

Cowlitz Chaplaincy

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Website: www.cowlitzchaplaincy.org

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

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Autumn Is Here

Can you believe it is autumn already the year is three quarters gone and the horizon beckons the New Year to come. Since our last newsletter many things have taken place in the Chaplaincy and in my personal life. In August I had to go to Indiana for a chaplains' conference with the Assemblies of God at their National Convention. I drove back and was able, for the first time in my life; see some of our nation that I never saw before.



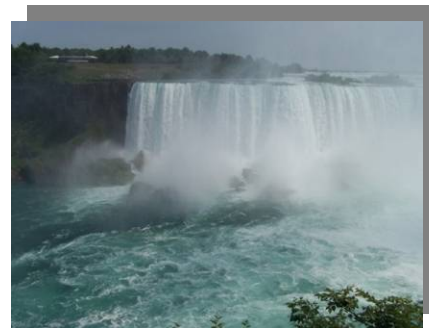
Though I think Washington is by far the most beautiful State that I thus far have seen, I did

find a sense of awe as my grand- daughter and I traveled highway 84 to Grand Island, NE where I left LaVena with her uncle, my oldest son, while I pushed on toward Indiana. While driving through Iowa along with about thirty other vehicles we threaded a tornado with interesting activity on each side of the freeway we only had a small blue sky patch centered over the freeway which I am sure the others along with me were praying, "Lord lead us through this interesting, exciting adventure that we are in," which He did.

After the conference I traveled on to Cleveland Ohio where a young lady whom I have been dating for the last two were married in her church on the 19th of August. Let me introduce you to my new wife, Miriam Prather.



On the 20th of August we started home to Washington via Highway 90 and we saw more exciting terrain; sights that we never saw before. Tornadoes, floods, sheet lightning, thunder, sheet rain, Buffalo Bill museum, Mt. Rushmore, Yellowstone, Coal strip mining in South Dakota, and lots and lots of corn and soy beans.



While I was in Ohio Miriam took me to Niagara Falls.

I was in awe again at the handiwork of God in His creation. He certainly is full of artistic wonder. It is so hard for me to understand how there are people who can't see His fingerprint in the tapestry of this world. As I ponder the thought that He has generously allowed you and me to live and to enjoy and manage this wonderful part of His magnificent creation. What a Savior we serve!

As we drove into the familiar landscape of Longview and Kelso, I realized that areas of need awaited me. I thank Steve for holding the fort while I was gone, and I picked up the reins of responding to the backlog of calls that I needed to respond to.

September has been filled with people who have lost loved ones for a variety of reasons

and each case was filled with pain and sorrow. One single mom of three girls had
(Cont. on P. 3)

In This Issue...

- "Just Some Thoughts" p.2
- Fire Prevention Week p.3
- Photo of the Month p.3
- Website Info p.3

JUST SOME THOUGHTS

Change is defined as; *“to make different... to transform or convert... to become altered or modified... to pass from one phase to another.”*

For me my world “changed” dramatically on September 8th. After Carmen and I came home from a wonderful vacation time ‘away from it all’ (I really needed the break!), my mother died suddenly. Mom had been going downhill physically for the past few months, but I did not expect it when it came.

I many times have told people that *“no matter how prepared you think you are – you’re not.”* This was my case too. Suddenly I was having to listen to my “self-talk” about how to process the death of a loved one. I know the things to do, why they are important to do and how to do them at a time like this (after all, I’m a trained “professional” – right?), but still when it’s one of your own, it’s hard.

On top of that, the same day my mother died I had to do a funeral for a family just a few hours after I heard of my mother’s death. As I was driving to that funeral I prayed, *“God, what am I going to do... I don’t know how I’m going to react in light of mom’s death... God help me!”* I heard His still small voice simply say to me, *“Be honest.”* And that’s what I did – I told them that when I say I

know what it feels like to lose a loved one, I **REALLY** know what it feels like. I continue to learn and re-learn along the path of this journey dealing with my mom’s death. I believe God is using it to make me more effective when I go and ‘knock on someone’s door’ to tell them they’ve lost a loved one. For those life lessons, I am most thankful.

