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Girl Scouts send gifts to troops overseas

By **FRANK MacEACHERN**
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WILTON — Wilton Girl Scouts decided the nation's troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan needed a gift from home.

Members of Wilton's 51120 Girl Scout Troop recently sent packages to to three units in Iraq and Afghanistan that they selected from reading an online site dedicated to armed forces personnel.

The boxws were filled with everything from body wash supplies to razors.

"It felt good to send all that stuff to the troops," said Daria Acosta-Rua, 9, a member of the troop. "It was good for the girls to know that not everyone is going to be home for the holidays."

Each month Girl Scouts fulfill a community service commitment, and this month it was decided that they would do something for the troops overseas, said Daria's mother Lianne,who is one of the troop's three leaders.

It's not only educational for the girls, she said, but it's also an important message for the troops.

"Many of them don't have family members who are sending them packages very often," Lianne Acosta-Rua said. "This shows them people are thinking of them."

The girls visited the online site www.anysoldier.com, and read letters posted by servicemen and women. After reading some of the letters, they chose three units to send the packages to.

"This is the first year we kind of focused on the war," said Cacciatore. "The girls are in the fourth grade and they're hearing their parents discuss it and hearing it in the news."

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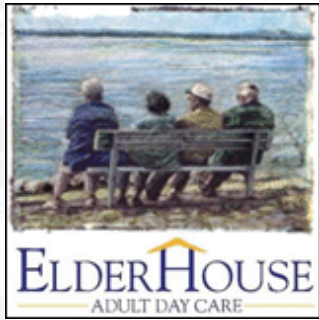
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The girl guides chose one unit each from the Army, Air Force and Marines. Each of the units also had many female members which made it a little bit of closer bond for the girls, said Acosta-Rua.

It's the little things which are often required the most, said Acosta-Rua. Because they're in countries which are dry and hot, female personnel often request items such as moisturizers, she said. Many will request shaving equipment and other articles such as personal fitness magazines, she said.

Reading the letters brought home to Daria a little about what the troops were undergoing overseas.

"It felt they translated their feelings pretty well," said Daria. "It's a little bit sad they can't be home for the holidays."



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