

LSU SCHOOL OF MEDICINE - NEW ORLEANS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION JOURNAL Medicinews

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Golden Tigers of '56



Reunions 2006

From the Alumni Office. . .



Not According To Plan

Reunion Weekend involves many carefully choreographed events. Folders of plans and directions exist for everything. The Scientific Session, involving many speakers, awards and recognitions, even contains a plan for the layout of the podiums and where each thing will be placed.

We've done it for over 20 years, nothing goes wrong, it operates like a well oiled machine. At least it did until about midway through this last Scientific Session.

After the coffee break, I went back on the dais. Outgoing President, **Cheri Niles (87)**, and incoming President, **Paul Azar ('70)**, began to behave in a way that I can only describe as weird. There was some sort of package on the table. It wasn't there earlier and it wasn't supposed to be there now.

I approached it and Cherie, totally out of character, snapped at me to sit down. I figured that 10 minutes before she was to step down, she'd lost it. Being no fool I did not try to investigate the package and I sat down. Paul then began a "History of the School" lecture which was not in the script and quite frankly did not make a lot of sense.

It featured some pictures from the past but periodically he showed a group shot and highlighted me. It began to dawn on me that I was being roasted by Paul but I could not figure why.

Then as Cheri unwrapped the package, Paul explained that the Alumni Board had secretly created the "President's Award" to recognize me for "...leadership, wisdom... and tireless support."

I took the award, stammered my thanks and sat down. What had happened did not fully dawn on me for some time. I was being recognized for doing a job that had quite literally been done by hundreds perhaps thousand of others over the years.

The Alumni Association has made a tremendous difference in the life of our School over the past several decades, first under the leadership of the late Dr. Richard Paddison and then, since 1985, under the guidance of volunteer leaders from the late **Julius Mullins Sr. ('36)** to our present group. Volunteers had served on the Board, organized reunions, served on committees, and helped the School in uncounted ways.

I believe I have played a role but this has never been nor could it ever be a one-person effort. The recognition that I received rightly belongs to everyone who has helped to make the organization the successful force that it is today.

To all of them, as we look forward to another 75 years, I say a heartfelt thank you.

Sincerely,

Russell C. Klein ('59)
Associate Dean

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Committee of 100 Honors Three

The Committee of 100 – Champions of Excellence held its 24th annual banquet as part of reunion weekend and dedicated two endowed chairs and an endowed professorship. The Chairs in Orthopaedics and Ob/Gyn and the Professorship in Microbiology honored three outstanding contributions to medical education, research, and patient care.

Dr. David J. Drez, Jr., Clinical Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery and an international authority in the field of Orthopaedic Sports Medicine, was the lone living honoree. David who has served in the Department since 1982 is co-editor of “Orthopaedic Sports Medicine,” the preeminent text in the field. He has trained countless residents and fellows during their rotations through his Lake Charles Clinic.

Memorial tributes honored Dr. Jerome M. Maas, a close personal friend of the late **Abe Mickal** (‘40), who headed Ob/Gyn for many years. Dr. Maas, a research scientist at Eli Lilly Corporation, made a posthumous

bequest to fund the Maas Chair of Reproductive Endocrinology in the Department of Obstetrics.

The last honoree was the late Dr. G. John Buddingh, who chaired the Department of Microbiology at LSU from 1948 to 1970. The 500 Club, an organization devoted to basic science advancement at the School of Medicine joined in helping fund the Professorship, the first in that department.



Clark A. Gunderson, MD, *left*, Assistant Professor of Orthopaedics from Lake Charles, presents David J. Drez, MD, with the plaque commemorating the establishment of the David J. Drez, MD, Chair in Orthopaedics.



Honoree David J. Drez, Jr., MD, (*left*) confers at the podium with Barry Riemer, MD, Professor and Chair of the Department of Orthopaedics.



Unveiling the plaque commemorating the G. John Buddingh Professorship in Microbiology . . .



Standing with the Buddingh Professorship in Microbiology plaque are (*left to right*): **Mary Lou Applewhite** (‘55); H. Adele Spence, PhD; Bettie Catchings, PhD; and Ronald Luftig, PhD, Professor and Head of the Department of Microbiology, Immunology, and Parasitology. Dr. Applewhite led the fund-raising. Drs. Spence and Catchings were colleagues of Dr. Buddingh.



Flanking the plaque commemorating the establishment of the Jerome M. Maas, MD, Chair of Reproductive Endocrinology are Harvey Gabert, MD, *left*, Emeritus Chair of Ob/Gyn, and **Fred Rodriguez** (‘75), *right*. Dr. Rodriguez represented the Committee of 100.

Committee of 100 banquet



At the Committee of 100 banquet (left to right): **Jack Strong** ('51); **Gerald Berenson, MD**; and **Alan Lacoste** ('75)



At the Committee of 100 banquet (left to right): **Larry Hollier** ('68), Dean of LSU School of Medicine and Chancellor of LSUHSC; **Diana Hollier**; and **Lee Monlezun** ('69), Vice President of the Alumni Association



Robbie Gunderson (left), wife of Dr. Clark Gunderson, and **Judith Drez**, wife of Dr. David Drez, at the banquet



At the Committee of 100 banquet (left to right): **Jim Murphy**; honoree **David Drez, MD**; **Chuck Murphy** ('82); and **Chad Millet** ('84)

PHOTO, right
Isidore Cohn, Jr., MD, with **Zeneyda Craighead** (left) and **Marianne Cohn** (right) at the Committee of 100 banquet



Roland Waguespack ('65) and his wife **Carol** at the Committee of 100 banquet.

Committee of 100 banquet



Charles Schibler ('92) and Janine Parker ('86), at the Committee of 100 banquet.



Enjoying a moment at the Committee of 100 banquet (left to right): Jeanne Juneau; Mark Juneau ('73); Nora Oates, MD; and Fred Lopez ('91)

Scientific Session Update

The 2006 Reunion Scientific Session, like so much of the School's recent history, was dominated by Hurricane Katrina and was devoted to health care issues related to it. Dubbed "Girls Gone Wild – The Health Effects of Katrina and Rita," it featured a stellar cast and a mountain of information. Following a call to order by outgoing Alumni Association President **Cherie Niles ('87)**, who reflected on the struggles that so many physicians and the School had dealt with post Katrina, **Larry Hollier ('68)**, Dean of the School and Chancellor of the Health Sciences Center, was introduced as *Alumnus of the Year*, a title earned for his leadership before and especially after the storm.

