

Schmidt Twins Are Termed Medical Mystery

Screaming sirens pierced the quiet of a cold winter night three years ago, waking the Schmidt household and sending Joanne, older of the five-month-old twins, into a screaming session of her own.

But Carol Anne, "the little one," slept through all the noise.

"It was then that we really knew," recalls Mrs. John L. Schmidt of Long Island City, N. Y. "My husband and I had always suspected, but never really admitted to ourselves, that 'the little one' couldn't hear."

The blonde, blue-eyed

Schmidt twins were born a minute apart on Columbus Day, 1964, but the difference between them is much more than a mere 60 seconds.

Their mother was stricken with German measles (rubella) early in pregnancy—so early that at the time she did not even know she was pregnant. The rubella virus caused Mrs. Schmidt only temporary discomfort and apparently left Joanne unaffected.

But for the other developing twin, Carol Anne, the result was tragic. She has suffered from near-total hearing loss since birth. Moreover, she has a heart defect and her general physical development has been slower than that of her sister.

What happened to the Schmidt twins is rare, if not unique.

"I have seen some cases where both twins were affected," the physician-in-charge of the March of Dimes-financed Rubella Birth Defects Evaluation Project at New York University Medical Center said in a recent interview, "but this is the first case I have seen in which one twin has been spared."

The physician is Dr. Louis Z. Cooper, assistant professor of pediatrics at

the university, who has examined the Schmidt twins and hundreds of other congenital rubella victims as part of the March of Dimes project.

The day a woman gives birth is, to say the least, filled with emotion and expectation. On that October day in 1964, the emotional stress on Eleanor Schmidt was particularly intense.

"We had no idea of what to expect. The doctors told us what rubella could do if contracted early in pregnancy. After the girls were born, we were just grateful it wasn't more serious," Mrs. Schmidt said.

She recalled that at birth Joanne was two pounds heavier and two inches longer than Carol Anne. Now the older twin is 12 pounds heavier than her sister.

"The little one," who wears a hearing aid in each ear, has been enrolled for half her young life in an auditory training program. She also attends speech therapy class and sees several specialists regularly.

To help prepare Carol Anne for school, Mrs. Schmidt keeps a special album of photographs from newspapers and magazines.

She has helped her daughter develop a vocabulary of 150 words from photos of the houses, cars, boats, etc.

"Joanne has been a big help, too," Mrs. Schmidt points out. "The little one follows her in everything, eating, walking. Of



These twins are a medical mystery. Joanne Schmidt, right, was born healthy, but Carol Anne was born with physical defects caused by German measles (rubella). With them is Dr. Louis Z. Cooper at March of Dimes Rubella Birth Defects Center.

course, she's not as well coordinated as Joanne. You can see that from her knees. They are forever scraped from falls."

Step-by-step the Schmidt family overcomes each new difficulty. They are not alone. The twins were born during one of the most severe rubella epidemics in the history of this country. In New York City alone, there were an estimated 200,000 cases in 1964.

HEALTH AND SAFETY TIPS

FROM THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Coincidence played a large part in establishing the reputed effectiveness of traditional remedies in medical folklore, points out TODAY'S HEALTH GUIDE the American Medical Association's manual of health information for the American family.

Warts, which come apparently from nowhere and often disappear for no apparent reason, gave undeserved reputations to innumerable remedies which happened to be used just preceding the spontaneous disappearance of a wart. The self-limiting character of many diseases, such as the milder sore throats and colds, also caused simple herbs and other home methods to gain a curative reputation which they did not merit, the health book says.

Here are the facts about some of the common misconceptions regarding health—

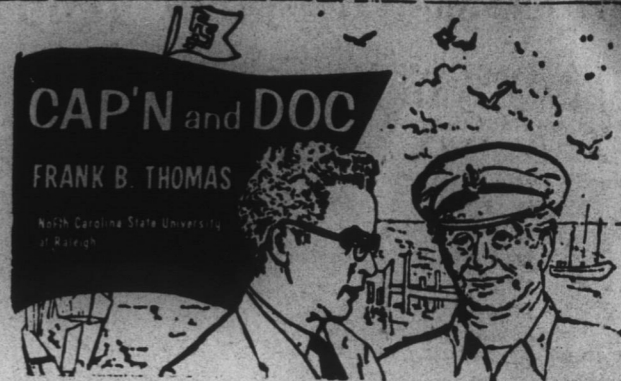
-:- There is no medicine which can be taken by mouth to dissolve gallstones.

-:- Premature baldness in men is not caused by wearing hats; nobody knows what causes it.

-:- Cancer has not been shown to be contagious.

-:- It is not important to lie on the right side when sleeping to keep from interfering with heart action; the heart actually is in the middle of the chest and not on the left side.

-:- We can read the handwriting on the wall quite clearly now. Poultry and poultry products will probably be the next industry providing us with protein



Christmas was a memory and everyone was still trying to stick to his New Year's resolution when Doc hove into view. Cap'n and his friends were warming the fire and chatting over the recent blast of artie air. Coffee aroma and tobacco smoke drifted hazily through the air.

Well, blasted Cap'n, what gives on this meat inspection program we've gotten thrust our way? Seems cartoons and news stories indicate we weren't getting much quality in our meat. Well, Doc replied, maybe in a few cases we weren't getting what we thought, but generally we get a good product at a fair price.

It seems that in any business someone is going to try to get by with the least effort, least quality, or least weight. So, to improve sanitation all along the processing channels and to insure the consumers of best buys for her dollar, we now have a mandatory meat inspection program.

