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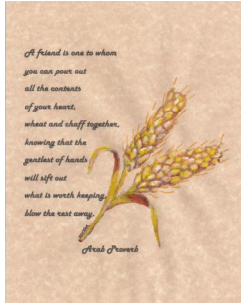
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## Holidays – My Thoughts

Well Thanksgiving has come and gone as a holiday for another year, yet it might, I would think be practiced a little more often. Now for me this was the third important event or episode in my life since the passing of my wife that I had to weather alone. First as I look back there was our Wedding Anniversary in June that marked our 48<sup>th</sup> year of our union as a couple; and then that was followed by my wife’s 72<sup>nd</sup> birthday during the first half of November; and then of course Thanksgiving, each of these days were days of great importance to the both of us over the years. Of course this all began in March when she died two days after my 76<sup>th</sup> birthday. Each was a significant moment in our lives that we enjoyed together. So needless to say that these events were celebrated alone, by me this time, that is except for Thanksgiving, which I spent my day after my morning dialysis stay, at my son’s home in Longmont. As it turned out my granddaughter invited me over for a sleep over, so being the grandfather that I am I accepted the invitation.

The meaning and practice of Thanksgiving for me, I must admit celebrating the holiday in the past was the same in scope and meaning for me as they were for my wife because it was more important to her than it was to me. Of course, being the devoted husband, I embraced her practices and meaning for the holidays that she had, so her absences during this time was felt with great remorse and emptiness. Therefore, as I look back, regarding the significance days that came, that found me alone without my wife, I should have reached out and shared them with a family member but I never was one to push myself on to anyone’s otherwise busy day.

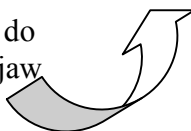
As I write this, looking back at the Thanksgiving I have just enjoyed, I hope each of you also enjoyed the day, the food, and the loving company that filled your day.

## Chemotherapy

“The time has come,” my Oncologist said, “to speak of many things,”  
“Infusion Drips, Healing time, labs and cancer things,”

Here you find me, at eight weeks into a treatment program that from where I’m sitting I can’t really see an ending, but having completed my fourth episode of receiving a Chemotherapy Infusion Drip plus four periods of 46 hours of wearing the mechanical pump that extended my chemotherapy. Now at this point I am happy to say, I am not suffering from any of the advertised side effects from the formula being used. Well maybe I should qualify that a little better. I do suffer from the intense cold, and a jaw

locking (muscle cramping my jaws) when I take my first bite of something when I haven’t eaten anything in a while, these side effects, I have been told might happen and they did. I am sad to say the intense cold that hits my hands, chaps and breaks the skin on my fingers, which is something I also feel in my mouth and throat when I drink something cold. It wasn’t so bad when the only thing I had to worry about was getting out an ice cube tray or even getting frozen meat from the freezer, which was bad enough mind you but I could avoid that with a little planning; but what do you know, from out of the northwest comes Colorado’s first snow. . Yes freeing snow, icy windows, and all the ills



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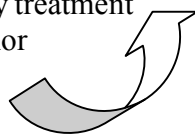
**Chemotherapy - continued from pg-1**

that come with the winter season. Now I can tell you the intense cold that struck me as I was scrapping my car windows during our first snowfall, just so I could drive to the dialysis clinic, was almost more than I could stand. Yes I wore gloves but still the cold penetrated my hands, and it felt like it was coming into my hands from the inside rather than from the outside elements.

Well anyway, I shouldered the pain and moved forward, making sure that I made my scheduled time here at the clinic. Of course this is only the beginning of winter, and I do hope I survive all the freezing frost that will lay its icy hands on metal door handles and frosting up my car windows, otherwise this winter will get old and painful fast.

I would like to say, that this being my fourth treatment (November 21<sup>st</sup>) as I said before, and I want you to know that I have what I can only describe as a hate – love relationship with a couple of Glad products, Cling Wrap and Press n’ Seal, which as you all might be aware has to do with keeping my PICC Line (catheter) dry during bathing. Of course none of these items actually work, I think they were invented to just annoy me and I have to report to you all it is not working and having said that I am not able to imagine what I could use to replace what I am using. Of course one other thing about this process flow, of treatment is that after my chemo infusion drip of 2.5 hours, I am faced with 46 hours of wearing a chemo mechanical pump, which makes sleep only something I wish for but not something I can enjoy during these 46 hours.