Larry gave a medical education update for Louisiana and also showed a "Katrina Video" on the effect of the storm on the Health Sciences Center.

He was followed by **Ben deBoisblanc ('81)**, a hero of the effort to care for patients at Charity during the storm. Ben spoke on "Humanism: The Legacy of Katrina," which vividly documented the struggle to save lives after the storm and the effect that the storm had on many, staff and patients alike.

He was followed by Alumni President-Elect **Paul Azar ('70)**, who discussed "An Island of Survival in a Sea of Destruction – Lessons From The Lafayette Cajundome," a medical facility set up after Katrina that Paul ran for 61 days.



Fred Lopez ('91) spoke on "Infectious Diseases and Hurricane Katrina."



John Ward ('86) and Gloria Kelley Anding ('86), wait for the Scientific Session to begin.

Following the mid-morning break, Paul was named President, **Lee J. Monlezun ('69)** was named President-Elect, **James Leonard ('63)** was named Vice President, and **Henry Peltier ('90)** was added to the Board as a regional representative. The entire new board is listed and all deserve praise for their hard work. Paul's acceptance speech, which veered from the serious to the comic, outlined

Continued on page 7

Alumnus of the Year 2005



Larry Hollier ('68) receives the Alumnus of the Year plaque from Cherie Niles ('87) outgoing President of the Alumni Association.

association plans for the coming year and ended with the Board presenting a plaque, "The President's Award," to **Russell Klein ('59)** for his service to the Alumni Association.

Next came honors bestowed on eight highly deserving individuals. JoAnn Roloff, Carmen Barreto, and Virginia Howard of the Alumni Association staff were given Special Merit Awards for untiring work in resurrecting the Association after Katrina.

Marianne Cohn, wife of Isidore Cohn, Jr., and Anne Monlezun, wife of **Lee J. Monlezun ('69)**, received the Robert S. Daniels Alumni Service Award for their leadership for the January 2006 Gala. Without them it would not have happened.



Co-recipients of the Robert S. Daniels, MD, Alumni Service Award: Marianne Cohn (left) and Anne Monlezun

Finally, three people, two physicians and an administrator, received the designation "Honorary Alumnus" for their work. Dr. Keith Van Meter, Chief of Emergency Medicine, and Dr. David Kline, Chairman of Neurosurgery, were cited for their work especially during the storm. Mr. Ronnie Smith, MPA, Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, was recognized for his outstanding dedication to the successful emergency operation and rebuilding of the Health Sciences Center.

Recognition of the Class of '56, the Golden Tigers then took place in front of the applauding group. Led by **Ralph Lupin ('56)**, the group was later fêted at a private lunch and each received a Golden Anniversary Diploma from LSU Board of Supervisors member **Jack Andonie ('62)**. Finally, **A. J. Friedman ('76)** and **Carol DeLine ('76)** presented the School with a check from their class for \$75,000 to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of the School.

The Scientific Session closed with three outstanding presentations, "Mental Health In Times of Crisis" by Psychiatry Chairman Dr. Howard Osofsky, "Managing Chronic Medical Illness During an Acute Crisis" by Dr. Van Meter and "Infectious Diseases and Hurricane Katrina" by **Fred Lopez ('91)**, Associate Professor of Medicine. An article depicting Dr. Lopez's experience during the storm is reprinted on page 17 of this issue.



At the Scientific Session (left to right): **Bo Sanders ('64)**, **Fred Lopez ('91)**, and **Paul Azar ('70)**



Honorary Alumni of 2005

Pictured below, the three Honorary Alumni of 2005 accept their commemorative plaques from incoming President of the Alumni Association, **Paul Azar ('70)**.



Honorary Alumnus **David G. Kline, MD (left)**, with Dr. Azar



Honorary Alumnus **Ronnie E. Smith, MPA (left)**, with Dr. Azar.



Honorary Alumnus **Keith Van Meter, MD (right)**, with Dr. Azar.



Former classmates and Golden Tigers **James Rogers ('56)** and **E. Bruce Edrington ('56)** confer at the Scientific Session.



Jo Ann Roloff of the Alumni Affairs Office receives her Special Merit Award from **Paul Azar ('70)**.



Carmen Barreto of the Alumni Affairs Office is given her Special Merit Award by **Paul Azar ('70)**.

PHOTO, right

A. J. Friedman ('76) and **Carol DeLine ('76)** presented a check from the Class of '76 for \$75,000 in honor of the School's Diamond Jubilee.



Virginia Howard of the Alumni Affairs Office accepts her Special Merit Award from **Paul Azar ('70)**.



Ruth Ettinger ('56), left, receives her Golden Tiger Diploma from **Jack Andonie ('62)**.



Ben deBoisblanc ('81) addresses the Scientific Session on "Humanism: the Legacy of Katrina."



E. Ralph Lupin ('56), left, receives his Golden Tiger Diploma from **Jack Andonie ('62)**.

Reunion Update

Although the effects of Hurricane Katrina dominated much of the weekend there was still enough time for friendship and fellowship as the classes of '46, '47, '51, '56, '59, '61, '66, '71, '76, '81, '86, '91, '96 gathered 600 strong to celebrate. This number equaled or surpassed prior year's attendance.

They gathered at the Hilton under the leadership of **David Aiken ('46)**, **Richard Bagnetto ('47)**, **Jack Perry Strong ('51)**, **E. Ralph Lupin ('56)**, **Mario Calonje ('59)**, **Charles Mary ('61)**, **Mike Ellis ('66)**, **Bennie Nobles ('71)**, **Meade Phelps ('71)**, **William Rolston ('71)**, **A. J. Freidman ('76)**, **Jessica Montegudo ('76)**, **Ben deBoisblanc ('81)**, **Janine Parker ('86)**, **Matt Miller ('91)**, and **Alsan Bellard ('96)** on Friday evening June 16, to recapture old friendships over cocktails after many had played a round of golf. The annual tournament was, as always, staged by **John McLachlan ('62)** and **Mack Thomas ('62)**.

Each class then gathered on Saturday evening, June 17, for a party at a private home or a local restaurant. Although glitches were expected in post-Katrina New Orleans, the weekend went off without a hitch and everyone had a great time.



PHOTO, above. The **Class of '96** was well represented at the Reunions. Among those attending were (*left to right*): James Fambro, Mark Henderson, Missy (Binder) Adams, Trey Conners, and Donna (Brian) Fargason.



