

# 3550



June 2019

a publication by and for the residents of Mirabella Portland



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Deputy Editor



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President

**W**HAT I LIKE BEST ABOUT MIRABELLA IS THAT WE ARE A caring community. We help one another when help is needed.

We all hope that the big Cascadia subduction zone earthquake will not come in our lifetime. Oregon State University geologists report that there is a 37% chance it will happen sometime in the next 40 to 50 years. So, we may get our wish.

If the Big One does come before we leave, Mirabella is arguably the best prepared building in Portland. It won't be a picnic in the park, but it also won't be doomsday.

Yes, the expected magnitude 9.0 quake will be a thousand times stronger than the 7.0 quakes Californians are used to, but we will not be close to where the worst damage will occur. Our roads and bridges will be unusable for vehicle traffic immediately after, but we don't need to go anywhere.

City and state resilience plans assume it will take about two weeks for significant outside help to get to us. Collapsed downtown buildings and tsunami-damaged coastal locations will get higher priority.

The good news is that Mirabella is designed to survive the quake with only cosmetic damage. Most of us have strapped our furniture and hung our pictures on tremor hooks so we won't be hurt by flying objects. We have learned to "drop, cover and hold on" so we won't be injured by the quake knocking us down.

We should be able to shelter in place here afterward even though we won't have electricity, water, plumbing, telephones or Internet access. That's better than being homeless in the rain. Most of us have stocked food, water and toilet bags to keep us going until outside help gets here.

Most important of all, Mirabella and South Waterfront volunteer emergency teams will help organize response and recovery. Communities that are most resilient after disasters are those where neighbors know their neighbors and help one another recover. We are that kind of community. ■

**O**NE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PURPOSES OF OUR RESIDENTS' Association of Mirabella Portland, known as RAMP for short, is to "promote effective communication and understanding among residents, staff, [and] Administration ..."

Several of our RAMP committees have done excellent work in recent months promoting understanding among residents about services provided by Mirabella and how to use them, as well as understanding how their own actions can affect their ability to enjoy the quality of life here.

An outstanding example is the work of our resident health advisory committee (RHAC), which produced a comprehensive document for residents about how to access all of Mirabella's health care services. Also, the committee worked with Executive Director Sharon McCartney to sponsor several events to inform residents about health care services including a well-attended, comprehensive presentation by Sharon in Willamette Hall and tours of the skilled nursing floor for small groups of residents. Both Sharon and RHAC have encouraged residents to sign up for In Home Care before it is needed.

Another great example has been the work of the green subcommittee of the buildings and grounds committee (B&G) in informing residents about the proper way to recycle. Not only does this help each of us do our part, it has resulted in cost savings in waste disposal, according to Facilities Director John Hart. Earlier, another B&G effort involved informing residents that the way we dispose of our garbage in the trash chute can be a factor in either creating or avoiding those unpleasant trash chute odors that arise occasionally.

Recently the ad hoc housekeeping committee has worked with Administration to share information with residents about what services are included in Mirabella's basic housekeeping, as well as developing a satisfaction survey. This will serve as effective communication between residents and staff about housekeeping services.

We can all be proud of our RAMP committees and grateful for the residents who volunteer to serve. ■



**O**N THE COVER:  
OHSU pharmacist George Harvey assisted in our feature story on drug prices, pages 8-11. Photo by Ron Mendonca.



**O**N THE BACK COVER:  
Green subcommittee members John Block and Kathy Suri finding trash that doesn't belong in a recycle bin. Photo by Ron Mendonca.

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### 3550 MAGAZINE

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## Live Nation Coming to Zidell Property

LIVE NATION PLANS A 10,000-SEAT OUTDOOR AMPHITHEATER concert venue for the Zidell property between Tillicum crossing and the Ross Island bridge, Jay Zidell announced at a May 6 presentation at Mirabella.

The concert promoter has a seven-year lease on the property with two two-year renewal options. Their target is to have 25 to 35 concerts each summer, starting in 2020.

Zidell also announced that they are converting their office building on the site south of the Ross Island to an art center and have leased space to nine arts-related tenants, including Portland Center Stage. One condition of each lease is to provide at least one free public event per year. ■

## Toppel Breaks National Swim Record

MIRABELLA RESIDENT MARGARET TOPPEL SET ONE NEW U.S. record while winning all six of the individual events she competed in at the U.S. masters national swim championships in Mesa, Ariz., April 25 to 28.

She also helped the Oregon team to two first place finishes, one second place and one third place finish in the four relay race events she entered.

Her new national record was in the 100-yard free-style event for women aged 70 to 74. The new record is one minute and 6.03 seconds. Her other individual races were the 100-yard backstroke, the 100-yard medley, the 50-yard free style, the 50-yard backstroke and the 50-yard butterfly stroke. ■

## Mirabella Stanches Leak

MIRABELLA'S ACTIVITY ROOM AND TWO THERAPY ROOMS WERE closed for a week starting on March 13 as workers dealt with the result of a leak that started at two in the morning.

The leak resulted from a "perfect storm," according to Executive Director Sharon McCartney. The air flow of an intake pipe on the seventh floor stopped and the pipe filled with water. Then a rubber piece in the pipe melted and blocked the pipe's drain; finally, the overflow tank that should have caught that water didn't work.

Two custodians found the leak at 2 a.m.; Michael Clayton, maintenance supervisor, and engineer Duc Tran came in right away to solve the problem. Working together, they were able to contain the leak in a couple of hours. "I was impressed at how quickly the team came together," Sharon said.

The water damaged ceiling tiles on the first floor, seven of which popped out and had to be replaced. Workers also had to tear out and replace damaged base boards while huge fans dried the affected areas.

Michael has put in an order for a detector that will sense running water and send an alert by phone. ■

## Water, (Cold) Water Everywhere

THE WATER EVENTS THAT PLAGUED MIRABELLA ON THE WEEKEND OF April 13-15 were all related, according to Maintenance Supervisor Michael Clayton.

First the pressure regulator on the 22nd floor, which serves floors 17-23, failed. That caused the pressure relief valve to pop and relieve the pressure, as it was supposed to do, creating a flood.

Finally, restarting the loop of water line that crosses the 23rd floor, descends to 17 and then goes up again raises the sediment in the line, causing brown water for residents who first turned on their taps.

Residents in single family homes experience the same thing when they flush out their system, Michael says. "It's not going to hurt you," he assures us.

It took a couple of days to get the part and fix the problem. "Just harder to do things on the weekend," Michael says.

Asked how Mirabella's complex system of plumbing is doing as it approaches the building's tenth birthday, Michael says, "We're where we're supposed to be." Plumbing problems, in buildings as well as people, are part of the aging process. ■

## RAMP Council Nominating Committee

IT'S ONLY JUNE, BUT THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE OF THE Residents' Association of Mirabella Portland (RAMP) is looking ahead to the September election of association officers for the next fiscal year and encourages your participation.

Bev Healy, RAMP's past president, is the non-voting chair of the nominating committee.

She said the committee will develop a slate of candidates for consideration and welcomes a conversation with any resident who may be interested in serving on the resident council.

"Just contact any member of the committee," she said.

The voting committee members are Steve Casey, Cliff Gray, Dee Poth, Joan Orner and Cornie Stevens. ■

## Tempe Paddling

**M**IRABELLA RESIDENT ED NOYES HELPED PADDLE THE PORTLAND Golden Dragons' team of men and women to a divisional first-place finish in the "Guts and Glory" dragon boat race in Tempe, Ariz., at the end of March, beating out four other teams.

Most of the races in the two-day event on Tempe Town Lake were 250-meter or 500-meter sprints. The "Guts and Glory" race on the final day was 1,750 meters.

The Portland Golden Dragons club, with about 200 members all aged 50 and older, entered two teams in the 16th annual Arizona Dragon Boat Festival — a women's team and a mixed team. Each boat has 20 paddlers plus a caller and a tiller.

Ed has joined Mirabella residents and seasoned paddlers Barbara Short, Anne Clark and Ed Parker in the year-round Golden Dragons practice sessions on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings.

Members can compete in different races. Ed Parker and Anne Clark raced in Venice, Italy, in 2016, in Oregon's Wallowa Lake in 2017 and Victoria, British Columbia, in 2018. They will compete with the Golden Dragons in the Victoria races again in August this year.

The Golden Dragons have a team in the Portland Rose Festival races every year, but no Mirabellans were on that team this year.

Mirabella residents are invited to come to the River Place Marina some morning for the exercise and camaraderie of an interesting group of seniors. Ask Barbara, Anne or one of the Eds for information. ■

## Ella 2

**S**OUTH WATERFRONT WILL SOON LOSE SOME FOOD CARTS AND gain a new apartment building. Construction of Ella 2 is set to begin soon, possibly this month. Ella developer Alamo Manhattan plans the building to be much like its current Ella apartment building at 3383 SW Bond Ave.

Pete Collins, director of South Waterfront Community Relations, reports that it will be a five-story wood framed 232-unit market-rate apartment building with underground parking. The plans call for a LEED certified building with 6,000 square feet of retail space. (LEED originally stood for Leadership and Environmental Design. It now stands alone as a standard for "green" construction.)

It will be located at 3838 SW Macadam Avenue on the southern half of the superblock between Gaines and

Abernathy streets and between Macadam and Moody avenues, west of where the Moody food carts were located. The northern half of the block abutting SW Gaines, where the Mirabella bus is parked when not in use, will remain undeveloped at this time. ■

## Mirabella Players Hit Home

**M**IRABELLA PLAYERS' JUNE 12 SHOW WILL FEATURE THREE short comic plays, including mild satire of Mirabella.

"Trolley," Polly Grose's play about an awkward threesome on the streetcar, features Rolf Glerum as a gentleman who may not be what he seems to be and Dot Lukins and Catherine Rudolf as two Mirabella residents.

In Nancy Moss's "Brave New World," a resident new to Mirabella gets inside tips from longtime residents Polly Grose, Ron Mendonca and Nancy Moss. Mikki Lipsey, an actual new resident, is on the receiving end of this helpful information.

Rounding out the evening is "Hair Today," a ten-minute play by Portland playwright Rich Rubin.

Rich's play, about a man's tonsorial change, features Norman Bengel, John Green, Don Marshall, Catherine Rudolf and Elaine Yudkin.

The show will begin at 7:30 p.m. in Willamette Hall. ■



Mikki Lipsey channels her inner Lady Macbeth for Ron Mendonca in Nancy Moss's play "Brave New World," part of the Mirabella Players' June production. Photo by Robert French.

## Bus Troubles Resolved

IT IS A GOOD THING THAT MIRABELLA HAS TWO BUSES. HAVING THE big bus out of service for a month was an inconvenience. But early detection of a problem that could have caused a major accident was fortunate.

Getting the bus repaired has been a long and frustrating adventure.

The problem started in March when a driver who was alone in the bus heard noises and felt vibrations. The bus was taken out of service immediately for safety reasons.

Transportation supervisor Rick Thompson says the problem was in the main axle that runs down the length of the bus. He says, "The spindles and gears broke."

Getting a replacement part was an ordeal. There was a problem getting the part because of the demand caused by a safety recall. The wrong part was shipped on the first attempt, Rick said. The right part had to be shipped by ground service from New York and was slow to arrive.

Rick managed to find solutions to most of the trips that needed a big bus.

For one of the Oregon Historical Society Hatfield lectures at the Schnitz, Rick borrowed the Holladay Park Plaza bus to have two small buses take Mirabella residents. The Mirabella travel club postponed their spring Columbia River Gorge trip to May 6, hoping the bus would be repaired by then. Other trips used a combination of the small bus and the town car.

