

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

# Hope For Tomorrow

Fall 2009

Vol. 4 Issue 2

## Letter from Dr. Meilman



Dear Friends ~

Hope For Tomorrow is now 17 years old. For all of us involved with this Buffalo organization it has been a great experience. I appreciate having this opportunity again this year to thank every one of you who has helped and participated throughout the years. Again, thanks to everyone who helped start the organization, who participated with the surgery trips throughout the world and at the yearly dinner.

This year Hope For Tomorrow visited Ecuador where we operated in Otavalo, a town just outside of Quito, the country's capital, with the help of Dr. Kenneth Anthone, Dr. Hratch Karamanoukian, and our anesthesiologist Dr. John Huebschmann. Surgery included cleft lip and palate, cataract, and peripheral vascular procedures.

We were also reunited with Christian, a 14 month old boy from the Galapagos Islands who we operated on to repair his cleft lip on our trip last year in Peru and the Galapagos Islands. He and his family met us in Ecuador and this year his palate was repaired.

Our total surgical patient number is close to 1600 children throughout the world, a number we can be very proud of. Next year we are planning to visit and work in Vietnam. Anyone with interest in participating please let me know.

As always, I hope to see you at the dinner in September.

~ Dr. Jeffrey Meilman, Chair

## Amherst plastic surgeon puts smiles on faces of boy, parents

As printed in *The Buffalo News* on June 22, 2009

A year-old Galapagos Island boy was born with a cleft lip and a cleft palate, facial deformities that could force parents to disown their child in many Third World countries.

His name is Christian, and his parents decided to keep him and to find a way to have him treated.

With no money, the road to recovery could have taken years. But luckily for Christian's sake, Dr. Jeffrey Meilman, an Amherst plastic surgeon has performed surgery on him twice in the last year at no charge.

"When I got off of the plane, there they stood - mother, father and child - each with a big smile on their face," Meilman said. "The kid looked beautiful. He couldn't have gotten this treatment any other way. This surgery sort of made him the star of the deal."

Christian is considered a star because his surgeries were both unexpected. Meilman first performed surgery on the child at his home in 2008. He did not intend on operating on anyone while in the Galapagos, but there was no other way to fix Christian's lip.

When Christian's parents heard of Meilman's trip to Ecuador, they traveled more than 600 miles to have him finish the job just over a week ago. Meilman, along with three other physicians, six nurses and eight volunteers, had traveled to Ecuador to treat children and teach native physicians for three days.

About 30 children and 25 adults were treated, with either cardiovascular or cosmetic surgeries. Ecuador marks Meilman's 19th consecutive trip as part of the Hope For Tomorrow Foundation, a nonprofit organization that assists the medically needy. "It's very, very eye-opening," said Ursula Campanella, vice president of Campanella Orthotics and Prosthetics and a physician who helped on the trip. "We are so lucky here. When people in America complain, like, 'We don't have this,' and 'We don't have that.' They don't know what these people are going through.

"These poor people are overlooked because there just isn't money to help them. It's not just cosmetic, it's medically necessary. If it wasn't for us, these people could not have had any help -



Dr. Jeffrey Meilman checks the face of 1-year-old Christian after performing plastic surgery on his face in Ecuador.

surgeries, prosthetics, cardiovascular or cataracts. It is truly exciting. It's an honor to help these people."

Cataract specialist and ophthalmic surgeon Ken Anthone taught the locals how to handle eye care and how to work with patients with eye problems.

Cardiovascular surgeon Hratch Karamanoukian worked specifically on 25 patients between the ages of 40 to 60. Each had varicose veins. He said after word-of-mouth information traveled on their first day of work, there was a line of 75 people looking to be treated the next morning.

"In these countries, people will show up at 7 a.m. or earlier, trying to get medical attention," he said. "Even if they are the last patient of the day, they will sit until it is their turn. It's not like the U.S., where there are complaints after a 30-minute wait. So many people showed up, we couldn't help them all. We just didn't have enough equipment."

It may seem tough for people in the United States in the current economy, Meilman said, but hardships are even worse in Third World countries. He said he was impressed with the doctors' performances and willingness to help in any way.

"It shows so much more dedication," he said. "These people honestly didn't have to go, but because they did, these people's health is much better off. They did it, and they did it well."

