

Briscoe survives killer disease

HOUSTON (AP) — Gov. Dolph Briscoe is working vigorously after apparently recovering fully from an ailment that usually kills more than half its victims.

The governor's physician, Dr. C. B. Jackson of San Antonio, said Briscoe was hospitalized last month with an ailment called acute tubular necrosis, a kidney disorder Jackson called "very serious."

Dr. Wadi H. Suki, a professor of medicine at Houston's Methodist Hospital and an expert in renal ill-

ness, said the ailment is, in fact, very serious indeed. He said about 55 per cent of the patients with acute tubular necrosis die of the illness.

Briscoe was afflicted suddenly last Dec. 6 while flying from Houston to Kansas City for the national convention of the Democratic Party.

The plane turned around, landed at San Antonio and the governor went into Nix Hospital for treatment.

Briscoe left the hospital after only a few days and is now working a full schedule.

His ailment, says Dr. Suki, causes a severe loss or sometimes a total shutdown of kidney function. The body, as a result, builds up fluids and wastes. The feet, hands and face can become bloated and swollen. Untreated, the patient could eventually drown in his own poisons.

The disorder progresses in distinct phases. Output from the kidneys, which normally filter out impurities, concentrates them and then discharges them as urine,

drops sharply to less than two pints daily.

Dr. Suki said this first phase is the most dangerous.

"Some go into shock from the condition and the mortality rate is then quite high, perhaps 70 per cent," he said.

If the patient survives the initial phase, which may last 10 days or so, the kidneys will start healing themselves. Urine output increases to three quarts or more daily as the kidneys work to cleanse the blood.

Recovery has started, but "the patient is by no means out of the woods," said Dr. Suki.

Patients are usually released from the hospital when kidney function, evidenced by the amount and chemistry of the urine, has stabilized, said Dr. Suki, "but the patient continues to require management."

Hospital stay time can vary, he said, based on several factors, including the care the patient could receive at home. Briscoe was released after four days in Nix.

"The kidneys will heal over a period of time with proper care," said Dr. Suki. And a major element of that care is curing or avoiding the root cause of the disorder.

Acute tubular necrosis can be brought on, said Dr. Suki, by shock, a medical term which involves the decrease in blood volume.

It can be caused by a loss of fluid, such as in bleeding, by poor heart function or from the effects of infection.

Individual reactions to nephrotoxic drugs, such as some antibiotics, can also bring on the ailment, he said.

Dr. Suki said that unless the root problem which precipitated the kidney ailment is identified and controlled, patients can experience more episodes of acute tubular necrosis, perhaps with fatal effects.

Briscoe, according to statements from his office, "has made a complete recovery and there is no damage to the kidneys."

The fact that he is working full, active days, said Dr. Suki, indicates his kidney function "is either stable or improving and is adequate to sustain his life."

Soldier adopts sister for Japanese move

ABILENE, TEX. (AP) — Sharon Strickland is her own niece, is a daughter to her younger brother and is big sister to her niece and nephew.

It has nothing to do with the fact the 26-year-old Abilene woman is a computer programmer.

The unusual family tree sprouted this week when Air Force Sgt. Eugene Ervin, 23, learned he is being shipped to Japan in a few months.

But what to do with his two children whose custody he gained in a recent divorce? Sister Sharon had been helping Ervin raise the children but Uncle Sam said Miss Strickland could not accompany the trio to Japan unless it could be shown she was single and most important, Ervin's legal dependent.

Ervin went to court and adopted

his older sister as his daughter.

Dist. Court Judge Don Lane granted the adoption. "This was much simpler than the adoption of a minor because the adult can give consent to be adopted," Judge Lane said.

Lane agreed the arrangement would best benefit Ervin's children.

So now Ervin, his children and his daughter-sister are packing for Japan.

One problem remains, however. If Sharon ever has children of her own, will they call Ervin Uncle David or Grandpa?

Mexican university works with Aggies

The Texas Engineering Experiment Station along with the National Science Foundation is financing the U.S. half of a joint engineering research program with Mexico.

