

NCMAF / ECVAC

Newsletter

News and Resources for
Military and Veterans Affairs
Endorsers and Chaplains

Autumn 2009

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Chairmen's Views

Letter from NCMAF Chairman Ed Brogan

"Be my rock of refuge, to which I can always go." *Psalm 71:3*

Dear Colleagues,

The summer has passed quickly with any number of major events. We all mourned the passing of Chaplain Timothy Vakoc, the Army's first chaplain to die as a result of injuries sustained in the current armed conflicts. We also witnessed the final graduation ceremonies of the Naval Chaplains School and the Air Force Chaplain Institute at NETC Newport and Maxwell AFB respectively. Both are now relocated to Fort Jackson, SC to become part of the Armed Forces Chaplain Center.

In this edition of our Newsletter you will find articles related to all of the above and more. I hope they will be both informative and of interest to you as you continue to vie for the chaplaincy in the various institutions we serve and support.

Now let me look not only to the recent past and its impact on our present but consider for a moment the immediate future. Our annual conferences are not far away. It is not too early to plan your attendance. Information to assist you in making arrangements is [found later](#) in this letter. The theme for the NCMAF conference this year is "Spiritually Resilient Ministry". I can think of nothing more important for NCMAF members to consider than this.

In an [editorial](#) responding to a front page article in the New York Times on "[Suicide's Rising Toll: After Combat, Victims of an Inner War.](#)" former Army Chaplain Peter Riga said "It took me 40 years to finally talk about those experiences (witnessing the death and agony of friends, soldiers and even the enemy), thanks to an ad hoc group of former Vietnam veterans at the local Veterans Affairs hospital. It causes the deepest trauma to see comrades torn to pieces and to hear the screams of the dying — screams that I have heard in my dreams for these past 40 years. Sometimes the screams were so loud that I woke up in sweat and in tears."

Our featured speakers are not strangers to these feelings and fears. I cannot urge you strongly enough to come and be a part of the discussions. I pray we will learn from each other how better to minister to both those who have suffered physical trauma as well as those who have suffered from trauma to their souls.

David in Psalm 71:3 prayed to his Lord, "Be my rock of refuge, to which I can always go." As chaplains and chaplain supporters, we are committed to a ministry of hope in the face of despair and burden. As I read the Psalms I begin to grasp the despair David knew deep within his soul. In my ministry I sense this must be how those like Chaplain Riga must feel. We are called to respond to this desire for hope in our own ministries and to support those who both provide it on a daily basis and all too often, need it for themselves. I am confident we will all benefit from this annual conference as we approach this subject together.

Again, please make plans now to attend our annual conferences. I look forward to seeing you there.

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)

NCMAF

"What a combat soldier sees and experiences in war can kill his or her soul. Then there is the guilt of surviving when others did not." – Peter J Riga, Chaplain with 101st Airborne Division, Vietnam

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Letter from ECVAC Chairman Hugh Morgan

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"The Untold Story of the Gulf War"

In every war ever fought in history, there have been spiritual leaders who brought God's message to the men in battle. **Elisha**, the Prophet, is one such leader. Today, we might call him a chaplain. He had an ear tuned to heaven and could hear the faintest whisper of God. He knew about the strategies and tactics of the Syrian army that had laid ambushes to destroy the Israeli army. God used Elisha to save the lives of these Special Forces repeatedly by revealing the enemy's plans.

We need those kinds of dedicated men and women today in our military forces whom God has called in ever age. "Bringing God to soldiers and soldiers to God" has been the theme of the Chaplaincy for many years. Our chaplains stand before commanders as well as the rank and file members of the armed forces today with the Word of God.

An outstanding illustration of the role and ministry of the chaplain comes to us from the Gulf War fifteen years ago. General Ronald Griffith, former Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, and the commander of the U.S. 1st Armored Division in the Gulf War tells his amazing story regarding his unique relationship with his chaplain, Danny Davis, and the influence of prayer and God's intervention in that historic war.

Although our military forces that fought in Desert Storm were the best trained and equipped of all armies that have ever fought, General Norman Schwarzkopf and our generals feared that there would be mass casualties and thousands of wounded men.

After a long extended staff meeting held by General Griffith in the desert prior to the invasion of Iraq, Chaplain Danny Davis approached the general and asked for a private meeting with him. Chaplain Davis asked, "General Griffith, what's bothering you, Sir? I sense you are under a lot of stress and worried. I see it in your body language and hear it in your voice. Would you like to tell me about it?" The general told him about his great concern for the men. The thoughts of having to send his men home in body bags to their moms and dads, wives and sweethearts, and brothers and sisters tormented him day and night.

Chaplain Davis said to the General, "Sir, I have been talking with God. He has told me that the battle will not be long and drawn out. It will last only a matter of hours. You will not suffer mass casualties and injured men. The battle is not yours, but the Lord's. Go to bed . . . get a good night of rest . . . be a peace."

General Griffith said, "I sensed that God Himself had spoken to me through my chaplain. I went to my tent, got into my bunk, fell asleep immediately, and slept soundly for about four hours.

What was the result? The war lasted only a matter of hours. There were only four casualties and fifty-seven men wounded in the division. He continued, "I want to give God all the glory, and thank Him for giving me a chaplain, a man of God, who hears from heaven."

You might ask how this story applies to VA hospital chaplains. It is my belief that chaplains not only minister to the patients and their families, but to the doctors and staff. They need affirming as professionals and persons of worth. They, also, need to hear a Word from God. It takes moral courage to speak up and speak forth a word in due season.

The sage of the ages, Solomon, wrote, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Proverbs 25:11, *KJV*). I like Eugene H. Peterson's rendering of this verse of Scripture, "The right word at the right time is like a custom-made piece of jewelry" (*The Message*). We can know God's Word by an intimate personal relationship with Him, and by reading Holy Scriptures. May God give you and me the right word for the right occasion that will be received as a Word from God, Himself.

Collegially,
[Hugh H. Morgan](#)



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Annual Conferences

Upcoming NCMAF and ECVAC 2010 Conference Dates

National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF)

- New NCMAF Endorser Training –, Monday, January 11, 2010
- NCMAF Annual Conference – January 12 – 13, 2010 –

Theme - Spiritually Resilient Ministry

Endorsers Conference for Veterans Affairs Chaplaincy (ECVAC)

- ECVAC Annual Conference –Wednesday, January 13, 2010

All above sessions will be held at the Hilton Mark Center Hotel in Alexandria, Virginia. The conference room rate is \$119 (single) and \$129 (double). You can make your hotel reservation now by calling 1-800-HILTONS (1-800-445-8667). Our special room rate block code is NCM. Be sure to use our NCM code when making your reservation. The deadline for making room reservations with our special group rate is December 9, 2009.

We plan to have our NCMAF and ECVAC registration materials available for you on or about October 1, 2009. You will be able to fill out the forms online and electronically return them to us. Further information about the conference registration fee and the link for online registration will follow in the next couple of weeks.

The Armed Forces Chaplains Board (AFCB) will host their all endorser meeting on Thursday, January 14. The meeting this year will be held at the Hilton Mark Center, not at the Pentagon as in the past. If you are a member of NCMAF and/or ECVAC you should have received registration information via email from [Rebecca Waldman](#) at the NCMAF office. If you did not receive this information please contact Rebecca or give Jack Williamson a call at 703.608.2100.