Tiger pride: Father and son at the reunion cocktail party... Golden Tiger **Samuel J. Stagg, Jr. ('56)** and son **Samuel J. "Jody" Stagg III ('81)**.



Doug Bostick ('96) and his wife **Gwen** at the cocktail party



At the cocktail party, *left to right*: **Lindy Mills** and **Bobbie Millet** of the Office of Student Affairs and **Fred Rodriguez ('75)**, Representative of the Committee of 100.



PHOTO, above: **John Cooksey ('66)**, at the cocktail party



More Tiger Pride: **Frank Minyard ('55)** with his daughter **Mynette Foley ('96)**



The Class of '51 and their guests make a grand entrance at the cocktail party.



Hugh Larriviere ('61) and Barbara Larriviere at the cocktail party



PHOTO, above:
Clay Wells ('46) and Rita Wells, at the cocktail party



A gathering at the cocktail party (left to right): Bo Sanders ('64), Cherie Niles ('87), and Larry Hollier ('68)



PHOTO, left
Horace Baltz ('59) making a toast at the private party for the Class of '59.



Elizabeth McDonald ('84), left, and Anne Monlezun enjoy a visit at the cocktail party.



At the cocktail party, left to right: Joseph Barreca ('56), Quinn Becker ('56), Pam Halter, and E. Ralph Lupin ('56)

Reunions 2006



*No portrait of the Class of '46 is available.
Those attending were as follows:*

- David Aiken
- Aubrey Alexander
- Margaret Bridwell
- L. Glynn Cox
- Carl Dicharry
- Francis Harris
- Clay Wells

Class of 1946



Class of 1947

Reunions 2006



Class of 1951

Golden Tigers of the Class of 1956 are on the cover.



*Class of
1959*

Reunions 2006



Class of 1961



Class of 1966

Reunions 2006



Class of 1971



Class of 1976

Reunions 2006



Class of 1981



Class of 1986

Reunions 2006



Class of 1991



Class of 1996

In the eye of the storm... an eyewitness account

Charity Hospital and Hurricane Katrina

by Fred A. Lopez ('91)

This eye-witness account of what happened in Charity Hospital during the week after Katrina struck was originally published in *The Pharos* of Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society, Winter 2006, Volume 69, No. 1, pp. 4-10. Reprinted by permission.

It was perhaps inevitable that New Orleans—a city sitting largely below sea level, where the dead are “buried” above the ground and residents blithely name cocktails after hurricanes—would one day be hit by a storm monstrous enough to bring it to its knees. With more than a dozen hurricanes having made landfall within 75 miles of New Orleans since 1950, the city is no stranger to nature’s furious dominance. But this one was different. Its name was Katrina, and it crippled New Orleans in unparalleled and horrifying ways.

Many residents believed New Orleans was charmed. It had faced close calls in the past and had always been spared. Although it had been predicted that one in five residents would not leave even if city officials mandated evacuation, many other residents did not have the means or the resources to leave. The sick and the suffering occupying the city’s hospitals were among those without a choice. During Katrina, they stayed and their health care providers stayed with them. Although most of our families evacuated, many other physicians from our medical center rode out this most devastating hurricane in New Orleans’s storm-checked history within the walls of Charity Hospital.

The long history of Charity’s caring

Charity Hospital was founded in New Orleans in 1736, thanks to a bequest by French seaman and boat builder, Jean Louis, to build a hospital to care for the city’s indigent. The second-oldest continuing public hospital in the United States, Charity provided outstanding clinical

care to its patients. Many were impoverished, earning the hospital the nickname, “The Big Free.” Charity Hospital was old and antiquated, having been rebuilt in 1939. Its capacity was approximately 2,500 beds, and it had survived the ravages of budget cuts and weather extremes to remain the icon for indigent care in Louisiana. The archway into Charity Hospital proclaims a message of hope: “Welcome to the Medical Center of Louisiana. Where the Unusual Occurs and Miracles Happen.”

Sunday morning, August 28

Little did I realize as I walked under the archway on the morning of Sunday, August 28, just how prophetic those words would be. The previous day, while Katrina was churning its slow path towards us, its then-Category 3 winds reaching 130 miles per hour, we followed our usual emergency preparation routine by creating the list of assignments for our Code Grey teams that would cover our hospital teaching services. I would

provide the faculty staff coverage for our Louisiana State University Internal Medicine service at Charity Hospital, reporting in the morning and remaining in the hospital as long as necessary. Since Code Grey teams usually leave the day after a hurricane (once the worst has passed), I had packed only enough clothes for a couple of days. After all, the city was charmed, wasn’t it?

“In this harbor weary sea-worn ships drop anchor. . . .”

On Sunday morning, the headlines of the Times Picayune blared, “Katrina Takes Aim,” and

forecasters were predicting that it would reach Category 4 or 5 strength. As I entered the hospital, I passed another inscription in the lobby: “In this harbor weary sea-worn ships drop anchor. . . .” I reported first to the hospital administration office to receive my yellow identification bracelet and sleeping room assignment, then in the emergency department I met my residents to review the patients assigned to our Internal Medicine service. I hoped the hospital was indeed the safe harbor that it proclaimed itself to be.



Team members (left to right): Phil Hoang, Bill Leefe, Rusty Rodriguez, Fred Lopez, and Melissa McKay.

In the eye of the storm

Phil Hoang, Bill Leefe, Rusty Rodriguez, Melissa McKay and I reviewed our patients. The first was a Vietnamese immigrant who had presented with hemoptysis and reported a history of a positive tuberculin skin test. He had apparently never received treatment. We ordered sputum smears for acid-fast bacilli and placed him in the negative-pressure isolation room. We proceeded to see the rest of our patients, discussing, as usual, the evaluation and management plan for each one.

Sunday evening, August 28

We spent much of Sunday evening admitting patients brought over from the Superdome several blocks away. The arena had been designated an emergency shelter for the city earlier that day.

One patient, a retired nurse with a history of hypothyroidism and ischemic cardiomyopathy, was admitted after almost passing out in the warm and humid stadium. Her work-up revealed metabolic acidosis and acute renal insufficiency: she would require hemodialysis. Another, with atrial fibrillation and presumed dementia, had fallen and suffered a fracture of her prosthetic hip. We knew little else. She had no records and could provide no verbal history. In fact, she was not even able to give her own name and was admitted as “Jane Doe.” Another patient, admitted with suicidal ideation, seizures, and a history of alcohol abuse, was developing a severe skin rash that we believed was secondary to a drug allergy.

