
Community of Christ



The Peacekeepers

Association for Ministry to Military Newsletter

August, 2005

Curt's Column



Conference has come and passed since our last newsletter. It was very gratifying to be here in Independence while conference was in session. Joyce and I were privileged to have Tim and Sheila Kunzweiler in our home during that period. We were not able to attend any sessions as my work as a security officer permitted it. We could have attended in the evening, but Joyce is not up to it. She kind of runs out of gas in the early evening. We did get to see the important sessions that were on Dish satellite. Dish was very good as they provided coverage of the entire session even though it ran beyond the allotted time. Those watching on cable were cut off when the allotted time ran out.

We are fortunate to have an article from Ken Robinson of the First Presidency in this issue. When we see him (which is not often) in the East Alton Congregation, which is their home congregation for he and his wife Pat, they greet us like old friends and we are always comfortable around them. This, to me, is a sign of a real leader. (Some leaders make you feel like you're of no consequence.) We, as a church, are blessed by having all of our First Presidency cut from the same cloth.

I hope that all of you have had an opportunity to read the *Herald* article written by our Chaplain, Scott Jobe. I think he did an outstanding job with it. It's great to know that we have at least one chaplain in the armed forces who is in the position to bring comfort and aid to those who have need and can do it with what I believe is divine authority.

Navy Lt Sam Young and his wife Tara are stationed in London, England. There was some concern that they might have been caught up in the terrorist's blast but we received an e-mail from Tara giving us the all clear. Thanks Tara.

One of our pressing concerns is addresses. We are receiving an increasing amount of returned mail. Either the post office or the military mail system does not want to take the time to keep us informed when a move is made. It would be helpful if when a move is made you could let us know as soon ASAP of the new address. Hopefully there will be a lot of changes as the conflict dies down in Iraq and Afghanistan. Please keep us informed.

Each one of you is a witness of The Lord Jesus Christ. It isn't the big things, but the little everyday examples you do as a part of your routine. This was brought home to me this past year. I work as a security officer part time at the Independence Center. I had an occasion to become acquainted with a lady working at one of the stores. She was quite a cut up and I kind of lost track of her while we were in Arizona. Upon my return the following spring I found that she had moved to a different store. I again had the opportunity to work with her and the store owner. I don't know how, but she found out that I was an ordained minister.

One day she informed me that she and the owner of the store were planning on getting married and wanted to know if I could perform the ceremony. From that point on she told all of her friends and customers that I was to perform their ceremony. It came off with a few glitches, but the point is that a good many of the mall employees know of my association with the Community of Christ. I am a witness even though I do not stand on the corner and preach. Just as I am a witness, all of you are also. The real question is — What kind of a witness are you?

May God bless you and keep you from harm's way is my prayer.

—Curt Heaviland

**The Community of Christ Association for Ministry to Military Personnel
is dedicated to bringing ministry to military members on active duty throughout the world.**

Testimony

Through the course of my life I have many times been amazed and comforted as I have witnessed the blessings that God provides to individuals in times of need. Sometimes that has taken the form of physical relief and even dramatic cure. In other circumstances there has been little change in the physical situation but remarkable peace and calm brought to the soul. There are instances of forgiveness and release from burdens that have been carried for many years. There are times when persons have been enabled to see life with totally new eyes as they finally understand Jesus' message. The joy that appears in them and the freedom from things of the past is amazing to behold. They have begun to comprehend the peace of Christ.



In recent years I have witnessed that kind of amazing blessing come to a whole community. In the world conference of 2000 when we considered the new name for the church it was clear that the church had been split down the middle on that matter. As the conference week progressed it was my role to manage the timing and order of the legislation brought to the floor. Our consideration of the name kept having to be put off. The timing was just not right. Then, finally, it was time. We in the Presidency were amazed and humbled to see what the Holy Spirit did among our people. There was a gentle, affirming spirit even among those who disagreed strongly and the vote (in the end) was an overwhelming one in favor of the change.

