

3550





NANCY MOSS
Editor



JOHN BRIGGS
President

Prospective residents touring Mirabella see a pristine place: flowers in tasteful vases, sparkling renovated apartments. Longtime residents know its joy as well as its occasional weaknesses.

Mirabella's strengths include:

- Staff that is capable, friendly and willing to take extra care of people who need help.
- An amazing array of activities, from cornhole on the terrace to mahjong.
- A superb library, maintained by dedicated volunteers.
- Interest groups spanning every aspect of communal life, from science and finance to a ukulele orchestra and pets.
- Residents (I almost wrote "women") who bring tasty snacks to afternoon openings in the Bistro.
- Packages delivered to our door.
- Amazing musical programs, often put together by Cary Lewis, a one-man resource.
- A monthly meeting where residents can quiz heads of departments on concerns.
- Eye-catching art on the walls, making rooms and hallways distinctive, thanks to the Art Committee.
- Green spaces for daily walks, enlivened this year by the birth of two bald eagles.
- Elevators: places to hear nuggets of news, along with a daily weather report.

As to weakness, perhaps a slowness to transparency in complex matters that residents need to discuss — like the coming end of the Resident Assistance Fund. See the article in this issue.

Later in this issue, there is an article regarding the Resident Assistance Fund (RAF). For the last two years, I have been the RAMP liaison to the Foundation Advisory Committee (FAC) and have participated in the discussions of the fund. Our contract states that if we are prudent with our funds, we will be able to remain at Mirabella if we run out of funds. Absent the RAF, the only funding available to support these residents would be from the operations budget which is supported by all residents' monthly fees.

According to our director, when the building first opened, some residents moved in under discounted entrance fees, some of which were 100 percent refundable and could be used if they ran out of money. Early residents recognized the possibility that a few residents might run out of funds, including the entrance fees, and contributed to the RAF. The Mirabella board also recognized the possibility and designated specific grants received to the RAF.

When certain residents required financial help from the RAF, the FAC realized that the amount required per month could not be met by normal fundraising. FAC decided not to attempt additional fundraising for the RAF. If the fund was exhausted, all residents would pay their share of the required funding through their monthly fees.

In thinking about this decision, I liken our contract, which guarantees we remain if out of funds, to an automobile insurance policy. We all could benefit from the policy but hope we never need it. If all RAF funds were exhausted, all residents would be paying our share to support those very few residents who were out of funds. Unlike an insurance policy where you pay ahead, we would pay as needed.

The decision regarding the RAF was announced by Steve Marsh at the December 2024 RAMP meeting. We know the RAF will not run out of money at this time. We do know that if the RAF is ever exhausted, the financial impact on all residents will be small.



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Lead server Kaleb Portilla tends Mirabella's rooftop garden.
Photo: Johanna King



Back Cover

Katherine Griffith photographed this Japanese maple in Portland's Japanese Garden.

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No Kings Protest, Portland, June 14, 2025



Photo: Robert French

The crowd, estimated at 50,000, included young and old, grandparents and grandchildren, people in wheelchairs.



Photo: Johanna King



Photo: Robert French



Photo: Robert French

Sounds: drums, cowbells, chants: "This is what democracy looks like."

South Waterfront Maintains Security

Lucinda Klicker, security outreach coordinator for the South Waterfront Community Association (SWCA), walked through the area recently with her counterpart in Portland's Pearl District.

"No encampments," he noted at the end of their circuit and concluded that the South Waterfront (SWF) was a safer, more secure area than the Pearl.

The Pearl District pays \$25,000 a month for security services, Klicker said; South Waterfront's total, once a new system is in place, will be less — because its need is less. Vandalism has been down recently, she says. Recent protests at the ICE building made less of an impact than she expected.

Because South Waterfront residents wanted input into any new system put in place, Klicker has been meeting with them to learn what they want out of a security company. "I am the residents' voice," she added. She will bring the residents' point of view to the SWCA board as it considers which new company to hire.

Klicker praised Mirabella's security system, especially its control of its garage, often a target of vandals. Mirabella's use of valets helps keep the garage safe, she explained. "You have a good system going."

In addition to resident meetings, finalization of the SWCA budget will help determine what security system SWF adopts, what measures it can choose. Communication between buildings, Klicker says, has increased.

Wayne Wiswell is a member of the SWCA and brings Mirabella residents' concerns to its meetings.



The ICE building after the June 14 protest.



Photo: Stanley Berman

Rebecca Roark Book Available on Amazon

Rebecca Roark's children's book, "Thistle, Bramble and Clover Go on a Mushroom Hunt!", is available on Amazon. Rebecca plans to expand on her ideas about writing for children in future projects. Rebecca's book is in the Mirabella library.

Nancy Moss Play Included in Online Anthology

The latest edition of Hello Godot's online anthology of one-minute plays includes "Threat," by Nancy Moss, a dialogue between a judge and a lawyer. The present issue is Hello Godot's 10th edition.

Fresh Words, which publishes Hello Godot, is an international magazine that publishes 12 times a year, available in both print and paperback format.

Portland Gaining, Councilor Says

The July update from Councilor Olivia Clark says that although Portland faces challenges, "we are seeing a drop in crime and reduced occupancy rates as well as an increase in foot traffic."



Photo: Johanna King

Liebelt Delivers Green Message

Kent Liebelt, Mirabella's director of facility services, told Strategic Energy Management's workshop that participating in its program had won Mirabella a \$1,000 check from the Energy Trust of Oregon.

He promised that the money would be used to update the refuse rooms on each floor. Kent plans to lead back-of-the-house tours to show Mirabella's other energy-saving features, such as green roofs, a rooftop garden and high-efficiency boilers.

Hardship Fund Offers Help

The obituary of Mirabella resident and talented sculptor **Bobby Cohn** mentioned the Mirabella Portland Foundation's committee's employee hardship fund for those wishing to honor her memory.

Director of Human Resources Renee Chan says the fund is available to full or part-time employees who have worked at Mirabella for 90 days, with \$2,000 as the largest available grant.

In the past grants have gone to employees who faced eviction or extreme medical expenses, for themselves or someone in their family.

Residents wishing to make donations should make out checks to the Mirabella Portland Foundation, with the name of the specific fund in the memo line. Specific funds are listed on the Miranet under RAMP.

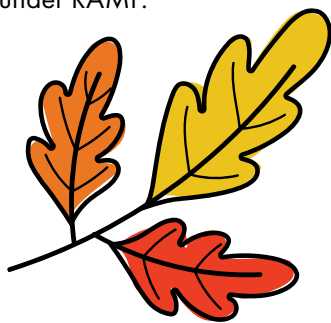


Photo: Nevion Dunn

Mural at Lone Wolf Watering Hole.

New Watering Place

Lone Wolf Watering Hole, on River Parkway, is sleek and simple, a long bar dominating the room, framed posters with descriptions of drinks: hard cider, beers, red and white wine.

Only popcorn is served here, but customers are welcome to bring their own food, the bartender tells me.

