

For the Fort Bragg Advocate & Mendocino Beacon

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“MCC staff volunteers benefit the community”

While the staff at Mendocino Coast Clinics (MCC) has grown from a handful of people to 109 employees over the last 17 years, one thing remains the same. MCC team members not only provide outstanding health care to all segments of the coastal community, many also volunteer their time and resources to help local causes as well as the global community.

Each year, in addition to their participation in MCC fundraising events, team members organize fundraising efforts to support organizations such as Project Sanctuary and Heifer International. Collections are taken and donated to families who are in crisis or suffered from a tragedy. MCC staff volunteers for local churches and community organizations such as Safe Passage, First 5 of California, Fort Bragg & Mendocino School Districts, Mendocino Theatre Company, Love in Action, Parents for Peace and even international organizations like Love Without Boundaries.

An example of staff volunteering her time and resources is Jennifer Salyer, a Mendocino Coast Clinics' nurse. Last fall she eagerly paid her own expenses to volunteer her nursing skills to help Chinese orphaned children receive life changing cleft lip and palate repair surgery for Love Without Boundaries. After witnessing the profound difference the surgical procedures had on the lives of her young patients, she realized welcoming a toddler with cleft lip and palate problems into her family through adoption was another way she could make a big difference in a child's life. Jenn was so inspired she began the complex and expensive international adoption process when she returned and was matched up with little Garrett.

Garrett is a 2 year old orphan with a severe bilateral cleft lip and palate surviving in a Chinese orphanage. As one of a million orphaned and abandoned children, given his medical condition, it is unlikely he will ever be one of the 2% who finds a loving home.

While Garrett did have surgery through a volunteer medical exchange at 9 months, it failed and the specialized care of a multidisciplinary cleft team is not available to him there. Garrett will need ongoing medical intervention over time. Garrett's only chance at a real life, eating and speaking normally, growing to reach his full potential is through adoption.

“We are a devoted family happy to provide Garrett with the love and medical care he needs,” said Jenn Salyer. As a nurse, I am well prepared to care for him throughout the many surgeries he will need. Jenn and her young daughter Alma

are working hard to bring Garrett home to give him hope for a better future. The longer he stays there, the greater the challenges he faces to his health and development.

“Mendocino Coast Clinics is proud and honored to have competent and compassionate staff, like Jenn, who serves the heart of our mission both at work and in their personal lives,” said Paula Cohen, MCC Executive Director. “The MCC team serves as a shining example of true volunteerism and service to the community both locally and globally”, she added.

For more information on Mendocino Coast Clinics please call Marianne McGee at 961-3460.

