



ICOMBO
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF
Multiple Birth Organisations

Start planning now:
Multiple Birth Awareness Week
November 4–11, 2018

News From Around The World

July 2018

Chairperson Report

I writing this report from a cold, wintry Melbourne whilst many of you will now be enjoying a northern hemisphere summer. I hope you are enjoying life wherever you are in the world!!

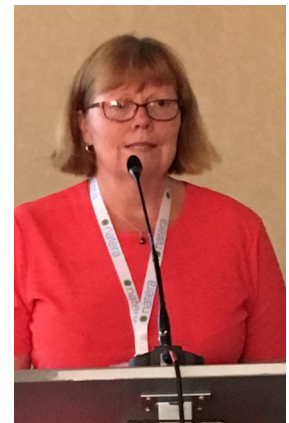
The ICOMBO Board has been busy since our last newsletter, planning for International Multiple Birth Awareness Week, and working on our two research studies. You will read more on these in the newsletter.

In May, we managed to hold a board meeting via Skype. Six board members were in attendance, a great achievement when we live in UK, USA, New Zealand, Australia and Canada. For some of us it was a very early morning and for others is was a very late night. However, the effort was worth it as we were able to discuss a number of issues together rather than rely on email discussions. It is great for us to be able to meet this way occasionally, to keep each other focused and to make decisions on our activities.

I hope you enjoy this edition of our newsletter. We have included some articles on current research which are interesting reading. If you have any comments, we love to hear from you. Please circulate the newsletter with your board, committee, local groups, clubs and chapters.

Regards,

Monica



Monica Rankin

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Be sure to watch for the next Newsletter which will feature ICOMBO Member Organisations: How they operate, annual events, and sharing of best practices to gain and retain members.

Resource Corner: Separation of Multiples in the Classroom

The issue of twins together or separate at school has been debated for a long time and some schools do enforce separation. A recent study from Goldsmiths, University of London, finds no strong evidence that putting twins into different classes at school is better for them academically. This is the case for both identical and non-identical twins. It says there should be no strict rules on separating twins, and it should be left to the youngsters, their parents and teachers to decide what is best.

Further information on the study can be found here:

https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A_www.bbc.com_news_education-2D43821974&d=DwICAw&c=GlhIK-Z7Itify6iax27XCf9KYFXDgbS2ET58kP-Ckgw&r=ZOLyxm7VZlqVMigyEgogIF_YeK47qC_vQudKH6wTW_g&m=NXXRAVdVl4odFZ7ncqzvwhYpaXc antYzri593lfZows&s=YfgfUFZbjsEZ9TNyQPbIVAusXjkIJex9cpLTmBvsndo&e=

It is also important to remember that academic achievement is not necessarily the main factor considered for separation. We need to understand more about the psychosocial outcomes for children with separating vs being in the same class, the dynamics of their relationships, emotional wellbeing and achievement. Ultimately it is an individual choice and based on what will benefit the children the most.

The following two articles provide additional insight on the separation of multiples. A special thank you to our contributors on this important topic to many parents of multiples.

PARTING IS SUCH SWEET SORROW

Joan A. Friedman Ph.D.

<http://JoanAFriedmanPHD.com>

The decision to separate twins into different classrooms is a perennial dilemma confronting many families of multiples. It is a multi-faceted issue etched with social, cultural, and political overtones. Our cultural stereotypic perceptions about the unbreakable twin bond magnify parental concerns about separating their twins in school. Societal and familial feelings about “the twin mystique” amplify tensions and anxiety in regard to twins being separated. Inevitably, the emotional issues intensify when parents of twins learn that they have no choice about their twins’ classroom placements. This mandatory separation policy is still in effect in many school districts in the United States and the UK. Parental backlash has motivated advocacy groups to lobby their state and local officials for guideline changes.

A recent study published in *Developmental Psychology*, led by academics at Goldsmiths, University of London, analyzed information on more than 9,000 pairs of twins aged between seven and 16 in the UK and Canada. <http://psycnet.apa.org/doiLanding?doi=10.1037%2Fdev0000519>

The findings demonstrated that there were no measurable academic differences among twins who were separated or stayed together in the same class. Moreover, the study also reported no changes in either academic motivation or cognitive abilities. These results are vital for those educators who believe that twins perform better academically when separated. For this reason, it is considered best practice to allow the family to decide. Ongoing assessments of the twins’ social and emotional growth need to be evaluated as the twins mature in order to monitor appropriate psychosocial milestones.

