

Update

A quarterly publication to inform current and prospective friends of the InterFaith Health Clinic
Providing affordable medical, dental and mental health care to the working uninsured and other underserved people



Peggy and Dennis Sharp

Giving Back: How One Family Shows Gratitude to InterFaith

For some, InterFaith is a place to go for the occasional sinus infection or earache. But for other patients, like Dennis and Peggy Sharp, InterFaith is a place to go for lifesaving medical help when you have nowhere else to turn.

Dennis Sharp is self-employed in the janitorial business, while also working part-time as a

landscaper and substitute teacher for Knox County Schools. Being self-employed, Dennis doesn't have access to health insurance, which led him to InterFaith in 2000. Four years later, his wife Peggy also became a patient at InterFaith.

Peggy was diagnosed in 2004 with chronic lymphocytic leukemia, a cancer of the white blood cells that is treatable but not curable. At the time of her diagnosis Peggy was on TennCare. Shortly after she began chemotherapy treatments, however, Peggy was one of the 170,000 people disenrolled from TennCare in mid-2005. Left without health insurance and in the middle of a 7-round series of chemotherapy treatments, finding a new health care home was literally a matter of life or death for Peggy.

"We tried getting her in at several different places, and no one would take her. She kept getting turned down," Dennis said. "When we came to InterFaith, though, they got her in to see the doctor right away. She didn't even miss any of her chemotherapy treatments," he said.



Dr. Richard Grapski, a medical oncologist/hematologist at Thompson Cancer Survival Center

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Mission Statement

To provide accessible, affordable, and quality health care to the low-income, working uninsured, primarily through the support of the religious, health care, and business communities.

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A Message from our Executive Director

Having just wrapped up our fiscal year, I'd like to take a minute to give you a brief "State of the Clinic" address.

First, the new things at InterFaith – electronic health care records. Yes, we are finally moving at least to the 20th century, if not the 21st century. It is not a system with all the bells and whistles, but it will make us much more efficient. When you are a multi-discipline facility, it feels like half of your time is spent chasing charts. If the nurse has it, then the dentist needs it. If the dentist has it, then our pharmacist needs it to fill medications. Other times the front office is trying to get it from our behaviorist. The main benefit with electronic health care records is efficiency – we are trying to improve so that we can provide the best possible care to our patients.



Did you notice I mentioned our pharmacist? Although we remain a physician-dispensed site (not a pharmacy), we now have a clinical pharmacist on staff to dispense medications and counsel our patients. In the private sector, your physician only hands out samples and then you go to a pharmacist for the bulk of your medications. Because high prescription drug costs make many medications unaffordable for our patients, however, InterFaith has always strived to provide our patients with their medications. There are several reasons we decided to hire a pharmacist. One of those reasons is efficiency. Rather than receiving medicines from the provider, patients now receive medicines directly from the pharmacist, freeing our providers up to spend more time on patient care. Another reason is simple checks & balances. A second set of trained eyes is evaluating the appropriate medication, dose and interactions. When you dispense almost \$2 million in medication each year, you need that accountability to ensure quality care.

Now, that is the boring, factual information. Let me tell you what we've really been doing. This year – July 1, 2008 through the end of last month – our staff, volunteers, and you provided over 28,000 visits. Twenty-eight thousand times a working individual in our community needed help and we were there.

Statistics are wonderful and numbers are great, but people are where real differences are made. I cannot tell you what it means to get a full night's sleep because your child is no longer sick. A statistic will not show what an impact a new pair of eyeglasses makes to someone on the job. Numbers will not tell the story or be able to illustrate the difference in a person's life today because five years ago we helped a brittle diabetic become stable.

That is what has really happened this year – 28,000 times.

We could not have done it without you. In the not-for-profit world, tough times mean there is more need and fewer resources available to meet that need. As the demand increases and resources dwindle because of the economic situation, we must make strides to become more efficient in order to best serve our patients. No single person can solve this problem, but we *can* take our dime and put it with someone else's dime to increase the impact. Yes, we set goals and we strive to meet those goals, but the numbers are only important if they represent people and their needs. I pray you will continue to work with us in the coming year to change lives.

On behalf of each and every patient that has walked through our doors, thank you.

Melissa Knight
Executive Director

How Can I Help InterFaith?

