

A VISION BECOMES REALITY

Dr. Cynthia Jacobsen of Children's Mercy Hospital, and Jo Finney, M.S. CC-SLP Manager, Speech-Language Pathologist for the Hearing and Speech Clinic, presented Joe Van Dolah 33rd Personal Representative Emeritus an award of appreciation for his creation and contribution to the Scottish Rite Care Clinic for the past twenty-five years.

Twenty-five years ago, Joe Van Dolah, had a goal and a vision. He aimed to establish a clinic for aphasic children initially just within the Kansas City Scottish Rite Valley. Upon further research, it became apparent that very few clinics existed within the United States, additionally empowering his ambition.

The Scottish Rite Valley of Kansas City Childhood Aphasia Clinic or now named "Rite Care Clinic," a clinic serving and assisting those children with speech and hearing deficits, did not come to fruition without an enormous amount of determination and drive to help those children in need.

Given this aforementioned fortitude, Joe proceeded to contact Sovereign Grand Commander Fred Kleinknect. Bro. Kleinknect was immediately receptive, and scheduled a special trip to Kansas City in order to discuss the initiation of developing a clinic. He generously pledged \$25,000 under the stipulation that the Joe and the Kansas City Valley would match his offer. Needless to say, the pledge was gracefully accepted and matched.

Joe proceeded to contact Children's Mercy Hospital and met with Dr. Cynthia Jacobsen, who displayed an enormous amount of enthusiasm in developing a partnership between Children's Mercy Hospital and the Kansas City Valley.

With this overwhelming opportunity, Joe wasted little time in establishing a Board of Directors who quickly created the by laws and a clinic was created. Executive Secretary Tom Mc Gully, 33rd was an essential part to the creation of the clinic. Joe stated without Tom this would not have been possible. Tom shared in his vision and dedicated many years to both overseeing the clinic as well as affecting many children's lives.

Twenty-five years later, the clinic is very blessed to still be run by Jo Finney and overseen by Dr. Jacobsen, whose knowledge and dedication has resulted in tremendous success. The word success should not be used lightly, as there are now four clinics in Kansas City and eight throughout the state of Missouri.

There are countless other volunteers who have donated their personal time, including; board members, construction crew and the many, many others who continue to contribute both time and monetarily to make the clinic a success. It's almost unfathomable to believe that over the past twenty-five years these many volunteers have generously given an incredible 1.2 million dollars.

Joe's appreciation comes deep within his heart and extends to each individual in both the Kansas City Valley as well as those members throughout the state of Missouri (St. Louis, St. Joseph, Joplin and Columbia). He could never have imagined that his dream would materialize to the magnitude that is has today.

To conclude, two years ago Joe received a kidney transplant, and if you believe in karma, the donor was from a seven- year old child.

DUSTIN VAN DOLAH, MD