

3550



December 2017

a publication by and for the residents of Mirabella Portland





**Nancy Moss**

*Deputy Editor*



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*President*

The young family at the streetcar stop included a loudly happy three-year-old child. “Train!” he shouted. “Ride train!” He capered about a bit and then looked up at the Mirabella. “Building!” he yelled. “Tall building.” His father pointed out the crane at the nearby construction site. “Crane!” the boy shouted.

His delight in new things, and in finding words to go with them, is one Mirabella residents seldom show. They don’t call out “Soup!” when the clam chowder arrives or “Pie!” at their lemon meringue tart.

I suspect the Creativity on Display artists felt something like that child’s joy creating the works that hang on our lobby’s wall for a month. They had made something new that did not exist before. Recognition by their peers, questions about their process during the program to introduce their work, is frosting on the cake. The essential element is something new: a new word, a new skill, the joy that keeps us young.

William Butler Yeats’ poem “Sailing to Byzantium” says “An aged man is but a paltry thing,/A tattered coat upon a stick, unless/Soul clap its hands and sing.”

The singing is art, which can take many forms. (Okay, Yeats also explored sheep glands as a way of staying young; his poem is wiser.)

Mary Zehrung’s quilters no doubt feel a little burst of joy as they finish one of their bright, beautiful creations for a child who needs it.

Anyone feeling a twinge of envy reading of that little boy’s exuberance may want to look around for an activity that creates that joy. Among the array of activities offered here, there should be one that captures, albeit a little more quietly, that child’s sense of joy. ❀

Have any of you had your computer hacked? If so, concerned friends from long ago may call to make sure we’re not really stranded in the Philippines and in need of money.

Here at Mirabella concerned friends surround us, and our needs are often obvious to them. Recently, when a resident lost her husband and we passed in the lobby, I stopped her for a hug, and she spoke of how the support she feels from all of us sustains her through her darkest days.

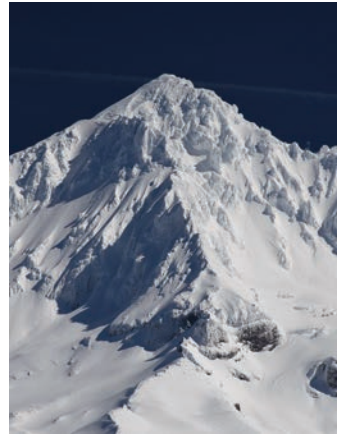
We live here as a gift to our children, so that they needn’t worry about the state of our health or be faced with getting rid of the “stuff” we’ve acquired since man first walked on the moon. We live here also as a gift to ourselves, free of the need to cook and clean, scrape ice off the windshield before negotiating unbelievable traffic, dine alone in front of the television, or decide not to go to the gym because of the rain. We sometimes wonder what it must feel like to be retired because life at Mirabella can become so busy we miss our afternoon nap.

Each of us, whether single or half of a couple, eventually finds a rhythm of daily life, both inside the building and in the community, that feels about right. Portland is a user-friendly community with much to offer. Newcomers may lean on the expertise longtime residents show about where to eat, get clothes altered, or a dog groomed. We share dinner and a bottle of wine in one of the most beautiful dining venues in the city.

I look forward to the next year as president of our RAMP (Residents’ Association Mirabella Portland) as a time to deepen our bonds of friendship, say hello to new residents and farewell to those who will inevitably depart. We are truly blessed to live here. ❀



**O**n the Cover: John McKinney leads Rosie Batcheller and Stan Tidman in the tai chi forms Grasping Sparrow's Tail and Single Whip. Photo by Robert French.



**B**ack Cover: The west face of Mount Hood, after a heavy snowstorm last winter. Photo by Robert French.

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### 3550 MAGAZINE

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# Still Bristol, or Smudges on the Yacht?

by Steve Casey

When Mirabella first opened, residents thrilled to a stunning building with fresh paint,

by the annual survey each resident receives.

The 2017 survey brought 95 responses — down by almost half from 184 the prior year. That's a 29% return rate. (Some residents found the survey questions to be badly designed, and so lost interest, which might explain the dearth of responses this year.)

Building upkeep and repair was one of the primary areas singled out

“I hope everyone took it as constructive,” he told 3550. “That’s why I focused on what I thought to be community-wide concerns.”

He discussed four specifics: general building maintenance, Aria’s troublesome air conditioning system, continual problems with garbage chutes in the tower building, and whether some carpeted areas should have a different floor.

“A consistent issue I often hear,”

he told the annual meeting, “is that our beautiful building is looking tired. Dents, scratches and gouges are more apparent on doors, walls and baseboards. Elevators — until recently — were not tidy and shiny. Many interior windows always seem cloudy or streaked.”

As to air conditioning in the 24<sup>th</sup> floor restaurant, he asked residents, “Remember the latest ‘cookout’ in Aria? It was

really hot inside. . . Management said the buffet-line warmers created the excessive heat (but) I went to Aria the next morning and found the room temperature still very warm. Over the past two or three years there has been a recurring problem with Aria air conditioning. My question is why doesn’t the air conditioning system keep all 24<sup>th</sup> floor dining areas cool during the summer?”

Stan also recommended checking with other high-rise residential buildings in the area, asking if they have experienced recurring issues with odors from the trash rooms and, if so, what they have done about it.



Neglect can change a pristine setting.

glistening surfaces and handsome décor.

Now, some say that beauty has faded as chips and dings are ignored, carpets fray and some basic functions — think elevators and air conditioning — often haven’t worked properly.

Is our home still as spiffy as a luxury cruise ship?

To make sure it is, can employees just *fix* blemishes they run across without getting a work order or direction from a supervisor?

And how does all that affect our quality of life?

Mirabella and Pacific Retirement Services are vitally interested in residents’ quality of life, as witnessed

as needing improvement — 99% said it was important, but only 61% were satisfied.

Some of that dissatisfaction likely stems from problems of building design or construction that the maintenance crew has worked hard to correct. For example, vexing elevator malfunctions reportedly resulted from inherent problems — not from staff neglect. And facilities management commissioned a rapid response to address some minor problems before they turn major.

Is that enough?

Speaking at the resident association’s annual meeting, Stan Tidman cited numerous maintenance issues.



The need for refreshing the building is not lost on management.

Executive director Sharon McCartney told 3550 that the current top priority to improve quality was “to improve building aesthetics,” citing the expensive replacement of worn and dirty carpet as a primary project.

She told residents that the current fiscal year budget included the largest ever capital improvement fund in order to freshen the building after seven years of use.

Stan’s comments went another step and recommended looking at something other than carpet for flooring in the dining venues, along heavily-trafficked hallways and in second floor patient rooms.

Stan told 3550 he frequently visits Aria at mid-day and when “you get off the elevators at 11:30 in the

to the gym and by the entrance to the Chic salon. He also suggested patient rooms on the second floor, sometimes susceptible to spills and accidents, could have hard-surface floors as found in hospital rooms.

“We are now seven years old,” Sharon said. “This is a very normal aging process of the building and we are right on target on the carpet in the Health Center.

“We could go to an institutional floor that’s easier to clean, but it destroys that home-like look. That is people’s home and they need a home-like environment.”

Sharon noted that hard surfaces — think “linoleum” or terrazzo here — also create more noise and seem at odds with a “cruise ship” feel, making the dining room more of a diner.

She agreed that a quick vacu-

He has reported on issues in the lobby, the hallways, with carpeting, the elevators, burned out lights, rust in front of the building, rust in the swimming pool area and countless others.

“I’m not on a mission,” he said. “I don’t inspect, I just walk around and I notice things. It’s not that I want to complain and it’s not that I don’t like it here — I do.”

Jerry points out that if minor blemishes keep getting ignored, eventually the building will look beat up and will be harder to market — putting our individual investments somewhat at risk.

Stan and Jerry both say a good start would be empowering dining, housekeeping and maintenance staff to jump in and *fix* minor problems they encounter, immediately and outside the “work order” system.

“They are very much encouraged to do that,” Sharon said, adding that managers could do a better job of promoting it.

“It starts from the director level,” she said. “The staff has to see the managers doing it — taking care of minor problems they see, picking up trash. It’s going to take more of our staff seeing

us doing that, and they’ll do more of it. That being said, some individuals have tunnel vision: ‘Here’s my task, here’s my work order, here I go.’ Hey, slow down. See a smudge? Get a wash cloth and wipe it down and you’re fine.”

It’s what they would do on a cruise ship. ☼



Extended neglect can lead to disorder. Photos by Art Moss

morning you get hit with odors of stale food.”

Often, he said, he will see food chunks on the floor in the morning, as cleanup awaits housekeepers who arrive later in the day.

Citing the long hallway from the back of the lobby to the back door on River Parkway, Stan noted that the carpet is worn by the employee entrance, by the entrance

uming after the last patron left Aria at night might help keep stains and odors in check.

Stan’s concerns partially overlap those of resident Jerry Abeles, a frequent source of alerts to damage in the building.

“I’ve been told I have submitted more work orders than anyone in all of PRS,” he told 3550.

# In The News

## 3550 Adds Staff

Your 3550 has added two new faces to its staff. Stan Tidman is the magazine's new advertising manager. After receiving his masters' degree from the University of Oregon, Stan worked as a regional planner in Salem, Corvallis and Lake Oswego. He will meet with potential advertisers and work at retaining old ones.



Marilyn Dodge is 3550's new business manager. Marilyn earned her MBA from Lewis and Clark and kept



accounts for her husband Raymond's travel agency. Asked why she took the job, Marilyn said, "I love the magazine and the people who work for it." She will supervise accounts payable and receivable, and keep our

finances straight.

RAMP treasurer Betsy Bullard will continue to maintain the bank accounts and write the checks. ❀

## Holiday Charities Chosen

The Northwest Pilot Project and the social services program under St. Michael the Archangel will be Mirabella's Christmas charities this year, according to Gwen Luhta.

The Northwest Pilot Project, which helps low-income seniors find affordable housing and settle into it, would like either checks or toiletries such as soap, toothpaste or toilet paper, according to Gwen. St. Michael's social services program, which sponsors the Sandwich Ministry, needs socks.

Gwen is looking for volunteers to man a table opposite the mail room for two weeks in December, starting December 4. She hopes to fill two-hour shifts from ten to 12 a.m. and three to five p.m. Anyone interested should call Gwen Luhta at 6859.

We can make a difference in some difficult lives, Gwen says. ❀



Sample of NWPP requested toiletries.



# Residents Hone Survival Skills

by Ed Parker

Mirabella residents practiced “Drop, Cover and Hold On” while listening to broadcast sounds of the ground shaking and glass breaking during the Great ShakeOut earthquake drill.

The drill at 10:19 am on 10/19/2017, Mirabella Portland’s first ever earthquake drill, left residents more prepared to help one another after any disaster. They practiced using emergency radios to organize disaster response when both landline and mobile phones are out of service.

The drill was proposed and organized by Rosie Batcheller with support from other members of the Mirabella Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee.

The drill was not able to simulate the shaking that will happen with a magnitude 9 Cascadia subduction zone earthquake, but it did broadcast some of the sounds that are likely to be heard during the estimated four to five minutes of shaking in a real earthquake. The sound volume was not consistent on different floors and included some unintended alarm sounds on some floors. Those problems should be fixed prior to future drills.

Mirabella’s resident incident commander Barbara Short coordinated Mirabella resident responses with management incident commander John Hart. Mirabella staff provided support to assisted living residents. The skilled nursing center practiced a simulated evacuation drill using Stryker chairs.

The drill included an E-team leader calling the incident commander to arrange for staff support to simulate evacuation of

an injured resident using one of the Stryker chairs located in the west stairwell on every third floor. Mirabella staff loaded 100 pounds of sandbags into a Stryker chair on the 17th floor and found that it was easy for one staff person to get it down to the first floor within five minutes. They also practiced carrying Stryker chairs back up, if needed for additional evacuations. It was apparently easy for two staff members to carry the chair back up 17 flights of stairs. Maintenance staff may be able to rescue Mirabella residents.

Mirabella staff also practiced examining Mirabella’s structural pillars to be able to determine quickly whether or not there was structural damage that would require building evacuation.

Independent living residents practiced “Drop, Cover and Hold On” to protect themselves from

in place without electricity, water or plumbing in the weeks afterward. They unlocked their doors after the simulated quake so rescuers could reach them if they needed help.

Effective communication, essential for any disaster response, will be particularly important after a major quake takes both landline and mobile telephones out of service. Twenty-seven resident teams, sometimes called floor teams or emergency teams (E-teams), practiced using emergency radios to communicate with three zone captains and the resident incident commander.

