Patricia Bragg, born to carry on her father's Health Crusade

Reprint from the Natural Foods Merchandiser

Patricia received Natural Legacy Award, given to only 2 people in Health Industry yearly

Patricia Bragg comes into a room like a tent-revival preacher spreading the gospel of good health. You would never guess she is chief executive of a large health and wellness company famous for its celebrity and prominent clientele and worldwide health crusades.

Within minutes of arriving in the conference room at Bragg Health Products and Books in Santa Barbara, Calif., she announces that her favorite color is pink and that she always wears a hat because actor Jack Lord – “you know, from Hawaii Five-0” – once told her: “Patricia, you may be only 5 feet tall, but if you wear a hat you will be 6 feet tall.”

She demonstrates exercises that have kept her feminine physique firm and youthful, and marches around the room, pumping her arms and legs like a drum major, drilling a visitor on the four pumps of the heart: “Your arms and legs like a drum major, drilling a medicinal butterfly going from flower to flower. She continually shares the Bragg health knowledge with everyone!”

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Patricia Bragg, ND, PhD, with Bill Galt, founder Good Earth Restaurants & Paul Wenner, Creator Gardenburger at Natural Food Expo, Anaheim, Patricia received coveted Natural Legacy Award for her lifelong dedication to health worldwide.

It’s impossible to understand Patricia Bragg without knowing the story of her father. Not only was Paul Bragg responsible for his daughter’s physical existence, he also shaped her emotional, spiritual and mental character. Even years after his death, he is still a daily influence on his daughter. “Dad said . . . ” is one of Patricia’s most frequent phrases.

“I believe my dad was on the right track about everything,” she says. “I’m very thankful he was my dad, my buddy, my mentor, my leader, my teacher, my angel.” To Patricia’s friends, her regard for her father is nothing short of reverence. “When she saw the impact he had on people worldwide promoting what we call today ‘alternative medicine,’ the admiration they had for him, the success stories of the prominent people he helped, she was in awe of him,” says Bobby McGee, former owner of House of Good Earth Restaurants &

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Paul Wenner says, “She became him. If someone made a movie of her life, Paul would be the shadow behind her – he’s talking and she’s moving.”

When Paul C. Bragg was a teenager he was diagnosed with tuberculosis. After his third T.B. Sanitarium, he developed an eating, breathing and exercising program that restored his health (see pg. 4 “How to Live The Bragg Healthy Lifestyle”). He credited God for much of his newfound vigor and made a pledge that he would spend the rest of his life showing others how to achieve this “super health” and he did!

He wasted little time. According to Patricia, her father founded Bragg Live Foods in 1912, and originated and named the first Health Food Store in Los Angeles in the 1920s, launched Health Builder magazine in the 1930s, helped found the National Nutritional Foods Assoc. in 1936, and hosted the “Health and Happiness” Hollywood TV show with

Blessings for a dynamic, long, healthy life! Paul and Patricia Bragg, era 1960’s postcard.
The Bragg Health Crusades Spreads the Word

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Pictures show Paul Bragg with his arms thrown out, embracing rooms full of congregants. “He was so gung ho and energetic,” remembers Kathryn Matheson, owner of Full of Life Natural Foods Market and Restaurant in Burbank, Calif. “People like him who have a strong, dedicated personality are natural salesmen. When you have fire in your belly, you can sell what you believe in.” LaLanne agrees. “He sold me!”

His showmanship wasn’t too shoddy, either. Bill Galt, (inspired by Bragg) founded Good Earth Restaurants, remembers: “Paul had this big pot on stage. He’d put three processed, refined meals that the average American eats everyday into the pot – white bread, refined sugar, Coke, hot dogs, fried foods, coffee, meat, etc. Then he’d stir it up and shout: “Who’s ready to eat? Folks, that’s what you’re putting in your body.”

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Birth of a Health Missionary

A fifth-generation Californian, where her mother’s family settled before 1849, Patricia remembers an idyllic healthy childhood in California. “I didn’t know murder, didn’t know the word ‘rape,’ didn’t hear swearing or never anything negative,” she says.

She grew up in a house where “people would go look in our cupboards for aspirin, coffee, white bread and sugar, and they wouldn’t find them. I never had a Coke. My dad taught me to see a skull and crossbones – ‘laws, you can be born again!’” Jack was!

