

Supercourse Newsletter

<http://ssc.bibalex.org/helpdesk/introduction.jsf> (BA Superhelp desk)

<https://www.facebook.com/TheBaSuperhelpDesk> (BA Superhelp Facebook)

[www.pitt.edu/~super1/](http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/) Supercourse

Nov. 19, 2013

Dear Friends,

“The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new lands but seeing with new eyes”  
(Proust)

The year of Hygeia, our present to you all

Eugene Shubnikov, Eman Eltahlawy, Faina Linkov and I have been working on our annual holiday present for you, the Supercourse calendar. In the next few weeks we shall send this to you, and this is the best one ever. I print out each month and post this on my wall so that I know what day it is. I find it much more interesting than a Google Calendar. Eugene has the Russian master touch in developing this. He found a fascinating free calendar program which we are trying out now, where you can chose the country that you live, and the Supercourse Calendar will include the major holidays from your country on the calendar. It is really “nifty”.

The theme is you and the Supercourse, and we have an overview of the supercourse, and a nice representation of “Stataphobia”, (October). We are also focusing on ancient public health, with some fabulous ancient Egyptian materials that Eman found. We would like everyone in the world to put the calendar on your wall, it is really nice. Please share the calendar with your students, faculty and children. We will provide the link in the next newsletter.

A central theme will be Hygeia <http://wordquests.info//hygeia.html> .

Hygeia is our goddess, the Greek Goddess of Health and Hygiene. (the root of Hygiene is Hygeia). When Jan and I got married at Phipps conservatory in Pittsburgh, I noticed that there was a beautiful Pittsburgh Hygeia statue. The last time I was at the Library of Alexandria as I was walking out of their museum, I saw a statue of the Alexandria Hygeia which was found in sea of Alexandria. Hanan kindly help us. Here is the beautiful picture.

<http://antiquities.bibalex.org/Collection/Detail.aspx?lang=en&a=1150>

Clearly it is fate, that we have been collaborating so long, or, is the ghost of Hygeia somehow watching over us? Here is a picture of the Pittsburgh Hygeia, and where we got married.

[http://farm1.staticflickr.com/30/63049488\\_e4bc11eef1\\_z.jpg?zz=1](http://farm1.staticflickr.com/30/63049488_e4bc11eef1_z.jpg?zz=1)

“There is only one way to avoid criticism: do nothing, say nothing and be nothing” (Aristotle)

Help Desk: We are still “scratching our heads” as to why young people are not coming in droves to the help desk. There is a critical need to publish, and we have 300 gray/no haired experts to answer questions for free, and we have a beautiful site at the Library of Alexandria. Also we have 8 national Facebook help desks. We thus a need world wide, and experts willing to help. Of all the many projects I have started, this is one I thought would fly fast. Robert Janz, had an interesting concept, that we work through the Senior researcher to tell their young folk. If you would like a copy of the article and suggestions write to me

[ronaldlaporte@gmail.com](mailto:ronaldlaporte@gmail.com))

Global Scientific public goods and publications: We are just completing a fascinating article titled Measuring Scientific Diplomacy, Global Public Goods: Public (ation). In this article we argue that monitoring of scientific publications is in fact, monitoring Global Public Goods. We used Scopus which is a fascinating site where one can compare publications across country and time. As part of this we evaluated global publications, and amazingly in 1996 there were 1 million publications, in 2012, 2.5 million. Also, science has become global with about 30% of the articles involving more than one country. We assessed the epidemiology of publication in selected Arab Countries, and the results were extremely interesting. Clearly the Internet has played a major role, as the Internet was first embraced by scientists. With the help desk we can accelerate this even faster, if we can get budding researchers to use it.

“Whatever the mind of man can conceive and believe, it can achieve” (N. Hill)

Retirement: As I have indicated I plan to retire after I turn 65. Many people have asked why. I plan to maintain the Supercourse operation, and we are looking into NGOs (if you have thoughts about this, let me know).

