Each December, GFC organizes and supports the Annual Shelter Health Fair. Along with the Marion County Health Department and numerous local health agencies, volunteers go to all the city homeless shelters and drop-in sites to offer screenings for communicable, chronic, vision, and dental diseases. To encourage participation, hats, gloves were distributed. Students in several disciplines train for their future careers at Gennesaret Free Clinic. Recently, we have enjoyed an abundance of eager and enthusiastic students serving the poor during their training. Most recently Shelly Mills from the Professional Careers Institute has been rotating as an extern at the GFC Blue.

Health Students Training at GFC

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Health of Poor Hurt by Budget Shortfalls

A message from Rebecca Seifert, Executive Director:

As probably all of you are aware the past three years have been challenging for non-profits. With a depressed economy, there is more need for services and fewer dollars to fund such services. In addition, locally Wishard Hospital is facing a financial crisis. These factors make the Gennesaret Free Clinic’s work in the community even more important and

Shelter Health Fair Needs Volunteers

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Eye exams for visual ability and depth perception are offered at Lighthouse Mission during the Shelter Health Fair.

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued on page 4)
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We gratefully accept these recent donations since the last newsletter. We are especially grateful for those contributions which have meant a sacrifice (regardless of the amount of the donation).

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- Ms. Sijida Avenins by Aija Avenins
- The marriage of Karl & Cindi Beeler
- The college graduation of Anita Reddy by Ram & Sheila Reddy
- Howard Krauss and Margaret Sheridan-Bannister by Jenna Spurrer
- Deb Porter by Northminster
- Presbyterian Church Jan Rost by James & Cheryl Strain

**In Kind Donation**
- Dental Supplies by Dr. Richard Berger
- Clothing by Mary Beth Brown, Ruthann Friedman, Janet Miller, & Al Bynum
- Medication samples by Georgetown Medical Care
- Hygiene items by Kathleen Murnane & Bethel United Methodist Church
- Two glucometers by Dr. Randall Stoez
- General supplies by Heather Williams

While Gennesaret Free Clinic is not a United Way Agency, you are still able to specify your United Way contribution goes to Gennesaret Free Clinic through their Donor Choice Program. Gennesaret Free Clinic’s Donor Choice Number is: 5546. Your support is greatly appreciated. Thank you.
How can I help?

These items are needed now!

- Band-aids
- Examination gloves
- Paper tape
- Over the counter analgesics
- Skin lotion, hygiene items including toothbrushes and toothpaste.
- Reading glasses
- A mini-van to transport Health Recovery Program clients

...And of course more volunteer health professionals especially Dental Hygienists willing to volunteer 4 hours per month.

NEW GFC VOLUNTEERS

Stephanie Demkowicz
Dr. Bill Driehorst
Kathleen Rozens
Dr. Jean Miller
Melanie Curtis
Rhea Oliver, RN
Eleanore Wilson, RN

GFC Calendar of Events

- Shelter Health Fair—Monday, December 8
- Dental Blitz—Saturday, December 14, 2003
- GFC Annual Meeting—February 4, 2004
- Homeward Bound Walk / Indianapolis
  Walk for the Homeless - April 18, 2004
- Art for Beds—May 16, 2004
- GFC Carpenter Golf Classic—June 18, 2004

Clinic Stats

July 2003
- 334 patient visits
- Top Diagnoses: Medication Refill, New patient exam, Hypertension, URI, Athlete’s foot. Sites seeing the most patients: St. Vincent DePaul 121, Lighthouse Mission 69, Salvation Army 44 patients

August 2003
- 354 patient visits
- Top Diagnoses: New patient exam, Hypertension, URI, Screening mammogram. Sites seeing the most patients:
  - St. Vincent DePaul 133, Lighthouse Mission 62, Salvation Army 62 patients

September 2003
- 349 patient visits
- Top Diagnoses: Hypertension, URI, Medication Refill, New patient exam, Screening mammogram. Sites seeing the most patients:
  - St. Vincent DePaul 133, Lighthouse Mission 69, Salvation Army 52 patients

Welcome new GFC Staff

We are pleased to announce the addition to our staff of three new employees. Cindy Hubert will coordinate volunteer activities and participate in development work for our clinic. Janet Brewer joins our dental clinic as our new dental assistant. Mary Sue McFarland will work part-time as our medical records specialist and maintain clinic facilities and formulary. We volunteers and donors welcome your commitment to the poor and look forward to working with you.

Holiday Decorating Party

Come and join us on December 13 at 2 PM for our annual and festive decorating Holiday decorating party at the GFC

Health Recovery Program located at 24th and Central Ave. We will string lights, put up decorations, share refreshments and involve the men (recovering from illness and homelessness) in the spirit of the season. Call the GFC office 262-5645 to join us and to choose a treat to bring.

What to do in a Crisis?

The Board and Staff have met with Full Circle trainers to discuss what to do in a medical or administrative crisis. Some general common sense recommendations emerged.

First, keep cool. Patient safety is our first concern. Handle the emergent problem as your training and abilities permit. Do what you can do to handle the immediate crisis, but don’t go beyond your abilities or training. Enlist the help of qualified persons, authorities or agencies for the immediate problem. Above all be honest and forthcoming to authorities. Inform our administrative office of the situation. Do not talk to media. Direct the media to our administration. Our staff and directors will either collectively handle announcements or enlist a professional spokesperson. Now pray we never have to implement our crisis management preparations.

