

Duke Study Looks At Exercise And Aging

By Charles Blackburn
Duke Medical Center
Special To The Post

Durham - Are some of the effects of aging, such as decreased cardiovascular and mental function, an inevitable part of growing old or can they be reversed through regular exercise?

the speed of mental functioning also occurs," according to Dr. James A. Blumenthal, assistant professor of medical psychology at Duke.

"There is a tendency for older people in our society to take things easier in their later years," he said, "but this inactivity could contribute to their physical and mental decline."

Without scientific proof, however, many physicians hesitate to prescribe vigorous exercise for elderly patients because the stereotype of the oldest person is one in which exercise is often perceived as too dangerous.

"There has been relatively little work done in the area of exercise and older people," Blumenthal said, noting that although exercise is generally safe, any program of exercise for the elderly should be closely supervised.

Medical personnel, including a physician and an exercise physiologist, will be present during aerobic exercise sessions for the study.

"We hope to determine if some of the effects of aging can be modified by exercise," Blumenthal said.

He said this may well be the first study of its kind to assess in detail cardiovascular and psychological functioning in a randomized trial where elderly test subjects undergo intense exercise for a long duration.

"Most studies of this type haven't had controls or haven't involved intense exercise for long periods," Blumenthal explained.

He and his colleagues, Drs. Steven Roark, David Madden, John Reasoner and Linda George, have begun recruiting test subjects for the study, which is funded by a \$488,000 grant from the National Institute of Aging.

They will randomly assign 120 healthy men and women over age 60 to one of three sections of the study: the exercise group will participate in aerobic exercise three times a week, primarily on a stationary bicycle; the yoga group will learn yoga, meditation and relaxation procedures, while a third group will be on the waiting list for four months before participating.

All classes will be conducted in the mornings at DUPAC, Duke University's Preventive Approach to Cardiology program. For more information, call Ms. Janet Simon, project coordinator, at 919-684-5820 or 919-681-6074.

All participants will undergo a battery of physical tests, bicycle ergometry studies and psychological-behavioral procedures to evaluate mental abilities, mood, concentration and memory.

NCCU Alumni In Charlotte Support Eagles

Durham - The Charlotte chapter of the North Carolina Central University Alumni Association presented a check for \$500 Wednesday, November 13, to the university's athletic director, Edward Boyd.

Boyd, basketball coach Mike Bernard, and alumni affairs director William P. Evans traveled to Charlotte to describe current developments in NCCU athletics to the enthusiastic alumni chapter.

The chapter is headed by Mrs. Marie Grier of the class of 1952, president. The athletic fund raising campaign was spearheaded by Lawrence Pettis of the class of 1958, an employee of Piedmont Natural Gas Co.

Evans said, "Mr. Pettis is one of NCCU's most loyal alumni. We can always count on his help in fund raising and in recruiting students for NCCU."

MercyGallery Debuts

Art lovers will be able to add another gallery to the tour of Charlotte art galleries on December 1. Artwork by various Charlotte and area artists will be hung on a rotating basis in the Mercy Hospital Lobby, 2001 Vail Avenue.

The first two artists to display their works are Barbara Geasner and Peggy Engler, both working in watercolors, and both from Charlotte.

All artists displaying their work in the hospital's lobby are members of the Guild of Charlotte Artists. Each display will be up for four to six weeks.

Framed and under glass, the art will range in price from \$50 to \$300, and will be for sale through the hospital's gift shop. Sale proceeds will go to the Mercy Hospital Auxiliary.



Reginald Thompson
....Opens new business

Thompson Teaches ABC's Of Driving

By Loretta Manago
Post Managing Editor

The skills that Reginald Thompson has acquired over the past 12 years, he's been a driver's education instructor, he'll now be putting to use in his newly opened business, ABC's of Driving, Inc.

Not only is Thompson concerned that his business will be prosperous and thriving, but he's also concerned that the people who come to him for driver's lessons leave prepared to handle any situation they could possibly encounter on the streets. His ABC's stand for Assuring Better Drivers with Certified Instructors.

For Thompson there's only one way to ensure competent and efficient drivers. And that's using the IPDE process. "IPDE stands for identify, predict, decide and execute," remarked Thompson.

"When a person is driving there is usually more on his or her mind than what's going on on the road. I feel that this process teaches you the type of concentration that you need to handle what driving emergency that may arise. For example, if the driver is about to become involved in a possible accident the IPDE process teaches him to assess the situation, explore the options avail-

able to him and then make a decision and last of all, carry that decision out," commented Thompson.

At the ABC's of Driving, Inc., located at 500 Archdale Dr., Suite 202A, drivers receive high intensity classroom instruction and on the road driving classes. The driving program is designed to reduce myths and fears of driving while at the same time providing indepth driver training.

Thompson became interested in opening his own business when he found he had a lot of time on his hands after he stopped coaching high school basketball. "I had always been open to the idea of having my own business. I feel if you start something on your own, that way no one can take it away from you." Thompson also added that if he failed he could blame no one but himself. But Thompson has no intention of failing. As a matter of fact, one reason he went into the driver's instruction business was because it was a prosperous area.

Still teaching in the school system, Thompson is also a certified driving instructor. He received his master's degree in driver's education from A&T State University and See THOMPSON On Page 15A

December Retail Sales Not Expected To Jump

By Natalie Eason Hampton
Special To The Post

When Thanksgiving sales kick off the annual Christmas buying season, many shoppers expect to break their budgets and break out their credit cards in order to spend more at retail stores.

This year, however, December retail sales may not climb higher than figures for other months this fall, according to Dr. Michael L. Walden, North Carolina State University economist.

Walden believes Americans have spent so much money and bought so much on credit recently that they will not be able to continue that trend through December.

Consumer debt is at a record high now, Walden said. With credit card accounts extended to near limits, buyers will not be able to rely on the plastic money for all their December spending.

Retail sales figures for recent months have shown higher-than-normal growth, he said, with growth due in part to increases in auto sales brought on by car dealers' low interest rates. But with so much money already spent, buyers may not be inclined to increase their spending in December, he said.

Generally, retail sales decline in summer months as people take vacations, Walden added. In September, October and November, retailers see steady growth, usually with an annual sales peak in December. The trend may continue through the first of the New Year, with sales falling off in February or March, he informed.

In Raleigh last year, December retail sales were up 20 percent over November sales.

Although Christmas buying is important to merchants, Walden said, they would not be devastated by minimal sales growth during December. Christmas is an expensive time for retailers, who try to spread out the buying season to cut costs.

Many retailers hire extra help, open longer hours and carry more stock before Christmas, all of which add to their operating costs, he related. Stores try to control that expense by enticing shoppers to buy early with pre-Thanksgiving sales and stocks of Christmas merchandise.

After Christmas, retailers must quickly reduce their stocks to prepare for January inventories. After-Christmas sales help accomplish

this, Walden said, and also attract customers who don't mind buying late in order to get better prices.

Last year, some stores put merchandise on sale in December before the 25th. Such sales may have been spawned by increased competition from more retailers or merchandise moving slower than expected. Last year's retailers also were concerned about how a predicted recession would affect business, he said.

If retail sales are not strong in December, economists will not be alarmed, Walden added. Month-to-month sales comparisons are poor indicators of economic trends, and sales trends have been good this year, he added.

When Christmas sales drop below figures for the previous year, buyers' confidence may be down, he said, adding that economists do not expect this year's sales to drop below sales for 1984.

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