

If it were not for hope...the heart would break.

# Hope For Tomorrow

Fall 2012

Vol. 5 Issue 8

## Letter from Dr. Meilman



Dear Friends:

This past year has been a strong continuation of the Hope For Tomorrow effort. In the Spring we traveled to the Nagorno-Karabach Republic near Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Our group consisted of 9 physicians and 12 college students studying the medical specialties and other volunteers. We performed approximately 100 surgical procedures consisting of orthopedic, vascular and plastic and reconstructive surgery. To date Hope For Tomorrow has performed over 2500 surgical procedures worldwide. Our mission this year was well received and successful and I want to thank Dr. Hratch Karamanoukian for helping with the arrangements. The group traveled to Rome following completion of our surgery, where we participated in blessing for the Hope For Tomorrow foundation from Pope Benedict and a private blessing for Cong Huu Nguyen, our six year old surgical recipient from 2010. One can tune into Time Warner cable to see the news video of this trip and some of our previous trips which appear weekly. Next year we are looking into carrying out a 2nd mission trip to Haiti or to Peru where the need for our type of surgical help is still significant. As always our group will be meeting with local religious and political dignitaries. Anyone with interest in participating in trips please let me know.

Our 19th annual dinner this year is at Salvatores on Friday Sept 28. I've always appreciated everyone's support through the years and hope to see as many of you as possible at the annual party. Again I thank all of you for your support of Hope For Tomorrow Foundation.

~ Dr. Jeffrey Meilman, Chair



## Twelve Area Students to Help Needy in Armenia with the Hope For Tomorrow Foundation



Twelve Western New York area college students assisted with plastic and reconstructive, vein and orthopedic surgeries with the Hope For Tomorrow Foundation for one week in the Nagorno Karabakh Republic in Eastern Armenia helping the needy in two area hospitals. Pictured left to right: Debbie H. Woodman, R.N. humanitarian volunteer, Daemen College Coordinator Lynn Matthews, Daemen College Physical Therapy student Tom McGary, retired Buffalo Schools teacher Debby Pieri, Vein Treatment Centers President Dr. Hratch Karamanoukian, Daemen College Physician Assistant graduate Virginia Kaufman, Daemen Physician Assistant student Anne Nikirk, Hope For Tomorrow Foundation Chair and Plastic Surgeon Dr. Jeffrey Meilman, Daemen Physical Therapy student Erika Funnell, American University of the Caribbean medical student Asher Blum, Syracuse University student Kristin Anders, University of Michigan student Nikki Smolinski, University at Buffalo student Aaron Pieri and University at Buffalo Health Sciences student Allison Pieri. Missing from photo are Daemen nursing student Jessica Panepento, Guelph University student Kelly Fox and Loyola University in Chicago nursing student Kristin Blum.

The Hope For Tomorrow Foundation has donated 2,500 surgeries in 21 years in third world countries. Pope John Paul II urged the beginning of this foundation during an audience in the Vatican in 1991.

If it were not for hope...the heart would break.

## Vein Treatment Centers Donates Equipment in Nagorno Karabakh Republic



Left to right: Mount St. Mary's Hospital Anesthesiologist Dr. Jack Huebschmann, Davit Khachatryan, Head Vascular Surgeon, Republic Hospital, Stepanakert, Vein Treatment Centers President Dr. Hratch Karamanoukian teaching endovenous laser/varicose vein procedure, Registered Nurse Anahit and Stan Coleman filming for Time Warner Cable and WKBW TV.

The Vein Treatment Centers of Williamsville and Clarence helped establish the first and only vein treatment center in the Republic Hospital, Nagorno Karabakh Republic to help women with painful and swollen legs.

Dr. Karamanoukian and the Vein Treatment Centers donated a \$50,000 medical and laser device and doppler ultrasound. Dr. Karamanoukian taught Dr. Khachatryan how to perform minimally invasive vein procedures.

## Another Successful Mission

by Dr. Hratch L. Karamanoukian, Hope for Tomorrow Foundation Board Member and President of Vein Treatment Centers in Amherst and Clarence



Dr. Hratch L. Karamanoukian

Once again, we had a successful mission abroad with the Hope for Tomorrow Foundation. We had 10 physicians, 22 nurses, students and volunteers from the Buffalo Niagara Frontier. As Board Members of Daemen College, Dr. Meilman and I were especially pleased that we had successful integration of the Foundation's mission with the educational mission of Daemen College. We traveled to the NKR, a country neighboring Armenia and delivered plastic surgery procedures, vein procedures and orthopedic surgery procedures. The need was immense and the surgery volunteers delivered high quality care to the people of Stepanakert and adjoining cities. The

students delivered hands on care in the operating rooms and participated in post-operative care. I was also happy to have started a vein treatment center by donating an ultrasound Doppler machine and a laser machine to the Central Republic Hospital. This made my mother very proud as we are of Armenian descent. It was her first and only trip to the land of her forefathers and the opportunity to meet the President of the NKR was a treat to all members of the mission. We look forward to our next trip in May of 2013. I am returning to the NKR in September, 2012 on a second mission to further train the local vascular surgeon in more advanced vein procedures in this newly established and only vein center in the NKR. I thank all of your supporters of the Hope for Tomorrow Foundation that made this mission possible and future Foundation missions possible.

