



**American Friends
Rabin Medical Center, Inc.**

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Forever Young

By Esti Sherbelis

She was only seven. She enjoyed writing poetry and dancing. She was Noam Leibovitch and she is gone.

Tuesday was a glorious day. Noam left school early to attend her three year old sister, Shira's birthday party in kindergarten. That afternoon the whole family drove to Jerusalem for more festivities at a relative's Bar-Mitzvah. In high spirits they sang on their journey home. But their joy was abruptly cut short when a sniper shot at their car on the new Trans-Israel Highway, in the Sharon area. Noam is dead. All that remains of her bubbly self is a video taken on that day at Shira's party, a morbid reminder of cheerful times.

Shira and her older brother, Moshe, were taken by ambulance to the Beilinson Campus at Rabin Medical Center, one of only six Level One Trauma Centers in Israel, serving children and adults alike. Waiting for them at midnight were Dr. Mickey Stein, Head of the Trauma Unit, and the team from the ER.

It was established that Moshe suffered from shock, but Shira was in serious condition, with a bullet lodged in her ankle and injuries to her right hand. At the Trauma Unit Shira was examined and stabilized before being transferred to Schneider Children's Medical Center, on the RMC campus.

Shira's physical condition is stable, but her loss is eternal.

Cardiothoracic Surgery Head at RMC Receives International Award

By Esti Sherbelis

Professor Bernardo Vidne, Head of the Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery at Rabin Medical Center, was awarded the Laureate of the Year prize for 2003, which was recently presented to him in Moscow, Russia. This award is a component of the Golden Hippocrates International Prize for Excellency in Medicine, which was established to annually honor a select international group of ten physicians who are national and international pioneers and leaders in their field of medicine. In 2003 the Prize was awarded in the field of Cardiac Surgery.

The Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery at Rabin Medical Center has gained national and international repute, performing almost twice as many medical procedures each year as the next ranking hospital in its field in Israel. This department is a much sought after center of learning for fellows from all around the globe.



Professor Bernardo Vidne, Head of RMC's Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery, is shown receiving the prestigious Golden Hippocrates International Prize for Excellency in Medicine for 2003.

Cheney to Speak, Wendy and Stephen Siegel to be Honored, Connick, Jr. to Perform, King to MC, at New York Gala Dinner- Sunday, November 2nd



Steven Siegel

“How are you going to top this next year?” was the comment most heard following the fantastic Dinner conducted in 2002 by the American Friends Rabin Medical Center at the Waldorf Astoria.

Well, according to the 2003 Dinner Chair, **Robert Ivanhoe** of the international law firm Greenberg and Traurig, the first signs that the event was off and running was when **Larry King** offered to return to be the Master of Ceremonies and **Stephen and Wendy Siegel** immediately accepted to be the Honorees. Connecticut **Senator Joseph Lieberman**, New York **Governor George Pataki**, and publisher and developer **Mortimer B. Zuckerman** agreed to serve as Honorary Chairs.



Larry King

With these people in place, the committee then determined that the **Vice President of the United States, Richard Cheney**, would be asked, and he has accepted, to be the guest speaker. Finally, to give the event a new twist, a major celebrity entertainer, **Harry Connick, Jr.** has agreed to contribute his talents to the festivities. As with last year’s event, a number of **additional surprises** will await all those who will attend- including prominent guests and staff and other visitors from Rabin Medical Center.

The date is Sunday, November 2 and the Dinner’s venue will again be the **Waldorf Astoria**. **Yoron Cohen** agreed to serve as the Journal Chair and the firm of **Ober, Onet & Associates** has been contracted to coordinate the event.

The goal of the Dinner is to help the Rabin Medical Center in Petah Tikva make up for some of the combined 7% loss in government funding that has impacted on its services. A portion of the funds raised will also serve as seed money for the development of plans for the new Cardiology unit to be constructed at RMC.

