

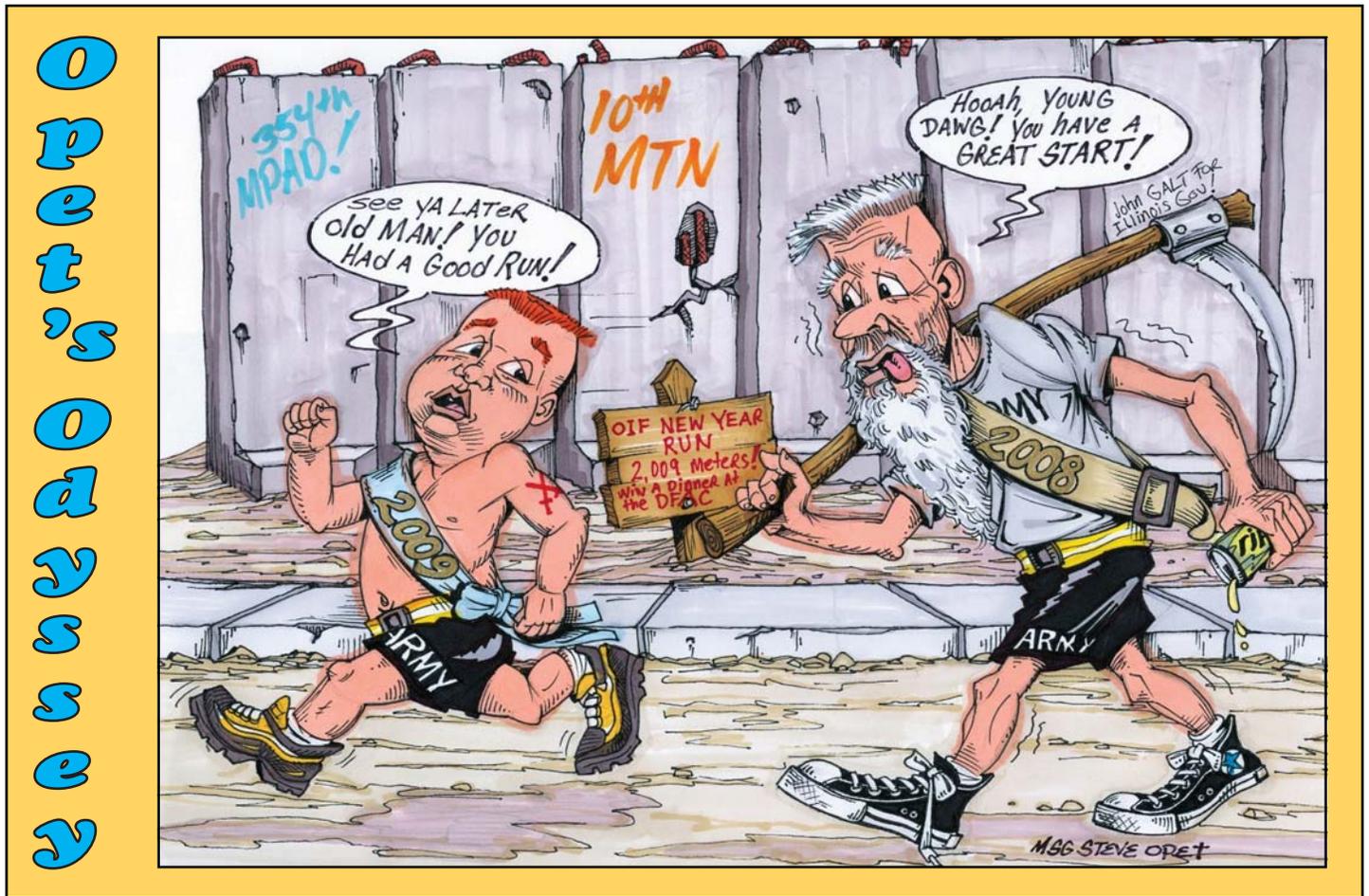


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Soldier Edition

January 1, 2009

Happy New Year!



Spirits stay high while working during the holidays

SPC. SOPHIA R. LOPEZ
MND-C



CAMP VICTORY – New Year's Day is the culmination of an exciting season of celebrations and usually, about a week away from work or school. Deployed Soldiers work these holidays like any other day; frequently, they work even harder on these days.

