



# Scoop

Oct. 29, 2004

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MEDICAL SCHOOL AT HOUSTON

## Events to Know

### October

**29-30 School of Nursing and Student Community Center Open House**, 6901 Bertner, noon - 6 p.m., Oct. 29; 9 a.m. - noon, Oct. 30. All UT personnel welcome. For information go to <<http://www.uthouston.edu/sonsc/openhouse.htm>>.

**30 Women's Health in the 21st Century**, Strategies for meeting the needs of perimenopausal and menopausal women, 7:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m., Westin Galleria Hotel. Call 713-500-5127.

### November

**1 Megan Cole**, 1st in a series of 6 talks on becoming an empathetic physician, noon, MSB 1.006.

**12-13 Women's Mental Health Conference**, all day, TMC Marriott Hotel. Sponsored by Mental Health Association of Greater Houston. Call 713-523-8963.

**15 Dean's Special Lecture, Dame Julia Polak, M.D.**, "Stem Cells and Regenerative Medicine," 4 p.m., MSB 3.001.

## UTMost Interest

**Drs. Bela Patel and Thomas R. Lux** of the UT-Houston chapter, Delta of Texas, of Alpha Omega Alpha, have been elected as alumni of UT-Houston to Alpha Omega Alpha... **Clair Lakkis, Monica M. Manga, and George van Buren** have been elected as housestaff to Alpha Omega Alpha.

## SCULPTURE DONATION ON DISPLAY



Pictured at left, **Dean Stanley Schultz** and **Dr. Eugene Brams**, with his work, "Shelter of Thy

Wings," the first such donation to the School since Allison, now on display in the Medical School's Fannin-side lobby.

## FANT BACKS ANTIDEPRESSANT BLACK BOX WARNING

On Oct. 15, the Food and Drug Administration ordered all antidepressants to carry a "black box" warning — the strongest recommendation that can be made by the government. A black box is a warning surrounded by a black border that is part of a drug's warning label. The list of antidepressants includes: Prozac, Celexa, and Zoloft. For a more complete list, go to <<http://www.chron.com/cs/CDA/ssistory.mpl/health/2848943>>.



**Dr. Michael Fant**

**Michael Fant, M.D., Ph.D.**, an associate professor in the Department of Pediatrics since 1993, is part of the Pediatric Advisory Committee to the FDA that spent two days in September pouring over data and listening to over 60 parents and caregivers give testimony about their experiences with antidepressant effects. "Prozac appeared to have a better safety profile," said Fant. However, based on the data, none of the drugs could be excluded from the potential risk of suicide, even Prozac, he added. "There clearly seems to be a small portion of kids and teens who, especially early in therapy, or when doses get increased, are at increased risk for behaviors or thinking indicating the risk for suicide," Fant said.

*(Continued on back)*

## PET AND MRI OPTIONS ARE READILY AVAILABLE

The month of October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. One of our faculty is a cancer-finding and tumor detective, **Dr. Bruce Barron**, professor, Department of Radiology, and chief, Division of Nuclear Medicine. Currently cardiac PET imaging is available at Memorial Hermann Hospital. This center is directed by **Dr. K. Lance Gould**.

Barron notes that while a new PET and MRI center will be available at Memorial Hermann in early Spring 2005, other centers in the Houston area supporting Breast Cancer Awareness Month include: Greater Houston Imaging, 6565 South Loop West, Suite 100, Bellaire, 713-668-5300 or <[cmeek@med\\_im.com](mailto:cmeek@med_im.com)>; E-Plus PET Imaging Houston-West, at 9525 Katy Freeway, Suite 102, Houston, 713-973-2115; and, The PET Scan Center or NW Cancer Center, at 17323 Red Oak Drive, Houston, 281-440-5006, ext. 1241 or 1262 or <[thepetscancenter@netscape.net](mailto:thepetscancenter@netscape.net)>.



**Dr. Bruce Barron**

For more information, contact Barron or **Dr. Usha Joseph** at 713-500-6843.

## ANNUAL NEUROSCIENCE POSTER SESSION SET FOR DEC. 4

Want to find out the latest in neuroscience research at the Medical School? Your chance to do so is coming up at an informative poster session from 10 a.m.-noon, Sat., **Dec. 4**, in the Leather Lounge. The event includes drawings and awards for the best poster presentations made by a graduate student and postdoctoral fellow. A light brunch will be served. Attendance is open to anyone interested in neuroscience research at UT-Houston. For more information, contact **Laura Ross** at 713-500-5538.



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[http://www.med.uth.tmc.edu/community\\_affairs/escoop.htm](http://www.med.uth.tmc.edu/community_affairs/escoop.htm)

Produced weekly by the Office of Community Affairs and Public Education



## DOCTORS ORCHESTRA ROLLS OUT “FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE” Nov. 13

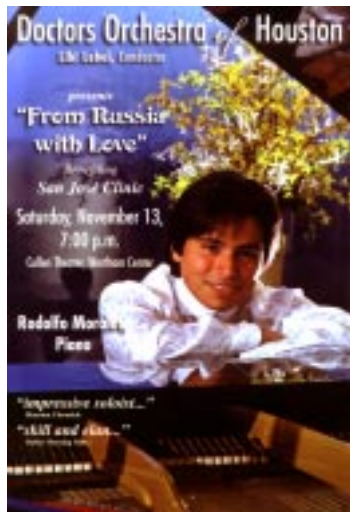
Come out for an evening musical serenade!

