

AFTER FIVE

THE NORTH STATE MAGAZINE

MARCH 2023 / 36th Year / No. 5

THE NEWS, ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT MONTHLY

ON THE COVER

GABY MORENO

Immersing herself in artists like Ella Fitzgerald, Nina Simone, Sister Rosetta Tharp and others built a bluesy foundation that Gaby Moreno, pictured at right, honed until she started adding Latin influences. The singer-songwriter is scheduled to open for Los Lobos on March 17 in Redding and March 19 in Chico. Read the After Five interview on page 2

SKIN OF OUR TEETH

Shasta College presents the American classic and Pulitzer Prize winning play by Thornton Wilder,

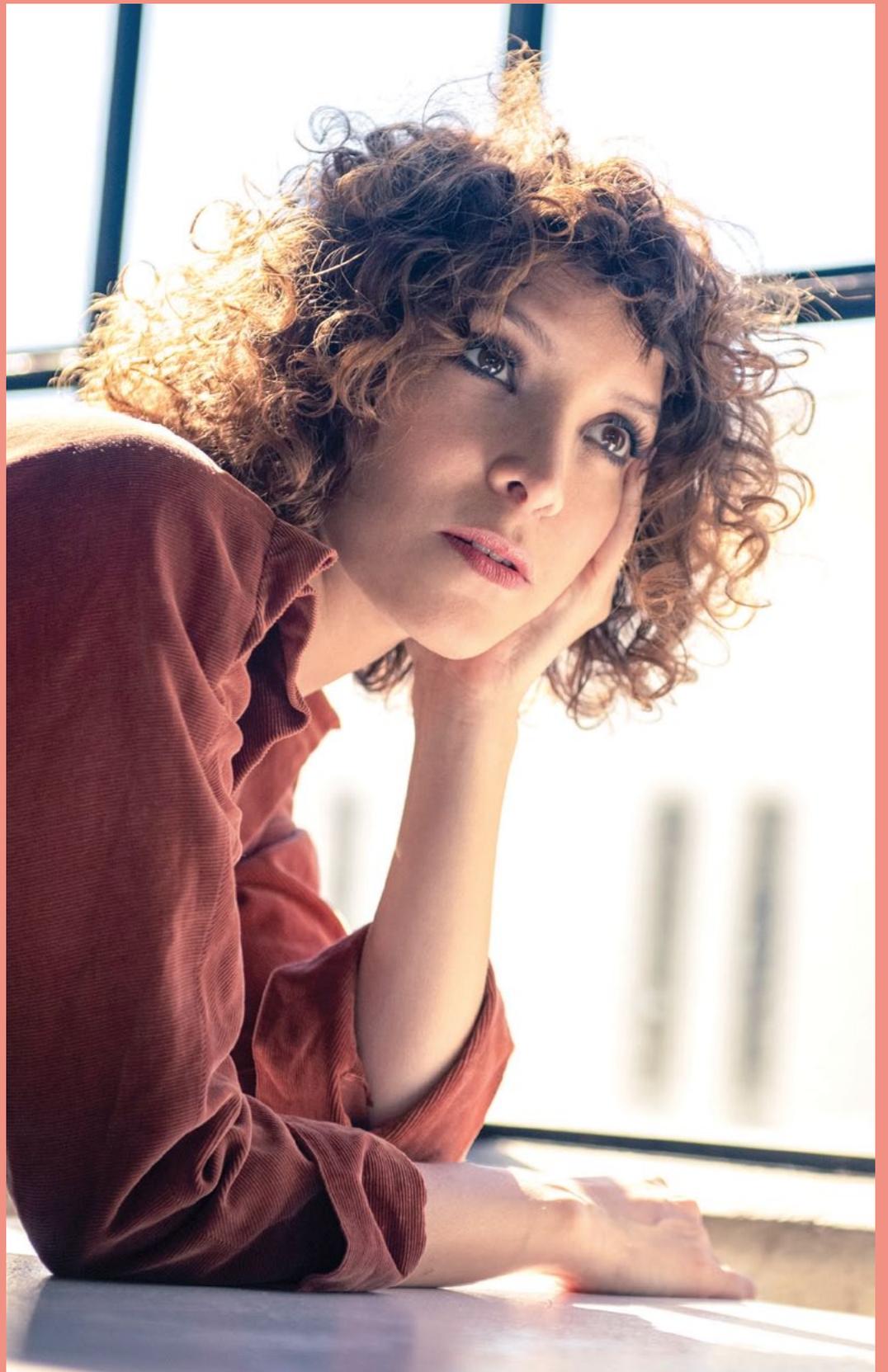


The Skin of our Teeth, scheduled in March at the Shasta College Theatre. "Thornton Wilder has created very complex characters to represent numerous aspects of human nature

and our ability to persevere through hardship," said Ashley Olson who portrays Mrs. Antrobus in the production. See page 5

CURIOUS INCIDENT

Following a three-year delay due to the pandemic, Axiom Repertory Theatre is set to present The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time, the critically acclaimed play based on the novel by Mark Haddon. It's slated to run March 10-25. See page 14





BLENDING LANGUAGES AND STYLES

Growing up in Guatemala, Gaby Moreno switches effortlessly from English to Spanish in her music. She'll open for Los Lobos March 17 in Redding and March 19 in Chico

PHOTO & COVER PHOTO / Alejandra Barragan

By Aaron Williams

Entertaining is in Gaby Moreno's blood. Growing up in Guatemala, her father was an entertainment promoter while her mother was in television and radio.

"Both of them were excited when I showed musical ability," Moreno said in an interview with *After Five* by phone from Los Angeles.

At 10 years old, Moreno opened a show for Ricky Martin of "Livin' La Vida Loca" fame.

On March 17, Moreno opens for Los Lobos at the venerable Cascade Theatre. Tickets are available at cascadetheatre.org. They'll also be in Chico on March 19 at Laxson Auditorium. Tickets at chicoperformances.com

Growing up in Central America, Moreno was raised on classical music, Broadway and Disney musicals.

"It's what my mother listened to and how she discovered I could sing," Moreno said. "When I was 13, I took a trip to New York and heard the blues and that changed everything. I was enthralled by blues, jazz and soul music, and that's what I studied."

