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Business

Celebrates 15 years for Fountain Hills practice

Dr. Gottfried's motto is 'Patient comes first'

Many patients long for the days when the old-time family doctor was just a phone call away.

Dr. David S. Gottfried believes his practice, Fountain Hills Medical Clinic in Fountain Hills Plaza, located at the southwest corner of Palisades Boulevard and La Montana Drive, has provided health care for the last 15 years with the "patient comes first" motto.

He opened the clinic on Dec. 15, 1994.

A Chicago native, he attributes his success to a willingness to see patients when they need to see a doctor instead of waiting four to six weeks for an appointment.

"We see people when they're sick, not when it is convenient for us," said Gottfried.

He estimated that he has treated more than 65,000 patients.

"Over the years, we have made a concerted effort to provide residents of Fountain Hills and Rio Verde high quality medical care similar in many ways to small town doctors who always put the patient first," he said.

"Fortunately for us, this approach has really worked." Arlena Mannila, office manager for the past seven years, said, "Our practice is based upon providing a personal touch that people in the area really appreciate. Since many of our patients are part-time residents, they rely on Dr. Gottfried for a variety of medical services that other practitioners simply cannot provide."

"Arlena is a one-woman band and she is really terrific. If she can't do it, it doesn't need to be done," said Gottfried.

The clinic staff also includes nurse practitioner

Eleanor Fenton.

He obtained a medical degree from Loyola University of Chicago and the University of Wisconsin. During the 1968 riots in Chicago, he administered care to rioting college professors and students in Cooke County hospital.

"Those were interesting times," said Gottfried, an emergency room physician for 25 years in Tucson, Apple Valley, Calif., and Kingman Regional Hospital, where he was director of emergency services.

In the early 1970s, he served as the recovery physician for the Apollo 15 mission, the fourth expedition to land men on the moon. It also was the first flight of the lunar roving vehicle where the astronauts explored the geology.

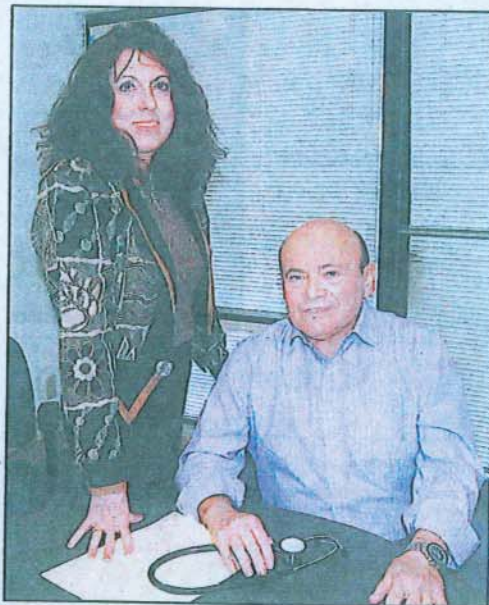
Astronauts David Scott, commander, Alfred J. Worden, command module pilot, and James Irwin, lunar

module pilot, launched from Kennedy Space Center in Florida on July 26, 1971.

Gottfried was assigned to the retrieval ship, USS Okinawa, for re-entry of the command module about 1,000 miles off the coast of Hawaii in the Pacific Ocean.

"It was my most fun assignment," recalled Gottfried. He said one astronaut developed a heart arrhythmia, an abnormal heart rhythm, that he monitored 240,000 miles beyond earth. Loss of bone mass after seven days in space was tested for the first time.

On previous missions, astronauts upon re-entry were quarantined for 30 days because of possible contamination. The practice changed when Apollo 15 crew returned. They



Dr. David S. Gottfried consults with his office manager Arlena Mannila. Gottfried is observing the 15th anniversary of the Fountain Hills Medical Clinic that he founded in Fountain Hills Plaza.

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were "fished out of the water" and Gottfried had dinner that evening with them.

When he decided to open his own practice, he said, "Fountain Hills looked like a community on the verge of developing and a very nice place to work."

In reviewing the last 15 years, Gottfried said the clinic treated a high number of construction injuries during the boom years.

"In fact, for the first two or three years, we really functioned as a small emergency room," he said.

"As the community be-

gan to mature, the practice evolved into treating a higher number of families and winter visitors which today is the core of our business."

The clinic's location in a retail-shopping plaza has proven to be a benefit to his practice.

"Perhaps our best advertising vehicle is Paul's ACE Hardware. I cannot tell you how many times a family has stopped in for a treatment or diagnosis either before or after they visited the hardware store," said Gottfried.

Many men will leave their spouses at Gottfried's office and leave to browse the hardware store.

Gottfried keeps active by skiing, long distance bicycling 50 miles once or twice a week, and working out at a gym. Earlier in life he climbed mountains, once making a climb on Mount Everest but did not reach the summit.

Retirement is not in his future any time soon: "My dad lived until he was 97. When he was 95, he told me the worst thing he ever did in his life was to retire at 65."

The elder Gottfried had been a chemical engineer.

The clinic accepts new patients. No appointments are necessary at the walk-in clinic. To schedule a visit, call 837-4300.