

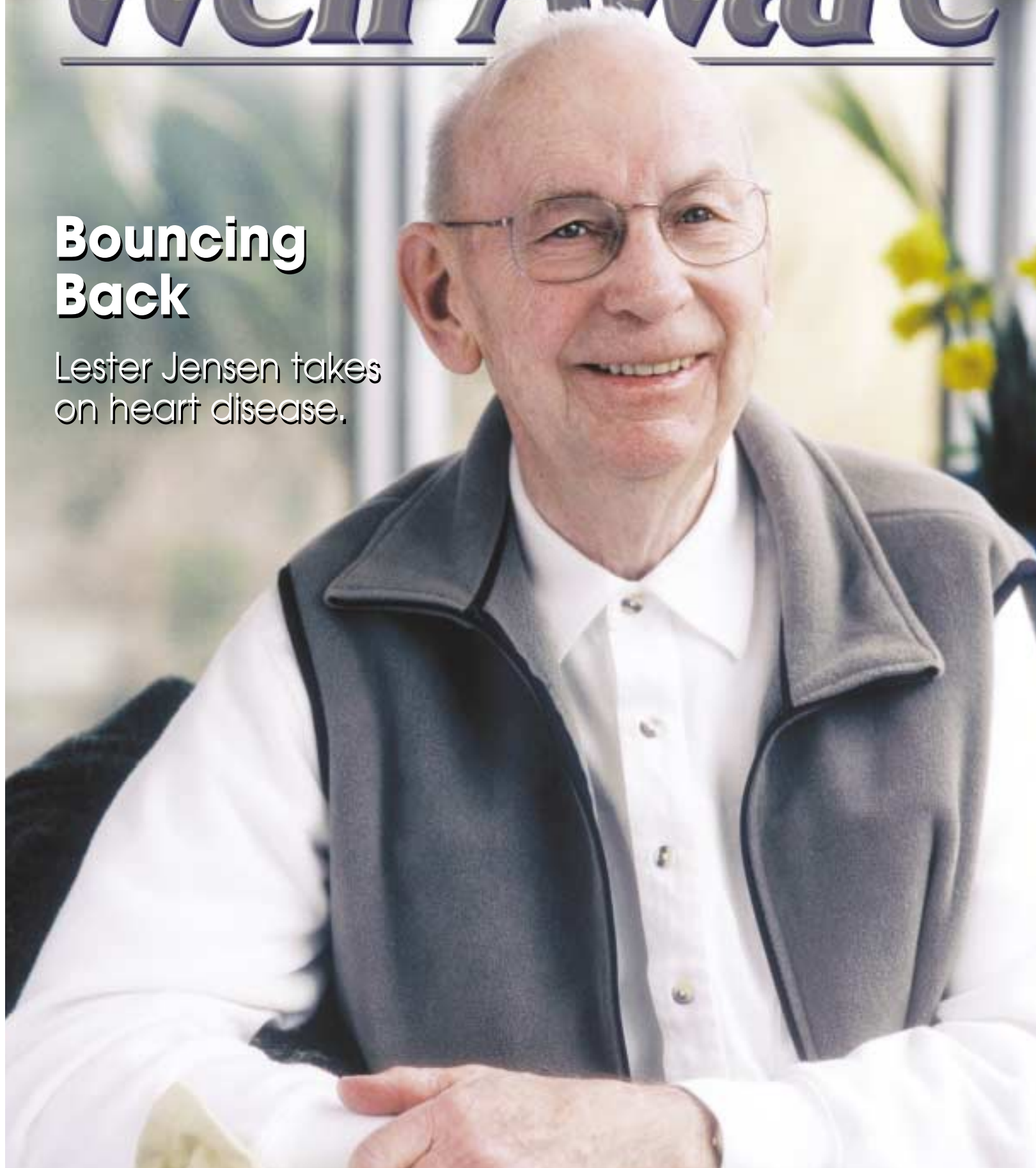
MID-COLUMBIA MEDICAL CENTER

SPRING 2003  
[www.mcmc.net](http://www.mcmc.net)

# Well Aware

## **Bouncing Back**

Lester Jensen takes  
on heart disease.