More than 20 years after she immigrated to America, Moreno has dabbled in all kinds of media, from music to television to film. She co-wrote the theme for the NBC sitcom "Parks and Recreation" while she also had a song as the closing performance on an episode of "Orange Is the New Black." She's been the voice of Marlena in



Los Lobos performing at the White House. Gaby Moreno will open for the group March 17 at the Cascade Theatre in Redding and March 19 at Laxson Auditorium in Chico.

"Elena of Avalor," a full-circle moment to appear in a Disney production.

Perhaps the strangest appearance was as a bit character in a cutaway scene in an episode of "Family Guy."

"That happens from living in Los Angeles and making connections," she said. "This last year has been amazing having songs placed in television and films. It's been such a productive year."

But at the heart of her entertainment career, Moreno said the music is the thing she always returns to.

Immersing herself in artists like Ella Fitzgerald, Nina Simone, Sister Rosetta Tharp and others built a bluesy

foundation that she honed until she started adding Latin influences about six or seven years after moving to L.A.

"People would ask 'Why aren't you singing in Spanish?'" she said. "So I started digging into my roots and started writing blues with a Spanish feel. That's who I am."

She earned a Latin Grammy for Best New Artist in 2013 and has toured with some heavyweights, including Ani DiFranco, Tracy Chapman, Calexico and has even collaborated with actor Hugh Laurie on his music.

She said sharing the stage with Chapman was a "pinch me" moment.

"People would ask 'Why aren't you singing in Spanish?' So I started digging into my roots and started writing blues with a Spanish feel. That's who I am."

- GABY MORENO

on adding Latin influences to her music after moving to L.A.

"I was 15 and 'Fast Car' was one of the first songs I learned," she said. "It was a teenage dream come true."

Moreno said hitting the road with Los Lobos, who have been playing their brand of Latin-infused rock for more than 50 years, is a dream. But it's not the first time she's shared a stage with the group.

"They helped with a benefit after a tragedy (a volcano) in Guatemala," she said. "It was at Candelas Guitars in L.A., where they get their instruments. It was amazing and a pleasant surprise when they asked me to open."

Moreno can switch effortlessly from songs with lyrics in English and Spanish - she jokingly calls it "Spanglish." Her seventh album "Alegoria," released in 2022, is no exception.

"Blending languages and styles is kind of second nature," Moreno said. "I want to do music that feels honest and authentic. It doesn't matter if you understand (the lyrical language) if there's something in the music that speaks to you."

RIVERFRONT PLAYHOUSE

On Golden Pond

by Ernest Thompson

Directed by Ronda Alvey and Marla O'Brien

March 10 - March 26



ON GOLDEN POND is presented by special arrangement with Broadway Licensing, LLC, servicing the Dramatists Play Service collection. (www.dramatists.com)

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Pink Martini featuring China Forbes slated for shows in Redding & Chico

Drawing inspiration from all over the world, crossing genres of classical, jazz and old-fashioned pop – and hoping to appeal to conservatives and liberals alike - the “little orchestra” Pink Martini was founded by pianist Thomas Lauderdale in Portland, Oregon, in 1994. Lauderdale hoped to provide more beautiful and inclusive musical soundtracks for political fundraisers for causes such as civil rights, affordable housing, the environment, libraries, public broadcasting, education, and parks.

“Pink Martini is a rollicking around-the-world musical adventure,” Lauderdale said. “If the United Nations had a house band in 1962, hopefully we’d be that band.”

The group has released 11 studio albums on its own independent label Heinz Records (named after Lauderdale’s dog), selling over three million albums worldwide. In 2019, the band released two EPs featuring the vocals of Pink Martini’s newest members Jimmie Herrod and Edna Vazquez.

Pink Martini, featuring singer China Forbes, is scheduled to perform at the Cascade Theatre in Redding on March 8. Go online to cascadetheatre.org for tickets. They’ll also be at Laxson Auditorium in Chico on March 9. Visit chicoperformances.com for tickets.



AFTER FIVE The North State Magazine

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PHOTO & COVER PHOTO / Peter Griggs

A scene from the Shasta College production of *The Skin of Our Teeth*. Pictured left to right the actors and who they portray: Thorin Hansen (son), Ashley Olson (mom) Rudy Lurchigian (dad), Malena Williams (daughter) and Megan Pittman (maid).

Shasta College presents 'The Skin of Our Teeth'

Shasta College presents the American classic and Pulitzer Prize winning play by Thornton Wilder, *The Skin of our Teeth*, scheduled March 10, 11, 16-18 at 7 p.m. and March 12 and 19 at 2 p.m. at the Shasta College Theatre.

"It seems like *The Skin of Our Teeth* is a play that gets performed in times of turmoil," Dr. Greg Thorson, producer of the Shasta College production, said in an email. "It sees the Antrobus family surviving and navigating three great disasters - an ice age, flood and war."

Wilder is probably better known for the classic play *Our Town*, but some of those themes of love, community and humanity are seen here on an even greater scale, Thorson said.

"On top of that he's created this wonderful sense of theatricality," he added. "Occasionally an actor breaks character and speaks directly to the audience, like you might see in a Shakespeare play. That adds a sense of humor to what are important themes."

Among the cast members in the Shasta College production, which is directed by Mathew McDonald, are Ashley Olson, who plays Mrs. Antrobus, and Megan Pittman, who plays Sabina.

"(Both) have been stalwarts in Shasta College theatre for the last year," Thorson said. "Both students took Acting 1 and 2 from me during the pandemic. At first it was a difficult environment to learn in, but I think we all learned a great deal from this challenging time. It reminds me a little of what the characters in the play experience. And they are better actors and people as a result."

Olson said *The Skin of Our Teeth* is very different from any other production she has ever worked on.

"Thornton Wilder has created very complex characters to represent numerous aspects of human nature and our ability to persevere through hardship," Olson said in an email. "It has been such an enjoyable and thought-provoking experience to bring the character of Mrs. Antrobus to life. I can't wait for us to be able to share this timeless story with the community."

Also in the cast are Malena Williams and Thorin Hansen. both who were in last fall's *You Can't Take It With You*.

"Now, they are playing leading members of the Antrobus family," Thorson said. "It is a great pleasure to work with students over a couple of plays or years and see their growth as actors and people."

