

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS



האיגוד הקרדיולוגי בישראל
ISRAEL HEART SOCIETY



OF THE ISRAEL HEART SOCIETY



Road to Jerusalem, December 2013

Editor's Note: Welcome to the Winter 2013 FIHS Newsletter. Thanks for all of the excellent comments on our last double issue. We celebrate the convergence of 2 great holidays-one is a thanksgiving victory celebration by the Jewish people in their first war for religious freedom. The second is the Thanksgiving celebration of the pilgrims who arrived in America seeking their own religious freedom. For an excellent article connecting Chanukah and Thanksgiving, please see http://download.yutorah.org/2013/1053/Chanuka_To-Go_-_5774_Rabbi_Soloveichik.pdf

This issue includes the usual sections such as the President's Message and announcement of

new research from Israel and an article on Israeli efforts to help in the Philippines in the aftermath of the Storm. In this issue, meet Professor Yoseph Rozenman, the new President of the Israel Heart Society. We also include an interview with Dan Tzivoni, long time head of cardiology at Jerusalem's Shaare Zedek Hospital. Finally, in our FIHS Heart Beats section, instead of featuring a book written by a member of the society, we feature a book review of a book written about a member of the society, the dean of American cardiology- our Board Member Eugene Braunwald.

Please save the date- Come to our annual FIHS reception at ACC- Sunday evening, march 30. Details to be announced. Hope to see you in Washington DC!

Please note- description of new technology in our Newsletter does not constitute an endorsement. We just want to give our readership a sense of the vast scope of Israeli

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ingenuity in the fields of Cardiology.

Remember, this Newsletter and Society belong to you, the membership. We look forward to enhancing this Society and the connections that we hope to foster between Israeli and non-Israeli cardiologists and their institutions. Please feel free to email us with questions, answers, comments, criticisms, or just to tell us to keep working harder!

Our immediate goal is to try to grow our membership and participation to include any and all cardiologists and fellows from around the world who would be interested in supporting this bridging relationship. If you know of any cardiologists or cardiology fellows who we can contact, please email me (my email is jackstroh@usa.net).

By the way, here is the new link for the Israel Heart Society. Please browse the site!

<http://www.israel-heart.org.il/english>



Message from the President

Thank you to all our Friends for your support for the Friends of the Israel Heart Society in 2013. I can confidently say that your help, support, and friendship are felt and appreciated by the Israel Heart Society. Current events also reemphasize the existential importance of our organization. Recently, a new attack on Israeli academics was launched by the American Studies Association. Many of you stood up to this attack and have helped launch responses against this shameful and unwarranted attack. As you know, this is not the first such attempt, nor will it be the last. As a nonpolitical

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and academically based organization, we promote academic interchange and will continue in our steadfast support of Israeli academics. We count on your support as well!

The FIHS and the New York Electrophysiology Society (with a grant from St. Jude as well) sponsored the Fellow's Case Competition for the upcoming International Dead Sea Symposium. From an array of competitive submissions from across the US and Canada, the following are the finalists:

Jorge Brenes-Salazar, M.D.
Mayo Clinic

Hammock Bridge on fire:
complete AV block in a patient with congenitally-corrected transposition of the great arteries and Wolff-Parkinson-White pre-excitation pattern

Michael Curley, M.D.
Medical College of Wisconsin

3 Dimensional Ultrasound Reconstruction of Left Ventricular Assist Device to Guide Left Ventricular Endocardial Imaging and Ablation: Image the Hardware Not Just the Heart

Asaf Danon, M.D.

University of Toronto

Resumption of dormant accessory pathway conduction with adenosine administration

Jason Roberts, M.D.
University of California, San Francisco

Bundle Branch Re-entrant Ventricular Tachycardia Secondary to *SCN5A* Mediated Cardiac Conduction System Disease: A Novel Genetic Mechanism for Sudden Cardiac Death in the Young

These opportunities to promote academic interchange among trainees in cardiology are essential. Please note the various upcoming scientific meetings that will be taking place in Israel. These meetings are high caliber and provide a wonderful opportunity to combine professional enlightenment with a visit to Israel.

While we continue to grow, I am struck by the number of people I meet who are would-be supporters but had not yet heard of the organization. We still need your help reaching out to the large number of cardiac care specialists who are (or might be) interested in the activities of the Friends of the Israel Heart Society, but who we have NOT YET reached. Please consider forwarding this newsletter to

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ten colleagues who you feel might be interested – new members can get on our mailing list either by signing up via our website <http://www.friendsihs.org/index.html> or by emailing me at j-goldberger@northwestern.edu.

