



The Penn Surgery Society News is published quarterly for its members, colleagues and friends of the Department of Surgery. For submissions, inquiries or comments, please contact clyde.barker@uphs.upenn.edu.

Message from the Chairman - A Holiday Story



The week before Labor Day I was heading to Cancun Mexico to deliver the keynote address (as President of the Society of Surgical Oncology) at the Mexican National Surgical Oncology meeting. On the way to the airport I began feeling sick and had to leave the security line several times to

vomit. However I had no abdominal pain and assumed it was something I had eaten. Since I was delivering an “important” talk I never thought about cancelling the trip. After arriving in Mexico I was able to keep water down and instead of going out to dinner with colleagues I went to bed, where I had drenching sweats and rigors. The next morning when I got up to give the opening address at the meeting I still felt terrible, and in fact had to sit down during the talk due to dizziness. After a panel discussion of my talk I went back to bed, getting up in the afternoon to give another lecture. I again skipped dinner and the next day flew back to the U.S.A., meeting my family and travelling to rural northwest Wisconsin to spend Labor Day weekend at my sister’s house on the lake. I was still markedly anorectic, and having sweats and chills, so I went to a small local hospital emergency room where my labs were normal except for mild leukocytosis and thrombocytopenia. I went back to the lake and after another bad night I decided to go back to Philadelphia early to get checked out at HUP. On the car ride back to the airport the local hospital called to tell me my blood cultures were positive for multiple organisms.

I went straight from the airport to HUP, where my CT scan revealed severe appendicitis and multiple pulmonary septic emboli. After four days of IV antibiotics in the hospital my blood cultures cleared, and I had another month of IV antibiotics at home followed by six weeks of p.o. antibiotics. The week after I left the hospital I returned to work and to performing surgery, planning for an interval appendectomy in another six to eight weeks. Prior to surgery I had some great negative tests – a normal colonoscopy (not a perforated

cecal cancer) and a normal trans-esophageal echo (not endocarditis). Two weeks before Thanksgiving and ten weeks after first getting ill I had a laparoscopic interval appendectomy (courtesy of Dr. Najjia Mahmoud) and a week later I resumed my administrative duties and my surgical practice.

Some lessons I have taken away from being a patient:

1. Don’t ignore your health – surgeons are notoriously bad patients and admitting to a problem that we can’t fix goes against our natural tendency to be “in control”. Ignoring days of bacteremia probably puts me at one end of the spectrum but I suspect I have many colleagues with similar powers of denial.
2. Antibiotics are a miracle that we take for granted in our day to day practice. Hopefully the evolution of drug resistance won’t lose this for subsequent generations.
3. Nurses and nursing assistants, as well as transporters, x-ray technicians, etc. really determine the patient hospital experience. I try to be more aware of thanking them for what they do for my patients now.
4. Hospital food served to patients is even worse than the food in the cafeteria. Our CEO swears we have renegotiated a higher tier of patient food quality in our new contract but I hope not to have the opportunity to compare.
5. My laparoscopic surgery resulted in minimal discomfort, but the Foley catheter was no fun at all.
6. The housestaff sent me a “care package” when I went home from the hospital the first time, including several terrific novels and DVD’s. They also sent *Being Mortal* by Atul Gawande, which I think was their kind way of offering me advice. The subheading of the book title is *Medicine and What Matters in the End*. Clearly, what really matters is our families, our health and our profession – in that order. I think my experience this fall has reinforced that for me.

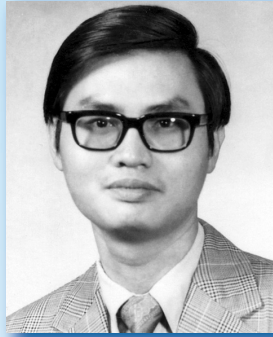
Wishing you and your families health and happiness this holiday season,



From the Editor

Clyde F. Barker, M.D.

