

# The OPERATION: THANK YOU Newsletter

January 2012

Carol Alexander, Manager  
513/899-3134  
[carolalex1@embarqmail.com](mailto:carolalex1@embarqmail.com)

**Serving Our Troops While They Serve Us**

PO Box 59  
Morrow, OH 45152  
[www.OhioOperationThankYou.org](http://www.OhioOperationThankYou.org)

**It was Christmas Eve, Eve** - the phone rang and the voice on the other end asked to speak to Carol, then said, "This is Sgt. Daniel Burgess." I knew at once who he was - our soldier who was wounded about Thanksgiving - he was calling from the hospital. The surprise and joy almost took me off my feet! What a nice Christmas surprise!

Daniel was calling to say "Thank You" for all the cards, letters, packages and support he has received from OTY. He is coming along well and his spirits are high. He is still in the hospital but the Army has moved his wife and daughters to San Antonio to be with him. He expects to be in that area for about a year going through Rehab and learning to use his prosthesis. He said they have not introduced the prosthesis yet, but he has started Rehab.

He told me he plans to come meet the OTY members when he is able to return to Cleveland. It is always a thrill to receive a call from one of our HEROES and we will welcome him with lots of hugs when he comes to see us.

**Thank you from Sgt Daniel Burgess.  
And THANK YOU  
for all your support to Operation: Thank You during this past year.**

We are grateful that our troops have returned home from Iraq. However, please remember **our troops are still deployed in Afghanistan** and will remain there until 2014. That means our work continues. We will not forget about any of our deployed troops, so we will be shipping as usual **until they ALL come home**. It is your continued support that makes it possible for Operation: Thank You to take care of our deployed troops.

*"Never believe that a few caring people cannot change the world.  
For, indeed, that's all who ever have."  
- Margaret Mead*

## **Christmas Blessings**

We were blessed with many donations for our holiday care packages, including 100 dozen homemade cookies and 50 pounds of homemade fudge. We also received tons of decorations and trees (seems that way), another couple hundred blankets and 4 microwaves. We received so much Halloween candy (2000 pounds!) that we're implementing a new rule for packing - every unit gets an entire box of candy!

We had a great turnout for our Christmas Party at Culver's. We received \$1600 in donations and Culver's receipts. It was wonderful to have such a great show of support.

We are all truly grateful for the many generous year-end donations we received. We could not have gotten through the end of the year without them. God has been working overtime again for us! My heart is filled with joy and gratitude for the overflowing support Operation: Thank You has received from all of you. Because of you, we can continue to take care of our troops. Thank you, thank you, thank you everyone!

## **Our Work Continues**

**Packing** - Wednesday 9am-noon \*\*\* **Weather Permitting** \*\*\*

**JANUARY** 4, 11, 18, 25

**FEBRUARY** 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

**\*\*\* Extreme Winter Weather or Dangerous Roads \*\*\***

OTY normally packs every week, even in winter. However, we don't want anyone risking injury in bad weather or when road conditions are hazardous. That means we don't pack when the weather is too bad. If it's packing day (Wednesday) and the weather and/or roads are bad, check your local radio and TV stations for information on the Little Miami School District. If Little Miami Schools are closed due to weather or road conditions, OTY will also "close" and will not pack that day.

**\*\* What to Donate for Our Troops \*\***

*< Please visit our website for drop site locations and other donation suggestions. >*

Hand Warmers	<b>Canned Meats</b>	Drink Mix Packets for water
Winter Scarves	Snack Foods	Hot Beverages - Coffee &
<b>Blankets - 72" Twin Size</b>	Bars - Fruit, Cereal, Energy	Tea (+ sugar, creamer);
Chapstick	Tuna, Chicken Salad	Instant Cocoa & Cider
Feminine Hygiene Products	Trail Mix, Nuts	(boxes of individual packets)
Microwave Popcorn	Gum	Games, Playing Cards, DVDs
<b>Beef Jerky, Meat Sticks,</b>	Pop Tarts	2012 Calendars
<b>Summer Sausage</b>	Instant Oatmeal	

***PLEASE Use Your KROGER Cards***

**Operation: Thank You - Dayton/Kettering Chapter**

OTY Dayton/Kettering received their first grant. The check was for \$1000.

