

AFTER FIVE

THE NORTH STATE MAGAZINE

JANUARY 2023 / 36th Year / No. 3

THE NEWS, ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT MONTHLY

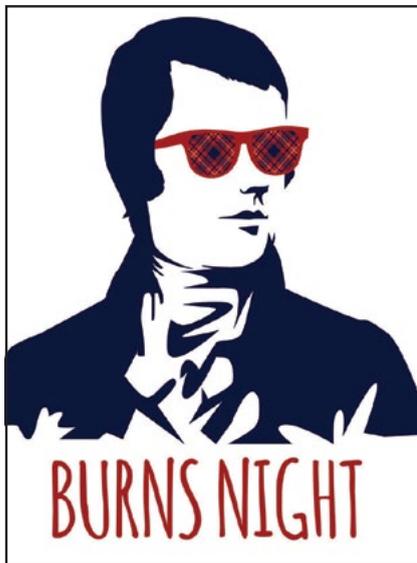
ON THE COVER

SIMON & GARFUNKEL

While Simon & Garfunkel no longer tour, North State music fans can relive the duo's glory days with 'The Simon & Garfunkel Story,' which comes to Redding for one night on Jan. 17. Read the After Five interview on page 2

BURNS NIGHT SUPPER

The Shasta Celtic Society's 25th Burns Night Supper, an annual event celebrated around the world for Scotland's favorite poet, returns Jan. 21 at the Red Lion Hotel in Redding. Each year in January, locals raise a glass to poet 'Rabbie' Burns, who gave the world 'Auld Lang Syne' and many much-loved poems. In Scotland, the poet's birthday is marked with lots of whisky, bagpipes, poems and, of course, haggis. See page 7



SINGING REVIVAL

'If you're coming to The Blind Boys of Alabama show with Charlie Musselwhite, expect to have a roof-lifting experience,' said Ricky McKinnie, vocalist and percussionist with the gospel group, in an After Five interview on page 14

DEAD MAN'S CELL PHONE

An endlessly ringing cell phone in a quiet café. A stranger at the next table who has had enough. And a dead man with a lot of loose ends. See page 18





The Jan. 17 Cascade show will take you back to the music that left an indelible mark

By Aaron Williams

Simon & Garfunkel created a soundtrack for our lives from their all-too-brief career. Songs like “The Sounds of Silence,” “Mrs. Robinson,” “The Boxer” and “Bridge Over Troubled Water” are just a few of the songs seared into the annals of rock history from the iconic duo.

Part of what made Simon & Garfunkel tick was their blend of songwriting combined with soaring, melodious harmonies. The duo strung together hit after hit starting as a band known as Tom & Jerry before becoming the eponymous pair that left an indelible mark on music in the 20th Century.

Boyhood friends, Paul Simon’s guitar work blended seamlessly with the almost angelic voice of Art Garfunkel. But creative differences and an almost love-hate relationship created a rift between the two that ebbs and flows to this day.

And while the pair no longer tours, North State music fans can relive the duo’s glory days with “The Simon & Garfunkel Story,” which comes to the Cascade Theatre for one night on Jan. 17. Tickets range from \$39-\$55 and are available at www.cascadetheatre.org.

Brendan Smith grew up in New York state and began singing early in

“It’s definitely more than a tribute act. It’s like a concert-style musical from when they first started to when they split up. We have the full band and dress like them while giving context to each song.”

- Brendan Smith, who portrays Art Garfunkel in ‘The Simon & Garfunkel Story’

life. The Empire State native - Smith portrays Garfunkel - joins fellow high school classmate Jonah Bobo as Simon in the California touring version of “The Simon & Garfunkel Story.”

And the parallels between Smith and Bobo and Simon and Garfunkel are not lost on the singer/actor.

“The two of us used to harmonize in the stairwell in high school,” Smith said by phone with *After Five* from New York where they are doing final preparation for the show. “We did a run through (of the show) a few weeks ago and it just feels right.”

“The Simon & Garfunkel Story” is part tribute act, part “MTV Storytellers” and part theater with Smith and Bobo playing their parts along with a backing band. They sing the songs and tell stories all while changing costumes to reflect the progression of

Simon & Garfunkel’s career.

“It’s definitely more than a tribute act,” Smith said. “It’s like a concert-style musical from when they first started to when they split up. We have the full band and dress like them while giving context to each song.”

Smith said even if you only remember a few of the hits, the catalog of Simon & Garfunkel is such that anyone who goes to the show will hear “something they know.”

Smith, 25, isn’t old enough to have experienced Simon & Garfunkel, but was raised on their music growing up in a musical family.

“My dad played guitar and we’d all sing and play music,” said Smith, who has a lengthy resume that includes performing with “School of Rock,” singing at the legendary CBGB nightclub in a middle school talent

show and most recently appearing on “America’s Got Talent” in an act called T.3. “I knew pretty early on in life that I wanted to perform. I’m grateful to be able to travel and perform.”

And while his parents raised him on classic rock and bands like The Beatles, Smith said he discovered Simon & Garfunkel on his own.

“I wasn’t around (when they were creating music) but it still feels relevant to me,” he said.

He also admits playing Garfunkel and having to replicate his voice is a fun challenge.

“He has an extremely specific voice,” Smith said. “When I auditioned and got the role, I knew it would be a task to figure out his tone and mannerisms. It’s slightly daunting, but it’s also been a blast to learn his voice. He has an angelic quality to his sound. I’m lucky I get to sing their music.”

He said despite running through all the hits there’s a moment in the show that always gets to him.

“I think my favorite (song to sing) is ‘America,’” he said. “I love to sing ‘Bridge Over Troubled Water’ but I love the lyrics (to ‘America’) and it comes at a part in the show that’s a bittersweet moment.

