

Healthwatch

by Steven Bailey N.D.



Clinic closes to welfare clients

The "dying of a dream" is how Mariah Taylor, R.N., M.S.N. describes the possibility of having to close her clinic on North Vancouver Ave. Having served North and inner North-East Portland for the past four years, Mariah, a pediatric (childrens) Nurse Practitioner faces one of her greatest challenges. The cause of her alarm is the recent state legislative changes that have resulted in the formation of health provider organizations (HPO's) to screen and assign welfare claims and treatments. In this new program Mariah will not be reimbursed as a primary provider for welfare clients.



Nurse practitioner Mariah Taylor examines a young patient at her clinic on North Vancouver Ave. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

While her clinic is unique in many ways, her problems with the new regulations are shared by many other private practitioners who are not affiliated with a participating HPO. What is crucial in her case is that nearly 90 percent of her patients have been on medical assistance. The economic ramifications of the new legislation may prove fatal to clinics like Mariah's which serve large segments of low income families.

As a nurse practitioner, Mariah has attended to the health needs of hundreds of Portland's low-income fam-

ilies. She has emphasized self-care, diet and preventative management as well as preventative dentistry. She screens patients with laboratory and diagnostic work-ups, treating those she can and referring those that need specialized attention. In a way, she epitomizes the intention of the new legislation (low cost care and referral) yet will have to yield her role to telephone intake/consultation, HPO clinics and hospital back-up.

Not only will her patients no longer receive the caring, personal attention

that she provides, but her emphasis on preventing illness, public health and education will be minimized in the new programs. Mariah utilizes four volunteer preceptors from the National College of Naturopathic Medicine and two rotating independent study positions through the University of Portland and Good Samaritan nursing programs. With her volunteer staff, austere furnishings and personal sacrifice, it is difficult to imagine any administrative changes resulting in more health care delivery for less cost.

It is sad to think that the change to HPO's may nail the lid on another minority business, that it may disrupt the prouful role model that Mariah provides her children (patients), and finally that it may place hundreds of low-income clients into a less caring and probably diminished quality program of medical assistance.

Hopefully additional changes will occur which will allow free choice of care to welfare patients, as many other professionals (nurse practitioners, naturopathic and chiropractic doctors) have taken issue with the new legislation. A local naturopathic doctor, Dan Cisco and his mid-wife wife Sarah Taylor had 20 patients last year who receive pre-natal care from them but were required by welfare guidelines to have their births through M.D.'s with the result that the state paid out a minimum of twenty thousand additional dollars to pay for the hospital births in these 20 low-risk and subsequent vaginal deliveries.

If we want to save money and provide more health care to those of limited resources we should be willing to change. But change that adversely impacts minority business, and the personal nature of established client/practitioner associations as well as excluding free choice of alternative care by naturopathic and chiropractic doctors is not conducive to the needs or wants of the patients or community.

Salvadoran doctor claims peasants napalmed

by Robert Lothian

As a congressional report accused the Reagan administration of lying about the extent of the U.S.-supported air war in El Salvador last week, a Salvadoran doctor who attends to the civilian victims of the bombings spoke in Portland.

The woman could only speak if it was agreed that she remain unidentified and that there would be no photos. A member of COPRASOL, a Salvadoran health organization critical of the U.S.-supported government, the woman and her associates work behind the lines attending civilians in the guerilla "zones of control."

The guerillas control large land

areas, but the government controls the air and has recently changed to a strategy of massive bombings in the guerilla zones.

She reported 300 bombings in recent months, often with napalm and white phosphorus. "A lot of the population has suffered from burns, also mutilations caused by the bombings," she said through an interpreter.

Between bombings, life goes on and people grow their corn and beans, she said. But the bombings can come without warning, and so "it's not possible to live a normal life."

"As in all wars, it is the civilian population that is most affected. 'It's just so much harder to get food and milk in

those areas, and the government cuts services, above all on the health level."

"This is not a conventional war; it is a war against civilians," she continued. "The people are in a war against a government they don't want." She said that Salvadorans want democracy and a standard of living "like you have here."