Set design for the production is by David Fraser, lighting design by Tim Dye, and costume design by Hillary Wilson-Fahey.

Tickets are \$15 general admission, \$10 seniors, and \$5 students. Tickets can be reserved at www.shastacollege.edu/ArtsEvents.

For more information, contact the Division of Arts, Communications and Social Sciences at (530) 242-7732.

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10, 11, 16-18 | 7^{PM}

12 & 19 | 2^{PM}

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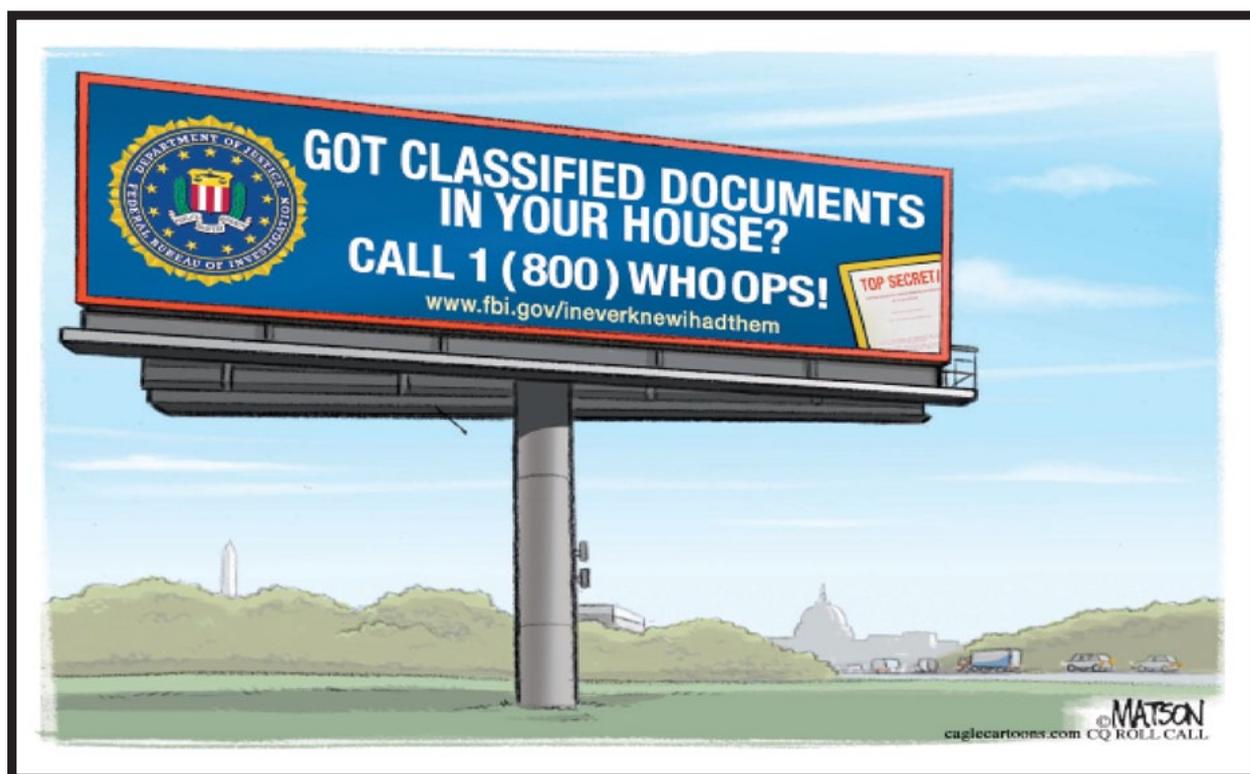
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I've been blinged

By Jase Graves

On a recent family vacation to New York City over the holidays, I brought home exactly one souvenir (I ate the others). While we were freezing our philtrums at the Bryant Park Winter Village Holiday Market in Midtown Manhattan, I was teen-pressured by my three daughters into purchasing a “manly beaded bracelet.” (I’m pretty sure that’s an oxymoron.)



I bought the bracelet from a shop called Raw Spirit NYC, and my misgivings didn’t end with the name of the establishment. The beads in the piece were made from black tourmaline, and the seller assured me that it would dispel toxic emotions and cleanse my energy field.

Although I’ve been wearing the bracelet daily, my daughters would probably disagree that my toxic emotions have been dispelled, especially when I have to pay their hair stylists. And my wife would definitely disagree with the claims about my cleansed energy field, especially after I’ve eaten anything spicy.

I don’t typically wear a lot of jewelry, probably as a result of my upbringing. Men in my dad’s generation weren’t known for accessorizing, so when I was in my lavishly-mulletted teen years and announced my intentions to have my ear pierced, I don’t remember exactly what he said, but I think it had something to do with removing my ears entirely. After all, it was the 1980’s, and just about the only males with pierced ears at the time were on MTV—and most of them wore eyeliner.

I solved the earring dilemma by compromising with an imitation gold and silver ear cuff set that I purchased at Claire’s (yes, Claire’s). I sported the ear cuffs only when I was away from home and was trying to convince any teenage girl in my general vicinity that I looked vaguely like a member of Duran Duran – at a distance, if she squinted and used her imagination.

Other than a succession of gold-ish herringbone chains that turned my adolescent neck green, and a tarnished, gold-plated nugget ring that I abandoned with an ex-girlfriend who probably still gets it out at parties for a huge laugh, my next memorable experience with jewelry came when my daughters were little girls.

Our daughters grew up during the Rainbow Loom craze and created hundreds of brightly-colored bracelets made of overpriced, miniature rubber bands that I’m still finding lodged in the carpet. Because this was back when the girls were still willing to admit that we’re related, they often presented me with the bracelets as gifts. (My favorites were fuchsia and chartreuse.) I still put them on from time to time when I need a good cry.

Looking back, I now realize that encouraging me to buy the bracelet in New York was just my daughters’ way of implicating me in the smackdown they were administering to my credit cards. Nevertheless, it reminds me of them, so I wear it proudly. Besides, it does look kind of cool, especially when I pair it with an ear cuff.

Copyright 2023 Jase Graves distributed exclusively by Cagle Cartoons newspaper syndicate. 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.



