



Today: Thursday, October 25, 2007



Sections

- ▶ HOME
▶ News
▶ AP Wire
▶ BlogCentral
▶ Michigan News
▶ Travel
▶ Auto/Business
▶ Business/Finance
▶ Opinions
▶ Legal Notices
▶ Announcements
▶ Obituaries
▶ Archives
▶ Special Sections

Entertainment

- ▶ Entertainment
▶ Events Calendar
▶ Movie Reviews
▶ Music Reviews
▶ Recipes & Menus

Sports

- ▶ Local Sports
▶ MICentralSports
▶ U-PICKEM NFL Contest
NEW!
▶ BlogCentral
▶ Lions/NFL
▶ Pistons/NBA
▶ Red Wings/NHL
▶ Tigers/MLB
▶ College Basketball

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Local girl to send 4,000 cards to troops

Local girl hopes to boost troops' morale this holiday season

By William Zilke, Staff Writer

PUBLISHED: October 25, 2007

In 2005, there was no way young Destiny Eadie could have realized the love, support and needed morale for young Americans thrown into harm's war in America's war on terror.

That first year, she sent out 578 cards to American soldiers. In 2006, that number climbed to an astonishing 3,600.

Now 12-years-old and attending the 7th-grade at South Middle school, Destiny has continued her Cards from Destiny project and is aiming to send out 4,000 cards for the upcoming holiday season.

As is often the case, people who

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do incredible things are often guided by a seemingly simple act of genuine kindness.

"My Dad's co-worker had a son that was stationed in Kirkuk, Iraq. I never met his son before, but asked if he thought Cody would like a Christmas card from me," she said.

"He told me to check out a site called [Anysoldier.com](http://Anysoldier.com) on the Internet."

[Anysoldier.com](http://Anysoldier.com) allows service members to sign up on the site and ask for things they want or need.

All the branches of the military are on the site.

You read the postings of the service members and then decide which ones you can help.

"That is where I read Staff Sgt. Cody Green's request for Christmas cards to help boost the morale of the people in his group," she said.

After Destiny read the postings by others, found out what they were doing without but wanting simple letters and cards from home, it made the tender hearted Destiny feel sad.

"So I asked everyone I knew to sign a card or write a letter, " she said.

One of the oddest twists of young Destiny's inspiring story, is that for all the support and love she's shown to our soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan, she had no idea her own family members knew all too well the loneliness of fighting in wars overseas.

"My Grandpa Eadie was in the Navy on the US DD818 in the Korean War. He just passed away on Jan. 1," she said. "My Great Uncle Bill Caldwell was also in the Korean War. He was a gunner in the army."Destiny's "Papa" Jim Wilcher was in the Army during the Korean War too.

His son, Mitchell Wilcher was drafted and served in Vietnam.

"The funny thing is that I didn't know any of this before I started sending cards to the troops," she said.

"It was only after talking about the needs of the troops that I found out

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that some of my relatives were Veterans."

Her family members told her that it meant a lot to them that she was sending the troops things and they wish they could have had that kind of support back then.

The soldiers in harm's way today showed their heartfelt appreciation in their letters to Destiny, which the Eadies agreed to share with The View.

"I heard that you got your town together and sent almost 5,000 cards in support of the troops! If the world had more people like you this war would be a lot easier on all of us," signed by Lance Corp. Patten

"Many thanks for your efforts to ensure Christmas for the troops is not forgotten. I am grateful," signed by Capt. Daniel Gray, Baghdad, Iraq.

"Hello Destiny. I am an Army Medic stationed at a base in Baghdad Iraq. I recently received a Christmas card from you guys and just wanted to show my appreciation for what you are doing.

"It's really nice to know that people like you have not forgotten us soldiers that are over here. I can tell you that all the other soldiers and airmen that got cards really enjoyed them as well. What you are doing is a great and noble thing. Its people like you that I am sure that will grow up to really make a difference in the world for the better.

"A big heart and an determination to make something positive is how our country became so great. Thanks again for everything that you do for us," signed by Spc. Laureles

Last year Destiny received 40 e-mails from service members, 29 cards and letters and 6 certificates of appreciation.

"A flag was flown in honor of me on a base in Iraq and then flown on a combat mission over Iraq in a jet," she said.

"I have it in a special case that my Grandpa Winn got for me along with one of the certificates, two Marine coin medallions, and a hand written note from one of the Marines in which he thanked me for my efforts in supporting the troops. It is very special to me."

Any veteran will tell you that Destiny's motivation, sense of mission and determination is more than commendable.

They also will relate to the sheer logistics of Destiny's project, which she does indeed handle with military-like efficiency under seemingly impossible conditions.

Destiny has shipped out more than 3,000 cards from a town of only 4,000 people and she started her project at 10-years-old.

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"I ship the cards in flat rate boxes that are about the size of a shoebox. Each box costs \$9.10 to mail regardless of its weight," she said.

"Because the boxes are going to a different country, my mom (Shada) and I have to fill out a customs form that states what exactly is inside the box.

Her family helps her count the cards and put them in the boxes.

"My Mom and Grandma Winn tote them to the post office to mail out," she said.

Beyond her family, Cards from Destiny is pretty much a one-young woman operation.

"As far as my friends helping me out, not too much. I have a friend sit with me during parent teacher conferences at school and we ask students, teachers and parents if they'd like to sign cards as they come in the front door," she said.

"Most of them do and some of them don't. Some people are very nice about what I am doing and some people are down right rude."

As much as anything Destiny is doing for our troops, our country and the families of veteran's of all wars, it is her quote that should be the war on terror's most famous statement.

All parents, all readers, all teachers and anyone who takes one breath of freedom for granted should read what Destiny has to say.

"They have freedom of speech as much as I do and they choose not to support the troops," she said.

"This project is not about supporting the war. It is about supporting our service members when they need it the most."

For Destiny, Cards from Destiny and aiding our troops is a year round event.

"I look for goodies and things that I can send over to the troops. I've sent Valentine cards and candy, and 4th of July cards and candy plus little toys that the troops can play with or give to the children they meet over there," she said.

"I have everyone looking for Christmas cards after the holidays when they are on clearance so we can put them back for the following year."

Cards from Destiny keeps growing as the determined young lady hopes to use the Van Buren Township craft room again this year and has garnered support from the Lincoln Consolidated Schools' students.

On Nov. 10, the Sign-A-Card For Our Troops Event will be held from 1 to 4 p.m. Nov. 10 at the Van Buren Township Hall craft room, 46425 Tyler Road.

"Everyone is welcomed to join our special guest, Santa, in the craft room to sign cards for the troops. Bring your own cards or sign some that we will have available," Shada said.

"This event will also serve as the drop off site for cards. Please do not seal the envelopes.

Donations to help pay for the shipping will be greatly appreciated but not required.

Contact Staff Writer William Zilke at 697-8255 or at [wzilke@heritage.com](mailto:wzilke@heritage.com).

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