

**GHOST OF MARK TWAIN IN RED BLUFF APRIL 1 – NO FOOLIN’**

# AFTER FIVE

THE NORTH STATE MAGAZINE

MARCH 2022 / 35th Year / No. 5

THE NEWS, ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT MONTHLY

## ON THE COVER

### JUDEE SILL

*An early 1970s singer-songwriter who had the backing of a major label and stars of the era, including Graham Nash, JD Souther, Cass Elliott, Linda Rondstadt and others remains 50 years later one of the greatest artists of the era that many have never heard of. Filmmakers Brian Lindstrom and Andy Brown are attempting to shed light on one of rock 'n roll's greatest stories in *Judee Sill: Soldier of the Heart*, a documentary over eight years in the making. See page 9*

### DIRECTORS REUNITE

*Actors rehearse for the upcoming performances of *Steel Magnolias*, scheduled to run March 11-26*



*at Riverfront Playhouse in Redding. Two early members of the Playhouse are teaming up to co-direct the Robert Harling play. Marla Frost O'Brien,*

*who was in Riverfront's very first show in 1981 and Erin Haney Stuart, who worked as a director, actor, technician and producer from 1982 to 1990, agreed to collaborate again. See page 2*

### SECRET GARDEN

*A story that began as a novel in 1911 by Frances Hodgson Burnett, and which has seen various theatre, musical, television and film adaptations over the years, comes to Redding's Axiom Repertory Theatre March 11-19 as the local theatre company presents *The Secret Garden*. See page 14*



# Two early members of Riverfront Playhouse team up again to co-direct *Steel Magnolias*

Two early members of Riverfront Playhouse are teaming up again to present this month's production.

Marla Frost O'Brien, who was in Riverfront's very first show in 1981, a musical called *Seesaw*, and Erin Haney Stuart, who worked at Riverfront Playhouse as a director, actor, technician and producer from 1982 to 1990, decided to co-direct Robert Harling's *Steel Magnolias*. The play is scheduled to run March 11-26.

*Steel Magnolias* was originally part of Riverfront's 2020 season – the third time it would be performed by the community theatre group in its 41-year history – but was postponed due to the pandemic. A 2022 date was then chosen, but a director had not been decided upon.

"One day I was sitting in a coffee shop working on some of my volunteer coordinator duties for the theatre, and I had an exciting idea: I wondered if my friend Erin from the good old days at Riverfront would be interested in co-directing the play with me," Frost O'Brien said in an email. "We had such great times working on shows together throughout the '80s, either as actors or as co-directors or working as an actor in a show the other was directing. We were even roommates for a while. But we hadn't done anything together since the '80s, so her availability was a long shot on my part. I was very happy when a week and a few texts later she agreed to the collaboration."

"Oddly I was supposed to direct *Steel Magnolias* for Shasta College in 1989," Haney Stuart said in an email. "But the movie premiered that year and the rights to perform the play were pulled back by Dramatists Play Service who owned the copyright. So, 33 years later I had a second chance when Marla contacted me about co-directing. Marla and I have history as co-directors."

Frost O'Brien started out as an actor – and still did a handful of roles during her time at Riverfront (1981-1988) – but discovered that she loved directing more.

"The theatre's board of directors didn't have a play or director planned for the second production (in 1981), so they asked me if I'd like to direct something," she said. "We ended up doing one of my all-time favorite plays, *The Rainmaker*. Directing that show was the beginning of my community theatre directing passion."

During the seven years she was involved at Riverfront, Frost O'Brien directed or co-directed 11 plays.

"(Directing) involves creating the overall vision for a production in order to bring a play's story to life, and I also learned that I had a knack for coaching actors," she said.

During that 1981-1988 time period, Frost O'Brien was also a board member, held theatre and acting workshops, and for a couple of years was Riverfront's artistic director.

She initially moved to Chico in 1988 to attend CSU, Chico, but that wouldn't happen for another several years (she



PHOTOS AND COVER PHOTO / Michael Burke

**Above, the cast of *Steel Magnolias*: Left to right, back row: Rheegan King (Annelle) Cindy Robertson (Clairee) Hollys Hanson (Ouiser). Middle row: Kathryn Kirk (M'Lynn) Emory Colvin Hornaday (Shelby). Front row: Malorie Glavan (Truvy). Right, co-directors and longtime friends Marla Frost O'Brien and Erin Haney Stuart.**



finally graduated in 1999 with a BS degree in health administration).

Over a period of 32 years in the Chico and Paradise area, she directed around 20 shows in four different community theatres: the Blue Room Theatre, Chico Cabaret, Chico Theater Company and Theatre on the Ridge in Paradise.

"I've been back in Redding since December 2020, and it feels great to have reconnected with my Riverfront family from back in the day, as well as making many new theatre friends."

During Haney Stuart's time with Riverfront in the 1980s, she also directed plays, musicals, and children's and reader's theater for Enterprise High School, where she taught English and drama. She also occasionally taught drama and speech classes for Shasta College.

After 17 years at Enterprise, she worked at College Connection for 10 years. Then in 2004 she and a team of educators started University Preparatory School (U-Prep) where she was the principal and then superintendent/principal until 2012 when she retired.

"I never intended to step away from local theater for so long but life had other plans for me," she said. "I had a baby,

became a widow, remarried, started a school..."

Frost O'Brien and Haney Stuart first met when they were actors in *Uncommon Women and Others*, which was performed in people's homes.

"The plays were performed in homes, bars and other non-theater venues," Haney Stuart said. "Then in 1982 I directed my first play for Riverfront, *The Philadelphia Story*, and I cast Marla in the role of Liz Imbrie. "In 1984 Marla and I decided to reprise *Uncommon Women* and we also took the same roles we had played in the previous production. We directed each other and directed together."

*Steel Magnolias* is the third time they've directed together, although they worked together frequently throughout the 1980s.

"At that time everyone who was involved with Riverfront did everything," Haney Stuart said. "Painted sets, found costumes and props, applied makeup, worked the bar, and helped with sound and lights in the booth. We did everything and it was so much fun."

Haney Stuart said she's enjoyed seeing how Riverfront has evolved into a more professional organization, including their new theatre.

"The facility is huge and that means no one is out in the parking lot building a set like before," she said. "Also, there's a legitimate green room, where actors can apply makeup and wait to go onstage."

## ***Steel Magnolias*:**

### **The play versus the movie**

According to the Wikipedia entry for *Steel Magnolias*, the original play by Robert Harling dramatized experiences of his family and friends following the 1985 death of his sister from diabetic complications following the birth of his namesake nephew and the failure of a family member's donated kidney. A writer friend continuously encouraged him to write it down in order to come to terms with the experience. He did, but originally as a short story for his nephew and then later to get an understanding of the deceased mother. In 10 days it evolved into the play.

"The movie had this amazing cast – Dolly Parton, Sally Field, Julia Roberts, Darryl Hannah, Shirley McClain, and Olympia Dukakis. It was a guaranteed hit and, unlike the play, it brought in other settings and the male characters (who are just talked about in the play)," Haney Stuart said.

Harling also wrote the movie's screenplay and much of the dialogue is identical to that in his play.

"Our audiences will hear all of the great quotable lines we still remember and love after all these years," Haney Stuart said. "For example, Ouiser's line, 'I'm not crazy. I've just been in a very bad mood for 40 years!'"

Haney Stuart said she prefers the play because of the intensity.

"The movie, while wonderful, dilutes some of the intensity by opening the lens and showing us the other characters and places," she said. "The play is set in one location – Truvy's salon – and the focus is solely on the women."

Haney Stuart said a huge challenge in this production has been absent cast members due to Covid. It wasn't until Feb. 7 that they had the whole cast at rehearsal.

"And we're praying that cast, crew and audience are healthy through March," she said.

