WANT TO ACT? THEN JOIN THE "HAMSTERS"

NIH thespians have banded together for the first time under the enthusiastic leadership of Mrs. Mary T. Beecher of National Heart Institute.

Although “The Hamsters” has been tentatively selected as the name for this dramatic group, most of the members seem to object to it. (The name was, of course, proposed by that inveterate punster, Phil Janus of Management Analysis.)

Mrs. Beecher, on behalf of the group, will welcome suggestions for a new name. She will also be happy to answer any inquiries regarding activities or membership in this group.

At the first meeting it was agreed that the first production will be a take-off on “Life at NIH.” The skit is scheduled tentatively for October, probably in Wilson Hall.

Meetings will be held every other Thursday. The next one will be on June 9, at 12:30 p.m., in the small dining room of the cafeteria in Building 1.

SEVENTH PACIFIC SCIENCE CONGRESS
DRS. WRIGHT AND DAVIS REPRESENTED P.H.S.

Dr. Willard H. Wright, Chief of the Laboratory of Tropical Diseases, has returned from New Zealand, where he attended the 7th Pacific Science Congress as a representative of the Public Health Service and the Rockefeller Foundation. Sessions of the Congress were held at both Auckland and Christ Church.

Dr. Gordon E. Davis, Senior Bacteriologist of the Division of Infectious Diseases, Rocky Mountain Laboratory, Hamilton, Montana, also represented the PHS at the 7th Pacific Science Congress.

The program of the Public Health and Nutrition Section was characterized by symposia on filariasis, tuberculosis, and dental caries, as well as papers on miscellaneous subjects.

Dr. Wright served as one of a committee of five to draw up recommendations for medical research in the Pacific. The report of this committee stressed the need, as an objective of first priority, for the establishment of a Pacific Epidemiological Centre for the correlation of epidemiological intelligence, such a centre to be provided with suitable personnel and machinery for collecting, recording, and distributing authenticated data.

Recommendations were made for a systematic program of analyses of the principal native foods and a study of dietary habits in relation to important disease problems. This recommendation was tied in proposals to inaugurate clinical and laboratory studies on the nutritional aspects of dental caries and periodontal and gingival diseases in native peoples.

Tuberculosis was recognized as being one of the most important, if not the most important, health problem of the area. The need for standardization of diagnostic techniques was emphasized as well as studies on the differential diagnosis of the disease in relation to other conditions prevailing in the area.

The importance of helminthic diseases, such as filariasis and schistosomiasis, in the Pacific was stressed and recommendations were made for attack on certain specific problems in relation to these diseases.

The occurrence of certain virus and rickettsial diseases in the area and the lack of knowledge concerning the occurrence of other such diseases indicated the need for additional studies to provide more information on epidemiology and vectors.

Fungus diseases are of common occurrence in the Pacific. Little is known concerning the deep mycoses, especially those affecting the chest. The etiology of certain dermatoses in which fungi are thought to be involved was recommended for further research, as was the relation of certain fungi to other conditions, especially yaws.

It was generally conceded that the incidence of both bacillary and amoebic dysentery is low in certain parts of the Pacific, and the committee believed it desirable to investigate the causes of this low incidence from the standpoint that facts so obtained might be of value in the control of these diseases in other parts of the world.
Science Elsewhere

Animal Brain Kept Alive Outside Body

Two University of Chicago physicians have succeeded in keeping part of an animal’s brain alive outside its body to permit study of the functions of the nervous system.

The achievement, by Drs. R. D. Tschirgi and R. W. Gerard, is reported the first of its kind in medical history. It involved removal of the spinal cord of a rat, together with the feeder artery which transports its sustenance.

Keeping the cord alive in a carefully regulated atmosphere that was both moist and warm, the physicians were able, by pumping chemicals into the cord instead of blood, to determine the compounds essential to transmission of impulses over the complex nervous system.

The doctors reported that of twenty-five chemicals tested on the cord, six were successful in keeping it active.

Anti-convulsant Drug

A new anti-convulsant drug, named phenacetylurea, or phenurone, has been described by Dr. Guy M. Everett of the Abbott Research Laboratories, North Chicago, Ill.

The drug, he asserted, “has been found effective in some resistant grand and petit mal cases (of epilepsy) and is particularly useful in psychomotor epilepsy.”

Niacin and Vision

The latest studies at Harvard on the chemical processes involved in vision have revealed that niacin, the vitamin B family member so far known largely for its role in preventing pellagra, also plays a vital role in the mechanism of seeing.

