

PHOTO BY CARL BREMER



At a recent retirement dinner hosted by her Ob-Gyn colleagues, Peggy Whalley, M.D., was presented with a commemorative bronze plaque that will be displayed in the High-Risk Pregnancy Unit at Parkland Memorial Hospital.

# OB-Gyn pioneer retires

By Mike West

The tag pinned to the dress of the Cabbage Patch doll in the table's centerpiece read, "Hello, my name is Rosita. My Mother had premature ruptured membranes, so she stayed at Peggy's Palace until I was born."

The occasion was the retirement banquet for Dr. Peggy Whalley, Jack A. Pritchard Professor in Obstetrics and Gynecology at the health science center and director of Parkland's High-Risk Pregnancy Unit.

In a festive evening Aug. 30 at the Faculty Club, Whalley's peers, co-workers and contemporaries honored her many achievements with reflections on her 34-year career here that began with enrollment at Southwestern Medical School.

Dr. Paul MacDonald, professor and former chairman of OB-Gyn, remembered, "She got a C-minus in Obstetrics from a chauvinistic

professor... then went on to be not only the first woman to complete an obstetrics residency at Parkland, but also to become chief resident in her senior year, a feat unequalled for 15 years!"

MacDonald also related facts about Whalley's specialty as a reproductive endocrinologist, which include her writings in numerous internationally important publications in this field as well as the field of maternal-fetal medicine.

Through her persistent effort, Whalley established the Dallas County Hospital District's first high-risk pregnancy ward in the unaesthetic environment of Woodlawn Hospital. It opened in October 1971 with ten beds and soon increased to 28 beds.

Since then, more than 10,000 pregnant women with complications have been admitted to the unit. Dr. Kenneth Leveno, associate professor in OB-Gyn, spoke of the indicators of the success of the program including

Parkland statistics showing a steady decline in the number of fetal deaths since the unit opened.

Dr. Gary Cunningham, chairman of OB-Gyn, and his wife Rebecca hosted the dinner honoring Whalley. Cunningham presented Whalley with a large bronze plaque honoring her years of work and dedicating the unit to her. The plaque will be hung at the entrance to the high-risk pregnancy unit on Parkland's seventh floor, east.

Toasts were offered in her honor by Dr. Donald Seldin, chairman, Internal Medicine; Dr. Jack Pritchard, and Dr. Norman Gant, both professors and former chairmen in OB-Gyn; and Dr. Charles Sprague, retiring president of the health science center.

The impressive bronze plaque was designed by Jerry Polley, technical assistant in Medical Illustration Services. ■