

# Class Notes

## 1950s



**Paul L. Wolf** (M.D. 1952) received the 2003 Award for Outstanding Contributions in Education at the annual convention of the American Association of Clinical Chemistry on July 20 in Philadelphia. Wolf is professor of clinical pathology at the University of California - San Diego Medical Center and resides in La Jolla with his wife, **Florence Freedman Wolf** (M.D. 1954).



**Russell Block, Nancy T. Block, Joel Zrull and Nancy Zrull**

**Joel Zrull** (M.D. 1957, Residency 1961) received the Agnes Purcell McGavin Award for Distinguished Career Achievement in Child and Adolescent Psychology from the American Psychiatric Association at its annual meeting in San Francisco in May. Zrull, professor emeritus and former chair of psychiatry at the Medical College of Ohio, resides in Maumee. **Nancy T. Block** (M.D. 1957) attended the meeting as then-president of the New Jersey Psychiatric Association. She is in private practice (which she says she finds too fascinating to quit) and teaches psychiatry residents as a volunteer faculty member at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. Block is also a mother of three and grandmother of 10.

## 1970s

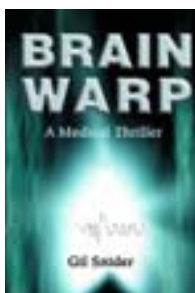


**Thomas A. Reminga** (M.D. 1973) has been elected to the Physicians Insurance Company of Wisconsin's board of directors. The company is a provider of medical professional liability insurance, risk financing, and consulting services to physicians, dentists, hospitals, allied health care providers, and networks in the Midwest. Reminga practices emergency medicine at Columbia Hospital in Milwaukee.



**Brian J. Miles** (M.D. 1974) was awarded the Cullen Distinguished Chair in Urology at Baylor College of Medicine in recognition of his contributions to urologic cancer, especially prostate cancer, and to the mission of the college. He resides in Houston.

**Gilbert Snider** (M.D. 1975, Residency 1981) has written a medical thriller, *Brain Warp* (iUniverse 2003), about a physician in Manhattan who becomes embroiled in a plot to take over the government of the Ukraine by poisoning its leader. Snider is a neurologist in private practice in Virginia. Find out more about *Brain Warp* at [www.brainwarp.net](http://www.brainwarp.net).



**Rosanne M. Leipzig** (M.D. 1978, Ph.D. 1981), professor and vice chair for education and Gerald and Mary Ellen Ritter Professor of Geriatrics and Adult Development at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York, was named a 2003 McCann Scholar in recognition of her success as a mentor in the field of evidence-based medicine. She received the \$150,000 award from the Joy McCann Foundation on October 11.

## 1990s

**Tuwanda Williamson** (M.D. 1999) is working with Direct Relief International as director of a medical team delivering care to indigenous people in the rainforest and upper Amazon in northwestern Bolivia. Williamson and her team travel up and down the Rio Beni River, a tributary of the Amazon, providing medical attention to the locals and educating them on health issues. Common health problems in the region are infection, parasites, amoebic dysentery, malaria, tuberculosis, malnutrition disorders and impetigo.



## Lives Lived

**Myron Fink** (M.D. 1941, Residency 1947), 85, of Toledo, Ohio, died on January 27 at the Hospice of Northwest Ohio. Fink served in the Army Air Corps from 1942-46, and was a graduate of the U.S. Army School of Tropical and Military Medicine and the School of Aviation Medicine. He joined the staff at St. Vincent-Mercy Medical Center in Toledo in 1948, was vice chief of staff from 1967-71, director of the Department of Medicine from 1970-71, and chief of staff from 1971-75.

**Reid E. Motley** (M.D. 1962) died on March 26 in Detroit after a long illness. He was 69. Upon ►

## ALEXA CANADY SPEAKS AT SECOND ANNUAL MEETING OF THE FITZBUTLER-JONES SOCIETY

Alexa Canady (M.D. 1975), an accomplished alumna and former chief of pediatric neurosurgery at Children's Hospital of Detroit, now retired, was the keynote speaker at the second annual gathering of the Fitzbutler-Jones Society at the Henry Ford Estate in Dearborn on September 7. The Fitzbutler-Jones Society is an organization of African-American U-M Medical School alumni, former residents and fellows that encourages support for African-American medical students.



