

The Good Samaritan Center

"A Healing Place"



Summer 2006

Blessed to be a Blessing

John Willome, Executive Director

As I settle in as the new director of The Good Samaritan Center I continue to be impressed by the organization that Sara Allerkamp, the founding director, left behind.

The first thing that strikes anyone who visits is our beautiful building, but the building is only a small look at what is really happening here. I think Sara would be the first to tell you that this Center exists in its present form because of God's provision and how He has worked through the hearts of different people to make it happen.

We currently have about 90 active volunteers. They are involved in every facet of our organization. Front desk workers, nurses, medication room personnel, janitors, dentists, hygienists, doctors, and landscapers all combine to serve thousands of patients because they care.

Why do they do it? Because there is a blessing they receive in return. That is the amazing thing about giving of your time, talent, and/or money. The more you give, the more you seem to receive.

We write an article about our volunteers in each newsletter because we want to let you see the blessing they receive from their participation. We do it to encourage you to pick an organization, whether it is ours or not, in which you can invest yourself. If you do I think you'll find that you will be *blessed to be a blessing*.



Everyone who walks in our door is greeted by a smiling volunteer. (L to R) Margaret, Mary, and Evelyn are always ready to help.

A Samaritan's Story

A young woman in her early twenties recently sought help from The Good Samaritan Center. She was very trim, and yet she looked like she was several months pregnant due to the lump in her abdomen. She had ignored the problem for a year, but her sister made her come to us for assistance.

Our doctor was concerned enough to refer the young woman to a volunteer gynecologist who comes to our Center every month.

That doctor was even more concerned. She arranged for a CT scan for the young woman, then gathered together a surgeon, an anesthesiologist, and a

pathologist to assist her in removing the growth. Of course, everyone's fear was that this lump was a cancerous tumor, and that it might pose a grave danger to this young patient.

Our staff gathered together to pray for the woman and the doctors the week of and the day of the surgery.

Good news! The lump was a benign fibroid tumor which was easily removed. The doctors were relieved. The staff was thankful. The woman was ecstatic.

Like most of our patients, this young woman is a hardworking person who is trying to get a good start in life. Yet, she is one of the 5

million adult Texans who do not have any form of health insurance.

We have seen over 1,100 medical visits from January through May of this year. Our volunteer dentists and hygienists have seen over 200 dental visits during that time. About 80 new medical patients come to us every month. The need is growing, but our entire community is rising up to meet this need.

We hope that this story blesses you as much as it has blessed and encouraged us. Together, we are living out Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan, and helping our "neighbors" throughout our region.

Summer Frolic (a volunteer's story)

I was trying to clear away some of the debris from Fredericksburg's spring storms when I heard children laughing. I followed the sound to the back area of our building where I saw something delightful.

Two small children were playing where landscape volunteers had installed bright yellow heart-shaped pavers into the concrete pad surrounding the picnic table. The children laughed as they ran around the table, careful to always keep their feet on the hearts.

I thought to myself, "This is part of the healing too."

Thanks be to God for the laughter of children, and for the volunteers who gave them a beautiful place to play.



A little boy enjoys the patio while he waits for the doctor (notice the hearts behind him).

Trudy and Tom Anderson: Carrying on the Vision to Love their Neighbors.



Trudy and Tom Anderson volunteer at the front desk on Thursday mornings.

Trudy and Tom Anderson work at the Good Samaritan Center on Thursday mornings. The Andersons moved to Fredericksburg from Lamesa, Texas about ten years ago. They began volunteering in 2004 at the suggestion of John Benson, a friend from church.

Trudy, who is battling cancer, identifies with many of the clients who come to the Good Samaritan Center for help.

“When you’re ill, and you’re a little bit frightened, it’s wonderful to go to a place where people have a smile on their face and are welcoming to you,” she said. “Everyone deserves that when they’re sick.”

Due to her illness, Trudy has taken a short break from her duties, although she enjoys working at the front desk. She and her husband take appointments and retrieve files for our doctor. Recently Tom has started to call patients who have

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Trudy Anderson
Thursday morning volunteer

dental appointments scheduled, as a reminder.

“We’re very much in demand, and we only have a limited number of hours we provide dental service,” he said.

Despite many opportunities to volunteer locally, Tom chose GSC. “I like the climate, the atmosphere. It’s professional. It’s down to people’s basic needs,” he said.

Trudy believes that she is carrying on GSC founder Sara Allerkamp’s vision for those in medical need in our community.

“It was her dream that anyone would be pleased to receive medical care here,” she said. “We want this place to be a worthy place, so the people who come here know they are worthy.”

Each Thursday morning, the Andersons continue that tradition of service. Even on the day of this interview, the Andersons had family in town. They could have skipped, but they came anyway.

