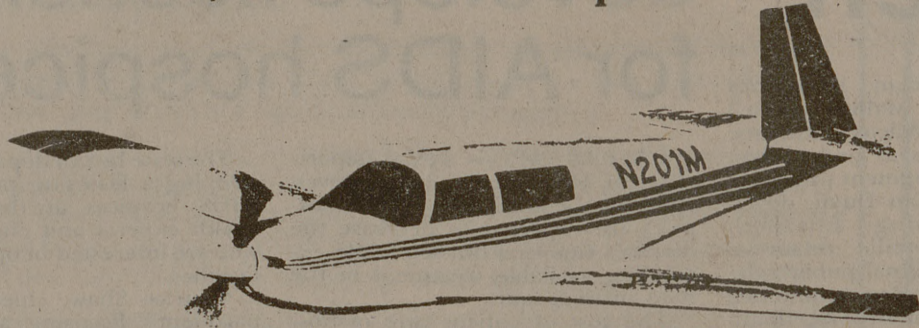


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ANDREW CHAVEZ

7:30-9 TEXAS LEGISLATURE
701 RUDDER
SEN. CARLOS TRUAN
SEN. HECTOR URIBE

TUESDAY

1:30-3 HISTORY 206 MSC
TONY BONILLA

3-4:30 WOMEN IN POLITICS 206 MSC
NORMA CANTU
HELEN CHAVARRIA
HELEN SOTO KNAGGS

4:30-5 PRESS CONFERENCE 206 MSC

7:30-9 FUTURE OF POLITICS 201 MSC
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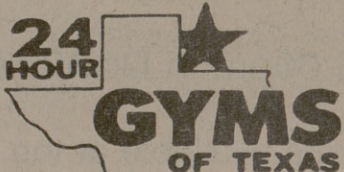
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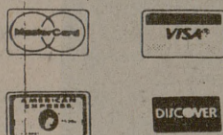
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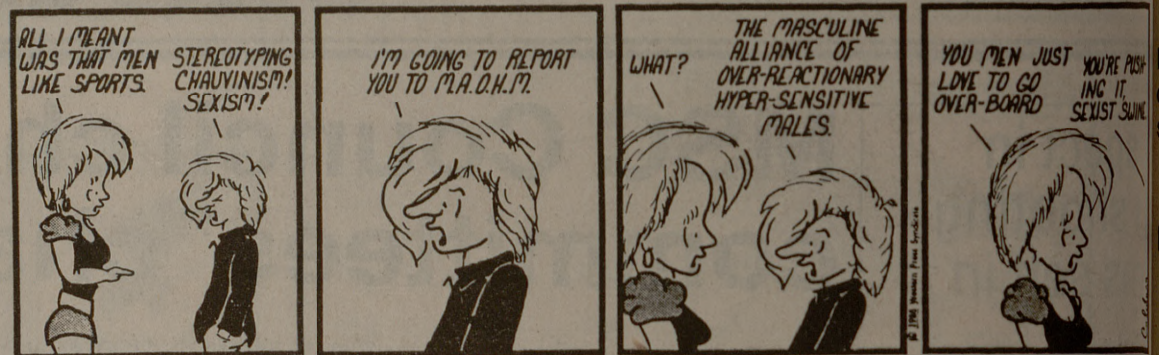


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by Jon Calda



Physiologist looks to find causes, cure for hypertension

By Sharon Maberry
Reporter

The causes of about 90 percent of the high blood pressure cases reported in the United States are unknown, a Texas A&M University researcher says.

Dr. Gerald Meininger, an associate professor of physiology at the Texas A&M College of Medicine, says he is conducting research to determine the unknown causes of high blood pressure, or hypertension.

Hypertension, which affects about 58 million Americans, increases an individual's risk of heart attack, stroke and kidney disease, Meininger says.

"I am interested in the role of microcirculation in high blood pressure," Meininger said. "Microcirculation involves the small blood vessels in the body."

