



GIVING BACK FROM PATIENT TO VOLUNTEER

“Bethesda is good for me, and I’m good for Bethesda.”

Flora Johnson has been a patient at Bethesda Health Clinic since the very early days, and remarkably, she’s been a volunteer at Bethesda just about as long.

“I was driving a school bus,” says Flora, “and it was work I loved. I had to love it! I did it for 35 years! But I couldn’t afford health insurance.” A friend told her about Bethesda and, from the beginning, Flora knew she’d found the medical home she’d wanted for so long. “Everyone was so kind to me. The doctors were so good and gave me very, very good care. And I loved that I have to pay something for my care. I didn’t want to go to a free clinic. Now I don’t have to worry. I can afford to care for myself!”

A diabetic, Flora has some special health issues, and the insulin necessary to control her disease is very expensive. Through a Bethesda program that connects patients with drug companies, Flora can get her insulin for free.

“I was so grateful to be a patient at Bethesda that I wanted to give back,”

says Flora. “I started volunteering right away because I appreciate what happens here so very much.” Flora volunteers each Tuesday at the clinic when chiropractor Dr. Mark Hembree volunteers. She helps get paperwork done, and also with packaging and labeling medications.

Flora loves everyone she works with at Bethesda, but she has a special heart for Dr. John English, Bethesda’s medical director. “Oh, that Dr. English, he’s the best!” says Flora. “He’s my friend, and I just love to tease him and mess with him all the time!”

“Bethesda is good for me, and I’m good for Bethesda,” asserts Flora. “I love that it’s accessible to anyone, and that it’s affordable. No matter your medical problem, even if you need to see a specialist, you can get help here.”





A NOTE FROM JOHN

Reflections on Bethesda's
first fifteen years...
And some thoughts
about the future...

As Bethesda Health Clinic celebrates its fifteenth anniversary, we continue our conversation with Dr. John English, Bethesda's CEO, as he shares his vision for the future.

Looking forward, what will it take, not just to support Bethesda, but to make it thrive?

Medical and dental care for the low-income, uninsured is a huge, huge gap in our healthcare landscape locally and in the nation as a whole. Bethesda has to find a way to make a dent in that gap, but we can't be the only solution. We also need to work with the broader healthcare community in finding a community-based solution for patients with more serious issues requiring surgery or hospitalization. We will continue to search for creative fundraising answers, ways to attract volunteers, and ways to involve the churches who have been so supportive of our mission. At some point, in order to meet the demand, we will need additional space, and if we are to address the "whole person" we will need to provide, or collaborate in providing mental health and spiritual counseling.

Do you have a big dream for the clinic?

We are, all of us, spiritual, physical, and intellectual beings with connections to each other and to our God. If we are to be "well," we must address each of those dimensions. I would love to see Bethesda collaborate with other providers to provide more comprehensive mental health services and spiritual counseling, addressing the whole person. Perhaps together we could create a wellness center to include exercise and nutrition classes.

My biggest dream is to be a catalyst to bring the community together to develop a solution for patients who need care outside the clinic. Our community is "health care rich." Together we could do so much and be a model for others of how to care for those who need us most.



Shine Your Light Check Presentation

We would like to thank the Tyler Morning Telegraph, anchor donors and members of the community who donated to the Shine Your Light Campaign at the end of the year. Because of this generous community response, Bethesda is grateful to have received:

\$15,479.83



Special thanks to everyone who participated on East Texas Giving Day! You helped raise over **\$44,000** for Bethesda!

FRESH 15 HOSTS 5TH ANNUAL PARTY ON THE PAVEMENT

The weather was perfect, the hills were plentiful and the crowd came out in full force for the 5th annual FRESH 15 Road Race, held March 2 at FRESH by Brookshire's.

Bethesda staff and volunteers once again took part in the event by stuffing swag bags, passing out water to runners, and participating in the race. 2018 boasted one of the best year's yet, with over 4,000 runners that competed in either the 15k, 5k, or kids' 1k running events.

Each year the FRESH 15 puts on the best race in East Texas and donates 100 percent of the proceeds back to non-profit organizations in the community, and Bethesda is blessed to be a recipient for all five years.

"The FRESH 15 has grown to be a truly iconic race in Tyler, and we are very thankful to be a part of the fun," said CEO Dr. John English. "We love being able to come out and support the runners who come from all over Texas and the United States to run in our town. Being able to continue to provide high-quality medical and dental care through the proceeds from this event is truly a blessing."

Registration for the 2019 FRESH 15 is already open and filling up fast! Bethesda encourages supporters to sign up to run or volunteer at www.bgcracing.com.



Bethesda Alliance volunteers for FRESH15



Bethesda Staff and Volunteers



DR. LIANNE HANSON-SANCHEZ

Dr. Lianne Hanson-Sanchez remembers the now-famous shower curtains from Bethesda's earliest days because she has been here from the beginning.

"We laugh about it now, but those shower curtains were all we had to separate one exam 'room' from the other," says Dr. Hanson-Sanchez. "We didn't let it stop us. We just did the best we could."

Bethesda was a perfect fit for Dr. Hanson-Sanchez fifteen years ago. "My family and I moved to Tyler from Albuquerque where I had been in a busy Obstetrics and Gynecology private practice," she said. "I knew that I really wanted to stay home with my two young boys, but I still wanted to work or volunteer in some capacity and use the skills that God had given me. When I learned about Bethesda, I felt a faith-based clinic providing care

for the working uninsured would be perfect. I could share my skills in a wonderful environment with great people and give back to the Tyler community."

