

# ANGELS ARE REAL

## The Raphael Community Free Clinic

by Greg Forest



**T**he name of archangel Raphael, in Standard Hebrew is described as serving the “God who heals”, “God Heals”, “God, and in Christian tradition performs all manners of healing.

August 7, marked the founding of the Raphael Community Free Clinic whose mission is “to minister in a caring and Christian environment to the medically underserved of Kerrville and the surrounding area.”

The clinic addresses the non-emergency medical needs of the uninsured. Residents of Bandera, Edward, Gillespie, Kendall, Kerr, Kimble, and Real Counties may qualify as patients.

With the help of other local social and medical agencies such as Peterson Memorial Hospital, and community medical professionals, the clinic has worked with its partners to have the Clinic become a reality.

With Texas being a “low services” state, there is a large gap between those who have medical needs but have no insurance or are unable to qualify for any government assistance. Sometimes becoming ill inconveniently happens to those who don’t qualify for government services such as Medicare or Medicaid. The onset of illness may not wait until a patient reaches the MediCare qualifying age of 65.

Sister Marge Novak, a Franciscan Sister and Family Nurse Practitioner, moved to Kerrville in 1995. Her vision of a medical mission for those who could not afford health insurance, especially the working poor, inspired a group of others to help bring the clinic about.

Raphael Community Free Clinic is a Funded Partner of Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas. Raphael Clinic is supported by contributions from private foundations, individuals, churches and civic clubs. It neither requests nor accepts funds from city, state or Federal sources. So it is not only the staff and volunteers who have made this resource a reality but the entire Hill Country community as well.

Sister Marge Novak, with co-founder Sister Mary Ann Giardina have built a monument to giving and sacrifice to help those in the region who need it most.

The clinic’s staff and cadre of 70 volunteers provides a wide variety of medical and pharmacy services ranging from prenatal care, diabetes treatment and education to Hep C treatment and cardiovascular care.

This holiday season keep in mind that your donation to the Raphael clinic can go a long way to helping those in medical need. Your donation remains right here in the Hill Country servicing your friends and neighbors. Yes angels do exist and you can be one too.