

Cancer test to predict survival

United Press International
BOSTON — A recently developed test may give women with breast cancer a more accurate prediction of their chance for survival and doctors a better idea of how to treat the cancer aggressively, researchers reported Wednesday.

"We now have a very strong predictor of whether the disease will come back," said Dr. William L. McGuire, chief of oncology at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio.

Breast cancer specialists say the test has been available for a couple of years, but this is the first study to show it is better than more common tests.

The test, reported in the New England Journal of Medicine, measures the level of progesterone receptors in breast cancers. Progesterone is a female hormone secreted by the ovaries.

Breast cancer is the most common cause of death in middle-aged women. An estimated 110,000 cases are discovered each year in the United States and 36,000 women die of the disease.

In a study of 189 patients, McGuire and his team at the University of Texas found tumors with high levels of progesterone receptors are easily destroyed, whereas tumors with low levels of progesterone receptors are tough to kill.

Therefore, if the test proves positive, women know

they have a good chance for survival. Women with a negative test should be treated with stronger chemotherapy and radiation, McGuire said.

"This study shows for the first time that progesterone receptors are the second most important thing a physician needs to know for an accurate prognosis," said McGuire.

The most important indication of survival after surgery is whether the cancer has spread to the lymph nodes. If the dis-

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case has spread into the lymph nodes, the chances of survival are not as good.

"The progesterone receptor was a better indicator of recurrence than the estrogen receptor in patients with negative (lymph) nodes," the report said.

The test supplements a current test for estrogen (another type of hormone) receptors. The progesterone test is able to filter out conditions that throw off the accuracy of the estrogen test.

Women will protest build-up

United Press International
NEW YORK — More than 150 U.S. and Canadian women are planning a prayer vigil at two Army and Navy bases in Honduras where they claim the United States is increasing its military presence in Central America.

The women represent the largest group of religious leaders and activists to visit the region on what an organizer

Wednesday called a pilgrimage for peace.

"The response has been way beyond our expectations," said Sister Margaret Coakley, a Roman Catholic nun and member of the Women's Coalition to Stop Intervention in the Caribbean and Central America.

The coalition is the sponsor for the four-day trip which begins Monday.

The coalition has more than

150 religious women — both Catholic and Protestant from the United States and Canada — signed up for the visit and a total of about 200 is expected.

The group leaves Saturday night for a one-day orientation in both Miami and New Orleans. They plan to leave those cities for Honduras on Monday.

The peace group scheduled the first prayer vigil for Tuesday at the military base at Palmerola

and the second for Wednesday at a naval base at San Lorenzo.

The idea for the peace vigil was hatched during a trip to Nicaragua in September, when 20 women from 17 cities made the journey, Sr. Coakley said.

"We decided we had to do something," Sr. Coakley said.

"We got an idea of getting 200 religious women leaders and going on a prayer pilgrimage

for peace to military bases. It's strictly a religious event."

Sr. Coakley said the coalition also wants to highlight "what's going on in Honduras" so it chose the largest permanent military base in Central America, at Palmerola.

Coalition spokeswoman Ann Pillsbury said Honduras is the staging area being used to beef up a military presence in Central America.

Crop-swap program saves farmers after this year's poor cotton crop

United Press International
LUBBOCK — The Payment-In-Kind Program saved many West Texas cotton farmers from a dismal crop year characterized by the drought, an early frost, hail and floods, a Texas Tech marketing professor said Wednesday.

Many farmers may have had to go out of business during 1983 had it not been for the federal crop-swap program, Louise Luchsinger said.

"As it has turned out, this has been a good year to have the PIK Program and to have the farmers participate," she said. Many farmers could have been devastated by the weather problems if they had planted the usual acreage.

"If we had not had PIK, we would have had 8 million bales in carryover and in a good production year have a crop of maybe 9 or 10 million bales," Luchsinger said.

A small enough carryover this cotton season means a possible price rise next season, Luchsinger said.

singer said, predicting: "I don't believe PIK will have reduced the supply enough to increase the price significantly."

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S Trio may go to trial soon

United Press International
COVINGTON, La. — Prosecutors said a trial might be scheduled in February for two Texas men and an Alabama man accused of killing St. Tammany Parish police jury candidate Stephen L. Stinson.

Stinson, 34, a Slidell, La., lawyer, was slain early the morning of Oct. 17, five days before the election.

Police said he apparently had stopped on Interstate 10 to help what he thought were stranded travelers and was shot in the face. They said robbery appeared to be the motive.

Larry D. Taylor, 27, and Larry Benjamin, 25, both of Houston, pleaded innocent this week before District Judge France Watts. A third suspect, David Earl Wilson, 30, of Mobile, Ala., pleaded innocent at his Oct. 26 arraignment.

A spokesman for the St.

Tammany Parish district attorney's office said the suspects might be tried in February. Their attorneys have been given 30 days to file special motions.

The sheriff's office said Stinson was driving toward New Orleans when he was flagged down by Benjamin and Taylor. Wilson was hiding off the side of the road.

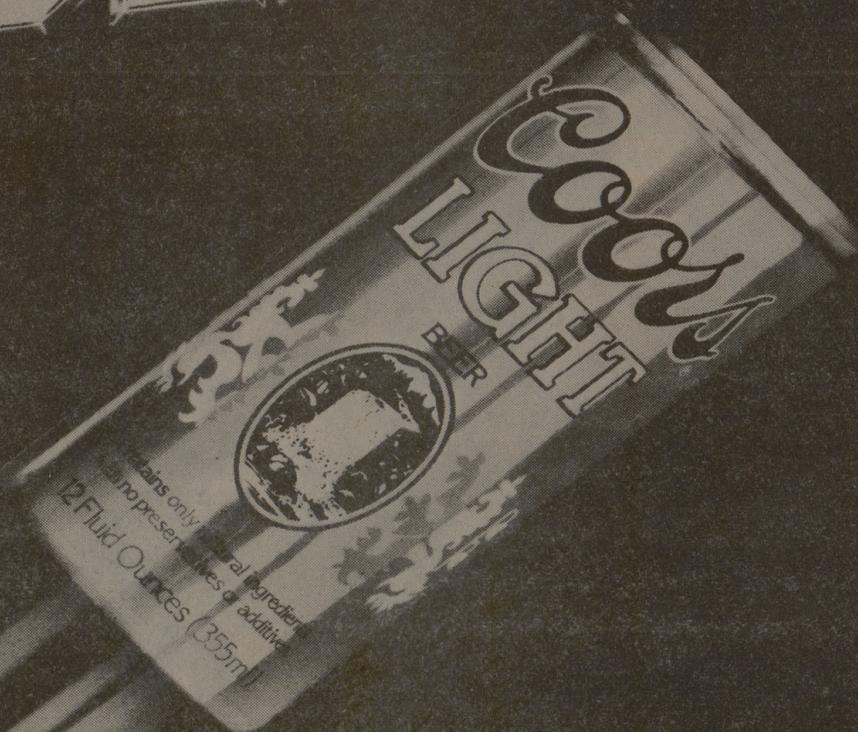
Authorities said Stinson agreed to take the two to a service station, but was shot.

Three days after Stinson's death, his wife qualified to run for the seat he was seeking. Qualifying was rescheduled for Nov. 19 after Sharon Stinson became a candidate.

She was defeated, running second to Barry Bagert, in the three-candidate race.

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