From the Chair

This special issue of Imaging Matters is devoted to an important department initiative. On February 24, 2010, a dinner was held to honor Dr. Robert Lukin, who was retiring as Chair of the Department of Radiology after fifteen years in that position. At that time, the creation of The Robert R. Lukin, MD Endowed Chair of Neuroradiology was announced, with the goal of building a $2 million endowment to perpetually fund the position. The fund was started with a $240,000 contribution from the Department. The Radiology Department has pledged to contribute $250,000 per year over the next five years. An additional $500,000 must be raised over the next five years for the Lukin Fund to become operational. I hope you will join me in supporting this endowment. Read on to learn more about Dr. Lukin and to learn how to contribute.
A Conversation With Dr. Lukin

Recently, Imaging Matters editor Clint Bramkamp interviewed Dr. Lukin; his questions are in italics.

How did you come to be at UC in the first place? I assume you mean in Radiology. I attended med school here in the early 60’s, internship in Cleveland and then worked for the Public Health Service. I was probably going to go into internal medicine, endocrinology, but I wasn’t exactly sure. My cousin and brother-in-law were both radiologists, and that was always in the back of my mind. But radiology was “giving up your stethoscope” so to speak, leaving patient care. At any rate, I was working in Washington, and so was Ben Felson’s oldest son, who was married to my wife’s cousin. We’d meet for dinner on Friday nights. About two months before my stint in the Public Health Service was due to end, I called Ben Felson and reminded him of who I was, that I had met him at his son’s wedding, and so forth. He said he didn’t remember me and all seven of his residency positions were filled. About three hours later, he called me back and said I had a spot. I still don’t know what happened.

When you completed your residency, you went on to a fellowship at the VA? Dr. Felson had been given a VA-sponsored fellowship that was supposed to promote academic radiology. I was supposed to learn how to pursue an academic career. Dr. Felson let me choose what subject to focus on, and that was neuroradiology.

So you had already chosen to focus on neuroradiology? Oh, yes. Neuroradiology in those days was all procedures, and I liked doing them. I had a sense that the field was about to explode. I also liked the department here, it was a very team-oriented place, and the one thing the department lacked was a neuroradiologist. They were already good at everything else. This was a plain film oriented department at the time, and neuro isn’t a plain film specialty.

And you became the first full time neuroradiologist in Cincinnati? Probably in the state of Ohio. There were only 100 to 150 card carrying neuroradiologists in the country, mostly on the east coast.

And then you became Section Chief in Neuroradiology? I was the only one, so that made me the Chief. But we gradually added people. Alan Chambers, who had been fellowship trained in New York. A key factor was that Tom Tomskick decided to take a fellowship with us in 1975. He’s been an extraordinary colleague, and today he’s probably the top stroke neuroradiologist in the world.

You weren’t just adding people, were you? No. Late in 1972, at the RSNA, a colleague told me to go and see a funny little machine called a CT scanner that some English guys were demonstrating. It wasn’t even part of the regular technical exhibits, it was set up in a hotel room. It was amazing: the first image I saw was of a fifteen-year-old boy, and I immediately knew the diagnosis, a craniopharyngioma. I got Ben Felson and Jerry Wiot to come and look at it with me, and they weren’t very impressed at first.

It didn’t relate as directly to what they did? No, and they were pretty negative about it, particularly Ben. Even I didn’t realize how much it would eventually be used for the whole body. Those first CT images were all neuro images. Besides, it cost $285,000, which would be several million in today’s money. I was convinced we had to have one. I badgered them for about ten months. By that time, the transition to Dr. Wiot as Department Chairman was underway, and we found the money. Dr. Charles Barrett helped identify some resources. It arrived June 5, 1975 – you can see how important that date was to me – I think, in many ways, that changed our department. The new technologies like CT and MR put us in the forefront, if not nationally, at least regionally. I don’t want to compare myself to Dr. Felson and Dr. Wiot, who were giants in the field, but I worked very hard to get us the new technologies and into new areas like interventional radiology, and make the transition to what is really a modern day department.

The CT scanner specifically was the first one in the area? It was the first in at least three surrounding states for the next three years. We got it when this was still Cincinnati General Hospital, and there were private patients who didn’t want to come here, but we had the most advanced technology.

