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DESERT MESH

The Official Voice of ARCENT - Qatar



Issue 30

*Merry
Christmas*
From
ARCENT-QATAR



Cover Graphics by Clayton Gausling



Father Christmas

He is the patron saint of Russia, of parish clerks, of scholars (who used to be called clerks), of pawnbrokers (because of his three bags of gold transformed to the three gold balls). Finally he is the original of Santa Claus.

St. Nicholas (real name Osios Nicklaus) was born in AD 280, in Patara, a city in Asia Minor. He soon became the gift giver of Myra and his gifts were given late at night so that his identity would remain a secret. It is directly from this that the legend that the children should go to bed and to sleep quickly or he would not come originated. St. Nicholas also gave his name to highwaymen, who were often referred to as St. Nicholas' Clerks. Possibly so called because of the liberties taken by choristers on St. Nicholas' Day. It is from St. Nicholas' Clerks that we get various slang phrases - e.g. Nick

- which is slang to steal, and 'in the nick' – meaning to be imprisoned.

Christmas is a celebration that is enjoyed in most of the world. Below are some phrases for saying "HAPPY CHRISTMAS". Or participate in the USO's E-Greetings!

French: JOYEUX NOEL

Spanish: FELIZ NAVIDAD

German: FROEHLICHE WEIHNACTEN

Can you name Santa's original reindeer?

(Don't be fooled, although he had the song, Rudolf is not actually one of Santa's original reindeer at all. He came along a bit later!)



The next Father Christmas (Peter Watson with Cpt. Samuel Jungman.) USO's sponsoring of Santa E-Greetings.

Doner and Blitzen, Cupid and Ptancer, Dasher and Dancer, Comet and Vixen



Kwanzaa

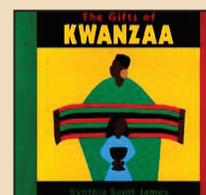
Honoring values of Ancient African Cultures

The year 2004 will see the 39th annual Kwanzaa, the African American holiday celebrated from December 26 to January 1. It is estimated that some 18 million African Americans take part in Kwanzaa. Kwanzaa is not a religious holiday, nor is it meant to replace Christmas. It was created by Dr. Maulana "Ron" Karenga, a professor of Black Studies, in 1966. At this

time of great social change for African Americans, Karenga sought to design a celebration that would honor the values of ancient African cultures and inspire African Americans who were working for progress. Kwanzaa is based on the year-end harvest festivals that have taken place throughout Africa for thousands of years. The name comes from the Swahili phrase "matunda ya kwanza," which means "first fruits of the harvest." Karenga chose a phrase from Swahili because the language is used by various peoples throughout Africa.

Colorful Celebrations

Families gather for the great feast of karamu on December 31. Karamu may be held at a home, community center, or church. Celebrants enjoy traditional African dishes as well as those featuring ingredients Africans brought to the United States, such as sesame seeds (benne), peanuts (groundnuts), sweet potatoes, collard greens, and spicy sauces.



Thanksgiving Celebration

Most people don't associate Thanksgiving with Napoleon Bonaparte. Which is a good thing, really, since the relationship between the two is practically nonexistent. However, Napoleon once said that "an Army marches on its' stomach." This statement has been taken to mean that good, hot chow is a real force multiplier. And nowhere was this more evident than in the Camp As Sayliyah dining facilities during the Thanksgiving Day feast.

3000 meals served... 54 gallons of "Cream of Mushroom" soup... 820 pounds of turkey (45 birds worth!), and 640 pounds of Steamship Round... 375 pounds of Shrimp cocktail... 630 pounds of macaroni and cheese... 46 gallons of salad dressing...



Appropriately enough, there was enough food to feed an Army.

"We were fortunate this year..." the Food Service Warrant Officer, CW3 Michael Colvin, said. "Not only were we able to spend an increased amount for the food that we got, but the DFAC crew did one heckuva job in preparing the feast." The CAS Food Service NCO, SFC Dan Stuckey, agreed; "Thanksgiving is many people's favorite Holiday, which makes it that much harder for troops to be away from home. We try to give things a little more plushness, and make it special for everyone who comes through." CW3 Colvin commented, though, that he doubted that many people went through as much effort at home.

Some 'special touches' that were exhibited at the Thanksgiving celebration involved ice sculpting, gourd carving, and even some creature creations made out of hard-baked bread dough. The cornucopia exhibited in the middle of the DFAC overflowed with seasonal fruits, sweets, and treats of different shapes, sizes and flavors. There was even carved and sliced Jell-O for those who were watching their weight.

