

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2009

Mammogram Advice Raises Questions, Concerns

By JOCELYN NOVECK
AP NATIONAL WRITER

NEW YORK (AP) — For many women, getting a mammogram is already one of life's more stressful experiences.

Now, women in their 40s have added anxiety of trying to figure out if they should even be getting one at all.

A government task force said Monday that most women don't need mammograms in their 40s and should get one every two years starting at 50 — a stunning reversal and a break with the American Cancer Society's long-standing position. What's more, the panel said breast self-exams do no good, and women shouldn't be taught to do them.

The news seemed destined to leave many deeply confused about whose advice to follow.

"I've never had a scare, but isn't it better to be safe than sorry?" asked Beth Rosenthal, 41, sitting in a San Francisco cafe on Monday afternoon with her friend and their small children. "I've heard of a lot of women in their 40s, and even 30s, who've gotten breast cancer. It just doesn't seem right to wait until 50."

Her friend agreed. "I don't think I'll wait," said Leslie David-Jones, also 41, shaking her head.

For most of the past two decades, the American Cancer Society has been recommending annual mammograms beginning at 40, and it reiterated that position on Monday. "This is one screening test I recommend unequivocally, and would recommend to any woman 40 and over," the society's chief medical officer, Dr. Otis Brawley, said in a statement.

But the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, a government panel of doctors and scientists, concluded that such early and frequent screenings often lead to false alarms and unneeded biopsies, without substantially improving women's odds of survival.

"The benefits are less and the harms are greater when screening starts in the 40s," said Dr. Diana Petitti, vice chair of the panel.

Breast cancer survivors who were diagnosed at a young age were among the more vocal critics of the new guidelines.

"This sure seems like a big step backwards to me," said Debbie Hayes, who was diagnosed with Stage 2 breast cancer at age 33 after finding a lump during a self-exam. A mammogram, ultrasound, biopsy and finally a mastectomy and chemotherapy followed.

"People are being diagnosed even in their early 20s," said Hayes, now 53 and a volunteer coordinator for the Chicago-based Breast Cancer Network of Strength. "Mammograms are a key element of that."

But another breast cancer survivor thought the new guidelines sounded about right — even though she was diagnosed at age 37, two years ago.

"They seem pretty sensible to me," said Claire Mayne, of San Francisco. "The death rate is not going down because of the earlier mammograms. I'd feel comfortable telling a friend to wait until she was 50."

Mayne was more doubtful, though, about the advice on self-exams; that's how she found her own cancer.

Most women in their 40s interviewed for this article said they planned to stick with the old mammography recommendations, at least for now.

"I have two young children," said Amber Smart, a 47-year-old mother in Agoura Hills, Calif. "There's a lot of years left that they need me." She's been having mammograms every six months, since she was 44, to make sure that certain dense areas of her breasts aren't cancer.

"I think it's kind of sad that they're basically saying, 'We can't afford to pay for the few people who may have it in their 40s, so a few people are going to die,'" Smart said.

Judy Finley, a flight attendant from Dallas, called the new recommendations "a terrible idea," and said she was especially worried that insurance companies might "pick up on this and quit paying for mammograms from 40 to 50."

"I think it would be really sad," said Finley, who was walking through the Crown Center mall in Kansas City, Mo. "And I See MAMMOGRAMS, Page B2

FROM DAYS GONE BY

20 Years Ago

From The Files Of November 16, 1989

'89 County Treasurer David Wright announced that the bonus and regular doe licenses allocated to the county this year are sold out.

Senator Terry Punt was the guest speaker on Saturday for the annual Veterans Day program. A parade, which included the Fulton Honor Guard, as well as all three local high school bands, formed at the fairgrounds and ended at the courthouse in McConnellsburg. Lynn Bard, a U.S. Army veteran, served as parade marshal for the annual services.

The Fulton County Medical Center Board of Directors announced this week that it has reached an agreement with Hospital Management Professionals to discontinue the center's contract with the Tennessee company that has been managing the local hospital since 1985.

Larry Wilson, son of Richard and Mary Wilson of Needmore, has been promoted in the U.S. Army to the rank of sergeant.

Keith Dibert, owner of Dibert's Recycling in Bedford, has assumed management of the former Kline's Recycling located along U.S. Route 522 in Dublin Township, about seven miles north of McConnellsburg.

Sandra K. Sigel and Travis Strait were united in marriage July 29 at Needmore Bible Church.

