
Community of Christ



The Peacekeepers

Association for Ministry to Military Personnel Newsletter

February, 2009

TIM'S SERVICE

by Tim "K9" Kunzweiler, President

I'm sure that, like for me, the seasons are special in their impact upon many of you. Now, right up front, I'm admitting that deep winter is not the season I'd call my favorite time of year but it *has* sometimes caused me to ponder things in ways that other seasons might not.

A case in point was the end of a workday on Wright-Patterson AFB recently. At 5 PM Retreat sounds, followed by the Star Spangled Banner – National Anthem of the United States. As is customary in my country's military (and out of due respect), when outside and on foot at the base while the anthem is played, a person stands, facing the flag (or the music – if the flag is not visible). Of course, some people time their exits out of the buildings so as to "beat the music," by getting to their vehicles before things start – or they may hover just inside a doorway until the last note has faded. I've never been one to try either tactic and I've never been one to even think about "avoiding" this event. Even so, standing outside in single digit temperatures recently caused me to have some special thoughts about the privilege of supporting this ceremony. When I took my hat off in those cold temperatures I was immediately aware of the loss of that warmth. When I stood with an ungloved hand over my heart, I felt more fully what that hand's placement relates to. With the wind blowing, it affected the sound I heard – and it also impacted my body with its might. As the notes played in measured time I became keenly aware of how that time related to continued exposure.

And, alongside all these thoughts, I realized that standing for the anthem reflects a willingness to sacrifice. I was standing with you and thousands of your fellow servants – standing for something larger and more important than self alone. Like me, some of my brothers and sisters were enduring cold; some were experiencing heat, some blowing sand, some sweltering tropics. Yet, no matter where they were, they were standing in honor



of a flag that, in the best of times, points a way to freedom, liberty and justice.

The way of Christ can be likened to what I pondered that day. Some will avoid the sacrifice that a life for Christ might entail; their interests will be toward sustaining their own perceived comfort – or they will simply not want to be troubled to go out of their way. I thank you for walking the walk and for enduring.

A number of recent writers to the Herald have discussed the military focus. Indeed, a church that focuses on peace must discuss conflict and all the factors that relate to it. Everyone has a viewpoint and, like us, most seem to desire peace. Today, peace still has a price. Thank you for sacrificing for the peace that we all crave. I stand for you. As Easter approaches may the Prince of Peace help you to stand.

In Christ – Victory! May God bless all Peacekeepers.
Tim "K9" Kunzweiler, President.

Lessons from the Iraq War

On Friday, April 24, the Independence Campus of Graceland University will host a unique conference addressing "Lessons from the Iraq War," co-sponsored by the Community of Christ Seminary of Graceland, Graceland's Center for the Study of the Korean War and the Human Rights team of the Community of Christ. Sessions will address the historical context of the war, the experience of veterans and the perspectives of peace activists. Speakers include Professor Mike Casey of Graceland, who served on General Schwarzkopf's staff during the first Gulf War; Ira Harritt of the American Friends Service Committee; Paul and Gregg Edwards, directors of the CSKW; and Apostle Andrew Bolton of the Community of Christ. On Saturday, a panel

The Community of Christ Association for Ministry to Military Personnel is dedicated to bringing ministry to Community of Christ members serving on active duty world-wide.

comprised of experts of various viewpoints will prepare a manifesto summarizing the lessons of the weekend's deliberations. For more details, check the CSKW website at www.koreanwarcenter.org. To register for the conference contact Tere Naylor at 816-833-0524 ext. 4903, or complete a registration form at www.koreanwarcenter.org.

Curt's Column

by Curt Heaviland, Vice President

Happy New Year – this is the common phrase being used as I write this column. Taking stock of the coming year, as it appears right now, that may take some doing. The economy has a road ahead before regaining health – the U.S. military remains engaged in warfare; unless we look at the biggest picture things may not look very bright right now.

Those that have served in the military have upheld our way of life. I'm proud to have served in the military for 28 years. There is nothing more I want than peace. We need to be strong and compassionate and strive to bring about acceptance of one another no matter our culture. There's potential for happiness in those thoughts.

Our economy in its present state is worrisome. I'm in the position of having a fairly secure financial future. It's my kids and my grandchildren I worry about. We need to remember that God is in charge. There's a reminder of where true happiness resides.

Perhaps my age has something to do with my attitude but it makes me more thankful than ever that we have a loving and forgiving Father that we can turn to. When we can turn to Him in prayer and feel confident that He has heard our supplications, that helps us as we face the future. My earnest prayer is that each of you will have a fantastic year and the Lord will bless you in the ways that you have need.

GOD BLESS,

Curt

Kid Stuff

by Mary Yocum



My three year old grandson, Dominic, (the human pogo stick) is learning new concepts all the time. Anything that has already happened occurred “esta-day.” Tomorrow is anything that hasn't happened yet.

