2010 season starts with new home field, date with Alabama

Old habits are hard to break. So forgive Marla Townsend for driving past the new on-campus UAB softball field Jan. 11, the first day of practice. The softball coach was headed to George Ward Park — the place where the Blazers had held every practice and played every game during its first 10 years of existence.

“I was quite embarrassed that I did that,” Townsend says. “I had in my head that I was headed to practice. I wasn’t thinking about it being at the new field.”

Townsend and her team made it to practice in the place they can now call their own — a newly constructed field with full-sized dugouts, a state-of-the-art scoreboard and 350 spectator seats.

“When the girls walked in and stepped in that dugout — they were just so excited,” Townsend says. “There was an enormous sense of ownership and pride.”

The Blazers are practicing at the new field on 11th Street South adjacent to the UAB baseball field almost daily as they prepare for this season — the 11th in school history. Their season opener is Feb. 12 at the Mississippi State Bulldog Classic, and anticipation already is building for the Tuesday, Feb. 23 home-opener against second-ranked national power rival Alabama at 6:30 p.m. in the DoubleTree Hotel Heritage Room.

A drop-in reception for more than 1,000 employees who will be recognized for five or more years of service will be held at 3 p.m. in the Heritage Room.

“I’ve been pretty fortunate for a craftsman,” Sewell says of his time at UAB. “If I didn’t enjoy what I do, I wouldn’t be here.”

Sewell came to UAB in 1964 after hearing about an opportunity to make parts for machines. The Cherokee County native worked on the cutting-edge of discovery with doctors in the heart program, including Tinsley Harrison, Champ Lyons and John Kirklin, constructing parts and machines the doctors needed developed to care for their patients.

“When I started here they were just beginning the open-heart-surgery program,” Sewell says. “At the time, blood pumps and oxygenators were not on the market. We had to make them.”

Sewell, who was named November’s Employee of the Month in 1994 and Employee of the Year for 1994-95, continues to build and repair parts and machines.

Much of his work today is for the Center for Nanoscale Materials and Biointegration (CNMB), where he repairs and builds materials for Yogesh Vohra’s diamond laboratory. Professors working with optics, lasers, biology, physics and mathematics also keep Sewell busy.

“There’s a saying: ‘The impossible we’ll do today, and the complicated we’ll do tomorrow,’” he says. “I’ve tried to stick with that.”

Growing together

Vaughan grew up in West End and attended Florida State University, following Bobby Bowden who left Samford for an assistant coaching position at FSU.

Vaughan played football only one year, but remained at FSU where he received his undergraduate degree. He completed graduate school at the University of Alabama before returning to Birmingham in 1969 to work at UAB.

“It was just an extension center of the University of Alabama when I was hired,” Vaughan says. “It became an autonomous university during my first year. I served on many committees and groups that helped develop the university in the early years. We were pioneers. I guess you could say.”
Take part in “UAB loves ASC” week

“If they aren’t playing at the Alys Stephens Center, I probably won’t go see them.” Those are the words of UAB RN Becky Langner, just one of thousands of people who have discovered that UAB’s Alys Stephens Center is the premier place in the Southeast to see performances.

UAB is celebrating the Alys Stephens Center Feb. 8-12 during “UAB loves ASC” week with ticket giveaways, discounts and more. Employees are encouraged to share their ASC experiences on the center’s blog for chances to win at blogs.uab.edu/ascpresents.

New 403(b) plan information to be offered this month

All TIAA/CREF participants should have received news at home about enhancements to the 403(b) plan, including streamlined administrative processes and new fund offerings including a new group retirement annuity contract. Please review this information with attention to allocation and beneficiary designations. Instructions for updating information will be included.

In February, new investment choices will be announced. By June VALIC will become a UAB vendor for the 403(b) program, and UAB also will offer a 457(b) plan through both TIAA-CREF and VALIC. Direct questions to the Benefits Office at 934-3458 or Benefits@uab.edu.

H2O for Haiti project seeks volunteers

“H2O for Haiti: The Birmingham Tap Project” will ask Birmingham-area restaurant patrons who drink water with their meals to donate $1 or more during World Water Week, March 21-27, to raise money for clean drinking water for earthquake-ravaged Haiti.

Volunteer opportunities are available for faculty, staff and students to assist with restaurant recruitment, raising community awareness and event planning. The Student Association for Graduate Education (SAGE) in the Department of Health Care Organization & Policy is holding Tap Project interest sessions for those interested in volunteering or learning more. The sessions are Wednesday, Feb. 10 from noon to 12:30 p.m. and 5:30 to 6 p.m. in Ryals Building Room 234.

A portion of the funds raised this year will support UNICEF’s water, sanitation and hygiene programs in Haiti, the Central African Republic, Guatemala, Yemen and Vietnam. A donation of $1 provides a child with clean drinking water for 40 days.

Visit www.tapproject.org for more information or contact Meg Davis at megdavis@uab.edu.

‘UAB Heart Answers live’ seminar is Feb. 11

Are you at risk for heart disease? Find out at the next “UAB Heart Answers Live” seminar at noon Thursday, Feb. 11 in The Kirklin Clinic first-floor Learning Center.

UAB cardiologist Vera Bittner, M.D., who helped develop the uabheartanswers.org Online Heart Risk Assessment, will discuss the risk factors for heart disease and explain changes you can make to reduce your risk and keep a healthy heart.

Reservations are required and space is limited; e-mail eventinfo@uabmc.edu or call 934-7778 with questions. Lunch will be provided at this free event.