More details and schedules will be made available at [NCMAF.org](#)

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Annual Conference Speakers

Chaplain (Colonel) Michael W. Dugal, USA,

Director, Center for Spiritual Leadership US Army Chaplain Center and School
 Author –[Affirming the Soldier's Spirit through Intentional Dialogue](#), US Army War College

Chaplain (Captain) Daniel W. Hardin, USA

Profiled in [Finding Peace in Iraq](#) by John W. Kennedy, Pentecostal Evangel

Captain Mark Steiner, CHC, USN

Chaplain, Joint Chiefs of Staff

Rear Admiral Barry Black, CHC, USN, Retired

[62nd Chaplain of the United States Senate](#)

Roger Benimoff, former Army Chaplain

Author: [Faith Under Fire, an Army Chaplain's Memoir](#), Random House

Chaplain (BG) Douglas Lee, USA-Ret.

Endorsing Agent, Presbyterian & Reformed Joint Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel

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Chaplaincy News

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Army Guardsman named 'Chaplain of the Year'

By [Staff Sgt. S. Patrick McCollum](#)

ARLINGTON, Va. -- Chaplains have a myriad of reasons for serving their country, but recognition is usually not one of them.

"Chaplains are often in the position where we love to serve so much, it's always a surprise to be rewarded for it," said Capt. Rebekah Montgomery, who will receive the "Chaplain of the Year" award from the Military Chaplains' Association, July 17.

A Unitarian Universalist chaplain serving at both the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arlington, Va., and with Maryland's 58th Troop Command, Montgomery said she has been a student of religion since high school. She found that religion fascinated her. "I was always drawn to how people negotiate their daily lives with the experience of the spiritual," said Montgomery, who grew up in Bethesda, Md. "I got so much stimulation out of understanding other faith traditions and I still do."

After an 18-month tour in Afghanistan, Montgomery found herself back in Maryland with two jobs. One weekend a month, she is the brigade chaplain in the 58th TC, a job that she says keeps her grounded in the "M-Day" unit mentality.

"With my state, that's where the real nuts-and-bolts mission is," she said.

"I feel like I'm staying in touch and serving at the local level." During the week at the readiness center, she focuses on a broader mission, advising high-level officials on spiritual issues.

"My position at NGB is sort of an aide-de-camp for a general," she said. "You go places and see things you would never see in an M-Day unit." At the readiness center, Montgomery has also participated in the recent Suicide Prevention Stand-Down, making herself available to Soldiers who need counseling.

"Suicide has been an issue I have seen deployed, in the field, and on drill weekends," she said. "It's a fact of life, and is something chaplains are often involved in."

While Montgomery feels she has made a contribution, she said it is hard to trace. Morale and the number of infractions can be indicators, but one can't measure exactly something that didn't happen.

"We don't see the direct results, but we trust God is using us in a profound and positive way," she said. "You can't quantify how many divorces didn't happen. You can't quantify how many suicides didn't happen."

Her efforts have been noticed though, and Montgomery said she never forgets the reason she was nominated. "Just having the opportunity to serve Soldiers is the greatest mission on earth."



Russian military units abroad to have chaplains by end of 2009

Barvikha, July 22, Interfax - Office of chaplain in Russia's military will be introduced in three phases, Russian Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov told reporters. According to him, every Russian armed forces unit based outside Russia will have a chaplain posted in it before the end of 2009 as phase one.

Serdyukov said the forces outside Russia he was referring to were the 102nd Military Base in Armenia, the 201st Military Base in Tajikistan, and units based in South Ossetia, Abkhazia, the Ukrainian port of Sevastopol and Kyrgyzstan.

"One chaplain will be posted in each of the divisions by end of this year," Serdyukov said.

Besides, according to him, it is planned to set up such a department in the North Caucasus armed forces unit during the first phase. "It's our most belligerent district, it needs chaplains," the Minister explained.

In course of the second phase, he went on to say, "additional civil staff (chaplains - IF) will be posted in main units, armed forces sub-units and military bases in Russia." "The third phase is to set up a special administration at the

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central apparatus of the Russian armed forces and departments in military commands and in the navy," Serdyukov further said.

He stressed, all main religions would be represented in these structures.

According to the Minister's estimates, staff of chaplains in the Russian Army and navy would list about 200-250 persons.

When questioned about chaplain's salary Serdyukov responded, "average wage of a chaplain can't be lower than the salary of the unit's deputy commander on educational work."

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Military Chaplains Association

President Eisenhower's Remarks at the 22nd Annual Convention of the Military Chaplains Association
May 6, 1954

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen:

I am somewhat embarrassed by the extravagance of the language your presiding officer used to describe certain of my simple convictions and beliefs. I am astonished that this group of public servants-this group of Chaplains-should have found it desirable from their viewpoint to present to me such an award, one that I assure you will be treasured by me and my family.



The last time that I can remember addressing a group of Chaplains was in the Hague. It was the last group that I addressed before I came home from Europe, in the early spring or summer of 1952. I can well remember the subject I took that day, as I had the opportunity, exactly as this one, to go before that body and to bid them welcome to a particular spot for a particular purpose. Then it was all the Chaplains of SHAPE, the great international organization, as you know, designed to preserve the peace in Europe.

Today it is my privilege to extend to you on behalf of the administration a welcome to the Capital City. What I talked about was what I thought was a dereliction of duty on the part of the Chaplains. And I had a-I thought-very definite reason for talking in that way. I thought they were far too modest, far too much like shrinking violets, and were normally hiding their lights behind trees, if not bushels, instead of getting out where they belonged and doing something about things. And we really had quite a nice time before I got away. But I still think that some modicum, at least, of criticism is applicable.

Now, I don't know to what source we trace our faith, its beginnings in our hearts and minds. But it was certainly not difficult for me to build up an intensive religious faith as long as I was as dedicated as I think I am-to a free system of government among people. To me it makes no sense, without a religious foundation. And indeed, our forefathers could not explain the new system they set up in America except by saying our Creator has endowed us with certain basic rights, thereby establishing, as far as this Government was concerned, a divine source for its beginnings.

Now, in its application to the Army, why does an Army fight? Why do people go into the armed services, either voluntarily or in response to the behest of Government? Why do they meet the tests of battle, and do it courageously?

Because there is a certain sense of values that are important to them. They have a cause for which to fight.

Now, if we fail to get that cause in their minds fixed as comprehending the very source of the things for which they are fighting, the whole system that provides them a free home, a free way of life, free education, free expression, all based on a religious foundation-if we don't get that across to them, I say the Army, Navy, Air Force, is not as good as it can be.

Cromwell's men marched into battle singing hymns. They were highly disciplined, and greatly and wildly enthusiastic about the cause for which they fought. Now you may have been a Cavalier instead of a Roundhead in your sympathies, but you do have to admit that that was a most efficient Army, and they sang while they hewed off heads with a sweep of their swords. Now they believed they saw a direct connection between the risking of their lives, and what they were doing and something very deep in their souls.

These things may be basic. You may say, well everybody knows that. Well, everybody doesn't know it. Everybody doesn't stop to think about it. And entirely aside from all of the, let us say, routine-normal duties of the Chaplain, as I see it, our great service is to get over and make sure every individual knows what his country stands for, and therefore what is the basic cause for which he fights.

This need became very real with me in the early days of World War II. I know of no question that I was asked by the private soldier, as I would roam around in the various fronts and along the roadways, through depots-I know of no question that was asked me as often as "Well, General, why are we here?" And particularly if they picked up some

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paper that showed there was some strike going on in the United States, as there was at that time, as I recall. "Why are we here fighting like this? These people aren't supporting us" -or words to that effect.

To get over to them that they were defending a free way of life, and that that free way of life was imbedded deeply in the religious faith of their fathers-that was the simplest and best answer I could give them.

And I believe it can be done ahead of time, and I don't believe we have to ask our fighting men of any service to go into battle not knowing what he is fighting for.

I conceive that to be a job of the Chaplains, and at least, let us say, you have worked efficiently, but you haven't completed the job-that we know.

