

OUT OF THE VAULT

Pendleton nurse found insane in Portland after disappearance

When Nellie Baker of Pendleton left for Portland in June 1912 to serve as a private nurse, her mother thought nothing of it. Three weeks later, Nellie was found in a padded cell in a Portland jail after she was discovered wandering the streets in a state of insanity.

Nellie Baker was a 26-year-old nurse who periodically performed private nursing duties for Pendleton residents. She told her mother she was approached by a Miss Huntington to accompany her to Portland as a nurse and companion. The two women supposedly left for the city on June 23 and took rooms at a Portland boarding house. Nellie sent several letters to her mother about their trip, but her last communication was received in Pendleton on July 5. At about the same time, the landlady of the

Portland boarding house noticed that Nellie had not visited her room for three days, but had left all her personal belongings behind. She immediately called the police.

On July 15, Nellie was identified as an inmate of a padded cell in the Multnomah County jail, where she had been since July 3. She had been found wandering the streets of Portland, completely insane, and was unable, or unwilling, to hear or speak since her incarceration.

Pendleton police began their investigation by attempting to locate the mysterious Miss Huntington, but could locate no one by that name in town. Nellie's mother insisted that her daughter had received a call from a woman on the north hill and had gone to talk to her. A taxi arrived early the next morning to take Nellie to the train, but no one at the station saw the young

nurse in anyone's company, and the brakeman of the train testified that Nellie traveled to Portland alone. This led investigators to theorize that "Miss Huntington" was a figment of Nellie's imagination, and that she had already been suffering from some kind of mental breakdown before she left Pendleton. But friends, including a Pendleton doctor, insisted Nellie was perfectly rational when they talked with her prior to her departure for Portland.

Portland police were criticized for not identifying Nellie earlier, as Pendleton police had sent her description and a photo when she disappeared in early July. But in their defense, Portland officers related that when she was picked up Nellie was using the name Gertrude Wilson, and she gave a lurid story of an attempted abduction into white

slavery. She told officers that she and her mother had moved from Minnesota to Stanfield several weeks prior to her disappearance, where they had attempted to start a chicken ranch. Their endeavor had failed and they lost all their money, and she had gone to Portland on the promise of a job. When she arrived, Nellie said, she had been met at the train station by the husband of her alleged employer, who had attacked her and attempted to drag her into a taxi. She had escaped from him just before the police spotted her on July 3, she claimed.

Portland police had taken Nellie to Stanfield in an attempt to find her mother. "Gertrude" had told them her mother dressed like a man, and lived in a hut there. When her mother couldn't be located, Nellie jumped out a second-story window of the hotel where she was

staying and hid in the sagebrush, but was soon found. On her return to Portland she was put in a straitjacket and locked in a padded cell at the jail for her own safety.

Nellie's mother telegraphed Portland authorities that she would travel there to make arrangements for her daughter's care. On July 17 a letter from Nellie's sister said that Nellie had regained her powers of speech and had briefly admitted that the Miss Huntington story was a complete fabrication, but later recanted. A piece of clothing known to have been worn by Nellie when she left Pendleton was found, badly torn, but no cause was ever found.

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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](http://eovault.blogspot.com)

DEAR ABBY

Teen doesn't want to stumble in approach to longtime crush

**Dear Abby:** I understand that a 15-year-old guy writing for relationship advice is shameful and that I'm probably better off not worrying about relationships in the first place, but I'm still gonna try.

I'm in high school, and I'm searching for a relationship with a certain girl. I've known her for eight years, and I always had a little-kid crush on her, but it's evolved over time and we've gotten closer. We used to talk a lot. She was in a relationship then. Even though we had feelings for each other, she stayed loyal to him.

Well, a couple months ago they broke up. As far as I know, she's single, but we don't really talk much anymore. A couple times I've started conversations with her, but they are usually short-lived.

She knows I have feelings for her, but nothing has happened. She's the one I want and now's my opportunity, but I don't want to ruin the small chance I have. I'm afraid she won't be single for long. — **Wants To Try In Ohio**

**Dear Wants To Try:** It is not



JEANNE PHILLIPS  
Advice

"shameful" to ask for advice. Call her and ask how her summer has been. If you did anything interesting, tell her about it. Then ask her if she's seeing anybody special. If she says no, ask if she'd like to go to a movie, a sporting event or on a hike with you — depending upon her interests. I can't guarantee it will get you the response you're hoping for, but at least you will know where you — and she — stand.

**Dear Abby:** My daughter will turn 6 soon, and she is a lovely, wonderful child. The only thing is, my parents and I have spoiled her a tad.

Holidays have always been celebrated with lots of gifts. I'm starting to worry that perhaps she's becoming too materialistic. What's the proper etiquette for requesting no gifts on her birthday invitations? And how do I respond if they ask why? — **Spoiled In Washington**

**Dear Spoiled:** I don't think it's necessary to state on the invitation "no gifts." There are ways to teach children that there are other, less-fortunate

children in this world.

One way would be to volunteer at an organization that serves the underprivileged so your daughter can see for herself how lucky she is. Another would be to do as some other parents do: Mention on the birthday invitation that any gifts will be donated to a cause you and your daughter agree upon. And if you are asked why, be honest and upfront about it.

**Dear Abby:** I feel uncomfortable when people end conversations with "I love you." It creeps me out when a man does it. I always thought those words were reserved for someone you are intimate with, such as a spouse or possibly one's children. Am I wrong to think "I love you" has become meaningless from overuse? Or am I just a weird guy? — **Uncomfortable In Texas**

**Dear Uncomfortable:** It's not uncommon for good friends of both sexes to say "Love you" or "I love you" to each other as well as to extended relatives. In my opinion, it's healthy for people to express their feelings, because there's never too much love. Our world could use more expressions of it, not fewer.