FIHS Heart Beats! If you have personal and/or academic milestones you would like to share with the FIHS membership, please submit these to Jack Stroh at jackstroh@usa.net. This is a wonderful opportunity for our members to share news.

Finally, a few notes of gratitude. I want to thank Josh Hartman for all his efforts on the FIHS website and Jack Stroh for his efforts at maintaining the high quality and informativeness of the FIHS newsletter. Many thanks to our Silver, Gold, and Platinum members for 2013 who are listed on page 11 (as of the publication date of this newsletter – a final list will appear in our next newsletter). We could not have succeeded without your support. Please plan to join us at our reception at the American College of Cardiology meetings in Washington, D.C. on March 30, 2014.

With best wishes for a great 2014,

Jeff Goldberger, M.D., M.B.A.

President, Friends of the Israel Heart Society



Two Presidents- Peres and Goldberger



Meetings

The 12th International Dead Sea Symposium (IDSS) on Innovations in Cardiac Arrhythmia and Device Therapy

March 3-5, 2014

Hilton Convention Center,
Tel Aviv, Israel

<http://www.idss-ep.com>

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Main Topics:

- Innovations in Cardiac Implantable Devices
- Innovations in Ablation Techniques
- Innovations in Imaging and Navigation Techniques
- Innovations in Non-Invasive Electrophysiology
- Stroke Prevention: Newest Approaches
- Wireless Device Diagnostics and Therapeutics
- New Implanted Devices (leadless, epicardial, subQ, etc)
- Remote Monitoring of Implanted Devices
- Cell-Based and Stem Cell Therapy
- Sudden Cardiac Death
- Atrial Fibrillation
- CHF
- Clinical Trials
- Controversy
- Entrepreneurship in Electrophysiology

Vice-President, European Society of Cardiology, Leiden University Medical Center, Leiden, The Netherlands

Peter Ganz

San Francisco General Hospital, San Francisco, CA, USA

Philip Greenland

Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, Chicago, IL, USA

John G. Harold

President, American College of Cardiology, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, Los Angeles, CA, USA

Thomas F. Lüscher,

Editor-in-Chief, European Heart Journal, University Hospital Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland

Patrick T. O'Gara,

President – Elect, American College of Cardiology, Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH), Boston, MA, USA

Fausto J. Pinto

President-Elect, European Society of Cardiology, Lisbon Cardiovascular Institute, Lisbon, Portugal



The 61st Annual Conference of the Israel Heart Society in Association with the Israel Society of Cardiothoracic Surgery

April 30- May 1, 2014

David Intercontinental Hotel,
Tel Aviv

<http://israelheart.com/>

Guest Lecturers

Dominick J. Angiolillo

University of Florida College of Medicine-Jacksonville, Jacksonville, FL, USA

Elliott Antman

President-Elect, American Heart Association,
Brigham and Women's Hospital,
Boston, MA, USA

Jeroen J. Bax

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Ronald G. Schwartz

University of Rochester Medical
Center, Rochester, NY, USA

Alec Vahanian

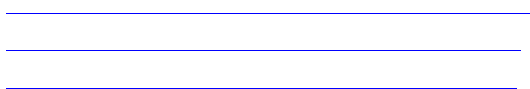
Bichat University Hospital, Paris,
France

Panos E. Vardas

President, European Society of
Cardiology, Heraklion University
Hospital, Heraklion, Greece

**Guest Speaker of Cardiothoracic
Surgery**

TBA



**Heart-warming Stories- Israeli
aid in the Philippines Disaster
and Life-Saving Treatment for
Syria's Wounded (both sides!)**

**IDF treats over 300 people a
day in the Philippines**

Posted By Viva Sarah Press On
November 18, 2013



The IDF medical team has treated over 700 patients at its [field hospital in Bogo City](#), Philippines, in the first three days of its operation. Israeli doctors assisted in delivering 12 babies – many of them premature – including one named, [Israel](#).

Col. Dr. Dudu Dagan, Vice Surgeon General, Tweeted that the team “delivered three babies in one hour. Moments like these are the ultimate experiences.”

The field hospital treats over 300 people each day, many of them injured in last week's Typhoon Haiyan devastation. Much of the area is still lacking running water and electricity.

On November 17, The IDF team based installed a water cistern on a nearby island that had no access to water.