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

## 2009 Hope For Tomorrow Honorees



**Ted Bell**

### *International Honoree - New York Times bestselling author of Hawke, Assassin, and Pirate*

A native Floridian, Ted Bell graduated from Randolph-Macon College in Virginia and is a former member of the college's Board of Trustees. Bell began his advertising career at Doyle Dane Bernbach, New York, as a junior copywriter in the early seventies.

By age 25 he'd sold his first screenplay and become the youngest vice president in the storied history of the creative powerhouse,

DDB. In 1982 he joined Leo Burnett Co., Chicago, as a creative director. He was named President, Chief Creative Officer just four years later. Bell joined Young & Rubicam, London, in 1991 as Vice Chairman and Worldwide Creative Director. After 10 years at Y&R, Bell retired in 2001 to write full time.

Bell holds an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from Kendall College in Michigan. Ted is also a member of the Men's Board at General Washington's Home at Mt. Vernon, a group chaired by former Secretary of the Army, Togo West.



**Anthony Gioia**

### *Honoree - United States Ambassador to Malta, Ret.*

Anthony H. Gioia has been a lifelong resident of Upstate New York. He received a BS degree from SUNY of Buffalo and an MBA from the University of Southern California. He then joined the family business, Gioia Macaroni, holding the offices of Vice President, President and President/CEO. After negotiating the sale of the company in 1976 to British based Rank Hovis McDougall (RHM), he then became President of RHM Pasta Inc., having

responsibility for the Gioia operations in Buffalo, along with pasta companies in St. Louis, Chicago and Seattle.

In 1988, Ambassador Gioia, along with his brother Richard, purchased a controlling interest in Armor-Box Corporation, and later, Cello-Pack Corporation, both located in western New York.

Ambassador Gioia has served as Chairman of the National Pasta Association, founding Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Greater Buffalo Savings Bank, and the Board of Directors of Perry's Ice Cream. In 1995, Governor George Pataki appointed Ambassador Gioia to the

Board of the New York State Urban Development Corporation, the state's lead economic development agency along with the State Job Development Authority. He has also served on the Board of Directors of Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation- upstate New York's largest public utility, the Albright Knox Art Gallery, Chairman of the Board of Children's Hospital of Buffalo and Chairman of the Kaleida Health System.

On April 4, 2001, President George W. Bush announced his intention to nominate Anthony H. Gioia to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Malta. The new Ambassador was sworn in on Wednesday, August 8, 2001 by U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell.

In August 2005, after returning to the U.S., the Ambassador was appointed Chair of the Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation's Board of Directors by New York State Governor, George Pataki.

In the early Fall of 2008 Anthony H. Gioia was once again called into public service. President George W. Bush appointed Anthony H. Gioia to serve as the United States Representative to the 63rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly which was unanimously confirmed by the Senate on October 5, 2008.

## Campanella Orthotics and Prosthetics Mission to Ecuador

On June 27, 2009 my wife Ursula and I met with the Hope For Tomorrow delegation at the Buffalo/Niagara International Airport. This was the start of our mission to Ecuador and our sixth participation in missions to developing countries.

Each of the sixteen health professionals and volunteers reserved room in their luggage for medical equipment and supplies to be donated. Included were donations gathered by the Campanella's from their company and donations from suppliers and physicians. These donations were estimated to be approximately \$20,000 in value. They consisted of medical instruments and braces for the spine and extremities. All of the braces were new and ready for immediate use.

Our first stop was in Atlanta where we boarded our flight to Quito, Ecuador. We landed in Quito close to midnight. There, everyone settled for the night ready for our two hour bus ride to our final destination in Otavalo. The next morning before leaving we visited with the Arch Bishop in Quito, he thanked us for our mission and offered our group refreshments and a light lunch before we boarded our bus to Otavalo. After approximately an hour we stopped in an area that was marked as being the earth's equator. We took a few minutes to take some pictures and boarded the bus to continue our journey.

Upon arrival at Otavalo we checked into a very quaint hotel named Ali Shangu, which means "the heart" in the native Indian language. It was a pleasant surprise to learn that this hotel was owned by an American couple, therefore communication was not a problem.

The first day the delegation visited one of the two hospitals in the Otavalo area. Later the mayor of Otavalo came to our hotel and welcomed us to his city.

The next day our delegation visited the second hospital. Although primitive by U.S. standards, it appeared to be more professionally staffed and operated than the previously visited hospital. Here the physicians of our delegation performed surgeries and gave presentations to the staff.

