



# Scoop



Friday, May 22, 1998

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - HOUSTON MEDICAL SCHOOL

## EVENTS TO KNOW:

- **Memorial Day Observed - UT-Houston Holiday**, Mon., May 25.
- **31st Annual Hermann Ophthalmology Alumni Conference**, Fri., Sat., May 29-30, 3.001.
- **Graduation: Awards Ceremony**, Sat., June 6, 11:30 a.m., TMC Conf. Center. **Commencement**, Sun., June 7, 4 p.m. at George R. Brown Convention Center.
- **Take Your Child to Work Day**, Wed., June 17, for registration, information, and to volunteer, call **Araceli Alvarez**, 500-3868.

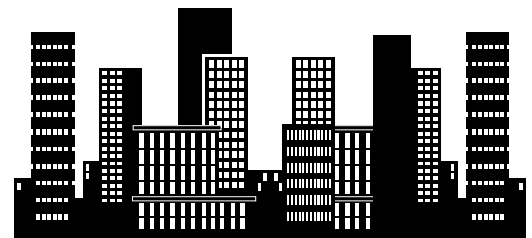
## CAUTIOUS CONCERN OVER HOUSTON'S HAZY SKIES

"Scoot inside if you deem it necessary. Caution and self-monitoring have been the watchwords with this issue," said **Dr. Andrij Holian**, Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine, this week. "Scare tactics are unwarranted and certainly those in normal health do not need to significantly alter their lifestyle," he added. Meanwhile a spokesman for the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission has announced that the Houston area is still on alert through Memorial Day. Phone lines have been set up to take callers' questions or concerns at 1-800-687-4040. No one who lives in Houston is unaware of the quality of air issue currently. From softball and baseball managers to Governor **George Bush**, **President Clinton**, meteorologists, and the Texas National Guard - all have been involved in mobilization strategy. "Shall we go down to Mexico and fight the fires?," some ask. "Only if we have the prior approval of the Mexican government," say others. Some



Good Health

Houston health officials meanwhile have started to express concern over the public's exposure to high levels of very fine airborne particulate matter. In addition, Houston's normally very intense sunlight, high impact traffic, and low winds gave it the highest ozone level rating in the country last summer. Ozone is an unrelated issue, but its presence compounds the fine particulate matter problem. The federal health standard allows a maximum average of 65 micrograms per cubic meter of very fine (sub-2.5 micrometer) particles. Houston's air has been exceeding and approaching that level consistently this past week. Experts are studying whether there has been any significant increase in either respiratory or asthma cases at The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, Texas Children's Hospital or Hermann Hospital's emergency room. A cautious public staying indoors may have kept cases from climbing. Meanwhile, anxious parents have swamped the phones at Hermann Hospital's children's asthma center, trying to get more information. Says **Dr. Gailen Marshall**, Division Director, Allergy and Clinical Immunology, who addressed this issue on Channel 13 on May 14, "The particulate pollution from Latin American fires is largely a temporary one. It mostly concerns those with underlying respiratory or cardiac diseases and those whose health problems center around hot muggy conditions. There is need for concern and if indicated, caution. Panic, however, is not warranted." Marshall also indicated that there is no good evidence that there will be any long-term consequence to the population at large unless conditions last much longer. Marshall, Holian, and **Dr. Raymond Campion**, President of the Mickey Leland National Urban Air Toxics Research Center (NUATRC), are collaborating in evaluating what risks to the public's health are posed presently. At this time there is a fairly broad-based effort with the Medical School, other scientists in the Medical Center, NUATRC, and experts recruited from around the country - to expediently, but carefully, examine the health effects of the current air pollution problem.



## Breaking News - Mr. David R. Page,

Chief Operating Officer of the Memorial Hermann Healthcare System has recently resigned to become President and CEO of Fairview Health Services in Minneapolis, effective



Hot News

around July 1. Page will oversee a large, private, not-for-profit system that includes seven hospitals, 96 clinics, 43 senior residencies, 24 nursing homes and 20 retail pharmacies. (*Houston Chronicle*, 5/19/98)

June 3

## NOMINATIONS SOUGHT

The William T. Grant Foundation is soliciting nominations for awards in the area of research on children, adolescents and youth. The Foundation is interested in junior investigators from diverse disciplines underrepresented in child and adolescent research, who can use the award to bring research light to bear on child and mental health. Awards are made to the applicant's institution to provide support for up to \$50,000 per year for five years. The award's deadline is July 1. Candidates interested should notify the Office of Research Services at 500-3075 by June 3, 1998.