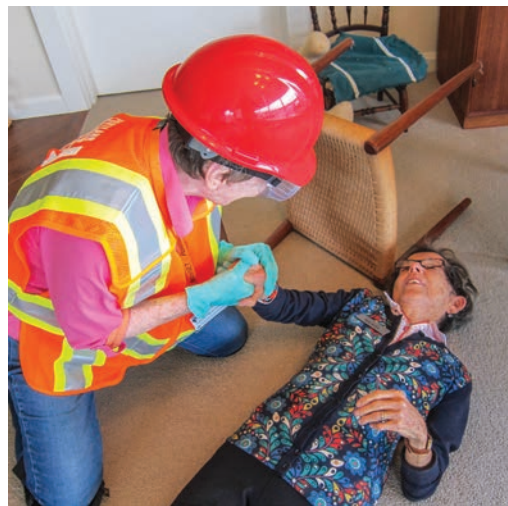
The radio drill, mostly successful, exposed a few instances where additional training and practice would be helpful.

In the drill, triage volunteers provided residents with a check-list of possible preparations to improve their survivability and post-earthquake resilience.

After a real earthquake, triage volunteers from each E-team would quickly check to see if any residents need emergency medical help. They would provide immediate life-saving first aid and call for backup from the volunteer medical response team, if needed.

The earthquake drill was part of “The Great ShakeOut,” an annual global earthquake drill. Mirabella was one of more than half a million Oregon organizations and families that signed up to participate this year. More than 19 million signed up world-wide.

The Mirabella Great ShakeOut drill increased resident awareness of how a prepared caring community can make us more resilient after any disaster. It also showed that we need more E-team radio and triage training to improve the effectiveness of post-earthquake responses. ❁



NET-trained Nancy Moss asks Polly Grose, “can you squeeze my hand?” Photo by Art Moss.

breaking bones by being knocked down by a powerful quake or injured by flying or falling objects. They looked around their apartments to see what additional preparations might reduce risks of injury and permit them to shelter



Photo by Ron Mendonca

## Bobby Cohn



*By Sybilla Cook*

Barbara Evans never thought of becoming an artist. After growing up with her sister and mother in Greenwich, Connecticut

## Resident Profile: Bobby Cohn Building a Life in Art

and then attending Sarah Lawrence College, Bobby (as we know her now) married Melvin Bisgyer and settled into suburban life.

While at home with her babies, daughters Marcia and Ann, Bobby developed projects such as covering large kitchen matchboxes with felt, using odds and ends of trimming and buttons left over from her brother-in-law's sweater business. Visitors admired them so Bobby made more. A nearby store sold them for her, and did so well Bobby walked into Saks Fifth Avenue and Nieman Marcus to see if they would carry her wares. Both stores accepted them.

One Christmas Bobby made a felt tree skirt to replace the usual white sheet under the tree for catching dropped needles, scalloping the edges and decorating the skirt with hand-cut felt Santa Clauses, Christmas stockings and

stars. Friends wanted their own, so she made more skirts and then sold them at Saks and Nieman Marcus.

After talking to a company that wanted to order a "hundred thousand dozen," Bobby realized that she would have to build a major business, an effort that didn't combine well with her third pregnancy.

Daughter Susan arrived and suburban life continued. But then came a divorce. Bobby moved with her three daughters to New York City and found a job working for an advertising agency.

Her ex-husband Melvin took the

girls every Sunday, and Bobby filled that time walking around the neighborhood. Watching craftsmen create clay lamps in a neighborhood art studio fascinated her.

She practiced working in clay at home; after a week of kneading clay, Bobby had one decent-looking thumb on a hand.

After watching a man sculpt with wax at the studio, Bobby switched to that medium. She learned about the various small tools used, the variety of waxes and that adding lamp black to the wax prevented fingerprints from showing. After creating the piece, she had to make a plaster mold for it. The sculpture was fitted into the plaster with small channels created for the wax to run out, leaving behind an empty, perfect mold. That mold went to the foundry to be filled with metal for the final piece.

Dick Eyen, a gallery owner who had noticed her creations, asked to represent her work in his gallery Environment. He suggested that Bobby put her pieces on display. When customers wanted to buy her work, Bobby wanted to keep it for herself; Eyen pointed out that she could make six duplicates, sell five and keep one.

That worked well.

Meanwhile, she'd had a date or two with Eric Cohn. Visiting his house in Rye, she realized two things she hadn't known about him. He had a sense of humor: a posted sign in the powder room said, "Jiggle It," referring to the old-fashioned pull chain. And he had a marvelous basement, just right for her sculpting.

They blended their family, Eric's two sons and her three daughters, a unit that became complete when they acquired a Saint Bernard. They hauled boats and camping equipment in pickup trucks and sailed on the Long Island Sound, a totally different lifestyle for Bobby.

Meanwhile Bobby was doing well in sculpture, her forte capturing motion. Most sculptures are still life; her figures are always in action. A girl twirls around, enjoying the flare of her skirt; a fisherman throws out his torn net; a man balances on one toe.

Since she was known under the name Barbara Bisgyer, she kept that name. Learning to weld, she created sculptures in a variety of metals. Her largest piece was done on commission, for a Florida couple who needed a large piece of outdoor sculpture for their estate. She created some small samples, and they chose one, a beautiful 11-foot by 14-foot bronze abstract.

It was a very large piece to create, to cast in the local foundry and then truck to Florida.

*(see Cohn p. 10)*

*(from Cohn p. 9)*

The owners had prepared for its arrival, building a large concrete platform about the size of a small room on their property, centered with a large hole for the sculpture. A huge crane hoisted this into the prepared hole. Bobby's job was to center it properly, so it looked right from every viewing angle. The piece was finally installed to everyone's satisfaction.

Meanwhile, Bobby's daughters Susan and Ann had



Photos by Robert French.

separately moved to the Portland area. When Ann was in the late stages of metastatic cancer, Bobby came to Portland to help care for her and moved — temporarily — into the nearby Mirabella. After Ann's death, Bobby stayed put.

She returns to New York occasionally, visiting friends and family, but is now a firm fixture in our residence. Another show of her lovely work will be coming up in the near future as part of Mirabella's Creativity on Display program. ❀

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For more information contact  
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*Season's  
Greetings to  
our readers  
from your  
3550 staff*



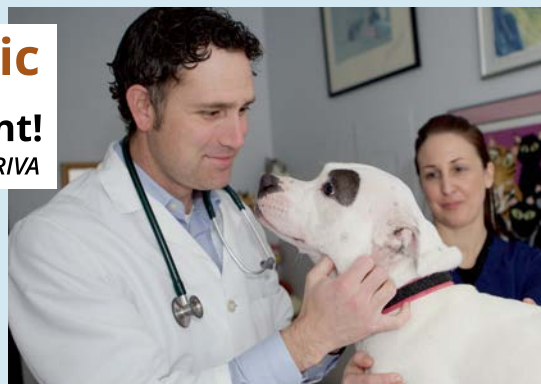
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by Claire Weber

Native Portlander John Lahodney, the part-time valet who drives the Mirabella bus, spent decades driving long-distance trucks all over the country.

After graduating from Washington High School, John joined the Marines, where he drove for Major General Joseph O. Butcher, an unusual assignment for a private first class. While driving, John received enough meritorious promotions to become a sergeant in only 11 months.

When he had leave, John usually returned to Portland; one time he ran into a friend from high school, Lee Ann Forster. They had never dated in high school but started going out and, as John says, “We hit it off.” They have been married for 49 years and have two daughters, two sons and two granddaughters.

“I couldn’t see myself sitting at a desk or working on an assembly line,” John says. Because he liked driving large vehicles in the Marines, he went to truck-driving school to become eligible to drive big semi tractor-trailers.

Long-distance driving was the right fit for John, who “really enjoyed it.” Driving takes a lot of planning, he explains. “You don’t just hop in a truck and drive to Ohio. You have to plan for the hours, the load, road conditions. I like planning and I like challenges.”

On long-distance drives, John points out, “Things are changing second by second. The other

vehicles, the road, conditions, police, timing. It’s a challenge and I like that.” In 49 years of driving cross-country in 47 states and three Canadian provinces, John drove 125,000 to 130,000 miles a year, totaling well over six million miles during his driving career.

Among John’s driving awards is a ten-year, million-mile safe driver award.

Although John enjoyed long distance driving, he finally retired in September 2013 because he was “fed up with the traffic.” With more trucks on the road, drivers were “just not nice like they used to be. They are too aggressive and there is too much road rage.” Always alert to avoid dangerous situations, John

midnight after unloading the truck when a driver drove a Volkswagen Beetle under the trailer, peeling back the top of the VW. The driver, who had been released from prison earlier that day, was driving with no lights and with numerous shot glasses littering the floor of the car. John didn’t want to look at the VW to check the driver’s condition, but fortunately, the driver was so drunk she passed out and fell over in the seat before impact, saving her life.

John’s driving, which required him to be away from home for weeks at a time, requires what John calls “a give-and-take wife.” When their children were younger, his trips would last one or two weeks; after they were older, he was usually on

## Staff Profile: John Lahodney, Working on the Road

points out that he saved many lives by always being watchful, slamming on the brakes or getting out of the way.

“I’d be a millionaire today if I had \$100 for every life I saved when someone cut in front of me or I swerved to avoid an accident,” John says. In his final years of driving, he estimates that he spent half of his driving time getting out of the way of accidents.

Constant alertness did not allow John to avoid all accidents. Once a young couple in a rented convertible rammed the back of his truck at 75 miles an hour. John felt the truck buck but thought something had just fallen over. Another trucker called and told John he had a car under his truck. The couple was lucky to survive, with the windshield of their convertible driven into the back of the trailer.

Another time in California, John was pulling out from a dock at

the road for a month or more. John says Lee Ann raised the kids while also working full time. “I had a great wife who was very understanding,” John admits, who did “a real good job with the kids and put up with me being gone.”

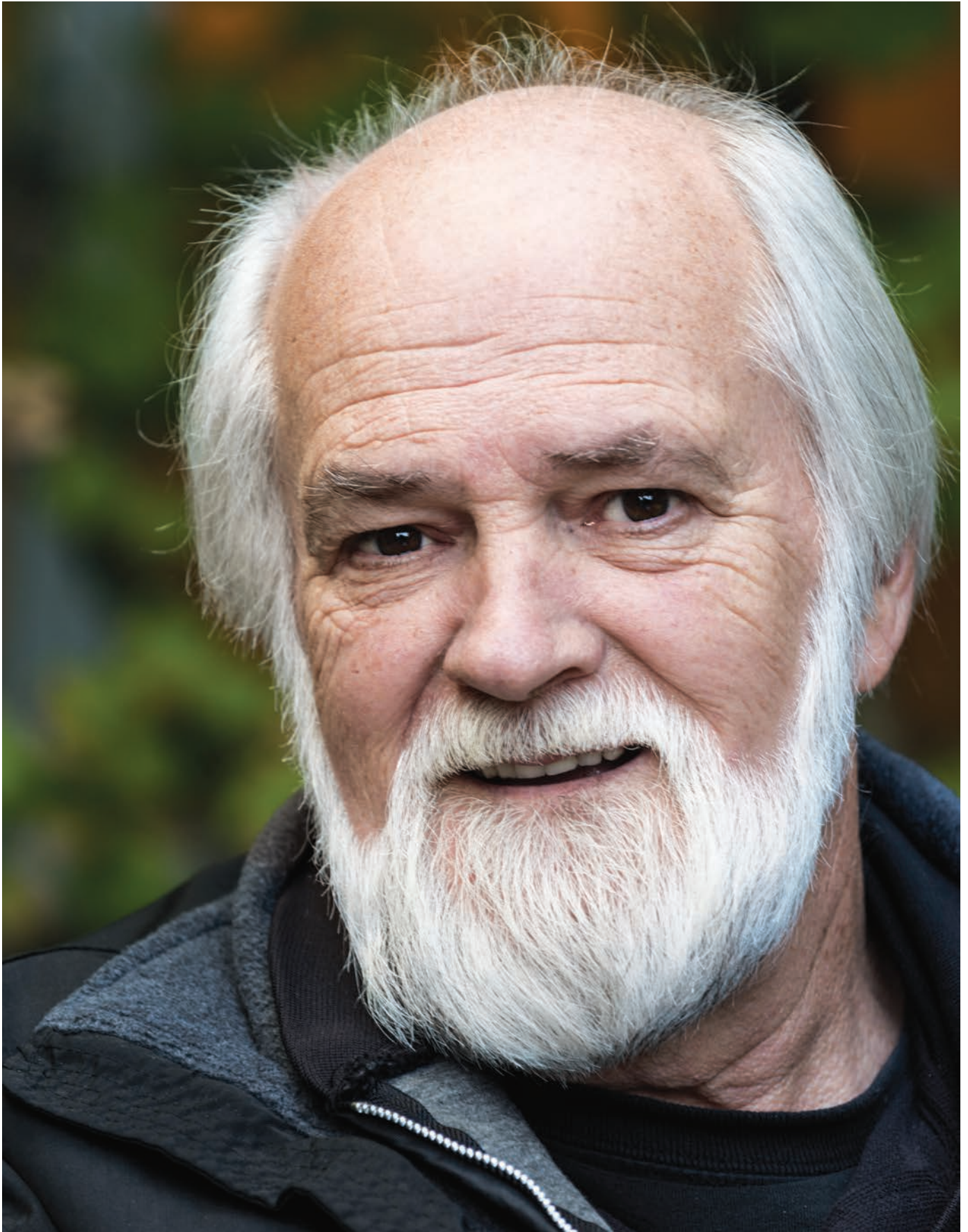
Looking back on his years of long-distance driving, John remarks that he and Lee Ann had different ideas of how to relax together. He wanted to sit down in a comfortable chair and unwind after driving and eating at truck stops. Lee Ann, on the other hand, wanted to take a drive and eat out at a restaurant — precisely what he had just spent weeks doing.