He also seems concerned that Mom is working so hard. He claims that when he grown up he'll work and she can stay home. She says that sounds good to her.

I've noticed that sometimes we forget our past – our yesterdays. We tend to forget the importance of our histories – individual and together. We also have difficulty seeing very far into the future – our tomorrows. Have you ever noticed how much we worry about things that God has under His control? It's often difficult to “let go and let God.” As always, prayer is our best tool to combat both the yesterdays and the tomorrows – the tough part is to leave it in God's hands.

On the way home the other night (they finally have their own place instead of bunking with Grandma and Grandpa), he told his mother, “I forgot to give a hug and kiss to God.”

“Well,” said Beth, “God is always with us and we can always talk to him, but he doesn't have a body we can hug or a cheek to kiss – at least not here.”

Dominic said, “Oh, like Daddy?”

“Hmmm... like Daddy.”

“Yeah – you know ‘Our Father in heaven ...’”

“Well,” thought Beth, “Richard loves him and talks to him on the phone, but is seldom here for hugs. Okay – it's something like that.”

Perhaps one day Richard will be as real to his son as God is. We'll keep praying for that.

Greetings from Afar by Scott Gaitley

Hello Everyone

12 December 2008

December 3rd, I departed Joint Base Balad for what I thought was just another opportunity to interview Air Force members here in Iraq, little did I know it turned out to be an experience of a lifetime. The 732d Expeditionary Support Squadron, Commander and First Sergeant invited me to attend a Transfer of Authority ceremony and interview several unit members at Ali Air Base. We flew out on a C-23 Sherpa and arrived in Tallil around 11pm. The next day our morning began with meeting Army & Air Force personnel from Combat Stress Control. Their primary duty is to provide preventative services to heighten return-to-duty rates for combat stress related complaints. They provide both reactive & proactive services to include neuropsychiatric testing and diagnosis, stabilization, behavioral treatment/counseling, and reconstruction services. They believe in treating primarily soldiers, however they do



attend to airmen, marines and sailors in the field and have a 98% success rate of keeping those individuals in Iraq and continuing their service. ...

My most interesting moment came when my two traveling companions and I had the unique opportunity to attend a tour of the Sumerian city of Ur. A real historical opportunity and a one chance in a lifetime. The city is estimated to have been built around 2113b.c. by King Ur-Namma. One of the ancient cities renowned attractions is the temple of Ziggurat, built by King Shulgi to worship the moon deity "Nanna." King Shulgi reigned for 48 years. This massive stepped pyramid is estimated at 210 by 150 feet in base size and is believed to have been around 64ft in height, and is the most well-preserved monument from the ancient Sumerians.



The second most interesting point of attraction was the birthplace of Abraham, the patriarch of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The home consisted of 27 rooms, and three stairways. In 1999, it was rebuilt on its original tiled floor and walled foundations. Our Iraqi tour guide was the grandson of one of the original excavators of this ancient city. While on tour I captured pictures of the ancient *cuneiform* writing, consisting of complex wedge-shaped symbols, which our guide graciously showed us written on certain clay bricks.

These bricks were used to build catacombs for burial of the local population at the time. We descended down two long flights of stairs to observe where the kings of their time laid entombed until their discovery. Here is a link with more



information. http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/archaeology/sites/middle_east/ur.html ...

Despite the season that supposedly brings peace on earth and good tidings to all men, here the innocent and military alike are greatly impacted. Various cultures and religious groups are struggling in conflict with one another and many are horrified by this, like it is something new. This part of the world has been warring over religious differences for thousands of years. People still wonder and speculate over the importance of our mission here, however after this historic trip I have realized how the world of Christians, Jewish and Islamic people all share a commonality in Abraham and his impact on religion. This one man made a unique impact on three religious groups, and why is it that others cannot overlook their differences, especially at this time of the year and let there be peace.