One of the principal investigators of the project at A&M is Dr. J. L. Stone who has just returned from a year's teaching at the Instituto Nacional de Astrofisica, Optica y Electronica (INAOE) in Puebla.

While in Mexico, Stone and his counterpart, Dr. Jorge Agraz, laid out a cooperative research program.

"The most important thing is not this research program," he said. "We're seeking long term relation-

ships with the Mexican universities by establishing programs that will be mutually beneficial to the participants.

"We hope to establish an exchange program involving both faculty and students," Stone added.

In the initial part of the program, Stone helped establish a solid-state electronics teaching and research program — mainly in the area of integrated circuits.

The research program was designed jointly, to be conducted collaboratively. Research will be supported by and conducted in the two countries on an approximately equal basis.

Albritton gets new position

Ford D. Albritton, Jr., who just completed a six-year term on the Texas A&M University System Board of Directors, has been appointed by Gov. Dolph Briscoe to the Coordinating Board, Texas College and University System.

Albritton, a 1943 TAMU graduate, is an oilman and private investor with offices in Bryan.

He succeeds L. B. Meaders of Dallas who recently resigned from the 18-member board which works closely with the governing boards and administrations of the state's institutions of higher education. The term to which Meaders was appointed expires Aug. 31.

In addition to having served on the TAMU System Board of Directors, he is a past president of both TAMU's 65,000-member Association of Former Students and the Texas A&M Research Foundation. He also is a past president of the Bryan-College Station Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Bryan United Fund and the Lay-Advisory Board of St. Joseph Hospital.

He has his own oil and gas firm, Albritton Exploration Company, and is chairman of the board of the Tipperary Corporation of Midland and the Ashbrook Corporation of Houston.

He is married to the former Miss Martha Stripling and the father of four children. His two older sons, Ford III and Robert, are graduates of TAMU. A daughter, Sally, attends Southern Methodist University and a third son, John, attends The Allen School.

Zoologist observes research

A New Zealand zoologist, Dr. George Alexander Knox, head of the Department of Zoology at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, is visiting A&M for a six-month stay, presenting seminars and observing TAMU marine research.

Dr. Knox is on sabbatical leave from his university. He decided to spend time at TAMU because "... of the very good grouping of marine research and coastal environmental studies that are going on here."

"I'm looking at the research going on — the approaches and techniques — because of a developing interest in estuarine and coastal ecology," he explained. "We still have time to prevent and plan in New Zealand, so that we can avoid the problems that have occurred elsewhere in the development of coastal areas."

The range of subjects for the seminars to be presented during the fall include Antarctic Research, Island Ecology, Marine Ecology and Estuarine Ecology. The subject areas range from the Antarctic, Arctic, New Zealand to "A scientist's impression of Red China," gained as a member of a New Zealand scientific delegation to China.

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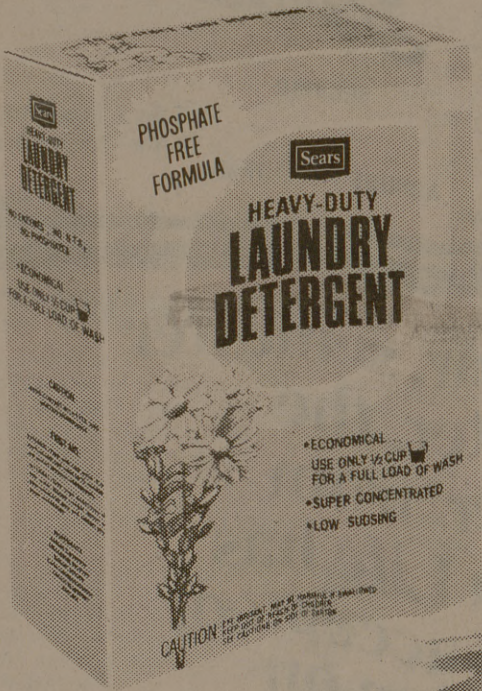
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