Life in These Parts...

True Grit

William H. Wilkinson, MD, 86, of Waialua died Jan 4 in Wahiawa Hospital after practicing for 59 years and delivering 5,000 babies. (The internist who cared for him was a baby he had delivered on Lanai.) Dr. Wilkinson was born in L.A., graduated from Stanford Medical School—arrived in Hawaii in 1940. He first practiced at Ewa Plantation, then moved to Lanai in 1941 and stayed till 1952 when he came to Wahiawa where he worked full time until 2 weeks before his death...

Zap! Zap!

Craig Thomas ER physician at Wahiawa and Castle Hospital believes that portable defibrillators could save 200 lives on Oahu if 20% of cardiac arrest patients are saved. (Oahu’s cardiac arrest survival rate is 3%) Assistant Police Chief Boisse Correa credits Craig as integral in getting $200,000 in City funds for 90 portable defibrillators for the Honolulu Police Department.

Of Mice and Men:

Ryuzo Yanagimachi (Yama) — Mouse scale experiments in his shabby lab led to fertility breakthrough and international fame — Star Bulletin writer Helen Alton writes: “Crammed lab space, rusty pipes, mold and a failing air conditioner didn’t deter UH researcher Ryuzo Yanagimachi and his team ...” Yanagimachi was happy to be back in his shabby laboratory after all the clamor in July over his group’s cloning of mice — dubbed the “Honolulu technique.”

Commercial application of the science eventually could enrich the researchers and the University. Alan Teramura, interim senior VP for research says, “The potential for the type of work they are doing is in the hundreds of millions of dollars.”

Potpourri I....

A woman and her husband interrupted their vacation to go to a dentist.

I want a tooth pulled, and I don’t want Novocain because I’m in a big hurry,” the woman said. “Just extract the tooth as quickly as possible, and we’ll be on our way.”

The dentist was quite impressed, “You’re certainly a courageous woman,” he said. “Which tooth is it?”

The woman turned to her husband and said, “Show him your tooth, dear.”

A young parish minister about to deliver his first sermon asked a retired cleric for advice on how to capture the congregation’s attention.

“Start with an opening line that’s certain to grab them,” the older man said.

“For example: ‘Some of the best years of my life were spent in the arms of a woman who was not my wife.’ “ He smiled at the younger man’s shocked expression before adding, “She was my mother.”

Life in These Parts...

Ailing Medical Industry Needs More Than A Pill (Excerpt from Malia Zimmerman’s knowledgeadgeable article in Pacific Business News Dec 28)

Every sector in the local medical industry is struggling with increasing costs, a demand for more coverage and the need to invest heavily in medical technology...

Medical providers are burdened by the responsibility to provide coverage to local employers no matter what the company can afford...

Hospital executives are trying to purchase the latest high tech equipment and attempting to shorten hospital stays to keep costs down and to maximize revenue...

Doctors say they are making less money. Their piece of the financial pie is shrinking due to higher insurance costs, state regulations and lower reimbursement...

Patients are demanding more. They are demanding coverage for alternative care options. I.e. chiropractic, acupuncture and naturopathic...(HMSA with 600,000 members is planning to extend coverage for alternative health benefits)

Kailua physician Robert Sussman says, “If alternative medicine coverage is implemented, rates will go up, people will pay more and doctors will receive an even smaller piece of the pie.”

Gentle Persuasion:

An Academy lawn sign: “Mahalo For Using The Side Walk.”

Potpourri:....

A psychology professor and a history professor are sitting on the porch of a nudist colony watching the sun set. The historian says to the psychologist: “Have you read Marx?”

And the psychology professor replies: “Yes, I think it’s the wicker chairs.”

Appointed, Elected & Honored...

Scott Hundahl is the new chairman of the Commission on Cancer. Scott has been practicing in Honolulu since 1988 and has been chief of surgery at QMC since 1995.

AMA News

A study published in the JAMA Dec 23 Issue recommends that laws barring felons from buying guns should be expanded to include those who have committed misdemeanors. A 15 year study has found that handgun purchasers with a prior misdemeanor conviction are five times as likely to be charged with new offenses involving firearms and violence.

Potpourri II....

“Hello, welcome to the Psychiatric Hotline. “If you are obsessive-compulsive, please press 1 repeatedly.

“You are so dependent, please ask someone to press 2.

“If you have multiple personalities, please press 3,4,5 and 6.

“If you are paranoid-delusional, we know who you are and what you want. stay on the line until we can trace the call.

“If you are schizophrenic, listen carefully and a little voice will tell you which number to press.

“If you are manic-depressive, it doesn’t matter which number you press. No one will answer.”

Some flawed new opportunities for investment: The Gingerich bond: has no maturity. The Dole bond: has no interest. The Clinton bond: has no principle

(Adapted from Financial Times)

Now that my mother’s office has a fax machine, I fax my correspondence to her instead of using the postoffice. Although I’ve told her many times that it’s a faster and less expensive way to communicate, she continued to mail me weekly letters.

