

Editor: Henny van Dijk

www.uthro.org

April, 2023

Another Lunch & Learn...

After a very successful talk about the wildebeest migration on the Serengeti Brian Tulloch, MD will take his audience on a trip down the Nile and enlighten us on a highly developed culture from thousands of years ago in the Valley of the Kings. Come to Lunch and Learn at OCB's Rio Grande



room on Thursday April 13 at 11 am. A light lunch will be served, and parking will be validated. Contact Janice Thomas at 832 515-0280 or email her at flyte99@yahoo.com by April 9th if you plan to attend.

"For civilization to evolve beyond the hunter-gatherer stage required a stable food source in an environment allowing early agriculture. Such was the fertile Nile Valley where some 5,000 yrs ago inhabitants evolved a stable lifestyle regulated by the annual floods. Hierarchies of priests and rulers evolved with the early evolution of script, metalworking and the wheel. Much industry centered on preparation for an afterlife with copious possessions and preservation of body parts. The dry desert environment has allowed near-perfect preservation of mummified rulers and their possessions, earlier dynasties carefully stored under 64 pyramids and later rulers in a pyramid shaped valley where burials were carefully listed. In the 1900's one ruler's tomb remained undiscovered an omission that spurred Lord Carnarvon to invest 1/3 of his considerable wealth towards its discovery, the 100th anniversary of which approaches. Historian and photographer Dr Brian Tulloch will share the considerable sights enjoyed during a cruise down the Nile with visits to the principle ruins from Predynastic mastabas to the great Giza pyramids and finally to share the wonders of Carnarvon's discovery the tomb of Tut-ank-Amun in Luxor's Valley of the Kings.



Cinco de Mayo Luncheon



UTHRO's Event Committee cordially invites you to a truly entertaining event

I just received notice that we have a reservation for OCB Rio Grande room for May 4th, 2023 from 10am to 2pm for our Cinco de Mayo luncheon.

UTHRO will serve the tacos. We plan on providing meat, tortillas, basic fixings (lettuce, cheese, onion, jalapeños etc) but please bring a side dish such as tamales, rice, beans, salsa, guacamole and desserts (and maybe chips for those that don't want to cook).

Members attending need to let Janice Thomas know by April 27th. Parking validations for the OCB lot will be available.

....And while we enjoy the food we thought it would be fun to play Loteria or Mexican Bingo, not for money mind you, but just for fun and some of you might get lucky and win a small prize. And for those who never played the game, think of it as Bingo with pictures instead of numbers. The first player with four chips in a horizontal, vertical or diagonal row, or fills the *tabla* first shouts "Lotería!" and is the winner. Again **RSVP by Wed. April 27** so we have an idea of how many tacos we need and what dish you plan to bring.



RSVP to: Janice Thomas at 832 515-0280 or email her at flyte99@yahoo.com

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Resources for Retirees from EAP...

As a UTHealth Houston retiree, we care about your well-being and your peace-of-mind. The Employee Assistance and Well-being Programs (EAP) office has created valuable resources to support your wellness post retirement.

Mental Health is at the forefront of the minds of most people, populations and demographics. We have a variety of options for you, if you need extra support with your mental well-being:

Mental health counseling – 5 free sessions, per issue, with a licensed, private and confidential counselor. We can provide a list of counselors to fit your criteria, many of whom can meet with you virtually or in-person. Call 713-500-3327 or 800-346-3549 to complete an intake and request a list of providers to contact.

Note: Retirees located out of state are currently not eligible for this service due to cross-state licensing restrictions, however feel free to call us about options available to you through your insurance.

Virtual meditation sessions and videos – these sessions are 15-30 minutes long and occur three days/week. Contact wellness@uth.tmc.edu and provide us your email and we will add you to the virtual meditation meeting invite.

Grief and caregiver support group – Sessions occur monthly for this virtual support group. To find out more and join the next series, contact Shalene.Johnson@uth.tmc.edu

Physical well-being options are available through UT System's new Living Well platform: <https://www.utsystem.edu/offices/employee-benefits/living-well> UTHealth Houston has won the 1st place trophy for over 10 seasons and several retirees have joined the challenge to help carry us over the finish line. Also on this platform is a rich selection of wellness topics to support your health and well-being. You may also take the well-being assessment and based on your results, the platform will automatically identify services and resources that are tailored based on your profile.

Consultation and Self-Directed Life-Balance Resources

are both available through EAP. We can help you find solutions for care-giver services for persons with disabilities, children and other conveniences and wellness issues. Our goal is to fully understand your concerns, explore resources and help you determine the best care option(s).

The EAP also provides a free 30-minute session for financial consultation as well as legal consultation for any personal legal issue that arises. If you choose to stay with that attorney to assist you further, there is a 25% discount on their fees.

For the self-directed resources, you may access our MyLifeValues.com website for additional resources, such as: tips on childcare, elder care, education, adoption, military, retirement, emergency preparedness and even pet services. To gain access, use uth/uth for username and password. We are also looking forward to introducing a new website specifically for UTHealth Houston retirees. The site is slated to be ready within the next few months. Keep an eye out in the Evergreen newsletter for news and links associated with the new website. For assistance please call us at 713-500-3327 or 1-800-346-3549.

