

# TRA *Imaging News*

PRINTED FOR THE REFERRING PROVIDERS OF TRA MEDICAL IMAGING CENTERS

## GIG HARBOR OFFICE NOW OPEN



*Erik A. Elam, MD*

*Medical Director, TRA - Gig Harbor*

Gig Harbor is a fast growing community attracting many new medical services. Amongst the

most recent announcements is the approval of St. Anthony's Hospital. Several months ago, TRA announced its intentions to open an imaging facility in the medical building located at 4700 Point Fosdick Drive. This new medical imaging facility is now a reality, having officially opened the week of May 9<sup>th</sup>.

TRA Medical Imaging - Gig Harbor offers two modalities which were previously unavailable in the area, namely multi-slice CT and high field, short bore MRI.

Multi-slice CT refers to the technology allowing multiple transverse images to be acquired by the scanner during one rotation of the x-ray tube around the patient. Not only can multiple slices be obtained, these slices are very thin. Thin slice imaging allows TRA's staff to acquire volumes of anatomic information very quickly and with improved detail. This volumetric approach to imaging the human body permits new technologic approaches to emerge. For example, while formerly non-invasive cerebral angiography was performed with MRI, CT brain angiography is now becoming the method of choice. Similarly, conventional angiography was formerly the method of choice to assess pulmonary arteries for pulmonary emboli; now CT is used. Advances in CT technology have allowed many innovations, including our ability to image patients with kidney

stones in one minute or less with no intravenous contrast, compared to several hours when intravenous pyelography was performed. We will continue to see new applications develop in this revolutionary area of radiology.

**Erik Elam, M.D.**

**MRI technology continues to evolve.**

**Our new Gig Harbor MRI is a perfect example**

MRI technology also continues to evolve. Our new Gig Harbor MRI is a perfect example. 'High field' refers to the magnetic field strength, which in this case is strong enough to acquire very thin sections through the body (including 3D imaging) in any plane desired. (cont'd p.2)

## FOCUS ON:

**Frank Wessbecher, MD**



Dr. Wessbecher is the newly appointed medical director of TRA Medical Imaging—Tacoma. He attended medical school at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore and completed his internship at Overlook Hospital in Summit, New Jersey. Dr. Wessbecher's residency took place at Yale-New Haven Hospital in New Haven, Connecticut and his fellowship in neuroradiology was completed at the University of Washington in Seattle. He is board certified in radiology, as well as neuroradiology.



With high field, undesirable sources of tissue signal, such as from fat, can be easily suppressed. 'Short bore' refers to the length of the magnet. New manufacturing techniques allow high field magnets to be shorter and wider than traditional magnets, in turn decreasing the incidence of claustrophobia and permitting very high image quality.

An additional technology implemented in Gig Harbor is PACS (picture archiving and communications system).

This technology allows 21<sup>st</sup> century radiologists to read digital studies, including MRI and CT, on sophisticated, interactive computer workstations instead of on one-dimensional film. TRA has installed PACS system wide, linking our outpatient offices and the hospitals TRA serves. This

greatly facilitates consultation on difficult cases with colleagues and permits more efficient comparison to old exams, all while promoting a filmless and paperless environment.

TRA Medical Imaging - Gig Harbor is a

sophisticated imaging facility and we anticipate that it will provide exceptional radiological service to Gig Harbor and its surrounding communities.



## TRA NEWS

*TRA Imaging News is produced bi-monthly for referring providers of TRA- Medical Imaging. It is designed to aid in the understanding of TRA and its services. If you have any questions, please contact the following:*

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