



(U) A Remembrance of NSA Thanksgivings Past...

FROM: SIGINT Communications
Unknown
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(U) We asked NSA'ers to send us their stories of spending Thanksgiving in unusual circumstances (see the [call for submissions](#)). Here's what we learned...

(U) Kenyan Cuisine

(C) Thanksgiving of 1984 was very interesting for me. I got to spend it TDY in the wilds of Kenya.

(C) I was in the Air Force, stationed here at NSA, working in the Special Support Activity (SSA). In November 1984, I went TDY to Kenya, attached to CSG Centcom, with a Special Forces group out of Ft. Bragg. We spent three weeks in country, living in tents and working with the Kenyan military.

(U) The commander gave us a "training" day on Thanksgiving and we did have a feast. But, instead of Turkey, we had goat along with salad, rice and a few other "goodies." The goats were cooked over an open fire on spits and actually tasted pretty good. There weren't any pies or cranberry sauce or even stuffing, but we made the best of it.

(U) We did have a "Turkey Bowl" football game which gave the Special Forces guys an opportunity to knock the Air Force guy around. But all in all, I think I held my own and earned their respect.

(U) There were many more interesting things that happened during that TDY, but those will have to wait for another time.

-- [REDACTED]

(U) Hijacked Turkeys

(U//FOUO) In 1969, I was a young Marine, stationed at the NAVCOMMSTA at San Miguel in the Phillipines. This was a tiny remote collection site on the west coast of Luzon. It was about an hour's drive north of Subic Bay Naval Station in Olongapo. This was a fairly lawless period, before Marcos' martial law was decreed. (In the village north of us, communist "Huks" reportedly massacred the mayor, his family and guests at an outdoor mah-jongg party.)

(U) Being connected to the rest of the world by only a one-lane, partially paved "national highway," we had nothing from outside that wasn't trucked in, including holiday food. For Thanksgiving of 1969, the one truckload of frozen turkeys being brought to our commissary got hijacked on the national highway. I don't remember what we ate instead, but adobo at baboy (the Philippine national dish, a vinegar-based stew usually made of "baboy" (pork)), pansit (a noodle dish) and lumpia (a classic small, fried

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spring roll) were favorites.

(U) Then around Thanksgiving in Mogadishu one year, we had Somali surf 'n turf: roast camel and shark steaks.

-- [REDACTED]

(U) Thanksgiving in Bavaria

(U) When my family was stationed in Bad Aibling, Germany between 1973 and 1977, we lived on base. All government civilian and military families lived on base in those days. My mom got together with all the other moms in Building 311 Stairwell C and planned a Thanksgiving Day feast. Instead of each family cooking their own Thanksgiving Day dinner, all six families would celebrate together. There would be two turkeys and everyone's favorite family dishes.

(U) We celebrated in the "Play Room" on the top floor of the building. The ping pong table, with extensions, provided seating for the adults, the kids had their own table. Every family was allowed to bring a guest. The food table was groaning under the weight of all the dishes. We had sage and chestnut stuffing and cornbread stuffing, lumpy mashed potatoes, smooth mashed potatoes, and sweet potatoes, sweet and sour green beans and sauerkraut. Dad made up several batches of his egg nog - strictly off limits to the kids. It was a wonderful way to celebrate the holiday, and so popular that we continued the tradition every year we were there.

-- Regina Hambleton

(U) Thanks to all who sent in their stories! Watch for more tomorrow!

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