The following two stories present very different yet sound decisions that parents made regarding kindergarten school placement when given the freedom to choose. Both mothers of these twin pairs are well aware that their children’s individual needs may change over time. Hence, along with educators, they want to be able to monitor each twin’s journey and make essential developmental recommendations. *Continued page 3.....*

Resource Corner: Separation of Multiples in the Classroom

A mother of 6-year-old fraternal twin boys shared the following story:

Her sons spent their kindergarten year in separate classes, as mom had requested. She was not in conflict about having them separate because the preschool teachers had recommended that she do so because Charlie would not give Craig time to answer questions or have his own conversations. Mother describes Charlie as interacting easily with adults while Craig is a bit hesitant to speak to other children or adults. Craig also suffered for a short time with some speech problems that have been corrected with outside therapy.

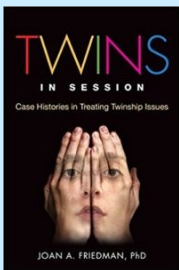
At the beginning of the school year mom said there was tension as each boy worked through the adjustment. Charlie instantaneously loved his classroom and teacher while Craig was much more circumspect, needing considerable time to feel comfortable and connected. Mom describes how difficult a balancing act it can be to respond to each boy in his particular context. The perennial parenting difficulty with twins – learning how to stay in the experience of each of them and respond appropriately without feeling the guilt and sadness that comes with the natural urge to compare them and their experiences. The challenge is ongoing – learning how to parent them as individuals even though they are born at the same time.

Separate classrooms for these boys provides a healthy environment to develop each one's strengths. They have an emotional break from their incompatible personality differences. Since it is much too early to predict any outcomes, she will continue to monitor their adjustments and be attentive to their peer relationships and emotional growth.

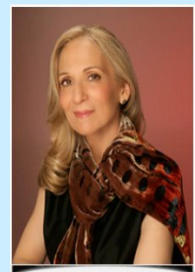
On the other hand, a pair of identical twin girls whose mother I have consulted with has been thriving beautifully in the same kindergarten class and will be in first grade together this coming school year. Mother believes that their being together at this age is an emotional advantage. They are very close in terms of personality. Both are outgoing and self-reliant. At this particular time, they do not exhibit any unhealthy signs of excessive competition or dependence. If mom or the teachers identify difficulties as the girls get older, she will definitely consider separate classrooms. However, for the time being, the same classroom placement suits all involved.

It is this emphasis on understanding each pair of twins' dynamics that allows us to determine what seems most appropriate in terms of school placement. As I have written about previously, I am a strong advocate for letting parents decide what their twins need. While I recognize that not all parents have the right to choose, I am optimistic that these policies will evolve. The draconian belief that twins MUST be separated is no longer an acceptable or viable educational strategy. Twin pairs cannot be lumped into any particular or exclusive category – one size certainly does not fit all.

Check out Dr. Friedman's website for more information on her latest book:



<https://www.joanafriedmanphd.com/>



<https://www.joanafriedmanphd.com/twins-in-session-case-histories-in-treating-twinship-issues/>

Did you know?



CONGRESS 2019 –Hong Kong

The location for Congress 2019 was tentatively announced during Congress 2017.

Start planning now for a fantastic Congress and **let's make this the most well attended ICOMBO Session in our history!!**

ICOMBO ON FACEBOOK

ICOMBO public Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/InternationalCouncilofMultipleBirthOrganisations?ref=hl>



We are gaining more interest from individuals around the world. Have you taken a look and “liked” the page? Do you have any information you would like to see posted on this page? If so, please contact Monica at chair@icombo.org

ICOMBO also has a members-only closed group on Facebook. The concept behind this group is so that members can discuss issues about their organisations with some privacy, rather than post comments and questions publicly. There are up to 4 or 5 individuals from each of our member groups who are members of this ICOMBO Facebook group.

For more information, please contact Monica at chair@icombo.org



Separate Classrooms for Twins: Academic Gains or Losses?

