

Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

“All Things Must Pass”
George Harrison

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Twenty years ago, I presented a new vision for medical publishing. *The Heart Surgery Forum (HSF)* was inaugurated in August of 1995 as a multimedia scientific publication communicating over the new “Information Highway” known as the Web. In the early days of HTML and HTTP, new ideas could evolve and disseminate quickly to a community that spanned the globe. The *HSF* began as a “Labor of Love” for my profession and for my colleagues as a dynamic tool for the betterment of themselves and their patients. Included in the original *HSF* Web site was a novel means to present interesting cases using color photos, movies, text and graphics, which was groundbreaking in 1995. This format led to the logical next step, creation of a peer reviewed specialty journal. The *HSF* journal, jointly created by myself and my publishing partners in Charlottesville, Virginia (Bill Carden and Joe Jennings), went live in early 1996. In the spring of 1996, the *HSF* journal became one of the cornerstones for the formation of the International Society of Minimally Invasive Cardiac Surgery (ISMICS), when the new society was proposed by Patric Nataf at the Palais Des Congres, Paris. For the next four years, the *HSF* journal was the voice of this nascent group until it spawned off its own journal. The *HSF* became the first journal awarded indexing by The National Library of Medicine in just its second year, and has published hundreds of papers, many quoted and referenced by others. In 2010 and 2014, members of *HSF* gathered for their own Scientific Meetings in Croatia, bringing together the friends and colleagues who have participated in the *HSF* from all corners of the globe.

August 2016 marks the 21st year of *HSF* and its popular listServ, the OpenHeart-L. My original programming of the Web site and journal has spawned many developments in our field and brought together many of the brightest minds. There have been changes in the Editorial Board and the Web site, but 21 years, in my mind, is a crossroads and an invitation for change. It has been my honor to serve as both the founder of this dynamic group of surgeons and the Editor-in-Chief of the *HSF* journal. Now it is time for a new generation to take the helm and lead the *HSF* into the next era of development. As I approach my 65th birthday in January, I am reminded that change and innovation are the domain of the young. I have guided this project for two decades and have given my

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best ideas to *HSF*. However, no one person can know or do all. I believe it is time for new life and new thoughts, a change in direction, an upgrade and infusion of youth and courage.

For this, I have called upon my good friend and colleague, Igor Rudez, MD, PhD, to assume the role as Editor-in-Chief of the journal. Igor has the qualities of leadership that we all admire, and has given unselfishly as the organizer of the two monumental *HSF* scientific meetings. Already an accomplished surgeon and educator, I believe the future of the *HSF* will be sound in his hands.



Igor Rudez, MD, PhD

Dr. Rudez is a graduate of the Medical School of Zagreb, Croatia in 1991. From 1992 to 1994, he worked as a research fellow at the University Hospital Center, Zagreb. He completed his General Surgery residency in 1995 at the University Hospital Dubrava, Zagreb. He was awarded a Masters degree in 1997 and a Doctorate in 2005. He trained in CT Surgery in Hamburg, Germany under the tutelage of Herman Reichensperner, and currently directs the aortic and coronary surgery programs in Zagreb. He is also supervisor for the cardiac surgery program at the University Hospital Mostar in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Dr Rudez serves as reviewer for multiple journals in our specialty including the *EJCTS*, *Military Medicine*, *Experts in Cardiovascular Surgery* and *The Heart Surgery Forum*.

I have known Igor for the past 10 years through my interactions on the OpenHeart-L, and then in person during informal gatherings of the *HSF* and finally at our exciting venues in Croatia. I am delighted to have his energy, creativity and devotion to the *HSF*. As always, there are many qualified surgeons who could be Editor, and handing over the reins to another after 21 years is always a decision of magnitude. I am very pleased that Dr. Rudez is ready and willing to step in and guide the journal and Web site through its next evolution. As a true reflection of the international role of the *HSF* in educating CT surgeons in every continent, the leadership now moves from the USA to a European setting. For those of you who have visited Croatia or attended one of the two *HSF* meetings there, the people and beauty of the countryside and coastline are truly memorable.

As in the words of George Harrison, as he issued his solo album after the breakup of the Beatles, “All Things Must Pass.” And so it is time for the baton of leadership to be passed in *HSF*. I will continue to act as advisor, participant, and supporter of the *HSF* community, but the leadership and direction now rests securely with our colleague, Dr. Rudez. Being the innovator of *HSF* since its inception has brought me in contact with a vast number of my peers and brought so many great personal accomplishments and memories. In many ways, the *HSF* has been the highlight

of my career in CT Surgery. However, to ensure its future, I must step aside and bring new talents to bear. Its an exciting time and I encourage all surgeons on the OpenHeart-L and readers of the journal to welcome Dr Rudez as you have myself over these past two decades. Onwards and upwards....

Mark M Levinson, MD

Founder

Editor in Chief Emeritus