

BOB tales

Brotherhood of the Balloon Member Newsletter | Jan. 2025



"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." —Lao Tzu

Dear Members (a note from Deb Hickey):

Well, here we are—another new year, another round of “I’m going to change my life” resolutions. Let’s face it, we’ve all been there—setting big goals only to see them disappear faster than the last piece of holiday pie. But this year, I’m making a deal with myself: no more grand promises. Instead, I’m focusing on small, manageable changes. But of course, I have an overarching goal—to feel better physically, whatever it takes.

If you’ve followed my updates, you know I battled (and won) an appeal for IVIG treatments for a mysterious autoimmune condition. After 16 doctors and eight years of head-scratching, I still don’t have all the answers (and if anyone *really* knows what an elevated TS-HDS antibody is, *call me*). Weekly five-hour infusions started last February, and while I’m still dealing with pain and pressure in my eyes, I think it’s slowing things down.

In the meantime, I’m exploring neuroplastic pain and stress—because let’s face it, I could win gold in worrying. I’m also trying to add little positive changes each day: prayer, a gratitude journal, and extra walks with my dog (she’s thrilled).

Whatever your resolutions may be, I believe the key to setting and achieving any goal is to keep it manageable, even if it’s ambitious. Here’s to a new year of feeling better, one step at a time!

In this issue of *BOB Tales* the lead article explores the anticipated rise in prostate cancer cases by 2040, driven by aging populations and expanded healthcare access, emphasizing the critical need for early detection and personalized treatment options. We also highlight a study showing that advanced radiation therapies, such as proton therapy

and SBRT, can significantly lower the risk of secondary cancers compared to traditional IMRT. Additionally, new research draws attention to the serious long-term risks associated with conventional treatments like radical prostatectomy and radiotherapy. We feature research findings linking 22 commonly used pesticides to an increased risk of prostate cancer, sparking important public health conversations. Finally, in our “In the News” section, we cover a groundbreaking blood test for metastatic prostate cancer that shows promise in detecting circulating tumor cells to predict survival and guide treatment decisions.

In our “Flashback” section this month, we discuss the many health benefits of leafy greens. In our “Health” section, we highlight the dangers of balance issues after age 60 and provide tips on building strength to prevent falls, which are crucial for maintaining independence and quality of life. Furthermore, we explain how high cortisol levels in men over 60 contribute to age-related health risks and how managing cortisol through lifestyle changes can improve overall health. In the final health article, we explore the importance of friendships for mental and physical well-being, especially for men, who often face challenges in maintaining close relationships.

And of course, we have much more.

As always, we welcome any suggestions you have on improving the value of the *BOB Tales* to our members. Please send your feedback to DHickey@protonbob.com.

Deb Hickey



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Prostate Cancer Surge: What Lies Ahead

Prostate cancer cases are expected to [rise significantly](#) over the next 15 years, driven by the aging Baby Boomer generation and increased access to healthcare and screenings worldwide.

“Studies suggest that we will see a dramatic rise in men with prostate cancer. As with most things, the reasons are complex and due to many factors. First, it’s due to the simple fact that people are living longer. The primary risk factor for prostate cancer is aging,” says Marc Dall’Era, interim chairman of the Department of Urologic Surgery at UC Davis Health.

By 2040, global prostate cancer cases are projected to more than double to 2.9 million annually, with deaths rising 85% to 700,000. This increase, driven by longer life expectancy and population growth, also means more men will face prostate cancer alongside comorbidities like diabetes and heart disease, prompting calls for broader men’s health screening programs. While prevention remains a formidable challenge, maintaining a healthy weight, regular exercise, and a balanced diet can help reduce risk. Early detection through regular screenings is critical to lowering mortality rates.

Racial disparities persist, with black men experiencing higher mortality rates due to reduced access to screenings and care. Advances in diagnostics, including biomarkers and imaging techniques like multiparametric MRI and PET scans, are improving detection and treatment options.

news briefs

[New Therapy Doubles PSA Success in Advanced Prostate Cancer](#)

A new treatment option is showing promise for men with metastatic hormone-sensitive prostate cancer. The addition of *Pluvicto*, a targeted radioligand therapy, to standard treatments more than doubled the chances of undetectable PSA levels at 48 weeks without significantly increasing side effects.