Dr. Nancy L. Segal
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When it comes to twins, the dialogue surrounding the question of separate or same classrooms is probably the longest and most heated of twin-based controversies. Benefits include, but are not limited to, each twins' having an individual experience apart from the co-twin and the easing of within-pair comparison/competition. Detriments may include social anxiety from being apart and/or more favorable educational experiences for one twin. My view has always been that there should not be a single policy for twins regarding school placement, but that decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis, taking each pairs' individual needs and concerns into consideration. I also believe that decisions should be arrived at cooperatively, with reference to the views of the parents,' twins' and administrators. It is also important to note that decisions are never final but can be monitored and modified over time.

Studies that have focused on twins' school issues have yielded mixed findings. For example, a Dutch study found no achievement differences between separated and non-separated twins at age twelve (Polderman et al., 2010). In contrast, a different study from the Netherlands reported that non-separated twins did better in language and somewhat better in math than separated twins (Webbink et al., 2007). Now a new study by White et al. (2018) has examined such questions using very large samples of Canadian (ages 7 – 12 years) and British twins (ages 7 – 14 years).

Academic achievement was assessed by teacher reports, with British participants providing their own grades at age 16. Intellectual abilities were measured by various verbal and non-verbal tests. Motivation was based on twin's self-reports.

Two key findings emerged from this most recent research effort. The first was that twins (both identical and fraternal) who were separated did not differ in level of achievement, ability or motivation from twins who were not separated. The second was that non-separated twins were not substantially more alike than separated twins; however, identical twins and non-separated twins were slightly more similar than fraternal twins and separated twins. In particular, twelve-year-old Canadian twins and sixteen-year-old British twins were slightly more alike in achievement if they were enrolled in the same class, with identical twins showing greater resemblance than fraternal twins. Of course, it is difficult to know the extent to which the identical twins' identical genes or same classroom was the major source of their greater similarity.

There is little question that debates over what constitutes the optimal educational setting for twins will continue. Taking into account each pairs' unique situation cannot be stressed enough.

References

- Polderman, T. J., Bartels, M., Verhulst, F. C., Huizink, A. C., Van Beijsterveldt, C. E., & Boomsma, D. I. (2010). No effect of classroom sharing on educational achievement in twins: a prospective, longitudinal cohort study. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, *64*(1), 36-40.
- Webbink, D., Posthuma, D., Boomsma, D. I., de Geus, E. J., & Visscher, P. M. (2008). Do twins have lower cognitive ability than singletons?. *Intelligence*, *36*(6), 539-547.
- White, E. K., Garon-Carrier, G., Tosto, M. G., Malykh, S. B., Li, X., Kiddle, B., ... & Vitaro, F. (2018). Twin classroom dilemma: to study together or separately? *Developmental Psychology*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/dev0000519>

ICOMBO Surveys: Research with Multiples And School Placement

Research with Multiples contributes to our knowledge of issues relevant specifically to multiples but also has the potential to contribute transformative insights to our understanding of health and disease for the whole population. ICOMBO is gathering information to present to researchers about what multiples (and their families) would like if they are involved in research. The first step is a survey to find out more detailed information about how people feel about being involved in research. It is important that we can get the message to researchers about how we want multiples to be treated, so your input will be very valuable. This survey is for both multiples themselves and parents of younger multiples.

If possible please complete the survey in English using the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MultiplesResearchEnglish>

Alternatively the survey is available in a number of other language options if you would prefer:

Arabic - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MultiplesResearchArabic>

French - <https://fr.surveymonkey.com/r/MultiplesResearchFrench>

German - <https://de.surveymonkey.com/r/MultiplesResearchGerman>

Spanish - <https://es.surveymonkey.com/r/MultiplesResearchSpanish>

Note all your responses are anonymous.

Please share far and wide so we can get as many responses as possible. If you have any questions about this survey please contact Carolyn (carolyn@icombo.org).

Thank you,

Carolyn Lister, ICOMBO Board Member

ICOMBO will be officially launching our own **School Placement of Multiples Survey** soon. The English version has recently been completed and work is underway to complete both a French and Spanish version by the official survey launch date of September 1st.

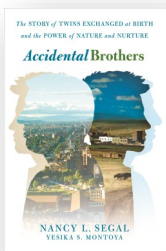
Results will be presented at the November 2019 ISTA Congress which is scheduled for Hong Kong.

Special thanks to Marion Gevers and Lucila Menendez for their translation work for this survey.

