

West Nile Virus Found in CA

BACKGROUND:

West Nile virus, discovered in the West Nile area of Uganda in 1937, has spread to Mediterranean and temperate parts of Europe and, now, to North America. It is carried and spread by mosquito. It can cause fatal inflammation of the spinal cord and brain (encephalitis) in certain birds, horses and humans. It is closely related to St. Louis encephalitis virus, found in North America.

In 1957, the virus was blamed for the deaths of several elderly patients in Israel. In 1960, it was observed in horses in Egypt and France. In 1999, a strain said to be virtually identical to the Israeli strain was detected in New York City.

The U.S. Center for Disease Control says that in regions where the virus is present, fewer than one percent of mosquitoes carry it; and fewer than one per cent of people bitten by an infected mosquito will develop serious symptoms of the disease. Many people show no symptoms. A study in Egypt reported that 50 per cent of the people exposed to the virus developed antibodies but showed no symptoms. However, other people, especially the elderly and those with weakened immune systems, can become very ill.

The *Culex pipiens* or common household mosquito spreads the virus when it feeds on a blood meal from infected birds. Scientists believe that the most likely "reservoir" for the virus in North America is the common sparrow, which can tolerate the infection. Among birds, the virus has had the greatest impact among crows. In 1999, in the New York area, the crow population crashed by about 90 per cent in a few months. Ten days to two weeks after the initial blood meal, the West Nile virus reaches the mosquito's salivary glands and can then be transmitted to birds,

animals or humans. Since 1999, the virus has been found in wild birds, humans and horses in the United States.

There is no evidence that West Nile virus can be spread from human to human. Nor is there evidence that a human can contract the West Nile virus by handling infected birds. Scientists believe the human immune system prevents the virus from multiplying in large numbers. That prevents humans from transmitting the virus to mosquitoes.

Scientists in the United States are puzzled that the infection seems, so far, to be moving north rather than toward the warmer south, as previously expected. Others point out, however that the infection is following the well-known Atlantic flyway for migrating birds.

Symptoms are usually mild and include fever, headache, body aches, sometimes skin rash and swollen lymph glands. Severe infection is marked by headache, high fever, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, with coma, tremors, convulsions, paralysis and occasionally death. Anyone with those symptoms should seek medical attention as soon as possible. There is no documented evidence that a pregnant woman or her fetus are at increased risk due to infection with the West Nile virus. If illness occurs, it usually happens within five to 15 days of being bitten by an infected mosquito. Fatality rates can range from 3 per cent to 15 per cent of cases.

To be cautious:

- * Minimize your time outdoors at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active and, whenever possible, wear long-sleeved tops and long pants when spending time outside.
- * Use insect repellents, New York State recommends the use of an insect repellent containing 10 per cent or less DEET (N, N-diethyl-methyl-meta-toluamide) for children and no more than 30 percent DEET for adults.
- * Make sure that door and window screens fit tightly and are free of holes.
- * Take action to reduce mosquito breeding sites

around your home, local parks and community. Ensure that things in and around the yard like pool covers, saucers under flower pots, children's toys, pet bowls and wading pools are regularly emptied of standing water. Clean eave troughs of debris regularly so water does not accumulate. Empty and clean bird baths twice weekly. Aerate ornamental ponds and stock with fish that eat mosquito larvae. Old tires are one of the most common mosquito breeding sites. Ensure that your yard is free of debris, such as old tires, that can accumulate rain water.

STORY:

A West Nile infection in a woman in Los Angeles could mark the virus' cross-country spread, but health officials are baffled at how she might have contracted the illness locally.

The woman tested positive for West Nile in preliminary laboratory results, state health officials said Friday. The results of further tests will not be known for another week. However, county health officials were calling it a "probable case of locally acquired West Nile virus infection."

"The virus' arrival in California is anticipated, but unexpected at this time since it is not present in any contiguous states," said Dr. Thomas Garthwaite, director and chief medical officer of the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services.

