

**Editor: Henny van Dijk**

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**November, 2020**

## World's Alzheimer Day...



The UTHealth Consortium on Aging hosted another virtual event - the yearly Alzheimer Day Webinar. Dr Dyer introduced the topic with focus on the caregiver and how the featured speakers would give their expertise on the issue. Dyer mentioned that of her patients about 20% struggles with dementia while of course a much larger percentage is affected in taking care of them.



The first speaker, Ann Marie McDonald, discussed the warning signs of dementia and the differences between normal aging vs dementia, which is an umbrella group of symptoms in cognitive impairment of which Alzheimers is just one. When diagnosed make sure to ask the physician which type of dementia is involved. At risk are the elderly, or those with a family history or a genetic disposition. She highlighted the 10

warning signs she identified: when it disrupts daily live, or challenges planning or solving issues, completing tasks or when the patient is confused about time & place, has trouble with visual imagery or spatial relations. Another sign is when there are problems with speaking or writing words, misplacing things or can't retrace items and shows poor judgment, Finally when the patient starts to withdraw from work or social interaction it's time to intervene. She advised to get help in education, support groups or at the Alzheimer Association, Houston Chapter at 1-800-272-3900.



The keynote speaker was Vicky Fitch who in a very relaxed presentation concentrated on ways to make the journey easier, which she called dementia with grace, using social networking (FaceBook) and her guiding principles, "Be the calmest person in the room" while addressing the Unmet Needs and realizing that the soul (our

emotions) remains When patients receive info it is sometimes absolute chaos, so invite them in your calm by using G.R.A.C.E. which stands for Gather, Routine, Assess (with PICEM), Calm and Excite.

**G-** get background info to be able to establish a relationship, to connect;

**R** - your charge has a daily routine and get to know that;

**Assess** if your patient is in Pain, has an Infection, is Constipated, or has Environment or Medication(s) problems.

Learn to redirect to save your sanity by **Calm** in a person-to-person to slow down the chaos and finally



**Excite** with the Power of Yes, which means positivity anytime while No means "I dig in my heels" and chaos persists and your own sanity is challenged.

So always Yes!

Dementia with GRACE

Henny van Dijk reporting



### *In this Issue*

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## Interesting Facts about TMC (cont)

Another Medical Center street name. Ross Sterling Ave. runs in front of Memorial Hermann Hospital on the Medical Center side out to Fannin St.



Ross Shaw Sterling was born near Anahuac, Texas in 1875. He was a farmer in the early days and had a feed store in Sour Lake. He also was in the banking business and purchased a number of banks in small Texas towns. In 1903 he became an oil operator, buying two wells which he developed into the Humble Oil and Refining Company, now

Exxon Mobil. He was in the railroad business and real estate in the Houston area. He bought the Houston Dispatch newspaper and the Houston Post, combined in the beginning, and later becoming the Houston Post. In 1930 he was chairman of the Texas Highway Commission, his entry into Texas politics, and in 1931 he was inaugurated Governor of Texas. Because of some of his rulings and actions in the area of oil management that were declared unconstitutional, the courts ruled that he had exceeded his authority. He was defeated in his reelection bid by Miriam A. (Ma) Ferguson. Sterling returned to Houston but stayed out of public life. Instead, he founded another oil company and was active in the banking industry.

He built a home at Morgan's Point near La Porte in the image of the White House. This was later given to the Houston Optimist Club for a boys' home. Sterling was married and had five children. He died in 1949 and is buried in Glenwood Cemetery in Houston.



From the Glenwood Cemetery Website:

*"Their bodies are buried in peace; but their names  
liveth for evermore."  
— Apocrypha 44:14*

## Remembering Dr. Willerson

*From the President of UTHealth  
Dr Colusardo*



It is with great sadness that I share that our friend and colleague James T. Willerson, MD, —former UTHealth president, world-renowned cardiologist, and titan of Texas medicine—passed away on Wednesday, Sept. 16, 2020, from a lengthy illness.

Dr. Willerson served as president of UTHealth from 2000 to 2008 and held the Edward Randall, III Chair in Internal Medicine at McGovern Medical School at UTHealth until his retirement. Before being selected as president, Dr. Willerson led the Department of Internal Medicine, spearheading recovery efforts following Tropical Storm Allison. He was paramount in launching the New Frontiers fundraising campaign, which led to the establishment of The Brown Foundation Institute of Molecular Medicine for the Prevention of Human Diseases. He leaves a tremendous legacy that will carry on at UTHealth through our scientific discoveries and innovative programs.

Dr. Willerson was an exceptional cardiologist both in practice and research. He was a pillar of the Texas Heart Institute, where he served as President Emeritus, Director of Cardiovascular Research, and Co-Director of the Cullen Cardiovascular Research Laboratories. His discoveries focused on detecting and treating heart disease, including pioneering research on using stem cells to repair heart tissue and vessels damaged by heart attack. Due to his work, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration awarded the institute approval to launch the first human clinical trial testing this method.

