



Successful Aging

Stein Institute for Research On Aging

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ONLINE AT AGING.UCSD.EDU

Welcome to the first edition of *Successful Aging*, the Stein Institute for Research on Aging's newly titled monthly newsletter. Formerly known as *Healthwise*, the newsletter has changed to reflect our recent focus on the study of successful aging.

This new direction is the result of the creative leadership of Dilip Jeste, M.D., Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry and Neurosciences and the Estelle and Edgar Levi Chair in Aging, who became director of the Stein Institute in 2004.

As always, the newsletter will feature information on cutting-edge research being conducted by Stein-affiliated faculty members, along with information about research opportunities and faculty awards. We will also continue to include updates on our training and outreach programs as well as information on upcoming community education and fundraising events. Some of the new features you can expect to see in *Successful Aging* will be articles on medical and faculty members whose work relates to successful aging, current media attention to the issue of successful aging, and a monthly article featuring a successful ager from our very own community.

The retooling of our newsletter accompanies several other changes that have been taking place in the Stein Institute's public outreach efforts. Our website has been entirely redeveloped to allow better access to the full range of activities we are involved in as an organized research unit at UCSD: our current and past research on successful aging; information on our research training and outreach programs to scholars, medical and high school students; and our efforts to educate the public on issues related to successful aging. If you have not already done so, we invite you to visit our website

at <http://aging.ucsd.edu/>—we think you will like what you see!

As part of our ongoing efforts to make information on successful aging accessible to more people, the Stein Institute has also opted to hold its Public Lecture Series an hour earlier than in previous times. The lectures are now held from 5:30 p.m. until 6:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of every month, in the Garren Auditorium on the UCSD School of Medicine campus. This change reflects our response to "popular demand" to make this event more accessible, especially for senior citizens in the community, as well as for UCSD faculty, trainees, and staff. Public Lecture Series events feature UCSD faculty from a wide range of disciplines related to successful aging, who share their expertise in a way that is accessible to community members. Keep your eye out for upcoming events that cover topics of interest to you or your family and friends. You are always invited to attend this free monthly event.

We hope that you will find these changes to your liking and welcome your comments and suggestions about how we might make further improvements. Please feel free to contact us at steininstitute@ucsd.edu or via telephone at (858) 534-6299. Increasing our understanding of what it means to "age well" is a collaborative effort involving the medical and research communities and the public. Together we can all help to make aging, as Dr. Dilip Jeste likes to say, a matter of "the world becoming more golden."

FREE PUBLIC LECTURE

OCTOBER

Dancing through the Darkness with Glaucoma

Dr. Robert Weinreb
*UCSD Vice Chairman/Professor
Department of Ophthalmology*

October 15, 2008, 5:30 p.m.
Garren Auditorium
Basic Science Building
University of California, San Diego

Glaucoma is the leading cause of treatable blindness in the United States and affects more than 60 million aged individuals worldwide. New approaches to diagnosis and treatment can prevent vision loss.

Free parking is available.

Please call (858) 534-6299 AT LEAST THREE WORKING DAYS IN ADVANCE to receive your free parking permit. Attendees may also purchase permits at the parking kiosk on Gilman Drive or park at the metered sites.

Directions:

From Interstate 5 North or South:

- Exit La Jolla Village Drive West
- Right on Villa La Jolla Drive
- Left on Gilman Drive
- Left into Parking Lot 602 (first stop sign)
- From parking lot, walk towards Medical Teaching Facility (MTF)
- Right through MTF and enter Basic Science Building through glass doors
- Left down first hallway



HS STAR PARTICIPANTS

A Summer of Learning: High School Students Gain Insight into Careers in Aging

On a Monday morning, students arrive on the UCSD campus to see a functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) machine and learn about changes in the brain with age, along with the various types of dementia.

