

News Digest

By The Associated Press

Study calls for changes in daily vitamin intake

WASHINGTON — A National Academy of Sciences committee is completing a study that calls for changing the daily recommended dietary allowances of certain vitamins and minerals, a move that critics say could have important effects on the nutritional habits of the nation.

The draft report, which has not been concluded or released, also will make a subtle change in the definition of recommended dietary allowances, or RDAs, that the authors say is more realistic.

Dr. Henry Kamin of Duke University, chairman of the academy's committee on dietary allowances, said Monday that the proposed new RDAs are not designed to establish minimum standards, but to assure what is healthy for all Americans.

"We make dietary nutrient recommendations within the context of the American diet as it is, not as it should be or not as interpreted by food fadists," Kamin said in a telephone interview.

Gail Porter, a spokesperson for the academy, a private, congressionally chartered organization that does studies for the government, said the report still is in the review process and may not be ready for release until the end of the year.

However, The New York Times said a draft of the report it obtained called for decreasing recommended allowances of vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin B-6 and iron, while increasing the suggested intake of calcium for women.

Michael R. Lemov, executive director of the Food Research and Action Center, a non-profit, public interest group, said his group learned of the proposals and opposes them.

"We fear that decreased RDAs will be used to 'prove' that fewer people are hungry in the United States," Lemov said in a statement. "It would be very convenient at this time to be able to wipe out hunger with a simple change in the numbers."

RDAs are used in planning the food intake of people of all ages in food

programs at hospitals, schools and other institutions. They also are used in developing dietary supplements, new food products, diets and for nutritional labeling on packages.

Since 1943, a committee of the academy's Food and Nutrition Board has revised the RDAs every five years to keep pace with the nation's changing needs.

The latest official nutrient report, issued in 1980, defined RDAs as the intake of essential nutrients considered "adequate to meet the known nutritional needs of practically all healthy persons."

The new definition, Kamin confirmed, would define RDAs as the levels of essential nutrients needed "to protect practically all healthy persons against nutritional deficiencies."

Kamin said the subtle difference reflects the fact that the committee does not know what the "nutritional needs of practically all (healthy) persons" are because of the diversity of dietary patterns in the country.

SAT scores make record gains

NEW YORK — Led by a strong upsurge by Mexican-American and Puerto Rican students, average Scholastic Aptitude Test scores posted their biggest gains in 22 years, the College Board announced Monday.

Average combined math and verbal SAT scores in 1985 rose nine points to 906 — the largest year-to-year climb since 1963 when scores rose nine points before beginning a 22-year slide.

College Board president George H. Hanford made the official announcement at a news conference that scores for the Class of 1985 rose five points on the verbal SAT to 431 and four points in math to 475.

SAT averages had leveled and turned up slightly in the past several years,

but the gain in 1985 was the first that could be considered a decisive upturn.

"All minority groups showed improvements on the SAT in 1985, and nearly all states had increases in their average scores. There was also a continued rise in the percentage of 'high scorers' — those students who score over 600 on either part of the SAT. Nearly 77,000 students did so on the verbal half of the SAT and 167,000 on the math section," Hanford said.

Puerto Rican youngsters showed the biggest year-to-year gains, up 10 points in verbal to a 368 average, and up six points to 428 on the math. Mexican-American gained six points on both math and verbal scores, averaging 426 and 382 respectively.

Black students gained four points to 346 on the verbal, and rose three points to 376 on the math, while white youngsters rose four points on both math (491) and verbal (449). Both groups thus trailed the average nationwide SAT gain.

Hanford said the public should be encouraged by the turn-around in SAT scores and other signs that American high schools are getting tougher. "But it is also clear that we have no grounds for being complacent about the state of education in this country. Despite the gains of the past few years, we are yet a combined total of 74 points behind the scores of 1963, the last high points in this SAT saga. We still have a long way to go."

