you gotta serve somebody! community service issue
Editor's Note
Lois Montague, MD

Welcome to the March Issue of the Murmur! This month's theme is all about serving the community. In this issue, you will find a variety of ways you and your fellow students have found to help others and information about how to get involved. I’m so excited by the energy UMMC puts into service. What a wonderful place to be!

Besides service, this issue includes Diagnosis Dinner from Taylor McPherson (I recommend to all future editors to ask a friend to write this column, her food is always delicious!!) and a March Madness overview by Jonathan Giurintano. Also, Sam Love will be picking up the reigns for Literati Medicus and has written about the interesting book My Stroke of Insight by a neuroscientist who had a stroke. There are also images of the D2 White Coat Ceremony.

Lastly, This issue contains the results of Match Day-- the culmination of years of hard work and anticipation. Thanks to the people who made match day special. I will miss the ladies pictured above. They are some of my best friends in med school and all almost headed different places!

Thank you to all the March Contributors!! To submit articles or photos to the Murmur or inquire about advertising, email gmontague@umc.edu. The beautiful flower photos on the cover were taken by Katie Maxwell, who will receive $25.

You’re Invited!!

What? HHP Health Fair at Neighborhood Christian Center
When? April 2 9-12 am
Where? Neighborhood Christian Center
417 West Ash Street
Jackson, MS 39203

Why? To inspire children to make healthy life choices and pursue careers in healthcare and offer screening opportunities for adults.

Who? You! All students are invited to participate.

How? Contact Sam Love at slove@umc.edu or me at gmontague@umc.edu with any questions or to sign up to volunteer!

Best Study Break EVER
Wrecking things with a hammer!!

This year’s spring Habitat for Humanity is here!! UMMC ASB is teaming up with Bancorp South again. The designated build days along with the “day leaders” are below:

4/2 - PT Karla Kregting Kkregting@umc.edu
4/7 - Bancorp South Hailey Ramage Lramage@umc.edu
4/9 - PT (beginning), contact Karla Kregting Kkregting@umc.edu
4/14 - Bancorp South
4/16 - Medicine/SHRP Gray Wallace JGWallace@umc.edu
4/30 - Dental/Pharm Katie Sims KVSims@umc.edu
5/7 - Nursing/Grad Sarah Stoner SStoner@umc.edu

If you would like to volunteer for any day, simply email the day leader. You can sign up for the day assigned to your school or a different one if you cannot make it on your school's day. If you are heading to volunteer, especially early on in the build, wear a hat and sunscreen. Also feel free to bring it if you have your own hammer and tool belt, but everything you need will be provided.

If you have any general questions, email ASB Philanthropy Chair Hailey Ramage at LRAMage@umc.edu.
Crestwood Church provides a wonderful ministry and service to the Metro Jackson community. The program was opened by Pastor Johnny Rayford and his wife, Janet. Students (K-6) from Galloway Elementary School come for three hours Monday through Thursday afternoons to receive help with homework, practice their math and reading skills, and to enjoy playing in an encouraging and Christian atmosphere. Several other UMC Physical Therapy students and myself have had the opportunity to spend one afternoon a week with these children during the school year. Several of the children come from home lives that do not promote learning and definitely do not reassure them that they are smart, worthy, or capable. Some of them live with grandparents that are unable to help them comprehend their school work (sometimes WE have trouble remembering subject predicate agreement and long division too ha). We have found through the many crazy conversations, cries, and fusses that these kids just want to hear that THEY CAN DO IT!

Here’s a heartwarming story of the joy of helping with children. I was hanging out with my kindergarteners last year and we started talking about the word “love.” We were in the midst of writing it five times and making sentences when I asked, “Who can tell me the definition of love?” And with all certainty and passion, one of the girls looks up to me and says “oh, you know Mrs. Rebecca, that’s when your heart starts pumping and it just comes out of you.” And that’s exactly what happens when you spend time with these awesome kids!

