



July 2015 Newsletter

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100- Hour Graduation at Okaloosa Correctional Institution



The "Graduation Cookie"



William DeJoode



James Sledge and Eric Melendez



Beverly Shatterly with Nick Selerno



Goodies



Fellowship

As promised from last month, we are pleased to devote more space to the wonderful graduation at Okaloosa Correctional in Crestview, FL. These kinds of celebrations are great motivators and let the inmates know that someone cares. We especially would like to honor 100-hour graduate William DeJoode (top, center) for a job well done in meeting all the requirements and graduating from our complete program. This involves completing 100 clock hours of group interaction and at least one course from each of the six required focus areas.

We would also like to honor Board Member Beverly Shatterly (left, bottom) for all that she does as well as everyone else there that has a part in making our program there a success. Notice the goodies she brought for Graduation Day. This is in addition to all of the planning, coordinating, mentoring, and facilitating that she does in her region.

Beverly Shatterly is a board member from the Florida Panhandle. James Sledge is a facilitator from the same area.

In her own words, she says "we should mention James Sledge. He has co-facilitated with me since I started doing FIT at Okaloosa CI in 2010. He is such a blessing to the men and they adore him in every class. The top picture is of a cookie we give each 100 hour Graduate. The top right picture is of James Sledge with Eric Melendez who was also a 100 hour graduate. The bottom left is of Nick Selerno who was thanking us for all that FIT does for the class. The bottom middle is of all the goodies that we bring on Graduation day. We call it our 'FIT Grad Party'. The class enjoying their treats is the bottom right."

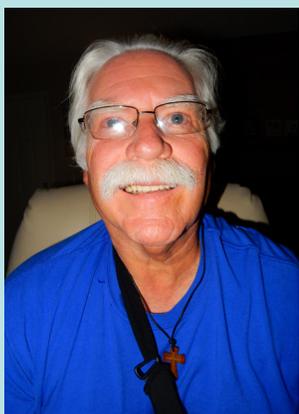
FIT TRAININGS! Saturday, July 25, at Branford, FL 9 AM-3 PM
Saturday, Aug 1, at Bradenton 8 AM-4 PM

Go to www.familyintegrity.org to enroll.



ANNUAL ONLINE FUNDRAISER SEP 1-2, NOON TO NOON
CONTRIBUTIONS MATCHED UP TO \$250. Some Restrictions Apply.
See next newsletter for details.

SALUTING PAUL WEBSTER



This month, FIT would like to honor one of FIT's most dedicated facilitators - Paul Webster. Paul is from Sarasota, FL. Paul facilitated 20 different FIT classes at the Sarasota County Jail before having a massive stroke that caused him to lose his job as an LPN and confined him to a wheelchair. While at the jail, Paul taught Parenting 101, Insight, Anger, and Free to Grow.

After a recovery period, he is back at it again, this time working with the Harvest House recovery center in Sarasota. He uses public transportation and a motorized scooter to get around. At Harvest House, he has taught Insight and Free to Grow. Over the years, he has been responsible for 92 graduates and a total of 1,500 student-hours.

The number of persons reached is much higher than that as turnover is very high in the settings that he ministers in.

PAUL WEBSTER HAD TO QUIT HIS JOB AS AN LPN DUE TO A STROKE THAT LEFT HIM CONFINED TO A WHEELCHAIR. NOW HE FINDS FULFILLMENT IN LEADING FIT CLASSES.

Comparing recovery-house ministry to jail ministry, he finds the recovery house as slightly more fulfilling. His reason? "The Lord delivered me from and addiction to an alcohol problem, so I have a heart for those who struggle with addictions like I did. In the past, I have several family members and close friends who have died from addictions." Also, he enjoys seeing his clients in church as well as in class.

Ministry to these fragile people is often frustrating. His last class started with ten and ended up with only two graduates. Some left the course and some were forced to leave the premises, but Paul maintains a positive outlook. He says he was encouraged by several things. Not the least was the dedication of the two that showed up and finished. Another plus was watching the initially quiet, who kept to themselves, open up and contribute. He was encouraged by seeing their faith in God increase and families being reconciled. There was a humorous outcome of Paul bringing "God is not dead" wristbands for the class members. One of them ended up getting a job because the employer saw it in the interview!

"EVEN IF ONLY ONE PERSON MAKES IT, IT IS WORTHWHILE. EVEN IF ONLY ONE COMES TO CLASS, I STILL HOLD CLASS".

As to his jail ministry, Paul has many good memories. He witnessed several men accepting Christ as a result of our programs as well as of others. He was glad to be a part in their overall progress. Again, he saw families come together as a result of the classes. He also used the personal salvation page many times to lead people to Christ and told participants to save the pages to lead others to Christ - and they did.

When asked, "why do you like the FIT program?", Paul had this answer. "It consists of volunteers who are volunteering their time out of the kindness of their own heart. It doesn't cost money to participate in the programs, and this is important because so many people are struggling with money problems these days. The most important thing to me, though, is that the classes are excellent for leading people to Christ, no matter which class it is." Paul said that his stroke and disability hit him hard, but FIT gives him a reason to keep going.

Summing it all up, he said "Even if only one person makes it is worthwhile. Even if only one comes to class, I still hold class".

Editor's note: Thank you, Paul, for sharing with us and being a model FIT facilitator. We are proud to have you as a part of our team.

