



OFFICERS' CORNER

All of us at OTA hope your summer was filled with great fun and that you enjoyed activities in good health, safety, and in the company of family and friends.

This summer, OTA worked hard to make life a little better for some troops in rough circumstances. The 2012 spring offensive in Afghanistan marked some of the worst conflict our military has faced in the War on Terror. Knowing the United States has a planned drawdown of troops over the next two years, the Taliban launched many attacks, intending to inflict as much damage as possible as our military ventures into remote locations to bring stability to the country.

Several bases were attacked, the most significant being FOB Salerno. In early June, a suicide bomber drove a truck loaded with explosives through the perimeter of the base, destroying the dining hall and military exchange store (PX), and damaging many of the troops' living quarters. Tragically, one US soldier was killed in the attack.

We also received a number of requests from troops who are now fighting on combat outposts in new areas of Afghanistan, building new bases and performing missions in the most austere conditions imaginable. Living conditions are harsh and it is critical that we do all we can to boost morale and let them know how much we appreciate their service.

With support from our donors and volunteers, OTA provided immediate relief to the many men and women serving on those bases. In response to the attacks, thousands of pounds of food, hygiene, nutritional supplements, and personal care items were quickly packed and shipped to the troops, giving them a much-needed morale boost and access to critical supplies while the military focused on rebuilding the bases and insuring the safety of our troops.

Just as our military faces one of the most significant challenges in the War on Terror, this initiative marked a significant challenge in OTA history and we are proud that you all answered our call for help!

With the support of our partner Walgreens, we held two "Stuff A Truck" events that re-stocked our shelves and garnered significant monetary donations to purchase specialty items and offset our shipping costs. Local media sponsors, WTAE-TV, CBS Radio and Root Sports spread the word about our organization and our events, and the city responded in droves!

Our morale was boosted from the outpouring of support we received from our community and that support was transferred to the troops we serve — from those on the front-lines in Afghanistan, to a unit providing humanitarian relief in Honduras. Some of the most poignant letters we've

received are featured in this newsletter.

As we move forward to the upcoming holiday season, we know that you'll be there ready to support us as we answer the call from our troops. And we are happy to share the letters and pictures from the troops you've helped. We are likewise happy to provide information on exciting, upcoming events you can participate in to make a significant difference in their lives.

We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your continued support and generosity.



Left to right: Kristen Holloway Querriera (Founder and CEO), Monica Orluk (President), Amanda Thompson (Vice President)

Inside this Issue

★ ★ ★ What We Do ★ ★ ★

Officers' Corner.....	1
We are Committed to Our Courageous	2
OTA Helps Local Pittsburgh Troops of 316th Expedition Sustainment Command.....	2
From the Front Lines	3
The End is Only the Beginning for These Soldiers	7

★ ★ ★ How We Do It ★ ★ ★

Mark Your Calendar	8
Out and About With OTA	9
Save the Date	10
Collection Drive Success.....	10
Donate to OTA through United Way And CFC.....	11

We are Committed to Our Courageous...

Operation Troop Appreciation (OTA) is dedicated to members of our Armed Forces serving and sacrificing for our country.

By providing them with “wish list” items to raise their morale and to aid in the success and safety of their missions, we present a united front to our deployed military by supporting them as individuals. We do this because each and every one of them:

- Memorializes our nation’s past
- Sacrifices to maintain our nation’s culture and freedoms
- Ensures the safety and freedom of our nation’s future generations

Our mission is to build and sustain the morale of deployed troops, enabling them to complete their missions with the assurance that the American public supports and appreciates their selfless service and daily sacrifices.



★ GREAT Nonprofits

OTA voted TOPS of Pittsburgh Charities

OTA is thrilled to have been named one of Pittsburgh’s Top Five Charities, as reported by GreatNonProfits.org. Selection criteria was based on user ratings and postings. Over 50 people reviewed OTA and every one of them rated us Five Stars out of Five. This was the highest ranking of all the charities in Pittsburgh! Thank you to all of our supporters who put OTA in the Number 1 spot!