Lone Wolf is open from 2–10 p.m., 11 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. Attendance "roller coasters around," the bartender says, with 5–7 p.m. happy hour drawing the largest crowd.

When a food truck is pulled up outside, the Lone Wolf's terrace offers a shady area to kick back and eat or drink.

Resident Assistance Fund Could Close

By **NANCY MOSS**



Photo: Stanley Berman

The Foundation Committee's Casino Night, ready for action.

The Mirabella Foundation committee's resident assistance fund, which helps residents who can no longer afford their monthly payments, may run out of money before the next fiscal year ends.

Once that happens, current residents' monthly fees will include covering those residents who can no longer afford them.

But first, some history.

Executive Director Sharon Van Eaton, who asked to answer my questions in writing, writes that as Mirabella started up, during the 2008 financial crisis, "the banks authorized discounts on entrance fees." She adds that these were "exceptions limited to that unique period of development." As the financial crisis continued, prospective residents found the homes they had hoped to sell, along with other investments, falling in value. After a promising start, sales of apartments in Mirabella lagged.

In the September 2020 3550, editor Steve Casey wrote that Pacific Retirement Services (PRS) began to "offer flexible financing, available at five different levels, ranging from 100% refundable entry fees downward." PRS adapted to meet the financial situation.

In the March 2015 3550, Ed Parker wrote that the resident assistance fund (RAF) "can lend money to residents who can no longer pay all of their monthly bills. Interest on such loans is currently 5%. The loans would be repaid from the

borrower's refundable entrance fee or other estate assets."

Ed explained in his article how such a plan would work. He added that financial aid would not come if "we have endangered our financial responsibility to Mirabella by unwise action" such as inappropriately large gifts or by gambling it away.

Sharon writes that she is "unable to disclose if there are any financial assistance applications either now or in the works." Residents who received the lower levels of the five entrance fees may lack the comfortable cushion that more recent arrivals, who pay substantial entrance fees, possess.

We all plan for our financial future, looking at our assets and anticipating needs. We guess at what future illnesses and care may cost. Anyone's plan can encounter unpleasant surprises. Part of our planning is that Mirabella will take care of our needs for as long as we stay here.

Residents needing help may recall that the Mirabella Foundation's RAF could be a source of loans from their original entrance fee. Remembering how substantial that refundable entrance fee was, present residents may feel secure that any loan they might need would cover the number of years of long-term care they might require.

However, the payments that the resident assistance fund

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has paid out monthly in the past few years have depleted its resources. In May 2025, for instance, the outflow was \$20,000, in March, \$26,000. Steve Marsh, chair of the Foundation Advisory Committee, told the RAMP council that "From July 2022 through May 2025 over \$700,000 was spent to support residents who had run out of resources." As of June 20, The RAF had \$146,345 remaining.

Fundraising events, such as the recent Casino Night, cannot meet the possible need. At the December 2024 RAMP meeting, Steve Marsh said that the committee "recognizing the impossibility of raising funds to match the need," said that the best alternative is for everyone to "share these expenses through increased monthly fees."

The RAF is a topic, this writer feels, about which Mirabella residents need to inform themselves. One way to begin is by choosing a possible monthly deficit facing the RAF, maybe picking one of the past monthly outflows mentioned above, Divide that by the number of independent residents, 273 as of June 21. (Multiply that by two if you're married). Your number may be close to the number that will be charged to monthly bills once the RAF runs out of money.

In 2018 and 2019, PRS, Mirabella's parent company, provided grants totaling \$269,000 that were used to augment the RAF, in what are called board-designated funds. However, Sharon writes that there are "no current plans for additional funding."

The Foundation's RAF funds donated by Mirabella residents were depleted by the end of December 2024; board designated funds, the PRS grant, have provided support since then but will run out if the demands on them are as great as they've been in the recent past.

In other words, it's on us. Our contracts specify that Mirabella Portland cannot give assistance to individual residents if it "impairs Mirabella's ability to operate on a sound financial basis." (section 7) That clause puts the burden on residents. Adding the cost of residents who can no longer pay their bills to our monthly fees leads to questions, however. If one of those residents dies during the year, will our monthly fee decrease by what it had cost to sustain that person?

Will resident contributions by any entity succeeding RAF

be kept separate, or will they be folded into the general pot? Sharon writes that money to support residents who cannot pay their monthly bills "would not be separated out for confidentiality purposes."

After years of RAF bookkeeping, we will be moving toward less transparency. How any addition to monthly fees will affect present residents is uncertain.

One resident, asked about using monthly fees to cover resident debt, said "The more transparent and above-board you can be, the better." He called the present situation a "conundrum."

Fundraising events ... cannot meet the possible need.

A long-term solution is for Mirabella to build an endowment by creating and publicizing a plan for residents to include Mirabella in their wills. But that will take time. Writing in 2015, Ed Parker mentioned this as a solution; it has not been acted upon. Steve Marsh says that residents can make legacy gifts by seeing Megan for a Designation Regarding Entrance Fee Refund in our Independent Living Residence and Care Agreement. An entrance fee can be repurposed to benefit Mirabella.

We all consider our financial assets, how they will best support us given the complexity of America's insurance-dominated medical system. We may have decided years ago whether to purchase long-term care insurance or self-insure, trying to predict a future we can't see. We hope our decision will be wise. We guess at choices that sometimes have unforeseen consequences.

A complex issue like that of residents who outlive their assets, which affects other residents' finances and has a history not often discussed, needs transparency. It needs more time and attention than one mention at a RAMP meeting full of other business. Residents need a time and venue to ask their questions — and have them answered. ●

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Photo: Dorothy Dworkin

Portland Center Stage, just a streetcar ride away.

Lights Out, Curtain Rises

By DOROTHY DWORKIN

My fourth-grade teacher, Ms. Gold, announced, "Our class will present the final assembly before summer vacation. We will perform "Cinderella" based on our recent unit, fairy tales. Auditions start later this week."

I aspired to become an actress when I grew up and envisioned myself as Cinderella, whose life changes when Prince Charming comes to her rescue with a glass slipper. My dreams were shattered when I was chosen to be the wicked stepmother, but my love for the theater did not diminish. I went on to become the Queen of Hearts in "Alice in Wonderland" and other characters in middle school plays, always the villain, never the ingenue. Typecast?

My immigrant grandparents on the lower east side of New York City nurtured my love of the drama, taking me to the Yiddish theater on Second Avenue. I didn't understand the language, but I loved the atmosphere, music, costumes, dancing and comic antics. As I grew older, my parents further fostered my theatrical ambitions with Broadway shows like "Oklahoma," "Carousel" and "Annie Get your Gun."

I never fulfilled my childish acting aspirations but continued to attend, taking part in community theater and supporting all theater: local, amateur and off-off Broadway. Arriving in Portland at the start of the 21st century, my husband and I found a vibrant theater community with first-rate performers and productions. Until the pandemic we were regular subscribers and theatergoers with special attention to newer and more topical productions.

