World-class poetry collection finds a home

BY MICHAEL TERRAZAS

It took four tractor trailers to transport Raymond Danowski's collection of poetry—considered the largest ever built by a private collector—to the Briarcliff Campus. But even those four trailers may not be enough to encompass the impact Danowski's gift will have on Emory in the years to come.

The collection, which comprises some 50,000 books as well as scores of thousands of periodicals, manuscripts, correspondence and other materials, makes the University quite simply one of the world's most renowned destinations for the study of contemporary English-language poetry, according to the individuals who brokered the transaction. Already nationally recognized for its Irish literature holdings, the Woodruff Library's Special Collections now takes its place among the truly elite repositories and research centers for English verse.

"This gift identifies and establishes Emory as one of the major centers of poetry in the world," said Ron Schuchard, Goodrich C. White Professor of English, one member of an Emory team that began conversations with Danowski about the collection in the mid-1990s. "People are already saying that, if you want to study 20th century poetry, you go to Emory. That's it."

To commemorate the formal announcement of Danowski's gift on Thursday, Sept. 9, National Endowment for the Arts Chairman and poet Dana Gioia will give a reading at 6:30 p.m. in the Carlos Museum reception hall. Gioia is the author of three collections of poetry (including Interrogations at Noon, winner of the 2002 American Book Award), as well as the book Can Poetry Matter? Currently on display in Special Collections are highlights from the Danowski collection, including first editions of Walt Whitman's Leaves of Grass (1855) and T.S. Eliot's Poems of Prufrock and Other Observations (1917). Rare and near-invaluable books like these may spark—Christie's recently auctioned off a similar copy of Leaves of Grass for $160,000, Schuchard said—but the real value of the Danowski collection is in the sheer breadth of its gems. "I call it 'building a snowflake,'" Danowski said of putting together the collection, which reaches beyond poetry to both antiquarian and contemporary works. "It's a full-dledged bibliography, and as years passed and his collection grew, Danowski and his books began to attract interest themselves. He formed Poets' Trust, a foundation to manage the collection, and soon his obsession with building the library became an obsession with finding a proper home for it."

But there was one problem: By the early '90s, Danowski's collection was so massive that selling it whole would be impossible; no single buyer could pay what it was worth. He would either have to break it up or essentially give it away. Once he learned the kind of home Emory would provide for the collection, Danowski chose the second option.

"People were whispering in his ear, 'You ought to see what they're doing at Emory,'" said Steve Enniss, director of Special Collections, who is now overseeing the processing of the collection. "But the real value of the collection, Danowski chose the second option. In conjunction with the exhibit opening, Priscilla Linn, curator of the state department's United States Diplomacy Center, and center director Michael Boorenstein will speak at 8 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 9, in the Carter Library & Museum Theater. The diplomacy center created the "After 9/11" exhibit in collaboration with the Museum of the City of New York. The poignancy of some of the messages included in the exhibit is compelling. "Dear Santa," reads a note scrawled in pencil by Nicholas Barko, a 6-year-old from Sydney, Australia. "I don't want any toys. I just want America to get better. I love you. XXXX Nick B." Another depicts a French child's drawing of the Edel Tower and Statue of Liberty holding hands, and there are dozens more in many languages.

While the exhibit is well-timed, there has been relatively little fanfare as Linn's and Boorenstein's addresses are the only special programs associated with the opening, although the light posts on Freedom Parkway have been dressed up with banners.

See EXHIBIT on page 7

CARTERLIBRARY

Exhibit remembers Sept. 11 attacks

BY ERIC RANGUS

To commemorate the third anniversary of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum will host a moving exhibit of condolence messages and artifacts sent to the United States in the days and months following those attacks.

The exhibit, "After 9/11: Messages from the World and Images of Ground Zero," opened Saturday and will be on display until Jan. 2. In addition to messages of sympathy—many from children—from more than 130 countries, "After 9/11" also features a collection of 28 photographs taken at Ground Zero by award-winning photographer Joel Meyerowitz.

In conjunction with the exhibit opening, Priscilla Linn, curator of the state department's United States Diplomacy Center, and center director Michael Boorenstein will speak at 8 p.m.

