In June 10th, Israeli Friends and Friends from abroad converged on Haifa for the first international Rambam Summit: “Where Medicine, Technology and Humanity Intertwine.”

The event was the brainchild of Mr. Adam Emmerich, President of American Friends of Rambam Medical Center (AFORAM). The idea was warmly received by Director General Prof. Rafi Beyar, whose signature concerns were written all over the final product: putting patients first, and promoting creative partnerships across disciplines.

The morning session was devoted to lectures and panels by physician-scientists, healthcare policymakers, life sciences entrepreneurs, and medical ethicists. Participants explored the role of drug and medical device R&D in the advancement of medicine, and the socioeconomic and ethical implications of medical progress.

2004 Nobel Laureate in Chemistry Prof. Aaron Ciechanover, Chair of Rambam’s Scientific Advisory Board, established the framework for discussion by identifying three modern revolutions in drug development: the era of incidental discoveries such as antibiotics (1930s-1960s), the era of brute-force screening of large libraries of chemical compounds such as statins (1970s-2000), and the current era of personalized medicine using such targeted molecules as Herceptin.

Ms. Jamie Rubin, Senior Healthcare and Pharmaceutical Analyst at Goldman Sachs, conceded that the pharmaceutical industry is struggling to move from the second era into the third, and predicted that by 2014, seven of the top ten drugs in the market will be biotech devices. New York-based entrepreneur Prof. Yuval Birnir forecast that medical devices will bridge the healthcare gap with cheaper and less invasive treatments. Israeli health policymaker Dr. Ran Balicer asked the audience to imagine a future in which medicine will have moved from bedside care to e-medicine and telemedicine provided via virtual consultations and mentored by health coaches.

“Personalized medicine is the biggest revolution in healthcare since vaccines,” declared entrepreneur Mr. Uzia Galil, “but it can be applied to the patient only if we put together the information technology and software and make them accessible to the general practitioner.” Prof. Beyar commented that for this to happen, funding mechanisms are needed. Mr. Gabriel Meron, Founder and CEO Emeritus of Given Imaging Ltd, spoke of developed countries’ thirst for innovative and effective healthcare solutions, which, he said, can be supplied by Israel and thereby strengthen the national economy.


The audience had just watched a clip featuring a younger version of Eyal, but that little boy with soulful eyes and a face made puffy from cancer treatment looked unlike the poised teenage speaker whose face a natural slimness had been restored: “I overcame cancer,” he said, thanking Prof. Myriam Ben Arush, Head of the Pediatric Hematology and Oncology Department.

“Today I can live my life like every normal child of my age.” The boy’s listeners included Rambam Award recipients for 2010. They are philanthropists Mrs. Ruth Rappaport and Mr. Sammy Ofer, trauma specialist and immediate past Director General of Rambam Prof. Moshe Revach, and Israel Prize recipient Rabbi Avraham Eilemezich Tifer. Rabbi Tifer is pictured right (l to r), Prof. Rafi Beyar, RHCC Director General, Prof. Karl Skorecki, RHCC Director of Medical and Research Development, Prof. Yehuda Hajaj, Chairman of Israeli Friends of Rambam Medical Center, and MK Prof. Daniel Henkinowitz, Minister of Science and Technology.

Rambam Health Care Campus

ISSUE No.6 NOVEMBER 2010

cont. p2
Dear Friends of Rambam,

As with every large endeavor to improve society, a core group of idealistic and ethical individuals gifted with creative ideas and executive skills is required at the helm. For the past several years, on behalf of realizing Rambam’s master development plan for the 21st century, Trustee Boards for the American and Canadian Friends Associations have been recruited and assigned responsibility for managing the international activities of AFORAM and CFRAM respectively. With the kind patronage of Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, we hope to achieve the same in the United Kingdom (p.7).

