

PRITZKER MILITARY LIBRARY

more than a library...it's an experience

610 North Fairbanks Court, 2nd Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60611
Phone: 312-587-0234
Fax: 312-587-7311
pritzkermilitarylibrary.org

Contact:
Mark Heiden
External Affairs Coordinator
312-587-0234
mheiden@pritzkermilitarylibrary.net

AUTHOR R. ALAN KING, WINNER OF THE 2008 COLBY AWARD, TO APPEAR AT THE PRITZKER MILITARY LIBRARY

CHICAGO, IL – While serving as a senior civil-military advisor in Baghdad, U.S. Army Lt. Col. R. Alan King disarmed several potentially dangerous situations with a weapon few members of the Coalition Provisional Authority possessed: quotations from the Qur'an.

On Thursday, June 12th, R. Alan King will appear at the Pritzker Military Library to discuss his Colby Award-winning memoir, *Twice Armed: An American Soldier's Battle for Hearts and Minds in Iraq*. This event is free and open to the public. The presentation and live webcast will begin at 6:00 p.m., preceded by a reception for Library members at 5:00 p.m. It will also be recorded for later broadcast on WYCC-TV/Channel 20.

King arrived in Iraq with the first American forces in April 2003. His civil affairs unit acted as liaison between the military, civil authorities, and the local population. It was a job with extraordinary challenges – in the early days of the occupation, various Iraqi exiles returned to Baghdad to declare themselves mayor or sheriff, and tempers flared during the endless summer power outages. But King found success through bringing faith to the battlefield. He estimates that he met with over 3,000 sheiks, praying with them and asking for their help to rebuild Iraq. And those relationships earned him a reputation for fairness and respect for Islam that led several people on the “most-wanted” list to seek him out and surrender to him personally; he even met with Muhammad Saeed al-Sahaf, a.k.a. “Baghdad Bob”, the former Iraqi Minister of Information.

But King also writes with pain at the memory of close friends who were killed in combat, both from his battalion and the Iraqis who worked with them, and he reflects with frustration on dealings with military bureaucracy and critical blunders that cost him some of that hard-earned trust.

R. Alan King was awarded two Bronze Stars for Valor, two Bronze Stars for achievement, and the Combat Action Badge. He is currently an active reserve member of the U.S. Army, and returned from his most recent service in Iraq in October 2007. He has appeared on NBC, CNN, Fox News, and other networks as a military commentator.

Named for the late Ambassador and former CIA Director William E. Colby, the Colby Award recognizes a first work of fiction or non-fiction that has made a significant contribution to the public's understanding of intelligence operations, military history or international affairs. It has been presented annually by the William E. Colby Military Writers' Symposium at Norwich University, the nation's oldest private military college, since 1999.

Seating for this event is limited, so reservations are recommended. Call 312.587.0234 or email events@pritzkermilitarylibrary.net.

For more information, please visit www.pritzkermilitarylibrary.org/events.

###

About the Pritzker Military Library

The Pritzker Military Library is a private, non-partisan research library located at 610 North Fairbanks Court in the Streeterville neighborhood of Chicago, near the Magnificent Mile. The mission of the Pritzker Military Library is to acquire and maintain an accessible collection of materials and develop appropriate programs focusing on the Citizen Soldier in the preservation of democracy.

The 5,000 sq. ft. facility features over 27,000 historical, reference, biographical and rare books on military subjects, over 900 original antique military posters and prints, and other military artifacts from private donors and the collection of COL (IL) James N. Pritzker, ARNG (Ret.). Since opening in October 2003, the Library has produced over 200 programs including author events, interviews with Medal of Honor recipients, and Chicago's only monthly public affairs program on military issues, *Front & Center with John Callaway*. Evening programs in the Library's McHenry Atrium are presented free of charge in front of a live audience, broadcast live on the Internet, and recorded for later broadcast on WYCC-TV/Channel 20, a PBS affiliate. Programs are also available as audio podcasts on the Library website and at iTunes. A complimentary reception for Associate Members with wine and light refreshments precedes each evening program. Books are provided for purchase and signing at author events by The Book Stall at Chestnut Court.

To learn more, please visit pritzkermilitarylibrary.org.

Contact:

Mark Heiden

External Affairs Coordinator

Pritzker Military Library

Library: 312.587.0234

E-Mail: mheiden@pritzkermilitarylibrary.net

Ryan Yantis

Executive Director

Pritzker Military Library

Library: 312.587.0234

E-Mail: execdirector@pritzkermilitarylibrary.net