

▼Beast

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"We'd been to the doctors, we'd been to everybody," he said. "She was so positive and I was in a total depression."

Rhonda told James she'd made an appointment for him to see an upper cervical doctor, a specialist that deals mainly with adjustments of two vertebrae — the C1 and C2 — at the top of the spinal column. This area, which also "houses" the brain stem, is known as the "mouth of God."

Then, he asked his wife a question that, years later, would become the title of the book he would write about the disorder and its treatment options:

"What *TIME*, Tuesday?" he asked.

Rhonda had made the appointment for 10 a.m., just seven hours before James planned to kill himself.

THE TREATMENT

It was a 17-mile drive north from the Tomasi's Oklahoma home to the doctor's office.

"Here I was, so discouraged it was unreal," James said. "When a spirit of suicide comes over you, you actually feel better and more calm about the decision. It's almost like, 'There's this pain that has taken over my life. If I kill myself, I can also kill it. Then, I can take my life back.'"

The doctor, Jennifer Shepherd Rowe, was very frank as she grabbed James by his shirt-sleeve:

"Remember when you were a little boy and your mama told you to get your head on straight?" the doctor asked.

James remembered his mother having said those exact words to him. He nodded at the doctor.

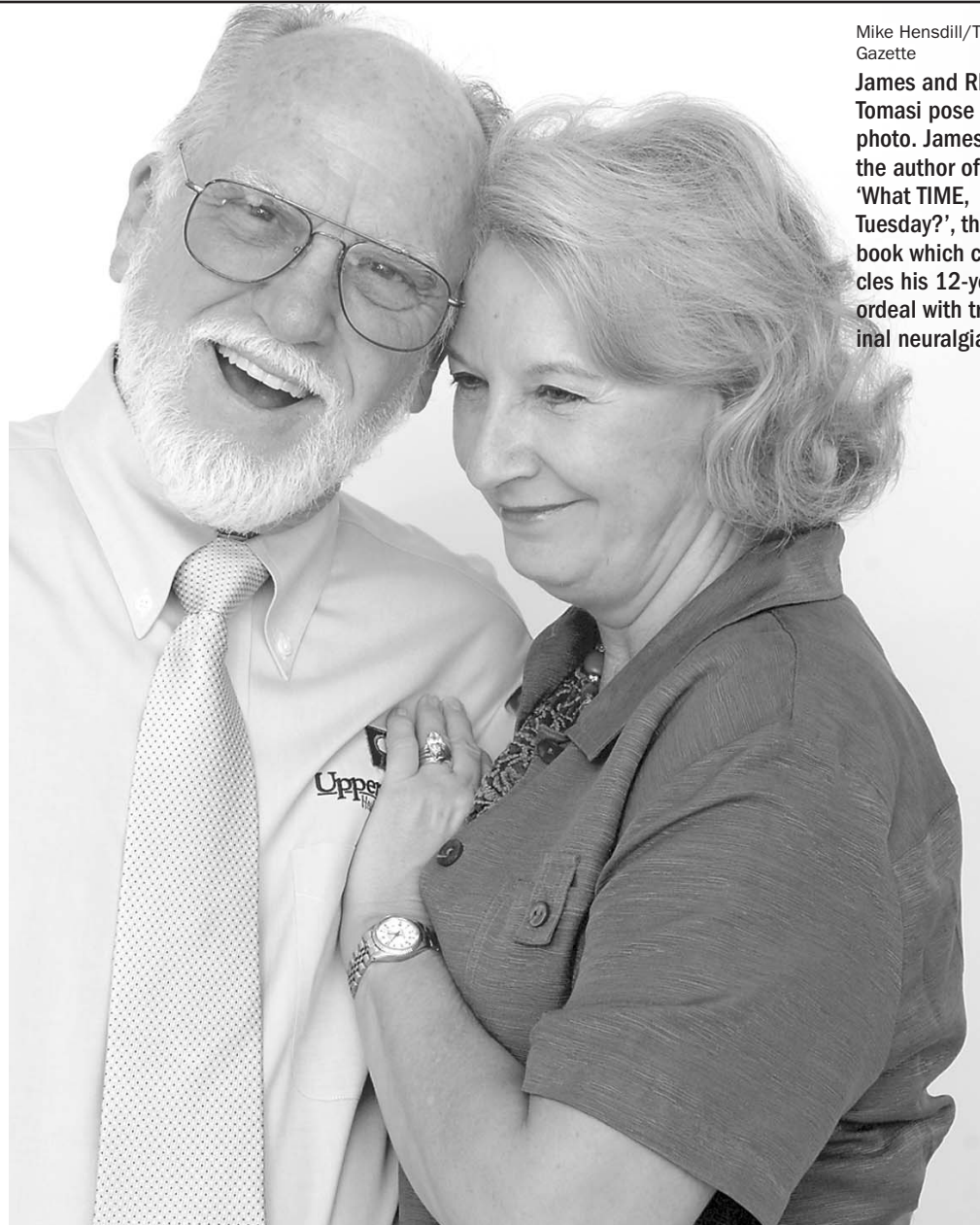
"Well, that's what I'm going to do for you, James. I'm going to put your head on straight. I'm going to take X-rays, realign your head, and then you're going to go home. Your body is going to heal itself."

