



# The Old Ironsides Report



**Saturday, December 20, 2003**

## Operation Gratitude ensures soldiers are not forgotten

By: Sgt. Christopher Stanis, 1AD PAO  
BAGHDAD, Iraq – This holiday season, Santa isn't the only one making a list and checking it twice.

Thousands of 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division Soldiers in Iraq and service members throughout the U.S. military who are deployed overseas will be remembered this holiday season because of Carolyn Blashek and Operation Gratitude.

Operation Gratitude is a program that has been providing support to troops since the build up for Operation Iraqi Freedom, from one woman's living room.

Encino, Calif., native Blashek sent her first four packages in March to a primarily female unit that she learned had run out of hard-to-get supplies.

She started Operation Gratitude after she was unable to enlistment in the Army Reserves following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

"Following Sept. 11, I tried to join the Reserves, but was politely, though firmly, told I was way too old," Blashek said.

But with the war on terror raging, the now-48-year-old knew there was something she could do to support the troops and the nation.

"I looked for ways as a civilian to support the military," Blashek said, "and eventually found the (United Services Organization) at (Los Angeles International Airport.) I volunteered there one, then two days a week, and became the volunteer coordinator."

While working one night at the USO, Blashek received a visit from a soldier who was in dire need of talking to a chaplain, or anyone available.

Since Blashek was the only one working at the time, she listened to his concerns.

"He said he was (home on emergency leave) to bury his mother, his wife had left him years ago and his only son had died as an infant," Blashek said. "He said, 'I am going back (overseas) and I don't think I will return this time, but I don't think anyone would care.' That was when I realized the need for service members facing war-time danger to

know that someone back home cares about them."

So began Operation Gratitude, an independent, non-profit organization, originally funded solely by Blashek.

Soon after word of the operation got out, family, friends and community members began contributing to the funds – approximately 15 to 30 dollars shipping per package.

Through October, Blashek shipped 650 packages. During the weekend of Nov. 8-9, a "Support the Troops" holiday drive kicked off.

Because of the magnitude of the event – more than 200 volunteers assembling 3,500 packages – the operation was moved to the Army National Guard's 746th Quarter Master Battalion Armory in Van Nuys, Calif.

To date, the holiday drive, running through mid December, has mailed more than 4,000 packages.

When it wraps up, Blashek plans on continuing to mail at least 100 packages a week until every soldier on her ever-growing list receives a box.

Originally, Blashek gathered names of soldiers by word of mouth, asking friends, family and everyone she met if they knew troops serving overseas.

In 1AD's case, contact with Brig. Gen. Mark Hertling, assistant division commander for support, provided names to Blashek.

"Brig. Gen. Hertling arranged for names of troops to be forwarded to me," Blashek said.

Now her Website, [operationgratitude.com](http://operationgratitude.com), allows family members and soldiers to sign up names on their own.

Blashek foresees Operation Gratitude as a permanent means for civilians to show their support of the military in a direct and hands-on manner.

"My intention," said Blashek, "is that Operation Gratitude will continue for as long as the United States Military has any service person deployed anywhere in the world."

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## News...

### Bremer Escaped Iraq Ambush 2 Weeks Ago

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) - U.S. administrator L. Paul Bremer escaped a rebel ambush on his convoy two weeks ago, authorities said Friday. An explosion, meanwhile, struck the office of a major Shiite party, killing an Iraqi woman. Also on Friday, a roadside bomb exploded near a U.S. military truck outside Baghdad, wounding two U.S. soldiers, the military said.

### Boat With Drugs, Ties to al-Qaida Seized

WASHINGTON (AP) - The U.S. Navy has seized a boat in the Persian Gulf carrying two tons of hashish and four people tied to the al-Qaida terrorist network, the military said Friday. The guided missile destroyer USS Decatur intercepted the boat on Monday, U.S. Central Command said in a statement. On board were two tons of drugs worth an estimated \$8 million to \$10 million and 12 people, four of whom have suspected ties to al-Qaida, the statement said.

### Emotional 911 Tape Played in Sniper Case

CHESAPEAKE, Va. (AP) - Jurors at the trial of teenage sniper Lee Boyd Malvo heard an emotionally wrenching 911 call Friday as prosecutors opened their effort to convince the panel that Malvo deserves the death penalty. In the frantic call, William Franklin sobs to the dispatcher that his wife, FBI analyst Linda Franklin, was shot in the head.

### Revised WTC Freedom Tower Design Unveiled

NEW YORK (AP) - A new design for the Freedom Tower at the World Trade Center site slopes gracefully into a spire rising 1,776 feet, echoing the Statue of Liberty, images released Friday show. The new plan - which comes after months of contentious negotiations between designers Daniel Libeskind and David Childs - retains many elements of Libeskind's original plan but appears to smooth out its most angular elements.