This was reported by Prof. George Wald of the Harvard University biological laboratories.

Studies in Amoebiasis

Many of the most encouraging leads in finding and improving serologic techniques for the diagnosis of amoebiasis have been made by John Bozicevich, John E. Tobie, and Helen Hoyem, parasitologists in the Subsection on Immunology of the Laboratory of Tropical Diseases, Microbiological Institute.

Increased interest of the medical profession in amoebiasis is reflected in the steadily growing number of serum specimens received by the Subsection for the detection of amoebiasis. From an approximate average of 500 per quarter for 1947, the number has risen to over 1500 specimens for the first quarter of 1949.

Two groups of Washington physicians are especially enthusiastic and frankly admit their increasing dependence on the results of this diagnostic tool. For one group, over 1500 specimens representing about 500 patients have been tested; for the other, nearly 500 specimens representing more than 100 patients.

A number of their problem cases, the so-called “psychosomatics,” have given positive reactions to the complement fixation test. In a small number of cases the serologic findings could not be substantiated by the discovery of Endamoeba histolytica in the stools. This may be due to incomplete or unsatisfactory stool examinations.

Despite failure to demonstrate amoebae by other means, these and other physicians have given anti-amoebic therapy to patients with startling results in many cases. Some of the chronic cases date back four to 20 years and longer.

Interest in amoebiasis is evident in letters received from physicians in all parts of this country and in several foreign countries. There is a growing awareness that amoebiasis is not an exotic, tropical disease seldom encountered in this country but rather an ailment which affects a larger percentage of the population than even the gastrointestinalists had thought possible.

Among veterans of World War II, the incidence of amoebiasis is variously estimated at from 10 to 20 percent. A few authorities put the figure much higher. More than 50 percent of the serum specimens tested came from Veterans Administration hospitals and centers. A great number of specimens from other sources are known to be sera from veterans.

The complement fixation test for amoebiasis is only one of several such tests conducted by the Subsection on Immunology. Antigens are kept in stock for tests for trichinosis, echinococcosis, schistosomiasis, trypanosomiasis (Chagas’ disease), leishmaniasis (kala-azar), filariasis, and toxoplasmosis. It is believed that this is the only laboratory in the world where such tests are a matter of routine.

The complement fixation tests for amoebiasis and the latter diseases are not yet sufficiently evaluated to take them out of the experimental stage. Research still goes on, and changes are made constantly with the view of definitely evaluating these tests as diagnostic tools.

For the reason that increased demands for these tests have interfered with the research work of the section, routine testing of specimens for amoebiasis and some other parasitic diseases has been recently transferred to the Communicable Disease Center in Georgia.

Dr. Clifford Grobstein Honored

Dr. Clifford Grobstein, NCI biologist, has been elected vice-chairman of the Federation of American Scientists.

AHI.. Breakfast

In case you didn’t know, hot breakfasts are now being served in the Cafeteria (Building 1) from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m.
TOPPING AND SHANNON IN PHYSICIANS' ASSN.

Dr. Norman Topping, Associate Director of NIH, and Dr. James A. Shannon, Associate Director of the National Heart Institute, have been elected to membership in the Association of American Physicians.

Dr. Shannon was Director of Squibb Institute for Medical Research until April, when he came to NIH.

AUREOMYCIN TREATMENT FOR WHOOPING COUGH

Aureomycin may be the answer to more effective treatment of whooping cough, according to a report of Microbiological Institute scientists in the May 13 issue of Public Health Reports.

The project, reported by Drs. Joseph A. Bell, Margaret Pittman, and Byron J. Olson, indicates that aureomycin may shorten the course of the disease and lessen its intensity.

Aureomycin hydrochloride, given subcutaneously to mice, prevented deaths due to prior intracerebral infection with Hemophilus pertussis, the whooping cough organism. Small doses of the antibiotic, given at 12-hour intervals over a period of eight days, were more effective than large doses given over a short period of time.

Preliminary clinical trials in 20 cases of pertussis, when compared with 380 untreated cases, suggest that aureomycin given orally in apparently nontoxic doses shortened the clinical course of the disease.

In a few cases, particularly those treated early, the clinical response was considered dramatic in the sense that complete recovery immediately followed a few days of treatment.

SAVE A LIFE!

You can help to save a life and prevent human suffering by contributing one pint of blood to the National Blood Program.

