

## Reminiscences

Thanks so much for letting me know. Dr. Matney was one of the kindest, most generous souls I've ever known; I am saddened to learn of his passing. *Stephen Bates; computer programmer, GSBS*

I am sorry for this delayed response, but I appreciate your informing me of the sad news. Tom was a kind and generous person, and I enjoyed working with him for six years. He was devoted to GSBS and UT. The ex-students will never forget him. Sincerely, *Alfred Knudson, Ph.D.; (former Dean of the Graduate School)*.

I am grateful to you for the notice and for this fine tribute to my colleague and friend Tom Matney. We were fortunate, as you know, to see him only a couple weeks ago. He made our day. I'm in touch with his family. Thank you so very much. *Thomas Roderick, Ph.D.; UT-SPH alumnus; Dr. Matney and Dr. Roderick were colleagues at the Atomic Energy Commission in the 1970s.*

Thank you for sending me this sad message. Professor Matney was my mentor when I was in GSBS and he was a great scientist and teacher. *Tien Kuo, Ph.D. (1973); current faculty*

Thank you for sharing this sad news. I am grateful to Dr. Stancel for his appropriate and thoughtful eulogy. I also greatly admired Tom. We shall miss him! *Bill Brinkley, Ph.D.; Dean of Baylor College of Medicine Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences*

Dr. Matney 'influenced his life' (taking his Recombinant DNA technology course soon after arriving at GSBS). *Paul Liu, Ph.D.*

I am very sorry to learn that Dr. Matney has passed away. I collaborated with him when I was a post-doctoral fellow at the MD Anderson Hospital and Tumor Institute in the late 70s. He was always informative, kind and helpful to me. His assistant at that time, Mary Ann, was just the same. I agree completely with Dr. Stancel that "we will never find a more generous and caring friend, colleague, or human being than Dr. Tom Matney." *William Au, Ph.D.; Director, MPH Education Center, Shantou University Medical College, China*

When I got the message, not only did the great memories of the wonderful course I took with him on bacterial genetics flash in my mind, but I also remembered with great gratitude his enthusiastic welcome to his office every time I visited in Houston and wanted to say hi to him. Additionally, the wonderful time I had when he and his adorable wife invited me for dinner at their home. The lively chats with Nancy on her origin from the Rio Grande Valley, where I have many relatives and friends, enjoying good red wine Tom brought out during discussions over several publications of his interests and the reprints he gave me of some of his seminal papers. Although I am very sad for his departure, I am going to keep the image of a very happy Tom accompanied by Nancy and saying good bye to me at their home door in my mind. I reflect upon his wonderful career as a teacher, mentor, and researcher, but above all, his always altruist attitude with friends and students.

*Hugo Barrera-Saldana, M.D., Ph.D. (1982) UT-GSBS Distinguished Alumnus*

I am terribly sorry to hear this news. I really enjoyed your [David Hewett-Emmett] class and Dr. Matney always made the class a little more interesting; his comments and questions always put a smile on my face. Watching you two interact with each other made the class feel very open and warm. I am very sorry to hear that he passed away. Thank you for letting me know sir. I hope all is well with you and yours. *George Golod [student in the Mutagenesis & Carcinogenesis class (PH2165/GS130073) a few years back – he is now a*

*medical student in San Antonio. He particularly liked the way Tom challenged everything we said! According to Dr. David Hewett-Emmett]*

Thank you for sharing this wonderful tribute to Dr. Tom Matney. We will all miss him and remember his humanitarian and scientific spirit. *L. Maximilian Buja, M.D., Executive Director, Houston Academy of Medicine-Texas Medical Center Library*

I am sad to learn that Dr. Matney has passed. I have many happy memories. Mildred Hopper introduced us when I was first a student on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor. Mildred and I and possibly a dozen other hungry folks would pile into his huge carpooling van and go to lunch at John's BBQ way up Main Street, north of downtown. The parking lot was full of plumbers' and other construction trucks and police cars (one reason I felt safe in that neighborhood). He was always fun-loving and interested in other people. He will be greatly missed. *Kay Kimball, Ph.D., UT-SPH faculty*

Tom, of course, was an extraordinary and much loved person. I had not heard about him in some time. Now, I can pay my respects, at least. *Hardy Loe, Ph.D.; retired faculty, UT-SPH*

He was a great guy! *John Kopchick, Ph.D. (1980) UT-GSBS Distinguished Alumnus; faculty, University of Ohio*

And an avid Astros Baseball fan! *Virginia Wray, Ph.D., (1970); National Cancer Institute*

