

ink spots: opinions, news, and reviews from an inkjet

Q: In your opinion, why is the new food pyramid so similar to its predecessor? A: In spite of mounting scientific evidence that favors low-glycemic eating, the USDA is still driven by the traditional low-calorie, low fat approach to healthy eating. I believe the influence of powerful industry groups and various political agendas can be perceived in the revised food pyramid. Dr Steve Nugent, Health and Living, Vol.5, No. 4.

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What happens when good nutrition and common sense are left off the menu

"The junk-food industry wants your kids to gorge on its fatty goodies...and that's just fine with the Bush administration. In June, the Agriculture Department refused to strictly enforce rules that ban the mealtime sales of soda and junk food in school cafeterias. At the same time, new federal dietary guidelines no longer recommend a specific level of sugar intake—another victory for the industry. The White House has also backed 'Big Foods' efforts to weaken the World Health Organization's anti-obesity strategy, 'questioning the scientific basis' for linking fruit and vegetable consumption with decreased obesity and diabetes.' Not a lot of subtlety is required to understand what's driving the administration's policy: It's large infusions of cash.' Executives from Kraft, Pepsi, Coca-Cola, and Nestle USA have given hundreds of thousands of dollars to the Bush-Cheney campaign. And if we know anything about this president, it's that he's loyal to his friends. Together, they seem to have developed a new rallying cry: 'Let them eat chips!'" Gary Ruskin and Juliet Schoor, "Why we're still 'a junk food nation'," quoted in *THE WEEK*, August 26, 2005.

Some might say that the

President is malicious. I personally doubt that he wants school children to be sick and fat, especially since he himself is trim and often confronts those in his administration who do not regularly exercise. But listening to the lobbies and taking their campaign contributions has a price tag. There's a quip that goes "I'm on a seafood diet. I see food and I eat it." Children who see junk food in their schools are not only tempted, they read the implicit message: It's in my school, so it must be ok.

What about diet soda? If you're chugging diet soft drinks in an attempt to keep your weight in check, forget it. People who drink diet soda have a very high chance of becoming overweight or obese.

Researchers doing a long-term study of heart patients at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio have come up with a paradox for which they have no explanation: Over a 26-year period studying 622 normal-weight participants ages 25-64, they determined that those who drank diet sodas were more likely to become overweight. "Specifically, the risk of being overweight or obese increased 65% more with each diet drink per day," the *Associated Press* reported.

We have been teaching this in our *Let's Be Well* classes for several years, based on other sources, but of all the sources mentioned in this *CompuServe* news story from 7 August 05 claim to be puzzled, bewildered, or surprised. Here are the numbers:

- Over the course of the study, 32.7% of all participants became overweight or obese.
- Of those who had two or more regular soft drinks per day, 47.2% became overweight or obese.
- Of those who had two or more diet soft drinks per day, 57.1% became overweight or obese.

Sharon Fowler, faculty member at the Texas Health Center, and the study's lead author, told *The Houston Chronicle*, "Right now we do not have any clear public message here. This just raises an interesting question." The article concludes: "So what is it that causes weight gain if it's not diet drinks? One theory is that someone who drinks diet soda may think it's OK to consume more calories. That is, it's fine to have that giant burger and super-sized fries as long as you wash them down with a Diet Coke." Study findings were presented at the annual scientific meeting of the American Diabetic Association.

So let's all drink non-diet soft drinks? I don't think so.

The one thing that makes us the fattest. "It is not what is on your plate that's making you fat. It's what is in your glass. Fully 13% of a typical teenager's daily calories come from sugary sodas and fruit drinks. When researchers from the University of Vermont, University of British Columbia, and the ENVIRON Health Sciences Institute studied the diets of 3,000 children ages 2 to 18, they found that [sugary drinks] provide more calories...and are the single leading source of added sugars in a teen's diet, providing more than half of all the added sugars they consume."

