

Newsletter

*News and Resources for
Military and Veterans Affairs
Endorsers and Chaplains*

Spring 2009
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Chairmen's Views

Letter from NCMAF Chairman Ed Brogan

"And the first one now will later be last, for the times they are a-changin'." (Bob Dylan)

Dear Colleagues,

Time seems always on the run. In January my friend and colleague Herm Kaiser retired from his position as our Chairman after many outstanding years of service. During his time as chairman, Herm and Jack were as active as any other team has been in representing the cause of chaplaincy and military ministry at all levels of government. I applaud Herm for his dedication and am thankful for his service.

But time moves on. I seek your suggestions and prayers as I now serve you as Chair.

As I reflect on the speakers at our Annual Conference this year and events which have transpired since, I am struck with how much is changing. I fully realize this is a constant refrain as evidenced by Bob Dylan's lyrics from 1963. But there is a very real sense in which significant change is coming to the chaplaincy. We have seen many changes in the way in which our chaplains conduct their ministry in this new century. The Joint Staff is in the process of a major re-write to Joint Publication 1-05, *Religious Support in Joint Operations*. We were privileged to have the Chaplain of the Joint Staff address us concerning the modifications at our annual meeting. We are seeking to monitor this process to keep you informed of any changes which may have an impact on how you prepare your chaplains and support them in their service to our military forces in peace and in war.

The focus of this issue of our Newsletter is also about change. All of our conference speakers addressed the issue in one form or another as you may discern by reading the synopses provided below. The articles selected for inclusion also highlight changes taking place as we look at issues ranging from one man's perspective on PTSD and his own perception of chaplain's roles to the comments made by Miroslav Volf at a recent international chaplain's conference in South Africa.

We have also changed the Newsletter by adding a new section – For Reflection. Here we present two related articles in which chaplains have differing views on a particular subject, both held with strong conviction and informed understanding. We present these for your consideration with the hopes they may cause reflection on issues which have caused controversy. Please let us know what you think of this feature and feel free to provide suggestions for future inclusions.

As you might expect, I cannot depart this, my first letter, without also appealing to you for another sort of change – this being the change that jingles in your pocket. Our nation and our world are facing difficult times financially and I do not appeal to you to provide for NCMAF if you or your neighbors are unable to provide for basic necessities. But please do consider our ministry for your faith group's consideration in providing financial assistance as you are able.

My friend and colleague George Packard, another of our endorsers, asked I send you his letter found after Hugh Morgan's below. He too recognizes the need we now have. Please consider your own assistance both in prayer and through your informed giving.

Daniel was confronted with a seemingly impossible task of not only interpreting but discerning the content of the dream of his king. He earnestly sought God through prayer and was graciously provided with the answer. In his response he indicates of God, "He changes times and seasons; he sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning" (Daniel 2:21). In these times of change, I do pray we will be given wisdom and knowledge to serve with both integrity and love.

Collegially,
Ed Brogan



*A publication of the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF)
and the Endorsers Conference for Veterans Affairs Chaplaincies (ECVAC)*

"For this mission, our chaplains are the sensors, confidants, caregivers, and friends that keep us all safe and healthy and sane."

-Col. Bob Edmondson, the commander of the Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operations Center

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[Letter from ECVAC Chairman Hugh Morgan](#)

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“Wall of Prayer for Our Military Forces and Wounded Soldiers”

Someone has said that there are three kinds of ideas: good ideas, great ideas and God Ideas. I believe I have a God Idea to share with you in this newsletter.

Earlier this year, Cal Dunlap, the Executive Director of ACCTS, introduced the membership of the NAE Chaplains Commission annual conference to the Wall of Prayer Initiative that began in Canada in 2007. Its purpose was to encourage the people of Canada to pray for their military forces. He shared how we, too, can become involved in this prayer movement.

It was Alfred, Lloyd Tennyson who wrote these words, “More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.” Although this specific prayer movement was started by Christians, it should not exclude all those who love God and know how to pray. Regardless of your faith tradition, may I encourage you to consider being a part of this Wall of Prayer Initiative to pray for our military forces engaged in the defense of freedom, and for our returning wounded men and women who desperately need our prayers and support.

The Apostle John in his third epistle wrote, “Beloved, I pray that in all things you may prosper and be in health, even as your soul prospers” (3 John 2).

Spiritual healing is God’s work of offering persons balance, harmony, and wholeness of body, mind, spirit, and relationships through confession, forgiveness, and reconciliation. It must be understood that all healing is of God. The Church’s healing ministry in no way detracts from the gifts God gives through medicine and psychotherapy. It is no substitute for either medicine or the proper care of one’s health. Rather, it adds to our total resources for wholeness.

What is the Wall of Prayer Initiative, and how did it start?

The Wall of Prayer is a strategic initiative to mobilize thousands of concerned people of faith across North America to start praying for our military personnel as their communities of faith discern how they might minister to the needs of our Armed Forces during these times of increased operations.

In 2007, Major (Canadian Forces, Retired) Michael Ward and his wife Leonore of the Military Christian Fellowship of Canada were led by God to start praying for the Canadian Military Forces. Within a year, they had built a prayer network of over 200 churches, Bible study groups, and lay organizations across Canada. On January 19, 2008, many of these intercessors gathered in front of the Parliament Building in Ottawa to pray for the Canadian military, while others across Canada also prayed in churches, on military bases, and in homes. Retired and serving military members, chaplains, pastors, civilians, parents and spouses of soldiers came as one to lay their concerns before God on behalf of the Canadian Armed Forces.

The Canadian initiative is spreading across North America and the Caribbean, with more than 200 individuals, churches, and Christian organizations participating. Under the leadership of the Association of Military Christian Fellowships, this intercessory prayer movement is becoming a North American prayer alliance, a spiritual analogy to NORAD, the joint Canada / US North American Air Defense alliance.

Why is the Wall of Prayer Initiative needed now?

Our forces are engaged in irregular warfare against non-traditional enemies, and they face improvised explosive devices, suicide bombers, and combat operations in urban terrain on a daily basis. This new form of combat is causing significantly increased Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury, as well as other horrific physical and psychological wounds. (A DOD task force reviewing data on troops returning from combat discovered that up to 49% of them experienced psychological symptoms, with the greatest incidence among those who had been on repeated deployments.) Another matter of concern is the psychological effects upon family members, as hundreds of thousands of children are experiencing the deployment of a parent as technology brings the horrors of war into their homes.

In addition, a smaller military force means more frequent deployments for most of our troops, which creates additional pressures on the home front. According to Chaplain Scott Henry of the First Fighter wing at Langley AFB, 67% of junior enlisted personnel marriages now require counseling, as young couples who should be together building their relationships are separated by the needs of the service at a critical point in their married lives.

Veterans are returning home from the current conflicts with Traumatic Brain Injury, lost or mangled limbs from IEDs, and other catastrophic injuries. Modern medicine and the availability of rapid air transportation to state of the art medical facilities mean that these wounded warriors can now survive such trauma. Survival, however, usually means extensive recovery and rehabilitation in a Department of Veterans Affairs Hospital or another military facility. According to the Boston Globe, the ratio of wounded in action to killed in action from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan is 16:1 – in Vietnam it was 2:6. Clearly our wounded veterans need prayer support as their numbers continue to grow, and VA chaplains find themselves stretched to provide the necessary ministry.

How can you help meet these needs?

You can become a prayer partner by committing to pray for our military on a regular and intentional basis. We know from Scripture that *“The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much”* (James 5:16b).

The ACCTS website – www.accts.org – has brochures and other information about the Wall of Prayer Initiative, including a list of suggested prayer concerns. On the website there is a prayer map - as churches, Christian organizations, and

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others commit to praying for our forces they are added so others can be aware of their efforts. The materials on the website may be downloaded at no charge.

A corner stone of the Wall of Prayer Initiative will be the North America Association of Military Christian Fellowships Regional Conference at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, Colorado, August 17-21, 2009. Here anyone with a heart for the military will be both encouraged and equipped to pray more effectively for the military. - Registration for the conference is open now online at www.accts.org, or by calling the ACCTS home office in Denver at 800-487-8108.

Collegially,
[Hugh H. Morgan](#)



Letter from Endorser George Packard

My Dear Friends:

I write to you as a colleague and supporter of the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF) mission.

Like you I have recently sent in our denomination's Fair Share contribution which I am always delighted to do. NCMAF is our organization, yours and mine, and it has become well known as the healthy advocate of spiritual support for persons in the military.

