



Senior Moments

with Emma Edwards

Brain boosts come in pleasantries

As I get older, I've noticed more joint pain when the rain and cold temps begin.

Are these simply challenges of becoming a senior citizen or could we become conquerors rather than conquered?

Toward the end of September, I shared that I had joined the Otago Exercise Program. The free program, which originated in New Zealand, is sponsored by the Northwest Senior and Disability Services. A therapist came to my home after I registered and put me through some testing to determine my basic needs, including my probability of having a fall. In my case, it was my balance that needed retraining. Also included was strength training and walking. I have a log to keep up on all of this.

In addition to the therapist, a personal trainer came to my home once a week in the beginning.

I can't tell you how jazzed I am about this program. I recommend you call Michelle Lewis, community program supervisor at Senior and Disability Services, 503-861-4200. There may be a waiting list, but would be good to get your name in now.

Now all I need is help for my forgetfulness. Any ideas Michelle?

An important reminder: It's time to set clocks back one hour this Sunday, Nov. 5. You know the formula. In the spring, we spring forward an hour. And in the fall, we fall back an hour. Well, most of us across the United States anyway. It's called Daylight Savings Time or DST.

Arizona is an exception and in doing a double check, I see

that it isn't even all of Arizona. Hawaii is another state that doesn't do DST. And then, of course, there are the territories of Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Guam and American Samoa that do not observe DST either. Not sure about Alaska as it is almost always daylight there?

For an interesting study, go to your computer and bring up en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daylight_saving_time_in_the_United_States

If you don't have a computer, run over to our amazing Warrenton Library and use one of its well-functioning computers. You will learn of the Benjamin Franklin Daylight Savings beginnings in 1918 and also about the three years during World War II when DST was observed year round as a safety factor and so much more.

I remember one time when Bud Haskell favored the senior meal site with a short ditty that I copied down. "*Remember, people will judge you by your actions not your intentions. You may have a heart of gold, but so does a hard-boiled egg!*"

Everyone liked that one. So, don't be a hard-boiled egg. And vote yes on the library levy. You'll be glad you did!

Why won't the city take action on Eighth Street structure?

Warrenton City Commission has been taking actions that would potentially allow the removal of the Eighth Street flood control structure since April 2014. The city has been working with public organizations using Bonneville Power Administration incentive money to finance full removal of the structure.

In the last quarter of 2015, the tide gates were removed, allowing the tide to surge in and out unrestricted.

Both organizations seeking removal of the structure publicly assured the citizens of Warrenton there would be no serious risk of flooding south of the structure.

In December 2015, there was an unprecedented flooding event south of the Eighth Street structure that caused significant property damage to one residence, and the flood water came within 12 inches of water height of causing substantial major damage to many residences along the river inside Warrenton's city limits.

Another Warrenton property owner substantially damaged their vehicle after being forced to drive through the approximately 30-inch flood water trying to get home.

It's extremely concerning to think ambulance or emergency service vehicles may be unable to reach some of our citizens because of future flooding.

From 1963, when the structure was built with tide gates installed, until December

Letter to the Editor

2015, there had never been a flooding event of this magnitude. Additionally, weather all over the world is becoming more extreme and there is no certainty more extreme events won't happen in the future.

City of Warrenton commissioners decided to hire a Portland legal firm to conduct an investigation of these events because the Skipanon Water Control District did not provide a full and accurate description of the consequences when it applied to remove the structure.

The investigation cost the city \$120,000 and the results were presented at a public commission meeting in September 2016.

In March this year, I was given access to the documents from the investigation and I found conduct by elected officials that was at the very least unethical, and sometimes totally illegal, in my opinion.

I am not a trained lawyer or investigator. Therefore, at a public meeting, I requested Warrenton city commissioners release to the public information they had in their possession. Commissioners informed me they would not do that at that time.

At a Monday mayor's coffee meeting, a typed list of the authorities responsible for enforcing regulations and laws for the state and federal government was given to the Warrenton city manager and mayor so that these legal enforcement organizations could investigate the situation officially. City leaders ultimately decided they did not want to forward the information at that time.

The city wanted time to work with the Corp of Engineers and obtain their official position on the problem. They also wanted time to meet with directors of the Skipanon Water Control District in a mediation effort to resolve ongoing problems.

I have waited six months for Warrenton city commissioners to act. Instead, they've decided to study the potential for future flooding before further action is taken.

During the meeting with the water district, I saw what I feel is the intransigence of its board of directors in their disregard for future flooding potential.

I have decided to send all information I have in my possession to 19 government organizations charged with enforcing the law or politically in charge of the organizations tasked with carrying out the law.

I sent each of these entities a package stating the facts as I understand them and 12 photos of flooding that occurred in December 2015 so these investigators could judge for themselves how much potential flood damage could happen in the future if the tide gates are not replaced.

I also sent the full summary of the legal investigation done for the city of Warrenton so these organizations wouldn't need to start from scratch to look into the possibility laws had been broken.

These packages are now in the possession of state and federal organizations charged with enforcing the laws. I await official response from these organizations as to what action they plan to take to deal with the issue.

In closing, I'm disappointed I've personally had to take this action as I have been unable to motivate the full City Commission to take action before winter arrives and a potential adverse weather event occurs that exceeds all historical experience.

To protect its citizens, I hope the Warrenton City Commission will take some type of action to effectively deal with this issue in the foreseeable future.

Scott Widdicombe
Warrenton

Senior lunch menu

Monday, Nov. 6: Chicken with mushrooms, brown rice, green beans, navy bean soup, apple pie.

Thursday, Nov. 9: Corned beef, boiled potatoes, carrots, tomato soup, chocolate cake.

The Warrenton senior lunch program is at noon (doors open at 10:30 a.m.) Mondays and Thursdays at Warrenton Community Center, 170 SW Third St. Suggested donation is \$5 for ages 55 and older; \$7 for those younger. For more information, call 503-861-3502.