

Former Army chaplain held in S.C. brig

BY PAISLEY DODDS
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO — Soon after graduating from West Point, James Yee left the military and spent four years in Syria, where he studied Arabic, converted to Islam, reportedly married a Syrian woman and changed his name to Yousef.

The Army welcomed Yee back after his Middle Eastern travels, and he became a Captain and an Army chaplain — a job that eventually sent him to Guantanamo Bay Naval Station, where he dispensed religious guidance to suspected terrorists.

Now, the 35-year-old's activities with detainees at the U.S. military outpost in Cuba are under scrutiny, and Yee sits in a military brig in South Carolina.

Yee has not been charged with any crime, but he was allegedly carrying classified documents containing cell diagrams and other material involving the detainees, according to newspaper reports. A senior law enforcement official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told The Associated Press that FBI agents confiscated documents Yee was carrying and questioned him before he was handed over to the military. Authorities detained Yee in Jacksonville, Fla., on Sept. 10, after he returned from Guantanamo.

The son of Chinese immigrants, Yee was raised a Lutheran in suburban Springfield, New Jersey. He left his hometown for the West Point Academy, graduating in 1990.

On Sunday, police shooed reporters away from his parents' tan, split-level home, in a middle class neighborhood where American flags were displayed from porches. A handwritten note taped on the family's front door read, "No reporters or media please."

In 2001, Yee became a chaplain with the 29th Signal Battalion at Fort Lewis, Wash. He was there during the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks, serving as an imam at the Fort Lewis Islamic Chapel Center, where he counseled Muslim soldiers.

After the attacks, Yee said, "An act of terrorism, the taking of innocent civilian lives is prohibited by Islam, and whoever has done this needs to be brought to justice, whether he is Muslim or not."

Yee arrived at Guantanamo in November of 2002, a stocky chaplain with a thinning buzzcut, saying one of his goals was to clear up misunderstandings about Islam.

"A lot of people don't know Jesus is part of Islam, but Muslims believe he was a prophet," Yee told The AP in January. "Surely people can be more open-minded."

But Yee, who was normally reticent in interviews with the media, was also concerned about the detainees' spiritual needs. Yee would make sure the men had Qurans in their cells and that the crackly recorded prayer calls were being broadcast five times a day.

His main job, however, was providing counseling and comfort to the prisoners at Camp Delta, the high-security prison where some 660 detainees from 42 countries are being held for suspected links to Afghanistan's ousted Taliban regime or the al-Qaida terror network.

Although Yee was seldom out of earshot from guards or interpreters helping with interrogations, he was sometimes left alone with the men.

His arrival came as U.S. officials struggled to stem a wave of suicide attempts among the detainees and cope with steady criticism over the decision to classify the detainees as "enemy combatants" rather than prisoners of war, which would have allotted the men with more legal protections under the Geneva Conventions.

Many of the detainees have been held in Guantanamo for nearly two years and none have been charged or given access to lawyers.

"He had daily access to the detainees," said Capt. Tom Crosson, U.S. Southern Command spokesman. "He is the first U.S. soldier that I know of to be detained and held since the war on

NASA spacecraft plummets to Jupiter's surface

14-year-old Galileo discovered first asteroid moon, returned 14,000 images of solar system

BY ANDREW BRIDGES
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PASADENA, CALIF. — NASA's aging Galileo spacecraft deliberately plunged into Jupiter's turbulent atmosphere Sunday, bringing a fiery conclusion to a 14-year, \$1.5 billion exploration of the solar system's largest planet and its moons.

The unmanned spacecraft, traveling at nearly 108,000 mph, was torn apart and vaporized by the heat and friction of its fall through the clouds after it dove into the atmosphere at 2:57 p.m.

EDT as planned.

At NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, hundreds of scientists, engineers and their families counted down the last seconds before the spacecraft ended its 2.8 billion-mile journey from Earth.

"We haven't lost a spacecraft, we've gained a new stepping stone in exploration," said Torrence Johnson, the mission's project scientist.

Rosalyn Lopes, another scientist on the mission, called Galileo's descent "a spectacular end to a spectacular mission."

"Personally, I am a little sad: I

had the time of my life on Galileo and I'm a little sad to say goodbye to an old friend," Lopes added.

Despite the glitches that plagued Galileo since its 1989 launch aboard the space shuttle Atlantis, it was one of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's most fruitful missions.

During its thrice-extended mission, Galileo discovered the first moon of an asteroid, witnessed the impact of a comet into Jupiter and provided firm evidence of salty oceans on three of

the planet's moons. Scientists consider one of the three, Europa, the most likely place in the solar system to harbor extraterrestrial life.

Among the most stunning of the 14,000 images returned by Galileo were those of the moon Io. Galileo caught some of the moon's more than 150 volcanoes actively spewing lava and plumes of dust and gas.

