

## Class Notes

40s ]

**Victoria Beckett** (M.D. 1949) has authored the book *Six Years in*



*Shangrila: Life in a Retirement Complex*, available on Amazon.com, to help families plan for retirement. Beckett is a rheumatologist

who retired from the Mayo Clinic in 1990 and since 2000 has been living in a retirement community in Rochester, Minnesota, with her husband. She has also authored *Living Medicine: Memoir Snapshots*, an autobiography that details living in Havana, Cuba, during part of her childhood when her father was a delegate there, and fleeing her native China for the U.S. at age 17 during the Japanese occupation.

has served as director of the Division of Pediatric Neurosurgery since 1984.

**Bartley Frueh**, M.D. (Residency 1970), professor of ophthalmology and visual sciences at the U-M Medical School, retired on June 30. Frueh had been a member of the faculty



since 1979. He is known internationally for his expertise on thyroid-associated eye disease, and has served as an examiner for the American Board of Ophthalmology for two decades. He resides in Ann Arbor with his wife, Cheryl.



and Neck Surgery, one of the oldest medical associations in the nation, representing more than 12,000 physicians and allied health profession-

als. Koppersmith has been practicing otolaryngology at Texas ENT and Allergy in College Station, Texas, since 2003, and is on the board of trustees of the College Station Medical Center. He has previously served the academy as secretary/treasurer, and will assume office as president in October 2009.

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**Benjamin Carson** (M.D. 1977) was awarded a 2008 Ford's Theatre



Lincoln Medal from President George Bush and Justice Sandra Day O'Connor on February 10. The medal is given annually to individuals

who exemplify the lasting legacy and character embodied by President Abraham Lincoln. Carson was honored again on May 29, when he became the inaugural recipient of an endowed professorship that bears his name at Johns Hopkins Children's Center, where he

90s ]

**Louito C. Edje** (M.D. 1995) joined the Governing Council of the



Organized Medical Staff Section of the American Medical Association after winning a national election for member-at-large. At 38, she is the youngest and the first African-American member in the history of the council. She also is the youngest physician to serve as chief of staff in the 100-year history of St. Luke's Hospital in Maumee, Ohio, where she practices family medicine.

**Ronald B. Koppersmith** (M.D. 1993) is president-elect of the American Academy of Otolaryngology — Head

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**Jay A. Zimmermann** (M.D. 2001) received a 2008 Pfizer Teacher



Development Award based on his scholastic achievement, leadership qualities and dedication to family medicine. The

award is given annually by the American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation to 15 outstanding, community-based family physicians who combine clinical practice with part-time teaching. Zimmermann teaches part-time in the Family Medicine Residency Program at the University of Virginia, where he completed residency training, and is clinical assistant professor in the Department of Family Medicine. He also maintains a family practice and volunteers at a free clinic.

## Alumni Profile ] David Botstein: Changing the Way Biology is Done

### ONE DAY IN 1978, DAVID

Botstein, then a professor of genetics at MIT, was listening to a graduate student discuss genetic markers of disease, when he was suddenly struck by the realization that the entire human genome could be mapped. “It was an ‘aha!’ moment,” Botstein (Ph.D. 1967) says. “I still don’t understand why nobody thought of it before.”

The paper that resulted two years later laid the foundation for one of the most significant scientific enterprises ever, the Human Genome Project. “He is a towering intellect in the field of molecular genetics,” says Shirley Tilghman, president of Princeton University, where Botstein has led the Lewis-Sigler Institute for Integrative Genomics since 2003. “He’s one of a handful of the greatest living geneticists.”

Botstein was born during World War II in Zurich, Switzerland, where his Polish parents had been medical students when the Nazis overran their homeland. They immigrated to New York with all three of their children when Botstein was 7.

It’s quite a family. Botstein’s mother, a pediatrician, was the first in Europe to show that cystic fibrosis is inherited. His father was a radiation oncologist. His sister, Eva Griep, M.D., is a cardiologist, and his brother, Leon, is president of Bard College and principal conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra.