During this period I was introduced to the administrator and a staff orthopedic surgeon. Lacking an interpreter, I made it known to them that I had donations of braces and instruments. To my relief, the orthopedic surgeon recognized the supplies and equipment of which he was in need of. He indicated that it would all be put to good use and both he and the administrator thanked me profusely.

During our stay in Otavalo we visited an orphanage and volunteers of our group gave the children candy and toys. The staff gave us a brief tour of the facility.

To show his city's appreciation of our efforts, the mayor invited our group to a fine dinner in an excellent local restaurant. The mayor thanked Dr. Meilman, Huebschmann, Karamanoukian, and Anthonie for their surgeries and presentations.

On our return trip we stopped in Panama City before returning to the USA. Alex and Ursula of Campanella Orthotics and Prosthetics would like to give special thanks to Pel Supply Company of Cleveland Ohio and Dr. Owen Young of Tonawanda, N.Y. for their donations.

## Recipient Update – Christian from Galapagos Island



Galapagos Islands, 3 month old baby boy, cleft lip surgery, before and after

One year later



Left to right: Brian Rusk, Dr. Zambrano, Alex Campanella, Ursula Campanella, Dr. Meilman, Christian and mother, Dr. Huebschmann, Dr. Anthonie, and Michele Patterson

This is one of the patients in Ecuador who was very grateful that Dr. Anthonie performed cataract surgery on her and restored her sight. He also instructed the physicians on new cataract techniques and introduced his instrument THE ENABLER, which facilitates the removal of cataracts. He designed this instrument and it is used all over the world for cataract surgery.

Dr. Anthonie donated this instrument as well as much needed medical supplies.



### Hope For Tomorrow Plans Vietnam Humanitarian Mission for May, 2010

The Hope for Tomorrow Foundation is planning its 18th annual Humanitarian Mission for Memorial Day Week, 2010 from May 28-June 5, 2010. This year's planned destination is to Ho Chi Ming City, Vietnam. The group plans to donate numerous surgeries along with a stop both ways in Hong Kong.

The past mission to Ecuador was highlighted with donated cataract surgeries and training by Cataract Surgeon Kenneth Anthonie, vein surgeries by Thoracic Surgeon Hrach Karamanoukian, anesthesiology by Dr. John Huebschmann, plastic surgery by Dr. Jeffrey Meilman and \$20,000 in orthotics donations from Campanella Orthotics and Prosthetics.

While in Vietnam, in addition to numerous surgeries, the group plans to meet with leaders of the US government, the Catholic church and Rotary International. Every year this mission with donations courtesy of Karen Carlo, travels to assist children with a needy orphanage.

The approximate cost is \$3,999 per single and \$4,799 per double. If one is interested in helping the needy and poor in Vietnam, please call Tony at Alidi Travel to reserve at 886-4443.

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

## Hope For Tomorrow Foundation Donates Cleft Palate/Lip Surgeries and Eye Surgery in Otavalo, Ecuador on Humanitarian Mission



Photo caption of young, 3 year old Ecuadorian boy being examined Sunday night at the Otavalo, Ecuador Hospital by Board Certified Plastic Surgeon Dr. Jeffrey Meilman. The cleft palate repair for this boy by Dr. Meilman and Anesthesiologist Dr. John Huebschmann with Mount St. Mary's Hospital, took 2 hours with a donated value of \$8,000. Dr. Meilman and Dr. Huebschmann performed a dozen cleft lip/palate surgeries for poor, needy children of Ecuador from 2 to 10 years of age. They also performed cleft palate surgery for this boy named Christian. Dr. Ken Anthone performed eye surgery in Neanby.



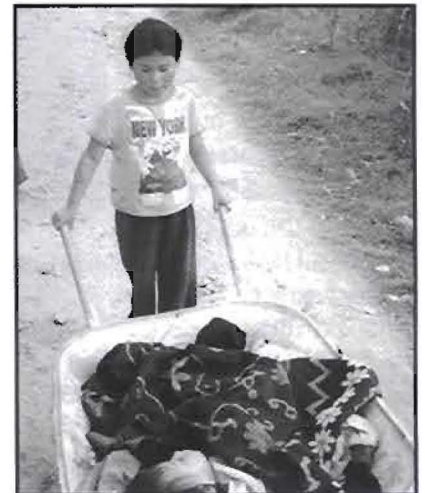
Lindsey, Dr. Karamanoukian and Carrie at the Equator

Left to right: Dr. Washington Zawbrano, Executive Director of Charity Anywhere Organization arranging anesthesiology for 12 cleft/lip surgeries with Mount St. Mary's Hospital Anesthesiologist Dr. John Huebschmann, patient, and Hope For Tomorrow Chair Dr. Jeffrey Meilman.