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New York Senator Hillary Clinton is shown being introduced at a reception for supporters of AFRMC by Abraham Cohen, second from right, Chair of AFRMC’s Board who hosted the gathering at his home. From left is Dr. Zvi Fuks, Deputy Physician-in-Chief for Planning at Memorial Sloane-Kettering and Board Member of AFRMC and Dr. Dan Oppenheim, CEO of RMC. (See story and pictures on page 5)

Israel's Economic Crisis Causes Dire Consequences at RMC

The constant roller coaster of events in the Middle East has taken its toll. The country is undergoing tremendous economic hardship and this year, 2003, the situation is only worsening. Clalit Health Services, as part of the health system in Israel has had to make extensive budget cuts. As a result, in addition to the 2% cut in 2002, the hospital has been forced to undergo a further 1.25% cutback in expenses. Therefore, in order to balance the hospital's yearly budget of \$200 million a particularly harsh reduction plan, one never before enforced, has been executed.

A vast effort has been made to perform these cuts without interrupting the daily functioning of the hospital and it is our sincere hope that we shall continue to maintain the high standard of care our patients so rightly deserve.

Naturally, under these circumstances, the budget for medical equipment acquisition has declined to zero and the hospital relies solely on donations for its future development. We are nonetheless optimistic that with the support of our Friends in Israel and abroad we will be able to overcome this particularly challenging period.

Already our loyal supports have rallied alongside us time and again and have made great efforts to help us and we are extremely grateful. I would especially like to extend my gratitude to AFRMC for having agreed to sponsor the American Friends Ambulatory Care Wing to be established at the Davidoff Comprehensive Cancer Center. Partial funds have been raised, however, we still need contributions to accomplish this \$600,000 project and move a step closer to completing the construction.

And now my dear friends, on a brighter note, I would like to wish you all a healthy, happy and prosperous New Year- with the hope we will all witness better times in the near future.



Dr. Dan Oppenheim
CEO of RMC

Dr. Eytan Wirtheim - Israel's Youngest Hospital Director at RMC's Golda-HaSharon Campus

By Esti Sherbelis



Dr. Eytan Wirtheim

Dr. Eytan Wirtheim (40) has been appointed as the new Director of the Golda-HaSharon Campus at Rabin Medical Center, making him the youngest hospital director in Israel today. The new appointment follows three years serving as Head of Ambulatory Services and Deputy Director of Beilinson Campus.

Dr. Wirtheim's specialized in internal medicine, after graduating his medical studies and M.H.A. (Master in Health Administration) with honors.

In the course of his previous role Dr. Wirtheim expanded Beilinson Campus' Ambulatory Services and upgraded the information technology and computerization system. As a result of these changes, as well as further actions undertaken to improve service, RMC's Ambulatory Service was voted No.1 in a survey regarding satisfaction, conducted by Clalit Health Services.

Golda-HaSharon Campus, with 320 beds, serves the population of Petah Tikva and the neighboring areas, this year celebrates its 60th anniversary. Dr. Wirtheim enthusiastically discusses his plans for the hospital's future.

What are your first plans for Golda-HaSharon?

HaSharon has outstanding services in many fields, including laser treatment for skin diseases, MOHS – a technique for the removal of skin cancer, treatment of ear problems such as hearing disturbances and vertigo and the use of endoscopic and laparoscopic methods in urologic procedures. It also boasts one of the most sought after surgery wings in the country, is a pioneer in Invasive Radiology, replacing iodine with gadolinium for those allergic to the substance or suffering renal failure, and the Nuclear Medicine's PET serves people from around the country. Currently we are in the process of expanding the rehabilitation facilities for heart patients and establishing a stroke unit. We would like to enhance these strengths. But our high standard of care is not the only reason the hospital has earned its good name. The human touch, the intimacy and warmth that all the staff offers its patients is its true strength.

How do you envision Golda-HaSharon in five years?

We have 120,000 ambulatory care visits, 23,000 hospitalizations annually and a staff of 1,000. My desire is to see the entire campus renovated so that we can offer our patients comfortable conditions that will complement the superior care they receive. It is only thanks to generous donors that we will be able to complete partial renovations in the coming years. Hopefully, we will find additional funds to carry out a total overhaul.

What is your greatest achievement so far?