OTA Helps Local Pittsburgh Troops of 316th Expedition Sustainment Command

Photos and story written by Sgt. Peter Berardi, 316th Expeditionary Sustainment Command and 354th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment.

Operation Troop Appreciation sent soldiers of the 316th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) stationed at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, over 250 care packages to welcome them as they started their deployment.

Being a Pittsburgh-based organization and having many contacts inside the unit, OTA wanted to do something for the troops of the 316th when they first arrived in Kuwait to let them know we are thinking of them and supporting them.

Items were donated through many means, including churches, schools, companies and individuals.

Soldiers from the 316th were very appreciative of the care packages. Col. Bruce Hackett, a Pittsburgh resident and the 316th deputy commanding officer said, “On behalf of Brig. Gen. Jameson and the soldiers of the 316th ESC, I’d personally like to thank Kristen Querriera and

Operation Troop Appreciation for their tremendous kindness and generosity for the wonderful care packages we received,” adding, “I was a recipient of the great support afforded my battalion when OTA first got started in 2004. They have not wavered in their cause and their continued acts of kindness keeps us connected to our loved ones and thoughtful friends supporting us from home. Thank you all for keeping us in your thoughts and prayers. We truly appreciate your undying support.”

Spc. Jacy Mozingo, a resident of Ambridge, PA and member of the 316th command group, said, “This was a very nice gesture, it was nice of them to send packages to us and to know they are thinking about us.”

“I think these are great,” said Sgt. John Howe, a resident of Carnegie, PA and member of the 316th. “I’m always thankful when family, friends and supporters back home think of us.”





FROM THE FRONT LINES

From: Salazar, Jose M
To: Kristen Holloway
Subject: Re: wish list items on the way from OTA! - Salazar (UNCLASSIFIED)

Ma'am good morning and I hope that this e-mail finds you in good health. First of all, I apologize for not responding to you sooner. I have been trying to send all the care packages that we made for our frontline soldiers, and we are attempting to get pictures from them. We are still awaiting more pictures and will send them to you once we get them (some soldiers are in smaller FOBs).

Ma'am, allow me to start out by saying that, I am seated in front of this computer, and thinking about how I can express to you the sincere gratitude that our troops have shared with me in response to your overwhelming generosity. I am sure that I could spend my entire tour here in Afghanistan looking for words that could accurately define our appreciation, but none would be precise. In fact, it was the way the package was delivered and the letter that you took time to write that has made this gesture a true blessing.

I will give you a short example, in your care package there were letters from students that (oh my GOD) really touched the heart and soul of our troops. You might think it is silly to say this, but let me tell you, from the little girl who spelled washing machine (Washing mosheen, cute by the way) to the young gentleman who said he was inspired by the work our troops are doing here in Afghanistan, all of these tremendous little gestures were greatly stimulating and welcoming. I have to say that the focus has been for many years now, on our troops, but nobody has taken the time to actually realize that back in the US, there are people like you (True American troop supporters) that are making a remarkable difference without asking anything in return (other than an e-mail and pictures).

Ma'am I hope one day you can stop what you are doing, look back, reflect, and actually realize what you actually do for our troops. I would like to take this time, to give you and your staff a sincere, heartfelt, and well deserved thank you. Trust me when I say this ma'am," I am sincerely and truly grateful for what you have done for our 296 C Co. front line soldiers". I say this because most Americans use the word thank you as loosely as the word bless you when someone sneezes. No one really knows what you actually do here (make soldiers smile,) or what you go through trying to send troops a slice of Americana, while at the same time making them feel appreciated. It is with this in mind that once again I must tell you to accept my sincere gratitude, and to let you know that I will forever tell my friends, and family members, that there was once a person who took time to make my unit feel valued.