Referrals to Wishard Hospital and Clinics

Please note that we are unable to make appointments in the Wishard clinics if the patient does not have any insurance (Medicare or Medicaid) or has not applied for the Wishard Advantage Program. If the patient is in dire need of care, the patient should be directed to the Wishard emergency room. All other patients will have to make an appointment at the Wellness Center (955-0217) so they can be financially screened for the Advantage program and then referred to the appropriate Wishard clinic.

Carpenter GMAC Realestate Continues Support of GFC

The best friend of Gennesaret Free Clinic continues to be our corporate underwriter, Carpenter GMAC Realestate. Through over 13 years of steadfast and increasing commitment, Carpenter has raised more than $500,000 for GFC. Through their golf tournament and walk, Carpenter has raised more than $94,987 dollars just this year for GFC programs. Quite literally, Carpenter has been the single biggest supporter of...
and scarves are given to the 700-800 men, women and children who attend. The Shelter Health Fair contributes to the remarkably low rate of active tuberculosis in the homeless population of Indianapolis.

This year the event takes place on Monday, December 8. We need volunteers to assist clients with registration, testing, and distribution of winter-wear. Some folks have participated every year and would not miss the opportunity to give back blessings to the community during the holidays. Sessions take place throughout the morning, afternoon and evening, so call right away if you can help. Consider involving your club or whole family, this year or next. What a great way to celebrate the holidays!

Sometimes you just can't win. He told me, "You just don't understand." He did not have the name of his arthritis medicine because the bottle and all his other belongings were stolen. "How did they get stolen?" "I left my bag with the person I most trusted at the mission. And I haven't seen him since." "Why did you leave it with him?" "I was trying to act up and I can't work. I have to start all over." I have to start all over." I have to start all over." I have to start all over." I have to start all over."

The health services offered by Gennesaret Free Clinic—medical, dental, vision, women's health, the annual shelter health fair and our health recovery program provide essential services to homeless and poor persons in our community. This past year, Gennesaret Free Clinic had nearly 12,000 patient visits in all of the clinic's health care programs. Through these services provided in a respectful and dignified manner, we are enhancing the lives of the poor.

I want to thank each and every one of you for joining us in helping to care for some of the most vulnerable persons in our community; each and every day you are helping to provide competent, accessible and compassionate health care to persons in need through the use of volunteer health care professionals and other concerned persons.

Gennesaret is unique in that we take our services to the people thus overcoming the barrier of transportation. All of our clinic sites have generic medications on-hand to encourage testing for preventable diseases. 

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It is hard to comprehend what it is like to be in such a spot without going through that yourself. Pray that more of us do not experience homelessness and its frustrations this winter.
Mayor Visits GFC Health Recovery Program; Hears successes and plans

GFC had the good fortune to have Mayor Bart Peterson and State Representative Greg Porter visit the Health Recovery Program on October 30th. The HRP had received a Neighborhood Action Grant for the improvement of the grounds and garden led by GFC’s Larry Dilda and Mark Varnau. With our prize winning landscape and gardens as a backdrop, about 50 people were present as the Mayor awarded new NA grants. Both Mayor Peterson and Representative Porter were given guided tours by the staff and informed about the successes of the Health Recovery Program. We thanked Mayor Peterson and Mr. Porter for their support but also gave testimony for the need to expand the HRP in conjunction with the Blueprint to End Homelessness. The HRP continues to serve an important role not only in the continuum of healthcare but also in ending the cycle of homelessness.

Mark Douglas NP, Mayor Bart Peterson, John Long, and Rebecca Seifert at the GFC Health Recovery Program

Reflection

Brother Jesus

There was no room in the inn when you came into the world. And today there are very few inns of hospitality for the homeless in our cities, our nation and our world. Create room in my heart for the homeless whose lives are uprooted and whose days are spent searching for a resting place. Give me welcoming hands and listening ears that I may create in my life a place of comfort and refuge for them. Give me a courageous voice and the strength needed to work with the homeless as they struggle for dignity and a dwelling place in our communities. And give me the eyes to recognize you in the faces of the refugees of war, political persecution and economic hard times.

For the Homeless by Tony Cordaro
Our Mission
We are health care professionals and other concerned individuals, who have heard a calling to offer our talents and training to the homeless and indigent in Indianapolis. Through our efforts, we endeavor to provide competent, accessible, and compassionate health care to the needy.
Our faith moves us to show special respect and dignity to those who are disenfranchised; for we realize that it is in such a healing encounter that we are all made more whole by God.

The Staff
Rebecca Seifert MSW, Executive Director
Mark Douglas RN-NP, HRP Manager
Cheryl Myers, Operations Manager
Sharon Swem LCSW, Women’s Health Initiative
Cindy Hubert, Development/Volunteer Services
Janet Brewer, Dental Assistant
Mary Sue McFarland, Med Records Specialist
Linka Ligon, Receptionist
Susan Eldon, Case manager
John Long, HRP Care Giver
Larry Dilda, HRP Care Giver

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