On This Date

On February 4, 1938 Walt Disney released “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.” In 1974, Patty Hearst was kidnapped by a group identified as the Symbionese Liberation Army. In 1983, Karen Carpenter died from heart failure brought on by anorexia. In 2004, Mark Zuckerberg founded Facebook, originally called “Thefacebook.” Today’s Birthdays: Rosa Parks (1913-2005, civil rights activist); Alice Cooper (1948, musician). Today’s Trivia: 1. What was unique about “Snow White,” the movie? 2. Karen Carpenter was ½ of the popular singing group “The Carpenters.” Who was the other member?

Practice & Profession

New Vaccine Schedule Released. The 2013 recommended childhood and adolescent immunization schedules have been combined and approved by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the CDC, and the American Academy of Family Physicians. A new single schedule covering patients ages 0 to 18 was developed to overcome the growing complexity of the schedules and the need to provide more information on recommendations. Details are on the CDC website.
Changes in Type 2 Pediatric Therapy. The American Academy of Pediatricians has issued its first-ever clinical guidelines for Type 2 diabetes, which recommends early aggressive treatments with insulin for many youth who are diagnosed with the disease. The guidelines also recommend changes in diet, exercise and oral metformin. An abstract is available online.

Workloads Lead to Patient Care Problems. Many hospitalists feel overburdened to the point of it having a negative impact on patient assessments, satisfaction and possibly safety outcomes, according to a research letter published in JAMA Internal Medicine. The authors analyzed the perceived impact of the average hospital physician's workload on safety and quality of care. Excessive workloads caused nearly a quarter of hospitalists surveyed to say they had ordered potentially unnecessary tests, procedures or consultation due to inadequate time with a patient.

Hospital Warns of Infection Risk. Olean (NY) General Hospital announced in late January that almost 2,000 patients may have received an injection from another patient's insulin pen. Earlier in the month, more than 700 patients at Buffalo Veterans Administration Medical Center were possibly infected. A routine pharmacy inspection revealed that some multi-dose pens were not labeled for individual patients and may have been used on more than one person. A similar audit found a similar lack of documentation and control at Olean, but the hospital did announce it would discontinue the use of insulin pens at the facility.

QR Codes for Clinical Purposes. Researchers from the Medical University of Vienna (Austria) and Vienna University of Technology have created a "medical safety code" which compresses patient pharmacogenomic data into a 2-D barcode that can be printed on a card roughly the size of a credit card. The primary objective for the QR code is to help patients avoid experiencing adverse drug events from medication use. The code can be scanned by a prescriber using a smartphone or other device and the data can then help predict a patient's response to certain medications. The study was published in the Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association.

App for Your DNA. University of California at Irvine researchers have developed a smartphone app that allows people to store and use their DNA according to a university article. While the cost of digitizing DNA is in the hundreds of dollars range, prices are quickly falling. The new app will allow encryption of the data for security purposes, and users will be able to determine whether they are genetically predisposed to certain health conditions, drug interactions or even for quick paternity testing.

Twitter As a Patient Tool. Columbia Valley Community Health, a 4-clinic organization serving some 25,000 people in north-central Washington State, has rolled out a Twitter platform to communicate with its 200-300 pregnant women in two of its service area's low income counties. While the patients are at the lower end of the economic spectrum, the system found that most have a smartphone
and a Facebook page. The social media platform enables patients to chat with each other, share advice and photos and receive information from their healthcare providers.

PTCB Launches New Website. The Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB) plans to open its new website today (February 4). The new site will include free online verifications of the certification status of technicians, and a new PTCB Account, which will replace the former Bulletin Board service. PTCB will also soon be announcing changes in its testing and certification programs. A session during the TSHP Annual Seminar has been scheduled for a PTCB update and look at the changes coming in technician education and certification. Plan to attend the PTCB Certification Program Changes: An Interactive Discussion program on Saturday, April 27 from 10:40 to 11:40 featuring PTCB's Jill Levin Spivey, Manager of Partnership Development.

