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IMMEDIATELY

\$5,000 EAGLES' HEART FUND GRANT
TO SUPPORT DIGITALIS STUDY AT UM

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MISSOULA--

A \$5,000 Eagles' Max Baer Heart Fund Research Grant has been awarded to the University of Montana in Missoula to support a scientific project entitled "Cardiotonic Activity of Digitalis Cell Cultures."

Arthur Cox, Butte, vice president of the Montana Eagles, and Frank G. LePiane, Missoula, former president of the Montana Eagles, presented a \$5,000 check for the digitalis study to Dr. Richard C. Bowers, University president, and Dr. Rustem S. Medora, associate professor of pharmacy at UM, on Tuesday, Oct. 12, at Bowers' home in Missoula.

LePiane said Eagles Lodges across the United States raised about \$1 million dollars for the Eagles' Max Baer Heart Fund Research Grant, which is used to sponsor heart research projects.

"This is the first year the money raised by Eagles Lodges in Montana has been awarded to a heart research project in the state," LePiane said.

Medora, who is project director for the "Cardiotonic Activity of Digitalis Cell Cultures" study, said the funds from the Max Baer Heart Fund Research Grant will be used to pay part of the salary of the technical staff and buy equipment and chemicals for the project.

Medora said the project is focused on developing a way to extract cardioactive compounds from tissue cultures of the common foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*) plant. The cardioactive compounds, such as digitoxin, stimulate the heart and improve tonicity of the heart muscle.

Digitalis tissue cultures, isolated from foxglove, have been grown and maintained in the project laboratory at UM and Medora hopes to test extractives of these tissue cultures for cardiotonic activity.

\$5,000 EAGLES' HEART FUND GRANT--page 2

"If significant amounts of the cardiotoxic activity are present, attempts will be made to isolate the active principle," Medora said.

"The methods we use in the production of cardiotoxic compounds could someday be adapted for commercial purposes, making the drug available in places where the original plant is inaccessible," Medora said.

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