A busy baker in Kettering is baking cookies to send out to the troops on a monthly basis.

Two very generous families wanted to send holiday cheer to the troops. They donated Christmas trees, decorations, coffee, and more, to units supporting approximately 1000 deployed Heroes.

Candy is still coming in! To date, Kettering OTY has collected about 1400 pounds of candy to ship to the troops.

"Way to go Cameron! He is officially part of the Mustang family." That's the word SSG Rosa-La Brown put out to the members of Task Force Mustang, currently deployed in Afghanistan.

From May to October, Chaplain Bev's grandson Cameron collected 4092 Christmas cards for deployed troops to send home to their families for Christmas. He sorted and bagged the cards into "Christmas Kits for the Troops" and shipped them overseas in November.

On behalf of the troops of PSG/OPS that were able to send cards home to their families, SSG Rosa-La Brown sent Cameron a "Hero's Box" containing Afghan items and a battalion sweat shirt.

Cameron hopes to collect even more cards next year!

**BIRTHDAYS** - *It only takes one first-class stamp to let a service member know you care.*

**February 8:** None in January

SHAW, KYLE

642ND ESC

FOB GHAZNI

APO AE 09364

**Donate to Operation: Thank You \*\* \$10 Will "Send A Box" To A Service Member**

**Check to:** Operation: Thank You  
PO Box 59, Morrow  
Morrow, OH 45152

**Online:** [www.OhioOperationThankYou.org](http://www.OhioOperationThankYou.org)

**Operation: Thank You**  
***Serving Our Troops While They Serve Us***

A veteran is someone who, at one point in his/her life, wrote a Blank Check made Payable to 'United States of America' for an amount of 'up to and including my Life'.

**We Wish All of You A Happy & Blessed New Year**

## **DECEMBER 2011 - EMAILS FROM TROOPS**

Thank you we received the 2 microwaves, coffee makers, dishes, and blankets. My Marines were very happy and the morale is extremely high. Thank you so much to your organization.

Shaon Rillon  
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We received your box of hygiene items. Thank you again for all you do for us. I pray you have a blessed Thanksgiving.  
VIKI  
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John Ainslie posted on Operation Thank You, Inc's Wall.

"Thank You for everything! We here at B Co. 1-148 greatly appreciate the blankets and care packages!"  
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I was given your name by Tracy Bailey. I am part of the 123d ACS that is currently deployed right now and he wanted me to contact you to give you our contact information. At this time we were told to not have anything mailed to us because of a situation beyond our control. We will hopefully be able to begin receiving packages again in about a month and I would have to get you the address at that time because I am not sure of what it is at this moment. We have it so much better here than most people who are deployed right now and I would feel terrible having you send us packages and wasting your resources when we have most of the amenities that we have at home. I know there are troops out there that have it so much worse than we do and could benefit and are much more deserving of the supplies and treats that you and your organization send than we are. Once we are settled into a permanent location I will send you our contact information if you would like it.

Thanks, Teresa  
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Thank you so much for the care package that was sent! It was greatly appreciated, any items that my unit will not be using was given to the USNSE (United States National Support Element) where they can distribute them.

Thank you again!  
Elizabeth Wozniak  
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Wow no I never heard that story! We would love a good coffee maker :) We only have 3 women at my unit but we have 4 more in our other field offices in Herat and Kandahar. We are working on a humanitarian mission with the local childrens hospital. It's a very poor area and they are without toys, blankets warm clothes etc. As far as our group we have about 20 it's a intel operation so the hours are 24 hrs. We have a very small PX located about 10 min walk that is constantly out of everything!

From laundry soap, softner to shampoo, razors etc. We are always looking for snacks since many times getting to the dfac is difficult for the agents (due to mission) I really appreciate the help! And if you need anything from over here let me know :) --- Elizabeth  
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On behalf of my unit and all of our Soldiers I would like to thank you so much for the blankets and the box of goodies we have recently received. I do apologize for not writing you sooner but we have been very busy getting settled in here, however it was made more comfortable upon the arrival of the blankets. Please pass on our thanks to all who have volunteered to help out your great cause. Have a great day and thank you again.

