

# A healthy dose of writing

By Bob Holliday

Monday, March 20, 2006

BLOOMINGTON - Dr. Nick Vlachos can't ignore the creative side of his brain. As an occupational and urgent care physician, Vlachos is scientific. As a playwright, he's creative.

"Medicine is No. 1 with me, but writing isn't a hobby. I take it seriously," he said.

Take, for example, "The Bed." Earlier this year, the Bloomington resident's play had a successful month long run with a small theater company in California.

Vlachos, however, isn't resting on his laurels. He continues to make revisions and hopes to have the play performed elsewhere, including Bloomington-Normal.

The full-length play, which Vlachos began writing four years ago, has only two characters. As the name implies, it's set in a bedroom. It's the tale of newlyweds, the husband a struggling painter and the wife a registered nurse. Set in New York, the play takes the couple through their married life from wedding to death. There's affectionate banter and bitter arguments.

It's among about a half-dozen plays Vlachos, who studied drama while attending college in Idaho, has written. Seeing one of his plays performed is special for the Chicago native, who also collects art.

"One of the greatest highs is giving birth to a story and watching people perform it," he said.

"The Bed," which also has been performed in Decatur, has been honored by the American Theatre Co-op, among other organizations. Vlachos hopes to adapt the work for a novel.

Vlachos, former medical director at Mitsubishi Motors North America and St. Joseph Occupational Health Center, Bloomington, now works as an occupational and urgent care physician at SafeWorks Illinois, an occupational clinic on the campus of St. Mary's Hospital, Decatur.

Vlachos, who attended medical school in Greece and Peoria, gives a nod to his Greek heritage with his pen name: Nikos Vlachos.