Another afternoon, these same students experience first-hand what it is like to be visually impaired, have stiff joints, and hearing loss, and its impact on being able to perform basic activities, such as reading a nutrition label, writing a check, and looking up a phone number. One morning, these same students talk with faculty to discuss career options in aging and the possibilities of medical

The staff that take part in this program do a great job at helping students understand the importance of the work that goes on at the Stein Institute and UCSD. HS STAR has been a great eye-opening and influential experience.

school. Mid-day, they are off to tour a local retirement community to visit with residents over lunch. Another day, they are off again to help serve lunch to low-income seniors at a bustling center downtown. Throw in a book review over coffee and a weekly film event and you have a snapshot of some of the many activities a participant within the UCSD Stein Institute for Research on Ag-

ing's High School Student Training in Aging Research (HS STAR) program experiences during their summer internship. In addition to these various activities students also work alongside

a faculty member with whom they spend five to six weeks of their summer learning about various facets of research. The projects are vast. One student is able to enter the operating room to observe and learn about various orthopaedic surgeries at the UCSD Medical Center, Hillcrest. Two other students are busy researching how elements of popular youth games, such as Guitar Hero and brain age games, such as Brain Train Age, can be used to develop an ideal game for older adults and its potential impact on cognitive functioning. Other sample projects pertain to physical activity, smoking and its effect on metabolic functioning, and conducting inventories of blood samples for use in cancer research.

This was the third year of the HS STAR program. This year, a total of ten students were selected to participate, the majority of whom were students at the neighbor-

Congratulations to the following ten students who participated in the HS STAR program this past year and a big thank you to the dedicated mentors who volunteered their valuable time.

Habibo Amba
Mentor: Brinda Rana, Ph.D.
Department of Psychiatry

Erika Chavez
Mentor: Sharron Dawes, Ph.D.
Department of Psychiatry

Gloria Chukwueke
Mentor: Brinda Rana, Ph.D.
Department of Psychiatry

Aliou Diallo
Mentor: Alexandra Schwartz, M.D.
Department of Orthopaedic Surgery

Christina Khavarian
Mentor: Matthew Allison, M.D., M.P.H.
Department of Family & Preventive Medicine

Manit Munshi
Mentors: Danielle Glorioso, M.S.W., and Hua Jin, M.D.
Department of Psychiatry

David Nguyen
Mentors: Colin Depp, Ph.D., and Ipsit Vahia, M.D.
Department of Psychiatry

Alicia Thomas
Mentors: Jacqueline Kerr, Ph.D., and Dori Rosenberg, Ph.D.
Department of Family & Preventive Medicine

Miguel Villarreal
Mentors: Colin Depp, Ph.D., and Ipsit Vahia, M.D.
Department of Psychiatry

Monzerrat Zarate
Mentor: Lisa Eyler, Ph.D.
Department of Psychiatry

ing UCSD Preuss School and have parents who have never attended college. To date, a total of twenty-eight students have completed the training. Eight of these students have participated in the program for two years in a row before heading

Congratulations to **Erika Chavez**, an HS STAR participant during the past two summers, who received \$10,000 in scholarships for college this year! These scholarships were awarded to her largely based on her participation in the HS STAR program. Both are renewable for four years, which will significantly help her with the costs of her college tuition. We wish Erika all the best as she starts college at Loyola Marymount University this Fall!

continued on page 4

Giving the Fountain of Youth: UC San Diego Receives \$2 Million Research Grant from Hillblom Foundation to Slow Aging Process

BY JADE BERGGREN

Funding from late DHL co-founder to serve as catalyst for research in the new Division of Geriatrics at the UC San Diego School of Medicine—one of the nation's top five public medical schools.



Laura Dugan, M.D., of UC San Diego's Division of Geriatrics will lead the research aimed at slowing the affects of aging.

A grant of nearly \$2 million from the Larry L. Hillblom Foundation will offer researchers at the University of California, San Diego, the opportunity to forge ahead in their trailblazing quest to better understand the process of aging and discover new

ways of minimizing its effects. Physicians and researchers of the newly created Division of Geriatrics at the UC San Diego School of Medicine—ranked fifth in the nation among public medical schools by *US News & World Report*—will work collabora-

tively to determine how processes such as cellular damage, inflammation, and gene activity may be linked to the aging process and disorders that often accompany advanced age.

The Larry L. Hillblom Foundation was created through a bequest from Larry L. Hillblom, a respected international businessman who was one of three founders of DHL Worldwide Express. The foundation provides support primarily to medical research targeting the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and cure of age-related chronic or degenerative disorders of the brain or vision, as well as diabetes and its complications.