James thought the doctor was nuts. Rowe told him to come back on Thursday.

By the time the couple left the office, James' pain was worse than when they'd arrived.

"What a rip-off," he told Rhonda.

At home, James fell back into bed and looked at the clock — he had four hours left to endure



Mike Hensdill/The Gazette

James and Rhonda Tomasi pose for a photo. James is the author of 'What TIME, Tuesday?', the book which chronicles his 12-year ordeal with trigeminal neuralgia.

SPREADING THE WORD

James Tomasi has been pain-free for more than 12 years. But when he canceled his plans to kill himself in 1997, he had no idea he eventually would help thousands of people around the world get their lives back, too.

He and Rhonda now travel the world speaking to groups of medical professionals — James will be the keynote speaker at a TN Association meeting this September in Portland, Ore. — where thousands have gained knowledge about upper cervical treatment and its advancements in the medical community.

To many, though, there is still doubt that upper cervical treatment is a viable option. To James, there is no doubt the treatment saved his life.

"Some groups think that medically, I'm not healed, but alternatively, I'm shunned, too," he said. "All I know is that I suffered with TN, along with my wife, for 12 years. I'm a Christian, and I don't believe in committing suicide. But at that time, I really thought I heard God tell me, 'It's OK, James. Get out of it if you want.' I began to believe that God had given me permission to end my life, and that this beast, this pain, had absolutely rendered me completely helpless."

The Tomasis currently reside in the Denver, N.C.-area, and plan to continue spreading the good news of God's grace and how it relates to upper cervical treatment.

"I want to help people make it happen," he said. "Let sufferers gain awareness, even to form statewide support groups, maybe in each city. The Lord led me to find this treatment. And it put an end to 12 years of misery."

You can reach Jennifer Kellar Erwin at (704) 869-1840.

the pain that had taken over his life.

But forty-five minutes later, something happened. For the first time in two years, James had a 15-second break in the pain.

"I screamed at Rhonda," he said. "But by the time she got to the bed, the pain was back. I thought I was hallucinating."

Another hour passed before the pain stopped for about 25 seconds before returning.

"When you've been in pain that long, 25 seconds feels like a lifetime," James said. "I began to weep and thank God for giving that doctor something to manipulate my head so I didn't have this pain." He decided to let 5 p.m. pass.

FOR MORE ABOUT

James Tomasi, visit the Web site www.whatimetuesday.com.

► For more information about upper cervical treatment, call Upper Cervical Health Centers of America at (704) 588-5560. The office is located at 2550 W. Arrowood Road in Charlotte.

