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Gazette
Times

Dr. Sam Datta new physician in Heppner



Dr. Sam Datta

There's a new health provider in Heppner—one who has traveled half way around the world to be here.

Dr. Saumyajit "Sam" Datta, 34, originally from Calcutta, India, is now on the job at Pioneer Memorial Hospital and Clinic.

Dr. Datta attended medical school in Calcutta, where he met his wife, Deepa. After graduation from medical school in 1989, he and Deepa both completed an internship in New Delhi, India.

Dr. Datta's clinical internship was at the V.S.S. Medical College, Sambalpur University from 1989-90. During the internship he did a "little bit of emergency medicine, a little bit of surgery and psychiatric care." He completed his residency on the house staff at All India Institute of Medical Sciences from January-November 1991, working in the areas of emergency medicine and neurosciences. He completed another residency on the house staff at Safdarjung Hospital at New Delhi from April-December 1992, working in the areas of burns and plastic surgery and out-patient psychiatry.

From July 1993-November 1994, Dr. Datta was senior medical officer at Jeevan Hospital at New Delhi, providing acute care and ambulatory care

as a family physician. From July 1995-June 1996, he served as an intern in internal medicine at Wyckoff Heights Medical Center at Brooklyn, New York, working in telemetry and the coronary care unit, on the infectious disease/pulmonary floor, in emergency medicine and ambulatory care clinics.

Dr. Datta also completed a residency in family practice at the Bronx-Lebanon Hospital, Institute of Urban Family Health/Albert Einstein College of Medicine. During this residency he worked in ambulatory and preventive care in a community clinic, in-patient management on the family practice floor, in the emergency room, in prenatal care, labor and delivery, newborn follow-up, pediatrics, geriatrics, intensive care unit, gynecology, completed surgical rotations and was the supervising resident of procedures and management and precepted physician assistants and medical students.

Dr. Datta spent the last 10 months in a fellowship which provided training in geriatrics. He cut the 12-month program short because of the "call of duty" from Heppner, but says he may complete the fellowship in later years. He is board certified with a specialty in family practice.

As a youth in Calcutta, Dr. Datta attended missionary schools in both elementary and high school where he learned to speak very fluent English.

While some of the stereotypes Americans have about India are may be true, including the big divide between the rich and the poor, Dr. Datta points out that the education system in India is very good and is subsidized to a great degree. For example, four years of med school cost him only around \$100. India is also one of the leading countries in the world in computer programming.

He says that training in the modern way of medicine available in the U.S. was the biggest impetus in his coming to

America. "I wanted to acquire more skills and more knowledge," he said.

While moving from New York to Heppner will be a big change, Dr. Datta says he feels the experience will be a good one. "Physicians are so plentiful there (in New York), and oversupplied, I thought it would be more worthwhile to provide care in a small town," he said. "It's easier to make a difference. It's a small town, but there's a lot of activity. Everyone I've come into contact with has been wonderful."

Deepa Datta, a pathologist, is currently completing fellowship training in blood bank transfusion medicine in California. After she completes her training, she plans to join her husband in Heppner in July with their two children, Argho, 3-1/2, and Shibani, one. Her mother, Pratima Debnath, who lives in San Jose, will join the Dattas in Heppner for a time to help get things settled. She also stayed with the family during their residency training.

"Our biggest source of help and support has been my mother-in-law," says Dr. Datta. "She has been such a support. I wish everyone had a mother-in-law like her."

Dr. Datta's parents still live in India, but he has a sister who lives in Ottawa, Canada.

Although Dr. Datta hasn't had much time for hobbies, he enjoys reading the newspaper and "spends hours on the computer." He adds that his wife is more of the "handy person" around the house.

The community is invited to meet Dr. Datta and other health providers at Pioneer Memorial Clinic on Tuesday, June 20. People are invited to stop by and get acquainted, enjoy cake and punch and take advantage of the clinic's "free appointment with the provider day."

Call 676-5504 for a free appointment. Appointments are limited to the first 75 callers.

Willow Creek Water Park to open Saturday

The Willow Creek Water Park in Heppner will open for the season this Saturday, June 10. Hours will be 1-5 p.m. Saturday.

The pool will be open for swim seven days a week: Monday through Friday, 1-5 p.m. and 7-9 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 1-5 p.m.

Adult swim will be week days from 8-9 a.m. Aquatic exercise is tentatively scheduled for 8-9 a.m. and 6:30-7 p.m. with fees to be announced.

A family swim pass will be \$125; an individual pass, \$60. Daily admission is \$1.50 for children five and under; \$2 for

students six to 18 years; and \$2.50 for adults.

Swim lessons will be held weekdays from 9:30 a.m. to noon and 6-7 p.m. with the first session planned June 19-30. The second session will be held July 10-21 and the third, July 31-August 11. Cost is \$25 per session. Space is limited, so those wishing to take lessons should call to reserve a spot. Private lessons are also available.

The therapy pool will be open during all outdoor pool hours and by appointment.

Water park manager Bobette Lovgren has also planned some special programs for kids and

teens during the summer if grant monies become available. She is hoping to be able to schedule teen nights on Tuesdays, where all teens swim for free, and youth game days.

New to the water park this year are pool covers which should help retain heat in the pool and cut down on the electricity bill. Lovgren says that the pool's heater has been fixed and the pools temperature should be maintained between 76-80 degrees.

For more information or to reserve a swim lesson date, call 676-5752 and leave a message.

Ione holds 38th annual IUCC auction



Two-year-old Ann Rietmann, daughter of Jerry and Lisa Rietmann of Ione, seems to be enjoying herself at the 38th Annual Ione United Church of Christ Auction. Little Ann is carrying on a family tradition started when her father attended the first auction when he was only a year old. He also got his photo in the newspaper.

