

MINNESOTA

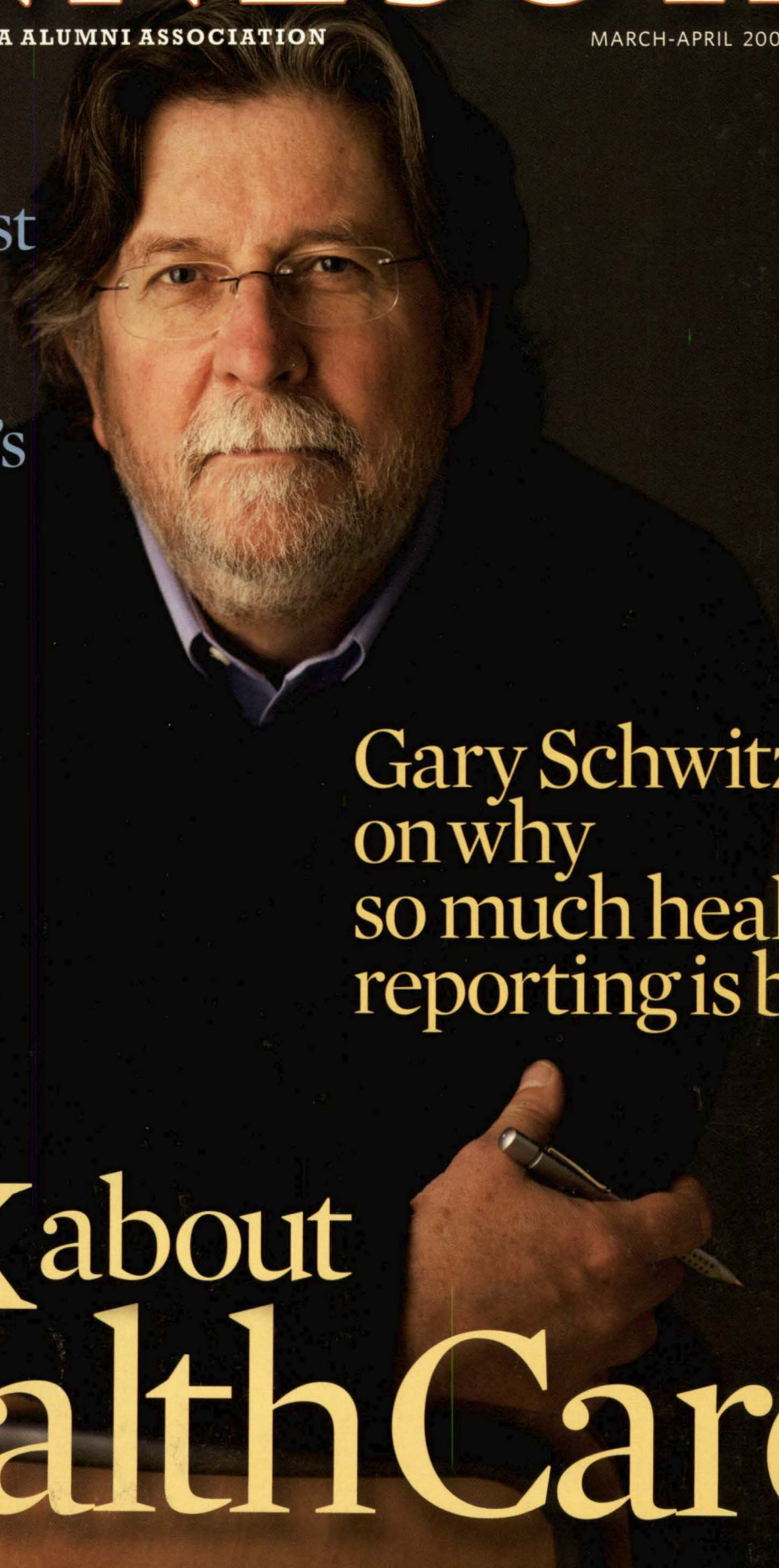
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10th Annual
Fiction Contest
Winner

Dwight
Wangensteen's
Gut Instincts

Honoring
All Veterans
at the New
Stadium

A portrait of Gary Schwitzer, a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a dark sweater over a light blue collared shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. His right hand is visible on the left side of the frame, pointing towards the text. His left hand is visible on the right side, holding a pen.

Gary Schwitzer
on why
so much health
reporting is bad

Sick about
Health Care

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

FAIRVIEW



page 49

Columns and Departments

- 4 **Editor's Note**
- 6 **Letters**
- 8 **About Campus**
The U Press's new chapter, more *Minnesota Daily* online, and who were the hobbits?
- 10 **Discoveries**
Long live kidney donors, innovative companies, and weighing in on television
- 14 **U News**
The U copes with the budget crisis
- 16 **First Person**
"Pai's Walking Lessons," an essay by Jim Martin
- 38 **Sports Notebook**
Gopher sports news and notes
- 40 **Stadium Update**
Honoring veterans at the new TCF Bank Stadium
- 42 **Arts & Events**
Limón Dance Company takes the Northrop stage
- 44 **Off the Shelf**
Bookmarks
- 46 **Alumni Profile**
Joan Velasquez, co-founder of Mano a Mano

Association Pages

- 49 **Alumni Association Angle**
- 51 **National President's Column**
- 56 **Chief Executive Officer's Column**

Features

- 18 **Sick about Health Care**
Gary Schwitzer, associate professor of journalism at the University of Minnesota, is working to bring accuracy and integrity to health reporting.
BY PAMELA HILL NETTLETON
- 24 **Aurie's Last Dance**
The winning entry in *Minnesota* magazine's 10th annual fiction contest.
BY LINDA NORLANDER

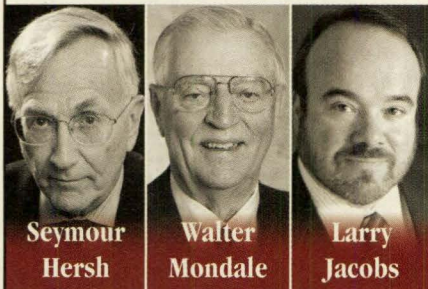


- 30 **Gut Instincts**
Through instruction and intuition, legendary surgeon Owen Wangenstein saved countless lives around the world and pioneered modern heart surgery. He made, and preserved, medical history.
BY TIM BRADY
- 36 **To Minnesota with Love**
Imports from Germany, Israel, and other countries are helping to put the Gopher men's tennis team back on the map.
BY ADAM WAHLBERG.

Cover photograph by Mark Luinenburg

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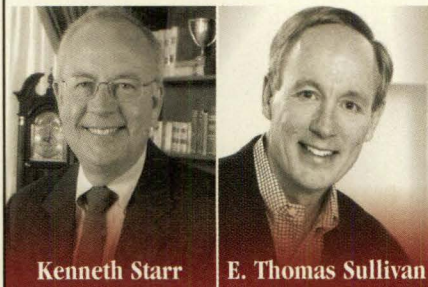


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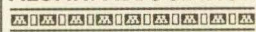
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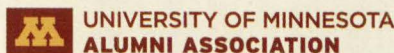
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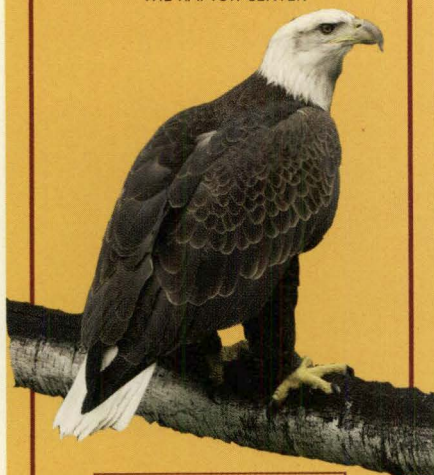
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Editor's Note

Healthy Skepticism

“Which headline tells the story?” wrote Gary Schwitzer, an associate professor of journalism at the University of Minnesota, on his health news blog. What followed were headlines from two newspapers, each covering the same Johns Hopkins study. “Hopkins study supports use of CT scan of heart,” cheered the *Baltimore Sun* headline, which contrasted starkly with the *Wall Street Journal* headline: “Heart scans sometimes fail to identify blockages, study finds.”



Shelly Fling

That two major newspapers characterized the same heart scan study in such dramatically different ways illustrates how confusing health news can be—and what health information consumers face when they try to interpret it. Schwitzer, featured in our cover story this issue (page 18), rarely misses a day blogging about the health information—much of it misleading or incomplete—that bombards American consumers every day. And he has no shortage of fodder.

In one recent entry, he posted an ad from a local heart clinic offering a \$50 coupon for a coronary test that, in fact, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends against. “Which should you believe?” Schwitzer wrote about the juxtaposed messages. “Beware of promotions of ‘simple 5 minute’ tests,” he warned. “[It’s] much more complicated than the enticing ads admit.”

In another post, Schwitzer uploaded a CBS video of a lunchtime liposuction procedure on a young, healthy, and—according to the CBS host—“gorgeous” woman who wanted to rid herself of a slight fat pouch on her belly. The story lacked independent sources, medical evidence, and an adequate discussion of cost. Wrote Schwitzer: “This was free advertising: 5 minutes’ worth!”

In other entries, he’s taken various media to task for health news hype, such as the *New York Times* for its headline announcing that researchers were close to finding a cure for the common cold and the Associated Press for running a story stating that a patient who underwent a bone marrow transplant to treat leukemia appeared to be cured of AIDS. “Does journalism ever learn about ‘cures’? About verification? About replication of results?” Schwitzer wrote. “About the impact of such stories on sick people?”

Schwitzer’s four-and-a-half-year-old blog (<http://blog.lib.umn.edu/schwitz/healthnews>) is steadily climbing in its ranking by Wikio.com, a news search engine, as one of the most widely referenced health blogs. And of the more than 7,200 blogs hosted by the University, his ranks as the sixth most active. His blog is read not just by health journalists, whom he targets and whose reporting he critiques, but by a growing general audience. We’re all health information consumers all the time, not just when we’re selecting a health care plan. We need to be skeptical of every health story or ad we encounter. Indeed, health care consumers would be well-served by judging health news according to the 10 criteria Schwitzer uses to rate stories.

A credible health story: adequately discusses costs, quantifies benefits, adequately explains and quantifies potential harms, compares the new idea with existing alternatives, seeks out independent sources and discloses potential conflicts of interest, avoids disease-mongering, reviews the study methodology or the quality of the evidence, establishes the true novelty of the idea, establishes the availability of the product or procedure, and appears not to rely solely or largely on a news release.

The goal is accurate health information for consumers so they may make informed health decisions. Until then, in the words Schwitzer concluded an entry shortly after he launched his blog in 2004: *Caveat emptor*. ■

Shelly Fling may be reached at fling003@umn.edu.



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Letters

THANKS FOR SALUTING VETERANS

I intended to write the magazine editors a note five months ago when, for your cover, you interviewed University of Minnesota students who are in the armed forces. But I did not get around to it. But today I received the alumni magazine and opened it up and saw a photo of more students in fatigues who are serving our nation. And I did not want to fail to write again.

Thank you for focusing your attention on these men and women. The article I

remember from last fall ["From Combat to Campus," September-October 2008] seemed to me to tell a story we don't often hear, about the abrupt changes these young people face. One day they are in combat or helping the wounded, and a week later they are surrounded by neighbors oblivious to the war and who are more concerned about their creature comforts.

In the snapshot ["Honoring Student Veterans," January-February], the students were in their camouflage and were smiling

and laughing, and they looked like they fit in at the University. War veterans were common among the student body when I trod the campus grounds, but I know they are a rarity now. Thank you for reminding us of their service, and I hope to see more of their faces in your fine magazine.

Evelyn Weston (B.A. '50)
Minneapolis

ADDRESS MS

I enjoyed reading about Susan Hagstrum, married to University President Bob Bruininks, in your recent issue ["A Tough Act to Follow," January-February] and had no idea the U had such a high-caliber volunteer doing so many good things. My interest was piqued most, however, by her interest in creating a center to address multiple sclerosis (MS). My family is familiar with this devastating disease; the extended side of my family has three members who have been diagnosed with MS. We've often wondered why more resources have not been poured into finding a cure for this devastating disease, and we hope that the U will pick up the mantle. We are cheering Susan Hagstrum on.

Pat Tetner (B.A. '72)
Minneapolis

IS THE RESEARCH RELEVANT?

In your January-February issue, you covered two studies ["Discoveries"] that made me scratch my head. One told of a study of youth's social networks that found that speaking Spanish is not significantly associated with substance abuse. My question: Why would anyone think language and substance abuse are connected? I see that this study debunks previous studies connecting Spanish with substance abuse. But aren't we beyond such profiling?

Another study claimed that infants can tell the difference between happy and sad music based on whether they looked at a face for three to four seconds. My question: And so what does this tell us that we didn't already know about babies and happy music? The researchers could have simply asked new parents to find that out.

I wish you or the researchers would explain why these kinds of studies are so important and should be continued.

Jay Murphy (B.S. '91)
Eden Prairie, Minnesota

To submit a letter, go to www.alumni.umn.edu/opinion or write to *Letter to the Editor*, Minnesota Magazine, McNamara Alumni Center, 200 Oak St. SE, Suite 200, Minneapolis, MN 55455. Guidelines are at the Web address above.

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Who Were the Hobbits?

Two million years ago, one branch in the human family tree led to the emergence of *Homo sapiens*. On the other branch, a diminutive human relative evolved. These tiny beings lived on a secluded tropical island as recently as 12,000 years ago, and for tens of thousands of years might even have shared their island with modern humans, ducking in the shadows and hiding in caves—like legendary hobbits.

That is the scenario upheld by Kieran McNulty, assistant professor of anthropology at the University of Minnesota. His research helps prove that the three-foot-tall inhabitants of Flores Island in Indonesia were a different species in human evolution and had ancestors that far predate the arrival of modern humans 195,000 years ago. His study (with co-author Karen Baab, a researcher at Stony Brook University in New York) appeared in the online edition of the *Journal of Human Evolution* late last year.

McNulty's work helps solve a mystery that began with the 2003 discovery of several partial skeletons and most of one skull in Liang Bua cave on Flores, part of the archipelago stretching east from Java. The skull, with a brain case the size of a modern chimpanzee's, belonged to an approximately 30-year-old female. The skull dates to 18,000 years ago, though other skeletal remains found in the cave are 12,000 to 95,000 years old. Along with the bones were stone tools, charcoal, and the remains of a butchered dwarf elephant. The small hominin became known as *Homo floresiensis* or the "hobbit."

The small stature of the species was surprising but not confounding to anthropologists. Because of the "island rule," animal species on islands often become dwarfed or gigantic as they evolve to adapt to the food supply and predators. The Komodo dragon is an example of island giantism. "We've seen this again and again on islands," McNulty says. "The exciting thing was we had never seen it with humans."

Controversy has surrounded the Flores skull since its discovery. Some scientists have insisted it belonged to a modern human afflicted by disease, such as microcephaly, causing an abnormally small skull. Others contended that it represented a previously unknown human species. "The idea was out there that these derive from *Homo erectus*. They just got small," McNulty says. "We figured this is something we can test."



Kieran McNulty

Working with a reproduction of the Flores skull, McNulty and Baab used 3D shape analysis to map the details of the skull's cranium and facial features. The modeling method can distinguish closely related species and ascertain how a species would evolve to become larger or smaller. They scaled skulls from apes, modern humans, and prehistoric humans down to the size of the Flores skull, and an ancestor from 2 million years ago was a close match. "The [Flores] cranium is most similar to *Homo erectus* or something just a little more primitive," McNulty says. "It was a really good fit." According to his findings, the Flores "hobbit" represents a new species, altering our understanding of human evolution.

"The fact that [*Homo floresiensis*] is only 12,000 years old when things that looked like that were supposed to have died off millions of years ago—that's why we're having this debate," McNulty explains.

—Greg Breining

Less but More *Daily*

In January, the *Minnesota Daily* discontinued printing its Friday edition, a move that is expected to save about \$10,000 per month in printing costs. For decades, the independent student newspaper has published five days a week, but plummeting ad revenue demanded action, according to co-publisher and editor-in-chief Vadim Lavrusik. But Lavrusik says that one fewer print edition per week means more news for the campus community, not less. That's because the *Daily* will shift its Friday edition to the Web and will also beef up its online weekend coverage, thus becoming a seven-days-a-week news source. "The *Daily* is looking to become more daily, despite the perilous economic times," Lavrusik wrote in a column announcing the change. College newspapers have been battered by the same economic woes as the larger newspaper industry; the *Minnesota Daily* is the third student newspaper in the country to eliminate a portion of its print circulation and shift to online publication within the past year. See the *Daily* at www.mndaily.com.



A New Chapter for Out-of-Print Books

The University of Minnesota Press, an independent auxiliary of the University, is returning to print nearly every book it has published since its founding in 1925. The endeavor is made possible through an ambitious partnership with Google Books, BookSurge (an Amazon.com company), and the Minneapolis-based digital book printing and publishing company BookMobile. The partnership, dubbed Minnesota Archive Editions, uses digital printing technology to make out-of-print books available again to scholars, students, researchers, general readers, libraries, and bookstores. "The seed of the idea came when we heard from Google that they were getting a high number of hits on our out-of-print books," says press director Douglas Armato. Books are published unaltered from the original University of Minnesota Press editions in limited quantities according to customer demand. A list of Minnesota Archive Editions titles is available at www.upress.umn.edu



OVERHEARD ON CAMPUS

"You pay your dollar, you have the fun of imagining what it would be like to win until the drawing and then your dollar disappears without a trace. To all intents and purposes that captures [the Powerball experience]."

—Doug Arnold, director of the University of Minnesota's Institute for Mathematics and Its Applications, in an article in *The Ledger* of Lakeland, Florida.

"Individual care is important and could make a difference in [an animal's] health and productivity. But I would not necessarily say that just giving a cow a name would be a foolproof indicator of better care."

—Marcia Endres, associate professor of dairy science, about research in England asserting that dairy farmers who address their cows by name reported higher milk yields than farmers whose cows remained nameless.

WEB HIT

Extending a Hand

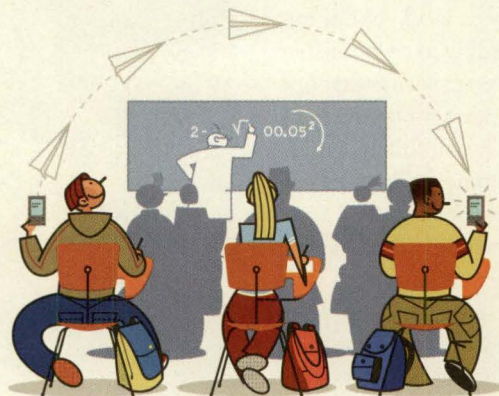
The University of Minnesota Extension Service is an old hand when it comes to helping families navigate economic crises. In its 100-year history, Extension programs and staff, in collaboration with community partners, have seen families through a Great Depression, recessions, and farm crises. About 18 months ago, Extension staff saw an increase in the number of page views began to increase for the Family Management Program's Web publication "Adjusting to Suddenly Reduced Income." Extension has responded by ramping up its Web offerings to people searching for a financial lifeline. Its new online resource, *Families in Tough Times*, offers strategies to help cope with job loss, foreclosure, and other economic stress. Trish Olson, Family Management Program leader, says that one advantage to the Web is that it offers struggling families some privacy. "People sometimes have lots of shame about their financial circumstances. It's not always palatable for them to go to a class called 'Lost Your Job?'" Visit www.extension.umn.edu. Many Extension resources are also available in print; call 612-626-3971.



