

## ASSET PRESERVATION

By Ben Best

**O**n a Labor Day weekend I attended the follow-up session of the "Asset Preservation for Post-Resuscitation Access" Seminar described on page 12 of the July/August 2008 issue of *Long Life*. The event, held in the Las Vegas area, began with a reception on Friday evening, an all-day seminar on Saturday and ended with a brunch at the Sahara Hotel on Sunday. There were 15-20 participants in the Saturday seminar, depending upon how you count participants. Three attended by speakerphone: Bill Faloon, Jim Yount and David Greenstein. I learned much about cryonics and the cryonics community that is not relevant to report.

The seminar began with introductions, as had been the case with the May 30 session held in California. A round of one-minute self-introductions was fol-

lowed by a round of five-minute self introductions. The time-keeping was not very disciplined and the introductions ended-up lasting all morning.

Tim Shavers is a Phoenix, Arizona resident still in the process of completing his Alcor signup. He has a background in corporate law and works in investing. He gave a status report on states that have repealed the law against perpetual trusts or otherwise modified the law (about 40% of states). Some modifications fall short of total repeal -- in a couple of states trusts can be 360 years (Florida, Nevada) or 1,000 years (Utah, Wyoming). My preference is still for states that have neither perpetuities nor income tax (South Dakota, Alaska). I would also count Florida and Nevada because these state have no income tax and I think a cryonicist would be extremely pessimistic to not expect revival within 360 years. My impression is that trusts in states without income tax are easier to administer and can have lower trustee fees. Tim was mainly summarizing a Harvard Law School Discussion Paper.

Nick Pavlica offered to put all seminar materials on the website of the Cryonics Society (<http://www.cryonicsociety.org/>) in a special section that may or may not be restricted. Nick spoke on the tax advantages of living in multiple countries (he has residences in the US, Canada and Mexico, and has a Dominica passport). He did not believe that his ability to live in the States if he became terminal and in need cryonics would be compromised. I described the increased delays to be expected from the new 2008 bureaucratic requirements for getting a body into the United States.

Ken Weiss ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kenneth\\_Weiss](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kenneth_Weiss)) was probably by far the wealthiest person at this seminar where there were many wealthy people. Against Bill Faloon (who favors Lichtenstein), Ken prefers Switzerland as a country to keep his assets, because he says it is larger and more stable than Lichtenstein. Most of Ken's presentation was a description of World War II fortresses under Swiss mountains which he believes would be an excellent location for cryonics facilities. He visited many



Where the money is (In most cases) L to R: Russell Chaney, Becky Witt, Dan Witt, James Clement, Ben Best, Ken Weiss, Lori Rhodes, Ralph Merkle, Carol Shaw, Michael Korn, Gilda Kibal, Cairn Idun., Mark Volker, Nick Pavlica, Rudi Hoffman, Tim Shavers

of these fortresses with cryonics in mind. He was previously unhappy with Alcor management and was considering starting his own cryonics organization, but now he is joining Alcor.

Alcor Director Ralph Merkle described the Alcor Wealth Preservation Trust, which is still work-in-progress. Many Alcor Members wanting a perpetual trust for their post-reanimation assets want to hitch a ride on Alcor's organizational stability and commitment to the interests of cryonicists by associating their trust with Alcor. More details are to emerge of the plan by which this can be done

Bill Faloon described how the Reanimation Foundation lost their Lichtenstein bank in 2006 because of the Wall Street Journal article about cryonics wealth preservation (-- and had to fight the government in court. They won the battle and found another Lichtenstein bank for the Reanimation Foundation, but are restricted in their ability to publicize. Bill lamented the fact that so few wealthy cryonicists put their assets in the Reanimation Foundation, but he would not reveal the number of Reanimation Foundation participants other than to say it is too small. He said that the investment practices of the Foundation are so conservative that asset growth is barely a b o v e i n f l a t i o n .

Rudi Hoffman is a fire-and-brimstone preacher -- sermonizing on salvation of money. He stressed the importance of creating a trust that could be dissolved if reanimation technology is developed so quickly that the donor/beneficiary is reanimated within a few years after deanimation.

