Community care

El Sol steps in to pilot health clinic for north county uninsured, under-served

El Sol and the Palm Beach County Health Department are finalizing an agreement for creation of a pilot health clinic in Jupiter in which El Sol will have a key role in helping uninsured and under-served north county residents access medical services.

The need for such a clinic arose when the former nonprofit Carelink Clinic in Jupiter closed earlier this year. The closing forced north county residents who were uninsured or unable to afford medical care to go to a Health Department clinic in West Palm Beach or to the nonprofit Caridad Clinic in Boynton Beach.

The pilot clinic, set to operate for one year, has evolved through meetings among El Sol, the Town of Jupiter, the Health Department and Jupiter Medical Center. Assistant Jupiter Town Manager Anne Lyons expressed her thanks for El Sol's taking a leadership role in opening the clinic, saying it represents the organization's expanded role as a neighborhood resource center by serving those in the community who are medically under-served.

"Hopefully, this is just the first step toward Jupiter's having a more permanent medical home for those in need," Lyons said in a statement. The proposed agreement between El Sol and the Palm Beach County Health Department calls for the department to operate the clinic at the existing Jupiter Auxiliary Health Center, 6405 Indiantown Road, which now provides only neonatal services and immunizations.

El Sol Center Director Jocelyn Skolnik said the proposed clinic could not be possible without the cooperation and strong commitment of all of the agencies involved to take action to help fill the void created by the earlier closing of the Carelink Clinic, which had treated thousands of persons in need.

The new clinic is expected to open in early 2012. Hours will be from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturdays. Health Department personnel will provide financial counseling to help patients understand their eligibility for different insurance and benefit programs, such as Medicare and Medicaid. El Sol will not render any medical services but will provide a volunteer clinic coordinator, Diane Williams, who will recruit volunteers, coordinate health prevention education and referrals, and coordinate referrals for radiology and laboratory services that Jupiter Medical Center has offered to provide.

Williams, a longtime El Sol volunteer, said the pilot clinic will fill a critical need for medically under-served residents of Jupiter and other North County areas. "It has been difficult because of the economy and so many uninsured have had to scramble to obtain medical care. This clinic will provide them with a medical home," Williams said.

On Sept. 15 El Sol held a "Doctors Appreciation Dinner" to thank several dozen doctors who have been providing free medical treatment at their offices through referrals from El Sol and they will continue to do so, Williams said. Meanwhile, Williams is busy recruiting volunteer doctors, nurses and other volunteers from the community to help staff the new clinic.

A grant from the Quantum Foundation is covering Williams' salary, some pharmaceuticals and training expenses. For more information on the health clinic call (561) 506-6487.

The photos are from the Doctors Appreciation Dinner, hosted by El Sol. Above, Betzy Rega, El Sol health coordinator; Jupiter Mayor Karen Golonka; and Diane Williams, new clinic coordinator gather at the dinner. Below, doctors, town officials and El Sol volunteers enjoy the meal.
**FROM THE DIRECTOR’S DESK**

**Reflections of Gratitude**

In this season of hope, we are grateful to you and every single one of our friends and neighbors for forming part of the El Sol community and making El Sol such a special place.

I asked some workers at El Sol to share their words of appreciation for you. Here are some responses:

“Thank you for giving so much without expecting anything in return. God bless you.”

“I am so thankful for your good work; please know that you will always have a friend in me.”

“I’m grateful for your good heart.”

“I’m grateful for everything that you have done for us, even if we come from a different country; you work hard and collaborate with us.”

“I thank you for your willingness to help; this is where I find my bread for every day.”

“Thank you for giving so much without expecting anything in return. God bless you.”

“I thank you for your help and for the kitchen. Thank you very much.”

“I thank you so much for everything you do, especially for the kitchen and the English classes.”

“Thank you for supporting us in our effort to find work.”

“Thank you for your friendship.”

“Thank you for giving me the opportunity, and for volunteering your valuable time.”

Again, thank you for everything you do!

On behalf of El Sol we wish you and your family a very Happy Thanksgiving!