Charting School Performance

Charter schools exacerbate rather than alleviate educational problems faced by low-income students and students of color in the Twin Cities area, according to a report by the University of Minnesota Law School's Institute on Race and Poverty. The study found that charter school students scored nearly 9 and 10 percentage points lower, respectively, in reading and math than students who attended comparable traditional public schools. While some charter schools performed well on standardized tests, researchers concluded that most such schools offer low-income parents and parents of color a choice between low-performing public schools and charter schools that perform even worse.

The study also found that charter schools that offer cultural specific or ethnocentric programs have deepened segregation within traditional public schools. In one example, a public school district established a Hmong-focused program within an existing elementary school to compete with a Hmong-



focused charter school. As the program within the traditional school grew, it had to move from the elementary school, which served primarily African American students, to a new, larger building in another location. What had started as a "school within a school" program that separated Hmong students from African American students eventually led to the creation of two separate school facilities that each primarily serves a specific racial group.

Charter schools are independent, tuition-free public schools that tailor their programs to the specific needs of the communities they serve. They tend to specialize in serving specific groups based on interest, ethnicity, risk factors, or other characteristics. The charter movement began in the 1990s as an attempt to provide choice and innovation in public education. The first charter school in the country opened in St. Paul in 1992. The Twin Cities area has approximately 100 charter schools serving nearly 28,000 students.

Sex, Evolution, and the Chippy Male

Aggression may be linked to reproduction and the desire for status, according to new research co-authored by a professor in the Carlson School of Management. The research examines the role of evolution in determining whether and under what circumstances men are likely to respond aggressively to perceived slights. It found that men who have sexual activity or status on their minds (for example, are thinking about a job promotion) are likely to have a hostile response to a trivial insult, particularly when there are other men around to watch the situation. Researchers say this suggests that aggression isn't just about self-defense but is also used as a display to gain status and become more attractive to the opposite sex.

Long Live Kidney Donors

People who donate a kidney are just as healthy and live just as long as non-donors, according to research out of the University of Minnesota Medical School. Researchers examined the long-term outcomes of 3,700 people who donated a kidney at the University dating back to 1963 and concluded that a donor's risk for developing kidney failure, high blood pressure, diabetes, and cancer is very similar to someone their age, gender, and ethnicity who is not a donor.



Waistful Television

The more television teenagers watch, the worse their diets are as young adults, according to new research at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. The study showed that individuals who reported watching five or more hours of TV per day had a lower intake of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and calcium-rich foods and higher intakes of snacks, fried foods, fast food, sugary drinks, and trans fats five years later than peers who watched less. Researchers said the results could be explained in part by food advertising on television and "mindless" eating while viewing.

A Fuel-Hardy Debate



New research co-authored at the University of Minnesota Institute on the Environment and Department of Applied Economics finds that cellulosic ethanol has fewer negative impacts on human health than either gasoline or corn ethanol because it emits smaller amounts of fine particulate matter. Cellulosic ethanol is a biofuel produced from wood, grasses, or the nonedible parts of plants. The study found that total environmental and health costs of gasoline are about 71 cents per gallon, while an equivalent amount of corn ethanol fuel costs from 72 cents to about \$1.45, depending on the technology used to produce it. Cellulosic ethanol costs from 19 cents to 32 cents, depending on the technology and type of cellulosic materials used. Researchers said the work highlights the need to expand the biofuels debate beyond its current focus on climate change to include a wider range of effects, such as impact on air quality. The study is the first to estimate the economic costs to human health and well-being from gasoline, corn-based ethanol, and cellulosic ethanol.

Bloody Good News

A pilot study at the University of Minnesota Medical School has found that oxygen levels in banked blood increased during an eight-week period, suggesting that donated blood might have a longer shelf life than the current six-week standard. Further research is needed, but the finding opens the door to the possibility that blood might not have to be tossed after only six weeks of storage—a significant discovery in light of research at the University of Minnesota in 2007 that found that the pool of eligible blood donors nationwide is smaller than originally estimated. The study may also have implications for treatment of acute trauma. Oxygen levels vary from donor to donor according to age, gender, cholesterol levels, and other factors. Researchers speculate that separating stored blood according to oxygen levels could allow doctors to infuse high-oxygen blood into trauma victims, thus improving their survival chances.

FUEL-HARDY DEBATE: GARY KEMPSTON



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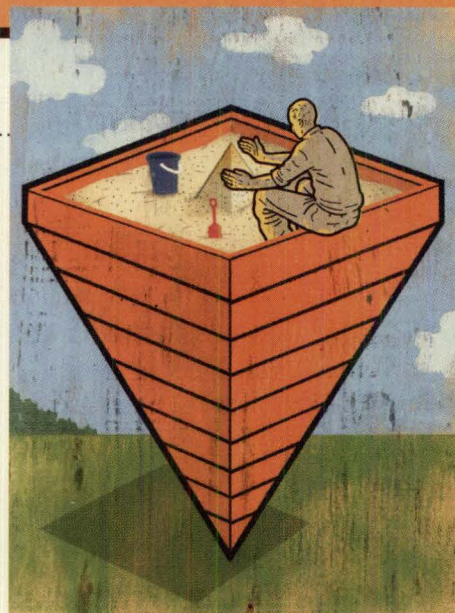
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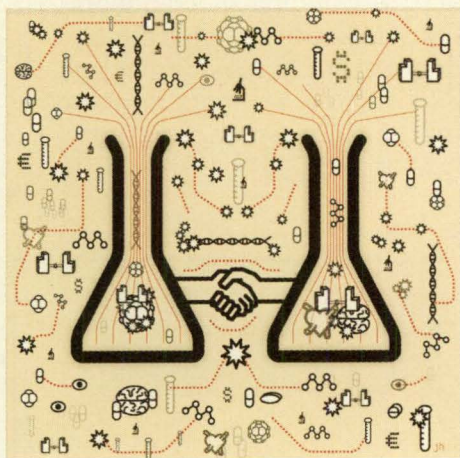


Innovators Keep Good Company

All innovative companies share a common culture regardless of where they are located, what their government's policies are, or how much capital they have, according to research from the University of Minnesota Carlson School of Management. Looking at data from 759 firms across 17 countries, researchers found that corporate culture, not external factors, drives innovation. Among the innovative companies' common traits are the ability to change quickly, a supportive internal structure headed by experts who are committed to the success of a particular product or project, and the capacity to keep an eye on the markets of the future. Researchers say it is important that companies resist the temptation to stop investing in innovation during economic downturns, since innovation propels new growth and financial value.



Master Gene Identified



Using genetically engineered mice, researchers with the University of Minnesota Medical School's Lillehei Heart Institute have discovered the mechanism by which cells develop into blood vessels. Scientists have known that certain cells, called progenitor cells, become smooth muscle, blood vessels, or cardiac muscle. What they didn't know is how. Now, researchers have pinpointed a protein that activates a master gene that in turn directs some progenitor cells to grow into blood vessels. By understanding how the cells develop, researchers say they hope to learn how the gene can be modified to treat disease. For example, in the case of heart disease, scientists may be able to "turn on" the gene to create new, healthy blood vessels.

Transplants OK for Older People

Age alone should not determine whether a patient receives a blood and marrow stem cell transplant for treatment of acute myeloid leukemia (AML) and myelodysplastic syndrome (MDS), another blood disease, according to a study by the University of Minnesota's Medical School and Masonic Cancer Center. Researchers found that patients older than age 65 fared as well from a transplant as patients in their 40s and 50s. The findings are important because AML and MDS are disproportionately common in older adults. Transplantation is the best-established treatment for them, but it is generally not offered to older patients because of concerns about potentially harmful or deadly after-effects.

Hormone Replacement Therapy Revisited



Long-term hormone replacement therapy (HRT), maligned for its role in increasing the risk of breast cancer, has been shown to cut the risk of colorectal cancer, according to research at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. The study analyzed data from 56,733 postmenopausal women. It found that women who had used estrogen and progestin HRT at some point in their lives had a reduced risk of colorectal cancer compared with women who had never taken them. Researchers said further study is needed to understand the reasons behind HRT's role in colorectal and other cancers.

Edited by Cynthia Scott

Search

Is a happy cow the key to a strong economy?

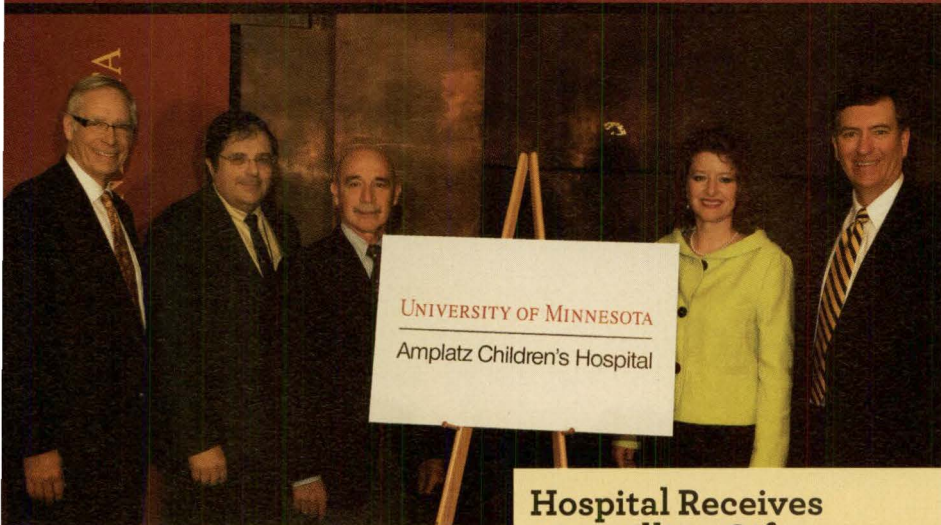


- ▶ U of M Extension animal scientist Marcia Endres and her students are researching cow comfort. They work with local farmers to improve bedding and housing, which adds to a cow's well-being. More comfort means more milk production for the state's \$2 billion dairy industry. Turns out a comfortable cow is a cash cow. So the search continues.

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Hospital Receives \$50 million Gift

The new University Children's Hospital will be named the University of Minnesota Amplatz Children's Hospital in recognition of a \$50 million gift from Caroline Amplatz in honor of her father, Kurt Amplatz. The hospital, which broke ground last summer, is on schedule to open by mid-2011.

Kurt Amplatz was a professor of radiology at the University from 1957 until his retirement in 1999. A pioneer in the use of noninvasive techniques, he holds more than 30 patents for inventions, including the Amplatz septal occluder, a tiny device used to repair a congenital heart defect in children without open heart surgery. At age 84, Amplatz continues to develop new devices and treatment protocols in his retirement.

Caroline Amplatz, a member of the University Pediatrics Foundation board of directors, is president of La Carolina and Caroline's Kids, foundations that support a wide range of children's health issues.

Pictured from left to right are University President Bob Bruininks, Senior Vice President for Health Sciences Frank Cerra, head of the University of Minnesota Medical School Department of Pediatrics Aaron Friedman, Caroline Amplatz, and Fairview Health Services President and CEO Mark Eustis.

University of Minnesota President Bob Bruininks told the Board of Regents at its February meeting that his administration is considering a number of options to deal with the budget crisis. The biennial budget proposed by Governor Tim Pawlenty (B.A. '83, J.D. '86) would cut \$156.1 million from the U's budget, or \$78 million in 2010 and 2011 each. Noting that three cost-saving measures have already been put in place—a hiring pause, an executive salary freeze, and a retirement incentive option that was offered in 2008—Bruininks estimated that at least two-thirds of further cost reductions would come from limiting or cutting academic programs, cuts in administration, and other reductions except tuition aid. Likely options are administrative reorganization, salary and wage freezes (subject to collective bargaining), health benefits plan design changes, furloughs, and cost reductions in purchasing, energy, printing, and space management. A tuition increase of 7.5 percent is being considered to make up for one-third of the shortfall.

Bruininks emphasized that the proposed cuts are not the only budget challenges the U faces. In 2010 alone, the U has \$55 million in facilities' operating cost, debt, and legal and contractual obligations that cannot be deferred.

It is not yet clear how much money the U will receive under the economic stimulus bill Congress passed on February 17. Key provisions of the bill include funding directed toward student aid in the form of Pell grants, work study, and tax credits; scientific research; and education aid for states, which may include

allotments for modernization of higher education facilities at the discretion of individual governors.

Leadership of the Medical School will be restructured and the 104-year-old Graduate School will be eliminated under reorganization plans intended to streamline administration. Under the restructuring of the Medical School, the largest unit of the Academic Health Center, the position of dean will be combined with that of senior vice president for health sciences. University President Bob Bruininks appointed current senior vice president for health sciences Frank Cerra to the position, pending approval by the Board of Regents, until a permanent hire can be made. A national search will be conducted in early 2010 for the new senior vice president and dean, with appointment expected by fall of that year. Current Medical School Dean Deborah Powell would assume an administrative role in the area of medical education, effective July 1, 2009. In a memo to the Board of Regents, Bruininks said the combined role will result in more focused leadership and more efficient use of resources in this severely challenged economy.

With the elimination of the Graduate School, administration of graduate programs will shift to the new Office for Graduate Education within the office of Provost Tom Sullivan. That office will be responsible for oversight, coordination, and leadership on issues related to graduate education and will approve changes to graduate programs. Ultimate responsibility and accountability for the quality of individual graduate programs will be with collegiate deans and their faculty. The move will result in a significant downsizing—the Graduate School currently has 50 full-time-equivalent positions and an office on the Duluth campus. Despite a petition signed by 18 Regents professors asking that the decision be postponed for broader consultation, Bruininks said the new reporting lines will be effective July 1, 2009, with full implementation expected by fall 2010.

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) awarded the University of Minnesota Libraries its 2009 Excellence in Academic Libraries Award. The award recognizes the staff of a college, university, and community college for programs that deliver exemplary services and resources to further the educational mission of the institution. The ACRL recognized the U libraries' programs for supporting users as they conduct scholarship. The award carries a \$3,000 prize and a plaque that will be presented at the American Library Association annual conference in July.

—Cynthia Scott

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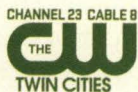
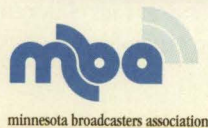
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Pai's Walking Lessons

A moral journey on the sidewalks of Porto Alegre

My Brazilian father-in-law wakes my wife and me at 6 a.m. to join him on his morning walk into Porto Alegre, a city in southern Brazil. This is when he releases his inner German soldier. At 88, he's been walking four kilometers every day except Sunday, starting when he suffered chest pains 23 years earlier. ¶ It's now 2003, and this morning, as always, José Gavioli Sobrinho becomes a German field marshal leading his troops to war. Head locked in a forward position, he sets a punishing pace conducted in iron-jawed silence. His long arms swing like pendulums, his big hands cupped as if he's swimming through the humid Brazilian morning air. His relentless, mechanical stride suggests a machine assembled back in the industrial age.

Wispy, white tufts of hair stick out from his cap and bounce in rhythm to his step. Today he wears a T-shirt with the word "ferry-boat" on the back, reminding me of a Walt Whitman poem about the final ferry that carries us to the next world.

Pai (or "Father," which I always called him in Portuguese) is not ready to board the final ferry. He's firmly rooted in this world, like the ancient tree roots we encounter that heave up and crack the sidewalk. We march around the roots, holes, rubble, dead branches, boulders to keep cars off the sidewalk, and sawed-off metal posts poking out of the pavement. The Porto Alegre sidewalks demand an alertness not required on ours in Minnesota, even in winter.

Daisi and I struggle to keep up, little boats in the wake of an ocean liner. I know the route by heart and could take the lead, but Pai is always in charge, always in front of me during the 33 years I have known him.

Daisi and I nickname these walks the "Forced March to Berlin"—Berlin being the name of the avenue on which we begin and end. Pai always takes precisely the same route, which curiously traces his German, Brazilian, and Italian roots. We start at Berlin, evoking his mother's German ancestry. Then we take Benjamin Constante, named for a leader in Brazil's independence movement. Finally, we turn onto Cristovão Colombo, recalling the Italian explorer and Pai's Italian paternity.

We barely start the walk and already we pass a semiconscious man with bloodshot eyes slouched on a stool in front of a small, neighborhood bar. I recognize him from previous years, a sentinel at its dark door. He waves a drunken greeting to us. Pai, who stopped drinking at 15, passes him as if he doesn't exist. Incredibly, Pai raised four children without a drop of alcohol.

ESSAY BY JIM MARTIN > ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT BAKAL

We reach a tiny metal shack the size of an outhouse perched on the sidewalk. It's owned by a locksmith, one of hundreds throughout this insecure city, keeping residents stocked with keys for a hundred thousand locks. He's the one who, a couple years earlier, had borrowed Pai's sledgehammer from the neighborhood baker, who had borrowed it from Pai. The locksmith passed it on to someone who never returned it. The baker gave a new one to Pai, who rejected it, boycotting the baker and his bread from that day forward.

Without slowing down, Pai grabs the stool in front of the booth, as he does almost every day, and keeps walking. As if on cue, the locksmith cheerfully yells "*ladrao!*" (thief!) and Pai returns the stool. They smile, and Pai pushes on.

Evidently, the locksmith is forgiven, but not the baker, who committed the Original Sledgehammer Sin.

We cross the first lane of heavy traffic on Benjamin Constante, reaching a concrete island in the middle of the avenue. The island is home to several sickly pine trees that live in the roar of traffic instead of the silence of a forest. I feel the wind coming off the lethal river of fast-moving cars, trucks, buses, and motorcycles howling and screaming perilously close to us. Unsteady, I grasp a tree, and with my other hand, I hold my 88-year-old companion's arm to keep him from stumbling one fatal step forward. It feels strange to support the arm of this still-powerful man.

"*Vamos!*" he shouts suddenly and steps off the island—a millisecond behind a passing car, as if it were imaginary and not a ton of high-speed, bone-crushing metal. I lurch forward after him, trusting this venerable ferryboat captain to lead me across this deadly river to its other side, life still linked to limb.

Safely across, he shakes his arm loose, reasserting his independence, the motor that drove him through the Great Depression.

We reach Cristovão Colombo and its nearly uncrossable stream of traffic. A bony-ribbed workhorse wearing blinders drags a cart loaded with cardboard for recycling. The driver snaps his whip on the wretched animal's sweaty back. Sporty cars snarl impatiently around this plodding piece of Brazil's past.

We're marching again. Pai leads us single file through crowds on the sidewalk or into the street to get around them, signaling to us with his arm to move closer to the curb. Our field marshal never looks back at us as he works his way through enemy territory in this guerilla war. I try to make small talk. No response. He is focused on our progress and keeping his troops in single file behind him. "*Olha os carros*" (Watch the cars), he warns, momentarily breaking his silence. He's making forward progress, which is the arc of his life, starting in poverty and ending in the middle class.

Pai makes a rare stop. He greets a hotel doorman, an old-timer hosing down the sidewalk against the promise of a hot day. As he does everywhere we go—butcher shop, grocery store, post office—Pai introduces me as "*meu genro Americano*" (my American son-in-law). The doorman asks whether I like President George W. Bush, then nearing the end of his first term. "No," I say. He breaks into a broad smile, shakes my hand, pounds me on the back with his other hand in the semi-embrace men use in this nation. I'm embarrassed but sense Pai's pride in the fact that his daughter

married an American, a touch of approval, something I always craved from him.

We pass an old woman clutching her purse to her breast. She gossips with another old woman through the imprisoning bars of a sidewalk gate.

We walk around a man with dirty feet sleeping in a fetal position on the sidewalk. We pass a blind man, sitting with his back against a wall, holding out a delicate hand for coins. A young man in dirty clothes sleeps on the sidewalk on newspaper. Two young men are asleep in a driveway, their heads pillowed against a garage door. A family of four sleeps on the concrete next to the doors of a bank not yet open. A young Indian mother, perhaps from the Amazon, baby in her lap, sits begging for coins on the sidewalk with her legs sticking out so people have to step over them.

