



Potential patients lined up outside AFC on new patient registration day.

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Transition to Electronic News

For the next year, as we transition to more electronic communications, we will send this newsletter electronically to those for whom we have email addresses in addition to a paper copy. If we don't already have your email, please send it to: pmcdermott@arlingtonfreeclinic.org

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Providing More Care for More Patients

In the past year, the number of people seeking to become registered patients at AFC has more than doubled.

While the numbers are far beyond our capacity to serve, our recently implemented Nurse Practitioner (NP) program is helping us respond to our community's increasing demand for care. With its own dedicated exam area, the NP program provides appointments five days/week. The program serves as the primary point of entry for patients who come to AFC via the lottery and also provides care

for patients referred directly from Virginia Hospital Center. Previously, new patients had to wait an average of 8-10 weeks for their first medical appointment. With the NP program, most new patients are offered a primary care appointment within one or two weeks of qualifying for services. With this first appointment, patients have an initial assessment and then have immediate access to the full scope of AFC's care including medications, laboratory testing and other

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What does healthcare reform mean for Arlington Free Clinic?

- We know that some of our patients will be eligible for some form of coverage through the new legislation. But the law will not take full effect until 2014 and most probably won't be fully implemented until 2019. At that time, many Arlington residents will still be left uninsured.
- There are still long lines of people without insurance seeking care at AFC each month, and we expect there will continue to be thousands of uninsured Arlingtonians for many years to come.
- AFC will play an important role in both helping uninsured people link with insurance they are eligible for and making sure those who cannot get covered have a

medical home at AFC.

- AFC's commitment to providing essential medical care for the poor in our community continues. This essential service is only possible with strong continuing support from our wonderful volunteers, donors and community partners.

Want more details on healthcare reform? The Kaiser Family Foundation website is an excellent resource. Go to www.kff.org. Under "New & Noteworthy," click on "summary of the law" for an overview and a great "timeline" of when various provisions of the legislation are scheduled to kick in. ❖

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



David D. Lee, MD
Chair, Board of Directors

The Arlington Free Clinic is back on Columbia Pike and I am honored to serve the Clinic that provides exemplary healthcare to Arlingtonians in need. It is with pride and humility that leads me back to a place that I have always known as home. I still have vivid memories of growing up in Arlington, eating ice cream at Gifford's, lunching at the Mario's Pizza, sneaking another view of "Jaws" at the Arlington Theater, and grooving at Louie's Rock City. Most of those places have gone but today

Arlington remains as vibrant as ever with new memories made at El Pollo Rico, the Cinema and Draft House, and the hockey rinks at the Ballston iceplex.

Like the proverbial spawning salmon, I have returned to raise a family and dedicate my life to healing and helping new generations of Arlingtonians. My Wakefield High School yearbook foretold my

future when my classmate Jerry Sherrill wrote, "I really admire the way you stay calm and cool...I hope you become a doctor so I can use you for free."

I have yet to treat Jerry at the Free Clinic but I have had the privilege of taking care of a young woman in need of gynecologic surgery, an elderly man with laryngeal cancer, and a family man who needed coronary bypass surgery so that he could return to work in order to provide for his wife and children.

The new Arlington Free Clinic is a wonderful home for those in need. Inside you will find patients, dedicated workers, volunteers, physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and even water saving toilets. You owe it to yourselves to come by for a visit and share your good fortune with your neighbors in need.

David Lee, MD

REPORT FROM THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR



N. Thomas Connally, MD
Medical Director

This spring the overwhelming clinical news is the progress we are making in converting from paper to computerized health care records. Although the complete transition to a robust Electronic Medical Record (EMR) may take as long as 18 months, it will just be a matter of time before we are fully computerized.

The benefits for the Clinic and our patients will be enormous. Once medical providers become fully acclimated to the computerized system, each patient encounter will be more efficient. I have spent much valuable time in

the past searching for hospital or lab reports; with the new EMR, this information will be immediately at hand. Ultimately, we expect to be able to share information electronically with community partners such as the hospital and diagnostic labs.

Perhaps more important, is the ability to quickly and efficiently gather data on our overall performance. In keeping with our clinical self evaluation goals, in the past several years, the nursing staff and I have painstakingly searched through patient records and with pen and paper recorded and tallied data on our performance. With computerized records we will be able to determine what we are doing well, and at appropriately frequent intervals make changes to further enhance quality of care. As we go forward with our electronic initiative, we will join the great, nationally recognized, private or university clinics with state of the art, ongoing evaluation.

N. Thomas Connally, MD
Medical Director

Save the Date for the "Starry, Starry Night" Benefit Gala!

