

Scientist researches ties

# Aging, immunity close

United Press International  
FORT WORTH — Research into aging is not aimed at enabling people to live to 150 or beyond, one scientist says, but at making our allotted three-score-and-ten healthier, happier and more active years.

Toward that end, Dr. Robert Gracy, head of the biochemistry

**Dr. Robert Gracy, head of biochemistry department at Texas College of Medicine, believes most of the health problems of the elderly can be traced to failures of the immune system.**

elderly can be traced to such a failure of the immune system.

Young people's cells, when stimulated, he said, produce enzymes that activate them into immunity cells. In older people, not only do the levels of those important enzymes not increase, but other negatively charged forms of the enzymes — the so-called cellular garbage — accumulate in the cells.

Part of Gracy's research has involved examining people who suffer from progeria, the rare premature aging disease that received so much publicity earlier this year when two victims — young boys from Texas and South Africa — were united at Disneyland.

Gracy's studies found that skin cells from the average 8-or-10-year-old contained only 1 to 5 percent of an enzyme known as TPI, a part of the cellular garbage, while progeria victims of the same age had 25 to 35 percent of the negatively charged TPI in their skin cells.

"We can see changes in the body's skin cells, in color and texture," Gracy said. "This is probably happening in all cells

in the body." Gracy believes the "garbage"

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buildup is triggered by two amino acids that change to a negative charge with age. Although

he said no one yet knows why the negative enzymes accumulate in a cell, there is speculation that

the accumulation inhibits a cell's ability to produce the proteolytic enzymes, the garbage disposals.

Gracy said no one can honestly speculate what changes would occur if older people's "garbage disposal" systems worked like those of the young.

"But we presume they would be healthier," he said. "And that is the real objective of anyone doing research in aging — not to make people live to be 150, but to allow the elderly to live as good a quality of life as a young person."

department at Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine, devotes his laboratory time to the human body's "garbage disposals," where he investigates how a cell's inability to shed certain enzymes — the garbage — leads to a breakdown of immunity.

Gracy, who recently was awarded a \$431,000, five-year grant from the National Institute of Aging, believes most of the health problems of the

