

OP-ED

Veterans Day a time to reflect, take stock

GUEST COLUMN
KELLY FITZPATRICK



And just like that, the calendar, once again, turns to Veterans Day. For me, like many of my fellow veterans, Oregonians and Americans, it is a time to reflect and take stock. One year ago, we “gathered” for a Veterans Day unlike any before it, in a virtual environment that gave us some flexibilities that we never had before, but we had to forego the warmth of being with other people.

Now, as we cautiously return to an environment more closely resembling normalcy, it’s appropriate to take stock of all that we have to celebrate. We as a country have much to be thankful for, and much of it is thanks to our veterans who fought for freedom and stood guard over our peace, and to our fallen heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice.

We remember our World War II veterans, the sadly dwindling “Greatest Generation,” who have much still teach us about the importance of self-sacrifice to a greater cause. Some 80 years ago, these brave men and women left their homes and families to answer the call — not only for their own country, but the world.

We honor our Korean War veterans, who fought in the “Forgotten War,” which came so soon after the Second World War that it is often overlooked. In a foreign land, they endured freezing conditions and disease in addition to an unrelenting enemy, often against impossible odds, and made a lasting contribution to world peace and

prosperity. We thank our Vietnam War veterans, who, regrettably, did not receive the heroes’ welcome that they deserved upon returning home from battle, and this remains a painful stain on our national memory that we must work hard to erase. Yet, these remarkable men and women refused to turn their backs on their fellow veterans. Vowing that another generation of service members would never face what they had to endure, many of them remain engaged in serving their fellow veterans.

We remember our veterans who represent the peacetime era, serving under the near-constant specter of the Cold War and prepared to confront any enemy that might threaten national security around the globe. Many of them engaged in so-called “small wars” in Grenada, or other military operations in far-flung nations such as Bosnia, Somalia and a host of other nations on the African continent.

And, we honor our veterans of the conflicts of the Middle East and Afghanistan. Many of these veterans entered the Armed Forces in the wake of the terrible attack on September 11, 2001, and fought and sacrificed to ensure that the United States would not experience similar attacks.

Thankfulness, gratitude, honor and remembrance: This is the duty and responsibility of all Americans who have not worn the uniform — and it is these principles that are embodied in the more than 75-year tradition of Veterans Day.

Originally known as Armistice Day, the occasion celebrated the Allied victory in World War II. It was motivated by a simple, two-word phrase from the heart of our country: “Thank

you.” Gratitude is a simple yet powerful thing. It has a way of humbling us, bettering us and reminding us of what’s most important.

We have much to be thankful for: The freedoms and way of life that we have long enjoyed, the peace that has been secured for our children and grandchildren — it is our veterans and service members we have to thank for that: Brave men and women who answered the call, ready to face the fire and, if necessary, pay the ultimate price on our behalf.

That’s my message this Veterans Day, and every day, to all who wore the uniform, regardless of branch, era, rank, duties, race, ethnicity, gender identity or sexual orientation, religion, creed or ability: Thank you for your service. Please consider joining me and the Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs for our Oregon Statewide Veterans Day Ceremony, which will take place at 2 p.m. Nov. 10 — the day before Veterans Day — at Oregon State Capitol Park, directly across from the front entrance of the Capitol building.

The event will take place in person and outdoors, with social distancing and mask requirements in place. It will also be livestreamed on the Department of Veterans’ Affairs Facebook page at facebook.com/odvavet.

Kelly Fitzpatrick is the director of the Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs and Gov. Kate Brown’s policy advisor on veterans’ issues. She is a retired U.S. Army officer. Her military awards and decorations include multiple awards of the Meritorious Service Medal, the Southwest Asia Service Medal and the Army Parachutist Badge.

Know the possible signs and symptoms of breast cancer

GUEST COLUMN
EMILY OLSON, DNP, CNM



You’ve probably heard or read the statistic by now: About one in eight females in the U.S. will be diagnosed with breast cancer during their lifetime. Whereas breast cancer in males is rarer and accounts for less than 1% of all breast cancers

Treatments work best when breast cancer is caught early. That’s why it’s important for females to get screened regularly for the disease starting at age 40. Transgender women who have received gender-affirming hormones for over 5 years should also be screened regularly after the age of 50. Transgender men should be screened at a regular interval starting at age 40. Transgender men should start regular screenings at age 50 if they have had chest reduction/reconstruction.