We pass a semiconscious man with bloodshot eyes slouched on a stool in front of a small, neighborhood bar. He waves a drunken greeting to us. Pai, who stopped drinking at 15, passes him as if he doesn't exist. Incredibly, Pai raised four children without a drop of alcohol.

We are witnessing the deep well of poverty, yawning wide open on the cruel sidewalks. This is the dark well Pai has worked relentlessly his entire life to avoid falling into. He and Sarah, his wife, achieved this with help from no one.

In a city where assaults at gunpoint or knifepoint are commonplace, Pai has never been assaulted, except for boys snatching the cap off his head a couple times. Maybe it's because he walks the busy streets, avoiding the vulnerable quieter ones. Maybe he's been lucky. But maybe it's like the African proverb, "You don't teach the paths of the jungle to an old gorilla."

One block from home, his pace gradually slows, a big jet coming in for a landing. He breaks his silence: "*Não se pode falar e respirar ao mesmo tempo*," he declares (You can't talk and breathe at the same time). This tiny gem is just one on an endless string. Other jewels from him: Wear Clean Clothes. Be Frugal. Drive Hard Bargains. Solve Problems Quickly and Aggressively. Never Quit. He bestows these commandments on his imperfect son-in-law free of charge. Through his eyes, life is a moral journey.

The first day I arrived at his house in 1970, recently married to his daughter, he summoned me into his bedroom, shut the door, and proclaimed in melodramatic Portuguese: "*Nossa familia é sua familia. Nossa casa é sua casa.*" (Our family is your family. Our house is your house.) He accepted me on the spot. But because I was young and immature, I accepted his generosity but not him, often feeling intimidated, frustrated, exasperated, and resentful.

Pai died two years ago. My mean feelings toward him disappeared long ago, yet I regret them still. In retrospect, I was like a young tree, rubbed raw by a barbed wire. But over time, the tree grew around the wire, accepting it, and deeply embracing it. ■

Jim Martin (M.A. '70), a former editor at the Metropolitan Council, is writing a memoir about his father-in-law. He is retired and lives with his wife, Daisi, in St. Paul.

First Person essays are written by alumni, faculty, students, or anyone with a University connection. For writers' guidelines, visit www.alumni.umn.edu/minnesota.

The quality of health care journalism
in America makes Gary Schwitzer ill.
But the associate professor of journalism
at the University of Minnesota
is working to bring accuracy
and integrity to health reporting—
and pushing journalists
to ask tough health care questions
that aren't being answered.

Sick about Health Care

BY PAMELA HILL NETTLETON // PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK LUINENBURG

S

itting on an airplane this past January, Gary Schwitzer pulled down the tray table and—plop!—right there in his lap was yet another health care message, this one an electric-orange-colored ad for Zicam Gel Swabs for head colds. Passengers sitting around him gasped.

With his iPhone, Schwitzer snapped a photo of the tray table ad, posted it to his blog, and added a characteristically entertaining observation on what he called a

“sneak attack” by a pharmaceutical company.

Schwitzer, an associate professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Minnesota, can't do much about health care ads, but he is working diligently to do something about inaccurate health care reporting—and those health stories that are essentially ads in disguise. He sees health care messages the way the boy in *The Sixth Sense* sees dead people: They're everywhere. And they rarely adhere to the code of ethics in health care journalism he helped shape. According to his research, journalists reporting on health news typically have had no training in the subject and usually fail to address costs and insurance coverage, harms and benefits, or the quality of evidence in their stories. Worse, he believes these news stories may negatively affect consumers' health care decisions.

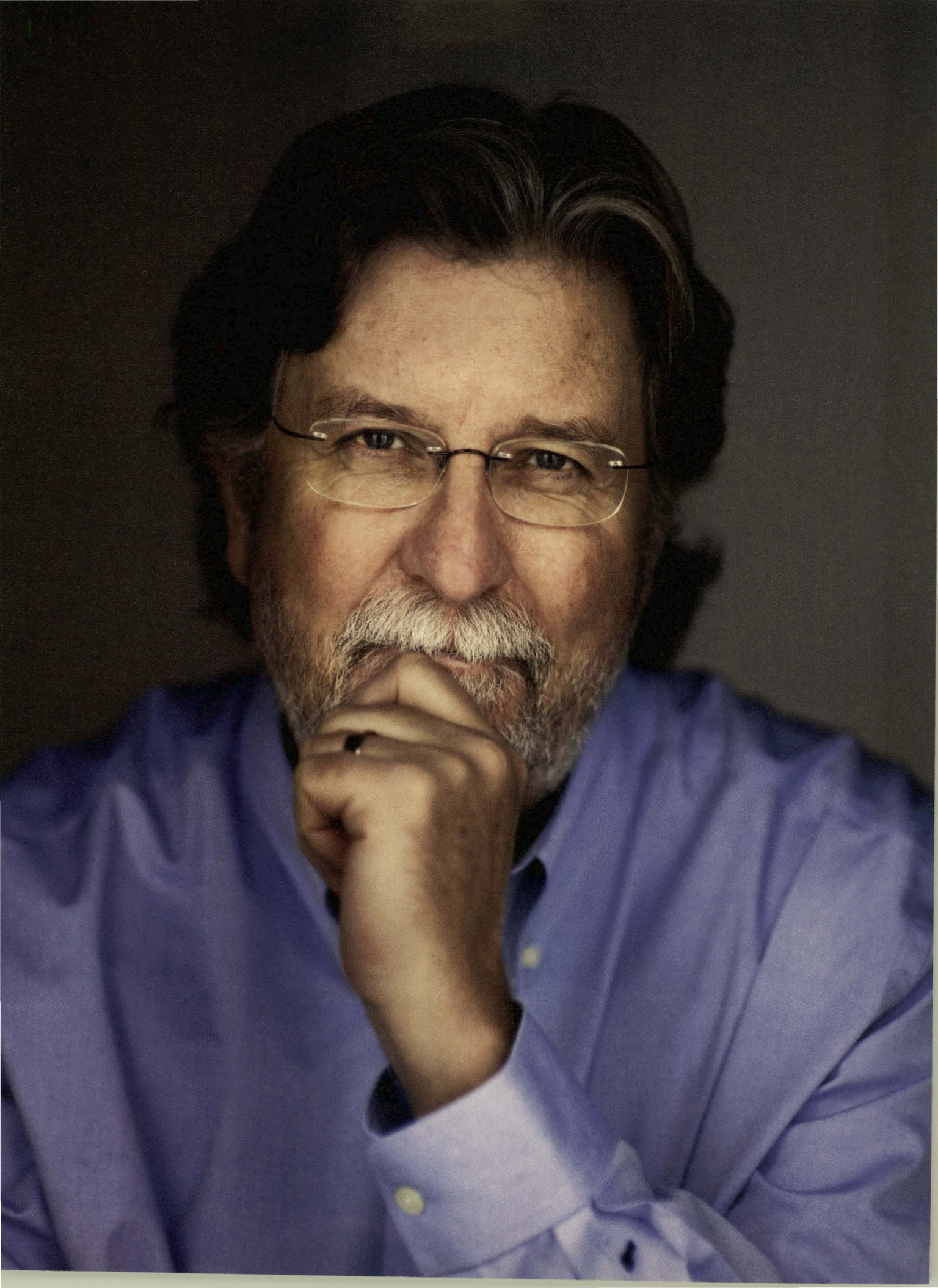
Schwitzer publishes an award-winning Web site

critiquing health care journalism (HealthNewsReview.org), maintains a health-related news and resource site (“Improving Health & Medical Journalism,” www.tc.umn.edu/~schwitzer), and is helping to train the next generation of health care journalists.

During his 30-plus years as a radio, television, interactive multimedia, and Internet journalist, Schwitzer led the medical news unit at CNN, reported in Milwaukee and Dallas, and served as founding editor-in-chief of MayoClinic.com. He came to the University of Minnesota in 2001 to launch the professional master's program in health journalism and served as director of graduate studies for the program from its inception in 2003 until this year. A twice-elected member of the board of directors of the Association of Health Care Journalists, he authored its Statement of Principles (see page 22). Last year alone, he flew 30,000 miles promoting the Health News Review site and speaking about improving the state of health and medical coverage in American journalism.

“Gary's work is unflinching in its quest for improving media coverage of health, medicine, and science,” says John Finnegan Jr., a professor and dean of the University of Minnesota School of Public Health, who teaches in the health journalism program. “His systematic, balanced critique is exactly what reporters, health care providers, and consumers need to cut through the fog of fragmented science, poor journalism, and public misunderstanding.”

Schwitzer sat down recently to discuss his work for *Minnesota* readers.



Your site HealthNewsReview.org finds stories that make therapeutic claims about drugs, treatments, and tests; has them reviewed by your multidisciplinary team of journalists and health and medical professionals; and then publishes graded critiques. Why is this critically important work? The Project for Excellence in Journalism in Washington, D.C., upon first reviewing our Web site's criteria for articles, said our criteria could be a model for other areas of journalism. This is not a media-bashing effort. It is meant to be constructive outreach to try to improve. I do think more and better strides are being made in health journalism than in any other beat. But I'm very restless and impatient because of the odds. Industry influence is at a runaway pace, conflict of interest is around every corner in health care. God help [President Barack] Obama or anyone else who tries to institute health care reform because you're going to see a lobbying effort like you've never seen. That was the problem when the Clinton administration tried it. They're just stronger and more entrenched now.

"We are **the only industrialized country**
on the face of the earth
that doesn't have some form
of universal, national comprehensive
health insurance.
It starts to beg questions
about **what kind of people we are.**
We aren't even getting
preventive health care
to 16 percent of our population."

It's a troubling time and there isn't time to waste space or air time or column inches on breakthroughs and cures and miracles and fluff. We're not asking tough questions: What's the quality of evidence? Who's going to have access to it? What's it going to cost? Who's your source? What are his or her conflicts of interest? This is not only a lesson for journalists, but a lesson for consumers. These are things we should be asking of anyone who makes health care claims. Including your own caregiver.

Describe a recent story you reviewed. NBC chief medical editor Nancy Snyderman had her own coronary artery scan on the *Today Show*, leaving the impression that all women should have this test, unduly frightening all the women watching. If all the women in the country want this test, it would bankrupt the nation. And forget about cold, crass cash. Think of all the false positives, think of all the anxiety you would cause. You would find a few things early and help a few people, but you're going to catch some fish you shouldn't have caught. Ones whose lives you're going to change unduly, and then they are labeled, anxious, find out nothing, and require more testing.

A friend at Dartmouth said you could take 15 percent of the docs in this country, move them to Africa, and improve the health care of both places. We are over-medicalized. We sell sickness. We fearmonger. We disease-monger. We are actually again being sold on the weapons of mass destruction in our lives, but these are weapons of mass destruction inside us. You'd better have a scan, although nothing is wrong with you. Under the banner of doing good we are doing harm.

You say there are seven words you shouldn't use in medical news: Cure, miracle, breakthrough, promising, dramatic, hope, and victim. Why? Each of those words and themes was put in my head by sick people, people with health care concerns whom I had interviewed over the years. Some people look at "hope" and "victim" and say, "well, how would you deny hope to somebody?" But a woman with breast cancer put that word on my list. Like Sergeant Joe Friday, she said, "Just give me the facts. Don't you tell me where to put my hope. I'm tired of being jerked around by false hope."

Who's the worst health care reporter? Hugh Downs? Sanjay Gupta? Neither, because neither is truly a health journalist.

Hugh Downs certainly isn't. I know Sanjay Gupta works and tries very hard, but at the end of the day—and this comes across in his reporting—he's still a physician. The move from physician to journalist isn't an easy transition. Some people applauded—I didn't—when he was embedded in Iraq, dropped the camera and microphone, and operated on a war casualty. But then he picked up the mic and reported on himself having done this. That shows that he is constantly crossing the street back and forth from being a physician to being a journalist. When you start to look at the trend lines of his coverage, which too often fail to scrutinize medicine [or] ask the tough questions about medicine, and too often glamorizes medical advances, that sounds like, talks like, and feels like a physician on the air—not a journalist.

I worked at CNN, I was actually in charge of medical news, so I could see where people might see this as sour grapes, but it's not. All of the things that I write about now, I was bloodying my head against the wall about then. Lately, I've probably been more critical of NBC's medical news. My criticism is directed by what I see. NBC right now is cranking out of a lot of schlock. We praise good stuff when we see it, we slam schlock when we see it.

What's it like being a watchdog of other journalists? Are you shunned at cocktail parties? Sometimes I expect it, but I can't tell you this strongly enough: it almost never happens. I'm out there inviting input all the time. The single most recurring thing I hear is: "Why aren't you reviewing us?" Wherever I go, someone has a nomination for somebody else I should be reviewing, and it's usually their particular station or paper. That's really powerful. [Either] they think they are doing a good job and they want the public recognition via our Web site, or, more likely, they know more about these topics than their editor, so they have no one to go to in their newsroom. They welcome the independent expert advice that we have to offer.

I have had journalists ask, on a number of occasions, "Could you make yourselves available pre-publication, so we can run things by you in advance?" That's tough for us to do because no member of our team works on this full-time. But I'm intrigued by the request and we may try to offer pre-publication advice to journalists in the future.

We also added on the home page of HealthNewsReview.org a growing list of more than 100 independent experts who agree to help journalists with their stories. These experts have told us that they have no financial ties to industry.

Why do you describe health care information as "flooding the public with a fire hose"? They are thirsty for a drink and they can't even get a sip. We have health insurance marketing people calling their products "consumer-driven health care plans" and I could just vomit. It's predicated on the notion that the tools will be there to put consumers in the driver's seat. I just don't think you can be rational and say those tools exist. There are attempts to build tools and we find over and over again that consumers don't use them. Then you'd better find out why. They find them unusable. At a recent meeting at *Consumer Reports*, their ratings guru and the guy who does the *US News & World Report* "Best Hospitals" ratings both admitted how incomplete and flawed are their efforts.

Who covers health care the way it ought to be done? We are making progress. Things are getting better.

There are people day in and day out who do a really good job. Predictably, those are the people who sucked it up and sought training or trained themselves. Evidence-based reporters: they always start by scrutinizing results. Carla Johnson at the Associate Press in Chicago: She has gone to evidence-based journalism workshops around the country and she hasn't even been on this beat that long, less than 10 years. A real role model. I will never forget with the *Wall Street Journal* next door to the Twin Towers—there was no media company as physically affected by the attack that day and they had to move their offices. Even in those days, the *Wall Street Journal* still beefed up its health care coverage. One guy I think very highly of is Scott Hensley, co-editor of the *Wall Street Journal* Health Blog with Jacob Goldstein. He's very new-media savvy and very smart in covering these issues. And you can't take the *New York Times* for granted, there is such a cast of all-stars there.

What is the biggest untold health care story in America? The biggest theme that is untold at the highest level is that we have to learn in this country that more is not automatically better. Newer is not automatically better. Thinking that way is why we spend more and don't have the outcomes to show for it. We don't know



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“Until journalism starts to accept this agenda-setting role and get us thinking about that more often—instead of getting us all hyped up about putting statins in the water supply and the latest erectile dysfunction drug—then journalism itself has to take part of the rap for the health care crisis we’re in.”

how to die a peaceful death in this country; we don’t know how to let go. We talk about advance directives and living wills and they almost never come into play. It’s the medical arms race.

Other countries laugh at us. We are the only industrialized country on the face of the earth that doesn’t have some form of universal, national comprehensive health insurance. It starts to beg questions about what kind of a people we are. We aren’t even getting preventive health care to 16 percent of our population.

As a journalist, I always look in the mirror first. [Journalists] have to shoulder some of the blame for the runaway spending and the “more is better, newer is better” mentality. We feed the worried well. We feed the pill-for-every-ill expectation. We are responsible, to some degree, for driving up unrealistic, unreasonable expectations of consumers about costly, unproven, and harmful treatments, tests, products, and procedures.

We just can’t afford to play around anymore in this country. We are not having a meaningful discussion on health care reform. We spend 16 percent of the gross domestic product on health care, double that of the second-place nation, and we don’t have the outcomes to show for it. Depending on which ranking you believe, we are 37th in the world in infant mortality. We spend more than anyone else and we have an obscene number of citizens who don’t know where they’re going to get health care.

What can a journalist do about that? Even if you’re going to follow our criteria of how to cover new studies and new claims, you could still be sure that every day you have that note of skepticism. Maybe all the evidence isn’t in. You could still add that note of restraint. Do we really need another cyber knife or proton beam machine? We used to have certificates of need in this state and country; you used to have to justify adding hospitals and services. That’s gone now. There are 16 to 20 MRI and CT scanning machines within a two-mile radius of Fairview Southdale. The proton beam [radiation therapy machine] is a new, multimillion dollar machine. Each treatment costs \$50,000. We don’t have the evidence yet that it’s that much better, but it’s this medical arms race. We’ve got to learn to say “no” in this country.

What role should the media be playing in framing national health care discussions? There is an agenda-setting role for health care journalism that is too often abdicated. I understand what reporters are up against. Travel and training are cut, fewer people are asked to do more with less, there are multimedia tasks now [such as shooting photos and video] and most are not paid extra for that. Those are all incentives to stay in the newsroom, read today’s medical journal, never leave the newsroom, and think you’ve covered the beat. But boy, that is really a skewed view. It is clear there is a publication bias to publish only positive findings and squelch negative results, and with industry controlling more

of the science, industry will publish only the positive and squelch negative results.

Instead of progress-hope-breakthroughs-cures, start embedding daily frames of “Are we scrutinizing the science?” and “48 million people are uninsured” and “more is not better.”

You can’t tell me that journalism couldn’t have tremendous impact. That’s not an advocacy stance, that’s not editorializing. That’s providing a balance that is required. Our coverage is already imbalanced by journalism that depends on the medical journals and what the commercial interests in the health care industry feed you.

And until we tackle some of those questions, and until journalism starts to accept this agenda-setting role and get us thinking about that more often—instead of getting us all hyped up about putting statins in the water supply and the latest erectile dysfunction drug—then journalism itself has to take part of the rap for the health care crisis we’re in.

What would a proud moment in health care journalism be for you? This is really radical, but I would be delighted if we stopped subscribing to medical journals in newsrooms and if AP didn’t cover those any more. There just aren’t breakthroughs and miracles on the 24-hour news cycle. There are not. We shouldn’t broaden the definition of “breakthrough.” There really are not many breakthroughs; that’s not the way science works.

What if we regularly started asking questions about where are our values? What are we getting for our investment? What do we as a people want to do for our families and selves and people we don’t know in our communities? Is health care a right or a privilege? Other countries have answered that.

If it creates a nation of skeptics, let the pendulum swing back that way. ■

Pamela Hill Nettleton (B.A. ’05, M.A. ’07) is Minneapolis writer and editor and a Ph.D. candidate and instructor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

Guiding Principles

In 2004, Gary Schwitzer helped draft a code of ethics for the Association of Health Care Journalists, an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing public understanding of health care issues. Here are a few of the principles for health care journalists.

- Show respect. Illness, disability and other health challenges facing individuals must not be exploited merely for dramatic effect.
- Report the complete risks and benefits of any treatment, along with the possible outcomes of alternative approaches, including the choices of “watchful waiting.”
- Clearly identify and explain the meaning of results that indicate an association, rather than a causal link, between factors in a study. Remember: association is not cause.
- Clearly define and communicate areas of doubt and uncertainty. Explain what doctors don’t know as well as what they do know.



