

**OPERATION NIGHTWATCH NEWSLETTER
NOVEMBER – DECEMBER, 2010**

Director's Message

Public relations consultants all say that if someone is to be an effective “pitchman” for his organization, he must develop an “elevator speech”—that is, he must have the capability of getting a complete stranger to understand the value of his organization in the time it would take to share an elevator as it travels several floors. Most people’s time available to listen (not to mention their attention spans) are just that short. If an organization’s representative is to win support, it must be in a message that fits its persuasion into a very small package.

I’ve developed several variations of the “elevator speech” I use to promote Nightwatch, and until a few weeks ago, I thought I had one to fit every circumstance.

But then I set up our Nightwatch display table at a volunteer fair that was attended by a number of families with children. And when the families came by, it was often the kids (because of their natural curiosity) who often led off the questioning: “What is Operation Nightwatch? What do *you* do?”

I suddenly realized that I had no “elevator speech” for kids. I had to create one on the spot. But how was I to do that? I found it challenging enough to explain to adults what it meant for us to provide hospitality and build relationships with folks who otherwise had nothing, and how it was just as important as feeding them a bowl of soup, or giving them a warm blanket, or providing a place to sleep that wasn’t exposed to the elements. But how was I going to get kids to understand?

So this is what I said:

“Do you ever think about where homeless people have to go at night? When you’re school day is done, you get to go home, enjoy time with your family, watch TV, call your friends, play video games. But those without a home don’t have anyplace like that. They often don’t even have any family. They’re all alone. Well, Operation Nightwatch is one place they can go to. There, they can meet with friends and make new friends. We give them something to eat, they can play games, and it feels very much like a family. It may be dark outside, but Nightwatch is a place they can come where we help them feel they are not all alone.”

The kids understood. Maybe that’s because when kids feel loneliness, they feel it in such an intense way. They know exactly how terrible and painful it can be. And with their imaginations so fertile, they could also feel how horrible it would be not to have a mom or dad to cuddle up to when suffering those lonely times.

It then occurred to me, however, that it doesn’t take much imagination on the part of us adults to feel those things, too.

When we say that ours is a “hospitality ministry,” people may have a hard time comprehending what that might mean.

But all of us knows what loneliness is.

Maybe I didn’t several variations of an “elevator speech.” Maybe I needed just one. And the one I invented for the kids that day was the best of them to help people appreciate what Nightwatch is and does.

Gary L. Davis

NIGHTWATCH CHRISTMAS PARTY IS DECEMBER 11!

It’s the Nightwatch “EVENT OF THE YEAR”! It’s a full sit-down dinner for 200 guests, with gift-giving and holiday music. Our guests look forward to it, and many of our volunteers do, too.

Needless to say, it requires the help of many people to make it a success. First of all, we need contributions to our menu. We need a number of folks to **roast turkeys** and bring them in. We need people to bake **apple and pumpkin pies**, and to make **dinner rolls**. We need **apple cider** and **vegetable relish trays**. We need **Cool Whip** to top off our pies. (We’ll also accept financial donations, to help provide gifts for our guests.)

And join us at the First Presbyterian Church on the evening of December 11 for the party—where we celebrate the real spirit of the Christmas!

This year, you can go online to volunteer or to commit yourself to a food donation. Go to www.operationnightwatch.org/christmas.htm and follow the links for either.

You may also contact us the conventional ways:

Phone or text: 503-220-0438

email: info@operationnightwatch.org

From the Program Coordinator

I can hardly believe that the weather is turning crisp and rainy already. Time moves exponentially; so has my learning curve in the last few months as “head volunteer” in the hospitality

center. After a series of 9-1-1 ambulance calls and a CPR/First Aid certification class I have learned very quickly what ailments hospitality can amend, and which ones we need to call higher authorities on.

One weekend in particular a regular guest came into the center in a disheveled state. He was a mess, both metaphorically and literally (when we were cleaning up that night there was a ring of dirt surrounding his chair.) When I approached him to ask why he was crying he told me that his brother had committed suicide a few weeks before and now he was finally processing the finality of the situation. I immediately filled him a cup of coffee and spent as much time as I could listening to his story. He spent the rest of the evening with a few other regular guests and left with tears still in his eyes, but in what seemed to be a more positive mental state.

Two nights later another regular guest came in cold and wet from the rain, complaining he was tired and hurting. I got him a chair and a cup of coffee hoping that he might be able to relax and calm down. But, as minutes passed his pain worsened and his breathing grew strained. Realizing his issue went beyond emotional compassion—it was indeed a physical problem—there was little other choice than to call an ambulance and pray that my guest would be alright (he has since recovered and is back in the center on an almost nightly basis).

