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"Let us rededicate ourselves to keep a sacred trust with all who have worn the uniform of the United States of America: that America will serve you as well as you have served your country."

President-elect Barack Obama, Veterans Day, 2008

In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)

[Annual](#)

[Conferences](#)

[Veterans Day](#)

[Chaplaincy News](#)

[VA News](#)

[News You Can Use](#)

[Items of Interest](#)

[Recruiting News](#)

[In Memoriam](#)

[Historical Note](#)

[Links You Can Use](#)

[Director's Note](#)

[Contributions](#)

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NCMAF / ECVAC

Newsletter

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

Autumn 2008

Vol 3, No 3

[703-608-2100](#)

www.ncmaf.org

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Chairmen's Views

Letter from NCMAF Chairman Herman Keizer

"Show me a hero, and I will write you a tragedy." F. Scott Fitzgerald

The Army and the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) have begun a five-year, \$50 million research program into the factors behind soldier suicides and how to prevent them. This initiative was announced by Army Secretary Pete Geren late last month. The Army Secretary is bringing together NIMH, the Army Science Board, and the Health Affairs office of DoD to build on work already begun to create the most far-reaching and comprehensive research project ever undertaken on suicide and its prevention.

I am particularly gratified chaplains are a significant part of this initiative. Even before the research program was made public, Brigadier General Rhonda Cornum, Army Assistant Surgeon General for Force Protection, said teamwork was an important way to combat suicide. Chaplains are a key and leading part of the team.

Chaplain David Reese, Director for Ministry Initiatives for the Army Chief of Chaplains, stressed the role of Army chaplains in General Cornum's announcement. Chaplain's help soldiers find balance and hope, he said. They offer a safe place to go, with no stigma attached, and through the Strong Bonds program chaplains are helping to restore failing relationships, which the Army has identified as a leading cause of suicide among soldiers.

Lieutenant Colonel Carleton Burch, in strategic communications for the Chief of Chaplains, told a story about a soldier he met on a plane between Kuwait and Afghanistan, on the way into theater. He said the soldier's story was typical and "kind of tragic".

The soldier had gone home on R&R leave and found his wife with someone else. He became depressed and lonely, and when alone in a friend's house, he found a gun, pulled the trigger on himself; but there was just a click and nothing happened. He thought "maybe God wants me to live a little while longer," but he was still in depression, still wanting to kill himself, and now going back into theatre with his weapon. But a fellow soldier who listened to him, said "I've got to get this guy some help," and alerted the assistant chaplain who told Burch. Now the soldier is getting the help he needs. "So thanks to that type of intervention...by that savvy Soldier who was listening to the Soldier beside him," said Burch, "He went into the mental-health community. He got the help he needed."

This will be my last letter to you as the Chair of the NCMAF Executive Committee. I have been honored by this opportunity to serve you but even more so, all the men and women who are true heroes in the service of our nation. As I express this gratitude though, I cannot emphasize enough that as Fitzgerald said, with every hero there is also some tragedy written as part of his or her life. This we have long ignored choosing to think only about the good.

You are key personnel, along with your chaplains, in seeking to provide essential ministry to all our men and women and their families, both immediate and extended, who serve in the cause of freedom. We, more than others, know that in tragedy there is also hope. As I retire from yet another position I pledge to continue to uphold you and your ministry in prayer and to be as involved in supporting NCMAF as you desire and I am able. Continue to take care of our heroes in all their needs.

Collegially,
Herman Keizer

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

In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)

[Annual Conferences](#)

[Veterans Day](#)

[Chaplaincy News](#)

[VA News](#)

[News You Can Use](#)

[Items of Interest](#)

[Recruiting News](#)

[In Memoriam](#)

[Historical Note](#)

[Links You Can Use](#)

[Director's Note](#)

[Contributions](#)

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Please forward this newsletter to others and consider how you can make a difference for Chaplaincy by contributing to NCMAF/ECVAC through a designated offering.

Letter from ECVAC Chairman Hugh Morgan

VA Clergy Days or Education Events

It is a distinct honor and a pure delight and pleasure to work with Keith Ethridge, National VA Chaplain Center Director. I often talk with him by phone and correspond with him through e-mail. Some time ago, he shared with me the concept of Clergy Days or Education Events they are now offering in the VA Hospitals across the United States. I asked him for a written document and he responded by sending me an attachment that is well written and describes in detail this mission to enlist volunteers in our communities to partner with them in their pastoral care ministry.

I will not try to write it in my own words, since I have no desire to take away from the hard work that his staff has given to this effort. So, here is what Keith gave me. I do want to encourage all of you to communicate with your people about this great opportunity to provide for the spiritual care of our returning veterans.

The VA National Chaplain Center Sponsors Clergy Education Events

In March of 2007, the VA National Chaplain Center started the Veterans Community Outreach Initiative (VCOI), co-sponsoring clergy education events with local VA Medical Center Chaplains and in some cases local Faith-based Community Organizations and State Governors Offices. The goal was to provide local community clergy with education, resource literature, and referral information that would help them to support the needs of our returning warriors and their families.

Just as every other war in our rather brief American history, the war in Iraq and Afghanistan has changed life as we knew it in the United States. Over 1.5 million service members have served in these two theaters since operations began. Approximately 840,000 OIF/OEF veterans have become eligible for VA healthcare benefits since January of 2002; 44% are former Active Duty service members and 56% are Reserve and National Guard. Only approximately 39% of the total OIF/OEF veteran population has enrolled for care with the VHA. Title II of Public Law 109-461, "Veterans Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act of 2006," requires VHA to carry out a program to expand and improve caregiver assistance services within the scope of existing legislative authority. In short, the need for care is great and the chaplain community must be ready to do our part to care for those who have borne this most recent battle.

At the height of the "surge" in Iraq, 52% of service members on the ground were Reserve and National Guard members. These Reserve and National Guard members are not returning to re-integrate back into their local communities often hundreds of miles away for their Reserve Center or National Guard Armory. These service members simply do not have the same support structures as do the Active Duty military. Local Clergy provide front line spiritual, community and emotional support for our returning soldiers and their families. Research shows that local clergy and religion are:

- "Important" or "Very Important" to 90% of US population.
- More accessible to the broad population not only because of the numbers (there are more ministers than mental health providers), but because of trust... ministers are trusted and engaged more often by the general population.
- Eager to "help" but need guidance. (This includes faith groups, VSOs, community organizations, and individuals.)

To date the National Chaplain Center has helped to sponsor 65 VCOI Clergy Education events around the country and have given out over 2600 information packets with literature and referral information. More events are being planned each month and the effort will continue in FY 2009.

Contact the National Chaplain Center at 757-728-3180 for information about an upcoming events near you or if your office would like to help sponsor and education day event. Ask for Chaplain Jeni Cook or Ms. Laurie Shaw.