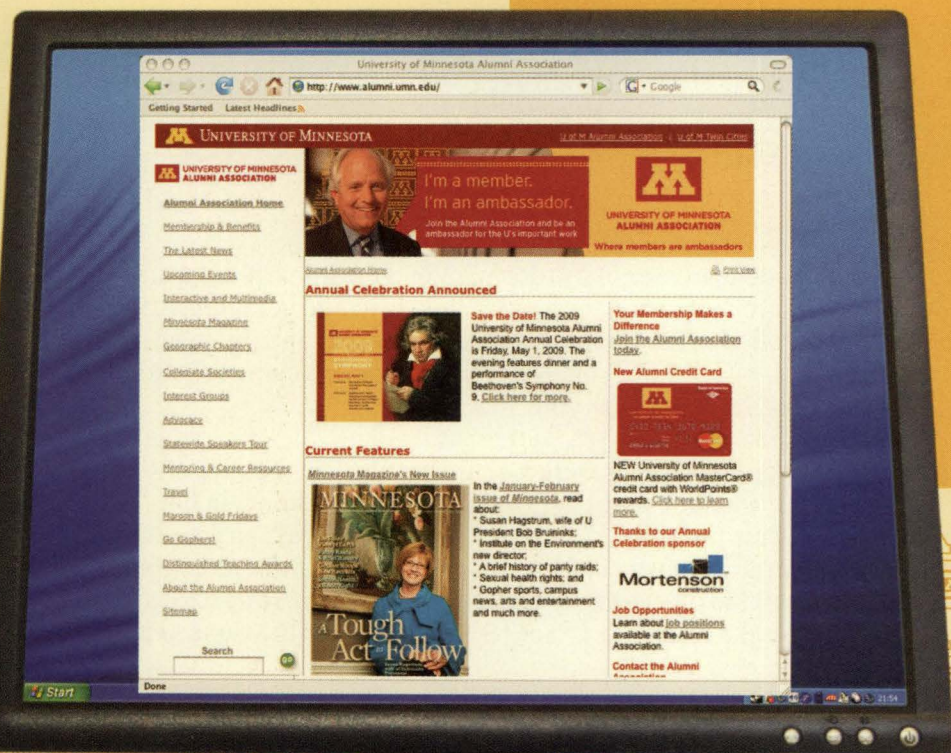
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By **Linda Norlander** // Photographs by Donata Wenders

AURIE'S LAST DANCE

For a year after the Edificio San Jose apartment building collapsed, Aurie came to me almost every day. I talked with him on the bus stop bench outside my dorm. I talked with him in the shower—sometimes so long that the water turned cold and people pounded on the door.

“Hey, man, you OK in there?”

Once, the resident adviser in the dorm invited me into his room and offered me a cigarette. I shook my head. When he could get them, Aurie smoked cigars rolled in Havana. The smoke was sweet and pungent.

“I’m—we’re worried about you. Everyone says they hear voices from your room. Who is in there with you?”

“No one,” I said.

“Are you all right?” His eyes were a liquid brown, like the eyes of Señora Benitez. I thought about her, secluded away for hours in her bedroom in the apartment in the building named Edificio San Jose with the blinds drawn and a severe *dolar de cabeza* that Doctor Benitez could not cure. Aurie would glance at the closed door and turn away with a contemptuous shake of his head. “See? See what Castro has done to my mother?”

I looked at the resident adviser and shrugged. “Sometimes I talk to Aurie.”

“Who? I don’t know him.”

“He is—was my exchange brother. Last year when I was in Venezuela.”

“Is he here?”

What could I say? Yes, he comes to me in the shower and when I’m walking to class and when I’m writing blue book exams?

“No,” I said. “But I talk to him anyway.”

The resident adviser inhaled deeply and the tip of his cigarette glowed bright red. Aurie used to say you should merely kiss the cigar and let the smoke swim in your mouth.

He flicked the ash into a small ceramic tray. “I don’t get it.”

“There was an earthquake in Caracas. It took buildings in my neighborhood, and I haven’t heard from Aurie since.”

“Did he die?”

If only he had come to the airport to say good-bye.

“Nobody knows.”

“So how do you talk to him?”

“I just do.”

After that, after I’d finally said Aurie’s name out loud, he stopped coming.





At first I tried to find something we had in common. The Beatles—stupid boys with no music in their souls; baseball—mindless sport for the lower classes; cars—I care not about what someone else drives. I asked if he would help me with my Spanish. He said, “Bah,” and walked away.



AURIE CALLED ME “GRINGO.”

“Gringo,” he said when I arrived at Edificio San Jose with my oversized suitcase. “We share an apartment, but nothing else.”

They called it an exchange program—my three months in Venezuela—and they called the Benitezes my host family. But there was no exchange. The doctor and señora took in a student each semester for the board and lodging money. Aurie told me from the beginning that he was not my *hermano* (brother), and he would not be responsible for me.

“*Soy Cubano*—I am a Cuban,” he said. “If it were not for that communist worm, we would be home in Havana—not here in this city of no character. We would be home and we would not be taking in gringos.”

At first I tried to find something we had in common. The Beatles—stupid boys with no music in their souls; baseball—mindless sport for the lower classes; cars—I care not about what someone else drives. I asked if he would help me with my Spanish. He said, “Bah,” and walked away.

Doctor Benitez apologized one day during the afternoon break from his clinic downstairs.

“Aurie, he is a lost child. Go on with your studies and don’t let his selfishness bother you.”

The day I arrived and Aurie told me he was not my *hermano*, Señora Benitez wandered out of the bedroom in a floor-length nightdress dappled with faded red flowers. She looked me up and down, sighed, and said in Spanish, “Breakfast at 8, supper at 7. You must be home by 10 every night or we lock you out.”

Doctor Benitez gently nudged me to the balcony. Once outside, he pulled a pack of cigarettes from his pocket and offered me one. “You see,” he said in heavily accented English. “She is not well. My Sonia used to love to cook and to dance.” He shook his head. “But since we come here, she suffers *el dolor*—the pain.”

I spent my evenings with the other Americans in the exchange program. We hung around Quinta Luisa, a house rented by four Venezuelan University students. The house smelled of stale smoke and mildew, but the refrigerator was always stocked with Cerveza Polar, and the Beatles played over and over on the phonograph.

“Do you know what I get for breakfast every morning?” I said to my friends. “Kellogg’s Corn Flakes, for chrissake. The box isn’t even printed in Spanish. Hell of a cultural experience.”

I could have asked the exchange program counselor to find me another host family. I could have told her that I felt like I was walking into a funeral every time I opened the door

to the apartment. I could have told her about the steady diet of corn flakes for breakfast and ham and cheese sandwiches for supper.

But I didn’t because every night, when I stepped out of the taxi from Quinta Luisa, I’d look up to see Aurie leaning against the railing of the balcony. I felt he was watching for me, or over me.

I didn’t because every time I looked at Aurie, studied his thick, brown hair and clear, light skin, I felt his anger. Behind the eyes that were not quite brown and not quite green, something boiled and seethed. I’d never met anyone my age so filled with rage.

Doctor Benitez told me that Aurie was studying medicine at the university. “He remembers how I had my clinic next door to the house. He wants to go back some day and open it up again.” Doctor Benitez looked away. “Someday, maybe Castro will be gone and we can go back.”

Sometimes, deep in the night, I would awaken to the staccato beat of typewriter keys from Aurie’s room. When I asked him what he was writing, he shrugged me off.

“I am a poet and someday I will be a great Cuban poet.”

ONE SATURDAY NIGHT the Venezuelans had a big party at Quinta Luisa. That morning, as I ate my corn flakes, I told Señora Benitez that I would not be home until Sunday afternoon.

“*Porque?*”

“*Una fiesta.*”

“Ah.” She rubbed her slippers on the tiled floor of the kitchen. “We used to party. Remember, Aurie, how we would string the lights in the garden and put on the record player and dance?”

Aurie shrugged, pulling the morning paper closer to his face.

“Do you want to come?” I asked.

“No,” he said.

“Go, Aurie,” Señora Benitez said. “You go. It’s time you danced again.”

She looked at me. “Take him with you. Watch how he dances with the girls.” Her eyes glittered. “He could teach you.”

“No Mamí, I don’t want to dance with the *gringas* and the *Venezolanas*. They dance stupid. They have no rhythm.”

Señora Benitez clucked. “Remember, Aurie, Señor Benicio our neighbor. Remember how he danced to Beny Moré? No one could play and compose like Beny.” Her voice dropped off and the room grew silent.

“Aurie?” Señora’s voice was low. “Please go. Please dance. For me?”



In Cuba, Papi had a nurse and a receptionist. He treated generals and scholars and diplomats and no one paid him with fish.” I looked up at him from my bowl of corn flakes. Aurie pressed his lips together in a tight line. “He fixed them all, and he didn’t have to iron his own shirts.”



When it was time to go to the party, I knocked on the door to Aurie’s room. He didn’t answer.

EVERY MORNING DOCTOR BENITEZ pressed a clean white shirt and pulled on a pair of creased trousers. He opened his clinic at 8, closed it for siesta at noon and reopened it at 4. His patients paid with cash and sometimes with goods. A fresh fish for the cough medicine, a grandmother’s bracelet to treat a kidney infection.

One morning, Aurie watched him slip on his thin tie and walk out the door.

“In Cuba, Papi had a nurse and a receptionist. He treated generals and scholars and diplomats and no one paid him with fish.” He spat out the last word. “His patients were our friends.”

I looked up at him from my bowl of corn flakes. Aurie pressed his lips together in a tight line. “He fixed them all, and he didn’t have to iron his own shirts.”

On the balcony that evening, when I told Doctor Benitez I wanted to be a physician, he smiled and shrugged. “You will learn that you can fix the *dolar del estomico* and the sprained ankles, but you can’t fix the broken hearts. My countrymen, they had a good life in Cuba. But Castro came and took our homes and our livelihood and our spirit. I can’t mend the spirit.”

Below us a car without a muffler roared by. “When you go to school, learn the science and the medicine, but also learn about the soul. When you understand the soul, you are truly a doctor.”

As he spoke, I heard a faint whisper of cloth from inside the apartment. Señora Benitez stood in the middle of the living room watching us. She looked as if she had just awakened from a long nap.

“*Mi amor*,” she called to Doctor Benitez. “How are the children?”

“They’re fine, my love. They’re fine.”

She turned and shuffled back to her room.

“It’s the pills for her headache. They make her a little. . . .” He paused to find the right word. “A little *loco*. You see?”

A FEW WEEKS before my semester in Venezuela was over, I came back to Edificio San Jose early. Señora Benitez stood alone on the balcony, smoking a slim cigar. She was dressed in a long silken robe and her feet were bare on the tiled floor.

“Come feel the breeze out here.”

I’d never been alone with her before.

“Do you see the little barrio over there?” She pointed to a once vacant lot two streets over that was now overrun with

cardboard shanties. “They come in the middle of the night and make their poor little neighborhoods. The police will come and tear them down soon.”

I nodded.

Señora Benitez swayed a little against the railing.

“In Havana, I would go to the outdoor market near one of the very bad barrios. I always took Maria, my housekeeper, with me. Oh, they had beautiful fruits—mangoes and papayas and bananas. And always raggedy children with dirty faces tugging at my skirt begging. Maria would shoo them away from me. They were annoying—like little mosquitoes.”

She blew the smoke from her cigar out over the balcony. “One day a little boy sat on the curb near my favorite fruit stand. His legs were withered and he held a little tin cup. ‘*Señora, señora, por favor.*’ He was light-skinned and his eyes were the same color as Aurie’s, not the deep brown of the other beggar children. He could have been Aurie, and I couldn’t look at him anymore. I hurried on to buy my mangoes.”

She turned to me. “Do you understand?”

I smelled rum and tobacco on her breath.

“Later, I sent Maria back with some coins but she said he was gone. I didn’t go back to the market after that because I didn’t want to see the hungry children with Aurie’s eyes.”

Señora Benitez sighed deeply. “How can I tell my husband and my son that I’m not sure the revolution was a bad thing? How can I tell them that we lived a life of privilege, and we never saw the little children with their withered limbs and their tin cups?” Her eyes flashed. “Tell me that.”

She flipped the cigar over the balcony and turned unsteadily to the apartment. I reached out and caught her arm. “Here, let me walk you back in.”

“You are a good boy. Maybe some day my Aurie will be a good boy, too.”

TWO DAYS BEFORE I WAS TO LEAVE Caracas, Aurie met me at the door of the apartment in Edificio San Jose.

“Shhhh,” he pointed to the balcony.

Doctor and Señora Benitez were standing together looking out over the city. He had his arm around her waist.

“Her pain is better tonight.”

“That’s good.”

“She received a letter from her sister, Tia Margita, in Miami. Tia says that Castro is sick, that he hasn’t been seen for over a month. Tia says that there’s talk that he has died and that we can come back.”

“Do you believe that will happen?”

Aurie flashed a smile. “*Si, gringo. Es la verdad. We will go*



He placed both his hands on my hips and guided them until our movements were synchronized. When the music finished, my heart pounded and sweat poured down my forehead. Aurie pointed to my reddened face and said to the partygoers, "We will make a Cuban out of him yet."



home soon."

His face was suffused with joy and relief—the same expression I would later see on my patients when I said to them, "The biopsy was benign. You don't have cancer."

The power of his happiness saddened me. I wanted Aurie to be alive. I wanted to see his mended spirit before I went home. But, in Venezuela, in the little barrios that spread throughout the periphery of the city, I'd seen poverty. I'd seen the children running barefoot on dirt paths while raw sewage snaked through open ditches. And I remembered the time with Señora Benitez when she talked of the crippled child in the market. If Castro left Cuba, would the crippled children come back?

"Gringo, what is wrong?" His voice was rich with sympathy, like his father.

"What about the poor in Cuba?" I asked.

Aurie looked at me in surprise. "Why do you say that? We took care of our poor. Papi went to the barrios." He paused. "Papi said that they were poor because they were ignorant and they were ignorant because they were stupid. Castro's revolution won't fix stupidity."

When I woke up in Edificio San Jose the morning after Tia Margita's letter, the household was already astir. Instead of corn flakes, Señora Benitez dished up scrambled eggs with a hot sauce mixed in. Instead of Nescafe, she poured me a demitasse of thick, sweetened coffee. "*Es Cubano*," she said.

Doctor Benitez, in his crisp white shirt said, "We will have a little party tonight."

That evening, Doctor Benitez met me at the door, a drink in one hand and a cigar in the other. "*Bien venidos*. Welcome at last. Tonight you will see true Cuban hospitality."

I drank rum and Cokes, *Cuba Libres*, until my head began to spin. Doctor Benitez and Señora danced a samba, moving back and forth as a single body. The doctor's face was flushed and he had eyes only for his wife.

Aurie danced with a heavysset young woman. While his dance partner plodded, Aurie swung his body and rotated his hips as if the music filled his soul. I'd never seen a man dance like that.

When the music was over he called to me, "Gringo, it's time you learned to dance the right way. Not your stupid disco but real Cuban dancing. I will teach you."

He grabbed my arm and pulled me to the middle of the floor. "See, you must move your body to the beat. Don't worry about your arms, worry about your legs and your gut." He pressed his hand into my diaphragm. "Breathe the music."

He wove himself into the rhythms of the music. I tried, too, my head roaring with rum.

"No, no," he said. "Loosen your hips." He took my hand and guided it to his hip. "Feel this." I wanted to pull away, embarrassed because I'd never touched another man like that, but I felt a connection that traveled like electricity from his body to mine.

The Cubans laughed and pointed. Aurie laughed, too. He placed both his hands on my hips and guided them until our movements were synchronized.

When the music finished, my heart pounded and sweat poured down my forehead. Aurie pointed to my reddened face and said to the partygoers, "We will make a Cuban out of him yet."

They clapped and hugged me as I made my way to the balcony to cool off.

On the balcony, Aurie joined me. He was so close I smelled the coconut sweetness of his hair oil and the lingering cigar smoke on his damp shirt.

"Will you come to the airport tomorrow and see me off?" I asked, still trying to catch my breath. The balcony tipped slightly and I leaned into Aurie to regain my balance.

"Ay, gringo, too much Cuban rum."

The stars above the hills surrounding Caracas blurred as I stared at them, trying to steady myself. "Whoa."

Aurie laughed, "*Borracho*. You're drunk. Let me get you to your room."

He guided me to my little room off the kitchen. At the door, he stopped and put his arms around me.

"*Mi hermano*," he pulled me so close I could smell the heat from his body. "Someday we will be together in Cuba. I can feel it in my bones."

I stood stupidly, my arms at my side, the air around me pulsating, and said nothing. Aurie kissed me then, full on the mouth, as if I were a girl.

When I fell into bed, the room spun round and round and round.

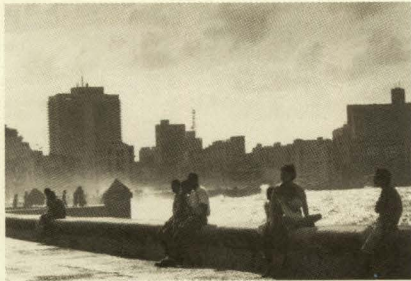
The next morning, with my head throbbing from the *Cuba Libres*, I tapped on Aurie's door.

"I'm leaving." The apartment was silent and smelled of stale cigar smoke and spilled rum.

Aurie did not answer.

All the way to the airport, I looked back, wondering if he was in a taxi behind me. As I walked onto the humid Tarmac of the Maquetia Simon Bolivar airport, I thought I heard Aurie's voice. When I looked back, only the porters stood lounging by the door to the airport. When I looked back, I felt the earth roll beneath my feet.

I'M TOLD THAT ONLY A FEW BUILDINGS were destroyed in



the earthquake and that three of them were apartment buildings designed by the same Cuban architect. I'm told that Edificio San Jose collapsed one floor at a time. Perhaps Aurie danced his way back to Havana that morning to the rhythmic beat of concrete against concrete. ■

About the Contest and Its Winner

Linda Norlander (B.S.N. '74, M.S. '98) has published fiction, nonfiction, and humor regionally and nationally. Her story, "Song of the Lake," won the second *Minnesota* magazine fiction contest, in 2001. She won a Loft Mentorship in Fiction in 2004 and an International Loft Mentorship in 1995. Her humor has been published in *Minnesota Monthly* and *Mpls.St.Paul Magazine*. Her nonfiction publications include two books, *Choices at the End of Life: Finding Out What Your Parents Want* (Fairview Press, 2001) and *To Comfort Always: A Nurse's Guide to End of Life Care* (Sigma Theta Tau Press, 2008). "Aurie's Last Dance" was inspired by a trip to Cuba and the memory of Cuban expatriates she knew as a high school student in Venezuela. Norlander resides in Tacoma, Washington, and is the clinical manager of a hospice and home care program.

Minnesota magazine's fiction contest is open to all University of Minnesota students and alumni. An independent judge selects the winner from a group of finalists chosen by the editorial staff, and the winner is awarded a \$1,500 cash prize. Visit www.alumni.umn.edu/fiction for contest guidelines.



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—Owen Wangensteen, in the Journal of the American Medical Association



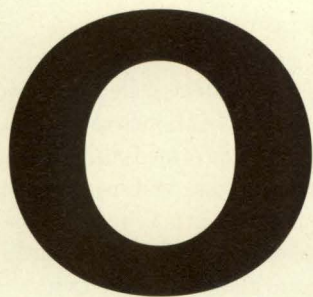
Gut Instincts

**Through instruction and intuition,
pioneering surgeon Owen Wangensteen saved countless lives
around the world and pioneered modern heart surgery.
He made, and preserved, medical history.**



C. Walton Lillehei (B.S. '39, M.D. '41) (second from left) was a protégé of Wangensteen and would become a pioneer of open-heart surgery at the University.