Through these instances (and so many others) I'm beginning to fully realize that through coffee, conversation and awareness, Nightwatch's Hospitality Ministry opens itself as a space of unconditional love and compassion for our guests. That is a love so immensely powerful that some days there is nothing else for me to do but break down in tears of awe as I feel it wash over me.

Cole

COME TO THE NIGHTWATCH ANNUAL BREAKFAST, NOVEMBER 6

What an interesting year Nightwatch has had! We've received grants, initiated a Mobile Hospitality Center, and lost our home.

Yet the future beckons: a new location for our work, and a new opportunity to re-invent ourselves.

Want to learn more about it? Be our guests at our Annual Breakfast, Saturday, November 6, beginning at 9:00 a.m. We'll be meeting at the Waverly Heights United Church of Christ, 3300 SE Woodward, in Portland.

The Mobile Hospitality Center will be there. And so will a new Lexus RX350. Why the Lexus? Because we'll be raffling off the opportunity for a free weekend use of the Lexus (offered by Lexus of Portland). Proceeds from the raffle will go to the Mobile Hospitality Center Maintenance Fund (one set of wheels supporting another set of wheels).



To R.S.V.P. for the breakfast, call or text 503-220-0438, or email info@operationnightwatch.org.

NOVEMBER 14 IS MOVING DAY

On Sunday, November 14, Nightwatch will be moving its belongings from Julia West House to . . .

Well, at the moment of this writing, we don't know exactly where that will be, but we do know it will be somewhere.

And we could use help. If you want to lend a hand getting our stuff moved to our new location (and have the bragging rights of being one of the first to see it), give us a call or text at 503-220-0438, or email info@operationnightwatch.org.

MEET OUR NEW BOARD MEMBER, LEAH HOLLINGSHEAD

We welcome Leah Hollingshead as the newest member of our Board of Directors. Leah is a retired mental health worker and a dedicated volunteer. Leah was one of the original members of our Street Hospitality Teams, and she can be found at the Hospitality Center a couple of times a month.

THE HOLIDAYS ARE COMING: HONOR YOUR LOVED ONES WITH A GIFT TO NIGHTWATCH

Does Aunt Sally really need another gift of perfumed bath powder? How about honoring her at Christmas by giving a gift in her name to Operation Nightwatch? We'll send her a nice card acknowledging the gift you made to/for her, and tell her how Christmas will be better for someone because of the thoughtfulness you expressed.

For instance,

- A gift of \$8 provides one blanket.
- A gift of \$10 will pay for the lemonade we use at the Hospitality Center for three nights (one weekend).
- A gift of \$24 will feed the group that attends one of our weekly Bible studies.
- A gift of \$26 will meet the expenses (movie + refreshments) of one Comedy Movie Night.
- A gift of \$30 will provide tuna sandwiches for one weekend for the Hospitality Center
- A gift of \$35 will supply enough fuel for the bus for one monthly outing.
- A gift of \$40 will cover the costs of food on one monthly outing.
- A gift of \$80 will buy 216 pairs of socks.
- A gift of \$150 will fill the gas tank of the Mobile Hospitality Center, enabling us to take our ministry to the poorest outside the downtown area.

USE GOODSHOP TO SUPPORT NIGHTWATCH

Here's another way you can help Nightwatch in your holiday gift-giving. If you do any shopping online, don't go directly to your retailer; go to www.goodshop.com instead. When asked, "Who do you GoodShop for?", type in "Operation Nightwatch Portland." Nightwatch will receive a percentage of every purchase you make.

Every major retailer is represented (and many you haven't heard of, as well)—from Amazon to WalMart.

And if you're traveling over the holidays and reserve online, you can also go through GoodShop. All the travel sites are there—and every purchase of an airline ticket, every car rental, and every hotel reservation will pay something back to Nightwatch.

Karl Malden used to say about American Express, "Don't leave home without it." I can say about GoodShop, "I don't buy a thing without it."

ESTATE GIVING: A SMALL STORY

In the wake of my mother's death, I heard from my mother's life insurance company. She still had me listed as a beneficiary, so I had some paperwork they wanted me to fill out. However, because I also hold a policy with the same company, they suggested I might want to update my beneficiaries because it had been a long time since I had done so.

As I looked at the list, certainly I still wanted to keep my wife on it. But my younger brother as a secondary? He was a kid when I first established the policy, but he's 41 years old now. I figured he really didn't need my money. But who could use it if I died?

