

# PS4FS Monthly Newsletter - March 2011:

Dear PS4FS friends,

This month, I'm proposing a new phase in our ministry. As you know, for the past few months, the Army's casualty list is no longer sent to us in entirety due to the legalities of "authorization disclosure". Recently, I spoke with both Army Chaplain Wallace and Marine/Navy Chaplain Rowley. They both affirm how meaningful our program is to our Dover Families – both chaplains very much want to continue our program with Families who travel to the base to personally observe the Dignified Transfer Ceremony. The chaplains know first-hand how much our work means to our military Families. At the same time, they're enormously busy. The time it takes to maintain a list of those who receive prayer shawls may not take priority over their important work serving the needs of our military Families.

So today, I'm recommending a new transition where our main program becomes sending prayer shawls to Dover Air Base without the specific names we've had in the past. We're less likely to receive the volume of thank you notes we've been used to in the past, but I believe we've been doing this long enough, we're "veterans" and do not need direct feedback in order to sustain the grand volume we've achieved over the past 3 ½ years.

Some of you prefer the mail/direct contact program, so my suggestion is to capture names you may see in the news or find on the internet, follow those leads, and inform me with the information when you give prayer shawls to our Families. (I cannot give out the few cities/towns provided by the Army, because there is no way to cross-reference this partial list with no list from Dover.)

I hope this meets with your approval. We've been together a long time – we are all proud of our achievements in this ministry. Certainly our main communication tool, our monthly newsletters, will become much smaller as a result of this change. My hope is that the Dover chaplains will let us know how the program is progressing, but I cannot depend on them as they are truly straight out emotionally, mentally, and physically, with their work-at-hand. Their first priority is with the families, as it well should be. What they do is truly exhausting! They appreciate our prayer shawls and the shawls' importance to their work, and hope we will continue to send them. I believe you will all agree!

In my conversation with Chaplain Wallace last week, he suggested we all view a recent television interview of him and the program on the base. On Wednesday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, Dover's WBOC News Channel 16 aired a six- minute piece on Dover's Dignified Transfer Ceremony including an interview of Army Chaplain Charles Wallace. He tells me this piece may help us all understand exactly what takes place at Dover. I watched it and felt it to be a huge learning. I urge you to take the time – but do it soon, as sometimes these websites change so it may disappear quickly! Follow these instructions:

Below is a two-step process to view the video:

1. Holding down your Control key, click below:

<http://www.wboc.com/Global/searchresults.asp?vendor=ez&qu=doover+air+base>

2. Scroll down to #3 and click on: **Final Journey Home: Dignified Transfers at DAFB**

**Or** copy and paste the path below into your web browser and it will come up after a short commercial:

[http://www.wboc.com/global/video/flash/popupplayer.asp?ClipID1=5624304&h1=Final%20Journey%20Home%3A%20Dignified%20Transfers%20at%20DAFB&vt1=v&at1=Promotion 24&d1=375000&LaunchPageAdTag=Search Results&activePane=info&rnd=89553351](http://www.wboc.com/global/video/flash/popupplayer.asp?ClipID1=5624304&h1=Final%20Journey%20Home%3A%20Dignified%20Transfers%20at%20DAFB&vt1=v&at1=Promotion%2024&d1=375000&LaunchPageAdTag=SearchResults&activePane=info&rnd=89553351)

Thank you for being a vital part of this ministry! Together, we've made a huge difference! We have accumulated 3 ½ years' of newsletters and stories, and I must tell you, not one time have I had anything but praise from our military families. They enjoy visiting our website, reading our newsletters, and have always been very eager to share photos and stories with us for the website. Knowing we exist boosts their morale! We have all come to sympathize and understand when we don't hear from them, they are grieving and so it's OK to not correspond with us. It should never affect our good work.

With this new change in our program, I hope you will continue to send prayer shawls to Dover, and allow the chaplains to do their good work! Please remember to let me know when you do send prayer shawls to Dover – we should continue to keep track of our numbers. (I will always reply with the current chaplains' names and addresses for your mailing.) When I do hear from the chaplains, I'll share whatever I may from them and what's going on at Dover!

Peace and good health to you all!

This month's newsletter does contain some interesting stories! Please read it and share it with your respective groups! You'll love seeing the photos of "our" chaplains taken by **PS4FS knitter/crocheter Becky Bowers from Belmont Baptist**

Church, Charlottesville, Virginia. Additionally, there are a number of thank you notes and stories, shared with the usual precious photos! Thank you, as always, for being here and doing what you do!