## Hope For Tomorrow Board of Directors

### Chairman

Jeffrey Meilman - M.D., F.A.C.S

### Board Secretary

Cynthia Guzik

### Treasurer

Michele Patterson

### Directors

Kenneth D. Anthon, M.D.

George A. Berbary

Alexander Campanella

Ursula E. Campanella

Karen Carlo, R.N.

Anna Marie Diina

Jack Huebschmann, M.D.

Hratch Karamanoukian, M.D.

Sally Lenahan

Janet Long

Brian Rusk

Richard Slisz

Robert J. Smolinski, M.D.

Davis Tiburzi



## Pope Blesses Vietnamese Hope for Tomorrow Surgery Recipient

by Dr. Jack Huebschmann

The mission trip this year took us to Armenia and as usual it provided an interesting experience into another culture. It once again gave us a chance to meet and help a number of people who would otherwise be wanting. I will leave the details of that part of the trip for another time.

However this year we had another opportunity that was nothing like usual - a meeting with Pope Benedict XVI. It came at the last minute as we were on our way home. We had hoped to have a chance to meet the Pope but were not certain of the opportunity until we were leaving.

It all started with our surgery of Huu the Vietnamese boy back in the fall of 2010. The surgery went well and we have been tracking his progress over time. Apparently the Vatican has also, and they extended an invitation to us to be present at the Wednesday Mass with Pope Benedict. It turns out that special groups are invited to attend these masses and sit in a special area to the right of the Alter. This in itself is a great honor as there are hundreds of thousands of people in attendance at these Masses and to have special seating next to the alter is quite exceptional.

On top of that we were allowed to have Huu and one other representative on the alter with the Pope. This is very special as only a few people each mass are granted this honor. Much to my surprise, I was asked if I wanted to accompany Huu as our representative. I naturally said yes and was very excited.

The day began with clearing security early in the morning at the Vatican. We proceeded to the staging area and I met up with Huu and his father. At this point Huu and I were escorted through another security checkpoint to our special seating area on the alter. This was still two hours before the mass was to start which was a long time. Unfortunately I do not speak Vietnamese and Huu does not speak English. This made it difficult to communicate but the magnitude of the event was evident. We were seated between a gentleman from Germany and Africa. Once again some language barriers to overcome, leaving us feeling a bit alone.

The morning was quite hot and sunny which was pleasant but we were not prepared for. Huu began to get a bit anxious as time wore on and more and more people poured into the square. Fortunately the security guards allowed Huu father and some of the Hope For Tomorrow people to come up to our area and bring some water, and a group from the Make A Wish foundation out of Cleveland gave Huu a cap for his head. As we sat there we marveled at the splendor of the Vatican, its beauty, size, and the historic significance that surrounded us.

Our anticipation, and the crowd, built to a peak as the Pope entered the Square in the Popemobile. He ceremoniously circled the people waving a greeting to cheers. Then he drove up to the alter, stopping right in front of us and stepped out of the Popemobile and proceeded to the alter. There was a genuine look of splendor in little Huu's eyes.

Next came the mass in which Pope Benedict XVI and representatives from each of the seven continents read the Homily and addressed those in the crowd from that continent in their own language. When it came time for North America he acknowledged the Hope For Tomorrow Foundation specifically! I believe this is the first time that has ever happened. Once again quite an honor as this Mass was not only witnessed by the hundreds of thousands in attendance but is also broadcast all over the world...

At the conclusion of the Mass, the special guests of which Huu and I were part, were brought in front of Pope Benedict XVI... As we stepped up to His Holiness he bent down to Huu and kissed him on the head. He then looked at the area on Huu's face where we had done the surgery and looked to me and thanked us for the work we had done. He then blessed Huu a second time and turned to me. He extended his hand and shook mine and asked about the surgery. I very briefly explained what we did and gave him a photograph of Huu prior to surgery and another photo of him after surgery with the team of Doctors and Nurses who had done the surgery. He then asked if there was anything he could do for us and I asked that he bless all of us at Hope For Tomorrow and our supporters. He graciously blessed us, our family members and supporters for the work we had done and extended a blessing for our continued support and protection in the future. I graciously thanked him and shook his hand again as we were then ushered off the alter. As we walked away, little Huu took my hand and looked up at me with a big smile. This was the first time he had ever done this, and although we could not speak I knew at that point he understood what had just transpired.

