



Wednesday November 9, 2005

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[Honor our country's veterans](#)

Honor our country's veterans

Emil Franz's Inside Track

Nov. 9, 2005 - This Friday is Veterans Day, not that it means much to most Americans. Of our country's patriotic holidays - July 4th, Memorial Day and Veterans Day - Veterans Day gets the shortest shrift.

[Chris Limberis: Reporter](#)

Nov. 11, a week or so after Halloween and two weeks before Thanksgiving, tends to get lost in the holiday shuffle. Plus, it falls on a different day every year and only government offices, banks and trash haulers seem to get the day off.

Letters To The Editor

The holiday is supposed to honor the men and women who are serving, or have served, in the United States armed forces. It is their sacrifice and commitment that keeps us free.

[Who you callin' an old coot?](#)

Yet Veterans Day, this year and the past two years, should have had more significance to Americans, considering roughly 150,000 American soldiers are in harm's way in Iraq and considering that about two soldiers a day have died for their country since the war started and about another three soldiers a day have surrendered an eye, a finger, an arm or a leg for freedom.

[Keeping 'em honest](#)

We should honor our veterans on Veterans Day and in doing so honor those men and women defending freedom in Iraq. Perhaps the best way to honor them is to get them home, soon.

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So this year for Veterans Day you could honor all veterans by simply writing to Congress and the president and demanding all the troops come home before next Veterans Day, or, failing that, instituting a draft and sending 400,000 more troops over there so we can get the job done sooner, and safer.

[Can't kid a kidder](#)

Otherwise, the way we're going now will mean more suffering and death for an ill-defined reason with no end in sight. That seems more dishonorable than honorable.

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But that method is packed with politics and emotion, so perhaps a better way would be to tell a soldier - no matter what your position on the war - you're thankful for the service.

You could send a soldier a book, some brownies or just a card or letter saying "thanks."

New Pentagon rules put the kibosh on sending GIs care packages and letters by simply addressing them "To any soldier." Now you have to address them to specific soldiers. That cut down on the ability for people who don't know any soldiers in Iraq to send packages and letters to anonymous GIs letting them know how much they appreciate their service.

However, a family in Maryland got around that by starting a grass-roots effort to enlist GI volunteers who agree to be the addressees, and then distribute the packages and cards to soldiers not receiving much mail.

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You can send a soldier, marine, airman or seaman a care package or letter by going to <http://anysoldier.com> and following the instructions. You can choose a soldier, perhaps even in a reserve or National Guard unit from your state, to send the package or letter to, and he or she will give it to a soldier who needs it.

It's a great way to celebrate Veterans Day and a way to show your appreciation of the sacrifice being made by the soldiers fighting the war. Happy Veterans Day.

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