Here is the link to the English version that is being released early:

[School Placement of Multiples Survey - English Version](#)

J Susan Griffith MD
Research Chair, ICOMBO



Check out Dr. Segal's Latest Book

Check out her website and Amazon for her newest book released in April 2018.

<http://drnancysegaltwins.org/accidental-brothers>

Amazon:

https://www.amazon.com/Accidental-Brothers-Exchanged-Nature-Nurture-ebook/dp/B075WZ8517/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1528249253&sr=8-1&keywords=accidental+brothers

ICOMBO and its members have been provided permission to reprint the following article from Two-fold, the Psychology Today twin-based blog written by Nancy L. Segal PH.D.

Why Are the Stories of Twins Switched at Birth So Amazing? Life histories and findings from doubly exchanged pairs

There have been just nine documented cases of twins switched at birth.

The most recent are pairs eight and nine, from Colombia. These two identical male pairs came to my attention in the fall of 2014 and I immediately knew that I wanted to visit them and study them. They are unique even among the previous seven because they are the only adult identical twins who were separated as infants in two-way exchange. Many details of their accidental switching are unclear, but what is known is that one pair was born in the capital city of Bogotá and the other pair was born in a tiny farming area near the city of Vélez, located about 150 miles to the north. (However, the family actually lived in a remote rural area called Vereda El Recreo.)

One of the newborn twins in the rural area was very ill, so his grandmother brought him to Bogotá's better equipped hospital when he was just one day old. It was arranged for an aunt who lived there to return the baby to his family one week later. Perhaps because of the crowded nursery conditions and/or overworked nurses, this twin baby was exchanged with a twin baby in the other pair. Consequently, two sets of unrelated brothers grew up together for 25 years, believing that they were fraternal twins. Even their families believed this. If not for a young woman who one day mistook the identical twin she did not know for the one that she did know, the truth might never have been known. These events propelled me to write [*Accidental Brothers: The Story of Twins Exchanged at Birth and the Power of Nature and Nurture*](#).

Everyone is drawn to stories of twins. Perhaps that is because their matched behaviors and identical features pose intriguing challenges to expectations of individual differences. More importantly, people are eager to learn the extent to which their interests, talents and habits are shaped by genetic and environmental factors. Furthermore, it seems natural that twins should grow up together—so we are saddened to hear about twins who were separated and moved when we hear about their reunions.

The discovery of the switch occurred when the two pairs of identical twins were 25, a time when these young men were thinking seriously about career plans and personal goals. Events surrounding the discovery of the switch unfolded like the finest of spy novels. They show what can happen when friends confuse one twin for another, arousing their curiosity over the origins of these uncanny lookalikes. Not wishing to meddle in family relations, the young woman and her friend restrained their urge to know more. But they kept peeking at pictures posted on websites and asking questions until what they learned made silence impossible.

The Bogotá twins were perfect subjects for scientific study, which is why I went to South America with my collaborator Yesika Montoya, who told me about them. Twins are natural living laboratories, giving us windows into the way we are and how we got that way. People love to debate the relative contributions of genes and environments to intelligence, personality and talent, but they have only to look to twins to settle their arguments. The twin design is simple yet elegant, capitalizing on the genetic difference between identical and fraternal twin pairs. Identical twins share 100% of their genes, while fraternal twins share, on average, 50% of their genes, just like ordinary siblings. If identical twins are more alike in mathematics, sociability or life style than fraternal twins—and hundreds of studies show that they are—this means that genes are making a difference.

The Bogotá twins are young and ambitious, energized and excited. Their lives have been completely revised by discovering that they grew up with an accidental sibling.



Source: Nancy L. Segal, PH.D

Meet Your ICOMBO BOARD



Monica Rankin

Board position: Chairperson

Why are you on the ICOMBO board?

I am passionate about the rights of multiples. I enjoy hearing about research involving twins, and sometimes having the opportunity to be involved in the research. I also value the friendships I have with multiple birth parents in other countries. We have some great memories of our get togethers at ISTS/ICOMBO congresses.

What do you want to achieve?

I want to continue to spread the word about multiples – their rights and their needs. I believe that ICOMBO is moving forward at the moment and I am excited to see where we can be in a few years time. We are conducting more of our own research and we are forging stronger links with the scientific and medical communities.

What is the name of the multiples club(s) to which you belong?

