

# THE PHAROS

OF ALPHA OMEGA ALPHA HONOR MEDICAL SOCIETY



AUTUMN 2010



## Commemorating the Fiftieth Anniversary of a Medical Landmark

On January 11, 1964, U.S. Surgeon General Luther Terry released what would become one of the most widely cited documents in the annals of medicine: *Smoking and Health—Report of the Advisory Committee of the Surgeon General of the Public Health Service*. The findings were blunt, sobering, and unequivocal: “Cigarette smoking is causally related to lung cancer in men; the magnitude of the effect of cigarette smoking outweighs all other factors.”

The landmark report proved to be the catalyst for broad-based antismoking efforts in the United States and around the globe. In the two decades following its publication, more than 20 million Americans stopped smoking, resulting in a significant decline in heart attacks and a slow but steady decrease in the incidence of lung cancer in men.

Yet cigarettes remain the most preventable cause of disability and death in the United States, killing more Americans than AIDS, breast cancer, motor vehicle accidents, alcohol, illegal drugs, homicides, and suicides combined.

Since 1980 sixty-five countries have issued stamps with an anti-smoking message, but the United States is not among them. Backed by twenty-two medical societies, a resolution was

approved in June by the American Medical Association that calls upon physicians to urge the U.S. Citizens’ Stamp Advisory Committee to issue a stamp commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Surgeon General’s Report in 2014.

In support of this campaign, two companion exhibitions, curated by Alan Blum, MD (AOA, Emory University, 1985), director of the University of Alabama Center for the Study of Tobacco and Society, are available for display at museums, medical libraries, and other venues. “Dr. Luther Terry and the Publication of the Surgeon General’s Report on Smoking and Health” and “Anti-Smoking Postage Stamps from Around the World” (featuring the collection of more than 130 anti-tobacco stamps and philatelic covers, amassed by retired Baton Rouge chest physician James Lutschg, MD) will be on view at Roswell Park Cancer Institute for the rest of 2010. They will also be seen at the American Society of Clinical Oncology annual conference in June 2011.

To preview the exhibitions: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fiIRnOUuIno>

To inquire about hosting the exhibitions, contact Dr. Blum at [ablum@cchs.ua.edu](mailto:ablum@cchs.ua.edu).