The big bus was back at Mirabella and ready for use on April 25. ■

## Ed Weiner Reelected to Neighborhood Association Board

MIRABELLA RESIDENT ED WEINER WAS ELECTED TO A NEW two-year term on the seven-member board of the South Waterfront Community Association at the annual meeting of the association on April 18.

The association provides flower baskets, lighting, street garbage cans, doggie stations, a security patrol and other amenities for the neighborhood. It also funds South Waterfront Community Relations, which sponsors the neighborhood farmers' market, street fairs, events in the park, the dog park, the community garden and other events and services.

Association funds come from fees paid by owners of buildings and lots in the neighborhood. Mirabella is required to pay about \$50,000 per year to this neighborhood association to cover the costs of services and amenities. ■

## Two Volunteer Opportunities for Mirabella Residents

TWO RECENT STUDIES SHOWED THAT SENIORS WHO INVEST TIME IN the younger generation are happier and healthier. To that end, Mirabella residents can take advantage of two volunteer opportunities in our neighborhood.

Reading Buddies connects residents with first and second graders from nearby Cottonwood School. A school focus is community involvement. The children love to come to Mirabella.

Teachers, all of whom have master's degrees, accompany the children, but the interaction is with the residents. This school year 44 children spent 45 minutes once a month reading to the resident volunteers as well as interviewing them and keeping a journal of "their" senior's life experiences.

Two students per volunteer is best. More boys than girls take part in Reading Buddies, so ideally more men than women will volunteer. Contact Elaine Yudkin to get involved. Other activities with the Cottonwood students are possible if enough volunteers step up.

There are so many volunteer roles at Ronald McDonald House, a list would fill a page. Our new neighbors are looking for people who like to cook, like to do crafts and projects with children, can participate in fund-raising activities, and much more.

Our activities with the children give parents a needed break from the stress of family medical concerns. Bernard Brown is the Mirabella contact for Ronald McDonald House volunteering.

He suggests dropping by the facility, mentioning his name, finding out what's needed from volunteers currently, and obtaining an application. Visit their website at [www.rmhc.org](http://www.rmhc.org) to learn more about Ronald McDonald House, which is part of the new OHSU Rood Family Pavilion across Curry Street from Mirabella.

—Pam Lindholm-Levy

Please support your  
Mirabella Portland  
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## Bernard Brown Gift

**M**IRABELLA RESIDENT BERNARD BROWN HAS PAID IT FORWARD, sending others a benefit given him.

In 1955 Bernard and Selma's four-year-old daughter Shelley became very ill and was sent from Salem, where they lived, to Doernbecher Children's hospital in Portland.

During her four-month stay they saw her only during visiting hours, one hour a day three times a week. "Where's my Mommy?" they heard her cry. "Where's Daddy?"

Bernard worried about paying the bill. With his optometry practice just starting, he figured he would have to pay over time. He called the hospital to make arrangements and was told there would be no bill; her hospital stay would be paid for by donations from past patients at the hospital.

Bernard and his wife Selma, now deceased, agreed that they would make a large gift to the hospital.

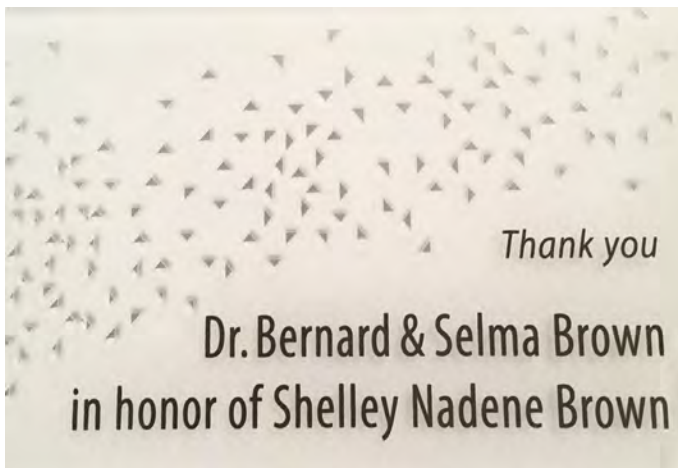
Fast forward to 1972. Bernard and Selma pledged and purchased an exam room on the second floor of the Doernbecher hospital. "Shelley Brown," the sign says on the door.

In 2016, Bernard saw from his Mirabella apartment a building going up. Going to inquire, he learned it was the Ronald McDonald house, part of the Rood Pavilion where families of children being treated at OHSU could stay.

"I got excited," Bernard says. After checking with all three of his children, he selected a room that he could see from his Mirabella apartment and made a generous donation, in honor of Shelley, to pay for it.

Bernard attended the ribbon cutting ceremony on April 12. Now, looking down, he can see the room (identified by the plaque below) where families will stay while their children are treated, knowing that they need not worry about the cost.

— Nancy Moss



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# Who To Blame For Outrageous Drug Prices?

by Steve Casey and Bruce Howard

**P**ROSECUTORS IN CRIMINAL CASES CALL IT THE “SODDI” DEFENSE: Some Other Dude Did It.

That’s the defense du jour against charges of price fixing and price gouging lodged against what we might call the American Drug Distribution Complex — manufacturers collectively known as Big Pharma on the one hand, and insurance companies, including their hired pharmacy benefit managers, or PBMs, on the other.

PBMs are powerful players, working as third-party drug plan administrators for insurance companies.

That our system of getting badly needed drugs into the hands of patients is a figurative national crime scene is beyond doubt.

The question is, who’s accountable?

Is it the Big Pharma chief executive officer (CEO) who pockets tens of millions a year in “compensation”?

Is it the manufacturing corporation itself, raking in billions in annual profits?

Is it the insurance company that makes its customers do a “step therapy” dance before allowing access to more expensive drugs prescribed by the customers’ doctors, and dictate what care and what drugs their customers can receive?

Is it the PBMs, operating in a world of opaque financials, pocketing rebates from drug makers, determining what drugs are included on a company formulary of covered medications and requiring co-pays that millions of patients cannot afford?

Let’s look at the evidence.

Americans pay far higher prices than anyone else in the world for the same drugs; in some cases, we pay double.

In a January hearing, the House Oversight and Reform Committee grilled CEOs of major drug makers about price increases on some widely used medications including those treating diabetes, high blood pressure and cancer.

The committee cited an American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) analysis which found that 94% of widely used, brand name drugs more than doubled in price between 2005 and 2017. Committee chair Elijah Cummings (D-Md.) said the Department of Health and Human Services found brand-name payments by Medicare Part D rose 62% between 2011 and 2015.

Evidence of the toll drug prices take on patients is everywhere, with insulin frequently cited.

Between 2002 and 2013, insulin tripled in price, according to the American Diabetes Association. U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) asked for a Justice Department investigation of suspected price fixing by drug makers Eli Lilly, Novo Nordisk and Sanofi.

One Lilly insulin product shot up 585% from 2001 to 2015.

Locally, the wholesale price of insulin from Sanofi to the OHSU pharmacies doubled in less than a year, in 2013-



CartoonStock.com

14, according to supervising pharmacist George Harvey.

Anecdotal evidence of diabetics having to ration their medications and imperil their health abound across the nation.

“Several factors are fueling the price hikes,” reports the website OnTrack Diabetes. The website referenced a 2015 New England Journal of Medicine report that insulin makers tweaked their product, sometimes adding improvements, to keep their patents alive.

“This practice, which the researchers call ‘evergreening,’ keeps pricey brands under patent protection so other drug makers can’t copy formulas and offer lower-cost versions,” the site reported.

What has happened with insulin prices has happened with countless other drugs, leaving many patients desperate.

“The prices are exorbitant,” pharmacist George Harvey told 3550. “I’ve been doing this a long time and I can’t believe what they’ve gone to.”



As examples, he used to purchase tetracycline for \$20 a bottle. It's now \$800.

Premarin was sold as a loss leader for \$9.95, and now it's hundreds of dollars. (Premarin is derived from pregnant mare urine, the major source of estrogens, which should not have become more difficult to obtain.)

AARP cites multiple horror stories of ordinary Americans being forced to, or over, the brink of bankruptcy or worsening health because of medication unaffordability.

So, who is to blame in all this? Here are three suspects in a lineup:

### **Defendant: Big Pharma**

First Defense: High prices are necessary to fuel research and development (R&D) leading to new and better medications.

This defense has been attacked on several fronts:

- The R&D excuse is over-stated,
- High prices mostly enrich executives,
- Much development is paid for by taxpayers, and
- Most drug profits come from acquisition rather than in-house development.

While it is true that research is extremely expensive and few drugs in development ever make it to market, Big Pharma CEOs admit their companies spend more on marketing than on R&D.

Also, more drug company profits go to enrich shareholders and executives than toward more drug development.

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*“Regardless of whether the employer is paying it, the government is paying for it or the individual is paying for it, at the end of the day all that money is coming from society.”*  
—John Arnold

---

In a February opinion piece in The New York Times, economists William Lazonick and Oner Tulum write: “Despite their claims, the big American drug companies have not been using profits from high prices to ramp up investment in drug development. Our research shows that for 2008 through 2017, 17 pharmaceutical companies in the S&P 500 distributed just over 100% of their combined profits to shareholders: \$300 billion as buybacks and \$290 billion as dividends. These distributions were 12% greater than what these companies spent on research and development.”

They said that enriched executives.

“With most of their compensation coming from exercising stock options and stock awards, senior executives benefit immensely,” they wrote, pegging an average compensation of top-paid drug executives at \$73 million.

“By jacking up product prices and distributing the increased profits to shareholders, executives lift stock prices and their take-home pay,” the economists wrote.

Critics say the R&D argument is specious anyway, as research gets a big boost from public money.

Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.) said at a hearing of the Senate Finance Committee that funding from the National Institutes of Health contributed to every one of the 210 new drugs getting Food and Drug Administration approval from 2010 through 2016, and taxpayers “feel they ought to be able to afford the medicine after they have helped develop it,” according to an AARP article by Dena Bunis.

That hearing was chaired by Republican Sen. Chuck Grassley of Iowa, who was instrumental in getting Medicare Part D, the drug benefit plan, through the Senate in 2003. The ranking Democrat on that committee is Oregon’s Sen. Ron Wyden.

Second defense: All this furor over list prices of drugs is misleading because with insurance and subsidies almost nobody pays sticker price.

John and Laura Arnold say that’s a bogus argument.

Billionaires who retired in their 30s (he was an Enron energy trader, later a hedge fund manager; she was a corporate attorney), they started the Laura and John Arnold Foundation, working in four areas: health care, criminal justice, public finance and education. Their Houston-based foundation has put more than \$119 million into health care issues.

In an NBC News interview, John Arnold told Anne Thompson that list price is highly relevant.

“Regardless of whether the employer is paying it, the government is paying for it or the individual is paying for it, at the end of the day all that money is coming from society,” he said.

“And 2019 is a big year because there are a lot of people who got elected on pharmaceutical pricing and this is the time they have to put up or shut up. They are on the clock.”

Third defense: If we didn’t have to give big rebates to the PBMs, we could lower drug prices.

But at the House Oversight and Reform Committee hearing in February, the seven testifying Big Pharma CEOs all refused to pledge that, if the rebates went away, they would, in fact, drop prices.

### **Defendant: Insurance companies**

Insurance companies have been accused of “colluding” with their hired or owned pharmacy benefit manager units to develop formularies favoring expensive, high-profit drugs and to impede the use of less profitable, cheaper drugs.

*(see Drug Prices p. 10)*

*(from Drug Prices p. 9)*

Drug makers charge that the discounts they give to insurance companies and their PBMs are not passed along to consumers.

"It is our belief that growing rebates and declining net prices should result in lower out-of-pocket costs for patients," drug manufacturer Sanofi told The Washington Post. "Unfortunately, under the current health care system, this is generally not the case."

