

State / National

Heart compounds discovered in excessive drinkers

United Press International
DALLAS — A team of St. Louis doctors and researchers has discovered compounds that may form in the hearts of people who consume excessive amounts of alcohol and may, therefore, explain why large amounts of alcohol are toxic to the heart.

Dr. Louis G. Lange, assistant professor of medicine at Washington University School of Medicine, said at least 2 percent of the 10 million alcoholics in the country have overt heart disease, and many more have weakened hearts with a limited capacity to respond to exercise or stress.

Finding may lead to development of drugs to slow down diseases

Lange spoke Monday at the 54th Scientific Sessions of the American Heart Association being held at the Dallas Convention Center.

Lange said he and his colleagues have isolated and identified biochemical compounds formed in the heart when it is exposed to amounts of alcohol typically consumed by social and heavy drinkers.

"The alcohol metabolites we identified in heart muscle may

contribute to the development of alcohol-induced heart disease," he said.

Lange said the compounds — called fatty acid ethyl esters — were found in the hearts of several people who died while intoxicated. Although research has determined the compounds injure the heart, he said it has yet to reveal why.

"We don't know exactly what the mechanism is yet, but we think these compounds may be in-

involved in the disease process," he said. Discovering the role of the fatty acid ethyl esters in heart disease could lead to the development of drugs that will slow it down or stop it, he said.

In another report presented Monday, Louisiana State University scientists revealed success in lowering high blood pressure in children predisposed to develop the disorder.

Gerald Berenson, director of

the Bogalusa (La.) Heart Study, said the pioneering program involved school children in Franklinton, La., and used a combination of diet, exercise and low-dose drug therapy to lower blood pressure levels.

The AHA estimates that 35.5 million Americans have high blood pressure.

Although researchers do not know what causes high blood pressure, recent work has established that in some people the

condition begins to "track" as early as age 5, Berenson said.

The LSU team spent four months surveying 1,602 school children in the Louisiana community for blood pressure. They then chose 100 youngsters whose blood pressure ranked in the top 10 percent to participate in the study.

Half of the youngsters were allocated to a treatment group, which was encouraged to engage in hardy exercise and follow heal-

thy diets, particularly limiting their salt intake. The children were also given low doses of sodium-depleting and pressure-regulating drugs.

The remaining 50 children formed a control group. A second control group of 50 children with lower blood pressure levels was also chosen.

When research began in 1976 the average reading in the treatment group was 118 over 78. After six months, the blood pressure of children in the treatment group dropped an average of eight millimeters to levels lower than that of the untreated control group.

Burglars, bomb blow heist attempt

United Press International
MIDLAND — Like the daring duo of the 1969 movie "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid," inexperienced burglars apparently had trouble gauging how many explosives were needed to open the safe in a chain restaurant.

In the popular western tale, Butch and Sundance dynamited a train's safe into oblivion, causing a rain of wood and cash. A similar attempt by burglars early Monday — this time with plastic explosives — caused about \$75,000 in damages to a Der Wienerschnitzel restaurant and left bits of cash strewn about the burned-out restaurant's interior.

Police said the burglars used as much as 10 times the amount of plastic explosive needed to open the safe.

"They had no earthly idea how much (explosive) to use," Police Lt. Earl Luckey said. "They probably hit the back door (after the explosion) and were happy to get away alive. They probably couldn't hear you now if you talked to them."

"The manager of the store thinks some (money) is missing, but I don't know how he could know. The money is scattered around in little bits," he said.

Luckey said there are no suspects in the case.

To go or not to go preppy is a question

United Press International
BATH, Mich. — The pressure to go preppy is one of the great dilemmas of teenage life today, said high school students who attended a psychology seminar.

Preppiness was the main subject at the second annual seminar at Bath High School in Bath, Mich. Other sessions dealt with teen-parent communications, legal rights, responsibilities and child abuse.

The seminar was attended by more than 100 students from Michigan high schools and community colleges.

"I dress preppy and I don't care what you think of it," one girl said.

Another girl said: "I have a friend and all she wants to talk about is the latest fashions and alligators and it makes me sick."

Speedy trial lost, nude bathers free

United Press International
LOS ANGELES — Thirty-four people arrested for nude sunbathing at Malibu beaches last summer will not be tried because they were denied their right to a speedy trial.

Superior Court Judge Florence S. Bernstein said Monday misdemeanor trials must begin within 45 days of arraignment, and the judge said there was no evidence of unusual circumstances that could warrant a delay.

The judge observed that Malibu Municipal Court was "apparently understaffed during the summer."

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