

Speaking of you

Suicide rate high for M.D.s

Dear Dr. Friedman:

I wonder if you'd be kind enough to comment on the fact that psychiatrists and other mental health professionals have one of the highest suicide rates in the country. Don't you think it's pretty funny that laymen have to go to professionals who may be more unstable than we are?

Dear Reader:

Actually, there's nothing funny about it. As a matter of fact, it is not only the psychiatrists who have high suicide rates, but the rate of suicide among all physicians is double that of all white American males.

Dr. Mathew Ross, psychiatrist,



By
DR. SONYA
FRIEDMAN

projects a composite of the high suicide risk doctor. He is a 49-year-old specialist in an area of medicine that deals with chronic problems where his emotional ties with the patient are high and his chances for success are dubious.

In the United States men specializing in psychiatry, ophthalmology and anesthesiology top the list. You might be interested in knowing that as a professional, these individuals are often tops but suffer the mounting tension of the individual problems of their patient load as well as a low frustration tolerance in their need for achievement and recognition.

A CLUE TO a professionals' impending disaster is often the use of drugs and alcohol. Additionally, those around him will see that he is becoming increasingly indecisive, disorganized and depressed. His life becomes harried and he ceases to separate his personal and professional life.

Often he will begin to neglect his practice. Probably the biggest difficulty among professionals is admitting to themselves and others that they need help.

A professional's educational background does not immunize him against his own emotional conflicts. All of us dealing with serious problems of others, medical or psychological, must keep some professional distance in order to survive.

The need for a personal life, not

in combination with an office practice, which is satisfying and varied is critical. Living one's practice seven days a week is a form of psychological suicide which may lead to physical suicide.

Unfortunately, a number of these individuals are those who care the most and who carry home their patients' problems and live with them long after the office door is closed.

Science day calls women

The science staff of Oakland Community College (OCC), Highland Lakes Campus, will encourage 300 women to turn on to science Thursday (April 4).

The college is hosting a one-day program, titled "Any Woman Can Enjoy Science," from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Panelists include members of the OCC science staff, women who earn their living in science areas, women whose hobbies are in science and female students of all ages who are currently in science courses.

Reservation information is available at 363-7191, ext. 273 or 310.

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Roberts heads cancer crusade

By DIANE HUBEL

Cancer is the number one killer of women between the ages of 20 and 45. One out of every four people die of cancer.

Facts like these helped lead William Roberts of Birmingham to accept the position as head of the Oakland County Crusade for Cancer for the American Cancer Foundation.

ROBERTS AND others like him are responsible for raising enough money to reach the 1974 Oakland County quota, a quota which, according to Roberts, has been increased by 20 per cent over that of last year. It is \$287,000.

Unlike the United Fund Drive, the cancer fund raising attempt is not a once-a-year drive. Fund-raising activities will continue throughout the year in an attempt to reach the quota.

Celebrities and community leaders have already begun to organize events, such as the celebrity ping pong tournament which took place Sunday at the Shiwasee Hotel in Southfield.



WILLIAM ROBERTS

Contributors were asked to pledge money in order to play a game of ping pong with their favorite celebrity. Proceeds from the event went to the cancer foundation.

Television personality Bob Hines is the special events chairman for Oakland County. His committee has already planned an annual golf tournament which will take place in June, a house-to-house fund-raising drive in April and an art auction, among other things.

Roberts said area committees are always seeking new and different ways to raise money for the organization.

"WE IN Oakland County are lucky," he said, "in that we have the leadership available to organize and carry out these programs. Our goal is high but we feel that we can reach it."

"So many of the outstanding personalities and leaders in the Detroit area are from Oakland County, and so many of these people are willing to help us. We could never reach our goal without their help."

Roberts said the money raised is used both to fight cancer by research and education and to rehabilitate and assist cancer victims.

EDUCATIONALLY, HE SAID, workers have already organized anti-smoking campaigns in the high schools and are planning to bring such programs into the junior highs.

"We are attempting to impress upon people the importance of early detection," he said. "A million lives could be saved this year if cancer were detected early enough. The greatest strides educationally have been made in encouraging self examination and early detection but this is still an area which needs constant reemphasis."

The cancer foundation also helps those who have been affected by cancer. Roberts said that after a cancer operation, the patient is visited by someone close to his age who has had cancer and has recovered.

HE SAID this encourages cancer victims when they need it most and helps them realize that others have been able to recover from the disease and go on to lead normal, full lives.

B Siegel

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