Dental Volunteers - As more and more patients seek dental care at InterFaith, the Dental Clinic is in need of volunteer dentists to perform general dentistry as well as extractions. Contact Donna Barker at 546-7330.

Opportunities to Raise Awareness about InterFaith - Is your club, church, or neighborhood group looking for a speaker? An InterFaith representative would be happy to inform others of the clinic's services and needs. Contact Kelly Mainor at 546-7330.

Dental Supplies - InterFaith's Dental Clinic also needs individually wrapped toothbrushes, toothpaste, and floss. Contact Donna Barker at 546-7330.

Financial Support - One of the most important ways you can support InterFaith is by providing financial support. The average cost of one patient visit is \$55. Patients pay an average of \$15, making the cost to the clinic \$40. Every \$40 you donate will provide for one patient encounter.

Giving Back (continued)

After her initial appointment at InterFaith, the clinic arranged for her chemotherapy treatments to continue under the care of Dr. Richard Grapski of the Thompson Cancer Survival Center. Dr. Grapski is a board-certified medical oncologist/hematologist who is part of InterFaith’s network of over 400 volunteer physicians who have agreed to treat InterFaith’s patients according to the clinic’s sliding fee scale.

Peggy participated in a clinical trial that required intravenous chemotherapy treatments five days a week for seven weeks. “I did real well with it. I felt bad, but I wasn’t going to let it take me,” Peggy said. Thanks to Dr. Grapski’s expert care, Peggy has been in remission since 2006.

Despite the improvement in Peggy’s leukemia, the disease has left her with a weakened immune system that puts her at risk for contracting a variety of illnesses. “I have no immunity anymore,” Peggy said. “I’ve been hospitalized twice in the last three months for chronic bronchitis. I have to stay away from sick people because I get everything going around,” she said. Prior to her diagnosis, Peggy worked as a home health care provider. She hopes to return to that career one day if her doctors give her the go-ahead to return to work. Dennis and Peggy spoke highly of the high-quality medical care she received at St. Mary’s Medical Center, which partners with InterFaith to provide hospitalizations, surgeries, and diagnostics to



Dennis and his grandson, Derrick, age 7

InterFaith’s patients according to the clinic’s sliding fee scale. UT Medical Center and Covenant Health provide similar in-kind services to InterFaith’s patients.

Because of Peggy’s leukemia, a caseworker at St. Mary’s is currently trying to get Peggy re-enrolled in the TennCare program. “Actually, I’m going to miss coming to InterFaith if I do get back on TennCare,” Peggy said. “I love the doctors here.”

“InterFaith has done so much for us. I’ll do anything I can to help the clinic.”

Dennis has also benefited from InterFaith’s comprehensive health care services, having had a recent colonoscopy and cystoscopy. In addition, Dennis had cataracts removed from both eyes in 2008, a surgery performed by another of InterFaith’s volunteer specialists, Dr. Grover Robinson of Williford, Dawson, & Robinson. InterFaith’s physicians have also treated Dennis for high blood pressure, but so far he’s been able to control his hypertension through diet and exercise.

As a way of showing his appreciation for InterFaith, Dennis has recently started maintaining InterFaith’s parking lot and grounds. “InterFaith has done so much for us. I’ll do anything I can to help the clinic,” he said. In addition to working several jobs, Dennis makes regular trips with his weedeater and lawn tools to make sure that InterFaith’s grounds are well maintained. About Dennis’s work ethic, Peggy said, “If he’s not working, he’s not happy.” He’s even brought his 7-year-old grandson, Derrick, to help on occasion. Derrick’s payment – a vanilla ice-cream cone with sprinkles from the local Freeze. Dennis’s payment – knowing that he’s helping the organization that keeps he and his wife healthy.



Dennis visits InterFaith regularly to maintain the clinic’s parking lots

“InterFaith has been there for us through a lot of hard times,” Dennis said. “I’ll do anything I can to give back to the clinic that has helped us so much.”

M*A*S*H BASH RAISES \$70,000 FOR INTERFAITH



InterFaith's 15th-annual signature fundraiser, *M*A*S*H Bash*, raised \$70,000 this year to provide health care for Knoxville's working uninsured. About 325 InterFaith supporters turned out for this year's event, which borrows its army theme from the 70s hit TV show *M*A*S*H*.