The pandemic changed many things, among them theater. Some venues closed. Others tried to provide safe spaces for patrons. Unfortunately, live theater failed to thrive. In some movie theaters, however, if you were willing to chance it, film lovers could mask up and sit seats apart.

Streaming services on the living room screen satisfied some of the in-person deficit for most moviegoers. Some of us probably watched more movies at home than we did before the pandemic when we patronized the big box cinemas. Now we watched from the comfort of our living rooms.

According to the New York Times, older viewers account for one-third of all television viewing, and we have adopted streaming in large numbers, especially on free platforms. Since 2023, the over-65 crowd is the fastest growing cohort for watching YouTube on television. How important is captioning for watching on home screens now that the virus is controlled?

I once prided myself on my hearing. My hearing was so acute, I could overhear conversations at nearby restaurant tables. Aging changed that and I started to ask, "What?" more often when speaking to friends and others, especially on the phone. I raised the volume on various electronic devices and controlled the remote on the television. Sound was better but still not clear. My husband, a hearing aid wearer, cautiously suggested that I might need hearing aids. Visiting an audiologist confirmed his layman's diagnosis.

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The aids helped but I was still more comfortable with closed captioning on the screen. I heard the dialogue, but the words were sometimes unclear. A study showed that more than 50% of Americans surveyed used

closed captioning most of the time. I returned to movie-going as the pandemic waned and realized I was addicted to the captioning and needed help hearing even Hollywood screen dialogue. Movie theater owners recognized the problem and responded by offering various devices to assist the hearing impaired.

The next issue was what to do at live theater. My husband and I, along with some of our peers, stopped attending plays when we could not clearly understand a large part of the dialogue. The actors either spoke too quickly or the words were unclear. When theaters reopened after the pandemic, managers noticed some former attendees were missing from the audience for the cited reasons. Cutbacks in endowments for the arts did not help the problem. Fundraising became essential for sustaining live theater. Portland Center Stage alone has a goal of raising \$2.5 million by Aug. 31 to stay alive during the coming season. Oregon Children's Theater already announced it will suspend operation by the end of the summer.

ALDs (assisted listening devices) have begun to appear more frequently in some theaters. They range from open captioning to occasional sign language. To learn how theaters have responded to hearing issues, especially among the growing senior population, I surveyed some popular theaters in the Portland area.

Portland Playhouse utilizes projected open closed captions for most of their performances. Captions can be displayed above a special seating section and are visible only to the audience seated in that specific area. Other audience members are not disturbed.

Portland Center Stage has at least one open-captioned performance for each production. A screen near the stage simultaneously provides captions for the dialogue or lyrics on stage. According to their website, when making an online purchase, enter CAPTION in the promo code box to access seats within the open captioned seating section. They automatically discount each adult ticket by \$5.00. ALDs are



Susannah Mars and Nia Scott in Portland Playhouse's production of "Matilda the Musical."

Photo: Portland Playhouse

available for every performance to amplify the sound.

The Keller auditorium offers ALDs at the coat check, free of charge, on a first-come, first-served basis. They include headsets with a receiver and neck loops for hearing aids and cochlear implants with a "T" switch.

Sign language is offered for selected events with seating in a designated area for clear viewing of the captioning onscreen. For non-designated performances, a request can be submitted two weeks prior to the event.

Portland's Center for the Arts, which includes Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall, Newmark, Keller, Winningstad and Brunish, supports audio description, open captioning and ALDs. Artists Repertory offers at least one open captioning performance during the play's run. The date is listed in "Additional Dates to Know" on the show's website page.

Some theaters in Portland also provide accommodations for neurodivergent theatergoers. They are becoming more inclusive by offering sensory-friendly performances, quiet spaces and other arrangements to reach individuals with sensory sensitivities or other neurodivergent needs.

For specific theaters, the websites and/or box offices can provide information. Portland Playhouse designates one relaxed performance and/or box office (sometimes called "sensory-friendly performance") per production. This includes no haze or smoke effects, no strobe or harsh lighting or jarring sound effects. Portland Playhouse also supports the use of personal fidgets or physical focus aids.

In addition, vision-impaired theatergoers at some venues can access one audio-described performance during the show's run. Portland Playhouse will also provide a pre-show "Touch Tour" opportunity for one performance in every production. These are designed for patrons with low vision or visual impairments and may be followed by an audio-described performance.

My childhood dreams of becoming an actress did not come to fruition, but my love for all things theater never diminished. It was delayed for a while due to physical limitations but now, with these necessary accommodations for patrons' special needs, I can indulge my passion.

The arts need our support. They have the power to change the dynamics of divisions and mistrust. Let's all go back to the theater. ●

Mirabella's Health Care Explained

By NANCY MOSS

Residents finding it more difficult to get in and out of the shower or to prepare a simple meal — when just opening the oven door becomes a challenge — may want to consider in-home care, according to Executive Director Sharon Van Eaton in a recent presentation with Health Services Administrator Zac Bright.

IN-HOME CARE, where aides perform the little tasks that have become an effort, can help residents stay in their apartments longer, is not emergency care and does not require a doctor's order. Any resident feeling greater need for help may want to fill out an application form with Director of Resident Services Megan Huston. It's sensible to do that ahead of actual need.

Mirabella does not handle home health care, where medical technicians come to a person's home to perform a limited service.

ASSISTED LIVING, which occupies half of the third floor, has 16 apartments and is limited by license to 24 residents. Like In-Home Care, it provides help with activities of daily living and is staffed 24/7. The staff fills out a service plan for each resident and keeps close watch over how they are faring. Assisted living residents have their own dining room on the third floor, but their meal credit is good anywhere in the building.

If assisted living is full when a resident applies, that person may receive health care services in their own apartment at an assisted living rate but must move to assisted living when a vacancy opens up. Failure to do that moves the resident to the bottom of the list of people applying.

TWO-WEEK RESPITE CARE, Sharon said, can be designed for a spouse who is a caregiver. It requires a doctor's order. A resident feeling worn down by caring for a spouse should make an appointment with Zac for a temporary bed on the health care floor.



Photo: Richard Mounts

Residents will play the instruments at drummer Steven Skolnik's feet.

SKILLED NURSING, appropriate when someone is recovering from surgery and needs short-term help, occupies half of Mirabella's second floor. "Insurance determines the length of stay in skilled nursing," Sharon says. Asked if there are times when skilled nursing rooms are not available, Sharon calls availability a "chess game." Sometimes there are openings for outside patients; at other times, Mirabella residents requiring skilled nursing have found a spot in Holladay Park Plaza, another PRS facility.

LONG-TERM CARE is part of the skilled nursing area and like the skilled nursing area requires a doctor's order. It is staffed by certified nursing assistants 24/7.

MEMORY CARE is Mirabella's dementia unit. It follows the Halcyon program which provides "joy and purpose" for each resident, Sharon says. For instance, breakfast is served not at a fixed time but when residents are ready for it. The second floor has its own dining room, but residents can eat in any restaurant in the building. The staff runs programs such as a percussion activity and tai chi to keep residents active.