## Dear Friends,

As we enter spring, it seems an appropriate time to talk about some new beginnings at Mid-Columbia Medical Center. I'm truly excited about the initiatives we've been pursuing over the past months, which are adding significantly to our ability to serve residents of this region.



You will be able to see one very visible sign of this activity if in the near future you drive by the site on Dry Hollow Road of what used to be Kirk's Market. Over the next several weeks we will be transforming that space into the new home of The Dalles Clinic and other physicians offices.

When the renovation is completed in late spring, the building will be able to accommodate 10 physicians in modern, comfortable spaces..

On the subject of physicians, we have successfully recruited several new doctors who will be moving to our community in the coming weeks. These include two primary care physicians, an orthopedic surgeon and a medical oncologist, a cancer specialist who will help round out our comprehensive treatment offerings at Celilo Center. In addition to these physicians, we have recruited a physician assistant.

Adding these professionals to our medical staff will help us meet the growing need for primary and specialty care in this region. These efforts will be further aided by an expansion of our visiting physicians program, which will enhance the cardiology, dermatology and endoscopy care available locally.

As you will read in this issue of *Well Aware*, we have added a new member to the Mid-Columbia Medical Center Board of Trustees. We are pleased to welcome Jorge Barragán, the owner of Casa el Mirador in The Dalles. He brings valuable business insight to our planning process and provides us with an excellent connection to the Hispanic community, to whom we will be reaching out with more services in the future.

It's an exciting time at Mid-Columbia Medical Center, and a great time of the year. I hope you have a happy and healthy spring.

Sincerely,

Duane Francis, President

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## Mid-Columbia Medical Center

### *It is Our Mission . . .*

*To lead and act as a catalyst in promoting health for all people.  
To recognize the individual as a whole human being with different needs that must be enthusiastically met. To communicate a vision of health, art, education, technology and a center for healing which will continually upgrade the quality of life in the community environment in which we live.  
To empower people to become partners in their health care.*

Mid-Columbia Medical Center is a not-for-profit healthcare organization offering comprehensive services to the Mid-Columbia Region, and is governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees:

- |                    |                           |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
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| Pamela Clausen     | Wallace Wolf, Jr., D.V.M. |
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# Lifestyles

## Help at



### *MCMC's Visiting Health Services launches Lifestyles Independent Care Program to help people heal at home.*

To fill a void in the community for important in-home and personal care services, Mid-Columbia Medical Center's Visiting Health Services has launched Lifestyles Independent Care Service. Lifestyles is designed to help elderly and disabled people live independently in the comfort of their own homes.



A similar program offered by another provider in the community recently ceased operation.

"We know most people prefer to stay in the comfort and security of their own homes, where they feel better, heal better and are happier," said Annie Soper, director of Visiting Health Services and Lifestyles Independent Care Services. "We believe our new Lifestyles program complements our existing home health services and fulfills an unmet need in the Columbia Gorge to provide services to help people remain as independent as possible."

Lifestyles Independent Care Services offers clients assistance with shopping, errands and transportation, as well as home management services, including nutritious meal preparation, light housekeeping, laundry and even pet care. Personal care is also available to those who need assistance with medications, exercise, bathing, grooming and dressing.

"Often, clients just want companionship and conversation," Soper said. "And we share that, too."

An estimated 6 million Americans rely on home caregivers each year. Even the sandwich generation is finding in-home and personal care services helpful, Soper said. They are

the mid-life couples who are caring for their aging parents and their own children at the same time, often in the same household, while working demanding jobs. "They simply need assistance to provide care to their parents and/or to help out with all of the daily-living activities," Soper said.

MCMC's Visiting Health Services is a charter member of the Oregon Association for Home Care (OAHC), an organization representing providers of skilled home health, hospice and in-home care. Soper has served on OAHC's board for the past four years and recently was appointed president of the organization.

"Our mission at OAHC is to support and assist our members in the delivery of high-value, home-based health services in their communities," Soper said. "We are very involved with state and national politics that govern and impact home healthcare and, through advocacy and education, we promote the practice and utilization of high-quality home care services."