Meanwhile, we have so many firsts to share with you in these pages! Ribbons have been cut for the State of Israel’s first Viral In Vitro Fertilization Unit (p.3) and for the laboratories of the LHCRIR Diabetes and Metabolism Clinical Research Center of Excellence. Rambam researchers have played leading roles in the decoding of the Jewish genome (p.5), and the Rambam Maimonides Medical Journal (RMM J) has been launched (p.6). The first drum of the laboratories of the New West Campus building complex (p.3). And of course, the first annual Rambam Summit took place in Haifa, and many of you were present.

Please accept our thanks, for not one of these achievements would be possible without your generous partnership.

The Diabetes and Metabolism Research Center of Excellence, and its Clinical Research Laboratories in memory of Ida Cabakoff, were inaugurated on October 13, 2010 with a festive ribbon cutting and a nationwide conference that focused on islet cell pathophysiology, insulin action, and diabetes’ complications. With this event, eminent authority Prof. Derek LeRoith—who has made aliyah to Israel, and to the Rambam campus—assumed his position as Director of the new research facility.

What originally attracted you to endocrinology?

The personality of my mentor in Cape Town made it very attractive. Endocrinology is a cognitive specialty. There are no procedures—it’s using the Kup [points to his full head of silver hair and uses the Yiddish word for brains]. There are millions of symptoms. We interpret blood tests, tissue tests, x-rays.

You have been recruited to Rambam for your impressive record of research center leadership and group building. How would you define leadership?

The components of leadership are a mentoring personality, interpersonal communication skills, and no hidden agendas—for example, [no] using [off] others to further one’s own career. A mentoring personality is inherent [in certain individuals], but it can be built upon. If you have this idea that the next generation is important, already by mid career you begin mentoring.

Which aspects of diabetes and metabolism do you intend to research?

One—the brain, which controls fat, liver, and muscle metabolism; we will be investigating appetite, safety, and what goes wrong in obese type 2 patients. And the pancreas, which is responsible for insulin secretion and is important for type 1 diabetes. Two—how insulin works and doesn’t work in obese and type 2 individuals. For example, if you take one hundred obese individuals, only 20% of them will become diabetic. Three—the genetics of beta-cell because diabetes is a dual-defect disease; every obese person has a defect in insulin action in the three major tissues—fat, liver, and muscle—but only those who have the beta-cell defect, which is genetic, become diabetic.

Four—the complications of diabetes. Five—vascular problems such as atherosclerosis.

Please describe your vision for the Diabetes and Metabolism Clinical Research Center of Excellence. The Center of Excellence will be a core facility with the capacity for phenotyping mice (this means describing their physical and chemical abnormalities) and for performing metabolomics and lipidomics, in which you look at substances that you find in the tissues and blood and describe their metabolic qualities. One to two Principal Investigators will compose the core, and the others will be attracted by their presence, the funding, the facilities and the people. We require a group of colleagues that can talk to each other.

What is the medical-research urgency regarding type 2 diabetes?

In the last 20-25 years, there has been an epidemic of obesity and, with that, an epidemic of type 2 diabetes. We are speaking of the Western world with the U.S. as an example, but [the phenomenon] is applicable to Israel and even to developing countries— the Chinese, the Indians, the Southeast Asians and the Africans, [people in] the developing countries with more economically advanced lifestyles. [Factors include] processed food—high-fructose corn syrup is a big industry—and [pauses, leans forward, and in his native South African accent, slowly pronounces the word with a degree of obvious relish]—slo-th-ful-ness.

You don’t have to be large framed. Asians are slim, for example, but are developing visceral adiposity, and that leads to type 2 diabetes. It’s a crisis for middle-aged men and postmenopausal women. Between the ages of 35-55 in the U.S., the percentage of diabetes is 8-10% [in the general population], but by old age, the percentage has doubled. And the number of diabetics is increasing all the time. Type 2s can go for 30 years without being diagnosed. They have no symptoms until they develop such complications as a heart attack, high blood pressure, or lipid abnormalities. A doctor has to think: maybe diabetes is being incubated.

