

US TOO PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT —

'By the way, you have prostate cancer' Part II



BY MARK WETZEL
CANCER SURVIVOR

Following is part of a series of true personal stories about men's experience with prostate cancer. These men tell their stories with the hope that they will help someone else traveling the same road.

I received a double lung transplant in June 2017. During the long journey to receiving the gift of life from my donor, I was diagnosed with prostate cancer. My only option was to undergo radiation therapy. The process started in October 2017 with a consultation with Dr. Kevin Forsythe, the radiation oncologist at the Oregon Urology Institute Radiation center in Eugene. After my visit at OUI, I was scheduled for a simulated CT scan where a foam block was vacuum formed to my legs for positioning on the radiation machine.

The Image-Guided Radiation Therapy, IGRT, consisted of 45 treatments done Monday through Friday for about nine weeks. Each day, I boarded the Friends of Florence bus at Peace Harbor Medical Center. It left Florence at 8 a.m. and

arrived at the OUI radiation center at about 9:30 a.m. OUI scheduled the bus riders as a group.

When Stacie called my name, I changed into a luxurious robe and went into the radiation room. I took off my robe and the radiation staff, Lewis, Juma and Patrick, got me on the table in front of the large Varian machine. They positioned me, and the radiation head rotated to take a CT scan. The machine then adjusted the table for precise alignment.

The radiation head then rotated to the first position, adjusted lead and tungsten fingers to focus the beam, and then "fired" the x-ray gun. Each shot lasted for about 12 to 18 seconds. The head rotated to the next position and another dose of radiation was delivered. This was repeated for seven positions to concentrate the

beam on the prostate while minimizing damage to surrounding tissue. The actual radiation treatment took about two minutes.

Once treatment was complete, I changed into my clothes and returned my robe to an assigned cubby hole. The next patient was called in. After the last Florence patient was treated, we boarded the bus and returned to Peace Harbor by about 12:30 p.m. Every week I met with the nurse, Lori, for vitals and then with Dr. Forsythe to review my status and to discuss any new symptoms and to answer questions. The OUI staff was great and made the therapy experience relaxing and easy.

For me, side effects of the radiation were minimal. I did develop an urgency to go to the bathroom and needed to get up in the middle of the night to

urinate. These symptoms subsided post treatment after a few weeks. The most annoying issue was the effect of the six-month Lupron shots; frequent "hot flashes."

I met nice men and women on the bus and at OUI undergoing radiation treatment. We shared our histories and experiences with cancer. For most of us, radiation therapy was, at most, an interruption to our daily lives. A few men had more intense side effects, such as frequently getting up at night to pee or difficulty in urinating. IGRT is designed to deliver each dose of radiation with pinpoint accuracy to maximize healing and minimize damage to surrounding tissue.

The Friends of Florence Bus is a unique and invaluable service to our community. The volunteer drivers, coordinators and trainers do a fantastic job. I met

wonderful people on the bus and we had a great time on the trips to and from Eugene and Springfield. For a while I was the lone liberal, tree hugger. We exchanged good-spirited banter and had many moments of laughter and good conversation. If only the U.S. Congress could ride the bus.

The Florence Us TOO chapter support has been very helpful during and after treatment. With our discussions at the monthly meetings, my treatment experience had no surprises. We help each other, and men newly diagnosed with prostate cancer, to make critical decisions about which treatment to pursue. As always, Dr. Mehlhaff is an invaluable resource.

Now, I wait until April to see if my Prostate Specific Antigen, PSA, is at the undetectable level near zero.

SIUSLAW VALLEY FIRE & RESCUE — Firefighters are a little different



BY PETE "BOA" WARREN
Special to Siuslaw News

Chances are, you probably know a firefighter. Let's just say they are a bit different than average folks. If you're someone who hangs out with one or more firefighters, you may have noticed they have tendencies to say or do things the average person doesn't.

Ever notice what firefighters wear or what's in their dresser drawers?

Yep, tons of firefighter shirts because they're inherently

proud of their station or position within the department.

When dining with a firefighter, you'll notice they are always the first ones to finish eating because they tend to eat quickly.

That's because eating hot food is so much better than reheating it, which happens quite often as a result of dinner- or lunch-time tap outs to emergencies.

While on the West Coast, don't ask a firefighter what it's

like to drive a water tanker; they'll tell you it's a water tender.

Tankers have wings and are flown to disperse water over fires from the air; tenders are giant water trucks used for refilling fire engines known as "pumpers."

And don't even think of calling out, "Look at that fire truck!"

You'll quickly be corrected. "That's not a truck, it's an

engine."

And when checking into a hotel, going to a convention site or even a department store, chances are your firefighter friend has likely already checked out the egress of the building in case of an emergency.

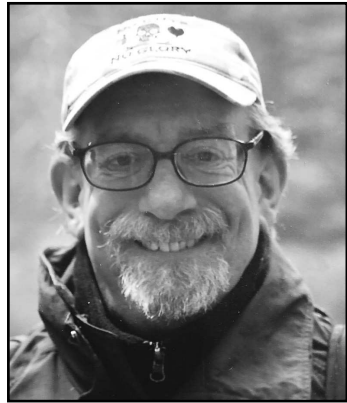
Finally, if you're in the presence of, or on a date with, a firefighter when they are suddenly tapped out to respond to an emergency, don't take it personally if they abruptly leave you.