The various parts of Mirabella's medical support are governed, as Sharon noted, by insurance rules. Its staff stands ready to help residents understand their different elements. ●

In the words of Maya Angelou, “You can only become truly accomplished at something you love.”

Jodi Childs, social services director in our health center, embodies that truth. According to Renee Chan, director of human resources, “I have never met anyone as passionate as Jodi about the work they do.”

Staff Profile:

Jodi Childs

Caring With Her Heart

By MARLENA FIOLE

In January 1997, armed with a BS in therapeutic recreation and a minor in psychology, young Jodi launched herself into a world of extreme psychological trauma. She accepted an internship in the inpatient adult psych ward at Overlake Hospital in Bellevue, Washington. In the midst of acute challenges, such as bipolar and other personality disorders, suicidality, and PTSD, Jodi discovered her love of working with older adults who have complex needs. “I learned it’s where my confidence is. It’s what I love,” she says.

Born in the small town of Burlington, Iowa, Jodi describes life there as slow-paced, “a front porch life where we watched lightning bugs at night.” Smiling, she remembers a carefree childhood as the middle sister of three girls. “It’s a safe place to live. Everybody knows everybody.”

Jodi’s expression changes when she adds, “It was safe and also boring. Iowa is a place you outgrow.”

As a child, Jodi was unusually shy and spoke with a pronounced stutter, which she overcame with hard work in speech therapy. Perhaps that’s why from a very early age she was drawn to help people with physical challenges. Throughout high school and college she worked at summer camps for people with disabilities such as cerebral palsy, hearing impairment and brain injuries. Her dream was to become a nurse. “But I’m kind of queasy with blood,” she says. “Better for me to work with people than on people.”

Jodi has been married for 25 years. She met her husband, Aaron, on a blind date shortly after moving to the northwest for her internship. “Initially, I was so nervous,” Jodi says. “However, it didn’t take long for my curiosity to take over, and the moment we started talking, everything felt natural and easy.” They are now empty nesters after raising two

children. In their free time, they enjoy running, whale watching, exploring tide pools and camping.

Five years ago, Jodi joined Mirabella as memory care coordinator. Within a year or so, she moved into the social services director position, taking on responsibility for the psychosocial well-being of all health care residents. When asked why she chose to work at Mirabella, Jodi says, “It’s small enough that we can really focus on person-centered care.” She distinguishes between patient-centered and person-centered care. “We care for the person as a whole, their whole story, not just their medical needs.”

For residents in short-term care, Jodi partners with the nurse care manager to explain their therapies and start a care plan, setting goals, planning for discharge and focusing on success post discharge. If residents want family involvement, she coordinates with relatives in quarterly care conferences.

For long-term health care residents, Jodi’s first responsibility is to work with the patients (and their family members if desired) on appropriate placement, either in memory care or long-term health care. She then ensures that they feel seen, heard and taken care of. In an initial conversation, which Jodi calls the “All About Me” interview, new long-term health care residents tell their story. From this, Jodi gleans what’s most important to them, whether it’s particular foods they love, music they resonate to, aspects of their career they remember fondly or even details like whether they like their feet covered or their hands touched or massaged. From this information, Jodi weaves a story for each resident. And when dementia robs residents of the memory of their own story, she is able to fill in missing pieces.

**... I believe if we find our
passion and purpose,
any of us can learn to care
with our heart.**

Jodi feels strongly about including family members, when possible, in the care residents receive. After people are discharged, they typically need family support. And when they face the end of life, their family can bring a sense of peace and belonging. “But our residents have to lead the way,” she says. “Sometimes residents need help to not feel like they are being a burden to their families. On other occasions, family relations are simply too toxic to be helpful.”

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Photo: Robert French

Jodi Childs

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Spending time with residents – especially one on one – is what Jodi loves most about her job: sitting with them; reassuring them that they’re safe; clarifying the resources available to them; helping them with paperwork like an advanced directive; but mostly, just making sure they feel seen and heard.

How does Jodi deal with the loss when death severs the loving relationships she has developed with residents over time? She says she is grateful to have had the opportunity to know them and to learn from them so she can keep growing.

When asked what she loves least about her job, Jodi stops to think. Finally, “That’s a hard one to answer – I really love my job.” Then she adds, almost as an afterthought, “Not having enough time for everything – feeling that things are unfinished. But there’s always another day. And I have a strong team to lean on.”

Jodi feels troubled about the stigma associated with the second floor. “People think that it’s all gloomy and sad,” she says. “There’s still a lot of joy even though people are declining. It’s just a different part of their life. There’s still so much joy.”

Jodi believes that we all need help, especially as we age. Sometimes we hesitate to ask for or offer help because we don’t know how.



Jodi is the sister with the sparkling smile.

“Caring with our heart is a powerful thing,” she says.

Can any of us learn to do this?

“Yes, I believe if we find our passion and purpose, any of us can learn to care with our heart. It takes time and effort, but it’s absolutely possible.” ●

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Paris' 15th Arrondissement

Photo Essay by RICHARD MOUNTS

For the past several years, Lynda and I, on visits to Paris, have stayed in this building in the 15th arrondissement. (“L’Atelier” refers to its history as workshop specializing in interior restorations). Initially, we rented here to be close to friends who live nearby. As we returned and got to know the neighborhood, we naturally felt more comfortable, more at home. “Our” Métro stations are “Vaugirard” and “Convention.” Now, we have our preferred boulangerie and we go to the indispensable Monoprix down the street for groceries and basics. Certainly Paris has its famous monuments and museums, but the 15th has its own history to discover. Random examples:

- The rue de Vaugirard, the longest street in Paris and the Main Street of the arrondissement, dates from Roman times when it linked Lutetia (Roman Paris) to Autricum (Chartres).
- From 1789 to 1859, much of the 15th, then known as Vaugirard, was a separate municipality, finally absorbed into the greater city under degree of Napoleon III.

- During the 1920s and 30s, one branch of the Surrealist movement emerged in workshops on the rue Blomet, not far from our apartment. Debates and dinners revolved around André Masson (painter) and Joan Miró (sculptor). It’s said that Ernest Hemingway occasionally came by to give boxing lessons. A park, near the site of the old workshops, includes Miró’s “L’Oiseau Lunaire,” donated by the artist to recall his days in the 15th.
- In the same period, literally next door, was a nightclub introducing Afro-Caribbean jazz to the city. Initially a gathering place for immigrants from Martinique and Guadeloupe employed in nearby Citroën and Renault auto factories, Le Bal Negre became the Studio 54 of that era, attracting the likes of Joséphine Baker, Maurice Chevalier, F. Scott Fitzgerald, etc.

Often on weekdays, Lynda and I can hear voices of children and their parents arriving at the school next door. It’s a reminder that the 15th is predominantly residential with many families, and, in contrast to the more internationalized arrondissements, seems somehow a more “French” Paris. ●

Map: mdpi.com

14 3550 SEPTEMBER 2025



Rue de Vaugirard at the Vaugirard Métro station.



Market on rue de la Convention.



Le Blomet restaurant on rue Peclet (on the square across from the Mairie of the 15th).



