

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Healthbeat

Grief program scheduled at Pinedale Christian Church

GriefShare, a 13-week recovery seminar and support group, will begin meeting on Jan. 23 at Pinedale Christian Church, 3395 Peters Creek Parkway, each Monday from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

With prior notice child care can be provided. Organizers also will provide grief sessions for young children.

GriefShare features nationally recognized experts on grief and recovery topics. Seminar sessions include: "When Your Dreams Fall Apart," "The Seasons of Grief," "The Emotions of Grief," "When Your Spouse Dies," "Your Family and Grief" and "Growing Through Grief."

For more information or to enroll, call Pinedale Christian Church at (336) 788-7600.

Medical students to sponsor free health fair at Marketplace Mall

Students at Wake Forest University School of Medicine will sponsor "Share the Health," a health fair aimed at encouraging medically underserved people to become involved in their own health care on Saturday, Jan. 28, from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. at Marketplace Mall, 2101 Peters Creek Parkway.

The fair will include free cholesterol and blood sugar tests and screening for glaucoma and high blood pressure, as well as health information. Translators and information in Spanish will be available.

New helmets may cut injury risk

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Newer helmet technology could reduce the risk of high school football players getting concussions, but not the severity of the injury, according to new research.

A three-year study by the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center found that athletes who wore a helmet with more protection for the temple area of the head and jaw had fewer concussions than those wearing a standard helmet, said university neuropsychologist Micky Collins, the study's principal investigator.

The study, published in the February edition of the scientific journal *Neurosurgery* looked at 2,141 high school football players from 2002 to 2004. Of those, 1,173 wore the improved helmet and 968 wore standard helmets through both the pre- and regular seasons.

The study, funded by helmet maker Riddell, is the first to look at whether helmet technology can reduce the severity or number of concussions, Collins said.

The study showed the annual concussion rate was 5.3 percent in athletes wearing the new Revolution helmet and 7.6 percent in the older version. Revolution wearers were 31 percent less likely to sustain an injury, compared with wearers of standard helmets, the study showed. The Revolution helmet was introduced in 2002.

Experts studying sports-related brain injuries welcomed the study.

"It supports what we have anecdotally been discovering over the past few years," said Kevin Guskiewicz, chairman of the Department of Exercise and Sport Science at North Carolina.

Fewer concussions were reported among University of North Carolina players wearing Revolution helmets, he said.

Stefan Duma, director of the Center for Injury Biomechanics at Virginia Tech, called the UPMC study "a critical aspect in improving player health."

Duma and Guskiewicz are involved in separate studies to measure the acceleration of football players' heads in real time by installing wireless transmitters in their players' helmets, both Revolution and standard.

Guskiewicz said he hopes studies like his and UPMC's help researchers to better protect the brain from sports-related injuries.

Clemmons Rotary receives Carolina Donor Services award

The Clemmons Rotary Club was presented an award for its commitment to furthering organ and tissue donation by Carolina Donor Services.

The club met a goal of signing up 600 people to agree to be organ and tissue donors; and is putting in place additional initiatives designed to raise community awareness, education, and increase donor sign-ups. Specifically, the club will be tailoring programs for colleges and universities, workplaces, churches and medical clinics.

Currently, there are nearly 90,000 people waiting for lifesaving organ transplants. More than 700 of them are right here in North Carolina. Last year 27,039 people received transplants but 2,027 died waiting, 253 of whom were North Carolinians.

"It's truly a miracle that all these lifesaving transplants took place, yet a tragedy that so many did not receive an organ transplant in time," said Ken Burkel, co-chairman of Clemmons Rotary's "Have a Heart, Give a Part" committee.

To become a donor in North Carolina, one should take three steps: register with the DMV by having a heart put on your driver's license, sign a donor card, and inform family of your intentions. With the exception of living kidney donors, all donations are made after death has been declared and all lifesaving efforts have been made.

According to Burkel, the Clemmons Rotary is in the process of developing a model that will be adopted by other Rotary Clubs. Rotary District 7690 here in North Carolina is considering requesting all clubs within the district to take on an initiative to promote organ and tissue donation. This initiative would involve 50 clubs and more than 3,000 members.

"We are very optimistic of that happening," said Burkel.

Wake medical researcher finds Americans pay most for drugs



Curt Furberg says higher costs don't lead to better health benefits

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

A study of drug costs around the world revealed proven methods that could be used to reduce costs in the United States, according to a researcher at Wake Forest University School of Medicine.

"Americans don't need to pay the highest prices in the world for prescription drugs — with our average expenditures increasing by 12 to 15 percent every year," said Curt Furberg, M.D., Ph.D., professor of public health sciences. "No documented health benefits are associated with the excess cost, and many elderly and low-income Americans cannot afford current prices without major sacrifice."