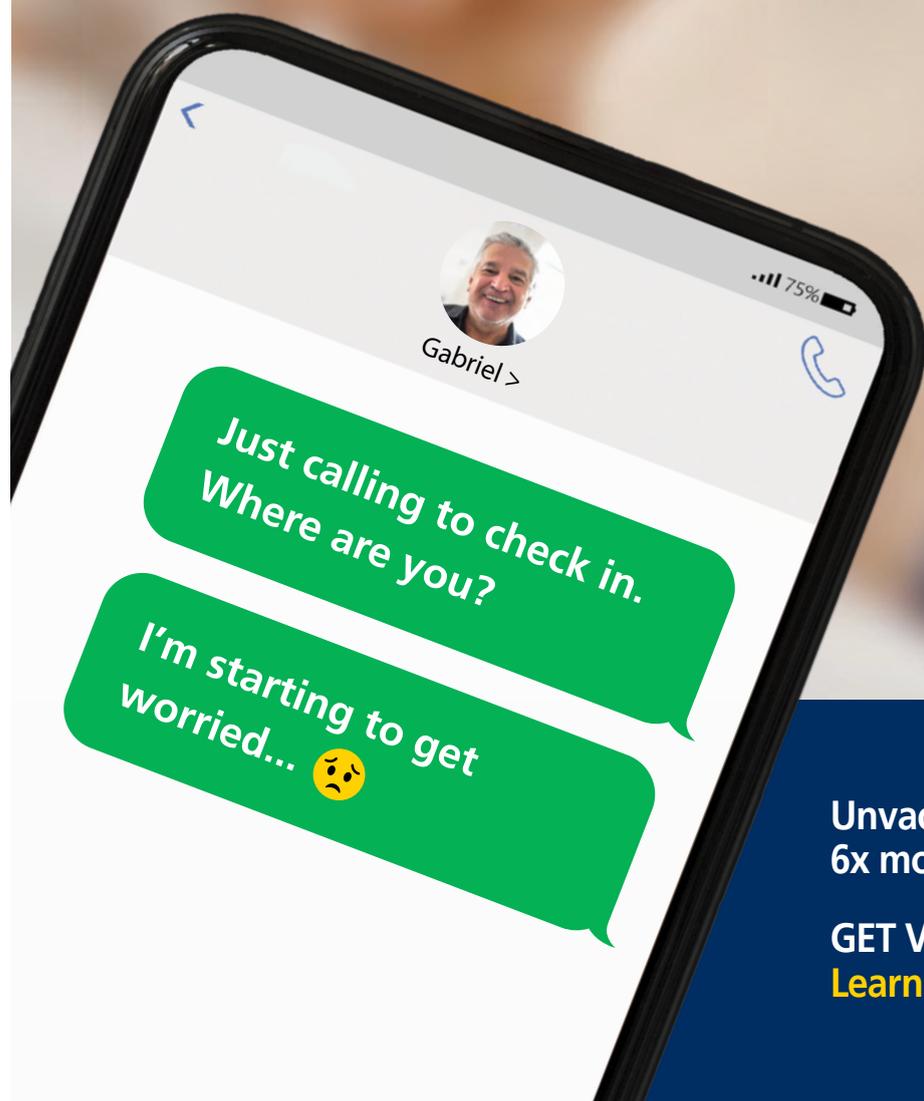
The six-member cast of Riverfront's production are: Malorie Glavan as Truvy Jones (Glavan is also Riverfront's theatre manager); Rheegan King as Annelle Dupuy DeSoto; Cindy Robertson as Clairee Belcher; Emory Colvin Hornaday as Shelby Eatenton Lacherie; Kathryn Kirk as M'Lynn Eatenton; and Hollys Hanson as Ouiser Boudreaux.

Performances are scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays March 11-12, 18-19 and 25-26; Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. on March 13 and 20; and a preview night at 7:30 p.m. on March 10.

For tickets go to riverfrontplayhouse.net or call 530-221-1028. You can also purchase tickets at Enjoy The Store, 1261 Market St, Redding, and, if available, at the door.

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"Tears," an abstract oil painting by Anne Leveque.

## Work of abstract artist on display in Weaverville

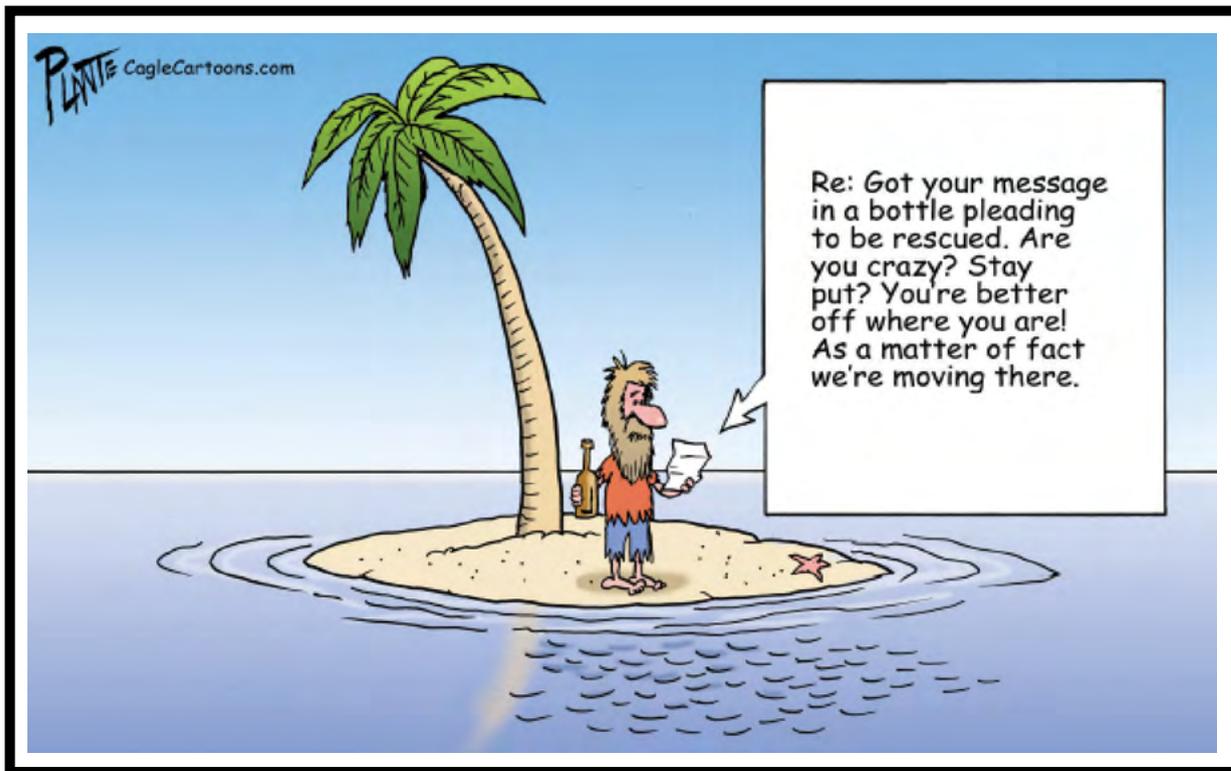
"Though everyone finds their own story within each piece, I love seeing their interpretation as we gaze upon the work". – Anne Leveque

The Highland Art Center presents PASSAGES, the opening of a solo exhibit by abstract artist Anne Leveque. This collection debuts on Saturday, March 5, during the First Saturday Art Walk, where abstract art and music will be Weaverville's main event.

To expand awareness and appreciation of abstract art in the community, Highland Art Center is installing selections in four additional venues uptown.

Experience Leveque's unique expression in bold color, texture and dynamic energy. The exhibit runs through March 26.

The Highland art Center is located at 691 Main Street, Weaverville. For information, email them at [info@highlandartcenter.org](mailto:info@highlandartcenter.org) or online at [highlandartcenter.org](http://highlandartcenter.org).



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# Social insecurity

By Tom Purcell



A quarter of a million dollars. That's the amount that I've paid in FICA payroll taxes during my working career, according to my recent Social Security statement.

FICA, which stands for "Federal Insurance Contributions Act," "is a payroll tax that helps fund both Social Security and Medicare programs, which provide benefits for retirees, the disabled and children," says the Social Security Administration (SSA).

The FICA tax also will partially fund — at least I hope it will — my retirement years.

My statement says I am eligible to begin receiving Social Security payments of \$1,851 a month when I hit age 62. If I wait until I am 70, I'll receive \$3,370 a month — which is a nice little chunk of dough.

However, if I had invested the \$250,000 FICA deducted from my earnings on my own, I'd have, according to my money manager, more than \$1.5 million socked away.

If I drew a conservative 4 percent of that \$1.5 million every year, I'd be collecting a \$5,000 retirement check every month right away.

Of course, that is assuming I would have saved and invested all the money that FICA took from my weekly paychecks. More likely, me knowing me, I would have blown most of it on nicer cars and more vacations.

Saving money for your future is hard, even for more-disciplined people.

My parents raised six kids on one income and had a lot of big bills along the way, so saving money for the future was not always possible. They now rely on the Social Security payments they receive every month to help them cover their basic expenses.

