

## Taking a moment to show their appreciation

by Senior Airman Tong Duong  
First Four Junior Enlisted Council treasure

4/22/2011 - **JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq** -- Members of the First Four Junior Enlisted Council organized a Thank You Campaign April 17, to gather signature from servicemembers at the H6 recreation center.

The 11 First Four members collected 60 "Thank You" cards and 200 signatures from military personnel, in one hour. The cards will be sent on behalf of servicemembers to more than 20 organizations, as a way to show thanks for their support and the care packages received.

"Sometimes we get so caught up with getting the mission done that we don't take the time to write back to the organizations that sent us stuff," said First Four events coordinator, Senior Airman Roland Barleen, 332nd Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron Vehicle Maintenance journeyman, who is deployed from Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickam, Hawaii.

Servicemembers may have received care packages containing drawings from elementary children, snacks, socks and hygiene items, Airman Barleen, a native of Ewa Beach, Hawaii said.

"We have also received letters from children who were learning about the military," said First Four sports coordinator, Airman 1st Class Jaimee Topinio, 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron Emergency Management apprentice, who is deployed from Misawa, Air Base Japan. "We want to be role models and by writing back we are showing we appreciate their support," Airman Topinio, a native of Rocklin, Calif., said.

Some of the organizations the First Four Council will send cards to include: Lufkin Middle School Lufkin, Texas; Military Support Group, Rhinelander, Wis.; American Legion Auxiliary; Girl Scout Troop 9067 and 109; Operation We Care and Creekwood Assisted Living, Waunakee, Wis.

The First Four Council is an organization open to junior enlisted members of all branches of service. The council strives to provide a better environment on base, primarily by organizing and promoting morale-building activities. Member of First Four have mentored local children during Iraqi Kid's Day and will be help the United Service Organization pack up in June. The council may host another Thank You Campaign at a later date.



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