

**Editor: Henny van Dijk**

**[www.uthro.org](http://www.uthro.org)**

**January, 2023**

## **The January Event ...**

Our speaker for this event furnished me with a little biography "Born on a Klondike style alluvial goldfield in German East Africa (now Tanzania) Brian Tulloch's family moved to a large cattle ranch in Rhodesia then considered a "Jewel of Africa".

After a boyhood of horse riding, bird watching and sailing he read Biochemistry at Natal University before being awarded a Rhodes Scholarship to Oxford.

There while he studied Medicine he sailed competitively with Ocean Races to Holland, France and Denmark, particularly enjoying the long post-race yacht deliveries thru Holland's spectacularly beautiful canal system.

Long a Nature lover he has developed his interest in Wildlife photography above and below the water, and now can share a life's collection of his special views of species met on these travels.

*Henny van Dijk*

The Lunch & Learn event for January 19 features Dr Brian Tulloch who will tell us about his most recent adventure with images and narrative: The event will be held at the Rio Grande Room starting at 11 AM. A light lunch will be served and we hope that we can count on your participation, which could lead to a number of future events.

## **"The Great Wildebeeste Migration of the Serengeti"**

So when 52,000 African Wildebeeste trekked over 350 miles following the Equatorial rains Dr Bernard Grimzeck, curator of Frankfurt Zoo persuaded President Nyerere to declare the Migration pathway a National Park. Now nearly 3 million strong the migrants offer sustenance to countless residents along its path, from the lowly Scarab beetle rolling it's dung to Prides of nonmigrating lions feasting on the great biomass as it passes by. Hyenas, jackals and vultures clean up His Majesty's kill, while colorful birds feast on flies and flowers propagating in the rich pastures.

Brian will describe his adventures following the Migration, camping in tents and recording up close the many fauna that flourish on its varied African Savannah.



## **Moody Gardens \_ A Look Back**



The bus trip to Moody Gardens in Galveston to see the Festival of Lights and Iceland exhibit took place on December 13, 2022. There were 34 members and guests who attended and everyone enjoyed the event.

Our bus driver was punctual and very helpful, after our arrival we all enjoyed a great buffet at the Garden Restaurant then we walked around the Festival of Lights which was entertaining and fun, complete with sound effects and Christmas music.

The Iceland venue had a temperature of 9 degrees, they provided parkas (one size fits all based on Hagrid of Harry Potter fame) but the colorful ice sculptures were worth braving the chilly temperatures.

It put us all in the holiday spirit!



*Images by Michael Thompson & Margaret Zambrano*

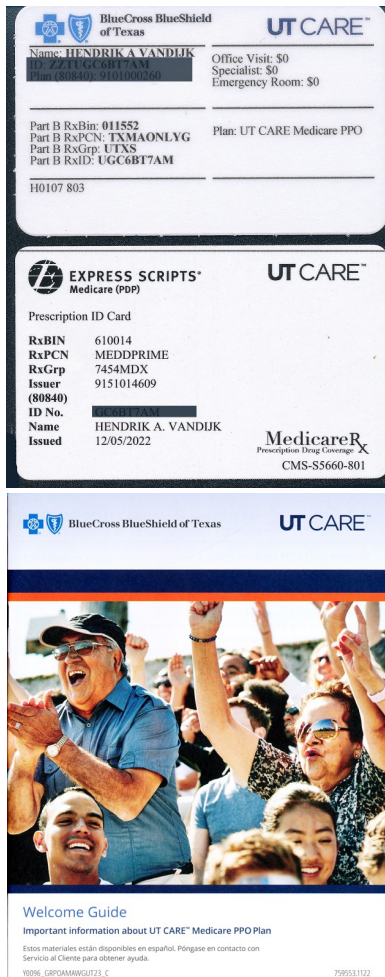
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## The Benefits Meeting

### UT CARE Medicare PPO.



Just received in the mail this week both cards we will need to be able to deal with health care providers if they agree to bill BCBS for the services. The top card will replace the Medicare card while the bottom one is for your prescription drugs. Those two cards will now replace Medicare A&B cards, add Plan C and Plan D for our drugs. I also received the "Welcome Guide" which explains the benefits and changes in the plan.

When the Benefits people from Austin and the BCBS reps told us about this pretty substantial change in our health insurance, we knew that we needed both cards to get coverage and they cut it pretty close just

about 10 days before January 1, 2023.

My experience with this process was quite involved with about 8 pieces of mail. First I got a letter telling me that Medicare had to agree for the change, then a second one telling me that Medicare agreed to enroll me in the UT-Care plan; finally the 2 pieces of mail that included the cards, first Express Script and then the UTCare card. The express script card is a bit flimsy, basically a laminated piece of paper, while the UTCare card is made of stronger stuff. Of course all this was duplicated for my wife's insurance.