Nevertheless, John emphasizes, “living with a long-distance driver takes a give-and-take wife. I am thankful for who she is.”

Mirabella residents heading out on the bus can be thankful for John’s experience — and for who he is. ❀



Photo by Ron Mendonca



**John Lahodney**

# My Choice Program Readied for Rollout

by Steve Casey

The big unanswered question in and about Mirabella these days is “will I like the new My Choice dining plan?”

Depends.

If you routinely have a bowl of soup and a salad as starters in Aria, then ask for extra vegetables with your entrée and seconds on the entrée if you’re still hungry, then finish off with a big dessert, the answer is no.

Today, that costs you one “meal credit.” With My Choice, you will pay for each of those items.

If you are a light eater who prefers small portions and doesn’t touch starters or dessert, or you want to take your dessert or leftovers home, the answer is yes. Your “dining dollars” will go a lot further and no longer will a simple bowl of soup cost a “meal credit.”

For the rest of us? There are attractive features, but some parts of the program are yet unknown.

This month, Todd Albert will start laying out details of My Choice, expected to hit Mirabella in March.

Todd, both Mirabella dining director and regional culinary director for Pacific Retirement Services, has for months been getting My Choice started in several PRS communities.

“I think for two reasons it will be relatively painless here,” he told 3550.

“We are already doing a large part of it, and by the time we roll it out in Mirabella we are going to be so experienced.”

Some other communities have had only buffet service or limited menu options, he noted, unlike Aria where diners mix and match vegetables and starch, get multiple starters or half orders and make other menu swaps on the spot.

“The service style (elsewhere) changes quite a bit with My Choice but that’s going to be less of a factor here,” Todd said.

Yes, but will I like it? The test will be Todd’s answer to two questions:

How many dining dollars does each person receive per month?

What are the menu prices?

We do not yet know the answers, and looking at other PRS communities is not helpful.

The dining dollar allowance and pricing structure varies from one community to the next, but Todd says the aim is the same: to provide enough dining dollars that a resident can have 30 dinners each month.

“The goal is that we don’t give them too little money so they could not dine as they do now, and we didn’t want to give them way more, as that wouldn’t be economical or prudent,” he said.

\* \* \*

At Holladay Park Plaza, Bill Wieber is a happy man.

He and his wife, Ruthie, both signed on for My Choice which he says works splendidly for them.

“We have quite a bit of family in the area,” he told 3550, “and if we want to have them over here it can get pretty spendy. We found if we regulated ourselves a bit, we would have enough (dining) points that we wouldn’t

be out of pocket. That was probably the key thing.

“Another factor is the tendency that ‘if you pay for it, you eat it.’ We are trying to cut down on our food a bit, particularly in the evening,” he said. “This is a means of doing that.”

The Wiebers are among what Todd estimates to be one-third of

Holladay Park Plaza (HPP) residents who elected to give My Choice a chance, effective October 1.

Kathy Hansen and Rufus and Karen Day are among the two-thirds of the HPP population who have elected to stick — at least for now — with the old “meal credit” plan, and are happy with their decision.

All Holladay Park residents were offered a 90-day trial of My Choice, as Mirabella residents will be when the program starts here. New HPP residents will automatically get the My Choice plan, just as will new Mirabella residents.

At a recent HPP dinner, the Days and Kathy Hansen hosted your editor and discussed why they stuck with the original dining plan.

“We were told that if you are going to eat in the dining room 30 or 31 nights a month, this program is not for you,” Rufus Day said. “We were told there are people who want to travel, and this program is for them.”

“We travel,” Rufus said. “But what will happen when we can no longer go to Fred Meyer and buy food, or go to

---

*The real test will be the answer to two questions:  
How many dining dollars does each person receive each month?  
What are the menu prices?*

---



Sisters as we like to do, and we will be eating 30 meals a month here?”

He fears the My Choice plan means they will run out of dining dollars before they run out of month, and with the original plan they can count on getting as big a meal as they want, every day.

Todd believes a fear of running out of dining dollars is unwarranted.

HPP's menu illustrates his point.

There, residents receive a \$420 per person dining allowance monthly. The nightly buffet costs \$14. Times 30, that's the \$420 monthly allowance.

Residents may opt to order pricier or less costly food on the menu.

They may also use dining dollars to pay for guest meals — the big attraction for the Wiebers — or alcohol. Food purchased with dining dollars and not consumed at the table may be taken home to enjoy later.

It is, as the name implies, a choice.

There is some lingering resentment at HPP over the way the program was introduced.

“I was chair of the dining committee,” Karen Day observed, “and we were never even allowed to ask questions in the committee.”

“You could ask questions,” Rufus said. “They just wouldn't be answered.”

“One mistake management made was not to involve residents in any part of the planning process,” he told 3550 at dinner. “They got off on the wrong foot, frankly. The plan may be good; I have some questions about the way it was forced on us.”

That is a problem Mirabella will not have.

Already, months before the anticipated rollout here, Todd has talked extensively with the dining committee, answered questions as those answers were developed, held one community meeting to outline the My Choice concept, and plans one or two more before implementation.

In addition, he has supplied program descriptions and menus from other communities for resident review.

“Mirabella has had a lot of information along the way,” dining committee chair Bernice Johnston told 3550. “There was the open forum, where all who attended posed questions that Todd has used in the development of My Choice, and the dining committee meetings where he brings us up to date. Like most changes, some folks will never believe they had enough information. That will happen here, I have no doubt.”

One concern was that servers would be baffled by having to keep track of who was on what program and how to charge meal purchases.

“The servers won't even have to know who is on which plan,” Todd told 3550. “The point of sale system will know. The plans are linked to each person, so when the

server rings in the order, if the resident is on My Choice the computer will price each item and deduct it from the balance. And if he or she is on the old plan, it will just deduct a meal credit.”

After a short computer coding glitch, that is now working at HPP.

“We get a slip every night showing exactly where we stand, which is quite nice because you're never in doubt,” reports Bill Wieber.

Some common questions and answers:

Yes, your “dining dollars” can pay for wine by the glass, beer or cocktails.

Yes, My Choice participants may use their funny money to pay for as many as four guests at any meal. So, if a couple is on My Choice, they can host as many as eight people, if their dining dollars hold out.

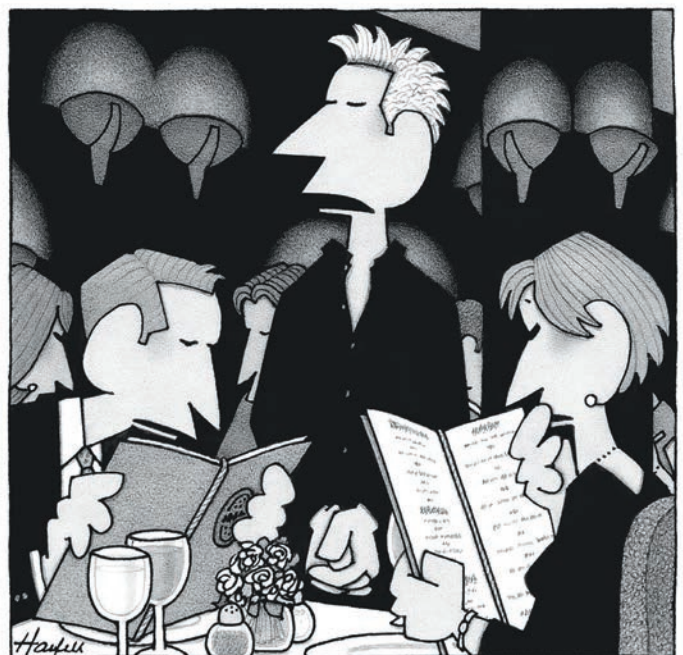
No, “dining dollar” balances will not roll over to the next month.

The 30% discount for Bistro meals charged to your account? Its fate is unknown. At press time Todd was “leaning toward” keeping that discount for charged meals, but not for meals purchased with dining dollars.

The popular barbeques will be charged one single price — the same price as charged for a regular buffet dinner in Aria.

As Mirabella residents can do now with meal credits — opting to reduce from 30 to 20, or increasing to 60 or even 90 a month — My Choice participants will be able to purchase more dining dollars at a slightly discounted rate, or reduce their monthly allowance.

But judging from the HPP structure, reducing the allowance brings only a tiny discount on monthly fees, so few will find it worthwhile. ❀



“I'll give you a few moments to recover from the prices.”

# Frieda: The Persistence of Trauma

by Nancy Moss

She escaped its electrified barbed wire fence at the age of 10, but Auschwitz has haunted Mirabella resident Frieda Grayzel all her life.

“People didn’t know how to help survivors emotionally. There was no understanding,” Frieda says of the trauma she experienced as a child. Freudian analysis, prevalent at the time, did not deal well with the effects of trauma.

“It never goes away,” Frieda adds.

Today, the crises of veterans who have returned from our many wars have expanded the study of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

“Trauma is not just an event that took place sometime in the past; it is also the imprint left by that experience on mind, brain, and body,” Bessel van der Kolk writes in “The Body Keeps the Score,” his best-selling book about treating trauma victims. According to van der Kolk, the left brain plugs away (and brain imaging shows just where in the left brain) while the right brain suffers the impact of trauma, with grave consequences for the individual. Neuroscientist Paul MacLean compares the left brain to the rider, the right to an occasionally unruly horse that may need control.

Frieda, whose formal education ended before the war when she was five, learned to write and do math in Poland after liberation. After being smuggled with her parents out of communist Poland in 1946, she lived in a displaced persons camp in the American zone of Berlin and then Germany, where she studied Hebrew, Jewish history and the Bible. When an educated person entered the camp, the school would snag him or her; her parents also

hired German tutors for Frieda and her cousin.

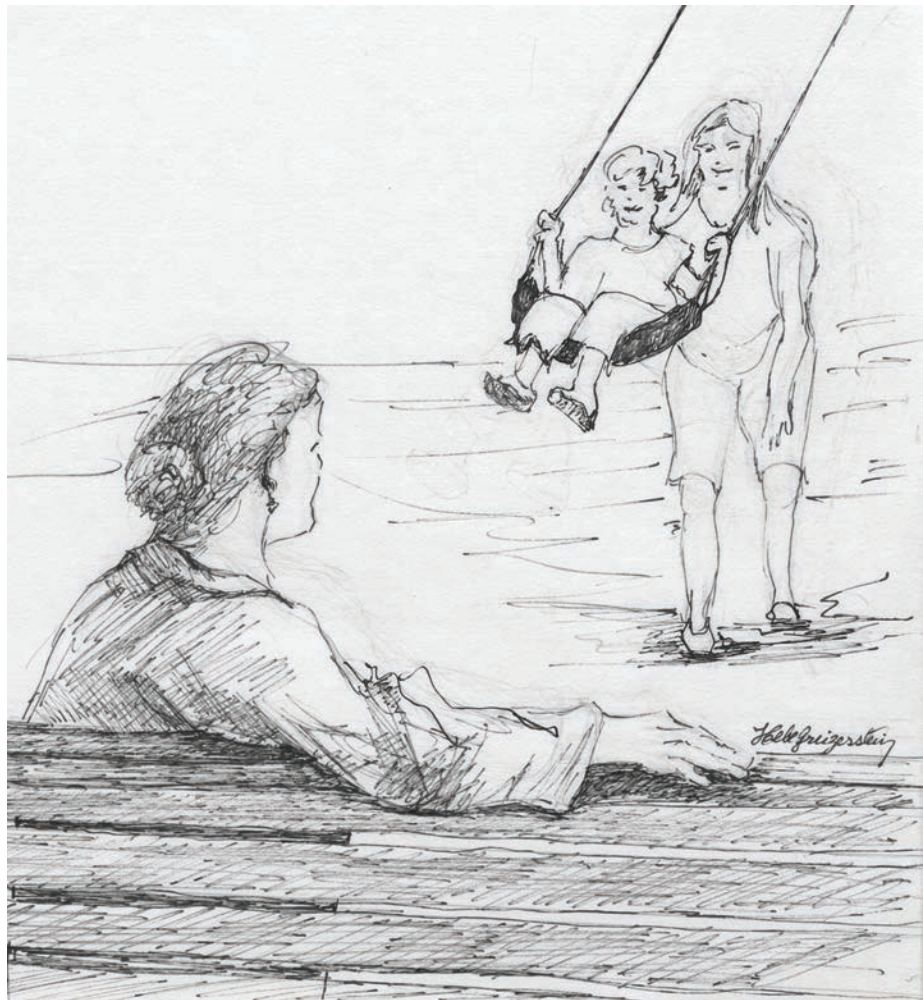
Coming to America at age 14, Frieda knew only one word in English: “Okay.” Eventually becoming an honor student at Forest Hill High School, she made friends with European kids who, like her, had survived the war or had escaped before it.