A recent letter from Winston (Win) Chu (HUP chief resident 1975-1976) updated me on his activities. For the last 3 and a half years he has been working on his autobiography. I believe it would be of great interest to Penn Surgery Society members. *REBORN: Journeys From the Abyss* was published in February 2015 and is available from Amazon. It tells the inspirational story of Win's father's World War II adventures and Win's own journey from government oppression in Burma to Philadelphia and HUP where he then trained in General and Plastic Surgery. I was particularly interested to learn that this saga could never have happened without the help of I. S. Ravdin and Jonathan Rhoads.



**HUP intern Win Chu
1971**

The story begins in 1916 when Winston's grandfather emigrated with his family from his native Canton China to Burma. His son, C. C. Chu (Win's father) graduated from Rangoon University Medical School at about the time Japan invaded British ruled Burma. As a young doctor Win's father joined the British Army and accompanied it as it was driven by the invading Japanese out of Burma and across the border to India near the town of Ledo. There Win's father met I. S. Ravdin the Commander of the U.S. Army's 20th General Hospital near Ledo. Win's father then joined the Chinese/American force and provided care for the soldiers as they fought their way back through the Burmese jungle, eventually clearing the Japanese from Northern Burma. This counter offensive was important since it opened the Burma Road, restoring the only overland route for supplying China, thus allowing this important ally to stay in the war. The many casualties from this campaign were flown by small planes for treatment at I. S. Ravdin's 20th General Hospital. Ravdin and Win's father who by now was a colonel probably shared in the care of many wounded soldiers. They became friends.

After the war, Win's father, C.C. Chu, was one of Burma's prominent physicians. Among his patients were Burma's Prime Minister and Speaker of the House of Parliament. His

eldest son, Win (our future HUP resident) followed his father into medicine graduating from Rangoon University. But then in the 1960s an oppressive socialist regime took over Burma's government. The Chu family especially because of its Chinese heritage was harassed and persecuted.

Winston's father decided that his son should pursue further training abroad and wrote to his friend, I.S. Ravdin asking help for his son to come to America. By then Ravdin was incapacitated but the letter of request was passed on to his successor, Jonathan Rhoads. Dr. Rhoads arranged for Win Chu to come to Philadelphia first for a research position in the Harrison Department and then for a HUP internship and surgical residency. Win also completed plastic surgery training at HUP. After a successful career as a plastic surgeon in Erie, Pennsylvania Win has now retired.

