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28 January 2022

Memorandum

To: Trialists

Fr: Curtis Meinert

Re: Jerry Stamler (27 October 1919 - 26 January 2022)

Jeremiah, but almost everybody knew him as Jerry.

The world lost a giant cardiovascular researcher and trialist with the passing of Jerry.

My life became connected with Jerry's when Chris Klimt and I signed on to run the coordinating center for the Coronary Drug Project.

Jerry and I were like Mutt and Jeff; me at 6'6" and Jerry about a foot shorter.

The CDP was a secondary prevention trial under the leadership of Jerry Stamler. Born of an "epidemic" of CV deaths in men, ultimately involving 55 clinical centers and 8,341 men randomized (double-masked) to six different treatment groups.

The CV death rates then, for men in their 40's and 50's, were about four times those for similarly aged women. (The male-female differential remains, but CV deaths have fallen dramatically for both gender groups since the 1960s.)

Jerry was a child of the Great Depression. I was reminded of that one Sunday afternoon in his office in Chicago. We were writing letters to CDP investigators that we wanted to mail that day.

Jerry started searching for stamps, drawer by drawer. I joined the search and eventually found air mail stamps (remember those?).

"Hey Jerry. Use these."

"They are air mail stamps!"

"So? They will work."

"I can't use them."

"Why not?"

"You don't understand. I am a child of the Great Depression. There is no way I can bring myself to use air mail stamps when regular stamps will do."

The letters went out Monday. With regular stamps!

One day early in 1969 I learned that Jerry had been subpoenaed by the House Committee Un-American Activities (HUAC) for a hearing to be held in Chicago later that year. Jerry was willing to

appear, provided he could be accompanied by legal counsel. The Committee refused, Jerry refused the summons and was subsequently cited for Contempt of Congress. (The Committee, in an effort to reinvent itself, was renamed in 1969 to the Internal Security Committee).

The legal wrangling went on for several years to a standoff. Ultimately the Committee, due in large part to efforts on Jerry's behalf by friends and colleagues, was dissolved; opening day of the 94th Congress (14 January 1975).

Jerry believed lipids were the primary culprits in heart disease.

I remember one day, behind him in a cafeteria line, when, with the precision of a surgeon, he removed whipped cream from his dessert to be true to his belief.

Most of what I know about the art and science of multicenter trials I learned from Jerry! I am truly blessed and grateful for the experience and ride. Thank you Jerry. Rest in peace!