Published by the Department of International Relations & Resource Development

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Architectural rendering
Arieh Sharon, Elazar Sharon, Architects & Town Planners Ltd. (West Side Story, p.3)

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This honor comes to me in partnership with Baruch. So many aspects of the Rambam were in him: vision, a multidisciplinary approach, love of the future, charisma. He would not start a project if he didn’t see a chance to complete it.”

On June 10th at the first Rambam Summit, with these words, Rambam Award recipient Ruth Rappaport paid dignified and affectionate tribute to her late husband.

On June 13th, the planned Ruth Hospital, a gift from the couple to the children of Haifa, Northern Israel, and neighboring countries, was brought one step closer to realization. On this day, the first of 20,000 concrete mixers – recruited for a vast construction project expected to last approximately 18 months – turned north from the Haifa thoroughfare bordering Rambam, tumbled heavily down a dirt access ramp into the 14 m deep, 20,000 sq m wide pit at the site of Rambam’s future West Campus, and poured out the first drum of concrete for the Sammy Ofer Northern Regional Underground Emergency Hospital.

The underground hospital’s reinforced ceiling will provide the foundation for the above-ground Ruth Hospital and its three companion buildings – the Joseph Fishman Oncology Hospital, a Cardiovascular Hospital, and a Biomedical Discovery Tower.

The Haifa Municipality has defined the project as central to its urban development plans and authorized night construction in order to advance the completion date.

Stats:

Although statistics don’t begin to tell the story, they do suggest how complicated an urban engineering feat has already been accomplished here, and something of what lies ahead:

- 16,000 sq m of obsolete hospital bungalows and old, above-ground parking facilities were demolished to free up campus land for excavation and construction
- 250,000 cubic meters of earth and dolomite bedrock were drilled, pulverized, excavated, and cleared
- Eighty-one 8-meter-deep wells were dug, and 81 underground pumps and 16 surface-level pumps were kept busy 24/7 siphoning off groundwater and seawater at a flow rate of 12,000 cubic meters per hour (cmh) per well; the water was piped 200 meters north into the sea
- 100,000 cubic meters of concrete will be poured to construct a three-level parking garage convertible within 72 hours into the 2,000-bed Underground Emergency Hospital

“Israel offers the world a model for the detection, treatment, and follow-up of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) carriers and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) patients, states Prof. Shimon Pollack, Director of the Allergy, Immunology & AIDS Institute. In Israel until recently, however, if HIV carriers or others with chronic viral diseases wished to start families with the help of in vitro fertilization (IVF), they had either to seek treatment abroad or to abandon the idea.

This changed on April 13, 2010, when Israel’s first Viral IVF Unit was dedicated at Rambam. The NIS 2m facility was planned and established in joint partnership with the Ministry of Health and is intended to serve HIV-infected childless couples from throughout the country.

“When AIDS was a lethal disease, we faced the big question of whether we should help HIV-infected couples have children if those children would eventually be orphaned,” recalls Prof. Pollack, “but now we can manage the disease [with the HAART drug cocktail], and carriers have a very long life expectancy.”

Rambam and other large Israeli hospitals took the first step in this direction by helping HIV-infected women who had become pregnant by natural means give birth to uninfected babies. “In the second half of pregnancy,” Prof. Pollack explains, “we administer drugs in order to lower the viral load to an undetectable minimum. Then, during labor, mother and child are treated intravenously, and the baby is treated for four to six weeks after birth. Four hundred HIV-free babies have been born to HIV-infected mothers in Israel, 230 of them at Rambam.”

The State of Israel has now taken the second step. The new Viral IVF Unit builds on the expertise of Rambam’s pioneering IVF Unit, under the direction of Prof. Joseph Itskovitz-Eldor, Chief, Division of Obstetrics & Gynecology, and also cooperates with the Allergy, Immunology & AIDS Institute, Institute for Liver Diseases, and Viral Laboratory.

