As the Christmas holiday season approaches, postal officials are asking the American public not flood the military mail system with letters, cards, and gifts. Due to security concerns and transportation constraints, the Defense Department can no longer accept items for mailing addressed to "Any Service Member". At the same time, military leaders are proudly acknowledging the support and generosity of the American people and how it has touched the lives of many service members - more than 300,000 of whom are deployed overseas. Thousands of Americans are therefore asking what they can do to show their support for service members, especially those serving overseas in this time of war. Below are web sites for several organizations that are sponsoring programs for members of the Armed Forces overseas.

DEPT OF DEFENSE 'DEFEND AMERICA' WEBSITE

http://www.defendamerica.mil/

Keeping the Public in Touch

Defend America, an official Defense Department website, offers the latest news, photographs, transcripts and other information about the U.S.-led global effort against terrorism. The Defense Department launched the site before Operation Enduring Freedom began in October 2001. The goal was to inform the public, both in the U.S. and abroad, of what the U.S. was doing to combat global terrorism.

The site also now features coverage of Operation Iraqi Freedom. News reports and photographs by military photojournalists on the frontlines as well as in supporting units are published daily. DefendAmerica reports on all branches of the military, including the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard, both active duty and reserve components.

SUPPORT OUR TROOPS

http://www.defendamerica.mil/support_troops.html

Learn what You can do Virtually

The support and generosity of the American people has touched the lives of many service members, over 300,000 of whom are deployed overseas. Learn what you can do individually at home and virtually online to support our men and women in uniform "on point for America" around the globe.

ARMED SERVICES BLOOD PROGRAM

http://www.tricare.osd.mil/asbpo/

Military Blood Program Seeking Type O Donors

The Armed Services Blood Program (ASBP) is looking for a few good donors. Actually, more than a few are needed. Donors with Type O blood are being asked to roll up their sleeves to support ongoing military operations worldwide and to help replenish the military's frozen blood reserves.

ARMY & AIR FORCE EXCHANGE SERVICE

http://www.aafes.com/docs/homefront.htm

"Gifts from the Homefront" Certificates Available

Americans can now boost the morale and well-being of deployed soldiers with "Gifts From the Homefront" CertifiChecks for post exchanges. These new PX gift certificates are the result of a partnership between the Army and Air Force Exchange Service and CertifiChecks, America's hometown gift certificate resource center.

Sending CertifiChecks is a way for people to show their support of service members, according to AAFES officials. CertifiChecks are redeemable for merchandise at all AAFES PX and base exchanges throughout the world. Details are available to anyone via the AAFES Web site,

www.aafes.com, and by phone at 1-877-770-GIFT (4438).
DEFENSE COMMISSARY AGENCY
http://www.commissaries.com/certificheck/index.htm
Give the Gift of Groceries!
A new partnership between CertifiChecks, America's hometown gift certificate resource center, the United Service Organizations (USO), the Air Force Aid Society (AFAS), Fisher House Foundation, Inc., and the Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) lets every American make a significant material contribution to the morale and well being of military personnel at home and across the globe.
OPERATION USO CARE PACKAGE
http://www.uso.org/pubs/93_325_1391.cfm
An Alternative to Individual Packages
Because of heightened security, individuals can no longer send letters and packages to "Any Service Member." Operation USO Care Package is approved by the Department of Defense, and provides a safe, easy way for individuals and corporations to show their prayers and thoughts are with our service members. The USO cannot accept items from individuals that are intended for overseas military personnel.
OTHER USO PROGRAMS
http://www.uso.org/pubs/8_20_1395.cfm
Browse through the links below to find out more about various ways you can support the USO and our troops.
*AOL's Project Video Connect
*InterContinental Hotels Group Donates a Percentage of Government Rate Revenue to Support American Troops
*Ty Inc. Launches "HERO"(tm) Beanie Baby? to Benefit the USO
*Operation Phone Home: Providing a Way to Stay in Touch
*Operation Dear Abby - Any Service Member E-Mail Greetings
*The USO and the Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA) Support American Troops with "101,000 Room Nights for America"
OPERATION UPLINK
http://www.operationuplink.org/
Purchase a Phone Card for a Service Member
This is a unique program that keeps military personnel and hospitalized veterans in touch with their families and loved ones by providing them with a free phone card. Using contributions from supporters like you, Operation Uplink purchases phone cards and distributes them to servicemen and women who are separated from those they care about.
AMERICAN RED CROSS ARMED FORCES EMERGENCY SERVICES
http://www.redcross.org/services/afes/0,1082,0_321_,00.html
Military Members & Their Families
Today's American Red Cross is keeping pace with the changing military. Using the latest in computer and telecommunications technology, the Red Cross allows military members stationed all over the world to send messages to loved ones back home during an emergency or other important event. These communications are delivered around-the-clock, seven days a week, 365 days a year.
While serving 1.4 million active duty personnel, the Red Cross also reaches out to the 1.5 million members of the National Guard and the Reserves who reside in nearly every local