Now of course I am honored to appear before such a body. Not only is it a wonderful feeling to come back among the uniforms, I am glad to see your ladies with you. Mostly I don't have that privilege. I seem to address stag dinners mostly-or luncheons. To each of you my felicitations, my best wishes for an enjoyable period here in the Nation's Capital, and a continuation of your work among our armed services to help raise and keep up to the highest possible pitch the morale and the spiritual strength that we so badly need, as we defend freedom against totalitarianism in this world.

Thank you very much.

News You Can Use

[Veteran's Administration Advance Care Directives](#)

VA's policy on advance care planning discussions is Handbook 1004.02, "Advance Care Planning and Management of Advance Directives." http://www1.va.gov/vhapublications/ViewPublication.asp?pub_ID=2042

Under this policy, patients must be:

- given written notification stating their right to accept or refuse medical treatment, to designate a Health Care Agent, and to document their treatment preferences in an advance directive;
- asked whether they have an advance directive;
- asked whether they want more information about advance directives and/or assistance in completing the advance directive forms.

Advance directive notification and screening is required at:

- Check-in for a patient's first primary care appointment, unless there is documentation of advance directive notification and screening within the last year;
- Each admission to a VHA inpatient facility (including hospital, nursing home, or domiciliary facility); and
- Each admission to home care or hospice care.

If patients request more information about advance directives and/or assistance in completing an advance directive, the screener must direct the patient to the requested assistance.

The above requirements closely mirror the provisions of the Patient Self-Determination Act, a federal law which applies to health care institutions outside of VA.

The policy requires that primary care practitioners initiate conversations about advance care planning periodically, at intervals no longer than three years.

The policy describes information that must be covered by the primary care practitioner as well as information that must be covered by advance directive counselors, who are usually social workers.

The policy includes the following approved patient educational materials for Veterans:

<http://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/vha-10-0137A-fill.pdf>

<http://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/vha-10-0137B.pdf>

The policy also refers practitioners to *Your Life, Your Choices* as a potential educational resource, and includes a link to the site that will host the new on-line computer program once its development has been completed.

Your Life, Your Choices was originally developed at the VA Puget Sound Health Care System in Seattle Washington more than 10 years ago under a federally funded grant (VA IIR 94-050). It was authored by 6 health professionals and researchers.

Your Life, Your Choices: Planning for Future Medical Decisions is not an advance directive or a living will. It is an educational workbook that helps Veterans think about their future medical decisions, and can be used by a Veteran to help complete an advance directive. The workbook contains individual worksheets that can be appended to an advance directive.

Several years ago VA decided to develop an on-line interactive computer program for Veterans. A number of different advance care planning tools were evaluated, including *Your Life, Your Choices*. VA elected to base the

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computer program on *Your Life, Your Choices*. However, VA also determined that *Your Life, Your Choices* was in need of revision.

Your Life, Your Choices is currently undergoing final content revision before the content is translated into an on-line computer program format. Chaplains representing eight different faith groups have been included in the revision process. This process is due to be completed in the spring of 2010.

The outdated version of *Your Life, Your Choices* is still officially suspended in VA, but can be viewed at: http://www.ethics.va.gov/docs/policy/VHA_Handbook_1004-02_Advance_Care_Planning_20090702.pdf.

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AFCC advance team gears up for classes

Susanne.Kappler1@us.army.mil, *Leader Staff*

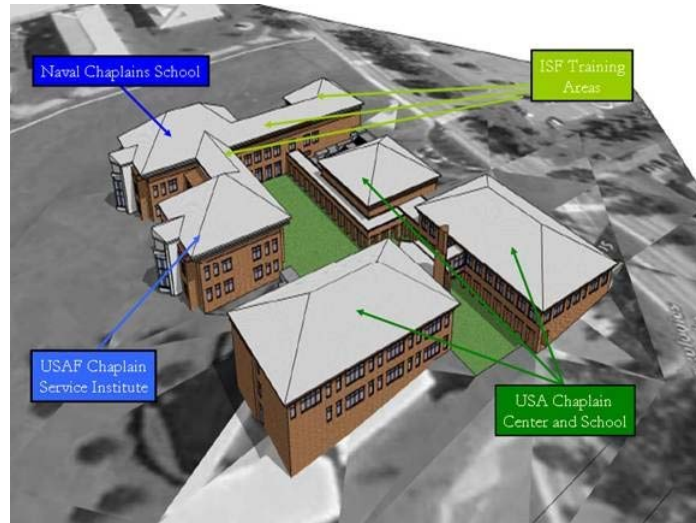
The first classes at the new Armed Forces Chaplaincy Center are not scheduled to begin until February, but an advance team has been working on establishing the center since August.

The team of five consists of Air Force, Army and Navy chaplains and chaplain assistants.

The team members act on behalf of their chaplain schools' commandants to facilitate the move of the Air Force Chaplain Service Institute, the Naval Chaplain School and the Navy's Religious Program Specialist School to Fort Jackson.

The team divides its time between tending to construction-related issues; planning training; and acting as a liaison for the AFCC with the installation and Base Realignment and Closure representatives, said Navy Chaplain (Cmdr.) J.P. Hedges.

The move to Fort Jackson is not without challenges, admitted Air Force Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Gary Ziccardi.



Armed Forces Chaplaincy Center - Designs for what the combined services, AFCC will look like when construction is complete.

"Our hub has historically always been at Maxwell Air Force Base, (Ala.)," Ziccardi said. "Our Air University is there, our library is there. Being geographically separated from that is a challenge."

However, being close together allows chaplains from all services to prepare for future assignments.

"Our chaplains will deploy in an interservice environment, where they'll work with the Air Force, Navy, Army and the Marines," Army Chaplain (Maj.) Gary Payne said. "Just to have that preparation before they have to figure it out downrange, I think is a big help."

Despite a common misconception, the AFCC does not constitute a joint organization, Hedges emphasized. Each school will continue to provide service-specific training, but in a co-located environment.

Payne explained that being co-located provides opportunities for the chaplain schools to work together.

"Each (service) does things a little differently and they have their own culture, yet with the Armed Forces Chaplaincy Center we are also going to have shared training," he said. "There are things that are common to our ministries, like counseling, suicide prevention and a lot of other subject areas that we can work on."

For now, the schools are planning to conduct 44 hours of shared training per training cycle. "The Interservice Training Review Organization set how many hours we are going to have shared, but we're still exploring further opportunities to see if we can do more training together," Hedges said.

Ziccardi expressed his optimism that once the AFCC is operational, more opportunities for cooperation between the schools will arise.

"The commanding officer of the Naval Chaplain School and the commandants of the Army and Air Force chaplain schools are very positive and optimistic about the possibilities for the future for shared training opportunities," Ziccardi said. "Once we're on the same piece of real estate, the conversations will unfold and

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multiply.”

For the Navy, an added benefit is that all members of the religious ministry team will train at the same location for the first time.

Currently, religious program specialists — the equivalent to chaplain assistants—train at the Naval Air Station in Meridian, Miss. “The big thing for the Navy is that the chaplains and the religious program specialists have never trained together before.

That’s going to happen now, so we’re excited about that,” Hedges said. “It’s going to be a good thing — coming together.”



This graphic rendering depicts the building that will house the Air Force and Navy chaplain schools. In addition, the building includes a 300-seat auditorium and shared classrooms.

Naval Chaplains School Holds Last Graduation in Newport

By Cmdr. Brian Simpson, Naval Chaplains School Public Affairs

NEWPORT, R.I. (NNS) -- The final graduation ceremony of the Naval Chaplains School (NCS) at Newport, R.I. will take place Aug. 12.

Graduating are 30 chaplains and chaplain candidates who have completed the basic course of instruction preparing them to serve the men and women of the sea services - Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard.