In addition to regular screening, it’s equally as important to know the signs and symptoms of breast cancer at any age, since even younger people

can — and do — get the disease. Be on the lookout — and speak up.

Any changes to the look or feel of your breasts shouldn’t be ignored. Chances are, something other than cancer is the cause. But it’s always best to let your primary or women’s healthcare provider know if you’re having any of the following possible signs or symptoms:

- A lump or thickening inside the breast, chest or in the underarm area.
- A change in the size or shape of a breast.
- A dimple or puckering in the skin of a breast.
- A nipple that has turned inward or is sore near the nipple.
- Fluid, other than breast milk, leaking from a nipple, especially if the fluid is bloody or leaks from only one breast.
- Skin irritation or color changes — such as redness or darkening, scaliness or new creases — anywhere on a breast, nipple or areola (the dark area of skin around the nipple).
- Small dimples in a breast that look like the skin of an orange.
- Pain in a breast, especially if the pain doesn’t go away or doesn’t seem

to be related to your menstrual cycle.

Your provider will ask you how long and how often you’ve been experiencing these signs and symptoms. They’ll also examine your breasts. And if necessary, they may order tests like a mammogram or ultrasound. You may need a biopsy if the results of those tests suggest something suspicious.

The thought of having breast cancer can be scary. But try to remember that other conditions can cause changes to your breasts. That’s why it’s always best to see your provider and get a diagnosis.

Finally, things that are good for your health can also reduce your risk for breast cancer: maintain a healthy weight; add physical activity to your routine; limit alcohol intake; avoid smoking; limit menopausal hormone use; and if you have children, breastfeed if you can and want to.

Call your CMH clinic or visit columbiamemorial.org to request an appointment or learn more information.

Emily Olson is a certified nurse midwife at the CMH-OHSU Health Women’s Center.

PEO hosts Holiday Treasures Boutique

The PEO Holiday Treasures Boutique features a William Steidel original watercolor at a silent auction on Nov. 18, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Bill and Sally Steidel, owners of Steidel Art Gallery of Cannon Beach, donated the watercolor to the Cannon Beach PEO chapter for their annual fundraiser. Prints have never been made of the original signed watercolor.

PEO is an organization dedicated to promoting educational opportunities for women for more than 150 years; www.peointernational.org. For more information, contact Diane Somers, 971-221-4680.

Master gardener courses to be conducted online

The Oregon State University Extension Service in Clatsop County welcomes the public to participate in the 2022 master gardener volunteer training from Jan. 3 to March 25.

The master gardener training will take place online, and offered in a self-paced format.

This course will feature weekly Zoom hangouts for participants to ask questions, and connect with other new and continuing mas-



Watercolor by William Steidel, one of the items for bid at the PEO silent auction.

ter gardeners. The course includes livestream lectures from horticulture professionals across the state, and will offer hands-on learning experiences as conditions allow.

This 10-week online training is available for \$100, with scholarships available. Registration is open now and will close on Dec. 15.

Mentor a local high school student

Seaside High School invites volunteers to participate as mentors for students.

The ASPIRE program is administered by the Oregon Student Assistance Commission and is Oregon’s official mentoring program to help students access career options, college admis-

sions and financial aid information.

After training, volunteers will serve as a mentor and adviser. Volunteers do not need to have prior college experience or expertise.

To sign up, contact Shannon Steed at ssteed@seaside12.org to set up a meeting.

Community hymn sing

On Sunday at 4 p.m., the Cannon Beach Community Church hosts a monthly hymn sing.

The event will be led by choral director Dr. John Buehler, with Dr. Susan Buehler on the Steinway Grand Piano at the church, located at 132 E. Washington St. in Cannon Beach.

The theme is “Thanks Giving” with the theme hymn, “Come You Thankful People Come.”

Attendees will be invited to select a favorite hymn to sing, and are strongly recommended to wear face masks. Windows and doors will remain open for maximum airflow, so dress warmly. This event is free and open to the public.

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