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## Get Involved: OCF Prayer Center

From its inception, OCF has emphasized the importance of praying members and of local fellowships that recognize their dependence upon prayer.

DISCOVER 5 WAYS YOU CAN GET INVOLVED WITH OCF THROUGH PRAYER: [ocfusa.org/pray](http://ocfusa.org/pray)



Tami and Hous Waring, left, recently visited Hospitality Home hosts Eric and Melissa Burkett. "It would be wrong of us to not share this blessing with others," said Eric.



Ministry news, events, and resources  
to keep you informed and...

## CONNECTED

MARCH 2023

### CONNECTED TEAM

**Publisher** Officers' Christian Fellowship  
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**CAPT R. Christopher Blake, JAGC, USN (Ret.),**  
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**OCF's mission is to engage military leaders  
in Biblical fellowship and growth to equip  
them for Christlike service at the intersection  
of faith, family, and profession.**

**BY KAREN FLIEDNER**  
COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Hospitality toward others is often expressed in a number of ways—a kind word to those we meet or sharing something of ourselves with someone else—but at its core is the opening up of our hearts, lives, and even homes.

Through OCF's Hospitality Homes program, an established yet growing network of OCF members who are passionate about the Biblical mandate to "contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality" (Romans 12:13) have signed up as Hospitality Home hosts, opening their homes to their fellow OCF members as a place to stay, offering a meal as they travel, and connecting in Christian fellowship.

"I might not know the Webster's

Dictionary definition of hospitality, but I know it when I feel it," said Maj Eric Burkett Jr., USMC (Ret.), a Hospitality Home host who, along with his wife, Melissa, recently provided a place to stay for Col Hous and Tami Waring, USAF (Ret.). "Hospitality is inviting, warm, safe and happy. It usually has good stories told over a nice meal. It provides a place to relax and rest. It feels like home."

Eric said the Gary Sinise Foundation built a smart home for them, complete with a dedicated, American Disabilities Act-compliant guest bedroom and bathroom.

"My wife and I wanted this feature because of some of the hardships I have experienced at hotels. We wanted

**Story continues inside**



people with all but the most severe of disabilities to be able to stay with us without the worry,” he said.

“Despite being a disabled veteran, I lead an extremely blessed life,” Eric said. “We live on a beautiful piece of property that overlooks the Neshannock River and supports a menagerie of wildlife. It would be wrong of us to not share this blessing with others, especially Christian brothers and/or sisters, traveling through.”

“It was like walking into a retreat home where the peace of Christ rested,” said Hous, OCF Director of Field Engagement, who travels extensively for the ministry with wife Tami. “We sat over coffee and got to hear a testimony of God’s faithfulness and goodness as Eric shared about growing in faith through the years, to include his MC-22 crash that claimed his lower legs.”

“Their place was warm and inviting,” said Tami, who is also OCF Staff Representative for Women’s Ministry. “It was hard to leave the fellowship.”

Rooted in the OCF B&B Directory, a printed resource from decades ago, the Hospitality Homes program is an online listing of hosts and their home locations. Its ministry-wide unveiling was sidelined in 2020 by the COVID-19 outbreak and uncertainty surrounding the pandemic as its varied impacts continued to unfold.

Now being ramped up for utilization by OCF members, the Hospitality Homes program provides opportunities to see and experience Christian love, giftings, fellowship, and ministry in action. It is also in stride with other OCF-targeted goals of bolstering engagement and reconnecting members with one another.

“Hospitality Homes epitomize much of the heart of OCF, as members willingly open up our homes and lives for the good of our fellow believers,” said Scott Fisher, OCF Executive Director. “In the same way a person may opt to stay with a family member when traveling within their area, Hospitality Homes enable the joy of fellowship with our OCF family when they are in our area, whether for a vacation, move, or temporary duty.”

Although the Hospitality Homes



Photo by Carl Pinkham

The view from Hospitality Home host Carl Pinkham’s Vermont home.

network is still in its early stages, the program has begun gaining traction among several OCF members who are eagerly anticipating having fellow brothers and sisters in Christ stay in their homes.

Dick Ford, a Hospitality Homes host in Pennsylvania, underscores that Christian hospitality is something that “should be done out of a heart of obedience and a genuine caring for others. Helping brothers and sisters in the Lord is an integral part of the purposes God created in the church.”

“After teaching Air Force dependents from Joint Base MDL for several years, I understand the stresses and challenges military life brings,” said Dick. “The Hospitality Homes program addresses the family portion by providing assistance during difficult times like going through PCS and all the adjustments that entails.”

“Being a Hospitality Homes host offers a great opportunity to live out one’s faith,” he added.

