

MEET ERON HENNESSEY



Eron in front of one of CI's cryostats. He was at CI for the Cryonics Rescue Course held this past May 18.

Born in the late 1960's in San Francisco, I grew up with and around people with highly variant views on life, politics, science and religion. Open-mindedness, curiosity, and a voracious appetite for experience and learning were instilled in me at a very young age, and allowed me the freedom to study, on my own, topics that excited and intrigued me.

Encounters with the ideas of both death and immortality came, also, at a young age. The music of Peter, Paul and Mary being one of the staples of the era, I remember distinctly, and with great interest, listening to the words of "Puff The Magic Dragon". The lyric: "Dragons live forever, but not so little boys", seemed to me to be a most unfair situation. I remember thinking: "I will have to die someday?", and this thought irritated me. To give up this? To never have the chance to experience *anything* again? If only... if only *I* could become a dragon, and live forever!

In the meanwhile, I resolved to live my life with fullness: enjoying each moment and all of the wonderful sensations and experiences it brought. Even today, this passion drives me to explore and enjoy the arts, literature, travel, cuisine, physicality and movement, and also the quiet and reflection that comes with moments of stillness. Whether I'm experiencing love, excitement, or even bits of pain and sadness--I feel that every moment has something to treasure, to learn and grow from. Life itself, to me, is the most precious thing that I possess.

However, I have digressed a bit. My interest in cryonics began with my reading of a book on "fringe science" called Great

Mambo Chicken and The Transhuman Condition, by Ed Regis. The tone of the book is somewhat disapproving of the topics he covers, but the idea that there was even a possibility of living beyond the normal span of years brought me back, again, to my childhood and the wish that I could grow from a little boy into a dragon. Perhaps I didn't need to become a dragon, after all? Perhaps all I needed to do was to live long enough, or preserve my body long enough, for science to catch up and create the conditions necessary for me to continue to enjoy my life for as long as I wished. I was intrigued, rather than amused, by the idea.

However, I was young, I was strong and healthy... I felt that these technologies needed improvement and that I'd have lots of time before I'd need to worry about death, anyway.

Well, I felt that way until the seizure. A number of years ago, I had a *grand mal* seizure after exercising in my home. Whether it was brought about by lack of sleep, the intense exercise, dehydration, my diet, or a family predisposition to migraines and epilepsy has never been determined. After a number of MRI and EEG sessions, blood tests and the best efforts of an esteemed neurologist, the cause remains unknown. What *is* known is that I was in a tranquilizer-induced coma for 48 hours after the seizure, and needed a breathing tube and artificial respiration in order to survive. Death had suddenly become a very, very real concern to me.

Soon after that episode, I began to seriously consider and actively look for ways to extend the life that I so enjoy. The idea of cryonics that I had entertained many years before was again prominent in my mind, and I began to scour the internet: arriving at the CI and Alcor websites, and also reading through articles that had been posted by Ben Best on his own website. Shortly after reading Robert Ettinger's "The Prospect of Immortality" (and wondering *why* I had waited so long to do so!), I became an "Option 2" member of CI, and began taking the steps necessary to secure my suspension contract. I have since become an "Option 1" member.

I was also honored to take part in the preparation of CI patient #72. I hope it is not my last such assistance. Taking part in the recent cryonics rescue training seminar demonstrated to me quite well how effective well-trained cryonicists can be in aiding the preparation and transport of their peers. I feel that a mutually-supportive community of cryonicists would go a long way toward improving the chances of survival for all of us. In addition to such rescue support, contributions to the community can be financial, academic, scientific, or even verbal. Just speaking about the ideas of life extension and cryonics to others will help increase the viability and mind-share of these ideas, and will help loosen the death-grip of pervasive defeatism in our culture with regards to mortality.

All of the cryonicists I've met so far I've found to be unique and delightful individuals. I sincerely look forward to meeting many more of you in time... and time again!