

IN MEMORIAM

Rudolf Frey

August 22, 1917 - December 23, 1981

Professor Rudolf Frey, Chairman of the Department of Anesthesiology and Reanimation of the Gutenberg University Medical School and Hospital, in Mainz, West Germany, died suddenly on December 23, 1981. His colleagues, associates, friends and family are left in a state of shock and grief over this immense loss to anesthesiology, emergency medicine and disaster medicine.

Rudolf Frey was born and raised, and studied medicine, in Heidelberg, where he also began a career as a surgeon during World War II. His experiences as a physician during the War and with emergency medicine after the War influenced his development as a world citizen, pacifist and humanist. During the 1950s he was Chief of Anesthesiology at the University Hospital in Heidelberg, where he began his career as one of Europe's pioneering anesthesiologists. During the 1960s, in Mainz, he became West Germany's first university professor and department chairman of anesthesiology and one of Europe's initiators of resuscitation and intensive care programs.

In Mainz, he developed numerous new programs which made the University known in the fields of anesthesiology, resuscitation, intensive care, emergency medicine, disaster medicine, pain control and medical ethics. He became a frequent traveler and lecturer, a consultant throughout Germany for numerous national and international organizations, and member of numerous professional and scientific societies. He was one of the world's initiators of physician-staffed ambulance and helicopter services and of modern disaster medicine.

In the early 1970s Dr. Frey first spoke of his desire to initiate a Club of Rome-type group of emergency care enthusiasts (physicians and non-physicians) with clout, expertise and activism, in an attempt to improve worldwide emergency care and, thereby, disaster response. This dream was actualized in 1976 when, after meeting

with disaster agencies in Geneva, he established the Club of Mainz for Emergency and Disaster Medicine Worldwide -- his most visionary creation (Crit Care Med 6: 389, 1978). The Club of Mainz first convened in 1976 to establish its goals, objectives and bylaws. The first Club of Mainz organized World Congress on Emergency and Disaster Medicine was then held in September 1977 in Mainz. In June 1981, he co-chaired the Second World Congress on Emergency and Disaster Medicine in Pittsburgh. At this Pittsburgh Congress Dr. Frey discussed the senseless suffering on Earth; however, he also presented hope for it to be diminished or abolished. He said that several million people could be saved through prevention of accidents, wars, and hunger, and, where prevention fails, through improved emergency care and through disaster medicine oriented teaching, planning and preparedness. This mix of warning and hope is inherent in the goals of his missions.

Dr. Frey held an ongoing visiting professorship at the University of Pittsburgh (which honored him in June 1981); was among the first foreign members of the Society of Critical Care Medicine; and was Chairman of the Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Committee of the World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists. Dr. Frey authored, co-authored or edited over 300 papers, chapters and books and co-initiated the journal Der Anaesthesist, the Disaster Medicine monograph series of Springer-Verlag and other ongoing publications.

Dr. Frey touched many lives; as initiator of numerous programs, symposia and congresses; as founding chairman of his department and its acute medicine programs in Mainz; through his interest in medical ethics and worldwide disaster relief; and through his unique human qualities of broad-mindedness, generosity, loyalty, dedication, activism, diplomacy, compassion and friendship. His star will shine into the future and many shall follow it by continuing his ideas and programs.

Peter Safar, M.D.
Pittsburgh, U.S.A.

By Peter Safar, M.D.
University of Pittsburgh, USA
December, 1981

RUDOLF FREY
8/22/17-12/23/81

Rudolf Frey, known as "Rolf" in Europe and "Rudi" in America -- a leading "star" of anesthesiology, emergency medicine and disaster medicine -- ended his life's struggles. He influenced many lives positively. His years were rich with experiences, feelings and contributions.

This is to convey to his family, his friends and his colleagues the sympathies and positive memories about Rudi from the following:

(1) The faculty of the University of Pittsburgh, to which he belonged as visiting professor and which honored him with a certificate of special recognition.

(2) From the Society of Critical Care Medicine of America, to which Rudi belonged by inception.

IN MEMORIAM

(3) From the Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation Committee of the World Federation of Anaesthesiologists, which he had chaired for several years.

RUDOLF FREY

Born August 22, 1917 Died December 23, 1981
in Heidelberg in Mainz

(4) From the Club of Mainz for Emergency and Disaster Medicine Worldwide, which he initiated and led as its president, and which represents the world.

