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Alcor News Bulletin

Number 19: December 7th 2003

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Editors: Tanya Jones [TJ], Jennifer Chapman [JC], and Mike Perry [MP].

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First Words

This issue was delayed a few days by a standby and cryopreservation (see Tanya's article below), and also, by a severe respiratory ailment that started around Thanksgiving (Nov. 27) and has affected several staff members, including Tanya. In addition to taking care of her major, patient-related duties as the new Chief Operating Officer, she completed her contribution to this newsletter while battling this nasty infection, and thus deserves special commendation. (By the way, she was confirmed as Alcor's COO at the public meeting, November 8). [MP]

Alcor Accepts 59th Patient

A four-day standby concluded with the cryopreservation of Alcor's 59th patient. Pronouncement occurred at 11:40 a.m., Dec. 3. Transport procedures were carried out quickly, and the team left the hospice with the patient after 20 minutes of surface cooling, the application of cardiopulmonary support, and medication administration. CPS continued until shortly before the patient was transferred to the operating room table for the neuroseparation procedure. The new LUCAS cardiopulmonary support device performed well, and the patient's oxygen saturation levels were observed to rise from 65% to 83% for a time.

Aside from a slight difficulty in locating the left jugular vein, cryoprotection was carried out quickly and with few

complications. The ramp was concluded within 5.5 hours of pronouncement, when the target molar concentration was achieved. Cooling to -114°C was completed in under 24 hours.

As a quick summary: the patient was local, pronouncement and protocol implementation were prompt, the hospice was otherwise also supportive, the team performed well. This patient by appearances received what Case Photographer Charles Platt termed, "an excellent suspension." He continued that this was, "a textbook example of the benefits that can result from experienced field personnel treating a patient who has moved near to the facility and is following a relatively predictable path toward mortality, in a location where the MRC can be brought to the bedside and death can be pronounced immediately."

A more complete report will appear in _Cryonics_ magazine.
[TJ]

A Further, Brief Comment

This case was the one reported in the last newsletter (#18) as "imminent." (As often happens, it took a bit longer than expected, but not that much.) The patient was a middle-aged cancer victim who relocated to a hospice in the Scottsdale area some months ago to be near Alcor when the need should arise. The man deserves credit for his wise decision, which can be a difficult one to make under the circumstances. The prompt and highly effective response of the Alcor team speaks for itself. [MP]

New CEO to Be Announced

Alcor is expected to have a new CEO soon, but no announcement has been made yet. [MP]

Construction Work

Construction work has now been going on for many weeks; The new operating room is now showing substantial progress. Walls and ceiling are up, drywall is in place and painted; electrical wiring, floor covering and doors remain to be done. Next on the list should be the new Patient Care Bay, which will be much larger than our present one. [MP]

Cryonics Magazine

The final, 2003 issue of _Cryonics_ will combine the 3rd and 4th quarter issues, and be extra long, with some regular features doubled (the "For the Record" column in particular). It will also include a review of all approved Board meeting minutes for 2003. [MP, JC]

Cell Storage

Dr. Mike Perry brought a Cryonet message to my attention the other day where Alcor policy was questioned. (<http://www.cryonet.org/cgi-bin/dsp.cgi?msg=22945>). In it, Randy Wicker quoted Mike at length as to how most cryonicists do not consider a DNA sample to be a successful or sufficient cryopreservation. When he implied that this attitude is reflected in Alcor's policy, Mr. Wicker was correct. To my knowledge, no one at Alcor believes a twin is an adequate representation of a person who lived, loved, learned and eventually was cryopreserved. We'll save the limited representation of a cell sample, if that is all that can be saved, but we prefer much greater completeness--there should at least be substantial brain structure. Mr. Wicker continues, "The issue is why Alcor (in particular) but not Cryonics Institute refuses to allow members the option of saving their cells for possible future cloning."

One point to make is that Alcor requires that its members be signed up for cryopreservation, a policy not necessarily followed in other organizations. (Each organization will, of course, have its own requirements and policies which a prospective member--however the organization chooses to define it--must investigate.) Again, to be "signed up for cryopreservation" with Alcor it is not sufficient merely to have arrangements to store a cell sample. Alcor does, however, encourage its members to deposit a DNA sample in its dewars, and we even went so far as to send out sample kits to all our members some years back. There are hundreds of those samples logged and stored in our vaults. Granted, perhaps we have been somewhat remiss in the follow-up for our newer members, but the issue is not that we refuse to store those cells. The issue is instead that we refuse to represent cloning as sufficient for successful reanimation.

