



August 24, 1998

Volume 2, Number 13 • Indianapolis, Indiana

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## Embassy bombing comes too close to home

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The horror of a terrorist attack will remain embedded in the memory of an IUSM faculty member who is doing a two-year service at Moi University Faculty of Health Sciences in Eldoret, Kenya.

**John Sidle, MD**, assistant clinical professor of medicine and team leader of the IU/ Kenya program, was at the American Embassy in Nairobi when it was bombed Aug. 7. One week later, officials set the preliminary death toll at 247. Thousands more were injured.

Dr. Sidle had traveled to Nairobi that day as an escort for 12 Moi University students seeking visas to take electives at IU and other collaborating schools in the U.S. Despite the turmoil resulting from the attack, those students may still be able to secure visas. Six of the students are scheduled to arrive in Indianapolis Sept. 11 for a five-week rotation. The other six will be assigned to other medical schools in the U.S.

In an e-mail to colleagues the day after the blast, Dr. Sidle assured them that he and all 12 students were safe despite a narrow escape from the actual blast and falling debris. He and the students had been outside the embassy since 6 a.m. waiting in a long line for assistance. The visa office closes at 11 a.m., so by 10:30 the students were getting rather anxious. Dr. Sidle went inside the building to see if he could expedite the process and returned with forms for the students to fill out.

“I walked down the steps of the embassy, and we had no sooner distributed forms to each student when we heard a loud explosion from the side of the embassy,” Dr. Sidle said in his e-mail message. “At first, no one knew what it was--we thought a couple of buses must have collided. Then suddenly a literal stampede of people came running around the side of the building screaming for everyone to run.

“All hell broke loose as the stampede gained momentum. I ran up the embassy steps screaming for the students to follow me inside, only to turn around and see them running in all directions. Good thing they didn't follow me though, for no sooner had I stepped in the door, than a second much bigger explosion

came, literally blowing the doors right off the embassy. Why I wasn't blown out the doors too, I don't know. I think the counters shielded me.

“I ran back out to look for the students and saw no one at first. There was glass and rubble falling everywhere all around the area (the actual damage spread for blocks). The building behind the embassy was rubble.

“Luckily, one of the students quickly found me and we ran together to the car, where another couple of students had come. We kept a core group at the car, and kept circulating in pairs to find others. There were so many injured that I was sure we would find one of our own badly hurt. Unfortunately, thousands of people from buildings and skyscrapers all around choked the area, making it impossible to move and impossible to search. Medical teams mobilized the wounded very quickly and got them out. We were left with 10 students after 2 hours of searching--without knowing if an ambulance had taken the others away.”

Dr. Sidle sent nine of the students back to the university and he and another student searched the hospitals and morgue hoping beyond hope that they would not find the other two students there. The next day they located the missing students at the homes of family.”

On the positive side, Dr. Sidle said, he was amazed that none of the Moi students or himself were injured “beyond a few scrapes and cuts.”

The medical school in Kenya and IUSM have had a collaborative agreement since 1990 when the medical program was established at Moi. The IU-Moi program supports one full-time IU faculty member on site.

The vision that guides this collaboration is grounded in the conviction that both the American and Kenyan faculty, students and young doctors will be changed in ways that will enrich their lives, families, professional careers, and ultimately improve the quality of the care they give their patients. By developing collegial relationships, Kenyan and American faculty, students, and residents have the opportunity to develop medical leaders prepared to face the challenges of a turbulent world.

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## BRIEFS

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### **Braddom appointed**

Randall Braddom, MD, MS, has been named chief executive officer and medical director of Wishard Health Services and associate dean at IUSM. The appointment will be effective Oct. 1.

Dr. Braddom will assume the positions held by John Williams Jr., MD. Dr. Williams held the positions from 1990 until his retirement on Sept. 30.

Dr. Braddom founded the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at IUSM in 1991 and has served as department chairmen since that time. He will continue serving as a professor in that department. He also served as medical director of Hook Rehabilitation Center of Community Hospitals from 1991 to 1997.

