

Bob's Corner

Last Wednesday I made sure that the I.V. stuck in a vein in the top of my left hand was stuck in far enough. This feat of skill was achieved by my unconsciously and cleverly pushing on it with a paper towel after washing my hands in a rest room at the offices of "my cardiologist." It hurt. Physically. And mentally, when I realized how dumb a move it was. However, there was no doubt that the thing was in far enough.

However, the pain wore off (today), and I think that the radioactive stress test I endured probably will have a good prognosis. Hadn't had such an enjoyable experience since the one I underwent in April last year at Tri-City Medical Center in Oceanside, Calif., when, lacking anything better to do, I managed to have my second heart attack.

The one in Grants Pass last week (the test, not another blood pump extravaganza), was at least as much fun as the one in SoCal. Good people, too; especially Technician Bob and Nurse Joany, the dynamic duo of stress-o-rama.

Here's how the procedure works, for those of you who will miss the thrill of modern medicine. First, wear loose and comfortable clothing, and bring a nice sandwich. Second, be prepared to lie still (seriously!) for 30 minutes without talking, with your right hand under your right hip to keep that arm still; and with your left arm bent so that your hand and forearm rest on your forehead. Now try to boogie from that position. Just kidding.

A mysterious and magical medical machine then moves slowly across your heart area, taking pictures for the dining and dancing pleasure of your favorite cardiologist. The first film is taken not "too long" after you arrive.

Then you hang around awhile awaiting the real stress part. Nearly constant blood pressures are taken, and EKG leads are attached (man, they're cold with that jell stuff on them). And now, start running, sucker. I ran and ran. Was getting nowhere. Ended up at 3.4 mph with about a 15 percent grade on the happy treadmill. Huffing-puffing, just like an old steam engine.

Finally, Bob and Joany said that I could quit, when I claimed that I had reached level nine on a 10-point scale, as far as exertion goes. How far does exertion go? Not far on a treadmill. The ol' heart was a'pounding though. Actually, when that portion was concluded, I felt pretty good.

After that I ate the terrific low-fat tuna sandwich that Jan had made for me. She was already eating hers when I found her in the interior waiting room.

Following that, I was invited back to the slow-moving heart camera. While I laid there you would not believe the places that itched (on me), that I couldn't scratch. I itched in places where I didn't even know I had places. And I wished that I had taken Bob's suggestion that I use the rest room again. He knew. Especially after giving me two cups of water in connection with the injections of something called thallium.

But I survived. And for that matter -- keeping in mind all medical and emergency-responder people -- from medics to orderlies (not to mention lawmen and firefighters) -- I am grateful. They have helped me survive. A lot. Overall, I'm really glad to be alive and kickin'.

With that thought, all of us wish all of you a Happy & Stress-Free Thanksgiving. I say, count your blessings. And that's Amen for this week.



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Corrections

*In a photo caption last week, it incorrectly was stated that Debi Dobie and Emmanuel Lungwa Demzee, who are engaged to be married, attend Brigham Young University (BYU) at Provo, Utah. In fact, they attend the BYU campus at Rexburg, Idaho.

*In a page 1 story last week the end of a story about Siskiyou Community Health Center inadvertently was deleted. Following is the complete last paragraph: Despite the changing face of medical care, Scheufele said that, "SCHC remains focused on and committed to its mission."

The cross of the Legion of Honor has been conferred upon me. However, few escape that distinction.
- Mark Twain -

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Questions and Answers by Christina Snell Executive Director at Lovejoy Hospice



In order to help you become better informed about hospice services, Lovejoy Hospice is publishing this question and answer column every month. Look for us on the fourth Wednesday of every month in 'Illinois Valley News.' If you have questions you would like answered in this column, phone us at the number below or E-mail us at lovejoy@parragon.com

Q: "My friend says she is just having the 'holiday blues' but I think she is really depressed. How can I tell the difference?"

A: Holidays are a time of the year when some people may suffer from the 'holiday blues'. If they have lost a loved one around the holiday, that can add to their feelings of sadness. However, when that continues for a long period of time and begins impacting their entire life situation it is time to take action.

Symptoms of depression are:

1. Insomnia - difficulty getting to sleep or increased need for sleep.
2. Significant weight loss or weight gain.
3. Inability to concentrate, make decisions or remember
4. Depressed mood most of the day, nearly every day, sometimes for no apparent reason.
5. Fatigue or loss of energy.
6. Lack of interest, motivation or pleasure in almost all activities including job, hobbies, family and sex.
7. Feelings of worthlessness, guilt, low self-esteem or indifference.
8. Recurrent thoughts of suicide or suicide attempts, desire not to be alive.
9. Difficulty controlling thoughts and/or inability to physically move.

If your friend has shared that she's had five or more of these symptoms in the same 2-week period, professional counseling may be the answer to reclaim her life.



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Letters to the Editor

Editor's Note: Views and commentary expressed in letters to the editor are strictly those of the letter-writers.

