



## Senior Moments

with Emma Edwards

### *I could be an amaryllis*

I could tell it was going to be a good day today.

As some of you know, I had to shrink the number of my beautiful violet plants down to six this year. Some bad disease hit the others.

Well, here it is the middle of the year and there's still only a few blooms as of last week. Maybe I wasn't paying enough attention to them.

So today, when I checked their need of water, three of the plants had many blooms. Well, mostly buds, but for sure those three will live. Yay!

So why did they suddenly have beautiful blooms? At one time, I transferred all my violets to a part of my home where they'd have a southern exposure. However, in dealing with the dying violets, I relocated them to their original northern exposure. And it is working!

It kind of reminds me of a person relocating. Sometimes a change really helps.

In the meantime, my other violets could be referred to as "shrinking violets." My middle name is Violet and, for sure, I don't think of myself as a "shrinking violet." So, where did that expression come from? I learned from a source that specializes in grammar idioms that it has been around since the early 1800s.

A shrinking violet is a very shy person, someone who is introverted and doesn't enjoy attention or engaging with others. Some may say "that's no job for a shrinking violet" in reference to a job description.

Have you ever thought of yourself relative to a flower or plant?

I asked two of my senior

friends and my editor what flower they felt they were most like. One friend said she was like a gladiolus – a really fancy one – and the other said she was a sunflower. Cindy, my editor, would describe herself as a daisy (uncomplicated, simple) most days and a rose (formal, striving for perfection) on others.

A common gift at Christmastime is the amaryllis with its amazingly beautiful flowers that suddenly burst out weeks after we plant that ugly dark brown bulb. The stem is strong and makes no struggle to hold up the large flowers. If I were to compare myself to a flower, perhaps that is the one I would choose.

Another flower that comes to my mind is the lovely pansy. And so that begs the question how did we begin calling a cowardly person or one who lacks courage a "pansy"? Is the flower of a pansy always beautiful? Most would say yes, if it's properly cared for.

Another flower often referred to is the petunia. There have been times when I've felt out of place when in an unpleasant, uncouth or overly aggressive group.

I suspect we can all remember times when we thought, "I'm feeling really uncomfortable in this rowdy sports bar (for instance), like a lonely little petunia in an onion patch."

I suppose we all could define ourselves as one flower or another. What would you compare yourself to?

We seniors need to have just the right exposure to reach our utmost perfection. So stay away from those places that don't help you grow.

## Here's to Your Health

by CMH staff



### Screening out men's major health threats

Screening tests can catch serious diseases in the early stages before they do major damage to your health.

We're focused on men's health this month. All men should have a few routine screening tests. These tests can help catch health problems before they've progressed enough to cause symptoms. Treatment in these early stages is more likely to be fully effective.

You can get screened for many diseases, but most men only need screening for a few. The diseases you need screening for, and how frequently you should be screened, varies according to your health and risk factors. The following tests are recommended for most men:

- Blood pressure tests: Health organizations, such as the American Heart Association, recommend blood-pressure checks at least every two years and more often if your blood pressure is high.

- Cholesterol screening: The American Heart Association recommends cholesterol checks once every four to six years starting at age 20. High blood cholesterol is a major risk factor for coronary artery disease.

- Colorectal cancer screening: Regular screening for this cancer should start at age 45.

- Prostate exams: The American Cancer Society recommends talking to your doctor about prostate cancer screening when you turn 50 years old. Black men should talk with their doctor about the pros and cons of screening at age 45.

- Blood-glucose testing: All men ages 45 and older should think about getting screened for diabetes. A simple blood test can reveal if you have diabetes or its precursor, prediabetes.

Skin exams: Many doctors recommend monthly self-exams to look for growths or changes that could be skin cancer.

Depression screening: If you've felt down, hopeless or

uninterested in the things you usually enjoy for two weeks straight, it's extremely important to ask your doctor about screening for depression.

Contact your local CMH-OHSU clinic to schedule an appointment and get a head start on your health care. Clinics are in Astoria, Seaside and Warrenton.

*Here's to Your Health* is sponsored by Columbia Memorial Hospital.

### CMH nurse receives DAISY award

Kristin Hooper, an emergency room nurse practitioner, recently received the Columbia Memorial Hospital DAISY award for extraordinary nurses.



Hooper

Hooper was nominated by the wife of a patient.

"Kristin came out of the ER at one point and sat with me in the waiting area and let me unload the experience. I was so grateful for her," the patient's wife said. "She really helped me relax and get through this ordeal. We so appreciated her kindness, caring and concern. It was just what I needed to gain a footing on my emotions and to deal with caring for my loved one."

The DAISY Foundation was created in 1999 after 33-year-old J. Patrick Barnes died of complications from an auto-immune disease. DAISY is an acronym for Diseases Attacking the Immune System.

Barnes spent the last eight weeks of his life in hospitals while he was treated for his symptoms. The nursing care he received profoundly impacted his family and they responded by creating the foundation to honor nurses who provide outstanding care.

Anyone with a great story about a CMH nurse can submit it to [nlund@columbiamemorial.org](mailto:nlund@columbiamemorial.org) or [columbiamemorial.org/daisy](http://columbiamemorial.org/daisy).

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**Week 4: Here's to Your Health from CMH**