



CHART NOTES



FOOD FOR FUN, PROFIT, & HEALTH

MICROBIOME



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ChartNotes is a quarterly publication whose purpose is to provide information of interest to the local medical community. Unless stated otherwise, opinions expressed in any article are solely those of the author and are not necessarily endorsed by the Marion-Polk County Medical Society, its employees, officers or directors. Community members interested in writing for this publication are encouraged to contact the editors. We invite feedback and comments, to be published at the discretion of the editors.

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Focus on food for fun, profit, and health

In this edition of *ChartNotes* we decided to focus on food—for fun, profit, and health. Unfortunately, American society has turned “nutrition” into the land of marketing propaganda, fad diets, easy outs, and at times, detrimental misinformation. However, for the life of me—I can’t remember any formal education on nutrition and diet even though it is a vital part of the well-being of all our patients, and ourselves. In the realm of preventive medicine, it would seem that a change in dietary lifestyle could be as helpful in maintaining the health of our patients as smoking cessation.

As a plastic surgeon, I cannot speak to the preventive role nutrition plays in the treatment and control of numerous metabolic and/or chronic disorders, however, I can speak to its crucial role in surgical outcomes. The nutritional status of my patients helps determine their ability to recover from an extensive body contouring procedure. Additionally, patients are often required to lose substantial weight prior to becoming eligible for many of the procedures I perform. Where do I send those struggling patients? How do I counsel them? Both are questions that I hope this edition will help provide some clarity, or at least, a little bit more introspection, on how to make nutrition a more central part my patient-education toolkit.

President’s Message

Keith Neaman, MD



On a personal note—hitting forty hit me hard. I was about thirty pounds overweight after attending a training program that gives nearly \$2500 a year in credit at the cafeteria. I know, poor me, right? Well, I knew I needed a lifestyle change, and, so as my family will attest, I only do something when it is extreme.

I hired a nutrition coach who wrote a diet plan focused on the concept of macro counting (carbohydrates, proteins and fats). This, combined with a cardiovascular and weight lifting routine, I lost that weight. Since then, I have adopted this approach to living—I determine a target for how many grams of carbs, proteins, and fats I want to consume and then create a diet. Meals are prepped and ingredients are weighed. As my activity level increases, I will increase my intake.

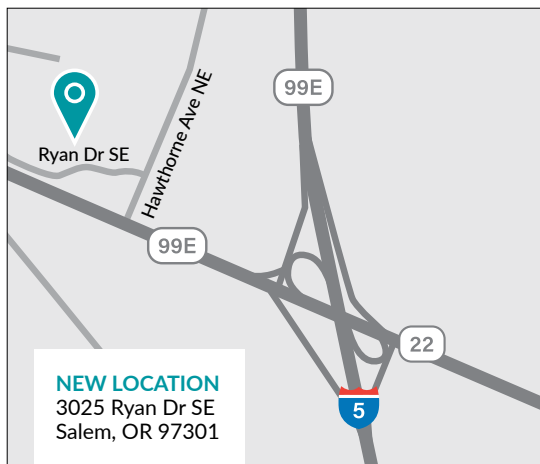
I now find it fascinating to look at food as the body’s fuel and see the body more like a machine. This is obviously quite extreme and very difficult for patients to follow, but for those looking for a major change, I am big fan of this approach. It encourages me to lead to a healthy lifestyle vs. going on a diet.



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Winter Membership Dinner and President's Award



Members and guests enjoy fellowship at the winter member dinner. Thanks to Willamette Vital Health, Praxis Health and Transformational Doc for sponsoring!



L-R: Erin Hurley, MD, Cathy Clark, Mayor of Keizer, and Tanie Hotan, MD.



The Winter Membership Dinner had over 50 attendees. We honored Dr. Enoch D. Shaw with the President's Award. He delivered a wonderful video acceptance speech from India. Also, Sherry Richert Belul, from Simply Celebrate delivered an uplifting talk on ways to find joy in everyday life.

Think Like A Farmer

Spring is a beginning, and many of us are looking forward to new things. We anticipate warmer days, getting that garden started, and enjoying more outdoor activities. But things grow better when cultivated, so think like a farmer. Plant some seeds – explore new ideas, new relationships, and new activities. Cultivate enhanced relationships at work, with your neighbors, and with your community.

This is the food issue of *ChartNotes*. Farmers know our food doesn't arrive on our plates by magic. It has to be seeded, grown, harvested, distributed, and prepared. So, think like a farmer. The next time someone hands you a plate of delicious food, appreciate the process from farm to fork.

Here's another great thing to do. Get engaged with our legislative process. Our elected officials are in session at the State Capitol until June. Take some time to learn about the bills that are

From the Executive Director

G. Harvey Gail, MBA



under consideration. Get involved by following the Oregon Medical Association's legislative priorities and attend the OMA Legislative Day on April 17. Go and meet with your local state representative and your state senator. They would love to hear your views as a constituent.

Last month, we held our annual winter member meeting. Our speaker, Sherry Richert Belul from Simply Celebrate, was inspiring. She cultivated spontaneous joy in all of us with wise words and a playful, casual style. What a great way to enter the spring and summer. Check out the pictures in *ChartNotes* and on our Facebook page.

So, this spring, think like a farmer. Plant those seeds and cultivate life to the fullest. And enjoy what blossoms in the coming weeks! [f](#)

In This Issue

When I became president of the Marion Polk County Medical Society at the turn of the millennium, the incoming executive director asked what I wanted to do with *ChartNotes*, then a slender black-and-white newsletter. I said I wanted members to get to know each other and to find common interests outside of medicine. I hope, all these years later, it still serves that purpose.

So why write a whole issue devoted to food? The obvious answer is that we are what we eat. But more importantly, learning about someone's relationship to food tells us new things about them. I had no idea that Howard Baumann and Doug Eliason, two doctors I have known half my life, both have a "thing" about Lutfisk.

I know a lot about Pam Smith, ultra-runner, but I had no idea about her crazy creative approach to menus and fundraising. I met ENT surgeon Joe Allan years before we each came to Salem in 1990, but *ChartNotes* allowed me to hear him play the piano for the first time. I finally learned a little bit about Sandra Wanek's deployments to the Gulf through the lens of care packages and local feasts. As many hours as I've shared with vascular surgeon Rick Pittman discussing *ChartNotes* editorial issues, his pursuit of molecular gastronomy surprised me.

From the Editor

by Nancy Boutin, MD



I love it when a journal, any journal, develops an internal dialogue. In his President's message, Keith Neaman says he hopes to learn about food-as-medicine in this issue. A few pages later, Tanie Hotan not only discusses it, but introduces free CMEs we can all access. A quick review of recent research on the microbiome reveals the interplay between gut flora, the neurotransmitters we attempt to influence pharmacologically, and the food we eat—which may be influenced by the microbes themselves. Talk about a tangled web!

This issue also features an interview with WVH CEO Iria Nishimura, advice from Eden Rose Brown, pictures of our annual meeting, holiday food traditions, and my current obsessions. Grab your favorite cookie and a drink, put your feet up, and enjoy. [f](#)



Out & About

BY MARY LOUISE VANNATTA, MBA, CAE,
AND ADDISON ALLEMANN

Wondering What To Do This Spring?

The sun is starting to shine, the birds are happy, and the flowers are blooming. After a long winter, it's time to participate in some springtime activities.

Spring Has Sprung in the Gardens

Looking for flowers to adorn your home with or give as a gift this season? Lucky for you, all around Salem are farms and fields where you can buy, pick, or simply walk through various beautiful flowers. The Wooden Shoe Tulip Festival in Woodburn runs from March 17 to April 30. Experience the beauty of 40 acres of tulips and over 200 acres of outdoor space and activities such as photo ops, onsite food, Wooden Shoe Vineyards Tasting Room, Hot Air Balloons, kid activities like the Cow Wagon, carnival rides, and so much more.

For a more peaceful, sweet-smelling outing, check out Adelman Peony Gardens in Brooks, open to the public from May 1 to June 15. There you will find 30 acres of peony fields and a two-acre display garden, with many photo opportunities at every turn. Adelman Peony Gardens also sells fresh-cut stems and a selection of potted peonies, or you can order bare roots for the fall.

Close to home is Deepwood Museum and Gardens on Mission Street. You can explore roses during garden hours, from sunrise to sunset. Take a tour of the museum Wed-Sat between 9 am and 12 pm. And make sure to put their famous plant sale on your calendar, March 17 and 18.