On *Golden Pond* cast and the parts the play, left to right: Nathan Miller (Charlie), Lanson Zaniroli (Billy) John Welsh (Norman) Cindy Robertson (Ethel) Emory Colvin Hornaday (Chelsea) Ian Dalziel (Bill).

Riverfront presents 'On Golden Pond'

Next up on Riverfront Playhouse's 2023 schedule is *On Golden Pond* by Ernest Thompson, which opens on March 10 and runs through March 26. There will also be a \$15 preview performance on Thursday March 9.

"*On Golden Pond* speaks the universal themes of love, family, forgiveness, aging, and mortality," co-director and Riverfront Board President Ronda Alvey said in a news release.



PHOTOS / Ronda Alvey

Lanson Zaniroli and John Welsh.

Remembered in cinema as the film that paired real life father and daughter Henry and Jane Fonda, *On Golden Pond* is the heartwarming and classic story of the bonds of family and the way that love can build bridges stronger than the differences that divide us.

Riverfront Playhouse's production features veteran actors John Welsh as Norman, Cindy Robertson as Ethel, Emory Hornaday as Chelsea, and Ian Dalziel as Bill. It will also feature newcomers to the Riverfront Stage with Lanson Zaniroli playing Billy and Nathan Miller as Charlie. The production is being co-directed by Ronda Alvey and Marla O'Brien. Most recently, O'Brien directed *Crossing Delancey* and *Steel Magnolias* for Riverfront.

Riverfront Playhouse will be presenting the second revision that Ernest Thompson has made to his original script. Thompson told TheatreMania in a 2022 interview that the biggest changes were to the many gay jokes that were included in the original play, which he wrote when he was 28 years old.

"When it got produced on Broadway in 1981, we were just beginning to hear about AIDS; it didn't even have a name," Thompson said. "So, I upped the play's time period to 1985 and got rid of the many gay jokes I wrote for Robin, whose ex-husband is gay. While they came off as funny back then, I wanted the script to reflect a reality that makes everything in the play more grounded. I've gotten wiser as I've gotten older and one becomes very conscious about making these things right."

In the forward for this version he wrote that "While the play, like any work of art, is about many things, what I thought I was writing as a young man was a study in dysfunction, one family's struggles with what we all struggle with – age, rage, regret, love withheld, love unspoken, disappointment and ultimately - if we're lucky - forgiveness, acceptance, and renewal."

Evening performances for the Riverfront production begin at 7:30 p.m. and matinees are scheduled at 2 p.m. For more information or to purchase tickets online go to riverfrontplayhouse.net. Tickets can also be purchased in person at Enjoy the Store or at the Riverfront ticket counter one hour before show time (subject to availability). Riverfront Playhouse is located at 1950 California St., Redding.



MASTERWORKS 4: RACHMANINOFF & DVOŘÁK

Guest Artist Charlie Albright, *piano*

Join North State Symphony as they capture in sound the iconic beauty of nature's endless charm. A highlight for this performance is the World Premier of *Lassen Awakes!* by composer Marko Bajzer, 2022 Artist-in-Residence at Lassen Volcanic National Park. Bajzer was awarded a co-commission by the North State Symphony to produce this original piece, and it will be performed before a live audience for the first time at this concert.

PROGRAM:

BAJZER - *Lassen Awakes!* *World Premiere*

RACHMANINOFF - *Piano Concerto No. 2*

DVORAK - *Symphony No. 8*

Saturday, May 13 | 7:30 PM | Cascade Theatre, Redding

Sunday, May 14 | 2:00 PM | Laxson Auditorium, Chico



Tickets to both performances are available at
northstatesymphony.org

NEWS of the WEIRD

When prosecutors went to court in Prince George, British Columbia, in a case involving a nightclub flouting COVID-19 restrictions last February, they thought their argument was airtight, the CBC reported on Dec. 7.

They had video from Lambda Cabaret that had been posted to Facebook showing patrons dancing and drinking with nary a mask in sight.

The club even bragged about their disobedience: "Open with zero mandates 2 weeks in a row," it posted.

But Judicial Justice Brent Adair saw it differently.

"There are so many holes in this case – it's like someone shot a shotgun," he said.

For one thing, he asked, "What is a social media post?" "These are posts that Lambda Cabaret made on Facebook," environmental health officer Joey Cheng answered.

"How do you know they made them on Facebook?" Adair asked.

"Ummmm ... it was on their Facebook page," Cheng replied.

Adair explained he's not a "technical person": "I know Facebook exists. I don't use Facebook. What is it? What does it show?"

He ended up dismissing all the charges against Lambda Cabaret, citing hearsay and questioning why video evidence was relevant. Might be time to brush up, Your Honor.



RayLee Holladay and her husband, Bubba, live in Lascassas, Tennessee, where they raise cows.

