

# DISTRACTION

THE NEWSLETTER OF ASAMI - NORTH AMERICA  
*The Limb Lengthening and Reconstruction Society*

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Volume 6, Number 1

Editor: Stuart Green, MD

April 1998

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## ILIZAROVIAN JAZZED BY NEW ORLEANS BLAST

It was like a scene from the movies. A great white shark, cruising around in the enormous central tank at the Aquarium of the Americas watches a crowd of orthopaedic surgeons and their guests sip chablis and munch on cheese cubes. Out of the corner of its unblinking eye, the massive denizen of the deep spots ASAMI-North America's president Jim Aronson approach the viewing area. The

huge behemoth slowly swims towards Aronson until the two are face to face, separated by just a few inches of transparent plexiglass. And then the shark - acknowledging Jim's remarkable achievement in organizing the first international ASAMI meeting - flexes its neck and deferentially bows three times while the sea turtles and manta rays roll 360s in gleeful appreciation.

For such was the response of all those assembled in the Big Easy that evening. The top rate jazz ensemble - upon recognizing Jim, wife Betsy and program coordinator Linda Perkins - played a joyous and worshipful version of When The Saints Come Marching In.

Jim Aronson and his co-workers at Arkansas Children's Hospital, by sheer will power and with tireless effort, brought in existence the Mother of All Meetings - the standard by which future gatherings of limb stretchers will be judged. And what a show it was: seminars, posters, simposia, basic and clinical science - you name it, we had it. Even the lunchtime bread pudding was beyond belief.

From around the world they came, presidents and representatives from ASAMI organizations in Europe (Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, UK) North America (USA and Canada, Santa Domingo y Caribe) South America (Brazil) and Asia (ASEAN nations, India, Japan, Korea).

The program included 74 submitted papers, 46 posters, five symposia and nine workshops. Also participating in the meeting were commercial and corporate sponsors: Autogenesis, EBI Medical, Encore Orthopaedics, Exogen, General Orthopaedics, Howmedica, Orthofix, and Smith & Nephew. And the venue was perfect as well. The Westin Canal Place Hotel sits at the bend in the Mississippi River that gives the Crescent City its nickname. Giant picture windows allowed executive committee members to contemplate the 01' Man River while considering the more mundane issues of the day.

Towards the end of the exec meeting, a motion was made to acclaim Jim Aronson for his efforts on behalf of ASAMI-North America. And, at that very moment, the Riverboat Natchez, plying the currents far below, blasted its steam-horn in concurrence.

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# The Story of Ignacio de Loyola and Perhaps the First Bone Lengthening

by Mark T. Dahl

*Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota*

Five years ago, I was asked to write a book chapter on the history of limb lengthening. (The book remains unpublished). The brief moment of flattery was quickly replaced by dread, as I realized it was yet another optional commitment in my all-too-busy life as a limb lengthener. At first glance, the task was a no-brainer. I thought to myself, "I've read all the articles on bone lengthening. I've done Wagner lengthenings, DeBastiani lengthenings, and Ilizarov lengthenings, and lots of them!" I also remember thinking, "I can do this on my way to work with a dictaphone in the car. . . . No charts, x-rays, or patients to review. I'll confirm the dates and details in my office library after clinic, and get some historical photos from Steve Koop." (Steve was writing a book on the 100 year history of Gillette Children's Hospital, *This Treasure We Hold* - which has been published. It would be easy to hit-him-up for some archival photos of old devices, as he had already reviewed cases of limb lengthening as far back as the 1920's.) As is my tendency, I seriously underestimated the research I would do and time I would spend, and overestimated my ability to write lucidly.

Deadline looming three months ahead, I swarmed the subject. I dictated the first draft, revised it the obligatory five times, and decided the manuscript sucked eggs! What was I telling my lengthening colleagues they didn't already know? Codivilla, the first publication. . . Putti, Abbott, Judet, Wagner, and DeBastiani, creative innovators fine-tuning the unnatural act of mechanical limb lengthening. Ilizarov, of course, delivered us from evil. Wait a minute. . . Who says Codivilla was first? There must have been somebody before him. There must have been a million malunions before 1905. These patients were just like ours, with deformities of angulation, translation, rotation, and length. Non-unions, segmental defects, and contractures hobbling them all.

We could always understand how the genius of bone transport was an original idea of Ilizarov's. We knew him to be an obsessive individual, with creativity, talent, and eventually, he even had some resources. He practiced limb lengthening and deformity correction for 40 years, with a focus like no one before him.

But even average surgeons must have thought to lengthen a short leg before Codivilla. I knew it wouldn't be possible to discover the very first bone lengthening, lengthener, or lengthenee, but something must have happened before 1905.

