

The logo for "BOB tales" features the text "BOB" in a large, bold, blue sans-serif font, followed by "tales" in a smaller, blue, lowercase sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a red balloon with a black outline and a black string. The background consists of several wavy, horizontal lines in shades of blue and green, creating a sense of movement or a stylized horizon.

BOB tales

Brotherhood of the Balloon Member Newsletter | April 2015

“The world hates change, yet it is the only thing that has brought progress.”

—Charles Kettering

Dear Members:

As you may have noticed, the member resources section of the Proton BOB website has been “down,” undergoing maintenance for some time. We apologize for this inconvenience. We have received hundreds of messages from members inquiring as to what is causing the problem and when the section will be back up and running. Please let us explain.

We have been working for months to upgrade a 14-year-old, outdated system, which did not have the capacity to handle thousands of member profiles with more than 165,000 data points.

As you may recall, Bob Marckini and a few other proton patients began this group in December 2000 simply to keep a few guys connected after treatment ended. A year later, the group had grown to a couple hundred. At that time, Bob hired a developer to create a member database and website to streamline communications and to broadcast to the world the benefits of proton therapy. Fast-forward to 2014 and that tired, old database was still chugging along, but with rapidly growing problems and shut-downs along the way, it was time for an overhaul.

We are transitioning the database into an entirely new system. Not only will this eliminate problems we were experiencing on our end, it will allow members to more quickly and easily navigate the password-protected member resources section of our website. It will also allow you, as a member, to search for information you are looking for.

In addition to relaunching our member database, we are also redesigning our entire public website to keep up with the rapidly changing technological environment. Design standards and website technology are vastly different than they were just a few years ago. So we are transitioning our website into a new system and design that will make it quicker and easier for us to disseminate information about proton therapy to visitors. Our new website will also adjust to any display size automatically and it will be mobile-friendly, so it will automatically fit onto a smartphone or tablet device. This will make it easier for more people to learn about proton therapy and our organization. We will be unveiling the new

database and website within the next few weeks. We are also working on some additional challenges with our member database, which will require some action from members to complete. We will share more details on this next month. We know it's been a long time coming—please be patient with us.

As always, this issue is full of new and interesting information including breaking news from Oklahoma relating to private insurers, as well as information on vasectomies and prostate cancer, important new information about vitamin D, a new, state-of-the-art technique for diagnosing prostate cancer, and much more.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions for future newsletters. Just send an email to DHickey@protonbob.com.

Deb Hickey

membership

We added **750 new members** in 2014 and **150** more have joined us in 2015. We have members from all U.S. states and 39 countries. Members represent all operating proton centers in the U.S. as well as four proton centers in Europe and Asia.



in this issue

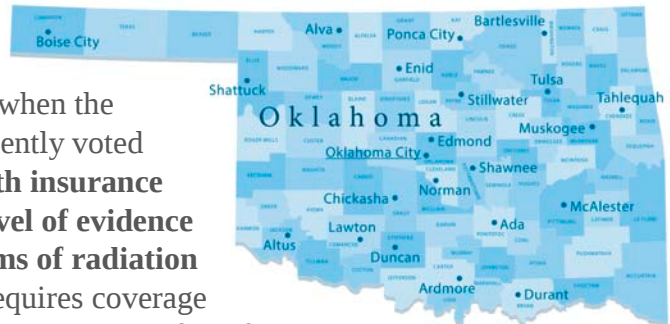
- Significant win for proton therapy for prostate cancer in Oklahoma
- Act now: Support new Tennessee legislature bill in support of proton therapy
- Does vasectomy put men at risk for prostate cancer?
- New information on vitamin D
- Diagnosing prostate cancer with MRI-US fusion-guided biopsy
- 93-year-old cancer survivor's life is active and vibrant thanks to proton
- Members respond to last month's opening memo
- Why you should eat nuts
- Recognizing a stroke
- The flu: Why manly men are more susceptible; make your shot last longer; tips for staying healthy



news report

Significant Win for Proton Therapy for Prostate Cancer in Oklahoma

The importance of grassroots patient advocacy was once again demonstrated when the Oklahoma House of Representatives recently voted 97-0 to pass HB515 that **prohibits health insurance companies from requiring a higher level of evidence for proton therapy than for other forms of radiation therapy**. HB515 is not a mandate that requires coverage for proton therapy, but it does require a level playing field for clinical evidence. This remarkable achievement occurred despite the long history of political contributions and extensive network of health insurance company lobbyists. The bill must be passed by the State Senate and signed by the governor before it becomes law, so there is still more work to do.



