

***Remember: You can live well with osteoporosis!***

# Never Give Up!

## Eleanor Mills Boney Express – The Legacy Lives On

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**Fracture Fact:**  
The Boney Express travelled 7,200 kilometres and visited 130 communities.

On a cloudy and chilly Mother's Day morning in 1993, Eleanor Mills set out from Victoria, B.C. guiding her walker-chair on the first of the five-kilometre walks that would be the signature of her visits to 90 communities across Canada. The final destination for Eleanor and her Boney Express? Saint John's, Newfoundland, two years and more than 7,200 kilometres away.

What could possibly motivate anyone to take on such a monumental task? - an equally enormous determination to prove to the hundreds of thousands of Canadians affected by osteoporosis that it is possible to overcome the pain, discomfort and loss of mobility that so many experience as a result of this devastating disease.

"Osteoporosis has relentlessly pursued and disabled women and men for centuries," said Eleanor, then 79. "Now that early diagnosis and preventive measures are available, it is our duty to get 'out there' and spread the news. We need to let people know about this disease before they have a fracture as I have had."

Eleanor realized she had a serious problem in the late 1970s when she noticed that the hem of her calf-length dress had suddenly reached her ankles. "That afternoon, I'd heard a very unusual crushing sound and felt a vibration as I awkwardly held onto some heavy grocery bags and tried to open the door to my home," she said. "The instant height loss was inexplicable. It was only later that I realized the sound I'd heard was the crushing of my spine. At the time there was no pain. That was to come later."

Fifteen years later, after Eleanor had been involved in an experimental exercise program for osteoporosis sufferers at Women's College Hospital in Toronto and had acquired a wheeled walker, a Sunday afternoon stroll inspired Eleanor to undertake a cross-country walk. "I got in touch with others I knew in the osteoporosis field and then I started training."

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Beginning with those first steps in Victoria, Eleanor and her Boney Express spent two summers joining walkers in communities across Canada. Lauding the many volunteers who supported the walk in each community, she said, "Those who helped me were simply splendid. They cannot be praised eloquently enough for helping me - a woman they had never heard of, and never met."

Eleanor's mission did not end with the walk. For another decade she inspired countless thousands as the patron of the Osteoporosis Society of Canada (now Osteoporosis Canada), regularly attending national board meetings and special Society events and always encouraging all those affected by osteoporosis to "Never give up!"



Eleanor Mills, left, and Mona Colicos

Eleanor Mills, Patron of Osteoporosis Canada, passed away at her home in Toronto on October 5, 2004. In commemoration of her remarkable contributions to the organization, each year Osteoporosis Canada bestows its highest award – The Eleanor Mills Inspiration Award - to the volunteer who, like Eleanor, has embraced his or her own osteoporosis, and, by doing so, has inspired others with his or her determination, perseverance and optimism.

### ***Her Legacy Lives on in our Staff and Volunteers***

Eleanor Mills touched the lives of so many Canadians, none more so than the staff and volunteers who participated in the original Boney Express. Two of those individuals share stories of the impact Eleanor had on their lives.

Lorell Thoms – "I was a 22-year-old university student when Eleanor's Boney Express walked into my life. For four months I lifted, directed and organized the women of the Boney Express. We laughed, learned and experienced Canada together." (Inspired by that experience, Lorell worked for many years with Osteoporosis Canada as the Alberta Chapter's Educator, doing her best to inform, educate and support those affected by osteoporosis.)

Judy Cline – "I was an active physiotherapist when I became involved with the Boney Express through a young friend (an Olympic rower) who was the co-chair of the walk. Eleanor was engaging, determined and moved like lightning with her walker. We hosted three more walks in St. Catharines, with Eleanor joining us a second time.

Eleanor achieved her aim of spreading the news about osteoporosis and its often devastating effects. As a healthcare practitioner then and now in retirement, I am impressed with the difference in both public and

and healthcare professional awareness of osteoporosis. Eleanor was the catalyst in making that difference.” (Judy Cline was, until recently, chair of the Niagara Chapter of Osteoporosis Canada.)

*In honour of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Boney Express, we are pleased to reprint this article originally published in Coping, May 11, 2012. Eleanor’s message is as vital today as it was 25 years ago.*

## Honouring our Volunteers with the Eleanor Mills Inspiration Award

The Eleanor Mills Inspiration Award honours those special Osteoporosis Canada volunteers who, like Eleanor, have embraced their own osteoporosis, and by doing so, have inspired others with their determination, perseverance and optimism, and have given of themselves to champion the osteoporosis cause. Past recipients of this prestigious award include:

**Cherylle Unryn**  
Chair, COPN (2015- present)  
2017

**Margaret Willson**  
British Columbia  
2016

**Ina Ilse**  
Founding Member of COPN  
2015

**Lawrie McCaffrey**  
Manitoba Chapter  
2014

**Larry Funnell**  
Chair, COPN (2009-2014)  
2013

**Elda Clarke**  
Saskatoon Chapter  
2011

**Marg MacDonell**  
Chair, COPN (2005-2008)  
2009

**Christine Thomas**  
Ottawa Chapter  
2007

**Gail Lemieux**  
Founding Member of COPN  
2006

**Priscilla Cole**  
Founding Member of COPN  
2005

### We Welcome Your Feedback

- Have a question?
- Is there an osteoporosis-related topic that you would like to see featured in the newsletter?
- Looking for a great volunteer opportunity?

