

TCU RETIREES' JANUARY LUNCHEON PROGRAM



Popular WFAA-TV News Anchor John McCaa

"The Role of the Media in a Changing Society & World"

Tuesday, January 24,

11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Dee J. Kelly Alumni and Visitor's Center

Park in the Visitor's Center, Lot 6, unless it is full. Alternate parking in the parking garage between the Kelly Center and Ranch Management buildings is available, courtesy of TCU Police.

For luncheon reservations, contact Becky Roach: rroach40@yahoo.com or 817/926-8824, by Wednesday, January 18th. Reservations also may be made on

TCURA's website, www.tcura.tcu.edu. If you have any difficulties doing this, contact DeVonna Tinney at d.tinney@tcu.edu.

In making your reservations, please indicate dietary restrictions needed for you or anyone attending with you. Even if you are not eating, please make a reservation but a meal will not be ordered for you. If you are eating, pay \$11 at the door.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT...

John McCaa

John McCaa joined WFAA-TV in 1984 as a reporter in the Fort Worth newsroom and was later promoted to bureau chief. He then transferred to the Dallas newsroom as a reporter, weekend news anchor and news manager.

He now co-anchors the 6 and 10 p.m. newscasts and writes a weekly award-winning "John McCaa Uncut" commentary every week on Friday's 6 p.m. Newcastle.

The award-winning journalist has a bachelor's degree from Creighton University and a master's degree in politics from the University of Dallas. He later earned a Ph.D. in Humanities-History of Ideas from the University of Texas at Dallas. He is a member of the Golden Key, Delta Epsilon Iota and Phi Kappa Phi Academic Honor Societies.

McCaa has served as President of the Press Club of Dallas and President of the DFW Association of Black Communicators.

UPCOMING TCURA MEETINGS

- Feb. 28** Stuart Flynn, Dean, TCU Medical School
- Mar. 28** Tim Madigan, author of "I'm Proud of You: My Friendship With Fred Rogers"
- April 25** John Giordano, former conductor of the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra and jury chair of the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition.

Family Caregiving: Struggles and Opportunities for Growth

By this time, leaves and bare trees surround us, and we face the colder temperatures of winter. I hope your holiday season goes well and the New Year offers opportunities for renewal and progress in ways you desire.

Last month, I introduced the topic of caregiving and legislation to improve the experience of the 43 M persons providing care to an ill or aging loved one (AARP Public Policy Institute/National Alliance of Caregiving, 2015). This column will expand the caregiver topic to cover challenges and coping strategies for unpaid family caregivers that improve the quality of life of an elder or ill person but also the caregiver.

Caregivers differ on a variety of factors (age, gender, socioeconomic status, culture, etc.) but share similar struggles. These struggles may result from an ill family member's health condition and needs, limited caregiver strengths and social support, and few available resources to aid caregiver coping. Sixty percent of caregivers are female with an average age of 49 years. Eighty-five percent of these women care for a family member, and those who care for a spouse are four times more likely to spend 21+ hours/week handling a loved one's physical, emotional, financial, and health care management needs than other caregivers. Caregivers spending long hours in their job and those responsible for care for greater than four years have a high risk of experiencing caregiver strain or burden. Over half of caregivers cite perceptions of burden that compromise their health and ability to engage in self-care. This burden ultimately affects the quality of care to an ill or needy loved one (AARP Public Policy Institute; National Alliance of Caregiving). Our interview work 15



HEALTH HELP NOW
by Kendra Belfi, MD

years ago showed Mexican American cancer caregivers denied caregiver burden, but measurement of that concept showed many at risk for depression and poor health status based on their primary caregiver role. *On the other hand, some current caregivers "discover their strengths" in caregiving and cope fairly well in that job.* It is important that health care providers find out how a caregiver feels about her role to foster her health and needs.

