

The

For family, friends, and alumni of Cistercian Preparatory School

C N T I N U M



March 2005

Salute to service

The story behind Cistercian
alumni serving in the military

First Lieutenant
Donovan Campbell '97
with Golf Company's
1st Platoon in Ramadi, Iraq.

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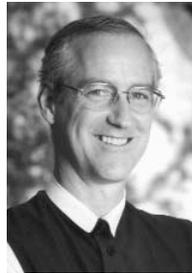
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St. Benedict's school for the Lord's service

Students follow the monks' lead in offering their lives to serving

In his Rule for monks, St. Benedict organizes monasteries as a "school for the Lord's service," *dominici schola servitii*. The monastery serves as a workshop where the monks dedicate their entire



Letter from the Headmaster

*Fr. Peter
Verhalen '73*

lives – through the vow of stability – to learning how to serve the Lord. Benedict sees our whole life as a life of service: our prayer is offered to God as a service of praise and thanksgiving, our work is offered as an act of obedience to God. It is God whom we serve as we carry out our day-to-day assignments teaching in the Prep School or the University of Dallas, or taking care of responsibilities in the monastery. No one ever graduates from this school.

In this issue of *The Continuum* you'll read about the way Cistercian students and alumni are serving in their own lives. Phyllis Carr (the mother of **Alex Carr '94** and **Phillip Carr '99**) reports on

community service programs at Cistercian, including the recent initiative of **Sam Bowler '06** and **Prasanth Pattisapu '05** to raise some \$35,000 for the tsunami victims. In David Stewart's feature article, you will learn about Cistercian alumni in the military and the sacrifices and rewards they experience serving our country.

Another fine example of service can be found in our news section. **Vincent Zimmern '06** won The Catholic Foundation's Scholar of the Year, which is awarded for outstanding scholarship, service to the community, and commitment to the Catholic faith. We are extremely proud of Vincent's achievement since this is the second year in a row a Cistercian student has won this prestigious honor.

In his inimitable way, **Smokey Briggs '84** reflects on his own experiences in the Marine Corps (and Fr. Matthew's Latin class). Finally, reflecting on our attitude toward Mass, Fr. Roch suggests that we worship God in an effort to unite ourselves – body and soul – with the crucified Christ offering himself to the Father.

I hope each of the stories in this issue of *The Continuum* inspire you to return to the school for the Lord's service.

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Cistercian alumni share glimpses of the military life, the sacrifices, the rewards, and whether Cistercian helped them succeed.



A rough one in Ramadi 10

Lt. Donovan Campbell '97 and his men brave some of the most intense fighting of the Iraq occupation on April 6, 2004 in Ramadi.



Wave of giving 14

The Cistercian community gave generously to the tsunami victims.

Cover photography:
Courtesy of Donovan Campbell '97

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Cistercian Preparatory School was founded with the aim of preparing talented boys for the colleges of their choice by challenging their minds with excellent academic programs, molding their character through the values of Catholic education, and offering them guidance with both understanding and discipline. Cistercian Preparatory School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational practices, admissions, scholarship programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

Diocesan-wide honor

Zimmern wins prized Catholic Foundation award

Fr. Peter Verhalen had his doubts when Mr. Bob Haaser approached him about nominating **Vincent Zimmern '06** for The Catholic Foundation's Scholar Award.

"It's not that Vincent is not very deserving," Fr. Peter told Haaser. "It's just that they aren't going to honor a Cistercian student two years in a row."

Last year, **Juan Muldoon '05** won the prize, which is given to one junior from the diocese's seven high schools on the basis



Photo by Jim Reisch

FRANCO-AMERICAN Vincent Zimmern '06 is Cistercian's second Catholic Foundation Scholar in a row.

of scholarship, community service, and commitment to his faith.

Despite the long odds, the Los Angeles native who was born to French parents (and maintains dual citizenship) won the prize.

He speaks French at home, and during Middle School, he completed his homework assignments in both English and French, to keep his French sharp. While excelling in his school work, Zimmern also began to exhibit some special skills.

Twice he finished in the top ten in the Texas State Geography Bee. He has twice finished in the top ten of the regional National Spanish Exam. He also is a quiz bowl whiz, filling in last year as a sophomore and helping his team attain the highest ranking out of 64 teams based on their age and finish.

Zimmern also plays to win when it comes to sports. He is line to win a Hawk Award this

year (signifying he lettered in three varsity sports).

An accomplished classical and contemporary pianist, Zimmern has recently picked up the saxophone as an outlet for his love of jazz. He will play sax at BraveArt this year.

Zimmern also serves as the yearbook's head photographer.

This St. Bernard Award winner also dives into community service. Over Christmas, he helped organize gift programs for Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity at St. James Parish and the needy families associated with the Low Birth Weight Clinic.

The Cistercian community can take great pride in Vincent Zimmern.

Ed Johnson pays tribute to Fr. Henry in accepting the Moroney Award

The annual Cistercian love fest, also known as the Moroney Award Dinner, incorporated all the ingredients of a variety show, except for the dancing girls. Hosted by Cistercian Alumni Association President **Matt Hawkins '88** at the Tower Club downtown, the event honored **Ed Johnson '80** as this year's Alumnus of the Year.

Steve Rasch '80 kept the audience in stitches with tales of Johnson's Cistercian days, including a story that would crown several in the Class of 1980 as the "Kings of Forest Lane." Despite Johnson's request that the "MZW988" story remain between friends, Rasch detailed the entire sequence of events.

Rasch shifted gears from comedy to music when he asked Johnson and **Mike Donahoe '80** to join him at the podium to reprise "Rawhide," a song that they had initially performed when all three were working at the Census Bureau in the summer of 1980.

In accepting the Jim and Lynn Moroney Award as Alumnus of the Year, Johnson thanked his parents who "considered the finan-

cial burden [of paying for a Cistercian education] and took the challenge because they believed it was best for me. It is," he said, "a debt I can never repay."

Johnson also shed some light on the "challenging" Class of 1980. He recalled Fr. Denis Farkasfalvy once comparing the class to the Roman Senate. "Individually we were all nice guys but together we were a pack of vicious dogs."

Johnson saved his kindest words for his form master, Fr. Henry Marton, who was ill and could not attend the ceremonies. "As we've grown older, we all realize how truly special Fr. Henry is and what an impact he's had on our lives," he emphasized. "We are lucky to have him on loan from heaven."

Johnson lives in Atlanta where he is president and chief executive officer of LCG Associates, an institutional investment consulting firm. But logistics have not prevented him from serving on the school's investment committee.

"The longer I was away from Cistercian," he acknowledged, "the more I realized how much I missed it and how much it had affected me. You realize how important it has been in your life and you want to give back."

MORONEY AWARD
Left: (left to right) Paul Tomaso '80 and Steve Rasch '80 (right) congratulate Ed Johnson '80 after the award presentation.
Right: The alumnus of the year delivering remarks at the Tower Club.



Photos by Jim Reisch





Photo by Jim Reisch

Fr. Gregory Schweers conducts his class on Dante's *Inferno* for 40 parents in the music room. Its success has prompted Fr. Peter Verhalen to consider ideas for another class for parents next year.

Dante and Desserts

Fr. Greg pilots parent enrichment with Dante class

Talk about a hot idea. Just after 3 pm on November 17, an email entitled, "Fr. Gregory's Dante class for parents begins on 10 January '05" was sent to Cistercian parents. By 5 pm, the response had exceeded all expectations and prompted a quick follow-up email declaring the class officially full.

"We had placed a limit of 20 parents," said Susan Madole (mother of **Rob Madole '06**). But within two hours, they received 40 requests. That required changing the venue from a parent's home to the music room at Cistercian.

Mrs. Madole, along with Joan Pruitt and Elise Murchison, had been discussing for years their desire to goad Fr. Gregory Schweers into teaching a class on Dante for adults.

"I'm game," said Fr. Gregory at a football game in the fall. With Fr. Peter's approval, plans moved forward to conduct one 90-minute class

each Monday for six weeks in January, February, and March.

"It's been fabulous," said Mrs. Madole. "We are utterly amazed at what we're learning. Besides just teaching, Fr. Greg speaks Italian and he performs large sections for us. It really adds to the flavor of the course."

