

# HEALTH

## Mississippi Jury Awards \$3.5 Million For Death Of Baby



Shown from left are Michael Williams, Tylvester O. Goss, Cassandra Rhone, F. Shields McManus, Willie E. Gary and Greg Davis after Rhone was awarded \$3.5 million for the death of her baby in a Mississippi hospital.

Meridian, MS. On Thursday February 2, a Lauderdale County Jury awarded \$3.5 Million to the young mother of a healthy two day old baby girl who died as a result of choking on her own vomit in a hospital nursery three years ago. According to the Clerk of Court, this is the largest verdict ever rendered for injury or death in Lauderdale County.

The suit was brought by the mother, Cassandra Rhone, 21, against

Jeff Anderson Regional Medical Center for failure of the nursery staff to observe the baby in the early morning. The medical center maintained that its nurses were doing their duties in the proper manner and that the baby died of sudden infant death syndrome which could not be anticipated nor prevented by the nurses.

The mother was represented by nationally-known trial attorney Willie E. Gary and his partner Shield

McManus, of the Stuart, Florida firm of Gary, Williams, Partenti, Finney, Lewis & McManus and by Tylvester Goss and Gregory Davis, of the Jackson, MS, law firm of Davis, Goss & Williams. Afterwards, Willie Gary indicated the verdict was significant for more than the litigants. Mr. Gary said: "this jury showed that the people of Meridian, Mississippi believe in justice for all, even for those of humble beginnings."

## Record Number Of Children Die From Abuse/Neglect In 1994

Kay Toran, Children's Services Division Administrator, released data on child abuse fatalities for 1994 at a Salem news conference Tuesday, March 7, 1995. "Thirty three Oregon children died by abuse or neglect last year," said Toran. "This is the highest number since CSD started tracking abuse deaths 10 years ago." In 1993, there were 11 fatalities. The second highest number was in 1992 when there were 32 deaths.

Toran released the following information:

- For the first time there were more fatalities due to neglect rather than physical abuse.
- More than one-third of the deaths involved children under the age of one.
- Twenty seven of the 33 fatalities were children under five years of

age. Under the "Neglect" category, the leading causes of death were drowning and lack of supervision.

Under the "Abuse" category, the leading causes of death were battering and maltreatment.

Also at Tuesday's news conference, Representative John Minnis (R) released an update on the first ever study of child deaths in Oregon. The comprehensive study, conducted by the Child Welfare Partnership at Portland State University looked at 1,800 child deaths between 1990-1993. The cases were varied and categories include, suicides, motor vehicle accidents, maltreatment, violent deaths, illness, and S.I.D.S.

The results of the study will be used by the "Child Fatality Initiative" which was established in Au-

gust 1994 by Rep. John Minnis and organizations that respond to child injuries. "The goals of the Initiative is to look for an aggressive approach to understanding and ultimately, targeting efforts and resources to prevent these deaths and injuries to children," says Rep. Minnis.

Legislation, House Bill 2592, was introduced in Salem to address recommendations from the Initiative.

For more information on the Initiative or the study contact the following:

- Rep. John Minnis (R-Wood Village), 986-1420
- Ben de Haan, Child Welfare Partnership (conducted study), 725-8013
- Connie Gallagher, Children's Services Division, 945.5687.

## Foundation For The Prevention Of Child Abuse

Child abuse prevention was adopted as a National Exchange Club project in 1979. Subsequently, Exchange established the National Exchange Club Foundation for the prevention of Child Abuse.

The Foundation currently coordinates a nationwide network of 72 Exchange Club Child Abuse Prevention Centers, with 15 prospective sites in various stages of development.

More than 70 percent of some 1,100 Exchange Clubs throughout the nation are actively involved in and support programs dealing with child abuse prevention.

To date, more than 35,000 families and 70,000 children have been helped by the Exchange Club Child Abuse Prevention network.

The focus of the Foundation

and Centers is the Volunteer Parent Aide Program. Volunteer parent aides are professionally trained individuals who enter the homes and lives of families at risk of abuse, or where abuse has occurred. The supportive relationship that develops between the volunteer parent aide and the family breaks the cycle of abuse.

Volunteer parent aides are recruited, trained and supervised by Exchange Club Center staff. Supervision includes individual conferences and monthly group meetings. Parent aides go through intensive training provided by the technical service staff of the National Exchange Club Foundation for the Prevention of Child Abuse.

In 1993, more than 2,500 volunteers--including more than 1,150 parent aides--gave their time to Ex-

change Club Centers.