I began my day at 0300 when I awoke and gathered my overnight bag, individual body armor, and weapon in preparation for my latest journey. At 0400 met up with my two traveling companions, a Captain and Chief Master Sergeant, who requested my presence on this particular trip. Show time at Catfish Air was two-hours prior to our flight departure at 0600. When it was time, we loaded up on a HH-60 Blackhawk helicopter. This would be our transportation to Landing Zone (LZ) Washington at the International Zone (Green Zone), Baghdad. A Blackhawk helicopter carries 14 people, four crewmembers, and passengers. There was a pilot, co-pilot, left gunner and right gunner who doubled as the crew chief. The flight was quite impressive, flying 300-500 ft above the ground, with both side doors open. We followed the contours of the Tigris River, and flew over various villages and farm type communities. (See attached picture). Upon arrival over the Baghdad suburbs, we gained altitude in preparation to fly over the city to our LZ. After a 30-minute flight, we landed and began offloading the aircraft, while the rotors remained turning. Within minutes of arrival, two members of the 732d Expeditionary Support Squadron whisked us away to begin our very busy day. First, we started with breakfast, followed by a tour of the Armed Forces Network (AFN) studios. Met one of the duty DJ's for Freedom Radio, which broadcasts various types of music throughout Iraq. Then I conducted an interview with a TV news anchor for AFN Freedom. The AFN assignment in Iraq will discontinue for the Air Force sometime next year. After this, it was time for touring the city. Since we were in the Green Zone, we were free to roam around without being in a tactical vehicle (armored). Therefore, we went to the Crossed Swords Parade Grounds, where Saddam had his military displays of power and to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Here we talked with a friendly Iraqi guard who allowed us to take a picture with him. (see top of article) Later for lunch, we ate in the Embassy. This was almost surreal, seeing personnel wearing uniforms from varying nations carrying weapons, alongside civilians who are dressed in business attire (suits and dresses), all in a somewhat formal dining area.

After lunch, I met with members of the Personal Security Coordination Center (PSCC). This unit is responsible for planning and coordinating the security for the Top Tier (leading six individuals) of the Iraqi government. There is one more Iraqi official, but he said some unpleasant things about the U.S., and well, he is on his own now. Since the US military has protected these individuals, there has not been an effective assassination attempt against them. The Iraqis take over this function early in the New Year. Went to dinner, and sampled the

taco bar and frozen yogurt. This may seem like a minor thing to most of you, but it is like a gourmet meal to us, something new and different. The little things make our day complete. Then I met with a Captain who is the assistant officer in charge and lead attorney for the Combined Review and Release Board. The CRRB is responsible for determining the fate of at least 120 detainees per week. My next interview was with another Captain who is the liaison officer for the Central Criminal Court of Iraq, and this officer focuses strictly on juvenile cases. Yes, there are those young teenagers even here, who are led astray, however these ones are attempting to inflict permanent bodily harm on both the citizens of Iraq and coalition forces.



We arrived at the helicopter terminal around 2000 (8pm) in attempt to locate an aircraft to take us back to Joint Base Balad. Finally, around 2230 (1030pm) we departed LZ Washington. It was interesting flying over the city lights of Baghdad, I even noticed the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, where we had visited earlier in the day. However, we had two other stops to make before we ended our expedition. The first stop, at Forward Operating Base Falcon we dropped off two passengers and picked up four more. Then we were off to Camp Taji, where we all had to disembark the Blackhawk in order for the aircrew to refuel the helicopter. Approximately, 10 minutes later we boarded and were on our way. Once again, we flew low above the ground, and regardless of it being nighttime, we could actually see the contours of the Iraqi soil, due to the illumination from the moonlight. Around 0100 in the morning, I finally laid my tired head down in my bed, and recalled the day's events as I drifted off to sleep.



17 December 2008

My home unit conducted a question and answer interview with me via e-mail and here is part of the AF Print News Today article.

Editor's note: Staff Sgt. Scott Gaitley, 931st Air Refueling Group historian, is deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom ...

Is this your first deployment to the Middle East? No, this is my third time in the Middle East. I served in the Persian Gulf from April, 1992 to April, 1993 and in Afghanistan from June to August of 2006. I arrived in Iraq in September and I'm scheduled to leave in January.

What's been the most rewarding part of your deployment so far? Having the opportunity to see for myself how the war is really going against terrorism. How we are positively impacting the majority of the country.

How does your deployment work differ from your working back at your unit? At McConnell there is only the 931st Air Refueling Group that I complete histories for. Here in Iraq, I'm responsible for the histories of five different Groups spread out over 60 different locations. I collect, analyze and utilize more than 4,500 documents every month. It is almost overwhelming at times.

Give an example of something you discovered on your deployment you were not expecting? How effective our Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance is along with the combined efforts of the military and civilian personnel utilized in order to apprehend insurgents. Also, I had the once in a lifetime opportunity to tour the ancient Sumerian city of Ur. This included the Ziggurat (temple) of Ur, kings' tombs, and the birthplace of Abraham, the prophet of Christianity, Judaism and Islam. ...

What advice would you give other Airmen getting ready to deploy to the Middle East for the first time? Remain positive, keep yourself extremely busy, and interact with others as much as possible. Do not keep track of how many days that you have remaining, do something worthwhile each day and make a difference.

Scott returned to the states on January 10th, 2009 and arrived back in Independence, Missouri late evening of the 11th.

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 "sustaining" members receive either edition with a paid membership, **\$10.00, due in April.** Archive newsletters also available on our Web site:
<http://www.cofchristpeacekeepers.org/>

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