

The Medical Roundup

by *Walter Alvarez*

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PAIN IN CHEST

A pain in the chest sends many a person in his twenties or thirties to a physician because he greatly fears a coronary heart disease. Usually, men of this age can be reassured in a minute, because of their youth; women can be reassured because of their youth and also because of their sex: coronary heart disease, which is due to a narrowing of one of the arteries of the heart, comes in men usually AFTER the age of 40, and in women after the age of 50 or 60.

In thousands of cases, the fact that the pain which the person complains of is never brought on by exercise or anger is enough to show that it does not arise in the heart. Many persons with chest pain due to anxiety go in daily fear of heart disease. Often this great fear took hold of them when a couple of relatives or friends suddenly died of a coronary attack. Many a woman with fear of heart disease keeps going into spells of "air hunger," in which she will run to a window "to get more air."

This symptom is always due to nervousness, and it should be treated only with reassurance. To give drugs for it is to do harm. Missing heart-beats and palpitation also are almost always harmless. Many persons suffer from them for 40 years, or until they die of old age.

Anyone who can walk rapidly along the street or can run up stairs or can play tennis comfortably has a good heart.

What, then, can be causing a pain in the chest? Often, the pain is in the chest wall. It may be in the muscle between two ribs, or in the gristle between the ends of the ribs and the breast bone, or in a nerve that runs under one of the ribs, or in the joint between the lower end of the breast-bone and the little end-piece of cartilage (gristle). It can be due to an arthritis in the little joints that are located at the end of a tenth rib in front.

On rare occasions, if the chest pain comes with a deep breath, it is due to a slight pleurisy (inflammation of the lining of the lung or the chest cavity).

Soreness in Muscles
Every so often when I examine the chest wall of a man or a woman who is frightened about a "heart pain," I find a soreness in the muscles that move the right arm. When I ask, "What unusual work did you do yesterday?" the person says, "I put up curtains," or "I painted the pantry shelves," or "I painted the kitchen," or "I played my first game of tennis this spring," and that explains the pain. It is like a "charley horse" in the leg.

Rarely, a severe pain of short duration is due to a cramp in a section of the muscle between two ribs.

A burning pain can be that of "heartburn." This is due to the regurgitation of acid gastric juice into a gullet which, in some unknown way, has become irritable. Heartburn can be due to loss of temper, to eating radishes or onions or to smoking too much. It can be relieved best by sipping a half-glass of water in which a half-teaspoonful of baking soda has been dissolved. Taking an antacid tablet cannot work so well.

Pain in the chest is sometimes due to a nervous spasm in the gullet, or in the "cardia," the valve located where the gullet enters the stomach; it may be due to the pinching of a bit of stomach in the hole in the midriff through which the gullet goes—a "hiatus hernia." I rarely see anyone with a hiatus hernia that produces enough symptoms to warrant an operation.

A pain in the right side of the chest under the shoulder blade can be arising in a diseased gallbladder, and a similar pain in the left side of the chest can be due to disease in the pancreas—the digestive gland that lies back of the stomach.

Medford Man Elected Secretary of Group

James Sheldon, Medford, was elected secretary of the Oregon Collectors Association at the annual convention of the group held in Portland. Highlight of the convention was the presentation of scholarships to three finalists in the state-wide essay contest for high school seniors on "The Proper Use of Credit." Elected president of the association was Ray Roach, North Bend.

Shady Cove VFW Elects Officers

Shady Cove—Jobie Bryn was elected commander of Steelhead post, Veterans of Foreign Wars, at a meeting April 19.

Others elected were Mel Gibson, senior vice commander; Clifford Shelby, junior vice commander; Reed McKay, quartermaster; Clarence Meyer, post advocate; Samuel Apling, chaplain; John Holgate, surgeon; and Kenneth Clair, trustee for three years.

Officers who have been appointed so far include Robert Hammons, adjutant; John Wilson, officer of the day, and Harry Birch, service officer.

Visitors at the meeting were George Connell, Rogue River, district commander; Jim William, commander-elect, Fred Kerby and John Jenkins, Ashland post, and Frank Otley, commander, Ed Smith and John Loomer, Medford.

Refreshments were served by members of the auxiliary.

THANKS FOR PUBLICITY

New Boston, Mass. — UPI-The Board of Selection of this Berkshire Hills hamlet (population 150) passed a resolution Monday formally thanking the officials and residents of Boston, the state's capital and largest city. Taking note of Boston's designation as an "all-American" city this year and the promotional campaign featuring the slogan "The New Boston," the selectmen's resolution thanked Boston for all the free publicity.

American Negroes Campaign For More Foreign Aid for Africa

BY LYLE C. WILSON
UPI Correspondent

It is bad news for the taxpayer that President Kennedy encouraged organized American Negroes to make political medicine in behalf of more foreign aid spending in Africa. It is bad news because organized American Negroes comprise a formidable political pressure group. If they demand that Congress and the Kennedy Administration increase foreign aid spending in Africa, Congress and the Kennedy Administration are likely to increase it.



