



## Report from Chaplain (Capt) Mike Kearin NHQ USV-JSC Chaplain Service



August 2007

### The Call

by Chaplain (Capt) Michael Kearin, USAVR

One of the nicest things about having made it to your sixties, besides just having made them, is the thought of finally being able to slow down. Most of my friends have begun planning retirement and I was looking forward to doing the same, just before “the call” came. This was not a calling in the biblical sense, it was a phone call. On the other end of the line was my old friend, Chaplain/Commander Lynn Anderson. After the initial pleasantries, Lynn cut right to the chase and asked, “*Kearin, what I really called for is to ask how you feel about free speech?*”. I explained how serving in an army uniform, I was willing to die to defend that right. “*Good*”, he said, “*I am about to ask you to give some*”.

That was my introduction to the United States Volunteers. Reflexively, I had at least twenty reasons why I couldn’t do it and began to rattle them off. Ignoring my pleas, Lynn began to explain the logic and inherent obligation behind the “Boots on Graves” idea. It sounded swell, I said, and deflected what I saw as the close with, “*Lynn, you know I’d love to help out, but I’ve been out of uniform too long.*” I knew that was a good one, until he asked how long? “*When I was in, the Garand was still state of the art and a satellite was an eastern European country*”. “*No problem*”, he countered, “*As a chaplain you don’t need to know anything about rifles and the satellites thing is now an Air Force issue*”.

He went on to explain that I would be commissioned as an officer/chaplain and would play an integral part in the burial ceremony of American veterans. That sounded lovely, and then it occurred to me as an officer, I would need a uniform. That was it! The perfect out. With the sincerest expression that I could muster on short notice, I began to explain that as much as I would like to participate, I had problems with wearing a uniform, “*Apparently the military purchased the cheapest fabrics that they could, because my old uniform had shrunk to the point that I could no longer put it on. Otherwise, you could count me in*”.

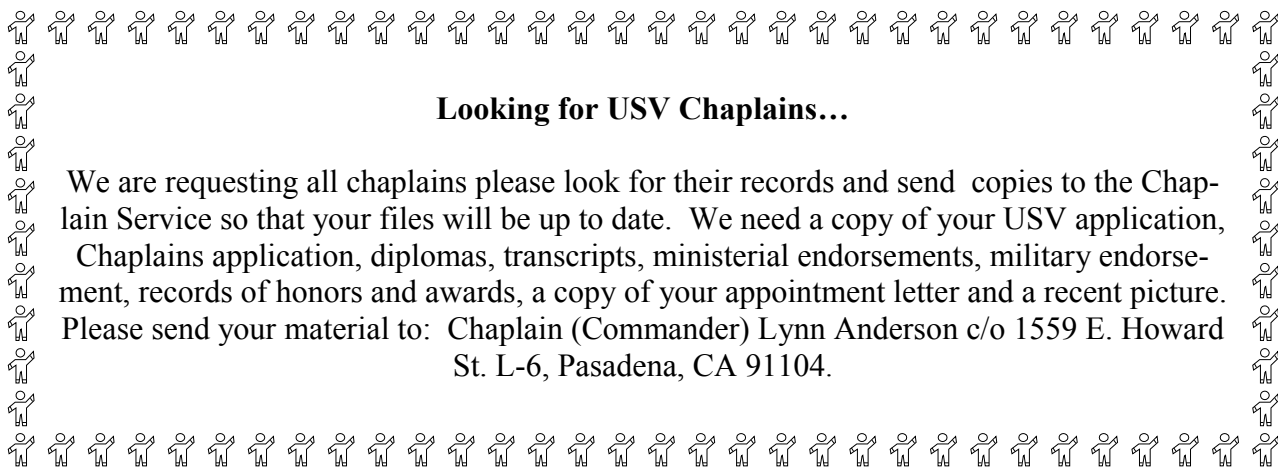
The last thing I remember was riding out to the National Cemetery in Riverside, California, in a new green uniform. Having been a working man (enlisted) for all of my brief military career, I wasn't sure how the captain bars went on and still haven't a clue how a beret is worn. And that my friends, is the point of this little story.

This is not about a bunch of old vets putting on their uniforms and "playing Army again". It is not about finally getting to show the neighbors your rank and medals as you strut around the yard before leaving. What it is about is an opportunity to demonstrate to the family of a veteran the appreciation of a grateful nation and to formally honor their distinguished service to our flag and country.

Currently more than 1600 veterans die daily. Yet, only about 10% of our veterans receive proper military honors at the gravesite. Think about that statement. You don't have to be a sentimentalist to realize that there is something intrinsically wrong about that. And you could make a real difference, one family at a time.

Currently, because of staffing limitations, the USV is conducting military burials at only the Riverside National Cemetery. We are hoping to attract more volunteers to create additional Ops Teams so that we can expand to other states.

Our needs are not only for ordained chaplains but also for chaplain assistants and admin personnel. Following the USV, you will note the hyphenated initials: JSC. This stands for the Joint Service Command. It simply means that the USV is made up from members of all five branches of service and all are welcomed. In fact, to borrow a phrase from one of our branches, "The USV is looking for a few good chaplains." Won't you consider being one of us?

A decorative border consisting of a repeating pattern of small, stylized human figures with arms raised, arranged in a rectangular frame around the central text.

**Looking for USV Chaplains...**

We are requesting all chaplains please look for their records and send copies to the Chaplain Service so that your files will be up to date. We need a copy of your USV application, Chaplains application, diplomas, transcripts, ministerial endorsements, military endorsement, records of honors and awards, a copy of your appointment letter and a recent picture. Please send your material to: Chaplain (Commander) Lynn Anderson c/o 1559 E. Howard St. L-6, Pasadena, CA 91104.

## THE CHAPLAIN SERVICE



Chaplain (Commander) Lynn Anderson, Chief of Chaplains,  
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(The Chaplain's Corner is published monthly at the direction of Chaplain Anderson featuring members of the Chaplain's service)



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First Chaplains Training Class—March 2007



General John Henke, Commander  
of Region 9, was kind enough to  
come and address students at PCU  
in the Chaplains Program



Second Chaplains Training Class—May 2007



Total of 6 chaplains/assistants were recruited  
to USV and 1 JAG. 2 joined the military.

**United States Volunteers – Joint Services  
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*Honoring the service men  
and women of this nation*



The General and his Lady, (Gen. Allen Baumann and Michelle Nguyen) had a beautiful elegant wedding and reception on July 21, 2007. They invited all members of the USV-JSC and treated them to a wonderful evening of fellowship and celebration. Each attendee received a beautiful photograph with the bride and groom worth framing. The dinner was fabulous—steak and salmon.

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### **Upcoming Training Activities**

Chaplain (Commander) Lynn Anderson, Chief of Chaplains is inviting all chaplains to mark your calendar for the following events and activities sponsored by the USV-JSC.

2nd Thursday of the Month—Riverside National Cemetery. “Boots on Graves.” All personnel meet at 9 a.m. near the Medal of Honor memorial in Class A uniforms.

Chaplains Training I—New Classes begin with Chaplain (Col) Stephen Kirtley, Deputy Chief of Chaplains, on Saturday, September 8th at 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m (3 sessions 9/8, 9/15 and 9/29) Register call 626 827-1097.

National USV-JSC Conference and Ball—October 11, 12, and 13th. Tickets are available for \$65 for a couple. \$35 Individual. The Chaplains will be offering training sessions from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. The Banquet/Ball begins at 6:00 p.m.

Chaplains Training II—First Time offered includes Emergency Services Training. Saturday, November 3, 10, 17) To register call 626 827-1097