

Shortage of medical care endangering lives claims Estacada doctors

By Randy Frank

A hospital, perhaps the most important building in any town, is one luxury that the small town of Estacada does not have. And depending upon who you are talking to, it is really only a secondary problem compared to the need for more doctors.

The problem is not that Estacada residents don't want or need a hospital. The fact is that the size of Estacada makes it almost impossible to afford one.

One concerned citizen said they could use an emergency room at least because "it is such a long trek to a hospital. It takes at least one-half hour to reach the nearest hospital in Oregon City or Gresham and in that time almost anything could happen to a severely-injured patient no matter how good the care."

One Estacada doctor went as far as to say that the situation without a hospital nearby has been "chaotic."

Dr. Alfred E. Neumeyer, Estacada's longest-residing physician, said that because there is no nearby hospital he has to spend time driving all over Estacada on emergency calls

at any hour of the day or night. Neumeyer said he receives between two and three emergency calls a night because the hospitals are simply too far away to guarantee that the patient will still be alive when he gets there.

Yet another Estacada doctor, Dr. Gordon D. Jansen, sees no immediate problem because there is no hospital in Estacada.

"A hospital really hasn't been the solution of a problem around here," Jansen said. "Our office right here serves as a makeshift hospital for almost any case that may come our way, and in some ways we are better than a hospital because they don't have to wait. As soon as we get an emergency case we admit them immediately."

"As for those really bad cases, we have the fire department rescue truck that can be here in a few minutes or an ambulance from Sandy within half an hour and our doctor can take care of them until it gets here," said Jansen.

"Besides, there is a hospital in Gresham only 15 miles away and two hospitals in Oregon City only 16 miles away. So really hasn't been that big a problem," Jansen added.

About the only thing the doctors agree on was that Estacada desperately needs more doctors because there are simply too many cases for only three doctors to handle.

Bonnie Jones: serving the community and the college

By Born Chhay

As a mother of five children, Bonnie Jones is a hard-working woman who has devoted herself to Clackamas County -- especially with people.

Jones serves on the Clackamas Community College Board of Education and retained chairmanship of that body for several years.

"I'm very interested in the availability of the college and what it has to offer rather than with my own education," said Jones.

Jones enjoys her work very much. She spends most of her time in the community -- particularly in her present position as coordinator of the community schools in Estacada.

"I like the people here," she said. "I like to serve people and to meet people that can utilize education."

Jones' job often includes dealing with politics, meeting with representatives of other Oregon community colleges, and participating in workshops and training sessions.

These experiences prompted her to volunteer her time working as a member of the CCC Board of Education. She feels she can

be of the best service to the board by staying close to the people.

"Any course the people may be involved in, we are interested in serving them because they are taxpayers," she said. "The people voted me on the board because they wanted a local person from the community to be a member."

"I'm beginning now to learn the system of the board, setting the policy and processes of the college," Jones added.

The growth of Jones' work has led her to understand more about the philosophy of education. She observed that today's education will bring more light to America as "every one of us needs education to keep this country strong forever."

Regardless of the conditions of society, Jones pointed out that most of the younger generation have the strength of character to educate themselves.

As coordinator of the community school system in Estacada and a member of the board, Jones feels that Clackamas Community College is a life-long learning center. "Unfortunately, the campus is still too small for the county," she said.

"I realize that it is the burden of the taxpayers, but in the long run the college is very beneficial," said Jones.