And grownups? A study from Purdue University found that "many adults can blame soft drinks for their ballooning figures as well. People who drink regular soda consume about 10 tpsps of sugar and 150 calories per 12 oz can." Study leader Richard Mattes said, "Evidence indicates that caloric drinks are contributing to...a national trend toward being overweight."

Remember water? We used to make water available all day to our dogs and cat. We had more sense than to offer them Pepsi, diet or otherwise. We did not have fat pets. Did you? +++

The fox gets to guard the henhouse—again

Government agencies have the authority to recall toys if they are deemed dangerous. But when meat is infected with E coli, listeria, or Mad Cow disease, the USDA does not have the authority to order a recall—it can only encourage meat processors to voluntarily recall it. The USDA does not tell state officials the locations of stores and restaurants that have received tainted meat, unless the state agrees to keep the names secret from the public. In Jan 2004 in CA, one of the states that signed the secrecy pledge, the state received a shipment of beef that included meat and bones from a cow that tested positive for Mad Cow disease. The meat and bones were mixed with 38,000 pounds of other beef and sold in CA and five other states. But while CA officials had received this information, consumers had no way of knowing which stores had got any of the tainted products, because of the secrecy law....

The policy is not only absurd but dangerous....

Ask me for a copy of this alarming article from **Consumer Reports**, Jan 2005.

Clean Air? For the foreseeable future, huge hog and poultry farms have been exempted from the federal Clean Air Act, "meaning they can pollute to their hearts' content. All they have to do is monitor their emissions and turn the results over to Uncle Sam. The US Environmental Protection Agency will use the information to set new standards for 'concentrated animal feeding operations'—giant feedlots where thousands of animals are cooped up before slaughter. Once the new standards are in place, the farms will supposedly have to meet them. Until then, the sky's the limit. And what a sky: the air from feedlots can spread ammonia, hydrogen sulfide, volatile organic compounds, and particulate matter—read: stink and pollutants—for two miles, making life for neighbors unpleasant as well as unhealthy."

Many of us in MN, IA, and NC live near factory farms of one kind or another. A 10,000 hog farm produces as much waste in one day as a town of 25,000 people, according to the article from the May 2005 *Vegetarian Times* from which I am quoting.

So why are the rules that used to give the EPA the authority to enforce pollution rules against factory farms being changed? As they say, follow the money. After negotiation with agribusiness interests, the current administration struck a deal in January 2005 that will allow the EPA to "set pollution standards that reflect

how farms really operate." In other words, we won't *prescribe*, we will simply *describe* the real world of factory farming. "We want regulations based on what we do," Kara Flynn of the National Pork Producers Council explains, "not on emissions from smokestacks."

Fair enough. But Ed Hopkins, director of the Sierra Club's Environmental Quality Program, points out that the EPA has agreed to let agribusiness conduct the research itself. "A nonprofit organization established by corporate farming interests is to hire its own supposedly 'independent' contractor to gather information—but how objective will such a subcontractor be?"

The study is to involve about two dozen farms. This means that after the new regulations are issued, "farm operators can always argue that, being unique, *their* operations can't be held to rules based on a study of such a limited scope. (Plus the EPA can always decide to exempt factory farms from Clean Air Act coverage altogether.)"

Although the study is to be completed in two years, Michele Merkel, senior counsel at the Environmental Integrity Project, predicts that it will be closer to 8 years before corporate feeding operations will actually operate under the new rules that the EPA might issue. There's no question that the pork, poultry, and other agribusinesses got a "sweetheart deal", she says. "This deal stinks—in

more ways than one." You can e-mail your support of the work of the Environmental Integrity Project to Ms Merkel: officemanager@environmentalintegrity.org or write Ed Hopkins, Sierra Club Environmental Quality Program, 408 C St NE, Washington DC 20002.

