

1ST WISH RECIPIENT PAYS IT FORWARD

Grants Wish #16 to neighbor deploying to Haiti



January 26, 2010

SPC Lenard Jones, known by his friends as "Charlie", joined the Army in 2006, and knew from the beginning that he wanted to turn his service into a career. He was stationed at Fort Hood (Killeen, TX) shortly after boot camp, then deployed to Afghanistan in 2007 for 15 months. He later returned to Fort Hood in May of 2009.

He and his wife of 12 years, Shanna, are raising three kids, Preston (age 9), Madison (age 7), and CJ (age 5) on Charlie's salary alone, and although they are doing well, it is sometimes difficult to purchase even basic essentials.

So, when Charlie received emergency deployment orders to Haiti last week, the Jones' were very concerned how they would be able to buy the bare necessities Charlie would need to deploy. Items such as toiletries, socks, batteries, pillows, sheets, and basic comfort items are not "issued" by the Army, and Charlie and his family had less than a week to get items in order before he left.

As luck would have it, Charlie and his family live next door to SPC Rob Forrest, our first wish recipient. SPC Forrest and his wife, Sam, learned of Charlie's need, and contacted us to see if there was something that could be done to assist their neighbor. We immediately put their wish on our website, though we knew we had to move quickly (regardless of online donations), as Charlie was scheduled to deploy on Thursday of this week (January 28th).

THE WISH

The Foundation purchased a \$500 gift card to Wal-Mart to allow Charlie to purchase the items needed for deployment. The most thrilling part of this wish was that SPC Forrest had the honor of presenting the gift card to his friend and neighbor.

"I had expressed an interest in "Paying It Forward", after Wish For Our Heroes repaired my truck and filled our home with groceries a few months ago. I am so appreciative of what this Foundation does, and I wanted to give back in some way."

Our thanks go to the Forrest family, and to Charlie for his service in Haiti. We wish him a safe and speedy return.