



Samaritan House Newsletter

March 2011

Volume 3 Issue 2

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A Dream Comes True!

by John Barringer
Samaritan House Board

By now most Samaritan House Supporters have heard the great news! Sometime in late April or early May we will close on our first real home for serving the homeless. For six years we have had the wonderful opportunity to lease the home on the grounds of the YWCA. Their help and support has allowed us to grow in service, and now we've got the opportunity to serve even better. In our present environment soaring utility bills (three months over \$1500 each recently) eat into our funds. In addition, our bedrooms are presently accessible only by climbing stairs making it virtually impossible to care for those homeless being dismissed from hospitals with any orthopedic problems requiring the use of crutches or walkers.

the flooring, some drywall work, a minor plumbing correction and an equally minor heating/air conditioning repair. The house was updated in the late 90's, and is well insulated throughout.

When we move in we'll have a 50% improvement in capacity, increasing from eight to twelve guests maximum; of equal importance we will, from day one, be able to safely care for those folks who have limited mobility..

We've been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support we've received. When we approached Hall's Flooring, they offered to provide flooring at cost! Sherwin-Williams has offered a huge reduction in the cost of paint; others have jumped in with offers of computers and support items, art work and mirrors, cleaning supplies, volunteer labor... and the list keeps growing and growing. We'll be giving a detailed listing of all those who helped us when the task is completed. Church groups, Rotary Clubs, Garden Clubs, Scouts...do you know of someone or some group who has skills and a willingness to pitch in? Give Samaritan House a call at 704 527-1130 so that we'll add them to our growing list.

Plan on being with us in late May when the moving van rolls up...and we start a new phase of living our mission to be "A Healing Haven for People who are Homeless"



Samaritan House
611 FORTUNE STREET
CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

Very soon all this will change. We are acquiring the former "Summit House" facility at 611 Fortune Street, just off Monroe Road. This 4300 square foot, four bedroom, 5 bath home is completely on a single level. In addition:

- it already meets all zoning requirements;
- is completely equipped with sprinklers
- has loads of paved parking area;
- sunny, open rooms and great office spaces;
- plenty of deck and leisure areas
- has central heating and air conditioning

Almost all of the up fitting will be cosmetic (we'll need plenty of painters and cleaners) and the only real repairs are



Celebrating 6 Years of Caring

by Ruth Woodend, Samaritan House
Founder and Board President

The 'Celebrating 6 Years of Caring' luncheon on March 3, 2011 was a joyful occasion. More than 150 people gathered to hear our guest speakers, Jennifer Roberts, County Commission Chairman, and Harvey Gantt of Gantt Huberman Architects. Over \$9000 was raised to support the work of Samaritan House.

Former Charlotte Mayor Harvey Gantt served as guest Master of Ceremonies for the luncheon and kept us all on schedule. He read a city proclamation from Mayor Anthony Foxx declaring the week of March 1-6, 2011 to be Samaritan House Week. He also reminded us that Samaritan House saves Mecklenburg County taxpayers millions of dollars each year by shortening hospital stays for our guests and reducing the frequency of readmission for the same illness.

Ms. Roberts asked us all to imagine what it would be like to try to recuperate from an illness or injury on the streets or in a shelter, away from the comforts of our own home and without the support of family and friends. She also reminded the audience that Samaritan House does not receive any government funding nor do we ask our guests to pay anything during their stay.

Samaritan House is supported solely by individual donations, Charlotte's faith community, and grants. Executive Director Brad Goforth reported that SH is the only agency in the country to operate in this manner. He also reported that 80% of the guests do

not return to the street. Many guests reconnect with family, are admitted into rehab facilities, find housing or work. This phenomenal, documented record was a surprise to many.

The luncheon gave us a chance to remember past success but also to celebrate the exciting news that Samaritan House will soon move away from our current rented facility to a permanent home at 611 Fortune St. As of this writing we have served 615 guests with a total of 10,000 guest days. Samaritan House looks forward to being able to include people who have had orthopedic surgery while continuing to serve all people who find themselves homeless and in need of recuperative care.



Ruth Woodend and
Jennifer Roberts



Many Thanks! to our generous event sponsor, Morris Jenkins Heating and Air Conditioning, and to table sponsors Mallard Creek Animal Hospital, McNulty & Dancausse General Dentistry, James Starnes, John Barringer, Roberta Farman, Mary Fluke, DVM, Malcolm and Linda Griggs, Bette Jacobs, Stephen McQueen, Michael O'Hara, David Sanders, Gene and Freda Schlaman, Logan Smith, and Ruth Woodend.