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The field hospital, which is attached to a local hospital, has incubators for the premature babies.

"I am not sure what would have happened if we had not been around," said Lt.-Col. Dr. Ofer Merin, medical manager of the field hospital.

Merin repeatedly told the 148 officers and soldiers, doctors, nurses, lab technicians, psychiatrists, social psychologists, search and rescue workers, that "we are here to answer the call for help."

"I had the privilege of being in the delivery room minutes after Israel was born and what was felt in that room was truly the essence of hope – the feeling that after such a horrific experience, life, and especially new life, continues," wrote IDF officer Lt. Libby Weiss in a [first person account of the devastation and hope in the Philippines](#).

Merin said the field hospital will stay open depending on the needs of the local population.

In related news, members of the IDF Home Front Command are helping to rebuild a school damaged by the typhoon.



IDF aid team: 'Wherever there are people in need, we will be there.' (IDF Spokesperson's Unit)

http://israel21c.org/news/idf-treats-over-300-people-a-day-in-philippines/?utm_source=20.11.2013&utm_campaign=November+20%2C+2013&utm_medium=email

Baby born in IDF field hospital, named Israel

Posted By [Viva Sarah Press](#) On November 17, 2013 @ 5:13 am



Israeli doctors with first Philippine baby born in field hospital.

A Philippine woman gave birth over the weekend in the IDF field hospital in Bogo City on Cebu Island, and called her son "Israel" to thank the Israeli army's

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gynecology team. The IDF set up the [field hospital](#) in the Typhoon Haiyan-hit area to help care for the local population affected by the devastating storm.

Attending physician Dr. Reuven Keidar congratulated the parents, saying, "Mazel tov. It's a boy."

"We choose the name 'Israel' as just saying thank you to the Israeli people," said Audrin Antigua, holding her newborn son. "Thank you so much." Long lines have become a common sight outside the IDF field hospital since its opening. Bogo City Mayor Celestino Martinez Jr. said: "The typhoon destroyed everything we have here, from infrastructure to agriculture."

The Israeli medic team has received high praise for its work in the Philippines so far. As of Saturday evening (November 16), the field hospital treated 370 patients, including 150 children, reported the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"The field hospital capacity that the Israelis can mobilize is top class, and we have seen it very, very effectively in many other crises as well," John Ging, a top UN humanitarian official, told ABC News.

Dr. Nancy Snyderman, an NBC correspondent, wrote a long piece on Israel's humanitarian work. "I asked the IDF Surgeon General in charge why they chose Bogo. He said it was because they were poor and their needs were great. As I left, I walked away in awe of this group of doctors: physician humanitarians, and medicine at its very best," [she wrote](#).

http://israel21c.org/news/baby-born-in-idf-field-hospital-named-israel/?utm_source=20.11.2013&utm_campaign=November+20%2C+2013&utm_medium=email



IDF using life-saving new field treatment for Syrian war

wounded BY MITCH GINSBURG
December 5, 2013



500-plus Syrians treated, Northern Command's chief medical officer Tarif Bader reveals; says he neither knows nor cares whether casualties are Assad supporters or rebels.

Over the past ten months — ever since Israel began aiding Syrians wounded in their country's civil war — the IDF has treated over 500 Syrian nationals, the Northern Command's chief medical officer told the Times of Israel on Wednesday.

"The first incident that we handled was on February 16, 2013," said Col. Dr. Tarif Bader, the Head of the Northern Medical Command. "There were seven wounded and we evacuated them to [Rebecca] Sieff Hospital in Safed."

Since then, he said, the IDF has treated wounded Syrians either at the Golan Heights' divisional medical unit or at a field hospital established expressly in

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order to treat those injured in the civil war.

The field hospital is not open at all times. Instead, it is located in a position that makes it easy for Syrians to deliver their wounded and for the IDF, when the need arises, to bring doctors and other medical personnel to the field.

Bader said that though the evacuation of a Syrian national to Israel requires the authorization of the upper echelons of the IDF command, "there has never been a delay while waiting for authorization."

"Those that are granted entry to Israel and afforded tax-payer-funded treatment at Israeli hospitals, particularly Sieff and the Western Galilee Hospital in Nahariya, are triaged and treated solely on the basis of need. "I don't know who the wounded belongs to and I don't care," Bader said. "I don't know what ethnic group he belongs to or what side he's fighting for. The only criteria is need."

Bader was deliberately vague in describing how the wounded arrive on Israeli soil and how they return to Syria. Asked how they get back after they have been treated, he would say only, "the same way they came."

