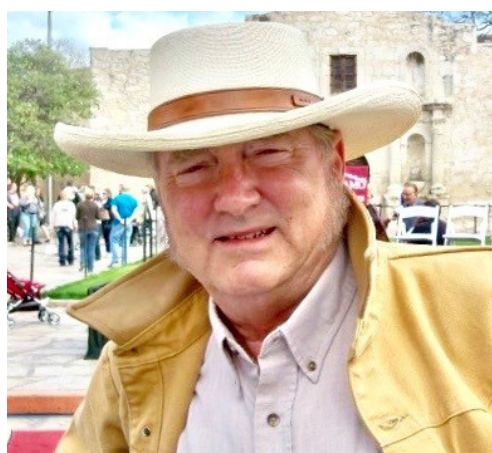


## TCU RETIREES' JANUARY LUNCHEON

# The Story of Fort Worth Told by Two Characters of the Time

Historian, author and re-enactor J.R. "Jack" Edmondson will be joining us as our January luncheon speaker to tell a story of Fort Worth through two different characters that he will play. A Fort Worth native and retired history teacher, he has been described as a scholar disguised as a history aficionado. He has a passion for Texas history, particularly for the Alamo and Jim Bowie. With his encyclopedic knowledge, he seems to live and breathe Texas history with an almost matchless enthusiasm that lights up a discussion. Jack is considered an expert on Bowie, whom he has portrayed in several films for the History and Discovery channels, as well as on the American TV series "Unsolved Mysteries." The films were all made in Brackettville, Texas, the site of the still extant set of John Wayne's film, "The Alamo." Jack has also portrayed Sam Houston and Alamo commander William Barret Travis at Living History in-person presentations at schools and historical organizations. Jack has collected over 170 Bowie knives,



**J.R. "JACK" EDMONDSON**

many of which are handcrafted.

Jack holds a B.S. degree from the University of Texas and a M.S. degree from TCU. He has authored over 50 articles for publications such as Blade Magazine and Knife World. In addition, he has written two books on Texas history. One is called "The Alamo Story," and the other "Jim Bowie: Legend, Alamo Hero." He also produced Texas and Texians, a historical calendar for the Texas sesquicentennial, and Victory or Death, the pageant performed every March at the Alamo.

Edmondson is past chair of the Tarrant County Historical Commission. He also serves on the Board of Directors for the legendary Fort Worth Herd, the Trail of Fame (in the Fort Worth Stockyards), and Log Cabin Village. In appreciation for his contributions to Texas history, Edmondson was elected an honorary member of the Sons of the Republic of Texas; and Governor Rick Perry commissioned him an Admiral in the Texas Navy. Edmondson resides in Fort Worth with his wife, Susan, and their two dogs and three horses.

### PLEASE NOTE:

**Reservations for the January meeting are due Monday, January 7, so please RSVP as soon as possible online at [tcu.ra.tcu.edu](http://tcu.ra.tcu.edu) or by contacting Joan Yates at [j.yates@tcu.edu](mailto:j.yates@tcu.edu) or 817-292-7087.**

**LUNCHEON  
DATES**

**JAN 15  
FEB 19**

**MAR 19  
APR 16**

**MAY 21**

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

# Laughter is the Best Medicine

At Tuesday's holiday luncheon we attempted a sing-a-long of "The Twelve Days of Christmas" with the Sunshine Singers. Our large retiree group of about 100 sang the various parts (two turtle doves, three French hens, etc.) by tables with some singing with more gusto than others. But we all got a good laugh out of it!

I was reminded how seldom some of us laugh – truly laugh out loud – these days. Part of it is that we're not out with people on a daily basis like we used to be. We laughed a lot in the Admission Office back in the day. Some of us who live alone don't necessarily interact with anyone (other than perhaps our pets) on a daily basis. Our earlier go-to sources of daily humor were TV sit coms that were actually funny or late night show monologues or comedians that weren't all political.

In "Six Science-Based Reasons Why Laughter Is The Best Medicine" by David DiSalvo, contributor to



JANET GEORGE HERALD

Forbes (June 5, 2017), he says, "Intuitively we know that laughter is one of the best tools we have for dealing with stress, and science backs that up. In fact, research into laughter goes even further, revealing that it's a potent drug with the contagious power of a virus that conveys a slew of benefits for the mind and body." He cites the following six reasons with more detail than we have room for here: "Laughter is a potent endorphin

releaser. Laughter contagiously forms social bonds. Laughter fosters brain connectivity. Laughter is central to relationships. Laughter has an effect similar to antidepressants. Laughter protects your heart."