Please contact us by calling Osteoporosis Canada’s toll-free number **1-800-463-6842** or emailing [copn@osteoporosis.ca](mailto:copn@osteoporosis.ca).

## Thank you!

### The Osteoporosis Canada Guidelines Survey has now closed and *your voice has been heard!*

We are delighted that over 1000 COPN members expressed their opinions on the essential issues to be addressed in the update of the 2010 Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Osteoporosis.

The Survey results will be analyzed and presented to the Scientific Advisory Council of Osteoporosis Canada. This will be an important resource for them to use in crafting the new Guidelines so that they best meet patient needs. These Guidelines will be used by doctors and other healthcare professionals to help provide the best care for individuals with osteoporosis and at risk for fractures.

Thank you again for taking the time to help us with this important initiative!

Cherylle Unryn, Chair, Executive Committee  
Canadian Osteoporosis Patient Network, Osteoporosis Canada

## Are You Up for A Challenge?

If so, we need you! COPN is now 9,500 members strong. Our goal is to reach 10,000 members in 2018 and raise our numbers across Canada.

Two million Canadians are affected by osteoporosis. The threat of broken bones is more urgent than ever with our aging population. Don't let a fracture caused by osteoporosis affect one of your friends or family members. We need your support to reach out to people in your community to encourage them to join COPN and help them improve their bone health.

We are dedicated to helping Canadians be unbreakable and live well with osteoporosis. We need you to tell others about COPN and what it has to offer:

- The latest evidence-based information on medical research, osteoporosis care, and medications, with rapid responses to media headlines.
- Inspiring personal stories from others who are affected by and living well with osteoporosis.
- The assurance that all information provided by COPN is vetted by Canada's foremost osteoporosis experts, the Scientific Advisory Council of Osteoporosis Canada.
- Practical information on nutrition, exercise, safe movements, fall prevention and much, much more.

**WE CHALLENGE YOU TO SEND AT LEAST ONE EMAIL TO A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER WITH THE LINK TO JOIN COPN NOW!**

<https://osteoporosis.ca/bone-health-osteoporosis/living-with-the-disease/copn/>

The more members we have, the more power we will have to advocate on behalf of those affected by osteoporosis. Thank you for helping us stop broken bones!

## FUNNY BONE:

“One good thing about punctuality is that it’s a sure way to help you enjoy a few minutes of privacy.” – Orlando Battista

### PENNE AND RAPINI TUNA PASTA

**Preparation Time:** 20 mins

**Cook Time:** 25 mins

**Serves:** 6

**Calcium:** 200mg



Cooking greens like rapini ahead of time help remove some of the bitter flavour that most associate with it. Letting it cook in the sauce helps soften it and create a hearty sauce. Try this method with other greens like kale, collards and dandelion to enjoy more hearty greens.

#### Ingredients

1 bunch of rapini (about 454 g/1 lb), trimmed  
1 tbsp (15 mL) extra virgin olive oil  
4 cloves garlic, minced  
1/2 tsp (2 mL) hot pepper flakes  
1 cup (250 mL) canned diced tomatoes with juices  
2 tbsp (30 mL) basil or sundried tomato pesto  
2 cans (170 g each) low sodium light flaked tuna in water, drained  
1 box (375 g) whole wheat, rice or spelt penne pasta  
1/3 cup (75 mL) freshly grated Parmesan cheese

#### Tips

Cook the rapini ahead of time and refrigerate it so you can make this simple recipe even quicker! Simply cook the rapini, drain well and remove excess water. Let cool and store in container in refrigerator for up to 3 days. Try this with your other greens too and start adding more to your dinner meals.

Omit tuna and substitute canned salmon with recipe and mash gently with bones before combining.

#### Preparation

Chop rapini into 1-inch (2.5 cm) pieces and place in pot of boiling water. Cook, stirring for about 10 minutes or until tender. Drain well and press any excess water out of rapini.

In large deep nonstick skillet, heat oil over medium high heat and cook rapini, garlic and hot pepper flakes for about 4 minutes or until starting to crisp. Add tomatoes, pesto and tuna and boil gently, stirring occasional for about 10 minutes or until thickened.

Meanwhile, in pot of boiling water cook pasta for about 10 minutes or until tender but firm. Drain well reserving 1/2 cup (125 mL) of the cooking water. Add pasta to the skillet and toss with sauce adding enough of the cooking water to moisten if necessary. Sprinkle with cheese to serve.

For more information, [click here](#) to view the recipe online.