[Germline Testing Gaps: A Barrier to Life-Saving Treatments for Veterans](#)

Many veterans with advanced prostate cancer avoid germline testing over fears of losing benefits. But this could mean missing out on life-saving treatments and early cancer detection for their families. Germline testing identifies inherited mutations like BRCA1 and BRCA2, which precision tools like PARP inhibitors target to improve survival and quality of life—testing is key to unlocking these options.

Personalized treatments, such as non-invasive proton therapy, and tools like genomic testing, which identify genetic mutations to guide treatment, offer targeted care with fewer side effects, particularly for those with hereditary risk factors.

As cases and deaths continue to climb, early detection, personalized strategies, and a comprehensive focus on men's health are essential. Men should prioritize discussions with their doctors about screening and treatment options and consider seeking second opinions to improve outcomes.

Advanced Radiation Therapies Reduce Second Cancer Risk in Prostate Patients

A [recent study](#) evaluated the risk of developing a second primary cancer after prostate cancer treatment with advanced radiation therapies like proton therapy and stereotactic body radiation therapy (SBRT), compared to the more widely used intensity-modulated photon radiation therapy (IMRT).

The findings revealed that both proton therapy and conventional SBRT were associated with a significantly lower risk of secondary primary cancer compared to IMRT.

Notably, while SBRT demonstrated a reduced risk, proton therapy showed an even greater reduction, underscoring its potential as a safer option. Experts suggest that combining the precision of SBRT with the advanced technology of proton therapy could further minimize the long-term risk of secondary cancers for prostate cancer patients.

[Proton Therapy Shows Promise for Pediatric Hodgkin Lymphoma Below the Diaphragm](#)

A new study from Children's Hospital of Philadelphia highlights the benefits of proton therapy for pediatric Hodgkin lymphoma patients with tumors below the diaphragm. Proton therapy reduced radiation exposure to vital organs, minimized side effects, and showed no severe complications—offering a safer, more targeted alternative to traditional radiotherapy.

[Proton Therapy: A Game-Changer in Breast Cancer Treatment](#)

A recent study examines how proton therapy can reduce radiation toxicity in breast cancer treatment. Proton therapy offers greater precision than traditional methods, minimizing damage to healthy tissues like the heart and lungs. The study highlights the treatment's potential to improve survival rates and quality of life. This research pushes for further exploration of proton therapy's role in advancing breast cancer care.

These results highlight the importance of considering advanced radiation modalities like proton therapy, particularly for patients seeking effective treatment options with reduced long-term health risks.

Conventional Prostate Cancer Treatments May Carry Substantial Long-Term Risks

A [new study](#) sheds light on the broader long-term risks associated with common prostate cancer treatments, including prostatectomy and traditional radiotherapy.

After analyzing data from nearly 52,000 men, researchers found that those undergoing prostatectomy faced a more than sevenfold increase in the risk of urinary and sexual complications, including erectile dysfunction and bladder issues, over a 12-year period. Patients treated with conventional radiotherapy also experienced increased risks of urinary complications and bladder cancer, with a nearly threefold greater likelihood compared to untreated men.

This data underscores the significant risks associated with traditional prostate cancer treatments, emphasizing the need for patients to make informed decisions before undergoing treatment. Although prostatectomy and X-ray/photon radiotherapy are common treatment options, these findings highlight the importance of considering potential risks when evaluating prostate cancer care.

- ▶ **BOB Comment:** Proton therapy was not included in this study but given that proton therapy delivers significantly less radiation to healthy tissue compared to conventional radiation methods, we believe the risks associated with proton therapy are among the lowest. And, as shown in the study mentioned previously, the precision of proton therapy helps minimize potential long-term complications, offering a safer treatment alternative for prostate cancer patients.

These findings reinforce the need for patient education about both the benefits and risks of treatment options. As patients navigate prostate cancer therapies, understanding the long-term health implications is critical to making informed decisions.



22 Pesticides Linked to Prostate Cancer

A [recent study](#) shows that 22 pesticides are linked to a higher risk of prostate cancer in the U.S., and four of them are also associated with prostate cancer deaths. While the findings don't prove causation, they suggest pesticides may influence prostate cancer risk, calling for further research.