We worked through most of the night and early morning, a welcome opportunity to avoid thinking about the impending arrival of what news media and experts were now predicting would be the “perfect storm.” The gusts of wind grew ominously louder as the night wore on.

Monday, August 29

Katrina tormented New Orleans for most of Monday. Although it was downgraded to a Category 4 storm, with

maximal 155 mile-per-hour winds striking with the greatest ferocity just to the east of the city, powerful gusts were strong enough to shatter many hospital windows and dislodge air-conditioning units. The city lost power, and the hospital quickly became oppressive and suffocating in the swampy heat. Steady sheets of heavy rain caused some flooding around Charity’s periphery.

Nevertheless, when the rains receded on Monday afternoon, we felt assured that the worst of the storm had passed and the worst of the damage been done. We even left the building late that afternoon to see the destruction for ourselves. We saw overturned cars, shattered windows in almost every room of local businesses and hotels, fallen trees and street signs, but were relieved. We were weary and sea-worn, but our harbor had proved safe.

Tuesday, August 30

Unknown to us, however, New Orleans’ nightmare—and our own—was just beginning. The flood-control levees protecting the city had been breached. Water flowed into the low-lying city, filling it up like a soup bowl. The levees that remained intact trapped the flood inside. By Tuesday morning, we could see rising waters in the street. Water poured into the hospital basement, where thousands of medical records and the morgue were located. It crept up the inner stairwell, approaching the first floor where the Emergency Department was housed. Already there were no laboratory or radiographic facilities working.

All we could do then was to move about 50 patients from the first-floor Emergency Department to the second-floor auditorium, an area normally used for regular hospital staff meetings. The standard of care we were administering changed radically from what we were accustomed to giving. Our patient with possible tuberculosis was placed next to the window, away from others. We still

had no way to determine his contagiousness. We had to remind him frequently about the importance of keeping on his N-95 mask and staying away from the other patients. In broken English he asked often to go home, repeating that he had a family for which he was responsible.

Jane Doe was placed on a stretcher, clearly uncomfortable but remarkably calm. She would reach out to us as we passed her. The retired nurse was placed on the floor, a frightened look spread over her face as she asked, “How much longer until we are evacuated?” She and I both knew that without hemodialysis, an impossible intervention in this setting, her survival was threatened.

In place of our lost technology, we had to focus on lending some humanity to that inhumane situation, imparting encouragement,

compassion, and optimism. At that time, we believed that help would surely come soon for our patients. In preparation for evacuation, patients throughout the hospital were classified in descending levels of severity as red, yellow, or green. Our team was caring for several “red” patients, including those who required hemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis, and surgery. The temperatures soared inside, and the stench of human sweat and excrement became overpowering.

Our greatest challenge came not from our “red” patients but rather from the increasing agitation of the patients in the Substance Abuse Unit. Their dependencies included alcohol and opiates. Some of these patients elected to leave the hospital. Paying no attention to the advice of others or to the contaminated floodwaters surrounding the hospital, they focused their concerns on family responsibilities or unrealistic job commitments or delusions, and forged out on their own. We don’t know what became of them. Those who remained were increasingly irritated and difficult to manage, as drug withdrawal mixed

New Orleans’ nightmare—and our own—was just beginning.

In the eye of the storm

with the fear and sense of isolation. Tensions escalated with each visit to this locked unit. We could not give the patients the answers they wanted.

With everyone's frustrations mounting, communication broke down, finally erupting into a loud shouting match. Fortunately, the quick intervention of half a dozen heavily armed security guards defused that situation and prevented any similar ones. We decided to move them to the second-floor Emergency Department, where perhaps they could appreciate the gravity of the hospital's situation, as well as the needs of other patients. The move had the desired effect. Within a short period, these patients became caregivers, helping the frailer patients by delivering food and water and administering to their other needs as they were able.

Wednesday, August 31

The following day, Wednesday, was the nadir for many of us who expected large-scale evacuations to begin. With rumors about an impending rescue abounding, everyone quickly prepared for an expeditious departure. No one came. Even more deflating were reports that news stations were announcing that Charity Hospital had already been evacuated. If everyone thought we were gone, how would we ever get rescued? Hope began to wear thin, as did patience and sleep.

Our food supply was diminishing, but no matter how cold or processed the meals were, they were quickly devoured. The long lines of hundreds that snaked from food service all the way down the dark hallway and into the stairwell helped to serve as a marker of time since all the clocks on the walls had stopped. Our hunger was a tangible reminder that the old halls still teemed with life.

Meetings to update staff about the current status of the hospital occurred at least twice daily in the lobby. The discussions became increasingly personal, emotional, and animated as some began to

question openly whether we and our patients would ever leave.

Remarkably, however, the prevailing mood was one of strength, collegiality, and optimism. Morale-boosting banners were hung inside the hospital and from many outside windows, declaring, "Katrina can't tear us apart," "X-ray all clear," "God of Abraham, Help Us! Oh, Lord please Help this City," and "CHNO-1, Katrina-0." Nondenominational prayer services were organized on the ramp outside the hospital Emergency Department, allowing members of the hospital community to worship, bond, and console each other. Several of the more resourceful physicians in the intensive care unit successfully engineered the rescue of four of the "red" patients by calling in to a national television show and receiving help from a helicopter operator who was listening. This evacuation was completed late Wednesday night. Randomly appearing boats and National Guard trucks evacuated several other less critically ill patients directly from the hospital. But most patients, including more than three dozen classified as "red," had to wait yet another day.

Thursday, September 1

Early on Thursday, boats and trucks ferried many of these "red" patients to the nearby helicopter pad, although gunshots from a presumed sniper delayed this process. Security forces finally ensured safe transportation. During this interruption, Rusty Rodriguez and I embarked on a boat belonging to a good Samaritan from a nearby coastal town to collect and deliver supplies to the helicopter pad, including oxygen and batteries. The route we took transformed this roadway into a surreal amalgam of the familiar and the bizarre.