The woman had a mild case of meningitis, which is associated with the virus, in early August and later recovered. The unidentified woman had not traveled outside the region, meaning the infection, if confirmed, occurred locally, county Department of Health Services spokeswoman Maria Iacobo said. Officials provided no further information about the woman, including her age or where she lives.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Since West Nile was first detected in New York in 1999, the virus has been found in

humans in 27 other states and the District of Columbia. While its push westward had been expected, there have been no confirmed cases of humans contracting the disease west of the Rocky Mountains. In two other cases of confirmed or suspected West Nile virus along the Pacific coast, the victims are thought to have been infected in states where the mosquito-borne virus is already known to be present.

Nationwide this year, there have been 954 confirmed human cases of the virus, including 43 deaths, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

NEWS from IRAQ

--Bush, Blair Discuss Iraq, Say Have Evidence to Act.--

BACKGROUND:

There are eight Iraqi men who control the fate of the disputed upcoming war with Iraq. The most important man is, of course, Field Marshall Saddam Hussein al-Tikriti. He is president and head of state, commander-in-chief of the armed forces, chairman of the Revolution Command Council and secretary of the Iraqi Command of the Baath Party. But even Saddam Hussein cannot rule alone. To maintain his power structure, he relies on his family from his home town of Tikriti, north of Baghdad, and fellow revolutionaries who have been with him for years.

Saddam's two sons in particular vie for power and influence - and try to position themselves to take over one day. The current favorite seems to be the younger son Qusay, cast very much in his father's mold. Qusay has concentrated on building his own power base in Iraq's military and security organizations. (He is referred to in the media as "supervisor" of the Republican Guard, but is also reported to have internal security roles. In May 2001 he was elected to the Iraqi Command of the Baath Party. The Baath Party is spread across the Arab

world and aims for Arab unity. Qusay's "election" (appointment in effect) was taken by many as a sign that the succession is going his way.

Saddam Hussein's elder son, Uday, is a far more flamboyant character but even he appears to have exhausted a father's patience. Uday himself narrowly survived an assassination attempt in 1996 which gravely injured him. His power base is in his ownership many media outlets, including a newspaper and a rock station called VOI (Voice of Iraq) FM. Ironically, this plays American and British music. Uday also formed own militia force and got himself elected to the National Assembly.

A key member of the clan is Saddam Hussein's cousin General Ali Hasan al-Majid. He is known by the Kurds as "Chemical Ali" because he was in charge of the Iraqi forces which launched a chemical weapons attack on the Kurdish town of Halabja in 1988. He was initially "Governor" of Kuwait after the 1990 invasion and is believed to have taken part in the repression of the uprisings by the Kurds and the Shias after the Gulf War. He is a member of the key Revolution Command Council and a dependable ally of the Iraqi leader, unlike a number of other of Saddam's relatives who have, fatally for some of them, fallen out of favor at different times.

During the Gulf War, when he was foreign minister, Tariq Aziz became well known internationally. A Christian, Aziz is an old revolutionary colleague of Saddam's, a forceful voice against Western influence in the region, and a great survivor. He had a rocky period in 2001 when his son was reported to have been arrested for corruption. No longer foreign minister, he nevertheless retains a position on the Revolution Command Council and is a deputy prime minister. Tariq Aziz famously refused to accept a letter from President George Bush to Saddam Hussein at a meeting with the US Secretary of State James Baker in Geneva just before the Gulf War. From that moment, war was inevitable.

The current foreign minister and the man who has the task of leading Iraq's diplomatic effort to undermine support for an American attack is Naji Sabri al-Hadithi. He is more of a technocrat than a political leader, though from a powerful family. He was ambassador to Austria before being promoted. Some see him as an interim figure who lacks the weight to present Iraq's case powerfully. He has a doctorate in English literature and was deputy information minister during the Gulf War. He once ran Iraq's press office in London. He is said to be close to Qusay which might explain his prominent position.

