

Elizabeth Hasier- The Forgotten Soldiers

On the two different occasions we have held the collections, I regretfully always forget to take pictures! Here are some articles about our collection and also a group picture of the teen volunteers at the collection! (I am the second girl from the right in the light jeans!)



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High school students collecting items for military dogs, handlers

By Rick Rouan TribLocal reporter
Oct. 7, 2010 at 6:00 a.m.

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A group of high school students in Orland Park is collecting items to send to military service dogs and their handlers overseas later this month.

The Village of Orland Park Recreation Department High School Recreation Advisory Committee will collect the items from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Oct. 22 at the Orland Park Civic Center, 14750 South Ravinia Ave.

Orland Park Teens to Collect for Military Service Dogs & Handlers Contributions Accepted at Orland Park Civic Center October 22

ORLAND PARK, IL – Military service dogs are deployed worldwide to support the war on terror, helping to safeguard military bases and activities and to detect bombs and other explosives.

Members of the Village of Orland Park Recreation Department High School Recreation Advisory Committee will host a collection for overseas military service dogs and their handlers.

"This collection says a lot for our young people," said Orland Park Village Trustee Patricia Gira, chair of the village's Recreation, Parks and Environmental Initiatives Committee. "It makes all of us very proud to see what these young adults are doing for those serving our country and the dogs that protect them," Gira said.

The high school students will collect items on Friday, October 22 from 3:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. at the Orland Park Civic Center, 14750 South Ravinia Avenue.

"Our high school committee members choose the causes they want to help," said Orland Park Recreation Program Supervisor Stephanie Simpson. "They've collected to help animals in the past and helping the dogs and handlers working to protect our service personnel overseas is a wonderful gesture," Simpson added.

Requested items for dogs include dog biscuits, dog treats (no pork or pig ears), jerky treats (no greenies or rawhides), dog shampoo, dog conditioner, dog brushes, chew ropes and toys, baby wipes, bones, tennis balls, kongs, eye and ear wipes for dogs, working dog salves for paws and noses, towels to wipe paws, dog beds or pillows, dog boots, cooling vests and doggles.

"Our members want to do what they can to help the dogs and their handlers, sending them what they need," said Janine Hozzian, the high school committee's moderator.

Orland Park Tribune

Permalink

Byline: Annemarie Mannon

Feb. 15--It was a dog day of winter recently when high school students from Orland Park collected dog biscuits, treats, chew toys and other items to donate to K-9 units serving in the United States military.

The items were given by people shopping for their own pets at PetSmart in Orland Hills. The students are members of the Village of Orland Park's High School Recreation Advisory Committee. Though they perform a variety of community service projects, they wanted this effort to focus on canines serving in the military overseas. That's because dogs and their handlers may be overlooked, said Janine Hozzian, Orland Park's teen coordinator. "No one thinks of the canines or even knows they are there," she said. ...

Donations sought for military dogs and handlers

Posted by Bob Bong , September 13, 2010 at 04:13 PM

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Members of the Orland Park Recreation Department High School Recreation Advisory Committee will host a collection for overseas military service dogs and their handlers.

Dogs serve with the U.S. forces in Iraq and Afghanistan as patrol dogs and explosives and drug detectors. Nearly 2,000 more working dogs provide similar services at U.S. bases and operating posts around the world.

Students will collect items on Friday, Oct. 22 from 3-8pm at the Orland Park Civic Center.

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The Forgotten Soldiers

For the past five years, I have been a member of my town's teen-run community service organization. Each month, we have meetings where we pick which projects we will be doing for the upcoming months. Then, we get to work planning the projects and promoting them all over our town. We have done all sorts of different projects ranging from working with the special recreation department, doing walks for the Cancer Support Center, and working with patients at the Peace Hospice centers. All of those projects had a similar theme to them—helping humans. But what about the other species we share the planet with? What about the animals? That was what I asked at one of our meetings, and that is when we decided to pick a cause devoted to our non-human counterparts—animals.

After countless hours of research on different types of animal suffering, I came across a topic that really struck a chord with me—military dogs. Since the beginning of warfare history, dogs have had an integral role in international militaries. Back in ancient Egypt, dogs were trained for Egyptian army missions. Thousands of years later, dogs are still important members of militaries. Despite increased technology innovations in the 21st century, military dogs continue to undergo suffering in their overseas missions. After researching the suffering of these forgotten heroes I made it my mission to draw attention to the courageous work of these spirited dogs who work every day to protect the freedom of us humans.

Before moving forward with the project, I wanted to gather information on military dogs and understand what exactly their role in the military was. In the past decade, the majority of the over 10,000 military dogs in The United States' army, have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. Beforehand, they undergo intense training. When they arrive in Iraq or Afghanistan, they then perform a variety of risky and dangerous activities. These tasks include serving as explosive and bomb detectors,

servicing as guards, and being a source of intimidation towards prisoners or other enemies. While performing these potentially life-saving tasks, the dogs suffer from extreme heat and dehydration. Also, the environments in Iraq and Afghanistan are very harsh on the padding on the dogs' paws and in addition, the dust and sand often get in the dogs' eyes. The dogs have to fight through the physical pain for long hours of the day to carry out their hazardous missions. Another aspect of canine suffering in relation to the military, is what researchers call "Post Traumatic Stress Disease for Dogs". Studies have shown that dogs who have suffered overseas, have a chance to develop anxiety and depression which may be called PTSD for dogs.

Upon reading all this about the dogs, I was impressed and inspired by their unflinching dedication to protecting their handlers, and ultimately protecting the freedom of all 300 million Americans. So, I looked up what would be the most helpful to end the dogs' suffering in foreign countries, and I found that there have been innovations such as dog boots, cooling vests and even dog goggles called, "doggles". These objects are all very expensive so I decided the best way to support these dogs would be a collection. The rest of the teens in the community service group agreed, and we got to work planning for the military dog collection. We synthesized a list of things we wanted to collect in addition to cash donations, and we created posters and signs which we hung up in local businesses around town. When the day of the collection came, we had a great response from our community. In addition to cash donations we received: dog treats, dog shampoo, dog conditioner, dog brushes, chew ropes and toys, baby wipes, bones, tennis balls, kongs, eye and ear wipes for dogs, working dog salves for paws and noses, and even some towels to wipe paws. I was thrilled to have collected so much for the deserving canines, and I was also excited to have brought attention to their cause. Several people that day explained how they only thought about the men and women in the military and forgot about the other brave soldiers—the dogs.

Our community service committee was so proud of our efforts for the military dogs overseas that we decided to hold another collection last year. Again we had a great community response. And equally important, we informed even more members of our community about the sacrifices dogs make to protect our soldiers. To this day, I continue to keep up to date on military dog foundations and I continue to promote and advocate for their better treatment and protection in wars. Many dogs have died in Iraq and Afghanistan, and their lives usually go unnoticed. It was my goal to shed at least a sliver of light on these dogs, and help them work comfortably and with minimal suffering—and I believe I accomplished that. This whole experience has motivated me to change people's mindsets so that when they thank our soldiers, they thank the human soldiers and our forgotten furry friends- the canine soldiers.

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