Millions of elderly Americans are in the same precarious financial boat.

The Social Security Administration reports that about 40 percent of Americans 65 and older receive half of their retirement income from Social Security — and about 13 percent rely on it for 90 percent or more of their income.

It takes some of the sting out of the 15.3 percent FICA tax that is imposed on my self-employed earnings to know that my contributions are helping others get by in their old age.

But will Social Security be around to help me in my old age?

Social Security is now paying out more than it is taking in and the funds working taxpayers contribute now go directly to Social Security recipients.

But what about the Social Security "trust fund," which saved trillions of the surplus tax contributions that had rolled in for years?

The partially good news is that it will not run out of money until 2034 — at which time Social Security payments will have to be reduced, taxes will have to be raised or more money will have to be borrowed.

The bad news is that its funds were "invested" in government bonds, which the federal government happily spent on day-to-day budget expenses, such as foreign wars, food stamps and the national debt.

As the great columnist Charles Krauthammer explained in 2011, the Social Security trust fund is filled not with money but with special-issue government IOUs that can only be repaid by raising taxes or borrowing even more money.

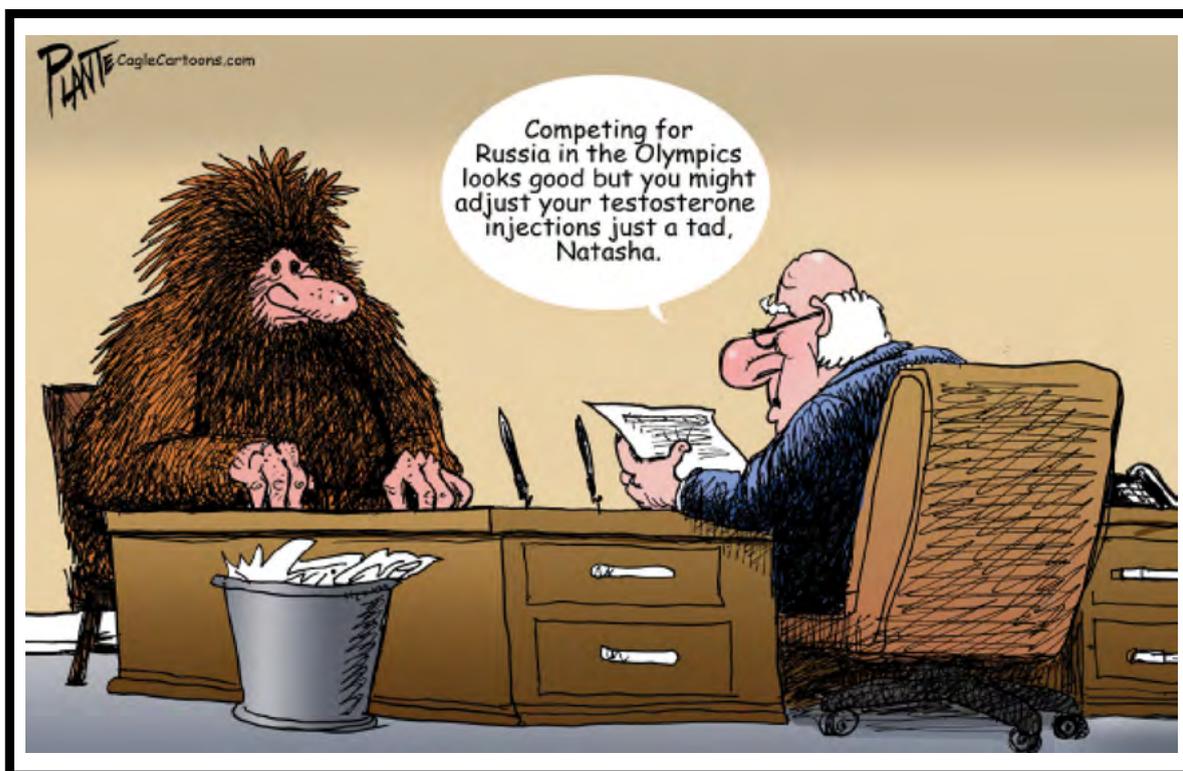
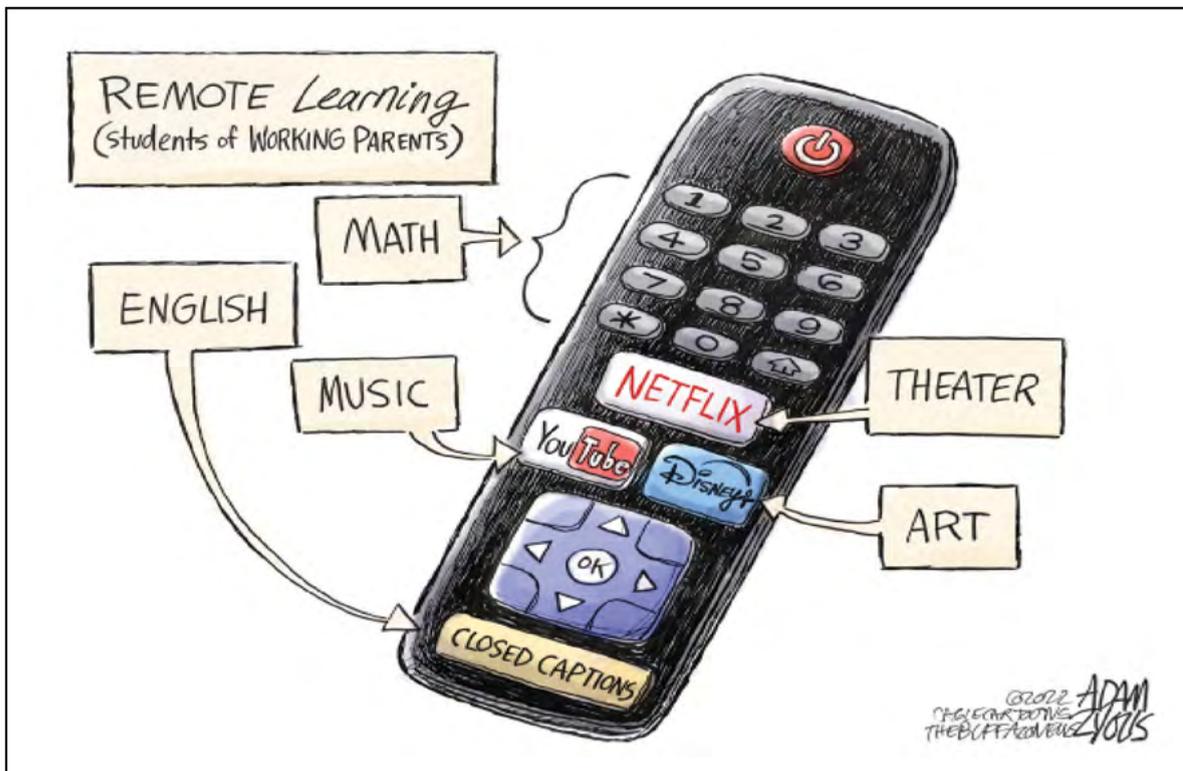
In any event, it's anybody's guess how much my monthly Social Security checks will be, so let me make the guys at the Social Security Administration an offer.

How about you give me back my 250 large in return for removing me from your rolls?

What do you say, SSA?

Hello?

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# NEWS of the WEIRD

An unnamed man in Jacksonville, Illinois, went to the hospital with a gunshot wound, the Journal Courier reported.

The victim told Cass County Sheriff Devron Ohrn that he and family members had been testing bulletproof vests, and he allowed another person to shoot him as he wore one.

"Something like this is definitely not a good idea," Ohrn said.

"A bulletproof vest is not a catchall. Also, it is still a crime to shoot another person, even if they tell you to."

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■  
Claire Vickers, 46, and Barry Douglas, 44, were enjoying a drunken night out when, at 2 a.m., they decided to head over to the Aldershot Lido in Hampshire, England, slip under a fence and speed down a waterslide in the closed park.

Unfortunately, a barrier blocks the exit from the slide after hours, and Vickers and Douglas both slammed into it, the Sun reported.

Vickers' shin snapped and broke her skin, and every bone in her left foot was broken.

Douglas broke his left leg and both ankles.

"I looked over at Barry. He was in the fetal position and silent," Vickers said. "That's when I thought we were both going to die."

After two hours of screaming and banging on the slide, Vickers and Douglas were rescued.