National Security Council: White House Agency's involvement increases

By W. Dale Nelson
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The National Security Council's behind-the-scenes maneuvering in the release of an American clergyman held hostage in Lebanon illustrates the operational side of the White House policy-making body.

Organized nearly four decades ago primarily to process paperwork for the president, the staff of the little-known White House agency at times undertakes tasks that could be assigned to the State and Defense departments or the Central Intelligence Agency.

The NSC staff is far less accountable to Congress and operates outside of the public eye. But its influence inside the government appears to be growing.

The council staff was especially active in the Middle East hostage crisis arising from the hijacking of a TWA jetliner and in the kidnapping of Americans in Lebanon.

Asked about the efforts to free the Rev. Benjamin Weir — who was released Sept. 14 and six other Americans who

still are being held hostage in Lebanon, a usually well-informed State Department official pleaded ignorance. "It's an NSC operation. No one here knows about it," said the official, who spoke on condition he not be identified.

Some academic experts and aides from former administrations believe the NSC staff has become too embroiled in day-to-day management in recent years and should be attending more strictly to policy making, leaving the operational details to the State and Defense departments.

Others say the council staff is just doing what it has been doing more or less steadily at least since the Kennedy administration and its role is no cause for concern.

But observers in both camps agree that the staff of the council, which was established in 1947, is doing much more than it did in its early days under President Truman and Eisenhower.

The NSC's members are President Reagan, Vice President George Bush, Secretary of State George Shultz and

Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, CIA Director William Casey and Adm. William Drowe Jr., chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, are advisers. The council is supposed to help the president formulate foreign and military policy.

Robert McFarlane, the president's national security adviser, heads the NSC staff, but is not a member of the council. The staff includes about 35 foreign policy experts and about 100 other employees who provide administrative assistance and run the White House Situation Room.

Several scholars said NSC staff members had traditionally been active in preparation for summit meetings and accompanied high-ranking government officials on missions abroad.

Morton Halperin, now director of the Washington office of the American Civil Liberties Union and an NSC staffer under Henry Kissinger, said the council, rather than confining itself to policy making, "has been an operating agency for a very long time; it's just gotten bigger and more bureaucratic."

Newsmakers

A roundup of the day's happenings

Police are investigating a party raid on the Nebraska Wesleyan University Delta Zeta sorority house where about 25 men allegedly used force against six women and stole almost \$500 of undergarments. The 25 could face strong arm robbery charges.

A Moscow street has been renamed for the late Soviet leader Konstantin U. Chernenko, who would have been 74 today. A red granite marker also was set up.

The State Department says the death toll in the two Mexican earthquakes has reached 3,461, including five Americans. About 6,700 people have been treated for

injuries.

Hagerstown, Md., officials are investigating a power surge that blew fuses and damaged household appliances in a two-block section of the community. Municipal Electric Light Plant workers apparently hooked up the wrong line to a transformer, sending 240 volts of electricity along lines that normally carry 110 volts.

Gov. Bob Kerrey told members of organized labor at an AFL-CIO state convention they should continue to fight against conditions that are wrong or unjust, and move to correct them.

In Brief

Commonwealth bill advances 30-5

LINCOLN — The Legislature gave overwhelming second-round approval Monday to a bill that would pay an \$8.5 million claim on behalf of Commonwealth Savings Co. depositors.

With the expected seven-day special session running on schedule, lawmakers voted 30-5 to move an amended version of LBI one step away from passage and transfer to Gov. Bob Kerrey's desk.

Kerrey convened the special session last Thursday when Attorney General Robert Spire concluded that an appropriations law passed this year had defects preventing the \$8.5 million tort claim payment.

Before giving second-round approval, lawmakers adopted, 30-5, an amendment offered by Neligh Sen. John DeCamp that mirrored a settlement between the state Banking Department and the Lancaster County District Court.

The amendment, which met no resistance from Lincoln senators shepherding Kerrey's LBI through the Legislature, would release the state from legal liability in Commonwealth's collapse.

