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by Tom Batiuk

'Jelly-like' clot affects heart, causes death

Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Jack C. Burcham, whose 10 days with an artificial heart were aggravated by excessive bleeding and kidney failure, was killed by a "jelly-like" blood clot that squeezed part of the heart and interfered with its pumping, doctors said Thursday.

The retired railroad engineer deteriorated rapidly during a 30-minute period Wednesday night. His blood — thinned by dialysis and anticoagulants — oozed from leaks throughout his chest cavity and lungs, said Dr. Allan M. Lansing, medical spokesman for Humana Hospital Audubon's Jarvik-7 implant team.

Once in the chest, the blood thickened and pressed against the left atrium, a remnant of Burcham's natural heart, and prevented the mechanical left ventricle from filling with blood, Lansing said. That action, he said, caused a sudden drop in blood pressure and backed up blood in the lungs.

No clots were found inside the artificial heart, Lansing said.

"This is a very common condition that we see in surgery, particularly at the end of all major cardiac procedures," Lansing said. "Clots may form in blood that has leaked out of a given area — jelly-like clots — but they are not rigid enough clots to seal holes in tiny blood vessels. So a patient will keep on oozing."

The compression condition, cited by Lansing as the cause of death, is known as cardiac tamponade.

Burcham's death came at 9:48 p.m. Wednesday, when doctors disconnected a respirator and the heart's power system after realizing "there really was nothing more we could do," implant surgeon William C. DeVries said in a news conference.

The 62-year-old Le Roy, Ill., man was the world's fifth and oldest recipient of the permanent man-made heart. His life with the device was the shortest. Three men with Jarvik-7 hearts are living.

William J. Schroeder, 53, and Murray P. Haydon, 58, are under DeVries' care in Louisville, while an unidentified man in his mid-50s is recuperating from an April 7 implant in Stockholm, Sweden.

Cemetery controversy

White House avoids comment on West German trip

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The White House ducked questions about a still-planned presidential trip to a German military cemetery Thursday as West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl thanked President Reagan for "the noble gesture of a friend."

"We are not answering Bitburg questions; there has been no change in the president's plans," spokesman Larry Speakes said, using the name of the graveyard that has embroiled the White House in controversy over the scheduled May 5 visit. The cemetery contains the graves of some 2,000 German war dead, including 47 Nazi SS troops.

Kohl thanked Reagan for going ahead with the visit in a speech to the West German parliament in Bonn.

Even the president himself, who sometimes talks about subjects his aides shun, turned aside a question about whether he was considering changing his plans.

White House chief of staff Donald Regan said Wednesday that Reagan would definitely go to Bitburg but that plans for the ceremony, in which the president has been scheduled to lay a wreath, were still being discussed with officials in Bonn.

Speakes would say only that there had been "no change in the president's plans" and that "all facets of trips are always under discussion." Reagan leaves Tuesday for a 10-day European trip including an economic summit conference in Bonn.

The White House spokesman declined to say whether Reagan had been in touch with his U.S. Information Agency director and close friend, Charles Z. Wick, about a newspaper interview quoting Wick as calling the Bitburg visit "a tragedy."

The USIA issued a statement saying, "The focus of the Washington Post story of this morning was essentially accurate, but the fact that the good intentions of the trip are lost in the controversy is what Mr. Wick described as a 'tragedy'."

A number of Jewish organizations, concentration camp survivors and veterans' groups have expressed outrage at Reagan's plans.

An administration official said privately Wednesday that Reagan attempted to talk his way out of the cemetery visit during a telephone conversation with Kohl last Friday, but the chancellor was adamant that Bitburg remain on their joint schedule.

Elaborate Ethiopian relief plan investigated by attorney general

Associated Press

DALLAS — A local talent agency whose elaborate plan to raise \$5 million for Ethiopian famine victims is under investigation by the attorney general says its campaign is genuine.

The investigation was launched after all but one of the organizations cited as backers denied any connection with the Brochelle Agency Inc. campaign.

Bill Beckhart, vice president of trade practices for the Better Business Bureau, said he has been unable to verify that the Brochelle Agency has even planned any fund-raising events.

"I called (the attorney general) because when we see something that's looking to be pretty bad, we will usually check with a law enforcement agency," he said Wednesday.

Lee Haynes, general manager of the agency, said, "We are genuine in this effort."

Brochelle officials announced plans for the USA for Africa in Dallas fund drive at a news conference last Friday.

They described a series of events — including a telethon, concerts, a "ball extravaganza," and a children's drive — to raise \$5 million during six days in May. Brochelle representatives

also said that several prominent Dallas corporations had pledged money.

Of the sponsors named at the news conference, only the Dallas chapter of the NAACP said it is affiliated with the Brochelle effort.

Representatives of the Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce, the Dallas Chamber of Commerce, Southwestern Bell Telephone, Diamond Shamrock Corp., the Southland Corp., and the national USA for Africa Foundation in Los Angeles have said they are not connected to the campaign.

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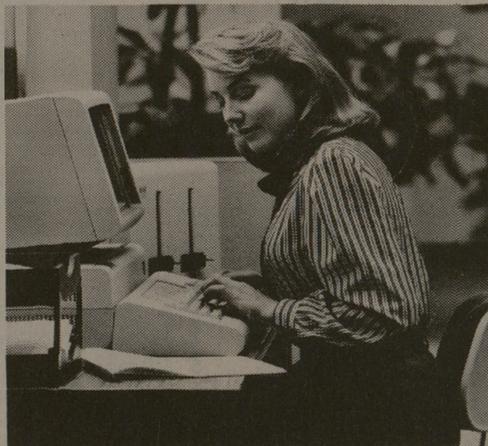
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