

Class Notes

50s]

Clair E. Cox (M.D. 1958), after 29 years as chairman of the Department



of Urology at the University of Tennessee, Memphis, is professor and chairman emeritus. In retirement, he retains his involvement with

the university's Center for the Health Sciences where he serves on a wide variety of boards and committees. His very first paper, on bladder defense mechanisms, published in 1962, set the stage for a long, productive research career focusing primarily on the diagnosis, etiology and treatment of urinary tract infections. He has since written more than 100 papers and presented at conferences around the world. Outside the hospital, Cox owns a grain farm in Illinois as well as a 900-acre tree and horse farm in northern Mississippi which he works with his four sons and considers a wildlife refuge.

60s]

Thérèse Gabrielle Simard (M.S. 1964) is an emeritus mem-

ber of the American Association of Anatomy, an honorary member of the Canadian Anatomical Association and has been an honorary professor of anatomy at the Université de Montréal since retiring in 1993. While a student at Michigan she studied under Russell T. Woodburne, Ph.D. In 2004, the second edition of her book *Anatomie Terminologique Internationale: un Lexique Pratique* was published.

70s]

Steven E. Newman (M.D. 1970), a neurologist and neurorehabilitation



specialist in Southfield, Michigan, has been named president-elect of the Michigan State Medical Society (MSMS). His term will begin in May

2011. Newman is also president-elect of the U-M Medical Center Alumni Society and a member of the Referring Physician Advisory Council at the U-M Health System. The MSMS is a statewide professional association of 16,000 medical doctors, and is affiliated with the American Medical Association.



Michael W. Smith (M.D. 1970) was elected to a one-year term as secretary of the Michigan State Medical Society Board of Directors

by the 45 members of the board. He practices family medicine and geriatrics privately in Chelsea, Michigan, and is on staff at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Ann Arbor and at Chelsea Community Hospital. Smith also is an instructor at the U-M School of Nursing.

80s]

Gus M. Garmel (M.D. 1988) received the Peter Rosen Award

from the American Academy of Emergency Medicine in February. The award recognizes outstanding contributions

in academic leadership. Garmel is the co-program director and co-founder of the Stanford/Kaiser Emergency Medicine Residency Program in Northern California, clinical associate professor of emergency medicine at the Stanford University School of Medicine, and a senior physician with the Permanente Medical Group at Kaiser Santa Clara. —MF and WH

Alumni: Update your classmates!

Send class notes to:
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Ann Arbor, MI 48104
E-mail: frostm@umich.edu
Or submit online:
www.medicineatmichigan.org/classnotes

REUNION 2010
University of Michigan Medical School

SAVE THE DATE!

Alumni from class years ending in "5" or "0" — as well as all emeritus alumni (those who graduated in 1960 or earlier) — will come together in Ann Arbor for Reunion 2010, October 14-16.

For more information, contact Gina Jennings at (800) 468-3482 or medevents@umich.edu, or visit www.medicineatmichigan.org/reunion.

Alumni Profile] Lorna Thomas: Her Dream Deferred

WHEN LORNA THOMAS DECIDED IN HER MID-30s to act on a lifelong dream of becoming a doctor, her physician friends, she says, were dismissive. “You’ll never get in,” they told her. “You’re too old.”

“Well,” says Thomas, “the best thing you can do is tell me I can’t do something ...”

Thomas, a ninth-generation Detroit native who grew up on the city’s east side, knew she wanted a career in medicine by the time she was 6 years old. “I never wanted dolls,” she recalls. “I wanted a doctor’s kit, but people kept giving me these damn dolls! I just dissected them.”

She excelled in her studies at Cass Technical High School, focusing on biology and chemistry, and was the valedictorian of her class. At Wellesley College, virtually every other woman in her dormitory had been valedictorian of her high school class. “It was very humbling,” she says. Thomas graduated from Wellesley in 1964, fully intending to continue on to medical school, but life intervened. She married a Harvard law student and worked in a lab to support them while he was in school. “It was the prelude to what I now call ‘my dream deferred,’” she says.

In the blur of working in a lab, married life and raising a son, another 10 years flew by with Thomas’ dream of a career in medicine still unrealized. One morning, she says, she had an epiphany. “I woke up and sat straight up in bed and thought, ‘I’m 36 years old; I’d better get moving!’” She drove to Ann Arbor and applied to the Medical School.

Soon a letter came from the U-M requesting an interview, and after that, her letter of acceptance. “Michigan saw something in me, and I will always love them for that.” Thomas soon found that the maturity that some considered a liability was actually a boon. Efficient, focused and most of all thrilled to finally be there, she sailed through her classes and still had time to coach her son’s baseball team. She earned her medical degree in 1983, at the age of 41. Following a dermatology residency at Henry Ford Hospital, Thomas began practicing in her beloved Detroit in 1987. Her office is in the historic Fisher Building downtown.

“I have a glorious career,” she says. “I get up every morning happy to be going to work.”

Now divorced, Thomas shares a home with her mother who herself started a career late in life — in real estate management — retiring in her 80s. Their house is filled with works of abstract and figurative African-American art Thomas has been collecting for years. She serves on numerous civic and cultural boards, including the Detroit Institute of the Arts, the Detroit Symphony, Michigan Opera Theater and the Detroit Medical Center. She is chair of the board of Detroit Receiving Hospital. Her son, Samuel “Buzz” Thomas III, is a senior senator in the Michigan State Legislature, representing the city of Detroit.

In 2008, Thomas established the Lorna L. Thomas, M.D., Scholarship in the Medical School. Says Thomas, “It’s not really a big deal; it’s just my way of saying thank you to Michigan for letting me do what I did. I don’t know of a single person in my class who isn’t doing well. We’ve all had fabulous careers, and I think we should all say ‘thank you’ in some way. It feels really good!”

—WHITLEY HILL