The truth about onions is nothing to cry about

Dear Susan, I noticed that you call for sweet onions in many of your recipes — is that vidalia? Also, are you supposed to refrigerate onions after you buy them?



SUSAN FLEMING

Curious About Cuisine

When I indicate "sweet" onions for my recipes, I do mean Vidalia or Walla Walla, which technically are not sweet, they are just milder than others. I prefer these for most recipes, simply because I like the flavor.

Onions get their pungency from sulfur compounds, and when you slice into onions, the sulfur is what is released and

Coming Wednesday in Food

■ Supermarket Sampler reviews Budweiser Premium Sauces, Melissa's Steamed Lentils and Capri Sun Roarin' Waters Fruit Flavored Water Beverage.

■ Watch those potatoes

■ Coffee grounds holders do a lot more than java

taste, actually. But I just love the flavor of onions and I have taken it upon myself to familiarize myself with the nuances of my favorite alliums.

Yellow onions are the most

makes you teary-eyed. The sulfur level of all onions is affected by variety and where they are grown.

Most recipes can interchange sweet, yellow, or white without much notice to the

Green onion varieties, such as scallions, chives, spring onions, and leeks need to be put into the fridge for storage. Bulbs like yellow, white, red, pearl, and shallots should be stored in a "cool, dry place" — not in the refrigerator.

Gastonia resident Susan Fleming is a food consultant and home economist. Her *Everyday Occasions* column appears in the *Gazette Wednesday's Food*

versatile, definitely, of all the onion varieties and subsequently, are the most widely used in the U.S. Although they are pretty strong raw, after you cook them, they really tone down quite a bit.

White onions are just as strong as yellow, but they do have a bit of a sharper, more pure "onion" flavor and they have a slightly shorter shelf life.

Green onion varieties, such as scallions, chives, spring onions, and leeks need to be put into the fridge for storage. Bulbs like yellow, white, red, pearl, and shallots should be stored in a "cool, dry place" — not in the refrigerator.

Gastonia resident Susan Fleming is a food consultant and home economist. Her *Everyday Occasions* column appears in the *Gazette Wednesday's Food*

Favorite Tomato and Onion Tart

2 large yellow onions, very thinly sliced
½ tsp. sea salt
Freshly ground black pepper
2 Tbs. olive oil
Pastry dough for a single-crust 12-inch tart
2 cups Gruyère cheese, shredded
1 tsp. herbes de Provence
½ pound plum tomatoes cut into wedges
2 medium yellow tomatoes, sliced
1 tart pastry for a 12-inch pan

Slice tomatoes first and allow them to drain in a colander.

Sauté onions with salt in oil until soft and golden and liquid has evaporated. Remove from heat to cool onions slightly. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Spread onion mixture over dough and top with cheese. Sprinkle herbes over cheese, then arrange tomato wedges in concentric circles over cheese and season with salt and pepper to taste. Bake tart in middle of oven 1 hour, or until pastry is golden, and cool on a rack. Remove rim of pan if necessary.

Tart Pastry

1 1/3 level cups all-purpose flour
½ level tsp. salt
½ stick butter vegetable

shortening 3 Tbs. cold water

Combine flour and salt in medium bowl; cut in shortening using pastry blender (or 2 knives) until all flour is blended in to form pea-size chunks. Sprinkle with water, one tablespoon at a time. Toss lightly with fork until dough will form ball. Press between hands to form a 6-inch disk. On a lightly floured surface with a floured rolling pin roll dough into a 14-inch round (about 1/8 inch thick). Fold round in half and transfer to a 12-inch tart pan with a removable fluted rim or a 12-inch quiche dish. Unfold dough, easing to fit, and trim overhang to ¼ inch. Fold overhang toward center and press

Section and her *Curious About Cuisine* column runs on Sundays. To ask her a question, log onto

www.everydayoccasions.com and select "ask Susan."