My decision was a no-brainer. A beneficiary need not be an individual. I decided to list Operation Nightwatch.

When's the last time you looked at *your* life insurance policy? Or your will?

Gary

DAY OF HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS, NOVEMBER 16

November 16, 2010 will be a “Day of Homelessness Awareness,” coordinated by the New City Initiative, in cooperation with Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, the Oregon Board of Rabbis, and city and county governments.

On that day people are invited to participate in a “Walk of Awareness,” beginning at 7 a.m. at Downtown Chapel (6th and Burnside) and proceeding to the new 13 Salmon Family Day Center at First Unitarian Church.

People are also encouraged to make an “Altruistic Splurge” that day, foregoing a coffee break or snack, and then donating the money they would have spent to support the Homeless Families Warming Center at Eastminster Presbyterian Church. An online donation can be made through www.joinpdx.com/dayofawareness.html.

For more information contact Paul Schroeder at JOIN: (503) 913-7853, or pschroeder@joinpdx.com.

2011 OUTINGS LOOKING FOR SPONSORS

Monthly outings consistently serve as highlights in the lives of our guests. As soon as we return from one, they’re eager to sign up for another.

We’ve established a schedule for the coming year, and we now need sponsors to help fund the excursions. Donors may fund an outing either fully or partially. Please let us know if you’d like to sponsor one of these upcoming outings in 2011.

MONTH	OUTING	SPONSOR
January	Miniature Golf (\$175)	
February	Bowling	Al Bowen
March	Pearson Air Museum (\$150)	
April	Tualatin Hills Nature Park (\$100)	
May	Milo McIver State Park (\$150)	
June	Spiritual Retreat	Lake Oswego United Church of Christ
July	Portland Timbers (\$150)	
August	Fort Stevens State Park (\$200)	
September	Annual BBQ – Food (\$300)	
October	Columbia Gorge (\$150)	
November	Camp Adams Day Trip (\$100)	
December	Christmas lights (\$150)	

MOBILE HOSPITALITY CENTER PARTNERS WITH SECOND STORIES

Second Stories is an organization in SE Portland that works with churches to “train and unleash” them “to collaborate with schools, service organizations, neighborhood associations, individuals and

other churches for long-term neighborhood enrichment [and work toward] social and spiritual transformation in Portland and beyond.” One of those groups that Second Stories has chosen to collaborate with is Operation Nightwatch, and because of volunteers coming from its coalition of churches, the Mobile Hospitality Center has started to go out on Fridays, adding a second evening to its ministry.

On both Fridays and Saturdays, the MHC now goes out to serve the poor and homeless in SE. Our goal is to have it also go out additional evenings of the week, meeting people in other sectors of the metro area.

OUR CURRENT WISH LIST

Forecasts for the upcoming winter is that it is going to be colder and wetter than normal. Our primary Wish List needs correspond to that. Furthermore, since we’re serving more people because of the Mobile Hospitality Center, we simply need more quantities of everything.

Blankets!
Sleeping bags
Athletic Shoes (esp. larger men’s sizes)
Hats
Jackets (esp. larger sizes)
Socks
Backpacks
Tarps
Sweatshirts (esp. hoodies)
Razors
Ibuprofen / acetaminophen
Canned soups/chili, saltines (for soup supper on Bible Study nights)
Gift cards, movie passes, etc. (for prizes to offer at game nights)
[PLEASE: NO pants, shirts, T-shirts, underwear, women’s clothes. These donations only create an additional burden for us.]

LIFE AT THE HOSPITALITY CENTER

Here are selections from our nightly log:

- “Paul is rocking the clean-up, so even though Leah and Ruthie both left early we are in good shape to close on time tonight.
“Jeremy showed up for about an hour toward the end of the night. Having him at the front of the house was nice—I was able to spend a bit of time on the porch with M-- and got to know her a bit better. She came from Oklahoma and prefers Portland because it has neither the heat or the snow.
“R-- showed me more of his artwork. We had an interesting conversation about metaphysics, demons and andromeche. In short, his religious philosophy.” (Cole)