Thanks for the news. Please send my sympathy to Dr. Matney's family. *Dunyaporn Trachootham, Ph.D. (2008); faculty, Thammasat University, Thailand*

Dr. Matney was a favorite of mine. *Dianne Hammond, Ph.D. (1989) GSBS alumna; retired from NASA*

What a wonderful man!! *Peggy O'Neill, Ph.D. (1974 ) GSBS alumna; Professor Emerita UT- Dental Branch*

Tom was a friend of many years, and a person for whom I gained admiration with the passage of every one of those years. He was a good person, indeed, a very, very good person and I say this with all humility even though he came from the western part of Missouri (around St. Jo's) and my home was in the eastern part (just south of Hannibal in Mark Twain country). Do let me know how ever I can be of help. *Jack Schull, Ph.D.; Professor Emeritus, UT-SPH; UT-GSBS*

What a lovely tribute to our wonderful Dr. Matney. *Joanne Prashad, M.D. ("Matney Kids")*

Please keep the Matney family in your thoughts. *Janice VanDerbur, Tom's piano teacher*

I just heard that a special friend of the HTMC died on Sunday, November 28, 2010, after a prolonged illness. Dr. Matney purchased the Steinway Concert Grand Piano and donated it to Emerson Unitarian Church in Memory of his first wife. I had the singular honor of introducing Dr. Thomas and Mrs. Nancy Matney as Dorothy and my special guests at an HTMC Club meeting earlier this year. Several of HTMC's piano recitalists gave testimony to the quality of the "Matney" piano on that Occasion. *William J. Cameron, C.I.C., Emeritus*

UTHRO has sadly lost a member who was a true and dear friend – Dr. Thomas Matney. Dr. Matney and I became friends over the past two years when we collaborated on some UTHRO efforts, most notably the creation of UTHRO's Annual Excellence Fund. He was a member of the Steering Committee for that effort. Although he was too ill to attend meetings because of his courageous battle with cancer, he continuously provided valuable input directly to me. As noted in his obituary, his accomplishments with many and varied causes and organizations seem unparalleled, and his leadership was sought by those who recognized his intellect and his willingness to help others.

A separate relationship for me with Tom was developed when we discovered that we both supported the Houston Tuesday Musical Club (HTMC). It is the oldest club in Houston at 100 years old, and it is also a performing arts club with which I sing. His gift of the magnificent piano donated to Emerson Unitarian Church was an unparalleled tribute to his first wife who was a pianist and was killed in an automobile accident. I have sung many rehearsals with accompaniment from that very fine instrument. What a privilege it has been for me to have known this outstanding individual both professionally and personally.

A lasting memory for me of Dr. Matney will always be his irrepressible sense of humor, ever ready to break through even the most serious dialogues and always just under the surface of his professional countenance. What delight that he shared that gift.

Dr. Matney's passing is a huge loss to UTHRO, to UTHealth, to M. D. Anderson, and to all of us. What a privilege it has been for me to have known this outstanding individual both professionally and personally, I will forever treasure my friendship with Tom Matney.

*Frances Poole Knight, UTHRO Immediate Past President*

GSBS has lost a loyal friend. Dr. Matney was a kind gentleman who knew that GSBS would be among the best. Through his touch during the early years, he helped make this happen.

I met Dr. Matney when I visited GSBS in late 1976. I had applied to the graduate school and came by to make certain that my application was complete. At the time, I had only applied to the master's program. Since I was the first person in my family to graduate from college, I did not aspire to a PhD, at least, not "right away."

When I came into the offices, Dr. Matney was at his desk. I introduced myself to his staff person. When he heard my name, he stepped out to greet me. He said that he had already looked over my application and only one thing troubled him. I had only applied to receive a Master's degree and he wanted to know why I had not applied to the MS/PhD program. I explained that I might go back later on for the PhD but not "right now." He insisted that I was "good enough" to do a PhD and that I needed to change to the MS/PhD program. We discussed the stipends and programs available to me. He encouraged me to expand my goals. I remember feeling that if he believed I could do the MS/PhD program, then, of course, I could. He was persuasive, yes, but more importantly, he was encouraging and knew me--he had memorized my application materials. That night, my family heard that there would be a PhD in the family. Over my years at GSBS, Dr. Matney always greeted me with a smile and an encouraging chat. I will always appreciate his kindness and belief in me. He will be missed, but his dream lives on. *Jackie Peltier Horn, Ph.D. (1981) Alumni Association President, 2011; Professor and Chair of the Biology Department, Houston Baptist University*

It is really sad news! Dr. Matney was so kind to me during my stay in Houston (1979-1983). I think that we have lost a great person. Sincere condolences are from me and my family for his surviving family and friends.