We have all been grateful over the years for the acute relevance of our annual meetings as well as newsletter and strategic efforts which have assisted us in bringing such ministry to our various denominations. I have the utmost confidence in our Chair, Ed Brogan, our Board, and our Executive Director, Jack Williamson. None of whom have prompted me to do this.

NCMAF faces operating challenges from increasing costs and shrinking assets. This is not surprising at any time but it rises to a critical level when our investment portfolio cannot supplement the budget as before. That is why I am proposing that we all take a second look at our contributions, and, if it's possible to give an additional amount in thanksgiving for the generosity of information and fellowship NCMAF brings into our corporate lives.

In some cases it might mean a quick percentage response by your organization, with others it might be a more deliberate consideration, and for others this won't be the time for another contribution. All are honorable responses and reflect the diversity of who we are; each gives according to the blessings received. What sets us apart from other advocacy groups is what we do before each of our sessions: we pray to God in thanksgiving and for guidance.

May we be joined in additional giving but always in the fraternity of devotion to God as we seek to serve those who serve.

Sincerely,
George Packard
The Right Reverend George E. Packard
Bishop Suffragan for Federal Ministries (Chaplaincies)
www.episcochap.org

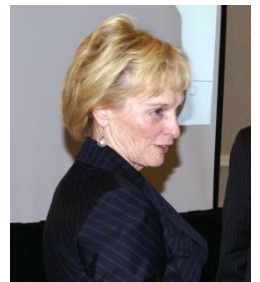


Annual Conferences

Annual Meeting Speakers

*Pauletta Otis, Ph.D., Professor, Security Studies,
United States Marine Corps Command and Staff College*

Dr. Otis addressed the roles and responsibilities of US military chaplains in security and warfare environments. After reviewing the present state of the US in the world and the face of modern warfare, Dr. Otis reviewed the traditional roles and missions assigned to chaplains in support of the military. Chaplains historically have been engaged in support of the military mission through spiritual leadership providing religious support in the form of divine services and facilitating access to resources for anyone desiring to worship in his or her faith tradition. In addition, chaplains have served as symbols of God's presence and/or the righteousness of the cause. They assure soldiers of eternal life and eternal values and encourage moral actions and heightened morale. Concerned for the overall well-being of the military member, chaplains have worked in hospitals, been engaged in education and literacy campaigns, have led the fight for certain moral and equality issues, and have facilitated contact with friends and family as well as support services for those left at home.



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According to Dr. Otis, with the change in warfare in the modern world, there may now be expanded roles and missions for chaplains in this new age of contact. The "new ordering of people, nation, state, international and global requirements requires 'new' or 're-newed' emphasis on the human dimension – spiritual and religious beliefs and behaviors of individuals." This focus on the spiritual and religious beliefs of those who we confront in armed conflict seeks the input of religious ministry professionals, chaplains, to inform and advise on issues of religions and ideology. This may be particularly true during periods of demobilization and pursuit of peace in the newly stabilized region. During these phases of war, religious values are used to inform on human values in the re-ordering society and are crucial for forgiveness, justice, reconciliation, and restitution as the nation returns to stability. To this end the ministry of chaplains may be crucial for the involvement of the US military in seeking its goal of providing for peace, freedom, and security for all people.

Colonel (Ret) Paul Hughes, Senior Program Officer,

Center for Conflict Analysis and Prevention, United States Institute of Peace (USIP) –



While on active duty, COL Hughes was assigned the Coalition Provisional Authority overseeing efforts in Iraq to disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate the Iraqi military forces into Iraqi society. From this experience he has an innate understanding of Iraq and its people which has proven useful in his writings and his advice on peace making operations in this and other turbulent areas of the world. In his talk to NCMAF, COL Hughes focused on the various challenges facing the Obama administration and the nation in relating to the Middle East in the near future.

Rather than offering predictions, COL Hughes focused on issues facing anyone involved in helping this region achieve stability. Among his principle concerns, in addition to tribal and religious conflicts, were socio-economic tensions. The Middle East experiences unemployment from 15 -60% with poverty rates above 20%. Underemployment is increasing and the economies are not growing fast enough to provide jobs and employment into the future. These tensions can be used by groups to undermine the credibility and legitimacy of institutions and governments and to increase opportunities for outside interference and mischief by radical and extremist groups. Nearly all actors in the region blame the economic doldrums on Western States due to a combination of colonial memories and real world manipulation. The overall environment creates a very difficult challenge in establishing peace and order in both Iraq and Afghanistan and also challenges the ability of military power alone to achieve US or human interests.

Though COL Hughes did not address the role of chaplains directly, his focus on the needs and challenges of the populations in the area coincided with Dr. Otis' presentation highlighting the increased role and opportunities for chaplains in making a difference in the coming years.

Robert Tuttle, Ph.D., David R. and Sherry Kirschner Berz Research Professor of Law and Religion, The George Washington University School of Law:

Dr. Tuttle returned in 2009 after an extremely interesting and informative session in 2008 with his colleague, Professor Ira Lupu. Focusing on First Amendment and other legal issues regarding the chaplaincy, Dr. Tuttle emphasized the role of chaplaincy based on the doctrine of accommodation. In this respect chaplaincy conforms to Constitutional provisions and guidelines as it is responsive to an issue created by the government in terms of the service required of individuals; it is voluntary not only with respect to the makeup of the chaplaincy but also in respect to those who take advantage of its benefits; it is neutral in that it does not necessarily favor any one religion but is open to all; and it (chaplaincy) does not place undue burdens on third parties in that those who do not desire religious ministry are neither forced to receive it nor disadvantaged because others do.



Dr. Tuttle focused on the concept of religious neutrality as being an essential aspect of chaplaincy under current Constitutional understandings. Neutrality in this sense goes beyond tolerance in that all are equal in the military with no privilege provided to those of majority or historical faiths by institutional bias. This neutrality is more than simple proportionality as allocation of resources is to be based on identified and not imposed needs. Chaplains must "bind up their own call" while providing for the needs of others and must understand the provision of ministry is carried out both at the institutional as well as the personal level. Inherent privilege built into the institution based on a dominant culture should be examined and confronted in seeking to extend a culture of neutrality with respect to faith issues so all are treated with equality and according to reasonable standards of accommodation. No one is tolerated, all are accommodated.

Brian Orend, Ph.D., Professor of Philosophy, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario:



Dr. Orend's academic interest is *jus post bellum*, justice after war. In his address he focused on the relative lack of attention which has been provided to this all important topic even suggesting the world might be well served by adopting a new Geneva Convention to deal specifically with peace. From his own studies he has come to the conclusion revenge in settling wars is always a bad policy. Historically revenge has created a new generation ready for renewed war, is not a requirement for justice, unfairly penalizes innocent civilians, and does not deal with removing or reforming non-responsive regimes but rather tends to reinforce and entrench them.

In contrast to a vengeful peace, Dr. Orend believes any peace settlement should be

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rehabilitative in character. Such a peace should be minimally just providing for demilitarization of the state, trials for war crimes, restoration of state boundaries, and return and restoration of prisoners of war. Additionally, the goal of the international community in imposing a peace settlement is to provide for a legitimate political structure which is responsive to the context and history of the people and not necessarily modeled strictly on western concepts of democracy. In his address, Dr. Orend applied these concepts of what a peace may look like to the current conflicts in both Iraq and Afghanistan. The world faces significant challenges in providing for rehabilitative peace in both situations. For more of Dr. Orend's perspectives on peace following conflict one may consult his work, [The Morality of War](#).

Ms. Deborah Amdur, United States Department of Veterans Affairs

Ms. Amdur addressed the ECVAC meeting as the key note speaker. She focused on the Federal Recovery Coordination Program (FRCP), the success it has enjoyed in its relative youth, and the increased level of care it provides to seriously wounded veterans.

The FRCP is an umbrella effort of the Department of Defense and the Veteran's Administration to ensure there are no gaps in treatment and minimal procedural delays in providing care and services to victims of such serious conditions as spinal cord injuries, burns, amputations, loss of vision, traumatic brain injury, and post-traumatic stress disorder. The goal of the FRCP is the recovery, rehabilitation, and reintegration of the veteran. Veterans may be referred to the program by their physician or through self-referral if they meet the criteria.

Once in the program each veteran is provided a full recovery plan which includes the goal for the individual and the steps required to achieve the goal. VA liaisons are assigned to thirteen Military Treatment Facilities around the nation to assist the veteran when transferring between systems and to ensure the receiving center is prepared and understands the needs of the individual upon arrival.

