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16<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade  
Public Affairs Office**

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## **Soldiers run, dance for the new year at Q-West**

By Sgt. Keith M. Anderson  
16<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-West, Iraq – Spc. Matthew Grossman, a 20-year-old native of Augusta, Ga., celebrated the New Year at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation center here by playing Guitar Hero with friends.

“You always miss home, but it’s been good, and I’ve made a couple of new friends,” said Grossman, a chaplain’s assistant, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Armored Cavalry Regiment. “And it makes me feel like a rock star.”

Soldiers played video games, pool, ping pong, shuffle board, and they danced and spent time with friends to celebrate the New Year. MWR officials also held a raffle, and a 5-km midnight “fun run” on the flight line here.

“We had many volunteers that came forward to help for New Year’s Eve,” said Robert Garcia, MWR coordinator. “We wanted to make this day more important than any other day for Soldiers, to celebrate this occasion.”

For Spc. Michelle Denish, a 21-year-old native of Emerson, Mo., who met Grossman while playing Guitar Hero, the festivities were a way of getting out of her room.

“There’s nothing else to do,” said Denish, a heavy equipment transporter (HET) driver, 129<sup>th</sup> Transportation Co., 30<sup>th</sup> Combat Sustainment Support Battalion. “I had a hot coco, stayed up past midnight, that’s all I know.”

Denish said it was good to be out with other Soldiers, but it was hard for her to be away from her two-year-old son, Asher.

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NEWYEAR/2-2-2

Sgt. Christopher Copas, quartermaster chemical and equipment repair non-commissioned officer, 506<sup>th</sup> Quartermaster Co., 30<sup>th</sup> Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, spent his holiday playing darts with his Soldiers.

“Honestly, it’s not a bad base, but, of course, if I had my choice I’d be home with my wife,” said Copas, a 26-year-old native of Huber Heights, Ohio, who is on his third deployment. “I just wanted to hang out with my Soldiers and make sure they had a good time.”

For some Q-West Soldiers, the night was a reminder that their tour of duty in Iraq was almost over, and a time to reflect.

“The hardest part about being deployed on New Year’s Eve is not being with my wife and baby girl,” said Spc. Joesph Heath, forward observer, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Armored Cavalry Regiment, and 21-year-old native of Winona, Miss., who has spent two New Years’ at Q-West because of his unit’s 15-month deployment. “But we’re leaving soon. And there wasn’t a lot of combat going on, which means we’ll be going home with almost all of our guys.”

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(Photo by Sgt. Keith M. Anderson)



Spc. Matthew Grossman, chaplain’s assistant, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Armored Cavalry Regiment, and 20-year-old native of Augusta, Ga.; and Spc. Michelle Denish, heavy equipment transporter (HET) driver, 129<sup>th</sup> Transportation Co., 30<sup>th</sup> Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, and 21-year-old native of Emerson, Mo., celebrated the New Year at

the Morale, Welfare and Recreation center here by playing Guitar Hero with friends Dec. 31. “You always miss home, but it’s been good, and I’ve made a couple of new friends,” said Grossman. “And it makes me feel like a rock star.”