

THE NIH RECORD

Still The Second Best Thing About Payday

NIH'ers Urged to Take the Stairs

Do you only use the stairs during a fire drill? Do you take the elevator for one floor and then feel people's glares as you get out? Do you think you should exercise but believe your day is too busy? Then read on.

There are some new signs around the NIH campus and in most off-campus buildings encouraging employees to take the stairs. The campaign, organized by the worksite health promotion action committee (WHPAC) with the support of the Division of Space and Facilities Management, is



The folks behind the Take the Stairs campaign include (from l) Susanne Strickland, Office of Disease Prevention; Ev Simmet, Center for Scientific Review; Randy Redmond, NICHD; and Chris Gaines of ORS.

intended to remind employees that taking the stairs is a fast, easy way to improve your physical and mental health. More and more research is showing us that daily physical activity is important in the prevention and control of a number of chronic diseases. No matter how busy your day, you can always find ways to add small periods of physical activity.

These exercise periods add up. When incorporated with walking down corridors, between buildings, and similar activities, stair climbing can help employees reach

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The new South Entry to the Clinical Center is taking shape as steel beams form its frame. Rough grading (above, foreground) of the roadway up to the new front door is complete and work continues on the main lobby, cafeteria roof and passageways to the innards of the 45-year-old hospital. Below, many tons of structural steel are visible as the entry is grafted onto Bldg. 10. The driveway, when complete, will sweep beneath a covered portico.



Moving Mountains (of NIH Mail)

By Pam Dressell

Mail—it's one of those services we take for granted, with deliveries both at home and in the workplace. Few people consider the effort involved in getting the mail promptly to the right destination. But consider these numbers for a moment: 21,000 customers receiving 30,000 pieces of mail daily in 80 buildings (on and off campus) with 1,000 different mail stops. The staff of the Mail Services Branch within the Office of Research Services encounters mountains of mail like this every day and constantly seeks new, improved methods to get it to you—twice a day!

Realizing how much NIH relies on the mail to conduct business, the Mail Services Branch has initiated a number of streamlining efforts. A new initiative currently under way is the migration from "door to door" mail delivery to "clus-



Accountable mail tracking system uses bar code technology.

SEE MOUNTAINS OF NIH MAIL, PAGE 6

Postmenopausal Vols Needed

The Cardiology Branch, NHLBI, needs postmenopausal volunteers for a study comparing different forms of estrogen therapies. Participants must be in good general health and not be taking any medications, hormone replacements or vitamins for 2 months prior to study. Volunteers will be paid. Call 435-4038.



Dr. Susan Gottesman, chief of the biochemical genetics section of NCI's Laboratory of Molecular Biology, and Dr. Malcolm Martin, chief of NIAID's Laboratory of Molecular Microbiology, were recently elected members of the National Academy of Sciences in recognition of distinguished and continuing achievements in original research. A private organization of

scientists and engineers dedicated to the furtherance of science, NAS was established by a congressional act of incorporation in 1863 as an official advisor to the federal government in matters of science and technology. Election to the academy is considered one of the highest honors that can be accorded to a U.S. scientist or engineer. The 1998 election brings the total number of current active NAS members to 1,798.



APAO Sponsors Two Events

The NIH Asian Pacific Islander American Organization is sponsoring a Resumé/171 brown-bag lunch seminar on Thursday, May 28 at 11:30 a.m. in Wilson Hall, Bldg. 1. APAO will also sponsor a bone marrow registration drive Friday, May 29 in Wilson Hall from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. ■

Congressman Xavier Becerra of California raises his hand to ask a question during a visit to NIH. He and Delegate Robert Underwood of Guam along with eleven staff of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus came to the campus on Apr. 27 for an orientation tour arranged by the Office of Legislative Policy and Analysis. They discussed NIH minority programs and recruitment



with Director Harold E. Varmus, Deputy Director Ruth Kirschstein and staff. They also visited the Clinical Center and received briefings on a number of topics including colon cancer diagnostics, human papilloma virus research, diabetes clinical studies, cholesterol and high blood pressure education programs, and genomic mapping.



A Russian delegation sponsored by the U.S. Information Agency visited NIH recently to take part in a 1-day program organized by FIC as part of a USIA study tour "Nutrition and Public Health: A Freedom Support Project for Russia." The visitors met with representatives of NIDR and NIDDK, and were briefed on the role of the NIH Office of Dietary Supplements and on opportunities for international collaboration. Russian participants included (from l) Dr. Sergei Khotimchenko, director, Laboratory of Food Toxicology, Institute of Nutrition, Russian Academy of Medical Sciences; Valentina Prisyazhnyuk, deputy, Moscow City Duma (Council); Dr. Loudmila Goultchenko, deputy director, department of sanitary and epidemiological surveillance, Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation; Dr. Lydia Tereshkova, director, Division of Nutritional Hygiene, Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation; and Dr. Eleonora Sakharova, deputy director, Central Research Institute of Stomatology.

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Dr. Eva J. Neer, a member of the National Advisory General Medical Sciences Council and an NIGMS grantee for the past 15 years, has been named recipient of this year's FASEB Excellence in Science Award. The award honors Neer for "her pioneering contributions to knowledge of cellular signal transduction mechanisms, and her leadership as mentor and educator in the biochemical and biomedical sciences." She is a professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School and a senior biochemist in the department of medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. The award, sponsored by Eli Lilly and Co. and including a \$10,000 unrestricted research grant and recognition plaque, was presented at the annual meeting of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology in Washington, D.C. In addition to NIGMS support, Neer has received research support for shorter periods from FIC, NIAMS and NINDS.