"I call it parent enrich-

ment," Fr. Greg said. "Parents recognize that they don't stop learning. We have both Middle School and Upper School parents. They ask good questions, show up on time, and stay late. What else can a teacher ask for?"

Fr. Peter said he already has been approached by other teachers who would be willing to teach a six-week course to parents in future years.

Middle School

Mathcounts team takes first for 7th year in a row

Last Saturday at UTA, the Cistercian Middle School Mathletes walked into the DFW-Mid-Cities Chapter Mathcounts competition with a huge target on their chests.

Having won this contest for six years in a row, all of the 20 schools registered (and 140 students competing) had one thing on their minds: Beat Cistercian.

Dr. Richard Newcomb led in his team comprised of **Michael Lawson '09, James Levitt '09, Greg McGuire '09, and Will Schleier '09.**

"It was the closest competition ever," said Dr. Newcomb. "Not only were there more schools and students competing, the quality of the contestants was very good."

In the individual competition Cistercian usually places four students among the top 12. This year only two placed in the top 12 (Lawson third and Levitt twelfth).

Cistercian's seventh consecutive title would come down to the team competition, in which the four students work together to solve 10 problems.

"They solved them all correctly," said Dr. Newcomb. "It's not an easy thing to do. But this group of guys has a really good team chemistry. They work really well as a team."

The competition gives each team a limited time (approximately 15 minutes per problem) to arrive at a solution.

The students must check each other's work, and come to a consensus on the answer.

The Cistercian team won the day by answering all 10 problems correctly.

"We needed that perfect score or we may not have come out on top," Newcomb said.

So the streak continues.

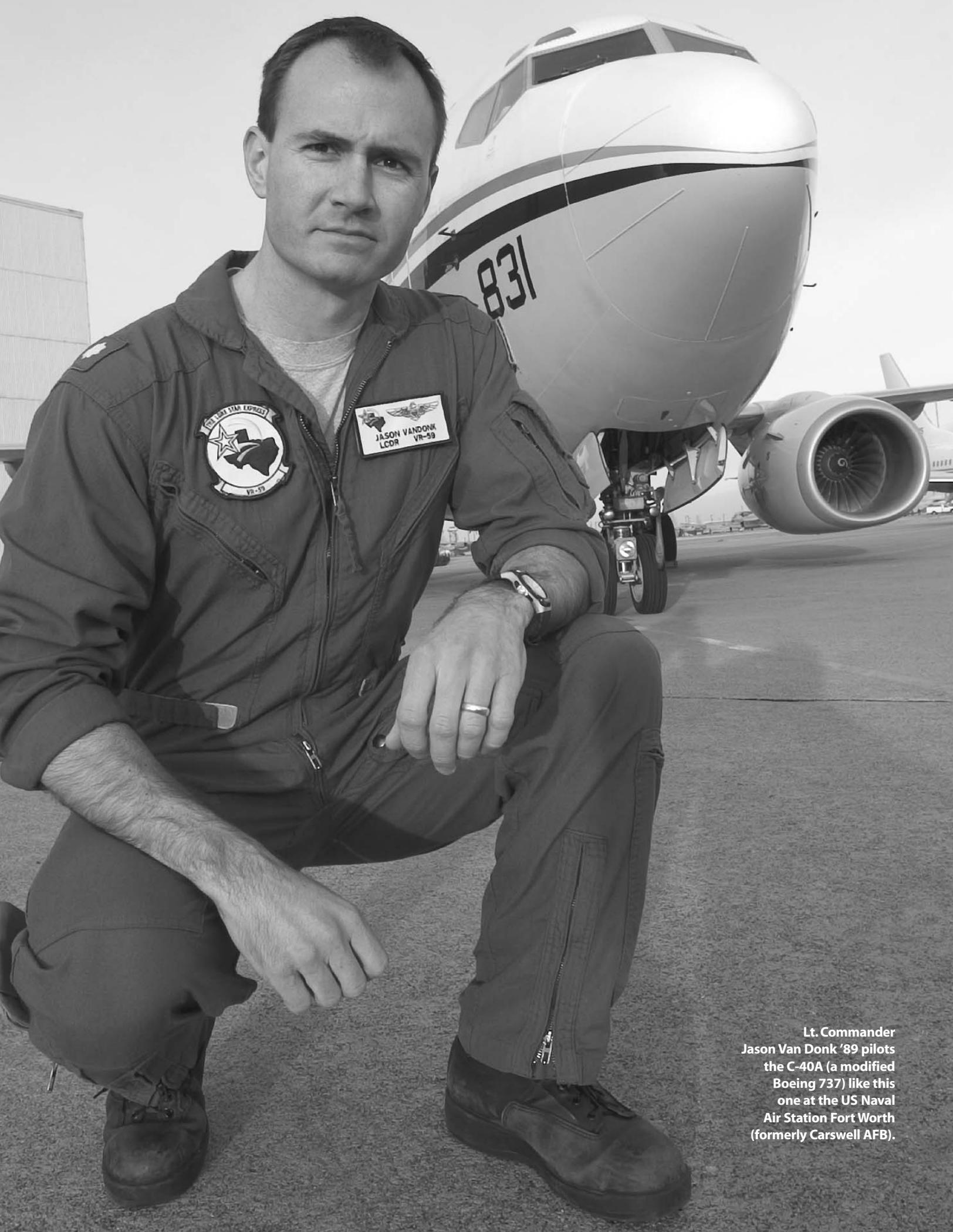
noteworthy

■ **Early notification:** Fr. Bernard Marton reports that a large number of schools have committed to Cistercian students, including Stanford (4), Notre Dame (3), Austin College (3), St. Louis U (2), Loyola U New Orleans (2), Boston College, Naval Academy, Tufts, UT Plan II, and Yale. Students have until May 1 to decide. One applied early decision to Duke and was accepted.

■ **Middle School toastmasters:** Nearly 50 students from Forms II, III, and IV are expected to have participated in the newly formed Middle School speech program before the end of the year. The classes are conducted by Ms. Pauline Bourqui, who has taught speech in the Upper School in the past. Boys take time out of their study halls to attend the classes. "We have some who are very proficient and some who are quite shy. Those are the ones I really enjoy working with." Already the boys have fared well in a couple of diocesan speech festivals. "I've been very pleased with the response," said Ms. Bourqui.

■ **Fr. Roch lectures in Hungary:** Fr. Roch Kereszty recently gave two talks on the Mystery of the Eucharist to the Conference of Major Superiors of Religious Orders in Hungary. Fr. Roch also gave some lectures at the Sapientia Theological Institute and in the Seminary of Budapest.

■ **Chez Cistercian:** Improvements to the menu at the concession stands this year have persuaded many to pass on eating after the games. Now they're eating at the games. The single most delicious addition – bratwurst with spicy mustard – was suggested by Burk Murchison. This and other improvements (e.g., better popcorn, better nut bar) have not only made dining at sporting events more palatable but also more profitable for the Booster Club.



Lt. Commander
Jason Van Donk '89 pilots
the C-40A (a modified
Boeing 737) like this
one at the US Naval
Air Station Fort Worth
(formerly Carswell AFB).

Salute to Service

Cistercian alumni share glimpses of military life, the sacrifices they endure, the rewards they treasure, and whether Cistercian helped them succeed ■ By David Stewart

“MY DECISION TO GO to the Air Force Academy was tough,” admitted Capt. Shane Steinke ’91. “In fact, I procrastinated until the last minute. I accepted my appointment just fifteen minutes before FedEx closed, and politely turned down Notre Dame.

“As I saw it, the decision was between two completely different lifestyles,” he explained. “I could go to college and be ‘normal’ or I could go to the Academy and know that none of my friends from Cistercian would ever really know what I was going through. I’ve never regretted the choice I made. It’s not for everyone, but it was the best choice for me at that time.”

“The toughest part is that at the age of 18, it is hard to know what you want to do in life,” remembered Jack Pritchett ’93, who recently left the Navy to take a job with a defense contractor in San Diego. “To make a commitment of at least nine years [four at the academy and five in the service] at that age is a big deal, especially when your buddies are going off to places like UT, Ole Miss, and Tulane.”

“It is strange to know that the next nine years are already planned for me,” agreed Midshipman 4th class Daniel Foose ’04.

“The Marine Corps represents for me

much of what I think is good about man, our nation, our civilization,” chimed Smokey Briggs ’85. “It is the embodiment of duty above self, of honor for honor’s sake, of team over individual, of courage devoted to ideals.