In orchestrating this year's celebrations, CW3 Colvin and SFC Stuckey were ably assisted by the Tamimi Company's crew, staffed by prep cooks, servers, and food specialists from a variety of Nations. Further adding to their efforts a local Girl

Scout even volunteered to assist in the preparation of the Dining Facility. And then of course, all the Camp As Sayliyah tenant organizations

lined up their Leaders to serve. The American Ambassador to Qatar served for a while on the line, and the Redskins cheerleaders were on hand to share in the meal and spread their unique Holiday cheer, keeping the troops' morale up.



All in all, many man-hours, much dedication, and a myriad of culinary arts went into making the Thanksgiving celebration a success, but from the satisfied looks of the people who attended it, it was well worth it. If you ask SFC Stuckey about the event, he will tell you with a satisfied grin that "it was definitely one of the nicer ones I've seen..." but he is quick to add "... I think that this year's Christmas is going to really blow people away!"

Yet another reason to look forward to the Holidays at scenic Camp As Sayliyah.

Article by Cpt. Christian Simon

Christmas Day Dinner December 25, 2004

Soup		Appetizer
Cream of Almond	Entrée	Shrimp Cocktail
Potatoes Starches,	Roast Turkey	Salad
Dressings	Steamship	Coleslaw
Orange Rice	Round	Potato Salad
Corn Bread Dressing	Baked Ham	Waldorf Salad
Mashed Potatoes	Bread, Rolls & Spreads	Tossed Green Salad
Macaroni and Cheese	Corn Bread	
	Hot Rolls	
Desserts		Beverages
Pumpkin Pie	Vegetables	Eggnog
Apple Pie	Collard Greens	Low Fat Milk
Sweet Potato Pie	Corn on the Cob	Coffee
Pecan Pie	Broccoli with Cheese	Hot Tea
Ice Cream &		Iced Tea
Candy Bar		
Cheese Cake		

Serving Times 1100 to 1400

Camp As Sayliyah Army Education Center

What do you do during your free time? Here at Camp As Sayliyah, we have an abundance of activities ranging from working on your tan at the swimming pool, working on your muscles at the gym, or working on your reflexes on the X-Box. Although all those popular activities help to ease the hardships of being downrange, none of them will help you get promoted, get you a higher paying job, or will improve your chances of being the next 74-consecutive games Champion on "Jeopardy".

Right now is the perfect opportunity for you to gain civilian education credits because the Army Education Center Staff have finally arrived at Camp As Sayliyah. The Army Education Center is located in Building 111 and is open everyday from 0900-2100 hours. According to Joanne Martin, the Education Services Officer, *"the Education Center has something to offer everyone. Soldiers are able to use the Army 100% Tuition Assistance, prior military service members are able to use their G.I. Bill benefits, and everybody is eligible to use the computer lab and register for on-site classes as long as space is available."* Central Texas College registration is currently being conducted by Michelle Centers, the Field Representative, for classes in Applied Management which begin on December 20th. The Army Testing Office offers testing services for DANTES and Army Personnel tests as well as distance education proctored exams. *Did you know that you can earn up to 6 semester hours of college credit just by passing one exam?* Corey Butler runs the Army Learning Center which has study material, MOS related information, and 20 online computers. The Best Computer Lab on base is open until 2300 hours which means you'll have plenty of time to work on your class assignments either before or after duty.

Two of the best resources for all downrange Soldiers are Vern Woolridge, the Local Program Manager, and Chris Cho, the Education Counselor Aide. Mr. Woolridge was also the Local Program Manager at the Education Centers in Kosovo, Macedonia and Bosnia. Mr. Woolridge, who is a former Army senior NCO that still takes great pride in helping Soldiers, says *"The number one mission of the Army Education Center here in Qatar is to take care of Soldiers. We have EAST classes that will improve Soldier's GT scores and we have ASEP courses that allow NCOs and junior Officers to receive college credit for military related classes such as "Effective Military Writing" and*



Back Row Left to Right: Corey Butler, Vernon Woolridge, Chris Cho
Front Row Left to Right: Joanne Martin, Michelle Centers, Aya Cho

Open daily from 0900-2100
20 Online Computers
Computer lab open until 2300
Top Notch Support Staff

"Personal Financial Management for NCOs".