Collegially,

[Hugh H. Morgan](#)

In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)
[Annual Conferences](#)
[Veterans Day](#)
[Chaplaincy News](#)
[VA News](#)
[News You Can Use](#)
[Items of Interest](#)
[Recruiting News](#)
[In Memoriam](#)
[Historical Note](#)
[Links You Can Use](#)
[Director's Note](#)
[Contributions](#)

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A n n u a l C o n f e r e n c e s

- New NCMAF Endorser Training – 12:30PM – 4:30PM, Monday, January 5, 2009
- NCMAF Annual Conference – Tuesday through noon Wednesday, January 6 and 7, 2009
- ECVAC Annual Conference – Noon – 5:00PM, Wednesday, January 7 and 8, 2009
- *All above meetings at the Hilton Alexandria Mark Center Hotel, Alexandria, Virginia*

- Armed Forces Chaplains Board Briefing for all military endorsers, January 9, 2009
- *This briefing will be conducted at the Pentagon*

- More details and schedules to be made available at NCMAF.org

Register at NCMAF.ORG/conference2009

(Deadline for registration is 1 Dec 2008)

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Featured Speaker -Annual Conference – Dr. Pauletta Otis, PhD

Dr. Pauletta Otis, PhD, has been a Faculty Member at the National Defense Intelligence College and now works with the U.S. Marine Corps' Center for Advanced Operational Cultural Learning. As both scholar and citizen, Dr. Otis has focused on the use of military force to prevent systematic violations of human rights during wartime, including the treatment of prisoners of war, or detainees, under jus ad bellum and jus en bello conditions. Below is an excerpt from her published work.

"A man with an idea is more powerful than 100 men with interests," said John Locke – and when ideas and interests combine, the chemistry can be lethal. It is this combination of religious ideology and group interests that is becoming an increasingly potent force in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, and even the Americas. As the world's hegemonic power, the United States has been involved in many of these conflicts, most notably in the Balkans, Somalia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. In each of these cases, religious factors were a significant part of the enemy's motivation, intent, capabilities, and goals. In addition, global terrorism is increasingly characterized, by violence perpetuated by individuals and small groups with religious motivation – using nonconventional weapons, choosing symbolic targets, and judging success by obedience to God.

As the United States becomes increasingly engaged on a global scale, a grim picture emerges of largely conventional forces of the single world superpower fighting various groups of global religious mujahideen in asymmetrical wars where the stakes include economic, political, and cultural power. Still, it would be too simple to resign world events to the inevitability of "doom and gloom." What is needed is the courage and commitment to press through the complexity and to develop balanced perspectives that work in concert with the faith aspects of belief systems rather than simplistically ignoring or condemning them. We are in a global competition for "hearts and minds" – our own and those of our "enemy."

Pauletta Otis, an excerpt, *Religion and War in the Twenty-first Century*, ***Religion and Security***, edited by Robert A Seiple and Dennis Hoover

In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)
[Annual Conferences](#)
[Veterans Day](#)
[Chaplaincy News](#)
[VA News](#)
[News You Can Use](#)
[Items of Interest](#)
[Recruiting News](#)
[In Memoriam](#)
[Historical Note](#)
[Links You Can Use](#)
[Director's Note](#)
[Contributions](#)

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Please forward this newsletter to others and consider how you can make a difference for Chaplaincy by contributing to NCMAF/ECVAC through a designated offering.

Veterans Day

Chairman Cites History in Veterans Day Message

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Nov. 6, 2008 – Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has issued a Veterans Day message to those who now serve or have served in the armed forces.

Here is the text of the chairman's message:

When Armistice was declared on November 11, 1918, effectively ending World War I, over sixty-five million individuals had been mobilized for the "Great War" that resulted in almost nine million deaths and over twenty-one million wounded. In just a year and a half of operations, 126,000 Americans lost their lives on the muddy landscapes of Europe and in the icy depths of the North Atlantic. Such loss of life and limb is hard to fathom today.

History has debunked the notion of a 'War to End All Wars.' And history has also proven that peace does not preserve itself. It requires millions of dedicated men and women – like you and your families – all working in unison toward what one memorial hails as 'high idealism, courageous sacrifice, and gallant achievement.'

Today, a new generation of veterans carries this torch. Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom have forged the most combat-hardened force in our nation's history. Yet, no war is without its casualties. Whether seen – or unseen – the wounds of war last a lifetime, and so should our care.

Our wounded veterans and their families deserve only the best medical care our nation can provide – care on par with the service and sacrifice these patriots have rendered. From the battlefield to regional hospitals, and rehabilitation centers to reintegration programs, our wounded, ill, and injured Service members and their families merit a continuum of care that lasts a lifetime.

To all our veterans – past and present – and your families, the Joint Chiefs and I salute you and thank you for your service and your sacrifice. As we remember those who have gone before us, may we honor their service through ours.

M.G. MULLEN, Admiral, U.S. Navy

Military Chaplains Association Hosts National Veteran's Ceremony



Joint Honor Guard members participate in a Veteran's Day ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery, Nov. 11, 2008.
DOD photo by Cherie Cullen



A U.S. veteran attends a Veteran's Day ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery, Nov. 11, 2008.
DOD photo by Cherie Cullen

In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)
[Annual Conferences](#)
[Veterans Day](#)
[Chaplaincy News](#)
[VA News](#)
[News You Can Use](#)
[Items of Interest](#)
[Recruiting News](#)
[In Memoriam](#)
[Historical Note](#)
[Links You Can Use](#)
[Director's Note](#)
[Contributions](#)

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A World War II veteran carries a ceremonial flag during a Veteran's Day ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery, Nov. 11, 2008.
DOD photo by Cherie Cullen



Thousands of people including Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, right, gather at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier to attend a Veteran's Day ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, Nov. 11, 2008.
DOD photo by Cherie Cullen

Chaplaincy News

Chaplain teaches religious diversity, understanding

Written by Naval Surface Force, Atlantic Public Affairs, Friday, 31 October 2008

A new series of seminars is rocking the religious boat aboard USS New Orleans (LPD 18). The series is designed to teach Sailors about different cultures and ways of looking at the world. This is all in an effort to have Sailors achieve a better understanding of their shipmates and provide them with an introduction to the regional cultures of the world that they serve in. Lt. Cmdr. Beth Stallinga, the chaplain aboard, is facilitating the series.

The “Religions of the World” program itself borrows material from a PBS series called “The Wisdom of Faith,” Huston Smith and Bill Moyers’ examinations of Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity, Judaism and Islam. The series explores the art, architecture, music and poetry of the different religions. The program defines differences and common themes within the religions. Stallinga looks forward to facilitating every discussion. She cites several reasons for her new focus on promoting religious understanding.

One of her strongest motivators stemmed from her seminary experience when she was able to travel to India. “I was able to live and work and study with Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians — and was exposed to the depth and beauty of their lives. More than anything else, it is our culture first, and then our religion that shape who we are,” said Stallinga. “When we have the chance to learn about others’ cultures and beliefs they stop being something different and strange and start to become something we can begin to understand and even appreciate.”

She is also optimistic about the effect of religious understanding on our Sailors. She shared a story about an interaction between a Sailor in Iraq and a mess hall worker from India. The Sailor told the contractor that he hoped he would have a “Good Ganesh Chaturhi,” one of the most popular of Hindu festivals. “This Sailor told me that the Indian man’s face lit up with joy — so here you have an American Sailor and an Indian contractor in Iraq, and by virtue of doing nothing more than taking a moment to acknowledge that which has meaning for another person -- you have a genuine experience of human sharing,” said Stallinga. “I know that it may sound naive, but for me, these are the kinds of moments that can build peace.”

Stallinga wants to convey to every sailor, regardless of their religion, that they have a place in the Navy. She believes that this is part of taking care of her shipmates and teaching them to understand how one another’s backgrounds affect their daily lives and cultures.

Stallinga’s initiatives align with the Navy’s encouragement of diversity training and advocacy within the ranks of Sailors, enlisted and officers alike. According to the Navy’s Diversity Directorate statistics, there is a shrinking pool of candidates for Naval service available. 72% of all 17-24 year olds are ineligible for military service due to height /weight issues, moral issues, education deficiencies, and/or inadequate ASVAB scores. These facts compel all Sailors, like Stallinga, to prevail in an effort to demonstrate that the Navy is a service where all who are eligible can join, learn, grow, thrive and succeed.

