

AMERICA’S HEALTHIEST HOMETOWN

A weekly report on The Villages’ efforts to become “America’s Healthiest Hometown” compiled by Daily Sun Ombudsman **Larry D. Croom**
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Primary care centers in The Villages

Colony Care Center
Opened December 2012
Santa Barbara Care Center
Opening October 2013
Pinellas Care Center
Opening November 2013
Mulberry Grove
Opening February 2014
Lake Sumter Creekside
Opening March 2014

Fixing health care: All about Dr. Susan Hawley

Primary care doctors have been recruited as part of an initiative to revamp health care right here in Florida’s Friendliest Hometown. The Villages Health is partnering with USF Health to bring in family doctors and specialists who will work as a team, all in the best interests of serving patients. This weekly feature will introduce these innovative doctors who have joined this effort.

What is the best part of being a family doctor?

The people. Helping people and getting to know all different kinds of people.

What is your personal health care philosophy?

Keeping patients healthy. Doing a lot of preventative care. Not waiting until someone gets sick to see them in the office, but seeing them when they’re well and planning their wellness.

What is it like to treat active, healthy patients?

It’s great. I love it. They’re very well-informed and it’s refreshing. They are involved with staying healthy. We’re partners in their health care.

How important is it to have a primary care doctor who knows you well?

I think it’s very important, especially because of the fragmentation of care today. People will come in and they have a heart doctor, a lung doctor, a kidney doctor, a gynecologist, an orthopedist and none of them want to deal with the whole person. I think it’s very important for us to know the whole person and everything that’s going on with all of your systems and put them all together as one.

How does having more



Care Center: Colony
Age: 61
Undergraduate: University of California, San Francisco
Medical school: University of California, Irvine
Internship, residency: Seattle, Wash.

time with patients help improve overall health?

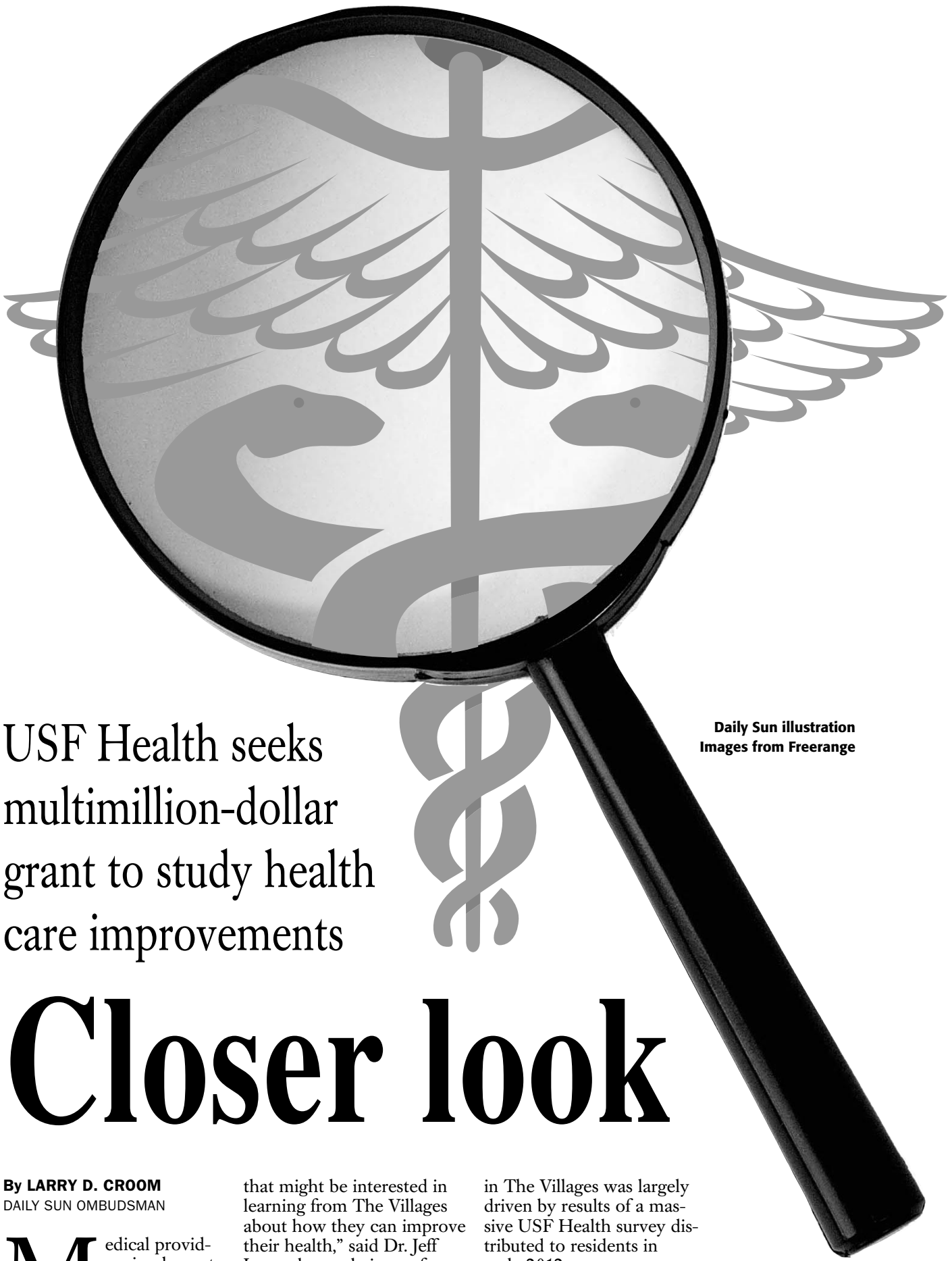
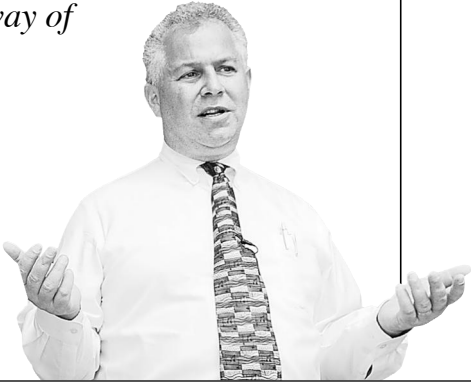
You have time to explore the history of what’s going on with them and what brought this particular problem they’re discussing to light. It might not just be one aspect of them. It might have many different reasons and if you don’t have time to sit down and talk about it, you’re not going to figure it out.

