

State

Bubble boy turns 10 at home

United Press International
HOUSTON — David, the world's oldest person with untreated severe immune deficiency disease, celebrated his 10th birthday Monday inside a plastic isolator with sterilized presents and a germ-free cake.

A Texas Children's Hospital Baylor College of Medicine spokeswoman said the fourth-grader's family also planned for him to participate this week in his first Communion — a Roman Catholic Church sacrament signifying a passage into adulthood and responsibility for one's actions.

The wafer and liquid David takes in a special Communion mass at home will be specially treated because David's body lacks the normal natural defenses against disease-causing germs.

"One of the reasons we wanted David at home with us was to give him religious training, to share our faith with him," his mother said. "He is our son and this is where he belongs."

Hospital officials said David's last name and address have been withheld since birth.

Dr. William T. Shearer said David previously alternated four weeks at home and two weeks at

the hospital, but now was being left at home more to grow up as normally as possible among his family and peers even though he's inside a three-chambered bubble.

"It is the goal of every hospital to return the patient to his normal environment," Shearer said. "In continuing to assess David's care, we try to consider what is important to a growing boy."

"We feel family life is very important to David's growth and development. At home, David can better experience the roles of son, brother and school boy, not just a patient here in the hospital."

"He also has the benefit of being

with his classmates more often."

Officials said David, who will spend one week twice a year at the hospital so his bubble can be scrubbed down, has been educated through a mix of tutors and visiting teachers who bring students who are David's peers to his house.

David last year began participating in class through a special telephone hookup that allows him to hear lectures, make comments and ask and answer questions.

Officials said there were plans to enlarge David's mobile isolator, in which he travels, to accommodate recreational trips, including visits to a friend's lake house.

David is described by officials as a good, interested student who often plays with his sister, Katherine, 13, sometimes having to be cautioned against the roughhouse "bumping" they like to do through the isolator's plastic wall.

Shearer said many treatments have been considered for David, but none of his relatives was a proper match for a bone marrow transplant. His family has decided against risky treatments. The search for a cure continues.

Triple great grandma marks 115th birthday

United Press International
HOUSTON — Having another birthday was a piece of cake for Rosa Deramus.

Sunday she celebrated her 115th birthday. Five generations of her family went to the party.

Deramus attributes her long life to hard work and clean living. A Baptist, Deramus neither smokes or drinks alcohol. She worked until she was 101, picking cotton.

Wearing a violet dress, decorated with a corsage and a double strand of pearls, Deramus

relaxed Sunday, surrounded by some of her 15 grandchildren, 50 great-grandchildren, five great-great-grandchildren and five great-great-great-grandchildren.

Her family describes her as a woman with a "strong constitution" who married late in life and who "tried to see to it that all her children and all their children were taken care of," Wilma Deramus said.

She has never had a Social Security card, but has received "old age" benefits since 1939.

Deramus has a family Bible

which says she was born Prince Earl and freed Hester Earl in 1866. She was born in the Smith Chapel community near Timpson and there until 1979, when she moved in with relatives.

If that date can be documented, it will make the world's longest living son with an authenticated span. The 1981 Guinness Book of World Records says the documented lifespan belongs to a Japanese man who died in 1980 on his 115th birthday.

LBJ never took illegal envelopes, attorney says

A lawyer who has handled the legal affairs for the family of former President Lyndon B. Johnson Monday described an author's allegation that Johnson received envelopes stuffed with cash while he was vice president as "a scurrilous lie."

Donald Thomas, who has handled the family's affairs since 1944, said, "I don't think anybody approached him (Johnson) about that or ever said anything like that to him. I still function as the president of the LBJ Co., and I think I know where all the assets are and where they came from. That sort of thing is unbelievable."

The Austin attorney, commented on the biography, "The Years of Lyndon Johnson," in which author Robert Caro claims Johnson received cash-stuffed envelopes as a vice president and used the power of the presidency to amass personal wealth.

Caro's biography also says that, although Johnson claimed to have put his business affairs in a blind trust, he had private phone lines installed in the Oval Office to confer with Texas lawyers administering the trust. Caro said Johnson

worked several hours a day on business deals.

Thomas said, "I thought I was his attorney and I certainly didn't have anything like that (phone lines)."

Robert Hardesty, Johnson's assistant from 1965 to 1969, said, "To the best of my knowledge, nothing like that existed. I never heard anything about a private phone line to Texas." Hardesty, who lives in Austin, recently was named president of Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos. Johnson graduated from Southwest Texas.

George Christian, Johnson's press secretary from 1965 to 1969, also said he was not aware of any private lines to Texas. "I know he talked to people a lot in Texas, but I never heard of a private phone line. I didn't know how he handled his financial or legal affairs."

In Milwaukee, Johnson's former aide, George Reedy said he never saw his boss accept money but recalled how Johnson wanted to abolish poverty both for himself and the nation's poor.

"I couldn't disprove it," Reedy said in an interview. "He probably could be pretty ruthless when it came to making money."

"He wanted to abolish poverty and he worked pretty hard to do that, and he wanted to do that for other people."

Reedy said Johnson rarely discussed his business dealings with him.

"He didn't talk a lot of money, actually very little, and to me," Reedy said. "You realize he was a very serious man, about everything, and about things he was doing might be a little shady."

Much of what Caro wrote, Reedy said, appears to be prose. "Now a journalism professor at Marquette University, Reedy was director of the Majority Policy Committee of Johnson in the 1950s. He was Johnson's special assistant in 1961 and was Johnson's press secretary from March 1965 to August 1965.

"The money is the only stuff, I wouldn't know about. Even if it did happen, it raises all sorts of questions about the circumstances — was it legal money, did it go into one's campaign fund — it's a lot more complex than it is on the surface," Reedy said.

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Asylum hearing slow for Haitians

United Press International
NEW ORLEANS — The Immigration and Naturalization Service should release 25 jailed Haitian refugees during extended individual hearings on whether they will be granted political asylum, their attorney claims.

"It has been three months since they left Haiti," said attorney James Gray III. "In three months they have either been in a small open boat at sea or locked up. It's beginning to get to them."

The hearings on the Haitians, who were plucked from their boat by an oil tanker near the mouth of the Mississippi River, have been recessed by Judge Ernest Hupp until Monday.

Last week, the judge ruled that two of the refugees were not

admissible to the United States under normal procedures.


Gray said the two were denied admission because they did not have proper documents from the U.S. government, but he will pursue other legal avenues.

The attorney said he did not know how long the hearings would go on, with each refugee called before Hupp to make a case for staying.

"If the asylum hearing is done right, they will take a long time," Gray said. "We do more than two this week. The judge will be gone a week. Then if we do the following week, that's one in three weeks."

The Haitians, being held in Orleans Parish Correctional Center, were being judged individually at Gray's request. They had originally been scheduled to appear before Hupp in groups of three or four.

Gray said he was asking Hupp to release the Haitians into the custody of local community organizations.

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