"We're idiots – let that be a lesson," she said. "I'm still having nightmares one month on. The pain was unbearable." No charges were filed.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■  
Laura Oglesby, 48, pleaded guilty to one count of intentionally providing false information to the Social Security Administration, The New York Times reported.

Her story is much more complicated than that one charge.

In 2016, Oglesby used her estranged daughter's identity to create another life for herself as Lauren Hays, a 22-year-old college student in Mountain View, Missouri.

She obtained a Social Security card and driver's license, then racked up more than \$25,000 in debt with student loans and other expenses.

She also worked at Southwest Baptist University and rented a room from Wendy and Avery Parker.

"Everybody believed it," said Mountain View Police Chief Jamie Perkins. "She even had



Veteran surfer Ingrid Seiple was catching a wave off Oahu, Hawaii, when she saw something floating like a log in the water, KITV reported. She at first thought it was a Hawaiian monk seal, but, she said, "That's when I realized it was a pig, and it saw me. It started swimming toward me as fast as it could! It was very close and getting closer. I pushed the board between the pig and I and it bit my board." Seiple thinks the wild boar was chased into the ocean by hunting dogs. "It looked like it had an injury on its face," she said. Seiple escaped the boar without harm, but no word on the pig's condition.

boyfriends that believed that she was that age: 22 years old."

Oglesby may face up to five years in prison and will have to pay restitution to her daughter and SBU.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■  
Thankfully, a sign on Interstate 95 in Delaware directing drivers to a Wilmington exit was only temporary, but that didn't stop commuters from noticing it.

The Associated Press reported that the sign was missing an "A" in the avenue's name ("Delware"); transportation officials said it was made in a hurry in case the permanent sign didn't arrive in time for the opening of the

exit, which had been under construction. There's always time for correct spelling, kids.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■  
Lauras Matusovas, 30, was suddenly (and mistakenly) released from the Pentonville Prison in North London after serving only 48 hours of a four-year sentence.

After he called the probation officer, who told him that everything was in order, Matusovas did what any grateful con would do: He embarked on a 10-day boozing binge with his friends.

"It's mad," one buddy said, according to the Daily Star. "He could have jumped on a flight and left the U.K. Instead,

he chilled with us and had a great time."

But it all came to an end when he was hauled back to his cell. The Ministry of Justice commented: "Releases in error are incredibly rare, but we take them extremely seriously."

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■  
Sure, the Greatest Generation may be coasting down the road at 32 mph in their Le Sabres, much to other drivers' frustration, but Buicks weren't always old-man cars.

In fact, car collector Anthony Saia sold a 1987 Buick GNX on eBay for \$249,999, Fox News reported.

The GNX, part of a limited edition of 547 built for only one

year, was produced by Buick along with McLaren Engines and ASC Inc.

It was the second-fastest 0-to-60 mph car of its day (behind the Porsche 911 Turbo), and others have sold for similar amounts. Saia's car had 426 miles on it.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■  
Working at home? Stubbed your toe while making the commute from the bedroom to your desk?

In Germany, you can now sue for worker's comp insurance for injuries suffered while working at home.

Germany's Federal Social Court ruled that an unnamed man who slipped on a spiral staircase and broke his back was entitled to coverage, saying it viewed the "first morning journey from bed to the home office as an insured work route," NBC Washington reported.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■  
Hasan Riza Gunay, known as Turkey's one and only stress coach, has a unique method for easing his clients' angst: He lets them hit him (and doesn't hit back), Oddity Central reported.

After a decade in the business, though, Gunay is ready to train someone to take his place.

"Most of my clients suffer from depression or panic attacks," he said. "I would like to train other potentially interested people ... and hand over my gloves to the new generation."

Gunay said around 70% of his clients are women whose strength is equivalent to that of boys 12 to 14 years old, so he doesn't worry about getting hurt.

And he wears protective gear, sometimes accompanied by a photo of the person the client is unhappy with.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■  
Mark Rogers, 38, Joseph Way, 36, and Tashara Levans, 37, each pleaded guilty to one count of kidnapping a federal employee, which could get them nine years to life in federal prison, The Washington Post reported.

It all started on Nov. 16, 2019, in Rochester, New York, when the three were anxiously awaiting a postal delivery of \$70,000 worth of cocaine.

The mail carrier delivered several other packages to the home that day, but as she stepped off the porch, the trio accused her of stealing the drug package. They ransacked her mail truck, "then told her she was coming with them," prosecutor Robert Marangola

—Please See Page 12

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# Rediscovering Judee Sill

Every few years, the early 1970s singer-songwriter is discovered anew. Stories have been written. The 'Church of Judee Sill' fans continues to grow. But a new documentary, expected to be released this year, may finally bring her remarkable story to a much larger audience. The filmmakers talk about Sill and their eight year journey to make *Judee Sill: Soldier of the Heart*



PHOTO AND COVER PHOTO / © Henry Diltz

Renowned rock and roll and Woodstock official photographer Henry Diltz took this photo, which would be a variation of the photo that

was used for Judee Sill's first album cover. Diltz also took the photo of Sill that is on the front cover of *After Five* and another on page 11.

By Aaron Williams

Judee Sill had the voice of an angel.

The early 1970s singer-songwriter wrote amazing ballads, turning a turbulent childhood and painful upbringing into songs that moved people to tears. She had the backing of a major label and stars of the era, including Graham Nash, JD Souther, Cass Elliott, Linda Rondstadt, and more were drawn to her music.

Yet, for some reason - whether self-sabotage, cosmic indifference or dumb luck - Sill remains 50 years later one of the greatest artists of the era that many have never heard of.

Judee Sill was 35 years old when a 1979 drug overdose killed the singer-songwriter in relative obscurity.

She had released two major label albums - an eponymous record in 1971 and *Heart Food* 18 months later - but failed to achieve the lofty heights of stardom like many of her contemporaries. Yet, Sill's songs, (including debate among some whether her songs were overtly religious or not), and story (including being openly bisexual at a time when that was not common), continue to intrigue to this day.

It's an amazing story that many people ask: "How has this not been made into a major motion picture?"

Filmmakers Brian Lindstrom and Andy Brown are attempting to shed light

on one of rock 'n roll's greatest stories in *Judee Sill: Soldier of the Heart*, a documentary over eight years in the making about Sill's life, death and career that is expected to be released this year.

"When you look at the power and beauty of her music and then her personal life, it's incongruous," said Lindstrom. "We wanted to know 'Who is this woman and how can we know more about her?'"

Judee Sill's niece, Donna Disparti, is thrilled *Soldier of the Heart* is being made.

"I remember being at her memorial service and a man, a friend of hers, came up to me and said 'Please don't ever let her music die.' I know if anyone ever listened to 'The Kiss' they would fall in love with her."

Born in 1944 to Milford and Oneta Sill in Southern California, Judee Sill spent some of her early childhood years in Oakland, where her father owned a bar and where she learned to play piano and sing.

Judee, her brother Dennis and Oneta relocated to Los Angeles after Milford died in 1952 and her mother remarried Kenneth Muse, an animator on the cartoon "Tom and Jerry."

It was then and there that Judee Sill's life began to unravel. According to a 1972 Rolling Stone interview with Sill, she said it was unpleasant with frequent

**"I remember being at her memorial service and a man, a friend of hers, came up to me and said 'Please don't ever let her music die.' I know if anyone ever listened to 'The Kiss' they would fall in love with her."**

**- Donna Disparti  
Judee Sill's niece**

fight with her mother and step-father. There were also accusations of physical violence and possibly more by her step-father.

"My stepfather was dumb and cruel, and my mother began to get more unreasonable herself," she said in the article. "We had such violent fights at our house that the police and newspapermen would come."

In the same article, Sill described herself as always balancing herself between beatniks and outcasts.

"I always found myself being the opposite of what every situation called for," she was quoted in the magazine. "If I was around lowriders, I'd come on intellectual. If I was around intellectuals, I'd be a lowrider."

While hanging out with other

rebellious students, Sill met a man with whom she committed a series of armed robberies.

"From armed robber to transcendent musician, Judee was all of that," said Lindstrom, with Brown adding: "There's empathy toward her. What is it that made her, what caused her to write these songs?"

Following her 1963 arrest - a Los Angeles Times article about her ran with the headline "Young Housewife Faces Robbery, Dope Charges" - Sill spent nearly a year in a Ventura reform school where she was the church organist. She also studied music, including gospel, that later permeated her lyrics and songs.

A 1966 marriage to Bob Harris took Sill even farther down a criminal path as the couple developed a heroin addiction where Sill took to sex work, scams and check forgery to support her habit.