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*"Left to their own devices, pharmaceutical companies are going to maximize profit."  
—Rep. Earl Blumenauer*

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Insurance companies say that is a deception.

"The whole middleman debate that big pharma continues to drive is nothing more than a distraction and finger-pointing to blame everybody about their high drug prices but themselves," a spokeswoman for America's Health Insurance Plans, a Washington trade group, told a news conference. "There is no visibility into how they set those prices or what causes them to go up."

#### **Defendant: Pharmacy Benefit Managers**

PBMs are getting harder to distinguish from the insurance companies that hire them, since they have been busy merging.

PBM firm Optum is now part of UnitedHealth Group; ExpressScripts (which has a Portland office) is part of Cigna; and CVS Caremark acquired Aetna (although in April a federal judge set out to reexamine that completed merger).

While drug makers point the finger at PBMs, their culpability is hard to assess given the opacity of their financials.

Here is how they see themselves, and how they are seen by outside experts.

"Pharmacy Benefit Managers administer prescription drug plans for more than 266 million Americans who have health insurance" including Medicare, private insurance, employer plans and others, according to the website for their trade group, the Pharmaceutical Care Management Association.

The site claims that PBMs "are projected to save employers, unions, government programs and consumers \$654 billion — up to 30 percent — on drug benefit costs over the next decade."

Well, maybe.

STAT, a health and science news website produced by the Boston Globe, says in an opinion piece by

philanthropist John Arnold, "As they currently operate, pharmacy benefit managers are part of the problem. But if incentives were realigned, pharmacy benefit managers could — and should — play more of a vital role in controlling runaway prices for prescription drugs."

PBMs should be fixed, not scrapped, he wrote: "Pharma would love nothing more than to see the PBM model implode, creating the opportunity to extract higher prices by negotiating against smaller, less sophisticated buyers."

#### **Is there a verdict?**

What is clear is that something must rein in the American Drug Distribution Complex.

"It's absolutely a broken market. We have a monopoly with no price regulation on it, and an industry that has co-opted the political process," John Arnold told Thompson in the NBC interview.

Noting that drug companies are pushing to extend patent protection from 20 to 38 years, thus freezing out generic competition, Laura Arnold said, "We want the patent system reformed and we want a regulatory structure that incentivizes breakthrough drugs, not prolonging a patent for the sake of maximizing profits."

Our congressman, Rep. Earl Blumenauer, whose district includes South Waterfront, pledges action.

"Drug prices are rising at an alarming rate, and we need to ensure medications are affordable and accessible," he told 3550 in a statement. "Left to their own devices, pharmaceutical companies are going to maximize profit. In Congress, we need to and will hold them accountable and provide access to quality, affordable medicine. I'm committed to ending the days of Americans skipping their medications because they can't afford them."

AARP has launched its "Stop Rx Greed" campaign, aimed at pressuring Congress and state legislatures to allow Medicare to negotiate prescription prices, encourage states to buy drugs in bulk, and give state attorneys general authority to bring legal action against drug makers for excessive price hikes.

"AARP believes it's unfair that we pay the highest prices in the world and that many older adults have to choose between filling their prescriptions and buying food," AARP says.

Several congressional committees in both the Democrat-led House and the GOP-led Senate have drug prices on their agendas, but in the lobbyist-loaded world of Washington it's tough to tell the good guys from the bad guys, and even tougher to enact effective solutions.

Perhaps the answer to the SODDI defense is "all the dudes did it."

The profiteers may all be pointing fingers at each other, but they reserve their middle fingers for their customers. ■

# How Have Drug Prices Risen Locally?

**A**T THE REQUEST OF 3550, GEORGE HARVEY, SUPERVISING pharmacist at OHSU's Center for Health and Healing, where many Mirabella residents get their prescriptions, selected a sample of drugs and tracked down their recent cost history.

For some on the list, there is a "historical note," which is George's observation based on his long service as a pharmacist.

In each case, "cost" is the actual acquisition cost to OHSU for the drug. What you pay depends on your insurance coverage.

Drug: Myrbetriq 50mg tablets, 90 tablets. Treats overactive bladder.

Cost in December 2016: \$890.19

Cost today: \$1,087.38

Drug: Humalog Kwikpen 100 units/ml: 15ml. Insulin, for diabetics.

Cost in December 2013: \$295.35

Cost today: \$500.27

Drug: Novolog Flexpen 100unit/ml 15ml. Insulin.

Cost in December 2013: \$295.53

Cost today: \$527.09

Drug: Novolog U-100 Insulin, 6 vials of 10ml. Insulin.

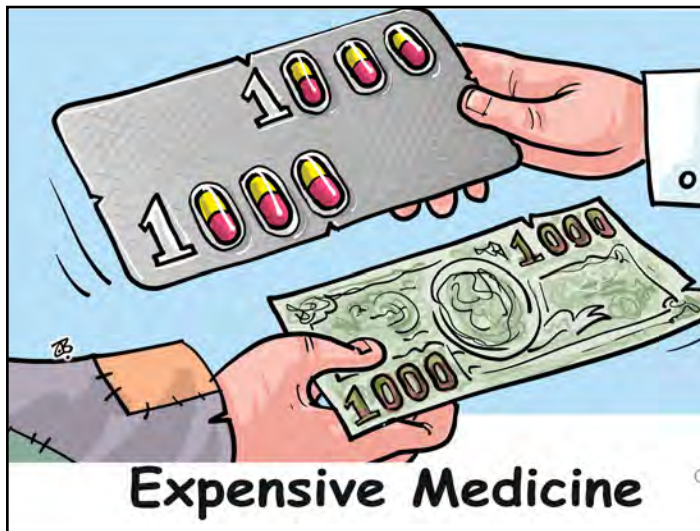
Cost in March 2016: \$1,420.20

Cost today: \$1,637.52

Drug: Vagifem 10mcg Vaginal tablets, 18 tablets. Female hormone estrogen.

Cost in July 2014: \$193.32

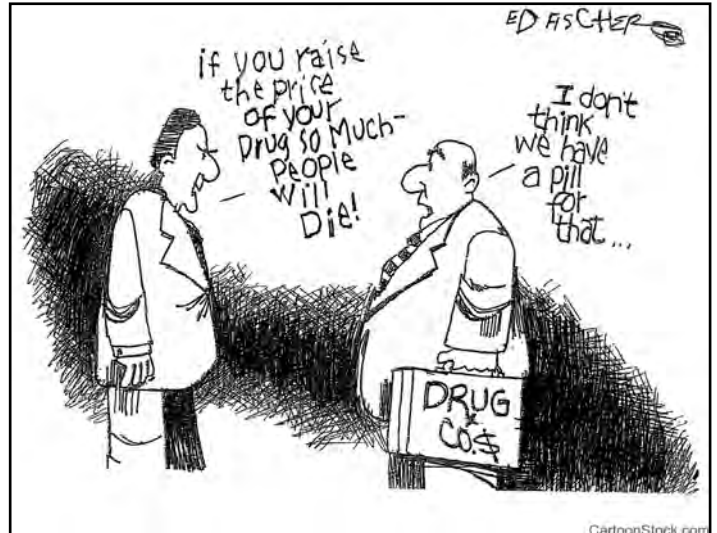
Cost today: \$361.11



Drug: Advair Diskus 500-50, 60 puffs. Bronchodilator, treats asthma and bronchitis.

Cost in July 2014: \$373.20

Cost today: \$488.67



Drug: Tetracycline 500mg: 40 capsules. An antibiotic.

Cost in October 2015: \$504.00

Cost today: \$847.02

*Historical note: For years, we could buy this drug for about \$10 for 100 capsules; it is not prescribed much, so only a few manufacturers produce it now and have raised the price astronomically.*

Drug: Secobarbital 100mg capsules, 100 capsules. A barbiturate used short-term for insomnia or anxiety.

Cost in May 2017: \$3,082.60

Cost today: \$3,359.29

*Historical note: This drug is used for death with dignity in Oregon. The drug used to cost under \$20.00 for 100 capsules; the federal government has put restrictions on the manufacturer, which has raised its prices significantly.*

Drug: Premarin 0.625 mg/gram Vaginal Cream: 30 grams. Vaginal lubricant delivering estrogens.

Cost in April 2015: \$240.78

Cost today: \$352.34

*Historical note: This drug was around \$40.00 per tube for years.*

Drug: Epipen 2-Pak 0.3mg/0.3ml: 2 syringes. Treats severe asthma attacks.

Cost in December 2014: \$349.19

Cost today: \$574.04 ■



Photo by Robert French

## Bill and Karen Early

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by Steve Casey

**I**N CHILE DURING A NAVY SUMMER TRAINING TOUR IN 1955, Bill Early had his first encounter with mind-crushing poverty and it changed his life.

Driving from Valparaiso to Santiago to play a basketball game, he saw what he describes as “very poor communities on hillsides, shelters made from scraps of wood and tin. I was shocked people had to live that way.”

Appalled, he determined to help alleviate global poverty.

An athlete and achiever — class president and student body president at Capuchino High School in San Bruno, Calif. — Bill was attending Stanford University on a Navy scholarship; with graduation and a commission came three years of active duty.

“I always intended to go to law school after the Navy,” Bill remembers. He turned down a scholarship to Yale law because he felt Harvard would better prepare him for the career he’d had his eye on since Chile: the U.S. Foreign Service.

## Resident Profile: Bill and Karen Early

Government service was not to be. Working overseas and boosting the lives of people around the world began with his graduation from Harvard law.

Through their travel and careers, and a lifetime of civic and philanthropic efforts, Bill and wife Karen for decades have made the world better.

“We’re so lucky to have what we have,” Karen told 3550, saying they want to share their good fortune, although “that sounds so Pollyannaish, so goody-two-shoes, and we’re not.”

Karen says she “was born in a dot on the map in the middle of Utah” to parents who divorced when she was six. Her mother remarried and Karen made the first of several moves that put her in a different school every year. Ultimately, at age 15, she was put on a train from New York to Meridian, Idaho, where her father, known as one of the best athletes ever to come out of Utah, was a high school coach in the town of 1,800. It was a culture shock.

Bill, born in Mexico, Mo., moved at age eight to Spokane and lived in Bellevue, Wash., and in the San Francisco area while growing up.

After a 12-year marriage to an Air Force pilot who died in Vietnam, Karen met the divorced Bill on Jan. 31, 1969. Karen had been raising her kids full time and, she remembers, “I was desperate to get out of the house.” When Bill asked her out, “I would have gone if he said he was Jack the Ripper. I was not staying home.”

On their third date, Bill asked Karen to marry him. Perhaps he was prompted by her daughter, Kathie, who pinched his arm and asked, “Are you going to marry my mommy?”

Their marriage brought a blended family of six children, three his and three hers, but all “ours.” Bill and Karen celebrated their 50th anniversary on May 24.

Bill is a lifelong sports fan and athlete who has run five marathons.

After law school, he joined the legal department of Weyerhaeuser, one of the world’s largest private owners of timberlands, working in the Seattle area.

He was transferred to Klamath Falls, then back to Seattle, handling the company’s investments in Indonesia, traveling often, mostly to Kalimantan, the Indonesian province on the island of Borneo.

One trip took him over the vast jungle in a DC-3. “We had been flying for hours and were running out of gas and didn’t know where we were,” Bill remembers. “I thought this was going to be it. Then the pilot found an air strip and got down just as the fuel ran out.”

After a business trip, Bill and Karen met in Hawaii on his way home.

“We decided after many mai tais that this was not what we had in mind,” Karen says.

