



Senior Moments

with Emma Edwards

Changing seasons prompts the wonder of snowflakes

Ah, December. Earlier this week, I was thinking it was almost cold enough for us to be blessed with a few snowflakes. Instead it turned into a cold, dry day.

Speaking of snowflakes, have any of you seen “The North Pole,” one of the Hallmark movies from a few years back? Back then, I had skipped over it thinking it was “just another kids movie.”

But it seems, nowadays, I catch myself snuggling into my recliner and watching a few more movies than usual.

Maybe what got me in the mood for a snow movie was that I chose last weekend to take down part of my ladybug collection, which sits on five shelves above my printer. I traded the ladybugs in for my joyful snowman collection, which I plan to keep up throughout winter. So I guess I had snowmen on my brain.

“The North Pole” has lots of snow scenes, of course. I even wrote down a line from the young girl Clementine about snow. “Even the smallest snowflake can turn into the biggest snowball,” she said.

A lot has been said and written about the snowflake.

Another well-known quote: “Snowflakes are one of nature’s most fragile things, but just look what they can do when they stick together,” -- Vista M. Kelly.

A fun grandma project is to teach the little ones how to fold white paper, cut out snowflake patterns and paste them on the window.

I’m sure we’ve all heard the expression “no two alike” in reference to snowflakes. Wikipedia tells us that “Initial attempts to find identical snowflakes by photographing thousands of them with a microscope began in 1885 onward by Wilson Alwyn Bentley (an American meteorologist and photographer).”

He gave names to many of the patterns and detailed their amazing colors as they journeyed to earth. By the way, reading further on we find that Bentley lived until 1931 and never did find any two snowflakes that were alike.

Another thing I learned is that snow is always white by the time it reaches earth even though it is made of clear crystal. As it passes through the atmosphere, things happen. I wonder if our astronauts currently in outer space see snowflakes differently than on earth.

And, yes, I am dreaming of a white Christmas, as I do every year. Having lived in Michigan and Minnesota, we had many a white Christmas.

C.S. Lewis once said, “You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.”

Having lived in snow country, I even know where snowmen keep their money. Don’t tell anyone, but it’s in a snowbank.

We can be thankful and dream of making a snowman soon. So, let it snow! Let it snow! Let it snow!

Here’s to Your Health

by Mari Montesano and Kelley Crusius



Safe ways to celebrate the holidays

This is our first -- and hopefully last -- holiday season during the COVID-19 pandemic.

It’s also a critically important time for each of us to continue making the sacrifices necessary to keep ourselves and our loved ones healthy through the winter.

With some creativity and planning, you can make the holidays special this year. And perhaps you’ll even start a new holiday tradition with your family.

Here are some ideas to get you in the holiday spirit:

- **Recipe Exchange:** Start a chain-mail recipe swap with neighbors, family or friends. Send three people one of your favorite recipes. Ask them to send you one back, and to pass it on to three more people.

- **Play Secret Santa:** Surprise someone you care about with a delicious dinner on their doorstep. You could cook yourself, or order take-out from one of our great local restaurants. Your gift will bring you and the person you surprise a warm, holiday feeling.

- **Cookie Muncher’s Delight:** Call up some friends or family and set a cookie date. Make enough cookies to share and send or deliver them to each other on your chosen day.

- **Celebrating together:** When the big day rolls around, be sure that you’re celebrating safely. Virtual gatherings are the safest way to be with your loved ones.

Perhaps you could start the morning with a cooking lesson from the elders in your family. You don’t have to be Julia Childs to put on your own cooking show. This is a

great way to pass down secret family recipes and to share the holidays together. You can finish the day with a toast and a special holiday drink or dessert.

If you decide to have an in-person gathering, consider holding your celebration outside around a fire pit. Or have a tailgate party with each household bringing their own food.

Remember, gathering with another household is a higher-risk activity. To make it as safe as possible, limit other in-person activities before and after your gathering. When gathering, don’t share silverware or dishes; be vigilant about washing your hands before eating and after using the restroom; maintain a social distance between households

when eating and drinking, and wear masks when you’re not eating or drinking.

You can have your Christmas cake and eat it too. Plan ahead and have those conversations early so that everyone you love can enjoy the holidays.

This is a hard time, but it will pass. When the next holiday season rolls around, we want everyone to be able to gather and celebrate. But to do that, we need to celebrate a bit differently this year.

Here’s to Your Health is sponsored by Columbia Memorial Hospital. Kelley Crusius is a physician assistant and Mari Montesano is a licensed clinical social worker at the CMH-OHSU Knight Cancer Collaborative.

Groups receive cultural grants

Six local cultural groups received grants from the Clatsop County Cultural Coalition for projects planned in 2021.

The recipients are:

- **North Coast Chorale:** \$2000 to hire instrumentalists for a performance of “The Healer,” composed by Karl Jenkins.

- **Little Ballet Theatre:** \$2,000 to acquisition a new, safe performance floor for annual “Nutcracker” productions.

- **Tillicum Foundation:** \$2,000 for virtual access to performances of music, theater and dance.

- **Coaster Theatre Playhouse:** \$1,100 to produce and film two shows.

- **Trail’s End Art Association:** \$1,200 for a work table to expand programs to artists with disabilities.

- **Partners for the PAC:** \$1,200 for a string musician workshop and artist-in-residence program.

Special columns in The Columbia Press

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Week 1: Here’s to Your Health from CMH

Week 2: Financial Focus with Adam Miller

Week 3: Off the Shelf by Kelly Knudsen

Final week: Mayor’s Message by Henry Balensifer