Her brother Dennis, Donna Disparti's father, died while Judee was in jail sending her spiraling even farther down as she had now lost her father, mother and only sibling.

But upon her release, she began to reform her life and begin her music career.

"Her story is compelling because of her life and then her music is so singular," Lindstrom said. "J.D. Souther says that people who like Judee Sill's music *really* like Judee Sill's music.

"We know a lot of people who've not



**Judee as a child at the piano.**

PHOTO / Provided by Donna Dispartti

only been moved by her music, but by who she was. Here's this woman with a reservoir of deep, beautiful music and who also seems to be struggling with basic human challenges."

Sill began writing music while playing clubs around Los Angeles. Among the songs was "Lady-O" - rumored to be about Oneta - that was covered by the Turtles and peaked at No. 78 for the group in December 1969 on Billboard's Hot 100.

"She got into that fast lane and hit the streets to become a famous singer-songwriter," Dispartti said. "I didn't see her much after that."

Around the same time, David Geffen offered Sill a contract on his new label Asylum, which he co-founded with Elliot Roberts. In fact, Sill was one of the first artists he signed to Asylum that would also include such artists as the Eagles, Joni Mitchell, Bob Dylan, Tom Waits, Linda Ronstadt, Warren Zevon and Souther.

At the urging of Geffen, Souther, whose biggest hit would come in 1979 with the song "You're Only Lonely" and who would go on to co-write the Eagles' song "Heartache Tonight," and Don Henley's "The Heart of the Matter," went to see Sill perform early in her career. The pair met and immediately hit it off and had what was described as a "fleeting" love affair before he returned to a relationship with Ronstadt who he had been seeing before his brief affair with Sill. Got that? Well, it was the '70s.

The album *Judee Sill* was released

Sept. 15 1971, with the Graham Nash-produced "Jesus Was a Cross Maker" as its first single, a song about her break-up with Souther.

Lyrics were drawn partly from the book, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, which she and Souther had read. She used the title and juxtaposed it with the reference that he (Souther) "is a bandit and a heartbreaker."

"She came over to my house about seven or eight in the morning and woke me up, pounding on the door," Souther told the BBC in a 2014 radio documentary about the first time he heard the song.

"It was a little numbing. She came in and sat on my bed and said 'This is for you,' very sourly. In fact, I think she called me something afterward. It was kind of half good-natured," Souther said. "And then she played it for me. It was obviously kind of a stunning thing to be face to face with."

A handful of articles telling Sill's story exist, along with the BBC broadcast, but much of her story for the documentary is being told from 50-year-old memories.

"One challenge we've had in making the documentary is dealing with a lack of archival material and just how to use Judee," Brown said. "Not only was she an amazing musician, but a talented (visual) artist. One of the challenges is how to tell a compelling story with minimal footage, but I think we figured out how to do it pretty well. The storytelling is going to make it because she's got a great story."

The pair weave Sill's own words (including from her journal) along with her

**"We've met her circle of friends and the family...and they all say the same thing. She wasn't this doomed artist. She was loving and great to be around and they show her as a full person. She's not just what gets written in the headlines. The archival material reveals she never gave up on her muse, she never stopped writing music."**

**- Brian Lindstrom  
co-director of  
*Judee Sill: Soldier of the Heart***

animations as well as a voice-over actor who the pair said "sounds just like her."

"We really wanted Judee telling her own story," Brown said.

Part of that story was Sill's own petulance over being an opening act.

"Whispering Bob" Harris, the host of the BBC2 music program *The Old Grey Whistle Test* from 1972 to 1979, recalled Sill's appearances on the show. In a YouTube video looking back at Sill's performance of "The Kiss" from her second album, he noted she had previously been on the program following the release of her debut album.

"It's funny, actually, how some performances really stand out in the memory and one of the people I vividly remember meeting for the first time... was Judee Sill," Harris said. "She seemed so unlikely to me when she first came into the studio. She looked every bit the librarian. She had horn-rimmed glasses on and she was pretty severe... she was saying into camera just as she was performing the song, 'Please buy my record so I don't have to open up for these snotty rock stars anymore.'"

Another part of her story includes an alleged falling out with Geffen. The same man who trumpeted her career at the beginning was reportedly the target of her wrath as her career started to wane following her second album.

Sill supposedly slammed Geffen at a concert during her second tour in the UK. She had gone from saying she loved David Geffen in the liner notes on her first album, to allegedly uttering a gay slur about him nearly 20 years before Geffen chose to come out as gay.

Jackson Browne, for one, doubts it even happened. In a 2021 *Rolling Stone* article on Sill, he said "There were always people saying shit about Geffen that was either hearsay or got really amplified or changed around."

But Souther said if she did do what is alleged, Geffen had every right to be angry.

"He'd already put a lot of money into her career and nothing was coming back," he said in the article. Ronstadt added she thought Sill had overreacted.

"David was trying to help her, and I think she'd been treated so badly in her past that she couldn't accept that people weren't mistreating her," she told *Rolling Stone*.

Material for her third album went unfinished as she and friends claimed Geffen failed to support the project - with some claiming he dropped her entirely from the label.

"We did interview David Geffen and he was very concerned that we 'get it right' about their relationship," Lindstrom said, adding the 78-year-old said the timeline supports that he didn't drop her, but it was done after he'd left Asylum.

"He said he felt strongly about Judee and that he did everything he could for her," Lindstrom said.

Adds Brown: "We don't really take sides and (we) let him have his say. It's easy to reduce him to the bad guy, I guess. But I will say there's not one



PHOTO / Provided by Donna Dispartti

**Judee Sill performing a song she wrote for her niece's wedding march during Donna Dispartti's June 1977 wedding.**

thing in any journal entry from 1973 until the end of her life that's negative about David Geffen."

Disparti, though just 13 years younger than Sill, said she was unaware of all the politics and underpinnings of her aunt's inability to reach stardom.

"I think about it all the time," she said. "Yes, I've heard the rumors that went around, that Geffen denies, that she'd pissed him off and he stopped trying to promote her."

What has been written about Sill points to the fact that while her music moved people and was critically praised, it was commercially unsuccessful - a fact she had a hard time dealing with, along with being an opening act.

"We let the audience decide for themselves," Lindstrom said about assigning blame, if any, in Sill's downfall.

Disparti thinks several factors played into her aunt's inability to cash in like Joni Mitchell, Judy Collins, Carole King, Carly Simon, Linda Rondstadt and other female stars of the early to mid-1970s.

"Someone once told me Judee didn't 'make it' because her music was out there and she didn't have the look," she said, referring to the coquettish beauty of many of the singers like Rondstadt and Simon. "She had a voice that will never be here again. And she had a personality to go along with her talent."

"She was in with all those people and who knows what could've happened had she not passed away."

And as work on an unfinished third album sat, Sill's personal life began to unravel and spiral down again. A series of car accidents and a failed surgery for a back injury led to a lot of pain, her friends and family say, and Sill once again struggled with drug addiction.

She died of an overdose on Nov. 23, 1979 in Los Angeles, the day after Thanksgiving. The coroner listed it as suicide, succumbing to "acute cocaine and codeine intoxication." But most who knew her think it was an accidental overdose.

"We've met her circle of friends and the family...and they all say the same thing. She wasn't this doomed artist," Lindstrom said. "She was loving and great to be around and they show her as a full person. She's not just what gets written in the headlines. The archival material reveals she never gave up on her muse, she never stopped writing music."

And while archival material was sometimes scarce, the eight-year project received a boost from Disparti, including a photo of Sill at her 18-year-old niece's June 1977 wedding. Disparti said her aunt had written a special song without lyrics and played it for her wedding march.

"(Donna) shared such wonderful photos and insights," Brown said. "Through her, you feel a kinship to the people in the 'Church of Judee Sill.'"

Sill's third uncompleted album, *Dreams Come True*, was rediscovered, worked on and finally released in 2005. The two-disc CD was produced by Bill Plummer and track engineered by Emmitt Rhodes, with the finished mix done by Jim O'Rourke. It included a second disc of many rarities and home demos by Sill. That was followed by reissues of



PHOTO / © Henry Diltz

Diltz took this photo of Sill at art director Gary Burden's home in Topanga Canyon on Feb. 5, 1971. The beagle fan or "groupie" of Sill's music was Burden's dog. Burden, like Diltz, was the creator of many classic rock album covers.