Ireland Distinguished Visiting Scholar lecture is Feb. 11

Angela Belcher, Ph.D., the 2010 Ireland Distinguished Visiting Scholar, will present a public lecture at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 11 in the Alys Stephens Center Jonson Concert Hall. The title of her presentation is “Engineering Organisms as Building Block Materials for Energy and Electronics.” For more information, call Lori Miles at 996-7190.

Dialogues will explore service-learning

Norma-May Isakow, director of Service Learning, will examine “The Power of the Individual and the Community: ‘Positive Living’ in Zambia and Service Learning at UAB” during the Discussion Book Dialogues from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 18 in the Lister Hill Library Ireland Room.

Direct questions to Juanna Sizemore at jsizemor@uab.edu. This event is free and open to the public. A complete listing of UAB Discussion Book activities can be found at www.uab.edu/discussionbook.

New Sterne exhibit features famous African-Americans


For additional information about library displays, contact Irina Stanishevskaya at istan@uab.edu.

UAB to host walk benefiting 2010 Transplant Games

UAB Hospital and Team Alabama will lead a fundraising walk Saturday, March 6 to raise money to send a large contingent of UAB’s organ-transplant recipients to the 2010 U.S. Transplant Games this summer in Wisconsin.

More than 50 participants went to the biennial transplants games in Pittsburgh in 2008 representing Team Alabama and UAB Hospital, one of the nation’s premier transplant centers. They won 19 medals.

Organ-transplant recipients, living organ donors and family of deceased organ donors will attend the games. The four-day athletic competition is open to anyone who has received a life-saving solid organ transplant — heart, liver, kidney, intestine. For more information, to join a walk team or to donate, visit tramalabama.wordpress.com or call 975-0588.

Docs, nurses are Trotting for Transplants

Transplant nephrologists Mark Benfield, M.D., and David Askenaut, M.D., and others in pediatric transplantation at UAB are running again in the Mercedes Marathon Feb. 14 to raise money for Camp Bridges, a non-profit group that raises awareness and funds for children who have or need solid-organ transplants. Sponsor a runner or sign up to run for a cause in the second annual Trotting for Transplants fundraiser at www.first-trotting.com or call 975-0588.

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UAB’s Antarctic marine research team will return to the continent just days from now.

Jim McClintock, Ph.D., and the husband and wife team of Chuck Amsler, Ph.D., and research associate Maggie Amsler have spent a combined 75 years pioneering research into the relationships between the chemically-protected algae and other organisms that call the polar waters home.

“What brings our research group back to Antarctica is a truly unique marine ecosystem—a set of plants and animals that give us marvelous tools to understand how ecosystems function in Antarctica and all over the world,” says Chuck Amsler.

Graduate students Kate Schoenrock and Ruth McDowell also are a part of the UAB team that will arrive at the base of operation at Palmer Station on the Antarctica Peninsula in Antarctica Feb. 17. They will assist with a range of research projects that include investigations into the effects of climate change and a warming planet on Antarctic ecosystems. For example, the team will study the effects of rising seawater temperature on the behavior of algal-consuming organisms. Previous UAB investigations have examined the impact of increasing ocean acidity on Antarctic marine life. Post-mortem examinations of the calcified outer shells of marine organisms have revealed it could jeopardize many ocean species.

“The trends in ocean acidification are creating a marine environment in which the sea water literally can eat away the shells of existing clams, snails and other organisms, which could cause species to die outright or become vulnerable to new predators,” McClintock says.

“Africa is a wonderful natural laboratory,” Maggie Amsler says. “Many of our discoveries have tangible impacts on human life, including a suite of chemical compounds collected from tunicates, an organism that lives along the ocean bottom, that seem to do a good job in combating melanoma cancer.”

More than four years ago, UAB Associate Professor of Sociology Jeffrey Michael Clair, Ph.D., and UAB alumnus Jason Wasserman, Ph.D., set out to find the answer to a simple question: Why do many homeless individuals prefer living on the street to living in shelters? So the two ventured into the streets of Birmingham to interview homeless people, learning in the process that many programs and policies designed to help the homeless succeed only in alienating them.

In their new book, *At Home on the Street: Poverty and a Hidden Culture of Homelessness*, Clair and Wasserman give readers an in-depth look at long-term homelessness and show the true meaning of life on the street. During a four-year period, the two slept under bridges, in makeshift camps set up by homeless individuals they befriended and in a shelter. They also visited other shelters in Birmingham for their research.

“The shelters were often dirty and unsafe,” says Wasserman, who teaches at Texas Tech University. “It was often a chaotic experience and even threatening, and we really felt more comfortable on the street than in the shelters.” Clair and Wasserman say common misconceptions about the homeless have resulted in an overabundance of social services that target the homeless who are drug-addicted or mentally ill. But too few services are available for those who are homeless due to circumstances ranging from misfortune or the bad economy. The authors found that the few shelters that did offer job training required people to participate in substance-abuse-treatment programs in order to access the training. This is generally the case nationwide, Wasserman says.

Clair said the standard view of homelessness is that it is largely a function of addiction and mental illness, and shelter programs are primarily focused on treating these conditions. In the process, however, those same shelter programs often make problematic assumptions and judgments that ostracize the street population.

“Most of the homeless that we met were creative and resourceful people,” Clair says. “Most work and are not panhandlers. That’s the stereotype. Many are well-read. We met many people who were religious. Most people would be surprised at just how so-called normal many of the homeless are.