**DAYS GONE BY**

**100 Years Ago**  
**From the East Oregonian**  
**Aug. 26-27, 1917**

Ray McCarroll, well known local wrestler, was out hunting in the Fly valley last week with a party of men in search of bruins. Ray had separated from the others who had the dogs with them, and rode down a canyon to find bear sign. All of a sudden his horse reared and snorted like a trumpet-call. At the same moment a big, shaggy black animal reared itself not 25 feet away and whistled defiance through its nose. Ray says he's a pretty good judge of distance and swears that the animal was nine feet in the air if it was an inch. With arms outstretched and eager, old Bruin made for the local champion. The horse aided Ray in his indecision by manifesting a desire to leave the bear behind. The way they traveled down the canyon would have delighted the soul of

a moving picture operator.

**50 Years Ago**  
**From the East Oregonian**  
**Aug. 26-27, 1967**

Speeches, Indian war dances, Round-Up and Happy Canyon royalty, square dancers and plenty of spectators were part of the dedication ceremonies at the Round-Up Pavilion Friday night. The audience appeared to enjoy master of ceremonies Fred Hill, who introduced persons instrumental in construction of the building — although he occasionally had trouble remembering their names. At one point he lost his list of names and turned to the platform of guest speakers for help. "Tonight I think I'd have trouble remembering my own name," he chuckled. Once the speech making was over, more than 100 square dancers stomped the pavilion floor until midnight. About

500 persons attended the dedication.

**25 Years Ago**  
**From the East Oregonian**  
**Aug. 26-27, 1992**

An 18-year-old Hermiston woman, Jill Peterson, will represent Oregon in the 14th annual Miss TEEN National Pageant. Peterson was named Oregon Miss TEEN at the recent state pageant in Portland. Her parents are Tom and Jackie Peterson of Hermiston. TEEN stands for Teens Encouraging Excellence Nationally. Teenage contestants are judged on scholastic achievement, volunteer service, talent, personal interview and formal presentation. At the state level, Peterson won the talent and formal presentation categories, along with the title. The pageant will be staged from Nov. 21-28 in the eastern Caribbean aboard the Norwegian Cruise Line ship "Norway."

**THIS DAY IN HISTORY**

Today is the 238th day of 2017. There are 127 days left in the year.

**Today's Highlight in History:**

- On August 26, 1920,** the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, guaranteeing American women's right to vote, was certified in effect by Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby.
- On this date:**
- In 1789,** France's National Assembly adopted its Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen.
- In 1817,** the University of Michigan was founded.
- In 1939,** the first televised major league baseball games were shown on experimental station W2XBS: a double-header between the Cincinnati Reds and the Brooklyn Dodgers at Ebbets Field. (The Reds won the first game, 5-2, the Dodgers the second, 6-1.)
- In 1944,** French Gen. Charles de Gaulle braved the threat of German snipers as he led a victory march in Paris, which had just been liberated by the Allies from Nazi occupation.
- In 1957,** the Soviet Union announced it had successfully tested an intercontinental ballistic missile.
- In 1964,** President Lyndon B. Johnson was nominated for a term of office in his own right at the Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey.
- In 1968,** the Democratic National Convention opened in Chicago; the four-day

**Today's Birthdays:**

Former Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge is 72. Rhythm-and-blues singer Valerie Simpson is 72. Pop singer Bob Cowsill is 68. Broadcast journalist Bill Whitaker is 66. Actor Brett Cullen is 61. NBA coach Stan Van Gundy is 58. Jazz musician Branford Marsalis is 57. Country musician Jimmy Olander (Diamond Rio) is 56. Actor Chris Burke is 52. Actress-singer Shirley Manson (Garbage) is 51. Rock musician Dan Vickrey (Counting Crowes) is 51. TV writer-actress Riley Weston is 51. Rock musician Adrian

Young (No Doubt) is 48. Actress Melissa McCarthy is 47. Latin pop singer Thalia is 46. Actress Meredith Eaton is 43. Rock singer-musician Tyler Connolly (Theory of a Deadman) is 42. Actor Mike Colter is 41. Actor Macaulay Culkin is 37. Actor Chris Pine is 37. Actor Johnny Ray Gill is 33. Country singer Brian Kelley (Florida Georgia Line) is 32. Rhythm-and-blues singer Cassie Ventura is 31. Actor Evan Ross is 29. Actor Dylan O'Brien is 26.

**Thought for Today:** "Suffering belongs to no language." — *Adelia Prado, Brazilian poet.*

**WORD★Roundup™**

by David L. Hoyt & Jeff Knurek

**Find and Circle...**

Five South American country capitals ☐☐☐☐☐  
Four four-letter bodies of water ☐☐☐☐  
Three continents ☐☐☐  
Three citrus fruits ☐☐☐  
Two competing cola brands ☐☐  
☐☐☐☐☐☐  
Answers to Sunday's puzzle: SANTIAGO BRAZILIA CARACAS BOGOTA LIMA / LAKE GULF POND COVE / EUROPE AFRICA ASIA / PEPSI COKE

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**7 LITTLE WORDS**

Find the 7 words to match the 7 clues. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in each solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

**CLUES**

1 like a low blow (9)  
2 lie low (4)  
3 held in low regard (8)  
4 low-key (5)  
5 in low cotton (9)  
6 low on the totem pole (11)  
7 at a low ebb (6)

**SOLUTIONS**

RES ING RED DEP INS  
HOR SED ULT NG MU  
AB MPO UNI HI TED  
NT DE NI RTA WA

Today's Answers: 1. INSULTING 2. HIDE 3. ABHORRED 4. MUTED 5. DEPRESSED 6. UNIMPORTANT 7. WANING

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