



**American Friends of
Rabin Medical Center, Inc.**
220 Fifth Ave., Suite 1301
New York, NY 10001

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit 1735
Phoenix, AZ

VITAL SIGNS

September 2002

Terror Descends Upon Petah Tikva

By Esti Sherbelis

Lambs to the slaughter. Sitting ducks. This is the only description that can amply describe the 49 people whose lives were put in total chaos when a suicide bomber exploded among them in a crowded café. It was a balmy evening and many mothers decided to spend their time with their children at the open mall in one of the newest neighborhoods in Petah Tikva, Israel.

Hani Havivi (32) had promised her 5 year-old son an ice cream. However, she had also persuaded him to wait a little longer. Accompanied by her parents, cousin, and her seven month old twins, she had just arrived in front of the café when she heard the explosion. Instinct took over despite being in a state of total shock. She immediately checked to see that her family was safe, and then, while still screaming, grabbed her children and began running. It was only when they had moved some distance away that Hani felt pain in her leg. Before she had the opportunity to look, her son began yelling and pointing at her. A gruesome sight met her eyes. Her jeans were completely soaked in blood. Within minutes she was rushed off to RMC, situated close by. An unidentified object had been embedded in her leg, and, following surgery, she said that she was only grateful that it was she and not another member of her family who was injured. She emphatically added that her family will no longer leave the boundaries of her house.

Dr. Dan Oppenheim, CEO of RMC, said, "As a Level One



RMC's Dr. Ze'ev Eshkol, Department of Orthopedics, checks on Hani Havivi, one of the victims of the Petah Tikva bombing.

trauma center we have had to be on constant alert for many months. I am proud of the staff at RMC, who showed dedication and took the initiative to come to the hospital within minutes after hearing the news, without waiting to be called." All facilities and departments, including x-ray, emergency and surgery were immediately put into full operation.

While more of those injured continued to be delivered to RMC, the Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Israel Lau, arrived to try to comfort victims in the ER. Among the 34 victims who arrived at RMC was an overwrought and grieving woman, whose one and a half year old daughter and mother had just been brutally killed. No one could console her.

During the night six of the victims underwent urgent operations. By morning half the victims had been released. In the Department of Surgery B lay one of the 17 innocent wounded still remaining at RMC. The physician allowed no one access. His patient was too traumatized, he explained. She refuses to look in the mirror and see the damage or talk to anyone.

Somber family members of one victim, Violet Maslush, age 53, waited in the corridor of the Department of Orthopedics at RMC. From inside the room heart-wrenching sobbing could be heard. Violet was finally able to release all the pent up emotions that she had repressed the night before. When she finally calmed down a bit she attempted to explain her ordeal. "My husband and I own the café that the suicide bomber targeted. It was full of mothers and children and I was waiting on tables outside. Suddenly a horrific explosion sounded, followed by nothing. All I remember is a white bubble. The next thing I recall is my husband and son leading me away. My right arm and foot were completely torn." Violet is still recovering from surgery. She has a hole in her arm and shards were removed from her limbs. Physically she will be able to function, but Violet says she doesn't know if she can ever return to work at the café.



Dr. Daniel Sourin Yordash is comforting Violet Maslush at the Department of Orthopedics at RMC where her injuries were treated following the terrorist explosion in her ice cream parlor in Petah Tikva.

Donations of Excess Merchandise or Inventory May Be Accepted for Tax-Deduction. Call David Fisher, at 212-407-4990

William Jefferson Clinton RMC's Keynote Speaker at NY Dinner October 27 at Waldorf Astoria Robert J. Ivanhoe to serve as Dinner Chair

By Craig Bassett

The third annual New York gala dinner of the American Friends of the Rabin Medical Center will take place at the Waldorf Astoria on Sunday, October 27, 2002. Among the special guests to attend the dinner will be the Honorable William Jefferson Clinton, 42nd President of the United States. Special guests include, Nava Barak, President of Israel Friends of RMC and wife of former Israel Prime Minister Ehud Barak; Dalia Rabin-Pelosooff and Yuval Rabin, children of the late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin; and many other dignitaries.