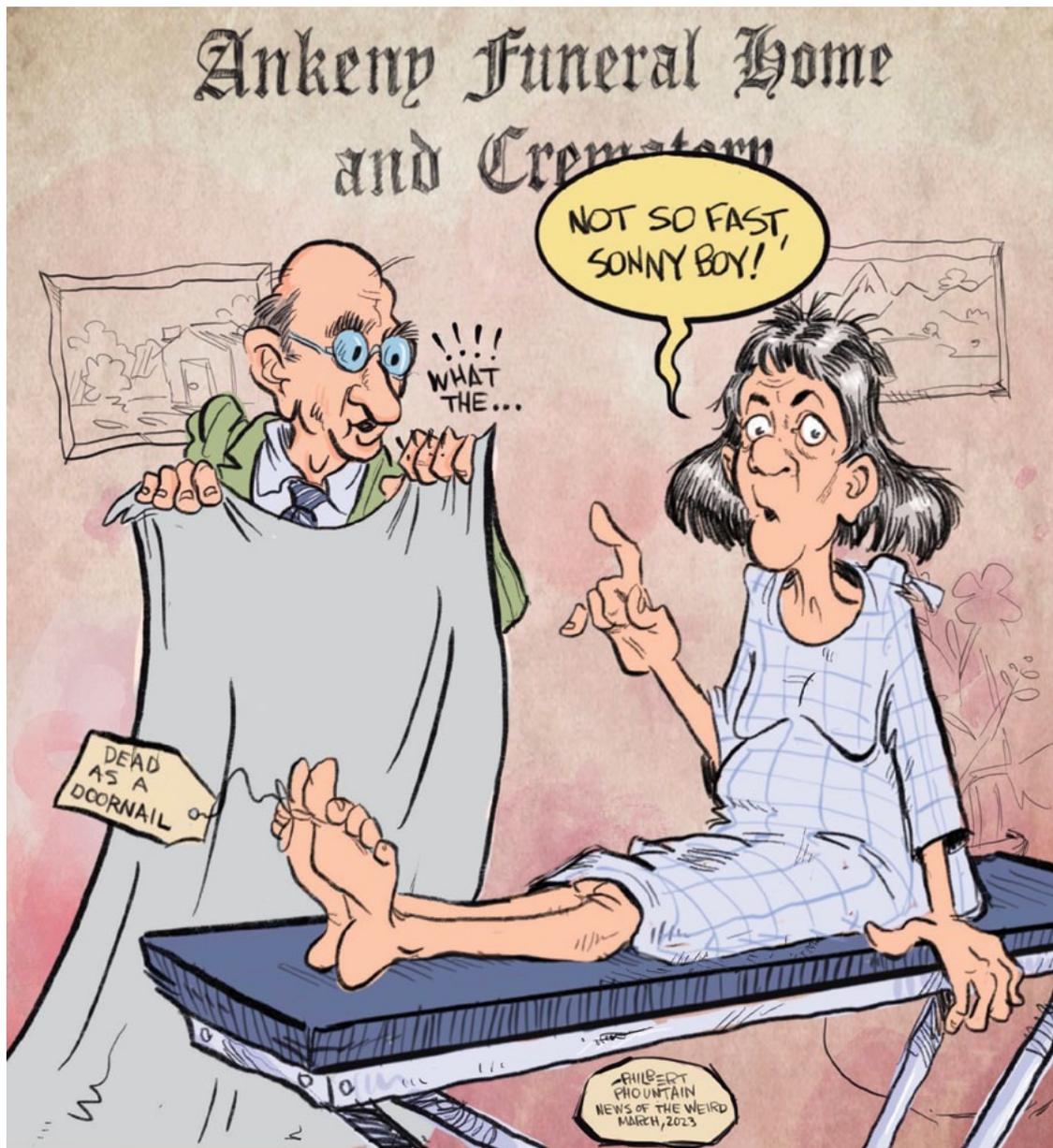
About six years ago, WKRN-TV reported, RayLee had been seeking a venture of her own to bring in money on the farm when she discovered Rent The Chicken, a business founded by Phil and Jenn Tompkins of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Today, RayLee's Rent The Chicken franchise is thriving. Customers can either rent egg-laying chickens for about six months, or hatching chicks, which can be returned about two weeks after they hatch.

"It's great for teaching kids a little responsibility," RayLee said. "And this is a trial. It's not like getting a puppy for Christmas."

Chickens can be rented by families or by schools, day cares and senior living facilities. If renters grow attached, they can adopt the fowl for an added fee.

Since its beginning 10 years ago, Rent The Chicken has expanded into 24 states, the



A 66-year-old female patient at the Glen Oaks Alzheimer's Special Care Center in Urbandale, Iowa, had suffered a slow decline and was moved into hospice care in late December. On Jan. 3, CBS News reported, the woman was pronounced dead, and the funeral home was called. She was placed in a body bag and transported to the Ankeny Funeral Home and Crematory, where workers unzipped the bag and got a shock: They "observed (the resident's) chest moving and she gasped for air," a report from the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals detailed. Responding EMS workers were able to get a pulse and monitor breathing, but she had no eye movement or verbal response. She was returned to the care facility, where she died two days later with her family at her side. The home is facing \$10,000 in fines.

District of Columbia and into Canada.

Mark Curtis Wells, 51, of Biloxi, Mississippi, and another golfer got into an altercation at Hollywood Casino, WXXV-TV reported.

They had played earlier in the day at Bridges Golf Course, where the argument allegedly began, police said.

When officers arrived at the casino parking lot, they found one of the men suffering a facial injury: His nose had been bitten off.

Wells took off from the scene in a Tesla but later turned

himself in and was charged with mayhem. The nose was not found.

On Nov. 28 at around 1:45 a.m., an unnamed 27-year-old man visited the Apple store on Fifth Avenue in New York City and made a huge purchase: 300 iPhone 13s. (The store is open 24 hours.)

He bought the phones to resell through his small business. But, the Daily Star reported, he didn't get very far with them: As he walked to his car, another car pulled up and two men jumped out, demanding his three bags.

The customer defended himself, but the thieves made off with one of the bags, which contained about 125 phones, worth approximately \$95,000. The New York Police Department is investigating.

Tony Toto and his wife, Frances, of Allentown, Pennsylvania, are celebrating 57 years of marriage, WFMZ-TV reported in a feel-good Valentine's Day story.

"We have been blessed that we had all these years," Tony said, noting "that one time when we had a rough time."

Yeah, that was the time

in 1983 when Frances hired teenaged hitmen five times to kill Tony.

"I don't think I was thinking straight," Frances said. "It was like it was a love-hate kind of a thing."

Of course, the murder attempts weren't successful, and Frances and the young hitmen were arrested. She spent four years in prison, but their love never wavered.

A feature film called "I Love You to Death" was made about their troubles, and they became minor celebrities, traveling to movie premieres and giving interviews.

Tony and Frances got counseling and committed to better communication, and decades later, have a long marriage to show for their efforts.



On Feb. 11, during an intermission at the Hannover State Opera House in Hannover, Germany, ballet director Marco Goecke shocked even himself when he approached the dance critic from the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung newspaper, Wiebke Hueter, and smeared animal feces on her face.

The Associated Press reported that Goecke was unhappy with a recent review of a production he staged in The Hague.

Following the incident, he took off through the crowded theater lobby. But strangely, Goecke seemed to justify his actions in a later interview, saying that after having his work "soiled for years ... Once a certain point has been reached, I disagree."

The opera house suspended and banned him from the facility until further notice.



People who suffer from chronic constipation now have a high-tech treatment option: a vibrating pill that stimulates the colon, CNN reported.

The Vibrant capsule, prescribed by a doctor, is taken at bedtime and reaches the large intestine about 14 hours later.