Researchers analyzed pesticide usage data from over 3,100 U.S. counties, comparing it to prostate cancer cases and deaths during two time periods: pesticide use from 1997–2001 linked to cancer outcomes from 2011–2015, and pesticide use from 2002–2006 compared to cancer incidence from 2016–2020. This extended timeline reflects the slow progression of prostate cancer. Several pesticides previously unlinked to prostate cancer were identified as potential contributors to increased risk. Notably, some were associated not only with higher cancer incidence but also with prostate cancer mortality, despite being classified by regulatory agencies as unlikely carcinogens.

These results “underscore the need for continued research into the relations among these specific pesticides and prostate cancer incidence and into the potential public health relevance of pesticide exposures and cancer incidence more generally,” says Simon John Christoph Soerensen, Ph.D. and colleagues from Stanford University.

The findings provide key insights into how environmental exposures may influence cancer risk and emphasize the importance of addressing regional variations in cancer incidence. They pave the way for future research aimed at identifying and mitigating environmental factors contributing to prostate cancer, with the ultimate goal of improving early detection and treatment strategies.

Blood Test Predicts Survival and Treatment Response in Metastatic Prostate Cancer

A [groundbreaking study](#) highlights the potential of a blood test to predict survival outcomes and treatment effectiveness in men newly diagnosed with metastatic prostate cancer. The test measures circulating tumor cells (CTCs)—cancer cells shed into the bloodstream—and provides critical insights into disease progression and survival prospects.

Analyzing blood samples from more than 500 patients in a phase 3 clinical trial, researchers discovered that higher CTC counts correlate with significantly shorter survival times and poorer treatment responses. Men with five or more CTCs had a median survival of 27.9 months, compared to at least 78 months for those with no detectable CTCs. These findings could guide personalized treatment plans, helping physicians identify patients who may benefit from riskier, more aggressive therapies or clinical trials of new drugs.

“No one, until now, has looked at whether CTC counts can be used right at the beginning, when a man first presents with metastatic prostate cancer, to tell us whether he’s going to live a long or short time, or whether or not he will progress with therapies,” said Amir Goldkorn, MD, lead author of the study and associate director of translational sciences at the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center at the Keck School of Medicine of USC.

This non-invasive test, already commercially available, represents a pivotal step toward precision medicine in prostate cancer care. Future research aims to enhance its predictive power by combining CTC analysis with other biomarkers, paving the way for even more tailored and effective treatments.





flashback

We've been producing BOB Tales newsletters monthly for 24 years. During this time we've published thousands of articles that our new members haven't seen, and some older members may enjoy revisiting. So, we regularly spotlight articles from the past that we believe remain relevant. This one from October 2007 is titled:

5 Reasons to Eat More Greens

Leafy greens like spinach, kale, collards, and romaine lettuce are nutritional powerhouses, rich in vitamins A, C, K, folate, potassium, magnesium, iron, and antioxidants like lutein. Here's why adding more greens to your meals can greatly benefit your health.



- 1. Eye Health:** As we age, our eyes face challenges like cataracts (cloudy lenses) and macular degeneration (damage to the retina's center). These conditions can lead to vision loss, especially in older adults. Leafy greens are rich in lutein and zeaxanthin, two compounds concentrated in the eye. These act as antioxidants, fighting harmful free radicals, and as filters, protecting the retina from damaging blue light. Studies show that people with the highest intakes of these nutrients have up to 50% lower risks of cataracts and macular degeneration. While not all studies agree, the evidence strongly supports greens as a natural way to protect your vision.
- 2. Bone Health:** Vitamin K, abundant in leafy greens, plays a key role in bone health. It supports proteins that help rebuild bones, a process essential for preventing fractures. Research shows that people consuming around 250 micrograms of vitamin K daily have a 65% lower risk of hip fractures than those consuming less. Higher vitamin K intake is also linked to better spine and hip bone density. Just half a cup of cooked collards provides 500 micrograms of vitamin K, more than enough to support strong, healthy bones.
- 3. Brain Health:** Eating leafy greens regularly can slow cognitive decline. Studies found people who ate the most greens experienced less memory loss over two years than those who ate fewer.

4. **Cancer Prevention:** People consuming about two servings of greens daily reduced their risk of colon cancer by 14% compared to those eating just one serving a week. The chlorophyll in greens may neutralize harmful effects of heme, a compound in red meat linked to colon cell damage.
5. **Stroke Prevention:** Eating more greens is associated with a 20% lower risk of non-hemorrhagic stroke (the most common type). Even one serving a day makes a difference.