"The Flag at Midnight" is one of the 28 images from award-winning photographer Joel Meyerowitz on display through Jan. 2 at the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum as part of the new exhibit, "After 9/11: Messages from the World and Images of Ground Zero." The photographs accompany an artifacts collection that features a remarkable variety of touching messages of condolence sent to the United States from more than 110 countries in the days and months following the 2001 terrorist attacks. Condolences include children's notes and drawings and even a signed firefighter's helmet from Australia.

BY ELAINE JUSTICE

Conference to explore health, faith

The connection between spiritual faith, bodily health and practical steps for the future will be explored by health care leaders, theologians and scholars gathering at Emory Oct. 11-13 for a public conference on "Bridging Faith and Health: The Role of the Church."

Conference leaders, including theologians from the Candler School of Theology, public health professionals from the Rollins School of Public Health, researchers from the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing and physicians from the School of Medicine, will conduct sessions on the faith and health connection from a variety of perspectives. Participants will examine current research, make suggestions for ways that religion and health might be related, explore ministries that promote individual and community health, and address justice and equity issues in health care.

"Faith and health long have been companions in the Christian tradition," said Russell Richey, dean of Candler, which is spearheading the conference. "The church's commitment to healing is evident throughout its history."

See CONERENCE on page 7
EmTech Bio announces call for proposals
EmTech Biotechnology Development Program announces a call for its third Seed Grant Request for Proposals. The deadline for submission is Friday, Nov. 19, at 4 p.m. Emphases are placed on projects that combine tangible commercial applications as well as scientific merit. Permanent, full-time faculty or full-time research staff may apply. The grant period begins on July 1, 2005, and will continue for 12 months. Proposals should not exceed seven pages including figures, tables and references.

For more information about the grant program, visit the EmTech Bio website at www.emtechbio.com, or contact Connie Snipes at 404-727-4518 or csnipes@emory.edu.

Panel to explore relations with Islamic world
A town hall and discussion series with the Islamic world is titled “Americans for a Pluralistic Future.” The four-part series will take place Sept. 13 at 6:30 p.m. in Cox Hall. The event is titled “Americans for International Understanding: Town Meeting on U.S.-Islamic Relations.”

Arri Eisen, senior lecturer in biology, lived with his family at Clairmont Campus during 2003-04.

Imagine this. You’re teaching a senior seminar, and you suggest that a heated discussion with a number of students that continues after class. So you leave class and walk across the sidewalk—to your apartment, which is on the same floor as many of the students in your class.

Then, one weekend, just in front of your apartment, you run into a group of those students developing a research project for your class. While you and your 6-year-old toss around a baseball in the sun, you discuss the project with the students and help them shape the foundation of what eventually evolves into a superb video and research presentation.

This scene played out for me, in Technicolor, last fall. It had been 21 years since I’d lived in dorm life, and at that time I was glad to get off—wanting to “be independent” and “have my own place.” Now I was moving back—with my wife and two young sons, no less—not quite sure what to expect. Granted, the new Clairmont Campus and its Olympic-sized pool and apartments with kitchens and swimming was the back of dorm life of yesteryear: two tiny beds and desks crammed into a room with a small rented fridge full of moldy mustard and questionable brands of beer. Nevertheless, living on the same hall with 28 undergraduates promised to be an intriguing experience.

It was an effort dreamed up to bring Campus Life and Academics back together students’ consciousness. In the old days, of course, there was no such thing as “Campus Life,” with a capital C and L. You went to class, came home, studied, saw your friends, played Frisbee, maybe belonged to an organization or two. That was your life, and you didn’t much worry whether it took place on campus or not. Times have changed—mostly for the better, as Campus Life (we’re talking about the division proper now) puts a lot of effort into making students’ extracurricular lives exciting and engaging.

Students in this millennium are always doing something; for this generation, downtime is for wimps. Now, as Campus Life as a concept and organization has grown bigger and bulkier around the country, as human institutions tend to, it has become its own force, separate from academia.