There are several reasons; academia, the U. of Pittsburgh, students and faculty have been wonderful to me. I want to make room for bright young epidemiologists, also there is the Jim Brown Phenomena. Jim Brown was one of the best running backs in American Football for a decade. He left “at the top of his game” I am not Jim Brown, but I am leaving when very satisfied, with our WHO Diabetes effort, Supercourse, and CAJGH among others. I am most satisfied with my legacy of 31 students who received their doctorate with me. We in academia are first and for most, teachers.

My students are the best.

As Jan has said, I need a hobby, I am thinking about “duct tape art”, collecting buttons, carving egg shells or playing in the NBA. Any ideas for hobbies would be most appreciated. I taught my last class last week, and it was good, as they laughed at my jokes. We now have 6 members of the Global Association of Retired Professors (GARP), please join on LinkedIn.

This week is the 50th anniversary of the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

I was only 14 at the time. Everyone my age remember where we were when we heard. The US and all our lives were all changed because of this. Sadly also two leading epidemiologists have passed away, Pat Buffler, and Milt Nickerman.

“When I let go of what I am, I become what I might be” (Lao Tzu)

Taiwan: I will be leaving for Taiwan to attend the 2013 Global Health Forum in Taiwan. November 23-24, 2013, Taipei. If there are friends in Taiwan who would like to meet with me, contact Ann at [icann@mohw.gov.tw](mailto:icann@mohw.gov.tw). It is indeed an honor to visit Taipei as the current Ministry of House is Wen-Ta Chiu, M.D., Dr. Ph. who received his doctorate in epidemiology with me. He is only a few years younger than me. It is a wonderful feeling seeing one’s student do way better than me. Also, it is amazing to see the respect that the mentor of the Minister of Health receives.

Happy Birthday: In January 2014 Lewis Kuller, M.D. will have his 80th birthday. Many of the leading epidemiologists in the world owe their career and friendship with Dr. Kuller. If it were

not for him, there would be no Supercourse. I and we all owe him so much. It is likely that his students, and his "grand" students are over 500 card carrying epidemiologists. Please write to me if you would like to take part in the celebration. His birthday is Jan. 9.

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"Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever."&#8213; Mahatma Gandhi

Faina's Lecture of the week:

Steven Blair receives Lifetime Achievement Award from The Obesity Society.

<http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/lecture/lec51041/index.htm>

The world is becoming swamped by obesity epidemic. Why are we becoming obese? Some people say it's because of environment. Some people say it's because our friends/social environment forces us to eat. Some people are saying it's the sugary drinks. Weight loss experts point to the fact that for physiologic reasons, it is difficult to lose weight. The list of potential reasons is endless, however one of the key underlying concepts behind obesity is the energy balance. Dr. Blair shared with us his recent lecture on energy balance that he presented as a part of obesity week in Atlanta, Georgia. While many potential reasons influence obesity epidemic, Dr. Blair's presentation points to the fact that energy balance is extremely important and over the past 3 decades we have an environment where we eat more and move less. Faina Linkov attended Dr. Blair's presentation and it was extremely well received with huge audience present at the talk. Steve has provided 13 lectures to the Supercourse. Congratulations Steve on your Award!!!!

Total and high-molecular-weight adiponectin levels in relation to insulin resistance among overweight/obese adults

<http://cajgh.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/cajgh/article/view/55>

The goal of this article, submitted by Dr. Acharya was to determine whether baseline levels or intervention-associated changes in total and high molecular weight (HMW) adiponectin levels were associated with insulin resistance after six months of behavioral treatment for weight loss. Please visit the website of the Central Asian Journal of Global Health ([cajgh.pitt.edu](http://cajgh.pitt.edu)) and send us your publications

Best Regards,

Ron, Faina, Eugene, Francois, Nicolas, Ismail, Vint, Kawkab, Ali, Olga, Maria, Eman, Kyle, Aiyim, Rob, Ohanyido, Nabil, Mita, Olga, Gil, Eric Shalkar, Sholpan, Hygeia, Reza

"Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". (WHO)