To make the trek by boat was unusual enough, but the random and senseless shootings necessitated the accompani-

ment of a guard. He stood at the front of our boat, directing his rifle at the surrounding buildings, while we slowly made our way through the floodwater to the helicopter pad. Along the way, we passed submerged cars, other boats, and floating debris. Even amid the chaos and catastrophe, however, the lighthearted élan that has earned the city its nickname, the Big Easy, was evident. Joe's, the popular bar located across the street

from the hospital, was completely under water except for a piece of board over one of its windows, with

Remarkably... the prevailing mood was one of strength, collegiality, and optimism.

writing that announced that the pop musical group "Katrina and the Waves" would be playing one night only.

At the helicopter pad, some of our patients had to wait as long as 12 hours before being transported. While they lay on the concrete ramp that led to the helipad, we manually ventilated patients and dispensed what care we could. Among them was Jane Doe, now identified by a yellow label that read, "Fractured Hip." During that time, she did the only thing she could to help. She reached out her hands to touch anyone nearby, attempting to console in her own way. It was an emotional and desperate situation.

By that time, an interesting but worrisome phenomenon had developed: visitors within the hospital and members of our own staff were becoming patients. A young man with diabetes who was staying at the hospital with his family presented with fatigue and light-headedness. He had a history of multiple hospital admissions for diabetic ketoacidosis, and had not taken insulin for over two days. A finger stick revealed a glucose level that was almost off the scale, and his urine dipstick showed four-plus ketones. We gave him intravenous fluids, electrolyte replacement, and insulin. Since there were no arterial blood gases or chemistry panels, finger sticks and urine analysis had to suffice. One of the residents in the Emergency Department remarked with

In the eye of the storm

humor, “I guess this must be the way you used to take care of patients in the old days, Dr. Lopez.”

That Thursday evening, I admitted a hospital security officer who had developed severe cellulitis while wading around the perimeter of Charity as part of his watch patrol. He was in great pain, and his leg was swollen, warm, and red. I told him he would need intravenous antibiotics, but he objected when I told him he was being relieved of his duties. I soon learned that his healthy son was also at Charity Hospital, and he feared that if he became a patient, they would be separated from each other. Once he was assured that they would remain together even during an evacuation, he submitted to the needed care. I shook my head, finding it hard to fathom that this situation had endured so long that the helpers were becoming the helped.

As I turned from him, I encountered a reporter from one of the major networks. He was interested in our story: the inefficacy of the evacuations, the unsanitary conditions, the communication deficiencies, the lack of medical resources, and the more than 1,000 people still there. Although media representatives are typically funneled through a central office of communications, in this situation we abandoned protocol to make full use of the opportunity to draw attention to the desperate plight of our patients . . . and of our hospital.

Friday, September 2

Shortly after this interview, most of the major networks descended on Charity, and by early Friday afternoon, hundreds of airboats and trucks arrived and evacuated over 1000 people in about five hours. In the period of waiting, patients had died. Ironically, when help arrived at long last, it was almost overwhelming. It involved such a large number of vehicles that the challenge for us shifted from pleading for attention for our nearly full hospital to coordinating the huge response that finally arrived. Where had all these vehicles been? Had they all arrived

at the same time from some distant place? What was responsible for this sudden mobilization of forces? These and many other questions hovered around us, but there was no time to find answers.

The immediate and pressing need was to secure the human forces necessary to carry patients who could not walk safely down as many as 12 flights of dark, fetid, and stiflingly hot stairs. It still seems a blur—patients being treated for airborne infectious diseases wearing masks while waiting among the many other evacuees with other problems. They had chest tubes, Foley catheters, cervical collars, drainage tubes, and feeding tubes. It was bizarre to see them waiting in line at the door of the hospital before stepping gingerly into boats that would speed them off to dry land, and other hospitals. Employees and family members ranging in age from infants to the elderly were forlorn and exhausted. The exodus even included animals—I saw at least one dog and several cats flee the building. As I ran out the hospital towards the airboat, my wading boots in hand, I turned around and watched the guard lock the doors of Charity Hospital behind me. After 5½ days, it was over. We were leaving.

Later. . .

More than a month has passed since we were evacuated from Charity Hospital. In retrospect, the ordeal at Charity, where we had at least some control over our destiny, was much easier than its aftermath. After the storm, we have moved the campus of the Louisiana State University (LSU) School of Medicine to a city more than 60 miles away, placed our residents and fellows in multiple medical institutions across the state and beyond, and asked some of our faculty to relocate their practices, research, families, and homes to just as many areas.

Although a few hospitals are now open in the New Orleans area, the CEO of LSU’s Health Care Services Division recently said that Katrina had issued Charity a “death warrant” and that the hospital was unsalvageable. It has been estimated that \$340 million will be needed to repair Charity Hospital, \$561 million to replace it.

Who will care for indigent people in New Orleans in the future? Who will care for them now? Though much remains unclear, hope prevails in each of us, the hope that the same qualities that enabled Charity to persevere during and after the storm will allow this once-breached “harbor” to fulfill once again its responsibility to the patients of New Orleans. In fact, the inscription in the lobby does not end when the weary, sea-worn

ships drop anchor. The full inscription reads: “In this harbor weary sea-worn ships drop anchor and new launched vessels

start their outward trips.” It is time to launch a new Charity. We owe this to our patients.

Acknowledgment

The author acknowledges the thoughtful review and editorial suggestions for this article of Michelle Burke, MEd, Editor, LSU Department of Medicine. Photograph of the resident team is courtesy of the author.



Fred A. Lopez (’91) is associate professor and vice chair of the Department of Medicine at the LSUHSC, and the assistant dean for Student Affairs at the Louisiana State University School of Medicine in New Orleans. He is the secretary-treasurer of the AWA chapter at LSU.

LSUHSC unveils next generation simulators

With the help of Drs. **Russell Klein** ('59), **Charles Hilton** ('76), Valeriy Kozmenko, and John Paige, along with medical students Philip Letourneau, Ian Hodgdon, Ann Azcuy, and Katy Morris, LSUHSC unveiled the next generation of human patient simulators in July 2006. Currently, LSUHSC is the only place in the world with these simulators, which were taken to the next level by our faculty. To enlarge and improve the body of training scenarios, LSUHSC faculty created software programs that overlay the existing programs, providing much more realistic interaction. In addition to the patent-pending technology, the new software allows the simulators to generate verbal responses to the questions from learners and stimuli.

The software provides a higher level of integration of physiological processes in simulated medical conditions. Besides incorporating standard treatment protocols, the new software is capable of recognizing the most likely mistakes in the management of virtual patients.