Presented at the funeral services

on December 30, 1981

in Mainz, West Germany

We founders or co-founders of these organizations cannot imagine that from now on Rudi will not meet with us anymore to plan, lead and catalyze. We must never forget how he led committees with his cordiality and hospitality, and how he motivated each committee member with open arms before.

by

Peter Safar

University of Pittsburgh

He was and will remain one of my best friends. Our friendship started over two decades ago. In 1959 and 1962 we published together the first papers in the German language about modern resuscitation. Since then, our mutual departments and programs have learned from each other. We will never forget his visits to Pittsburgh since 1961; his first visit was soon after the initiation of our Department of Anesthesiology. Likewise, we will always remember his gracious hospitality during my and my associates' visits to Germany, also starting in 1961. Surgery and anesthesiology were the base specialties for both of us. Alone, these fields would have been too narrow for us. I learned to appreciate Rolf's professional contributions, primarily as an initiator of: the first professorship of anesthesiology in Germany at the University of Heidelberg in the 1950s; the first departmental chairmanship at the Gutenberg University in Mainz starting in 1960; the first textbook of anesthesiology in Germany; the first physician-staffed advanced life support ambulances in Western Europe; the ambulance helicopter services; numerous training programs, symposia and congresses; and -- last, but not least -- the Club of Mainz and its associated monograph series "Disaster Medicine", published by Springer-Verlag.

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University of Pittsburgh, USA
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This is to convey to his family, his friends and his colleagues the sympathies and positive memories about Rudi from the following:

- (1) The faculty of the University of Pittsburgh, to which he belonged as visiting professor and which honored him with a certificate of special recognition.
- (2) From the Society of Critical Care Medicine of America, to which Rudi belonged since its inception.
- (3) From the Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Committee of the World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists, which he had chaired in recent years.
- (4) From the Club of Mainz for Emergency and Disaster Medicine Worldwide, which he initiated and led as its president, and which represents his most visionary creation.

We founders or members of these organizations cannot imagine that from now on Rudi will not meet with us anymore to plan, lead and catalyze. We must never forget how he led committees with his cordiality and hospitality. He greeted each committee member with open arms before starting business.

He was and will remain one of my best friends. Our friendship started over two decades ago. In 1959 and 1962 we published together the first papers in the German language about modern resuscitation. Since then, our mutual departments and programs have learned from each other. We will never forget his visits to Pittsburgh since 1961; his first visit was soon after the initiation of our Department of Anesthesiology. Likewise, we will always remember his gracious hospitality during my and my associates' visits to Germany, also starting in 1961. Surgery and anesthesiology were the base specialties for both of us. Alone, these fields would have been too narrow for us. I learned to appreciate Rolf's professional contributions, primarily as an initiator of: the first professorship of anesthesiology in Germany at the University of Heidelberg in the 1950s; the first departmental chairmanship at the Gutenberg University in Mainz starting in 1960; the first textbook of anesthesiology in German; the first physician-staffed advanced life support ambulances in Western Europe; the ambulance helicopter services; numerous training programs, symposia and congresses; and -- last, but not least -- the Club of Mainz and its associated monograph series "Disaster Medicine", published by Springer-Verlag.

About one-half year ago at the Pittsburgh World Congress on Disaster Medicine, Frey talked about the history of mankind having been a history of catastrophies. However, whenever he presented the senseless suffering on Earth he also presented hope for it to be diminished or abolished. He said in that talk that several million people could be saved through prevention of accidents, wars, and hunger; and where prevention fails, through improved emergency care, and through disaster medicine-oriented teaching, planning and preparedness. This mix of warning and hope is inherent in the goals of his Club of Mainz, which intends to use implementation mechanisms of the Club of Rome.

More important than the facts in his curriculum vitae are his human qualities. Outwardly Rudi was always positive, cheerful, exuberant and euphoric. Inwardly he probably was much more complex than most of his acquaintances realized. Some of his most beautiful human qualities contrasted each other. He was generous, broadminded and liberal. Generous as a host and in giving help, money and compassion to anybody in need. He gave asylum to refugees. He was generous with money. He was the first department chairman of Anesthesiology in Germany to share the department's private practice income with his colleagues. He was generous with his family. Broadminded he was for medicine, by concentrating on important practical topics. Liberal he was in political matters, where he stood up to principles. He functioned with a sensitive cordiality. He had the ability to listen to people and to recognize their needs. How sad that we did not listen enough to recognize his needs.

He had courage. He assumed responsibility for his own life, creativity, and death. It took courage and foresight to embark on large-scale planning like the Club of Mainz. In his program developments he was an activist and organizationally a "workaholic", but at the same time a diplomat, who could charm people who were angry with him.

He showed sincerity and loyalty toward his collaborators and friends. He was a unique friend for those who loved him for the person he was. In the development of friendships and collaborations he always assumed first that a person is good and reliable. Naturally, when some later turned out to be the contrary, disappointment sometimes followed. Those who did not disappoint him, however, had his continuous support.

All these and other superior human qualities helped Rudolf Frey to become one of the first German professors after World War II who broke out of the confines of his homeland, spread abroad the potential goodness of Germany by example and became internationally recognized. His experiences as an anesthetist at the frontline and with emergency medicine after the war have naturally led him toward pacifism and world citizenship. He became an apostle of humanism.

