

Downsizing at Rhinoceros General



Last month the Department of Disinformation and Mammalian Rights (DDMR) held a briefing session at the hospital on the subject of "Healthcare in the 21st Century. How many bodies will we need?"

Mr. Livingstone, the hospital administrator, opened the meeting. He emphasized that Administrators and doctors must work together to provide Quality Care for their Consumers—he always capitalizes important words, out of deference to Mr. Lehrkopf's Teutonic forbears. They must build a bridge to the 21st century, he said, but must make sure that the bridge does not become so overcrowded that some providers will have to be pushed off.

In the questions and answers session that followed Mr. Pipsqueak from Materials Mismanagement asked if administration was contemplating lay offs. Mr. Livingstone replied that we must all tighten our belts, then rushed off to a negotiating session on the hospital's merger with the nationwide vertically integrated grocery chain.

Mr. Lehrkopf, vice president for DDMR, spoke next. He said that the department had been the driving force behind the recent restructuring at the hospital, the sixth in two years, and was now spearheading the move to build the bridge to the millennium. The doctors were the vertebrae of this bridge, he explained, and the DDMR was very excited about building a totally seamless bridge.

Mr. Pipsqueak asked if he meant vertebrate or invertebrate, and how a vertebrate bridge could be seamless. Mr. Lehrkopf replied that we needed to improve client access to healthcare providers.

From the Planning Department next came a report on the state of the grant to link Rhinoceros City with its sister cities of Goma and Gomorra by a data sharing computer system. Unfortunately, all computers were down and the grant had been sent by mistake to the Washington office of the Mammalian Rights League and ended up in a crocodile pit in Florida.

Dr. Grumpus then said that he had wanted to decorate his office but administration had forbidden him to hang his Delvaux painting in the waiting room.

Mr. Lehrkopf replied that a multidisciplinary committee, with representation from consumers, ethicists, spiritualists, vegetarians, and the painters union, had met weekly for 11 months and concluded that for the sake of uniformity Delvaux paintings should be placed in all offices or in none.

Dr. Smyth asked for an update on the merger talks. Will there be redundancies, and if so who will do the pushing off the bridge and who will be pushed? Will doctors wear grocers' coats or vice versa? Will patients receive olives for free or will they have to pay for them?

Dr. Grumpus asked if the olives for patients with hypertension would be salt free.

Mr. Lehrkopf said that he recognized the need for salt free pickled olives and had referred the issue to the Delvaux committee. He praised Mr. Pipsqueak for his downsizing efforts, but thought that the Departments of Disinformation and Mismanagement could be merged into one.

Mr. Pipsqueak fainted on hearing this news and was rushed to the intensive care unit.

As things settled down Dr. Smyth repeated his earlier question.

Mr. Lehrkopf answered that there were important strategic synergies between the healthcare and the food care industries. We need more primary care grocers and fewer delicatessen style doctors, he concluded.