

Opinion

The Herald
www.mcherald.com

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OUR OPINION

A hospital in Madison

The numbers tell the story. In Hinds County, there are 8.65 hospital beds per 1,000 residents. In Rankin County, there are 2.15 beds per 1,000 residents. But how many hospital beds are there for every thousand residents of Madison County? .75

Madison County, one of the most rapidly growing counties in the state, has a shortage of hospital beds, particularly in the heavily populated southern end of the county. For this reason, 36 percent of local residents leave the county when they need hospital care.

In a county that aims for and achieves excellence in so many areas, there should also be quality health care. This is a need not only for convenience, jobs and economic development, although those would all be benefits from the project, both for Madison County and for St. Dominic. The main goal of this move is to save lives. If a loved one was critically ill or injured, who would want needed health care to be a drive of 20 minutes or more away?

St. Dominic is seeking approval from the state to build a 71-bed hospital in Madison. A certificate of need hearing is set for Feb. 3-17, 2010.

The Herald applauds efforts to bring more health care to Madison County and encourages residents to visit the Web site www.mystdom-madison.com to sign the petition in support of the new hospital.

YOUR OPINION

Remember farmers today

This Thanksgiving season, we are all reminded of the numerous menu choices we have in our nation. We are seeing different challenges this year and, as a nation, we are confronted with some tough decisions as it relates to our overall economic situation.

It is easy to become complacent and fail to count every blessing we enjoy. I speak for the farm community when I say this has been one of the most trying years ever for those individuals who depend on agriculture for their livelihood. We have seen every imaginable swing in the weather patterns throughout Mississippi during this growing season. We saw cold, wet temperatures in the early spring, which delayed planting for many of the crops that are vital to our economy. Once we passed the cold, wet season and many of the crops were in the ground, we saw an extended period of dry weather, which certainly delayed maturity and cut yields of those crops that we are all so dependent upon. While we thought the drought ended with the rainfall we received in July, we never imagined that the rainfall would continue through our normal harvest dates. As a result, we have seen many crops lose from 30 to 80 percent of their value simply because they were mature in the field and

unable to be harvested in a timely manner.

As we begin this Thanksgiving season, we all need to be aware of how delicate our food supply is. We are all dependent on the weather to produce the crops we need to carry forward the domestic food supply that ensures our nutritious diets and, more than that, ensures our national security.

It is my hope that throughout this Thanksgiving season we will be reminded of the fact that those family farms that produce the bountiful supply are being challenged by circumstances beyond their control. As we sit down to enjoy a festive treat on this Thanksgiving Day, let us remember to lift every farmer up in a special way to our Creator in hopes that they will be able to continue to produce those products that are essential to life as we know it. From the field to the processor to the grocery shelf, there is no better producer than the American farmer. I trust that we will all be mindful of the fact that our farmers are especially challenged this season but are resilient and will continue to produce that bountiful food supply that we as Americans enjoy. May God bless America.

David Waide
President
Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation

MORE OPINION

Health care shortage

MY OPINION

