

Conowingo health center to conduct open house

Popular West Cecil facility eyes future expansion

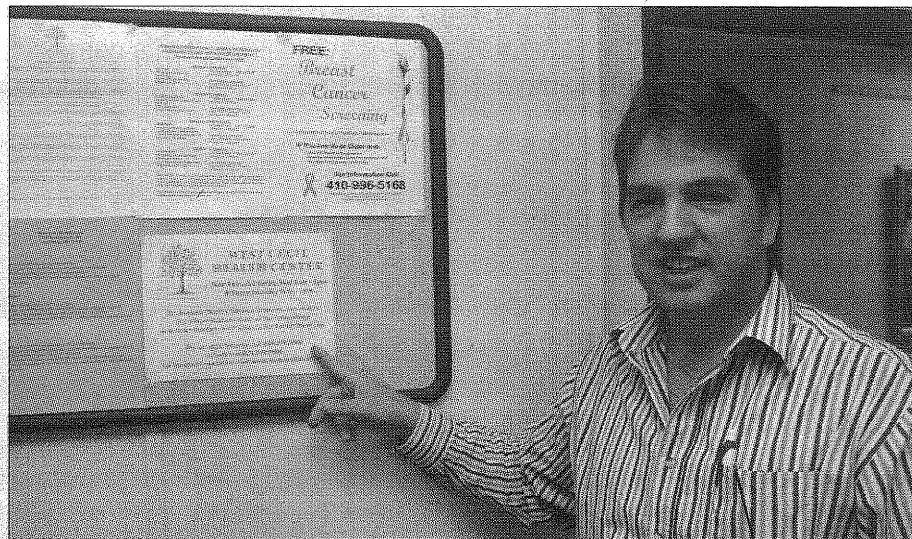
By Jane Bellmyer
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The 2000 U.S. Census helped bring West Cecil Health Center to Conowingo in 2008 and its director is hoping this year's Census will make it even bigger.

Mark Rajkowski said the popularity of the medical facility at 535 Rowlandsville Road over the last 2½ years shows that the 2000 Census was correct when it identified the Conowingo area as being underserved for basic medical care.

What started as a general practice medical center serving the uninsured and underinsured has since expanded its hours, increased its staff and added gynecology and psychiatric services.

"We're looking at adding satellite sites," Rajkowski said of the medical center's plans for the future. "We got a grant for an ultrasound (and are)



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Mark Rajkowski of West Cecil Health Center has added new doctors and extended patient hours. He said the medical facility is looking forward to adding satellite locations. The center will conduct an open house on Saturday.

preparing for obstetrics ... and I want an onsite pharmacy."

On Saturday, West Cecil Health Center will hold an open house to celebrate its work and to recognize National Health Center Week.

"This is our way of letting people know what we can do for them, and thank the community for supporting us," Rajkowski said.

From 9 a.m. until 1 p.m., the center will offer free blood pressure readings and diabetes screenings, as well as free games, food, face painting, an inflatable play structure and a sticky wall.

"You put on this suit and you jump onto a Velcro wall and try to get off," Rajkowski said, describing the latter offering.

The open house also will include

a formal presentation of some of the grants recently awarded to the center, including a \$250,000, three-year grant from Maryland Community Health Resources that will fund the center's behavioral health program and a \$4,000 grant from the Conowingo Lions Club that will help subsidize patients' prescription costs.

Rajkowski said the center also is hoping to win a \$4.5 million grant that could be used to purchase a 12,000-square-foot building to replace the center's current 2,500 square feet of office space in a pair of rented manufactured homes.

"It's not uncommon for health centers to have satellite centers," he said. "It doesn't have to be here in Conowingo. It could also be in Chesapeake City."