“The whole show, as a musician, makes you feel alive.”

shastaartscouncil.org

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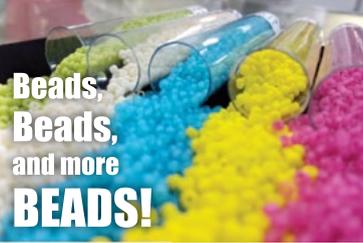
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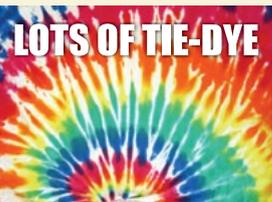
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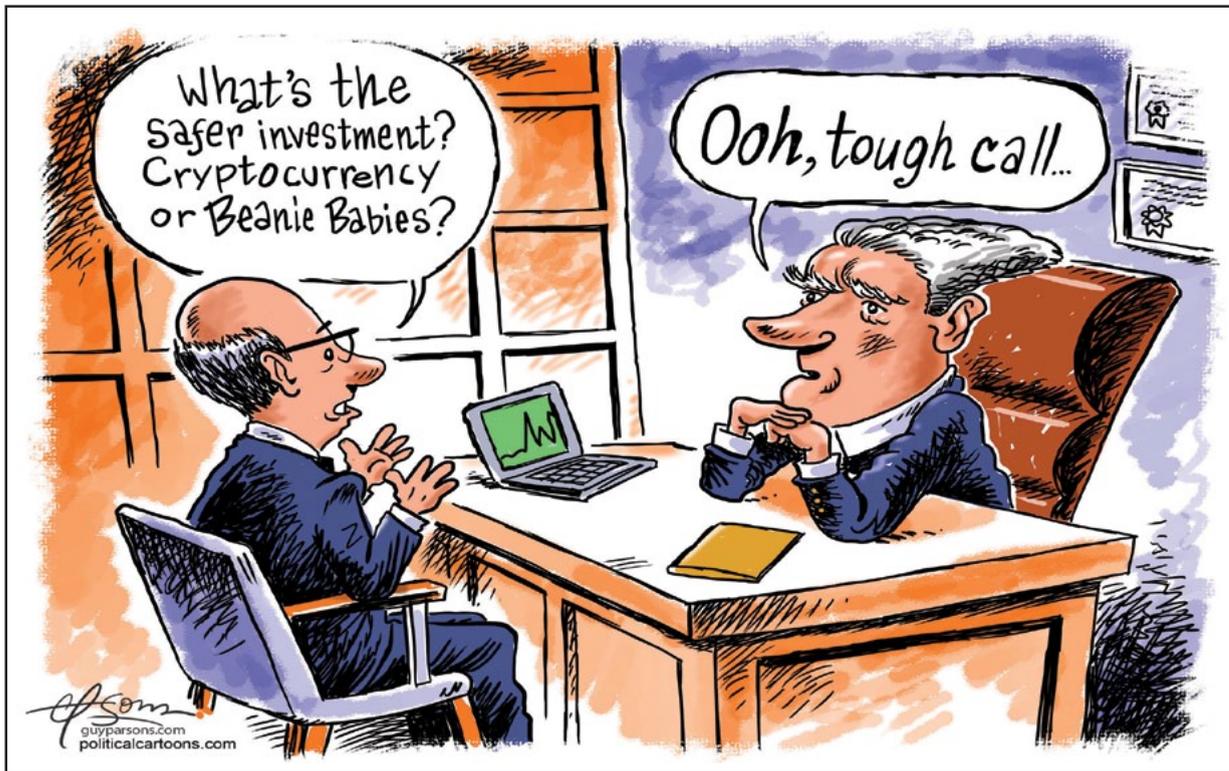
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AF



Riverfront to present the comedy 'Mama Won't Fly'

An outrageously hilarious race against the clock begins when Savannah Sprunt Fairchild Honeycutt agrees to get her feisty mother all the way from Alabama to California in time for her brother's wedding. Savannah's problem: Mama won't fly.

With only four days to make it to the ceremony, this determined daughter has no choice but to drive cross-country with her equally willful mother, Norleen Sprunt, in Mama's vintage sedan.

Riverfront Playhouse presents "Mama Won't Fly" Jan. 27 to Feb. 11. The comedy is written by Jessie Jones, Nicholas Hope and Jamie Wooten and is locally directed by Jennifer Levens.

Showtimes are 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 2 p.m. on Sundays. Riverfront Playhouse is located at 1950 California St., Redding.

For tickets, visit www.riverfrontplayhouse.net or by stopping by Enjoy the Store, 1261 Market St., Redding.

AFTER FIVE The North State Magazine

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No telephone call submissions; email or regular mail only.

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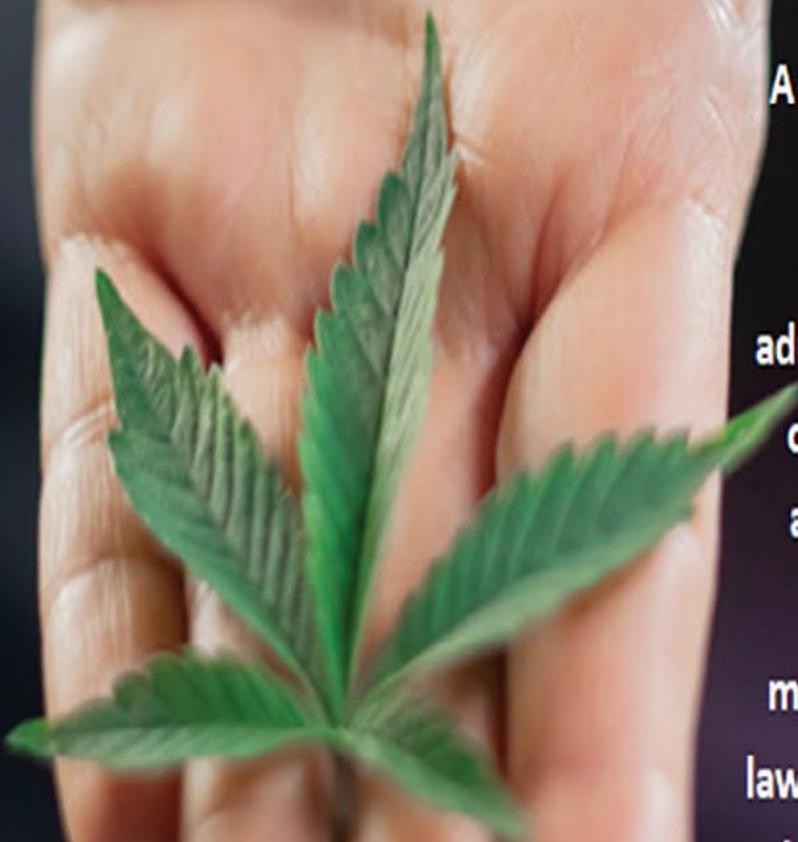
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Get out of Bed and Breakfast

By Jase Graves



The whole concept of a bed and breakfast is pretty ingenious and fits almost perfectly with my lifestyle. In fact, the words “bed” and “breakfast” are fair representations of my favorite activities, namely eating, sleeping and eating. I only wish I could reinvent the idea and call it

“bed and breakfast food eaten in the early afternoon” since my wife and I both identify as late sleepers and, on most Saturdays, are finishing our pancakes at around 2:00 p.m.

