

TREATS FOR THE TROOPS

Girl Scout deLites in 1,000-box sale

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News Columnist

Sally Key was one of the new kids on block this year when it came to selling Girl Scout cookies.

But the Rosewood Elementary third-grader proved herself a quick study at peddling the bite-sized delights.

How quick?

Try 1,000 boxes — in one order.

“Are you serious?” the 9-year-old asked when she first got the order.

The customer, **Fowler Cary**, was quite serious. But he won't be helping himself to any of those treats. Instead, he's donating them to deployed servicemen and women through the Girls Scouts' program to send cookies to troops.

This is the third year the Girl Scout Council of the Congaree has joined Blue Star Families and Blue Star Mothers of South Carolina to send cookies to soldiers overseas. The two organizations say the cookies are among the most requested items from soldiers.

Last year, Midlands residents responded to that call by donating more than 8,000 boxes through the Girl Scout effort.

Cary considers it a small act of gratitude.

“Anything that we can do back at home to let them know that we are behind them is important,” said Cary, president of CCM Investment Advisers in Columbia.

The businessman has a special affinity for soldiers. He has a pilot's license. His father was in the Air Force and he has many friends who are deployed. Cary often sends care packages to soldiers and had all but decided to send cookies this year after learning about the Girl Scout program. But before he committed, Sally — a member of Brownie Troop 1391 in Shandon — had to close the deal.

“I told her she had to make a presentation,” Cary said.

So with the help of her father, **Robert Key**, who works at Cary's business, Sally prepared a slide show giving reasons Cary should donate. After her pitch in the company's conference room, even she was surprised by her persuasiveness.

“I thought he'd buy like a 100 (boxes),” Sally said. “This was my first year.”

Troop leader **Cheryl Craig** said the Blue Star effort is a great way to reinforce patriotic values for Sally and other Scouts.

“They learn generosity and about giving,” Craig said. “They are becoming more aware that we've got soldiers that are fighting for our country.”

Sally added an additional 140 boxes of cookies to her sales total in recent weeks. She picked up the other orders at the State Farmers Market last weekend with her father and mother, **Jane Key**.

But she's well aware of the significance of her biggest sale.

“They told us it would go to all the people who are fighting for our country to be free,” she said.

Cary said he's happy to see that message coming through.

“She made a lot of folks happy with that one (sale). We get to say ‘thank you.’ It helps a great organization and it helps our warriors.”



Sally Key, 9, helps unload cases of Girl Scout cookies Saturday at Rosewood Elementary School