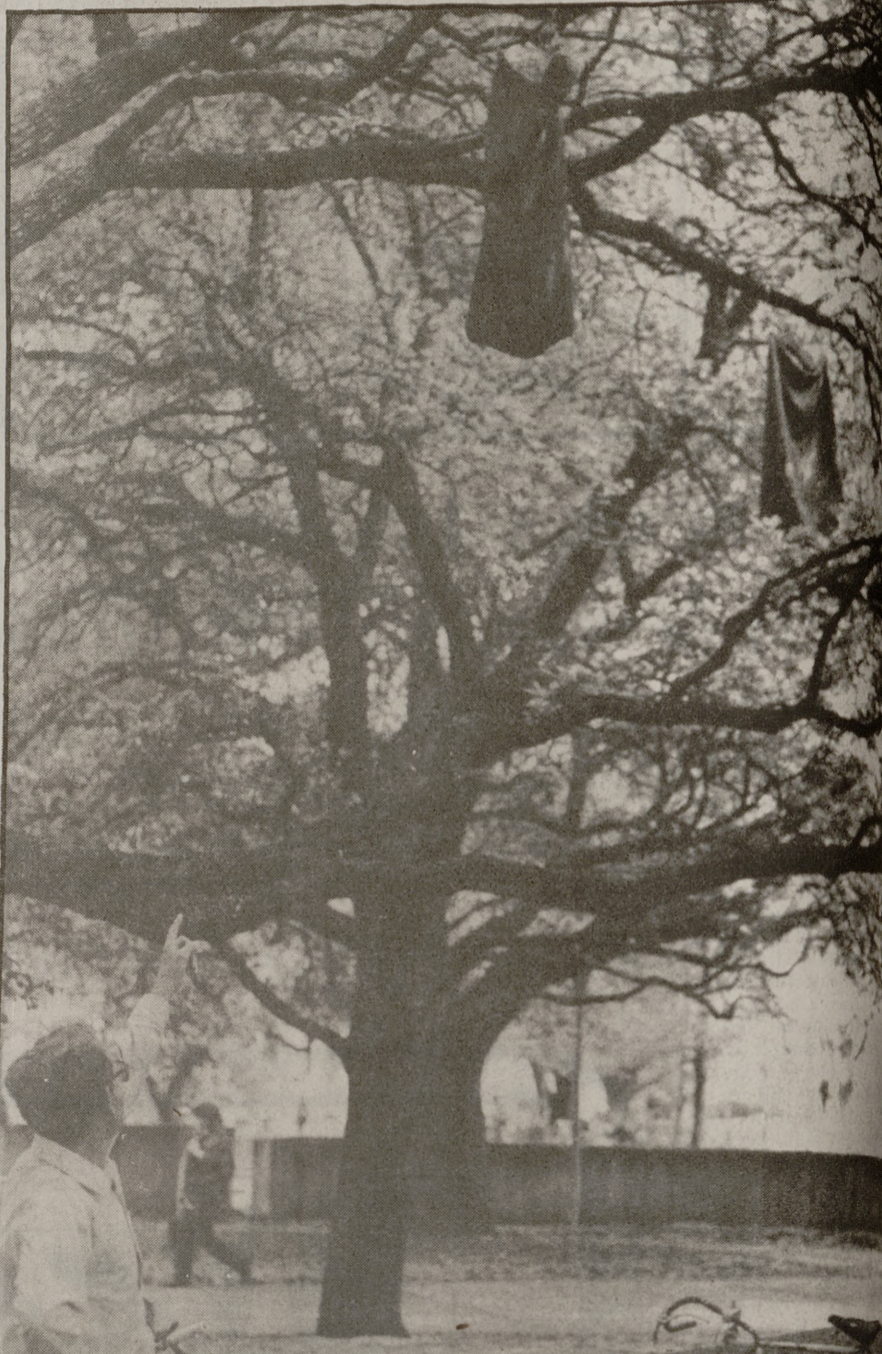


photo by Larry Co...

## Sacks solve problem

Donald Jones, a Texas A&M maintenance worker, points out two of many burlap sacks hung in trees around campus that are helping solve a problem caused by messy bird droppings on campus sidewalks.

The sacks are doused with chro-penta, a chemical used to deter bird nesting in trees. Once a the sacks must be resprayed with the chemical to maintain effectiveness.

Enjoying the s...  
Ben Barlass, science major

Oil r...  
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## Couple hitches to Colorado to buy rare Presley record

United Press International  
LUBBOCK — Wendy and Jim Berlowitz spent \$930 and a weekend hitchhiking to Colorado for an Elvis Presley record they'll never play.

By outlasting bidders from Arizona and Florida, the couple paid \$930 at a used record store

in Colorado Springs, Colo., for the 45-rpm record issued in 1957 only to radio stations as a special preview of a forthcoming Presley album.

Although the record itself is valuable, Mrs. Berlowitz claimed the real buy was the record sleeve bearing Elvis' picture.

"This is only one of three such records known to exist," she said. "A collector paid \$2,000 for one just like it two years ago. At this price, we stole it."

Mrs. Berlowitz, 33, claimed the records would never be played or sold.

"Oh, God, no, we'll never play it," she said after buying the Presley record Friday. "We might scratch it."

The couple hitchhiked from Lubbock Monday clutching the

fruits of another successful St. JAMES, La. — President Gerald F. energy Secretary J. says the stockpile billion barrels of Louisiana salt domes v the oil-producing coun to us," Mrs. Berlowitz said. Griggs, president of the Holly Memorial Society, in Lubbock.

The record, which has songs on each side, was recorded in the 1950s by Holly, who in a 1959 airplane crash was pumped into th

"It's the only 10-inch (of the record) known to Mrs. Berlowitz said.

The couple, who said the was broken, hitchhiked to they did not trust their in the mail.

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