BY TIM BRADY



n a desperate night in 1931, a patient at the University of Minnesota hospital lay critically ill following surgery. Her intestine was obstructed, causing the walls of the organ to become distended. The distension threatened the circulation of her blood, which could quickly prompt a gangre-

nous response and, in a very short time, take her life. The condition is a frequent occurrence following abdominal surgery or injury when the intestine becomes twisted, folded, or kinked.

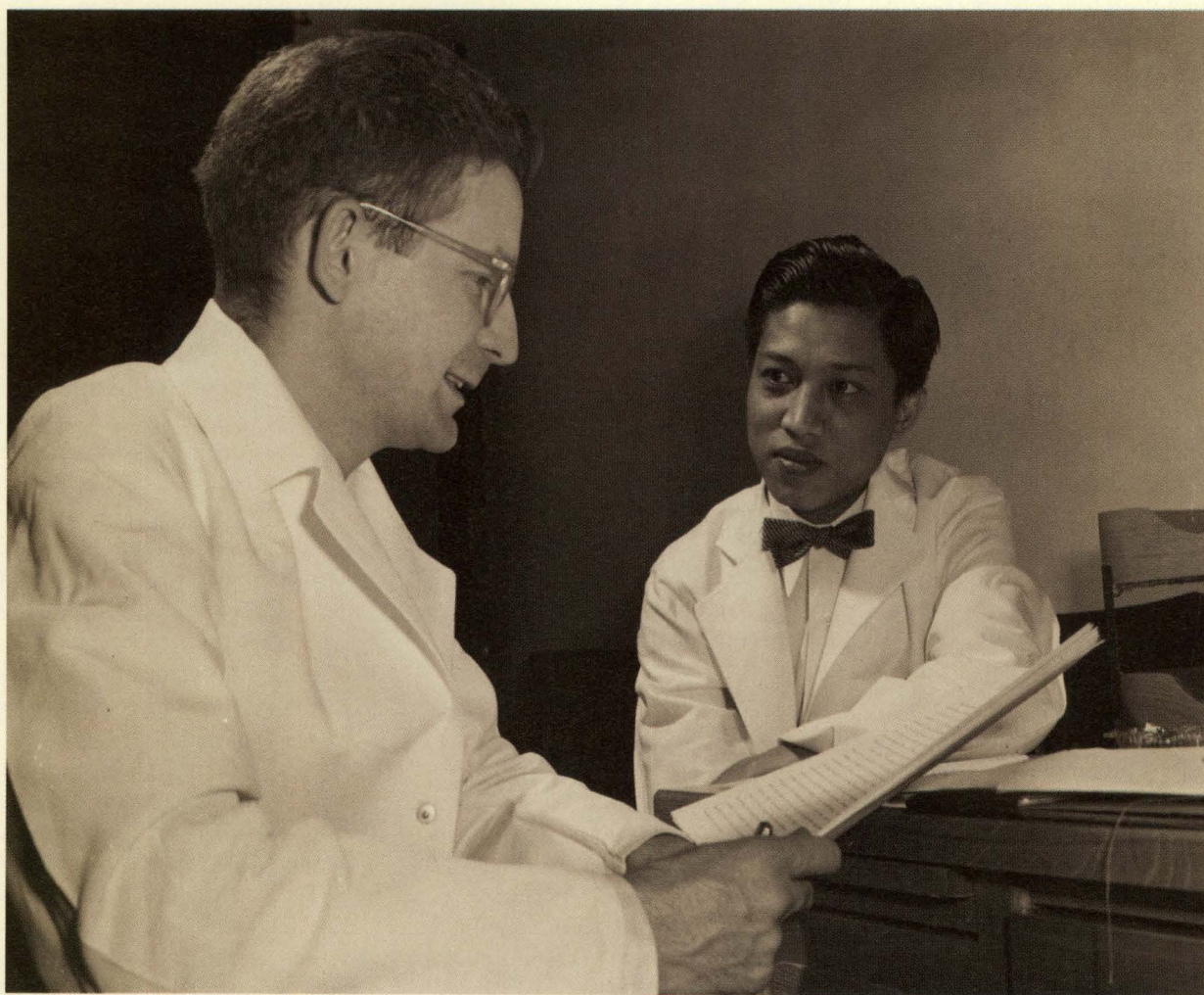
In the 1930s, the standard protocol in this situation was immediate surgery to remove the blocked section of the intestine. Surgery carried other risks, however, including the possibility that the contents of the bowel would spill during the procedure and cause infection. But without treatment, the distension could grow until the bowel ruptured, killing the patient.

Owen Wangensteen (B.S. '19, M.D. '21, Ph.D. '25), the recently

appointed head of the Department of Surgery at the University of Minnesota, had been pondering this problem for some time. His experiments had led him to look for alternative ways to release the pressure of gases and fluids in the body—the source of the distension. If these were drawn off, went Wangensteen's theory, the need for further surgery would be alleviated and the intestine might begin the process of healing. The problem on that night in 1931 was that no device for drawing off these fluids and gases yet existed.

So Wangensteen improvised. He inserted a rubber tube through the patient's nose and down to her small intestine. He attached the outside end of the tube to a siphon bottle, and to the siphon bottle he attached receptacles for gas and liquid, likewise hooked by rubber hose. After priming the siphon, intestinal fluids and gas began drawing off, flowing into the receptacles, and the patient improved almost instantly.

The Wangensteen suction procedure turned out to be just the first sign that an extraordinary individual was making his mark on the history of medicine at the University. But at the time, his contraption seemed too simple a solution for a



F. John Lewis (M.D. '41) (left), assistant professor of surgery, with medical student Maung Kyaw Than, in 1952. Lewis was one of Wangensteen's talented students at the University and, with former classmate C. Walton Lillehei, would perform the first open-heart surgery.

problem that had confounded surgeons for years. Even after a pump was added to Wangensteen's basic invention to make the siphoning process easier and more consistent, the medical world was slow to accept the procedure.

When World War II began, however, and as stretcher after stretcher carried GIs with abdominal injuries into field hospitals, doubts about the effectiveness of Wangensteen's invention vanished. Soldiers around the world were saved by Dr. Wangensteen's elegantly simple invention. Its use became so prevalent that U.S. Army surgical wards were nicknamed "Wangensteen alleys" by staff. By the end of the war, an estimated 100,000 people were saved by the Wangensteen suction instrument. In 1951, poet Ogden Nash would immortalize the method with the lines: "May I find my final rest in / Owen Wangensteen's intestine / knowing that his masterly suction / will assure my resurrection."

For all its success, however, this life-saving invention was only one in a long line of distinguished achievements in Wangensteen's remarkably fruitful career. In time, Wangensteen would mold a small army of renowned surgeons and send them forth to lead hospital and university surgical staffs around the nation; he would build one of the world's great surgical departments at the University of Minnesota; and through his guidance and encouragement, the nature of heart surgery would be forever changed by the work of doctors who studied and worked at the U of M.

In the rarefied world of academic surgery, Wangensteen is primarily remembered for shaping that remarkable department at the University and mentoring and instructing a generation of gifted doctors, whose names read like a who's who of post-war surgical giants. There was C. Walton Lillehei (B.S. '39, M.D. '41), the great pioneer of open-heart surgery at the University of Minnesota; F. John Lewis (M.D. '41), who with Lillehei performed the first-ever open-heart surgery; Christiaan Barnard (Ph.D. '58), the famous South African surgeon who performed the world's first heart transplant; and Norman Shumway (M.D. '56), who became chief of cardiovascular surgery at Stanford University. Shumway did the first heart transplant in the United States (soon after Barnard's South African surgery) and the first heart and lung transplant in the world and became known as the "Father of Transplant Surgery."

All these, and many more shining lights in the surgical arts,

were brought to the University of Minnesota by Wangensteen and nurtured by his guidance and instruction.

For 37 years, "The Chief," as his residents called Dr. Owen Wangensteen, ruled the University of Minnesota's Department of Surgery with a unique blend of medical brilliance, administrative finesse, and an instinctive gift for spotting talent in young surgeons. Wangensteen, with characteristic earthiness, liked to claim that he was just "a plumber of the alimentary canal." ("I have worked at both ends, but largely in between," he would say with a smile.)

Born in 1898, Owen Wangensteen arrived at the University of Minnesota as a farm boy from Lake Park, Minnesota, a town near Detroit Lakes in the western reaches of the state. As a high school student, he longed to be a veterinarian and battled briefly over the matter with his father, who preferred that his son be a medical doctor. The Wangensteens raised hogs. A particularly hard summer of work on the farm convinced Owen that, as his father had suggested, an easier life awaited him in Minneapolis. "Through the portals of pigs and manure—too much of each—" he would say later, "I became a doctor."

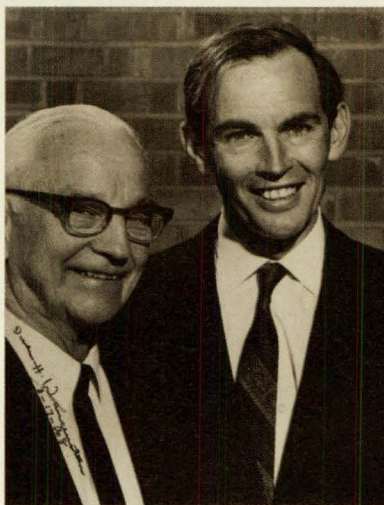
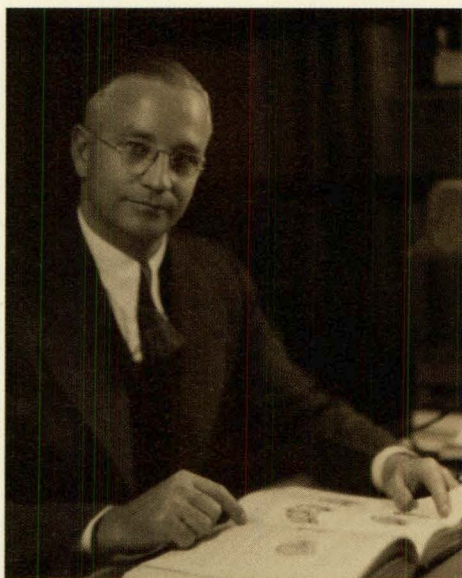
Wangensteen entered the University through a special program established during World War I that allowed for accelerated study in medicine. He earned a bachelor's degree in that subject in 1919 and two years later his M.D.—ranking number one in a class that included future president of the American Medical Association, Dr. Leonard Larson.

The young Dr. Wangensteen was interested in pursuing surgery, but the University had a limited surgical program at the time. The sole fellowship available in the department was already taken, so Wangensteen accepted instead a \$600 stipend as an internist and waited for his chance to study surgery.

That came a couple of years later and, once again, Owen Wangensteen shone as a student. In fact, he so impressed the medical school faculty that, by the time he'd earned his Ph.D. in 1925, he was not

only appointed as a surgical instructor at the U, he was tapped, over two outside candidates—veteran academic surgeons from Harvard and Johns Hopkins—to succeed Dr. Arthur Strachauer (M.D. '08), who was about to retire as head of the Department of Surgery.

Except no one told Wangensteen of the appointment. The idea of promoting a 28-year-old to such a prestigious position



Top: Wangensteen was an avid collector of rare medical books and a voracious reader. By the time he retired in 1967, he was reported to have checked out more books from the University library system than anyone else.

Bottom: Wangensteen (left) was photographed in 1968 with his former student Christiaan Barnard (Ph.D. '58), the South African surgeon who performed the world's first heart transplant.

seemed a little *outré* to the medical school faculty. Besides, Wangensteen was planning to study abroad for the next couple of years. The search committee decided to keep the news of his promotion quiet until his return. Wangensteen left for Switzerland where he studied European surgical techniques and began researching intestinal obstructions, not knowing that his future had been decided.

Wangensteen came back to a program that consisted of three clinical teachers, including himself; one surgical fellow; and 17 part-time clinical professors who were all surgeons in private practice. The budget was \$30,000. When Wangensteen finally received his official appointment in 1930, his first move was to boost the department funds and he did so by ruffling the feathers of those 17 part-timers. He politely suggested that since all had a private practice of their own, perhaps they would be willing to donate their University honoraria back to the department. Despite serious griping, most acquiesced and the budget slowly began to climb.

Wangensteen would prove to be quite adept at coaxing generosity toward his department. A few years after he was established in surgery, he left staff scratching their heads by deciding not to bill some of the more affluent clients seen at the hospital. His request that they “give something for research instead” would turn out to be a very successful means for raising more funds than a simple fee.

Wangensteen was a tremendously hard worker and encouraged the same trait in his students. “Life presents very few bridges to help us over the morass of daily confusions, difficulties, and obstacles,” he wrote. “In our climb, each of us must erect his own Jacob’s ladder. There is no escalator to success.” His day typically began at about 3 in the morning and ended late. A voracious reader, it was claimed of Wangensteen at the time of his retirement in 1967 that no one at the University of Minnesota had checked out more books from the library system. (His love of learning and commitment to preserving knowledge and the record of medical accomplishments became the foundation for the Owen H. Wangensteen Historical Library of Biology and Medicine. See “Body of Work” on page 34.)

The Chief emphasized rigorous training in basic science as well as much work in the lab. Unusual for a university department of surgery was its emphasis on postgraduate research, which led to scores of Ph.D.’s and M.D.’s matriculating from Wangensteen’s department to academic posts across the nation.

His eye for talent was exceptional, and according to one of his most brilliant students, C. Walton Lillehei, often based on intuition. “If he was convinced that a candidate had a good brain and a capacity for work, he would say on the spot: ‘When can

you start?’” Lillehei said. “Such matters as who he was, where he went to school, and character references were considered irrelevant.”

He was tough on his protégés but could be extremely generous with his time and support. Christiaan Barnard remembered that “his demands were so severe, his standards so unyielding, that often I left his office with tears streaming from my eyes.” But when the South African earned his Ph.D. in 1958, he was called into Wangensteen’s office and told that he would need some proper equipment and research funds if he was to do advanced surgery in Cape Town. Wangensteen made a phone call to the National Institutes of Health on Barnard’s behalf, and the future transplant surgeon left Minneapolis knowing that \$2,000 in research funds and a heart-lung machine awaited his arrival at



Owen Wangensteen’s residents called him “The Chief.” He is pictured here with interns in 1952.

the University of Cape Town Medical School.

Wangensteen was a fearless risk-taker and encouraged experiment and innovation in the department. When word spread that Lillehei was looking to perform open-heart surgery by means of cross-circulation with a human donor, considerable opposition to the procedure arose in the Medical School; but when an acceptable donor appeared for the surgery and Wangensteen was notified, he sent a note that Lillehei kept for years afterward: “Dear Walt,” it read, “By *all* means, go ahead! Good Luck! O.H.W.”

Wangensteen also made contributions in cancer surgery and in the understanding of gastrointestinal tract disorders. Through the course of his long career, Wangensteen earned a boatload of honorary doctorates, was a president of the American College of Surgeons, and was an honorary member of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. He founded the Surgical Forum of the American College of Surgeons in 1940—it would become a vital means for surgeons around the country to keep abreast of each

other's work. A prodigious writer, Wangensteen authored more than 900 articles in his career and kept writing after his retirement in 1967. With his second wife, Sally, a medical historian, Wangensteen wrote a lengthy history of surgery, *The Rise of*

Surgery: From Empiric Craft to Scientific Discipline, published in 1978 by the University of Minnesota Press. (Wangensteen and his first wife, Helen, divorced in 1954. Together they had three children: Stephen, Owen, and Mary.)

Body of Work

The medical library Owen Wangensteen founded at the University of Minnesota holds nearly 70,000 rare and important titles.

Located on the fifth floor of Diehl Hall at the University of Minnesota, the Owen H. Wangensteen Historical Library of Biology and Medicine represents one of the great passions of Dr. Wangensteen. A collection of some 70,000 rare books and journals, the library was amassed primarily through the dedication and foresight of Wangensteen and his wife, Sally, who was a medical editor and member of the History of Science Department faculty.

The library is one of the world's best of its kind and includes a cornucopia of precious volumes, letters, journals, and artifacts that stretch back to the 15th century. Its shelves groan with medical learning, from Padua during the Renaissance, to Edinburgh in the 18th century, to Paris in the early 19th century, to Germany in the late 19th century.

The Wangensteen library holds a full cupboard of medical subjects, including a 15th century volume on hygiene (the *Regimen Sanitatis Magnae Mediolanensis* de Mayneri Mayno), the groundbreaking anatomy textbooks published by Jacopo Berengario da Carpi (1521) and Andreas Vesalius (the library has editions from 1568, 1604, and 1642), and the 19th century "school of surgery" books published by the German doctor Theodor Billroth, who was a particular favorite of the library's founder and namesake.

The library has strong collections on surgery, pharmacy, cardiology, anatomy, obstetrics, pediatrics, orthopedics, ophthalmology, and public health. It also maintains a natural history collection that includes a first edition copy of Darwin's *Origins of the Species*.

Open to the public since 1961, the Wangensteen is visited by medical students, young artists interested in taking a peek at the anatomical studies (including some by Albrecht Durer in a 1528 text), and women's studies classes charting the progress of female health concerns. But it is not exclusively the province of higher education scholars. "Some of my favorite researchers are seventh graders who come here for History Day studies," says library curator Elaine Challacombe.

Obviously, a great number of books and manuscripts at the

Wangensteen are precious, rare, and costly. Near the top of the list are the texts of Vesalius and Berengario. Berengario's book, published within 75 years of Gutenberg's Bible, was the first anatomical treatise to employ illustrations in the age of the printing press. Vesalius' work, *De humani corporis fabrica*, first published in 1543, represents a giant leap forward in the study of anatomy from Galen, the famed Greek doctor who lived in the 2nd century. A strong advocate of the necessity of dissection for the understanding of the human body, Vesalius' text corrects some of Galen's misconceptions about the functions of the human body that were still current in the 16th century. The text is accompanied by stunning woodblock engravings from a student of Titian. The descriptions of the workings of the body, with their detailed illustrations, were so advanced for their time that new editions of the book were published all the way up to World War I.

When the Owen H. Wangensteen Historical Library of Biology and Medicine first opened its doors to the public in 1961, it held 3,000 volumes of rare medical texts collected over the years by Wangensteen and other medical faculty at the University of Minnesota. Until his death, Wangensteen continued to build the collection by personally adding books to the

library and, even more important, by successfully raising funds and establishing a \$1 million endowment that provided a means for it to thrive into the present. Over the years Wangensteen and Sally hosted so many fund-raising gatherings in the library's reception room that Sally would say that the library was built "brick by brick, friend by friend, brownie by brownie."

Sally Wangensteen's role in the growth and success of the library deserves special mention. She lived into her 80s, a dozen years beyond her husband, and worked at the library until her death. "She had a wonderful sense of humor and was a very practical-minded person," recalls Challacombe, who has been at the library since 1989. "Every year she would winter in Arizona, and before she left she would have a list of things that needed doing 'in case I don't come back.'"

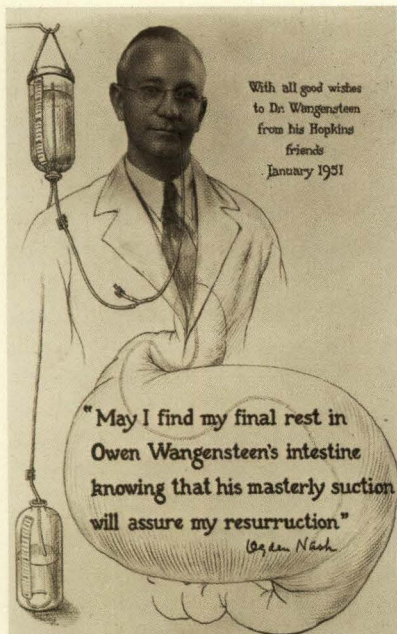
Sally died in 1994. Through her good work and her husband's, the Owen H. Wangensteen Historical Library of Biology and Medicine continues to thrive as it preserves the medical knowledge of the ages.