He did reveal, however, that dozens of Syrians have been given a new life-saving treatment that the IDF has recently introduced into the medical corps but has yet to use on an Israeli soldier.

Holding a glass bottle of freeze-dried plasma, he said that blood loss, within the first hour after injury, is the primary cause of death for soldiers in the field. Ordinary plasma, known as fresh frozen plasma, must be kept at a minimum of -25 degrees Celsius and is therefore only administered at hospitals with the appropriate freezers. The FDP, made by the German Red Cross, can be kept in a simple refrigerator or even at room temperature. Mixed with IV fluid, the powdered unit of plasma can be intravenously introduced to a patient within minutes.

The simple treatment restores a patient's intravascular volume in a far more significant way than mere IV fluids. Noting that the IDF has treated dozens of Syrians in this manner, he said "it has made a tremendous difference in the field."

http://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-using-life-saving-new-field-treatment-for-syrian-war-wounded/?utm_source=The+Times+of+Israel+Daily+Edition&utm_campaign=15d6431d9c-2013_12_05&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_adb46cec92-15d6431d9c-49957405



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\$250 Silver member

\$500 Gold member

\$1,000 Platinum member

\$5,000 President's Club

Your support enables us to continue growing our programs, including the ACC meeting, support for Israeli fellows to attend the AHA/ACC meetings, and to grow other programs.

For those who are interested in directed donations, we have the following opportunities:

\$500 Sponsor an issue of the FIHS newsletter

\$1000 Partial sponsorship of an Israeli fellow to attend the AHA meeting

\$1000 Partial sponsorship of an Israeli fellow to attend the ACC meeting

\$2500 Sponsorship of an Israeli fellow to attend the AHA meeting

\$2500 Sponsorship of an Israeli fellow to attend the ACC meeting

We would like to thank our Platinum, Gold, and Silver Members for their past and future support! Thanks to all!



Membership

This is also a reminder regarding membership dues for the Friends of the Israel Heart Society. The basic dues are **\$50**. You can register through our website <http://friendsihs.org/Register.html> or send a check directly to:

**Friends of the Israel Heart Society
8912.Little.Elm.Bend
Skokie, IL 60076**

Please include your email address to assure you do not miss an issue!

We are particularly grateful to those who can be sponsors at any one of the levels indicated below so that we may continue and increase our support of creating a bridge between Israeli Cardiology and the rest of the World:

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Platinum Level Sponsorship

*Dr. Jeff Borer
Dr. Eugene Braunwald
Dr. Peng-Shen Chen
Dr. Edo Kaluski
Dr. Michael Wolk
Dr. Douglas Zipes*

Gold Level Sponsorship

*Dr. Jeffrey Goldberger
Dr. Philip Greenland
Dr. Allen Gutovitz
Dr. Charles Love
Dr. Bruce Wilkoff*

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Dr. Stanley Nattel
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Dr. Arthur Moss
Dr. Richard Popp
Dr. Alan Rabinowitz
Dr. Stuart Rich
Dr. Melvin Scheinman, Dr. Jack Strofi*

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Research

Macrophage Subpopulations Are Essential for Infarct Repair With and Without Stem Cell Therapy

Tamar Ben-Mordechai, PhD,* Radka Holbova, MS,* Natalie Landa-Rouben, PhD,* Tamar Harel-Adar, PhD,y Micha S. Feinberg, MD,* Ihab Abd Elrahman, PhD,z Galia Blum, PhD,z Fred H. Epstein, PhD,x Zmira Silman, MA,* Smadar Cohen, PhD,y Jonathan Leor, MD*

Tel Aviv, Beer-Sheva, and Jerusalem, Israel; and Charlottesville, Virginia

Objectives This study sought to investigate the hypothesis that the favorable effects of mesenchymal stromal cells (MSCs) on infarct repair are mediated by macrophages.

Background Methods The favorable effects of MSC therapy in myocardial infarction (MI) are complex and not fully understood.