## Chaplain's thought for the day...

### "You may not be talented..."

Back in June of 1999, Eddie Stankey died at the age of 83. Time Magazine carried his obituary. It seems that in his day, Stankey (nicknamed "the Brat") had been a pugnacious 2nd baseman for such championship teams as the Brooklyn Dodgers, the Boston Braves and the New York Giants.

The general manager of the Dodgers, Branch Rickey, once commented on "the brat": "He can't run, he can't hit and he can't throw, but if there's a way to beat the other team, he'll find it."

Some of us may not have many natural abilities, but we can overcome that lack of ability by a willingness to do whatever it takes to succeed.

## Entertainment...

### Record Industry May Not Subpoena Providers

By TED BRIDIS, Associated Press Writer  
WASHINGTON (AP) -- A federal appeals court on Friday rejected efforts by the recording industry to compel the nation's Internet providers to turn over names of subscribers suspected of illegally swapping music online.

The ruling from a three-judge panel from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia was a dramatic setback for the industry's controversial anti-piracy campaign. It overturned the trial judge's decision to enforce a type of copyright subpoena from a law that predates the music downloading trend.

The appeals court said the 1998 law doesn't cover the popular file-sharing networks currently used by tens of millions of Americans to download songs.

The Digital Millennium Copyright Act "betrays no awareness whatsoever that Internet users might be able directly to exchange files containing copyrighted works," the court wrote.

The appeals judges said they sympathized with the recording industry, noting that "stakes are large." But the judges said it was not the role of courts to rewrite the 1998 copyright law, "no matter how damaging that development has been to the music industry or threatens being to the motion picture and software industries."

The appeals ruling throws into question at least 382 civil lawsuits the recording industry filed since it announced its legal campaign nearly six months ago.

U.S. District Judge John D. Bates had approved use of the subpoenas, forcing Verizon Communications Inc. to turn over names and addresses for at least four Internet subscribers. Since then, Verizon has identified dozens of its other subscribers to music industry lawyers.

The appeals court said one of the arguments by the Recording Industry Association of America "borders upon the silly," rejecting the trade group's claims that Verizon was responsible for downloaded music because such data files traverse its network.

The law, passed years before downloading music over peer-to-peer Internet services became popular, compels Internet providers to turn over the names of suspected pirates upon subpoena from any U.S. District Court clerk's office. A judge's signature is not required. Critics contend judges ought to be more directly involved.

Verizon had argued at its trial that Internet providers should only be compelled to respond to such subpoenas when pirated music is stored on computers that providers directly control, such as a Web site, rather than on a subscriber's personal computer.

## Safety Message...

### BACK TO BASICS

The key to accident prevention is compliance with standards and successful application of the risk management process -- eliminating hazards or reducing their risk.

To achieve this, measures must be taken to enforce standards and implement controls that eliminate hazards or reduce the risk of injury or the chance of damage to equipment.

