

## **A smile can touch a heart**

**By: Clairen Reese**

One of the best things you can share with a person is a smile. Local Pace dentist Dr. Noel Spurlock and associates took that to heart recently by participating in a national event offering free dental services. On Friday, April 30<sup>th</sup>, over 160 people from the local area were the recipients of a variety of much-needed services during Dentistry From the Heart.

“Now more than ever, I know there are people out there that need my services,” said Dr. Spurlock. “Many have no means to afford it – whether they’re out of a job, or just don’t have dental insurance. This Dentistry From the Heart event is our way of giving back to the community and being there for the people who are in need of dental work. “

In their second year of participation and the only locally participating dentistry office, Advanced Dental Concepts deems both years a huge success. Over 160 people received cleanings, fillings or extractions this year. Last year over 200 were served.

The opportunity was on a first-come, first-serve basis. That saw many people lining up early to ensure their chances of receiving dental treatment when the office opened at 8 a.m on Friday, April 30. The first person staked their place at the head of the line as early as 6 p.m. the evening before. Others spent the night as well. By 4 a.m. there were 40 people in line and by 7:15 a.m. they were at capacity. The time waiting was well spent according to patients.

“I was one of the first in line,” said Kathryn Lewis. “We arrived at 6 p.m. the night before. This event is such a blessing for me and my family. My husband has been out of work since September. I couldn’t afford to get my teeth fixed. It was well worth the wait. May God bless everyone that had a part in this.”

The Advanced Dental Concepts staff was just as pleased to offer the services as those were who received them. According to Team Leader Diane Masaitis, 24 staff members and 10 volunteers helped out during the long day which ran until 6:30 that evening. In all, over \$22,800.00 in free services was provided to those in need.

“It was a wonderful feeling at the end of the day to know I was a part of helping so many deserving people,” said Masaitis. “We received so many thank-you’s from patients needed dental services for some time.”

Team Leader Jessica Rohr agrees. Due to the local economy many people have been forced to put off dental treatment much too long.

“By delaying treatment, this lessens the chance of being able to save a tooth or requires a more costly restoration,” said Team Leader Jessica Rohr. “I think everyone deserves the confidence that you get from a healthy, beautiful smile and we were able to make a lot of people smile. At ADC, it is our philosophy to help our growing community thrive. I feel like I received just as much as I gave that day.

We appreciate all the people and companies that volunteered and gave donations to help us make it happen.”

Dentistry From the Heart is a national non-profit organization with a simple mission – making people smile. It was founded in 2001 by Dr. Vincent Monticciolo to aid those in need, including the growing population of under-insured Americans. More than 100 million Americans lack dental insurance. To date, DFTH has helped more than 5,000 patients and provided more than \$1 million in dental care.

