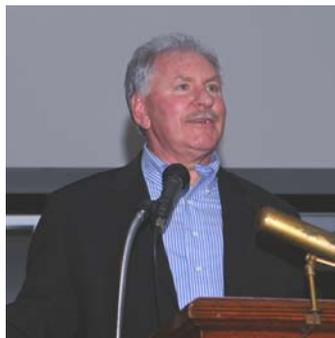


# The Old Brown Coat

Issue 26 University of Illinois Emergency Medicine Residency Alumni News October 2009

## The Leader and his Legacy

After 28 years with our program, 19 years of those as the founding and only chair of emergency medicine at UIC, Dr. Gary Strange embarked



on a new journey - that of retirement.

No single individual has influenced this program more than Dr. Strange. Beginning in the “glory days” of the early 80’s, he was there just after the formation of the program by Vera Morkovin and Hal Jayne, where he assumed the first chairmanship at Mercy Hospital. Taking on an emergency department at a time when emergency medicine was in its infancy proved to be a challenging task. In the quest to develop a bonafide ED, Gary had to overcome some major hurdles, including stubborn nurse managers and uninitiated and unenlightened administrators. “The battle at Mercy was mostly an uphill one” Gary reports, requiring patience, skill and diplomacy. In the end, it was the prayer from Sister Mary Ellen that he attributes his breakthrough there. Shortly thereafter a new nursing director arrived on the scene and “things happened!”.

Following the sudden unexpected death of Hal Jayne, Gary assumed the role of program director as well. The transition was a smooth one, thanks in part to the support of Julie Finney, who was present at the celebration.

It wasn’t long until the program, under Gary’s leadership, was setting its sites on higher things – bringing the program to the University of Illinois. For almost a decade the program carried the U of I name, but had no clinical involvement at the University. With the specialty of

emergency medicine still in its infancy, convincing the U to accept us on their turf as faculty, clinicians, teachers and researchers was a challenge. More hurdles had to be overcome, starting with suspicious and wary departmental chairs (medicine and surgery) at UIC. A proposal was developed by Gary, Ed Sloan, Mary Ann Cooper and Max Koenigsberg which included not only clinical service, but made academic standing in the medical school a key component for our move to the University. Negotiations began in earnest and the proposal was ultimately accepted, allowing us to debut as a ‘Program’, to be elevated to department status providing a set of measurable objectives were met within five years. In October 1990, our program took over the emergency department there, under the



*Bernie & George Hossfeld, Gary*

leadership of Gary as both departmental chair and program director. Stepping into a department where a board certified emergency physician was a novel species, was again – challenging (to say the least.) We could have



*Karlene Montgomery and Gary*

really used Sister Mary Ellen’s prayers again. More stubborn administrators, unenlightened nurse managers, wayward rotating residents...

Gary’s experience at Mercy proved helpful, as he

shaped and developed a respected clinical and academic department, emerging out from under the shadow of surgery to become a separate department in less than four years.

On a beautiful evening on August 28 faculty, friends and alums gathered to celebrate his retirement and reflect on his many accomplishments and achievements during his long and illustrious career. Evident in the many



stories and tributes was that he has touched and inspired so many, on so many levels and in so many ways. His leadership, perseverance and sheer tenacity are

*Bills Ahrens, Tim Erickson*

respected and admired. He has served as physician, educator, role model, administrator, friend, listener, CQI leader and Cerner “superuser” during his tenure.

Some memorable quotes from the evening:

“When Hal Jayne died early in the residency program, Gary emerged as the guy our program needed to survive. It not only survived, it has prospered under his leadership.”...”No one says anything bad about Gary. To be a boss that long and all say good things” George Hossfeld (’83)

Ed Ward (’99), as a “U of I lifer” (undergrad, med school and residency) was fortunate to have



Gary as both his academic advisor in med school and as chair and program director in residency. He recounts the time that Gary, as his advisor, spent 2 hours reviewing head and neck anatomy with

him following his subpar performance on the M1 exam. “Two hours for a chairman is a lot of time for a screw up M-1.”

Jan Baldwin, then nursing administrator for Critical Care and the ED, described the ED at the time of our arrival as a “dead zone” in the organization. “Gary changed that.” She also recounted his role as the “quality guru” of the

90’s, creating a quality program at UIC “like finding religion”

“Even as Gary climbed the administrative ladder, he is still the best ER clinician. Even now he can sink his teeth into a case.” Bill Ahrens (UIC faculty)

Marianne Araujo, then VP of nursing at Mercy: spoke of Gary’s impact in emergency medicine across the city, starting at Mercy, then at UIC, with departmental chairs, program directors and faculty at Lutheran General Hospital, Resurrection, Rush, University of Chicago, Loyola and beyond, as well as across the country from coast to coast.

