



Samaritan House Newsletter

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From the Executive Director's Desk:

Christmas is a time of miracles and has a special meaning for each of us. Sometimes something happens that makes the season even more memorable. That happened for me this year when Roman came to stay at Samaritan House.

I get all the calls from the hospitals about homeless patients who need recuperative care. This time, the call was about a young man whom I'll call Roman, 19 years old, with a stab wound to his abdomen and no place to go. The hospital social worker described him as a quiet young man, easy going and cooperative, who didn't need to be on the streets or in the shelter. Another intake, another patient/guest for Samaritan House, but also the beginning of a truly touching series of events that I will never forget.

Roman arrived with the clothes on his back and nothing else. He was quiet and pleasant, not the kind of person who gets stabbed. He was polite with an easy smile, but it was easy to tell that he was in a great deal of distress and pain. He couldn't stand up straight because his wound hurt when he tried. I could see that he was troubled by the circumstances of his life, hesitating to trust people anymore. He thanked us quietly for helping him and then went to his room to lie down.

Over the next few days the Samaritan House staff and I learned more about Roman. His mother died when he was six so he lived with his uncle (his legal guardian) in the house that Roman and his brothers inherited from her. One by one, the uncle kicked the boys out of the house until only Roman remained. His uncle was the person who had stabbed him. One day he showed me the wound and I could see that the injury had been terrible, with skin staples from his chest to below his waist. The cut was a foot long. I learned that the paramedics responding to the 911 call found Roman holding his own intestines inside himself with his hands. He had had to walk to a neighbor's house to call for help. The surgeons at Carolinas Medical Center performed a miracle to be able to put him back together again.

Roman's extended family filled me in on more details about this amazing young man. He used most of his Social Security check to help out friends and family in need, paying a mortgage or buying a small gift.

While at Samaritan House, he found out that his cousin was in a bad situation. It turned out that she had also been living with the uncle and had been thrown out. Roman didn't want her to be out on the street by herself. He asked me to take him to her so he could help her out.

As he healed, Roman became more active and also more open

A Samaritan House Christmas Story

with others. He befriended the other guests in the house. He got his hair trimmed at a local hairstyling academy and started walking every day. He became more comfortable both physically and emotionally, but when the day came that his staples needed to be removed, he was like any other teenager, a little scared and worried about the pain and needing someone to support him. I went with him and stood by him as the procedure was done. I could see how relieved he was when it was over. His doctors were very pleased with his recovery and expect him to heal fully.

Roman's family stayed in constant touch with him during his stay, including visits. Plans were made at his school to help him finish up the semester and see him through the next one. Classmates sent him balloons and stuffed animals. He realized there were people who cared about him. His aunt and uncle called and offered to let him live with them. He stayed with us a bit longer until he was well enough to be left alone while they were at work. On Christmas Eve, standing straight and smiling broadly, Roman left to be with family again.

All of us at Samaritan House were witness to the miracle of Roman. It took the skill of the surgeons to save his life, but the renewal of his spirit depended on finding a safe place to stay, where his body could heal and he could learn that he was loved and that he wasn't alone. After he left, he wrote a note to us which said, *"Thanks for everything. Your jokes, stories, and comfort, and the grace of God healed me from the inside out. I know I probably couldn't have done it without you. We could probably never compare our life to others, but not many have been through the things I have. You've changed me when my heart was full of hate, and helped me from the waist up. I feel stronger than I ever have before thanks to you. God put you in my life for a reason. May he bless you in every move you make."*

I am so glad to be a part of Samaritan House, to help create this place of healing for people who need it more than most of us can possibly imagine. I am so grateful for the support of donors and volunteers who make this all possible. All of you help to make these miracles possible, not just at Christmas, but all year 'round.

Bless you all.

Brad Goforth



Love Letters

We are thrilled to announce the upcoming benefit performance of *Love Letters*, the Pulitzer Prize nominated play by A. R. Gurney, performed by Judy Simpson Cook and Melvin Farris in the Christian Life Center at Providence Presbyterian Church on Saturday, February 12, at 7 pm. Cook and Farris will reprise their roles from last season's hit production at The Storefront Theatre in Waxhaw. Local musicians will perform prior to curtain time and coffee and dessert will be served. Tickets are \$15. All proceeds will benefit Samaritan House.

To reserve tickets, e-mail Kay Starnes at kaystarnes@carolina.rr.com or call 704-596-2776. Tickets may also be reserved by calling the church office at 704-846-1079.

Providence Presbyterian Church is located at 10140 Providence Church Lane, Charlotte, NC 28277.



Judy Simpson Cook and Melvin Farris

A benefit play in support of Samaritan House

Love Letters is a Pulitzer Prize for Drama nominated play by A. R. Gurney. The play centers on just two characters, Melissa Gardner and Andrew Makepeace Ladd III. Using the epistolary form sometimes found in novels, they sit side by side at tables and read the notes, letters and cards - in which over nearly 50 years, they discuss their hopes and ambitions, dreams and disappointments, victories and defeats - that have passed between them throughout their separated lives.

In such critically acclaimed plays as *The Dining Room* and *The Cocktail Hour*, A.R. Gurney has wittily captured the manners of upper-middle class WASP America, but never as gracefully or with such dazzling economy as in *Love Letters*.

