

# COUNTY-WIDE CHAPLAINCY

"There to Help  
When it Hurts"

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Dear Friends of Chaplaincy,

I had just finished meeting with a husband whose wife had died after a long struggle with cancer, when my cell phone rang. I was hoping to get home in time for dinner, so I dreaded this call. It was from a funeral director friend, Don, who told me he had 2 tickets to the air show, and he had a fishing conflict, so would I like the tickets. They were "Presidential Club" tickets with food and drink furnished, so I thought it over carefully for about 1/2 second, and accepted!

I took my oldest son Brian and we had a great time. I got home and could hardly wait to see my pictures of the event. Well, what a disappointment they were, as most were blank since the planes were long gone before I took the picture. I finally gave up since I was missing watching them swoop and soar up into the blue sky with amazing precision and grace - while I was trying to catch them with my camera. They flew so close together that they surely had to trust each other and be so

very disciplined. I understand that one of the pilots calls the shots, and the rest must follow the instructions implicitly or there would surely be a big crash. In January 2004 there was a crash because a pilot miscalculated his altitude and had to eject 8 seconds before his plane hit the ground. Part of the excitement is in the fact these are high-risk maneuvers.

Well, life itself is filled with many high-risk maneuvers. Some we survive and we tell stories about how much fun we had. This past week I made 2 death notifications in which a "fun day" ended in tragedy. The first was for a young lady of 18 who was riding an ATV with her brother on the sand dunes when apparently a sand rail vehicle struck and killed her. I went to the home of her parents to inform them of her death. They had already received a call from one of their sons on the scene, but we (sheriff deputies and Chaplain) confirmed it. When I left the home, the father said to me, "I feel so sorry for you, you really have a "nasty" job!" I assured him that

it was his family that I felt sorry for because of their huge loss of a young lady with so much potential.

The other notification was this past Friday. I had a Dr. appointment for a physical; and just before going, we got a call of a "train vs. ped" on a bridge in the north end of our county. I've been on 3 such calls on that bridge. Two sharp young men had finished work early and were thinking of going down to the river for a swim. They walked out on the bridge and the Amtrak train (speed limit of 79 mph on that bridge) came through. One of them made it off the bridge and the other was hit and killed. Together with chaplain Dean Schrock, we went to the homes involved to tell the terrible news. Both young men were a vital part of a local church, and what a privilege it was to pray with the families for strength and comfort. It just amazes me how special bonds are formed in and through these terrible times.

It has also been a real encouragement to have many of you say that you are keeping our family and our daughter-in-law Jennie in your prayers. Some of you have asked about the web page set up to track her progress. You can access it and get up-to-date as well as sign her guestbook at - [www.caringbridge.org/visit/jenniepp/journal](http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/jenniepp/journal).



Since Jennie had a doctor appointment on Connor's first day of Kindergarten, grandma and I got to take him for his orientation time. We made it a McDonalds lunch date first. Here he is finishing his sundae quickly so he can go and play on the slide. Oh to

be young and only have such major decisions like "How can I quickly get this icecream eaten so I can do something even more fun!!"

Thanks again for your part in supporting and encouraging this ministry through your gifts and prayers.

Joyfully serving together with you,  
*Chaplain Landis Epp*

Web Page -  
[911chaplain.org](http://911chaplain.org)