Arlington Free Clinic will hold its Annual Black Tie Gala on **Saturday, October 16, 2010** at the Ritz-Carlton, Tysons Corner. The theme of this year's event, "**Starry, Starry Night**," evokes the beauty and serenity of what promises to be an elegant evening. Many of the Clinic's vital patient services depend on the success of this event.



Photo by Sonny Odum

Kevin Sullivan, Special Gifts Committee Chair and MaryBeth Sullivan, Benefit Gala Chair

We have a dynamic duo heading up our Gala festivities. **MaryBeth Sullivan** is returning as our Benefit Gala Chair, and her husband, **Kevin Sullivan** will Chair our extraordinarily important Special Gifts Committee. MaryBeth and her enthusiastic Gala committee plan every detail of the party. Kevin and the Special Gifts Committee secure commitments from individuals and businesses to buy tables and underwrite expenses of the Gala. The revenue generated from this event is an important investment in Clinic operations and the healthcare of the community.

The "**Starry Starry Night**" event includes a wonderful dinner, dancing, an exciting raffle, and a fabulous silent auction. Tickets for the Gala will be available in June and may be purchased on AFC's website or by calling Pia Clark at 703.979.1425, Ext. 143. Please visit www.arlingtonfreeclinic.org for more information. ❖

AFC Earns LEED® Gold for Sustainable Design

Arlington Free Clinic is thrilled to announce that we are the first free clinic in the nation to earn the prestigious LEED® GOLD certification for sustainable design. By working closely with design and engineering teams that donated significant amounts of time and labor, AFC was able to achieve a nationally recognized “green” space that is healthy, comfortable and cost effective. Because the resource efficient space is less costly to operate, it also allows AFC to direct more donated funds to patient care. This year, AFC will provide 10,000 free medical visits for Arlington’s low income uninsured residents.

AFC relocated to its permanent home in the recently constructed Halstead



building in South Arlington in May 2009. The Washington, DC, architectural firm Perkins+Will, Inc., the Alexandria, VA, engineering firm, Integral and Arlington builder Bognet Construction Associates incorporated energy-efficient features into the Clinic’s design, such as improved ventilation and lighting systems, ENERGY STAR® appliances and recycled, regional, renewable and non-toxic materials throughout the

space. Additionally, Washington Workplace, a local Arlington business, provided furniture at a substantially reduced cost to AFC.

Mark Silverwood, an AFC Board Member who served as a key advisor during the design and construction process says that AFC’s Board of Directors never thought about being at the forefront of sustainable design. “Building green was just the right thing to do and earning GOLD shows that even a small non-profit can set the bar high and build a space that benefits the entire community,” he said.

If you have not yet had the opportunity to see our new facility, please contact Pat McDermott at: pmcdermott@arlingtonfreeclinic.org or (703)979-1425, Ext. 121. ❖

Connected: Technology and Healthcare at AFC

Something more than record-breaking snow happened in February 2010. On the evening of Wednesday February 17, AFC’s new electronic medical record (EMR) went “live” for the first time. Since technology is now such an accepted part of our daily lives, this may not seem like such a big deal. But for AFC staff, the hundreds of volunteers who provide or support medical care in the Clinic and the thousands of patients who will have their care managed by new integrated health information technologies this year and in years to come, it is indeed a big deal.

So what exactly are we doing? We’re implementing major new technology systems including a new EMR (HEALTHeSTATES), a new eligibility screening and demographic software and new pharmacy management software. Training for staff and over 350 volunteers who will use the systems began last December and will continue throughout the year. We will work with Virginia Hospital Center (VHC) to develop an electronic interface that will enable both AFC and VHC to exchange patients’ medical information. Last year, VHC provided over \$800,000 of services for AFC patients.

To understand why we’re doing this, let’s back up a bit. Since beginning services 15 years ago, AFC has been dependent on paper medical charts. In 2005, we ventured into the EMR arena with a simple patient demographic and appointment system that also tracked basic clinical program reporting (number of visits, number of patients with diabetes, etc.).



Volunteers being trained on the Electronic Medical Record: Kate Wilson, RN, staff trainer
Left to right: Leigh Watlington, M.D., Nirmala Limaye, M.D., Surekha Cohen, Jerome Stein, M.D., Kate Sweet, N.P., Christine Pintz, NP, Arcana Ball, M.D.