“Public policy should be oriented more toward enabling people to work and to secure a dwelling,” he says. “But current policy in our American culture tends to approach homelessness with rigidity fueled by fear of difference and uncertainty.” Clair and Wasserman say they want to be clear that they are not critical of the treatment programs offered in the shelters.

“Many people need treatment and should be able to get the treatment,” says Wasserman. “But rather than punishing those who don’t need treatment or won’t engage the process, there ought to be other alternative approaches.”

More than four years ago, UAB alumni Jason Wasserman, left, and Associate Professor of Psychology Jeffrey Michael Clair set out to find out why so many homeless individuals preferred to live on the street instead of in a shelter. And they decided to find out first-hand.

**UAB students, marine biologists head back to Antarctica**

**Professor, alum get first-person look at homelessness**
Michael takes communication back to the blackboard at SPH

C

ompanies, groups and organizations constantly search for ways to improve their communications, and the ideas and strategies are numerous.

In fact, a recent Google search of “communications strategy template” returned 722,000 responses.

Max Michael, M.D., has unveiled an idea that is likely not among those — but it may be one day.

Michael, dean of the School of Public Health, recently had two blackboards installed in the lobby of the Ryals Building to encourage communication among faculty, staff and students on issues ranging from building management to public health.

Michael says his school faces the same challenges as others when it comes to communication. Many people, he says, are tired of newsletters and e-mails.

Michael thought the blackboards would be a unique way for people to give and receive information.

The idea came during a staff meeting this past summer. Someone mentioned that a mayor from a U.S. city hung several whiteboards and corkboards in front of city hall for people to post notes and ideas.

“I didn’t want to do a white board,” Michael says. “I thought a chalk board was retro.”

Other ideas were proposed. The blackboards were cheaper, and, more important, Michael thought they invited the most interaction.

Many of the comments have been about procedures or special requests. One person asked if the school could purchase and install covered bicycle racks, a request Michael says is reasonable. He is looking into the possibilities.

Other posts have asked about healthier foods in vending machines, temperature settings in the building, internship possibilities and funding opportunities for students.

“We erased the board recently and wrote responses to the questions that were posed,” Michael says.

“Some of the questions were things that have been nagging folks,” he says. “There also were some very thoughtful questions. It enabled us to put up the issue of state funding and where the dollars go, which was a good educational lesson.”

Of course there are some funny requests that are written from time to time — “Send chocolate to Room 220,” for example — but Michael says he’s pleased with how the boards have been received by faculty, staff and students, and he’s eager to see how the communication practices between the groups evolves in the future.

“My hope is that the boards will become a place where people will share thoughts and ideas on a variety of important topics,” says the dean.

The neat thing about these ladies — and it’s been this way since day one — they have an on-campus stadium to show for their work.” Townsend says.

“It’s a reward to Marla Townsend and all the athletes because they focus on their academics,” Michael says. “Will the field help? Yes, it’s a plus. But the academic structure that’s in place here is why they choose UAB. I am proud of the student athletes because they focus on their academics first and understand the order of their priorities.”

Townsend is working to keep her priorities in order, and she doesn’t want her team looking past the first two weeks of games before the home-opener.

Still, she’s excited about the possibilities for the Feb. 23 game.

“The environment for that first game is going to be awesome,” Townsend says. “We want to play the top teams in the country. For our athletes, it’s going to be a chance to show what we’re made of in front of a large crowd. We want to show them we’re competitive. It’s our job to bring them in here and keep it a low-scoring game and come out on top. That’s what we want to do.”

Visit uabsports.cstv.com/tickets for ticket prices and packages. Call 975-UAB1 or e-mail tickets@uab.edu.

Coach Marla Townsend, left, reads her team for their 2010 season that begins Feb. 11 at the Mississippi State Bulldog Classic.

field house with locker rooms and offices for baseball and softball coaches will be added if private funding is secured.

Many accomplishments

Townsend is not only excited about the new stadium and the possibilities it brings, she also has a great sense of pride in her team for their accomplishments on and off the field.

UAB sophomore shortstop Catherine Douglas and fifth-year senior outfielder Martina Landrum were selected to the Conference USA 2010 Preseason All-

CONFERENCE TEAM, marking the first time two Blazers have been selected.

Off the field, 13 of the team’s 20 members are academic scholarship recipients with four named to the President’s List and seven named to the Dean’s List. Ten Blazers were selected to the Conference USA Honor Roll (3.0 GPA) in 2009 and seven were Conference USA Academic Medal winners (3.75 GPA) — the most of any sport at UAB.

That one reason Townsend is hesitant to say the field is the sole reason UAB now may be more attractive to future recruits.

“The academic tradition and reputation that UAB has is the way we get the talented athletes we get,” Townsend says. “Will the field help? Yes, it’s a plus. But the academic structure that’s in place here is why they choose UAB. I am proud of the student-athletes because they focus on their academics first and understand the order of their priorities.”

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Visit uabsports.cstv.com/tickets for ticket prices and packages. Call 975-UAB1 or e-mail tickets@uab.edu.
Vauhan has seen UAB grow into Birmingham’s biggest success story through the past 40 years. It has grown from an extension center that primarily taught older students who could not afford full-time work to a university that encompasses more than 80 city blocks and has residence halls on campus to house students.

Vauhan never imagined UAB growing into what it has become, but he also never imagined he would work at one place for 40 years.

