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The Voice for Chaplaincy - Chartered by Congress - Serving Since 1925

Weekly Newsgram - January 3rd 2018

Happy New Year!

Holidays of Hope

The Story of an Atheist, a Navy Chaplain and a Search for Hope



2017 has now drawn to a close and with it another year of our lives and our ministry is behind us. We live in a culture which has been shaped by many factors - one of the most significant being that we are people of the northern hemisphere. In a very real sense, December, our common final month of the year culturally, is a month of contrast brought on by the ever-shortening days and the holidays of hope which we eagerly celebrate.

No matter our faith tradition, we as humans rely on the sun for our lives and its diminution as it approaches the winter solstice takes its toll on us personally and socially. Thus, we have grouped together many holidays of hope which each emphasize an increasing amount of light for our souls. Whether it be Hanukkah, Christmas, Yule, or even Bodhi day, all have some focus on the increase of light and thus of hope as we look to the future and the new year.

As chaplains, by our calling, we are part of this essential quest of the human soul, not only in December but throughout the year. The expression of this contribution in the lives to whom we minister is captured in a DVIDs article from November of this year written by a Petty Officer 3rd Class serving in the USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) somewhere in the 7th Fleet AOR. Unusual for DVIDs in both length and style, "[*Not Applicable: The Story of an Atheist, a Navy Chaplain and a Search for Hope*](#)" is a story of assurance and encouragement for the ministry of chaplaincy at the very core of our calling. After

expressing how morose his life had become, the author describes his encounter with the chaplain as follows;

"And then, it will happen. I will start to get a glimpse of the light -- figurative colors and shapes. My eyes, like a newborn's, will begin to open and I will again be able to visualize the once familiar but then almost forgotten truth.

In a chaplain's office -- aboard a steel leviathan steaming across whatever piece of ocean we're sailing -- I still won't believe in an all-powerful deity in control of everything. I won't think of myself as alienated to the divine light. I won't see error in my ways or a folly in my long-held personal convictions.

But I will know something new. That I am not, have never been, and perhaps most importantly, will never ever be alone."

Two more articles relating the hope we bring in our common ministry appear below - both from this past year relate some of the various means by which the community of chaplains serving those in our uniformed services bring hope, not only in December but throughout the year.

Thanks to you all for being hope filled messengers of peace in 2018 and beyond.

Lyman Smith
Executive Director



In Memoriam

Jan Friend

Chaplain (COL) United States Army, Retired
Born 1932
Deceased December 13, 2017
Yakima, WA

Theoren Jerrold Murvin, Jr.

Chaplain (Lt Col) Civil Air Patrol
Presbyterian Church in America
MCA Member
Born 1929
Deceased January 2, 2017
Pompano, Florida

Robert Eugene Foelber

Chaplain, United States Navy, Retired
Lutheran
Born 1923
Deceased December 17, 2017
Seal Beach, California

A. Wayne Riggs

CAPT, CHC, USN, Retired
Congregational
MCA Member
Deceased December 22, 2017
San Diego, California

Chaplain Corps Unveils New Sexual Assault Recovery Program



ARLINGTON, Va (NNS) May 3 2017 – In a unique approach to assist sexual assault victims, the Navy Chief of Chaplains initiated a pilot for a personal resiliency retreat modeled after those offered by the Chaplains Religious Enrichment Development Operation (CREDO).

Service members and civilians gathered to observe Denim Day at NSA Bethesda. The event was a U.S. Army led program focused on sexual assault prevention. Photo by William Phillips Apr 26 2017

"In the last year, the Chaplain Corps designed a new retreat program for survivors of sexual assault. It's called 'Hope to Healing' (H2H)," said Rear Adm. Margaret Kibben, Chief of Chaplains.

CREDO, led by chaplains in 11 regions around the world, offers workshops, seminars and retreats to inspire hope and improve spiritual well-being among Sailors, Marines, Coast Guardsmen and their families as well as DOD civilians.

"The H2H retreat differs from a personal resilience retreat... we have a target of instilling hope and healing, where the emphasis is placed on hope," said Cmdr. Jennifer Bowden, Navy chaplain and CREDO director for Navy Region Mid-Atlantic.

