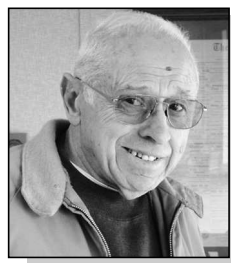


Siuslaw News
 P.O. Box 10
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Opinion

NEIGHBORS



Long hiatus — Part III

BOB JACKSON
 NEIGHBORHOOD CORRESPONDENT
 For the Siuslaw News

It had been a long break in my narration about the desperate decision to resort to radiation in the hope that it would somehow at least slow the progress of the cancer that had been growing in my lungs. It was time to put it in print, but something had gone terribly wrong. My computer had somehow become a mystery and the keys had no meaning. It was like I had sud-

denly gone insane. It seemed that my big reliable dictionary always by my side, was now filled with gibberish. I panicked. The damage from the weeks of radiation had obviously wreaked havoc on my brain. And so for a long while I waited it out. It took weeks, but eventually the fog began to clear away, and again I was able to recognize the once familiar keys on my computer.

I am quite certain that my experiences are not unique; however, there may be some solace in sharing the occasional frightful episodes that occur during extreme medical treatments. And then I got slammed really hard! I was informed that I had been placed on hospice care. It states that a doctor has given a referral that the patient has terminal diagnosis and six months or less, with symptoms to be managed. This picture was written with a very wide brush. It was not as bad as it sounded. I discovered hospice to be a godsend, a wonderful program. The serious-

ness of hospice needs vary widely with each individual. Trained hospice professionals are on call 24/7, any time of the day or night. One of my nurses informed me that it was not a death sentence. Patients with willpower and perseverance many times overcome their malady and recover completely. These hospice caregivers are like angels, always cheerful and knowledgeable. Laurie, hope I spelled her name correctly, comes regularly all the way from Newport, some 50 miles up the coast, fills out my medicine and explains every question I may have.

The dizziness never goes away — guess I will just have to live with it. Hospice furnishes oxygen that seems to have a calming effect when I feel agitated. This has been my own personal journey, probably not much different from the countless legions who have come before me. And so I wrap this up, in what may not at times be a very neat package. Where and when do I go from here? The best doctors are unable to answer these questions. And as Yogi Berra once said, "It ain't over, till it's over!"
Finis

LETTERS

Police corruption

While I respect the difficult and dangerous job that police do, there is something systemically wrong with our police departments when young black boys are gunned down in the back repeatedly, not as a last resort but routinely. And, when a police department withholds prosecution of the officer, leaves him on payroll for over 400 days until a court-ordered release of the dash-cam video is about to happen, that's corrupt to me. There needs to be rigorous training in mediation and problem-solving alternatives before lethal force is a consideration and real consequences for unruly behavior by officers. Also, there needs to be some sort of independent citizen and police committee to oversee a more transparent police system. I certainly can understand the "Black Lives Matter" movement since often it takes courageous mobilized pressure from the people to invoke real change and justice for all.

Julie MacFarlane
 Florence

The Silent Generation

Those born between 1926 and 1945 are referred to as the Silent Generation. Those of my age who were born in the early 1940s were considered naive because we thought of those early years and the 1950s as the "Good Old Days." The Silent Generation was never quiet. I was born in California in 1940, and after World War II, like a number of military veterans and those who worked for the war effort, like my father, bought new 800-square-foot two-bedroom, one-bathroom stucco houses in Ventura, Calif., where I spent my next 11 years. Those years were the Good Old Days for a number of reasons that I will now mention. Warner Street, where I grew up, was a two city-long block street where everyone knew everyone, but it was not in the city but out on the Avenue beyond where the white collar people lived. Our fathers worked either in the oil or agriculture industries and a few men and most women, who were not stay-at-home moms, worked in retail for companies like Sears, JC Penney or what I always called Monkey Wards. At that time the white-collar workers were doctors, dentists and those who owned or managed businesses. It was a time of discovery for both parents and their children, mainly because it was their first home and car. We experienced an ever-changing world. On the Avenue, about 10 blocks away, we had E.P. Foster Grammar School with grades from kindergarten to third grade. Then about two miles up the road there was the Avenue School with grades from fourth to sixth. At the end of Warner on the Avenue, we had Jue's Market and a church on opposite corners, and the barber shop, pharmacy and Five and Dime store were only a few blocks away as was the



Valentine Dairy, which delivered milk and had a great malt/ice cream shop. It was sort of a small composite of post-war America. By the time I was in the third grade my friends and I walked to school and went trick-or-treating with pillowcases in a six-block radius, all without parental supervision. By the seventh grade, on summer days a few friends and I would ride our bikes three miles with our fishing gear to the beach to body surf or take a truck inner-tube strapped with a canvas seat out past the breakers to fish with a drop-line. After spending the day on the beach, we would then go onto the pier, sometimes fishing until 11 p.m., when a parent would pick us and our gear up. Safe and sound. "Duck and Cover" became a game in school that we did not comprehend until an earthquake happened or why a few families in town had fallout shelters. During those years I called it "Surprise Time," when special things happened. A new "big" movie would come out and the first week searchlights would ply the skies and each year you waited for the new cars to be introduced and going into the auto showroom was a special time, even though you knew that your parents would never have one. We went hunting on the beach at midnight with two fires

burning, one with car tires for heat and the other with driftwood for roasting marshmallows. At that time our parents did not have much money, so a stocking hanging from an open fire (above the electric heater) with one present under the tree was special. My most favorite gift ever was a bicycle that my father made for me. Having no money he bought old parts, sanded them down and put them together and painted this custom bike. Those were the good old days! What our parents instilled in all of us my age was a work ethic that, for me, lasted a lifetime. That ethic started with chores for an allowance beginning with mowing and trimming our lawn, which led to mowing lawns for neighbors and then a paper route. Working at a car wash, numerous gas stations, a men's clothing store and eventually driving truck in the oil patch to put my way through art school. Now back to the Silent Generation, which was never silent and gave this nation so much. A few of those silent people include Sandra Day O'Connor, Bob Dylan, William F. Buckley Jr., Joan Baez, Ted Kennedy, Warren Buffett, John Lennon, Tom Brokaw, George Will, Ray Charles, Huey P. Newton, Clint Eastwood, Antonin Scalia, Martin Luther King Jr., Johnny Cash, Newt Gingrich, Charlie Rose and Malcolm X.

The most important thing the Silent Generation did was learn to verbally communicate with each other. We did not have social media, so from grammar school through college or the workplace we would talk to each other, sharing thoughts, dreams and ideas. We actually talked to each other, which now seems like a foreign idea.
 Win Jolley
 Florence

LETTERS POLICY

Siuslaw News welcomes letters to the editor concerning issues affecting the Florence area and Lane County. Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters should be limited to about 300 words and must include the writer's full name, address and phone number for verification. Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity. Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received. Libelous and anonymous letters as well as poetry will not be published. All submissions become the property of Siuslaw News and will not be returned.
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