Study suggests illicit drug Ecstasy damages chronic users' brain cells

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NEW YORK (AP) — Chronic usnormality in a new study that sug gests the drug may damage brain

The work follows "ample evidence" that Ecstasy causes long-term brain cell damage in rats and monkeys, researcher George Ricaurte said. But it is too preliminary to prove whether the drug causes such damage in humans, he said.

Ricaurte, of the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore, presented the study recently at a meeting sponsored by the New York Academy of Sciences.

Ecstasy is formally known as MDMA, or 3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine. Users report a variety of pleasurable reactions, such as losing defensive anxiety and feeling more open emotionally.

Ag expert says

Texas officials

hindered study

DENVER (AP) — An agriculture economy expert testified Thursday

he was not allowed to talk with the

Texas Agricultural Experiment Station's director to gather research for a study about the Pecos River dis-

John Ellis, an assistant professor

of agriculture economy at Washing-

ton State University, told a special

master hearing evidence in the case

that the Texas attorney general's of-fice prohibited Dr. Jaroy Moore of

the agricultural station to provide

him data for an economic study of

Texas' yield and irrigation practices.

ble information about what I

thought was pertinent," Ellis testi-fied. He said in a later interview that

the information he needed was not critical, but "should be available."

Special Master Monte Pascoe is presiding over hearings to deter-

mine the method of reimbursement

for water that New Mexico used from the Pecos River in violation of a

In 1987, the U.S. Supreme Court

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democrats were betting

Thursday that President Bush would not permit a partisan dispute over budgetary accounting to block

speedy passage of the multibillion-dollar savings and

Senate Republicans have threatened to block final approval of the bill if it includes the Democratic version of how to pay for the bailout. But Sen. Donald W. Rie-

gle Jr., leader of the Senate contingent now working out differences with the House in negotiating sessions,

said neither the voters — nor Bush — would stand for

ference between the Senate and House versions of the

bill, negotiators tried to settle the question of whether to

count S&L rescue spending as part of the federal bud-

Democrats and the House would go ahead and let the

spending push up the deficit, but order that it not trig

ger automatic spending cuts under the Gramm-Rud-

Republicans say the Democratic plan will blow a can-

nonball-size loophole in the deficit-reducing Gramm-

Rudman law and inspire a congressional spending spree on other programs. Democrats say their plan al-

lows the government to borrow the needed S&L money

The Bush administration and the Senate want to keep \$50 billion in S&L spending out of the deficit.

Meanwhile, after resolving virtually every other dif-

ruled New Mexico used 340,100

acre-feet of water during the 1950s to which it was not entitled.

compact with Texas.

"I was unable to find out reasona-

In rats and monkeys, MDMA low levels of the breakdown product, ers of an illicit drug dubbed damages nerve cell fibers that con-"Ecstasy" showed a spinal fluid abtain serotonin, a substance some

brain cells use to communicate.

Ricaurte presented a study of squirrel monkeys in which MDMA treatment destroyed 90 percent of serotonin-containing nerve fibers in the forebrain. The monkeys also showed abnormally low levels in the spinal fluid of a substance that is a breakdown product of serotonin.

So Ricaurte studied the spinal fluid from 34 long-time human users of MDMA to look for abnormally

called 5-hydroxyindoleacetic acid or

The users had taken MDMA for an average of about five years, twice a month on average. They had not taken any within two weeks of the spinal fluid test.

On average, the users showed about 25 percent less 5-HIAA in their spinal fluid than was found in a group of 24 non-users studied for comparison.

Ricaurte cautioned that the study did not account for several factors

that can affect 5-HIAA levels in the spinal fluid, such as diet and activity.