In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)
[Annual Conferences](#)
[Veterans Day](#)
[Chaplaincy News](#)
[VA News](#)
[News You Can Use](#)
[Items of Interest](#)
[Recruiting News](#)
[In Memoriam](#)
[Historical Note](#)
[Links You Can Use](#)
[Director's Note](#)
[Contributions](#)

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The Diversity Directorate's plans include community outreach and also training within the ranks. By revamping diversity training and education, like Stallinga has, the Diversity Directorate hopes to develop a consistent, compelling message for prospective service members in the civilian professional ranks as well as to help retain current service members.

U.S. Africa Command holds commemoration ceremony

Diplomats and service members, including representatives of African nations and the African Union, gathered in Stuttgart Oct. 17, for a formal ceremony marking the activation of U.S. Africa Command.

The ceremony at Kelley Barracks was attended by the command staff and approximately 300 guests representing various U.S. government agencies, to include U.S. ambassadors and embassy representatives, as well as African ambassadors from Liberia and Rwanda, and Brig. Gen. Jean De Martha Jaotody, head of the African Union's Operations and Support Unit, Peace Support Operations Division.



African Union representative Jean De Martha Jaotody speaks at the U.S. Africa Command establishment ceremony Oct. 17 on Kelley Barracks. was spoken by U.S. Army chaplain Maj. Lawrence Bleboo.

"There is an integral link between defense, diplomacy and development, and it is our hope that AFRICOM would advance these interrelated policy objectives in Africa," said Jaotody.

U.S. Africa Command was activated Oct. 1 in Washington, D.C., to coordinate U.S. military relationships with 53 nations of Africa plus African regional organizations. U.S. Gen. William E. Ward, commander of AFRICOM, said the Oct. 17 ceremony in Stuttgart was a way to formally mark the command's launch for the international community, German hosts and the approximately 1,000 staff members in Stuttgart.

Guest speakers included Katherine Almquist, the U.S. Agency for International Development assistant administrator for Africa; The Honorable Mark T. Kimmitt, assistant secretary of state for political-military affairs; as well as the Joatody. Additionally, an African proverb

CHAPLAIN DAVID COLWELL, Command Chaplain: Good morning. Won't you please join me for a moment of prayer? We are reminded, in the various holy scriptures of the world, that if we are to be great, if we are to benefit this world, if we are to give blessing, our first desire must be to seek God's will. Heavenly Father, make us careful to listen in our earnest desire to do what is right in your eyes in the years and decades to come. Give us ears to hear and moments of sincere reflection to reacquaint ourselves with your soft voice. As the world longs for hope, peace, and nourishment, make us instruments of thy will for your people, and may the fraternal bonds with allies and partners alike coexist within a covenant of mutual respect and trust. And may the healing of the nations be quickened by our reliance on your wisdom. And, finally, may each of us, and those we endeavor to serve, be blessed and rest in your infinite, strong arms. May God's peace be on all of us this day, amen.

CHAPLAIN LAWRENCE BLEBOO: God has a great eye. He sees everything in the world. And so –

Totrobonsu - You are our giver of grain and water

Amowia - You are our giver of sun and light.

Ewuradze - You are our master.

We look at the vast continent of Africa and its people and see hope, cooperation and prosperity.

A head alone does not counsel

Two ants never failed to pull a grasshopper.

Many hands make the work light.

So for the great Africa Command and the people of Africa unite and work toward the common purpose of advancement of humanity, peace, and stability in the world.

Strength and fortitude is with the Africa Command. Let there be no discouragement.

With the hunting guide before the sun is set.

The one who eats has tasted the hardship of labor.

Nananom - Be present.

Asaase Yaa, Mother Earth.

Spirits of the living God - be present, be present, be present at this ceremony today.

In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)
[Annual Conferences](#)
[Veterans Day](#)
[Chaplaincy News](#)
[VA News](#)
[News You Can Use](#)
[Items of Interest](#)
[Recruiting News](#)
[In Memoriam](#)
[Historical Note](#)
[Links You Can Use](#)
[Director's Note](#)
[Contributions](#)

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Military Chaplains Undergo Unique Boot Camp

The Online NewsHour (PBS) originally aired Sept 11, 2008

SAUL GONZALEZ: At Fort Jackson, South Carolina, soldiers train for the dangers of Iraq and Afghanistan.

SOLDIER: Go! Go! Go! Go! Go!

SAUL GONZALEZ: This recent afternoon, it was a simulated insurgent ambush on a military convoy.

SOLDIER: Combat base. This is Charlie One. Copy that.

SAUL GONZALEZ: But many of the troops in this exercise, the ones not carrying weapons, aren't warriors. They're members of the clergy attending the Army's boot camp for chaplains.

COLONEL CLARKE MCGRIFF, Commandant, U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School: So, we are not a theological school, but we take theologians and train them on how to provide or perform religious support in an Army setting.

SAUL GONZALEZ: Colonel Clarke McGriff, an American Baptist minister, is the commandant of the U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School. It teaches new Army chaplains who have already been ordained by their own religious bodies the rules and customs of Army life.

Teaching chaplains military skills

COLONEL CLARKE MCGRIFF: The Army is a world of its own, and we walk, we talk, we do things in a peculiar way, and for a chaplain and a chaplain assistant to be effective in that environment they each must have the understanding of the codes, the lingo, the particular battle rhythm that the people that they're serving have as well.

SAUL GONZALEZ: Much of the school's 12-week-long curriculum emphasizes battlefield skills, from how to react while under fire, to administering first aid and moving wounded soldiers.

TRAINER: And you just gently ease him down.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL MARC GAUTHIER, Chaplain Training Officer, U.S. Army: The biggest question is, if they deploy to Iraq or Afghanistan, their survivability on the battlefield.

SAUL GONZALEZ: Chaplain and Lt. Col. Marc Gauthier plans and manages training at the school.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL MARC GAUTHIER: The expectation is they already have the ministry skills understood, and what we are trying to do is teach them to learn military skills to make both those things match together, so they provide effective care to soldiers and families and provide effective ministry.

TRAINER: Behind me, behind me, Chaplain.

SAUL GONZALEZ: Since military chaplains are classified as noncombatants, they don't carry weapons on the battlefield. Armed and unordained chaplain assistants, who also train at Fort Jackson, provide protection for the military clergy.

TRAINER: Conduct yourself with dignity and honor and comply with the law of war.

SAUL GONZALEZ: New Army chaplains say they have joined the military as a way to serve both their faith and country.

CHAPLAIN MIKE SMITH, U.S. Army: I'm giving every soldier the opportunity to learn about God, to get a source of faith and hope that they may not get.

SAUL GONZALEZ: Prior to becoming a Baptist minister, Mike Smith had been an enlisted Marine and Florida police officer. He says joining the Army chaplaincy has given him a new purpose.

CHAPLAIN MIKE SMITH: What an opportunity to be with those young soldiers now, as a mentor and as an encourager to have -- to give them spiritual motivation, what they -- what kind of motto that we have. We are bringing God to the soldiers and the soldiers to God. That is exciting. That's exciting. That's a new mission.

SAUL GONZALEZ: To further serve soldiers, chaplains at this school learn about crisis intervention and counseling.

TRAINER: Here is the scenario.



In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)
[Annual Conferences](#)
[Veterans Day](#)
[Chaplaincy News](#)
[VA News](#)
[News You Can Use](#)
[Items of Interest](#)
[Recruiting News](#)
[In Memoriam](#)
[Historical Note](#)
[Links You Can Use](#)
[Director's Note](#)
[Contributions](#)

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SAUL GONZALEZ: New chaplains are also taught how to deal with death on the battlefield.