This year as the church participated in the discernment process and then the world conference in June I witnessed again the peace of Jesus Christ visited upon a whole community of people - not just those at conference, and there was a marvelous spirit at conference, and throughout the whole church. We as leaders felt physically upheld and strengthened by the prayers and support of the people through a most difficult and challenging time.



I have never felt anything quite like it. In the midst of a time when there could have been disillusionment, loss of morale and even division we experienced the exact opposite - unity, joy and optimism. Surely it is awesome how the Holy Spirit works among us and assists the church to continue moving forward in its calling. I pray that each one reading this testimony will be strengthened in faith, for there is much that God

would have us do wherever we find ourselves in the world.

—Ken Robinson

The Room

17-year-old Brian Moore had only a short time to write something for a class. The subject was what Heaven was like. "I wowed 'em," he later told his father, Bruce. "It's a killer. It's the bomb. It's the best thing I ever wrote." It also was the last.

Brian's parents had forgotten about the essay when a cousin found it while cleaning out the teenager's locker at Teary Valley High School. Brian had been dead only hours, but his parents desperately wanted every piece of his life near them — notes from classmates and teachers, his homework. Only two months before, he had handwritten the essay about encountering Jesus in a file room full of cards detailing every moment of the teen's life. But it was only after Brian's death that Beth and Bruce Moore realized that their son had described his view of heaven. "It makes such an impact that people want to share it. You feel like you are there." Mr. Moore said.

Brian Moore died May 27, 1997, the day after Memorial Day. He was driving home from a friend's house when his car went off Bulen-Pierce Road in Pickaway County and struck a utility pole. He emerged from the wreck unharmed but stepped on a downed power line and was electrocuted.

The Moores framed a copy of Brian's essay and hung it among the family portraits in the living room. "I think God used him to make a point. I think we were meant to find it and make something out of it," Mrs. Moore said of the essay. She and her husband want to share their son's vision of life after death. "I'm happy for Brian. I know he's in heaven. I know I'll see him."

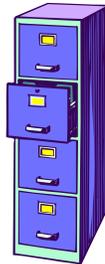
Brian's Essay: The Room...

In that place between wakefulness and dreams, I found myself in the room. There were no distinguishing features except for the one wall covered with small index card files. They were like the ones in libraries that list titles by author or subject in alphabetical order. But these files, which stretched from floor to ceiling and seemingly endless in either direction, had very different headings. As I drew near the wall of files, the first to catch my attention was one that read "Girls I have liked." I opened it and began flipping through the cards. I quickly shut it, shocked to realize that I recognized the names

written on each one. And then without being told, I knew exactly where I was.

This lifeless room with its small files was a crude catalog system for my life. Here were written the actions of my every moment, big and small, in a detail my memory couldn't match. A sense of wonder and curiosity, coupled with horror, stirred within me as I began randomly opening files and exploring their content. Some brought joy and sweet memories; others a sense of shame and regret so intense that I would look over my shoulder to see if anyone was watching.

A file named "Friends" was next to one marked "Friends I have betrayed." The titles ranged from the mundane to the outright weird. "Books I Have Read," "Lies I Have Told," "Comfort I have Given," "Jokes I Have Laughed at." Some were almost hilarious in their exactness: "Things I've yelled at my brothers." Others I couldn't laugh at: "Things I Have Done in My Anger," "Things I Have Muttered Under My Breath at My Parents." I never ceased to be surprised by the contents.



Often there were many more cards than I expected. Sometimes fewer than I hoped. I was overwhelmed by the sheer volume of the life I had lived. Could it be possible that I had the time in my years to fill each of these thousands or even millions of cards? But each card confirmed this truth. Each was written in my own handwriting. Each signed with my signature.

When I pulled out the file marked "TV Shows I have watched," I realized the files grew to contain their contents. The cards were packed tightly, and yet after two or three yards, I hadn't found the end of the file. I shut it, shamed, not so much by the quality of shows but more by the vast time I knew that file represented.