Keeping the Littles (and not-so-littles) Busy

It may still be rainy, so finding activities for the little ones can be challenging. Gilbert House Children’s Museum is always a hit. Current exhibits include Forest Friends’ Toddler Room, an oversized kaleidoscope, a play vet clinic, and Bill’s Bubble Factory. Older kids may enjoy “Recollections” where they can make larger-than-life colored stop-motion images set to music. They also can explore green screen technology or build items out of recycled materials in the Gilbert Engineering Studio. Afterward, take a walk through Riverfront park and stop by the Salem Riverfront Carousel.

The recently remodeled Salem Public Library is a perfect place to spend a rainy afternoon. Check out their ongoing programs like preschool and toddler story time, Tinker Tech Tuesdays for kids, or a Friday Craft & Chat- Casual Drop-in Social for Adults (every first Friday at 11 am)

Fun for Grown-ups (Inside and Outdoors)

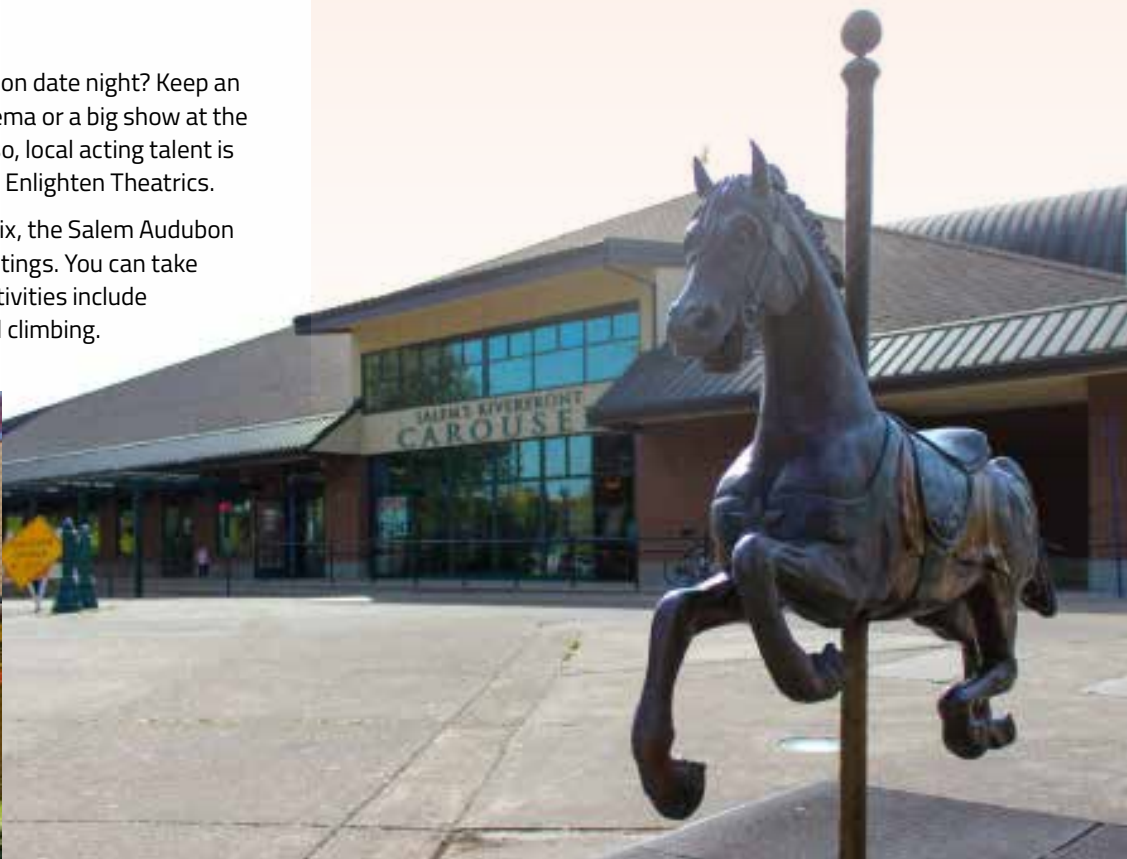
Tired of watching the same old shows on date night? Keep an eye out for a foreign film at Salem Cinema or a big show at the beautiful, historic Elsinore Theatre. Also, local acting talent is on display at the Pentacle Theatre and Enlighten Theatrics.

If you’d rather watch nature over Netflix, the Salem Audubon Society has frequent bird-watching outings. You can take a hike with the Chemeketans. Their activities include backpacking, skiing, snowshoeing, and climbing.

Spring Events and Activities:

- **Wooden Shoe Tulip Festival:** www.woodenshoe.com March 17- April 30*.
- **Adelman Peony Gardens:** peonyparadise.com from May 1- June 15*.
- **Deepwood Activities and Plant Sale:** www.deepwoodmuseum.org March 17-18
- **Salem Audubon Society:** www.Saleaudubon.org
- **Chemeketans:** www.Chemeketans.org
- **Gilbert House Children’s Museum:** <https://acgilbert.org>
- **The Salem Public Library:** www.cityofsalem.net/community/library (closed Mondays)

*Always confirm dates and times before visiting.





Your Trusted Counselor

By Eden Rose Brown, JD

Beyond Wills and Trusts: Three Documents Everyone Needs

When it comes to estate planning, you probably think of wills and trusts. But there are three other estate planning documents you should think about to make your plan complete:

1. An Advance Directive, also called a Health Care Directive, Medical or Healthcare Power of Attorney, or Designation of Healthcare Surrogate depending on your state;
2. A Dementia Supplement; and
3. A Financial Power of Attorney

Planning for Medical Emergencies with an Advance Directive and Dementia Supplement

Having the right legal documents in case of a medical emergency is essential to providing a family member or trusted friend with guidance and decision-making authority during a difficult time.

The Oregon Advance Directive allows you to state your wishes about the type of medical treatment you do, or don't, want to receive if you are injured and not expected to recover or become terminally ill. The Advance Directive allows you to choose the trusted family member or friend who will be responsible for making healthcare decisions if, for any reason, you lose the ability to make them for yourself.

A Dementia Supplement is an additional form to the statutory Advance Directive that allows you to stop spoon feeding (nutrition and hydration) if you have late-stage dementia and are close to death. Because the Oregon Advance Directive only addresses "artificial" life support, the Dementia Supplement is a critical addition to any Advance Directive.

Don't End Up Like Terri Schiavo

One of the well-known cases that highlights the need for a medical emergency plan is that of Terri Schiavo, a 26-year-old Florida woman who collapsed and fell into a coma in February of 1990. Ms. Schiavo didn't have a Healthcare Directive and as a result, was kept alive for fifteen years while her husband and parents fought in court over taking her off life support. Finally, in March 2005, a Florida court ordered the removal of Ms. Schiavo's feeding tube. She died thirteen days later—and the autopsy proved that she had been brain dead since she collapsed fifteen years earlier.

While the Schiavo case is extreme, it emphasizes the fact that without a medical emergency plan, your family members may be left to guess (or possibly fight) about your medical treatment and end-of-life wishes.

But it doesn't have to be that way. An Advance Directive and Dementia Supplement can make your wishes known and legally enforceable. If you haven't reviewed your healthcare documents in the last year, now is the time to make sure they reflect your current wishes.

Planning for Property Management with a Financial Power of Attorney

A Financial Power of Attorney allows you to select a trusted family member or friend who will be responsible for managing your money and other property if you become mentally incompetent. Without this document, bank and investment accounts held in your name (and not by a living trust) will become inaccessible, IRA distributions can't be requested, bills won't get paid, tax returns won't be filed, and property can't be bought or sold. Instead, a loved one may be forced into court to be appointed as the legal guardian, and a judge will oversee the guardian's every move. A Financial Power of Attorney can provide authority to handle these issues without the court's involvement.

Caution: Financial Powers of Attorney Can Become Obsolete

Many Financial Powers of Attorney can be "obsolete" in as short as one year because many institutions don't want to rely on stale documents. Depending on your circumstances, if you rely on a power of attorney rather than a fully funded living trust, a stale, obsolete power of attorney may not be able to help you and your family with:

- Insurance contracts – life, disability, long-term care, property, and casualty.
- Annuity contracts.
- Retirement plans – pension, profit-sharing and stock bonus plans, IRAs, 401(k)s and 403(b)s.
- Online financial accounts for banking and investments.
- Online personal accounts such as email, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.
- Elder care and special needs planning.

If it's been more than a year or two since you've signed your power of attorney, it might be time for a fresh one. Contact your estate planning attorney to ensure you and your family are fully protected.