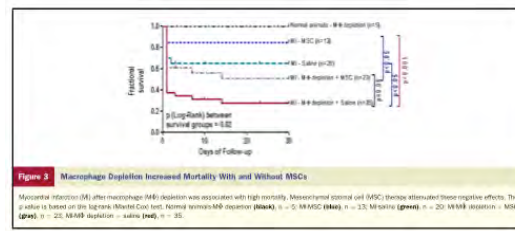
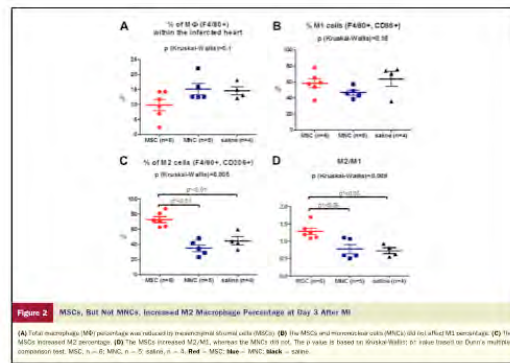
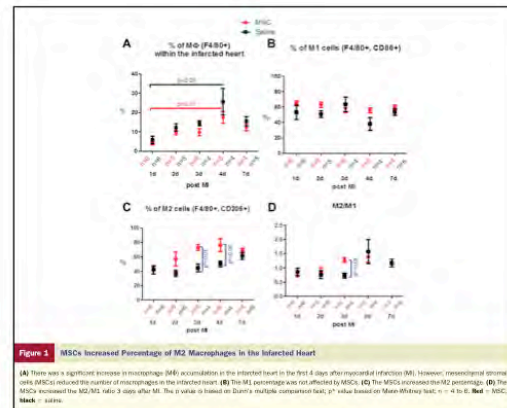
We induced MI in mice and allocated them to bone marrow MSCs, mononuclear cells, or saline injection into the infarct, with and without early (4 h before MI) and late (3 days after MI) macrophage depletion. We then analyzed macrophage phenotype in the infarcted heart by flow cytometry and macrophage secretome in vitro. Left ventricular remodeling and global and regional function were assessed by echocardiography and speckle-tracking based strain imaging.

Results The MSC therapy significantly increased the percentage of reparative M2 macrophages (F4/80⁺CD206⁺) in the infarcted myocardium, compared with mononuclear- and saline-treated hearts, 3 and 4 days after MI.

Macrophage cytokine secretion, relevant to infarct healing and repair, was significantly increased after MSC therapy, or incubation with MSCs or MSC supernatant. Significantly, with and without MSC therapy, transient macrophage depletion increased mortality 30 days after MI.

Furthermore, early macrophage depletion produced the greatest negative effect on infarct size and left ventricular remodeling and function, as well as a significant incidence of left ventricular thrombus formation. These deleterious effects were attenuated with macrophage restoration and MSC therapy.

Conclusions Some of the protective effects of MSCs on infarct repair are mediated by macrophages, which are essential for early healing and repair. Thus, targeting macrophages could be a novel strategy to improve infarct healing and repair. (J Am Coll Cardiol 2013;62:1890–901)



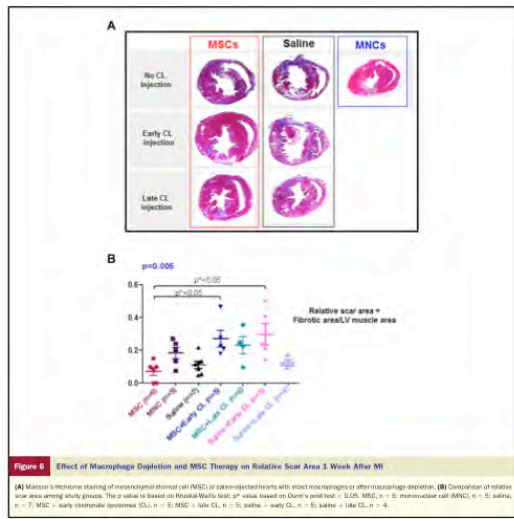
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Meet the new President of IHS

Professor Yoseph Rozenman



Prof. Yoseph Rozenman is an interventional cardiologist and holds current positions of the Head of The Cardiovascular Institute at the E. Wolfson Medical Center (Tel Aviv University – Faculty of Medicine) and



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the President of The Israel Heart Society. He is married to Orit, a dentist, and father of Yael and Maya.

