

# Army Volunteers unite for Holiday Social

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## Volunteers unite for Holiday Social at Carlisle Barracks



*Pfc. Moses Deng, originally from Southern Sudan, escorts Martha Wilson into the Letort View Community Center Dec. 10 for the annual Senior Citizens' Holiday Social. The two-day event brought nearly 300 guests to the installation for cookies, punch and entertainment. Photo by Spc. Jennifer Rick. [Want more photos?](#)*

Dec. 10, 2008 -- As a young boy running around his village in Southern Sudan, **Pfc. Moses Deng** knew he wanted to move to America and join the U.S. Army.

"I always admired the military here in the states, I would hear about all the good they were doing and I knew I wanted to be a part of it," said Deng.

Seeing the Sudanese military operate as a boy only strengthened his admiration for the U.S. Army.

"They were corrupt and were doing bad things to people I knew and loved. I knew that if I wore a uniform, it wasn't going to be for Sudan. It would be for the United States," said Deng.

As Deng assisted a Carlisle retirement home resident out of a vehicle and into a wheelchair to attend Carlisle Barracks Annual Senior Citizens' Holiday Social on Thursday, Dec. 11, the scene offered a stark contrast to the life he could be living in Sudan.

"Volunteering is a part of the American society that I have always liked. In my culture seniors are highly respected, so the Holiday Social is something I am very happy to be doing," said Deng.

More than 400 volunteers gathered to share in holiday festivities with senior citizens from local retirement homes at the Letort View Community Center on Carlisle Barracks, home of the U.S. Army War College.

The event, spanning two days, united the post of War College students, international fellows, spouses, and faculty as well as Carlisle Barracks Soldiers and civilians in the spirit of volunteerism.

"This event is what the holidays are all about. I am glad to be giving back to the Carlisle community," said **Air Force Lt. Col Rick Matton, student.**

"Volunteering for the social is humbling. It's great to see everyone at the Barracks come together and offer a small token of appreciation to the local Carlisle community that gives the college so much support," said Matton.

The nearly 300 guests shared cookies, punch, and lots of laughter with Army volunteers as they enjoyed entertainment ranging from the Moore Child Development Center's preschool choir to **Lt. Col. Todd Isaacson,** student performing as the King of Rock 'n' Roll, Elvis Presley.

Elvis was a highlight for many of the female guests in the audience, as he serenaded the lucky ladies with his rendition of *Blue Christmas* while placing Hawaiian leis around their necks.

"It was a great feeling to see their reaction to my performance. I'm glad I brought some joy to people's lives, even if I had to wear this crazy outfit," laughed Isaacson.

***U.S. Army War College students and their guests enjoyed entertainment provided by pre-schoolers from the Moore Child Development Center, a local high school, War College students and more. Photo by Spc. Jennifer Rick***



**Philippines Col. Jac Motril,** International Fellow, sang two songs to the crowd, *Away in the Manger* and *The First Noel*. The latter held personal importance to him.

"I wanted to perform *The First Noel* since my daughter was born on Christmas Eve and we named her Noelle," said Motril. "Whether I am in the states or at home in the Philippines, Christmas is my favorite time of year and I wanted to share that with everyone here."

Several volunteers noted that the event aligned with the USAWC mission of uniting people from various branches of service, nations, and civilian organizations.

"It's about bringing everyone together no matter where they come from or what they believe in, for the sole

purpose of sharing in holiday traditions and spreading a little bit of happiness," said **Col. Glenn Richie, student**

This is what the holiday season is all about declared the hundreds of volunteers that crowded the poinsettia filled community center at Carlisle Barracks.

"My wife and I wanted to come to America for a better life and the Army has given that to us. Today is a great example," said Deng, donning his U.S. Army Class A's, as he held the arm of Carlisle senior citizen Martha Wilson and led her to see the shining red, green, and gold Christmas tree.

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