

## Edgewood Freedom Calls a 'spectacular experience'

By Megan Gildow

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TRENTON — Edgewood City Schools will continue to try to be a part of a national program putting families in touch with soldiers serving overseas, said Technology Coordinator Chris Andrews.

The district was able to be a part of two families' holiday calls to troops serving in Iraq Dec. 13, in what retired teacher and Edgewood's Freedom Calls coordinator Sandy Estoye called a "pretty spectacular" experience.

"I love the technology and just to be able to unite families for a few minutes," she said. "It was very exciting. They were very happy that... they get to see their loved ones at Christmas time."

The Freedom Calls Foundation, a non-profit group that works with schools to arrange video conference visits from families to their troops, wants to expand the project to provide year-round opportunities and Edgewood has already expressed interest in participating, said Andrews.

"I was impressed at how well it worked," he said. "The families really didn't have to worry about any of (the technology). They could just sit back and relax and talk to their loved ones."

Edgewood was able to participate at no cost to the district through distance learning equipment it owns, said Andrews. A grant from the Middletown Community Foundation provided the equipment to the district, said spokesman John Thomas.

The Edgewood community has been very involved with projects for U.S. troops over the past few months, with welcome home celebrations for two soldiers and school projects to send ornaments to troops overseas.

"Trenton has always been a close-knit community," said Estoye. "I just think it's a nice little community that supports each other."

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