



W.L. Winters, M.D.

HOMER LISTON BEAZLEY, M.D. NOVEMBER 1, 1920 — AUGUST 8, 2004

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Continuing in our tradition of recognizing those, now deceased, who were among the early stalwarts in the development of Houston Methodist DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center, the following pays tribute to Dr. H. Liston Beazley.

— William L. Winters Jr., M.D.

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Dr. Homer Liston Beazley was born in Grapeland, Texas, November 1, 1920, the fourth child of Homer and Anna Childs Beazley. Dr. Beazley spent 2 years at Baylor University as an accounting major before enlisting in the U.S. Army Air Corp. As lead pilot of a Flying Fortress B17 Wing flying out of England, he was awarded an air medal with five oak leaf clusters, known as the distinguished flying cross, and shared a presidential citation with his 390th bombardment group. True to his genuine humility, he never mentioned those awards in the 17 years I worked so closely with him.

After his return to Texas, Dr. Beazley switched his major to pre-medicine and entered Baylor College of Medicine (BCM) in 1946. In 1950, he graduated first in his class and was elected to Alpha Omega Alpha, the Scholastic Medical Honor Society. Then followed training in internal medicine and cardiology at BCM, after which he moved with his family to Harlingen, Texas to enter practice with Drs. Howard Tool and Noel Searle. In 1964, Dr. Don W. Chapman persuaded Dr. Beazley to return to Houston to join him and Dr. Paul Petersen in their cardiology practice, which became known thereafter as “The Chapman Group” until the name was changed to “Houston Cardiovascular Associates” in the late 1970s. Their practice was located primarily at Houston Methodist Hospital and St. Luke’s Episcopal Hospital/Texas Heart Institute, although they did consult at many other Houston hospitals. In 1968, Drs. Beazley and Chapman were part of the team that performed the first heart transplant with Dr. Denton Cooley at the Texas Heart Institute.

Dr. Beazley enjoyed immensely teaching students and residents. He ultimately retired as a BCM clinical professor of medicine in 1985. Many teaching awards came to him, for he was a caring, Christian physician beloved by his patients and colleagues. I remember him as “the rock” of the Chapman Group that at one



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time numbered seven in all. It’s an old cliché, but he really was a physician’s physician. His clinical and interpersonal skills were legendary. Many were the times he helped me make the proper decision, as I frequently found him at the hospital seeing his patients throughout the day and night.

Dr. Beazley always warned his colleagues that he would retire at age 65, and he did so during the peak of his career. He was then able to enjoy more often his passion for golf (at age 77, his golf score equaled his age) and tennis. After retirement, he became a skilled woodcrafter. Although not well known, he was a formidable ping pong adversary as well.

As a dedicated Baptist, he served as Deacon at his church, South Main Baptist Church, and was known as the physician to the congregation. When my family moved to Houston in 1968, Dr. Beazley was instrumental in helping our three young sons acclimate to Houston through Scout activities at South Main Baptist Church.

His widow, Dora Kathryn (Dodie), now lives in Dallas near her daughter, Lista Kay Hightower, and her husband Rick and granddaughter Hayley. Her son, Kenneth, lives nearby in Ft. Worth with Nancy, his wife, and their three sons, Aaron, Luke, and Benjamin Beazley.

A clinical award was established in his name by Dodie to recognize annually that fellow in our cardiology training program who epitomizes the clinical and humanitarian skills so well manifested in her husband. As one of two survivors of the original Chapman group, I have a substantial trove of fond memories of him as my colleague, friend, partner, and confidant, and of his family as role models for all families.

Dr. Beazley died August 8, 2004 after a lengthy bout with cancer, leaving a legacy of excellence as a person and physician for all of us to emulate.