Two of Saddam's closest aides are Izzat Ibrahim and Taha Yasin Ramadan. They always seem to be present in pictures of Saddam's important meetings, and are his enforcers. Izzat Ibrahim is vice president of the Revolution Command Council and has been used in 2002 to try to woo Iraq's neighbors. He has exchanged an embrace with Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and has promised to respect the "territorial integrity" of Kuwait. He narrowly escaped arrest on a war crimes warrant in Austria once while being treated for suspected cancer.

Taha Yasin Ramadan is a vice president, though the title does not necessarily mean he would take over from the president. He is also used as an enforcer and as an envoy depending on the leader's need of the moment. He is reported to have entertained Osama Bin Laden's deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri in Baghdad in 1998. He is accused by exiles of ordering his tanks to run over rebels who took part in the uprising against Saddam in southern Iraq in 1991.

STORY:

The U.S. and British leaders expressed concern on Saturday that Iraq was developing nuclear weapons and said before a joint strategy session that there was sufficient evidence to act against President Saddam Hussein. Vice President Dick Cheney said that Saddam Hussein is "actively and aggressively" trying to

build a nuclear bomb, that the US is justified in striking first against anyone that plans to attack America.

President Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair cited security reports of new construction at sites previously linked to Baghdad's weapons programs and intelligence about Saddam having been close to acquiring nuclear capability as evidence to support action against Iraq. They also cited a 1998 report from the same Vienna-based regulatory arm of the United Nations that said Saddam could be six months away from developing nuclear weapons. And Cheney said that the Iraqi president has also stepped up his efforts to produce and deliver biological weapons. But Baghdad, which denies it is developing weapons of mass destruction, accused Washington of plotting to control Iraqi oil, while Germany and France agreed they were opposed to unilateral U.S. military action.

Bush will challenge the United Nations to take quick, tough action to disarm Iraq or possibly face the United States acting alone to remove Saddam. He has promised to consult with allies and U.S. congressional leaders and will set out his case against Iraq in a U.N. speech next Thursday. He insists Saddam is developing weapons of mass destruction and backing international terrorism.

Bush, seeking an international coalition to back his plans on Iraq, on Friday phoned the leaders of France, Russia and China, whose nations with the United States and Britain hold veto powers in the U.N. Security Council. He got little encouragement for an attack on Baghdad.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The US has been trying to build diplomatic support for military action to topple the Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, but different countries have different ideas.

United Kingdom: Prime Minister Tony Blair has been George Bush's most supportive European ally on this issue. He says Iraq's

build-up of weapons of mass destruction must be stopped. Senior members of the prime minister's cabinet and many within his party are opposed to attacking Iraq. Mr Blair seems determined to back the US and commit British troops to operations against Iraq.

Turkey: Already allows US and British planes to use its bases from which the no-fly zone over Northern Iraq is enforced. But Ankara is very hesitant to join in an invasion of Iraq. Turkey's main concern seems to be that the Kurds of N Iraq might set up their own state and that this would encourage the separatist tendencies of Turkey's own Kurds.

Germany: Ahead of a closely-fought election the government has strongly criticized US plans. Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder has said: "Under my leadership Germany will not be available for adventures."

For a more comprehensive list please visit:
theweeklyreport.com/Newsletters/Sep9extra.html

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SPORTS:

Oakland A's Finish Amazing Winning Streak

The Oakland Athletics' 20-game winning streak finally came to an end Friday night as Brad Radke pitched the Minnesota Twins to a 6-0 victory in a Metrodome filled with fans waving Homer Hankies.

Having the longest winning streak in the last 67 years, the Athletics just fell short of matching the second-longest streak in baseball history. The Chicago Cubs of 1880 and 1935

each won 21 straight games. The 1916 New York Giants own the major-league record of 26 wins in a row. However, the A's had set the American League mark for consecutive victories since their last loss, 2-1 to Toronto on Aug. 12.

