



Will Lester Staff Photographer

Inland Valley Daily Bulletin Sports Editor Louis Brewster speaks to students at Carden Arbor View School in Upland on Friday as he accepts boxes full of donated books as a part of the U.S. Army's United Through Reading Program and the Bryan Brewster Foundation.

Books for service

Upland school donates for military kids

By Sandra Emerson
Staff Writer

UPLAND — The sun was brightly shining on the students at Carden Arbor View as they stacked dozens of their favorite children's books on stage before their Friday morning assembly.

Families and teachers at the school began gathering books to help the Daily Bulletin's sports editor, Louis Brewster, with a mission he had taken on to help the children of soldiers deployed overseas.

Brewster's son, Army Sgt. Bryan Brewster, was killed in 2006 in Afghanistan.

And through the Bryan Brewster Foundation, Louis Brewster is collecting books for the Army's United Through Reading Program.

"Those guys and girls in Afghanistan will thank you,"

teachers and parents. "This is something that's very important to them — to stay connected to their families and this is a really good way."

The United Through Reading program was formed by the Army with the purpose of keeping children connected to their parents overseas.

The program helps ease the stress of separation for families that are serving in the military.

There are four steps to the program. An American soldier will read a book aloud and have it filmed on a DVD. The DVD will be sent home to their child, who will then watch it and read along. A parent or adult at home will film the child's reaction via DVD or photos, which will then be sent back to the parent overseas.

The program allows the parent and child to connect with each other despite being thousands of miles apart.

The books, ages 2-12, will be sent to Bagram Air Force Base

Bryan Brewster, 24, served in the 10th Aviation Brigade Mountain Division. He was on his fourth tour of duty.

"When we lost Bryan and nine others, five children lost their dads and that's never far from our minds," Brewster said. "None of them were older than 8 years old. One young girl was born a month before the accident. She never got to meet her dad. It's that type of thing that drives me and helps me overcome the emotion of it all."

Brewster was told about the program by Capt. Jenn Mahoney, their casualty assistance officer at Ft. Drum in New York.

Bryan loved to read, Brewster said. He even carried a book around with him for 18 years that was long overdue from the library.

"When I was told about this program and how it affects soldiers and their children, it just struck a chord with me and I can remember those days," Brewster said.

ents at Carden Arbor View school in Upland often take up a local charitable cause.

They collect diapers for the Foothill Family Shelter and will soon begin collecting clothing for Steven's Hope For Children in Upland.

But, this was something different, said Anthony Bouz, 12.

"This was one of my favorites," said Bouz, a seventh-grader. "It's actually more important because we're making kids connect with their loved ones overseas. Some haven't seen them for a few months. That's a good way to connect ... reading a book."

Marcus Baldwin, 13, said books have a different impact on families.

"It's more heartfelt overall," Baldwin said. Clothes are "always recognized and appreciated, but books, you can always have books. Books are endless."

The school at 1530 N. San Antonio Ave. is collecting books through Tuesday.

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