

Language barriers hamper MDs

Associated Press

PORT ARTHUR — A woman suffered an attack of appendicitis while on a ship in the Gulf of Mexico and was transported by helicopter to Port Arthur's Park Place Hospital.

At the hospital's emergency room, she was unable to communicate with doctors and nurses because she spoke only Russian.

Emergency care was administered, but discussions between the woman and those trying to care for her were delayed until two translators could interpret the woman's words.

The problem was not that she spoke Russian, but that she spoke the language in an unfamiliar dialect, and the first interpreter had trouble understanding the woman, said Pat Adams, director of community relations at Park Place.

A rabbi from Beaumont finally was able to understand the woman and translate conversations between doctors, nurses and the patient, Adams said.

Most doctors and nurses in the Port Arthur area don't get to hear unfamiliar languages in unusual dialects, but some emergency care pro-

fessionals find themselves face to face with people who don't understand a word of English.

The shipping industry and the arrival of refugees have provided Port Arthur with an economic base and cultural diversification, but they have also produced communication problems similar to the one with the Russian woman.

Some foreign seamen, visitors to the city and Vietnamese residents have found themselves confronted with medical emergencies. Many of these people face the task of communicating pain to medical professionals who do not speak the same language.

"Ninety-nine percent of them are seamen," said Jerry Rowley, R.N., clinical coordinator of nursing at Park Place. Many of the non-English speaking emergency patients are not residents, she said, but people just passing through the city.

"Expressions of pain and fear are universal," said Jan Dengler, R.N., at Park Place Hospital. Rowley and Dengler can recall situations where they have pantomimed their way through emergency room episodes. Talking is not always necessary when

pain is evident, Dengler said.

Family members of foreign-speaking patients can be helpful if they speak English. But the family may panic if they cannot understand what is happening to a relative under emergency care.

Recently, a Vietnamese man who had severely injured his leg on a shrimp boat was able to talk with the hospital's medical staff, Dengler said, but his mother could not understand enough English to be sufficiently informed about her son.

"She freaked out," Dengler said. The woman remained frightened until another family member arrived to assure her of her son's safety and condition.

"We usually try to bring them into the room and show them that their relative is OK," Dengler said. "We can't tell them they are OK over the phone."

Although there are problems in treating some non-English speaking people, Rowley and Dengler agree that communication problems will not get in the way of treatment.

"We pantomime a lot," Dengler said, "but if it is impossible to com-

municate we always render emergency care."

Problems occur when a medical situation is not an emergency, but medical personnel need consent to treat someone, Rowley said.

Information about drugs a person may be taking is needed before treating someone in any case, Rowley and Dengler said.

Rowley said there are many more drugs available to Europeans than to Americans.

Rowley, a member of the Olympic Village Polyclinic in Los Angeles, said the organization of the clinic during the Olympics enabled most people to be treated without a hitch. Even with the many countries represented, Rowley said, she remembers only one problem with communication, when a man from Tibet presented a slight problem for interpreters because of a rare dialect.

A list of interpreters was available at the clinic, but Rowley said most people who could not speak English could speak French.

Dengler and Rowley are able to converse in a small amount of Spanish, and a number of Park Place employees are bilingual.

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Overdue

Library book returned after 47 year absence

Associated Press

HONOLULU — A book at least 47 years overdue from the USS Arizona's library has been returned to the Arizona Memorial.

The museum has only two other volumes from the library of the historic battleship, sunk in the Pearl Harbor attack on Dec. 7, 1941.

This third book, "The Incurable Filibuster," was delivered Dec. 7 by University of Hawaii scientist Gary McMurtry. The book had been checked out from the ship's library before 1927.

The book, an autobiography by Col. Dean Ivan Lamb, deals with war and revolution in Central and South America.

How the book found its way from Pearl Harbor to California and back again is an adventure in itself.

McMurtry said he was in Santa Rosa, Calif., visiting Jim Sipher, who had heard about the book from his landlord, George La Favre.

Sipher introduced McMurtry to La Favre, who asked McMurtry to return the book.

La Favre described how he acquired the ship's book from a close friend named Murdoc G. Henry.

He said a sailor from the Arizona had been reading the book and became interested in a part describing how author William Sydney Porter adopted the pseudonym O. Henry and his connection with Murdoc G. Henry in Honduras.

Murdoc Henry was superintendent of all the banana lands in Honduras for United Fruit Co., La Favre said. He said Henry had visited with Porter, who also was

in Honduras and "had probably the only civilized abode in the area."

"It was claimed at the time that Porter adopted the name of O. Henry because (Murdoc) Henry was in demand all over the plantations and they were always calling, 'Oh, Henry, oh, Henry,'" La Favre said.

He said the sailor, whose name is unknown, had apparently wanted to learn more about Porter. He knew somebody in the United Fruit Co. who told him about Murdoc Henry, who had retired and was living in a penthouse in San Francisco.

La Favre said the sailor, after finding Henry, "brought the book and showed it to him, and for some reason decided to give it to him."

When Henry died, his wife gave La Favre the book.

Teams gather to inaugurate World Cup soccer stadium

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — The national soccer teams from Mexico, Poland, Bulgaria and Switzerland are in Queretaro this week to inaugurate the Corregidora Stadium, the 12th and final stadium to be used in the 1986 World Cup tournament.

On Tuesday, President Miguel de la Madrid will inaugurate the \$13 million stadium, named after a heroine of the 19th century Mexican War of Independence. The stadium has a capacity for 40,643 fans.

Joao Havelange, president of the International Federation of Football Association, and other top international soccer officials will attend the inauguration.

The tournament starts Tuesday afternoon with Mexico playing Poland and Bulgaria playing Switzerland. On Wednesday, Mexico plays Switzerland and Bulgaria plays Poland.