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Paul inspired people world-wide to open health stores and helped them get started.

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Then there were the celebrity Bragg followers. “Samuel Goldwyn called up my father and asked him to speak to his actresses. He said, ‘These young girls are staying up all night partying and they’re so tired, I can hardly make a movie,’” Patricia says, most of the girls ignored the Bragg teachings, but one was mesmerized: the 18-year-old Gloria Swanson, who became a strong Health Fan and occasionally joined Paul on The Bragg Health Crusades.

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pierced her ears ("It exposes nerve endings") and doesn’t wear a wristwatch because it can slow and even cut off circulation.

She never had the desire to rebel against her father’s teachings and sneak a cigarette or even an aspirin. “I always knew the consequence of living an unhealthy lifestyle is sickness! You pay for your sins,” she says.

“Patricia lives what she sells,” says Matheson of Full of Life Natural Foods Market. “I’ve been with some pretty high-falutin’ people in the health food business, and I’ve seen them smoking and drinking. That’s not Health Crusader Patricia Bragg.”

Bragg’s childhood nickname was “Busy Lizzie.” “I was very active – I was playing tennis and piano when I was 5; I’ve been gardening since I was 5. I danced ballet and jazz. I always had super energy,” she says. Demonstrating that more than 65 years later she’s still worthy of the “Busy Lizzie” nickname, she leaps off the couch and begins jogging in place. “If you get up and bounce around, you massage 70 trillion cells, and good circulation is one of the keys to good health,” she says as she races around the room barefoot, pink sweatpants flapping and pink cowboy hat bobbing.

When a youngster, Patricia began attending the boarding school she would graduate from – the Mary Wallace School in Piedmont, California. Others might be lonely or scared to leave home at a young age, but not Patricia. “I had my own vegetable and flower garden plots. The school was my second home, I loved being there,” she says. After college, she then taught kindergarten at the boarding school for a year. “I took little monsters and made them little angels. I taught them what’s right, what’s wrong, how to sing and dance, exercise, read, paint, and grow vegetables and flowers. I taught them healthy habits and never to say swear words! What comes out of your mouth is living – words are living,” Bragg is so opposed to swearing that she forbids it among her employees, and once fired a woman for cursing on the job.

**Patricia Loves Crusading**

During her school years, Bragg dreamed of being a Baptist missionary in Africa like her cousins. But when 18, her father approached her with an idea. “He said, ‘I want you, in time, to be a health missionary. Just give me one year.’” Paul Bragg wasn’t the type to take no for an answer. “The only person I’ve met who is stronger than Paul is Bill Clinton,” says Gardenburger’s Creator.

“When you are around someone so strong-minded, so controlled, you realize you don’t change people like that. You do what they want.” So Patricia took her place in the Bragg Crusades. She quickly discovered she loved being a Health Crusader and spreading Bragg Healthy Lifestyle with thousands at the Crusades nine months a year. “My dad said I was his left and right hand and we were like two peas in a pod. Sometimes he said he even knew what I was thinking.”

During the long years she worked with her father, she was right there assisting him on the Bragg Health Crusades world-wide, appearing on the Bragg TV show, “Health & Happiness from Hollywood” and helping to write the Bragg Health Books. “They were always a team,” recalls Matheson. “When you looked at them, you would see only two people headed in the same direction, and as he slowed, she gently took over. She was born to do his work and carry on Bragg Crusades.”

Also the Bragg Longer Life Exercise Club at Waikiki Beach has been going 6 days a week from 9 - 10:30 at Fort DeRussy Lawn for over 40 years. Thousands have attended and learned the health benefits of exercise.

Matheson remembers Patricia in those days as “beautiful, with long, blond hair and very tan.” LaLanne described her as a “devoted health crusader,” she never married. She was engaged at one point, but her fiance died in an accident a week before the wedding. Since then, “I have had many wonderful men friends, but I just can’t get around to thinking about marriage,” she says. House of Health’s McGee, regards Patricia as his little sister, says, “She had many opportunities to marry, but she’s never found the right one. I told her, ‘You admired your father so much, it’s impossible for other’s to compare favorably with him.’”

