### **SENIOR NEWS**

# Normal memory loss not a sign of dementia



T OUR AGE, IT'S common to worry when you can't remember a name, or you can't find that word on the tip of your tongue. When that happens, I often ask myself, "Is this normal for my age? Or am I in the early stages of dementia?" And then the more I worry, the more I seem to forget!

To relieve my anxiety, I found an article by Dr. Mike Davis who gives the following three examples demonstrating the distinctions between normal memory loss and dementia: 1) Misplacing keys is normal. Forgetting what they are for is not. 2) Forgetting a person's name is normal. Not remembering

knowing the person is not. 3) Forgetting to turn into a familiar street is normal. Becoming easily disoriented or lost in familiar places for hours is not.

Good. I don't need to wor-

ry. I often misplace my keys,

but I do know what they are for. I seem to have a harder time remembering names, but they eventually come to me by the end of the conversation. And when I'm in a hurry, there are times I do turn down the wrong street, but so far, I've always found my way home. But then I read the next sentence. "These lines are distinct for most of us, BUT in early dementia patients, it can be tricky to tell." Now, what the heck does that mean, tricky to tell? Could my forgetfulness seem normal, but because of some subtle signs, I could unknowingly be in the early stages of dementia?

Should I still be worrying? It does give me pause. But there is one sign that gives me hope. I figure as long as

I can spell Alzheimer's without looking it up, I'm okay.

For those who have been diagnosed with dementia, there is hope. There have been huge investments in understanding more about the brain and what causes Alzheimer's Disease. There are many theories including lysosomal storage. (I'll have to ask my son what that means. He just received his degree in biology, so he should know, right?) But the most dominant theory is that Alzheimer's Disease is caused by sticky brain plaques called beta-amyloid that have been found to build up in the brains of people with Alzheimer's.

Just recently at the urging of the Alzheimer's Association and other advocates, the FDA approved a new drug, Aducanumab, that has proved highly effective in reducing the plaques to treat persons in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease. BUT (there's always a but!) it's not yet clear whether reducing

the plaques is actually effective in slowing the progression of Alzheimer's Disease. Two large studies offered conflicting evidence.

Next week I will share more about dementia and the brain: The different types of dementia, treatable conditions that mimic dementia, and most importantly tips on what you can do now to maintain your brain health. Don't forget!

The name of the five-member band known for their vocal harmonies and epitomized the "California Sound" were the Beach Boys. I received correct answers from Susan Ellis, Jeannie Pesicka, Emmett Sampson, Rhonda Spies, Sandy Haechrel, Barbara Cadwell, Diana Weston, Jess Birge, Dave Lutgens, Tiiu Vahtel, Margo Dameier. And this week's winner of a quilt raffle ticket has to be Linda Frizzell, who graduated from Hawthorne High School with the Beach

Boys! And from the previous week, I received the correct answer from Barbara Cadwell, Susan Ellis, Steve Woolpert, Patty Burnet, Diana Weston, Gene Uczen. Pat Evenson-Brady, Dave Lutgens, Rose Schulz, Doug Nelson, and the winner Lana Tepfer.

Okay, the Beach Boys was way too easy for most of you so let's move to something more challenging: Broadway musicals. This original 1965 Broadway production won five Tony Awards including Best Musical. Inspired by Miguel de Cervantes and his 17th-century novel Don Quixote, it tells the story of the "mad" knight Don Quixote. For this week's "Remember When" question, what was the name of this musical. E-mail your answer to mcseniorcenter@ gmail.com, call 541-296-4788 or send it with a recording of "The Impossible Dream.'

Well, it has been another

week, glad to be back in the Gorge. Until we meet again, as Dan Jaworski who was diagnosed with mild cognitive impairment at age 54 says, "There is no day like today."

"If people were meant to pop out of bed, we'd all sleep in toasters". — Unknown

Nutritious home-delivered meals and pick-ups are available for anyone over 60. For more information, you can call the meal site in your

**Hood River Valley Adult** Center at 541-386-2060;

The Dalles Meals-on-Wheels at 541-298-8333;

Sherman County Senior and Community Center at 541-565-3191;

Klickitat County Senior Services — Goldendale, 509-773-3757 or White Salmon, 509-493-3068;

Skamania County Senior Services at 509-427-3990; Seniors of Mosier

Valley at 541-503-5660 or 541-980-1157.

## The City Council: A fictional narrative of rural life in the American West Episode 164: Mary Means' Return to Warhaven

#### **■** By Jim Tindall

In Warhaven — from a distance through the dust – tarnish, rust, patina, they look about the same. Her aged beauty and tested mettle of her demeanor still cast a clarion call for respect. That was Mary Means in 1940, age 73, the oil executive who was born and raised on the West Hills farm of her parents.

Some called her demeanor haughty, others, less observant, labeled it shyness. Despite her long years spent in the Mediterranean and Middle East in business, she was of that class of strong western women, independent, blunt, succinct.

Mary had been away a long while, working for Standard Oil and doing well. When her husband, John Dee, passed away in Beirut in 1938, she lost that edgy will to continue in business.

Mary had kept the family farm, and decided to return to Warhaven, which she did the following year.