Kick the Job Stress Habit. Job burnout increases the chances of developing heart disease or having a stroke, so take action to turn down the stress, Ben Fanning writes in SmartBrief/SmartBlog on Leadership. Take a break from the rut, take time to rest and spend some quiet time during the day. Reduce the intensity of your day, and question whether you really have to watch the news on TV every night or maybe just spend some time with music or reading.

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**Annual Seminar**

Seminar & Alcáldé Registration Now Open. Get ready for the 2013 TSHP Annual Seminar and Alcáldé Southwest Leadership Conference, April 24-28 at the Renaissance Hotel in Austin, TX.

The online registration for both meetings is now available, or you can download a form for Fax or surface mail. See the TSHP website for the Seminar. The Alcáldé registration form is available on the R&E Foundation page.

The hotel room block at the Renaissance Hotel is also open for reservations. See the TSHP website for details and a link to the online hotel reservation system.

The Alcáldé Conference will be held Wednesday - Thursday, April 24-25.

The TSHP Seminar begins Friday morning, April 26 at 8 AM and will conclude on Sunday at 1:30 PM following the Installation Banquet.

Approximately 17 hours of continuing pharmacy education credit will be available during the 2½ day Seminar, spread among 5 educational tracks (management, technicians, clinical, student and new practitioner).

Now is the time to sign up for the first step toward your professional future - the TSHP 2013 Annual Seminar and 2013 Alcáldé Conference.
New Drugs & Devices

New Cholesterol Drug Approved. FDA has approved Kynamro (mipomersen sodium) by Isis Pharmaceuticals and Genzyme, for treating patients who are genetically predisposed to have high levels of LDL cholesterol. The drug has been approved for use as an adjunct to lipid-lowering medications and diet for patients with homozygous familial hypercholesterolemia (HoFH), a rare genetic condition that makes the body unable to remove LDL cholesterol from the blood. In the U.S., HoFH occurs in about one in one million individuals, according to the company. Due to liver toxicity, the once-weekly medication will carry a boxed warning.

New Vaccine Use OK’d. FDA has approved Prevnar 13 (pneumococcal 13-valent conjugate vaccine [diphtheria CRM197 protein]) for children and adolescents ages 6 to 17 for active immunization against the 13 Streptococcus pneumonia serotypes. For this group, Prevnar 13 is administered as a one-time dose to patients who have never received it.

New Type 2 Therapy Approved. FDA has approved 3 new drugs for Type 2 diabetes. Nesina (alogliptin), Kazano (alogliptin and metformin) and Oseni (alogliptin and pioglitazone) tablets by Takeda were approved after a long delay by FDA. Alogliptin is the fourth dipeptidyl peptidase-4 inhibitor to win FDA approval, joining sitagliptin (Januvia), saxagliptin (Onglyza), and linagliptin (Tradjenta).

Recalls & Warnings

Lactated Ringers and 5% Dextrose Injection Recall - Non-Sterility. Hospira, Inc. is initiating a voluntary nationwide user-level recall of one lot of Lactated Ringers and 5% Dextrose Injection, USP, 1000 mL, Flexible Container, NDC 0409-7929-09 due to one confirmed report where a spore-like structured particulate, consistent with mold, was noted in the solution. Hospira has not received reports of any adverse events associated with this issue for this lot, and has not identified any quality issues with retention samples for this lot. Anyone with an existing inventory should stop use and distribution, quarantine the product immediately, and call Stericycle at 1-888-965-5798 to arrange for the return of the product.

