

About ten days before Christmas I became ill with some a strange disease. I had a head ache, muscles that were sore when I used them, pain in my large intestine, and a fever.

In my desk there were some Tylenol tablets left over from a prescription after my hernia operation, and some penicillin capsules left over from a prescription after the felon operation on my finger. I started taking these one night. I slept good that night, and the next morning the head ache and the fever were gone, but I still had the sore muscles, and the same condition in my large intestine.

Monday morning, the eighteenth, I woke up and found myself lying on my bed with all my clothes on. I looked at my watch and saw that it was six o'clock. I thought, "Oh, it's time for the Oregon Emergency Net." It is a net on amateur radio that comes on at six o'clock in the evening. I thought that I must have lain down in the afternoon and gone to sleep.

I started to get up, and found that my right leg was down into my left pant leg along beside my left leg. I had quite a struggle getting the right leg out and into the right pant leg.

Finally I got over to the radio, turned it on, and tuned to the net frequency. Two California stations were on the frequency talking with each other. Sometimes the net controls have to move off the net frequency when someone else is already on it. I

checked above and below the frequency, but didn't hear a net control. Then I heard one of the guys say that it had warmed up quite a bit after the sun came up. I turned on the TV. A commentator was saying, "There is more news from Panama now that it is later in the morning."

Finally I realized that it was morning instead of night. I thought, "My gosh! I've lost a whole night. Where did it go?"

I faintly remembered that sometime, probably after midnight, I was trying to do something to my left pant leg. I had my left leg across both arms of the rocking chair. I can't imagine what I was trying to do. I remember that at one point I decided I would have to give up what I was attempting to do, and decided to put my left foot on the floor, but I couldn't get it down. I saw that I would have to swing my body around in front of the chair where I would be able to get my foot down. I hopped on my right foot to maneuver around in front, and managed to get my foot down. I didn't remember anything after that. I must have been completely out of my head.

Now as I moved around the room I had a tendency to fall. It was as though something was pulling me over. I would have to grab the back of a chair, or anything handy; lean against the wall, the table, just something to keep me from falling. When I turned to the left I would tend to fall to the right.

One time outside I fell to the ground face down when I went around the engine house. Then again as I approached the trail going down into the garden. Before going any farther I came back and got a walking stick. With it I could prevent a fall.

In the afternoon I walked down the road to get some exercise, and several times almost fell but caught myself with the stick. Then coming back up the steep grade I started to put my right foot forward, and fell right over backward. Here I couldn't use the stick to keep my balance. I managed to twist my body so that I landed mostly on my right shoulder. However, my right arm was under my body, and it took a long time to get it out to where I could use it to help me get on my feet.

I was planning to go to Burns Friday where I had an appointment with a representative of the energy assistance program. Thursday I went out to check the pressure in the tires of the Bronco. Leaning over to get to the valve stem I had a tendency to fall forward. I had to hook my left knee behind the tire to hold myself from falling. After checking the last one, which was on the left rear, I started to straighten up from a kneeling position, thinking that I had my right foot in a good position to prevent me from falling, I gave a push to get up and fell on my face in the weeds. I caught most of the force of the fall with my hands.

I decided that if I wasn't better in the morning I would not go to town. By golly, the next morning I had no trouble getting around. I went to town to meet my appointment.

However, for several weeks I was very weak. When I walked down the road I would go slow, and coming back up it seemed as though I could barely make it. I remembered how Mike had been weak like that, and thought, "Am I going to get worse like he did?"

Well, now I am back to normal, have my strength back and am fine. Last Thursday I went a mile down the road running most of the way, and came back up putting plenty of energy into my steps. I feel like a kid again; running here running there. How good it is to feel so active.

30TH

The hawks have gotten all my chickens except two hens. Now I know that I will need many more chickens to have enough for the hawks to eat and have some to spare for scratching in the garden to rid it of the insect pests. If I could get fifty setting eggs, I could hatch them out in the fifty-egg incubator I have on hand. I also have a brooder house with thermostat control.

I like these game chickens because they can fly so good. It is a sight to see them in the air. The chickens don't like to walk in the snow. One day, when there was about two inches on the

ground, I looked down into the garden to see how the hens were doing. They were on a bare spot about two-hundred feet from the chicken house. One of them flew up about ten feet and right over to the chicken house. Another hen started flying. I thought she would land at the chicken house, but about twenty feet from it she turned and flew fifty feet to the fence at the upper side of the garden.

