

# **CELEBRATION OF LIFE**

**Funeral Service**

**Old Post Chapel, Fort Myer**

**Arlington National Cemetery**

**9:00 a.m., 24 June 2014**



**In Loving Memory**

**Lt. Gen. John M. Wright, Jr. (USA, Retired)**

**14 April 1916 – 27 January 2014**

## **I Believe**

### **LTG John M. Wright, Jr.**

In forty months as a prisoner of war, I learned a lot about what makes men tick. I saw men die in an effort to keep their buddies alive. I saw men murder their companions in an effort to keep themselves alive. I saw brave men turn to cowards; and weak men become heroes. I saw treason and acts of patriotism; superb leadership and acts of mutiny. Looking back on that period, I feel now that I was indeed fortunate because the experience led to the development of several strong convictions. I would like to share these convictions with you.

**I believe:** that much of the character which a man exhibits in his day-to-day actions is like a veneer. Under increasing degrees of physical and mental stress this veneer will wear away. Ultimately, as a man approaches his breaking point, he must be sustained by a strength derived from a basic, innate, mental, moral, and physical stamina which has flowed in his veins since he was a baby. What enabled some men to hold themselves together while others cracked was the love and care their parents gave them from the time of their birth until they were old enough to think for themselves.

**I believe:** there is great strength to be derived from a sincere belief in God. In the face of apparently unbearable adversity, a man who can ask for God's help and be confident he will receive it will keep going when other men cannot.

**I believe:** we must be helped through life by our friends, and we must be a friend to those who need our help. Friendship must be deep and sincere, and sometimes it entails self-sacrifice. In the Gospel according to St. John is a passage which expresses my belief: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lays down his life for his friends."

**I believe:** we should be aware of and grateful for the good things in this world. There are so many of them. When you have lived without a single material possession, you become acutely aware of how fortunate we Americans really are.

**I believe:** as Americans, we need to make a greater effort to know, to understand, and to appreciate our heritage and the sacrifices made by our ancestors in securing our way of life. True patriotism must be founded on a strong belief in the United States of America, its Constitution and Bill of Rights, and its freedoms.

Finally, **I believe:** it is necessary to take time now and then to look seriously at where we are and where we want to go. What is it we really want out of life? What are the satisfactions and the obligations? Only by thinking seriously of life as a whole can we discover the courses of action which will give our lives real meaning.

These are my convictions and I thank God for leading me through the experiences which developed them.



**JOHN MACNAIR WRIGHT, JR.**  
**Lieutenant General, U.S. Army (Retired)**

General Wright was born in Los Angeles, California in April 1916. He enlisted in the Regular Army in 1935, entered the U.S. Military Academy in 1936 and graduated 1940. In World War II he commanded the battery which fired the last round in defense of Corregidor, and then survived three and a half years as a prisoner of war of Japan. He served in the Korean War, and during the Vietnam War he served one tour as assistant division commander of the 1st Cavalry Division and a second tour as commanding general of the 101st Airborne Division. He also served as commanding general of the U.S. Army Infantry Center, and commandant of the U.S. Army Infantry School. Among his awards are the three Distinguished Service Medals, two Silver Stars, two Legions of Merit, the Distinguished Flying Cross, sixty Air Medals, two Purple Hearts, Combat Infantryman Badge, Master Parachutist Badge, and Senior Army Aviator Badge. He retired from the U.S. Army in 1972 while serving as Comptroller of the Army. He was inducted into the Army Aviation Hall of Fame in 1986 and received the United States Military Academy Association of Graduates Distinguished Graduate Award in 2007.

General Wright became a Boy Scout on his twelfth birthday and has served in Scouting continuously since then. He was an Eagle Scout, the son of an Eagle Scout, the brother of an Eagle Scout, the father of two Eagle Scouts, and the grandfather of an Eagle Scout. As a volunteer he served as Scoutmaster, Explorer Advisor, District Commissioner, District Chairman, member of council and regional executive boards, member of the national Boy Scout Committee, council president, and as a leader at Philmont Scout Ranch and national and world jamborees. During the Vietnam War he served as Technical Advisor to the Vietnamese Boy Scout Association. He was a recipient of the Boy Scouts of America Silver Beaver, Silver Antelope, and Distinguished Eagle Scout awards. Following retirement from the Army, General Wright joined the national headquarters of the Boy Scouts of America as a professional in 1973. He served as Director of Research and Development, National Director of Program, and National Director of Exploring. He retired from the Boy Scouts of

America in 1981. He served on the National Exploring Committee and was a Regent for Life of the National Eagle Scout Association.

General Wright was a member of a number of patriotic and hereditary organizations. He was a member of Evergreen Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons of California. He was a York Rite and Scottish Rite Mason, a Shriner, and a member of National Sojourners, Heroes of '76, and High Twelve. He served as Governor General of the Order of the Founders and Patriots of America; President of the Texas Society of the Sons of the American Revolution; President of the California Society, Sons of the Revolution; District Deputy President General and Vice President of the California Society of the War of 1812; Lt. Governor of the California Society of Colonial Wars; and Commander of the Inland Empire Chapter of the Military Order of the World Wars. He was a member of the Society of the Cincinnati; Order of the Crown of Charlemagne; Baronial Order of Magna Charta; National Flag Foundation; National Congress of Patriotic Organizations; Military Order of the Carabao; Military Order of the Purple Heart; American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor; Order of Daedalians; Association of the U. S. Army; Army Aviation Association of America; National Infantry Association; 101st Airborne Division Association; and The Distinguished Flying Cross Society. Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge awarded General Wright the George Washington Honor Medal for his talk, "Reflections on Survival" and his book, Captured on Corregidor, Diary of an American P.O.W. in World War II.

General Wright was a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and Staff College and the National War College. He earned Master's Degrees from the University of Southern California in Business Administration and George Washington University in International Relations.

General Wright met his wife, Helene, in high school and they were married in 1940 after his graduation from West Point. She passed away in March 1995. He is survived by his two sons, John M. Wright, III of Tucson, Arizona and Richard K. Wright of Alexandria, Virginia; four grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.



# CELEBRATION OF LIFE

Prelude		Dr. Randall Sheets
Processional	<i>Mansions of the Lord</i>	West Point Alumni Glee Club
Welcome and Invocation		Chaplain (LTC) Allen W. Staley
Scripture Reading	<i>Psalm 23</i>	Nikole Heredia
Memories of Jack Wright		Rick Wright
Hymn	<i>Amazing Grace</i>	Hymn No. 375
Message		Chaplain Staley
Benediction		Chaplain Staley
Recessional	<i>West Point Alma Mater</i>	West Point Alumni Glee Club



After the service please follow the caisson and family  
to the gravesite.

There will be a reception at the Fort Myer Officers'  
Club immediately following the interment.