Based on U.S. Census Bureau projections, it is anticipated that by 2030, the entry of baby boomers into retirement age will bring the number of persons over sixty-five to more than 76 million, or 25 percent of the population. As a result, more and more individuals will be living with chronic and debilitating conditions such as diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular disease, and Alzheimer's. It has been suggested, however, that if the basic aging process itself could be slowed by 5 to 10 percent, this would have dramatic effects on the health of older adults and significantly

[continued on page 5](#)

Maureen Halpain, M.S. Appointed to Chancellor's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women

Congratulations to Maureen Halpain, M.S., executive director of the University of California, San Diego Stein Institute for Research on Aging and the Division of Geriatric Psychiatry who was recently appointed to the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women (CSW). The committee was established in 1987 and comprises representatives from members of the faculty, staff, and student body at UCSD appointed by the chancellor.

The charge of the committee is to identify and analyze issues relating to the status of women at UCSD, including faculty, staff, and students; to inform and educate the campus community about conditions that affect the status of women within the university; and to advise and make recommendations to the chancellor regarding policies and procedures that will improve conditions for women.

Stein Institute for Research on Aging Awards Pilot Grants

Each year, the Stein Institute for Research on Aging awards pilot grants to select UCSD faculty. These projects are small in nature and provide the necessary funding that faculty need to gain some preliminary results to then apply for larger funding sources. This spring, applications were solicited from faculty with projects related to successful cognitive aging. The Stein Institute received over three times the number of applications as the number of available funding slots. Many of the applications were excellent, which made it very difficult to select only a handful of awardees from this talented group. Applications were reviewed by the Stein Institute's Scientific Advisory Board as part of the selection process. Based on their input, five awardees were selected, with each receiving a total of \$10,000 of funding over a one-year period to assist them with their research projects. Congratulations to the five recipients of the 2008 Stein Institute for Research on Aging Faculty Pilot Research Grant Awards!

Sameh S. Ali, Ph.D.

Department of Medicine

Project: NADPH-oxidase dependant free-radical dynamics in aging brain: The gender factor

Michael Baker, Ph.D.

Department of Medicine

Project: A sensitive multi-steroid assay for investigating biomarkers associated with aging

Amy J. Jak, Ph.D.

Department of Psychiatry

Project: Impact of a walking intervention on executive functioning in older adults

Thomas Meeks, M.D.

Department of Psychiatry

Project: Tai Chi and cognition

Chih-Min Tang, Ph.D.

Department of Pharmacology

Project: Functional and gene expression changes in the aging hearts of P2Y2 nucleotide receptor-null mice

Stein Institute Fellow Jared W. Young Receives Award

Jared W. Young, Ph.D., a Postdoctoral Research Fellow from the Stein Institute for Research on Aging, was recently awarded grant funding from the National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Affective Disorder (NARSAD). This award has been given to investigate the putative role of cholinergic receptors—implicated in cognitive dysfunction in aging and Alzheimer’s disease—in attentional function in rodents. Specifically, the \$60,000 award will enable Dr. Young to investigate whether selective drugs to nicotinic cholinergic receptors can improve natural decline in attentional performance. The quality of the proposed translational research highlights the Stein Institute’s dedication to developing therapeutics to combat natural cognitive decline and promote successful cognitive aging.

Professor Young and colleagues will train mice to perform an attentional task, consistent to tests used to assess attention in humans. This task requires the subjects to attend to stimuli in their environment, responding when relevant stimuli are presented, and not responding following the presentation of irrelevant stimuli. Much in the same way we traverse everyday occurrences, responding to those stimuli that we deem important, Professor Young and colleagues will be able to assess the ability of mice to do the same. Using these mice, Professor Young will then be able to address whether drugs targeted at specific receptor subtypes found in the brain enhance the ability of subjects to attend to what is relevant in the environment, respond accordingly, and promptly. Once these receptors have been assessed, drugs can be developed into human-safe therapeutics for treating poor attention and decision making brought on not only by natural processes, but also by premature dysfunction brought on by the likes of schizophrenia and Alzheimer’s disease.

Stein Institute Welcomes Faraz Yaghouti as WEB Development Manager



Faraz Yaghouti is the newest addition to the Stein Institute, joining the team in February.