William Jefferson Clinton

William Jefferson Clinton was elected President of the United States in 1992 and again in 1996, the first Democratic president to be awarded a second term in decades. His accomplishments as president include increasing critical

investments in education, expanding access to technology, encouraging investment in under-served communities and promoting peace and strengthening democracy around the world.

AFRMC is pleased to have Robert J. Ivanhoe serving as the Dinner Chair and Mortimer B. Zuckerman serving as the Honorary Chair. Ivanhoe is Chairman of the National and New York Real Estate Department at Greenberg Traurig, LLP, a full service international business law firm, and a member of Greenberg Traurig's Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and Operating Committee. With over twenty years of legal experience, Ivanhoe has participated in the development and financing of some of New York's most significant office, industrial, and mixed-use real estate projects. He was honored in 2001 by the Real Estate Division New Leadership



Robert J. Ivanhoe

continued on page 3

WHAT'S INSIDE...

- Terror and a Dedicated Staff, Reception for Dr. Oppenheim, The Suicide Bomb 2
- A Sacred Trust, Tisha B'av and Terror, William Jefferson Clinton Keynote Speaker continued 3
- Montefiore Resident Receives Fellowship, RMC Social Workers Bring Solace, Progressive Stem Cell continued 4
- Gift of Love, Israel TV's ER, Visit to RMC, Tisha B'av and Terror Victim continued 5
- International Collaboration, Planned Parenthood, Terrorist Victim 6
- From Around the Globe, Trauma Equipment Needed 7

Progressive Stem Cell Technique Offers New Hope to Chronically Plagued Cardiac Patients

By Danna Rosenthal

The future of cardiac treatments is taking a radical turn, with Phase I trials of a new technique showing encouraging results at Rabin Medical Center in Petah Tikva, Israel, New York and Washington Hospitals. In order to stimulate the growth of tiny blood vessels in the heart so that they bypass damaged muscle, a technique was developed by Dr. Ran



Dr. Ron Kionowski monitoring stem cell recipient

Kornowski, Head of the Catheterization Unit in the Department of Cardiology at RMC while on sabbatical at Washington Hospital Center, D.C., and Manhattan's Lenox Hill Hospital. The technique involves injecting stem cells from the patient's own bone marrow and injecting them into the patient's heart. The Phase I trials have been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Helsinki Committee.

continued on page 4

Terror and a Dedicated Staff

The Webster dictionary defines dedication as "self sacrificing devotion to an ideal or cause." I could not find a more apt way to describe the actions of the staff at Rabin Medical Center.



Dr. Dan Oppenheim
CEO of RMC

Recently a suicide bomber exploded in the heart of a café situated in Petah Tikva, only two minutes away from the hospital. The normal procedure would be to immediately contact management and all needed personnel. However this was not possible. All telephone and mobile phone lines were down in the Petah Tikva area. This did not deter the nurse in charge that evening. She instantaneously took control, ordering all surgeons and nurses to the Emergency Ward, so as to be fully prepared for the countless terrorist victims who may have arrived. Her efficiency was commendable and all 49 victims were given the optimum care they needed, but my definition of "devotion" refers largely to the overwhelming number of staff who appeared moments later ready to help, despite the lack of formal communication. Social workers and psychologists accompanied family members, patients were examined and rushed to surgery, and the luckier ones were released.

For these committed staff members being part of the hospital is not just a job it is their calling and I am proud to be surrounded by such people.

I share this with you, the American Friends of RMC, because we definitely have a winning partnership. For while with your generosity you provide us with the means to expand and improve, we pledge to continue to offer the best medical service possible for our patients.



Dr. Bilha Fish, center, hosted a reception at her home in Locust Valley, Long Island for Dr. Dan Oppenheim during his May visit to NY. Dr. Oppenheim presented her with a RMC logo in lucite, while her daughter Ariel looked on.

Reception Held for Dr. Oppenheim on Long Island



Mrs. Margaret Cuomo Meier, left, enjoyed her first exposure to an AFRMC program, as did Simona Frankel, right, the new Deputy Consul General in New York. AFRMC's Assistant Treasurer Seymour Rosenthal also enjoyed the festivities.



Mrs. Lillian Rosenthal and Tzipora and David Onn, left to right, enjoyed the buffet dinner in which some 50 friends, many of them now new friends of AFRMC, participated.