That built contacts and relationships for the department? That’s right. I also wanted to be open to neurologists and neurosurgeons in the surrounding area. We had a conference that I ran late on Mondays for some years, where they could bring in difficult cases that I would show and discuss. There was no charge. We built relationships that way, and ultimately this became a much larger referral service for neurological disease. If you want to take that further, John Tew became chair of Neurosurgery, Fred Samaha and later Joe Broderick in Neurology. We really accomplished a lot. That’s the secret of what became a large neuroscience center. The Neuroscience Institute is still headed by Dr. Tew. The departments that were intimately involved in growing this area were Neuroradiology, Neurology, Neurosurgery, and later...
ENT and the head and neck people. The secret was working together. It’s a good model that could work throughout the medical center.

UC is concerned presently with growing its national and international stature. How do you think neuroradiology fits into that picture? First, in the whole specialty of radiology we had those two giant leaders, Felson and Wiot, who put us on the map. If you look at the leaders of radiology in general, so many of them have come from here. I think we have had more trustees of the American Board of Radiology than any other medical center. One thing I’m very proud of is that I’ve given the most ABR examinations by any individual in any specialty. I was head of the neuroradiology section of the ABR for ten years. UC radiologists have also held leadership positions in the American Society of Neuroradiology. We have other people in leadership positions: I’ve already mentioned Dr. Tomsick; then there’s Becky Cornelius in Head & Neck; Mary Gaskill-Shipley; Achala Vagal is a future superstar that we’ve trained. We’ve trained over 300 residents and over 60 fellows in neuroradiology.

The specific occasion for this interview is to support fundraising for the Robert R. Lukin, MD Endowed Chair of Neuroradiology. What is the significance of having a named chair in Neuroradiology? Oh, yes. I’m having fun, the residents and fellows are having fun, and hopefully we’re helping a lot of people.

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We are in a leadership position in neuroradiology, and we’ve had great growth, but in order to support that and continue it, to be able to attract people from other parts of the country, you’re going to need something like this. It will help the whole department financially, and it will allow us sometime in the future to recruit a great leader in neuroradiology. Top people in a specialty like this need time to do research and other academic work that may not be revenue producing. Endowments enable us to recruit top subspecialty people to Cincinnati.

And the endowed chair also makes a statement that Neuroradiology is one of the things that UC places importance behind? Absolutely. It places a stamp on us, that we will be noted in neuroradiology circles, nationally and internationally.

One thing that keeps being mentioned as we’ve been preparing this issue of Imaging Matters is how much fun you have teaching, and how much the residents enjoy reading with you and studying with you.

It’s very different now from 1972. The case material is more varied, which creates a very fertile environment for teaching. I consider myself a clinician-educator. I like to take care of people with neurologic disease. I like teaching. Originally, that involved doing a lot of procedures, and that gradually transitioned into this modern day high tech neuroradiology specialty.

And it’s still challenging? Oh, yes. I’m having fun, the residents and fellows are having fun, and hopefully we’re helping a lot of people.
When I met Dr. Lukin ...

I met Bob Lukin in 1970, when I was an intern and he was a resident. Since then he has been a wonderful colleague and friend, and he was an outstanding supervisor and department chair. Dr. Lukin is known as a neuroradiologist, but as chairman, he touched the lives of all trainees, and encouraged excellence throughout the whole department. He promoted technical innovation without abandoning the best traditions of Ben Felson and Jerry Wiot: do good, do good work, and have fun doing it.—**Thomas Tomsick, MD**

When I first worked with Dr. Lukin, I was an angiography technologist at Good Samaritan Hospital. At the time, the UC neuroradiology faculty rotated at Good Sam. UC had just acquired a CT scanner, the first in the area, and I was seeing images that I had never seen before. I had only an associate degree, but Dr. Lukin inspired me to resume my education, get bachelor's and MD degrees, and eventually join the UC neuroradiology faculty.—**Rebecca S. Cornelius, MD**

Oriiginally, I came to Cincinnati as a resident because of Dr. Wiot and Dr. Lukin, and I became a neuroradiologist because of Dr. Lukin. As my career progressed, he was a tremendous mentor, and the best boss you could hope for.—**Mary Gaskill-Shipley, MD**

I first worked with Dr. Lukin as an observer and I was impressed with how many clinicians came to him for second opinions on their complex cases. He is the well-respected authority on difficult cases.—**Achala Vagal, MD**

Dr. Lukin's impact as a Chair and nationally acclaimed neuroradiologist ...