Lifestyles Independent Care Services is available to residents in Wasco, Sherman, Hood River, Klickitat and Skamania counties. To learn more about MCMC's Visiting Health Services or Lifestyles, call 298-7962 or toll-free 1-888-388-7280.

# Bouncing Back

## Rehabilitation

By Leslie Teegarden

### *With the help of MCMC's Cardiac Rehabilitation Clinic, Lester Jensen faces heart disease head-on.*

A diagnosis of heart disease can be a frightening, confusing and stressful reality. Coping with the news and wondering about your future health can be overwhelming. But the support of family and friends, as well as healthcare professionals, can make a big difference in how you adjust to these changes.

Once the medical emergency (if there was one) has passed, learning about heart disease and understanding the principles of cardiac rehabilitation will help improve your recovery and overall health.

Lester Jensen underwent triple-bypass heart surgery a little more than a year ago, but

that operation was only the first step in a long process that has allowed him to regain his physical and emotional health. After being tethered to an oxygen machine for three months and enduring an unusually lengthy recovery period with several relapses, Jensen stabilized and decided to take control of his recovery. And so did his wife, Betty.

Together, they enrolled in MCMC's Cardiac Risk-Reduction & Rehabilitation Clinic, a series of education classes and exercise clinics specifically designed to help patients who have been diagnosed with heart disease, recover faster and return to full and productive lives.

"Initially, I was having trouble even standing up without being dizzy," Jensen recalls. "When I could move around, it was very limited and I could only walk the block in front of my house. I wanted to do anything that would be beneficial to my health."

"Lester and Betty really embraced the program," says program director Pat Visser, R.N., whose team consists of professionals who specialize in all areas of cardiac rehabilitation. "Not only were they willing to change their lifestyle habits, but they listened attentively to all the lectures; explored seriously the relaxation component of the program; kept incredible diaries of their work outside of the clinics; shared personal experiences with the group and generously supported others."

The Cardiac Risk-Reduction & Rehabilitation Clinic provides education and instruction for developing a better understanding of the heart and how to protect it against further disease. Visser and her staff help patients adopt heart-healthy diets, understand the role of medications, reduce stress and manage weight, blood



## A POETIC EXERCISE

pressure and cholesterol. Each clinic includes a medically supervised, EKG-monitored cardiovascular training program.

“We offer a cardiac health and rehabilitation program because it has been shown that behavior modification can help reduce contributing heart disease risk factors,” says Barbara Robison, director of MCMC’s Center for Mind & Body Medicine. “Specifically, clinical research suggests the benefits of increased exercise tolerance, increased strength, symptom improvement, enhanced sense of well-being and overall improvements in lifestyle.”

“My wife was really the driving force behind my motivation and recovery efforts,” Jensen says. “And I give the program credit for helping me regain a lifestyle that is healthy, productive and enjoyable - the staff inspired me, and I felt like they really took a personal interest in my recovery.”

Betty says her husband was dedicated and never wanted to miss a day of the program.

“We act as the patients’ advocate and help them attain the health goals they set for themselves at the beginning of the program,” explains Visser. “Our goal is to help improve their understanding of heart disease, enhance their ability to make heart-healthy choices and return them to their highest level of activity and independence.”

Although Jensen had some initial setbacks, he has managed to change and improve his lifestyle. He currently exercises five to six days a week and eats healthier, avoiding foods high in fats, cholesterol and sodium. Visser said Jensen more than doubled his exercise time and speed and attained his personal goals to strengthen his heart, improve muscle tone and gain endurance.

Even though the Jensens are very disciplined, the doctor said they could still enjoy one of their favorite weekly traditions. “We like to go out for a bowl of clam chowder on Friday nights,” Betty says.

### Are you a candidate for MCMC’s cardiac rehabilitation program?

If you have had heart surgery or a heart attack, experience chest pain or have any heart condition, you may benefit from the Cardiac Rehabilitation & Risk Reduction Clinic offered by MCMC.

Participation in the clinic requires a physician’s referral. Ask your doctor about the program or call us for more information at 296-7202.

