RAIN OR SHINE – JOIN THE AMERICAN HEART WALK

The American Heart Association (AHA) continues to fund research on such lifesaving discoveries as pacemakers, bypass surgery, and blood pressure medication.

In 2004, UAB Health System ranked 11th in the nation in corporate giving, raising $177,000. This year, the Health System’s goal is $100,000.

Join the UAB team in support of AHA’s annual American Heart Walk on August 27 to raise critical funds to continue the fight against heart disease and stroke. The majority of funds raised in Birmingham stay here to fund local research and programs.

The walk will take place at The Summit off Highway 280. Registration is at 7 AM, and the walk begins at 8 AM. To register, call 975-8111.

APPRECIATION

Former Huntsville Dean Remembered

James Ellis Sparks, MD, died in Huntsville on June 13 at age 79. Dr. Sparks was the former dean of the School of Primary Medical Care, School of Medicine in Huntsville, from 1989 until 1994, when he was named dean emeritus.

Born in Corinth, Mississippi, he moved to Huntsville with his family, attended public schools there, graduated from Emory University, served an internship in Madison, Wisconsin, entered the

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CLINICAL NEWS

The UAB Personal Health Clinic

FRIENDLY SERVICE, TIMELY CARE

More than 65 million Americans have an incurable sexually transmitted disease (STD). An additional 15 million are infected annually, according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention surveillance data. In Alabama, as in other southern states, rates of chlamydia, gonorrhea, and primary and secondary syphilis are consistently higher than the rest of the nation.

UAB’s Personal Health Clinic (PHC) addresses this substantial health care burden — often called a “hidden epidemic” because so many afflicted individuals remain asymptomatic and undiagnosed — and fills an important local and regional health care niche, clinic Medical Director Jane Schwebke, MD, professor of medicine, says.

In May, Dr. Schwebke received an honorary doctorate degree from her alma mater, Elmhurst College in Illinois, in appreciation of her innovative work in

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In The NEWS

Hospital Practices Role In Nationwide Emergency Medical Response System

PREPAREDNESS, COMMUNICATION, COOPERATION

When a natural disaster or terrorist event occurs, local medical professionals and emergency management authorities may find community resources and personnel stretched to the limit by rapid influx of many injured patients. Smoothly and rapidly evacuating an overflow of patients to regional health care facilities in unaffected areas saves lives.

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Medical staff at University Hospital (UH) recently practiced such a scenario during a drill conducted by the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS): In the early morning hours of Monday, May 23, an earthquake centered in northeastern Arkansas created a ring of damage and injuries as far away as Memphis, Tennessee, closing roads and limiting communications. Affected states requested federal emergency assistance,
and NDMS kicked in. Local medical staff triaged and stabilized a number of patients for transport to regional health care facilities that have volunteered to serve as NDMS hospitals, UAB Hospital Safety Manager Dennis Stanek explains.

As 1 of Alabama’s 17 NDMS hospitals, UH provides about half of the 827 beds available in the state. During the May drill, UAB’s Emergency Department (ED) evaluated and treated 29 mock patients, including a handful of individuals who arrived in Birmingham from Pensacola, Florida, via a C-130 aircraft, which allowed medical personnel to practice off-loading patients. The exercise, called Lifesaver 2005, was the first full-scale live NDMS exercise in the region since 1999.

“This was an unusual drill because we had advance notice of the number of victims and their condition — it was really a best-case scenario for an emergency situation,” Stanek says. “We had time to consider how to move patients into our facility quickly while minimizing the overall impact to the hospital. As in every drill, we learned valuable information that helps us prepare for real events.”

Stanek prepped drill volunteers for maximum realism, and he notes that live mock patients contribute significantly to the authenticity of such exercises. “Staff learn much more when real people are involved. Real patients have anxiety, make demands, and ask lots of questions. Once, during a drill that used pieces of paper as patient stand-ins, I observed someone stacking the papers onto a single stretcher,” he says. “You can’t stack real people!”

**NATIONAL CATASTROPHIC CARE**

NDMS, a section within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, supports federal agencies in coordination of federal medical response to major emergencies, including terrorist attacks and natural, transportation, and technological disasters. NDMS moves medical teams, supplies, and equipment to affected areas and evacuates injured individuals to hospitals in unaffected areas for definitive medical care.