V/R
1LT Salazar, J.
BDE AN 3-2 ID

From: Knotts, Jason K SGT MIL USA FORSCOM
To: Kristen Holloway
Subject: Re: wish list items on the way from OTA! - Knotts (UNCLASSIFIED)

Dear Kristen,

Thank you to you and everyone with Operation Troop Appreciation. We have received our wish list items and have been put to good use already. The Care package arrived while I was home on R&R. I let my roommates know the contents of the care package and told them to go ahead and open it in my absence. I should have given them instructions to take pictures as they opened the care package. Unfortunately they didn't think of it on their own and now we have no pictures of their faces lighting up like a kid on Christmas. When I returned from R&R I was able to witness quite a few guys enjoying the x-box as they were having a battlefield 3 tournament. I will try to get some pictures of the guys enjoying some of the great gifts that you have sent us. Again I would like to thank you and all of Operation Troop Appreciation for all that you do.

Thank you
SGT Jason Knotts



From: Dickey SSgt Morgan G
To: Kristen Holloway
Subject: RE: wish list items on the way from OTA! - Dickey

Kristen,

We received the boxes today. Thank you very much for them, we were running low on the basic necessities since our PX left and our mail is maybe every couple weeks. You should have seen my Marines when I started opening the boxes up, their eyes lit up like Christmas morning.

We appreciate everything that you sent, the hygiene gear was a big help since the heat is hitting upwards of 110 to 115 everyday and it doesn't start to cool down until about 8 at night. The snacks have already been rummaged through already. Now the Pirate and Steeler gear was given to the Marines that are Pittsburgh fans. I didn't give any of those to any Cincinnati, Cleveland, or Baltimore fans. We will display it proudly along with our Terrible Towels that the diehard fans bring on every deployment. I will definitely take pictures of the Marines so you can put a face to the name.

Thank you very much again, words cannot express the gratitude that we have for you all.

SSgt Dickey M.G.
Local Security Chief



FROM THE FRONT LINES

Dear Operation Troop Appreciation,

We at Fox 227 wanted to take a moment to say thank you for the extraordinary efforts you took to send us all of those amazing packages. Sometimes, being here can make people feel disconnected from home. We settle into routines from brushing one's teeth while using a water bottle to subconsciously rolling out of bed when we hear the incoming fire siren while we are sleeping. Perhaps because of this it can be definitively said that when we received your touches of home, we all felt a whole lot closer.

Your ballistics eye protection, Under Armor shirts, and massive boxes of blankets, snacks, hygiene items, and recreational items were greatly appreciated by all of us, with everything being liberally handed out. Sometimes nothing is better than throwing a football around an empty hangar, or holding a phone card with the knowledge that talking to one's family is only a few buttons away.

It's because of organizations like yours, comprised of amazing people with generous hearts that our deployments are that much easier. Make no mistake; you folks make all the difference in the world. When one does the same thing every single day for 12 hours a day, mail, surprises, and kind words can be the difference between "I hate this place," and "It's not so terrible here". We at Fox 227 are truly appreciative of everything you sent to us and everything you do for all of us. Sincerely with heartfelt gratitude and appreciation,
Sergeant Terance Collins and FOX 227 AVN RGT, 1st Cavalry Division

From: Jesse Border
To: Kristen Holloway
Subject: Re: Blackhawk Stomp II on the way from OTA! - Border

Dear Mrs. Holloway,

Yesterday I received the Blackhawk Stomp 2 Medic bag, and today I have been setting it up with all my supplies so it is mission ready. I cannot explain how great this bag will be for my platoon, or how much I appreciate you and your organization doing this for us. The bag will really be a great tool for us in the conditions that we are in. After seeing its capabilities, I don't know how I was working with anything less, It is an unbelievable bag. Thank you very much for this, and everything else you have provided us here in Afghanistan. You really make being here easier for us. I will get some pictures together and email them to you as soon as possible.

Thank You for all your support.

