

Very thankful on this Thanksgiving

This Thanksgiving I am thankful not to have cancer. I hope.

Six months ago my family doctor sent me for a CT scan because I went in to be checked out for something that felt weird, which ended up being nothing.



GLENN MOLLETTE
SYNDICATED COLUMNIST

However, the CT scan did reveal some nodules in my thyroid. A local endocrinologist did a fine needle biopsy and said one of the nodules was 30 percent suspicious of malignancy. I went to another doctor out of town who did the same test that came back inconclusive and then another test which revealed the same nodule was about 40 percent suspicious of malignancy. I asked the question "What should I do," and his response was we need to remove the entire thyroid within two months.

I didn't really want to do the surgery and have read many reports about people living their entire lives with thyroid nodules. I have read many die with thyroid malignancy that never caused them any trouble. Of course, cancer anywhere in your body is never working to your advantage.

I agreed to have the surgery and pathology revealed that I not only had a suspicious nodule but four malignant nodules. According to the extensive report, I had three malignant ones on the right lobe of my thyroid and one malignant one on the left side of my thyroid. The pathology report, surgeon and supervising endocrinologist all have assured me the malignancies were small and contained within the thyroid and no further treatments are necessary at this time. Of course, for the rest of my life I will be visiting my doc for surveillance to see if anything nasty pops back up.

This of course is the short version of the story. The main point is I'm better off with cancer out of my body than in my body. This time last year I was clueless that anything so detrimental to my health was lurking beneath the surface. This year I will celebrate Thanksgiving for a miraculous early detection and a surgery that ended up being the only real choice to make.

My voice is not strong yet after the surgery and I have a little pill to take every day, but who cares, I am alive, feel good and writing this column. I have to praise God almighty for his grace toward me. I also have to be thankful for medical insurance that provided me a way to go to a place where I chose to go. Two doctors told me I needed only half of my thyroid removed, and if cancer was found then I could have the other half removed. Who wants to have two surgeries? I did not. The doctor I sought out could not prove I had malignancy on my left lobe but simply said, "I don't like how it looks and I think the whole thing needs to come out." I am grateful that I got to choose my doctor and my place of surgery. Every American should have the option of choosing their doctor and place of medical care.

Some people are not as fortunate. I have several friends who could not beat cancer and passed on this year. Often times the symptoms already an indication things were too late for them to treat their condition.

As a word of caution, I want to say simply waiting to see what your condition does often ends up being an emergency down the road. If you have an early warning, then trying to move forward to aggressively eliminate the problem or treat it is the only way to have a chance of winning. Of course, we are talking about our human bodies and there will always be something to repair or deal with concerning our health. We go from one thing to another if we are blessed to live long enough.

Thus, this Thanksgiving I am thankful — very thankful.



Your views

Bergstrom: Free-range dogs a serious problem in Union

To the Editor:
Dog owners, I would address the problematic situation of dogs running at large in Union. Without doubt, our small animal companions are in constant danger of being seriously injured, maimed or killed by these dogs at all hours.

Though heartbreaking, some recent cases in point include, just to name a few, some chickens killed by two dogs on Main Street, a beloved cat killed by a Great Dane on W. Arch Street and a cat seriously injured by a large pitbull mix on W. Arch Street. All of these animals were attacked on their own properties. In the case of the Great Dane, the owners of the cat were bitten as well.

Most certainly, the owners of these dogs are well aware of the leash law and choose to simply ignore the fact, regardless of the resultant pain our pets and ourselves may have to endure. As well, anyone who truly cared for their dog would not subject it to the hazards that prevail, much less the danger it presents to our small pets, which are helpless against attack.

I believe people with this mindset need to put the

shoe on the other foot. They display irresponsibility in maintaining their dogs, not to mention wanton disregard and total disrespect for animals and for the rest of us who love and responsibly care for and maintain our animal companions.

These people need to be held accountable for their actions, and they need to know the grief and pain they have caused those of us who dearly care. Clearly these loved family pets do not deserve this horror.

Marcia Bergstrom
Union

Roberts: Thanksgiving is a holiday of joy

To the Editor:
Thanksgiving is almost here, and what a beautiful holiday of blessed joy it is.

All the beautiful fall colors and the cool crisp air filled with the singing of little snow birds in our neighborhood makes me smile and my heart sing.

What wonderful blessings our loving heavenly father has created for us to enjoy. I give him all the praise and glory he solely deserves for it all.

What an awesome God we serve. May our loving and gracious heavenly father

bless each of you this Thanksgiving, that is my prayer.

Janice Roberts
La Grande

Journet: San fire management is the answer

To the Editor:
As you've heard: "Denial ain't a river in Egypt!" Denial flows from Washington, D.C., to the western states.

Data indicate the area burned by fire has been increasing over the last few decades. But data also tell us that going back a century and beyond, the area of western forests burned was much greater than today.

So, what's been happening? Since the wildfire trend started in the 1970s or 1980s before logging was substantially reduced, that cannot be the problem.

However, what happened in the mid-early years of last century was an extensive campaign of fire suppression. Meanwhile, during the 1970s-1980s and onward, climatic conditions started becoming notably different as temperatures rose, snowpack declined and soils started drying out, producing worsening drought trends.

Throughout the world, areas with our wet winter / dry summer climate

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support vegetation that is fire prone, fire adapted and fire dependent. Since fire is critical to the health of our forests and is inevitable with global warming continuing, we'll never prevent fires however hard we try. Urging yet more fire suppression rather than sane fire management is displaying ignorance.

It's alarming to see uniformed citizens and politicians blaming the wrong causes for fires.

Alan Journet Ph.D.
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