

Francisco Javier Romano



Francisco Javier Romano passed away on July 5th, 2008.

He was the President of our Society in 1970 and 1971. A few years later, between 1978 and 1982, he would be President of the *Asociación Médica Argentina* (Argentine Medical Association), where he was its Honorary Chairman. Romano –Chicho, as called by his relatives and close

friends– was born on January 23 rd, 1916. He was the son of a renowned professor of Internal Medicine, Nicolás Romano, MD, and of Clara Bondi. His family was also made up of Graciela Josefina Romano de Provenzano and Domingo Alberto Romano. In 1936, before his graduation, Romano published his *Atlas Manual de Embriología* (Manual of Embryology Atlas), and in 1944, his doctoral thesis in the *Facultad de Ciencias Médicas de la Universidad de Buenos Aires* (Medical College - University of Buenos Aires), *Síndrome de tromboestasis por trombosis de la aurícula derecha* (thrombostasis syndrome due to right atrium thrombosis), a piece of work that would lead him to cardiological clinics.

As part of a rich family tradition, and with a proven record and personal experience, which dated back to 1946, when both as visiting or attending physician and lecturer in congresses, he started an active participation in the international cardiology. Thus, he visited the Metropolitan Hospital and the Mount Sinai Hospital of New York; in 1946 and in 1950, he attended the two World Congresses of Cardiology, which were held in Mexico and Paris and were chaired by Ignacio Chávez and Charles Laubry, respectively. During those activities, he had the opportunity to meet big international names, such as Wilson, Ritter, Fattorusso, Grishman, and Braunwald, among others.

Throughout many years, until 1983, he was Department Chief at Hospital Italiano.

His social work was significant, and his management, knowledge and friendship with Ignacio Chávez, Paul White, Eliot Corday, and Charles Laubry were fundamental for our country to be selected as the 1974 World Congress venue, which he himself chaired. However, that success would not have been achieved if Romano had not set the political stage so that the SAC members could persuade the delegates from the rest of the countries to vote for Argentina, and so Canada, winner for a wide margin up to the night before, lost by 17 votes.

Held in a tense political situation due to violence and economical and political instability, the World Congress was a very important achievement for the country and for the Argentinian cardiology, as well as the occasion for many young cardiologists to meet the international big names in cardiology, and become themselves known in the world scene for the first time.

Oral tradition says Romano, a skilful politician, in his role of Congress chairman, should have visited, blindfolded, the participants of guerrilla forces in their clandestine refuge, to be able to come to a non-aggression pact.

As a result of this successful event, there were funds available, and the idea of buying a more suitable building for the SAC arose. A year later, in 1975, his support, together with the support from other relevant personalities, such as Blas Moia, Fernando Battle, Julio Bronstein and so many others, was decisive to facilitate the present central office.

Francisco Romano, one of the figures in the *Sociedad Argentina de Cardiología*, in his glorious 92 years old, was still being consulted, showing tolerance, balance, and, above all, combative spirit. He had his ideas and other's ideas respected, and permanently searched for consensus. These features made of him an archetype of human being, one of the fewest to be imitated in Argentina nowadays.

José Milei