Vibrations cause the gut to contract, moving food along. Eventually, the capsule is eliminated and makes its way to a sewage treatment plant, where it's sifted out and sent to a landfill.

Dr. Eamonn Quigley of Houston Methodist Hospital helped test the new technology. He said most people couldn't feel it working.

"A minority could feel it. None of them felt it was

—Please See Page 12

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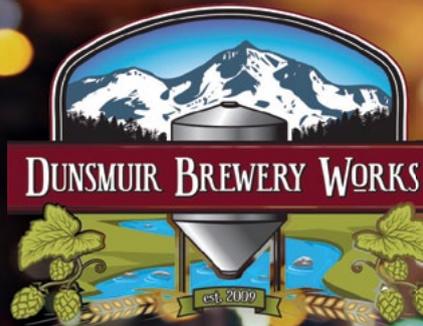


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Judee Sill doc being shown at festivals

The documentary *Lost Angel: The Genius of Judee Sill* about the singer-songwriter of the early 1970s was shown at the DOC NYC film festival in November 2022 and was scheduled to be shown at the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival the end of February. After Five did a story about the documentary in the March 2022 issue with directors Brian Lindstrom and Andy Brown (available in our archives at northstate.news). The documentary features interviews with, among others, Linda Ronstadt, David Geffen, J.D. Souther and Graham Nash. At the time of the article, the working title was *Judee Sill: Soldier of the Heart*. A trailer for the documentary is available on YouTube, along with a Q&A with Lindstrom, Brown and singer Shawn Colvin at DOC NYC. Follow the twitter account for the documentary under its new title for other possible film festivals and streaming opportunities.



'Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania' in theaters now

The third installment of the Marvel Studios Ant-Man series, *Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania*, was released in February. The movie, directed by Peyton Reed and starring Paul Rudd, Evangeline Lilly, Michelle Pfeiffer, Michael Douglas and Jonathan Majors, was written by former eastern Shasta County resident Jeff Loveness. Loveness began his entry into mass media at the first Sundial Film Festival in Redding back in 2008 with his short film "Profiles Are Lovely" where it won first place in the narrative division. From there he went on to become a writer for *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* and the writer of several episodes of the Sci-Fi TV show *Rick and Morty*. After Five did an interview with Loveness in the November 2021 issue while he was in London working on Ant-Man.



Red Bluff native to release album in March

Country singer-songwriter Chad Bushnell is set to release his album *Whiskey To Work* on March 24. It was produced by Nate Coon (drummer for Aaron Watson) and Derek Hames (owner of Edgewater Studios). The Red Bluff native is scheduled to have a single release party for the album's title cut on March 4 at the Tackle Box Bar & Grill in Chico. That will be followed on March 24 with an album release at Goldfield Trading Post in Sacramento, where the first 10 people through the door get a free signed CD. A fourth-generation Northern California rancher and musician, Bushnell has had three No. 1 Country Christian singles with "What Would Jesus Do" in December of 2018, followed by "That Ain't My Church" and "Thank God." He won Contemporary Country Vocalist of the Year at the Josie Music Awards in 2020 and he's nominated as an Artist to Watch in 2023 by Country Evolution.



Celtic music and more March 10 in Mt. Shasta

The father and son duo of John and Tyler Weed along with Stuart Mason will present an evening of Celtic music, Irish dancing and American song at 7 p.m., March 10, at Jefferson Center for the Arts in Mount Shasta. The performance will feature the dancing of world champion Pacific Northwest step wizard Marisa Gilman. Tickets are \$25 at the venue or \$20 advance at jeffersoncenterforthearts.com. Kids 12 and under get in free.

High school art show

A Second Saturday Art Opening and Reception is scheduled from 4 to 7 p.m., March 11, at the Siskiyou Arts Museum in Dunsmuir for the Mount Shasta High School "Student Art Show." For more info., visit siskiyouartsmuseum.org.

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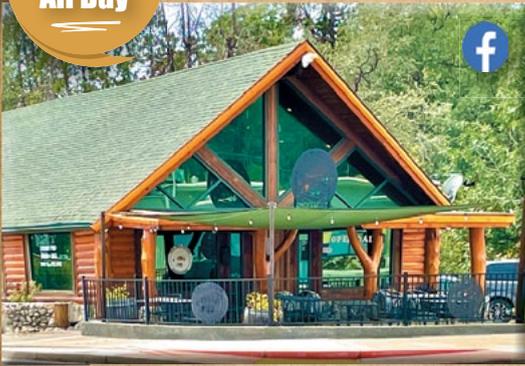
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NEWS of the WEIRD

-From Page 8

being uncomfortable.” But we’re uncomfortable just reading this.

Christopher Gaddis, 41, was holding a cat in his arms when he was approached by Metro Nashville Police officers, WSMV-TV reported.

Gaddis had two outstanding warrants, and officers were trying to arrest him when he shoved the cat into the face of one of them, leaving several cuts on the officer’s hands.

Gaddis also kicked the officer. After being treated for his own injuries from the cat, Gaddis was charged with resisting arrest and assaulting an officer.

In what prosecutor Owen Beale called an “organized criminal matter,” Joby Pool, 32, pleaded guilty to theft and criminal damage in Kidderminster, England, magistrates court, The Guardian reported.

His crime? Pool broke into a warehouse and towed away a trailer with about 200,000 Cadbury Creme Eggs, valued at about \$37,000.

He didn’t get very far; when police stopped him, he “walked toward (them) with his hands up.”

“This clearly wasn’t spur-of-the-moment offending,” Beale said. “You don’t just happen to learn about a trailer with that kind of value being available.”

The “Easter bunny,” as police dubbed him, will be sentenced this month to about two years in jail.

In the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia, one gas station is employing a dramatic tactic to try to keep people experiencing homelessness away: blasting opera music over its outdoor speakers.

WPVI-TV reported that neighbors aren’t fans: “I heard all this music, I couldn’t tell where it was coming from. Loud, it was unbelievable that time of night,” said Clinton Barnes, who lives close by.

“I don’t think it’s a deterrent,” said Karen Clark. “They have to find something else.”

One neighbor said it was as loud as if someone had “cranked the volume all the way up” on the TV inside their home. Gas station employees refused to comment.