“I said, ‘See y’all,’ ” said Tom. “I need to be there at nine.”

Volunteer Dentists and Hygienists Make a Life-Saving Difference

The Good Samaritan Center has a unique dental program. Most charitable clinics like us either offer no dental care, or are only able to offer extractions. The cost of the dentists’ time and the dental supplies simply make it cost-prohibitive to operate a dental clinic. But thanks to a group of volunteer dentists and hygienists, and generous donations from civic groups and individuals we are able to offer extractions, fillings, and cleanings for a flat rate of \$25.

The ability to offer fillings made a life-saving difference in one patient’s life this May. She had been diagnosed with cancer and needed to start chemotherapy soon. There was only one problem – she also needed extensive dental work. Her doctor told her that the cavities in her mouth posed a risk of infection, and she could not start the chemotherapy until the risk had been eliminated.

We were able to schedule her for three appointments to complete the work she needed. She had two extractions and three teeth filled. One of the dentists even came in on a day that the clinic was not open

so that she could start her chemotherapy sooner.

The biggest challenge facing our dental clinic is capacity. There are a lot of low-income patients who might be fortunate enough to have medical insurance, but still do not have dental insurance. But our volunteer dentists and hygienists are only able to see sixteen patients per week (twelve dental and four hygiene) leaving a large gap between the need and our ability to meet the need.

Please pray with us as we make plans to expand our dental program in 2007. We want to be there for every person who qualifies for our service when they need us.



Our volunteer dentists and hygienists take turns on Monday and Thursday afternoons every week.

Answering the Call to Prayer

With all of the news about our medical, dental, and diabetes work, it can be easy to forget that we also try to meet the spiritual needs of our community.

Our chapel is a tremendous resource in this area. One family in particular helped to make the chapel beautiful. They wanted to remind people that the Good Samaritan Center is more than just a clinic; it is also a place of ministry.

An example of that type of ministry happened this spring. An adult daughter brought her Spanish-speaking mother to the clinic. The mother was sobbing because her brother had recently died. The grief overwhelmed her.

A volunteer asked the adult daughter, "Would your mother like prayer?" The mother understood the question well enough to nod. The three went into the chapel along with another volunteer who spoke Spanish. They let the mother cry for a long time. Then the Spanish-speaking volunteer led a prayer. Afterwards, the mother stopped crying. She left the Good Samaritan chapel having been ministered to.

Please feel welcome to visit the chapel any time the clinic is open. We maintain a Prayer Request box there. Forms are available at the front desk. The staff prays together for those requests on Monday mornings, and we pass them on anonymously to our volunteers via email.



The chapel is one of the most beautiful parts of our building.



Yes, I want to help!

You are welcome to help us in any way that you feel led to be involved. Because we charge only \$15 to \$25 per patient visit, we end up subsidizing about \$70 for every patient we see. This money comes from foundations and private donations. Of course, there are other ways to help too. Volunteers and in-kind donations help us to minimize our costs and use our resources wisely. Please take a moment to pray and consider whether you would like to become a volunteer or donor. Thank you!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/ST/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

- Monthly commitment (amount _____)
- One-time donation (amount _____)
- Memorial/Honorarium (see below)
- Wish List (see back for list)
- Volunteer (type of activity _____)
- In-kind service (type _____)
- Send me the quarterly newsletter
- Please make my gift anonymous

Memorials/Honorariums (circle one):

Name of honoree: _____

Person(s) to be notified: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

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John Willome, Executive Director





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Your Chance to be Involved

People often ask us how they can help. Here are some options for you as you prayerfully consider how you might join us in reaching out to our *neighbors*.

Help us get the word out:

- Bring your friends by for a tour.
- Invite us to present to your church, social, or civic organization.

Volunteer:

- Become a weekly administrative/medical volunteer. *If you speak Spanish we definitely need your help.*
- Help with facility maintenance and cleaning.
- Join our landscaping crew.
- Assist us in conducting fundraising events.
- Conduct a public education class.

Donate:

- Become a monthly/regular donor to cover our \$70 per patient cost (we see 200-260 patients each month).
- Donate "Wish List" items or services your business might provide.

Our mission is to provide coordinated and affordable health and social services that minister to the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the unserved and underserved in the Texas Hill Country (Blanco, Gillespie, Kimble, Llano, and Mason Counties).

Wish List:

- Two examination lamps (\$75 each)
- Gynecological supplies (\$300)
- Diaper changing table for each lobby bathroom (\$150 each)

Please call to verify that someone has not already donated your chosen item.

Thank you!

Front desk volunteer, Dot Dittmar, helps a patient on the telephone.