His brilliance as a scientist was only equaled by his devotion to his patients. Dr. Willerson would return phone calls even when traveling internationally, and he felt each loss dearly.

His accolades—too many to count—span medical schools, scientific academies, and cardiology societies throughout the world. He served as a visiting professor and invited lecturer at more than 260 institutions, sat on editorial boards of numerous professional publications, edited or co-edited 27 textbooks, and published more than 1,000 scientific articles in major journals. On a personal note, Dr. Willerson appointed me as dean of McGovern Medical School in 2007—transforming and enriching my career in so many ways—and I will forever be thankful for the opportunity he provided and the faith that he placed in me.

As we see the evidence of his work all around us—in buildings where scientists carry on his legacy, endowments that bear his name, and patients who stand as living testaments to the difference he made—may we always reflect with gratitude on the honor of having counted Dr. Willerson as one of the many faces of UTHealth.





## His First Thanksgiving ...



Photo: Durham Morning Herald, 11-28-'68

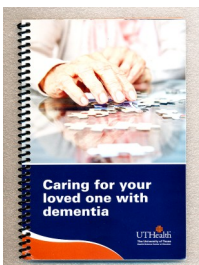
When Yoka and I immigrated to the US in April of 1968 we came to Durham, NC. Our son Stef was 5, Monique 3 and we enrolled Stef in a Kindergarten class at Ashbury Week-Day School. Of course we had never heard of Thanksgiving, but the teachers made sure those who never experienced this uniquely American Holiday were quickly indoctrinated in the custom. All the children came dressed up as Pilgrims and Indians. Indian tom-toms were made and dances performed by the children. Mrs Overby and Blaney, the nursery school teachers, popped popcorn as part of the feast.

That class had two first timers here pictured in the center and both Indians. Diana Molina of San Juan, Puerto Rico and Stef van Dijk of Utrecht, The Netherlands, standing in the circle of friends at Ashbury Week-day School, but they had no trouble at all fitting right into the spirit of things as the Ashbury group staged its own Thanksgiving scene. As you can see the newspaper was alerted and a photographer showed up to make our son's experience one for the centuries and of course one for the photo albums. We still don't celebrate Thanksgiving and for one very good reason, we both don't like turkey, so when the Executive Committee voted to cater the Holiday Luncheon by Pappas BBQ we were first in-line.

*Reported by Henny van Dijk*



## Easy Access On-Line...



This is the link to the Dementia Handbook online.

<https://online.fliphtml5.com/qsbv/oler/>

We will publish the link for our members also on our website at [www.uthro.org](http://www.uthro.org). We hope that this will fill a need for those who might need it now or in the future.

*Barbara Kelly*

## Fender Skirts and such...

Gillian Rittman is responsible for this funny look back at how words and car concepts changed in our time.

*I came across this phrase yesterday -*



"Fender Skirts", a term I haven't heard in a long time and it started me thinking about other car terms that quietly disappear from our vocabulary with hardly a notice.

Remember "**curb feelers**" or steering knobs and talking about car vernacular



what about **Continental kits**, the rear bumper extenders and spare tire covers that were supposed to make any car look as cool as the Lincoln Continental.



When did we quit using the term "**Emergency Break**"? It became "parking break" such a mundane anti-dramatic term.



I'm sad too that almost all old folks are gone who would call the accelerator the "**foot feed**". Many today do not even know what a "clutch" is or that the dimmer switch was located on the floor to your left. I remember one friend who was a proud Mustang owner complaining about that pre-historic placement while everybody in Europe used the "high beam" switch on the steering wheel so popular on the AutoBahn.



Remember the vent windows? I had a Mercury Monterey that featured a "breeze" window angled inward behind the back seat.

Didn't you as a child ever wait for your Daddy to come home so you could ride the "**running board**" up to the house?



# UTHRO

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*To update your address or phone number  
please contact us at 281-655-1983*

## And Now For Something Completely Different...

***Reflections*** by Fredi Bleeker Franks ...

It's October! Who had "pandemic" on their bingo card for 2020? Certainly not me! Life has changed so much in the last eight months or so – when I make my occasional trips to the grocery store and see all of the people in masks and the employees behind their plexiglass shields, when I count the number of months since I've hugged my children and (adorable) grandchildren, when I celebrate the Jewish High Holidays via computer - I wonder if things will ever be "right" again. But then – but then I spent some time at Lake Livingston, sitting outside at night, under the starry sky and the harvest moon. I watched little children fishing off the dock, giggling and laughing. And I just let all the sadness and depression go – if only for a couple of days. And I breathe, just taking in all of the beauty and wonder and miracles around me. Those few minutes of peace are all I need to keep going and to restore my faith that one day, things will be "right" again – whatever that looks like. What restores you...?



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