The road less traveled

By Chaplain Michael J. Tagaloa

There's a Spanish story of a father and son who had become estranged. The son ran away, and the father set off to find him. He searched for months with no success. Finally, in a last desperate effort to find him, the father put an advertisement in the Madrid newspaper. It read: "Dear Paco, meet me in front of the newspaper office at noon on Saturday. All is forgiven. I love you. Your father." On Saturday, 800 "Pacos" showed up, looking for forgiveness and love from their fathers.

If you haven't guessed it by now, the road less traveled is forgiveness. So much energy and time is given today on getting retributions, getting even and getting revenge. Forgiveness is one of those nice ideals that we just place on a shelf and let it collect dust.

The interesting thing about getting revenge is that even when the guilty parties have been punished, those who have been wronged still have no peace. The memory of the offense remains, and because you won't let go of this memory it causes great anguish and emotional turmoil.

We have all heard the old adage 'forgive and forget.' Many people will agree that they might be able to forgive, but they definitely will never forget. How do you forget a wrong that has been so deep and tragic?

The truth is there are two paths we can choose. There is the path to bitterness and the path to forgiveness.

In the path of bitterness, we continue to blame the source of our pain. In addition to this, we nurse our hurt and keep it fresh by remembering it and taking every opportunity to hurt the other party. This will be an area of your life that you will have no peace.

In the path of forgiveness, you choose to stop the blaming. You choose to cancel the debt, for that is what forgiveness really means. You choose not to allow the memory, or anything else, causing you to nurse the pain or seek revenge. You choose to release this area of your life and be free from hatred and bitterness.

Forgiveness is not an easy thing. It is one of life's many difficult challenges. But the peace that you have will be immeasurable.

Clara Barton, the founder of the American Red Cross, was reminded one day of a vicious deed that someone had done to her years before. But she acted as if she had never even heard of the incident. When her friend asked her how this could be, Barton replied, "I distinctly remember forgetting it."

Make sure you remember to forget a wrong someone has done to you.

Thousands of DoN civilians transitioned from NSPS to GS

By Linda Dent Mitchell,
Department of the Navy Transition Management Office Public Affairs

The Department of the Navy (DoN) successfully completed its first phase of the transition of employees from the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) to the General Schedule (GS) July 2.

Approximately 18,000 employees have made the transition from NSPS in this first phase.

"The transition's success can be attributed to the tremendous collaboration across the department at all levels," said Tony TorresRamos, director of the DoN Transition Management Office.

The DoN plans to transition about 45,000 employees to GS by the end of 2010.

"We remain committed to a strategic and orderly approach to the transition, which best enables us to avoid disruption of our mission and minimizes negative impact to our employees," said TorresRamos.

Non-bargaining unit employees transitioning from NSPS to GS will be covered by the DoN Interim Performance Management System approved April 20. The system provides a framework for commands to recognize and reward employees in meaningful ways. The system leverages the capability of a two-level performance management system.

More than 70,000 DoN employees will transition from NSPS by Jan. 1, 2012. Of this number, about 15,700 NSPS positions from Naval Air System Command and Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command (SPAWAR) will transition to newly developed Science and Technology Reinvention Laboratory demonstration projects.

Approximately 2,100 NSPS positions located within Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity; Marine Corps Systems Command; Direct Reporting Program Manager, Advanced Assault Amphibians; Naval Sea Systems Command Program Executive Office Carriers; and Department of the Navy-Assistant for Administration; will transition to acquisition demonstration projects.

Approximately 880 NSPS positions located in SPAWAR will return to their alternative personnel system, and specific healthcare positions across the DoN have been identified for transition to an alternative personnel system building on Title 38 authorities.

Consistent with the DoN focus on communication and education, visit the human resources website at http://www.public.navy.mil to learn about current information, online resources and guidance.

