

Breast cancer deaths are up, report says

By SUZETTE HUGHES
Staff Writer

More American women are dying from breast cancer despite the highest detection rate on record, according to a report released Monday by the National Cancer Institute (NCI).

Although breast cancer detection rates are the highest ever, the report said women are not using early screening devices to detect the cancer early enough for effective treatment.

Marlene Clegg of the N.C. chapter of the American Cancer Society (ACS) said the statewide incidence of death by breast cancer among women is increasing. There were 900 breast cancer deaths in 1987, up 50 from 1986, she said.

"If the cancer is detected earlier," she said, "there is a 90 percent chance of at least a five-year survival."

Clegg said that the ACS still recommended early detection "because one in 10 women will get breast cancer in their lifetime."

Dr. Marian Nadel of the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta said that the study could show an increased mortality rate because of a "change in age distribution."

"Due to the baby boom generation," she said, "higher numbers of women are reaching the age (around 40) when rates of breast cancer are higher. The number of women in those age groups is greater than it was in the past."

The National Cancer Institute "hopes the report will have an impact on women" by encouraging them to use early detection tests such as mammography, said Alice Hamm, NCI information specialist. Hamm said that women are not doing breast self-exams as they should, even though the earlier the cancer is detected, the better the prognosis.

"One reason why having a regular mammography has not caught on is because the cost of mammography is still pretty high," she said.

Insurance companies only pay for screening after a lump is discovered, and don't cover screening costs for healthy women, Hamm said. But sometimes in the early stages of breast cancer, the cancer can be so small that neither the woman nor her doctor can detect it, and that is why having a yearly mammography is so crucial, she said.

"Many women can't afford to pay for the screening themselves," Hamm said. "If a woman is poor, she is unlikely to spend money on screening if she has no suspicion that anything is wrong."

Because of this, interest groups are "trying to introduce legislation to help poor women pay for mammography," Clegg said.

Russell Harris, assistant professor at the UNC School of Medicine, said that detection rates are higher because the incidence of breast cancer is increasing. Early detection and appropriate treatment can reduce the

mortality rate from this disease by more than 30 percent, but only in women over 50 years of age, he said. "Studies clearly show that women 50 and over with breast cancer can reduce their mortality rates by earlier detection," Harris said. "Studies don't show that we can do that with women under 50."

He said the incidence of breast cancer increases with age. Breast cancer is rare among college-age women, and early screening would not necessarily help younger women because most of the lumps found in that age group are benign.

He said that mammography is beneficial in older women because breast tissue changes after menopause.

"Breast tissue before menopause is harder for mammography to read," he said. "After 50, it is easier to read (because) the tissue is composed of more fat."

2 gunmen take over school, hold children, teacher hostage

From Associated Press reports

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — Two gunmen wearing ski masks took over a private school building today and held a teacher and at least 60 children hostage while one of the men detailed a series of complaints against the government, authorities said.

The takeover at the West End Christian School began about 8:40 a.m., and the gunmen demanded a meeting with Mayor Al DuPont, police spokesman David Hartin said. DuPont donned a bullet-proof vest and met with the men twice, and one of them surrendered after about four hours.

FBI discusses inquiry

WASHINGTON — FBI Director William Sessions said Tuesday that the bureau's investigation of a group opposing the Reagan administration's Central America policy was "not properly directed" in all instances.

Sessions, in his first in-depth discussion of the probe, denied that the FBI had expanded its investigation into the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, or CISPEL, to include other organizations.

Mecham faces impeachment

PHOENIX, Ariz. — Gov. Evan Mecham denied wrongdoing Monday before a legislative panel considering his possible impeachment, but the hearing was abruptly adjourned when he refused to answer questions from attorneys

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for the legislature. Speaker Joe Lane said lawmakers would discuss whether to subpoena the governor, hold him in contempt or forego his testimony in deciding whether to impeach him.

Also Monday, Mecham, in office just barely over a year, was ordered to face a recall election on May 17. He also faces a March 9 trial on criminal charges accusing him of concealing a \$350,000 campaign loan.

Arabs report more violence

OFRA, Occupied West Bank — A Palestinian was wounded Tuesday in new clashes with the Israeli army, Arab reports said. Jewish settlers vowed to carry out vigilante justice if the army failed to protect them.

The latest clashes came after nearly eight weeks of violence in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, in which, according to United Nations figures, 41 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli gunfire.

In Washington, Secretary of State George Shultz told Congress he had undertaken a new Mideast diplomatic initiative designed to provide "a greater sense of political control" to the 1.5 million Palestinians who live in the occupied territories.

Congressmen predict defeat for contra aid

By STACI COX
Staff Writer

A close vote is expected to end in defeat today when the U.S. House of Representatives votes on President Reagan's package for aid to the Nicaraguan contras, North Carolina congressmen said Tuesday.

"There will be 10 hours of debate on the House floor before the package is voted on, but it will probably be defeated," said Sam Wang, legislative assistant to Democratic Rep. Tim Valentine.

The Reagan request is for \$36.2 million in mostly humanitarian aid, including \$3.6 million for military expenditures, said Jim Jordan, press secretary for Democratic Rep. David Price. The military assistance would be held in escrow until March 31, when Reagan could decide whether to allow the money to the contras, he said.