Speaking of my wife, who would prefer that I leave her out of this, we spent our wedding night in a historical bed and breakfast in Jefferson, Texas. The most memorable aspect of our stay—other than my relief that she actually went through with the wedding – was what has become known as “The Bathtub Plug Incident.” Now, before you let your imaginations get carried away, let me explain.

Our honeymoon suite featured an antique, clawfoot bathtub with brass fittings, into which I was looking forward to performing my most romantic cannonball after swamp-soaking my penguin suit throughout the wedding ceremony on a sweltering East Texas August’s eve. Unfortunately, in our post-wedding delirium, we couldn’t locate the tub’s antique drain plug.

Sporting my luxurious rented bathrobe, I crept downstairs to the owners’ quarters and lightly knocked on the partitioning French doors. When they opened, a bleary-eyed fellow appeared—enveloped by billows of pungent smoke. Now, I’m not 100% positive about the source of the fumes, but let’s just say that this guy probably had a raging case of the munchies.

After I very slowly and deliberately explained my dilemma, the owner stumbled up the stairs, into our room and over to the bathtub where he pointed to the brass drain plug resting in and camouflaged by the brass soap dish, peered at me suspiciously with his mouth hanging slightly open and simply said, “Dude.”

Needless to say, hilarity and cannonballs ensued.

Recently, my wife and I decided to relive the whole bed and breakfast experience – minus the stoned proprietor – at the charming Brazos Bed and Breakfast, a countryside cottage suite in Washington, Texas, a short drive from Texas A&M University where our eldest and most expensive daughter attends. We thought it would be nice to have some peace and quiet out in the country while also being close enough to go watch the Aggie football team run out of time – again – and visit our daughter so she could ask for money in person.

(Incidentally, the nearby Washington-on-the-Brazos Historic Site is where the Texas Declaration of Independence was signed in 1836, and I’m pretty sure the armadillo was designated as the official roadkill of the new republic.)

And speaking of armadillos, upon our arrival, the owner warned us about the electric fence encircling the picturesque property just off the ground in order to keep the nocturnal creatures from having pasture parties and breaking in to use the bidet.

Yes, there was a bidet! I’d never used a bidet before and wasn’t sure exactly how it worked, but I did give the opposite bathroom wall a thorough pressure washing.

Despite having to get up before noon to eat, the breakfasts were ample and delicious. The cordial owner served breakfast in our suite and reminded us, “Don’t ever feel like you have to eat everything. We have chickens, and they love leftovers!”

My only thought was whether or not we could eat the chickens, too.

Although I would have liked a little more bed to go with the breakfast, we had a wonderful trip. I’m even thinking about purchasing a clawfoot tub for our own house someday – right after I figure out how to install the bidet.

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Graves is an award-winning humor columnist from East Texas. His columns have been featured in Texas Escapes magazine, The Shreveport Times, The Longview News Journal, and The Kilgore News Herald. Contact Graves at susanjase@sbcglobal.net.

25th Burns Night Supper returns Jan. 21 to Redding

The Shasta Celtic Society's 25th Burns Night Supper, an annual event celebrated around the world for Scotland's favorite poet, returns Jan. 21 at the Red Lion Hotel in Redding.



"Each year in January, we raise a glass to poet 'Rabbie' Burns, who gave the world 'Auld Lang Syne' and many much-loved poems," Chris Alexander of the Shasta Celtic Society said in an email. "In Scotland, the poet's birthday is marked with lots of whisky, bagpipes, poems and, of course, haggis."

Here in Shasta County, Alexander said they follow closely to the traditional format found in Scotland, so you can save on the plane fare and join them right here in Redding.

This year's theme is "A New Day." This gala event will include all the traditional entertainment and trappings that everyone has come to love and expect, Alexander said. There will be toasts and speeches, poetry readings, singing, piping, the parading of the Haggis, and musical entertainment, all done in high Scots style. The talent includes performers associated with the Shasta Celtic Society and the Jefferson Pipe Band.

In his short life, Burns wrote many poems and songs that inspired so many in his time and remains relevant in today's world, Alexander said. Robert Burns was born January 25, 1759 and died at the young age of 37. He was admired not only for his verse and great love songs, but also for his character and his high spirits. He came to fame as a poet when he was 27 years old, and his lifestyle of wine, women and song made him famous all over Scotland.

"Burns will never be forgotten as his poems and songs are still as popular in Scotland as they were when first written," Alexander said.

Burns Night is a great occasion in January around or on his birthday when many dinners dedicated to his memory are held all over the world.

"The ritual of the Burns Supper was started by close friends of Robert Burns a few years after his death and the format remains largely unchanged today," Alexander said. "The evening begins with a welcome to guests, soon followed by the reading of the poem, "Address to a Haggis," and is toasted with a wee dram of scotch whisky. A full buffet meal is included and after a night of toasts, music and song, the evening ends with a rousing rendition of 'Auld Lang Syne.'"

For the Jan. 21 event at the Red Lion Hotel, the doors open at 5 p.m. for the traditional social gathering, with cheers and great conversation at "The Robbie" and again will feature special libations and a Scotch tasting. After the gathering, your seat will be ready for you, and the ceremonies will commence promptly at 6 p.m. A no-host bar will be available throughout the evening.

Advance tickets are \$50 each and are available on Eventbrite at shastaburnsnight.eventbrite.com. You need to reserve by Jan. 17. Celtic attire is encouraged.

For more information call 530-547-5517.

Whether you have Scottish heritage or just appreciate good poetry, bagpipes, great food, whisky and friends, Alexander asked that you come join them and celebrate the Shasta Celtic Society's Burns Night Supper.

Auld Lang Syne

You might not realize it, but New Year's Eve celebrants honor the world-renowned Scottish poet and lyricist each time they sing along to "Auld Lang Syne" as the clock strikes 12 midnight on New Year's Eve.

