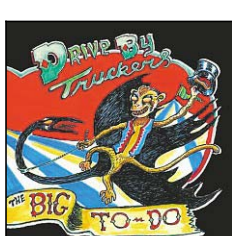


FEATURES EDITOR SUZY FLEMING LEONARD, sleonard@floridatoday.com or 242-3614

60 seconds

Tell us your health ideas

Do you have ideas or feedback on the health and medical coverage in FLORIDA TODAY? Contact medical reporter Susan Jenks at 242-3657 or sjenks@florida.com



New on CD

- 'Big To-Do,' Drive-By Truckers
'Here I Am,' Marvin Sapp
'Under Great White Northern Lights,' The White Stripes
'Live On Lansdowne, Boston MA,' Dropkick Murphys
'La Raza,' Armored Saint
'Imaginary Television,' Graham Parker
'Highway Rider,' Brad Mehldau
'Best of Twelve Nights in Hollywood,' Ella Fitzgerald
'Survival Story,' Flobots



New on DVD

- 'The Princess and the Frog' Armored
'Ninja Assassin'
'The Fourth Kind'
'Did You Hear About the Morgans?'
'Astro Boy'
'Broken Embraces'
'Dillinger is Dead'
'Wonderful World'
'Paris'
'Hawaii Five-O - The Eighth Season'
'Mystery Science Theater 3000 - Volume XVII'

Chorale in concert

Brevard Chorale presents a performance at 7 tonight at Brevard Community College, 1519 Clearlake Road, Cocoa, featuring music from 'Les Miserables,' 'The Sound of Music' and more. The cost is \$10. Call 433-7385.

FLORIDATODAY.com

Pill won't shorten life, study finds

BY RANDY DOTING GANNETT

Good news for women who have used birth control pills: A long-term study finds those who took oral contraceptives at some point in their lives have a lower risk of death than women who never took the pill.

'Many women, especially those who used the first generation of oral contraceptives many years ago, are likely to be reassured by our results. However, our findings might not reflect the experience of women using oral contraceptives today, if currently available preparations have a different risk than earlier prod-

ucts,' Dr. Philip Hannaford of the University of Aberdeen, leader of a new study, said in a statement.

However, those who took oral contraceptives are at higher risk of violent or accidental death. The authors of the study, which appears online March 12 in the journal BMJ, aren't sure why this that might be so.

Hannaford and colleagues tracked 46,000 women for almost 40 years.

In the long term, women who took birth-control pills had a significantly lower risk of death from causes such as heart disease and

cancers — even cancers of the uterus and ovary — compared with other women.

Women younger than 40 who took birth control pills had a slightly higher risk of death, the researchers report.

The authors conclude, 'oral contraception is not significantly associated with an increased long-term risk of death — indeed a net benefit was apparent.'

But, they write, 'the balance of risks and benefits may vary globally, depending upon patterns of oral contraception usage and background risk of disease.'



More online

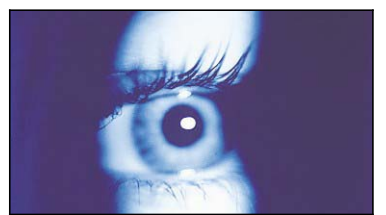
The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists has more information about birth-control pills at acog.org.

Thinkstock



Michael R. Brown, FLORIDA TODAY

Miracle of life. Susan McCrea, with her 3-month-old daughter, Sarah, said donating her placenta was an easy decision. 'It's not like there's anything you're going to do with your placenta,' McCrea said.



Thinkstock images

Eye opening. A single placenta can help up to 100 recipients.

If you want to donate

- Only mothers-to-be who have planned Caesarian sections can donate, to prevent bacterial infections.
Prescreening involves normal blood tests and questions involving sexual history and drug use.
Once donated, the placenta's innermost layer is processed for use in eye surgeries.
A single placenta can help up to 100 recipients regain eyesight.
The most common treatment is for pterygium, a wing-shaped growth on the cornea that can distort vision. It also is used to treat chemical burns, corneal perforations and even some cancers in the eye.
Cord blood can be banked at the same time, although it requires more advance notice.
For more information call the Southeast Tissue Alliance at 866-432-1164.

Tissue helps restore sight

Placenta lining promotes faster healing after eye injuries, primarily the cornea

BY SUSAN JENKS FLORIDA TODAY

Patricia Koslowski does not know the identity of the donor whose tissue helped restore her vision to near-normal after a severe chemical burn in her left eye.

'Whoever it was, I feel so blessed,' she said. 'I had golf-ball-sized water blisters hanging on my face, and I couldn't see anything at all for three weeks.'

The 65-year-old Melbourne resident burned her eye last October when she dropped a bottle of Clorox while doing laundry. Its contents splashed 'up all over my face and up into my left nostril and eye.'

Damage to her face healed fairly quickly, she said. And because of a donated placenta, her eye doctor was able to restore much of her lost sight using tiny grafts made from the tissue, which were implanted in the eye.