The VA has also established four Polytrauma Rehabilitation Centers to provide specialists for many rehabilitative needs in one location. To further facilitate coordination in support of veterans, the Department of Defense has transition personnel at these various centers.

According to Ms. Amdur, the current conflicts have seen more than double the survival rate of those seriously injured in battle from previous wars. This increase in survival has brought with it the need for increased focus on rehabilitative care. The FRCP is an answer to the need and is in place and working. For more information visit the [VA Web site](#) or contact Ms. Amdur at Deborah.amdur@va.gov.



Upcoming Meetings

- New NCMAF Endorser Training –, Monday, January 11, 2010
- NCMAF Annual Conference – January 12 – 13, 2010
- ECVAC Annual Conference –Wednesday, January 13, 2010
- All above meetings at the Hilton Alexandria Mark Center Hotel, Alexandria, Virginia
- More details and schedules will be made available at NCMAF.org



Chaplaincy News

Camp Cropper dedicates Guardian Chapel on Easter Sunday

By MULTI-NATIONAL FORCE-IRAQ, JOINT TASK FORCE 134, Apr 14, 2009 - 8:32:05 PM

BAGHDAD, Iraq - As millions of people celebrated Easter around the world, members from the 11th Military Police Brigade joined together to officially open and dedicate a new chapel Sunday at Camp Cropper.

The chapel, named Guardian Chapel, is the first hardened facility dedicated solely for religious support activities at the camp. Initially, the camp used a small tent and later a large multi-purpose structure for religious services, said Chaplain (Maj.) Thomas Vaughn of the 115th Combat Support Hospital. But the brigade commander made it a priority to have a dedicated chapel for service members.

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Brig. Gen. Robert Kenyon and Chaplain (Col.) Robert Boidock cut a ceremonial ribbon held by Spc. Nathanael Putnam and Staff Sgt. Robert Munden at the Guardian Chapel dedication ceremony as Chaplain (Maj.) Thomas Vaughn looks on. DoD Photo Credit Army Staff Sgt. Carlos Vinson (RELEASED)

"Clearly, a multi-purpose facility did not meet our needs, and having a chapel became one of my priority lines of effort to work during our tenure," said Brig. Gen. Robert Kenyon, commanding general of Task Force Military Police North and the 11th MP Bde. "Thankfully, resources became available to us, and now we have this wonderful building thanks to everyone that helped complete this project for the benefit of all."

Following the ribbon cutting ceremony, the chaplains baptized 10 service members outside the new chapel. One of those baptized Sunday was Sgt. 1st Class Genaro Haywood of the 154th Quartermaster Company, 50th Brigade Combat Team, New Jersey Army National Guard.

"I've been close to the Lord for a long time, but never baptized," he said. "So, to be baptized here in Iraq, the cradle of civilization, is a humbling experience. I've been

involved in the gospel choir and experienced getting closer to God on this deployment, and it is a blessing to have a safe location here at the chapel to be able to gather and worship. It doesn't get better than this."

Chaplain (Col.) Robert Boidock agreed. He said he was grateful to be part of the first baptisms at the chapel in this combat zone, and appreciated all the hard work and participation from everyone.

"What a blessing to be a part of the history of Camp Cropper and the United States Military in Iraq," said the chaplain.

The 11th MP Bde, deployed from Ashley, Pa., is the first brigade to be headquartered and co-located at Camp Cropper as command and control of Task Force Military Police North.



[Navy chaplain travels to Kenya for volunteer work](#)

By [Tim Wightman](#), Stars and Stripes, Pacific edition, Monday, February 23, 2009

Nothing Navy Lt. David Masterson heard beforehand could do justice to the squalor that awaited him upon his arrival in Kenya.

Masterson, Camp Fuji's command chaplain, spent all of January in the Dandora district of Nairobi, home to about one-third of the capital city's more than 3 million people. He was there as a volunteer with Kinyaho-Dandora School, founded in 1987 by Kenya Children's Fund, an American group.

What he saw outside the school gates were people living in slum apartments or shacks made of sticks and mud, many with no electricity or running water. Some homes have as many as 10 people living in a single room. AIDS and crime are rampant.

A river filled with garbage and waste runs through the area and is the community's lone option for cooking, bathing or cleaning. People frequently forage through a nearby garbage dump, searching for food and anything else of use.

Masterson said he was awestruck by the scene.

"It is one thing to read about these conditions in the print media and quite another thing to experience the sights and smells of raw destitution firsthand," he said. "My eyes were opened and my heart deeply touched."

The Kinyaho-Dandora School enrolls nearly 800 children from kindergarten through 12th grade. Besides education, kids at the school receive two meals a day and medical care.

Masterson worked with a team of Kenyan psychologists whose mission was to provide counseling to children suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder due to widespread violence that occurred in the aftermath of the 2007 Kenya elections.

Some of the children had family members who were raped, beaten or burned, the chaplain said.

Masterson was one of nearly 20 specialists to use music and basic fellowship to help the kids share their stories and begin healing.

He said it was imperative to put aside the environment they were in if he expected to do any good.

"What's important is not to get overwhelmed by the enormity of the poverty but to focus on the potential that each child has," he said.

"We would build relationships with children one on one, look into their faces and see their desire to grow and learn."

Masterson described a bitter feeling of seeing children pressed against the gate that surrounded the school grounds — wishing they could attend. He said students couldn't be more grateful about where they were.



Navy Lt. David Masterson, command chaplain at Camp Fuji, Japan, sits with children at the Kinyago-Dandora School in a slum area of Nairobi, Kenya. Masterson spent January teaching at the school and helping children suffering from PTSD.

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"This is literally like a rescue mission operation," he said. "The alternative is you're in the slums basically withering in your house, or you're out in the garbage dump looking for food."

Masterson also visited a camp and assisted families displaced by the post-election violence, when hundreds of thousands fled their homes.

He called his experience in Africa "life changing" and said he would encourage any servicemember to take advantage of similar opportunities.

"Every day you go home and you're just so thankful and your heart is so happy because you know that what you did actually changed somebody's life and made a difference for them," he said. "And there's nothing more rewarding than that."

Military Chaplains Association

With reprint, tale of WWII chaplain takes on new life

By [MIKE ELSWICK](#) – News Journal, Longview, Texas, Saturday, April 25, 2009

Words of faith can take on a life of their own.

Just ask Longview author Bill Keith. While he was working on his latest book, "The Commissioner," Keith got word that a book first published in the early 1970s is being reprinted. "Days of Anguish, Days of Hope" is being distributed to as many as 500,000 members of the Military Chaplains Association stationed around the world, according to the group and the publisher.

Published by Doubleday in 1972, "Days of Anguish, Days of Hope" tells the story of military chaplain and Henderson native Robert Preston Taylor. William David Kirkpatrick, vice president of Scripta Publishing, which has re-published the book, now in its fifth printing, said the book "captures the anguish and the dignity of Christian service" in an inspiring narrative weaved together by Keith.

"Taylor's story of survival and sacrificial service as a World War II chaplain and an authentic hero of the conflict in the Philippines has been immortalized in American military history by the research, insights and the writing of Bill Keith," Kirkpatrick said. "His narrative allows Chaplain Taylor's story to not only inspire, but also challenge all of us to a stronger commitment of faith and service to both church and nation."

Kirkpatrick said the Military Chaplains Association is having the book distributed "to encourage chaplains everywhere to greater service as Bill Keith's hero of the Bataan Death March becomes a model of commitment and courage."

Keith said having the book re-published was a surprise. "But it really is a timeless story," Keith said. He happened across Taylor's path years after the last shots of World War II were fired when both worked at Southwest Seminary in Dallas.

Taylor, however, was reluctant to have the spotlight shed upon himself.

"I approached him several times about letting me interview him to share his story," Keith said. After repeated requests of "Billy, lets do that book," Taylor, then retired from military service but serving as director of development at Southwest Seminary, finally consented.

Keith completed numerous interview sessions with Taylor and made two trips to The Philippines as part of his research to retrace the steps Taylor and others took in the Bataan Death March.

"It's a story of bravery, courage and supernatural strength of how a person can find faith to overcome extreme adversity," Keith said. Taylor was wounded when American pilots bombed Japanese ships transporting American prisoners of war.

Keith said those ships gained the nickname of the "infamous hell ships" because of the mistreatment the POWs suffered. He said U.S. pilots had no way of knowing Taylor and other POWs were on board.

