

VIEWPOINTS

Heart Symptoms Guide Us

BY RICHARD P. HOLM MD

When should one worry that he or she might be having a heart problem?

Unfortunately, heart symptoms can be all over the board, and sometimes there are no indications for trouble until very late in the game. On top of this, classic heart symptoms can be due to just esophageal spasm or musculo-skeletal strain, and not heart disease at all. That said, there are clues for heart trouble that signal us to seek help.

Taking into consideration the age, gender, size, lifestyle and situation of the individual in question can be helpful. In general there is a higher incidence of heart problems in people with a smoking history, positive family history, increasing age, and male gender. But heart problems can occur in anyone; so never cover-up or ignore symptoms especially knowing that heart disease in some people, especially diabetics and women, can present with unusual or very minimal symptoms.

Hypertensive and over-weight snorers should have an inexpensive night-time oxygen test to see if a full sleep study is needed. Sleep apnea is a dangerous and important cardiac risk-factor, and I believe way more worthy of attention than cholesterol. If suspicious, talk to your doctor, since discovering sleep apnea could add years to your life.

A middle aged or older person having a heavy sensation in the chest, neck, jaw, shoulder or arm that comes with exertion and is relieved with rest, could be a sign for blockage of coronary arteries. Called angina pectoris, this alone may not be dangerous unless coming on with a decrease in exercise. Still, angina means see your doctor. If these symptoms come on suddenly and do not go away with rest, then you have a very urgent problem, so call 911.

Heart weakness, also called congestive heart failure, or CHF, can be caused by heart-valve disease, long standing high blood pressure, chronic alcohol use, certain viral infections, and more. The most common symptom from CHF is shortness of breath, but almost every illness, especially lung disease can cause this too.

Heart rhythm problems are sneaky and many of us, including me, have a benign sporadic fluttering feeling in the chest that is not dangerous and means nothing, but is worth discussing with your care provider. Runs of heart rate in the 150 range, or rates so fast or slow as to cause weakness or passing out. If this happens to you, go the emergency room.

As complex as all these warning signs may seem, the most important way to diagnose heart disease starts with paying attention to symptoms.

To hear more from Dr. Holm, visit his website, www.PrairieDoc.org. On Call with the Prairie Doc is produced by the Healing Words Foundation in association with the South Dakota State University journalism department and airs Thursdays on South Dakota Public Broadcasting Television at 7 p.m. CT, 6 p.m. MT, and streams live at www.PrairieDoc.org.

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No Such Thing As Too Much Courage

BY PAULA DAMON

"You will never do anything in this world without courage. It is the greatest quality of the mind next to honor."
—ARISTOTLE, GREEK PHILOSOPHER

Amelia Stewart Knight was no stranger to the Oregon Trail. Knew it like the back of her hand.

Some 162 years ago in April 1853, along with her husband and seven children, Amelia left her cozy well-heated home in Iowa, hitting the trail in a covered wagon, seeking a better life out West.

Five months later, the Knights arrived in Western Oregon, near Portland, where they settled just in time for Amelia to give birth to her eighth child.

The details of Amelia's adventures, and the harrowing westward journeys of Julia Archibald, Clara Brown, Sarah Royce, Sarah Herndon, Tabitha Brown, Mary Powers and Ellen Fletcher, are colorfully laid out in "Heart of the Trail—the Stories of Eight Wagon Train Women" by Mary Barmeyer O'Brien.

Based on their journals, O'Brien's anthology brings to light the true grit, heartache, stamina and sheer bravery that drove these women over rough terrain to the so-called promised lands of California and Oregon in late nineteenth-century America.

And you thought you were having a bad day?

Consider jostling along in an eternally

rocky ride over deeply rutted, poorly mapped trails; wading through rapid rivers; riding across parched desserts; fighting off rattle snakes and other predators; losing loved ones to disease, famine and gun battles.

With few settlements along the way [no quick stops or drive up windows here], rations dwindled and these sojourners at times found themselves fueled by nothing but hope.

When delving into "Heart of the Trail," a quick, sobering read, I easily placed it at the top of my list of favorite books.

Come to think of it, my own journey westward, when I was on the cusp of turning 20, was similarly questionable; although, not as harrowing.

People on both ends of my travels — those from my home in New York and the ones awaiting me in Iowa — scratched their heads in disbelief, asking why.

My reasons were not all that distant from wagon trailers Archibald, Brown or Royce. I had left the comforts of home seeking a new life. Little did I know it would be far better than I had imagined.

No sooner had I put down O'Brien's book, had I picked up the news about two courageous South Dakotans.

Lois Schmidt of Pierre and Pauline Brehe of Agar were recently awarded the Congressional Gold Medal by S.D. Governor Dennis Daugaard.

During World War II Schmidt and Brehe decided they wanted to do something big, like helping their country defend

itself against Japan and Germany.

