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## News

# From Iraq, Port soldier hopes for holiday cheer

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By Adam Martignetti

Staff Writer

NEWBURYPORT — "I'll Be Home For Christmas," Bing Crosby famously sang in 1943, a time when hundreds of thousands of soldiers were scattered about the world fighting World War II.

For Newburyport native Maj. Adam Love and other soldiers in Iraq, the idea of being home for the holidays this year is just as appealing as when Crosby's song was a staple of American radio. And just as distant, too.

Since June, Love has been stationed at Camp Fallujah in Iraq, a city where the bloodiest battles of the war have been fought. More than half of the mosques and other buildings there were leveled during a battle fought by 15,000 U.S. troops last year. Instead of warming himself by a crackling fireplace, Love will likely witness the flickers of sniper fire from insurgents who still attack U.S. and Iraqi soldiers on a daily basis.

It's not the ideal Christmas scene. And it's certainly not easy for Love's family.

"I knew this was his job," said Love's wife, Pamela, who lives in Jacksonville, N.C., with the couple's two children, 2-year-old Katelyn and 9-month-old Bobby. "It's hard, but we do it. These are the sacrifices we make."

Love's sister, Tracy, and his parents, Larry and Barbara, still live in Newburyport. During this holiday season, the family is asking those in the community to send greetings and cards to the soldier to bolster his spirits.

"We're a very close family, so it's hard not to have him here," Tracy Love said. "We miss him terribly, but we're very strong supporters of what he's doing."

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Through daily e-mail with his wife and weekly telephone conversations with his family, Adam Love has told of the good that the soldiers have done for the war-torn country. That story is often lost amid daily media reports of car bombs, wounded soldiers and insurgent attacks, said Tracy Love.

Adam Love has told his family he is helping to build roads, new schools, water filtration plans and sewer systems. And perhaps the biggest validation of the U.S. presence to date was last week's parliamentary election, in which voter turnout was high and violence was low, even in previously war-torn Fallujah.

"He really believes in what he's doing," said Pamela Love. "He's always been really willing to help the less fortunate."

Adam Love grew up here and graduated from Newburyport High School in 1984. At the University of Colorado in Boulder, he participated in Air Force ROTC as an aviation cadet, as well as in the Army's Ranger program. He earned a bachelor of arts degree in political science with a focus on Central and Eastern European affairs. Love joined the Marine Corps in October 1991 and was promoted to major 10 years later while serving with the United Way in New Orleans.

Although Love's family said he is proud of his work in Iraq, it has not come without a price. His mother said he is surviving on a handful of hours of sleep each night and working 20-hour days.

"He's like a walking zombie," Barbara Love said. "He sent us a picture, and he looks like he's ready to keel over."

Last Christmas, Pamela and Adam Love traveled to Newburyport to be with his family for the holidays. In his absence, the Love family will keep the soldier in their thoughts during this season.

They hope members of the community will take some time to do the same.

"Since the holiday season is upon us, I ask you to send items related to the holidays," Maj. Love wrote on the Web site, [www.anysoldier.com](http://www.anysoldier.com). "The holidays are especially tough for deployed personnel, as we are not with our loved ones back home. This can be a lonely and difficult time for Marines who are far from home. Anything you can do to make our time here in Iraq more enjoyable would be greatly appreciated."

To write

Cards and letters may be mailed directly to Maj. Adam W. Love, Camp Fallujah, II MEF (FWD) /II MHG/CE SSEC, FPO AE 09509-3920. Donations also may be made to Love's unit through the Web site [www.anysolider.com](http://www.anysolider.com)

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incidents

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- ▶ Onceover by the way
- ▶ Onceover New England
- ▶ Onceover nation/world
- ▶ Seaplane crashes off Miami Beach; at least 19 killed
- ▶ Holiday Fund extends quality of life for cancer patient
- ▶ Federal survey shows unwanted births up, but reason unclear
- ▶ Report concludes 1898 riot in Wilmington, N.C., was organized
- ▶ Holiday concert to fill school with music
- ▶ Housing plan presented to public tonight
- ▶ DPW, others look to voters for money at March Town Meeting
- ▶ Swiss hospital agrees to allow assisted suicides
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