"Taylor ministered to thousands of American POWs in the prison camps and helped bury thousands of others who died of starvation, disease and cruel and inhumane punishment," Keith said. Taylor was liberated by the Russian army from a Manchurian prison camp in 1945 to continue with his service to God and his country, he said.

In 1958, President Dwight D. Eisenhower named Taylor Deputy Air Force Chief of Chaplains with the rank of brigadier general. Four years later, President John F. Kennedy appointed him Air Force Chief of Chaplains with the rank of major general.

For his efforts to pen Taylor's story, Keith said he has received only minimal royalties. The real payment has been in knowing that Taylor's story has been — and will continue to be — shared through the written word.

For the latest revival of "Days of Anguish, Days of Hope," Keith and his wife Vivian Keith received an honorary lifetime membership in the Military Chaplains Association this past week.



Longview author Bill Keith, center, is flanked by Military Chaplain Association Executive Director Gary Pollitt, left, and the association's national president, William McCoy.

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Calling All Chaplains

Chaplains, sometime Email addresses change and mail no longer reaches its intended recipients. If you serve on a staff with other Chaplains, please show this Newsletter to the rest of your staff and colleagues and ask that any chaplain who is not currently receiving our letter to send their email address to the NCMAF/ECVAC offices at Rebecca@ncmaf.org, or if anyone on your staff has changed emails, please let Rebecca know as well. Thank you.

The US Army Chaplain Corps Regimental Association, Inc.

After much research and collaboration, on 2 March 2009, "The U.S. Army Chaplain Corps Regimental Association, Inc." was officially incorporated with the *dba* of "USACCRA" in accordance with IRS Regulation 503 (c) 19. It is *the* Professional Association for Serving, Retired, or Former Chaplains and Chaplain Assistants of the Active Army, Army Reserve, National Guard and Chaplain Candidates.



The initial members of Board of Directors are: President: Wayne Hoffman; 1st VP - Programs: Dick Stenbakken; 2d VP – Membership: Hugh Dukes; 3d VP – Local Chapters: Open; Sec/Trea: - Bill Lord

The Association, organized exclusively for past and present members of the United States Army Chaplain Corps and their family members, will:

- Provide social activities for members through Local Chapter activities, Annual Membership Meetings and Bi-Annual Reunions
- Conduct programs for religious and educational purposes which clarify the functions and ethic of the Army Chaplaincy
- Assist disabled and needy war veterans and their dependents (Wounded Warrior program)
- Carry on activities to perpetuate the memory of deceased U.S. Army Chaplains and Chaplain Assistants, and to comfort their survivors
- Provide recognition for persons who demonstrate extraordinary service and excellence in the US Army chaplaincy
- Support the US Army Chaplain Museum

The Association gives meaning to the phrase: "Where the past, present, and future come together".

- Local Chapter meetings and Annual Association meetings will offer opportunities to "stay in touch" with former comrades in the work of the Army Chaplaincy, to meet and mentor serving chaplains and chaplain candidates and to become involved in implementation of the Purposes stated above. Activities like the Bi-Annual Reunions for Retired Chaplains and Chaplain Assistants will be under the not-for-profit umbrella of the Association. Resources will be marshaled for projects and activities that can make a difference in the lives of soldiers and their families, and provide greater public understanding of the role and ethic of the Army Chaplaincy.

JOIN NOW – U S A C C R A, C/o Bill Lord, 1750 W. Bennett St., 8-B, Springfield, MO 65807

Reading Program Connects Deployed Soldiers with Their Children

By Army Sgt. Frank Vaughn – Camp Victory, Iraq - infoZine - American Forces Press Service -

A program in Iraq is helping deployed soldiers bond with their children back home through books.

United Through Reading, a nonprofit organization, gives deployed soldiers an opportunity to record themselves reading stories on a DVD that is shipped home for their children to watch.

The program, available worldwide for deployed units, is coordinated here by Army Capt. (Chaplain) Mike Jones, chaplain for the 10th Mountain Division Special Troop Battalion, and his assistant, Army Spc. Annamarie Greenfield.

To participate, soldiers first choose a book from the collection, along with a



LT Choe, a United Through Reading Champaion, in Afghanistan, stocking the bookshelves so others could stay connected to their families at home. LT Choe was killed on a humanitarian mission on Mar 27, 2009 (photo courtesy of AnySoldier.com)

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miniature stuffed animal to help them tell their story. Soldiers may send the book and the furry friend home with the DVD as a keepsake.

"That's one of the neat things about this program," Greenfield said. "The book and the animal make a good heirloom for kids, grandkids and so on."

More than 80 soldiers have participated in the program since its inception here in June.

"We have handed out around 140 DVDs so far," Greenfield said. "Some soldiers come back to do it again and again."

Army Sgt. 1st Class James Morton, noncommissioned officer in charge of the battalion's security section, is one of the program's repeat customers. He said he enjoys reading books via DVD to his 4-year-old daughter, Emily.

"I first discovered this program when I was deployed to Qatar in 2005," Morton said. "Since coming to Camp Victory, I've done it at least seven or eight times."

While the United Through Reading program helps soldiers like Morton stay connected with their children and loved ones, the benefit to their families is apparent as well.

"One of the major reasons I do this over and over again is because of the stress relief it gives my wife," Morton said. "She pops in a DVD of me when my little girl is sad."

Morton said his daughter is glued to the television when he's on the screen. "She likes having daddy around," he said. "She's definitely a daddy's girl."

While the program benefits deployed soldiers with children, it is not limited to parents.

"People can read stories to nieces, nephews, cousins or whomever they choose to do this for," Greenfield said. "We can even set them up to read to school children they don't even know if they so desire."

Army Sgt. Frank Vaughn serves in Multinational Division Center.

Items of Interest

Remarks by the First Lady At the Fort Bragg Community Center

March 12, 2009

Mrs. Obama: I came to Fayetteville last year to learn more about the needs of soldiers and their families. The people I met then — some of the stories that I heard stayed wanted to come back. I said I sharing your lives with me.

I'm delighted to be day. I had a wonderful visit at some of the marvelous Although I was here before and actually on the base. I sat down time visiting one of the the Hat" and got lots of hugs soldiers while they were having was a very meaningful visit for

But what's always that when you meet a soldier, it they do. Don't just see it here; I see it everywhere I go, in the faces, in the conduct of every military person that I meet. They have respect for their work, they have respect for their fellow soldiers, and they have respect for the country that they love. These soldiers, they get up every day and they hold themselves to these extremely high standards, the highest standards imaginable. They work hard to prepare every day, not knowing what tomorrow will bring.

Their dedication isn't just for their own sake, but for the sake of their unit and for the sake of this country. It's pride, high standards, selflessness, dedication, responsibility — these are their values.

And as I speak, there are servicemen and women who at their posts across this nation and around the world, as I speak, they're standing watch, and they're providing the security of our daily lives. We keep them, the wounded who are recovering, and those who made the ultimate sacrifice so that we can live in safety and freedom, we keep them in our thoughts and our prayers every second of the day.

But as my husband, the President, said recently in his address at Camp Lejeune, service doesn't end with the person wearing the uniform; the war doesn't end when a soldier returns home. Military family members have their own special courage and strength.



First lady Michelle Obama reads a book to children of military service members at the Prager Child Development Center in Fort Bragg. (Gerry Broome / Associated Press)

whom who are here today, I believe — and with me. They stayed with me. And I would come back. And thank you all for

back. This has been an exciting, fabulous Fort Bragg today where I was able to tour facilities and learn about life on the base. spoke to spouses, this is my first time with military spouses today, I had the best excellent child care centers, read "Cat in — (laughter) — and I spoke with some lunch. That was exciting. (Laughter.) It me.

powerful for me is that — what I notice is is the pride that they have for the work that

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I have met husbands and wives who keep the family on track while their wives and husbands are deployed or on duty. I've met grandparents, and aunts and uncles, sisters and brothers who take care of children while single moms and dads are away. I've met moms and dads who both serve in uniform and leave their children in the care of family when they're both deployed. I've met mothers and fathers who have lost their beloved children to war.

Our soldiers and their families have done their duty. They do it without complaint. And we as a grateful nation must do ours and do everything in our power to honor them by supporting them.

The President recently announced plans to improve housing, to expand child care, to raise military pay, to expand job training for spouses, to implement the 21st-century GI Bill, and expand counseling and support for families who are dealing with the stress of deployment and war.