**Jocelyn Skolnik**

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**A lament from a day worker at Jupiter’s Resource Center, El Sol**

I came to America from afar
With a hope of one day owning a car
Finding a job was my only obsession
Working for less would be the concession

I did not expect to be given a thing
Knowing I could sell my wedding ring
I believed in the great American dream
Where I would rise to the top like cream

I did not expect the bigotry and hate
For a person who had arrived here late
Lucky for me I found Jupiter’s El Sol
They helped me achieve my basic goal.

They gave me free English classes to speak like Americans do
Some days they helped me get jobs on a big construction crew.
Each day they provided me with a free meal before facing the future
They even offered me free classes on how to use a PC computer

I now can send emails to family and friends back home
Telling them of my life and that I am not all alone
There are plenty of people here who are just like me
All have the same dreams and ambitions to live free.

If only more people would show compassion like El Sol
I could contribute to the greatness of this country’s goal
Work is scarce during this scary financial recession
Even the locals are not given a special concession

America is really great, so I do not worry or despair
I go to El Sol each morning where the volunteers care
I hope someday immigrants will become an accepted trend
Where everyone can live free in harmony and be a good friend

*The above poem was penned by El Sol volunteer Royce Emley.*

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**Happy Thanksgiving from El Sol!**

El Sol is once again hosting a festive community Thanksgiving celebration, Thursday, Nov. 24, complete with a traditional turkey dinner with all the trimmings.

The event begins at 12 noon. There will be music and raffles plus a bilingual program on the Spirit of Thanksgiving preceding the dinner.

“We expect a large crowd and all are welcome,” said Alex Fuentes, volunteer coordinator for the dinner. Last year’s Thanksgiving celebration attracted a crowd of some 250, including individuals and families. The dinner will include turkey, mashed potatoes, beans and cranberry sauce, as well as beverages and desserts.

“The community is coming together again as it has in the past to ensure a nice Thanksgiving for persons who might otherwise not be able to have a dinner of their own,” said Fuentes, who is in his fourth year as volunteer coordinator. He noted that all of the food is donated, with the meals being prepared by the Big Heart Brigade and Christ Fellowship in Palm Beach Gardens.

A group of 32 volunteers, including members of a Jupiter Girl Scout Troop will serve the meals. A pre-dinner program on the Spirit of Thanksgiving will be presented by El Sol volunteer Susan Mitchell and Patricio Silvestre, president of Corn Maya.

For information call 745-9860.
Volunteer brings her ‘can do’ spirit to El Sol

Jan DuFour is October’s featured volunteer

When nominating Jan DuFour to be October’s volunteer of the month, El Sol kitchen coordinator Andrea Cleveland had this to say: “It is an honor for me to recommend Jan. As a kitchen volunteer, Jan is reliable and dedicated. When we had a volunteer gap to fill in the kitchen, Jan was the first person to offer to help. At the recent Art Fest, Jan volunteered for the bake sale not only to bake things but to sell them. When I need someone to step in and ‘Just Do It,’ Jan is always right there. Her ‘can do’ attitude is so appreciated.”

Jan and her husband moved to Jupiter from New Jersey several years ago, after being snowbirds for 15 years. “I hate snow and ice,” she said, when asked why she left New Jersey.

And what brought her to El Sol? “Lee McCarthy,” Jan says. Lee and Jan were traveling buddies for many years. When Jan told Lee that she enjoyed cooking, Lee encouraged her to help out in the El Sol kitchen. That was in April 2008 and Jan has quietly and skillfully led the lunch crew every Thursday morning since then.

She makes it a point to come in on Wednesdays to check the refrigerator and freezer to see what’s available for Thursday lunch. She will take frozen food home to thaw and get it ready for the next day. Jan works hard to serve the El Sol workers a hot, nutritious lunch. “They are all so kind and polite,” she said.

During her years in New Jersey, Jan worked at Lord & Taylor department store and as a baby nurse at a home for babies of unwed mothers. In Jupiter she continues giving to those in need by baking cakes in coffee cans and sending them to our soldiers in Afghanistan.

Jan has two grandchildren who are very lucky to have a caring and loving grandmother who dedicates her life to serving others.

Grant provider comes through with clinic funds

Quantum Foundation offers resources for clinic’s operation, consultants and more

El Sol’s role in providing health care through a new clinic for North Palm Beach County residents could not have happened if not for a generous grant from the Quantum Foundation, a private grant-making organization.

