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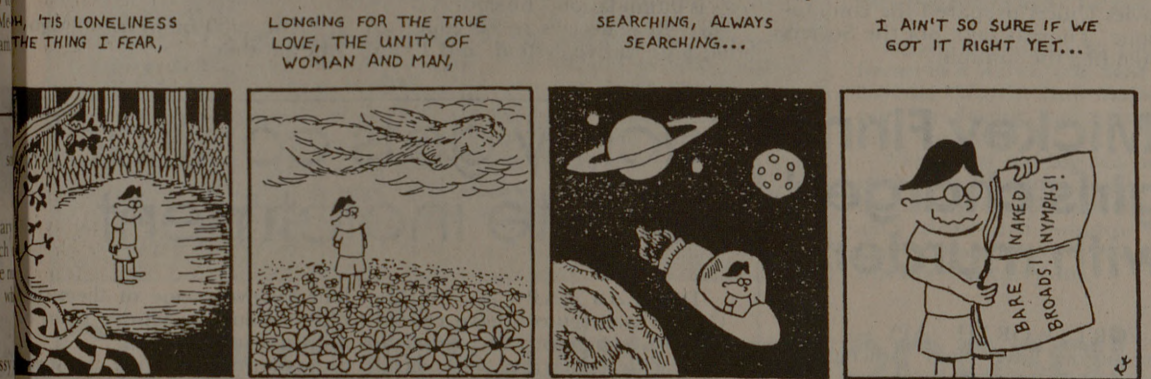
by Scott McCullar



by Jeff MacNelly



by Kevin Thomas



Most common VD hitting A&M

By Daryn DeZengotita
Reporter

About seven Texas A&M students a day discover they've been infected by the country's most prevalent sexually transmitted disease. It exhibits no symptoms, but can have devastating effects.

In 1986, 4.6 million cases of chlamydia will be diagnosed, yet it remains virtually unknown.

Dr. Claude Goswick, director of the A.P. Beutel Health Center said, "Without a doubt, this is the most commonly seen and treated sexually transmitted disease."

Chlamydia trachomatis, also called nonspecific or non-gonococcal urethritis, is a urological disease. It attacks the reproductive system, often exhibits no symptoms and can lead to painful pelvic inflammation, miscarriages and infertility.

According to the April 21 issue of Newsweek, the 4.6 million expected cases are more than twice the expected number of AIDS cases is 15,000.

Studies of some college students show that the infection rate on campuses may be as high as 10 percent.

"This organism is not really a true bacteria or a true virus. It's somewhere in between," Goswick said. "It is probably closer to bacteria in most of its characteristics. It happens, luckily, to be sensitive to tetracycline, a commonly used antibiotic."

Dr. Eugene Washington, assistant to the director of the sexually transmitted disease unit at the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, says chlamydia has been ignored in the face of other diseases.

While he calls the public-health consequences of AIDS "tremendous," Washington contends that chlamydia is also a major problem. But defining the size of that problem, not an easy chore, is the first step in attracting research money.

Health regulations in many states do not require reports of cases of chlamydia. Therefore, some researchers consider the CDC's estimate of 4.6 million cases this year to be conservative. The actual number may be as high as 10 million cases.

Goswick said symptoms include those usually involved with sexually transmitted diseases, such as urethral discharge, which is much more pronounced in males than females, or a mild burning sensation during and increased frequency of urination.

But about 70 percent of all cases show no symptoms. The disease is treated using a high dose of tetracycline on a ten-day schedule. Sexual partners are usually treated simultaneously.

Goswick said tetracycline may not be effective in a few individuals, but 99 percent of the time, patients are treated and that's the end of it.

"Of course, you can get it again," he said. "Many of these guys don't realize that just because they've been treated once doesn't mean they can't get it again."

The Health Center lab reports the cases of chlamydia for statistical purposes to the health department. The department also will treat the disease and will get involved with tracking down affected sex partners when necessary.

Goswick said people should take the initiative by being more careful in their choice of sexual partners and by using barrier methods of contraception.

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A&M scientist's idea may aid road paving

By Yvonne DeGraw
Reporter

When Dr. Donald Saylak was asked to testify in a case where two people were badly burned in a fire laying an experimental sulfur-coated road, he asked himself, "Isn't there a better way?"

Just so happens at that time I was creating some candy-coated pills," he said, "and I wondered I couldn't coat the asphalt with it."

The pellets he developed from the idea may completely change the way roads are paved, he said.

Sylak, a materials scientist in A&M's civil engineering department, said he has applied for a patent through A&M's Institute for New Technologies.

Normally, asphalt is stored and

transported at temperatures around 300 degrees so it can be pumped, he said. It must be mixed with aggregate (small rocks), which has been heated to drive out moisture, he said.

Since 1975 scientists have experimented with sulfur-extended asphalt for several reasons, Saylak said. Sulfur acts as a binder, compensates for low quality aggregate and is less expensive than asphalt, he said.

But sulfur also poses practical and safety problems. If it gets too cold, below 240 degrees, it can crystallize and solidify in storage tanks. If it gets too hot, above 310 degrees, it can give off toxic fumes.

Sylak said the pellets will be especially useful in situations where roads must be laid quickly.

Lawsuit to halt TECAT grading hits snag

AUSTIN (AP)—A lawsuit to stop 37 South Texas teachers' competency tests from being graded hit a snag Wednesday over the question of how to resolve broader legal challenges to public school reform legislation.

The specific issue before the Texas Supreme Court was a Webb County case in which State District Judge Ruben Garcia directed the Texas Education Agency to cease scoring and turn over to him 37 teachers' answer sheets from the March 10 statewide examination.

The teachers' lawyers had argued that their clients had been certified before the competency law went into effect and were entitled to retain that lifetime certification.

The Supreme Court blocked Garcia's order pending Wednesday's hearing at which lawyers for the TEA and the teachers presented arguments.

Kevin O'Hanlon of the state attorney general's office said Garcia had

If even 5 percent of the teachers fail what is basically a literacy test, that would mean that 300,000 Texas students are being taught by teachers who can't read or write.

— Kevin O'Hanlon of the state attorney general's office

no jurisdiction to act because the issue had to be raised in Travis County, home of the TEA. The TEA seeks to rescind Garcia's order granting a temporary injunction.

Since test papers have been graded and teachers are scheduled to learn Monday whether they passed, Chief Justice John Hill asked

O'Hanlon if Garcia's injunction would be moot if the high court stay remained in effect one more week.

O'Hanlon said it would but added that the TEA needed guidance on court challenges because a number of new cases are expected after the teachers find out the test results.

O'Hanlon and Donato Ramos of Laredo, lawyer for the 37 teachers, agreed that the case did not address the constitutionality of the competency test.

But they said the larger issue, as well as others, is addressed in a suit by the Texas State Teachers Association challenging the Texas Examination of Current Administrators, or TECAT. The teachers' association lost in state district court, and appealed to the 3rd Court of Appeals.

O'Hanlon said if even 5 percent of the teachers fail what is basically a literacy test, that would mean that 300,000 Texas students are being taught by teachers who can't read or write.

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