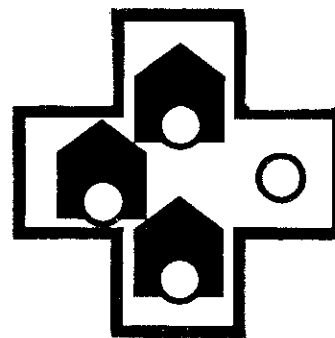

GENNESARET FREE CLINIC NEWS



Volunteer Health Care for the Homeless and Poor

Clinics at Dayspring Center, Care Center, Lighthouse Mission, Salvations Army Adult Rehab., Holy Family Shelter, Mt. Olive Crisis Center, and Mobile Unit. Office at 631 E. N. Y., Indpls, IN 46202; (317) 262-5645

August - September, 1992

"... And all those who touched Him were healed." Mark 6:58

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Conference Set for Sept. 12

The second annual **Health Care for the Homeless and Poor Conference** will convene in Indianapolis on **Saturday, September 12**. This event has become a regional meeting for volunteers and professionals who care for the needs of the indigent. Representatives from nearly every medical program in Indiana as well as a few from surrounding states will meet to hear excellent **lectures**, share in **workshop / roundtable discussions**, and enjoy **debates** on controversial topics. Many top speakers will be present too.

This will be a great chance to see the new **Indiana Government Center**. The facility includes a state-of-the-art facility for conferencing and audio-visuals. The Gennesaret Free Clinic **mobile unit** will be present for your inspection as well as **displays** from numerous agencies and institutions involved in indigent care from around the state.

The affair will be catered and there should be good food for breaks and lunch.

You will have the chance to meet and talk with **Dr. Philip Brickner**, a national leader in homeless medical care. He will offer his ideas on several topics that he is involved with in treating the homeless in New York City.

Dr. John Chris Bailey, Indiana State Health Commissioner, will open the conference. He has been very supportive of efforts to expand health care to the needy and would welcome your insights. Dr. Bailey is a GFC volunteer.

The conference will be a venue to make announcements to other workers from around the Midwest and to meet and problem-solve with fellow health workers. There are topics for everyone's interests. There will be handouts of valuable information and articles and a wonderful conference poster for participants.

Your attendance will support other full-time professionals in the field, will help with new ideas for your

care of the indigent, and should be an enjoyable day as well.

Please enroll soon. Scholarships are available for students and those unable to afford the enrollment fee (which includes meals). As one of the few conferences of its kind in the country, come and take part in the 1992 Health Care for the Homeless and Poor Conference.

GFC Applies to United Way

We have begun the difficult process of **seeking aid from the United Way Agency for year 1994**. GFC Board Treasurer, **Moni Draper**, has attended several meetings with United Way officials in order to begin the detailed application process. The United Way requires that an organization be well planned, governed, financially very accountable and responsible, and have extensive documentation. Of course, these are all good things but they have placed added strain on members like Moni. GFC thanks its volunteer Board members for their hard work in continuing on this application.

Since this application is not for this year or even the coming year it will not help for quite some time. One danger in announcing our efforts toward becoming a United Way agency is that persons may think that GFC is already covered. We are far from being in a spot where we can be complacent.

However, even though we are not a United Way agency yet, **you can still assign your United Way contribution to go to GFC**. This requires a right-in on the back of your contribution card that asks for the agency you wish to support. If we are approved as a United Way agency we will not be able to ask members to assign their contributions to GFC and we will not be able to solicit donations of any kind during the fall months while the United Way drive is on. **Please consider this option, when you make your contribution.** This may actually help GFC be approved as an agency if there appears to be established support.

GFC hopes to continue to help the indigent and encourage meaningful opportunities for health volunteers through these funds.

