

Quote of the month:

"The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and the lightning bug."
Mark Twain

1. Meeting commenced at 11:30 am at SAC Conference Room B and adjourned at 1:45 pm.
2. Members present: A. Breggin, D. Breggin, Cherington, Collier, Heitkamp, Langford, Yarnell.
3. New members were introduced:
Arme Breggin; Dave Breggin of US West Advanced Technologies.
4. Rich Collier had just returned from Alabama where he participated in the triggered lightning experiments. Arme and Dave Breggin, often go on hiking and camping trips, wondered if any information is available on what kind of soil or rock would be the best choice for setting up a tent. They suggested devising a study using various soils, sand, and rock might yield important information. The members of the group agreed. Phil Yarnell will contact his friend, a geologist. Ken Langford will speak to the people at the Colorado School of Mines. This subcommittee will meet again within a month to decide how to procede.
5. Phil Yarnell and I recently saw a patient who developed a cranial nerve palsy after lightning struck just outside his apartment window. An interesting feature of this case is that the window was closed. The patient, however, was standing near the window. The group discussed how such an injury could occur. Static electricity probably built up inside the dry window. Dave Breggin pointed out that static electricity is less likely to build up on wet materials. The patient stated that it had not yet started to rain. Could electromagnetic and microwave energy associated with lightning cause this injury?

Phil presented two other cases. One of man who was struck in the hand just as he was touching the outside door handle of his car. The second was a man who never regained consciousness after being struck on the golf course. He was seated in his cart which was under a tree.
6. Many human cases of lightning strikes do not have burns of the eyes, mouth and mucous membranes as their primary injury. This is of interest in view of the reports of Dr. Chris Andrews on sheep injuries where the orifices of the eyes, ears, mouth were particulary vulnerable sites. Dave Breggin wondered if the sheep's wool covering might account for some differences. Arme Breggin also wondered about the vulnerabibility of the sheeps pointed snout and wet nose.
7. I presented a homemade Leyden jar which I built with the help

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of my son-in-law. Phil Yarnell supplied a plastic rod and steel wool which we used to charge the jar.

8. Ken Langford presented photographs which he had taken during a May night showing lightning cause a brush fire. Ken reported that he had spoken recently with Ron Holle who suggested we look into the costs of hospitalization of patients who were struck by lightning. We will ask Michael Boyson if he can obtain this information.

Ken and Todd Heitkamp reported that our article on the underreporting of lightning will probably be accepted after it has been revised and given a new title. I read a letter from Ron Holle indicating that Dr. Scott Lillibridge of the CDC might be interested in our data and suggested I call him in a few weeks.

9. Phil Yarnell brought a videotape entitled "Sparks and Shocks" which included a "history of 18th century electricity". This tape can be obtained from The Bakken Library at 3537 Zenith Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55416. (612-927-6508). All of us enjoy watching the video material.
10. Our next meeting is scheduled for Friday July 9, 1993 at 11:30 am at St. Anthony Central Hospital in Conference Room B.

Respectfully submitted:



Michael Cherington, M.D.
Chairman, LDC