## FACULTY AFFAIRS MOVING

The Medical School Office of Faculty Affairs has moved from G.104 MSB to 7.130 MSB (blue elevator hallway). Phone number, 500-5104, and e-mail addresses will remain the same.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS-HOUSTON  
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER



Medical School

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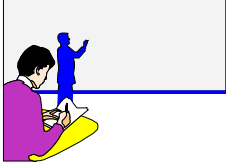


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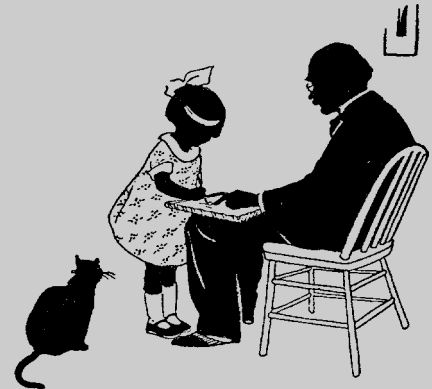
**2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Internal Medicine 1998: Update and Board Review**

About 100 registrants are expected to attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Internal Medicine 1998: Update and Board Review at the Marriott Medical Center Hotel, July 30-August 3. Program Directors are **Drs. Frank Arnett and James Willerson**. “We were well received last year by the participants, in terms of their feedback. The five-day course is taxing and intense, with specialists covering the whole spectrum of internal medicine. It’s primarily a board review course which will help people pass the review board,” commented Arnett. A continuing medical education activity, the event is directed towards internists, primary care physicians, senior residents, sub-specialty fellows, junior faculty and other physicians board-eligible in internal medicine. At the conclusion of the course, the participant should be able to: identify and diagnose most major adult diseases; manage most major adult disease; describe the pathophysiology of human diseases; discriminately use laboratory and imaging testing; and successfully attain certification or recertification in internal medicine. Tuition includes handouts, continental breakfast and lunch. Advance registration is required and must be received on or before July 15, 1998. A block of guest rooms has been reserved at the Houston Marriott Medical Center Hotel, 6580 Fannin. Reservations should be arranged directly with the hotel by calling 796-0080. To ensure a room, make reservations by July 15, 1998 and indicate that you are a registrant for the “Internal Medicine 1998: Update and Board Review.” For further information contact **Beverly Osterloh**, Conference Coordinator, 500-5128.

**Ellison Medical Foundation Senior Scholar Award - On Aging**

Support for biomedical research on aging, including basic biology, epidemiology, and clinical investigation, in the form of a senior scholar award, has been announced by the Ellison Medical Foundation. Award recipients are encouraged to attend the Ellison Medical Foundation Annual Colloquium on Aging head each summer at the Marine Biological Laboratories at Woods Hole, MA. Letters of intent to submit an application will be screened by the Ellison Medical Foundation Scientific Advisory Board in July. The Scientific Advisory Board will then invite a subset of these potential applicants to submit a complete application. Selection will be based upon criteria stated in the announcement. The Ellison Medical Foundation Senior Scholar Program is designed to support established investigators to conduct research in the basic biological and clinical sciences relevant to understanding aging processes and age-related diseases and disabilities. The award is intended to provide significant support to established investigators in order to allow the development of new, creative research programs by investigators who may not currently be conducting aging research or who may wish to develop new research programs in aging. The Foundation particularly wishes to stimulate new research, which as rigorous scientific foundations, but which may not be currently funded adequately, because of its perceived novelty, its high risk, or because it is from an area where traditional research interests absorb most funding. Funds are available for up to four years but applications for pilot projects and feasibility tests in new areas will be given expedited consideration. Areas of interest include, but are not limited to:

- Structural biology
- Molecular genetics
- Studies with model systems ranging from lower eukaryotes to humans
- Enquiries testing the relevance of simpler models to human aging
- Genetic epidemiology of aging; candidate longevity genes
- Aging in the immune system
- Host defense molecules in aging systems
- Mechanisms of free radical induced cell aging
- Mechanisms of aging in various differentiated cell populations
- Gene/environment and gene/gene interactions
- Integrative physiology
- New approaches to age-modulated disease mechanisms: Alzheimer’s diseases and others



The first round of Ellison Medical Foundation Senior Scholar Awards will be issued in late 1998 or early 1999. Awards are \$150,000 per year for up to four years. Funding for years two, three and four is contingent upon submission of an acceptable progress report. Applicants are expected to furnish evidence of substantial prior scientific creativity and productivity not necessarily targeted to aging. For additional information, contact **Dr. Richard Sprott**, Executive Director, at <rsprott@concentric.net> or 301-299-6805.

**About the UT-Houston Center on Aging**

**Dr. Sharon Ostwald** is Director of the UT-Houston Center on Aging, whose focus is to provide “leadership to improve the quality of life for an aging society in the Twenty-First Century.” The Center’s goals include developing, coordinating, and implementing interdisciplinary aging-related activities on the local, state, and national level. The Center pursues research that aims at improving the well-being of older adults and their caregivers. Examples include: social support among multi-ethnic elders; use of preventive services among older adults; reduction of burden and depression among caregivers to older adults; and maintenance of functional abilities among frail elders. For more information on the Center, call 500-3788. A *Festival for Seniors* will be held on Wednesday, Wed., May 27, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Independent Heights Park, 603 East 35th Street. For information call **Marilyn Vargiu**, Interfaith Ministries, 520-4641.