

Spotlight on Crestwood Who Keeps the Place Running?

Our new Facilities Manager, Jim Cristi, does not like the spotlight on himself. When I finally wrangled him to meet with me, I found a somewhat shy but truly nice guy who is eager to do a great job for Crestwood. I learned a lot by talking with him.

I learned what a facilities manager is. I learned we are getting a new super-duper security system, and I learned that there is such a thing as a riding floor mop. Unfortunately, the latter can't be taken to my home.

The main take-away is that a facilities manager is what all of us would like to have at our personal disposal. Jim, it seems, is a Jack-of-all-Trades but also a Master-of-all. As far as I can tell, he seems to be responsible for all our physical needs at Crestwood. Until we can hire a part-time custodian (not an easy task apparently), he basically has to take care of everything from cleaning the bathrooms to bargaining with prospective contractors.

The day I met with Jim, he began his morning by checking the calendar of events for the day. He made note if users had any special needs or set-ups required, and opened all the related doors. Throughout the day, he puts up tables, arranges chairs, and provides whatever is needed for meetings or activities.

For his next job that morning, he completely mopped the gym and Mission Center's hallways. I couldn't feel too sorry for him, though, as we own a riding scrubbing machine. Not being into cleaning, I didn't know there was such a thing, but it sounds like a wonderful invention and wise investment for a church as big as ours. I'm sure though, in reality, it's a lot more work than fun.

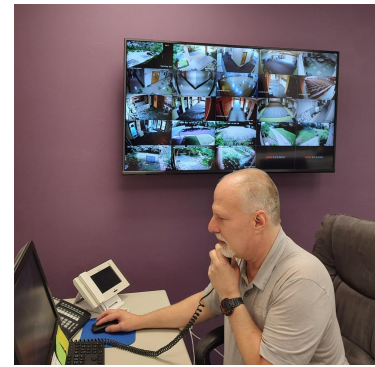
I met up with Jim late in the morning in the church office where he was seated at his desk with a huge network of TV screens behind him. He was dealing with e-mails involving numerous property issues—situations with the gym lights, roof issues, and HVAC replacement quotes for starters.

My attention was continually drawn to the twenty-three live TV screens behind him. Each screen views a different area of the church and makes it possible to see everything going on throughout the facility at any given time. I had wondered about the open nature of our church before, and this certainly should make everyone feel safer during the day. I asked Jim what he would do if he saw someone roaming the halls. "I'd confront them and find out what they want," Jim replied. So, the role of Facilities Manager expands to security as well.

The security system fully goes on-line at the end of June. At that time, keypads will replace keys. There will be training for everyone needing access. Again, arranging the training is Jim's responsibility along with the Property Team.

After I left him, Jim was meeting with vendors to get bids on cleaning supplies. One of his other jobs is to get detailed estimates on contracted services. He presents the bids to the Property Committee who make the final decision, and then Jim will work with the winning contractor to oversee the work.

By the end of the day, he was going to deal with new soap dispensers for the restrooms. No boredom in his job.



Jim came to Crestwood in April of this year. He has thirteen years of facilities management-related experience, and said he is eager to do a good job in helping Crestwood look its best and function well.

Jim is married to Lauren Cristi, and is the proud father of daughter Ashley who will begin Eastern Kentucky University this fall. Jim likes sports, and claims to be a big Wildcat fan. I wonder if bleeding blue is a prerequisite of employment at Crestwood, considering our historic ties to UK sports. Regardless, Jim is in good company when the Wildcats play.

We are glad to have Jim with us and already notice the difference he is making in our facilities.

.....

I need to make a clarification and an addition to the last Spotlight article on the Crestwood library. I am learning through these articles how kind and generous everyone is. Peggy Falace, our current librarian, did not want to be given credit for computerizing all the books in the collection. She said the kudos belong to Peggy Harris who proceeded her as librarian. I say our hats are off to both women for their outstanding work.

There also seems to be a backstory concerning the children's book collection which was apparently significant at one time but is missing now. It turns out that in 2011, the Children's Ministry Team decided the books should be moved to the children's wing. The Library Ministry Team donated their library cart, and member Sue Duncan made a beautiful Biblically-themed quilt to cover the end of the cart. There is a picture of the cart and quilt in an old Crest from that year. The plan was for the cart to be moved between the Sunday School classes each week for the children to choose books.

Years have passed. Ministerial staff has changed. No one so far remembers what happened after that. A mystery has developed about the whereabouts of the books, cart, and quilt. Sue Duncan moved to Florida so it is possible the quilt went with her. Emails have been flying over our little mystery. Someone may be able to fill in some blanks. If you have a piece of the puzzle to add, let Missy Wallace know. Stay tuned in case more is discovered about our lost children's library.

Also, I learned there is another author in our midst. Judy Cowgill's book, "The Kentucky State Parks" is in the Crestwood library. Hurry, though, if you want to beat me in checking it out.

.....

If there is some area of the church you would like to know more about, please share your ideas with me. Let's explore together.

Gaye Holman: gholman@bellsouth.net.

