
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

Vol. 4, No. 44. July 27, 2012

Hello, Everyone:

Sadly, this week WUD starts off with the tragedy in Colorado. It's hard to express feelings about something so tragic. I'm sure there is going to be a lot of debate about the adequacy of our mental health system and also our fascination with guns in our culture. I just don't understand how most of us go to see violent movies that we see as some form of dramatic expression of art and entertainment, and we go home, and we make dinner, and go to bed. And some people go home, get on the internet and order 6,000 rounds of ammunition and protective gear. I'm sure there will be a lot of debate about accessibility of this type of weaponry. I certainly don't know what the answer is and I'm not sure anybody does. It seems like we have this happen here in America more than other countries, and I wonder why. Our hearts and prayers are with the families of that tragedy.

As you know from last week, I just got back from the ACA conference in Denver. It was a well-attended conference. I was busy on the campaign trail, running for President-Elect. ACA is a large organization with approximately 22,000 members nationwide representing all disciplines in correctional practice, to include mental health, medical, chaplaincy, probation and parole, community-based services, food service, line staff and administrative staff. Everyone involved had plenty of sessions to choose. The keynote speaker was Miss America, Laura Kaeppler – who spoke about the plight of children of incarcerated parents. She spoke from personal experience, as a child of incarcerated parents herself.

As you know, the Governor's Conference on Juvenile Justice is coming up in August and I look forward to seeing many of you there. It will be held right here in Baton Rouge this year- no one has to catch a plane, which is a good thing. Conferences are a good way to connect with colleagues who do the same kind of work that we do, in addition to gaining knowledge and perspective about what we do. I hope that everyone is continuing to find opportunities to learn and participate in training. We have to keep sharpening the saw, as Steven Covey says.

Well, here it is the end of July. I hope that those of you who have had plans for summer trips and getaways have gotten to go and enjoy some vacation time. I need some myself, but my leg kind of threw me off track. If you have not yet done so, you still have a few weeks before schools starts up again.

Well, this is one time we can really have a discussion about the weather. It's gotten kind of crazy lately with droughts across huge parts of the country and killer thunderstorms elsewhere. The news today was of intense storms across the Midwest and northeast with 75 mile an hour winds. Millions of people are without power. Sounds sort of familiar, doesn't it? I'm sure we are all grateful that the people who make a living predicting hurricanes, who said we would have over a dozen named storms, have so far been proven wrong. I know we have a long way to go before the end of hurricane season, so we can't get too complacent, but maybe we'll get lucky. Maybe this year's storms will stay way north and leave us alone. We also need to send good thoughts to our neighbors up north, because we sure know how it feels to be without electricity in the heat of summer.

So, it's the weekend already, and we can enjoy the brief break. I hope you enjoy the weekend, and stay safe and dry, and maybe catch some of the Summer Olympics, with my thanks to each of you, in every OJJ location, for all you do every day to meet the mission.

Sincerely, "Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*

Mary L. Livers, MSW, PH.D, Deputy Secretary

Office of Juvenile Justice • PO Box 66458 • Baton Rouge, LA 70896 • e: Whatsupdoc?OJJ@la.gov • www.ojd.louisiana.gov