

Greetings Nobles and friends of the Shriner's Children Hospital in Spokane,

July was a big month for the twenty-two Shrine Hospitals of North America. Our annual session was held in San Antonio, Texas the first part of the month. The two main pieces of business before the nobility were the possible closure of six hospitals in our system that made necessary by the drop in our economy and the billing of third party for our hospital (insurance companies).

It has always been the desire of the Shrines to raise enough money in our endowment to fund the hospital system off the interest only. During the course of the last year, we were forced to dip into the principle for the uninterrupted care of our children. Our Imperial officers from a purely financial position, felt it necessary to close some of our facilities. However, the hearts and emotions of the general nobility dictated to the officers that we will close no hospitals and that we will help every child we can. This has been the mission of the Shiners since its inception.

The second top issue regarding the billing of insurance companies was unanimously approved by the nobility. While it has the implications of helping us reduce the deficit in the budget, it will not fully satisfy. That is why the nobility have been given strict in charge to go out and solicit donations for our great work. For the fiscal year 2010, it is estimated that we will have a deficit in our budget of approximately \$180 million. While we do have the ability to meet our financial obligations going into the future, this is not something that can perpetuate forever. We, as Shiners, need to reconfirm our commitment to the hospitals to keep them funded so we can help future generations of our children defy the odds.

Another mission of the local Shrine Temples is to maintain a transportation fund. Which is to see that those in need can get to the hospital for treatment. This support could come in the form of bus ticket, gas money or a plane ride, depending upon the needs of the child.

The Shrine Hospital System is made up of twenty two hospitals, which does children orthopedics (skeleton and muscles) and burn treatment. The State of Montana supports the Spokane hospital and our burn patients are sent to Sacramento to the Northern California Shrine Hospital. The State of Montana is fortunate to be represented by six brethren, with board member located somewhat close to you. Each one will go out of their way to answer any questions you may have and assist in getting the kids the help they need.

In closing, remember no man has stood so tall as the man who has stooped to help a child.

Yours in faith,

E.G. Leipheimer