I am also thankful for my family and the many, many friends who have expressed their love and care for me



Mom White -- always smiling.

during this time of grief. At times like this, you can’t have too many friends. The cards, phone calls, conversations, and emails have been my strength on many days. I know we are supposed to just “trust in God”, but sometimes we need God to have some “skin” on so we can touch Him. I am often asked ‘who is your Chaplain?’ and that’s a valid question. These past couple weeks I have had many “chaplains” caring about me and that is something I will never forget. Thank-you to each of you -- you know who you are!!!!

There’s one more thing I am extremely thankful for in this time of change. My mom knew Jesus – I mean really knew Him as her personal savior and Lord. One of the last things my mom did in fact

was give her pastor her “tithe check” to take to the church. Pastor Bill had come to visit mom at my sisters home (where she has lived the past 5 months) and as he went to leave she handed him her tithe. She “knew” she wouldn’t make it to church that next Sunday but she wanted to be faithful to her Lord. My mom had ALL her affairs ‘in order’ and for that I am so thankful.

Speaking of faithful – my mom wrote another check that last week before she died – a check to Cowlitz Chaplaincy in support of her son. It wasn’t much, but each month my mom let me know how proud she was of me by financially supporting this ministry. She knew what we do is important and worthy of her involvement. Because I am the one who does all the data entry for our financial donations, I had to enter my mom’s donation one final time. As I did I said a prayer of thanks for her faithful act of sacrifice that helped me “be there” when others are in crisis. If you’re one of those I’ve helped these past 5 years, you can thank her when you get to heaven. (You could also make a donation to the chaplaincy in her honor...)

Is change hard – you bet it is – especially when it hits so close to the heart. But reality is the day we are born we begin a journey of change. My prayer is that you are as blessed as I am on your own journey and that, like me, you find reasons to be thankful in the midst of all the change.

Shalom!

Chap Steve

(continued from page 1)

her bathtub break and I have been busy helping them to get their bathroom operational again. Another young son is having a problem adjusting to a new family structure; another family teenager wants more freedom that is far beyond her years of maturity. These all represent the stresses that folks find themselves in. Death, drug and alcohol addiction, accidents, and the lack of funds to meet the needs of living, plague folks in our community and many find their way to our office for help.

This is why your faithfulness is so important to the Chaplaincy. Your dollars and your prayers enable us to reach out and successfully touch lives to bring hope, help, and comfort when the precipice of despair overwhelms them.

Steve and I again want to keep before you that we truly appreciate your love and support. Please help us to share the mission of the chaplaincy to your friends. The chaplaincy could use more people joining you in helping us. We would very grateful.

Your friend

Chaplain Lyle

Check us out on the web...



www.cowlitzchaplaincy.org

Fire Prevention Week - Oct. 7-13

Most cities have special activities during this week ranging from school tours to open houses to educational demonstrations. Here is a list of the activities planned in Cowlitz County (at least the ones we know about):

SUNDAY, OCT. 7th: Representatives of all departments will participate in the 7th Annual Memorial Procession Parade honoring those fire personnel killed in the line of duty beginning at 11:00 am at the Cowlitz Fairgrounds and concluding with a brief ceremony at Cowlitz 2 F/R Station 21.

OPEN HOUSES for all ages will be held at the following Fire Stations:

Kalama Dist. 5	Wed/Oct 10 th	2-6pm
Kelso C2F/R	Sat/Oct 13 th	10am to 2pm
Longview Fire Dept.	Sat/Oct 13 th	10am to 2pm
Castle Rock Dist. 6	Sat/Oct 13 th	10am to 2pm

There are games and prizes and food and all sorts of displays at all these events.

TUESDAY, OCT 9th: Woodland FD will be out in neighborhoods encouraging people to check their smoke alarms.

MONDAY, OCT 8th - THURSDAY, OCT 11th: School tours of fire stations are held. Contact your child's school to see if they are participating in this activity this year.



Special thanks to all of our current Fire Personnel as well as all the "future" Fire Fighters who will serve and protect us in the days ahead. May God keep you safe today and always!