Botstein still plays the cello his wife and brother gave him for his 50th birthday. “There is an orderliness and mental discipline in music as in science,” he says. “You need to develop an intuitive grasp of what things should look and sound like. This intuition is the same in music as it is in biology. There’s a great misunderstanding in education that music and art are optional. They are no more optional than exercise.”



The remark is characteristically blunt, and it bespeaks a passion for teaching that matches Botstein’s passion for research. In fact, for him, the two are inseparable.

“There is something about teaching that makes you a better researcher,” he says. “There is an organic connection between them. Students ask very good questions, and when you can’t give a straight answer to a relatively simple question, it’s called a research problem. Those, it seems to me, should be in the top rank of research questions.”

Botstein taught at MIT until 1987, when he became vice president of science at the biotechnology firm Genentech. He remains a consultant for the firm, but left his job there in 1990 to become chair of the genetics department at Stanford University, a position he held until accepting Princeton’s invitation.

“The emergence of the data from the Human Genome Project completely changes the way biology can and will be done,” he says. “We have to educate ourselves and the students differently. It’s been a long time since anyone’s looked from the ground up at what’s important and what’s merely traditional.”

Botstein’s experience at Michigan’s Department of Human Genetics — a revolutionary program itself when it was established in 1956 by James V. Neel, M.D. — is reflected in the design of the institute. “What was extraordinary about the department was its breadth,” says Botstein. “It was sort of a Noah’s Ark of genetics. It was also extremely quantitative. They were doing work on the computer in the early ‘60s, as best they could with the markers that were available. Neel was right about what he did. Genetics is a way of thinking that encompasses all the organisms on Earth because they all have the same biology. He really hit that nail on the head.” —JEFF MORTIMER

## Alumni Profile ] The Brothers (and Doctors) Overholt

### BORN JUST 51 WEEKS APART, THE OVERHOLT

brothers revel in their brotherhood; each is the other's passionate advocate. For more than 30 years, Bergein "Gene" Overholt (Residency 1967) and Robert "Bob" Overholt (Residency 1970) have practiced medicine in Knoxville, Tennessee. In very different ways, their influence has reached across the country and beyond.

The brothers were born in Battle Creek, Michigan, where their father, Bergein M. Overholt, a Northwestern-trained physician, practiced at Battle Creek Sanitarium. One of his patients, a Knoxville businessman impressed by his skill, urged him to relocate to Knoxville. The Overholt brothers grew up there and excelled in sports. Both were deeply influenced by their father's work and graduated from the University of Tennessee Medical School.

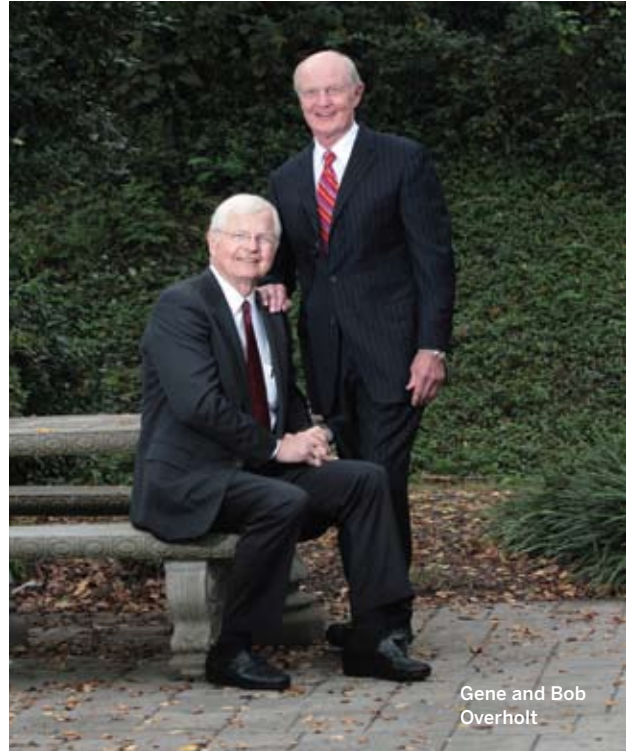
Gene, the soft-spoken older brother, came to the U-M in the early 1960s for internship and residency followed by a two-year fellowship in gastroenterology. After two additional years of training at Cornell University, he returned to Knoxville. The distance from major cities and research centers never impeded his research. "If you want to do it, you can do it," he says. "You just have to allocate time."

