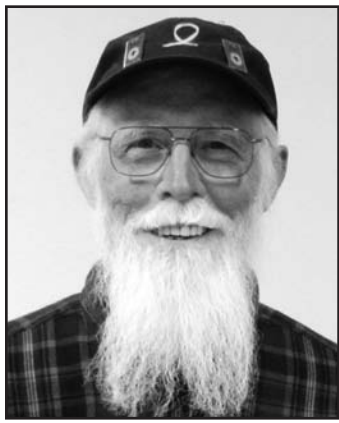


Us TOO Florence Behind the headlines



By BOB HORNEY
CANCER SURVIVOR

This month I want to talk about surviving prostate cancer — a.k.a. life after diagnosis. Life after prostate cancer diagnosis comes in two forms: non-treatment and treatment.

Non-treatment refers to men who are on Active Surveillance (AS), having been diagnosed with prostate cancer but not moving directly into active treatment.

They know they have prostate cancer, but indications are they have a low-risk stage that is “probably” slow growing. With that knowledge, they are willing to work with their urologist to close-

ly monitor the disease with the intent of living as long as possible before undergoing treatment or avoiding treatment altogether.

The rest of that intent is that the careful monitoring will catch it early enough to provide a cure if it changes in any way.

Let’s fast-forward now to those men who were diagnosed with a more aggressive — but still localized — prostate cancer.

These would be the men who could likely be cured with surgical or radiation treatment, but have one or more disease characteristics (usually as evidenced from the biopsy results) that eliminate AS as a choice: this could be a Gleason score higher than 6, a PSA of 10 or greater, too many positive biopsy cores, too much volume of cancer cells in any one of the biopsy cores, etc.

Since these men don’t qualify for AS, but are still deemed to most likely have localized and curable prostate cancer, the decision boils down to choice of treatment.

For the sake of this article, we are going to assume that all went well with the treatment and the PSA responded favorably, i.e., to either (a) an undetectable level fol-

lowing surgery or (b) to a low, stable level following radiation (since they still have a prostate gland and a limited amount of PSA will be produced).

Now we have a prostate cancer survivor. One would think this would be “easy street,” but now comes the “after treatment-AS,” which means follow-up PSA tests to quickly identify and treat a recurrence in case the initial treatment isn’t totally successful.

What got me thinking about these after-treatment PSA tests was a chance conversation on March 12 in a local grocery store with a man who attended Us TOO Florence meetings, had treatment and is now having a hard time dealing with anxiety while waiting for those post-treatment PSA test results.

He feels the anxiety is bad enough to seriously consider stopping the PSA tests. On top of that conversation, on March 13, I read a posting on the Us TOO INSPIRE website titled “Stress While Waiting Test Results” that dealt with the same concern which is often referred to as “PSA anxiety” or “PSAitis.”

So, why are these treated men

now suffering from this anxiety?

The short answer is: We know a rising or elevated PSA from screening can be due to other factors. However, a rising or elevated PSA following prostate cancer treatment is often a worrisome sign that the treatment missed some of the cancer — the first sign of a recurrence.

Those of us who attend Us TOO Florence meetings know a recurrence is a very real possibility; many of us have personally experienced it and those who haven’t have seen it happen to others in the group.

It isn’t unusual for the heart to tick a bit faster as we await the results, but the majority of us will put up with that because we have seen and understand the unforgiving consequences of a recurrence getting a head start and escaping the “window of curability.”

If we will simply stop and consider the anxiety of cancer patients following treatment of their cancers that have no early warning of a recurrence, we might think that a bit of anxiety for a few days is a small price to pay for a test that may save our life.

Just saying...

Honest portrayal



NED HICKSON/SIUSLAW NEWS

The Bromley Room of the Siuslaw Public Library was filled to capacity Saturday, April 4, as Steve Holgate portrayed Abraham Lincoln during a special “Town Hall” meeting with the President, during which he spoke of his life, recited the Gettysburg Address and took questions from the audience.

Senior Network Group membership continues to grow

Florence offers retirees a unique life style. Within the community is a group of dedicated people who provide quality services to its older citizens.

The Senior Network Group was founded more than 25 years ago. The group meets on the second Wednesday of every month, from noon to 1 p.m.

The collaboration and resource sharing are invaluable and ensure that good communication and community partnerships exist.

Each month from the Senior Network membership, a different host volunteers to coordi-

nate the meeting, the speakers and a free lunch.

The group membership includes representatives from: Elderberry Square Residential Care; Regency Florence Nursing Facility; Spruce Point Assisted Living; Shorewood Retirement; Senior and Disability Services; Peace Harbor Hospital; Peace Health Home Health and Hospice; Heavenly Helpers; Lil’ Toe Truck; Adult Foster Home Providers, and others providing care and services to older adults.

The next meeting will be

Wednesday, April 8, at noon. It will be held at Spruce Point Assisted Living and is hosted by Senior and Disability Services.

The Guest speakers will be Becky Strickland, unit manager of Adult Protective Services, and Geoff Clark, Lead Adult Protective Service Specialist. They will be presenting on adult abuse, with a focus on elder abuse and financial exploitation.

The presenters will talk about the scams that are currently targeting vulnerable populations, identifying the

risk factors, present indicators of abuse, and ways to help reduce risk.

There will also be time for discussion and questions.

Those caring for an older adult are encouraged to attend. For more information about the Senior Network Group, contact Susan Burkhart, administrator at Shorewood Retirement, by emailing shorewoodretirem@qwestoffice.net or calling 541-997-8202.

Burkhart maintains an email list of attendees for future meetings and information sharing.

Household Hazardous Waste Round-up April 10, 11

The spring Household Hazardous Waste Roundup is a free collection of hazardous waste that is from household sources, up to 35 gallons total per customer.

Hazardous waste from businesses, schools, churches or nonprofit organizations may be subject to disposal fees.

The round-up will take place Friday, April 10, from noon to 5 p.m., and Saturday, April 11, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Florence Transfer Site, 2820 N. Rhododendron Drive.

All community members are welcome to participate in the roundup.

What to bring:

Paint, household cleaners, lawn and garden chemicals, car care products, arts and crafts products, and other household hazardous waste. Check labels for words like “flammable,” “corrosive,” “poison,” “caution” and “danger.”

Do not bring:

Empty containers, radioactive waste, asbestos or explosives. Any empty containers can be safely thrown in the trash.

For information about disposal of radioactive waste, asbestos and explosives, call 541-997-8237.

What about hazardous waste from businesses?

Businesses, nonprofit organizations, schools and churches which generate small amounts of hazardous waste may pre-register to bring that waste to this event. They must pay for disposal of the waste, but most can save money by using this program, rather than hiring a contractor on their own.

Electronics Recycling:

The Florence site accepts the

following items for free during normal operating hours (maximum of seven items at a time): televisions, computer monitors, CPUs and laptops.

Appointments are required and fees may apply for more than seven items, call 541-682-4120 for an appointment. There is a \$35 charge for large copy or printing machines, as well as large floor standing electronics.

Call 541-997-8237 for more information.

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FRIDAY,
APRIL 10 • 12-5
SATURDAY,
APRIL 11 • 8-2

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