Children's Inn Needs Volunteers

Overnight and weekend volunteers are needed to staff the Children's Inn, especially on holiday weekends.

Weekend resident volunteers typically serve three or four times a year, managing the inn from 6 p.m. Fridays through 2:30 p.m. Sundays. On 3-day holiday weekends and other special occasions, two volunteer teams may divide the responsibilities. One full-time staff member is onsite at all times. One-night shifts on Thursdays are also available.

The two-person overnight teams are most frequently married couples, two friends or mother/daughter pairs. The teams receive inn operations and procedures training and reside at the inn during their weekend experience as onsite hosts, facilitators and managers. The training is easy. The weekend is the best time to find out how special the children and their families are. To help, call Laura King, director of volunteers, 496-5672. ■

Is There 'Life After NIH?' Find Out May 21

The NIH quality of worklife committee invites you to come hear three former NIH'ers talk about "Life After NIH" in a panel discussion on Thursday, May 21 at 11:45 a.m. in Wilson Hall, Bldg. 1. Mattie Jackson, formerly with the Office of Human Resource Management, OD; Moe Hedetniemi, former NICHD executive officer; and Dr. Tom Malone, former NIH deputy director, will share their thoughts, expectations and realities of retirement. Interpreting services will be available. For reasonable accommodation, call 496-4197. ■

Asian Cultural Program Set, May 22

Everyone is invited to continue the celebration of the 26th anniversary of the NIH Asian/Pacific Islander American Heritage Program in Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10 between 7:30 and 9:30 p.m. on Friday, May 22. As this year represents the start of a new quarter century for the Asian Heritage Program, it is fitting that most of the performers and musical pieces will be featured for the first time at NIH. The program will include performances of music and dance from Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia and Korea.

The Cambodian Cultural Group will perform the classical dance "Aspara," and the "Coconut Folk Dance." The Asian American Arts Center will present four pieces including the humorous "Wedding Day," which depicts the wedding night of a very young groom and his bride of twice his age. The Hua Sha Chinese Dance Center will feature Chinese music and dance. Their program will include the "Fan Dance," a folk dance from the middle east of China that demonstrates various techniques of handling fans in fast rhythms. The Nritya Rangam Dance group will be introducing dances of Manipur to the NIH audience. The traditional dances of Manipur, a tiny state on the northeastern border of India, are famous for their variety and rich cultural significance. The Gamelan Mitra Kusuma will close the program with Balinese music and dance featuring a gamelan orchestra.

A reception in the Visitor Information Center will follow the program. All are invited to the reception to meet the artists and to feast on Asian pastries and snacks.

There is no admission charge for the program and reception, and no reservations are necessary. Since this is a popular event, it is recommended that you come early in order to secure a seat. As this is a family affair, children of all ages are welcome.

The program is sponsored by the NIH Asian/Pacific Islander American heritage committee, the NIH Asian/Pacific Islander American Organization, several NIH components and the NIH Credit Union. Sign language interpretation will be provided. For more information and reasonable accommodation, call 496-2906 (v/tty), or contact Victor Fung, email: vf6n@nih.gov; or Molly Eng, 443-7810. ■

Healthy Male Volunteers Needed

The cognitive neuroscience section, NINDS, seeks healthy men age 45 and older with less than a bachelor's degree to participate in a study on how memory changes across the lifespan. Participation requires 3-4 hours and participants will be paid \$40 to \$50, depending on time involved. For more information call 402-0060 and ask for the lifespan study. ■

Injured on the Job?

Do you have a work-related upper extremity problem or injury, i.e., carpal tunnel syndrome, tendonitis, or repetitive strain injury of the fingers, wrist, elbow or shoulder? USUHS is conducting a study that includes a \$40 payment. Volunteers must be ages 20-60, seen by a physician within the past month and currently working. Call (301) 295-9659.

TAKE THE STAIRS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the goal of 30 minutes daily of moderate-intensity physical activity recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American College of Sports Medicine. Employees are cautioned to start out slowly and climb as many flights as is comfortable, particularly if they aren't in the habit of exercising or haven't routinely climbed stairs. They should gradually add another flight until they can go the distance.

"By following this simple plan, the employees on the eighth floor could take some positive steps (pun intended) to becoming much healthier than employees on the second floor," quipped Ev Sinnett, a scientific review administrator who suggested the campaign. "Climbing down also provides physical activity and is something nearly everyone can manage. To start, you might try climbing up three flights in the morning (just get off the elevator at 5) and down all eight flights when you leave at the end of the day. If you feel deprived because you work on the second floor, you could always substitute a climb to the eighth floor for a trip to the cafeteria for a snack. You'll soon find this gives you more energy and concentration than a cheese danish does. Just remember to climb back down to your office!"

To emphasize the benefits of taking the stairs such as weight control, heart health, stronger bones, and stress management, WHPAC developed slogans such as, "Why WEIGHT for an elevator? Take the stairs and burn some calories," "Take steps for a healthier heart," "Bone up to good health...Use the stairs," or "Feeling stressed? Burn some steam—Take the stairs."