This is a Soldier's life; their work protecting, feeding and entertaining the troops is worth the hours.

"It's not too bad. I try not to think about it too much," said Sgt. Larry Tuttle, of Kittanning, Penn., a Headquarters Support

Company, Division Special Troops Battalion Soldier who works at entry control point two. "I always remember I have Family at home who cares; but on the flipside, I have a family of Soldiers who depend on me now. This is what I need to be doing right now, and I'll call my Family when work is done."

Pfc. Diego Valbuena, of St Lucie, Fla., a personnel supervisor for ECP 2, HSC, DSTB, 10th Mtn. Div., is responsible for supervising Soldiers and Ugandan security contractors as they search civilians coming onto Victory Base Complex.

"I worked Thanksgiving, my birthday and now, Christmas.

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WHAT IS YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION?



Photo by Spc. Sophia R. Lopez

"To be there for my kids," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Shawn Walker, of Marston, Mo., canine handler, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 10th Mountain Division.



Photo by Spc. Sophia R. Lopez

"To be the best version of me I can be," said 1st Lt. Jake Massacci, of Diamond, Ohio, Iraqi Police operations officer, HHC, 10th Mtn. Div.



Photo by Spc. Sophia R. Lopez

"To spend more time with my son," said Spc. Robert Heller, of Prescott Valley, Ariz., helpdesk technician, Network Support Company, 10th Mtn. Div.



Photo by Spc. Sophia R. Lopez

"To quit smoking," said Sgt. John Coogen, of Palm Springs, Calif., signal support systems specialist, 445th CA Battalion.



Photo by Spc. Sophia R. Lopez

"To start working more on the book I'm writing," said Spc. Rebecca Ritter, of Ramore, Mo., civil information management cell data analyst, 445th CA Battalion.



Photo by Spc. Sophia R. Lopez

"To get home and be a better person," said Pfc. Adam Silva, of Santa Rosa, Calif., a supply specialist for HHC, 10th Mtn. Div.

THE Mountain View

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Task Force 449



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SPIRIT

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I just look at it as one day closer to home," said Valbuena.

For Valbuena and the other Soldiers working during the holidays, this day is just like the rest - with Family on their minds.

"To go home on Christmas would be nice, but I'm making money here, and that allows my family to have a good Christmas," said Ivan, of Uganda, a contractor with EOD Technology, Inc., a security company which works around the Victory Base Complex.

Soldiers are thinking of Families back home, but they also think of the family they have here - their military family.

"This is our extended family," said Sgt. Dianara Easterwood, of Providence, R.I., assistant manager and noncommissioned officer-in-charge of administration at the Coalition Café, HSC, DSTB. "We spend time with each other and have an appreciation of what we are each going through because we are all going through the same thing."

Easterwood, who takes charge of eight to 12 Soldiers to keep the dining facility running, acknowledges that during the holidays, the job doesn't change, just the pace and work load.

"We feed a lot more personnel, and there is a lot more preparation involved," she said. "(The Soldiers) put in countless hours during shift and in their off-time." For the holidays, many food service Soldiers are busy preparing displays for the DFAC.

On a regular day, Pfc. Joshua Leonard, of Edmond, Okla., a food service specialist of HSC, DSTB, takes a running headcount, tracks personnel and helps with guard shack duty, making sure no unauthorized personnel enter the DFAC.

For the holidays, however, he also assists in creating the displays. During Christmas, there were styrofoam displays of the Grinch, Cindy Lou Who, a snowman, Rudolph, Santa and his sleigh. These displays took approximately three to four weeks to prepare.

The food service Soldiers also average 17 to 19-hour days preparing for Christmas, but the final product is rewarding.

"The advantage to working the holidays is seeing the end result, the look of amazement on people's faces," said Easterwood.

All those who work to keep Soldiers safe and lift their moods appreciate the importance of their work - especially when deployed.



Photo by Spc. Sophia R. Lopez

Sgt. Dianara Easterwood, of Providence, R.I., assistant manager and noncommissioned officer-in-charge of administration at the Coalition Café, HSC, DSTB, prepares food for the Christmas dinner with her fellow Soldiers Dec. 24.