"It had more surprises, better stuff waiting to be discovered than we ever could have imagined," said Andy Ingersol, a Jupiter scientist at the California

Institute of Technology.

The last of Galileo's science measurements arrived on Earth after the spacecraft was destroyed Sunday, taking 43 minutes to cross half a billion miles of space at the speed of light.

"I just can't believe the spacecraft collected data all the way in," said a tearful Claudia Alexander, Galileo's seventh and last project manager.

Galileo is the first planetary spacecraft NASA has intentionally destroyed since it steered the Lunar Prospector into the Earth's moon in 1999.

Israel pauses for birthday amid war-torn Mideast

BY DAN PERRY
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TEL AVIV, ISRAEL — A parade of global figures — from Bill Clinton and Mikhail Gorbachev to actress Kathleen Turner — filed into Tel Aviv Sunday to celebrate the 80th birthday of former prime minister Shimon Peres, the Nobel laureate, visionary of peace and oft-failed political candidate.

The extraordinary guest list reflected global appreciation for Peres' efforts toward a "New Middle East" — the title of his 1993 book dismissed by many here as utopian — and a longing for the days before the Israeli-Palestinian peace process collapsed in violence that has killed thousands in the last three years.

But Israeli critics saw an extravaganza whose security costs and general disruption suggested an oversized ego and somewhat poor form at a time when fighting continues and the ranks of poor Israelis and Palestinians are swelling.

Peres, whose birthday was actually last month, says he only went along with the party idea to bring some cheer to the region. It was organized by both supporters and the right-wing Likud government whose policies he opposes.

The tight schedule included a reception at the "Peres Center for Peace" in Jaffa, a meeting with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in Jerusalem and a gala at a Tel Aviv concert hall — followed by a symposium Monday.

"I feel strange," Peres said Sunday. "But it happens once in 80 years, so you can survive."

Peres emigrated from Poland at age 11, but he retains a European accent and genteel manner that, along with a penchant for parliamentary maneuvering, lofty pronouncements and electoral defeat, brought him occasional ridicule.

Nonetheless, he has walked the corridors of Israeli power since his 20s, when as a top aide to its founder David Ben-Gurion he helped build the young nation's defenses; in the 1960s, he was instrumental in

creating the Dimona nuclear facility where Israel reportedly has amassed a stockpile of nuclear weapons.

Although in the 1970s Peres was briefly considered a supporter of the Jewish settler movement, he soon concluded Israel's occupation since 1967 of the West Bank and Gaza was not just unfair to the millions of Palestinians who live in the areas but a disaster for the Jewish state. He now supports a Palestinian state.

After a brief 1977 stint as acting premier, he ran for the job five times and never won outright. He served two years from 1984 to 1986 after a tied election, using the period to bring down hyperinflation and withdraw troops from much of Lebanon — popular moves that still failed to win him the hearts of the masses.

In 1993, as foreign minister, he helped push Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin into interim peace accords on Palestinian autonomy with Yasser Arafat's PLO, and the three shared the Nobel Peace Prize a year later.

Peres served another eight months as premier after Rabin's 1995 assassination before losing narrowly and unexpectedly to Likud's Benjamin Netanyahu. In 2000, he lost to a Likud backbencher, Moshe Katsav, in a parliamentary vote for the largely ceremonial post of Israeli president.

"Peres turns 80 in the feeling that he has not enjoyed the credit he deserves," columnist Dan Margalit wrote in the Maariv newspaper. "The thanks of the nation (today) are but a brief respite."

Peres implored Sharon, seated in the first row at Sunday's gala, to make peace, saying, "It is closer than you think, and perhaps closer than I believe."

But internationally, few Israelis — or former prime ministers of any kind — seem to muster more respect.

American entertainment figures wished Peres a happy birthday by video at the Tel Aviv ceremony — including Barbara Streisand and comedian Jerry Seinfeld. Filmmaker Woody Allen sent greetings "from a bad Jew to a very great Jew."

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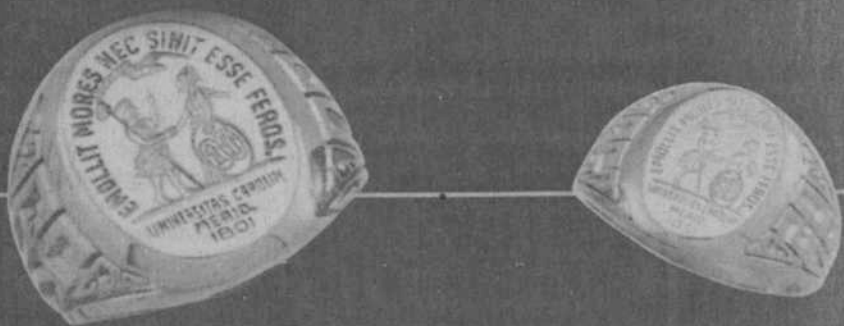
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