Following completion of the standard program, participants are provided an opportunity to continue their rehabilitation in MCMC’s fitness center and/or enroll in the rehabilitation graduate program, which helps patients continue stamina and strength building under the guidance of a physical therapist and/or cardiac nurse.

To relax, Lester Jensen recites poems. “I breathe in motion to the meter of the poetry and visualize peaceful places - it’s a very pleasant and calming experience, and it eases any tension I may have.” Lester’s favorite poem (for this exercise) is William Wordsworth’s *The Daffodils*.

### *The Daffodils*

*I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o’er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.  
Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the milky way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay:  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.  
The waves beside them danced; but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:  
A poet could not but be gay,  
In such a jocund company:  
I gazed - and gazed - but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought:  
For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.*

# Skin Deep

## Cancer Treatment

by Erin Johnson

*Years of sun exposure catch up with Jim Bell, but things are looking up for Celilo patient.*

It started out as a sore on his left arm that wouldn't heal. But no one suspected melanoma. Least of all Jim Bell.

However, the diagnosis wasn't entirely a surprise to him. The Hood River resident is an inveterate traveler, following the road "wherever the white line goes," he says. Bell had logged many miles throughout the years behind the wheel, left arm dangling out an open window. Exposed to the elements.

"I doubt I ever used any type of sunscreen lotion," he reflects. "It was a matter of not being aware."

Growing up in Southern California, in the San Bernardino mountains, there was no shortage of the sun's damaging rays. Bell spent most of his working years outside, he says,

into "anything involving dirt." Fresh out of California Polytechnic, and armed with a degree in agricultural sciences, he marked some time in the Sacramento Delta, working in farm management. Following his agricultural stint, Bell discovered his niche in the construction industry, where he would spend the remainder of his career.

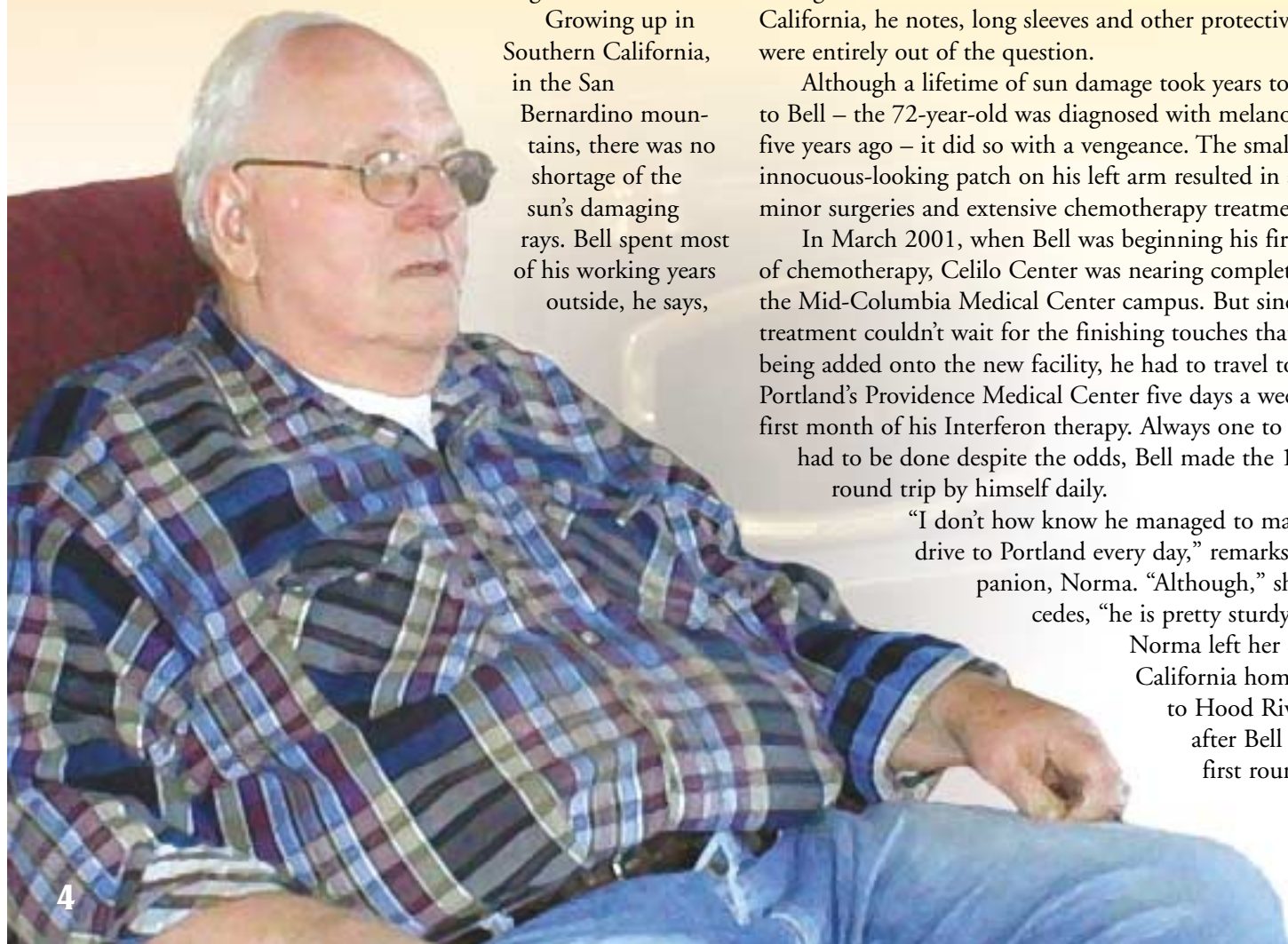
"I remember coming home at the end of a long day at work, and my hands would be bright red from exposure," Bell recalls. "Eventually I found that it might be a good idea to wear gloves." But in the desert-like environment of Southern California, he notes, long sleeves and other protective gear were entirely out of the question.