However, with its extremely slow connectivity and inflexible design, the system could not be used for clinical charting or care management. The result was continued dependence on paper charts that, for our many patients with multiple chronic diseases are, literally, several inches thick. A volunteer physician seeing such a patient for the first time had to divert attention from the person and spend valuable time flipping through new and old documentation to understand the history and current status. In contrast, with the EMR, physicians and nurse practitioners will use a computer in the exam rooms to quickly view each patient’s chronic conditions, labs,

allergies, current medications, appointments, and care plan on a single “dashboard” screen. We will complete the transition from paper charts to “paperless” medical care management by July 2011.

Implementing our new technologies is really not an option but rather a required step for us to meet the community’s growing demand for services and maintain excellence of quality. Successful implementation of our new technologies will allow us to coordinate care more effectively, streamline processes, measure performance and health outcomes, and improve quality of care. This really is a big deal. ❖

SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERS



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- Christopher Wilkes, Washington Fine Properties, LLC**
- Sheila R. Zedlewski,**
Director, Income and Benefits Policy Center, The Urban Institute
- David Briggs, JD**
Holland & Knight LLP, Counsel to the Board

Board Members: Sitting left to right: Joan B. Ritter, M.D., Jesus Noriega, Kathy Freshley, John F. Benton, II, David D. Lee, M.D., Douglas A. Dowling, C.P.A., N. Thomas Connally, M.D. Standing left to right: Jennifer S. Lee, M.D., James G. Cochran, Diane H. Naughton, Patricia A. Rodriguez, M.D., Keith T. Shiner, J.D., Christian Dorsey, Robert G. Deason, Kevin R. Sullivan, J.D., Christopher Wilkes, Sheila R. Zedlewski. Missing from photo: Timothy D. Muir, M.D.



Additional Board Members: Left to right: Grace Abi-Najm Shea, David Townshend, Soo Cheng, Ruth E. McGoff, M.S.W., Kit Gordon, Christopher McManus, M.D.

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- Joseph A. Backer, M.D.,**
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AFC Board 1996-2008
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- Reuben K. Varghese, MD,**
Health Director, Arlington County Public
Health Division

And the Awards Go To....

AFC is proud to announce that two of our incredibly talented and committed volunteers and former Board members – Lillibeth Boruchow, MD and Mark Silverwood – have been recognized for their extraordinary leadership through prestigious community awards.

Lillibeth was selected from a highly competitive field of nominees as the recipient of the Arlington County Commission on the Status of Women's 2010 Women of Vision Award. Eight years ago, when serving as Chair of AFC's Board, Lillibeth, a psychiatrist, worked with other volunteers and clinic staff to develop and successfully implement a mental health program at AFC. This important program, which is now fully

integrated within the Clinic's primary care setting, continues to provide essential services for hundreds of AFC patients.

Mark Silverwood, President of Silverwood Associates, was selected to receive a "Heroes in Health Care" award from the Virginia Health Care Foundation (VHCF). In this annual, state-wide competition, the VHCF recognizes individuals who have provided excellent service, commitment and dedication to an organization that has received a VHCF grant. Last year, AFC received a \$150,000 VHCF grant for our new clinic space. Mark played a key leadership role throughout the new building planning and construction process and was the first donor to "name" a space within the new Clinic. Mark will receive



Mark Silverwood



Lillibeth Boruchow, MD

his award in late May during a reception to be held in Richmond.

Congratulations and thanks again to Lillibeth and Mark for making a significant difference in the lives of patients served by AFC. ❖

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Arlington ENT serves AFC!

The Clinic is pleased to highlight and thank Arlington ENT Associates for the dedicated, high quality medical care they have provided for Clinic patients since 1995. Dr. Scott Spagnoli, Dr. Joseph Lee and Dr. Thomas Pilkington provide essential specialty care in their offices for our patients who have a variety of ear, nose and throat issues. These include conditions like chronic ear disease, chronic sinusitis, head and neck tumors as well as allergies. Their comprehensive services include surgeries and other procedures for AFC patients. One recent example is a tympanoplasty, a reconstructive surgery for treating a perforated eardrum.

Each year, Arlington ENT Associates generously treats at least 3 dozen Clinic patients. Because of their complicated



From left: Dr. Joseph Lee, Dr. Thomas Pilkington and Dr. Scott Spagnoli

medical issues, some of these require multiple follow-up appointments. Arlington ENT also provides comprehensive audiology services including hearing tests.

After working with Arlington ENT for

over ten years, AFC Case Manager Matt Kennedy says he especially appreciates the professionalism, generosity, and patience of the doctors and office staff. "I've always felt very comfortable working with Arlington ENT," says Matt, "and I know our patients are always very thankful for the care they receive."

The doctors at Arlington ENT seem to agree. They say that they find AFC patients to be grateful for the care provided and that they are happy to continue working with AFC. On behalf of our patients and staff, we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Arlington ENT for all they have done and continue to do for our patients.