Jesse Border





FROM THE FRONT LINES

From: mark dearlove
To: Kristen Holloway
Subject: Re: wish list items on the way from OTA! - Dearlove

Dear Mrs. Holloway Querriera,

I just wanted to let you know that we received the items you sent us, and we are absolutely most grateful for your team's kindness and generosity. One Soldier remarked "I got the best sleep last night since I left home. I was so comfortable..." We also received a very warm letter from your team and we will certainly be sending a postmail response from all of us here.

Most gratefully,
SFC Dearlove & the thankful soldiers of
Medic PLT, HHC, 1-17th IN

P.S "We will send pictures too..."

From: Brandon Meuth
To: Kristen Holloway
Subject: warm gear

Hello, my name is Brandon Meuth. I am with the 661st En Co attached to 7th Bn Red Devils in Afghanistan. We have a mutual friend Ssg Delgado. He recently contacted you asking for cold weather supplies and you responded quickly. I am one of nine persons you helped out in a time of need. I want to Thank You from all of us. The boots and under gear work great along with everything else. It is people like you that keep a smile on a soldiers face when times get rough. You are doing great things and your effort is much appreciated. Keep up the good work and again, THANK YOU...Spc Meuth

From: Ruiz, David SFC USA USA TF Wolfpack S6
To: Kristen Holloway
Subject: RE: (U) your wish list items on the way from OTA! -

Ma'am,

I received the X-Box, the games controller and the letter. Thank you very much and I appreciate your support. You guys are really awesome. We had a FOB attack a couple of days ago, no Soldier casualties but I tell you that it was one of the proudest moments in my life to see Soldiers just united for our country whooping bad guys. As I was leading perimeter defense A Soldier looks at me and says; Sergeant look, I said what, He said the American Flag and we started to look at about 7 flags that we can see from where we were providing overwatch during the battle. I told another Soldier that was manning the Machine gun and said Soldier, look at the Flag, even if we get hit and fight, Ole Glory Flies through the Sky showing them that we stand for what we believe in as Americans, doesn't that make you proud! As we were doing our stuff, we just continued with that Bold American Pride.

Again, thank you for supporting our troops!

AIRBORNE!

vr,

Be Blessed,
SFC David Ruiz
TF Wolfpack Communications Chief
82nd Airborne Division
FOB Salerno





FROM THE FRONT LINES

THANKS SO MUCH FOR THE BOX. WE ALL LOVE THE SUPPORT HERE. WE HAVE 40 SOLDIERS WHO CARE ABOUT OUR COUNTRY AND LOVE WHAT WE DO. ALL OF US HERE ARE ON MISSIONS DAILY. IF NOT ON A MISSION WE ARE WORKING HARD TO MAINTAIN OUR EQUIPMENT SO WE ARE ALWAYS MISSION READY. OUR PLATOON DRIVES THE LARGEST MILITARY VEHICLE CALLED THE HET. WE HAVE VERY LARGE EQUIPMENT TO MOVE DAILY AND IT MAKES OUR JOB EASY ON MOST DAYS WE HAVE ABOUT 10 MORE MONTHS OVER HERE. AGAIN THANKS FOR EVERYTHING

SSG BAUMAN ARTHUR
72B 1650

I thought the reason's why I joined the service were my own yet 20+ years later I've come to realize that there are others that feel the same as I.

Keep doing what you do.

GOD Bless You!!

SFC Crystal Renee Saunders
OFF XII 2012



REPLY TO ATTENTION OF

14 May 2012



Dear Operation Troop Appreciation,

Today we received numerous boxes containing hygiene supplies, snacks, and of course good ole Pittsburgh gear. Words can not express the amount of gratitude that myself and my Marines have for you operation and all the people associated with it. It has been a couple weeks since our last mail drop and our PX has left the base for a month so the Marines were running low on basic hygiene necessities and snacks. Their faces lit up when I started to open up the boxes and they saw what was inside. We all here at Echo Battery 2nd Battalion 10th Marines Detachment 2 aboard Delaram II are very appreciative of all the people that made this possible. Thank you again and God Bless.