Bill had been wooed by Klamath Falls company Jeld-Wen, a leading manufacturer of windows and doors, and back they went, Bill staying with the company more than 35 years, becoming senior vice president and the man behind the door part of the business.

But his traveling days were far from over.

After the Iron Curtain tumbled in the late 1980s, Jeld-Wen fired up operations in Latvia, hiring locals for the factory, paying them fairly, providing economic opportunities unimagined before. Then it was the same story in Poland, where the company ultimately had to build an employee parking lot for all the former bicycle riders who became car owners.

After Bill and Karen moved to Portland in 1992, Bill continued with Jeld-Wen in semi-retirement, and both Earlys dove into Portland civic life.

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*(see Early p. 14)*

*(from Early p. 13)*

They attended Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, where they met Ells Culver, a co-founder of the Portland-based international charity Mercy Corps, which has become their favorite cause. "We just liked what they were doing, and the idea of teaching people to help themselves," says Karen.



Longtime supporters Bill and Karen attend the October 2009 opening of Mercy Corps' global headquarters in Portland. Photo by Craig AIness for Mercy Corps.

They became active in the Portland Opera and the Oregon Symphony, with Bill serving several years on both boards.

Both have been involved with SMART — Start Making A Reader Today — a program pairing children with adult volunteers who read to and with them.

Bill thought of writing his own book about the beneficial effects of capitalism, but realized he needed something else to give his work impact. That took on new urgency in 1999 with the Seattle riots during the World Trade Organization conference there.

He told an interviewer later that "I saw youth fighting against globalization. A lot of people thought American companies were taking advantage of international workers, but I wanted to tell the positive

side of the story. It was that misunderstanding of markets and how they can lift people out of poverty that prompted the idea."

His concept was "Global Envision," a website now a part of Mercy Corps, promoting dialogue on globalization and a free market economy.

Life hasn't been all sunshine and rainbows, though.

Diagnosed with Alzheimer's shortly after moving to Mirabella, Bill has faced his disease with courage, grace and an undiminished upbeat personality. He now lives on the second floor and travels in a wheelchair, but he and Karen are usually together in his room or their 30th floor apartment, at meals, watching sports or enjoying spring-time weather in the South Waterfront.

Dark days also had hit the Early family in 2006, when Karen's oldest child, Steve, died during recovery from surgery. She and Bill were devastated.

But then something good happened. At a symphony event, they met musician and Pink Martini founder Thomas Lauderdale. Brassy, funny and caring, his uplifting spirit was exactly what they needed.

"I don't know what I would have done without his friendship," Karen says softly, as Bill nods in agreement.

"They are my best friends in the entire world," Thomas told 3550.

"I love my piano teacher, I love my parents, there are other people I love, but in terms of my best friends, it's Karen and Bill Early. I would do anything for them. Anything. They are such an anchor for me." ■



Karen, Thomas Lauderdale and Bill following a piano performance at Mirabella April 23. Photo by Robert French

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TENACITY AND OPTIMISM HAVE SERVED MICHAEL CLAYTON WELL during his journey from Hope, Ark., to Mirabella Portland.

For Michael, who's now Mirabella's maintenance supervisor, life has centered on taking care of his family and enjoying being in the woods or wherever there's a river, lake or ocean.

When Michael was born in 1967, his mother was just 17. His parents divorced when he was 2, and he grew up with his mom and younger brother, Jeff.

Michael's mom, Sandra, worked as a waitress at the Red River Café in Fulton, Ark., which Michael remembers fondly. "I remember as a kid, mom taking us to the café where she worked," he says. "Jeff and I would sleep on the floorboards of the 1967 Cadillac. Then she would drive us home and put us to bed."

Michael was fortunate to know both of his great-great-grandmothers and one of his great-great-grandfathers, called Tompee.

"My fondest memories are these: my brother and me sitting on Tompee's knees and he is playing the harmonica with one hand and tapping his fingers on the other hand to keep time," Michael says. "I can remember him taking me and my brother to pick cotton. He set me and my brother in a bucket and he would pick cotton and put it in a sack."

Every day, Michael worked.

"I got up at 6 and did chores, watered and fed the animals, cut grass and worked in the garden," he says. At noon, he could go hang out in the woods or go fishing. He got his first paid job when he was 12, earning \$1.75 an hour to wash dishes on the graveyard shift at the Huddle Restaurant in Broken Bow, Okla. His first paycheck of \$53 went to purchase a bike at Walmart.

Michael went to elementary school in Foreman, Ark. He and Jeff were first on the school bus and last off, so they got on at 5:30 a.m. and came home at 6 each evening. He liked grade school because "I like people."

High school was a different story. With his stepfather constantly moving the family around, Michael attended half a dozen high schools before graduating in Winona, Texas.

When Michael was 18, his stepfather beat up brother Jeff. Michael stepped in, decking stepdad. Michael and Jeff then left the family home and Michael moved in with his Uncle Charles, who he says "saved me. I was headed down the wrong path in school, not doing the work and getting in trouble. We would sit there every night and do homework."

Leaving home was not the only family drama. At the age of 21, Michael learned he had a younger brother, David, whom he had never met, never heard about. Born when

Sandra had no way to support him, David had been put up for adoption. Michael felt "hurt, betrayed and the biggest question was why?"

Michael developed an interest in his family tree, and using ancestry.com has tracked his forebears back 17 generations to England, finding one who was a Minuteman in the American Revolution.

After leaving home, he joined the Army and served eight years on active duty and two more in the reserves. He figures his worst assignment was "three summer months in Ft. Polk, La., with mosquitoes." Looking back, he wishes he had made a career of the Army: "I kicked myself in the rear for not staying in to retire."

## Staff Profile: Maintenance Supervisor Michael Clayton

One day in Alleene, Ark., Michael and some friends were hanging out on the river in Patterson Shoals. He noticed Renee Settle, whose family had moved to Arkansas from far-away Coos Bay, Ore. He thought, "Hmmm — this is somebody I need to know." They married in 1994.

After their wedding, Renee worked in a restaurant and Michael did welding on a farm. Then he drove log trucks for four years, but every 3 a.m. brought the start of a new 16-hour shift, and "I wanted to know my daughter." So they decided to go back to the state where Renee had grown up and the family moved to Portland in 2001. He and Renee now have two adult daughters, both working in Portland.

"The drive to Oregon was tough," he recalls. "I consider myself a rubber-necker and my neck got so bad from looking around at new things on the trip. I'm a flat-lander. I saw things I had never seen, particularly the desert, mountains and the ocean. In the desert, the dust devils were just amazing."

Portland was also a new experience. On his first July 4th in the city, friends took him to see Portland's fireworks and it was "culture shock big time. I was about to panic, jammed into the MAX and so close to so many people."

Michael arrived with no job, and "being pig-headed as I am, I decided I would draw unemployment checks for

*(see Clayton p. 18)*



Photo by Ron Mendonca



**Michael Clayton**

*(from Clayton p. 16)*

the first time after paying in all those years. It didn't work for me — I drew two checks and went to work," first in apartment maintenance and later at Terwilliger Plaza. At Terwilliger, he worked up to maintenance supervisor and



Michael with Ricky the Raccoon circa 1987

around me and all I hear is the ocean and it's relaxing. But never turn your back on the ocean."

A serial pet owner, at one point he fed an orphaned raccoon, Ricky, with a baby bottle and Ricky grew into a 16-pound adult who would walk on a leash and ride on Michael's shoulder in the truck. Ricky was eventually retired to a petting zoo and Michael now has a Siberian Husky named Nolan.

Michael likes being at Mirabella. "I think I have earned the respect of the staff and the residents. I enjoy the residents who live here. I don't guess I've met anybody who is mean. I've been treated nicely from Day One." ■



Michael at age 2.

found "I loved working with senior living." In February, 2018, he came to Mirabella.

While his workday ends early in the afternoon, Michael has impressed Mirabella's emergency preparedness crew by becoming a certified emergency responder, acquiring an amateur (ham) radio operator's license, coming back to join evening meetings, and helping any way he can.

And he is as busy away from Mirabella as he is at work.

"I go home at night and cook dinner for my wife," he says. "I get home at 2:30 and she gets home at 6, she makes more than I do and I love to cook. I cook Southern food like fried okra, corn bread, hush puppies, soups, pot roast, any kind of fish and chili."

When he isn't making dinner, he likes to be outdoors. Sometimes he pans for gold the old-fashioned way in southern Oregon. In the past two years he has found "not enough gold to pay for the gas — maybe two ounces." He still loves to fish and to hunt elk and deer.

He fishes at the shore "where the breakers are." He says one of the best things about fishing is that "nobody's



# City Club Recommends New City Charter

by Ed Parker

PORTLAND IS THE ONLY U.S. CITY WITH A POPULATION LARGER than 100,00 with a city government that does not separate the legislative branch of government from the executive branch. Elected city council members, called commissioners, are also the executive managers of city bureaus.

According to a 2019 City Club of Portland report, one reason Portland is the only major city left with this form of government is that it has not been challenged in federal court under the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Another reason is that Portland city council members are elected because they represent voters in setting policy. They are not elected because of their executive management skills.

Portland's commission style of government requires at-large elections instead of elections by district. That is so that commissioners would not use the bureaus they manage to the advantage of voters in their districts at the expense of voters in other districts.

The City Club report cites a U.S. Supreme Court decision that says at-large voting systems "tend to minimize the voting strength of minority groups by permitting the political majority to elect all representatives." Consequently, the system disadvantages minorities.

Legal challenges under the Voting Rights Act have been successful in getting other cities to abandon at-large voting in favor of district voting, which meant the end of commission forms of city government.

Portland's charter requires that a charter review commission be established not later than 2021 to consider alternatives to the present form of government. It could be sooner.

The City Club report was approved by 93% of its members, with 6% voting no and 1% abstaining. The report recommends three major changes.

First is to switch to a modified city manager system in which elected city council members perform a legislative function to set policies and approve budgets. A professional city manager would oversee the executive function of implementing those policies and budgets.

The second recommendation is to increase the size of the city council.

The third is to elect council members by district "preferably with multiple members per district."

Since the current form of Portland's city government was adopted in 1913, eight attempts to change it have been rejected by Portland voters, most recently in 2007. The

2007 proposal was for a "strong mayor" system with the mayor acting as chief executive officer while the council served as the legislative branch.

The 2019 City Club report calls for executive authority to be centralized in the office of the mayor who would chair the council. That is like the rejected 2007 proposal. However, in the 2019 version, executive authority would be delegated in large part to a professional city manager.

The report also calls for the city council to be increased to at least eight commissioners plus the mayor.

The City Club, established in 1916, is a nonpartisan nonprofit membership organization that researches and debates policy issues affecting the city of Portland. Its Friday lunch time forums are broadcast on radio or cable television. Non-members are welcome to attend.

The 11-member research committee recommended further study of alternate voting methods. The committee said the current system of voting "has been shown (in theory, in practice, and in the courts) to systematically underrepresent many communities."

Underrepresented communities include "everyone who does not live in SW Portland (but particularly those living east of 82nd Avenue), people of color, women, ethnic minorities, young people, renters, and others."

The committee recommended that, whether or not Portland scraps the commission form of government, "Portland should institute some system of preferential voting

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*If Portland was legally challenged under the Voting Rights Act of 1965 it might need to change its form of government to protect minority rights.*

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to elect our city leaders, including the mayor, in one election in the fall, when voters are most engaged."

The next step toward changing Portland's system of government is the appointment of a 20-member charter review commission. Each of the five city council members appoints four members.

If a supermajority of 15 or more members agree, their proposal would go directly to Portland voters. If fewer than 15 members agree, the city council can accept, reject, or modify any recommendations.