I was “on autopilot,” Frieda says now, adding that “I didn’t know what having a sense of humor was.” She wanted to get along with American teenagers, but had a hard time relating to people who described having only chicken rather than red meat during the war as “suffering.”

Finishing high school in three years, Frieda persuaded her parents,

who wanted her to have the security of a trade, to let her attend Queens College, which was practically free then. While at graduate school at Columbia University, she won a 15-month fellowship from the Brooklyn Museum to train in museum work, and then designed and installed an African art gallery in what she calls “the best year of my life. I felt I had come home,” she explains.

On a blind date, she met Al Grayzel, who became her husband. He persuaded her to move from New York to Cambridge, where she learned that jobs in art history were scarce. She earned her MFA in art history from Harvard and raised three children.



Drawing by Hebe Greizerstein



When Al's NASA job was phased out, the family moved to Israel where Al worked at a research lab in Haifa for three years. However, living in a country in what Frieda calls a "state of constant war," with occasional warplanes flying low overhead, triggered old memories, and she went into therapy. Dr. van der Kolk, who treats victims of rape and abuse, as well as veterans with PTSD, says his goal is to help patients "tolerate the sensations, emotions and reactions they experience without being constantly hijacked by them."

Finally gaining what Frieda calls "the courage to separate," she and her husband separated and then divorced.

Feeling that her therapy had helped her, Frieda decided to go into the field herself and got her master's degree in clinical social work. After three and a half years at a community health center, Frieda became an independent therapist.

Like her mentor Dr. van der Kolk, Frieda questions the role of medication alone in dealing with panic disorders, anxiety disorders and depression. Medications complement therapy, she feels, enabling the patient to explore deeper issues.

She has trained in meditation, relaxation techniques and hypnosis. She points out that "stress and emotions affect the ability of the immune system to function. The body cannot fight illness as effectively" if the spirit is struggling. Dr. van der Kolk recommends yoga,

pointing out that "noting and befriending the sensations in our bodies can produce profound changes in both mind and brain that can lead to healing from trauma."

"It's never far away," Frieda says of her own struggle. "The strongest part of trauma is abandonment," she adds, saying that in therapy it is important to reestablish human contact, to help a client face to face, unlike Freudian analysis where a client lies on a couch. She describes helping a man with a flying phobia to take a planned trip with his son to the Serengeti.

A friend and fellow Holocaust survivor told Frieda, "You carry your dead sister in your arms," referring to Frieda's four-year-old sister murdered by the Nazis, along with her grandparents and cousins.

In his book about Holocaust survivors, Laurence Langer sees their future selves as "unable to escape the grip of a memory laden with grief." To help them, Frieda created a group of child survivors of the Holocaust who hold self-led support groups. Now 34 years old, it has spread worldwide.

Having survived Auschwitz and "abandonment of the profoundest sort," Frieda has found that, "like mourning, healing is a lifelong task." ❁

# Woof. Meow.



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Walking by our friendly construction cranes the other day, I recalled the creative names some residents offered for the cranes. Wanna reminisce?

East and West, Ichabod and



## Around Campus with Marge Carothers

Whooping (personal favorite), OH and SU, Trumpeting Crane (28) and Crowned Crane (29), Fred and Ginger, Giant Porphyrion and Apollo, Trumpeting (28) and Denny Crane (29), Hansel and Gretel, Yin and Yang, Frazier and Niles, 28 and 29, Romeo and Juliet, Abbot and Costello, Crane and Abel, Sandhill and Whooping, OMG and WOW, Samson and Goliath and Pete and Repeat. Did we ever declare a winner?

Social bridge chair **Laurie Meigs** offers a special invitation to new residents to participate in the Bridge Group. We “welcome new members — come and try us out. It’s fun.” Feel free to call Laurie at 6830 for details.

**Nancy Moss** writes that “the Mirabella Players will perform Dylan Thomas’s A Child’s Christmas

in Wales on Monday December 11 in Willamette Hall at 7:30 p.m. Once again, the show will feature **Judy Seubert** on the recorder. They will repeat the show on the second floor at 2 p.m. on Friday, December 15. Anyone feeling that Christmas has become too commercial should enjoy this trip back to a time when the holiday was snow, uncles drowsy after a heavy meal — and just a hint of mystery.”

Some things in our sophisticated lives force us to halt speech and say “oh, look”. Sunsets qualify, especially from the 24th floor — or our favorite beach. And some rainbows have been show stoppers. I loved **Ronnie Rudolph’s** picture on Google of a spectacular autumn full-on rainbow.

Please feel free to voice to this column some of the things that you “just love.” I’d “love” to share them. Perhaps a poignant comment from one of our Reading Buddies? Or seeing little ones in the Bistro or visiting their grandparents in the dining rooms?

An addendum to this column’s article in the last issue of 3550 entitled “Things I wish I’d known when I first moved to Mirabella”: I wish I’d known that, when dining in the buffet, I can order one item from Aria East’s menu that day, such as a salad, appetizer, dessert, etc.

**Curtis Guthrie**, chair of the Movie Committee, says, “Many of the new movies are longer than two hours. For those of us who go to bed early, if a movie runs two hours (7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.) or longer the

times posted will be highlighted in red. Mirabella movies are shown on Thursday night, Sunday afternoon and once per month on a Tuesday night, all in Willamette Hall and on Miranet Channel 981. Dates and times and a brief description of each movie are posted in the mail room. The Movie Committee welcomes suggestions.”

**Sivia Kaye** is forming a new memoir class. Contact Sivia at 6790 if you’d like to collect your memories and have her guide your “Remembrances of Things Past.”

Mirabella is chock full of talented, unique and highly accomplished folks — evidenced by our steady stream of Artists in Residence since **Rolf Glerum** — in his wisdom — created and organized the Creativity on Display Committee in January 2013. Check out the two new leather-bound scrapbooks in the lobby, one featuring artists in the hanging area and the other those in the display case. Rolf takes pictures of the artists or contributors each month to place in the scrapbooks.

Equally valuable in our eyes are those with gentle souls. Though gentleness and kindness persists throughout our building in both residents and staff, we have at least one couple who fall in every category — unique, talented and accomplished AND gentle — **Chong Mahn Lee** and **Eun-Sul Lee**.

Born in Korea, they met while working as translators for the Christian Children’s Fund. Chong’s exquisite paintings were shown a few years ago, and Eun-Sul is the King of Origami after instructing and helping residents make a gorgeous 1,000 crane exhibit for Mirabella’s second floor.

While dining one evening, Eun-Sul presented me with a wee crane he’d made from my tea bag. Accomplished, indeed. ❀



# Portland Diary

by Nancy Moss

Standing by the deli counter at the Jefferson Safeway, I hear a man yell “Stop!” I turn to see a black security guard pursuing a black man in a hooded sweatshirt who is holding something in his hand.

“Did you pay for that?” the security guard asks.

“I’ll put it back.”

“I saw you eat it.”

“I’ll pay for it,” I say.

The cashier weighs the item, a chicken strip from the salad bar. “Thirty-one cents,” she says.

As I count the money out, the security guard says, “I have to do it; it’s my job. I got kids at home.”

I hand the cashier three dimes and a nickel; she rings up the sale

and puts the chicken strip in a paper bag.

“I understand, man,” says the man in the sweatshirt taking the paper bag.

## On the Streetcar

A number of PSU students board the streetcar and settle in, focused on their smartphones, a few of them wearing ear buds or earphones.

The car is full. At the next stop a very pregnant woman and her mother enter and stand at the front of the car.

The students all continue to text, scroll or listen to barely-audible music.

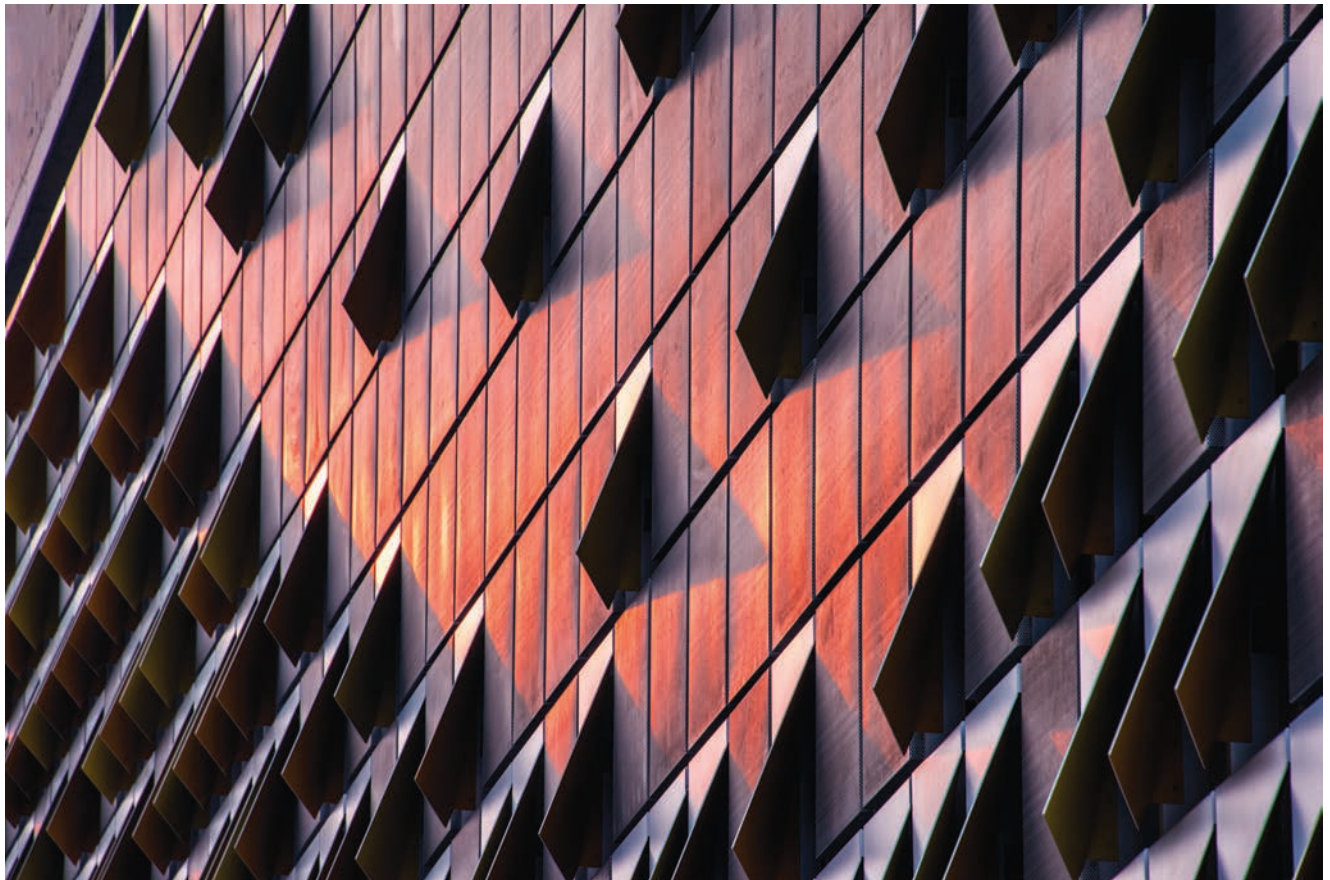
## Streetcar stop scene

Across the street from the PSU streetcar stop a young man

is lying on a small piece of tarp. Occasionally he gets to his feet and walks around, red-faced and agitated, asking bystanders for donations. His pants droop dangerously low; luckily he is wearing a tight black garment under them, along with a woolen cap and a bulky green, rather complicated cloak. His requests for money denied, he walks back to his stuff and begins to fold up the tarp, putting it in a large bag that he carries. He struggles to arrange his cloak. “Mother f\*\*ker!” he yells at the cloak. “God\*\*\*n you!”

Finally he gets it the way he wants. He picks up three paper coffee cups lying on the ground around him and walks over to deposit them in the trash can.

Long ago, he was a well brought up little boy. ☼



Orange light from the late afternoon sun plays across the side of OHSU Rood Family Pavilion. Photo by Robert French.