TRAINER: You are the chaplain for the infantry unit, and you have two soldiers who are killed in action as a result of an IED.

TRAINER: Forward march.

Rejoicing and weeping

SAUL GONZALEZ: Through practice ceremonies, the chaplains learn the solemn task of conducting memorial services for soldiers killed in action. The details range from organizing pallbearers to reciting prayers before bodies are sent back to the United States.

CHAPLAIN MIKE SMITH: I will say of the Lord, he is my refuge and my fortress and my God. In him, will I trust.

SAUL GONZALEZ: Some chaplaincy students at Fort Jackson have already served tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan and have returned for additional training.

CHAPLAIN SETH GEORGE, U.S. Army: We lost, in this last deployment, 22.

SAUL GONZALEZ: Chaplain Seth George has served two tours of duty in Iraq. Is it hard being all things to all soldiers at different times?

CHAPLAIN SETH GEORGE: Oh yeah, it's difficult, because you will be with a platoon that just lost a soldier. Guys are crying. You're hugging them. You are trying to talk to them a little bit. And then you literally walk around the corner to another company area, and they're like, "Hey, Chaplain, what's the word for the day?" And so they're -- they want to laugh and cut up, just like always. And, so, to switch gears like that is very difficult, and I try my best to do that. You rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. And that's part of the -- I think, the unique element of being a chaplain in the Army.

Understanding religious tolerance

SAUL GONZALEZ: Along with all the military training, chaplains who attend this school are also supposed to learn a lesson in religious tolerance, namely how to uphold the beliefs and practices of their own faiths, while also respecting religious differences within the ranks.

COLONEL CLARKE MCGRIFF: As I say to my students as they first come in here, this is not a Christian summer camp. The Army did not call the chaplain into the Army to promote his or her faith. The Army has called the chaplain into the Army to provide for the religious support needs of its members. And its members include men and women of all sorts of orientations.

TRAINER: Evaluate your opinions very carefully.

SAUL GONZALEZ: However, the Army also has no formal rules against its more than 2,500 chaplains actively sharing their religious beliefs with soldiers of other faiths, as long as soldiers don't feel coerced or pressured.

CHAPLAIN DAVID DICE, U.S. Army: I am given a lot of freedom to be myself to the soldiers as I minister to them, and as they ask questions regarding their own faith or my faith. They're coming to me seeking advice.

SAUL GONZALEZ: Chaplain David Dice, an evangelical Protestant, says he looks forward to sharing his religious beliefs with soldiers interested in his faith.

CHAPLAIN DAVID DICE: You know, I live out my ministry and what that is as an evangelical, and the Army gives me a freedom to do that. As a soldier comes to me asking questions, that's when I find full freedom to really share what my personal belief is in God's word and in that truth that I hold to personally.

A need for a wider range of clergy

SAUL GONZALEZ: Although the Army recognizes 115 religious groups, about half of active-duty chaplains are Protestant. Some people, both in and out of uniform, fear that the growing number of evangelical chaplains could lead to proselytizing and religious discrimination within the ranks. They also worry about military outreach activities by conservative civilian religious groups. At Fort Jackson, the Army was embarrassed when a photograph was posted on the Internet showing soldiers holding Bibles and weapons in a study group affiliated with the Campus Crusade For Christ. The photo was quickly taken down, at the request of the Army.

SAUL GONZALEZ: Col. McGriff acknowledges the Army's need for more qualified clergy from a wider range of faith, but says the military is clear about what lines cannot be crossed.

COLONEL CLARKE MCGRIFF: When a person's ideals or faith orientation gets in the way or supersedes the provision of religious support to all persons, then it becomes a problem.

SAUL GONZALEZ: As for these new chaplains, they will soon be putting the lessons they have learned at this school into battlefield practice, where they will serve their fellow soldiers in both life and death.

In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)

[Annual Conferences](#)

[Veterans Day](#)

[Chaplaincy News](#)

[VA News](#)

[News You Can Use](#)

[Items of Interest](#)

[Recruiting News](#)

[In Memoriam](#)

[Historical Note](#)

[Links You Can Use](#)

[Director's Note](#)

[Contributions](#)

Pass It On

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Veterans Affairs News

[VA Names New Director for National Chaplain Center](#)

Washington, D.C. -- A. Keith Ethridge, was recently named director of VA's National Chaplain Center located in Hampton, Va. and will oversee 399 full-time and 93 part-time chaplains serving VA's 155 medical centers. The position is a two-year appointment.

Ethridge joined the National Chaplain Center in 1992, as a chaplain manager with responsibilities for developing Clinical Pastoral Education programs in VA. In December 2004, Ethridge was appointed deputy director for the center.

"Chaplain Ethridge has devoted his career to helping meet the spiritual needs of America's veterans," said VA Secretary Dr. James B. Peake. "We're fortunate to have him in this critical leadership position."

Ethridge earned a Bachelor of Arts degree with a double major in Religion and Psychology from Mercer University in Macon, Ga. He completed the Master of Divinity Degree at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ken., in 1982.

"It's an honor to serve our nation's veterans as the Director of VA's Chaplain Center," said Ethridge. "I have had the distinct privilege to work within the Chaplain Center since 1992 and have seen the importance veterans and their families place upon spiritual and pastoral care as part of the healing process. The center is well established, and I hope to continue that tradition as we offer support for our returning warriors and veterans of all generations."

Chaplain Ethridge received the Legion of Honor Award from the Chapel of the Four Chaplains in 2004.

[Veterans Community Outreach Initiative: Caring for Wounded Warriors](#)

"The reunion with my family and my homeland was wonderful," recalled one National Guardsman, a veteran who served in Iraq. "It was staying connected that that seemed almost impossible. I just couldn't relate to anyone like I used to." He isn't alone. The Department of Defense medical authorities believe that as many as 30% of returning Army Reserve and Guard members struggle with significant mental health issues within six months after returning from combat. Since the Reservists and National Guard members quickly fade back into their "civilian camouflage," they are not easy to identify. They are also not surrounded by the resources of a military community, and thus, the unseen wounds of war compound and, without treatment, can be fatal. Many of these overlooked wounds are spiritual in nature.

Returning veterans also describe reluctance in seeking mental health services, even when they know it to be advisable. There is fear and uncertainty about how a mental health diagnosis would stigmatize them in the community and perhaps, also affect their potential for success and promotion in the military. Local clergy provide front line spiritual, community and emotional support for returning soldiers and their families. Research shows that local clergy and religion are:

- "Important" or "Very Important" to 90% of the US population
- More accessible to the broad population (because of numbers and trust levels)
- Eager to "help" but need guidance to know how

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Chaplain Service is dedicated to ensuring that patients and family members who want and need pastoral/spiritual care, receive it in a timely manner. But VA chaplains are few in number and the need is great! So in 2007 the VA Chaplain Service Veterans Community Outreach Initiative (VCOI) was launched. The goal of this program is to recruit and educate community clergy members throughout the country to partner with VA Chaplain Service in caring for returning OEF/OIF veterans and families. In fiscal year 2008, this program was first funded.