A fortnight ago in New York, the committee decided to establish a permanent link between the American Negro leadership and the new African nations. At this meeting, American Negro leaders criticized the recent Clay Committee report on foreign aid and the administration's proposed reductions.

Pearson To Acquire Nuclear Warheads

Ottawa—UPI—Liberal leader Lester B. Pearson Monday became Canada's 14th prime minister and immediately said he would acquire nuclear warheads for the nation's armed forces. He pledged the "friendliest possible" relations with the United States.

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Miss Stacey Named Teaching Assistant

Pamela Stacey, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Stacey of Harbrooke rd., Medford, has accepted a position as graduate teaching assistant at the University of Illinois, where she will work for her master's degree in French.

Miss Stacey will graduate from the University of Oregon in June. During her university career she spent a year in Paris, studying at the Sorbonne and the Institute of European study. She is a graduate of Medford High school.

4-H Club News

Westside Club

The last meeting of the Westside Home Improvement 4-H club was held at the home of Corine Florey April 15 after school.

The treasurer's report showed that the club made \$9 at the recent cake sale. Plans for entertaining the dads at supper were discussed.

All members participated in judging of table settings. Refreshments were served by Corine Florey.

Sandra Mayfield, Reporter

Nutty Nittin Needles

Sandra Mayfield was hostess to the recent meeting of the Nutty Nittin Needles 4-H club. Corine Florey, president, presided and members answered roll call by telling of a funny experience. Plans for presenting a skit at the Veterans Administration domiciliary were discussed.

A new reporter was elected to replace the member who dropped out of the club. The next meeting will be held April 23 at the home of Rita Ford.

Sandra Mayfield, Reporter

African Aid Proposals

The committee noted that U.S. aid programs in the African area uniformly tended to increase. As an over-all policy guideline, the committee said this:

"In the light of its other responsibilities, the United States cannot undertake to support all of the African countries."

It proposed that U.S. aid to the Congo be limited to half of all aid extended by all of the other free world nations together.

The foregoing summarizes the Clay Committee's report

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Small Worlds Around Us

By LYNN M. WATKINS
(Register and Tribune Syndicate, 1963)



Men, Boys, Animals and Insects All 'Used' Bridge

The placement of the cross-over was sheer accident; the great tree had grown at the edge of the little, fast-moving stream. The water, made swift and strong by heavy rains, had washed the soil away from the roots, toppling the trunk athwart the little river. On the opposite bank, the farther end was securely wedged; the stream was bridged.

Some years ago men or boys with axes had hacked away the roots and branches from both ends; what remained was only the trunk. A log across a stream, a natural cross-over that had been there a long time, much longer than any of those now using it could remember, but over the years, countless feet had crossed it, sometimes maybe just to get to the other side.

During most of every year the little stream was deep and swift moving; the cross-over log, as it was referred to by those that knew of it, saved considerable distance for those who moved across the area; it was a short cut to the other side.

Ax Marks Helped
Some one, some time or other, had tried to flatten out the roundness of the upper part of the log. They had only partly succeeded, but the ax marks helped a little; afterwards, the trunk was a little less slippery. The bark had long since rotted away; the bare wood showed pasty-white and semi-smooth.

There was very good reason to use the cross-over when it was wet, for it was then, after heavy rains, that the stream ran bank-full, and noisily swift. Then, too, all of the boys in the vicinity scurried back and forth along the trunk displaying their sense of balance and sure-footedness.

Others besides boys, and men taking a shortcut to work, used the cross-over-log. Of all, the squirrels and raccoons accomplished it the easiest.

Lesser Beings Stayed
After the last human crossed over during daylight hours, the log became a highway for the wild creatures of the field and the forest; skunks, foxes and opossums made regular trips over and back. During the darkness of the nights the old log-bridge was their's alone, and they made the most of it.

Too, there were many lesser beings present that had no intention of crossing; they moved in to the log itself. Wood boring beetles, large and small, ants and termites, all labored constantly to tear apart or reduce the cross-over.

Sawdust from many of these tunnelers fell into the hurrying waters below and floated away to some unknown and distant lodging place.

Dry rot, mildew and other agencies of devastation worked at it; water deposited in cracks froze in winter cold and exerted forces little suspected by the scampering feet that traversed the length of the cross-over. By slow degrees, the old fibers of the dead wood snapped and broke; every insect chewed harder as if intent on hastening final collapse.

No one will ever know what human or animal was the very last to use the old "bridge" that spanned one night—broken in two. The next day's light revealed the damage; one section had been carried away by the stream, the other end slanted sharply downward from the bank, its end causing a constant swirl in the water. Gone was the cross-over, unknown the animal or the human that was the last one across.

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