Leafy greens are low in calories but packed with vital nutrients like potassium, magnesium, and antioxidants. With benefits ranging from stronger bones to better brain and heart health, they truly are a nutritional powerhouse. Adding greens to your plate is one of the simplest, most impactful steps you can take for better health. Why not start today?



making a difference by giving back

What does it *really* mean to ‘make a difference’?

When you’ve been given the gift of life—life preserved, life improved—what could be more meaningful than giving back? For our members, the journey with prostate cancer wasn’t just about survival; it was about preserving quality of life. Thanks to the precision of proton therapy, most of you not only survived but also avoided the debilitating side effects of other treatments—side effects that could have drastically altered your lives.

Without the efforts of the late Dr. James Slater, whose unwavering determination to improve the quality of life for cancer patients led to the first use of proton therapy in a hospital setting, the nearly 50 other U.S. proton centers we rely on today wouldn’t exist.

In 1990, Dr. Slater oversaw the creation of the James M. Slater, MD, Proton Treatment & Research Center at Loma Linda University Health (LLUH)—the first hospital-based proton therapy center in the country. His visionary leadership not only advanced proton therapy but also revolutionized cancer treatment by maximizing precision in targeting tumors and minimizing side effects, setting the stage for future innovations.

Giving back to the institution that pioneered proton therapy isn't just about gratitude—it's about purpose. It's about ensuring that the place where life-changing care began can continue advancing and offering hope to others. Today, LLUH is at the forefront of groundbreaking cancer initiatives, including theranostics, CAR T-cell therapy, and boron neutron capture therapy, which are tackling aggressive, metastatic cancers once thought untreatable. Supporting these efforts means paying it forward for those who will one day stand where you once stood: scared, uncertain, and hoping for the best possible treatment and outcome.

Thank you for your support.

Giving Options

- **Online:** [Donate here](#). From the pull-down menu, choose where you'd like to direct your gift — 1) Cancer Center Vision; 2) Proton Research through the *James M. Slater Chair*; 3) Proton Research through the *Robert J. Marckini Chair*; or 4) Other (specify any area you'd like your gift directed in the space provided)
- **By Check:** Make your check out to "LLUCC." Specify where you'd like to direct your gift in the memo line — 1) Cancer Center Vision, 2) *Slater Chair*, 3) *Marckini Chair*, or 4) write "unrestricted" so LLUH can use it where it's needed most. Mail your check to: LLUH, Office of Philanthropy P.O. Box 2000, Loma Linda, CA 92354.
- **By Phone:** Call Regina Joseph at 909-558-5010.





health

Maintaining Balance: Key to Preventing Falls after 60

As we age, maintaining good balance becomes increasingly important. Falls are one of the leading causes of injury among older adults, often resulting in fractures, hospitalization, loss of independence, and even death. In the past two months, three of our members reported having serious falls resulting in significant injuries. A close friend of ours lost his elderly father, a few years ago, as a result of a fall. The good news is that with proactive measures, you can improve your balance and significantly reduce your risk of falling.

Why Balance Matters

Your body's ability to maintain balance depends on the coordination of multiple systems, including your vision, inner ear (vestibular system), muscles, and joints. With age, these systems can become less effective due to natural changes, underlying health conditions, or reduced physical activity. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than one in four adults aged 65 and older falls each year—and falling once doubles your chances of falling again.

Falls can have serious consequences. The National Institute on Aging highlights that falls are the leading cause of hip fractures and traumatic brain injuries (TBIs) in older adults. Beyond physical injuries, falls can also affect mental health, leading to a fear of falling that reduces activity levels and further weakens balance over time.

Factors That Affect Balance

Understanding the factors that contribute to poor balance can help you take preventive action. Common causes include:

- **Muscle Weakness and Loss of Flexibility:** Aging leads to natural muscle loss (sarcopenia) and stiffness in joints, making movements less stable.
- **Chronic Conditions:** Arthritis, diabetes, or neurological conditions like Parkinson's Disease can impair balance.
- **Medication Side Effects:** Some medications, including sedatives and blood pressure drugs, can cause dizziness or lightheadedness.