Of the Ruth Hospital’s $45M cost total, $25M has been raised, the majority of which has been donated by the Rappaport Family. The new hospital is slated to open in 2012. The project requires an additional $20M for its completion.
In order to “see” the genes, scientists will tag these segments with a probe, a chemical structure that emits a color specific to each gene. The explanation is delivered by nephrologist and molecular geneticist Prof. Karl Skorecki at Rambam, whose Molecular Medicine Laboratory at the Technion’s Rappaport Institute investigates various populations’ genetic susceptibility to such common scourges as cancer and kidney disease.

So elegant is DNA’s structure that scientists, looking at it in the lab, have sought beautiful language with which to describe it—a double helix, a coiled ladder—and artists have rendered its side members (the sugar-phosphate backbone) and 3 billion rungs (chemical-base pairs) in silver and gold studded with gleaming gems (histone proteins).

As for the secrets of DNA applicable to clinical medicine? Rambam is on the case.

The Mystery of the Missing Mutations

Kidney disease (ESKD) compared with Caucasians of European origin. Persons of Hispanic heritage (because that population is admixed with a West African heritage population) are at two-fold higher risk.

Population geneticists, suspecting that these health disparities cannot be attributed solely to socioeconomic, cultural, dietary or environmental factors, have hypothesized African ancestry as a contributing factor.

In order to test this theory, a number of research groups around the world, including Prof. Skorecki’s laboratory, have looked at results obtained from the DNA analyses of blood samples taken from African Americans and Hispanic Americans, as well as from individuals from populations currently residing in Africa.

Using genome-wide analysis methods, the scientists searched for disease-risk markers (the scientific term is single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs)). They identified a genomic interval on chromosome 22, comprising more than 30 genes, and then set out to look for point mutations in the region that would be predicted to modify cellular function.

Prof. Skorecki explains, “SNPs are telltale signposts that are predictive, but not necessarily causative, of disease.” Since September 2008, researchers looking for a genetic reason for susceptibility to ESKD had focused on the MYH9 gene because it features a rare mutation that can cause kidney failure.

Prof. Skorecki states bluntly: “The scientific community jumped to the wrong conclusion, and focused exclusively on the wrong gene for almost two years.”

Based on data by the United States Renal Data System (USRDS), 32 million Americans have chronic kidney disease (CKD). Of these, 500,000 patients have progressed to end-stage kidney disease (ESKD) and are on life-sustaining dialysis. Five thousand Israelis have ESKD and are receiving dialysis treatments; based on this figure, and extrapolating from USRDS statistics, it is estimated that 300,000 Israelis have chronic kidney disease.

ESKD is a multi-gene disease, but it’s likely as close to a single-gene disease as any multi-gene disease will get.

Prof. Karl Skorecki
Director, Medical and Research Development

On the Culprit’s Trail

Prof. Skorecki’s team, composed of researchers from Israel, Canada, England, and Ethiopia, had also focused on the MYH9 gene. But they were puzzled; they could find no mutations on that gene with a likely functional effect that might account for nondiabetic ESKD.

In March 2010, with the release into the public domain of the 1000 Genomes Project Dataset, they and other teams received a windfall. 1000 Genomes is an evolving dataset that currently aims to compile population-based whole sequence information on 2,500 individuals. The pilot data contained the complete genomes of 180 individuals.

Of these, Prof. Skorecki’s team analyzed 119 whole genome sequences, 60 of European origin and 59 of West African origin. The

Following the Clues

A significant clue that led Prof. Skorecki’s team to focus on the APOL1 gene is the absence of the alleged culprit mutation in the 306 Ethiopian individuals whose DNA analysis had been included in the scientific community’s previous investigations of MYH9. Prof. Skorecki’s team had noticed that Ethiopians are relatively protected from kidney disease. They suspected a causative link.