The Suicide Bomb...The Bomber...Nails, Screws and Bolts

On Sunday, May 19, a thirty-one year-old man was shopping in the vegetable market in Netanya, when a bomb went off killing three and injuring dozens more. He was rushed to Rabin Medical Center (not necessarily the nearest hospital), because of the nature of his injuries, and because RMC is one of only 6 level-one trauma centers in Israel.



His visible injuries consisted of shrapnel penetrations along the left side of his body and second and first degree burns on his face, chest, hand and leg. But what the x-rays revealed was nearly 15 nails and other metal fragments imbedded throughout his body. "One nail was endangering the main blood vessels to and from his brain," said Dr. Michael Stein, RMC's director of trauma. "While some patients have been seen with as many as 20 nails causing internal trauma," offered Dr. Stein, "after 15, they are usually dead. Big nails leave very small, innocent looking, holes."

Fortunately for this victim, the operations to remove the nails and treat the severe burns were successful, although much shrapnel remains in the body, because it is usually more dangerous to remove it. He was subsequently removed from a ventilator and has been undergoing intensive rehabilitation since.

According to Dr. Stein, if the blast doesn't immediately kill the victim, the shrapnel, and even the bones of the terrorist, are all lethal weapons of destruction. One man arrived at the emergency room, following a terrorist attack, with a small cut above his ear. He was alert and talking. "We did a CT scan. We were stunned to see a nut lodged in his brain. He didn't even know he had it."

Fellows from Around the Globe Meet at RMC

Cardiothoracic Surgery Head Creates Global Village with Fellowship Program

By Esti Sherbelis

Dr. Georgios Georghiou has made the RMC Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery his second home. He is a long way from his wife and children in Cyprus. Although he misses them, and while they have visited him frequently over the past three years, he feels that he could not have passed up the opportunity to learn from Professor Bernardo Vidne, Head of the department, and to work alongside him. Dr. Georghio is looking forward to implementing the advanced techniques he is learning at RMC in his homeland, Cyprus, in the future.

Professor Vidne, encountered Dr. Victor Rubchevsky, a cardiac surgeon, while operating alongside him in Siberia, Russia. Dr. Rubchevsky decided that he could not surpass the opportunity to work in such advanced surroundings as RMC and become familiar with complex and modern procedures unavailable in Russia. In the half a year he has been in Israel he has mastered the Hebrew language and toured the country. He is luckier than his counterparts for his wife, also a physician, is by his side. He bestows warm praise, not only on the medical technology in Israel but stresses the caring nature of his peers, who have given him great assistance.

Dr. Wandwi Boniface, a vascular surgeon, has a mission. He intends to become one of the pioneers in establishing a Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery in his homeland, Tanzania. Dr. Boniface's decision to come to Israel while on fellowship in Australia was based on his desire to work with Prof. Vidne, whose worldwide reputation precedes him. His choice has not come without a cost to his personal life. His wife and three children remain in Tanzania and communicate via e-mail. Nevertheless, he is certain that his experience will significantly affect the destiny of cardiac patients in Tanzania, who until now have had to travel abroad for cardiothoracic surgery.



Left to right- Dr. Victor Rubchevsky, Dr. Wandwi Boniface, Prof. Bernardo Vidne Head of the Dept of Cardiothoracic Surgery at RMC, and Dr. Georgios Georghiou.

NY Dinner Proceeds to Expand Trauma Unit Equipment Needed

Over the past year and a half RMC's Trauma Unit has been at the forefront saving lives by providing treatment to large numbers of trauma patients who were wounded during terrorist attacks. Victims treated are civilian and army personnel, most suffering from multiple injuries. RMC must be constantly on the alert and primed for many types of emergency situations, including unconventional and all-out warfare.

Unfortunately, the Trauma/Emergency Unit was not built nor is presently sufficiently equipped to handle concurrently the volume of patients hurt and traumatized by terrorist attacks. To rectify this situation the proceeds of the 2002 Annual NY Dinner will be used to enlarge and refurbish the Trauma/Emergency Unit.

However, there is an urgent need to immediately acquire cutting-edge equipment, essential to ensure optimal life-saving treatment so as to assure quick and accurate diagnosis and proper emergency surgical procedures. The following equipment will save lives on a daily basis. Designated donations will be greatly appreciated- call 212-279-2522.