I recently was struck with a personal caregiver burden experience when our research cultural consultant shared her experience of caring for her aging mother. She describes her life during that time and how caregiving affected her overall health and family in the following way:

Mother became almost demanding and self-centered in her own way, often not intentionally meaning harm to us, but with an inability to focus on what was happening to those around her. Over time, she desired our household to become like her own home and not my family's. I ended up helping Mother with her activities of daily living (bathing, eating, toileting, etc.) while making sure she was actively participating in activities that made her happy - her advanced age and medical condition demanded my deep involvement with an elderly parent. Even though I have adopted many American values and had a successful academic career, as

the oldest Mexican-American daughter, my cultural values and those of my Mother directed me to honor her by serving as her primary caregiver and preferably with no outsiders or agencies to help me with her care needs. However, our (mine and my husband) focus on her needs without assistance from my siblings or others left little to no time for my own normal activities of daily living nor those of my husband. I felt rushed doing errands and household tasks and worrying about Mother every day, and even my GP described me as a 65-year old going on 90! As we continued to provide care, my husband and I found little time for our individual or couple needs, and this imbalance created tension, fatigue, exhaustion, difficulty thinking, anger, worry, lack of focus on self-care, and onset of illness and flare-up of one of my pre-existing conditions. Our life was placed "on hold" - then we realized our Mother felt our caregiver burnout based on our behavior. We finally decided that my younger siblings were stronger and safer to take turns caring for Mother and save me and my husband from losing ourselves.

Unpaid family caregivers provide a most valuable role in our society and our support of their care insures a quality of life for an ill or aging loved one. Here are some tips for caregivers to foster their health and continued care:

- 'Share the load' and responsibility of caregiving: ask family members and friends to stay with a care recipient so that you can take an evening or weekend away to renew/refresh yourself; make a schedule for others to share the caregiving role over time

- Have others listen to your needs

CAREGIVING from P2

and help you; text, email, "Facetime," or call supportive others on the phone to quickly communicate your needs

- Find a "buddy" that will understand and listen to you during difficult days of caregiving; be willing to forgive yourself for not meeting caregiver expectations

- Use local programs, agencies and organizations that offer caregiver relief (Area Agency on Aging, Fort Worth Cancer Care Services, Alzheimer's Association, Meals on Wheels, day care programs, support groups, etc.); take time to locate online resources that may help (www.eldercare.org; www.HealthinAging.org; www.caregiver.org, etc.)

- Talk to your loved one about what a special occasion means to them (birthday, anniversary, etc.) and, if desired, celebrate with family or others to make the event memorable

- Seek flexibility with scheduling a

loved one's health care appointments to meet your needs or family issues

- Establish new traditions (habit of ordering from a restaurant on Fridays, e.g.) to free you from usual cooking one day a week

- Enjoy sharing memories with your loved one and establishing new ones to revisit during difficult times

- Acknowledge your feelings and needs and share those with trusted others to gain perspective and help; e.g., crying may release tension and finding humor in frustrating situations can relax you

- Recognize your work as valuable, reflective of your doing your best, and one that strengthens and teaches you about yourself

- Do something good for yourself every day: take time to deep breathe, relax, walk around the block, read, pray, or engage in reflective time to refuel your energy and perspective

- Take time to do self-care (flu shot, routine health exams, adequate sleep,

eat healthy, socialize with friends, etc.) to foster your caregiver well-being

- Keep a journal to validate your caregiving experience for personal growth and increased coping

- Choose to be a caregiver, learn from that journey, and share your wisdom with others

Best wishes for the New Year ahead and opportunities for more learning on health in the coming months!

References Cited:

AARP Public Policy Institute/National Alliance for Caregiving (2015, June). Executive summary: Caregiving in the U.S. Retrieved from <https://www.aarp.org>

Coping with cancer during the holidays (2016, August 1).