Bernie Hossfeld in speaking of her 30+ years as an ER nurse at LGH: “any experienced ER nurse can smell a good ER doc.” Gary was one of them.

Tess Hogan (’87): The skills that she learned as a resident working directly with Gary, then her department chair and program director, gave her the expertise and experience she used to start a new EM residency program at Resurrection (often referred to as “U of I west”).

Ed Sloan (’87), in his account of the presentation of the EM proposal made to the UIC leadership: “When we told them how much it would cost for us to run their ED, they almost choked on their bagels. Then we left Gary in the room to handle that issue.”...”Gary has let all of us do what we wanted to do: he created opportunity and allowed people to succeed, while he absorbed the administrative heat. His gift for teaching, his energy, and savvy are part of his legacy.”

Debra Krause (former UIC administrator) recounted the story of using “sleazy Dollar Store

items – mostly underwear” as prizes and rewards for use in quality improvement meetings. Meeting attendees, mostly

other departmental chairs, were quite taken aback as recipients of such unique gifts. (Clearly they have never attended a Tim Erickson Tox lecture.)

Armando Marquez(’89): “I have seen the whole spectrum of the man: advisor, education



director, employer, boss and friend. He taught me a lot. I am proud to have worked with him.”

David Howes’ Lessons from Gary: “1. He taught us patient care was everything, first and foremost, and was a good clinician. 2. He was a good teacher (taught prior to med school) and his tutelage infused something into all of us. 3. Gary demanded respect by his own example. He was



*Janet Lin, Rhea Begeman*

respectful of everybody – patient, nurse, doctor and family—“if you weren’t, you didn’t last.” 4. We did well because he wanted us to do well.

Gary remarked that he hopes he has established some foundations upon which later generations can build... All agree this is true, for he has had a tremendous impact on healthcare in Chicago, nationally and internationally, by his legacy of teaching, his high standards, and his accomplishments in emergency medicine. Gary closed the evening by invoking Mark Twain and reassuring us that he would stay busy in retirement, traveling and doing the things he's always wanted to do.

## *More memories*

In addition to the tributes at the dinner, faculty and alumni sent in their thoughts and stories from around the country. :

–“It’s nice that Gary is retiring. Glad to hear he doesn’t have to work until he is 104 with the way the market went! When I think of Gary, I think of him with a smile on his face and a sparkle in his eye. That is, except for the times when he would be rolling his eyes in dismay! He was always kind, fair and nurturing. He has contributed to the training of many residents, and I count myself lucky to have been one of them.” Erica (Heit) Remer (’88)

–Pat Lee(’93) recalled her and Mark Rosenbloom’s (’93) rescue at sea (Lake Superior) from their overturned canoe during the SAEM meeting in Toronto, with a helicopter circling overhead. “When we told Gary, he laughed! He did not scold us but was so grateful

that we were ok.” Gary had his turn underwater during “our white water rafting days when Gary did the ‘elevator shaft’ and we thought he had drowned as he shot down under the water – just when we were ready to send in the troops, he popped up laughing saying “let’s do that again!”

–Dan Butterbach (’98) recalls his interactions with Gary during medical school as a research assistant. “I gained more of an interest in EM and that only grew as I completed med school. ... (he) wrote a letter of recommendation for me and was always available to me during residency and even after. I think I’ll have a successful career in EM... make good money, save some lives, make a difference. It would be very cool to also truly influence and be remembered by peers (like Gary).”

– In a letter to Gary: ““I can honestly say that without a doubt you have opened doors for me and I am so grateful. As a medical student you gave me the chance to do research in the department.

Little did I realize at the time but that opportunity would spark such an interest that it would lead me to



*Nick Furtado, Gary, Heather Prendergast, Brad Bunney* an academic career that has been very rewarding.

