

Community of Christ



The Peacekeepers

Association for Ministry to Military Newsletter

June/July, 2007

Tim's Service by Tim Kunzweiler, President

In this, the first of my offerings to you as President of our Association, I feel I need to start by offering THANKS. The Peacekeeper organization – seeking to provide ministry to Active Duty Community of Christ members – probably wouldn't have existed without the vision and dedication of the first president, Curt Heaviland. Under his leadership military members of the Church have had a dedicated and loving pastor. Curt: THANK YOU for the vision and blessing that you have offered as you have continued in service these many years. I very much appreciate your willingness to step into the Vice President role and will (as you WELL KNOW) continue connecting with you on a regular basis for ideas and perspectives. To the rest of the officers & their families (Lehman and Jennifer), to Chaplain Jobe and Kim, to Steve McCrosson and Mary Yocum – THANK YOU for your willing support to this ministry; few people may fully realize all the gears that are necessary to keep things humming and moving forward – and it's less easy when many of us remain geographically separated. To the First Presidency and the Apostle over Military Ministries (Jim Slauter) – THANK YOU for ensuring that this most diverse – but dedicated – congregation is provided and cared for. This field is a complex one and all who walk it grapple with the tension of the call to follow Christ while also serving the continuing military need. Our prayer is that, one day; the Association may exist *but to preserve the memory of the time when military service was needed*. Until then, we appreciate your keeping this part of the flock in prayer and informed. Finally, to our sustaining membership: THANK YOU. When you paid Lehman your annual dues in



April you exercised an important role in ministry and stewardship. Your support is what allows us to execute this mission. Without the association sustaining membership's support we'd be severely strapped.

The membership might desire to know a little about our newest Association officer: Chief Warrant Officer Five Jennifer Redfern. I'd asked Jen for a short bit of bio for the newsletter and she provided a good snapshot:

Jen is ordained as a member of the Aaronic Priesthood in the office of Teacher and is currently on active duty with the United States Army. Jen began her service in 1974 as a Military Police patrolwoman in the Women's Army Corps. She was accepted into the United States Army Criminal Investigation Command as a Special Agent in 1982 and appointed in 1987 as a Warrant Officer. Her latest promotion was 1 Mar 2005 when she became the first female CID agent promoted to Chief Warrant Officer Five.

Jen has served at Ft Lewis, WA where she attended the Puyallup Congregation, Seattle Stake; Erlangen, Germany; Wuerzburg, Germany; and Kitzingen, Germany where she worshipped with whomever she could find within the RLDS church and enjoyed retreats in various locations in Germany and the Netherlands; Ft Bragg, NC where she worshipped on the installation with members of the Raleigh/Carey congregation. Jen is on her second tour at Ft Belvoir, VA where she is reunited with her brothers and sisters of the Springfield, VA congregation.

Jen met her husband, CW5 Tony Redfern, also with CID, while they were both serving at Ft Lewis, WA as military police. They married in 1976. They have two grown children, Jenet Redfern-Marmara and her husband Reis who live in Sterling, VA. Jenet is currently on assignment in Bosnia-Herzegovina where she also volunteers in her spare time with World Vision. Their son, Josh,

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

resides in Raleigh, NC where he is employed as a chef and attending school part time.

Jen: it's great to have you in the Association and now serving as Secretary while still on active duty!



It's been busy since World Conference. I am sorry to report that my wife Sheila's father, George Anderson, passed away April 19th and that necessitated a couple trips to Maine. I am glad that Sheila had the opportunity to be with "Daddy" before he "was discharged for the last time." George was a WWII veteran and served a part of his time aboard an LST. He earned a medal for shooting down a Kamikaze fighter while manning one of the guns! The family was very honored to have two Army troops support the burial service – providing bugled TAPS and a beautiful flag folding and presentation to Sheila's mother, Eleanor. We'll all miss George but we know his Heavenly R&R is better than anything we can yet imagine in our current physical state.

