

Pastor Larry,

Thank you for having us. I'm sure we will all remember that day forever, I know I will. You were all so wonderful.

I have to tell you the balls we were given that morning at church, many of them made it to Kuwait and now Afghanistan. We have all carried them with us on the trip. I do have to tell you that our last night in WI and again on our last night in Kuwait, we used a couple for a game of indoor stick ball. Although we all remember the meaning behind them, they brought us some great excitement in other ways. Stick ball was probably the most fun we had our last days together. Originally we were playing stick ball in the barracks, but that changed when I accidentally hit a pillar and knocked the drywall of the entire side. Then we moved outside to finish the game. You also have to know it was a pretty fair game, the Chaplain was the umpire. Wasn't a lot of arguing with him. Ha Ha.

6 of us left the next morning for Kuwait. Carl, the African American that was with us would end up catching us on our last day in Kuwait. He was given leave to see his children. The rest of us left Wisconsin, traveled to Chicago, then Atlanta. What a mess that was. We had too much luggage to fit on the plane. Not only that, we were stuck in Atlanta for 5 days. We stayed at a 5 star hotel on the government while we waited on United to find our bags. Once they were able to bus our bags to Minnesota, they flew them to Atlanta. We left on the 6th day. The flight to Kuwait went through Germany and took about 19 hours.

We were stuck in Kuwait for 5 days, with not much to do. It was about 140 degrees out during our stay and we saw one sand storm. The remainder of the time, we tried to hide in the air conditioning. Something else we saw, Camel Spiders and Scorpions. Wow they grow them big in Kuwait. The spiders were as big or bigger than tarantulas. I have photos of the spiders, I'll try to send some the children may thing they are interesting. Oh yeah, we played our last game of stick ball the night before we left Kuwait. Once we left Kuwait we traveled to Northern Afghanistan where we went in different directions. What a great bunch of guys. Two of us, myself and Gabriel are working together. The Chaplain is just down the road from us, about 15 minutes. He sends a daily prayer when he's not out helping children and soldiers. Thank you again, we really do want to thank everyone at the church for taking us in on that Sunday morning. Everyone was wonderful and it was so nice to have a place to go away from the base. I hope to get back that way on my way home and will try to stop in. Thanks again for everything, including your thoughts and prayers.

Tell the young lady that gave us the extra balls, she made our trip around the world much more fun. Depending on which way I fly back, the red ball I have left will really make it all the way around the world.

I believe everyone was asking for our address as we left and no one knew where they were going yet. Gabriel and I can be reached at:

Shane Ross
KAIA IJC (PAO)
APO AE 09320

Thank you again for taking us in and we look forward to hearing from everyone. If the children would like to send letters, I'm sure I can find time to write and send photos. If they are like my children, they may rather email.

Blessings,

Shane Ross
MC2 USN

All:

Please express our deep gratitude for the warm reception we received last month while visiting your church from Ft McCoy. This is just a note to let you know we made it safe and sound to our prospective commands here in Afghanistan.

I am the new Garrison Chaplain at Camp Eggers, and I am also in charge of what we call "VCR's", volunteer community relations projects. It is a lot more complicated with the force protection and transportation issues in such a dangerous place. We take donated items of new school supplies, toys, and clothing to children in orphanages and schools. Last week we visited a government school for the blind and deaf. We distributed about 150 bags to the kids and about 50 to the families. Family bags have adult clothing, blankets, linens, coats and things like that. Winter is fast approaching and it does snow here.

I have a mailing address here if anyone would like to send a note.

Daniel E. Link (no title, no rank)

NTM-A/CSTC-A

Chaplain's Office

APO AE 09356

We appreciate your thoughts and prayers:

Dan Link

Chaplain, Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Navy Garrison Chaplain NTM-A/CSTC-A

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Shohna ba Shohna -- Shoulder to Shoulder