Although a lifetime of sun damage took years to catch up to Bell – the 72-year-old was diagnosed with melanoma just five years ago – it did so with a vengeance. The small, fairly innocuous-looking patch on his left arm resulted in a series of minor surgeries and extensive chemotherapy treatments.

In March 2001, when Bell was beginning his first round of chemotherapy, Celilo Center was nearing completion on the Mid-Columbia Medical Center campus. But since his treatment couldn't wait for the finishing touches that were being added onto the new facility, he had to travel to Portland's Providence Medical Center five days a week for the first month of his Interferon therapy. Always one to do what had to be done despite the odds, Bell made the 120-mile round trip by himself daily.

"I don't how know he managed to make that drive to Portland every day," remarks his companion, Norma. "Although," she concedes, "he is pretty sturdy."

Norma left her Southern California home to move to Hood River shortly after Bell began his first round of



chemotherapy. She's been by his side ever since, helping him through the logistics – along with the inevitable emotional ups and downs – of living with cancer.

Fortunately for Bell, the opening of Celilo shortened his daily cancer commute considerably. That was a good thing, particularly since his next phase of treatment was a much more bitter pill to swallow.

“Chemo has tremendous physical and psychological effects,” he says. “It just saps everything you have.”

Bell continued to visit Celilo three days a week through March 2002. Though many of his fellow patients took advantage of the facility's unique wellness offerings – massage therapy, meditation practice, journaling classes and yoga, for example – he stuck to the basics.

But even those who stay just long enough for their treatment have to admit there's something special about Celilo that separates it from other cancer centers. “If you have to have cancer,” says Norma, “then Celilo is the place to be. The whole feeling and atmosphere is so caring, and not a bit condescending.”

Part of it is the people. “Everyone we encountered was so nice,” Norma adds. “People who work in cancer care have to be special, and [Celilo Care coordinator] Lyn Juergens is just the tops. She exudes kindness and warmth, and you can tell it's not a put-on – she's completely sincere. When she's with you, you are her sole interest. I've seen her interact with patients who were really down in the dumps. It's amazing how she can turn things around for them.”

Bell agrees. “I've met some real nice people through my cancer experience. The doctors and nurses have shown supreme professionalism, and always have the best of intentions for their patients.”