On May 29th, enroute back from the burial, I had the privilege of witnessing an aspect of what greatly blesses certain countries – in this case the United States. While traveling through Pease International Airport at Portsmouth, NH, my family and I were invited to support the local community in providing a send-off to a group of Army troops headed to Iraq. I was truly blessed to witness civilians and retired & discharged Soldiers, Sailors (including Seabees), Marines, and Airmen – along with some current Air National Guard members – pay respects to those who are today serving on active duty and headed into harm's way. I believe the Portsmouth group has already supported over 101 groups of deploying/returning service members when they pass through the terminal. That support isn't just with presence either (though that presence sends an important message all by itself!). These people stocked the restrooms with toiletries in case the troops needed to clean up. They provided cake, cookies, and beverages – as well as donations of phone calling cards, stationery, and flags. And, before these sons and daughters departed American soil, they were photographed as a group, hugs and handshakes were



exchanged, they were saluted by all in attendance, and they were sent forward with a prayer offered by a retired USMC Chaplain. There were tears in both groups. Military members are family; they are brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, fathers and mothers. They are simply a part of our family with a special calling. I was proud to be a part of the family showing them love that day.

One of our members (and a good friend from our Utah assignment days), LTC Patrick Nary, US Army, has announced his retirement. Most recently he served as Chief of Training, Office of Military Cooperation, Egypt. By his reckoning, his career included "...24 years of service, 14 moves, 4 out of the last 7 years away from the family..." Pat: THANK YOU for serving and helping others to stay/become free. I'd ask the membership for prayers for Pat and his family as they work through this time of transition and seek to discern the Lord's will for their future.

Finally, as the Association presses to best reach out to and serve our military members, let me know your ideas and hopes. There may seem limits to what we can do based on resourcing and personnel – but we believe in the power of Almighty God to work miracles too. Your prayers for us are ALSO appreciated!

In Christ, Victory — Tim

Jerry Lee Gorden (published on February 08, 2007 Copyright: The Des Moines Register. Used with permission)

Jerry L. Gorden, son of Earl and Fannie June (Post) Gorden was born in Spencer, Iowa, August 31, 1937. At the age of ten, his father was killed in a farming accident and the family moved to Superior. When his mother remarried, they returned to Spencer.

In 1954, Jerry joined the Iowa National Guard. In 1955, he graduated from Spencer High School. In 1957, he graduated from Graceland College and in 1958 he was married to Nancy D. Doty, Miami, OK. Then thirty years later, he received his BA degree from Western Illinois University.

Further education came with the Guard. He completed Officer's Candidate School, Ft. Sill, OK and later was an honor graduate of the Command and General Staff College, Ft. Leavenworth, KS.

Jerry served in a variety of command and staff positions. Highlights were within the 194th Field Artillery and Military Police. Was also a state training officer, director of HRO, Chief of Staff during the return of soldiers from Desert Storm. Additionally he was the Task Force Commander and Staff Planner for state

emergencies that included civil disturbances, tornadoes and flood recovery. He was the Traffic Control Planner for the visit of Pope John Paul in 1979 and the State Emergency Operations Military Commander for the flood of 1993 in Des Moines, Iowa

Decorations include the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal with four Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Commendation Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, Humanitarian Service Medal, Iowa Distinguished Service Medal, National Guard Bureau Distinguished Service and various other medals and ribbons.

Jerry had federal recognition as the rank of Colonel and was promoted to Brigadier General (Iowa) upon his retirement in 1993, after 39 years of total service. Completing his military responsibility he moved into the ICN and later became the director of the Iowa Gold Star Museum, located at Camp Dodge, serving for six years. At the time of his death, he was the national secretary-treasurer for the 34th Infantry Division Association.

Jerry was an ordained minister of the Community of Christ serving in a number of responsibilities within the twenty-plus congregations of Central Iowa as well as a member of the International World Church Peace/Justice Committee, Independence, Missouri. To the Guard member, this was his opportunity not only to worship, but to serve in the sacraments which included marriage.

Survivors include his wife, Nancy, of Johnston. Son: Steven K. (Jeannie) of Canesville, MO; Daughter: Sherry B. (Darren) Long, Olathe, KS. His daughter, Shelly Ann preceded him in death. Grandchildren are Lindsay Gray, David W. Gorden, and Nathan A. Long. Step grandchildren include, Robert, Tenya and Tasha Reed and nine step-great-grandchildren. Brothers: Tom (Cholly), of Boston, MA and David L. of Washington D.C. Diane Mayfield, Tennessee, IL and Darlene Wren, Joplin, MO are his sister-in-laws. Uncle: Danny Joe Gorden, Independence, MO and Aunt: Lilabelle Carlisle, of Cameron, MO.

