Janice Marie Sikorski Pfeffer

October 31, 1943 January 23, 2000 (56) Chestnut Hill, MA

At services held on January 26th, friends and colleagues paid tribute to Boston Women's Hospital (BWH) researcher, **Janice Marie Sikorski Pfeffer**, **PhD**, who died on January 23rd after a long illness. Born in Rockford, IL on October 31, 1943, she is survived by mother, Mary Frances Sikorski, Rockford, husband Mark Pfeffer, MD, PhD, Chestnut Hill, MA, and children, Kathryn and Michael Pfeffer.

Janice Marie Sikorski Pfeffer, graduated from West High School in 1961, and later, with honors from Rockford College. At Rockford College she studied with lab partner, Marc Pfeffer, who shared her passion for integrative physiology. Janice and Marc became inseparable, not only as husband and wife, but also as collaborators in integrative physiology. She was awarded her PhD in Physiology and Biophysics from the University of Oklahoma where she studied under Dr. Edward D. Frohlich. Her doctoral thesis, "Longitudinal Changes in Cardiac Function and Geometry During the Development of Left Ventricular Hypertrophy in the Spontaneously Hypertensive Rat," became a classic study on the role of cardiac hypertrophy and left ventricular remodeling.

She continued her studies as a post-doctoral fellow in Dr. Eugene Braunwald's laboratory at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, Harvard Medical School. There she demonstrated that progressive ventricular enlargement, "ventricular remodeling," occurs following a myocardial infarction, and that this process continues long after the histologic resolution within the infarct zone. Her landmark study, "Influence of Chronic Captopril Therapy on the Infarcted Left Ventricle of the Rat", definitively demonstrated that ventricular enlargement was attenuated by angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitors, and that favorable alterations in ventricular remodeling in the animal model were associated with improved cardiac performance and prolonged survival. These pioneering animal studies introduced the concept of ventricular remodeling as a potential therapeutic target, and subsequently served as the basis for the landmark clinical trial, Survival and Ventricular Enlargement (SAVE), which showed that long-term treatment with an angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitor (Captopril) prevented cardiac remodeling and resulted in improved clinical outcomes in humans. Based upon the results of this seminal translational study, angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitors have become one of the mainstays of therapy for the treatment of myocardial infarction.

Pfeffer next served for 25 years as a member of the BWH Cardiovascular Division, where she attracted international attention for her laboratory studies on improving heart function following a heart attack. With husband and collaborator, BWH cardiologist, Marc Pfeffer, Md, PhD, Janice identified a new use for the anti-hypertensive drug Captopril, which has since saved the lives of hundreds of thousands of heart-attack patients. A landmark BWH-based trial that began in 1987 showed that Captopril could slow enlargement of the heart's left ventricle, which typically occurs in the wake of a heart attack and often leads to a second attack and heart failure. That trial paved the way for studies of similar drugs now used to prevent first-time heart attacks in people with coronary artery disease.

The author of more than 100 publications, Janice Pfeffer served on editorial boards of prominent medical journals. In addition to being a meticulous and thoughtful scientist, Janice M. Pfeffer was a devoted mother and wife, who served as a role model for countless women scientists. She was the recipient of a Distinguished Alumni Award from her alma mater, Rockford College, where a scholarship fund has been established in her name to promote a greater interest in science among women.

The International Society for Heart Research established the Janice M. Pfeffer Distinguished Lecture. Each year, the International Council selects a speaker to deliver the Pfeffer Distinguished Lecture at the World Congress or one of its annual section meetings. The Lecture topic must address remodeling, heart failure, and/or hypertrophy. The intent of the Lectureship is to acknowledge not only the latest insights and advances in the field of cardiac remodeling, but also to remember the cardiovascular research contributions and remarkable personal and professional qualities that were emblematic of **Dr. Janice Marie Sikorski Pfeffer**.

References:

pfeffer_brochure_carrier_201.pdf (ymaws.com)

PFEFFER, JANICE M. was born 31 October 1943and received a Social Security number indicating Illinois. The Death Master File says she died 23 January 2000.
PFEFFER, ISADORE thru PFEFFER, JEAN (sortedbyname.com)
BWH Bulletin (bwhpublicationsarchives.org)