Typed, double-spaced letters are acceptable for consideration. Hand-written letters that are double-spaced and highly legible also can be considered for publication. Cards of thanks are not accepted as letters.)

'Ideal parent'

From Donna Pernicka O'Brien

I am the mother of six boys, and, yes, I gave birth six times (ouch). My fifth son, Drake, is 11, and today he handed me a paper he wrote for a class assignment, and I wanted to share it with everyone. It is titled, "Ideal Parent."

While I was reading his paper, my eyes filled with tears, and my heart pumped with joy. I gave my son a big kiss and a bear hug.

We are not perfect parents, nor do we even want to try. All we wanted to do as parents is give our kids all the love, caring and the best guidance we can.

All my boys are doing well. God has blessed me well, and I thank him and my husband. If I go to bed and never wake again, you can say that I have had the best 39 years of my life and never regret being me.

To me, my awesome family is the ideal family.

By Drake Pernicka

Have you ever thought of what an ideal parent would be? Now I would like to tell you what I think an ideal parent would be. So sit back, relax, and enjoy.

My parents are the ideal parents. They are supportive in whatever I do. I want to be a forensic scientist and they're behind me 100%. I also wanted to be a doctor, and they were behind me in that too. I ran for student council and my mom made me the best posters in the world. I got a \$300 scholarship for college, and my dad and mom both want me to go to college and graduate.

My parents are active. They take me quad riding and camping. I love it when my dad takes me somewhere special, and it's only the two of us. We have such a good time together. It makes me feel so good to know that I have the best parents I could ever dream of.

I am so rich in a way, because my parents are the best, and to know that they would do anything in the world for me. My parents take me to the coast and we walk along the beach. Then we build castles and watch the ocean try to take them down. They take me quad riding at the track.

My parents do that with me because it doesn't take a lot of money and the best things in life are free, but it is so great to be with them having fun, it doesn't take a lot of money to let me have fun.

Now, I hope you have a better understanding of what an ideal parent would be. My parents are the ideal parents, and I hope you liked it.

Tax misinformation

From Lou Chauvin
Cave Junction

With the economy in tatters, war looming, unemployment rising, and the national deficit growing at an increasing rate, it's not surprising that all money measures in the recent ballot were beaten down (with the exception of the Illinois Valley Fire District, whose voters came close to being destroyed by the largest fire in Oregon history).

However, I believe that the funding defeats were due, in part, to the influence of the anti-government crowd that spews the "government-spending-is-bad and out-of-hand" nonsense.

Only five other states dedicated a smaller share of their income to state and local taxes than Oregon. And that tax burden has remained steady for the last 20 years: 10.5 percent in '78/'79 and 9.3 percent in '98/'99. Government employment has also shrunk as a share of total employment. State and local government employed 16.2 percent of all Oregon workers in '79, but only 14.6 percent in

2000.

We truly need state and local services for the functioning of our society. It would take a whole book just to list the job descriptions, from the guy that visits the gas stations to make sure the meters are correct, to the firefighters and their supporting staff, to the port managers, to the prison staff, to the teachers and professors, to the real estate agency, to the fish and game people, to the public health doctors and nurses and vector control people (mosquitoes, rats, etc.) -- all these and thousands more make our lives possible.

They are inherently necessary because they guarantee the quality of our lives. Libraries, jails, and college classes cannot be abandoned when things get a little tight, a little uncertain. That's the slippery slope that jeopardizes our future.

If you feel overtaxed, consider talking to your federal representatives. By the time George W.'s term is over, our defense budget will be equal to all other defense budgets in the whole wide world. It currently exceeds that of the top 50 countries of the Earth.

We are now an empire greater than any that has come before, beholden to the rich and powerful, who buy power, through our votes, with campaign contributions.

Getting along From Billie L. Coakley Cave Junction

I was able to attend the Biscuit Fire meeting Oct. 29 at the county building.

This meeting was highly informative and progressed in an orderly and polite manner. This was surprising to me, as the groups involved and the people attending were and are quite diverse.

Becoming educated about the process involved to recover from this devastating fire is important because this is our neighborhood. We should be aware of decisions affecting where we live, work and play. We are fortunate to live in such a beautiful place.

Putting our differences aside to learn and work for this recovery is worth the time and effort.

Six from valley honored on 'National Dean's List'

Six students from Illinois Valley are among the approximately 140,000 included in the 25th annual edition of "The National Dean's List, 2001-2002."

Those honored, who were or are attending Rogue Com-

munity College:

O'Brien resident Dwayne K. Neuberger; and Cave Junction residents Jedediah D. Galloway, Joshua J. Galloway, Glenda Graham, Nicholas Leach, and Christina R. Leippe.

Students are chosen for the honor by their college deans or honor society advisers. They must be in the upper 10 percent of their class or on their school's dean's list, or have earned a comparable honor.

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