Quantum’s grant money is paying for the clinic coordinator’s salary, volunteer coordination, supplies and staffing needs for the new health clinic. (See Page 1 story) In addition, Quantum identified El Sol as an organization that provides critical services to those in need and is providing additional grant money for general operating expenses. Quantum also provides El Sol with consultant support to help in development and fundraising initiatives.

El Sol was one of more than 30 Palm Beach County organizations that received Quantum funding to “keep the lights on” and continue to help those in need, El Sol Director Jocelyn Skolnik said.

The new clinic is a collaborative effort by Jupiter town officials, Jupiter Medical Center, county agencies, and El Sol staff and volunteers, Skolnik said. “But it was through the funds from Quantum that we were able to fulfill the needs of our budget for this project.”

Since other health clinics began to close down, the closest free or reduced-cost health clinic is at 45th Street in West Palm Beach, Skolnik said. “For someone living in Jupiter without insurance who usually walks or bikes everywhere, getting to routine health visits is just very difficult.”

El Sol’s launch of the new clinic will be a pilot project, with a goal of eventually opening a full-time clinic in Jupiter to serve north county residents.

In the photos, El Sol workers receive health services from El Sol through past health care programs.

Mexico native always willing to help

Eduardo Ozuna is Worker of the Month for October

Eduardo Ozuna’s commitment to community service and participation in workshops have earned him Worker of the Month honors for October.

Ozuna, 31, a native of Mexico, came to El Sol in March of last year, having heard about the El Sol Center from two brothers who had returned home after living in Jupiter.

El Sol Labor Coordinator Wilberto Luna said Ozuna’s willingness to perform community service whenever the opportunity arises and his attendance at workshops such as HIV Awareness and others contributed to his being recognized as Worker of the Month.

"Besides that, he’s a very good worker and a good guy," Luna said.

Congratulations to Eduardo Ozuna, who receives priority for jobs over other workers for three days for being Worker of the Month.
**ART FEST SUCCESS**

Painters, artisans, volunteers put on the best art show yet

El Sol’s fourth annual Art Fest theme - “Building Community” - came shining through in every aspect this year. New artists joining the community of established artists, a cooperative spirit between town officials, organizations and the center, and El Sol volunteers working together to make it all happen.

“There were so many people working together to make this day happen,” said Andrea Cleveland, co-chair of this year’s event. “From Karen Clark and her daughters welcoming folks, to people baking cakes and cookies at home.”

This year’s Art Fest earned double the profits from past years, totaling about $2,300, Cleveland said.

“The diversity of the art this year was great. I was so proud to represent such a wide variety,” she said. Among the artists were seven painters and four other artisans who are regular workers at El Sol. New artists Eddie Lopez said it was a new beginning for him with his artwork and he really appreciated the opportunity, Cleveland said.

In addition to painting sales, vendor sales and ethnic foods, this year’s Art Fest included an added celebration of the 5th anniversary of El Sol being in the Jupiter community.

One of the biggest hits this year was the raffle of the beautiful painting, vase and table runner, all made by patrons of El Sol. Fabulous cakes made and donated by Jim Wabol were a huge success.

A new feature this year was a table of items made by the El Sol sewing program. The participating sewists demonstrated their sewing abilities and sold out of all of their items.

In the photos, Art Fest attendees browse the paintings and arts and crafts. El Sol President Ed Ricci presents Jupiter Mayor Karen Golonka with a plaque of appreciation.

**What’s the Big Idea?**

Meetings keep volunteers informed, up-to-date

El Sol volunteers are being schooled on everything they need to know about the center and its workings.

On Oct. 13 and 15, meetings titled “What’s the Big Idea?” were held for volunteers, covering the basics: Who’s in charge, the role of volunteers, the history and mission of the center, all the services and programs offered, and ways volunteers can stay up-to-date.

The meetings were organized by Katie Carpenter, El Sol’s VISTA volunteer developer. Each meeting was attended by about 20 volunteers, including board of directors members. The volunteers heard from staff and board members, received a handbook, enjoyed refreshments, and got to view volunteer Wendy Meehan’s 5th anniversary slideshow on El Sol. Volunteers were encouraged to give feedback and ask questions.

Any volunteer who did not attend one of the meetings may pick up a volunteer handbook from the Volunteer office.