Command Religious Ministries supports crew while at sea

By MC3(SW) Devon Dow,
***USS George Washingto*n Public Affairs**

Since the founding of the U.S. Armed Forces, chaplains have been serving the spiritual needs of Sailors, soldiers, Marines and airman. Today, on board *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) (*GW*) this fact is no exception.

Religious support has a vital role to play in military life. The Command Religious Ministries Department (CRMD) operates around-the-clock and stands ready to assist the crew and their families with religious, spiritual and personal needs or concerns. This work is done by three *GW* chaplains, Religious Program Specialists, Temporarily Assigned Duty (TAD) personnel and designated command lay leaders representing a variety of religious traditions.

"For those who come to our services, I hope they are beneficial to them," said Lt. Cmdr. David Yang, a chaplain aboard *GW*. "The worship services, Bible study and various programs we offer Sailors will only help them throughout their time on board. The more opportunities that are given to them and the more chances they have to come and take part I think will be beneficial not only to them but to the command as well."

Responsible for more than 50 religious programs a week at sea, CRMD provides thousands of acts of ministry over the course of a cruise. The chaplains counsel hundreds of Sailors on a wide variety of issues ranging from religious matters to personal problems. Evening prayer over the ship's intercom system, as well as other prayers offered from medical to the brig, to flight deck control, punctuates life at sea for many.

"I think it's a good thing for us to be able to have services at sea," said Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Fuels) Airman Raymond Ussery, a Macon, Ga. native from Air Department's V-4 Division. "The services definitely provide Sailors an outlet after work and wanting some time to unwind or to practice their faith. The Sunday services can also provide a feeling of home for those who are use to attending services back with their families."

CRMD operates the ship's Learning Media Resource Center (the ship's library) which serves Sailors and gives them access to reading materials, videos and e-mail.

"I've used the library since I have been on board *GW*. It's a good place to relax when I have time," said Colorado Springs, Colo. native Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) Airman Taurean Jones from Air Department's V-3 Division. "All of the services and other projects that the CRMD provides are good ways to raise morale."

"That's the reason why we exist, to serve our Sailors, assist them in becoming better and make sure that they are taken care of while they are doing their mission here onboard *GW*," Yang said. "We try to incorporate the 'whole Sailor' where not only their physical needs are met, but their spiritual and mental needs as well. When they have some time off they can come to the lounge in the library and relax or study. That time alone can make a huge difference in a Sailor's performance."

(Right) Cmdr. Brian Haley, *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) command chaplain, offers communion to Airman Alexander Czerwimski while conducting morning mass July 11. Command chaplains conduct mass, organize community outreach projects and counsel Sailors while helping to maintain overall morale aboard the ship.
U.S. Navy photo by MC3(SW/AW) Adam K.Thomas

Whether in port or in foreign ports, CRMD helps Sailors serve the greater community. In the last two years *GW* has conducted more than 200 Community Service Projects in countries such as Republic of Korea, Australia, Singapore, and Hong Kong to name a few.

"These service projects give us a great opportunity to lend a helping hand and build relationships with countries we visit and gives us the opportunity to be an ambassador to our Navy and our nation," Yang said.

Life Skills classes are administered by CRMD which offer a wide variety of topics to include stress and Anger Management, Couples Communication, Conflict Resolution and parenting to list a few. Chaplains also offer pastoral care and counseling including marriage and pre-marriage counseling.

"I think the Life Skills courses we provide are very important," Yang said. "They can help prepare Sailors for every kind of life setting on a daily basis, not just on military skills or situations, but on a personal level for them as well."

CRMD provides Sailors with a wide variety of service while in port and underway. Yang said he sees the success of the programs through the positive feedback he receives from the crew.

"I have spoken with Sailors and received a lot of e-mails from some who said I made a huge difference in their time on board, I was humbled by their remarks," he said. "Sometimes you wonder if you're making a difference and to hear the responses from the Sailors as I begin to transition reassure in me that the CRMD on *GW* is doing their part."