Lori Rhodes was also concerned about the time when reanimation becomes a reality and cryopreservation is no longer treated as death. Modified death certificates would be issued for those who choose cryopreservation, and revival certificates would be issued upon reanimation. Lori works for the wealthy cryonicist Dr. Martine Rothblatt. Martine

offers Alcor Membership cryopreservation as an employee benefit for all her employees \*and their families\* (!).

James Clement is trying to give new meaning to the phrase "up yours" with the Interspace Foundation and an X-Prize for uploading minds into computers .

My own presentation was largely a rehash/update of my previous presentation stressing the importance of saving your ass as well as your assets. I mentioned the fact that three wealthy donors are contributing \$150,000 each (\$450,000 total) per year to improve Alcor management and cryopreservation case readiness.

I mentioned that CI Director Alan Mole is donating \$10,000 to help Aschwin & Chana de Wolf start a research laboratory in Oregon (with directions for the research he wants done). And I mentioned the fact that Nick Pavlica is matching donations for William O-Rights made through the Cryonics Society website.

I said that just as diversification of investments is prudent for asset preservation, it is prudent to not invest all resources in one cryonics organization. I described how a number of cryonicists have cryopreservation arrangements with both Alcor and CI, with CI as the backup. Nick Pavlica is arranging to use a second insurance policy for funding a CI/Suspended Animation backup for his Alcor Membership. Another wealthy Alcor Member has funded his CI backup with full prepayment. Yet another CI/Alcor Member has a \$200,000 life insurance policy which distributes 60% to Alcor and 40% to CI.

One of the seminar participants wants to fund CI/SA backup arrangements using the same insurance policy as he is using for his Alcor Membership. This could be complicated, but Rudi Hoffman has offered to help try to make it work.— Ben Best

## MEET GUY GIPSON

I was born on September 26, 1944, in Magee, Mississippi. Before she died, my Mom told me all about it. I weighed over 10 pounds and came out backwards. The hospital was quite informal - windows open for blowing fans in the summer. Relatives would come by the dozens and just walk in and out any time they wished.

My father was in the US Army Air Corps, stationed in Biloxi, MS. He made Master Sergeant before he got out. He was good at typing and filing, so they would not let him go overseas. In 1946 we moved to a 5-acre mini-homestead near Danville, Illinois. My father went to work for the Railway Express, and shortly after my parents divorced. My father moved to Montana and Idaho, working in the mines. In 1954 he came back to visit and I went back with him to Idaho, where I graduated high school in 1962.

I moved to California, where I went to college, got a B.A. degree, and met my first wife. We got tired of the jungle there, and moved to rural Kentucky. There were not a lot of jobs there, but I did things like pick apples, cut tobacco, and drive a school bus, to feed my wife and two little boys. Finally I landed a job with the State of Kentucky as a social worker, doing child welfare cases. The pay was regular but dismally low. We had a daughter there, and adopted another one of about the same age later on. We had difficulties, and I left to move to Pennsylvania. There I did temporary jobs and had a newspaper delivery business going, until I got a job in 1977 with the US Postal Service as a mail handler (dock worker). A year later I became a city letter carrier, and in 1985 got promoted to a supervisory position. In 1991 I got promoted to Postmaster at Lafayette Hill, PA, which position I occupied until I retired.

At one of the temporary jobs mentioned, I met my second wife. We were walking around a table picking up papers from stacks to collate them, and I was following her. The rest was history.

We got along well, married a couple of years later, and had one son. About five years from then, she left for other pursuits, and I became a single parent. During my youngest son's youngest years, I had been taking temporary assignments at work to higher levels, and also went back to college and got a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) degree on a nights/weekends program. No advancements ever came of those activities and the degree, as it was a very rewarding experience raising this son, and I have no regrets not being able to trade that for more of the stress and rat-race of the business world.

In the early 1990s I read a newspaper or magazine article about Alcor and cryonics. For whatever reason, I had gone the first approximately 40 years of my life never having heard of cryonics, or at least not given it conscious notice. The idea was appealing, so I dug up Alcor's address from somewhere and wrote to them for information, which they sent. This was before the world wide web was popular and useful to find almost anything. Eventually I learned of the existence of Cryonics Institute, as well as American Cryonics Society and Trans Time. I wrote all three for information, and only heard back from CI.