“It also works well with college,” he acknowledged. “Several years I volunteered for active duty during the summer months – banked my pay – and had tuition and books in the bank when the fall semester rolled around.”

“It didn’t hurt that the price was right,” admitted John DiPasquale ’90 who attended the Air Force Academy, “but I didn’t find out until my first day that nothing is free.”

While some – like Army Ranger Sgt. Nathan Porter ’95 and Lt. Donovan Campbell ’97 (see page 10) – were moved by a desire to serve their country at this juncture in history, the military occasionally serves more personal agendas.

“I had been screwing up my life for a while,” admitted E-6 Chris Crawley ’83, “bombing out of college and having a few dead-end jobs, and felt it was time to do something with my life.” Crawley has served ever since, a total of 15 years.

Patrick Haggerty ’86 felt the same way.

“After a year of failing at Springhill University in Mobile,” Haggerty said, “they asked me not to come back. I needed

something to shake me up. I had an uncle who was a Marine and I remembered Fr. Aloysius always saying that Americans didn’t appreciate what they have here in the US.”

“The Marines gave me the discipline in my life that I needed to succeed.” Haggerty now teaches computer programming for Learning Tree International.

“My family had military experience,” said Lt. Col. Greg Davis ’78, who was the first Cistercian alumnus to graduate from a military academy. “And while I went to Cistercian, I knew I wanted to fly and to serve in the military. Part of that desire came from listening to the Fathers talk about the experiences of their lives from WWII and escaping from Hungary.”

“I saw some of the older guys on the football team who I had a lot of respect for, guys like Mark Roppolo ’88, Les Pritchett ’89, and John DiPasquale head off to the Academies,” explained Marc Conselman ’91, “so I checked out West Point.”

“I liked the fact that it was a leadership institution, and I felt it was a good way to justify the money my parents spent to send me to Cistercian.” Conselman left the Army a Captain after five years. He is currently completing his MBA at the Cox School of Business at SMU.

Ivan Konermann '92 vividly remembers standing at the pay phone in the corner of the old lunchroom (now the reception area) in December 1991. He was calling the US Military Academy in hopes of finding out whether he had been accepted at West Point.

"The admissions officer said that he was not supposed to tell me, but told me to hang on for a minute while he checked with his boss," recalled Konermann, who would resign a captain after five years of service. "A very long minute later, he came back on the line and said that I had been accepted and given a presidential appointment.

"I ran upstairs toward my class which had already started, passed a classmate to whom I told the good news, and then ran into Fr Bernard [Marton]'s office to let him know.

"When I returned to my class," he said, "all my classmates stood and clapped for me. It was great to see all the support that my Cistercian family gave me."

"I DO NOT CHOOSE to spend myself in a static bureaucracy," explained Midshipman Tom Martin '70 to the Secretary of the Navy in his June 1972 letter of resignation. It took Martin just two years at the Naval Academy to determine that "this institution and the organization it services are too old and cold and settled in their ways."

Martin opted for the freedom and broad curricular options of the University of Texas at Austin.

Martin's rejection of military life may have been a sign of the times. In fact, it would take another decade before a Cistercian graduate (Greg Davis) completed the program at a military academy.

By 1972, support for the Vietnam War had reached an all-time low. Returning soldiers, who should have been applauded for risking their lives, found that most Americans had turned their backs on them. The draft remained the military's best "recruiting" tool.

The culture of Cistercian in the seventies also may have had an impact on the school's virtual military drought during its first decade. Still heavily influenced by the sixties, Cistercian students of the seventies enjoyed bucking the establishment, which included anyone over thirty and any entity with any authority. Despite a rigorous curriculum, Cistercian's culture remained free and independent. Students enjoyed classes occasionally conducted outside, a smoking lounge, and lots of freedom to do as they pleased.

A number of things changed in the eighties. President Reagan focused the country's



West Point Cadets Aaron Jackson '01 (left) and Anthony Perone '01 enjoy the festivities at the Army-Navy game in November.

attention on the Cold War and boosted the image of the military. Changes also emerged at Cistercian, where more structure was introduced and the Hungarians became wiser to the ways of unruly American boys.

But more directly, Fr. Bernard, who became headmaster and college counselor in 1981, began to take an interest in the military academies.

"I found the service academies like to

What are the odds?

While serving as a flight instructor at Corpus Christi Naval Air Station, Lt. Jason Van Donk '89 found a familiar name among the list of new students checking aboard: Bill Pritchett '97.

"I am a classmate and friend of Bill's brother, Les [Pritchett '89]. It was my privilege to serve as Bill's 'onwing,' meaning that I instructed Bill in his first phase of flight training, seeing him safely to his first solo flight."

"It was truly a blessing," Pritchett said. "Since he was such a good family friend, he had the extra pressure of answering to my mom if anything happened to me. So that was good. But he definitely did not make it easy for me."

"Learning to fly is amazing, but extraordinarily stressful," Pritchett said. "A lot of that stress came from the Lieutenant in the back seat, making Coach Hillary references to make me perform better. But I got through it. And in the end, having Jason teach me to fly made me that much of a better pilot."

"In a traditional, yet informal, ceremony known as a 'tie-cutting,'" Van Donk remembered, "Bill and I took turns 'praising' each other's virtues as instructor and student, after which I cut his symbolic — and hideously outdated — necktie."

attract students with a strong work ethic, a respect for authority, and a commitment to serving their fellow men," Fr. Bernard remembered. "Along with other Catholic schools, Cistercian seems to be especially fertile ground for recruiting such candidates."

Beginning with the Class of 1985, Cistercian has sent a steady stream of students to the academies, an average of one student per year for 20 years (including one from the Class of 2005). All have graduated and served out their military obligations.

"The education at Cistercian made my first year at Annapolis much easier," commented Roppolo. "Also, the character and spiritual development at Cistercian helped me survive the tough times."

"One goal of the Naval Academy is to train midshipmen to be prepared and think on their feet," said Michael Stanzel '86, who played football at Navy until a knee injury ended his gridiron days. "Having been to Cistercian, it was more of reinforcement than training. Both academically and athletically, Cistercian prepared me well for this test of mental quickness."

"In order to be successful in the military, you have to be able to think for yourself and take the initiative," said Jack Pritchett. "Pretty much every day involves an instance, big or small, where you have to think for yourself. Cistercian definitely prepares you for that.

"Time management also is a challenge at USNA," he added. "Cistercian definitely trains you well for handling that task usually a lot better than your roommates or classmates. In addition, Cistercian provides you with a good deal of discipline which is something you need from day one."

"Cistercian almost is the military way of life," DiPasquale insisted, "wear a uniform, stand when your instructor enters, grow as a group of young men together for eight years, overcome challenges (academic, athletic, spiritual)."

"I didn't play varsity sports in college," said Jason Van Donk '89, "but the lessons I learned from Coach Hillary and all the great Cistercian coaches certainly benefited me as I transitioned to military life. Putting the team ahead of the self is a great example of this.

"I think Cistercian instills the discipline and self-confidence you need to be very successful in the military."

"In both worlds," Konermann suggested, "you are accountable for what you do, and people hold you to high standards. In both worlds, you help and are helped by those around you. In both, there is a lot of creativity that could be applied to the task at hand. Both also have a lot of closeness that comes

from knowing that not everyone can hack it in that world, and that it is hard to get there, and harder to stay there.”

WHETHER AT AN academy or in the armed services, military life requires all kinds of adjustments; not just for the individual making the commitment, but also for the loved ones of the individual.

“When Les [Pritchett ’89] went to the Naval Academy,” remembered Cistercian parent Jan Pritchett, “he was not only my oldest, it was the Naval Academy. In those days, that meant very limited access. We could talk to him for only five minutes on Sunday afternoons.”

“Probably the worst part about being in the military was never being able to plan anything in advance.”

— Ivan Konermann ’92

“I was very sad for several months,” said Mrs. Pritchett whose remaining two sons also would attend the Naval Academy. “I didn’t know what was wrong with me. I eventually realized that I was depressed.”

Things changed over the next 12 years, and Mrs. Pritchett witnessed them all as one of her

sons attended Annapolis from 1990 to 2002.

“By the time that Bill [Pritchett ’97] went,” Mrs. Pritchett remarked, “the boys could use email and cell phones to communicate with family. That eased the separation quite a bit.”

