

Galesburg Illinois National Guard Unit Gives Back to the Community

Written by Stephanie McCurry

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The 444th Chemical Company Held a Local Blood Drive and Donated Food to Local Shelter.

GALESBURG, IL (12/20/2010)(readMedia)-- The 444th Chemical Company based in Galesburg wanted to do something for the local community as a way to say thank you for all of the support it has received over the past years. The 444th held a blood drive with the American Red Cross and donated cases of canned food to a local homeless shelter Dec. 18 at the Galesburg Readiness Center.

"It is a matter of giving back to a very supportive community," said 1st Sgt. Robert Heck of Edwardsville.

The Family Readiness Group (FRG), Soldiers and families were invited to donated blood and invited members of the community to do the same.

"I donated blood to show my appreciation for the support from the communities around us," said Staff Sgt. Michelle Melendez of Roseville.

The American Red Cross received 56 pints of blood during the blood drive. Almost every Soldier in the 444th donated. The blood donated is going to help cancer patients.

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Over the past couple months, members of the unit have been bringing in cases of canned food to deliver to a local shelter. On Saturday all of the canned food was delivered to the Galesburg Homeless Shelter. 1st Lt. Chad Wester of Adair said he was inspired by the younger Soldiers and how much they donated to the food drive.

"The people at the shelter were very thankful," said Wester. "It was nice to meet some of the people that it was going to benefit."

"The citizens of Galesburg deserve some recognition for all their support to the Illinois National Guard," said Heck. "They give us their sons and daughters and we appreciate everything they have done for us."

Story by Staff Sgt. Stephanie McCurry, Illinois National Guard Public Affairs

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