Flea market on rue de la Convention.



Clock tower for the auction house of the former Abattoirs de Vaugirard (1896–1985), now part of the Parc Georges Brassens.



Trompe l'oeil painting on 108 rue Brancion, looking towards peaked-roofed sheds once part of the Abattoirs de Vaugirard.



Current residents of the Parc Georges Brassens.



"L'Oiseau-Lunaire" by Joan Miró in the Square de l'Oiseau-Lunaire, 43 rue Blomet.



Parc Georges Brassens.



Rue Ferdinand Fabré.



Jazz Manouche at Place Genièvre-de-Gaulle-Anthonioz.



Rue de la Convention.



Photo: Bert Van Gorder

The Magic of Nature

By LOUISE DUNN

About twenty years ago, a friend persuaded me to climb to the summit of Mount Hood on an Outward Bound outing. She assured me it would be mystical, magical and an enlightening experience — our opportunity to bond with nature.

On the appointed day I met with other climbers at Mount Hood. My friend did not show up. We practiced all afternoon, halfway up the snow-covered mountain, catching ourselves as we went into a slide, then turning an ice pick and plunging it into the snow to stop our rapid descent.

I spent most of the time at the bottom of the hill, to the consternation of my fellow climbers. That night at Silcox Hut (we were leaving at 2 a.m. for the summit) I fretted and fretted. Should I quit?

Before I had to make a decision, the trip was canceled due to a snowstorm. I happily got on the snowcat to descend to Timberline Lodge.

Never was I more thankful for Mother Nature. The white-out was indeed mystical, magical and yes, enlightening. ●

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Janet Hachiya Kakishita is all about community and connection, in her career as a teacher and school administrator and in creating a meal program for Japanese-American seniors.

Resident Profile:

Janet Kakishita: Creating Community

By **PAMELA LINDHOLM-LEVY**

Janet was born in Portland a few months after the end of World War II. Her grandparents immigrated from Japan; Janet's parents met at the Minidoka internment camp in Idaho.

The Portland Japanese, after Franklin Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066 of February 19, 1942, were forcibly removed to the Portland Union Stockyards, where animals had recently been confined. The Japanese were put into the stalls and stock pens and made to wear tags that looked like luggage or sale tags. At what is now Portland Expo on the same grounds, a Torii gate stands at the MAX stop, and hundreds of attached metal tags sway in the wind in remembrance of the indignities suffered by these people, many of them American citizens.

At Minidoka, Janet's mother was a nurse's helper. Her father had an itchy back, and it was the helper's job to rub lotion on it. Thus, romance blossomed.

Janet's father made deliveries around central Idaho and was not always confined to the camp. Eventually he was allowed to attend college in Salt Lake City, far enough away from the west coast for officials to deem the young Japanese man no threat to security.

Janet's mother was from a samurai family. Janet shared some early family history: "Most of the Japanese migrated with friends from their KEN (state) community. My mother's side of the family is from Fukushima. Many are from samurai families. First-born son inherits the land, so many younger sons migrated. However, many first-born also migrated; once here they did not want to leave as they had more opportunities in the U.S. My friends and I often chuckle as many of our grandfathers were heirs to land in Japan that was distributed to the samurai. After the war, many first-born sons of the Nisei generation went to Japan to sign the land over to the families remaining in Japan. My mother's family owned a city in Fukushima. When my cousin who would have been heir to the

city went to visit the city, he thumped his chest and spread out his arms saying, "Just think that this could have been my city!"

On her father's side, Janet's grandfather became a cook at the University Club and her grandmother's father cooked at the Arlington Club, meeting influential Portlanders. "During difficult times we ate like rich people," Janet says her paternal grandfather commented on being able to take food home. Janet tells of the time her grandfather was in the hospital. He pretended not to speak English so that Janet's father could be with him there.

Janet's grandfather leased a small hotel in Portland, the Hachi Hotel. The family ran it and lived in it but worked outside jobs in order to save money. Eventually he purchased a hotel in downtown Portland, the Columbia Hotel, which was on the property where the present-day Marriott sits on Naito Parkway. Japanese were not allowed to own land, but because Janet's father was a citizen and even though he was only 16, he and a guardian went to the bank to close the deal. During the internment a non-Japanese friend ran the hotel. It was a place Japanese families could stow their belongings before they had to leave home. Janet's mother's family in Seattle was not so fortunate. The neighbors sold off their belongings and kept the proceeds.

Her appreciation of community makes Janet happy she landed in a place where it is practiced every day.

Janet and her four brothers grew up living in the hotel. The family had combined three bedrooms as a family room and two bedrooms to make a dining room. There was a plant room that included a piano. Typical of the times, there was only one bathroom.

Janet wasn't sure what she wanted to do after high school but attended PSU, where there was a core minority of Japanese. Her father had urged her to have a profession. She chose teaching and went on for a master's degree.

As a junior high teacher she took eighth graders to Washington, D.C., for up to three weeks, visiting colleges as well. Janet taught special education for many years.

Eventually she became an administrator. Assigned as principal at Sunnyside Elementary, she succeeded in bringing the community back to the school. A number of families had moved their children to what they considered a more

(Continued on page 24)



Photo: Ron Mendonca

Janet Kakishita

(Continued from page 22)

responsive school. Janet arranged a sign language class that all the students participated in. She brought in Vietnamese traditions, including dance. The parents approved. She accomplished the same thing at another school where attendance had dropped.

Janet met her husband, Mark Kakishita, at PSU. Their two daughters, Lisa and Lori, and four grandchildren live in Portland. Mark had a career in banking until he developed a serious spinal condition. Eventually the couple moved into the John Ross, near medical help from OHSU. In their 13 years there, they watched Mirabella's construction.

Mark died in 2022; realizing that "no one would know if I needed help if I fell," Janet moved into Mirabella. "I needed a new community," she says.

Janet shared some Japanese traditions with this writer. One of them is that Japanese people do not want to appear needy. Other traditions that are personal traits as well include giving back something better than what one has received; if offered something refuse three times before accepting; respect elders and help them first; be part of the group not the leader. For example, don't promote yourself.

Giving back is one of Janet's strengths. She became involved with a community lunch program based out of

Ikoi-No-Kai restaurant. She and a friend conceived of a new service, creating bento boxes to be delivered to homebound seniors. To raise seed money, they created cards with images on special paper and sold them at various events. This paid for the food. Next they recruited volunteer delivery drivers in the community who would develop relationships and do extra favors for their clients. The most difficult recruitment was of recipients, who did not want to appear needy.

It took time to gain acceptance of the program by stubborn community members. But eventually all went as Janet and her friends hoped. The boxes hold a large serving of a balanced meal

because the recipients will stretch the food out over more than one day. Included are fish, beef, vegetables, salad and dessert with attention to appearance, taste and smell.

Janet had to leave this ongoing project because of difficulty with her vision. As might be expected, it is difficult for her to ask for help, for example when she needs help to walk somewhere. She has a computer that makes images extra-large and reads text to her in a flat AI voice. Nevertheless, she took Ron Mendonca's Japanese braiding class and is dipping into other Mirabella activities. She suggests she should skip woodshop.