Kid's fishing derby to be held

In celebration of National Fishing Week, June 3-11, the USDA Forest Service's Pacific Northwest Region, along with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, have adopted the concept of free fishing for specified days during that week. Free fishing days offered this year will be Saturday and Sunday, June 10 and 11 in Oregon and Washington and all four Ranger Districts on the Umatilla National Forest are planning free events in conjunction with National Fishing Week. Children participating in these events need to bring their own fishing gear and must be accompanied by an adult.

Fishing week will be commemorated in the following districts: Heppner Ranger District: The Kid's Fishing Derby will be at the Willow Creek Reservoir on June 11, 2000 between 1 and 5 p.m.

The derby is open to all kids 12 years and under. Registration is required, so to beat the lines and have more fishing time, fill out the registration form and bring it with you and your parents to the registration booth. Prizes will be awarded in several categories. The prizes will also be awarded by age groups; 0-5, 6-8, 9-10 and 11-12 years old. A casting contest, held during derby hours, is a "great time to get pointers for the youngsters." There will also be prizes for the Casting Contest. Parents are invited to come out and watch their kids catch bass, sunfish, trout and some great prizes. Sponsors include Mid Columbia Bass Club, NW Steelheaders, Heppner Lions Club, Ducks Unlimited and

Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife. For more information call Greg Lynch at (511) 676-9187.

North Fork John Day Ranger District, Ukiah: The North Fork John Day District is sponsoring a "Kid's Fishing Derby" Saturday, June 10, at Twin Ponds, located six miles south of Ukiah on Forest Road 52 (follow signs from Ukiah).

The Fishing Derby will take place from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Hot dogs, hamburgers and sodas are provided for everyone who registers and participates in the Derby. A special fly casting competition and "biggest fish" contest will also be held.

This event is sponsored by the Forest Service, Blue Mountain Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Battle Mountain Am Vets and Ladies Auxiliary, as well as numerous businesses and individuals in Pendleton, Pilot Rock, Ukiah, and LaGrande. For more information, call (541) 427-3231.

McElligott named all conference

Melissa McElligott of Ione has received University of Nevada-Reno student-athlete Academic All-Big West Conference honors in women's track and field. To be eligible for this award, student-athletes must maintain a 3.2 cumulative grade point average, have attained a sophomore standing academically and competed in at least 50 percent of their team's contests.

McElligott is a senior majoring in elementary education. Her parents are Joe and Jeri McElligott of Ione.

Cemetery to be cleaned

The Heppner Cemetery staff requests that people, if they wish, remove flowers, flower arrangements, etc. from the cemetery as the cemetery will be cleaned on Monday, June 12.

Christian Women's salad luncheon slated

A potluck salad luncheon sponsored by Eastern Oregon Area Board of Aglow International will be held at the Nazarene Church in Heppner at noon, Wednesday, June 14. Babysitting will be provided.

The guest speaker, Dorothy Biamont, is an anointed teacher; "a woman of passion, love, and fun." "She leads people into a more intimate relationship with the Father," according to a news release. Dorothy has traveled extensively, ministering in Australia, Mexico, Indonesia, Israel, Finland, the former Soviet Union, Canada and the USA. She has been active in Aglow International for 30 years.

She speaks and ministers at retreats, local churches, conferences, on television, radio, in prisons and even on the streets. "Come expecting to receive from Jesus," added the release. "We are fortunate to have a woman of this calibre willing to come and minister in our community. Please come."

For more information call Peggy Connor at 676-9408, Kari Keown at 676-5884 or Corinne Miles at 676-5016.

Committee examine rural health issues

The Joint Committee on Health and Human Services traveled to Eastern Oregon Monday, June 5 on a four-day fact-finding tour to examine rural health issues. While touring safety net health clinics, rural hospitals, and emergency services departments, members of the committee will have an opportunity to discuss the most pressing issues these community providers face in bringing essential health care services to rural Oregonians.

Cities the committee will visit include: Heppner, Hood River, Condon, Pendleton, Enterprise, Elgin, Union, La Grande, Baker City, Sumpter, John Day, Burns and Bend. A copy of the itinerary is attached.

Committee members look forward to hearing from hospital administrators, board members, and practitioners about Oregon's rural health care delivery system, how legislatively passed initiatives such as the rural practitioner tax credit have

allowed providers to remain in our rural communities, and what barriers still exist that impact their ability to deliver quality health care services to rural Oregonians. The legislators will also see how rural emergency services will be impacted by the new Emergency Medical Services grants made available as a result of SB 911 (1999).

The tour will be led by committee co-chairs Senator Bill Fisher (R-Roseburg) and Representative Jeff Kruse (R-Roseburg). Other committee

members who will participate in the trip include: Senator Verne Duncan (R-Milwaukie), Senator Cliff Trow (D-Corvallis), Representative Jerry Krummel (R-Wilsonville), Representative Bill Morrisette (DSpringfield), and Representative Vic Backlund (R-Keizer). Senator David Nelson (R-Pendleton), Representative Mark Simmons (R-Elgin), Representative Bob Jensen (I-Pendleton), and Senator Ted Ferrioli (R-John Day) will host the committee in their districts.

Business retention training

The Willow Creek Valley Business Retention Steering Committee will host an evening training for community volunteers on Thursday, June 8, between 5:30-8 p.m. at the Bank of Eastern Oregon Conference Center in Heppner.

Twenty community volunteers will learn how to visit businesses

to better understand the business climate.

The volunteers will visit businesses in Ione, Heppner, and Lexington in the coming weeks. The goal of the effort is to identify ways to improve profitability for local businesses. For more information, contact Lisa Breckenridge at 276-6745.



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