



EPISODE TRANSCRIPT

EPISODE INFORMATION

Episode Title: Samaritan House

Episode # & Date: Episode #9 – December 26, 2019

Episode Description: Judy contacted the San Mateo Police Department to ask about how safe San Mateo is, what to do about car break-ins, how the homeless are doing, and more.

Episode Web Page: <https://sanmateofocus.com/samaritan-house/>

TRANSCRIPT

I'm Judy Gordon, and *this* is San Mateo Focus. San Mateo Focus is a weekly podcast that gives you a shot of San Mateo information.

Well, we've made it to the last episode of the year - our 9th episode. And, we want to thank you for listening, for subscribing, and for sharing [San Mateo Focus](#) with your friends, families and coworkers. When we had the idea to start a local podcast, we decided that our initial episodes would highlight the organizations, landmarks, and locations in San Mateo that make us unique to other towns up and down the Peninsula. We always knew that we wanted to end the year with a profile of local nonprofit Samaritan House. This is a time when many people make resolutions for the year ahead, and think about donating time or money to local charities. The decisions people make are very personal, and the end result is simply that helping others feels good while doing good.

If you're thinking about volunteering your time in San Mateo, and you haven't yet figured out where to go, [Samaritan House](#) will most likely come up on your first search. With roots deep in the community, Samaritan House was started in 1974 by Dr. Cora Clemons who had concerns that it was too difficult for people to get access to basic social services. Samaritan House was originally located in a small, 2-bedroom house in north central San Mateo. From 1985 to 1999, well-loved and respected Executive Director John Kelly grew and led Samaritan House to a full-service, two thousand volunteer organization offering free meals, a winter homeless shelter, and free medical care to anyone in need. Today, Samaritan House is run with over 3,300 volunteers. It operates two respected free clinics, one in San Mateo and the other in Redwood City, that supply medical and dental services to their clients. This year, Samaritan House expanded their reach with the opening of Samaritan House South in East Palo Alto.

Samaritan House provides a full level of services that makes it the leading organization for fighting poverty in San Mateo County. The reality is that economic inequality in San Mateo is pushing more people to the financial edge and Samaritan House has the programs, the leadership, the experience, the volunteers, and the capacity to make a big difference for people who are struggling. The world wouldn't look at this area and think people are living in poverty, but surviving day-to-day looks and



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feels very different from thriving. Many people here, are in fact, only barely surviving. Uplifting those in need is necessary for a community to endure. If you've got a few minutes, write a check, or get your office to organize a food or funds drive. Sixty-eight percent of Samaritan House funding comes from private donations.

In planning for the year ahead, if you think you can set aside time to help out, Samaritan House has had 45 years to figure out how to make you feel included and be the most effective for meeting their goals. What does it look and feel like to volunteer at Samaritan House? They work hard to personalize the volunteer experience. The first thing that they will do is to talk to you to figure out where your skills and interests are. From there you'll receive a small and intimate orientation. The volunteer department meets one-on-one with prospective volunteers after they have had a chance to hear about the organization. You'll then receive a tour of the San Mateo facility. Samaritan House wants volunteers to feel included and to do what they want and like to do. There's fun involved too. There are two events annually to thank volunteers: a formal dinner, and a more casual picnic. Here are some examples of the areas where Samaritan House needs volunteers. They are always seeking support for *Kids Closet*, and drivers for their *Grocery Rescue* and *Mobile Meals* food programs. They are in need of a second *parking lot assistant* to help manage the flow of clients, staff, and volunteers in the lot during the holidays, which is their busiest season. If you've always wanted to direct traffic, here's your chance! And they are in deep need of health care professionals, particularly dentists and assistants, plus mental health professionals.

Samaritan House is thinking long term, too—they are considering the future of San Mateo County. One of their programs is *Project WEECare*, a school-based empathy-building program, where children learn about the issues of poverty and how they can help. The program encourages conversation and action among children, teachers, and parents by providing the tools for local poverty awareness and empathy-building,

I'd like to thank Samaritan House Executive, Bart Charlow, and Communications Coordinator, Joani Wong, for helping me understand Samaritan House. Samaritan House is probably the best known of San Mateo based non-profits. But there are also many more incredible groups doing good things in our community. The San Mateo Focus team thanks you all very much for your work.

So, the new year is coming, and you've listened to this episode and are ready to act.

Here's the deal: If you feel that you could use support from Samaritan House, by all means, call them at **(650) 347-3648**. You will be treated with respect, and the conversation will be confidential. And, if you've been inspired to set aside some time to help out this year, do it. It feels good, and helps tremendously. Have a happy and peaceful New Year! Okay, that's all the time we have for this episode. Have a great week. Thanks to Jack Radsliff for the original music to this podcast. If you'd like more information about our sponsor or the topics in today's episode, go to sanmateofocus.com.

— [end of episode - podcast overview on next page](#) —



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PODCAST OVERVIEW

Podcast Name: San Mateo Focus

Logo:



Description:

Whether you're new to San Mateo, California, or a long time resident, the San Mateo Focus Podcast is the place to learn about local history, good eats, and things to do.

Website:

<http://www.sanmateofocus.com>

Email:

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Host & Founder: Judy Gordon

Producer/Co-host: Peter Radsliff

Where to listen:

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