

INTRODUCING



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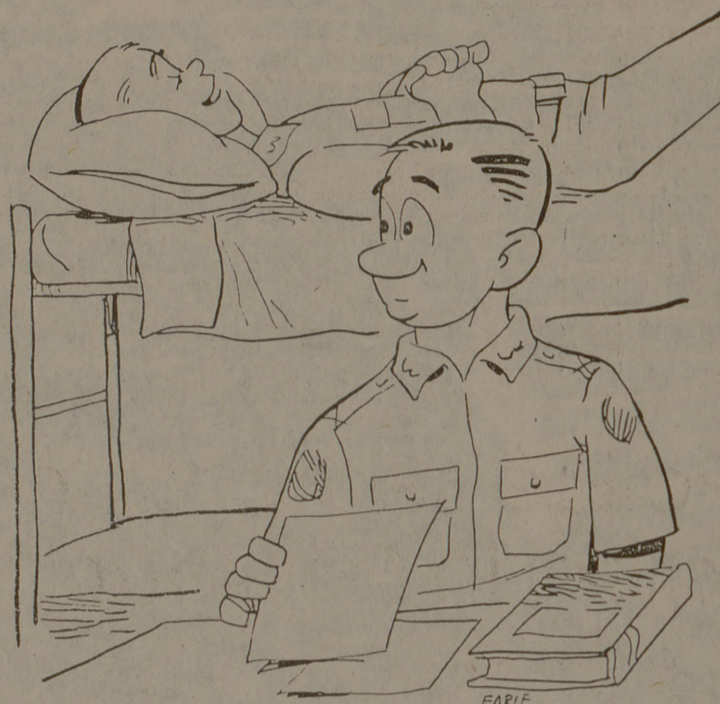
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By Jim Earle



"I figure that by the time I get through dropping, adding, and changing, I'll get at least another week of vacation time."

Heart disease still number one killer

United Press International
DALLAS — Despite recent advances in research and treatment, cardiovascular disease is still by far the most common cause of death in the United States, the American Heart Association said Monday.

In its annual "Heart Facts" study, the association said an average of 4,100 Americans suffer heart attacks every day and predicted that about 550,000 of the 1.5 million Americans who have heart attacks this year will die — 350,000 of them before they reach a hospital.

The study estimates the annual cost of cardiovascular illness at \$72.1 billion for 1985. Most of that cost will be for hospital and nursing home services — \$43.7 billion.

Despite a decrease in the number of deaths from cardiovascular diseases in 1982, the most recent year for which figures are available, they still accounted for half the deaths in the nation, the report said.

"In 1982, nearly 1 million American deaths were attributed to these diseases. ... almost as many deaths as were caused by cancer, accidents, pneumonia, influenza and so on — all combined," the AHA said.

The association said the increase in the number of coronary bypass surgeries, procedures to divert blood around clogged arteries, fell from 16 percent in 1981 to 14 percent in 1982.

The report stresses major factors Americans can change to improve their chances of dying from heart disease. The association recommends that people stop smoking, control high blood pressure, eat a diet, exercise, lowered salt consumption and medication if necessary, to control cholesterol and saturated fat in the diet and control diabetes.

"Diet is a safe, practical and effective way to reduce blood cholesterol for most people," the report said. "Reducing the intake of high-fat meats, whole-milk dairy products, egg yolks and other foods high in saturated fat and cholesterol is helpful, along with eating more poultry, fish, fresh fruits and vegetables, grains and cereals and low-fat products."

In addition it lists three contributing factors — obesity, lack of exercise and stress — that are linked, not yet proven to cause heart disease.

"Lack of exercise has not been clearly established as a risk factor for heart attack," the AHA said, "when combined with overweight, which is clearly a contributing factor."

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Ex-convict lobbies legislature

United Press International
AUSTIN — Texas legislators are fond of saying they need the hordes of lobbyists in Austin because they provide lawmakers with expert advice and information that might not otherwise be available.

Martha Quinlan, the new lobbyist for an Austin-based prison reform group, should fall into that category since she should qualify as an expert on life in the Texas Department of Corrections.

The 53-year-old Galesburg, Ill., native was released from prison only a year ago after serving more than 8 1/2 years of a 20-year sentence for armed robbery.

In fact, she has spent 25 years behind bars in Illinois, Louisiana, Texas and California for crimes such as aggravated assault, burglary, forgery, possession of drugs and robbery.

"I tried it all," says Quinlan, who is now ready to try her hand at lobbying the Texas Legislature on behalf of Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants.

But Quinlan realizes that because of her extensive criminal record, she must establish credibility with lawmakers if she hopes to be effective in influencing legislation.

"I'm well aware of the fact that I probably will be rejected by any number of people, but that will not stop me," she says. "I think it's important that they do know that (she has a record). Otherwise, how will they know that I do know what I'm talking about?"

Quinlan was released to a halfway house in Austin on Jan. 13, 1984, and soon went to work for CURE.

When CURE founders Charles and Pauline Sullivan establish a Washington, D.C., office later this year, Quinlan hopes to take over as director of the Texas office.

Sullivan said he believes Quinlan's serious criminal record could be an advantage in lobbying lawmakers.

"Texans like to see a success story, and I think Martha is a success story," he said. "One reason we felt Martha could make a contribution is that the Legislature doesn't see people walking the halls who have turned their lives around."


"We're not talking about someone who got in trouble with some pot smoking and spent a few years in prison or something and was rehabilitated. We're talking about someone with a long history of incarceration. I think Martha is a symbol that people are salvageable and shouldn't give up on them."

Quinlan said she opted to move to Austin to continue the fight for inmate rights that she began as a writer in prison.

"I felt we had exhausted these remedies on conditions in TDC, as a consequence I felt the only way to go beyond that for additional relief was through the Legislature," she said.

Quinlan first went to prison at age of 22 in 1954 for a burglary in Louisiana. Paroled from an Austin prison in 1973, she moved to Houston in 1974 and got a job in Houston.

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