Births at the Medical Center: a son to Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey Rupert of Saltillo on November 3; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Garry Wright of Harrisonville on November 4; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Walter Yanosik of Harrisonville on November 6; a son to Mr. and Mrs. James Divilbliss III of Needmore on November 8.

Mr. and Mrs. Chester Grove Jr., McConnellsburg, announce the engagement of their daughter, Ronda K., to Darren D. Eddy, son of Mr. and Mrs. Merwyn Eddy of Needmore.

Deaths: Paul Blattenberger, manager and miller at Burnt Cabins Grist Mill for the past 20 years; Claire I. Mellott, Charleston, N.C.; Earl S. Reed, Hancock.

30 Years Ago

From The Files Of November 15, 1979

'79 Final tabulations by the Fulton County Election Board on Friday made no changes in last week's general election results. Official figures for the county commissioners' vote stand at 1541 for Donald Culler, 1282 for Delmar Mellott, 1222 for W. Edward Palmer and 1207 for Donald Bard.

Veterans Day was commemorated in McConnellsburg on Saturday with a parade and ended with ceremonies at the courthouse. A tank from Letterkenny Army Depot was part of the parade in which the first-prize winners were the McConnellsburg High School Band, the Fulton Honor Guard and the VFW Ladies Auxiliary's decorated float.

On October 7 a surprise 40th wedding anniversary celebration was held for Mayford and Leah Brady of Big Cove Tannery.

Mr. and Mrs. George "Sam" Truax, Warfordsburg, celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary on November 10.

Specials at the IGA: turkeys, 69 cents lb.; Betty Crocker layer cake mix, 69 cents; sirloin tip roast, \$1.99; grapes, 57 cents lb.

Births at the Medical Center: a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Roger Robinson of Lemasters on November 1; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Preston Carbaugh of McConnellsburg on November 11; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Gordon of McConnellsburg on November 7; a son to Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey Beatty of Mercersburg on November 8.

Deaths: William Shomper, McConnellsburg; Henrietta Knight, Hancock; Ervin F. Baker, Hancock; Wayne Diffenderfer, Mercersburg; Goldie Schaffer, Chambersburg; Chloe Thomas, New Grenada.

40 Years Ago

From The Files Of November 27, 1969

'69 A dinner honoring Evelyn Hendershot, postmaster at Warfordsburg, who retired on October 31 after 31 years of service was held on Tuesday evening, November 18, at River's Bend, Everett.

At the fall meeting of the Franklin-Fulton County Bankers Assoc., which was held last week at the Mercersburg Academy, Henry W. Daniels was elected vice president of the association. Daniels, cashier of The First National Bank of McConnellsburg, was previously a member of the group's executive council.

Marriage licenses: John Poole of Hagerstown and Debora Mellott of McConnellsburg; Donald Shaffer of Woodbury and Jeannette Hall of Loysburg; Reed Englert of McConnellsburg and Jo Ann Bain of McConnellsburg.

Checks totalling \$174,151 were recently sent out to Christmas Club members by the two local banks — \$86,437 from the Fulton County Bank and \$87,715 from The First National Bank.

Births at the Medical Center: a son to Mr. and Mrs. Paul Lynch of Mercersburg on November 17; a son to Mr. and Mrs. Martin Brown of Burnt Cabins on November 18; a son to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Johnson of Wells Tannery on November 18; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Fred Vogt of Warfordsburg on November 20.

Specials at the IGA: turkeys 29 cents, 18-24 lb. size; Hills Brothers coffee, \$1.39, 2 lb.; IGA butter, 79 cents lb.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert House of Hustontown celebrated their 50th anniversary on November 27.

Airman Danny Ford, son of Mrs. Helen Snyder of McConnellsburg, has completed his basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas. He has been assigned to Lowry AFB, Colo., for training in the munitions and weapons maintenance field.

Deaths: Virginia Stuholme, Centre Hall; Jesse Mellott Jr., Big Cove Tannery.

50 Years Ago

From the Files Of December 3, 1959

'59 Russell Keefer, 3-year-old of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Keefer of McConnellsburg, was killed last Thursday when he was run over by a milk truck in a lane on the property of his uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Owen Shives, with whom he was staying.