Note: If you prefer to be removed from this list, please notify me.

<http://webpages.charter.net/ps4fs/Shawls/>

Fondly,

Cozette

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**I.) INFO:**

**1.) CURRENT STATISTICS:**

# Prayer Shawls made since October 2007, including prayer shawls delivered to Dover Air Base:	4,495
# Prayer Shawl Groups/Individuals:	259

## 2.) DOVER PROGRAM

Last month, PS4FS knitter/crocheter Becky Bowers and her active troop from Belmont Baptist Church, Charlottesville, Virginia, made another trip to Dover to hand deliver their prayer shawls. Thank you so much for your dedication to this program! Below are the photos. Becky writes:

*We had a wonderful but humbling trip to Dover and anticipate returning to Dover in the spring to deliver additional shawls. We were unable to visit the Fisher House as there were families there on the day we went. Thank you for allowing Belmont to serve alongside of you in your Prayer Shawls for Fallen Soldiers vision. May God continue to bless you! Health and happiness to you!*

*(Note: Becky shares a lovely note from a Dover mother – near end of newsletter)*



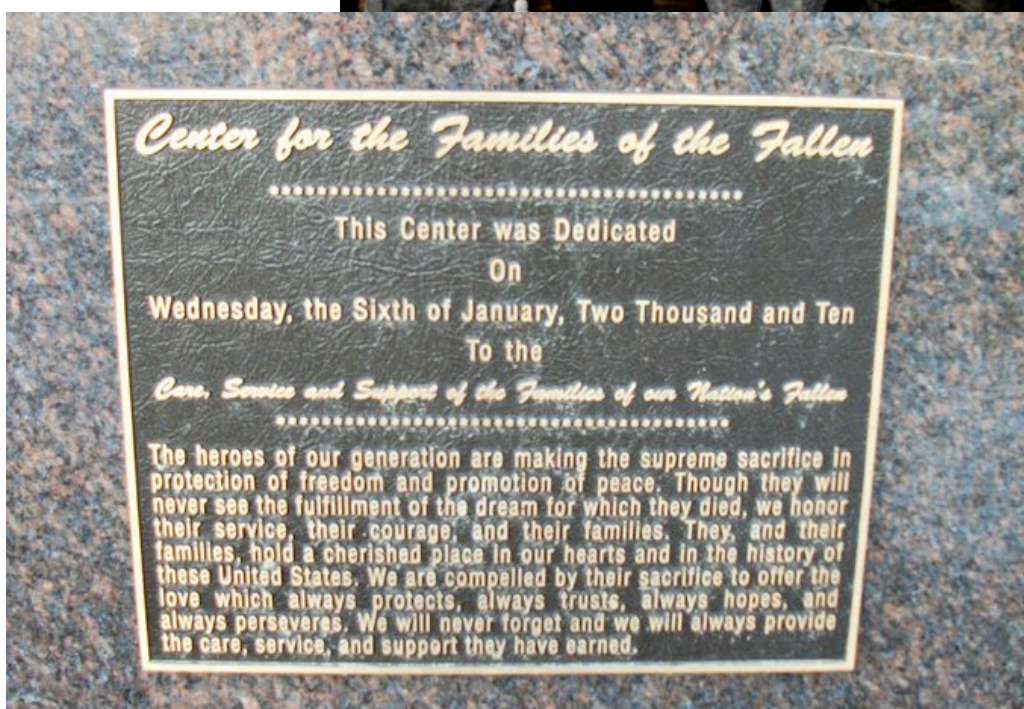
Front Row - Crystal Cochran, Martha Lynch, Becky Bowers, Bill Sampson and Robin Raine (Chief, Families of the Fallen Support Group).

Back Row – Chaplains Rowley and Wallace, Willie Bowers and Braton Newman.

*L-R: Chaplain Jensen (Army), Robin Raine (Chief, Families of the Fallen Support Group), Chaplain Wallace (Army) and Chaplain Rowley (Navy) This heroic group works tirelessly to aid our military families!*



*Below is a plaque outside the Fisher House. Thank you, Becky and others in your group for making yet another "crusade" to Dover for our eyes!*





## II. INFO, IDEAS, AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM YOU:

PS4FS knitter/crocheter Ellen Tingley, who works with the group from Christ United Methodist Church, Franklin,

Tennessee, shares a story about her experience with the Prayer Shawl Ministry. Although this story is not directly related to our military families, it reminds us of the powerful healing energy of our prayer shawls. This healing force extends to our grieving families who need our blessings and prayer shawls!

