

FRANK TALK

A WEEKLY ENTERTAINMENT PUBLICATION



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ANY SOLDIER

I've mentioned in the past that I am in the Army and stationed at the Pentagon. I can't recall if I'd also mentioned that working there comes with a nice dose of guilt. The guilt comes from working a nine-to-five job five days a week, while there are thousands of other soldiers working 24-7 in combat zones. I've complained about my commute on more than one occasion in this column, but while my hour-long commute may be a bit "hostile" at times, there is no fear of being shot at, taken hostage, or having someone detonate a roadside bomb as I drive by. While I am very thankful for this degree of safety, it once again brings a guilty feeling. I have recently found a way to ease some of that guilt.

The other day, I received an e-mail from Chip, a friend I was stationed with in California. It was a bulk e-mail, with about 1,500 other e-mail addresses listed in the header. Normally, I would delete something like that before I even read it, but considering the source I decided I'd browse through it first. I'm glad I did. It was about a company called *Any Soldier, INC.* that was started by a soldier stationed in Iraq. It seems a lot of the guys in his infantry unit weren't getting any mail, so he asked his mother if she would put some care packages together and mail them to him, with the attention line "Any Soldier". He, in turn, would distribute them to those in his unit that weren't getting much or any mail. Soon his father, a 20-year Army vet, joined in; and it has grown exponentially from there. Packages are now sent to over 1,100 individuals, in all branches of the armed forces, which are, in turn, distributed to nearly 46,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines in the combat zones of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Through the volunteer efforts of a law firm and an Internet web-hosting company, *Any Soldier* has been incorporated as a Maryland non-profit and has a very functional and informative website. A visitor can read more about the program, how soldiers located in combat zones can become distributors...and that anyone who wants to can contribute. I say again, anyone who wants to can contribute.

I'm not a salesman, and I don't often urge anyone to donate to this cause or that cause. However, today I make an exception. Today I am asking each and every reader of FRANK TALK, each and every organization, church, youth group, scout troop, Legion Post, VFW post (you get the picture) to seriously consider donating items or funds to this great effort. This is one of the only organizations whose efforts directly impact the troops in the field.

To make it even easier, you (yes, I am talking directly to *you*) can go to www.anysoldier.com.

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treatanysoldier.com and with the click of a mouse purchase a care package that will be sent in your name. No need to put things together, go to the post office, or even try very hard. Packages range in price from \$9.99 to \$49.95. All of them are specifically designed to comply with regulations governing mail/packages, and all contain items identified by those wearing the dirty boots as being in great need.

Maybe you don't like the war, or the President, or both. In that case, you should donate even more—because it's the sacrifices of these men and women, and the sacrifices of those who served before them, that allow you to stand up and say what you will about our country and its leadership without fear or retribution.

As a soldier, even one with a "cushy job," I don't make much money. However, I have donated to this organization and plan to as often as I can. I urge you to do the same.

To make a donation, find out how to send packages, or for more information, visit www.anysoldier.com

To have a care pre-made package (or packages) sent in your name, visit www.treatanysoldier.com

Freedom isn't free. Just ask any SOLDIER.





Think about these guys the next time your mattress feels too lumpy or your house feels a bit chilly at night....

You can contact Brian at myview@heritagemultimedia.net.

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