

Candy gifts recognized

By **KURTIS J. WOOD**
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The latest quest for the pen pals of Monument Elementary School is more of a sweet nature.

While the letter writing to the soldiers of the A 4/101 AVN Regt. continues, the students have added the youth of Iraq to their list. Students in three Monument classes have collected 55 pounds of candy. The destination is the A 4/101 and the helicopter couriers.

The helicopters fly low missions and drop clear plastic baggies full of candy – known as ‘candy drops.’

Richard Bittle, a veteran door gunner and current President of the A/101 Aviation Association, Inc., said it is a “kid to kid” mission. The trio of classes have sent 150 letters to soldiers and now look to work with the A 4/101 “Comancheros.”

“They’ve really been good about supporting our unit,” Bittle said.



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Gil Jones presents Monument Elementary principal Ben Bazaldua a painting of the craft flown by the Comancheros.

The new campaign starts with the Monument students collecting the candy and shipping to the unit in Iraq. The pilots fly low missions to deliver the candy to the Iraqi children.

Because of the support the A 4/101 received from the students, a gift was presented to the school. Bittle and fellow veteran Gil Jones presented the school with a flag, certificate and a limited edition print of all the helicopters the unit has flown since its inception in 1959.