Dr. Rozenman was born in Haifa, Israel and grew up in Jerusalem. After completion of his army duty (discharged after the Yom Kippur war where he served as an officer in the engineering forces at the Golan Heights) he started his medical studies at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Concurrent with his medical training, he also received a BSc degree in Mathematics and Physics and MSc degree in Physics. He started his postgraduate medical training at the Hadassah Medical Center in Jerusalem (chair - Prof. Mervyn Gotsman) and then completed four years of training at the Harvard University in Boston; Two years of medical residency at the Beth Israel Hospital (chair - Dr. Eugene Braunwald) followed by a combined clinical and research fellowship in

cardiology at the Massachusetts General Hospital and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (chair - Dr. Edgar Haber). He holds board certification in medicine and cardiology (USA). He returned to Israel to become a staff cardiologist at the Hadassah Medical Center, where he was later appointed in charge of the catheterization laboratory and in 1999 moved to Tel-Aviv to become the Head of The Cardiovascular Institute at the E. Wolfson Medical Center. Between 2010 and 2012 he served as the Chair of Cardiology at the Tel-Aviv University Faculty of Medicine.

His main clinical and research interests are interventional cardiology, heart failure hemodynamics and cardiovascular pharmacology. Prof. Rozenman is actively involved as a principal investigator in many international multicenter clinical trials of new drug and device therapy in cardiovascular diseases. He published more than 150 manuscripts in peer reviewed scientific journals and has also an extensive experience in the

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biomedical industry serving as a consultant and a member of the advisory board of many companies.

Professor Dan Tzivoni

Chief of the Department of Cardiology at Shaare Zedek Hospital, Jerusalem



After 21 years at the helm of Shaare Zedek Hospital's Department of Cardiology, Professor Dan Tzivoni is stepping down, passing the baton this coming January to our colleague at FIHS, Giora Weiss.

Prior to taking over the department at Shaare Zedek in 1991, Dr. Tzivoni was a senior cardiologist and Assistant Director of the Division of Cardiology at Jerusalem's Bikur Cholim Hospital. In an interesting twist of fate, just

prior to Dan's retirement, Bikur Cholim Hospital was taken over by Shaare Zedek, and Dr. Tzivoni was able to oversee the merging of the departments of cardiology at these 2 institutions where he has contributed so much during his illustrious career.

Dr. Tzivoni is proud of the growth of his Department in size and services during his tenure. He took over a department which had 5 cardiac beds, and quickly expanded it to 40 beds with state of the art treatment protocols, the largest cardiac service in Israel. Under his guidance, Shaare Zedek's cardiology service is currently performing 3000 coronary stent procedures yearly as well as advanced treatment for structural heart disease.

I sat with Dr. Tzivoni in September to review his accomplishments and goals during his long and successful career.

Biggest Accomplishments-

Leadership-

Building 2 separate departments of cardiology in Jerusalem from scratch. He is especially proud of the growth at Shaare Zedek, making its inpatient cardiology department the largest in the country. During his first year at Shaare Zedek in 1991, the department

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cardiologists were able to increase cardiac catheterizations from 200-900, and cardiac Emergency department visits doubled. He created the concept of the heart hospital in Israel, caring for a wide variety of heart ailments with the latest and best technologies, an early example that others followed. He helped train the future leaders in cardiology over these years.

Research-

Silent ischemia (with Shlomo Stern).

The role of magnesium in the treatment of Torsade de Pointes (after reading some papers by Doug Zipes on the use of magnesium in digitalis toxicity).

Ischemic preconditioning of the heart.

Innovative Procedures-

Transradial cath and interventions.

Peri- MI VSD closures.

Unfinished work-

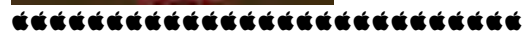
Establishing a preventive cardiology institute to help Israelis to avoid needing advanced cardiac care.

What's next?

After 33 years leading the way, what's next for Dan Tzivoni?

Professionally he wants to continue to see patients in his clinic as well as teaching medical students and residents. Privately, he wants to spend time with his family, and travel with his wife. Finally, he wants to concentrate on cardiac prevention, promoting healthy lifestyle in Israel. He is also happy to have lured his former student Giora Weiss away from Columbia University in New York to "come home where he belongs."

We at the Friends of the Israel Heart Society wish Dan and his wife good luck in following his heart with his family and goals in retirement.



Highlighting Joint Programs

This section highlights ongoing Interchange Programs taking place at American sites. Thanks

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to Board member Richard Popp for directing this program and allowing us to publicize it:

Feldman Family Foundation Visiting Professors Program

Stanford University School of Medicine, Palo Alto, California, USA

Program Director: Richard L. Popp, M.D.