UTHealth "Golden" Boys...

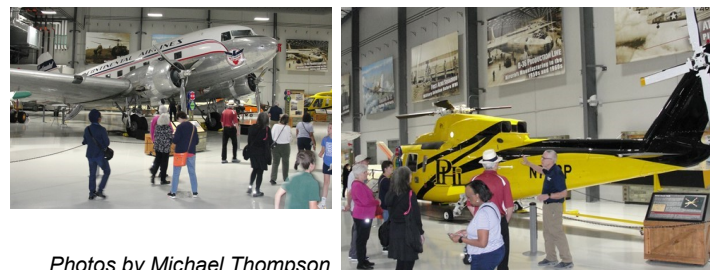


At the latest STAR Awards there were three colleagues who reached the 50-year service level and all three were from the Med School and all three were former colleagues of mine arriving just like I did in 1972; however they continued for 17 more years to reach that "golden plateau" fltr: Gary Rosenfeld, Nachum Dafny and Bill Dowhan who is also a UTHRO member—Congratulations guys.

A Look Back at the March Event

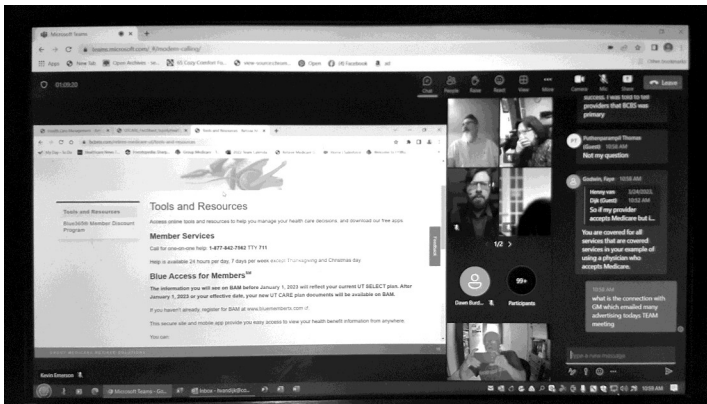
The nineteen of us enjoyed our tour of the LSFM today. There was lots of history and information on the museum being one of the top flying ones in the United States. Our luncheon on the Kemah boardwalk was great, the weather was absolutely beautiful today.

Janice Thomas



Photos by Michael Thompson

The BCBS Virtual Meeting ...



Some 90 people signed up for the virtual BCBS TEAM meeting on Friday March 24. Moderator Craig Eivens, the EOB manager at UT Austin and BCBS specialist Kevin Emerson guided the audience through first the basic UTCare plan as we received that months ago through the mail and in booklet form.

There were some new pieces of information, specifically BAM, which stands for Blue Access for Members, to our secure, online tool that can help make your life easier. It offers health and wellness information, and more to help you live a healthy lifestyle. You can create an account or download a mobile app for your platform (Apple or Android). You find Forms and Documents there to get answers to your questions.

A second important piece of information was the fact that new ID cards will be issued shortly to replace the ones we have now. Look for it in your mailbox and destroy the cards you have now. Once you receive the replacements.

For those of you who will be traveling overseas there is the Global Core Program that will be helping you with health issues abroad. For reimbursements you will need to access the Claim Forms at www.bcbsglobal.com or call 1-800-810-Blue (2583).

Someone asked about Dental plans which of course are not included in the Medical Plan. You will still need to attend the yearly Benefits meeting in July for those and other plans such as Vision or Life Insurance.

Hearing did get much attention as well and yes UTCare does cover Hearing. Just look over your plan to see what exactly is available but in short UTCare will cover hearing aids for about \$1,000 per ear every 3 years.

Finally a note about Signify, the Home Health Evaluation Service.. Many of you might have gotten phone calls or emails where people will visit you and take stock of your health and environment both a legitimate endeavor of BCBS' UTCare program.

Craig did a yeoman's job trying to answer everyone's questions and the one that impacted me personally—the fact that UTSelect and UTCare don't talk to each other; My wife had an appointment on November 2022 but their accounting people did not bill till January 2023 so Medicare denied it and I would have been stuck with the bill. I called UTCare customer service at 1-877-842-7562 to warn them that they will probably get more calls about this and that BCBS should find a way to streamline those events more smoothly, without anxiety to their members.



The 88th Texas Legislature convened January 10, 2023, marking the beginning of 140 days of lawmaking, adjourning May 29, 2023. The Texas Senate passed its first bills of the 88th Texas Legislature on Wednesday, March 9, 2023. By reaching out to Texas Legislators, engaging them in discussions and advocating on behalf of older Texans, it is the mission of TSHL to make the state a better place to support a healthy, thriving, safe place, addressing the issues of aging Texans.