(The youngest also would benefit from another change in Naval Academy policy when he underwent PRK surgery that made it possible for Bill Pritchett to become a naval pilot.)

“For my time on active duty, I think the separations have been the toughest part,” Steinke said. “My wife and I were together for nearly five years before the time we spent together exceeded the time we spent apart. It never fails that the car breaks, the roof leaks, the (fill in the blank) stops work-

continued on page 12

Hawks in the military

Alumni and former students with military credentials

(The names of those currently serving in the military have been bolded. Graduation years in parentheses indicate a former student and their class year.)

Name	Year	Undergrad college (degree)	Branch	Years in	Rank
Gregory Davis	78	USAFA (Mechanical Engineering)	Air Force	22	Lt. Col.
Alex deAlvarez	(81)	University of Dallas	Marines	5	Captain
Chris Crawley	83	Chapman Univ. (Soc. Science)	Navy Reserve	15	E-6 1st class
Smokey Briggs	84	UTA (History)	USMC	8	Corporal
Chris Carlson	85	USNA (Political Science)	Navy	8	Lieutenant
Tom Nutt	85	Duke University	Navy	10	Lieutenant
Tim Bock	85	USC (Aerospace Engineering)	Army	13	Major
Bill Garre	86	UT (Communications)	Air Force	13	Major
Doug Bryan	86	USMA (Mechanical Engineering)	Army	5	Captain
Michael Stanzel	86	USNA (Political Science)	Navy	5	Lieutenant
Patrick Haggerty	86	Georgia State (Actuarial Science)	Marines	4	Corporal E-4
Dirk Renick	88	USNA (Naval Architecture)	Navy	13	Lt. Commander
Mark Roppolo	88	USNA (Economics)	Navy	9	Lieutenant
Michael Richardson	88	Notre Dame (Physics)	Air Force	13	Major
Jason Van Donk	89	Southwestern Univ. (History)	Navy	12	Lt. Commander
Les Pritchett	89	USNA (History)	Marines	10	Major
John DiPasquale	90	USAFA (Oper. Resrch, Eco.)	Air Force	8	Captain
Marc Conselman	91	USMA (Beh. Science, Leadership)	Army	5	Captain
Chris Buchanan	91	Johns Hopkins (Biology)	Army	10	Captain
Shane Steinke	91	USAFA (Economics)	Air Force	10	Captain
Ivan Konermann	92	USMA (Military Geography)	Army	5	Captain
Jack Pritchett	93	USNA (Mathematics)	Navy	12	Lieutenant
Nathan Porter	95	Fordham (Political Science)	Army (Rangers)	2	E-5/Sgt.
Bill Pritchett	97	USNA (English)	Navy	8	Lieutenant
Donovan Campbell	97	Princeton (History)	Marines	4	1st Lieutenant
Will Parish	98	USNA	Navy	7	Ensign
Luc Chandou	00	USAFA (Foreign area studies)	Air Force	1	2nd Lt.
Anthony Perone	01	USMA			Cadet
Aaron Jackson	01	USMA			Cadet
Blake Holbrook	(01)		Army	2	Spc.
Edward Anderson	03	USMA			Cadet
Gary Darby	03	USNA			Midshipman
Robert Reagan	03	USNA			Midshipman
Daniel Foose	04	USNA			Midshipman

We apologize for any errors in this list. Please send corrections to: scook@cistercian.org.

A rough one

On April 6, 2004, 12 Marines were killed and many more wounded in Ramadi. It would be a long day for Lt. Donovan Campbell

AS HE WIPED THE SLEEP from his eyes on the morning of April 6, 2004, 1st Lt. Donovan Campbell '97 tried to absorb the startling news. Marines from Golf Company's 3rd Platoon had been ambushed in the center of Ramadi. One Marine was already dead. Another needed to be evacuated. Campbell's 1st platoon was designated as the Quick Reaction Force (QRF) this mild spring day, and in a matter of minutes they launched into the center of the city.

Campbell and his men had little time to reflect on the one to two hours of sleep they'd had since beginning a security assignment the previous morning. By radio Campbell was learning more about the plight of the 3rd Platoon. Two squads (24-26 men) were holed up in some houses. Isolated and besieged by hundreds of insurgents, the Marines were trying to weather intense enemy fire from small arms, machine guns, and Rocket Propelled Grenades (RPGs). The Marines were running low on ammunition.

This news only added to Campbell's urgency, but as he and his men neared the center of the city they hit heavy enemy resistance at a major thoroughfare named (ironically) Easy Street. Still five or six blocks from the 3rd Platoon's position, Campbell was anxious to find a way to fight through. He stuck his head out from around the corner. A barrage of machine gun fire immediately obliterated the wall.

"My face was peppered with the debris," Campbell remembered, "and my Marines returned fire from right next to my head. I went deaf in my right ear for a while."

"It was pretty hairy when we reached

Easy Street," commented Corporal Christopher Bowen, 3rd squad leader of the 1st platoon. "This was by far the most intense fire fight we had seen."

Up until April 6, Ramadi had been considered a fairly tame assignment, despite its location on the main road from Baghdad to Jordan (a major pipeline for the insurgents). But on April 6, Ramadi exploded with violence as insurgents executed their most well coordinated, and deadliest, attack of the occupation. In all, 12 Marines would lose their lives that day. In the months since April 6, more Marines have died in Ramadi than in any other Iraqi city.

"Most platoon commanders would have positioned themselves within the platoon," Bowen explained.

"But Lt. Campbell is the kind of leader who wants to be there when the initial contact is made, so he leads from the front. He always says that if something is going to happen, he'd rather it happen to him than to his guys."

With bullets and mortar flying from virtually all angles, Campbell maneuvered his teams to cover for one

"It hit me that literally hundreds of people were firing small arms, machine guns, and RPGs at us, and that we were fighting through them all."

— Lt. Donovan Campbell '97

another as they slowly closed in on the enemy along Easy Street.

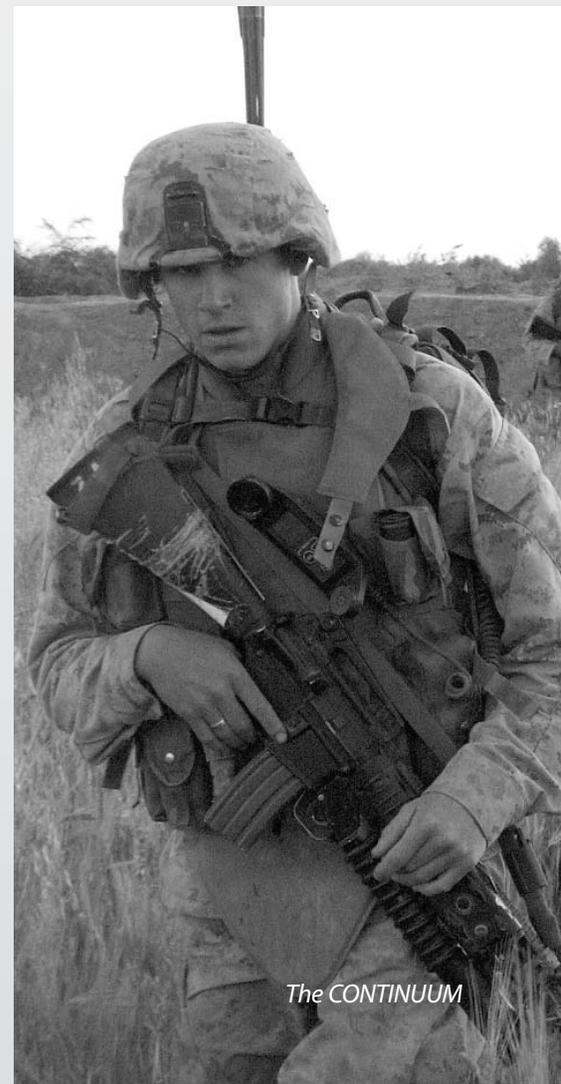
"Two grenades landed a couple of feet away from me," Campbell said, "and I scrambled for cover around a street corner. Those same grenades failed to explode and my squad leader picked them up and threw them away so we could continue to advance.

"About that time," Campbell recalled, "Weapons Company arrived and delivered heavy firepower onto the rooftops of the buildings where the enemy was positioned with their machine guns surrounding us."

