



Rural medicine part of Dr. Young's DNA



Medicine runs in Dr. Donella Young's family. Growing up in rural Kentucky (this explains the soft country drawl), she remembers her father being gone a lot. "He was the only doctor in the entire county so he was gone all the time, and when he was home, people were always coming to our house for help, especially in the middle of the night," she smiles.

Still, Dr. Young saw the love he had for his patients and the difference he made in lives. Medicine called and she answered.

After attending the University of Oklahoma for medical school, Dr. Young chose a rural track residency program, which took her to Enid, Oklahoma. "I never liked living in the city and never had any desire to live anywhere other than the country," she explains of her choice, which turned out to be the right one.

While in Enid, also the home of Vance Air Force Base, the young resident attended a Navigators Bible Study. There, a handsome fly boy caught her eye. His name was Bill Young. "He was an instructor pilot, and was such a nice guy," she smiles. He was gentle and caring, particularly to animals, which caught this farm girl's attention. "And the best thing was he didn't seem to mind that I was a doctor."

They were married, and pursued their careers. Dr. Young's passion was obstetrics. Delivering babies gave her great satisfaction, as did her general family practice.

Eventually, Bill's career in the Air National Guard brought them to Fairchild AFB, where Dr. Young practiced for a short time before signing on at Lincoln Hospital.

As her family had expanded to one daughter and two sons, she was grateful that Lincoln Hospital was willing to work around her family — not quite what she was used to growing up.

"I've got it easier," she says of her flexible schedule. "I work three days a week and still have time to be with my family. I don't get to do all the aspects of medicine I'd like to, like delivering babies and being in the ER, which is exciting, but it doesn't fit in with my family's lifestyle right now. Babies come at all hours of the night and with Bill being a pilot, he can be gone from a few days to a few months. Leaving my kids isn't an option," she says.

Until then, she's content delivering lambs and colts on her Waukon farm and is busy with the Lincoln Hospital Women's Program. Always interested in women's health issues, Dr. Young plans to be instrumental in the implementation of the program. "I'm not a natural talker. I'm a listener and that's important to women especially as patients," she says of her gentle, easy-going spirit.

As for her career, the farm girl definitely feels at home. "It's very pleasant to come to work."