He was responsible for creating the new Web application for the Stein Institute, along with implementing strategies and managing the creation of the technical tools needed to

increase Stein’s Web presence at a global level. Faraz comes to us with much experience in leading development of new Web-based applications. He also has tremendous experience in the start-up field and has spent the majority of his career to date as an entrepreneur. He co-founded and served as the CTO of videonary.com (video directory for businesses and local services). Faraz received his bachelor’s degree in computer science from the University of California, San Diego in 2005.

A Summer of Learning

continued from page 2

off to college. One student returned to conduct additional research for a third year while home from his attendance at UC Los Angeles. These student participants receive a stipend for their work. However, the impact of this program reaches far beyond their wallets. Many of these students have used the HS STAR experience to help with college applications. One student was successful in obtaining two college scholarships based on guidance from her mentor. As a result of the HS STAR program, many participants are considering career paths in research, medicine, geriatric psychiatry, or neurosurgery, while others are considering new avenues within previous dreams. An interest in engineering is being tailored towards potentially constructing orthopae-

I noticed that all the elderly at these places have something in common: they are happy, active, and have a positive attitude on life. This is what I believe helps someone age successfully....

dic equipment. An interest in history is being tailored towards looking at the history of geriatric psychiatry and/or helping to preserve the life histories of today’s older adults. With an insufficient number of specialists in aging and geriatric medicine, along with the need for more individuals to pursue research careers, the HS STAR program is one small step being taken to address this shortage. While sitting in

the audience listening to participants give their oral presentations at the conclusion of the summer program, it is evident that the students are walking away with a valuable experience that could certainly shape their career interests. We look forward to following these students over time to see just where they end up on their career path.

The Stein Institute would like to give a special thank you to the **Susan Scott Foundation** for their generous donation this past year in support of the HS STAR program! The HS STAR program could not exist without the support of the Susan Scott Foundation and other donors to the Stein Institute for Research on Aging!

Giving the Fountain of Youth

continued from page 3

decrease the number of individuals living with disease and disability.

"We are proud to support research of such great promise for patients of advanced age," said Peter J. Donnici, president of the Hillblom Foundation. "This study at UC San Diego is an excellent fit with the philanthropic mission of our foundation. We are pleased to provide the funding for this groundbreaking, innovative research, which has the potential to positively affect individuals nationally and globally."

The four-year research project, led by Laura Dugan, M.D., holder of the Larry L. Hillblom Chair in Geriatric Medicine and the head of UC San Diego's Division of Geriatrics, is aimed at understanding the basic biology of aging in humans, which might lead to dramatic and far-reaching benefits to human health.

"This research should provide important insight into some of the most fundamental questions related to the process of aging," said Dugan. "The primary objective of the research is to identify the underlying problems of aging and to develop interventions to overcome them. We are extremely grateful to the Larry L. Hillblom Foundation for their continued generous and comprehensive support of aging research at UC San Diego."

The study will delve into how antioxidants may assist in rescuing memory loss and decreased cognitive function common to advanced age, which inflammation pathways cause derangement in the neural circuits critical to normal brain function and the relationship between diabetes and the aging process. Researchers will also utilize imaging technology to map when and where the processes associated with aging occur in the brain. The conclusions drawn from the imaging may lead to methods which would allow physicians to better diagnose diseases associated with advanced age.

"We are proud to support research of such great promise for patients of advanced age."

— Peter J. Donnici, president of the Hillblom Foundation

Joining Dugan in these studies are UC San Diego faculty members Sameh Ali, Ph.D., and Marga Behrens, Ph.D., also in the Department of Medicine, Division of Geriatrics; and Richard Buxton, Ph.D.; Tom Liu, Ph.D.; and Eric Wong, Ph.D., M.D., in the Department of Radiology. From the Department of Pathology, Nigel Calcutt, Ph.D., and Andrew Mizisin, Ph.D., will also be involved in the research efforts.

The UC San Diego Division of Geriatrics was founded as part of the university's School of Medicine in July 2007 with the goal of promoting healthy aging through patient care, medical education and research. More information on the new Division can be found by visiting: <http://geriatricsmedicine.ucsd.edu>.

PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES UCSD-TV SCHEDULE



Lectures air on:

Cox Digital, Ch. 135
Time Warner Cable, Ch. 18
Time Warner Del Mar, Ch. 68, or
UHF (without cable), Ch. 35

Successful Cognitive and Emotional Aging

Dilip Jeste, M.D.
9/25 9:00 p.m.
9/28 5:00 p.m.
9/30 7:00 p.m.

How Sleeping Pills Can Harm You

Daniel Kripke, M.D.
9/16 9:00 a.m.
9/16 7:00 p.m.
9/20 1:00 p.m.
9/21 8:00 p.m.

To purchase a video copy of a specific lecture seen on TV, please visit <http://ucsd.tv/sira> or call (800) 742-5117.

For additional information on viewing past lectures online or any other questions, please visit our Web site <http://aging.ucsd.edu> or call (858) 534-6299.

Do You Know Someone Who Is a Great Example of Successful Aging?

As part of the newly revised newsletter, the Stein Institute will be launching a new feature highlighting examples of successful aging within our local community. We welcome your nominations. If you know of someone who is age eighty-five or older and you feel is an example of successful aging, please contact Jody DelaPena-Murphy at (858) 822-1132 or jodelapena@ucsd.edu with the name and contact info of the person you would like to nominate, along with a brief description of why you feel he or she is successfully aging. From these nominations, we will select some of these individuals to be interviewed, with their responses included in future editions of the newsletter!

Interested in a good book?

All participants of the Stein Institute's High School Training in Aging Research program were required to read *Water for Elephants* by Sara Gruen. The story weaves back and forth between the current life of an individual aged ninety, plus, and his earlier life experiences as part of a Depression-era circus. This book should be available at your local bookstore! Enjoy!

Adrenaline Highs

BY NATASHA JOSEFOWITZ, PH.D.

I have my own theory about why some people retire happily, and others, upon retirement, get depressed or ill; about why some people drive fast and like roller coaster rides and scary movies; and others—like me—absolutely refuse to see anything violent and frightening, and have always avoided scary rides in amusement parks.



Natasha Josefowitz, Ph.D.

It has to do with an addiction to “highs.” People with generally low levels of adrenaline need a boost to “feel alive.” While people whose levels

are usually high easily move into anxiety when overstimulated.

I’m of the latter category. Even a scary book makes my heart beat faster, and I get so uncomfortable in suspense movies that I want to leave. The feeling of being frightened is upsetting—I hate it and do all I can to avoid being in such situations.

My granddaughter, on the other hand, loves to be scared. She says, “It’s fun.” A large number of people must agree, considering how many movies are made just to raise adrenaline levels. Steven Spielberg said in one of his interviews, that during a preview of *Jaws*, he saw someone leave as the shark was swallowing a man and thought: “It’s a flop.” Then he saw the person throw up and return and he thought: “It’s a blockbuster.”

Addictions to emotional highs are not very different from addictions to alcohol or drugs. Without the stimulation, one feels low key, empty, or depressed.

Some people can only work under pressure, as deadlines are motivators. I’m

always several columns ahead, and I handed in reports early in college. Deadlines make me anxious. I can work under pressure if I have to, but I hate the feeling it generates.

Why do people continue working at a hard-and-fast pace when they could retire and don’t need the money? A newly retired friend of mine recently said to me: “I miss the challenge, I miss risk taking, I miss having the control.”

Another friend, a just-retired CEO said: “Who am I if I’m not a manager, if I’m not in charge, if I don’t have the opportunity to make important decisions?”

What these men miss, besides their job identities and the daily adventure that work provides, is being looked up to by colleagues and staff, being someone who matters, feeling responsible, and being challenged.

The people who retire most happily are college professors who have had experience filling up their time in productive ways during the long summer vacations.

Interestingly enough, stress addiction can be harmful to some, leading to heart attacks but not to all. For some, the release of adrenaline in the blood stream might increase resistance to disease through the production of lymphocytes.

In other words, stress may be bad for some individuals but good for others who live in the fast lane, getting high on violent video games and high-risk sports such as bungee jumping. People addicted to their own adrenaline seek ways to get these surges and when deprived of them get irritable or depressed.