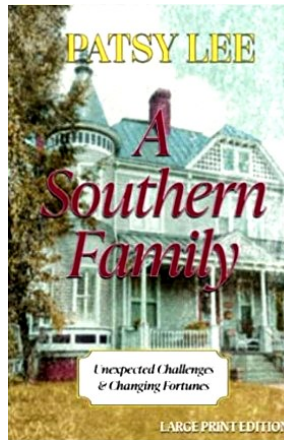
You will have to present the UTCare card to get care if the provider agrees to accept the fact that they will now bill BCBS instead of Medicare. Medicare will then reimburse BCBS for the charges.

If you were not yet aware, as of January 1, 2023 MDAnderson will accept this new insurance arrangement, a huge benefit for those who need MDAnderson for their health care.

Henny van Dijk

## Memories Never Spoil...

In previous editions of the Evergreen I have highlighted UTHRO members who have done unexpected things in their retirement and I just discovered a beauty—a novel by Patricia Starck I'd like to share with you in her own words. To get to know Starck as Dean and leader read this excellent article <https://nursing.uth.edu/cizik-nursing/story.htm?id=cda19835-92ef-4816-9f98-5c6510d6ff17>



After decades of academic publishing, when I retired I wanted to try my hand at fiction writing. I had stories in my mind and joined a writing club at our local library. There I found two other retired university women and we all struggled to let go of the parameters of scholarly writing—just the facts and be double sure they are accurate, don't embellish, don't offer your own opinions, always use perfect grammar. In fiction writing, one has to embellish—what is going on in

the surroundings, how does it smell, what impression do you have? And best of all—it's ok to break the grammar rules! It was a fun process as we would share and critique each other's works. I struggled with the concept of Point of View and was frequently called on it by a previous Hollywood script writer. All of that said to make the point, fiction writing just does not flow from the pen. It's hard work.

So why did I write this particular book? It had long been brewing in my mind. My grandparents lived on farms in South Georgia, but most of their descendants preferred city life, a fact which seemed peculiar to a child who loved the ambience of farm life as an occasional visitor. When I was a preteen, my parents sent me alone by bus on a trip of about 13 miles every Saturday to arrive at my step-grandfather's country store where I was to "help out". They would come up on Sunday for a big dinner, visit with the family, and then take me home. In the store, I would count out Johnny cakes, those big brown sugar cookies, for the customers while I enjoyed the fragrance from the big glass jar displayed on the counter. I would also restock shelves, sweep, dust, and do other such odd jobs. But mostly I listened and learned some things about life. The store was a place for connecting and visiting for these disparate country neighbors. And let's face it, gossip about others was the news everyone wanted, just like it is now. If I appeared to be listening, the conversation was often guarded and subtle, which only set my imagination to work filling in the unspoken parts.

I began the process of weaving an integrated whole out of these embellished snippets. The story takes place in the 1920's and is about four siblings of a large family on a rural farm in Georgia. They all have their life plans, but, alas, life happens, and each has to make adjustments. I decided to use my maiden and childhood name as the author, as I felt like that little girl as I told these stories. The book is entitled *A Southern Family: Unexpected Challenges and Changing Fortunes* by Patsy Lee.

## Houston Weather, Wait 5 minutes

### Today will be one of the strangest weather days of your life...

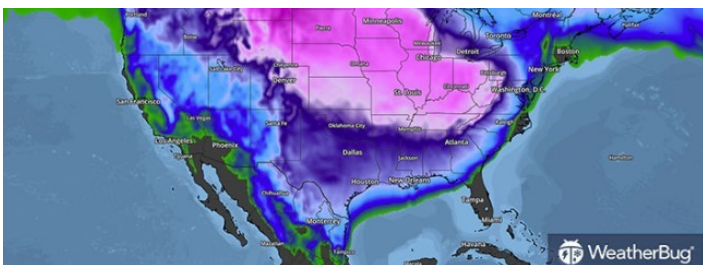
So started Eric Bergen's article today (Dec.22). And he has seen quite a lot of weird weather stuff in Houston. As the title said, today is a weather day you may remember for a long time. I can point to half a dozen vivid weather memories in Houston that are as plain as day for me—late-night flooding during Harvey, Allison, and Imelda; winds and tornadoes during Ike; drought during the summer of 2011; and the extreme cold, snow, and ice of February 2021. Today we will be making some new memories I think.

**Thursday:** The immediate changes with the front will be sustained north-northwesterly winds at about 25 mph, with gusts up to 35 to 40 mph. By around sunset most of the metro area will already be experiencing freezing temperatures, with air temperatures dropping into the 20s by this evening. If you're out and about after 9 or 10 pm, be prepared for apparent temperatures in the single digits. To the extent we have electricity concerns, at this moment our largest worry is brief outages due to strong winds affecting poles and lines. Otherwise, we expect the Texas power grid to be able to accommodate demand over the next few days.

