

# SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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## WEIGELT-WALLACE AWARD HONORS PHYSICIANS

DALLAS — August 11, 1995 — A new international award to honor physicians for exemplary medical care will be presented to two American doctors who rescued a woman trapped deep inside the rubble of the bombed-out Oklahoma City federal building and to a British doctor who saved a woman in a jet high above the Bay of Bengal.

The award, established by a Texas philanthropist in recognition of "extraordinary dedication and sacrifice on behalf of medicine and mankind," will be presented to Drs. J. Andy Sullivan and David Tuggle, both of The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, on Friday in Dallas during the opening ceremony of the United We Stand America National Conference.

Professor Angus Wallace of University Hospital, Queen's Medical Centre in Nottingham, England, is to receive his award from former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in London later this fall.

Each physician will receive a scroll, a specially commissioned sculpture and an honorarium of \$50,000. The award is the only international recognition of its kind honoring exceptional examples of patient care.

The benefactor was inspired by the example of Dr. John Weigelt and U.S. Navy Commander Mark Wallace, physicians who, from opposite sides of the globe, worked together to save a United States National Guardsman critically wounded in the 1991 Gulf War.

The donor asked The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas — one of the nation's leading academic medical centers with four Nobel laureates on its 900-member faculty — to administer the Weigelt-Wallace Award. The institution appointed physicians to a committee to select the award recipients.

"Every day, doctors in every corner of the world deliver care to patients with exceptional skill and dedication, often under difficult or dangerous conditions," UT Southwestern president

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Dr. Kern Wildenthal said in announcing the awards. "The Weigelt-Wallace Award is intended to highlight and honor examples of clinical care that are truly extraordinary.

"We are grateful that UT Southwestern was chosen to help call the world's attention to the contributions and sacrifices made by doctors to the welfare of their patients," he said. "Examples of remarkable compassion and courage inspire us all — both those of us inside the medical community and those we serve."

On April 19 Sullivan and Tuggle crawled into the darkness and debris that had been the basement of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, to the spot where Dana Bradley lay pinned beneath a concrete slab.

As cold water from broken pipes leaked water on them and the possibility of another bomb or a collapse of the precarious rubble threatened, Sullivan, chairman of the Department of Orthopedic Surgery at the OU Health Sciences Center, and Tuggle, an associate professor of surgery there, realized that the only way to free her was to amputate her leg.

Using four surgical knives, his own pocketknife and a tourniquet fashioned from nylon rope, Sullivan amputated her right leg at the knee while Tuggle monitored the victim in a cavern so small they could barely move.

"I am honored by this award, but I don't feel like a special hero," Sullivan said. "Heroes are trained, not born. They're around us everywhere — in medicine, the military, fire and police departments. By training, we have special skills so that, if called upon, under the right circumstances, we can perform. Many surgeons can perform amputations. The decision-making process and the setting were what made this unique."

"I am gratified that Dana has recovered so well," Tuggle said. "She suffered a great personal tragedy with the loss of her children, and her strength of character has pulled her through."

The perilous surgery performed by Sullivan with makeshift equipment, took about 10 minutes — about the time it took Professor Angus Wallace to treat Paula Dixon on a British Airways flight from Hong Kong to London last May.

When the woman, who had been in a motorcycle accident on her way to the airport, complained of pain shortly after takeoff, Wallace, professor of orthopaedic and accident surgery in Nottingham, recognized that his fellow passenger had suffered a collapsed lung. Her condition was unstable, and Wallace feared a descent would bring about a fatal change in air pressure.

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So, using a scalpel and local anesthetic from the 747's medical kit, a bottle of water and a rubber urinary catheter, scissors and a coat hanger sterilized in five-star brandy, he operated on the woman's chest to release the air compressing her lung.

"Although this was a fairly stressful operation for everyone concerned I do think that, presented with the same circumstances, a number of my surgical colleagues in the UK would have acted in a similar way," Professor Wallace said. "There is no doubt that my training on an Advanced Trauma and Life Support (ATLS) course improved my confidence to proceed with the operation."

