

Doctors 'kill' patients to save lives

PITTSBURGH (AP) — To save Ethel St. Lawrence from the aneurysm pressing on her brain, doctors "killed" her for 40 minutes. They put her in a coma, stopped her heart, chilled her by 40 degrees and drained her body of blood.

St. Lawrence was back at work 10 weeks after what she calls "a cotton-pickin' miracle," a sort of suspended animation that lets surgeons cure hard-to-reach, high-risk aneurysms that once were considered inoperable.

"It is everything that technology can possibly offer," said her neurosurgeon, Dr. Robert Spetzler at Barrow Neurological Institute in Phoenix.

"It may be the surgery of the future in cases where bleeding poses the greatest risk to the operation," Dr. Julian E. Bailes, a neurosurgeon at Allegheny General Hospital here who studied with Spetzler, said.

"That's the biggest cause of death in surgery. If you could put someone in a state of suspended animation, you could operate in a totally bloodless field."

In a severely cold, bloodless state, the brain can be deprived of oxygen up to 55 minutes, giving surgeons time to remove the aneurysm — a bubble caused by weakness in the wall of a blood vessel — and clip arteries feeding it without the danger of massive bleeding and certain death.

Of 15 patients who have undergone the procedure at Barrow, only one has died, Bailes said. Most had "excellent" results, a few reported some weakness but otherwise did well, and most remained in a coma no more than five days.

"It's getting through the surgery," said Dr. Steven Shedd, a Barrow neuroanesthesiologist who was involved in St. Lawrence's operation.

"If you've tolerated the procedure and you wake up, you're going to be OK."

But the risks, including that the heart won't restart, are too great to use the procedure where normal anesthesia can adequately do the job.

And because the patient has to be taken to the point of clinical death for the operation to succeed, doctors approach it with "a lot of respect," said Shedd. "Every time I do one of these I get very nervous."

"You're taking a patient that's alive and breathing and stopping their hearts and putting them into this state."

"They are nothing. There is no breathing, no heart function. The brain function is nil. We tilt the table up and drain all the blood into the pump."

St. Lawrence, a 61-year-old Phoenix secretary, was rushed to Barrow on June 2, suffering from a severe

two-day headache and unable to open her right eye. Tests showed that a sinus aneurysm detected four years ago had grown.

Partly because of heavy doses of barbiturates given before surgery to help prevent stroke or brain damage, St. Lawrence recalls nothing about the June 6 operation. But she does recall experiencing a very strong sensation.

"I just had this immense feeling that I was being cared for. It felt like somebody was just holding me in

their arms and taking care of me and that I would be OK. It was just a feeling of peace."

Four months after surgery, she needs no medication and the severe headaches are gone, though she still

is unable to fully open her eye.

Bailes is confounded, though, by Cecilia Duffy, a 76-year-old Pittsburgh woman who spent 51 minutes in suspended animation Aug. 31 while surgeons removed an egg-sized aneurysm that had almost completely disabled her.

Duffy hasn't come out of the drug-induced coma, even though her brain activity is improving, and there is no evidence of brain injury, and she moves her legs when stimulated. "Quite frankly, I'm worried about

her because I would have thought she would have come out of it by now," Bailes said.

"As we go longer it's more likely she will have suffered some stroke, some sort of (brain) injury."

Piano concert dazzles crowd of 200 at A&M

By Andrea L. Warrenburg
Reporter

Werner Rose, pianist and conductor of music in the Department of Philosophy and Humanities, opened the University Chamber Series last night with his debut performance in Rudder Theater to a crowd of more than 200.

The crowd was dazzled by pieces by Domenico Scarlatti, Bartok, Franz Liszt and Johannes Brahms.

Sonata in F Minor from Opus 10, No. 3 by Johannes Brahms was called a "special piece" by Rose. Brahms was from inspiration of romantic piano. Rose said. Sitting tall at the keyboard, he brought its variations with powerful precision and emotion.

Rose also played an exciting piece by composer and Texas A&M assistant coordinator of music, Dr. H. Lieuwen. "Sonatina" composed in 1981 was a fast, dynamic piece that complimented Rose's quickness and Lieuwen's talent. The crowd's approval brought Lieuwen on stage after Rose finished the piece.

Rose came to A&M in June spearhead the development of music in the College of Liberal Arts in a 22-year tenure at the University of Wyoming.

Lieuwen arrived shortly after from the University of California Santa Barbara.

Newspaper agrees to charges of misquoting

AUSTIN (AP) — A newspaper agreed Monday with Texas Railroad Commission member Jim Nugent that a recent article quoted him incorrectly concerning his fund-raising methods.

The story in Sunday's editions of the *San Antonio Express-News* was the basis for a charge Monday by Ed Emmett, the Republican candidate for Nugent's seat, that Nugent's pur-

ported solicitation of contributions from those who appear before the commission is "unethical" and "amounts to extortion."

The article said Nugent, during a meeting with the *Express-News* editorial board, commented: "We get a list of those who come before the commission and we send them letters asking them to help out with the campaign."

In response to Emmett's charges, Nugent denied saying that.

His actual comment, the Democratic incumbent told the Associated Press, was that his staff purchased copies of a list from the secretary of state's office of people who had contributed to Railroad Commission campaigns in the past. His staff then sent off letters to those individuals, he said.

In a statement Monday night, *Express-News* assistant managing editor Jay Rogers confirmed Nugent's account.

"Nugent's comment was that he got a list of people who had contributed to previous Railroad Commission candidates and solicited campaign contributions from them. He pointed out there was nothing illegal

about that practice," Rogers said.

"It is unfortunate he did not bring the matter to our attention," Rogers said. "It is our policy to run corrections if we had erroneous statements in our paper."

Emmett, a former state representative from Harris County, called a news conference Monday to cite the article.

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