A Good Estate Plan Needs Up-to-Date "Ancillary" Documents

In the estate planning community, Advance Directives, Living Wills, Dementia Supplements, and Powers of Attorney are called "ancillary" documents. But don't be fooled by the name – these documents are essential and should be updated as lives, finances, and laws change. Even better, consider creating a comprehensive living trust that can hold your non-retirement assets so that you maximize control over your assets and avoid judges and courts. [f](#)

A former MPCMS board member and *ChartNotes* contributor, attorney Eden Rose Brown provides comprehensive, highly personalized counsel in wealth preservation strategies, family legacy design, estate, tax, and charitable planning. Honored by her peers as an Oregon Super Lawyer and named one of the Top 100 Attorneys in the United States, Eden's innovative planning strategies maximize client control, minimize taxes, and preserve family wealth and harmony for generations.

The Law Office of Eden Rose Brown, LLC has offices in Salem, Lake Oswego, Springfield, and Bend. 503-581-1800; Office@EdenRoseBrown.com; Learn more and register for our free Family Matters Workshop at www.EdenRoseBrown.com.



Microbiome

BY NANCY BOUTIN, MD

The number of bacteria in the human body approximates the number of cells making up the body.

Many years ago, a journalist wrote an article describing cultural differences in individuals' self-diagnosis of mild illness. When the French feel under the weather, with no discernable cause, they blame their livers, Americans believe they've "caught a bug," while the stodgy British say their bowels are at fault. As we learn more about the gut microbiome, it becomes evident that the Brits were on to something.

Back in the 1680s, van Leeuwenhoek described vast diversity between the assortment of microbes found in different parts of the human body. It took more than three hundred years for those various collections to receive a name. In a 2001 article entitled, "'Ome Sweet 'Omics—a Genealogical Treasury of Words," published in *The Scientist*, Nobel laureate Joshua Lederberg credits himself with coining the term "microbiome."


In popular use today, "the microbiome" usually refers to the trillions of symbiotic and pathogenic microorganisms inhabiting the human intestinal tract—although microbiota occur from the nares to the vagina and everywhere in between. The relationship between microbes and their human host impacts health in myriad ways, easily seen in visually accessible tissues like skin and the oral cavity. The study of the influence of gut flora on all aspects of physical and mental health became possible only after the first isolation of human-associated anaerobes in 1944.

Nevertheless, physicians have long recognized the gut-brain axis. A 2018 article in *Microbial Ecology in Health and Disease* notes that an 1829 book by London-based doctor John Abernathy "traced all bodily and mental disorder back to 'gastric derangement.'" (See? The Brits and their intestinal fixation.) He also proposed that "humans needed to eat simple, natural foods instead of the refined, unnatural and often adulterated foods being increasingly consumed in industrializing Britain."

Research by Philip Strandwitz, PhD, published in 2018, noted that, in animal models, "bacteria have been shown to produce and/or consume a wide range of mammalian neurotransmitters, including dopamine, norepinephrine, serotonin, or gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA). Accumulating evidence in animals suggests that manipulation of these neurotransmitters by bacteria may have an impact on host physiology."

A January 2023 article in the *Washington Post* reports on research from Oxford University (the Brits again) comparing microbiome data from more than 2500 subjects that revealed sixteen bacteria whose presence or absence strongly predict depressive symptoms. The authors carefully avoid attributing causation to their findings. Jack Gilbert, a (British) PhD researcher at UCSD, reviewed the study and suggested that whether the microbiome alterations are the *cause* or the *result* of depression, "If we can add those elements [beneficial flora] back in, maybe we can re-energize that cycle."

Overwhelming evidence exists to prove diet impacts the quantity and quality of microbes in the gut. "We have known for many years that adopting a Western lifestyle is associated with an increase in disease," Gilbert says in response to a study comparing microbiota in immigrants before and after moving to the US. "The diet analysis is as good as it can be for any populations. Yes, lifestyle factors could influence these trends, but the trends we observe could easily be explained by diet changes."

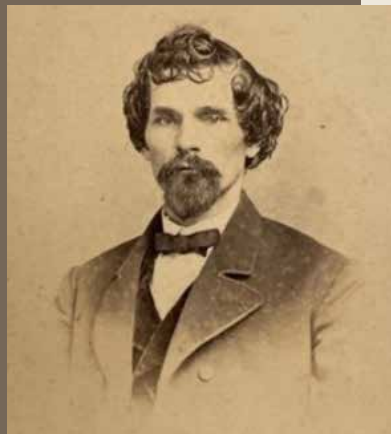
Two hundred years after the fact, research supports Dr. Abernathy's 1829 advice to avoid refined, unnatural, and often adulterated foods. Your British Nan already knew that. 



JULY 25, 1867 THE FIRST GRADUATING WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE



Waller Hall, dedicated 1867.
(Courtesy Oregon Historical Society.
Research Library, OrHi562)



William A. Cusick, c1866.
(Author's personal collection)



*Dr. Cusick House on Fairmont Hill,
415 Lincoln Street South, Salem.*
(Author's personal collection)

The first three medical students to graduate from Willamette University College of Medicine did so on July 25, 1867, the same year the medical school was officially dedicated. This initial early graduation ceremony occurred because these three students had already completed most of their medical training elsewhere and were able to finish their final year at Willamette. The three graduates were:

Dr. William A. Cusick

Dr. Daniel M. Jones

Dr. James L. Martin

This article will look at the lives of these three doctors as they entered our medical community over 150 years ago. Two lucky finds on eBay heightened my personal interest in this graduation; a studio photograph of Dr. Cusick taken at about the time he graduated, and Dr. Jones' diploma, one of the three diplomas given out that day.¹

After the dedication of **Waller Hall** in 1867, the College of Medicine occupied the third floor, which included classrooms, labs, and medical student dormitory rooms. An anatomy shack sat along the Mill Stream which flowed through campus. Clinical training occurred in rented space on the second floor of the Moores' Building located on Commercial Street for clinical training.^{2,3}

William Asa Cusick was born in Illinois in 1837 and came to Oregon on an oxen-driven wagon train with his parents at age 16. The family settled on a farm near Scio in 1853. William graduated from Bethel College in Polk County in 1860 and taught school before starting a medical preceptorship in 1864 with Salem physician Dr. J.W. McAfee. He then attended Toland Medical College in San Francisco for a year and ultimately transferred to Willamette to complete his training and obtain his MD degree. Toland Medical College later became part of what is today the UC San Francisco School of Medicine. Dr. McAfee was appointed Professor of Chemistry and Toxicology when Willamette's Medical School first opened, and later served as a Dean.⁴

After graduation, Dr. Cusick served as an assistant surgeon at Camp Lyon, Idaho, for two years. But after his marriage to Marcia Williams in 1869, the couple moved to Gervais, where he practiced for thirteen years. Dr. Cusick then moved to Salem in 1882 and practiced there until 1908. In addition to his private practice, he saw patients at the Oregon State Insane Asylum, the State Prison, and served on the State Board of Medical Examiners. In 1870, Dr. Cusick also became a founding member of our Medical Society.

Dr. Cusick was also an Oregon Legislator in 1885 and 1886, served as a President of Salem's School Board, and did a term as Chair of the College of Medicine. Busy guy! He and his wife built a stately home on Fairmount Hill in 1911, where they lived until his death in 1919 at age 82. Dr. Cusick was buried in Pioneer Cemetery.⁵

CLASS

EDGE OF MEDICINE



N. Main Street, Scio, current census 956 people.
(Author's personal collection)



Dr. Daniel M. Jones, undated photo.
(Courtesy of great-granddaughter,
Pamela L. Harrison)

Daniel Maddison Jones was born in Indiana in 1837, came to Oregon at age fifteen with his father, and settled in Marion County. After graduating from Willamette University as an undergraduate, Daniel taught public school but also started a medical preceptorship that allowed him to eventually enroll in Willamette's College of Medicine to complete his studies and obtain his MD degree.

Dr. Jones practiced in Albany for many years, where he was an owner of the Albany Herald and served on the Editorial Staff. Dr. Jones was also an early member of our Medical Society, where he served on the committee that founded the Oregon State Medical Society (today's OMA). From 1875 to 1880, he served as Professor of Materia Medica (Pharmacology) at Willamette. He married Jane Dickens in 1857, and they had five children, one of whom became a physician. He had another child following a later marriage to Elizabeth McGee in 1884. Dr. Jones passed away in Portland in 1920 at age 83.⁶

James L. Martin was born in Tennessee in 1822, making him, at age forty-five, the oldest of the three graduates. For me, he was also the most challenging. For instance, I could never find a photograph of him anywhere. However, we know he served in the United States Army from 1855 to 1856 as an assistant surgeon during the Indian Wars in Eastern Oregon and Washington Territory. His official medical training was a preceptorship in Linn County, finishing at Willamette University, where he earned his MD degree.⁷

James married Frances "Fanny" Cusick in 1860. Frances happened to be a first cousin of fellow graduate William Cusick. Sadly, Frances died during childbirth at age 24 on September 8, 1867, not long after the graduation. Frances and their infant son were buried in the Cusick Cemetery near Mount Pleasant, Oregon.⁸

Dr. Martin subsequently established his office in Scio, where he practiced for many years. In 1869, he married Catherine Brenner Cregan, who already had five children from a prior marriage. Dr. Martin served on the Scio city council and was elected mayor in 1873.⁹ He died in 1896 at age 74 and was buried in the Cusick Cemetery with his earlier family.^{10, 11} [f](#)



Dr. Jones' 1867 Willamette
Medical School Diploma.