Robert Burns wrote "Auld Lang Syne" in 1788 and translations regarding what the phrase means vary. Burns wrote the poem in the Scots language, which is a little known language spoken in Scotland and parts of Ulster in Ireland. The phrase is now widely translated as "times long past," which may explain why it has become the unofficial anthem of New Year's Eve.



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Tickets to both performances are available at
northstatesymphony.org

NEWS of the WEIRD

Designer Amanda Booth, 33, of Toronto, Canada, has a business making jewelry, aptly named Trinkets by Amanda, Oddee reported.

Her first pieces were of clay, but then a friend contacted her and asked if she could make a jewelry set from her son's ashes.

Booth has "never said no" to a friend, and the set inspired other customers – one who asked if she could use breast milk to make jewelry.

She posted about the jewelry on TikTok and business took off, including orders for items made with umbilical cords, placenta and hair.

But the real creme de la creme came when people started requesting jewelry made from semen. Booth transforms the liquids to powder and mixes them with clay, then sculpts the jewelry piece. "I am an open-minded artist," Booth said.

In Katwe Kabatoro, Uganda, a 2-year-old boy was playing near a lake when a hungry, hungry hippo "grabbed ... the boy from his head and swallowed half his body," the Telegraph reported.

Bystander Chrispas Bagonza witnessed the event and started chucking rocks at the hippo, which caused it to spit the toddler out.

As the beast lumbered away, onlookers rushed the child to the hospital, where he was treated for injuries sustained in the attack. Police warned residents in the area to be on the lookout for the hippo, as they can become aggressive when they feel threatened.

If you don't mind sharing a ride with the quintessential bah humbug, you stand a chance at beating traffic in the HOV lane.

At least, that's what one driver in Arizona was hoping on Dec. 13 as he cruised along Interstate 10 with an inflatable Grinch in the passenger seat, CNN reported.

"While we appreciate the festive flair, this is illegal and the driver received a citation for the HOV violation," the Arizona Department of Public Safety noted on Twitter.

Motorists in Marathon, Florida, who didn't heed the school zone speed limit were met with a choice: a citation, or an onion presented by the Grinch himself. Monroe County Sheriff's deputy Lou Caputo, a 37-year veteran of the force, started dressing up as the surly green character more than 20 years ago, the Associated Press reported.



In Tennessee, it is legal to collect roadkill for consumption, WJHL-TV reported on Nov. 20. In fact, the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency encourages people to take home animals found on the road, with some strict rules in place. For example, deer and turkey must be reported to TWRA or local police within 48 hours of collection. But "bears, on the other hand, require that a TWRA agent come out and issue you a receipt for a black bear," said spokesperson Matthew Cameron. That's because the bear population is monitored, and the TWRA takes a tooth from the animal for the purpose of dating it. In addition, tracking bear kills helps the agency prevent the sale of bear parts on the black market. "It's highly illegal to sell any kind of bear parts in the state of Tennessee," Cameron said, "but it does happen." Small animals such as rabbits, raccoons, squirrels and skunks can be collected without notifying anyone.

"It's about education, awareness that our school zones are still operating even though it's the holiday season," Caputo said.

"It catches them off guard." Some speeders have even elected to eat the onion right on the spot.

The Catalonia region of Spain has a quaint tradition at Christmastime that features "caganers," or "poopers" – figurines of shepherds with their pants down, relieving themselves, Reuters reported.

The figures are usually

placed among nativity scenes, but more recently, they've morphed into caricatures of famous people such as Donald Trump, Vladimir Putin and King Charles III.

And now, inmates at a prison north of Barcelona are getting in on the action: They've been trained to produce the clay figurines for a private family business, Caganer.com.

Working four-hour shifts, prisoners mold, bake, polish and paint the figures.

David Fernandez, an inmate at Puig de les Basses prison, said he feels like "an elf."

"I feel very good working all year to get the job done and spread illusion. It's very cool. It's something from deep inside."

Elito Circa, 52, a Philippine artist, creates his paintings with an unusual medium: his own blood.

Circa told Reuters that using his blood started when he was young and had little access to painting supplies.

Now he sources his "paint" every three months when he goes to Manila's health clinic to have 500 ml extracted,

which he stores in a cooler in his studio.

"My artwork is very important to me because they come from me, it is from my own blood, my DNA is part of it," Circa said.

This week's "And What the Heck Have YOU Done?" story comes from Golden, Colorado, and 8-year-old Maddock Lipp.

The Denver Post reported Lipp skied with his family on Mount Heogh in Antarctica, achieving in his short lifetime a big feat: He has skied on all seven continents and is unofficially the youngest person to do so.

Lipp said he liked Antarctica best because he "got to ski next to the penguins." He hopes to nab a Guinness World Record for the accomplishment.

An Argentinian soccer superfan became alarmed as he headed home to watch his team's match with Croatia in the World Cup semifinals, Oddity Central reported.

The 53-year-old was frustrated at the slow progress of the bus he was riding, so when the driver stopped and stepped out to buy something at a kiosk, the soccer fan allegedly hopped into the driver's seat and took off toward his home.

He drove about 4 miles, then abandoned the bus and its occupants and continued on foot. But police officers caught up with him and took him into custody – and he missed the whole game.

Police officers in London were summoned to Laz Emporium, an art gallery, after a call about a "person in distress," Sky News reported.

In a gallery window, the figure of a woman could be seen slumped over, with her face in a bowl of soup.

Officers broke into the gallery, only to find that the "woman" was a mannequin, and the scene was art.

The American artist, Mark Jenkins, created the piece, titled "Kristina," on a commission from the gallery's owner, Steve Lazarides.

Turns out these officers weren't the first to be fooled; paramedics were called out to assist the woman in October.

A photographer in Western Cape, South Africa, set off alarm bells after he posted some shots on Facebook that eerily resembled scenes from "The War of the Worlds," LAD Bible reported.

Jan Vorster's shots showed

–Please See Page 10

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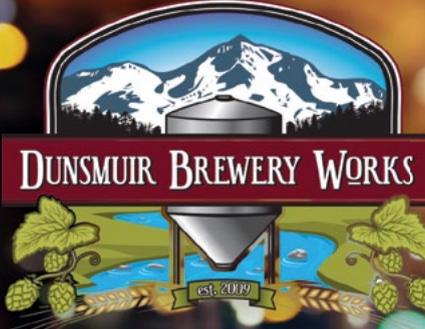


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NEWS of the WEIRD

-From Page 8

creepy creatures emerging from the surf, which provoked 22,000 comments – but Vorster, 62, said the spidery “creatures” are just dead aloe vera plants.