Thank you,
CO My

Thank you so much!
-Cpl Travis

Thank you for the gear
you sent -
Go Sargent's
Thank you for
Lolli Dancer

Thank you
Lolli Brand

Thank you for
EVERYTHING!!
LCPL ALCOSER

Thank you
Lolli Alvi

Thank you
Lolli Alvi

Thank you for
the letters! they
mean a lot!
Sgt DYE

God Bless
SSgt Morgan Dockery

Thank you
-Lolli Trugel

Thank you
Lolli Alvi

Thanks alot!
Sgt Koser

Dear Ms. Holloway and Ms. Orluk,

We received several boxes yesterday from Operation Troop Appreciation. Thank you so much for taking the time to organize, gather and ship the snacks, personal hygiene and MWR items. The Soldiers will definitely enjoy using the products.

We appreciate your support, and look forward to sharing your information with others, who will follow in our footsteps. Because of your loyalty to the troops, it is times when we receive items, from the heart, that makes us feel close to home. It boosts the Soldier's morale, and gives us something to look forward to. It is nice to be able to open a box, and know that it was packaged with thought and kindness, from those who took the time to prepare the boxes.

Please thank everyone, who had a helping hand in packaging, gathering and shipping the items to the Soldiers of the 119th ICTC. Your kind generosity will not be forgotten. We are truly grateful to have people, like you and others, who care so much for the men and women, who are serving our Nation. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!


FELICIA E. STURGEON
CPT, LG
Commanding





The End is Only the Beginning for These Soldiers

With many American troops serving on their third, fourth, fifth, or even sixth deployment overseas, our support of them is critical.

In June, enemy forces attacked FOB Salerno in Afghanistan, which destroyed the base's Dining Facility and Military Exchange. OTA responded to dozens of requests from soldiers affected by this attack. We sent thousands of pounds of nutritional food and snacks, health care and personal care items to tide the soldiers over until repairs were completed and replacement supplies made available.

With military operations in Afghanistan slated to end in December 2014, our military is working over-time to stabilize the country. Combat Outposts (COPs) are being set up in dangerous and remote areas to establish stability. For the troops setting up these brand new COPs, it almost feels like the beginning of a new war, with no running water, sewage or showers, and no way to procure basic items. They are engaging with the enemy every day.

Our troops are incredibly skilled and well-trained to deal with these challenges, but support from home during these times keeps their morale high so they can focus on their missions. OTA's primary focus is to provide immediate support to the troops working to stabilize new areas of Afghanistan.

Our goal is to provide them:

- Supplemental tactical gear (gloves, eye protection, GPS systems, multi-tools, etc.)
- Hygiene and personal care items (many areas do not have outlets for troops to purchase their own)
- Amenities to ease rough living conditions and to prepare their own meals (such as solar showers and cooking equipment)

For the troops setting up these brand new COPs, it almost feels like the beginning of a new war, with no running water, sewage or showers, and no way to procure basic items.

There are a few simple ways you can ensure the troops in greatest need receive necessary supplies. Get more information on these ideas on our website at

OperationTroopAppreciation.org

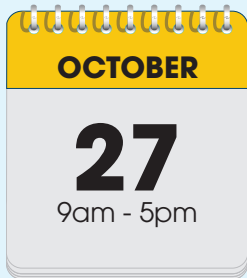
- Make a financial contribution.
- Contribute to one of our Top Priority troop units by Sponsoring a Unit.
- Collect or donate snack, hygiene or personal care items to OTA for inclusion in care packages

No one at OTA (not officers, board members, or volunteers) has ever received wages or salary for our work — and that's not going to change. We are a service non-profit, motivated only by our passion and sincere support of the troops, and we think that makes us a very special charity.

Instead of paychecks, our rewards come in the form of smiles and letters from our troops. And it really doesn't get any better than that.