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December 20, 2003

myafn.net TV SCHEDULES: SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2003				As of: Friday, December 19, 2003 7:37:53 PM		
Start Time	SPORTS	ATLANTIC	SPECTRUM	PACIFIC	NEWS	Start Time
00:00	NFL FILMS PRESENTS - GAME OF THE WEEK	HEADLINE NEWS	THE LIFE OF MAMMALS			00:00
00:30		TONIGHT SHOW WITH JAY LENO			HEADLINE NEWS	00:30
01:00	AROUND THE HORN		BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER : - SHADOW	BEAR IN THE BIG BLUE HOUSE (YR. 6) : - VOLUNTEERS OF WOODLAND VALLEY	LESTER HOLT LIVE	01:00
01:30	PARDON THE INTERRUPTION	THE LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN		FRANKLIN : - FRANKLIN STAYS UP/FRANKLIN'S BARGAIN		01:30
02:00	SPORTSCENTER		IRON CHEF : - NOODLE/CHEN VS TOSHIYUKI NAKAGAWA	ROCKET POWER : - TITO SITTING/ THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT BREEZY	HEADLINE NEWS	02:00
02:30		ACCESS HOLLYWOOD		THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS	NBC NIGHTLY NEWS	02:30
03:00		THE PREACHER'S WIFE	THE VIEW	YU-GI-OHI (TV-7): - THE DUELING MONKEY	ABC WORLD NEWS TONIGHT	03:00
03:30	NBA SHOOTAROUND			THE PROUD FAMILY : - WHO YOU CALLIN' A SISSY	CBS EVENING NEWS	03:30
04:00	NBA - DETROIT PISTONS @ INDIANA PACERS		LIVING BETTER WITH CARRIE WIATT	OUTWARD BOUND: COSTA RICA/ COLORADO (TV-7): - EPISODE 18	THE NEWSHOUR	04:00
04:30			HOMES WITH STYLE : - COUNTRY LIVING PRESENTS GARDEN ENTERTAINING	THE BEST OF : - ITALIAN DISHES		04:30
05:00			WHILE YOU WERE OUT	TRADING SPACES FAMILY : - NORTH CAROLINA: DOGWOOD TRAIL	HANNITY & COLMES	05:00
05:15		SNOW DAY				05:15
06:00			THE AMAZING RACE : - HE'S A FEW TICKS AWAY FROM HAVING A HEART ATTACK!	FRIDAY NIGHT FIGHTS - CRUISERWEIGHT TITLE BOUT: O'NEIL BELL VS DERRICK HARMON	THE NEWS WITH BRIAN WILLIAMS	06:00
06:30	NBA - SAN ANTONIO SPURS @ SEATTLE SUPERSONICS					06:30
07:00		HEADLINE NEWS	GILMORE GIRLS : - THAT'LL DO, PIG		BET NIGHTLY NEWS	07:00
07:30		ESPNEWS			NIGHTLY BUSINESS REPORT	07:30
08:00		HEADLINE NEWS	THE DIVISION : - MOTHER'S DAY	ESPNEWS	LARRY KING LIVE	08:00
08:30		HEADLINE NEWS		ESPNEWS		08:30
09:00	SPORTSCENTER	BEAR IN THE BIG BLUE HOUSE (YR. 6) : - VOLUNTEERS OF WOODLAND VALLEY	A SEASON FOR MIRACLES	WWE RAW!	NEWSNIGHT WITH AARON BROWN	09:00
09:30		FRANKLIN : - FRANKLIN STAYS UP/FRANKLIN'S BARGAIN				09:30
10:00	NFL TOTAL ACCESS	ROCKET POWER : - TITO SITTING/ THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT BREEZY		HEADLINE NEWS	PAULA ZAHN NOW	10:00
10:30		THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS		NAVY/MARINE CORPS NEWS		10:30
11:00	COLLEGE FOOTBALL - 2003 DIVISION I-AA FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP: COLGATE VS DELAWARE	YU-GI-OHI (TV-7): - THE DUELING MONKEY	THE VIEW	ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT	NIGHTLINE	11:00
11:30		THE PROUD FAMILY : - WHO YOU CALLIN' A SISSY			ARMY NEWSWATCH	11:30
12:00		TRADING SPACES FAMILY : - NORTH CAROLINA: DOGWOOD TRAIL	LIVING BETTER WITH CARRIE WIATT	YOUR CORPS	HARDBALL WITH CHRIS MATTHEWS	12:00
12:30			HOMES WITH STYLE : - COUNTRY LIVING PRESENTS GARDEN ENTERTAINING	ESPNEWS		12:30
13:00		OUTWARD BOUND: COSTA RICA/ COLORADO (TV-7): - EPISODE 18	WHILE YOU WERE OUT	ONE ON ONE : - THE ONE ABOUT YOUR FRIENDS	THE O'REILLY FACTOR	13:00
13:30		THE BEST OF : - ITALIAN DISHES		ACCORDING TO JIM : - THE BROTHER-IN-LAW		13:30
14:00	SPORTSCENTER	ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT	THE AMAZING RACE : - HE'S A FEW TICKS AWAY FROM HAVING A HEART ATTACK!	THE PRACTICE : - THE MAKING OF A TRIAL ATTORNEY	DATELINE NBC	14:00
15:00	NHL - COLORADO AVALANCHE @ ANAHEIM MIGHTY DUCKS	WWE RAW!	GILMORE GIRLS : - THAT'LL DO, PIG	LAW & ORDER: SPECIAL VICTIMS UNIT : - PRIVILEGE	CNN SATURDAY MORNING	15:00
16:00		ONE ON ONE : - THE ONE ABOUT YOUR FRIENDS	THE DIVISION : - MOTHER'S DAY	HEADLINE NEWS	20/20	16:00
16:30		ACCORDING TO JIM : - THE BROTHER-IN-LAW		SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE (03'-04') : - SNL CHRISTMAS SPECIAL 2002 ENCORE		16:30
17:00		THE PRACTICE : - THE MAKING OF A TRIAL ATTORNEY	A SEASON FOR MIRACLES		SATURDAY TODAY	17:00
17:30	NFL LIVE					17:30
18:00	SPORTSCENTER	LAW & ORDER: SPECIAL VICTIMS UNIT : - PRIVILEGE		LIVE IN HOLLYWOOD		18:00
19:00		YOUR CORPS	THE VIEW	THE ENTERTAINERS	WALL STREET JOURNAL	19:00
19:30	NFL COUNTDOWN	NAVY/MARINE CORPS NEWS			AMERICA'S BLACK FORUM	19:30
20:00	NHL COOL SHOTS	COLLEGE BASKETBALL - ACC: TEXAS @ DUKE	LIVING BETTER WITH CARRIE WIATT	COLLEGE BASKETBALL - BIG TEN: KENTUCKY @ INDIANA	NEWS FROM CNN	20:00
20:30	NFL MATCHUP		HOMES WITH STYLE : - COUNTRY LIVING PRESENTS GARDEN ENTERTAINING			20:30
21:00	FOX NFL SUNDAY		WHILE YOU WERE OUT		DATELINE NBC	21:00
21:30	NFL - ATLANTA FALCONS @ TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS					21:30
22:00		ESPNEWS	THE AMAZING RACE : - HE'S A FEW TICKS AWAY FROM HAVING A HEART ATTACK!		HEADLINE NEWS	22:00
22:30		NFL LIVE		ESPNEWS	ARMY NEWSWATCH	22:30
23:00		ESPNEWS	GILMORE GIRLS : - THAT'LL DO, PIG	HEADLINE NEWS	20/20	23:00
23:30		SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE (03'-04') : - SNL CHRISTMAS SPECIAL 2002 ENCORE		HOOR OF POWER - FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST		23:30