Furberg is widely recognized as a drug safety expert and has served on the FDA Drug Safety and Risk Management Advisory Committee. In 2004, he was awarded a Rockefeller Foundation Residency to gather information about drug costs around the world. He relied on published information as well as personal interviews. "The goal of the project was to provide essential information to health planners, politicians, health care professionals and others with the desire to improve public health in the face of limited resources," said Furberg.

Furberg studied drug costs in 13 countries and presented the

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2005 very active for WSSU program

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The year 2005 was a very productive year for students enrolled in the gerontology program at Winston-Salem State University.

During the spring, students worked collaboratively with the Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging to plan a Spring Fling for aging adults in Davie, Forsyth, Stokes, Surry, and Yadkin counties. The event was held in the Education Building at the Dixie Classic Fairgrounds.

Students were also very actively involved with planning a Mini-White House Conference on Aging. The conference was held in the Thompson Student Services Center on the campus of Winston-Salem State University. In addition to serving on various planning committees, students served as hostesses and facilitated conference sessions.

Students attended, participated and networked at the spring and fall conferences sponsored by the N.C. Association for Death Education and Counseling (NCADEC). These conferences are held each year at Magnolia Manor in Colfax, N.C. The 2005 conferences focused on personal and spiritual responses to loss and the role of food in the grief process. Students also attended, participated and networked at the N.C. Conference on Aging in Newbern.

Community service is an integral part of the learning experience for gerontology students. Community service activities included serving as hostesses at a Scam Busters Expo for older adults sponsored by WFMY-TV2 and the Winston-Salem Better Business Bureau; serving as Salvation Army Angel Tree attendants at Hanes Mall; sponsorship of a grandparent-raising-grandchildren family for Christmas; and the collection and delivery of personal care packages to residents at Golden Lamb Rest Home and Moore's Retirement Home.

Graduating seniors in the gerontology program will begin an internship of 480 hours on Jan. 17 in various cities/counties in North Carolina and in Atlanta, Ga. Partnerships have been established with the Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging in Forsyth and Stokes counties; The Shepherd's Center of Greater Winston-Salem; Forsyth County Department of Social Services, Simplified Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP); Arbor Acres Retirement Community; The Brian Center for Rehabilitation and Retirement; Senior Resources

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Migration ambivalence may lead to poor health for some Hispanics

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Men migrating to the United States from Mexico and Central America often face competing desires: wanting to remain with their families while realizing that migration offers the promise of a better future. These feelings of ambivalence may be associated with poor mental health, such as anxiety, according to new research by Wake Forest University School of Medicine.

The study involved 60 male migrant farm workers in a four-county area in North Carolina (Harnett, Johnston, Sampson and Wake). The results are reported in the current issue of the *Journal of Immigrant Health* by Joseph G. Grzywacz, Ph.D., and colleagues.

"The consequences of poor mental health are serious," said Grzywacz, an assistant professor of family medicine at Wake Forest's School of Medicine, which is part of Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center. "Farm work can be a hazardous environment, and if workers have anxiety or depression, they may fail to take appropriate precautions to prevent occupational health injuries."

Previous research found that about 25 percent of Mexican immigrants have a psychiatric illness such as depression or anxiety during their lifetimes. Common explanations for poor mental health among immigrants include the clash of cultures and the physical and emotional demands of immigration. The Wake Forest study focused on whether ambivalence about migration may play a role.

Study participants were interviewed in Spanish. Standard psychological scales were used to measure anxiety, depression and stress. Ambivalence was measured by asking workers to respond to specific factors known to compel men to come to the United States as well as factors known to pull them back to Mexico.

The researchers found that 75 percent of men reported ambivalence about leaving their children or spouses and 66 percent faced ambivalence about leaving their parents. The researchers found that each type of family-related ambivalence was associated with more symptoms of anxiety, com-



pared with men with no ambivalence. The researchers did not find a consistent relationship between ambivalence and depression.

Men often come to the United States without their spouses or children. Even when both spouses migrate, some or all of the children may remain behind. In a previously

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File Photo

A medical worker holds two young evacuees during the aftermath of the Hurricane Katrina disaster. PTSD is common among medical and rescue professionals who work national disasters.

WHAT IS PTSD?



Wake Forest University Baptist

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, we have heard much about the people who have lost their lives, their homes, and everything they own. However, there are other, less widely discussed consequences of this disaster. Many people are also suffering from psychological complications caused by the disaster. One such condition is known as post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD.

Post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD, is a type of anxiety disorder that can arise as a result of a significant trauma, such as war, accidents,

assault, or other disasters. It is frequently used to describe psychological conditions associated with soldiers upon their return from combat.

It is relatively common, occurring in 9 percent to 12 percent of the general population. However, this condition is often under-diagnosed in the African-American community, and African-Americans are less likely to receive treatment for it. Minority children and adults affected by the hurricane are especially susceptible to this condition.

Who is at risk for developing PTSD?

Anyone who has experienced a major traumatic event, either personally or as a witness, can develop PTSD. For example, a first-aid worker responding to a bad accident may be so psychologically affected by the

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