(Diploma is in Author's personal collection)

References:

- 1 These two treasures will be donated to Willamette's Hatfield Archives and Special Collections.
- 2 Baumann, HW. Historical Tour of Willamette University's College of Medicine. *ChartNotes*, Winter 2020, 16-17.
- 3 Baumann, HW. Joseph Wythe, MD. Founding Father and Fallen Hero. *ChartNotes*, Spring 2017, 8-9.
- 4 Olaf Larsell, *The Doctor in Oregon* (Portland, Oregon: Binforde and Mort, 1947), 194.
- 5 Larsell, 197.
- 6 Larsell, 333, 424.
- 7 Carol Bates, *Scio in the Forks of the Santiam* (Publisher Carol Bates, 1989), 229.
- 8 Lisa L. Jones, *Linn County Cemeteries*, 2001.
- 9 Bates, 79.
- 10 Statesman Journal, 5 June 1896.
- 11 Cusick Cemetery is located on private property, unmaintained, and unfortunately is in very poor condition.

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- *Supportive/
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Experience at Your Side

by Cheryl MacDonald, MD

In recognition of forty-five year of service to the mid-Willamette Valley, I sat down with Willamette Vital Health's CEO, Iria Nishimura, to ask a few questions.

CM: Iria, how is WVH different from all the other hospices that have recently come to this area?

IN: We truly are a local community resource, a nonprofit agency that has been here for over 40 years. Other hospices all are for-profit, owned by either a large corporation with a mid-Valley "branch office" or a local owner-investor.

CM: What does that mean to the patient?

IN: Non-profit hospices have the ability to provide additional services because they can fund-raise for add-ons that fall outside Medicare-mandated core services. It would not be sustainable for most for-profit agencies to pay for things like Pet Peace of Mind, certified music therapists, and so on. Our community has been incredibly generous over the years. We also received a large grant this year to expand grief counseling beyond bereaved families already connected with WVH.

CM: Doesn't a stand-alone not-for-profit like WVH have more financial constraints than a big national company?

IN: Yes. We don't have the economies of scale, the ability to consolidate infrastructure over multiple states, or risk-share across many entities like a large corporation. It also means that all our employees are part of the community we serve—and community support is incredibly important.

CM: The other day, I heard one of our bereaved families included a former hospice volunteer. How often does that sort of thing happen?

IN: Often. One of the amazing things about Willamette Vital Health is that we have established a relationship of trust that goes from one generation to the next. We recently interviewed a young nurse who came to us because we cared for her grandfather. We have even cared for former nursing staff members and referring providers at their end-of-life. I am not sure any other hospice in this area would be able to say the same.

CM: This is the 45th anniversary of the agency's founding. Can you tell me how it all started?

IN: In Salem, community members came together with public health officials in the late 1970s to develop an alternative to hospitalization at the end of life. The Hospice Movement in England grew from a group of volunteer doctors and nurses, and it started that way here, too. Medicare approved a hospice benefit in 1983, and Mid-Willamette Valley Hospice, as it was called then, completed certification about ten years later.

CM: That leads me to my next question. In the last year, there have been articles in the news about hospice and Medicare fraud. What can you tell me about that?

IN: Sadly, we see unscrupulous people committing fraud in all areas of healthcare and hospice is no exception. Oregon is very low on the list of known or suspected fraud. The biggest offenses have occurred in California, Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico, where individuals or groups have started new agencies that either have no patients or so few that they fly under the radar of the regulators. In some cases, multiple "different" hospices share the same address, because if an agency has fewer than fifty patients per year, they aren't required to submit quality data. Patients and families can suffer substandard care, or worse, and the public has no warning.

CM: As a hospice medical director, I know the number of hospices, and Medicare spending, has skyrocketed. Now our decisions and our documentation come under "payment-related scrutiny."

IN: CMS works diligently to find and recover overpayments. Hospices that admit patients who don't meet CMS criteria cost the government a lot of money. Inappropriate services, either done fraudulently or due to a lack of understanding of CMS regulations, lead to more scrutiny for everyone.

One very special thing for Willamette Vital Health, which is rare in for-profit "branch offices," is our full-time physician staff. Our doctors review every referral for eligibility and follow each case for patient needs, making sure we meet every regulation to the best of our knowledge.

CM: The agency recently changed its name for the second time in 45 years. Why?

IN: It's a strategic decision to make certain the services we provide for the community continue to be relevant. Presently, our largest program is the hospice program, but our mission, to support community-member needs at end-of-life, requires we offer additional programs. We are an integral part of the healthcare community, with skills and expertise in related areas, and we continue to work with our partners to identify other needed services we can provide.

We needed a bigger umbrella to cover all we do! [f](#)



Iria Nishimura



Pet Peace of Mind

SKÅLLING YOUR WAY THROUGH THE HOLIDAYS

BY HOWARD BAUMANN, MD

Skålling is the Scandinavian equivalent of giving a toast, a particularly popular custom during the Holiday Season, and at other special occasions throughout the year. Any beverage can be used for a skål, alcoholic or not, but this article will mainly focus on aquavit.

My heritage is not Scandinavian; however, my personal coffee mug clearly declares that I am **Swedish by Marriage**. This has been true ever since I married Jean, my bride of 52 years. Her father, Helge Carlson, was born in a humble sod house on the plains of North Dakota in 1920 soon after his parents, along with their customs, arrived from Sweden.

My first Christmas Eve with Jean's family was more interesting than can ever be imagined, given my family's modest Irish and German traditions. Rather than a typical

ham or turkey dinner, I was introduced to a major smörgåsbord (julbord) to include such delicacies as Swedish meatballs, pickled herring, smoked fish of all types, ripe cheeses, braised red cabbage, lutefisk (lye-fish), krumkake, and rice pudding. The beverage preferences included homemade beers, glögg, aquavit, along with nonalcoholic choices.

For most people, the most difficult food to eat is the lutefisk. The history of lutefisk goes back to the days of the Vikings. They learned to preserve their air-dried codfish by fermenting the fish in lye with the hope of not running out of food in the winter. The custom of continuing to eat this white gelatinous fish with its strong fishy odor each year serves as a tribute to these early ancestors. Thus, the guests are traditionally expected to eat, or at least politely sample, a small portion of the lutefisk. Unless you have a fish allergy,

or are like my father-in-law, you might try to discreetly dispose of your portion. Helge had learned to cleverly slip his portion of fish under the cranberry sauce on his plate when he was certain nobody was looking!

Aquavit is a distilled spirit from grain or potato mash. Each Nordic country has its preferred flavors, usually caraway or dill along with the infusion of other spices and herbs. Many families, including my wife's, have their own aquavit customs, and I have become entrenched in these practices. For instance, I have produced a hot pepper aquavit and a horseradish aquavit (a big hit), and I'm next planning a bacon and pepper creation.

The Holiday meal starts with everybody standing to give a skål to the host and hostess for their hospitality. More skåls typically occur during the evening, so if your beverage of choice is aquavit rather than a nonalcoholic substitute, it is permissible to sip from your aquavit shot glass like an aperitif as the evening progresses.

One memorable skål for my family occurred at the time of Oregon's Total Solar Eclipse of 2017. For this once in a lifetime occasion, I infused aquavit with activated charcoal to turn it pitch black to be available for an appropriate skål precisely at 10:17 am when the eclipse was at its totality, and all the streetlights suddenly clicked on!

Aquavit recipes are easy to find on the internet. However, here are some useful tips to follow:

- (1) Use potato vodka, which picks up flavors better than grain vodka due to its higher viscosity.
- (2) Use a glass jar for the infusion of the spices and herbs, which can take a few days to a few weeks. Regular tasting is the best judge.
- (3) Strain through a coffee filter and store in the freezer. 🍷



Jean's favorite Holiday Season apron.



Oregon Solar Eclipse, morning August 21, 2017. Baumann family members ready to skål as the sky starts to darken



Eclipse label art by one-year-old grandson, Henrik Baumann.