After the hawk got the last rooster I began keeping the three hens that were left locked in the chicken house until two o'clock. I thought that by making an appearance in the garden once in a while I would scare away any hawks that came around. One time when I went down in the garden, I could not find the three hens anywhere. I looked every where even down in the willows of the draw. At three o'clock I drove down to get the mail, and, when I got back, I looked again, but couldn't see any sign of them. I went for a half-hour walk down the road. When I got back, it was time to shut them up. During the day, if I haven't been able to find them, they usually show up around four-fifteen ready to go to roost. This time, when I went down, they were still out. Soon I saw two of them walking toward the chicken house from the patch of garden sage. I thought, "Maybe in the day time they have been hiding in the bushes of the garden sage."

I went back up to the dug out for half an hour. That would give them time to go to roost. Back down again I looked into the chicken house to see if they were all there.

One hen was missing. I was sure I had seen two of them earlier, and I thought I had seen three, but I wasn't sure.

I left the chicken coop door open, and after it was almost dark I went down again. The missing hen hadn't shown up. A hawk must have gotten it. Now I wait until later in the day to let the two out. It has been cold, and snow on the ground so they don't stay out long. I stand near by watching for hawks, and I'm glad they don't stay out long.

Carl was up yesterday with a tape for me to wrap and send to Oma. Also he wanted me to make out an order for two motorcycle tires in the Whitney catalog. He says that Oma's brother has only three game chickens left. I certainly wouldn't be able to get fifty setting eggs from him. I wrote a letter to Oma telling her about the chickens, and that I wanted to get fifty setting eggs, and thought that Sears might have some in their farm catalog. I put the letter in with the tape.

Lately I've been getting a good run down the road going only as far as the Indian-Creek turn off. Almost always there is a strong wind blowing, and I am just barely able to keep warm.

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6th

Well, here I am in Ontario. I left home right around seven-thirty this morning. The drive to Burns was quite pleasant, and not too tiring. The gravel road was in pretty good shape. North of the Alvord-Ranch buildings, a deer ran across the road not far ahead of me, followed by several others. I had to slam on my breaks hard, but did not have to come to a complete stop. About thirty others stopped, turned back, and then watched as I went by. I kept my eye on them in case any decided to cross in front of me. Sure enough, one jumped the fence and dashed across. By that time I was going slow enough to have stopped in time if any more tried to cross.

A little farther on I saw a dozen antelope off to the left of the road. They didn't seem to be afraid, but just stood there watching as I went by.

I didn't meet any vehicles on the gravel road. On the Cold-Spring Summit there had been a light sprinkling of snow, and I was wondering if there might be patches of black ice somewhere between there and Burns. However, after I started down the grade on the other side the pavement was dry, and it was that way all the way to Burns.

I got into Burns at ten to ten; parked near the Post Office; went in; asked the girl at the counter if they had any change-of-address cards. She said, "You'll find them in that rack over there." pointing toward the front of the lobby. I got ten cards and took them over to the girl and asked, "How much for ten cards?"

She said, "There is no charge for them. Do you want stamps on them?"

I said, "No. Thank you. I have stamps."

I gassed up at the Chevron Station, and drove to the bank where I deposited some checks into my savings account. Then headed for Ontario. The traffic was light, and I made good time; was in the motel by twelve-thirty

After getting all my stuff inside, and eating a lunch of cold-hot cakes, I drove over to the dermatologist's place on Fifth Avenue, mainly to give them my change of address, and also to find out when I could get an appointment to see Dr. Thornfeldt.

At the counter I gave the girl my new address. She asked, "Do you have a new phone number."

I said, "No. It's the same. I haven't moved."

She said, "I don't have your Social-Security number. Do you have your card with you?" I got my card out and handed it to her. She entered the number into the computer.

I said, "It's been nearly six months since I saw the doctor last. I was to be notified the date of an appointment for me at the end of six months. Can you now let me know when that appointment will be?"

She said, "If you can wait a few minutes, the doctor will see you today." I told her that I certainly could wait. Soon a nurse took me into an examination room, where I waited for Dr. Thornfeldt.

When he came in he shook my hand as he usually does, and said, "How are you James?" Then asked about the snow on the Steens. He is going to take part in the Steens-Mountain run this summer.

I said, "You're going to take it easy this time; aren't you." The reason I mentioned this was that he had run in a twenty-six mile marathon last year and nearly collapsed at the end.

He said, "This will be my last year running. I'm beginning to feel it in my knees."

