

Reflections

October 2025

Lessons Learned

By Bruce McClay

After my wife, Mary, and I retired from Walla Walla University we continued to teach part-time. We had been active in church our whole lives. Nearing our 50th wedding anniversary, we decided to take a sabbatical from our part-time work and church responsibilities—one year off to focus on uninterrupted time together, our relationship with Christ, and doing some things we had dreamed about doing “someday.”

One week before our 50th anniversary, I was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Our plans and world suddenly flipped upside down. I entered 5+ months of chemotherapy followed by a 14-hour surgery, more months of chemotherapy, several infection episodes requiring hospital stays, and immunotherapy. I am living today with impaired food absorption. My energy and immune system have been depleted. Face-to-face social interaction is limited.



BRUCE MCCLAY (Librarian Emeritus, Walla Walla University) taught academy youth Bible, History, and English for 25 years. From 2000 to 2017 he served as the librarian and history teacher for Walla Walla University's nursing school in Portland, OR. He lives in Battle Ground, WA, with his wife, son, one dog, and one cat.
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THIS MONTH:
October 27

NEXT MONTH:
November 26

Here are a few things I have learned from this experience:

- 1| If you have something special you plan on doing with someone special “someday,” do not wait for “someday.” It may never come as you expect.
- 2| When you are struggling through a life-storm, God will provide someone to help. When my diagnosis was announced at church, a friend said, “You need to contact Dr. Shephard at OHSU.”* We soon learned that he was a premier pancreatic cancer researcher and surgeon.
- 3| When life throws you a curve ball, adjust your swing. Much of what I loved, I can no longer do, but I found a new passion. Our church includes a “Think About It” section in the bulletin. Members can contribute articles dealing with personal spiritual growth or spiritual themes. I have enjoyed writing for the “Think About It.” God has blessed others through my thoughts and words. I also have been, on occasion, a guest columnist for our local newspaper. In my “old” life, I was too busy to write.

*Oregon Health and Science University

This December will be six years since my surgery. Though much has changed and we had to give up some dreams, the richness of our relationship with each other and with God has flourished. Paul’s words have taken on new meaning for me:

“Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So, we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”

(2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

I will admit that at times the troubles do not seem “light and momentary” and fixing my eyes on the eternal can be challenging, but I serve a loving God. He helps when I am struggling and is gracious when I fail to look up. ■



Roasted Apples and Butternut Squash with Dill

By Nancy Schaaf

Adapted from the **Joy of Eating** site. Go to <https://nadhealth.org/joyofeating/recipes/>

- 1 butternut squash, cubed
 - 2 apples (such as Braeburn, Cortland, Fuji, Gala or Granny Smith), cubed
 - 1 large sweet onion (such as Vidalia), cubed
 - 3 tablespoons olive oil
 - Salt and fresh ground black pepper, to taste
 - 2 tablespoons minced fresh dill
- Mix butternut squash, apple and onion in a large bowl. Add olive oil and salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to a covered baking dish and roast until crisp tender, approximately 30 minutes. Remove cover and continue roasting another 10 minutes.
 - Top with fresh dill and serve immediately.
 - If desired, serve over chopped kale or mixed greens with salad toppings of choice (such as pepitas, dried cranberries, seasoned chickpeas).

SHARP Corner

(Supplemental Healthcare Adventist Retirement Plan)

Important Reminder About Your HRA Eligibility

To stay eligible for the Health Reimbursement Account (HRA), you must stay enrolled in a medical or prescription drug plan through Alight. Any changes to your coverage must also be made with an Alight advisor. If you aren't enrolled through Alight in at least one plan, you risk losing your HRA.

If you made changes to your 2025 coverage and aren't sure if it was done with an Alight advisor, call Alight at 844-360-4714 to confirm your enrollment.

If you've moved or changed your zip code, check with Alight to see if your new location affects your plan options.

For questions, contact SHARP at 443-391-7338 or SHARP@NADAdventist.org. You can also find 2025 plan documents at: adventistretirement.org/retiree/sharp

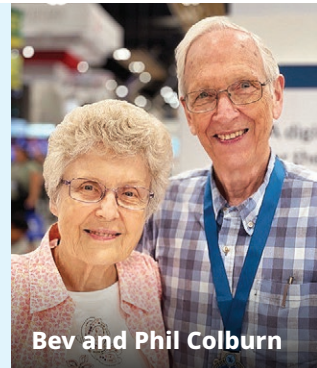
BONUS!

Did You See Us at General Conference Session in St. Louis?

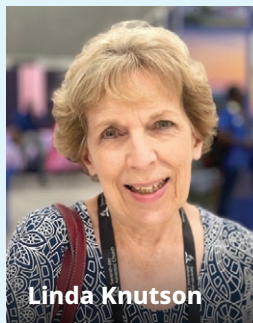
While the Adventist Retirement team was not at GC Session, a couple staff members were, and we're thrilled to share a few photos with you! Keep in mind if you are at an event, look for any of us. Most likely someone from the office is also there. ■



Jerry Page (left) and Kent Sharpe



Bev and Phil Colburn



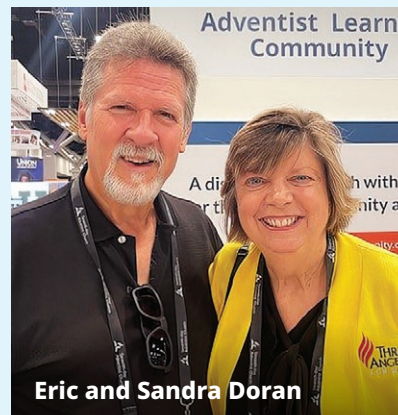
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