"At times it was strange," he reflected. "I felt detached, just an automaton doing my job. I had no time to worry about my safety or about the danger of the situation — I had my hands full just trying to make sure that I knew where all my men were and trying to decide what they needed to do next.

"Then for a brief moment it would hit me that literally hundreds of people were firing small arms, machine guns, and RPGs at us, and that we were fighting through them all. Then the automaton would take over again and I would return to focusing on the task at hand."

Campbell led his men to follow Weapons Company but was struck by "see-



e in Ramadi

ended when insurgents launched a series of coordinated attacks
'97 and the 1st Platoon of Golf Company ■ By David Stewart

ing Marines in front of us doubling over and collapsing as they were hit by enemy fire.”

Once across Easy Street, an incensed Campbell fought even more fiercely to allow the remaining members of the squad and elements of Weapons Company to continue their advance toward the stranded 3rd Platoon.

“I had no idea what was going on half of the time,” Campbell said, “hundreds of people were trying to kill me and my men, and the situation was changing every second, forcing me to make hundreds of life-and-death decisions on the spur of the moment.” Decisions like whether to leave a Marine’s body for follow-on forces to pick up, whether to

employ a signal flare so that the isolated 3rd Platoon could pinpoint the 1st Platoon’s location, and what to do with the body of another dead Marine.

The fighting would go on but Campbell’s deft leadership had already helped to provide the breakthrough that turned the tide, allowing the wounded of the 3rd Platoon to be rescued and scattering the insurgents.

“We fought for over 10 hours,” Campbell said. “I don’t know what time it was when we returned to the base, only that I was tired as hell from the combat and from not having slept for over 48 hours.”

In official reports on the action that day, Campbell was praised for his “steadfast

leadership, disregard for his own safety, superb employment of his Marines and their firepower, decisiveness, and presence of mind [that] resulted in zero casualties to his Platoon and significant losses to the enemy in extremely difficult terrain.”

Campbell earned the Bronze Star with the Combat Distinguishing Device for his service in Ramadi on April 6, 2004. But he did not earn a day off.

Campbell and the remainder of Golf Company would spend another six months combatting the most dangerous insurgent attacks in Iraq before returning to Camp Pendleton, CA, in September.

Their secret to survival: Campbell had required each member of his platoon to learn the 23rd Psalm during training in California.

Once in Iraq, the platoon prayed the Psalm before each mission. Even when time was short, the men refused to conduct missions, no matter how urgent, without praying first. Golf Company’s 1st Platoon became known as the “praying platoon.”

23rd Psalm

The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul:
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil: For thou art with me;
Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies;
Thou annointest my head with oil; My cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the House of the Lord forever.

March 2005



Photos courtesy of Donovan Campbell

PRAYING PLATOON Left: On patrol in Ramadi with Lt. Campbell leading from the front. Above: Lt. Campbell (upper right with head-set) leads his platoon in the 23rd Psalm, which they recited before every mission.

continued from page 9

ing when you're deployed. The wives don't get enough credit."

"In the Navy," explained Van Donk, "we deploy for six months at a time aboard a ship or at an overseas air base, and we have 'work-ups,' or training periods of four to six weeks aboard ship leading up to the long deployment. After the deployment you might have six or nine months home and then you start the process all over again. In a 36-month tour, it is not uncommon to spend 22 or more months at sea."

"Probably the worst part about being in the military was never being able to plan anything in advance," Konermann said. "I would routinely have to cancel personal trips or activities because something came up and the unit was going to be somewhere, or there was a task that came down and I had to work on a weekend."

Nathan Porter '95 left a desk job in the office of Senator Phil Gramm for the mountains of Afghanistan as a member of the elite Army Rangers.

"It was tough leaving my soon-to-be wife for basic training in the spring of 2003," Porter admitted. Rather than pursue Officer Candidate School, Porter enlisted so that he could try out for a Special Operations unit immediately (officers must serve two years before applying for Special Operations).

Special Operations meant a quick succession of training camps – nine weeks of basic training, five weeks of Advanced Individual Training, three weeks of airborne school, and finally the three-week Ranger Indoctrination Program. Then Porter tied the knot with his wife Amy before shipping off to the mountains of Afghanistan as an Army Ranger.

“Service to your country means service to your family and friends and the protection of all the liberties and privileges we all enjoy as Americans.”

— Lt. Com. Jason Van Donk '89

Most say they never adjusted fully to the inevitable red tape of the armed services. But those adjustments pale when compared to the sacrifices men make in combat.

On his tour in Ramadi, Lt. Donovan Campbell '97 and his platoon worked for eight months straight. No days off.

"Even if your platoon wasn't the one out there running the day's or night's mission," Campbell explained, "you were either standing watch, doing firm base improvements, acting as the Quick Reaction Force, or rehearsing for upcoming missions."

"All of the platoon commanders [like Campbell]," he added, "began suffering from severe insomnia after about two months into the deployment from the stress of constantly worrying about your men. Many also suffered severe nightmares when they were finally able to sleep. Throw in the fact that we rarely had electricity during the 130-degree summers and you have a recipe for very little sleep."

One of the few bright spots during

Campbell's Ramadi tour came courtesy of the Cistercian community.

Campbell's mother organized a drive to send supplies to her son's platoon.

"The Cistercian community was so generous," Mrs. Campbell said. "We sent so much that they left some of the supplies for the platoon that replaced them."

It was one way this mom of a combat soldier could try to make a difference.

"I don't think I slept through the night once," remembered Mrs. Campbell of the nights Donovan Campbell spent in Ramadi. "It would be daytime over there and I'd know that he was out on patrol or something."

"We all just had to pray and trust the Lord that Donovan was in his hands."

“THERE ARE SO MANY rewards that come from a military career," Van Donk insisted. "Service to your country means service to your family and friends and the protection of all the liberties and privileges we all enjoy as Americans."

"The day after Christmas found me again headed for an overseas destination, this time Atsugi Naval Air Facility in Japan. That was the day the tsunami struck south Asia. I fly the C-40A, which is a converted Boeing 737. Our squadron was called upon to support relief efforts in the region and we were in Thailand within days of the disaster, delivering supplies such as blankets and portable generators. We also carried U.S. Marines from Okinawa to help the victims."

"The most rewarding aspect about going to the Naval Academy," said Robert Reagan '03, "is the knowledge that what you do every day will ultimately serve a purpose larger than your own individual life."

"Leading soldiers was by far the most rewarding part for me," said Doug Bryan '86 who served as a captain in the Army. "Working with the range of individuals in the service was stimulating and enlightening."

"Most of the guys [in my platoon]," Campbell emphasized, "come from what we would call 'tough' backgrounds — not a lot of money, single parent families — but they are the finest group of young men I have ever met."

"The funny thing is, these guys are probably the toughest group of people I've ever been around, but you'd never guess it by looking at them. They're mostly skinny little guys between 5'5" and 5'10" weighing in at somewhere between 110 and 150 lbs. Half of them wear Army issue glasses which make their eyes look about five times the normal size. Not exactly a sight to inspire fear."

"These little high-schoolers have traded

Some scary military moments

Even outside of combat, the military can provide a variety of memorable, yet frightening moments. Below is an assortment from Cistercian alumni:

■ Sgt. Nathan Porter '95: "In Afghanistan, during an exfiltration from a mission, a MH-47 Shinook Helicopter came within feet of landing on me. About 25 of us were positioned prone on the ground in a circle as the helicopter landed. It was nighttime and the dust was blowing. I had night-vision goggles on but I didn't see the wheel of the Shinook until it was almost on me. I rolled out of the way just in time."

■ Cadet Anthony Perone '01: "My most harrowing experience involved a parachute, an airplane, and the ground 4,500 ft. below me. When the jump master screamed, 'Perone, step in the door, it's your turn to jump!' that got my heart pounding a bit. After I jumped and my parachute opened successfully, it was an awesome experience!"

■ Tom Nutt '85: "Landing on the ship at night with a pitching, heaving, rolling deck. It's dicey!"

■ Major Bill Garre '86: "Recently I was selected to be a casualty notification officer. I had to go the parent's house and tell a mom her son was dead. It was an important job, and an honor, but one I hope not to do again."

grenades with the enemy in some of the toughest and fiercest fighting the US has seen since Vietnam.