These are the issues that soldiers and their families have discussed with me over the last couple of years — and I heard about it again today. Military families bear a very heavy burden — and, again, they do it without complaint. But as a nation, we need to find ways to lighten their load.

Fayetteville, North Carolina is a shining example of how a community can do just that. From holding a baby shower for a thousand expectant mothers — what a day, I imagine — (laughter) — to providing tickets to sporting events, to scholarship programs, to counseling services and support networks designed especially for the children of troops, the people of Fayetteville and the leadership from numerous community organizations and businesses have gone above and beyond the call of duty.

You have found ways to help strengthen families under great stress. You found ways to make life fun for children who wake up and go to sleep worried about their moms and dads. You found ways to celebrate life and provide hope to a new mom who is giving birth all alone. You found ways to comfort a parent when the grief is just too much to bear. Fayetteville clearly does watch over those who watch over us. And thank you for your loyalty and your devotion.

And for those communities out there that don't have a base, there's still work to be done. National Guard and reserve troops come from towns all over this great country, and their families often struggle to cope with the deployment of a spouse or a parent or a child.

So I encourage everyone out there within the sound of my voice to reach out — to reach out on your own, through schools, the PTA, little leagues, churches, workplaces, and find out if there's a soldier or a soldier's family right there in your own community who needs a little extra support — because they are there. Something as simple as offering help with carpool duty can make the world of difference to a parent who is trying to hold the family together during a very stressful time.

I'd also like to make a special plea that we reach out to the wounded soldiers and their families and that — those who have lost a loved one. Soldiers who return from war and receive care off the base, and widows or widowers and their children can become disconnected from the network of support that comes from living close to a base. And when they lose a troop, all of that is gone. So let's take it upon ourselves to reach out to them at these times more than ever. They need us.

And finally, it is my hope through these efforts that today's and future generations will honor our men and women in uniform by doing one simple thing: by never taking the blessings of freedom for granted and by doing their part to support these families.

So thank you, Fayetteville. Thank you, Fort Bragg. Thank you to our troops. Let us keep them in our prayers. God bless.



[New roles emerging for military chaplains](#)

By Ed Stannard Register Metro Editor, New Haven Register, April 16, 2009

While military chaplains' primary role is to serve the pastoral needs of the armed forces, they are increasingly taking on a role as reconcilers, according to professor Miroslav Volf of Yale Divinity School.

Volf, director of the Yale Center for Faith and Culture, spoke recently at the first Military Chief of Chaplains Conference in Cape Town, South Africa, where more than 50 countries and numerous faiths were represented.

Volf was joined by Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate.

"I urged that the mission of military chaplains should no longer be limited to serving soldiers and their families, but should extend to promoting reconciliation between warring parties during peacekeeping missions," Volf said in a letter to supporters after his return.

While their traditional role remains, Volf said, chaplains, particularly those involved in peacekeeping missions, are interested in going further.

"My impression of the meeting was one of extraordinary openness for expanding the mission of the chaplains to include peacemaking within military processes, but also bringing more perspectives, including ethical perspectives, moral perspectives, to all of the role of the military," Volf said Wednesday.



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Military chaplains are in a unique and, at times, contradictory position, Volf said in his lecture.

"Given the classical account of the purpose of armies, then, it seems that military chaplains, in their official role, cannot be agents of peace," he said. "If they have a ministry of reconciliation, it will be an internal one of helping to ease the tensions and conflicts that undoubtedly rage among soldiers in stressful situations, as well as within their individual souls. But externally, military chaplains would either serve the cause of violent injustice or of justice violently enforced.

"How, then, can military chaplains have an external operational ministry of reconciliation?"

They can, Volf said, because of the changing nature of many military missions, which involve peacekeeping more than defending nations by force of arms.

Because they have an "independent base of (spiritual) power," chaplains are in a position to give an "ethical perspective" to those whose training is to accomplish objectives by often-violent means, Volf said this week.

During the U.S. peacekeeping mission in Bosnia in the 1990s, Volf said, a chaplain reached out to local religious leaders to see if they had an interest in "reconciling events."

Volf said he was surprised to learn of the chaplains' interest in such work, and the military leadership's willingness to allow such non-traditional work.

"I thought chaplains were there to serve and act at the bidding of the military," he said, but he found many had "much more leeway than that."

[I've got PTSD, we all do](#)

Yes, I was diagnosed. But I'm not broken or crazy or any other misconception people have of this "disorder."

By [Ross Anderson](#) Published: 05/03/2009

My life is the alphabet: When a young child, it was ADD. At puberty, I graduated: ADHD. Once a man, well, it's now PTSD. Recently a VA rep tried to convince me I had a TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury). (That was scary.) That's a lot of letters in a lifetime, too many for a simple man like me. I've carried the weight of these letters; for too long I left them in the back of my mind. Until recently, like a sandstorm lifting from my skull, I realized: These letters do not define me as a person.

To be sure, while entertaining the letters PTSD, I displayed many post traumatic stress symptoms, or more plainly, I was "messed in the head," the widely held stereotype of the combat veterans. I'll say clearly, for a time I was mentally unwell. This period was mostly defined by anger and feelings of isolation. But as with the majority of veterans who have symptoms of PTSD, the severity of my symptoms has decreased over time, though I still can't say that I'm over it or that I still do not struggle with some things. But for me, (and I speak as an individual, not on behalf of all veterans) it was the rejection of these letters that ultimately lead to recovery. Other veterans wrestling with this issue may also find it helpful to call our struggles something else. I suggest NRPS: our natural response to prolonged stress. It's not a disorder, a guy in a white coat didn't ascribe it to you, and there's no stigma or disability rating for it, but I find it serves the individual much better.

A veteran does not like to be told anything, so I won't pretend to speak for our nation's veterans, for that's an impossible task. We are liberals, conservatives, gay, straight, all races and religions; we cannot be appropriately summarized or generalized. When the Department of Homeland Security decides to tell the nation that veterans are more likely to be right-wing extremist, they're pretty much saying that every class/race of American is suspect of this charge.

Though veterans are not good candidates for generalizations, there is one thing most all share: After a six or 12-month stint in a combat zone, we all are likely to experience some symptoms of post traumatic stress. The severity of these symptoms varies according to combat experience and the individual's response to reintegration.

You can call it PTSD. Sure, I have many of the symptoms described on [Helpguide.org](#), as I think most vets do. But my condition is discernible only to those who know me very well. And I am not "broken" as an Army chaplain once so simply put it.

Emotional numbness is probably the most common complaint of combat veterans. Any soldier who has deployed to a combat zone has most likely endured a calculated and necessary desensitization courtesy of the United States government. You can call it PTSD, or you can call it a successful training of a U.S. troop. As for my own numbness, I don't find it helpful to believe it a disorder more than something that I simply must work to improve.

When application of a "disorder" is this broad, does it not lose its meaning? I do not see how labeling someone with a psychiatric disorder is useful if it applies to nearly every person who served. Having difficulty returning to your old life after such an extraordinary experience is not a disorder; it's simply a natural response to an extended absence and extreme stress.

My Army chaplain was right (emphasis added). None of the hundred or so men in that tent/church in Iraq were destined to have PTSD, none predestined to mental illness. The chaplain reminded us of this because a veteran is told by psychiatry and society that we are fated toward disorder. But the simple truth uttered by that chaplain is worth more than all the psychiatric applications or media hype in the world.

The problem is that labeling someone with PTSD usually does not justify the stigma that accompanies this label. The negative perception of veterans and the aforementioned stereotype is pretty obvious when you're on the receiving end of it.

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When not writing for the pages of this newspaper, I choose not to tell people of my service, not because I am ashamed but because I hate the judgmental question marks that appear in people's eyes after I tell them. I can almost see people trying to calculate how crazy I am; the misperception of PTSD and what it means to be a veteran has caused me to conceal my service, to fear that widely held misconceptions will be applied to me. How many veterans have a disorder to justify the stigma that PTSD carries? I'd say not many.

There is an important distinction that most do not understand. To come home and have symptoms of post traumatic stress is not the same as post traumatic stress disorder. None of these words are meant to discredit those who suffer from PTSD, for I know quite acutely it is real and often beyond the control of the individual suffering from it.

But there is another distinction that I fear veterans don't even understand. [Helpguide.org](#) gets it right when they explain "the only difference between people who go on to develop PTSD and those who don't is how they cope with the trauma." To my fellow vets who are struggling, I suggest talking with someone because while you may think that it takes strength to walk it alone, in reality, it takes much more courage to admit you have a problem and seek help.