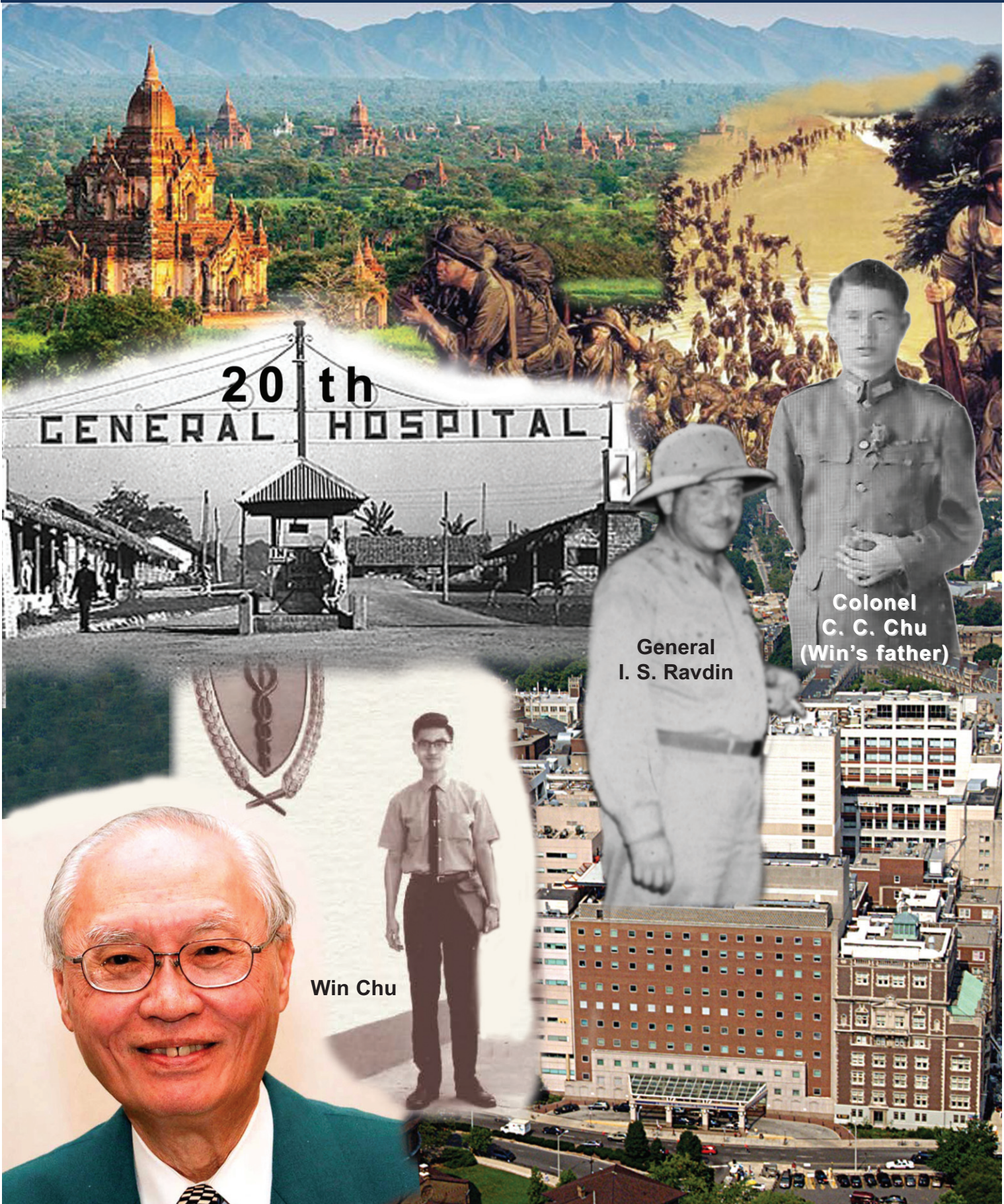
Win's book also tells how Dr. Rhoads helped his sisters come to the U.S. and HUP. Jennifer became a HUP faculty member in the Department of Physical Medicine while Janette graduated from Penn's nursing school and then worked at HUP as a surgical nurse.

Surgical Society members especially his fellow HUP residents of the 1970s will be interested in Win's frank characterizations of themselves and of Penn faculty members including the abusive Julian Johnson, the deified Jonathan Rhoads and the dapper Clete Schwegman. I learned that I was considered handsome, but slow.

I'm sure Win would like to hear from his old HUP friends. His address is 3916 State Street, Erie, PA, 16508 and his email is Winston.Chu@rebornthebook.com.



HUP Chief Residents class of 1975-1976 - Ali Naji, Manny Melissinos, Win Chu, Art Brown, Jim Roseman, Bob Rout



Pictured upper right are Colonel C. C. Chu (Win's father). He treated Chinese and American soldiers during their campaign to recapture Northern Burma from the Japanese. Wounded soldiers were flown in small planes for further treatment at the 20th General Hospital where Colonel Chu and I.S. Ravdin met. Pictured (lower left) are Win Chu as a Medical Student in Burma and as he is now.

2015 ACS Clinical Congress in Chicago

Penn Surgical Society members were remarkably prominent in the 2015 scientific program of the Clinical Congress of the American College of Surgeons. There are only 8 major (named) lectures delivered annually. One of them is named for I. S. Ravdin. It was given this year by Melvin Silverstein of

USC. Of the other seven, two were given this year by Penn surgeons. In the John H. Gibbon, Jr. Lecture, Dr. Joe Bavaria spoke on *The Innovation Imperative in Cardiothoracic Surgery: Lessons from Thoracic Aortic Disease*. The John J. Conley Ethics and Philosophy Lecture was delivered by Dr. Scott Adzick on *Fetal Surgery*.

Last year the Scudder Oration *The Winds of War* was given by Bill Schwab. This year Dr. Schwab gave a new lecture that will become an annual event at the College as part of a revitalized Excelsior Surgical Society (see page 5). This lecture has been named for U. S. Army Major John P. Pryor, the

Penn Trauma Surgeon who was killed on Christmas Day 2008 while serving in Iraq. Dr. Schwab's title was *Training of a Combat Surgeon and TEAM*.