*As I was telling my friends, Brenda and Bill, about our Prayer Shawl Ministry we had just started at church, Brenda looked at me with tears in her eyes and asked how she might receive a prayer shawl. She told me her nephew had brain cancer and didn't have long to live. I had a shawl that I had just finished but it had not been blessed yet. I decided Christopher didn't have time to wait for it to be blessed and suggested one of their ministers could do that for them. I told her I wanted her to take that shawl and send it to her nephew. Later, Brenda told me Christopher kept it with him all the time and took it every time he had to go for chemo treatments. It has been five years since all this happened and, thankfully, Christopher is still with us. He is in remission although his short term memory is not good. He still sleeps with that shawl - it is VERY special to him.*

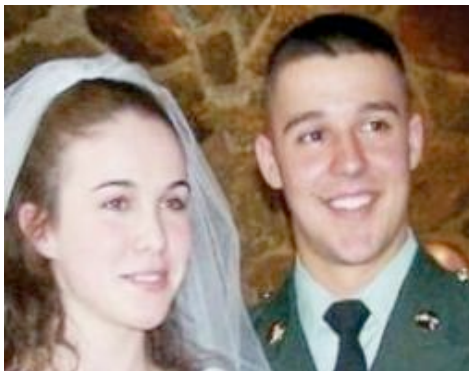
*Brenda then went on to tell me of a friend of Christopher's who found out about six months ago she had breast cancer. Christopher's wanted to go see her. His mother told me he took his shawl to "loan" it to his friend while she was in the hospital. When he gave it to her, he told her there had been so many people praying over that shawl that he knew God would help her get well. Today she is well and cancer free.*

## III. THANK YOU NOTES, NPC RESPONSES, AND MESSAGES:

PS4FS knitter/crocheter Donna Buse, who work with the Knitting for Ewe and God's Fellowsheep group in Grantville, Pennsylvania, gladly accepted a direct request from mother, Deb Etheridge, from Dover, Pennsylvania. Deb was able to contact me through Facebook. (I'll never understand it all!) She is the proud mother of SPC Zachary Etheridge, DOD 7/18/07. Deb's request shows the continued pain, despite 3 ½ years – this is no surprise, but needs to be restated as we move along in this ministry: (3 photos above) *I would love to have one of these! It would be a lot of comfort for I could take it with me where ever I go. Thank you for what you do and honoring the families that gave so much.*



PS4FS knitter/crocheter Julie Aamot, from Custer, Washington, received a touching note from a mother who traveled to Dover and received Julie's prayer shawl there. Robin Norwood, mother of SPC Andrew Hutchins, DOD 11/8/10, lives in Portland, Maine. This is so sad, as Robin tells of the meaning of a prayer shawl she plans to save for Andrew's unborn child. Note: Julie's own son, SPC Aaron Seth Aamot, was KIA 11/10/09 – thus the reference in Robin's note!) Below Robin writes: (2 photos below)



Spc. Andrew L. Hutchins, of New Portland, is pictured with his bride Heather on their wedding day. (Photo courtesy Sun Journal)



*It has taken me a while, but I wanted to send a thank you note for the beautiful purple and white shawl you made. Your note was attached. Amazing this made it all the way across the country to the coast of Maine!*

*We lost our son, Andrew Hutchins, on 11-8-10 in Afghanistan. While we were in Dover, DE waiting for him to be brought home, I chose this shawl. My son was married and they are expecting their first child, a girl, in March, our first grandchild. I chose this shawl to give to her and to explain when she is older, where it came from.*

*My deepest sympathies on the loss of your son; we know exactly what you and your family have been through. So many*

*people from all over the country and the world have reached out to us, some knew our son, some did not, but all are touched by what our soldiers do for our country. One lady from in California put his name on a banner on their wreath this past Christmas; she sent a beautiful card and pictures of the wreath. She knew my son through her son; they went to*

*boot camp together and were battle buddies. Amazing, even with the distance, how close people who have never met, can be. Again, my heartfelt thanks! Robin Norwood*



PS4FS Janice Norris, from Midwest City, Oklahoma, received a thank you note from Gale Poindexter, proud mother of SGT Joel W. Lewis, DOD 5/6/07. Gale lives in Sand Springs, Oklahoma and writes: (5 photos right)



*Just wanted to let you know I got a "thank you" note from Gale Poindexter today in the mail. It says: (5 photos right and below)*

*Dear Janice:*

*Thank you so much for the beautiful prayer shawl! I very much appreciate you. God Bless Gale Poindexter.*

Janice's reaction, as many of have come to know, it how nice it was of this mother to respond. She tells me it "Sort of gives that boost you need sometimes to keep on sending and let you know that our efforts are not in vein."