They are going because it's what they do.

That being said, depending on how the date is going, they may have triggered their emergency pager on purpose for a quick egress!

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NOTES FROM THE SILTCOOS — The ebb and flow



BARRY SOMMER
Special to Siuslaw News

The water rises, the water falls. The tides come and they go, bringing estuarial life one minute, and then taking back into its salty embrace what it willingly gives twice a day.

Without Isaac Newton we wouldn't know what tides were or how they worked.

The scientist in him described the effect as "The Law of Universal Gravitation" which sounds good in a dissertation thesis but means diddly to the regular person. So he put it in simpler terms: "The gravitational attraction between two bodies is directly proportional to the product of their masses, and inversely proportional to the square of the distance between the bodies"

Okay, so maybe Newton didn't care about the salty embrace of estuarial tidal life, but he did know how to be a ground breaking but boring scientist. I'm not trained in science and won't take anything away from his work and research, but I would still prefer watching the old pilings by the bridge being inundated twice a day by the mixing waters of the Pacific and the Siuslaw than re-read his monumental science tome "Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica."

Well, maybe if it came out as a Readers Digest condensed version...

Even as science was explaining the why and how of tides, the movement of water tied to

the moon and attempts to explain it have always been grounded in the mystical, the magical and the mythical.

Most civilizations had their gods and goddesses connected to water and the moon.

Ancient Greece had Selene, Hecate and Artemis, Rome gave us Diana, Sina was in Polynesia and, my favorite, the Inuit deity Alignak. The Inuit knew how to make their gods and goddesses entities to be reckoned with, as Alignak was not only in charge of tides but earthquakes, the weather and eclipses.

Pay no attention to the story that he was incestuous with his sister Yol kai and thus banished from earth (no mention of who banished them) where he became god of the moon and the tides while sister Yol kai became the goddess of the sun — just be fearful of what he can do once moved to action.

If you're an Inuit, that is.

For all the good the moon does, there is a dark side. It is believed by some that the influence of the moon on humans (and animals) is less benign and more malevolent. The term lunatic is not just the invective thrown at Uncle Dwayne during Thanksgiving supper when he goes on about some conspiracy involving the Russians and out of work circus clowns in the vodka and tricycle business.

Its roots as a moniker for the less than sane are embedded in ancient legend and lore, originally middle English/French late Latin in origin and used to connect the movement of the moon to certain unacceptable behaviors.

It used to be that acting out when the moon was full was a guaranteed meeting with the therapist's couch (or the torch and pitchfork crowd.)

Today, it's just another quirky behavior that garners the response, "Well bless your heart."

Beyond the magic and sci-

ence, the rhythmic ebb and flow of salt with fresh water has its impression on all of us who live, visit and work close to the shore. Some say the release of negative ions as the water crashes into itself has a calming and soothing effect on the soul and psyche.

Others credit the quiet but constant background sound of the water moving as the elixir of stress relief.

Still others say the grand scheme of nature which includes the rise and fall as well as birds, fish, fishermen and wind all contribute to what is inarguably an amazing dance of life.

Despite the tides coming and going when you least expect them to, with a timetable in hand one can enjoy this carousel of life and rhythm even at 3:17 in the A.M.

Not me, but for someone else, (perhaps with a case of insomnia), this might be the ticket for a good sleep.

In order to get the full effects and enjoy all the benefits of the changing tides, anywhere in Old Town will provide good access to watch. Since the bridge and its surrounds have remnants of the old timber days sticking up out of the sand, anyplace works to observe the slow rise of water, the pilings being covered (as they have been for decades) and the change of wildfowl as they adapt to the temporary water change.

Plants get covered, grass inundated, new small coves and sand spits appear and the bay takes on a different feeling. The liquid letter "V" is created as the water flows around the pilings, giving the impression of a flight of birds, the ironic twist being the seagull sitting on the top of a tall piling, looking down as if watching an imaginary flock passing below.

Then the tide reverses and the patterns shift, water again seeking the open ocean and taking with it its half of the life

and spirit, leaving the bay and river wanting and the seagull very confused.

The tide comes in, the tide goes out. Fresh mixes with

salty and life flourishes.

And as I watch the dance, the words of Warren Buffet echo across the Siuslaw...

"It's only when the tide goes

out that you discover who's been swimming naked."

Thank goodness there's no lights on at 3:17 in the morning.

Recipe

COLLECTION 2018

Siuslaw News has been the region's newspaper for 128 years. In that time, restaurants have come and gone, trades have shifted and the area's demographics have changed, but the area's taste for fresh seafood, locally grown produce and handcrafted meals remains. In 2018, Siuslaw News wants to showcase some of those recipes in a new collection.

This is a chance for community members to submit recipes for entrées, appetizers, soups, cocktails, side dishes and more. People are encouraged to share recipes of their favorite local and regional cuisine, recipes handed down from family, the best use of seasonal produce and even tips on where to find foraged foods. Businesses and restaurants may also submit their famous or unforgettable recipes.

Once complete, this bound collection will be available for sale at the Siuslaw News.

Submit your recipes online at
thesiuslawnews.com/recipe-collection/
 or
 mail a copy to PO Box 10 Florence OR 97439 Attn: Siuslaw Cook Book
 Fax 541-997-7979

Deadline is March 12th

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