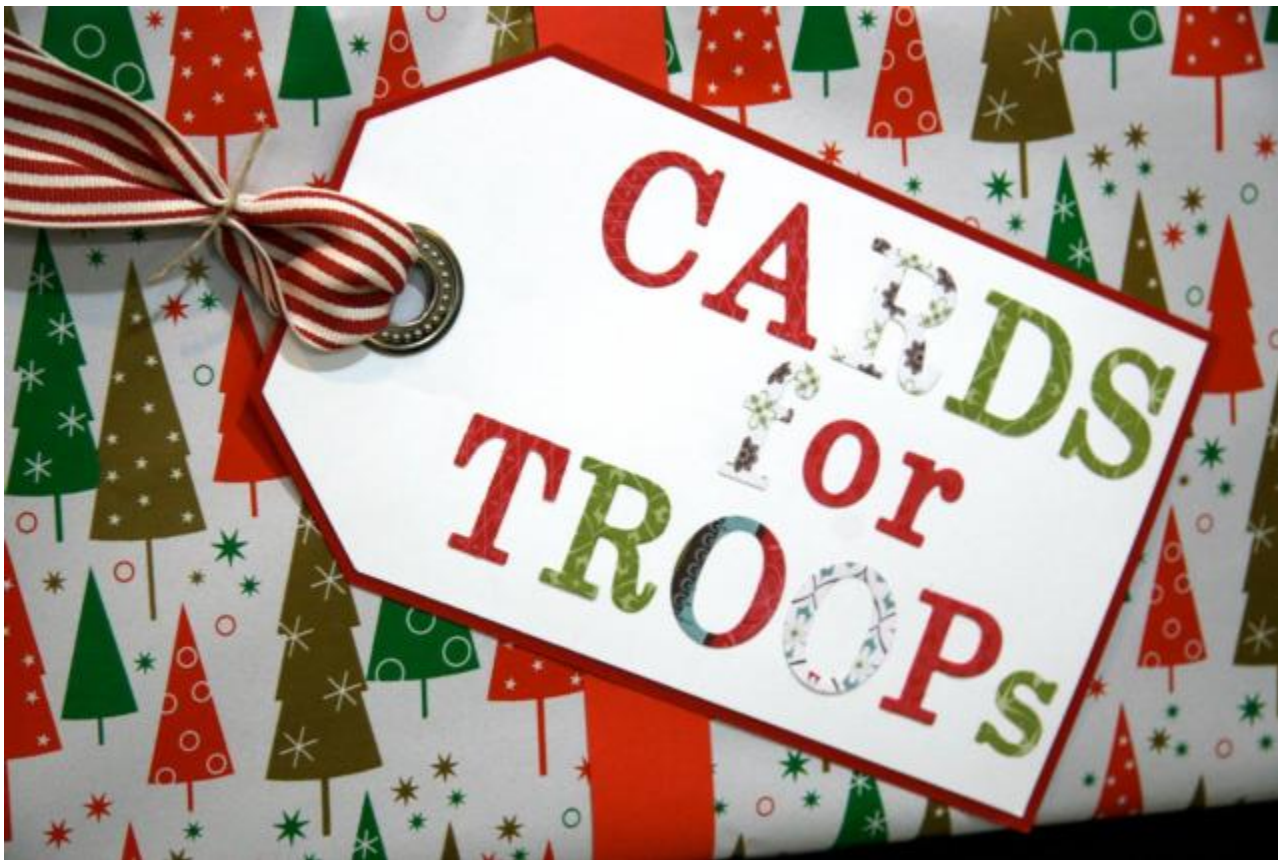


Governor Rauner announces Military Holiday Card Drive with the USO of Illinois

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As Veterans Day approaches, Governor Rauner and the USO of Illinois encourages Illinoisans to remember military members serving throughout the world

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Bruce Rauner today announced the 2016 Holiday Card Drive for the Military. The drive will again be done in partnership with the United Service Organizations (USO) of Illinois.

“It is important we remember our American heroes who continue to serve in harm’s way and are unable to be with their loved ones this holiday season,” Governor Rauner said. “We are proud to be partnering with USO of Illinois again this year to help spread holiday cheer to our brave men and women overseas. A card is a simple gift that can lift spirits and remind our service members that we’re thinking of them even while they’re far from home. I encourage all Illinoisans to send holiday cards to express their gratitude and admiration for the service of Illinois’ heroes.”

Illinois citizens should send holiday cards for U.S. service members to the USO of Illinois as early as possible and thanked the USO of Illinois for helping to distribute the holiday cards to troops and for all the USO does to lift the morale and increase the well-being of our military members throughout the year.

Maj. Gen. Richard J. Hayes Jr., the Adjutant General of the Illinois National Guard and Director of the Illinois Department of Military Affairs, thanked the USO of Illinois for its support of his Soldiers and Airmen.

“I have seen first-hand the positive impact the USO of Illinois has had by always being there for our service men and women, as well as their families,” said Hayes. “These holiday cards are just one example of how their support, as well as the support of our fellow Illinoisans, helps bring a little bit of home to our Soldiers and Airmen as they continue to serve overseas.”

With service members serving throughout the world, including many remote locations, and the additional holiday mail, it is important to send holiday cards and gifts to service members as early as possible to ensure they arrive before the holidays.

The United States Postal Service recommends the following holiday mail deadlines for service members serving overseas:

Standard: As soon as possible (deadline is Nov. 7)

Space Available Mail: Nov. 25

Parcel Airlift Mail: Dec. 2

Priority Mail: Dec. 9, except for AE ZIP 093 (Iraq and Afghanistan), which is Dec. 2

First-Class Letters and Cards: Dec. 9, except for AE ZIP 093, which is Dec.2

Priority Mail Express Military Service: Dec. 16. Service not available to AE ZIP 093.

ABOUT USO OF ILLINOIS

The USO strengthens America's military service members by keeping them connected to family, home and country, throughout their service to the nation. Supporting over 330,000 troops and their families every year, the USO of Illinois is a civilian 501(c)(3) non-profit that is supported solely by the generosity of the American people. For more information about the USO of Illinois, visit: www.usoofillinois.org