

## Cynthia Bassham, Love Thy Neighbor Program

August 5, 2011

At Friday's Drumright Rotary meeting, Rotarian, Odessa Dyer, welcomed her guest, Cynthia Bassham, of Drumright Dental Center. Cynthia is a Hygienist for Drumright Dental Center and the initial spark behind Love Thy Neighbor here in Drumright.

Cynthia felt led to help people and she put that feeling into action in 2007 on a mission trip to New Orleans to work with a mission group building a house. However, even though she was glad she had participated, she realized her skills with hammer and nails were not her strongest skill set.

After returning from the mission trip, Cynthia decided to find a mission that suited her better. After asking God "what is your purpose for me", Cynthia received the answer "people need dental work". Cynthia turned to friends and bosses of Drumright Dental Center, Drs. Melton and Burkett and approached them with her new vision.



Pictured L to R: Cynthia Bassham and Kipp Dyer

That was the beginning of Love Thy Neighbor that started in Drumright four years ago. The name Love Thy Neighbor came from the scripture Luke 10:27 and is an appropriate moniker for the event that happens every August.

Love Thy Neighbor is about providing free dental care to Drumright and the surrounding community. Appointments are made in May for the August event. On the day, Drumright Dental Center and other volunteers work straight through for nine hours to see as many patients as possible. The average number of patients is approximately seventy-five people. Services performed include cleaning and extractions. Decisions to see a patient is not based on age, income levels or whether the patient has insurance coverage or not. There is no judging – it is just free dental care.

Over the years the event has grown – more and more churches, companies and individuals are getting involved. Usually, there is a free gathering in the park the Friday night prior to the event. Hot dogs and children's activities are provided free of charge and are sponsored by local churches and Drumright companies. This year was a bit different. Due to the heat, instead of gathering in the park, each Church involved held events at their location on Saturday, August 6, 2011. There was a clothing drive at the Assembly of God, where the goal was to provide each child three outfits. The Nazarene Church had a foot washing and opened the Youth House. First Baptist served free hotdogs, donated by Keystone Gas. And that is just a few examples.

"The community really pulls together for this event", said Cynthia, "they donate food, utensils, and activities for the children".

Thank you Cynthia for inspiring us to Love Thy Neighbor and thank you Drumright for being the type of community that comes together for a greater good.

Our guests included Kipp Dyer of Drumright High School and Evan Skaggs, grandson of Rotarian Milton Skaggs.

Please join us at Friday's meeting hosted by Rotarian, Linda Crane, and her guest of honor, Raydene Walker with Sapulpa Alternative Education.

If you are interested in becoming involved in Drumright Rotary Club, or if your high school child(ren) would like to be involved in our Rotary Interact Club, please contact us on our FaceBook page, Drumright Rotary Club or go to our website [www.wix.com/drumrightrotary/drumrightrotary](http://www.wix.com/drumrightrotary/drumrightrotary).

Written by Jena Drake, Rotarian