

Samaritan Car Care's new garage on the way: A story about good people working together to help others

[nkytribune.com/2023/01/samaritan-car-cares-new-garage-on-the-way-a-story-about-good-people-working-together-to-help-others/](https://www.nkytribune.com/2023/01/samaritan-car-cares-new-garage-on-the-way-a-story-about-good-people-working-together-to-help-others/)

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

By Andy Furman
NKyTribune reporter

He took the advice of a minister.

And the region is better for it.

“Rev. Simon knew I was mechanical,” Bruce Kintner told the Northern *Kentucky Tribune*. “And he had a request.”

Rev. Chinnamuthu Simon did his work at the Madison Avenue Christian Church, and in 2007 he was giving meal to the community – two-or-three-times-a-week, according to Kintner.

There was only one problem – and it was a major one.

“Most of those single moms that needed the dinners couldn’t make it to the church,” Kintner said. “They had older vehicles that needed brakes, tires or oil changes.”

What were the kind words of the Reverend?

“Bruce, figure it out.”

He did – with the assistance of Dave Brownfield’s Walther Auto Body.

“I approached Dave,” Kintner said, “and asked if I could borrow his shop for oil changes for low-income single moms.”



Bruce Kintner

“That’s how it all began.”

Brownfield graciously offered his shop for Kintner’s Samaritan Car Car Clinic volunteers to hold their quarterly maintenance and oil change events.

“This has been a fantastic in-kind gift for the last 15-plus years,” Kintner said.

The last clinic – December, 2022 – 16 oil changes were donated, according to Kintner.

And next – well, this April Bruce Kintner is planning to open this region’s very first dedicated non-profit vehicle repair shop.

“It won’t be 100 percent charity,” Kintner told the *Tribune*, while dry-wall was being moved in his new location and building at 1428 Madison Avenue in Covington. “We’re looking at a shared-cost basis business.”



A team of volunteers

That lot on the corner of 14th and Madison was donated to Kintner and his dream by the Butler Foundation.

“They did it,” he said, “To make a dream come true.”

Kintner had this dream for some time. A native of Paraguay, South America he ended a 34-year career at PNC Bank in '07. “I started in 1987 with Central Trust,” the 59-year-old Kintner said.

And your wife – what did she say leaving a steady salary to help those less fortunate.

“Sure she questioned the move,” he said, “but she supports my efforts.”

The Samaritan Car Clinic works on a referral basis with Northern Kentucky social service agencies to help low-income families with car repairs. Repairs are done on a shared-cost basis with the goal of helping the families get to their jobs and stay on the path to self-sufficiency.

Some of the functions of Samaritan Care Care:

- Change engine oil**
- Replace air filters**
- Replace wiper blades**



*An artist’s rendering of the new garage.
Completion can’t come soon enough.*

Replace bulbs
Top-off fluids
Inflate tires
General Car repairs

“Simply put, we offer a lifeline to working poor families. Our services enable these families to maintain their cars, to allow them to access jobs and transport family members to school and health-care appointments,” Kintner said.

Last year, according to Kintner – the sole full-time proprietor to date with one part-time employee—we did 315 car repairs. Seventy-two percent were for single moms, he reported – and they spanned all three Northern Kentucky counties.

“Eighteen percent of our business of single women are those who once were single moms,” he said.

The problem is simple, says Kintner, “A single mom is working but must have a car because her job is not on a nearby bus line. Her rent goes from \$850 to \$1,400, so she moved in with a family member in an already-crowded apartment. Then, her car breaks down, with a repair bill she can’t afford.”

Then it’s Samaritan Car Care and Bruce Kintner to the rescue.

His first grant, albeit a small one, came in 2011 when Kintner met Vanessa Freytag, then director of the Women’s Fun.

Another major donor came along in 2015 when Kintner met with Bill Butler of the Foundation that bears his name.

The Butlers, the R.C. Durr Foundation, and the Carol Ann and Ralph V. Hale Foundation agreed to a three-year funding commitment – but only if Kintner became a full-time executive director – that’s when he quit PNC.

Today, some six shops give these needy single-moms discounted rates for car repairs.



A work in progress



Interior of garage

While Corporex donated the land, the Catalytic Fund of Northern Kentucky is financing the building's construction and Samaritan now has a \$600,000 mortgage that it will need to pay.

The shop is set to have three bays, as well as a bicycle repair shop.

Jim Dennis, who owns A-N-D Auto Repair, will serve as director of the garage and train its mechanics.

Kintner says last year the clinic helped 227 families.

"They generally perform an oil change, install an air filter and/or new wiper blades, but most cars have bigger problems," he said. "The average repair costs \$1,100."

So far this year, the clinic has helped 255 families.



"Our goal," says Kintner, "is to repair 250-300 vehicles per-year."

What the clinic needs is more funding.

Grants and donations.

"About \$500,000 to \$600,000 per-year to have an administrator, and one-or-two mechanics."

Kintner has approached Gateway Technical and Community College for help.

"We'll get some of their students working on our cars," he said.

But he reminds, "We need supply; we do not lack for demand."

-
-
-
-
-
-
-