

Donated tents support Afghan children made homeless by war

BY WHITNEY CARNAHAN

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In recent months, several members of the Mid-Atlantic Tent Renters Association (MATRA) have supported the volunteer efforts of Operation Care, an organization based at Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan that is run by U.S. servicemen and women who volunteer their time to assist children and refugees in Afghanistan. Items Operation Care has requested from donors are used tents and tarps, which many times become homes for refugees and orphans, particularly small children. Items needed also include heavy-duty stakes, ¼-in. ropes and other tools.

Davis Richardson of Sugarplum Tent Co., Boyds, Md., shared the needs of Operation Care at the MATRA conference in Dover, Del., in November, and says the response has been positive. Sugarplum loaded several used frame tents, tools, clothes, firewood and other equipment on an outbound cargo aircraft from Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland in early January.

More recently, Eureka! The Tent Co. of Binghamton, N.Y., shipped a large quantity of new camping tents to support military volunteers at Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan. Another MATRA member, L & A Tent Rentals of Trenton, N.J., put together some used tenting that will provide shelter for a group of orphans and refugees. Additional commitments of used tents have also been made by other MATRA members.

Richardson, a West Point graduate and retired Army Colonel, reports that even the smallest donation can make a big difference in the lives of these struggling children and families.

Operation Care accepts donations of basic necessities including school supplies, shoes, clothing, blankets and similar items from many U.S. sources and distributes humanitarian aid throughout the country. It also supports members of U.S. and coalition forces stationed at forward operating bases in remote areas.

Donations of clothing, tents and other equipment can be mailed to the following address: Operation Care, TF Cincinnatus, APO AE 09354. Tent and equipment donations must be boxed.

Monetary donations also can be made. Checks should be made out to "Chapel Tithes & Offering Fund (Operation Care)." Monetary donations only can be mailed to HQ USAF/HC112 Luke Ave., Suite 319, Bolling AFB, DC 20032-9050. You will receive a tax deductible letter from the Chaplain's office. Additional details are available at www.Operation-Care.net.



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