Every VA medical center and Chaplain Service is encouraged to host one-day educational seminars for clergy in their immediate community. Not only do clergy participants receive excellent face-to-face training from medical center staff, they are also given a "clergy toolkit" with information about an array of VA programs and services. A booklet, *Ministering to Families Affected by Military Deployment*, prepared and produced by the Army is included, as well as a DVD, *Spirituality: Inspiring Hope in Healing* (produced by VA Chaplain Service). A book, *Accepting the Ashes, A Daughter's Look at Post Traumatic Stress Disorder*, is included to assist clergy in understanding the impact of war and its aftermath upon the family. The National Chaplain Center funds, compiles and delivers enough of these clergy toolkits for each participant nation-wide to receive this resource. Another positive outcome of these

In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)
[Annual Conferences](#)
[Veterans Day](#)
[Chaplaincy News](#)
[VA News](#)
[News You Can Use](#)
[Items of Interest](#)
[Recruiting News](#)
[In Memoriam](#)
[Historical Note](#)
[Links You Can Use](#)
[Director's Note](#)
[Contributions](#)

Pass It On

Please forward this newsletter to others and consider how you can make a difference for Chaplaincy by contributing to NCMAF/ECVAC through a designated offering.

training events is to help community clergy and medical center staff to know how to make appropriate and timely referrals to one another when that need is identified. Generally, a tour of the VA Medical Center is included in the training.

To date, VA chaplains have hosted 74 VCOI events, training more than 3758 community clergy members who minister in the communities surrounding VA medical centers. The VCOI initiative will continue in FY '09 and will be modified slightly to encourage clergy to bring the veterans from their congregations with them to the training. If you are interested in attending one of these events, please call your nearest VA Medical Center Chaplain Service Office to inquire about when this training might be conducted in your area.

News You Can Use

November is Warrior Care Month for Army, DOD

Oct 31, 2008, BY Heike Hasenauer, (Army News Service)

Beginning Nov. 5, the Army and its sister services will focus attention to one of the Defense Department's highest priorities – caring for wounded, ill and injured warriors. As directed by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, November has been designated as "Warrior Care Month."

Each branch of the U.S. Armed Forces has events planned during the month to highlight warrior care. Since reports nearly two years ago that Soldiers recovering from war wounds were living in a substandard facility at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., the Army has transformed the way it structures and provides military health care to wounded and ill Soldiers, said Brig. Gen. Gary H. Cheek, Assistant Surgeon General for Warrior Care and Transition. "We have made great strides in garnering more support and more resources for our wounded, ill and injured Soldiers," Cheek said. "Our key challenge is ensuring Soldiers and families are aware of the various programs and benefits we have to help them with the unique and personal issues each of them face."

The general said the month is more than a way for the Army and other services to show how far they have come in taking care of their own -- the activities and events during Warrior

Care Month also make the programs the Army offers more visible to Soldiers who might need them. "Warrior Care Month is a way to highlight these programs across the Army so our wounded warriors and their families know what's being done on their behalf, and how to take advantage of them," he said. Cheek said Warrior Care Month is meant to provide a clear message to service members and the public that caring for those who have sacrificed for America is one of the military's highest priorities.

The Army has unique activities planned throughout Warrior Care Month, which begins with the Department of Defense kick-off event Nov. 5. The Army's 36 Warrior Transition Units, in cooperation with military treatment facilities and installations across the Army will be conducting a variety of events and activities to help educate the force on wounded warrior resources, and to thank local communities and elected officials for their support.

On Nov. 17, designated as Army Service Day for warrior care, Secretary of the Army Pete Geren and the Army Surgeon General are scheduled to host a town hall meeting for Soldiers and families assigned to the Walter Reed Warrior Transition Unit.

Other events during the November observance include a visit by the Army chief of staff with Soldiers at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Nov. 2 and 11; Brooke Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Nov. 19; and Bethesda National Naval Medical Center Nov. 29 and 30.

Besides visits by officials to major military medical facilities, caregivers and recovering Soldiers alike will speak at various public venues about the state of care of wounded and ill



Photo by Elaine Wilson October 31, 2008
John Ferguson, lead prosthetist at the Center for the Intrepid, uses a digital scanner to create a 3-D image of Spc. David Lawsen's leg for a prosthesis. Wounded warriors are a top priority at Fort Sam Houston. Photo by Elaine Wilson.

In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)
[Annual Conferences](#)
[Veterans Day](#)
[Chaplaincy News](#)
[VA News](#)
[News You Can Use](#)
[Items of Interest](#)
[Recruiting News](#)
[In Memoriam](#)
[Historical Note](#)
[Links You Can Use](#)
[Director's Note](#)
[Contributions](#)

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Chaplain's library fits in his pocket

By Tricia Pursell, *The Daily Item*, October 25, 2008 05:02 am

—SUNBURY -- "Information at your fingertips" is the motto for Harris Micrographics Inc., in Sunbury.

Soon, Capt. George Tyger, Army chaplain stationed in Afghanistan, will see firsthand how literal that really is. In the rugged and mountainous terrain of Afghanistan, Tyger knew it would be impossible to carry all of his books, pamphlets and hymnals with him as he ministered to the soldiers in the field, possibly many miles from his office or main base. Before heading overseas, he knew he had to find another way of doing his job.

And that's when he called his old college buddy for some help. Jason Harris, vice president of operations at Harris Micrographics, met Tyger at Lycoming College, in Williamsport, where they were both members of the same fraternity, Tau Kappa Epsilon. Shortly after college, when Tyger attended seminary, Harris joined the staff of his father's business, which specializes in converting information to electronic formats. The company first began with microfiche technology and is now fully embracing the digital age.

Harris was glad to help his friend. Before he was sent overseas, Tyger arranged to have boxes of books sent to Harris Micrographics. Upon their arrival, Harris set out to convert Tyger's entire library onto discs and thumb drives.

"All the literature, books, everything he has in the United States, are now going to be available on a thumb drive," Harris said. "You couldn't pick up the hundreds of pounds of boxes, but now you can put them in your pocket." A thumb drive can contain thousands of pages of documents, and, according to Harris, the memory is equivalent to several DVDs on one small device.

Everything that is converted onto a thumb drive is also placed on a disc, which Tyger will also be given. However, while discs can become scratched easily -- especially in the environment Tyger is in Afghanistan -- the thumb drive can be safely transported everywhere. To access the information, Tyger needs only to plug the drive into a computer's USB port. If he plans to be in a situation where no laptops are available, he can print the information he needs and take it with him.

"Each book, or section of a book, is placed into a file," Harris said. "They can then search for a file name, open the book up, and the software allows them to leaf through the pages much as you would an actual book." The information being sent to Tyger will be in a PDF format that allows for easy viewing. In the case of a lost thumb drive or disc, or something else happening to the electronic information, Harris Micrographics will keep copies of the information on discs in their vault at its Sunbury office. The company would be able to make another disc and send it to him if necessary.

Harris and his staff were unsure of Tyger's specific situation as a chaplain in a religiously closed country like Afghanistan and decided to err on the side of caution. The thumb drive is unmarked, and the information is encrypted. In case of a lost device, or if Tyger doesn't want someone to see the information, it is fully secured. A password is needed to open any of the files.



Jason Harris, vice president of operations at Harris Micrographics, stands with the collection of religious resource books he and employees converted onto a thumb drive and compact disc for George Tyger, a Army chaplain stationed in Afghanistan.

DEOMI upgrades Religious Diversity Computer Support

The Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute's (DEOMI) Division of Diversity Management and Equity Research conducts basic and applied diversity research to inform DOD policy makers. They develop/validate and assess diversity training, provide measurement, analytic capability, and online and knowledge management tools for diversity issues available across the DOD and industry. Furthermore, this division consults with the DOD and the respective Services on their diversity management needs and strategies. Their web site can be accessed at [Diversity Management](#). There is a special link to resources regarding religious diversity in the military at [Religious Diversity and Accommodation](#).