Following the ceremony, the NCS will move to Fort Jackson in Columbia, S.C. where it will join the U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School and the U.S. Air Force Chaplain Service Institute in forming the Armed Forces Chaplaincy Center. This move is a result of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission's 2005 mandated collocation of schools and is designed to foster closer cooperation among the three chaplain corps as well as enhance opportunities for shared instruction and training.

"This marks the end of an era in Newport where we've trained tens of thousands of Navy chaplains who have served during peacetime and conflict all over the world," said Capt. Michael W. Langston, commanding officer, Naval Chaplains School. "We anticipate the move to Fort Jackson and the standup of the new Armed Forces Chaplaincy Center will mark a new chapter of excellence and achievement for our chaplain corps and for our sister services, the Army and the Air Force."

Along with the move will come a new name. In addition to training clergy to serve as chaplains, the school will also train religious program specialists (RPs), the enlisted support rating for Navy chaplains. No longer the Naval Chaplains School, it will become the Naval Chaplaincy School and Center.

The school came into existence in February 1942, when large numbers of civilian clergy, most with no military experience, entered the Navy during World War II. These pastors, priests and rabbis stepped forward to meet the religious needs of the millions of young men and women who were joining the Navy and Marine Corps. First located at Naval Station Norfolk, Va., the school moved shortly thereafter to the campus of the College of William and Mary in nearby Williamsburg, Va. The school was decommissioned Nov. 15, 1945.

In 1951, after the outbreak of hostilities in Korea, the increased requirement for chaplains dictated the need once again for an indoctrination course for new Navy clergy. The NCS was re-established in Newport, R.I., as part of Naval Schools Command.

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During the time the NCS has been in Newport, it has trained more than 50,000 chaplains to serve the men and women of the sea services. The last 10 chiefs of chaplains (two-star admirals) have been graduates of the school. Also among its graduates, the school counts Chaplain Robert Brett, for whom the NCS building is named, who was killed in action at Khe Sanh, South Vietnam less than six months after his graduation. Chaplain Vincent Capodanno, another NCS graduate, was also killed in action in Vietnam and posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for valor, while Rear Adm. Barry Black, retired from active duty and went on to be chaplain for the United States Senate.



Chaplain Service Institute on target to relocate to Fort Jackson

Senior Airman Melissa Copeland, Air University Public Affairs 5/22/2009 - MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala. –

The Ira C. Eaker College for Professional Development's Chaplain Service Institute here has been bustling with activity since May 2008. And has gotten much busier lately.

The institute is scheduled to relocate to Fort Jackson, S.C., by fiscal 2010 to join the U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School, the Naval Chaplain School-to include the Marines, and be known as the Armed Forces Chaplaincy Center (AFCC).

Although collectively known as the AFCC, "each service will retain its own school's name in order to differentiate among the specific services," said Col. James Galloway, Eaker commander.

The move came under a Base Realignment and Closure initiative enacted in 2005, which mandated all Department of Defense chaplaincy schools be collocated at Fort Jackson.

The CSI is home to the Chaplain Assistant Apprentice course for enlisted members, the Chaplain Candidate course for the Air Force Reserve Command, Basic and Intermediate Chaplain Courses and courses for Wing Chaplains.



Final graduation ceremony of the Air Force Chaplain Service Institute while located at Maxwell – Gunter Air Force Base. Photo credit – Ed Brogan

Approximately 500 Chaplains and Chaplain Assistants graduate from the institute annually.

The move is scheduled to begin this year with the last instructional course being taught at Maxwell October 2009. Classes will resume at Fort Jackson beginning December 2009.

Although no longer on Maxwell, Eaker College will remain the parent organization and continue to provide educational and administrative oversight for the institute, Colonel Galloway said.

"The Chaplain Resource Board, an Air Staff Function that we host, will realign July 1 to actually be a part of the Chaplain Service Institute, forming a third division. The three divisions, Doctrine/Curriculum, Education/Training and the Resource division will team together to execute Blended Learning initiatives," he continued.

With Fort Jackson as the largest Initial Entry Training Center for approximately 50,000 Army enlistees, facilities are being built specifically for the chaplain schools as to ensure no training interruptions.

"The facilities are similar to what we have here at Maxwell with the addition of four inter-service classrooms and a 300-seat auditorium to be shared among the three services," said Chaplain (Col.) Steven Keith, commandant of the Chaplain Service Institute.

The unique training mission of Fort Jackson will also provide the Chaplains opportunities to 'practice what they preach.'

While at Maxwell, all Chaplains and Chaplain Assistants had to be sent to Silver Flag at Tyndall Air Force Base, FL., for practical deployment exercises where there was no guarantee other courses would be there for interaction purposes, Colonel Galloway said.

But Fort Jackson will provide access for the chaplains to utilize the Warrior Training Area, an area always in use by Army basic trainees.

"The Army has roughly 300 soldiers in the WTA conducting Advanced Individual Training nearly all the time," Colonel Galloway said. "This gives our new Chaplains and Chaplain Assistants real people with which to interact. It is a great experience for our Airmen and we began using this area over a year ago."

Being collocated with the other services will also provide valuable training opportunities for Air Force Chaplain Corps.

"It will allow us the opportunity to combine our teaching efforts in some areas of study," said Chaplain Keith. "Currently we have identified 44 hours of shared inter-service instruction for our basic chaplain courses. We anticipate that number will grow once the move is completed. Additionally, the collocation will allow us to better understand one another's cultures, differences and strengths."

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With the distance between Fort Jackson and Shaw Air Force Base, the nearest Air Force installation, nearly 45 minutes, the benefits look to outweigh the cost.

"The benefit will be the interaction among the services in a similar career field," he said. "Already the Army, Navy and Air Force school commandants and their transition teams have forged positive working relationships and started down the road of inter-service teamwork and cooperation. There is a lot of excitement at all levels in the Chaplain Corps of all services to see this go through successfully."

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Audio Bibles reaching American Troops

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M., Sept. 3 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- On U.S. Navy ships and forward operating bases around the world, military chaplains are using Audio Bibles to give comfort and hope to troops.

Faith Comes By Hearing, the world's foremost Audio Bible ministry, designed and distributed more than 14,000 Military BibleSticks to chaplains and troops in Iraq, Kuwait, Kosovo, and Afghanistan.

"Last year, Faith Comes By Hearing felt burdened to bring the Word of God in audio to our nation's military community," said Troy Carl, Faith Comes By Hearing's national director. "So, we developed a specialized, portable audio player just for their use--camouflaged and loaded with the dramatized New Testament--and sent it to those who are deployed or deploying."



The Military BibleStick has been popular for both troops and chaplains. "MP3 players are such a huge thing right now," said a Navy chaplain in San Diego. "These BibleSticks put the Bible in their hands. And, they're helping our sailors get through their deployments."

"It's great to be able to offer our young soldiers something technology-based, as they practically grew up with cell phones and iPods," said an Army chaplain deployed to Iraq. "I've heard great comments about ease of use, portability, and the fact that now there's no excuse for a soldier to not carry his Bible when it's so easy."

"This has been the most useful thing I've ever had. Every day I listen—and it has brought me closer to God," agreed one Navy pilot.

Another Army chaplain said, "My soldiers are on the roads every day hauling supplies. Convoys can last up to 48 hours, and they can't take much with them.

These BibleSticks easily fit inside their cargo pockets so when they're on break, they can take a few minutes to hear the Word of God and be spiritually edified."

"More and more chaplains are contacting us for these vital spiritual resources for the members of their units. And what a difference it's making!" said Carl. "Simply by word of mouth, we've distributed over 14,000. Our conservative estimates show that we could literally provide tens of thousands of units."

"This is a wonderful way to engage in Scripture for those serving our country in so many trying and troubled spots of the world," said Carl.

To learn more about sponsoring the troops with God's Word in audio, visit <http://www.faithcomesbyhearing.com/military/military-outreach> or call 800-545-6552.

