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Here



Site Navigation

- News
- Sports
- Business
- Entertainment
- Opinions & Columns
- Community
- Cartoons
- Milestones
- Obituaries
- Activism
- Antiques
- Art
- Cars
- Collectibles
- Computers
- Crime
- Education
- Environment
- Features
- Finance
- Food
- Games
- Government
- Health
- History
- Hobbies
- Home
- Humanities
- Internet
- Jobs
- Kids
- Law
- Living
- Music
- Nature
- Opinions & Columns
- Pets
- Real Estate
- Recreation
- Reference
- Regional
- Relationships
- Religion

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To Home



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6:49 am PT, Tuesday, Nov 30, 2004

Holidays Are Difficult Time For Soldiers And Their Families

By Dorene Stamper/Staff Writer-SOnews.com

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Medford, Oregon. The American soldiers in Afghanistan, Iraq and other war zones are a long way from home but they are in the thoughts and prayers of many here in the United States. Recently military members enjoyed Thanksgiving while receiving items from the home front to remind them they have not been forgotten.

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Laura Salgado, wife of Spc. Moises Salgado said on Thanksgiving eve, "From what my husband SPC Moises Salgado, who is in Afghanistan, has told me the MWR (Moral Welfare and Recreation) will serve things to the soldiers to keep their spirits up over the holidays. Although as far as he knows they will be eating in the chow hall."

Moises Salgado is in the United States Army and works the night shift. Until recently he was working 12 hour shifts every night of the week and volunteering in his spare time, as well as taking an on line math class. He also tries to keep an ongoing report of his humanitarian efforts at: www.AnySoldier.com

"We know they are there for a reason and are making a difference in these countries a little at a time," continued Laura Salgado. "Unfortunately we miss out on a lot of things together during a year's time. We missed our ten year anniversary together this past September, and of course probably the most difficult is when we miss Thanksgiving as a family as well as Christmas."

"Normally I have a very positive attitude and keep a smile on my face, but once in a while it slips a bit when I am reminded of what we are missing out on," said Laura. "To a six-year-old a year is like an eternity. The other night I was grocery shopping and saw a man in his desert uniform shopping with his wife and child for their Thanksgiving dinner. He was fortunate; most of the soldiers will not make it home for the holidays. Moises has been gone almost eight months and it made me a little sad to be reminded my six-year-old son and I wouldn't see my husband for another four or five months."

Reports from many military families have come in on Thanksgiving in the war zone.

"My husband's unit was treated to a full Thanksgiving dinner and the football game was televised for them," said Mary Pennypacker, who's husband is in the Army.

Many other wives of soldiers understand and support why their husbands are there.

"My husband has been there for a while," said Sandy White. "He called to tell me that he was enjoying Thanksgiving, but wish he was with us. Though he misses us as much as we miss him he wouldn't choose to come back home before it's over."

"I send my husband many things that he can't find in Iraq," said Patricia Downey. "I sent him some of the chocolate mints he loves. Our children and I hope this will help him to feel a little closer to home."

Even though these efforts are small, sending the soldiers gifts, messages and photos from home, the impact on their lives is tremendous and these small efforts means the world to them.

The Salgado's have been working on humanitarian projects to help out the people and especially the children in Afghanistan. In doing this they are helping people as well as keeping busy and making the time go faster.

"This Thanksgiving we should all take a minute to really give thanks," added

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Laura Salgado. "When seeing pictures and hearing about the living conditions millions and millions of people live in every day, I realized Americans are truly the most blessed people in the world! I hope we can all realize that and want to share a little of it with others who are in desperate need every day."

The photos included with this story are of Moises Salgado and the children of Afghanistan. They were supplied to us through Any Soldier, www.AnySoldier.com

To read more on Moises Salgado and the humanitarian program the Salgado family has undertaken for the children of Afghanistan, log onto <http://www.medfordnews.com/articles/index.cfm?artOID=211180&webpage=3934>

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