

## Southwest Medical Center Bond Vote Tuesday March 2.

Local access to modern quality health care for Seward County and the surrounding area residents has always been a priority as evidenced by the support and success of the Southwest Medical Center throughout the decades. It must continue to be a priority for the health and future of our County and area. In addition to providing vital services, Southwest Medical Center is one of our area's largest employers with approximately 435 employees and an annual payroll of \$17.4 million. As economists estimate that payroll dollars are circulated in a community by seven to eight times, the economic impact of the Medical Center is estimated at more than \$130 million annually. Equally as important, the hospital and emergency care availability as well as skilled long term care, home health and a variety of other wellness services are crucial parts of our quality of life in Seward County.

The Medical Center has an dedicated staff including 30 doctors that provide outstanding quality of care services to patients and residents with an emphasis on complete care. Southwest Medical Center offers a wide range of services including 24-hour a day, seven days a week nursing services, acute and emergency care, out-patient services, surgery, physical, occupational, and speech therapy, diagnostic and lab services and a variety of other specialized medical services. Modern healthcare is both essential to the welfare of our residents and area communities, but also the retention and attraction of new businesses and residents to the area.

Southwest Medical Center opened in 1964-more than 45 years ago. The community has grown dramatically in the last five decades and the need for medical services also has grown. Changes in the way medical care is provided as well as regulations require an investment to continue to provide an environment of healing and to meet today's code requirements. Improvements and upgrades of existing spaces as well as additional space for the recruitment of doctors and staff are also priorities.

After much time, study and thought, the Board of County Commissioners, at the request of the Medical Center Board, approved a resolution calling a special election requesting the authority to issue general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed \$17 million to provide the financing for the majority of the proposed improvements. A part of the overall plan is a Medical Office Building that will be funded with existing hospital resources and not from the proposed bond issue.