As this Murmur issue so adequately portrays, there is an amazing sense of service the UMC community has for the Jackson area. I truly believe that every child that is helped makes a much more tremendous impact on our lives than we could ever hope to make on theirs. God is working in the lives of everyone who enters through the doors of Crestwood Church.

The Crestwood after-school program is always in need of more volunteers to help tutor and encourage kids. If you are interested in getting plugged in feel free to email Deann Cleveland cleveland@umc.edu or myself at rford@umc.edu.
Hello!!

I hope that everyone had fun at Anatomy Ball! I definitely had a blast at my last UMMC party at Hal and Mal’s. Thanks to those of you who donated to the Jackson Free Clinic. The student body raised $1600 for their facility expansion. That is awesome!! The next party on the list is Crawfest. The event will be Saturday, April 9th at Luckett Lodge from 1pm-5pm. The band is Chris Gill and the Sole Shakers. There will be shuttles transporting students back and forth from the student union to the party. Watch for an email with more details and directions to Luckett Lodge. I hope to see all of you there. Bring your appetites!!

Amanda L. Harrell
Associated Student Body Vice President
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For more information, contact the Private Client Group at BankPlus:
Donated $50 to JPS for uniform purchase.

Handed out water to patients in line at the JFC

Provided a pre-Thanksgiving dinner and homemade desserts for the residents of the Ronald Mcdonald House on Campus

Provided residents of Manhattan Nursing Home with Vday cards and goodies.

Participated in the American Cancer Society's Breast Cancer Awareness walk/run with 17 participants.

Raised $1,230.00 that will go towards breast cancer research.

Can food drive for StewPot Community Services.

Collecting can goods and non-perishables from March 20-Apr 1st.

Boxes located outside student lounge, Mrs. Virginia's office, and the Family Medicine office 4th floor of Clinical Sciences Bldg.

SOM Class of 2011 brought can foods to donate during Match Day Celebration

FMIG Year of Service

by Ashley McPhie
Whether you’re an underclassman trying to remember why you came to med school or an upperclassman wanting to practice newly found skills, volunteering at the Jackson Free Clinic (JFC) is an excellent chance to do both. JFC is a student-run medical clinic dedicated to treating patients who have no insurance or could not otherwise afford medical care. Teams of med students led by an M3 or M4 see patients every Saturday from noon until the last patient is seen. Patient encounters include everything from taking a history and physical to blood draws for labs and to devising a treatment plan. All teams are supervised weekly by a licensed MD and a JFC board member to ensure quality patient care.

For patients, the clinic provides valuable services such as medical condition management, disease treatment, laboratory monitoring, and education. Patients requiring a higher level of care are provided with emergency or specialist referrals. Various donations have also allowed us to provide many medications free of charge to our patients.

Aside from the obvious benefits of contributing to the Jackson community, there are lots of reasons to volunteer at JFC. M1 and M2 students apply knowledge from the basic sciences in the clinic and prepare for the clinical years by learning from upper levels. M3’s enjoy practicing their new skills in the clinic setting while M4’s find volunteering a good way to invest some of their “free time” before they begin intern year. For many M4’s, volunteering at JFC has also been a good topic of conversation while on the interview trail.

The clinic’s laid-back atmosphere provides a great teaching environment. Currently, the volunteer day begins at 11:45 a.m. when the clinic opens and ends around 4:00 p.m., depending on the number of patients. Since med students often struggle to find time in their busy schedules, the JFC board is currently working on a new schedule that would shorten the amount of hours for volunteers while keeping the patient volume the same.

Other ways to get involved with the JFC are through various fund-raising campaigns we have during the year. This past year we participated in the PGA Tour’s Viking Classic held in Madison, MS that proved to be a great fundraiser we’d like to continue with next year. Many of you may have seen our new JFC t-shirts that we designed this year. They have not only helped with fundraising but have also been a great way to increase student as well as community interest in the clinic. We also held a raffle at last month’s Anatomy Ball, which helped us raise around $1,500 thanks to UMC’s student body.

