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The Battalion

Wednesday, July 21, 1993

Studies show fleas carry Lyme disease

By MICHELE BRINKMANN

The Battalion

Researchers at Texas A&M University's College of Veterinary Medicine say laboratory experiments suggest common cat fleas carry the bacterium that causes Lyme disease and that cats can develop the disease after being infected with the organism.

New questions are being raised about how Lyme disease is transmitted from animal to animal and perhaps to humans, Texas A&M microbiologist and associate professor of Veterinary Medicine Dr. Colin R. Young said.

But he said he is not sure ticks are the only culprit.

"It's something that needs to be looked at in some kind of detail, because there are people who develop Lyme disease who say they've never been bitten by a tick," Young said.

Working with researchers at the Texas Department of Health, a team of A&M scientists has shown in laboratory experiments that cats can develop Lyme disease.

There is no evidence yet that humans are in danger of getting Lyme disease from fleas that feed on infected cats.

Young said the Texas Department of Health has no plans as of yet to issue a warning to the public about the chance of getting the disease from cats.

"The chance of a flea being able to transmit a sufficient number of spirochetes to cause Lyme disease in these cats would seem to be unlikely," Young said.

The research does show, however, that there is a lot that still is not understood, he said.

The Texas A&M researchers used bacteria taken from both fleas and ticks to artificially produce Lyme disease in laboratory cats. They found evidence of the Lyme disease in-

fection and signs that the bacterium had damaged the cat's heart, lungs, spleens and joints. These symptoms are similar to the disease's effects on humans.

"All of these facts, taken together, indicate that cats indeed, can develop Lyme disease in an experimental situation," Young said.

Lyme disease is named for the town of Lyme, Conn., where the first case of the disease was identified.

Early symptoms in humans include: a rash, fever, headache and nausea.

If untreated the symptoms can range from arthritis-like joint pain to neurological, heart and liver complications. The disease is easily and effectively treated with antibiotics.

Lyme disease has been reported in 49 states, including Texas. Texas reported 113 cases in 1992, according to the Texas Department of Health.

Lottery jackpot winner receives first installment

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — A 40-year-old woman was presented Tuesday with the first installment of a \$4.5 million lottery jackpot, becoming the fourth winner from Corpus Christi this month, the state comptroller said.

Gloria Flores, who matched all six numbers in Saturday's drawing, said she plans to open a second bakery with the money and continue working.

State Comptroller John Sharp presented Ms. Flores with a check for about \$200,000, one of 20 annual payments.

"Something must be in the water in Corpus Christi," Sharp said.

"In the last two weeks about \$27 million have been won (there)." Other winners from Corpus Christi in July were: Janie Elizalde, who shared a \$50 million jackpot with two others; Gloria Soto, who won \$1 million in the lottery's monthly grand prize drawing; and an unidentified winner who will share \$10 million from the July 14 lotto drawing.

New insurance rule protects minorities

Law provides for anti-discrimination

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — State insurance officials Tuesday gave preliminary approval to an anti-discrimination rule after hearing a report that showed low-income and minority consumers pay higher rates for insurance even if they are a lower risk.

The State Board of Insurance voted 2-0 for the anti-discrimination measure, and scheduled an Aug. 30 final vote on the matter.

Under the rule, insurers would be prohibited from discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, geographic location, sex or disability. The rule would apply to an insurer's decision of whether to insure or continue to insure an applicant and at what rate.

"I believe Texans are entitled to fair treatment in insurance matters," Insurance Board member Allene Evans said.

Jerry Johns, an insurance industry spokesman, said the rule is unnecessary because it, in part, duplicates federal law. He also disputed the report's findings of inequities in insurance premiums between wealthy and minority and low-income customers.

According to preliminary findings of the report, low-income and minority policyholders pay higher rates for property and car insurance.

The study shows that policyholders with homes worth \$50,000 or less pay on the average up to 10 percent more than the benchmark rate for property insurance. The Insurance Board sets the benchmark and the range that companies can charge above or below it.

Policyholders with homes worth between \$50,000 to \$150,000 usually pay below the benchmark, while those with homes worth \$150,000 or more pay 15 percent below the benchmark, the study said.

"There is some evidence there of inequities," said Mark Crawshaw, a consultant hired by the Texas Department of Insurance.

In medium and high minority zip codes, homeowners' rates were also higher for comparably valued homes in zip codes where few minorities lived, the report said.

Kyle ranch to be sold in auction this November

By CARRIE MIURA

The Battalion

The Sid M. Kyle ranch, of which Texas A&M University owns over 16,000 of the 49,000 acres of land, will be sold at a sealed bid auction Nov. 1.

The ranch, which is located near Pecos, Texas, was a gift donated by Mr. and Mrs. Sid M. Kyle to Texas A&M University.

Tom Goen, senior real estate analyst in charge of the Kyle project, said, the ranch is being sold

because there is no specific use for the ranch at this time, and because it is not under lease.

"Rather than having the ranch just sit there, we'll sell it," he said.

The other portion of the property is primarily leased to Texas A&M from the Texas Pacific Land Trust.

"The University is going to keep all of the mineral rights to the land and will also keep a small part of the surface rights," Goen said.

The surface rights that are to be

sold by A&M are valued approximately between \$500,000 to \$1,000,000.

There is a substantial amount of producing oil wells on the land, Goen said.

"The ranch has had very limited grazing in the past two years and has had time to grow and looks in good condition," he said.