GOD JUL: SKÅL



More Traditions

BY NANCY BOUTIN, MD

Merriam-Webster defines traditions as “the handing down of information, beliefs, and customs.” Some holiday meal traditions were handed down to us from ancestors we never knew, and some we started for our own families.

Doug Eliason, long-time Salem family medicine doctor, grew up with many of the same traditions as Howard Baumann, but they came to him through his Norwegian grandparents. “Lutefisk,” he says, “is the thing that Norwegians talk about, but very few of them eat because it really does smell awful. When I was in the military, I met the attaché from Norway and I asked him if he ever ate lutefisk. He gave me a shocked look and said, ‘No, no one eats that stinky old fish anymore.’ I realized it would be like someone asking how we in the US like our buffalo jerky.

A show on the food network, he says, reported that said far more lutefisk is consumed in the Midwest than in all of Norway. “We sample our Norwegianess in an attempt to bond with a homeland none of us actually had.”

Lefse, a sort of Norwegian potato tortilla, and Kringla, soft, slightly sweet, pretzel-shaped buns, are much more “benign” ways to connect with Norway during the holidays, according to Eliason.

My children look forward to lefse and cringles at the holidays, usually brought by my husband’s sisters. The must-have, however, comes from my side. The 1957 red Betty Crocker cookbook give my family its cinnamon streusel coffee cake, probably the first thing I learned to bake without a box. We often had it Christmas morning, but it became a tradition forty years ago when I started my family. The girls could look at their stockings whenever they woke up but presents stayed under the tree until grandma and grampa arrived with the coffee cake grandpa had made. Two weeks before my dad died, I made the coffee cake for all of us and have done so ever since.

One year, setting off by car from San Diego on Christmas morning with our very pregnant daughter and her dog—my son-in-law’s deployment had been unexpectedly extended—we searched for an open Starbucks to buy their streusel coffee cake. It made a poor substitute. I made up for it a few weeks later when I brought warm, homemade coffee cake to Mother-Baby.

With a family that was Jewish on one side and LDS on the other, MPCMS president Keith Neaman enjoyed a variety of holiday traditions growing up. As a plastic surgery fellow, far away from his family of origin, Neaman and his wife invited another fellow for curry on Christmas eve. They’ve made Indian food the Christmas eve tradition ever since. “The kids aren’t very adventurous eaters, so I’m not sure how much they love it, but then our sixteen-year-old daughter makes two kinds of cookies for Santa, and they definitely like that. It’s nice family time.”

Tanie Hotan, Santiam primary care physician, remembers going with her mother to a “mom and pop fish market” to buy escargot for Christmas eve dinner as a youngster living just south of Paris. “You’d get a big scooper and just scoop them out of the barrel.” Her mother cooked them the traditional way with butter and garlic. “The aroma, the family, the time was better than any of the gifts we would ever have.”

They have continued the tradition in Oregon, with necessary modifications due to the lack of available live escargot. Hotan says that while the sibs love it, the spouses embrace the tradition more tentatively.

In Canada, Dallas-based physician Chris Edwardson looked forward to an annual Christmas fruit cake—a delicious light, yellow loaf cake with candied fruit that bore no resemblance to its much-maligned cousin—and Nanaimo bars, at that time unknown in the States. But he says his favorite Christmas dessert was his Scottish grandmother’s Butter Tarts. He fears the recipe died with her. But, he says, he has a Canadian patient who makes them for him every year. It’s unclear whether they’re willing to share the recipe, however. Edwardson’s adult children have adopted a new traditional treat, a tapioca-based dessert brought from South Africa by Jeanne Edwardson’s elderly aunt.

One aspect of tradition is that it offers symbolic meaning or special significance with ties to the past. It binds families or communities with shared fond memories. Or, in the case of lutefisk, funny stories of an ordeal they survived together. [f](#)

Menus for a Cause

INTERVIEW WITH
PAM SMITH



Nancy Boutin: When we spoke for the *ChartNotes* article about women runners eighteen months ago, COVID had knocked out your plans to compete with the US National 24-Hour team at the World Championships—which were canceled in both 2020 and 2021. Where do things stand now?

Pam Smith: Yeah. With so many races canceled, everyone had to requalify and I'm just not running at that level anymore. I had some injuries and some chronic stuff, and frankly, it got harder to stay singularly focused on training as my kids got older. They had their own events and things I wanted to do with them. So I've stepped into the role of manager for Team USA for their trip to Worlds in Taiwan in December.

NB: And you're fundraising for USATF? Isn't that a pretty wealthy organization?

PS: Track and field has a lot of big, sexy events that bring in tons of dollars, but we're a different story. I mean, we don't generate a lot of television revenue! Our whole budget to go to Taipei is \$15,000 for twelve athletes and three team leaders. That won't cover airfare. Some competitors have declined their spots in the past because of the financial ramifications. One of my goals as the team manager is to raise funds so the travel is fully compensated.

NB: I saw one of your fundraisers online and it looked like a pretty amazing meal.

PS: For several years I had the idea of creating a dinner based on the 12 Days of Christmas, and I didn't think I'd ever do it because I knew it would take so much work. And then I had the cause that got me inspired to do it. I didn't want to just ask people for money—there are a million great causes out there. But what if I gave them something for their money? I decided I would offer a nice dinner and ask them to contribute what they thought they'd pay at a restaurant for a similar meal.

NB: Had you ever done anything like this?

PS: The dinner in December for Team USA was actually the fourth one I've done for charity. I had done one for Band of Runners, a veterans group I work with, Howard Street Charter School, and the Salem Free Clinic. People have been very receptive. It's been a long time since we've had

dinner parties, but people still like to sit down, break bread, chat, and have a shared experience.

NB: That sounds ambitious. Do you have any formal training?

PS: Mostly I just watch a lot of food network TV, flip through magazines, and try recipes. But I like the idea of taking a concept and trying to translate that into a plate or a meal. So the creative part was taking twelve verses and somehow making something that would represent each verse. We had ten courses, with three items making up the dessert—cake, a cookie, and coffee.

NB: I've watched the British baking show. Did you practice it? Could you get it done in the time allowed?

PS: For the most part I don't practice, but I can do almost everything. In the couple of days leading up to the event, you make a soup, and you taste the soup, and if it doesn't work, you throw it out and you make a new one. But if it's good? Hey, you're done. I made a black turtle bean hummus for the turtle doves and you taste it until it's seasoned the way you want. The biggest part is actually the organization, and the timing, not the cooking. That's where the skill comes in. Anybody could follow a recipe. Getting everything going at the correct time, keeping everything warm during plating and serving? That's the skill.



12 Days of Christmas Dinner

A Partridge in a Pear Tree

Parsnip and Pear Soup, Cranberry Chutney

Turmeric and Black Sesame Crackers

Two Turtle Doves

Black Turtle Bean Hummus, Duck Confit, Chipotle Aioli

Three French Hens

Chicken Cordon Bleu, Haricot Vert, Dijon Cream Sauce

Four Calling Birds

Steak Bites, Poblano Peppers, Blackberry Sauce

Five Golden Rings

Golden Beet Salad, Chevre, Grapefruit and Pomegranate Vinaigrette

Six Geese A-Laying

Linguine, Mushroom Cream, Soft-boiled Egg

Seven Swans A Swimming

Savory Pastry with Salmon Mousse

Eight Maids A-Milking

Assorted Cheese Pairings

Nine Ladies Dancing

Dancing Coffee

Ten Lords A-Leaping

Lord Baltimore Cake

Eleven Pipers Piping

Peppermint "flutes"

Twelve Drummers Drumming

Maple Pecan Truffle, Pretzel Drumsticks



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NB: Do I remember correctly? Did you say that organization is your superpower?

PS: I like it. I like to have the lists and figure things out, the actual organization and planning. I always came up with my own planning and organization for how to train for my running events and for coaching.

NB: How many people came to the Christmas dinner?


PS: We had 18 people, including my husband and me. I suggested \$100 per person. We weren't asking for any tips so that saves 20% right off the bat. And we had free-flowing alcohol.

So I thought that that was actually a fairly good deal. You know, the flip side of that is, it's in my home. It doesn't have the atmosphere of a restaurant, but I had the tables all decorated to give it a festive atmosphere.

NB: Did you hit your goal?

PS: I'd like to get to \$10,000 over the course of this year, and we raised \$2,200—so, a good start. Once the team is selected in July, some of the athletes can get involved. There are other things we can do besides dinners.

But the dinner I really wanted to do is the planets of the solar system, with all the different planets, and then a bonus. Pluto. Pluto is like a truffle at the end.

I think people appreciate it. It's a unique experience. It's fun. And you know, at the end of the day, it's for a good cause. Even if you don't like the dinner, you know your money is going for something good and you're helping. 