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Centuries of Service: Military Chaplains in the USA



The University of North Carolina, Wilmington maintains an extensive website in support of military chaplain information. The site both celebrates and illuminates the history of the US Military Chaplains. These men and women have dedicated their lives to our country and have served the soldiers, sailors and airmen as well as families by guiding and comforting all in religious and spiritual matters.

This site contains: transcriptions of [interviews](#) with Chaplains; numerous [histories](#) in searchable full-text digital format; [bibliography](#) to print and electronic sources; and [links](#) to associated websites.

We hope that the interested public, students, researchers, historians, genealogists, seminaries, endorsers, religious institutions and all who want to know more about the role and service experiences of

Military Chaplains will find this site helpful.

The site is accessible to all via the supplied [link](#).



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Items of Interest

The Life of Col. Joseph Powell Remembered With Military Honors

By Cheryl Brown, 02 Sep 2009, blackvoicesnew.com

"A giant has fallen," said Pastor Gerald Penick, President of the So. Eastern Conference of the Seventh Day Adventist Church. And a life was well remembered at a top military service for Col. Joseph Powell.

About 1600 people spent time honoring a man who gave to God and country through his service as a pastor and leader in the military as Chaplain.

U.S. Senate Chaplain, Barry Black preached his eulogy and Major Andrew R. Harewood, United States Army Deputy Pentagon Chaplain directed the service. It was military and it was holy. There were few seats to accommodate late comers and the program progressed on. Those making comment were those who knew him.

Not a passing knowledge of him but a deep knowledge of what made him the man that he was. The men who honored him one after another said that he was the reason for them being in the military and he was the reason they themselves had the rank. He had diverse relationships: husband, father, brother, dean, soldier, chaplain, read Dr. Tina Robinson, head of Living Legends. She and Victoria Watts read the acknowledgements from civil rights organizations, the Bermuda Conference of Seventh-Day Adventist and from close friends.

"Martin Luther King, Jr. whom he fought the battles of legal segregation over, said everybody can be great because everyone can serve. Powell's work was great because he served," they read. As she finished she saluted the casket and said, "Col. Powell you are dismissed."

Chaplain Black spoke of the sadness he felt when he heard of his mentor's death.

"Powell used to come to Oakwood College in his uniform, crisp and sharp," he said. He said they were both from Baltimore and he felt that he came to the campus just to see him and to encourage him. It was his nurturing spirit that helped to lead Black into the ministry and the military. "He mentored me and others," he said. Chaplain Black said that he led a life service and after he retired he was willing to go to Oakwood College to be the chaplain there. He served the purpose of God not the life of himself.

Chaplain Black recalled the story of when he asked for permission to get involved with Martin Luther King, Jr. and the desegregation movement; he was told that racial segregation will be here as long as the end of time. "He got involved and served his generation," said Chaplain Black. Chaplain Black spoke of the ability to articulate and make his verb and subject agree, and how his ability to speak helped level the playing ground. He had the military asking "are there any more like you where you come from?"

The military was segregated when he came along.

Speaking directly to Powell's wife Alice he said, "we would not be military chaplains without your husband, without his sustained performance. Chaplain Herman Kibble would not have been the first Black Adventist Chaplain on an Aircraft Carrier.

"Had it not been for him I wouldn't have been an Admiral, had I not been an Admiral I wouldn't be the U.S. Senate Chaplain. I owe it to my mentor," said Chaplain Black.

Delbert Baker, President of Oakwood College made mention of Black's priorities.

"I thought about the funeral of (Ted) Kennedy (going on at the same time) and that Chaplain Black was on program. But he came here," he said. In a word Harewood told Black Voice News after the service of Black coming even with the pressing service of Kennedy: priorities! It's what you are and who you are and he knew his priority. He made the right choice," said Harewood.

"He did what he had to do. They could get by without him," said Sgt. William Farmer.



Current U.S. Senate Chaplain Rear Admiral Barry C. Black with his friend Col. Chaplain Joseph T. Powell (ret.)



[Former Marine is first Buddhist Army chaplain](#)

By Bob Smietana - The (Nashville) Tennessean, Posted : Thursday Sep 10, 2009 21:17:47 EDT

(Editor's note – The following is an abridged version of the published article. The entire article is available at this [link](#).)

When Thomas Dyer heads to Afghanistan in December, the former Marine and one-time Southern Baptist pastor won't take a rifle with him. He won't take a Bible, either.

Instead, Dyer, a Tennessee National Guardsman from Memphis and the first Buddhist chaplain in the history of the Army, hopes to bring serenity and calm, honed by months of intensive meditation.

That preparation, he says, will help him bring spiritual care amid a war zone.

"We're going to put it to the test," Dyer said.

Dyer's deployment is another step in the U.S. military's attempt to meet the diverse spiritual needs of America's fighting forces. It's no easy task.

For one thing, the military chaplaincy is facing all the complications that have affected American religion over the past 40 years. The decline of mainline Protestants and their aging clergy. The ongoing Catholic priest shortage. The explosion of religious diversity. The emergence of people with no faith. The ease with which people move from one faith to another.

The military is trying to adapt to these changes, while trying to find ministers willing to serve in a war zone, and who can minister to American troops without offending Muslim allies.

Chaplains say they are up to it, saying their "cooperate without compromise" approach allows them to serve soldiers of any faith. But critics wonder if the whole enterprise is doomed to fail.

The latest report from the Defense Department tracks 101 faiths for active-duty personnel, from 285,763 Roman Catholics to the one member of the Tioga River Christian conference. In between are Baptists, Jews, Buddhists, Bahai's, Mormons and Wiccans. About a half a million active personnel are evangelicals. Almost 281,710 claim no religion.

No military has ever tried to meet such diverse spiritual needs, says Doris Bergen, a history professor at the University of Toronto. In World War II, the British army had thousands of Hindus and Muslims in its ranks, but only Christian and Jewish chaplains.

"To build a military chaplaincy that reflects the incredible religious diversity of Americans, and that supports that diversity in a meaningful way — it's uncharted terrain," Bergen said. "It's completely brand new. You don't really have any models to look to."

In the end, Bergen, the Toronto professor, wonders if creating a diverse chaplain corps is possible

"You need to have chaplains who can minister to everyone who is under their care," she said. "So if you are injured or dying and you need counseling or you want to pray, there has got to be someone there. And whether they are Jewish or Buddhist or Catholic, or Wiccan, you have got to feel comfortable with them."

Then there's the E-word. Military regulations place strict limits on evangelism. Chaplains can't try to persuade people to change their faith. But they can try to convert the unchurched, provided that a soldier lends them a willing ear.

Things get tricky when chaplains push their faith.

Chaplain Steve Blackwell, a Tennessee native who now serves as an Army chaplain recruiter in Los Angeles, said a chaplain's job is not to evangelize and that a chaplain who pushes his faith too hard will eventually fail.

"I am as evangelical as they come," he said. "And I am not going to shy away from the chance to lead someone to Jesus. But if someone comes in and they see every soldier as a potential convert, they are not going to last long as a chaplain."

Compassion is the key

Back in Memphis, Dyer meditates and prepares to be deployed.

He's already been in contact with soldiers overseas. Once word got out about the new Buddhist chaplain, he was bombarded with e-mails. He's already done one wedding for a Buddhist soldier who has returned home, and offered spiritual direction over the phone with an overseas soldier.



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Dyer said he's ready for whatever comes. And he believes being knowledgeable about Christianity and Buddhism will make him a better chaplain. Most of all, he wants to be there.

"If I have a Church of Christ or more conservative soldier, he certainly does not need to know about dharma or things like that," he said. "But if he is in pain, or his child back home is sick, I need to be compassionate and help him through that moment. We both need to forget at that moment that I am a Buddhist."