Memorials may be directed to the Gold Star Museum, Camp Dodge, or as individual choices.



of the service). But I frequently hesitated to respond as it seemed I could never formulate the words. On two occasions I did speak (once because I was the facilitator and also the speaker for that Sunday's service and on my last Sunday at home before my new assignment). On both occasions as I began to say what I planned, I felt a feeling overwhelm me and I know I was speaking but did not know what I said. Afterwards I felt very exhausted and sad but then energized. On both occasions someone else stood and spoke and I could feel myself nodding in agreement as to affirm that what they were saying was the same as the message in my head. I was still befuddled until that Sunday evening at conference.

As I listened I could feel the greatest relief like a burden had been lifted from me. Prophet/President Veazey was saying what I had been feeling but couldn't quite seem to voice in such excellent verbiage. He was affirming what I had been feeling for many, many months — or I was affirming what he had been struggling with. As I looked at the young woman standing next to me she also had tears streaming down her face. So strange, just a day before we had met at the airport and my shuttle was canceled but she was there to offer me a ride in her shuttle and then we were sharing this moment. She a former service member and I still in service to our country; her first conference and my first conference and both of us feeling compelled to be there. We even continued to run into each other all week without intention.

I am so happy that I went to World Conference and my desire to serve grows stronger each day. I am finding more and more joy in my interactions with strangers. I even found joy in the sadness of the Virginia Tech Institute Tragedy. Students were able to pray together in public. They are attempting to seek blessings in the tragedy; supporting their school staff and police and feeling compassion for Cho's family. They want to grieve, heal and move on in life. Yes....the Spirit does continue to breathe....and we need to encourage this spark of light...we need to share with those who will listen, our testimony of our interaction with our heavenly father, parent, The One Known by Many Names, and his son Jesus, The Christ. And we need to find joy in listening to our neighbors as they share their joys and sorrows as well.

Amen

Testimony by Jennifer Redfern, Secretary

I still cannot get over the feeling of relief I felt while I listened to our Prophet/President Veazey read the Letter of Counsel. I had been praying, studying, meditating for many, many months but still could not shake some feelings I had. As I would sit in church I felt prompted to stand and speak (which is easy to do in my home congregation as we have open microphones most

Curt's Column

We just recently celebrated Memorial Day. This is the day that we all remember those who have gone before us and are in service today. I had the opportunity to put on my uniform (believe it or not it still fits) and be a part of the flag ceremony at church. It still gives me a

thrill to put on the uniform of the United States Army. While the army has been good to me, I am grateful for the opportunity to have served with a lot of great people. I salute each one of you that are currently serving in the military and to those of you who have served.

There was an article in a recent copy of the Independence Examiner about allegiance and what it actually means. I repeat the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States of America but have never had the word and its implications explained like this article. I get very upset when I hear of American citizens desecrating the flag and what it represents. Unfortunately we have many people that are concerned with only what affects them and not the community as a whole. The name of our church reflects our attitude toward society. It is our hope that we can eventually live in a community where the world can live together in a manner in which even Christ would be proud.

I know, without a doubt, that those of you in the field carry the presence of Christ with you. As we look back over our history we find many congregations have been established through the presence of our military. In the area where you are now

servicing there is a feeling of hostility toward anything Christian. It makes serving more of a challenge than ever before. Our hats go off to you and just remember to take Christ with you wherever you go.

I wonder sometimes if my column is read. In the last newsletter I appealed to all of you who have access to e-mail to send me your e-mail addresses so that the newsletter can be sent electronically. Since postage has gone up to \$.41 it would help a great deal. Also, I have repeatedly asked for news from the field. You do not have to be published authors to send something that has occurred in your life.

Captain Scott Jobe, USAF and his family are now in the deep South. Captain Jobe, as you know, is a chaplain in the Air Force and has spent the last couple of years at Minot AFB. I have been told that it gets cold up there in the winter. In any event Keesler AFB, MS will be a change for them. We here at home wish them well in their new assignment.

It is my wish that each one of you will be kept from harms way and the Spirit of the Lord will accompany you wherever you go.

GOD BLESS,
Curt



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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