

Fort Mill dentists among volunteers at free clinic

BY STEPHANIE MARKS MARTELL

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ROCK HILL — “Dentists, you rock.”

This was the consensus, inscribed in sidewalk chalk, of people who had spent the night waiting in a line that snaked around the parking lot of First Baptist Church in Rock Hill on Friday morning. By noon Friday, the pavement near the church was covered in messages from thankful patients to their caregivers at Dental Access Day, the annual event coordinated by the South Carolina Dental Association to provide dental care free of charge to underserved adults in the state.

The Griffin family of Clover was among those in line.

“I think it’s a blessing. It was a blessing that they did this,” Connie Griffin said.

Working alongside rows of other professional volunteers, Dr. Kavi Sagunathy and Dr. Jennifer Mokris of Gold Hill Family and Cosmetic Dentistry in Fort Mill performed extractions in a temporary triage set up inside the church. The Gold Hill team, along with hygienists and administrators from their practice, joined with other volunteers from across the state to provide dental care during the three day event.

“It’s a great time to be able to give back to people who need it the most, the under-served population,” Sagunathy said.

“It’s really nice to have the organization come together to donate their time, their services and their materials to really reach out and help the people who need it the most. I accept patients for who they are and that’s why they’re coming to see me. It’s not a judgmental field. We just want to do the best we can and help keep them at ease and pain-free.”

More than 1,400 patients were treated over the course of the two-day clinic, officials said.

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