

Heinz on aging

You and your medicines

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Following is the column on aging from senator John Heinz, (R-PA). The topic this week is "You and Your Medicines.")

Of the problems facing older Americans today, misuse and unintentional abuse of prescription and nonprescription drug ranks among the most prevalent - with often tragic results. Advances in modern drug therapy have saved countless lives. Drugs may contribute to increased longevity and, to some degree, to an improvement in the quality of life for millions of older Americans. Even such traditionally debilitating diseases as high blood pressure often can be controlled with drugs. Yet tragically, too many older persons suffer needlessly from improper use and abuse of these same drugs.

At a recent hearing of the Senate Special Committee on Aging, I learned that four major factors contribute to the problem of drug misuse.

- Age related changes in the body decrease an individual's tolerance of drugs and increase the likelihood of adverse reactions.

- Older people are more likely to take several drugs, often simultaneously and are thus more likely to experience adverse side effects and dangerous drug interactions.

- Medication often is taken improperly, either intentionally or unintentionally.

- Poor communication between the patient and the doctor and pharmacists is another major factor. The concept of a "health team," with patient and health professional working together, is not well-established in practice.

These factors were all too real in a survey conducted in two Pennsylvania counties, and reported to the Special Committee on Aging. Of the elderly

interviewed, 40 percent reported an "unexpected or bad" result from drugs they were taking, yet these persons had not discussed the problem with their doctor. Only 27 percent of the doctors interviewed in the survey felt they had sufficient training in geriatric medicine to recognize and treat drug effects in their older patients.

You know your body better than anyone else, what is normal and what is unusual. Both your doctor and your pharmacist depend on you for information about your health. Make sure you have a family doctor and a pharmacist with whom you feel comfortable, who knows your medical history, who you use fairly exclusively for your health care needs. Above all, don't be afraid to ask questions about the drugs you take. You should get the answers to these questions before you begin taking any medication.

- At what times should I take this drug?

- Should I avoid alcohol or certain foods while I am taking

this drug?

- Will it cause drowsiness or dizziness? What other side effects should I be aware of?

- Can I take this drug with other drugs (prescription and nonprescription) I am taking?

- Can this drug be purchased generically? Do you recommend generic substitution?

- Will you explain the label direction to me?

- How long will I take this drug? Should I have the prescription refilled?

Many conditions can be treated without drugs. Whenever your physician recommends medication, have him explain exactly how the drug will help you and if there are other alternatives.

The tragedy of drug-induced sickness among America's older population affects us all. Yet is a tragedy with a remedy. Your efforts as an informed consumer can make a big difference. Informed and conscientious use of prescription and nonprescription drugs is your best protection.



ROBERT RISMONDO AND SUZANNE HUDAK

Alex Rebar photo

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Wedding set

Mr. and Mrs. John J. Hudak, Lehman, are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter, Suzanne Jane, to Robert Peter Rismondo, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Louis Rismondo of Dallas.

Suzanne, a 1979 graduate of Lake-Lehman High School, received an Associate Degree in Animal Technology from Harcum Junior College. She is employed by E.R. Squibb and Sons in New Brunswick, New Jersey, as a chemical lab technician.

Robert, a 1976 graduate of Dallas High School, received an Associate Degree in Applied Sciences, majoring in Criminal Justice, from Luzerne County Community College. He is presently employed by Offset Paperback Inc.

A July 27 wedding is planned.

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Kentucky-bound

Shown here are some of the Misericordia students packing for their trip to Kentucky. From left, Maria Pallante, Penny Farrell, Kathy Donovan, Beth Cummings, Maureen Ashenbrenner, Jennifer Flora and Nancy Naughton.

College students in Kentucky

Volunteers help poor; learn much more than they teach

By ANN DEVLIN
Staff Correspondent

Many people envision college students spending their spring breaks either vacationing on the sunny beaches of Florida or relaxing comfortably in their homes.

Eleven area college women did something entirely different over their spring break, March 9-18, as they volunteered to work with the impoverished people of two western Kentucky communities, Morgantown and Elkton.

The group consisted of 10 Misericordia students and one King's College student. Volunteers from Misericordia were Jane Miller, Hanover, Pa.; Diane Danko, Bowie, Md.; Penny Farrell, Elmhurst, Pa.; Maria Pallante, Westville, N.J.; Nancy Naughton, Scranton, Pa.; Agnes Cesare, Moosic, Pa.; Maureen Ashenbrenner, La Plume, Pa.; Beth Cummings, Dunmore, Pa.; Kathy Donovan, Bethesda, Md.; and Jennifer Flora, Succasunna, N.J. A King's College student, Patty Sinex, of Sugarloaf, Pa., also joined the group.

Sister Noel of the College Misericordia Campus Ministry Office arranged the trip.

Traveling by car, the students left

the Back Mountain area on March 9 and arrived in Kentucky late the following night, following a stopover in Coraopolis, Pa., a suburb of Pittsburgh.

Upon arriving in Kentucky, some of the students stayed at Holy Trinity Parish in Morgantown, while the others set up residence at St. Susan Parish in Elkton.

The students went in pairs to visit the homes of the poor each day. The college women also distributed clothing and food donated by the local churches.

Kathy Donovan, spokesperson for the group, describes one poor woman, Polly, who was especially thankful for the students' help. Polly, who has only one leg, is unable to get food on a regular basis. She must rely on the local nuns for cheese, except when her son comes to bring her food once in a while. "She was very grateful for the food we brought her," says Kathy, "and she was delighted to see us."