MEMORY JOGGER



This week's Memory Jogger, submitted by Chalmer Strait of Buck Valley, pictures the 1977 Buck Valley Little League team. Front row, left to right: Adriel Fletcher, Gary Wills, Eric Stahle, Randy Carpenter, Lee Kump, Elmer Vanorsdale, Mark Powell, John Munson, Randy Wills, Dwayne Northcraft; middle row: Brian Strait, Gary Wills, Eric Powell, Chris Munson, Aletha Fletcher, Bill Vanorsdale, Cole Elbin, Coach Chalmer Strait, Coach Carl Fletcher; back row: Laura Kump, Linda Wills, Cathy Elbin, Lisa Vanorsdale, Maxaine Vanorsdale, Linda Elbin, Jeannette Wills, Violet Sheeder.

George Edward Sigel of Warfordsburg, Victor MacKinlay Glee and Marlin Jack Glee, both of McConnellsburg, left on Tuesday for Pittsburgh for induction into the armed forces.

Congressman Richard M. Simpson is a patient in a Bethesda, Md., hospital and was unable to attend the dedication of the new McConnellsburg Post Office on Sunday. Sen. J. Irving Whally, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Keefer of McConnellsburg, owners of the building which will be leased to the Postal Department, Post Master George Paul and the Hon. Thomas E. McCann, field service officer, were introduced by master of ceremonies Merrill W. Kerlin at the ceremonies at the firehall.

A search party was organized Monday night for John Robinson, 22, of Mercersburg, who was reported lost while hunting on Sideling Hill. On Tuesday morning he was reported safely at home in bed having slept the night in the woods then hitch-hiked home unaware that between 100 and 200 volunteers were hunting for him.

Mary Bradshaw, 15-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Bradshaw of Needmore, was taken to Harrisburg General Hospital on Monday where her illness was diagnosed as polio. The other two Fulton County victims, Rosalie Hixson, 14, of Crystal Spring, and Debra Ann Shaw, 3, of Crystal Spring, are both patients in the same hospital.

According to the State Department of Agriculture the average value of farmland in Pennsylvania in mid-year was slightly more than \$200 an acre.

Mrs. Fred Spanke of Hollidaysburg, daughter of Mrs. Harvey Mellott, is recovering from major surgery in the Altoona Hospital.

Mrs. E. H. MacKinlay and daughter Jane spent Thanksgiving in New York, where they were joined by Ensign Eddie MacKinlay, who is attending U.S. Naval Justice School at Newport, R.I.

The senior class of the McConnellsburg High School will present the play "Stranger In The Night" on December 3.

At the annual convention of the Township Officers Association last Wednesday, Calvin Beatty was elected president; Junia Hann, first vice president; Edward McCray, second vice president; and J. Pierce Gordon, secretary-treasurer.

Mary Bradshaw, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Bradshaw of Needmore, was rushed to Chambersburg Hospital on Thanksgiving Day, where her illness was diagnosed as meningitis.

Mrs. Judson Truax, Needmore, fell on her back porch last week, breaking two to three ribs.

The home of the late Annie Mellott, Needmore, was sold on Saturday to Norman and Austin Golden and the tenant house to George Shives.

The sixth, seventh and eighth grades in the Belfast Consolidated School moved this week to the new school building at Warfordsburg.

Births at the Medical Center: a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Baltzer Deshong, Needmore, on November 17; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Ray Mellott, Needmore, on November 17; a son to Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Deshong, St. Thomas, on November 18; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Glen Barnett, Chambersburg, on November 18; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Austin Somerton, Harrisonville, on November 19; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. David Hess, Hopewell, on November 21; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Wood of Fannettsburg, November 20; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Fred Miller of Fort Loudon on November 22.

Deaths: Fred Shoop, Fannettsburg; Guy Edward Beatty, Roanoke, Va.; Mrs. David Stevens, St. Thomas; George E. Strait, Paris, Ill.; Mrs. Nettie Booth, McConnellsburg.

Army Private John K. Gordon, 23, son of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Gordon, is serving a tour of duty in Wildflecken, Germany.

60 Years Ago

From The Files Of December 1, 1949

'49 More than 700 people jammed into the local American Legion home on Tuesday night to see and hear Glen Gray and the Casa Loma Orchestra — the first "name" band in the world of music ever to appear in this area.

Fire completely destroyed a summer home and hunting cottage near Fort Littleton on Tuesday morning. The property was owned by Adolph Shonek of Johnstown.

Announcement has been made of the engagement of Mary Virginia Runyan to Wilbur R. W. Hubley of York.