“I thought I could use this as a metaphor for how people see these plants as aliens, but we are actually the two-legged aliens messing up their world,” he said.

Even as it was naturally going out of style, the name Karen took a big hit in the last few years, when it suddenly became synonymous with an entitled, demanding, complaining woman.

But one British TV and radio personality can't bear to see the moniker disappear completely, so he has a plan, LAD Bible reported.

Matt Edmondson has vowed to pay 100 people to legally change their name to Karen, with the hope that they'll keep it relevant.

What's the catch? He'll only pay you the standard fee to have your name changed, about \$51. In addition, he's launching a board game called – you guessed it! – Karen.

Hashem Al-Ghaili, a producer and filmmaker who has a background in molecular biology, has set imaginations on fire with a concept he shared on social media: EctoLife, “the world's first artificial womb facility,” Huffington Post UK reported.

Basically, it's a techno farm for growing human children, and Hashem believes it could be reality within a decade.

Frighteningly enough, some scientists agree.

Andrew Shennan, professor of obstetrics at King's College London, said artificial wombs are a possibility.

“It's just a matter of providing a correct environment with fuel and oxygen,” he said. “When we put people on things like heart bypasses or other organ bypasses, we are theoretically giving them what they need from a machine.” Jeepers.

In June 2023, people in South Korea will suddenly become younger, the BBC reported.

On Dec. 8, the South Korean parliament voted to switch from two traditional methods of counting age to the more widely recognized international method for official documents.

Currently, Koreans are 1 year old at birth and then gain another year on the first day of each following year. An alternate method has them at 0 upon birth, then adding a year each Jan. 1.

So, for example, someone born on Dec. 31, 2002, is 19 years old using the international method.

But under Korea's traditional methods, they might be 20 or 21 years old.

One member of parliament said the

change would reduce “unnecessary socio-economic costs, because legal and social disputes as well as confusion persist due to the different ways of calculating age.”

Phoenix police officer Christian Goggans, who had been assigned to home duty, took advantage of the situation by dedicating more hours to his porn career, KOLD-TV reported.

Goggans is facing an internal investigation after he allegedly traveled back and forth to Las Vegas while on the clock to produce and star in pornographic videos.

He posted the films to a public Twitter page using his “stage” name, Rico Blaze (which has since been made private).

A Phoenix PD public information officer said Goggans' work-from-home assignment required only that he call in once daily.

Someone aboard the USNS Yuma, a Navy transport ship moored on the Greek island of Crete, is having a superior bathroom experience, thanks to the installation of the Bio Bidet BB-1000, The Washington Free Beacon reported.

At a cool \$553, the BB-1000 offers a heated seat, blow dryer, remote control, deodorizer and an “effective enema function,” which a retailer called “the absolute strongest spray pressure of any electronic bidet seat on the market.”

The Military Sealift Command confirmed the purchase but declined to offer more details.

In Japan, a phenomenon known as rojo-ne – literally, sleeping on the road – is once again becoming a hazard as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted and people are out partying more, reported The Guardian.

The number of deaths of snoozing partiers has nearly doubled in Tokyo compared to last year, police say, and they're worried that the impending end-of-year celebrations will only add to the problem.

Officials have also asked taxi drivers and others to drive with their high beams on and slow down.

A live nativity scene in Carolina Beach, an island community about 140 miles southeast of Raleigh, North Carolina, was missing its cows on Dec. 4, the News & Observer reported.

The two cows escaped their pen at Seaside Chapel around 10:30 p.m. on Dec. 3, police explained, and were apparently so determined to get away that they ended up in the Cape Fear River.

Carolina Beach police were joined by state park rangers and a K-9 with special herding skills as they hauled the soggy bovines back to shore.

A homeowner in East Grand Forks,
–Please See Page 12

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NEWS of the WEIRD

-From Page 10
Minnesota, was puzzled when he discovered five bullet holes in the siding of his house, along with another in his son's bedroom window, the Grand Forks Herald reported.

Police were summoned, and they questioned a next-door neighbor, Michael James Powers, 76, who readily admitted that he'd been shooting at a squirrel that was on his bird feeder; as he put it, "Well, that's war."

Powers was aiming from his own bedroom window, and said it wasn't the first time he'd shot at squirrels.

He offered to go talk to "the other guy" and make it right, but officers had something different in mind: They arrested him for reckless discharge of a firearm.

When Powers told his wife he was being arrested, she responded, "Well, I told you."

Anthony Thomas Tarduno, 48, saved the Hernando County (Florida) Sheriff's Office the trouble of investigating after one of their patrol cars was set on fire in Spring Hill, Florida, WTSP-TV reported.

As officers looked over the scene, Tarduno walked up and confessed to being the arsonist, saying he "had been drinking at a bar ... and decided he'd like to set it on fire."

Tarduno placed a bag of garbage under the patrol vehicle and used a lighter to set it ablaze, police said. Tarduno admitted to detectives that when he gets drunk, he does "stupid things."

Residents of South Tampa, Florida, are shaking their heads, trying to discover the source of "a deep, vibrating bass sound" that's been occurring on Saturday evenings for months,

Fox13-TV reported.

"You can feel it when your head's down on the pillow," said Abbi Reynolds. People have posted on social media, saying that their "windows are literally rattling" and "it reverberates from neighboring tall houses like an echo chamber."

But Tampa police can't locate the source, either. They've checked with the local Air Force base and cruise lines, neither of which are responsible for the noise.

Resident Zach Reynolds and others want to get to the bottom of it, trying to triangulate the noise and station people in different areas to suss out the culprit.

Police in the village of Warzymice, Poland, are hunting for an unlikely culprit in a vandalism case – a Christmas tree.

The odd figure cut a hole in a fence and slashed the tires of 21 vehicles belonging to a meat warehouse around 1 a.m., and cameras recorded the whole incident.

In fact, the figure is seen loitering

nearby and covering themselves with branches taken from nearby trees before committing the crime.

Mateusz Watral, who works for the meat company, called it "more of a guerilla (action) than a well-prepared operation. Along the way he lost his 'camouflage,' (and) branches were scattered everywhere."

Alligator intrusions in Florida are so ubiquitous that News of the Weird has stopped reporting them.