Marty Karphe (HUP chief resident 1988-1989) is a member of the program committee for the Congress. This year he was responsible for compiling *Clinical Congress News*, the



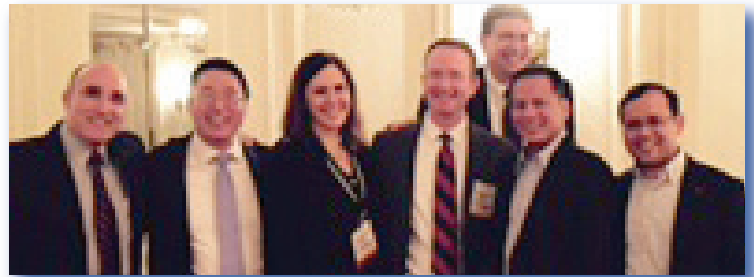
Joe Bavaria
John H. Gibbon, Jr.
Lecture



Scott Adzick
The John J. Conley
Lecture



Skandan Shanmugan, Lindsay Kuo, Jeff Drebin, Andre Ramdon, Carol Chen, Becky Hoffman and Salman Zaheer



Rob Redfield, Dale Han, Rachel Kelz, Mark Faires, Jeff Drebin, Ian Soriano and Joseph 'Stryker' Rodriguez



Elliott Haut, Mark Faires, Pat Kim, Joe Sakran and Ben Jackson



Julia Tchou, Carol Chen, Andre Ramdon, Salman Zaheer and Ian Soriano



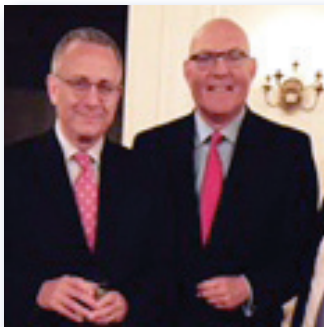
Ben Jackson, Pat Kim and Pat Reilly

Clinical Congress *(continued from page 4)*

daily publication that helps attendees keep track of the important and interesting events.

A probably incomplete list of Penn faculty and residents who contributed to the scientific program included Drs.

Drebin Czerniecki, Dempsey, Dumon, Williams, Fairman, Jackson, Foley, Etkin, Singhal, Acker, Fraker, Kim, Kuo, Sims, Reilly and Kelz (who had 5 listings in the program).



Jon Morris and Noel Williams



Howard Silberman, Stan Dudrick and Clyde Barker



Dale Han, Doug Fraker, Noel Williams, Julia Tchou and Mark Faires

Excelsior Surgical Society is Reestablished

Dr. Bill Schwab Professor of Surgery, founder and former chief of the Penn Trauma Program, played an important role in revitalizing the legendary Excelsior Surgical Society at the 2015 Clinical Congress of the ACS.

First Excelsior Society Meeting Rome 1945



The original Excelsior Surgical Society was formed in 1945 by a group of American Surgeons who served during World War II in the North African and Mediterranean Theater. Among the founders were Edward D. Churchill and Michael DeBakey. The first meeting took place in Rome, Italy. Because it was designed to be a “last man” society with additional members not to be elected, attendance at the annual gathering gradually dwindled until the last official meeting took place in 1986. After this the Excelsior Society was largely forgotten. I became aware of it only in 2003 when Mike DeBakey sent me the above slide.

At the annual meeting of the Excelsior Surgical Society a lecture was given annually in honor of the group’s leader, Dr. Churchill, Chief of Surgery at the Massachusetts General Hospital. Even after the Excelsior Society stopped meeting the Churchill lecture was continued. It was given during the Spring Meeting of the American College of Surgeons until

2008 and then shifted to the College’s Clinical Congress. Over the years the lecture was delivered by a number of prominent surgeons including Drs. Alfred Blalock, John Gibbon, Joseph Murray, Michael DeBakey, Everts Graham, Francis Moore, Claude Welch, Claude Organ, Basil Pruitt, George Sheldon, Don Trunkey, Norman Rich and many others.

