



Catching Up With Clifton

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A Guest's Tale

By Brenda Gales

Occasionally in the afternoon, I sit in my office and watch the guests as they get off the van and return to the shelter. My office is located in the front corner of the building with a large window that allows me to observe and make notes about their body language and interactions with each other. I note who needs to come in and give me more health information and who might need to stop in my office to just talk about their health.

I also look for limps, painful expressions, flat affects, sad faces, and joyful laughter. Some appear to crawl out of the van, some jump, and others are so tired that they need assistance. One day as I studied the group, I noticed a new exit style. It was a painful waddle. I didn't recognize the gentleman who was carrying two crutches – carrying them because they hadn't been fit properly and were too short, but he struggled as he walked up the ramp, stopping frequently to cough and catch his breath. When he got inside, he stopped in my office and said, "I think I'm to come see you today." He introduced himself as Mr. Zackery and I learned that he arrived at Clifton on a day that I was off - but everyone, guests and staff, let me know that he was to see me when he got back that evening.

He had recently been discharged from Grady inpatient services where he was treated for respiratory problems, but also had a long history of other health concerns. He was carrying a large bag filled with medications, most of which appeared to be unused. When I inquired as to why he hadn't taken his medications, he began to gasp for air as

he explained that when he takes "all of his medications" they made his stomach hurt.



We had a lengthy conversation and developed a plan to work with his physicians at Grady to obtain education on how to take his medications and to ask if some medications could be changed or discontinued. We also agreed that he would talk monthly with the student volunteers from the Mercer University School of Pharmacy that visit Clifton as additional on-going medication education.

Just when I thought we had a workable plan, it all went out the window when other guests, as well as the staff, expressed concerns about Mr. Zackery's constant and chronic cough. *(continued inside...)*

Sharing the love of God we are
a sanctuary to men seeking to
overcome homelessness.
Clifton Sanctuary Ministries

Funding for Clifton Sanctuary Ministries is provided by the City of Atlanta, Georgia Department of Community Affairs, HUD, local communities, churches and many individuals. We love you, We bless you, We appreciate you, We thank God for you!

A Guest's Tale *(from the cover)*

Because he needed immediate appointments, I decided to refer him to the DeKalb County Health Department. While working with the great professionals at the Health Department, it became apparent that Mr. Zackery had been charming the ladies on the staff. After each appointment, the nurses would always call to check on him and let me know when his next appointment was scheduled. "They like me over there", Mr. Zackery proudly commented.

Shortly after that, we noticed that Mr. Zackery had given up one of his crutches and was using only one. He talked more openly about his appointments, how he was taking his medications, and more. He also shared about other relationships that he had in the community and he hoped that would help him out of homelessness.

He talked about his friends at North Avenue Presbyterian Church, the pastor and volunteers from First Presbyterian Church, the staff at Grady, and now he was adding the nurses from DeKalb County Health Department. I must admit that he can be charming because he has a beautiful smile and a bashful way of answering questions. It's easy to see how people can be drawn into his life.

DeKalb County cleared him of any additional health concerns, but it has taken several weeks for his cough to subside. The staff noticed that his cough really began to decrease as he assumed a leadership role in the shelter. Suddenly, the second crutch disappeared and he began to use a cane. He volunteered for extra duties, guided new shelter guests as they were beginning orientation to the shelter, and has become much more confident.

We watched in awe as he began to work on one of his goals of moving into our transitional living apartments at Joe's Place. His wide circle of support outside the shelter agreed that he was showing positive change and progressing extremely well.

Moving day was extremely gratifying when Mr. Zackery achieved that goal and moved to Joe's Place last month. Alice is working with him on the importance of follow through, particularly when it involves his health care. The cane is now only an occasional aide, he's lost a good bit of weight, and is employed part time as an overnight host at the shelter. I'd say "a little bit of sugar – the caring support he receives – helps the medicine go down."

Update on Our Guests

Bobby Abbott, 2008 Graduate, is working at the Merchandise Mart. He and his wife recently regained custody of their three really cute girls. The happy family is living in East Point.

Keith Pinder, 2008 Graduate, and his wife, Nadira, welcomed their first child, a son Aidan was born on February 7. Everyone is happy and healthy and occasionally gets some sleep.

Arthur Johnson stopped by Clifton earlier this month. If you were at our 2007 Graduation Dinner, you will remember that AJ and his band were our musical entertainment. Arthur is doing really well and in Decatur. He also now knows why everyone at Clifton gets up early!

Lee Duncan called yesterday to let us know just how happy he is in his new digs. Lee moved out of Joe's Place early in March and is living with a wonderful family in the Decatur area. Lee found out about the wonderful folks at **Home But Not Alone**, a ministry of the Jewish Family & Career Center who introduced him to an older couple dealing with dementia. These lovely people needed someone to help them in their home on a permanent basis, in return for living accommodations. Lee said that they are wonderful conversationalists and enjoy music. Seems like this is truly "a match made in heaven" – quite literally.

