

September 4, 2008

Town of Payson, Arizona, City Council

Re: America Supporting Americans Presentation to City Council

Dear Council Members,

My name is Mil Thornton. I am a new resident of Payson as of June 2007. I am also a representative of the organization: ***America Supporting Americans (ASA)***. The attached documentation is for your pleasure to understand who, what, and how ASA is and works. My reason for being here this evening is to present ASA and it's unwavering support for our armed forces to you and to request that you consider the adoption of a military unit the same as over 150 other towns, city's and organizations have done since the beginning of ASA.

What gave me the idea that Payson would be a good choice in adopting a unit? I participated in the escort of the Vietnam Memorial Wall into the town that took place recently.

During that experience I was very pleased and honored to be a Payson resident as I saw the 100's of town people come out on Main St. to welcome the Wall into their community. That started me thinking that I live in a town that believes in honoring and supporting our armed forces and our Veterans. I contacted ASA's founding person and President today, Linda Patterson and asked if she would allow me to approach the council and have Payson adopt a unit. You see I know Linda well because I am an adopted son of the City of San Mateo, California. I am one of the original soldiers that were adopted while in Vietnam. I cannot tell you how important it was as a soldier to know that there was a community back home that actually cared about the well being and morale of us soldiers in the war zone. I still have the original medal that the City gave us when it became official. The City of San Mateo was the only city in America at the time that welcomed its adopted son's home from that war. I was not able to attend that parade but I know that it happened and during those times of turmoil over the war this was a very important event. This year is the 40th anniversary of the adoption and the unit, Alpha company, 1/327th, 101st Airborne Infantry. The city still supports that unit which is currently deployed in Afghanistan.

The idea of adoption is that a unit is supported by the community of the town for as long as that unit exists in our armed forces. It is not just for war time activities. It is a permanent adoption that makes the town proud and the warriors grateful in knowing that they are cared for.

Please take the time to read the information that I have included and I will be happy to answer any and all questions regarding ASA.

www.ASA-USA.org

SEP 04 2008 D.5

America Supporting Americans History

ASA began its work in 1967 when Sergeant Joe Artavia wrote his big sister from Vietnam asking her to do something to help raise the morale of his unit the A Company, 1st battalion of the 327th Infantry Brigade of the 101st Airborne. Linda Patterson, as a young woman living in San Mateo, California, convinced her hometown to "adopt" her Brother Joe's unit in Vietnam. Believing that the individual soldiers charged with fighting an unpopular war desperately needed to feel the interest and concern of communities back home, San Mateo agreed to Linda's request. As a result, the morale of Joe's fellow soldiers was, in Joe's own words, "raised as high as the clouds." Tragically, Joe who was just nineteen was killed in a firefight trying to aid a fallen trooper three weeks after the adoption took place. To this day the men in his unit gratefully remember him and Linda each time they look at a cherished medallion that reads, "City of San Mateo, Adopted Son." After Joe's death, Linda traveled to Vietnam to personally deliver the medallions San Mateo had issued in honor of Joe and the men in his unit. Many of the men carry those medallions to this day.

Having geared up the adoption program again during Desert Storm and now for a third time in the wake of September 11th, ASA has facilitated the adoption of many units by towns and cities across the country. Through these adoptions, both soldiers and civilians are discovering the unique and crucial link that exists between the men and women of our Armed Services and the American citizens they are charged to protect. In times of both war and peace, this strong connection has proved dynamically and richly rewarding to all involved. ASA has, over the years, learned that the greatest benefit is gained when the adoption remains active whether the unit is at home or deployed abroad. There are many ways the two can demonstrate their care and patriotism towards one another. For example, when units are home, they have visited with the community, participating in a variety of events and activities. Traditionally, units deployed abroad count on letters and care packages from adoptive cities to boost morale and help them feel connected to home.



