

PARENTS TALK BACK

A new life after a devastating diagnosis

Sheila Johnson-Glover knew something was wrong when her doctor asked her to sit down after a routine mammogram in December 2009.

“Uh-oh,” she thought. That had never happened before. She was instructed get an ultrasound and an MRI. When Johnson-Glover, then 43, met with the doctor again, he showed her the scans.

“You see this white stuff?” he said. “That’s breast cancer that has metastasized to your liver and ribs.” He told her she had stage 4 breast cancer.

Johnson-Glover didn’t know what to think. Her mother had died of breast cancer about a dozen years earlier.

“How many stages are there?” she asked.

“Well, you’re at it,” the doctor said.



AISHA SULTAN
Parents talk back

Johnson-Glover, now 49, worked at Scott Air Force Base as a records manager. Her best friend’s husband was dying of prostate cancer. When he died a few months after her diagnosis, she called her friend bawling.

“I’m scared I’m going to die. I’m scared I’m going to leave my daughter,” she cried.

“Sheila, stop it,” her friend said. “And stay off the Internet.” There are women living with stage 4 breast cancer beyond the five-year survival rate, she said.

Johnson-Glover took her words to heart. In addition to an 11-hour surgery to remove her right breast and 13 lymph nodes, she underwent nine months of chemotherapy. She took a medical retirement after 25 years in the Air Force.

The aim was to stop the spread of the disease. After a year and a half of no growth, the cancer started progressing again. She went back on chemo. The doctors declared her disease stable in August 2013.

Two years later, she embarked on an adventure that would change the way she saw her battle with cancer. It started when she noticed a Facebook post from a friend who also had stage 4 cancer. She was raising money for a trip to South Africa. Johnson-Glover, who had always wanted to take a missionary trip, decided to apply for the same program, even though it wasn’t a religious trip.

Terri Wingham, a breast cancer survivor, founded the nonprofit A Fresh Chapter that runs the program. She has taken 60 participants since 2011 to volunteer at various international destinations to heal the emotional scars that cancer leaves.

“When you get sick, you feel really unlucky,” she explained. “We create an opportunity for people to feel lucky again.” She wants survivors to see themselves as empowered rather than a victim of a disease. The program costs \$5,000, and about half the participants receive some subsidy or scholarship.

Johnson-Glover started fundraising online. She emailed friends and sent letters. She was still far from the goal and discouraged until an anonymous donor offered to match \$1,500 if she could raise it. Then, she won a grant from the Silver Linings Foundation for \$1,800.

She made it. She flew out from Chicago to New Delhi in March, where she met 13 other men and women who are cancer survivors. She and three others would be working at a school in the slums for 3- to 7-year-olds. She would be teaching English and other basic lessons.

They volunteered every morning until noon during the two-week trip, and then took part in group activities, such as learning how to breathe using yoga techniques. A deep bond developed between the entire group.

“I was able to share my story with people who knew how I felt,” Johnson-Glover said.

On their last day in New Delhi, with all the children clamoring around her to say goodbye, one of the teachers handed her note.

“Thank you for all you have done,” it said. “Though thank you is not enough.” Johnson-Glover started to cry.

“I realized it wasn’t what we could give them. What mattered to them was our presence.”

She and her co-travelers visited the Taj Mahal. Johnson-Glover was struck with the realization that she was not her cancer. She was not her treatment. She felt inspired to do more.

Each of the cancer survivors attended a burning ceremony before they left India. They wrote down what they wanted to leave behind. She wrote “negativity” and threw it in the fire pit. “I have no space for it my life right now.”

She came back to Swansea, Illinois, and continues to volunteer as an advocate for breast cancer survivors. She is graduating next month with a Master in Business Administration from McKendree University. She has inspired her daughter to want to go on a missionary trip.

She said her experience has shown her daughter that no matter what you go through in life, you can still make it. Johnson-Glover admits that there is always a fear with which she lives.

“I don’t let it consume me,” she said. “If fear consumes me, I’m letting cancer win. And I refuse to let cancer win.” She was devastated when she lost her mother, who had been her best friend. So, when she was diagnosed, she realized she needed to fight to help find a cure.

“I need to fight hard. I don’t want this to happen to my daughter,” she said. “That’s why I advocate so much — for her. It’s not about me anymore. It’s about my daughter.”