Dr. Mila Ioussifova is a residency-trained optometrist with a diverse background and widespread training in comprehensive eye care. A graduate with honors from New England College of Optometry, Dr. Mila maintains and practices the highest standards in optometric practice. Her approach to patient care is systemic with an emphasis on ocular nutrition and disease prevention. She is passionate about eye care and health, and she takes the time to educate her patients on how to maintain healthy eyes.

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Digital Art  
By  
Ron Mendonça

*Ron Mendonca*



I have been studying Digital Art or Photo Artistry online for about a year, creating art on the computer with Photoshop, Lightroom, On1 and Topaz. I use photos, textures and multiple tools such as brushes, layers, masks, blend modes, vectors and other techniques.

I think of art as a piece or image that fits five criteria:

A **Wow** factor that gives me a feeling of having seen something new.

**Clarity** or a focus on a subject or intended feeling in a powerful way.

**Uniqueness**, a striking personal style, fresh viewpoint or unique way of seeing the world or capturing it in an image.

**Mood** or a blend of light, subject, color and movement that creates a definite feeling or sense of time or place.

Finally, **Abundance**, or a quality of depth with constantly new things to be discovered.

I hope you enjoy the pieces I have chosen. ❁



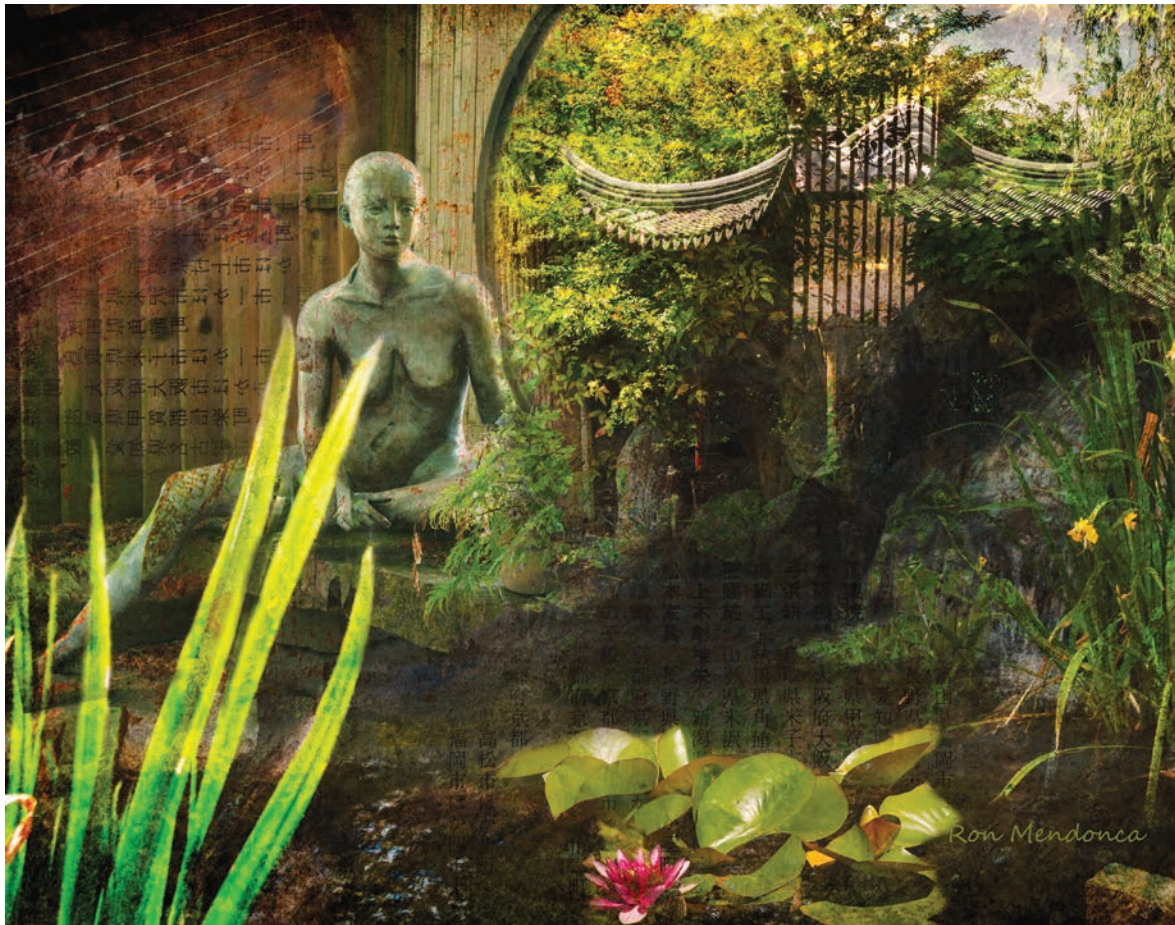














# It *Felt* Like a Holiday

Special occasions, events that make us chuckle or gasp with surprise, don't always fall on the calendar's red-letter days. Three Mirabella residents reflect on events in their life that made an impact.

## We Had a Ball

*By Roy Abrahamson*

It was a summer Sunday in New York: beautiful, clear with a soft breeze, a perfect day for a ballgame. The Boston Red Sox and the Yankees were playing a doubleheader at Yankee Stadium. The Red Sox had a great young outfielder, Ted Williams, on his way to batting over .400. No other player has accomplished that in the 75 seasons since.

Bernie, Red and I packed lunches, rode the White Plains Line down to 149th Street, changed to the Jerome Avenue Line and rode uptown to 161th Street. From the El station we could see the green outfield where the players were warming up.

Bleacher admission was 50 cents. We were early, and positioned ourselves in the first row behind a chain link fence atop a low brick wall, where we could give Williams a hard time.

And we did, as only three adolescent big mouths from the Bronx were capable of doing. We started during pregame warm-ups, were creative and loud and soon had other Yankee fans joining in.

Williams finally had enough of our abuse. After shagging a fly ball close to the bleachers, he turned and fired it at us angrily. It smacked off the screen in front of us and fell to the field.

That provoked more jeering, louder and more personal. Ted recovered the ball, looked at us, smiled and flipped it softly.

I put my hand between the fence and the wall, extended my arm and caught the ball. Before I could drop it, my friends' hands closed over mine, and we carefully brought the ball back to safety.

Williams smiled again, boos turned to cheers and we had a precious souvenir — a big league baseball.

After the game we waited outside the players' entrance until the Red Sox appeared. Ted saw us, grinned and autographed and dated the ball.

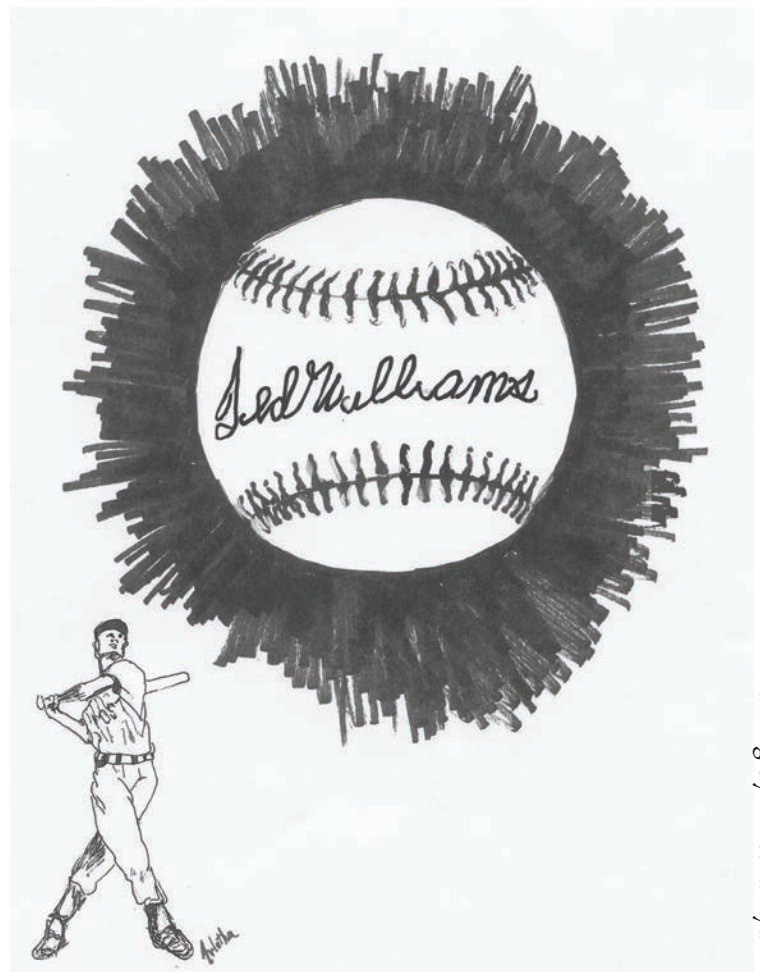
We treasured the "Williams Ball," took turns keeping it in our homes, had showings for our friends and generally gave it the respect and love due a religious relic or Fabergé egg.

Until one day we wanted to play baseball and had no ball. Out came the "Williams Ball."

It lasted a long time, for many games that summer. Eventually it wore out, the stitching parted, the cover torn and hanging in tatters, the inside unraveling.

Today every 12-year-old knows the value of a baseball collectible and how to sell it on eBay for the equivalent of a gross of baseballs. But you are only 12 years old once and in 1941 there was no eBay. Today's game was more important than tomorrow's collectible.

That baseball beat any present tied with a bow. ❀



Drawing by Arletha Ryan



## A London Holiday

*by Polly Grose*

In mid-life I followed my heart to a new life, thousands of miles from my Minneapolis home, my family, friends and career.

I moved to London to live with David, a dashing Brit, in his bachelor flat overlooking the charming Chelsea Green.

A holiday aura surrounded my moving preparations; a look at a new culture, adventure, and excitement.



**Polly and David Grose in Venice 1992.**

Goodbyes became a bit wistful. As the plane heading for London flew out over the Atlantic, I wondered about our age gap. Would twelve years create a problem? I shook my head. I'd committed.

And so began my exposure to new social rules. A few evenings after my arrival, David minced no words as he drove me to a party where I would meet his friends. "Do not enter the party, shake hands, and introduce yourself around the room. That's an American thing. We don't do that here."

Okay, I thought, a holiday free of formality.

I continued my work for the University of Minnesota organizing a program for British civil servants to study public affairs at the university. For the first meeting of the British committee, I prepared folders for each participant with copies of the agenda and discussion items. The cry from the chairman rang out. "What's all this? We don't do that here, a waste of paper."

Okay, I thought, a holiday free of U.S. meeting protocol.

David's family welcomed me to London life. He and I often joined friends for chamber orchestra concerts followed by dinners at our various flats. David enjoyed doing our cooking. And I learned the English method for table setting. Frequently I heard, "The knife looks to the right." Or, "Careful, the wine glass is inside the water goblet."

Most weekends, we sailed on David's small sloop along the South coast and over to the Isle of Wight.

My holiday continued to sparkle.

About six weeks after my arrival, as we dressed for a festive holiday dinner, David zipped up my dress with these words, "I think our grandchildren would like it if we got married."

In an instant, my holiday exploded into an enduring passport to London discovery, challenge, and joy. ❀

## Who's the Fool?

*By Helen Stern*

Back in the day, before the phrases "anal retentive" and "obsessive compulsive disorder" were part of the American lexicon, I had a friend named Harriet who could best be described as ... "quirky."

Upon greeting you, she would look you up and down with piercing black eyes, making you feel as though you were under inspection. It was not uncommon for her to lick her finger and rub someone's face, fixing a smear of lipstick perhaps, or to pat down an acquaintance's unruly lock of hair.

One April Fool's Day, my very clever husband Jerry came up with a mischievous plan. He donned a beautiful black alpaca sweater with a sport shirt underneath. In the pocket of the shirt he placed a bobbin of white thread that he carefully wove through the shirt, leaving a small white string on the shoulder of his black sweater.

When Harriet walked into our home, she immediately reached over to pick the offending filament from the front of Jerry's shirt. She grasped the thread and pulled and pulled and pulled, ending up with several feet of white string in her hand and a miffed look on her face.

Jerry grinned at her with twinkling blue eyes, gave her a hug and said, "Happy April Fools' Day!"

We all laughed uproariously and though her behavior didn't change, we created a memory that still makes me smile. ❀

# Al-Hawr Could be Lebanese for 'Delicious'

By Priscilla Cowell

**A**l-Hawr, named for a species of Lebanese cedar tree, is an authentic addition to South Waterfront restaurants. Located just across the street from Mirabella's back door, it's perfect for a rainy night.

Ranadi Rafeh is the lovely manager and co-owner of this branch of her cousin's Al-Hawr restaurant near Beirut, Lebanon. The owners and nearly all the staff are members of the family.