To keep it light, the committee chose cartoon characters to convey the message. "Even though our message is an important one, we're not taking ourselves too seriously" states Randy Redmond, chairperson of the exercise subcommittee of WHPAC. "We're just pointing out that climbing stairs is an easy-to-adopt way to improve health and well-being."

For other simple ideas for improving health, stop by the Health Fair on June 16-17, or visit WHPAC's soon-to-be launched Web site. ■

Bike To Work, May 22

Celebrate National Bicycle Month and National Heart Month by bicycling to work on Friday, May 22 and joining the NIH R&W Bicycle Commuter Club for orange juice and bagels between 8 and 9 a.m. in front of Bldg. 1, rain or shine. If you can't cycle in that day or are merely considering bicycle commuting, the club can supply information on parking, showers, routes, etc.

Thrift Savings Plan Open Season

The Thrift Savings Plan is having another open season from May 15 through July 31. FERS employees who were hired before Jan. 1, 1998, as well as CSRS employees have an opportunity to change their current election, or make an initial election.

Eligible FERS and CSRS employees may elect to contribute to the G fund (government securities), C fund (stocks), and/or F fund (bonds). FERS employees may contribute up to 10 percent of their salary each pay period and will receive matching agency contributions on the first 5 percent. CSRS employees may contribute up to 5 percent of salary, but do not receive any matching contributions. FERS employees who do not contribute receive an automatic 1 percent agency contribution each pay period. They may choose to distribute this among the three funds.

The features of the plan and directions on how to make a plan election or to change your current withholding are described in the Thrift Savings Plan Open Season leaflet, which will be distributed to eligible employees by their IC personnel office. More detailed information is provided in the *Summary of the Thrift Savings Plan for Federal Employees* booklet and is available in your IC personnel office. ■



History Now—NIEHS director Dr. Kenneth Olden (l) and Dr. Paul Kotin, the first director of what started as the Division of Environmental Health Sciences in 1966, pause before Kotin's portrait in the Bldg. 101

lobby of NIEHS headquarters. Kotin was scientific director for etiology at NCI at the Bethesda campus in 1966 when he became the first director of the fledgling division, which attained institute status in 1969. He joined the private sector in 1971, and visited the institute recently to discuss beryllium-related health issues as a representative of the beryllium industry.

Stress Study Needs Vols

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences is recruiting volunteers for a brief research study investigating the value of educational components relating to stress. This study takes approximately 2 hours over two visits to the lab. Also, you will complete some simple "home-work" assignments and several questionnaires. Volunteers should have no current or past psychological diagnosis or treatment history. Participants will be paid \$50 upon completion of the study. For more information visit <http://members.aol.com/anxietylab> or call Darin Lerew at (301) 295-9665.

Russians, NIMH Try to Stem Depression

Russian and NIMH psychiatrists and psychologists are developing a collaborative approach between primary health care and mental health specialists to reduce disability associated with major depressive disorder.

This joint effort was inspired by a recent study entitled "The Global Burden of Disease," identifying major depression as the fourth leading cause of disability worldwide. It is one of two mental health initiatives emanating from the Gore/Chernomyrdin health committee initiated by DHHS Secretary Donna Shalala and Russian minister of health Dr. Tatiana Dmitieva. The other initiative focuses greater attention on the mental health consequences of disasters.

"Enabling primary care doctors to work more effectively with specialists in the management of all chronic diseases is a relatively new area of emphasis in both countries, and one of increasing importance in the U.S. in this era of managed care," said Dr. Darrel A. Regier, NIMH associate director for epidemiology and health policy research. He cochairs the Russian-U.S. effort with Dr. Valery N. Krasnov, professor and director, Moscow Research Institute of Psychiatry, and president, Russian Psychiatric Society.

Russian doctors involved in this project recently spent a week of intensive training in Seattle, observing and evaluating several model programs for screening, diagnosis and treatment of depression in primary care settings involving the participation of mental health professionals in a variety of ways.

"Our Russian colleagues, led by Dr. Zurab Kelelidze, have been extremely productive in both



NIH recently hosted a delegation of Russian mental health professionals who are working with their U.S. counterparts to reduce disability associated with major depressive illness. Pictured above are (from l) Dr. Darrel A. Regier, NIMH associate director for epidemiology and health policy research; Dr. Valery N. Krasnov, professor and director, Moscow Research Institute of Psychiatry, and president, Russian Psychiatric Society; Dr. Steven E. Hyman, NIMH director; Dr. David Lozovsky, senior scientific advisor for international health, NIMH; and Dr. Philip Schambra, director, Fogarty International Center.

the depression area with NIMH, and in disaster-related mental health area activities with the Center for Mental Health Services in the past 6 months," said Regier. "They have developed educational programs in several Russian cities to help primary care providers recognize depression and have translated English language mental health textbooks into Russian." Next fall, he added, Russia will unveil a major public education program on depression and other mental disorders entitled "Nations for Mental Health." ■

The floor of the Bldg. 50 construction site has transformed from a muddy cauldron to an even grade from which the foundation of the building will soon rise. Work on bid package 2 has begun with contractor Bell Co. preparing to work on the concrete frame and basement slab.

R&W Has Discount Tickets

R&W has discount tickets available for *Showboat* at the Kennedy Center Opera House, Saturday, June 13 at 8 p.m. Orchestra seats, rows Y and Z in front of the overhang, are \$71. This is a savings of \$2 per seat, in addition to no service charge.