Aragon Beam Coagulator.....	\$28,600
Sonosite 180 Portable Ultrasound.....	20,000
Datex 17 CS-3 Monitor.....	18,000
Propaq CS Color Vital Signs Monitor.....	13,000
Computerized Drug Docking Pump.....	12,000
Multi-Perimeter Ambulatory Monitor.....	6,500
Mobile Pulse Oxometer.....	3,500



At RMC's Trauma Unit, visiting a victim of a terrorist attack, wearing glasses, is Israel's Public Security Minister, Uzi Landau.

International Collaboration During RMC Robot Surgery

By Esti Sherbelis

The 80 guests at the Israeli Congress of the Association of Surgeons, hosted by Rabin Medical Center (RMC), which took place at the Felsenstein Research Center this morning, were exposed to a unique and mesmerizing experience. The first robot assisted laparoscopic cholecystectomy and funduplication surgeries in Israel, were telecast live to the prominent physicians and media who attended.



Dr. Moshe Rubin, monitors the patient and supervises the changing of the surgical tools on the Zeus robot in the operating room.

The surgery took place at RMC, the only medical institution in the country, and one of the few worldwide, to possess "Zeus", as the robot is fondly called. The robot was first used several months ago.

The patient, a 70 year old man, underwent open heart surgery without the need to open the chest. Since then it has assisted in numerous operations in the Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery.

The surgery was performed by a joint team from RMC and Italy. Professor Cristiano Huscher, directed the robot's actions from a computer screen with control sticks. Prof. Huscher has had extensive experience, having spent seven years at Memorial Hospital in the U.S. and currently acting as Chairman of the Department of Surgery at San Jovani Hospital in Rome. He was assisted by Dr. Eldad Powsner, Deputy Head of Surgery B at the Golda Ha-Sharon Campus of RMC and Dr. Moshe Rubin of the Department of Surgery B at the Beilinson Campus of RMC.

At the termination of the congress the many guests expressed their admiration for both the advanced technology and the skillful way in which it was used.



Dr. Eldad Powsner, Dr. Jacob Yahav, Director of Beilinson Campus at RMC, Prof. Cristiano Huscher and Dr. Moshe Rubin answer questions of guests at the congress. The sign in the Background reads "Live telecast of operations performed by the robotics system, Zeus."

Planned Parenthood

By Esti Sherbelis

A unique service offered at RMC free of charge provides soon-to-be parents with the opportunity to meet with a midwife and plan together their child's upcoming birth. The midwife supplies information and answers to a wide variety of topics that stem from major issues to small details. The range of subjects may include: which types of anaesthetization should be used; positions for labor; alternative therapy; massages; onlookers during birth; and much more.

Personalized birth planning reflects the outlook of the Women's Comprehensive Health Center, where 8,000 babies are born each year. It is based on the notion that each and every mother-to-be deserves to have her personal wants and needs heard. This perspective stems from a belief that childbirth is one of the most significant experiences a couple will undergo in their lives and therefore it is pertinent that they arrive prepared and well equipped with as much knowledge as possible.

The program, which began little over a month ago, is enjoying great success, with 71 women, almost all of whom are joined by their spouses, attending. With further exposure, including brochures distributed in Arab villages, it is a certainty that numbers will rise rapidly.

Terrorist Victim Widow's Response to Relatives of Arab Recipient of an Israeli Organ Donor: "Now we are a Family"

By Esti Sherbelis

A spark of optimism amidst traumatic days in Israel, as Rabin Medical Center transplants a kidney of suicide attack victim into an Arab woman.

"I don't know how to thank you for giving my mother's life back," said an emotional Sayid, the son of Aisha Abu-Hadir, the recipient of Ze'ev Vidner's kidney, to his widow, Zahava. Zahava was sitting in mourning over the loss of her husband, her daughter, Sivan,



Aisha Abu-Hadir, received a kidney from the terrorist victim.

and her daughter Gilli's fiancé, Avi Beckerman, who were murdered by a terrorist's bomb during a celebration of the Passover Seder at the Park Hotel in Netanya. Zahava was touched by the visit to her house of brothers, Sayid, Muhammed and Sammy and answered, "From now you are part of us. We are one family." Sayid responded with a warm embrace.

