

TUMOR

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for lunch. Heider went to Burger King, bought two Whoppers, ate one and relaxed. She had no idea what was wrong with her eyes, and she thought they would be better for the second test — the clinical segment — if she relaxed them.

They didn't get better.

By the end of the day, Heider had miraculously completed the first and second tests with 99 and 100 percent scores.

Heider had her nursing license, but she had a new priority now. She had no idea her blurry vision was only the beginning of a long medical ordeal. An excess of cerebral spinal fluid had begun to pool in Heider's brain, causing vision problems that doctors couldn't fix or explain. She had no idea that it would get worse, eventually inflicting short-term memory loss, dyslexia, slow comprehension of speech and writ-

ing, and a swollen body.

The build-up of fluid, also referred to as a tumor, has resulted in surgeries, drugs, spinal taps, Computerized tomography scans and Magnetic Resonance Imaging scans, endangering her health and often hindering her daily life.

Right now Heider, a 46-year-old University student, is in urgent need of surgery. Heider said Dr. Catherine Gallo, a neurosurgeon in Eugene, doesn't think she'll live another 10 years.

That's why Heider wants her story told — to thank everyone who's helped her through the tough times, to thank the people who have helped keep her alive.

The medical roller coaster

After the state nursing exam, Heider went home to Redmond and began searching for a good optometrist. She eventually found Dr. Michael Stauder.

A couple of weeks later she sat in his Bend office.

"He looked into my eyes and he

wasn't saying very much," Heider said. "I knew from my experience that that wasn't a good sign."

Over the next few weeks, Stauder dilated Heider's eyes and ordered diabetic and peripheral vision tests. Then, he ordered an MRI.

Heider received a message on her machine from his office at 5 p.m. on a Friday evening. He wanted her to go to St. Charles Medical Center immediately, but he didn't tell her why, she said.

At the center, she met Dr. Gary Buchholz, who was first to tell her what was really going on in her head. He discovered that the pressure in her skull was more than twice that of a healthy person. Buchholz administered Heider's first spinal tap — an operation where a 4-to-6-inch needle is inserted into the spinal column — and measured the pressure of her cerebral spinal fluid. He then removed about 15 cubic centimeters of it from her spine.

Next, she went to Oregon Health Sciences University in Portland for a

second opinion. Experts at OHSU sent her back to Bend to neurosurgeon Dr. Norwin Newby, who gave her another spinal tap. It was an operation that she would become intimately familiar with; she estimates she's had 90 spinal taps in the last 10 years.

Filling the void

In 1998, Heider started school at Central Oregon Community College in Bend, her second trip to college. Going back to school after 20 years in the workplace was a relief for Heider, who graduated from Portland's Roosevelt High School with honors.

It was a way of filling a gaping void in her life after much of her family went away. Heider said her father, Howard, died of heart disease in 1995; her mother, Louise, suffers from dementia at home in Portland; and her older sister, Bev Clark, has all but abandoned Heider because she couldn't handle her chronic medical condition.

Jan Steele, Heider's younger sister, said their mother has disowned them both.

"She has more or less said she doesn't have a daughter named Jody," Steele said.

Despite these personal setbacks, Heider persevered academically. In 1999 she got her first degree, a two-year general associate of arts.

But Heider wasn't finished. She wanted to get a four-year degree like her father had always wanted her to do.

In fall 2000, Heider became one of the first students to enroll in the University's General Social Science program in Bend. For the next two terms, she buried herself in 12-credit course loads, laboring toward a four-year degree while working as a certified nursing assistant in home health care.

"She has gone through a tremendous amount of heartache," Steele said. "Her journey has been quite incredible. I don't know how she has persevered to keep going when she didn't have anything left. How she picks up and keeps going, I don't know."

Contact the people/culture/
faith reporter
at jaredpaben@dailyemerald.com.

IRAQ

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decades and that "these ideas need some time to be corrected."

Hedo, who is from Baghdad, said Iraqis realized after "the liberation of Iraq" how deprived they were under Hussein's regime.

"We used to be misled by the previous regime," he said. "Especially about the United States and the western world in general."

The men had different views on the future of Iraq.

Faizula said he's not optimistic about the future because both Turkey and many of the Shiites oppose a federal system for the Kurds.

Muhammed said Iraq in five years will be heaven for him. He said Iraqis are thinking about business, raising

children and developing their country instead of killing or destroying.

Two of the men said they want U.S. troops to remain in Iraq until the country is stable.

Faizula said pulling out is not practical and that the only thing holding the country together is the presence of an international force.

Hama Amin agreed, pointing out that Iraq has become the front line in America's war on terror and that pulling out may bring the front line back to New York City or other American cities.

"I think Iraq can do it," he said. "But, for the time being, they need help from others."

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faith reporter
at jaredpaben@dailyemerald.com.

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what is called a balancing test.

"What the court has to do is balance the interest in free speech ... against the state interest on the other hand to prevent fraud and overreaching by signature gatherers," he said.

Epps said there have been several cases throughout the nation in-

volving restrictions on petition-gathering and free speech issues which fell on both sides of the fence as to whether such restrictions were unconstitutional, though none of the cases involved laws exactly like Oregon's.

"It's not the end of the story by a long shot," Epps said. "This could definitely go on to the Supreme Court."

Contact the city/state politics reporter
at nikacarlson@dailyemerald.com.

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