Furthermore, the APOL1 gene was already known to be involved in resistance to African sleeping sickness. This disease is caused by an infectious pathogen that attacks the brain and results in coma and death. It does not occur in North America, but is still prevalent in certain regions of Africa and is thought to have been a major cause of death in the past. This detail has led Prof. Skorecki’s team to suspect that increased vulnerability to kidney failure among persons of West African heritage in North America may be related to their forebears having acquired protection from African sleeping sickness in the ancestral past.

“The challenge is now to prove the biological and epidemiological relationship between mutations on the APOL1 gene and the risk for kidney disease, and to develop preventive and therapeutic interventions,” Prof. Skorecki says. He and his team plan to pursue their hypothesis in collaboration with nephrologist Dr. Sheldon Tobe of Sunnybrook and other colleagues worldwide.
The researchers’ comparative genetic analysis of individuals whose ancestry traces to 14 Diaspora communities and 69 worldwide non-Jewish populations has yielded findings consistent with the traditional historical narrative of Jewish origins in the Levant followed by migrations and varying degrees of assimilation and admixture with local non-Jewish populations.

The research team also included scientists and scholars from Italy, Portugal, Russia, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States. The names of these countries could not be more evocative for they recall major stations in the 2,000-year Jewish Diaspora.

Think of it as a video game with clear-cut bad guys, good guys, and a team of championship gamers alert for the surprises and shifting rules generated by the game itself – and for the recalcitrant mysteries at the game’s core.

In this case, the bad guys are cancer cells. The good guys, a daring duo, are antigen-presenting cells (APCs) and T cells – white blood cells that work together and are essential to the body’s immune response. APCs present (point out) foreign bodies to the T cells, which attack and destroy the interlopers. But cancer is an aggressive and resourceful disease. Cancer cells damage the biological process by which APCs present intruders to T cells for destruction. The gamers are clinical researchers. For the past five years, a multicenter team from Rambam Health Care Campus and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center/Harvard Medical School has worked to develop a vaccine able to prevent cancer recurrence in patients with chemotherapy-induced remission.

On April 27, 2010, team members met at Rambam for a conference entitled “Cancer Vaccine and Immunotherapy Program.” They discussed the outcomes to date of a joint Rambam-Harvard Phase I-II interventional prevention trial involving 42 patients with multiple myeloma (MM), a hematological malignancy of the white blood cells in the bone marrow. A combined Phase II trial is intended to test the efficacy and toxicity of an experimental drug or vaccine.

Team member Dr. Irit Avivi, Senior Attending Hematologist in the Department of Hematology and Bone Marrow Transplantation, explained that in the lab, the researchers mechanically fused MM patients’ APCs and myeloma cells. The fusion cells were produced at disease presentation, then frozen and stored. Meanwhile, trial participants underwent chemotherapy until their disease level became minimal. At this point, they received the fusion cell vaccine in an attempt to arouse the immune system against residual MM cells.

“In most evaluable cases, we found that the patient’s immune system worked against the tumor, and in many patients, we saw durable remission,” Dr. Avivi reports, adding that the researchers will next test fusion cell vaccines on patients with leukemia and kidney cancer.
BEYOND POLITICS

In late May 2010, a confrontation between Israeli Navy commandos and foreign activists aboard the Turkish-flagged ferry Mavi Marmara ended tragically. Nine Turkish nationals were killed, and seven commandos and dozens of activists were wounded. Israeli Air Force helicopters evacuated the most severely injured to Rambam.

“Doctors do not busy themselves with politics,” Director General Prof. Rafi Beyar soberly stated in answer to a reporter’s question as he strode into ER. There, the wounded adversaries had been placed side by side in Shock Trauma Room beds and then wheeled into parallel surgical suites for lifesaving operations.

“We treat all of our patients with the same professionalism,” Prof. Beyar added, “and the most advanced medical expertise is provided to everyone.”

In June, Dr. Margalit Lorber, Head of the Autoimmune Diseases Unit, directly experienced the diplomatic fallout from the clash when she traveled to a pre-G8 Summit event in Ottawa, Canada to deliver a keynote address entitled “The Feminization of AIDS.” As she rose to speak, the Turkish delegation walked out in protest.