Edward A. Hiler, vice chancellor and dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at A&M, said, "Proceeds from the sale will fund research and educa-

tional programs in arid and semi-arid land studies and support graduate student research and workshops on ranch and livestock issues in West Texas."

Mr. Sid M. Kyle, Class of '26, decided to donate the ranch to A&M in memory of his parents to demonstrate the family's respect and admiration for the University.

Kyle also was the nephew of E.J. Kyle, Texas A&M's first dean of agriculture, for whom Kyle Field is named.

Bill passed to extend college aid to veterans

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — State officials are scrambling to find a way to keep thousands of Texas veterans from losing up to \$2 million in college tuition and fee exemptions this fall.

Lawmakers have pleaded with Gov. Ann Richards to help, and they want an attorney general's opinion on the law that threatens the veterans' benefits.

Richards and others have asked the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to find a way around the measure.

"We are very aware of the concerns that have been expressed by veterans as well as a number of legislators and we are looking into some options that might be available," said

Measure requires proof of need for exemptions

Jan Friese, spokeswoman for the Coordinating Board.

It's quite a brouhaha over a measure that passed the Legislature unanimously and was signed into law by the governor. It takes effect Sept. 1.

The bill by Rep. Wilhelmina Delco, D-Austin, was intended to expand a veterans' college financial aid program to cover children whose parents were missing in action or died as a direct result of military service, including deaths due to chemical defoliant Agent Orange.

It covers more conflicts than the previously existing program, which applied to children of veterans killed in action during World War I, World War II, the Korean War and the Cold War.

But Rep. Warren Chisum, D-Pampa, added an amendment. Chisum says he thought his addition would require veterans' children to prove financial need before they could qualify for tuition or fee exemptions.

However, the amendment actually requires all veterans who receive aid to prove financial need.

Coordinating Board officials estimate that as many as 3,500 of the 9,784 veterans who received aid last year would be unable to qualify again this year.

The following incidents were reported to University Police Department between July 9-16.

Places Weapons Prohibited / Public Intoxication

Parking Area 37- A College Station Police Department radio broadcast led to the arrest and apprehension of two individuals who were involved in a fight that ended with gunshots being fired at a local eating establishment on Texas Avenue. The vehicle was stopped and a Smith & Wesson, .357 Magnum was recovered from the floorboard.

Credit Card Abuse

Neeley Hall- The victim's MasterCard was used without authorization to place several long distance calls. The individual using the card was identified and charges will be filed.

Driving While Intoxicated / Public Intoxication

Wellborn Road- An intoxicated motorist and passenger were arrested and incarcerated.

Assault

Houston Street- A Parking Services Officer was twice shoved aside by an individual who refused to comply with the officer's instructions. Criminal charges are pending.

Minor in Possession of Alcoholic Beverage

Joe Routt Boulevard- Three in-

dividuals were issued citations.

Criminal Mischief

State Headquarters Building- An exterior wall of a storage building was damaged by someone who spray-painted graffiti on the north side of the structure.

Burglary of Motor Vehicle

Parking Area 27- A Physio-Control Life Pak-5 (Monitor/Defibrillator) was stolen from an outer compartment of an ambulance.

Misdemeanor Theft

Doherty Building- A dark

blue 18-speed Trek 820 bicycle was stolen.

Engineering Physics and Blocker Building- An orange Murray 10-speed bicycle was stolen.

Wells Hall- A gray Savannah 10-speed bicycle was stolen.

Memorial Student Center- While parked in the bicycle rack, someone removed the seat from the victim's Trek 930 bicycle. Three days later the handlebars were stolen and the front fork dented and scratched.

Engineering Physics Building- The front tire was stolen from the victim's bicycle.

Harassment by Phone

Gainer Hall- The victim has received annoying phone calls consisting of hang ups, animal sounds, and derogatory comments.



Police Beat

Wanted: desperately seeking wives for four white males

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HOUSTON — Four Houston men have tried bars and churches in their hunt for wives. Now they're serious.

The four have plopped down \$2,500 to plaster their plea on a 48-foot billboard along one of the city's busiest freeways: "4 Middle Class White Males, 32-39, Seek Wives, Kids OK."

A Houston post office box number is provided for commuting women to communicate their interest.

"This is really not a joke," said 39-year-old Bill, one of the four single men. They asked that their last names not be used. "We really are serious. It would be an expensive joke if it was."

Bill and the others — John, 32; Mike, 35; and Ed, 36 — have rented the billboard along the Southwest Freeway just outside downtown Houston for a month.

Bill, a divorcee who was married 10 years, said he came up with the idea a year ago, and the four recently gave up on conventional ways of meeting women.

"The bar scene got very old," said Bill. "And at the church there's nothing but old ladies."

The four drew straws to see who would get to answer the first 15 responses, the next 15 and so forth.



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The Battalion (USPS 045-360) is published daily, Monday through Friday during the fall and spring semesters and Monday through Thursday during the summer session (except University holidays and exam periods), at Texas A&M University. Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77840.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Battalion, 230 Reed McDonald Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843.

News: The Battalion news department is managed by students at Texas A&M University in the Division of Student Publications, a unit of the Department of Journalism. Editorial offices are in 013 Reed McDonald Building. Newsroom phone number is 845-3313. Fax: 845-2647.

Advertising: For campus, local and national display advertising, call 845-2696. For classified advertising, call 845-0569. Advertising offices are in 015 Reed McDonald and office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Fax: 845-5408.

Subscriptions: Mail subscriptions are \$20 per semester, \$40 per school year and \$50 per full year. To charge by VISA or MasterCard, call 845-2611.