

Clackamas Town Center Shooting Hits Close to Home for Tualatin Residents

Publisher's Note: Last month's shooting at Clackamas Town Center was a horrific event that shocked our region as well as the entire nation. With the Sandy Hook massacre occurring later the same week, news coverage and much of our attention was shifted to that story, but the effects of the Clackamas shootings were still looming large over our community. In this article you will find two accounts from Tualatin residents who were directly affected by this tragedy and their thoughts about the two fatally wounded victims.

So often (too often!) we hear about such horror stories and we are saddened and moved, but they seem so distant and off we go to the next news cycle. This story is close to home and it might give us all a sampling of the losses and widespread effects these events have on people beyond the victims and their families. **-JC**

WRITTEN BY: **DIANE HARTFORD**, FRIEND OF CINDY YUILLE

I have lived in Tualatin for 12 nearly years. I am an RN and work for Kaiser Permanente in their Geriatric and Long Term Care department. Prior to filling this position, I worked as a hospice nurse within the same department.

On Wednesday morning, December 12th, I found out that my co-worker and friend Cindy Yuille was one of the victims of the shootings at Clackamas Town Center. The shock and sadness was and is overwhelming. I left work early that day and came to the comfort of my home to grieve.

That evening, as I was watching the stories on the evening news and feeling completely overwhelmed, I began to hear the near-by rifle range; it sounded like there was a big training session going on with automatic and semi-automatic weapons (I am an Army veteran and my job was Small Arms Specialist so I know those sounds). I usually don't pay much attention to those noises, but that night was different. I thought, "OMG, you have got to be kidding! Not now!"

I called the non-emergent police line and spoke to a woman. I told her my story and asked if there was any way that they could knock off early, just this once. She was very consoling and understanding. I was told she would contact a field officer and find out if that would be possible. A short time later, I received a phone call from the field officer. (I can't remember the name; my mind is not terribly sharp right now as I'm sure you can understand). He told me that he checked with the range and they were hosting a fund raiser and that they couldn't stop. He also said that the range folks assured him that they'd be done by 9pm. He apologized on behalf of the range folks (which he certainly didn't need to do) and then offered his condolences. What he did next floored me. He offered the services of the Police Chaplain if I needed someone to talk to. He asked if I was supported and if I was ok. I thanked him for the offer and declined as I was well supported by my family at home and by my employer and had resources available if I felt I needed them. He offered his condolences once again and we ended the call.



Cindy Yuille, Clackamas Town Center Shooting Victim

I took the next day off and stayed home. Around 11 a.m. someone rang my doorbell. It was another Tualatin Police officer who came by to check on how I was doing (I wish I could remember his name, he was so kind). He asked if I had the emotional support I would need to heal from this tragedy and asked that I feel free to call the department if I needed any help. He simply held my hand for a moment and that one simple gesture helped me remember that not all of humanity has lost its mind; there really are truly kind people on this earth.

I have been deeply touched by the kind and caring offers from our Tualatin Police Department. I think that their actions are a beautiful testament to what true community policing looks like and should be. I want to thank them from the bottom of my sad and wounded heart. Their willingness to take time is more appreciated than they could know.

Please, say a prayer of healing for Cindy's family and friends. Her loss is felt very deeply by everyone who had the great fortune of having her touch their lives.



Diane Hartford is a 49 yr old RN living in Tualatin since 2001. She lives with her partner Brandy and their son Logan. They were planning to move to Portland after Logan graduated High School, "but the sense of community we feel here is too peaceful and loving to leave!"

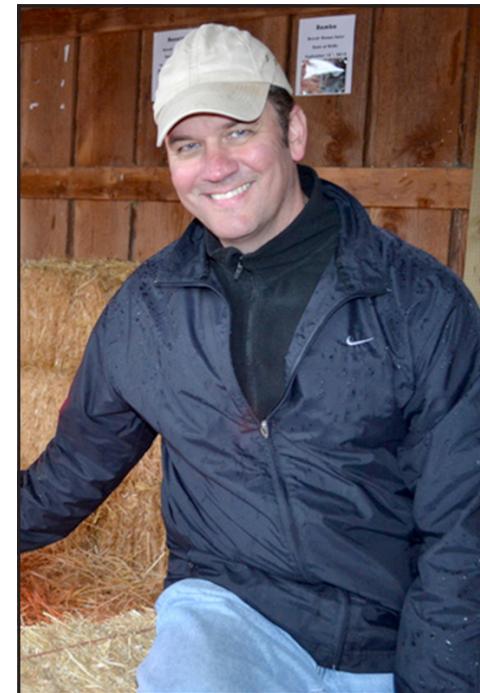
WRITTEN BY: **ERIC HERMANN**, FRIEND OF STEVE FORSYTH

In 21 years as a Patrol Officer I have learned that crimes are sometime committed by people that I would never understand. I have seen pure evil. On Tuesday December 11, a lone gunman entered Clackamas Town Center and started randomly firing rounds at the people inside. Two innocent people senselessly lost their lives that day. I was working that day, and I thought to myself how it could have been much worse.

The next day I was not prepared to learn that one of the victims killed was one of my good friends in High School, Steve Forsyth. Immediately I was brought back to the time in my life that I have a lot of good memories, when life was simple, and the friends were true. Steve was truly one of a kind, with a personality that was hard not to like. For some reason I thought back to the time that I helped him with the interior of an old beater van that he just bought. At that time, I looked up to him for getting his own car, which by itself was a measure of coolness. If you asked me what I think of a similar old beater van today, I would give you a whole different analogy.

Sitting in the crowd at Steve's memorial made me realize that even though we all took our separate paths after High School, Steve really hadn't changed through the years. It seemed that everyone around him truly felt blessed to know him. I pray for Steve's family that he left behind. I had never known Steve's wife Carla, daughter Katie, and son Alex. If I had known them, I know I would like them.

After the memorial I realized that the spirit of Steve is still amongst us, reuniting classmates that I have not seen in over 20 years like only Steve could. In the crowd was our basketball coach, Sonny Long, who to this day I remember



Steve Forsyth, Clackamas Town Center Shooting Victim

saying that we were "the worst basketball team he had ever coached". I thought to myself, it's easy to be good under the coaching of Sonny Long, but it's quite an accomplishment to be "the worst". However, I'm sure that everyone in the photograph would agree that playing basketball for Coach Long helped guide us to be successful in life. The basketball photograph is of the seniors on that 1985 Lakers team.

I imagine Steve still laughing and joking about it.



Eric Hermann is a 21 year veteran of the Tualatin Police Department. In addition to being a Field Training Officer, he was also 2012 Officer of the Year and a long time Tualatin resident.



From left: Eric Hermann, Steve Forsyth, Colin McNulty, Beau Harlan