“When you start out, you don’t have that intention,” Vauhan says. “I never thought I’d be here that long, and I thought it might even be temporary. But every step we took and every year that passed we were building something. We were developing a new university. We had to build libraries, and we had to build a reputation. The university grew, and I grew, so we kind of grew together.”

Changes have been numerous and frequent during Vauhan’s time here. Courses have been restructured and teaching formats have changed many times. E-mail has become the primary means of communication with students outside the classroom, and homework assignments can be completed on the Internet.

But through all of the changes, Vauhan says the basics of how campus life here have remained the same.

“You still try to educate students the best way you can,” he says. “Through all of the restructuring and format changes, you still think you are making progress. We work to improve the process.”

Vauhan, the course coordinator for the Survey of Calculus for Business course, says he intends to keep teaching the course for as long as he enjoys it and is healthy. He has no plans to retire soon, but he adds that he knows when the time will be right.

“I’ve always said that the day I have to take the elevator to get to my fourth floor office in Campbell Hall is the day I’m retiring. I still have fun doing this. I turn 65 this year, but physically I’m in pretty good shape. My children and my wife keep me young as long as my health is good, I’ll be here.”

This year’s other honorees are:

Honored 20-year recipients

Maria Alfaro (Otolaryngology Surgery); Wanda Allen (Anesthesiology); Pamela Altvorson (Cancer Center); Bouda Andrews (OB/GYN); Alexa Austin (Curriculum & Instruction); Anthony Banks (Physical Security); Scott Barnum (Microbiology); Karen J. Benson (Building Services); Deborah Blackstone (Medical Student Services); Norman Branch (Calculus for Business course); Chront Boyd (Center for Clinical & Transactional Sciences); Kyle Boyett (Office of Ast VP Occupational Health & Safety); Lawrence Bradley (Immunology/Pharmacology); Robert Brower (Microbiology); Olympics Brooks (OB/GYN); Dorothy Brown (Building Services); Karen Buckner (Nursing); Kerri Burden (Design Build Construction); Beth Bushey (Ophthamology); Mary Cagle (Surgery-Chimmpore Res Section); Charles Calhoun (Curriculum & Instruction); James Camel (Genetics); Denise Cardin (Psychiatry); Christie Carroll (IRB for Human Use); W. Wynn Chatham (Immunology/Rheumatology); Joan Conway (Grants & Contracts); Margaret Crim (Student Financial Aid); Marsha Daniel (Family Medicine Program-Huntsville); Patricia Dulley (UAB Police); James Dykstra (Computer Science & Information Tech Program); Rhonda Eubank (Cell Biology); Alicia Farley (Cardiovascular Disease); Randall Foster (Nephrology); Katrina Fowler (Nephrology); David Freedman (Infectious Diseases); John Hall (Office of Planning & Analysis); Pam Hall (Plant Biology); Flora Hathof (Microbiology); Shirley Ginwright (CORD); Brian Gleason (OB/GYN); Darlyne Graham (CHCBM); J. F. Taylor (Facility & Design); Trena Johnsey (Office of VP Research); John Kappes (Hematology & Oncology); Herbert Kerpinger (Hospital Maintenance); Paula Kiley (Immunology/Rheumatology); Larry Lambert (West Office Financial Aid); Rado Madoj (Otolaryngology); Patricia Long (Art); Katherine Margolies (Neurobiology); Gwenneta Marshall (Hematology & Oncology); Beverly Matlock (Office of Assoc VP Financial Affairs); Janet May (Student Financial Aid); Robin Memarian (Pharmacology); Deborah McBuff (Immunology/Rheumatology); Brenda McKenzie (Gastroenterology); Sylvia McPherson (Microbiology); David McPherson (Center for AIDS Research); Stephen Meda (Center for Health Care Regulation & Policy); Patricia Mercado (Dermatology); Andre Millard (History & Anthropology); Melissa Miller (Psych-Psychiatric); Kathy Minor (OB/GYN); Melanie Montgomery (SHP); Lisa Norris-Madison (TROA Aca- demic Services); Lea Morton (Gastrointestinal Surgery); Timothy Muncher (Hospital Maintenance); Wayne Nall (Campus Division of University Computing Center); Minhenga Nkama (Mathematics); Lori Parsons (Procurement); Andrew Paterson (Endocrinology, Diabetes & Metabolism); Nina Poynters (OB/GYN); Jose Quintana (Health Administration Programs); James Ramsey (Telecommunications); James Raw (Medicine); Michael Reddy (Periodontology); Nedra Reece (Dent-Dental Diagnostics); Kenny Renfree (Immunology/ Rheumatology); Charlene Rhodes (Pediatrics); Beth Rials (OB/GYN); Annie Ridgeway (Cardigan Center); E. Doug Rigby (Information Technology); Kelly Roach (Clinical Trials Office); Martha Robbins (Vision Sciences); James Roebuck (Occupational Health); Myrtle Riddle (Optometry); S. L. Rutledge (Clinical Genetics); Christy Shinn (Pulmonary/Allergy/Critical Care); Bonita Sims (UAB Police); Tommy Smith (Curriculum & Instruction); David Snider (Design & Construction); Shanna Spen- cer (Radiation Oncology); Stephen Spencer (Architecture & Engineering); Mary Stewart (Building Services); Sylvia Strooters (Institute of Oral Health Research); Gregory Tarrant (Lister Hill Library of Health Sciences); Michael Teague (Campus Maintenance); John Thompson (Trans- plantation Surgery); Nancy Timpa (Leadership, Special Education & Foundation); David Torpin (Telecommunications); Dianne Vickers (Biochemistry & Molecular Genetis); Monica Wallace (OB/GYN); Janice Ward (Office of Associate Provost); James Ward (Mathemat- ics); John Welch (Design Build Construction); Kenneth Wilson (Sociology); Joan Wilson (Pediatrics); Steven Wood (Marketing Communications); Karen Wood (Lister Hill Library of Health Sciences); Xuan Wu (Radiology Chair Office); Xiaozhong Xue (Infectious Diseases); Ruwen Zhang (Clinical Pharmacology/Toxicology); Tong Zhou (Immunology/Rheumatology).