## Vein Treatment Center Donates 25 Vein Surgeries in Ecuador

Photo caption left to right Tuesday as Dr. Hratch Karamanoukian, President of the Vein Treatment Center at Georgetown Plaza, Williamsville, performed with his staff 25 VNUS Closure procedures for the poor at the Otavalo, Ecuador Hospital during a humanitarian mission with the Hope for Tomorrow Foundation: D'Youville College Physician Assistant student Carrie Wydysh, Thoracic Surgeon Dr. Hratch Karamanoukian, 25 year old Ecuadorian donated vein surgery recipient and Stan Coleman, videographer providing a series for Time Warner Cable. Missing from photo is Certified Assistant Lindsey Myers.



Ecuadorian patients coming to hospital.



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

## Campanella Orthotics Donates \$20,000 in Orthotics in Ecuador

Photo caption left to right Tuesday at the Iberra Hospital in Ecuador, South America as Alex Campanella, President of Campanella Orthotics and Prosthetics in North Buffalo and Amherst donated \$20,000 in equipment for the poor including a bone saw from Dr. Owen Young, Orthopedic Surgeon of Tonawanda, instruments, corsets, knee and neck



Carrie, Lindsey, Executive Staff of Otavalo Public Hospital donating gifts of appreciation for donated surgeries, Dr. Karamanoukian, and Dr. Meilman



Dr. Meilman, Jenna Cage, Michele Patterson, Andrew Gage, Dr. Karamanoukian and children at orphanage in Ecuador



braces, back braces, children's arm and leg braces for deformities and hip dislocation, shoes for babies with internal fibial torsion for toes and long brace knee immobilizers: Stan Coleman, videographer producing series for Time Warner Cable, three Iberra Hospital staff members, Iberra Hospital Administrator Yullins Reascos, Alex Campanella, President of Campanella Orthotics and two members of the physical therapy staff.



Dr. Karamanoukian at orphanage



Ursula and Alex Campanella with children at orphanage in Ecuador

### Hope For Tomorrow Board of Directors

#### Chairman

Dr. Jeffrey Meilman

#### Board Secretary

\* Cynthia Guzik

#### Directors

Kenneth D. Anthone, M.D.

George A. Berbary

Alexander Campanella

Ursula E. Campanella

Karen Carlo, R.N.

Anna Marie Diina

Lorraine Engl, Ph.D.

Jack Huebschmann, M.D.

John J. Lenahan II

Janet Long

Michele Patterson

Brian Rusk

Richard Slisz

Davis Tiburzi

\* New members in italics

## Hope For Tomorrow Foundation Raffle

- First Prize - \$2,000 in Chips for Seneca Niagara Casino
- Second Prize - 5 Days for Two in Las Vegas (includes airfare)
- Third Prize - Plasma TV and Home Theatre (\$1500 value)
- Fourth Prize - Laptop computer

All prizes subject to availability. Drawing to be held September 25, 2009. Winner need not be present.

\$25.00 per Ticket • 5 Tickets/\$100.00

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

## **Enlightenment in Ecuador**

A Journal of Humanitarian Acts for the Poor in a Third World Country

by Dr. Hrach Karamanoukian, Thoracic Surgeon and President of the Vein Treatment Center at Georgetown Plaza, 5225 Sheridan Drive, Williamsville, New York

### **Ecuador Day One**

We had an interesting first hour in Quito, Ecuador as the Hope for Tomorrow Foundation was greeted at the Quito, Ecuador Airport with the request to wear facial masks as the swine flu was very serious in Ecuador in June, 2009. We even had to undergo thermo body scanning. I was happy to have excellent staff assistance with Certified Medical Assistant Lindsey Meyers and D'Youville College Physician Assistant student Carrie Wydysh. The Hope for Tomorrow Foundation is led by Amherst Plastic Surgeon Jeffrey Meilman.

### **Ecuador Day Two**

Our group was blessed as an entourage by Quito, Ecuador Archbishop Raul Vela Chiriboga. We were so honored to go into his private chapel. The Archbishop was warm hearted, congenial and friendly. He showed us great strength and care for the very poor of Ecuador. We were given spiritual motivation by Archbishop Chiriboga. He said: "Do not give up. You will see a lot of problems and politics in Ecuador. Please persevere and work through all of this to help my flock."