Renewed interest in combat casualty care has recently increased as a result of conflicts in the Middle East. Consequently military surgeons wished to resurrect the Excelsior Society and make the Clinical Congress as it’s home. The inaugural meeting of the reorganized society met at this year’s Congress. Bill Schwab was chosen to deliver the first of a new annual lecture series to be named in honor of John Pryor. Bill spoke on his vision for the education of combat surgeons. He urged that war surgeons be trained in a stepwise fashion in major civilian trauma centers where the



John Pryor and Bill Schwab

treatment of penetrating trauma could be taught by experts in a controlled environment. He also suggested creating a national network to train all military surgeons and their teams. In addition he

advocates a centralized system for response to disasters within the U.S.

Gordon P. Buzby Surgical Leadership Lecture

Dereck and Beverly Joubert: *Lessons Learned by Saving Big Cats*



The Jouberts are award-winning filmmakers from Botswana where they are National Geographic Explorers-in-Residence. They have made 25 films, published 11 books and many articles for National Geographic magazine.



In the new Wildlife Adventure, *The Last Lions*, Dereck and Beverly Joubert follow the epic journey of a lioness named Ma di Tau ("Mother of Lions") as she battles to protect her cubs against a daunting onslaught of enemies.

Shortly before his death in 2003 Gordon Buzby (HUP resident and faculty member) endowed a lectureship of a special kind. Gordon was strongly committed to the department's goal of producing leaders. He believed that valuable lessons in leadership could be learned from men and women successful in careers other than surgery. In keeping with his vision we have since then selected speakers from a variety of fields. Included have been medical school deans, health system CEO's, Wharton School teachers of leadership courses, a CNN security analyst, a researcher in executive selection, and a CIA Director.

On October 15, 2015 Dereck and Beverly Joubert spoke on their experience from saving the big cats. They have explored and researched Africa for 30 years. Their mission is the understanding and conservation of large predators



At a reception for the Jouberts are Jim and Karen Mullen, Linda Mundy, Jeffrey Drebin, Karen Buzby, and Michael Craven.



Gordon Buzby

and other wild life species and the course of conservation in Africa. Their *Big Cats Initiatives* with National Geographic currently funds 39 grants, in 17 countries for the conservation of big cats. You can bet that they gave a fascinating lecture.



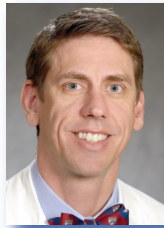
Alumni News

Faculty, Residents, Alumni of Penn Surgery
email your news to Clyde Barker
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- ◆ **Olugbenga Okusanya, MD**, was one of only two residents inducted to the Arnold P. Gold Humanism Honor Society in October. He is shown receiving the GHHS pin from Penn senior medical student, Elizabeth Nelson, who nominated him for this honor.



- ◆ **Steve Allen, MD, FACS** has accepted a position at the Penn State Hershey Medical Center as Associate Professor of Surgery, Director of the Acute Care Surgery Fellowship and Associate Program Director of the General Surgery Residency.



- ◆ **Scott Damrauer, MD** has been awarded a Leonard Davis Institute Senior Fellowship for his health services research aimed at understanding how the act of undergoing surgery alters an individual's interaction with the health system.



- ◆ **Dan Dempsey, MD** is president elect for the Philadelphia Country Medical Society. This is one of our country's most venerable medical societies. Brooke Roberts was the last Penn Surgeon to serve as president.



- ◆ In April **Tim Gardner** former Penn Chief of Cardiothoracic Surgery (1993-2003) received the Lifetime Achievement Award of the American Association of Thoracic Surgery. The award was presented by former AATS President G. Alexander Patterson, MD. Tim is now Medical Director of Christiana Care's Center for Heart and Vascular Health. He is Past President of the American Heart Association and of the American Association of Thoracic Surgery.