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Aisha Sultan is a St. Louis-based journalist who studies parenting in the digital age while trying to keep up with her tech-savvy children. Find her on Twitter: @AishaS.

9-year-old reporter defends homicide coverage after backlash

By KRISTEN DE GROOT
Associated Press

A 9-year-old reporter who wrote about a suspected murder in her small Pennsylvania town is defending herself after some locals lashed out about a young girl covering violent crimes and said she should be playing with dolls.

Hilde Kate Lysiak got a tip Saturday about something untoward happening in Selinsgrove, 150 miles northwest of Philadelphia. She went to the scene to get the details and posted a story and video clip on her website, OrangeStreetNews.com, later that day.

Soon after, her Facebook page and YouTube channel were clogged with negative comments urging her to “play with dolls” and have a tea party and questioning her parents’ judgment in letting her do such work.

“It kind of gets me angry because just because I’m 9 doesn’t mean I can’t do a great story,” she said Tuesday. “It doesn’t mean I can’t be a reporter.”

Hilde has run the *Orange Street News* since 2014. She gets help from her father, Matthew Lysiak, a former reporter for the *New York Daily News*, and her 12-year-old sister, Isabel Rose Lysiak, who handles videos and photos.

What started out as a newspaper for her family, written in crayon, has become a community news source complete with website and Facebook page.

In recent weeks, in short stories under headlines frequently punctuated with exclamation marks, she has reported on a possibly rabid skunk shot dead by police, several acts of vandalism, the



Isabel Rose Lysiak via AP

In this September 2015, photo provided by Matthew Lysiak, Hilde Kate Lysiak poses for a photo at her home in Selinsgrove, Pa. Lysiak, a 9-year-old reporter, recently wrote about a suspected murder in her small Pennsylvania town and is defending herself after some locals lashed out about a young girl covering violent crime.

many empty storefronts in downtown Selinsgrove and the removal of a Christmas wreath from a building after several years, under the headline “Christmas Finally over in Grove!”

Matthew Lysiak said the comments on his daughter’s stories are usually positive.

“She was embraced when she was doing cuter stories, but

about six months into writing the paper she got more confident and started stepping outside the box,” Lysiak said.

The debate is all about whether it’s appropriate for a girl her age to be covering such news.

Lysiak said Hilde caught the journalism bug when he worked for the *Daily News* and would occasionally take her along on

OUT OF THE VAULT

Tree pranksters return 40 years later to show contrition

In a grassy field along the Old Oregon Trail Route on Highway 203 south of La Grande, five former Union County residents each planted a tiny conifer seedling on April 24, 1979, in penance for a 40-year-old prank that toppled a landmark during their wild youth.

The stunt that felled the 97-year-old Ponderosa pine tree, a landmark along the route, made national headlines in 1939. The Lone Tree was the victim of a prank perpetrated by Robert Watts, Roland McCroskrie, Bill Southhall, Bill Wiese and Lyle Morehead, La Grande high school students, who didn’t realize the worth of the tree.

“We thought we would cause a little devilment,” said Weise, 59, of San Mateo, Calif.

The group hit upon the idea



RENEE STRUTHERS
Out of the vault

of cutting down the tree while driving between La Grande and Union and enjoying a little Red Cap ale that warm, drizzly night.

Two of the group did the sawing while the others drove up and down Highway 203 in Morehead’s car, keeping a lookout. They were caught the following day, supposedly by an alert Oregon State Police trooper, but more likely because everyone at the high school knew the identities of the tree-cutters.

Not only did the incident make headlines across the country, a national radio

show did a skit parodying the prank. “It was blown up to magnificent proportions,” Wiese added. According to McCroskrie, half of La Grande’s residents thought it was funny; the other half was not amused. “Fifty percent were for hanging us and 50 percent for shooting,” cracked Wiese.

The boys were sentenced in June 1939 to 30 days hard labor. They sweated under the summer sun to saw Lone Tree into firewood, dug up the taproot, and then painted guard rails from Kamela to Hot Lake.

The return to La Grande was the brainchild of Watts, who in 1979 was a Clackamas County deputy sheriff and a former police chief for the city of Union. Southhall, who spent 3 1/2 years in a Japanese prison camp, became a world

traveler and settled in Kansas. McCroskrie retired a colonel from the U.S. Air Force and moved to Florida. Of the original crew, only Morehead was absent; he died in Italy during World War II when his plane crashed. Another childhood friend, Dr. Leonard Lee (who took no part in the original incident), stood in for Morehead during the planting ceremony.

