

Commander's Connection



Photo by Airman 1st Class Susan Penning

Brig. Gen. Allen Peck (left), 9th Air Force vice commander, briefs pilots on their performance during demonstration team certification here Wednesday. Col. Sam Angelella observed the team in action.

"Commander's Connection" is a link between Col. Sam Angelella, 20th Fighter Wing commander, and the Shaw community. Questions or concerns that can't be resolved through normal channels can be called in and recorded at 895-4611 or e-mailed to **commandersconnection@shaw.af.mil**.

Callers should leave a name and telephone number in case questions need clarification. Comments of general interest may be published in *The Shaw Spirit*.

Kudos

I was recently involved in a car accident near the Main Gate. I was amazed at how efficiently and thoroughly Shaw members responded. 20th Security Forces Squadron personnel were extremely helpful. Also, Emergency Medical Services and Fire Department members showed up to assist and make sure I was taken care of. Thankfully, I was not injured in the accident, but it was comforting to know these teams are ready and willing to respond to any emergency situation on base.

Chaplains shepherd airmen

By Chaplain (Maj.) Bob Clemons
20th Fighter Wing

A chaplain in World War I came across a dying soldier and offered to pray for him. The soldier, seeing the chaplain's crucifix, said, "But Father, I do not belong to your church." The chaplain replied, "But you do belong to my God." And he prayed with him.

That's why we have chaplains in United States military services. Although you and a particular chaplain may have different theological beliefs, we are in the military to serve you.

Chaplains are trained to offer what we call pastoral care, with emphasis on the word "care." We are available to provide our own brand of nurture wherever military members are assigned. Our mission is to give you the care you need to stay focused on your mission.

I was an enlisted Army soldier in Vietnam from July 1969 to July 1970. Although it would be nice to be 20 years old again, I would not accept the age reduction if it meant I also had to live that particular year over. The man who did the most to get me through the year, with my sanity intact, was a huge, grizzly-bear-sized man who always had a smile on his face and a common-sense solution for every problem. He was our unit chaplain, a Lutheran minister who answered the call to duty, and ministered to soldiers in a war zone.

Chaplain Grodin was always there for us. I have done my best over the years to keep him as my role model, especially during my more recent assignments to war zones such as Operation Desert Storm and Bosnia.

Do you know your unit chaplain? Did you know he or she provides counseling, prayer, encouragement and a multitude of other helpful functions? Chaplains are trained, ordained clergy who provide the same faith-group services as your pastor, priest, rabbi or imam back home. Chaplains have broad education and experience that equip them to advise and guide

in a wide variety of life situations. They have a great deal more in common with military members than civilian clergy do, because they share the same military lifestyle. They are highly motivated to help other service members with their problems.

Air Force chaplains must earn a four-year college degree in any field, a three-year master's degree from a theological school in their faith group, receive ordination in their faith, serve at least two years as civilian clergy, compete for limited positions in the chaplain program and complete military training, including chaplain school and continuing professional military education courses. No two chaplains are alike, but all share above-minimum qualifications.

Your unit chaplain is one of your most valuable military benefits and assets.

If you are interested in preparing to become an Air Force chaplain, you may obtain more information by going to the Website of the Chief of Chaplains at **www.usafhc.af.mil**, or simply drop by Shaw's chapel and ask to speak to any chaplain on duty.

If you are starting with a high school diploma, it will take you a minimum of 10 years to complete all the requirements, and you must be able and qualified to receive a commission as an officer.

The chapel staff at Shaw may be reached by calling 895-1106 during regular duty hours. For emergencies, the duty chaplain can be reached after hours at 895-5850. The schedule of worship services is listed in the Lifestyles section of this paper.

Since the days of the Revolutionary War, military chaplains have served America and the men and women who guard and protect this country.

There are good chaplains and better chaplains, but all share one characteristic in common: They love this country and the men and women who protect it.

The Shaw Spirit

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