The simulation technology will be a key component of the new Isidore Cohn, Jr., MD, Student Learning Center and the Center for Advanced Practice, which will occupy two floors of 2020 Gravier. Government grants and funding will support part of the cost to replace what was lost during the post-Katrina flooding. The LSU Medical Alumni Association, which has already contributed \$300,000, is working to raise the \$4.5 million needed to complete the \$7.5 million project.

LSUHSC is currently the only place in the world with these simulators, which were taken to the next level by our faculty.

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Mobile health units to visit FEMA parks

Two mobile health facilities, recently acquired through a partnership with The Children's Health Fund, a nonprofit organization, and the LSUHSC School of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics, will travel to FEMA housing sites around East Baton Rouge Parish and provide primary physical and mental health care to children and their families affected by Hurricane Katrina.

One mobile unit will provide health care to children and their families. The medical unit has two examination rooms and the ability to provide all the services that a pediatrician's office would. The other bus, called the Community Health and Resiliency Unit, is where people can get therapeutic support and can be connected to other programs to help with recovery.

The \$300,000 units, along with the estimated \$1.8 million in operating costs over the next

three years, have been provided through The Children's Health Fund, which started in New York almost 20 years ago, and now has 21 mobile health unit programs operating across the country.

The program will operate under LSU but will have guaranteed funding for three years. By then, the program should have secured other ways to pay for the service, said Dr. Heidi Sinclair, assistant professor of pediatrics at LSUSM-NO and medical director for the Baton Rouge program.



Portions of this story first appeared in The Advocate in July 22, 2006. It was also discussed in WAFB-TV "Healthline with Phil Rainier," in WBRZ-TV "2 Your Health," and from the Associated Press.

Mobile health units bring aid to children displaced by Katrina.

Faculty News

Kudos

Dr. Nicolas Bazan, Boyd Professor and Director of the Neuroscience Center, has been chosen to receive the Proctor Medal by the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology. ARVO's highest honor, it is presented annually for outstanding research in the basic or clinical sciences relating to ophthalmology.

Dr. David G. Kline was presented with the 2006 Cushing Medal, the highest honor granted by the American Association of Neurological Surgeons. He was honored for his many years of outstanding leadership, dedication, and contributions to the field of neurosurgery.

Dr. David Martin, Chief, Section of Infectious Diseases in the Department of Medicine, and the Harry E. Dascomb Professor of Medicine, received the 2006 Achievement Award from the American Sexually Transmitted Diseases Association. The ASTDA Achievement Award is presented annually for a single recent major achievement in the field of STD research and prevention.

Patent

Iris Lindberg, Professor of Biochemistry at LSUHSC-NO, has received a patent for developing a compound that thwarts the deadly toxins of such infectious bacteria as *Pseudomonas* and anthrax. The peptide, called D6R (hexa-D-arginine amide), is a potent, stable, small molecule inhibitor of the protease furin

Appointments

Dr. Leonard Bok has joined the faculty as Chairman of the Department of Radiology. Dr. Bok has come back to LSUHSC from LaGrange Memorial Hospital, where he has been a radiologist for the past six years. He is a former Vice Chairman for Clinical Affairs in Radiology and Head of Radiology at UMC.

Dr. Frank Culicchia has been appointed Professor and Chairman of Neurosurgery. Dr. Culicchia succeeds Dr. David Kline, who chose to step down as chairman after serving for 36 years,

perhaps the longest tenure as chairman of a neurosurgery department in the country. Dr. Kline will continue to teach and treat patients as a Boyd Professor of Neurosurgery on our faculty.

Dr. Culicchia completed a general internship at Charity Hospital and a residency at Tulane. Board certified, he also completed a fellowship at the Barrow Neurological Institute in Neurovascular Surgery. He has been the medical director of the Culicchia Neurological Clinic since 1989, and also served as Chairman of the Department of Surgery at West Jefferson Medical Center and as a Clinical Associate Professor of Neurological Surgery at Tulane Medical School.

Dr. Roberto Quintal is the new Head of Cardiology. The current President of the Orleans Parish Medical Society, Dr. Quintal has served as a Clinical Professor of Medicine at Tulane and is a Past President of the medical staff at Touro.

Chris Winters ('88) is the new Chairman of Urology. He has served as Vice Chairman of the Department of Urology and Director of Urodynamics and Female Urology at Ochsner Clinic. He has also served as Residency Director and Clinical Associate Professor at LSUHSC.

132nd Commencement holds unique place in history

On Saturday, May 21, 2006, we celebrated a miracle at the Pete Maravich Assembly Center in Baton Rouge. Nearly 500 students graduated from our six health professions schools during the commencement that even Katrina's aftermath could not stop.

The Allen Copping Teaching in Excellence awards for the School of Medicine went to **Robin English ('95)** [Medicine] and Dr. Richard Whitworth [Basic Science]. Dr. English is an associate professor of clinical pediatrics. Dr. Whitworth is associate professor of cell biology and anatomy.

The top graduate in Tulane's Master Medical Management program was our own **Dwayne Thomas ('84)**, who received the Outstanding Student Award for the Class of 2006. Dr. Thomas is Director of the Morial Asthma, Allergy & Respiratory Disease Center

*2006 Cushing Medal
awarded to
Dr. David G. Kline.*

*Patent granted to
Dr. Iris Lindberg*

*New chairmen named
for four departments.*

*Almost 500 students
graduated from
LSUHSC- NO's six
health professions schools
despite Katrina
hardships.*

NOTE: We are currently in the process of updating our donations. A complete list of donors will appear in the next issue of Medicinews.



To the Alumni Office

We would like to take this time to thank the LSU Alumni Association for their generosity helping to replace the equipment and supplies lost due to Katrina. The last item needed was purchased on Friday, July 21, and should be received by the end of this week.

With the money donated by the association, we purchased everything needed to provide the highest level of medical education to our students. It is great to have an Alumni

Association that takes such great pride in supporting their medical school. We are happy to inform the current and incoming medical students that this was all made possible by the association. Thank you!

Sincerely,

*Daryl Lofaso
Clinical Skills Lab Coordinator*

Students make good use of equipment in the Skills Lab.



To the Alumni Office. . . .

To the Alumni Office. . . .

Being a medical student is not easy; however, my fellow classmates as well as the instructors have helped me considerably in my quest to become more knowledgeable. I am thankful for the privilege of attending such a renowned institution. Through seeing many other students' similar work ethics, I am confident that we will all make great physicians in the future.