The Abu-Hadir family had given up hope of ever finding a kidney match for their mother after four years of waiting. When the call came from Rabin Medical Center they were ecstatic. Aisha was operated on by Dr. Ezra Shaharabani of the Department of Transplantations. Only after the successful completion of the surgery was Sayid told that the kidney had been donated by the Vidner family.

Despite the tremendous loss suffered by a family whose sole desire was to celebrate the Passover feast together, they, nonetheless, in their darkest hour, saved the lives of four people, two of whom received Ze'ev Vidner's kidneys, and the others the heart and liver. "The decision to donate our father's organs was unanimous. That is what he would have wanted, to help others, regardless of religion or race," stated Nimrod, Ze'ev's son.

Both families ended their meeting with a joint statement, "We, the simple people, are the ones capable of changing the situation. We must find the courage to talk about peace."

The Abu-Hadir family were oblivious to the extent of the Passover tragedy. They assumed that only Ze'ev Vidner had died. It was only after they had taken their leave of the mourning family that they questioned reporters as to why Zahava and Gilli had burns on their faces. When they discovered the truth they were shocked and their empathy towards the Vidner family visibly deepened.



Terrorist victim Ze'ev Vidner's kidney was donated to Arab woman.



Burton Lazarow Executive Director AFRMC

A Sacred Trust

"Choose life!"

These words from Deuteronomy are a commandment. While that "choice" unquestionably directs us to sanctify our own lives, it no less suggests an obligation to choose to save the lives of others; and, that is the underlying goal of the work we do for, and the dollars we give to, RMC.

RMC strives for the highest quality of medical care but care with a concern for assuring a respect for a patient's dignity and for providing them with a proper level of comfort. That is why, as I shared with you recently in a special mailing, because of lost income and increased costs resulting from the downturn in the Israel economy and the tremendous impact on the hospital's budget caused by dealing with terrorism, AFRMC has undertaken efforts to find the funds to make up these losses so as to minimize cuts in programs, services, and in the replacement of equipment.

When the victims of terrorist attacks arrive at RMC's Trauma Unit/Emergency Room the facilities, equipment, treatment, physician care, follow-up care, and so forth, has to be exceptional - able to handle the most extreme levels of treatment. To meet this responsibility as one of only six level one Trauma Centers in Israel, the facilities and support equipment must now be upgraded and expanded. It has become even more critical to complete this project immediately given the unfortunate increase in trauma volume due to terrorist activities in Israel.

However, even as we engage in these efforts, RMC continues to seek funds to build for the future by refurbishing and replacing facilities and expanding or opening new medical and research departments. That is what a responsible institution must do to secure its future so as to be prepared to serve its patient load of almost one million people annually.

We do have a sacred trust - to indeed be our "brother's keepers" and to help "save lives". During these trying times, please help. If you have recently done so, we appreciate your efforts so very much. If you have not as yet done so, now is the time. Thank you!

Tisha B'av and Terror Arrived Together at RMC

By Esti Sherbelis

There is nothing as sacred as the bond a mother shares with her child, a bond that begins in her womb. Judit Weinberg (22) experienced this bond for eight months before an explosion blew up the bus she was traveling on in Emmanuel, a settlement in Israel's West Bank, on the day before Tisha B'Av

Within a matter of minutes, at Rabin Medical Center, Israel's largest medical institution, situated in Petah Tikva, Judit underwent a Caesarian section in order to save the baby's life. The baby, born in critical condition, was taken to Schneider Children's Hospital, adjacent to RMC, where he died 45 minutes later despite an arduous struggle to save his life. A perfectly healthy, fully developed infant was ripped from his mother because of a cruel, senseless act of terror.

Judit was one of five innocent victims brought to RMC on that fateful evening. All emergency procedures were in full swing when the wounded and their relatives arrived.

Ayelet Shilon (29), one of the women brought to the hospital, was returning from a visit to her parents. Her mother, Zilpa Kashi (67) decided to accompany her and help with the grandchildren, the twins, Galia and Sarah aged nine months and Or

continued on page 5

continued from page 1

Cabinet of State of Israel Bonds where he has been active since 1980 and presently serves as a vice-chairman. In addition, Ivanhoe serves on the executive committees of the Real Estate Lawyers Division of UJA-Federation and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and is an involved supporter of the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation and numerous other philanthropic and community organizations.