"I know I directly influence the morale of Soldiers, and it's satisfying to know that," said Sgt. Jeffrey Groome, of Johnson City, N.Y., a tuba player for the 10th Mtn. Div. band. "Music is my job, and we perform for Soldiers for their morale." Groome and other band members perform for many events ranging from transfer-of-authority ceremonies to holiday parties.

The band is busier during the holidays with more performances in addition to their normal responsibilities. This increase in their operational tempo is a good distraction during the holidays, said Groome.

"Time flies, and it makes it easier being away from Family," he said. "Working during the holidays is just something musicians do. There's always something going on," he said.

"Sure, you miss some time off, time to yourself, but I know I'm making a difference to the Soldiers. That makes it worthwhile."

CSM Smoot- the man behind the rank

SPC. JUSTIN SNYDER
MND-C



CAMP VICTORY- It was Oct. 1981 when Private Tyrone Smoot began his journey in the military. After mulling over whether or not to join the Air Force, Smoot and his best pal decided that the Army was the right choice.

He left for basic training with four years on his mind; the amount of time he was going to serve.

"I only planned to serve for four years," said Smoot, a then 20-year-old private fresh out of high school. "I had a lot of people telling me, 'You don't need to join the Army,' and wondering if I could cut it,

but it was something me and my buddy were doing together.

"Besides, it was only going to be four years," added Smoot.

It was the encouraging words of a colonel that changed his mind - just in the nick of time.

"Exactly one day prior to my (end time of service) date, a colonel at Ft. Lewis told me, 'We need leaders like you to stay in the Army,' said Smoot. "I took those words to heart."

To the pleasure of his comrades today, the Soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division Special Troops Battalion, Smoot re-enlisted. Sitting at his desk in Iraq 28 years later, the rank private now replaced

with command sergeant major, Smoot looks back with a smile.

What was to only be a stop in his life's journey, has become a passion and a career that he wouldn't trade for the world.

He thrives on knowing that hundreds of Soldiers are depending on him to ensure that they are getting the training and guidance to succeed if the time might come to fight.

While Iraq has made significant security gains, Smoot understands that things can go wrong in the blink of an eye. He takes his job very seriously and believes that training is a key element for Sol-

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SMOOT

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diers to continue to be successful in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"I was here when things were not exactly pretty," said Smoot. "Things are way different now, but these Soldiers need to be well trained in all atmospheres."

Smoot served in both countries and saw both the good and bad moments of a deployment.

He was in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 and again now as the DSTB command sergeant major. He also served with the 10th Mountain Division in Afghanistan.

"I must always ensure that we are ready to ensure the safety to every one of these Soldiers over here," said Smoot. "One life is too many if it's a fallen comrade. Getting through each day is a blessing because you can't get back a life.

"Families, husbands, wives and kids; they all rely on me to bring their Family member home safe. No Family deserves to get that devastating phone call, and it's my duty to ensure them that the only phone calls they get are from their Soldier."

Smoot's wife, Rolanda, helps also, as she heads the Family Readiness Group back at Fort Drum.



Photo by Spc. Justin Snyder

Command Sgt. Major Tyronne Smoot, DSTB, 10th Mtn. Div. senior enlisted adviser, speaks to troops during an Eid Al Fitr celebration on Camp Victory.

Smoot, constantly managing a myriad of issues, believes that communication is among the most important aspects of his role as a command sergeant major.

"We have a lot of Soldiers out at the (joint security stations) and the (forward operating bases) who are doing great things," said Smoot. "I like to get out and see these Soldiers and have real conver-

sations with them. Communication and talking to the Soldiers is essential for our mission to be a go."

He truly strives to have a personal relationship with the Soldiers he leads and serves; though there are approximately 1,000 Soldiers in the DSTB, each one is important to him.

"There is no better pleasure for me than sitting down and talking with the Soldiers," said Smoot. "Their perspective is a lot different than mine; they're the ones out in the field.

"Getting information from them and hearing what they have to say is huge. I want them to know that we are here for them to help with whatever needs they may have."

Smoot acknowledges that he wouldn't be where he is today without the mentorship and guidance he received from his leaders in his early days.