I get a “high” when I see a good performance in a theater or have a particularly stimulating conversation, and that’s enough for me.



Seeing a destructive storm on television, hearing someone else’s bad news, or a dramatic story also provide a small kick, which explain people’s preoccupation with sensational trials or sex scandals.

After all, what is “having a good time” but a “high”?

Stress is negative when people have little control over their work. Low-level employees with heavy job demands are at the highest risk of heart disease. The workers with least control over their jobs were five times as likely to develop coronary heart disease as were those with the most control.

“Job control” involves two factors: the ability to make one’s own decisions and the capacity to use a range of skills.

If psychological strain cannot be translated into action, then the cardiovascular system is adversely affected. Even talking to someone about one’s stress is an action that can be helpful.

Being in control, being needed, and being important are highs. So how to get that high in other ways is what must be found.

What gives you a high? How much of it do you need and with what intensity? Being aware of one’s needs for adrenaline highs is already half the battle in seeking what one must have to feel alive. This will give you control over your behaviors and not let you fall prey to unconscious motivations and needs.

Meet Stein Institute's Community Board of Advisors (CBOA) Member, RADM Raymond Smith USN (Ret)

Rear Admiral Ray Smith, U.S Navy Retired, served as a Navy SEAL for thirty-one years, beginning as a junior officer and rising to the overall Commander of the 2300-man SEAL force in 1992.



A graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy in 1967, Admiral Smith commanded the Navy SEALs during Operation Desert Storm conducting over 270 successful

missions while incurring no casualties. Admiral Smith served as a member of the California Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports for four years during which the council was chaired by Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Since retiring, Admiral Smith has pursued a wide variety of interests. He is a board member of two public companies and

an advisory board member to a private company. Additionally, he teaches leadership as a volunteer to the Los Angeles Police Department, speaks to numerous audiences on leadership and team building, and is an adjunct researcher at the Rand Corporation, Santa Monica. Admiral Smith and his spouse, Kathy, reside in Coronado. They have three married sons and seven grandchildren.

In a recent conversation with the admiral, he cited several reasons for joining the CBOA, including his conviction that service to one's community and its citizens is an obligation each one of us should endeavor to fulfill. Also, his four-year tenure on the California Governor's Council on Fitness and Sports emphasized the need to focus on the health and well-being of senior citizens. Finally, the admiral believes that the Stein Institute's groundbreaking research, both current and planned for the future, will provide a quantum leap in the quality of life for our growing population of senior citizens.

Two Medical Students Receive Aging Awards at Graduation

Each year, the UCSD Stein Institute for Research on Aging awards \$500 to one or two graduating medical students. The Stein Institute for Research on Aging Award was established a few years ago to recognize one to two fourth-year medical students who have conducted original research and/or shown outstanding interest in the field of aging. Awardees are selected based on nominations from UCSD School of Medicine faculty. This year, two individuals were selected as recipients. They are Joseph Hyder and Amanda Lamond. Joseph Hyder was nominated by Michael Criqui, M.D., M.P.H., from the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine. Joseph completed his medical and graduate training in the UCSD's Medical Scientist Training Program and conducted some innovative research which focused on two common diseases of

aging—cardiovascular disease and osteoporosis. His research has already resulted in two publications and a poster presentation.

Amanda Lamond was nominated by Colin Depp, Ph.D., from the Department of Psychiatry, for her research on the topic of resilience in aging, which resulted in a paper being published in a top psychiatry journal. Amanda also was an active participant in the Stein Institute for Research on Aging's Medical Student Training in Aging Research (MSTAR) program and continued to maintain her involvement with the Stein Institute throughout her medical school training.

Both students received their awards during an event held on Saturday, May 31, 2008, as part of the graduation festivities. Congratulations to these two exceptional new doctors!

Honor Roll of Stein Institute for Research on Aging Contributors

We would like to express our deep appreciation for all those listed, as well as the anonymous donors, who chose to provide support to the Sam and Rose Stein Institute for Research on Aging during the months of April thru mid August 2008. Thank you, also, to all of our donors who have made generous contributions through United Way. While we have no way to identify and thank you personally, we want you to know how much we appreciate your support!

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[continued on page 8](#)

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continued from page 7

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