Tickets are also available to *Henry VIII* at Kennedy Center's Terrace Theater on Sunday, June 14 at 1:30 p.m. Orchestra seats, rows K and L, are \$57, which is a savings of \$3 per seat with no service charge.

For baseball fans, there will be an Orioles Bullpen Party on Saturday, July 25 when the O's take on the Seattle Mariners at 1:15 p.m. Tickets include upper reserve seat (left field), getting into the game early (at 11:15 a.m.) for a picnic in the bullpen area that includes hot dogs, hamburgers, baked beans, cole slaw, popcorn, beer and soda. Price is \$27, which includes tips and taxes. Transportation to the game may also be available; call R&W at 496-4600. ■



MOUNTAINS OF NIH MAIL, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

tered" mail delivery. A study comparing 11 government, military and academic institutions with mail operations similar in size and scope to NIH's identified clustered mail delivery as the most efficient and cost-effective method for high volume multi-facility applications. Sixty percent of those organizations studied used clustering with lower overall costs and less manpower.

How does clustered mail service work? The cluster arrangement is similar to a post office with assigned P.O. boxes. Generally, each building or building complex will have one strategically located "cluster" room. Each existing mail stop will be assigned a secure, key-operated mail box sized to accommodate the volume of mail received. Since the mail box can hold larger volumes of mail, ICs

will be encouraged to consolidate some of their existing mail stops and use one larger cluster box. Mail will be deposited in the boxes twice daily at regularly scheduled times by MSB staff. ICs will manage the distribution of keys and designate individuals who have access to the boxes. Those people can pick up the mail for

their area at any time during the day. There will also be interoffice and domestic mail slots where outgoing mail may be deposited and, like the U.S. Postal Service, pickup schedules will be posted and mail collected at the specified times.

Coming Up: Converting to Clusters

Converting to clustered mail service will enable the Mail Services Branch to continue providing twice-daily delivery of incoming and pickup of outgoing mail—at guaranteed times. In a survey of mail managers, this was deemed an important factor when considering any changes in mail service.

Clustering has already been successfully implemented in six NIH buildings: 9 and 45 on campus, and off-campus in the Federal Bldg., Executive Plaza, Rockledge, and 6100 Executive Blvd. Clustered service will be phased into other buildings over the next 2 years with full implementation expected by September 2000.

Slated for the next conversion to clustering are Bldgs. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 30 and 31. To prepare NIH'ers for the conversion, John Hunt, Mail Services Branch chief, and Warren Spinks, mail operations manager, have been spreading the word about this change in service. They have conducted briefings with IC executive officers, mail managers and other user groups. ORS wants to make sure that everyone is well-informed and that the conver-



Evan Holly uses the Paragon mail processing system.

sion runs smoothly.

In addition to the mail clustering project, the Mail Services Branch has initiated a number of other enhancements to keep the mail flowing smoothly and rapidly. Have you noticed that interoffice mail makes it from point to point sooner than before? Several months ago, MSB began sorting and handling interoffice mail as a high priority and separately from U.S. Postal Service mail, cutting delivery time in half and, in most cases, guaranteeing next-day delivery.

In May 1997, MSB deployed a 5-person customer service team responsible for handling customer inquiries and to serve as liaison between NIH and the U.S. Postal Service. The team also reviews and processes an average of 200 pieces of "unidentified mail" daily. This includes tracking down the many employees who move from one location to another at NIH without notifying MSB, as well as envelopes addressed with only the recipient's name. Customer inquiries are followed up with site visits to make sure the situation is resolved and the customer is satisfied.

Equipment Upgrades, Improvements

The central mail hub at North Stonestreet has upgraded many outdated pieces of equipment and now functions more efficiently. It uses a high-speed sorting machine to expedite the massive sorting process for incoming mail using less staff. With this machine, 6 workers can sort 25,000 pieces in a day. Previously used manual methods would require 10 employees to sort the same number of pieces. They also use 6 new postage metering systems that can handle 200 pieces of mail per minute. All 6 systems can run simultaneously, if necessary.

Another enhancement that will ensure the control and delivery of accountable mail (i.e., registered, certified, insured, and Express Mail as well as NIH specials) to IC mail stops and mail rooms is the use of bar code scanners. These scanners will track each piece of accountable mail from the time it is received in the central mail facility to delivery to the ad-



Lisa Harper, lead mail clerk at Rockledge II, uses mail cluster boxes and the mail repository in her building.

dressee. This device is also used as an automated trip ticket to monitor the arrival and departure of MSB staff responsible for handling and delivering this mail. When delivering mail to each mail stop, the drivers scan a bar code attached to the mail slot and the time, location, and mail group number is electronically logged. Data are reviewed by managers to make sure the drivers make deliveries according to schedule and are also used to make scheduling adjustments when necessary.

Safety First

Not only does it try to keep the mail moving, MSB also has employees' safety in mind. Were you aware that the MSB has an x-ray machine similar to those used at airports? Letters and any suspicious parcels are scanned as soon as they arrive at the Stonestreet facility to prevent harm coming to NIH employees from letter bombs or other potentially hazardous items.

