



**Ned
Hickson**

It all started a few weeks ago when my wife and I were watching a Japanese movie with subtitles. Being that I'm the only one in the family who doesn't wear glasses, I gladly explained to her that Lord Yushido had demanded, "A ferret army be dropped by helicopter upon my enima lesions!"

I'm no expert on early 1700s Japanese history, but I'm pretty sure Shoguns didn't travel by helicopter. And the rest of that statement... I

don't even want to think about.

"When's the last time you had an eye exam?" my wife asked, pressing pause and donning her glasses. "And by the way, it says, 'A fierce army be delivered on horseback to break my enemy's legions.'"

"Yeah, that makes more sense," I said, and admitted I hadn't had an eye exam since middle school. Did I mention I'll be 50 in a few months?

I've always prided myself on still having a full head of hair, being in relatively good shape and not needing glasses. Thanks to Lord Yushido and his lesions, it seemed I

might have to settle for two-out-of-three.

As we arrived at the optometrist's office the following weekend, I was still hopeful my eyes had just been tired lately.

"Can you read the first line for me, Mr. Hickson?"

"Sure, G... 6... 8... 1..."

"Mr. Hickson, there aren't any numbers on this chart."

"Oh."

While I don't need glasses to function, there's no arguing that wearing them allows me to see certain things more clearly. This bothered me at first. While it's true I have some grey in my hair and beard that wasn't there a few

years ago — coincidentally around the time our kids became teenagers — I saw the need for glasses as the first real sign of aging. Was this the initial step toward turning in my rocker Tees for a rocking chair? Would I soon be eating dinner at 3 p.m. How long until I didn't care about ear hair? Or basic driving rules?

I spent a few days in a slight funk until I realized something important: I've demanded a lot from my eyes over the years.

As a writer staring at words all day, every day.

As a photographer composing images and judging light

conditions for more than 20 years.

As a chef for 10 years finely slicing and chopping everything but my fingers. Usually.

And as a firefighter for the last five years, searching for potential dangers in order to remain situationally aware.

After nearly 50 years, my eyes have earned the right to ask for a little help.

The other night, I was in the kitchen cooking when I looked to see my wife sitting at the dining room table,

reading something that made her laugh. I reached for my glasses and slid them on, watching her come into per-

fect focus. Though I could see her pretty well from the counter without my glasses, with a little extra help I could make out every detail of her smile. The curve of her face. The way her cheeks rise the bigger she smiles. The way her nose crinkles when it's questionably appropriate.

I could get used to this, I thought.

Now, if I could just unsee Lord Yushido's enima lesions...

Ned is a syndicated columnist with News Media Corporation. His book, "Humor at the Speed of Life," is available online at Port Hole Publications, Amazon Books and Barnes & Noble. Write to him at nedhickson@icloud.com

Know the signs of a potential heart attack

Western Lane Ambulance District (WLAD) responds to hundreds of heart attack calls annually, but fortunately most of those don't lead directly into a cardiac arrest incident. When they do however, WLAD paramedics and EMTs are trained and experienced to respond rapidly; using the current up to date cardiac arrest life saving procedures.

Oftentimes a heart attack will be the prelude to a cardiac arrest. A heart attack is when blood flow to the heart is blocked. If the blocked artery is not reopened quickly, the region of the heart normally nourished by that artery begins to die. The longer a person goes without treatment, the greater the damage.

A cardiac arrest is when the heart malfunctions and suddenly stops beating. Often, cardiac arrest occurs suddenly and without warning. It is triggered by an electrical malfunction in the heart that causes a lethal irregular heartbeat.

With its pumping action disrupted, the heart cannot pump blood to the brain, lungs and other organs. Seconds later, a person loses consciousness and has no pulse, and without treatment death follows within minutes.

WLAD Manager Brian Burright encourages members of the general public to educate themselves to "be aware and recognize the signs and symptoms of a heart attack, which can quickly lead into cardiac arrest."

Once a person lapses into cardiac arrest, early CPR is of the utmost importance. A new type of CPR has come into play and it's called cardio cerebral resuscitation (CCR).

What makes it different from standard CPR is that it basically eliminates the need for mouth to mouth, and decreases the role of ventilation by Emergency Medical Services (EMS) providers. The emphasis is on chest compressions prior to and after electrical

shocks from heart defibrillators by EMS personnel.

Survival beyond the first five minutes of cardiac arrest is predominantly dependent on chest compressions, until EMS can arrive with a cardiac monitor and defibrillator.

The sooner EMS crews arrive on scene the better chances for patient survival.

"I can't stress enough the importance of calling 911 in a cardiac emergency," Burright said. "The sooner we get there the better. The American Heart Association says that 6 to 10 minutes without oxygen to the brain in a cardiac arrest, then there will be irreversible damage and mortality will follow."

In addition to early defibrillation, EMS providers also start intravenous access (IVs) in order to deliver emergency cardiac medications into the patients system to attempt to revive the heart.

Paramedics also are able to better facilitate ventilations using an endotracheal tube

which is introduced into the patient's airway. This also prevents vomit from entering the airway.

If EMS is able to restore a heartbeat again, the patient will be taken to the nearest appropriate medical facility for follow up cardiac specialty care. This may involve transport to a regional medical center such as PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center at Riverbend, which provides advanced cardiac procedures, such as cardiac stents and heart bypass surgery.

Again, the key to preventing a patient from suffering catastrophic cardiac arrest is early intervention.

"The bottom line is, don't be afraid to call 911 for an evaluation even if you're not sure if you're having a heart attack," Burright says. "There is no charge or hassle if we just evaluate and don't transport."

—Submitted by Al Kreitz, Western Lane Ambulance

Florence Habitat to break new ground tomorrow

The Florence affiliate of Habitat for Humanity will host the groundbreaking of its 28th new home tomorrow, April 7, at 2:30 p.m., at 1875 37th St.

Future homeowners, Nathan and Amber Fuller and their family, will invest "sweat equity" through working on their own home. Volunteer members of the Florence community will provide labor and

expertise during construction.

Habitat for Humanity is a testimony to the vision and hard work of many as the community comes together to build decent, affordable places to live.

The community is invited to the dedication. Come learn more about the mission and volunteer opportunities of Florence Habitat for Humanity.

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