Mad cow: shooting the messenger. On July 12, 2005, our e-mail Organic Bytes #61, stated: "In the wake of the recent news reports that the governments had attempted to cover up another case of Mad Cow disease, an internal feud has erupted inside the USDA." The most recent case of Mad Cow was detected in a Texas cow that was slaughtered in Nov 2004. At that time the USDA claimed that tests on the suspect cow were negative and the cow was healthy. Several weeks ago after public outcry and internal USDA accusations of improper testing, the case was reopened. New tests on the remains turned out to be positive. The USDA has admitted that its procedures are not stringent enough, but instead of creating policy that would upgrade testing for Mad Cow, the agency has focused its energies on attacking USDA Inspector General Phyllis Fong, who ordered the retest. According to Mike Johanns, USDA Secretary, Fong's discovery of the second case of Mad Cow disease in the US is behavior that will not be tolerated within the Agency." Do we need a new watchdog? +++

There are pyramids and pyramids: the USDA vs Harvard

The US Department of Agriculture recently revamped its Food Guide pyramid. The original pyramid, which made its debut in 1992, has not only **not** curbed obesity but may have exacerbated it instead. The USDA's most recent incarnation of the pyramid [available at www.my-pyramid.gov] is actually 12 different pyramids, designed to match a consumer's age, gender, and activity level.

We subscribe to 27 different magazines, many of them about wellness or nutrition. I have yet to read anything favorable about the USDA's new pyramid. Most articles point out that the USDA is clearly beholden to corporate lobbies and that has skewed its recommendations.

Walter Willett MD, professor of epidemiology and nutrition at the Harvard School of Public Health, is someone I frequently quote. Dr Willett is the author of *Eat Drink and Be Healthy*, which was recently revised and is available again as of August 2005.

The July 2005 edition of *Bottom Line Health*, a magazine that aims to provide "wellness strategies from the world's leading medical experts," featured a two-page article in which Dr Willett compared the USDA's new pyramid with Harvard's new eating plan described in his book. Dr Willett says, "At the Harvard School of Public Health, we've created a Healthy Eating Pyramid that—unlike the government's new pyramids—is free from food industry influence."

Here's how the USDA's pyramid stacks up against Harvard's:

GRAINS. USDA advice: *Grains represent the widest swath at the bottom. Make half your grains whole grains.* Dr Willett: This allows refined grains, such as white bread and rice, to account for half of the person's daily grain intake. Refined grains convert to sugar as rapidly as pure sugar does, raising one's risk for obesity and diabetes.

Harvard's pyramid puts whole-grain foods—breads, cereals, and rice—in a single category that is only half of the swath and moves them **above** the "daily exercise and weight control" widest segment of the pyramid. Dr Willett: Studies show that whole-grain foods reduce the risk for heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers....We've put refined grains, along with pasta and sweets, in a small space at the top of our pyramid, indicating that they should be consumed sparingly.

OILS. USDA: *A sliver of their pyramids is devoted to all fats, good monounsaturated and polyunsaturated as well as bad trans fats and saturated fats. Grouping all fats in one category plays down the proven benefits of essential fatty acids [EFAs] or "good" fats.*

Harvard: Studies show that EFAs in fish, nuts, and some vegetable oils can prevent potentially fatal cardiac arrhythmias and blood clots. Because not all fats are created equal, we've placed saturated fats, such as butter, along other occasional indulgences at the top of the pyramid.

MILK. USDA: *The dairy industry wins big, with their pyramid saying adults should get three cups of milk prod-*

ucts daily and giving milk almost as much emphasis as grains and vegetables. Dr Willett: There is no evidence that this number is beneficial or even safe. Studies have **not** shown that high dairy consumption reduces the risk for bone fractures. Also, some research indicates that men who consume two or more daily servings of dairy are twice as likely to develop prostate cancer.

Harvard: Adults who are concerned about bone strength should engage in regular weight-bearing exercise such as walking and weight lifting, and eat dark green, leafy vegetables, that are rich in bone-building vitamin K. 400 IU of vitamin D can also help to reduce the risk of osteoporosis and fractures.