I am a life member of a local group where I live – Casey & District Multiple Birth Association. I joined this group when I was pregnant with twins 29 years ago. I am also a member of Multinet Multiple Birth Association, an Australian group that was primarily set up for parents whose multiples are school-aged or older. Both of these groups are affiliated with Australian Multiple Birth Association.

What roles have you had or do you currently have in your local/national club?

I have had many roles in my local club, having been on the committee for the past 28 years – President, Secretary, Treasurer and more. I am currently Treasurer. I have been on the Victorian State Committee of Australian Multiple Birth Association for several years. I have been President, Treasurer and other roles. I am not currently on this committee. I have been on the National Council (back in the old days!) and the national Board of Australian Multiple Birth Association. I have had a few roles here too – Journal editor, Director Publications, Director of Finance and other roles. I am not currently on the national board.

Where do you live?

I live in Narre Warren, a suburb about 40km from the CBD of Melbourne, Australia. I have lived in Melbourne for over 30 years. I grew up in Townsville, a regional city in Queensland, in northern Australia. Although I have lived in Melbourne for many years, I still consider myself to be a Queenslander. I have family there and visit them regularly.

What type of multiples do you have and any siblings?

I have ID twin sons who are 28 yrs old. I have a 3rd son who is 25 and a daughter who is 22.

What do you do in your paid job (if you have one)?

I am a secondary teacher (students who are 12 – 18 yrs old). My area of expertise is Mathematics and Chemistry. I have been working as a relief teacher for the past 6 years. In my spare time, I volunteer my time with ICOMBO.



CALLOUT FOR VOLUNTEERS

We are commencing work on International Multiple Birth Awareness Week. We would love some assistance from volunteers interested in promoting multiples.

Please contact carolyn@icombo.org

Meet Your ICOMBO BOARD



Keith Reed

Board position: Vice Chair

Why are you on the ICOMBO board?

I have a passion for trying to improve outcomes for multiple birth pregnancies and seeing families supported to enjoy their parenting journey as much as possible. I was first interested in twins when my wife was expecting our first child and we shared the journey to becoming parents with friends who were expecting twins. It was much tougher for them and my campaign background in tackling social injustice and inequality meant I had to find out more.

What do you want to achieve?

I would like to see our organisations work even more closely together so communities across the world benefit from our collective strength. I would like us to coordinate research together but also look at coproducing resources and materials for professionals and families.

What is the name of the multiples club(s) to which you belong?

Tamba - Twins and Multiple Births Association

What roles have you had or do you currently have in your local/national club?

Chief Executive Officer

Where do you live?

Southampton, United Kingdom

What type of multiples do you have and any siblings?

2 children – 1 boy, 1 girl (not twins)

What do you do in your paid job?

I get paid for the honour and pleasure of working for Tamba.

J. Susan Griffith MD

Board position: Research Chair

Why are you on the ICOMBO board?

To support other families of multiples.

What do you want to achieve?

Perform research that can be beneficial to families of multiples.

What is the name of the multiples club(s) to which you belong?

Multiples of America nationally; my local club is Bluegrass Parents of Twins and Multiples (Kentucky USA)

What roles have you had or do you currently have in your local/national club?

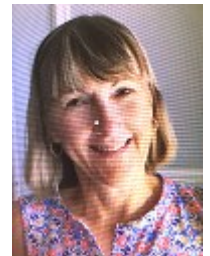
Nationally I have been on the Board as Research VP, Research Chairman; other positions - Research Interpreter, Research Committee, Reporter, Research Librarian, and many committees. State-wise, I have been President, Secretary, Parliamentarian, Librarian. Locally, I have been President and Librarian.

Where do you live?

Lexington KY - middle of the eastern half of the USA

What type of multiples do you have and any siblings?

32 year-old fraternal sons



continued page 10.....

Meet Your ICOMBO BOARD

Susan Griffith...continued from page 11

What do you do in your paid job?

I've been a family physician for 35 years, the past 26 years as a college health physician at the University of Kentucky.

In my spare time, I play a lot of tennis, garden, run my book club (love to read), sing in my church choir and am active in volunteer activities in my town.



Carolyn Lister

Board position: General board member

Why are you on the ICOMBO board?

