

## A word of thanks from Iraq



Saturday, November 24, 2007

ATTLEBORO - Mayor Kevin Dumas often gets calls from constituents, but one he got Wednesday made Thanksgiving extra special.

It came from Naval Reservist Mark Deslauriers, who is stationed in Afghanistan. He called Dumas to thank him for the Christmas Care Packages that city workers put together for Attleboro area troops in war zones.

"It was great, we talked for about ten minutes," Dumas said. "He thanked us for the packages. It touched him so much he called from Afghanistan."

The packages contained personal care items, food, books, disposable cameras and DVDs with footage of city events. An Attleboro flag was included for each of the different military units that got the gifts.

City workers who organized and carried out the project mailed the packages from the Pleasant Street post office eight days ago, hoping they'd get to the soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq ahead of the holidays.

They succeeded beyond their expectations. Some of the packages reached soldiers in Afghanistan in just five days.

Also included in the shipment were toys that soldiers could give to Afghan or Iraqi children.

While soldiers overseas can communicate with their families and keep up on community affairs quickly via the Internet, the pang of a distant separation often hits. And that's what happened to Deslauriers during a recent medical clinic for kids, Dumas said.

"He really felt the pinch of not being here," the mayor said. "He saw some little children who reminded him of his son."

But the packages helped, Dumas said.

"This was really something special for us," he quoted Deslauriers as saying.

Deslauriers, who in civilian life is a probation officer at Attleboro District Court, is married to Narvy Kes-Deslauriers, who is a member of the Housing Authority.

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