Visit [www.medicineatmichigan.org/magazine](http://www.medicineatmichigan.org/magazine) to see photos from this event.

# COMING BACK TO ANN ARBOR: REUNION 2003

**1** Dean Allen Lichter presented Rhoda Rosenthal (M.D. 1953) and all the members of the emeritus Class of 1953 with commemorative medallions at their class dinner on Friday evening, September 5.



**2** Richard Dicks (M.D. 1953) and Roy Gerard (M.D. 1953) reminisce with James Collins (M.D. 1953, Residency 1958) and his wife Cora Collins, an alumna of the U-M Rackham School of Graduate Studies.



**3** Medical Center Alumni Society president Jamie Baker Knauss (M.D. 1981) and Dean Lichter's wife, Evie



**4** John Chen (M.D. 1993) brought his son all the way from Fullerton, California, to see where Dad got his M.D.



**5** Michael Beaulieu (M.D. 1983), his wife, Karen, and their children are decked out in maize and blue for the U-M vs. Houston football game. The Wolverines dominated the Cougars, 50-3.



**6** Reunion isn't just for alumni! Ruth Morales and medical students Sergio Morales and Ed Baker join the alumni at Saturday's tailgate party.



**7** Alfred Touma (M.D. 1953) celebrates his emeritus anniversary with his wife, Nancy.



Visit [www.medicineatmichigan.org/magazine](http://www.medicineatmichigan.org/magazine) for additional photos from this event.

# LIFE REVISITED

Photo: Alfred Eisenstaedt/LIFE magazine © Time, Inc.



Tom Peterson (holding cards) and fellow medical students in 1950.

Photo: D.C. Goings



Members of the Class of 1953: Ralph Straffon, David J. Horning, Carl T. Rauch, Barry Breakey, Tom Peterson and Edmund Andrews, in 2003.

In 1950, *LIFE* magazine came to Ann Arbor to chronicle the study of medicine in America by profiling the academic and personal lives of the four classes of the University of Michigan Medical School. Famed photographer Alfred Eisenstaedt contributed the black and white images, including the one at the top of this page of Tom Peterson and fellow medical students during a break in their studies. Back in Ann Arbor for Reunion 2003, Peterson and other members of that class, the last of the *LIFE* classes to graduate, recreated the card-playing scene at a Saturday evening emeritus dinner at the home of Dick Kraft and his wife, Jean.

# THE CROSS-BODY BLOCK

Prevention of injury has been a primary focus of Tom Peterson's career

**T**om Peterson (M.D. 1953, Residency 1958) has a face that was seen around the world in 1950, when *LIFE* magazine's article featuring all four Michigan Medical School classes focused on him as a representative of the freshman class. When he wasn't engrossed in his medical studies, Peterson also played football for Michigan from 1947-49, which included a memorable trip to the Rose Bowl under Coach Fritz Crisler.

Peterson went on to choose orthopaedics as his specialty. A pioneer in sports medicine, he is a founding member of the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine. Peterson never strayed far from the gridiron, however, and devoted a great deal of time and energy to studying football's cross-body block.

"I'd witnessed so many injuries with this block in my studies at Michigan, Michigan State and Eastern Michigan Universities, as well as Michigan high schools. I wanted to change certain aspects of the game in order to decrease injuries," he remembers. "After doing a number of studies on knee injuries, I approached the Rules Committee of the National Collegiate Athletic Association about different forms of blocking at knee level and their relationship to injuries."

As a result of Peterson's vigilant lobbying, the cross-body block became illegal in college football in 1972, and high school rules were amended a few years later.

Even with better rules and improved equipment, young people still face risks in athletic competition. Orthopaedics has changed over the years, Peterson says, so more injuries are treatable surgically and the many assistive devices — such as the arthroscope — all work to make treatment and recovery easier and faster.

Peterson is proud of being featured in *LIFE* magazine and proud, too, of helping the Wolverines score a huge win (49-0) over the University of Southern California in the 1948 Rose Bowl. But he's most proud of the difference he's made to young athletes in terms of injury prevention.