I feel that the clinics established on the Beilinson Campus, with the assistance of department heads, were of great significance. These include an Alzheimer Clinic, Multiple Sclerosis Clinic, Pulmonary Institute, Heart Transplantation and Heart Failure Clinic as well as Genetics and Oncogenetics Clinics. I am particularly satisfied with the advanced computerization and IT systems, which allow easy access to files and prevent unnecessary delay and complications.

Who has been your role model?

Many people have taught me along the way but I would have to say that my managerial skills are attributed to my father (Dr. Wirtheim's father passed away two days after the interview. He never had the chance to read his son's words of praise). My uncle was a doctor and his choices also influenced me.

Do you have any words of wisdom for us?

There are two quotes by the author Paulo Quelo that inspire me, "A man abandons his lifestyle to pursue his dreams" and "You must dare to succeed".



AFRMC Board members David Onn, left, and his wife Tzipi, left, and Shalom Yoran and his wife Varda, right, were given a tour of RMC by Judit Solel, Director of Israel Friends RMC, and Jonathon Zunz, Deputy Director of RMC, during their recent visit to the hospital.

RMC Selected Best Hospital for 2003

By Esti Sherbelis

Rabin Medical Center has been selected as the outstanding hospital of Clalit Health Services for the year 2003, competing with 14 other medical institutions for the title.

Mr. Zeev Vurembrand, CEO of Clalit Health Services, stated that the prize was awarded based on the following parameters; quality of services, customer service and satisfaction, reciprocal relations between the hospital and the District Office, intelligent use of resources and working within the budget perimeters.

Touched by the award, Dr. Dan Oppenheim, CEO of RMC, was quick to credit the staff members and sent a personal note of gratitude to each one expressing his thanks for providing the best professional, quality service to their patients. He concluded with a quote by Walt Disney, "It's possible to dream, to plan, to create and build the most magnificent structure in the world but you need the people to convert the dream into a reality."

New Genetics Center at RMC

A most generous donation of 15 million NIS (3 million dollars) made by Dina Recanati, wife of the late Raphael Recanati, and their sons Udi and Michael, will enable the establishment of a unique Center for Genetic Treatment and Research.

The establishment of this center will enable treatment of difficult and complicated cases by offering cutting-edge genetic treatment, performed today in only a few centers throughout the world. It will also focus on advanced research of genetic diseases specific to the Israeli population and on collaborative ventures for the development of medications. The center will be directed by Prof. Motti Shohat, one of Israel's leading geneticists.

This is the Recanati Family's second contribution to RMC. The first donation by the late Raphael Recanati enabled the establishment of the Recanati Center for Internal Medicine and Research. The present donation is being granted during a period of economic crisis in Israel's national health system, which must now rely, more than ever, on the good will of generous friends in order to advance the public health services.

Sleep Disorders Laboratory

By Esti Sherbelis

A Sleep Disorders Laboratory was established at RMC as a response to the serious problem of Sleep Apnea in over 5% of the Israel population. Sleep Apnea is a disorder whereby a person stops breathing while asleep. This causes a lack of oxygen and may result in memory loss, hypertension, cardiac arrhythmia, and brain and heart damage.

The disorder generally affects overweight people with short necks who snore. Further signs are tiredness, headaches in the morning and falling asleep during the day.

The Sleep Disorders Laboratory at RMC on the Beilinson Campus consists of two rooms with a bed in each and a specialized piece of equipment, which is a polysomnograph that monitors sleep apnea. The subject sleeps in the lab all night while undergoing harmless, non-invasive monitoring.

Once Sleep Apnea has been established there are three alternative solutions:

- 1) Weight loss – frequently solves the problem
- 2) Positive Airway Pressure machine – a mask supplying oxygen worn on the nose while the person sleeps
- 3) Uvular Palatal Pharyngoplasty operation – an operation that opens the throat muscles, which fail to work during Rapid Eye Movement.

There is a large demand on this service and it is necessary to extend the laboratory to six beds. Dedication of a room in the Sleep Laboratory requires a gift of \$100,000.

RMC Performs Mini-Technology Eye Surgery

By Esti Sherbelis

The Department of Ophthalmology at RMC is one of ten medical institutions worldwide chosen to perform eye surgery using mini incision microscopic technology.