- **Sensory Changes:** Reduced vision, hearing loss, or changes in proprioception (awareness of your body's position in space) can increase fall risk.
- **Environmental Hazards:** Cluttered spaces, loose rugs, or poor lighting at home are common culprits.

How to Improve Balance

The good news is that balance is a skill that can be strengthened at any age. Incorporating the following strategies into your daily routine can help:

- 1. Stay Active:** Regular physical activity is essential for maintaining strength and coordination. Exercises like walking, swimming, or dancing can improve overall fitness and agility. Additionally, balance-focused activities such as tai chi or yoga have been shown to reduce fall risk. A study published in *The Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* found that older adults practicing tai chi experienced a 58% reduction in falls.
- 2. Strengthen Core and Leg Muscles:** Your core and legs play a key role in maintaining stability. Simple exercises like heel-to-toe walking, standing on one foot, or practicing chair squats can enhance your strength and balance. Consult a physical therapist or trainer for a tailored exercise plan.
- 3. Check Your Vision and Hearing:** Regular eye and ear exams are vital. Poor vision or hearing can make it harder to detect hazards or maintain spatial awareness. Update your prescriptions and consider assistive devices like hearing aids if recommended.
- 4. Review Medications:** Discuss your medications with your doctor to identify any that might affect balance or coordination. If dizziness or drowsiness is a side effect, adjustments may be possible.
- 5. Create a Safer Home Environment:** Take steps to minimize fall risks at home. Remove tripping hazards like loose rugs or electrical cords, install grab bars in bathrooms, ensure adequate lighting, and use non-slip mats where needed. The CDC provides a free checklist for home fall prevention.

Warning Signs to Watch For

If you notice any of the following, it may be time to consult a healthcare provider:

- Frequent stumbling or tripping
- Dizziness or lightheadedness

- Difficulty rising from a chair without support
- A fear of falling that limits activity

A physical therapist or occupational therapist can assess your balance and recommend targeted interventions.

The Emotional Side of Balance

Maintaining balance isn't just about physical safety; it also preserves confidence and independence. Fear of falling can lead to isolation and inactivity, which further weakens balance and strength. By taking steps to improve your stability, you can stay active and engaged in the activities you love.

Stay Steady, Stay Independent

Falls are not an inevitable part of aging. With a proactive approach, you can protect yourself and maintain your independence. Make balance exercises a regular part of your routine, address health concerns promptly, and create a safe living environment. As the saying goes, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. By investing in your balance today, you can enjoy a safer, more active tomorrow. For additional resources, visit the [CDC's website on fall prevention](#) or speak to your healthcare provider about balance training programs in your area.

Understanding Cortisol: Why It Matters for Older Adults

Cortisol, often called the “stress hormone,” is essential for the body’s stress response. But when cortisol levels remain elevated, they can lead to significant health risks, especially for older adults. [According to Dr. Scott Lee](#), an endocrinologist at Loma Linda University Health, common symptoms of high cortisol include abdominal weight gain, anxiety, easy bruising, fatigue, and muscle weakness.

Why Older Adults Should Be Concerned

[For men over 60](#), high cortisol levels pose specific risks, exacerbating age-related conditions and contributing to:

- **Impaired Immune Function:** Increasing vulnerability to illness.
- **Cardiovascular Disease:** Heightened risk of heart-related issues.
- **Muscle Wasting:** Loss of strength and mobility.
- **Cognitive Decline:** Deterioration in memory-related brain structures like the hippocampus.
- **Stress Recovery:** Reduced ability to recover from stress.

Other symptoms of high cortisol may include sudden weight gain (especially on the face or back), changes in skin or hair, and reproductive changes such as loss of libido.

Proven Strategies for Managing Cortisol



Fortunately, managing cortisol levels doesn't require supplements. Lifestyle modifications are safer and more effective:

- **Exercise:** Engage in aerobic activities, like walking 20-30 minutes, three times week.
 - **Diet:** Focus on whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and high-fiber foods while avoiding refined sugars and saturated fats.
 - **Stress Management:** Techniques like mindfulness, yoga, or spending time outdoors can lower stress levels.
- Sleep:** Ensure 7-9 hours of restorative sleep per night.

The Importance of Early Intervention

Chronic high cortisol levels in older adults can accelerate conditions such as osteoporosis, diabetes, and heart disease. These risks underscore the importance of addressing elevated cortisol early. Consult your healthcare provider for a thorough evaluation, especially if symptoms like weight gain, fatigue, or anxiety persist.