They maintain the high standards of the original restaurant, Ranadi says, adding, "We want to feel as though you were dining in Lebanon," on "the highest quality ingredients, the \$80 tahini, not the \$20 tahini. We smoke our own

Lebanese food is subtly flavored with herbs and spices, but not spicy hot. For a salad, Ranadi suggests traditional tabbouli (finely chopped Italian parsley, tomatoes, mint, onion, bulgur, fresh lemon juice and extra virgin olive oil) or mtabal batenjen (freshly baked eggplant with fresh lemon juice and olive oil). With drinks come hot pita bread with two dips: Lebanese olive oil with dried thyme and labneh (yogurt mixed with garlic and mint).

For a main course, mixed grilled meat features savory skewers of filet mignon, marinated chicken breast and grilled ground beef prepared with onion, parsley and spices, with saffron basmati rice and a special garlic sauce completing the meal.

For more variety diners can share a number of small dishes, with the wait staff ready to explain any that are unfamiliar. Favorites the evening we sampled Al-Hawr's fare were enab (organic grape leaves filled with rice, fresh parsley, mint, tomato, onion, lemon juice and olive oil), creamy hommos (mashed chickpeas, tahini,

and lemon juice) and batata harra (fried potatoes tossed in garlic, cilantro, chili red pepper and special seasoning mix). Other small plates



include sawda (sautéed chicken livers with garlic and pomegranate molasses) and falafel, a deep-fried mix of crushed chickpeas.

When every serving dish at our table was empty, Ranadi's husband poured complimentary tiny cups of Lebanese coffee.

Al-Hawr features a full bar, including wines and beers from Lebanon. Although there is no official happy hour, diners can put together a fine light dinner from the list of dishes and salads. The restaurant is open Monday through Saturdays from 4:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m., and diners can place take-out orders at 971-254-9785. The staff want to spend Sundays with their families, so Al-Hawr's is closed on Sundays.

This family's venture of bringing their country's authentic, delicious and healthy cuisine to the South Waterfront enriches our area's culinary offerings. ❀



eggplant. The pita bread is fresh every day.

"We can taste the difference," Ranadi says.



# Prometheus Charts Its SoWa Future

*By Bruce Howard*

Greek legend credits Prometheus with bringing fire to humankind; Prometheus Real Estate Group works at developing dwellings for it.

Last September, James Santana, vice president for development of Cairns Pacific, unveiled plans for land bought from the Old Spaghetti Factory 10 years ago. The City of Portland has designated the land, which lies between its former owner on the south and Osprey apartments on the north, as Blocks 41 and 44, which extend from the waterfront to SW River Parkway, and Blocks 42 and 45, which reach farther west to Bond Avenue.

Santana told his Mirabella audi-

and summer of 2018 after completion of the permitting process, weather permitting, and should be ready for occupation two years later.

The architects incorporated the history of the South Waterfront into their designs, with the buildings on blocks 41 and 44 intended to resemble stacks of wood on riverside docks, waiting to be loaded into ships.

The buildings will be five-on-two, with two stories of reinforced concrete supporting five stories of wood. The roofs will not be the solid white that provides maximum reflectivity to reduce air-conditioning costs. Because solid white is unattractive to neighbors who look down on the buildings, the roofs will be gray instead.

Gaps between the buildings will

that these apartments will have on parking, which is now inadequate for visitors and guests at Mirabella. The City of Portland's favoring the use of bicycles and mass transit has made the situation more difficult for residents with automobiles. The city requires only 0.7 parking spaces for each apartment unit and prevents the construction of parking garages.

Santana nevertheless predicted that the buildings on Blocks 41 and 44, , will have a negligible effect on street parking. However, one of Cairns Pacific's goals is to attract high-end retailers; many Mirabella residents believe inadequacy of parking for retail customers and employees is a major reason why so many stores in our neighborhood are empty, and why a New Seasons size grocery has yet to materialize.

Two years from now, construction of the two apartment buildings on Blocks 42 and 45 is set to begin; Santana acknowledged that the buildings will have a significant effect on parking.

He suggested that the audience direct their complaints about parking to the Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT). Pete Collins of South Waterfront Community Relations reassured the audience that they would be able to

express their concerns about parking to PBOT at a future event to be scheduled in Willamette Hall. ☘



Image courtesy of The Landing at Macadam LLC (AKA Prometheus).

ence in a packed Willamette Hall that the timetable for new construction depends on the ability of the real estate market to absorb new apartments. Construction on Blocks 41 and 44 should start in the spring

provide views of the river.

There will be 1,000 apartments on the property when it is fully occupied, Santana told his Willamette Hall audience. A number of questions dealt with the effect

## South Waterfront Quiz

# What Do You Know About Where You Live?

*by Nick Cowell and Ed Weiner*

**1. The new name of the Southwest Charter School is**

- A. The Willamette View Charter School
- B. The Cottonwood School of Civics and Science
- C. The Charter School of Southwest Portland
- D. The Southwest Community School
- E. The Place based Charter School

**2. The name of the pedestrian bridge from our neighborhood to the Corbett/Lair Hill area is**

- A. the Senator Henry W. Corbett Bridge
- B. the Italian/Jewish Heritage Bridge
- C. the Darleen Hooley Bridge
- D. the Southwest Corridor Foot Bridge
- E. the Umpqua Indian Memorial Bridge

**3. The neighborhood building with the most residential units is**

- A. John Ross
- B. Residence Inn by Marriott
- C. Ella
- D. Mirabella
- E. Ardea

**4. Caruthers Park was named for Elizabeth Caruthers who**

- A. was the first mayor of Portland
- B. was the first person to settle on land that is now the park
- C. was an early crusader for Native American rights
- D. sold much of what she grew on her land in order to support herself
- E. deeded ten acres of her land to the city for a cemetery

**5. The reason there are no Canada Geese on the Greenway is**

- A. the city has hired dogs to frighten them away
- B. spreading a poison to which humans and animals are immune but geese are not
- C. it is the duty of the gardeners who are hired to take care of the plants and the geese
- D. machines that produce sounds that frighten geese but people and animals are not able to hear
- E. there is no particular reason; the geese just don't seem to like it there

**6. One item that the convenience store behind Mirabella does NOT carry is**

- A. bags of ice
- B. limes
- C. Yerba Mate
- D. dark glasses
- E. scented candles

**7. The hanging flower pots that grace our neighborhood each spring and summer are provided by**

- A. the city of Portland
- B. the South Waterfront Community Association
- C. the Residential Beautification Committee
- D. the Southwest Neighborhood Association
- E. the Design and Landscape Bureau

**8. An animal that lives on or visits Ross Island is**

- A. a deer
- B. a wild dog
- C. a rat
- D. a wolf
- E. a zebra

**9. The number of islands that make up Ross Island is**

- A. 1
- B. 2
- C. 3
- D. 4
- E. 5

**10. The nearest restaurant to Mirabella is**

- A. Bambuza
- B. Subway
- C. Little Big Burger
- D. Al-Hawr
- E. Cha Cha Cha

**11. Which is NOT true concerning the Willamette Shore Trolley that leaves from the Bancroft Street station?**

- A. It once was connected to a train that went all the way to Corvallis
- B. It is available for charter by private parties
- C. It will resume service in early December
- D. It costs \$8 for a one-way trip
- E. It goes through a tunnel



**12. Prometheus Real Estate Group will develop blocks 42 and 45 just to our south along Bond**

- A. that will include an amusement park
- B. on land that was purchased from the Old Spaghetti Factory
- C. that will be named for a Norse god
- D. that will include a topless bar
- E. that will have six story buildings

**13. The approximate length of the nearest Greenway section (between SW Gibbs St. to the north and SW Lane St. to the south) is**

- A. 950 feet
- B. 1,300 feet
- C. 1,800 feet
- D. 2,150 feet
- E. 800 yards

**14. This is a double question. The first number is the average time the NS trolley rests between trips at the SW Lowell street stop on a week day. The second number is the average time it takes the trolley to make the complete circuit.**

- A. 7 minutes and 50 minutes
- B. 10 minutes and 65 minutes
- C. 15 minutes and 70 minutes
- D. 18 minutes and 60 minutes
- E. 20 minutes and 55 minutes

**15. John Ross was**

- A. a British ship captain who hoped to find the Northwest Passage
- B. Elizabeth Caruthers' second husband
- C. a scientist who made several inventions that aided fishermen in this area
- D. a wealthy businessman man who had an unsuccessful run for governor of Oregon
- E. a young man who was one of the first to harvest evergreen trees on the land that is now the city of Portland and float them down the Willamette River for milling

**16. Where was the Old Spaghetti Factory chain of restaurants founded in 1969?**

- A. Boston
- B. Brooklyn
- C. Portland

- D. Miami
- E. Chicago

**17. The long waterfront park that borders our neighborhood to the north is named for Tom McCall who was**

- A. a mayor
- B. a senator
- C. a congressman
- D. a governor
- E. a prominent businessman and generous philanthropist

**18. The first high rise building built in our neighborhood was**

- A. Mirabella
- B. John Ross
- C. Atwater
- D. Meriwether West
- E. Ardea

**19. The lead construction company for OHSU's buildings on Lots 28 and 29 is**

- A. Andersen
- B. Hyland
- C. Hoffman
- D. Hunter-Davidson
- E. McKenzie Commercial

**20. Homeless camps in our neighborhood are located**

- A. at the southern end of our greenway slightly to the south and more toward the river
- B. just north of the eastern end of the pedestrian bridge on the ground below
- C. inside the east end of the Zidell shed
- D. up the path that is south of Cha Cha Cha
- E. B and D above

**BONUS. If you're on the south side of Mirabella and facing south, look at the hill to your right and you'll see a tall and narrow red and white tower. It is on the land that once was a goat farm belonging to the family of which Mirabella resident?**

- A. Priscilla C
- B. Muriel M
- C. Bev H
- D. Joni W
- E. Bev O

Answers to this quiz can be found later in this issue.  
Please read on ☘

# Zidell 'Legacy Project' Underway

by Steve Casey

For 75 years, a 33-acre property straddling the Ross Island Bridge on the west bank of the Willamette River was the birthplace of ships that helped win World War II, the post-war spot where ships came to die and the launching site for sophisticated barges.

Owned for most of those years by the Zidell family, this Mirabella neighbor now is the hottest piece of commercial real estate in the city.

It's to be the site of a 4.5-million square foot development, a project that starts now, spans two decades and promises a blend of residential, office, retail, arts and public use, and is an intended innovation inspiration and city showpiece.

Charlene Zidell, corporate relations and communications director of the Zidell Companies, is a family member and attorney who is passionate about bringing the family's values and vision to the project called Zidell Yards.

"It's definitely an opportunity to do some things to create a different kind of place for Portland," she told 3550.

"We look at this as a legacy project — we didn't want to just build another shopping center," she said. "We have one shot at this and we want to do it right."

It is far too early to know exactly how Zidell Yards will look when finished, as family members and other planners are in constant discussions with city officials, crafting a public-private partnership, attracting an anchor tenant and planning infrastructure. A planning team of eight is working on this full time.

The first visible evidence of development is hard upon us, as the array of businesses known as the Zidell Companies were to leave their longtime headquarters by Nov. 30, moving to an office building at SW Fourth Avenue and SW Lincoln Street. They expect to be there seven years before returning to the South Waterfront where, Charlene says, "we will establish our permanent headquarters in one of the new buildings."

As planners reach for the future in creating their riverside showpiece, they give a respectful nod to the site's vital past.

\* \* \*

To help win World War II, Commercial Iron Works, founded on the east side of the river by one William T. Casey, crossed the Willamette to build 206 ships on that west bank site, at its peak employing more than 15,000 men and women, operating three shifts, seven days a week.

They built 106 landing craft, 49 sub-chasers, tugs, barges and a host of support ships.

In 1942, Commercial Iron Works built its low-rise office building on the property.

At war's end, Zidell Machinery and Supply, started by Russian emigre Sam Zidell and then run by his son, Emery, leased some of the property, took over the building, later purchased the rest of the Commercial

Iron Works land and got into the business of chopping up 255 cashiered ships and selling off their scrap metal.

For a time, the family had the largest navy in the world, as naval size is traditionally measured by gross tonnage — not whether the vessels can actually, you know, float.

Then Zidell Marine launched barges from the site, both for its lease fleet and to sell to others.

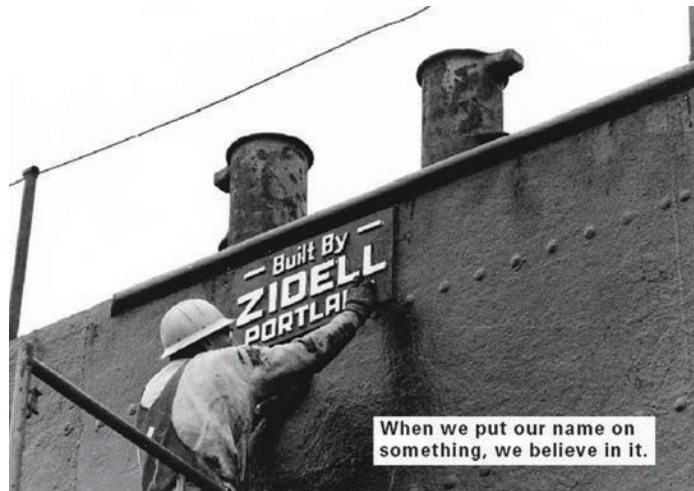
Mirabella residents enjoyed seeing the vessels being built and watching the launches into the river. The show came to an end this summer, however, as Zidell Marine built its last barge.