On my last birthday, however, she showed that she now has a full grasp of technology. She faxed me a $100 bill with the note: “Happy Birthday. You’re right — it is cheaper to fax than mail.

Love, Mom.”

Letters to the Editor

(With Apologies to Norm)

Physician assisted suicide/death

Fred Holshuch, MD Honokaa

(Hawaii-Tribune-Herald Dec 7 1998)

As a long time Big Island emergency physi-
ican, I am involved in end of life care on a daily basis. The 1999 State Legislature will almost certainly be considering legislation regarding physician-assisted suicide/death. Although I think all of us want control of our own end of life decisions, I will be speaking in opposition to any bill to legalize physician-assisted suicide or death (PAS/PAD). The Hawaii Medical Association and the American Medical Association oppose PAS/PAD feeling it is inconsistent with the physician’s role as a healer.

I want to mention a personal example involving my elderly parents (late 80s) who came to live with us in March of this year. My mother, a 50 year smoker who quit over 10 years ago, died at home Nov 17 of a recently discovered but rapidly progressive lung cancer. She had clear advanced directives and a desire to die at home and we were able to be with her at the end. In her case, she had what experts on dying have called a “good death” as she was able to put her affairs in order, knew her advanced directives would be honored and was afforded relief of as much pain and suffering as possible.

My father, who is 89, who once ran one of the largest defense corporations in the world, and who now has the confusion and memory loss often associated with aging, presents a different side of the PAS/PAD issue. One could easily imagine a scenario where a very aggressive, profit driven, mainland type managed care organization might offer PAS/PAD to my father if he lived alone, with the argument that if he ended his “suffering” more medical care would be available for his grandchildren and great grandchildren. Feeling his life is nearing an end anyway, and missing his wife of 63 years terribly, he might well be coerced to opt for an end of life action.

I feel, at this time, we have not addressed the issue of PAS/PAD adequately, to make the practice legal. We can and must, however, do better education of the public and caregivers on end of life care issues, including cessation of futile care, provide effective pain management, have greater availability and use of hospice, create and encourage more widespread use of advanced directives and encourage more widespread use of advanced directives and living wills. We have to ensure that people’s advanced directives are honored. I think before we embark on the path to legalizing PAS/PAD we must as a society be more comfortable discussing death and dying and allow physicians, patients and families to deal with this very personal issue with complete trust as they would any other aspect of health care. To partially quote ethicist Hans Jonas: “...a patient must never have to suspect that his physician might become his executioner.”

If after thoroughly evaluating the effects of more comprehensive approaches to end of life issues, there are still many people who feel loved ones have had unnecessary, agonizing end of life experiences, PAS/PAD can always be revisited.

Medical Tidbits...
Bethesda Maryland: Scientists of the National Institute of Health report that a chemical in marijuana may protect brain cells from the effects of a stroke. Researchers found that in experiments with rat neurons, cannabidiol prevented more than half the brain cell death associated with strokes. If the findings are confirmed, cannabidiol can limit brain damage in victims of strokes, heart attacks, Alzheimer’s and Parkinsonism.

More On Silicone:
London: A panel of scientists appointed to review evidence that silicone breast implants cause long term illnesses concluded that women have no need to worry. The seven scientists appointed to a review panel by the government health ministers could find no conclusive evidence that silicone causes immune system disorder or other serious illnesses. Silicone implants have been banned in the U.S. since 1992, but the UK has no restrictions.

Conference Notes:
PET Scanning Marc Coel QMC Nov.20 ’98
A. Positron Annihilation
P=N + e– + V + energy
Positron Emmission
Tomography: Hamamatsu: $3 x 10^6

B. Uses PET scan:
1. a. Tumor detection, staging and follow-up
2. b. Viable myocardium detection
3. c. Seizure disorder
4. d. Dementia
5. e. Brain function (Research)
6. f. Infection Imaging (Research)

**Tumor cells have high metabolic rate
T glucose metabolism

FDG-PET in Ca Detection; Staging and Recurrence
Lung Breast
Melanoma Lymphoma
Colorectal Bone & Soft Tissue
Head & Neck Cholangiocarcinoma
Thyroid Pancreatic
Brain Esophagus

C. Cases in Hawaii (Tumor Registry)
Lung 632
Breast 882
Colorectal 490
Thyroid 76
Lymphoma 180
Hepatoma 72

D. PET Scanning at QMC: $5.00 x 10^6 cost $3,000/test: saves on need for surgery:

PET Scanning:
1. F18 FDG PET: metastatic nodes detected even c normal CT
2. F18 FDG PET demonstrates normal lymph nodes despite abnormal CT

FDG-PET and SNP
(Single pulmonary Nodule)

Potpourri III....
One day, a man came home from work and his wife greeted him. “I’ve got good news and bad news,” she said.

He swallowed hard and said he’d like the good news first.

“The air bag works,” she said.