New Faculty

- ◆ **Nicole Saur, MD** - Assistant Professor, Division of Colon and Rectal Surgery; MD - University of North Dakota; Surgical Residency, Tufts University; Colon and Rectal Surgery Fellowship, Cleveland Clinic Florida



- ◆ **Stacy Ugras, MD** - Assistant Professor of Clinical Surgery at Pennsylvania Hospital, Division of Endocrine, Oncological Surgery; MD - Cornell; Surgical Residency New York Presbyterian Medical Center; Breast Surgery Oncology Fellowship, Memorial Sloan Kettering.



- ◆ **Ian Soriano, MD, FACS** - Clinical Assistant Professor, Division of Gastrointestinal Surgery; MD - University of the Philippines; Surgical Residency, Mount Sinai, New York and Einstein, Philadelphia; Fellowship in Minimally Invasive and Bariatric Surgery, Cleveland Clinic in Florida.



- ◆ **Phuong Ngyuen, MD** - Assistant Professor of Surgery, Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at CHOP; MD - University of Minnesota; Residency in Surgery, NYU; Residency in Plastic Surgery, UCLA; Fellowship in Craniofacial Surgery, Hospital for Sick Children, University of Toronto



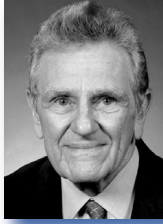
- ◆ **J. Alejandro Conejero, MD** Clinical Assistant Professor, Division of Plastic Surgery; MD - University of Chile, in Santiago; Surgical Residency, Massachusetts General Hospital; Residency in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, University of Massachusetts; Staff Physician in Plastic Surgery, Clinical Las Coudes. Santiago, Chile (2007-2015).



Alumni News *(continued from page 8)*

Deaths

- ◆ **Isidore Cohn, Jr.**, Professor and Chairman Emeritus at Louisiana State University died at age 94 on October 14, 2015. Dr. Cohn graduated from the Medical School of the University of Pennsylvania and earned a DSc degree from Penn's Graduate School of Medicine. He had his surgical training at the Graduate Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania while I. S. Ravdin was surgical department chair.



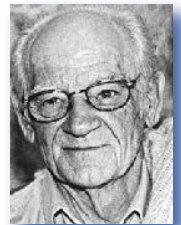
He returned to his native New Orleans in 1952 as a faculty member at LSU where he became Chairman of Surgery in 1962, serving in that role for 27 years. The Chair of Surgery at LSU is now named in his honor. He was one of the most prominent academic surgeons of his time. He published 358 peer reviewed articles and served on 10 editorial boards. He was President of the Southern Surgical Association and First Vice President of the American College of Surgeons. He was awarded the Founder's Medal of the Society for Surgery of the Alimentary tract. Dr. Cohn was a loyal member of the Ravdin-Rhoads Society and the Penn Surgical Society. Even when he was well into his 90s he and his wife, Marianne (who survives him), could be counted on to attend Penn receptions at surgical meetings.

- ◆ **Barbara Latenser**, HUP Fellow in Trauma and Surgical Critical Care 1987-1989, died at age 62 on June 15, 2015. She was a 1976 graduate of the School of Nursing of the Un-

iversity of Colorado before obtaining her MD in 1985 at the University of Nevada. After completion of a general surgery residency in Las Vegas, she came to HUP as one of Bill Schwab's earliest Fellows. She was then appointed Medical Director of PennSTAR, the helicopter program. From 1992-1998 she worked in Pittsburgh at Mercy Hospital becoming an expert in burn care. Volunteering for Doctors Without Borders, she served in Bosnia during the war there. In 2009 she was appointed Burn Center Director at Cook County Hospital in Chicago. In 2004 she was appointed Clara Smith Professor and Burn Center Director at the University of Iowa. Her dedication to burn care took her to 90 countries including Bangladesh, India, Nepal, the Australian outback and Zambia, where she established a burn unit in the mission hospital. She also co-founded the International Outreach Committee of the American Burn Association.



- ◆ **James McCaughan, Jr.** died at age 85 on May 18, 2015 he was HUP chief resident in 1961. His son James S. McCaughan, was HUP chief resident in 1993. The elder Dr. McCaughan also trained in thoracic surgery at HUP. He practiced general and thoracic surgery at Grant Hospital in Columbus, Ohio for 35 years. There he was a pioneer in laser surgery.