Honored 25-year recipients

Mary Accavitti-Loper (Genetics Research); Barbara Adams (Temporary Services); Francesca Allen (Genetics Research); Johnny Armstrong (Hospital Maintenance); David Ballinger (Shipping & Receiving); James Barnard (Clinical Trials Office); Anthony Barnard (Hospital Maintenance); Awtry (Clinical Pathology); Mary Bagley (Cancer Center); Boyd Bailey (Family Medicine-Selma); Judy Baker (Epidemiology); Tracey Baker (English); Frederick Bamberger (University Computer Center); Roger Berkow (Pediatrics); Carla Bonds (Accounts Payable); Robert Bourge (Cardiovascular Disease); Gwendolyn Boyd (Anesthesiology); Cynthia Brunsfeld (OB/GYN); Joseph Burns (Curriculum & Instruction); Cynthia Calhoun (Pulmonary/Allergy/Critical Care); Caroline Chapman (Cardiovascular Disease); Katherine Clare (Optometry); Donna Crabbe (Pathology); Marilyn Crane (Pediatrics); Elizabeth Dezelic (Epidemiology); James Dorrity (WBHIM); Nancy Dunlap (Pulmonary/Allergy/Critical Care); Annette Fordham (Development, Alumni & Ext Relations); Deborah Fraser (Hematology & Oncology); Larry Freeberg (Immunology/Rheumatology); William Garth (Orthopaedic Surgery); Keith Geddes (Pediatrics); Jay Gentz (Genetics); Kiran Goyal (Pathology); Joanne Hala (Microbiology); Anna- Margha Hala (Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation); Donna Hamer (SHP); T. Michael Harrington (Family & Community Medicine); Bach Hoang (Mervyn H. Sterne Library); William Hopkins (Telecommunications); Thelma Houston (Shipping & Receiving); Gary Hunter (Human Studies); Debra Jackson (Dental Diagnostic Sciences); Thomas James (Electrical & Computer Engineering); Wanda Jordon (Graduate School); Bruce Julian (Nephrology); Terry Justice (Procurement); Constance Kamil (Curriculum & Instruction); Kevin Kirk (Physiology & Biophysics); Rita Landford (Procurement); Belinda Lee (MIST); Michael Lorin (Arts & Humanities); Kevin Macou (Center for Biophysics Sciences & Engineering); Lynn Mableyt (Microbiology); John Mauer (Mathematics); Kenneth Morrow (Central Utilities); Nandu Nanda (Cardiovascular Disease); Ceeela O’Riordan (Pharmacology); Jessica Parke (Library Services); Richard Pilgren (Customer Services); Larry Poythress (Campus Maintenance); Cynthia Pratt (Psychology); Loretta Preston (OB/GYN); Winnifred Price (Hospital Maintenance); Brian Prince (Nursing Sciences); Phyllis Rush (Building Services); Jane Shalahan (Cardiovascular Disease); Pamela Smith (Gastroenterology); Jacqueline Stalworth (Microbiology); Edward Standish (Microbiology); Timothy Sullivan (Campus Services); Teresa Tennyson (Geriatrics/Gerontology/Palliative Care); Arabella Tillman (Healthcare & Wellness); Michael Tolman (Biochemistry & Molecular Genetics); Jenny Tucker (Surgery); Diane Tucker (Psychiatry); Robert Varner (OB/GYN); Daniel Vaughan (Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation); Carolyn Wallace (Cell Biology); John Waterbor (Epidemiology); Godfrey Watkins (Mervyn H. Sterne Library); John Wayland (Center for Biophysics Sciences/Engineering); Terry Weaver (Telecommunications).

Honored 30-year recipients

C. B. Alexander (Pathology); Brooks Baker (Facilities); Betty Barron (Hospital Maintenance); Angela Benon (Human Studies); Wilson Black (Electronic Maintenance); Scott Brande (Chemistry); Charley Brooks (Cardiovascular Disease); Wayne Brouillette (Chemistry Research); Karl Brown (Business Services); Al On Outcomes, Sys); Arlene Bulger (Neurology); Fred Chambers (Campus Maintenance); Mary Clark (Cardiovascular/Surgical Thoracic); Pamela Clark (Continuing Medical Education/Enrollment Services); Mattie Conaway (Campus Planning); Janette Cunningham (Office of Exec Director Facilities Management); John Curtis (Nephrology); Lella Daniel (Bell-Wallace Gym); Della Daniel (Bostistatistics); Pamela Fordham (Nursing/Family Health/Caregiver); Donald Forshoe (Design Build Construction); Jeannie Garner (Periodontology); C. G. Goddard (Huntville Clinic-Psychiatry); Cynthia Holmes (Student Affairs); James Jackson (Medical Education); Martin Jones (Gerontology/Geriatrics/Palliative Care); James Kirklin (Cardiovascular/Surgical Thoracic Surgery); Alfred Lakeman (Pediatrics); Scoug-Dong Lee (Marketing, Industrial Distribution & Economics); Warren Martin (Marketing & Industrial Distribution); Thomas Martin (Student Financial Aid); Daviет McDole (Justice Sciences); Suzanne Michalek (Microbiology); Earline Moore (Employment); Loie Mungrove (Gastroenterology); Dennis Pillow (Pharmacy); Gary Poole (Warren College of Medical Sciences/Engineering & Periodically; Patricia Rankin (Financial Affairs); Max Richard (Education Training & General Safety); Sonja Ritter (EAT); Les Odom (Optometry); Jana Shultz (Pathology; G. L. Stephens (Philosophy); John Seegert (University Computer Center); James Swanson (Grounds); Greg Vaughan (Electrical & Computer Engineering); Deotha Welch (Cardiovascular Disease); Bruce Wheatley (History & Anthropology); J. M. Wyss (Cell Biology).