Meanwhile, a report released last week to the Congressional Arms Control and Foreign Policy Caucus accused the Reagan Administration of providing "insufficient, misleading

and in some cases false information" to Congress and the public about the extent of the U.S.-backed air war, how U.S. aid is used, and the number of U.S. advisers in El Salvador.

Senator Mark Hatfield said the new strategy of bombing and helicopter assault is creating more felts than it is killing, and has generated over 100,000 refugees in 10 months. "The air war is wrong and I'm going to do my best to stop it," said Hatfield.

Emanuel gets laser

Emanuel Hospital recently purchased its first laser. Called an ND:Yag laser, it is the only one of its kind in Oregon. At Emanuel, the laser will be used in surgical procedures involving gastroenterology, urology and neurology.

The ND:Yag laser, (the ND stands for the man-made crystal called neodymium and Yag is an acronym for three chemical elements), is made by Messerschmit, a German-based company. The laser, which works off an infra-red beam of light, will be installed in two operating rooms and the gastro-enterology laboratory at Emanuel.

The ND:Yag laser is unique because the beam of focused light can travel through curves and down a diroptic bundle. This feature makes it particularly attractive in gastroenterology and urology. A benefit related to this is

that the beam of laser light, which is invisible, can travel through water without scattering. This is advantageous when treating disorders of the bladder. Another advantage is that by using the ND:Yag laser it eliminates the need to use pressure, traction and handling of surrounding, healthy tissue. The laser can be attached to an endoscope to aid in the treatment of the area.

Invested in 1957, lasers have proved to be a valuable tool in medicine. A laser, which stands for "light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation" is capable of changing light of various frequencies into extremely intense, small and nearly perfect straight beams of one-color light radiation. Lasers are also capable of creating intense heat and power when focused at very close ranges.

Malcolm X film

The Militant Labor forum will show a one-hour documentary film which contains footage of Malcolm X's speeches and interviews dealing with the theme of his 1964 trip to Africa.

Following the film, Leroy Watson will give a talk on "The Meaning of Malcolm X's Ideas for the Black Freedom Struggle Today." Watson is a member of the Machinists' Union, the Seattle Chapter of the National Black Independent Political party, and the Socialist Workers Party.

The forum will be Saturday, March 2, at 7:30 p.m. at the Militant Bookstore, 2732 N.E. Union, Portland. A donation of \$2.50 is requested for \$1.00 for unemployed.

Urban chemicals

"Learn about chemicals in the urban environment, and take home a free birdhouse, booklet, Douglas Fir seedling and commemorative pencil."

That's the invitation the East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District is extending to residents of East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District is extending to residents of East Multnomah County in announcing the District's annual meeting.

The meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 28, at 7 p.m. at the main auditorium of the Bonneville Power Administration Building, 1002 N.E. Holladay Street (near Lloyd Center). For more information, call the East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District at 255-6881.

Oakwood alumni

Oakwood College Alumni Association Rally will be held at Sharon SDA Church on March 2, 1985, at 11:00 a.m. service. L.A. Paschal, President, National Alumni Association will be the guest speaker. There will also be an evening program including a slide presentation. Call Pastor T. Jones, 287-7649 for more information.

Sharon SDA Church is located at 5209 NE 22nd Avenue, Portland.