Legislative & Regulatory Update

Medicare Adjusting Dialysis Drug Reimbursement. Medicare is recalculating reimbursement rates for hospitals and clinics for drugs used to treat dialysis patients after a federal audit found that the program could save as much as $880 million annually. The overpayment occurs because reimbursement is based on the assumption that drugs are being given at the higher doses used in 2007. While the use of the 3 drugs (Epogen, Aranesp and Procrit) has fallen in recent years, the overpayment will continue until new rates
Bundled Payment Initiative Announced. CMS announced that more than 450 health care organizations will participate in the Bundled Payments for Care Improvement initiative, a payment model program created in the health care reform law to test whether bundling payments for services in a single episode of care can improve quality and lower costs. Those selected organizations represent a wide range of healthcare providers -- including not-for-profit and for-profit hospitals, academic medical centers, physician-owned facilities and post-acute providers -- that were chosen by the CMS either as awardees for Model 1 starting in April, or as participants for the first phase of models 2, 3 and 4 that begins with the announcement.

Administration Proposes Contraceptive Rule Changes. The Department of Health and Human Services has released a rule that lays out how nonprofit religious organizations, such as nonprofit religious hospitals or institutions of higher education, that object to contraception on religious grounds can receive an accommodation that provides their enrollees separate contraceptive coverage, and with no co-pays, but at no cost to the religious organization under the Affordable Care Act. The agency will accept comments on the proposal through April 5. The rule basically exempts group health plans of "religious employers" from having to provide contraceptive coverage if they have religious objections to contraception.

Hydrocodone Restrictions Under Consideration. FDA’s drug safety advisory panel voted 19-10 to recommend that products containing hydrocodone should be reclassified as Schedule II controlled substances. According to CDC, more than 16,500 people died after overdosing on opioid-based pain medications in 2010. FDA had rejected previous requests by DEA to reclassify hydrocodone products, and the agency has not commented on the committee vote. Some 47 million patients were given prescriptions for hydrocodone in 2011 according to FDA. Meanwhile, Reps. Vern Buchanan (R-FL) and Edward Markey (D-MA) have written FDA to urge them to make the change in scheduling. You can learn the very latest on the ongoing debate during the TSHP Annual Seminar. A special presentation on Sunday morning, April 28, will feature Joseph T. Rannazzisi, Deputy Assistant Administrator of DEA’s Office of Diversion Control from Washington, DC discussing "Drug Diversion & Pill Mills."

Cruz Moves to Dismantle Obamacare. Freshman Texas Senator Ted Cruz has introduced legislation to fully repeal the Affordable Care Act. "I promised the voters of Texas that the first bill I would file as a U.S. senator would be to repeal every last word of Obamacare, and that's a promise I'm proud to keep," the senator said in a prepared statement. The senator says the bill has 23 Republican co-sponsors, but he acknowledges "it will not pass in the current Congress."

TSHP Legislative Report. Keep up with the developments and background behind the 2013 Session of the Texas Legislature with the "TSHP Legislative Report." The weekly overview is posted on the TSHP
website under “Government Affairs/TSHP Legislative Report.” During
the Session we’ll keep information coming to you via the TSHP E-
News, but specifics and more in-depth information will be available
via The Report. If you would like to be added to the distribution list
to receive the report directly in your e-mail, contact Rebecca English
at the TSHP Office (rebecca.english@tshp.org)

State, National & International

FDA OKs Morning-After Pills via Vending Machines. FDA will allow
Shippensburg State University to continue to dispense Plan B
through a vending machine on campus. The agency decided not to
intervene following a “politically motivated uproar” over the machine
the University installed in its nurses’ office. Students at the university
can obtain Plan B without waiting for an appointment by depositing
$25 in the machine. Since the drug is available without a prescription
to women over 17, and the university doesn’t have any students
younger than 17, it’s not in danger of violating FDA prescribing rules.

PBMs Claim Potential $100B Savings Possible. The Pharmaceutical
Care Management Association (PCMA) says a study it commissioned
shows that expanded use of preferred and limited pharmacy
networks could save payers $115 billion over the next 10 years. The
study, conducted by Visante, claims there are more pharmacies in the
U.S. than McDonald’s, Burger King, Pizza Hut, Wendy’s, Taco Bell,
Kentucky Fried Chicken, Domino’s Pizza and Dunkin’ Donuts
restaurants combined, creating a “highly competitive environment.”
The study claims that increased use of pharmacy networks could save
Medicaid and Medicare $26 billion and $35 billion, respectively, over
the next 10 years.