For further information, call Extension 2071.

DR. HUEBNER REPORTS ON Q FEVER STUDIES

Pasteurization of milk does not always kill the organism that causes Q fever, medical researchers of the Microbiological Institute have found.

Studies made in the Los Angeles area, with the cooperation of the California State Department of Public Health, indicate that pasteurization usually destroys all the Q fever organisms in naturally infected milk. A few of the organisms, however, occasionally remain alive and apparently capable of producing the disease following pasteurization.

The studies were reported by Dr. Robert J. Huebner of the Laboratory of Infectious Diseases in the April 22 issue of Public Health Reports.

DON'T TAKE YOUR CAR

Our softball players welcome your presence, but please don't take your car to the ballfield.

Parked cars in this area impede highway and NIH traffic.

Calendar of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Place</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 3</td>
<td>NCI Informal Discussion (Quantum Efficiency of CO₂ Assimilation and O₂ Production)</td>
<td>3:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Wilson Hall</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 3</td>
<td>National Advisory Dental Research Council</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>101 Administration Bldg.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 7-8</td>
<td>National Advisory Heart Council</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>1057 Tempo 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 10-11</td>
<td>National Advisory Health Council</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>5051 Fed. Security Bldg. North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 13-14</td>
<td>National Advisory Cancer Council</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>2025 Tempo 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 23-24</td>
<td>Second National Symposium on Recent Research in Water, Sewage, and Industrial Wastes*</td>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Commerce Auditorium</td>
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*Open meeting.

DR. YAGODA'S NEW BOOK

Dr. Herman Yagoda, physical chemist in the Section on Nuclear & Radiation Biology, Laboratory of Physical Biology, EBMI, is the author of a new book, "Radioactive Measurements with Nuclear Emulsions."

Published in March by John Wiley & Sons of New York, Dr. Yagoda's book is a coordinated study of the use of photographic emulsions in the field of radioactivity.

DR. RAYMOND M. HANN

Dr. Raymond M. Hann, 49, Chief of the Chemistry Section, EBMI, died April 30 at the U.S. Marine Hospital in Baltimore. He was considered one of the country's leading chemists in the carbohydrate field.

DR. JOHN T. WRIGHT

Dr. John T. Wright, 37, of the Laboratory of Biology Control, Microbiological Institute, died of a heart attack on May 14.
**SUMMER EMPLOYMENT**

NIH continues to be a very popular place for applicants interested in summer employment. Applications have already been received from 100 veterans and 75 non-veterans. Many of the applicants are medical students interested in laboratory work. Some, however, have indicated their willingness to accept clerical or other employment.

Since veterans receive first preference in filling Federal positions, it appears that we will have sufficient veteran eligibles for our summer program, except in the clerical field.

Information has been obtained from the operating officials relative to the numbers and types of summer positions that will be available. The Personnel Branch plans to refer the applications of qualified veterans for consideration in the near future.

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**Open Examinations**


Chemist, $3727 to $6235. No written test. Closing date June 30. Announcement 94.


Engineer, $3727 to $6235. No written test. Closing date June 30. Announcement 95.


Medical X-ray Technician (Photofluorography), $2284 to $2498. No written test. Announcement 151.

Pharmacologist, $3727 to $10,305. No written test. Announcement 131.

Physicist, $3727 to $6235. No written test. Closing date June 30. Announcement 93.


Medical Officer (Rotating Intern, $2200 to $2400; Psychiatric Resident, $2400 to $4100; Surgical Resident, $3400 to $4150) Announcement 173.

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**Job Opportunities**

Six hundred vacancies exist in the Washington area for photographers, microphotographers, and blueprint and photostat operators. An examination has been announced for these positions. Salaries range from $2066 to $2724 per year.

Illustrators are wanted to fill positions from $2284 to $6235 per year. The Civil Service Commission has issued an examination announcement for illustrators to handle scientific or technical illustrative work.

NIH, in conjunction with the Military District of Washington, announced an examination for Medical Technician and X-ray Technician positions on April 12, 1949. Salaries begin at $2284 to $4479 per year.

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**Reading List**

Recent additions to the Library:

- Darby, Eleanor M.K. Laboratory chemistry; for students of nursing. N.Y., Putnam, 1948.
- U.S. Naval Medical Research Institute, Bethesda, Md. The susceptibility of golden hamsters to Schistosoma mansoni. Bethesda, 1949. (Project NM 005 004. Report no. 21.)