We also met with US Embassy in Quito Deputy Chief of Mission Andrew Chritton through the kindness of US Congressman Chris Lee. He briefed myself, Cataract Surgeon Ken Anthonie, Anesthesiologist Jack Huebschmann and the Ursula and Alex Campanella of Campanella Orthotics about our US government role and what we can do as Americans to help the needy in South America.

I have one political statement to make- on our bus ride we are always so environmentally conscious as Americans as the US government tells us to close factories for environmental reasons. It was ironic that we were in Ecuador to help those in need while our diesel run bus polluted much of the sky with toxic fumes.

Next we arrived at the Otavalo, Ecuador Public Hospital. This facility was large, cold and empty with very few resources. It was at about a 1960 level of our US hospitals. We were greeted by 50 prospective vein treatment patients. They waited 12 hours for our arrival with our staff including Lindsey and Carrie. Our group was busy screening patients until 3 am. Many patients had open, venous ulcers which had been poorly cared for. Our Hope for Tomorrow delegation agreed to help these people by performing procedures to heal many wounds.

### **Ecuador Day Three**

As we arrived in the morning 50 patient were already lined up. We helped a 25 year old female hospital cleaner. She had an ulcer in her leg which produced severe pain from a chronic, weeping wound. In fact, she was scared of



*Hope For Tomorrow group with Archbishop Chiriboga in Quito.*

being fired. Our group from the Vein Treatment Center in Williamsville, New York cleaned up the ulcer with a laser procedure to address the underlying problem. The procedure was a great success. The ulcer healing was accelerated from 6 months to 6 weeks.

Our bus driver with the toxic diesel fumes observed our vein treatment procedures. He asked for help from a big, bulging varicose vein in the back of his legs. After our procedure, his legs felt better immediately. As a matter of fact, he drove us back to the hotel with no pain. The next day the bus driver said he was a new man as he drove me to the market square. In total our Vein Treatment Center staff provided 25 venous closure procedures for the needy in Ecuador.

When we were on break 15 people came to me in need of donated heart surgery. The Ecuadorian government would pay for the surgery, but not for the valve worth \$4,000 or 20 months of salary. The government of Ecuador justifies saying surgery is free. But, it does not pay for the heart equipment. This is the problem of socialized medicine. There are false claims of security without the delivery of necessary services.

### **Ecuador Day Four**

I was happy to visit an Ibera, Ecuador orphanage. It was very well run. It was wonderful to see children well taken care of even though it was placed in a third world country.

### **Ecuador Day Five**

Our Hope for Tomorrow group returned to remove sutures in patients and give a post operative check up. The Ecuadorian patients were thrilled with the results. And the doctors were so happy that we could offer vein services in a mobile hospital. Our humanitarian group of surgeons, nurses and volunteers were gratified to help the poor of Ecuador who had inferior care before our visit. It made me feel good to help these people to feel better and maintain themselves with healthier lives.

I can no longer take for granted our profitable, successful lives in the USA. It is my hope that we do not follow the socialist health care I saw in Ecuador. It is my hope that we keep our well run model of health care in the United States.

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

# 2008 Hope For Tomorrow Charity Event



Co-Chair Audrey Russ and MC Don Postles



Jan Wozniak and Joe Williams



Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Vukelic



Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Kessler and Dr. Ken Anthone



Patrick Lee, Cynthia Lee and Congressman Chris Lee



Andrew Gage, Jenna Gage, Lindsey Meyers,  
and Carrie Wydysch



Dr. Ken Anthone and Dr. John  
Huebschmann

PLEASE JOIN US AT THE  
*16<sup>th</sup> Annual*  
*Hope for Tomorrow*  
*Fundraiser*  
Friday, September 25, 2009  
Chairman  
Jeffrey Meilman, MD  
Salvatore's Italian Gardens



*Hope For Tomorrow Foundation*

Jeffrey Meilman, MD  
811 Maple Road  
Williamsville, NY 14221

NON PROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
BUFFALO NY  
PERMIT 720


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

*10<sup>th</sup> Annual*

**NEW  
GRAND  
BALLROOM**

*Hope For Tomorrow  
Charity Benefit*

**Friday, September 25, 2009**

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

Jeffrey Meilman, MD - Chairman