Last January, Bell began a fresh series of treatments. This time, it's a new vaccine injection, designed to maintain his level of white blood cells while stopping the spread of the radicals. Bell is optimistic he will conquer the disease, once and for all.

“The doctors seem to agree I have it pretty well controlled,” he says. “There has been no appreciable spread of the cancer. It appears that the surgeries and chemotherapy have pretty much taken care of it.”

Throughout the various operations and chemical bombardments, Bell's sense of humor has remained intact. It's something he's worked hard to keep, and it's served him well.

“If you're dealing with cancer for the first time, read up,” he suggests. “Learn about it. Become aware of what you're facing.”

“But the best thing you can do for yourself is to not lose your sense of humor. Because you'll need it.”

## The ABCDE's of Skin Cancer

The key to successful skin cancer treatment is early detection.

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States. More than 1 million new cases of skin cancer were diagnosed in 2002. The three major types of skin cancer are basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma and melanoma.

Melanoma is the deadliest form of skin cancer, causing more than 75 percent of all skin cancer deaths. But melanoma is also curable if detected at an early stage. Some melanomas are not easily noticed in our everyday life. They may be in inconspicuous locations on the body, hidden by clothing or even hair. Most can be spotted as soon as they arise if you know what to look for.

## What Should You Look For?

The American Cancer Society has provided a guideline to self-check for skin cancer, the ABCDE Rule. This rule can help you look for signs of skin cancer. When looking at moles on your skin, look for the following:

You should also watch for these changes in your skin:

- **A mole that bleeds**
- **A mole that grows fast**
- **A scaly or crusted growth on the skin**
- **A mole that itches**
- **Any moles that appear after age 30 should be watched carefully and shown to your doctor.**

**A**SYMMETRY: When both sides of a mole don't look the same

**B**ORDER: When the edges of a mole are blurry or jagged

**C**OLOR: Most common moles are a single shade of brown. Be aware of change in color, if the color spreads or disappears

**D**IAMETER: When a mole is larger than 1/16-inch (about the size of a pencil eraser)

**E**LEVATION: When a mole is raised above the skin and has a rough surface

# Barragán on Board

## *MCMC welcomes restaurant owner to its Board of Trustees.*

Jorge Barragán, owner of Casa El Mirador in The Dalles, has been appointed to the Mid-Columbia Medical Center Board of Trustees, a group of community leaders who donate their time and talent to assist the hospital in carrying out its mission of providing high-quality care and service to every patient. He will serve a four-year term and contribute to decisions that will impact the future of the hospital.

“We want the composition of our board to reflect the diversity of our region,” said Duane Francis, CEO, Mid-Columbia Medical Center. “Jorge is well-respected and has been dedicated to serving this community for nearly 10 years. Our board will benefit greatly from his proven business expertise and perspective on healthcare issues important to our Hispanic community.”

“Being appointed to Mid-Columbia Medical Center’s Board of Trustees is a great honor,” Barragán said. “I look forward to serving on the board because I care about our community and I want to help to make it a better place for all of us. I’m just happy to be of service.”

Barragán previously served on the Board of Directors of The Dalles Area Chamber for more than five years and was elected president for the 2000-2001 term. He is also a member of The Dalles Rotary Club and is involved in numerous programs supporting local charities, schools and community events.

Barragán moved to The Dalles in 1994, after discovering the community on a drive from the Tri-Cities to Portland. He and his wife, Lupe, opened Casa El Mirador and began serving cuisine native to their home in Central



Mexico. Today, they both still run the restaurant but with an increased staff of 17. Prior to opening his own restaurant, Barragán co-owned a restaurant with his brother in Washington for seven years.

He and his wife have four children: Jorge, Jr., Eddie, Alex, and Victoria.

Along with Barragán, the hospital’s board of trustees include Duane Francis, CEO, Pamela Clausen, R.N., Robert A. Staver, M.D., Cascade Orthopedics; Gretchen Kimsey, teacher, St. Mary’s School; Robert Bailey, Orchard View Farms; and Wallace W. Wolf, Jr., D.V.M., The Dalles Veterinary Hospital.



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