



Senior Moments

with Emma Edwards

Remembering what's important

Memorial Day is observed on the last Monday of May, which is nearly here.

It was formerly known as Decoration Day and commemorates all men and women who have died in military service for our United States of America, the land of the free and the home of the brave.

We are reminded that our flag doesn't fly because the wind moves it. It flies with the last breath of each person who died protecting it.

Many choose Memorial Day to go to the cemetery where loved ones are buried to spruce up their graves.

Many church services on Sunday will include singing of *The Star-Spangled Banner*. "Oh say, does that star-spangled banner wave o'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave." And *America the Beautiful*. "America! God shed His grace on thee! And crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea!"

Memorial Day is traditionally seen as the start of summer. We weren't allowed to wear white shoes, white clothes or even white trousers or knickers until Memorial Day.

As a child living in Detroit, Mich., the holiday meant a picnic at either Chandler Park or Belle Isle. My three brothers were taken to the park almost at the break of dawn to get a "good table." They always had a snack equivalent to breakfast with them and kind of commandeered the table that our father had chosen.

The boys literally sat on the tables until the rest of us and all the food were brought out nearer to noon. That was what Memorial Day meant to us – the first picnic of the year and fun. Sometimes our cousins would join us so we would need to move a table or two nearby over to attach to our table.

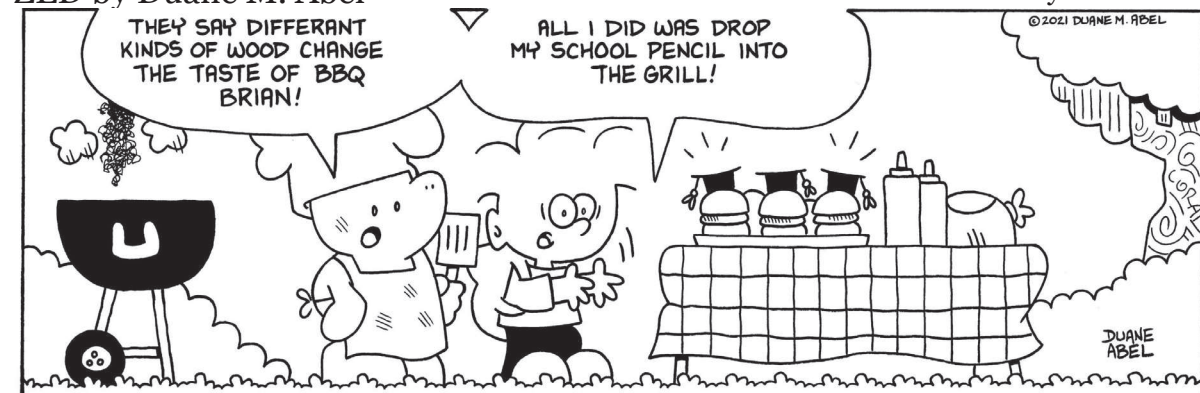
Our menu usually consisted of sandwiches (filled with ground-up bologna and pickles), potato salad and pickled cucumbers and onions. Sometimes we had a watermelon, too. The beverage was orange Kool-Aid.

If the cousins joined us, then Aunt Thelma and my mother would try to outdo each other on the desserts to make it an even better picnic. We always had tablecloths for the picnic tables.

Memorial flowers were loaded in the trunk of the car and brought to the cemetery on the way to the picnic by our parents and us two girls. There was no ceremony or explanation, except that it was the thing we did on Decoration Day, a day we got to spend enjoying our freedom.

We need never forget that we live in the home of the free because of the brave.

ZED by Duane M. Abel



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Mayor's Message

by Henry Balensifer III

Street, park and other improvements add to life as we enter post-COVID normal

Summer is coming and people are understandably anxious to get back to whatever sense of normalcy can be allowed.

Clatsop County, as I write this, is 60 percent vaccinated. We're on the home stretch.

While slow at some points and faster at others, your city is moving to improve the city to ensure we're well poised to move out of this pandemic.

The Warrenton Urban Renewal Agency is moving forward to engineer and underground power lines downtown, as well as improve drainage and sidewalks.

We have a fighting chance that our Congressional delegation can get us federal funding to finish a sidewalk

all the way to the high school connecting downtown to the Morrison District (where the high school is). These livability improvements don't just make Warrenton a safer, more enjoyable place to live — they improve the attraction to businesses as well.

The Urban Renewal Agency also is moving forward with building up the foodcart pod near City Hall.

All-in-all, Warrenton remains a city of opportunity, while improving itself with the primary goal of improvement for Warrentonians — not tourists. Obviously, we will share our town with them and welcome them to patronize our area. But we're not gearing our improvements nor our town to service tourists. It must service residents first.

Take business out of it, we have two notable investments in parks in the west side of our city. The Carruthers Dog Park is getting a new river viewpoint pavilion, as well as expanded parking. The park in Officers Row (inside the Fort Stevens neighborhood) is getting improvements to

the playground and a new beach volleyball court.

For our east side, the Forest Rim neighborhood will receive its first park (our only park east of Highway 101) this year. It's only in phase 1, but as time and funds build up, we hope to add more amenities to this large but underserved part of our town.

As we move forward toward normalcy, many of us are anxious to get back to normal. I'll admit, I am.

I do not wish to debate, nor even change your mind about, your views of the COVID situation. As your mayor, I just ask this: Please do not take your vexation and frustration out on the retail associates, food servers, and essential workers of our city.

They're just trying to make a living — and I've heard from many of them — they don't like the situation any more than you. Most of them answer to some faceless corporate entity not based in our city, or an owner who is desperately holding things together.

A little kindness goes a long way.

Special columns in The Columbia Press

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Week 2: Here's to Your Health from CMH

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Final week: Mayor's Message by Henry Balensifer