Recruiting News

Army

Chaplain Buddy Program

If an individual desiring to enter Active Duty will identify and recruit another clergy associate for the Active Duty Chaplaincy, both will be guaranteed assignment to the same installation during their initial active duty service obligation (ADSO) tour. One or both applicants may be reservist chaplains.

CH (LTC-P) Thomas H. Brouillard.
Chief, Chaplain Recruiting Branch, USAREC
Phone: (502) 819-8974 or 1-800-233-2725, ext. 6072
E-Mail: thomas.brouillard@usarec.army.mil
"Providing Spiritual Strength to the Army Strong"

Air Force

New scholarships available for chaplains

Army Times Saturday May 2, 2009 8:20:26 EDT

A call to the chaplaincy can only come from God, but the Air Force wants to make answering that call easier.

Struggling to fill a shortage of chaplains, the service is offering scholarships for commissioned officers, or anyone currently enrolled in a commissioning program, to earn a master's of divinity degree. Two scholarships, which will pay tuition and a stipend, will be funded in fiscal 2009.

Because Roman Catholics are the most underserved religious population in the Air Force, these two scholarships will likely go to Catholics, said retired chaplain Rev. John Kurzak, director of chaplain accessions for the Air Force Recruiting Service. The Air Force has only about 70 Catholic chaplains to serve a population that makes up 25 percent of the service, according to the Air Force. More than 25 bases have no Catholic chaplain.

Future scholarships could go to chaplain-hopefuls of other faiths as the needs of the Air Force change.

Kurzak acknowledged that money is not usually an obstacle for someone who is interested in becoming a chaplain, as many religious groups will find a way to get candidates the training they need.

The point, he said, is to help the Chaplain Corps "grow its own."

The program "allows [airmen interested in ministry] to discern earlier and see a more clearly defined path to stay close to the military."

Those interested may call the program manager at (800) 803-2452, or e-mail chaplains@randolph.af.mil. Applications for the fiscal 2010 scholarships are due by September 2009.

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As a matter of procedure, when completing the DD Form 2088 for an Air Force Chaplain Corps applicant interested in *active duty*, please check Block 5, "Regular Commissioned Officer" in Section 3, Letter i. Additionally, please send all DD Form 2088s to the following address:

HQ AFRS/RSOCC
550 D. St. West, Ste 1
Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4527

If you have questions about specific policies or procedures as it relates to the endorsement of individuals for the Air Force Chaplain Corps, please contact me at (210) 565-0335 or e-mail me at

Richard.Anderson.6@us.af.mil.

Blessings,
+Richard G. Anderson
Chaplain, Major, USAF
Protestant Chaplain Recruiter



Navy

To contact a Navy Chaplain Recruiter please select one from the list below. They are "called to serve."

NAVY RECRUITING COMMAND-MILLINGTON TN
CAPT Diana L. Meehan, CHC, USN
(901) 874-9216 (work)
(901) 553-1118 (cell)
diana.l.meehan2@navy.mil

REGION EAST-ATLANTA GA
LCDR DAVID BROWN
david.r.brown4@navy.mil
(770) 612-4360 ext. 2803
(770) 238-9715 (CELL)

REGION EAST-HYATTSVILLE MD
CDR MICHAEL MUELLER
chap_re@cnrc.navy.mil
(301) 394-0502 ext. 228 (office)
(518) 339-2021 (work cell)

REGION WEST--ST LOUIS MO
CDR PETER MUSCHINSKE
peter.muschinske@navy.mil
(314) 263-6480 (office)
(314) 261-6456 (cell)

REGION WEST-IRVINE CA
LCDR Jeff Logan
jeffrey.logan@navy.mil
(949) 509-7679 (office)
(949) 769-1775 (cell)

REGION WEST-DALLAS FT WORTH
LT MARGARET E. SIEMER
817 782-1990 office
817 320-4310 cell
Margaret.e.siemer@navy.mil

CAPT Diana Meehan, CHC, USN – diana.l.meehan2@navy.mil or (901) 874-9216

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Veteran's Administration

www.usajobs.opm.gov for opportunities to apply. Veterans with a service-connected disability can apply whenever they like.

For Reflection

He was our quarterback, and quarterbacks save the world

- By [Matt Soergel](#), Story updated at 9:42 AM on Tuesday, Apr. 21, 2009

It's 1948, third down and long at Robert E. Lee High School on the Westside. Charlie Liteky, a darkly handsome, 6-foot-1, 160-pound senior, trots on the field. The other team knows what he's going to do: Throw the ball. Because that's the only thing he does. And he's going to do it again.

It's 1967, an ambush in a Vietnam rice paddy, where machine gun fire and rockets sing their deadly song. Army chaplain Charlie Liteky gives last rites to the dead and dying, often walking upright amid the bullets. And more than 20 times, he carries the wounded from the battlefield to safety. There is so much blood, he'll smell it until the day he dies.

It's 1968, in the White House, and President Lyndon Johnson presents Charlie Liteky with the Medal of Honor. It is the country's highest award for valor, and he is the first chaplain awarded it during the Vietnam War.

It's 1986, at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, where Charlie Liteky becomes the first person in history to give up the Medal of Honor. Cameras click as he places the medal before the black wall that's covered with the names of the dead. It's something he has to do, he is so sickened by the policies of the country he served.

It's later in 1986, on the steps of the U.S. Capitol, and Charlie Liteky is gaunt, burning with hunger. For more than six weeks, he and three other veterans have starved themselves, protesting the Reagan administration's policies toward Central America. After 46 days, one of the veterans is days, perhaps hours, from death. Only then do they eat.

It's 2001, inside a federal penitentiary in Lompoc, Calif., and Charlie Liteky is turning 70. It's his second time in prison following protests outside Fort Benning in Georgia, where the U.S. had trained Latin American military officers, some of whom were later linked to atrocities in their home countries. He didn't want to mark that birthday in prison - but this is what he must do, he is so angry at his country.

It's 2003, in Baghdad, and Charlie Liteky is there with other peace protestors, bearing witness to what he calls an unjust and unwise war. He feels the ground shake during the bombardment, and he gives arriving U.S. soldiers copies of anti-war statements he wrote. He needed to be there. He says he now knows what it's like to be on the receiving end of American bombs.

Roy Bourgeois is a Maryknoll priest and founder of School of the Americas Watch, based outside Fort Benning, where he's protested and fasted with Liteky. He said his friend, even in his 70s, is driven by a zealous distaste for bullying and unfairness - and a need for action.

"Talk, Charlie discovered, is cheap," Bourgeois said. "He has to do more than writing a letter to Congress or a letter to the editor. He has to put his body on the line."

'He was our quarterback'

Liteky's classmates from Lee's class of 1949 will meet this Friday and Saturday for their 60th reunion. Liteky was planning to join them, but health issues will keep him home in San Francisco, where he's spent most of the past three decades. Liteky never thought he'd live to be an old man, but here he is, 78 years on in life.

Friends of his from Lee say they weren't surprised by Liteky's actions in Vietnam - or by his protests over the following decades.

"That's just who Charlie is, a man who is willing to risk speaking out when he feels injustice prevails," said Richard Petry, once a captain of the Lee football team, now a retired Methodist clergyman from Jacksonville.

"He has very strong feelings, which I don't agree with," said Carroll Gambrell, who now lives in South Carolina. "But that's beside the point. Subsequent events didn't diminish his act of valor to win the Medal of Honor in the first place."



Associated Press
1986: RENOUNCING HIS MEDAL OF HONOR
Charles Liteky places an envelope containing his Medal of Honor at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington. His renunciation was an act of protest against U.S. aid to the Contras in Nicaragua. He is the only recipient to ever have renounced the award.

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Gambrell said Liteky was a charismatic student who broke a lot of girls' hearts when he went to seminary in his early 20s. Despite their differing views on the world, Gambrell still admires him- recently he even wrote an essay about his old friend. The title? "Faith and Valor."

"He was our quarterback," Gambrell wrote, "and quarterbacks save the world. And also being a priest - they save the world, don't they?"

Perhaps not the world. But Liteky did save the lives of American soldiers on some bloody ground in Vietnam.

His Medal of Honor citation, given to him under his ordination name of Father Angelo, says that at one point he went within 50 feet of an enemy machine gun to rescue men. He carried one wounded man to safety by hoisting him on his chest and crawling to the evacuation zone. He stood up under fire to free a soldier trapped in dense brush. He faced fire while directing medevac helicopters in and out. All while wounded by shrapnel in the neck and foot.