Jean-Claude Pouliquen and I first met in 1992 when we were speakers at a Verona Orthofix workshop. He then asked me to speak in Paris at the 1993 European Orthopaedic Congress. Two days into the conference, he invited Mike Saleh and me to his hospital for surgery, and his home for lunch. Mike and I were fascinated by Professor Pouliquen's views of how orthopaedics fit into the bigger picture of art, history, and ... life. He spoke with informed candor of the Judet brothers and their farreaching impact on all orthopaedic patients and surgeons. He showed us the original Judet lengthening fixator, explained the Judet brothers as people, and told of their pioneering efforts at lengthening-over-nails, latency periods, and distraction osteogenesis, concepts we thought of as new. It was truly a great day, the highlight of my trip.

I returned to Minnesota disappointed in my lack of knowledge of local orthopaedic history. With Jean-Claude Pouliquen's inspiration, and Steve Koop's help, I looked further into the limb lengthening methods of early Minnesota surgeons. Carl Chatterton, George Williamson, and Wallace Cole performed dozens of bone lengthenings of 5-7 cm, without benefit of rings, titanium, or even antibiotics. It was becoming clear to me the peer review articles I had read didn't really tell the story of bone lengthening.

My newly inspired chapter was getting better, despite the passing deadline. But, I needed to know more about the very early lengthenings, so early they wouldn't be in peer review articles. Remembering Jean-Claude's historical perspective, I called him for help. Among other things, he sent me the story of Ignacio Lopez de Loyola (translated from Spanish to French and now to English), taken from The Testament and Spiritual Exercises.

"... When the day of the artillery attack on May 20, 1521, Ignacio Lopez de Loyola confided his thoughts to one of his colleagues. After quite a long struggle, artillery fire hit his leg and broke it completely, and since the cannonball passed between his two legs, the other was also badly injured. Because he could not fight anymore, the defenders surrendered him to the French, who, having secured the citadel, dealt civilly with him and were very polite and kind. After a stay of 12 to 15 days at Pamplona, the French moved Ignacio to his family home... At Loyola, Ignacio began to feel very badly and all the doctors and surgeons who were called

to examine him agreed that his leg should be reduced a second time. They thought it looked as if the bones had been improperly adjusted the first time, or that they had moved during the voyage home. Healing seemed impossible under the circumstances... Ignacio's condition was worsening. He could not feed himself and other symptoms announcing death were already appearing... The bones were fusing, but under the knee a bone superimposed itself onto another and resulted in a shortening of the leg. So obvious was the prominence of this condition. This displeased Ignacio greatly but he would not accept it. He thought that the deformity would not allow him to live his life as he wished so he asked the surgeons if they could re-cut the bone. They told him that this could probably be done but the pain would be worse than anything he had ever endured. Also, since the fracture was already healed, the operation would be long and difficult. He decided to nevertheless suffer through the procedure. The incision was made and the bone was cut. Many various attempts were made trying to lengthen the leg. They applied ointments, they lengthened the leg non-stop using instruments - stretching it and supporting it so that Ignacio could not move at all. Ignacio endured great pain but the Lord was going to give him back his health. There was such an improvement that his general state was diagnosed as excellent with the exception that he could not steadily stand on that limb which forced Ignacio to stay in bed. . .After...happy end."

Although this story is very old and short on technical details, it underscores the difficulties encountered by surgeons who have attempted bone lengthening by any method. The story also shows how the process of limb lengthening is endured with sometimes significant morbidity and poor outcome. A condition that requires an intervention as dramatic as bone lengthening is complex and high risk. Patient expectations are significant. Any surgeon intent on pleasing the patient and achieving success undertakes a difficult task when surgically lengthening a bone.

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## Membership News

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## Meet Our New Active Members

DR. EDWARD ABRAHAM is professor, Department of Orthopedics, University of Illinois School of Medicine at Chicago. He trained at the American University of Beirut, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and the University of Sheffield. He has particular interest in pediatrics, limb lengthening, malunions, and non-unions.

DR. MARK BRINKER is clinical assistant professor, Department of Surgery, University of Texas at Houston Medical School. He trained at Tulane University in New Orleans, where he also served as associate director of resident education. He has a particular interest in basic science, lengthening, and trauma.

DR. JAMES HUTSON is an assistant professor in the Department of Orthopedics and Rehabilitation of the University of Miami. He trained at the North Carolina Baptist Hospital and Jackson Memorial Hospital University of Miami. He has an interest in nonunions, malunions, trauma and osteomyelitis.

DR. JOHN LANGE trained at UC Irvine and works in Redding, California. He has an interest in pediatrics, limb lengthening, trauma, and osteomyelitis. He was elected to the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons this year (1998).

DR. BARBARA MINKOWITZ is assistant clinical professor of Orthopedics at University of Medicine and Dentistry in New Jersey, and is a resident of Staten Island, New York. She trained at Maimonides Medical Center in New York, and Scottish Rite Children's Hospital in Atlanta. Her interest is in pediatrics.

DR. SHAFIQUE PIRANI is associate professor of Orthopedics with the University of British Columbia, and works in New Westminster, B.C. He trained at Charring Cross Medical School, the University of British Columbia, and the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, Ontario. He is particularly interested in pediatrics, foot deformities, and trauma.