But in Brevard County on Dec. 4, the alligator's look-alike cousin made an appearance in Melbourne Beach, WESH-TV reported.

A 9-foot-long American crocodile, which is seldom seen so far north, was chilling on a beach.

"American crocodiles typically live in coastal areas throughout the Caribbean, and southern Florida is at the very north end of their range," noted the county's Environmentally Endangered Lands Program. Uh, not anymore.

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Singing Revival



The Blind Boys of Alabama and Charlie Musselwhite to provide 'a roof-lifting experience' Jan. 22 in Redding

By Aaron Williams

There will be some minor - and temporary - construction to the Cascade Theatre in January when The Blind Boys of Alabama and Charlie Musselwhite hit the stage of the venerable art deco theater.

But fear not, the beautifully restored palace will be unharmed.

"If you're coming to The Blind Boys of Alabama show with Charlie Musselwhite expect to have a singing revival," said Ricky McKinnie, vocalist and percussionist with the gospel group that's been inducted into multiple Halls of Fame. "We're not gonna get preachy, but we're going to have a roof-lifting experience."

The Blind Boys of Alabama and Charlie Musselwhite hit the Cascade Theatre stage at 7:30 p.m., Jan. 22. Tickets range from \$35-\$49 and are available at www.cascadetheatre.org.

The blend of a gospel act with the well-respected Musselwhite forms a seamless blend of good time music that McKinnie said uplifts the soul.

"The blues and gospel are first cousins," McKinnie said in a phone call with *After Five* from his Atlanta home while taking a break in between the East Coast and West Coast legs of their tour. "When we play with Charlie Musselwhite, it's like a hand in glove."

The pair have been to Redding multiple times over the past decade, including as special guests of Marc Cohn in January 2018, and McKinnie said it's been good to get back on the road following the pandemic.

"We missed our fans," he said.

The Blind Boys of Alabama first formed in the late 1930s and has

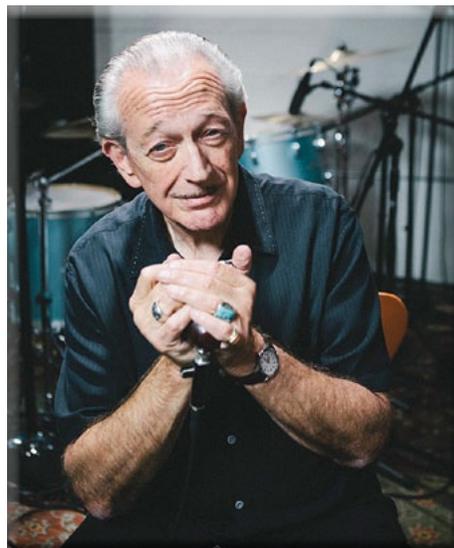
"If you're coming to The Blind Boys of Alabama show with Charlie Musselwhite expect to have a singing revival. We're not gonna get preachy, but we're going to have a roof-lifting experience."

**- Ricky McKinnie
The Blind Boys of Alabama**

featured a changing rotation of musicians over the years, most who are vision impaired. McKinnie is the second longest current tenured member, having been with the group since 1990. Jimmy Carter has been with them since the early 1980s.

The group is highly decorated, belonging to the Gospel Hall of Fame and the Alabama Music Hall of Fame. Along with five Grammy awards (all in the 2000s), they were awarded a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 2009. They have also played at the White House for presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama.

Additionally, The Blind Boys of Alabama have performed and recorded with a veritable Who's Who of jazz, rock, blues and soul musicians over the years, including everyone from Prince, Lou Reed, Peter Gabriel, Dr. John, Bonnie Raitt and Ben Harper to most recently Bella Fleck on a cover of the Billy Taylor song, "I Wish I Know How It Would Feel to Be Free," covered by many, including Nina Simone in 1967. The Bella Fleck and The Blind Boys of Alabama version was nominated for a Grammy Award in 2022 for Best



Charlie Musselwhite

American Roots Performance.

"We've been fortunate enough to collaborate with a lot of people and we're happy God has shown faith in us and allowed us to perform," McKinnie said. "Ben Harper is fantastic and I really love Dr. John. He's a great guy."

And of course, he loves their longtime collaboration with Musselwhite.

"He's been one of our longtime personal friends and played on our first Grammy record *Spirit of the Century*," McKinnie said of the 2001 record. "It's a great friendship and we come together (easily) because of that friendship."

A fan of all kinds of music, McKinnie said he is particularly fond of the 1970s R&B and soul music, like the Delfonics and Stylistics.

"You didn't have to try and figure out what they were saying," he said, chuckling. "And they had a song for everything. If you were going through

something (a breakup or falling in love), there was a song for it."

McKinnie, whose mother Sarah was a professional singer, grew up around music and one of his first gigs was creating the Ricky McKinnie Brothers with his mother and brother before landing with The Blind Boys of Alabama in 1990, where he also serves as their tour manager. He said growing up in the South with uncles who were preachers meant spending lots of time in church.

"Gospel is feel-good music and we (The Blind Boys of Alabama) make you feel good," he said. "We sing straight from the soul. We learned a long time ago that people need people, and by meeting people where they're coming from it all works."

"Our music is such that if you feel like singing, then sing. If you feel like clapping, then do it. And if you want to dance, then dance. We sing songs that people can relate to."

And while The Blind Boys of Alabama come prepared for each show with a set list, "each night and song brings about its own life ... it's never the same way," he said.

And in the same way McKinnie and the group uses music to uplift, he says being visually impaired can also be uplifting.

"Blind Boys were always a symbol that a handicap doesn't have to be a disability," he said. "I'm not blind, I just can't see; I've lost my sight, not vision."

"Nowadays people have tendencies to look down on others and you don't need to look down on anyone unless you're picking them up."

And don't forget to glance toward the ceiling, as you just might see the roof raised.