Without that precaution, he said it would be premature to draw any conclusions about MDMA's longterm effect in humans. Current studies are accounting for factors that affect 5-HIAA concentrations,

He also said he and colleagues have just begun to look for long-term changes in behavior or thinking due to MDMA, and have not identified any. It may take detailed testing to uncover any effect, he

use of alternative motor fuels in

areas facing the most severe ozone

own clean air legislation, but Rosen-

berg said he is confident a compro-

sal before Congress, the four metro-

politan areas with the most severe pollution in 1988 — the New York,

Chicago, Houston and Los Angeles areas — would be required to phase in automobiles using alternative fu-

els as well as take other pollution

years to come into compliance. Chi-cago was added to the four after the

final 1988 ozone figures were tab-ulated, while the other three have

for some time been considered to

have the nation's worst air pollution.

by the EPA to have "serious" ozone

Another 27 cities are considered

The four areas would be given 20

Under the administration propo-

Democrats have introduced their

and carbon monoxide threat.

mise can be worked out.

control measures.

EPA says spread of dirty air affects millions of Americans

spread last year with 30 million more Americans living in areas where they breathed levels of air pollutants the government considers harmful, the Environmental Protection Agency said Thursday.

The agency said the latest figures, which cover the recent three-year period, mean that at least 101 areas will be required to take additional air pollution control measures under new clean air legislation that is likely to emerge from Congress this year.

In all, about 110 million people — better than four of every 10 Americans — were breathing air that at least during some summer days in 1988 had smog levels considered to be unhealthful, according to the EPA figures. The year earlier the number was about 80 million.

The EPA attributed the higher levels last year of ozone - a principal component of smog - largely to the fact that the country suffered through one of the hottest summers in half a century. Ozone is created when hydrocarbons, mainly from automobiles, combine with severe heat and dust. Severe smog pollution can cause a

variety of respiratory ailments in-cluding impaired breathing and chest pain, while long-term exposure can cause permanent lung tissue damage, according to medical

While the unusually hot 1988 summer may have been largely to blame for the surge in air pollution, EPA officials said the statistics re-

Democrats bet Bush will not allow

partisan dispute to block S&L bill

inforce the need for swift action in Congress on legislation tightening use of alternative motor fuels in

air pollution controls.

"This sharp increase in the number of areas not yet meeting the ozone standard is dramatic proof of the pressing need for a new clean air bill," EPA Administrator William Reilly said.

"The problem is immense," he said. "We must address it now."

"This sharp increase in the number of areas not yet meeting the ozone standard is dramatic proof of the pressing need for a new clean air bill."

> - William Reilly, **EPA** administrator

the EPA in determining what action a state will require of local communities to clean up the air under new federal air pollution laws being de-bated on Capitol Hill. William Rosenberg, EPA's asso-

ciate administrator for air, said that while some of the targeted communities may again come into compliance if the summer heat eases, most of the 101 geographic regions will have to impose additional pollution controls under the expected clean air legislation.

President Bush in June proposed a sweeping revision of the federal air

The 1988 figures will be used by

It was the last major snag holding up agreement be-tween the House and Senate, which had already passed

separate versions of the 10-year, \$166 billion bailout,

House and Senate were expected to vote on the com-

promise package next week before leaving on vacation.

However, Sen. Phil Gramm of Texas and 40 other
Republicans have said they're prepared to try to block
any compromise that includes the Democratic funding

And, White House Budget Director Richard Darman

on Thursday raised anew the possibility that Bush would veto the bill. Darman told reporters at a break-

fast that he would recommend a veto. Treasury Secre-

tary Nicholas F. Brady already has said he would push

However, Riegle, leader of the five-member Senate

negotiating team, said that voters, with S&L losses

mounting at a rate of at least \$10 million a day, would

"I don't think we can have anything derail the legis-lation and I think the president feels the same way,"

In compromises struck Wednesday, Senate delegates

agreed to tougher limits on junk bonds as well as a re-

quirement that S&Ls devote more assets to home mort-

not stand for delay.

Riegle told reporters.

After settlement of the funding dispute, the full

first outlined by Bush nearly six months ago.