Well some good news, during my appointment with my Oncologist I learned that my treatment is actually working because my Tumor Markers have shown a marked

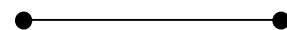


improvement; so as a means to demonstrate to you the reader, I have created a rough bar graph for a visual demonstration of where I currently stand –



**Information shown above as taken  
From my four-scheduled lab test on the  
dates shown.**

Just a closing thought, I have to admit that I have met some very interesting people at the Rocky Mountain Cancer Center located at the Foothills – Boulder Community Hospital; which I will speak of at another time, lets leave this Chemo Infusion area with the thought that there will be more to follow.



### Caregiver

Continuing on from Issue 2, we pick up the report that I began about caregivers, I hope you’ll find what follows as very enlightening.

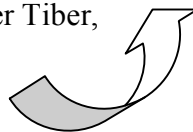
The concept of care giving is a service of one person or organization given to another individual, it can be something one person would hire done for them or a service provided to a friend or family member by a family member or a good friend. This service, though it may not have been called Care Giver when it all began, it could just be a helping hand provided from one person to another; matter fact, you could even say the person providing this service had a calling for it, such as doctors, nurses, medical aids or techs, and all of these would probably pursue a course of training to qualify themselves accordingly.

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Even though the position of a caregiver has been around since the beginning of time, and the concept today has been claimed by many organizations that provide such service. However, I think that they might have just formalized it by giving it a name, where we who have recognized it for what it is, we see mothers, fathers, grandparents, sisters and brothers giving of themselves to provide a loved one such care. I think you would recognize it as when a couple give birth to a child, then this child is in need of a caregiver and as they grow, that could be any member of the family, along with someone hired such as a babysitter.

Looking at what I have written about caregivers, it brings to mind something that I came across while I did some online research. It falls into something that is a myth or questionable story that you would weigh it as either being fact or fiction; I am speaking of an area of time that may have taken place during days gone by, when I say days gone by, I am talking about a good 2,500 years ago and nobody can accurately tell us what is or isn't true about this story, you the reader will have to determine what is or isn't true

Well anyway, it began when twin brothers Romulus and Remus, the sons of the God Mars (War) and vestal virgin sworn to be celibate however, Mars induced her and she gave birth to twin boys. As one might imagine, Zeus fearful of someone replacing him ordered the boys drowned in the River Tiber,



and one story goes she put them in a small boat and sent them down the river and eventually they found themselves on the banks of the river where they would be found by anyone. And in this story, a she wolf found them and took them to nurture as her own (yes I view the she wolf as a caregiver). The wolf pack convinced her to get rid of the boys, so she left them where a human could find them.

Later a Shepard found the boys and took them to raise as his own, so taking them home to look after them, he ended up raising the boys as his own children. The boys grew up to be very strong and clever and they decided to build a town on the spot where the Shepard had found them. Shortly after building the town the twins had a big argument about who should be in charge, Romulus overpowered his brother Remus who died in the fight. Romulus then became the first king of this town, which he named Rome, after himself.

As the story implied, the she wolf and the Shepard were caregivers in the nurturing of the twin boys, and they did this without the title – Caregiver.

So moving forward, as I said a number of organizations in the U.S. of A. kind of said that they were the moving influence in making the position of Caregivers a national position where a person's effort can be respected. Primarily, as I viewed the caregiver history, it seemed to me that the original caregiver person implied that this person took care of the elderly.

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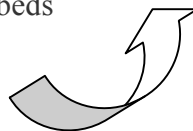
What might a caregiver be called on to do for the person they are providing such service? In this I have found an excellent description that such a person could be called on to perform –

A caregiver might be responsible for attending to the specific needs of an elderly person, but a caregiver may also attend to the needs of an infant or a disabled person. Caregivers serve a key role in the health care industry. Caregivers ensure that those under their care are clean, fed and safe. The responsibilities of a caregiver can be diverse and encompass many aspects of care.

Caregivers will generally work in a patient's home and be helpful with a variety of tasks. Caregivers are or can be responsible for assisting infants, seniors or the disabled with their receiving a proper diet and meals along with preparation of their meals and in some cases grocery shopping. Caregivers assist in cleaning and taking those they are caring for on errands and other daily activities. When caring for an elderly patient a caregiver will also be responsible for a senior's health care. This may include monitoring vital signs and keeping a logbook (ex. if they are Diabetic). If the caregiver is caring for a child the job description may include making sure they are physically well and providing necessary social interaction such as playing games, reading and encouraging development of skills (primarily described many times as the job of a Nanny).

