

## Accidents of poverty aren't

Everytime I go to the dentist I see it. His daughter gave it to him as a birthday present, but his patients have probably enjoyed it as much as he has. It's a collection of sayings reflecting uncommon wisdom. One that always provokes meditation on my visit is the one that says "accidents almost never are."

Defined as an unforeseen contingency, an accident is most often interpreted as creating victims. To suggest that accidents are more often caused by contingencies not unforeseen is to create perpetrators.

A recent study by the Consumers Federation of America listed the automobile as the one "most likely to kill or injure." About 50,000 Americans die in auto accidents annually, although the vehicle itself is not always at fault in every accident. Cigarettes were listed second and alcohol third as the most dangerous.

MY DENTIST'S wall hanging would introduce another perspective. The automobile, cigarettes and alcohol would not be the cause and people merely the victims. People would use the automobile, ciga-



Rev. Lloyd Buss

rettes and alcohol in destructive ways and therefore should not be surprised at the consequences.

Recent and current efforts to shore up the basic human support system for the great number of the hungry and poor in the metro-Detroit area have been presented as an unforeseen contingency in our middle and upper class life style. The demands placed on us are regarded as accidents of economy or the inexcusable greed of the lazy and unemployed. In the spirit of the holiday mood, however, food was collected and distributed.

We should not be surprised at the extent of impoverishment nor its roots in our economic order. High income jobs in high-tech

industries and lower paying jobs which are increasingly part-time, do not provide a broad economic base leading to a healthy community. Add the burdens of additional taxes which have increased more rapidly for the poor and the contingencies before us are not as unforeseen as we might have hoped.

SURELY We need to share resources in these times. We need to maintain life at more than a mere subsistence level. We need to provide opportunities for employment. We need to construct a healthy public order. But the current needs for life and order by the area's impoverished must not be cast as an unforeseen contingency we can care for at this time in the spirit of the holiday season.

We need to remember that accidents almost never are... that unforeseen contingencies are almost never unforeseen. Let us at least have the courage to recognize our role in what has happened and so restore integrity in the public resolution of one of our most serious issues in community life.

## Makeup tips for older women

Dear Jo:

My complexion is very fair, and I have a problem with "sun warts" which are rough, raw spots, caused by exposure to the sun. My dermatologist prescribed 5-FU, and they healed in a matter of weeks.

Since my sister, who also has a fair complexion, has the same problem, do you think there is any harm in passing along my leftover 5-FU to her? It is just an externally applied liquid.

Mrs. M.G.

Dear Mrs. G.:

The liquid chemical 5-FU (5-Fluorouracil) acts as a cell destroyer which prevents "sun warts" which are also known as solar keratoses from developing into skin cancer. It is also used for treating actual skin cancer. It is a very strong preparation and should only be used for the condition for which it is prescribed and under the close supervision of a doctor or dermatologist.

So, to answer your question... no... do not pass your leftover 5-FU on to your sister.

Dear Jo:

Could you please print some makeup suggestions for older women in your column? My mother, who is in her late 50s still dyes her hair dark brown and wears pretty well the same makeup that she wore 30 years ago. I do not want to hurt her feelings by criticizing her as she works very hard on her appearance. She could use

some objective help.

Unsigned

Dear Unsigned:

Many older women do not realize that as their hair changes color, generally to gray or white, so does the color or tone of their skin. When they dye their hair a dark color the normal lines and wrinkles that accompany the aging process are accentuated, giving a harsh unnatural appearance to the face.

Older women should attempt to keep a natural, subtle look. If hair dye is used, one should avoid the dark shades, using lighter ones, which blend nicely with the new growth of lighter (whiter) hair as well as the new lighter skin tone. The dark bases, bright eyeshadows and bright lipsticks give a far too dramatic look, which does not enhance the beauty of the older woman.



A. Jolayne Farrell

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## medical briefs/helpline

### • DRINKING HAZARDS

During National Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Week, the Southeast Michigan March of Dimes is continuing its efforts to tell the public about the hazards of drinking during pregnancy.

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) has been recognized during the last decade as one of the leading known causes of mental retardation in the newborn. It is not known whether there is an absolutely safe level of alcohol consumption during pregnancy, or if consuming small amounts still poses some risk.

Congress has declared the week of Jan. 15 National FAS Awareness Week. As part of its mission of preventing birth defects, the March of Dimes has supported research into FAS and does extensive public health education about the impact of alcohol and other maternal health habits on the healthy of the unborn baby.

"The effects of alcohol on the fetus are probably felt very early in pregnancy, possibly even before a woman knows she is pregnant," said Dolores Wehr, associate executive director of the Southeast Michigan March of Dimes. "That's why women planning pregnancy must be made aware of the effects drinking may have."

Among pamphlets available free of charge from the March of Dimes are: "Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco Abuse During Pregnancy," "Pregnant?

Before You Drink, Think" and a booklet, "Be Good to Your Baby Before It Is Born." Interested persons can contact the March of Dimes at 423-3200.

### • TAKING CHARGE

If helping yourself to better health is part of your plan for 1984, the Providence Hospital community health education department has classes to support you in keeping your resolutions.

"Take Charge of Your Health" is a four-week series introducing concepts and practices which enhance health. Informative discussions, activities and a variety of films and slides will be presented.

The introduction, blood pressure screening, and goal-setting sessions will be held 7-9 p.m. Tuesday, March 6, in the DePaul Center, 16001 W. Nine Mile Road, Southfield.

Exercise will be emphasized on March 13; dealing with stress on March 20; and nutrition on March 27.

More information on the program and other classes may be obtained by calling the department at 552-0041.

Some classes will be offered in the Providence Hospital Novi Center as well as the Southfield center. Pre-registration is required.

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