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## Scope returns

Fall is upon us and Scope is back in print.

We depend on faculty and staff submissions to make Scope interesting and informative for all. Please send news items and story ideas to Mary Hardin, LO 401, or fax them to 278-3502. A third option for submitting items is e-mail them to mhardin@iupui.edu.

In the interest of space, Scope will no longer be printing faculty titles unless the position is relevant to the context of the story.

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## IUSM pathologist member of international forensic team

An international incident touched IUSM in a unique way in July when John Pless, MD, was asked to travel to Nigeria as part of a forensic team conducting an inquiry into the death of a long-time political prisoner.

Moshood Abiola, an African chieftain, died July 7 during a meeting about his release from prison with Nigerian and American officials. The family approached the Boston-based Physicians for Human Rights for an independent autopsy.

Dr. Pless and colleagues from Canada, Britain and Germany left July 8 to conduct the inquiry and returned home four days later from the politically unstable African nation. The team ruled that Abiola died as the result of serious cardiovascular problems.

Dr. Pless is president of the National Association of Medical Examiners.

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## Two appointed to named positions

Two IUSM pediatricians were appointed to named professorships at the Aug. 21 meeting of the Board of Trustees of Indiana University.

The professorships were established by the Riley Memorial Association in memoriam. Nora and Edwin Letzter, who founded the Indianapolis Machinery Co. in 1926, were supportive of several service and charitable organizations including the RMA which established the two professorships in their honor in 1997.

The faculty members and their new titles are:

- Mary Dinauer, MD, PhD – Nora Letzter Professor of Pediatrics
  - Ora Pescovitz, MD – Edwin Letzter Professor of Pediatrics.
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## Volunteers needed for second RiverFest

The National Institute for Fitness and Sport (NIFS) and IU Medical Group-Specialty Care are sponsors of the second annual RiverFest, Saturday, Sept. 5.

A health fair, children's events, a 5-mile run/walk race, 5-kilometer fun walk, cookout and other events are planned. All activities take place at NIFS beginning at 8:30 a.m. and continue until noon.

Volunteers are needed. They will receive a free T-shirt, 3-day guest pass to NIFS and a free lunch. To volunteer or for more information about the events, call Vanessa at 274-3432, ext. 207.

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## HONORS

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**David A. Williams, MD**, has been elected president of the International Society of Experimental Hematology. Dr. Williams also has been elected secretary-treasurer and **Mary Dinauer, MD, PhD**, has been elected councilor of the American Society of Clinical Investigators. Dr. Dinauer also has been named a member of the NIH Hematology Study Section, Center for Scientific Review, for a four-year term.

In recognition of their contributions to public health in Indiana, **Jacquelyn O’Palka, PHD, RD**, and **Sara Blackburn, PhD, RD**, have received an Award of Excellence for Work/Advocacy from the Association of State and Territorial Public Health Nutrition Directors. The award was presented during the group’s annual meeting in June.

**Richard Rink, MD**, has been elected president of the Society of Genitourinary Reconstructive Surgeons during their annual meeting in July.

**Robert Saywell Jr., PhD, MPH**, has been honored as the 1998 Outstanding Alumnus by the Alumni Association of Dean College in Franklin, Mass.

The National Childhood Cancer Foundation has designated **Susanne Ragg, MD, PhD**, a William Kennedy Research Fellow. With the designation, Dr. Ragg will receive a two-year fellowship award of \$25,000 the first year and \$30,000 the second year to fund her research in pediatric cancer.

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## Wife of Fort Wayne director dies

**Sharon Rose Crowder Ragatz, wife of Barth Ragatz, PhD**, director of the Fort Wayne Center for Medical Education, died Aug.13 following heart by-pass surgery.

Contributions can be made to the IU Foundation for the Fort Wayne Center for Medical Education or The Chapel, 2505 W. Hamilton Road South, Fort Wayne, Ind., 46804.

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<http://www.medicine.indiana.edu>