- “A new guest named K-- came in tonight. He is new to Portland from Eugene, got a sandwich and a blanket and was looking for a place to stay. I called City Team ministries, they had a spot. I pointed him in the right direction and he was off.” (Cole)
- “Tonight seemed pretty busy for the first week of the month. Started the evening by playing a game of Apples to Apples . . . and subsequently spent the evening listening to P-- hassle me concerning the Michigan Wolverines. Had to break up my first argument and send both D-- and E-- home.” (Cole)
- “V-- staggered in, and I followed her to the patio. I told her that she couldn’t be here if she had been drinking. She asked if she could have a cup of coffee. I said she had to leave until she was sober. She got up, said, ‘I am sober!’ proceeded to take a cup half-filled with cold coffee, downed it, and staggered out. A few minutes later, I went to stand outside. V-- walked by and said to me, ‘You can’t come back until you’re sober!’ ‘Deal!’ I said, ‘Let’s both agree to that.’ (Gary)
- “Tonight C--, who bears a striking resemblance to President Obama, introduced me to 91.7 Charlie FM. I had the music on softly at the back of the kitchen, but he asked me to bring it forward so everyone could hear it. He was in the Navy and has lived at bases across the US and even in Oxford, UK where he guarded F100’s: Bombers that carry nuclear weapons.
 “I spoke with S-- for a bit. He’s thinking about heading back to New York City after five years in PDX. He is from the Bronx and says he doesn’t like to stay in one place too long.
 “Toward the end of the evening as I was talking to S-- on the patio I watched D--and another gentleman have individual conversations with the air. Mellow evening overall.” (Cole)
- “B-- was very upset when he came in. When I saw him crying and asked what was wrong he said his brother had committed suicide while talking to him over the phone and that it was all beginning to wash over him. J-- and M-- (back from their trip to Seattle) spent the majority of the night with him; B-- seems in better spirits now than when he came in. We didn’t give any blankets out tonight, thinking we will keep the remaining 12 for emergencies only. The only person who really wanted a blanket was E--. He said he needed one to keep from waking up cold in the night. I offered him the sleeping bag Leah had brought instead and he was very grateful saying he will keep that for a long time.
 “T--, the manager at Alder House came to inquire about our movie. He would like to know as soon as we find a new place so he can inform his residents. I told him his residents would be the first to know.
 “Jessica from PSU came to deliver her Career Futures Presentation, which she did mostly by mingling individually with the guests. It seemed to be pretty well-received and she plans on returning when she can.
 “Over all mellow evening of great guests and great volunteers.” (Cole)
- “We had to close at 10 tonight as the Lewis and Clark students and Ruthie had to leave early, but clean-up is going well with the help of [some guests].
 “Tonight was trying with a huge influx of guests at the beginning with many different needs. A couple (the girl’s name was R.—she was pregnant) came to the area from Newport and were looking for shelter. I called every shelter I could but they were all full because of the rain. The couple stayed most of the evening. . . .
 “Bingo (led by Ruthie) was well-received. People seemed to have a lot of fun and really enjoyed the prizes.
 “Ruthie was integral to tonight running smoothly. She was on top of the bingo game and the food. I certainly couldn’t have done it without her as I helped the other guests.” (Cole)

- “G-- came in this evening complaining that he was light-headed and tired. I sat him down thinking the condition would improve and when he didn’t, I asked Julia who suggested I call an ambulance.

“So tonight, I made my first Nightwatch call to 9-1-1. G-- was conscious through it all and answered many of the operator’s questions. . . . The paramedics and firemen were nice and took Gerald away—he even told them his birthdate and last name.” (Cole)

- “P.A. was back and he said he needed to give up the booze. He’s to talk to people at the VA about getting into a program. He’s also aware he can’t do it alone. I hope he makes it. I don’t doubt his intentions are good, but the odds are against him. We’ll do what we can to support.” (Gary)

- “The crowd outside was jovial before even opening; everyone was talking about the ‘Where’s Waldo’ bank robber. M-- pulled up R--’s picture on a news site—very sad that he had to resort to something so highly illegal; rather unfortunate. Everyone was discussing what they would do if they caught him and got the \$1000.

“Carmen’s art class (and cookies) were well-received; everyone was jovial tonight. P.S. and I just talked... rather, P-- just talked to me. The conversation went from the Hindenberg disaster to Led Zeppelin’s albums and the year they came out to Jethro Tull; He’s a repository of knowledge.” (Cole)

- “I’m starting to recognize a lot of the same faces after coming to Nightwatch for several weekends now. It’s amazing how many stories some people have to tell. My favorite of the night was from a veteran up told me about moving in the services. One move, he packed up 18 cases of beer and after chewing out his platoon, then informed them as punishment they had to clean his trailer... Full of beer.

