

UT Staff Member Elected VP of UT System Employee Advisory Council

By Pamela Lewis, Public Affairs

William C. "Billy" Hinton, long-time advocate for classified staff at the UT Health Science Center at Houston, was elected Vice President of the UT System Employee Advisory Council for FY06 at its July meeting in Austin.

"My job as vice president, in addition to the main area of working with the budget and making sure that we are good stewards of our resources, is to help keep the council president from becoming overly stressed — to handle whatever I can to help her out." This year, the president is Ann Tate of UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, the secretary is Sandee Goertzen of UT Dallas, and the historian is Melanie Loving of the UT Medical Branch at Galveston.

"The year will surely be a challenge," said Hinton, "Obviously upcoming changes in retirement benefits (see related story on Page 1) are a concern. However, I believe one of our jobs is to try to show employees at all campuses that UT System is a good place to work — in many ways better than private industry."

Hinton said all employees may not appreciate fully the assets we receive through our participation in the Teachers Retirement System or Optional Retirement Program and

our insurance. "We tend to take what we have for granted, not really looking at how it compares dollar-for-dollar to private industry benefits," he explained.

Hinton also pointed out that the way we get information from UT System is changing — less person-to-person contact, more technological interaction. "I do think people like Dan Stewart in System Benefits are really trying to do the best they can for us in very hard times."

Hinton thinks the council's role is to make sure that the System provides its employees with enough good information to make good decisions about their current situations and their futures. "Sometimes I tend to go at things like a bull in a china shop," he said with a laugh. "But this time, I'm going to try to use my skills to help move things along slowly and smoothly."



Billy Hinton

The council, which held its first meeting in March 2001, defines, analyzes and makes recommendations on employee issues, in addition to providing a forum for communicating ideas and information among employees, to the Board of Regents, and to the executive officers of the UT System. The council is comprised of 32 members and 16 alternates

who represent the UT campuses and the UT system. The council has four standing committees — benefits, communication, compensation and policy. The council's annual meeting with the regents takes place in November.

Hinton, who was a member of the first University Classified Staff Council at the health science center, is in his second year of service as a delegate to the council, which advises System on matters related to A&P

and Classified Staff. He is the manager of Auxiliary Enterprises' UT Housing Office Operations.

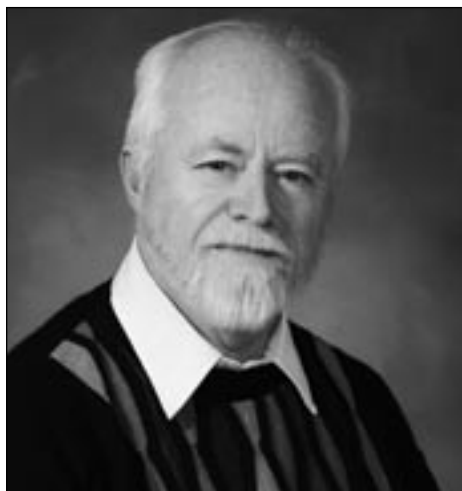
Hinton said that one of the main issues for the council this year will be working to standardize the council's inner workings, such as the way that delegates are selected — some are appointed, others are elected. "And, we may suggest to the Board of Regents that there be an effort to provide for staff-to-administration communication at all campuses. Now, some campuses have councils for both classified and A&P employees, some have one, some have none," said Hinton.

Also, there is a push to increase the delegate terms to three years. "Now, with a two-year term, delegates are just starting to learn what the council is all about and then their term is up," Hinton explained.

Randolph H. "Randy" Scott, Ph.D., associate dean for management at the School of Health Information Sciences, is the A&P representative to the council. Earliest delegates were Gill Rittman, of the Dental Branch, and Michael Jimenez, the late vice president for Human Resources. Scott has been reappointed to the council for another term.

Pamela Lewis, editor for Campus Communications, in the Office of Public Affairs, is the current alternate to the council. ★

Medical School Communications Office Established



The retiring Henny van Dijk.

The Medical School's Office of Community Affairs and the Graphic Communications Group joined forces July 1 to become the new Office of Communications under the direction of Darla Brown, former director of Community Affairs.

Scoop, UT-Houston Medicine, and the school's catalog among others will continue to be produced within the new office. Enhancements to the Medical School's home page and Dean's Office Web site also will be priorities.

Located in the school's remodeled basement, the Office of Communications houses a staff of nine and offers a full range of services at competitive prices including print

and online design services, posters, photography, digital scanning, and much more.

The upcoming Aug. 31 retirement of longtime Graphic Communications director Henny van Dijk provided an opportunity to combine the award-winning talents of both offices into one unit.

"There is a positive synergy to housing the creative editorial and graphic talents represented by these two programs in one location within the Medical School. I have no doubt that the accessibility and expanded capabilities of the new office will benefit our faculty, staff and students in many ways," said Bryant Boutwell, Dr.P.H., associate dean for Community Affairs. ★



Darla Brown, director of Medical School's new Office of Communications.

Founders' Fun Fest Continues the Tradition

Founders' Fun Fest, the oldest UT Health Science Center tradition, will be in its 26th year this October when it takes place Friday, Oct. 7, 2-6 p.m., at the Texas Medical Center's Edwin Hornberger Conference Center. It will have been 26 years since the original chili cook-off competition was started by the health science center's second president, Roger Bulger, M.D., to bring together members of the then-fledgling university.

Looking back, competitors from the Medical School, School of Public Health and Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences cooked and stewed in a no-longer existing park just east of the Houston Main Building. The competition has evolved through the years to become a social gathering and cook-off competition for the six schools, the Harris County Psychiatric Center staff and general administration.

Mark your calendars now for this special event. For updates on what is planned for this year's event and interesting stories from throughout the previous years, visit the Founders' Fun Fest Web site at <http://www.uthouston.edu/community/funfest>. ★



Help make some memories like these from 2003 at Founders' Fun Fest 2005, coming Friday, Oct. 7. Right: Chief Operating Officer Mike McKinney, M.D., celebrated at his first Fun Fest with the Pirates of the Curry-Beans chili cook-off team and, above, fancy footwork of the line dancing variety ruled the day on the dance floor. File photos