With a 2021 deadline fast approaching, it will be interesting to see how the process plays out over the next two years. ■

# Exercise for Brain Health

by Bryant Symkowiak

**W**ORRIED ABOUT ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE OR OTHER FORMS of dementia? While there is no cure, effective treatment may be solely in the control of each of us.

Research studies over the years repeatedly have shown a link between regular aerobic exercise and brain health, making vigorous exercise one more weapon in the fight against Alzheimer's and other dementias, staving off symptoms for years or slowing the disease's progression.

At Mirabella, the anti-Alzheimer's war room is the Wellness Center, aka your gym.

A strong heart helps protect against dementia, and fellow residents have asked Dr. Paul Johnson, a retired cardiologist, about the best way to fight off Alzheimer's.

"The link between aerobic exercise and holding off Alzheimer's is astonishing," Paul told 3550. "It's not a pill, and a pill is years away. It's something each individual can do and it's the best treatment we've got."

We'll get to why that is so in a moment. First, a little perspective on the pervasive problem:

Worldwide, an estimated 44 million people suffer from Alzheimer's disease.

The Alzheimer's Association — the largest nonprofit funder of Alzheimer's research — reports there are 5.4 million Americans living with that disease, and its website flatly states, "By 2050, this number is expected to rise to nearly 14 million."

One in 10 people age 65 and older have Alzheimer's dementia and 60% of Americans with Alzheimer's are women.

This disease is a massive financial burden — on individuals, families, and the economy — costing \$148-billion overall, including \$94-billion on direct health care services. That's just the money part; dementia also leaves shattered lives, exhausted caregivers, anguished families and a strained health care system.

What do we do?

We devise a medical strategy to treat and slow the progression of this disease. One of the tactics in that strategy should be regular aerobic exercise.

Developing an appropriate exercise routine and maintaining it is an important strategy that studies show can help slow the progression of Alzheimer's disease by as much as 50%, or a five-year delay of symptoms.

Aerobic exercise has the most profound effects on the area of the brain that control executive functions (the ability

to organize, plan and carry out a set of tasks in an efficient manner) in adults aged 55 to 80.

The studies are not unanimous, but the positive link between regular aerobic exercise (walking, running, pumping an elliptical machine) and the absence or slowing of dementia has been seen time and again.



While there is near-universal agreement that lifelong exercise staves off or reduces the progression of dementia, the jury is still out on whether already-diagnosed dementia patients benefit from such an exercise program.

"As a whole, the clinical evidence suggests exercise may provide a minor cognitive benefit to dementia patients, but that conclusion is still uncertain," according to author Nick McKeehan in a June 2018 article in *Cognitive Vitality*, an online publication of the Alzheimer's Drug Discovery Foundation.

"There is, however, strong evidence that lifelong exercise can lower your future risk for Alzheimer's disease," McKeehan writes.

"In fact, a recent review that combined epidemiology studies ranging in length from 3.9 to 31 years and including 23,345 people showed that exercise can reduce your Alzheimer's disease risk by up to 35%" he writes. "Another recent study reported that middle-aged women who were more physically fit were up to 88% less likely to develop dementia."

Studies have shown significant improvement in psychomotor speed and information processing in subjects starting

and sticking with a vigorous aerobic exercise regimen, as well as notable reductions in circulating vascular risk factors — diabetes, stroke, hypertension, coronary artery disease — associated with a decline in cognition.

How can exercise possibly help?

There are various medical explanations, but for the non-scientists among us the takeaway is this: Studies show that exercise improves cardiovascular and metabolic health, both important to the brain, and that exercise may reduce inflammation and cholesterol, and promote generation of new neurons.

The Harvard Medical School reported last year that a study it conducted on mice shows that while the “hostile inflammatory environment” in the Alzheimer’s brain can block cognitive benefits of new neurons, physical exercise can “clean up” that environment, allowing new nerve cells to survive.

The Journal of the American Geriatrics Society reviewed 19 studies on the effects of exercise on cognitive function, encompassing 1,145 older adults, most of whom were in their mid-to late 70s. (They would be known as “kids” at Mirabella.)

Those who did aerobic exercise alone experienced three times the cognitive improvement of those who participated in both aerobic and strength exercises, while those in the no-exercise control group faced cognitive declines.

This means, counter-intuitively, that while strength exercises do convey many benefits, those benefits may — studies say — come at the expense of some of the cognitive benefits brought by the aerobic workout.

A separate 10-year study reported in 2016 demonstrates that the beneficial effect of regular physical exercise in protecting against dementia is strongest in people aged 75 and up, because low physical activity is associated with a higher risk of dementia in older people.

If all this sounds like it was tailor made for Mirabella, perhaps it was.

“The availability of exercise equipment and expert help to set up your exercise program are extremely important,” says Dr. Johnson, noting that both are here at Mirabella.

The evidence from decades of scientific studies is there. The equipment and expertise are waiting in the first-floor gym.

All that’s needed now is you and your determination. ■



“I always need motivation to exercise. Like being chased by the cops.”



Rose has been growing her garden for over thirty years. The best part of my day is hearing all of Rose’s memories rooted in her backyard. The slam of the garden gate reminds her of her kids running home from school. As a Home Instead CAREGiver, I can help Rose keep hearing that gate slam shut, because that is home.

*Gloria L.*

— Gloria L.  
Rose’s CAREGiver

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# Balcony Gardening Tips

by Yvonne Branchflower

**M**OVING TO MIRABELLA DOESN'T MEAN YOU HAVE TO GIVE up gardening. Some Mirabella residents have a plot in the nearby community garden. Others have created balcony gardens.

Here are some tips for present and future balcony gardeners.

June is the perfect month to top-dress the soil for your balcony plants. After a year or two, the nutrients are depleted and salts may have built up. Your plants may no longer be growing and blooming with abandon.

It should not be necessary to repot them. Instead, just remove the top 1 to 3 inches of potting soil, depending on the size of the pot, and replace it with fresh moist potting

The Gaines' patio wraps around the corner of the tower, giving them exposure to the east as well as the north. The apple blossom (*Clematis armandii*) is on the north side, while an exquisite camellia is on the east. A variety of evergreens and annuals give them year-around color and texture.

A ground tour of Mirabella's balconies in early March revealed how little we garden in the winter. There were some exceptions: It was rewarding to identify those plants which managed to look good all through the storms and freezes, such as camellias, star jasmine, New Zealand flax, boxwood and pines.

Some of these plants bloom very early, offering a bevy of flowers just when your heart is aching for them. Daffodils



Apple blossom (*Clematis armandii*)

soil. Double bag and tightly tie off the old soil and send it down the trash chute.

Feeding keeps your plants lovely through a longer season. Slow-release plant food is always good, as are the organics that need to be applied a little more religiously. Follow the directions on your plant food container.

By the third year, you may want to consider replacing all of the potting soil.

Barbara and Michael Gaines enjoy their large patio on the third floor. To keep their garden looking good, every March they prune, feed and top-dress. Two more feedings later in the year complete their schedule.



Camellia

were present on a few balconies, being their relentlessly cheerful selves on cold and cloudy March days.

If you ever loved playing in the dirt, now is a great time to do it. But don't water the balconies below while you are watering your garden. ■



# Land and Seascapes:

photography and text by Bob Cronk

Photo previous page: Beach sunset — A summer sunset in Lincoln City, Oregon.

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Fireworks on the river — The Fourth of July is quite the spectacle when you live in South Waterfront. This image was taken from the top of the Mirabella.

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I HAVE LIVED IN THE SOUTH WATERFRONT SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 2006. This neighborhood has become the foundation and inspiration for my photography. After entering two photos in the South Waterfront Art Show in 2009, I started pursuing photography seriously as a hobby. My primary subject matter is landscapes although I am always looking for ways to expand and explore beyond my comfort zone. Much of my material is from various road trips around Oregon and the western United States. Many of my favorite photos were taken while traveling in an RV. Photographing places and events off the beaten path is something I am always in search of. I am often trying to get a different perspective that hasn't been photographed before. Through the use of a drone, I am able to take to the air and see things from a unique angle (see Drone cherry blossoms). Lately, I have tried to create more "mood" in some my pictures by adjusting light and color to create a more dramatic feeling (see Witches). ■



Explorers — This is the view at the top of the giant sand dune in Cape Kiwanda at the Oregon Coast. The view is other-worldly and makes it worth the climb.

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St John's bridge — An iconic piece of architecture finished in 1931. I have photographed every angle of this bridge over the years.

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[Editor's Note: An accomplished photographer, Bob Cronk is a prior contributor to 3550 Magazine. A South Waterfront neighbor, Bob is married to former Mirabella marketing representative Phuong Hart.]



Elephant — **Da Tung and Xi'an Bao Bao** (“Universal Peace and Baby Elephant”), donated to the city of Portland in 2002. I used a tilt-shift effect to make the elephant stand out against the background.

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Zidell — This is an image of the last barge that Zidell built in South Waterfront before closing.

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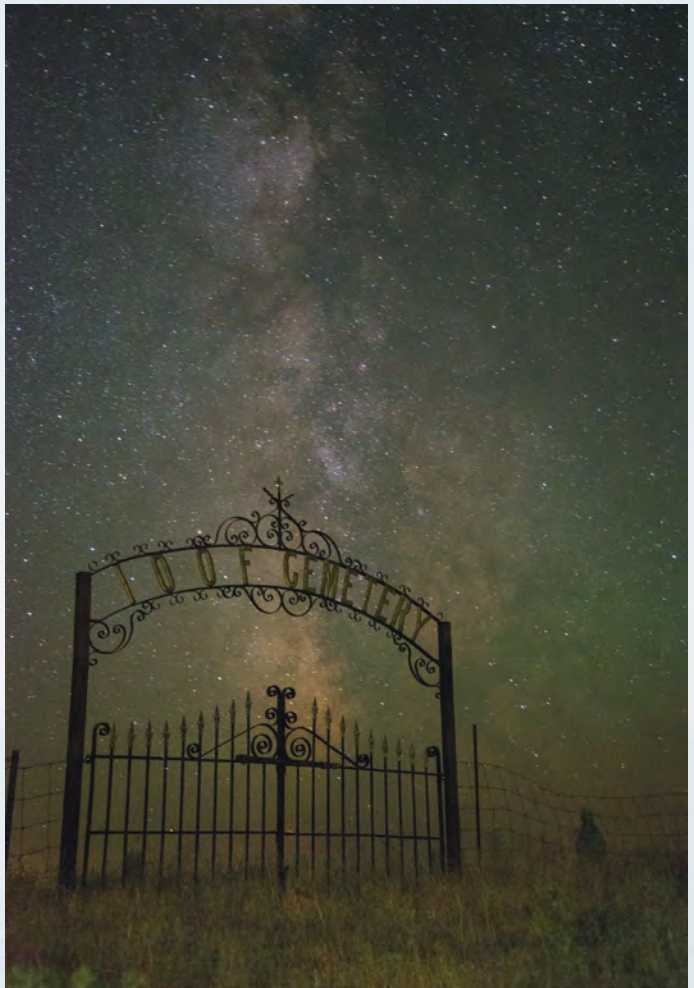
Witches — taken in 2018, this was the annual Portland Stand Up Paddleboard Witch Paddle where dozens of witches took to paddleboards on the Willamette.

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Beach access — Photographed in Neskowin. One of my favorite photos, it is a combination of three images to balance the light and color.

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Cemetery — By far the scariest photoshoot I have ever been on! This was at an old cemetery in Grass Valley, Oregon.

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Drone cherry blossoms — Everyone has a camera in their pocket these days. I use a drone to get perspectives that stand out. The Steel Bridge is in the background.

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# Portrait of a 2nd Grade Pen Pal

by Priscilla Cowell

EMILY, MY NEW PEN PAL, IS EIGHT. I AM 78. THIS AGE DISPARITY could be a barrier to communication. But Emily is a stand-out in penpalmanship: she treats me as an equal.