Sincerely, Takashi. *Takashi Gojobori, Ph.D. Vice-Director, National Institute of Genetics, and Professor at the Center for Information Biology and DNA Data Bank of Japan (DDBJ) National Institute of Genetics, Mishima, 411-8540, Japan*

We were very deeply saddened to learn about the passing of Dr. Matney, whom we remember very warmly. Below I included a few words of reminiscence from me and my husband, Ron Adkins, both of us knew Dr. Matney during our years in Texas.

We interacted with Dr. Matney for several years when Julia was a graduate student and Ron was a postdoctoral fellow at the Center for Demographic and Population Genetics/Human Genetics Center, where Dr. Matney worked as faculty. Dr. Matney was a kind person, a senior mentor to whom it was always very pleasant to talk and who could offer his own perspective on the subject. Interactions with him were always very enjoyable, even when he himself had a hard time in his life. We will deeply miss his warm personality and remember him as a senior faculty member in our center - very respected, distinguished, but still kind and warm to his colleagues and to young trainees. *Julia Krushkal, Ph.D. (1996) UT-GSBS and Ron Adkins, Ph.D.*

I have been very pleased and honored to have met with and taught by Dr. Tom Matney. I was a graduate student during 1974-1979 and he was extremely valuable to me as a teacher, mentor, listener and guide for many an occasion. After I got married in 1978, I asked him whether my wife, who was doing nothing then, could sit in on his course in bacterial genetics. He not only agreed (she was not a registered student) but included her in his class enthusiastically and started her on her research career. We will remember him fondly.

Aravinda Chakravarti, Ph.D. (1979) & Shukti Chakravarti

Tom Matney had been at MDAH for a year when I arrived in 1963. The Texan in him (confirmed by his bolo tie) welcomed the Yankee and initiated him in the lifestyle of the area. I believed that "finger licking guide" was a colloquial expression of his rather than an advertiser's logo. He took me and my son to central Texas for dove hunting and for dominos. Tom decided that I needed a second car and he took me shopping for second-hand vehicles. He drove a Mercedes 220 and I ended up with a rebuilt Mercedes 210 of his choice. I learned a lot about living here from Tom.

On the professional side, Tom and Joan Suit moved from the Section of Genetics to my Section of Molecular Biology when the new research wing was completed. As the GSBS blossomed, he became a key player in the instruction of our students and in the development of the Core Program. While doing this, he maintained an active research program in *E. coli* genetics which he continued when he moved full time to the Graduate School of Biomedical Science. *Manley Mandel, Ph.D.; retired GSBS faculty*

Dear Friends: This sad news is quite shocking. Dr. Matney was a great colleague and friend during my stay in Houston (1972-2001) when I as well as my wife got to know him not only as a colleague but also as a social friend. Even after our departure from Houston, Tom kept contact with us for scientific as well as social enquiries. As already mentioned in the tribute, Dr. Matney was not only a great Microbiologist, but also an excellent educator and Mentor for many. We have lost a great person and sincere condolences are from me and my wife (Bandana M Chakraborty) for his family and friends – *Ranjit Chakraborty, Ph.D.; Director, Center for Computational Genomics, Institute of Investigative Genetics, Professor, Department of Forensic and Investigative Genetics, University of North Texas Health Science Center*

Thank you for the news about Dr. Thomas Matney.

I remember that when I was a student of GSBS, Dr. Matney was very kind to the humble foreign student. My sincere condolences to his family and relatives. *Yoshio Tateno, Ph.D. (1978); Foundation for Propagation of the Knowledge of Genetics*

Yes, Tom was a great person. He was a good scientist and an excellent educator. He really cared about young people and gave them whatever support he could come up with. He gave stipend support to many students. I got to know him well and became a close friend. He'll be missed by all of us! *Wen-Hsiung Li, Ph.D.; James Watson Professor, University of Chicago*

I AM SO SORRY TO RECEIVE THIS INFORMATION. I FONDLY REMEMBER DR. MATNEY. I EXPRESS MY CONDOLENCES TO THE MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY. WARM REGARDS. *Partha P. Majumder, Ph.D.; National Institute of Biomedical Genomics, West Bengal, India*

Thank you...I'm so glad that I had the opportunity to talk with him when we gathered. He was always so considerate and we had many great conversations and interactions beginning with CDPG until I left. He was remarkable in many ways and I will always remember him in the most positive of ways. *Terry K. Bertin, Ph.D., Baylor College of Medicine—previously at UT-SPH*