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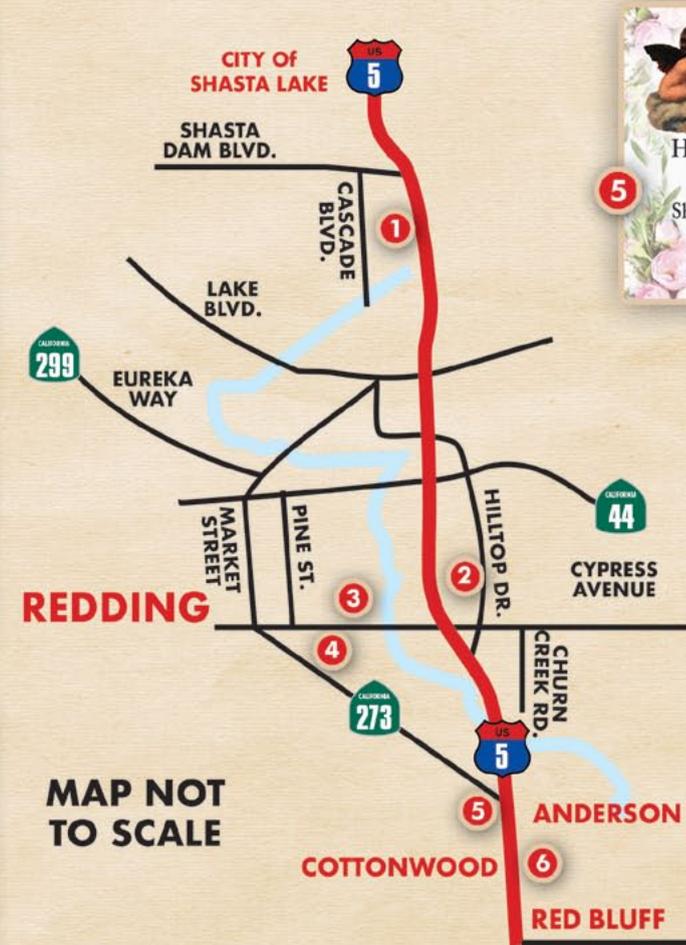
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Redding Cultural Cruise slated for four hours on Jan. 27

By Agata Maruszewski
Shasta County Arts Council
Arts & Grants Coordinator

Visitors will be able to view examples of fabulous art, see historical artifacts, hear great music by local performers and get a sampling of the North State culture and arts when the annual Redding Cultural Cruise returns on Friday, January 27.

The evening begins at 4 p.m. and continues through 8 p.m. at participating venues: Redding City Hall, Turtle Bay Exploration Park & The Mosaic Restaurant gallery, Shasta Historical Society, Shasta Arts Council – Old City Hall, Behrens-Eaton House Museum, North Valley Art League, and Enterprise High School gallery.

Drive, bike or walk to all the Cruise stops with free admission at all venues from 4 to 8 p.m. Cultural Cruise printed guides will be available at each location and will be available to download and print at Shasta County Arts Council's website - www.shastaartscouncil.org.

Turtle Bay Exploration Park will celebrate the openings of several art exhibitions, among them the acclaimed "West Coast Biennial Art Exhibition," "Famous Artists Children's Art Exhibition" and "What's Your Bag?" Other exhibitions available are "Honor, Courage, Commitment: Marine Corps Art, 1975-2018" and "Magnificent Me." Refreshments will be available. **The Mosaic Gallery** features work created by University Preparatory School's Advanced Placement art students.

Shasta Historical Society invites you to explore historical artifacts and the many stories that make up the rich tapestry of experiences that shaped Shasta County.

The Behrens-Eaton House Museum invites all to take a trip back in time. Visitors will discover the restored Victorian home of the 1890s containing original family furniture. Costumed docents will greet you and take you on a fascinating tour of local history.

Shasta Arts Council – Old City Hall will be presenting a group exhibition of North State woodworkers featuring creations by Alice Porembski, Eric Nanson, Jerry Cousins, David Allred, Cregg Zahnle, Don McDonald, Karl Pavlik and Yosh Sugiyama. The exhibited works vary from bespoke furniture, to wood turnings, to sculptures, marquetry, and forms dictated by nature.

Redding City Hall features an extensive exhibition of works by artist Anne Leveque.

The Carter House Gallery at Caldwell Park, home of North Valley Art League, will be celebrating the creativity of member artists through an annual all-member exhibition.

Enterprise High School Art Department invites all Redding residents to visit their on-campus gallery for the exhibition of works created by Enterprise students entitled "Things Are Looking Up!"

For the first time this year, **The Art Hunger** gallery at IOOF Hall downtown



will be joining the Cruise, presenting an open-theme showcase of works of local artists and celebrate the organization's third anniversary of work.

Collect stamps and win prizes

Save the date and grab your Cruise Map. Collect stamps on the map from each venue you visit, then make sure to put your contact information in the designated spot on the map and leave it at the last stop of your Cruise to enter for a chance to win fantastic prizes prepared by the Cruise venues. Winners will be selected the following week.

More on Saturday, Jan. 28

On Saturday, Jan. 28, visit venues like The Art Hunger at the IOOF Hall and Shasta Arts Council at Old City Hall to participate in artist demos, workshops or to recapture the impression of the exhibitions presented.



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Sleeping Beauty

17 | PILOBOLUS BIG FIVE-OH!

24 | NEIL BERG'S 50 Years of Rock & Roll

28 | TREELOGY: A Musical Portrait of California's Redwood, Sequoia and Joshua Trees



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19 | LOS LOBOS with special guest
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Axiom kicks off 6 year anniversary with 'Dead Man's Cell Phone'

Axiom Repertory Theatre Artistic Director and CEO, Ken Hill, was enthusiastic when asked about their January production of Sarah Ruhl's comedic tour de force, "Dead Man's Cell Phone" scheduled Jan. 13-28.

"It's absolutely hilarious," Hill said. "It's quite unlike anything I've ever read. The title of the play is deceptive. It's accurate, in a sense, but also doesn't reveal the incredible layers present within the text. The revelations contained in the play sneak up on the audience again and again, and send the viewers into paroxysms of laughter. One can't see them coming and they continue throughout the entire show."

Some plays, and even some great plays, revolve around a single tenant, Hill said.

"'Dead Man's Cell Phone' is unrelenting in exploring new and newer ideas, thoughts, philosophies, life, death, relationships and even something that would appear to be as mundane as paper, in both hilarious and thought-provoking fashion," he said. "It's impossible to describe. A synopsis of the show is kinda like an iceberg. One can describe what is above the surface, but what's below is significantly larger and more complex."

Hill said there's a blurb that's been used to somewhat describe it: "An incessantly ringing cell phone in a quiet café. A stranger at the next table who has had enough of it. And a dead man - with a lot of loose ends. So begins Dead Man's Cell Phone."