**"One of the challenges is how to tell a compelling story with minimal footage, but I think we figured out how to do it pretty well. The storytelling is going to make it because she's got a great story."**

**- Andy Brown  
co-director of  
*Judee Sill: Soldier of the Heart***

her first two albums and a compilation of recordings *Live in London: The BBC Recordings 1972-73*, released in 2007.

Sill has attracted a legion of fans, including Andy Partridge of XTC, Liz Phair and Shawn Colvin. New artists continue to cover her songs. "Lopin' Along Through the Cosmos" has recently found new life after Paramore singer Hayley Williams covered it on YouTube during the pandemic.

Brown and Lindstrom, who met while film students at Columbia University, said they're hoping to get *Judee Sill: Soldier of the Heart* released at Tribeca or another film festival this year and eventually have it go on to a streaming service.

"We're pretty confident we can sell it," Brown said, adding he and Lindstrom think it would also make a powerful motion picture. "Music documentaries are very popular right now and we have a very good film and people who love her will love it and maybe it will introduce her music to more people."

Brown and Lindstrom said they're thankful for beginning the project so long ago as a handful of those they interviewed have passed in the eight years since its inception.

And while the pair were in Portland

recently working on the sound mixing, they say the pandemic has definitely made finishing the project challenging.

"We've actually done editing in person and on Zoom," Brown said. "We started editing as Covid hit and it made it a lot more challenging, but it can be done. Part of why it's taken so long is getting the resources together and then lining up people to shoot. That would ultimately lead to the discovery of more people to interview. You'd find more people and then it takes time to work with them and develop trust."

"But we're rapidly approaching the finish line."

For Brown, he said his introduction to Sill was the song that many declare is her masterpiece: "The Kiss."

"The Kiss' was my gateway into

Judee and when I heard it my jaw was on the floor," he said. "I wanted to know more and we've certainly gone down the rabbit hole."

In the 2014 BBC radio documentary on Sill, "The Lost Genius of Judee Sill," Andy Partridge of XTC said Sill's songs were, to him, like little tiny symphonies with beautiful chord changes.

"(And) I would have to say, 'The Kiss' is perhaps the most beautiful song ever written," Partridge said.

So much so that he said it's impossible for him to listen to it all the way through, he's so overcome by the emotional pull of the song.

"It's just too beautiful," he said.

*Ron Harrington contributed to this article.*



PHOTO / Provided by Andy Brown and Brian Lindstrom

*Judee Sill: Soldier of the Heart* directors Brian Lindstrom, left, and Andy Brown stand behind sound mixer, Wayne Woods, in Portland during their final day of sound mixing for the documentary.

# NEWS of the WEIRD

-From Page 7

said during a hearing. In Levans' SUV, they told the postal employee that they were going to kill her, her children and her mother.

They searched her personal vehicle, then continued driving her around while threatening her.

But eventually they stopped and got out to talk. That's when the mail carrier used her smartwatch to text her supervisor and the Rochester Police Department.

As the suspects finally dropped her off at her car, police swarmed the SUV and arrested them. Sentencing is scheduled for April.

Rob and Marcela Wild of Robertson, South Africa, figured there might be a mouse in their newly decorated Christmas tree when their cats started watching it intently on Dec. 10.

Instead, they found one of the most venomous snakes in Africa, a boomslang, CNN reported.

The Wilds called on snake catcher Gerrie Heyns, who used "snake tongs" to put it on the floor.

"Once I had it under control, the family came right up to see the snake," Heyns said. "A scary moment turned into an exciting moment for the children."

Heyns released the female snake, about 4-1/2 feet long, back into the wild a couple of days later.

An unnamed mountain climber is a little richer this season after a cache of precious gems valued at \$84,350 was awarded to him by the Chamonix-Mont-Blanc council.

The climber found the emeralds and sapphires in 2013 as he scaled the tallest peak in western Europe; they apparently were debris from an airplane crash there in 1966, CNN reported.

The original owner of the stones couldn't be located. The council split the booty with the climber and will display their half at the Chamonix Crystal Museum.

A 50-year-old Italian dentist tried to dodge getting the COVID-19 vaccine but still gain a health pass by offering the health worker a silicone prosthetic arm for the jab, The Guardian reported.

Italy recently cracked down on unvaccinated people at social, cultural and sporting events, so the man allegedly purchased a fake arm that may have cost him hundreds of euros.

The medic, Filippa Bua, said she "felt offended as a professional. The color of the arm made me suspicious and so I asked the man to uncover the rest of his left arm. It was well made but it wasn't the same color."

The unidentified man will face fraud charges, according to Luigi Icardi, the regional health counselor.

Graham George Spencer of Singapore was walking with a friend in

the Singapore Botanic Gardens when a runner dashed right into the path of a group of about 20 otters, causing them to change from "being quiet to going crazy like dogs," Spencer told todayonline.com.

The otters, apparently confused about who was who, attacked Spencer, pushing him to the ground and biting him around his feet and buttocks.

"I was bitten 26 times in 10 seconds," he said. "If it wasn't for my friend, I don't think I'd still be here. I'd be dead." At a hospital across the street, Spencer was given tetanus shots and antibiotics.

Former (unsuccessful) mayoral candidate for Berkeley, California, Wayne Hsiung, an animal rights activist, is going to spend some time on supervised probation after a February 2018 stunt in which he stole a newborn goat, Berkeley's side.

The theft, a felony, took place in Transylvania County, North Carolina, at Sospiro Ranch.

Hsiung said he stole the kid because he thought it was suffering and might face a cruel death, but the court was not entertaining his "right-to-rescue" defense.

In fact, Judge Peter Knight sustained so many objections by the prosecution during Hsiung's opening statement that he wasn't able to finish it.

Curtis Burnside, owner of Sospiro Ranch, said NipNap, the baby goat's mother, "cried for days and was beside herself looking for her lost baby."

In the "this could never happen in America" category: New Zealand is putting in place laws that will eventually ban smoking altogether by 2025, The Guardian reported.

Each year, the legal smoking age will increase, said associate health minister Dr. Ayesha Verrall.

Legislation will also make smoking unaffordable, reduce the level of nicotine in tobacco products, limit retail outlets, and increase funding for addiction services.

"We want to make sure young people never start smoking ... People aged 14 when the law comes into effect will never be able to legally purchase tobacco," Verrall said.

A middle school in Milton, Massachusetts, went into lockdown when a student reported that an adult "may have had a weapon," The Patriot Ledger reported.

After about 30 minutes of investigation by school officials and Milton police, however, it was determined that the "weapon" was a phone charger that a staff member was carrying.

"I am pleased to report that nobody was physically harmed," Superintendent James Jette said in a statement.

A second-grader at Pamoja Preparatory Academy in St. Louis, Missouri, brought a loaded pistol to

school to "show it to classmates," the Daily Beast reported.

The child said they took the gun from a lockbox under the parents' bed.

Two days earlier, at Woerner Elementary School in St. Louis, a kindergartner brought a gun to school when they picked up the wrong backpack.

Sgt. Charles Wall of the St. Louis Police Department said no charges will be filed in either case: "It was determined no criminal incident occurred," he said.

Nicole Gregory, 28, was arrested in St. Petersburg, Florida, after a sheriff's deputy observed her dropping baggies containing fentanyl.

According to The Smoking Gun, Gregory admitted to selling the opioid, saying she gets \$10 per "bump."

But she had a good(?) reason: She was selling the drugs "to make money to pay for an attorney for a pending drug charge."

Actually, two charges: one in August and one in October. Along with the fentanyl, Gregory was most recently found to have meth, morphine and Oxycodone.

You may be grouching about your mail taking FOREVER to get to your mailbox, but that's nothing compared to a couple in Chicago, CBS Chicago reported.

Last year, a postal worker tossed a package onto Vera and Donald Rideaux's front porch - then pulled away in his vehicle, hitting the Rideauxs' van, "and he kept backing the truck up, back and forth, back and forth, pulling my car at the same time," Donald said.

The worker got out of his truck, looked at the car, and "got back in it and he drove off," Vera added.

The couple called the USPS but, they said, there had been no resolution of the \$1,467 in damages caused to their van.

A spokesman said drivers are supposed to notify immediate supervisors when they're involved in an accident but wouldn't confirm that such a report had been made in this instance.

Those seeking euthanasia in Switzerland now have the option to use a 3D-printed "death capsule" called the Sarco, Oddee reported.

Philip Nitschke, founder of Exit International, an Australian company, explains how the pod works: A patient enters the coffinlike capsule, closes the lid (which includes a large window), answers a few questions, and then activates a series of events with a single button.