America Supporting Americans
Building Morale as High as the Clouds



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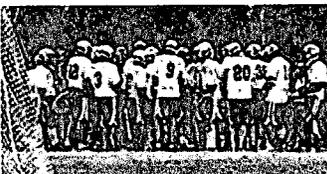
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Who We Are



ASA is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization that links individual units in all branches of the military with communities across the country

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ASA's History and Mission



Linda Patterson 1969

HISTORY

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MISSION

Adopt A-Unit-Program

The centerpiece of ASA's work is the Adopt-A-Unit Program. Believing that a strong, supportive connection between young men and women of our armed forces and the civilian communities they are ready and willing to serve is crucial to morale, ASA has committed itself to building and strengthening this link.

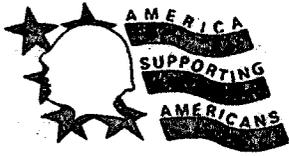
By coordinating with both civic and community groups, ASA facilitates "adoptions" between towns, cities, or counties and individual military units throughout the country. We work with all branches of the armed forces, including the National Guard, establishing adoptions between communities and units already interested in forming a partnership and between communities and units that have no previous connection with each other. In some cases, a city is already "home" to a particular unit, and the municipality and unit may want to solidify this relationship in unique, personally meaningful ways. In other cases, a city or town wants to establish a strong, supportive connection with soldiers, sailors, airmen, or Marines in a unit not already affiliated with the community involved. Both these situations result in rewarding, successful adoptions that are beneficial to everyone involved.

Foster-A-Unit Program

The ASA Foster-A-Unit Program provides the opportunity for business and organizations not involved in the Adopt-a-Unit Program to support the morale of troops serving in military units both at home and overseas while they wait for adoption through the ASA Adopt-a-Unit Program. A business, community group, or school group not involved with local adoption activities, can foster a military unit by sending one or two rounds of letters and/or care packages to troops who are serving in harms way.

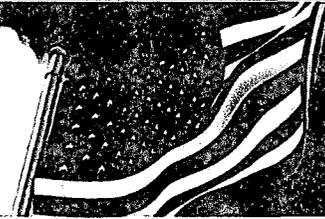
Youth Civic Action and Awareness Program (YCAP)

ASA encourages adoptive communities to use their adoption programs to expand young people's understanding of America's role in global affairs, of the role the military plays in the American political system, and of the experience of American servicemen and women. With this in mind, YCAP enables teachers to use their community's participation in the Adopt-a-Unit Program to enrich their curriculums and to add new dimensions to the learning that goes on in their classrooms.



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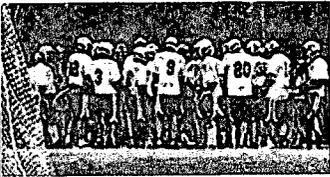
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Suggested Adoption Activities

There are many activities communities and units can engage in. Whatever you plan, be sure you think of the following things before you begin:

- 1) *What will the activity cost? Are there transportation costs involved?*
- 2) *How much time and how many people will it take to plan and run the activity?*
- 3) *Is there sufficient support in the community for the activity?*
- 4) *Is the unit stationed at home or deployed abroad?*
- 5) *Have unit members agreed to the activity, if it requires their attendance?*

With these questions in mind, here are some activities to consider. . . .

Sending Letters & Care Packages

Unit members love receiving letters and care packages. These can be sent by school and community groups. The *ASA Handbook for Adoptive Cities* contains a list of items that are good to include in care packages, or you can look the *Ideas for Care Packages* page included on our website.

Having Unit Members Speak to School and Community Groups

Many unit members enjoy coming to talk to school and community groups, when they are stationed at home and are able to do this. the Youth Civic Action and Awareness Program (YCAP) encourages teachers to integrate adoption activities into the classroom. (Visit the YCAP page for more information on this program.)

Holding Parades and Hosting Parties



Whether it's the 4th of July, Memorial Day, or Veterans' Day, both community residents and unit members can enjoy a parade! Going away parties for units being deployed and homecoming parties for units returning from abroad are also a great idea. Just remember there may be transportation costs involved for unit members to travel to the adoptive community, so fundraising may be needed. Plan ahead!

Exchanging Awards and Holding Recognition Ceremonies

It is a good idea to create opportunities to recognize unit members for their military service and for their involvement in your community's adoption program. It is also good to give them the opportunity to recognize community residents who have been particularly supportive and committed to working with the adoption program and adoption activities.