Only doing his duty

Liteky says he wasn't trying to be a hero. Others needed help; he had a duty to them.

He was unarmed, by choice, but at one point he picked up an M-16 rifle belonging to a fallen American soldier. He'd been trained. He was no pacifist. He knew what to do with it.

Still, after a few seconds, he put the rifle down, thinking to himself: Holding a weapon - now wouldn't that be a hell of a way for a priest to die?

Turning point

He left the Army in 1971, the year he turned 40. It was a time of change, of questioning. He thought often of advice a professor had given him between his two Vietnam tours: "You need to rise above the assumptions of your subcultures."

Charlie Liteky's life is defined by his heroism in 1967 - and by his decision to renounce the medal that honored that heroism. Giving it up, he says, was not hard. Indeed, he felt as if it was the only thing he could do, given his anger at his country.

His chief regret was not acting earlier, during the Vietnam War. "I accepted it, but I wish now that I hadn't," he said. "I wish I could have woken up when I was there, and protested the war."

"Heroes, so-called heroes, have clay feet just like everybody else. When you're getting all those accolades, and you know who you really are, the mistakes you've made - it doesn't feel that good," he said.

Several times during long conversations, he wonders how much time he has to live. That's what old men do, he says, as they weigh whether they've made a difference during their time on earth.

He'll tell you straight off that he knows he's far from perfect.

"But I have tried to live life to the truth as I see it at the time. That's a very costly thing; I've lost a lot. I'm an ex-lot of things. But what have you got? Your integrity."

[The Battle to Train the Enemies of our Enemies](#)

By Matt Grills, Monday, January 5, 2009 American Legion Magazine

Peace activists and their allies in Congress tried to shut down the School of the Americas. Now they vow to close its successor, WHINSEC.

Last January, the Colombian Navy, with the help of the U.S. Coast Guard, stopped two homemade submarines off the South American coast. Each vessel is believed to have carried more than 10 tons of cocaine, but they both sank after the crews flooded the hatches and jumped overboard.

Every year, drug traffickers use an unknown number of these self-propelled semi-submersibles, or SPSS, to transport hundreds of tons of cocaine to delivery points in Central America, Mexico and the United States. In 2007, 13 were seized on land or at sea by Colombian and U.S. Navy patrol boats. With a skeleton crew of four, an average length of 60 feet and ballast tanks to keep it just under the surface of the water, the vessels are nearly undetectable, making them more than an annoyance to anti-drug authorities. They are likewise considered a growing threat to U.S. and regional security. Drugs aside, who's to say one of the subs couldn't be manned by terrorists with weapons of mass destruction?

These challenges and others shape the mission of the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC), which opened in 2001 at Fort Benning, Ga. Last year, 1,534 students from 24 countries - military personnel, law enforcement and civilians - attended the school. Nations represented included Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru and St. Kitts.

"We're in a world now that requires we work as teams, whether it's to defeat narco-terrorists or help our friends in need when they are hit by an earthquake or a hurricane," says U.S. Army Col. Gilberto Perez, a Cuban native who served as

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WHINSEC commandant from 2004 to 2008. "What we are trying to create at this institute is a sense of unity, hemispheric friends and partners.

"Some of the countries in this region have had political differences and, in some cases, have even fought with each other. That has changed. We want them to be willing to work with each other and with the United States, not only in this part of the world but around the world."

The Opposition. In recent years, WHINSEC has teetered on the edge of losing government funding - the school's budget is about \$11.5 million, about the cost of a single Black Hawk helicopter. In June 2007, an amendment that would have cut off funds failed by just six votes in the House; the year before, the margin was 15 votes.

Opponents accuse the School of the Americas - and by implication, WHINSEC, claiming it's merely a continuation of the former institution - of complicity in crimes against humanity and other atrocities in Latin America. Led by Father Roy Bourgeois, a Roman Catholic priest of the Maryknoll Order, an organization called SOA Watch has regularly demanded investigation of the school and called for its closure over the years.

Named for WHINSEC's predecessor, the School of the Americas, SOA Watch was founded in 1990 - a year after Salvadoran soldiers killed six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her 16-year-old daughter at the Central American University Pastoral Center in San Salvador. Of the 26 soldiers later implicated in the murders, 19 had received some type of training at the School of the Americas.

The Defense. U.S. Army Chaplain (Maj.) John Kaiser, who serves as WHINSEC's command chaplain and ethics instructor, says that of the 64,000 people who have attended the school, "fewer than 600 have ever been implicated in any kind of wrong, which means that well over 99 percent of our graduates have gone on to serve their nations well."

"If a police academy has a graduate who goes on to commit a crime, are you going to close the school because of that? I don't think so, because that's not what is taught at the school," Kaiser says. "If an individual crime is committed, you don't blame the institution that trained the person in the right way to perform his duties."

"We are challenged by a group of opponents who try to create a cause-and-effect relationship between some individuals who may have graduated from a course at the old School of the Americas and their behavior later on in life," Perez says. "In other words, if you attended a course and, 20 years later, commit some sort of heinous crime, the school is blamed for being the cause, which makes no sense whatsoever.

"However, our opposition has been very effective in conveying to a sensitive public that WHINSEC teaches unethical behavior - criminal behavior - which is, of course, impossible. I'd be in jail, and my instructors would be in jail, if that was the case," Perez says.

"The U.S. justice system and the military justice system would take care of that. Anyone can come here at any time and sit in a classroom, talk to students, talk to our instructors, or review our lesson plans and literature. They will see there's nothing illegal, immoral or unethical. It's all U.S. doctrine."

Perez says that SOA Watch is unable to prove that even a single graduate of the old School of the Americas ever misused his U.S. education and training. SOA Watch doesn't even acknowledge that the School of the Americas and WHINSEC are different institutions altogether, governed by different public laws; critics dismiss this as a cosmetic change.

Finally, WHINSEC defenders point out the extremely tenuous link between the School of the Americas' training of "notorious" graduates and their later crimes. For example, Argentine dictator Leopoldo Galtieri attended a U.S. engineering course in 1949, when he was a 23-year-old lieutenant in the army. The implication is that the course led him to become a general and junta leader 30 years later.

What bothers WHINSEC's chaplain most, he says, is that SOA Watch's crusade taints the reputation of American soldiers. "They don't like the U.S. military, even though they say they support the troops. We've been called a terrorist training camp, and I won't stand for that. You can say whatever you want about me personally. That's fine. But if you insult my fellow soldiers, I'm going to get a little upset, and I'm going to challenge you."

Kaiser has debated opponents of WHINSEC, even within his own Presbyterian denomination, and says their agenda is about more than just closing the school.

"WHINSEC is the lightning rod that attracts all of the anger these people have," he says. "They want to change U.S. foreign policy. They're very much against any kind of cooperation or military interaction with Latin American militaries. They basically try to turn WHINSEC into a scapegoat on false premises. The 'torture-manual' issue wasn't really an issue at all, because in the same manuals where they talked about interrogations they were talking about human rights and not to cross the line. The way this has been spun by SOA Watch isn't the truth, and they've been able to go on for years with nobody really challenging them on this."

Besides, Kaiser says, people know enough about committing crimes to do it without U.S. help.

"You don't have to teach anyone to be evil or to do bad things. We actually do the opposite here. We try to teach them how to perform their military duties in a moral, ethical and legal way."



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Historical Note

Seder in Saigon, 1966: The amazing story of Rabbi Alan Greenspan

By [DAVID GEFFEN](#) – The Jerusalem Post (editor's note – Story edited for length – full story at the link)



Former US Army chaplain Rabbi Alan Greenspan at his home in Jerusalem.
Photo: Ariel Jerozolimski

What does it take for an American Orthodox rabbi to become a chaplain in the United States Army and to conduct Sedarim in Saigon during the Vietnam War?

That's exactly what Rabbi Alan Greenspan, now a Jerusalem resident, accomplished, outmaneuvering potential army bureaucratic minefields and the dangers of real combat to bring the Pessah spirit to US servicemen in Vietnam.

Born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, he was inspired by a religious school teacher to love Judaism and to want to be a rabbi.