## *This day in history...*

December 20, 1946

### **HO CHI MINH FIGHTS FRENCH**

The morning after Viet Minh forces under Ho Chi Minh launched a night revolt in the Vietnamese capital of Hanoi, French colonial troops crack down on the communist rebels. Ho and his soldiers immediately fled the city to regroup in the countryside. That evening, the communist leader issued a proclamation that read: "All the Vietnamese must stand up to fight the French colonials to save the fatherland. Those who have rifles will use their rifles; those who have swords will use their swords; those who have no swords will use spades, hoes, or sticks. Everyone must endeavor to oppose the colonialists and save his country. Even if we have to endure hardship in the resistance war, with the determination to make sacrifices, victory will surely be ours." The First Indochina War had begun.

Born in Hoang Tru, Vietnam, in 1890, Ho Chi Minh left his homeland in 1911 as a cook on a French steamer. After several years as a seaman, he lived in London and then moved to France, where he became a founding member of the French Communist Party in 1920. He later traveled to the Soviet Union, where he studied revolutionary tactics and took an active role in the Communist International. In 1924, he went to China, where he set about organizing exiled Vietnamese communists. Expelled by China in 1927, he traveled extensively before returning to Vietnam in 1941.

There, he organized a Vietnamese guerrilla organization--the *Viet Minh*--to fight for Vietnamese independence. Japan occupied French Indochina in 1940 and collaborated with French officials loyal to France's Vichy regime. Ho, meanwhile, made contact with the Allies and aided operations against the Japanese in South China. In early 1945, Japan ousted the French administration in Vietnam and executed numerous French officials.

When Japan surrendered to the Allies on September 2, 1945, Ho Chi Minh felt emboldened enough to declare the independence of Vietnam from France. French forces seized southern Vietnam and opened talks with the Vietnamese communists in the north. Negotiations collapsed in November 1946, and French warships bombarded the northern Vietnamese city of Haiphong, killing thousands. In response, the Viet Minh launched an attack against the French in Hanoi in December 1946. The French quickly struck back, and Ho and his followers found refuge in a remote area of northern Vietnam. The Viet Minh, undefeated and widely supported by the Vietnamese people, waged an increasingly effective guerrilla war against the French.

The conflict stretched on for eight years, with Mao Zedong's Chinese communists supporting the Viet Minh, and the United States aiding the French and anti-communist Vietnamese forces. In 1954, the French suffered a major defeat at Dien Bien Phu, in northwest Vietnam, prompting peace negotiations and the division of Vietnam along the 17th parallel at a conference in Geneva. Vietnam was divided into northern and southern regions, with Ho in command of North Vietnam and Emperor Bao Dai in control of South Vietnam.

In the late 1950s, Ho Chi Minh organized a communist guerrilla movement in the South, called the *Viet Cong*. North Vietnam and the Viet Cong successfully opposed a series of ineffectual U.S.-backed South Vietnam regimes and beginning in 1964 withstood a decade-long military intervention by the United States, known as the Vietnam War in America but also called the Second Indochina War.

Ho Chi Minh died on September 2, 1969, 25 years after declaring Vietnam's independence from France and nearly six years before his forces succeeded in reuniting North and South Vietnam under communist rule. Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam, was renamed Ho Chi Minh City after it came under the control of the communists in 1975.