Wiese also made one final act of contrition: He paid each of his compatriots \$3, a sum he had owed them since their time on the road gang for the Lone Tree stunt.

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Renee Struthers is the Community Records Editor for the East Oregonian. See the complete collection of Out of the Vault columns at [eovault.blogspot.com](#)

ODDS & ENDS

Uber driver naps as rider leads police on car chase

COLESVILLE, N.Y. (AP) — Authorities say an Uber passenger who took the wheel while the driver slept later crashed the car while trying to elude police.

State police say 20-year-old New York City resident Juan Carlos hired the car in Philadelphia to take him 200 miles to central New York.

Police say the driver asked Carlos to take the wheel Saturday while he napped, and a trooper later clocked Carlos going 86 mph in a 65 mph zone on Interstate 81 near Binghamton.

When the real driver woke up and asked Carlos why he was driving so fast, Carlos told him it was because police were chasing them.

Carlos soon crashed. Both suffered minor injuries.

Carlos was charged with fleeing police and driving without a license. It wasn’t clear if he has a lawyer.

Lonely penguin hopes for friends in Pennsylvania

SAGINAW, Mich. (AP) — Dewey wanted to spend more time with Bamm-Bamm. That wasn’t good for Don.

So Don, a female African

penguin, has a new home in Pennsylvania, leaving a Michigan zoo for a new life — and hopefully more friends.

Don and sister Dewey had been at the Saginaw Children’s Zoo since 2003. Spokeswoman Lizzy Schultz says other penguins didn’t seem interested in Don after Dewey became close with Bamm-Bamm, a male penguin.

Schultz tells *The Saginaw News* that Don “had no one to groom her, or eat with her, or hang out with her.”

Don’s last day at the zoo was Friday. Her farewell party included a frozen cake filled with fish. She’s now at the Lehigh Valley Zoo in Schnecksville, Pennsylvania.

Town to fight wild turkys with air horns

TEANECK, N.J. (AP) — A New Jersey town plans to acquire 20 air horns to help its residents deal with aggressive wild turkeys.

Animal Control Officer Vincent Ascolese said he will give the air horns to Teaneck officials to distribute to the public, *The Record* newspaper reported.

“We have to coexist as best as possible,” he said.

Amy Schweitzer, of the state Department of Environmental Protection’s fish and wildlife division, said she captured an aggressive male turkey on

Tuesday, which she said will help ease the aggression of the wild birds.

Officials said they’ve received about a dozen complaints — and one police report — from residents reporting aggressive wild turkeys. The birds have attacked residents, pecked at cars and held up traffic. One has flown through a resident’s glass kitchen window.

Town officials said only the state is able to touch the birds, but residents can humanely scare them away by using water hoses or making loud noises to assert dominance.

Schweitzer said that cardboard in windows or window decorations can help keep birds from defecating in yards or attacking windows.

The birds’ aggressive behavior tends to decrease in the summer when flocks break up, Schweitzer said. Residents with an immediate issue have been told to call the police.

Man charged with leaving baby in car at strip club

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A Los Angeles man has been charged with child abuse for allegedly leaving his baby in the car while he went to a San Fernando Valley strip club.

Twenty-four-year-old Auwin Dargin pleaded not guilty to the charge on Monday. He could

face up to six years in prison if convicted.

Authorities say Dargin left his 9-month-old daughter in the car for an hour last month during an afternoon visit to the club.

Authorities say the baby was found by employees of the club and a neighboring business.

Murderer OK’d for retail pot license

SEATTLE (AP) — A report about a convicted murderer being granted a license to open a marijuana shop in Washington has prompted a double-take by state officials.

The Washington Liquor and Cannabis Board selected Green Grotto LLC to open a marijuana store in the Seattle suburb of Issaquah. As first reported by *The Issaquah Press*, the company is run by George Garrett, who pleaded guilty to second-degree murder for killing his wife and dumping her body in Hood Canal in 1993. He was sentenced to 13 years in prison.

Board spokesman Brian Smith says Garrett disclosed the conviction on his application for a marijuana retail license. Under the board’s rules, the felony did not automatically disqualify him because it was more than 10 years old.

Smith says the case “raised a flag” and that the board will be discussing whether further action is warranted.