MSB senior staff meet with IC mail managers quarterly to exchange information. Customer service reps are also available to provide training in proper mailing procedures to ICs upon request. One issue they can assist with is how to achieve cost-savings on bulk and other special mailings. NIH ICs frequently use contractors to help with bulk mailing projects. Contract firms generally mark mail "Priority" or "First Class" regardless of the urgency. In many cases the mail can be sent at the standard or special standard rate and still reach its destination on time. Using standard or special standard rates is significantly less expensive than priority or first class. For example, a large mail project sent at the priority rate that costs \$100,000 could be mailed at the standard rate for approximately \$75,000. If the mailing qualifies for the special standard rate it would cost approximately \$51,000.

Mail Operations Manager Warren Spinks passes on these tips that customers can use to help expedite the mail:

- ◆ Use the Zip+4 and mail stop codes
- ◆ Use proper return addresses
- ◆ Update your mailing keys
- ◆ Call MSB's Customer Service Team at 496-3586



Holly revs up the Novak mail sorter.

before undertaking large mailing projects or for any mailing needs. They can help you save time, money and effort.

These tips and other useful information will be available in a comprehensive Mail Services Guide that will be widely distributed across NIH and installed soon on the Web. Visit the ORS home page at <http://www.nih.gov/od/ors/>.

Frederick Festival Offers Free Lectures

Two scientific leaders will deliver lectures on May 28 at 7 p.m. as part of the Ft. Detrick-National Cancer Institute Frederick Cancer Research and Development Center Spring Research Festival. The presentations will be held at Strough Auditorium and all are welcome.

Dr. Edward A. Sausville, associate director of NCI's Developmental Therapeutics Program, will explain NCI's role in "Drug Discovery and Design Research." Col. Gerald W. Parker, Jr., commander, U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases, will discuss, "Can It Happen Here? Bioterrorism in the U.S."

To learn more about these government research areas, join the Spring Research Festival, May 28-29, at the Ft. Detrick parade grounds. The festival will also include scientific poster sessions, a career and health fair, and commercial exhibits from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on both days. For details, visit the festival's Web site at <http://www.ncifcrf.gov/FCRDC/conf/springfest/>.



Orchestra Holds Fundraiser, May 31

The Montgomery Symphony Orchestra will hold a concert to benefit the Children's Inn and Camp Fantastic on Sunday, May 31 in Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10. Suggested donation is \$2 for adults and \$1 for children.



Larry Vann puts a package through the x-ray scanner.

Kirby Named NINDS Executive Officer

Kevin E. Kirby recently joined the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke as its new executive officer. Before coming to NIH, he was deputy chief of staff of the Army Research Laboratory (ARL) in Adelphi, Md. Prior to that, he was chief of the director's strategy group at ARL. In 1991, he served as a fellow in the MIT Sloan Fellows Executive Management Program, a 1-year curriculum designed to provide the fundamentals and best practices in all management disciplines for executives. He received his bachelor's degree in chemical engineering in 1978 from Syracuse University and his master's degree in management from MIT in 1992.

Hildebrandts Unveil Diabetes Dragon

By Sharon Ricks

Hollywood came to NIH recently with the Stone House unveiling of a painting of a golden dragon that seems to have been hurled into outer space. "Taming the Dragon of Diabetes" was created by twin fantasy artists Greg and Tim Hildebrandt for the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP). The brothers did the original poster for *Star Wars*, the J.R.R. Tolkien Hobbit Calendar, and comics, posters, and trading cards of Spiderman, the X-Men, and Captain America for Marvel Comics.

Creating a painting for the DPP was personal. "My daughter Mary came down with diabetes when she was 9 and over the last 8 years or so has had retinopathy pretty bad," said Greg Hildebrandt. "She's an artist, so it's really devastating, yet her spirit is incredible. She's active, positive and energetic, but the retinopathy is traumatizing."

Now 33, Mary may soon need kidney dialysis or a transplant. Her uncle, Tim Hildebrandt, was diagnosed with diabetes at age 27. The Hildebrandts say the painting illustrates the monstrous devastation that afflicts people touched by the disease.

For Bob Huber, the fight against

the dragon began on Valentine's Day 1997, when he became one of 2,100 people to join the DPP. Since then, he's lost 30 pounds, his cholesterol level has dropped, he's started an exercise routine, and he's genuinely missing pizza with everything on it.

Between bites of salmon mousse and fruit at the unveiling, Huber, who is participating in the lifestyle modification protocol, explained his success simply: "It's education and willpower.

"Ordinarily, I would be trying to eat that whole block of cheese," he added, pointing to a mound of cheddar wrapped in nuts, "but now I think in terms of calories and fat." He hasn't had a hamburger, french fries or a piled-up pizza since he started, and he can be an investigator if he's tempted to overeat.

The DPP seeks 4,000 volunteers with impaired glucose tolerance in 26 centers across the country. Half of the participants will be minorities who have a high risk of diabetes. Investigators are trying to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes in these individuals through lifestyle or pharmacologic interventions.

Twin artists
Greg (l) and
Tim
Hildebrandt
discuss their
"diabetes
dragon" at
Stone
House.



According to Dr. David Nathan, DPP chairman, 35 to 40 percent of people with blood sugar levels above normal, but not yet diabetic, will develop diabetes within the next 5 years if not treated. He hopes the painting will further energize recruitment efforts.

The dragon flew to Los Angeles during Oscar week. It was auctioned off at the end of April, and proceeds went to diabetes research. Michael Jackson and Robin Williams are among collectors of the Hildebrandts' work.

In the meantime, Huber is learning to cook a light chocolate cheesecake, has a free pair of sneakers from Nike, one of DPP's corporate sponsors, and is the new owner of a reproduction poster of "Taming the Dragon of Diabetes."

