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## Boxes on way to Afghanistan, Iraq

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BOXES TO TROOPS -- The Livermore Veterans Foundation's "Christmas-in-a-Box" has sent out 76 very large boxes to units stationed in Afghanistan and Iraq.

In conjunction with Groth Brothers Chevrolet, Carl's Jr., UNCLE Credit Union, the Josefa Higuera Livermore Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Country Charm and the Cedar Grove Community Church, more than 800 soldiers will receive Christmas packages. Each adopted unit will also receive a package to share with all their soldiers including items such as 2foot tall plastic Christmas trees with battery operated lights, extra batteries, fake snow and aerosol cans of "Christmas tree fragrance" to make the time away from home a little less lonely.

Since the adoption in 2003 of a single company from the 101st Airborne Division, the program has grown into the adoption of an entire battalion from the 101st - the 2nd Battalion of the 502 Regiment. Organizations around the Tri-Valley such as the Livermore Veterans Foundation, Operation: S.A.M, Pleasanton Military Families, Blue Star Moms and a host of individuals make the difference in the lives of our servicemen and women overseas.

This is just one example of an ongoing process of support for our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan and other points around the globe. If you see an announcement about one of these fine groups making a collection or organizing a pack, won't you please help? You'll be making that soldier, sailor, airman or Marine's life just a bit easier.

LIGHTS OF THE VALLEY -- Alex Dourov of Utkaduck Design Internet Services has once again put up his "Lights of the Valley" Web site at [lightsofthevalley.com](http://lightsofthevalley.com). Now in its ninth year, the site is new and improved, with more than 300 homes listed in 70 communities.

Started in 1999 by Dourov to share some of the local favorite Christmas scenes around town, including the granddaddy of them all, "Deacon Dave's" on Hillcrest Avenue, it has grown over the years to where it is now a database of hundreds of homes with up-to-date pictures and addresses so you can visit in person.

There is a "house of the day" feature this year that will run through Jan. 1, which will be featured on the websites of KKIQ radio at [kkiq.com](http://kkiq.com); KUIC FM at [kuic.com](http://kuic.com); and KKDV FM radio at [kkdv.com](http://kkdv.com). The house of the day will also be featured on KPIX-TV's 6 p.m. newscast or on their Web page at [cbs5.com](http://cbs5.com).

This is a fun site to visit. We do every year and try to get to the local houses around town to get into the Christmas spirit. Try it -- you may get hooked like we are!

LASTLY ... Though Thanksgiving was Thursday, I wanted to give thanks for one more thing, the men and women of law enforcement. Sadly, a local CHP officer, John Miller, gave his life in the performance of his duty, in a crash on North Livermore Avenue last week.

Though just getting off-duty, he was searching for a reckless and possibly drunken driver that many drivers had called in. While the cause of the collision that took Officer Miller's life is still under investigation, we should be thankful that such men have lived to protect and serve us.

He gave his last full measure of devotion to that cause, and we should honor his sacrifice and the sacrifices of officers everywhere who put their lives on the line every day. Thank you, one and all. Officer John Miller, End of Watch, Nov. 16, 2007.

Until next week, be alert, be safe and God bless America.

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