When the preacher’s car broke down on a country road, he walked to a nearby roadhouse to use the phone. After calling for a tow truck, he spotted his old friend, Frank, drunk and shabbily dressed at the bar. “What happened to you Frank?” asked the good reverend. “You used to be rich.”

Frank told a sad tale of bad investments that led to his downfall. “Go home,” the preacher said, “Open your Bible at random, stick your finger on...
the page and there will be God’s answer.”

Some time later, the preacher bumped into Frank, who was wearing a Gucci suit, sporting a Rolex watch and had just stepped out of a Mercedes. “Frank,” said the preacher, “I am glad to see things really turned around for you.”

“Yes, preacher, and I owe it all to you,” said Frank.

“I opened my Bible, put my finger down on the page and there was the answer - Chapter 11.”

A man appeared to be on his last legs. He constantly gasped for breath and his eyes popped out. The mystified doctors weren’t hopeful, so he decided to live it up.

He went on a shopping spree. At an expensive haberdashery, he pointed out a dozen silk shirts in size 14.

“Your neck looks bigger than 14,” said the clerk, “You need a 16.”

“I know my size,” the man insisted. “I want the shirts in a 14.”

“I’ll get them for you,” replied the clerk. “But I want to warn you - if you wear a 14 you’ll gasp all day and your eyes will pop out.”

Milton Berle

The ARB’s
(Introduction by Peter Cohn, editor of Cardiology Review Nov ’98 Issue)

“The management of hypertension has undergone continuous change over the past decade. Not the least of these advances has been the realization that blocking the effects of the renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system (RAAS) can lead to successful treatment of high blood pressure in many patients.”

1. ACE: Side effects: a. hyperkalemia
   b. increase in serum creatinine c. cough
2. ARB’s: (Angiotensin AT1 receptor blockers): side effect profile similar to placebo

***RAAS important in hypertension and congestive heart failure:

***ARB’s:
   a. Losartin (Cozaar)
   b. Candesartan (Atacand)
   c. Irbesartan (Avapro)
   d. Valsartan ( Diovan)
   e. Telmisartan (Micardis)
   f. Eprosartan (Teveten)

***Current Trials ≠ ARB’s (on going):
   a. CHF  b. Type II  c. LVH  d. MI
   e. Isolated systolic HTN

Conference Notes....

“Cardioprotection — Clinical Definition” VP Claude Benedict, Prof of Medicine, U of Texas, Medical School Fri Oct 9 ’98

Introduction: In DM, HTN, CHD etc, the common issue is involvement of blood vessels ... Therefore, vascular protection is an important issue; hence the role of Angiotensin II ...

Comparison of 5 yr survivals:

1. End stage cardiac failure:
   Women: 25% Men: 35%
2. Duke’s C Colon Ca:
   48% 5 yr survival
3. Breast Ca: 65% 5 yr survival

Diabetics: DM interacts with CHF. Survey of 2,000 CHF pts: DM raises CHF 33%; ARB’s work in DM pts.

LVH: Angiotensin II causes LVH in young adults (Ages 16 - 24); All causes vascular and cardiac changes in healthy individuals.

All—Fibrous tissue and smooth muscle cells—causing narrow vessels

Hypertensive heart disease: Tissue fibrosis—coronary blood flow;

Thromboembolic Diseases: a/c MI rates and renin levels in HTN pts; cardiovascular complications in HTN a/c renin levels. 

Association of All—Renin levels—MI and CVA’s. Therefore All → Strokes

Atherogenic Effects of All:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All</th>
<th>NE</th>
<th>PAI-1</th>
<th>tPA</th>
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<tr>
<td>endothelium</td>
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Progression Myocardial Injury

↓ Load

↓ Systolic perfusion

↓ sym TRAS catecholamines

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Energy Depletion

Ischemia &

All Effects in CHF:

a. Vasodilation

b. Aldosterone stimulation

c. Renal Effferent arteriole constriction

d. Collagen synthesis

e. Myocyte growth/remodeling

f. Endothelium secretion

g. Vascular smooth muscle growth

h. Superoxide production

SOLVD Trial: ACE Therapy;

↓ Survival CHF (Still 40% mortality);

↓ All levels even with ACE Therapy.

Cardiac Chymase

↓ 80% ↓ 20% ↓ ACE

Myocytes Fibroblasts

AT1 AT2

Coronary Artery in CHF: All → vasoconstriction;

LOSARTIN blocks vasoconstriction

Excuse Us!

(Excuse notes from parents collected by Nisheeth Parekh of the University of Texas medical Branch)

My son is under a doctor’s care and should not take PE today. Please execute him.

Please excuse Lisa for being absent. She was sick and I had her shot.

Please excuse Gloria from Jim today. She is administrating.

Dear School: Please excuse John being absent on Jan 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and also 33.

John has been absent because he had two teeth taken out of his face.

Please excuse Roland from P.E. for a few days. Yesterday he fell out of a tree and misplaced his hip.

Please excuse Ray Friday from school. He has loose vowels.

Sally won’t be in school a week from Friday. We have to attend her funeral.