Still in their teens, they enlisted in the S.D. Civil Air Patrol [CAP].

Ask them why and they'll tell you "out of love of country" and, in Schmidt's case, "love of airplanes."

By the time they became full-fledged members of the CAP, Schmidt and Brehe joined thousands of others who performed critical wartime missions, among which only a handful were female cadets.

An auxiliary to the U.S. Air Force, the Civil Air Patrol was founded in the late 1930s — one week prior to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

The Corp's accomplishments during World War II were commendable, including logging more than 500,000 flying hours, sinking two enemy submarines and saving hundreds of crash victims.

From westward pioneers, Civil Air Patrol defenders to the daily or lifelong battles we face, there's no such thing as having too much courage.

SOURCES: www.gocivillairpatrol.com; www.kdlt.com/news/local-news; Heart of the Trail, O'Brien, Globe Pequot Press, 1997.

Paula Bosco Damon is a national award-winning writer whose columns appear weekly in regional newspapers of the Upper Midwest. For more information, email boscodamon.paula@gmail.com.

LETTER TO EDITOR POLICY

The Plain Talk encourages its readers to write letters to the editor, and it asks that a few simple guidelines be followed.

Please limit letters to 300 words or less. Letters should deal with a single subject, be of general interest and state a specific point of view. Letters are edited with brevity, clarity and newspaper style in mind.

In the sense of fairness and professionalism, the Plain Talk will accept no letters attacking private individuals or businesses.

Specific individuals or

entities addressed in letters may be given the opportunity to read the letter prior to publication and be allowed to answer the letter in the same issue.

Only signed letters with writer's full name, address and daytime phone number for verification will be accepted. Please mail to: Letters to the Editor, 201 W. Cherry St., Vermillion, SD 57069, drop off at 201 W. Cherry in Vermillion, fax to 624-4696 or e-mail to shauna.marlette@plaintalk.net.

Something bugging you?



E-mail a letter to the editor:
shauna.marlette@plaintalk.net

CHAMBER BUSINESS ANNOUNCEMENTS

- With all of the events that are held in the heart of downtown area, we would like to invite members from the downtown area businesses to participate with us to create an advisory committee regarding happenings, challenges, event coordination, etc. Please contact the VCDC at 624-5571 and/or contact: timb@vermillionchamber.com to be included.
- You can now go to: www.LiveVermillion.com and click on the tab "Things to Do" in the center of the page. It takes you directly to the community calendar of events listing all of the area's posted events. If your event is not listed, this page will allow you to submit an event to be included.

- W. H. Over Museum in Vermillion is in the initial start-up phase of creating GEOCACHING CENTRAL (a one-stop location to learn all about geocaching...and how to participate in this GPS/cultural phenomena). Dr. Larry Bradley (Director of the W. H. Over; 659-6151) and local geocache enthusiast Diane Leja (675-9077) are organizing the rollout of the project for an Oct. 1 launch date. Anyone interested in helping with the project can contact them or Tim Bellis at the VCDC (624-5571). This new project will provide family friendly entertainment for everyone that wants to experience the fun of geocaching. Education about geocaching, lists of regional coordinate locations, new cache sites added, historical and cultural lists, how-to-guidance and even loaner GPS units are being created now. Future geocache events are also being planned and considered for inclusion at the Museum.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7
• The VCDC office will be closed Mon., Sept. 7 in observance of Labor Day

THURSDAY, SEPT. 17
• Please join us for a Ribbon Cutting and Open House at Premier Real Estate, LTD, 1216 E. Cherry St., Ste. #101, on Thursday, September 17 to celebrate and welcome their new owner, Jami Baedke. The Ribbon Cutting Ceremony will be

at 5:15pm and the Open House celebration will be from 5:00-6 p.m. Everyone is invited to stop by, help celebrate and meet the great agents and staff! Hors d'oeuvres and refreshments will be served.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13
• Coming this fall: Welding Boot Camp-introductory course for basic welding skills beginning Tues., Oct. 13 @ 6 p.m. Classes meet Tues. & Thurs. evenings (approximately 2.5 hours per class) for a total of 35 hours at the Vermillion High School Shop. Tuition is \$250. Tuition reimbursement is available for those who obtain a welding job with a Clay County employer. Register early to save your spot - class size limited to first 10 applicants. Call the Vermillion Area Chamber & Development Co. at 605-624-5571 or email: vcdc@vermillionchamber.com. Sponsored by VCDC, in partnership with Masaba and the Vermillion School District.