"Achieving prevention is even better than providing the best medical care to someone who is already injured," Peterson says.

—MBR



Photo: D.C. Goings

## Lives Lived (continued)

graduation from the U-M Medical School, Motley served his residency in ophthalmology at the University of Iowa, and then opened a private practice in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Motley and his wife of 48 years, Burtine, enjoyed mentoring University of Iowa athletes, both in athletics and academics. During his life, Motley was active with the Democratic Party and the Cedar Rapids Rotarians, and served as president of the Iowa Board of Medical Examiners, the Iowa Academy of Ophthalmology, and the board of directors for the Cedar Rapids YMCA program. Recreationally, he enjoyed cruising the Mississippi River with his family on his houseboat, the "Motley Crew."

**Leland Rickman** (M.D. 1980), 47, died suddenly of natural causes while traveling and teaching medicine in Lesotho,

Africa, on June 24. In addition to being an alumnus of the U-M Medical School, Rickman received his bachelor's of science degree from the U-M College of Literature, Science,



and the Arts in 1976, served his internship and residency in internal medicine at the University of California - San Diego from 1980-83, and completed a fellowship in infectious disease at Naval Hospital San Diego in 1985. After holding several positions with the Navy, he joined the UCSD faculty in 1990. In 1993 Rickman was appointed hospital epidemiologist and medical director of the epidemiology unit, and served as a key member of the antibiotic utilization team. For the last three years, he served as acting associate director of the microbiology laboratory and led clinical microbiology rounds. He also played an active role in preparedness and training for bioterrorism in San Diego County.

**Robert C. Vander Wagen** (M.D. 1957) of Bullhead City, Arizona, died on June 16 at the age of 72. [\[M\]](#)

# MEDICINE, 46; FOOTBALL, 5

For Ralph Straffon, another member of the Class of 1953, the outcome was never in doubt

“Which do you want to do — play football or be a doctor?” a stern Carl Vernon Weller of Pathology demanded of young Ralph Straffon (M.D. 1953, Residency 1959) one winter day in 1950.

Straffon, a Michigan fullback from 1945-50, was dedicated to completing his medical education and becoming a doctor. So, after missing a pathology test in order to play Army in Yankee Stadium, Weller said that if Straffon wanted to pass pathology and become a physician, he had to be present for all the tests. Then came the ‘snow bowl’ against Ohio State in Columbus in 1950, played in 21 inches of snow. Winning this game gave Michigan the 1951 Rose Bowl invitation.

Traveling to Pasadena with the team meant Straffon would miss a major pathology exam, but the dean intervened. Straffon passed a thorough oral exam, headed west with the team and helped make Michigan football history, beating the favored University of California-Berkley, 14-6.

But Straffon’s eye was always on medicine.

“I have no regrets about the career that I chose. Michigan gave me a great start in medicine and particularly in surgery,” Straffon says.

Choosing urology as his specialty, Straffon helped pave the way for Michigan programs in dialysis and, ultimately, kidney transplantation. He spent six months at Boston’s Peter Bent Brigham Hospital training on the artificial kidney machine under John Merrill, M.D., a pioneer in the fields of nephrology and solid organ transplant who established the first hemodialysis program in the U.S. Straffon, together with Jim Pierce, M.D. (Residency 1958), returned to Michigan to set up the dialysis program at University Hospital in Ann Arbor.

In 1959, Straffon left Michigan for the renowned Cleveland Clinic and saw that the possibilities for challenging surgical experiences were enormous. He progressed steadily in leadership roles at the Clinic, serving as chair of urology from 1964 to 1983, chief of surgery from 1983 to 1987 and ultimately, from 1987 until his retirement in 1999, as chief of staff.

“What I’m most proud of, however,” Straffon says, “is being elected to the American College of Surgeons as a regent from 1980 to 1989, and then as president from 1991 to 1992. It has been the high point of my career.”

A couple of rings in a drawer commemorate Straffon’s five-year fullback career and his Rose Bowl participation, but it’s his stellar 46-year career as a surgeon, medical leader and president of the American College of Surgeons that represents the wins closest to his heart.

—MBR



Photo: D.C. Goings

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