



NEWS RELEASE

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A SWEET TASTE OF HOME FOR SOLDIERS OVERSEAS

July 22, 2009 (FAYETTEVILLE, PA) – “Although we must be away from home, it is this little act of kindness that makes our time here that much more bearable,” writes a Chambersburg area soldier serving in Iraq in a thank you note. His little act of kindness came in the form of Girl Scout cookies. Troop 939 of Fayetteville sent 700 boxes of cookies to soldiers overseas as part of their “Cookies from Home” program.

Troop 939, along with several other troops in the Chambersburg area Conococheague Service Unit, have sent nearly 20,000 boxes of Thin Mints, Tag-a-longs and Somoas to Iraq, Afghanistan and other overseas military bases for the past six years. And it’s all thanks to donated funds girls collect while selling cookies.

This year Troop 939 collected enough money to send 700 boxes to soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. That ranked the troop number three in the Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania Gift of Caring program. Girl Scout troops across 30 counties in Pennsylvania participated in the program by donating cookies to various organizations in the U.S. and abroad.

Each participating troop decided where to donate cookies. Soldiers were just some of the recipients. Other troops gave to local firefighters, hospitals and area food banks. In total, Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania troops donated more than 6,000 boxes of cookies this year.

Being in the top three in the Gift of Caring was not what motivated the girls from Troop 939. “It makes me feel good because it made them smile and brought some cheer to their day,” said Elise, 11.

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11 year-old Blair knows how hard it is for the soldiers to be away from home. “It is nice to know the cookies are going to someone who deserves them.”

Suzanne Crider, leader of Troop 939, started the “Cookies from Home” program in 2004 after her husband and his co-workers at the Letterkenny Army Depot in Chambersburg suggested how much the soldiers overseas would enjoy the traditional Girl Scout treat. But Crider said the girls are the ones who keep the program going. “These girls don’t need much motivation. They know how much these cookies mean to the soldiers so they take the program and run with it,” said Crider.

Troop 939 also uses the experience to do more than just donate cookies. They learn about the regions where they send the care packages and even discuss how women are viewed differently in other cultures. The Girl Scout cookie program is dedicated to teaching girls to become the leaders of tomorrow. Through the program, girls help discover the world around them, connect with others and finally take action to make a difference.

It’s obvious their actions are achieving those goals. Another soldier writes, “These gifts make it that much easier to do the things we must do to keep our country safe.”

Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania serves 27,000 girls in 30 counties including more than 450 in the Chambersburg area. To learn more about Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania, please visit www.gshpa.org.

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