

## Armando Roncoroni, MD (1939 - 2013)

On the first day of this year, the heart of Armando Roncoroni – El Vasco, as we liked to call him – suddenly stopped. A few hours before, he was celebrating the arrival of the New Year with his loved ones –his wife, María del Carmen, and his children, Pablo, Julia, Miguel and Emilio. However, his death will not wipe away the imprint he has left on those of us who had the good fortune of sharing part of his long professional and personal life.

He was born 73 years ago, on the Argentina's Independence Day, in the city of Dolores. That may be the reason why he would never abandon his Argentine easy-going personality trait, not even during his years of training at Cleveland Clinic. He received his medical degree from the University of La Plata, and he always returned to that city, alternating his work time with Buenos Aires. He was part of the generation of brilliant cardiovascular surgeons who trained highly abroad and who returned to the country by the early 1970s, together with René Favaloro, with whom he performed the first coronary artery bypass-graft surgeries in Argentina.

Beginning 1974, when he was still very young, he developed a pioneering tertiary cardiac center together with Liliana Grinfeld, Roberto Grinfeld, José Navia, Kazumitsu Shinji, Félix Fabrikant, among many others, who joined the group of young cardiologists leaded by Dr. Moisés Aptecar. Those were the good old days of the Sanatorio Antártida, where he worked tirelessly until it closed in 2005, training highly experienced cardiac surgeons such as Jorge Trainini, Horacio Cacheda, Fernando Jaimes and many more.

Armando Roncoroni was Full Member of the Argentine Society of Cardiology and was in charge of the Council of Cardiac Surgery. He was also President of the Argentine College of Cardiovascular Surgeons

and the Argentine Association of Angiology and Cardiovascular Surgery. His corporate, teaching and scientific activities were promising, and his colleagues – particularly clinical cardiologists – have always recognized him as a man to be consulted. His ability to add experience was uncommon and as special as his ability to transmit it to younger physicians.

However, the most outstanding virtues of his professional life as physician have been his great humanism, kindheartedness, generosity and warmth towards hospital staff, patients, and colleagues. His medical judgment, common sense, confidence and serenity conveyed when making decisions in critical situations were only surpassed by his great surgical skills, ability and strong commitment to his patients. Despite his wisdom, he treated us like peers, and he was always ready to listen to the opinions of those who were less experienced and were always eager to learn.

Personally, I am grateful to life for the opportunity of having shared more than 25 years of work, mostly as Director of the Cardiovascular Recovery Unit of his Department. I was proud to have been his personal physician, but it was not as easy and pleasant as having been his colleague and friend.

We will be missing you, Vasco; we will be missing your teachings, your anecdotes, your easy-going humor, our lengthy talks about medicine, politics, history, literature, football, or life itself, while drinking mate or, sometimes, enjoying a barbecue. We will always remember you, particularly because of that uncommon combination of humbleness and wisdom that was typical of you.

**José Luis Barisani, MD, MTSAC**