Initial Cost Still a Concern for Insurers

Despite the well-known advantages of proton therapy, there are still only 16 proton therapy centers in the U.S. Additionally, fewer than 1 percent of the patients who receive radiation therapy enjoy the benefits of proton therapy. Since proton therapy, like any emerging medical technology, costs more than traditional forms of radiation, a growing number of healthcare insurers are limiting coverage, with a particular focus on eliminating coverage for prostate cancer. This, of course, improves short-term profitability for these insurers.

Overwhelming Support from Patients and Their Families

The keys to building support for HB515 were strong support from patients who have benefited from proton therapy and a scientific survey among likely voters that showed overwhelming support for physicians and patients to make treatment choices. The survey results motivated legislative leaders to visit the proton therapy center in Oklahoma City. On these tours, the legislative leaders were far more interested in hearing directly from patients and their families than they were in learning the details of proton therapy.

We, the BOB, Made a Difference

When the House Insurance Committee and the House of Representatives held hearings on the proposed legislation, the visitors' galleries were packed with proton therapy patients and their families. These patients had been treated at several proton therapy centers, including Loma Linda University Cancer Center. Many of those who were present are active members of the Brotherhood of the Balloon. We made a difference!

Key Talking Points

The key talking points for the legislators were, 1) Proton therapy provides the same or higher dose to the tumor and, 2) It is never good to give healthy tissue unnecessary radiation. Short and long-term side effects from radiation matter greatly to patients and their families. Less is more! The physics of proton therapy is well understood and clearly demonstrates the superiority of this technology.

Randomized Clinical Trials Present Challenges

Prospective randomized trials comparing proton therapy with photon therapy are difficult to institute, since all the patients in such a trial would receive the same dose to the tumor but the photon (X-ray) patients would receive much higher doses to the healthy tissue. It is very difficult to interest patients in registering for a randomized clinical trial when they learn they have a 50/50 chance of being selected for the conventional radiation arm, resulting in significantly higher doses of radiation to healthy tissue.

Lobbyist Would Have Liked Proton Therapy Option Personally

Interestingly, the legislative strategy for this effort was developed by a lobbyist who dropped out of the legislature when she was being treated for breast cancer. Her only regret is that proton therapy was not available to her when she was being treated.

BOB Comment: There is more work to be done to encourage the Oklahoma State Senate to pass this legislation. Having said that, we cannot overemphasize the significance of this victory. Congratulations to the team that orchestrated and led this process. We can now build on this success and work to support similar legislation in other states.

Act Now: Support New Tennessee Legislature Bill in Support of Proton Therapy

BOB member **Don Denton** (Townsend, TN) is Chairman of the Tennessee Cancer Patients Choice Coalition. He speaks to groups about proton therapy all over the state and is working hard to fight insurance companies in Tennessee that won't pay for proton therapy for people in the 19-64 age group.



A bill is before the Tennessee Legislature that would require insurance companies to provide coverage for proton therapy for prostate and breast cancer. Sadly, the insurance lobby is very strong in Tennessee and is working hard to defeat this bill.

Don's organization [launched a website](#) in February in support of this effort. The website contains information about the Tennessee Patients Choice Coalition, more about the bill, a form for visitors who support proton therapy for prostate and breast cancers to use for [contacting Tennessee legislators](#), and a lot more. You may also visit the Tennessee Cancer Patient Coalition [Facebook page](#) and watch a [video](#) about the Cancer Patient Choice Act.

When we asked Don why he's so passionate about this bill he told us, "Four years ago my insurance company rejected my treatment choice—proton therapy. After experiencing the tremendous benefits, I'm disturbed that others may be kept from receiving the same treatment." He went on to say, "Tennessee approved the construction of a new proton center. Amazingly, the state now needs to pass this bill in order for people to benefit from it! I'm a part of this effort simply because it's the right thing to do. A vote against this bill is a vote against cancer patients."

Whether you live in Tennessee or not, we are asking our members to [submit a brief message](#) about why you support proton therapy for prostate cancer and/or breast cancer in order to help future men and women who will benefit from proton treatment. **This request is urgent as this bill is expected to be presented very soon.**



One of our core missions at the BOB is to promote proton therapy and to rally together to address challenges, such as private insurer reimbursement policy changes. Repeatedly in the past, we have been successful in these efforts. **Let your voice be heard!**

If you have any questions, contact Don at 865-437-9545 or info@tncancerpatient.org.