DR. MARK ROBINSON is Director of Orthopedic Surgery at Ventura County Medical Center in Ventura, California. He received his undergraduate training from Princeton University, and his orthopedic training at University of San Francisco Orthopedic Residency Training Program. He has a particular interest in non-unions, trauma, and the Compass hinge.

DR. STEPHEN SUNDBERG received his undergraduate training from Dartmouth College, M.D. from the University of Utah (Salt Lake City), did his orthopedic residency at the Mayo Clinic, and completed a fellowship in Pediatric Orthopedics in Adelaide Children's Hospital (Adelaide, Australia). He is on staff at Twin Cities Shriner's Hospital, and is a member of Gillette Specialty

Healthcare and Children's Healthcare (Minneapolis/St.Paul). His interest is in pediatrics and limb lengthening.

## **Meet Our New Corresponding Members**

DR. RIYAD DAKWAR is from Nazareth, Israel. He trained in Belgium, and is currently the senior pediatric orthopedic surgeon of the Nayriya Hospital, and consultant in the University Hospital, Rambam, in Haifa. He is a member of SICOT, the Israeli Orthopedic Society, and the Israeli Pediatric Orthopedic Society. He made a presentation entitled "Twelve Years of Experience with the ilizarov Apparatus" to ASAMI-North America in 1997.

DR. KOZO NAKAMURA is an M.D., Ph.D. (both degrees received from the University of Tokyo). He was an Associate Professor of Orthopedic Surgery at the Jichi Medical School from 1988-1993. He has been an associate professor, Department of Orthopedic Surgery, Faculty of Medicine, the University of Tokyo since 1993. He is a member of the organizing committee of ASAMI-Japan. He has a particular interest in pediatrics and limb lengthening.

## **Change in Membership Status from Associate to Active**

DR. GREG STOCKS is an Assistant Professor in the Orthopedic Surgery Department of the Texas Tech University Health Science Center in Lubbock, Texas. He trained at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas, and Texas Tech in Lubbock. He also completed fellowships in Ilizarov methods in Lecco, Italy and total joint replacement in London, England. He was an Associate member, but was elevated to Active status since his entry to the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons in 1997.

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## **Lone Star Dental Scientist Wins Top ASAMI Grant**

This year's Young Investigator's Award was awarded to a researcher from Texas: Jason Cope, DDS, a PhD fellow at the Department of Biomedical Sciences, Baylor College of Dentistry. His submission was entitled "Membranous Bone Formation Following Sagittal Osteodistracted of the Canine Mandible." Jason's co-investigators include: Mikhail Samchukov, Dwight Bronson, David Ross (all from Texas Scottish Rites Hospital for Children) and Thomas Diekwit of Baylor.

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## **CORR Becomes ASAMI's Official Publication**

**Clinical Orthopaedic and Related Research will soon become the official publication of The Limb Lengthening and Reconstruction Society. Our group will thus join several other distinguished organizations that now have CORR as their official publication, including the Academic Orthopaedic Society, The Hip Society, The Musculoskeletal Tumor Society and the Knee Society. The name of our society will be listed on the title page of CORR along with those mentioned above. The International Cartilage Repair Society has also asked CORR to become their official publication. A deputy editor from ASAMI will serve on the editorial board to assist Dr. Brighten review submissions in the field of limb lengthening and reconstruction. CORR has a long and close relationship with distraction osteogenesis, having published Professor Ilizarov's first English-language articles. Likewise, CORR has had two Symposia dealing with the ilizarov Method. Please show your support for CORR by submitting appropriate manuscripts to that journal. We will be given a reduced subscription rate for ASAMI members, but we must have 100% participation for such rates to be offered. The Board of Directors will have to consider the matter of including a CORR subscription as part of our dues.**

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## **FUTURE MEETINGS**

ASAMI Deutschland announces a Deformity course to be held in Wiesbaden, Germany on April 22-25, 1998. The course chairman is Dr. Etienne Heijens of Wiesbaden. For further information, contact Frau C. Rubig, Orthopadische Klinik Wiesbaden, Mosbacher Str. 10, D-65187 Wiesbaden.; Tel: 94 611 883 202; fax:: 49 611 883 204

Dr. Youseff Othman announces an ilizarov Course to be held in Amman Jordan in late October 1998. For further information, contact Dr. Othman in Amman Jordan (address available on request at Distraction office.)

The Baltimore Deformity Course will be held in September 1998. Contact the Maryland Center of Limb Lengthening and Deformity Correction for further information.

The Ilizarov Advance Course will be held in Cancun Mexico on October 22-24, 1998. The program will feature not only Advanced Ilizarov Techniques, but also include didactic and Workshop programs for the Heidelberg Monolateral Angulator, The Taylor Spatial Frame and the Compass Universal Hinge. Contact Monica Dolby at Smith & Nephew for more information.

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