Although her friends believe Patricia’s personality is as vibrant as her father’s, they also agree it’s not as forceful. “Paul was a little tougher in his approach—he’d literally challenge you and say you’re going to die if you don’t change,” Good Earth’s Galt says. Patricia recounts that when she joined the Bragg Crusade, my dad said, “Just don’t be too tough – don’t hit them over the head with a big stick.” He’d say, “Patricia, remember: go slow and speak softly from your heart.”

“I saw Paul Bragg when he was 92, and he was singing songs, vibrant, full of life. You would think he had another 25 years left,” says Sandy Gooch Lederman, founder of Mrs. Gooch’s Health Stores, Los Angeles area. She thanks the Bragg Crusades for her fulfilling health career. “Patricia observed and patterned herself after his attributes. She’s a character, a little health fire-ball.”

Patricia’s approach to health crusading is more motherly, but just as persuasive as Paul’s. “She never stops talking health,” Galt says. “If you’re eating with her in a restaurant, she’ll find a way to go over to another table and strike up a conversation about health. We were on a cruise together, and before it was over, all the crew had Bragg Health Books.” Wenner adds: “If she’s at a gathering, she’ll go to every person and give them some information about being healthier. She doesn’t miss a person. Patricia gets them moving in the right direction. She truly changes lives, one person at a time.”
Patricia relies heavily on celebrity stories to get her point across, tantalizing listeners with tidbits such as: “Steve Jobs told me that he’s been reading the Bragg Health Books since high school and he admires our Health Crusades, or JC Penney – a kind, wonderful, brilliant man, so humble – told me we all have human angels. ‘You’re a human angel and so’s your dad,’ he said.” She talks about lunches she’s had with Jane Russell and how she taught Clint Eastwood to stand up straight. She rhapsodizes about how The Dalai Lama, Donald Trump and Tony Robbins love Bragg Liquid Aminos. She talks about famous people and celebrities, she leaves little time for questions about herself.

But like most things Patricia does, name-dropping serves a greater good. “Other people are a witness, just like in the Bible, which gives stories of things that actually happened,” she says. People can more easily relate to a celebrity health story than people are a witness, just like in the Bible, that indefinable miracle that is the universe, that indefinable miracle that is my relationship to man, nature, and God.”

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Awaken Health & Happiness, written 1937
For more inspiration visit twitter.com/patriciabragg

Today, Bragg crusades mainly through radio talk shows, recording as many as five a day. For a woman who has been around the world 30 times, leaving home isn’t as much fun as it once was. Still, she frequently visits her organic macadamia nut farm in Maui and her organic farm in Australia that grows 30 varieties of tropical fruits. She has properties around California, many inherited from her mother’s family, which produce the ingredients for Bragg products. The Bragg headquarters is located on a 120-acre organic farm in Santa Barbara, Calif., and she lives in a 115-year-old farm-house. Patricia is surrounded by 250 rosebushes, the house is aptly named “Patricia’s Rose Cottage,” and is decorated with cheerful floral prints and family mementos and pictures of their pets.

Like her father, Patricia has a Ph.D. – and a Doctor of Naturopathy degree, which she earned in her 20s from Bernadine University. She continues to keep updated on health, incorporating new studies into “Bragg Books that talk for us,” she says. The old walnut barn at her farm, houses her father’s library with thousands of titles. Subjects include flowers, organic gardening, motherhood and babies, allopathic medicine, self-help, ageing, happiness, psychology, health and healing, poetry, cookbooks and the classics.

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She applies new health research to Bragg Books and Products. “In the Bragg Sprinkle, Patricia picked out every one of the 24 herbs and spices,” says Bragg Chief Officer. Sandy Gooch adds, “You could always trust Bragg Health Products. Paul did his research, and really believed in his products.”

Patricia also devotes time to charitable causes funded by the Bragg Health Institute. “Not many people know how much she does for charity,” Galt says. “She put up the seed money graciously for Friends of the Animals International and set up a Mexican spaying and neutering program where U.S. vets train Mexican vets. She also funds research with botanicals for alternative cancer solutions.”

Her CPA says “Bragg Health Institute gives scholarships for training health-minded future doctors and gives money to everything from church camps, charities to wheelchair athletes. She has agape love for world health and peace and for all of us.”

For Bragg, giving back to others is a mission. You put your life to a daily test and you ask, “What are you doing to help mankind?” she says. “Sometimes people just have to have someone open the door and tell them – have a purpose! Remember it’s up to you if it’s to be – to have either sickness or super health!”

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