

## **Operation Paperback Newsletter - November 2004**

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### **Updated Book Counts**

August Shipments: 10,790 books  
September Shipments: 9,165 books  
October Shipments: 13,324 books

Special Project: Shipments to Construct Library in Afghanistan : 4,402 books  
Special Project: Shipments to Construct Libraries in Crete : 5,354 books

Grand Total: 235,249 books

### **HOLIDAY mailing deadline**

Can you believe it? The holidays are just around the corner! The US Postal Service would like us to remind you that all Christmas packages should be out the door by Saturday, November 13 in order for your goodies to get to our troops on time. What if you do not make the deadline? Nothing really... we're a year round program. :-) From past experience, the military mail system goes a bit haywire over the holidays with thousands of extra packages being sent every day. Do not listen to the postal clerk when they say it will get there faster by you paying more for Priority Mail – it doesn't (unless you are sending your books to one of our domestic locations).

### **Do not send romance novels unless requested**

We have received feedback from some of our service members that they are receiving a lot of romance novels. Not only do the covers of many of these novels violate Middle East mailing standards, our troops have expressed little interest in this genre. While we know that romance novels are aplenty at used book sales and giveaways, our troops deserve the reading that they want! If we have an address that is requesting romances, we will let you know. Otherwise, do not send romances. Also, we have had a few boxes returned to us and when inspected we found them to be of poor quality – covers ripped, pages missing or hanging, stained, and/or without Operation Paperback stickers. Please, when preparing your boxes, check each book for quality, and label them.

## **Are you volunteering as a part of an organization?**

So many of our volunteers let us know that they're volunteering as part of a community effort. We would like to acknowledge the work of your group by listing you on our web site! Not only will your group receive the recognition they deserve, but you might encourage others to do a community book drive in support of Operation Paperback. Send Andrea a note and let her know about your group affiliation (workplaces, churches, girl and boy scout troops, friends of the local library, veterans groups, you name it) and if you would like your contact information made available or just your group name. We won't post the information up without your permission!

## **Troop Thank You Notes**

We have received a lot of thank you notes from the troops and have tried our best to direct them to the appropriate volunteers. However, we still encourage you to visit our troop thank you note page at <http://www.operationpaperback.org> to read the latest words of appreciation from those who are serving overseas.

We wanted to share a few of the most recent notes here in our newsletter:

From CPT Beverly P: "I have been touched by the kind gifts and support from people from around the country who are a part of operation paperback. On behalf of Alpha Surgical (all Navy Medical personnel) and the injured we care for...thank you so much! I am sorry I can't write personal thank you notes to all who have contributed. I hope this can be posted for all to see. Again, many thanks... Fondly, CAPT B. P."

From David M: "To all who are apart of Operation Paperback, we here at the 386 CASF Kuwait salute you and your efforts to support the US Military members while deployed. Receiving your packages brings great pleasure, not only to the individuals who work here in the medical facility but to our patients as well. Your books allow us to break free from our daily routine, and escape to another place even if only for a moment. Thank you again for your support!!"

From 3D Marine Division: "Thanks for the shipments, please keep sending more!"

From Jacob L: "Ma'am, We received a few boxes of books from Scott H. who is in HHC, 1st Battalion, 151st Infantry in Afghanistan . My unit goes through Camp Phoenix , where he is, for much of our logistical support and he passed them on to us. The Soldiers of A Company, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry (my company) appreciate it greatly - you can only carry so many books in a duffel bag with your clothes."

From Stephen L: "I just received a package of books. I just want to say thank you to everyone involved at Operation Paperback. Also I have others that I share these books with and they thank you too. Please keep them coming as long as you're able. They are such a great break from the everyday tasks at hand. Thanks again."

**Stay tuned for a new web site**

A new web site is in the works. No, it's not because Andrea has a lot of free time. Over the past year and a half we have received excellent and constructive feedback on the site. So we're going to incorporate those suggestions and make the web site even better!

### **Mailing Instructions/Reminder**

Send your books via Media Mail Rate. A medium sized box (between 20 – 40 books) costs around \$4 to \$8 to ship. If the clerk is giving a hassle about the Operation Paperback standard letter being enclosed in that box, request to send your package, “Media Mail Rate with a First Class Enclosure.” This means you pay media rate, plus \$0.37 for the letter. If the clerk looks confused, ask for a manager. You do have to fill out a customs form! If you are sending a small box, the green form is okay. However, most volunteers end up using the big white form because of the size and weight of their boxes.

### **Sending Food and Non-Book Items**

With the holidays coming around, it's very tempting to start sending additional goodies with your Operation Paperback boxes. However, please be careful when sending food or non-book items!

First of all, your package can no longer go Media Mail rate – it must go Parcel Post or First Class/Priority (which is more expensive). Also, you must keep all food in its original packaging and somehow separated from the books – i.e. in a well sealed bag. We received letters from soldiers saying that the food got there and it was rotten and messed up the books.

Finally, it is usually a good idea to correspond with your service member and check to see if they really want food or non-book items. They are grateful for your gifts, but space is limited and there are few facilities to store food. Hard candies are always a welcomed treat, but ask before you send 1,000 Little Debbie Cakes.

### **USUAL REMINDERS...**

#### **Do Not Use Old Address Lists**

The list changes daily now! When you are ready to head to the post office, email [OpAddresses@usmilitarysupport.org](mailto:OpAddresses@usmilitarysupport.org) and get the latest list.

#### **Thanks for volunteering!**

Please never hesitate to contact us with ideas or suggestions. We are always working to make Operation Paperback bigger and better!