The special apparatus, used during operations on the Beilinson Campus, includes slim optic fibers that illuminate the inside of the eye, and 1 m.m. scissors and forceps and surgery knives capable of making 1,500 cuts per minute in vitreous and retinal surgery, all of which greatly improve the outcome of the procedure.

Professor Dov Weinberger, Head of the department, says that the microscopic technology has numerous advantages "The operation is performed under local anesthesia without stitches, duration of the procedure is shorter, there is a distinct reduction in distortions of the cornea that result from stitches, and there is much enhanced vision and better recovery of the eye."

This technology has already proved successful in cataract operations undertaken on both campuses, operations performed for retinal and vitreous diseases (such as diabetes where bleeding is endured from the retina) and on patients with degenerative retinal diseases.

The fact that the incision is 50% smaller than the norm, and that the apparatus is so delicate, demands great skill from the surgeon.

Bullet to the Head

By Esti Sherbelis

A unique dilemma faced physicians at the Beilinson Campus of Rabin Medical Center recently.

When a male in his fifties was rushed in to the Trauma Unit with several bullet wounds, examinations found that a bullet had pierced his neck and was lodged in the junction between the skull and the cervical spine. The patient was miraculously conscious and coherent, suffering no neurological damage – a unique phenomenon considering the havoc caused by the impact of the bullet. Any movement of the patient could result in immediate death thereby eliminating the alternative of leaving the bullet inside. Dr. Nissim Ohana, Head of the Spine Surgery Unit in the Department of Orthopedics, knew that moving the patient in order to operate might also result in a fatal outcome.

After conferring with Dr. Dror Alon of the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Dr. Ohana found two possible options. A spinal fusion could be performed, however this would result in limited head rotation. The second option, the one chosen, was a trans-oral operation, a complex procedure using microscopic equipment, performed by both physicians. The rare surgical procedure was extremely difficult due to limited vision via the seven c.m. diameter mouth opening.

Initially the particles of crushed bone were removed, then the bullet. In order to fill the gaping hole caused by the bullet's penetration, the physicians took a bone graft from the patient's lower jaw and transplanted it in the gap, securing with titanium plates and miniature screws.

The five hour surgery ended successfully and the patient returned home after only two weeks hospitalization.

Exce\$\$ Inventory Wanted

AFRMC is able to receive top dollar for donated excess inventory. The donor can take a "fair market" value income tax deduction and RMC can be helped by the proceeds received. Call David Fischer 212-407-4990.

RMC's Trauma Head Shares Experiences With Colleagues

By Ety Jinjikhshvily

" Doctor Stein brought great credit to Israel, Israel's preparedness program, your hospital and himself ...His lectures were outstanding, receiving higher than the highest category of acknowledgement in the post congress evaluations. His teaching rounds with the residents and faculty at the Ben Taub General Hospital and Baylor College of Medicine were one of the teaching highlights of the year. His meetings with our administration and the disaster preparedness personnel have caused them to totally rethink the way we approach mass casualties and disasters."

Professor Kenneth L. Mattox, M.D.
Program Director of the Trauma Conference,
Vice Chairman of Surgery at Baylor College of Medicine



Dr. Michael Stein, Head of the Trauma Unit at RMC makes teaching rounds with Baylor College of Medicine surgery residents at the Ben Taub General Hospital, Houston, Texas.

Last March, Dr. Michael Stein, Head of the Trauma Unit at Rabin

Medical Center participated in three important programs in Houston and Las Vegas:

Formal Visiting Professor to the Michael E. DeBakey Department of Surgery Grand Rounds, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston Texas, on March 19, 2003.

Kenneth L. Mattox Extended Visiting Professor to the Ben Taub General Hospital, Houston, Texas, from March 19-21, 2003.

Special Lecturer and Faculty at *Trauma & Critical Care 2003*, held in Las Vegas from March 24-26, 2003 and attended by physicians and nurses from 50 states and 16 foreign countries.

Professor Mattox also commented that Dr. Stein's visits "made possible the transfer and dissemination of unique and timely knowledge to untold numbers around the world at a time when it is so needed, and resulted in significant improvement in protocols as well as great strides in patient care."