The A's could be starting a new streak with Saturday's win. Mark Mulder pitched well enough to get Oakland back on the winning track. Mulder pitched eight shutout innings, outshining Minnesota's Joe Mays and leading the Athletics to a 2-0 victory over the Twins.

Even with those 20 straight victories, the A's began the day only two games ahead of Anaheim, which took an eight-game winning streak into its game at Baltimore Saturday night.

ENTERTAINMENT:

Book Review by Renee Stender

The Lovely Bones by Alice Sebold

A truly extraordinary book, *The Lovely Bones* forces us to look at many aspects of ourselves. As you read, you are encouraged to look at how you deal with grief, wonder if your life is one of fulfillment, and finally, think about your personal vision of Heaven.

We first meet Susie as a middle school student. She is on the cusp of love and life, her future beginning to unfurl before her. After her murder, Susie narrates the remainder of her story from Heaven with the innocence and plainness of a fourteen year old. She combines the emotions and story of her loved ones on Earth with her new life and feelings in Heaven.

Susie is able to watch her family handle her death in different ways. She watches them grieve, grow and separate. She watches her father's desperate struggle to make sense of his life. Through Susie's eyes we watch the killer's descent into madness. We feel her pain, confusion and hopelessness.

This is a tremendously captivating book. It has some of the usual components of a murder mystery but with a twist. However, to

lump this book into a mystery genre does not tell the whole story.

The Lovely Bones is a poem about life. The book has beautiful lyrics which open the doors to Heaven. Heaven is what we want it to be. Perhaps my Heaven smells like jasmine and yours like apple pie, for example. Susie learns about "possibility" while in Heaven. The possibility of life, love, and moving on.

Alice Sebold has a style which helps us see the depth of the characters. They are well developed, empathetic and smart. We care what happens to them. Their loss is ours, their triumphs ours as well. *The Lovely Bones* made me a bit scared, a bit thrilled and definitely made me think. I would like to go to Susie's Heaven. There is no mystery why this book is on the best seller's list, it is a must read.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY:

September 4, 2002

SPITZ WINS 7TH GOLD MEDAL:

U.S. swimmer Mark Spitz wins his seventh gold medal at the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich. Spitz swam the fly leg of the 400-meter medley relay, and his team set a new world-record time of 3 minutes, 48.16 seconds. Remarkably, Spitz also established new world records in the six other events in which he won the gold. No other athlete has won so many gold medals at a single Olympiad.

Before Spitz's great achievement could fully sink in, however, tragedy struck at dawn on September 5 when Palestinian terrorists attacked the Israeli quarters in the Olympic village, killing an Israeli coach and wrestler and taking nine other Israeli team members hostage. Spitz, who is Jewish, was put under armed guard and then flown from Munich to London out of fear he might become a target. The nine Israeli hostages were eventually killed.

WHO YOU NEED TO KNOW:**MIKE SPITZ**

Mark Spitz was born in Modesto, California, in 1950. He began receiving instruction in competitive swimming at age six, and by age 10 he held 17 national age-group records and one world age-group record. When he was 14, his family moved to Santa Clara so Spitz could train with George Haines of the celebrated Santa Clara Swim Club. At age 16, he won his first of 24 Amateur Athletic Union championships and at 17 took home five gold medals at the Pan-American Games in Winnipeg, Canada.

Having set 10 world records by the time of the 1968 Summer Olympics, the 18-year-old Spitz brazenly predicted that he would take home six gold medals from the Mexico City Olympic Games. Actually, he won just two gold medals, both in team relay events, and took home a silver in the 100-meter butterfly and a bronze in the 100-meter freestyle. Humbled, he went to Indiana University in Bloomington to train under Doc Councilman and prepare for the next Olympics.

