

## Josef Rösch, M. D., DrSc.

*“If you want to learn a lot about a subject, write a paper on it;  
if you want to learn everything about it, write a book.”*

Upon being awarded the first honorary membership in the Czech Society for Interventional Radiology, Josef Rösch returns to Pilsen to deliver the “Josef Rösch Lecture” entitled “Those were the days my friends.” This meeting is a very special event for Josef since he was born in Pilsen in 1925 and attended gymnasium and medical school there. His first medical assignment after receiving his medical degree in 1950 was in the internal medicine department in Pilsen working under Professor Karel Bobek. It was also in Pilsen that Josef married Bohunka, his wife of 57 years.

Both of Josef’s parents had strong influences on his personality and were instrumental to his well developed common sense and practical approach to work and life. His mother had an unfulfilled dream of being a teacher. Her beliefs that hard work leads to personal satisfaction and will eventually bring rewards are perfectly reflected in Josef’s philosophy. She taught Josef to treat everybody like equals and stressed the importance of helping others to improve their lives. These values were very influential in Josef’s decision to become a physician.

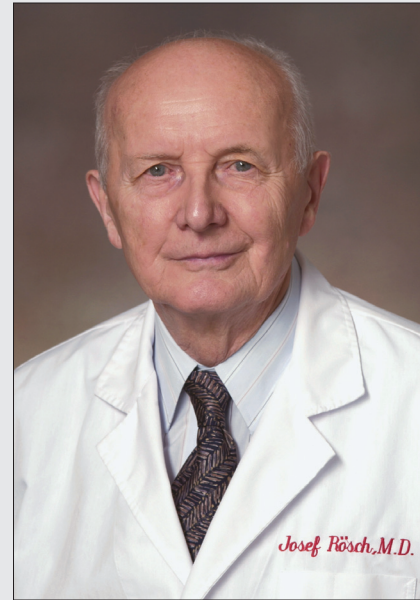
Josef’s father worked in the family business, a garden-husbandry nursery, that had been in the Rösch family for four generations. Beginning early in his youth, Josef helped in the nursery and gained a healthy respect for manual labor.

As a youth, Josef lived through several, rapidly occurring major political upheavals – a short lived democracy; the German occupation, and the Communist suppression. These tumultuous events influenced Josef to a great extent teaching him to be quiet, keep his mind on his work, conform and adapt.

During his long professional career, Josef has excelled in research, teaching and in educational activities. Most of his research originated from clinical work since during procedures he was always thinking of ways to improve existing techniques of diagnosis and treatment. In diagnosis, Josef has been recognized as a leader in splenoportography, hypotonic duodenography, and visceral, pancreatic and coronary angiography. In therapy, Josef has also been a pioneer in using vasoconstrictive therapy and embolization for the treatment of gastrointestinal hemorrhage, selective use of fibrinolytics, fallopian tube recanalization, venous, biliary and esophageal stenting, TIPS, and transjugular liver biopsy.

Josef, a beloved teacher of all his trainees, is respected by interventional radiologists around the world. His philosophy of “writing a paper to learn a lot about a subject and a book to learn everything about it” has not only been personally valuable in his career but also an example to his many trainees. Josef’s calm encouraging approach to young physicians both during their performance of clinical interventional procedures and writing scientific manuscripts has been an inspiration to many. To date, Josef has authored or coauthored 446 original and review articles and book chapters. Furthermore, he is the author of two books; one of them considered a classic has been published in four languages. Josef has also created many award winning teaching movies, videos and scientific exhibits. Teleducation is an area where Josef combined research with education. He is a pioneer in using the internet for multipoint conferences enabling interventionalists in multiple locations and continents to participate together in educational presentations and conferences.

In addition to research and teaching, Josef has been the principal organizer of many medical meetings. At an early age, Josef’s organizational skills were evident when he was selected as the head of Victoria Pilsen track and field club. Josef was the initial organizer and secretary of the first Czech Radiologic Congress in 1963 at Karlovy Vary. He invited Charles Dotter to the congress as a visiting speaker. It was there that a long collaboration and friendship developed that resulted in Josef initially being invited to the United States for a fellowship in Portland, Oregon and ultimately in his settling there. Between 1994 and 2002, Josef organized eight highly successful international interventional radiology workshops in Prague intended to update Czech and Eastern European radiologists on new interventional techniques. He was also responsible in helping to secure funding that allowed many young Eastern European radiologists to attend these Prague workshops. In Japan, Josef organized workshops on TIPS and fallopian tube recanalization. In the United States Josef organized the Dotter Institute Mt. Hood research symposia and meetings for the Western Angiographic and



Interventional Society, and the Society of Minimally Invasive Therapy. Josef continues to be actively involved in organizing Dotter Institute educational meetings.

Together with Bill Cook and Peter Kohler, M.D., the president of Oregon Health & Sciences University, Josef was instrumental and he personally was the driving force in the creation of the Dotter Institute in 1990. Although controversial at the outset, separation of interventional radiology from diagnostic radiology proved beneficial for both programs. Josef served as the first director of the Dotter Institute and held that position until 1993. For the past 14 years he has been the Institute's director of research. Josef feels that establishment of the Dotter Institute has brought him the greatest personal satisfaction in his professional life.

Josef always loved sports and was very athletic. He was active in track and field, football and volleyball during his youth. Later on he enjoyed running and hiking. At age 69 Josef completed the legendary round Mt. Hood hike (67.2 kilometers) in a mere 16 hours. Throughout his life physical activity has always been a method for Josef to balance mental stress and find inspiration for new ideas. Josef has aged gracefully. At 82, he continues to help young interventionalists with their research work, especially with publication of their articles. As Josef says, "In my earlier years, I used to live for my work, now I work to live!"

Josef is one of the world's most recognized and honored interventional radiologists. Among his many honors are gold medals from four prestigious interventional radiology societies, an annual eponymous lecture in his name at CIRSE and the Josef Rösch Lecture of the Czech Society of Interventional Radiology. He received lifetime achievement awards from CIRSE and the Czech Radiologic Society and the 650 Year Charles University Anniversary Medal in Prague. The American Heart Association awarded him the Distinguished Scientist Award and he received the Innovators Award from the Society of Interventional Radiology Foundation. The Oregon Health & Sciences University established an endowed professorship for interventional radiology research in Josef's honor. These awards, medals and honors are only a few of the great number of recognitions Josef has received.

Josef and Bohunka have been blessed with two wonderful grandchildren, William, 11, and Amanda, 9. For Josef, they have been a constant source of joy and continue to provide him with a new outlook on life. One of Josef's future projects will be an autobiography entitled "Letters to my Grandchildren" that will detail where "Grandpa Joe" came from and the important events in his life. We can be sure that he will be as successful with this personal project as he has been with his outstanding professional career.

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