



# Cowlitz Chaplaincy

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*A non-profit organization serving Emergency Service Responders and Citizens since 1983*

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## Here is Spring???

March was certainly an interesting month, wasn't it? The flowers are blooming; the grass is growing which means we have to mow our lawns, Yuk! Allergies found their way into our community. I, for one, have the awful pleasure of entertaining that pesky condition and I found I could get sick.

February & March brought tremendous stressors for many people. Some found situations so stressful that they chose to end their lives by means of suicide. This only compounded the problem as families had to deal with the aftermath of their selfish decisions to check out of this life. It is heart-wrenching holding someone when they can't come up with any rational reason for their loved one to do such a thing to themselves and family. **"Why? Please tell me why???"**

Of course we stand there with no answer to their plaguing question. Folks, these scenes apply pressure and stress on us who are called to offer hope and help. Only by the grace of the Lord can we accomplish such a task. The Bible tells us that only when a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies can it be fruitful in abundance for a harvest. That is revealed each spring time when our landscape is beautified with an array of colors displaying life.

When someone makes choices that cause so much pain and distress for those who are left behind in cases such as suicide, I would hope such selfish acts would contain some vital information. When confronted with problems, I hope people will evaluate their choices that would enhance life and well-being rather than destroy it.

**WOW!!**

The effects of our economy such as gas prices, price of food at the store, and the tax season

have really hit us all this year. The Chaplaincy has suffered a tremendous blow during the months of February and March. Steve and I's paychecks were severely cut these past couple months because of it. We are grateful that the other chaplaincy's bills were covered, so we at least could purchase gas for the vehicles to respond to calls.



We really are in a very tight spot and are asking for your financial and prayer support. We have traveled a long way over these past twenty-five years and it will be only by your sacrificial and faithful financial help will we are able to continue to reach out to our community in times of crisis.

This year we celebrate 25 years of serving Cowlitz County. It doesn't seem like it's been that long but it has. On March 3, 1983 the **Cowlitz County Sheriff's Chaplaincy** was birthed. Somewhere around 1987 or 1988 we took on a working name of **Cowlitz Chaplaincy** because every one thought the Sheriff's Office funded the program -- which wasn't the case. Therefore, we started to use **Cowlitz Chaplaincy** as our name to help alleviate confusion. We are, and always have been, funded by donations from folks like you who have been concerned about emergency service personnel and their families. Keep up the good work! We thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Your friend

**Chaplain Lyle**

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## JUST SOME THOUGHTS

Just a quick report on my trip to Florida to reconnect with my 'Nam buddy, Pat... The trip went way beyond all my expectations – the weather was terrific – the time with Pat and his wife was wonderful. In spite of 37+ years apart, it was as though no time had passed for us. The more we talked the more we remembered. We chose to 'stay away from' the negative aspects of our "adventure" and instead talked for hours about the good stuff (yes, in spite of being in a war zone, there were good experiences). Mainly we remembered friends we had served with and the zany things we did.

Have you got a "Bucket List" (if you haven't seen the movie yet – see it!)? One of the things on my "Bucket List" is to ride on as many of the old



WW2 Amphibious type rigs as I can around the country. They are called "Ducks" and are now used for sight-seeing rides in

several cities. While in Florida I found them in Miami Beach and West Palm Beach so I scratched those off my list (we previously have rode in Seattle, San Diego, Washington, DC, and Wisconsin Dells). Unfortunately some places around the country have 'modernized' the rigs so it's not quite as fun as the oldies, but still it's "on my list". We

plan to 'scratch off' Portland this summer.

Carmen and I even had the chance to get "up close & personal" with some alligators – but that's a whole other story. Bottom line – we had a wonderful trip and I pray my buddy "Poncho" will come out our way next year so we can reminisce some more. In the mean time we'll stay in touch through email & phone calls. Most importantly, I have to say that this was the first time in many years that I "truly relaxed" and came back home fully refreshed. Trust me, I REALLY needed the break! I thank God for it all!

The rest of February and March has been one big whirlwind. Had I not had the break I'm not sure I could have gotten through it all. In no time at all I was thrust back into the storm with calls to walk along side folks in their darkest hours. I'll share just a couple with you...

Only 3 days after my return from Florida I once again was called to walk with parents of a 4-month-old infant that had tragically died during the night following heart surgery 10-days earlier. Talk about a reality check for me – this was huge. In all honesty I found myself asking if I wanted to continue doing what I do as a Chaplain. After some time of reflection and prayer I realized this is what God has called me to and until He releases me I will press on.

Another tragedy involved the death of a 25-year-old mom

of 4 kids. While I was getting ready to go to the hospital with the husband I got word that the woman had died. We went to the hospital to have a time with her and minister to other family members who had gathered there. I then went back to the house to tell the kids that their mom had died. This kind of ministry is never easy, no matter how many times I've done it in the past. The 'good news' (at least for me) was that this family has a wonderful connection with a local church and pastor. It's always a little easier when I can "pass families off" to a loving pastor. Thank you Lord!



On the "up" side of life, I was able to attend my first Fire Service Academy

graduation in late March. Longview FD had 2 firefighter's graduating from the 10-week academy at Bates Tech in Tacoma. One of the grads is a former Longview PD officer so I have known and worked with him for over 6 years. Both of our firefighters received special recognition in their class and we are so proud of them.

That's a brief look at my world these last 60 days. Lyle already mentioned the financial strain we are facing right now, so I won't press harder. Truth is, your support is the only way we can remain "available 24-7". Please consider a gift at this critical time. Shalom!

**Chap Steve**

## Fundraiser News



On April 26<sup>th</sup> friends of Cowlitz Chaplaincy will gather at the Cowlitz

Regional Convention Center to celebrate 25 years of ministry in the county. This event will coincide with our annual fundraiser. In addition to speakers and special awards being presented, we will hold a 'silent auction' to help raise support for the Chaplaincy.

If you would like to attend this event and have not yet been asked to "sit at someone's table", please call the Chaplaincy office at 425-7222.

**We MUST have your reservation by April 11<sup>th</sup>!**

## "Every 15 Minutes"

March 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> kicked off the 2008 season of this important program at Woodland HS. "Every 15-Minutes" (sponsored by the Cowlitz County Sheriff's



Office) encourages students (especially the Senior Class) to make mature choices and not drink and drive. The 22 young people at Woodland High School did a great job with the skit at the assembly on Day 2 and were once again very polite and cooperative folks.

As Chaplains, Lyle and Steve come alongside law enforcement to assist with this program each year. Lyle said that, "During these past 12 years local schools that participate each year haven't lost a student due to an alcohol related crash. It is evident the kids are taking the matter of not drinking and driving seriously."

This year's Every 15 Minute program will continue at Castle Rock HS on April 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>; at Kalama HS on May 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>; and conclude at Kelso HS on May 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>.

Lyle went on to say, "It was truly a delight interacting with the Woodland HS students. It is too bad that the Longview Schools, Mark Morris and R.A. Long School Administrators, don't honor the value of this program for their students."

**Check us out on the WEB:**

**[www.cowlitzchaplaincy.org](http://www.cowlitzchaplaincy.org)**

Cowlitz County Citizen Corps Presents:

## Prepare Fair 2008



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**10:00am - 3:00pm**

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Longview, WA 98632  
*Take the time today to keep your family safe tomorrow!*

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