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Local News

Woman, soldier bond through care packages

By Erica Kritt, Times Staff Writer

Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Iraq is in a desert region, so why would Brandy Moore, a corporal in the Army, be so cold?



DYLAN SLAGLE/STAFF PHOTO
U.S. Post Office sales associate Andrea Spencer, left, helps Kathleen Selby of Westminster mail a package of warm clothes and blankets Tuesday in Westminster to Army Cpl. Brandy Moore in Iraq, whom she met through the Web site www.anysoldier.com.

Moore, a North Carolina resident, recently requested blankets, hot chocolate and socks from Kathleen Selby of Westminster to stay warm while serving overseas.

Selby has been sending care packages and exchanging e-mails with Moore since the summer and received Moore's request Sunday.

"They're all freezing over there," Selby said.

Snow fell in Iraq on Jan. 11, the first snowfall in recorded memory in the capital. The Iraqi climate is similar to Southwestern America, with hot, dry summers and cool winters, according to www.globalsecurity.org.

"I think this was unexpected," Selby said. "I don't think it ever gets that cold."

As soon as Selby received the e-mail, she started shopping for supplies.

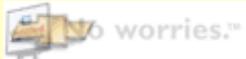
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Along with Moore's requests, the care package contained nonperishable food, pajamas with bottoms and Valentine's Day cards. Selby shipped the package Tuesday.

"It really broke my heart when she said she was cold," Selby said.



Selby found Moore via www.anysoldier.com, a Web site that connects troops to Americans who want to give back to the soldiers, according to Scott Remington, the site's support team director.

The site was started after Sgt. Brian Horn of La Plata kept giving away his care packages to soldiers who didn't get anything from home.

Horn came from a military family that knew the importance of care packages, but not all of his fellow soldiers had the same support.

"Sometimes, people's family situations aren't conducive to support soldiers," Remington said.

As word spread, a Web site was created and anysoldier.com now helps more than 100,000 service members who are working in hostile territory.

Selby said she had formed a close bond with Moore and sends her packages at least once a month. The two are planning to meet when Moore comes home in the summer.

"I consider her my adopted daughter," Selby said.

Recently, Selby has lost several close family members and saw an opportunity with anysoldier.com to bring positivity into her life.

"When you're feeling down, doing something good for someone else helps," she said. "It's been a very rewarding relationship."

Remington and Selby both agree that sending care packages is not about politics but support.

"We do not talk about the war. It's basically I support her for what she's doing for the country," Selby said.

The military provides the troops with general necessities: food, shelter and uniforms, but everything else the soldiers have to get on their own via care packages or buying products at stores on the military bases, Remington said.

"It's the taste of home they want," Remington said.

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