Weigelt is now professor and vice chairman of the department of surgery at the University of Minnesota and chairman of St. Paul-Ramsey Medical Center's department of surgery. Cmdr. Wallace (who is not related to Professor Wallace) is now stationed at the Naval Medical Center in San Diego, Calif.

The man they saved is National Guardsman David Campbell of Pennsylvania.

Campbell was wounded in a SCUD missile attack on his barracks in February 1991, and was near death when friends connected Weigelt, then at UT Southwestern, with Cmdr. Wallace, a specialist in infectious diseases who stayed at the soldier's bedside in Bahrain for days. The two doctors conferred by a special satellite telephone link until Campbell's crisis passed.

"I don't think I'm special," Weigelt said recently. "I was just doing what any physician would have done. But I think this award is an excellent idea. Unfortunately, our society and our culture have a tendency to emphasize the bad things a few physicians do. It's rare today to see physicians receive the positive recognition so many deserve."

Cmdr. Wallace said the advice and encouragement he received from Weigelt, along with assistance from other U.S. and Arab doctors and Navy nurses, were crucial to Campbell's recovery.

"I'm grateful and humbled that this award is named in part for me, but many people worked very hard," Cmdr. Wallace said. "When you're confronted with a situation like that, you just do it. I think it's great that someone decided to shine the light on the dedication that physicians have for their patients."

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## WEIGELT-WALLACE AWARD BIOGRAPHIES

**Mark Raymond Wallace, M.D.**, 40, is a commander in the U.S. Navy, stationed at the Naval Medical Center in San Diego. He is an infectious disease specialist recognized for his award-winning clinical research. He was awarded a Meritorious Service Medal for his work in Operation Desert Storm and a Navy Commendation Medal for his service in Operation Restore Hope in Somalia. He is a graduate of Whitman College in Walla Walla, Wash., and St. Louis University School of Medicine.

**John A. Weigelt, D.V.M. M.D.**, 48, is professor and vice chairman of the department of surgery at the University of Minnesota and chairman of St. Paul-Ramsey Medical Center's department of surgery. In 1978, while at UT Southwestern, he won the Resident's Paper Competition sponsored by the American College of Surgeons. Since then he has built a reputation as an expert on surgical critical care and trauma. He is chairman of the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma. He is a graduate of Michigan State University and Medical College of Wisconsin.

**J. Andy Sullivan, M.D.**, 51, is professor and chairman of the department of orthopaedic surgery and rehabilitation at The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center and holder of the Don H. O'Donoghue Endowed Chair. His expertise is in pediatric orthopaedic surgery and the spine. He has served as secretary and currently is second vice president of the Pediatric Orthopaedic Society of North America. He is a graduate of Texas A&M University and Washington University School of Medicine.

**David W. Tuggle, M.D.**, 41 is an associate professor of surgery specializing in pediatric surgery at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center/Children's Hospital of Oklahoma. He is Coordinator for Surgical Critical Care there. Tuggle chairs the Oklahoma State Committee on Trauma for the American College of Surgeons (ACS) and was honored as the ACS Young Surgeon Representative in 1991. He is a graduate of Abilene Christian University and Southwestern Medical School at UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas.

**W. Angus Wallace, MB, ChB, FRCSEd, FRCSEd(Orth)**, 46, is Professor of Orthopaedic and Accident surgery at the University of Nottingham in Nottingham, England. He is based at Queen's Medical Centre Nottingham, which is Europe's largest teaching hospital. He has received the Sir Walter Mercer Gold Medal from the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh and the ABC Travelling Fellowship from the British Orthopaedic Association. He has been a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons Edinburgh (FRCSEd) since 1977 and a Council member since 1990. He holds a bachelor of medicine (MB) degree and a bachelor of surgery degree (ChB) from Queen's College, the University of Dundee.

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