Does **Vasectomy** Put Men at Risk for Prostate Cancer?

A 2014 study published in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology* [provides clarification](#) on this important question. The study involved 50,000 men ranging in age from 40 to 75. In 1986 at the start of the study, 12,000 of the men had undergone a vasectomy. During the next 24 years, about 6,000 men in the study developed prostate cancer.

The study reported: "Overall, vasectomy was associated with a small (10 percent) increased risk of prostate cancer compared with no vasectomy. Although vasectomy was not associated with an increased risk of low-grade or localized disease, men who had undergone vasectomy were 22 percent more likely to have high-grade (Gleason score 8 to 10) prostate cancer and were 19 percent more likely to have lethal prostate cancer. Still, the absolute risk of developing lethal prostate cancer was low; affecting 16 of every 1,000 men who'd had a vasectomy."

Researchers concluded that vasectomies should not be ruled out completely as a form of birth control, however, the results of this study should be taken into consideration during the decision-making process.

New Information on **Vitamin D**

High Vitamin D Levels May Increase Cancer Survival Rates

According to a study published in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism*, cancer patients with higher baseline vitamin D levels have better survival rates and remain in remission longer than patients who are vitamin D deficient. Researchers reviewed the results of 25 studies involving more than 17,000 cancer patients. [Read the full article.](#)

Low Vitamin D Levels Linked to High Prostate Cancer Risk

In another study published in *Clinical Cancer Research*, men at risk of prostate cancer are more likely to develop an aggressive form of the disease if they are vitamin D deficient.

Normal vitamin D levels are in the range of 30 – 80 ng/mL. In the study, about 44 percent of men with positive biopsies had low vitamin D levels. And those with very low vitamin D levels—under 12 ng/mL—had greater odds of more advanced and aggressive cancers than those with normal levels. The lower the vitamin D level, the higher the risk. [Read more.](#)

BOB Comment: [Last month](#) we reported on familial prostate cancer links. It appears that those who have prostate cancer in their families should pay attention to their vitamin D levels. A blood test that measures 25-hydroxyvitamin D can give you important information about vitamin D levels in your body.

We have noted that in his [Prostate Cancer Forum Newsletter](#), Dr. Charles “Snuffy” Myers, noted prostate cancer expert, often recommends that his patients take vitamin D3 supplements.

You should consult with your doctor before taking any supplements, including vitamin D.

Diagnosing Prostate Cancer with **MRI-US Fusion-Guided Biopsy**

We have written in the past about new high-resolution imaging techniques that take the guesswork out of prostate biopsies. The conventional approach is often referred to as doing a “blind biopsy” because ultrasound imaging alone doesn’t see small lesions in the prostate, and cancer is often missed.

An [article on this subject was published in Scientific American](#) and posted in [Prostate Disorders](#) on February 19, 2015. It reports on a new, state-of-the-art technique that starts with high-resolution multi-parametric MRI imaging, which today can distinguish between very small tumors and normal tissue. A fusion device is then used to digitally overlay the MRI image onto the ultrasound image. By combining these technologies, doctors can see a three-dimensional real-time image and a clear, unambiguous target for the biopsy needle.

Many of our members report having multiple “blind biopsies” over several years before their cancer was found. By using this new technique, cancers can be found sooner when treatment can be more effective. Also, when an MRI-US fusion-guided biopsy shows no evidence of cancer, one can have more confidence than in the past, that there is no cancer present.

This technique is not just a major advancement in detecting first time cancers, it is also a significant step forward in helping to detect recurrent cancer.

93-Year-Old Cancer Survivor’s Life is Active and Vibrant **Thanks to Proton Therapy**

This is the title of an article originally published on HeraldOnline.com among several other news outlets. The “93-year-old” is BOB member **Harold Rabin**. Here are some excerpts:

The former president and founder of Illinois Technical College didn’t know that he would be around to tell this story 24 years ago when he became only the tenth person in the world to receive proton treatment for prostate cancer. But today the story has a happy ending, as Harold is cancer free and living a life that, without the miracle of science, wouldn’t have seemed possible.

