

Cathy's Corner

You've probably never heard of his name. I had not. It's Wayne Dillard. But when he suffered an apparent heart failure on the Saturday before Easter Sunday, Heaven's Gates welcomed a giant. I never met him. I didn't know what he looked like. But I felt his heartbeat daily for many years.

In 2007 when my Marine son redeployed for Fallujah, Iraq, I somehow "stumbled" onto his Prayer Central website late one sleepless night. I was trolling the web looking for other sites for parents whose children were now a part of the War on Terror. In 2005, I had connected with other parents and found a great relief in having another person with whom I could share thoughts and feelings while our Marine sons were on deployments. No one understands like another military parent what it's like.

But that night, I found a website that told me what the local time was in Baghdad. It gave a Scripture passage and then followed up with a prayer for the troops. Some days when I would log into the Baghdad Prayer Patrol, it would pray for a specific neighborhood in Iraq or that the hearts of terrorists might be changed. Oftentimes, the prayer would be for the families of Iraq...the fathers, mothers, and children of this far-off land where my son now was stationed. These were *real people* for whom God loved and sent His Son, as well as mine. While my Marine son was living in an abandoned rail station in Fallujah in 2005, the Baghdad Prayer Patrol reminded me that there were homes with real families inside these Iraqi homes who were facing terror as well. I would often print out these prayers or tell other parents about the website. It gave me comfort that there was *SOMETHING* I could do. I could turn off the negative news on the TV and get on my knees and pray. When your own flesh and blood is in harm's way, oftentimes it's such a helpless feeling. But on my knees, I could bring my son and my friend's children to the Great Throne Room of the God of the universe. On my knees, I had a position in the spiritual battle for the troops.

And Wayne Dillard's **Baghdad Prayer Patrol** reminded me of that daily. I would log into my email and like the steady ticking of a clock, his emails would be there after midnight with a new prayer each day for the troops, the chaplains, the families, the leaders of both the U.S. and Iraqi governments. Each day the login would begin, "*Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain.*" *Psalm 127:1* And I would join others in prayer for the city of Baghdad, as well as other cities and neighborhoods. I would read through other prayers from believers left as comments. Always powerful, sometimes shouting aloud to God in ALL CAPS, sometimes in Spanish, sometimes just a few words. I became "Irene" on the Prayer Patrol. I didn't leave my comments every day...just a few times. But I saw other regulars on the site. It became a comfort to know "they" were out there. Because as the time dragged on and another deployment loomed in 2007 with President Bush's "troop surge," I knew my son was headed back to war. But I knew Wayne Dillard's Prayer Patrol was out there. Wayne Dillard's own words, "Our war is not against flesh and blood but there are spiritual opponents that must be brought down." And so, with a little picture of a site in Iraq, a Scripture in my mind, and a beautiful new daily prayer, I joined with the Prayer Patrol around the world AND WE PRAYED. As the song says, "Our Position Was On Our Knees." No matter how war dissenters rallied on, no matter what the left-leaning Press was squawking about on the TV, no matter how discouraging it was to see the names of those

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beloved troops who had paid the ultimate price or those wounded warriors, the people of God were praying.

And a funny thing started happening. As Wayne Dillard stated on his website, "Maybe it's a coincidence, or maybe there really is a God who answers the prayers of His people. I'm putting my faith in God." This missionary from South Asia who later moved his family to minister in India, this unknown man in my world, was pursuing God's vision and bringing along a host of 800-plus people to specifically pray for our troops and the land of ancient Babylon. And as far as I knew, Wayne didn't have a kid in uniform. Why God plucked Wayne out of his missionary work to lead this rag-tag group of praying Dads and Moms and other concerned people on a blinking blue screen, I'll never know. But God's ways are high above my ways (Isaiah 55:8). And God moved. The following information is taken from the PrayerCentral's Afghanistan Prayer Patrol. Yes, that's right. Wayne first started the Baghdad Prayer Patrol and now had an Afghanistan site as well. See his words as follows:

'The chart shows a steady increase in U.S. casualties from April 2009 through August. Then a sudden 20% drop in casualties for the month of September. "We began mobilizing prayer in late August, then officially launched the Prayer Patrol in September", explains Dillard. "We saw the same results with the Baghdad Prayer Patrol back in 2007," he continues, "As soon as we had 800 to a 1000 people praying daily in unity, we started seeing a decline in casualties."

Afghan Prayer Patrol is an online effort to mobilize prayer for the troops and people of Afghanistan. Visitors are presented with a short scripture-based prayer each day to cover various topics of need for the Troops and people of Afghanistan. Those who sign up, receive a daily email with a link to their prayer assignment, and other prayer resources, such as maps, news etc. Participants can also post their own prayers and agree with the prayer of others. Information on the Afghanistan Prayer Patrol is available at <http://prayercentral.net/engage-me/patrols/afghan>. (chart statistics source: icasualty.org)U.S. Casualties Only'

The casualties came down in 2007 when the Troop Surge started and the Prayer Patrol got going. It happened again in September 2009. Prayer Changes Things. And Wayne Dillard was quietly making a difference with his army of Prayer Patrollers! Praise God!

And so last week when I again logged into my prayer "assignment" from the Baghdad Prayer Patrol, it was with sadness that I read of this ordained minister's passing that Saturday before Easter. I wasn't sad for Wayne Dillard...he was in the Presence of the Living, Resurrected Savior. It was that earthly sadness that settles in when you realize there is a wonderful wife and 2 college-aged daughters left behind. And as I continue to log in this week, I see his strong wife Kathleen continuing on in the Prayer Patrols, as well as her "WOW" postings on the website. Even in these early days of her grief, she continues on in the power of the Spirit of God with beautiful words of Scripture and passion for the work of the Lord.

They said of war-time President Abraham Lincoln, "'A tree is best measured when it's down.'" There is no way we can measure the lasting effectiveness of Wayne Dillard's work on earth. Only God knows that. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, (Matthew 25:21" is so true of Wayne Dillard.

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In the 90's Ray Boltz sang a wonderful song: "Thank you for giving to the Lord. I am a life that was changed." Wayne Dillard, you are going to meet all kinds of military people in Heaven someday who will say that to you.

~~from my corner of the world

Catherine DePew

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