Many folks at Emory, led by John Ford in Campus Life and academic life so they enhance and complement each other, instead of just being parts of a list of things students check off. Another sad result of the evolving university—especially one like Emory that struggles to be both a Research University and a place that truly educates young people—is that the system discourages many faculty (especially our youngest and most energetic) from really spending time with students outside the classroom in any substantive way.

Thus, BASE (Bridging Academics, Service and Ethics) was born (as was the Center for International Living and other programs), with support, ideas and funding cobbled together from the Center for Ethics, Emory Scholars and the Program in Science & Society.

It is fair to say I had no idea what I was doing when I signed up for a 12-month tour of duty at Clairmont. It was sort of like teaching a course outside your field for the first time—and having to live and eat inside the course for nine months.

We selected 28 students from a pool of applicants who represented about as diverse a group of Emory students one could find in terms of their backgrounds, interests and majors. The students saw all this, the diversity, the encouragement to live with different people (not folks who were already their friends), as an enormous strength for BASE. One room had a gay black student from the Deep South, a Caucasian, a Puerto Rican and a bond-fellow student from India, all of whom became great friends while wrestling through many differences, especially around the racial discussions and events that occurred on campus last year.

Two startling things I learned right off. First, how hungry for community the students are (“community” seems to reach a high among Emory undergraduates during their freshman year and then goes downhill from there); and second, even given this hunger, this time and money-consuming it is to build community when you’re battling students’ urban life and health, visiting lecturer David Suzuki on our global environment, and political science’s Merle Black on the changing electoral landscape. We had a successful retreat to North Georgia, participated in worthwhile service projects, made award-winning movies, shared birthday parties for my kids and enjoyed many social/cultural outings.

For the most part, as with anything one does with a group of good people, it was a successful first year. One good sign: My family and I are doing this another year, as are 90 percent of the folks on the hall. I think we’ll make last year. With their leadership, and some frank discussion about what worked and what didn’t, we’re sure to have another great experience in 2004-05. The students recommended developing the whole campus (or at least an entire residence hall) in similar programs in the future.

I strongly recommend the experience and I encourage any faculty who are interested in doing this to contact me and come visit BASE. You never know what can happen on a sunny afternoon outside the classroom and a couple of well-thrown baseballs.

Andy Gallwitz
gallwitz@EmoryReport

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After 9/11, what we said was “everything is different now.” What we should commemorate is our sense of what’s different now.

Kimberly Wallace Sanders
AILA & Women’s Studies

We should continue to allow the weight that comes with the date itself, as individuals and as a nation, to press us to open ourselves to deeper and fuller connections with the whole world.

Donna Mote
aila@EmoryReport

We should remember those who died through prayer, as well as those still living with the hurt.

John Schmitt
doctoral student
Mathematics
John Xerogeanes, chief of the Emory Sports Medicine Center and assistant professor of orthopaedic surgery, said Xerogeanes of the origin of his almost unpronounceable surname (it's pronounced: zero-ee-nee). “I just got born with it. I think a lot of people expect to see a gray-haired, old doctor.”

Xerogeanes is certainly not that. An energetic, personable 39-year-old (and-a-half, he admitted), Xerogeanes is at the cusp of a discipline that is young, technologically savvy and well-trained.

“You are still excited about what you are doing,” he said of orthopaedic surgeons in general. “You are current and innovative. You have to stay on top of things.”

Xerogeanes is not the only team physician for all of Emory’s athletes, but he moonlights as team physician for Agnes Scott College’s athletes and those at Georgia Tech. With the Yellow Jackets’ 2004 college football season starting last weekend, Xerogeanes schedule has gotten quite a bit more hectic.

“A friend of mine told me about the opening, so I sent my resume just like everybody else,” Xerogeanes said. “I thought their plans were interesting.” He continued. “I had nothing to lose, so I came down here and gave it a shot. I kind of came in under the radar, but at the same time I was expected to build something from nothing.”

In less than four years, a lot has changed. Come January, the Sports Medicine Center will employ three surgeons, three nonoperative sports medicine professionals, three trainers and several fellow residents. There is an entire operation dedicated to orthopaedics: bone scans, MRIs, physical therapy, prosthetics, orthotics, and much more is available on-site in the new facility.