Custody of cell samples, pet or otherwise, remains with the Owner. That Owner must be an Alcor member (again, signed up for cryopreservation), but the Owner has the option to decide what is done with stored property. The bottom line here is that the Owner can use the sample for cloning, but that Alcor will not. [TJ]

Pet Storage

Non-Alcor members have been contacting us lately to ask about temporary storage of pets. In part, this is due to the legal restrictions being imposed on other organizations. While we're sure those problems will soon be solved, there are those who need help now.

Alcor's policy is that we only accept pets from Alcor members, but the Board recently allowed a modification of our pet suspension contract to permit the temporary transference of custody to an existing Alcor member. This was done for one specific case, where the individual in question had plans to join Alcor himself at a later date. Paperwork was drafted to allow the pet owner to recover

custody once his Alcor membership had been approved.

With the legal challenges that have lately occurred to non-Alcor cryonics operations, Alcor has the infrastructure in place to offer pet storage services to members of other organizations if they so desire (or need). Cryoprotection is also available in those cases where notice exists. Minimum fees must be fully met for all services performed. There is no discount on the perpetual storage fee, since we have no guarantee that the custody will ultimately revert to the original owner. Unlike the pricing structure for a human, the pet scale depends more greatly on volume, for example, whether the preservation is whole-body or neuro. [TJ]

The Return of the Application Fee

Since January 2003 Alcor's \$150 application fee has been waived. In the absence of a notable increase in the number of applications being processed, an application fee will again be applied effective January 1, 2004. The new rate will be \$100 for the first family member who applies. If one or more additional family members want to join, an additional \$50 payment will be collected. In total, an entire family can join for \$150, making family memberships much more affordable while sustaining this source of income for the organization. (You'll note the new fees are a kinder, softer version than before. But you have at least until the end of the year to start the sign-up process and avoid them altogether.) [JC, TJ]

Alcor Director of International Relations

Dr. Peter Toma, longtime Alcor member and supporter, recently informed the Board that he would like to coordinate a life extension conference in Davos, Switzerland and to lecture in several places in Europe to improve Alcor's worldwide reputation. Dr. Toma is fluent in several European languages and is also a brilliant computer scientist, having developed the original SYSTRAN system for automated language translation.

To facilitate his present goals, Dr. Toma requested being made a representative of Alcor in some official capacity. A special Board meeting was held immediately after the public meeting November 8 (it being felt that further discussion was needed), and he was given the title Director of International Relations. [JC, MP]

Membership Agreements

It has long been known that completing Alcor's paperwork can be a daunting task. The amount of required paperwork was considered at the last public meeting (November 8), and the Directors addressed the legal and practical reasons for having multiple originals. There is no legal reason for

having more than one original, and it was agreed that a duplicate will suffice when representing a member in the hospital. Most prominently, only requiring one original will be tremendously easier for those in the sign-up process, as well as Alcor members who want to make paperwork updates. With these considerations in mind, it was resolved that Alcor will now only require submission of one original contract. Clients will still be given the option of completing additional originals, and in all cases the original and a duplicate will be kept with Alcor's records. [JC]

Northern California Meeting

The last Alcor Northern California meeting in 2003 will be the customary Thanksgiving/Christmas celebration on December 14. The meeting will be at 5:00 pm and dinner will start around 5:30. The event will be held at the Peartree Apartments Recreation Room at 330 N. Mathilda Ave in Sunnyvale. Turkey will be provided; please bring something else to eat or drink. For more information, call Tim Freeman at (408) 774-1298, or send email to [JC]

Alcor Central Meeting

Alcor's final meeting of the year will be held on Saturday, December 13, at 11am MST (10am PST, noon CST, 1pm EST). Alcor meetings are now held in the new conference room at the facility's location in Scottsdale. [MP]

End of Alcor News bulletin #19 dated December 7th, 2003.
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