Also due to the efforts of the students, a young girl was able to receive some much needed medical care. Kathy Donovan and Beth Cummings drove a fifth-grade girl to a hospital over two hours away so she could have treatment done on

her leg muscles. Because of a lack of transportation, the little girl had been waiting over six months to receive medical attention. Now, the youth has two casts on her legs from the waist down.

An infant boy received his baby clothes and basin from two of the students, Penny Farrell and Kathy Donovan, who delivered the items which were donated from the area church.

One might think these poverty-stricken people would be very unhappy and bitter about their lives. But Kathy describes them as happy people. "They're content and accept the fact that this is how they live," she said. "But, their existence is enough."

Kathy feels her group has learned a lesson that others can benefit from, also - it's not what you have that matters, it's who you are that really counts.

"We thought we'd go down there to help the poor," says Kathy, "but they end up helping us. We got a chance to look at ourselves, re-evaluate our priorities, and critique our values."

Would the students volunteer to go again?

"We'd do it in a second," Kathy answers.

O'Connell pushes new liquor bill

Sen. Frank J. O'Connell, R-20 was the prime sponsor of a bill that was given immediate attention by Governor Thornburgh to move up the opening hour for Sunday sales of liquor and beer.

According to O'Connell, alcoholic beverages can now be sold at 11 a.m. on Sundays instead of the previous 1 p.m. hour in those establishments which hold a Sunday sales permit. The 2 a.m. Monday closing hour for Sunday sales is unchanged.

"The Governor's prompt action in signing Senate Bill 730 could have a halo effect on the restaurant, stadium and tourism industries," said O'Connell. "Restaurants can begin to serve alcoholic beverages with their earlier Sunday brunches immediately."

The new law also permits liquor and beer to be sold in bowling alleys and other recreational areas of licensed hotels, such as game rooms and video arcades, where minors are present but are under "proper supervision" as defined in the Liquor Code.

Supplementary House amendments included in Senate Bill 730 permit distillers, manufacturers,

retail and club licensees to sponsor contests or tournaments and advertise, offer, award or permit the awarding of trophies or prizes for such contests. Alcoholic beverages may be served in the same area where the tournament or contest is held, and a bar or service bar may be installed in the lobby, passageway or entrance adjacent to the licensed premises.

Senate Bill 730 also increases the amount of money that may be spent on point-of-sale advertising and no single advertising item may cost

more than \$35. Cooperative advertising between distributors and manufacturers is also clarified.

Further, the Liquor Control Board is authorized to issue one liquor license in any third class city for a restaurant situated within 1,000 feet from a stadium having a seating capacity of more than 5,000. The restaurant and stadium must be on the same parcel of land not less than 25 acres in size and with no intervening public thoroughfare between the restaurant and the stadium.

Tours offered at state park

This summer, children and adults are invited to explore the natural and historic features of Frances Slocum State Park, Mount Olivet Road, Wyoming, by participating in the Park's weekend interpretive programs. Every Saturday and Sunday, beginning on Memorial Day weekend, visitors to the State Park will be able to enjoy free guided walks, craft demonstrations, interpretive talks, films or slide programs.

"The Life of the Forest" is the theme that inspired the programs of Memorial Day weekend.

Saturday, May 26, 2 p.m. Wigmans and Tanner looks at the uses of forest products from the time of the American Indians to the present.

Sunday, May 27, 2 p.m., Woodland Wildflowers and Ferns examines the forest's delicate beauties through a guided walk.

Monday, May 28, 2 p.m., Forest Blindfold Walk acquaints visitors with the sounds, scents and feel of the woods.

In early June visitors can learn how to reap "Nature's Bounty."

Saturday, June 2, 2 p.m., Healing Herbs, a guided walk, focuses on favorite medicinal wild plants of American Indians and settlers. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Periodic demonstrations of dyonog cloth with wild plants.

Sunday, June 3, 11:30 a.m., Harvesting Cattails teaches the edible parts of the common wetlands plant. 1:30 p.m., The Wild Gourmet features a slide program about local edible wild plants, plus recipes and samples of wild foods.

Further weekend program themes for the month of June will include "Energy," "Wildlife," and "Fears and Facts of Nature."

The location of all programs will be listed at Frances Slocum State Park's Visitors' Center and Park Office. Call Frances Slocum State Park at (717) 696-3525 for more information about the summer interpretive programs.

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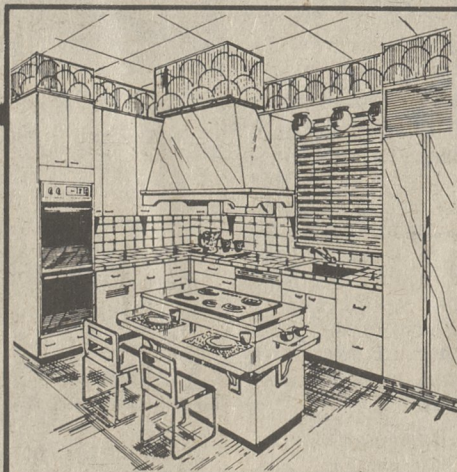
Mrs. Alberta Cross, operating as Cross Mountain View Guest Home, Inc., RD 1, Box 107, Sweet Valley, has requested the rezoning of a lot situated on the South side of Route 118, approximately one third of a mile west of T668, formerly known as the Scandinavian Motel in Ross Township.

Mrs. Cross has requested the area be rezoned from an Agricultural District (A-1) to an Apartment Residence District (R-3) to operate a "Personal Care Boarding Home."

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