Recruiting News

Army

U.S. Struggles To Find Clergy For National Guard

by Brian Mann, September 8, 2009 from [NCPR](#)

NOAH ADAMS, host: The strains of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan created recruiting problems for the National Guard. But now, most Guard units have returned to full strength. Still, a recruiting issue remains: Guard units are searching for clergy willing to serve as chaplains.

As North Country Public Radio's Brian Mann reports, the Guard is trying to fill more than 250 chaplain posts.

BRIAN MANN: In 2004, Chaplain Eric Olsen, a Lutheran pastor, deployed to Iraq with the National Guard unit from upstate New York. He found himself ministering to men and women fighting in the Sunni Triangle.

As part of an audio diary, he recorded this conversation with one of his parishioners, Staff Sergeant Ulrich(ph).

Lieutenant Colonel ERIC OLSEN (Chaplain, 42nd Infantry Division, U.S. Army): How would you say your faith has changed being in a combat zone?

Staff Sergeant ULRICH: Well, you know, they say there's no atheists in a foxhole.

MANN: Olson struggled to help soldiers balance their faith and values with the ugliness and confusion of war.

Lt. Col. OLSON: Whoa. At ease, guy. Hey, stand back. We got a couple of soldiers who got into a little bit of an altercation because of attitude and the workload and...

MANN: In tense situations like this one, Olson was often able to talk soldiers down. He says chaplains serve as pressure valves, helping with issues that range from family troubles to post-traumatic stress.

Lt. Col. OLSON: We provide worship services. We provide counseling, everything from weddings to funerals to baptisms. The hard part of the job lately, with the war on, is we're the ones who notify families a loved one has been killed.

MANN: Five years after he deployed, Olson is a full colonel, the top chaplain in New York state's National Guard. These days, his challenge is finding clergy willing to take his place on the front lines.

Lt. Col. OLSON: Let's face it. It requires physical fitness. It requires a discipline that many are not willing to undertake.

MANN: National Guard recruiters say clergy these days tend to be older, too old for a combat zone, and churches are less willing to give up their pastors.

Lt. Col. OLSON: It's very difficult for a congregation to lose a chaplain for - their pastor for 18 months and to survive that and then him come back.

Major Chaplain Timothy Baer is a Baptist minister charged with recruiting chaplains for reserve units nationwide. He says a third of clergy positions in the National Guard are unfilled. There are only six rabbis in the guard and not a single imam. The biggest problem, Baer says, is a shortage of Roman Catholic priests.

Mr. TIMOTHY BAER (Major Chaplain): We are short Catholic priests for every component in the military, and that's a reflection of the national shortage of priests. We do need priests that are willing to accept the call and go forward. They are vitally needed.

MANN: Here in New York State, 40 percent of Army National Guard soldiers are Roman Catholic, but Chaplain Olson hasn't been able to recruit a single priest, not one.

Lt. Col. OLSON: The Archdiocese of New York City, I have several candidates who are in the diocese, but they won't let them come on to active duty because the diocese, the Catholic diocese, already has shortages.

MANN: The military is working to accommodate priest recruits whenever possible. Father Douglas Decker from Adams, New York serves with the Air National Guard, which has fewer and shorter deployments than the army.

Reverend DOUGLAS DECKER (Air National Guard): Since I'm a pastor here in a Catholic church, they let me come in on the Friday of that weekend and then Saturday of that weekend. And that way I can get back for masses and all for the parish.

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MANN: Decker says his parish made do with retired priests and a lay pastor when he was sent to Saudi Arabia and Germany, but those deployments lasted only a few weeks. What the guard needs is civilian clergy who can go to war for a year or even 18 months.

For NPR News, I'm Brian Mann.

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

The Air Force Chaplain Corps continues to provide spiritual care, as well as the opportunity for Air Force personnel, their families, and other authorized individuals to exercise their Constitutional right to the free exercise of religion.

As we seek to glorify God, serve Airmen, and pursue excellence, we continue our partnership with you in order to access religious ministry professionals who will remember their calling while directly performing acts of ministry for those from similar faith traditions or indirectly providing for the spiritual needs of others.

We would like to say, "Thank you," at the end of FY09 for your partnership with us. You have contributed to our success in meeting this year's recruiting goal. We have accessed a wonderful group of individuals who desire to provide warrior care with excellence through the guidance and wisdom of God.

Looking forward to FY10, we encourage you to continue to send us your endorsements, allowing us the honor of working with your religious ministry professionals as they seek to be accessed into the Air Force family. Additionally, we'd like to introduce you to our newest team members: Ch, Lt Col John Kinney and Ch, Lt Col Kerry Abbott. Thus, our Air Force Chaplain Corps recruiting team consists of the following persons:

- Fr John Kurzak (Director)
- Ch, Lt Col John Kinney (Catholic recruiting)
- Ch, Lt Col Kerry Abbott (Catholic recruiting)
- Ch, Maj, Richard Anderson (Protestant recruiting)
- TSgt Barbara Ritson (Program Manager)

Blessings,
 +Richard G. Anderson
 Chaplain, Major, USAF
 Protestant Chaplain Recruiter
 HQ AFRS/RSOCC
 550 D. St. West, Ste 1
 Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4527

Active Duty Chaplain Recruiting
 Contact Phone Number
 1-800-803-2452

Reserve Chaplain & Chaplain Candidate Recruiting
 Contact Phone Number
 1-800-223-1784 ext. 71475
 Air Force Reserve Command website
<http://www.afrc.af.mil/>

Air National Guard Chaplain Recruiting
 Contact Phone Number
 1-866-839-7438
 Contact E-mail chaplain@ngb.ang.af.mil



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

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(314) 261-6456 (cell)

REGION WEST-IRVINE CA

LCDR Jeff Logan

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(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

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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.



Chaplain Mark Tidd as he is promoted to Rear Admiral. Mark serves as Deputy Chief of Chaplains of the Navy and the Chaplain of the Marine Corps. General James T. Conway, Commandant of the Marine Corps, officiated at the promotion ceremony. Mark previously served as General Conway’s chaplain when the General had his Battalion command. Photo Credit – Ed Brogan

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For Reflection

[Editor's Note – Official status of HR1283, Military Readiness Enhancement Act of 2009, can be tracked at The Library of Congress, Thomas Home](#)

[Vet-turned-congressman: End 'don't ask, don't tell'](#)

From Emily Sherman CNN, updated 4:38 p.m. EDT, Wed July 8, 2009

Rep. Patrick Murphy, an Iraq war veteran, kicked off a push Wednesday to persuade Americans that the president should repeal "don't ask, don't tell," the policy that prevents openly gay troops from serving in the U.S. military.

Murphy, D-Pennsylvania, appeared along with several gay, lesbian and straight service members to launch the initiative.

"We cannot afford to wait any longer" for the policy's repeal, Murphy said at the National Press Club in Washington. "Now is the time to change this, when our military is stretched so thin" with wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

A "Voices of Honor" tour, sponsored by the Human Rights Campaign, will travel across the country, sharing stories of gay, lesbian and straight servicemen and -women in hopes of garnering support for the Military Readiness Enhancement Act, which would repeal the law that established the policy.

The act would allow gay and lesbian Americans to serve in the military without concealing their sexuality.

Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese said in a statement, "We must repeal this discriminatory policy and ensure that our military can recruit and retain the best and the brightest troops regardless of their sexual orientation."

President Obama has said he wants Congress to repeal the law, but gay rights groups have been angered that the president has not done more to hasten the change.

Since Obama took office, 287 service members have been discharged for being [gay](#), according to the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, which supports the repeal.

The bill, introduced by Colin Powell in 1993 and signed into law by President Clinton, ended the protocol requiring service members to state their sexual orientation.