A Visit to Andante Vineyard

BY NANCY BOUTIN, MD



If you have a chance to sit down with Joe Allan and his wife, Karen Saul, in the Andante Vineyard tasting room, and I hope you do, be prepared for a conversation that ranges from viticulture to European travel, architecture, religion, the great Missoula flood, and doctors who trained at OHSU in the 1980s. (Your topics may vary.)

Joe, recently retired from Willamette ENT and Facial Plastic Surgery, didn't grow up in a wine-drinking family. In fact, he didn't have his first glass of wine until an office Christmas party in Salem, sometime after he joined the practice in 1990. Joe's introduction to enology occurred just as the Willamette Valley wine industry got its start—growing from fewer than 70 bonded wineries in the valley in the mid-'80s to more than 700 today. His interest in wine and wine-making grew organically alongside Oregon's viticulture boom.

However, Joe and Karen weren't looking for a vineyard when they bought forty-two acres above Basket Slough in 2009. They had each grown up in places where young children could get out and explore nature—Joe hiking the southern Nevada desert, Karen swimming in Abiqua Creek. They wanted a property where they could build a house, have space for kids and grandkids to visit, and maybe plant some sort of crop. They drew a circle that encompassed everything within a thirty-minute drive of Salem Hospital and started investigating acreage for sale.

"We fell in love with the place and then asked ourselves what we could do with it," Karen recalls. "We had the soil tested. It's not good for very many things, but it's perfect for grapes. So we did that."

Joe agrees that winemaking seems to be a common interest for area physicians during the second half of their careers. "It takes a certain amount of financial capacity to start a vineyard, but you also need to have attention to detail, discipline, and comfort with the notion of delayed gratification."

The couple says they were "beach people" until bitten by the wine bug. Once Joe and Karen committed to the idea of growing grapes, they began a viticulture course at Chemeketa Community College. "You show up in January and they have you start pruning the vines, and then you just keep taking care of them throughout the course. It's a great class even if you're not going into growing. We thoroughly enjoyed it. By

then we had enough vines planted here that we bought a little Airstream and put it at the top of the hill. Instead of stopping at six acres, we kept planting. We're putting in vines now for our grandchildren."

Karen says that all the time they spent learning to prune vines became very important when their planting expanded. She pulls out a piece of paper and a pen. "I'm doing the math. So, we have 1556 vines per acre times 15 acres that's more than 23,000 vines that we and our employees are pruning ourselves, using a specific technique that emphasizes bilateral sap flow through the vines."

At first, they sold most their grapes to other winemakers. They started making a small amount of wine at the Carleton Winemakers Studio in 2013. Eventually, they moved everything in-house, made possible by the construction of a beautiful combination tasting room and winemaking facility. Work began on "Karen's barn/tasting room/party central" back in 2017. The long, low building sits nestled among the gently rolling foothills of the Coast Range, its COR-TEN steel cladding already matured to a warm reddish-brown. They added a patio, outdoor pizza oven, kitchen, and chef, making the space flexible enough to function well in every season, weather, and level of social distancing.

Now they have capacity to open their operation to other small vineyards, recreating the welcome they received at the Carlton studio early in their wine-making journey.

"We have friends in the business with stunning buildings inspired by French or Italian villas," Karen says. "We wanted to build something that would last a long time, but we also wanted to look like farm country."

The interior of the building, with picture windows and glass doors, offers comfortable, clean lines and plenty of light. Joe's Steinway occupies a prominent corner. If you ask, he'll play Beethoven's "Pathétique" No. 8 in C minor, a piece meant to be played "andante," or walking pace. There is nothing coincidental about the collision of music, wine, and intentionality at Andante Vineyard. Joe says they chose the name as a tribute to his mother who used to say, "Joe, go play that andante thing for me."

"I literally did that on the day she died," he says. "And, we try to remember to approach each day here at a walking pace. Of course, it's not always



With friends in the tasting room


possible when you're dealing with rain, wind, smoke, frost, and the particular needs of different varieties of grapes."

"The whole idea," Karen says, "was to create a calm and intentional space for the customer experience, but we honestly care about our employees' experience, as well. A lot of our people have come here from much busier places where they ultimately said, 'This isn't any fun.' Everybody who works in this industry has a very strong sense of

hospitality, and you cannot do that if you're taking care of ten tables."

The couple not only cares about their impact on the people in their space but the impact of their space on the surrounding countryside. They have actively worked to incorporate sustainable farming practices, extend the wildlife-welcome of Basket Slough hospitality onto their acres, and research varieties that will thrive in a changing climate.

Joe had intended to practice medicine until at least his seventieth birthday. Health issues made that impractical, and the drive started to wear, so he retired a year early—which still amounted to almost forty years of caring for patients in the Salem area.

Now, he commutes from the house at the top of the hill to the vineyard below, often accompanied by their rescue dog, Mila. Together they make the journey at a walking pace. Andante. 

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The Best Way to Keep Teams Happy

BY NANCY BOUTIN, MD

It is a few minutes before midnight at a forward operating base in western Afghanistan. You stand under a cold black sky fuzzy with stars, the humidity so low your breath doesn't fog. You've had a long, hard day followed by a dinner of chicken fingers—again—because there hasn't been an air delivery in weeks. But a plane is scheduled to arrive tonight. No one sleeps, waiting to see what will be in the boxes. It is Christmas, your birthday, and Halloween all rolled together. Soon there will be fresh food, letters from home, and best of all, care packages. TRACS surgeon, Sandra Wanek, who deployed to Afghanistan five times in the last ten years says, "When the food comes, it's magical."

Wanek and her colleagues approached the treasure like she and her siblings negotiated over Halloween loot when they were kids. "Everybody shares," she says. "We'd dump everything in one big pile, digging through this mountain of cookies and candy and whatever else. We'd have cookies for breakfast for the next several days because suddenly you have all this amazing homemade food and coffee. When you're somewhere you don't get mail reliably or quickly, and there's nowhere to shop, it's a big deal to get stuff shipped to you. It's a huge morale booster. People send a lot of Girl Scout Cookies and Pop-Tarts, for some reason, and baby wipes. It all gets used and appreciated, and it's interesting to see what people think about. Of course, homemade cookies get snapped up immediately."

Sending a care package to Viet Nam fifty years ago seemed very difficult, *The Greatest Beer Run Ever* notwithstanding. Amazon, however, has made sending tokens of love and appreciation to military addresses incredibly simple. They will even remind you every so often that Wanek's crew likes dark chocolate Milanos, Dunkin coffee, and OxiClean. For unknown reasons, the Timothy grass for pet rabbits bestowed upon her by an Afghan general became problematic after a few shipments.

COL (Ret) Mark Manoso, MD; LTC Sarah Wickenhagen, DNP (Urgent Care); and Wanek in Kuwait looking for something different to eat.



Wanek realized, however, that Amazon doesn't hold a monopoly on shipping overseas. One day, talking about the many flavors of honey available at Pike Street Market, she decided to give the honey shop a call. They said they had never shipped to Afghanistan, but said, "We're all about it. Yeah, sure, let's do this."

"So I bought it all." Wanek laughs at the memory. "Sometimes you do ridiculous things for the point of having something novel to do. And—the honey was delicious."

After all her deployments around the globe, Wanek has picked up a few culinary tricks of the trade. If she's living on a base with more than one dining facility, she always goes where the contract workers eat. Whether they have insider knowledge, arrange a better deal, or bribe the chefs, the food is always amazing. She also realized that the cooks, often from the Philippines or Thailand even in landlocked deserts, make their own meals—usually vegetarian curries that are more in line with her preferred plant-based diet. And they were willing to share. "I don't always know what I'm eating, but it's always good—and spicy!"

Although it is expected that military members eat at the post, Wanek is often included in key leader engagements with local population. "We always eat local food at those kinds of things, even though I prefer a vegetarian diet at home. I've been offered a few things I've passed on, like cobra blood, for example. Otherwise, I'm pretty open. I've eaten crickets overseas, which is just like the little throw-away part of the french fry. I ate a few things in Indonesia that I didn't recognize, but I've never intentionally eaten monkey brains or anything."

When she lands back on American soil after a deployment, there are a few foods Wanek looks forward to; sushi, beer, and "a big green salad with all the stuff." For obvious reasons, fresh fruits and vegetables are not plentiful in isolated outposts, and in other areas, there may be questions of food safety, so they are high on her list when she gets home.

Having a family, maintaining a career, and serving American soldiers around the world be impossible, Wanek says, if not for the support of her TRACS family and her home command, aka husband, Jamie. "I have no doubt he's fine, the boys are fine, he's got it and I don't have to worry. Still, it was hard to leave them when they were little."



