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Dr. Olwyn Davies has been a practicing physician and surgeon for more than 60 years. He turns 90-years-old on May 1 and has no plans for retirement. Photographed at his general practice office in Silverton on April 25, 2019. ANNA REED / STATESMAN JOURNAL

PHYSICIAN HITS 62 YEARS IN PRACTICE

No stopping Dr. Olwyn Davies, not even turning 90

Christena Brooks
Special to Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

May 1 is International Workers Day, and working is exactly what Dr. Olwyn Davies plans to be doing, even though it's also his 90th birthday.

Davies is a Silverton institution who's worked 62 years here as a general practice physician. A stroke last fall convinced him to cut back to four days a week but, for most of his career, he worked six days a week and made house calls on Sundays.

"I'm not going to quit until people stop coming in my front door," he said. "It amazes me how many people will come to an 89-year-old doctor. My patients tell me, 'I come to you because, for 60 years, you've been telling me what to do, and it hasn't gone wrong yet.'"

Davies' career stretches back to a time when family medicine barely resembled what we know today. He'd deliver your baby, remove your 8-year-old's tonsils, take out your appendix and provide dementia care for your grandfather. Specialists were the stuff of dreams and big cities. In towns like Silverton, family doctors (almost) did it all.

"Dr. Davies represents a time when medicine wasn't just a job; it was a calling," said Dr. Clinton Sanford, a retired Silverton doctor 18 years Davies' junior. "He's the epitome of being called to medicine ... as



A cross stitch made by a patient is displayed in the general practice office of Dr. Olwyn Davies in Silverton on April 25, 2019. He has been a practicing physician and surgeon for more than 60 years. He turns 90-years-old on May 1 and has no plans for retirement. ANNA REED / STATESMAN JOURNAL

long as he can do it, he'll do it."

If you'd told the teenage Olwyn Davies he'd grow up to be a small town's good doctor, he'd probably have laughed in your face.

He was born in Enterprise, into a family where no

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Bethany was a bustling pioneer town

Kaylyn F. Mabey
The Willamette Heritage Center

Along the banks of Silver Creek in the late 1840s, two twin communities took hold, Bethany and Silverton. The older by a few years, Bethany's roots date to the arrival of brothers Gideon and Peter Cox, immigrants of 1846.

Readers of local history may be more familiar with their historically famous brother Thomas Cox who established the first store in Salem.

In 1847 Thomas brought his merchandise over the Oregon Trail in thirteen specially built covered wagons each drawn by three to four teams of oxen.

On reaching the summit of the Cascade Mountains along the Barlow route, the goods were transferred to 60 pack horses belonging to Indians in the vicinity of Bethany - Silverton that had been secured by his

brothers Gideon and Peter. Quite an undertaking at the time.

Bethany was an ambitious rival of Silverton in pioneer Oregon days with the backing of the Cox family and Thomas Shaw, future assessor, sheriff and judge of Marion County.

The town was platted with 56 blocks that lay on both sides of the county road just north of Silver Creek, present-day Hazelgreen Rd. A number of businesses took hold including a chair factory, blacksmith shop, general merchandise store, and doctor's office.

The community took its name from the Biblical home of Lazarus, Mary and Martha, friends of Jesus.

It was in Bethany that Jesus stayed the week before his crucifixion and resurrection. As such, it is fitting to note that the first church in Bethany was organized on

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Developers eye wetlands for housing projects

Tracy Loew
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Developers would be able to build in wetlands more cheaply and quickly if three bills in the Oregon Legislature are approved.

The legislation would reduce the amount of wetland mitigation required in some cases, streamline the permitting process and create a pilot program to create a local mitigation bank.

Backers say the bills will help address Oregon's housing crisis and spur economic development.

"As much of our valley is wet and delineated as wetlands, we are at a disadvantage when trying to develop new housing, economic opportunity or industry," Corvallis Mayor Biff Traber said during public testimony on the bills.

Opponents say the legislation threatens to undermine natural infrastructure that protects residents from floods and drought, helps provide clean air and water, and provides critical habitat for fish and wildlife.

Oregon wetlands lost

Wetlands once covered 2.3 million acres in Oregon. Over the years, nearly a million acres have been lost to agricultural and urban development.

Oregon law requires people who want to fill wetlands in order to build to obtain a permit from the Oregon Department of State Lands.

Each permit requires an evaluation of efforts to re-

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Chemeketa nursing students go hi-tech

Capi Lynn
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

While training to be a nurse in the late 1960s, it wasn't unusual for Tom GrayCQ to go home with bruises on his arm.

He was enrolled in the new associate degree program at Salem Technical Vocational Community College, soon to be renamed Chemeketa.

"We actually did IVs on each other," he said. "NG tubes in the nose, too. We didn't have any mannequins to practice on. We were the mannequins."

Fast forward to today, and Chemeketa nursing students are mastering their skills on high-tech medical mannequins that sweat and bleed.

The college is ranked No. 2 on RegisteredNursing.org's 2019 Best Nursing Schools in Oregon List, behind only Clatsop Community College in Astoria and six spots ahead of Oregon Health and Science University in Portland.

And Chemeketa is the only one of 17 associate degree nursing programs in Oregon to achieve a 94% or better licensure exam pass rate each of the past five years, Oregon State Board of Nursing statistics show.

This year, the program received 236 applications for Fall 2019, accepting just 40 - a reflection of the high demand for nurses and the intense competition to get into nursing school.

Since Tom Gray's class graduated in 1969, the school has produced more than 2,300 nurses, a fete the college will celebrate with a 50th anniversary open house from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, May 4, in Building 8 on Chemeketa's northeast Salem campus.

Admission to the program has always been competitive. Gray was a third-alternate in 1968 before getting in after classes started.

A point system is used today to determine who is selected into the program based on grades earned in prerequisite courses.

Even back when nearly twice as many students

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