“At the time I was diagnosed with prostate cancer, proton therapy had just been developed as a treatment for cancer,” recalls Harold. “One of my wife’s relatives was working as a research oncologist at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD. He suggested I consider proton treatment because studies were emerging proving the effectiveness of proton to eradicate prostate cancer while at the same time minimizing typical side effects like incontinence and impotence.” Harold was then living in Palm Desert, CA, not too far from Loma Linda University Cancer Center.

Harold recalls feeling no pain or discomfort during treatment. He never experienced fatigue as each afternoon following his treatment he had enough energy to play a twice-weekly round of golf or meet friends and family to socialize.



Harold Rabin
with friend, Jean

Today Harold lives a full and active life in his hometown of Northbrook, IL, where he continues to drive himself to his many social activities like going to dinner, theater, and movies with friends. He volunteers by sharing his experiences with prostate cancer patients.

We spoke with Harold this month and learned he is still going strong. He still goes out frequently, though the snow in Chicago

is keeping him inside more than he likes, and he's looking forward to spring when he can play golf again. In our conversation, Harold recounted his doctor's reaction to his announcement that he had chosen proton therapy for his prostate cancer. "I was no longer 'Harold,' he said, I was 'Mr. Rabin.'" And my doctor said, "Mr. Rabin, if you want to be in an experimental program, that's your business."

Today, Harold's PSA remains at 0.3; his quality of life is excellent; and he's enjoying life to the fullest . . . thanks to the proton treatment he had 24 years ago.

Harold will be 94 on May 5!

St. Jude Hospital Plans to **Build Proton Center** for Children

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital announced the planning of a new \$198 million medical center, which will [include a proton center](#) dedicated to the treatment of pediatric patients. The St. Jude Red Frog Events Proton Therapy Center will be the only proton center in the world dedicated entirely to treating pediatric patients.



events

National Proton Conference, Arlington, VA

**NPC
2015**

[Register here](#) for the 3rd Annual National Proton Conference, 2015—*Creating a Better Future for Cancer Patients Worldwide*. The event takes place March 30 through April 2, 2015, at the Ritz-Carlton at Pentagon City, Arlington, VA.

Pacific Northwest BOB Reunion and Golf Event, Newberg, OR

When: Thursday, June 11, 2015 | golf first tee time: 10:00 a.m. | dinner and reunion: doors open at 5:30 p.m., dinner at 6:30 p.m.

Where: Golf Event: Chehalem Glenn Golf Course, 4501 E. Fernwood Rd., Newberg, OR 97132 | Dinner and reunion: Portland Adventist Medical Center, Education Center "A," 10123 Southeast Market St., Portland, OR 97216

Details: The golf event is not a tournament—it is an activity and reunion with fellow proton therapy graduates. The cost is \$40/player. This includes 18 holes with a power cart. The event is open to all BOB members and their guests.

The dinner and reunion will feature a program by **Dr. Lynn Martell, D.Min**, Director of Special Services at Loma Linda University Health. The full buffet, including two entrees (non-meat), salad, and dessert, is \$17/person.

RSVP: Download, print, and fill out registration forms for the [dinner](#) and [golf event](#) (Payment for golf may be included with dinner payment). Mail your registration(s) with payment no later than June 1, 2015. Checks should be made out to: Gary D. Brown with “BOB Event” in the memo and mailed to: Gary D. Brown, 115 Nicholas Way, Newberg, OR 97132-2353. For more information, if you need assistance with registration, or if you have questions, email garyjune1962@gmail.com or call 503-538-8885.



spotlight on members

Members Respond in Large Numbers

Deb Hickey received tons of feedback last month from members responding to [her opening memo](#) about her father, **Bob**. We saved all of them and felt truly humbled by members’ messages. Here are some excerpts:

Thank you for giving your father the opportunity to “live.” His book was instrumental in giving me the information to ultimately make the decision to receive proton therapy in 2008. This January was my sixth year being cancer and symptom free. Our family has been blessed by his work. Recently, I gave Bob’s book to a friend ready to undergo surgery. After reading that a DRE can elevate your PSA, he requested his PSA level be retested and found it to be a normal reading of 3.2. He considered Bob’s book an answer to prayer! God’s continued blessings to your father, yourself, and the “Brotherhood.”

I just read the wonderful tribute to your father in the March 2015 newsletter. I was very touched. I’m sure you receive letters like this all the time, but I must let you know that your father is my hero too. I was diagnosed with prostate cancer three years ago at the age of 49. A good friend of my parents recommended Bob’s book to me; I read it immediately. After spending hours on the phone with former patients and meeting with several doctors, I made the decision to have proton treatment.