Shirley Smith, another DPP participant, said, "I am determined not to become a diabetic." Diabetes has affected her grandmother, mother, aunts and uncles. She and a friend had planned to join the DPP on the same day, but her friend found out that she had diabetes that morning. "I don't know whether she was fortunate or unfortunate," Smith said.

The DPP is sponsored by NIDDK, NICHD, NIA, the Office of Research on Minority Health, the Office of Research on Women's Health, the Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research, the Indian Health Service, CDC, the American Diabetes Association and many corporations.

Local volunteers interested in the DPP should call the Medlantic Clinical Research Center at (202) 675-2082. Individuals from other regions may call 1-888-DPP-JOIN. ■

Volunteers Needed for Medications Study

Healthy volunteers ages 18-35 are needed for a USUHS study of commonly prescribed medications. The study provides free medical tests and involves multiple visits over a 3-month period. Participants will be paid. Call (301) 295-4009 or (301) 319-8204. ■



The Hildebrandts unveil their poster, "Taming the Dragon of Diabetes."

Pollack, Kuhn Retire from NIAID's Contract Management Branch

Toni Kuhn (nee Abbaticchio) retired recently after 25 years in the Contract Management Branch of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. Shortly thereafter, the chief of the branch, Lew Pollack, retired after 21 years in the institute.

Kuhn began part-time at NIH while she was still in high school. By 1963, she was working full time in the NIH personnel office. In 1965, she went to work for the Administrative Office for Collaborative Research as a secretary. In 1973, Kuhn joined the Contract Management Branch, NIAID, as a procurement assistant. By the time Pollack was selected as branch chief in 1977, she was a contract specialist.



Toni Kuhn

Together they saw NIAID grow from one of the smaller institutes to one of the largest. The AIDS epidemic was the main impetus. The R&D contract budget grew from approximately \$16 million annually in 1977 to \$166 million by 1995. Kuhn's responsibilities grew along with the institute's response to the national health crisis engendered by AIDS. By the time she retired, she had risen to chief of the preclinical AIDS research contract section. She was known as a particularly empathic manager and her experiences at all levels of the NIH hierarchy served her in good stead. Her expertise and sound leadership were acknowledged many times during her long and distinguished career. For example, she received the NIH Director's Award in 1990 and the PHS Special Recognition Award in 1994.

Kuhn and her husband, Dick, built a house 4 years ago in New Market, Md., on a golf course. She now expects to take full advantage of that environment to improve her game.

Pollack began his 38-year federal career following his graduation in 1960 from the University of Rhode



Lew Pollack

Island. With a degree in accounting, he began as an auditor for what is now the Defense Contract Audit Agency. He spent a year with the National Science Foundation before he came to NIH in 1967 and began work in centralized NIH research contracts. When contracts decentralized, Pollack was assigned to the National Institute of Child Health and

Human Development and was ultimately named chief contracting officer for NICHD. He was among the first people certified by the National Contract

Management Association as a professional contracts manager.

After he took over as chief of the CMB at NIAID, he became known for his superior planning skills, innovative thinking and vision. He, like Kuhn, was recognized many times for his achievements. He is particularly proud of the development of a computerized contract administration system, his role in the introduction of the electronic posting of requests for proposals and his considerable efforts in a "paperless acquisition" pilot project. This project was recognized by the DHHS Office of the Secretary with an Exemplary Service Award in 1996. Pollack also received the NIH Director's Award twice, once in 1980 and again in 1997.

He and Rhoda, his wife of 34 years, plan to focus their attention on ballroom dancing, their cats, their two married children, Jeffrey and Michele, their grandkids and travel. Lew will also try to find time for golfing, surfing the Internet and following his beloved Atlanta Braves.—Greg Pryor ■

STEP Session on Tissue Engineering

The STEP committee will present a Science for All session entitled, "Organs 'R' Us: Tissue Engineering," on Thursday, May 21 from 9 a.m. to noon in the Natcher Bldg., Rms. E1&2.

Tissue engineering is the science of developing techniques for fabrication of new tissues for restoration and regeneration of lost or impaired tissue function. Tissue engineered products are manufactured equivalents of functional body parts that can lead to new forms of therapy including wound covering, bone, cartilage and ligament substitutes, vessels, hormone and drug delivery devices and nerves. The goal of the presentation is to review current information in tissue engineering.

Three leaders in the field will discuss how advances in cell biology combined with progress in medical and surgical intervention are designed to provide new solutions to tissue and organ replacement therapy. They are: Dr. Hari H. Reddi, director, Center for Tissue Regeneration and Repair, University of California, Davis, School of Medicine; Dr. Scott P. Bruder, director, bone and soft tissue research, Osiris Therapeutics, Inc.; and Dr. Linda G. Griffith, associate professor, department of chemical engineering, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Moderator for the session will be Dr. John Watson, acting deputy director, NHLBI.

The series is free and open to all on a first-come, first-served basis. No advance registration is necessary. Inform STEP of any need for sign language interpretation or reasonable accommodation by May 19. For more information contact the STEP office, 435-2769, or visit <http://www.nih.gov/grants/step/step.htm>. ■

Study of Donors Needs Volunteers

Male volunteers over age 40 and females over 50 are needed for a study to assess the effects of donating blood on prevention of heart disease. Participants should have donated blood one or fewer times in each of the last 5 years, and given less than 15 units in their lifetime. Blood studies and a carotid ultrasound will be done. Two outpatient visits are required; pay is unavailable. For more information or to participate call Xin Fu, 402-4482.