Don Barlow  
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I am HM2 Rillon and I'm currently serving in Afghanistan. I was given your website address because I was told you give tremendous support to the troops deployed overseas. How can my team and myself be apart of this?

Respectfully, HM2(FMF) Shaon D. Rillon  
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Our team would very much appreciate your organizations support while we are deployed out here. Our Detachment has been deployed for 2 months now. We have 13 total: 8-Military Males, 2-Military Females, 3-Linguist. Well our living conditions are somewhat decent. 3 of the members are pushed out and live in either caves or tents. As for the remaining live in a structured Afghan building and all is 110 generated power. The PX availability is only by helos to the larger base. The chow hall is MRE's and we occasionally get fresh fruit or buy the local food in the bazarre. Our bathing water supply come from a well. Missions can be either days to weeks at a time. I know for us that are pushed out the the remote locations mini fridges and/or microwaves would be a tremendous morale booster. Coffee pots would be great for my Captain that is pushed out. Any food items would be fantastic, healthy food items like: healthy choice microwave meals, oatmeal, dried fruit etc. are things we really like. The bedding items would be very nice as well since winter is just around the corner.

A little about myself I live the SLC, UT and I volunteered for this deployment with 4th CAG (Civil Affairs Group) based in D.C. I'm a Navy Corpsman and the medical chief to maintain the health and well-being for my Marines, Sailors, and linguist. I've been in the Navy for 5 years and I'm on my 2nd combat tour, one in Iraq and now Afghanistan. I'm originally from Stockton, CA. Musa Qal'eh is located in Helmand Province just North of Sangin. One of the soldiers in the Psyop detachment passed your information to me.

I speak on behalf of my team and would be delighted in giving hugs and possible tears for your services. I admire your passion to making the well-being for troops comfortable as possible. Pictures are great to give for our appreciation to your organization. I believe my Captain is from a small farm town in Ohio. I'll touch base with him when I see him next and I'm willing to try the chili. Sounds delicious as long as it's dark chocolate.

Talk to you soon. Shaon Rillon

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If you wouldn't mind passing a thank you to Karen from the Marines and Sailors in Musa Qal'eh as well. We deeply appreciate it. Pop tarts are a great carb load before going out on missions. The throws I will definitely get out to my guys in the caves first. The microwaves and toasters are going to be a great hit of morale for everyone here. We have 1-3 at each location. We are very grateful for what you can provide us and it will be shared with the other personal that we work with out here. We are going to be ecstatic to break the MRE habit.

Depending on the mission at hand will determine if we are all going to be in the same place. We will be sure to send pictures of us opening and enjoying your organizations love you send to us. Again, Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Shaon

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I really enjoy the blanket, Thank you so much for the support. May God bless you always..

SSgt. Dumlao, Lorenzo

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Its great that you do all this and have the help! If you ever get toys or stuffed animals that would be great for the hospital. Now your questions...Travel between the other offices is VERY often about every

other week. Herat would be the best to give you a contact since they have no American stores or anything, it's a very small, base in the middle of nowhere. We do have a microwave, very small and old! We have a few Christmas decorations (stockings for each of us, a small tree \_desktop\_, and some odds and ends) If you want to send items it would be things like razors, lotions, toothpaste things like that. And as far as snacks or food we'll eat anything that reminds of us of America. Appreciate the support! Elizabeth

We have received boxes, with contents ranging from: Toiletries, Christmas decorations, Candy, Snacks

As usual the Soldier were very excited and appreciated the contents of each box. Thank you once again for your continued support and recognizing them for what they do.

--- Rosala

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Just wanted to say thank you for the folded flags. Operation Thank You and all the supporters continue to make our deployment just a little easier with all the care packages.

Thanks and may God bless you and your family.

CPT David P. Wedlock

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Moms,

We received a big box of lights and Christmas décor today from Miss Joann. Our office is cheerful with the holiday spirit.

We also received a box from Ruth Ann that had toiletries, cookies, and wet wipes.

Awesome! We are over joyed. Thank you so very much for taking care of the Soldiers. I will take some pictures of them hanging around the CP so you can see their smiling faces.