"I guess most popular high school and college kids would probably consider them dorks. But you can ask these tough little dorks to do anything and they'll do it. If you told them to assault into an open field in the face of heavy machine gun fire, they wouldn't bat an eye – they'd just do it.

"I know this; I've seen it happen."

"Teamwork," insisted Tom Nutt. "I have never been around a group of more talented, dedicated, and motivated people, from the top down. It's amazing so many people can come together to accomplish what is essentially an exceptionally intricate, delicate operation: sailing half-way around the

world and putting the right mix of people and machinery into a point in space at the right time in order to execute national policy. It's eye-watering!"

"This is a pretty significant time in our country's history," said Nathan Porter, who could share only broad details about his activities in Afghanistan. He spent four months there in 2004 and was replaced by a platoon that included NFL player Pat Tillman. Acting as the muscle for the CIA, Army Rangers capture suspected Al Qaeda members for questioning. Most operations are conducted under the cover of night.

"I feel like I am making a difference and I am part of it all," emphasized Porter.

"Most people don't understand the military," suggested Mrs. Pritchett. "It is the

most family-oriented, connected environment I have ever seen. It makes you so proud of those people. All of them. Whether they're in Iraq or San Diego."

"I remember Rep. Steve Bartlett's words at the convocation for those about to enroll at the Naval Academy. He wanted the boys to understand that serving in the military is a sacrifice, a gift of service to everyone in the country. That's why they call it 'the service,' he said."

"You know, after you have a son in the military," she said, "the national anthem sounds different. It takes only a few notes before the tears start to come."

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Signing out from Baghdad

Spc. Blake Holbrook shares some moving epiphanies from his service in Iraq

Editor's note: The emails excerpted below were sent by Blake Holbrook, brother of Andrew Holbrook '97, to Fr. Roch Kereszty, family, and friends. Blake Holbrook attended Cistercian through Form IV (Class of '01).

July 26

Well the audacity of the terrorists is just really remarkable.

After a month and a half of being out of action, I finally returned to full duty. So on my first patrol back you'll never guess what happened. Grenade! They threw a grenade at me again; bounced off my foot! Luckily my vest took all the shrapnel and I came out unscathed; miraculous being that the grenade blew up about 10 feet from me. Yeehah!

July 28

As of last night, after yet another grenade attack, my platoon of almost 30 men has 15 Purple Hearts, most of any platoon out here. In the last three days they have thrown three grenades and taken out two of the three machine gunners in my Squad. Did I mention who the third and only machine gunner in the squad is now? Yours truly.

July 29

Well another grenade went off and might have blown up my left ear drum. So I can't hear for !@# \$ now. I'm pretty upset about that.

July 30

Another grenade was thrown at my buddy and me as we were shooting and trying to maneuver on the enemy. It landed right next to us and we had no place to go. We braced for the explosion. But the explosion never came. Somebody upstairs likes me.

July 31

So last night I was on guard and I had about a two-hour conversation with our interpreter who we call Rocky. So we were talking about our lives and everything and it made me realize just how

lucky I was. It also humbled me. These people appreciate the smallest things because that's what they live with, they have no fancy cars or houses or cell phones or anything like that. I tell you, appreciate everything because everything is a gift; even my being out here is a gift.

August 5

We come from all over the US, some from other countries and from all walks of life. Yet here there is no skin color, there is no "What kind of car do you drive?" There is no "What kind of clothes do you wear?" "What! You don't have a cell phone?" There is only us. Right now, all we have is each other.

Lately it hasn't been so easy to wake up in the morning because we know what's coming.

Lately it hasn't been so easy to make that 100-yard walk to the Internet cafe because we fear a mortar attack.

Lately it hasn't been so easy to walk the streets and not want to freeze up at every little sound because you fear it's a grenade coming your way.

Lately it's been hard for the memories of home to put a smile on your face because you fear you may never see home again.

Lately I think of my family and cry.

Lately ... well folks, it's just been damn hard. Seven of us injured in a nine-grenade

attack. Four of them evacuated to Germany.

They won't be coming back.

Lately I have been thinking about Him, hanging on that cross. And what we're doing suddenly seems very easy.

Signing out from Baghdad,
Blake



Spc. Blake Holbrook is scheduled to return home from active duty in Baghdad in March 2005.



A wave of giving

A tsunami relief drive inspired the Cistercian community to give generously to the victims. But it didn't dampen the enthusiasm for other service projects.

By Phyllis Carr

COLBY BOOKOUT '10 BROUGHT IN \$90 WORTH OF coins to contribute toward Cistercian's tsunami relief drive, which concluded at the end of January. Fr. Paul McCormick, community service sponsor, asked the Third Former how he had found so many coins.

"I've been collecting them all of my life, Father," answered Bookout.

Such stories of generosity arose frequently during the course of the tsunami relief effort spearheaded by Prasanth Pattisapu '05 and Sam Bowler '06. Although the tsunami struck halfway across the globe, the tragedy hit close to home for the two students.

Pattisapu, in fact, was visiting family in India when the tsunami came crashing ashore on December 26. Although he did not suffer a personal loss, he met people who were searching for loved ones in Thailand. When there was a threat of an aftershock in his grandmother's coastal town, he experienced the fear and anxiety that the victims must have felt.

Friends of Bowler's grandparents died in the tsunami; he also had friends who were there and survived. Upon learning of the disaster, Bowler was touched by the plight of the victims and their families; the Cistercian relief effort gave him a way to make a difference.

The pair's passion for the cause prompted them to create a competition among all eight forms to see which could raise the most money for the Red Cross. Students were encouraged, as Bookout's story demonstrates, to contribute their own money, not just their parents' money.

The tsunami drive lasted nearly two weeks and created quite a buzz among the students who were apprised of the results by a thermometer graphic in the school showing the totals. Students crowded

around the graphic between classes to check the latest figures.

In the end, students and parents donated \$18,500. Through a matching grant from Best Buy, the Red Cross received \$37,000. Forms III and VI tied for contributing the most money and therefore shared the pizza provided by Mr. Peter Bowler (Sam's dad).

"I had expected just pocket change," said Pattisapu. "I am in awe of the generosity of the Cistercian community."

"I plan to become more involved in community service as a result of my involvement in the tsunami relief drive," Bowler promised. "It makes me feel useful and now I know how important it is to do something for others."

Despite all the attention paid to the tsunami drive, the Community Service Council has worked hard to ensure that other projects did not suffer from a lack of attention.

Dan O'Brien '05 and Eric Welch '05 are serving as co-presidents this year and are receiving help from representatives Juan Muldoon '05 and Andres Ruzo '05, David Pruitt '06, Vincent Zimmern '06, Will Arbrey '07, Kerr Friedman '07, Jean-Michael Blanc '08, and Daniel Box '08. Fr. Paul provides a subtle influence, guiding the boys to do the right thing.

"If Fr. Paul suggests something," Muldoon said, "you want to do it. I know that Fr. Paul has my best interests in mind."

"How can you say 'no' to Fr. Paul?" asked Ms. Brenda Welch, mother of Eric Welch and Kyle Welch '07.

EVERY LAST DIME (clockwise from top left) Tsunami relief drive leaders Prasanth Pattisapu '05 and Sam Bowler '06 with Colby Bookout '10, Clayton Stich '11, Tyler Freeman '10, and Joel Fontenot '10 with some of the donations collected for tsunami victims.

Habitat for Humanity ranks as a favorite among the recurring community service projects at Cistercian.

"From the time I was a child I've always liked to build and work with my hands," volunteered Trey Mohr '05, whose service as liaison to Habitat has proven invaluable.

After his first Habitat experience, he was hooked.

"I've started a Habitat campus chapter which is for educational and fund-raising purposes," he said. "Already we've worked on two projects and there is another one planned for March.

"You have a lot of fun, you feel good and usually you get a tan, so you look good, too."

Mr. Tim Parker '90, community service sponsor from 1996-2004, participated with the boys in Habitat's High School Build last year.

"It is quite an accomplishment to start with a blank slab and finish with a four-walled structure," Parker said.

The 30-hour Famine also attracts a healthy number of students. It combines a fast to raise funds for World Vision with a number of other community service projects (e.g., preparing food and feeding the hungry at Austin Street Shelter). Afterwards, one can often sense a change of consciousness in the boys.

"This might translate only into picking up a few extra canned goods for the church food drive," Ms. Welch acknowledged. "But little things can move mountains."