Fifteen years later, Bethesda Health Clinic is still a perfect fit for Dr. Hanson-Sanchez who is now on staff providing gynecology services for Bethesda's patients.

"I am still inspired to work with Bethesda because I believe in the mission," she says. "I love the people who work at Bethesda and make the clinic run so smoothly. Most importantly, I love the patients that come to Bethesda. They are so appreciative of the care we provide. In many cases they would not be able to receive medical care, especially medical care in a loving, Christian environment."



DR. MARK HEMBREE

When we reached out to Dr. Mark Hembree to ask if we could recognize him for his fifteen years of service to Bethesda Health Clinic, he was in a hurry. "On my way to Kathmandu, Nepal, tonight," he wrote. "Going to help build a house."

This same heart for service led Dr. Hembree to Bethesda in the very beginning. When he read in the newspaper that a clinic for the working uninsured was opening, he picked up the phone right away. "I couldn't wait,"

he said. "I called Dr. John English and volunteered my chiropractic services, and I've been here ever since."

"I grew up in a family who was always volunteering and helping others," said Dr. Hembree.

"I follow their example, and it is my honor and privilege to serve at Bethesda. The staff is wonderful and the patients are very grateful to be receiving care they would not otherwise be able to afford. It is a blessing to me to serve."

DR. TOM ECKERT

You could say Dr. Tom Eckert's connection to Bethesda Health Clinic began the day he was born! When his mother went into labor on a freezing West Texas night, his father was out of town at work for the Santa Fe railroad. The neighbor across the street drove her to the hospital. That neighbor's son-in-law was Luther Yates who, many years later, worked for Pfizer Pharmaceuticals and called on Tom in his medical practice here in Tyler. Luther was a ground-floor volunteer for Bethesda and suggested to Dr. Eckert that he get involved.

"I began seeing Bethesda patients in 2003," says Dr. Eckert, "so I have seen

our clinic grow steadily in patient volume and outreach, expansion of the building, and most importantly its' impact on the patients of Tyler and Smith County. I enjoy working with patients, and it is very rewarding to see them improve. Nothing inspires like a smile on their face and a hearty, sincere "THANK YOU!"

"Every time I come to Bethesda," adds Dr. Eckert, "I think of our family friend, Luther Yates, who has since passed away, appreciating him for his friendship, and his invitation and foresight to become involved with Bethesda. Our family connection began long, long ago, and it's part of the reason I'm blessed by my work at Bethesda now."



DR. TODD RAABE

Dr. Todd Raabe has been a volunteer for Bethesda Health Clinic since before there was a Bethesda Health Clinic. Indeed, it's no exaggeration to say that Dr. Raabe, along with other dedicated founding volunteers, is the reason Bethesda Health Clinic even exists.

In 1999 the seed of an idea for a clinic for the working uninsured took root in Dr. Raabe's mind and heart, and he presented the idea to the missions committee at First Baptist Church, for which he served as chairman. The idea grew into a seedling when Dr. Raabe and Pat Mallory visited The Church Health Center in Memphis, Tennessee, where they saw first-hand a model of what a Christ-centered health ministry could do

for the working uninsured. With the support of Dr. Mike Massar, who was the pastor at First Baptist Church at that time, and the support of the congregation, the idea grew to include multiple churches, hospitals and health care providers.

Dr. Raabe is modest in taking any personal credit for the idea of Bethesda Health Clinic. "There are not many places the size of Tyler which are blessed with the depth of spiritual and medical resources we have here," he says. "It is a privilege to be able to show the love of Christ to someone even in a small way. Bethesda not only provides an avenue for physical healing, but the opportunity to share and experience the love of Christ. This is God's clinic."



Dr. Luke Society 2018



Stacy and Dr. Glen Graves



Melissa and Dr. Virgil Gonzalez, Elizabeth Clark



Doctor Luke Society members:

Left to right back row – Drs. Sam Houston, Don Smith, David Nichols, Bill Moore, Gary Gross, Rick Yates, Bill Starling, Stephen Rydzak
Left to right front row – Drs. Maxey Abernathy, Tom Lowery, Sasha Vukelja, Virgil Gonzalez, Glen Graves, Kerfoot Walker, Gary Kimmel



Dr. Luke Society 2018



Dr. Gary and Lisa Gross



Teresa and Peaches Owen



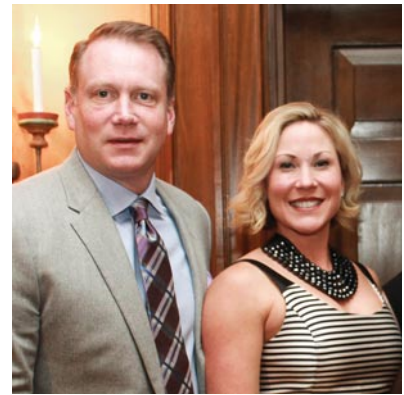
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June and Dr. Tom Lowery



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John and Sherri Soules



Gwen and Doug Bolles



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Randy and Darla Childress, Dr. Craig Harrison



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EAST TEXAS MISSION OF MERCY



The East Texas Mission of Mercy is a bi-annual mission that provides free dental treatments and eye exams for low income families that cannot otherwise afford dental or eye care. All of the dentists and dental assistants who participated at Bethesda were volunteers giving their time and skills for those in need. Thanks to Drs. David Nichols, Taylor Holland, Matthew Grace, Benjamin Bunt and assistants Daisy Hernandez, Cassie Gonzalez, Cristal Lemus and TJC dental students!