THIS WEEKS HAPPENINGS ANNOUNCEMENTS
• The Student Executive Board is thrilled to invite the Vermillion Area Community to the University of South Dakota's Annual Dakota Days. This year's festivities will feature a variety of exciting events designed with the University and Vermillion community in mind. Through Coyote pride and University spirit, our goal again this year is to foster community-campus relations, making this year's Dakota Days bigger and better than ever! The Dakota Days Parade is Sat., Oct. 3 at 10 a.m. For more information and to register for the Dakota Days Parade by Sept. 18, please go to <http://www.usd.edu/student-life/dakotadays/parade-and-registration-information>. Please contact dakotadays@usd.edu with any questions.

- Help support the Main Street Mural by Terms Restoration project in downtown Vermillion. Contributions accepted at any level. To help support the mural project, go to: www.gofundme.com/3u7qj6sf7q
- South Dakota Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, Sun., Sept. 27 in Sioux Falls. Sign up for Team Vermillion to

support breast cancer research and our survivors of breast cancer. For more information, check out our Facebook page, Team Vermillion South Dakota Komen.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4
• One-on-One tech assistance at Edith B. Siegrist Vermillion Public Library beginning Sept. 4, every Fri. from 10:30-12 p.m. Staff will assist in a variety of topics (i.e., e-book downloads, basic software, email & device use). There is no cost for the service, but appointments are encouraged. Call 677-7060 or stop by the Circulation Desk.

- Boys Soccer: Hot Springs, Fri., Sept. 4 @ 3:30 p.m. (H)
- Football: Dell Rapids, Fri., Sept. 4 @ 7 p.m. (H)

SATURDAY, SEPT. 5
• Vermillion Area Farmers Market, Sat., Sept. 5 at Ratingen Platz in downtown Vermillion from 9-noon. Call 605-659-3399 or email VA-FarmersMarket@gmail.com for more information.

- Overeaters Anonymous: Sat., Sept. 5 @ 9 a.m. Location: Newman Center-USD Campus, 320 E. Cherry across from the MUC at the corner of Rose & Cherry St. (West Door-straight through double glass doors on left & first door on left; North Door-down hall to left & first door on left). Description: Overeaters Anonymous is a 12 step program for people with eating disorders & struggles
- Volleyball: Luverne, MN, Sat., Sept. 5 @ 9 a.m. (T)

NEXT WEEKS HAPPENINGS SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6
• USD Soccer vs Green Bay, Sun., Sept. 6 @ 2 p.m. at DakotaDome Soccer Field

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7
• No classes at Vermillion Public Schools & USD, Mon., Sept. 7 in observance of Labor Day

- Al-anon meeting at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Mon., Sept. 7 @ 7:30 p.m. For more information, call 624-9764

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8
• Vermillion Children's Choir will be holding auditions for children ages 9-13, grades 4-7 on Sept. 8 from 4-6pm and Sept. 10 from 5-7pm at the United Church of Christ in Vermillion. This is for children

from the entire area. Rehearsals will be every Tuesday from 3:30 to 5:30pm. Please see our website for more information and to sign up for auditions. www.vermillionchildrenschoir.weebly.com

- The Sustainability Program in collaboration with the Edith B. Siegrist Vermillion Public Library's Long Overdue Series and the Living River Group of the Sierra Club are hosting a showing and subsequent facilitated discussion of the documentary A Fierce Green Fire: The Battle for a Living Planet, Tues., Sept. 8 @ 7 p.m. at the Vermillion Public Library, 18 Church St.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10
• "A Kickoff to a Safe Harvest": Clay-Union Electric Membership Appreciation Day, Thurs., Sept. 10, 11 am-2 p.m. @ 1410 E. Cherry St. Everyone is invited. Serving free brats & hotdogs. Bring a storable food item for the Vermillion Food Pantry. Event will feature a free mini home show including displays of heating & cooling products, building & remodeling aides & ideas, new home designs & more.

- Vermillion Area Farmers Market, Thurs., Sept. 10, 3:00-7 p.m. at Clay County Fairgrounds. Call 605-659-3399 or email VA-FarmersMarket@gmail.com for more information.
- Art Club at Vermillion Public Library for K-5, Thurs., Sept. 10, 3:30-5 p.m. (2nd Thurs. of month through Nov.) Snacks provided.

- "VERMILLION DAY" in downtown Vermillion-Main St. (kick-off pep rally for VHS & USD sports seasons). Thurs., Sept. 10, 5:30-7 p.m. Both Town & Gown will come together in a friendly competition between "Red vs Red". The city of Vermillion residents and the Coyotes student body will join both marching bands, coaches, cheerleaders, athletic directors & dance teams as they compete with one another to see whose fans are the most spirited & enthusiastic as fall football begins a new sports year. EVERYONE WELCOME! Come out & experience the fun!

- Teen Lounge at Vermillion Public Library (Thursdays Sept.-Nov). Thurs., Sept. 10, 6:30 p.m. in the Teen Room. Weekly social hour for teens will include book clubs, films, crafts, snacks, & much more (grades 6-12)