Rudolf was always outwardly smiling, seemingly happy. Even when he suffered the worst possible personal tragedy, the death of his son, he insisted on maintaining "self control" and continuing his living, working and struggling. He also had reasons for joy, as he has a second son, three daughters and six grandchildren. He deeply loved his sons and daughters.

Although he confided in me the joys and problems of his profession, family, love and friends, he remained closed (withdrawn) about his depressions, the hidden suffering of his soul. Only close friends could sense grief behind his happy dancing at congresses, like the spontaneous tap dancing at the Pittsburgh World Congress banquet. Either we were too clumsy to fully understand him or he was incapable of identifying or communicating his own needs and therefore could not be helped even by his friends.

He sometimes tried to communicate with me through gifts of books. The last book I received from him was the report by the physician Peter Bamm about the horrors of the Russian front in World War II, called "The Invisible Flag". Rudi said that he could have written some sections of this book himself, based on his own experiences. Wars then and now were much on his mind.

Immortality comes from the fact that every human life, no matter how brief, somehow influences its surroundings. Rudi lives on through his ideas and his achievements, as well as through his children, pupils, friends and colleagues. We in Pittsburgh were influenced by him; also by his son Martin, who in turn was influenced by his father. Rudi had become a link in many chains, the biologic as well as professional and personal ones.

As Rudi's legacy, we who remain behind should now try to close or strengthen those links in the chains which he started but are still incomplete. Here are some examples: The Club of Mainz needs leaders, researchers and diplomats who can devote time and energy to the Club's objectives; this requires funds. The monograph series Disaster Medicine must continue to help catalyze the worldwide implementation of the goals of the Club of Mainz. The two volumes which will be the proceedings of the Pittsburgh World Congress in 1981 should be dedicated to Rudi's memory. The able members of the Department of Anesthesiology and Reanimation which Rudi started over 20 years ago in Mainz should learn from his life and death and replace infighting and jealousies with creativity by cooperation. The department has many opportunities to thank him through lasting, meaningful memorials, such as a Rudolf Frey research fellowship and an annual special lecture in his name.

While the students and colleagues whose lives he touched will always remember him, we also urge all his relatives to cherish the positive contacts they have had with him. The colleagues and friends, particularly those for whom he was host, should themselves be hosts to all of Rudi's children and close friends. All this is in the spirit of the oath of Hippocrates.

Finally, his legacy includes the lessons we should learn from the unnecessary pain he suffered from some. Those still fighting about power, money or prestige should make peace before it is too late. Not only in wars between nations but also in conflicts between people there are usually no victors. Only now can we suspect how much he must have been depressed by the petty, sometimes cruel weaknesses of human coexistence.

We must regard his end as positive, since he wanted it this way to be the final component of his creative life. We thank him for what he has done for us and we will always admire him.

And In conclusion -- Rudolf Frey was a "star". Desperate in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles to his work, loving and life, he decided to travel from this world into cosmos. His star will shine there forever. All who appreciated and loved him, as well as those who did not understand him, should try to follow his star, while continuing to work, strive and care on this Earth.

We're One of Thornton Wilder's thoughts is appropriate for this occasion: "There is a world of the living and a world of the dead. The bridge between them is love." The bridge which Rudi built for him and us is made of all types of love.

And we're left to ponder why.

It seems his happy moments
Were outweighed by strife.
The fact that gives some comfort now
Is that he controlled his life.

So many never take the path
Of absolute control
They let the whims of fate and man
Dictate and lead their soul.

Most see this as a wrongful act.
Life's value outweighs death.
But others go beyond these thoughts
And choose for them what's best.

So Rudi chose a path to tread
That's known by very few.
I wish you well, goodbye, dear friend.
"Und schlief in himmlischer Ruhe".

Nancy Kirinall
Pittsburgh
December 29, 1981

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Auf Wiedersehen, Rudi

If we're sad this day, it is for our loss
And not our friend who is gone.
So we cry for we know he'll not see again
The beauty of earth's dawn. Louis Stevenson (1850-1895)

At times like this, it's human to cry,
But it's really a selfish whim.
And the season of tears is all for us.
We're truly not thinking of him.

For if we were, we'd be singing now,
With just an occasional sigh,
Since Rudi has found the peace he sought
And we're left to ponder why. longed to be;

It seems his happy moments
Were outweighed by strife.
The fact that gives some comfort now
Is that he controlled his life. from the sea
from the hill".

So many never take the path
Of absolute control.
They let the whims of fate and man
Dictate and lead their soul.

Most see this as a wrongful act,
Life's value outweighs death.
But others go beyond those thoughts
And choose for them what's best.

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REQUIEM

A poem by Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1895)

Under the wide and starry sky
Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live, and gladly I die.
And I lay me down with a will.

This be the words you engrave for me:
"Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea
And the hiker home from the hill".

Born August 22, 1917 Died December 23, 1981
in Heidelberg in Mainz
Presented at the funeral services
on December 30, 1981
in Mainz, West Germany

by
Peter Sagar
University of Pittsburgh