

Sill chapel offerings affect many lives both on, off post

Did you know where offerings collected at Army worship services go?

Fort Sill has about 25 weekly worship services and religious education activities for a variety of faith groups spread among eight facilities. The Garrison provides appropriated funding for large equipment needs and maintenance of chapel facilities, while regular tithes and offerings support the congregational events and activities, and outreach ministries to Soldiers.

But, sometimes the congregations designate special offerings for certain chapel-sponsored or charitable organizations, or purposes that directly impact the military community.

Three priorities govern how local congregation's tithes and offerings benefit the community. The first priority is chapel auxiliary programs, such as Protestant Women of the Chapel, Protestant Youth of the Chapel, and Military Community of Catholic Women. On July 24, all Protestant congregations gave more than \$3,000 to the Protestant Women of the Chapel auxiliary program, and the Catholic congregations gave nearly \$1,400 to the Military Community of Catholic Women auxiliary program.

The second priority is agencies that directly impact Soldiers and family members, such as the American



Did you know?

By Col. Paul Hossenlopp
Fort Sill Garrison commander

Red Cross, USO, Armed Services YMCA and Operation Helping Hand.

The third priority is programs selected by the congregation that help the local community. Additionally, the Army Chief of Chaplains' Office asks congregations Armywide to contribute toward causes such as the Warriors in Transition Fund and disaster relief for tragedies such as Hurricane Katrina and the Japan tsunami relief fund. Fort Sill congregations contributed \$9,400 to the Japan tsunami relief fund and \$6,800 to the Soldiers wounded in action fund this year.

Fort Sill's congregations respond locally when disaster strikes or when needs arise. On July 10, an offering was designated to support the Medicine Park Fire Relief Fund and more than \$6,000 went to the Medicine Park Fire Department and the families who lost their homes. The following week, the Gospel congregation gave nearly \$1,200 to the Armed Services YMCA. Collectively congregations gave more than \$7,000 to the Army Community Service holiday food program to

support local Soldiers with holiday food needs.

Chapel tithes and offerings are also used to support our Soldiers serving on Fort Sill through Operation Helping Hand. When a Soldier is in an unforeseen financial situation and cannot receive help from other sources, the command can request financial assistance through their unit chaplain. Upon approval by the religious support office, the Soldier is then escorted by his or her chaplain or chaplain assistant to purchase needed items.

Around \$10,000 a year goes toward supporting Operation Helping Hand. Families who have lost their homes in the last year due to fires have also received help through this program, providing them with opportunities to purchase needed items at the Main Exchange, commissary or local stores.

So, the next time you attend one of the religious services on Fort Sill, you may decide to give knowing that your tithes and offerings are going to support Fort Sill Soldiers and family members as well as the chapel programs.



Photo by Jeff Crawley

Robert Dodrill, Fort Sill Army Substance Abuse Program Suicide Prevention manager, ties a red ribbon around a tree Oct. 21 on post, in preparation for Red Ribbon Week—America's national drug prevention and education outreach.

The story behind the symbol

By the Drug Enforcement Administration

Red Ribbon Week is the nation's oldest and largest drug prevention program, reaching millions of Americans during the last week of October every year.

By wearing red ribbons and participating in community anti-drug events, people pledge to live a drug-free life and pay tribute to DEA Special Agent Enrique "Kiki" Camarena.

Special Agent Kiki Camarena:

Special Agent Camarena was an 11-year veteran of the DEA assigned to the Guadalajara, Mexico, office

where he was on the trail of the country's biggest marijuana and cocaine traffickers. In 1985, he was extremely close to unlocking a multi-billion dollar drug pipeline.

On February 7, 1985, he was kidnapped, brutally tortured, and murdered by Mexican drug traffickers. His tragic death opened the eyes of many Americans to the dangers of drugs and the international scope of the drug trade.

Red Ribbon Week:

Shortly after Kiki's death, Congressman Duncan Hunter and Kiki's high school friend Henry Lozano launched "Camarena

Clubs" in Kiki's hometown of Calexico, California. Hundreds of club members pledged to lead drug-free lives to honor the sacrifice made by Kiki Camarena.

These pledges were delivered to First Lady Nancy Reagan at a national conference of parents combating youth drug use.

Several state parent organizations then called on community groups to wear red ribbons during the last week of October as a symbol of their drug-free commitment.

This year's Red Ribbon Week was celebrated Oct. 22-30 around the nation.

the Cannoneer®

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