



The **EVERGREEN** Newsletter

**Editor: Pamela Lewis**

[www.uthro.org](http://www.uthro.org)

**December 2011**

*From the President*

## Our Own Budget Crunch!

Sometimes good fortune doesn't carry over from year to year.

When UTHRO was fortunate enough to receive financial help with the printing and mailing of our newsletter last budget year, we were able to keep the dues as low as they have been for years.

However that fortunate circumstance has run out with the most recent budget cuts at UTHealth.

I have been informed that they can no longer assist with this project and so the cost of the newsletter, about \$2600/year will fall completely on the membership. For those who like to crunch numbers – the monthly bill for 152 newsletters is about \$225, roughly \$18/year for each member.

As you can appreciate, this is about \$10 more than the dues. Doing nothing would be unsustainable. Furthermore, these are current costs and do not reflect printing/postage increases.

At its November meeting, the Executive Committee decided to rectify this shortage two ways: 1) by sending the newsletter electronically to all those who have e-mail (currently only 70 members receive the newsletter electronically); and 2) by raising the membership dues to \$10/yr. for all retirees, still a remarkably small amount as dues go.

Since some 50 members do not have e-mail, we will continue to send them the printed version.

I am confident that this small increase in dues will not deter our members from continuing their membership and support. I would appreciate any feedback and/ or constructive ideas to make sure UTHRO stays financially healthy.

UTHRO's Executive Committee wishes all our members and their loved ones a wonderful Holiday Season and a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous 2012.

*Henny van Dijk*

### Dr. Cheves Smythe — Q&A with UTHealth Medical School's founding dean

The founding dean of The University of Texas Medical School at Houston, **Dr. Cheves Smythe** came to the school in 1970 and established its faculty, overseeing the curriculum, building its infrastructure, and shaping its future. He served as dean from 1970–75 and as dean pro tem from 1995–96. He has continued to serve on the faculty since that time, with three leaves of absences,

including one during which he served as the dean and later chair of the department of medicine at the Aga Khan University of Health Sciences in Karachi, Pakistan. He has continued to have an influential role on the educational program and in the field of geriatrics at the Medical School. He is retiring after 41 years of service to the Medical School.



*Dr. Cheves Smythe*

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## EVENT CALENDAR 2012

**Mark these dates now!**

**Tuesday, February 7**  
**VALENTINE LUNCHEON**  
**Saltgrass Steak House at**  
**510 Meyerland Plaza**

Featuring the  
Ranch Hand Group Menu  
\$17 per person + tax + 18% gratuity  
RSVP by January 30

**Thursday, March 29**  
**La Bahia Road Bluebonnet**  
**Trail**

Washington on the Brazos  
to  
Burton, Texas

**Saturday, May 19**  
**Liberty County Opry**  
Featuring: "Rock Around the  
Clock" (50s/60s)

**Thursday, September 27**  
**Galveston**  
Event destination to be announced

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## Dr. Cheves Smythe — Q&A with UTHHealth Medical School's founding dean

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### How has the Medical School changed since you were first named dean?

It's bigger; it's increased logarithmically in size, so it's not as personal, less warm. But it's more productive. It's a tradeoff.

### What are your favorite memories of the Medical School?

Friendships—everyone on the staff, the students, faculty, and supporters in the community. First and foremost it's the people. There's not a particular episode I can think of now.

### What are you most proud of in your career?

I might surprise you that it's not a memory from here. In 1966, I was involved in changing the leadership of the South Carolina Medical College from being run by the state medical society to broader representation. And in 1982 I became dean of the the Aga Khan Medical School, which went from being 89 acres of sand to a successful school—it has really taken off.

### What was your biggest failure—and what did you learn?

I couldn't hold a job. I'm an impatient man, and I want to change too much too fast. It makes people restless, although the changes eventually get made.

### What has inspired you?

I got into Harvard Medical School without an interview. The associate dean said he wanted to meet me because I had written an honest letter about why I wanted to go to medical school. I wrote that I didn't want to be a lawyer and being a doctor seemed like a good way to make a living. I'm not inspired to care for the world.