When I came to a file marked "Lustful Thoughts," I felt a chill run through my body. I pulled the file out only an inch, not willing to test its size and drew out a card. I shuddered at its detailed content.

I felt sick to think that such a moment had been recorded. An almost animal rage broke on me. One thought dominated my mind: No one must ever see these cards! No one must ever see this room! I have to destroy them!" In insane frenzy I yanked the file out. Its size didn't matter now. I had to empty it and burn the cards. But as I took it at one end and began pounding it on the floor, I could not dislodge a single card. I became desperate and



pulled out a card, only to find it as strong as steel when I tried to tear it.

Defeated and utterly helpless, I returned the file to its slot. Leaning my forehead against the wall, I let out a long, self-pitying sigh.

And then I saw it ... the title bore "People I Have Shared the Gospel With." The handle was brighter than those around it, newer, almost unused. I pulled on its handle and a small box not more than three inches long fell into my hands. I could count the cards it contained on one hand.

And then the tears came. I began to weep, sobs so deep that they hurt. They started in my stomach and shook through me. I fell on my knees and cried. I cried out of shame, from the overwhelming shame of it all. The rows of file shelves swirled in my tear-filled eyes. No one must ever, ever know of this room. I must lock it up and hide the key. But then as I pushed away the tears, I saw Him.

No, please not Him. Not here. Oh, anyone but Jesus. I watched helplessly as He began to open the files and read the cards. I couldn't bear to watch His response. And in the moments I could bring myself to look at His face, I saw a sorrow deeper than my own. He seemed to intuitively go to the worst boxes. Why did He have to read every one? Finally He turned and looked at me from across the room. He looked at me with pity in His eyes. But this was a pity that didn't anger me. I dropped my head, covered my face with my hands and began to cry again. He walked over and put His arm around me. He could have said so many things. But He didn't say a word. He just cried with me.



Then He got up and walked back to the wall of files. Starting at one end of the room, He took out a file and, one by one, began to sign His name over mine on each card. "No!" I shouted rushing to Him. All I could find to say was "No, no," as I pulled the card from Him. His name shouldn't be on these cards. But there it was, written in red so rich, so dark, so alive. The name of Jesus covered mine. It was written with His blood. He gently took the card back. He smiled a sad smile and began to sign the cards. I don't think I'll ever understand how He did it so quickly, but the next instant it seemed I heard Him close the last file and walk back to my side.

He placed His hand on my

shoulder and said, "It is finished." I stood up, and He led me out of the room. There was no lock on its door. There were still cards to be written.

My "People I shared the gospel with" file just got bigger, how about yours?

—Joyce Cooley
School Secretary

Bear Facts

Each day, on my way to work, I pass several interesting homes and yards in the historical district of Independence, Missouri. One house in particular stands out though. A wooden bear with his right paw raised and his left arm bent, holding an American flag. I don't much care if I'm called "curious" or "down-right nosy," but I had to find out about that bear!



I tracked down the owners — Mr. and Mrs. Ron Yale. Three years ago we had a terrible ice storm here, most of the trees lost limbs from the weight of the ice, several trees were lost all together. This particular front-yard tree lost all of its limbs, leaving a 7 foot stump. After allowing it to cure for a year, Mr. Yale's friend, Jack Scarborough, brought his chain saw and began to carve away.

Was there a reason for the flag? Did they have family in harm's way? No – Ron is a retired fire fighter and their group meets each 11 September, but they are always big on patriotism, decorating more than one of their properties, most of which are rented out.

Ron often drives an antique fire truck in parades, he, his friends and family often help others, but most visibly – he stands for something.

His big wooden bear reminds me each day that I need to stand for something too.

—Mary Yocum



Available in an E-mail and a "snail mail" edition. Active-duty military members who join the association can receive either edition for free. Non-active-duty members receive either edition with a paid membership, **\$10.00, due in April**. The newsletter is also available on our Web site: <http://www.cofchristpeacekeepers.org/>

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