Media notes homeless

Several media features have brought out the plight of the homeless. In June, *USA Today* wrote on "Rights of the Homeless: Are street people 'criminals just by living?'" It was noted how Miami homeless were being "swept" out of shanty towns to "make the problem disappear." "Several **legal challenges** on behalf of the homeless are on the rise: in NJ., a federal judge ruled last year that a library could not kick out the homeless, even if they smell bad or stare at other patrons. In San Francisco, last year, an anti-begging law was ruled unconstitutional. In Atlanta, a pending ACLU suit charges that the city's ban on "aggressive pan-handling violates free speech."

In Indianapolis, the *Star*, reported on "**the jungle**" a shanty town near downtown and the day center on East Washington street. The abandoned wooded area is "home" to many of the 1200 Indianapolis homeless veterans. There are clearings every 20 feet or so where the homeless set up makeshift beds and places to live made of cardboard or old wood. Some are primitive with beds made of weeds and branches. Most crime in the jungle is caused by teen gang members who harass the homeless.

Russell Harding said he'll probably be on the streets until he dies. He prefers it to operating within a system he hates.

"Its easier than being in Viet Nam," he said taking a swig from a bottle of wine.

"But you still gotta look over your shoulder."

The Indianapolis News recently covered **Dr. Matias Vega** of Peoples' Health Homeless Initiative Program in a very flattering article. Mat has given so much to develop and direct the care of the homeless in Indianapolis. This is a notice that is well deserved.

In July *Hospitals*, the article "Health care for the homeless: What role should hospitals play?" quotes **Dr. Philip Brickner**. "Homeless persons constitute the sickest part of the population, and a significant percentage of them will need health care." It notes that Brickner headed the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation program from 1985-90 in founding 19 programs across the country. Presently with St. Vincent of NYC, he oversees 29 separate sites for the homeless throughout Manhattan. (Drs. Vega and Brickner are featured speakers at the 1992 Health Care for the Homeless and Poor Conference). Hospitals across the country have helped establish **clinics at homeless shelters and soup kitchens**, breaking down barriers that may stop the homeless from seeking care at more formal settings.

Advocates for the homeless point out that hospitals often see a direct financial benefit from their outreach efforts-- namely, a decline in inappropriate visits to their emergency departments.

News ... News...

Your GFC work was represented and visible at the **Indianapolis Black Expo**. More than 100,000 visitors to the health display saw and toured the GFC mobile unit. Thanks to Linda Schnellinger and the volunteers who staffed the van at this important event.

Carpenter Better Homes and Gardens Realty will be holding a city-wide "garage sale" to raise money for GFC. They have shown interest in working with GFC on other projects too. Thanks to Mr. Thomas Prail, owner, for really being concerned about "better homes."

The Homeless Coalition of Indiana and the National Coalition for the Homeless report "The HUD-VA-Independent Agencies appropriations bill was reported out of the full House Appropriations committee on Thursday July 24. The committee essentially followed the President's budget proposal to cut the FEMA Emergency Food and Shelter program from \$134 million to \$109 million and slash funding HUD's Emergency Shelter Grants program **from \$73.2 to \$17.5 million**. The Labor-HHS-Education appropriations subcommittee cut Emergency CSBG by 50%, raised Job Training for the Homeless slightly, and cut all other McKinney programs by 1% below last years level; the full appropriations committee is expected to approve these recommendations."

This may mean "**closure for many**" of the **47 Indiana homeless shelters** according to Barbara Anderson, Chairperson of the Indiana Coalition for the Homeless.

These cuts are being instituted to encourage shelters to become full service agencies not just temporary housing. (As a Not-for-profit agency, GFC cannot endorse a particular political position).

Anyone interested in **servicing on GFC Board of Directors committees** is invited to participate. The funding committee has special need of persons interested in developing financial support for GFC. Also Linda Schnellinger needs help with some administrative jobs such as getting this newsletter ready for our 450 members. Call 262- 5645 to help.

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Reflection

For you have been my shelter, a tower of strength against the enemy. In your tent I shall make my home forever and find shelter under the cover of your wings. Ps. 61:3