“Crazy stories, who cares if they’re true. The joy he had telling me about freaking out his platoon and the looks on their faces was great. His entire face lit up.” (Kat)

- “Enforced B.L.’s exclusion after being given a head’s up by T-- at the beginning of the evening; this was followed by a multi-tattooed man (tats all over his body and on his face) cutting in line to charge his phone. He asked Jenny for an alcohol swab to take care of an abscess on his leg. He asked if he could be in the bathroom for ten minutes to take care of it. She said it was against policy. Good work for a new volunteer!

“This was followed an hour later when M-- found a syringe on his bag on the bench. While I was searching for a container for the sharp (a cigarette butt can) R-- wrapped the needle in paper and shoved it in his pocket. I caught him running toward the door and made him place the sharp on the floor so Katie and I could dispose of it. When I approached R-- about the situation he said he had been trying to follow proper Hazmat procedure and get rid of the needle before the building got shut down in the disposal process. I told him to leave for the night. He was compliant.

“This was followed by C-- falling backward in an epileptic episode. Katie protected his head and he was fine in a few minutes. Thank God Katie was here; it was good to have a nurse on staff.” (Cole)

- “What happened to all our volunteers? Gary had to stay till 9:30. Carmen showed up unexpectedly but a great crew is on the clean up. Hearts of Fire was well-received, J-- told me about how she got M-- from getting stabbed in Chinatown. Met S-- who lives in Alder House. The end.” (Cole)
- “Pretty chilly evening tonight. With David watching the door I was able to play a game of Scrabble with J-- and J--. J-- opened up to me a bit about her personal life: she has been ill for

the better part of the last fifteen years and has been bouncing between France and the US for treatment.

“Anne from Defend Oregon came in and registered two voters . . . The majority of people have already been registered, but all was good. She was happy to have two new voters registered.” (Cole)

- “People filtered out fairly early tonight, but we went through all our supplies for the night. I’m starting to put more names to faces and people are now greeting me like an old friend. I can’t believe that Nightwatch will have to move out of here soon—it’s *such* a great location to help the community. I think my favorite part of the night was Cole dancing around the kitchen to classic rock. Highlight of my week.” (Kat)
- “Had a really good night. Two guys gave me really good insight into the homeless population and shared their concerns about my vulnerability and how I should be more wise. They opened up about their past experiences, etc. Good fellowship.” (Bonnie)
- “Enforced C.B.’s exclusion. As she walked out she bumped into R.S. and allegedly repeated “I’m gonna kill you.” She asked for a copy of her exclusion form but left before I could tell her I didn’t have a copier. I had to ask R-- to leave afterward. I suspected him of being drunk, and the clincher was when he said he had been drinking coffee to ‘sober up.’ He then told me he’d been sober for eight years. Eight years ending tonight?

“Operation Jukebox was a SMASHING success. After my 10-song playlist was over people still wanted more! I played requests for over an hour and a half. As I shut it down guests chanted ‘Cole for President.’ T-- said it was awesome; will definitely do again. Now S--, L-- and D-- are serenading the front entrance with ‘Danny Boy.’ It’s wonderful!” (Cole)

- “At the start of the night Monterey (an instructor at Mt. Hood) said she and her students already want to come back—that this is a ‘very good coffee shop.’

“And the Mt. Hood nursing students were very good volunteers. They filled me in on the contagiousness of pneumonia when M-- came in wearing a mask—and that made me hyper-aware of sanitation and the way I disinfected J-- and M--’s table after they left.

“I went to the bathroom and when I came back there was a hatchet in the mail crate. Unsure of what to do with it, nor where it came from, I placed the hatchet in the closet. L-- came to the desk a few minutes later asking for his “tool.” (He makes rings with the hatchet apparently). I told him since he brought a weapon in he had to leave for the night. He was compliant.

“At about 8:30 I was on the guest side of the counter talking to Vic. Z-- came up, tapped his cup on the counter and said ‘coffee.’ When I told him to ask please he said he wouldn’t, that he was sick of being polite. He said ‘You just wasted a good cup of coffee’ and went back to his seat. He hasn’t gotten a drink since.