I find it very rewarding being able to share my knowledge and experiences with other clubs and also parents of multiples. I enjoy interacting with people from around the world and having the opportunity to do some different things outside my day job. I always enjoy a challenge and like to keep busy. I think I can bring my skills as a science researcher to strengthen some aspects of ICOMBO's work, especially in the research arena.

What do you want to achieve?

I would like to see better communication and sharing of knowledge, resources around the world. Collectively I think we can do so much more than working in isolation and no matter where in the world we are there are some common challenges and issues with multiple pregnancies and raising multiples. I am really keen to progress research and strengthen our visibility to the research and medical community.

What is the name of the multiples club(s) to which you belong?

I am a Life Member of both Multiples NZ and my local club Multiples Canterbury.

What roles have you had or do you currently have in your local/national club?

I am currently Membership Secretary, Buddy Coordinator for Multiples Canterbury. I have had other roles for local club in the past including President, Playgroup Coordinator and Grants/Funding. I am also a Past President of our national organisation Multiples NZ and am still involved with some support, especially across our Facebook groups.

Where do you live?

Prebbleton which is just out of Christchurch (Quake City lol) in New Zealand.

What type of multiples do you have and any siblings?

Girl/boy twins who have just turned 13.

What do you do in your paid job?

I am a research scientist working in the area of food and health. I have been working for the same organisation (through a couple of name changes) for the last 29 years.

Note: Carolyn's current ICOMBO responsibilities include managing our Facebook page, website support and research.

Meet Your ICOMBO BOARD

Lucila Menéndez Bueno

Board position: General Board Member

Why are you on the ICOMBO board?

It is a huge opportunity to share with other associations and colleagues around the world our local experiences; learn about the experiences of others; and propose worldwide strategies that would lead us to achieve our common objectives.

What do you want to achieve?

I would like to achieve a global recognition of multiple families. Our families are growing very fast all around the world. Today, 5% of all babies born in Spain are multiple births and this is a percentage to be taken into account in a country where the average number of children per couple is only 1.3.

What is the name of the multiples club(s) to which you belong?

Federación Española de Familias Múltiples: Gemelos, Trillizos y más. (Spanish Multiple Families Federation: Twins, Triplets and more) and Asociación Madrileña de Partos Múltiples (AMAPAMU) (Madrid Multiple Birth Association).

What roles have you had or do you currently have in your local/national club?

I started as a volunteer in AMAPAMU 12 years ago (2005 when I had my twins), responsible for answering calls that came in by phone from parents seeking advice. At that time AMAPAMU had less than 500 members. Following that role, as a member of the board since 2006, I had different roles related to the Organization's cultural activities for its members and I was elected as president in 2011. Since my presidency I have been responsible for the internal reorganization of the Association looking for more effective ways of achieving our goals and managing the growth of the organization. (Currently more than 6800 families have been associated to Amapamu).

After a meeting at the Spanish Ministry for Health and Social Affairs and following their advice, we founded the Spanish Multiple Families Federation in 2015. The Federation is integrated by four local associations nowadays (Madrid, Huelva, Cantabria and Barcelona). Our goal is to have a local association in each province in Spain (52 provinces + 2 autonomous cities) and to achieve the recognition of Multiple Birth Families in Spanish Laws so our families can achieve some of the benefits that other families (Numerous or Lone Parent families) already have. Currently I am president of both entities.

Where do you live?

I live in Madrid (Spain)

What type of multiples do you have (twins/triplets, ID/fraternal, age, gender, etc) and any siblings?

I have identical twins, age 12 (2005/09/01) and a younger sibling that is 8 (2010/06/07). All of them are boys.

What do you do in your paid job (if you have one)?

After 15 years working in different roles (sales specialist, head of marketing and institutional relationships) within the Pharmaceutical area, I founded my own consultant company in 2009, Lumen Pharma, S.L. and work as a consultant for Pharmaceutical companies and Scientific Societies. My speciality is strategic marketing, business development and market access in Spain.



*We hope you enjoyed the Board Profiles appearing in this newsletter.
Watch for the remaining board members to appear in the next edition.*

A SUMMARY OF STORIES FROM *TWIN RESEARCH & HUMAN GENETICS* (the journal of the ISTS) Articles sourced from Volume 21, Number 2

♦ **A Possible Twin: A 1960s Twin Study Revisited**

It's quite a well-known story that in New York in the 1960s, the Louise Wise Adoption Centre placed separated several sets of twins and triplets, without the knowledge of either them or their families, to provide them with a home where parental attention was not divided between two or three children. This decision is recognised to be extremely unethical today.