In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)
[Annual Conferences](#)
[Veterans Day](#)
[Chaplaincy News](#)
[VA News](#)
[News You Can Use](#)
[Items of Interest](#)
[Recruiting News](#)
[In Memoriam](#)
[Historical Note](#)
[Links You Can Use](#)
[Director's Note](#)
[Contributions](#)

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Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Veterans Christian Worship Aids

Calvin University makes available [resources](#) for use in Christian churches and by families that they may be more alert to the needs of veterans and understand how to help. They also have an article on how to become a veteran-friendly church while being sensitive to any in the congregation who may be opposed to war. This can be found at [Becoming a Veteran-friendly Church: Pacifists can do this too.](#)

I t e m s o f I n t e r e s t

Former Army Chaplain Describes Combat Experiences That Led To PTSD

An article from the Dunn Daily Record, Dunn, NC

Former Army chaplain Jim Johnson became one of the walking wounded after his combat experiences in Vietnam, but it took him years to realize that he really needed help. Dr. Johnson, who is the author of "The Aftermath of Combat Trauma," a memoir about his journey through Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSD), spoke at Campbell University's Friends of the Library's annual dinner meeting on Sept. 26.

Dr. Johnson was only 26 when he served with an Infantry Battalion of 350 soldiers in Vietnam. Out of the eight and a half months he spent with them, more than 900 were wounded and 96 were killed. Dr. Johnson was in 22 firefights and several major battles. He later became a master at suppressing his feelings.

"For many years I had feelings and I didn't know what they were about," he said. "I was a chaplain, I was a helper. But as time went by, I suffered from extreme fatigue; I became withdrawn and didn't want to answer the phone at night, and I began to have terrible dreams and flashbacks."

In one of those dreams, Dr. Johnson kept reliving an attack on a village in which a young child was brutally killed.

"Finally, I had to do what I had told countless other people to do," he said. "I had to face my own demons."

After Dr. Johnson sought help, he decided to write about his experiences. In his second book, he interviewed 15 friends who had served combat tours in Vietnam and recorded their PTSD trauma 40 years later.

"Every day we feared the sounds of another ambush, the click of an automatic weapon or having to lug the remains of our colleagues through the mud without having any time to grieve over their deaths," Dr. Johnson wrote. "PTSD is a combat wound you don't see. It can result in emotional numbness, isolation, rage and guilt. Thousands of combat vets are hurting like we were."

A native of Albemarle, Dr. Johnson received a Master of Science in Counseling from Long Island University and a doctorate in marriage and family from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pa. He was an Army chaplain from 1966-1986 and currently serves as minister of counseling at Snyder Memorial Baptist Church. Dr. Johnson is also the author of the book, "Combat Chaplain: A Thirty Year Vietnam Battle."

Local clergy visit Grand Forks AFB

by Tech. Sgt. Amanda Callahan, 319th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

GRAND FORKS AIR FORCE BASE, N.D. (11/3/2008) -- More than 30 clergymen from the Grand Forks area participated in the base's first Fall Interfaith Leadership Summit held here Oct. 28, which gave base chaplains an opportunity to explain how the Air Force meets spiritual needs of Airmen and civilians on base, and invite attendees to become part of Team Grand Forks as honorary chaplains.

"We are thrilled that so many faith leaders from the community, as well as a prominent speaker and leaders such as Dr. [H.B] London would join us for the unveiling of this important event," said Col. John Michel, 319th Air Refueling Wing commander. The program is yet another first in the Air Force, and is one that further strengthens the

In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)
[Annual Conferences](#)
[Veterans Day](#)
[Chaplaincy News](#)
[VA News](#)
[News You Can Use](#)
[Items of Interest](#)
[Recruiting News](#)
[In Memoriam](#)
[Historical Note](#)
[Links You Can Use](#)
[Director's Note](#)
[Contributions](#)

Pass It On

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bond with the community and ensures Warriors of the North have access to an even broader level of care and support, he added. The goal of the summit was to introduce local clergy to military life and present the base's high operations tempo environment so they could gain a better understanding of the wing's population.

"The Honorary Chaplain Program is an opportunity to create a unique relationship with local clergy in which they walk alongside our commanders and their units to enhance care giving for Airmen," said Chaplain (Lt. Col.) John Kinney, the 319th Air Refueling Wing chaplain. "One may think that honorary chaplains are additional chaplains who pray and lead services, but that is not the intent. Honorary chaplains build relationships through spending time with the commander and the unit, and participating in special unit activities." In order to showcase the base's mission and high operations tempo and further explain the need for robust spiritual fitness, attendees were taken on a tour of the base, including the fitness center and a KC-135. They were also given a mission briefing by Colonel Michel.

"My primary goal for this program is simple," the colonel said. "To provide yet another resource to our precious teammates so they can succeed in all they do, both at work and at home - a tangible demonstration of our belief that 'a team's spiritual fitness is the key to their personal and professional success.' According to Colonel Michel, the introduction of the Honorary Chaplain Program also reflects the wing's willingness to venture into new directions to ensure we are doing all we can to equip our precious Airmen and their families to succeed both at home and at work, here or abroad.

"Each of our chaplains and chaplain assistants reported high appreciation from participants for the caliber of the day, the introduction to the Grand Forks AFB mission and the invitation to become an honorary chaplain," added Chaplain Kinney. "We're looking forward to their participation as force multipliers to the Chaplain Corps and commander in meeting Airmen and civilian spiritual fitness needs." Not only will the program add strength to the Chaplain Corps in the 319 ARW, it also strengthens the bond between the base and the Grand Cities.

"The program provides yet another tangible way in which our community partners can invest in the lives of our teammates," added Colonel Michel. "It also provides a venue for members of the local community to enjoy their base, after all, we who serve in uniform are merely stewards of these tremendous facilities and, as such, I think we should celebrate every opportunity we have to make others feel at home at Grand Forks AFB."



[Chaplain reflects on how war affects body, soul](#)

By Jerry Hames November 07, 2008 [Episcopal Life]



The Rev. Frank Wismer, holding Islamic prayer beads, speaks through an interpreter to a local Islamic religious leader in Baghdad on Veterans Day in 2003.

Surviving war is more than assuring one's physical safety, claims Colonel Frank Wismer III (ret.), an Episcopal priest who in his 25-year career as chaplain in the Army Reserve served with troops in Saudi Arabia, Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, Haiti, Bosnia, Iraq and Kuwait.

His personal concern, expressed in a new book about his experiences in Iraq, is for the many who meet death either psychologically or spiritually. "Returning from war alive is not merely an issue of the body; it is an issue of the soul," he says, relating incidents during which he counseled those suffering from "the long night of the soul."

In War in the Garden of Eden (Seabury, 184 pp., \$22.), Wismer undoubtedly will bring some readers to tears while he will anger others as he chronicles his experiences in Iraq between 2003 and 2004, when he served as senior chaplain for the Coalition Provisional Authority, and reflects on the U.S. Administration's actions since then.

Wismer, whose awards include the Bronze Star Medal and the Combat Action Badge, passes on to readers many lessons he learned while in Iraq. Here's one: "Going to war is an incredibly fantastic experience if one lives through it...One year in Iraq revealed things about community that the church was not able to reveal to me in 50-some years. I say that not as a criticism of the church, but to highlight the incredible bond that is established by individuals who survive the horrors of war."

And another: "I don't believe it is enough for the United States to win the Global War on Terrorism. We must also, as a people, win the Personal War on Terrorism. It isn't good enough for our soldiers to finally come home from Iraq and Afghanistan victorious in the global war if in the process they lose the personal war that strips away human

In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)
[Annual Conferences](#)
[Veterans Day](#)
[Chaplaincy News](#)
[VA News](#)
[News You Can Use](#)
[Items of Interest](#)
[Recruiting News](#)
[In Memoriam](#)
[Historical Note](#)
[Links You Can Use](#)
[Director's Note](#)
[Contributions](#)

Pass It On

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dignity...It isn't enough to expel evil from the world in its entirety if we cannot constrict it within ourselves individually."

