

LETTERS



Animal Research Advanced Kidney Transplants

The article about animal research in the fall 2006 issue (“Myths, Realities, Benefit Beyond Measure”) was particularly interesting to me because at the time of the first kidney transplant at the U-M (1964), I was working under Dr. Paulette Szadaly, a veterinarian, in the Kresge Medical Research Building. We were testing formulations of radiographic contrast media that were being developed for arteriography. Before doing a transplant, the donor had to have a renal arteriogram to be sure he or she had normal kidneys and normal renal artery anatomy. There was no CT, ultrasound or MRI then. We were also testing a new type of dialysis filter that is now used worldwide – the Cordis filter. In the 1960s and ’70s, most patients were on dialysis before they could have a transplant, so we were working to improve the efficiency and safety of dialysis. Both the filter and the contrast media were tested on dogs.

Although some medical research doesn’t require animals, there are many instances where animal research is the only way that new medical knowledge and treatment can progress.

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Kudos, Memories and a Theory

I have just received and read the spring issue and find that “Class Notes” begins with the 1960s. It is yet one more reminder that those of us who graduated in the ’50s are slipping further into senescence. Nevertheless, I step forward to congratulate you on the style and content of the magazine, as I believe you have improved the readability markedly over the years.

This issue was of special interest as I actually knew some of the teachers and colleagues mentioned. I agree with Dr. Williams about his memories of Professor Falls (“Letters”). I kept my notes from his lectures for many years before finally turning them over to my colleague, Dr. Michael Schermer, a U-M grad and ophthalmologist still practicing in Sacramento. Also, it was nice to see Jeremiah Turcotte, a fraternity brother and friend who cared for my mother when she required surgery in the ’70s in Ann Arbor.

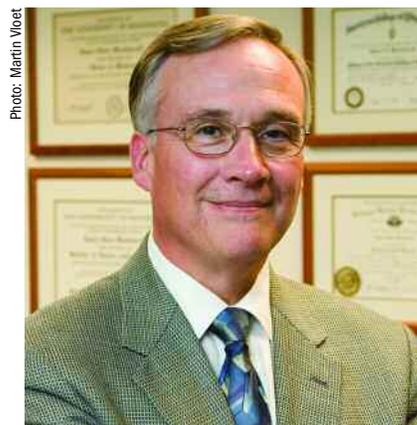
Finally, I wish to comment on the article about idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, or IPF (“Hope for a Devastating Disease”). My specialty was general surgery, but pulmonary disease was of great interest to me as an inhabitant of the Sacramento Valley for more than 40 years. In the last decade I watched three friends succumb to this disease, and all had been lifelong residents of the valley which is known for its rice farming and annual burning of the rice residue prior to the next planting. It has been my theory that the small particles of toxic waste drifting in the smoke were inhaled and fixed in the lungs of these friends for a period of 70 years. It did not help that all were smokers, but I believe that we now have the scientific tools to identify these tiny particles and prove the etiology of this illness. These are the ramblings of a nearly 50-year medical school graduate, but as my mother (also a U-M graduate, in dental hygiene, 1926) succumbed to respiratory failure, this puzzle has continued to intrigue me.

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James Woolliscroft Named Dean of Medical School

James O. Woolliscroft, M.D. (Residency 1980), has been selected dean of the Medical School for a five-year appointment which began July 1.

Woolliscroft served as executive associate dean since 1999 and was named interim dean last year. An internationally recognized medical educator, he has played major roles in medical education at the U-M, and has helped establish standards for education and accreditation at a national level for medical student and graduate medical education.



Woolliscroft joined the U-M faculty in 1980 and was selected as the first Josiah Macy Jr. Professor of Medical Education, awarded through a national competition in 1996. In January 2001, he became the Lyle C. Roll Professor of Medicine, recognizing his work in enhancing the practice of medicine through education. Woolliscroft is also a professor in the Department of Medical Education.

He was chosen as a fellow of the Association of American Medical Colleges’ Council of Deans in 2003-04. In 2004, Woolliscroft received the Society of General Internal Medicine’s Career Achievement in Medical Education Award.

—Mary Beth Reilly