The worst part of my entire experience was wading through all the information to make a treatment decision. Since Bob’s book was written by a man who went through the journey I was about to embark on, it was truly priceless to me. Additionally, the Brotherhood of the Balloon organization has been so helpful and unique in this industry—I’m still amazed.

My quality of life has been preserved; my PSA is well below 1; and I’m actually better off now (as a person) than I was before my diagnosis. Thank you!

In all my life, I have never met anyone who cared more for others, aimed so high to make a difference, and hit the mark, and beyond, every time! I join the many, many others who have benefited from your father's labors, and stand in admiration of his selfless efforts.

What a fabulous introduction you wrote! I'm glad you are giving your father a chance to vacation. He is a fantastic person. He was very helpful to me following my proton treatment. I had a chance to meet him when he visited Cincinnati for a BOB meeting. I could never figure out how he had time to write all the BOB reports and answer all of our emails. I guess you answered that question. He has worked so hard, and it shows how much he loves what he does. Thank you for all that you and your father do.

Great issue! Thank you for giving your father a great incentive to relax a bit. You are at the helm and are doing very, very well. Bob has earned a well-deserved rest many times over. Yes, we are all indebted to him for the safe and healthy journey that he guided us through. I know that you are extremely proud of him. And your mother and father are blessed to have such a loving and loyal daughter! God has smiled on you all and I pray that this continues for many years.

BOB Comment: These are just a handful of messages Deb received. She's still seeing emails trickle in and we couldn't be more thankful for each one. We feel honored to be a part of such a caring and wonderful group of men (and women—even member spouses have written in!).

Paying it Forward: Members **Helping Prospective Proton Patients**

Every week we learn how members are “paying it forward” by helping newly diagnosed men and their families learn about proton therapy for prostate cancer. Some of them are listed on our reference lists; they are contacted by newly diagnosed men; and they communicate with these men via email or phone, answering their questions and speaking about their personal experiences. Some of our members meet with prospective patients in person to share their stories. Some of our members pass along Bob's book. Some speak at local community groups with the help of our PowerPoint presentation. We could go on and on.

Below is just one example of a member who is *always* going above and beyond to help others. **Scott Wilcox** has, again and again, proven himself to be an enormous support to the proton therapy world. And, he's done it again. After speaking with one man, Scott received the following email message:

Thank so much for our talk. You did not talk too much. I understand I am a talker that needed to listen. It was you I listened to, and trust me—you have helped so very much. This “BOB thing” is something that is a little hard for me to understand—is this group for real? Your feelings for me, a total stranger, is something I've never experienced. Thank you, Scott, and thank you, proton therapy. Peace.



making a difference by giving back

Passionate about Proton Therapy and Avocados

By James Ponder, PR Writer/Editor, LLUH



Don and
Mary Anne
Cardamon

Once upon a time, nobody called him “Avocado Don.” Aside from the occasional serving of guacamole, there was no reason to connect BOB member **Don Cardamon** to the bumpy green fruit. But that was before he retired from a sales and management career in the steel beam industry and bought a nine-acre avocado farm in Fallbrook, CA.

Fast-forward 15 years and Don and **Mary Anne**, his wife of 59 years, are sitting in the kitchen when the conversation turns to avocados.



Don's Avocado Farm
(his backyard)

“People always ask me why their trees don’t produce more fruit, or why their avocados don’t reach full size,” he says. “I give them my one-word answer: water. They are very water-dependent. One avocado tree needs between 300 and 350 gallons of water per week to thrive.”

A couple of years ago, Don began having water problems of his own. His doctor referred him to a urologist who ordered a biopsy. “He said I was too old for surgery, and that my Gleason score was 7,” he says.

Don’s insurance company would pay only for photon therapy or brachytherapy. That latter treatment involves inserting small radioactive isotopes or “seeds” inside the body to zap the cancer from within. Don chose brachytherapy at a San Diego area hospital.

Because of his difficulty urinating, Don underwent a procedure to open his urethra to allow him to void freely. But then his urinary issues flared up again. “This time, they shot me full of steroids and told me I was no longer a good candidate for brachytherapy,” he says. “The doctor said I had too much scar tissue and too many ongoing urinary problems.”

Fortunately, Don heard about proton therapy in nearby Loma Linda. Energized with new hope, he bought a copy of [“You Can Beat Prostate Cancer And You Don’t Need Surgery to Do It”](#) by **Bob Marckini**. After reading it, Don called Loma Linda.