Rosa-La Brown

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We have been receiving the many boxes of blankets you've sent to us. We've handed out as many as we could get people to take then forwarded the remainder to the chapel for wider dissemination.

We are entering the last month of our deployment and starting to prepare to head home after Christmas.

In appreciation for all your organization has done for us, we would like to send you all a flag that has been flown in a mission over Afghanistan with a certificate and coin from the 376 Expeditionary Medical Group.

Would you please reply to confirm an address to which I can mail these tokens of appreciation? Also please include the name you would like me to print on the certificate.

I have not yet discussed it with the airman replacing me in December, but I'm confident my replacement will be willing to continue accepting packages from your organization on behalf of the men and women stationed here. Once he arrives and has set up his email account, I will forward you his email and

mail addresses as well as give him your contact information.

Thanks again for all you have done for us.

----- Capt Gary Leavitt, RN

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I am Cpl Felix with MWSS-371 Forward and I just wanted to thank you for the Coffee Grinder you sent Sgt Burton who gave it to our shop. Makes for great coffee in the morning, thus a great day after being able to stay awake. Once again thank you very much.

CPL JOSE L. FELIX

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I want to take the time to express my gratitude to you and all those who contribute to your program for soldiers like myself. The stresses of being deployed vary from soldier to soldier, however the support you provide us counters those stresses. I believe it to even in some situations saves lives, as some soldiers can not handle those stresses. Thank you again for your love and support to all of you. God bless you all, and God bless our country.

Love, Sgt. Riehle, Robert US Army *(this message was in a letter from him)*

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I look forward to being a positive asset for all who I can be one for and thank you for allowing me this opportunity to continue such a beautiful outreach to all it can touch to make a difference in their life. I will keep all information currently and in future for those who can continue this wonderful road of blessings. THANK YOU FOR BEING A BLESSING TO ALL IN NEED OF ONE. May you have a wonderful season of blessings also and I look forward to communicating with you soon. I will be in theater very soon, so it won't be long before we connect again....., until I have an official theater email address working.

Thank you again,  
Marilynn A. Diller, MSgt, FLANG Superintendent of Chapel Operations

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I have passed your email around. The other microwaves have not arrived yet, but that can be the mail on our bigger base hasn't transported yet. My guys appreciate everything you guys do for the troops. It takes a enormous passion you guys commit to us. Thank you.

HM2(FMF) Shaon D. Rillon, USN

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Dear Carol and the wonderful people at Operation Thank. I am Sergeant Angela Pace from Maineville, Ohio. Over the past few months I have been receiving wonderful packages. I am VERY thankful for having such a wonderful support group. I have been in Afghanistan for almost a year now, AND ITS TIME TO COME HOME SOON!!! I just wanted to send you an email to let you know just how much I appreciate what you have done for me and many other deployed Soldiers. It is awesome to have such a great group of people from your home town. I hope to stop in and meet all of you someday. and again, I cant say it enough THANK YOU!!!!

Sincerely, Angela Pace

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Wow, first let me say what you and your organization does is really a nice thing. I can only imagine what you've done for all us soldiers to make deployments so much better. And, honestly, just to know there are people like you that work so hard for us and think about us, is more than I can express in gratitude!

We are a small group here in Herat, AFG...six of us. And I am the only woman (baaahhh!) ha ha! We do have two chow halls for food, (they are run by the Italians and Spanish) but they don't serve breakfast. We can get cereal from the US class I on Camp Stone, but have to beg the chow hall for milk, which they can't often provide (since it is, after all, for the soldiers' chow). So milk would be great. We could use some plates, bowls, and plastic silverware.

Also, and I don't know if you do this...we would like to give the local school some school supplies. It's one of the only things we can give the kids that they actually want for learning and that no one will take to sell back on the markets! So, if you can provide any of these things, we'd really appreciate it. I will tell the other US element here (we are on a NATO base...all Italians and Spanish) about you. They are a nice group with more females too. And, they, like us have to make movements to Camp Stone for supplies.

Thank you for YOUR SERVICE and all YOU DO!!

Britney

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Just wanted all you ladies to know that we have received at least 12 boxes over the last several days.

The contents ranged from snacks, Christmas stockings, toiletries, candy, and my favorite homemade cookies.