Wanek with Brigadier General Katherine A. Simonson



Feast at a KLE (key leader engagement)

"I mean, who has a harder job?" Wanek asks. "He has his work, the kids, school, the house, everything. All I have to do is take care of patients, eat, sleep, work out, and not die."

Okay, maybe some of that doesn't sound ideal, but Wanek makes it clear that she has a passion for what she does. "It's what I'm meant to do," she says. "It's a very different experience than civilian medicine. You take care of someone who's putting their life on the line and is wearing the same uniform. The team is very outcome-driven to achieve a mission and obstacles are addressed quickly. Soldiers can get very creative and do amazing things when you give them the end state and stay out of their way."

Wanek says that when she finishes her current command assignment she has several options in process. "We'll see what works out. Semper Gumbly. If you're in the military, you've got to be flexible."

Let's hope wherever the future and the Army Reserve take her, Wanek will always receive plenty of care packages full of magical food. They are, she says, the best way to keep the teams happy and remind them of home. 🇺🇸

One of many FOBs in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2021.



With the US withdrawal from Afghanistan and Wanek's current role in the Army Reserve, Wanek's every-other-year cadence of deployment has changed. That doesn't mean, however, that she's letting the moss grow. In October, she went to Lviv, Ukraine, with an organization called Global Surgical Medical Support Group to help build "surgical capacity, healthcare capacity, all-encompassing—like infections disease, nursing procedure, etc."

Lviv, she says, is a nice city, but health care is "quite variable. You can go into one part of a building where they're doing transplants and then go to a different part of the same building and it's pretty austere."

The organization continues to support healthcare in Ukraine, but at this point, Wanek has no immediate plans to return.



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Wellness

Tanie Hotan, MD



Food as Medicine

If you know me or have read anything by or about me in *ChartNotes* over the last few years, you know I am passionate about dance, movement, and wellness as means of self-expression and connection. You might also know I'm a joiner, always have been. By this time last year, I had a full slate of commitments, and I didn't think I needed any new opportunities.

When my colleague, Lauren Carlson, earned a certification from the American College of Lifestyle Medicine, we celebrated her accomplishment. That might have been the end of it, except the College offered a free, eleven-week wellness course to Lauren's family and friends. She asked, "Who wants to do this?"

I immediately said, "Me!"

If you go to the ACLM website, you'll see that the College has committed \$22 million to provide free CME to 100,000 healthcare providers in response to the second White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health. The national strategy, unveiled in late September 2022, focused on improving access, affordability, and education regarding healthy food and physical activity and also "integrating nutrition and health," to decrease "diet-related diseases." Anyone, whether or not they know Lauren, can sign up for a 5.5-hour CME bundle that includes "Food as Medicine:

Nutrition for Prevention and Longevity" and "Food as Medicine: Nutrition for Treatment and Risk Reduction."

Did you know the SAD (Standard American Diet) but true fact that three out of four Americans do not eat a single piece of fruit on any given day according to the 2010 report from the National Cancer Institute? Only one out of ten Americans reach the minimum recommended daily intake of vegetables. I suspect healthcare providers may not do much better.

80% of all chronic diseases, including diabetes, stroke, heart disease, and 40% of cancers could be prevented, primarily with improvement in diet and lifestyle. That's 80% of chronic diseases!!! Wow!! Can you think of any other treatment modalities or medication that offers this level of success (with little harm)? I cannot.

The teaching is simple—if we strive towards a guilt-free, mostly plant-based, high nutrient-dense, whole grain foods, with a reduction in highly processed meats, the results will be improved moods, more energy, decreased cancer risk, and reduction in chronic diseases. Every small change moves the needle forward. We do not need to strive for perfection, only progress.

One study I read touts the benefit of eating eight servings of fruit/veggies/whole grain per day, (this could mean 4 servings of veggies, 2 servings of fruit, and 2 servings of whole grain). Study participants felt much better the following day.

I tried this myself, and although not perfect, I genuinely believe that the increase in plant-based foods, with more beans, seeds, nuts, and whole grains, has given me more energy, and I feel happier overall. Maybe you could consider making a small change towards a mostly plant-based lifestyle.

However, the invitation to Lauren's family and friends was to another training offered by the ACLM—the Lift Project, an evidence-based mental well-being program. Nobody but me signed up. Maybe because it required a bit of work. But I think I was just ready, and I could tell her excitement. Every week they sent a video link that I watched, and Lauren and I would chat during lunch, comparing notes on different topics. It was like we had a book club for positive psychology, movement, food, and community. How do you flourish as a person? What would it take for you, as a provider, to flourish?

The course made an impact on my life right away. There's one exam room in my clinic I associate with several traumatic events—which always made it uncomfortable to see patients






there. But in just those few weeks, I found new tools to help me face difficult situations. I could just breathe, let things go, and remove the negative power the space had over me. It felt very freeing to have all my exam rooms neutral, or even comfortable, places to spend my work day.

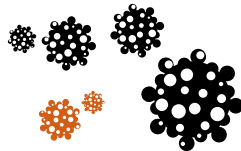
As I spoke with patients about their wellness, I realized that focusing on a positive approach to health challenges made it easier for them, and it brought me joy and connection in my patient encounters. It's not black and white, me telling them what to do, but a journey together—no matter where they start. The rich conversations we've had have been a real antidote to burnout. I can't remember the last time I lost myself in patient care, without the ticking clock in my head telling me how much time I'm supposed to spend.

It may sound cliché, but I loved it so much I contacted the program's founder, Dr. Darren Morton, in Australia. Long story short, I trained to become a facilitator. After I passed a certifying exam, I ran a pilot cohort of friends via Zoom. All completed the program, and all said they found it valuable, and some improved a great deal. It made me feel so good to deploy this tool. You can find more information about the Lift Project and future local sessions at my website <https://www.taniehotandance.com/rise-workshop-retreat>.

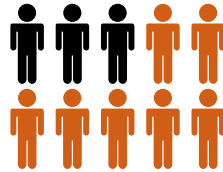
In the meantime, it's not too late to be one of the 100,000 providers who take advantage of the free, food-as-medicine, CME found at www.lifestylemedicine.org. 



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Source: Melinda Ratini, D.O., M.S. (2017) "Allergy Statistics and Facts." WebMD.

northeastern Clark County, where they started Pull Caffé. In 1997, Todd began looking online for a vintage Probat large enough to roast a standard burlap bag of coffee beans. He found one for sale, dissembled, in a barn in Serbia. He reached the sunflower farmer in possession of the machine and offered to buy it for the agreed-upon price.

Millar calls the machine “the Mercedes of roasters.” However, Probat’s parent company, Emmericher Maschinenfabrik und Eisengießerei, predates Mercedes-Benz’s parent company by almost 20 years. Their “groundbreaking patent” for the Kaffeeschnellröster (coffee fast roaster) also predates Benz’s groundbreaking internal combustion engine patent by two years. Perhaps the car should be called the “Probat of automobiles.”

After Millar and the farmer set up an account in an Italian bank, Millar started to have questions. He considered a trip to Serbia, but a friend who traveled extensively for the Gates Foundation cautioned against it. Instead, the friend arranged an introduction to a Serbian woman living in Germany who could go in his place. The photos she sent back suggested the machine might not be repairable, but Millar had his heart set on owning it. He had it packed on pallets and ultimately loaded into a container for shipping. Although he had paid the shipping company in full, getting the roaster from landlocked Serbia to its port of debarkation continued to rack up frequent

additional charges. One wonders if some of them may have been “extrajudicial.” When stevedores at the dock weighed the container before putting it on the Washington-bound ship they discovered the machine weighed more than twice the 5,000 pounds he’d expected.

Millar says the extra weight could have caused a disaster when he unloaded the container at his property. Fortunately, the worst problem they experienced was a cracked concrete floor. Then the real work began. Although he fabricated espresso carts and high-end manual lever espresso machines (as opposed to pump-generated pressure) based on a design from the 1940s, Millar had never taken on such an enormous project. His good friend, David Cornell, offered hours of advice and encouragement. During his lifetime, Cornell helped restore vintage cars in Jay Leno’s extraordinary collection, among other things. It took about a year to get the machine into working condition. Millar resisted the urge to give the roaster a facelift, but instead sealed the tidied-up surface, preserving the exterior, chips and all.

The restoration remained true to the mechanics and fabrication of the original roaster. Millar constructed an afterburner to reduce smoke and volatile chemicals and converted the hopper to accommodate wood pellets made of alder, cherry, and maple wood.

