

New Year New Goals

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we have leaned into the new year, I am excited about the growth and development of our organization. We are currently housing 4 veterans of which 3 of them are justice involved. We have seen the vision of the founders of our organization come to life before our very eyes. We are providing a safe and secure environment for these men to heal and finally come home. Our board has expanded over the past several months and we have laid the foundation to start a new project for our organization. Over the next 5 months or so our board will be working on a Strategic Plan to implement 2025-2028 ensuring the long-term stability of Camp Centurion Inc. Our board is forged to be good stewards of what the good Lord has entrusted us with. We are persistent in seeking to fulfill the mission of the organization leaving no Veteran behind. With your help over the last 18 months, we have been able to house and assist 12 Veterans from the Gaston, Lincoln, and Cleveland County areas. I want to thank everyone who has been a part of this journey in some way, shape or form. Together, we can continue to create a safe and supportive environment for our veterans as they heal and transition back into civilian life.

Ken Heavner

President, Board of Directors

On January 20th Kenneth and I had the pleasure to speak to the awesome ladies at American Legion Post 100 Auxiliary located in Cherryville, North Carolina. We had some delicious soup and sandwiches, and we walked away with a generous contribution. Thank you, ladies!



From our director:

As a new year begins, the team at Camp Centurion are working hard to positively affect homeless veterans in need. We can't do this without help from donors and volunteers. Donations can be monetary, food items, or cleaning supplies; or you can volunteer your time, even if it's just lending an ear to a veteran. Please come out and visit with the staff and residents of Camp Centurion during our Open House on February 22, 2025, 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM and help us help a veteran in need. Camp Centurion is hosting this Open House to raise awareness for homelessness among veterans and to encourage community support. Attendees can learn more about the organization's mission, meet the staff and residents, and explore volunteer opportunities. Donations of food, cleaning supplies, and monetary contributions are also welcome and much needed.

UPCOMING EVENTS: Camp Centurion Open House**Open House Date: February 22, 2025****Time: 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM****Location: 2126 Bess Town Road, Bessemer City, NC 28016**

We would love for you to come visit our home for an in-person tour to find out more about our mission. Light refreshments will be provided. Please come out and join us!

Joe Willy Dunn

Director

Below is a list of our needs:

Large trash bags, Gatorades, one gallon freezer bags, one quart freezer bags, dryer sheets, shower gel, razor blades, shaving gel, shaving cream, paper towels, toilet paper, Windex, bleach, Clorox wipes, Lysol cleaner, toilet bowl cleaner, wasp and bug killer, paper cups, paper bowls, dish soap, mouth wash, Swiffer spray, Swiffer pads, cooking oil, aluminum foil, paper towels, paper plates, plastic forks, spoons, knives, tide pods, dishwasher pods.

Here is the link to our Amazon Wish list if you are willing to help us out in these areas:
<https://a.co/5idsFwm>. Otherwise please contact me if you wish to purchase items a different way.

Chaplain's Corner

(excerpted from W is for Warrior)

A Veterans Court is charged with trying cases of minor offenses that involve veterans diagnosed with service-related illnesses. The first veterans' court was established in 2008 in Buffalo, NY and was used as a model for other veterans' courts in other parts of the United States. On April 20, 2016, journalist Bill Kirby, Jr. wrote an article, in the *Fayetteville Observer*, about one such Veterans Court. Much of the following is from that article.

On April 12th, 2016, retired Special Forces First Sergeant Joseph Serna was trembling with fear as he entered the Cumberland County, NC courtroom of Judge Lou Olivera. After several tours in Afghanistan, during which Serna had received three Purple Hearts, he had developed severe PTSD and was trying to cope by self-medicating with alcohol. He had previously stood before Judge Olivera 25 times as part of the Veterans Treatment Court program. His mentor was standing with him when he confessed that he had lied to the judge about the positive results of his latest urinalysis test. At that point, Judge Olivera had no choice, and he sentenced Serna to 24 hours in jail. But Olivera knew Serna could not handle a night in jail and so he did far more than just throw Serna in jail. Olivera drove Serna to the jail. The cell door closed, and Serna sat on the cot alone in the cell. Then he was shocked when the door opened, and Judge Olivera walked into the cell. Judge Lou Olivera, himself a Gulf War veteran, stayed the night in jail with the man he had sentenced, and the two men spent most of the night as two vets talking about their military service. Olivera later said, "I thought about a story that I once read. It talked about a soldier with PTSD in a hole. A family member, a therapist and a friend all throw down a rope to help the suffering veteran. Finally, a fellow veteran climbs into the hole with him. The soldier suffering from PTSD asks, 'Why are you down here?' The fellow veteran replies, 'I'm here to climb out with you.'

Judge Olivera met the requirement of the law for justice, and he also met the need for mercy. Jesus came to earth to spend time in prison with us and for us. He climbed down into a dark hole with us and for us. He suffered and was tempted in every way as we are and He met every requirement of the law including the requirement for justice and, in Him, we meet every requirement of the law for we died with Him. In Him we also received new life: His life and, in *Deuteronomy 31:8* and in *Hebrews 13: 3-5*, He promised He would never leave us nor forsake us.

Chaplain Bud