I sent some of the boxes over to the USO so that all of the Soldiers here would at least get a stocking for Christmas.

Even some Marines heard that we had some so they came by to help themselves. Know that everything is being well received and consumed/used by the Soldiers here on FOB Fenty.

Thank you all on behalf of all the Soldiers!

I also received a box of cards from school children. Our internet has been down so I plan to look up the school address and send a reply. In our next company meeting, I will ask for volunteers to write their little buddies back that were gracious enough to take the time to write us.

Rosa-La Brown

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We just finished receiving the gifts you sent. I just wanted to send a email letting you know how much we appreciate your generosity. It is the biggest morale booster and I am forever grateful for your support. Thank You again and Merry Christmas to you and your family.

Respectfully, Cpl Reed

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I spoke with HM2 Rillon today and he told me that you are the one to thank for the amazing items from home we have been receiving. I have been out at one of our forward patrol bases and he has been sending me a steady supply of great stuff from the supplies you guys have sent him. I can't even begin to tell you how much it is appreciated. Everything I get is shared with a company of infantry Marines, and they pretty much think I'm the best thing ever because of the stuff you have sent! I've told them many times that it's not from me, I'm just the messenger, and they have also asked me to send along their thanks. So on behalf of myself, my CAG team, and the Marines and Sailors from Fox Company, 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines: THANK YOU! I hope you have a wonderful holiday season.

Semper Fi,  
Sgt Judah Kelber, 4th Civil Affairs Group

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We got your box of cards and cookies and fudge today. Thanks so much! I'd write more but the keyboard will get too messy..... DJ Dereck

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I cannot thank you enough for the packages! We got all of them (I think) We really appreciate the support. When I go to the hospital I will be sure to send you pictures.

Elizabeth

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Paul Kelley posted on your Wall.

"Hey carol!! I just wanted to let you know I made it back to fort hood safely about 10 days ago. I wanted to say thank you for all you have done for me and the other people in my company. I appreciate you mucho!! Stay in contact!!"

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[Jeff Lasure](#)

We're going to have 9 plus 2 terps here. We don't have any women, there is a coffee pot, a small fridge, the px here sells hygiene items and tobacco. We have a copy of guys with sheets and pillows. There's 11 guys in a 20 man tent, so at least we have some space. The dfacs here are good. Well, the one open anyway. The rip is stil going on, so we don't have space until our predecessors leave. Then we'll be able to unpack and see what all we can scavenge together. This isn't the worst place to be. It actually has many more amenities than most of the fobs from last time. Showers, flushing toilets, running water. It could be worse. The locals refuse to barter on their merchandise, and they're crazy expensive. I think theyve become spoiled over the last few years of dumb americans. I'll try to fix that. You always barter at a flea market/bazaar. If you want anything special or specific from here, just tell me what it is, and we'll get ot Kaf and mail it out to you. Have to go though. Talk to you later.

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I'm so sorry that it has taken me so long to reply. Internet is hit or miss here. I'm from a small town called Flintville, its located right next to Fayetteville, TN. So being sent to Vegas as my first duty station was kinda diffrent for me. Speaking on your fee, Ma'am for all that yall do for us out here your husband will have to get over it your getting sugars as well. We are the only all Air Force Foward Surgical Team. We have 14 males and 8 females. We have a pretty good supply of food and hygiene items. When we ship patients to other bases we ship them with all the hygiene items so the army usually keeps us pretty stocked. We could probally use some blankets because the ones we had must of grew legs somehow or a cheap interpreter lol. Anything that is sent our way is more than enough and I can not express enough how much it means to us out here. God bless you in all you do.  
Thanks Again  
SrA Andrew Bynum Merrell

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How are you doing? I am well aware that you have been very busy over the past 4 weeks. I have been busy myself in and out of the office out on the battle field visiting soldiers. I want to thank you for all the support you have been giving us. We really do appreciate it. You are really making a difference in our lives with the support that you are providing. GOD will continue to bless you day after day. I am a firm believer of that because of what you do for us. I really do hope to meet you in person one day. Be Bless and Happy Holidays!!!  
HARRIS, LUKELDIC