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SGV Sheriff's Deputies threw a pizza party for Marko Tinoco Jr. at his Pasadena school to show him how much his dad, Deputy Marko Tinoco Sr. who's deployed to Iraq with the Naval Reserve, misses him. From left are Deputy Leo Castro, Deputy Ray Tabua, Deputy Tom Rodriguez and Deputy Dan Aparicio, Marko Tinoco Jr. and Deputy Gary De Bondt.



SGV Sheriff's Deputies Stand In for Deployed Fellow Officer

BY JIMMY STROUP

(April 4, 2006) Sheriff's Deputy Marko Tinoco has been deployed to Iraq for the past several months as part of his commitment as a Seabee in the Naval Reserve— but even that couldn't stop him from getting the message to his son that he loves and misses him.

On March 8, deputies from the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau's El Monte Division threw a pizza party for Tinoco's son, 10-year-old Marko Tinoco Jr., and his fourth-grade classmates at St. Joseph's Catholic School in Pasadena. They wanted young Marko to know that his father is always thinking of him.

After the event, El Monte Division deputies e-mailed photos of the party to Tinoco in Iraq, wishing him well and a speedy return.

In a return e-mail, Deputy-turned-Seabee Tinoco wrote, "I want to thank you guys for taking time out of your busy day to visit my son. Your efforts sure put [him] on cloud nine – he was so ecstatic, he couldn't stop talking about how cool you guys are."

Not just part of the job

Among those who visited Marko Jr. in Pasadena was Special Problems Unit Deputy Tom Rodriguez, who said that helping out team members, wherever they are, is not just a part of the job, but a pleasure.

"We explained to the kids what a real hero is to us and what a hero should be – and it's not always a basketball or football star, but that a real hero is someone like Deputy Tinoco," he said. "We think his son's a hero, too, because he's supporting his dad. He's always got a family here with the LA County deputies."

Deputy Tinoco wrote that his co-workers actions had helped revitalize what was beginning to become a hard separation from his family. He is starting to see light at the end of the tunnel and can't wait to come home.

"I thank you for the support you guys have provided for my family and me," Tinoco wrote. "I'm looking forward to the day I can wear the uniform of a Deputy Sheriff and walk the walk with Los Angeles County's greatest."