In addition to living out the Christian faith by taking “the command to be hospitable seriously,” former Naval officer Jacqui Kilpatrick also relishes what being a Hospitality Homes host presents to her and her family.

“Hospitality is one of my gifts! It is easy for me to invite people into our home,” said Jacqui, who hosts with husband, LCDR Ian Kilpatrick, USN, from their Maryland home. “We also figured it

would be an easy way for us to show and teach by example our kids to see hospitality in action.”

Beyond providing lodging and a chance to break bread together as fellow believers in Christ, COL Carl Pinkham, USA (Ret.), is eager to have other OCF members in his Vermont abode for other reasons as well—to enjoy the view and showcase God’s work in his ministry efforts.

“We would love to have more people take advantage of our spectacular view,” said Carl of his home overlooking steep, rolling, tree-studded hills. Involved in ROTC ministry at Norwich University, he is especially eager to “share how God is working in our life and theirs.”

Dick went on to say that the act of Christlike service to others through the Hospitality Homes program comes with reciprocal blessings for him as well, from “the enjoyment of fellowship, making new friends and seeing guests relax from the grind of life as they find an oasis for a brief time.”

“That feels rewarding to me,” he says. “I end up feeling glad I put in the time to help someone.”

“In the U.S. we have such a ‘go-it-on-your-own’ attitude that we don’t want to inconvenience people,” Tami said. “At first you might think it is awkward, but it never has been that way. It is like visiting family that you have never met. We have

met the most amazing people when we have stayed with someone who registered as a Hospitality Homes.”

Beyond the need for OCF members to “move beyond comfort zones” such as those, Hous also underscores the need for intentionality when it comes to using the Hospitality Homes network on travels.

“We need OCF members to unabashedly plan travels when it comes making plans so that they stay with other OCF members,” he said. “It honors the OCFers who have listed their homes, encourages them in Christian fellowship, and helps keep our ministry healthy because we stay connected to one another.”

“If loneliness is the number one health epidemic in our nation,” added Hous, “then the military community can certainly step into that area by opening up our homes and by planning to visit others.”

**To find out more about the Hospitality Homes network and how to get involved, visit: [ocfusa.org/hospitality](https://ocfusa.org/hospitality).** 📖

### Are you traveling?

Check out the OCF Directory by scrolling down to Categories, and selecting Hospitality Home to discover if any host homes are available in your intended destination: [ocfusa.org/directory/](https://ocfusa.org/directory/)

### Other key takeaways

Here are 4 key things to know about OCF Hospitality Homes:

1. They provide a bed and/or fellowship over a meal for those who are passing through, visiting, or moving into the area.
2. They provide an opportunity for others to see Christian love in action—each of you has various giftings, and you don’t have to have a perfect home to welcome strangers in ... you need the Holy Spirit dwelling within you!
3. Set boundaries. Communicate clearly if your conscience or home will be strained or harmed by your guests. Be gracious but share honestly.
4. Send your guests out by praying for them and offering a coffee for the road. If appropriate, stay in touch.

# OCF’s Annual Priorities: What you need to know and how you can get involved

Every year, OCF Council members and staff prayerfully gather to set ministry-wide priorities to guide ministry efforts and resourcing for the next fiscal year, which begins 1 June. Below is a snapshot of each of the three priorities, along with ways you might be able to engage with the broader OCF community and get involved.

### Fan the Flame of Fellowship

*“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works. Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near” (Hebrews 10:24-25, ESV).*

**What you need to know:** Our goal is to reinforce the value of uniting in authentic biblical fellowship both within local groups and at OCF’s conference centers.

**How you can get involved:** Visit [ocfusa.org/directory](https://ocfusa.org/directory) to find a small group near you. Start a group if one does not yet exist, and let the home office and other OCF members know by completing the form at [ocfusa.org/list-me](https://ocfusa.org/list-me). Sign up for a program at [springcanyon.org](https://springcanyon.org) (CO) or [whitesulphursprings.org](https://whitesulphursprings.org) (PA).

**More information:** Contact Colin Wooten, [colin.wooten@ocfusa.org](mailto:colin.wooten@ocfusa.org)

### Expand & Mature the Local Leader Network

*“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not groaning” (Hebrews 13:17, ESV).*

**What you need to know:** As hundreds of Local Leaders across the world start, sustain, and hand off leadership of a specific OCF small group, our goal is to provide the support that will equip these individuals. To that end, OCF will invest in the recruiting, equipping, and strengthening of the Local Leader Network.