Former President William Clinton and Former Prime Minister Ehud Barak develop their friendship during the Camp David talks.

Zuckerman is Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of "U.S. News and World Report", Publisher of the New York "Daily News", founder of Boston Properties, Inc. and Chair of the Presidents Conference of Major Jewish Organizations.

Proceeds of the Dinner will help in expanding and equipping the Trauma/Emergency Unit to provide better services to terrorist victims.

For an invitation to the Dinner or to make a reservation or place a greeting in the Dinner Journal, please call 212-279-2522.

AFRMC

Abraham "Barry" E. Cohen - Chair of Board

Sherwood D. Goldberg - President

Stephen M. Flatow - Secretary

Shimon Topor - Treasurer

Seymour Rosenthal - Asst. Treasurer

Sen. (Ret.) Howard Metzenbaum - Chair, Honorary Board

Andrew C. Freedman - Counsel

Burton Lazarow - Executive Director

Vital Signs is a publication of American Friends of Rabin Medical Center (AFRMC), Inc., a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization, which is solely responsible for its contents. AFRMC was formed to educate Americans about the Rabin Medical Center (RMC), located in Petah Tikva, Israel, and to raise funds on behalf of the RMC. AFRMC's main office is 220 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1301, New York, NY 10001. Tel: (212) 279-2522, Fax (212) 279-0179, Email: afrmc826@aol.com

Published by - Specialized Office Systems • Phoenix, Arizona • (602) 485-0900

Montefiore Resident Receives Flatow Fellowship

By Vicky Saksenberg, MD

I am thrilled, excited, and extremely grateful to be receiving the Flatow Fellowship, which will allow me to spend this forthcoming November at the Rabin Medical Center. I am currently a fourth year resident in Anatomical and Clinical Pathology at Montefiore Medical Center, the sister hospital to RMC.

While at RMC, I will divide my elective time in the hospital between 4 services, spending approximately a week in each of them.

I am looking forward to spending time with the liver transplant team, who have tremendous experience in organ transplantation and have developed novel methods to detect disease progression and understand mechanisms of rejection. One of these methods is using fine needle aspiration, which is managed by Cytologists in the Pathology Department, and which, I understand, could rival any clinic in the world. I will spend my second rotation in that department.

RMC has the oldest and one of the largest blood banks in Israel (started in 1938), and, in addition see many Thalassemic patients, which are not seen as commonly in the Bronx. I am excited about being with the blood bank and the hematology teams, which are the other two services that will be hosting me.

I am eagerly anticipating meeting all the people in these services, learning from them, seeing a different perspective, and in some services, a different patient profile. I am eagerly anticipating exchanging ideas and approaches to diagnostics, and hope to help strengthen the existing bonds between the 2 hospitals. I am also looking forward to the cultural activities to which I will be exposed and to learning more about Israel.



Congratulating Dr. Vicky Saksenberg upon receiving the Flatow Fellowship for Study at RMC, are Burt Lazarow and Dr. Dan Oppenheim.

I would like to thank AFRMC, Burt Lazarow and Dr. Dan Oppenheim, who have both been wonderfully supportive and helpful, and Mr. Stephen Flatow, for providing the fellowship, named in memory of his daughter. I would also like to thank Dr. JJ Steinberg, my program director for all his support and Drs. Michael Prystowsky, Chairman of Pathology at Montefiore and Greg Burke, Vice-President for Planning at Montefiore, for facilitating my forthcoming experience at RMC.

Rabin Medical Center Social Workers Bring Solace to Souls Troubled by the Effects of Terror

We'd all like to believe that life has some rationale - you behave well and you reap the rewards. But what happens when there is no logic, when chaos takes over- our sense of security is stripped, our belief system crushed. This is the state of a victim of the terror in Israel: complete disorientation takes over, enormous stress results, and then comes the belief that his/her whole world has been totally crushed.

It is Rachel Raz and her team of social workers at Rabin Medical Center in Petah Tikva, Israel, who step into action immediately following a terrorist attack. They are all too familiar with the routine. For the past 19 months their mobile phones are never switched off, but in reality most of the social workers don't wait for the inevitable call. Once they hear the news, and have ascertained that their loved ones are safe, they switch into professional mode and grab the car keys. Their families have learned to accept that these family members may not see the end of a movie, finish their weekend getaway, or join in the Passover feast.