Purpose: The aim of the professorship is to allow senior Israeli faculty physicians, in the mid-portion of their careers, to have sufficient time away from clinical duties to update their general skills and/or to acquire specialized knowledge that they will transmit to their colleagues and students on their return to Israel. Physicians from any field may apply. Each visiting professor will have a program tailored to his or her needs by the Program Director and a collaborating Stanford Faculty sponsor, who will ensure the quality of the visiting professor's day-to-day activities. The experience of living in the United States for 6 months is an additional aspect of the program. If you are a faculty member of an Israeli Medical School please contact Dr. Popp at rich.popp@gmail.com and he

will give you the contact person's name at your program.

I would also encourage Israeli programs to let our membership know about happenings and offers for training in Israel: Please email these to me at jackstroh@usa.net.



FIHS Heart Beats



Eugene Braunwald and the Rise of Modern Medicine

By Thomas H. Lee Harvard, 383 pages, \$35

http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304066404579125204086074282?mod=WSJ_Opinion_LEFTTopOpinion

When I was a medical student in Africa, "Harrison's Principles of

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Internal Medicine” was my bible. A multi-authored text, it was wildly popular all over the world. To us readers, the editors of “Harrison’s,” with their exotic titles (“Hersey Professor of the Theory and Practice of Physic,” for example), were like rock stars. “Harrison’s” separated itself from other textbooks of its day by the weight it gave to basic science and to the understanding of fundamental biological mechanisms, which the editors believed was key to understanding disease. Eugene Braunwald’s name was familiar to so many of us, not just because he was an editor of “Harrison’s” but also because many of the advances in cardiology described in the book came directly from his own research.



Dr. Eugene Braunwald, ca. 1957. Eugene Braunwald

In writing about Dr. Braunwald, Thomas Lee, a professor of medicine at Harvard, attempts to capture both the life of this remarkable man, now 84, and the explosive scientific progress that fundamentally altered medicine in the second half of the 20th century. “Evidence from research began to matter to doctors and to patients. . . ,” Dr. Lee writes. “In 1950, heart attacks were ‘bolts from the blue’—unpredictable, unpreventable, and untreatable—but in the decades that followed, mortality from myocardial infarction fell from 30-40 percent to 5-8 percent. Throughout cardiology and the rest of medicine, unbeatable diseases became treatable, and some even became curable. Progress helped to drive fatalism out of medicine.”

Dr. Braunwald’s life is emblematic of this change: “Over six decades, he was repeatedly in the right place at the right time with the right people. He became interested in and worked on cardiovascular hemodynamics when he was a medical student in 1951, just as modern cardiac catheterization was being developed. He went to the National Heart Institute in 1955, when it was small enough for someone in his mid-twenties to be a creative force,” Dr. Lee observes.

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He grew into a skilled manager, helping to build a new department of medicine at the University of California, San Diego, and rebuilding an old one at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston. He became a leader in medicine's cultural shift toward relying less on experience and more on rigorous science. "After starting his career in intimate laboratories with just a few colleagues, he saw that many big questions in medicine could be addressed only through big studies—often randomized trials involving tens of thousands of patients in multiple countries."

Born in 1929, Dr. Braunwald grew up in Vienna and can remember the crowds when he was 8 cheering the arrival of Adolf Hitler. One night he watched his father, a prominent businessman, being forced onto a truck with other Jewish men. His family, fortunately, was able to save him by persuading the SS that he was indispensable for the process of liquidating his company. The family fled Vienna soon thereafter, leaving all their possessions behind—the children were told they were going on a picnic—and eventually making their way to Brooklyn.

While in medical school at NYU, Dr. Braunwald, like many physicians-to-be of that era, was influenced by

Sinclair Lewis's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, "Arrowsmith" (1925), which "described the rigors of medical training and the discipline of scientific research, and . . . romanticized the selflessness of the people who pursued this work." After NYU, Dr. Braunwald worked for a period at the National Institutes of Health, where his seminal work in cardiology took shape. "I realized that when you are young, bright, motivated, willing to work upwards of a hundred hours a week, and you get the right conditions, you can grow simultaneously as a researcher and clinician," he would comment later about that fruitful time. "You can multitask. It's one plus one equals three—or at least 2.5."

He completed his residency at Johns Hopkins and then returned to the NIH in 1958, during what is referred to as the NIH's "Golden Years." The NIH was responsible for creating a new breed of doctors across the country: the physician-researcher. In Dr. Braunwald's words: "There was a brand-new culture. Scientific and even social networks of these physician-researchers developed that had not existed before, and those networks soon became the most important relationships in their professional lives." Among his many contributions while at the NIH was his work identifying a condition

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called hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, in which thickened sections of the heart's own tissue can restrict blood flow and which we now realize is far from rare.