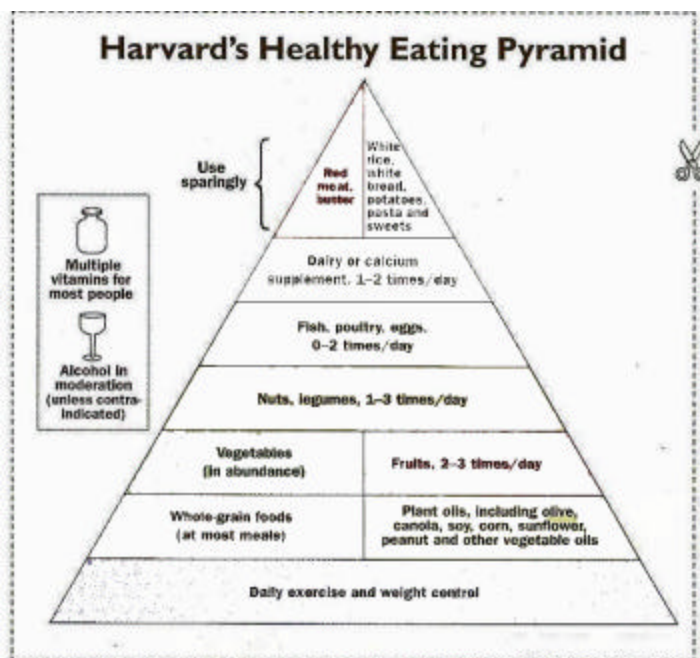
MEATS AND BEANS. USDA: *Select lean cuts of meat and eat more fish, nuts, and seeds.* Dr Willett: By grouping beef and fish together, the USDA ignores the fact that these two foods do not offer comparable benefits. Healthy fish [not deep-fried] helps protect the heart. Frequent red meat meals contribute to heart disease.

Harvard: We grouped red meat with butter to be enjoyed occasionally. Replacing most red meat with poultry, fish, or eggs can reduce the risk for heart disease and diabetes. We gave nuts and beans their own category because they are rich in protein, fiber, vitamins, and minerals.

VEGETABLES AND FRUIT. USDA: *2.5 cups of vegetables and two cups of fruit.*

Harvard: We recommend at least 9 daily servings of vegetables and fruit. Include both dark green, leafy and orange vegetables daily. Moderate alcohol consumption of no more than two drinks daily for men and one for women can lower heart attack risk.

Bottom Line's conclusion is "Unless the USDA's new pyramid fares much better than its previous version, we believe the Harvard guidelines are a better way to go." Compare it with what you do, and decide for yourself. +++



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Notable Quotables: some important reasons to lose weight

- **Easy on the knees.** "Losing just one pound can make a real difference in the way your knees feel. Scientists in NC looked at 142 overweight and obese older adults who had osteoarthritis of the knees. They found that for each pound of weight people lost, there was a four-pound reduction in pressure placed on their knees as they walked. That means that shedding just one pound can lighten the load to slow the progression of osteoarthritis." *Arthritis and Rheumatism*, July 2005, quoted in *Self Healing*, Sept 2005, with a comment by Andrew Weil, MD: "This study confirms my belief that losing even a few pounds can benefit painful, arthritic knees—joints that bear most of your body weight."
- **Pain in the Back.** "Carrying around those extra pounds takes a toll on the body and is particularly tough on backs," according to findings from the North American Spine Society [NASS]. "In June, experts at NASS conducted a national survey of US spine professionals and discovered that the number of obese patients undergoing treatment for spine disorders has increased 67% in the past five years....[The vast majority recommended weight loss as part of the standard of care for their patients....]" For exercise, dietary, and other advice, log on to www.spine.org and click on "For Spine Patients." *The Saturday Evening Post*, Sept/Oct 2005.
- **Obesity-Dementia Link.** A recent study by the National Institutes of Health and Kaiser Permanente Medical Foundation, and reported in the *British Medical Journal*, found that fat is implicated in dementia. The study followed 10,276 people for 27 years, beginning when they were in their mid-40s. Data showed that the fatter people were when they entered middle age, the more likely they were to be headed for dementia as they age. People categorized as overweight were 35% more likely to develop dementia than normal weight people, while those who were obese, especially women, were 74% more likely to develop dementia or Alzheimer's disease. UCLA Division of Geriatrics, *Healthy Years*, July 2005.
- **Dangers of diet drinks.** Obesity expert John Foreyt, Baylor University College of Medicine: "The sweetness of diet soda promises the body calories it doesn't deliver. That stimulates cravings, and prompts the body to seek the missing calories elsewhere." *THE WEEK*, July 1, 2005.