And the center doesn’t lack patients. Xerogeanes sees more than 100 each week. The nonoperative professionals see 150. Utilizing the center’s two operating rooms, Xerogeanes can perform at least 10 orthopaedic procedures in a day. Because of technological advances, some surgeries (all are outpatient) take just 15 minutes plus prep and recovery time.

A 1992 graduate of Emory’s School of Medicine, Xerogeanes completed his residency at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and his sports medicine fellowship at the Steadman Hawkins Clinic in Vail, Colo., where he studied under some of the pre-eminent orthopaedists in the world. The patients were primarily soccer and football players and, understandably, skiers.

“I was either going to be a football coach or a orthopaedist,” Xerogeanes said. “I always wanted to do what I’m doing now. I wanted to help athletes because we always had team physicians who didn’t play sports, so they never really understood what we went through. I don’t want to forget what it was like being one of those guys.”

When he completed his fellowship, Xerogeanes got an offer from a ski resort to be its orthopaedic specialist, but he was lukewarm about it. “Ski resorts are pretty isolated,” he said. “Everybody thinks they’re great until you live there.” Through a friend, he also heard about an opening at Emory. Xerogeanes spoke to several Emory doctors including Scott Boden, current director of the Orthopaedics & Spine Center, and was impressed.

“I thought their plans were interesting,” he said. “I had nothing to lose, so I came down here and gave it a shot. I kind of came in under the radar, but at the same time I was expected to build something from nothing. That’s where the fun and challenge came in.”

Xerogeanes’ responsibilities with Georgia Tech and Agnes Scott came later, and they complement rather than interfere with his sports medicine center work.

“A friend of mine told me about the opening, so I sent my resume just like every other resume in town,” Xerogeanes said about his pursuit of the Georgia Tech position in 2000. “[Then-Coach George] O’Leary said he wanted someone who had played football in college,” he continued. That made Xerogeanes candidacy stand out; he got the job and eventually took over the care of all Tech athletes. But athletes are only some of Xerogeanes’ patients. He now takes care of many of his former teachers in the School of Medicine and their families, and he has operated on top Emory administrators.

Another of Xerogeanes’ A-list patients was former President Jimmy Carter, who underwent surgery for a torn rotator cuff in 2000 shortly after Xerogeanes began his practice at Emory.

“He’s a wonderful guy,” Xerogeanes said of Carter. “I don’t care what your politics are, he was a good person, a great patient and a very aggressive guy. He is someone who wanted to be out turkey hunting and working out immediately. He did great.”

The Secret Service agents in the operating room observing the procedure were only minor distractions and the minimum to be expected when a former president meets a guy named Dr. X who wields a scalpel.

Xerogeanes became director in 2000, sports medicine at Emory was going through some serious changes. Faculty had departed, and the discipline had to be rebuilt in facilities near the corner of Clairmont and N. Decatur roads that were becoming obsolete.

“We are used to the fact that she will be a football widow every fall as Xerogeanes is on 24-hour call.”

The relationship between doctor and patient can be even tougher when dealing with high school athletes. “The amount of pressure put on these kids is huge,” Xerogeanes said. “You have to protect them. Sometimes you have to say, ‘Johnny’s not playing.’ Parents try to bargain with you, but it’s not a negotiation.”

Xerogeanes takes a hard line, but that doesn’t mean he is without feeling. In 2000, then-Coach [George] O’Leary said he wanted someone who had played football in college,” he continued. That made Xerogeanes candidacy stand out; he got the job and eventually took over the care of all Tech athletes. But athletes are only some of Xerogeanes’ patients. He now takes care of many of his former teachers in the School of Medicine and their families, and he has operated on top Emory administrators. In fact, the Sports Medicine Center’s reputation is such that the new facility includes a special room where professional athletes from this country and around the world can meet with physicians privately.

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Xerogeanes took a hard line, but that doesn’t mean he is without feeling. In 2002, the point guard and team captain for Georgia Tech’s women’s basketball team, Nina Barić, tore her anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) in the season’s first minute—in the same knee she’d had reconstructed less than a year before.