Finding Joint Community Service Projects to Work on

Unit members may be interested in participating in a joint community service project with area residents. This might be a Toys-for-Tots campaign, a Red Cross blood drive, a school fair or charity event, a boy or girl scout camping trip, or any other project the community and unit members agree to. Keep in mind that these activities might well serve as fundraisers for other adoption events and activities that have costs involved. (Remember that donations, whether by check or online contribution, can always be directed through ASA so that donors are able to take a tax deduction for their donations.)

Winning Hearts and Minds. . .



A community might want to coordinate with its adopted unit and send items to be distributed by unit members to civilians or even to local policemen living and working in the area in which the adopted unit is deployed. Provided their adopted unit has clearly confirmed their willingness and ability to engage in such an activity, communities can send toys, school supplies, and even surplus police equipment to units deployed abroad who then distribute these items to local residents and policemen they are working with. (Police equipment cannot include any weapons, but vests, helmets, and other basic supplies are very helpful.) The ASA Handbook for Cities has more information about this type of activity; it is crucial

that you follow the parameters outlined there. Please feel free to discuss this further with someone from ASA.

Showing Support for Family Members of Units Deployed Abroad

It is often difficult for families of service men and women when their loved ones are deployed abroad. Finding ways to show community support for them, particularly if a unit member is wounded or makes the ultimate sacrifice, is an excellent thing to do. Notes, cards, letters of support from the Mayor, and even meals delivered by caring neighbors during a difficult time are all things to consider.

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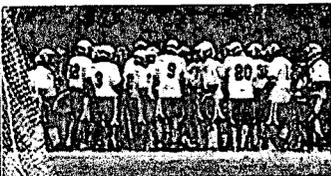
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Who We Are



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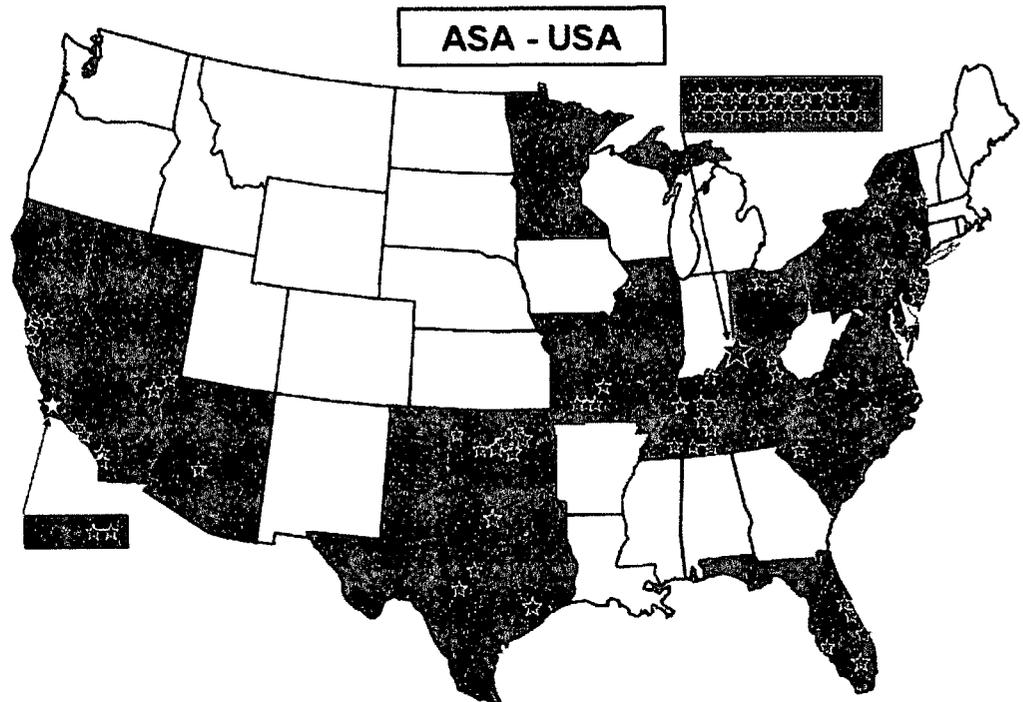


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PUT YOUR CITY ON THE MAP!



