

employers are often unaware of the regulations covering wages and deductions. If anything on your pay stub appears incorrect or unclear, ask about it. Most employers want payroll done right.

Michael Sussman
Earth Bookkeeping & Payroll
Eugene

WRONG SCROOGE

The actor pictured as playing Ebenezer Scrooge in the 1938 film of *A Christmas*

Carol (Holiday Happenings, Nov. 20) is not Reginald Owen but Alastair Sim, the wonderful British character actor who portrayed Scrooge in the 1951 film, arguably a better acted and more compelling production.

An interesting side note about the 1938 version is the portrayal of Bob Cratchit and his wife by real-life spouses Gene and Kathleen Lockhart, and the portrayal of the Cratchits' eldest daughter by their real-life daughter, June Lockhart, best known

as Maureen Robinson in *Lost in Space* and Timmy's mother in *Lassie*. Leo G. Carroll, who played Marley's ghost in 1938, went on to star in the 1950s TV show *Topper*, about a banker who is the only person who can see and hear a pair of ghosts.

Lucinda Muñiz
Eugene

A GREAT DISSERVICE

In response to WTF in *Slant* Nov. 13: From 1992-96 I learned that the Democrat

politicians of the '90s were not the Democrats of the 1970s and '80s when President Bill Clinton passed NAFTA, the welfare slavery act, granted the World Trade Organization supra powers, enacted the salvage logging rider suspending all environmental laws, perpetrated an undeclared war on the Iraqi people for eight years and did away with the Glass-Steigel Act.

From 1995 to 2010, as an executive member of the local Sierra Club chapter, I made numerous attempts via newsletters

VIEWPOINT

BY JAMES R. MORRIS, M.D.

A Champion of Peace

LADY PALMO'S SECRET OF HAPPINESS

A memorial service was held for Lady Naljorma Jangchup Palmo, affectionately known as Amala, on Oct. 10 in the Ragazzino Theater on the LCC campus. Mayor Kitty Piercy, presidents of the UO and LCC, faculty members and Sen. Jeff Merkley's office offered special tributes and condolences. Amala was a champion of peace and one of the key people who helped to bring His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Eugene in 2013. She was also a co-founder of the Palmo Center for Peace and Education.

Born in Tibet in 1944, Lady Palmo fled the Chinese invasion at age 15. Witnessing the killing of her entire family, she was shot six times and managed to escape from capture twice. After a grueling journey over the Himalayas on foot, she finally reached safety.

Amala lived the life of a retreatant and spent 16 years meditating in the mountains of Tibet and northern India. Through daily meditative practices, she mastered her anger and eventually forgave her captors. She raised a family, immigrated to the U.S. and settled in Cottage Grove. Amala (Tibetan for "revered mother") cultivated peaceful acceptance that she used to continuously help others solve their own problems and soothe their troubled minds.

When Amala became ill three years ago, she met her diagnosis of advanced metastatic lung cancer with fearlessness and grace. She never complained. Amala



rarely acknowledged the pain from tumors invading her bones, lungs, brain and other organs. Instead, she steadily showed more concern for others whose circumstances aroused her compassion and thoughtful kindness. Despite a three- to six-month prognosis, she lived and worked more than two and a half years, all the while helping others recognize their state of mind.

Days prior to her passing, Amala entered a deep meditative state, knowing that her death was near.

From scientific inquiry, we are able to predict the usual stages of death and decomposition with forensic accuracy. We know that once breathing stops and the heart ceases to beat, our body begins to cool to ambient temperature. Blood pools in the dependent portions. The skin develops a deathly pallor. The eyes dilate and cloud over. Within hours the muscles contract and harden: "rigor mortis." The skin loses its elasticity. At 24 to 72 hours, internal microbes putrefy the intestines and the pancreas begins to digest itself. Blistering may occur over the body. Eventually there is the rank smell of decay as the body begins to dissolve.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama estimates that in the past 50 years only 30 or 40 Buddhist masters have been able to sustain a deep meditative state, called *Thukdam*, beyond the moment of bodily death. Amala's death was witnessed and remarkable. Her body remained supple. The area around her heart remained warm. Her skin retained its elasticity. She appeared fresh and relaxed. There was no odor, no pallor and no sign of decomposition. Incredibly, she maintained this state of *Thukdam* for a full 10 days following her last breath on Sept. 19, 2014.

Impossible, you say? What's Amala's secret, you ask? Her secret to happiness was cultivating the heart and the mind, together. Meditation works. Taming the demons of selfishness, distrust and violence requires dedication and practice. Amala is and can be an inspiration for all who hear her story.

If you would like to learn more about Amala's inspiring life and support her vision of a Peace Center in Eugene, please go to the Palmo Center for Peace and Education website at palmocenter.org.

James R. Morris, M.D. of Eugene has been practicing medicine for the past 35 years, specializing in pain management.

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