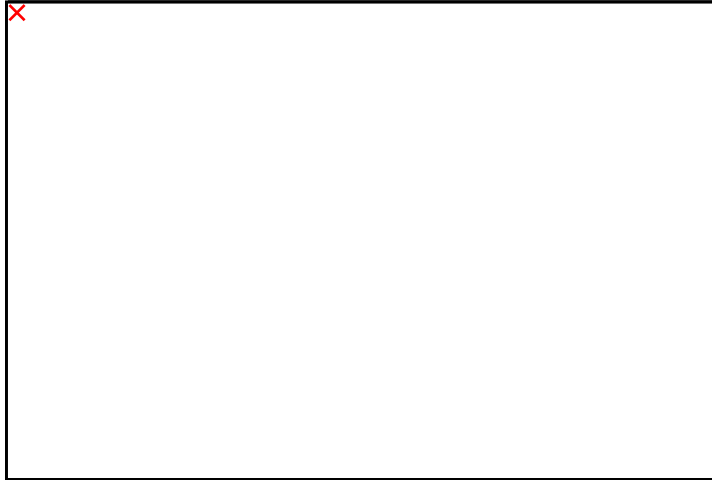


Chapel hosts Thanksgiving for Soldiers

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Soldiers from Carlisle Barracks, Dunham Health Clinic and the 1st Battalion of the 108th Field Artillery, 56th SBCT of the Pennsylvania National Guard line up for a Thanksgiving luncheon in the chapel on Nov. 10, 2009. Photo by Erin Stattel. [want more photos?](#)

Nov. 10, 2009 -- For the 17th year Soldiers stationed at Carlisle Barracks and the surrounding area, joined together to enjoy the annual Soldiers Thanksgiving Luncheon on Tuesday, Nov. 10 at the Carlisle Barracks Post Chapel.

"It was started in 1993 as a way to thank the Soldiers for what they do," said retired Army Col. Ray Porter, Post Chapel volunteer.

Post Chapel volunteers make sure the event runs smoothly—they decorate the tables, serve the food, and bring desserts.

In their opening remarks post chaplains Col. Gregory D'Emma and Lt. Col. Jim Carter said on occasions like this it's important to remember the service and sacrifice of Soldiers and called to mind the recent tragedy at Fort Hood, Texas.

Sgt. 1st Class Pamela Murphy, operations sergeant at Carlisle Barracks Garrison, said this was her second time at the luncheon.

"It is very nice and nice that it is open to other Soldiers," she said. "I know the Soldiers appreciate it," said Murphy.

This year, Soldiers from the 1st Battalion 108th Field Artillery 56th SBCT Pa. National Guard in Carlisle, participated after returning from Iraq in September.

"It feels good to be back," said Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Klunk. "What we are trying to do right now is get our Soldiers back to our drilling status."

About 411 Soldiers from the 108th and 134 from the 856th Engineer Brigade from Punxsutawney served together in Iraq for nine months.

Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Kankiewicz, 108th assistant operations sergeant, said that the transition was easier since it was his second time in Iraq.

"When I left, my son Donovan was three-months-old," said Kankiewicz. "I was very excited to come home and see how much he has grown." "He just started to walk," he said.

Before heading to Iraq, the 108th spent three months training at Camp Shelby in Miss., and Ft. Polk, La.

"This deployment was more challenging mentally because we moved so much," said Capt. Luis Mendoza, 108th logistics officer. "I had to make sure that the equipment was accounted for and secure at each location," he said.