

Boston Medical Center, Boston, Massachusetts

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Happy New Year!

We have had a wonderful, very busy and productive year. Our continued enrollment of centenarians, their family members and control subjects have led to new and important findings. 2006 also saw the introduction of a new protocol: The Long Life Family Study.

For interim updates and more information, please see our website at: www.bumc.bu.edu/centenarian

Changing Seasons, Changing Faces:

Last year the New England Centenarian Study welcomed several new staff members. Joining us full time in July were Kirsten McLaughlin, B.A. and Craig Clement, M.A. Kirsten and Craig work primarily on the Long Life Family Study.

We also welcomed Madeleine Jeune to be our study phlebotomist, and part time researchers, Nikki Chamoy, B.A. and Stephanie Baldwin.

In February of 2007, the NECS bid farewell to longtime staff member JaeMi Pennington. JaeMi left to pursue a career in public relations at a firm here in the Boston area.

Study Updates:

LONG LIFE FAMILY STUDY:

2006 saw the launch of the Long Life Family Study which is a multi site study of familial longevity. The New England Centenarian Study is collaborating with researchers at Columbia University, the University of Pittsburgh, Washington University School of Medicine, and the University of Southern Denmark and the National Institute on Aging on this important research endeavor.

These study centers are recruiting families with multiple members achieving very old age to become involved in the research. Participation entails an in-home interview, a brief physical examination, and collection of a small blood sample.

To qualify for this study, a family must have two living siblings over the age of 80 and complete a

telephone screener. If you, or a family you know, is interested, please contact our office at 88-333-6327 or email Stacy Andersen at Stacy@bu.edu.

Cardiovascular Study of Centenarian Offspring:

In June of 2005, Dr. Lara Terry began her study of cardiovascular function among the children of centenarians and control subjects. Dr. Terry has previously observed that the children of centenarians have markedly lower rates of heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure compared to controls. This study is the next step to better understanding how they do this. We are thankful for the enthusiastic response that we have received from our participants.

Since the protocol started in mid 2005, roughly 85 "kids" have participated in this study and we hope to reach our goal of 120 during 2007.

Subjects who are children of centenarians, the spouses of centenarian children, or our control subjects who live in the Boston area are being asked to come to Boston Medical Center one time for non-invasive testing. If you are interested in participating, please call Dr. Terry at 617-638-6677.

NECS Participates in Body Worlds 2 Exhibit at the Boston Museum of Science:

This past November, the New England Centenarian Study participated in the Body Worlds 2 Exhibit at the Museum of Science. Dr. Dellara Terry and Dr. Thomas Perls conducted a "Centenarian Panel" as part of the adult workshops taking place at the Museum along with the exhibits.

Drs. Terry and Perls were joined on stage by



two of our centenarians and their families. Della De Filippi of Cambridge, age 102, appeared with her son, Richard. Arthur Sampson from Reading, age 103, was joined by his daughter, Joan Arena, and his son, Robert Sampson.

The centenarians told stories about growing up in the early 1900s and gave their impressions of society today to approximately 70 paid ticket holders. The session lasted about an hour.



Recent Results & Publications:

Perls, T, The Different Paths to Age One Hundred. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*. 1055:13-25, 2005

Terry, DF, Wyszynski DF, Nolan VG, Atzmon G, Schoenhofen EA, Pennington JY, Andersen SL, Wilcox MA, Farrer LA, Barzilai N, Baldwin C, Asea A. Serum Heat Shock Protein 70 Level as a Biomarker of Exceptional Longevity. *Mechanisms of Ageing and Development*. 2006 Nov;127(11):862-8. PMID: 17027907

Schoenhofen EA, Wyszynski DF*, Andersen S, Pennington J, Young R†, Terry DF, Perls T. Characteristics of 32 supercentenarians. *Journal of American Geriatrics Society*. 2006 Aug;54(8):1237-40. PMID: 16913991

Terry DF, Pencina MJ, Vasan RS, Murabito JM, Wolf PA, Kelly-Hayes M, Levy D, D'Agostino RB, Benjamin EJ. Cardiovascular Risk Factors Predictive for Survival and Morbidity-Free Survival in the Oldest Old Framingham Heart Study Participants. *Journal of American Geriatrics Society*. 2005 Nov;53(11):1944-50. PMID: 16274376

All of these articles will be made available online:
<http://www.bumc.bu.edu/centenarian>

Centenarian Highlight:



Eunice Mildred Murphy was born in Lee County, Iowa on October 9th, 1900. She was the middle of 5 children born to Jay and Flora Murphy. She was raised on her parents' farm where they grew corn and beans, and kept horses and livestock. Eunice recalls riding to high school in a horse drawn buggy until she graduated in 1920, one year after women won the right to vote.

Today, Eunice keeps busy. She attends church each week, reads the Bible regularly, and enjoys singing. She keeps in touch with friends and family through her letter writing, and "always knows just the right thing to say" according to her family.

In October of each year, Denmark, IA celebrates "God's Portion Day" with a parade and festivities. The event originated as a celebration of the harvest and giving God "his portion." It has been an annual event for the past 57 years. Also an annual event since 1999, Eunice has appeared in the God's Portion Day Parade, much to the town's delight, on the back of her nephew's motorcycle. Parade watchers offer their birthday greetings to Eunice as she passes by.

Riding on motorcycles is just one of the things that she has done: Since turning 100, Eunice has been kayaking and cross country skiing in Colorado, and has even taken a tour of Alaska for a family wedding.

Our contact information at Boston Medical Center:

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<http://www.bumc.bu.edu/centenarian>
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Recruitment & Media Opportunities:

We are always looking for participants for our studies. If you know of any centenarians, their siblings, or children of centenarians, and their spouses who may be interested, please call our study toll-free at 1-888-333-NECS (6327) or email Stacy Andersen (stacy@bu.edu).

Send us your pictures!

We love getting your pictures! Please send us your photographs. We make regular submissions to various media and we love being able to include photographs of our amazing participants. If we decide to use your use your photo for any reason, we will contact your family to obtain permission.

If you wish, we will be happy to return any photographs to you.