Dr Peter Neubauer, a psychoanalyst, took advantage of this unique situation to study the differences between some identical twins, again without their or their families' knowledge, and the resulting interviews, recordings, and other evidence were stored in the Yale University archives with a release date of 2066. Many of the multiples have since met by gaining access to the study, or by chance, having all been raised in New York, but not all the separated twins were included in the study.

In Los Angeles late last year, the daughter of a New York-raised man was taken aback when she saw a man exactly like her father, yet not her father, in the farmer's market there. She filmed the man and took it back to show her father. He was also struck by the resemblance and filmed himself in the same place, the start of an investigation to see if there could be an explanation. His research led him back to the adoption agency and the possibility that he could be a twin, a realisation that was life-changing but also explained his life-long search for connection.

Justin, known as Michael before his adoption, is now trying to find out the truth about his situation, and will feature in a US TV programme produced by ABC in hopes that someone watching can offer an answer as to whether Justin does have a twin, or whether this was a very strange and unusual coincidence.

♦ **Triplet Delivery in the UK**

A rare triplet pregnancy was successfully delivered in the UK in May last year. The triplets were identical and were conceived naturally, beating approximately 200 million to one odds. The boys, Roman, Rocco and Rohan, (3lbs 6, 3lbs 5, and 3lbs 10 respectively) were delivered by caesarean section at 31 weeks before spending three weeks in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Mum, Becki-Jo, described finding out she was expecting triplets as the biggest shock of her life. After they returned home, she noticed that the boys were very alike, and DNA tests have now confirmed that they are identical.

♦ **Skin Grafting to Save an Identical Co-Twin**

In September 2016, an industrial accident left Franck Dufourmantelle with severe burns over 95% of his body. Usually in this case, patients' skin is grafted from other parts of their body or from a donor, but for Franck, neither option would work. Fortunately, Franck was an identical twin to Eric, who was able to provide the skin grafts needed for his recovery. Despite Eric's concerns that they may no longer appear identical, the two still share common features.

♦ **Passing of the Remaining Twin from the World's Longest Separated Pair**

In 2014, the world's longest separated pair of twins (as confirmed by Guinness World Records) were reunited at 78 years old for the first time since they were babies. Liz Hamel and Ann Hunt had been born in England but as their mother was a lone parent and unable to care for both, Ann was adopted at 5 months old. Liz knew she had a twin, but had moved to the USA and had little hope of finding her. It was Ann's daughter, trying to find her mother's biological relatives, who first managed to connect with Liz. Tragically, just six months after meeting, Liz died of cancer. Ann also died in December last year and Guinness World Records are said to be preparing a tribute to them both.

**A SUMMARY OF STORIES FROM *TWIN RESEARCH & HUMAN GENETICS*
(the journal of the ISTS)
Articles sourced from Volume 21, Number 2**

◆ **Conjoined Twins and the Concept of Self**

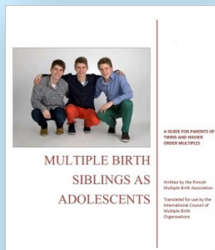
Krista and Tatiana Hogan, now 11 years old, have been the subjects of scientific interest since their birth. The conjoined twins are craniopagus (joined at the head) and their brains are also connected. As a result they are able to see what their twin sees, feel the same sensations, and even communicate by thought. This has raised some questions about sense of self, as each girl also has her own distinct personality. Director Judith Pike has released a documentary called *Inseparable* to try and examine some of these difficult and complex questions about the individuality and shared consciousness of the girls.

◆ **Twin-to-Twin Heart Transplantation**

In very tragic circumstances 25 years ago, a 3 day old baby with a complex heart condition received the heart of her non-identical twin, who had sadly died. Despite the difficulty of the decision, the transplant was a success, and has now enabled researchers to understand more about heart transplantation. Although they were keen to emphasise that they hope tragic situations like this do not happen again, they acknowledge that this case has been significant in moving forward their understanding of heart transplantation in children.

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Looking for information on adolescent twins, triplets, or other multiples?
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A Guide for parents of adolescent twins or higher order multiples

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