

A New Path to Advancing Aging Research

Welcome to **The Old Grey Muzzle Tour 2013**, a scientific expedition launched to uncover the secrets of successful aging and cancer resistance. This spring, I'm embarking on a 40-day, cross-country trek to study 12 of the oldest-living Rottweiler dogs in the U.S. in their homes.

My research team is proud to be innovating research on healthier aging by committing ourselves to the intensive study of these exceptional dogs. We believe dogs with extreme longevity – equivalent to humans who reach 100 years – may hold the keys to unlock the mechanisms that connect cancer resistance and successful aging.

It represents a whole new way of doing aging research – moving the study of aging out of the laboratory and into the living room. We believe there's just no substitute for first-hand observations – going muzzle to muzzle to explore the links that factors, such as stress response, ovaries, and obesity have with highly successful aging. From our Exceptional Longevity Database of almost 250 canine centenarians, we already know a lot about the lifetime health and medical histories of these exceptionally long-lived dogs. But we want to gain a clearer picture of highly successful aging. That's why I am hitting the road to connect the dots.

The overarching goal of our research is to develop a national resource for scientists trying to understand what it takes for dogs and humans to achieve healthy longevity. That is why we have established the Longevity Biorepository at the Center for Exceptional Longevity Studies – the world's first collection of serum, blood cells, DNA, and autopsy tissues from exceptionally long-lived dogs. Securing biospecimens from the 12 dogs I visit will expand the array of specimens on hand, thereby accelerating our progress.

Thanks for joining us on a journey that is sure to position us at the forefront of scientific discovery – keeping a keen eye on the need for translating our research findings into practical application that will promote healthy longevity for both pets and people.

David J. Waters, DVM, PhD
Director
Center for Exceptional Longevity Studies
Gerald P. Murphy Cancer Foundation

