

## Plans for National Launch Event Announced

### Local Effort Expands to National Campaign

May 26, 2010, Richmond Hill, GA – The Matthew Freeman Project: Pens & Paper for Peace will officially launch its national campaign on Memorial Day, Monday, May 31, 2010 with a live kickoff event in Richmond Hill, Georgia beginning at noon.

The 45-minute ceremony will take place at the Veterans Memorial in J. F. Gregory Park on Ford Avenue.

The event will recognize Richmond Hill Boy Scouts who began collecting schools supplies after Marine Captain Matthew C. Freeman, a Richmond Hill Eagle Scout, was killed in combat in Afghanistan in August of last year. Just two days before he was killed, Captain Freeman called his mother, Lisa, a 30-year veteran Richmond Hill school teacher, and said, *“Mom, the kids would rather have pens and paper more than anything, even food or water. Would you please start a collection and send them to me?”*

“The amazing thing about Matthew’s call was that he had only been in Afghanistan for a week,” said Ms. Freeman, who founded The Matthew Freeman Project: Pens & Paper for Peace and who will explain the national effort at Monday’s event. “He had an amazing capacity – the vision to see what was needed – and then do whatever was required to meet the need. Now it’s up to us to realize his vision.”

Shortly after his death, Richmond Hill Boy Scouts organized a collection drive of pens and paper and gave them to soldiers at Fort Stewart, who, in turn, distributed them to school children in Afghanistan.

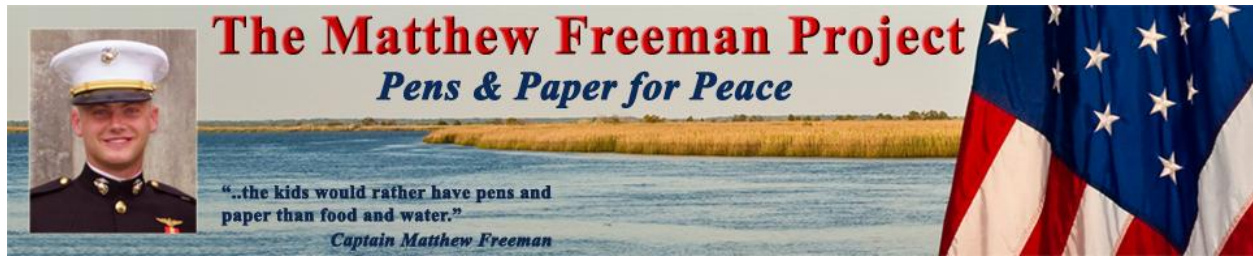
Students in five other states have volunteered to serve as Chapter Presidents of The Matthew Freeman Project: Pens & Paper for Peace as they organize and direct collection efforts in their communities. Some of them will be introduced at the event, and the project’s Web site [www.freemanproject.org](http://www.freemanproject.org) will go “live” with a ceremonial switch thrown by Theresa Freeman, Matthew’s widow.

“We’re hoping to add more states as more people become aware of Matthew’s and his mother’s story,” said Jim Bunn, a volunteer with the project who covered the war in Afghanistan as an embedded journalist for NBC News with the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne, Third Brigade. “We believe that having American school children help children in war-torn countries continue their education is a message of hope and healing that will have universal appeal no matter what people think about the war.”

The Richmond Hill High School band will provide music at the event and a color guard from nearby Fort Stewart will also be part of the ceremony.

The Matthew Freeman Project: Pens & Paper for Peace is a not-for-profit charitable organization dedicated to collecting pens, paper, and other school supplies in cities and towns across the country and sending them to U.S. military personnel for distribution in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other war-torn countries where children’s education has been interrupted by armed conflict. Donations are tax-deductable.

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## Fact Sheet

**WHAT:** The National Launch Event for The Matthew Freeman Project: Pens & Paper for Peace

**WHEN:** Monday, May 31, 2010, 12:00 Noon

**WHERE:** J.F. Gregory Park, Veterans Memorial, Ford Avenue, Richmond Hill Georgia

**WHY:** To launch the national campaign of American school children collecting school supplies and sending them to U.S. military personnel for distribution to children in Afghanistan and Iraq whose education has been interrupted by armed conflict.

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