“I was crushed,” said Xerogeanes, who was coming home from a Georgia Tech football game when he received a call from the basketball team’s trainer. Xerogeanes had performed the first surgery on Barić. Upon receiving the call, he went directly to the gym to see her, and Barić was close to inconsolable.

“You don’t say, ‘Come see me in the morning,’” Xerogeanes continued. “She wanted to talk to me. She didn’t want to talk to her coach, she didn’t want to talk to her mom. I needed to be there.”

Xerogeanes operated on Barić’s knee once again, effectively ending her college career, but there is a happy second act. She is now playing professionally in Europe. Her photo is one of the many on the waiting-room walls in the Sports Medicine Center.

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FOCUS: INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Salam lends hand to Egyptian medicine

(Editor's note: This begins a series of columns by the Office of International Affairs highlighting faculty members' international work.)

In 2001, the Egyptian government awarded vascular surgeon (and Emory medical professor) Aftef Salam the Shield of the University, one of 10 most outstanding Egyptian doctors in the world. The award recognized Salam's contributions to advancing medicine in his native country, where he spent 40 years. He has returned annually to perform charity surgery and train Egyptian physicians in the latest surgical techniques.

Salam's lifetime mission to improve Egyptian medicine took root in the mid-1960s. A junior faculty member at Cairo University's medical school at the time, he found himself treating peasants and poor farmers who worked in fields along the Nile. They had developed liver cirrhosis, a complication caused by an endemic parasite contracted from the river.

"I was doing the traditional operation on them, and we were correcting the problem, but the side effects of this operation were too much to accept," Salam said of effects that included severe liver damage. "If you are not 100 percent, you cannot work in the fields. There was no welfare, so these people would just shrivel and die."

Salam wrote to a doctor in Miami (Dean Warren, former chair of surgery at Emory) who he had heard struggled with similar issues. Thus began Salam's journey to the United States. In the two decades since, he has collaborated and developed a new operation for cirrhosis that avoided the debilitating complications. In 1971, Salam followed Warren to Emory, where he has worked since.

"It became my mission," Salam said, "to introduce this new technique to doctors around the world.

Later, following Egyptian president Abdel Nasser's death, Salam returned to Egypt for the first time after several years of exile (his move to the West in the 1960s had branded him a desertion in Nasser's highly nationalistic government) and was saddened by what he found: a medical system deteriorating from state rejection of anything considered Western, interfered with by the political party, and run by the British-built medical centers in which Salam had been trained.

"When I left Egypt in 1965, the level of medicine in Egypt was pretty good," Salam said. "But after that, three things happened simultaneously that were very damaging. One was the nationalist sentiment. Second, technology exploded. So there was a movement toward isolationism while the world was changing, and Egypt was left out.

"Third," he continued, "the population exploded. Modern medicine became technologically driven and expensive, and the 'haves' in Egypt got good treatment, but they are a minority. The poor and the middle class could not afford modern medicine. And this is a major social and political problem, much more so than in the United States."

Salam traveled several times a year to academic centers in the Middle East, Egypt, Korea, Saudi Arabia and Mexico to train medical teams to perform his new operation. Since then, his service to Egypt has extended to several other activities, including bringing promising young Egyptian surgeons to spend two years researching and training with him at Emory; organizing an annual international surgical meeting in Cairo with 600-1,000 participants from the Middle East and Mediterranean; and writing the first book in Arabic on vascular surgery. He is also consulting with the Egyptian government on plans to construct several modern hospitals.

For his recent activities, Salam receives the processes used and the results achieved by its facilities management department. The review covers areas such as: purpose and goals; organization and resources; policies and procedures; communication and quality of relationships; and divisional planning. FM and, in some categories, exceeded the established requirements to receive this award.

The Award for Excellence is designed to recognize and applaud excellence in the field of educational facilities. Originally established in 1988, it provides educational institutions the opportunity for national and international recognition for outstanding achievement in facilities management. The Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers (also known as APPA, a vestige of its former name, the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers) was founded in 1914 and represents nearly 4,500 learning institutions throughout the United States, Canada and other countries.