By prioritizing lifestyle changes and staying proactive about stress management, older adults can significantly improve their health and well-being.

Why Making and Keeping Friends Matters for Men's Health



Friendships aren't just enjoyable; they're vital for mental and physical well-being. Research shows that making and maintaining connections can lower blood pressure, reduce depression, and improve heart health. For men especially, cultural expectations and isolating factors can make it harder to sustain close friendships, which are essential for their overall well-being. A [study by the Survey Center on American Life](#) highlights that many men face challenges in maintaining these relationships, contributing to significant health risks like depression and cardiovascular issues.

As men age, busy work schedules, health issues, or social discomfort may make maintaining friendships more difficult. Yet, prioritizing these connections can greatly enhance quality of life. Friendships have been shown to increase life satisfaction and lower the risk of depression, anxiety, and even physical conditions like heart disease. Conversely, loneliness raises the risk of early death, cancer, and other health problems.

Friendships also help manage stress by offering emotional support. If you've lost touch with friends, rekindling old connections or making new ones can provide a meaningful boost to your well-being. Even a few close friendships can make a big difference.

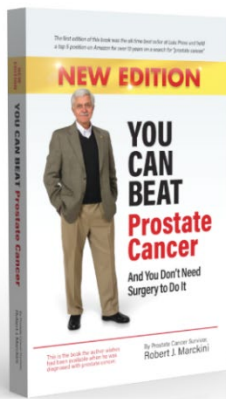
To build new friendships, consider exploring hobbies, joining a gym, attending religious or community gatherings, volunteering, or taking classes. Sustaining friendships doesn't require large amounts of time—small, regular efforts like meeting for coffee or sending a thoughtful message can go a long way.

Finally, while email, texting, and social media can supplement communication, they're no substitute for face-to-face interactions. For more tips on fostering relationships that improve your health, consider discussing this with your healthcare provider.



the book

You Can Beat Prostate Cancer: And You Don't Need Surgery to Do It – *Second Edition*



Still Strong on Amazon!

Bob's book continues to significantly impact people's lives, as evident by the feedback received on Amazon and by the many daily email messages we receive.

On Amazon, the book is *still* holding strong in the No. 2 position on a list of more than 6,000 books on prostate cancer. And, the first and second editions have a combined 781 reader reviews, averaging a five-star rating.

A “Must Read” for Those Diagnosed with Prostate Cancer!



The most recent Amazon review, at the time of this writing, is both powerful and to the point. The reviewer gives the book five stars and writes:

This book is an excellent resource for information on prostate cancer and its treatments! Most physicians tend to “push” us as patients toward their “usual and customary” treatments. This book provides refreshing “out of the box” perspectives and ideas, offering valuable guidance for navigating the complex world of prostate cancer.

If Bob's book answered your questions and provided vital information for your treatment choice, please help others discover it. When many turn to the internet upon diagnosis, Amazon listings are often returned within the search results. And with more than 2 billion visitors each month, more than 90% of shoppers rely on reviews to guide their purchasing decisions, especially for books that can provide essential support during such a significant life change. Please take a moment to [write a review](#). *Thank you!*



on the lighter side

Last Month's Brain Teaser

On which day of the year do the fewest people die?

Answer: Leap Year Day, February 29. It comes around only once every four years.

Winner: Congratulations to Richard Svedeman of Morgan Hill, CA, our latest brain teaser winner! Richard is a retired dentist and tennis coach who, alongside his wife Faye, is celebrating 55 wonderful years of marriage.



Richard and Faye Svedeman

The day after Richard was diagnosed with prostate cancer, he discovered Bob's book on Amazon. He recalls diving into it "in record time." As Richard puts it, "It was a total lifesaver in so many ways." He also shared that proton therapy was never mentioned by his urologist, underscoring the importance of being your own health advocate.

Inspired by what he read; Richard called Loma Linda University Medical Center as soon as he finished the book. Shortly afterward, he began the preparation and treatment process in March 2022. Reflecting on his experience, Richard shared, "The staff at Loma Linda exceeded my expectations with tender care and friendship. Any worries or questions I had were relieved with expertise and kindness."

New Brain Teaser

Two fathers and two sons go on a fishing trip and each one catches one fish. When they return home, they have only three fish. Why?