Mary K. Allen, Program Coordinator of *Trauma and Critical Care*, who has been reviewing post course evaluations for many years wrote in a letter addressed to Dr. Stein: "Never before have I seen so many consistently positive comments about a single speaker as I observed for you and your lectures... I doubt that you will ever realize the great impact you made and will continue to make as those who heard your lectures return to their hospitals, medical schools and cities, and spread the knowledge you gave them from your unique perspective, experiences and expertise."

American friends of RMC met Dr. Stein at last year's New York Dinner and were very moved by his compassion, commitment and leadership. Those of us associated with RMC are very proud that a physician with the credentials of Mickey Stein is one of the many accomplished doctors working at Rabin Medical Center.



COWBOY DR. MICKEY STEIN. After delivering the Kenneth L. Mattox Formal Visiting Professor lecture at Ben Traub General Hospital, Dr. Stein got into the Texas spirit after his host Professor Kenneth L. Mattox presented him with a plaque and a Stetson cowboy hat commemorating the occasion.

Montefiore and RMC Strengthen Ties

By Esti Sherbelis



Dr. Larry Brandt, right, Head of the Division of Gastroenterology at Montefiore Medical Center (MMC) and at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, hosted Professor Yaron Niv Head of the Department of Gastroenterology at RMC Beilinson Campus and Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine at Sackler School of Medicine at Tel Aviv University at MMC for joint discussions on their specialties and provided a tour of the facilities at the hospital. The visit was one of the continuing joint efforts between the sister hospitals.

On a recent trip to New York Professor Yaron Niv, Head of the Department of Gastroenterology at RMC was a guest at Montefiore Medical Center. The two medical institutions have enjoyed an amiable professional relationship for a number of years and Prof. Niv's visit strengthened the mutual exchange and collaboration arrangement between them in order to advance medicine and share ideas.

Prof. Niv was full of praise at the warm hospitality bestowed upon him at RMC's sister hospital, where he met with Dr. Lawrence Brandt, Chief of the Gastroenterology Division and former President of the American College of Gastroenterology. The two physicians discussed possible options for future collaboration, particularly in the fields of inflammatory and functional bowel diseases, which may include a comparative study of such diseases in two communities, residents of the Bronx and residents of Petah Tikva.

The meeting was followed by an extensive tour of the hospital, accompanied by Greg Burke, Vice President, Planning.

Upon his return to Israel Prof. Niv remarked on the distinctiveness of Montefiore, "The hospital has a strong bond with its community. It operates a number of outpatient clinics throughout the city and in this way the doctors from the hospital are able to follow up on their patients' progress."

Fasting is Not Enough

This time of year, as we approach the high holidays, my thoughts turn to the message of Isaiah, (58:3-14), which we read on Yom Kippur. He suggests that the fasting, which most of us have done since age 13, is not just to afflict our souls and to atone for the wrongs we have committed, but rather to redirect our priorities. He tells us we must “let the oppressed go free,” “break every yoke,” “satisfy the afflicted,” and in so doing the Lord will “make strong our bones,” and we will be considered, “The repairer of the breach”. Those of us who will read this excerpt from Isaiah will also wish each other a happy and healthy new year.



Burton Lazarow
Executive Director
AFRMC

Those who are the volunteers and contributors to AFRMC and to other charities, which work year-round to help the afflicted and to construct those facilities such as the new cancer center at RMC, which will treat those who are oppressed by the ravages of cancer, are meeting this challenge as conveyed Isaiah. Their reward is that they will be “the repairers of the breach” and they will be rewarded with “strong bones”- and they will indeed have a healthy new year.

This is your invitation to “have an easy fast,” one which will bring you closer to the real meaning of the holidays. AFRMC has accepted the challenge to help RMC fulfill its dream of having the entire cancer center, including all of its rooms, finished and furnished when it opens late next year. This can only happen if many of our friends, especially a few very generous people, step forward to make a gift to the Cancer Center Building Campaign, which is presently underway. Just call me at 212-279-2522 or send your tax-deductible donation to AFRMC, 220 Fifth Ave. Suite 1301, NY, NY 10001. We truly need your help for us to succeed in our efforts. Please take out your checkbook and write us a check right now, or pick up your phone and call me to talk over your thoughts on a gift.

