

## Peninsula Journal

### Doctors honored for medical clinic

William Schwartz and Walter Gaines, who co-founded the Samaritan House Free Medical Clinic in 1992, were honored at the 17th annual Samaritan House Main Event Sept. 13 at the Sofitel San Francisco Bay in Redwood City.

The theme of the gala fundraiser was "Celebrating Homecoming." In addition to the tribute to Doctors. Schwartz and Gaines, the evening included a gourmet dinner, live and silent auctions and dancing to the Joe Sharino Band.



Dr. William Schwartz is a retired board-certified internist and Fellow of the American College of Physicians who graduated from the University of Utah School of Medicine and practiced internal medicine in San Mateo for 32 years. He is also a retired clinical professor at UCSF and a former member of the boards of directors for Samaritan House and the Peninsula Community Foundation.

In 1988, former Samaritan House Executive Director John Kelly placed a notice in a local medical bulletin asking for volunteers to help organize a medical clinic for Samaritan House clients. Dr. Schwartz responded, and according to John Kelly, "became the main recruiter."

Dr. Schwartz enlisted many medical professionals and institutions to play important roles in setting up the clinic. Some of the professionals he recruited were his patients, such as Dr. Walter Gaines, who is now honored as a clinic co-founder. In 2005, the American Institute for Public Service honored Dr. Schwartz with its Jefferson Award for his work with the Samaritan House Free Medical Clinics. Following this, the late congressman Tom Lantos read into the Congressional Record a statement honoring Dr. Schwartz.

Today, Dr. Schwartz said fulfilling John Kelly's idea for a free clinic was "always a group endeavor."

Of the many medical professionals he recruited, Dr. Schwartz said, "People often do more than you ask them to do and often create great improvements in our quest to take good care of our patients."

Co-honoree Dr. Gaines is a retired board certified radiologist who graduated from the University of Illinois College of Medicine in 1940. After returning from World War II, he practiced family medicine in Chicago for two years before moving to San Francisco to begin a residency in radiology at UCSF. In 1952, he started a private radiology practice in Burlingame. Later he moved his practice to San Mateo.

In the late 1980s, Dr. Gaines accomplished two major charitable acts.

The first was traveling to Ethiopia to help the late Dr. Ted Myers and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee establish a medical clinic in Ethiopia. The second was joining Dr. Schwartz and others in the effort to establish a Samaritan House free medical clinic in San Mateo.

The clinic Dr. Schwartz and Dr. Gaines began 20 years ago is thriving, seeing more than 7,000 patient visits per year in its two locations — in San Mateo at 19 W. 39th Ave. and in Redwood City at 114 Fifth Ave.