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# what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

It is the holiday season isn't it? Are you "all in yet?" I am not quite there. I hope everybody had a good Thanksgiving and now, we have Christmas to go. Then there is New Year's. Then there is "Carnival." We are indeed "all in." At least for a while. It has been a good and busy week. Just getting back to work on Monday after Thanksgiving (seems like a long time ago) and getting cranked up again was a tough deal. But it seems we had no choice. It is just rocking and rolling and back to work around here.

We had several important meetings this week, beginning with a meeting on sex offender treatment in the community. We are challenged with ensuring that we have treatment providers in the community that are willing to be part of the La. Behavior Health system, also known as "Magellan." We are working with our providers to establish the correct protocols so that these funds can be leveraged and we can provide the best assessments and treatment that is suitable for this population. We made some progress and we will be taking steps for all of us to get where we need to be. It is always challenging, and never easy is it? We also had our first round of discussions on next year's budget. This is the time of year that we start putting together what we need. It is a long process and we won't know how things stand for a while.

Tuesday evening Sean Hamilton and Director of Education Kim Mims and I ventured out to the Northshore Technical College for a "Soiree". It was a really nice event launching the partnership between Northshore and the Groom Elite Horsemen's Educational program. We had quite an adventure trying to find it in the dark. I am convinced the lady in the GPS had it out for us. I think she has a sick sense of humor as she had us all twisted up-going down dark, deserted gravel type roads (in St. Helena parish). It was quite scary. And we were very lost. I saw something in the country I had never seen before: a graveyard where a memorial had Christmas lights decorating it. Have any of you seen that before? That was new on me.

I got the chance to go to the Lafayette Probation and Parole office on Wednesday and got to say hi to a few people in the office. Most of the supervisors were there and most of the PO's were out and about at court or seeing their kids. I did get a chance to meet 4 new PO's that have just joined OJJ. They are getting their feet wet and preparing to go to POST training soon. Welcome aboard! We had an Interstate Compact Council meeting that was chaired by Angela Bridgewater. There is a lot to the ICJ, as most of you know who work on getting kids back to Louisiana or out of state for supervision. Judge Duplantier is on our council and was at our meeting along with other council members including Representative Helena Moreno, Genie Powers from Department of Corrections, and Beth Meeks from the Louisiana Coalition against Domestic Violence. Judge D. treated us to a jambalaya lunch cooked by Chef Pat from the Lafayette Parish Sheriff's office. It was sooooo good let me tell ya. Back on the diet today!

Today we hosted two University of Southern California professors at Jetson. They are here to study what we have done with implementing the treatment model based from the Missouri model. They will be talking to our youth and our staff to learn all about how we have done things over the last few years. It is always good when I get a chance to talk about the good work that goes on at OJJ.

On a sad note, we lost a great leader, Nelson Mandela on Thursday. Mr. Mandela was a truly mission driven leader. After surviving years in prison, he emerged to fight for the goal of a democratic South Africa free of apartheid, rather than choosing to exact revenge upon those who opposed and imprisoned him. He successfully led a peaceful government side by side with his former oppressors. Selflessly, after his first term as President, he stepped aside so that a democratically elected successor could take over to continue to advance the transformation of South Africa. Mr. Mandela was many things during his lifetime -- a fighter, a prisoner, a negotiator, and finally a President. In all of those roles he was a leader who put the good of others before his own personal desires.

As always, thanks for all you do, every day to meet the mission.  
Sincerely,

"Doc"

*Dr. Mary Livers*

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