Mark your Calendar



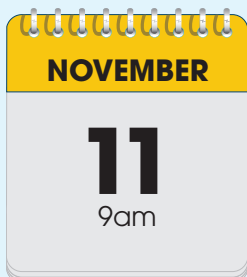
Sam's Club Drive West Mifflin, PA

While you stock up on your Sam's Club supplies, you can help OTA stock up on much-needed items for the troops. OTA volunteers will be on hand to accept your donations.



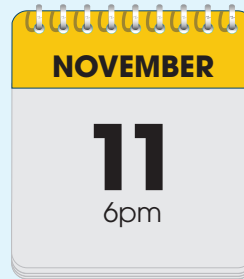
Operation Troop Appreciation Book and Jewelry Sale OTA headquarters at Century III Mall

This two day event will feature hundreds of books and beautiful jewelry for sale, with all proceeds going to OTA. With school back in session, now is a good time to catch up on your reading and get a head-start on your Christmas shopping! While you're there, be sure to stop in and tour our military tribute space.



Veteran's Day 5K race Hampton Community Park, Allison Park, PA

This Annual Veterans Day race gets better every year! Join hundreds of runners, walkers, baby strollers and dog walkers for another unforgettable day of fun, awards, entertainment and post-race buffet. For details on how to register, see page 10.



"A Tribute to Our Military" at ELEVEN in the Strip District, Pittsburgh, PA

Join OTA for an intimate evening that includes a 5-course dinner with wine pairings, a tribute emceed by Pittsburgh's own Bill Hillgrove, with key note speaker and national best-selling author Sean Parnell who led the Outlaw Platoon of the 10th Mountain Division in a 16-month deployment in Afghanistan. Tickets are \$150. Contact Monica Orluk at Monica@OperationTroopAppreciation.org for ticket and sponsorship details.



Pittsburgh Penguins Support Our Heroes

Join the Pittsburgh Penguins and sponsors, ATI, Dunkin Donuts, Pizza Hut, and First Niagara Bank from October 23 through November 10 as they launch the *Support Our Heroes* campaign throughout the city. The program kicks off with the Penguins Game on October 23. Make a donation during the campaign and the sponsors will match those funds! Proceeds go to OTA, The Mario Lemieux Foundation, and the Penguins Foundation. "Zamboni Banks" are located at hundreds of sponsor locations throughout the city and at CONSOL Energy center, so you don't need to go far to donate and help make a difference for these very worthy causes!

Out & About with Operation Troop Appreciation



OTA is very active in the Pittsburgh community, showing our neighbors what their support has enabled us to do over the past eight years. It gives us an opportunity to say "Thank You Pittsburgh" for making OTA a successful non-profit that has impacted 100,000 troops. Here are a few things we've been up to!

Castle Shannon Community Day

OTA Volunteer and recent Jefferson Award winner Don Wilson was one of several community spokesmen to speak at the Castle Shannon Memorial Day celebration on Saturday, May 26.



Pittsburgh Marathon

Team OTA raised over \$4,600 at the Pittsburgh Marathon on Sunday, May 6. Thank you to the runners and sponsors who helped make this event a tremendous success. Special thanks go to OTA volunteer Tricia Staley (far right) who coordinated the entire event, recruited runners, and inspired everyone in their training and race preparation.



Walgreens hosts "Treats for Troops"

Walgreens' wildly successful "Treats for Troops" campaign continued throughout the spring and summer, with overwhelming support shown by the Pittsburgh community. Walgreens hosted Collection Drives at five different store locations: Peters Township, Moon Township, Canonsburg, Pleasant Hills and Upper St. Clair from March through August to collect hygiene and snack items for deployed troops.



OTA Volunteer Barb Mead greets Walgreens customers and thanks them for their purchases.

In June, American Forward Operating Base (FOB) Salerno in Afghanistan was attacked, destroying the base's Military Exchange and Dining Facility. OTA responded by sending thousands of pounds of supplies to help tide the soldiers over until resources could be restored on base. After that large shipment, OTA reached out to Walgreens who responded with immediate assistance with another collection drive to help restock OTA's shelves.