Emory received the Award for Excellence as a result of an in-depth review and verification of the high levels of excellence it has achieved in its facilities management department. The review covers areas such as: purpose and goals; organization and resources; policies and procedures; communication and quality of relationships; and divisional planning. FM and, in some categories, exceeded the established requirements to receive this award.

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Stoll takes on expanded pediatrics roles at CHOA

BY RON SAUER

Barbara Stoll, an internationally recognized pediatrician and scholar, has agreed to take on expanded pediatrics roles at Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta (CHOA) at Egleston. Stoll’s appointment to the new position at Egleston will further cement a strong leadership connection between the two institutions, which have enjoyed a long historical association at their adjacent Clifton Road campuses. Many Clarkestonians are Emory pediatrics department faculty members.

In September 2013, Emory Children’s Center physicians are scheduled to move from their building that is located behind CHOA into Emory’s newly constructed $42 million Pediatrics Building nearby. CHOA then will expand onto the 2.4 acres of land vacated by Emory when the pediatrics center opens.

“We are delighted that Barbara Stoll has accepted the great responsibility of carrying Emory and Children’s at Egleston another step closer to that dream of a great university hospital,” said Provost Woody Hunter, former President Thomas Lawley. “It was very obvious. At that point in time, while the collector wanted to languish inside a steel vault, Emory—could become a true center for poetry. Wagner’s words, makes Emory a true destination for [poetry] scholarship.”

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— Steve Enniss, director of Special Collections
Dr. Dezhbakhsh goes to Washington for GAO

SCHOLARSHIP&RESEARCH

BY ERIC RANGUS

M any professors take sabbatical time to fin- ish a book or visit another class. Hashem Dezhbakhsh wanted an entirely different experience. The Emory professor spent the 2003-04 sabbatical at the General Accountability Office (GAO) in Washington.

“The GAO is a wonderful place for people who do policy-oriented research,” said Dezhbakhsh, a newly promoted professor of economics. The department’s director of under-graduate studies, Dezhbakhsh also is acting department chair, so he isn’t lacking for activity upon his return to Emory.

Dezhbakhsh spent almost nine months (mid-August 2003 to April 2004) working not only on his own research but contributing to GAO work. He played a role in the completion of two prominent studies: tracking of the relationship between the performance of government programs and their budgetary assessment, and whether the mergers of several oil companies in the 1990s had an effect on gas prices.

Performance-based budget- ing was an idea that first came about in 1950 but didn’t really develop legs until the Clinton administration. When George W. Bush took office, more reforms were instituted, and now there are enough data to determine whether performance of discretionary programs after budgeting and mandated programs, such as Social Security, were not studied).

After studying the data, Dezhbakhsh found a relation- ship, but not a particularly strong one. The effect is more prevalent for small programs, and budgeting is used more fre- quently to penalize programs than to reward them.

“There is a compromise,” he said. “You start with the smaller programs and apply budgeting in a punitive fashion rather than as a reward. It’s less costly to penalize the weaker than to reward the stronger pro- grams.”

He recently completed an academic paper on the rela- tionship and will submit it to economic or political science journals. Dezhbakhsh also pro- vided the Council of Economic Advisers with a copy for its use.

Dezhbakhsh’s contribu- tions to the oil-company merg- er evaluation are purely ortho- doxical, but when the results came out in May, they made a huge impact.

“(Some) economists argue that when firms merge, they try to capitalize on ‘scale economies,’” Dezhbakhsh said. “They try to reduce the cost of production and get rid of duplicate structures and the reduced costs are passed onto consumers in the form of lower prices.

“There is another school of thought saying that they had less competition,” he continued. “They own a larger percentage of the market and they can control the price better. That’s what we did. And it led to higher wholesale gas prices. The increase was as high as 7 cents a gallon for cer- tain fuels sold in California through 2006.”

The results of the study released in May led, in part, to a congressional debate in the Senate concerning President Bush’s nominee to head the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). The debate was related to the agency’s policies regard- ing relatedness of merg- ers, and the study was used as evidence of price gouging in the gasoline industry as a result of the FTC’s merger policies in the petroleum industry.