“As John and I were about to walk out the door we got a knock. M-- was being escorted by a woman I’d never seen before, looking incredibly tired and disoriented and falling sideways. We got her to sit down and I called an ambulance—she said she had had a seizure and had been released from the hospital earlier that day. John and I went to look at First Unitarian for J-- but couldn’t find her.” (Cole)

- “So far the night has been a little crazy, we’ve had one of the guests ranting about how he’s convinced everyone he has known in the past is going to kill him. It’s been a bit hard to see an old veteran trying to get every military branch and government official down here to help him. It makes me wonder what mental help is available to vets who need it.” (Kat)
- “I really enjoyed spending time here and learning more about Nightwatch. I have met great people, and Cole is an amazing person. I really appreciate the opportunity.” (Megan)

- “I came here with my nursing students and within 15 minutes we all loved it here. Being with the guests, staff and volunteers has been the best way to spend a Saturday night. I love engaging students in both local and global issues. What a valuable community service that Cole is leading. Thank you for letting us be part of it.” (Monterey)
- “I was really enlightened by this experience. I met so many amazing people and enjoyed spending time with them! Cole and Kat and the others were so amazing!” (MHCC student)
- “Tonight has been insanely quiet which was nice, with absolutely no shortage of food. We couldn’t give away our quota of sandwiches due to the leftover donations from the OHSU volunteer fair. The Mt. Hood students were good sports and filled plates as people asked. We still have a ton of cookies and tabouleh left over.
 - “J-- wants me to start the LGBT group next Thursday; she’s found 5 interested guests, and I really look forward to it.
 - “Now, J--, C-- and F-- are cleaning hard core. We’re in great shape.
 - “Reporter and photographer from the Oregonian stopped by to write on impending move.” (Cole)
- “Early in the evening I had to ask one of R--’s friends to leave because she had brought a cat in under her shirt and claimed it was a service animal, it keeps her from having panic attacks. The girls left relatively quickly but R-- was upset. I had to enforce J--’s exclusion and she had some not so nice names for me.
 - “As R-- left he said ‘See you whenever. What you did to my sister you done just ****ed up your friendship with me.’ It seems that is all I’m capable of doing tonight, so I’ll just have to let it roll off. Otherwise, a quiet, mellow evening. Brenda had to leave early with a stomach bug but we were more than covered with Ruthie and Jeff in the kitchen, Adolfo on the patio and Bonnie doing clothes. It’s starting to rain and we all seem pretty tired.” (Cole)
- “A nice mellow night, it’s 10:15 and we’re nearly cleared out. The Mt. Hood volunteers were good and interactive with the guests. Sonnie ran the kitchen well.
 - “We were pretty busy in the first two hours. T-- showed me the new book he’s picked out from the library—he said he’s beginning to read about for the first time in 20 years. He has published some of his stories on the Internet.
 - “P-- was unusually quiet tonight—no chicken caps on his head. It was refreshing but also a bit disconcerting. Perhaps this is a new trend. He didn’t even run in it that Michigan lost to Michigan State today.” (Cole)
- “I had many conversations tonight. One in particular was about how he came to Portland and how he’s trying to find work and an apartment for him and his girlfriend. He talked about his life on the streets and how easy it was to get there but it’s been very hard to get out.” (Mt. Hood student)
- “We had a really busy but jolly and convivial night especially at the start. The entire clothing request list was filled (both sides) by 7:30 and it took Paul about a half an hour to fill the requests. . . . We went through all our coffee by 8, but I authorized another pot after realizing that one of them had only been brewing one gallon.
 - “I waited to start Pictures Worth 1000 Words until after 9 when it had calmed down a bit. It wasn’t too long and the guests were receptive to the volunteers’ stories. It lasted about 15 minutes, then I got photos from a few guests to use for next week’s show.” (Cole)
- “Tonight was busy but these Thursday volunteers are truly coming together as a team. The best I’ve worked with here at Julia West.” (Paul)
- “First, a poem:

“Oh how I knew
P--’s quiet nights would not continue.
He was heckling in full force tonight
And farting every five minutes
Making the entire interior smell
Like rotten chicken eggs.”

“I had to mediate an argument between H-- and T--. H-- was upset that T-- is disrespectful of him, T-- was upset that H-- approaches him and he can’t get him to leave without being rude. I spoke with both separately about respecting boundaries. They have agreed (I think) to ignore one another.

“There was a lot of conversation this loud night; C-- was back telling me stories about her ‘husband’ in the Marines. (and here comes poem 2):

“Then we called the police.
The very intoxicated man
Had o’ so many chances
To leave.
But instead, he chose
To push Gary
And wave his middle finger
Saying o’ so many swears
O’ so many derogatory words.
He was asking for police,
Wanted them to take him away.
His wish was our command;
Cold cuffs on puffy wrists
A night in the drunk tank.

It could have been so much different
But what other choice did we have?

None in that moment.” (Cole)



ONW's first director and current director at the Annual BBQ



At the Annual BBQ