



# THE ENCOURAGER

MINISTERING TO ALL FIRST RESPONDERS

Let us never forget



“Let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the day approaching.”  
Hebrews 10:25

November / December 2011

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Greetings, to all my Firefighting Brothers and Sisters in the Lord.

It is difficult to write about all the twists and turns a life can take, especially when you realize that the Lord has done great battles, constantly trying to steer you in a life-saving direction when you don't know where the steering wheel is. As you look back, it's humbling to know that it was the Lord that pulled you out of all those possible life-ending, hot situations and not yourself.

I am a retired engineer that was blessed with a thirty-plus year career with the Sacramento City Fire Department. I am married to the love of my youth, Charmion. We are blessed with four grandchildren, two which live in British Columbia.

I was raised with four brothers and sisters. We attended church and Sunday school every Sunday. There was something that made me feel all warm and fuzzy when inside the “House of God”. A Plan of Salvation was never given that I can remember, but there was still that special feeling I couldn't put a name to. I earned my first Bible at the age of six by memorizing Psalm 100. I still treasure it.

### Psalm 100

**“Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.”**

Well, I continued to grow older and dumber (as I see it now) and was very excited about what the “World” had for the taking, until my feet hit the ground in South Viet Nam. I spent two tours in the Mekong Delta and flew with an Assault Helicopter Company. During a chapel service one evening, our nightly attack got really intense. I felt this night might be my undoing. I did something very unexpected, I told God that “If He got me out of this mess He could have me”. He saved my body and I didn't realize He would collect on my offer later. During the Tet Offensive, my flight-line position was assaulted, by-passed, and cut off by the enemy. We were counted as dead for five hours. Returning

## MEET A MEMBER

Jerold Kemp  
Engineer  
Sacramento City FD (Ret)



from Military service, I got talked into taking a fire department entrance exam and passed high enough to get hired. While at the training academy I acquired a reputation as an angry young man. I enjoyed dealing with extremely stressful situations. I filled my life with the National Ski Patrol, Certifying on the first Haz-Mat Team, became an EMT, and certified in everything that came my way. But I could not fill a huge void somewhere inside.

On January 6, 1989, my wife and I were in church. I was very troubled in my spirit by the message of salvation. I knew I needed to respond to the altar call and give my life to the Lord. I always thought I was a Christian, but my wife knew I wasn't saved. She had prayed and prayed for me. Over night the Lord started to change me. Only the Christian brothers in the firehouse knew what created the drastic change.

The Lord mercifully asked me to honor my offer I made that night in South Viet Nam.

What a joy I've experienced since then. I have served as an ambassador and Task Force Leader for the Promise Keepers Ministry, an elder in my church, FEMA, and was one of five brothers to start the Sacramento Area Fire Chaplaincy. My wife and I are currently active members of the Gideons International.

There is such an abundance, but I must end with sharing a very important assignment the Lord has blessed me with. In 2009 my wife's doctors decided her heart would not last but a few more days. They sent her home on a Thursday and knew they had to find a heart by the end of the weekend. My wife knew inside that she had only a little time left and would soon be with the Lord. But that was not God's plan. I received a call at three in the morning from a surgeon telling me they had a heart. We were concerned about the one hundred mile trip with heavy traffic. The Lord opened the way at three in the morning. She received her new heart on 26<sup>th</sup> of April, 2009 and has had NO REJECTION!

### PRAISE THE LORD!

I don't know what the Lord has waiting for me but I will continue to honor my word to the Lord and “For me and my house we will serve the Lord” (Josh 24:15).

“Giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 5: 20).

**Fellowship of Christian Firefighters**  
INTERNATIONAL



Bob Winston, Gay, and Carlton (Corky) Flora Regional Director GA

## Missionary Musings

by Chief Gay Reynolds  
Chaplain and FCFI Missionary

**'Tis the Season**—Yes, this is my favorite time of year.

Thanksgiving—Do we have a lot to be thankful for?—Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior! Do you remember ALL He's done for you?

I'm thankful for all of you, as you serve Him through FCF in the fire service. What a blessing it is to see the difference you make in firefighters lives. And, yes, you are making a difference! We see it in communications with firefighters and at the conferences we attend as they come up and talk. We see it as many more members and chapters step up to share The Lord and FCFI at local conferences and Fire Academies. Keep on doing His work in your area.

Christmas—We celebrate the birth of the One we are most thankful for. Do you invite Him to your festivities? You should, He is the "Reason for the Season!" Oh yes, as we get together with family and friends, I pray that He is among you. Make Him feel welcome.