Game times Tuesday are 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. CST and 5 and 7 p.m. CST Wednesday in Queretaro, 138

miles northwest of Mexico City.

The three European teams are fighting for spots in the 24-team World Cup competition next year. The tournament here will give them a chance to try the turf and get some practice under ideal weather conditions.

As a host of the World Cup, Mexico qualifies for the tournament automatically. The only other team certain to qualify for the World Cup tournament is defending champion Italy.

The Mexican team is coached by Yugoslav-born Bora Milutinovic, who called 31 players for the tournament.

The tournament will be the first match of the year for the Mexican team after a fairly successful 1984 visit to Europe and South America.

Switzerland, current leader of Group Six in the World Cup eliminations in Europe, arrived Saturday night from Bogota, Colombia.

Swiss coach Paul Wolfisberg said

chances to return to Mexico for the World Cup.

"We have played two games so far and we have won them both," he said of the elimination tournament. "We have to play the Soviet Union soon and, if we win, our chances of being here for the World Cup will be very good."

In Group Four of the World Cup, Bulgaria is tied for second with Yugoslavia. The Bulgarians lost 2-1 last week to a team of players from the professional teams in Mexico's Jalisco state.

"The trip affected us last week," Bulgarian Coach Ivan Vutsov said. "Our rhythm was off."

Poland's Coach Antoni Piechniczek told reporters that he did not know much about the Mexican team other than it had a good year in 1984.

"We came here to train our players and to provide a good show," he said.

Student lobby says tuition hikes could hinder economic growth

Associated Press

AUSTIN — Although boosting tuition at state universities would raise money for a financially strapped state government in the short term, it would cost Texas in the long run by reducing educational opportunities, a students' group said Monday.

"We believe that the future prosperity of Texas is directly related to the education of its citizens," said John Tarbox, 25, Houston, a member of the Texas Student Lobby.

"For Texas to emerge from an economy based primarily on oil and agriculture to a more broad-based economy bolstered by the strength of the high technology industries, education will be essential," Tarbox said.

The student lobby, a statewide organization representing college students, said proposals before the Legislature to hike tuition would make it difficult for some poor students to attend college.

The student lobbyists said they

don't think lawmakers have looked at all the ramifications of such a decision.

"The rush to raise tuition has not been a careful, deliberate study of Texas' policy," Tarbox said. "Rather, it has been treated as a revenue issue in a nearsighted attempt to balance the budget and avoid political difficulties."

The state is facing a \$1 billion shortfall between the revenue it expects to take in during the 1986-87 budget years and the amount agencies currently are spending.

To help offset that difference and generate more money for universities, Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby last week proposed raising undergraduate resident tuition from \$4 per semester hour to \$8 per hour in 1986.

Tuition for other students also would be increased, and the boosts would raise about \$120 million more for higher education, Hobby said.

At present, Texas undergraduate tuition is the lowest in the country. But the students said tuition makes

up only a small part of the total cost of a college education.

"The cost of attending a four-year, public institution in Texas is almost identical to the national average," said Mitch Kreindler, 22, Dallas, a former student body president at the University of Texas.

"Even more surprising, the cost of higher education in Texas is substantially higher than the average cost of attending college in other states in the southwest."

Meg Brooks, 22, of Austin, said the students see several options to an across-the-board hike if the Legislature does raise tuition.

She said lawmakers should consider smaller increases phased out over a longer period of time to allow parents and students time to prepare for the additional costs.

Brooks also said lawmakers should make certain that sufficient funds are put aside for financial aid for students who otherwise couldn't afford the increase.

Inns face economic hardship

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Houston hotel operators are trying to cope with a sagging market that has seen occupancy levels dip to just 44 percent, well under the 70 percent rate considered break-even.

"Houston always had the extra kick from the oil business," according to Jerry Carpenter, a partner in the accounting firm of Ernst & Whinney.

The November occupancy rate fell by 7 percentage points from year-ago figures, the fourth consecutive month that levels dropped from the previous year, says an analysis compiled by the Houston accounting firm of Laventhol & Horwath.

John Keeling, who follows Houston hotels for the firm, said the lagging numbers make some hotels good targets for sale.

Others, meanwhile, are being shopped around by their owners. But Keeling said some firms looking for a buyer of their hotels "have been insulted by the (low) offers they are getting."

Houston has more than 30,000 hotel rooms in 110 facilities.

"We're trying to survive 1985 and hope 1986 will be better," said Sonny Look, a principal in the Houston-based Sunbelt Hotels Inc.

Department complying with lawsuits

Associated Press

AUSTIN — The commissioner of the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation said Monday his agency is doing all it can to comply with federal court rulings to upgrade services.

Testifying to a Senate subcommittee, MHMR Commissioner Gary Miller said the court orders have "placed extreme pressures on the department."

"We have on occasion been found to be in non-compliance with provisions of the settlement when we believe and still believe that not only were we in compliance but we exceeded in the compliance," Miller said.

He blamed differing interpretations of the settlements in two lawsuits brought by patients of state institutions.

The department currently has a \$590 million budget to run eight state hospitals, 13 state schools, 31 community mental health centers and other programs with a total of 25,900 employees.

David Pharris, a member of a review panel appointed by U.S. District Judge Barefoot Sanders in the settlement proceedings, told lawmakers that his panel has seen compliance and improvements throughout the department.

Pharris said the department originally lacked adequate individualized treatment plans, protection of patients from those with aggressive behavior, a poor staff-to-patient ratio and requirements for placement of patients who no longer needed to be institutionalized.

Since then, Pharris said, he has been "impressed with new programs on aggressive behavior patients and improvements in staff ratios."