But Powell now says the time has come to review whether the policy is still necessary.

"Sixteen years have now gone by, and I think a lot has changed with respect to attitudes within our country, and therefore I think this is a policy and a law that should be reviewed," Powell said.

"I am withholding judgment, because the commanders of the armed forces of the United States and the Joint Chiefs of Staff need to study it and make recommendations to the president and have hearings before the Congress before a decision is made," he added.

The military's top uniformed officer, Adm. Mike Mullen, said Wednesday that it's clear the president wants the law changed and that he is beginning to work with his staff on how a repeal would be implemented. But, he advised, with two wars ongoing, that the decision not be hurried.

"When I talk about looking at this in the future, we have a force that's under extraordinary stress, and it's a force that, you know, should this occur, I think we need to implement in a way that is -- that recognizes the challenges and the stress that we're under right now," said the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. "But, if it does occur, when it does occur, you know, I'll certainly lead it and carry it out."

Defense Secretary Robert Gates recently said he is looking for ways to make the policy "more humane," including letting people serve who may have been outed because of vengeance or a jilted lover.

But there is plenty of opposition to the repeal. In the spring, more than 1,000 retired officers signed a letter organized by Flag and General Officers for the Military urging [Obama](#) to uphold the law.

"We believe that imposing this burden on our men and women in uniform would undermine recruiting and retention, impact leadership at all levels, have adverse effects on the willingness of parents who lend their sons and daughters to military service, and eventually break the all-volunteer force," the letter said.

The recent shooting death of a sailor has also raised questions about acceptance of gays among troops. The family of Seaman August Provost of Houston, Texas, said they believe that he was killed because of his sexual orientation and his race.

But a spokesman for Camp Pendleton, where the shooting took place, said there was no indication early in the investigation that the killing was a hate crime.



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Still, Genevieve Chase, a straight veteran of Operation Enduring Freedom and the founder of American Women's Veterans, said she believes that not much would change in the military if "don't ask, don't tell" were repealed. Chase appeared with [Murphy](#) at the event Wednesday in Washington.

Calling them service members of a "new era," Chase said, "Gays have been and are already serving openly. ... Allowing discrimination and bigotry to continue is what disrupts cohesion."

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[Powell Calls For Review, Not Reversal, Of Don't Ask Don't Tell](#)

[HuffPost Reporting Sam Stein](#), July 05, 2009

Former Secretary of State Colin Powell said on Sunday that the "Don't Ask Don't Tell" policy he helped craft should be revisited, but he would not go so far as to call for a full repeal of the compromise.

"The policy and the law that came about in 1993 I think was correct for the time," Powell said in an appearance on CNN's "State of the Union." "Sixteen years have now gone by, and I think a lot has changed with respect to attitudes within our country. And therefore, I think this is a policy and a law that should be reviewed."

"I was withholding judgment because the commanders of the armed forces of the United States and the Joint Chiefs of Staff need to study it and make recommendations to the president, and have hearings before the Congress before a decision is made," he added. "It is not just a matter of old generals who, you know, are just too high-bound. There are lots of complicated issues with respect to this, and I think all of those issues should be illuminated. And I hope that the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the commanders working with the secretary of defense will give this the greatest consideration and make their recommendation to the president and to the Congress."



Powell, as much as any congressional figure, played the foil in President Bill Clinton's efforts to follow through on a campaign promise that all citizens, regardless of sexual orientation, should be able to serve openly in the military. In recent months, he and other key players from the first battle (notably, former Georgia Sen. Sam Nunn) have argued that political realities have evolved to the extent that the armed forces should take a closer look at the policy's purpose and effectiveness. In December 2008, [Powell told CNN](#) that it was time to "definitely re-evaluate" "Don't Ask Don't Tell."

By not calling for full repeal, the former Secretary of State and prominent Obama endorser doesn't really do the Obama administration many favors. During the campaign, the president called for overturning "Don't Ask Don't Tell." But he has been slow to act since taking office, even as 250 military servicemen have been dismissed for disclosing their sexuality. Having a prominent figure like Powell provide the cover for a sweeping policy reversal would be a gift to Obama and a boon to gay-rights groups, which have grown increasingly frustrated with the president for dragging his feet on this issue.

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Historical Note

[Remembrance: Chaplain recalls 9/11 attack on Pentagon](#)

By [Susanne Kappler, Fort Jackson Leader](#) Sep 9, 2009

FORT JACKSON, S.C. -- Pentagon Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Henry Haynes had just come out of a meeting and was on his way back to his office when he heard the news: A plane had hit one of the World Trade Center towers in New York.

At first, he did not pay close attention to the events, said Haynes, who is now a colonel and the Fort Jackson installation chaplain. But when a second plane struck the other WTC tower, people around the building started to realize the magnitude of what was happening, Haynes said.

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Photo Credit: Petty Officer 1st Class Brandon W. Schulze.
In this file photo, a memorial flag is illuminated, Sept. 11, 2007, near the spot where American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon.

"One man said, 'I bet we're going to be next,'" he remembered. "I guess it was about a few minutes after that when all the sirens started going off in the building - because we were next."

On Sept. 11, 2001, at 9:37 a.m., American Airlines Flight 77 struck the west wall of the Pentagon, killing 64 people aboard the plane and 125 people in the building.

"When the alarms went off, everybody ran out of the building, and smoke was pouring out of the western side of the building," Haynes said. "There was total chaos and confusion, because nobody really knew what was going on."

Haynes and his fellow chaplains did not have time to let what happened sink in. They set up an operations center outside the building to attend to victims, rescue workers and others in need.

"It was just a long, long day of trying to minister to and ... take care of people who were hurting," Haynes said.

In the days that followed, Haynes was busy ministering to survivors and conducting prayer services. Haynes also traveled across the country to attend memorial services for the victims -- many of whom he had known personally.

"There was one fellow -- we parked side by side every morning when we drove in to the Pentagon. And the reason I remember him so well was because he always read his Bible," Haynes said. "I would get in at about 6 a.m. each morning ... and he would be sitting there reading his Bible every morning. It really just sort of impressed me. The fact that he was killed -- it was just really emotional, because I knew he was a very good person and very spiritual. But it was good to be able -- when the parents asked me, 'Did you know my son?' -- to say, 'Yes, I knew your son. We frequently spoke.' I told them that he read his Bible every morning and they liked that."

About six months after the attack, Haynes was organizing the Pentagon's National Prayer Breakfast and found himself in a tight spot when his keynote speaker canceled on short notice.

"And a voice, like God, said, 'Ask Brian,'" Haynes said.

Brian Birdwell, now a retired lieutenant colonel, had just been released from the hospital two days earlier. He had been wounded in the attack, suffering severe burns, which covered more than 60 percent of his body and required more than 30 operations. To Haynes' surprise, Birdwell agreed to speak at the event.

"And then he (Birdwell) asked, 'Should I wear my uniform?' I asked, 'Brian, can you get into your uniform?' He asked, 'Do you want me in dress blues?' I said, 'Brian, we'll all be in dress blues. Come in your dress blues,'" Haynes recalled. "And so he came. He still had all the pressure bandages on and the grafts were on his body. He couldn't stand on his own; his wife had to help him. But he came. And when Brian told his story, there was not a dry eye in the place."

Haynes said that, despite all the evil that happened during 9/11, one of the positive things that happened as a result of the attacks was the good it brought out in people.

"It was just an outpouring of love from the American people," he said. "Everybody was just supportive of one another. I've never seen anything quite like that before."

Haynes said he feels privileged having been at the Pentagon during 9/11, being able to serve those in need of spiritual support. He said that although it was a trying and tiring time, his faith helped him meet the demands.