**How you can get involved:** If you feel the Lord calling you to serve as a Local Leader, visit [ocfusa.org/list-me](https://ocfusa.org/list-me) so that other OCF members in your area can find you. Additionally, pray for Local Leaders and their ministries to the military community scattered across the world.

**More information:** Contact Hous Waring, [hous.waring@ocfusa.org](mailto:hous.waring@ocfusa.org)

### Accelerate & Diversify Donations

*“The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully” (2 Corinthians 9:6, ESV).*

**What you need to know:** OCF ministry efforts are predominantly funded by donations, making a vast and varied base of active donors vital. As such, our goal is to mobilize members, companies, foundations, and others who will step forward and financially support OCF’s mission and vision.

**How you can get involved:** Visit [ocfusa.org/donate](https://ocfusa.org/donate) to learn about unique ways you can support OCF.

**More information:** Contact Teppi Helms, [ocfplannedgiving@ocfusa.org](mailto:ocfplannedgiving@ocfusa.org)

—Courtney Taylor, Assistant Director of Communications



## Summary of Fall 2022 OCF Council Meeting

Romans 8:28-30 was our theme verse for the Fall Council meeting in October at Spring Canyon in Colorado.

Joined by many beloved staff reps, we had the privilege to welcome two new staff couples: Joe and Kristi Chiaravallotti, OCF Mid-Atlantic Regional Coordinators, as well as Paul and Janee Homan, the new OCF staff couple at USAFA. We celebrated the excitement and vision that our Lord has given them for their new roles and prayed for the start of their ministries.

The meeting started with a Pray-Discover-Obey session of corporate prayer, seeking our Lord's will for ministry in OCF as a whole, at our respective home locations, and in our families and other circles.

We had the privilege to receive a ministry-wide update from our directors. These updates focused on how our Lord works in the souls of military members and their families through OCF, and they also included metrics like the impact of inflation on ministry capabilities. We also discussed past progress and future goals with regard to strategic priorities and lines of effort, focusing on OCF Area and Regional Coordinators' efforts to support each OCF Local Leader. Finally, we reviewed the current budget status, dug into strategic framework assessments, and made progress on refining governance documents.

Throughout these updates and planning sessions, we were constantly delighted to see how "all things work together for good for those who love God" in unexpected ways, and we left Spring Canyon encouraged to see how He will continue to impact the military community through each OCF member.

—LTJG Brigit Jogan, USCG

### CLASS OF 2026 ELECTION RESULTS

New council members who will start a three-year term on 1 June are: Lt Col Robert "Rob" Crespo, USAF (Ret.); COL David Guida, USA; Brig Gen Jeff Hurlbert, USAF; COL Robert "Rob" Jassey, USA (Ret.); LTJG Abigail "Abby" Rouser, USN; LCDR Lawrence "Lars" Tormey, USCG; and Lt Col Stephen "Steve" Wade, USAF (Ret.). OCF Council officers are: COL Ric Schumacher, USA (Ret.)—President; LTC Steve Schmidt, USA—Vice President; LCDR James Rader, USCG—Secretary, and COL Rob Jassey, USA (Ret.)—Treasurer.

## OCF Ministry News

### Since Our Last Issue:

**October 2022:** USMMA midshipmen attended a retreat at White Sulphur Springs with OCF groups from USMA and USNA for the first time in years. Seven USMMA midshipmen chose to be baptized during the retreat.

**November 2022:** Uniformed women, ranging from cadets through retirees, gathered at the OCF Leading Women Retreat at Spring Canyon. They discussed how to find psychological rest in Christ, rather than simply physical rest, and they encouraged one another as fellow women in uniform.

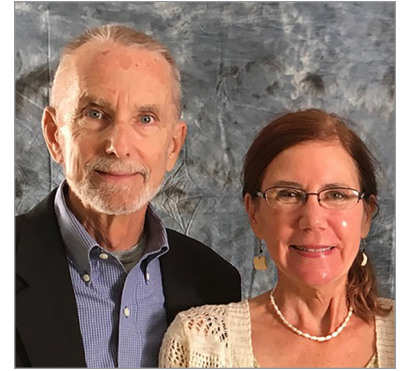
**January 2023:** Forty OCFers and friends gathered in Pensacola for a one-day conference on sexual brokenness and learning to enjoy sex the way God intended. CAPT Brent & Nicole Breining, USN (Ret.), led several impactful speaker sessions, a panel discussion, and breakout groups.

**February 2023:** ROTC ministry efforts through regional retreats and local fellowships proved prominent this month, during which the Eastern ROTC Retreat at White Sulphur Springs, the Rocky Mountain ROTC Retreat at Spring Canyon, and the Midwest ROTC Retreat in Iowa all took place.