We at Hope For Tomorrow do what we do because we want to. There is no expectation of our work other than the satisfaction of knowing we have helped others in need. It is nice when we are recognized for our deeds and someone says Thank You. It is unbelievable to be thanked by the Pope! I am glad I have the skills and opportunity to be part of this organization.



*6 year old Cong Huu Nguyen of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam receiving Papal Blessing May 30th before 40,000 people at the Vatican from Pope Benedict XVI. Huu received donated facial reconstructive surgery to remove a facial tumor covering one third of his face. This took place in late 2010 at Mount Saint Mary's Hospital, Lewiston. This was donated by Board Certified Surgeon Jeffrey Meilman and Anesthesiologist John Huebschmann.*

If it were not for hope...the heart would break.

## *U.S. Diplomats Celebrate Papal Blessing at the Vatican for Vietnamese Boy*



U.S. Diplomats celebrated the Papal blessing in person by Pope Benedict XVI for Cong Huu Nguyen in the Vatican following donated, reconstructive surgery provided by Plastic Surgeon Dr. Jeffrey Meilman at Mount Saint Mary's Hospital in Lewiston, New York. The Hope For Tomorrow Foundation just donated 120 surgeries for the needy in Eastern Armenia.

Pictured left to right: Mount Saint Mary's Hospital Anesthesiologist Dr. John Huebschmann, Hope For Tomorrow Chairman of the Board Dr. Jeffrey Meilman, donated surgical recipient Cong Huu Nguyen of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Mario Mesquita and U.S. Embassy in Rome, Italy Transatlantic Diplomatic Fellow Elizabeth Ann Fritschle.

---

## *Plastic Surgeon Donates Surgery for Armenian Burn Victim*

Board Certified Plastic Surgeon and Hope For Tomorrow Foundation Chairman of the Board Dr. Jeffrey Meilman provided donated plastic surgery for a six year old Armenia boy with a severe contraction suffered from a fire burning him as an infant. The surgery was performed at the Plastic Surgery Center in Stepanakert Nagorno Karabakh Republic in Armenia. The surgery took two hours with a donated value of \$5,000. Dr. Jeffrey Meilman and Dr. Jack Kotlarz of Pensacola, Florida donated 40 plastic, reconstructive surgeries in Armenia in May of 2012.



*Left to right: Daemen College Nursing student Jessica Panepento, UB Biomedical Sciences student Allison Peieri, Armenian donated surgery recipient and Borad Certified Plastic Surgeon Dr. Jeffrey Meilman.*

## 2012 Hope For Tomorrow Honorees

On Friday, September 28, 2012 the Hope for Tomorrow Foundation will present the International Community Service Award to Barry Ingham and the Community Humanitarian of the Year Award to Robert Swados, Esq. and also to Donna and Robert Irwin. This was announced by Hope for Tomorrow Chairman of the Board Dr. Jeffrey Meilman.

The Hope for Tomorrow Foundation began in 1992 at the request of Pope John Paul II in the Vatican. Since that time the Hope for Tomorrow Foundation has embarked on 21 humanitarian missions to third world countries donating hundreds of plastic, cataract, orthopedic and vein surgeries with hundreds of thousands of dollars in medical supplies. Dr. Meilman has led these medical missions to Jamaica, Nigeria, Tanzania, Albania, Bosnia, Cuba, Poland, Nepal, India, etc.

This 19th annual Hope for Tomorrow Charity Benefit will take place at 6:30 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at Salvatore's Italian Gardens, 6461 Transit Road, Depew, New York. Dinner will be served at 7:30 p.m. The dinner is black tie. The price per ticket is \$90.00 and \$900.00 per table of ten. Checks payable to Hope for Tomorrow Foundation should be mailed to 811 Maple Road, Williamsville, New York. For more information one may call (716) 626-5300.



**Barry Ingham**

### ***International Community Service Award – Barry Ingham, Famous British Actor***

After serving as a Royal Artillery officer Barrie Ingham spent a year with the Manchester Library Theatre Company, followed by two years at London's Old Vic Theatre, initially as Fortinbras, graduating through several Shakespeare productions to leading roles as Cecil Farrington (*The Magistrate*), Lelie (*Sganarelle*) and Damis (*Tartuffe*). He has played leading roles in London at the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Royal National Theatre, the English Stage Company and the Mermaid Theatre Company and as leading man in many West End musicals, plays and revues.