Thank you for your involvement in this Scholarship foundation. I am thrilled to have received this award. Thank you.

A Scholarship Recipient

Thank you for your continued support of the LSU medical students. Your dedication to the Alumni Association and your fund-raising abilities astonish me, especially following the tremendous challenges of this year.

The receipt of my scholarship will be a great help as I plan for my first year of residency. I hope that I will one day be able to provide financially for a scholarship in my own name!

A Scholarship Recipient

Going wireless!

During summer 2006, all seminar rooms on the third floor of the Medical Education Building were upgraded and modernized. The renovations included electrical wiring, painting, new marker boards, ceiling tiles, and carpeting. The Medical Alumni Association donated wireless internet connectivity to the project. The wireless connectivity was also added in the cafeteria as well as in the atrium, a process that had been partially completed before the storm.

Tigerlines

Tigers in the News

Charles Black ('38), Shreveport, was chosen as the first recipient of the new LA-ACS Outstanding Volunteerism Award, given by the Louisiana Chapter of the American College of Surgeons in recognition of his selfless efforts as a volunteer surgeon to the medically underserved around the world.

The LA-ACS will present this award only when the organization's leadership believe that a physician has shown extraordinary volunteerism in his/her community.

'45

Albert L. Hyman, Brookline, MA – Retired from cardiology consultation practice, September 2005. “Washed up to Boston by Katrina. Appointed visiting professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School but still retain appointments as Clinical Professor of Medicine in Cardiology, Research Professor of Surgery and Adjunct Professor of Pharmacology at Tulane Medical School and Clinical Professor of Medicine at LSUNO. Have authored or co-authored about 250 peer-reviewed manuscripts in cardiovascular research. Still co-investigator on two cardiovascular grants from National Institutes of Health. Cardiology as a study was guided by Drs. Richard Ashman, Edgar Hull, and John Sam LaDuc.”

'49

John Hamilton, St. Petersburg, FL – “I still volunteer at the Free Clinic one day a week.”

'54

Robert Cangelosi, New Orleans, LA – Appointed Regional Hospitalier of the Sovereign Military Hospitalier Order of

St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta. “I conduct an eye clinic annually in Granada, Nicaragua, as a medical mission with the Order of Malta.”

Michael Hirsch, New Orleans, LA – “I have evacuated to Dallas, Texas, where 2 of my sons live. I enjoyed my stay at the Embassy Suites temporarily – swimming daily. Now I have an outdoor pool.”

'56

Martin Klein, El Paso, TX – “We lost our home in Lakeview and are relocating to El Paso. My son, **Terren David Klein ('88)**, is a graduate of LSU and my son-in-law, Al Hernandez, was a resident in LSU Orthopedics. I will be teaching at Texas Tech Medical School in El Paso and starting a new life. I miss my LSU affiliations and maybe one day will return.”

'57

Alvin Cotlar, Gulfport, MS – Colonel (Retired). Continues as Director of Graduate Medical Education at Keesler AFB Medical Center to bring back

Tigers in the News

Senator **Donald E. Hines ('59)**, Louisiana State Senate president, was inducted into the Louisiana Political Museum Hall of Fame in January 2006. Last year Dr. Hines co-authored the “I’m Sorry” legislation that helps physicians feel open to express empathy, thus enhancing the physician/patient relationship and reducing the number of claims filed. In 2003, he was instrumental in implementing changes to the Med Mal Act, which requires plaintiffs to pay a filing fee and make brief allegations against each named defendant when requesting a medical review panel.

A native of Bunkie, Dr. Hines has represented District 28 as state senator since 1993.

Tigers in the News

Cy Vaughn ('58), the first surgeon in the world to implant an artificial heart as treatment of heart transplant rejection, has authored a novel, *The Phoenix Heart*, in which artificial hearts and art masterworks stolen by the Nazis are woven into an intriguing odyssey. The book is available on the web at www.cyvaughn.com and www.buybooksontheweb.com. A portion of the proceeds for the sale of the book will be donated to the LSU Medical Alumni Association.

residency training here July 2007. All residents were moved post-Katrina.

Bernard Samuels, Lumberton, MS – “Retired on 70th birthday – 4 years ago. Flitting between my new home post-Katrina (in the Mississippi woods) and our vacations homes. Both sons practicing medicine, **Rick ('90)**, radiologist in Pensacola, and **Keith ('89)**, gyn in Vail (moved there post-Katrina). House in New Orleans and sailboat, both sunk! Love the Mississippi woods, 8 acres of paradise! Hope to see everyone next year at the 50th.”

'60

Jim Willis, Covington, LA – Retired 7-1-05 after 41 years practicing radiology in Covington, LA. “Still trying to hang onto my first wife, who gave us 5 great kids and 6 grandkids spread from Florida to Montana. I enjoy remembering the New Orleans we knew in the '60's and recalling the wonderful characters of the class of 1960.”

'62

Warren Grafton, Bossier City, LA – “I would like to have the email addresses of all members of the class of 1962. Please send them to me at wgraft@worldnet.att.net.”

'63

Charles Norwood, Alexandria, LA – Faculty, LSU-Shreveport Family Medicine with residency in Alexandria. Lecturing internationally, recently in China and Tibet. Still working occasional shift in E.R. Researching Russia device called SCENAR for pain management.

'65

George Rucker, Shreveport, LA – Retired from 30-year practice of ophthalmology in 1999. “I currently play on the National and Southern Senior Tennis Circuit. My wife Joy and I have 3 children and 7 grandchildren.”

'72

John Raggio, Lakes Charles – Neurosurgeon. Listed in *Best Doctors in America* for 2005-2006, an honor received through a nationwide physician survey. The Best Doctors database

includes the top 3 – 5 percent of specialists in the country. Dr. Raggio has been selected annually since 2001. Also selected by the Consumers' Research Council of America as one of America's Top Surgeons for 2005-2006. Surgeons are selected for this honor based on a point value system that takes into consideration experience, training, professional associations and board certification. Dr. Raggio has been selected annually since 2002.

'75

Danny Williamson, Houston, TX – Private practice in developmental pediatrics. “Kay and I still live in Houston. Our daughter, Anna, age 25, works for a nonprofit organization, First Book, in Washington, DC. She's often in New Orleans now working on a special project, Book Relief, to distribute books to schools and public libraries destroyed by Katrina.”