Dezhbakhsh contributed to other studies as well. One of his methodological suggestions led researchers to uncover a pattern in wage gap between men and women, one that had been shrinking until 2000, when it widened following Bush’s elec- tion. The study that resulted found its way to the website of a Democratic Congresswoman — “the politicization of the non-partisan GAO research was plain to see. “So you can look at it as a puzzle back into the esophagus. In patients who experience reflux for the first time, the cure is usually medications, not surgery. However, for patients who suffer from the condition on a regular basis, surgery may be recommended.

Edward Lin, assistant professor of surgery, is one of the first physicians in the world to use a new endoscopic method to treat gastro-esophageal reflux disease (GERD) with a simple, outpa- tient endoscopic procedure that takes less than an hour.

GERD is a term used to describe the variety of symp- toms and forms of tissue dam- age resulting from chronic reflux of stomach contents into the esophagus. One of the most common symptoms of GERD is heartburn, caused when acids (flow backwards) from the stomach into the esophagus, causing inflammation. More than 15 million Americans suf- fer from daily heartburn.

“I’m very excited about this new technique to treat GERD,” said Edward Lin, assis- tant professor of surgery.

“Reflex can be a debilitating condition, and this proce- dure gives patients a viable option to surgery and costly medications.”

According to Lin, the new procedure is different from tradi- tional surgery, where part of the upper stomach is wrapped around the esophagus to create a new anti-reflux valve from the exterior of the gastroesophageal junction. The new technique is a fully endoscopic method that attempts to create a ‘ball-valve’ anti-reflux barrier from inside the upper stomach completely using endoscopy.

The procedure uses a device consisting of a reusable instru- ment called a Plicator, a single-use cartridge containing a suture-based implant, and a specially designed endoscopic tissue retractor. The device is passed orally into the stomach over a guidewire and sutures the inside of the stomach at the gastroesophageal junction to tighten the valve, stop reflux and restore the natural anti- reflux barrier.

Normally, a muscular valve at the end of the esophagus keeps stomach contents from refluxing into the esophagus. However, in GERD, this valve is weak or relaxes too frequently, allowing stomach contents to flow freely into the esophagus.

Currently, treatments for GERD fall into three categories: medications, surgery and endos- luminal (by endoscopy) therapy such as the Plicator. The Plicator is one of four endoluminal ther-apies currently approved by the FDA and available at Emory. The main differences with the Plicator procedure is that it instantly creates an internal valve at the gastroesophageal junction with full-thickness sutures and can be performed quickly.

“This may not always offer a complete cure, but neither does surgery,” Lin said.

“Because it is comparatively new, the outcomes data for the new procedure are still being evaluated. However, the new procedure does not complicate future treatment or surgery for patients who do not experience relief. Our goal is to offer our patients relief from GERD, and we are able to do it now using the full spectrum of available modalities including a quick, minimally invasive outpatient procedure.”

Lin said patients typically go home an hour after the proce- dure and start experiencing relief from reflux within a month.

“This is appropriate for our complicated patient popula- tion—especially those who cannot undergo an invasive surgery or choose an intermediate proce- dure between medications and surgery,” Lin said.

Some people with complex esophageal conditions, such as hiatal hernia and rare esophageal motor problems, are not candidates for the proce- dure, he added.

Most insurance plans cover the expense, which is currently FDA approved in April 2003. Endoluminal therapy is markedly less expensive than surgery, and medications can cost as much as $2,000 a year. Costs of GERD treatment exceed $9.3 billion each year in the United States.

New treatment option for gastro-reflux disease

On sabbatical last academic year, Hashem Dezhbakhsh spent his time at the General Accountability Office (GAO), where he was able to utilize expertise from his own research. He also contributed to a variety of GAO reports, some of which immediately affected policy.
The conference is a response to the growing interest in faith communities in health issues, a traditional interest in the African American church, according to Alton Pollard, director of black church studies at Candler. “The African American church recognizes that it must address both the spiritual and the physical world,” he says.

greater understanding of the forces influencing health, as well as a strong appreciation for the potential roles of faith institutions and communities.”