### Recent Staff Hires:

#### Keith & Gale Peck, Pastoral Care

While Keith & Gale Peck have served within OCF for the past 35+ years as conference center speakers, they took on a new role in the ministry as OCF's Pastoral



Care Couple on 1 June 2022. With over 45 years of pastoral ministry experience, including 27 years as the pastor of Broadneck Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Annapolis, and with a son-in-law serving as Vice Superintendent at the U.S. Air Force Academy, they understand how to come alongside those in military ministry via counseling, prayer, love, encouragement, and a listening ear. The Pecks reside in Lynchburg, VA, and have 5 grown children and 17 grandchildren.



#### Brian & Rebecca Olsen, Director of Facilities & Maintenance at Spring Canyon

Col Kim Hawthorne, USAF (Ret.), center director at Spring Canyon Conference Center,

### OCF Births, Weddings, and Taps

If you have an item for Births, Weddings, and Taps, send it to Karen Fliedner at [karen.fliedner@ocfusa.org](mailto:karen.fliedner@ocfusa.org). Find the latest list of names on the Connected page of the OCF website:

[ocfusa.org/connected](https://ocfusa.org/connected).

## LISTEN

### TRENDING EPISODES OF THE OCF CROSSPOINT PODCAST

#### SEASON 3, EPISODES 10-12

Brig Gen Robert “Gwyn” Armfield, USAF (Ret.), former OCF executive director Lt Gen Bruce Fister, USAF (Ret.), and current OCF executive director Col Scott Fisher, USAF (Ret.) discuss leadership in this three-part series.

Subscribe to OCF Crosspoint on Apple Podcasts or wherever you listen to podcasts. Or visit [ocfusa.org/subscribe](https://ocfusa.org/subscribe)

## GET INVOLVED

Christian mentors who can share their lessons learned with younger men and women of all ages and ranks is a powerful means of growing disciples of Christ in the military. Utilize OCF’s online resources, designed to equip you to become a mentor, a mentee, or to host a local Mentoring Program by visiting [ocfusa.org/mentoring](https://ocfusa.org/mentoring).

## ATTEND

#### AT WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS

**9 June-4 August:** Summer R&R, Allegheny Outback!, and Camp Caleb

> [whitesulphursprings.org/events](https://whitesulphursprings.org/events)

#### AT SPRING CANYON

**4 June-29 July:** Summer Celebration, Rocky Mountain High, and Father Teen Adventure

> [springcanyon.org/events](https://springcanyon.org/events)

announced the addition of Brian and Rebecca Olsen to the Spring Canyon team in December 2022. Brian began serving as the Director of Facilities & Maintenance that month and became a full-time director in March 2023. Brian and Rebecca bring 24 years of camp and conference center ministry experience at four different camps, and they and their four children moved from Colorado Springs to Spring Canyon to join the team. Both share a real passion for ministry and believe that Christian camp and conference center ministry is vital to helping renew and refresh guests in their walk with Christ.

#### Teppi Helms, Resource Development Administrator

Teppi Helms started her role on the Resource Development Team in June 2022.

Inspired by parents who led an OCF Bible Study at USMA from 1995-1998 and encouraged

her attendance at Camp Caleb and Allegheny Outback! at White Sulphur Springs, Teppi served on WSS’ summer staff in 2012. Teppi met her husband, Joe, at White Sulphur Springs while he worked on the Facilities Team. Teppi now assists with resource development efforts to steward and engage OCF’s giving community and ministry partner relationships. The Helmses reside in Falls Church, VA, with their son, Shane, and their dog, Annie.



#### Lisa Clemons, Assistant Director of Finance

Lisa Clemons joined OCF as Assistant Director of Finance in October 2022. She grew up in southern California and accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior at a church family camp while a young girl. After earning an

accounting degree at Azusa Pacific University and Masters of International Management at Whitworth College, Lisa worked several years in public accounting and then at for-profit and nonprofit organizations including Compassion International and Little Sisters of the Poor.



#### Steele & Natalie Sessions, Youth Programs Manager at White Sulphur Springs

Steele and Natalie Sessions have joined the team at White Sulphur Springs Conference Center, where Steele will serve as the WSS Youth Programs Manager. They have been blessed with a son, Elijah, and a baby on the way in March. Steele and Natalie are both 2018 graduates of West Point and are coming off active-duty status this May; Steele having served as an infantry officer and Natalie in the medical service corps. They bring a passion for youth ministry, experience with ministries like YoungLife, a love of outdoor adventure, and an excitement to weave faith in Jesus Christ into the Allegheny Outback! and Camp Caleb camp programs beginning this summer.

—From staff reports