Most of our volunteers are medical students, but we’re looking to expand our volunteer base to the other schools as the clinic continues to grow. This year we partnered with the pharmacy school whose volunteers have been instrumental with medication management and cost-maintenance. If you would like to volunteer at the clinic, please contact Amika Sood or Brandy Hood (csood and bhood in webmail).

by Meagan Mahoney, M3
As we were boarding the plane in Atlanta bound for Lima, it finally hit me: “We’re going to PERU!”

After approximately six hours of flight, we landed in Lima a little after midnight only to mill about the airport until 5:00 AM or so to board our next flight into Iquitos. That is where our adventure would begin, in the largest city in the world only accessible by boat or by plane. Coincidentally, Iquitos was recovering from a large Dengue Fever outbreak, and we were fortunate enough to tour the hospital and hear firsthand from the residents there about the hundreds of patients affected.

Our group from UMC consisted of seven people. Lauren McClain, Anna Oberhofer, and myself made up the three eager M4 students. Leila Tehrani, an ID pharmacy fellow, was our jungle pharmacist. Ben Burkett, third year Med/Peds resident, was our baby expert, and ID attendings Dr. Svenja Albrecht and Dr. Arti Barnes served as our “consults”. We were joined by Kitty Jackson, a senior medical student from the United Kingdom studying in Oxford (who coincidentally found out where she matched during our trip!) who was a great addition to our team. We were led about the Amazon by Devon, the fearless Canadian American who is a professor of all things Amazonian at Florida International University in Miami. We were joined by an awesome Peruvian dentist, José, who pulled more teeth than we could count and patiently taught us Peruvian Spanish. Our crew consisted of some wonderful boat captains, a steward, translators, and the best cook ever. Muchas gracias to Edwin, Segundo, Emerson, Cesar and Danilo.

We set off from Iquitos onto the Amazon River, whose size is so breathtakingly huge, it’s hard to imagine that the river itself is actually a couple of rivers that come together every so often. Along the way we passed by a number of river islands and watched the strong currents make eddies. The riverbanks were just saturated with green vegetation, and there were large numbers of multicolored birds flying about. Once we turned into some of the smaller rivers, we would see pink and grey river dolphins and the occasional snake.

We visited many villages during our trip. Their names included Sabalo, Nueva de Agosto (literally “August 9th”), Libertad, Santo Tomas, and Yanahuacu. The villagers were a very labor intensive group: the men were typically out in the fields everyday tending to yucca or corn, or even away working for logging companies. The women have kids pretty early, and you can tell which villages have access to contraceptives and condoms. Some places were fortunate enough to have traveling nurses dispense Depo shots every three months; in those places we would still see 17 year old girls that still acted like kids. In the other villages, it was not uncommon to see a 15 year old girl with a baby on her hip and obviously quite pregnant. They eat mostly fish, fruit, plantain and yucca. They hunt wild animals, but they also adopt them as pets. We saw pet monkeys and even a pet boa! The river is the lifeblood of all the communities. They go down to the river to get their drinking water, to bathe, to clean their fish guts, poop, pee...EVERYTHING. No concept of “let’s go downriver for hygiene”, it’s all in the same area. No wonder it seemed that everyone had “bichos” (worms) in their stool or crawling out their nose!

We went from village to village setting up clinics. We usually would have two clinics a day, and in some of the larger villages we would have to take a break for lunch and come back to it. The most common complaints for the kids were “tos, bronquios, y grippe”, cough, wheezing, and runny nose. For the adults, “dolor en mi ___ y mareos”: pain somewhere and dizziness. The more interesting things we saw ranged from suspected cardiac anomalies to basal cell...
carcinoma, and from STDs to microtia. We also counseled people on viruses versus bacteria and the importance of drinking enough water every day to avoid dehydration. Everyone who came to clinic received mebendazole to lessen their parasite load. Any child that we suspected had a high parasite burden received more doses to take at home. Most everyone received a supply of multivitamins, and the pregnant women received all the appropriate prenatal vitamins. We also handed out condoms discreetly to those that asked for them, and then would have to laugh when we saw the kids carrying their parents’ condoms around for them. Our dentist would set up in the most lit area and start pulling cavity-filled teeth. He would numb them up first with lidocaine, pull the tooth, and then stuff homemade cotton balls in their mouths. You could always tell who had seen the dentist based off the cotton and the blood-tinged drool they would have.