Tom Matney introduced me to a whole new world, the microscopic world that not only surrounds us but inhabits us. As part of the Core Program at GSBS, I was required to take two six-weeks laboratory courses that were outside of my major field of study. I chose electron microscopy and molecular genetics. I still have the stereoelectromicrograms of T4 bacteriophage that I produced in my EM lab course, but what I got from Tom Matney was much more substantial. My background was in psychology – principally sensation and perception – so the microscopic world was foreign to me. Tom Matney made it not only interesting, but fascinating. My six-week laboratory course stretched into six months during which I isolated a new mutation in the D gene of the Histidine Operon of *E. coli* – not a bad achievement for a psychologist, as Tom was prone to say. I even got to present a paper at the Texas meeting of the American Society for Microbiology; not many psychologists can brag of that. But there was more to come.

First, I seriously considered changing my major to microbiology, but continued instead with my studies of human perception, mainly in color perception. The most important factor in my decision was that I felt I could ask and answer the “big questions” in human perception, rather than taking the “baby steps” in microbiology with essentially daily experiments. Had I met Tom Matney a bit later, when recombinant DNA research had become the norm, I'm certain that I would be a molecular geneticist today. I'll get back to recombinant DNA in a bit.

Then, the area of research that I chose for my dissertation was the genetics of normal and abnormal human color vision; you can see Tom's influence here. I was fortunate enough in my dissertation studies to formulate the model of human color-vision genetics that dominated the field from 1972, when I published it, until 1986, when as part of a team, I disproved it. I could not have been part of the team – we won the Newcomb-Cleveland Prize from the American Association for the Advancement of Science for an Outstanding Contribution to Science in 1986-87 – had it not been for Tom Matney's guidance. Our team sequenced the genes that encode the photopigments of the human retina. The understanding of molecular genetics that Tom Matney instilled in me allowed me to uniquely bridge the gap between color perception and DNA sequencing. I told him often how grateful I was to have studied with him. He was a good friend and I will miss him. *Tom Piantanida, Ph.D. (1972)*

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center (UTMDACC) and The University of Texas Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at Houston are indebted to Dr. Thomas S. Matney for his leadership during the founding of the carcinogenesis research program, located in the Lost Pines Forest near Smithville, i.e. the Science Park-Research Division (SP-RD). Dr. Matney was a charter member of the Carcinogenesis Study Section (1975), an advisory body charged to design a new multidisciplinary research program focused on cancer cause and prevention. During the gestation (1976-1977) and birth (1977-1980) of the SP-RD Dr. Matney served as Chair of its Internal Advisory Committee; and in that capacity he was involved in faculty recruitment and the search for a permanent director. He also supported actions to facilitate graduate education at the SP-RD. Dr. Matney's contributions to the early development of the SP-RD are documented in *The Science Park – Dream to Reality: The First Twenty Years (2009)*, authored by Dr. Earl F. Walborg, Jr. and available at the Medical Research Library of UTMDACC.

THIS IS A STORY ABOUT DR. MATNEY AND HIS INVOLVEMENT WITH THE TRAIN PRESERVATION PROGRAM HE WORKED ON IN HOUSTON. HE HAD A LOVE OF ALL THINGS OLD CONCERNING TRAINS. AS A RESULT OF HIS EFFORTS AN OLD RETIRED PULLMAN CAR WAS RESTORED AND MAINTAINED ON THE TRACKS OF THE DOWNTOWN HOUSTON RAILROAD STATION. IT HAD BEEN BEAUTIFULLY RESTORED.

IN THE LATE 1960S I HAD A GRAD STUDENT WHO WAS GETTING MARRIED. THE STUDENT'S NAME IS LAWRENCE "JOE" ALLRED; HE DESIRED TO DO SOMETHING A BIT DIFFERENT FOR THEIR REHEARSAL DINNER AND PARTY. TOM SUGGESTED HAVING HIS AFFAIR CATERED ABOARD THIS PULLMAN CAR. AT THE SAME TIME JOE ASKED MY YOUNGEST SON, RHETT HUMPHREY, WHO WAS 5 YEARS OLD AT THE TIME, IF HE WOULD BE THE RING BEARER. RHETT WASN'T TOO EXCITED ABOUT THIS AT FIRST, BUT WHEN HE FOUND OUT ABOUT THE TRAIN PART HE SAID OK. FOLLOWING THE REHEARSAL WE GATHERED AT THE STATION AND HAD OUR DINNER. JOE PRESENTED RHETT WITH A PRESENT, WHICH WAS A POP UP BOOK. RHETT TOLD US LATER THAT IT WAS THE BEST EVENING HE HAD EVER HAD BECAUSE OF THE TRAIN CAR AND HIS PRESENT. THIS IS A FAVORITE STORY IN OUR FAMILY AND IT ALL HAPPENED BECAUSE OF AN INTERACTION BETWEEN A GSBS GRADUATE STUDENT AND TOM MATNEY'S LOVE OF OLD TRAINS AND THEIR PRESERVATION.