For more information on the library, visit www.wangensteen.umn.edu.

—T.B.



Wangensteen and his wife, Sally, at the dedication of his portrait in 1978. He would die three years later.



With all good wishes
to Dr. Wangensteen
from his Hopkins
friends
January 1981

"May I find my final rest in
Owen Wangensteen's intestine
knowing that his masterly suction
will assure my resurrection"
Ogden Nash

The Wangensteen suction device, credited with saving countless lives during World War II, was immortalized by poet Ogden Nash in 1951.

Of all of Wangensteen's successes, however, perhaps the most remarkable was the simple reach of his mentoring. By the time Wangensteen retired in 1967, nearly a thousand surgeons had gone through the Department of Surgery at the University of Minnesota. Of those, more than 150 were serving on faculties across the nation and the world, as either heads of surgical departments, full- or part-time professors of surgery, or surgical fellows engaged in academic surgery. The department that had had three full-time staff members when he took over in 1930 had grown to a total of 167 faculty members and an additional 180 surgical fellows when he departed.

An article in the *New York Times* from January 1968 lauding the heart transplants performed by Shumway and Barnard—and by extension Wangensteen and the University of Minnesota—summed up The Chief's legacy quite nicely: "There are a bunch of little Wangensteens all over the country, highly motivated, working day and night, trying to do the impossible."

The first and genuine Wangensteen died of a heart attack in January 1981. ■

Tim Brady is a regular contributor to Minnesota. He lives in St Paul.

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To Minnesota with Love

By ADAM WAHLBERG || Photograph by DAN MARSHALL

Ishay Hadash is a tennis machine. The top player for the Gophers, he has lumberjack shoulders, sinewy forearms, and legs that resemble tree trunks, all of which fortify his power game. And brother, he lays it on you with authority.

Hadash may have been raised in a small town—“even Israelis don’t know where it is,” he says—but his game resounded across the ocean. Scholarship offers flooded in. He knew about the University of Minnesota (he has relatives in the area), but did he really want to move from the Middle East to the Midwest? Hadash, who plans to major in economics, took a recruiting visit and found a lot to like: the gorgeous, state-of-the-art Baseline Tennis Center; a persuasive and successful coach, Geoff Young; and a program with a storied legacy that includes 14 Big Ten titles and seven All-Americans. And guys like himself: machines from foreign shores. Tobias Wernet was one.

“I remember we took him to the Mall of America,” says Wernet, a sophomore from Germany who plays No. 2 on the team. While strolling around the Wimbledon of malls, Wernet assured Hadash that the U would be a good choice for him: The people are welcoming and the team is going places. Hadash was convinced. He signed and has been intimidating opponents ever since.

Hadash and Wernet are just two of seven international players on this year’s resurgent 12-man squad. There is also another German, another Israeli, a Colombian, a Croat, and a Slovak, plus five Americans—three from Minnesota, one from Florida, one from Kentucky. It’s a veritable UN in short pants. And they can play.

While last year’s team limped to a 7-17 record, this year the club is showing signs, after sweeping Marquette and DePaul in its first two matches, of making waves in the Big Ten. “We have six freshmen so we’re young, but we’re talented and deep,” says Young. “And having Ishay helps.”

Nearly every Division I team has an Ishay. As of early February, 64 of the top 100 ranked college players, nearly two-thirds, were foreign. There are myriad explanations for this, the most prevalent being that in the United States, top young athletes tend to play other sports, like football and basketball, while internationally, tennis is still a top attraction. Whatever the reason, the numbers are undeniable. And the U was among the first to see it coming.

“It started for us in 1979 when Hakan Almstrom wrote me a letter,” says Jerry Noyce (B.S. ’67), who coached the team from 1973 to 1988. “He was the national junior doubles champion in Sweden and was high-ranked in singles. We offered him a scholarship and he was great, and he introduced us to Stefan Eriksson, who was also a gem. They really established our Swedish connection.”

Noyce kept recruiting Swedes during the 1980s, and boom, Minnesota started winning Big Ten titles, three in six years. Once the floodgates opened, players from all over the world—France, Ecuador, India, you name it—came to the U. And now all Division I programs are thick with accents.

This doesn’t thrill everyone, namely American parents who want their sons—many of whom were accomplished high school players—to get plenty of playing time in their intercollegiate careers. This can put coaches in a delicate spot. If they want to win, and keep their jobs, they have to play their best players, and that often means going with the international

student athletes. Yet these are American universities, not professional leagues. There are no formal restrictions but most coaches shoot for a 50-50 balance, which is about what Young has on the Gopher squad.

Adam Altepeter isn’t complaining. A fifth-year senior in accounting and finance from East Grand Forks, Minnesota, he plays sixth singles, the lowest rung on the ladder. Internationals have played above him every year, and they got the scholarships while he’s on his own dime. But he wouldn’t change his experience. “I’m not from the most diverse area so it’s been great to get to know people from different countries,” he says.

Like Hadash, Wernet is gifted. He goes left to right like Australian tennis great Lleyton Hewitt, and has a sledgehammer of a two-hand backhand. Tennis gave him options as a lad in Germany—just not *in* Germany.

“There’s no college sport there. You either go to a university to study or you go pro. I wanted to do both. I found out in America you can combine them,” says Wernet, who is majoring in international business. He landed here through the recommendation of a recent former player from Germany, Raoul Schwark. He won 17 matches last year and his first four this year.

Another indication the program is on its way back stands in the shoes of another recent import, this one with a familiar last name: Hadash. Jonathan, Ishay’s younger brother, arrived in mid-January and is starting to get matches. Ishay is obviously thrilled to have him here . . . sort of. “It’s OK,” he says with a big-brother shrug.

Coach Young is more enthused. “Right now he’s not at the same level of Ishay, but he’s talented and is going to improve,” he says.

The same is true of freshman Michael Sicora, a promising two-time state champion from Buffalo, Minnesota, who plans to major in general management. He started the season 3-1 and has proven that he is not overmatched on this level. “He plays good tennis,” says Young.

Which is what it’s all about. No matter where you’re from or what your background, the net is the same three feet for everyone. And that holds true in any language. ■

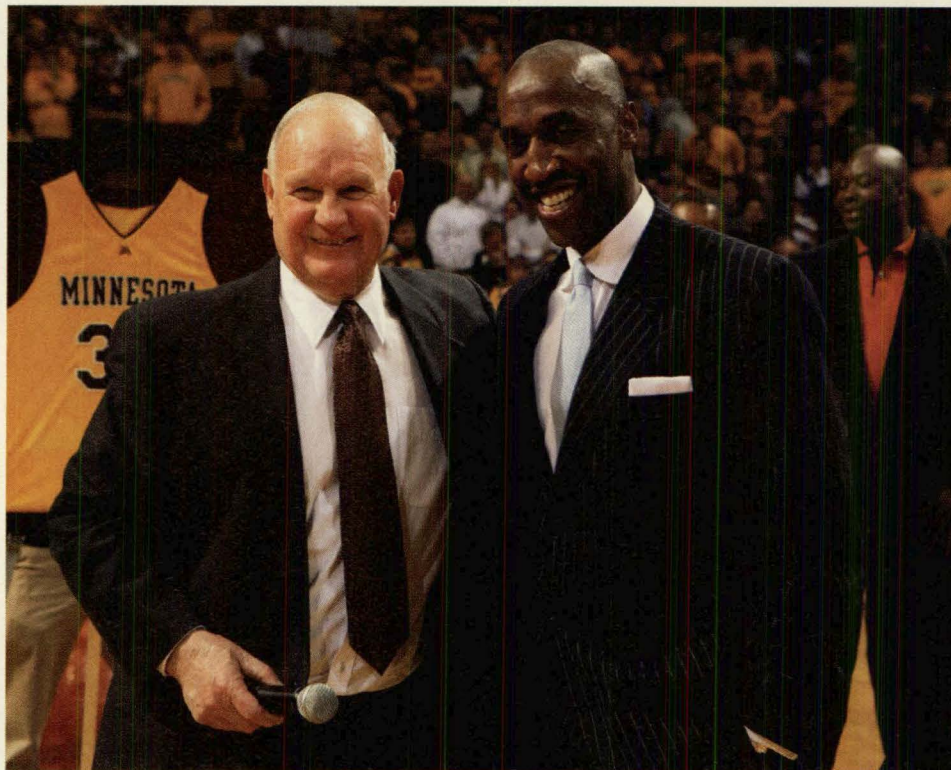
Imports from Israel, Germany, and other countries are helping put Gopher tennis back on the map.

Adam Wahlberg is executive editor of Minnesota Law & Politics.



Homegrown and international talent have teamed up on a resurgent Gopher men's tennis team. Pictured are sophomore Tobias Wernet (left) from Mainz, Germany, and senior Adam Altpeter from East Grand Forks, Minnesota.

The jersey of former Minnesota basketball standout Trent Tucker (B.A. '06) was raised to the rafters of Williams Arena during half-time of the Gopher-Indiana game February 10. Tucker's No. 32 joined the jerseys of Gopher greats Kevin McHale, Lou Hudson, Mychal Thompson, and Jim Brewer, whose numbers have also been retired. Tucker, a native of Flint, Michigan, played four seasons at the U under Coach Jim Dutcher, leading the Gophers to the Big Ten title in 1982. Following his collegiate career, he played pro basketball for 11 years and won a world championship as a member of the Chicago Bulls. He returned to the U in 2004 to complete his degree in education. Tucker is currently vice president of community outreach and youth development at the U, where he works with middle school students on post-secondary readiness. He is also a basketball commentator on the Big Ten Network.



Former Gopher basketball coach Jim Dutcher (left) and Trent Tucker

A survey conducted by the Chronicle of Higher Education shows that the U has the smallest athletics endowment of any university in the Big Ten. At \$25 million, the U's endowment is about half that of Penn State and Ohio State, which led the conference. The endowment is used to fund athletics scholarships. Athletics director Joel Maturi acknowledged the need to increase the endowment but noted that the department's priority in recent years has been raising money for construction of TCF Bank Stadium.

The men's and women's basketball teams each threw monkeys off their backs in January by snapping long-standing losing streaks against Big Ten opponents. The women upended nationally ranked Ohio State 59-56 on January 15 to record the Gophers' first-ever win at Columbus after 23 previous attempts. The men, stymied in their previous 20 contests with Illinois, crushed the Illini at home 59-36 on January 29. It was the fewest points allowed by the Gophers against a conference opponent since 1951.

The reigning Big Ten champion Golden Gopher soccer team will try to extend its record-breaking home winning streak when it hosts the Minnesota Spring Classic April 18. The Spring Classic, which marks the end of the

spring season, will feature the Gophers, Nebraska, North Dakota State, and Drake University. Last year the Gophers went 12-0 at Elizabeth Lyle Robbie Stadium, marking the team's first-ever undefeated home season. The Gophers' 22 wins overall set new school records for number of wins and winning percentage (.846), and earned them a ranking of No. 15 to end the season. The team advanced to the NCAA Sweet Sixteen, where they lost 1-0 in overtime to then-No. 1 Notre Dame.

Head football coach Tim Brewster made good on his intention to toughen the Gophers' nonconference schedule by securing two games with national powerhouse University of Southern California. Minnesota will host the Trojans at TCF Bank Stadium on September 18, 2010, and will play at USC to open the 2011 season.

Gopher distance runners Chris Rombough and Hassan Mead each bested the previous school record in the 3,000-meter run at the Washington Husky Classic in February. Mead's time of 7 minutes, 56.60 seconds broke the previous mark of 7:59:36, which Rombough set last year. Rombough's time at the Husky Classic was 7:57:58. Rombough is a junior from Fremont, Wisconsin, and Mead is a sophomore from Minneapolis.

Gopher women swimmers won 10 events, but still came up short in defending last year's title during the Big Ten championships. Led by senior Jenny Shaugnessy, who was named Swimmer of the Championships, the Gophers finished second to Indiana. The Gophers broke all but four school records during the meet.

—Cynthia Scott

Sports Quotebook

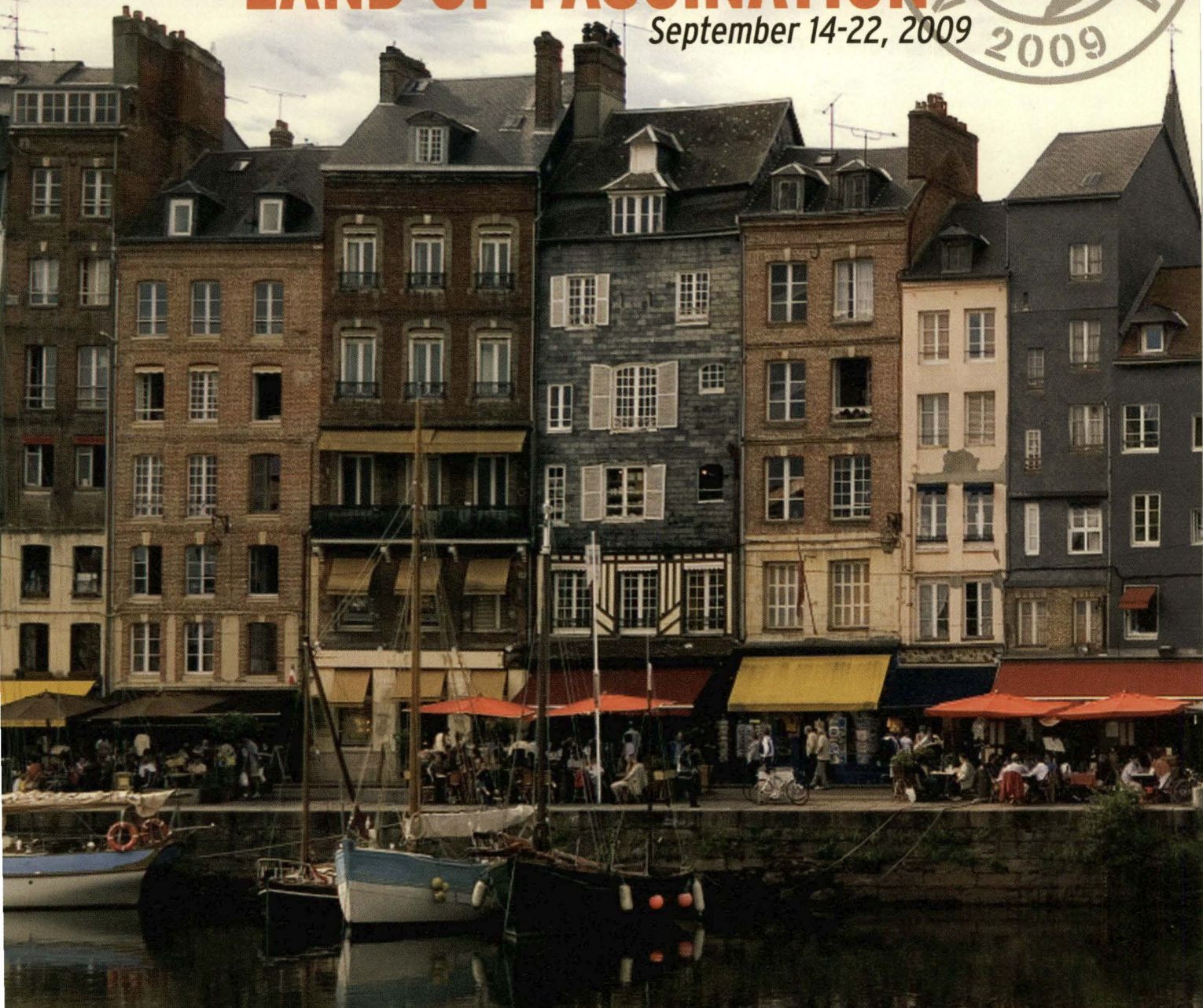
"I'm an explosive offensive coach. Whatever that is, whether it's East Coast, West Coast, pro style. I don't know what the definition is. We're going to be the Gophers' offense. We're going to 'go-fer' touchdowns."

—Jedd Fisch, new Gophers offensive coordinator, in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*.

Normandy:

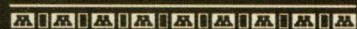
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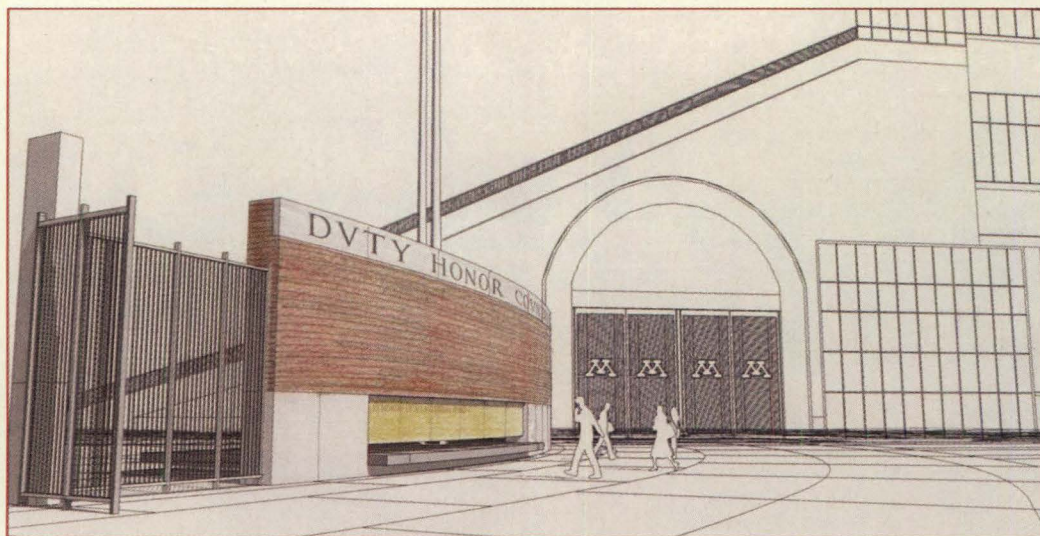
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Honoring Service and Sacrifice

The new Veterans Tribute at TCF Bank Stadium honors the work and sacrifices of all veterans.

When the Gophers return to campus this fall in the new TCF Bank Stadium, the University of Minnesota will be restoring more than just the tradition of on-campus football. They'll also be renewing their commitment to honor veterans. The new Veterans Tribute—which will consist of a wall, plaza, and flags just outside the new stadium's entrance—links back to the old Memorial Stadium, which was named in honor of World War I veterans. “The tribute is an important tie to veterans and the Armed Forces community as well as to [the stadium's] past,” says Karen Himle, vice president for university relations. “We want to remind students and the wider community how important veterans are to our state and to the country.”

In 2005, retired U. S. Air Force Brigadier General Dennis Schulstad (B.A. '66), former national board president of the University of Minnesota Alumni Association, led a committee commissioned by University President Bob Bruininks to plan the tribute. With the



The Veterans Tribute will grace the entrance to TCF Bank Stadium.

help of U officials and more than a dozen veterans groups the committee decided to expand the scope of the tribute (see sidebar). Instead of recognizing only World War I veterans, as Memorial Stadium had, the group chose to honor the efforts of all service members, past, present, and future.

For veterans such as Curt Cooper, a recently retired army officer who represented the University Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) on the tribute committee, the tribute is a nod to the nation's history and its struggles for freedom. “As veterans, we tie ourselves to our past and to our comrades in the past. We trace our lineage and we remember,” says Cooper. “When you do tributes like this, it's an outward sign of that remembrance of veterans, and a reminder that they won't be forgotten.”