Honored 35-year recipients

David Corliss (Planning & Analysis); Daniel Craft (Design Build Construction); Joane Davis (Development, Alumni & Ext Relations); Annie Edwards (Nursing Student Affairs); Milton Essig (Comp Dentistry); Anne Foote (Nursing Adult Acute Health); David Jenkins (Biology). John Joseph (Preventive Medicine); John Kearney (Microbiology); Howard Kies (Hospital Maintenance); Robert Tennant McWilliams (History & Anthropology); David Narfett (Cardiovascular/Thoracic Surgery); Mary Ross (Mervyn H. Sterne Library); Cynthia Scott (Student Recruitment Program at the School of Medicine); Geriatrics/Palliative Care); Jerry Stephens (Mervyn H. Sterne Library); James Tent (History & Anthropology); Lawrence Wharton (English); Shirley Williams (Building Services).
Cooling-off reduces brain injury after cardiac arrest

I t was 9 a.m., Friday, Jan. 29, and it was time for Eldrid Primm to go home. Finally. A pulmonary embolism had triggered a cardiac arrest in Primm 20 days earlier. He was carried into UAB Hospital on a stretcher, and his survival odds were not great. Only 3 percent of all cardiac-arrest patients in Alabama are successfully resuscitated, and many survivors suffer extreme brain damage.

Primm is an exception to that rule, and on this day he was walking, talking and laughing — practically his old self. But he wasn't going home until he shook the hand or gave a hug to every physician, nurse, physical therapist and rehabilitation staff member that he had come in contact with during his stay in the emergency room and critical-care units.

Primm thanked each person for not giving up on him, for continuing to perform CPR and for administering therapeutic hypothermia — a feeling that he says “is probably like being in the Alaskan cold with no clothes on.”

But it was a feeling that was worth it. It ultimately meant he was going to live. He was going to be OK.

Numerous cardiac arrests

Some of the memories of Saturday, Jan. 9 are sketchy. Others will be etched in his heart and mind forever.

Primm remembers it was hard to move, walk and breathe when he woke up that Saturday morning in his Lincoln home. He remembers blacking out in the ambulance on the way to UAB Hospital. And he remembers waking up as he was rolled into the emergency room and more than 20 medical personnel — led by Marty Vander Noot, M.D., assistant professor in the Department of Emergency Medicine — swarmed to him.

“I remember Dr. Vander Noot telling someone in the room, ‘We witnessed his heart stop, and if we have the ability to treat the cause, we’re not going to let him go yet,’” Primm says.

Then everything went dark.

For the next 90 minutes, UAB medical staff worked frantically, pumping Primm’s chest to try and restart his heart. It would begin beating again, only to stop a few moments later — a process that repeated itself time and again.

“I think in my dictation notes I used the word countless to describe the number of times he coded,” Vander Noot says. “But he kept coming back. That’s why we thought we could save him.”

Vander Noot decided that blood clots were the likely culprit. Indeed, clots had formed near Primm’s lungs and blocked the flow of blood back to the heart. Vander Noot administered a high-powered medicine to break the clots apart, and Primm finally stabilized, his heart beating without assistance.

Having weathered that storm, now there was a new issue: Primm was unresponsive.

Vander Noot and his team’s next course of action was therapeutic hypothermia, a technique that cools the patient to 32 degrees Celsius in order to prevent brain damage caused by loss of oxygen. UAB emergency medicine physicians began using the therapy in August 2009. Only cardiac arrest patients whose hearts stop and then restart following CPR or defibrillation are candidates. Primm was the perfect candidate.

“Our nurses were thinking of therapeutic hypothermia before his heart was stabilized,” Vander Noot says. “The cold saline and blankets already were in the room.”

Primm awoke during the treatment, surprising everyone. The medical team reassured him and put him under anesthesia for the remainder of the treatment. It was the first sign that he was going to survive and reinforced the importance of the therapeutic hypothermia technique.

“I think Mr. Primm’s case lets people know three things: First, when there is a witnessed arrest, maybe you should perform CPR a little longer,” Vander Noot says. “Second, if you get the patient back, don’t let their neurologic status at the time influence how you’re going to take care of the patient. And third, the hypothermia protocol should be the standard of care in anyone you code who remains unconscious.”

New therapy

When a person’s heart stops, oxygen-rich blood no longer is pumped to the brain, causing damage or death of brain cells. While the reasons are unclear, medicine long has known the rapid return of blood to the brain follows, successful resuscitation carries with it the potential for additional damage to brain cells.