Our communication began with Emily's first letter from her second-grade classroom in Ridgefield, Wash., with one sheet of wide-lined primary school paper, a crayon drawing of a blonde little girl, and an array of questions that revealed her wide curiosity.

She began with an arts question "What is your favorite color?" "Peach," I replied in my first letter. Hers is pink, so we're in the same palette. We're off to a great start.

Each monthly letter contained new areas of interest. Physical culture was next. "What's your favorite activity?" Hers is gymnastics. I wanted to reply that mine was "napping" but gamely wrote "pool volleyball." She nudged me by pointing out that gymnastics is hard, with the bridge kickover being the hardest, and she needs to practice a lot. She gave me a maxim to practice by: "Team work is dream work." I passed that on to the other pool volleyball players.

Geography was no challenge to Emily. When I named the six countries I had lived in and asked if she could find them on a map she replied, "Yes, they are on the map."

A popular media question was next. "What's your favorite TV program?" She likes to watch "Friends" with her two older sisters. I admitted that Mr. Rogers was my all-time favorite TV star.

Literature had its query, too. She likes to get books for Christmas and she reads chapter books. What is your favorite book?, she asked. Hers is "The Day the Crayon

Came Home." Mine, I wrote, is "Kim," which is about a journey, too.

Theology also interests her. Do I go to church or to synagogue? To church, I waffled, sometimes.

Creative writing appears to be a newish interest for Emily. She sent me a nine-page story "The Two Little Mermaids," illustrated by her friend Audrey. I'm not sure I understood it all, but luckily everyone lived happily after. In "About the Authors," they let me know that they love to write stories and have been writing for about a week now.



Emily writes to Priscilla. Photo by Ron Mendonca.

Emily already embraces the concept of the support group. When she sent me her photo I wrote back that she was very pretty. She asked for my photo and replied that I was pretty too. That's a real girlfriend.

The pen pals in Mirabella plan to visit their pen pals in Emily's classroom before the end of the school year, each of us bringing a gift book our pal has chosen. I hope Emily chooses "Little Women." When she's ready for it I think she may recognize herself in the curious mind and broad interests of the sister named Jo. That would please me a lot.

Note: If you would like to be a pen pal, please talk to Mirabella resident Jill Seager. Jill and Lew's daughter, Ellen Ferrin, is Emily's teacher. She facilitates the pen pal program from her second-grade classroom. ■

"Life is good."

Okay, but what does that even mean?

Does it mean you are "happy"?

The 2019 World Happiness Report, an annual assessment run in part by the United Nations, is a poll of how happy people in 156 countries perceive themselves to be.



The poll suggests that while money can help, it does not always buy happiness.

(Really — they needed a poll for that?)

Produced in the breezy, laugh-a-minute style of academic writing, the 136-page report and its predecessors can be found online at <https://worldhappiness.report>.

Happiness comes in many flavors; it's like the Baskin Robbins of emotions.

What makes people happy at Mirabella?

So, we asked some residents and a couple of staff members "What's the best thing that's happened to you recently?"

Here are some of the answers:

**Michael Gaines:** Sunshine.

**John Green:** Being invited to Vespers services at the Lutheran church.

**Julie Green:** My ability to remain active and to walk my daughter's dogs.

**Ron Mendonca:** Getting back to Mirabella after a two-hour drive from Beaverton.

**Ann Morris:** Finding my lost earring that brought a flood of memories — and having a knee that works without drugs.

**Priscilla and Nick Cowell:** Our son wrote a 200-page book on philosophy and Nick read every word and questioned his son.

Priscilla and Nick offered another: Having a grandchild accepted with scholarships to two great schools.

**Mikki Lipsey:** Two lovely days with friends and riding the streetcar.

**Larry Levy:** Living here.

**Pam Levy:** Petting a kitten.

**Frances Page:** Dinner with our new great-grandson who is 3 months old and very healthy.

**Lefty Page:** Getting home after being in snow.

**Joan Smith:** I lost three pounds by being away from Mirabella.

**Ed Noyes:** Three minutes and 40 seconds of hard paddling.

**Carol Domenico:** Talking with friends at the breakfast table.

**Jane Wachsler:** A positive experience at DMV in Lake Oswego.

**Joyce Roe:** Not having to answer this question now.

**Adam Hampton:** Listening to everyone else answer your question.

**Rusty Davis:** Driving around in my Tesla, as fast as I can go.

**Andrew Gleason:** Making fun of my wife's cat in front of her.

**Linda McCaw:** Being able to swim every day.

So next time you want to engage with a neighbor, how about asking: "What is the best thing that has happened to you?"

Starting a conversation on that joyful note will bring a more engaged response than the standard "fine."

And might even tell why, for that person, life is good. ■



"Memory loss has certainly made wife-swapping a lot easier hasn't it Jack. Walter. Whatever your name is."

# Mirabella Goes Green

by Nancy Moss

**M**EMBERS OF THE BUILDING AND GROUNDS GREEN SUBCOMMITTEE spread a tarp on the Terrace floor, upend a blue recycling bin onto it and begin separating the contents. A greasy fast-food container, an unrinsed catsup bottle, a plastic drinking glass, wadded-up plastic bags — all trash that contaminates recycling material — go to one side. On the other side, items that follow the rules and can be passed on to the recycling center.

The Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, which runs the Master Recycling Program, has tapped Mirabella residents Kathy Suri and John Block, green subcommittee co-chairs, for membership.

John Block says that he does the work “to reduce the cost to Mirabella,” since waste that goes into landfill costs more than recycled material. Even a small amount of contamination will result in a whole load being charged as trash.

---

*Put Oregon refundable bottles and cans into the new separate container in your trash room. Refunds support the employee scholarship fund.*

---

The green subcommittee will also save Mirabella money by taking over the recycling of refundable beverage containers: glass, plastic bottles and aluminum cans. Consumers pay ten cents when they purchase these items; Mirabella can return them to drop centers like Safeway and Fred Meyer to collect the refund.

Holladay Park Plaza donates about \$2,000 a year to their foundation by managing its beverage containers, according to Kathy. Mirabella bottle and can refunds are now donated to the Mirabella Portland Foundation’s employee scholarship fund.

The greatest source of contamination in recycling centers is “sharpies and wet diapers,” Kathy says. Sharp objects like needles used for injections should be put into medical waste containers for proper disposal.

Acting Home Care manager Stephanie Cook has informed Matt Preston of Home Instead of the proper disposal of used briefs.

Since China has stopped taking America’s trash as of January 2018, cities across America have cut back or eliminated recycling programs. With the price of oil low, it is now cheaper to make a plastic bottle from raw petroleum than from recycled materials.

Both Portland and Oregon, however, are committed to making recycling work and are passing on increased costs to trash pick-up programs. Costs passed on to recycling companies most likely will find their way to consumers.

John Hart, corporate director of facility services, says that Mirabella was “ahead of the curve” and locked into a three-year-contract where its recycling company, Waste Management, could not raise its rates.

He adds that since the green subcommittee went into action last year, Mirabella has had no contamination fees.

Excessive volume is another cause of extra fees. A Waste Management camera in their truck can detect too-bulky loads. John Hart says that in the three months prior to the green subcommittee’s management of recycling, the average monthly charge was \$140; since its involvement, the average monthly fee has been \$91.

Residents can help keep that figure low by breaking down their cardboard boxes. For residents afraid of injuring themselves in the process, John Hart has a cutter specially designed for boxes which he can show interested residents and which they can purchase.

In addition to residents, staff needs to learn to follow rules for recycling. “We are 95% of where we want to be,” John Hart says of training staff. Home aides can help residents dispose of their medical waste. Wet waste like incontinent briefs that are not sealed in plastic bags can result in a bad-smelling trash chute.

Decisions regarding sustainability can be tricky. For instance, John Block points out that the new clamshells for Bistro take-out, regarded as a step ahead because they are compostable, generate methane gas when they decompose in a landfill. Methane is a major contributor to global warming. The Bistro’s experiment with reusable plastic containers may be an answer.

“How can I make my footprint smaller?” Kathy asks. Reduce, reuse, repurpose, recycle.

John Hart, who has Greenpeace tattooed on the inside of one wrist, says that “I will be bringing my passion” of sustainability across PRS as he moves into his enlarged area of corporate responsibility.

The green subcommittee’s goal, according to Kathy, is to “get people to recycle properly.” Whether a resident’s goal is to save money or to rescue the earth, extra time spent rinsing that catsup bottle or properly packaging medical waste can pay off in the future. ■

# Internet History

by Ed Parker

IF YOU BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU SEE IN THE NEWS MEDIA, YOU MAY think you know that 2019 is the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Internet.

What really happened in 1989 was that a young English researcher working in Switzerland, Tim Berners-Lee, introduced Internet software for what we know as the World Wide Web. That is what the WWW in Internet addresses stands for.

The World Wide Web permitted software that we now call Web browsers (such as Microsoft's Internet Explorer or Google's Chrome) to access databases of information anywhere on the Internet.

Like all successes, the Internet has many fathers. The origins go back further than the World Wide Web.

Before the Internet became publicly available it was an academic research network. Before that, it was called Arpanet, and was funded by the Advanced Research Project Agency of the Department of Defense.

More than 50 years ago, in May 1968, I gave a talk in a Stanford University public lecture series called Toward Century 21.

My assigned topic was to describe what communication media would be like in the next century. The Stanford Daily news account of that talk is reprinted on this page.

I understood that the cost of information technology would continue to decline indefinitely. That is because the value of communication media is in the information content, not the physical media used to transport it. The ongoing computer revolution would keep lowering the costs of storing and transmitting information.

I was not making abstract predictions. I was describing my research on computer information storage and retrieval, financed by the National Science Foundation.

Personal computers were more than a decade in the future. I had a home computer terminal. It was a large teletypewriter of the type then used by Associated Press to distribute news to newspapers at speeds much slower than people could read.

My research lab had only one visual display screen because the cheapest available at the time cost \$50,000. Computer storage was so expensive I had to work with very small databases until costs came down.

The first database my team created was developed for physicists. It became the first North American WWW page on the global Internet. ■

The Stanford Daily, Volume 153, Issue 60, 10 May 1968

## *Library, Newspaper Combined*

# 'The Daily Computer' Likely

By BARBARA HYLAND

Professor Edwin B. Parker of the communication department foresees a future information system which will use computers as both libraries and a newspaper. This will be one product of the communication revolution which our society is undergoing.

"The New Communication Media" was the topic of the speech made by Parker in Tresidder to a small audience. It was part of the Century 21 lecture series.

The computer of the near future will look like a "cross between a television set and a typewriter," according to Parker. Control will come from the receiver not the sender, which is a "drastic change." Parker said that "the world's store of information will be at everyone's finger tips."

In its role as a "combination of newspaper and library," this medium will replace a library card catalog. One will be able to

type queries and the computer will answer. The information of an encyclopedia will be stored in it for handy reference.

A display screen will supplant newspapers. At breakfast the headlines will be as current as possible since, unlike in a newspaper they can be changed seconds before the public sees them.

If the viewer wants more data on a particular story, background material can be transmitted since it is all stored in the computer. This could include biographies on people in the news or even the cartoons of the previous week.

Publishers who turn to this media will bypass the fantastic production and distribution expenses of newspapers. The daily information the computer will transmit will be like a newspaper "25 times the size of the Sunday Times," Parker says. The reader can choose what he is interested in.

The social implications of the communication revolution are "more far reaching than those of the Industrial Revolution," Parker says. Society will be "giving the public the information they want and not what some authority thinks they should have." Parker thinks that the new system will be more democratic.