He examined the tumors on my face and forehead. One to the right of my nose was very conspicuous, and it was hard. He had frozen it twice, but it was still there. I had been applying the prescription cream that was supposed to destroy precancerous growths that couldn't been seen or felt. I think it had some effect on this tumor because yesterday I noticed a dark ring was showing up around it. He said, "I treated it with nitrogen gas twice already, it should have fallen off. I'll do a shave biopsy on it now. We'll go into the operating room, and get at it."

I lay on the operating pad, and he started to work. I heard him say, "The needle-" probably to the nurse. I felt the needle just a little. I guess he cuts the tumor away bit by bit. That's why it's called a shave biopsy.

I could feel him working on it, but there was no pain. The Novocain worked fast. Finally he said, "It looks good. It's solid, and not cancerous."

I said, "That's good." I had been wondering about the thing because freezing it hadn't worked.

He checked other tumors, and on the left side of my nose near the end he pressed hard and said, "How long has this been here?"

I had never noticed anything in that location. I said, "I didn't know anything was there."

He said, "I don't like it. It's a Basic Cell Cancer. I'll have to dig that out."

Well, he worked on it longer than he did on the first one. I didn't feel anything while he was cutting on it. He kept pressing hard on it all the time. He finished up by using nitrogen gas on it. Then he used the gas on several other tumors:- in front of my right ear, on my forehead, behind both ears, in my left ear, and below my right eye.

When he was through, he said, "The nurse will give you a paper with instructions on how to treat them at home. Have the girl at the desk make an appointment three weeks from now. If they're healed up by then, call on the phone and cancel the appointment. There will be some drainage for a while."

The nurse did something to the wounds. I could only surmise that she was cleaning them. She treated the one below the right cheek bone first. Then put a square band aid over it. She put a small-round-band aid over the one on my nose.

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Then she read the instruction for home care to me, and gave me a package of round-band aids, and another package of large-square-band aids. In each package she included a bunch of Q-tips, and a sample tube of Polysporin. Then handed me the sheet of instructions, and another paper with a list of the names of the tumors he had treated, and the method of treatment.

On my way out the girl at the reception window gave me a card with an appointment for March 22 at 12 p.m..

I was mighty pleased to get such quick service. By now the wound on my nose was becoming painful. I had been thinking of stopping at Albertsons to get some groceries for a meal in my room this evening, but I drove straight back to the motel.

Well, back here I lay down, actually wishing I had a pain pill. I had no desire for food. I must have slept a little. After while I thought about the time, and, looking at my watch, saw that it was getting late in the afternoon, especially by Ontario time. I wanted to go to the Social-Security Office to tell them about my change of address, and to find out what the premium was on my Medicare insurance. I didn't know the address, and thought of asking the manager of the motel. However I found a phone book in a drawer, and got the address out of it, 2040 S. W. 4th Ave. I didn't know which way the numbers ran on the avenue, but, because I knew which way it was to The King's Table, I

looked up its address. It was a block farther down on the other side of the avenue.

It is difficult to see the street numbers while driving, but, when I came to the King's Table I knew I had passed the number. I drove into the parking lot there thinking I would turn around and go back up 4th Avenue to the Social-Security Office. I thought, "Well, it's too late to get in there now, so I'll go in here and get something to eat." The pain in my nose had all gone.

I had to wait a while at the cash register. The girl was doing other work while waiting for customers. When she finally came, I said, "They sure keep you busy. Don't they?"

She said, "They sure do." Then said, "Do you have a senior book."

I didn't have one and told her so. She charged me the regular price which seemed strange, because in years passed they charged a senior a dollar less. You just had to look old. I paid the five dollars and fifty cents. She gave me a card for winning a prize, and showed me how to scratch the silver colored spots to find out if you had won.

I told her that the two band aids on my face were from biopsies that Dr. Thornfeldt had done. I said, "I was lucky to get it done today without an appointment."

She said, "He's good all right. My grandmother has had lots of those growths frozen off with nitrogen gas. My mother also had one taken off."

I asked her where the Social-Security Office was. She said, "Right across the street, up a ways. It's not easy to see. There's a lot of shops together there. One of them is the B & B. You can see that sign easy."

I went down the line and put two plates on a tray with a knife, fork and a teaspoon. I noticed that the plates were smaller than they used to be. On one plate I put potato salad, a gelatin salad mixed with a cream whip and some chunks of fruit. On the other plate I put string beans, mashed potatoes with brown gravy, and a slice of ham, then got a glass of root beer.

From the table where I sat I could see most of the dining area. I was amazed that most of the people were seniors. Not far from me were six people who could have been of one family or at least close friends. One sat with his head hunched forward a little. He appeared quite old. They all got up to leave. The old man seemed to have difficulty getting up. Two people next to him reached out to help him. He said, "I'm all right. I can make it." Extending from the stump of his right arm was a hook. He used this against the table to help himself up. His left arm was all right.