Walgreens volunteers assist at the kids activity table

The summer 2012 campaign ended with a Community Event featuring raffles, prizes and kids' activities at the Upper St. Clair store. Tremendously grateful for their amazing efforts and hard work to make this campaign a success, OTA thanked Walgreens for their support by presenting them with an American flag that flew over FOB Fenty in Afghanistan.



Pictured left to right are OTA VP Amanda Thompson with Walgreens staff Justin Kalnicky, Shawna Laughlin, Jason Belczyk and Chris McCrum.

OTA thanks Walgreens for two years of dedicated service to our troops. Their hard work and enthusiasm have made a tremendous impact on our organization, and most importantly, a tremendous impact on our troops.

PPG & OTA Packing Day

PPG employees participated in the first ever Joint PPG & OTA packing day on August 25. The group packed over 50 boxes totaling 2500 pounds of supplies for troops in Afghanistan.



Pictured from left to right are: Anita Garbo, Kelly Hicks, Janet Wood, Tim and Jane Keener, Carolyn Ilhrig, Anne Marie Gebhardt, Kristen Querriera, Lou Geibel, and Al Hicks (in front).



SAVE THE DATE

One Day, Two Ways to Support OTA

OTA Presents A Tribute to Our Military

OTA is hosting *A Tribute to Our Military*, Sunday, Nov. 11, 2012, at ELEVEN in the Strip District.

This special event will

- Honor veterans and pay tribute to their service
- Allow veterans to share their experiences in times of war and the importance of support from home.
- Help provide OTA with resources needed to continue to provide morale boosting items to our troops overseas.

The evening's festivities include: Champagne Pre-Dinner Reception, 5-course meal with wine pairings prepared by Executive Chefs, Derek Stevens and Bill Fuller.

Host and Emcee:

The Voice of the Pitt Panthers and Pittsburgh Steelers – **Bill Hillgrove**

Keynote Speaker:

Author of *Outlaw Platoon* and decorated Army Veteran – **Sean Parnell**

Sergeant Bob Timney will perform the National Anthem and Staff Sergeant Matthew Claycomb will share his experiences of his deployment to Iraq and the importance of support from home.

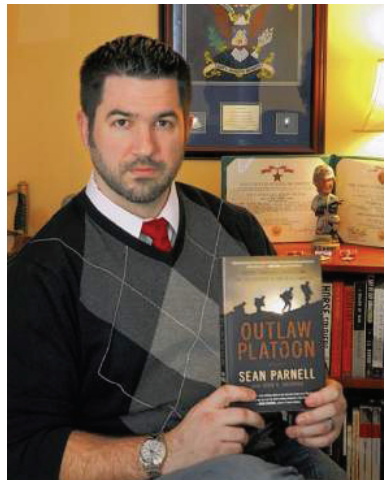
OTA and the troops we serve need your support. Limited sponsorship opportunities are available at the \$1000, \$500 and \$250 level. Dinner event tickets are \$150.

To sponsor this event or for more information, contact Monica Orluk, Monica@OperationTroopAppreciation.org

*As commander of the 10th Mountain Division's **Outlaw Platoon**, Sean led his unit in a sixteen-month deployment, under close combat on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. The battle they fought resulted in the highest casualty rate since Gettysburg and Sean shares his experience through his book, **Outlaw Platoon**.*

*A searing and unforgettable story of friendship in battle, **Outlaw Platoon** brings to life the intensity and raw emotion of this deployment under close combat, showing how the fight reshaped the lives of Parnell and his men and how the love and faith they found in one another ultimately kept them alive.*

Sean is a resident of Cranberry, PA and now devotes himself to military and veteran causes across the country. He devotes his time to the belief that "When they come back, we give back." Learn more about Sean at www.officialseanparnell.com.



7th Annual OTA Veteran's Day 5K Race

The Seventh Annual OTA Veterans Day 5K Race will be held on Sunday, November 11, at 9 a.m. at the Hampton Community Park, 3101 McCully Road in Allison Park.