community in America.
NATIONAL MILITARY FAMILY ASSOCIATION
http://www.nmfa.org/
Serving the Families of Those Who Serve
We are the only national organization dedicated to identifying and resolving issues of concern to military families. Our mission: To serve the families of the seven uniformed services through education, information and advocacy
TRAGEDY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FRO SURVIVORS
http://www.taps.org
Providing Support When Support is Most Needed
The Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, Inc. (TAPS) continues to work diligently to provide a wide variety of programs and information to survivors, military and casualty personnel and others. We are proud to announce that we are upgrading our website in order to provide the most comprehensive information and user-friendly format for our web visitors. The new website will soon be online. In the meantime, this temporary site includes useful information regarding our services, resources and current projects. Please browse our links and contact us with any questions you may have. You may continue to reach our Washington, DC, headquarters at 800-959-TAPS.
ARMY EMERGENCY RELIEF
http://www.aerhq.org/
Helping Soldiers and Their Families
Army Emergency Relief is the Army's own emergency financial assistance organization and is dedicated to "Helping the Army Take Care of Its Own". AER provides commanders a valuable asset in accomplishing their basic command responsibility for the morale and welfare of soldiers.

AER funds are made available to commanders having AER Sections to provide emergency financial assistance to soldiers - active & retired - and their dependents when there is a valid need.
NAVY-MARINE CORPS RELIEF SOCIETY
http://www.nmcrs.org/
Supporting Marines & Seamen Worldwide
Founded in 1904, the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society is a private non-profit charitable organization. It is sponsored by the Department of the Navy and operates nearly 250 offices ashore and afloat at Navy and Marine Corps bases throughout the world.
AIR FORCE AID SOCIETY
http://www.afas.org/
Relieving Distress of Air Force Members
The Air Force Aid Society is the official charity of the U.S. Air Force. It promotes the Air Force mission by helping "to relieve distress of Air Force members and their families and assisting them to finance their education". It is rooted in the original Army Air Corps and the World War II Army Air Forces, whose members wanted to "take care of their own." Through the years, AFAS has become increasingly effective in helping individuals with personal emergencies-- as well as extremely useful when used by commanders to help solve personnel problems in their units.
COAST GUARD MUTUAL ASSISTANCE
http://www.cgmahq.org/

Providing Financial Aid to the Coast Guard Family
Coast Guard Mutual Assistance is a non-profit organization providing financial assistance to the Coast Guard community. Coast Guard Mutual Assistance is administered by the Board of Control located at Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, DC, Regional Directors in various CGMA regions throughout the country, and Representatives at selected duty stations. CGMA strives to promote financial stability and general well-being of the people it serves.
THE AMERICAN LEGION
http://www.legion.org/support/index.html?content=support_welcome
Welcome Our Troops Home
While operations in Afghanistan and Iraq continue, more than 100,000 of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen have returned from overseas. As they do, many communities from around our country are paying tribute to the efforts and sacrifices these brave men and women have made in our global war on terrorism."
AMVETS
http://www.voicesfromhome.com/home.html
Voices from Home
Voices From HomeTM is an exciting, quick, easy and global application of a streaming audio product called InteleStreams. This new technology allows users to take advantage of this state of the art application to communicate with separated loved ones. The Voices From HomeTM program allows anyone - but particularly military personnel and their families - to record their voice or other sounds over the telephone. These sound files are then stored on special servers designed to support the Voices From HomeTM program.
OPERATION DEAR ABBY
http://www.operationdearabby.net/
Any Service Member Virtual Letter
Thank a service member for his or her sacrifice and for dedicating their lives to making this a safer world. Tell them they are in our thoughts today -- and every day. We pray for their safe and speedy return.
BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA
http://www.bluestarmothers.org/
Send a Message to the Troops
We are mothers who have or have had children serving in the military .We are a non-profit service organization supporting each other, our children and promoting patriotism. An outstanding article listed in the DOD news link gives a short history about our organization and the Blue Star Banner. Feel free to visit our site and join us in our endeavors.
Veterans Administration Hospitals
http://www.va.gov/
Volunteer to honor veterans who bore the lamp of freedom in past conflicts.
FISHER HOUSE
http://www.fisherhouse.org/
Donate to the Fisher House
The Fisher House program is a unique private-public partnership that supports America's military in their time of need. The program recognizes the special sacrifices of our men and women in uniform and the hardships of military service by meeting a humanitarian need beyond that normally provided by the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs.
INTREPID MUSEUM FOUNDATION

http://www.intrepidmuseum.org/foundation_heroesfund.html
Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund
The Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund provides gifts to military families that have paid the ultimate price: the loss of a loved one in defense of our country. Our goal is to provide financial support to help spouses and children of military personnel through any immediate or long-term financial difficulties they may face. This gift is made quietly and without fanfare, to protect the privacy of the families.
NETPETS
http://netpets.org/netp/foster.php
Military Pets Foster Project
A Nationwide network of Individual Foster Homes that will house, nurture and care for the dogs, cats*, birds and other pets for all the Military and other personnel only.
CARINGBRIDGE GUESTBOOK
http://www.caringbridge.org/wounded/heroes/guestbook.html
Wounded Heroes Tribute Page
CaringBridge and Fisher House stands in unity and support with courageous U.S. military personnel. Access the Wounded Heroes Guestbook to write a message of encouragement for any hero wounded in the line of duty.