Pediatric Double-Hand Transplant

Philadelphia newspapers and top-tier news outlets across the nation and around the world reported on the first bilateral hand transplant for a child. The operation was performed at CHOP in July by Penn Medicine surgeons from Orthopaedics, Transplantation and Plastic Surgery. The 10-hour procedure was nearly two years in the making. "The planning took approximately 18



Zion Harvey and his mother Pattie Ray, are pictured with his surgeons L. Scott Levin (Chairman of Orthopaedics and Ben Chang (Associate Professor of Plastic Surgery).

months," said team leader L. Scott Levin, MD, Chair of the Department of Orthopaedics and Director of Penn and CHOP's Hand Transplant Program. The patient, eight-year-old Zion Harvey, suffered a life-threatening infection at age two that required amputation of both his hands and feet. Harvey said the new hands are a dream come true.

Catching Up With . . . *Steve Fishman*

Contributed by Jon Morris

Steve Fishman is a 1986 graduate of the Northwestern University Medical School with Alpha Omega Alpha honors, after which he matriculated to HUP for surgical internship. During surgery residency, Steve took two years out as a research fellow in the Harrison Department of Surgical Research, exploring blood-surface interactions in extracorporeal circuits. During his residency Steve received a number of awards including the William Inouye Award for Resident Teaching (1990),



Steve in 1992

the Jonathan E. Rhoads Research Award (1990) and the Penn Center of Surgical Excellence Award for the highest score on the American Board of Surgery In Training Examination (1991). Following his general surgical training, Steve took a Pediatric Surgery Fellowship at Boston Children's Hospital (1992 -1994). In 1994 he was appointed to the Harvard Medical School where he has risen in the ranks to Full Professor of Surgery (2012). He remains on the staff of Boston Children's Hospital.

A Conversation with Steve

JoMo: What were the highlights of your training at Penn?

Steve: *The camaraderie of the residents as we were in the trenches was very special. We learned from each other and supported each other almost without exception. The independence on the Ward and VA Services provided extraordinary opportunities for learning and exercising responsibility. That was where we exercised the maturity and judgment modeled for us on the private services. Everyone from my era marveled at how well and quickly we could remove a gallbladder or a colon at Jeanes Hospital while Ben Jarigue just moved his Deaver retractors under our hands (pre-laparoscopy). My Chiefs accused me of putting air bubbles in the cholangiography syringe when I did something like 9 common duct explorations as an intern at Jeanes, but we found stones in all but one.*

JoMo: Which faculty influenced you the most and why?

Steve: *Ernie Rosato, most certainly, not just because of the enormous volume of complex procedures he served up. His approach to problem solving when we found ourselves in a mess was formative to my clinical development. For many years (and even occasionally now), I would ask myself out loud "What would Ernie do"?*

Leonard Miller gave us the confidence to make an independent decision and follow it through. We knew there was no way he was going to over-rule us or scrub in the OR, so we just had to "do it".

Clyde Barker was and is a role model for the triple

threat academic surgeon. I quote him frequently in advising mentees to "pick a problem that is important, potentially soluble, but will take your entire career to do".

Leonard Perloff was a terrific doctor who enjoyed life, but his early demise drove home to me how much you need to make every day count.

Ron Fairman, for his meticulous attention to detail, compassionate approach to patients and families, and calm, caring teaching methods.

JoMo: When you were a junior resident, which Chief Residents had the greatest impact on you and why?

Steve: *Pat Bailey was my Chief for half of the rotations of my internship. She treated me as "HER intern". She was a terrific role model, demanding of perfection but understanding of the life of an intern. She was something of a mother to me, pushing me to perform to the best of my abilities.....abilities she recognized, even when I didn't.*

Marty Karpeh was first class in every respect. He exuded confidence. As a junior at the VA, he was the perfect Chief to have looking over me. He gave me independence and support and was the perfect operative teacher. 25 years later, I still remember him taking me through every stitch of a total gastrectomy.

JoMo: When you were a Chief Resident, which junior residents impressed you the most and why?

