

# Organ donation: A gift of life

by Kara Kelley  
Staff Reporter

Although most families do not think of organ donation prior to the time of death of a loved one, the staggering number of people waiting each year for a transplant indicates a strong need to create awareness in this area.

There are more than 142,000 people waiting for organ/tissue donations each year according to Nevada Donor Network (NDN), a local federally-designated agency for organ procurement.

"The problem is not all families think about donation at the time of death," said Ann Occhi, senior procurement transplant coordinator at NDN. "For a lot of families who haven't previously talked about donation, trying to decide about donating is difficult

because they don't know what [the deceased] would have wanted."

There are two steps to becoming a potential organ/tissue donor.

First, one should sign an organ donor card which can be picked up at any Department of Motor Vehicles office, the Student Health Center at UNLV, and the NDN office.

By carrying a donor card, the individual is immediately identified as a potential organ donor which can be helpful to medical personnel. Also, the card can be marked noting any organ/tissue removal restrictions.

"The purpose of the donor card was to create awareness and interest. It is hoped that carrying and signing a card would spark discussion within the family," Occhi said.

The second step is to discuss the decision with one's family. Organs and tissues will not be removed without the legal permission of the next-of-kin. It is therefore essential that the potential donor lets his/her wishes be known.

"It makes it much easier [for the family] if you've talked about it," said Occhi.

Most organ donations come from people between the ages of 16-35. It is this group who are more frequently involved in situations like auto accidents, gun shots, and head trauma, that cause brain death, according to Occhi.

To be an organ/tissue donor, one must be declared legally brain dead, a condition in which all indications of brain function have permanently ceased. Those who

experience brain death are kept breathing by a respirator so that their organs (heart, liver, kidney, lungs, pancreas) can still be used.

"Once the heart stops, only the tissue can be used," said Occhi. The usable tissues are: the cornea, skin, bone, heart valves, tendons, and ligaments.

According to Occhi, a typical concern of potential donors is the condition of their body after the donation takes place.

"Families should be reassured that there will be no alteration of the appearance of the body," noted Sandoz Pharmaceuticals Corporation in an educational pamphlet on organ/tissue transplants. "Funeral ceremonies usually are not altered or delayed by organ donation."

"Donation provides an opportunity to turn family tragedy

into the gift of life to others," said the Sandoz pamphlet.

The view of organ donation as a gift of life is supported by many religions.

"The Roman Catholic Church views donation as an ethically and morally acceptable act of charity. Judaism... affirms that saving a life takes precedence over the sanctity of the human body. The Protestant religions also encourage organ donation... [and] the Moslem Religious Council, initially opposed to organ donation for followers of Islam, has reversed its position," said the Sandoz educational pamphlet.

For further information on organ/tissue donation, the NDN will have a booth at UNLV during Health Awareness Day, Wednesday, Oct. 17.

## New classes offered through Continuing Education

Have you ever thought that just maybe, everything you have learned since you were six is "a bunch of crap?" Do you wonder if the noble savage, living in some remote South American jungle is happier than you, even without MTV. Do you remember how much fun life was when rocks and plants and animals and the wind and the clouds in the sky were alive?

Those were the days; the days when you were a child, a time before you developed your intellect with fantasy in place of knowledge. Then religion and science, pulling at you from two directions gradually convinced you that all that was just child's stuff.

They gave you truth. You are not of this world, but just passing through, undergoing some kind of test and only your species has the free will to knowingly pass or fail it. The world is

animal, vegetable and mineral arrangements of atoms, and man sits atop the animal chain as the most complex arrangement of neutrons, protons and electrons; his consciousness a result of this fantastic, yet completely logical arrangement.

Today only heretics and "kooks" question the religious and scientific truths. However, beginning Thursday, Oct. 18 you can too.

UNLV professors Tom Schaffter, Tom Sexton and Bill Wells have collaborated in a UNLV Continuing Education course titled "Mind, Nature and Reenchantment of the World." Over the next four weeks these purveyors of scientific truth in mathematics, psychology and engineering intend to question some of the basic tenants on which they have staked their professional lives.

Intended for free thinkers

with a background and interest in the sciences, the class will examine the paradigms of science and psychology through the Greek, middle, neo-classic, renaissance and modern ages. The instructors will discuss recent developments in science and psychology and consider shifts which might be occurring that will determine how man sees himself and the world in the post-modern age.

The class is centered on the writings of Morris Berman and Gregory Bateson as well as others. Berman's 1981 book, "Reenchantment of the World" will receive primary emphasis and is available in the UNLV bookstore.

The class begins Thursday Oct. 18 from 6-8 p.m. in Special Collections Room of UNLV's James Dickinson Library. The fee is \$25. Call the UNLV Division of Continuing Education at 739-3394 for details.

## Health Awareness Day provides services and information

by Tina Crinite  
Lifestyles Editor

For the fifth time in three years the UNLV Student Health Center and Student Government's Health Advisory Committee will be hosting Health Awareness Day on Oct. 17 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Donald C. Moyer Student Union ballroom and lounges. Organizations from on and off campus will be there with free information, various product samples, and a variety of testing programs. Food and drinks will be provided at no charge. All activities are open to students, faculty, and staff.

Scheduled activities include blood pressure tests, nutrition analysis, weight loss methods, sports medicine, HIV/AIDS information, pregnancy and contraception information, organ donor programs, and much more.

UNLV's new health educator, Ray Rodriguez said they are expecting over 50 organizations to participate in Health Awareness Day.

"We hope to promote a better idea of the Wellness Concept (emotional, physical, spiritual, occupational, intellectual, and social well being) within the UNLV community."

## FRESHMEN!!

This is your last chance to pick up your Freshman Yearbook (Who's New at UNLV) - 1990 & 1989. After October 25, 1990 you won't be able to claim your copy!

**HURRY** to MSU 120-Student Government before your copy is gone!!!



Affordable  
Comfortable

3825 S. Cambridge  
(702) 792-9191

1 Bedroom furnished - 450 sq. feet  
Utilities • Maid Service • TV  
and much more INCLUDED

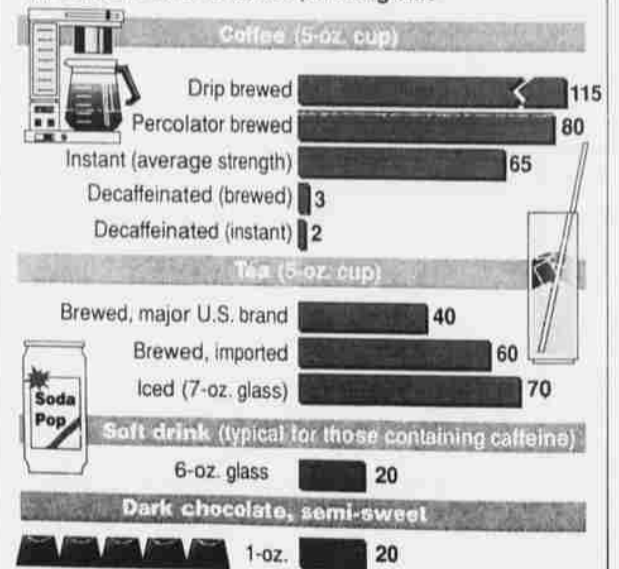
Monthly from \$570.00 Weekly from \$145.00  
\$40 Cleaning Deposit Waived with  
this Coupon.

Open 7 days a week

### Facts du jour

#### Caffeine: Big jolts and small

Approximate caffeine content, in milligrams



SOURCE: International Food Information Council