Tracing the lifelong correspondence of the staid, dutiful lawyer Andrew Makepeace Ladd III and the lively, unstable artist Melissa Gardner, the story of their bittersweet relationship gradually unfolds from what is written -- and what is left unsaid -- in their letters.

A smash hit both off and on Broadway, *Love Letters* captures Andy and Melissa with a precision of detail and depth of feeling only Gurney can command."

- from book jacket *Love Letters*,
A Plume Book--Penguin

"Exhilarating, funny and moving."

- The Wall Street Journal

Janice Elder Wins Recipe Contest to Benefit Samaritan House!

Many thanks to Janice Elder for winning a \$500 gift card for Samaritan House in the Country Crock "Little Changes, Big Difference" Recipe Contest! Janice and her husband Larry have been long time supporters of Samaritan House. Her "Lime and Basil Kissed Coconut Pound Cake" recipe was among the top vote getters in the contest. For the story of how Janice came to enter the contest, and the delicious recipe, go to the Samaritan House website at www.thesamaritanhouse.org. (If you try the recipe, write and tell us about it at admin@thesamaritanhouse.org.)

For other recipes submitted for the Country Crock's 'Little Change, Big Difference Contest, please see their website at www.makealittlechange.com.



6th Anniversary Annual Luncheon and Fundraiser

Jennifer Roberts to be Featured Speaker

This March will mark the 6th year of Samaritan House's mission to provide recuperative care to people who are homeless. Last year's 5th anniversary luncheon was such a success that we decided to make this an annual event, so mark your calendar for Thursday, March 3, 2011 for our "Celebrating 6 years of Caring" luncheon and fundraiser. We are fortunate to have 2 very special guests this year. **Jennifer Roberts**, chairperson of the Mecklenburg County Commissioners will be our guest speaker. Ms. Roberts will be introduced by **Harvey Gantt** of Gantt Huberman Architects, who will serve as guest master of ceremony for the event.

The luncheon will be held in the Martha Bowles Parish Hall of St. Peter's Episcopal Church, at the corner of West 7th and N. Tryon Streets in uptown Charlotte. Free

parking (with validated ticket) is available in the TransAmerica Building. Attendees will gather at 11:15 am and the luncheon (catered by La-Tea-Das) and speeches will begin at 11:45 am. Tickets will be \$35 per person and will be available for sale in the near future (watch your mail for the announcement!) Individual or corporate table sponsorship opportunities are available (ranging from \$300 to \$2500 per table)—contact Michael O'Hara at 704-968-7496 for more information. For ticket reservations or more information, email email@thesamaritanhouse.org or call 704-527-1130.

Last year's luncheon attracted a crowd of 150 people who were treated to a lovely meal and a riveting interview between local columnist Ken Garfield and a former guest of Samaritan House who gave a very personal viewpoint for how Samaritan House can change a person's life. We hope that this year's event will be as enlightening and enjoyable, as well as successful in raising much needed funds towards the purchase of our new house and continued service to our guests. Please come (and bring a friend!)



Samaritan House founders Ruth Woodend and Freda Schlamman address an enthusiastic crowd in the Martha Bowles Parrish Hall of St. Peter's Episcopal Church on March 4, 2010.

Would you like to sponsor a table at this year's event? Contact Michael O'Hara at 704-968-7496 for more information.

Did you know that Samaritan House is one of a kind? As best we can tell, no other agency is comparable. We don't charge our guests for any services nor is Medicaid or other insurance accepted. Our funding is dependent on the faith community, donations from individuals, and grants. Samaritan House does not accept any government funding. The only admittance requirement is that the person must be homeless and be referred by a reliable medical provider within Mecklenburg County.

From our opening date in 2005 until January 1, 2011, Samaritan House has provided a warm, safe place to recuperation for 593 guests, including 112 people from December 2009 until December 2010.

Samaritan House
3424 Park Road
Charlotte, NC 28209

Address Service Requested



www.thesamaritanhouse.org

Wine Tasting and Silent Auction: Blue Restaurant

Mark your calendar for Thursday, March 31, 2011 for a wine tasting and silent auction fundraiser for Samaritan House, hosted by Blue Restaurant & Bar, on the College Street level of the Hearst tower in Uptown Charlotte, at the corner of 5th and College Street. The wine tasting will be held from 6 pm until 9 pm. Complimentary valet parking begins at 6 pm and Blue will validate parking in the Hearst Tower parking garage. Tickets are \$25 per person and may be reserved by contacting Blue at 704-927-2583.

For specific information about the event, visit to www.bluecharlotte/special-eventswine-dinner.

New House Update!

Samaritan House is moving! We are purchasing a house at 611 Fortune Street in Charlotte and will close on March 24th. We will be needing help to prepare the house for our use doing things like painting, cleaning, construction work, landscaping and a myriad of other steps to make a "property" into a home. We are still fundraising to make this purchase and will be asking for help with volunteers. To make a contribution, please visit our website at www.thesamaritanhouse.org. To volunteer, feel free to contact us at 704-527-1130. We are all looking forward to having a permanent home in our community.

Would you like to help us save money to pay for guests' needs rather than paper, ink, and postage? Contact us at bgoforth@thesamaritanhouse.org so we can update your contact information including e-mail address and we'll start sending your newsletter electronically and save a few trees!