Her appreciation of community makes Janet happy she landed in a place where it is practiced every day. ●



Janet and family in Hawaii.

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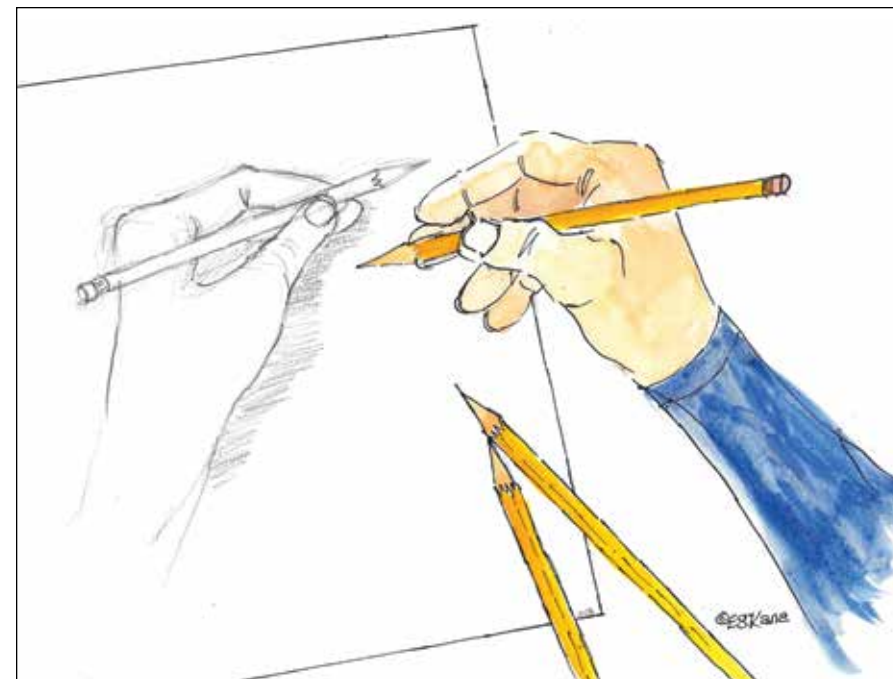


Photo: Eileen Kane

I, Pencil: An Autobiography

By RITA BRICKMAN EFFROS

Many of us are writing memoirs or autobiographies, but who could guess that the lowly pencil has done the same? The story of the complex international involvement in the making of a pencil and how it became a symbol of world trade turns out to be fascinating.

First, a bit of history. Modern pencils owe their origin to the stylus, an ancient Roman writing instrument that was a thin metal rod made of lead. The lead was eventually replaced by non-toxic graphite, which came into widespread use following the discovery of a large graphite deposit in Borrowdale, England in 1564.

The graphite mineral left a darker mark than lead but was so brittle that it required a holder. Graphite sticks, originally wrapped in string or sheepskin, were later inserted into hollowed-out wooden sticks. Voila, the wood-cased pencil was born!

The birthplace of the first mass-produced pencils was Nuremberg, Germany, in 1662. Early settlers in the American colonies depended on pencils from overseas until the war with England cut off imports. William Monroe, a cabinet-maker in Concord, Massachusetts, is credited with making America's first wood pencils in 1812. Writer Henry David Thoreau also made pencils.

The pencil industry in the U.S. took off toward the end of the 19th century with the Joseph Dixon Crucible Company (now Dixon Ticonderoga) and several other companies. These early manufacturers hosted several factories established by prominent German manufacturers, such as Faber-Castell and Eberhard Faber.

This factual history fails to address fascinating details

revealed by the pencil itself. The autobiography of a pencil, entitled, "I, Pencil", was "ghost-written" by a Michigan businessman named Leonard Read in 1958. He wanted to point out that the simple pencil is hardly simple.

The pencil emphasized that its creation involves global supply chains, different inventions going back in history and multiple steps. Put it all together, and you realize no one in the world could really understand how to make a pencil from scratch from raw materials.

The pencil explains that his family tree begins with an actual tree—a cedar of straight grain grown in Oregon and northern California. The processes involve people cutting down the trees, the folks who designed the chain saws and axes and the truck that shipped the cedar across the country, not to mention the thousands who were involved in every cup of coffee the loggers drank.

Next, the pencil tells us, the logs are shipped to a mill in San Leandro, California, where they are milled and cut into pencil-like shapes. The pencil acknowledges all the workers who built the hydroelectric dam that powers the mill.

The story of the pencil continues, saying that the lead pencil is not made of lead but is graphite mined from Ceylon, Sri Lanka, mixed with clay, paraffin wax, candelilla wax and hydrogenated natural fats. The pencil nods to all the graphite miners and the men who build the ships that transport the graphite and even the harbor pilots and lighthouse keepers who help guide the ships.

Moving on to the lacquer— the paint that gives the famous

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Mongol 482 pencil its bright yellow color — Pencil explains, “my cedar receives six coats of lacquer.” The lacquer is made of oil from castor beans and loads of other ingredients. Even the process involved in creating “my distinctive yellow color” requires the skillful hands of specialists. In fact, the world’s first yellow pencil was the KOH-I-NOOR 1500, which had 14 coats of yellow paint with the end dipped in 14k gold.

The brass metal at the end of the pencil the ferule — is made of zinc and copper, thanks to the miners. The eraser is made, not of rubber, but rather rapeseed oil mixed with sulphur chloride and pumice and calcium sulfide to give it color.

Pencil concludes, that “Actually, millions of human beings have had a hand in my creation. There isn’t a single person in all these millions, including the president of the pencil company, who contributes more than a tiny, infinitesimal bit of know-how.”

Who would have thought that the life story of the pencil could teach us global manufacturing and the proper role of government in the economy? The pencil’s autobiography was echoed in a TV series by Nobel laureate economist Milton Friedman, who used a yellow pencil as a single prop to describe, albeit in more sophisticated language, this same global involvement.

Current pencils come in many forms, categorized according to marking material and usage. Graphite pencils, the most common type, are made from mixtures of clay and graphite, allowing for the smoothest strokes. The solid form has no wood casing and is used primarily for art purposes, since the lack of casing allows for covering larger spaces more easily and creating different effects.

Liquid graphite pencils, invented in 1955 by Scripto and Parker pens, write like pens. Charcoal pencils provide fuller blacks than those made of graphite but tend to smudge more easily. Carbon pencils, a mixture of clay and lamp black, produce a fuller black than graphite and are smoother than charcoal.

Other types include colored pencils, which have wax-like cores, grease pencils, which can write on any surface, and watercolor pencils which have cores that can be diluted by water. Strokes made by the pencil can also be saturated with water and spread with brushes.