Physicians and researchers also know that cooling the body for a period of time has a neuro-protective effect, and studies have shown that cooling leads to much better outcomes for cardiac-arrest patients.

Therapeutic hypothermia is the new therapy resulting from this research and now is recommended by the American Heart Association as the standard of care for patients who survive the initial cardiac arrest.

Patients are kept in a hypothermic state for 24 hours after resuscitation using cooling blankets, cold IV fluids and icebags. Patients are slowly warmed to normal temperatures during the next two or three days.

“This is being practiced throughout the country in many academic centers like ours,” says Henry Wang, M.D., an associate professor in the Department of Emergency Medicine and director of UAB’s therapeutic hypo-thermia program. “Once upon a time, people like Mr. Primm were written off as hopeless, destined to die in the hospital or to live with major brain injury. However, therapeutic hypothermia has given us a new treatment and new hope.”

Larger programs including the University of Pittsburgh and Virginia Commonwealth University have reported success with therapeutic hypothermia treatments. At these centers, almost 50 percent of patients who undergo the therapy after the trauma of cardiac arrest have survived.

UAB has performed the treatment on 25 patients since August, and Wang says his goal is to reach a 50 percent success rate.

Achieving that mark depends on many factors, including cooperation from departments throughout the hospital — something that was evident throughout Primm’s treatment.

Critical-care medicine, cardiology, neuroscience and rehabilitation medicine and emergency medicine practitioners work together in a multidisciplinary effort to make the treatment possible.

“It’s amazing the amount of teamwork we pulled off to make this happen,” Wang says. “When we first started the program, I kept my cell phone turned on 24/7 and came to the bedside for every hypothermia patient. But I wasn’t even in town when Mr. Primm came to UAB. That’s a testament to the incredible teamwork of our program.”

Wang says the therapeutic hypothermia treatments wouldn’t have been possible, however, if Vander Noot and his team had not resolved the cause of Primm’s car-diac arrest.

“Blood clots in the legs and lungs are very common causes of cardiac arrest but are very under-recognized,” Wang says. “Dr. Vander Noot was smart. He picked up on it, and he pushed very sophisticated drugs to get the clots resolved.”

Vander Noot says his team, which had Scott Irvine, M.D., resident physician, and Valerie Snow, charge nurse in emergency medicine, as its leaders, deserves credit for the work they did in the moment as Primm cleared each hurdle.

“I can’t emphasize enough how much this was a total team effort from everyone in the room, and everyone who cared for him in the moments and days after,” Vander Noot says. “Mr. Primm is why we do what we do.”

What a miracle

P rimm walked into the Cardiac Care Unit and the caregivers who recognized him were astounded.

One nurse didn’t recognize him at first. When she was told who he was, she said: “Oh, thank goodness. What a miracle.”

Primm smiled, put his arms around her and thanked her for caring for him.

It’s a scene that repeated itself for the next 20 minutes as other medical staff received word Primm has come by to make it happen.

February 8, 2010

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Climate change is also negatively affecting the marine environment. The atmospheric carbon dioxide that is causing acidification and that is a direct result of increasing carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere; it is incontrovertible," said McClintock, who has spent more than two decades researching the marine sciences off the coast of Antarctica. Carbon dioxide is absorbed by oceans, and through a chemical process hydrogen ions are released to make seawater more acidic. “Existing data points to consistently increasing oceanic acidity, and that is a direct result of increasing carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere; it is incontrovertible," McClintock says. “The ramifications for many of the organisms that call the water home are profound.”

H1N1: Targeted prevention measures stopped spread of flu

Providing preventive Tamiflu and educating and emphasizing the need for repeated hand sanitizer use and disinfectant spray helped stop the spread of H1N1 influenza at a boys’ summer camp in northern Alabama, according to the co-director of the Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases.

David Kimbrell, M.D., a preeminent influenza physician and researcher, volunteered as the camp’s doctor in 2009 when three campers were confirmed to have H1N1. Kimbrell serves on the American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Infectious Diseases, and he advises the federal panel that has spent more than two decades researching the marine species off the coast of Antarctica. Carbon dioxide is absorbed by oceans, and through a chemical process hydrogen ions are released to make seawater more acidic.

“The oceans are a sink for the carbon dioxide that is released into the atmosphere," says McClintock, who has spent more than two decades researching the marine species off the coast of Antarctica. Carbon dioxide is absorbed by oceans, and through a chemical process hydrogen ions are released to make seawater more acidic. “Existing data points to consistently increasing oceanic acidity, and that is a direct result of increasing carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere; it is incontrovertible," McClintock says. “The ramifications for many of the organisms that call the water home are profound.”

Kenth Saag, M.D., Jane Knight Lowe Professor of Medicine in the Division of Clinical Immunology and Rheumatology, has been named to the editorial board of the Annals of Internal Medicine, the premier internal medicine professional journal. As a member of its editorial board, Saag’s role will be to strengthen its rheumatology content and advise on broader issues of editorial policy. His term will extend through June 2013.

Changes in NIH app, review process is seminar topic

The Center for Clinical and Translational Science will sponsor a Scientific Writing Seminar from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday, Feb. 22 in the Margaret Cameron Spain Auditorium to discuss changes in the NIH application/review process.