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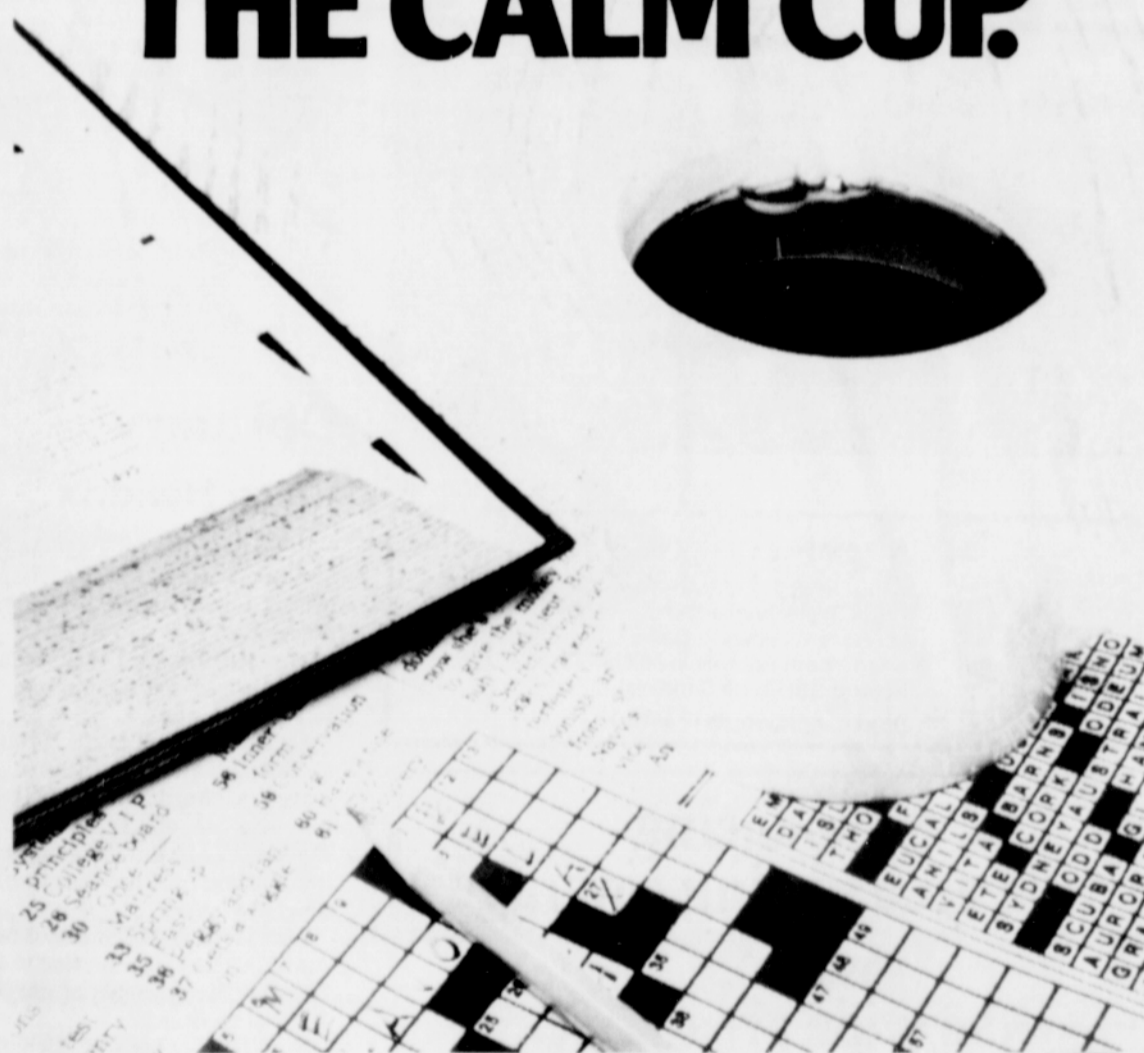
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Community Calendar

Women's Rights Coalition lobbyist Marcia Ohlemiller, of Salem, will be speaking on current legislative issues of interest to women on Monday, February 25, at 7:00 p.m. at the Good Samaritan Nursing Education Building, 2255 N.W. Northrup, Room 107. The public is invited. Admission is \$1.

Beech Primary School, 1710 N. Humboldt, Portland, is holding a community/school carnival on Friday, March 15, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the school. Food, games and other fun activities enjoyable for the entire family will be provided.

"Discover Your Library," 512 N. Killingsworth, Thursday, February 28, from 6:45 to 8:00 p.m. Tour this historic building and learn ideas on how to use it. Children can enjoy storytime, balloons and fun.

