

Elderly Pensioner New Inhabitant of Chicago's Skid Row

Chicago — (UPI) — Along Chicago's Skid Row, along the stretch of the 25-cent-a-night cubicle hotels with their chicken wire partitions, along the cheap wine stores and the cluttered gutters, there is a new breed of inhabitant today — the elderly pensioner.

Their entire lives revolve around the stark reality of getting from place to place without being jackrolled for pocket change.

"It is a tragedy of modern times," said Frank Stillwell, chief of special services for the Salvation Army's Skid Row-based Harbor Light Mission.

"Some of these men looked forward all their lives to old age and retirement," Stillwell said. "Now, forced to live on pensions in an inflated economy, this is all they can afford."

1,100 Counted
A soon-to-be-released extensive study by a University of Chicago sociological team counts 1,100 elderly pensioners among Skid Row's 12,000 inhabitants.

Salvation Army Maj. Roland Quinn, head of Harbor Light, said the pensioners total closer to 2,500.

What is more, both Quinn and the sociologists insist, no more than a handful of the elderly are alcoholics.

"Their only weakness is age," Quinn said. "Their problem is almost purely economic."

Men Living in Extreme Heat Need More Food

Washington (Science Service) — Men need more food when they live in extreme heat than when they live in moderate temperatures, an Army study at Yuma, Ariz., has shown. The study upsets older theories that men's caloric requirements are higher in cool weather.

Personnel of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Nutrition Laboratory at Fitzsimons General Hospital in Denver made the studies with eight conscientious objectives who volunteered as test subjects. **Worked in Hot Sun**

In one ten-day experimental period, the men worked and ate in the hot sun, at 105 degrees Fahrenheit. In a second period they worked and ate in hot shade, 104 degrees. In a third, they were in an air-conditioned room, 78 degrees.

The men could eat all they wanted at all times. Food intake per man per day was 400 calories higher in the hot sun and hot shade than in the cool room. The men gained weight slightly in the heat because of a gain in the fluid held in their bodies. But this fluid exceeded the total weight gain so that the men actually lost body tissue during the hot periods, presumably to satisfy the energy requirements of their bodies.

Action of Blood
The researchers say that in all likelihood the increased requirements resulted from a combination of increased action of the blood in heat transport, increased action of the sweat glands, increased caloric loss because of sweat vaporization and increased metabolism because of the elevation in body temperatures.

The study was reported at the Fifth International Congress on Nutrition here by C. Frank Consolazio, chief of the bioenergetics division of the laboratory. Working in association with Consolazio were Ralph Shapiro, John E. Masterson and Philip S. L. McKinzie.

Higher Prices for Winter Fruit Seen

Corvallis — (UPI) — Smaller supplies and higher prices are forecast for fall and winter fresh fruit, especially apples and pears, according to Stephen C. Marks, Oregon State college extension agricultural economist.

Estimates put the national 1966 apple crop at 109 million bushels, the smallest crop since 1956. Oregon and Washington expect a crop of about the same size as last year, but eastern states are likely to run 15 per cent below 1959, Marks said.

Pear production throughout the United States is estimated about 13 per cent below 1959 and the 10-year average, Marks said. Oregon, one of the nation's major pear states, is likely to harvest 15 per cent fewer pears than last year.

Northwest growers are getting \$25 a ton more for No. 1 canning pears than last year.

ic and their only real vice is that they want to live."

At precisely 1:30 each Thursday afternoon, 100-plus of the elderly file into the Harbor Light auditorium — a freshly painted pink room with a large piano — and sing their theme: "Battle Hymn of the Republic."

Quinn calls the group his "Golden Agers," and it guarantees the elderly at least an hour's shelter each week.

Last week there also was a movie. It was in Japanese.

"We got it as a donation," Quinn apologized.

After the meeting there was the usual meal of beans and bread, sweet rolls and coffee.

"We always put out a lot of bread," Quinn said. "We encourage the men to put a few extra slices in their pockets for 'later on.'"

Running Account

The four-drawer green filing cabinet in Stillwell's office holds the running account of Harbor Light's attempts to secure missing pensions and social security for Skid Row's elderly.

There is, for instance, the retired inventor they call Charlie, who was 71 and living off the bread for "later on" before he summoned enough nerve to request help in seeking social security.

Then, too, there's the neat little man known as Mr. Brown. Bored to the point of a mental breakdown by the blankness of Skid Row existence and having no means to live anywhere else, he eventually drifted into Harbor Light. Now he has taken up chess with 12-hour-a-day intensiveness.

"But we don't have facilities to handle more than one like that," Quinn said. "This is a center for rehabilitating alcoholics. We have no provisions for the elderly."

Across the street there is the Harbor Light Clubhouse, with the sandwich bar and the pool tables and the television set. It is warm and pleasant and the jackrollers are kept out.

So, however, are the elderly. Only men taking Harbor Light's "program" of alcoholic rehabilitation are allowed in the clubhouse.

"There just isn't enough room for everyone," Stillwell said. "What the elderly need so much is a club room. But who is to put it up?"

Sam Higgins, 72, managed to get a room around the corner. "I used to be a carpenter," he smiled, toothlessly. "A good one too, you bet. Now I get \$80-a-month pension. I pay \$22 for rent and the rest goes in for food."

"I get the pension check on the third of each month. You've got to watch your step, though. I don't go out much because it's pretty tough out."

Very Independent
The sociologists discovered that the pensioners were "very independent" about their meal arrangements and most paid cash on a meal-for-meal basis rather than monthly board.

"It's better that way," Higgins said. "Sometimes you ain't feeling so well for a day, so why eat? If you pay by the month, though, you don't save nothing by not eating."

Near the stand-up height dining tables in the Harbor Light basement, after the meal of the beans and bread and sweet rolls and coffee, a stooped man who said he was 71 came up to Stillwell.

"I've been having spots in front of my eyes," he said, meekly. "Is there anything to eliminate this?"

Stillwell recommended a nearby charity eye clinic. "Thank you," the man said. "That may help. You see, I've been taking up learning how to read Spanish and the spots are a bit of trouble."

Household Brushes May Lighten Chores

Chicago — Put regular household brushes to off-beat use to lighten chores.

A brush manufacturer suggests that a vegetable scrubber with an angled head is excellent for keeping white-wall tires clean. A long-handled tub brush does a quick and easy job of brushing out the car.

The tiny nylon brushes for buttering sweet corn can be used by the household handyman to clean small power tool and appliance parts, or apply solder flux. Hobbyists like them for applying glue and cement and they also are good for cleaning jewelry, or applying shoe polish in hard-to-reach areas.

The pastry brush can keep the toaster free of crumbs, and the percolator brush does a good job of cleaning narrow-necked vases and tea or coffee pot spouts. ☉



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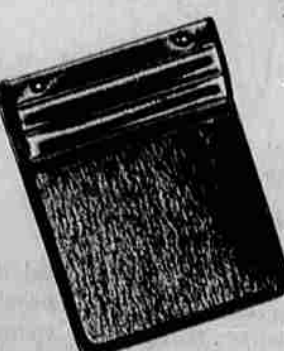
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