One donated placenta can potentially save the sight of up to 100 patients.

The stem-cell rich placenta, which lines the uterine wall and protects a developing fetus during pregnancy, usually gets thrown out after birth. But, increasingly, eye doctors are using the innermost lining of this tissue, known as the amniotic membrane, to See PLACENTA, 4D

The process of placenta donation

- The Southeast Tissue Alliance contracts with hospitals across Florida to recover placenta from women choosing to donate.
SETA contracts locally with Holmes Regional Medical Center in Melbourne and Cape Canaveral Hospital in Cocoa Beach.
Tissue is collected or recovered in the operating room by SETA.
Laboratory tests screen for possible infectious agents, such as

HIV, or hepatitis viruses.

The tissue is shipped on dry ice to BioTissue Inc. in Miami, where it is processed for use in eye surgery.

The final product goes to ophthalmologists in Florida and other states to treat a number of eye diseases, primarily pterygium, growths on the eyes' surface, associated with sun damage.

— FLORIDA TODAY, Southeast Tissue Alliance



Room to grow. The placenta is a membrane that develops during pregnancy, lining the uterine wall and partially enveloping the fetus.

Orchestra takes audience 'Around the Bloch'

BY PAM HARBAUGH FLORIDA TODAY

If you're looking for an affordable and wide-ranging symphonic music experience, then consider Thursday's concert by the Brevard Community College Chamber Orchestra.

A simple \$5 admission fee will

get you into 'Around the Bloch,' a concert with a variety of symphonic music genres. Conducted by James Bishop, the program includes:

- Mozart's 'Divertimento' K. 136
Mahler's 'Adagietto Sinfonietta' from his Fifth Symphony

Corigliano's 'Voyage'
The prelude and fugue from Bloch's 'Concerto Grosso for Piano and Orchestra'

The concerto features pianist Sally Cook, who is a BCC piano professor.

'It's a concert of very sophisticated music (and) academically

challenging for the students as well as the listener,' Bishop said. 'It's quite beautiful and moving.'

The performance begins at 7:30 p.m. Thursday in the Bernard W. Simpkins Fine Arts Auditorium, BCC, 1519 Clearlake Road, Cocoa. Tickets are \$5. Call 433-7375.

Contact Harbaugh at 242-3717 or pharbaugh@floridatoday.com.

Research barks up tree of long life

Old dogs may have cancer answers

BY DAN MCFEELY GANNETT

University researcher David Waters hopes a bunch of old dogs will be able to teach scientists new tricks about aging and cancer.

Waters has embarked on a 23-day trek across the country to meet face-to-snout with 15 of the oldest-living Rottweilers in the United States. Waters, head of the Gerald P. Murphree Cancer Foundation at the Purdue Research Park, West Lafayette, Ind., has been leading a research team that studies aging and cancer in pet dogs. During the past three years, the team has compiled a database of scientific data on 140 Rottweilers through breeders and fan clubs. Only 15 still are alive, prompting Waters to put together his 'Old Grey Muzzle tour.'

'These dogs have lived 30 percent longer than average,' Waters said. 'They have dodged cancer and we believe studying them can shed light on what it takes to live well.'

All of the Rottweilers are at least 13 years old. Typically, they don't live much past 10. Of the 15 he plans to visit, females outnumber the males 11 to four.

Monday, Waters was in Virginia to visit with 'Buzz.' Today, he travels to Tennessee to see 'Schatze,' and the tour ends in Seattle on April 3 with 'Sugar,' the oldest dog on the tour at 15 years and two months.

'If you want to understand aging, you have to look to those who have been extremely successful,' Waters said. 'These dogs are the equivalent to 100-year-old people and we want to find out what is the root of their success.'

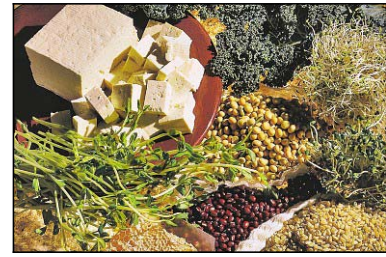
First stop on the 'Old Grey Muzzle tour' was Friday in Holliston, Mass., where Waters met with 'Bort,' a mild-mannered Rottweiler owned by Gretchen Caldwell.

The Caldwell family raised Bort from a 12-week-old pup. The dog will turn 14 in two weeks.

'He's still pretty active, loves to go on his walks and greet the kids when they come home,' said Caldwell, who volunteered Bort for the study. 'He still thinks he can catch a squirrel, too.'

During each stop, which can last up to four hours, Waters performs a physical examination on the dog. He listens closely to the hearts and lungs. He performs a neurological exam, collects DNA samples, checks bone density and measures See CANCER, 4D

INSIDE



Vegetarian tricks to staying slim

Think a vegetarian diet is the ticket to weight loss? Think again. Once they give up meat, many women find the number on the scale goes up, not down, 5D

- Fitness calendar.....5D
People's Herbal Pharmacy6D
Health Newsmakers7D

