

The Good Samaritan Center

“A Healing Place”



Summer 2008

Manna from heaven

John Willome, Executive Director

You probably know by now that we are looking for a new long-term medical director/doctor for The Good Samaritan Center. Our previous doctor, Maurine Porto, moved on at the end of April, after nearly four years serving with us. She did a great job and we are grateful for her. She is missed.

Of course, that leaves us looking for both short- and long-term doctors to see patients. There are days when this can be very frustrating. Our volunteer doctors are terrific, but it is always better to have one doctor who is in charge.

One day in May I was feeling frustrated with our progress in finding a long-term candidate when I read a passage in Numbers 11. In it, the Israelites were in the wilderness, and they were tired of the manna God had provided them to eat. They wanted something more. Offended, God decided to give them quail, and they ultimately got sick and repented for their ungratefulness.

It occurred to me that I was on the edge of being ungrateful for the manna God had given to us. Out of the sixteen clinic days in May, we had three volunteer doctors and a nurse practitioner cover fourteen of them! God showed me that He was not only providing us with manna, but it was really good manna.

Perhaps this is an opportunity for you to think about something that is frustrating you right now. Is it possible that God is providing for you in ways you do not realize. If He is, learn from the Israelites and enjoy your manna. God intends it for your good and it will sustain you.



Carol Hawkins is a bilingual counselor who comes to the center every two weeks to meet with some of our patients. We hope to increase her presence here to every week by the fall. Carol works for Catholic Charities out of San Antonio, and also spends one day each week seeing clients at the Hill Country Community Needs Council.

A Samaritan's Story

One of the ministries of our clinic is the opportunity to treat patients who are incarcerated in the Gillespie County prison. Seeing inmates here helps minimize the county's costs of maintaining an inmate, and it also alleviates the strain on Hill Country Memorial Hospital's emergency room, which is where the inmates would go otherwise.

Recently, there was a patient in the prison temporarily who has since been reassigned to the state prison in Huntsville. While he was here, he needed treatment for a chronic disease, and our doctor also felt he needed mental health counseling.

Thanks to your support, we were able to start a mental health counseling program last year, and this inmate was able to come every two weeks for an appointment with her.

We recently received a letter from him addressed to our doctor and staff, and I want to share part of it with you:

“Thanks to you and your staff, I've learned to understand that there is kindness in my world. As I face negativity and struggles every day in prison I remember you and your staff, and I smile. You gave me care, you made me;

a convict, a drug junky, a criminal in the eyes of most, feel special. Feeling special, just once, can make a man like me remember his humanity.”

I don't know what this man's life holds, but I do know that God at least touched him in a small way through our doctor, counselor, staff and volunteers.

He touched him through you as well. Thank you for your support. We simply wouldn't be here to help people like this without you. I hope that when you read his quote, you realize he is speaking to you as well.

Doctor Search Update

We are still searching for someone to serve as our long-term medical director. In the meantime, however, we are very grateful for the doctors and nurse practitioners who are helping us see patients during this interim period. **Drs. Jim**

Bacon, Kelly Pelton, G.L. Mabaquiao, and Charles Hood; and nurse practitioners **Marilyn Anderson and Carol Freeman** have been real God-sends. Thanks to them we saw 120 appointments in May.

As of the writing of this

newsletter, we are talking with one prospect who seems to be a good fit as a long-term medical director, but there are still a lot of steps that must be taken.

Please continue to pray for us. We can only do this with God's provision.

Volunteer dentist, Paul Panaceck, brings more than a smile to everyone's face.



Paul Panaceck, DDS, (pictured with silly wig) helped start The Good Samaritan Center's dental clinic in the fall of 2004.

You have read a lot about our dental program in this newsletter. You have read about the different dentists and hygienists who volunteer. You have learned about our new part-time dentist who is helping us to double our dental appointments for this year. But you might not realize that none of the dental program would be

possible without the efforts of Paul Panaceck, DDS.

Dr. Panaceck feels like his entire dental career has been a calling to serve others. "It just feels great to do what the Good Lord has led me to do."

His charitable work began when he lived in Dallas and started volunteering at a Native American mission. The equipment they had was in such poor shape that he eventually ended up agreeing to see the patients in his office because he felt he could do more for them in a more professional environment.

Some time after he and his wife, Dorothy, moved to Fredericksburg he went on a mission trip

"Jesus set out a model for us that one of the things we are supposed to do is make others' lives easier. I feel like we can really do that here."

Paul Panaceck, DDS
Volunteer Dentist

to Mexico with Sara Allerkamp, the Good Samaritan Center's founding director. He got to know Sara, and one day she approached him about helping her set up a dental clinic at The Good Samaritan Center's brand new facility.

Dr. Panaceck remembered back to his days at the Native American mission and was determined that the center's dental equipment be top-of-the-line. He contacted a supplier in Dallas with whom he had done a lot of work and got a lot of the equipment at the supplier's cost. Then he worked with the local Rotary clubs to help pay for the equipment, ultimately securing over \$30,000 from them. Finally, he recruited several dentists and hygienists to volunteer their time in the center every month.