Austin Bristoe, 26, of Bloomington, Indiana, was sick and tired of people breaking into his 1998 Buick and stealing stuff, Fox59-TV reported.

On Feb. 12, when police responded to a car fire, they found Bristoe just standing next to his burning vehicle, and he told them he set it on fire to stop the thefts.

“If there was nothing left of the vehicle, then there would be nothing left to steal,” Bristoe’s logic went.

As it burned, the fire caused a small explosion, and Bristoe commented, “I

hoped the explosions would be bigger.” After arresting him for arson, they searched him, finding several packed syringes and benzodiazepine.

Police in Santa Cruz, California, are warning locals not to “engage” with the Cookie Monster, KION-TV reported.

A man named Adam Sandler (not the actor), known to dress up as “Sesame Street” characters and harass people, has surfaced in Santa Cruz.

Resident Sarah Jones said he entices people “to want to take a photo with him,” but as soon as they approach, he flips up his costume head and starts yelling.

“Based on how dirty his costume was I knew it wasn’t going in the right direction,” she said. Sandler has not been charged with any crimes.

News of the Weird reported last August about a 3-1/2-foot-tall, 200-pound bronze statue of Dennis the Menace that had disappeared from a playground in Monterey, California.

On Feb. 8, Monterey County Sheriff Tina Nieto announced that Dennis had been found in Roberts Lake after authorities received an anonymous tip, the Associated Press reported.

They were sure it was the same statue because the thief had cut through one of Dennis’ feet to remove it, and the recovered statue’s foot is damaged. “Today is a happy day!” Nieto gushed.

It’s about time! Japanese garment company Takikou has developed a wearable bean bag, Oddity Central reported.

“This concept was born out of the idea of a cushion that would allow you to totally let go, anytime, anywhere,” said the company’s Shogo Takikawa.

“You can put this on and chill out in your living room or loads of other places.”

The bean bag is available in different sizes and colors, but it does weigh about 11 pounds (which might make you want to sit down more often). Prices range from \$60 to \$119.

Jose Luis Callisaya Diaz, who is serving a 15-year term in the maximum-security Chonchocoro prison facility in Bolivia, made a bold attempt at escape, Fox News reported.

Diaz, also known as El Arana (“the spider”), wrapped himself in a sheepskin, got past a wall and crawled through the countryside surrounding the prison in the middle of the night.

Juan Carlos Limpas said Diaz “took advantage of the inclement weather to try to escape through one of the walls of the external perimeter of the prison.”

He was apprehended after guards noticed he wasn’t in his cell and photographed on all fours in the grass.

A couple in Etobicoke, Toronto, left on an extended business trip in January 2022, CTV News reported.

When they returned home months later, they were stunned to realize that their house had been sold and the new owners had moved in.

Police said a man and woman impersonated the owners, hired a real estate agent and listed the property using fake identification. Police are still looking for the imposters.

Momo the lar gibbon, who lives at the Kujukushima Zoo and Botanical Garden Mori Kirara in Nagasaki Prefecture, Japan, delivered a baby in February 2021, which surprised zookeepers, since Momo lived in her own enclosure with no males.

She was very protective of the offspring, United Press International reported, so it wasn’t until two years later that handlers were able to collect DNA from the youngster to determine who the father was.

As it turned out, a 34-year-old agile gibbon, Itou, was the baby daddy. Zookeepers found that a partition between Momo’s exhibit and Itou’s off-display area had a perforated board with holes about 9mm in diameter, and they believe the two were able to mate through one of those holes.

The perforated board was replaced with a steel plate, but Momo and Itou will be introduced properly to each other so that they may live as a family.

The Wyandotte (Michigan) Police Department opened an investigation after an officer was suspected of stealing another officer’s lunch while he was out of the room.

The “Today” show reported that Officer Barwig was called away from the break room to assist in the jail; when he returned, K-9 Officer Ice was seen licking his chops, and Barwig’s sandwich was nowhere to be seen.

“Officer Ice has invoked his Fifth Amendment right to remain silent and quite frankly is not cooperating with the investigation,” the department posted on its Facebook page.

Later, dozens of attorneys offered to represent Ice in court, but the department decided not to pursue discipline or criminal charges.

Robert Powers, 37, managed to terrorize multiple citizens of Altoona, Pennsylvania, on Feb. 6, WTAJ-TV reported.

He allegedly broke into four different homes, telling one woman as he covered her mouth, “I’m Batman.”

At the next home, he choked a man, went through his pockets and held him hostage with a pocketknife.

Next, he turned the man’s gas stove on and forced him into his truck, heading across town at speeds of more than 100 mph before crashing into a Jeep.

Powers then kicked open the door of a nearby home and repeatedly asked, “Why’d you do this, mom?” as he walked through the residence.

Finally, at the last crime scene, police were able to subdue Powers, who admitted he may have ingested meth or bath salts.

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Three years later, 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time' hits the stage

Following a three-year delay, Axiom Repertory Theatre is scheduled to present *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, the critically acclaimed play by Simon Stephens based on the novel by Mark Haddon. It's scheduled to run March 10-25.

The play was one week away from opening in March 2020 when the pandemic shut down this and other entertainment throughout the area and the entire world.

"At the time, we all thought we were just shutting down temporarily for maybe a month or two while the pandemic was brought under control," said Lisa Collins, the director of the production, in a news release. "Little did we realize that it would be years before we would be able to re-stage this extraordinary play."

The story is told from the point of view of Christopher Boone, a teenage boy who wrote a book about his investigation of the murder of his neighbor's dog. Christopher happens to be on the autism spectrum, is very good at math and solving puzzles, but often finds people and places to be completely overwhelming and frightening.

"The play is very physical," Collins said. "There are 10 actors who are on the stage throughout the entire show, playing numerous roles and taking us on a journey that is fast and furious. With 58 scenes in the play, we go into the past, present and a little bit of the future as Christopher solves one mystery, only to discover a deeper and darker mystery



Gabe Newman, right, portrays Christopher, while Che Stedman portrays his father, Ed.

that hits even closer to home."

Of the 10 original cast members from the 2020 production, seven were able to return, including Gabe Newman who plays the role of Christopher.

"Portraying Christopher now compared to three years ago is really a whole new experience" Newman said. "Everybody has learned and grown so much both as individuals and actors within those three years, and we are all

able to bring this show to life in a way I never knew we could."