The residents of Joe's Place bid farewell to Peter Hunstiger last month – and then waved hello to their new neighbor across the hedge. Peter is living in his own apartment; conveniently located next door to Joe's Place! Being that Peter is our food coordinator and the best chef we know, we're certainly not going to let him go too far.



Happy Feet Now Appearing at Clifton

By Leslie Prince

Have you ever enjoyed a pedicure? For our manly friends reading this....a pedicure involves someone massaging your feet & trimming your toenails while you relax.

Imagine if you've been homeless for weeks, months, or even years. You've walked the streets for the majority of these days, your shoes may not fit, and your socks most certainly have holes. Foot care certainly isn't on top of your priority list.

But then imagine that you've just been referred to Clifton. It's the 3rd Friday of the month, the great folks from *Ormewood Park Presbyterian Church* are serving at Clifton. And you're enjoying a pedicure!



Thanks to the mission committee at Ormewood Park, several of their members recently began providing a foot clinic for the men at Clifton during their monthly turn as evening hosts. Brenda Gales, Healthcare Case Manager at Clifton, was approached by the volunteers at Ormewood Park who wanted to offer this service to the guests last fall and she developed the protocols for the foot clinic. Brenda remarked during one of the foot clinics that the guys were initially reluctant about having their feet done. However, once they saw the first guy getting his pedicure, the line soon formed. The foot clinic has quickly become a highlight of the month.

Jody Ball of Ormewood Park said, "I first heard of foot clinics at homeless shelters from our previous



mission team leader, Paul Osborne. Central Presbyterian Church has offered this service at their shelter for many years, so Larry Roberts and I began volunteering there to learn the process. I was inspired by the thought of placing myself in the role of servant to these men. To have physical contact and one on one fellowship with someone who is likely avoided on the street, rarely touched or cared for. I feel blessed to have such an opportunity."

Blessings all the way around ... because the men of Clifton truly are blessed to be served in such a meaningful and fun way. Thanks Ormewood Park Presbyterian Church!

Just a Note

By Leslie Prince

Several of our volunteers and supporting church leaders have asked me the same question in the last month. "Has your demand for service gone up and are you having a hard time fund-raising?"

The short answer is....yes and kind-a.

The yes part ... I certainly don't have to tell you anything about the economic times in which we live. We are now serving men who, until recently, owned their own business or were self-employed, particularly in the construction business. We have had a few who even owned store-front businesses. Many of the men who are residing at Clifton now have very marketable skills, but it's tough finding a job for those skills. So, the guys who, in the past, would have been easy to work with and move on to independent living are now staying longer. This translates into a higher occupancy rate - it's not very often that we have fewer than 30 men. We are maintaining our good success rate, it's just taking each guest a little longer to succeed.

The kind-a part ... We are working very diligently to get our message out in very creative ways in hopes that we can turn folks who are interested in what we are doing into folks who are interested and are making a financial investment in Clifton. We firmly believe that even though many congregations and foundations are cutting their contributions, that our friends and volunteers will carry us through these tough times.

There are so many fabulous guys who need our help – we're hoping that we can count on you to help us get out the good Clifton word! If you know of a group or individual who might be interested in learning more about Clifton, please contact me at clifton@cliftonsanctuary.com.

Clifton Executive Director, Alice Jenkins, constantly reminds me that God hasn't brought us this far during the last 30 years to forget about us now. I'm taking that to the bank.

And the Winner Is ... Clifton Toastmasters!

Each year, Toastmasters International hosts a competition that allows representatives from each chapter to compete against each other in Table Topics. Table Topics is a speech given on a topic that is not known in advance on the speech. Basically, how fast can you think on your feet?

In February fifteen Clifton Toastmasters competed against each other to determine who would represent our chapter in this competition. *Kevin Stewart, a former Clifton guest who has continued his participation in Toastmasters, won the chapter competition.* Kudos go to Marvin Perkins who finished in 2nd place, and Edward Underwood who was 3rd.

On February 19, Kevin competed against representatives from other Atlanta chapters ... and WON! Several members of Clifton Toastmasters were on hand to cheer him on – Alice said that Kevin had the largest cheering section. Kevin now goes on to the regional competition which will be held on March 14 as the representative from our Atlanta Toastmasters district.

Way to go Kevin ... and thanks to North Avenue Presbyterian Church for their continued financial support of our Clifton Toastmasters chapter!

Night Hospitality in 2008 by The Numbers

Quarter	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
Guests Served	63	57	48	66
Employment	18	10	7	12
Housing	16	14	14	18
Programs	6	2	5	4
Benefits/Other	2	4	3	2
Positive Outcome	42	30	29	36
	66%	52%	60%	55%

For the year 58% of our guests have had a positive outcome! Thank you for making this possible.