NHLBI's Sheila Merritt Retires

Sheila Merritt, NHLBI associate director for administrative management, retires this month after 34 years of government service.

"Sheila has been a dedicated and resourceful colleague at the institute," said NHLBI director Dr. Claude Lenfant. "Time and again, she led institute efforts to find new approaches to administrative problems and has been a strong advocate of staff training and career development. And despite all the demands on her time, she has been able to serve as a mentor with young people. She was a guide for them and for the institute itself and we will all miss her."

Originally from Philadelphia, Merritt came to the Washington area to attend Morgan State College in Baltimore. She graduated with a B.S. in chemistry and later earned an M.S. in information technology from American University.

In 1964, she joined the federal government, soon taking a job as a chemist with NHLBI, then called the National Heart Institute. For nearly 10 years, she worked in the Laboratory of Technical Development on such projects as development of an artificial lung and various innovative instruments such as those to measure micro and nano quantities of body fluids, and one to measure oxygen saturation of circulating blood in vitro.

In 1973, she made a career shift into administration, eventually becoming NHLBI deputy executive officer in 1993 and then executive officer in 1996.

Early on, she worked on NIH and NHLBI projects that sometimes wound up changing NIH practices. For instance, recommendations from a study she conducted on use of the Privacy Act led to creation of an NIH grant appeals system and the automatic distribution to researchers of peer review summary statements.

"It may sound paradoxical," Merritt said, "but in my years at the NHLBI, the institute has been both stable and a leader of change." For instance, she said, the institute has been at the forefront of advances in peer review and grants management procedures and processes, and in the quality of work life movement. "Most of the advances have come from the energy and ideas of a very stable and dedicated workforce known for their longevity in the NHLBI," she added.

Merritt also has long been involved in equal employment opportunity issues and received a special NHLBI award in 1984. Through the years, her efforts have included serving as a mentor in the DHHS Mentors Program at Eastern High School in Washington, D.C., and coaching and advising interns and trainees.

Her other awards include a 1984 NIH Director's Award and a 1992 Special Act or Service Award.

In retirement, Merritt expects to travel and has already planned a cruise. She and her husband also will continue their involvement in volunteer work with seniors and the disabled. ■

Photo Competition Set, May 19

The annual NIH-Wide Photographic Competition is scheduled for Tuesday, May 19 at 7:30 p.m. in Bldg. 31, Conf. Rm. 6. The competition is open to all NIH'ers and government employees, their family members and NIH Camera Club members. Any subject matter is acceptable. Black & white, color prints and 35 mm chrome slides will compete for cash prizes. Prints (mounted) must be at least 5x7 and no larger than 16x20.

Three professional photographers will judge the competition. Cash prizes will be given to the winners of each category. Honorable mentions will receive an award ribbon. Entries will be collected outside Conf. Rm. 6 between 6:30 and 7:30 p.m. ■

'Take Your Child to Work Day,' May 28

NIH will observe "Take Your Child to Work Day" on Thursday, May 28. Employees are welcome to bring their children ages 9 to 15 to work, if approved by individual supervisors. For a list of featured activities or to register your child, visit the Web site at <http://TakeYourChildToWork.nih.gov>. For more information, contact Karen Basnight, 594-2751 or O.H. Laster, 496-6302. For reasonable accommodation, contact Carlton Coleman, 496-2906 (voice/TTY). ■



Dr. Henning Birkedal-Hansen (second from r) director, Division of Intramural Research, NIDR, and Dr. Mark Hoon (l), from NIDR's Oral Infection and Immunity Branch, were both honored with awards at the American Association for Dental Research meeting held recently in Minneapolis. Pictured with the award recipients are AADR president Dr. John

Keller (r), and AADR honoree Dr. Chris Squier. Birkedal-Hansen received the 1998 AADR Distinguished Scientist Award in recognition of his outstanding research accomplishments in the field of oral science, his originality and creativity in research, and his sustained record of achievement. The award includes a \$5,000 cash prize and is supported by SmithKline Beecham Consumer Brands. Hoon and coauthor Dr. Nicholas Ryba (not shown) were honored by AADR with the 1998 William J. Gies Award, given for the best paper published in AADR's Journal of Dental Research during the preceding year. The paper, titled "Analysis and Comparison of Partial Sequences of Clones from Taste-bud-enriched cDNA library," appeared in the journal last April. A \$500 cash prize accompanies the award.



DWD Training Tips

The Division of Workforce Development, OHRM, offers the courses below. Personal computer training is also available through User Resource Center hands-on, self-study courses, at no cost to NIH'ers. For details call 496-6211 or visit DWD online at <http://www-urc.od.nih.gov/dwd/dwdhome.html>.

