



Cowlitz Chaplaincy

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

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Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year



From the Chaplaincy board Steve and all our Volunteers, have a very Merry Christmas and happy New Year and may our Lord and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ bestow His blessing on each of you.

December: Where In The World Did 2011 Go?

It seems just a few days ago I was writing our Christmas newsletter for 2010.

This year of 2011 has been filled with many trying cases such as a young teen drowning over the 4th of July weekend; horrible auto accidents where precious lives were tragically lost; the insane deaths where people died because of drug abuse; families thrust into grief because their loved one was seduced by the drug god who rendered death to his victim.



It is hard for me to understand why people won't believe what the Bible warns us of which is: Satan is out to rob, steal and destroy the lives of those he woos into his damnable net of death.

Our Les Nelson memorial breakfast and auction fundraiser was a success. Our Beef raffle was a success also. These two events help us so much financially during our lean times during the year. They exact a lot of energy from Steve and me and we are very thankful for our board and volunteers as well as our wives for all the time invested in making these fundraisers come about. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for donating materials for the auction or purchase tickets for the beef raffle.

During the months of August, September and October we were introduced to civil disorder involving EGT and the Longshoreman concerning which group has the right to work at the new grain terminal owned by EGT. We watched feuding among our neighbors to the point where local Law enforcement had to intervene. There was a move to recall Sheriff Mark

Nelson for doing the job he is mandated to do. I thank the Lord that the courts ruled in favor of Sheriff Nelson.

Miriam and I enjoyed a wonderful vacation after my operation. It was a great time for my recuperation, and Miriam was able to join in the wild life adventure and catch her first fish. She is a wonderful partner and wife to me. Best of all, she says She loves me. I thank God for the treasure He has blessed me with. I do love her so.

HOLIDAY TIME

Since this is the season to express our thanksgiving I would like to thank the Lord for all who are involved with administration of duties and serving for the Chaplaincy.



Thank you, Sheriff Mark Nelson for your leadership as the president of our corporation; Bob Heuer as our vice president, Darryl Arrera as our Secretary, Cindy Brado, our Treasurer who keeps us current in our bill-paying and taxes. Thank you, Chief Andy Hamilton, Captain Robert Huhta, Battalion Chief Kevin Taylor, and retired

Chief Wayne Nelson for your dedication and time spent on our board.

Thank you Miriam for the many hours you give during the fundraising and the hours spent with our newsletter preparing them to be mailed. Thank you for your prayers and putting up with me. You are a wonderful partner.

Thank you, Steve and Carman White for all the hours you serve our community and Carman for having to put up with those times that Steve is away from home. I appreciate all the work you do in helping during those time consuming fundraisers.

Thank you Mario and Nancy Gambaro for your passion and compassion for the chaplaincy. Flip and Crystal Eiland, thank you for your willingness to serve the chaplaincy and our community.

Thank you, Doug and Laura Fields for being part of our chaplaincy and helping us serve. Finis and Pat Johnson, dear friends, thank you for the times you share in serving the Lord touching those who are hurting.

My sincere thanks to all of you for the time you sacrifice to serve this Chaplaincy and our community and being willing to answer the call when the phones rings from the Communication Center and our services are needed.

Thank you from my heart to you.

As I wipe the tears from my eyes, I am also very thankful for America and for God's rich blessings that He so graciously showers upon us. I thank Him for my family and all my friends.

We had a wonderful Thanksgiving Day with my daughter DaVena's family. I can tell with truth the Turkey was good.

The holidays have the tendency to incorporate fantastic joy and to others they can bring unbelievable pain a suffering. We at the Chaplaincy have responded to some very hurtful and taxing situations where people have to balance the celebration of the Holidays with the loss of a loved one, Tables will have a vacant spot which will intensify the hollow hurt inside oneself. If you know someone in this condition give an encouraging word during our times of celebration.