Rachel explains that work gives her and her staff a personal sense of control over the traumatic situation. While on duty they focus only on the victims and forget their own basic needs. In addition to supervising her team of dedicated social workers, Rachel's responsibilities include heading the information center for the public. The center provides information to distraught relatives and friends. It is connected to all other hospitals involved so as to assist bewildered families to find the whereabouts of loved ones.

The psychologists and social workers prepare families for their encounter with the wounded and escort them to the departments.

However it is the victim him/herself who most often is the one in desperate need of help. S/He sits in Emergency. S/He is lost. S/He has endured a terrible agony and the social workers now must help him/her grasp reality and organize his/her thoughts. Most importantly they listen to the story. Whom to contact? Are there any children? Is there an elderly person or pets left behind at home? Are they alone? These are all standard questions. Most victims refuse treatment until they discover the fate of those who were with them.

While the physicians labor relentlessly, trying to save limbs, organs and lives, the social workers mediate between the doctors and families. They support the patients and their loved ones in their hour of crisis, clarifying proceedings, and finally, explain what hardships lie ahead.

The light in Rachel's office burns long after the patients are settled, as 20 social workers gather for a debriefing session. It is an opportunity to unwind, to share the feelings of the horrific experiences they have undergone and the experiences that have left them emotionally and physically drained. Rachel believes that her "comrades in arms" inner turmoil can only be understood by their fellow social workers. She does not subject her family to the details of her work for she wishes to spare them the particulars she knows they can never fully comprehend. Her home for her is a sanctuary, and the mundane chores a step back into sanity.

Although the social workers follow the patients closely throughout their stay at RMC, they are fully aware that the suffering has far from healed. They guide the patient and family as to welfare services, nurses and psychological counseling they may need when they return home. It is time also for the social workers to return to their families who need them until the next time terror calls.

continued from page 1

This advancement in the field of cardiac treatments offers new hope to cardiac patients who have undergone extensive medical treatments such as: cardiac surgery, angioplasty, medications, and have spent an enormous amount of time in and out of hospitals with no respite from their heart disease even after the traditional techniques have been performed.

The first Israeli patient, Menachem Steinvorzel, aged 56 underwent the procedure in the beginning of June 2002. He was a perfect candidate for the procedure as he had previously endured four bypass operations, 33 catheterizations, and 15 angioplasties.

Dr. Kornowski and his team removed 30 million stem cells (approximately 2.5 cc) and then processed them in a lab. After the sterilization of the cells, they were injected, via a special catheter that was designed by Dr. Kornowski in conjunction with Biosense-Johnson & Johnson located in Tirat Hacarmel. Twelve different sites in Steinvorzel's heart were then selected using a three-dimensional, non-radiological imaging technique. The patient was fully conscious and the entire process lasted only 45 minutes.

Steinvorzel was able to return home the following day. It is now a month later and the patient feels great, but Dr. Kornowski said it would take about three months before they know if the stem cell's factors have produced new blood vessels to replace the diseased ones.

While the current tests appear promising, the next step is to begin much larger Phase II trials at Rabin Medical Center. It has improved the cardiac condition of pigs at the hospital in Washington. The goal is to show safety and efficacy.

A Visit to RMC

By David Onn

At the end of last year, my wife Tzipi and I arrived in Israel for one of the many visits we make each year. Although we had many prior commitments, we were fortunate enough to have the time to visit the Rabin Medical Center. Until you see it with your own eyes, it is hard to imagine the degree of innovation and development and the level of care extended at the Center. This visit was the highlight of our trip. We were moved by the dedication and professionalism of both the staff and management of all those we met.

It all started a year ago when Tzipi and I had the honor of attending one of the American Friends of Rabin Medical Center functions. Dr. Dan Oppenheim presented the future design for the Medical Center campus. We learned about the extensive medical activities offered, and the impressive plans to develop the Center's infrastructure to be more responsive to the actual and future needs of public health care. We were so impressed with the presentation that we decided to volunteer our time to contribute to this important project.