The February production of *Love Letters* at Providence Presbyterian Church attracted an audience of over 100 people and raised a whopping \$1800 for Samaritan House! Many thanks to Samaritan House board member Kay Starnes, actors Melvin Faris and

Judy Simpson Cook, and the members of Providence Presbyterian Church for making this event such a big success.

Thanks also to Blue Restaurant for hosting a wine tasting on March 31 to benefit Samaritan House!

Volunteer Spotlight

George Kaye--

“Does Anybody Need A Ride?”

If you spend any time at all at Samaritan House, you're going to meet George Kaye. He's a tall white haired man with a cup of coffee in his hand, a big smile on his face, and a song in his heart. George started out his working life as a forestry and conservation administrator in Toronto. He switched to teaching, which he did for 50 years all over this country from California to Florida, and even for 7 years abroad in Australia. George and his wife moved to Charlotte in 1996.

After George finally retired, he found himself with time on his hands and nothing to do. Sister Helene from St. Anne's Catholic Church told him about Samaritan House just across the street so he came over and started volunteering. George took on the job of driving guests to doctor's appointments, pharmacies, local agencies like Crisis Assistance Ministry or Urban Ministry, Social Security Administration, Department of Social Services, Myers Park Clinic or Middle Point Clinic, and sometimes just to the grocery store or Walmart. He put 12,000 miles on his car last year driving for Samaritan House.

Executive Director Brad Goforth says, “George is almost like a staff member at this point. He comes in every morning and gets his cup of coffee and his cookie and sits down to chat with the guests until somebody needs a ride.” George is such a fixture that he has his own tin of cookies that is kept filled for him. He calls the guests his compadres, his copilots in the car. I asked him if there were any guests that really stood out for him and he seemed reluctant to make any distinctions. I got the impression that every single person is important to George, and that the person who is most special for him is the one that he's with at any given moment.

He's got a million stories about the things he's done,

the places he's been and the people he's met. He told me about meeting Bing Crosby at Pebble Beach in California, and joking with Danny Kaye on a plane ride because they had the same last name. It didn't take me long to realize that going for a car ride with George would be a very entertaining experience.

Then there's the music. George plays the piano, even gives lessons. He loves old songs, Big Band stuff from the 40's and 50's. George is one of those people whose life has a sound track. It doesn't take much to inspire him to sit down at the piano and share a tune or a song.

Volunteers are the life-blood of any non-profit organization like Samaritan House. Some people volunteer as a duty, or an experiment, but George does it because there is nothing else he'd rather be doing. He's found a way to make a contribution and to keep making connections with other people on a daily basis. I'm going to keep thinking about George as I live my life, about being energetic and cheerful, and looking for ways to make a difference, even through something so simple as a car ride.

“Anybody need a ride?”

--Mary Fluke, DVM

Samaritan House Board Member



George Kaye

On March 15, 2011, Samaritan House accepted our 615th guest and surpassed 10000 bed days of service.

Did you know...?

It costs about \$100 to care for a guest overnight at Samaritan House. It costs about \$2500 to care for that same person at the hospital. That's an estimated \$2400 in savings to CharMeck taxpayers for indigent health care per person per night...times 10000 bed nights in 6 years. We help people and save money, too!

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www.thesamaritanhouse.org

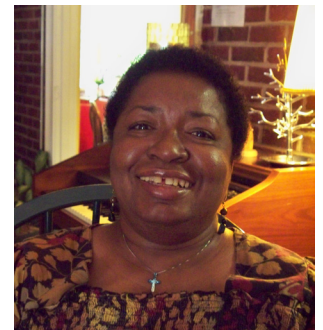


Margaret's Corner:

by Margaret Harrison

Samaritan House welcomed a new senior center employee in February. Her name is Merelean Ingraham and she helps out as an office assistant. Merelean is a Brooklyn native who moved to Charlotte in September, 2009. She had been an Certified Nursing Assistant for many years in Pennsylvania and then had a short stint in the catering service before coming here to be closer to her daughter and grandchildren. She has expressed how impressed she is with the warmth and hospitality shown

not only to her but everyone who comes into Samaritan House and how much she loves coming to work everyday. Her favorite way of showing her appreciation is by baking goodies for everyone at the house. Cheesecakes and poundcakes seem to be her specialty, Yum! I am sure she will be a great asset to us all at Samaritan house, loved chatting with her.



Once a guest of Samaritan House, Margaret Harrison is now a board member and ardent supporter. She visits and volunteers at the house regularly and will be providing a regular newsletter item to spotlight staff members, volunteers, and guests.

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!