Next week Find out all about Jennifer Jordahl, an advanced registered nurse practitioner at Colony Care Center.

Keeping communication lines open Doctors working together as a team

“Let’s say the primary care physician says, ‘you know what, I think we need an opinion that’s a little bit more specialized than the information I have.’ ... We would send a person to a specialist. Ideally that specialist would be able to say, ‘I know exactly what your primary care doctor has talked to you about, looked at and the question that’s being looked at for answering.’ ... It’s just a much better way of delivering the care.”

Dr. Jeff Lowenkron,
chairman, department of comprehensive medicine in The Villages



Daily Sun illustration
Images from Freerange

USF Health seeks multimillion-dollar grant to study health care improvements

Closer look

By **LARRY D. CROOM**
DAILY SUN OMBUDSMAN

Medical providers implementing sweeping health care changes in Florida’s Friendliest Hometown are hoping other markets can benefit from what they learn along the way.

That goal could become a reality if USF Health is successful in obtaining a multi-million dollar grant from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

The grant would fund a three-year study detailing how the partnership between The Villages Health and USF Health is building a better system for Medicare patients.

“Ideally, we can scale the model to other communities

that might be interested in learning from The Villages about how they can improve their health,” said Dr. Jeff Lowenkron, chairman for the department of comprehensive medicine in The Villages.

The proposal, which asks for \$10-\$12 million, will be submitted in mid-August with the goal of launching the study next spring.

“Seniors here not only spend a great deal of time helping one another when needs arise for their neighbors, but they are also committed to helping to improve the quality of life for other older adults they’ve never even met,” said Dr. Carla VandeWeerd, an assistant professor in USF’s College of Public Health.

She noted that the health care revolution underway

in The Villages was largely driven by results of a massive USF Health survey distributed to residents in early 2012.

In that study – the nation’s largest ever public health survey – Villagers made it clear they wanted seniors across the country to benefit from the data collected.

“The job for us now is to go back and evaluate the system of care that’s been developed to ensure that it remains responsive to residents’ needs, and in turn, to identify ways in which it can be leveraged to help seniors in other regions who have not had a chance to get their voices heard,” VandeWeerd said.

Dr. Elliot Sussman, chair of The Villages Health, said the findings could then

begin to reshape health care across the country.

“We’ll have results that you can share with the world,” he said. “A lot of people say this clearly may be one of the most important potential transformations in American medicine. All we’re asking for is the funds to carefully study it.”

Lowenkron agreed, adding that changes in health care are critical as more Baby Boomers retire.

“I think there will be a lot of people coming here saying, ‘please teach us,’” he said.

Washington

Genetically modified food debate:

Genetically modified foods are a key issue in a massive free trade agreement between the United States and Europe. Many of the plants cultivated in the US are manipulated in labs to resist disease and drought, ward off insects and boost the food supply, but these are largely banned in Europe.

Safe or unsafe?

Most studies show genetically modified foods are safe for human consumption.

The Food and Drug Administration generally recognized these foods as safe, and the World Health Organization has said no ill health effects have resulted internationally.

Opponents on both sides of the Atlantic say there has been inadequate testing and regulation. They worry that people who eat genetically

modified foods may be more prone to allergies or diseases resistant to antibiotics.

GM foods have been a mainstay in the U.S. for more than a decade.

Europe largely bans genetically engineered foods. They do allow the import of a number of GM crops such as soy, mostly for animal feed, and individual European countries have opted to plant these types of crops.

Can modified food combat world hunger?

By 2050, the world’s population is projected to rise to 9 billion from just over 7 billion currently. Proponents of genetically modified foods say they are safe and can boost harvests even in bad conditions by protecting against pests, weeds and drought. This, they argue, will be essential to meeting the needs of a booming population in decades to come.

But some scientists say

genetic engineering for insect resistance has provided only a modest increase in yields and drought-resistant strains have only modestly reduced losses.

Andrea Roberto Son-nino, chief of research at the U.N. food agency, said total food production at present is enough to feed the entire global population world food production will need to increase by 60 percent to meet the demands of 9 billion by 2050.

To label or not to label?

Europe requires all GM food to be labeled unless GM ingredients amount to 0.9 percent or less of the total. The U.S. does not require labels on the view that genetically modified food is not materially different than non-modified food. Opponents of labeling say it would scare consumers away from safe foods, giving the appearance that there is something wrong with them.

U.S. activists insist consumers should have the right to choose whether to eat genetically modified foods and that labeling would offer them that choice. California voters last year rejected a ballot initiative that would have required GM food labeling. Connecticut and Maine have passed laws to label genetically modified foods, and many more states are contemplating labeling.

– The Associated Press