The Knoxville Convention Center served as the venue, with music provided by the Chillbilles. Major sponsors of the event included Pilot, Regal Entertainment Group, BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee, Buck & Linda Vaughn, and PAETEC.

In addition to enjoying a delicious buffet and dancing to the eclectic music of the Chillbillies, guests engaged in a friendly bidding war at the live and silent auctions. More than 20 silent auction items (including gift certificates, golf packages, glassware, gift baskets, and more) were purchased, with the following live auction items also up for bids:


- U.S. flag flown over Capitol Building
- Interactive dinner party for 16 people at Roux Barb
- Three-night stay at cabin in Wear's Valley
- 18k gold multi-color gemstone pendant
- Lane Kiffin autographed football
- "Chef's Night Out" cooking class at Season's Cafe
- Lunch at Long's Drugs with Johnny Majors
- Dinner party with Bruce Pearl



Bidders also had the option to "purchase" patient visits at InterFaith, with the goal being to raise enough money to fund an entire day of health care. InterFaith's supporters proved their faithfulness once again, pledging \$7,400 to provide for approximately 148 patient encounters at InterFaith. In total, this year's M*A*S*H Bash auctions were more successful than ever before, raising \$15,283.

Money raised from the live and silent auctions, in conjunction with ticket sales and sponsorships, totaled about \$70,000. Melissa Knight, InterFaith's Executive Director, said the proceeds would provide for about 1,750 patient visits for Knoxville's working uninsured population. "When the economy's bad we have more patients coming to us for help and fewer dollars to fund their treatment. The money we raised at M*A*S*H Bash will help ensure that our services are available during a time when people need help the most," Knight said.

InterFaith would like to extend our thanks to the volunteers and sponsors who made M*A*S*H Bash 2009 such a success. Your commitment to InterFaith translates into better health care for Knoxville's working uninsured.

Mark your calendars now for the 16th-annual M*A*S*H Bash, tentatively scheduled for Saturday, June 5th, 2010, at the Knoxville Convention Center. More details to come. 

****SPECIAL SALUTE**** InterFaith extends sincere thanks to the following M*A*S*H Bash sponsors:

FIVE-STAR GENERALS:

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Going once...Going twice...Sold!

InterFaith would also like to thank those that donated items to the M*A*S*H Bash 2009 silent and live auctions. Because of the support of the following donors, the auctions raised more than \$15,000 to help the working uninsured of the Knoxville community.



*Bruce Bogartz
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Gifts-in-Kind

Donated goods and services help us keep operating costs low. We received gifts from these friends between February 14, 2009 and June 30, 2009.

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We received the following gifts between February 14, 2009 and June 30, 2009

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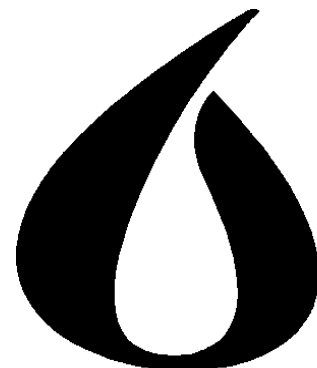
Nina Bowling, InterFaith's Development Director, shares the mission of InterFaith at the Tennessee Dental Association annual convention



InterFaith's medicine dispensary gets a facelift with the installation of a new door to be used for dispensing. InterFaith is grateful to Mike Torrey, Garrett Hanas, and Bill Torrey for donating their time to install the door.

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M*A*S*H BASH 2009 SNAPSHOTS



Words from our patients...

Nearly every week, InterFaith receives letters from patients who are grateful for the help they received at InterFaith. Because we could not carry out our health care ministry without your faithful support, we like to pass these thank-you letters on to you so that you can get a glimpse of the work being done at InterFaith.

Dear Staff & Doctors,

It is hard to put into words just how much you mean to me. I want to thank each and every one of you for being there when I needed you. You are a blessing to everyone that comes into InterFaith. I will never forget you. Each and every one of you have been so good to me. I can't thank you enough for your kindness and help. I couldn't have made it without your help.

Thank you so much!

*Sincerely,
A Grateful Patient*

**The InterFaith
Health Clinic
Update**

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**To unsubscribe or to change your contact information, please contact the
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