In return, he strives to be that positive influence to the Soldiers he sees coming up in the Army ranks.

"I had some NCOs and great teachers who set an example that I always wanted to live up to," said Smoot. "It's important for Soldiers to find that person and set those goals now.

"If I can be that person for a Soldier, it's just as big of an accomplishment as anything I've ever done. I won't let these Soldiers fail."

"Laugh in the New Year-Improv in Iraq Tour" visits MND-C



Photo by Staff Sgt. Amber Emery

(Above) Karri Turner, Lt. Harriet Sims from "J.A.G.," poses with 10 Mountain Division Judge Advocate General's office at the Multi-National Division - Center headquarters Dec. 30 during a stop made on the tour. (Right) Turner gets a driving lesson from Pfc. Nathaniel Reyes, Company G, 3rd Battalion, 16th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, at Convoy Support Center Scania.



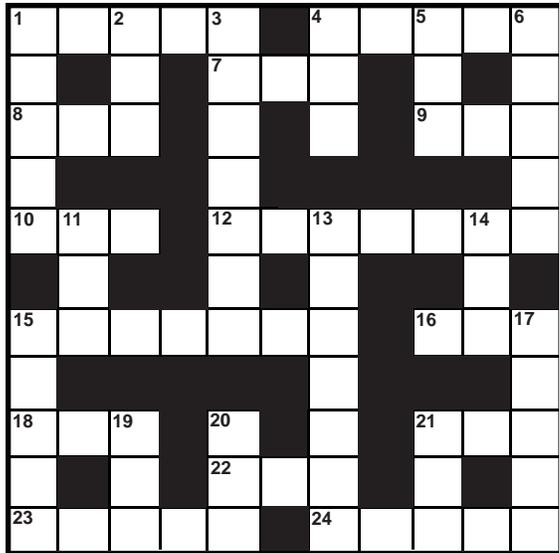
Photo by Staff Sgt. Amber Emery

(Above) Jordan Black, star of "Punk'd," "Saturday Night LIVE" and "Mad TV;" Karri Turner, Michael Hitchcock, star of "Best in Show," "Serenity," and "Mad TV;" Wendi McLendon, star of "Comedy Central," "Reno 911;" Page Kendig, producer of CBS's "The Early Show;" and (seated) Dave Price, reporter for CBS's "The Early Show," pose in the MND-C commanding general's office Dec. 30.



Photos by Capt. Brian James

Crossword



DOWN

1. where writers work
2. where a sparrow comes from
3. editors?
4. go fast
5. pirate agreement
6. pointy flying weapon
11. what a good review helps
13. what a novelist wants to be
14. poem
15. Earth
17. aroma
19. Lena's significant other
20. a writer's tool
21. The Catcher in the ____ novel

ACROSS

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. songs for two | 15. Dustin Hoffman role |
| 4. Queen Isabella's daughter | 16. year for landlubbers |
| 7. hatchet | 18. ____ Grande |
| 8. droop | 21. regret |
| 9. listener | 22. lady sheep |
| 10. ocean | 23. it came from space |
| 12. A mature 2 down | 24. live |

Word Search



- Artichoke hearts
- Asiago
- Asparagus
- Bacon
- Banana peppers
- Basil
- Bell peppers
- Black olives
- Broccoli
- Crust
- Eggplant
- Feta
- Garlic
- Goat cheese
- Gouda
- Green olives
- Ground beef
- Ham
- Jalapenos

Pizza

- Monterey jack
- Mozzarella
- Mushrooms
- Olive oil
- Onions
- Oysters
- Parmesan
- Pepperoni
- Provolone
- Ricotta
- Salami
- Sausage
- Shrimp
- Spinach
- Tomato sauce
- Tomatoes
- Zucchini

**WOULD YOU
 LIKE TO CHAT
 WITH THE
 CG?
 HE WOULD
 LIKE TO CHAT
 WITH YOU!**



Meet the CG online
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 to 9:00 p.m.

How?

- Go to www.taskforcemountain.com
- Click on *Lima Charlie chat room* (right sidebar)
- Click on the *click here* icon
- Enter your name and login

Trivia of the Week

What are the names of the Three Musketeers?