At that point, the chamber is flooded with nitrogen, but the occupant will not feel like they're suffocating or choking, he says.

"There is no panic. The person will feel a little disoriented and may feel slightly euphoric before they lose consciousness. Death takes place through ... oxygen and carbon dioxide deprivation."

After five to 10 minutes, the patient is deceased.

"The machine can be towed anywhere for the death," Nitschke said.

"It can be in an idyllic outdoor setting or in the premises of an assisted suicide organization."

Some news items just catapult themselves to the lead story position.

On a Delta airlines flight from Syracuse, New York, to Atlanta, the woman sitting in 13A allegedly tried to breastfeed her hairless cat, much to the cat's (and other passengers') distress.

Flight attendants repeatedly asked the woman to return the yowling cat to its kennel, the New York Post reported, but she refused.

"Her shirt was up and she was trying to get the cat to latch ... and the cat was screaming for its life," said Ainsley Elizabeth, a flight attendant who was on board during the incident.

Finally, a message was sent through the Aircraft Communications Addressing and Reporting System (ACARS) alerting the ground crew in Atlanta that they would need a Red Coat team member to apprehend the woman at the gate.

(Red Coats are specially trained to handle customer service issues, which now include cat-breastfeeding.)

It's unclear what happened to the woman or her cat after the flight landed.

The Flower Mound Rebels, a youth football team in Texas, were not in the playoffs this past season, NBC News reported.

The Rebels, composed of 7- and 8-year-olds, are "too good" for their league, boasting a perfect record and having outscored their opponents 199-6, according to Keller Youth Association Vice President Rhett Taylor.

"They are a select-level team." He said if the team had competed in the league's super bowl, he would have caught it from parents of other teams. Center Greyson Tanner, 8, reported being "very sad" about the ruling.

Twenty-year-old Lucy Battle of Burnley, England, nearly threw out the baby with the bathwater ... er, with the sofa, recently.

Battle posted an ad on Facebook Marketplace about her sofa, with the caption "Need gone today," but she accidentally posted a photo of her 7-month-old son, Oscar, rather than of the furniture, Leeds Live reported.

"I just somehow managed to upload the wrong photo ... I didn't expect it to go so far!" Battle said. One user commented, "Can I swap for a teenager?" But Battle isn't budging: "I don't want to give away my child."

Swedish meatballs for everyone! A snowstorm that dumped about 12 inches in Aalborg, Denmark, forced about 30 people to spend the night in an Ikea store, Pix11-TV reported.

Store manager Peter Elmoose said customers and employees slept "in the furniture exhibitions and our showroom on the first floor, where we have beds, mattresses and sofa beds," giving shoppers the chance to "pick the exact bed they have always wanted to try. It's been a good night. All fun."

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# Axiom ventures into the musical Secret Garden

A story that began as a novel in 1911 by Frances Hodgson Burnett, and which has seen various theatre, musical, television and film adaptations over the years, comes to the Axiom Repertory Theatre stage March 11-19 as the local theatre company presents *The Secret Garden*.

"I have always cherished the story of *The Secret Garden*, ever since seeing the film as a child and reading the book as a teenager," Lizzie Stoxen, who is directing the Axiom production, said in an email. "When I heard the soundtrack of the musical for the first time, I fell in love with the charm, the melodies, the poetic dialogue, and I loved the juxtaposition of seeing children at the center of an adult cast. I knew I wanted to be involved in producing this show some day."

The plot of *The Secret Garden* musical is similar to the original novel and the films, Stoxen said.

Mary Lennox, a 10-year-old girl growing up in British colonized India, loses her parents to cholera and must travel to Yorkshire, England to live with her estranged uncle. When she arrives, she discovers the house and the people within it have many secrets, and that they are all dealing with grief and loss, just as she is.

Through exploration, discovery, positive thinking and a bit of earth in a mysterious garden, Mary comes to learn what it means to love and be loved, and helps her uncle and cousin learn this for themselves as well.

"The show features an incredibly haunting and charming score," Stoxen said, featuring, such numbers as "A Bit of Earth," "Hold On" and "Wick," among many others.

First staged on Broadway in 1991, the musical version was adapted by Marsha Norman (script and lyrics) and Lucy Simon (music). It was nominated for a Tony for Best Musical and won the Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Musical.

Although there were film productions of *The Secret Garden* in 1919 and an MGM production in 1949 that starred Margaret O'Brien as Mary, most might be more familiar with the 1993 production that was executive produced by Francis Ford Coppola and the 2020 version starring Dixie Egerickx, Colin Firth and Julie Walters.

"The musical (and the 1993 film) stays very true to the plot of the original novel, whereas the 2020 film changes quite a few aspects of the story, including the time period and some of the personality traits that make these characters so charming," Stoxen said.

"The musical focuses largely on the characters of Mary and her uncle Archibald and sees their development fully through an emotional arc with the help of all the supporting characters such as Dickon and Martha," she said.

"The addition of the score, as is always the case in musicals, helps to elaborate on the story and draw out even more of an emotional understanding than the audience would be able to fully appreciate from words alone," she said. "Even though our production doesn't have Colin Firth, it does have the magic and mystery of live theatre, and I still



PHOTOS / Daniel Hill for Axiom Repertory Theatre

Left to right, above: Cole Cassell (plays Dickon), Clara Stoxen (Mary Lennox) and James "Jet" Thomas (Ben Weatherstaff). Below left: Priscilla Prewett (Claire Holmes), Kris Carpenter (Alice) and Catherine Prewett (Mrs. Shelley) and understudy for Mary Lennox). Below right: Jocelyn Olson (Rose Lennox) and David Boehme (Albert Lennox).



think the musical beats the film every time."

Stoxen said the Axiom show features Mark Amacker (previous performances include *Next to Normal*, *Spamalot*) as uncle Archibald Craven, Pamela Carney (*The 39 Steps*) as the miserly housekeeper Mrs. Medlock, and Cole Cassell (*The Lion in Winter*, *Spamalot*) as the green-thumbed optimist Dickon.

"We have many veteran performers in this production who know their way around the stage, as well as some making their Axiom debut, such as Jon Amacker, playing the imposing Dr. Neville Craven," Stoxen said.

The cast also includes some of those who have come up through their children's theatre training program, including Clara Stoxen as Mary Lennox and Lanson Zaniroli as Colin Craven.

"(That's) my favorite aspect of our cast is that we have several roles being played by teenagers and children who are learning the responsibility of being in a full-scale production with experienced adults and material that is rather complex," she said. "This is the whole purpose of our children's theatre and young adult programs, so it's quite exciting to see that come to fruition in this show."

In the past, Stoxen has served as music director for many shows (*Newsies*, *Mamma Mia*), and has a wide range of experience in education and teaching, performance, choral, instrumental and

even opera. She currently teaches drama and choir at Cottonwood Creek Charter School, is choir director for the Redding Performing Arts Center, and has a private studio for voice lessons.

"Up to this point in my career as a music educator I have worked with mostly children and directed children's shows (*James and the Giant Peach*, *Seussical Jr.*," she said. "I was very excited at the opportunity to work with both kids and adults together in a show chosen specifically for its family-friendly appeal. The idea of exploring self-acceptance and love through the lens of loss and grief is definitely not a simple concept, but I also think we don't give enough credit to young people for what they can understand and be moved by.

"This show represents a journey of self-discovery on multiple levels, and explores themes of love and forgiveness, and I think there are few messages so important to share with an audience. I know that audiences will enjoy the music and choreography, the beautiful costumes and, most importantly, the incredible story brought to life by our wonderfully talented cast."

*The Secret Garden* is scheduled 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, March 11-12 and 18-19; 2 p.m. matinees on Saturdays, March 12 and 19; and a 2 p.m. Sunday matinee on March 13.

Axiom Repertory Theatre is located at 2613 Bechelli Lane, Redding. For tickets and more info., go to axireptheatre.com.

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# Have you seen my wallet?

By Jase Graves

I have a problem. I misplace my wallet – a lot.

In fact, if losing wallets was an Olympic sport, I'm pretty sure I'd be investigated for doping. And according to a 2018 survey by MoneyTips, I'm not alone, joining the 62% of survey respondents who said they had also lost their cash taco, or had it stolen.



I relapsed again recently on a Saturday morning road trip with my wife and some friends, trying to convince myself that I would enjoy attending a college basketball game more than sleeping until noon. We had stopped at a convenience store on the way to the game, and when I reached for my wallet to pay for a nutritious gas station breakfast, the flaccid denim of my back pocket told the sad, well-worn tale.

