



## Your Editorial Board: Dr. Martin Schechter

Dr. Martin Schechter, a longtime contributor to *CMAJ*, is a professor of epidemiology at the University of British Columbia and a medical scientist at St. Paul's Hospital.

### Who was your most influential teacher?

Dr. Abraham Shenitzer, a mathematics professor whose pure love of the subject and whose passion for teaching was absolutely infectious.

### What aspect of your work gives you the most pleasure?

Mentoring residents, fellows and junior faculty, and watching them develop.

### What research paper has had the most influence on your career?

There have been many. However, the following one showed me a lovely example of clinical epidemiology in action and that there is a place for devilishly clever titles and irreverence in an overly stuffy medical literature: Feinstein AR, Sonin DM, Wells CK. The Will Rogers phenomenon. *N Engl J Med* 1985;312:1604-8.

### What is your favourite pastime?

Skiing Blackcomb Mountain at Whistler.

### What book did you last read? What CD did you last buy?

*Le Ton Beau de Marot* by Douglas Hofstadter and *Love Scenes* by Diana Krall (a product of BC).

### What alternative profession would you have liked to pursue?

I did pursue a career as a pure mathematician prior to entering medicine and loved it. The career I still think about is writing.

### What complementary therapies have you tried?

Vitamins and a single visit to a chiropractor. I may have been the recipient of intercessory prayer, but how would I know?

### What advice do you have for a young physician?

Develop principles and base your career and your decisions on them.

### What was your biggest mistake?

Too numerous to mention. Indeed, choosing just one might constitute my biggest mistake.

### What was your biggest achievement?

1) my 2 daughters and 2)a. organizing the XI International Conference on AIDS with 15 000 delegates, 3000 media representatives, myriad political issues and 2)b. living to tell the tale!

### What make and year of car do you drive?

A poorly treated, taken-for-granted, 1991 blue 4WD Mazda MPV.



Dr. Martin Schechter on Goldie, daughter Rachel, 11, on Chico

## Order of St. John turns 900

The Order of St. John, which once counted knights among its members and kept the Mediterranean free of pirates, launches a year-long celebration of its colourful 900-year history this month.

The order, named after St. John the Baptist, was founded in 1099 by Benedictine monks who adopted the white cross as their symbol and

cared for the sick and injured in Jerusalem. The turmoil of the Middle Ages shaped development of the order, which was forced to adopt military might in order to continue its work. Over the centuries, its members provided a vital naval presence in the Mediterranean and were "protectors" of Malta. In the 19th century, following the loss of Malta to Napoleon, the order became devoted solely to acts of charity,

such as providing field ambulances during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-2.

Today the order continues to work in 40 countries, including Canada, as a nonprofit, nondenominational, charitable organization with a reputation for no-nonsense instruction in first aid and CPR.

More information is available from the St. John Ambulance Web site at [www.sja.ca](http://www.sja.ca).