When he started walking he was slow, and limped heavily with his right leg, and leaned forward from the waist. The others were soon far ahead of him. I thought, "Maybe he's not so old. He looks old from having gone through a rough ordeal."

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I ate most of the food except the mashed potatoes which were too salty. From the dessert section I got a piece of chocolate cake with ice cream.

When I finished eating I scratched the silver-colored spots on the card, and saw that I was not a winner. There was a place to put your name and address. You were supposed to fill it out, and put it in a box. There would be a lottery drawing for a prize. I didn't bother to do that, because it would be a long time before I ever ate there again.

From there I drove to Albertson's, and looked for a sunscreen lotion called Block Out. I had intended to bring the lotion I had at home, but I didn't get into the Bronco. One of the girls stocking the shelves showed me the Pre Sun lotion number 29. She said, "That would be stronger than Block Out 28.

I said, "Yes, but I need something that will be compatible with a prescription ointment that I am using on my face."

She said, "It's hard for us to get many different makes of sunscreen."

I got a box of All Bran, and drove back to the motel. Inside I turned the TV set to channel six to get the news, mainly for the weather forecast. I read a story that I brought with me.

Later in the evening I wrote until eleven-thirty, shaved and went to bed.

7th

I was up at seven-thirty, Ontario time, ate some All Bran, and a cold-hot cake, then loaded my stuff into the Bronco and headed for the eye clinic. It was eight-forty-five when I got there. I went inside and at the reception window and I said to the girl, "I'm James Weston. I believe I have an appointment for nine o'clock."

She said, "Yes. You do."

I said, "I have a new address. Shall I give it to you now?"

She said, "Yes. I'll put it in the computer."

After I gave her the address she asked me, "Do you have the same phone number?"

I said, "Yes. I haven't moved, but they've changed my address."

She said, "All right, James. Have a seat. It will be a few minutes."

I sat down in the waiting room. Shortly a nurse called my name, and led me into an eye-examination room; had me sit in the chair where all the instruments were. I said, "This is the same as the last time I was here."

"Yes." she says, "Things don't change much."

She looked through my file, then said, "You are 84. Did someone come with you?"

I said, "No. I came by myself."

She said, "That's a long way to drive. Do you live alone?"

I said, "Yes. I don't mind living alone. I have a lot of Ham friends I talk with every day on the radio."

Concerning the band aids on my face, I told her how lucky I was to get to see Dr. Thornfeldt the day before, and how he had removed the tumors.

She started to operate the gadgets for checking my eyes, but one machine was too much for her. She punched buttons, but couldn't get the results she wanted. She said, "I've been here only a few days. I'll get Chuck to come in and show me."

She went off to another examination room. I could see her waiting to speak to someone, but I couldn't see the others in that room. I could hear one of the doctors telling an old lady what to do about her eye when she got home. She had had a cataract operation. He seemed to be having a hard time making her understand about things. He said, "You can bend your head, but don't bend over to pick up anything off the floor."

Her voice was so low I couldn't hear what she said, but he said, "Don't worry about that. It is normal."

After quite a long wait, Chuck came in. He finished making all the checks on my eyes. Dr. Pitts came in and reviewed the findings, then he measured the pressure in my eyes.

He said, "To make sure there will be no damage to the optic nerve, you should continue taking the Timoptic eye drops."

He said, "There's no change in the prescription for glasses." He gave me a prescription for the eye drops.

I went out to the reception window. The charge was for an office visit, \$40.17.

From there I crossed SW 4th Ave. and drove east keeping my eyes open for the B&W sign. It was easy to see. I turned in at the corner and parked, then walked a short distance west to the Social Security Office.

The girl at the counter was talking on the phone. When she hung up, she asked if she could help me. I told her about my change of address, and about needing information on the premium of my Medicare insurance. She said, "I cant give it to you right now, but I will get it from the computer and mail it out to you today." She asked if my phone number had changed.

I said, "No. It's the same, 503-495-2297." I thought, That's not right. For some unaccountable reason I couldn't remember the last digest. I said, "It's 2290." After I left and was driving out of Ontario, I remembered the 495-2294.

When I had first started learning the number, I would check it in my mind by visualizing a 4 at the beginning, and a 4 at the end. That seemed to make it easier to remember. After learning it, the number came to me automatically. I was dumbfounded at this experience. Like the guy said, when someone told him his memory was getting bad.