Chris Cho, the Counselor Aide, spent eight months in Iraq last year as an active duty enlisted Soldier. He just finished his M.B.A. degree and successfully completed two of those courses while deployed in Iraq, even though he says, *"At the location I was at in Iraq, none of the enlisted Soldiers had any phones, computers or Internet access so it was next to impossible trying to work on my class assignments. There wasn't any Internet Café, MWR facilities, or any type of Education Center. Anybody that has been deployed to Iraq knows it is pretty rough over there; at our base we didn't even have any air-conditioning or running water. On the other hand, Soldiers here in Qatar have such a golden opportunity to sign-up and complete classes either on-site or online. Just come in and talk with us, whether it is your very first class or you're working on a master's, the staff at the Education Center will help you achieve your educational goals."*

Article by Christopher Cho

Annual Christmas Tree Lighting Festivities

This year's 2nd annual tree lighting ceremony celebrated the theme of unity and community at Camp As Sayliyah. All shared in the spirit of fond holiday memories, friendships both old and new coupled with the generosity of the season. Participating in this year's event and performing their holiday favorites were selected choral students from The American School of Doha. Pondering the eternal question of what is the meaning of Christmas; Spc. Calandra Holt recited a short poem by Agnes M. Pharo



*Christmas Tree Lighting
Headquarters, ARCENT-QA*

WHAT IS CHRISTMAS?
IT IS TENDERNESS FOR THE PAST,
COURAGE FOR THE PRESENT,
HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.
IT IS A FERVENT WISH
THAT EVERY CUP MAY OVERFLOW
WITH BLESSINGS RICH AND ETERNAL,
AND THAT EVERY PATH MAY LEAD TO PEACE.

Members of several local Boy Scout troops and their families, along with Soldiers from ARCENT and tenant units joined in the festivities participating lighting unity candles, holiday sing-a-longs and refreshments.

Oasis Grand Reopening

After being closed for several months of renovation, the much anticipated reopening of the Oasis Club at Camp As Sayliyah took place on Saturday, November 20th. Lt. Col. Corbett welcomed everyone with opening comments then took great pleasure in introducing the Club's entertainment. Complete with strobe lights and fog machine; DJ Steve Buck created the air of excitement spinning tunes that would rival any Monday Night Football theme. As the crowd roared, the World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) was introduced as they took the stage.



*World Wrestling Entertainment Meet & Handshake
with Camp As Sayliyah Troops*

Speaking individually, the entertainers each expressed their gratitude for those in the armed services, particularly those serving in the region. A handshake and autograph period ensued. AAFES provided complimentary hors d'oeuvres and sodas. Separate spaces now provide potential for a variety of entertainment; darts, gaming tables and pool tables in one space and the largest dance floor in the area in the second.

Continued on page 6



Cpt. Ismael Reyes believes in Santa Claus



All Photos by Clayton Grusing



Lighting Unity Candles



*Choir Students from
American School of Doha*



CAMP AS SAYLIYAH COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Oasis Grand Opening Continued from page 5

16 December - Activities

Holiday Door Decorating Contest doors photographed.

Camp As Sayliyah community "Winter Wonderland Celebration" dance at Oasis on 16 December 1800-2400, food, DJ and fun, fun, fun.

24 December - Activities

Chaplain Services - Christmas Eve Service
Protestant - 2000hrs, Catholic - 2200hrs

25 December - Activities (Christmas)

Chaplain Services - Catholic - 0900,
Protestant - 1030hrs
Christmas Day Celebration - 1100hrs - 1400hrs, DFAC, Bldg. 218.

Door Decorating Winners Announced, 3 gift certificates donated by AAFES

Outdoor Greeting Card Winners announced

Happy Holidays !



Flashback



Majs. Mark O'Donnell and Christine Hackett representing USACC SWA QA serving Soldiers on Thanksgiving Day



Girl Scouts, Santa and E-Greetings

A very special thank you is extended to those who made the grand reopening of the Oasis Club at Camp As Sayliyah a success; the following MWR personnel; Sgt. 1st Class Everingham, Senior Airman Edgerton, Airman 1st Class Rimpley, Spc. Lisa Schwartz and Mr. Brian Smylie. Thank you to Mr. Eddie Williams of ARCENT-QA Protocol and the staff of AAFES. Thank you to the musical entertainment provided by the Army Material Corp Band and DJ Steve Buck.



Army Material Corp Band

AFE events at Camp As Sayliyah would not be possible if it weren't for the hard work and dedication of our volunteers. Thank you to Wilson Velez, Staff Sgts. Scott Faile and Mark Gatling 25th Signal, Ryan Mooney SOCCENT, Ramon Figueroa ARCENT-DOL, Jonas Moody JTAGS, Staff Sgt. Donald K. Alton ISG, Spc. Michelle Kruse ARCENT-S1, and from MEDLOG Tech. Sgt. Jason Russell, SRA Doran, Sgt. Julie Kennedy, Tech. Sgt. Eric Hauf, Spcs. Melody Brown, Ensor Gonzales, TJ Owens and Brown Sgts. Robert Sanchez and Angela Benedict, and 1st Lt. Pawlak CENTCOM.

Collabrative story by Jamie Whipp and Spc. Lisa Schwartz



Lt. Orrin Viner enjoys Thanksgiving with Washington Redskin Cheerleaders

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