Pencils are also categorized according to usage. Carpenter’s pencils are oval or square-shaped to prevent them from rolling, and their graphite is strong. Eyeliner pencils used for makeup are therefore made with non-toxic materials. Stenographer’s pencils, whose reliability is essential, are made of break-proof lead and are round to avoid pressure pain during long texts. Finally, golf pencils are usually short and inexpensive; many libraries offer them as disposable

writing instruments with scratch paper.

We all recall the requirements of bringing a number 2 pencil to an exam. Why was that? Why do schools specifically list a number 2 pencil at the beginning of the year? Why is there even a number for a pencil?

The number grading system, originally developed by none other than Thoreau, relates to the hardness of the graphite used in the pencil, with number 2 being of mid-range hardness. It is therefore optimal for academic use because it makes a mark that is sufficiently dark but can be erased. Importantly, it is ideally suited to be read by scanners.

There’s a pencil for everyone and every pencil has a story. For example, the Blackwing 602 is famous for being used by many writers, especially John Steinbeck and Vladimir Nabokov. The Dixon Company is responsible for the iconic Dixon Ticonderoga, which is what most people envision when thinking of a pencil.

The pencil is perfect.

A 2018 TED talk by pencil-lover Caroline Weaver was entitled “Why the pencil is perfect: small things, big ideas.” She emphasized that it took hundreds of people over many centuries to come to the current design. For example, the original pencils were round until Joseph Dixon developed machinery to mass produce the hexagonal configuration. Also, until the current erasers were developed, breadcrumbs were the erasers of choice.

Ten-year-old Caroline Weaver asked her mother to sharpen a Ticonderoga pencil three times, then draw it to scale. That drawing was the basis of her tattoo, which symbolized her lifelong obsession with pencils.

At age 25 Weaver opened CW Pencil Enterprise on the lower East Side of New York City. Within months, her tiny shoebox \$1800/month store grew from a one-woman shop into the world’s most extensive pencil specialty shop.

In its heyday, the store sold pencils from India, Japan, Germany, Sweden and the U.S. Along with the standard 30¢ pencil, the store sold vintage ones for as much as \$75.

Weaver’s blog said: “You’ve found a tiny niche in the universe where graphite wins over pens, typewriters, computers, smartphones I propose that you consider digging the sharpener from the bottom of your stationary drawer and put the perfect sharp point of a new pencil to paper.”

She concludes with advice that we all might want to consider: “The smell of the wood, the sound of the lead as it scrawls, the tiny, imprinted letters on the barrel — you will fall in love, and you’ll probably be surprised.” ●



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Windemuth Newspaper Ads: Oregon Journal

A River Story

By PAMELA LINDHOLM-LEVY

Before there was the Ross Island bridge, the curve and elevated roadway off to highway 99E, or the bike path and rail tracks along the east bank, or Zidell Yards on the west, or Tilikum Crossing, or the heavy industry that grew up in the South Waterfront, swimmers enjoyed endless summer in the Willamette River.

North of the northern tip of Ross Island and in mid-stream, a large wooden swimming and diving platform was anchored to the bottom of the river. In the evenings there were dances, drawing people from 1914 to the mid-1920s.

The two-story swimming tank of the Windemuth swimming platform held 500 people and was a huge summer social scene. Professional divers showed their form. Boats brought patrons from both east and west banks of the river. Around the turn of the 20th century, on the east side there had been Bundy’s Baths, a summer mecca where up to 1,000 people would gather. It was tucked into the cove made today by the curve of the concrete wall north of the bridge. It had anchored docks, changing rooms, a snack bar, an enclosed swimming area, diving from springboard and platform. As we

can see today, the east bank is steep; it required a stairway to bring people down to the beach. After Tom Bundy died, the locals had to wait six years for joy on a hot summer day.

The Oregonian newspaper reported, “The rush to Windemuth continued far into the evening, and launches deposited loads of sweltering humanity on the floats under the refreshing river atmosphere as late as 10 p.m. The quick transition from the torrid heat of the streets to the river breezes and cooling water turned many a sweltering human atom into a pleasurable realization of what an asset the river is when the good old summertime goes on a rampage with the thermometers.”

Portland was growing. Cringe-worthy to say, until the early 1950s raw sewage went right into the Willamette. Southeast Portland had a building boom in the 1920s, and its sewage was piped to the river.

The owner of the Windemuth structure, John Jennings, was required to renew his business license in July 1924 in order

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to open to the public. He had opened in June in anticipation of another successful summer. Jennings didn't expect what happened next.

The city health officer had to approve the renewal. He and the city sanitary inspector had learned that the river was running with record-breaking levels of fecal coliform bacteria and low levels of dissolved oxygen. Jennings requested another test. It was even worse. The health officers wanted to close the whole river to swimming. The cause: the building boom in southeast Portland.

The Lents (Portland neighborhood) trunk sewer and two others drained into the Willamette not far upstream from Windemuth. The pipe was 5.2 miles long and 56 to 71 inches in diameter. Two other sewer pipes dumped directly across from Ross Island.

One fix was to divert the sewer outflows to the Columbia River. The city council realized that would cost millions. Nevertheless, the council was reluctant to close a thriving business. The July 24 Oregonian said, "None of the members

of the council felt inclined to rob the Windemuth company of its business." So it ordered the health officials to test another set of samples. Nine days later they were no better. Jennings announced on July 27 that he was closing Windemuth. An Oregon Journal headline claimed "A Swimmerless River."

To salvage Willamette River swimming, Jennings conceived of giant tanks and a swimming center on the north end of Ross Island, which was wider then. The tanks would be filled with well water, a drilling job Jennings began the next May. He imagined a deep-water tank for experts, a large graduated tank for most swimmers and a shallow pool for children.

There would be diving again. But the complex was never realized. Jennings died of a heart attack in 1927, a year after Ross Island Sand and Gravel began excavating the lagoon. The Ross Island bridge was built in 1926. The neighborhood changed.

Today, the Human Access Project (HAP) promises to embrace, cherish and preserve our river after decades of abuse. HAP promotes advocacy for the river and encourages people to get into the Willamette, 100 years later.●

Portland Diary

Father's Day, 2025

I

I relax into my massage chair, listen to space music. Cindy praises the shade of pink I have chosen for my toes, runs warm water into the footbath in front of me. She is wearing a beautiful jade bracelet and deep-green jade ring, which suggests a family background I cannot guess. As she works, shaping and snipping, she tells me my toes will match my shirt, gives me a motherly pat from time to time.

Finally, my toes are done: brilliant pink. Cindy carefully puts on my sandals, helps me over the small ridge leading to the central aisle. "Be careful," she warns me. I'm not sure if I resent the warning or welcome her care.

II

On the Portland Streetcar, a young man sits in front of me, his daughter of about 4 in his lap. A streetcar rumbles by going the opposite direction. "Oh, papa," the girl cries, "It's pink!"

How long has it been since I marveled at a color?

III

Walking the Greenway, I pass a man with a low-slung dog on a leash. He cries out, "Oh, no! That's crazy. What a shame!"

He is either eccentric or wearing an earbud.

— Nancy Moss

I was prepared for a quiet Father's Day brunch at Mirabella, the bistro burger definitely on my mind. Little did I know I would experience an unexpected joy.

