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Bubonic plague found in rabbit

United Press International
KERMIT — Fleas on a rabbit gave a 46-year-old hunter bubonic plague, West Texas health officials said Tuesday as they urged oil field workers to avoid wildlife.

"The chances of being infected are really pretty low," said Dr. William Rosser, a state Health Department veterinarian in Lubbock. "Every once in a while there are flare ups," of the plague in a certain area.

Rosser said Texas Railroad Commission officials told oil companies to warn their workers in the Kermit area. He said

this was the third case he knew about in West Texas since 1980.

Winkler County Health Officer Dr. William Timmons said the hunter was treated at the Winkler County Memorial Hospital for about a week before he was released.

"He had skinned a good number of rabbits. He probably picked it up from a flea that was on the rabbit," Timmons said, adding the man had gotten treatment fast enough so that he did not become contagious.

The man had a hunting companion who was tested, but did not have the disease, said a spokeswoman for the city-county health department in Midland.

Rosser said rabbit meat taken from the hunter's freezer showed bubonic contamination. He said animals other than rabbits also might carry the disease.

Timmons said in the past the plague usually was fatal because it was rare and not treated correctly, but he said the disease was easy to treat if victims sought medical help soon enough.

Timmons said people get the disease by being bitten by fleas carrying it, which are often found on rats or prairie dogs. Until the 1980s bubonic plague had not been experienced in Texas since the 1920s.

Texas counties near New Mexico are considered vulnerable because about 50 percent of the U.S. plague cases are reported in New Mexico, Rosser said.

In 1981 a rancher died of the plague in an El Paso hospital after skinning a bobcat. Timmons said an Odessa youth also died of the disease about two years ago after skinning a rabbit.

Fever and chills are the first signs of the plague with swelling in the groin or under the arm, he said, adding it usually takes up to seven days between the time a person is bitten by a flea carrying it and the time signs appear.

Faculty handbook revised, updated

By DAINAH BULLARD
Reporter

An updated version of the Texas A&M University Faculty and Staff Handbook featuring a new format is now available.

The handbook is published by Educational Information Services, and this is the first revision since 1977.

"The information in the handbook is based on our perception of the types of questions that come up most often," said Mary Helen Bowers, director of Educational Information Services.

The handbook has been published every year or two in the past, Bowers said, but this revision was delayed because

of impending changes. The faculty senate was in the works, and tenure policies were being redefined, she said.

Since the 1977 publication, major changes in Texas A&M policies have been distributed to the faculty and staff through news releases and official channels, Bowers said. The new handbook contains all of these changes, plus information from the Policies and Procedures Manual, but it is condensed and easy to read, she said.

Thomas A. Emmet, special assistant to the president of Regis College in Denver, was a consultant on the project. He worked with a committee from Texas A&M in May 1982

and developed the handbook format.

"In the long run, we think this format will be economical," Bowers said. "Changes can be made printing new sheets and replacing the old ones." The handbook is printed on leaf pages held together by a ring binder.

The handbook is divided into seven sections. Bowers said the most important are those dealing with University administration, employment conditions and regulations. "All of the information in the handbook is available at other locations," Bowers said, "but I don't know of any source where all of the information is together."

Baby born by Caesarean as mother dies of burns

United Press International

ARLINGTON — A day-old girl, delivered by Caesarean section as her mother was dying from burns, was in critical condition Tuesday with complications from a lack of oxygen, hospital officials said.

The baby, who has not yet been named, was born Monday to Brenda Smith, 24, who was eight months pregnant.

Smith died a few hours later in Par Memorial Hospital in nearby Dallas of third-degree burns she suffered Monday morning in a fire at her apartment.

The blaze also killed her 4-year-old son Bryan and injured

her husband and another daughter.

The infant girl, who was taken after birth to John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth, was suffering from "hypoxic encephalopathy," hospital spokeswoman Sally Blaydes said.

"It is a condition related to a lack of oxygen," she said. "We suspect that condition occurred because the mother had smoke inhalation which probably prevented oxygen from going into the bloodstream. The baby is breathing by herself but we are observing her condition very closely. She is in critical condition."

Blaydes said the fact the baby was breathing by herself was a good sign.

Rescuers at the fire scene in

Arlington kept Smith alive long enough for doctors to deliver her baby by Caesarean section. Arlington Memorial Hospital Doctors credited firefighters and ambulance workers with saving the infant's life.

Fire officials said the infant's death was not a tragedy because she was not born.

Fire spokesman Dr. McMullan said the baby, Vernon Smith, carried by her mother, was in critical condition. Mrs. Smith went to the hospital apparently because she was having trouble breathing in the smoke-filled apartment and did not come out. She and her son were found beside a window in one of the bedrooms, McMullan said.

Business airliner to fly to Houston

United Press International

ST. LOUIS — Air 1, an airliner which caters to the business traveler, said Tuesday it will inaugurate service to Houston and Los Angeles this spring.

Mark G. Morris, president of Air 1, said the all first-class carrier will operate flights on a non-stop basis to and from St. Louis, with connections to other airlines and some of the other cities served by Air 1.

Air 1, which began flying on April 1, 1983, now serves New

York's Newark Airport, Washington, D.C., Dallas, Fort Worth and Kansas City, Mo.

Morris said the additional routes will extend the airline's service from coast to coast.

"We will start our service program Houston on March 15 and Los Angeles on April 1, our seven-year anniversary," said Morris. "Competitive reasons, we say, are the withholding details of our computer fares and choice of aircraft until a later date."

Police report

Thefts:
• One barricade and five construction "flasher" lights were reported stolen from Spence Street on the Texas A&M University campus yesterday. The equipment belongs to Drew Wood Inc. University Police are investigating the case.

• A Cain Hall resident reported someone entered his unlocked room between 6:30 and

10 Monday night and stole a gold Seiko wrist watch from a desk. University Police are investigating the case.

• A female student's program was reported stolen from a pack left in the Academic Building between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday. The wallet contained her credit cards, driver's license, University I.D. and check. University Police are investigating the case.

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