Bob Lukin is very simply the best and most effective neuroradiologist that I have ever known. He has an incredible ability to interpret and remember details of every case that he has ever seen. I have such enormous respect for that ability that I never make a critical surgical decision without seeking the opinion of Dr. Lukin.—**John Tew, MD**

As Chair of the Neuroradiology Section of the Board exam for many years, Dr. Lukin had a major hand in shaping the practice of neuroradiology and the people who practice it nationally.—**Dr. Cornelius**

A s Department Chair, Dr. Lukin was a consensus builder, and he created a friendly, cohesive department where people wanted to stay.—**Dr. Gaskill**

A s Chair of the Radiology Department, Dr. Lukin nurtured relationships with neurologists and neurosurgeons at outside imaging centers in addition to those physicians at UC. As a result, we have a much more regional scope.—**Dr. Cornelius**

Many people know about Dr. Lukin being a competitive tennis player, but he was a great all around athlete. He was a scratch golfer, and even played on the same freshman basketball team at Ohio State as John Havlicek. I believe Bob’s athletic background has been reflected in his academic career. He’s always been a great team player. As Department Chair, like a good tennis player, he knew when to lob the ball back gently and when to smash it down the line.—**Dr. Tomsick**

Dr. Lukin foresaw the value of new technology. He saw the potential of CT scanning for neuroradiology and pushed for the department to acquire the first scanner in the area. It was a revelation; for the first time we could visualize the whole brain, not just the skull and the vessels inside. Later, he made us an early adopter of MR and other new imaging.—**Dr. Gaskill**

When I joined the faculty of the Department of Radiology as a medical physicist in 1975, one of my primary responsibilities was to provide technical support for the soon to be installed EMI Mark I CT head scanner. It was Dr. Lukin, as a neuroradiologist, who recognized the potential of this revolutionary diagnostic instrument for neuro examinations and spearheaded the UC Medical Center’s acquisition of this equipment as the first in Cincinnati. The excitement of those early days in computerized tomography with 4.5 minute brain scans, 180 degree rotation (although we did get 2 adjacent slices per rotation), 160x160 image matrix, 10 shades of gray, nominal
13 mm or 8 mm slice thickness …remains vivid in my memory. I worked with Dr. Lukin on various projects evaluating the Mark I’s capabilities. We’ve come a long way with Dr. Lukin leading the quest for state of the art instrumentation in the Department through the years.—

Stephen R. Thomas, Ph.D.

Dr. Lukin promoted radiology in the community. He offered neuroradiology services to the community and neighboring hospitals, and built relationships with neuroscience colleagues in Greater Cincinnati. Some of this started when we were the first adopter of new technologies, but even after other institutions bought the same machines, we were able to maintain our go-to position as a service provider.—

Dr. Tomsick

Collegiality has been an important part of Dr. Lukin’s contribution. Our department became a nationally recognized center of neuroradiology, partly because of the relationships he established as President of the American Society of Neuroradiology, and holding other offices in a number of professional organizations.—

Dr. Gaskill

Dr. Lukin has long been an ambassador of neuroradiology and has contributed significantly to national organizations and societies. One link that I had with Dr. Lukin in that regard was with the American Board of Radiology where we overlapped as ABR Trustees starting with my tenure as a Trustee in Medical Nuclear Physics in 2001. In fact, the University of Cincinnati Medical Center was well represented for a time with 3 ABR Trustees (including Janet Strife, MD, in pediatrics). Dr. Lukin always went the extra distance to promote the entire profession of radiology on a national scale.—

Dr. Thomas

It is a pleasure for me to recognize Dr. Lukin’s vital importance to the ABR. Neuroradiology had emerged as a specialty of great importance to the care of patients with central nervous systems diseases. Recognition of this specialty had to be approved by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). No specialty gets approval by ABMS without several years of unbelievable preparation. Bob Lukin as trustee of the ABR not only accepted responsibility but provided the leadership for the final approval by ABMS for certification of the specialty of neuroradiology. Even among the neuroradiology community, few realize the countless hours he contributed to make this happen.—

M. Paul Capp, MD (Past Executive Director, ABR, Professor Emeritus, University of Arizona)

My personal experience with Dr. Lukin …

Dr. Lukin is still the best teacher of residents. He doesn’t just give out information. He has a great ability to ask the question that will inspire residents to find out more for themselves.—