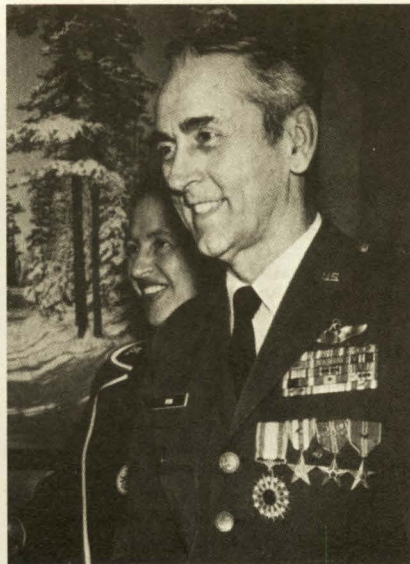
Architects from the Minneapolis firm Architectural Alliance designed the simple but powerful tribute. An 18-foot-tall curved wall will stretch 72 feet from the entrance, serving as a key part of the entrance gate. The brick-and-limestone wall will feature several words and phrases etched onto the stone: Duty, Honor, Country; Minnesota Veterans; and Thank You for Our Freedom.” An inscription, inspired by one from Memorial Stadium, will read, “This stadium was erected by the members and friends of the University to honor the men and women of Minnesota who serve their country.” Subtle lighting will allow passersby to read the inscription and etchings at night.

At the center of the tribute will be a 15-by-25-foot American flag. “The American flag and veterans go hand in hand,” says Schulstad. “There's a 100-foot flagpole and one of the largest—if not the largest—American flag in Minnesota.” A POW-MIA flag will fly just below the American flag, and a separate 80-foot flagpole will be used for the Minnesota flag. The limestone wall, which will be just behind the flags, will serve as the backdrop during the

Saluting Veterans

These veterans groups served on the committee to plan the Veterans Tribute:

- American Legion
- Association of United States Army, General John W. Vessey Jr. Chapter
- Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Minnesota Disabled American Veterans
- Minnesota National Guard
- Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs
- Minnesota Disabled American Veterans
- Minnesota Military Order of the Purple Heart
- Minnesota Reserve Officers Association
- Minnesota Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Minnesota Vietnam Veterans Charity
- Military Officers Association, Minnesota Chapter
- Air Force Association
- United Veterans Legislative Council of Minnesota
- University of Minnesota Army Reserve Officer Training Corps



Top left: The sight of student soldiers training on campus was common in the 1940s as they marched from class to class and from barracks to mess halls. From the January 1944 *Minnesota Alumnus*.

Bottom left: Lieutenant Kenneth Blackmer (B.S. '46) received the Air Medal for meritorious service in 1952. General Kenneth Sweany is presenting the medal in a ceremony in Korea. From the May-June 1952 *Minnesota*.

Above: Air Force Brigadier General David Winn (B.A. '58) at an awards ceremony in 1974, when he was decorated for his personal heroism and inspired leadership as a senior ranking prisoner of war for four years and eight months in North Vietnam. His wife, Mary, is in the background. From the March 1975 *Alumni News*.



national anthem and other pre-game events. A steel platform on the stadium side of the wall will be used for raising the flag as well as for events throughout the year including Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and ROTC commissioning ceremonies.

Schulstad says that while the tribute will be highly visible on game days, it will also make an impact on a daily basis. "It's in a great location, so people will see it while driving or walking by the stadium," he says.

To create the tribute, the committee agreed to raise \$450,000. After a kickoff contribution of \$100,000 from the University, more than a dozen individuals stepped up to raise a total of \$580,000. "We knew there were a lot of people who would be very interested in funding something like this," says Schulstad. "We had several very generous individuals who were willing to help out."

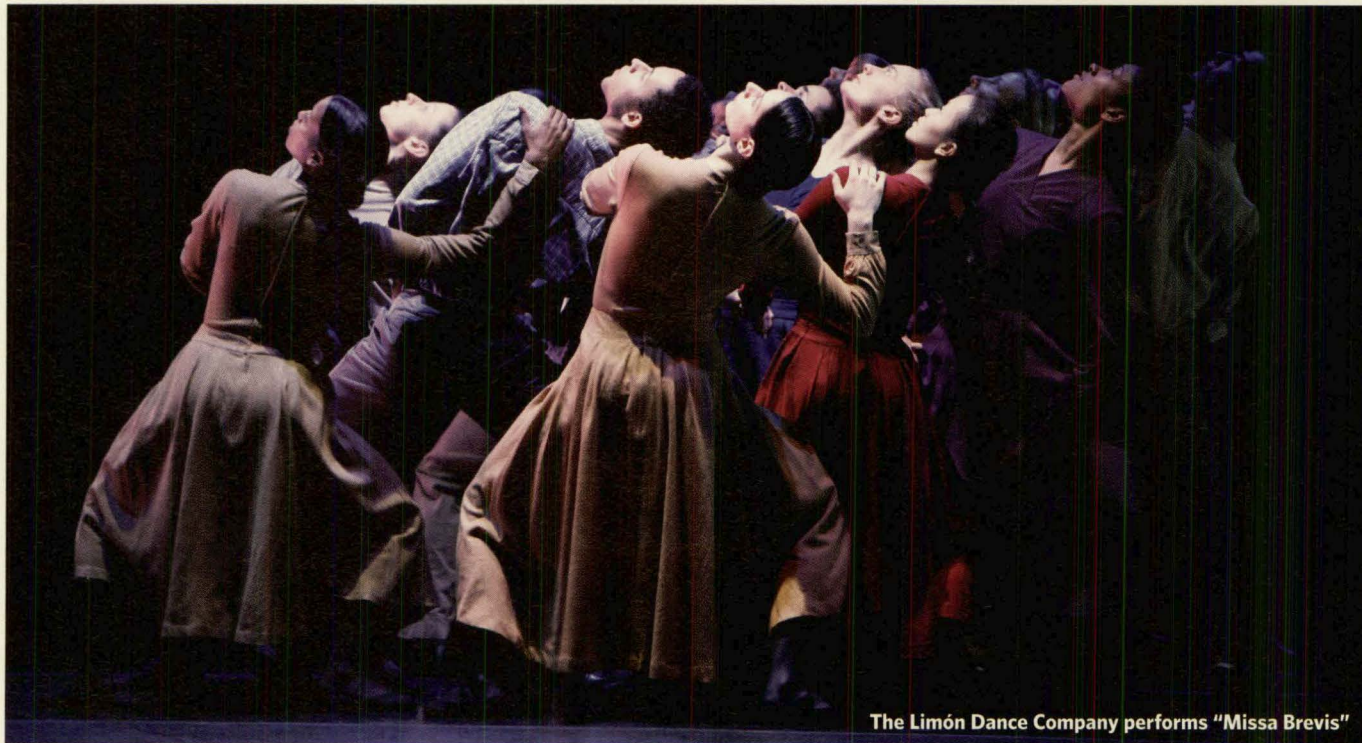
The extra funding will be used to pay for flags and future

maintenance costs, and future upgrades may also be considered. "We want this to be more of an ongoing, living thing," Schulstad says, noting that suggestions have included using the tribute to recognize University of Minnesota alumni who received the Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest mark of distinction that can be bestowed upon a member of the military. Three University of Minnesota alumni have received the rare honor: Captain Richard Fleming (B.A. '39) and Major Henry Courtney Jr. (B.A. '39), both of whom died in World War II, and Specialist 4th Class Lee Olson (B.S. '67), who lost his life in Vietnam.

The Veterans Tribute dedication ceremony will be held on September 11, the day before the Gophers' first home game. Veterans and other members of the military will be invited to the event, which will likely include a flyover from a World War I-era plane and a parachute drop. On September 12, when Minnesota hosts the Air Force Academy, a range of activities will recognize veterans, including a patriotic halftime show by the University of Minnesota marching band and scoreboard greetings from University of Minnesota alumni serving in Iraq.

The tribute may have started as a way to recognize the past. But by working with other veterans to help with the tribute, it became a way for building connections in the present. And for Schulstad, the tribute is also about looking ahead. "It's a whole new stadium," he says, "and we're excited to start new traditions."

—Erin Peterson



The Limón Dance Company performs "Missa Brevis"

Limón Zest

In the late 1950s, Mexican American choreographer José Limón (1908–1972) and his young dance company toured Europe. As they traveled through Poland, in particular, Limón was horrified by the devastation wrought during World War II. But he also marveled at people's faith and perseverance as they sought to rebuild their lives. Inspired by what he witnessed, Limón created "Missa Brevis," a modern-dance work of tremendous depth and sweep in which a large community of dancers swirls around a solitary figure.

The Limón Dance Company (last here in 1976), winner of the 2008 National Medal of Arts, comes to Northrop Auditorium March 19 to perform the 1958 "Missa Brevis," one of Limón's most powerful, humanistic, and timeless works. It "exemplifies the epic aspects of Limón's choreography at its best," says Carl Flink (B.A. '90), chair of the Department of Theatre Arts & Dance, who danced in Limón's company from 1992 to 1998. During that time, he performed both as a member of the group and in the role of the soloist.

Choreographed to Hungarian composer Zoltán Kodály's same-titled score, "Missa Brevis" has been called a communal hymn against war. While the community of dancers swirl in fear and hope, individual dancers emerge in solos of anguish or spiritual uplift. "As an audience member, you get the sense of an outsider or iconoclastic individual against this large, tight-knit group," Flink explains. "While it's not a good-versus-evil relationship, José did have a great passion for the stark opposites of life: the good and evil, the profane and the holy."

During the Northrop performance, Kodály's score will be sung by the Oratorio Society of Minnesota, directed by Matthew

Mehaffey, assistant professor of music and associate director of Choral Activities in the U's School of Music. Helen Jensen from the Oratorio Society will play one of Northrop's best-kept secrets: a four-manual Aeolian-Skinner organ, original and unaltered since its installation in the 1930s.

In addition, nine students from the dance department will join the 12-member Limón company on stage. The students auditioned for the performance last spring. In August, Flink and his wife, Emilie Plauche Flink (also a former Limón company member), conducted an intensive workshop on the Limón technique, which uses breath, the body's weight, gravity, and propulsion to express ideas and emotions. And last fall, former company member Sarah Stackhouse taught a five-week residency on the Limón technique and taught "Missa Brevis" to the students.

"All of these opportunities have made the Limón experience a deep and rewarding one for the students," Flink says. "The students have lived with this material for almost a year. And to work with professional dancers and perform with them on the Northrop stage is an invaluable real-life opportunity that teaches them how to evolve as dance artists."

The program also includes "The Traitor," Limón's meditation on Judas's betrayal of Christ, and "Into My Heart's House," a work by former Limón Dance Company dancer Clay Taliaferro commissioned in celebration of the 100th anniversary of José Limón's birth.

The Limón Dance Company performs "Missa Brevis" March 19 at 7:30 p.m., at Northrop Auditorium. Tickets are \$31 to \$55. Call 612-624-2345 or visit www.northrop.umn.edu.

—Camille LeFevre



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2008–09 Distinguished Teaching Awards Ceremony

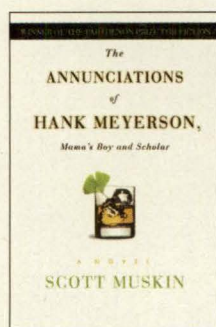
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Bookmarks



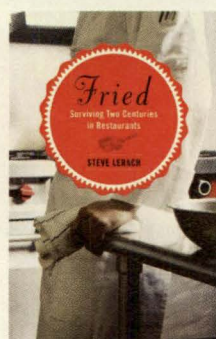
The Annunciations of Hank Meyerson, Mama's Boy and Scholar
By Scott Muskin (M.F.A. '98)
Hooded Friar Press (2009)

This award-winning debut novel features a complex protagonist who is both sympathetic and pathetic, intelligent and oblivious, victim and violator. A self-described mama's boy, Hank Meyerson is unkempt, overweight, and indulgent. His life takes an emotional rollercoaster ride through acts of betrayal and their repercussions. He travels from Minneapolis to Montana in an attempt to piece together a self he can live with and find redemption.



Free Market Madness: Why Human Nature Is at Odds with Economics—and Why It Matters
By Peter Ubel (M.D. '88)
Harvard Business Press (2009)

A physician and director of the Center for Behavioral and Decision Sciences in Medicine at the University of Michigan, Ubel understands the limits of human rationality and the ways people act against their self-interests. For example, despite an obesity epidemic, people continue to consume high-fat, over-processed food. This is killing people and rewarding exploitative companies. The free market will never cure obesity, Ubel argues. He believes an unregulated free market can be dangerous for people's health and well-being and that, in some cases, the government must regulate markets to stop the damage people do to their bodies and their finances—and to the economy as a whole.



Fried: Surviving Two Centuries in Restaurants
By Steve Lerach (B.A. '96, M.L.S. '07)
Minnesota Historical Society Press/Borealis Books (2008)

For 200 years, dating back to the era of France's King Louis XVI, an odd collection of chefs and cooks have served the dining public. *Fried* interweaves the history of restaurants with stories from the author's 30 years of working in the food industry. Lerach started as a restaurant dishwasher and worked his way up to professional chef, including running the kitchens at the University of Minnesota. With humor and poignancy, he tells the tales from behind the lines, complete with the personal and often tragic stories of the characters who found livelihoods and acceptance in restaurant kitchens.

It's a Cat's World... You Just Live in It
By Justine Lee
Three Rivers Press (2008)

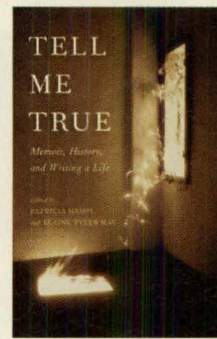
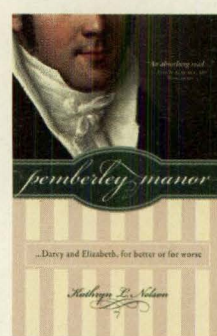
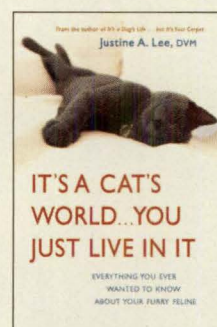
Assistant clinical specialist in the University's College of Veterinary Medicine, Lee has written a companion book to *It's a Dog Life... but It's Your Carpet*. Domestic cats are enigmas to many people, including longtime cat owners. With tried and true advice and irreverent humor, the author explains cats' behavior and health issues and offers tips on dealing with frustrating cat problems, such as how to stop kitty from begging for food in the middle of the night.

Pemberley Manor... Darcy and Elizabeth, for Better or Worse
By Kathryn L. Nelson (B.A. '74)
Sourcebooks Landmark (2009)

In Jane Austen's famous *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet spar over class and manners, exposing their respective pride and prejudice. Weathering heartache, miscommunication, and scandal, the two find love at last. But does it last? Do the Darcys live happily ever after? In this sequel, Nelson takes up the story after they begin married life and considers how their vulnerabilities, personalities, and propensities might play out in one of literature's most famous unions.

Tell Me True: Memoir, History, and Writing a Life
Edited by Patricia Hampl (B.A. '68) and Elaine Tyler May
Minnesota Historical Society Press/Borealis Books (2008)

A popular genre for readers and writers, memoirs have fallen under great scrutiny with questions of their accuracy. Memoirists must draw on their memories and imaginations, yet audiences demand narratives that, while worthy of fiction, are completely factual. Hampl, an essayist and memoirist, and May, the author of several books on 20th century America, have navigated the gray areas between fact and memory, history and imagination, in their writings. Both Regents Professors at the University, they have collected 14 original essays from award-winning memoirists and historians who show how to tell compelling, and true, stories. Included are essays by André Aciman, Alice Kaplan, and Cheri Register.



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Joan Velasquez

A Helping Hand

When Joan Velasquez's husband, Segundo, first moved to Minnesota from Bolivia in 1969, he was amazed at the amount of perfectly usable goods Americans throw away. A manager of technical operations for an airline at the time, he would return home from work lugging surplus tools, machine parts, and other items that were headed for dumpsters. "It was repulsive to him almost," she says. "It was always, 'How could you throw this away? Somebody in Bolivia could use this!'"

Joan (Ph.D. '79) had been a Peace Corps volunteer in Bolivia in the late 1960s, when she met Segundo, and had seen firsthand the devastating effects of the country's poverty. With 95 percent of rural Bolivians living below the poverty line, the country has the highest rural poverty rate in the world. Ten percent of newborns die in their first year and the average family makes less than \$300 annually. Few have access to clean water and health care.

In 1994, when she retired as a social work administrator in Ramsey County, she and Segundo—who was still collecting surplus goods—decided to formalize what he had been doing informally for years. They co-founded Mano a Mano (Hand to Hand), a nonprofit, volunteer-driven organization that collects and ships discarded but serviceable American goods to Bolivia. Originally, Mano a Mano focused on sending surplus medical equipment.

But the Velasquezes knew their impact would be limited if rural Bolivians did not also have access to health care, so they also began raising funds to build free medical clinics. To date, 94 clinics have been opened, giving more than 700,000 Bolivians health care access for the first time. More than 2.5 million pounds

of gurneys, wheelchairs, and stethoscopes that were otherwise destined for American landfills have also been sent.

Last year, the National Peace Corps Association recognized Joan with the Sargent Shriver Award for Distinguished Humanitarian Service. The annual award is named for Peace Corps founder Sargent Shriver and recognizes returned Peace Corps volunteers who continue to make contributions to humanity.

Much has changed since Velasquez first walked from door to door as a young volunteer in rural Cochabamba trying to gauge the needs of its residents. Then, she says, villagers would tell her stories of immense hardship and conclude with "*si Dios quiere*" (roughly translated, "if it be God's will"). "There was a sense that there's not much you can do to have an impact on the world or on your life," she says.

Velasquez believes that programs like the Peace Corps and Mano a Mano have changed that outlook by emphasizing local involvement in everything from planning to building. Last year, rural Bolivians logged 80,000 hours building clinics and completing other community development projects with Mano a Mano's assistance. And Mano a Mano has expanded into an organization that underwrites the construction of roads, reservoirs, and schools in addition to medical clinics. *Si Dios quiere* isn't as prevalent these days, says Velasquez, who continues to co-direct the organization with Segundo. "Once people get that sense of 'we did this' then they come back and say, 'We need to have our children go to school. Can you help us build a school?'"

—Danny LaChance



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Alumni Association Angle



Happy Campers. Every student knows that breakfast is the most important meal of the day—especially when it's winter and you've spent the night camping outside, as these four students did in 1957. With Coffman Union in the background, they cooked their grub before heading off to class.

