



The Old Ironsides Report



Monday, December 22, 2003

Operation 'Ho, Ho, Ho,' brings a little joy to children in need

Story, photo by Sgt. Christopher Stanis, 1AD PAO

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Here comes Santa Claus, here comes Santa Claus right down ... *Baghdad Lane?*

After a suggestion from Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Ferrand, a medic with 1st Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, to the 1-325 chaplain, Capt. Darren Chester, the two, with a handful of other 1-325 paratroopers conducted "Operation Ho, Ho, Ho" Dec. 20.

The battalion is part of Task Force 1st Armored Division.

"It's not a big Walt Disney story to tell," said Ferrand. But it is a story from the heart.

The group brought stockings stuffed with toys and candy to two orphanages in Baghdad: the Al Awiya orphanage and the St. Hanna orphanage.

"I remembered working with the orphanages, and the kids," Ferrand said. "I asked the chaplain what he had planned. He didn't have anything, so I offered up the idea."

With toys sent to Ferrand by family and friends and donations from 1-325 soldiers, "Santa's little helpers" stuffed more than 80 stockings full of goodies for the children.

A tight squeeze and a couple of turns down alleyway streets led to a gated, well kept yard with a small two-story house. Inside, a Christmas tree stood in the corner of the living room. At the base of the tree sat a nativity scene. Around a coffee table in the room sat three warm-hearted women.

These are the sisters of the St. Hanna orphanage, a Catholic orphanage that currently houses about a dozen girls.

The well-mannered girls filed down the stairs to receive their gifts.

After a short visit, the soldiers moved on



Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Ferrand, a medic with 1st Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, hands out bags with stockings and goodies to children at the St. Hanna orphanage in Baghdad, Dec. 20 for Operation Ho, Ho, Ho.

to the next orphanage.

This time, more than 60 rambunctious children filled the room of the barracks-like building where Ferrand's group passed out the presents.

Some of these children lost their parents during major ground operations of this war, some lost their parents in past wars. Others were simply not wanted or the parents couldn't afford to take care of them, Ferrand said.

Ferrand had an earlier relationship with the orphanages, where he helped conduct physicals and provided needed medical care to the children shortly after the liberation of Iraq.

He said he can see the improvement in their health and in their spirits.

"No matter where you go in the world, kids are kids are kids," Ferrand said. "They want to learn ... they want an education. These kids have a good outlook on life."

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News...

Libyan Deal Shows Need for U.S. Shift

WASHINGTON (AP) - The White House portrayed Libya's promise to abandon weapons of mass destruction programs as affirmation of President Bush's hard-line strategy on arms proliferation and suggested the U.S.-led war in Iraq helped convince Moammar Gadhafi that he should act.

Some arms control experts, however, point to what is known about how and when the agreement came about and say that Libya's turnaround offers proof the United States should shift tactics in dealing with North Korea, Syria and other nations. A greater commitment is needed, they say, to the kind of patient but firm diplomacy that worked with Libya.

