

Our Community

E-mail your community news items to:
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Brushing, flossing and other dental obsessions

I don't like the dentist. Not any particular dentist — just going to the dentist in general.

Despite what my friends might say, I have a small mouth. That, coupled with having anxiety about not being able to breathe because of asthma, makes my mouth not very user-friendly when it comes to dental work. Seriously, there's not very much room in there for my teeth, much less hands, mirrors, suction tubes and various instruments that I probably don't even care to know what they are called.

It seems quite unfair that I brush my teeth several times a day (I even have a toothbrush in my desk at work) and I have all kinds of funky implements to clean and dislodge debris from between my teeth and gums. Yet, I seem to have my share of dental issues.

And, don't even get me started on dental floss.

Too late. I floss with regularity — more in the past five years than ever before. It hasn't gotten to the level of a social activity, which I get the impression from my dental hygienist wouldn't be a bad thing.

The interesting thing is, I recently came across an article in Time — "How Dental Floss Became a Thing in the First Place," Aug. 2, 2016 — that suggests flossing isn't all it's cracked up to be.

The article talked about the history of dental floss (yeah, I know, a riveting

subject). It ends with, "Today, however, the value of dental floss is not so certain."

Another thing I'm intrigued with is the specialty areas in dentistry. Back in the day, your regular dentist was one-stop shopping. They did it all, from basic care to extractions and root canals.

Now that I think about it, maybe there is one dentist I don't like. It seems my parents paid for a root canal when I was in high school that I never actually got. I remember getting hit in the mouth with a rock and it resulted in a slow and agonizing death of the tooth.

The fix — a root canal and cap. Evidently, the dentist decided to collect the extra cash for the root canal without actually performing the procedure. Or he did such a lousy job, the endodontic specialist I saw in the fall couldn't tell it had ever been done.

I recently looked up the dentist's name on the Oregon Board of Dentistry. It seems he had some issues over the years.

While I can't be certain that dentist did me wrong decades ago, I do know I didn't get the best set of choppers genetically. I won't hold that against my mom and pops. Before I had braces, I could have left a pretty gnarly bite mark. They did sacrifice to give me a straight smile — something I appreciate to this day.

Tammy Malgesini is the community editor. Her column, Inside My Shoes, includes general musings about life. Contact her at tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4539.



Tammy Malgesini
INSIDE MY SHOES

Nurse's aide bids farewell after 46 years

Eleanor Hockensmith spends entire career at Good Shepherd

By TAMMY MALGESINI
COMMUNITY EDITOR

When she first started taking medically-related classes nearly five decades ago, Eleanor Hockensmith had no intention of working at a hospital or clinic.

"When I took the training, I didn't intend to work. I took the classes to have the knowledge to take care of my family," Hockensmith said Friday during a retirement celebration at Good Shepherd Medical Center. Hockensmith and her late husband, Charles, had four children, Bill, Mary Lou, John and Michael.

The Hermiston woman worked longer than any other employee in the history of Good Shepherd Health Care System. Her 46 years of service, said Kelly Sanders, vice president of human resources, will likely never be exceeded. Of the 63 years Good Shepherd has been operating, Hockensmith has worked for the hospital for just over 73 percent of its existence.

Hockensmith started her employment as a nurse's aide March 27, 1971. She initially worked in the OB department in the old hospital building located on Orchard Avenue. In 1983, she transferred to the medical/surgery department, initially working the night shift, and later the evening shift. Hockensmith, Sanders said, is one of the few remaining



STAFF PHOTO BY TAMMY MALGESINI

Eleanor Hockensmith is all smiles Friday while people greet her at a retirement celebration in her honor after 46 years with Good Shepherd Health Care System.



STAFF PHOTO BY TAMMY MALGESINI

Eleanor Hockensmith, right, gets help cutting her cake from her niece, Marjorie Hoagland.

employees who made the move from the old hospital to the current facility in 1985.

In August 1995, Hockensmith transferred to a part-time position in Good Shepherd's TLC Home Health Care department, which later combined with the Vange John Memorial Hospice. When those departments later separated in March 2012, Hockensmith remained with the hospice department as a certified home health and hospice aide until retiring June 2, 2017 — after 46 years and 68 days with Good Shepherd.

