

MARILLAC NEWS

A quarterly report to the friends of the Marillac Clinic • Winter 2008



If you build it, they will come.

*The story of how a town and
a clinic grew up together*

Late in 1987, the little city of Grand Junction, Colorado was reeling from nearly five years of a dreadful economy and the loss of some of its biggest employers. Prospects for better days in Western Colorado seemed far far away. Hope and prosperity seemed destined for others. Health care and health insurance were hard to come by. People would wait until they were really sick and then finally show up at the local emergency room.

Carroll Multz, the President of United Way of Mesa County, and Sister Marianna Bauder, the CEO of St. Mary's Hospital, the largest health care facility between Denver and Salt Lake City, saw that something had to be done. They approached St. Mary's Board of Directors with a daring plan: to create a primary care facility to treat the uninsured. Not a free clinic, but a place where individuals and families could come and obtain health care at an affordable price.

In December of 1987, this dedicated band of visionaries formed a task force of 21 community leaders to study the bold idea. By early in 1988, the new clinic was incorporated. Named after Louise de Marillac, it opened its doors in May of 1988. With a tiny paid staff and an outpouring of volunteer and financial support from the community, the clinic registered just over 3,000 patient visits in its first year. The tradition of caring for the poor that Louise de Marillac had begun in France during the 1600's was alive and well in Western Colorado nearly 400 years later.

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CLINIC PREPARING FOR 20TH ANNIVERSARY

*All through 2008,
Marillac will be celebrating
its 20th Anniversary.*

*So much has happened in our
community since that first
little band of visionaries set
out to make life better for
their fellow citizens. We hope
you'll take some time this
year to learn a little more
about the clinic and what a
unique community resource
it truly is. We couldn't have
done it without the thousands
of supporters, volunteers and
donors who have been there
for us every step of the way.*

Thank You!

FALL FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN REPORT ON PAGE TWO

MESA COUNTY CONTINUES TO DEMONSTRATE BROAD AND GROWING SUPPORT FOR THE CLINIC'S MISSION

Every November Marillac sends a fund-raising letter to our donors and the community at large.

We are happy to report that Marillac's appeal achieved excellent results in a year that was marked by many high profile campaigns and mailings.

During the holiday campaign, hundreds of our fellow citizens responded to the Clinic letter with individual gifts totaling more than \$97,000

One particularly encouraging statistic was the number of new donors who responded to the mailing. This is especially gratifying since donations to nonprofits are slightly down across the state.

Once again we are reminded how fortunate we are to live in this wonderful community. The growing need for the clinic's services continues and donations play an important role in funding the work of the clinic all year long. If you were part of this holiday outpouring of generosity, thank you so much. Your generous gift is part of a wonderful Grand Valley tradition.

T**HIS YEAR THE CLINIC'S ANNUAL HOLIDAY CAMPAIGN RAISED MORE THAN \$97,000 TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE CLINIC.**

ALL OF US AT MARILLAC ARE SO GRATEFUL FOR THIS OUTPOURING OF GENEROSITY.

THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO DUG A LITTLE DEEPER TO SHARE THEIR GOOD FORTUNE AND HELP THEIR NEIGHBORS!

INDIVIDUAL GIVING IS ALMOST ENTIRELY FROM LOCAL SOURCES. THANK YOU GRAND VALLEY!

www.MarillacClinic.org

Our new website was finished in 2007 and we are very pleased to report that more and more visitors are finding it a great way to stay abreast of the Clinic's activities and services. Outreach events, news items, updates on health related happenings around our community and our state are all available at www.MarillacClinic.org.

Many donors are discovering that the website is a great way to make a donation to the Clinic as well. Great thanks to those of you who are stopping by on a regular basis. You're always welcome at the clinic whether it's an actual visit or a virtual one.

Steve Hurd, PhD.



Many challenges ahead for health care reform in Colorado...

As Marillac celebrates its 20th year of service to Mesa County, one constant remains: the need for Marillac's services continues to grow. This need grows every day, as an increasing number of employers, individuals and families find health insurance simply too expensive to provide or purchase.

As many of you know, the Colorado Legislature created the Blue Ribbon Commission for Health Care Reform to study this complex problem. An estimated 792,000 Coloradans – nearly one-fifth of our state's population – don't have health insurance at the present time.

On January 31, the Blue Ribbon Panel (also known as the 208 Commission) presented the findings of its year-long study to the state legislature. The entire document can be reviewed at www.Colorado.gov/208commission. The conclusion: The status quo is not sustainable.