Food for thought: improving your cognitive health through wise lifestyle choices

"What you eat can make a big difference in maintaining your brainpower. Although science is still a long way from preventing Alzheimer's disease, one of the best ways, it appears, is through diet," says an unnamed writer in the summer 2005 issue of *Momentum*, a publication of our long-term care insurer.

High blood pressure, high cholesterol, and being overweight have all been linked to both heart disease and dementia. So a heart-healthy diet is also a brain-healthy

diet. That means eating foods low in fat and cholesterol. However, some fats—the mono- and polyunsaturated fats found in olive oil and fish—**increase HDL [good] cholesterol, which may protect brain cells.**

The Alzheimer's Association recommends increasing your intake of protective foods. Current research suggests that the following may protect brain cells:

- Choosing foods rich in vitamin E, or vitamins E and C together, vitamin B-12, and

folate may lower your risk of developing Alzheimer's.

- Dark-skinned fruits and vegetables have the highest levels of naturally-occurring antioxidants.
- Cold-water fish, such as halibut, makerel, [wild-caught] salmon, and trout, contain beneficial omega-3 fatty acids.
- Almonds, pecans, and walnuts are a good source of vitamin E, an antioxidant.

According to the January 2005 issue of *Neurology*, a study of nearly 9,000 Californians found that middle-

aged men and women who had one or more of these risk factors—high cholesterol, hypertension, diabetes, and smoking—in their early 40s were more likely to develop Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia.

The good news is that making diet changes and doing regular exercise, as well as quitting smoking, can address those risk factors. If you are not currently into healthy food choices and/or fitness, remember your brain, while you can. +++

A little nostalgia: when were the good old days?

The US post office was kind enough to issue "America on the Move" commemoratives, sporty cars from the 50s, the week of our 50th wedding anniversary. *US News and World Report* produced its "America Eats" issue the same week, August 15-22. If you haven't seen it, you may want to check it out of your local library. However old you are, it will give you the opportunity to reflect on some of the changes in the food you now serve compared with earlier times in your life. The depth and breadth of the articles reflect its thesis: "how one nation revolutionized the food of the world," for good and/or evil, one might add. I am thankful that our grown children do not serve their families the Hamburger Helper and TV dinners their working mother fed them in the 60s.

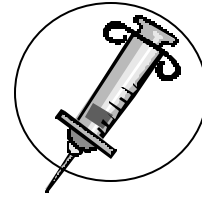
We are ambivalent about the food we eat, suspicious of it, yet we eat it with gusto: I particularly like the introduction to the 34-page cover story. Sara Sklaroff writes: "What is it about Americans and food? We love to eat, but we feel guilty about it afterward. We say we want only the best, but we settle for—and even heartily enjoy—junk food. We're obsessed with health and weight loss but face an epidemic of obesity. Perhaps the answer to this ambivalence lies in our history...."

The timeline, "Four centuries of foodies," is noteworthy. Starting in 1621 with the first Thanksgiving, it traces our preference for coffee over tea to the Boston Tea Party in 1773. Did you know that John Pemberton began selling a medicinal syrup as a fountain drink in 1886, creating Coca-Cola? Or that a cough medicine manufacturer created a gelatin dessert that was 88% sugar in 1897, and his wife named it Jell-O? Pharmaceuticals and food married early.