F.B. Plessinger of Amaranth, Harold Deshong of Harrisonville and Lewis Harris and Miss Beulah Johnston of McConnellsburg are serving as jurors at U.S. District Court in Harrisburg this week.

"Here Comes Charlie" is the name of the play the Hus-

tontown seniors will stage December 2-3. Taking part will be Ivadean Shaw, John Gracey, Phyllis Ritchey, Kenneth Earley, Ralph Brown, Virginia Grac-ey, Ellis Yinging, Margaret Ramsey, Audrey Shaffer and Clifford Berkstresser

Cpl. Walter V. Mellott, son of Mr. and Mrs. Vernon L. Mellott of Needmore, was discharged on March 24 and re-enlisted in the Army October 24.

Recent births: a son to Mr. and Mrs. Donald Davis of Big Cove Tannery on November 25; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. John Buterbaugh of Cito on November 27; a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Pittman of McConnellsburg on November 29.

Tommy Christian, 14, of McConnellsburg, received a broken leg on Thanksgiving Day when his leg was caught on the tailgate of a truck.

Deaths: George Carson of Amaranth; George Boyd Elvey of Mt. Wolf; Mrs. Florence Belle Kerlin of Three Springs; E.M. Gelvin, Fort Littleton's oldest citizen.

70 Years Ago

From The Files Of November 30, 1939

'39 The little 3-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Norman Helman of Cito received a severe injury to the little finger on Friday when a cellar door fell on it. She was taken to Dr. MacKinlay and then to Chambersburg Hospital where her finger was amputated at the first joint.

Deaths: Dr. James M. Fleming of Blairs Mills.

Samuel J. Thomas, 38, of Finleyville, Bedford County, was fatally injured on Monday night while working in No. 9 mine of the Rockhill Coal And Iron Co. at Roberts-dale. Thomas, a motorman on a mine car and although the exact manner in which he met his death has not been determined, was crushed by his train.

The death toll on Pennsylvania's "dream highway" mounted to 17 on November 25 when Herbert Clossen, 23 of South Fork, was crushed to death between an electric shovel and a steel beam as he was working near the eastern portal of the Allegheny Tunnel. He was the first fatality in Somerset County, but 16 other workers have died on the project in Fulton, Bedford and Westmoreland counties.

On November 25, John M. Spangler of Montclair, N.J., purchased from Robert Fleming the property known as the Trout farm, about one mile north of McConnellsburg. Mr. Spangler will take possession on April 1 and plans to build a summer home.

Born: a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Tritle of Cito. "The Ghost of Roaring Pines" is the name of a play to be presented by the Hustontown seniors on December 8-9. Included in the cast are Henry Melius, Robert Barkman, Glenn Kelso, Earl Alloway, Ernest Glatfelter, Grace Thomas, Fern Brant, Dorothy McClain, Alfarat Melius, Naomi Naugle and Juniata Melius.

Walter W. Watkins Sr., prominent merchant of Saltillo, is seriously ill at this time. He is a brother of William Watkins of New Grenada.

Miss Mary Frances Gobin returned home on Friday after being a patient in Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore.

Death: John Chaney of Langdondale. Buddie "Glenn" Barnett, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Barnett of Wintergreen, received a badly broken right elbow while at school.

Mr. and Mrs. Paul Gordon of Thompson Township are the proud parents of a baby girl. She has been named Phyllis Jean.

80 Years Ago

From The Files Of November 28, 1929

'29 Among the recent new subscriptions to the "News" is sent by Mrs. Lizzie Bain Lysinger of Bedford for Miss M. Kate Allender of Rogersville, Tenn. Mrs. Lysinger is a native of Fort Littleton and Miss Allender, a native of McConnellsburg, was her first teacher. Miss Allender is still teaching in a private school for girls in Rogersville at the age of 88 years. Mrs. Lysinger is a prominent teacher in the Bedford schools, her ambition is to round out 50 years in the work.

Death: Mrs. Rhoda Grissinger, wife of Dr. R.D. Grissinger of Bedford; Lloyd Elmer Evans of Hollidaysburg; Benjamin Franklin Gress of Fort Loudon.

Samuel R. Martin of Dunkirk, Ind., who was called here by the death of his mother, Mrs. Lydia Martin, called at the "News" office on Saturday. Mr. Martin, a leading funeral director in Dunkirk, is a former Fulton County teacher, having taught here from 1897 to 1903.