“The role of spirituality in patient care is significant,” agreed nursing Dean Marla Salmon, also a conference speaker. “Understanding and in a way, building upon that connection as a patient and caregiver can make a profound difference in positive healing.”

Workshops include: church contributions to the health of communities; nurses in partnership for community health; preparing parishioners to make ethical decisions; how long-term survivors of HIV/AIDS are challenging pastoral theology and practice; refugee communities and health; the church and mental health; how science illuminates opportunities for health; and preaching for health and wholeness, among others.

Cost of the conference is $130 prior to Sept. 15, $150 after that day. Daily fee options are available, as well as continuing education credits. For more information on continuing education credits, call 404-727-0174 To download a brochure and registration form, visit http://candler.emory.edu/events.cfm.
PERFORMING ARTS
TUESDAY, SEPT. 7 European Art Cinema film series The Loves of a Blonde. Milos Forman, director. 8 p.m. 206 White Hall. Free. 404-727-6671.
SUNDAY, SEPT. 12 University Organist Recital Series Bach Live! Timothy Albrecht, University organist, performing. 4 p.m. Glenn Auditorium. Free. 404-727-5050.
TUESDAY, SEPT. 14 European Art Cinema film series Hour of the Wolf, Ingmar Bergman, director. 8 p.m. 206 White Hall. Free. 404-727-6671.
SUNDAY, SEPT. 19 Oxford Lyceum concert Timothy Albrecht, University organist, performing. 3 p.m. First Presbyterian Church of Covington. Free. 770-784-8389.
TUESDAY, SEPT. 21 European Art Cinema film series One Plus One. Jean-Luc Godard, director. 8 p.m. 206 White Hall. Free. 404-727-6671.
WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 22 Film Tatezare Sebest, Yoj Yamada, director. 7:30 p.m. 205 White Hall. Free. 404-727-6671.
TUESDAY, SEPT. 27 European Art Cinema film series The Names of the Brave. Milos Forman, director. 8 p.m. 206 White Hall. Free. 404-727-6671.

Lectures
TUESDAY, SEPT. 9 Surgical Grand Rounds “Operative and Nonoperative Approaches in Patients With Difficult Hepatic and Splenic Injuries.” Leon Pachter, Fitch Hospital (N.Y.), presenting. 7 a.m. Emory Hospital Auditorium. 404-712-2196.
Environmental studies lecture “Risk Assessment of Coastal Hazards in the Southeastern U.S. and Policy Challenges.” David Bush, West Georgia University, presenting. 4:30 p.m. 205 White Hall. Free. 404-727-6676.
TUESDAY, SEPT. 14 William E. Mitch lecture in Nephrology William Mitch, former Emory nephrology division director, presenting. 4:30 p.m. Emory Hospital Auditorium. Free. 404-727-6660.
History lecture “The Crisis of the Spanish Monarchy in the Mid-17th Century.” Geoffrey Parker, The Ohio State University, presenting. 4 p.m. 116 Bowen Hall. Free. 404-727-2184.
THURSDAY, SEPT. 16 Environmental studies lecture “Identifying Priority Habitats in the U.S.-Mexico Border Region for North America’s Neotropical Cats.” Melissa Grigone, University of South Florida, presenting. 4:30 p.m. 205 White Hall. Free. 404-727-6676.

Religion
MONDAYS Weekly Zen sitting meditation Weekly sitting meditation and instruction in the Soto Zen tradition. 4:30 p.m. Rustin Chapel, Cannon Chapel. Free. 404-727-5120.
WEDNESDAYS Zen meditation and instruction 4:30 p.m. Religious Life Apartment (HPI0), Clairmont Campus. Free. 404-688-1299.

WEDNESDAYS Thursday lectures @ Emory 8 a.m. 721 Rollins School of Public Health. 404-371-0055.
THURSDAYS Carlos Museum Thursday evenings Visit the Carlos Museum on Thursdays, when galleries are open for extended hours until 9 p.m. Free. 404-727-4282.
SPECIAL Tuesdays Chess club 6:30 p.m. 106 Bishop’s Hall. Free. 404-778-4121.
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