Prof. Beyar’s words ring true, however. In the contest within the human psyche between belligerent and destructive urges and creative, healing and constructive impulses, physicians strive to realize the humanitarian ideals of their profession.

For instance, also at the pre-G8 Summit, Dr. Lorber was cordially approached by Afghan pediatrician Dr. Massouda Jalal, who raised the idea of cooperation between Israel and Afghanistan. Dr. Jalal, who received the UN Watch’s Morris B. Abram Human Rights Award for 2010, has served her country as Women’s Affairs Minister from 2002-2006 and was a candidate for her country’s presidency in 2006. Dr. Avraham Lorber, Director of the Pediatric Cardiology Institute and Adults with Congenital Heart Disease Service, is Dr. Margalit Lorber’s husband and the other half of an Israeli couple that travels the globe sharing their medical know-how.

In June, he was at home in Israel and at Rambam to direct the third in a series of four intricate surgeries to repair the heart of Nikolay Bocharnikov (7), who lives with his family in an agricultural station of Krasnodar Federation in Russia.

Nikolay was born with a univentricular heart. “Leave the child to die,” the regional-hospital specialist had advised. Through the grapevine established by families in Russia whose children had successfully undergone lifesaving cardiological interventions in Israel, the distraught parents found their way to Dr. Lorber. He assured them that with appropriate medical intervention, Nikolay stood a 95% chance of survival and of enjoying a reasonable quality of life.

How is it, Dr. Lorber is asked, that the small State of Israel has medical expertise so keenly sought by nations around the world?

“Our excellent physicians have the gifts,” he answers, “and there is qualitative surgical activity at Rambam, but our skills have been learned abroad where there is a critical mass of interventions that provides us with invaluable experience.”

Rambam has shared Israeli medical expertise with more than a dozen countries in Africa, Asia and Europe and also as far afield as South America:

**REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON** – Senior Physician Dr. Yoav Berger and Chief Resident Dr. Sergio Soarea of the Department of Ophthalmology conduct 55 cataract and glaucoma operations on children and adults at the Centre Hospitalier d’Essos in Yaounde, and also train local medical teams to perform the procedures.

**CHINA** – Gynecological oncologist Dr. Amon Amot spends 3 weeks in Xinghua teaching laparoscopy to young physicians, and also performs laparoscopic surgeries to remove ovarian and uterine tumors from 18 patients.

**ETHIOPIA** – Prof. Moshe Berant, Chair of the Clinical Studies Ethics Committee, leads workshops at Addis Ababa Medical School to assist those in obtaining World Health Organization (WHO) certification for conducting clinical research.

**FORMER SOVIET UNION (FSU) STATES** – Thirty healthcare professionals from Belarus, Georgia, Russia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan come to Rambam for advanced training in caring for HIV carriers.

**G8 SUMMIT** – In June-August 2010, Dr. Moshe Michaelson, Director of the Trauma Unit, and Gila Hyams, RN, Director of the Teaching Center for Trauma Emergency and Mass Casualty Situations (MCS), lead an Israeli delegation to that country, where they train 300 rescue unit personnel.

**PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY** – In August 2010, Dr. Mo’men Kharraz of Rafidia Hospital in Nablus completes two years of advanced orthopedic surgical training at Rambam under the auspices of the Peres Center for Peace.

**PORTUGAL** – Twenty-five Portuguese physicians travel to Rambam for 10 days of advanced Mass Casualty Situations (MCS) preparedness training.

**SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM** – Drs. Avraham and Margalit Lorber travel to Da Nang Hospital, where he teaches local physicians to perform lifesaving therapeutic catheterizations for children with congenital heart disease, and she teaches prevention of mother-to-child HIV transmission.