At Indiana, he won eight individual National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) titles and was named World Swimmer of the Year in 1969 and 1971. By the time he graduated in 1972, he was ready for the XX Olympiad in Munich, West Germany.

Spitz was expected to dominate at Munich, but the 22-year-old star had learned his lesson in Mexico City and made no predictions. His actions spoke loudly enough. On August 28, his spectacular victory march began with an easy victory in the 200-meter butterfly, then in the butterfly, he set a new world record of 2 min. 0.70 sec. That same night, he won his second gold as a member of the U.S. 400-meter freestyle relay in a world record 3 min. 36.42 sec. The next day, he won his third gold medal, with a world record time of 1 min. 52.78 sec. in

the 200-meter freestyle.

He swam the 100-meter butterfly in 54.27 sec. to earn a world record and his fourth gold medal, and then anchored the 800-meter freestyle relay team to victory for another gold medal and world record. He considered pulling out of the 100-meter freestyle out of fears he would be bested by teammate Jerry Heidenreich but then went ahead with the race, finishing a half-stroke ahead of Heidenreich in a world record 51:22 sec. He had won his sixth gold medal, surpassing the medal record held by Italian fencer Nedo Nadi, who had won five gold medals at the 1920 Olympics in Antwerp, Belgium.

The capstone of his gold medal sweep came on September 4, when his 400-meter medley relay team won the gold. After the victory, Spitz's teammates lifted him on their shoulders and carried him around the pool in a victory lap. He had given a performance that may never be repeated: seven events, seven gold medals, seven world records.

Spitz received a hero's welcome in the United States and with his good looks and comely mustache. He made a fortune from endorsements contracts, but a hoped for movie career failed to pan out. He lost his amateur status and rarely swam in competition after 1972. In 1992, at age 42, he launched a comeback bid but failed to qualify for the Barcelona Olympics. He was inducted into the International Swimming Hall of Fame in 1977 and was a member of the first class of inductees into the United States Olympic Hall of Fame in 1983.

FEATURE:**Keep Exercise Equipment out of the Bedroom**

Dear Joan Marie,

My husband insists on keeping his exercise bicycle (which he rarely uses) in our bedroom -- right next to the bed. Besides

taking up a great deal of space and being ugly, I have heard that this is a Feng Shui “no-no.” If it is, could you explain why? I am tired of looking at it and hope your advice might help us resolve this situation.
Sincerely, Emma

Dear Emma,

Sounds like you already know why! Intuitively, you sense that a bedroom is not the best place for exercise equipment. You’re right. Exercise contraptions in the bedroom produce clutter, block the flow of harmonious chi (chee - positive energy), invite activity rather than rest, and often present you with guilty pangs if they are not being used frequently. As you’ve noticed, this kind of mixed message creates confusion, drains your energy and makes you tired.

A bedroom should be a tranquil refuge from noises, appliances or decor that overstimulates. A simple, uncluttered, cozy bedroom with minimal distractions will provide an intimate environment that will calm the vital chi energy and produce better sleep and/or romance. Promise these results and see if your husband can’t find another place for the bike (either the garage or a garage sale).

Oh, and you’re right about another thing. Good chi thrives on comfort, safety and beauty. Nobody should have to sleep next to something they think is ugly!

Good chi, Joan Marie

Joan Marie Purvis is a certified Feng Shui practitioner and instructor in practical, westernized applications of Feng Shui principles. To address your questions, learn about upcoming classes or arrange a personal consultation for your home or office, please contact Joan Marie at: www.funshwayfortoday.com

<p>Quote of the Week: If you make money your god, it will plague you like the devil. -Fielding</p> <p>Fact of the Week: Japan has only half the population of the, but buys 10 times as many comicbooks.</p> <p>Word of the Week: pith (pith) n. the soft , spongy substance in the center of plants, the essential substance force or vigor.</p>

**Thank You for Reading,
we apologize for the
technical difficulty.**