..I can vividly recall all of the encouragement you provided during my tenure track years and the unwavering support and direction you offered me during those impromptu office visits. You have allowed me room to grow into a well rounded academician. Your leadership for our department has been outstanding and it is a bittersweet moment to see you retire. I am very proud to have you as the Head of the UIC Department of EM. You have been an outstanding mentor, a trustworthy colleague and a dear friend. .. Thank you, thank you, and thank you. You will be missed. I can only hope to have such a distinguished career and be as influential in the lives of other young faculty as you have been in mine. God Bless.” Heather Prendergast, UIC faculty

“I will always remember Gary Strange foremost as a fine gentleman. He was a patient

teacher who encouraged me as a medical student and someone I always enjoyed being around as a resident. Although I could only understand years later, I witnessed his emergence as a remarkable leader following Harold Jayne's sudden death. The circumstances of the field of EM, the situation within U of I and the absence of succession planning had considerable force against the survivability of the residency. I never worried. It was all good. It has been a blessing to see the program prosper and encounter the fine men and women who emerge from training and the wonderful professors who remain and those who join the staff. Gary Strange is the cause of all that history and the provider of an even greater future." Jim Concannon '88

"Mercy was my first job out of residency...But, I had an obligation to the



National Health Service Corps and was looking at the prospect of fulfilling that in some backwater destination down south. Lucky for me, Reagan's administration

slightly altered the terms..., specifying that urban areas could be designated as "health manpower shortage" defined by zip codes. Gary came up with the bright idea of going through the ED log books and doing a manual assessment of zip code patient origins. We were able to use this data to show that the Mercy ED saw enough patients from so-called shortage areas to allow me to fulfill my 2 year obligation to the NHSC. Not only did Gary save me from social suicide, he was instrumental in kicking off my academic career." Tim Turnbull, former faculty

## Alum News...

- Marny Fetzer ('06) writes from her post as faculty at Lutheran General Hospital "It is amazing how quickly the transition went from being a resident to teaching them. Enjoying the LGH and U of C residents. Very intriguing bunch. Challenging working in such an acute environment and kept on my toes with clinical debates.... Married in '06 and had our first amazing little one last winter! Her name is

Katherine (Kate) Noelle Wood (12-28-08). I can't believe my eyes when I see her face each morning (especially when she gets up before sunrise....)"



- George Hossfeld ('83) writes "I'm excited to announce the debut of my new column in EM News. For now, it will only be found in its On Line version EMN Online. You can find it at [www.EM-News.com](http://www.EM-News.com) and clicking on *You've Been Served*. The column is focused on the personal trauma of malpractice suits. I'd love to hear from you. No need to generate lawsuits to read it.

## Girls, Girls, Girls...

- "We have 2 girls, 4 and 6. Another girl on the way... I 'm way outnumbered." Dan Butterbach ('98)

-Ed Sloan ('87) is the clinical director for the latest rural hospital addition to our UIC fold, Belvidere Community Hospital, just outside of Rockford, Ill. Operations there began this spring, just in time for the first H1N1 run. The community there has welcomed our faculty and alums into their new hospital, maintaining a higher than expected census since our debut, resulting in a shorter shift (12 hours) and higher pay.

-Lisa Maier ('08) moved to the St. Louis area last July and is beating the bushes there for employment.

-Tess Hogan ('87) was featured in the August 19 issue of JAMA for her pioneering work in creating a set of geriatric competencies for emergency medicine residencies, developed as part of her Brookdale Leadership in Aging Fellowship.

## A message from the Dean...



I am pleased to announce the appointment of Professor Timothy Erickson as Interim Head of the Department of Emergency Medicine. Dr. Erikson has been a University faculty member since 1992 and has

received many honors in teaching and clinical service including the 2008 College of Medicine Faculty of the Year award.

Dr. Erickson completed his Bachelor of Arts at Greenville College and earned an M.D. from the Chicago Medical School. He has a rich skill set and deep understanding of the Department from his multifaceted appointments ranging from residency director to chief of the division of clinical toxicology. He has been a member of multiple editorial boards and has a prolific academic history including publishing over 130 book chapters, abstracts and original journal articles.

Dr. Erikson's commitment to excellence, his outstanding intellectual abilities, and his dynamic character will serve the Department and the University well. Please join me in welcoming Dr. Erickson in his new role as Interim Head of the Department of Emergency Medicine.

Joe Flaherty

Dean, College of Medicine



*Rhodessa Capulong, Tony Ghidorzi*



*Mike Wahl, Leon Gussow*



*Peggy + Ed Callahan*

*Dear John,*

Ah, Chicago. Where the summer's been cool and the patients are wheezy. The days are shorter and the leaves are already beginning to turn. Yes, we've seen our share of asthmatics with the chilly, wet weather. In fact, I've noticed many unusual patterns in the ED recently. It's not uncommon, of course, for the ED to be "constipated" with multiple patients awaiting beds upstairs. This creates a dynamic that seems to select—how can I say?-- weirdness. On a recent shift I had a full board (and a packed waiting room) which included 4 neurosurgery admits, 4 neurology admits, 3 psych evals, and 2 ophtho admits! Well, we are a center of excellence.