Some of the most humorous things I see are on Facebook. Dog and cat videos may sound silly, but they make me smile or sometimes laugh out loud. They're certainly better for my mental health than watching the news!

I wrote in my September column about some of the irritants in our everyday lives. It seemed to resonate with a lot of you. My challenge for you – and for myself – in 2019 is to find a way to offset those irritants and be healthier by finding something to laugh about every day.

All the best to each of you in the New Year! See you on January 15 for a most interesting program...and a laugh or two.

## TCU RETIREES' ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL 2018-2019\*

TERMS OF OFFICE END MAY 2019.

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COLUMNIST CAROLYN SPENCE CAGLE PHD, RNC-E

# Health Help Now: Ways to Promote Health and Well-being in Cold Weather

Despite the winter weather upon us, evidence-based ways to promote our health in the darker and shorter days of winter allow us to remain healthy for the warmer and brighter days of spring ahead. Here are ways to minimize body stress and health insults to prosper during the winter months:

- Make sure you have your hi-dose flu shot: your risk of developing pneumonia or experiencing severe flu possibly causing hospitalization increase with chronic illness (e.g., heart disease for diabetes) and being 65 years or older. The flu shot decreases your risk of hospitalization by 70%.

- Wash your hands for the length of the “birthday song:” do this after shaking hands (substitute a pat on the shoulder perhaps?), crowd contact, bathroom use, and touching possible “germy” surfaces (e.g. grocery cart handles, etc.). Avoid touching your eyes and nose after touching or breathing in possible areas of cold and flu germs common during winter months. Frequent handwashing decreases your risk of infection by 50%!

- Keep your joints warm: this is important if you have arthritis, walk outside, or have other inflammatory

conditions. I wear leggings under pants, a thick hat and scarf, padded gloves, and sometimes boots when I walk in the Missouri winter cold. Use an electric blanket or warm comforters/blankets at night to protect your joints and keep your body warm for improved sleep.

- Watch for outside ice, slippery surfaces: we lose some balance with aging and face higher risks of falls and injuries. Wear footwear with sole grips and use a walker or cane as needed to minimize fall risks.

- Take vitamin D: we lose our sun exposure to help our body make vitamin D with longer inside periods during cold weather. Talk to your doctor about the best dosage of this over the counter vitamin to keep your bones strong.

- Stay active: recent research documents sitting in a chair most of the day may increase the risk of heart attack and stroke. Program your e-device/clock etc. to tell you to move 10 minutes of every hour. Regular exercise (150 minutes/week of moderate exercise) decreases inflammation and minimizes stress. Walk outdoors in warm clothing, use an indoor stationary bike or treadmill, or use your Silver Sneakers benefit at a local gym. Walk to preserve and

build leg muscle (see online article on walking this month).

- Focus on your social needs: Volunteer at a local charity, promise to greet 3 new people every day, or use technology to connect with new ideas and people to prevent loneliness, recently identified as a high risk factor for disease.

- Eat and gain restorative sleep for health: The Mediterranean diet fosters weight loss and overall health. Meditation, mindfulness, relaxation techniques (deep breathing, visual imagery), and ignoring e-devices 1 hour before bed decrease the stress response and pain as well as promote sleep for body healing and overall health.

Best wishes for health to each of you!

## References:

Dunkin, M, A. (2018, Winter 2018-2019). Science & Medicine: Cold weather checklist. Arthritis Today, 32(6), 21, 24.

Why are you coughing? UCLA Health: Healthy Years (October 2018), 15(10), 1, 7.

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

Recent retirees who attended the December TCURA luncheon included Nancy Petruso, University Advancement

COLUMNIST CAROLYN SPENCE CAGLE PHD, RNC-E

# Health Help Now: Walking Speed The Sixth Vital Sign

I've often spoken about the value of consistent exercise for health in many "Health Help Now" columns and hope you have a current exercise routine meeting your needs. Now evidence indicates one form of exercise measurement, walking speed and quality, may provide insight into one's overall health. Walking speed and quality assessment add to an measure of your temperature, heart rate, blood pressure, and pain (the usual 5 vital signs assessed by a health care professional). ***In essence, walking speed and quality may serve as a 6th vital sign to evaluate your health related to age.***

Walking speed and quality are components of a term called "gait." Persons who walk slowly, limp, shuffle, or use shorter walking steps have abnormal gaits. Foot and leg

problems, injuries, neurological conditions, and weak leg muscles may affect one's gait. Persons with leg and balance problems may take shorter steps to prevent falling. Parkinson's disease persons often show a shuffling walk. Persons who walk slowly may have a higher risk of developing dementia than those who walk faster and meet age standards for walking speed.