Sometimes we would get called on for an “emergency”. One night we were told of a laboring woman in distress and some of us set off in the speedboat in the darkness to assist her. Once we arrived at her hut, we found that she had just delivered about 10 minutes prior, and that she had a grade 3 laceration with plenty of blood flowing out. We set up a mini-OR and sutured her back together and luckily were able to stop her bleeding. Can you imagine sewing a postpartum woman back together, using 2 flashlights as your light source, with no proper needle drivers (had to use an aorta clamp!), all the while crammed into a tiny living space with the floor bending precipitously with every move you made? Another day we were called upon to make a house call to see a man that wasn’t able to walk, and upon arriving to the hut you see a man laying in a hammock with an obvious septic knee? We were fortunate enough to have the materials needed to do a joint aspiration, and gave the man a supply of antibiotics. Yet another house call we were invited to see a man that was incredibly cachectic and suffering from some longstanding illness, and as it turns out, the man had been diagnosed as HIV positive and had come home to die in his village.

Overall, the trip was incredibly eye-opening. We got to see an area of the world that is incredibly awe inspiring and vastly different from our way of life in the USA. However, what I found most interesting was that patients are the same in the Amazon villages as they are here at home. We had to tell moms that viruses aren’t cured with antibiotics. We counseled people about safe sex and STDs. We had to deal with a large number of people coming to clinic and lying about symptoms to try and get pain medicines. Here at home those medicines are called morphine and dilaudid, just to name a few, but the ones we had were called ibuprofeno and paracetamol, hardly considered addictive. People would come and say all sorts of things or even try and coach their children (right in front of us, and we can understand your Spanish!) of what to say to “score some drugs”! And then you think, “It’s only ibuprofen and tylenol! That’s over the counter here in the USA!”. But then you see the children with stomach aches and find out their parents have been giving them adult-strength ibuprofen, thinking “they have a tummy ache, ibuprofen takes away pain, let me give them that!”, not realizing that what they are doing is actually quite harmful.

If any of this sounded interesting to you, please give it some thought. I personally feel that you can learn a lot about humanity by experiencing another culture, and the Peruvians we met were some wonderful people. Boating down the Amazon and seeing the jungle firsthand is a sight I will never forget. Though, I will admit, I could do without mosquitoes…
The Luck of the Irish was with us this St. Paddy’s Day!

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March 17, 2011

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Class of 2011 Match Day Festivities

The Match Day Ceremony began with addresses from Dr. Helen Turner and our Vice-Chancellor, Dr. James Keeton. Dr. Turner recognized all the families and friends in the audience. Dr. Keeton’s message was simple: “To those of you leaving our state, please come home.” Mississippi has a physician shortage, especially in rural areas. He said he never felt like his education was lacking during his training outside of Mississippi. Mississippi is ranked one of the highest in the nation for physicians trained in Mississippi returning to the state to practice. Dr. Woodward provided interesting facts about Mississippi while she led the ceremony.

Dr. Jerry Clark and Mrs. Virginia Covington were selected by the class to have the honor of drawing the first name. The Class of 2011 matched into a variety of different states and specialties. 60 will stay in Mississippi and 60 will venture out of the state for residency. The top states for graduates to match into this year besides Mississippi were South Carolina-9, Tennessee-8, Alabama-5, and Louisiana-4 – 47 member of the Class of 2011 plan to enter primary care specialties include Pediatrics, Medicine, OB/Gyn, Med-Peds, Family Medicine, and General Surgery.