Tanya Stedman, returns in the role of Siobhan, Christopher's trusted teacher.

"In 2020, I spent a day in the classroom with a special needs teacher and knew that the most important part of what I needed to bring out in Siobhan is her innate understanding of how Christopher's mind works," Stedman said. "She never gets emotional with him like Judy and Ed do, even if it's a very happy emotion because he doesn't understand emotion and it doesn't take much of it to shut him down. Siobhan asks questions and makes comments that she knows will help Christopher figure things out for himself."

Che Stedman returns in the role of Ed, Christopher's father.

"The weight of responsibility that rests upon the shoulders of any parent is tremendous," he said. "Rearing a healthy, 'normal' child through adolescence tests the boundaries of patience, integrity, love and good intent. Now take away the ability to touch the child, remove the capability of emotional bonding, add a purely logical and brilliant intellect, remove all nuance, replace with pure fact, and you have the parental guidelines for Ed. Ask yourself if you could do better. Ask yourself if you could do it at all."

The other returning cast members are Amy Dunn, Sandy Terry, Jared

Newman and Bill Collins. New to the cast are veteran actors Sean Sampson and Pamela Carney, along with newcomer Lili Gregory.

"The three cast members who are missing from the original production - Caz Crozier, Kerry Greene and Shay Little - will still be represented in the show," Collins said. "There are several scenes where we have pre-recorded voices and we will be using the tracks that Caz made in 2020."

Collins notes that the efforts of the 2020 team were significant in the development of the 2023 production.

"Composer Morgan Fator was originally set to play a live soundtrack to the play at each performance," Collins said. "She has since moved on to become a successful film composer but left us with invaluable information that helped us to create pre-recorded music and sound tracks this time around thanks to the immense talent of musician/composer/sound designer Bill Ruess."

One of the most important collaborators, Collins said, is choreographer Roni Grandell.

"As one who has done choreography for over 30 musicals" Grandell said. "this 'Curious' show has given me a new and most rewarding challenge: using movement to portray the thoughts and emotions of our main character, Christopher, who is on the spectrum."

Additional collaborators for the 2023 production are lighting designer Daniel Hill, costume designer Tanya Stedman, script supervisor Lyn Regan, 2020 Assistant Director Richard Myers, artistic director Ken Hill and producer Nancy Hill.

Collins wants audience members to know that this play is about hope and possibilities.

"There are lots of fun and lovely moments in Curious Incident" Collins said. "Most good stories need to have highs and lows, happy and sad, comedy and tragedy. Each enhances the other and makes this a very satisfying night of theatre."

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time runs Thursdays through Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. with Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. Collins said the play does contain adult language.

Axiom Repertory Theatre is located at 2613 Bechelli Lane, Redding.

The box office and full-service Looking Glass Lounge both open an hour before every performance. Reserved seat tickets may also be ordered online at axreptheatre.com



Left to right, Bill Collins, Sandy Terry and Lili Gregory and lying down is Che Stedman in the Axiom Repertory Theatre production of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in Night-Time*. The play is scheduled to run from March 10-25.

PHOTOS/ Lisa Collins

How to protect seniors from scam calls

Dear Savvy Senior,
 What tools can you recommend to help protect trusting seniors from scam calls? My 74-year-old mother gets tons of unwanted telemarketing and robocalls on her cell and home phone and has been duped out of hundreds of dollars.

- Frustrated Daughter



By Jim Miller

If your mom owns a new Android phone, she can also block spam calls in the phone "Settings." Or, if she owns a Samsung Galaxy phone, she can use "Smart Call," which flags suspected spam calls and allows her to block and report them.

She can also block specific reoccurring spam call numbers on iPhones and Android manually.

Dear Frustrated,
 It's a great question. Scammers are always looking for new ways to dupe people out of money, and in the U.S., phone calls remain the primary way swindlers hook older victims.

The Federal Trade Commission recently found that 24 percent of adults over age 60 who reported losing money to a scam in 2021 said it started with a phone call – the largest percentage of any method, including email, text and mail.

To help protect your mom from the onslaught of robocall scams, telemarketing and spam calls, here are some tips and tools you can help her employ.

Register Her Numbers

If your mom hasn't already done so, a good first step in limiting at least some unwanted calls is to make sure her home and cell phone numbers are registered with the National Do Not Call Registry. While this won't

stop fraudulent scam calls, it will stop unwanted calls from legitimate businesses who are trying to sell her something. To sign up, call 888-382-1222 from the phone number you want to register, or you can do it online at DoNotCall.gov.

Cell Phone Protection

Most wireless providers today offer good tools for stopping scam calls and texts. For example, AT&T has the ActiveArmor Mobile Security app; Verizon provides the Call Filter app; and T-Mobile offers the Scam Shield app.

To activate these tools, download the spam-blocking app from your mom's carrier on her phone, which you can do at the Apple and Google App store. These apps are free to use, but most carriers will also offer upgraded services that you can get for a small monthly fee.

If, however, your mom uses a regional or small wireless carrier that

doesn't offer scam/robocall protection you can use a free third-party app. Truecaller (Truecaller.com), Call Control (CallControl.com), Hiya (Hiya.com) and YouMail (YouMail.com) are all good options to consider.

Built-In Call Blockers

Many smartphones today also offer built-in tools that can block spam calls. If your mom uses a newer iPhone (iOS 13 or later), she can completely silence all unknown callers who aren't in her contacts list in the phone "Settings."

Silencing all unknown callers is an extreme solution that will definitely stop all unwanted calls, but your mom will also miss some legitimate calls too. However, unknown callers do have the option to leave a voice message and their calls will appear in her recent calls list. And she can add any number to her contact list to let them through in the future.

Home Landline Protection

To stop scam calls on your mom's home phone set up the "anonymous call rejection" option. This is a free feature available from most telephone companies, however some may charge a fee. It lets you screen out calls from callers who have blocked their caller ID information – a favorite tactic of telemarketers. To set it up, you usually have to dial *77 from your landline, though different phone services may have different procedures.

Call your mom's telephone service provider to find out if they offer this tool, and if so, what you need to do to enable it. And if they don't offer it, find out what other call blocking options they offer.

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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