**Friday:** How low will temperatures go on Friday morning? Some of this will depend on the extent of winds and mixing overnight, but it's a safe bet to expect lows in the 15 to 20 degree range for areas inland of Interstate 10, including locations north and west of Houston. The city itself will likely see lows between 17 and 22 degrees, with coastal areas between 20 and 25 degrees. Friday will be sunny, with continued gusty northerly winds, and high temperatures briefly nearing or reaching the freezing level. Lows will drop again on Friday night into the low 20s for much of the area, with local temperatures perhaps 2 to 5 degrees warmer than Thursday night.

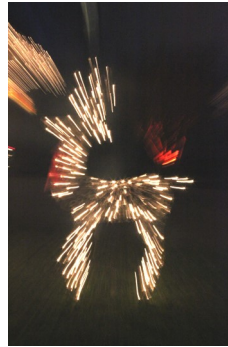
**Saturday:** Christmas Eve should see highs near 40 degrees, with sunny skies. Overnight lows will drop into the mid-20s.

**Christmas Day:** Another sunny day, likely with highs in the mid-40s. A light freeze is possible on Christmas night.



*The weathermap sure looks pretty and colorful but when I had to move my trashcan so the City can pick it up today it was very cold and I looked pretty blue in the face. Henny*

## Could There Be A Santa...



No known species of reindeer can fly. But there are 300,000 species of living organisms yet to be classified, and while most of these are insects and germs, this does not completely rule out flying reindeer which only Santa has ever seen.

There are 2 billion children in the world, but since Santa doesn't visit the Muslim, Hindu, Jewish and Buddhist children, that reduces the workload to 15% of the total - 378 million according to Population Reference Bureau. At an average rate of 3.5 children per household, that's 91.8 million homes. One presumes there's at least one good child in each.

Santa has 31 hours of Christmas to work with, thanks to the different time zones and the rotation of the earth, assuming he travels east to west. This works out to 822.6 visits per second. This is to say that for each Christian household with good children, Santa has 1/1000th of a second to park, hop out of the sleigh, jump down the chimney, fill the stockings, distribute the remaining presents under the tree, eat whatever snacks have been left, get back up the chimney, get back into the sleigh and move on to the next house. Assuming that each of these 91.8 million stops are evenly distributed around the earth (which, of course, we know to be false but for the purposes of our calculations we will accept), we are now talking about .78 miles per household, a total trip of 75-1/2 million miles, not counting stops to do what most of us must do at least once every 31 hours. This means that Santa's sleigh is moving at 650 miles per second, 3,000 times the speed of sound. The fastest man-made vehicle on earth, the Ulysses space probe, moves at a poky 27.4 miles per second - a conventional reindeer can run, tops, 15 miles per hour.

The payload on the sleigh adds another interesting element. Assuming that each child gets nothing more than a medium-sized lego set (2 lbs), the sleigh is carrying 321,300 tons, not counting Santa, who is invariably described as overweight. On land, conventional reindeer can pull no more than 300 pounds. Even granting that "flying reindeer" could pull 10x the normal amount, we cannot do the job with eight, or even nine. We need 214,200 reindeer. This increases the payload - not even counting the weight of the sleigh - to 353,430 tons, traveling at 650 miles per second creates enormous air resistance - this will heat the reindeer up in the same fashion as spacecrafts re-entering the earth's atmosphere. The lead pair of reindeer will burst into flame almost instantaneously, exposing the reindeer behind them, and create deafening sonic booms in their wake. The entire reindeer team will be vaporized within 4.26 thousandths of a second. Santa, meanwhile, will be subjected to centrifugal forces 17,500.06 times greater than gravity. A 250-pound Santa (which seems ludicrously slim) would be pinned to the back of his sleigh by 4,315,015 pounds of force.

**In conclusion** -- If Santa ever DID deliver presents on Christmas Eve, he's dead now.

# 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...

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Once the villagers decided to pray for rain. On the day of the prayer all the people gathered, but only one boy came with an umbrella. That is **Faith**.

When you throw babies into the air they laugh because they know you'll catch them. That is **trust**.

Every Night we go to bed without assurances of being alive the next morning, but still we set the alarm to wake up. That is **hope**.

We plan big things for tomorrow in spite of zero knowledge of the future. That is **confidence**.

We see the world suffering, but still, we get married and have children. That is **love**.

On an old man's shirt was written a sentence "I am not 80 years old, I am sweet sixteen with 64 years of experience. That is **attitude**.

Have a Happy Day and live your life like these 6 stories. Remember—good friends are the rare jewels of life, difficult to find and impossible to replace.

**Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous 2023 to all.**

### UTHRO OFFICERS 2023

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**Vice-Pres** Efren Pena  
**Secretary** Daun Gray  
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**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](mailto: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