Dr. Cornelius

The residents can all tell you about ‘Lukinisms’ – funny names that help you recognize and remember things. He calls developmental venous anomalies (DVAs) ‘little squids’ and the piriform sinuses the ‘cowboy hat.’ And I love that rather than saying the patient’s ‘grey-white differentiation is preserved’ he’ll say ‘She still has a nice armadillo.’ Dr. Lukin always says ‘now you’d better write this down,’ right before he starts dropping knowledge bombs (and I’m always glad that I started writing when he started talking).—

Judy Squires, MD

After seeing a conference given by Dr. Lukin as a third year medical student, I immediately knew what I wanted to do in medicine. I can trace my entire professional career to that conference. He has had a similar impact on a huge number of physicians throughout his career, drawing many smart, capable medical students into our specialty.—

James L. Leach, MD

It is a treat to read images with him. He always makes it interesting, because he truly loves what he does.—

Dr. Vagal

It simply isn’t common to be able to work with someone who pioneered an entire field. Working with Dr. Lukin, the father of neuroradiology, is a privilege that all UC trainees assuredly treasure. He is the experts’ expert.—

Matt Hawkins, MD (UC Radiology Resident, 2008-11, Chief Resident, 2010-11)

Hundreds of residents and fellows have gained a real passion for radiology and neuroradiology from Dr. Lukin.—

Dr. Gaskill

Dr. Lukin has been such a meaningful educator and role model throughout my residency. Every time I work with him, he teaches me a lesson about neuroradiology that I will remember and use for the rest of my career. Similar to so many residents, Dr. Lukin has inspired me to pursue a career in neuroimaging with aspirations to teach others the way he has taught me.—

Nathaniel Von Fischer, MD

His interactions with clinicians and the collaborative relationships he has created over many years are second to none. Built initially on solid clinical competence, nurtured by his interpersonal skills and willingness to do whatever it takes to help the patient, Bob Lukin is a shining example on how to act and perform as a physician. In the reading room, no matter what the clinical volume, when a clinician comes down to review a study, their patient becomes the most important. When a problem arises, he’s going to help solve it, immediately, in an even-tempered way, to do what’s best for the patient. Then, as they leave, always, “Thanks for coming down…” The medical community and world in general would be a much better place if more people adopted this attitude. —

Dr. Leach
Department Benefits From Endowed Chair

An endowed chair provides benefits for the department. These benefits include:

- **Attracting gifted leaders.**
  A department conducts national searches to fill academic positions with faculty leaders who exemplify excellence and offer invaluable experience to students, patients, the department, the college, and the Academic Health Center. Such individuals are in high demand across the nation. Endowed chairs provide faculty salary enhancement and recognition for outstanding performance.

- **Rewarding excellence.**
  The added financial support and recognition of an endowed chair provide an important incentive for talented professors to stay at the College of Medicine. While colleges actively recruit talented leaders from around the country, they remain acutely aware of the excellent professors who are already members of their faculty. Many of these individuals show extraordinary talent and promise. They are often approached with competitive offers from other institutions. Endowed chairs recognize and reward excellence within faculties.

- **Demonstrating commitment.**
  Establishment of an endowed chair in a particular department or field demonstrates commitment to that discipline and helps attract additional support. With faculty support, new programs or centers of excellence can be developed that greatly benefit patient care, education and research.

- **Chairs are Permanent.**
  Because chairs are endowed, they provide permanent support for educational leadership. With an endowment, approximately 5 percent of the endowment’s market value is awarded each year, but the gift principal is never spent. The benefit to the department will be ongoing.

- **Attracting and Retaining Faculty.**
  Endowed chairs help to attract and retain outstanding teachers, researchers and scholars. This will also allow the Department to continue to recruit the best and brightest fellows from throughout the nation, and it will have a lasting impact on the excellence of care provided in our community, the region, and the nation.

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**The Radiology Department’s Commitment**

The Robert R. Lukin, MD Endowed Chair in Neuroradiology will provide ongoing funding for a faculty member serving as Neuroradiology Section Chief. A total of $2 million is necessary for the endowed chair to become operational. In an effort to ensure the success of the Endowed Chair, the Department of Radiology has made an initial donation and also pledged additional annual contributions. With this, and other donations which have been received so far, an additional $500,000 will need to be raised over the next five years to establish the Lukin Chair.