Community service also builds a stronger sense of community among families, students, and schools.

"It's a fun way for students of various forms to accomplish something bigger than themselves and something beyond the intellectual environment," said Steven Reinemund '99.

"Community service projects help the boys move out of their comfort zone and consider others," emphasized Reinemund, who introduced the 30-hour Famine to the school.

Events such as these, and others like the Down Syndrome Guild Dance, appear right in line with the role community service plays in the school's overall program.

"Everything we have is a gift," emphasized Fr. Peter Verhalen '73, "and we need to learn about taking care of each other. Our goal is to help the boys become better men."

While some projects involve collecting goods and others offer direct services (e.g., Special Olympics bowling, tutoring, Children's Medical Center), all community service activities at Cistercian remain purely voluntary.

According to Fr. Peter, that independent-minded aspect of community service at Cistercian started back in the seventies. Since then, community service has become a requirement at most schools (e.g., Ursuline requires 100 hours before graduation; St. Mark's and Hockaday require fifteen per year). Some even give time off from school to perform the work.

"It's not a requirement; it's not like homework; it's not a burden," said Bowler. "It's important that we voluntarily do something for others."

Parents also have played a major role in facilitating the giving spirit.

"I take the Gospels literally, to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and house the homeless," said Ms. Liz Heyne, mother of Joseph Heyne '94, Peter '97, Nick Heyne '99, Tommy Heyne '02, and Jon Paul Heyne '06. "It is an apos-

tolate that ties family, volunteerism and work all together. My aim is to see Christ in everyone, especially in the poor."

Ms. Heyne put her creative approach to service to work in 1994 when Cistercian students donated 650 hours for the Low Birth Weight Development Center. The boys raised money by volunteering at concessions stands at Texas Stadium during Cowboys games.

Community service continues to play a major role in the life of Tom Lewis '73, who initiated several projects while he was president of the Student Government at Cistercian.

Lewis and his wife Cathleen have continued that tradition by serving as part-time medical missionaries in Africa since 1988. He attributes his desire to help others to "my Catholic upbringing, the influence of the Cistercian Fathers, and my respect for the teachings of Christ."

A self-proclaimed handyman, Lewis can triage patients, fix generators, and entertain children, while Cathy treats patients as an ophthalmologist. They began in Nigeria, but now have a home base in a small village in Sierra Leone.

Conditions are grim in Serabu. There is no electricity or plumbing. Due to the civil war in Sierra Leone, no physician has practiced in the village for fifteen years. In fact, only three ophthalmologists practice in the entire country.

No wonder the patients walk miles and wait for hours to be seen by Dr. Cathy. As hospital and clinic spaces are being refurbished, the Lewises have a dream to provide year-round care. They hope to train locals as technicians and recruit other doctors. The Lewises have created a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization to help defray the expenses of this venture and to provide educational programs in Memphis. [They may be contacted through Southern Eye Institute, 5350 Poplar, Suite 950, Memphis, TN 38119.]

Four years ago, Juan Muldoon was intrigued when Lewis spoke about his passion for helping the people of Sierra Leone. That came as no surprise to Ms. Elena Muldoon, mother of Juan and Pablo Muldoon '09.

"Community service is Juan's passion," she said. "He likes being useful, making a difference in people's lives."

Over this Christmas holidays, Muldoon spent two and a half weeks in Freetown and Serabu, Sierra Leone helping Tom and Cathy Lewis.

Juan admitted having a queasy stomach and occasionally wondering, "What in the heck am I doing here? But returning someone's sight is about as rewarding as it can get."

While Sierra Leone is 90 percent Muslim, Serabu is 60 percent Catholic. Juan was grateful that he was able to attend Mass every day.

Both Lewis and Muldoon mentioned a strong spiritual presence during their stay in Serabu. Even in Freetown when the Muslims were called to prayer at 4 am on the loudspeakers, at least a few Christians prayed with them.

"You can't really separate the spiritual aspect of life when you are helping your neighbor," Muldoon stressed. "You transcend yourself. There is an underlying force for everything you do."

For more information on Cistercian's community service projects, please visit www.cistercian.org and click "Student Events."

Phyllis Carr can be reached at PD_Carr@comcast.net.

HOT MUSTARD (left to right) H.T. Flanagan '07, James Hinkley '07, and Michael Montoya '07 at the Austin Street Shelter in February.



Photo by Jim Reisch

Hawks win 20 and qualify for the SPC-I tourney, again

Wrapped up in this, the final game of the regular season, was everything the Hawks had been playing for all year.

Arriving from Oklahoma City to ruin their plans was Casady's Cyclones, a team Cistercian has been unable to defeat for over 12 years. But then, led by all-time scoring leader **Eric Ojeda '05**, this was not your average Cistercian basketball team.

The Hawks came out strong, leading for much of the game by between five and 10 points. But Casady came back and with three minutes to play, the Cyclones tied the score. The crowd held its collective breath.

Bobby Crews '06 didn't though. He wasted little time in responding. He appeared to be driving to the hoop when he braked and hit a seven-foot pull-up jumper.

When Casady tried to trap Crews on the next possession, he spotted **Zach Heard '05** open under the bucket for an easy lay-up. The Hawks had weathered Casady's best and would go on to win 57-48.

"That was by far the biggest game of the year," said Coach Dan

Lee. "Winning meant accomplishing two of our three goals for the season, 20 wins and qualifying for the Division I tourney."

(The Hawks just missed meeting all three goals when they placed second in the Cistercian Tip-Off Classic.)

Other season highlights included wins over Oakridge (the first in four years over the Owls) and Fort Worth Nolan.

"I'll remember this team as being

very deep," Lee said. "We had a lot of different guys who contributed to our important wins," Lee said.

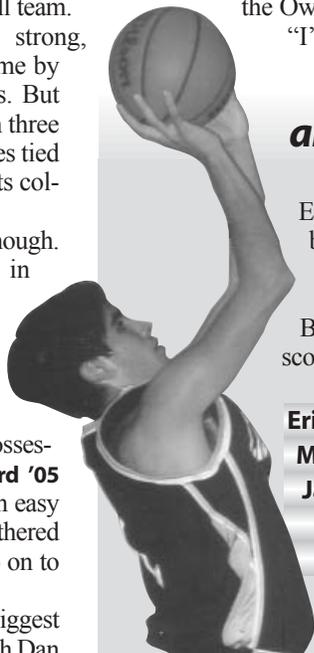
"In our games with Trinity Valley and Casady we needed great defensive efforts because both teams featured not just one but two great scorers," remembered Lee. "In both cases, we assigned **Dylan Starrs '05** and **Tony Johnston '05** to take on their two scorers and both times they came through to help us win the games."

Johnston and Heard were named to the SPC North Zone team. Ojeda and Crews won All-SPC honors.

To say that Ojeda will be missed is an understatement. He leaves Cistercian as the school's career leader in three categories (see box).

"He is the most consistent player I've ever coached," Lee said. "We will greatly miss his work ethic and quiet determination."

"I am happy for Eric and for all the seniors," Lee said. "They had two 20-win seasons. Cistercian has made it to the Division I tournament only four times, and they did it twice. That's quite an accomplishment."



alone at the top

Eric Ojeda '05 set three school career basketball records this year by sinking 57 percent of his shots, scoring 1,452 points, and grabbing 821 rebounds.

Below are the school's top five all-time scorers in order of points scored.

Eric Ojeda	'05	1,452
Matt Buchanan	'99	1,226
Jack Pritchett	'93	1,172
Greg Carney	'99	1,161
Tim Bock	'85	1,068

Eric Ojeda '05

Photo courtesy of the Ojeda Family

Cistercian struggles with a SPC-I berth on the line

With the two games left in the regular season, the Hawks varsity soccer team still had a chance to land a spot in the SPC Division I tournament.

Led by midfielder and captain **Sam Bowler '06**, the Hawks had disposed of Trinity Valley, Country Day, and All Saints earlier in the season. Midfielder **Arthur Yang '05**, sweeper **Kurt Klinke '06** and keeper **Giulio Yaquinto '06** also played key roles along with attackers **Gabi Ferenczi '06** and **Matthew Abola '07**.

For the Hawks to earn a spot in the Division I tournament, they would have to muster a victory against either Casady or ESD, both perennial soccer powers.