After a decade at the NIH, Dr. Braunwald was restless, ready for another challenge. He moved to the new medical school in San Diego, to chair the Department of Internal Medicine. It was a big move. "The clinical enterprise was as chaotic as any other startup business," Dr. Lee writes, "but the research environment was as vibrant as Braunwald had promised those recruits it would be." Although the move was largely good for him, it was harder for his wife, Nina, a thoracic surgeon. "The chairman of surgery viewed Eugene Braunwald as his rival for power, and was far from welcoming to the first woman cardiac surgeon in his department. The environment for her was hostile from the start, and Nina became progressively more unhappy. Eugene felt guilty that he had dragged his wife away from the NIH, where her career had been on a brilliant trajectory, to UCSD, where she had become a pawn in a medical political battle."

His next move was to Boston, where Dr. Braunwald transformed the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston

into the premier internal-medicine department in the country. He replaced a lot of the old guard, made radical changes and pushed forth a vision of excellence at every level. In 1978, Dr. Lee notes, when most chief residents were white and male, the Brigham's Chinese-born chief resident, Victor Dzau, told an Asian-American applicant "that there were no perfect meritocracies, but the Brigham came close—and that Braunwald set the tone. 'You don't get ahead here by playing golf with the chairman, because the chairman doesn't play golf,' Dzau said. 'Dr. Braunwald doesn't care what color you are—he wouldn't care if you were purple. What he cares about is whether you're smart and work hard. If you are, and if you have any kind of luck at all, things tend to work out well here.'"

All the while, Dr. Braunwald continued his work on interventions for treatment of heart attacks, focusing particularly on the new "clot-busting" drugs. There was a desperate need for rigorous clinical experimentation to define their appropriate use. Dr. Braunwald led the Thrombolysis in Myocardial Infarction trial, which became known as TIMI. In a series of landmark tests beginning in 1984, Dr. Braunwald established the superiority of one clot buster over

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another and the effectiveness of a number of other medications after a heart attack. He proved a master at coordinating these multicenter studies, enrolling thousands of patients and negotiating contracts with industry that were win-win, such that there was money not only to prove the worth of one drug or another but also to test blood for biomarkers that were of more academic and experimental interest.

Keeping the many participating hospitals and the central TIMI research group intact, Dr. Braunwald followed up with several more studies. “TIMI became an actual research ‘brand’: when a study had the TIMI name in it, journal editors and readers knew that this paper was going to be rigorously done by well-respected researchers . . .,” Dr. Lee writes. “With Braunwald as chairman, TIMI became an academic and business success. It placed Braunwald in the middle of a network of many outstanding cardiovascular researchers. Hundreds of young cardiology researchers around the world realized that if they worked on TIMI trials, they would have funding and the chance to be an author or coauthor on research papers, some of which would document important advances.”

Dr. Lee’s book is thoroughly researched and well-written. If it has faults, they may well reflect the reticence of his subject. Dr. Braunwald’s wife, Nina, came of age in medicine with Dr. Braunwald and chose a difficult path as a surgeon. As a reader I was curious to learn more about her—what it was like to be the trailblazer she must have been and be married to another trailblazer. Her struggle with and death from metastatic breast cancer in 1992 is mentioned in a sentence or two. One is left feeling that Dr. Braunwald, who seems to have been most cooperative with his biographer, shut the door on the more personal aspects of his life. Still, what is there is most satisfying.

Dr. Braunwald, looking back on his career, says that it was “not very hard to write papers that get published in good journals, but it’s immensely difficult to develop treatments that will help people and change medical practice. To think that somewhere, thousands of miles away, somebody whom I’ve never met and never will meet is living longer and better because he is receiving an ACE inhibitor following a myocardial infarction—now that’s gratifying.”

—Dr. Verghese is Professor for the Theory and Practice of Medicine at Stanford University and the author

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of “Cutting for Stone.”



Cardiology and the world. If you have any questions, comment, criticisms (my favorites!) please email me at jackstroh@usa.net.

That’s it for this issue of the newsletter of the Friends of Israel Heart Society. Special thanks as always to Mort Lebowitz MD and Batia Ziv for being our “eyes and ears on the ground” in Israel. Special thanks in America to our new Society Administrators- Janice and Larry Brown, welcome!

Have any ideas to make this a better tool for our Society? Share them with us!

Tell your friends that we want them to join our mission to be a bridge between Israeli