The White House staff has been lobbying hard for the aid package all week, inviting congressmen to private meetings, making personal phone calls, and sending hundreds of letters to representatives who have not stated their position, said Edith

Wooten, Valentine's press assistant. "He (Reagan) says his package will only use \$36 million, but that is probably wrong," Jordan said. "The aid spans only a four-month period, and the final cost looks more like \$60 million."

Although the vote will probably be negative, there are 35 to 40 swing votes that could make the difference and pass the aid package, said Frank Hill, chief of staff for Republican Rep. Alex McMillan. While both sides agree that humanitarian aid is needed, it is unlikely that the Sandinistas would comply to any peace agreement if no military strength is present, Hill said.

"I know Nicaragua would be better off with another government," Valentine said. "They are a bunch of tyrants. However, there is no reason the United States should pay the contras for raping, pillaging (and) killing men, women and children."

"We're not just suddenly leaving the contras in the lurch," Jordan said. "The Democrats have an alternate plan that will be introduced once this one is defeated that would supply humanitarian aid (to the contras)

through international peace groups, not the CIA."

Democrats have not produced any alternate package, and are just using the idea to defeat the Reagan package, said Patrick Murphy, legislative director for Republican Rep. Cass Ballenger. An alternate package is against the original agreement between Reagan and House Speaker Jim Wright, D-Texas, for a single all-or-nothing vote, Murphy said.

"That package is in the works," said Valentine. "Even so, I don't like the idea that the contras couldn't account

for over \$10 million we sent them, and I would prefer economic sanctions against the government over misused aid to the contras."

If the Democrats do introduce an aid package of purely humanitarian aid, it would probably pass with a few objections, Murphy said. It is important to support the contras somehow to maintain pressure on the Nicaraguan government, he said.

"I'm not sure another aid package would pass," said Valentine. "The battle over aid to the contras will be fought one step at a time."

Officials approve plan for radioactive waste facility

By STEVE LONG
Staff Writer

Users of a new low-level radioactive waste facility in North Carolina may fund its development if a proposal by Carolina Power & Light Co. and Duke Power Co. is accepted, waste management officials said Tuesday.

The plan, which could cost users from eight states up to \$15 million, met with approval from the 15 members of the N.C. Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Authority Monday. The authority asked for the proposal to be further developed.

"Generators of waste should pay for the cost of site selection and be repaid through user fees," said Merrill Eisenbud, authority chairman.

"The plan is a way for them (users) to fund the cost the authority will

incur while finding a site," said Sue Becht, assistant treasurer for Duke Power Co.

Since the utilities will be the biggest users of the new facility, they should pay for most of the development costs, Becht said.

But utility customers will ultimately pay more as a result of the incurred costs, she said.

"There is no conflict of interest," Becht said. "It behooves our customers and us to help the authority in the most effective way." She said the public is afraid the utilities are out to make money by charging interest.

"Substituting Southeast Compact

utility credit for authority credit will reduce the cost of capital," she said. "The proposal is the most cost effective way of getting the facility to the construction stage."

This alternative method of funding saves the authority from asking the N.C. General Assembly for funds, because it should spend more on social programs, Eisenbud said. Other states have used surcharges on companies that ship their waste to other states. That money is then placed in a fund for development costs.

This procedure sets some precedent, said Capt. William Briner, an

N.C. member of the Southeast Compact Commission.

"Utility companies in the Midwest Compact Commission are doing the same," he said, "but they have no current site."

The Southeast Low-Level Radioactive Waste Compact Commission decided North Carolina would become the second state to host the facility. The current site in Barnwell, S.C., will be closed Dec. 31, 1992. The N.C. site will operate for 20 years starting Jan. 1, 1993.

This is the only funding proposal the authority has heard so far.

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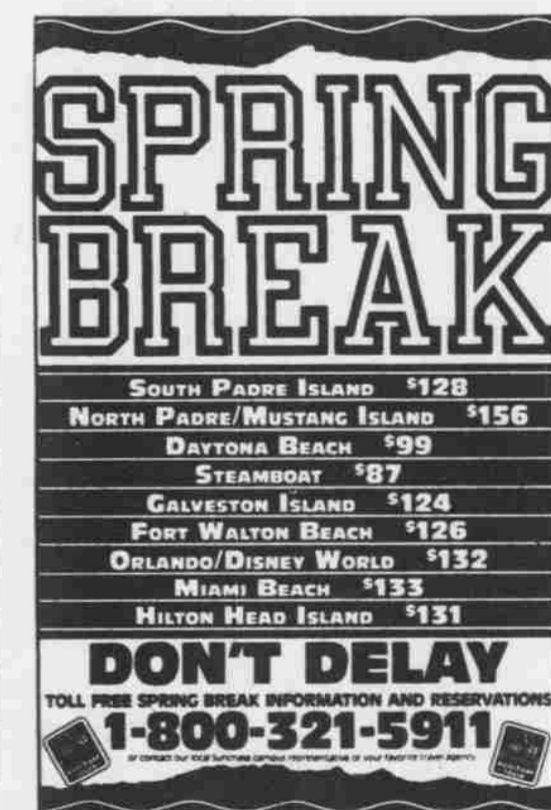
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