Sir John Geilgud gave him his Broadway debut and he subsequently played in many hit musical shows in New York. He has made over 200 appearances in American and British TV and motion pictures. He combines his career as an actor with that of director and producer (notably of the record breaking *Hans Anderson* at the London Palladium).

He was professor at the University of Texas at Austin, theatre consultant to Baylor University and is artistic advisor to the Shakespeare Society of New York. His two one man shows have played worldwide. He met his wife Tarne in their first theatre jobs and they have 4 lovely daughters and too many grandchildren to count.

Barrie has received the following accolades:

- Honorary Associate Artist with the Royal Shakespeare Company
- National Theatre of Great Britain Player
- Australian Theatre Most Distinguished Actor Award
- Drama-Logue Award for the Best Performance in a Broadway Musical
- Southern California Motion Picture Council Award



**Robert Swados, Esq.**

### ***Community Humanitarian of the Year Award – Robert Swados, Esq., Philanthropist***

Bob is a Buffalo native, graduate of Harvard Law School, and an accomplished attorney with a career that expands 70 years. His career initially started in Washington DC but to Buffalo's benefit he returned home where along with his Uncle established the law firm of Cohen, Swados, Wright, Hanifin, and Bradford. In his early career, Bob was instrumental in bringing Channel 2 to Buffalo and was intimately involved in the financing and building of our HSBC arena which is now First Niagara Center. His legal career became focused on the world of professional sports from his efforts in the early 1960's to bring a major league baseball franchise to Buffalo to his close connection with Seymour Knox III and Northrop Knox to establishing the Buffalo Sabres. Bob had a 30 year journey through

the ups and downs of the National Hockey League. He served the league as part owner of the Sabres, Vice-Chairman and Counsel for the Sabres, Secretary of the League and League Governor. Bob stated in the epilogue of his recent book that he is "still vertical" and that his overall grasp of life and drive are still alive and strong. Bob has been a generous benefactor of many Buffalo charities and endeavors.



If it were not for hope...the heart would break.

# 2011 Hope For Tom



Matthew Bradfuhrer, HFT Honoree Kenneth Timmerman, First Lady of Somalia, and Father Walter Matuszak



Arthur Russ, HFT Volunteer Michael Mank, Audrey Russ, Marc Holzauer and Devon Tiburzi



Paul and Melissa Saffrin with HFT Honoree JD Crane and Cathy Baron



HFT Student Trip Volunteers along with HFT Board Members



Heather Anderson and Charles Spriesch



HFT Honoree Kenneth Timmerman, HFT Co-Chair Audrey Russ, HFT Honoree Carl Paladino, HFT Chairman Dr. Jeffrey Meilman, and HFT Honoree JD Crane



If it were not for hope...the heart would break.

# orrow Charity Event



HFT Honoree Carl Paladino with HFT Board Member Anna Marie and Rocco Diina



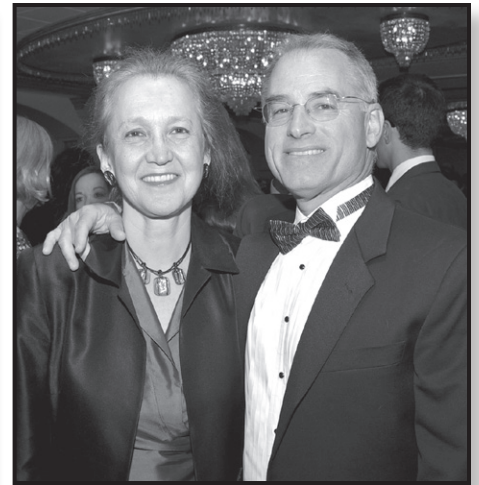
HFT Honoree JD Crane with his family



US Congresswoman Kathy Hochul and HFT Chairman Dr. Jeffrey Meilman



Aaron, Allison and Debby Pieri



Stephanie Meilman Wetreich and Dr. Gary Wetreich



Dr.'s Smolinski, Anders, and Blum with Armenian Surgeon



HFT volunteers in Armenia



*Hope For Tomorrow Foundation*

Jeffrey Meilman, MD  
811 Maple Road  
Williamsville, NY 14221

NON PROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
BUFFALO NY  
PERMIT 720

RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

IF IT WERE NOT FOR HOPE... THE HEART WOULD BREAK

**VENETIAN  
BALLROOM**

*19<sup>th</sup> Annual*  
*Hope For Tomorrow*  
*Charity Benefit*

**Friday, September 28, 2012**

 **Salvatore's Italian Gardens**  
6461 Transit Road • Depew, New York  
6:30 pm – Cocktails  
7:30 pm – Dinner

Jeffrey Meilman, MD – Chairman  
Audrey Russ – Event Chair  
Donna McGuire – Co-Chair