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AmeriCares

88 Hamilton Avenue
Stamford, CT 06902-3100

The mission of AmeriCares Free Clinics is to provide free quality health care to uninsured residents in a setting where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect. The intention of AmeriCares Free Clinics is to help those who are making a sincere effort to help themselves and their families, but who do not have the financial resources for medical care.

SAVE THE DATE

November 3-5: Holiday Treasures & Pleasures, AmeriCares, Stamford, CT

Start your holiday shopping early and benefit the clinics at the same time. This annual 50% off sale of decorative holiday accessories, donated by Pound Ridge Nursery, is a great way to get a jump on the season.

January 7, 2007: Tea and Symphony, the Marvelous Mozart IV Concert at the First Presbyterian Church, New Canaan

The Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra performs the melodious sounds of Mozart to benefit the Free Clinics. Maestro Anthony Newman will share program notes at a special tea prior to the concert.

January 18, 2007: 10th Anniversary of the AmeriCares Free Clinic of Danbury

Members of the AmeriCares Free Clinic community are invited to celebrate the Danbury clinic's 10th anniversary at the Ives Manor Ballroom in Danbury.

February 10, 2007: "An Evening to Die For" with Joe "Vito" Gannascoli

Join Joe Gannascoli, formerly of The Sopranos at Connecticut Kitchen and Bath in Danbury to benefit the clinic. Joe will prepare recipes from his new book, "An Evening to Die For" and dish up a few behind-the-scenes TV stories.

More details on these events can be found at www.americaresfreeclinics.org or by contacting Deb Howard at 203-658-9651 or dhoward@americares.org

AMERICARES FREE CLINICS STAFF

Executive Director: Karen Gottlieb, RN, MBA
Associate Director: Cathy Sheehan, RN, MPH
Associate Director, Operations: Martha Kennard
Mgr., Community Development: Deb Howard
Data Manager: Laura Galusha
Admin. Assistant: Kathleen Moriarty

WE'RE VERY PROUD OF THE WAY WE MANAGE THE FUNDS CARING PEOPLE LIKE YOU GENEROUSLY DONATE. A copy of the latest financial statement filed by AmeriCares may be obtained by contacting AmeriCares, 88 Hamilton Ave., Stamford, CT 06902, (203) 658-9500. Some states require that special notices be included with each solicitation. If you are a resident of one of these states, you may obtain financial information or annual reports from us or directly from the state agency: in New York, Office of Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, New York 10271; in Maryland, for the cost of the copies and postage, the Secretary of State, State House, Annapolis, MD 21401; IN NEW JERSEY, FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL BY CALLING (973) 504-6215; IN NORTH CAROLINA, A COPY OF THE LICENSE TO SOLICIT CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS AS A CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION OR SPONSOR AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE CHARITABLE SOLICITATION LICENSING SECTION, NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE, BY CALLING 1-888-830-4989; in Pennsylvania, residents may call the Pennsylvania Department of State at 1-800-732-0999 (in state only); for West Virginia residents, the Secretary of State, State Capitol, Charleston, WV 25305; in Virginia, the State Division of Consumer Affairs, P.O. Box 1163, Richmond, VA 23209; Washington State residents may obtain a copy of the last report filed with the Washington Secretary of State by calling toll free within Washington, 1-800-332-4483 (in state only); IN FLORIDA, RESIDENTS MAY CALL THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES AT 1-800-435-7352 (in state only). Our Florida Registration number is SC-00910 and since AmeriCares does not employ professional solicitors, we retain 100% of contributions and 0% is retained by such solicitors. Our license number in Michigan is 10588. **STATE OF KANSAS Registration #222F593F6SC** Office of Secretary of State, First Floor, Memorial Hall 120 S.W. 10th Avenue Topeka, KS 66612-1594. Copies of the filings with the authorities listed above can also be obtained by writing to AmeriCares at 88 Hamilton Ave., Stamford, CT 06902. Registration with any of the above agencies does not imply endorsement by the state.



AmeriCares Free Clinics

Providing free, quality health care to the uninsured

FALL 2006

Clinics Face Volunteer Shortage



Photos by Jane Hetherington

Among the professionals volunteering their services are (at left) Dr. Stephen O'Mahoney at the Norwalk clinic, and Dr. Joe Connolly with wife Cindy Connolly, R.N., in Bridgeport (at right).

Echoing a growing nursing shortage across the country, AmeriCares Free Clinics finds itself increasingly facing its own staffing challenges in Bridgeport, Danbury and Norwalk, and not just for nurses: physicians and interpreters are needed, too.