Thank you for what you have done and what you will yet do, and please have a..... **HEALTHY AND HAPPY NEW YEAR.**

L'shana Tova Tikatavu

RMC February Miami 2004 Mini-Run: Proceeds to Cancer Research

Last winter a group of runners participated for their second year in the Miami Tropical Mini-Marathon. They obtained sponsors, and raised more than five thousand dollars for RMC's Charles E. Trobman Data Research Center. This year's run is scheduled for February 1, 2004 and once again, under the leadership of Phyllis Trobman, the loyalists will run the half marathon, while others may run the full marathon and some just walk- all to help in the search for a cure for cancer. They are seeking people to join them.

There will be a reception for runners (and walkers) hosted by the Trobman family, and special room rates have been arranged at a local hotel. Those interested in participating this year, or seeking more information, may call Mrs. Trobman at 856-795-0776, or AFRMC at 212-279-2522, or, in Florida, call Desiree Trobman at 954-366-4100.



Phyllis Trobman, right, at the finish line of the 2002 Miami Tropical Mini-Marathon.

AFRMC's "New Circle" was a Sponsor of the 19th NY Israel Film Festival



Volunteers, staff, patrons and participants of AFRMC spent a wonderful evening together at the New Circle sponsorship of the showing of the film “Wisdom of the Pretzel.” It was the second consecutive year that AFRMC, through the efforts of the New Circle group, participated in the New York Film Festival. Following the screening, where participants received pretzels and other refreshments, the patron ticket sponsors and their guests attended a reception at Mendy's Restaurant in the Galleria building at 57th and Lexington. Pictured above, left to right are: Lillian Rosenthal; Raquel Rosenfeld, New Circle Chair; Yvonne Cohen, Sponsor of the evening; Seymour Rosenthal, AFRMC Board member; New Circle Steering Committee members Alyssa Cohen, Julie Meridy, David Schwartz (and wife Dr. Paige Schwartz) and Alicia Klat; Cynthia and Burt Lazarow; and, Gal Feinstein.

Senator Hillary Clinton Helps AFRMC Celebrate the Completion of the Shell for the New Davidoff Comprehensive Cancer Center



Left to right, Dr. Dan Oppenheim, Hillary Clinton, Brad Perkins and Mary Jean Eastman, Architects for the Davidoff Comprehensive Cancer Center and Barry Cohen.



Dr. Michael Sela, Barry Cohen, Hillary Clinton and Kenneth Bialkin.



Barry Cohen and Alice Kendel.



Barry Cohen, Kenneth Bialkin, Eli Hurvitz and Hillary Clinton.



Martin Zeiger, Hillary Clinton, Ellen David Zeiger and Barry Cohen.



Amb. Alon Pinkas, Israel's Consul General in NY, Barry Cohen, Hillary Clinton and Dr. Dan Oppenheim.

On November 11th, 1999, the then first lady of the United States, Hillary Rodham Clinton, was the guest of the first lady of the State of Israel, Nava Barak, for a visit to Rabin Medical Center. During that visit, Mrs. Clinton learned of RMC's plans to construct Israel's first cancer center and planted an olive tree for peace in the Middle East.

On May 16, 2003, Senator Clinton was the guest of Barry and Yvonne Cohen, at a cocktail party in their home, to join in the celebration of the completion of construction of the skeleton for the new Davidoff Comprehensive Cancer Center.

In her comments, Senator Clinton expressed her hope that the Davidoff Center will serve as a bridge for peace between the nations of the Middle East and that it will bring solace to the ill. Dr. Oppenheim presented Senator Clinton with a glass cube inscribed, by laser, with the hospital logo.

In honor of the occasion, a number of the guests made donations dedicating rooms in the new cancer center.



Lillian and Seymour Rosenthal, and Hillary Clinton.



The completion of the construction of the skeleton for the new Davidoff Comprehensive Cancer Center at RMC was celebrated during Shavout. Funds are still being sought to allow for the opening of the complete facility in late 2004.



Harry Snyder and Tamar Hirschl Snyder, left, Hillary Clinton and guests from Israel, Dina and Ilan Grodsky.



Hillary Clinton, Yvette and Steven Pomerantz.