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# Streets of South Waterfront: Walking through History

by Edward Weiner

**W**ALKING AROUND OUR NEIGHBORHOOD, WE CAN wonder about the origin of street names. Eight of South Waterfront's streets are named after prominent Oregonians from the early history of our state — the 50-year period from 1845 to 1895.

The history in a nutshell: A territorial government, comprising executive, legislative and judicial branches, was established in 1848 to replace the provisional government of 1843. Oregon became the 33rd state on February 14, 1859.

Let's begin a walk at the OHSU tram at the corner of Bond Avenue and Gibbs Street, and walk south on Bond Avenue.

Addison Crandall Gibbs served as Oregon's second governor from September 10, 1862, to September 12, 1866, during the American civil war. Gov. Gibbs was perfectly clear in his inaugural address — he supported the union and would keep Oregon in it. Gov. Gibbs used his political power to quash secessionist movements.

Stroll one block south to Whitaker Street, where the Center for Health and Healing's two buildings are connected by a sky bridge. John Whitaker was Oregon's first governor following admission to the union, preceding Gibbs.

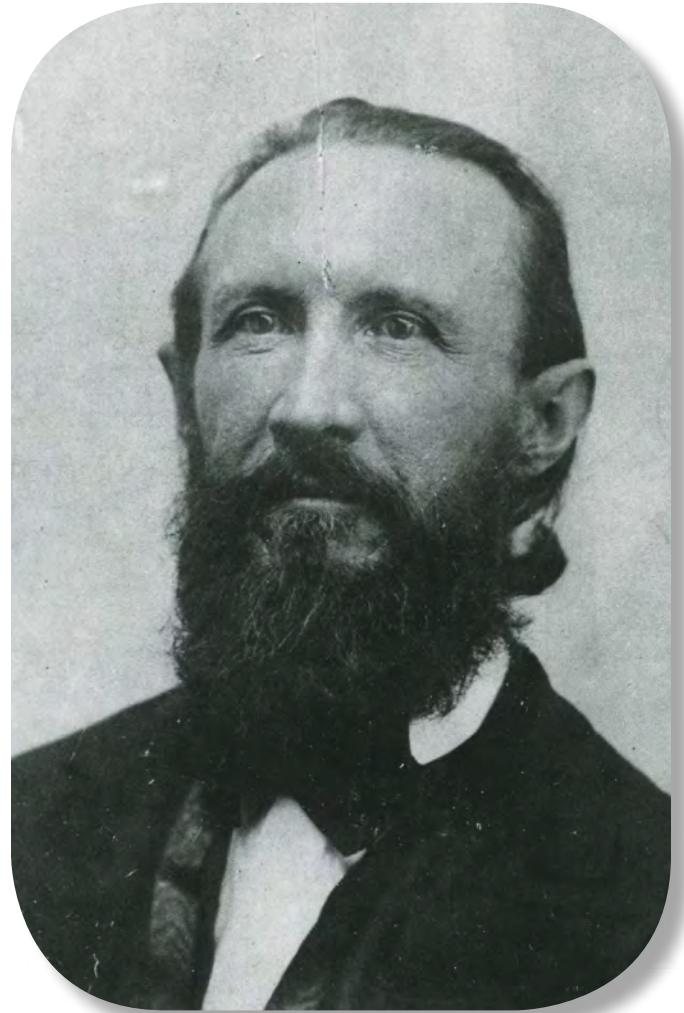
An Indiana native, Whitaker served in the army during the Mexican-American War and prospected for gold in California before moving to the Oregon Territory. A Democrat, he was pro-slavery when many residents were abolitionists.

After his term as governor, "Honest John," as he was nicknamed, stayed in local politics, winning three terms as a state representative and election to the state senate in 1876.

One block further south is Curry Street. George Law Curry, a native of Pennsylvania, published a newspaper in St. Louis, Mo., before traveling the Oregon Trail in 1846. After a brief and unsuccessful career as a journalist, he entered politics and held various positions in the newly formed territorial government, becoming secretary of the Oregon Territory in 1853.

That office made him first in line to succeed the territorial governor. Twice he stepped in as acting governor. In 1854, U.S. President Franklin Pierce officially appointed Curry as Oregon's territorial governor, a position he held until statehood in 1859.

During the 1855 Yakima War, Gov. Curry raised a force of 2,500 volunteers and led them into battle in support of federal troops. Curry's wife, Chloe Donnelly Boone, was the daughter of Alphonso Boone, the operator of Boones



Gov. George Law Curry, 1846

Ferry, and the great granddaughter of Kentucky frontiersman Daniel Boone.

Next is Pennoyer Street. It looks like an alley, but it really is a street. Sylvester Pennoyer was Oregon's eighth governor, serving two terms from 1887 to 1895. He supported labor unions and opposed the Chinese in Oregon.

Pennoyer was born to a wealthy New York family, earned a Harvard law degree and moved to Oregon in 1855. He served as superintendent of Multnomah County schools from 1860 to 1862, after which he made a fortune in the lumber industry. He was pro-slavery and started a newspaper that opposed women's right to vote. After



leaving the governorship, he served as Portland's mayor from 1896 to 1898.

One block further south, we come to Gaines Street. John Pollard Gaines was a major in the U.S. Army and aide-de-camp to Gen. Winfield Scott during the Mexican-American War. While a prisoner of war, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Kentucky.

A supporter of President Zachary Taylor, Gaines was appointed the third governor of the Oregon Territory in 1850, after Abraham Lincoln declined the position. (An acting governor served two months between Lane and Gaines.) In 1854, after leaving office, Gaines drove a herd of cattle west from Kentucky that helped start the cattle industry in Oregon.

Continuing our walk along Bond Avenue, passing the Riva and Ardea apartment buildings, we arrive at Lane Street. Joseph "Joe" Lane, an Indiana politician and U.S. Army General in the Mexican-American War, was appointed the new Oregon territory's first governor by President James K. Polk.

Following a hazardous trip on the Oregon Trail, he arrived in the territory in 1849, and served only 15 months. His first official act was to initiate a census of the territory's white residents, which showed a total of 8,785 American citizens and 298 citizens of other countries. He was also the first Oregon Superintendent of Indian Affairs, leading several military operations against native Americans.

When Oregon became a state in 1859, Lane was elected one of the state's first two U.S. Senators. In the presidential election of 1860, he was the vice-presidential nominee of the pro-slavery southern wing of the Democratic party. That election was won by Abraham Lincoln.

Lane's pro-slavery views and sympathy for the Confederate States effectively ended his political career, but his legacy lived on. Lane County in Oregon is named

for him. His son, Lafayette Lane, was a two-term member of Congress in the late 1870s. His grandson Harry Lane, a physician, progressive Democrat and advocate for women's suffrage and fair treatment for native Americans, was mayor of Portland and U.S. senator.

Back to our walk, we pass by the Ella apartments on our right to reach Abernethy Street, which in the future will extend through the empty four square blocks on our left. An astute politician, George Abernethy became Oregon's first and only provisional governor, winning election in 1845 and 1847. He traveled to the pre-territorial Oregon Country as a secular member of the Methodist mission, where he became involved in politics and helped found the first American newspaper west of the Rocky Mountains.

He was an American loyalist who opposed the creation of an independent Republic of the Pacific. He believed the provisional government was strictly interim until the question of U.S. and British claims on the Oregon Country was finalized. As provisional governor, he worked to build roads, levied the first property taxes, and sent representatives to Washington, D.C., to lobby for official U.S. territorial status.

Let's leave Bond Avenue and move one block west to Moody Avenue. Zenas Ferry Moody was 19 years old when his family immigrated to the Oregon Territory in 1851, traveling the Isthmus of Panama route. Five years later he moved to Illinois, but returned in 1862, after Oregon became a state.

Settling in The Dalles, he became a major shipper of wool from eastern Oregon. In 1882, after one term as a member of the legislature, he was elected the seventh governor of the state of Oregon, serving until 1887.

So, you now have eight interesting characters to think about when walking around our neighborhood immersed in Oregon's early history. ■




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# Success Is Not Forever

by Rolf Glerum

WHSOEVER FIRST CAME UP WITH THE oft-heard TRIPLET *Land, Sea and Air* is lost in the sands of time, but it makes a perfect launch pad for three of the most spectacular failures in Oregon history — the Hotel Portland, the Tillamook Lighthouse Columbarium and SeaPort Airlines.

## The Hotel Portland

This crown jewel of the Pacific Northwest hotel industry suffered two failures, on both ends of its 67-year-old life. The project was initiated in 1883 by Henry Villard, who had assumed control of the still-incomplete Northern Pacific Railroad in 1879. It was Villard's vision to build this elegant structure to accommodate guests arriving after long trips on the transcontinental trains. Construction started in 1884, until Villard was forced to resign from the railroad and all construction was halted, leaving nothing but bare walls on



Hotel Portland circa 1900. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=8678282>

the site. It became a "refuge for transients and muggers," as one historian put it.

Construction finally began again in 1888 under a new syndicate of Portland civic leaders and businessmen. Completed in 1890 on what is now Pioneer Courthouse Square, the upscale hostelry consisted of an H-shaped structure with 326 finely appointed rooms on six floors electrically illuminated throughout, and an inner court dining room that set the hotel far above all others. As described by *The Oregonian*, "This is the finest, largest and best hotel in the Pacific Northwest, the preferred location for presidents, politicians, business leaders and celebrities,

and the center-piece of the city's upper and upper-middle-class social life."

Things began to turn downward, however, in 1913 when the Hotel Portland was outstripped in elegance by the newly opened Multnomah and Benson hotels. Competition overtook the fading doyen. It continued to deteriorate until 1951 when Meier & Frank bought it, razed it, and built a parking garage on the site. Eventually, the site's central location and accessibility won out and city officials, in their wisdom, took over the site, removed the garage, and turned it into Portland's "public living room," as it's known to this day.

## The Tillamook Lighthouse Columbarium

Talk about a pig in a poke! This doomed-to-fail enterprise first saw the light of day in 1980, when the then-abandoned Tillamook Lighthouse and the rock it sat upon was purchased for \$50,000 by two Hood River real estate developers who planned to convert it an exclusive columbarium, with more than 100,000 niches for loved ones' remains to be housed forever. They gave it the name "Eternity at Sea."

Little or no research was done on the history of the lighthouse, however, and things went sour from the very beginning. Built about a mile off the Oregon Coast in 1881, the lighthouse was soon given the nickname "Terrible Tillie," due to the horrendous weather conditions that made it difficult to get to without risking life and limb. More than a few did take the risk and suffered for it.

Raging winds, pounding surf, nesting cormorants and common murrelets (and their droppings), mean-spirited sea lions and even vandals soon took their toll on the uninhabited tower.



Tillamook Lighthouse, 1891 (Library of Congress)

Records show that by 1999, of the 100,000 available niches at \$1,000 each, only 30 had been sold and only 7 urns had been placed. Apparently, they are still there

today, although the columbarium lost its operating license in 2005 and accurate records no longer exist.

An 87-year-old woman whose mother's ashes are still at the columbarium had a poignant remembrance that appeared recently in a local newspaper. "I still worry how Mama can continue to withstand the elements. She didn't even like bird poop on her car."

## SeaPort Airlines

Founded in 2008 by several Portland investors, the fledgling carrier was publicized as a hassle-free commuter service between Portland and Seattle. Rather than deal with crowded airports, long lines and expensive cab rides into downtown, SeaPort planes used the Flightcraft private plane runway in Portland and Boeing Field in Seattle. The company flew a fleet of Cessna 208 Grand Caravan turboprop planes, eventually to smaller cities such as



SeaPort Cessna 208 Grand Caravan Turboprop.

