



Greetings NVF Member:

May 2010

The National Vitiligo Foundation (NVF) hopes you are having a delightful spring. As you know our goal is to [1] support research on Vitiligo, [1] advocate for people with Vitiligo, and [3] increase awareness of Vitiligo worldwide. Towards those efforts we have the following new exciting information.

RESEARCH INFORMATION: A significant article was published last week in the New England Journal of Medicine from the lab of Dr. Richard Spritz that presents amazing information on several genes associated with vitiligo. In the study presented, a genomewide association analysis in 1514 patients with generalized Vitiligo was performed that demonstrated significant association between Vitiligo and several genes that participate in autoimmune diseases (particularly MHC class I & II molecules) plus the gene that encodes tyrosinase, the primary enzyme responsible for the production of pigment by the melanocyte. This is critical information because it links for the first time a mechanism that explains a possible way the immune system can selectively attack the pigment system. This opens a new avenue of research that will unveil the molecular and cellular mechanisms regulating Vitiligo and ultimate rationales for better therapy.



The **NEW ENGLAND**
JOURNAL of **MEDICINE**

WEB SITE: Several new items have been added to our Web Site that includes the following. [1] MEDILL REPORTS of Chicago has recently published an article entitled “Vitiligo: Beyond skin deep” by Anne Boyd. This Article features comments by NVF Board Members Johnny Ramos and Caroline Le Poole and has been linked to our Media Information section at (http://www.nvfi.org/pages/media_info.php).



[2] a Vitiligo & Dermatocurgery Center in Mangalore, India has been added to the NVF Road Map at (http://www.nvfi.org/map/road_map.php).

NVF COMMUNITY: A new text book entitled “Vitiligo” co-edited by Mauro Picardo (Italy) & Alain Taieb (France) has been published by Springer Press. This textbook defines and gives a complete overview of the disease, both regarding the classification of differential diagnosis as well as the treatment. Written by the most authoritative experts in the field, all therapy recommendations are based on new evidence-based guidelines. It includes case studies with illustrations before and after the treatment in order to demonstrate the treatment success. This textbook will be a valuable resource for all physicians who are seeing patients with this disease. More information on this textbook will be available soon on the NVF “Publications” site at (www.nvfi.org/pages/books_pubs.php).



ADVOCACY & AWARENESS: The *Vitiligo Support and Awareness Foundation of West Africa* (VITSAF) centered in Lagos, Nigeria held their Inaugural Launch & Seminar Conference entitled "Understanding Vitiligo in Africa" on April 29, 2010. Organized by Ogo Maduewesi (VITSAF's Executive Director), the program contained presentations pertaining to Psychological Perspectives, Current Clinical &



[Ogo (in purple) & Dr. Boissy with the VITSAF staff]

Basic Science Issues, the Importance of Diet, Camouflage Technology, and numerous Patient Stories. Over 100 attendees were present including the NVF and several press representatives. This was a pivotal event that will initiate dramatic and essential awareness in this country. Support the VITSAF by checking out their web site at

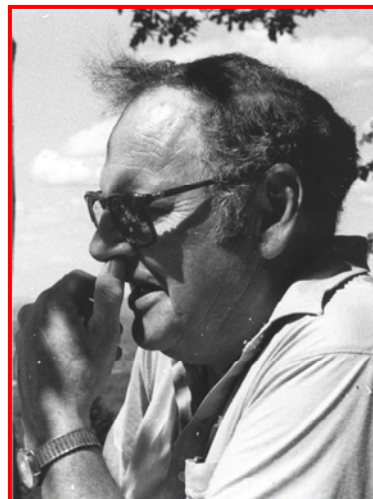
<http://www.vitsaf.org/index.htm>.

OBITUARY: It is with a bittersweet heart that I inform you of the passing of J. Robert Smyth, PhD. Dr. Smyth was the quintessential educator who mentor many students (my career was sparked by him and his insights) and who was a passionate advocate for the vitiligo community.

AMHERST - Dr. J. Robert (Bob) Smyth Jr., formerly of 851 South East St., Amherst, passed away on March 22, 2010, at the age of 86 following a brief illness.

Bob was born on Feb. 9, 1924, in Lexington, Ky. He was the son of the late John R. Smyth and Selma Eubanks Smyth. He graduated from the University of Maine in 1945 with a degree in poultry science, and he received MS and PhD degrees in animal genetics from Purdue University in 1947 and 1949 respectively. He met his wife, Ethel Ann "Evvie" Tarr during his freshman year at Maine, and the couple married on Sept. 23, 1945, in Baltimore, Md., following their graduation from UMO. Bob and Evvie and daughter Kathy moved to Amherst, Massachusetts in 1949 when Bob accepted an associate professor position at the University of Massachusetts. He was hired into a research position but enjoyed teaching and always managed to teach some classes throughout his career, both at the Stockbridge School of Agriculture, and in the University's Animal Science program.

Bob was recognized professionally a number of times during his career including the prestigious Merck Poultry award, the Poultry Science award, and the Breeders of America Research award. He served on several commercial committees, and was a member of the University Athletic Council for three years. Bob had many significant accomplishments during his career including the development of the Anderson turkey, a large, cost-



J. Robert Smyth, Jr., Ph.D.

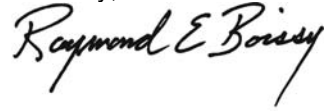
effective bird that helped popularize turkey as a mainstream America food source. He also developed the "Smyth chicken", which was strictly a research bird used in the study of vitiligo. The Smyth chicken (shown on the left) is the only known practical animal model for studying vitiligo, a disease of the eye found occasionally in human beings. During his 46-year career at UMass, Dr. Smyth mentored over 31 graduate students who have gone on to impressive careers of their own in teaching, research, and other fields. Several of his students have made significant contributions in the area of genetics and medicine.



Smyth Vitiligo Chickens

These new information and programs highlight the great strides the NVF has accomplished in the past few months. These accomplishments have been successful in part by your generous and sustained support & contributions. I personally wish to thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Raymond E. Boissy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'R' at the beginning.

President
National Vitiligo Foundation