Relatives of Lockerbie Victims Seek Probe

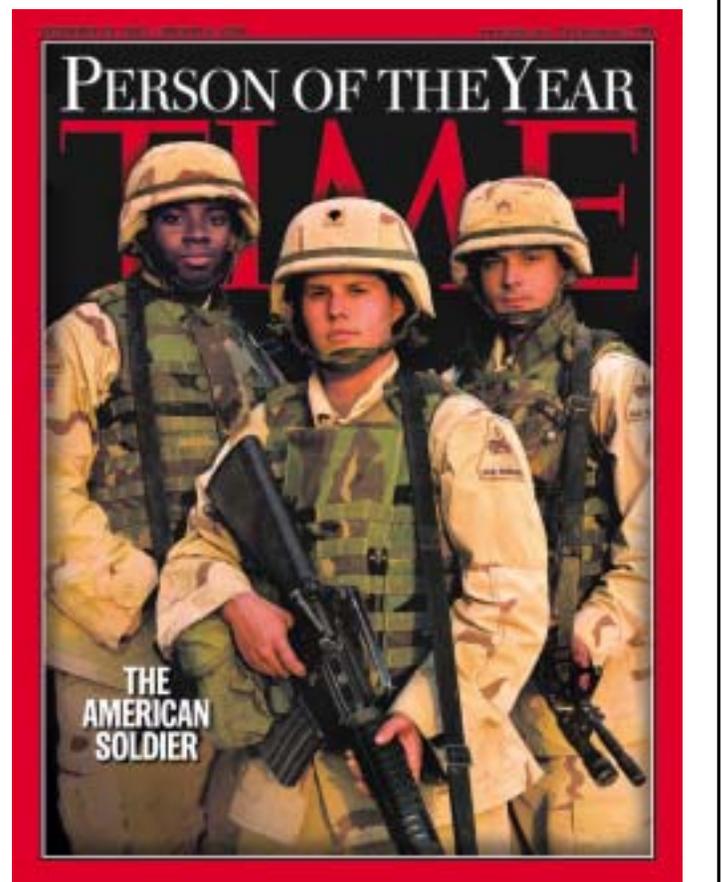
LONDON (AP) - Relatives of Britons killed when a Pan Am jet exploded over Scotland in 1988 renewed calls for an independent inquiry into the bombing on Sunday, the 15th anniversary of the attack.

U.K. Families Flight 103, a group representing families of British victims, said "big and important questions" still needed to be asked about the motive and planning behind the attack, and the failure to prevent it.

Iraqi Insurgents Blow Up Oil Pipeline

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) - Iraqi insurgents blew up an oil pipeline and fired on gasoline storage tanks, as U.S. troops searched for rebels and weapons Sunday in strongholds of captured dictator Saddam Hussein.

American soldiers raided homes shortly after midnight in Fallujah, a flashpoint in the so-called Sunni Triangle where resistance to the U.S.-led occupation has been fiercest. Iraqi journalists reported similar raids in other areas where support for Saddam has been strong, including Samarra, 75 miles north of Baghdad, and Rawah, near the western border with Syria.



The U.S. Soldier Is Time Person of Year
NEW YORK (AP) - The American soldier, who bears the duty of "living with and dying for a country's most fateful decisions," was named Sunday as Time magazine's Person of the Year. The magazine's editors chose the nameless soldier to represent the 1.4 million men and women who make up the U.S. military, which led the invasion of Iraq nine months ago and a week ago captured deposed leader Saddam Hussein.

Chaplain's thought for the day...

"In the Hands of the Archer"

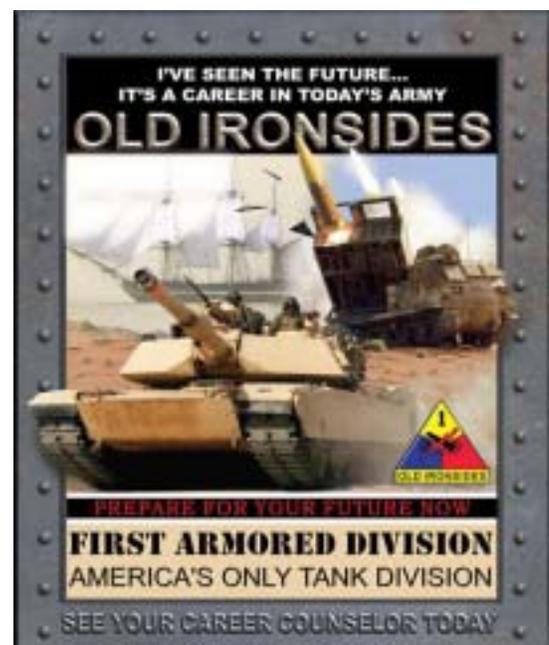
"A saint's life is in the hands of God as a bow and arrow in the hands of an archer. God is aiming at something the saint cannot see; He stretches and strains, and every now and again the saint says, 'I cannot stand any more.'

