

## Pythians thanked for Supporting Our Troops

The Grand Lodge of New York Knights of Pythias originally set up its [Service men and Veterans Committee](#) to provide support and visitations to VA hospitals where simple gifts and good cheer would bring comfort to injured – many permanently disabled -- members of our armed forces. In 2006, a New York Pythian and former Marine, recognizing that our service personnel in the middle east battle zones lacked access to basic personal care products including shampoo, razor blades, snack foods, books, etc., started soliciting products to send over.

It currently costs \$15.00 to ship one box via USPS. With the support of Pythians and others, the Servicemen and Veterans Committee under the leadership of its chair, PCDGC Sir Joseph Robinson, raises enough money and material to box and ship some 900 boxes per year totaling over 5,000 individual packages to service men and women currently serving tours in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Below find the most recent “thank you” letter received by the the committee.

From: Eugene Kwag  
Sent: Sunday, April 21, 2013 1:16 PM  
To: Calvin Kong  
Subject: Thank you!!! Knights of Pythias

Knights of Pythias,

From all of us here in 1st Platoon (the Renegades!), Assault Battery, 2-12 Field Artillery Battalion, we would like to express our most sincere gratitude!

From what I hear, these packages were sent out quite a while ago. We were beginning to get worried they had gotten lost. According to our mail staff, packages first reach Kandahar Air Field and then get rerouted to the various bases in country. However, the unusual amount of sandstorms and rain of late have grounded our mail choppers for an extended period- creating a large backup. Sometimes, packages even get rerouted incorrectly and simply disappear. I feared the latter with your packages, but I am happy to report that all of them have made it here just fine!

My men appreciate your support and the care that went into each and every one of these packages. Especially the cards! I personally received one from a young lady named Sarah- if you happen to know who she is, please extend my heartfelt 'Thanks!' These packages really made our day!

As you may already know, we are currently operating in the city of Spin Boldak located in Southern Kandahar. From our base, the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan lies just 10 Kilometers away. We are in the

middle of a desert- an unfamiliar territory for most of us here. It is often too easy for my soldiers to get lost in our back to back mission cycle. With our high op tempo, it's easy to forget that there are loved ones and people back home still supporting our efforts. Therefore care packages like yours are all the more meaningful and important!

The majority of my soldiers are very young- we've even got soldiers who just recently turned 19 and 20 years old! With the exception of our senior leadership, this is the first deployment for most of my men. They are bright, energetic, and a pleasure to serve. I've attached several pictures for you to see for yourselves!

As a way of showing our appreciation, we have prepared a little something for you. Please let me know an appropriate address for us to send you our small gift!

Once again, thank you so very much!

Very Respectfully,

Eugene Kwag  
First Lieutenant  
United States Army

View these articles on the work of the committee in Pythian News:

[\*Marine Corps League Presents Flag to Grand Lodge\*](#)

[\*North Shore Lodge Supports Pythian Servicemen and Veterans Committee\*](#)

[Posted May 18, 2013]