"If you've got health care skills, language capabilities or administrative experience, the AmeriCares Free Clinics could really use your help," says Cathy Sheehan, the organization's associate director. "Right now, we are experiencing an acute need for volunteer nurses, physicians and interpreters. As the number of uninsured people living in our area continues to increase, the need for our services also

increases and we can't provide help without an active group of volunteers."

With two new exam rooms recently added to the Norwalk clinic, expanded hours in Danbury, and construction underway for a permanent clinic in Bridgeport to replace the current mobile medical unit, the services of additional skilled volunteers are in great demand. Recognizing that busy professionals are already juggling many work and family responsibilities, AmeriCares Free Clinics is asking for small increments of time: volunteers can sign up for as few as three hours, every six to eight weeks.

That is basically one clinic session every

two to three months.

"We don't want to turn any patients away," says Sheehan, "but sometimes we have to because we can't see all of our patients during the clinics' operating hours. If we had two doctors and more nurses for each session, it would greatly increase the number of people we could help."

In 12 years, the three AmeriCares Free Clinics have provided more than \$15 million in health care services in the communities they serve. To learn more about volunteering, call Cathy Sheehan at 203-658-9654 or e-mail her at csheehan@americares.org

IN THE NEWS

The AmeriCares Free Clinics has been on the receiving end of cash and in-kind contributions from a variety of generous donors over the past few months. In this issue of the newsletter, we'd like to acknowledge some of them:

In June, the AmeriCares Free Clinic of Norwalk received a \$10,000 grant to support its pediatric clinic from the **Perrin Family Foundation** of Ridgefield, CT...

In July, the AmeriCares Free Clinics were awarded a \$20,000 grant from Fairfield County's **Near and Far Aid Association** to help support the general operating expenses of the Norwalk and Bridgeport Clinics...

Also in July, the **Sound Sailing Center** of Norwalk held its fifth annual fund-raiser for the AmeriCares Free Clinic of Norwalk, a weekend-long "Sail the Sound" event that gave folks the chance to enjoy a sail while benefiting the clinics at the same time. More than \$1,600 was raised thanks to this event. Sound Sailing's Wendy and Martin van Breems have been supporting the clinics for 10 years....

Information Portfolio of Largo, Florida, recently donated 1,000 "personal health portfolios" to the Free Clinics for our patients. These binders are designed to contain an individual or families' health and medical records in one place and are especially useful for those with chronic illnesses. Information Portfolio President Cheryl Rios made the gift because, as she says, "I greatly appreciate the work that AmeriCares Free Clinics does."



Karen's Corner

Dear Friends,

Why do they do it? That question is asked every time we speak about the generosity of Norwalk Hospital, Danbury Hospital, St Vincent's Medical Center, Bridgeport Hospital and Quest Diagnostics. Since 1994, AmeriCares Free Clinics

has received donated laboratory, radiology and diagnostic testing from our affiliating hospitals and laboratories, plus a variety of clinic and emergency room visits and specialty care, to the tune of well over \$3 million.

So, why do they? First and foremost, they are dedicated to taking care of the people in their communities. Norwalk Hospital's mission of "meeting the medical needs of the community without regard to economic circumstances," is shared by all our partner hospitals. And I believe they see the partnership with the AmeriCares Free Clinics as the fulfillment of that mission. They can attest that patients seen and followed by the Free Clinics are patients who will not show up in their emergency rooms or be hospitalized for complications of treatable conditions. This is good for each hospital's bottom line, good for the community as a whole, and most importantly, good for the patients.

All of us at AmeriCares Free Clinics want to wish to express sincere appreciation to the silent partners who do so much and ask for so little: the radiologists who donate their professional services, the hospital staff and Quest Diagnostics. Working together, we have provided comprehensive out patient care to nearly 3,000 patients this year. We couldn't do it without you!

With gratitude,

By Karen Gottlieb, RN, MBA
Executive Director
AmeriCares Free Clinics

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Norwalk Hospital
- Norwalk Radiology Consultants
- Quest Diagnostics
- NEON/South Norwalk Community Center
- City of Bridgeport
- Bridgeport Hospital
- St. Vincent's Medical Center
- Fairfield County Imaging
- Advanced Radiology Associates
- Danbury Hospital
- New Milford Hospital
- Danbury Office of Physician Services
- Danbury Radiology Associates
- Danbury Housing Authority
- Northeast Radiology

Sign up for the AmeriCares Free Clinics e-news! E-mail your name and address to clinicsnewsletter@americares.org with "newsletter" in the subject line.