### That seems at odds for a medical school dean who must inspire students who enter medical school starry-eyed, wanting to care for the world.

The role of a dean is not to inspire students. The role of the dean is to provide resources to give to the faculty so they can set the values for students. The dean's role is a background, not a forefront, position.

### What will you miss most about the Medical School?

I don't have sense enough to lead an unstructured day. The residents and students keep you mentally sharp.

### What do you think the future holds for the Medical School and the practice of medicine?

The United States is slow to adapt to the change that Europe and others have already undertaken. This country is wasteful, and we can't have everything we want. Rationing is a dirty word, but we must have more testing and a more stringent definition of benefit. To do away with waste is imperative. In addition, the molecular biology revolution will change care.

### What advice would you give to students starting out in our medical school today?

I tell students and residents to assume the world in which they move around today will be different in the future and to maintain an open mind about health care.

### What challenges do faculty have today that they didn't have 40 years ago?

Forty years ago was a great time to be in the medical school business. The federal government was funding us; the NIH was providing startup funding. Nowadays, the competition for grants can only grow, and clinical faculty are expected to earn their way.

### What has kept you here at the Medical School?

I've always written myself a letter when other opportunities came along—listing the pros and cons. And I have moved—the university let me go to Pakistan, and I took a sabbatical at UCLA. But things were always working here with more reasons to stay than move.

### What else would you like to add?

People often ask me why I came here. I came here for opportunity and growth. And just because Houston and the Medical School have grown, that doesn't mean that opportunity and growth are no longer around. The future remains very bright, even though it is a tough economic climate for health care.

*Scoop, UTH Medical School*

### New Members

#### HSC General

**Bonnie Geppert & Myron**  
2011

#### Medical School

**Gertrude (Chris) English**  
2011

### Questions about Retirement Benefits? Your NEW contact person is

**Sherry Haytten**

**713-500-3856**

**[Sherry.L.Haytten@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:Sherry.L.Haytten@uth.tmc.edu)**

The membership fee for 2012 will come due on January 1, 2012, so please take a minute to pay your dues by completing the renewal form below and sending it with your check for \$10.00 (retiree or retiree/spouse) or \$5.00 (associate member). We are counting on your support so we can continue to bring you the newsletter, the educational events, and the trips to some of the more interesting places in Texas.

I want to emphasize once more the importance of membership in UTHRO – the continuum of friendships and collegiality built during our careers at UT, and the ability to enjoy those friendships in an atmosphere of relaxed and fun events, luncheons, and educational programs. We hope that all our members sign on for another year and, actually, for many more to come, and we also hope that you all will respond in due time, after January 1, 2012.

*Henny van Dijk, UTHRO President*

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**UTHRO**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HOUSTON RETIREE ORGANIZATION  
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM  
JANUARY 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2012**

**As stated in the Bylaws, annual dues are payable on or before the first day in January. Please use this form to pay your dues and include information that will be used for UTHRO’s records.**

**Check appropriate member status.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Retiree (includes spouse) - \$10.00**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Associate - \$5.00** (Associate members include surviving spouse and employees 55 years of age or older not yet retired but anticipating regular membership upon retirement.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse’s Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address: Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell/Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Dues are payable by check only (do not send cash). Return this form with check payable to UTHRO to the Treasurer: Jean Long, 6115 Aberton Forest Drive, Houston, TX 77084**

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*Please consider making a donation to our 2012 UTHRO Excellence Fund.*

*This fund has been established by UTHRO to support a well-deserving program at one of UTHealth’s schools. To make a donation at this time, please enclose a separate check with your dues payment check; we will forward your donation for you. Please make your donation check payable to The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHSC-H) and indicate “UTHRO Brain Health Clinic” in the memo space on the check. Thank you in advance for supporting this worthwhile cause.*



# UTHRO

The University of Texas Houston Retiree Organization  
1851 Crosspoint, Suite 1.204  
Houston, TX 77054

To update your address or phone number  
please contact us at 281-550-8071

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