As more patients were admitted, the blue "admission" stars spread across the big board like pop-ups. Suddenly, late in the evening the patients began disappearing into their assigned beds. I marveled at this phenomenon, certain that so many in-patients upstairs were not actually being discharged home at this hour. I could only imagine that I was witnessing a miracle!

Several faculty traveled last month to Valencia, Spain, to lecture at the Fifth Mediterranean Emergency Medicine Congress. Brad Bunney spoke on ischemic stroke and the extension for TPA to 4.5 hours; Ed Sloan talked about seizures; and Heather Prendergast spoke on acute meningitis. The conference was a great success; there was standing-room only.

As we move into autumn the fresh faces of our new interns have become more familiar and less

timid in approaching the patients, and the attendings. We've said good-bye to our most recent class of senior residents, who by now are already entrenched in their new routines. We're lucky to have a few stay close to home: Ben Stull is working locum tenens with Cullen Kehoe in the midwest (Iowa and Wisconsin). Ben did his first attending shift at the U recently, a memorable day with multiple ICU admissions!

Chris Lloyd is a new attending at Mercy, and congratulations to him and his wife on their new son Lucas! Amy Parecha is working across the street at Rush, Monica Pitzelle is now at Mt Sinai. Kris Knopp is at Alexian Brothers in Schaumburg, also doing some shifts at Masonic. Gayatri Shangari is now working at Northwest Community Hospital. Saroosh Ahmed is working at OSF St. Anthony in Rockford. John De La Cruz moved south to SIU in Springfield and will lead the new EM residency program next year. On the other hand, Rob Rieppenhoff has moved north to Columbia St. Mary's in Milwaukee, and is also due congratulations for his new son!

A little farther afield, Chris Trigger has started a Sports Medicine fellowship in Pittsburgh, as has Jason Glowney in Denver. Vaishal Tolia has joined the Emergency Department at UCSD in San Diego, and will also be working on the hospitalist teaching service there. Kruti Shukla is at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, and Derek Sorensen is fulfilling his military obligations at Langley AFB 1<sup>st</sup> Medical Opera in Virginia.

That's it for now. To those of you who will be joining many of our faculty at ACEP in Boston, have fun! Good luck, and keep in touch!

*John Williams ('95)* [medwright@gmail.com](mailto:medwright@gmail.com)



*Vaishal Tolia, Scott Heinrich, Kruti Shukla, Amy Parecha*



*view from the restaurant, Aug 28, 2009*



*Doug Propp*



*Mary Ann Cooper with husband, Dale*

## One Foley, Two Foley, Red Foley, Blue Foley

A long time ago, I was in a big bind.  
I needed a Foley, but none could I find.  
None Blue, none red, none under the sun,  
No 16s, no 14s, not even a one!

I needed a Foley, and I needed it fast.  
You see Mr. McGoo, he wasn't gonna last.  
He tried and he tried and he tried hard to pee,  
He tried and he tried and he tried, don't you see?  
But it's been 2 days, and it's not gonna be,  
And now we have a GU emergency!

I opened my mouth to scream and to shout,  
For someone, for anyone, to please help me out.  
But no one would help, and it made me so mad,  
For the thought in my head was really quite sad.

I had to make a call, one not made in glee,  
I had to bit the bullet and call Urology.  
They'd come with their scanners, their wires and scopes  
And in a brief instant they'd dash all my hopes.

But then it came to me, a vision, a light,  
No suprapubic, no, not tonight!

A Foley I had back in the day  
No ordinary Foley, my savior, a coude.

And just like that I was past the obstruction,  
To save Mr. McGoo any urethral destruction.

A fountain of gold rushed at me at last,  
And those visions of GU residents raced into the past.  
I could send those intubators of the penis away,  
To a mystical place where they do TURPs night and day.

So I didn't need two, only one Foley you see,  
To get that flashback, that river of pee.  
And that is the story of my philosophy,  
On how to approach a GU emergency!

Printed, with permission, from Chad Kessler ('05)- author, poet and director of the Jesse Brown VA Emergency Department.  
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*Enjoy life, enjoy retirement...*



*Helene Connolly, Kathleen (Cline) Schupner,  
alumni reception, October '08*



*Judy Jean-Baptist, Max Koenigsberg, October '08*



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