"I believe that God gives you strength. And I believe in the power of prayer. There was a lot of prayer going on," he said. "A lot of people just wanted to hear some positive words. I felt like that was my duty. I had to do that. I had to be strong for my fellow comrades and employees in the building. I believe that God prepares us for stuff, and I believe that God had me there for a reason."

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In Memoriam



[Chaplain Vakoc leaves legacy of care](#)

By [J.D. Leipold](#), Jul 2, 2009

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, July 2, 2009) -- Maj. Henry Timothy Vakoc, the Army's sole chaplain to have been severely wounded in Iraq, died June 20, from a fall at his care facility, five years after an improvised explosive device injured him on the drive back to camp from celebrating Sunday Mass for Soldiers in the field.

The IED attack occurred on the 12th anniversary of his ordination as a Roman Catholic priest, May 29, 2004, as he drove along the road returning to his unit, the 44th Corps Support Battalion in Mosul. It ended his all-encompassing work giving solace to the living, ministering to the wounded and honoring the dead.

The roadside explosion gravely wounded him, taking his left eye, paralyzing his left side and leaving him with a traumatic brain injury. He was evacuated to Germany and later to Walter Reed Army Medical Center here, and then to the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Minneapolis, Minn., near his hometown of Robbinsdale where he continued to have countless surgeries and infections. He was later awarded a Purple Heart, the Bronze Star and the Combat Action Badge before being medically retired.

About 30 months later in 2006, the chaplain started to recognize his family and friends, able to acknowledge them with hand-squeezes and small smiles. Later he was able to type a few words through a laptop computer. He seemed to be winning the battle against the physical, starting to laugh and smile more, able to stand for 10 minutes at a time. His strength was building; he was able to use the machine that ran his CD player and television and he was able to give spiritual blessings with his right arm according to the National Catholic Register which kept updates on its Web site.

Father Tim, as he was known to his hometown parish and later to Soldiers, was recruited in 1996 by the Army Chaplain Corps and first served in Germany and later Bosnia.

Deputy Chief of Chaplains Brig. Gen. Donald L. Rutherford, who recruited Vakoc, recalled meeting the then-34-year-old priest who was young, very outgoing and friendly ... just what the Army was looking for to help fill the chaplain corps.

"When we went to Fort Snelling (Minn.) to do paperwork, fingerprinting, administrative things, everybody knew him from his parish," Rutherford said. "He knew most of them from visiting people in the VA hospital there. He was an amazing, unbelievable extrovert ... I don't know how else to put it ... he was just off the chart."

Rutherford attended the funeral for Vakoc, performing military honors at Fort Snelling where Vakoc was buried June 26. People from his hometown and who went to seminary with him were telling stories about him after the funeral, things that Tim had done for the parish and the mischief he got into as a kid. The wake was jam-packed for five straight hours, Rutherford said.

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Rutherford and Vakoc served together in Germany. He recalled how Vakoc loved to participate in Volksmarches, the German version of fitness walking which is typically 6.2 miles of road or trail walking.

"He loved them. Every Thursday he would get Stars and Stripes and find out where the Volksmarches were, check it out on a map because this was before GPSs, then he would give me a call, so he would put his dog in the car and off we would go to wherever the Volksmarch was," said Rutherford. "He'd meet people along the way and even though his German wasn't good, he had a way of communicating with them all along the way."

Rutherford recalled a story about Vakoc from Iraq, how he would go anywhere regardless of where the Soldiers were.

"He went out to the same hospital where he was taken when he was wounded himself ... a convoy had been hit and two Soldiers had been killed, some were badly wounded and some were shaken up," Rutherford said. "Caring for the living, ministering to the wounded and honoring the dead, he did in 20 minutes that day. He took care of those who were alive and then he went over and talked to the guys who were shaken up and he ministered to the wounded and held prayers with the hospital staff."

Rutherford said someone once described Vakoc as the "most unpriestly priest and the most unsoldierly Soldier" he'd ever met as he ran around the compound in Mosul in his gator with his helmet on, but he was always where the Soldiers were. He'd even travel to the outposts and perform Mass for just two or three Soldiers.

"Tim had an amazing life of prayer. He was a very, very holy person, but he was holy in a way that was refreshing. He wasn't one who held his hands all together all the time, I wouldn't call him pious, but I'd call him a very spiritual individual and I think he relied a great deal on his faith and a great deal on those who were around him. When he was working with Soldiers, that's when he was at his best," Rutherford said.

In an email to the National Catholic Register before he was wounded, Vakoc summed up what he felt was his calling referring to it as a "ministry of intentional presence."

"I live with [the Soldiers], work with them, eat with them, care for them, listen to them, counsel them," he said. "The Soldiers know if you are real and genuinely care or not. The Soldiers see me out there with them and that makes a difference."

Links You Can Use

- [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](#)
- [National VA Chaplains Center](#)
- [Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America](#)

Have another link you believe would be helpful for our readers? Please submit it to Lyman@ncmaf.org for possible inclusion in future letters. Thank you.

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Executive Director's Note

[Walking Together down Difficult Paths](#)

Dear Colleagues,

In his comments at the beginning of this newsletter, Ed touched on several issues from this past summer which related directly to our shared ministries. There were also events from this summer which may potentially have an impact on our ability to support chaplains and their ministry in all our various venues of service.

One such event was President Obama's eulogy for Senator Ted Kennedy. Very close to the beginning of his statement the President said, "Through his own suffering, Ted Kennedy became more alive to the plight and the suffering of others – the sick child who could not see a doctor; the young soldier denied her rights because of what she looks like or who she loves or where she comes from." ([Los Angeles Times, August 30 2009](#))

I could not help but note this direct reference to the Senator's concern for health care reform as well as to issues of discrimination with respect to military service. There is little doubt our President and his administration are committed to removing barriers within our society which he believes are illegitimate and inhumane. This commitment will in all likelihood have an impact on our how our chaplains perform their duties.

Above, in the [For Reflection](#) section, you found two articles on the current legislative initiative to alter the Congressional policy commonly known as Don't Ask Don't Tell (DADT). The Defense Department is acutely aware of the President's promises on this and has addressed the issue obliquely in comments by both the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. "What I feel most obligated about is to give the president my best advice should this law change and the impact of that change on our people and their families at these very challenging times." ([Admiral Mullen to John King on July 5th](#))

NCMAF and ECVAC are both composed of highly diverse groups and organizations which hold to a wide variety of religious and theological constructs and doctrines. We undoubtedly have members who champion the abandonment of the current DADT policy and those who want to see it made even more rigorous. Neither NCMAF nor ECVAC can take a stand on this political issue. Our status as 501(3)(c) organizations restricts us from advocating political position. However, we can be informed and prepared for whatever changes may come.

DADT is not on the agenda for our upcoming conferences. This is by design as no changes to the existing policy have yet been debated by Congress. I do hope, though, to seek approval from the NCMAF Executive Committee to establish a Subcommittee to address the challenges our chaplains may face if and when the policy is changed. I hope this Subcommittee will suggest a list of appropriate questions that endorsers can carry to their respective Faith Groups for consideration with respect to their response to any changes which may come as it affects their chaplain's ministries. By being better informed, I hope we can also be better prepared to give wise advice.

Even as Ted Kennedy, known as the Lion of the Senate, projected strength in his own approach to legislative action and the role of the government, NCMAF and ECVAC have projected strength regarding the role of chaplaincy in caring for our military members and our nation's veterans. We do this not by seeking total agreement on every issue and taking unified stands but rather by coming together in peace and good will to engage in dialogue and understanding. We trust truth will have its day.

We may face a rocky road ahead as we walk through some important subjects very near to our hearts. Please join with me as we seek to walk this road together in humility and with a prayerful attitude.

Collegially,
Jack Williamson
NCMAF/ECVAC Executive Director

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