It was during this early 1990s period I had been handed the responsibility of being a single parent, and was also working fulltime and sometimes more in US Postal Service management. That afforded little time to really focus on signing up for cryonics, although I could see from the first time I heard of it the logic of it being a better alternative than burial or cremation. Also during this time I had learned of CryoNet, and started reading it fairly regularly.

The hot topic of the time was the formation of CryoCare and the loss of dozens of Alcor members to it. This gave me cause to wonder if something was wrong with Alcor to cause this "split". I requested by mail and received a signup package from CryoCare. I had also considered CI at the time, but concluded, correct or not, that Alcor's preservation procedures were more advanced, and I knew I could get insurance to cover Alcor's higher fees if I went with them. I further procrastinated on signing up for cryonics for several more years. In the latter part of the 1990s I was starting to

develop an interest in living fulltime in a RV after my probable retirement date in 2005. I realized that an RV was an extremely practical way to spend time with family in four states, do sightseeing in between, and spend the winters in the south and the summers in the north. At the time this tipped my decision in favor of Alcor over CI, because CI did not have standby response service that might come and help me anywhere in the USA. CI's use of local funeral directors where the members live works fine for people who almost never travel, but I was proposing to myself to travel all the time.



In the summer of 1999, I attended a week-long business convention in Tucson, Arizona. During that week, I found time to drive to Scottsdale and get a tour of Alcor. I met most of the people there including Steve Bridge, on his last day as President of Alcor. I went back to my hotel room in Tucson and got the signup papers organized, and the next day returned to Scottsdale and got the business done on the spot. Mike Perry and Jerry Searcy helped with witness signatures, and Jerry drove me to a notary public for those signatures. Steve was gone, and Fred and Linda Chamberlain were there, so I got to meet them on their first day back.

Thus, I became a member of Alcor, and remained so until September, 2008. I had funded my arrangements with Alcor via term life insurance, not preferring the much higher cost of whole life policies at my age, and their relatively low returns. I knew the premiums on my policy would jump to an unaffordable level in September of 2008, and all along was planning to do cash funding at that time, and drop the term insurance. In the months before that, I had been seriously reconsidering Cryonics Insti-

tute because they now have standby response available anywhere in the USA via Suspended Animation, Inc., and the quality of their preservation methods had vastly improved. In spring of 2007, I visited Cryonics Institute for the first time, and met Ben and Andy. Andy gave me a superb tour, printed out a membership application on the spot, and I wrote a check for a lifetime membership. I also did tissue samples and watched Andy prep them up and pop them in the liquid nitrogen tank.

"I continued with Alcor for cryopreservation arrangements a few months more until September, 2008, when I switched to CI and SA, along with the air transport option." I prefer the less bundled approach that CI has for these services. Alcor receives a large sum (\$120,000 for me at the time and it is now higher) if they cryopreserve you, no matter what other services they actually do. I have money on deposit guaranteed to CI and SA, but if I move near CI and make local arrangements, I might decide not to need SA's services, so they would not be paid that money, nor part of the funding for CI that CI has to pay SA if they perform services, nor for the air transport if it is not needed.

I have been living in and traveling fulltime in my RV since I sold my condominium in Pennsylvania and moved into the RV in summer of 2005. My youngest son was off to college, and I hit the road. Everything has worked out well as planned, including the transition to CI/SA. My necklace tab, wallet cards, driver's license sticker, etc. for CI/SA are all in order.

I feel great! And I anticipate many more years of enjoyable travel before I settle down into one or more relatively fixed locations, one of them possibly being the condominium apartment I purchased in Michigan, 4 miles from CI and 1 mile from Walsh. It is being used as a rental now, but that status can be easily changed after a lease expires. Meanwhile, I occasionally work into my travels a visit to CI, such as for an Open House or the AGM.

I have met many of you and hope to meet more in future years.—Guy Gipson