

World and Nation

Lincoln edges Washington in place race

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — George Washington may be the father of our nation, but when it comes to namesakes, Abraham Lincoln has edged him out by a narrow margin.

Washington, of course, has a whole state named after him, as well as the nation's capital, while Lincoln's most prominent namesake is probably the capital city of Nebraska.

Those are just the highlights, though.

Nationwide, there are no less than 1,346 towns, schools, reservoirs, parks, streams, valleys, springs, ridges and other geographic features named Washington.

But the U.S. Geological Survey reveals that there are 1,361 places and things called Lincoln.

At this season of celebrating the birthday anniversaries of the two presidents, Illinois, "the Land of Lincoln," has the most potential for festivities, with some 128 spots named for that president.

Tylenol not poisoned at plant level, official says

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The chairman of Johnson & Johnson said Sunday disputed suggestions that cyanide was put in Tylenol capsules at the plant or distribution center, saying it seemed too great a coincidence that two bottles would "end up at two stores a block and a half apart."

At least 14 states and the District of Columbia, along with Italy, have banned sales of Tylenol capsules or ordered them off store shelves, and one official called on the federal government to control production and sale of all drugs in capsules.

A young woman died in suburban Westchester County after taking two capsules that contained potassium cyanide. A second poisoned bottle of capsules was found later in a store less than two blocks from the market where the woman's pills were bought.

According to the chairman of the company that manufactures the popular painkiller, investigators reported no new leads in the case.

Interviewed on the ABC News program "This Week with David Brinkley," Johnson & Johnson's



James Burke said FBI Director William Webster told him Sunday morning that, "Unfortunately, there's nothing new at this time."

Burke disagreed with Westchester District Attorney Carl Vergari, who said FBI test results led him to believe the capsules were poisoned "at the plant."

Vergari said FBI officials told him that tests indicated the seals on both tainted bottles had not been broken after they left the factory.

But Burke said the bottles came from two plants, one in Pennsylvania, the other in Puerto Rico. He also rejected a theory that the pills were tainted at a distribution center, also in Pennsylvania, where both bottles were handled last summer in the space of two weeks.

A tamperer at the distribution

center would have had to penetrate "an awful lot of material" in which the capsules were packed, he said.

Then, Burke said, the tamperer would have to ensure that it would "end up going through the A&P (supermarkets) distribution center which goes to 38 states. . . . And then you've got to get (the other bottle) into a packing center that goes to the F.W. Woolworth distribution centers in 26 states."

Finally, he said, the pills had to "end up at two stores a block and a half apart at the same time."

Vergari said he would send investigators to the Pennsylvania Tylenol factory this week.

Frank Young, head of the federal Food and Drug Administration, noted that the bottles had several layers of protective coating. "It really sounds like it's much more of a professional-type job," he said.

Westchester County Executive Andrew O'Rourke called on the federal government to ban the use of such capsules, except where medically necessary or prepared by local pharmacists for sale only behind the counter.

Insurance company rule condemned

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — For every dollar the government pays health insurance companies to process Medicare claims, the Reagan administration expects them to deny at least \$5 in benefits, according to federal regulations.

The obscure rule for evaluating the performance of insurance companies hired by the Health Care Financing Administration is cited by critics as evidence the administration is trying to make it harder for elderly people to get Medicare to pay for post-hospital care.

The regulation, which was formally adopted in 1982 and has been updated several times since, was detailed in a letter last summer to Chairman Edward R. Roybal, D-Calif., of the House Select Committee on Aging from Lawrence J. DeNardis, acting assistant secretary of health and human resources.

"Both medical review and audit are critical elements," DeNardis wrote of the cost-benefit ratio. "Failure to succeed in these elements could

lead to various contract actions, including termination."

No insurance company's contract has been canceled for failure to return \$5 in savings for every dollar it earns. But critics contend that companies getting the lucrative audit contracts feel pressure to deny benefits with little regard to the merits of claims.

William Dombi, co-director of Legal Assistance for Medicare Patients in Connecticut, said, "We are finding clearly covered cases that are being denied. They are happening with too great frequency."

One insurance company executive, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said the rule isn't a factor in the way the firm processes claims because she has never told her auditors about it.

"I know that the decisions they are making are supportable because they are not aware of that requirement," she said.

Thomas McElvogue, a vice president of Blue Cross of Greater Philadelphia, says the rule has not affected his company's review of Medicare

claims. "I don't think there has been any increased pressure on us to come up with more savings or anything specific."

But operators of nursing homes and home health agencies contend they are feeling the brunt of a government crackdown on Medicare benefits for the care they provide.

Robert Stutz, an administrator of a hospital-based nursing home in Philadelphia, said the facility's rate of denied claims soared to 70 percent for a time last year after Blue Cross was ordered to check the medical charts of every patient admitted following hospitalization.

Stutz said the facility was forced to close half its beds last year because too few patients were qualifying for Medicare.

Philip Nathanson, a senior HCFA official, said, "There is not a campaign here to cut reimbursements to nursing homes in any way."

"Our main interest in intensifying reviews is to make sure that people are not being prematurely discharged from hospital beds, not to restrict nursing homes."

Kenya seeks to stop custom of mob justice

Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya — Mob justice, often lethal and frequently misdirected, is a Kenyan custom of which no one is proud.

A shout of "mwizi" — Swahili for thief — can transform passers-by on a city street into a hysterical mob that will punch, kick, bludgeon and stone a suspect to death without pausing to determine the facts of a case.

Since Jan. 1, two suspected robbers have been stoned to death after a chase through a Nairobi shantytown, a burglar who stole a tool box was set ablaze by another Nairobi mob and a woman in a village southeast of the capital was beaten to death after being accused of using witchcraft to poison fruit she gave to three children who became ill.

Kenyan police keep no statistics on mob killings, but the average annual toll in recent years, as gauged by newspaper reports, appears to be perhaps two dozen.

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There are conflicting theories why mob justice is more common in Kenya, East Africa's most prosperous country, than elsewhere in the region.

One factor may be a public perception that thieves are unlikely to be caught by police.

Harrison Musau, a deputy commissioner of the national police, said, "If there were policemen everywhere, where they could arrest these people, there would be no need for mob justice."

A recent informal survey by a Nairobi newspaper, The Standard, indicated many Kenyans view mob justice as an effective deterrent.

Arthur Okoth-Owiro, a lecturer in criminal law at the University of Nairobi, told the Associated Press, "Mob justice has more to do with self-hate than it does with stopping crime. The people who engage in it are normally in the same social and economic category as the victims of mob justice. They are frustrated, hardened people who feel left out."

Mob justice is a product of Kenya's modern-day social problems, he said, not an evolution of the community justice traditionally administered in Kenya's villages, he said.

"In traditional Kenyan society, everybody had a place," he said. "Punishment was not arbitrary, and peo-

ple were rarely killed, even murderers."

Urban violence is one of the many problems worsening in Kenya and other African countries as their cities swell with arrivals from the countryside. Often, the newcomers give up the psychological comfort of family and tribal ties only to find that the city has too few jobs and too little decent housing.

"Just trying to survive in Nairobi is very difficult," Okoth-Owiro said.

There have been cases in Nairobi where thieves escaped by making a false accusation that prompted a mob to pursue and beat the wrong person. In other instances, angry mobs intent on violence have tried to pull their quarry from the grasp of intervening police officers.

Government officials, police officers and judges condemn the violent aspects of mob justice, but they encourage the public to play an active role in law enforcement.

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