The Foundation is endorsed by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and was a winner of the 1988 presidential Award from The White House Office of private Sector Initiatives. The award recognizes exemplary community outreach and volunteer service projects sponsored by businesses, trade associations, professional societies and other private organizations.

The Foundation is striving to become the national leader in the Parent Aide Program and preventing child abuse.

George J. Mezinko, Executive Director, The National Exchange Club Foundation for the Prevention of Child Abuse (419) 535-3232 or 800/760-3413.

## Affordable Therapy For Personal Issues

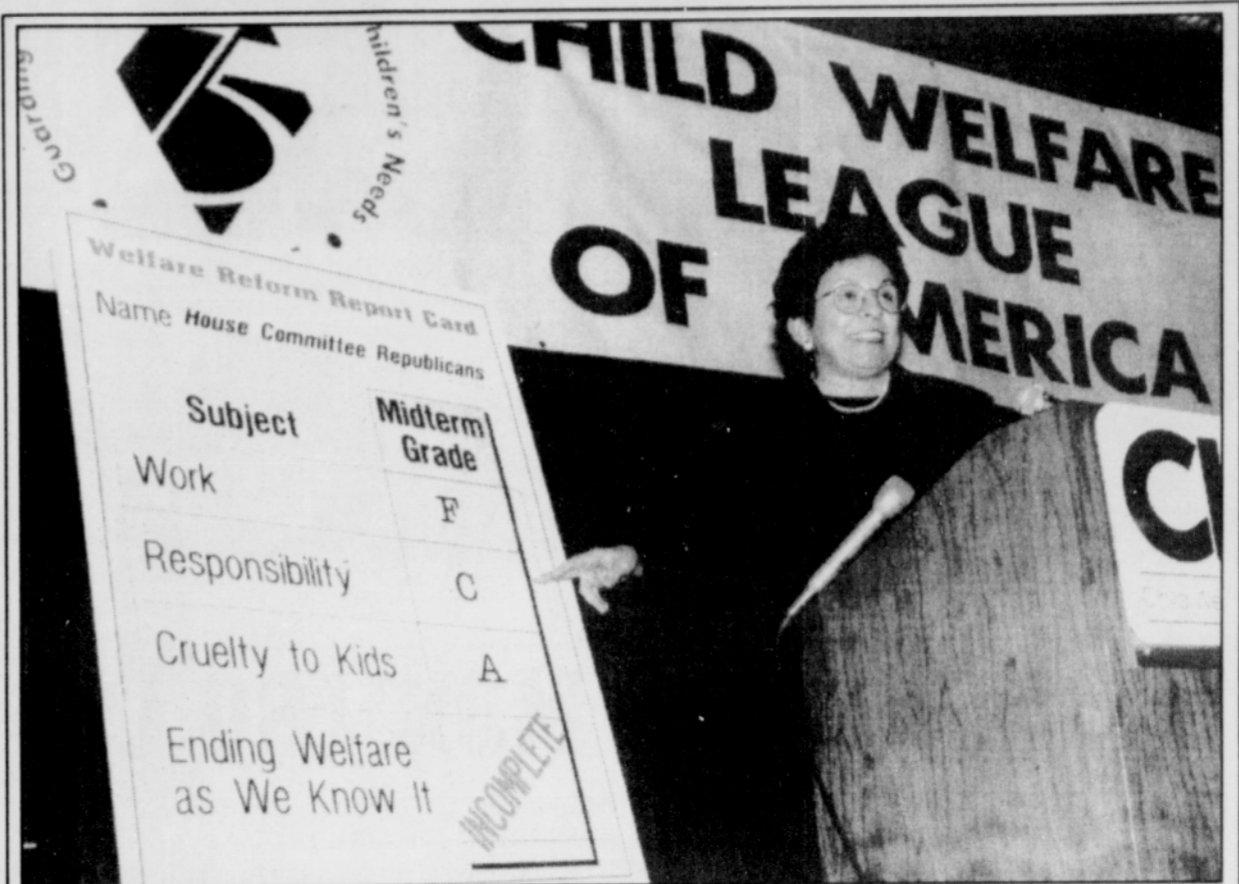
Appointments are being made for individuals of all ages, who are interested in affordable therapy for a wide range of personal issues. Individual, family, child, and group therapy are available with reduced fees through the Pacific University Psychological Service Center, 511 SW 10th Ave., Suite 400 near the MAX terminal in downtown Portland.