Today, Gene Overholt is known internationally for pioneering the use of photodynamic therapy and BARRX (BAR-ex) – a highly successful treatment for Barrett's esophagus (a precancerous condition of the esophageal cells). During BARRX treatment, a device inserted into the esophagus is inflated. Coils within the instrument come in contact with the affected areas, emitting a radio frequency current that destroys the targeted cells.

Recalls Bob Overholt of his brother's work: "It was thrilling. It was medicine-changing. Patients would fly in from all over the country."

Bob Overholt was torn between studying cardiology at Georgetown or allergy at Michigan. Allergy won, in no small part because of his brother's earnest recommendation of the U-M. "It was a huge change in my life direction, but I've loved my allergy practice," he says.

Another huge change came in 1990, when Knoxville's NBC station approached Bob Overholt about being



Gene and Bob Overholt

featured in a twice-weekly health segment. His exuberant, outgoing personality – combined with up-to-the-minute medical knowledge – was perfect for television and within three years, the segments had morphed into the 30-minute "Dr. Bob Show." PBS called, urging him to quit his day job for full-time television, but he declined; his heart, he says, is with his patients. Today, "Dr. Bob" is syndicated through the American Life network, available in 17 million homes across the country. Its format has grown to include interviews with specialty physicians, fitness tips, and health reports with other correspondents.

Highly regarded for their medical contributions and deeply involved in church, community and civic activities in their hometown, the Overholt brothers are unwitting celebrities and, though they don't particularly look alike, they're often mistaken for each other. Their usual, enthusiastic response: "That's my brother!" —WHITLEY HILL

# Returning to Michigan

**ALUMNI GATHERED AT THE** Ann Arbor Marriott at Eagle Crest Resort September 25-27 for Reunion 2008, a weekend filled with camaraderie, education, reminiscing and — of course — football! Alumni from class years prior to and including 1958 were honored at the Emeritus Dinner, where they received medallions commemorating their emeritus status. Following the tailgate on Saturday, guests headed to Michigan Stadium and witnessed the greatest comeback in Big House history as the Wolverines defeated the Wisconsin Badgers, 27-25.

Don't miss next year's Reunion, September 24-26, 2009, which will celebrate the emeritus Class of 1959 and all prior classes, as well as classes ending in "4" or "9." —MF

**MORE ON THE WEB** ➤



**Top:** Dean Woolliscroft presents John Colwell (M.D. 1958) with an emeritus medallion. **Below:** Don Crandall (M.D. 1963) leafs through an old yearbook with classmates.

**Alumni:  
Update your  
classmates!**

Send class notes to:  
*Medicine at Michigan*  
301 E. Liberty St., Suite 400  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104  
E-mail: [frostm@umich.edu](mailto:frostm@umich.edu)  
Or submit online:  
[www.medicineatmichigan.org/classnotes](http://www.medicineatmichigan.org/classnotes)

## MCAS Honors Distinguished Alumni

On September 24, the Medical Center Alumni Society honored three alumni with awards at the annual MCAS Awards Dinner. Visit [www.medicineatmichigan.org/MCAS/awards.asp](http://www.medicineatmichigan.org/MCAS/awards.asp) to learn more about MCAS awards and awardees, and to find out how you can make a nomination. (Nominations must be postmarked by January 31, 2009.) **MORE ON THE WEB** ➤

**Allen S. Lichter** (M.D. 1972), dean emeritus of the Medical School and executive vice president and chief executive officer of the American Society of Clinical Oncology, received the Distinguished Service Award.



**Gary E. Friedlander** (M.D. 1969, Residency 1971), chair of the Department of Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation in the Yale University School of Medicine, was honored with the Distinguished Achievement Award.



**Ella A. Kazerooni** (M.D. 1988, Residency 1992), professor of radiology and director of the U-M Division of Cardiothoracic Radiology, received the Early Distinguished Career Achievement Award.