This year The Good Samaritan Center will see over 1,100 dental appointments and nearly 200 hygiene appointments, using five dentists and four hygienists who volunteer their time as well as a part-time dentist.

"What makes me feel good is that Jesus set out a model for us that one of the things we are supposed to do is make others' lives easier," Panaceck said. "I feel like we can really do that here."

Counseling Program Receives \$10,000 Grant from The San Antonio Area Foundation

Nearly two years ago, the board of directors heeded the suggestion of our medical director, Maurine Porto, MD, and decided to establish an internal mental health counseling program for 2007 and beyond.

After a lot of research and some assistance from Deborah Agnew and the Hill Country Community Needs Council, we were able to establish having a counselor come twice a month in April of last year (see picture caption on cover).

Of course, there is a cost associated with having a counselor here. We pay \$45 per session to Catholic Charities in San Antonio, for whom the counselor, Carol Hawkins, works. For the patients, the first visit with the counselor is free and follow-up visits are \$10 each. That means, we end up subsidizing

each counseling visit by \$35 to \$40.

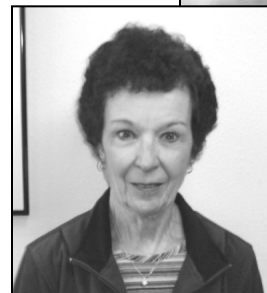
Thanks to your donations we could pay for the pilot in 2007, but we need more funding in 2008 and 2009 if we are to grow the program into a weekly service.

We were notified two weeks ago that the San Antonio Area Foundation, which is a community foundation, granted us \$10,000 to use for the counseling program over the next year.

Of course, this funding is not permanent, and we will need donations to sustain the program beyond the life of the grant, but it is refreshing to know that the program is secure for the next year.

Thank you for your contributions and support. It is because of you that the pilot worked and our patients will receive a lot of needed help.

The best thing about Monday mornings!



(l to r) Karen Davies, Susan Antomarchi, Maggie Klein and Marsella Fults (not pictured) make up our Monday morning volunteer staff.

Same Kind of Different as Me

Denver Moore and Ron Hall speak at our 2008 Fundraising Dinner

Ron Hall and Denver Moore, the best selling authors of *Same Kind of Different as Me*, spoke at our 2008 fundraising dinner, which James and Estela Avery hosted at their Alegria party barn.

Our biggest surprise was that we sold out in less than two weeks. Thanks to all of you who bought tickets, and we apologize to those of you who were unable to buy them.

Same Kind of Different as Me is now on the New York Times Bestseller List and will be a movie in the next couple of years. It is the story of how God gave Deborah Hall, Ron's wife, a vision of a poor man and how his wisdom would change the city of Fort Worth for the homeless and eventually bring revival. Little did Ron know that her vision would lead to the scariest, meanest man in the Union Gospel Mission, a ministry for homeless people in downtown Fort Worth. And she wanted Ron to become is friend.

For Denver's part, he did not trust white people and just wanted to be left alone. Experiences throughout his life had left him jaded and distrustful. And now, not only was this white couple showing up at

the mission, but this white woman was getting "in his business" and bothering him. He told Ron to tell her to leave him alone, but Ron was fighting his own battle, trying to resist Deborah's

encouragements that Ron become Denver's friend.

Denver and Ron did become friends. In fact, they are currently best friends. Denver has also proven to be the man of Deborah's dreams, even if she did not live to see how far both Denver and Ron have come.

Ron compares his and Deborah's story to the parable of The Good Samaritan. Ron passed by homeless people everyday in downtown Fort Worth as he walked to his art gallery. He is certain that Denver was among them. But he and thousands of others never stopped to help, for fear of what it would mean for them if they did. But, as he put it, his wife asked a different question. She wondered what it would mean for the

homeless if she *didn't* stop to help.

Soft cover copies of their book are still available for \$15 at The Good Samaritan Center. Just stop by 140 Industrial Loop in Fredericksburg to pick up a copy.



Board member Hector Pedregon and his wife, Cynthia, greet Ron Hall and Denver Moore and the center's fundraising dinner on April 28 at Alegria. (l to r: Ron Hall, Hector Pedregon, Cynthia Pedregon, and Denver Moore)

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 appointment we see. This money comes from private donations and foundations. 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: _____

Check Enclosed Credit Card (Visa or MC)

_____ Exp Date ____/____

Memorials/Honorariums (circle one):

Name of honoree: _____

Person(s) to be notified: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

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

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The Good Samaritan Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
Your donation is tax deductible.



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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 appointment 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:

- Stackable washer/dryer (\$950)
- Floor buffer/burnisher (\$850)
- Christian and/or health-related magazines (Spanish ones would be great too).

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

Thank you!

Mary Heidtke (left) and Judy Enderlin work the front desk on Wednesday afternoons.