INSIDE

An Exceptional Annual Celebration

Eavesdropping on Kenneth Starr

The Arboretum's Ode to H₂O

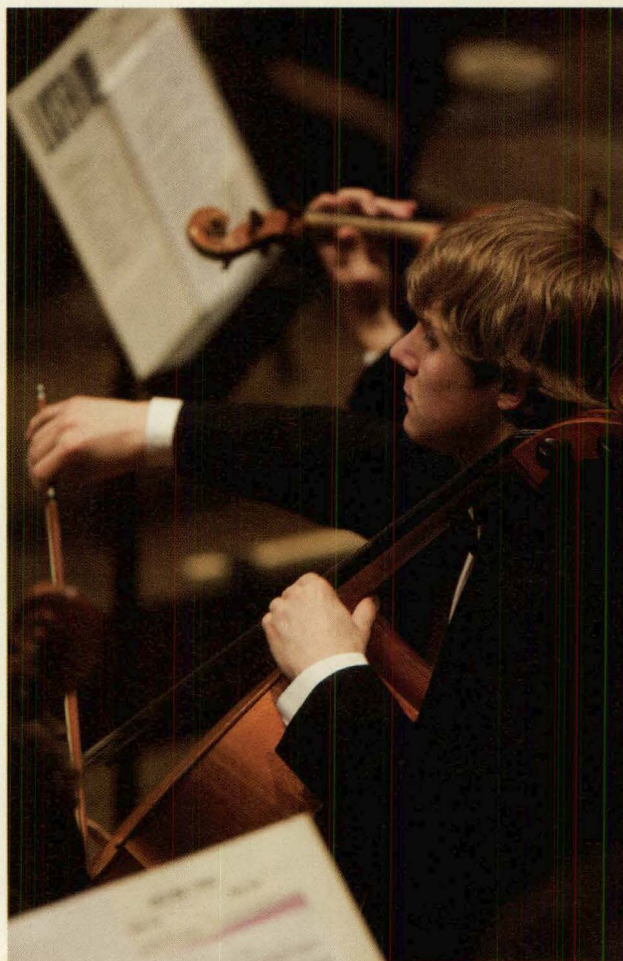
Letters to Lawmakers

Alumni Set Sail

2009 Annual Celebration a Musical Feast

The U's outstanding performing arts tradition will take center stage for the 2009 University of Minnesota Alumni Association Annual Celebration on May 1. The Alumni Association is pleased to partner with the School of Music and Northrop Auditorium to present Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, Op. 125 (choral), featuring the University Symphony Orchestra and Combined Choirs. Internationally renowned conductor Mark Russell Smith, artistic director of orchestral studies at the U and director of new projects for the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, will make his debut with the University orchestra. Kathy Saltzman Romey, director of choral activities at the University and artistic director of the Minnesota Chorale, will conduct the chorus. Nearly 300 students will perform in the orchestra and chorus, creating a work of majestic scope. The Ninth Symphony incorporates the rapturous "Ode to Joy," one of the most beloved works in Western music.

The evening will begin at 5:30 p.m. with a reception and a gourmet boxed supper at the University Recreation Center. Following the annual meeting, guests will adjourn to Northrop Auditorium, where they will be seated in premium reserved seats. Transportation to Northrop will be provided for those who need assistance. Tickets for the annual celebration are \$45 for members and \$50 for nonmembers. This is a rare opportunity to enjoy some of the University's finest musical talent. Make plans now to be part of this memorable evening. Watch for details at www.alumni.umn.edu.



The University Symphony Orchestra and Combined Choirs, 300 students strong, will take the stage at Northrop Auditorium for the Alumni Association's 2009 annual celebration on May 1. Attendees will receive premium seating for the concert.

National President

Mentor a Future Leader

As national board president of the Alumni Association, I have the privilege of regularly meeting with a variety of University of Minnesota officials and representatives—including the president and regents, the provost and administrators, and deans and faculty members—to offer the Alumni Association’s perspective on critical U issues. I’m always impressed by the depth of their energy and commitment to this great university.

As remarkable as I find these people, however, I am bowled over by U students. Whenever I come to campus and have the opportunity to interact with students, I leave inspired and uplifted by their intelligence, exuberance, spirit, and intellectual curiosity.

I signed up to participate in the Carlson School of Management’s mentoring program this year. And when I first met sophomore April Wendt, from Frazee, Minnesota, I wasn’t certain what I’d be able to offer her. Although I am technically the mentor and April is my mentee, I can assure you that I’m learning more from her than she is from me.

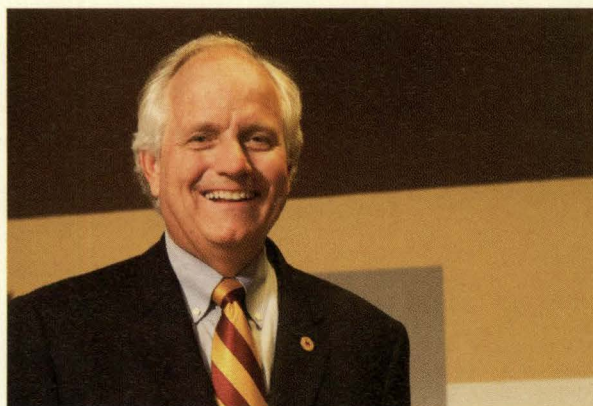
April is earning her bachelor’s degree in business and human resources with a minor in coaching. We usually meet for a lunch on campus every month and discuss her coursework, her résumé, preparing for interviews, and making connections in the field of human resources. But we also talk about our backgrounds and what’s happening in our lives now. April and I had both been Little League umpires, involved in campus ministry activities, and mentored other young people (she through Big Brothers Big Sisters). April is around the age of my wife, Tracy’s, and my daughters but offers a different perspective on the important issues facing college students today, such as the difficulty in finding employment during this tough economy and the stress on students who are about to enter the job market.

When it comes to mentoring, I pale in comparison to Don Bauer (M.P.A. ’57, M.A.’59), the U’s longest serving mentor, who has mentored students for 22 years. He is one of hundreds of alumni who volunteer as mentors. Thirteen colleges and professional schools at the U have mentoring programs, with nearly 2,000 mentoring pairs for the 2008–09 school year. The School of Journalism and Mass Communication established the U’s first mentoring program, in 1983. The College of Pharmacy has the largest program, with 334 student mentees. Since the 1992–93 school year, more than 23,000 students have been mentees at the U.

The demand for mentors often exceeds the supply, however, and I encourage all alumni to consider becoming a mentor. The Alumni Association’s Mentor Connection is the place to start. A clearinghouse of information and resources, the Mentor Connection has created a handbook for mentors, hosts workshops and networking events, and works with alumni societies, colleges and departments, and community organizations to make every mentor pairing a success. In particular, anyone who is concerned about our nation’s future would benefit from becoming a mentor of a U of M student, because when you spend time with the future leaders of our community, you realize we’re going to be in good hands.

For more information, go to www.alumni.umn.edu and click on “Mentoring & Career Resources.”

—Bruce Mooty (B.A. ’77, J.D. ’80)



Bruce Mooty



Great Conversations: Eavesdropping Encouraged



World renowned heart researcher Doris Taylor (above) of the University of Minnesota, keynote speaker at last year's Alumni Association annual celebration, and former federal independent counsel Kenneth Starr (far right), the dean of Pepperdine University Law School, are among the featured guests at this year's Great Conversations.

Breakthroughs in medicine and the role of the Supreme Court will be the topics of conversation for this year's Great Conversations series on April 14 and May 12. Now in its eighth year, Great Conversations pairs outstanding scholars from the University of Minnesota with world-renowned experts in a discussion of important current issues.

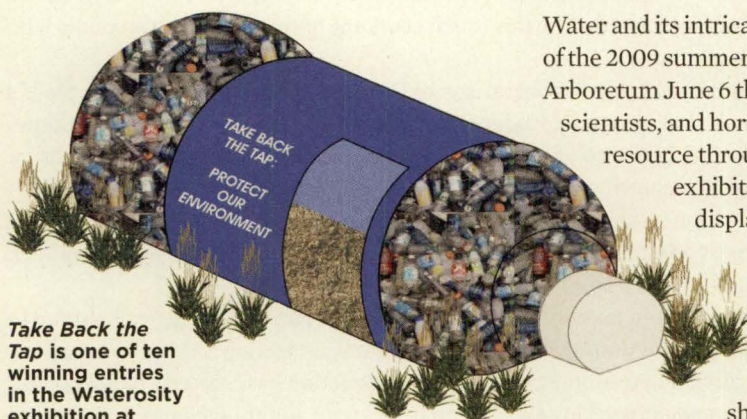
The April conversation will feature celebrated University of Minnesota heart researcher Doris Taylor and Mayo Clinic pediatrician and Chair of the University of Minnesota Board of Regents Patricia Simmons. They will discuss innovative breakthrough therapies that hold promise for treating and curing now-fatal ailments.

May's conversation will pair University Provost and former law school dean Thomas Sullivan with Pepperdine University Law School Dean and former U.S. Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr in a discussion about the impact of the United States Supreme Court on American life.

Sessions begin at 7:30 p.m. at the Ted Mann Concert Hall on the West Bank. Alumni Association members receive a \$5 discount on the regular ticket price of \$28.50. For more information and to order tickets, go to www.cce.umn.edu/conversations or call 612-624-2345.



On Tap at the Arboretum

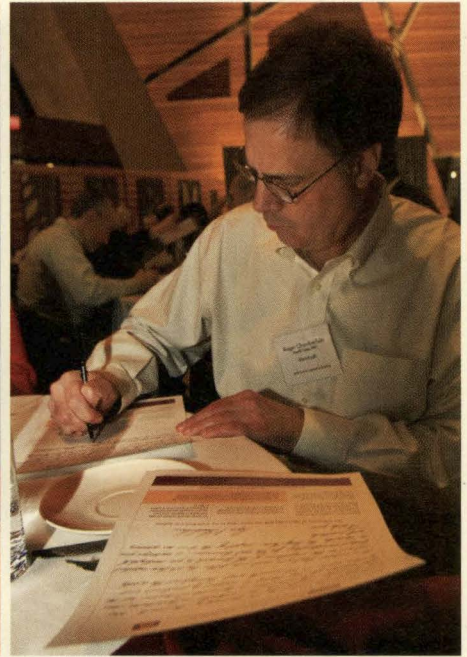


Take Back the Tap is one of ten winning entries in the Waterosity exhibition at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum June 6 through October 4. It can be previewed at the Galleria shopping center in Edina March 15 through April 30.

Water and its intricate, essential relationship to people and plants is the theme of the 2009 summer exhibition at the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum June 6 through October 4. Bringing together the voices of artists, scientists, and horticulturists, "Waterosity" will celebrate this precious resource through thought-provoking and playful installations and exhibits. Among the items on exhibit will be a new permanent display that demonstrates how to return rainwater to earth using a green roof, rain barrels, and rain gardens; a display about water-wise living and landscaping, including information on new, water-efficient grass varieties; a juried exhibition of 10 art installations depicting the interplay of people, plants, and water; and kid-friendly features including shows by Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theatre.

Alumni Association members are eligible for a \$5 discount on the \$35 annual membership fee to the Arboretum. Members of the Arboretum are entitled to free admission and other benefits. The Arboretum has 1,000 acres of magnificent gardens, and natural areas and extensive northern-hardy plant collections. For information, visit www.arboretum.umn.edu or call 952-443-1400.

Legislative Advocacy Kicks into Gear



The biennium budget proposed by Governor Tim Pawlenty (B.A. '83, J.D. '86) that would eliminate \$156.1 million in funding for the University of Minnesota framed the 2009 legislative briefing at the McNamara Alumni Center on January 28. Gathering the day after the governor unveiled his budget proposal, 370 alumni, students, faculty, and staff joined members of the Board of Regents and several legislators to hear President Bob Bruininks' assessment of the governor's budget and his thoughts on the role of higher education in creating a strong economy. A portion of the session was dedicated to participants writing letters to their legislators about the value of the University. Those letters—more than 400 in all—were delivered to delegations representing 52 of Minnesota's 67 legislative districts in early February.

Supporters of the University showed up in force to the 2009 legislative briefing at the McNamara Alumni Center in January. A portion of the evening was dedicated to writing letters to legislators about the importance of the University to Minnesotans.



"We got a budget cut yesterday and then you all showed up tonight," Bruininks said in thanking attendees for their dedication to legislative advocacy on behalf of the U. He reiterated his position that the University is prepared to do its part to help the state address a multi-billion-dollar budget shortfall, but termed the governor's proposal a disproportionate cut. He called for serious public debate about the implications of cutting more than \$150 million from the U's budget given the school's history of creating jobs and stimulating growth throughout the state. Criticizing the wide swings in funding that the U has experienced in recent years, he noted that the governor's budget would mark the first time in the U's history that tuition brings in more revenue than state funding. "That's nothing to be proud of," he said.

Bruininks praised the student legislative advocates who had testified earlier in the week to the House Higher Education and Workforce Development Finance Committee. Those students, both graduate and undergraduate, voiced their concerns that budget cuts would reduce the quality of their education.

Grassroots advocacy is essential as the University works with legislators and the governor throughout the legislative session. A template of the letter to legislators is available at www.supporttheu.umn.edu. The site also contains important facts about the University, along with suggestions for how to be an effective advocate.

Welcome!

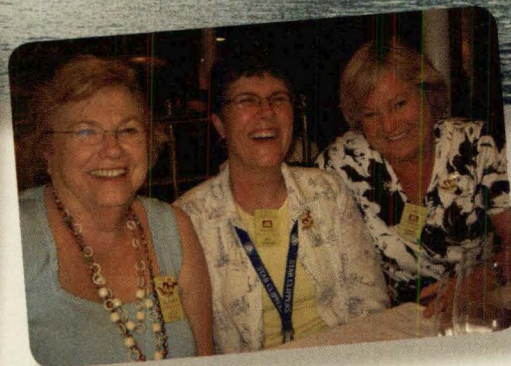
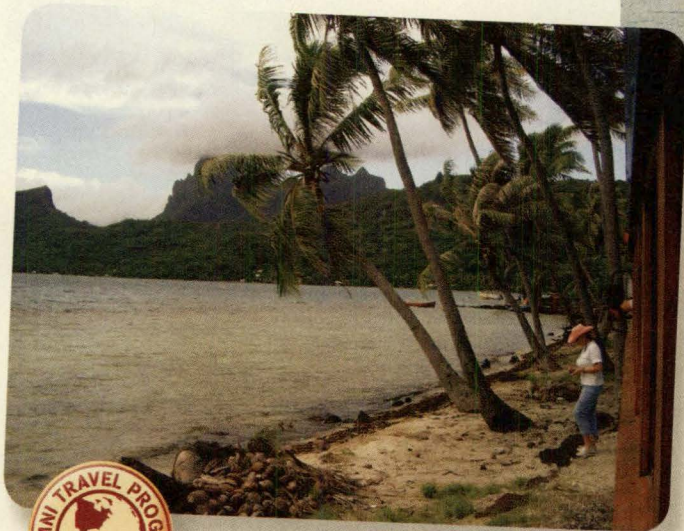
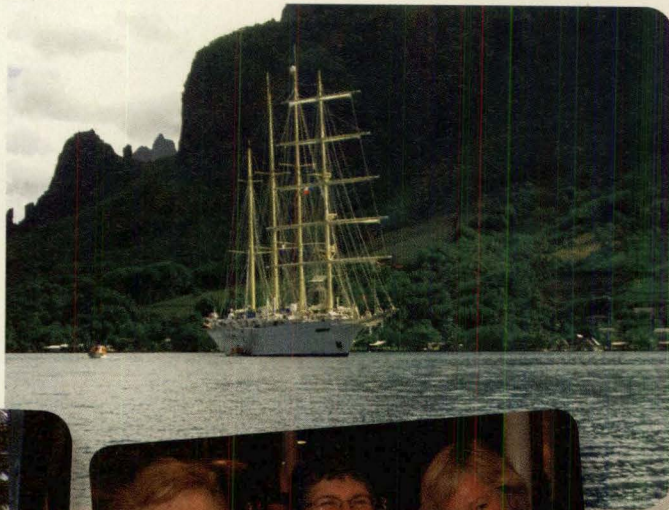


The Alumni Association is pleased to welcome new chapters in central Florida and Sarasota, Florida. This brings to five the number of Alumni Association chapters in the Sunshine State. Visit www.alumni.umn.edu/chapters for contacts in your area and to learn about events.

Gophers Head to the South Seas



Twelve alumni left the late winter doldrums of Minnesota behind for Tahiti and French Polynesia February 1 through 9 with the Alumni Association travel program.



Sailing aboard the S.Y. *Star Flyer*, a classic-style tall ship furnished with 85 suites, dipping pools, a complete library, and other amenities, travelers enjoyed snorkeling, windsurfing, sailfishing, and frolicking on the beach. Pictured left to right are Anita Nelson (B.S. '54) of Austin, Texas, Bea Winkler (B.S. '79, D.V.M. '81) of Sartell, Minnesota, Alumni Association and travel program director Cheryl Jones (B.A. '82). In 2009, the Alumni Association travel program offers trips to the Black Sea, Dubai, Italy, France, and other exciting destinations. For information, visit www.alumni.umn.edu/travel, or call 612-624-2323.

Save the Date!



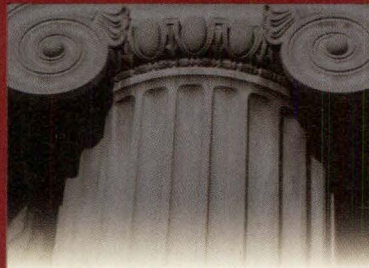
The eighth annual Classes Without Quizzes will be held Saturday, April 4 on the St. Paul Campus. The Alumni Society of the College of Food, Agricultural, and Natural Resource Sciences hosts this spirited and fun half day of learning and networking. Participants can choose to attend one or two classes from a varied and intriguing lineup of offerings, all taught by CFANS faculty. Past topics have included chocolate, trout streams, aging, bees, and other topics. For details on this year's program, visit www.cfans.umn.edu/cwq.

Search Can a heart have a second life?



► U of M center for cardiovascular repair director Doris Taylor and her students are researching a way to build new organs. They've successfully washed dead cells from a nonliving heart, injected it with living cells and it started beating. They hope to build donor organs from a recipient's own cells. Someday you could be your own donor. So the search continues.

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An Ode to Northrop

The Alumni Association has always held an annual celebration, even in tough economic times. We haven't seen times like these since the Great Depression, so we knew that this year's event had to be more cost-effective and budget-friendly than ever before while still providing our guests a warm and memorable experience.

The key to our assured success is Steven Rosenstone, vice president for scholarly and cultural affairs at the University. We're delighted to work with him on an innovative and exciting partnership between the Alumni Association, Northrop Auditorium, and the School of Music. Prior to assuming his current position, Rosenstone served as dean of the College of Liberal Arts for 11 years. Now, he's working to strengthen scholarly, cultural, and civic programs on campus and lead the transformation of Northrop into a dynamic academic, cultural, and civic center that is central to the life of the campus and the wider community.



Margaret Sughrue Carlson and Steven Rosenstone

Rosenstone suggested that we invite alumni and friends to help celebrate Northrop's 80th birthday. "No building has played a more enduring and important role in the academic and cultural life of our University and state," Rosenstone says. Given that the Alumni Association helped raise money to build this iconic building in the 1920s, Rosenstone's idea was a great fit for our 105th annual celebration.

Please join us on Friday evening, May 1, for a reception and dinner at the U's Sports and Recreation Center followed by a performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony at Northrop. Nearly 300 University orchestral and chorale students will perform together to present this uplifting program. In his first performance as University orchestra conductor, the world-renowned Mark Russell Smith will join forces with esteemed U choral conductor Kathy Saltzman Romey to present this groundbreaking music that has influenced all music since.

Beethoven's Ninth, which incorporates part of Friedrich Schiller's stirring poem "Ode To Joy," is one of the best-known and most beloved works in Western music. Acclaimed University organist Dean Billmeyer will perform a concert prelude. "This will be an absolutely glorious concert," Rosenstone says.

Annual Celebration guests will receive premium reserved concert seats. And the reception will feature exhibits and presentations by the Weisman Art Museum, Goldstein Museum of Design, Department of Theatre Arts & Dance, Creative Writing Program, and other University arts units.

At what other event would you be able to socialize with fellow alumni and campus friends, experience amazing music performed by University stars, and celebrate the birthday of one of the University's most significant buildings? And all for just \$45—we've lowered the ticket price by 25 percent from last year. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Mortenson Construction for sponsoring our event again this year.

Don't miss this unique opportunity to be part of University history. For more information and to order tickets, visit www.alumni.umn.edu.

—Margaret Sughrue Carlson (Ph.D. '83)



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Bruce Mooty '77, '80
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