In the Summer of 1962, after he was ordained, Greenspan went on active duty. His first assignment was at Fort Knox, Kentucky, and he took his new bride, Gala, with him. The chaplain quickly became expert at caring for his troops' spiritual and mental needs. He conducted a school for the children of Jewish officers and enlisted men. Since he was a golfer, Greenspan hit several balls in the rough where the American Gold Reserves were kept and which was off-limits. He and his wife got to know the members of the Jewish community in Louisville and also entertained at their home on the military grounds. Since this was the military, Greenspan decided he wanted to drive a tank. Fort Knox, in fact, had a school for preparing Army tank drivers, so the chaplain felt that he should have his chance. He was bothered by one important question in this process: "How could I relate to the claustrophobia of a soldier in the confined body of a tank if I did not know what the inside of one looked and felt like? I set out to learn and experience as much as I could by visiting soldiers during field training," he recalls.

When Chaplain Alan Greenspan arrived in Saigon in early March 1966, he was greeted by a fierce battle in which the 272nd Regiment of the Vietcong 9th Division had attacked the American Third Brigade.

The Americans only succeeded in forcing the Vietcong soldiers to retreat with support from the US Air Force. The chaplain realized how significant his mission would be and he wrote about it: "The role of a rabbi in a war zone is an extremely gratifying one because of all that he can do to help our fighting men adjust to its horrors. It is a difficult one as well, because of the misery that one sees."

With this battle and others as his initial military contact, Greenspan began to work very diligently to prepare for the first Seder on April 4. "I knew that I had to make sure there would be Pessah Sedarim along with Pessah in toto, and I would not be deterred." Day after day he fashioned the holiday observance, putting into place all the objects required plus the food.

With the table set and everything in readiness, just an hour and a half before the first Seder, a real problem arose. "The tension then was unbelievable, but one has to find a way." What had happened? Greenspan received a phone call from one of the men wanting to know if he had heard anything about Saigon being put off-limits to all US personnel from 5 p.m. to 6 a.m. the next morning. Greenspan contacted the Provost Marshal and the curfew was confirmed. It seemed for a few moments that there would be no Seder in Saigon in 1966.

Now Greenspan went higher, contacting the assistant Chief of Staff of the Saigon district. Time was of the essence.

Quoting "Army regs," Greenspan stressed how important this Pessah observance was and how much effort had been put into the planning of the Seder, scheduled to start now in only an hour. Greenspan remembers quite well those moments and recalls while sitting in Jerusalem 43 years later that "it was agreed that an exception would be made for those 'off-limits' in order to allow the Seder to go on as scheduled provided that it ended by 9 p.m."

The chaplain had made his point well and "the upper brass" had taken him seriously.

The soldiers began to arrive, 135 in all, having waited anxiously to participate in the Pessah Seder so far away from home.

Greenspan looked out over the room in the USO (United Services Organization) building which he had been lent for the entire holiday. He found joy in the way the tables were set with beautiful white tablecloths and napkins. The plates and all the chinaware sparkled as did the wine glasses and flatware. He saw all the waiters ready to serve the Seder meal. As he was about to begin the traditional Haggada, he asked everyone to listen to the message of General Westmoreland, the American Vietnam commander.

General Westmoreland's words rang out at all the Sedarim of the American military in the Pacific zone that year. "The Festival of Passover commemorates the exodus of the Jewish people from Egyptian bondage. The exodus marked the first struggle of a people to secure religious freedom and the right to govern itself independently. All of us are here to continue that struggle. The era may be different but the aims are the same. We, too, must help a people to live without fear of persecution and aggression.

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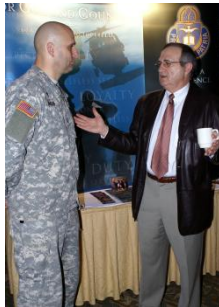
"As you gather to celebrate your holiday, may its message of hope ring true. In this vein, I extend to you my best wishes for a meaningful observance... May the hallowed customs of these days give each one of your people the inspiration to carry forward the struggle for freedom."

Greenspan stood before all those gathered and led the Seder. Army photographers even took a few pictures. One of Greenspan was published in newspapers around the world. As the Seder was continuing, Buddhists monks began to riot outside.

When a group of soldiers left the Seder, demonstrators came rushing down the street. The soldiers retreated into the building. One soldier had to climb over fences to escape the monks. When Greenspan left the building, his eyes burned from the tear gas which had been fired to control the crowds. "Services were held the next morning" the chaplain stressed, and "the response from the men was gratifying. What a spiritual moment it was. To join in prayer, with a large congregation, so many miles from home and under conditions of combat, was indeed an inspiration."

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- [Military One Source](#)
- [Department of Veterans Affairs National Center for PTSD –](#)
- [The Military Chaplain's Association](#)
- [The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life](#)
- [Religious News Service](#)
- [Coalition of Spirit Filled Churches Member Groups](#)
- [Christian Reformed Church Resources for Soldiers](#)
- [J.M. Dawson Institute of Church State Studies – Baylor University](#)
- [Religion Clause](#)
- [U.S. Department of Defense – Defense Link](#)
- [Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty](#)
- [The American Legion](#)
- [Warrior Care](#)
- [Religious Diversity and Accommodation \(Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute\)](#)
- [Armed Forces Chaplains Board](#)
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Executive Director's Note

Religion in the Modern World

Recently two editors of the magazine, The Economist, published a book entitled *GOD IS BACK, How the Global Revival of Faith Is Changing the World*. In it they describe how religion has confounded the experts by staging a revival around the globe which was supposed to enter modernity and leave behind the foolishness of belief in God. This revival is being fueled by American know-how, the model of the mega-church, and the seeker friendly service, even in non-Christian religions. The authors coin the term "pastorprenuers" to describe the ever expanding numbers of clergy engaged in marketing their faith and associate them with engaging in "soulcraft", selling religion as a means of coping with modern society.

On the one hand I applaud the authors for bringing to the popular press a realization of the importance of religion even in these supposedly modern times. On the other hand, I am not sure they have captured the essence of this renewed interest in religion. Our chaplains however, experience the renewed interest each and every day. As I read and hear the stories of our chaplains engaged with men and women around the world I cannot help but marvel at the opportunities for ministry provided to them. I sometimes long to return to my active status to be part of these exciting times. Whether they are forward deployed, ministering to members back home, taking care of Guard and Reserve families awaiting their loved ones return, or ministering to wounded warriors, our military and VA chaplains are definitely making a positive difference!

NCMAF and ECVAC are making a positive difference as well. With the recent change of administrations there is also a change of personnel in the Pentagon overseeing chaplain ministries. We await the appointment and confirmation of Dr. Chu's replacement as the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. When that individual takes office we will seek opportunity to meet and discuss the important contributions of chaplaincy as well as some of the challenges we face. We believe it important to meet and establish personal communications with these high level officials to ensure they know of the involvement of America's communities of faith in supporting their programs. We find many have little conception of how chaplaincy works and the important role of endorsing agents and sending bodies.

With the changes taking place in our military and Veteran's systems and the roles of chaplains ever evolving to meet the needs of tomorrow, NCMAF and ECVAC work to be both aware and involved in the process at all levels of the various organizations involved. Thanks to your support, we can do this.



We appreciate your support of your chaplains and your support of ministry overall. Working on your behalf and in concert with the MCA, we seek to be the voice of chaplaincy as an organized and representative group which expresses interest not only in actions which may impact us but also in actions which can seriously affect the quality of life of our military members. Chaplains are concerned for the whole person. We reflect this holistic approach to ministry in the support we provide.

Thank you and your chapel communities for designated offerings we have received over the last few months. As Ed said earlier, we know times are tough and the needs are great in all your communities. And as George said, our needs continue and we do need you to consider how you might assist NCMAF/ECVAC above and beyond your normal and ongoing support. Please mention our name and cause as worthy of special offerings and remember us when opportunities arise for special needs consideration. As endorsers and chaplains you don't need to be reminded that God is Back. For all of us, God never left. Faithful we remain in our support of your ministry.

Collegially,
Jack Williamson
NCMAF/ECVAC Executive Director

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Your financial support is needed!

- **Please let us know if you will ask your chapel or faith community to assist in our ministry.**
- **Consider a designated or special offering to help support NCMAF and the military chaplaincy. Your financial and prayer support are both needed and appreciated.**

- **Offerings may be sent to**

**NCMAF
c/o Rebecca Waldman
7724 Silver Sage Court
Springfield, VA 22153**

- **(NCMAF is a non-profit organization authorized by the IRS to receive charitable donations)**

Please contact Jack at Jack@ncmaf.org or Lyman at Lyman@ncmaf.org for comments, suggestions, or questions concerning the Newsletter.