Immediately she was approached by Ohio DuMont, who convinced her to run for the West Hills seat which would open in the next year's election. She reasoned this would give her some focus, would permit her to reconnect in meaningful ways, would perhaps bring her some joy and walk her

out of her grieving for her beloved John Dee. She won the election. She was a quick study and in 1943 served her first of three terms as mayor of Warhaven.

When Mary and John worked for Standard Oil, it was his strident mandate that she carry a gun out of sheer prudence. Her handgun of choice was the Remington 95 Double Deringer with pearl grip. Now in Warhaven she laughed out loud, thinking, "A western desperado would sneer at such a measly piece of concealed steel." So her persona donned a tooled leather holster on the back of her hip, tied off to her lower thigh which housed a 12inch barreled Colt Buntline Special, her .45 cartridges filled with No. 9 shot. She became a walking billboard for the Second Amendment rights of women. When a tourist questioned the civility of such a practice in 1946, Mary looked down her nose at the man in his khaki vest and pith helmet and said in her throaty voice, "Why, sir, I believe all adults ought to pack weapons, every one, every Indian, every Black man and woman, every Japanese American neighbor of mine, even you, sir, although I surmise you'd be one foot shy shortly."

This was about the

time she took to smoking Chesterfields, saying goodbye to her favored, exotic Sobranie Black Russian cigarettes, and wearing a crushed down fedora, beneath which hung her full long gray locks, streaked with some red of her youth, braided in pigtails. She savored delight in riding her roan horse Betsy down into town, clad in jodhpurs and snake boots. Mary would tie up Betsy in front of Brown's Lunch Counter and walk about town with errands and social visits, her freckled face and cornflower blue eyes glowing in anticipation of small adventures.

Another event from August 1946 is well worth mentioning. Tony Dini, then manager of the L&M Merc, was planning to retire in the coming year. He was having his weekly lunch with competitor Henry Fieldman, manager and owner of Sid's Groceries. This tradition had begun 21 years before. They always sat in the back booth, and the contents of their whispered confabs were guardedly confidential. Many thought it was merely to share dirty jokes or snide remarks about customers. No one suspected, not even their wives, that these men were the founders and administrators of the mysterious and generous



Illustration by Peggy Ohlson

Sisterhood of Kindness, that anonymous charity that had done so much to diminish the pain and anguish of World War II here in New Hope County.

Mary was about as astute as a person can be. She found herself at Brown's that afternoon, dining on a Reuben sandwich and iced sweet tea. Two of her business skill sets were foreign languages (Farsi, Arabic, Turkish, and Kurmanji) and lipreading, the latter coming in handy virtually every day of her career with Standard

In the middle of a bite she glanced up, absent-mindedly entering the conversation of Henty and Tony, discovering their long-held secret.

She was the consummate

diplomat, practicing the delicate touch in business on sheiks, emirs, and princes. Mary sensed Henry's burden of carrying the charity along alone, knowing now Henry's sadness over Tony's imminent retirement.

She finished her meal, paid the bill, and strolled over to their table. They both looked up, startled.

"Gentlemen, excuse me." She leaned down, over the table and whispered, "You two are deep in conversation. I simply want to say your work is highly

appreciated and respected.

She turned to leave, but turned back, placing a check on the tabletop. She smiled and walked away.

"Gosh!" exclaimed Tony, "It's a check for \$5,000!" Henry grabbed it, reading,

stammering, "She knows!" Incredulous, dumbfounded, they stared at each other.

### SafeSpace campaigns for home

■ By Gail Oberst or Columbia Gorge News

The area's only nonprofit specifically serving abused children is launching a fundraising campaign to build and staff

a permanent home of its own. Since 2009, the newly-renamed SafeSpace Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) of the Gorge, formerly the Columbia Gorge CAC, has rented or leased space in Hood River and in other communities it serves, according to Executive Director Beatriz Lynch, who gave an update on the campaign for the Hood River County Commissioners June 7. Under one roof, SafeSpace coordinates multiple services to abused children provided by child protective services, law enforcement, family advocates, medical experts and mental

health professionals. The nonprofit serves children who have been physically or sexually abused in Hood River, Wasco, Gilliam, Wheeler, and Klickitat

SafeSpace has outgrown its current 1,300-square-foot headquarters on Woods Court, off of Pacific Avenue in Hood River, Lynch said. The campaign, which officially begins in mid-July, hopes to raise an estimated \$2 million in grants and community donations in the next two years to build a 4,000-square-foot building to coordinate services to children and to house additional outreach and intervention staff. Additional campaign events will be planned later this year, Lynch said.

Despite tight quarters, SafeSpace in 2019 saw 132 children and responded to 160 calls, but Lynch told Hood

River County Commissioners that with outreach and additional space, the nonprofit could easily double the number of children it serves. Since 2009, SafeSpace has seen more than 800 children. She estimated that in the Gorge-area served by SafeSpace, as many as 1,500 children suffer some form of abuse each year, but many are not reported or do not get the support they need. As a front-line responder, SafeSpace staff provides one-stop services for the child including medical assessments, forensic interviews, child and family advocacy and crisis intervention services and referrals to mental health therapy.

For more information on SafeSpace and its fundraising campaign, visit www.safespacecac.org/ or its Facebook





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