Bob Winston and Corky Flora worked the Fire Rescue International, IAFC booth with us in Atlanta. What a blessing it was to have them there. I praise the Lord for the activity at our booth. I'm sure we were the busiest! We should be, we have the greatest gift to present! In Las Vegas, at the Firehouse Central/EMS Expo many new, interested EMT's and firefighters stopped by. Again, it never ceases to amaze me to see how the Lord is working in the "First Responders" lives.

Thank you for allowing Sue and me to serve you in FCF. And thank you for serving FCF through serving the Lord. We love and appreciate you. **Happy Christ's Day!!**



*Greetings From North Jersey Chapter!*

**Chaplain Russ Stammer,  
FCFI Regional Director and Board Member.**



Our booth at the New Jersey State Firemen's Convention held September 16–18 in the seaside resort of Wildwood, NJ was kept busy with people stopping by to visit and get information. Convention attendance seemed to be down, but you'd never know

it by how busy our table was. In addition to working the exhibit table we held a cookout at a hotel near the beach. Good food and fellowship were had by all. FCF members also got together at a local Italian restaurant for an additional time of good food and fellowship. On Sunday morning we partnered with the First Baptist Church of Wildwood and led their worship service. FCF members Thom McCoy, Jake Thigpen, Shelley Thigpen, Bill Willemsen, and Scott Pruikisma assisted with the service along with help from Katie and Jonathan Stammer, Nick Pruikisma, and Brandon Degro in handling the offering collection. Following the service there was a luncheon provided by the church.

Many of our North Jersey members were involved with



ministry in the days following 9/11. Chapter president, Joe Smaha went to Florida and spoke at a service at the First Baptist Church of Middleburg and was interviewed by a local TV news crew. Regional Director, Russ Stammer, gave the invocation at the Oakland

(NJ) Borough 9/11 service and was quoted on the front page of the local paper, and Scott Pruikisma helped coordinate a 9/11 service at the Hawthorne Gospel Church in Hawthorne, NJ where approximately 2,000 people attended. Scott had the opportunity to share about the FCF and its ministries.



If you're ever in New Jersey please give us a call! Our meetings are usually held the last Friday of each month, but do check ahead as our dates may change based on other outreach opportunities. You can follow us on Facebook: "[Fellowship of Christian Firefighters North Jersey](#)". Please sign up as a fan and join us online.

### *Pierce M. Damewood MD Chapter*

The next prayer breakfast of the Pierce M. Damewood Chapter will be held jointly with Allegany-Garrett on November 5 at Branchville, Co. 11. Due to scheduling conflicts, there was no prayer breakfast in October.

For further information  
& to RSVP  
contact FCFI @  
FCFIHQ@aol.com  
or call  
1-800-322-9848

**YOU ARE INVITED**  
TO THE  
**FIFTH ANNUAL**  
**APPRECIATION DINNER**  
APRIL 20, 2012 AT 6:30 P.M.



PLEASE JOIN US FOR THIS TIME OF  
FELLOWSHIP, WORSHIP, AND APPRECIATION  
TO THOSE COMMITTED TO BRINGING  
THE FCFI VISION TO THE FIRE SERVICE  
OF KNOWING CHRIST AND THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION  
(PHIL 3:10).



Guest Speaker: Kevin Coffey

Kevin Coffey served as a Chicago Firefighter for thirty years before retiring in 2009. For years he was the president of the Chicago Chapter of FCFI. Kevin and his wife, Lorraine, have six children and four grandchildren. Currently he is a high school teacher and serves as chaplain to the Illinois Firefighters Association.

*God Is Telling His Rescue Story*  
Kevin Coffey; Retired, Engine 95

You are in His hands—and if you can believe it, many times you are His hands.

God is a Rescuer—He saves people all the time. One way that I like to think of God's intervention in human affairs is with the metaphor of storytelling. Using this metaphor I would say that day and night God is telling His Rescue Story - and a big way that He tells His Story is through the fire service. Every dispatch is an invitation for you to join Him in His Rescue Story. Someone is having a seizure, someone is trapped in a wrecked car, someone's apartment is on fire and the kids are trapped inside, etc. Somebody needs help, somebody needs to be rescued, saved! Sure, they can call out to God to save them, and many do, but they also dial 9-1-1. You hear the tones come in, and you are invited to another chapter of God's Rescue Story.

Every dispatch is an invitation for you to join Him in His Rescue Story.

The training, the experience, the physical stamina, the courage, the compassion, and at times the self-sacrifice are gifts that God has given so that you will be ready when His invitation comes. You are in His hands—and if you can believe it, many times you are His hands. What's even wilder, is that Jesus so identifies Himself with those that need to be rescued that He tells us, "whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me". Serve whole-heartedly, believe deeply—you are part of the Story.



