

Free clinic gets big boost

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A 26-foot rental truck rolled through town last week packed with valuable medical equipment, everything from exam tables and lighted X-ray readers to ENT (ear, nose and throat) scopes and blood-pressure cuffs.

Behind the wheel was Rick Zeeb, financial planning director for Salem Alliance Church, presumably with a big smile.

The equipment, worth thousands of dollars, was donated to Salem Free Medical Clinic, which the church helps run twice a month in the gymnasium at Walker Middle School.

Salem Alliance has joined with West Salem Foursquare Church to expand the clinic to five days a week at a permanent location. They had budgeted \$750,000 for new medical equipment, because they couldn't depend on finding it used or getting it donated.

But that financial hurdle has been cleared thanks to the generosity of the Sutter Gould Medical Foundation in Modesto, Calif., which recently moved into a new building with all new equipment.

"I'm the fundraising guy," Zeeb said. "Am I a happy guy, or what?"

Salem Free Medical Clinic eventually will have a permanent home in the new community center that Salem Alliance is building on Broadway, but not until the fall of 2010.

Zeeb said the churches are looking for ways to put the equipment to use now, which means looking into other possibilities for a temporary location.

"We'd like to open up where we don't have to set up and tear down every other Saturday," as they do at the school, he said.

The clinic, a nonprofit organization started in 2004 by West Salem Foursquare, offers free medical care to people who are uninsured or underinsured.

It serves an average of 40 patients during a three-hour window on the first and third Saturdays of each month, and often has to turn folks away.

It has several physicians, nurses and other health care



John Svendsen | Special to the Statesman Journal

Volunteers help unload a truck full of medical equipment that has been donated to Salem Free Medical Clinic.

Inventory

How Many Item

- 2 Book shelves
- 6 BP cuffs, wall mounted
- 1 Chair, dental
- 4 Chairs, upholstered office
- 5 Chairs, doctors stools
- 9 Chairs, office
- 2 Chairs, phlebotomy
- 28 Chairs, waiting room upholstered
- 10 Chart holders
- 3 Desks, brown
- 3 Desks, white
- 6 ENT scope wets
- 5 ENT tip holders
- 4 Exam tables
- 2 File cabinet - 2-drawer
- 3 File cabinet - 4-drawer
- 1 File table on wheels with top that folds down
- 6 Goose-neck lamps
- 1 Gurney
- 1 Hyfreccater

professionals who donate their services, but the clinic's conditions are somewhat primitive.

Exam rooms are made of PVC pipe frames and draped with blue sheets. Folding tables are all that is available for exams.

Patients don't complain, because they're grateful for free care. According to clinic officials, an estimated 29,000 people in Salem-Keizer have no insurance and 17,000 others are underinsured.

The free clinic will be able to better meet that need with this equipment, which includes four padded exam tables, five lighted X-ray readers and six blood-pressure cuffs.

The owner of a medical supply company in California learned of the clinic's need and helped facilitate the donation, with help from Rotary International and World Vision.

"I just know how badly that type of service is needed, wherever you go," said Mike Keckler, president of J.M. Keckler Medical Co. Inc.

He estimated the equipment donated to the Salem clinic is worth more than \$100,000.

"Forward This" appears Mondays and Thursdays and highlights the people, places and organizations of the Mid-Willamette Valley. To share a story, contact Capi Lynn at clynn@StatesmanJournal.com or (503) 399-6710.

- 3 Instrument tables, rolling
- 1 Magazine rack, large plexiglass
- 2 Magazine rack, metal
- 1 Magazine rack, plexiglass
- 2 Microscopes
- 1 Microwave
- 2 Oxygen meters
- 5 Paper towel dispensers
- 3 Refrigerators, small
- 4 Room flags
- 1 Scale, baby
- 1 Scale, small floor
- 2 Scales, standing with height measure
- 3 Stainless-steel carts, rolling
- 1 Stainless-steel tray
- 2 Stools, non-rolling
- 1 TV/VCR
- 1 X-ray reader, large lighted
- 4 X-ray reader, wall lighted

Clinic details

Salem Free Medical Clinic offers primary and preventative medical services to those who are uninsured or underinsured.

When: 1 to 4 p.m. the first and third Saturdays each month, with patients seen on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Where: The gymnasium at Walker Middle School, 1075 Eighth St. NW, Salem.

Contact: West Salem Foursquare Church at (503) 391-4346.