**UGANDA** – In Masaka, 25 physicians, nurses, teachers, and community workers attend a 2-week course in which Dr. Margalit Lorber conveys the latest medical knowledge concerning HIV.
LONDON – Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks is pictured sounding a silver shofar presented to him by Director General of Rambam Prof. Rafi Beyar. The occasion was a reception hosted by the Chief Rabbi and his wife, Lady Elaine Sacks, at their home on May 11th. The convivial evening brought together prominent London Jewish Community members with representatives of Rambam’s leadership echelon, among them Prof. Aaron Ciechanover and Mr. Eitan Wertheimer. The aim was to recruit a Board of Directors to lead an expanded and reinvigorated British Friends association (BFRAM), of which the Chief Rabbi has graciously agreed to become the patron. Stanley Brodie QC has set an example by becoming the first charter member. Among the organizers who gave generously of their time were Malka Leon, who attended with her husband, Amnon, Leora Torn-Hibler, who attended with her husband, Shimson, Mr. Amir Levy of Goldman Sachs UK, and Mr. Lior Hannes, who represented the IBD Group.

A Friend in Deed

For the past seventeen years, British Friends has been directed by one extraordinarily dedicated volunteer, Anita Alexander-Passe. Her quiet and consistent efforts have brought us a steady stream of support, which we have used to replace obsolescent medical equipment and modernize hospital facilities. We can’t think of higher praise for Anita and her values than that expressed by her granddaughter, Anoushka Alexander-Rose (pictured). Anoushka has decided to use some of the gifts that she received for her Bat Mitzvah to purchase new equipment for our Children’s Hospital.

A Weill of a Good Time!

NEW YORK – “I hear something about a child or an elderly person in need of medical attention and I want to do something, but to be effective, you need to focus your energy – Sandy taught me this,” says Joan (Mrs. Sanford) Weill, pictured with her husband and flanked by (l-r) Mr. Adam Emmerich, President, American Friends of Rambam Medical Center (AFORM); Prof. Rafi Beyar, Director General, RHCC; and (far right) Mr. Yair Kagan, Executive Vice President, AFRAM. On March 3rd, the couple opened their Manhattan home to American Friends. Mrs. Weill appears holding a 1st century CE Roman unguentarium (cosmetic flask) of light amber glass, which was presented to the couple by Rambam.

Well-Appointed

Please welcome Michele Segelnick, who has been appointed Deputy Executive Director of American Friends of Rambam Medical Center (AFORM). Mrs. Segelnick most recently served as Director of Development, Hebrew Academy of the Five Towns & Rockaway, in Lawrence, New York. She brings to her new position more than two decades of fundraising experience on behalf of local Jewish schools and Israeli hospitals.

SHOFAR, SO GOOD

Friend of Rambam

President of the engineering firm SMJ co-hosted the event, which included a cocktail reception and gourmet supper at handsome and historic Club 357c. Prof. Beyar also lectured at the Montreal Heart Institute and met with the Deans of the Faculty of Medicine at McGill University and the Universite de Montreal.

TORONTO – In 2009, the gift of an Oncology Hospital for Rambam’s new West Campus was announced by the Fishman Family in loving memory of Joseph Fishman. On August 11, 2010, Dr. Esty Golan, Chief Administrative Officer of RHCC, was guest of honor at an outdoor reception at the home of Moti and Nati Fishman, son and daughter-in-law of the late Mr. Fishman, whose daughter and son-in-law Irit and Naam Cohen were among those attending. The event was held to introduce 60 guests from the Israel community in Toronto to Canadian Friends of Rambam (CFRAM), and was held in the presence of the Consul General of Israel in Toronto, Mr. Amir Gissin. Nati Fishman and Naharya native Orly Meyer organized the evening. Guest vocalist Paula Valstein entertained.