We are where we eat: Carhops served customers in The Pig Stand in Dallas in 1921, Ray Kroc franchised McDonalds in 1954, and Starbucks began serving designer roast coffee in Seattle's Pike Place market in 1971. In 2005, 30% of us are eating in our cars at least once a week. Well, maybe not "us."

Sowing seeds to save them. The difference between the hybrids grown all over Iowa and the mission of Seed Savers Exchange Heritage Farm is spelled out on pp 63-64. A few farmers worry about pests that are resistant to pesticides. May it be so. +++

"The CDC [Centers for Disease Control] is guilty of incompetence and gross negligence. The damage caused by vaccine exposure is massive. It's bigger than asbestos, bigger than tobacco, bigger than anything you have ever seen." Mark Blaxill, vice president of Safe Minds, a nonprofit organization concerned about mercury in medicines, quoted in "Deadly Immunity," Robert F. Kennedy Jr, *Rolling Stone* magazine, June 2005.



Circle of influence

fall 2005

LET'S TALK ABOUT "INFLUENCE"

Since 1992 Dick and I have devoted an enormous share of our lives attempting to influence anyone who will listen to take responsibility for his or her own wellness. We came late to this mission, if it can be called that. Like many people who have survived a life-threatening illness, we have tried to get the attention of those who want to avoid serious diseases. Sometimes we have. Mostly the people who have listened have been those who were already ill, perhaps because they were attracted to what we called ourselves, Let's Be Well.

We like to believe that what you name yourself is what you become. I would, for example, have a hard time working for the Centers for Disease Control, because I do not want to be about controlling diseases; I want to be about being well.

Example #1: I have on my desk an article called, "Drug Companies Influence Doctors' Diagnoses," dated 2 July 2005 and printed from CompuServe, our internet provider. It begins, "A June 30, 2005 report from the *Seattle Times* reports that a large portion of doctors' diagnoses may well be influenced by the large drug companies looking to improve their bottom line. The exposé, authored by Susan Kelleher and Duff Wilson, points out that many of the criteria used for making a diagnosis have been changed in order to classify more healthy people as sick, and therefore to sell more medication.

"The article notes that researchers at Dartmouth Medical School estimate that during the 1990s, tens of millions more Americans were classified as having hypertension, high cholesterol, diabetes, or obesity simply because the definitions of those diseases were changed. The *Seattle Times* article uncovered that the experts writing the treatment guidelines for a broad spectrum of diseases had drug-company ties ranging from research contracts to consultancies to stock ownership."

If by changing the definitions of certain diseases, "tens of millions more Americans were classified as having hypertension, high cholesterol, diabetes, or obesity during the 1990s," who benefited? People whose lives were saved? Maybe. But, "the net results are the huge increases in sales of prescription drugs that may carry a greater health risk than the underlying conditions they were prescribed for."

Currently, owing to the expanded diagnosis parameters, three out of four Americans technically have at least one of the commonly medicated diseases. The authors, Kelleher and Wilson, say, "Millions of them are not truly sick and never will be." Dr John Kitzhaber of the Foundation for Medical Excellence stated, "We have a system that nobody but Big Pharma is happy with."

Example #2: The quote at the top of this page is from a second article pulled from CompuServe on the same day. Robert F. Kennedy Jr reported in *Rolling Stone* on his investigation of the use of the mercury-based preservative in vaccines. He begins by describing a secret retreat that was held in Georgia in June, 2000, in which 52 attendees representing "high level officials from the CDC, the FDA, the top vaccine specialist from the World Health Organization in Geneva, and representatives of every major vaccine manufacturer, including GlaxoSmithKline, Merck, Wyeth, and Aventis Pasteur." Participants attending the secret meeting, convened by the CDC, were repeatedly reminded that they could neither make photocopies of documents nor take papers with them when they left. The meeting had been called "to discuss a disturbing new study that raised alarming questions about the safety of a host of common childhood vaccines administered to infants and young children."

