



Senior Moments

with Emma Edwards

When it finally gets you

Everyone seems to have an opinion about something. Does that annoy you?

For me, it depends upon how adamant I am about the subject at hand. For instance, this COVID thing is beginning to get under my skin.

I do not believe that the risk of getting a COVID-19 related illness is over yet, not by a long shot. Therefore, I intend to wear my mask in public places that I am cautiously entering!

SARS-CoV-2 is constantly changing, giving us, first, the alpha variant followed by the delta variant and others. The most common variant now seems to be omicron, which continues to seek out victims.

I have a friend who works in a hospital and, amazingly, went two years without getting the dreaded illness. However, one day last week I got a one-line text from her. It was just four words: "It finally got me!"

I understood. Immediately I knew what she was talking about. We seem to almost assume it is not going to "visit" us and then we get a positive test. It almost seems like someone chasing after us. We often refer to the virus as an "it."

I'd had a vaccination and two boosters and yet I endured a very terrible case of what was most likely the omicron variant of COVID. Some will suffer even more with what's being called long COVID, which has other serious complications.

So, what can we seniors do about this? In Isaiah 41:10 of the Bible, we are told to "fear not for I am with you."

In fact, the phrase "fear not" appears 365 times in the Bible. God is reminding us that

we don't walk alone if we look to him for comfort and not fear whatever is around the corner.

Many seniors do have more time to lament over the unknown and, if we spend enough time on our fears, they can grow!

The phrase "tsk tsk" is often heard in vintage films and old literature. You pronounce it by putting your tongue to the roof of your mouth and shaking your head when you say it.

Instead of being tempted to "tsk tsk" over a situation, dial the phone number of someone you've not heard from in a while and let them talk. Sometimes, they will get quiet and it's at that time you might introduce the subject of fear and even read Isaiah 41:10 to them.

The verse continues on, telling readers "*do not be dismayed.*" Some day, they may have to say "it finally got me" or perhaps express their fears of getting "it." That verse can turn their day right side up instead of upside down.

I try to make such calls often and sometimes it does me more good than the person on the other end of the line.

I can't help but think of a saying you may remember too.

"So live that when death comes, the mourners will outnumber the cheering section."

Special columns in The Columbia Press

Every week: Senior Moments with Emma Edwards

Week 1: Mayor's Message by Henry Balensifer

Week 2: Financial Focus with Adam Miller

Week 3: Off the Shelf from WCL

Week 4: Here's to Your Health from CMH

Letter to the editor

City discriminates against Hammond in street plan

The state of Oregon charges a fuel tax of \$.38 per gallon throughout the state.

Each year, a portion of the tax money paid for fuel purchased in Warrenton is returned to the city.

Funds from this income source must be used exclusively for construction, reconstruction, improvement, repair, maintenance, operation and use of public highways, roads, streets, and roadside rest areas in Oregon, according to The Oregon Constitution, Article IX, Section 3a.

Warrenton has received \$5.1 million in State Fuel Tax revenue since 2005. All this income was spent in Zip code 97146, and none in Zip code 97121.

A current internet search by Zip code shows 97121 has 1,383 residents (19 percent of Warrenton's population as of 2021). Zip code 97146 has 5,905 residents (81 percent of total population in the same period).

Warrenton Mayor Henry Balensifer sent me an email stating the funds can be used only for streets in the Transportation System Plan (TSP). The mayor also states there were other considerations based on an adopted city master plan.

I do not know if the master plan is the TSP or some other city requirement.

There is also a category known as System Develop-

ment Charges (SDC).

The commission has a strong preference to upgrade Warrenton streets to include curbs, sidewalks, and drainage, the mayor has indicted in the past. City commissioners can create any local ordinances, codes, rules, etc. they wish to guide how they use city Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) income.

I do not believe the state intended to empower local political leaders to exclude a major portion of the population to spend all the state fuel tax revenue exclusively in Zip code 97146.

I question each commissioner's judgment if they feel it's reasonable to discriminate using local regulations to achieve the exclusion.

Either these leaders are unaware they're excluding a full Zip code or they do not care.

The Oregon constitution needs to be amended to be more specific in how these funds should be allocated so cities receiving them in the future use them for street maintenance in a population-proportional manner.

I am going to Salem early next year to visit the offices of the newly elected governor, Clatsop County's state senator, and state representative. I will be delivering documentary proof of the city of Warrenton's discrimination.

I will request a written response from office staff of these political leaders so I can obtain written proof these political leaders do or do not agree with how the Warrenton City Commission currently is using these funds.

I reject the mayor's current verbal excuse for excluding most streets within Zip code 97121 from having any of their streets rebuilt from

scratch.

None of the streets in this area have been rebuilt in the past 30 years using CIP funds, which are described by Warrenton's Accounting Department as state fuel tax income. This is blatant discrimination.

Everyone in Zip code 97121 pays \$.38 a gallon in tax on gasoline purchased locally. This is taxation without representation (better described as discrimination) to exclude every street in the area based on rules established by the Warrenton City Commission.

The fuel sales tax paid to Oregon for each gallon of gas purchased by Warrenton residents should not be used to rebuild or repair streets for only a select group of streets – all of them within Zip code 97146.

I object to discrimination of any type.

Anyone reading this is welcome to write a letter to the editor if you feel the information I've included isn't accurate. However, please provide provable facts.

Scott Widdicombe
Warrenton

Senior meals

TUESDAY, SEPT. 27

- Pork loin
- Mixed vegetables
- Roasted potatoes and tomatoes
- Applesauce
- Cheesecake

Warrenton's eat-in senior meal program is organized by Warrenton Senior Citizens Inc. and is at noon on Tuesdays at Warrenton Community Center, 170 S.W. Third St.

Suggested donation is \$6. Doors open at 10:30 a.m. for socializing and coffee.