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*emergency physician,*  
*Springfield Community Hospital*



## Physician from Philippines analyzes her first year in Springfield practice

**By Laurie Glenn**

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**F**rom Chinese cuisine to politics in medicine, Conchita Redmon has an opinion peppered with passion.

The 40-year-old physician, wife and mother moved to Springfield with her Ozarks-born husband and her three children one year ago. A native of the Philippines, she has worked as an emergency physician at Springfield Community Hospital since March.

Redmon said she's amazed at the size of Springfield's medical community and its competitiveness.

"This is such a big medical community for a town this size," she said. "I just wonder how all the doctors are doing. But I don't see anyone going hungry."

"And it's competitive but competitive in the wrong way," she said. "I think it does benefit the public if the room rates are lowered, but you have a duplication of services, and you have to pay for it. Who's going to pay for a 500-bed hospital?"

Redmon said hospitals all over the country have become businesses instead of merely lifesaving institutions.

"They have to be. You can't run a hospital and not look at the bottom line," she said. "The notion that a hospital is not for profit can't really be true. I think people can see through that.

"Also, I think it becomes an ego thing," she said. "If you have a hospital named after you, you want

people to think you have a nice hospital."

**A**s a female physician, Redmon said she has been the target of and seen prejudice against her female colleagues. She said she speaks less from personal experience and more in the role of an observer.

"It's (medicine) been a traditionally male-dominated field, but I think that's changing all the time. Forty percent of graduating medical students now are female," she said. "In my specialty, emergency medicine, where people can see you in action, it's easier to earn their respect, perhaps. You just have to handle it like you do everything else in life — be open, objective and work with the system. Don't act like you're better than you are.

"Also, I guess I'm older and I'm used to it. I've gone through the fire already, I guess," she said.

**R**edmon received her medical degree from the Medical University of the Philippines and trained in internal medicine at the University of Hawaii medical residency program in Honolulu. It was there that she met her husband, Howard Redmon.

"We married late, and I think that's good," she said. "That way, you have your education and your career, you've paid off the car, and there's less to fight about."

She and her husband have been married almost 11 years.

"I like him even better now. You get used to each other," she said. "I think I got more than what I bargained for. He's a very nice man. To top it all off, I've got very nice in-laws. I really can't complain. I've had a good life."

Part of that good life was fulfilling a longtime dream last summer. While her husband took care of their three children, Mara, 9, Shana, 8, and Philip, 6, Redmon went on a two-month backpacking trip through Japan by herself.

"It's a very safe country — clean, no muggers, no pickpockets. Never once did I fear anything," she said. "Travel helps you to be tolerant of different ideas and more understanding of why things are done differently.

"When you're young, you should do it," she said. "Dare to be something. It's an experience no one can take from you."

**R**edmon has dared to be different and dared to risk. Part of that was leaving her native country to come to the United States in 1970.

"I've been here 15 years. I can't believe it. I've grown old here," she said.

But for all her daring and love of adventure, Redmon had a prerequisite before settling in the Ozarks.

"I love Chinese food," she said. "I told my husband I wouldn't live anywhere that they didn't have a good Chinese restaurant."