IN THE 1950S TOM AND I WERE FELLOW GRADUATE STUDENTS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF BACTERIOLOGY AT THE UNIV OF TEXAS IN AUSTIN. OUR GRADUATE PROFESSOR WAS DR. ORVILLE WYSS. WHEN TOM FINISHED HIS DEGREE HE RETURNED TO HIS DUTIES AT THE BIOLOGICAL WARFARE UNIT AT FT. DETRICK. I WENT TO THE PHYSICS DEPT AT M. D. ANDERSON. A FEW YEARS LATER I HAD THE PLEASURE OF REUNITING WITH TOM WHEN HE JOINED US AT ANDERSON IN THE BIOLOGY DEPARTMENT. FROM THAT POINT ON I HAD MANY WONDERFUL INTERACTIONS WITH TOM THROUGH THE GSBS. I HAD GREAT RESPECT FOR TOM AS HE WAS THE MOST DEDICATED SCIENCE EDUCATOR I HAVE EVER KNOWN. NOT ONLY THAT, BUT BECAUSE HE WAS A MAN OF GREAT PERSONAL INTEGRITY AND ENTHUSIASM FOR HIS FELLOW HUMANS. *RON HUMPHREY, Ph.D.; retired GSBS faculty*

I am sorry to learn that Tom Matney passed away last November. I had the privilege of knowing him and working with him while I was a member of the Students Admission Committee of the GSBS in the early 70's. I enjoyed his company very much. By nature, he was a very kind and generous person. We rarely meet such an individual. *Potu Rao, Ph.D.; retired GSBS faculty*

I have many fond memories of Tom especially during the formation of the GSBS and the development of its initial unique curricula, including the Core Program. He was a staunch supporter of the ideas and classes we developed which addressed the necessity for those enrolled in the graduate school to be able to understand the backgrounds of research in areas other than that of their undergraduate specialization so that they could more effectively contribute to interdisciplinary research.

*N. Burr Furlong, Ph.D.; retired GSBS faculty*

I had the privilege of knowing Tom Matney for over 20 years in a number of relationships. I believe I first met Tom at local scientific meetings in Texas. Tom was an outside member of my dissertation committee while I was studying at UT-Medical Branch (UTMB) in Galveston. When I first arrived at The University of Texas School of Public Health, I worked in Tom's laboratory and collaborated with him on several research projects. We continued to collaborate for many years after I started my own laboratory at SPH. The most enjoyable collaboration was co-teaching a course on carcinogenesis and mutagenesis with Tom for almost 20 years. Tom was a great story teller and his lectures were more like a chat by the fire with your grandfather. However, he had a wealth of knowledge and experience to share with our students. I was fortunate to spend some time with Tom teaching a special course on genetic toxicology in Smithville quite a few years ago. Tom knew all the great places in the La Grange area for BBQ and other great meals and I think we hit them all. Tom was most of all a friend and will be missed by many individuals while his legacy will continue with his generous scholarships and other philanthropic activities.

*Thomas H. Connor, Ph.D.; Research Biologist, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Cincinnati, OH; Dr. Matney was on Dr. Connor's dissertation committee at UTMB.*

Tom Matney. We became friends during my food radiation activities in the early 1980's. After I retired in 1983, he and I saw each other occasionally. In 2003, He was Teaching Genetics and invited me to speak on food radiation. At that time I quit driving on my 90th Birthday. Thereafter he would drive me to the office 2 - 3 days a week and during our drive I would review the news in the morning, and he discussed the news in the evening, and I always fell asleep. He joked about it that, he listened to me in the morning but I wouldn't listen to him in the evening.

In recent years he became interested in Mesothelioma a genetic disease and he ask me frequently if I have a [particular] knowledge: I remembered that in cattle, a tumor had been described in Iran. Even when he was in the hospital, he asked me if I have more information about Mesothelioma; his questions and curiosity to find answers stimulated our friendship. He was a Great friend. **Dr. James H. Steele, DMV**

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