

Operation Paperback Newsletter - February 2005

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Updated Book Counts

November 2004: 12,628 books shipped

December 2004: 12,001 books shipped

January 2005: 14,752 books shipped

Grand Total: 274,630 books shipped

New Service Member Names Always Welcome!

Operation Paperback continues to grow and we have a lot of volunteers on board now (and a lot of books available). If you know someone in the military, please mention our program to them. We have composed a standard inquiry letter for our volunteers to use if someone has questions about adding their loved ones to our shipping list.

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, etc.) 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 www.operationpaperback.org to read the latest words of appreciation from those who are serving overseas.

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

From SGT Greg L: "I writing you to let you guys know that I have received the books that were mailed to me. Thanks a million times. Now I have something to do for the whole year while I'm in Iraq . Once again, thank you."

From CPL Stewart A: "I found two books of my favorite author out here and one had your stamp on it. Thank you. I'm keeping both books to bring home with me."

From SPC Lynne S: "Dear Operation Paperback, I'm so sorry that it has taken so long to get back to you. We are pretty busy here. I want to thank everyone so much for all of the books they've sent to us. It really means a lot to us. Receiving mail here is one of the biggest morale boosters. The soldiers' faces light up when they see their name on the mail list. I've received about five shipments of books already and there is usually something for just about everyone. Thank you again from the bottom of my heart, and God bless you all for your support."

"I wanted to say thank you for the books and for supporting the Bamberg military community. They are greatly appreciated. They have touched several families either by being used to send down range to the soldiers or for reading enjoyment to pass the time for the spouses. It is so wonderful that you took the time and effort to do this. They are again, so greatly appreciated."

From LTCOL Greg R: "Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. I am the recipient of an Operation Paperback delivery from you. You can't know how comforting it is to know that people, complete strangers even, back at home in the US care enough to take the time to send us a small reminder we haven't been forgotten. The books have been shared with those I'm stationed here with and we are ever so grateful for your kindness and consideration. Thank you."

From LTCOL H: "I wanted to say thanks for the support that you have shown to all military personnel throughout your program. I and the Marines listed below have all received numerous packages through your program and the library at Camp Fallujah has continued to be developed."

From Brad M: "We have received several shipments of books aboard USS Essex. Greatly appreciate the efforts of all who took the time and expense to collect and send these books."

From Michael B: "I would like to thank all those that have sent books to our Forward Operating Base in Afghanistan . They are so appreciated. I do believe we have plenty of books for now and little space left to put them. We will be plenty busy reading in our spare time what little there is."

From PFC W. in Kuwait : "Thank you so much. Being away from my home and family has been real hard. Being able to pass the time by reading really helps me out a lot. You have no idea how much your helping us out. It is also reassuring to know that there are people out there who take the time to show that they are supporting us as we fight for the safety of our country and to bring hope to those that in the past have had none. Once again I just want to say thank you and God bless all of you."

Special Notice About American flags

We wanted to pass along this note from Charles Taliaferro and the Kitchen Table Gang Trust (veterans group): “You can retire your tattered, worn out and frayed American flags without cost to you. Send your flags to the Kitchen Table Gang Trust, 42922 Avenue 12, Madera , CA 93638-8866 and we will dispose of your flags in a proper and dignified manner with full honors and dignity pursuant to the United States Flag Code Section 8K. We have been doing this for the past seven years. Our flag retirement ceremonies are held on Flag Day, June 14th each year and are conducted by an all-volunteer U.S. Marine Corps Honor Guard supervised by GySgt. Dan Kelley USMC (Ret.)”

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. This may sound silly, but the Media Mail Rate for APO choice is on the second digital screen on their computer. Sometimes they may tell you it is not an option and you have to ship Priority, tell them to check the 2 nd page of their screen and they will find the choice to punch in.

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. Pick up extras to save yourself time in line.

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 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!