Note: They didn't eat any or throw any back in the water.

Send your answer to DHickey@protonbob.com for a chance to win a signed copy of Bob Marckini's second edition book, [*You Can Beat Prostate Cancer*](#).

Some Things to Think About

- In the early 1900s, Coca-Cola contained an estimated nine milligrams of cocaine per glass. Maybe that explains why our parents and grandparents could walk to and from school, uphill, both ways, in the snow, barefoot!
- Do not sit on the floor without a plan on how to get back up.
- Why must I prove that I am me to pay my bills over the phone? Do strangers call to pay my bills? And, if they do, why don't you let them?
- Ever notice there are no lines for the bathrooms at waterparks?
- If paying a cashier a living wage will make prices go up, why doesn't replacing cashiers with self-checkouts make prices go down?
- Last year I joined a support group for antisocial people. We haven't met yet.



odds & ends

Fun Facts [Source](#)

- **Earth's rotation is changing speed.** It's slowing down. The length of a day increases by almost two seconds per century. This means that if you lived on Earth 600 million years ago, your day would have lasted just 21 hours.
- **Bees can fly up to 60 miles in one day.** Who would have guessed?
- **Are you ready for this? More than half of our bodies are not human.** Bacterial cells outnumber the number of human cells in our bodies. Research has found that the average human is around 56% bacteria. Wow!
- **Our blood pressure drops when we pet a dog.** And so does the dog's blood pressure!
- **Los Angeles' full name is "El Pueblo de Nuestra Senora la Reina de los Angeles de Porciúncula."** Imagine if the Chargers were playing the Jets this Sunday? Perhaps the headline would be "The El Pueblo de Nuestra Senora la Reina de los Angeles de Porciúncula Chargers Play the New York Jets!"
- **LEGO bricks withstand compression better than concrete.** And, before you ask why the world isn't just made of LEGO bricks, think about how much just one set costs!

Quote of the Month:

"Success is no accident. It is hard work, perseverance, learning, studying, sacrifice and most of all, love of what you are doing or learning to do."—Pele



final thought

The Lost Wallet [Source](#)

A "schmaltzy" but nice, feel-good story...

I stumbled upon a wallet in the street. Inside were just three dollars and an old, crumpled envelope with a letter dated 1924, signed "Hannah." The return address prompted me to call information, and the operator connected me to a senior living facility where Hannah now resided.

Though it seemed silly to track her down over a letter written 60 years ago, I felt compelled. When I visited, Hannah, a sweet, silver-haired lady, told me with tears in her eyes, "This letter was the last contact I ever had with Michael. I loved him, but I was only 16, and my mother said I was too young. If you find him, tell him I still love him." She had never married, as no one had matched him in her heart.

I thanked her and left.

As I waited by the elevator, a nurse saw the wallet and exclaimed, "That's Michael Goldstein's wallet! He's always losing it." My hands shook as she told me he lived on the eighth floor.

My hands began to shake. "Who's Michael Goldstein?" I asked.

"He's one of our residents on the eighth floor. That's his wallet for sure."

I dashed up the stairs and the nurse on the eighth floor told me that Michael was in the day room. As soon as Michael saw me holding the wallet, a smile of relief crossed his face.

I confessed to him that I'd read the letter to find the owner of the wallet. His face turned pale when I mentioned Hannah. "I've always loved her," he said softly.

I asked Michael to come with me and took him down to the third floor, where Hannah was sitting alone watching television. The floor nurse pointed to Michael. “Do you know this man, Hannah?”

Hannah adjusted her glasses but didn’t speak.

Michael whispered, “Hannah—it’s me, Michael. Do you remember me?”

She gasped. “Michael? Michael, I don’t believe it. It’s you!” They walked towards one another and embraced. The nurse and I left with tears streaming down our faces.

About three weeks later I got a call from the lady I met at the senior living home. “Can you break away on Sunday to attend a wedding? Michael and Hannah are going to tie the knot!”

It was a beautiful wedding with many of the people at the home joining in the celebration. I was the best man!

The senior community gave them their own room, and if you ever wanted to see a 76-year-old bride and a 79-year-old groom acting like two teenagers, you had to see this couple.

A perfect ending for a love affair that had lasted nearly 60 years.

Low PSAs to all,

Bob Marckini and Deb Hickey



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