Absolutely, Janice! We knitters and crocheters need feedback in order to continue our ministry!

It's nice to get it once in a while, even though we all realize these families are grieving and often do not write a thank you note. Nevertheless, it's nice to hear from them! Thank you all



for continuing this ministry despite the few and far between thank you cards.

PS4FS knitter/crocheter Barbara Conway, from Our Lady of Victory, Centerville, Massachusetts, has done a lot of background work for our ministry. Barbara used her computer to search for "abandoned" names, leaving messages on "message boards" and "guest books" asking families to get in touch with us. Many names that had been flagged as "no response" became new owners of our loving prayer shawls, thanks to Barbara's work. This past month I received a direct request from a mother who was looking for Barbara's name. Wendy Ralston, proud mother of PFC Daniel Courneya, DOD 5/12/07, lives in Hastings, Michigan. She writes: (4photos – 2 left including parents Wendy and Harvey, and 2 right, including "a sketch done by Michael Reagan, "It captures EVERY ESSENCE of who and what Daniel was in life" according to his mother!)



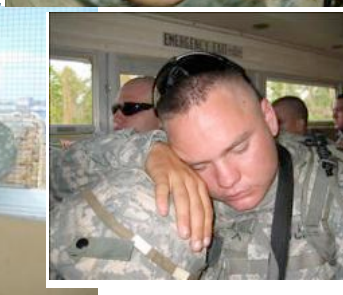
*I received a card in the mail from Barbara Conway of Centerville, MA. I have emailed her my desire to receive one of these beautiful prayer shawls in honor of my son, PFC Daniel Courneya, KIA 05/12/2007. I did not receive one in Dover due to the fact that I was never informed that I could tend to my son, and receive him there. Please let me know what information that you need. I emailed Barbara almost 2 weeks ago, and haven't received a response, so I am not even certain that she received my email, so I decided to contact you directly. Thank you for all that you do to honor great men like my son. Wendy Ralston.* Barbara wrote back that she had responded, but her email was acting up that day. Barbara offered Wendy and Harvey one of two prayer shawls, a navy blue prayer shawl, and she was also working on a tri-color lacy prayer shawl of dark green, beige, and light green.





PS4FS knitter/crocheter Janice Norris, from Midwest City, Oklahoma, shares some thoughts from a thank you note she received from Colleen Stevens, from Owasso, Oklahoma, mother of SGT Schuyler Brett Patch, DOD 2/24/09. (4 photos right)

*I got another thank you note in the mail. Ms. Stevens also included a very nice program from the funeral home. It has the obituary with really nice pictures of SGT Schuyler B. Patch. The postage stamp even had his picture on it. February 24 was the anniversary of his death. She said the shawl was received at just the right time to bring comfort. God is never early, never late, just always on time. Janice*



PS4FS knitter/crocheter Becky Bowers, who works with the Belmont Baptist Church group from Charlottesville, Virginia, (and their group just traveled to Dover for the third time in 3 years!), received a thank you note from a Dover relative. Her

message reminds us why we are so passionate about our cause! We also want to thank our Dover Chaplains for the tireless job they do!

Below is a message from Doris Woody, aunt of CPL Johnathan W. Taylor, DOD 2/22/11. (4 pictures – 2 left, 2 right)

*Ms Bowers, This is a note to thank you for the thoughtful acts of kindness. I received a shawl on Feb. 25, 2011 from the Chaplain at Dover Air Force Base. My cousin was killed in Afghanistan, Tuesday Feb. 22, and he was brought home on the 25th. I just want you to know that the scarfs & shawls that were received*

*saved our family. As you may know, the wind was horrendous on Friday and we (the family) were not prepared for that. Standing on the tarmac, watching with the rest of the family as Johnathan's coffin was taken from the plane, I said a prayer for having the warmth of one of your scarfs around my head and neck. The work your group has done is beyond words. All I can do is let you know that we felt the warmth of your prayers in the moments on the tarmac. May God always bless every one of you for your time and kindness. My cousin was Cpl. Johnathan W. Taylor. Again, thank you so much for your kindness. Doris Taylor Woody*