Here are some basic caregiver job responsibilities:

- Change linens and make beds



- Prepare and plan meals (including clean-up)
- Help with walking and light exercise
- Plan ahead for future meals, check expiration dates on food
- Do laundry (may include light ironing)
- Light housekeeping duties (such as vacuuming and dusting)
- Assist with dressing, grooming and bathing
- Take out the trash
- Run small errands (pick up prescriptions, go to the bank, etc.)
- Remind when to take medications
- Engage in mental and physical exercises
- Escort to appointments (doctor, physical therapy, hair salon, etc.)
- Organize mail and maintain a schedule/calendar
- Escort to religious services
- Engage in regular activities (talking, games, etc.)
- Provide companionship
- Record daily care notes

Now the above deals solely with the home care caregivers position, however, the field of care giving extends far outward from the home care position; nurses, medical aids and techs are also viewed as caregivers,

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and/or medical staff such as doctor's offices whose duties could also be working in specific clinics where treatment is given for certain ills or ailments such as cancer and dialysis as an example. These individuals could also be working in a nursing and rehabilitation homes, there is no limitation as to where you might find a caregiver.

**To be continued in Issue 4**



## A Day on Dialysis

The noise of machines can be heard out in the hall,  
Where you set quietly waiting your treatment call,  
Three times a week you set there waiting,  
And waiting sometimes can be so frustrating.

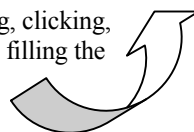
And through it all,  
The machines' noise - whirling, popping, clicking,  
Along with the beep-beep-beeping ever filling the air.

The process begins when a Tech calls for your time in the chair,  
But first the scale is something you must face and bare,  
A ritual of weighing to measure what you have gained,  
To determine what liquids gained that must be drained.

And through it all,  
The machines' noise - whirling, popping, clicking,  
Along with the beep-beep-beeping ever filling the air.

The Nurse is waiting to assess your health, body and mind,  
To measure your lungs and heart, as they intertwined,  
And to question you of your present ongoing condition,  
Looking always for answers, an honest admission.

And through it all,  
The machines' noise - whirling, popping, clicking,  
Along with the beep-beep-beeping ever filling the air.



You arrive at your assigned chair and machine,  
Blood pressure is checked with a cuff, with a little chagrin,

Standing and sitting, before you and the machine are connected,  
Yet it is only when the needles are used, that pain is ever inflicted.

And through it all,  
The machines' noise - whirling, popping, clicking,  
Along with the beep-beep-beeping ever filling the air.

From time to time your blood is tested, monthly in fact,  
The Dietician shares the result and its important impact,  
Done in a friendly manner, never seemingly to preach,  
More as instructional process, hoping to reach out and teach.

And through it all,  
The machines' noise - whirling, popping, clicking,  
Along with the beep-beep-beeping ever filling the air.

The Social Worker person has an ever-helping hand,  
Scheduling treatment centers as you travel across the land,  
Updating first-hand your patient information records,  
Solving problems and calming chaos and discord.

And through it all,  
The machines' noise - whirling, popping, clicking,  
Along with the beep-beep-beeping ever filling the air.

Doctors, Nurses, Techs, and Dietitians all doing their part,  
Taking the time to track your progress on their charts,  
Each playing a role in reversing a physical trend,  
Giving advice and medicine as they attend.

And through it all,  
The machines' noise - whirling, popping, clicking,  
Along with the beep-beep-beeping ever filling the air.

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## Notices & Tips

Four things come not back:  
The spoken word; The sped arrow;  
Time past; The neglected opportunity.

### Just a couple of thoughts -

1. It is good to have a hobby that you can bring with you to your dialysis treatment (it does make the time go by faster).
2. Time goes by faster when engaged in conversation with your neighbor.
3. Viewing your treatment time as a part time job, and finding something to keep yourself busy.



Looking for someone who would like to contribute to this newsletter. As to topic or subject matter, as an example, that will be accepted –

- ☉ humors anodal stories relating to dialysis
- ☉ stories of caregivers
- ☉ recommended books to read



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## Scuttlebutt



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