All the shipbuilding and ship stripping left an ecological mess, as toxic metals seeped into the ground. Hunks of metal, insulation, wiring, linoleum, paint — all were contaminated and had leached deep into the soil.

In 1994, the company began a voluntary cleanup program in cooperation with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.

Twenty years and \$20 million cleanup dollars later, the most contaminated soil and river sediment were removed, the land and riverbed were given a thick layer of clean sand and dirt, and 15,000 native plants were installed.

The property was getting ready for development.





\* \* \*

Part of the development will pay tribute to the maritime history of the site.

The area next to the aerial tram is to be known as Heritage Park. It will incorporate the Gantry — the hulking yellow crane — and a blue Whirley crane, among other features. The park, Charlene says, “will maintain the legacy of the site.”

The park and the slipway will provide public access to the river.

The large, blue barge building is going to be an important part of that development.

“We are starting the design of the adaptive reuse of the barge building as a retail space,” Charlene told 3550 in an email. “It is our plan that it be open in the fall of 2020.”

While architects have yet to come up with a plan for that building, the concept is to include retail shops,



Zidell site in ship-stripping days. Photo courtesy of the Zidell Companies.

restaurants and other public areas.

“Phase one (of the development) will be on the south end of the property, from the tram to approximately where our current office building sits,” she said.

Charlene said the development aims to instill Zidell family values by creating a hub that fosters innovation, by making sure arts and culture are incorporated throughout the project, by offering public places for quiet reflection.

And, yes, by bringing in a grocery store.

“A grocery store is, from our perspective, the most important thing to put in,” she said.

Meanwhile, planning continues for the portion of the Greenway along the bank over Zidell property.

Alan Park of the Zidell company in mid-October notified interested community members of the status of that project and what lies ahead.

Zidell’s ZRZ Realty Company and the City of Portland together have prepared a pre-application request for a greenway and design review, listing “improvements dedicated to public use and enjoyment and (that) include . . . features that are not currently available” in the South Waterfront Greenway.

Among them:

◆ Two ADA-accessible docks. “These docks will have a combined program of human-powered watercraft launching and retrieval, swimming access, motorized or

sailboat transient moorage, fishing, and passive enjoyment of the river,” Alan Park wrote.

◆ A bridge over the slipway (from which barges were launched), connecting the area south of Gibbs Street to the area immediately north, along the river’s edge.

◆ The re-purposing of the barge building, as described by Charlene Zidell.

◆ Separate bicycle and

pedestrian paths, as seen in the existing Greenway.

After the pre-application, Zidell will submit a design review application that will be open for public notice and comment as well as staff recommendations, and will go to hearings before the city’s design commission, he said.

Once the city approves the plan, the company will seek necessary federal permits.

So, don’t expect to see it any time soon.

“Federal review is expected to take 12 to 24 months,” Park wrote. ❀

# The SoWa Name Game

by Rolf Glerum

“What’s in a name?” Juliet Capulet famously asked Romeo Montague in the bard’s “Romeo and Juliet.” When applied to streets and structures in the South Waterfront District, the answers are as varied as crossword puzzle clues and frequently come as a surprise.

Take the streets and avenues around our community, for example. Of the seven streets in proximity to Mirabella, six are named for pioneer Oregon governors. Herewith:

John P. Gaines (1850-1853) — Governor of Oregon Territory.

George Law Curry (1853-1859) — Governor until Statehood.

John Whitaker (1859-1862) — Pro-slavery Southern Democrat.

Addison Cranwick Gibbs (1862-1866) — Known as “A.C.” — guess why?

Zenas Ferry Moody (1882-1887) — Speaker of the House in 1880.

Sylvester Pennoyer (1887-1895) — Often referred to as “His Eccentricity.”

But there was no Oregon governor named Bond, so how did the avenue that carries our address come about? Bond Avenue first appeared in city records in 1883, and the only person in Portland named Bond at that time was William Bond, an owner of a match company. Guess we’ll have to go with that, unsatisfying as it may seem.

Let’s move on now to the many buildings in South Waterfront with recognizable names.

How many of us remember the slick women’s fashion magazine named Mirabella? Published from 1989 to 2000, it was named for Grace Mirabella, a former Vogue editor. I’m not suggesting our building took Grace’s name, but

hey, maybe someone at PRS was a subscriber.

In the 80s and 90s, the spot for power lunches in Portland’s business community was Atwater’s Restaurant & Grill, on the 30th floor of the US Bank Tower, aka Big Pink. Now occupied by the Portland City Grill, Atwater’s was open for lunch to members of the exclusive Founder’s Club and their guests only, but then designed to serve the public for the



evening meal.

Meriwether is an easy one. Besides being the first name of Capt. Meriwether Lewis of The Voyage of Discovery fame, it has a second Portland connection, that being the prominent restaurant on NW Vaughn called Meriwether’s. Try it sometime.

Other apartments and condos named for people include The Emery, named for Emery Zidell, the late patriarch of the Zidell family that is so instrumental in

the development of our neighborhood. Gray’s Landing is named after John Gray, another distinguished Oregon developer (Salishan, Sun River, many others) who spent his final days in Mirabella. The French impressionist artist Henri Matisse lived from 1869 to 1954 and was a contemporary of Pablo Picasso.

Then we come to John Ross. We’ve got a triple play going here, what with a condo, an island and a bridge all named after one man. But if you believe that’s the case, you’re wrong. Here’s the straight story.

Ross Island and the bridge that overlooks it were named after Sherry Ross, an Indiana pioneer who crossed the plains to Oregon in 1845 and established a dairy farm on the 400-acre island. He died in 1867. The Ross Island Bridge was opened in December 1926, at a cost of \$2 million, a great sum in those days.

So who’s this John Ross character? Sources tell us that he was Admiral Sir John Ross (1777-1856), a famous (to Brits, at least) Arctic explorer. How this condo tower neighboring Mirabella came to be named

after an English naval hero remains a mystery.

Two other residential structures in SoWa feature avian names, one of a common raptor and the other an ancient term for a beautiful bird of statuesque proportions. The Osprey takes the name of the great fishers of the Willamette River, many of which build their nests on Ross Island. The Ardea, on the other hand, is an ancient Greek word for Great Blue Heron, also seen now and then around the island.



Aside from the Ross Island Bridge, two other bridges bear names of historical significance.

The graceful span between the Marquam and Ross Island bridges, Tilikum Crossing, was named for a word, not a tribe. Tilikum, in the Chinook jargon spoken by many Native American tribes in the Pacific Northwest, means “people or friends.” There couldn’t be a more appropriate name, since the bridge is open to pedestrians, bicycles, busses, street-cars and MAX only — no automobiles.

The Darlene Hooley Pedestrian Bridge, running between SW Kelly in Lair Hill and SW Moody in SoWa and spanning I-5 and SW Macadam, was opened in 2012. It was named



Photos by Art Moss.

after Darlene Hooley, who represented the 5th Congressional District of Oregon in the U.S. Congress for six terms. Most pedestrians heading west take the elevator to the top of the 700-foot tower, but a few hardy souls climb the 132 steps both up and down — breathtaking climb for a breathtaking view.

Last on our list of places named after people is Elizabeth Caruthers Park, conveniently situated across SW Bond Avenue from Mirabella. This pioneer Tennessean was one of the first settlers in south Portland, and was instrumental in a U.S. Supreme Court decision establishing a woman’s right to own property to be equal to a man’s.

Now there’s a legacy to be proud of. ❀

## Innovative Dementia Care

by Nancy Moss

Gone are the days of heavily medicated dementia patients tied into their chairs, lined up before a television set.

Debbie Rayburn, chief health-care officer for Pacific Retirement Services, described Halcyon, an innovative dementia care system that will help patients find “joy and fulfillment in daily life.”

Halcyon’s three goals — specially trained staff, adaptive programs and purposeful space — should give memory staff a sense of pride as they “provide an environment of care,” Rayburn told her Mirabella audience. Focusing on patients’ strengths

and learning about their life story can help achieve this goal.

She said caregivers should remove the word ‘quick’ from their vocabulary, giving patients hours to dress, if necessary, and letting them eat when they are hungry rather than at specific times. They should learn who their patients are and “slip into their perceived reality,” if necessary, giving the example of a staff member who took a note that a retired colonel had carefully written out and was anxious to give his subordinate.

If patients lash out when upset, Rayburn suggested a “positive distraction,” such as freshly baked cookies.

For a supportive environment, Rayburn suggested “warm mid-range colors,” with “interesting things around” and “nothing the patients can’t touch. “They like to rummage and sort,” she explained.

Success occurs when patients are able to function without mind-altering medications, Rayburn said.

In the question period following her talk, Rayburn admitted that her biggest problem is finding staff. “We’re not there yet,” she said of her program. People’s fear of dementia, of falling into it themselves, may make nurses and CNAs shy away from memory care.

And, Rayburn emphasizes, the need persists. ❀

# Getting Good and Mira-Nettled

by Nancy Moss

It sounded like a simple task: put the Mirabella Library annual report, August minutes and membership list on the MiraNet. Claire Weber, Fred Morris and Megan Huston, all of them tech-savvy, were available to help. I had a web site of my own ([nancymossplaywright.com](http://nancymossplaywright.com)) to which I had successfully added content. What could go wrong?

After making a pdf file of my annual report, I emailed it to Claire, who then led me through the steps outlined on MiraNet's three-page

instruction sheet: select all, copy, Command-V (for Macs) to paste my report in the right place.

We both stared at the result. "I have never seen anything like that," Claire told me.

The document was bizarrely spaced, with irregular distances between words, as if someone had flung them against a wall. This was probably due to my use of the pdf format, Claire decided — although the instruction sheets did not explicitly rule out pdf documents.

I would delete that document and redo the process, we both agreed.

I next talked to Fred Morris about transferring the library

membership list. "Oh, that's impossible," Fred said. "I wouldn't do that."

So, I emailed the membership list to Megan, who quickly and efficiently transferred both it and the August minutes to the library section of the MiraNet, while I took careful notes.

Piece of cake, I told myself.

All that remained was my 2017 annual report. I deleted the ugly one and asked Art to help me transfer the report via Word document rather than the pdf format that had been so troublesome. Select all, copy. Some words appeared in the small box on the screen. Looked good. So, we pushed Command-V and — the library's 2015 annual report appeared.

"It's the wrong one," I said. This was a puzzle indeed; the 2015 annual report had never been on my computer.

We returned to my Word icon to find that my 2017 report had disappeared, that I had the 2015 report along with a number of MiraNet documents, such as a memo about the garage door opening, that had never before existed on my computer.

Like Zombies, the MiraNet had devoured all of my recent Word documents.

An hour on the phone with Microsoft technology restored all of them, except for the 2017 annual report, which remained missing.

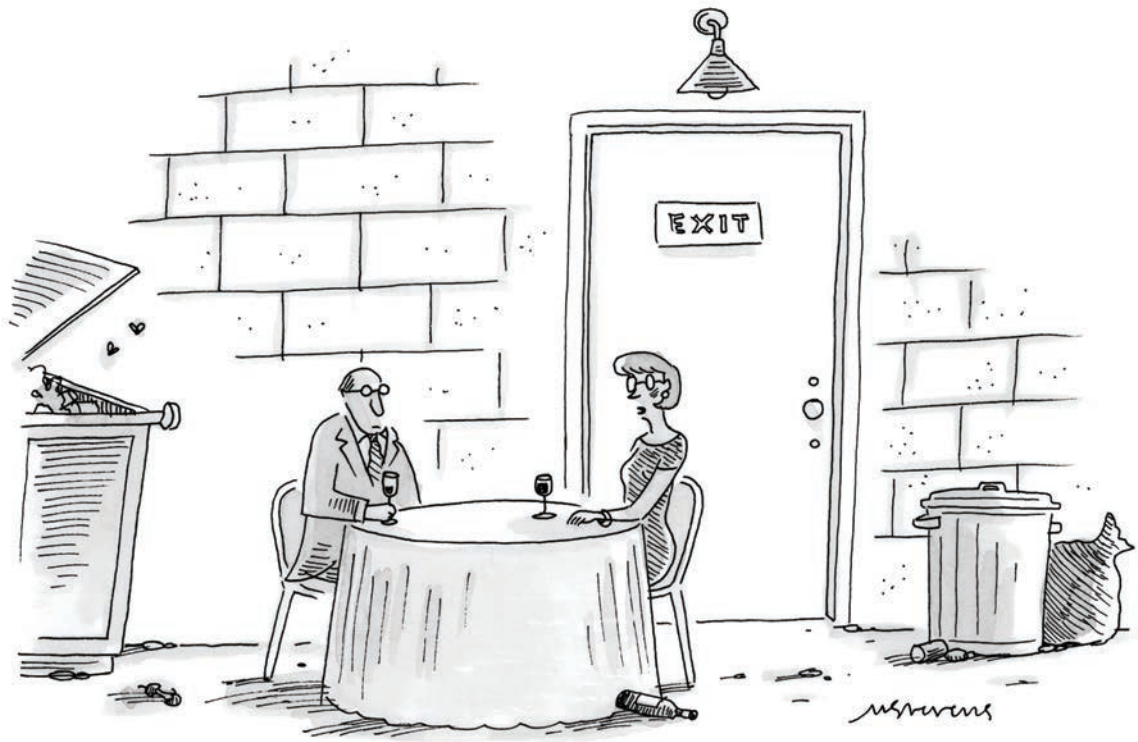
I explained the situation to Claire. "I never push 'paste,'" she said, trying to help. I hadn't done that, I told her; we had used Command-V as instructed. "I've never heard of anything like that," she told me.