'76

John Stafford, Lafayette, LA – “Survived Katrina and Rita without damage. Practice in Lafayette is still healthy. New grandson and family are doing well in Houston. Looking forward to working less and traveling to Gatlinburg to get away from this *HEAT!*”

Floyd Buras, Metairie, LA – Featured in the August 2006 issue of *AMA Voice*. He discussed the problems of rebuilding his practice after Hurricane Katrina.

'81

Carl Blunck, Mobile, AL – “Daughter Hallie starts UAB Medical School, got 2006 NCAA Grad Scholarship; son Hans is sophomore at Auburn; son Conrad is member of 3 championship teams (football, indoor/outdoor track) in 2005-2006 at UMC-Wright. Life is good. Hope to have Tiger Cub at LSUMC soon.”

Les Hurrelbrink, High Point, NC – “We continue to work hard and play when we can. Our oldest daughter turned 21 and is at Wake Forest. Two more kids in high school/middle school. Our daily prayers are for all the displaced from the hurricanes. Ten more years until retirement!”

'82

Chris Slusher, Bedford, NH – “Katrina Story – Hosted and helped settle a family of four way up here in New Hampshire!”

'86

Janine Parker, Covington, LA – “Spent 5 lovely days at Methodist Hospital with 750 people, 150 patients. Learned how to triage and the glory of a flushing toilet. Can guide-in helicopters for landing when the malpractice attorneys destroy the practice of medicine.

Making a Difference - Campus Cleanup



Students Heather King (L-4) and Brad Gandolfi (L-3) decided to do something to speed up the recovery of the campus. With funding from the Alumni Association, the students purchased supplies, arranged times, and found a few medical student volunteers. The team worked three hours on two separate Saturday mornings in May to clear campus areas of litter and debris.



Now you see it...

Now you don't!



Bag it! The trashbag pile holds what was cleaned up in one four-hour morning.

~ In Memoriam ~

Howard Randall, PhD
1936 -2006

Dr. Howard Randall, a faculty member of the School of Medicine since 1965 and beloved mentor to thousands of graduates as Associate Dean of Student Affairs, died of metastatic carcinoma in Birmingham, Alabama. He had moved there in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina to be near family, having retired from LSU on November 1, 2005.

He became ill soon after and passed away in May 2006. He had been in charge of Student Affairs since 1977. A memorial service was held at the School of Medicine on August 2, 2006, where Dr. Randall was praised by students, graduates, and faculty as a man of compassion, approachability, integrity, and knowledge. His generous nature, wit, and dedication to students were all remembered to the packed audience.

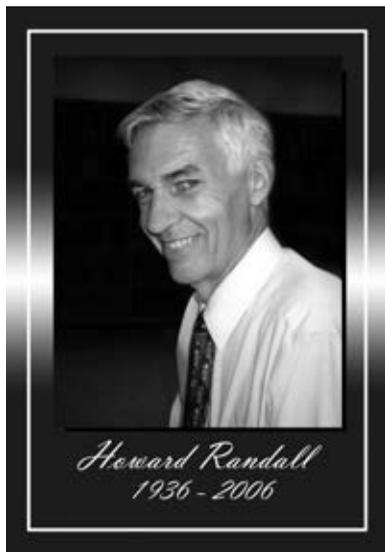


Photo by Lindsay Mills



A memorial fund has been established by the Alumni Association to honor Dr. Randall. A plaque will be installed as a remembrance to him in the Student Learning Center. The donor response card can be used to direct a gift to his memory and his family will be notified.

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'87

Brent Videau, Pensacola, FL –
Currently President of the Medical Staff at Sacred Heart Hospital in Pensacola, FL. He has worked in Pensacola as a cardiologist since 1995.

'94

Troy Hutchinson, New Orleans, LA –
"I've recently accepted the Medical Directorship for Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company where I'm based at the NASA/Michoud Assembly Facility here in New Orleans. I also have responsibility for sites in northern California, the Denver area and in eastern Pennsylvania. This business unit of the Lockheed Martin Corporation has over 18,000 employees. Being back in

New Orleans after nearly 9 years in southern Lafourche Parish is a welcome change, but I do miss so many of the great people down there. New Orleans is home, though, and it feels right to be back, especially now."

'03

Kelly Babineaux, New Orleans, LA –
"Thank you to Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center in Baton Rouge for allowing the continued training of general surgery residents! Without the generous staff and wonderful facilities, our training program would have been in jeopardy."





Moving forward

My name is Paul Azar and I am a 1970 graduate of the LSU School of Medicine, a practicing ophthalmologist in Lafayette, and just recently I became President of the Medical Alumni Association.

One year ago, I spent 61 days as Medical Director of the Cajundome in Lafayette as it took in 17,000 evacuees from Hurricane Katrina. All told, 30,000 people evacuated to Acadiana and many required emergency medical care.

It was provided by local physicians, ably assisted by LSU residents, interns, and medical students. It is what you would expect. Since 70% of physicians in Louisiana graduate or train at LSU, the healthcare for our citizens is in their hands.

Over the next ten years a physician shortage may develop as older physicians retire or reduce their patient volume. It is absolutely imperative that we continue to educate and train their replacements and make certain that the education and training is first class. It is also imperative that we offer the best continuing education to physicians so that they can continue to provide the best care to all citizens, no matter where they live.

We are currently celebrating the School's Diamond Jubilee (1931 – 2006). Our big project is to rebuild and expand our Learning Center. As you know the Isidore Cohn Jr., MD, Student Learning Center was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. The expansion of our effort, the creation of an Advanced Practice Center scheduled for construction in October 2005, was also destroyed by the hurricane. All the funds that the Association had earmarked for that had to be used for more pressing needs, including replacement simulation equipment.

But we are going ahead with our plans and we ask that you continue to support the Association and School in this endeavor. And I thank you for the opportunity to serve this great organization. With your continued help we will be stronger than ever.

Sincerely,

Paul J. Azar ('70)
President

2007 Reunions



June 8 and 9, 2007

**Astor Crowne Plaza Hotel
Canal at Bourbon**

FOR CLASSES

**'46, '47, '52, '57, '62, '67,
'72, '77, '82, '87, '92, '97**

To volunteer to help with
the 2007 reunions, contact
the Office of Alumni Affairs at
(504) 568-4009
or email: ROAR@lsuhsc.edu