



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
1249 ENGINEER BATTALION
TASK FORCE GRIDLEY
FOB SHARANA, AFGHANISTAN
APO AE 09311

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

CJTF-101-TFT-1249-CH

July 6, 2011

TO: **GIFT BOX SENDERS**

SUBJECT: Gift Boxes for the Agape Store

Thank you again for the gift boxes we recently received from you here at FOB Sharana. The operation of the Agape Store will continue to benefit the soldiers at this location due to your generosity. As you know, we have soldiers from all over the post coming for the free gifts and receiving the love of Jesus Christ. In addition, soldiers bring in items from care packages that they have received to share with others as well. It is uplifting to see the support of all of us from home and here on the FOB.

I would like to be able to communicate our thanks through email as well. If you have email access, please send me an email at richard.barnes@afghan.swa.army.mil.

Thank you for everything that you have done and your support in the future!

Attached is our monthly newsletter covering some of our current events.

RICHARD L. BARNES
CHAPLAIN (CPT)
HHC 1249 EN BN

Freedom is not free, it is paid for both by the soldiers who step out on the battlefield, and the families that give them up during deployments. Our families are the true heroes!

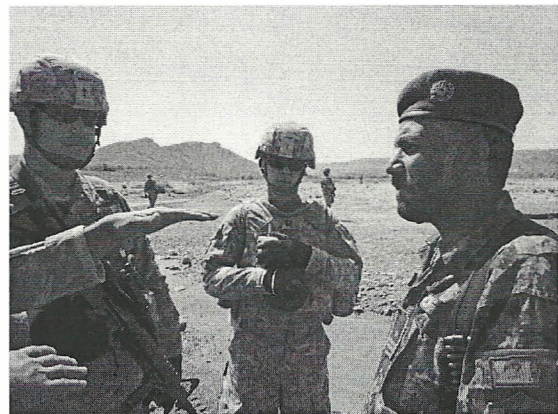


June 2011 Religious Support Team (RST) Newsletter Article

It is finally official, we are over half way done! Yes, I know it is hard to believe, but we are now on the last half of our deployment. With many of the other units rotating out in the future, pretty soon SPC Chitwood and I will be the RST with the most time on FOB Sharana. Seems like we just got here, but we are also looking forward to the coming months and passing our experiences and lessons learned onto the next

chaplain and chaplain assistant.

This month we have been incredibly blessed at the Agape Store. We have been receiving about 150 care packages a month since we arrived. At our half way mark in June we are over 250 boxes. Today we received 150 alone. Wow! With such incredible generosity from Oregon and all over the country we are spreading these care packages to four other FOBs besides ours. Soldiers who are transitioning through ask how they can get care packages too, so we get their address and forward to them also. Thank you very much for your generosity and support. Attached is a copy of our current needs list which also includes those items that we are currently overloaded with.



SPC Chitwood is currently on leave hopefully enjoying family time and some well deserved rest and relaxation. Prior to his leaving, however, we have been busy with our CMO and ANA Coordinator teams. With my vocational background as a civil engineer, I routinely get the "Chaplain what do you think about this..." questions. Sometimes it ends up in a field trip as well. We looked at a couple of water crossings recently and were able to incorporate a mosque rehabilitation project as well at one of the locations. Combining engineering and religious cooperation is definitely a God thing! When we brought back the materials with our Afghan counterparts, the local village elder

was extremely happy! Of course we had to share some good chai tea with him to mark the occasion.



Thank you again to our families. Our families are the true heroes! Your dedication to support us while we are deployed is a blessing from God. We could not be able to do this without you! May God bless you and keep you safe during this deployment!

CH (CPT) Rick Barnes & SPC Ed Chitwood