



Senior Moments

with Emma Edwards

Social distancing with Plastic Man

We have a whole new lifestyle. Social distancing 6 feet apart? Wearing gloves and masks almost all the time? Yes, it's a whole new world for sure.

How can we play Pinochle or Bridge sitting 6 feet apart? My friend, Dolly Coffey, who is in our Pinochle club said she was reminded of the comic book character Plastic Man. Yes, we would need to do some serious stretching.

Just picture it. Four of us each sitting 6 feet apart playing cards with our mask and gloves on. One of us would have to win some serious money to put up \$90 to \$146, which is the going price for a vintage copy of the Plastic Man comic book.

Jack Cole of Pennsylvania created Plastic Man when he was 27, according to Wikipedia. Cole named him Patrick "Eel" O'Brian.

At first, Eel was a crook living a life of crime. During a late-night safecracking heist, Eel (complete with mask and gloves) and his fellow gang members were surprised by a night watchman. Eel was shot in the shoulder and doused with a large drum full of an unidentified chemical liquid that entered his blood stream.

The liquid caused a body-wide mutagenic process that transformed his physiology. Eel now existed in a fluid state, neither liquid nor solid.

Once Eel digested the fact that his "friends" ran out on him, he served his time in the hoosegow (term back then for jail) and went into law as a way of getting back at the bad guys. He soon realized that he had complete control over his

structure.

Oh, yes this fictional character could stretch every part of his body 10 feet easily. It's no wonder Dolly's older brother, Wes, enjoyed Plastic Man Comics. I'm sure all my brothers did, too.

Back then, they had to save 10 cents to buy a comic book.

We have more time these days to think about such things as comic books. And, sorry to say, more time to eat, which gets some of the best of us in trouble.

Recently, I told a friend that I "fell off the wagon" in the eating realm. I got to wondering where that saying came from.

In the 1800s, when "men drank whiskey like it was water," temperance evangelists drove horse-driven water wagons around town and encouraged the reformed alcoholics to climb aboard, showing they had been "saved" from drink.

If they resumed drinking, it was said they "fell off the wagon." I guess some actually did.

Yes, they could resume life as a "teetotaler" and climb back on the wagon. They were readily forgiven.

Forgiveness is a necessary aspect of life and much needed, especially in crisis times. Of course it was a great deal more difficult to stay sober in those days as it was before the availability of Coca-Cola and other soft drinks. Lemonade back then was a child's drink and took time to prepare.

I wonder what Plastic Man liked to drink? There's so much to learn and so little time.



Mayor's Message

by Henry Balensifer III

Return to normal takes time, patience

By the time you're reading this, Clatsop County's order covering north county will have likely been issued opening lodging at 60 percent starting June 5.

The plan is to fully open county accesses at Sunset Beach and Del Rey at noon on May 31. Additionally, the state is expected to open Fort Stevens by then, so the Peter Iredale shipwreck should be open as well — but I've heard no confirmation to date on state entrances, only county.

While we're all feeling the effects of this statewide/West Coast stay-at-home order, Warrenton still is getting quite a bit of interest from housing, commercial and industrial developers, and several are building or moving toward that end.

We also launched an economic strategy technical advisory committee to help inform our land-use comprehensive plan to better position ourselves for industrial development.

Despite all the shiny new things coming to our town, I want to encourage all Warrentonians to patronize what we have now for food and shopping.

I get a lot of calls about masks. I know they are not comfortable, fog up glasses, and many other things. They are inconvenient, but from the workplace to public, they are becoming more the norm. Many businesses are required to wear them while interacting with the public per the governor's guidance, or are requiring them for entry into their privately owned

stores.

This definitely has been an adjustment for many people. Be patient. Be kind. Don't take out your angst on a store employee who reminds you to meet the state requirements or their company policy.

They are just doing their job. Everybody wants to be able to make ends meet, stay healthy and just get through this whole ordeal. Everybody is stressed.

I've heard from some folks they no longer patronize certain favorite restaurants because they are not open for in-dining. While that certainly is one's right, I wish to reframe that discussion.

Do we want our favorite foods to be available after this is all over? Or is the missing ambiance of in-dining so important we're comfortable letting it go permanently?

I don't know about you, but I love good food and I'd rather give up the temporary inconvenience of no dining-in

Hazardous waste collection is June 13

Clatsop County's Household Hazardous Waste Facility will be open from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, June 13.

The new collection center, 1789 Williamsport Road, Astoria, is specially designed to receive and handle tox-

ic, flammable and otherwise hazardous products.

Residents can dispose of them for free at the drive-through facility, which allows residents to drop off materials without leaving their cars.

More info is at co.clatsop.or.us. I want to take this time to thank both CEDR and the Astoria-Warrenton Chamber of Commerce, particularly the chamber, which has done a masterful job pivoting missions and acting fast to get information out.

Additionally, the chamber has taken an active role in assisting the city with event planning alongside our Main Street U.S.A. program, "Spruce Up Warrenton." If you haven't checked out the latest contest, be sure to visit Spruce Up Warrenton's Facebook page.

We're all pulling together. We're all coping the best we can with what we have available to us. With patience, kindness, and understanding, let us weather this storm as a community.

Special columns in The Columbia Press

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Week 3: Off the Shelf by Kelly Knudsen

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