...continued on next page

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My Current Obsessions

...continued from previous page

During that time, Millar had ongoing discussions with leadership at Probat both in the US and Germany. Everything about the roaster suggests it was one of the earliest machines made by Emmericher. Most or all of the other machines of similar vintage had likely been melted down to support the German war effort in WWI and WWII. Although the company gave Pull Caffé permission to use the words, "Oldest Coffee Roaster in the World" in their marketing, they disagree with Millar about the dating. They now believe a Probat in Switzerland deserves the title.

One interesting sidebar detail supports the notion that Millar's machine is older than the Swiss roaster. Unlike its rival, which has new-fangled ball bearings, the Yacolt machine uses technologically older bushings that need to be kept lubricated. A glass bottle, resembling an old IV bottle, hangs on the front of Millar's Probat. He says the inventor of the lubricating system, a Canadian named Elijah McCoy, had his products shunned by some Americans because he descended from recently enslaved men and women. The prejudiced customers chose to use inferior knock-offs, but connoisseurs, like Probat, insisted on "the real McCoy."

On Millar's website you'll see the phrase, "everything old is new again." His preference for earlier technology doesn't limit itself to the roaster and the hand-built manual espresso machines. He cans his beans using a vacuum sealer from the 1940s. The labels are printed and applied using techniques of similar vintage. Millar's quest is not for the newest and shiniest, but for systems and practices that are the antithesis of planned obsolescence.

You might call it his current obsession. 



The real McCoy for lubricating bushings.



Obsession: Comfort Food

On the Great British Baking Show, the first contestant is always always be a "signature bake." Often it's a recipe handed down from a beloved grandmother with emotional resonance for all involved—it provides comfort with its associations to other people and other times.

But those foods produce happy chemicals along with the happy memories. Comfort foods often contain high density sugar, fats, and/or carbs which cause elevated levels of serotonin and dopamine with a concomitant decrease in cortisol levels, thereby offering temporary stress relief. The impetus for these cravings may come from our old friend the gut microbiome and—just as too much of a good thing may compromise the health of the host—it may also compromise the health of the gut flora.

My mother, deep in her Alzheimer's journey, gave away our family's copy of "the red Betty Crocker cookbook," published the year I was born. Only when I found an identical replacement did I realize how many different comfort meals Betty had provided us. It also contained the "right" recipe for the streusel-filled coffee cake that became my family's Christmas morning tradition.




The coffee cake granddaughter enjoying her own coffee cake with grandma.



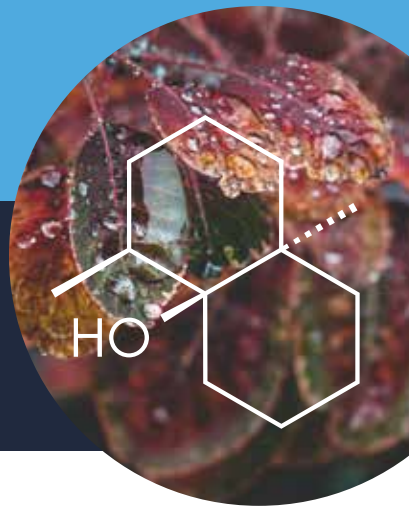
Socially distant Christmas morning with the grandkids pre-vaccine

My daughter ate so much stress-relieving coffee cake in the last trimester of the pregnancy that included my son-in-law's "surprise" deployment to SE Asia, she expected my granddaughter to be born with a sprinkling of brown sugar and cinnamon. Now we know she was eating Prozac-in-a-pan thanks to the urging of her gut microbes.

Beyond the biochemistry of coffee cake-as-comfort comes the other aspect of food—it is how we demonstrate love, care, and support to each other. Whether it comes thousands of miles in an Amazon box, scooped from a barrel in a Parisian suburb, or poured in a glass next to a piano, the gift of food sends the message, I care about you. And that is powerful medicine. 

Last Word

Molecular Gastronomy: She Put de Lime in de Coconut



In 1971, Harry Nilsson explained, “She put de lime in de coconut, she drank ‘em bot’ up.” This song may be the first literary expression of molecular gastronomy. “I say, Doctor, ain’t there nothin’ I can take to relieve this bellyache? You put the lime in the coconut, then you feel better. Put the lime in the coconut, and call me in the morning.”

While the true meaning of these lyrics is subject to speculation, lime mixed with coconut water is an ideal beverage to replace electrolytes—easy to drink, rich in vitamins and minerals, low in sugar, and works great as a thirst quencher. In Nilsson’s example, the drink appears to function as a digestif or a hangover remedy.

In 1976, I attended the University of Paris (Sorbonne). Most of my classes were reading, writing, and speaking French, but the cooking classes I attended really changed me forever. The teachings of Auguste Escoffier were in vogue. He believed the three most important ingredients were butter, butter, and butter. He created the five French “mother” sauces—béchamel, velouté, espagnole, hollandaise, and tomato.

In 1988, the scientific discipline of molecular and physical gastronomy (shortened to molecular gastronomy) was introduced by Herve This, a physical chemist, and Nicholas Kurti, whose doctorate in low-temperature physics and love for cooking led him to coin the term “gastrophysics.” Imagine hot liquor encased by a shell of frozen meringue or an egg yolk surrounded by transparent ravioli. How about a rectangle of silver sardine with a black dot of fish entrails, reduced to essential umami? Umami, sometimes called savoriness, is one of the five basic tastes and characteristic of broths and cooked meats. (Sweet, sour, salty, and bitter are the other four).

Molecular gastronomy, also known as progressive or molecular cuisine, focuses

on the fundamental molecules responsible for flavor and texture. Containers of salt and sugar look nearly identical, but consider this basic test. Take a pound of water (~2 cups) at room temperature. How much salt will dissolve? How much sugar? (answer below) [i]

Molecular gastronomy, as a discipline, is available in more than thirty universities world-wide. Students in physics, biology, chemistry, and other disciplines can make practical use of these theories. Mathematics enables students to understand molecular components better by unraveling recipes and making changes based on molecular calculations since the concentration/combination of certain molecules gives us our food.

Jordi Roca, pastry chef at El Celler de Can Roca in Catalonia, Spain, wanted a dish that tasted like old books. He isolated the flavor by assuming the molecules that would taste like old books were fat-soluble, not water-soluble. Using an old, smelly book, Roca spread lard on the pages and placed it in a sealed plastic bag in a water bath at low temperature for twelve hours. He then put the recovered lard in a vacuum distiller to isolate the molecules that would conjure the flavor of old books.

Last summer, I took an online course through Harvard entitled “Science and Cooking”[ii]. I have yet to do anything I consider experimental, but I have a “new, new thing” to practice in the kitchen while I drink de lime in my coconut. I was thinking of isolating the fragrance of petrichor, the smell of rain after a long dry spell, which contains a fat-soluble compound, geosmin. I would mix it with vodka and call the drink “Oregon.” [i]

[i] 1/3 lb. salt. 2 lbs. sugar!

[ii] “Science and Cooking---Physics Meets Food.” M. Brenner, P Sorensen and D. Weitz. 2020



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Managing Editor



Nancy is the Medical Director of Supportive Care at Willamette Vital Health. She has contributed articles to *ChartNotes* off and on for twenty years. She is very happy to be back at the keyboard.



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In private vascular surgery practice for 28 years before obtaining a MBA from OHSU/PSU, Dr. Pittman works full-time as a vein and wound care specialist in the Silver Falls Dermatology Clinics and spends his spare time in the garden, behind a camera or in the workshop restoring cars.

HOWARD BAUMANN, MD



Howard Baumann retired in 2010 after 34 years practicing gastroenterology at Salem Clinic. He is a member of the American Association of the History of Medicine, the Society for the History of Navy Medicine, and is a Board Member of the Oregon State Hospital of Mental Health. He contributes regularly to *ChartNotes* and Historical Tidbits.



THANK YOU MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

If you’re a “foody”, the Spring issue of *ChartNotes* is for you. Beyond the fun ideas and traditions around food is the reality that we need good, nutritious food to survive and be healthy. But for many people, getting good healthy food can be a challenge. So, for everyone who supports programs that help people get nutritious affordable food, thank you. You’re contributing to healthcare whether it’s ensuring your patients eat well before and after treatment, delivering for Meals on Wheels, volunteering at Marion Polk Food Share, or just helping a neighbor in need. Always, if you have any ideas for features in *ChartNotes*, contact Nancy Boutin at nancyboutin@me.com. If you or your organization has news or events to share, or an in memoriam to share about one of our members, contact Harvey Gail at exec@mpmedsociety.org. Also, visit our website at www.mpmedsociety.org for our news submission policy. The Marion-Polk County Medical Society thanks all of the medical professionals in our community for your unwavering dedication, service and sacrifice. Be Well!



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