Axiom's 'Dead Man's Cell Phone' cast, left to right: Kim Mobley, Erin Brown, Tyler Lockamy, Pamela Carney, and in front, Ann Marie Lockamy (photo by Daniel Hill). Inset is Jerred Newman who portrays Gordon (photo by Kim Mobley).

"And that's all on page one of a show that runs under two hours," he said.

The play is comprised of two acts, with six scenes in each act.

"The play is told in linear fashion, but even that concept is tilted on its side," Hill said. "What's linear in a non-linear world, or perhaps 'worlds' plural? What

happens when everything we know or believe to be true is challenged? This play sneaks up on one and will leave a person with lots to think about long after the laughter subsides."

Hill is especially enthusiastic with his cast and crew.

"We assembled a formidable cast

for this production. Ann Marie Lockamy stars as Jean, a woman who answers a just deceased man's cell phone. Jerred Newman portrays Gordon, the dead man. Gordon's mother, Mrs. Gottlieb, is played by veteran actor Pam Carney. Erin Brown is Gordon's widow, Hermia, and Tyler Lockamy is Dwight, Gordon's brother. Kim Mobley appears as 'the other woman.'

"The cast is phenomenal. It was almost impossible to keep a straight face during the rehearsal process. The talent on that stage is a force unto itself. Couple that with the sound and lighting design by Daniel Hill, the assistant direction of Brandon Nascimento, and the production assistance of Nancy Hill, and I'd say we have the dream team in place."

Axiom Repertory Theatre was formed on Jan. 1, 2016, and Hill said they're overjoyed to present "Dead Man's Cell Phone" as their sixth anniversary production to kick off the new year.

"Come ring in the new year with Axiom and this hilarious comedy," he said. "It's the perfect tonic for whatever ails you."

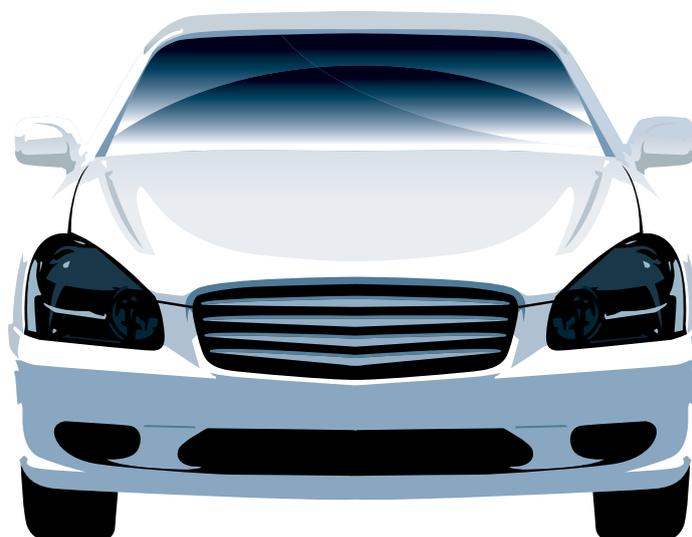
Axiom Repertory Theatre is located at 2613 Bechelli Lane, Redding. Performances are at 7:30 p.m., Thursdays through Saturdays, with Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. The box office and full-service Looking Glass Lounge both open an hour before every performance. For reserve seat tickets go online to axreptheatre.com.

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Simple home safety solutions for aging-in-place

Dear Savvy Senior,
Falls and fires are the two things I worry most about for my elderly father who lives alone. Do you have any suggestions on what we can do to help keep him safe, and keep an eye on him from afar? - Concerned Daughter



By Jim Miller

dad's house (buy one for each floor) that will alert him when smoke or carbon monoxide is detected. These smart devices will also send alerts to your phone to let you know when a problem is detected. Google Nest and First Alert both smart smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

Dear Concerned,
Of course. There are a number of small adjustments and modifications you can make to your dad's home to help protect him from falls and fires, both of which cause thousands of injuries and deaths each year. Here are some tips to get you started.

Eliminate tripping hazards

Since falls are the leading cause of home injury among seniors, a good place to start is to pack away your dad's throw rugs which are common tripping hazards or use carpet tacks or double-sided tape to secure them. You may also need to adjust your dad's furniture so there are clear pathways to walk through and position any electrical or phone cords along walls and out of the way.

For hardwood steps, consider attaching a nonslip tread to each one to provide traction and help him see the edge. And for added protection in the bathroom buy some nonskid rugs for the floors and use adhesive nonslip treads or a mat with rubber suction inside his tub or shower stall.

Improve his lighting

Good lighting is essential for safe aging-in-place, so check the wattage ratings on your dad's lamps and light fixtures, and install the brightest bulbs allowed, and add supplementary lighting if necessary.

You should also purchase some dusk to dawn nightlights for the bathroom and in the hallways that light up when the sun goes down. And mount some motion sensor lights outside the front and back doors and in the driveway that automatically come on when he comes and goes after dark.

Get grab bars

These can significantly reduce his risk of bathroom falls. Install them where he enters the shower or tub and on a wall inside the stall, but don't use grab bars that attach with suction. Instead, have wall-mounted bars put in by someone who can affix them to the wall studs. It's also best to choose bars

whose surfaces are slightly textured and easier to grip.

Ensure railings are stable

Wherever he has steps – stairways, entryways or basements – he needs sturdy railings. Ideally, they should be on both sides of the steps.

Prevent cooking fires

There are several affordable products you can purchase to help your dad prevent home cooking fires like BurnerAlert discs that attach to a stove's knob and will continuously blink or beep after the stove has been in use for a preset amount of time, and Ome smart knobs that can control a stove's heating settings from an app. Or you can invest in a more expensive iGuardStove sensor that shuts the stove off when it doesn't detect motion for five minutes.

Install smoke alarms

Install a smart smoke alarm in your

Add fire extinguishers

Get portable multipurpose fire extinguishers for each level of your dad's house and in the garage.

Consider a medical alert

To ensure your dad's safety and provide you some peace of mind, consider getting him a medical alert device that comes with a wearable SOS button that would allow him to call for help if he were to fall or need assistance.

For more tips, get a copy of AARP's "HomeFit Guide" (see AARP.org/HomeFit), which has more than 100 aging-in-place suggestions that can help make your dad's home safer and easier to live in.

Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit SavvySenior.org. Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of "The Savvy Senior" book.

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