

March 02, 2009

Topeka Capital Journal
Letters To The Editor

Dear Editor:

March 14-20 is national "Cover the Uninsured Week," as if anyone needed reminded how devastating it is to lack health insurance! However we believe Topeka reflects a community of caring. The Marian Clinic, for example, is a community medical and dental clinic whose only patients are the uninsured who live at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. More than 200 physicians and health care providers volunteer their time and expertise to care for those in need, while our two hospitals, Stormont-Vail HealthCare and St. Francis Health Center, generously donate diagnostic and laboratory tests and hospitalizations to our referred patients. Together this network, and the generosity of charitable private donors, allowed the Clinic to treat over 5,220 patients in 2009 (2,000 were *new* patients!) and to provide medications worth over \$520,000. Still, the need continues to grow in our community. A full 45% of our patients are the working poor who lack insurance.

The economic downturn brings out both the best and the worst in people. If you have health insurance and would like to help someone who doesn't, please extend your support to the Marian Clinic and similar organizations that care for our vulnerable friends and neighbors every week of the year. Your prayers are also appreciated.

Robert Trepinski
Executive Director

Robert Washatka
Chairman, Board of Directors