

Cancer strikes

REAL HEALTH

Jesse Henninger
Arts & Culture Editor



One third of all women and one half of all men will develop cancer. For an unfair percentage of our world populous, the opportunity to knock on Heaven's door manifests as one of many forms of cancer.

Cancer has become the norm. Outranked by heart disease and smoking-related illnesses in annual death tolls, cancer remains prevalent worldwide.

Cancer is evolving into an everyman topic. We are all familiar with the major cancer types, including some practically untreatable cancers. How has cancer affected your life?

Whenever I get sick, I react. Visiting doctors, buying medication and taking every additional measure I can to aid in a swifter recovery, without infecting others. These kinds of measures are imprinted in our brains and become reflexes as we age. Ailments like colds, sinus infections, strep throat are quickly and easily treated. But when the diagnosis is indeed cancer, time stops.

We are thrust into an uncomfortable limelight, both foreign and potentially terrifying. A diagnosis of this magnitude will often shake a person emotionally. Why? Well there are only two cancer routes available: the route that leads to recovery and the route where cancer prevails.

If you are able to fight the cancer, there are many additional challenges within the battle. Should the cancer be untreatable or have progressed past a treatable point, then specific challenges also exist.

It can also be a catalyst for new understanding, acceptance and change in our lives.

How do we make sure that we come out on top?

One simple answer: Be prepared. Not one of us is impervious to the butterfly effects that come from life's "impossible" challenges.

The information is available. All the steps are mapped out already. The steps to prevent illness (as best we can) have been there, but we haven't bothered to apply them, at all. Being prepared has become more simple just by being able to know your family history and genetics and check out books and newspapers for the newest treatments and alternative treatments. The Internet is your friend, everything you could want to know about cancer prevention methods and numerous agencies of support for those in need are available.

Cancer (or any other scary, life-threatening illness) does not need to be the depressing, daunting, fear-mongering monster anymore. Becoming responsible for our own health through education, prevention and actually using our resources is the best prescription for a healthy being, with or without cancer.

National Novel Writing Month frees the minds of writers and readers alike

Sequoia Allen
The Clackamas Print

All across the world, hundreds of thousands of people are getting ready: sharpening pencils, stockpiling Halloween candy — and perhaps even cleaning up their desks. They purchase fresh typewriter ribbons and cross the days off their calendars in breathless anticipation of Nov 1.

It's not the apocalypse they're preparing for, although there may well be zombies involved. No, these eager masses await the beginning of National Novel Writing Month, or NaNoWriMo for short. At this time every year, the ink and the coffee start flowing and it won't stop until December. All strive toward a common goal: to write 50,000 words in one month's time. Many won't make it to the finish line, while others will surpass it. Regardless, all will come away with something special — it's up to each participant what they will create.

All genres and skill-levels are welcome. Many participants return year after year, everyone from school children to seasoned wordsmiths. Every year many college students also take

the plunge. According to Steven Genise, NaNoWriMo events and development associate, last year around 133,000 participants were between the ages of 18 and 29. There are even people here at CCC who — in the coming month — will be diving headlong into writing a novel.

“To write a novel, you need to have read a hundred.”

Tae Gordon
Head of CCC writing club

Among these is faculty member Tae Gordon, who heads up the writing club here at CCC. Although she pointed out that NaNoWriMo has its potential weaknesses, such as emphasizing quantity over quality, she said that NaNoWriMo can be an effective tool for many people because it helps one get used to writing regularly.

“Like anything, writing has to be practiced,” Gordon said, “[NaNoWriMo] is good for keeping you on schedule.”

Some might question the sanity of such an endeavor as NaNoWriMo. While challenging, it's far from impossible, and some notable published novels have come from the event, including the book “Water for Elephants” by Sara Gruen, to name just one. Through local write-ins, word-count trackers and online forums, NaNoWriMo provides external motivation and community support to ambitious novelists, and can be a very useful writing tool, not to mention a ton of fun.

There's nothing quite like knowing that you're writing a novel in 30 days at the same time as 341,375 other people, which was the number of people who participated last year. That's not even counting the 82,554 others who participated through the Young Writer's Program for ages 17 and under.

If you're interested in novel writing, NaNoWriMo is an interesting program to look into. More information can be found at nanowrimo.org. In the meanwhile, there are many resources for writers here on campus. Many different writing and liter-

ature classes are offered at CCC, as well as the Writers Club and a mini writing conference which takes place every spring. Trevor Dodge, who teaches fiction writing, shared some of his advice for fitting regular writing into a busy schedule:

“Just make your mind up that you're going to do it,” he said. “There are a million reasons, and a lot of times really, really good ones, not to write... But the primary reason that trumps all those other million reasons is that you want to do it.”

Eric Bronsen is a member of the Writers' Club and takes classes at CCC. He has created four full-length works of fan fiction and over 60 short stories to date. He adds that it's important not to “allow [your writing] commitment to upset you. Writing is hard work, and too many people give it up when it becomes even a small burden.”

Dodge uses tools like daily word prompts and email reminders to keep himself going, and Tae Gordon recommends reading as much as possible. She contends that “to write a novel, you need to have read a hundred.” Fundamentally though, Gordon, Dodge and Bronsen all agree; making time to write every day is vitally important.

ASG Halloween costume contest

The long-awaited spooky holiday is upon us! To celebrate, Associated Student Government (ASG) has planned a costume contest to get the campus in the spirit. Time to break out the creativity and show what you've got! Come sporting your hilarious, thought-provoking, creepy and creative get-ups and receive the bragging

rights that go with being named Clackamas Community College's Costume Contest Champion. Look around campus for the flyers and sign up this week. For anyone wanting to witness the showdown, come to the Community Center from noon to 2 p.m. Halloween day.

- Compiled by Marissa Nwerem

Get Published!

THE CLACKAMAS PRINT WILL BE RUNNING A SPECIAL SECTION DURING WINTER TERM. IT WILL FEATURE PIECES OF WRITING FROM STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS.

SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED OCT. 30 THRU DEC. 15

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