Enjoy entertainment, great competition, lots of prizes, awards in thirteen age groups, goody bags, and a scrumptious post-race All-American buffet!

Early Bird Special: \$15 (until Oct 16)

Pre Registration Fee: \$20

Race Day Fee: \$25

Join a Team Challenge for groups of five runners. Teams will compete for a special prize to be won by team with the lowest total score.

Team Fee: \$75 in advance;

\$100 race day.

Register and pay on line at www.Active.com.

(On the blue navigation bar, type in Pittsburgh for the location; Operation Troop Appreciation for the event; click Search. A link for the OTA 5K race will appear, and registration details appear on that link.)

For more information, contact Event Director, Alice McLaughlin at Gerardmac977@aol.com.

COLLECTION DRIVE SUCCESS

Many generous and patriotic individuals, corporations and organizations came through for the troops in a big way. We heartily thank all those folks who completed a Collection Drive this summer!

- ✳ Applebee's -Trinity Point in Washington, PA
- ✳ Kaplan University
- ✳ EDMC Online Higher Education
- ✳ John McMillan Presbyterian Church
- ✳ Chick-fil-A at South Hills
- ✳ Mohawk Elementary School-Memorial Day project
- ✳ Stoney Creek Church, Goldsboro NC
- ✳ Blumling & Gusky, LLP
- ✳ Boy Scout Troop 1320 in McMurray, PA
- ✳ Propel-Montour in Kennedy Township
- ✳ Erin Showalter "Operation Sunscreen"

It's that time of year again! Donate to OTA through United Way and CFC

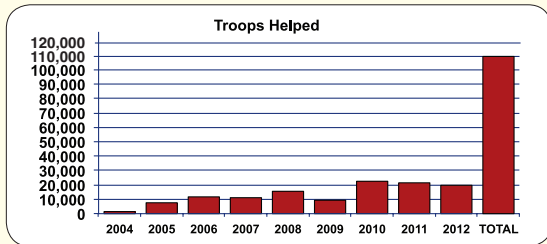
Did you know you can donate directly to OTA through the United Way and the Combined Federal Campaign?

Simply designate Operation Troop Appreciation on your annual giving contribution form with these codes;
United Way Agency # **1525287** or CFC Code # **94786** (in Southwest PA and Ohio Valley only)

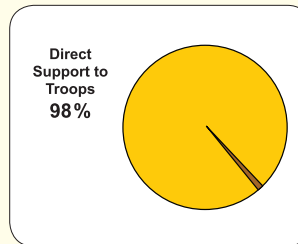
By supporting OTA with these campaigns, you'll be helping OTA make sure our troops are taken care of throughout 2013.



We Proudly Support All Branches of the Military



Because of the generous support of our donors, more than 100,000 troops have received "wish list" items from OTA.



OTA is an all-volunteer organization with minimal overhead expenses. As a result, 98 cents of every dollar we have spent since our inception in 2004 has gone directly to our troops. Very few charities can boast this high efficiency rate.

How You Can Help

Please remember, there are troops deployed all over the world. Operation Troop Appreciation is always in need of donated items to fulfill our troops' "wish list" requests.

If you, your company, church, school or civic group are in the Pittsburgh area and would like to hold a collection or fundraising drive for OTA, please contact us.

Groups and individuals nationwide can also sponsor a unit as part of a fundraising effort.

Please contact Vice President Amanda Thompson for a list of needed items, collection guidelines, and sponsorship information at Amanda@OperationTroopAppreciation.org.

Connect with Us

Operation Troop Appreciation is an official cause on Facebook and Twitter. Follow us for announcements of upcoming events, notice of volunteer opportunities, pictures and postings from the troops we help.

Do you know someone who would like to get the OTA newsletter delivered via email? They can sign up in one easy step by providing their name and email address on our website at OperationTroopAppreciation.org. They'll get our newsletter conveniently delivered to their inbox. We never sell or trade personal information to third parties.