Retrieved from <https://cancer.care.org>

Caregiving during holidays and special occasions (2016, February 29). Retrieved from <https://cancer.care.org>

Caregiver self-care: Caring for you (2016, August 6). Retrieved from <https://www.caregiver.org/caregiver-self-care-caring-you>.

If you have not already done so, let me encourage you once again to visit our new website—tcura.tcu.edu. There you will find a wealth of information about our organization, a menu page where you can make reservations for all of our events, and our mission statement which includes these words: "to advocate for fair benefits."

Most of you will recall the time this mission became especially critical for our membership. I refer, of course, to the time the University, citing an unsustainable growing liability, cancelled the health insurance benefit that we were counting on to see us through our retirement. At that point, the TCU Retirees' Association, together with strong support from the Faculty Senate, stepped in to address a decision that for many would create financial hard-



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN
Stan Hagadone

ship, declining health, or both.

Out of a series of negotiations with the University came the Bridge Program, which provides each retiree and his or her spouse or partner with a monthly stipend to help defray the cost of Medicare Part B and Part D insurance coverage. In addition, the University assigned Tracy Thompson in Human Resources to work exclusively with retirees, granted free membership

for retirees to the University Recreation Center, and provided access to a number of other resources designed to assist with navigating the health care system.

Based strictly on anecdotal evidence, these benefits have worked out quite well for most of our members. For others, however, particularly those with chronic health issues or those with illnesses that require expensive prescription drugs, there is a gap that is clearly "unbridgeable."

Bob Vigeland, who chaired our Health and Wellness Committee, and who was instrumental in leading the efforts of the Faculty Senate on our behalf, is in the process of relocating to Asheville, North Carolina. We



**Mildred Mary
Midget Howell**

June 22, 1933 – Dec. 5, 2016

Mary Howell worked at TCU's Mary Coutts Library from August 1979 until she retired in February 2009.

She was born in Hopkins County Texas, and on December 21, 1956 married

Gerald (Jerry) Clifton Howell. He predeceased her, dying December 17, 2001,

A graduate of Sulphur Springs High School and TCU, she taught in elementary schools in Louisiana and Texas for several years then she and her husband co-owned East Texas Electric in Sulphur Springs before they moved to Fort Worth..

Her love of cats was shared by Ted and Nancy Menard, friends who supplied her with reading materials and saw to her well-being after her retirement from TCU. She was buried in Sulphur Springs City Cemetery.

PRESIDENT from P3

are fortunate, however, in that Manny Reinecke, who worked tirelessly on this issue on behalf of the TCURA, has agreed to step in to this role for the remainder of the academic year. He has already assembled a strong committee and together they will be addressing two critical questions: (1) How well is the Bridge Program serving or not serving our members? (2) What should be our plans as we approach the deadline for the expiration of the program in 2019?

Please know that your Executive Council is aware

of the challenges we are facing and will make every effort to keep you informed as we seek to address these two questions. Of course we will be seeking your input, most likely in the form of a survey, and at that time your responses will be crucial for our current members as well as those who will soon be coming to join us.

I am honored to be working with capable and committed colleagues on your behalf and trust that together we can not only advocate for fair benefits but also actually achieve them. Will you join us in this noble effort?

TCU Retirees' Association Board of Directors 2016-2017

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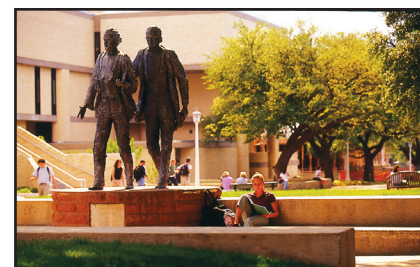
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MISSION STATEMENT

The Texas Christian University Retirees' Association exists to provide opportunities for fellowship, to promote lifelong learning, to advocate for fair benefits, to recognize the accomplishments of its members, and to strengthen the relationship between the retirees and the University.

NOTE

If you do not wish to continue receiving this newsletter notify the newsletter editor or any of the others listed as contacts here.

Thank you