Steve: *Rob and Joe Gorman always knew the answers.*

Occasionally, I could figure out which one was which. Jon Odorico was classy, thorough and always reliable. Kathy Reilly was stuck with me on so many rotations, she was like my right hand. She was flexible, tolerated my neuroses and never disappointed.

JoMo: Tell us what your greatest professional accomplishments have been since graduating Penn.

Steve: After completing Pediatric Surgical Fellowship at Boston Children's, I recognized that the extraordinary assembly of geniuses (Judah Folkman – Pediatric Surgeon/discoverer of angiogenesis, John Mulliken – Plastic Surgery, Patricia Burrows – Interventional Radiology focused on vascular tumors and malformations) didn't have the organizational skills to organize a three car funeral. I knew nothing about the field, but they let me lead from below in developing a robust interdisciplinary Vascular Anomalies Center that has led rapid advancement in the field.

JoMo: What do you miss most about Philadelphia?

Steve: I've visited a few times, most recently on college exploration trips with my kids. I realized that I really didn't know much of anything about Philadelphia. We didn't get out of the hospital much in those days.

JoMo: Who from your Penn Surgery days do you stay in touch with?

Steve: I keep in touch with Jon Morris at least annually due to the long string of outstanding Penn residents choosing to apply for Pediatric Surgery fellowships. This has been a remarkable transition, since there was about 2 decades between me and Mory Ziegler matching in Pediatrics. I kept in touch with Ernie Rosato for a number of years, usually when I needed input on a tough case. It didn't matter that my patients are children. I exchange holiday cards with some residents from my era like Ed Savage and Stephen Downing, but regret that more of us don't keep in touch. It was terrific to see so many at Dr. Barker's festschrift.

JoMo: Tell us about your current surgical practice, types of cases you are doing, etc.

Steve: I still care for the breadth of Pediatric Surgery, but probably 80-90% of my clinical work is in vascular malformations and vascular tumors. I spend a lot of time these days in leadership roles including

President of the Physicians' Organization and SVP for Access and Business Services and Vice-Chair of Surgery for Clinical Operations at Boston Children's Hospital.

JoMo: What are your current interests and hobbies outside of medicine?

Steve: Up until now, I've mostly limited myself to family and activities with them including terrific vacations and skiing. Now that the kids are nearly gone, I'm starting to dabble in learning to cook. This summer, one of my son's roped me into letting him build a replica Cobra race car, during which I learned a whole lot about cars. He got it running and nearly completed the project, but left for college with me now trying to put finishing touches on the electrical and ventilation systems. I used to say I couldn't fix anything that didn't bleed, but I'm learning.

JoMo: Tell us about your family.

Steve: I met my wife Laurie while rotating as a senior at CHOP. She was a pediatric resident and got me a turkey sandwich when I ran to a trauma alert and she knew the cafeteria was closing. I knew I was in love. She's a pediatric gastroenterologist at Boston Children's, so we get to car pool occasionally. Mark, 21, is a junior and Jason, 18, a freshman, both at Northwestern. Rachel, 16, is a junior in high school. All are brilliant, accomplished and wonderful individuals... I married up. Trisket, 13 is a lab mutt who is the one I can count on to greet me at the door. (continued on back page)





Penn Surgery

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FALL 2015

Catching Up With *(continued from page 11)*

... Steve Fishman

JoMo: What is the last book you read that you would recommend and why? (or if you prefer what is the last movie you saw that you would recommend and why?)

Steve: *The Organized Mind: Thinking Straight in the Age of Information Overload* by Daniel Levitin. This book explains why we can focus on limited amounts of information at a time, but how to organize the rest for easy access. I've always developed systems for doing this, but modern technology makes it so much easier and more powerful. I've become a heavy user of Evernote to become nearly paperless. Interestingly, I've never been a big reader of fiction, not because I don't enjoy it, but because I never seem to have time. I learned only in my 40's that I'm dyslexic, which I figured out when my son was diagnosed. Obviously, I accommodated well enough to succeed in school, but I'm left to read slowly forever. I only wish I knew this when I was a kid. There are so many advantages to being dyslexic that my son has realized. I've discovered many surgeons and radiologists are dyslexic (knowingly or unknowingly), as we are advantaged in visual-spatial relations.

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