Click the link below to find out more info about activities in your state:

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ASA's Adoptive Cities

Arizona
Avondale

Arkansas
Carroll County

California
Atherton
Auburn
Baldwin Park
Burbank
Burlingame
Culver City
Hillsborough
La Habra
Laguna Niguel
Malibu
Pacific Palisades
Pleasanton
San Jose
San Mateo
Santee
Poway
San Clemente
Solana Beach

Minnesota
Stacy

Missouri
Ozark
Piedmont
Springfield

Nevada
Las Vegas

New Jersey
Holmdel Township
Middletown
Ocean Gate

New York
Auburn
Newy Hartford
Queensbury
Washingtonville

North Carolina
Apex

Turlock

Ohio

Valley View
Westlake

Florida

Belle Glade
Boynton Beach

Oklahoma

Chandler City
Del City
Midwest City
Owasso
Shattuck
Shawnee
Weatherford

North Palm Beach
Sarasota
Tequesta

Kentucky

Alexandria

Pennsylvania

Liverpool
York

Ashland
Bellevue
Cold Spring
Covington
Crescent Springs
Crestview Hills
Edgewood
Elsmere
Erlanger
Florence
Fort Mitchell
Fort Wright
Glasgow
Harrodsburg
Independence
Lakeside Park
Louisville
Mayfield
Owensboro
Russellville
Taylor Mill
Union
Villa Hills
Washingtonville

South Carolina

Walhalla

Tennessee

Ashland City
Brentwood
Franklin
Pleasant View
Pulaski
Winchester

Texas

Big Sandy
Kendall County
Missouri City
Trophy Club
West Lake Hills

Virginia

Martinsville

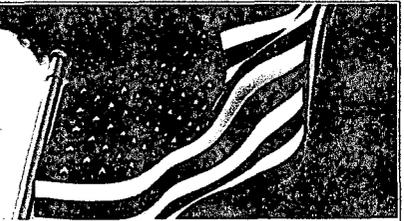
Maryland

Salisbury



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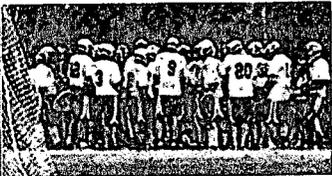
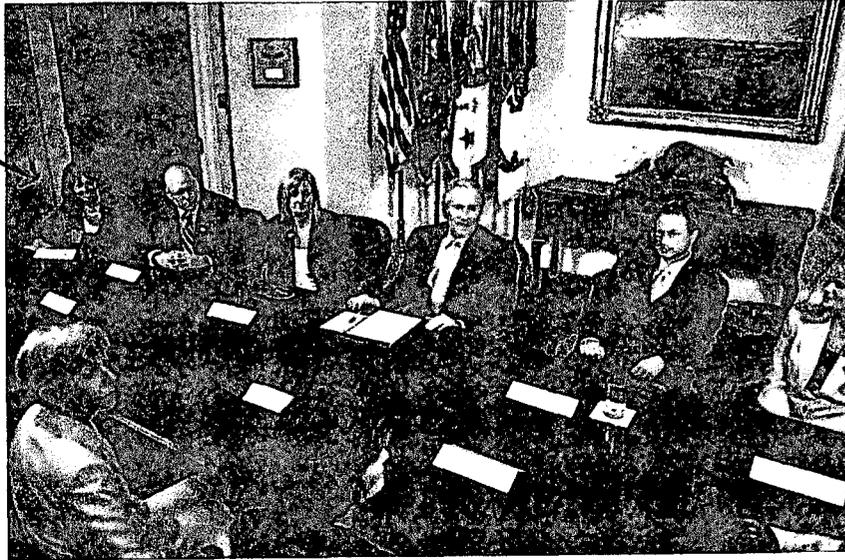
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"Breaking News for ASA"!!

President Bush Meets with Supporters of U.S. Military in Iraq and Afghanistan

*Linda
Patterson
w/ Pres
Bush*



Who We Are



1968 to 2006 ... From coast to coast touching one heart at a time, ASA has embraced the soul of America .