***Maintaining leg strength to safely walk and move through aging is very important.*** A person dependent on chair arms to rise to a standing position needs to further develop leg strength. Having sufficient leg strength prevents falling and potentially breaking a hip or other body part. Your doctor can check your leg, hip, and knee strength to check your lower body strength.

Risk factors for falling include thyroid disease, being inactive, and taking statin (for high cholesterol) medications that may cause leg weakness.

***So, how can you increase your leg strength?*** Try brisk regular walking for 30-45 minutes three times a week, getting out of a chair or sitting position and walking around every 30 minutes, standing slowly from a sitting position 6 times per hour, and sitting less. If you need to sit, get up and frequently move around your environment to improve leg strength. Use a pedometer or other e-device to meet walking 100-120 steps/minute if outside or in an athletic facility.

***To read more visit [tcura.tcu.edu](http://tcura.tcu.edu).***



2019  
happy new year



### TCU GIVES DAY

You helped make TCU Gives Day the best day ever! Overall, TCU received 2,160 gifts for a total of

\$652,128 given (nearly \$200,000 more than the previous year).  
The TCU Retirees' Association

received 43 gifts for approximately \$2400.

### BRIDGE

Bridge meets the second Friday of the month from 1 to 4 p.m. The next meeting will be Friday, January 11, at Nancy Madsen's home, 3936

Stonehenge Road, Fort Worth 76109. Please call or email Nancy at 817-938-4341 or [n.madsen@tcu.edu](mailto:n.madsen@tcu.edu) to let her know if you will be attending.

Everyone is welcome: beginners and men as well!

### COFFEE, BOOKS AND CONVERSATION

Coffee, Books & Conversation canceled its meeting on December 5 due to the Herbert Walker Bush service which was to happen at the same time.

We plan to meet on Wednesday, January 16, at 10 AM in the library at University Christian Church to briefly

talk about "A Bite-Sized History of France," and spend the bulk of the hour discussing the book, "Grant," and its importance as a history of the Civil War, the aftermath, and Grant's two-term presidency wrestling with the many problems following the Civil War.

All retirees are welcome to attend the meeting whether you have read the books or not.

Judy Smith  
[j.o.smith@tcu.edu](mailto:j.o.smith@tcu.edu)

### OTHER INTEREST GROUPS

For information about the **Arts and Antiques Interest Group**, contact Gail Davis at [gdavis@twu.edu](mailto:gdavis@twu.edu) or Jack Davis at [davis@unt.edu](mailto:davis@unt.edu).

**Mah-jongg** is a game played with tiles with Chinese characters on them. Players have to match the tiles that they draw to a specific hand on a card. In many cases it is a lot of luck but

it's a lot of fun. For those interested in playing (beginners or any level) please contact Jane Mackay at [j.mackay@tcu.edu](mailto:j.mackay@tcu.edu).

## 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.



## IN MEMORIAM

**Stella Mae Barber**, Development;  
**Lucille Kelly**, spouse of Henry "Jim" Kelly of Chemistry; and  
**Virginia Merrill**, spouse of John Merrill, Ranch Management.

**IF YOU ARE  
INTERESTED IN  
STARTING A SPECIAL  
INTEREST GROUP,  
CONTACT CHUCK  
LAMB AT  
[C.LAMB@TCU.EDU](mailto:C.LAMB@TCU.EDU).**





**Photos from the December TCURA luncheon (from top left):** 1) Leo and Maureen Munson 2) Larry Adams and Scott Sullivan 3) our intrepid leader Janet George Herald at the piano 4) the amazing Sunshine Singers presented a musical program 5) Alice Frye, Jean Walbridge and Arturo Flores 6) Vice President Julie Baker (right) greets Chancellor Emeritus Bill Tucker and Jane Mackay 7) Richard Sybesma (with door prize) and Harold Leeman 8) Suzanne Huffman and Bronson Davis shared a table.  
*All photos taken by Deana Ray*

#### NOTE

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



#### FIND US ON FACEBOOK

Search "TCU Retirees' Association" in the search line, and filter by groups. Click the "Join" button.