Tom Verstraeten, a CDC epidemiologist, had analyzed the agency's massive database containing the medical records of 100,000 children. He found that "a mercury-based preservative in the vaccines (thimerosal) appeared to be responsible for a dramatic increase in autism and a host of other neurological disorders among children. He commented, 'I was actually stunned by what I saw.' What he told the group was that since 1991, when the CDC and the FDA had recommended that three additional vaccines laced with [thimerosal] be given to young infants, the estimated number of cases of autism had increased 15-fold, from one in every 2,500 to one in 166 children."

You may remember that in our summer issue of *ink spots*, I reported that children will have had 45 vaccines by age six months, 64 by 18 months, and 74 by 4-6 years. One of the influences on our lives for good has been the work of Dr Russell Blaylock, neurosurgeon and author of several books on the brain. When he spoke at our Optimal Health Seminar in 2002, he pointed out that the infant brain is four times more sensitive to toxicity than the adult brain. In the chapter, "Mercury: the Silent Killer," in his book, *Health and Nutrition Secrets that Can Save Your Life*, he says, "The infant's protective systems are immature and poorly developed....The introduction of mercury during this delicate process can cause glutamate levels to rise too soon, or to accumulate in high concentrations, resulting in 'miswiring' of the brain. The effects of this miswiring can be subtle or devastating, depending on many conditions: the dose of mercury, when it was given, and the nutritional status of the baby."

"Subtle changes may result in behavioral problems, such as some difficulty in memory or cognition, or loss of anger control. As a child, these may be classed as attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), or...in more severe cases, the damage may result in full-blown autism or Asperger's syndrome."

One might have hoped that immediately following the meeting, the participants would have used their considerable influence to take steps to have thimerosal removed from vaccines. "However, as the Robert F. Kennedy article reported, instead of taking immediate steps to alert the public and rid the vaccine supply of thimerosal, the attendees of this secret meeting spent most of the next two days discussing how to cover up the startling data." Dr John Clement, vaccines adviser at the World Health Organization, stated that the study "should not have been done at all" and warned that the results "will be taken by others and used in ways beyond the control of this group."

Summing up, Robert Kennedy stated his reason for doing his investigation: "I devoted time to study this issue because I believe that this is a moral crisis that must be addressed. If, as the evidence suggests, our public health authorities knowingly allowed the pharmaceutical industry to poison an entire generation of American children, their actions arguably constitute one of the biggest scandals in the annals of American medicine."

Each of us has some circle of influence. Are we mentoring someone? Are we networking? Whom do we serve? We learned a few minutes ago via e-mail that Dick's nephew's wife, a registered nurse with six children, has just completed her training with the American Red Cross. She is leaving tomorrow for either Houston or Baton Rouge to be a nurse in a shelter. On 2 September, AIM sent an e-mail to let us know that all members can contribute toward efforts to help those suffering in the Gulf States through our BarleyLife® purchases in September. AIM will donate to the American Red Cross twenty-five cents for every canister of AIM BarleyLife®, BarleyLife® X-tra, BarleyLife® certified organic, and BarleyLife® capsules, sold in the US or Canada. By the way, if you are not familiar with the **four** members of the BarleyLife® family, call AIM and ask for the new data sheet, which describes their differences and benefits, or if you are a Let's Be Well alum, in our AIM network, or would like to be, call us. We will be glad to send you one. +++

Promotions:

We are pleased to recognize the following who have promoted: To *Preferred Member*: **Heath Gay**, Suffolk VA; **Deborah Langer**, Cary NC; to *Product Consultant*: **Immaculate Forziati**, Saugus MI; **Ann Knutson**, Northfield MN. Congratulations on using *your* influence to improve the quality of people's lives!

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