

VFW Post 1018 Roasts a Pig and Raises Money

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KANSAS CITY, Mo. — It's nice to receive a care package from home, whether you're 100 miles away, or overseas fighting for our country. But, for troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, gift cards, instead of care packages, are more practical these days.

That's why VFW Post 1018 out of Dorchester, Mass. held a fundraiser last month to raise money to send Army & Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) gift cards to troops overseas. The event included a pig roast, with a five dollar admission fee. Raffle tickets were sold, and prizes were given away.

"The fundraiser turned out very good. Everyone had a great time," said Jorge Castro, National Military Services Chairman for Massachusetts.

After the pig was roasted and the fun was over, Post 1018 had raised \$1,300. Donations came from the Massachusetts Correction Officers Federation Union, the American Legion, and more.

A few benefits of sending AAFES gift cards overseas instead of care packages are:

- Less volume of material to transport across the very dangerous supply lines. This is especially critical in Afghanistan where so many casualties occur along the limited roads available to move troop supplies.
- The AAFES gift cards allow the service member to get exactly what they want or need.
- AAFES gift cards circumvent the numerous restrictions & procedures associated with shipping items into a war zone.
- Less trash for the military to clean up. One recurring mission for troops while deployed is "Route Sanitation," requiring units to remove debris along the sides of the roads- notorious hiding places for IEDs.

The AAFES gift cards also benefit those sending them:

Sending gift cards saves time. The cards can be easily ordered on line by one person.

Shipping costs are lower for gift cards. For example, you still can provide the shampoo and

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personal care items by sending a gift card, but are not paying for the shipping.

If you are interested in purchasing AAFES gift cards, you can do so by visiting their website: <https://shop.aafes.com/gcs/default.aspx>.