For events and continued updates, please check out www.friendsofelsol.org, search for “El Sol, Jupiter’s Neighborhood Resource Center” on Facebook, sign up for the El Sol Shines email newsletter by sending an email to diane.fitzpatrick@mac.com, and check out the volunteers board right outside the Volunteer Office.

The staff is planning to initiate quarterly all-volunteer meetings starting in early 2012, to keep volunteers informed of all new programs and updates.

In the photos, staff and volunteers share information at one of the “What’s the Big Idea?” meetings.
‘We believe in you,’ graduates are told

There were lots of smiling faces and plenty of applause among students, friends and family members at the recent Fall 2011 Education Recognition Ceremony for 62 people who successfully completed ESL, computer and basic education classes.

Those who received certificates at the Nov. 16 ceremony for completion of the 11-week education program heard an inspirational talk by keynote speaker elementary school principal Ann Wark who urged them to continue to learn in order to improve their lives and continue to serve as examples to their children.

“Continue to go forward in your studies and never stop believing in what you can accomplish. We believe in you and want you all to succeed,” said Wark, who is principal of Jerry Thomas Elementary School in Jupiter. “This community supports you in your efforts, we know that an educated community is a successful community,” she said.

Wark formerly served as principal of Jupiter Elementary School, located across the street from El Sol and it was there she said that she came to know the immigrant population and saw migrant children eager to learn English. She also saw parents wanting to be part of their children’s education and to learn along with them.

Wark lauded the students for their patience and persistence in learning and practicing their language skills, noting that English is not the easiest language to learn. “You have realized something that only wise people know, that education is the key that unlocks your future,” she said.

Fifty students received certificates for completing one of four levels of English. Awards were also received by five students for completing basic Spanish literacy instruction, how to read and write in Spanish. Eight others received certificates for finishing a basic computer class.

Gift certificates were also awarded to Jeremias Chox for perfect attendance and to Victor Armando de la Cruz for 99 percent attendance. The recognition ceremony was the last of three such events held this year for graduates of El Sol’s free education classes. Others were held in the Winter and Spring.

Student volunteers from Palm Beach State College and Florida Atlantic University serve as teachers for the language classes along with volunteers from the community.

In the photos, some of the many graduates proudly display their diplomas, Principal Ann Wark makes remarks, and El Sol Associate Director Dora Valdivia recognizes graduates.
A shout out
to the St. Peter’s Friday kitchen crew

On Fridays, El Sol’s kitchen is taken over by a crew from St. Peter’s Catholic Church. It’s a dedicated group of volunteers who cook together every week at St. Peter’s church and then bring the whole meal to El Sol to serve to the workers at lunchtime. They also help stock the pantry shelves and put away food that El Sol purchases from Feeding South Florida. The St. Peter’s kitchen crew is headed up by Chef Dom, who has been instrumental in getting new kitchen equipment and appliances for the El Sol kitchen. Many of their members have gotten involved in other aspects of El Sol, helping to secure grants, bringing in other volunteers, and helping out in a number of ways.

El Sol’s
Mission Statement

El Sol’s vision is for a premier day-labor center providing skilled, dependable workers to employers. We are also committed to promoting strong economically and ethnically diverse communities in which all people can achieve their highest potential.

El Sol seeks to improve the quality of life for all residents of the Town of Jupiter through:

* Organizing and supervising Jupiter’s day-labor hiring in a controlled and sanitary atmosphere;

* Educating Jupiter’s day-laborers and contractors about their rights and responsibilities;

* Assisting Jupiter’s immigrant population to become an active and integrated part of the larger Jupiter community;

* Building bridges and communication among the different ethnic, cultural and religious groups in Jupiter;

* Providing occupational training, language and literacy instruction, counseling, health education, legal and other services to individuals in need.

El Sol
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Find us on the Web at www.friendsofelsol.org

Follow us on Twitter at http://twitter.com/ElSolJupiter

See us on Facebook at El Sol, Jupiter’s Neighborhood Resource Center

El Sol’s Hiring Hall is open
6 a.m. - 2 p.m. Monday through Saturday
7 a.m. - 12 noon Sunday

Donate online through Network for Good through our website www.friendsofelsol.org

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