FASHION Q&A

Help my swimsuits last longer

By JEAN PATTESON
The Orlando Sentinel

Q: I swim laps several times a week for exercise. This is good for my health but tough on my swimsuits. The chemicals in the pool water wreak havoc on the fabric, and my suits barely last two months before I have to replace them. Can you suggest a solution?

A: Most swimwear stores sell products designed to protect suits against the thinning,

fading or stretching caused by chlorine, sunscreen oils and bacteria.

Such products include Swimwear Protector and Swimwear Cleaner (\$5 each), available at Everything But Water stores in most Central Florida malls.

Protector is used before swimming. You soak your swimsuit in water to which a capful of the Protector has been added, then allow the suit to drip dry. Repeat the process periodically.

Swimwear Cleaner is used to

wash your swimsuit after every swim. A similar product is Swimwear Care Wash by The Laundry. It sells for \$16 online at thelaundress.com.

Another solution is to choose an "endurance" swimsuit for your frequent exercise sessions. These are suits made from durable, 100-percent polyester. Most swimwear is made from fabric that contains some spandex, a fiber that is susceptible to damage from pool chemicals and bacteria.

And speaking of pool chemicals, here's another hair-care

item to add to last week's list of products that deal with the problem of green "swimmer's hair": So Cozy Swimmer's Shampoo For Children, available online at socozy.com.

LOST & FOUND

Lost: A reader is trying to find a bonnet hair dryer — the kind that sits on a tabletop. And a reader wants to know where she can purchase a good-quality wig.

Starr is trying to find St. Ives Hair Repair in the 8-ounce size. Delores is looking for

Realm After Shave Balm, which used to be available at Dillard's.

A reader wants to know where she can purchase the NIA 24 skin-care line. A reader is trying to track down Mango Hand & Body Lotion by J. R. Watkins Apothecary. And another reader is trying to track down Coco Chanel Body Satin Spray.

Found: The reader looking for something to prevent lipstick from "feathering" into lines around her mouth can try

these products from Sephora: Reverse Lipliner from DuWop, Stiff Upper Lip from Bliss, and Sephora's Lipstick Sealant.

For the woman looking for a small, shoulder-strap purse for everyday use, several readers advise that such purses can be found at flea markets.

Fashion writer Jean Patteson welcomes your questions. Mail: Orlando Sentinel, MP-240, P.O. Box 2833, Orlando, Fla. 32802-2833. E-mail: jpatteson@orlandosentinel.com. Phone: (407) 420-5158.

▼Will

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What am I going to do? I guess I'll just get her a gift card."

Yeah, you're a prize there, buddy.

Some dads have the good sense to bring their daughter along with them. He has a better shot at picking out the "right" present with her advice than he would if he were there on his own.

Teens get their own category in the people-watching game,

especially when shopping with their parents.

The ones who aren't yet embarrassed by good old Mom and Dad walk side-by-side with them. Then there are the kids who have outgrown that scene and would rather be a million miles away instead of hanging around with their folks. In the world of unhip, this is at the top of the list. But if Mom and Dad are still controlling the shopping bankroll, there's nothing that can be done.

There's also the Best and

Worst Dressed game. Points are given for spotting the first baseball cap on backward, bedroom slippers, or pajama bottoms.

People-watching can also clue you in on what's hot and what's not.

In Atlanta, those big Nicole Richie '60s-looking sunglasses are so five minutes ago. Nobody in Atlanta — from Buckhead to Little Five Points to midtown — was wearing them.

Long, straight hair has fallen flat. Sorry, Jennifer Aniston

wannabes, it's time to put those irons away.

Casual wear also seems to be getting worn out. People dress up to go out to eat or go shopping. Actually they dress up to go just about anywhere.

People-watching is a game you can play just about anywhere. All you need is a comfortable chair and the world is your window.

Community Editor Will MacDonald resisted the temptation of walking around Buckhead wearing a Braves T-shirt.

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