He said, "My memory isn't getting bad. My forgetter is getting better."

When I baked biscuits yesterday and when I backed bread the other day, a rank odor developed. I thought it might be from the mixture of oil and lecithin that I was using for a non-stick solution. Tonight I thought, "Maybe it's the new thermostat control." I turned on the oven without baking anything. The order came on strong. Maybe I should have washed the element before I installed it.

We only had .03 inches of rain last night. The ground was dry this morning. The high yesterday was 67, and the low last night was 34. It was 38 at eight o'clock this morning.

On my way to Fields to get the UPS package, I stopped at Dora's and Pat's to see if they wanted anything at the store. Dora wanted some topping nuts for the ice cream she would serve at her birthday party tomorrow. Her birthday is today, but Jim and Stella cant come until tomorrow. Pat wanted a half gallon of milk.

When I entered the store Ralph came in at the same time I did. I didn't recognize him, and wondered who he was because he seemed to know me. He introduced me to the new store owners, Don and his wife. Don was waiting on a woman. I had told Ralph that I had come for a package. He said to Don, "He's looking for a package."

Don was behind the Post Office counter. He reached down and got two packages, one large and one small. The large one contained the wood lathe that Mike had ordered last year.

Ralph said, "Hold the door open, and I'll carry this out to your pickup."

Saturday evening just after seven, I left for a walk down the hill. I went only as far as the Indian Creek turnoff, because I wanted to be sure to get back in time for the detective show, Comish, at eight o'clock. When I got back as far as the turn at the foot of the last steep grade, I suddenly started to fall over backward. I'm at a loss to know why, because I had been feeling confident of my balance. It may have been that when I moved my left foot forward, a rock rolled under my foot causing me to tip backward. I stepped back as fast as I could to keep my feet under me, but not fast enough. I fell and as I fell I twisted slightly sideways, and came down partly on my right shoulder and arm, and back. My cap and glass fell off.

I rolled over onto my stomach to get my arm out from under me, then reached out and got my cap and glasses, and put them on. I looked at my watch and saw that it was seven-thirty. I got up on my knees and elbows, then tried to move my feet forward under me while I pushed against the ground with my hands to move my body onto my feet. I couldn't get my feet forward far enough. They would slide back backward on the loose gravel.

This was a time I wished I had my cane with me. I struggled for a spell without success. There wasn't any sagebrush handy that I could hang onto to keep my balance. I thought of a large bunch of tall sagebrush farther up the road.

I crawled up the wheel track, inching on my elbows and knees. I didn't have enough strength to walk on my hands and knees. My arms would tire quickly when I tried it.

After a time that seemed forever, I came to the clump of sagebrush. Daylight was fading, but the moon was still high, almost at first quarter. I rolled over and pushed up to a sitting position near the sagebrush. Hanging to the sagebrush I tried to stand up, but my feet would slide forward. I couldn't get them under me. I heard a cow go by above me on the side hill.

I finally decided I was wasting my time. I started inching my way up the wheel track. I used the same method as before, but soon gave up that method because my knees and elbows were getting sore. I rolled over onto my back, and using my feet, I would push first one shoulder forward and then the other. How I wished I could get up onto my feet. Time passed. The stars came out. I moved. I rested, and inched ahead again.

I remembered how years ago, when I was standing out at the point at night, I would sometimes see the headlights of a car coming up the road. I thought it was unlikely now, because no one every comes up here at night anymore. I half wished to see one now, but then thought of how embarrassed I would be for someone to find me lying in the road.

I thought of the story, "West Wind to Hawaii" where natives in the region near Tahiti left in a double canoe, (two canoes held together by two beams). It had two masts, one near the rear of one canoe and the other near the front of the other canoe. The name of the double canoe was, "Wait For The West Wind."

I thought of all the struggles they had to get to Hawaii. I thought, "Well, they had wind to help them along, but I cant put a sail up to help me up this hill."

Hawaii was under the Seven Little Eyes, the Pleiades. I couldn't see them. Maybe they were too far south. The bird with the long neck, the Big Dipper, was overhead and its beak was pointing to the North Star. The astronomers on the double canoe saw it for the first time, and were amazed that it didn't move like the other stars. They learned to use it for navigation.

I thought of how lucky I was that it was a calm, clear, and warm night, The moon went down and the only light was from the stars.

As I neared the top I decided that the right-hand-wheel track would better to follow. To get there I rolled over and over. When I got over there, I thought that the hill being less steep it might be easier to stand up. I tried to stand up, but my feet slid back on the loose gravel. I fell to my elbows and knees.