Unlike others who closet tightly their wartime experience when they return home, Wismer said wrote the book because he felt the need to integrate what he learned into the rest of his life. "I was involved in Planning for Tomorrow [retirement] conferences for Church Pension Fund," he explained, "and I would preach at the end and over those occasions I shared some of my experiences in Iraq.

He revisited and reread the daily journal he had kept in Iraq and the result is a series of vignettes in 26 chapters about people, places and occurrences that he witnessed as the Coalition Provisional Authority struggled to bring order to a country in chaos.



Caring for Returning Veterans

The [Psychotherapy and Spirituality Institute](#) (PSI) and [Intersections International](#) of the NYC Collegiate Church convened a meeting on October 16th and 17th, 2008 in New York City that brought together veterans and people working in service to veterans. Jack Williamson and John Gundlach of NCMAF and ECVAC along with several chaplains attended this think-tank meeting. The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Strengthen the network of existing program leaders by convening people who might not otherwise meet
- Provide a forum for listening to the needs, experiences and recommendations of returned veterans as a crucial part of program development
- Identify characteristics of effective programs, challenges to programming and identify priorities for future work
- Create a series of recommendations to be considered by PSI, Intersections and other organizations dedicated to responding to the psychological and spiritual wounds of war.

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Invited participants brought diverse backgrounds, experience, and expertise to the meeting. People working within the VA as chaplains and therapists sat next to veterans who felt abandoned by the VA system. Military and civilian chaplains, psychotherapists, faith community leaders, returned veterans of four wars, artists, writers, advocates, direct service providers, leaders in post-conflict transformation, disaster relief, and educators each brought their own perspective to the meeting. Participants came from across the United States and even from South Africa.

THE "WE" OF HEALING

There was an unexpected power and experience of healing that arose from the meeting process. Beyond concrete identification of needs and potential programs, the process created space for storytelling, support and creativity. The ongoing dialogue facilitated authentic connection between people, all of whom are working in their particular organizations and areas of expertise, often under great stress.

At the heart of trauma is a debilitating sense of isolation and powerlessness that is experienced by caregivers, albeit in a muted way. The synergy and sense of common purpose that formed as participants listened to each other created a model in and of itself. Multiple approaches, disciplines, and communities are needed to address the wounds of war. Forming diverse partnerships that listen deeply and move toward intentional, cooperative action can begin with relatively simple interactive processes. The most consistent recommendation from participants was to facilitate similar meetings whenever, and wherever possible. After the meeting, a chaplain back from the Iraq war for only three weeks observed, "I wish everyone could have this kind of meeting as part of their homecoming."

PROGRAMS

One of the program areas of Intersections includes reaching out to veterans and refugees from the Iraq/Afghanistan wars. PSI and Intersections are both working on development of a scalable pilot program that will be available to veterans and their families over an extended period of time. On [January 21, 2009](#) [Intersections](#) will host Mr. Paul Rieckhoff, Executive, Director [Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America](#), in a discussion on issues to include Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and ways to help your local veteran community.

If you would like to read the Executive Summary, Content Report and Next-Step Recommendations, you can will be able to find these at [Intersections International](#).

In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)

[Annual](#)

[Conferences](#)

[Veterans Day](#)

[Chaplaincy News](#)

[VA News](#)

[News You Can Use](#)

[Items of Interest](#)

[Recruiting News](#)

[In Memoriam](#)

[Historical Note](#)

[Links You Can Use](#)

[Director's Note](#)

[Contributions](#)

Pass It On

Please forward this newsletter to others and consider how you can make a difference for Chaplaincy by contributing to NCMAF/ECVAC through a designated offering.

Recruiting News

Army

Army Reserve Chaplain Bonus

The Army Reserve is now offering a bonus of \$10,000 for ministers entering a USA Reserve Troop Program Unit (TPU) with a six year commitment. The bonus is payable in a lump sum following the completion of the Chaplain Basic Officer Leadership Course (CBOLC), which must be completed within 36 months of commissioning.

Army Chaplains who are currently serving in the Regular Army and decide to leave it in order to serve in a U.S. Army Reserve TPU are eligible for an Affiliation Bonus of \$10,000.

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

Nearly three years following the birth of the Chaplain Corps on 29 July 1775, General George Washington issued the following order at Valley Forge on 2 May 1778, "The Commander-in-Chief directs that divine services be performed every Sunday at eleven o'clock in each bridge which has chaplains...While we are duly performing the duty of good soldiers, we are not to be inattentive to the highest duties of religion." As supporters of the First Amendment right to the free exercise of religion, military chaplains have the distinct privilege of tending to the garden of the soul of America's military family. Thank you for your part in qualifying clergy to perform, directly or indirectly, this special trust.

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

I look forward to seeing each of you at the upcoming NCMAF Conference in January 2009. 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

In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)

[Annual Conferences](#)

[Veterans Day](#)

[Chaplaincy News](#)

[VA News](#)

[News You Can Use](#)

[Items of Interest](#)

[Recruiting News](#)

[In Memoriam](#)

[Historical Note](#)

[Links You Can Use](#)

[Director's Note](#)

[Contributions](#)

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Please forward this newsletter to others and consider how you can make a difference for Chaplaincy by contributing to NCMAF/ECVAC through a designated offering.

Navy

The Navy has made some staff changes with regards to its chaplain recruiters. 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

Veteran's Administration

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

In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)

[Annual](#)

[Conferences](#)

[Veterans Day](#)

[Chaplaincy News](#)

[VA News](#)

[News You Can Use](#)

[Items of Interest](#)

[Recruiting News](#)

[In Memoriam](#)

[Historical Note](#)

[Links You Can Use](#)

[Director's Note](#)

[Contributions](#)

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In Memoriam

Army chaplain who had served in Kuwait dies at Walter Reed

By Joseph Giordano, Stars and Stripes, Mideast edition, Thursday, September 25, 2008

An Army chaplain who ministered to troops for decades died earlier this month after being medically evacuated from Kuwait to Walter Reed Army Medical Center, the Pentagon announced late Tuesday.

Chaplain (Col.) Sidney J. Marceaux, a Catholic priest, died Sept. 14 at Walter Reed "from a noncombat related illness," according to a news release. He had been serving at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, before being transferred to the Warrior Transition Brigade at Walter Reed, officials said. A memorial service was held Wednesday in Kuwait, a spokeswoman for U.S. Army Central said. According to the Web site CatholicMil.Org, "during what was to be his final tour in Kuwait, the 69-year-old priest took sick and was sent to Walter Reed, where he died peacefully in his sleep."

The site quoted another Army chaplain in Iraq, who knew Marceaux, as saying, "It can accurately be said that he died with his boots on. He will truly be missed."

In an August 2007 interview with Stars and Stripes, Marceaux — who was then serving in the Benelux — said, "I loved dropping in on a FOB [forward operating base] where there were just a few guys, armed, tired, dirty and waiting for you. for you." "If something happens to them," he added, "they want to be reconciled with their creator."

Marceaux was raised in the rice fields of southwest Louisiana, and the Pentagon listed Beaumont, Texas, as his hometown in its news release. He had been set for retirement at the end of 2007, but because of a shortage of Catholic priests in the Army, requested one more active-duty tour. The assignment that lured him back was ministering to troops in combat. "I was able to exercise my priesthood in a way I couldn't in a diocese," Marceaux told Stripes. "I was able to help them face death daily. They knew they had to go out and they knew they may not come back."