But God does not heed; He goes on stretching until His purpose is in sight, then He lets fly."

-- Oswald Chambers in The Love of

God. Christianity Today, Vol. 33, no. 12

All of us are being stretched by this deployment experience. We must trust ourselves to the Archer; if we are willing to be used, He will aim us in the right direction.



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myafn.net TV SCHEDULES: MONDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2003				As of: Sunday, December 21, 2003 8:41:46 PM		
Start Time	SPORTS	ATLANTIC	SPECTRUM	PACIFIC	NEWS	Start Time
00:00	NFL - SAN DIEGO CHARGERS @ PITTSBURGH STEELERS	NFL - ARIZONA CARDINALS @ SEATTLE SEAHAWKS	MAGNUM P.I. : - HOME FROM THE SEA	NFL - SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS @ PHILADELPHIA EAGLES	CNN SUNDAY	00:00
01:00			FAMILY TIES : - A WORD TO THE WISE (PT. 1)		MEET THE PRESS	01:00
01:30			THE COSBY SHOW : - NO WAY BABY			01:30
02:00			CHIPS : - AWEIGH WE GO		TIM RUSSERT	02:00
03:00	SPORTSCENTER	HEADLINE NEWS	RUGRATS : - CAT GOT YOUR TONGUE	DORA: THE EXPLORER	FOX REPORT	03:00
03:30	NFL PRIMETIME	SEINFELD : - THE VIRGIN	SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS (TV-7): - THE SECRET BOX / BAND GEEKS	WHEEL OF FORTUNE		03:30
04:00		THAT 70'S SHOW : - JACKIE BAGS HYDE	THE SIMPSONS : - SIMPSON SAFARI	THE DR. PHIL SHOW	THIS WEEK	04:00
04:30	NFL - DENVER BRONCOS @ INDIANAPOLIS COLTS	ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT	HOME IMPROVEMENT : - YOUNG AT HEART			04:30
05:00			BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER : - SLEEPER	THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW	DATELINE INTERNATIONAL	05:00
05:30		WWE SMACKDOWN!				05:30
06:00			LAW & ORDER : - WHOSE MONKEY IS IT ANYWAY	HEADLINE NEWS	60 MINUTES	06:00
06:30		AMERICA'S BLACK FORUM		JUDGE JUDY		06:30
07:00		MEET THE PRESS	CRITICAL RESCUE : - THIN ICE	ACCESS HOLLYWOOD	CNN PRESENTS	07:00
07:25				GUIDING LIGHT		07:25
07:30	SPORTSCENTER					07:30
08:00		HEADLINE NEWS	AMERICAN CHOPPER		LARRY KING LIVE	08:00
08:13				GENERAL HOSPITAL		08:13
08:30		ESPNEWS				08:30
09:00	NFL PRIMETIME	SESAME STREET	SCROOGED	ZOOBOOMAFOO : - BATHTIME	AT LARGE WITH GERALDO RIVERA	09:00
09:30				DISNEY'S BUZZ LIGHTYEAR OF STAR COMMAND : - 42		09:30
10:00	SPORTSCENTER	DORA: THE EXPLORER		CYBERCHASE	ACCESS HOLLYWOOD	10:00
10:30		WHEEL OF FORTUNE		EVEN STEVENS : - SCRUB DAY		10:30
11:00	SPORTSCENTER	THE DR. PHIL SHOW	RUGRATS : - CAT GOT YOUR TONGUE	JEOPARDY!	BELTWAY BOYS	11:00
11:30	FIGURE SKATING - GRAND PRIX OF FIGURE SKATING: NHK TROPHY		SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS (TV-7): - THE SECRET BOX / BAND GEEKS	HEADLINE NEWS	FOX NEWS WATCH	11:30