Tzipi and I both remember the Rabin Medical Center when it was known as Beilinson Hospital as two of our three sons were delivered there. What a tremendous change! At that time, the hospital consisted of a four story, old building with outdated medical equipment. We now see beautifully designed, imposing buildings, with state of the art medical equipment ready to provide services and treat a myriad of illnesses and diseases.

Most important is the smiling and dedicated staff that devotes their days and nights to caring for their patients to make this wonderful center a world-class hospital.

Dr. Oppenheim together with the Rabin Medical Center Management should be proud of a job well done. We know that there is still a lot to accomplish and there are never enough resources in the health care arena. But, there is always a drive and a dream to become better and better.

We would like to thank Judit Solel for her wonderful hospitality and Burt Lazarow for making our visit such a rewarding one.

Ben-Gurion said: "If it had to do with Israel and you don't believe in miracles then you are not a realist." The Rabin Medical Center is a living testament to the extraordinary achievements of the people of Israel.

Israel TV's "ER" is RMC



A new hit TV series debuted this season on Israel Channel 2 called "ER". It is filmed at RMC and actually features RMC prominently in each episode. Noted Israeli stage actor Yossi Grager, who plays the CEO of RMC, is shown above, center, in discussion with fellow thespian, Amos Lavi, who plays the Head of Cardiothoracic Surgery at RMC, who is having an affair with....

Gift of Love

A stranger gives a part of himself at RMC

By Esti Sherbelis

For four and a half years 70 year old Ventura Buchachi suffered from kidney failure. Ventura's body rejected a kidney, which had been donated by her daughter. She became totally dependent upon a dialysis machine. Shalom Cohen, 22, Ventura's grandson, was surfing the Internet three months ago in the hope of learning more about his grandmother's illness. When his eyes fell upon an announcement by Paul Henry offering his kidney free of charge Shalom immediately told his grandparents. They, however, were completely skeptical. That was until they met Paul face to face.

Paul Henry, 40, is a rare find. The New Zealander belongs to a devout group of Christians called the Jesus Christians, whose sole purpose is to help people in the world. The 25 members are located in London, Dallas and Newcastle, Australia. Paul spent most of his adult life in Australia. After viewing a movie, "Gift of Love," about a grandson who donated a kidney to his grandmother, these altruistic people were inspired to offer their kidneys.

Paul and Ventura underwent the operations at RMC, Israel's largest medical institution, which performs 70% of all kidney transplantations in the country. Paul was released from the hospital after only five days. "I was extremely impressed by the professionalism and facilities but even more so by the kindness. Even the few staff members who were not proficient in English made me feel welcome", he stated upon his departure.

Ventura is currently recovering in the Department of Organ Transplantation, at Rabin Medical Center, surrounded by her loving family. Her physician, Professor Eytan Mor, is very optimistic and said that she is progressing well.

continued from page 3

Haim, aged two and a half. When the bus was attacked Ayelet phoned her husband, Gal (30). He arrived on the scene and saw what he presumed to be three Israeli soldiers in the vicinity. He rushed towards them in search of assistance and was instantly sprayed by bullets. The terrorists had not only exploded a bomb beneath a bus but also ascertained that any survivors would be killed. They disguised themselves as Israeli soldiers and when the passengers disembarked gunned them down. Ayelet, who is pregnant, suffered the highest casualties of all. She lost her husband, her mother and Sarah, one of her twins. She herself underwent a complex operation on different parts of her face and cannot even attend the funerals of her loved ones.

"As a citizen I am shocked, just shocked by what I have seen here," said Dan Oppenheim, CEO Rabin Medical Center. "We have two pregnant women. One woman lost her baby, and one is still unconscious."

Oppenheim said one of the victims was a 12 year-old girl who had been injured in the December attack at Emmanuel.

"That time she was lucky," said Oppenheim. "She was only lightly injured. This time she was not so lucky. She is now hospitalized in severe condition. She is here for the second time, in the same hospital, injured from an attack."

RMC had not yet recovered from the events at Emmanuel when terror struck the following night, this time in Tel Aviv. The hospital once again, as it has unfortunately had to do almost daily for the past two years, went into immediate action treating four of the victims.

For the people of Emmanuel and the staff at Rabin Medical Center Tisha B'av was observed this year in the true sense of its meaning as day of mourning.