Marceaux joined the Army at age 17. As a member of the Texas National Guard from 1955 to 1963, he served as a rifleman, truck driver and radio operator. He left the Army, finished college and taught social studies at a public high school. Then, in the mid-1970s, a weekend training stint that was part of his seminary studies brought him back to military service. That training was attending to wounded soldiers at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.



Gowen Field chapel dedicated in name of former chaplain



BOISE (Idaho News) -- Dozens of Idaho guardsmen gathered Sunday to dedicate their base chapel at Gowen Field. The chapel was dedicated in the name of a chaplain who died earlier this year.

Lt. Col. Joseph "Art" Moore served as a Gowen Field chaplain for over 15 years.

In May he died of natural causes during a deployment supporting Operation Enduring Freedom. "He was a very loveable and affable fellow and took us all fishing and barbequed for us and cooked for us with great Texas hospitality, and so it's a sad day, but more than anything a joyful day for us," said Lt. Col. Worster, chaplain, Idaho National Guard. Moore's wife was present as the chapel was renamed for her late husband.

In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)
[Annual Conferences](#)
[Veterans Day](#)
[Chaplaincy News](#)
[VA News](#)
[News You Can Use](#)
[Items of Interest](#)
[Recruiting News](#)
[In Memoriam](#)
[Historical Note](#)
[Links You Can Use](#)
[Director's Note](#)
[Contributions](#)

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Historical Note**Celebrating the Centennial of the Historic Town of Allensworth and Its Impact on California**

Born into slavery, Allen Allensworth escaped during the Civil War and served with the Union Army. After the war he and his brother operated two highly successful restaurants in St. Louis, while Allen also managed to continue his formal education. In 1871 Allen Allensworth became a minister, and in 1877 he met and married Josephine Leavel, a young school teacher and talented pianist and organist. In 1886. Allensworth accepted a commission in the Army as a Chaplain to serve in the all Black 24th Army Infantry. When Allensworth retired in 1906, he held the rank of lieutenant colonel and was not only the highest ranking Chaplain in the Army, but the highest ranking Black officer of this time.

**THE TOWN OF ALLENSTWORTH IS BORN**

After his retirement from the Army, Colonel Allensworth, Professor William Payne, and three other Black men decided to establish a self-governed town for Black people. They envisioned a place where Blacks could own property and achieve their full economic potential free from the discriminatory laws and practices of the time.

In 1908 Allensworth and Payne incorporated the California Colony and Home Protection Association and started looking for the best possible location for their town. The site finally selected was midway between Los Angeles and San Francisco and had plenty of inexpensive farm land and several artesian wells.

The new town grew rapidly as enterprising Black men and women - nurses, business owners, educator, farmers, ranchers, retired soldiers and crafts people - purchased town lots, started farms and built homes. It was not long until the prospering town had a school, church, library, and post office. Allensworth's businesses included a hotel, machine shop, bakery, drug store, and barber shop.

In its heyday, Allensworth bustled with activity. The town was a railroad transfer point, providing a steady stream of customers for Allensworth's many businesses. The grain and cattle merchants of Allensworth used the railroad to move their products to market. While the town's shops and stores supplied day-to-day needs for living, the church and school provided for the spiritual and educational needs of the town's people. The women of Allensworth organized formal debates, concerts, plays, club meetings and other social activities that brought people together transforming the town into a closely-knit community.

ALLENSTWORTH'S DECLINE

In 1914, Colonel Allensworth was killed in an accident. The death of this dynamic leader was a severe blow to the town. While capable leaders stepped forward and kept things moving for a time, other problems doomed the community.

In the early years, access to plentiful supplies of good water was easy. As each year passed, growing agricultural demands increased up stream diversions and deep-well pumping throughout the San Joaquin Valley, lowering the natural water table. The result was a significantly diminished quantity and quality of water available to the people of Allensworth.

During these years, income associated with Allensworth railroad shipping business began to decline as trucks gradually replaced trains for transporting farm products to market. During the 1920s and 30s, many people were forced to seek work elsewhere. The draft and enlisted men needs of World War II called more of Allensworth's young men and often their families followed.

ALLENSTWORTH TODAY

The downtown of Historic Allensworth is now preserved as Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park. California's first historic park that recognizes the contributions made by Black pioneers to the development of California. The aim of the park is to perpetuate for public use and enjoyment of the township called Allensworth, dedicated to the memory and spirit of Colonel Allen Allensworth, a distinguished Black pioneer of California.



In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)
[Annual Conferences](#)
[Veterans Day](#)
[Chaplaincy News](#)
[VA News](#)
[News You Can Use](#)
[Items of Interest](#)
[Recruiting News](#)
[In Memoriam](#)
[Historical Note](#)
[Links You Can Use](#)
[Director's Note](#)
[Contributions](#)

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[Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America](#)



Veterans Day, 2008 at Arlington National Cemetery

In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)
[Annual Conferences](#)
[Veterans Day](#)
[Chaplaincy News](#)
[VA News](#)
[News You Can Use](#)
[Items of Interest](#)
[Recruiting News](#)
[In Memoriam](#)
[Historical Note](#)
[Links You Can Use](#)
[Director's Note](#)
[Contributions](#)

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Executive Director's Note

Tough times never last, but tough people do!

I am unsure if this quotation originated with Robert Schuller or if he picked it up from another source. Regardless, as I reflect on our current situation I want to re-apply it – “***Tough times never last, but tough organizations do.***”

We are poised at a pivotal point in our nation’s history. Our economy is seriously troubled, our political leadership will soon undergo a major transition, and our military continues to serve in two major overseas fronts with deep strain on its resources and personnel. Hunger worldwide is on the increase and the generosity of the American people is being strained by pressures not even contemplated just a few short months ago.

One might consider this and react in horror wondering how any organization dependent on voluntary contributions could survive in such times. NCMAF must and will.

We will be hosting our annual conference in January. I am excited by the speakers we have lined up but am even more excited by the coming together of the endorsers to form and reform relationships and profit from one another. Chaplaincy and religious ministry in our Armed Services and to our Veterans has never been more important. As Herm indicated in his letter, the demands on our people are great and we have a key role to play in providing them religious ministry in the service and working to ensure ministry is available to them as they make the transition back to civilian life. Our annual meetings are key to our success as we come together to share ideas and be stimulated and encouraged on how we can pursue these tasks with even more courage and insight. Please plan now to attend if you have not already. You can still register up until December 1 at ncmaf.org/conference2009.

I am excited by the challenge to raise funds to continue this great ministry. NCMAF’s role is crucial. We must advocate on behalf of chaplaincy every day. The pressure is on everywhere to cut funds even when programs are essential – trim the fat so to speak – but how do you keep from trimming the muscle as well. We are advocates to ensure the muscle is preserved so our chaplains can be strong. We need your help to do this. Please consider now how you can support us through your contributions, both monetarily and spiritually. We are a tough organization but we need your toughness and support to pursue our important mission

Thanks and I look forward to seeing many of you in January.

Collegially,
Jack Williamson
NCMAF/ECVAC Executive Director

In This Issue

[Chairmen's Views](#)

[Annual Conferences](#)

[Veterans Day](#)

[Chaplaincy News](#)

[VA News](#)

[News You Can Use](#)

[Items of Interest](#)

[Recruiting News](#)

[In Memoriam](#)

[Historical Note](#)

[Links You Can Use](#)

[Director's Note](#)

[Contributions](#)

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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.