A panel discussion on the revised grant scoring system and the 12-page application will include: Annapurna Agarwal, M.D., Nephrology; David Bedell, Ph.D., Microbiology; Dale Beno, Ph.D., Physiology & Bio-physics; Mary Am Bjornst, Ph.D., Pharmacology; and Rosa Serra, Ph.D., Cell Biology. Light refreshments will be provided. (Feel free to bring your own lunch.) Register at swchef22010.eventbrite.com.

Submit apps for skin disease research

Preliminary applications are being accepted for the UAB Skin Diseases Research Center Pilot and Feasibility Studies in the amount of $25,000 to provide seed money for new investigators or experienced investigators new to cutaneous biology/investigative dermatology to pursue original hypotheses. The preliminary application is due March 12 to Jennifer Frank at EFH 414 zip 0009 or preferably e-mailed to jfranf@uab.edu. Call 975-6415 for questions about the application process. Investigators with scientific questions should contact Craig Elmets, M.D., at 934-5188 or celmets@uab.edu.

Apply for postdoc derm fellowship

The Department of Dermatology is seeking a candidate for the fifth year of a T32 training grant in investigative dermatology and cutaneous biology at UAB.

The program will provide interdisciplinary training to talented individuals who are interested in becoming independent researchers in the area of immunodermatology, health outcomes and epidemiology research, skin carcinogenesis, cell cycle regulation, signaling pathways regulating proliferation (particularly sonic hedgehog signaling) and development of suitable marine models.

Direct inquiries to Jennifer Frank at 975-6415. Interested candidates should send their CV to Craig Elmets, M.D., professor and chair, Department of Dermatology, via mail at EFH 414, ZIP 0009 or e-mail celmets@uab.edu.

Research retraction breaks link between Autism, MMR vaccine

The Lancet, a premier British medical journal, retracted a study published in 1998 that drew a link between the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine and increased incidence of autism. Alun Percy, M.D., professor of pediatric neurology and medical director of the Civitas International Research Center, said the retracted study’s findings long have been questioned by the scientific community.

“The years, study after study had found no causal relationship between the MMR vaccine and autism,” said Percy. “This was of particular concern since the 1998 study was often cited by parents as a reason to not vaccinate their children with the MMR vaccine.”

The retraction should alleviate fears for parents over the safety of the MMR vaccine, Percy said. “It underscores the safety and efficacy of vaccines, whether the MMR or others, and should restore the public’s confidence in vaccines’ ability to ward off these very serious illnesses.”

Marson named to APA human research oversight group

Daniel Marson, Ph.D., J.D., director of the Alzheimer’s Disease Center, has been named to the first American Psychological Association (APA) Committee on Human Research. Marson is one of seven committee members charged with ensuring that research using human participants complies with prevailing ethical principles and federal regulatory standards and policies.

“Rapid advances in science and technology, particularly in regard to genetics and imaging, give rise to new ethical dilemmas and challenges for the current regulatory system,” said Marson, a professor of neurology at UAB who earned a Ph.D., in clinical psychology, from Northwestern University Medical School in 1990.

“I am honored to have been selected to serve on this committee, as I believe it will play a leading role in addressing emerging ethical and regulatory issues as they affect the psychological, behavioral, and clinical research communities.”

Saag joins editorial board of Annals of Internal Medicine

Kenth Saag, M.D., Jane Knight Lowe Professor of Medicine in the Division of Clinical Immunology and Rheumatology, has been named to the editorial board of Annals of Internal Medicine, the premier internal medicine professional journal. As a member of its editorial board, Saag’s role will be to strengthen its rheumatology content and advise on broader issues of editorial policy. His term will extend through June 2013.

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Learn more about these topics and other UAB research at www.uab.edu/news.
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<tr>
<td>MONDAY</td>
<td>FEB. 8</td>
<td>Win tickets to ASC performances! UAB faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to blog at AlysStephens.org or e-mail <a href="mailto:jesssimpson@uab.edu">jesssimpson@uab.edu</a> about their favorite experiences, performances, or events at the ASC. Everyone who shares their story will be entered to win a pair of tickets to all regular shows for this season!</td>
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<tr>
<td>TUESDAY</td>
<td>FEB. 9</td>
<td>Meet the staff and register to win tickets to ASC performances! 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Visit the ASC tables at the North &amp; West Atriums of University Hospital.</td>
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<tr>
<td>WEDNESDAY</td>
<td>FEB. 10</td>
<td>Meet the staff and register to win tickets to ASC performances! 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Visit the ASC tables at the UAB Administration Building. 4 to 6 p.m. - Visit the ASC tables at the UAB Recreation Center.</td>
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<tr>
<td>THURSDAY</td>
<td>FEB. 11</td>
<td>ASC-JP Party for UAB Young Professionals - 6 p.m. at the ASC! If you are interested in attending, email <a href="mailto:uabevents@uab.edu">uabevents@uab.edu</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRIDAY</td>
<td>FEB. 12</td>
<td>THREE DOG NIGHT - 8 p.m. Tickets on sale now!</td>
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<tr>
<td>SATURDAY</td>
<td>FEB. 13</td>
<td>ASC Kids' Club presents “EXTRAORDINARY AMERICANS WHO HAPPEN TO BE...” A Celebration of Black History Month - 10 &amp; 11:30 a.m. Tickets just $8!</td>
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<tr>
<td>SATURDAY</td>
<td>FEB. 13</td>
<td>20% Discount for UAB Faculty, Staff, &amp; Alumni for SOWETO GOSPEL CHOIR - Live at the ASC! 8 p.m.</td>
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