“I got a list of names of people who had had proton therapy,” he says. “I called three or four guys about my age and they had nothing but good things to say about it. I started the program the week of July 4, 2013.”

Although his treatment has been over for nearly two years and his PSA score is down, Don is as excited about the care he received as he is about avocados. He was so touched by the care he received that he recently made a contribution to proton beam research at Loma Linda University Cancer Center. He doesn’t want to brag about it, but hopes telling his story will accomplish one important objective.

“I made lots of friends at the proton center,” he says. “The guys and their wives from the Tuesday night meetings, the staff members, people I called on the phone; even the guys who called me asking for my thoughts about proton. I’d love to hear from those people again. I’d like for them to give me a call.” If you know him, Avocado Don is awaiting your call—760-451-0975. We also encourage you to check out [Don’s “Life after Proton” story](#) on our website.



Funding the Future of Proton: **Planned Gifts**

We hope that our gift will enable more funding in the area of proton radiation therapy to further its medical science advancement and be able to treat a wider range of cancer in the not so distant future.

Frank and Sirpa Lee, Heritage Society Members

How to **Support Proton Research**

Make a Future Gift

Contact **Todd Mekelburg** at the Office of Planned Giving at Loma Linda University Health at 909-558-4553 or email legacy@llu.edu.

Donate to the Marckini Chair

1. Send a check made out to “LLUCC Proton” to Loma Linda University Health, Office of Philanthropy, P.O. Box 2000, Loma Linda, CA 92354. Memo line: “Marckini Chair.”
2. [Donate online](#).
3. Call **Elvia DeHaro** at 909-558-5010.

Other Ways to Give

Contact **Aaron Laudenslager** at the Office of Philanthropy at Loma Linda University Health at 909-558-3284 or email alaudenslager@llu.edu.



Let Them Eat **Nuts**

According to [Men's Health Magazine](#), there were 20 percent fewer deaths over a 30-year period among men who eat at least 7 ounces of nuts a week, versus men who eat none. Source: *The New England Journal of Medicine*



Recognizing a **Stroke**

Each year, an estimated 600,000 Americans experience strokes, which are interruptions of the blood supply to any part of the brain. Of these victims, 160,000 die, making stroke the third-leading cause of death in the U.S. Furthermore, many of those who do not die from strokes are left with lifelong debilitating infirmities of speech, movement, and thought.

In a report presented to the *American Stroke Association*, a stroke may be recognized if you ask the individual to smile, to talk (speak a simple sentence), and to raise both arms. If the person has difficulty with any one of these tasks, call 911 immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.

One way to easily remember these things is the first three letters of the word “STRoKe” Smile. Talk. Raise (arms).

The above three questions should be asked of any individual who is experiencing any of the **following symptoms**:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body.
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause.

If the individual has trouble smiling, talking, or raising both arms you should call 911.

Learn more on the [American Heart Association \(AHA\) website](#).

The Flu

Why **Manly Men** are More Susceptible

When you hear the word “testosterone,” you probably think of a strong, tough guy. Turns out, this hormone actually makes men *weaker* when it comes to getting the flu. [Learn why.](#)

Make Your Shot **Last Longer**

Research suggests the flu shot wears off faster the older you get. Although they are not entirely sure why; diet, prior vaccinations and exposure, and an aging immune system could all play a part. Exercise can help flu shot benefits last. Exercise boosts antibodies! [Watch a video.](#)



Tips to **Stay Healthy** This Season

- **Consider having a flu shot:** Many doctors feel the flu shot is your best defense.
- **Be Clean:** Wash your hands frequently with soap and water (or hand sanitizer if you can't get to a sink). Keep your hands away from your eyes, mouth and nose.
- **Sleep:** Lack of sleep impairs your immune system's ability to fight disease. Here are [some reasons](#) you might not be sleeping well.
- **Consider taking extra vitamin D:** If you live north of 32 degrees latitude, you could be low in vitamin D, which may make you more susceptible to colds and the flu. Some experts say you could cut your risk by taking 1,000 IUs of vitamin D3 a day or eating more of [these vitamin D-rich foods](#).
- **Don't sweat the small stuff:** Chronic stress releases cortisol, which suppresses your immune system and decreases your ability to fight infection. [Reduce stress.](#)
- **Walk:** [Every step you take](#) mobilizes immune-system warriors that patrol your nose, throat and lungs in order to take down invading cold and flu viruses.

