

# Vision In Focus



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## A Story of Heroism You Won't Hear in the Media

Courage and heroism in battle—what is the source of these qualities? King David acknowledged, "Praise be to the Lord my Rock, who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle." Ps.144:1

The author of Hebrews relates that by faith great warriors of Biblical times showed tremendous courage: "I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David...who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies." Heb. 11:32-34

America today has many warriors in military uniforms who are risking all and who need our prayers. Maybe you'd like to hear about one real American, somebody who honors the uniform he wears. Meet Brian Chontosh.

Graduating in 1991 from a high school in Churchville, Brian went on to graduate from Rochester Institute of Technology. Husband and about-to-be father, Brian is a first lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps. And a genuine hero.

The secretary of the Navy said so when Brian Chontosh was presented with the Navy Cross, the second highest award for combat bravery the United States can bestow. From the media we get a non-stop feed of gloom and doom. But we don't hear about the heroes—the incredibly brave GIs who honorably do their duty.

It was a year ago on the march into Baghdad. Brian Chontosh was a platoon leader rolling up Highway 1 in a humvee when firepower from an Iraqi ambush exploded around them. The



young Marines were being cut to ribbons--mortars, machine guns, rocket propelled grenades. And the kid out of Churchville was in charge. It was do or die and it was up to him. As he tried to poke a hole through the Iraqi line his humvee came under direct enemy machine gun fire. And Brian Chontosh gave the order to attack. He told his driver to floor the humvee directly at the machine gun emplacement that was firing at them. And he had the guy on top with the .50 cal unload on them.

Within moments there were Iraqis slumped across the machine gun and Chontosh was still advancing, ordering his driver now to take the humvee directly into the Iraqi trench that was attacking his Marines. Over into the battlement the humvee went and out the door Brian Chontosh bailed, carrying an M16 and a Beretta and 228 years of Marine Corps pride. And he ran down the trench filled with mortars, riflemen, machine guns and grenadiers. He fought with the M16 until he was out of ammo. Then he fought with the Beretta until it was out of ammo. Then he picked up a dead man's AK47 and fought with that until it was out of ammo. Then he picked up another dead man's AK47 and fought with that until it was out of ammo. At one point he even fired a discarded Iraqi RPG into an enemy cluster, sending attackers flying with its grenade explosion.

When he was done Brian Chontosh had cleared 200 yards of entrenched Iraqis from his platoon's flank. He had killed more than 20 and wounded at least as many more. Brian Chontosh received the Navy Cross medal during an awards ceremony in California. The citation says:

"By his outstanding display of decisive leadership, unlimited courage in the face of heavy enemy fire, and utmost devotion to duty, 1st Lt. Chontosh reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service."

\*Story excerpted from column by Bob Lonsberry © 2004

## Immanuel Lutheran Signs with Building God's Way

Immanuel Lutheran in Wentzville, MO becomes the fifth area church to sign with the Building God's Way program. Rod Kumm, Kenneth Theilmann and Pastor Dwain Sliger participate in the official signing of agreement that will result in a new quality facility for their expanding ministry. BGW architects will be at Immanuel in June to custom design their new facility. Established in 1874 Immanuel Lutheran has a long history of spreading the gospel. They now hold Saturday evening worship as well as three Sunday morning services.





A marine in Fallujah gives a soccer ball to an Iraqi child



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All Demien Construction  
resources have been archived  
at: [DemienConstruction.com](http://DemienConstruction.com)  
[www.MarineCorpsMoms.com](http://www.MarineCorpsMoms.com)  
[www.usmc.mil](http://www.usmc.mil)

#### Schedule of Upcoming Resources

**June: Kingdom Builder Fax**  
**July: Nehemiah Newsletter**  
**August: Vision in Focus Email**  
**September: Kingdom Builder Fax**  
**October: Nehemiah Newsletter**  
**November: Vision in Focus Email**  
**December: Kingdom Builder Fax**

## Frisbees over Fallujah

Heroism shows itself not only in the heat of battle, but also in the aftermath. America's soldiers are trained to defeat the enemy, but God also calls them to show compassion. Rom. 13:9 instructs: "...whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

And in God's certain plans, He gives our soldiers the opportunity to be heroes of compassion. In a village outside of Camp Fallujah, one such opportunity presented itself in the form of a tank mired in mud. In the midst of battle, and impending danger from all sides, a marine unit a couple miles out of Camp Falluja had an unexpected encounter with a village in Iraq. When a 68-ton tank becomes stuck in the middle of an Iraqi village, it's no small task to undo things.

Dubbing the place, Tank Village, the marines got to know the people as the tank spent a week sitting in the mud before help arrived to extract it. "Lt. Col. Colin P. McNease talked about the experience. "They were friendly to the Marines who already felt bad about trashing their canals and fields while trying to unstuck the M1A1 (tank). When we went out to pay damage claims for all the lost crops and date palm trees and torn up roads, we saw a lot of kids around and met a few of them. This made us think of the Spirit of America stuff, especially the soccer balls and frisbees, we had been sent and had back in Camp Fallujah."

McNease added, "Aside from paying for damages, we told them we could start some projects out here." It didn't take long for the word to spread that Marines have taken an interest in lending a helping hand.

People from other villages heard that we compensated for the damages, but also saw that we brought fertilizer and tools for that one village," McNease explained. "As we were leaving, they waved us down wondering if we're willing to work with their villages too"

McNease continues, "The next time we went to visit the village, we took as many of the soccer balls and Frisbees as we could fit into the open space in the back of our hummers (around chow, water, ammunition, radio batteries, etc.) When we arrived at the village and parked the HMMVWs in the center, some shy but curious kids were peeking out from doorways or looking out their windows. But when we pulled out the soccer balls and handed the first one out, they started coming out like ants to a picnic.

None of them wanted Frisbees at first, all really wanted the soccer balls. But when we ran out of soccer balls and kept handing out Frisbees they would line up to take them. They didn't know what to make of the Frisbees at first, but once they had a little professional military education on how to operate the frisbee a lot of them became surprisingly good. I spent almost 45 minutes tossing the disc with one very young girl who got to be quite accomplished.

This took place at a time when we were being shot at in most every other place we went so it was particularly gratifying, and it was nice to have something good to give them."

The Marines in the An Najaf province last year lost more soccer games than they won . . . but in the process of losing games, they won the respect and cooperation with the locals. No Marines casualties from hostile action were recorded from April, when they arrived in An Najaf, to October when the last Marines came home.

Sometimes heroes come bearing soccer balls and love comes in the shape of a Frisbee.

\*This story excerpted from Jim Hake, Spirit of America.