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Leaders of Radiology at UC: background, Ben Felson, MD, Department Chair 1951-73; foreground from left, Jerome Wiot, MD, Chair 1973-1992; Jannette Collins, MD, current Chair; and Robert Lukin, MD, Chair 1993-2008.
In 2013, the Department of Radiology will unveil a **NEW DONOR WALL** outside the Chair’s Office, recognizing major donors to radiology endowments, including The Robert R. Lukin, MD Endowed Chair in Neuroradiology. As shown in the artist’s rendering, the display, 4’6” high x 9’3” wide, will consist of five glass panels. Other funds to be recognized on the wall are The Harold N. Schwinger Endowment Fund, The Ben Felson Endowment Fund, The Eugene L. Saenger Fund, The Diagnostic Radiology Fund, The Nuclear Medicine Fund, and the Jerome F. Wiot Endowed Chair of Radiology Residency Education Fund. Donor names will be updated annually. Names of those who contribute to the Lukin Fund by February 14, 2013, will be listed on the inaugural Lukin board.

If you would like to support this important effort, please send checks payable to “UCF/Lukin Chair” to the UC Foundation, P.O. Box 19970, Cincinnati, OH 45219. Gifts can also be made online at med.uc.edu/radiology/alumni/LukinFund.html. For more information about giving options, please contact Mike Zenz at the UC Foundation; 513-558-3355 or michael.zenz@uc.edu.

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**LUKIN FUND**

**$100,000 Level**
University Radiology Fund of Cincinnati

**$50,000 Level**
Dr. Robert R. Lukin and Mrs. Marcia Lukin
UCHealth University of Cincinnati Physicians

**$10,000 Level**
Dr. Rebecca S. Cornelius and Dr. James J. Arbaugh, Jr.
Dr. John P. German and Mrs. Denise German
Dr. Austin Wand and Mrs. Janet C. Wand
Dr. Jerome F. Wiot and Mrs. Andrea K. Wiot

**$5,000 Level**
Dr. Herbert B. Francis and Mrs. Sylvia A. Francis
Dr. Damon F. Mills and Mrs. Marcia C. Mills
Dr. Michael D. Schaen and Mrs. Jewel M. Schaen

**$1,000 Level**
Anonymous
Dr. Jay K. Costantini
Dr. Donald J. Heimbrock
Mr. Bradley H. Kuhr and Mrs. Kimberly F. Lukin-Kuhr
Dr. James L. Leach and Dr. Sabrina D. Leach
Dr. Robert S. Lenobel
Dr. Jonathan S. Moulton and Mrs. Judith A. Moulton
Dr. Judith E. Simon
Dr. Thomas A. Tomsick and Mrs. Judith Z. Tomsick

**Less Than $1,000 Level**
Mrs. Sarah P. Alspaugh and Dr. Jonathan Alspaugh
Mr. Clinton A. Bramkamp
Dr. Alan S. Brody
Mrs. Eileen Chalfie and Mr. James J. Chalfie
Dr. Jannette Collins
Drs. Helen L. Corcoran and Mr. Kevin T. Corcoran
Mr. Ralph C. Corley, Jr. and Mrs. Mary L. Corley
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Dr. Bernadette L. Koch
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Mr. Kaushal Mehta
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Dr. Edward B. Silberstein and Ms. Jacqueline M. Mack
Dr. Bernard Sisman
Dr. Cheryl A. Stewart and Dr. George M. Wyatt
Ms. Betty Jo Traister
Dr. Achala Vagal and Mr. Sameer Vagal
Mrs. Cheryl B. Wiot and Dr. J. Geoffrey Wiot
Mr. Stephen H. Wolter and Mrs. Kimberly Wolter
Dr. Lukin and I have been colleagues and close friends for more than 40 years. He has been a constant source of support, inspiration, and collaboration for the Department of Neurosurgery. As the first Director of the Division of Neuroradiology, Dr. Lukin was instrumental in leading the Division and the Department of Radiology to become nationally and internationally renowned as a center for neuroradiology. He has been a local, national and international leader in neuroradiology, radiology and education. His contributions to the RSNA and the American Board of Radiology are legend. I am eager to participate in this important opportunity to endow a Chair in Neuroradiology to recognize the memorable contributions of this great UC leader.

John Tew, MD
Professor, Neurosurgery, Radiology and Surgery
University of Cincinnati