We can read the handwriting on the wall quite clearly now. Poultry and poultry products will probably be the next industry providing us with protein

foods to come under the gun. Voluntary inspection under the U. S. Department of Agriculture is now available. Next, this will be moved into a mandatory program sometime in the near future.

With these indicators and what has already been said in Congress, it appears that fish and fishery products are certain to follow suit. Our shellfish sanitation program at state and federal levels has been operating well for many years. However, we see many fishery products totally exempt from almost any standards of sanitation or quality. Thus, we better start putting our house in order and get ready for more, not less, inspection and regulation.

Honestly, it would be nice to do all this by educational methods rather than buy the regulatory route. Seems man really never learns as he should by example, or from someone else's experience. He ends up having to be regulated.

Three sparks kindle in all hearts—pride, envy and avarice. —Dante.

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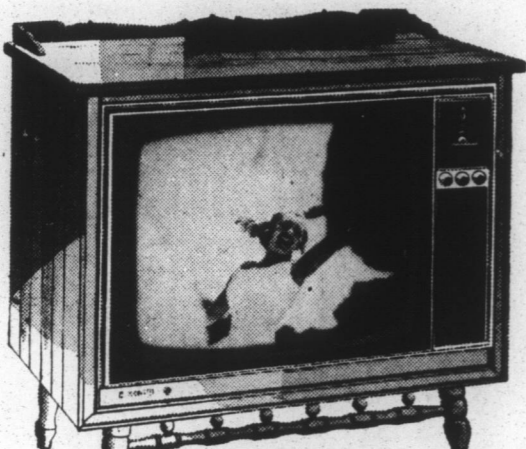
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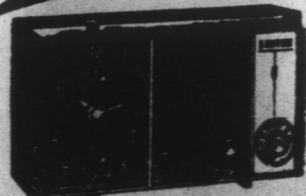
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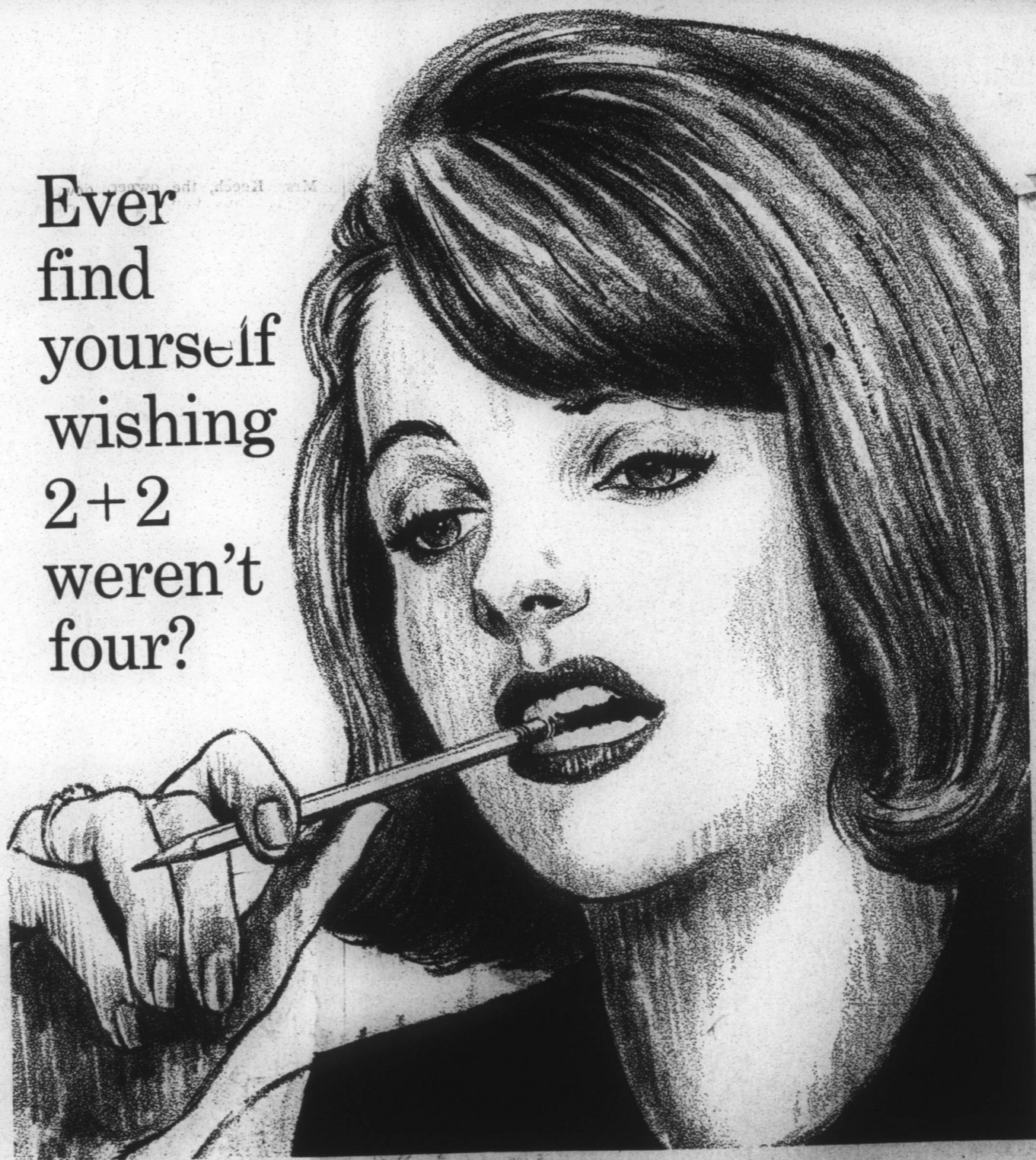
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