

Sent: Thu, July 7, 2011 2:29:15 AM

Subject: Thank you

Mr. Rod Hirsch,

I am SgtMaj Stroud with 2d Combat Engineer Battalion currently deployed to Afghanistan. I want to thank you for your support. I want to tell you a little bit about what my unit is responsible for here in Afghanistan. We are up front on the ground searching for IED's. That is the greatest threat we have here. This place is not safe and it's very dangerous. The summer is here and it is HOT and DUSTY. I have done three tours to IRAQ and its worse here than IRAQ. I have 845 Marines and Sailors in 39 areas here in country. Our casualty rate is significant due to the nature of our mission. We clear the way for the infantry patrols and all vehicle movement. It's a tough job and it takes a special individual to accomplish this task. My Marines and Sailors do it every day. I love them all very much! It hurts when I see them get injured and some of them have lost their legs and arms and this is a very significant emotional event for us and their families. We are "MARINES" and that is what we sacrifice daily for our families and country. We are a special breed. We are very grateful for your support and we thank you for your unswerving dedication to supporting all the service members serving our grateful nation. Most of my Marines and Sailors do not have internet or the ability to send letters. Most of them live in fighting holes and use baby wipes to keep clean. They are living in a very austere environment. I have numerous route clearance platoons that execute missions for several days. They live out of their vehicles and they really do not have a home base. They come through my camp and grab items for the mission that I set aside for them. I was approached by a Marine SSgt today that was donating some of the care packages that your organization had sent to him. I can say that I was very impressed. He did give my unit 4 big boxes that had individual boxes that the Marines will be able to grab and go. Not sure who came up with the idea, but it is a marvelous idea and it is perfect for the men fighting everyday outside the wire. You will not see my name on anything within your organization because I just learned today about the awesome organization that you founded. You have made a tremendous difference in the many lives of our military through your generosity and hard work. I ask that you let everyone in your organization know that their efforts are appreciated and we salute everyone that is responsible for the support we all receive who wear the uniform and serve in harm's way. Again, thank you for working so diligently to support us all. Keep us in your prayers, pray for our safety, and our return home to the greatest nation on earth. We all here serve proudly! Please keep in touch!

Semper Fidelis,

SgtMaj Stroud

2d Combat Engineer Battalion

Camp Lejeune, North Carolina