

Medical test: Doctors examine Clinton plan

BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Like many of his contemporaries, Dr. Max McKinney became a businessman as well as a doctor when he began his Farmington Hills practice 23 years ago.

Although McKinney, 59, didn't go to medical school until he was 33, he is in many ways typical of physicians who began a general practice and became a trusted family friend and entrepreneur with a great deal of respect and standing in his community.

Along with Dr. Carolyn Nelson, McKinney practices out of an office on 12 Mile and continues his close relationship with many patients. But an increasingly complicated profession that has forced him to increase his office staff from four to 10 employees over that time, inadequate insurance reimbursement and malpractice insurance costs have changed how he operates. And that's one of many features of the proposed Clinton health proposal he likes.

"It addresses malpractice, which is a big cost," he said. "We do a lot of tests because of malpractice. It eats up time and money."

McKinney, who is married with three grown children, has more than just his medical practice to consider. As a small businessman, he will be faced with higher costs for his employees.

"It could be \$16,000 more a year," he said.

Nelson, 35, is more representative of the newer breed of general practitioner. Like McKinney, Nelson likes the variety of cases she sees. But the mother of three young children tries to avoid the 60-hour weeks McKinney works. She works three 12-14 hour days a week in order to spend more time with her family.

"I try for a balance," she said. Nelson and McKinney will deal with everything from a routine pap smear and pelvic examination to a cyst removal in a typical day.



STAFF PHOTOS BY SHARON LEMIERX



Nelson, a Mercy High and Michigan State University graduate, was a patient of McKinney's who put aside her initial interest in veterinary medicine to become a doctor. She worries

that the Clinton proposal will lessen the gains in health care without accomplishing its goals of universal coverage.

"I look at the Canadian system and it scares me," she said. "There are indigent people who are just not going to use the system anyway. And the cost is going to be high."

But McKinney said he is philosophical about the proposal's possible shortcomings, and he does think universal health care is key.

"I think a lot of us say que sera," he said. "We'll see what happens."

There could be other benefits for his practice, such as simplifying insurance billing.

"There are hundreds of forms to deal with," said Mary Moorcraft, McKinney's office manager.

One part of the plan will add to the heavy patient load the two doctors already have. The plan gives more importance to primary care physicians like McKinney and Nelson.

"That means there will be a flood of new patients for primary care doctors," McKinney said. "It will take some time to meet that demand."



Looking at pictures: Above, Dr. Max McKinney looks at X-rays of Lois Gerigh (left) of Redford Township. She's a longtime patient. At left is Dr. Carolyn Nelson.

Band enlists Elks in battle to raise D-Day trip money

BY TOM BAER
STAFF WRITER

D-Day for the Farmington High School marching band is Dec. 1.

The "D" here stands for the self-imposed deadline that band boosters and other supporters have set for raising \$180,000 they need to transport the 104-member band and 10 chaperons to France to play in an April program commemorating the upcoming 50th anniversary of World War II's D-Day (June 6, 1944).

Band boosters have turned to the Elks Club in their efforts to raise the money.

"We'd like to get all the community involvement we can get," said Jack Curd, a Farmington resident and representative of the local Elks Club who hopes to raise the funds to cover transportation and other costs for the trip.

The Farmington High marching band had been selected to represent Michigan in the "Allied Musical Salute to the Liberation of France." Prep bands from all 50 states are due to play in the celebration set for April 1-9, Easter break.

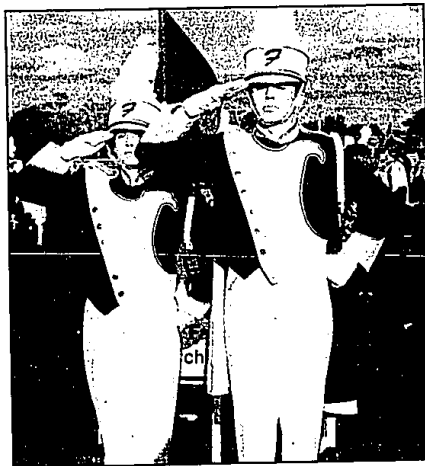
The Farmington band will perform at both the Utah and Omaha Beach Memorials, the Caen Memorial Museum and at the parks and cathedrals in Paris, according to Katherine Hall, mother of two Farmington band members and the president of the FHS Music Patrons.

"For a lot of these kids, it'll be a trip of a lifetime," said Hall, whose son, Steven, is the drum major. A younger son, Kevin, plays baritone in the band.

"Ninety percent (of the band members) will go," said Hall. "We're trying to defray the costs, to keep the costs down. For some parents, it's quite a stretch to send their kids."

Curd, who staged a party for WWII veterans last year, has made up "promo packs" explaining the need for funds. He said he intends to distribute the packs to "50 to 100 influential people" in the Farmington area.

"I'll ask each of them to contact five or 10 of their friends," Curd



Bound for France: Farmington High drum major Steven Hall and assistant Jennifer Sloane (left) hope to celebrate the 50th anniversary of D-Day in France.

said, "and I'll ask them all to open up their checkbooks and their hearts."

Curd will also enlist the help of the 55,000 Elks members in the 76 clubs across Michigan, he said. Some 25-30 percent of them are WWII vets, he added. "We hope they'll respond to our cause."

The Farmington Band, directed by Norman Logan, was picked for the honor by Music Celebrations International, an Arizona-based group, which is co-sponsoring the event with the U.S. Department of Defense.

One reason Farmington was picked, Hall said, is because of its sharp new uniforms, designed by her husband Bruce. The uniforms cost the school district about \$40,000. Protective rainwear worth another \$8,000 was provided

ed by the Music Patrons. A band must replace its uniforms every 10 years or so, Hall said.

The Dec. 1 deadline was set to give the group time enough to make travel arrangements with the airline, Hall said.

Anyone who wants more information on the fund drive should call Hall at 471-4516. Donations can be made to "Farmington Elks" and mailed to: Farmington Lodge No. 1976, Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks, 23666 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington 48336.

Thousands of veterans and their families are expected to return to France from April through September to participate in events commemorating the liberation of France from Germany in World War II.

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