After placing my order, I heard the gentleman behind me order waffles topped with scoops of ice cream, assorted fruit and different toppings. He proclaimed he wanted a banana split on top of his waffles. My ears perked up.

I was enjoying my burger when his banana split waffles arrived. I could hear sounds of bliss and pure joy. Surprised that the Bistro could accommodate such a delightful request and that the resident hadn't paid attention to the number of points he was using, I got out of my chair to see what was evoking such ecstasy.

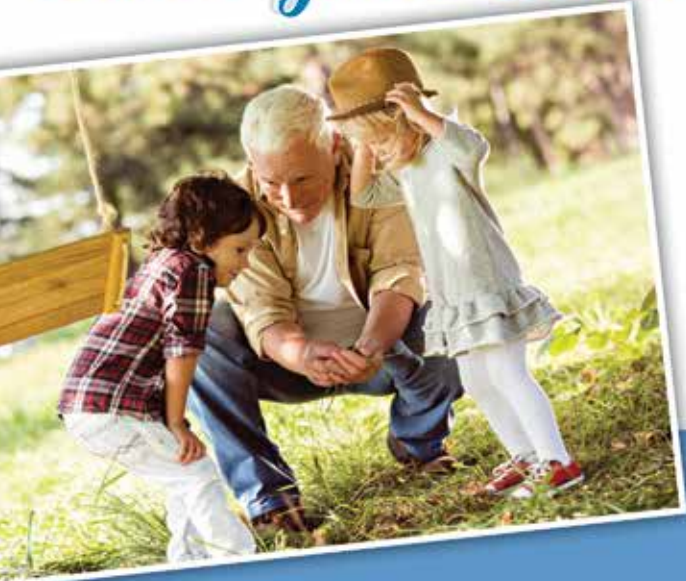
I told him that my husband, grandson and I enjoyed the bacon waffles they used to make at the Bistro when I lived at the John Ross.

As soon as he heard the word "bacon," he slapped the side of his head and said he had forgotten to order his usual bacon with the meal.

Now that I know how to order such a treat, I'm going to invite my grandchildren over to enjoy a banana split and strips of bacon over waffles for brunch. I was able to experience what it was like to be in seventh heaven over the simple pleasures of our lives at Mirabella.

— Janet Kakishita

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Courtesy Mirabella Library

Library Meets Resident Needs

As a new resident, you walk into the library, absorb its efficient but cheerful ambiance — the woman in a comfortable chair reading the newspaper, a man scanning a shelf of Oregon writers — and ask the woman at the desk about a book you couldn't find on the shelves.

She mentions Multnomah County Library's (MCL) outreach program, which delivers books to Mirabella on the second Monday of each month. You will need an MCL card, she says. Even if you have one, you will need to update it.

After getting that card, you approach another volunteer, during her listed hours off the mail room, to follow the next steps. You need a new library card, she tells you, with information relevant to Mirabella: MIRA followed by your apartment number, followed by a space, followed by your initials. Your password is your four-digit telephone number.

Easily done! On a computer you go to Multnomah County Library and ENTER followed by your new card number and password. That gets you into its catalog where you can browse to your heart's content. You are now one of the 68 Mirabella participants listed on Google Sheets. In July the library staff also distributed books or media to 15 residents.

Residents with low vision can get special materials through the State Library of Oregon. After filling out an application and taking it to Mirabella's director of resident services Megan Huston, they are eligible to receive the free audio book player necessary for playing the library's specially formatted audio books (replaced or repaired by the library for free). The player is small, convenient and has "just a few easily identifiable controls and large buttons," says Mirabella resident and library volunteer Gail Van Gorder.

Books are mailed for free and mailed back using pre-paid mailing cards. The National Library Service's collection includes 65% fiction and 35% non-fiction featuring bestsellers, fiction, biographies and how-to books.

Back in the library, the man continues to browse while a volunteer works quietly at the librarian's desk. ●

— Nancy Moss

Poem: Hummingbird

By EILEEN KANE

A flickering
A barely detected
Motion
Sudden and rare
A needle beak
Pokes rapidly,
Intermittently,
Into the feeder
Outside
The small head
Bobs
Continuously
Side to side
A visible tension
A wariness
Burst of feathers
Away from view
Only to return
Quickly
for another sip of
Nectar.



Photo: Bert Van Gorder

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THE BEST EYE DROPS COME FROM YOU

USING YOUR BLOOD TO TREAT DRY
EYE DISEASE

By Dr. Mila Ioussifova, OD, FAAO



If you have been experiencing dry, irritated, and red eyes—especially since the pandemic—you are not alone! Although **dry eye disease (DED)** is already one of the most common eye disorders that eye doctors treat, a 2021 study published in the *International Journal of Occupational Safety and Ergonomics* found that in people who switched to working remotely during the pandemic, a large number had an increase in eye strain symptoms, with over 28 percent experiencing severe DED. Researchers attributed this to their increased digital screen usage. Besides eye dryness and redness, DED can cause other symptoms like a gritty and sandy feeling, itchy or painful eyes, and even blurry vision. This condition can be simply annoying for some people and downright debilitating for others.

Patients suffering from DED are often frustrated with traditional treatments, which include artificial tears and prescription eye drops.

While these can be effective for people with occasional or mild dry eyes, they are usually insufficient for those with moderate or severe DED. That's because while these options help to lubricate your eyes, they do not replace what is found in natural tears: critical substances like proteins, lipids, enzymes, vitamins, and growth factors. These biochemical molecules, especially growth factors, are important in corneal (front part of the eye) cell division and wound healing.

Here is the good news: you can get these healing molecules from your blood plasma—the clear liquid of your blood.

At South Waterfront Eye Care, we have been making autologous (from the patient) serum eye drops to treat dry eye disease for years. This service is not offered by many clinics, so most patients have never heard of it, and accessibility is often limited. We have a convenient and straightforward process of drawing blood and making the drops within one hour.

Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) is a regenerative therapy used in all areas of medicine and aesthetics. And now we are using it for the eyes! PRP eye drops provide more concentrated growth factors and therefore healing properties. We see incredible results in corneal healing, pain reduction, and vision improvement in patients who have tried and failed with many other therapies for dry eye.



Our doctors treat DED as the multifactorial disease it is, approaching it with holistic and functional medicine solutions and assessing nutrition, gut health, and overall wellness. We address the underlying causes of dry eye, such as ocular rosacea, meibomian gland (eyelid glands) dysfunction, and blepharitis (eyelid inflammation and bacterial overgrowth) with highly effective treatments such as Intense Pulsed Light (IPL), Lipiflow Thermal Pulsation, Radiofrequency, Miboflow, and BlephEx.

Although DED is common, it is still an underdiagnosed and undertreated condition. Addressing the root cause and utilizing the regenerative powers of our biologics can be critical factors in treating this disease. I love that we now have so many options to offer our patients struggling with DED, and I never get tired of hearing patients say, "I am not using lubricating drops all day long anymore; I feel like I have my life back!"



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