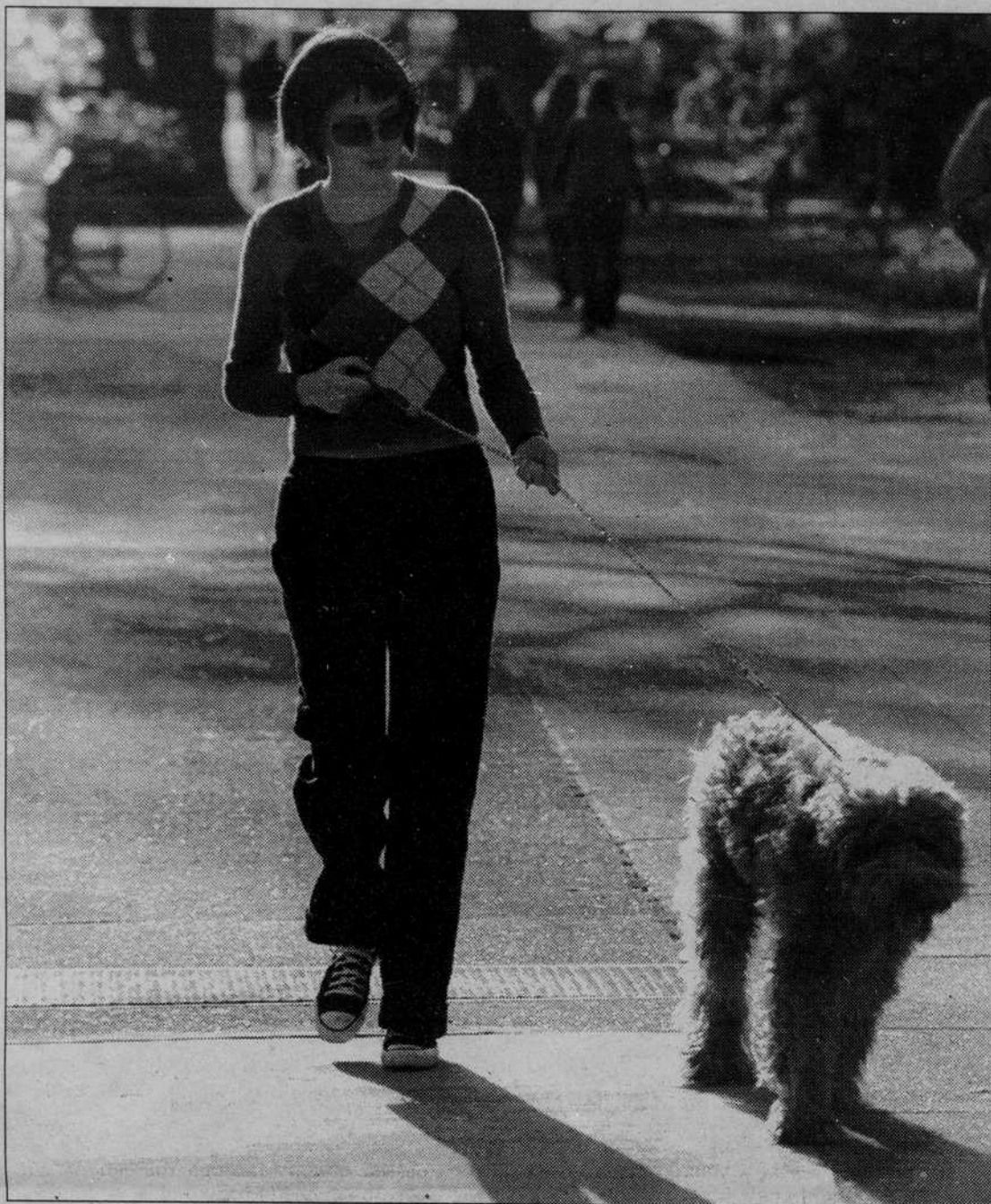


A day in the sun



Morgan Hertrup and her dog enjoy an afternoon walk on campus last Thursday. It was one of the sunniest days of spring break. R. Ashley Smith Emerald

Health officials keep eye on TB outbreak

EUGENE — Roughly three dozen clients and staff members at a Eugene homeless shelter have tested positive for tuberculosis, health officials said.

It's not yet known how many at the Eugene Mission are infectious or are likely to get sick, said Sandy Mowrer, clinic services supervisor at Lane County Public Health.

Public health officials routinely administer TB skin tests on mission staff and clients. In the past two months, they've seen an unusually high number of positive skin tests.

"It is a big concern," Mowrer said Friday. "We have the potential of a problem, and we need to move in and act immediately."

One man had a confirmed infectious case of TB and was isolated, she said. He's no longer infectious and is back at the mission, taking medication.

A positive test indicates TB germs are in the body, but doesn't necessarily mean the person is infectious. Anyone who tested positive is getting a chest X-ray and

having their medical history taken to determine their vulnerability.

People whose X-rays look fine and have no sign of active disease will be placed on preventive drug therapy that dramatically reduces the possibility they'll develop the disease. The therapy requires 60 doses over 60 days, which will be administered at the mission by public health officials.

Public health officials won't know the severity of the outbreak for at least two weeks, the time it takes for laboratory tests to come back.

Rick Ausmus, chaplain of the mission, wouldn't comment on the situation and referred inquiries to public health officials.

There's a higher incidence of TB in the homeless population and in crowded populations, such as at jails and prisons.

Homeless people are susceptible because their immune systems are often weakened by drugs, alcohol, poor nutrition and inadequate rest.

Associated Press

Church to fund education

By Christy Karras

The Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on Saturday announced a program to fund college educations for underprivileged members from around the world.

The fund will mainly assist church missionaries from areas such as Asia, Africa, Mexico, Central America, South America and the Philippines, "who often return to a life of poverty after Church service, lacking the resources to pay for an education," a church press release said.

Mormon men typically leave home at age 19 to serve two-year missions for the church. Women go on 18-month missions.

Assistance will come in the form of low-interest loans, payable after the recipient has finished college.

"Where there is widespread poverty among our people, we must do all we can to help them lift themselves, to establish their lives upon a foundation of self-reliance that can come of training," church president Gordon B. Hinckley said.

"Education is the key to opportunity. This training must be done

in the areas where they live. It will then be suited to the opportunities of those areas," Hinckley said.

The program, funded by contributions from Church members, will be directed through the church's existing infrastructure using its Institute program, which already oversees religious education for members worldwide.

Institute program directors will accept applications and make recommendations for loans. Funds will be issued from church headquarters in Salt Lake City to the institution where the recipient will receive his or her education.

Though the program will start small, Hinckley said, "We can envision the time when this program will benefit a very substantial number."

Hinckley compared the fund to the Perpetual Immigration Fund of the 19th century, when members donated money to help others immigrate to the United States in the church's early years.

"This is not a dream. We have the resources. We have generous friends. We have the organization. We have the manpower and dedicated servants of the Lord to make it succeed," he said.

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