We appreciate how involved the bookstore is in match day. Every year on match day, each senior student places $5 in a doctor bag donated by one of the bookstore’s vendors. The student whose name is drawn last receives the bag with around $500! This year, the winner was Scoot Saul. As a consolation prize for the next-to-last name drawn, the bookstore graciously donated a beautiful diploma frame, won by Demarre Jones. Every senior student received a prize from the giant match book. By matching in Boston, MA, Toni Peters won the award for the person going the farthest away, a Mississippi T-shirt and by being the first to match at UMMC, Joe Cook won a gift certificate for $250.

We are grateful as a class for all the effort that goes into planning and executing match day festivities, especially by Drs. Woodward, Jackson and Clark and Mrs. Linda Kivlan and Virginia Covington. Thank you also to Alumni Affairs for a wonderful breakfast at River Hills and to Bancorp South and Bankplus for the enjoyable parties.
Picture it . . . a campus full of eager students in white lab coats, a challenging curriculum of science, UMMC Faculty buzzing about giving lectures, and a central focus on health and wellness . . . a perfect description of the University of Mississippi Medical Center, right?

Wrong! The 9, 10, and 11 year old students who are called interns at Franklin Academy Medical Sciences Magnet School in Columbus, MS are a long way from being student at UMMC. But, their dream is closer than ever to becoming a reality because of the commitment of some key people at UMMC. And it all began on September 28, 2010, with the official launch of the UMMC/Franklin Academy Partnership.

Dr. James Keeton, UMMC Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs, and about 30 other faculty, staff, and students, traveled to Columbus, MS, for an all day intensive investment in the youngsters at Franklin. These students were addressed by a host of Mississippi dignitaries and then ushered to their playground, which had been transformed into a sea of hands on information booths in each of the six areas of health professions offered at UMMC.

Students from the Schools of Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, Pharmacy and Graduate Studies, gave generously of their time, energy, smiles, and compassion, as kids filed through and made the connection between “what I want to be when I grow up”, and what they are now – a student. After experiencing the games, demonstrations, models, Q&A, and receiving numberless “give-aways”, the children were all smiles on the inside and outside as they went home that day. Each UMMC student who participated was an inspiration to a child who probably has no one in his family who is a successful healthcare professional.

This was, to say the least, a mentoring activity that further authenticated our Multicultural Affairs Pipeline. Its not just rhetoric, but our UMMC family is prepared to “pull” these kids through the pipeline with hands-on involvement through service-learning activities like these.

The Franklin Academy Partnership is comprised of a series of monthly visits to Columbus in which students are given enrichment in a focus area of health. This opportunity is open to faculty, staff professionals, and students. To volunteer for AY2011/2012 rotations, please contact Chris Taylor in the Division of Multicultural Affairs at 601-984-1340 or cttaylor@umc.edu

On April 14th, students from Franklin Academy will be touring our campus. Also, there will be a spectacular High School Day on campus that same day. I am hoping that many members of the student body will help pull this off.

Submitted by Chris Taylor, Mentoring and Tutoring Programs Coordinator, UMMC Division of Multicultural Affairs.
On February 25, 2011, the 35 D2’s from the Class of 2013 took part in the American College of Dentists White Coat Ceremony in the Norman C. Nelson Student Union. This ceremony marks a rite of passage in a dental student’s career as a symbol of the transition from pre-clinical studies, weighing heavily in basic sciences, to patient care and also as a re-iteration of the ethical values pledged by the class during the Ethics Ceremony that took place in the D1 year. Members of the class and their guests were treated to a buffet dinner and a series of remarks by representatives from UMC and the Mississippi Dental Association. Afterwards, my classmates and I received our white coats and pins from Fellows of the American College of Dentists. Following the ceremony, smiles abounded as literally hundreds of pictures were taken by proud family members and friends. Participation in the ceremony confirmed that hard work does pay off and that our responsibilities for live patient care begin soon. - Ryan Morrison, D2
The month of March means basketball, Match Day, and St. Patrick’s Day. I’m not entirely sure what “food theme” I would pick for March Madness. But if I were creative enough, I would have chosen this theme in honor of my Richmond Spiders basketball team making it to the Sweet Sixteen. A “Match Day Theme” is obviously out of the question because thinking about it makes most people lose their appetite. Therefore, the only logical theme for this Diagnosis Dinner is St. Patrick’s Day. And who needs luck more than an M4 during Match week? No one. That’s why I invited a few other M4s (Lois Montague, Amanda Harrell, and Jennifer May) over for some Irish luck.

