

100 Year-Old Heart Patient Sings Praises of ‘Wine, Women, and Song’

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“Schubert’s *Serenade*, do you know it?” asked Ernest Schoen. “I sang it for Eleanor Roosevelt in the San Francisco Opera House in the early ‘40s.”

The former First Lady, soldiers of the US army, clubgoers to New York’s St. Regis Hotel, and worldwide opera aficionados have all been admirers of Schoen. Today, one of his biggest fans is Daniel Blanchard, M.D., cardiologist at the University of California, San Diego Medical Center.

“Ernest has been a patient here for more than 10 years now,” said Blanchard. “He is my first 100 year-old patient, one the most fascinating people I have ever met, and a superb example of someone who has treated cardiovascular disease with great success.”

Born in Austria in 1907, Schoen began his musical journey with violin lessons at age 4. He was among the youngest to play in the Vienna Symphony Orchestra and the children’s chorus of the Vienna Opera. Later in life, during WWII, he served as a pole climber in the Signal Corps and became a trumpet player for the Army Air Force Band. He also performed regularly for the San Francisco Opera.



Daniel Blanchard, M.D., and Ernest Schoen celebrate his 100th birthday.

“My prescription for long life is ‘wine, women and song, and most importantly, not getting married until you’re thirty,’” jested Schoen. “As for Dr. Blanchard, I am lucky that he is my physician. He stays with me every step of the way.”

While Blanchard would agree that Ernest’s positive outlook on life and sense of humor are key to his longevity, he also points out that Ernest has been vigilant in aggressively treating coronary artery disease and high blood pressure with a combination of regular checkups, prescriptions, and exercise.

“Ernest’s regimen of keeping his cholesterol and blood pressure low with prescriptions, diagnostic tests such as angiograms, and daily exercise keep him going and going,” said Blanchard.

Though Schoen has been retired for thirty years now, he has not slowed down. He still travels, drives a car, and considers every day of life an opportunity to celebrate.

“I can remember when Ernest’s goal was to get to the Millennium. Since that day has come and gone, I now look forward to a champagne toast with Ernest on his 105th birthday,” said Blanchard.

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