



Mel Nygaard

Successful ...

— CANCER —
SURVIVOR

In June of 1942, Mel Nygaard traveled by train from Minnesota with his Mother and brother to Oregon to join his Father who had found work at the Hines Lumber Company. Mel was six years of age at the time and this was his first train ride. On the final leg of the four-day journey the family traveled on a freight train that stopped frequently to load or unload livestock and freight. The only passenger seats available were in the caboose where the family

gathered around the warmth of the coal fired stove wrapped in Indian blankets purchased earlier in the trip. Once reunited with his father, Mel and his family began their new life in Oregon.

Mel developed a strong work ethic early in life working odd jobs at the sawmill and helping his parents run the commissary. After finishing high school with exceptional grades, Mel enrolled at Oregon State University where he later graduated with a degree from the OSU School of Business and Technology. At the time, Mel recalled the cost of his tuition as nine dollars per credit hour which he paid for by working in the offseason.

In June 1957 Mel began his career in accounting as a junior accountant with Wilson, Medlar & Twietmeyer in Portland, Oregon. Through his tenure with the firm, Mel became a partner and in 1979 founded Nygaard, Mimms & Hoffman rather than merging with a large national firm. As managing partner, the new firm serviced clients in the timber and construction sectors as well as other types of organizations. Several of Mel's clients were located in Roseburg, leading him to develop a relationship with a local public accountant named Art Rich who introduced him to Mary Sykes, whom he soon hired.

Even with a growing firm to lead and manage, Mel stayed active in industry associations and community affairs. During his career, he was Junior First Citizen of Portland, President of the Oregon Society of CPA's, served on the American Institute of CPA's Joint Trial Board to hear and decide on ethics violations, President of the Roseburg Rotary Club where he served as administrator for the Rotary Duck Race and numerous other community affairs.

Mel retired his firm in Portland and moved to Roseburg at age 59. He had not expected to live beyond 65 given his family history with cancer. No male had survived past 65 years of age. "Last year I began having issues with my prostate and

went to see Dr. Duvol. In just a few months my PSA level had jumped from 2 to 10. They did a bi-opsy which came back positive for cancer. I told my wife Mary, I've got the family disease. I expected it" he explained.

Mel continued, "We met with Dr. Brown at the Community Cancer Center and I was just astounded at how in depth he explained my condition and what had to be done. He drew diagrams and explained every step of the treatment process." Mel's treatment plan began in late November 2015, which included 45 radiation treatments along with anti-testosterone injections every three months.

"My only side effect was fatigue. During my treatment schedule I continued to assist Mary in her accounting practice. We were also able to travel a bit," he said.

On February 2, 2016, at age 80, Mel completed his treatment plan and was awarded a Cancer Survivor Medallion which is perhaps his most precious accomplishment.

When asked about his quality of treatment Mel said, "To a person every individual -- I dealt with at the Community Cancer Center was nothing less than upbeat and positive in every way. My experience could not have been more wonderful."

A few months later, Mel and Mary were driving to Bend, Oregon when they encountered a treacherous patch of black ice. The Ford Explorer they were driving flipped and rolled crushing the roof down upon them. Due to the quick response of the Crescent Fire Department both Mel and Mary were rescued. Mary escaped with minor injuries; however Mel was impacted by the roof top crushing several vertebrae in his neck.

Today, Mel is recovering well from the accident, loves tending to his tomato garden and continues to assist Mary in her practice.