11:46		THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW				11:46
11:52				PACIFIC REPORT		11:52
12:00			THE SIMPSONS : - SIMPSON SAFARI	ESPNEWS	BULLS & BEARS	12:00
12:30			HOME IMPROVEMENT : - YOUNG AT HEART	HEADLINE NEWS	CAVUTO ON BUSINESS	12:30
12:35		GUIDING LIGHT				12:35
12:52				PACIFIC REPORT		12:52
13:00			BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER : - SLEEPER	60 MINUTES	THE O'REILLY FACTOR	13:00
13:17		GENERAL HOSPITAL				13:17
13:30	SPORTSCENTER					13:30
14:00		HEADLINE NEWS	LAW & ORDER : - WHOSE MONKEY IS IT ANYWAY	NYPD BLUE : - HEALTHY MCDOWELL MOVEMENT	WAR STORIES WITH OLIVER NORTH	14:00
14:30		JUDGE JUDY				14:30
15:00	NHL - PHILADELPHIA FLYERS @ ATLANTA THRASHERS	TODAY	CRITICAL RESCUE : - THIN ICE	C.S.I.: MIAMI : - BODY COUNT	GOOD MORNING AMERICA	15:00
16:00			AMERICAN CHOPPER	HEADLINE NEWS		16:00
16:22				PACIFIC REPORT		16:22
16:30				TONIGHT SHOW WITH JAY LENO		16:30
17:00	GOLF - WENDY'S THREE TOUR CHALLENGE: FINAL ROUND	ZOOBOOMAFOO : - BATHTIME	SCROOGED		HEADLINE NEWS	17:00
17:30		DISNEY'S BUZZ LIGHTYEAR OF STAR COMMAND : - 42		THE LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN	ABC WORLD NEWS THIS MORNING	17:30
18:00		CYBERCHASE			THE EARLY SHOW	18:00
18:30		EVEN STEVENS : - SCRUB DAY		ACCESS HOLLYWOOD		18:30
19:00	SPORTSCENTER	JEOPARDY!	RUGRATS : - CAT GOT YOUR TONGUE	THE SECRET OF GIVING		19:00
19:30		HEADLINE NEWS	SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS (TV-7): - THE SECRET BOX / BAND GEEKS			19:30
20:00		ESPNEWS	THE SIMPSONS : - SIMPSON SAFARI		FOX NEWS LIVE	20:00
20:30	NFL PRIMETIME	HEADLINE NEWS	HOME IMPROVEMENT : - YOUNG AT HEART			20:30
20:45				ROMAN HOLIDAY		20:45
21:00		60 MINUTES	BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER : - SLEEPER		WAR STORIES WITH OLIVER NORTH	21:00
21:30	COLLEGE BASKETBALL - ACC: ST. JOHN'S @ GEORGIA TECH					21:30
22:00		NYPD BLUE : - HEALTHY MCDOWELL MOVEMENT	LAW & ORDER : - WHOSE MONKEY IS IT ANYWAY		FOX NEWS LIVE	22:00
23:00		C.S.I.: MIAMI : - BODY COUNT	CRITICAL RESCUE : - THIN ICE	ESPNEWS	HEADLINE NEWS	23:00
23:30	ESPNEWS			HEADLINE NEWS	INSIDE POLITICS	23:30

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	BEARS (7-8)	27		COWBOYS (10-5)	19		LIONS (4-11)	14
	REDSKINS (5-10)	24		GIANTS (4-11)	3		PANTHERS (10-5)	20
	DOLPHINS (8-6)	20		RAMS (12-3)	27		JAGUARS (5-10)	20
	BILLS (6-8)	3		BENGALS (8-7)	10		SAINTS (7-8)	19
	RAVENS (9-6)	35		TITANS (10-4)	27		FALCONS (4-11)	30
	BROWNS (4-11)	0		TEXANS (5-9)	24		BUCCANEERS (7-8)	28
	CHIEFS (12-3)	20		PATRIOTS (13-2)	21		STEELERS (5-9)	40
	VIKINGS (9-6)	45		JETS (6-9)	16		CHARGERS (3-11)	24
	49ERS (6-8)	31					SEAHAWKS (8-6)	28
	EAGLES (11-3)	28					CARDINALS (3-11)	10