*FAMILY CAMP JUNE 20-24, 2012 Black Mountain, NC*

*Worship Team*  
Pastor Ken Hall, Phil Garcia  
Music by Deb Garcia  
FOR MORE INFORMATION  
CONTACT JACK WHITE / 812-295-2838  
djwhite@dishmail.net

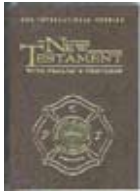


Pastor Ken and Dorothy Hall, Deb and Phil Garcia

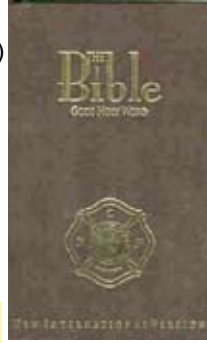


# MEMORABILIA SUGGESTED DONATIONS

## BIBLES



Right: Station Bible / FCFI Logo:  
English / (Regular or Large Print)  
Available in NIV (Blue Cover)  
or KJV (Black Cover)  
\$25.00 includes shipping  
Left: NIV Wildland New  
Testament (Blue)  
FCFI Logo: English or Spanish:  
\$5.00 includes S & H



**ANSWERING THE CALL  
NEW TESTAMENT**

Seek the support of your chapters and churches to place these New Testaments in the hands of all Fire Service Personnel in your area.

Consider a special service to honor the fire service in your area and present them with these Bibles

- ◆ Full color cover and picture inserts
- ◆ Firefighters Prayer
- ◆ Suggested Reading
- ◆ Salvation Message
- ◆ Testimonies and stories from Fire Service Personnel and More

**Suggested Donation: \$5.00 each includes S & H**

**Case of 50 \$175.00 includes S & H**

## Memorial Bibles:

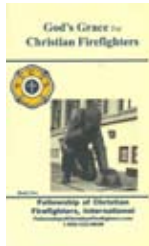
The FCFI Station Bibles with the FCFI logo (pictured on left) serve as a loving memorial to families or to a fire department presented in memory of a loved one.

## BIBLE STUDIES:

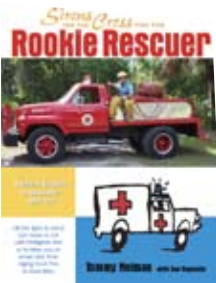
WRITTEN BY & FOR FIREFIGHTERS



\$3.00 each \$1.50 S & H for up to 6.  
Add \$1.50 S & H for each additional group of 6.



## BOOKS



Right: Sirens For The Cross:  
Left: Sirens For The Cross  
For The Rookie Rescuer  
**\$15.00 each includes shipping**

## Stories of Faith & Courage From Firefighters & First Responders

### Single Book

Special Pricing: \$12.99 plus \$3.50 each S & H (USPS)

### 20 Book Case Special:

\$199.80 plus \$25.00 S & H  
That's only \$9.99 each (more that 40% off) (UPS Ground service)



## FLAG OF HEROES

With names of the 343  
Who perished in  
The Attack on America:  
**\$25.00 Includes S & H**



Flag of Heroes.

## DECALS



Left: White or Black Praying Firefighter At The Cross \$5.00  
Right: Patriotic Praying Firefighter At The Cross \$3.00 / 2 for \$5.00  
Middle: FCFI Logo Decals Small Decal — \$2.00 / Large Decal — \$3.50  
Includes S & H

## FCFI LOGO SHIRTS:

### Screen Printed Shirts:

Blue T-shirts—White Logo: Small - XL \$13.00 XXL; XXXL: \$15.00  
White T-shirts—Blue and Yellow Logo: Small - XL \$13.00 XXL; XXXL: \$15.00

### Embroidered Emblem Polo Shirts:

#### Navy Blue or White

Small - XL \$25.00 XXL; \$27.00 XXXL: \$30.00  
Please add \$5.00 S & H



"Let us encourage one another," Hebrews 10:25

MESSAGE INSIDE

"I thank my God in all my tribulation, always offering joy in my every prayer for you..."  
Philippians 1:3,4

The Lord brought you  
To mind today  
May His blessings be yours,  
I pray.

And may you feel  
the joy, strength and love  
That comes from  
Our loving Father above.



"Let us encourage one another," Hebrews 10:25

MESSAGE INSIDE

"I can be destruction  
and the life:  
he that belitteth in me,  
though he sees death,  
yet shall he live."  
John 11:25

It's easy telling other  
To take courage and to pray  
We only learn how hard it is  
When our own pass away.

But may it help to comfort you  
And ease the loss you bear  
To know that there are other hearts  
That understand and care.

## Sympathy or Thinking Of You Cards

12 for \$8.00 includes S & H



Pin — \$4.00  
+ \$1.50 S & H



3" Patch — \$7.50  
Please add \$1.50 S & H

## Pray For Firefighters Magnets.

\$5.00 each  
\$1.50 S & H