**Dublin Coddle**

**Ingredients:**
- 2 onions
- 1 lb potatoes
- 1 lb Irish pork sausage
- 1 lb bacon
- 2 cups water
- 2 chicken stock cubes
- 4 Tbs chopped fresh parsley
- Salt
- Ground pepper
- Crock pot

**Instructions:**
First, slice the onions, quarter the potatoes, and chop the parsley. Next grill the sausage and bacon enough to color, allow to cool and drain, cut bacon into one inch pieces and sausage into 4 inch pieces. Throw all of the above into your crock pot seasoning liberally with ground pepper and adding salt to taste. Lastly, dissolve the chicken stock cubes in 2 cups of boiling water. Once dissolved, pour chicken stock over ingredients in crock pot. Cook on low for about 5 hours (high for about 3 hours). You can’t really over-cook this - just stir occasionally and add water if needed.
GUINNESS BEER BREAD

**Ingredients:**
3 cups self-rising flour  
1/2 cup sugar  
12 ounces Guinness  
4 Tbs melted butter

**Instructions:**
In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, beer, and butter. Mix well. Pour into a greased loaf pan and bake at 375° F for 50 minutes. Remove bread from oven, brush the top of the loaf with butter and return to oven for another 5 minutes.

BROILED CABBAGE

**Ingredients:**
2 slices Irish bacon, diced  
1 head of cabbage, cored and quartered  
2 Tbs melted butter  
2 tsp nutmeg  
Salt and pepper to taste  
1/2 cup red wine vinegar

**Instructions:**
Preheat oven broiler. Place cored and quartered head of cabbage into a large pot. Add water and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer over low heat for at least 15 minutes or until desired tenderness is reached. Meanwhile, cook bacon until crisp, drain, and dice. Now, drain cabbage and place in baking dish. Sprinkle bacon, nutmeg, salt, pepper, and melted butter over cabbage and place in broiler until top is lightly browned (~5 minutes). Serve with red wine vinegar as desired.
It's the most wonderful time of the year… for sports fans, at least. With 68 teams in the field this year - the largest number ever - the NCAA Basketball Tournament promises to be two weeks of basketball and drama abound with upsets, Cindarellas, and tens of thousands of online brackets submitted. ESPN has gone so far as to create an entirely new field of science: Bracketology. Though there do exist some expert bracketologists who can accurately predicts upsets and have refined picking winners to a science, most of us fill out our brackets based on school reputation, win-loss records, and sheer guessing. As the science of bracketology is entirely too complicated for me to explain, I’ve recruited the help of local bracketologist Zeb Whatley (M3), last year’s winner of the tournament pick-em, to share some useful information.

According to Whatley, “The best way I could advise someone would be to not try and pick too many upsets. If you look at the facts, more times than not the favorites win.” He explains further, “always take the 1’s into the sweet 16, and I go into the elite 8 with them.” Undoubtedly the most difficult part of selecting a bracket is determining what upsets will occur and who the tournament Cinderella will be. Last year Butler electrified the tournament as the Cinderella, making it all the way to the National Championship game only to lose to No.1 seeded Duke after Gordon Hayward’s last-second shot rimmed out. The 12-5 seed upset is generally the most popular choice in bracketology, and Whatley suggests to pick at least one 12 over 5 seed upset, if not two.

