

## Local volunteers collecting items for Armed Forces Weekend

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By Charlie Breitrose/Staff Writer  
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North Borough -

**SOUTHBOROUGH** - This Saturday and Sunday, in honor of Armed Forces Weekend, a group of volunteers from town will hold a drive to collect items to send to troops overseas.

Items sought include food and snacks, as well as toiletries, said organizer Lisa Braccio. She has helped organize three prior drives that sent more than 2,200 boxes with more than 27,000 pounds of goods, but Braccio said this is a key one.

"The need is out there more than ever," Braccio said. "Most troopers' tours have been extended three months more."

With the unpopularity of the war in Iraq, Braccio fears people may not be as quick to donate items.

"You don't have to support the war to give, believe me I have been in conversations about that," Braccio said. "It is not about politics, we just want to say thank you to the troops. It is nothing to do with the war or why they have these needs."

Braccio looked on [anysoldier.com](http://anysoldier.com) for things that the troops would like, and she fills their requests.

"They are not asking for great big things. They are asking for toiletries, things to put in their in pack when they can't get to chow hall - granola bars," Braccio said. "Microwaveable food and snacks are big. They can't get good snacks over there."

Braccio receives e-mails and letters from past recipients, who are always very grateful.

"I got the most wonderful letter from a naval commander," Braccio said. "So many members of his unit had registered on [anysoldier.com](http://anysoldier.com) that he said we touched lives of nearly 1,000 of his sailors and Marines."

Volunteers will box the care packages and ship them this weekend, Braccio said. She sometimes receives e-mails from troops within five days.

The care packages also include a greeting of some kind, Braccio said.

"Every box has a letter and a card in it," Braccio said. "A general letter is sent out with every box telling them the box was generated from care package drives in the MetroWest community."

Some boxes will also have cards made by schoolchildren, Braccio said.

WROR radio will be at the drive Sunday, from 10 a.m. to noon, to play music and give out bumper stickers, Braccio said. The station also made donations at prior drives, she said.

The drive will run Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the Southborough Senior Center, located at 9 Cordaville Road, just south of the intersection of routes 85 and 30.

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