"We were tied with Casady with 15 minutes left," said Head Coach Rob Kowalski. "We just didn't have it in us to come through with a win." The Hawks faltered 3-1. Three days later, the

Hawks held ESD to one goal in the first half before succumbing 4-0.

"Our lack of depth played a role," Kowalski said, "especially as illnesses hit some of our key players during the last few crucial games. We were not able to compensate."

"It was a disappointing finish, but the boys gave it everything they had," Kowalski insisted.

The team's future appears bright with the core of the team returning next year.

"I also am encouraged by the talent coming up," Kowalski said. "The JV, Form IV and Form III teams all compiled winning records."

Bowler earned All-SPC honors and Kurt Klinke earned All-North Zone recognition.



Photo by Vincent Zimmerman '06

TAMING A LION Hawk midfielder **Arthur Yang '05** takes the ball from a St. Mark's player.

Enlist in the Marine Corps? Are you nuts?

One day I was living the life of an average young man. Top priorities included girls, motorcycles, girls, football, girls and sometimes schoolwork.

Did I mention girls?



Afterthoughts
Smokey Briggs '84

The next day my life turned upside down. True, I had volunteered for it, but that did not make it any easier.

In 24 hours my life went from cool to chaos.

In the blink of an eye I found myself immersed in an all-male environment full of men wearing uniforms, half of them armed with sticks, most with the seeming disposition of a Doberman with a bad tooth, all of whom were intent that I learn far more in

a far shorter time than I was capable of.

It was a shock.

Four years later I graduated from Cistercian Prep and on October 9, 1984, I shipped out for Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego.

At least when I was introduced to Senior Drill Instructor Staff Sergeant Wilson I was pretty sure that if he killed me, and I was convinced that he might, God would hold it against him.

I had no such reassuring thoughts after my first Latin Class with Fr. Matthew and his meter stick. From day one I suspected that if my body was found on the grounds bearing the marks of meter stick and Latin book, Fr. Matthew would still be on the up and up with all that is holy.

If I had made a career of the Marines I could be drawing retirement today.

I think about that sometimes when I write the check to the school loan shark outfit that helped finance my enlistment in law school.

As I read down the list of questions sent out to CPS grads who ventured into the military it brought back a platoon of questions from the months before October 9, 1984.

Questions like:

“Why?”

“Are you nuts?”

“What about college?”

“What about one of the service academies?”

The unspoken sentiment was that enlisting was a waste.

Times were a bit different then – darn that makes me feel old. But, it's true. Vietnam was only 10 years past and national sentiments about military service were far different in 1984 than today.

Enlisting was certainly not the thing to do for a young man graduating from arguably one of the best prep schools in the nation in 1984 – no matter his station near the bottom of class rankings.

Expectations called for a university.

Expectations are evil when they are not self-imposed.

Now, there was no B-grade movie-like resistance to the idea. No threats of getting cut out of Grandpa's will, or heated arguments with a mentor that I was throwing my life away.

It was not like I was giving up a full scholarship to MIT or anything.

But, looking back, if I had trashed a full-ride at a good university to enlist I would not have any regrets.

For one, I was simply not ready for four more years of academics. I was ready for some adventure.

For two, my experiences in the Marines and later in the National Guard have stood me in good stead throughout the rest of my life.

I was a better student having been a rifleman. I know I am a better citizen of this great country.

I drew on what I learned in uniform as a college student, as a maintenance man, as a security guard, as a carpenter, as a historian, as a reporter, as a lawyer, and as the publisher of a newspaper.

After earning a diploma at CPS and the right to tattoo the eagle, globe and anchor of the Marines on my arm I have yet to encounter a situation either academically, physically or emotionally where I felt intimidated.

Scared yes, but not intimidated. Knowing in your heart that you are as mentally capable and as tough as any man in the room can be a real advantage from bar room to boardroom.

Would I recommend it to young men graduating CPS today?

The answer is obviously yes. To me CPS and the military are similar environments and similarly rewarding. Both are demanding, both require commitment,

both teach tough lessons in courage and discipline and both leave you with a sense of accomplishment and pride that is worth more than money.

And, both will prepare you for the rest of your life.

Semper Fi boys.

Smokey Briggs can be reached at smokey@pecos.net.

“Knowing in your heart that you are as mentally capable and as tough as any man in the room can be a real advantage from bar room to boardroom.”

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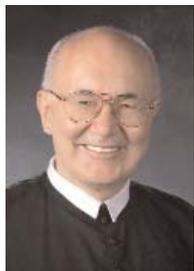
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“I don’t get anything out of Mass anymore”

We often hear complaints like this: I used to go to Mass regularly, but I did not get anything out of it, so I finally gave up. I think I live a good life: I pray when I like it, but if I go to a beautiful lake, meadow or forest or even if I look at the sky, I feel closer to God than in the midst of a bunch of hypocrites who go to Mass because they are used to it, who go through a boring ritual that is always the same, who endure a mediocre or bad sermon and listen to a long list of irrelevant announcements from the Parish Bulletin.



On Prayer
Fr. Roch Kereszty

Why should I waste my time with all this? I can read the Bible at home and get more out of it than listening to the parish priest. We can have a family meal and pray together as a family, which is a lot more intimate celebration than any Eucharist.

I would like to get to the root of such an attitude and offer to you a few ideas that you could use for yourself and share with your teenagers and friends.

What is implied in the saying, “I don’t go to Mass because I don’t get anything out of it?” It implies that these people go to Mass in the frame of mind in which they go shopping and want the best buy for their money. They have developed the attitude of a typical customer who refuses to buy what he does not like. He feels he must be in charge, he picks and chooses and follows his likes and dislikes, whims and moods.

This approach is quite normal in a shopping mall but may turn out to be a very dangerous attitude towards God. If God is God, then he is in charge and he is going to tell me what I ought to do. And I have only one right response: to obey him. The consumer’s approach to Mass ultimately implies that he is above God, that he wants to dictate to God what he should give him: this is the exact opposite of true worship.

Moreover, what do we want to get out of the Mass? Good, uplifting feelings, an aesthetic experience of beauty, a feeling of fellowship, joy, elation, an emotional high?

I am not saying that it is wrong to have a good and uplifting experience while at Mass. I am not saying that beautiful singing and a good homily are irrelevant. In addition, there might be legitimate grievances behind your complaints: poor sermons, irreverent and hasty celebration by a priest, people who are indifferent toward each other, and the list could go on and on.

But do you really think that Jesus on the cross had an uplifting aesthetic experience? Do you really think that he was surrounded by a loving, caring community and that he was comforted and encouraged by those standing around him? The celebration of the Eucharist includes the whole mystery of Christ: not only the last supper and return among us of the risen, glorified Christ, but also the cruel, bloody reality of Christ hanging on the cross, abandoned by all but a few, and apparently abandoned even by his heavenly Father. All these mysteries of Christ become present to us in the Mass. Sometimes this or that aspect of the mystery is perceived more keenly, sometimes the joy of the resurrection and sometimes the agony of the cross.

So the right attitude when going to Mass would be something like this: “Jesus gave up his life for me to feed me with his Body and Blood. I come to Mass not to get a thrill, not even an emotionally satisfying experience, but I want to unite my body to his body, my sweat to his blood, so that through him and with him I may become an everlasting gift to the Father.”

Briefly, we should try to offer ourselves to God the Father through Christ and offer others, ultimately the whole

world, to him. If we persevere in doing so, we will indeed “get something out of it.” We will have more peace, and may even be able to share this peace with those around us. We will develop an increased ability to love, we will become “community builders” wherever we are, we will even be able to forgive those who sin against us, able to endure sufferings and resist temptations. We will have hope even in desperate situations, for we will know from the changes we have undergone that the crucified and risen Christ lives in us and his transforming presence daily increases in us.

Fr. Roch Kereszty can be reached at fr-roch@cistercian.org.

“I come to Mass not to get a thrill, not even an emotionally satisfying experience, but to unite my body to his body, my sweat to his blood.”

calendar

March

- 6 Book Fair
- 21-28 Spring/Easter Break
- 28 Alumni Assoc./Booster Club Golf Tournament

April

- 8-10 Upper School Drama
- 20 Abbot’s Circle Dinner

May

- 6-7 Athletic Banquets
- 21 Commencement
- 27 Closing Ceremonies

June

- 3-5 Reunions Weekend with Hawks’ Hoops

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