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## Christmas at EAFB

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[Rachael Embler](#)

Everybody has his or her own idea of what Christmas is about.

"Christmas is a time that you gather with friends and family," said Colonel Scott Vander Hamm, of the 28<sup>th</sup> bomb wing at Ellsworth Air Force Base.

"We just enjoyed the opportunity to be able to come out and give thanks," said retired Master Sergeant Roger Scott.

"Roast beef and turkey and ham," said Staff Sergeant Rhodello Nuval.

Christmas day many airmen can't be with their families.

"Because they can't go home and do that a lot of our airmen will join with other friends, they'll join with community members in town, but for those of them in the dorm and the mission doesn't allow, we do that here," Vander Hamm said.

At the Bandit Inn dining facility on base, the higher ups are serving active and retired airmen all-out Christmas meals.

"They do such a beautiful job here. It's beautiful food. You can eat all you want, we fell so blessed just to be able to have that opportunity," Scott said.

Those making and serving the food said they do it for their military family.

"This is our way to give thanks and bring us together as a close-knit military family," Nuval said.

Then there are those over seas.

"We have about 500 down range in fact we just deployed another 20 this week and another 20 next week. So even during the holidays that mission continues on," Vander Hamm said.

However, they aren't completely missing out, they get a Christmas meal too.

"Whether they're in the desert or whether they're in mountainous terrain and whether it's cold or hot they're getting a little piece of Christmas right now down range," Vander Hamm said.

The meals go beyond making them feel at home, it gives many the opportunity to thank them for what they do.

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