TORONTO – In 2007, Mr. Sammy Ofer contributed $25M for the Northern Regional Underground Emergency Hospital. The project requires additional tens of millions of dollars for its completion. In May 2010, in order to help raise funds for the new facility, Canadian Friends turned the underground parking garage of Greenwin Square in Toronto into the replica of a hospital complete with doctors, patients, and equipment. Board member Marilyn Gofrid introduced RHCC Director General Rafi Beyar and Dr. Michael Halberthal, Director, Pediatric Cardiac Critical Care Unit at Rambam, to the over 150 people in attendance. The event was sponsored by Greenco, the Danbury Group, Minden Gross LLP, and Ventroc Development Corporation.

MONTREAL – Vieux Montréal (est. May 1642) is so lovely in springtime that the heart expands! Prof. Rafi Beyar was there – also in May – to expand his listeners’ scientific understanding of the heart at an event entitled “Cardiovascular Innovations: Where Engineering Meets Medicine.” P.M. Johnson, former Premier of Québec, was among the guests. Henri Elbaz, Former Executive Director of the Jewish General Hospital, arranged Prof. Beyar’s visit, and Gérard Lagnanière and Bernard Poulin (the latter is Director General Rafi Beyar and Dr. Michael Halberthal, Director, Pediatric Cardiac Critical Care Unit at Rambam, to the over 150 people in attendance. The event was sponsored by Greenco, the Danbury Group, Minden Gross LLP, and Ventroc Development Corporation.

**FRIENDS HELP BUILD A HOSPITAL!**

[Image 35x286 to 268x410]

[Image 36x45 to 195x171]

[Image 54x941 to 366x1100]

Israel to the Court of St James.

FRIENDS HELP BUILD A HOSPITAL!

[Image 57x895]Israel to the Court of St James.

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Gen Rx

In 2010, fifty 9th graders from Irini Aleph Junior High School in Haifa came to Rambam for a pilot course intended to provide them with insights into the medical profession. The pupils toured hospital departments, attended lectures by senior physicians and nurses, and participated in practical workshops devoted to basic resuscitation, emergency and trauma care, the heart and vasculature, and organ donation and transplantation. The pupils also took part in two large-scale Home Front Command exercises testing hospital preparedness for mass casualty situations (MCS) and chemical warfare attacks.

Neonate

Mazel Tov to Editor-in-Chief Shraga Blazer, Director, Department of Neonatology, on the June 10th launch of the Rambam Medical Journal (RAMMJ). The international, open-access, peer-reviewed journal is published online only at www.rmmj.org.il. Guests attending the Rambam Summit received the handsome inaugural issue in hard copy, and it will surely be a collector’s item for Israel buffs: the first-ever medical center affiliated scientific journal to be published in this country.

Young Artists

Beauty and meaning were enhanced at Rambam on February 4th, International Cancer Prevention Day, with the opening of an exhibit of drawings by children hospitalized in pediatric oncology units in the Middle East and the United States. The event was held in the context of “The Day I Will Never Forget” project, which was initiated in 2007 by the Middle East Cancer Consortium (MECC). Children from Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, the Palestinian Authority, Turkey, and the USA participated. Pictures representing Rambam is young artist Lena Ibrahem, who appears with her mom, Miriam; they are flanked by (far left) Social Worker Swar Makhoul-Khoury and Art Therapist Anna Magen Schyfestone of the Pediatric Hematology & Oncology Department.

Kudos to recently published Rambam authors and editors Dr. Ahmad Assalia, Deputy Director, Department of Surgery B; Dr. Doron Behar, Senior Physician, Department of Critical Care Medicine, and RHCC-based coauthors Prof. Karl Skorecki, Director, Medical and Research Development, and Guennady Yudkovsky of the Rappaport Faculty of Medicine and Research Institute; Prof. Shraga Blazer, Director, Department of Neonatology, and Prof. Diana Gatinini, Director, Ultrasound Unit, Department of Medical Imaging.

Soul Searching

With thanks for assistance in compiling this bibliography to Margie Serling Cohn, Head Librarian, Alfred Goldschmidt Medical Sciences Library, Technion – Israel Institute of Technology.