***** San Mateo, California to Washington, D.C. *****

USA towns and cities, who sought ASA have traveled this journey with us never to waiver their support.

ASA is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization that links individual units in all branches of the military with communities across the country

On June 26, 2006 The White House is pleased that ASA will be able to join President Bush as he thanks us for our support of America's courageous troops.

Read More

America Supporting Americans (ASA) is proud to make this announcement and extend our thanks and appreciation to all ASA volunteers and supporters across the USA who contributed towards this great honor of meeting with our Commander in Chief.



America Supports You is DOD's official troop support website

ASA has two goals: 1) to raise the morale of America's brave men and women "As High as the Clouds" (SGT. Joe Artavia, KIA Vietnam) and 2) to strengthen the civilian-military bond by increasing civilian understanding of the military experience and by providing the troops with the opportunity to become directly involved with residents of a community committed to their support. ASA is on-going not just during deployments or time of war.

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With each bomb exploded in Iraq or Afghanistan, the terrorist not only target our warriors in the field, but they are also targeting the will and resolve of the American people. ASA's efforts directly strengthen America's Center of Gravity (our National Will) by creating an unbreakable bond between our Nation's military and the free people that they serve.

UNITED STATES SENATE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

JOHN MCCAIN
ARIZONA

July 24, 2003

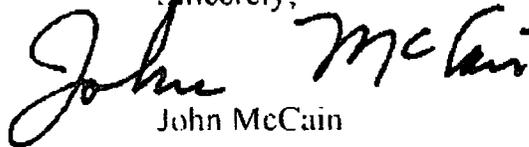
Mrs Linda Patterson
Americans Supporting Americans
Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

Dear Mrs. Patterson,

I would like to extend my deep appreciation to you for your 35 years of dedicated service to our great nation. You should know that your tireless effort on behalf of our men and women in uniform has not gone unnoticed. Few evolutions for our deployed military are more eagerly anticipated than "mail call". For 35 years, you have helped make mail call better for uncounted soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines. The importance of these letters and packages as a link to home transcends the momentary joy of reading a letter or opening a package. They make a profound statement about the support and gratitude felt towards the young men and women that receive them, and have a lasting positive impact on the morale of the adopted units.

I can not thank you enough for your hard work and dedication to a cause greater than your own self interest. Your personal sacrifices have been essential to supporting the morale of people far from home for nearly four decades. Thank you for your service to our nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John McCain". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John McCain
United States Senator

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News 

Local City Gives Extra Support To Troops

Friday, November 11, 2005 | 7:31 PM

ABC7 Salutes



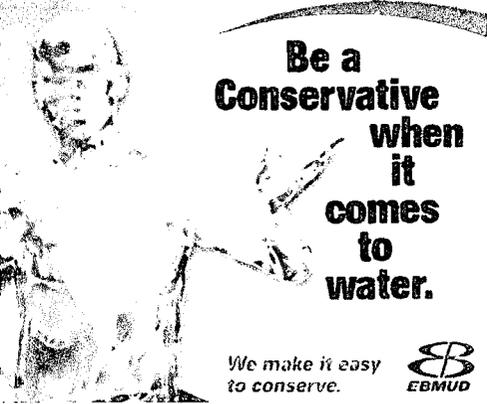
Nov. 11 - KGO (KGO) -- This Veterans' Day, we'd like to tell you about one Bay Area city that's going the extra mile to honor some active-duty soldiers in this week's ABC7 Salutes.

Christmas decorations are piling up at San Mateo City Hall. Soon they'll be shipped off to the 101st Airborne's home base -- Fort Campbell, Kentucky -- and then on to Iraq, where the 101st's Alpha company infantrymen just arrived for their second tour of duty.

Norma Gomez, San Mateo City Clerk: "It is their goal to have a Christmas as if they were home. Everything, decorations, a tree, lights."

[Story continues below](#)

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**Be a
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*We make it easy
to conserve.*



San Mateo city clerk Norma Gomez is helping keep alive an idea that started almost 40 years ago. In 1968, Sgt. Joe Artavia wrote back to his sister, Linda Patterson in San Mateo, asking if she could drum up a letter-writing campaign to his unit.