“In our continued increased-risk environment, it’s important for us to work with NDMS to prepare for large-scale emergencies,” Thomas Termdrup, MD, professor and chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine and director of the Center for Emergency Care and Disaster Preparedness, says. “The North Pavilion is still a new facility, and live exercises increase staff confidence and ability to deal with a disaster, helping us pinpoint areas that need improvement.”

The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations requires hospitals to perform at least two emergency drills each year — a patient influx exercise and a drill with community involvement, Stanek says. UAB’s next live exercise will take place this fall.

Some 65 Federal Coordinating Centers (FCC) are located throughout the nation in major metropolitan areas with proximity to transportation hubs. FCCs act as liaisons between federal agencies and local hospitals, coordinating communication, patient evacuation, and medical team and equipment deployment. Birmingham’s Veteran’s Affairs Medical Center is Alabama’s only FCC.

**Andresen Joins Pediatrics**

UAB Professor and Chair of the Department of Pediatrics Sergio Stagno, MD, and Professor and Director of General Pediatrics Carolyn S. Ashworth, MD, announce the appointment of Jennie Andresen, MD, as assistant professor. Dr. Andresen joins UAB from The Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina, where she served as assistant clinical professor of pediatrics for 7 years. Before moving to North Carolina, Dr. Andresen was medical director of the Wetumpka Pediatric Clinic, Wetumpka, Alabama, for 2 years.

A graduate of Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia, Lima, Peru, and the Alberto Hurtado School of Medicine, Dr. Andresen completed a pediatrics internship and residency at Children’s Hospital of Michigan/Detroit Medical Center, Wayne State University School of Medicine, where she also completed a pediatric infectious diseases fellowship. She is certified by the American Board of Pediatrics.

**HONORS CONVOCATION AWARDS**

Each year at graduation, the Caduceus Club recognizes achievements of selected faculty members and presents each with a $1,000 check.

This year, the club honored Richard E. Powers, MD, as Best Basic Science Professor and Louis W. Heck, Jr., MD, as Best Clinical Professor. Caduceus Club President Ronald W. Orso, MD, presented the checks to Drs. Powers and Heck.

The Medical Alumni Association also presented its annual Alumni Award for Leadership and Community Service (given each year to a graduating senior) to Gigi Youngblood, MD. President of the UASOM Medical Alumni Association Albert J. Tully, MD, presented the award and a $500 check to Dr. Youngblood.
appreciation of her innovative work in health care/public health and in treatment of STDs.

“Individuals reluctant to discuss personal health care issues with their family physician are often equally uncomfortable seeking care at public health facilities,” she continues. “But failing to diagnose and treat STDs perpetuates a cycle of reinfection, resulting in significant morbidity. Our clinicians, nationally and internationally recognized for their STD expertise, emphasize sensitivity and confidentiality.” The clinic and its small friendly staff, an excellent alternative for individuals concerned with privacy, are currently seeing 100 patients a month.

The PHC has also turned out to be an extremely active research site for patients who come for an array of studies targeting everything from recurrent bacterial vaginosis and yeast infections to genital herpes. In addition, the clinic provides discreet diagnosis and management of urinary tract infections and also offers patients contraceptive counseling, as well as rapid HIV testing using blood or saliva assays. Treatment for resistant trichomoniasis also is available.

Housed in the Community Care Building (908 20th Street S), PHC clinicians also are skilled at guiding individuals through one of the most difficult and often overlooked aspects of STD management — informing and treating sexual partners. Dr. Schwebke adds, “Patients who are uncomfortable discussing their diagnosis can bring their partner into the clinic and have a conversation with their physician in a private setting. Clinic patients value the continuity of this personalized, compassionate care.”

The clinic is staffed by Dr. Schwebke, Edward Hook III, MD, professor of medicine, Laura Bachmann, MD, assistant professor of medicine, William Geisler, MD, assistant professor of medicine, and Molly Venglarik, MSN, CRNP, reproductive nurse practitioner. Joy Lewis is the receptionist. No referral is required, and most insurance is accepted. For more information, call 996-2780.