Music director Libi Lebel is hosting “From Russia with Love,” benefiting the San Jose Clinic, 7 p.m., Sat., **Nov. 13**, Cullen Theater, Wortham Center.

Rodolfo Morales is the featured pianist.

The program will cover Rubenstein’s “Wedding March,” Tchaikovsky’s “Piano Concerto No. 1,” and Rimsky-Korsakov’s “Scheherazade.”

For ticket information, go online to <<http://www.doctorsorchestrahouston.org>>.



## PETTY CASH WINDOW NEWS

Beginning Tues., **Nov. 2**, the Medical School petty cash window, MSB G.150, will be open on Tuesdays from 9 a.m.-11 a.m. and on Wednesdays from 12:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m. The maximum allowable reimbursement is \$250 per day per employee. Call 713-500-5026 for questions, or e-mail <[Minerva.Montano@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:Minerva.Montano@uth.tmc.edu)>.

## FANT BACKS ANTIDEPRESSANT LABEL WARNING, CONTINUED

Most of these prescriptions are written by healthcare providers adequately trained to manage depression in children and monitor the drugs’ effects, relayed the scientist. Unfortunately, there are far too many instances where caregivers, not equipped to using these medications appropriately, are using them in situations where there is no evidence of efficacy and the patients are not monitored appropriately. For example, said Fant, “We heard testimony from a father whose daughter was prescribed a selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI) because she couldn’t sleep, something that was totally inappropriate for her condition.” The message that needs to get out, noted Fant, is that these drugs are not necessarily benign, especially for children.

The health care system is not structured so that every child has easy access to a psychiatrist, Fant believes. “Not every adult has easy access either. The state of access to mental health care in this country is more wanting than health care in general. And that’s a problem.”

According to Fant, the best possible treatment of depression in children and teens appears to be a combination of cognitive behavioral therapy and medication — when appropriate. “We aimed, by our recommendations, to empower the physician, the child or teen, and their families with good information — so that all parties can be part of the decision-making effort to manage both the disease and therapeutic interventions.”

- C. O’Brien

## IF YOU’RE A PERSON WITH A TREMOR, YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR A DIAGNOSTIC STUDY

Nuclear medicine and neurology doctors at the Medical School are seeking volunteers aged 18-80 who are experiencing tremors, but have not visited a neurologist for the condition.

Qualified patients will visit doctors three times over the course of the research. The first visit will be an assessment to determine the overall health of the patients and their suitability for the study. During the second visit, individuals will undergo a brain scan with the investigational diagnostic agent and repeat the medical evaluation. The last visit will be a safety and health evaluation.

The study hopes to show that this diagnostic agent is able to highlight areas of the brain that are involved with Parkinson’s Disease, a disorder that causes a progressive loss of nerve cell function in the part of the brain that controls muscle movement.

The researchers hope to use the results of the study to eventually develop the first diagnostic test for Parkinson’s Disease, which currently has no cure and few treatment options.

Participants who successfully complete the study will receive free blood work, laboratory testing, and a medical evaluation from a movement disorders specialist. Some financial compensation is also available. Call 713-704-6861 for more information.

- S. Rasp

## COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH & LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM SEEKS APPLICANTS

The Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholars® Program is designed to augment clinical training by providing new skills and perspectives necessary to achieve 21st century leadership positions both within and outside the walls of academia. The program stresses training in the quantitative and qualitative sciences underlying health services research essential to improving health and medical care systems. The program’s newest information will also emphasize community-based research and leadership training.

To be eligible, physicians may be trained in any of the medical/surgical specialties; in addition, they must:

- Be committed to a career consistent with the program’s purposes and priorities.
- Be highly regarded by those responsible for their clinical training.
- Plan to complete the clinical requirements of their residency/fellowship training by the date of entry into the program (except for surgeons).

The program offers graduate-level study and research as part of a university-based post residency training program. Four participating institutions will be recruiting Scholars, including: University of California, Los Angeles; the University of Michigan; the University of Pennsylvania; and Yale University. Up to 28 Scholars will be selected in 2005 for appointments beginning in July, 2006.

The application deadline for 2006 is **February 15, 2005**. For complete information on this grant opportunity, eligibility requirements and the application process go to <<http://www.rwjf.org/cfp/clinicalscholars>>. Or, contact Sally Schroeder, Deputy Director at the National Program Office at Stanford University School of Medicine by calling 650- 566-2337 or by e-mail at: <[rwjcsadmin@stanford.edu](mailto:rwjcsadmin@stanford.edu)>.