The amendment still gives depositors one avenue to seek more money from the state — a miscellaneous claim based on an argument that the state is morally liable in Commonwealth's Nov. 1, 1983 collapse.

Fall gas prices expected to drop

LINCOLN — Gasoline prices apparently will drop this fall and winter for the second straight year, providing welcome relief for motorists after a summer of increases at the pump.

Gas prices in Lincoln already have dropped an average of one or two cents in the last month.

A recent \$8-a-barrel drop in the price of crude oil is an indication that more price drops are on the way, said R. L. Clark of the Cornhusker AAA Motor Club.

Jury picked in 14-year-old's trial

BELOIT, Wis. — A 14-year-old boy went on trial on delinquency charges Monday in the slaying of a 9-year-old who refused to share his bicycle, and jurors were asked whether they doubted that a person so young could commit murder.

None responded when District Attorney James Daley asked the question during jury selection for the trial of the oldest of the three youngsters accused of beating and stabbing Anthony Darnell Wilson.

Circuit Judge Patrick Rude emphasized to prospective jurors that the defendant was being tried on a juvenile delinquency petition and was not charged under laws that apply to adults.

A 12-year-old boy also has been charged with delinquency and his trial is scheduled Oct. 14. He is being held at the Rock county Youth Home.

The third defendant is an 11-year-old girl, but under Wisconsin law a youthful defendant must be at least 12 to be charged with delinquency. She is to stand trial Oct. 21 to determine if she is "a child in need of protection and services" for her alleged role in the incident. She has been released to the custody of relatives.

All three children have pleaded innocent.

Accused Rulo men waive hearings

FALLS CITY — Two men accused of murder on a survivalist farm near Rulo waived their rights to preliminary hearings Monday in Richardson County Court.

Michael Ryan, 37, and Timothy Haverkamp, 23, waived their hearings in brief separate appearances before Richardson County Judge Thomas Gist. He scheduled the arraignment of both men for Oct. 10 in district court.

Ryan, who was the reputed leader of a religious survivalist group that lives on the Rulo farm, is charged with two counts of first-degree murder in the deaths of Luke Stice, 5, and James Thimm, 25. The bodies of Stice and Thimm were found in unmarked graves during a search of the farm on Aug. 18.

Haverkamp is charged with first-degree murder in Thimm's death. Attorneys for Ryan and Haverkamp said one of the reasons they waived the preliminary hearings was a concern over pre-trial publicity. Last week, Gist denied the attorney's motion to close the hearings.

FarmAid proceeds way below goal

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. — At \$9 million so far, proceeds from the all-star FarmAid benefit concert appeared to be running short of the goal Monday but organizers said they would be happy if the event triggered new interest in farmers' problems.

By the time the 14-hour concert ended and 50 stars of country, rock and blues had left the stage early Monday, FarmAid had raised more than \$9 million. That was way below singer Willie Nelson's prediction of raising \$50 million.

Nelson, who organized Sunday's show, said FarmAid received about \$4 million from corporate donations and ticket sales, and roughly \$5 million in pledges from television viewers and radio listeners.

But tabulation of the pledges was incomplete. The FarmAid money will be used for cash grants to needy farmers, legal aid, counseling and job training, a nationwide information hotline and a campaign to increase awareness of farm problems.

Reagan outlines new trade policy

WASHINGTON — President Reagan, trying to stave off legislation to protect battered American industries from cheap imports, outlined a refurbished trade policy Monday that is designed to combat unfair trade practices abroad and open foreign markets to U.S. goods.

"I will not stand by and watch American businesses fail because of unfair trading practices abroad," Reagan pledged in a speech to lawmakers and business leaders invited to the White House to hear his announcement. "I will not stand by and watch American workers lose their jobs because other nations do not play by the rules."

But Reagan, who has said quotas or tariffs to protect more expensive domestic products from foreign competition would lead to economic disaster, promised to veto measures "that I believe will harm economic growth, cause loss of jobs and diminish international trade."