Litovsky Joins Anatomic Pathology

UBA Professor and Department of Pathology Chair Jay M. McDonald, MD, and Professor and Division of Anatomic Pathology Director Gene P. Siegal, MD, announce the appointment of Silvio H. Litovsky, MD, as assistant professor. Dr. Litovsky joins UAB from Texas, where he was senior research scientist at the Texas Heart Institute and assistant clinical professor of pathology at the University of Texas at Houston.

Dr. Litovsky graduated with honors from University of Buenos Aires Medical School in Argentina. He completed an internal medicine internship and cardiology residency at Ramos Mejia Hospital in Buenos Aires and a postdoctoral fellowship at Masonic Medical Research Lab in Utica, New York, followed by a pathology residency at State University of New York Health Science Center at Syracuse and a cardiovascular pathology fellowship at Armed Forces Institute of Pathology in Washington, DC. He then completed a cardiac registry fellowship and pediatric pathology fellowship at Children’s Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts. He is board certified in anatomic and clinical pathology.

In addition to numerous peer-reviewed publications, books and book chapters, and abstracts, Dr. Litovsky has served as a reviewer for Circulation, the journal of the American Heart Association, since 2002.

Dr. Litovsky’s major research interests include several fields of cardiovascular pathology, including inflammation and calcification in atherosclerosis, infections as promoters and destabilizers of atherosclerotic plaques, pathogenesis of transmural and nontransmural myocardial infarction, devices employed in patients with severe heart failure, heart transplantation, and stem cell therapy.

He may be reached at 975-6964 for academic and administrative calls; e-mail slitovsk@uab.edu.

Appointments

Carlos R. Arguelles, MD, 934-3875, TKC
4th Floor Endocrinology, Effective June
J. Bradley Ball, MD, 939-9589, ACC
604, Pediatrics, Effective June
Sidney Barratt IV, MD, 934-9666, BDB
321, Internal Medicine, Effective June
Jennifer J. Davis, MD, 934-5400, THT
215, Pulmonary & Critical Care Medicine, Effective June
Daniel J. Hendrick, MD, 934-9666, BDB
321, Internal Medicine, Effective June

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ACCOLADES

SMITH IS FASEB VP-ELECT

John A. Smith, MD, PhD, MMM, DSc (Hon), professor and director, UAB Division of Laboratory Medicine, is vice president-elect of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB). He succeeds UAB Vice President for Research Richard Marchase, PhD. The selection of two UAB scientists in succession to prominent offices in this leading biomedical research organization, consisting of 22 member societies and more than 65,000 scientists, is a tribute to UAB's outstanding scientific enterprise.

Dr. Smith's 3-year appointment involves 1 year as VP-elect, 1 year as VP, and 1 year as past-VP. "My primary role is to chair FASEB's science policy committee, which is FASEB's think tank on science policy issues affecting its member societies, for example, stem cell research, postdoctoral training, clinical research, and conflict of interest," he says.

He is a member of seven FASEB societies: American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (1986-); American Society for Investigative Pathology (1980-); American Association of Immunologists (1980-); Biophysical Society (1993-); Protein Society (1986-); American Peptide Society (APS) (1990-); and International Society for Computational Biology (2001-). Dr. Smith's service to these societies marks his rise from committee membership to committee chair to national office.

He has served FASEB as Public Affairs Executive Committee member representing APS; representative, Annual Federal Funding Consensus Conferences; cochair/chair, NIH Subcommittee, FASEB Federal Funding Consensus Conference; chair, Veteran's Affairs Subcommittee, FASEB Federal Funding Consensus Conference; member, FASEB Executive Director Search Committee; Capital Campaign Committee; FASEB Science Policy Committee (SPC), representing APS; and SPC Subcommittees chair, Office of Management and Budget and member Enhanced Public Access and Corporate Relations, Public Affairs Subcommittee, and FASEB Strategic Planning Committee.

Former Huntsville Dean Remembered

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United States Navy Medical Corps as a lieutenant and was awarded a Bronze Star for his service in Korea. After completing his training, he opened his practice in internal medicine and cardiology in Huntsville in 1956.

Dr. Sparks joined the University of Alabama School of Medicine in 1974 as professor and chief of the internal medicine program in Huntsville. The medical school library is named in his honor.