TSHP/ASHP/Local Chapters

Call for Volunteers 2013-2014. TSHP President-Elect Emory Martin
is beginning consideration of appointments to Councils and
Committees. He is particularly interested in appointing pharmacists,
technicians, new practitioners and students from throughout the
State, as well as a diverse cross-section of practice settings.

Councils meet by toll-free conference call, usually 3 or 4 times during
the organizational year, depending on the business before the group.
Calls usually last 1 hour and are scheduled during the workday; often
around the noon hour, but subject to the Chair and council members’
wishes.

In order to be considered for appointment, please complete an online
sign-up form and include your 1st, 2nd and 3rd choices. We make
every effort to assign all volunteers, but there are limited positions
available.

To indicate your interest, go to the TSHP Website (www.tshp.org),
login to your member portal (using your e-mail and password), and
click on “View Open Forms and Applications” in the right hand column.
Then click the "view" council & committee volunteer link and then 'apply,' or contact the TSHP Office (paul.davis@tshp.org).

**TSHP Journal Online.** The latest edition of the *TSHP Journal* is now available on the [TSHP website](http://www.tshp.org). Two clinical articles, an overview of the Texas legislative session and a preview of the 2013 Annual Seminar are included.

The *Austin Area Society of Health-System Pharmacists* will meet on **February 7** for a dinner/CPE session at the Texas A&M Health Science Center Building in Round Rock. The program is "Interpretation of Drug Levels from the Viewpoint of a Toxicologist." To RSVP, see the AASHP website, [http://aashp.net](http://aashp.net) and follow the link or click on the "Meetings" button.

### R&E Foundation

The *TSHP Research & Education Foundation Board of Directors* met on January 29. The Board approved increasing the amount given for two scholarships to $1,500 effective for 2013. The *TSHP R&E Foundation Gene Lake Scholarship* and the *TSHP R&E Foundation Celso and Matiana M. Cuéllar Sr. Scholarship* have now surpassed $33,000 in total assets, making it possible to increase the level of scholarship support. Application information for 2013-2014 scholarships is now available on the [Foundations' website](http://www.tshp.org). The Board approved moving some of the 2012 surplus of funds into investments to help replenish the General Fund. Plans were made for the 2013 Foundation raffle and recognition activities to occur during the 2013 TSHP Annual Seminar. The Foundation's Contributors' Recognition Breakfast will be held on **Sunday, April 28** beginning at 7:00 AM in the Wedgewood Room of the Renaissance Hotel in Austin.

### People & Places

*Memorial Hermann Health System* has partnered with *Aetna, Inc.* to form an **Accountable Care Organization**. The ACO will include a portion of the 4,000 doctors affiliated with the Memorial Hermann Physician Network, and is expected to be available in Harris, Montgomery, and Fort Bend counties beginning **April 1**.

*Texas Health Resources*, which had previously announced an ACO partnership with Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Texas (January 21 *TSHP E-News*), has announced plans to form an **Accountable Care Organization** with *Aetna*.

The *Michael & Susan Dell Foundation* has announced a $50 million commitment to establish the **Dell Medical School** at **The University of Texas at Austin**. Additionally, the Dell family foundation committed another $10 million to Austin and Travis County community health quality and access programs over the next 10 years. The Foundation previously funded $90 million of grants in the Dell Children’s Medical Center of Central Texas, UT Austin's Dell Pediatric Research Institute, UT’s Michael & Susan Dell Center for
Healthy Living and the Texas Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Childhood Obesity.

**Answer to Today's Trivia**

1. Disney's "Snow White" was the first animated feature to be produced in English and in Technicolor. 2. Karen was the sister of Richard Carpenter, who was a producer, arranger, pianist and keyboardist, and occasional lyricist, as well as joining with Karen on harmony vocals.