For this year’s tournament Ohio State received the No.1 seed; Las Vegas has given the Buckeyes 7-2 odds for taking home the school’s first championship since 1960, but they will have to face the gauntlet of North Carolina, Kentucky, and Syracuse to reach the Final Four. Looking ahead to the Final Four, most analysts predict No.1 seeds Ohio State and Kansas will advance to Houston, with Texas, Duke, Pitt, Florida, and Notre Dame also topping many experts’ brackets. If able to watch any one team play, I would suggest BYU; though missing big man Brandon Davies due to infraction of the BYU honor code, guard Jimmer Fredette, who recently poured in 52 points against New Mexico, is the tournament’s most exciting player to follow…and his name is Jimmer. Fredette has the potential to take BYU into the Elite Eight pending solid performances, but reaching the Final Four will be difficult without a big man in the paint.

Zeb’s final thought: “The only method to this madness is to be careful who you listen to because they are picking the unknown, just like you. Always play with the odds on your side, find that winner, and ride it all the way to the bank.”
Literati Medicus, a book club for medical students, spent the month of February reading the New York Times bestseller My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist’s Personal Journey by Jill Bolte Taylor Ph.D. As a neuroanatomist and a traveling speaker for the Harvard Brain Bank, Dr. Taylor’s understanding of the intricacies of neurological functioning was as vast as any other person in the world. She was well trained, very passionate, and extremely dedicated to discovering more about the brain and its relationship to our environment, our personality, and our daily life. One fateful day, however, Dr. Taylor’s world drastically changed and what she experienced turned into an invaluable look into the neurology she had dedicated her life to discovering. At 37 years old, an AVM (arterio-venous malformation) in Dr. Taylor’s brain exploded leaving her unable to walk, talk, read, or write. Dr. Taylor chronicles with incredible detail the hours it took for her to think through the process of walking to the phone, figuring out which buttons equaled which numbers, what number she needed to call, and how to actually express that she was in need of help. Our brain’s ability to take in thousands upon thousands of stimuli and integrate them into one big picture is beyond amazing, but we can never really understand the intricacy of it until we have lost the ability to do so. Dr. Taylor’s experience was more insightful because she already had an intricate understanding of how the brain functions, so as abilities were lost she still held the mental fortitude to place what was going on externally with what was occurring in her brain. As one person put it, “Having lost the categorizing, organizing, describing, judging and critically analyzing skills of her left brain, along with its language centers and thus its ego center, Jill’s consciousness shifted away from normal reality. In the absence of her left brain’s neural circuitry, her consciousness shifted into present moment thinking whereby she experienced herself “at one with the universe.”

Once the acute events settled down, Dr. Taylor dives into a relatively lengthy expose on her seven-year recovery that finds her back to a normal, although newly enriched, life. She describes how the differences in people’s touch when coming to her bedside gave her strength or took it away. She describes how the hundreds of neurological exams that doctors, nurses, and students gave her constantly left her in a state of exhaustion. She details her mother’s love and how the best medicine she received was a full night of sleep. The exposure was nothing short of long winded but it does provide us with a great glimpse into the eyes of a stroke victim. Rest, encouragement, and reassurance seemed to be the factors that gave Dr. Taylor the greatest strength through her healing process, and sadly those are often missing from our own prescriptions.

My Stroke of Insight provides us as students with a valuable look into the reality of disease processes. As Medical Students, we often have never experienced disease ourselves and it can be a valuable learning tool to hear the stories of someone laid out in the format of this book. If you are considering neurological sciences, this book provides a great blend of scientific explanation and patient experience that makes it a great learning tool. If you are interested in more information regarding Dr. Jill Taylor and her book you can check it out at www.mystrokeofinsight.com.
Now I can... get back in the groove

“[If] I could walk, I would be flat out the door.”

When Chris Gill wrote the lyrics for “Hospital Blues,” he feared his music career might be over. An 18-wheeler had crashed into his SUV, leaving Chris with a severe brain injury and broken bones from head to toe.

But therapy at Methodist Rehab Center helped Chris get back to playing his signature “island blues.” And now he sings the praises of MRC staff. “They are so caring and giving,” he says. “They are helping people every day.”

Methodist Rehabilitation Center is a nationally recognized center of excellence in guiding recovery following stroke, brain or spinal cord injury.

For more information, visit methodistonline.org or call 601-364-3434 or toll-free 1-800-223-6672, ext. 3434.