I now view the MiraNet as I do those trolls that lurk under bridges in Norwegian folk tales: unpredictable, destructive and obscurely hostile. ❀



Double rainbow from Mirabella's 25th floor as captured by visitor Julie Miller.





*“What, exactly, did you say to the maitre d’?”*



August 21, 2017 solar eclipse composite by Todd Albert Photography.

# Screening an Ugly View

by Yvonne Branchflower

When we moved to Mirabella, we all knew that our views would change as South Waterfront developed. Still, we're shocked when it happens. Most of us

grasses are also good options for north-facing balconies. Avoid berry-producing plants that would irritate neighbors below you, and be aware of Mirabella's balcony restrictions.

Windows without balconies provide a different challenge, requiring window coverings other than mini-blinds. Any window treatment center can give you myriad ideas for sheers, shutters and blinds that will complement your rooms, control the light, and improve your view. For inspiration, you can always ask your Mirabella neighbors to show off their beautiful window treatments. ❀



North view from Pat Sheline's apartment showing jasmine vines on her balcony. Photo by the author.

liked the architect's pretty renderings of our new neighbors on SW Bond. Fewer like the reality.

Objections include loss of river and city views, glare from the panels, reduced light and increased wind. There are several ways to minimize these issues.

Not long after she moved in, resident Pat Sheline placed two potted evergreen jasmine vines on her north-facing balcony. Rectangular wrought iron trellises extend the jasmines' upward reach about 18" above the balcony railing, creating a fragrant lacy screen. Pat's solution does not block her view of the new parking garage, but it breaks it up nicely with a leafy distraction.

Other residents have opted for evergreen shrubs visible from the streets surrounding Mirabella. Small trees like dogwood, Amur maple and some pines, judiciously pruned, can create a seasonal barrier to a less-than-perfect view. Visit Portland's Chinese and Japanese gardens for examples of small trees that both frame and modify views. Taller growing camellias and some

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## Answers to South Waterfront Quiz

1. B
  2. C
  3. E
  4. E
  5. A
  6. A
  7. B
  8. A
  9. D
  10. D
  11. D
  12. B
  13. B
  14. C
  15. A
  16. C
  17. D
  18. D
  19. C
  20. E
- Bonus. C



## Current and Coming Theatre Events

### Exciting Plays on Portland Stages

by Polly Grose

#### Portland Center Stage ASTORIA, Part Two

Continuing the adventure of *Part One*, which told the stories of the Astor expeditions by land and sea to establish trade routes to the Pacific Northwest, *Part Two* is about the endeavors that lead to the establishment of Astoria, the first permanent United States settlement on the West Coast.

Reprise performances of **ASTORIA, Part One**, pair with Part Two on selected days to experience the entire story. This amazing work plays from January 20 to February 18.

The **Artists Repertory Theater's** production of **HUMANS**, runs from November 19 to December 17. A family holiday celebration in a small New York apartment begins happily but shifts ominously as mysterious sounds forecast trouble. Lurking secrets are revealed. Don't miss this 2016 Tony Award for Best New Play.

#### Portland Playhouse.

Several years ago, Nikki Weaver, a founding director, sent a letter to 60 women, friends and strangers, requesting memories and a price of fabric that illuminated their mother. The result is **WEAVING WOMEN TOGETHER**, an entirely female-driven piece about the loss of Weaver's mother. It's a new work that will touch our hearts. ❀

#### Portland Center Stage

128 NW 11<sup>th</sup> Ave  
503-445-3700

*A Christmas Memory/Winter Song*  
Now thru Dec 31

*Twist Your Dickens*  
Dec 5 thru Dec 31

*Astoria — Part One*  
Jan 13 thru Feb 17

*Astoria — Part Two*  
Jan 20 thru Feb 18

*Kodachrome*  
Feb 3 thru Mar 18

**Artists Repertory Theatre**  
1515 SW Morrison St  
503-241-1278

*The Humans*  
Now thru Dec 17

*Magellanica*  
Jan 20 thru Feb 18

#### Portland Playhouse

602 NE Prescott  
503-488-5822

*A Christmas Carol*  
Now thru Dec 30

*Weaving Women Together*  
Jan 17 thru Jan 28

*Scarlet*  
Feb 28 thru Mar 25

#### Lakewood Theatre

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

*To Kill A Mockingbird*  
Now thru Dec 10

*Parnassus On Wheels*  
Jan 5 thru Feb 11

#### Portland Opera Broadway Series

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

*A Gentleman's Guide To Love & Marriage*  
Feb 13 thru Feb 18

#### Portland Opera

Hampton Opera Center  
211 SE Caruthers St.  
503-241-1802

*Winterreise*  
Feb 9 thru Feb 17

#### Broadway Rose Theatre

12850 Grant Ave, Tigard, OR  
503-620-5262

*Your Holiday Hit Parade*  
Now thru Dec 23

*Company*  
Jan 26 thru Feb 26

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**Shaking The Tree Theatre**

823 SE Grant St.  
503-235-0635

**Macbeth**

Feb 16 thru Mar 17

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**White Bird Dance**

Arlene Schnitzer Hall  
1037 SW Broadway  
503-228-1353

**Mark Morris Dance Group**

Feb 21

---

**Bag & Baggage Productions**

253 E. Main St, Hillsboro  
503-345-9590

**Dickens Writes A Christmas Carol**

Now thru Dec 23

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**Triangle Productions**

1785 NE Sandy Blvd  
503-239-5919

**An Act Of God**

Now thru Dec 16

**The Madness of Lady Bright/The Story**

Feb 1 thru Feb 24

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**Portland Baroque Orchestra**

503-222-6000

**Handel's Messiah****First Baptist Church**

Dec 8 thru Dec 11

**Vivaldi's Magnificat & Gloria**

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral  
Dec 20

**Il Favorito**

Feb 16, 17 — First Baptist Church  
Feb 18 — Kaul Auditorium, Reed College

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**Oregon Symphony**

Arlene Schnitzer Hall  
1037 SW Broadway  
503-228-1353

**Andre Watts Plays Grieg**

Dec 2 thru Dec 4

**Gospel Christmas**

Dec 8 thru Dec 10

**Big Bad Voodoo Daddy**

Dec 16

**Comfort & Joy: Classical Christmas**

Dec 17 **Pink Martini New Year's Extravaganza**

Dec 30 and 31

**Dinosaurs! (Kids Concert)**

Jan 7

**Stravinsky's Rite of Spring**

Jan 13 thru Jan 15

**Pirates of the Caribbean in Concert**

Jan 20 and 21

**Brahms' First Symphony**

Jan 27 thru Jan 29

**Distant Worlds: Final Fantasy**

Feb 3

**Tchaikovsky's Pathetique**

Feb 10 thru Feb 12

**A Johnny Mathis Valentine**

Feb 13

**John Williams At the Oscars**

Feb 17 and 18

**Sibelius' Fifth Symphony**

Feb 24 thru Feb 26

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**ON STAGE NOW** **UP NEXT**



**THE HUMANS**  
NOV 19 - DEC 17



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***Policarpa***

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***Roses From Castille***

Feb 19

***Stroke of Madness***

Feb 26

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Keller Auditorium  
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***Balanchine's The Nutcracker***

Dec 9 thru Dec 24

***Alice (in wonderland)***

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**BodyVox Dance Company**

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***Lexicon***

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***Skinner/Kirk Dance Ensemble***

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Dec 17 — St. George Orthodox, Gresham

***The 12 Days of Christmas In the East***

Jan 6 — St. Mary's, Portland

***Machaut: Message De Nostre Dame***

Feb 3 — St. Mary's, Portland

**Oregon Repertory Singers**

First United Methodist Church  
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***Glory of Christmas***

Dec 3, 8, 10

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# Total Obsession

My lovely wife, Adrienne, and I do not agree on a lot of stuff, but we both decided in early August that the upcoming total eclipse of the sun would be a truly significant event.



“I think it will be one of the most eventful happenings in my lifetime,” I proclaimed.

“Without a doubt,” she said. “Up to now, you and your so-called life have been a total bore.”

“We need to plan ahead to be sure we get a perfect view,” I said, ignoring her.

“You should learn to live in the moment,” she said. “You’d be a lot

happier.”

“I can’t help it if I’m a Type A personality.”

## Larry Braverman

“You’re no Type A, you’re Type OCD. Anyway, what’s to plan? If we just stay here in our apartment, all we need to do is look out our window. The view from the 15<sup>th</sup> floor should be terrific.

“I wish it were that simple,” I said. “From here, we would see only a 99.5% eclipse. To get to 100%, we must drive at least 20 miles south on the Interstate and stake out a great spot.”

“You mean leave in the middle of the night and then lie down on the cold hard ground for hours? Not me!”

“Yeah, you’re right. No way is that worth one half a percent.”

“On the other hand,” she said, “if we stay here, we would barely have to move, not even to go to the bathroom.”

“No chance!” I insisted. “I want to be absolutely sure that we are in the best place here at the right time. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. We do not want to miss it.”

“Okay, then we ought to go up nine more floors to Aria East. It has a magnificent panoramic view, and will be serving coffee and muffins.”

“No way! The place will be jammed. Anytime a restaurant offers free food, you can bet it will be crowded.”

“You expect the impossible — a perfect view, complete comfort, and no inconvenience. Like I said, why don’t we just stay in the apartment? It’s got close to everything you want.”

“Wow! You just gave me a great idea. The 25<sup>th</sup> floor balcony! It’s got it all; nobody else will be there.”

“And, just in case, you could race up at five in the morning to secure the lounge chair. I would leisurely join you with our beach chair at nine, and bring coffee and muffins. We would both be happy.”

“Super! Why I didn’t I think of that!”

As it turned out, I should have come at nine with Adrienne because nobody else ever showed up. We sipped our steaming hot coffees and nibbled on our freshly baked blueberry muffins. Then, as the magic moment got close, we put on our special viewing glasses, Adrienne sat in her beach chair, and I lay back comfortably in the lounge chair with a picture-perfect view of the deep blue sky. Just a few moments later, right on schedule, the amazing event began to unfold.

Unfortunately, by amazing event, I’m not referring to the eclipse, but to the webbing in Adrienne’s beach chair, which suddenly began to rip apart. Adrienne’s butt broke through the seat and hit the deck, her legs wrapped tightly around the metal frame, which was still upright. She was trapped and couldn’t move. Her coffee and muffins were splattered all over her clothes and the balcony; her special viewing glasses were smashed to bits.

I attempted to free her but was afraid I might break her legs, which were twisted around the chair. After several frustrating minutes, I lay flat on my stomach and tried to push her rear end gently up and out of the frame, but had no leverage. Finally, I was somehow able to muster all my strength to turn the chair gradually over on its side. I was exhausted.

“Are you all right?” I gasped, as she slipped out of the chair. “You are a total mess.”

“I am fine,” she insisted, obviously perturbed. “Now I am going to go to our apartment to clean up. I will watch the eclipse from there. It must be starting very soon. The birds have stopped singing.”

“Lucky I am in such good shape,” I pointed out to her as I lay back down in the lounge chair. “Fortunately for you, I have been lifting heavy weights in the fitness room.”

She glared at me and rapidly left the balcony without responding.

Then the real tragedy occurred.

I was so wiped out from the ordeal I fell into a deep sleep. By the time I awakened the sky was bright blue, and the birds were chirping again. I was all alone. The only eclipse I experienced was a total eclipse of the brain.

“Too bad,” Adrienne said later. “You should have stayed in our apartment. The view was fabulous!” ❀





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