"I enjoyed taking care of people," Hockensmith said. And, people appreciated the care she provided.

During Hockensmith's retirement celebration, which included upwards of 100 people, Ken Freeman shared about the first time he met her in 2013. Hockensmith had entered the room where Freeman's mom was.

"I watched her — that lady took such great care of my mother," Freeman said. "She was a great first face for hospice. She is one of a kind."

The nurse's aide even inspired Freeman. The Hermiston man started volunteering for hospice about a year ago.

Carolyn Robinson, hospice clinical liaison, said she always appreciated Hockensmith's willingness to help. She often came in on short notice when someone called in sick. Hockensmith, Robinson said, exhibited loyalty and dedication to the people she worked with, as well as the patients.

"Her heart is huge," she said.

Luanne Brownfield of Heppner, who worked with Hockensmith for 26 years, said the nurse's aide was like the Energizer Bunny.

"She ran us ragged," Brownfield said as many nodded in agreement.

Although frustrated at times with technology and computers, Brownfield said Hockensmith was willing to learn. Brownfield said Hockensmith is proof that "we can teach an old dog new tricks." However, Brownfield said they had to get additional help on a couple of occasions because passwords were lost.

"I didn't lose it. The computer just didn't go along with it," Hockensmith explained.

Hockensmith loves to sew and cook. In addition to many winning entries over the years at the Umatilla County Fair, she has been named Homemaker of the Year on numerous occasions. She plans to continue using her talents to help other people, including a current project of making chair backpacks at Hermiston Terrace.

Adult programs continue at Hermiston library

Adults are invited to attend specialty groups that meet regularly at the Hermiston Public Library.

- Yarn Club meets Thursdays at 5:30 p.m. and Saturdays at 10 a.m. Lovers of needlecraft are invited to attend
- Writer's Group meets the fourth Thursday of each month. The writing community offers sup-

port, encouragement and motivation

- Photography Club meets the second Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. The group often participates in photo-taking field trip.

Each of the groups are free and open to the public. For more information, call 541-567-2882 or stop by the library at 235 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston.

Umatilla Landing Days expands festival

In celebration of the town's 155th anniversary, Umatilla Landing Days will feature a two-day celebration.

The festival kicks off Friday from 5-10 p.m. at Umatilla Marina Park. Geared towards an adult crowd, the evening offers food vendors, a beer garden and live music, including The Outsiders and Grupo Viajero.

The event kicks into high gear Saturday, starting with a parade at 10 a.m. in downtown Umatilla. After the parade, the fun moves to the marina park, which will feature a full schedule of entertainment and activities. In addition, craft and food vendors will be on hand.

Additional displays and educational activities in-



FILE PHOTO

Umatilla Landing Days offers a variety of vendors at Umatilla Marina Park. The event kicks off Friday evening with food vendors, a beer garden and live music. It continues Saturday from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., including a fireworks display at dusk.

clude boater safety information, along with boat rides

from the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office marine di-

vision, personnel from the Umatilla Rural Fire Protection District and a drunk driving display trailer from the Oregon Department of Transportation.

The day also features a salsa making contest (entries must be submitted by noon), a soccer tournament and an Instagram photo contest — be sure to use the hashtag #UmatillaLandingDays2017. Also, Nuketown is the featured evening performer.

There is a \$5 parking fee at the gate. Money is used to help cover costs for the fireworks show, which will fill the air Saturday at dusk.

For more information, call 541-922-4825 or search Facebook for "Umatilla Landing Days."

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Murder is Par for the Course

Saturday, July 1st 5:30PM

\$25 per Person
 Maxwell Siding Event Center
 Corner of Locust & 1st PI (Behind Nookies)
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DINNER
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Seating is limited
 Call Dave for info and tickets
 541.567.8774

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Purple Ridge Lavender Festival

June 24th - 9am to 5pm
 2891 Bridge Road, Hermiston

Magic in the fields!

Come enjoy the backdrop of beautiful blooming lavender and a masterful quilt expo. Listen to live music as you stroll through the fields of lavender. Guests are encouraged to don their favorite storybook consumes and receive \$2 off admission!

General admission: \$10 • Including beer tasting: \$12

Proceeds go to Agape House and Martha's House