Issues:

Cost-shifting: A decreasing number of people are paying for the health care costs incurred by the entire population. As health insurance becomes more expensive, fewer people can afford it. This means they lose their medical home. People delay receiving care until they can no longer ignore their symptoms. They receive care in hospital emergency rooms, where they receive the most expensive level of care. They are discharged back into the community, where

follow-up care is unavailable.

Health insurance premiums rise to cover the cost of those who don't pay. This vicious cycle of spiraling costs and fewer payers has resulted in annual double digit increases for premiums and health care costs.

Portability: Our present system of acquiring insurance is largely dependent upon our employer.

This tie needs to be unbound. Having the employer negotiate a plan for its employees is ultimately not an efficient way for people to obtain coverage. When the expense of health care is beyond their ability to control, employers find it nearly impossible to compete in an international economy. This system also depresses the entrepreneurial spirit in this country. People with innovative or creative ideas might want to start a new business, but are reluctant because they are afraid of losing their health insurance.

Reimbursement: The current system of reimbursement for health care providers is motivating medical students to move away from general family or pediatric practice toward specialization. Yet most of us would prefer having a long-term personal relationship with a medical provider who knows us as a person.

Mandates: One committee recommendation that will draw considerable discussion is an individual mandate to

participate in the cost of health care. When I first heard about mandates, my initial reaction was "No... I don't want government telling me what I must do." After much reflection and discussion with colleagues, I realized that all of us need to pay what they can afford in order to minimize cost-shifting. This also gives people the opportunity to lower their health care premiums by living healthier life styles.

What can we expect?

Unfortunately, many bills will be proposed in the current legislative session that will offer piecemeal solutions to the health care crisis. On the other hand, the Blue Ribbon Panel has developed a roadmap that follows a logical sequence of gradual reform. We cannot expect that one bill or one referendum will adequately address the complexity of health care.

My hope is that you've learned a bit about health care reform by reading this, and that you will share your knowledge and opinions with your friends and neighbors. The best outcome of open discussion is that we develop a health care plan in Colorado that works for everyone.



continued from front page

If you build it, they will come.

The story of how a town and a clinic grew up together

In 1989, an enterprising VISTA Volunteer put together a program to provide eye exams and eyeglasses for clinic patients. That program still exists today.

In 1991, another VISTA volunteer initiated a dental program and the clinic began to treat dental patients two days a week. One person remembering those early days remarked that the clinic was so tiny that the paint on the walls was scraped off from the chairs that had to be pushed up against the wall for someone to pass by. By the end of 1991, patient visits had increased to 4,188.

In May of 1992, the Clinic initiated its pharmacy program, making low cost prescriptions available to its patients. From these modest beginnings and the vision and dedication of a community to make a difference, Marillac Clinic has grown to become a model of quality care that is recognized nationally for its innovation and effectiveness.

In 2000, the Clinic initiated its Collaborative Care model and received a major grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to develop and study the effectiveness of such an approach. Today that model has become a key component of care at the clinic and has gained nationwide recognition for Marillac's excellence.

In 2006, Marillac opened a second clinic location in Palisade, to more effectively serve the population of agricultural workers who are so vital to the economy of the valley. The Palisade location is also more convenient for the growing population in the eastern portions of Mesa County.

And that struggling little city that thought its best days were behind it? It has grown and prospered over the years – and yet there still remain the persistent problems of access to health care and health insurance. The partnership that began with a few dedicated citizens has grown as well.

This year, the Clinic celebrates its 20th year of service to Mesa County. In Fiscal Year 2006-07, the Clinic provided more than 28,000 medical, dental, and optical patient visits and has become an integral part of delivering health care services to the people of the Grand Valley.



The birth of Marillac Clinic came at a time when the community was at a low point and went against all odds – but a few dedicated individuals, led by the spirit of helping and caring for their fellow citizens, set in motion events and an energy that has transformed countless thousands of lives over the years.

Today, Marillac is a model of care for the uninsured and the poor, and even though the community's hardest times are part of the past, the needs are still great and the community has never forgotten the little clinic that began with faith in the future and in one another.

KEEP UP WITH THE YEAR-LONG CELEBRATION OF THE CLINIC'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY BY VISITING US FREQUENTLY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR AT www.MarillacClinic.org

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REMEMBERING THE CLINIC IN YOUR WILL IS A GREAT WAY TO ENSURE THAT YOUR LEGACY OF CARING AND GIVING LIVES ON AFTER YOU. TO DISCUSS THIS OR OTHER PLANNED GIVING OPTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT

RUSS SCHUCKMAN, DONOR DEVELOPMENT MANAGER AT (970) 244-2234

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health care.**

**Marillac Clinic takes a
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community to insure that
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