Always talk with your doctor before taking new supplements or increasing your exercise routine.

Series: Top 20 Most Common **Health Questions** (and Answers)

Last summer, we began a series on the top 20 most common health questions (and answers) from *Business Insider Magazine*. Below is the 13th question on the list.

Can you drink too much water?

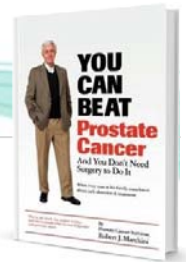
Short answer: Yes. It is very rare for someone to die from drinking too much water, but it can happen. Overhydrating is most common among elite athletes. Drinking an excess of water, called water intoxication, dilutes the concentration of sodium in the blood leading to a condition known as hyponatremia. The symptoms of hyponatremia can range from nausea and confusion to seizures and even death in severe cases.

To avoid this, drink fluids with electrolytes during extreme exercise events.



the book

We have 217 reader reviews on Amazon—more than any other book in the top 50! Here is an excerpt from what one reader recently had to say:

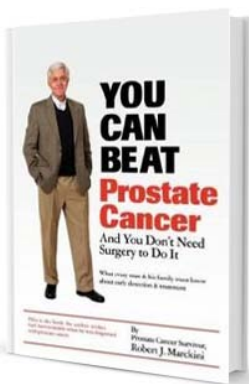


Must-read for anyone with a man in their lives. By K. Thompson

This is a must-read for pretty much anyone with a man in their lives—be it a brother, father or friend ... Marckini has done all the research already. Before making a decision on treatment, I recommend you read this book. Prostate cancer can be a serious disease and treatment can leave men with debilitating side effects. But, it doesn't have to. There are options out there. Do your homework.

More Information / Where to Buy the Book:

[Paperback](#): \$19.00 • [Kindle](#): \$9.99 • [NOOK Book](#): \$9.99 • [Apple iBook](#): \$9.99



The paperback version of *You Can Beat Prostate Cancer* is available on [Amazon](#), [Barnes & Noble](#) and [LuLu Press](#). All proceeds help fund BOB efforts and support proton therapy research.

Ask about our BULK DISCOUNT for hard copy books: DHickey@protonbob.com.

If you found Bob's book helpful in making your proton treatment decision, please post a review on [Amazon](#). Once you are logged into your Amazon account, [click here](#) and click "Create your own review" button. Don't forget to rate the book from 1 to 5 stars!



odds & ends

Baby Boomers Don't Score Well

“Baby Boomers” are defined as people between the ages of 50 and 68. This comprises about 65 percent of our membership. And, according to *Healthworks Collective*, an Allianz Life Insurance survey, and the *American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons*:

Baby Boomers don't take particularly good care of themselves. →

- 75% have one or more chronic diseases
- 43% have high blood pressure
- 24% have a walking disability
- 52% report no physical activity
- 673% increase in knee replacements within 15 years
- 174% increase in hip replacements within 15 years
- 16% have diabetes

The sad thing is most of these are preventable through diet and/or exercise and lifestyle changes.

Estate Planning Hints

BOB Member **Ron Hendricks** is Director of Gift Planning for Trinity Western University. He regularly copies us on his “News from Ron” mailings, which are helpful hints to the readers of his newsletters. We have found Ron’s suggestions to be timely and beneficial. With his permission we will periodically be sharing some of his wisdom with our membership. [We started last month.](#) Here is the second.

What is the Difference Between a **Last Will** and a **Living Will**?

A last will and a living will are two very essential but completely separate types of documents that are used for totally different purposes.

Both are intended to provide directives for circumstances during which you are unable to communicate, but having one does not mean you don't need the other.

A last will expresses your preferences after you have died. In this document you will designate the guardian for your minor children. You will name your personal representative(s) and a successive personal representative. You should provide instructions for the distribution of your possessions and property. This is also the document where you direct your desire for charitable distributions.

A living will is exclusively focused on healthcare decisions while you are alive. The living will covers the time before your probable death. In the last days and weeks of life decisions regarding care, nutrition, hydration and resuscitation need to be made. The living will gives you the opportunity to offer recommendations to medical staff about the types of care to be provided to you at that time.

Did You **Know**?