Pendleton, Coos Bay and Redmond. There were no security stations, free luggage checking, plenty of free parking and easy access to the planes. What's not to like?

Generous funding from the Essential Air Service (EAS) program of the US Department of Transportation kept the company afloat for a few years. As of November 2013, SeaPort had received \$13.8 million from EAS. But it wasn't enough. Fuel costs, lack of qualified pilots and slow passenger growth caused the airlines to file for voluntary Chapter 11 bankruptcy in February 2016. After reducing its route network, the airlines struggled for a few more months, then finally went out of business after its Chapter 11 bankruptcy was converted to Chapter 7 liquidation in July of that year.

Mirabella resident Bernice Johnston speaks fondly of SeaPort service. "Years back, I flew to Seattle frequently on business. What a pleasure it was to avoid all the stuff that one had to endure at PDX and SeaTac. Sometimes, the passengers had to change seats to balance out the plane, but that was the extent of it. I just loved that airline and I was really sorry to see them fail." ■



"Sorry, Dad, but it's time to consider a retirement kingdom."

CartoonStock.com



"So, you're not currently taking any prescription meds? Well, we'll take care of that."

## Portland Center Stage's Season

**M**ARISA WOLF, PORTLAND CENTER STAGE'S NEW ARTISTIC director, looked for works with "energy, humor and music" to fill her first season here.

The season begins with "In the Heights," a 2008 Tony award-winning musical that Wolf says is "bursting with life." The first work of "Hamilton" author Lin Manuel Miranda, the show "celebrates a neighborhood," New



Marissa Wolf

York City's Washington Heights, and "neighbors and friends coming together," Wolf explains.

The music combines many styles — salsa and meringue in addition to traditional musical theater songs. Mirabella residents may find "Inutil," about a father's struggle to provide for his daughter, most moving.

The rest of Portland Center Stage's 2019-20 season includes classics like "Macbeth" and "Howard's End," as well as the Tony award-winning play "The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time," in which an autistic boy solves a crime. "We see the world through his lens," Wolf says.

This may be the show to take grandchildren.

Gwen Luhta has ordered a bus for Sunday, Sept. 8, for "In the Heights," leaving at 1:15 p.m. for the two o'clock show. ■

## Mr. Otis Regrets

**A** PAEAN, PERHAPS, TO MIRABELLA'S LIFTS, WRITTEN BY ROY Abrahamson Sung to the tune of "Miss Otis Regrets" by Cole Porter

Mr. Otis regrets the elevators won't run today,  
Madam

Mr. Otis regrets the elevators won't run today  
He's sorry for the delays

And suggests that you try the stairways,  
Madam

Mr. Otis regrets the elevators won't run today  
When you push the button and wait

Nothing happens and you're gonna be late,  
Madam

The problem is in the program we're told  
And our computer expert, twelve years old  
Can't get here until after school at three,  
But she'll make everything alright in a jiffy,  
Madam

Mr. Otis regrets the elevators won't run today

— By the late Roy Abrahamson, a Mirabella resident until his passing. First published in a time of elevator madness, in the Sept. 2016 issue of 3550. ■

An advertisement for WIL Fest 2019. It features a cartoon illustration of a goat wearing a striped shirt and a banner that says "10TH ANNIVERSARY". The text reads: "ORIGINAL PRACTICE SHAKESPEARE" in large white letters, with "BECAUSE SHAKESPEARE SHOULD BE A LITTLE DANGEROUS" in smaller white letters below it. The background is dark blue with yellow stars. Below the illustration, it says "WIL Fest 2019" in large white letters, followed by "FREE Shakespeare every weekend at Willamette, Irving, &amp; Laurelhurst Park" and "July 12th - August 4th". At the bottom, it says "Plus more FREE shows throughout the summer!" and "For more information, visit opsfest.org" in white letters.

# Performing Arts Schedule

## Broadway Rose Theatre

12850 Grant Ave., Tigard  
503-620-5262

*Into the Woods*  
Now thru Jun 30

*Footloose*  
Aug 1 thru Sept 1

## Chamber Music Northwest

www.cmnw.org  
See website for venues  
503-294-6400

*Summer Festival*  
Jun 24 thru Jul 28

## Lake Oswego Festival of the Arts

George Rogers Park  
Lake Oswego

*Juried Art Displays*  
Jun 21, 22, 23

## Lakewood Theatre

368 S. State St., Lake Oswego  
503-635-3901

*Singin' In the Rain*  
Now thru June 9

## NW Dance Project

PO Box 42488  
Portland 97242  
503-828-8285

*Summer Memories*  
Jun 13,14, 15

## Opera in the Park

Washington Park  
Amphitheater

*Via Verdi! An Operatic Extravaganza*  
Free  
Aug 4 at 6 p.m.

## Portland Center Stage

128 NW 11th Ave.  
503-445-3700

*The Breath of Life – Bye Studio*  
Now thru Jun 16

*Native Gardens – Main Stage*  
Now thru Jun 16

*Storm Large in Crazy Enough — Main Stage*  
Jun 25 thru Jun30

## Portland Opera

Keller Auditorium  
222 SW Clay St.  
800-273-1530

*The Barber of Seville — Keller*  
Jun 7 thru Jun 15

*La Finta Giardiniera — Newmark*  
Jul 12 thru Jul 27

*In the Penal Colony — Hampton Ctr*  
Jul 26 thru Aug 10

## Portland Opera Broadway Series

Keller Auditorium  
222 SW Clay St.  
800-273-1530

*Wicked*  
Jul 10 thru Jul 28

*Charlie & the Chocolate Factory*  
Aug 13 thru Aug 18

## Portland Playhouse

602 NE Prescott  
503-488-5822

*Fences*  
Now thru Jul 1

## Portland Rose Festival

503-227-268

*Starlight Parade*  
Jun 1

*Spring Rose Show*  
Jun 6 & 7

*Dragon Boat Races*  
Jun 8 & 9

*Grand Floral Parade*  
Jun 8

## Summer Arts on Main

Main St., between  
Schnitzer and Newmark  
Theaters

*Free Music Concerts*  
Wednesdays 5 — 7 p.m.  
Jul 10 thru Aug 28

## Mocks Crest Productions

Mago Hunt Theater  
University of Portland

*The Yeoman of the Guard*  
Jun 8 & 9 and Jun 20-23

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# Window Washers Fly High

**W**E HAVE ALL SEEN THE BRAVE WINDOW-WASHERS, RAPPELLING down the glass face of Mirabella suspended only by what seems a mere thread.

They go about their job with smiles and a sense of adventure, while the rest of us can think “I’m sure glad that’s not me up there.”

How do they work? Is it really dangerous? Is this a good business?



Company owner Brian Ferber.  
Photo by Ron Mendonca.

To find out, 3550’s Ed Noyes talked with company owner and crew boss Bryan Ferber. Their interview has been edited.

Question: What’s the most dangerous part of window washing at the Mirabella, or any tall building for that matter?

Answer: Every building has its own unique challenges.

At Mirabella, for instance, the issues are on the south side. At the south west corner, there’s a lot of shrubbery and often it’s not trimmed back so it’s really difficult to carry the rope with authority over the wall and find the anchor point without having the trees and bushes in the way.

Any time there’s a fall hazard greater than six feet — which is what really qualifies here, right? — if you’re closer than six feet from the edge you’re supposed to be tied off. So that presents a holy mess of, “How do I get back into that corner and rig for this drop safely?”

Q: How do you teach your crew to avoid safety problems?

A: For one thing, we have monthly training meetings and go over OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) rules and training from professional associations.

On the job sites, I just show them how to do it — or how I’ve done it in the past — which I believe is the safest way to go. We are also working as a team, with one person pulling up the slack so another team member can move around more freely.

It all takes training and experience.

Generally, on all buildings the biggest safety issue is human error.

I teach proper gear inspection. Every time we go down, ropes are looked at every time they are handled. They’re checked out so it’s a relatively safe job.

We kind of watch each other and make sure that everybody is staying safe.

Q. It’s kind of like how I describe flying or piloting — it’s a game you play with gravity and gravity always wins. You don’t let gravity run up the score.

A. Right. So, the end result is, if we think something is not safe, we stop and make sure that it is safe and then proceed. If there’s ever a question with gear, we just replace it. But to me it’s not worth it and so far, thank God, we don’t have any safety issues and we have never had any accidents

I did have somebody put their foot through a window one time. That’s why you don’t wear steel-toed boots for doing this job.

Q. Is there a lot of competition from guys trying to get into the business?

A. Building work is not a very competitive world. It’s definitely a limited labor force so a lot of the guys are going to go from one company to the next ... a greener pasture kind of thing. But there is so much new building



Photo by Ron Mendonca.

going on, there’s enough work out there for everybody.

And then half of the guys who think they can do it — they get there, and we find out quickly that they just can’t. ■

# On My Own

**B**EFORE MY LOVELY WIFE, ADRIENNE, FELL AND INJURED HERSELF, she never let me leave the apartment alone. Not for her sake; for mine.

"Frankly, you are pathetic," she said. "There's no telling what a mess you'd make on your own."

"Don't be ridiculous," I replied. "I invite you to come along only because I know how much you love to be with me."

Now, with Adrienne in rehabilitation, I foolishly ventured out by myself to go to a nearby cafeteria for lunch.

When we ate there together, Adrienne always asked

me to grab an open table while she went to the counter to buy lunch.

"I know how tough it is to fend off all those nasty table snatchers," she would say, rolling her eyes, "especially while having to check your iPhone at the same time. You are amazing!"

"It's an impossible job, but one of us has to do it."

Now, of course, I was on my own both to go to the counter and to secure

a table. It was an exasperating experience. I had to decide what I wanted without Adrienne's help, stand in a long line at the counter by myself, wait forever for a table to open up, then push several other customers out of the way to nab it.

By the time I had sat down with my lunch, and pulled out my phone, everything, including the coffee, was cold. But that was only the beginning. Not only was the political picture depressing, but the stock market was down. I set my phone aside and read the newspaper instead, which was even more depressing. I quickly finished my cold crumbly lunch, cleaned off the table, and left.

I had not gotten but a few steps out the door before I heard Adrienne's familiar voice in my head berating me for forgetting my phone.

I ran back to the table, but it was gone. I was panicked, sure that it had been stolen.

Then I heard the same familiar voice telling me that I had no doubt thrown it away with the trash.

"Use your brain for a change and look in the waste bin."

"Great idea! Why didn't I think of that?"

I reached down into the can as far as I could, pushing aside all the scraps of food and paper, but couldn't find it.

"Tip it over!" she exclaimed.

I dutifully spilled the whole bin on the floor. Particles of food and paper were scattered everywhere. Customers gathered around staring at me in disbelief. But still no cell phone.

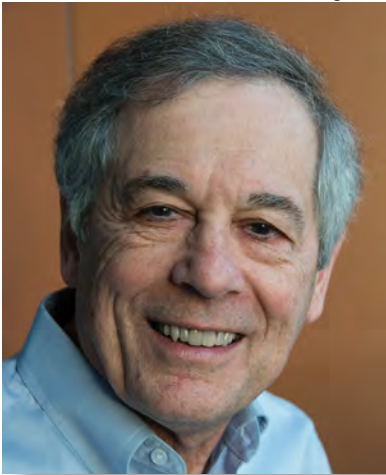
The angry manager glared at me.

"What the hell are you doing?" he stammered.

When I explained my predicament, he just shook his head while asking for my phone number. The ring was loud. The phone was a few inches away, under my discarded newspaper.

"Thanks" I said meekly, departing as fast as I could. I had never been so embarrassed.

"You are truly pathetic," Adrienne said. ■



Larry Braverman

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Highly recommended by Mirabella residents  
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