Six evening groups are now be-

ing scheduled. Issues to be addressed include women's mid-life transitions, the changing role for men in the family and in the work place, the problems of starting over for recovering alcoholics and substance abusers, bulimia and compulsive eating, and problems in interpersonal relationships and living. Also beginning is a personal, professional, and spiritual growth group for clergy and lay

church leaders.

Therapists and group facilitators are advanced students enrolled in Pacific University's doctoral psychology program, who receive intensive supervision from Licensed Clinical Psychologists. Fees are based upon income. For more information, please call the Psychological Service Center at 220-0390.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Donna E. Shalala

## Report Card Day: Shalala Flunks House Republicans

Stating that true welfare reform must reinforce the core values of work, responsibility, and reaching the next generation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Donna E. Shalala graded the House Republicans' welfare reform proposal and gave them failing grades. Shalala, speaking before the Child Welfare League of America in Washington, D.C., demonstrated a blown-up report card and read off the inconsistencies within the Republican's proposal.

"Proposals that are weak on work and cruel to kids are not real reform," said Shalala. "What's worse, they totally leave out common sense measures that enable people to move into good jobs. We need to ask them: Where is the child care? Where is the education? Where is the job training?"

On promoting work, Shalala gave the Republicans an "F" for not balancing the tough expectations that

are needed to move people from welfare to work with clear pathways of opportunity. According to their plan, Republicans consider cutting people off from welfare the same as offering them work-related activities.

As for responsibility, the Republican's proposal received a "C," although Republicans keep promising to include tough child support provisions in their proposal, they still haven't done it. "I am hopeful that the House Republicans will turn in their child support plans late," said Shalala, "and raise their grade."

Ironically, the only outstanding grade issued was for "cruelty to kids." The Republican proposal received an "A" on this subject.

"Every time I hear a plan to take food out of the mouths of children or a plan to punish children for their parents' past mistakes, I am reminded of the movie: "Dumb and Dumber," said Shalala. "We all know that

welfare reform must be about strengthening families--not tearing them apart or writing them off. Our goal must be to lift people up, not punish them because they happen to be poor or young. We need to be tough -- not cruel."

In the last subject, Ending Welfare as We Know It, the House Republicans received an "Incomplete" for not having a clear vision nor showing a true commitment. Regardless of changes that have been made in their proposal, such as the elimination of the word, "orphanages," House Republicans have not shown enough willingness to work together for common-sense solutions.

"Through it all," ended Shalala, "we need you to continue to stand up for our children. Because as you know, children don't have lobbyists. They're not a special interest group. They don't buy T.V. time or host radio talk shows. And, they can't vote."

## Legacy Announces New Incentive Program

Legacy Health System announced a new employee incentive program for its 5,000-plus employees this week. The Legacy Goal share program will reward employees for achieving goals in three target areas: patient outcomes (clinic quality), patient satisfaction and financial performance. Results will be measured quarterly and when the goals are met, employees will receive a financial reward. The program will begin April 1, 1995.

"We are proud to reward legacy employees whose hard work and commitment enable us to continue to

streamline and integrate programs," says Legacy Health System president and CEO, John G. King. He adds, "As partners, management and staff have survived some tough times as we have worked to bring down utilization and costs."

Hospital utilization in the Portland market is the lowest in the country. Legacy, while maintaining high clinical quality and patient satisfaction standards, has reduced costs to its 1991 level and has kept retail prices constant for three years.

"We want Legacy to be a great

place to work, even in the face of a relentless healthcare market place," King says. "By rewarding employees, we can all share in the success of the organization," he adds.

King also notes that the Coal Share program is based upon system-wide performance; financial rewards are gained by each employee only when the whole organization meets each of the target goals.

"This is a way of thanking Legacy employees while at the same time encouraging them to keep up the great work," says King.

### AIDS Council Alarmed

Minorities continue to be disproportionately affected by the AIDS epidemic with African Americans representing 39 percent and Hispanics 19 percent of all AIDS cases. The National Minority AIDS Council has indicated its alarm at the figures by the Center For Disease Control. While the findings show increases in AIDS in women and minority populations, the percentage of cases among gay and bisexual men has begun to drop.

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### A Gift of Giving

Camp Fire is now recruiting volunteers to teach community problem solving to elementary school children. Help students develop a sense of caring about their community and participate in service projects. Training and structured curriculum is provided for the five 60-minute sessions. Please call Nancy Warnock by April 3rd about "A Gift of Giving", 224-7800.

### Full Service Salon

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