These small vessels, embedded within the tissues of the body, control blood flow and delivery of oxygen and other nutrient material to the tissues, he says.

Meininger says hypertension occurs when these small vessels become constricted and resist blood flow. Pressure goes up because of the high resistance to blood flow through the small vessels. An abnormal amount of constriction of these vessels seems to be a problem in hypertension, he says.

Scientists can determine the causes of only about 10 percent of the high blood pressure cases reported in the United States, he says.

Known causes of hypertension include abnormal activity of the nervous system and of several circulatory hormones, he says.

"In addition, there appears to be a group of mechanisms that are intrinsic to the (blood) vessels themselves," Meininger says. "These mechanisms

of autoregulation are important for normal regulation of function in these vessels."

Meininger says these blood vessels sense specific signals by the body tissues and react accordingly to permit the correct amount of blood flow.

When the vessels constrict, the increase in pressure seems to stimulate these local mechanisms to constrict even more, he says. This amplifies the initial disturbance into a greater disturbance and blood pressure increases.

Trying to figure out what stimulates these mechanisms to cause vasoconstriction (a reduction in the size of the blood vessels) is what he's been researching since 1981, he says.

"I've called attention to these local mechanisms in autoregulation as contributors to the hypertensive disease process," Meininger says. "My goals are to identify precisely what these mechanisms are and if various drugs can be used to manipulate these mechanisms."

Meininger says his research is important because when the cause of hypertension is determined, it can be cured surgically.

However, when the cause is unknown, as in almost all high blood pressure cases in the United States, the problem can be treated but not cured, he says.

"Treatments are aimed at keeping the blood pressure down at a normal level," he says.

Such treatments include drugs that increase the size of the constricted vessels, reduce abnormal activity of the central nervous system and reduce heart action in the body, he says.

Other methods aimed at controlling hypertension are weight loss, exercise and eliminating smoking, he says.

Group rapes girl, shoots man in park

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Police searched Monday for a group of thugs accused of sexually assaulting a woman and killing her boyfriend when he tried to come to her defense, authorities said.

Authorities were looking for five young Hispanic men accused in the assault and slaying and the random shooting of another man who was walking near the scene, police spokesman Juan Stewart said.

Victor Paul Ramirez, 20, was shot in the back of the head in the chest at Padre Park jogging trail, just south of downtown, Stewart said.

His 21-year-old girlfriend was treated at Medical Center Hospital and released after the attack, which occurred about 11:40 p.m. Saturday.

The girlfriend told the Ramirez family Sunday that they decided to take a late-night stroll through the park. The girl jumped the couple on the jogging path and demanded Ramirez's money, said his brother, Joe Ramirez.

"He said, 'I don't have any money in the car,'" the brother said, quoting from the girlfriend's account. "They didn't like that. These two guys held my brother while three had their way with (the woman)."

The woman told police she heard Ramirez yelling and struggling with the two men holding him and that she believed one of the men holding her went to Ramirez and shot him.

The five men then fled and a few minutes later, Edwigen Enriquez Jr., 22, was shot in the abdomen as he passed a group of five men running through a parking lot.

"No motive — they just shot him at random," Tavitas said.

Athlete recovers from 10-month coma

FORT WORTH (AP) — Some high school students may dread the end of spring break, but 17-year-old Mike Guynes was anxious to return to class after a painful recovery from a football injury.

It's been nearly two years since Guynes collapsed during a Martin High School football practice and slipped into a coma when a blood vessel ruptured in his brain. On Monday, he entered classes for the orthopedically handicapped at Lamar High School, but that didn't dampen his spirits.

"I'm excited," Guynes said through his mother, Kay.

"It's getting back to a normal life."

He was injured during a "machine gun alley" football drill in which a player must block a string of other players running at him after another. Guynes, a defensive back, was in a coma for 10 months, and recovery has been slow and often painful.

Guynes said he always knew he would be back to school one day, but never thought it would take so long to prepare. His new classroom is part of a special education program for students who are physically handicapped.

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