

'White bird must fly...'

Clinic a product of concern

By BARB SVENDSEN
Of the Emerald

"White bird in her golden cage...white bird must fly, or she will die." The lyrics to this song, "It's a Beautiful Day," provided the inspiration for the name of Eugene's White Bird Socio-medical Aid station.

"At the time we opened, this song was popular, and it seemed like a nice name, the white bird being the symbol for peace and

through the effort of Dennis, who is now project director, Frank Lemons, now working for the Veterans Administration Hospital in Portland; and Dr. Leonard Jacobson, who is still the principal doctor working at the center.

The center operates in several capacities: counseling, medical treatment, an information service and a bummer squad. Thomas is the Counseling

Resources, Sacred Heart and the YMCA, said Liz Margoliash, assistant project director. About the police, she stated, "We've had real good cooperation. They respect our wish for confidentiality. If they find kids bummed out on the street, they bring them to us and leave."

Seemingly, working with the cooperation of the police has had an adverse effect on the clinic. Dolf lamented the fact that working with the police connotes working for the police. "Our reputation seems to be delicate. I don't understand."

"Last summer," he said, "kids used to bring drug problems in. Now its not the place to go. Now people are saying that you can't get help here, or that the cops will be involved."

"There's no basis to these rumors. Our work is strictly confidential," he said.

This situation is doubly unfavorable as the clinic's emphasis is placed upon alienated youth and meeting the problems facing the growing numbers of members of the subculture.

"Mononucleosis, malnutrition, hepatitis, venereal disease, the common cold and flu, adolescent rebellion, rejection, identity crisis, misunderstanding, loneliness, fear, alienation, misplaced values, misinformation or ignorance, conflicts with and harrassment by the police, drug abuse, lack of proper food and clothing, difficulty in finding employment, family conflicts, etc." are specific problems named in the Summary Report.

"We need support. At the same time, we need to be able to work with the people we want to work with," Dolf said.

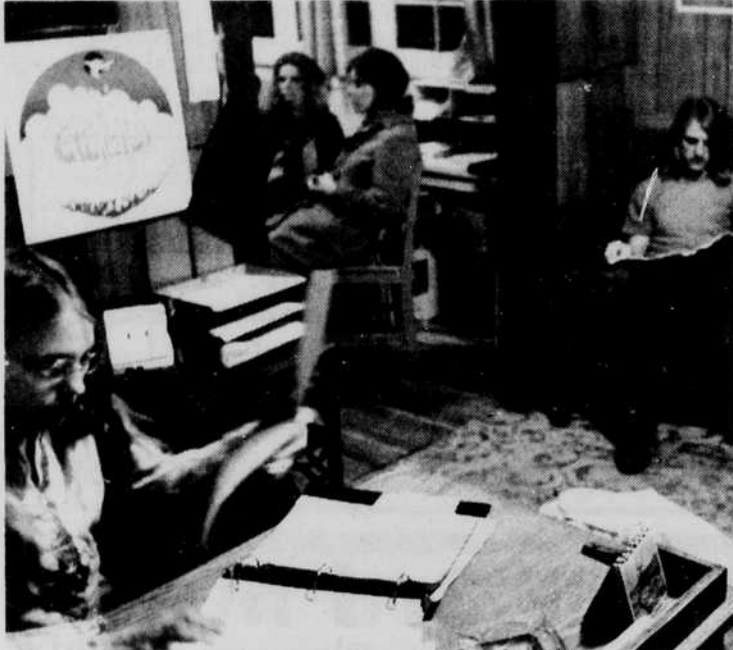


Photo by Bill Feather

Patients await treatment at White Bird Clinic.

love, and all," said Dolf Selten, White Bird's clinical director, acting as spokesman for the community service organization.

The idea to open a free clinic evolved last year after several people who had been investigating free clinics on their own, Dennis Ekonger, Dolf and Jerry Thomas, started talking to each other, according to Dolf.

A series of meetings over about a three month period ensued, he said, involving groups of interested professional people such as the Eugene Police Department, University people, Lane Human Resources, Skipworth and Lane County Mental Health Clinic.

"The reason why we felt so good about it, was because everyone was involved in it," he said. "It wasn't just one group, or one group's trip."

The clinic opened last January

Supervisor, and Mike Gerdes supervises the bummer squad.

The information service provides community drug education through T.V., radio and newspapers, as well as in speaking engagements for church groups, LCC, the University, junior high and high schools, Dolf said. "If you find a place, we've been there."

In conjunction to this function, White Bird acts as a social service unit assisting the clients and the community in the best use of facilities existing in the community, such as therapy and rehabilitative resources, according to a summary report released by the clinic last April.

White Bird has the co-operation of and works with the Welfare Department, Lane County Mental Health Clinic, the Eugene Police Department, the Juvenile Department, Lane Human

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