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

## Weekly Newsgram - March 21st 2018

### Professional Chaplaincy Journal

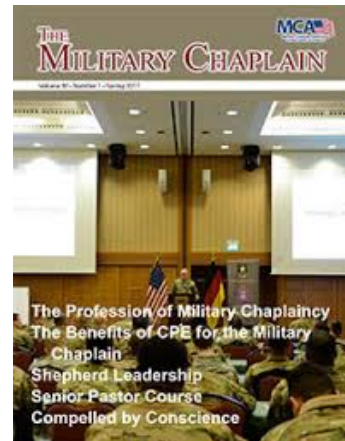
#### From the Executive Director

One of the big surprises that I was told as I came on board as the Executive Director was that all three of the military chaplain corps had ceased the publication of their professional chaplaincy journals. I clearly recall when I was a seminarian at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary reading different copies of the journals and being impressed by the subjects that were covered and the high quality of the writing.

The MCA journal is the only magazine currently published highlighting professional military and VA chaplaincy issues. We have a remarkable opportunity to provide articles and shape the professional conversation about military and VA chaplaincy. To do this we need your input. There are a number of things that can be done, and two come to mind immediately : Thesis projects written at the Senior Service Colleges and Staff Colleges on the topic of chaplaincy, and book reviews about topics that are of interest for chaplains.

While it would be difficult to print entire thesis projects - each would be an entire edition of the magazine - it would be possible to have authors provide a one or two page article that highlights the work, with a link to the entire document at the end of the article. This would allow those willing to share what they have done with us to raise the bar of the professional discourse of military and VA chaplaincy, and in the process, allow others to see what remarkable work is done by our members on a regular basis.

In a reverse of that, regular book reviews of topics of interest to the membership would bring those topics to us, and broaden our knowledge of current scholarship to enrich us. I had a number of you come up to me after our National Institute banquet in October to volunteer to provide book reviews for publication. Such reviews will be greatly appreciated. Anyone else who would like to offer their time to do book reviews are welcome to let us know and we will be in touch with you for your contributions to the journal.



In my short time as your Executive Director I have seen the potential that MCA has to shape this unique field of chaplaincy, and look forward to continuing to find ways to leverage the collective skills of what each of you bring to the table on a daily basis in whatever situation you are in.

Also, in closing, last week I had mentioned that one of our number was recently elected as the MOAA chapter president for Columbia, SC. Chaplain (Colonel) Sam Boone, US Army (Retired) is the recipient of that trust. Sam - congratulations on your election and demonstrating what so many of us know: Leadership skills in chaplaincy settings are leadership skills in all settings.

And if you do have any contributions you would like to make to the journal - either an article or a book review - feel free to let us know!

Fr. Razz Waff, DMin, BCC  
RazzW@aol.com,  
Executive Director



## In Memoriam

### *Chaplain Wayne Leroy Bouck*

Commander, USN, Retired  
United Methodist Church  
born August 15, 1934  
deceased February 26, 2018  
Fairfield, CA

### *The Rev. Theodore Bryant*

*"Pastor Tedd"*  
US Army Chaplain Assistant  
United Church of Christ  
born October 31, 1951  
deceased March 13, 2018  
Hixson, TN

## Congratulations

**Chaplain Greg Todd  
nominated to become next**

## Deputy Chief of Navy Chaplains

Capt. Greg Todd, Navy chaplain, nominated to serve as Deputy Chief of Chaplains of the Navy and Chaplain of the Marine Corps

Secretary of Defense James N. Mattis announced today that the president has nominated Capt. Greg Todd for appointment to the rank of rear admiral to serve as the next Deputy Chief of Chaplains of the Navy and Chaplain of the Marine Corps.



Todd is currently the Chaplain of the Coast Guard. He is a native of Seattle, Washington, and was ordained a minister in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in 1988. In 2009, Chaplain Todd received the Doctor of Ministry degree in Christian Leadership from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Charlotte, NC.

In Jul 2010, Todd assumed duty as the 2D Marine Logistics Group (2D MLG) Chaplain leading transition and support ministries for Marines and Sailors deploying and redeploying from Afghanistan. He led the team of chaplains in support of Third Location Decompression programs for EOD Marines in Ramstein, Germany facilitating their transition from a very kinetic deployment. He detached from 2D MLG in Feb 2013 and reported to II Marine Expeditionary Force as Force Chaplain managing the II MEF Command Religious Program for over 50,000 Marines, Sailors, and their families. Todd detached from II MEF in Jun 2014 to assume the duties as Chaplain of the Coast Guard.

from [Navy Chief of Chaplains Facebook https://www.facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/NavyChiefofChaplains)

A promotional graphic for AmazonSmile. It features a teal background with white hearts. A large white heart contains the text '3x' in orange. To the right, white text reads: 'Now your support goes 3 times as far'. Below that, smaller white text says: 'From Mar 12 – 31, Amazon will triple the donation rate to 1.5% on your first eligible purchase at smile.amazon.com.' At the bottom is the 'amazon smile' logo.

Go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) today and sign up to support the **Military Chaplains Association** with each purchase you make. Thank you.

## Atheist as a Navy Chaplain Two Perspectives

Reports indicate the Navy Chaplain Corps advisory board has recommended Jason Heap be accepted as a Navy chaplain. This has stirred some debate. For two perspectives on the argument here are extracts from



[Jason Heap](#)

two articles, both of which are available in full at the links.

### [From the Commercial Appeal March 13, 2018](#)

A couple of Mid-South senators, one of them leading the charge, have signed on to an effort to block an atheist from becoming a U.S. Navy chaplain.

Sen. Roger Wicker, R-Miss., sent a letter to Navy Secretary Richard Spencer and Admiral John Richardson, chief of naval operations, asking them to reject the application of a secular-humanist seeking the post.

Wicker, an Air Force veteran and member of the Senate armed services committee, said he and 22 other senators signing the letter feared the Navy "may expand the Chaplain Corps beyond its clear purpose of protecting and facilitating the constitutional right of service members to the free exercise of religion."

"The Navy has sufficient authority to create programs for humanist or atheist service members," the senators' letter states. "The Chaplain Corps is not the appropriate place. The Chaplain Corps serves religious needs, not philosophical preferences."

A letter signed by 45 House members makes similar arguments.

### [From the Friendly Atheist](#)

Jason Heapis still trying to become a chaplain in the U.S. Navy. He's perfectly qualified for the position, too: He earned two master's degrees (including one in divinity), passed his physicals, and completed the paperwork... but what he doesn't have is the endorsement of a religious organization that's currently approved by the Navy; his comes from the Humanist Society

The Navy first rejected his application in June of 2014. They didn't say why, only that a lot of people were rejected, but it wasn't hard to connect the dots given Heap's impeccable credentials. It was also a mystery because there are more atheists and other non-religious people in the military than any other non-Christian denomination, and most of those other groups have their own chaplains, including Jews, Muslims, and Hindus.

Before you write off the idea, saying atheists don't need a chaplain and a "Humanist chaplain" is an oxymoron, realize that the job is to provide comfort and guidance to those dealing with life and death issues. They are really counselors. And atheists struggle with the same issues as other members of the military. Going to a religious chaplain who doesn't understand where you're coming from is obviously not as helpful as speaking with a trained professional who gets your godlessness.

Rejecting Heap means turning a back on soldiers who don't belong to an organized religion.

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If you missed the March 14th edition of the Newsgram [click here](#)

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