<i>Courses and Programs</i>	<i>Starting Dates</i>
<i>Management, Supervisory & Professional Development</i>	
Supervision: New Skills and New Challenges	6/16
Managing Conflict in the Workplace	6/23
Federal Budget Process	6/8
Project Management	6/9
Facilitation That Gets Results	6/10
Building Morale Through Humor	6/10
Enhancing Interpersonal Relationships in the Work Environment	6/16
<i>Human Resource Management</i>	
Human Resource Management	5/27
<i>Communication Skills</i>	
Proofreading Skills	6/22
Fundamentals of Grammar	6/15
Reviewing Math Skills	6/18
<i>Administrative Skills</i>	
Introduction to Working at NIH for New Admin. Support Staff	6/11
Organizational Tools for the Office	6/15
Effective Leadership and Management Skills for Admin. Support Staff	6/18
<i>Administrative Systems</i>	
Domestic Travel	6/15
Delegated Acquisition Training Program	6/8
<i>Career Transition</i>	
Mid-Career Benefits and Financial Planning - CSRS & FERS	6/10
NIH Retirement Seminar - CSRS	6/10
Trans-FERS Briefings	6/11
<i>Computer Applications and Concepts</i>	
Lotus 1-2-3 for Windows 95	6/9
Deneba Canvas Fundamentals (NIDR)	6/22
Advanced MS Word 6.0	6/23
Web Page Design - Advanced	6/18
MS Exchange for Windows	6/9
MS Schedule+ for Windows	6/9
MS Word 97	6/10
MS Access 97 Intermediate	6/22
PowerPoint 7.0	6/22
MS Word 7.0 Advanced	6/17
Presentation Skills with PowerPoint	6/23

Appeal for AB Blood Donors

The Clinical Center Blood Bank (department of transfusion medicine) urgently needs AB type whole blood donors to participate in research protocols. The donation process takes only 15-20 minutes and compensation is available for qualified donors. Call 496-1048 for more information. ■

CIT Courses and Seminars

All courses are on the NIH campus and are given without charge. For more information call 594-3278 or consult the training program's home page at <http://livewire.nih.gov>.

NIH Data Warehouse: Property Management	5/21
PC Viruses	5/21
Numerical Optimization	5/21
NT Server Registry	5/22
Parachute Startup for Windows 95	5/26
LAN Services and Email from Parachute	5/26
BRMUG Macintosh Users Group	5/26
Avoiding Pitfalls in Statistical Analysis	5/27
Oracle PL/SQL for Application Developers	5/27-28
Windows NT Server Troubleshooting for Administrators	5/28
Advanced HTML Tips and Tricks	5/28
Understanding JCL	6/1-2
Electronic Forms Users Group	6/3
MATLAB 5 - Matrix Laboratory	6/3-4

Communication Study Needs Male Smokers

The USUHS department of medical and clinical psychology needs healthy male smokers, ages 18-45, to participate in a 3-hour study on men's communication processes. Volunteers will be paid \$30. Call (301) 295-9672. ■

'Save Your Drive for the Office'

Montgomery County Express Bus Service will deliver you from Germantown and Gaithersburg to Bethesda in just over a half hour for only \$2.20 roundtrip, including free parking, according to a new campaign (sample below) supported by NIH's Employee Transportation Services Office. For more information, call (301) 770-POOL (7665).

Germantown
 Milestone Park & Ride (Dorsey Mills & Observation)
 Ride On Route 70 Express

Gaithersburg
 Lakelorest Park & Ride (Lost Knife & Odendhal)
 Metrobus J9 Express

Bethesda
 National Naval Medical Center
 National Institutes of Health
 Suburban Hospital
 Bethesda Metro Station

One fully loaded bus can prevent road congestion equivalent to a line of cars stretching six city blocks. One full bus is the equivalent of 40 cars (average 1.2 passengers per car).

Do You Sleep A Lot?

Do you almost always sleep 9 or more hours a night? Are you between ages 20 and 30? Do you sleep soundly, with no sleep disturbances or insomnia? If this sounds like you, you may be eligible to participate in a sleep study conducted by NIMH's Clinical Psychobiology Branch. You must not take any types of medication or birth control pills, must have no history of mental illness and must be in good health. You must also be willing to live 4 consecutive days at the research unit. Compensation is available. Call for more details, 496-6981.

A Bird's Eye View of CRC Construction



The best way to appreciate the scope of work on the new Clinical Research Center is to see it whole from the top floors of the neighboring Clinical Center, from which it will extend. In the photos on this page, progress is plain on the formerly wooded and verdant site. The area west of West Dr. can be seen at upper left. Below that, a trailer sits where Bldg. 20 once stood; the former apartment house has been replaced by a sward on which grass now grows. At bottom left, one of two storm-water retention ponds abuts the woods adjacent to the Children's Inn. At top right, the clearing for CRC and new Center Dr. construction reaches due west of Bldg. 31. Below that, a second storm runoff pond stands adjacent to an old basketball court on which the children of NIH'ers once played. At bottom right, the site extends to the brink of the inn playground.



Wednesday Afternoon Lectures

The Wednesday Afternoon Lecture series—held on its namesake day at 3 p.m. in Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10—features Dr. Donald E. Ingber on May 27, speaking on “Integrins, Mechanical Forces, and Control of Gene Expression.” He is associate professor of pathology, Harvard Medical School, and research associate in surgery and pathology, Children’s Hospital, Boston.

The special Monday lecture on June 1 by Dr. Leon E. Rosenberg, who was to give the second annual James A. Shannon Lecture, has been postponed to Oct. 26.

On June 3, Dr. Carl F. Nathan, professor of medicine, Cornell University Medical College, will discuss “Nitric Oxide and NO Resistance Genes: Lessons from Tuberculosis.”

For more information or for reasonable accommodation, call Hilda Madine, 594-5595. **R**