- The military salute is a motion that evolved from medieval times, when knights in armor raised their visors to reveal their identity.
- If you get into the bottom of a well or a tall chimney and look up, you can see stars, even in the middle of the day.
- In ancient times strangers shook hands to show that they were unarmed.
- The moon moves about two inches away from the Earth each year.
- The Earth gets 100 tons heavier every day due to falling space dust.



on the lighter side

Last Month's **Brain Teaser/Riddle**

When it's light, I'm dark. When it's dark, I'm gone.
When I'm gone for good, so are you. What am I?

Answer: You are my shadow.

Winner: BOB member **Gene Asken** (Las Vegas, NV) was the first to write in with the correct answer. Gene was diagnosed with advanced prostate cancer in 2009. "I remember the dire look on my urologist's face as he explained to me the limited treatment options available," Gene told us. Radiation was offered as the only possible alternative with, perhaps, dubious benefit.

At the time of his diagnosis, Gene was a participant in an online investment group where members also shared personal information on health issues. Fortunately for Gene, another group member was also a BOB member, having undergone proton therapy at MD Anderson. He encouraged Gene to look into proton therapy and read Bob Marckini's book, which he did. Gene said, "I have been a follower of the BOB group ever since."

Gene told us that today he is in "good health relative to my age of 82." Gene did have some minor side effects following his proton treatment, which are now "under control." Nonetheless, he said, "I am grateful that my proton treatment proved exceptionally effective with relatively limited after effects."

He and his wife **Evie** moved to Las Vegas from Kalamazoo, MI two years ago and now enjoy much milder weather. "And, no, we don't gamble," said Gene before we asked. The two enjoy "the easy life," socializing with neighbors and avoiding the hustle and bustle of the "strip."

Congratulations, Gene! Your signed copy of Bob's book is on the way!

New Brain Teaser/Riddle: **Small Hotel**

Thirteen people came into a hotel with 12 rooms and each guest wanted his own room. The bellboy solved this problem.

He asked the 13th guest to wait a little with the first guest in room number 1. So, in the first room there were two people. The bellboy took the third guest to room number 2, the fourth to number 3 ... and the twelfth guest to room number 11. Then he returned to room number 1 and took the 13th guest to room number 12, still vacant.

How can everybody have his own room?

Answer next month: The first to send an email to DHickey@protonbob.com with the correct answer will receive a signed copy of Bob's book.

Partners

The husband is in the hospital with only days to live. His wife Sarah is by his side day and night. The husband looks at his wife and says, "Sarah, you have always been right by my side. When I lost my job, you were there. When I joined the Army, you became an Army nurse to be near me. I was seriously wounded, and you were right there with me. When I lost everything in the stock market, you stood right by my side. And now that I'm dying, you are here again."

He then said, "Sarah, I'm beginning to think you're bad luck."

Amicable Separation

"Mr. Clark, I have reviewed this case very carefully," the divorce court judge said, "And I've decided to give your wife \$775 a week,"

"That's very fair, your honor," the husband said. "And every now and then I'll try to send her a few bucks myself."

Quote of the Month

"The wise man, even when he holds his tongue, says more than the fool when he speaks."

—Yiddish Proverb



A True Friend

It's a third-grade classroom. There is a 9-year-old kid sitting at his desk and all of a sudden, there is a puddle between his feet and the front of his pants are wet. He thinks his heart is going to stop because he can't possibly imagine how this happened. It's never happened before and he knows that when the boys find out he will never hear the end of it. When the girls find out they will never speak to him again as long as he lives.

The boy believes his heart is going to stop; he puts his head down and prays, "Dear God, this is an emergency! I need help now." He lifts his head up and sees the teacher coming with a look in her eyes that says he has been discovered. As the teacher is walking toward him, a classmate named Susie is carrying a goldfish bowl that is filled with water. Susie trips in front of the teacher and inexplicably dumps the bowl of water in the boy's lap. The boy pretends to be angry, but all the while is saying to himself, "Thank you Lord. Thank you!"

Now instead of being the object of ridicule, he is the object of sympathy. The teacher rushes him downstairs and gives him gym shorts to put on while his pants dry out. All of the other children are on their hands and knees cleaning up the water around his desk. The sympathy is wonderful, but as life would have it, the ridicule that should have been the boy's is now placed on Susie. She tries to help but the other kids tell her to get out. "You've done enough, you klutz!"

Finally at the end of the school day as they are waiting for the bus, the boy walks over to Susie and whispers, "You did that on purpose didn't you?" Susie whispers back, "I wet my pants once too."

Low PSAs to all,

Bob Marckini and Deb Hickey

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