Arlington ENT Associates is located at 1635 North George Mason Drive, Suite 250, Arlington, VA 22205. (703) 524-1212. <http://www.arlingtonentassociates.com> ❖

Thank You Karen Pyrah!

If there's anyone who knows our volunteers, it's Lee Miller, AFC's Volunteer Director. And here's what Lee has to say about Karen Pyrah and her 9 years of volunteer service: "Karen has become a foundation for our volunteer program because I know I can always depend on her. She combines great good humor with immense capability." But there's more. Karen, who had been volunteering twice a month for years, recently committed

to an additional weekly responsibility of teaching other volunteers to use AFC's new Electronic Medical Record system. Lee points out "With her background in computers and data management, Karen is a perfect fit for this new job."

Karen seems to agree with that assessment. "I love my work at AFC," she says. "It's easy to give here. The staff nurses have so many talents, and I don't

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Volunteer Karen Pyrah

AFC is now on facebook.

Arlington Free Clinic has expanded its Web presence to Facebook. Facebook is a free social networking service connecting individuals to their friends and now to Arlington Free Clinic.

The new Arlington Free Clinic Page provides us with an engaging and participatory platform to update you on AFC's current news and events. The same event information found on our website will also be available on the Facebook Page. On our Facebook Page, you can contribute photos and comment about planned or past events on "The Wall".

Show your support and become a "Fan" of AFC today! Log on to www.facebook.com today and do a search for Arlington Free Clinic and select the text "Become a Fan" from the top right. ❖



WIN A TRIP TO PARIS!

Arlington Free Clinic is holding a fabulous raffle and you can be the lucky winner of a trip to Paris, France! The raffle prize includes two round-trip tickets and a four-night stay in Paris's luxurious, five-star hotel, the Paris Marriott Hotel Champs-Élysées! Take a chance to win this fabulous trip - only 300 tickets will be sold at \$100 each, and all proceeds benefit Arlington Free Clinic. Buy as many as you'd like, and you don't have to be present to win! Winning ticket will be drawn on May 24, 2010. Winner has until May 23, 2011 to complete travel.

Hotel stay has been donated by Marriott International.

For more information please contact Pia Clark, 703-979-1425 ext.143 or pclark@arlingtonfreeclinic.org. ❖

Patients

Continued from Page 1

services such as mental health, physical therapy and nutrition education.

During the last six months of 2009, the NP program provided 1,226 visits for 557 Arlingtonians. Of these, 305 (55%) were new patients. Without AFC, these people would simply not have received the medical care they needed.

What kind of folks does the NP see? Our new patients are a mixed group. They range in age from 20-somethings to those aged 60+. Some are US born and others are foreign born. Most are parents; many are working multiple jobs. An increasing number have lost

their jobs due to the economic downturn and are uninsured for the first time in their lives. All are sick. The majority of new patients come to us with chronic conditions that are common and treatable – like hypertension, diabetes and high cholesterol. Others come to us with less common but also treatable diseases like cancer and lupus.

The NP provides an initial evaluation and works to ensure each patient receives all necessary care. Before coming to AFC, a young mother of two who could not afford her insulin, ended up in the hospital. Later released, she was referred to AFC and was screened for eligibility. The same day she was accepted as an AFC patient, she saw the NP and had immediate access to her life saving medication. ❖



Nurse Practitioner Maura Constance examines a patient.

Karen Pyrah

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have enough superlatives to describe the volunteer doctors." She also notes how much she enjoys working with very young volunteers and interns. "It's encouraging to me that these young people have such a strong interest in being involved with a non-profit."

And then there are the patients – who Karen points out are so patient! "Sometimes they have to wait a long time, but they don't complain." In addition to the challenge of working in the high action environment

of clinic nights, Karen also treasures the unexpected pleasures that come her way. One recent evening when Karen was volunteering, a patient came to the Clinic with his alto saxophone and two friends with guitars. They settled in and performed a remarkable concert in the reception area. This was the grateful (and talented) patient's way to thank an AFC nurse and volunteers for the care he had received.

It was appropriate that Karen was able to enjoy this extraordinary expression of gratitude. We just can't thank her enough for her own extraordinary commitment to AFC and our patients. ❖

In Memoriam

As this newsletter was going to print, the Clinic learned that Karen Pyrah passed away unexpectedly. Our Clinic family is deeply saddened by this news. All of us at AFC extend our sympathies to Karen's family and friends. She had been a loyal and highly valued volunteer and friend of the Clinic and will be greatly missed.