Spotlight on Norwalk Volunteer

Tracking the Meds

For six years now, Barbara Licker has been the "queen of medicines" at the AmeriCares Free Clinic of Norwalk.



Photo by Elizabeth Walsh

Barbara Licker

Volunteering at the clinic two to three days a week, she is the chief liaison to the pharmaceutical companies, responsible for keeping the inventory of the clinic's medicines, and ordering drugs as they are needed.

"Every pharmaceutical company has its requirements, we have to get proof of income from our patients, make sure the right medicines are being sent for, ask for refills... there are a lot of details to keep track of. Fortunately, much of it is automated now, but the pharma companies are always introducing new systems," Barbara notes.

Barbara can't remember how she first heard about the clinics, but she says she "liked the idea of helping the indigent. They've got so much to face in the U.S. There are a lot of people who really can't help themselves in this area. The clinic fulfills some of the need here."

A Westport resident, Barbara retired from Daimler-Chrysler in 2000, where she had worked as an administrative assistant for 11 years. These days, when she is not helping out at the clinic, she visits with her three grandchildren.



AmeriCares Free Clinic of Norwalk
98 South Main Street, Norwalk CT
203-899-2493

Hours:

Tuesdays 1-4; Wednesdays 2-4 (peds.);
Saturdays 9-12

STAFF

Director: Barbara McCabe, APRN

Patient Care Coordinator: Gail Banigan

Staff Nurse: Pat Porio, RN

Keeping a Hand In

Jane Bohnsack, R.N., has been volunteering for the AmeriCares Free Clinics for more than five years.

She started by helping out at the Norwalk clinic and then moved to the Bridgeport clinic shortly after it opened.

“I’ve always volunteered at some sort of medical activity,” says Jane. “I wanted to keep my hand in nursing and this gives me a chance to help people without insurance. I chose AmeriCares Free Clinics because the clinics were local and because I love what I do and wanted to keep doing it in some way.”

Working with the uninsured, Jane says, has its ups and downs. “There are some things that tear your heart out.



People who can’t get work and are going to be forced out of their living situations because they can’t afford them. When they have chronic illnesses like diabetes to deal with, too, it is heartbreaking.”

Jane says that one of the advantages of volunteering at the AmeriCares Free Clinics is working with the other volunteers. “We’re all on the same wave-length. We all want to volunteer, we

Jane Bohnsack, R.N.

all want to help. Every doctor I have worked with there is wonderful.”

To learn more about volunteering at an AmeriCares Free Clinic, visit the web site at www.americaresfreeclinics.org



**AmeriCares Free Clinic of Bridgeport
Mobile Medical Unit
888-736-3435 (call for locations)**

Hours:
Tuesdays 1–4; Thursdays 12:30–3;
Saturdays 9–12

STAFF

Director: Sharon Joslin, APRN
Coordinator, Mobile Unit: Charles Jones

A World of Expertise

Dr. Joseph Belsky brings a wealth of experience to the Danbury clinic.

He has been practicing in Danbury for more than 40 years, both in private and group practice. Currently, he sees patients twice a week as part of his work with Danbury Hospital’s



Office of Physicians’ Services, and is also a Clinical Professor of Medicine at Yale University.

Dr. Belsky has been volunteering his services at the Danbury clinic since 1998, seeing patients once a month at the specialty clinic for Endocrinology & Diabetes. “There is an increase in the incidence of diabetes in the general population. We see many people who have come here from different cultures who are at increased risk for Type II Diabetes, because there is less physical activity here and a different diet,” he says.

Dr. Joe Belsky

Dr. Belsky has had some interesting experiences outside of Danbury, too: He served in the U.S. Navy in ’45 and ’46. He lived in Japan for three years, working as the Chief of Medicine at the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission in Hiroshima/Nagasaki, studying the late effects of atomic radiation on the population. He has also visited Russia and China as a “Diabetes Educator” for People to People, and worked in the Marshall Islands with the people there who were exposed to hydrogen bomb testing.

“We’re very lucky to have him,” says Dina Valenti, clinic director for the AmeriCares Free Clinic of Danbury. “He has a great ability to make everything understandable for our patients and that is a real plus.”



**AmeriCares Free Clinic of Danbury
198 Main Street, Danbury CT
203-748-6188**

Hours: Wednesdays 12–7; Saturdays 9–12
Call for hours for the mobile clinic in
Bethel, Brookfield & New Milford

STAFF

Director: Dina Valenti, RN
Admin. Assts: John Weggeman, Chris Regan
Staff Nurse: Judy Hottle, RN
Nurse Practitioner: Geraldine McQuirk, APRN