Some of the bills being considered for this legislative session will give rise from resolutions drafted by members of the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature (TSHL). This elected group of Texans (age 60 and over) held its 19th Legislative Session at the state's capitol on May 2-5, 2022. TSHL operates strictly as a nonpartisan, not-for-profit, bicameral organization which serves in an advocacy capacity to improve the lives of older Texans.

In preparation for the 88th Texas Legislative session, TSHL members sought to identify issues impacting those Texas citizens 60 and over within their respective regions and across the entire state. They spend arduous hours collecting data, researching the issues, and drafting resolutions which are presented to the entire TSHL membership during the Legislative Session held in May 2-5, 2022. The adopted resolutions voted as most critical/significant are published in our Legislative Report 2021-2023, that goes to the Governor and each elected member of both Texas houses prior to the beginning of the Texas Legislative Session. The 19th TSHL Legislature passed a total of fifty-four resolutions. In essence, these resolutions ask the 88th Texas Legislature to enact specific actions/laws to benefit older Texans. Of the fifty-four resolutions passed by TSHL, ten were voted as "Top Ten", representing those issues/concerns most important to older Texans.

The breakout of resolutions relative to specific legislative issues/concerns was as follows:

Criminal Justice – 2 Resolutions

Health and Human Services – 8 Resolutions

Pensions, Investments, Insurance, and Financial Services – 6 Resolutions

Retirement & Aging – 7 Resolutions

Rural-Urban – 6 Resolutions

State Affairs – 14 Resolutions

Utilities & Natural Resources – 3 Resolutions

At the close of the TSHL Legislature last May, members got busy reaching out to professional organizations, businesses, and others, and also to Texas Legislators, particularly after committee assignments were made for the upcoming Texas Legislature. There is flurry of activity with TSHL members providing testimony to committees, visiting face-to-face with congressional members, both House and Senate, all in an effort to gain support for the resolutions and presented as a bill. Presently, several TSHL resolutions have been filed and it looks like we are off to a great start! For more information contact:

Viola Hebert Tshlvhebert1@gmail.com

UTHRO

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*To update your address or phone number
please contact us at 281-655-1983*

And Now For Something Completely Different...

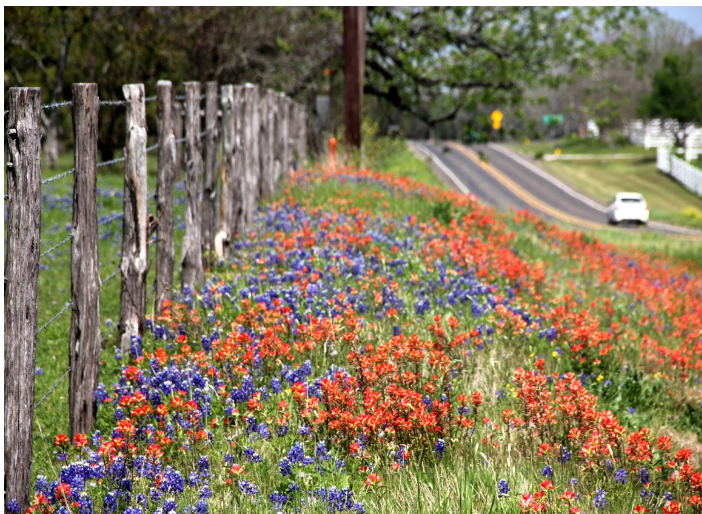


Image by Henny van Dijk

Every spring, the bluebonnet craze takes over Texas for a few weeks. The fields and roadsides all over the state get transformed with hundreds of thousands of orange and blue flowers. One of the best places to see this beautiful phenomenon is the small town of Chappell Hill, located between Brenham and Hempstead in Washington county. Bluebonnets usually bloom from March through April, and early to mid-April is the peak time to grab your camera and head to Chappell Hill to take a few pictures. To celebrate the beautiful season, the town holds the annual Bluebonnet Festival on the second weekend of April. The Official Bluebonnet Festival of Texas features music, performances, pony rides for kids, vendors, and food trucks. The fair includes over 250 juried exhibitors that offer various home décor items, gardening supplies, as well as art, jewelry, and apparel. Live music concerts take place downtown, and, of course, there are historical and bluebonnet tours. Chappell Hill is located along Highway 290. The bluebonnet field is right next to the parking lot of First Baptist Church, north of the town.

UTHRO OFFICERS 2023

President Barbara Kelly
Vice-Pres Efren Pena
Secretary Daun Gray
Treasurer Margaret Zambrano
Web Administrators Henny van Dijk, Pat Grealy & Glenn Schreyer

To protect our officers' personal information on our website, UTHRO has instituted a new general purpose email address: uthro@uth.tmc.edu. This is a "forwarding" email that will send copies to both the UTHRO president and Efren Pena who will then forward the email to the appropriate person. Including the recipient's name in your subject will be very helpful; e.g. Subject: For Barry, BBQ lunch. If UTHRO members already know the phone number or personal email address of an officer then by all means continue using that for your communication needs.

Newsletter Editor Henny van Dijk