Officials say higher rate of lung cancer deaths due to female smokers

ATLANTA (AP) — Lung cancer deaths are up 15 percent over seven years mostly because of the soaring death rate for women, who have given up smoking less readily than men, federal health officials reported Thursday.

More men than women die of lung cancer — about 74 deaths per 100,000 for males in '86, compared to 27 per 100,000 for women, the Centers for Disease Control said Thursday.

But the mortality rate from lung cancer among women is rising rapidly compared to the rate for men, and is expected to continue to climb for the next decade. From 1979 to 1986, the rate for women jumped 44 percent, while the rate for men was up just 7 percent.

As a result, lung cancer deaths overall increased 15 percent in the United States from 1979 to 1986, to rate of about 50 deaths per 100,000 people.

The highest lung cancer death rate among the states in 1986 was in Alaska, with 148 such deaths for a rate of 70.5 per 100,000 people, the Atlanta-based CDC said. The lowest was in Utah, with 275 such deaths, or a rate of 24.3.

In the next few years, the trend in lung cancer death rates is expected to continue, the CDC said. That is because, statistically, peaks in smoking seem to be followed by peaks in lung cancer deaths about 35 years later. More than eight out of 10 lung cancer deaths are believed to the quarte caused by smoking.

Nissan workers

vote to exclude

union at plant

SMYRNA, Tenn. (AP) – san employees voted overwheingly Thursday to keep United Auto Workers out of

plant, denying the union a hold in the nation's fully J

nese-owned auto factories.

"They can't give us anyth we don't already have," wor Dotty Lockhart said Thursday ter employees voted 1,622 to? against the UAW at Nissan'ss U.S. plant.

The balloting Wednesday a Thursday came after an light of the control of the

Thursday came after an month drive by the UAW and

seen as a test of union muscle

a challenge to automakers' str egy of locating plants in the trait tionally anti-union South.

The union effort also re resented a challenge to Japane style team management and Jap

nese industry's reputation fore

"It was like someone was try

plant, where pickups and Senta

to divide our family," work Redgie Gentry said of the or

nizing drive at the 6-year

After the vote, the UAW a cused Nissan of misrepresent

tion and intimidation to keep

the union, including "capti dience" meetings and a ba

of anti-union videos on the TV system, in which the au

benefits if the union won.

ker warned employees would

Jerry Benefield, president Nissan Motor Manufacturi

U.S.A., denied any intimidation and said he was elated by the more than 2-to-1 margin of vi

"I think the results of this elec-

tion are very strong support for

the participatory manage philosophy here at the com

and we're very happy we're goir to continue that," he said.

cars are made.

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Male smoking has been on the decline since the early 1950s, the CDU said. But female smoking peaks later - in the 1960s.

And the recent dropoff in smo ing among women — from 32 per With the cent in 1965 to 27 percent in 198 Conference studies — isn't nearly as sharp as in back at the drop in smoking by men - from to measure percent to 32 percent.

The result: the death rate from reality that lung cancer among women continuation happiness ues to climb and will do so until the Six differences. turn of the century, assuming the on NCAA 35-year lag between peak smoking receiving t and peak deaths.

Lung cancer already has passe athletics. A breast cancer as the most common got to expecause of cancer death among conference women, the CDC said.

omen, the CDC said. program a In actual numbers, 125,511 under one Americans died from lung cancer in available to 1986, the last year for which com-Plete statistics have been reported. Not be able Nearly two-thirds of those death questions v uestions w

occurred in people 65 and over.
The CDC noted that while almost half of all Americans who ever took alumni invup smoking have quit, more than made a hig

million people in the United State department continue to smoke. The lung cancer death rates are about the same for white female and black females — 27.4 p 100,000 for white women and 2 for black women in 1986. The dea rate among males, however, higher for blacks, 98.4 to 72.3.

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tions. \$200 incentive for those chosen to participate.

