

South Texas woman's curiosity leads to discovery of lost siblings

The Associated Press

ALICE — Eight years after her father died, Lisa De Reese kept wondering about a woman's name he had tattooed on his right forearm.

Her father, Sam Magaro, had told her the tattoo reading "Sherry Lynn" represented a military vessel on which he once had served. As she grew older, she suspected it might have been an old girlfriend.

In August, De Reese finally learned the truth from an uncle: The tattoo marked the birth of a half-sister during a previous marriage by her father.

The discovery led De Reese to yet another: Her mother also had children by a previous marriage — four siblings, one of whom died nine years ago, De Reese never knew she had.

De Reese arranged reunions this month with her previously unknown siblings: Sherry Lynn Grunwell of San Antonio, Nancy Asbery of Capicola, Calif., Paul Reineck of Auburn, Calif., and Pamela Carranza of Duarte, Calif.

"We all had a lot of mixed emotions, but basically, it was happy. It was joyous," said De Reese.

Before Magaro's 25-year marriage to De Reese's mother, he had been married and had a daughter named Sherry Lynn, who now runs a day-care center in San Antonio.

He also had another daughter, born in Germany, whom De Reese still wants to meet.

"It just happened so fast. From one week to the next, I have six other brothers and sisters," De Reese said.

De Reese's mother, Joyce Magaro of Harlingen,

said her first marriage ended when her ex-husband left her with four children under age 5. Mrs. Magaro said her in-laws forced her to give up the children. Later, fear of rejection kept her from contacting them.

"Years went by and I could not interrupt somebody else's life. I just didn't want to hurt anybody," Mrs. Magaro said.

"I guess I probably walked to the telephone to pick it up a thousand times ... I felt like they might not accept me."

Two months after De Reese discovered her siblings, she and her mother flew to California, where they spent a week with family members they had never known.

"My mother was always very sad around the holidays, and I never knew why," De Reese said.

— Lisa De Reese

said. "On the way to the airport, she said, 'Now I can finally heal.'"

Mrs. Magaro, 65, said: "It was the most positive thing that has ever happened to me. The best word to describe how I feel is 'complete.' I have never felt that before."

A brother who died nine years ago was the one who suffered most from the disruption, family members said.

Asbery, 34, said her youngest brother was shifted from one relative's house to another and became a runaway at age 14. He died of AIDS.

"He got the brunt of all of this," Asbery said. Asbery said she had begun searching for her birth mother several months before she heard from De Reese.

"I think the timing was right for everybody," Asbery said. "All of us needed a little bit of growing up before we could do this."

No grand jury for Hutchison, attorneys say

The Associated Press

AUSTIN — U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison will not voluntarily appear before a grand jury unless her attorneys can present their side of the case to the panel, her defense team said Thursday.

Attorney Dick DeGuerin of Houston asked State District Judge Robert Perkins to allow him to give a half-day presentation to the 12-member grand jury.

He accused prosecutors of misleading the panel in its investigation of Hutchison's tenure as state treasurer.

Hutchison was indicted last month on charges of official misconduct, but the charges were dismissed because of a technicality.

The investigation has been taken up by another grand jury.

DeGuerin also asked Perkins to explain to the new grand jury state laws concerning the conduct of public officials.

"We're not asking for special treatment, only fair treatment," he said.

The Travis County District Attorney's office said Hutchison was asking for privileges that no one else is allowed before a grand jury.

First Assistant District Attorney Steve McCleery said grand juries only determine whether there is enough evidence to bring someone to trial.

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Dr. Ruth unveils program about rise in hepatitis B

The Associated Press

DALLAS — Dr. Ruth urged college students and other young adults Thursday to be more cautious about sexual partners because of a rise in hepatitis B.

Dr. Ruth Westheimer, a leading sex educator and "safer sex" advocate, used the 69th annual Associated Collegiate Press convention in Dallas to unveil a program aimed at cutting into the runaway incidence of hepatitis B among the nation's youth.

"People should have a relationship before they go to bed together. You ought to know the person you wake up in the morning with, so you won't have to worry and say ... 'Oh, my gosh. I wonder' ...," she said.

Dr. Ruth is a major spokesman of the American College Health Association in its effort to wipe out hepatitis B, one of the most dangerous of sexually transmitted diseases.

The organization says 300,000 Americans — three-fourths of them in the 15-to-39 age range — contract hepatitis B each year.

The disease is 100 times as contagious as the HIV virus that causes AIDS, and almost half of those who contract the disease do so through heterosexual activity.

"No woman should be naked in bed with a man unless she has decided to be sexually active with this man. The older I get, the stronger I feel people should have a relationship before they have sexual activity," Dr. Ruth said.

She said if young people have any doubt about their sex partners, they should be vaccinated immediately.

"For anybody single, separated, you have no choice but to be careful. Only a small amount of people are getting vaccinated," Dr. Ruth said.

Although hepatitis B is incurable, it can be prevented by a series of three shots over a six-month period.

The series of shots cost a total of \$60 to \$100 and are available in colleges, high schools, and communities across the nation, officials say.

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