She did, and got the city of San Mateo to officially adopt the 101st, also known as the Screaming Eagles.

Patterson's brother was killed a few weeks later -- but San Mateo continued its support and was the first, and it believes, the only city in the nation to give returning Vietnam soldiers a homecoming parade.

Mayor Jan Epstein, San Mateo: "It was mind-boggling to me that we were the only city that welcomed people home from the Vietnam War. And you have to keep in mind that was a time when the draft was on."

After 9/11, the city renewed its pledge to its adopted sons.

City clerk Norma Gomez is instrumental in coordinating the letter-writing and care-package campaign. She went to meet Alpha company at Fort Campbell before they left for Iraq. She emphasizes the city's support has nothing to do with a political position on the war.

Norma Gomez, San Mateo City Clerk: "These are just families. And the soldiers, it's their career they have chosen, and they're very young, and I would hope the community would understand that and be eager to support them."

City councilman John Lee was a marine for 22 years. He spent two of those years in Vietnam and has a special place in his heart for the 101st.

John Lee, San Mateo city councilman: "They truly are my brothers and I'm proud of them. And I'm thrilled to death that the city of San Mateo stood up during the Vietnam War, during those hard times we adopted them."

The support also extends to the families left behind. Gomez reads a thank you letter from the Alpha company.

Norma Gomez, reading letter: "It's difficult to be away from all that we know and from our family and friends for such a long period of time. They say it's harder on those left behind and we believe it to be true."

For supporting our troops abroad and their families back home, ABC7 Salutes Norma Gomez, the city government and residents of San Mateo.

If you live in San Mateo and want to find out how to get involved, or to find out how your city can get involved use the following links:

- [City of San Mateo](#)
- [Americans Supporting Americans](#)

>> [Video On Demand: Build Your Own Newscast](#)

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- [E-Mail story](#)
- [Print Article](#)

Messages from home * Texas Tech Sponsor * Response from Iraq * unit Commander * America Supporting Americans

Subject: Re: We adopted your unit!
From: Unit Commander

Dear Megan,

First off, we are excited to hear from you, ... We spend several days at a time traveling on some of the most dangerous roads in the world, and we do it with complete confidence, devotion, and commitment to deliver goods to coalition forces all over the country. We call these men and women our Distribution Platoon, or Distro Platoon for short, and they are proud Americans just like you and your Raider Sisters. They all drive Hummers and shoot big guns!

Support from the home-front is probably the single most important thing that keeps us going! There's nothing better than the thanks we receive from other true patriots who believe in the Red, White, and Blue! That said, a simple and sincere "Thank you" carries more weight than anything else. Just knowing we have the support from the nation is critical and enables us to keep our heads up high. However, when you connect with someone special and share this experience that makes it all worth while. We're here for you! We're here for the rest of America! We're here to make sure "they" never attack our people again! Your prayers, kind words of encouragement, letters, cards, care packages, and belief in us goes a long, long way, more than you could ever know. We sincerely appreciate people like you and the Raider Sisters.

I hope your Army Theme Party is a great success and we would love to see pictures, too! We'll send you some, as well. Everyone knows about Texas girls...no other state has crowned more Miss America's. So, do what you do and make it happen!

Our needs--Surprises are best! We like unique items that allow us to connect with y'all (i.e. Raider stuff, etc...) Since we just got here we have many of the normal care package items like personal hygiene stuff, but in about 5-6 months those things may become scarce. We like books, movies, magazines, videos, DVDs, games, anything that entertains us during our down-time. We like pretty much that same stuff that most red blooded Americans like. Mind you, we have a small post exchange, but no Wal-mart. We would like to read a real newspaper once in a while. Although we have the internet and a few TV stations, and we know what's going on in the world we miss out on many of the smaller things like local papers, USA Today, etc... Pictures are great! We like homemade snacks and healthy snacks (nothing that will melt because it's over 120 degrees here). We have four ladies in our company and the rest are gentlemen from all over the U.S. Our ages range from 18-43. Most people are in their early to mid-20s.

Megan, we look forward to outstanding support from you all and anticipate when we will hear from you!

Sincerely,
CPT Robert Rowe