The goal is to help sexual assault victims heal," said Capt. William Stallard who has a doctorate in psychology and helped design the H2H when he was a CREDO director. He is currently the Force Chaplain for Navy Region Southeast. "CREDO was the vehicle, and with collaboration from a team of chaplains, Fleet and Family Service Center, mental health care providers, and partnership with the Department of Navy Sexual Assault Prevention Office, the product evolved."

After facilitating three successful pilots, Bowden explained the difference that a 72-hour weekend retreat can make.

"Hope takes us out of our experience and on the path to healing," she said.

[CAP Chaplain Provides Military Support](#)

In the very early hours of Saturday, 17 June 2017, the United States warship, the USS Fitzgerald, collided with a Japanese freighter in the western Pacific Ocean.

Sustaining heavy damage, seven active duty enlisted sailors were unaccounted for in the aftermath. One of the sailors, 19-year-old, Gunner's Mate Dakota Kyle Rigsby of Lake Monticello, Virginia, was among the missing. It would take hours before the ship limped into port in Japan where damaged areas of the vessel could be searched.



Dakota Rigsby

At 1 a.m. on Sunday, 18 June, Father's Day, Miner, in his CAP service dress uniform, and the Navy CACO, in Navy summer whites, went to the family where the chaplain delivered the heartbreaking news that Rigsby was found in a damaged and flooded berthing area onboard the USS Fitzgerald.

A half-a-world away, in Charlottesville, Va., a young Navy Casualty Assistance Calls Officer (CACO), on duty as a member of the Navy ROTC faculty at the University of Virginia, was looking for a military chaplain to support his first death notification to the young sailor's parents who lived nearby.

Reaching out to the Air Force ROTC detachment, he learned that a new program to provide military chaplains was just announced and that the AFROTC commander was already in contact with one of the first ten chaplains selected to test the program. The lieutenant called the AFROTC's future chaplain and asked if he could standby to support the duty. The chaplain was the Civil Air Patrol's Virginia Wing Chaplain and the CAP mission chaplain assigned at Marine Base (MCB) Quantico, Lt. Col. Timothy Miner.

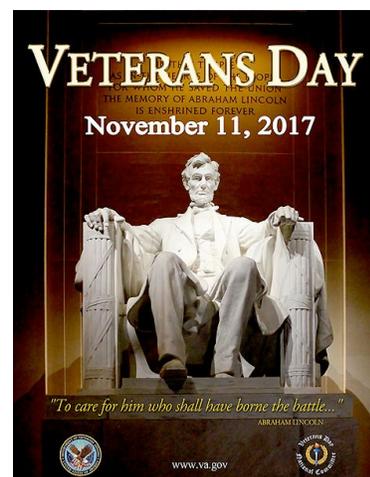
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As a direct result of this event, the US Navy has assigned a Navy chaplain to support each CACO in the world. It will be unlikely that a CAP chaplain will be used in this way again. However, the biggest lesson to be learned was that volunteering leads to recognition and the chance to serve in unique and divinely influenced ways. For the Civil Air Patrol Chaplain Corps, it was a chance to live the core value of "volunteer service."

editors note - Chaplain Miner is a retired Air Force Chaplain and a member of the MCA. Thanks to him for being a Chaplain for Life

2018 National Veterans Day Poster Contest

Calling all artists! The 2018 National Veterans Day Poster Contest is underway. Each year the Veterans Day National Committee publishes a commemorative Veterans Day poster. The poster is selected from artwork submitted by artists nationwide and is distributed to VA facilities, military installations around the world across cities and town in our nation. It also serves as the cover of the official program for the Veterans Day Observance at Arlington National Cemetery.



Over the years these posters have illustrated the rich history of our country's service men and women. The poster clearly reflects our pride and patriotism in saluting Veterans while providing the thematic artistry for the year.

2018 marks the Centennial Commemoration of the end of World War I on November 11, 1918. The theme for the 2018 Veterans Day Poster is: "The War to End All Wars".

To view examples of past winning submissions visit <http://www.va.gov/opa/vetsday/gallery.asp>.

The deadline for submissions is 1 April, 2018. The Veterans Day National Committee will convene a selection sub-committee in May 2018 to review submissions and make a final selection.

Questions? - contact the Veterans Day Coordinator at vetsday@va.gov.

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