Remember the Chaplaincy

Please remember us at the Chaplaincy through these times of financial leanness. It is by your faithful prayers and financial support that we are able to respond to the calls of those who are forced to walk through their night- mare of a traumatic event that they didn't plan on. You have been

so faithful and Steve and I want you to know we are very grateful for your support.

Chaplain Lyle Prather

AUCTION FUNDRAISER 2012

We are beginning to plan for the Les Nelson Memorial Fundraiser Breakfast and Auction in April, 2012.

If you have items you would like to contribute for the auction it's not too early to contact us.

Further details will follow in the next newsletter.

**OUR BOOKS FOR
THE YEAR WILL
BE CLOSED ON
DECEMBER 31ST.**

**BE SURE TO GET
YOUR 2011
DONATIONS TO
THE CHAPLAINCY
IN TO OUR OFFICE
FOR TAX CREDIT
BY DECEMBER 31,
2011.**

In just a couple weeks I will be busy with our 5th Annual **"SHOP WITH A COP"** program in the county. What started out with just one department (LPD) has since grown to 4 departments. LPD will "Shop" on Friday, December 16th at the 7th Ave. Wal-Mart. KPD will "Shop" on Saturday, December 17th at Target, and CRPD/CCSO will shop the same day at the

Ocean Beach Wal-Mart. I was so blessed to get grants from both Wal-Mart stores to help with this year's activity.

Many other businesses and individuals have also donated to this growing program. If you happen to be out shopping on December 16 & 17 don't be surprised if you see a bunch of kids hanging out with some of our law enforcement folks. Take a minute and say 'thanks' to the officers and deputies. This is a special highlight for all of us each year and I'm ready to have some fun.

Sprinkled in with fun, experience tells me there will be tragedy as well. During a season when people should encounter times of joy and celebration that same season creates unbearable stress for some. It's like *'two sides of the same coin'* – joy and sorrow – often just a heartbeat away from each other. Perhaps the most difficult of all during this



season is suicides. Suicide is never easy to deal with, but this season of the year makes it so much more difficult on all of us. My partner (Lyle) and I trade off the holidays each year – this year I worked Thanksgiving and he gets Christmas. In the past 10 years rarely have I made it through the holiday without being called out. Please say an extra prayer for all emergency responders during this season as they respond to tragedies and don't forget us Chaplains too.

By the way, if you've lost a loved one to suicide here is an excellent website with helpful info: www.road2healing.com –check it out.

My point in saying all that is that we need 'balance' in our

lives. That need for balance in life is never more critical than it is for emergency responders. They experience more trauma in the first year of their career than most people see in a life-time. I work hard to try and 'be there' for the men and women who rush toward danger while others run away. Activities like **"Shop with a Cop"** take a lot of time and effort, but it's worth it.

What did you do for Thanksgiving this year? Seriously, I'd love to know. We did the 'normal' stuff – you know – ate too much, watched too much football (is that really possible?) The best part of all was when I asked our kids and grandkids to each say "Thanks" to someone they appreciated. It didn't have to be anyone at the table, just someone who

has made your life better. I excluded Jesus from the list (not that He isn't the best). My heart jumped for joy as each of us identified who we were thankful for. The food may have gotten a little cold, but it was well worth it. [Seriously – I'd love to hear your Thanksgiving story – email me at steve@cowlitzchaplaincy.org

If you're like me (and I suspect you are) life gets REALLY busy this time of year. There are all the church activities and the parties with family and friends. All the shopping and decorating and the list goes on. I remember a Christmas season several years ago when I was pastoring that totally drained me. When Christmas Eve came around I found myself sitting by the fire in my chair all alone listening to one of my favorite CD's. It's a guitar instrumental of Christmas music that created an amazing oasis of peace for me. It's amazing what happens when we slow down and 'wait on the Lord.' I pray this Christmas will be one wherein we all pace ourselves better and not let the busyness of the season rob us of the joyful reason for the season.

May God fill your heart with His joy and peace – may you know in your knower that Jesus loves you – may 2012 be the best year ever for you and your family. Thanks for making my life better and fuller by your prayers and support. Shalom!



Steve