At that moment, I took my missing wallet in stride, assuming I had (once again) just forgotten to grab it at home – distracted by grief over my recent breakup with the cool side of my pillow.

But when we returned that evening and the wallet was not in its usual place on the kitchen counter, I panicked – almost as much as my three teenage daughters when I told them we might have to cancel the credit cards.

Despite my state of acute frustration, I carefully searched in all of the logical places, starting with the freezer and working my way to my wife's underwear drawer.

I even called all of the businesses I'd visited that day (mostly Mexican food restaurants) to see if they had found a wallet with an empty and seldom-used bill compartment.

Eventually, I just gave up and figured that some disappointed thief was now reevaluating his or her career choice.

My sweet mother reminded me to pray about my lost wallet, which I did – even though I assumed that the Almighty was probably rolling His eyes and trying not to laugh the whole time.

But, sure enough, my prayer was soon answered when, a couple of days later, my wife received a phone call at work from a Texas state trooper, who curtly asked if she knew a Jase Graves.

Terrible thoughts raced through her mind as she frantically wondered whether I had been in an accident—or arrested for public doofusness.

Apparently, the wallet had slipped out of my pocket and fallen onto the running board of my SUV, finally making a desperate leap for its freedom and landing on the shoulder of the highway. (Imagine Morgan Freeman narrating that last sentence.)

The trooper had found the wallet, my long-suffering credit cards, and an unusually large number of Mexican restaurant receipts when he stopped to move some debris out of the road.

Fortunately, I also keep my wife's business card in the wallet – in case I get lost when I go to Walmart.

Even though it's a relief to have my old wallet back, aggravating my sciatica and causing me to list to the left when I sit, I think it's time for something new. My friends told me I should go buy a wallet with a chain, but I'm just not a chain kind of guy. Besides, with a chain wallet, I worry that I'd also be expected to get a neck tattoo – or be mistaken for that biker dude from the Village People.

I think the solution might be one of those newfangled wallets furnished with an Apple AirTag that you can track with your cellular device.

Now, if I could only find my iPhone.

Copyright 2022 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.

# Can Covid-19 cause shingles and how effective is the vaccine?

Dear Savvy Senior,  
How effective is the shingles vaccine and what is the CDC recommendation for getting it? My older brother and sister, both in their fifties, got Covid a few months back followed by shingles. Do you know if there is a connection between these viruses, and would the shingles vaccine have protected them?  
- Scared of Shingles



By Jim Miller

years old, and 91 percent effective in those 70 and older.

Shingrix also does a terrific job of preventing nerve pain that continues after a shingles rash has cleared – about 90 percent effective.

Because of this protection, the CDC recommends that everyone age 50 and older receive the Shingrix vaccine, which is given in two doses, separated by two to six months.

Even if you've already had shingles, you still need these vaccinations because reoccurring cases are possible. The CDC also recommends that anyone previously vaccinated with Zostavax be revaccinated with Shingrix.

You should also know that Shingrix can cause some adverse side effects for some people, including muscle pain, fatigue, headache, fever and upset stomach.

Shingrix – which averages around \$205 for both doses – is covered by most private health insurance plans including Medicare Part D prescription drug plans, but there may be a cost to you depending on your plan. Contact your insurer to find out.

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.

Dear Scared,

Great question. Many healthcare professionals across the country have been urging their older patients to get the shingles vaccine (in addition to the Covid-19 vaccinations) during the pandemic because getting Covid-19 can increase your chances of developing shingles. And the more severe case of Covid you get, the greater your risk for shingles.

The reason for this is because when you contract Covid-19 your immune system becomes compromised fighting off the virus, which gives shingles – a virus that already exists in your body if you've had chickenpox – a chance to reactivate.

Here's what you should know about shingles, the shingles vaccine, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations.

## What are Shingles?

Shingles, also known as herpes zoster, is a burning, blistering skin rash that affects around 1 million Americans each year. The same virus that causes chickenpox causes shingles. What happens is the chickenpox virus that most people get as kids never leaves the body. It hides in the nerve cells near the spinal cord and, for some people, emerges later in the form of shingles.

In the U.S., about one out of every three people will develop shingles during their lifetime. While anyone who's had chickenpox can get shingles, it most commonly occurs in people over age 50, along with people who have weakened immune systems. But you can't catch shingles from someone else.

Early signs of the disease include pain, itching or tingling before a blistering rash appears several days

later, and can last up to four weeks. The rash typically occurs on one side of the body, often as a band of blisters that extends from the middle of your back around to the breastbone. It can also appear above an eye or on the side of the face or neck.

In addition to the rash, about 20 to 25 percent of those who get shingles go on to develop severe nerve pain (postherpetic neuralgia, or PHN) that can last for months or even years.

And in rare cases, shingles can also cause strokes, encephalitis, spinal cord damage and vision loss.

## Shingles Vaccine

The vaccine for shingles called Shingrix (see Shingrix.com) provides much better protection than the old shingles vaccine, Zostavax.

Manufactured by GlaxoSmithKline, Shingrix is 97 percent effective in preventing shingles in people 50 to 69

Shasta County Health & Human Services Agency

# Dealing to Minors = Prison Time

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HSC 11361(b)

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# California drought on course to break another record

After record-breaking snowfall at the start of the rainy season, January and February were likely to be the driest on record, prolonging California's drought.

By Rachel Becker  
CalMatters.org  
Feb. 16, 2022

The first two months of 2022 were shaping up to be the driest January and February in California history, prompting state officials to warn of dire water conditions ahead.

"There's no precipitation forecast through the remainder of February and there's very little precipitation in the long-range forecast for March," Erik Ekdahl, a deputy director with the State Water Resources Control Board, said at a board meeting in mid-February. "All this is pointing to, again, some pretty dire conditions statewide for drought."

After record-setting storms in October and then December, the past six weeks (January to mid-February) — usually among the wettest months in California — have seen precipitation totals plateau at roughly half the yearly average in the state's major watersheds.

The dry spell follows the driest year in California since 1924, as aridity continues to dominate the West.

The prolonged drought, which began in early 2020, leaves many water suppliers leaning more on their stored water supplies or shifting to other sources, such as groundwater.

Jennifer Pierre, general manager



of the State Water Contractors, an association of water agencies in Southern and Northern California and the San Joaquin Valley that receive supplies from the State Water Project, called the storms late last year "a blip" that meant little to California's water supplies.

The agencies are getting 15% of their requested supplies from the state aqueduct, which carries water from Northern California rivers south. Initially, the allocations were set at zero, which meant deliveries would only cover enough for public health and safety.

For residents of the Silicon Valley, the conditions could mean tightening restrictions and increasing rebates to reduce water use. In San Jose, customers who exceed limits — based on a 15% cut in amounts of water they used in 2019 — already have to pay extra fees.

The drought has collided with earthquake retrofits that required almost completely draining the area's largest reservoir, knocking out more than half of the storage capacity serving 2 million people in and around San Jose.

In June, Valley Water's board mandated a 15% cut to water use from 2019 levels, to be implemented by the local water agencies it supplies. Board chair Gary Kremen said he wouldn't be surprised to see an update to the restrictions and rebate programs come up for another vote.

"You use the word dire," Kremen said. "But for us, it's kind of worse than dire."

"The challenge is, this is year three of the drought rather than year two," Anderson said. "And in terms of a three-year period, we're likely going to set a new record for a three-year window of drought."

The snowpack, too, hasn't increased. A critical water supply, the Sierra Nevada snowpack was measured at 72% of normal for Feb. 15, but only 55% of the seasonal average measured on April 1. And in parts of the state, the snow is already melting.

"You're in this window where you're still expecting to be building (snow)pack, but it's already starting to melt," Anderson said. "The challenge will be how much snowpack makes it to spring, and how much shows up in the reservoirs."

Anderson is keeping an eye on the months ahead, and hopes that March will bring more rain and snow than anticipated. A big question will be how much runoff from snow melt in the Sierra

Nevada will reach California's reservoirs, which saw substantially less runoff than expected last year.

"The good news is there's room in the reservoirs to capture what does make it to the streams and come down," he said. "The challenge is that if we're dry this early, the demands for water start earlier."

Most of the state's reservoirs are sitting below historic averages despite the December deluge, with some notable exceptions, such as Folsom Reservoir — "the breadwinner of the storms," Michael Macon, who works with the water board's Division of Water Rights, said Tuesday.

Shasta Lake is about half a million acre-feet — enough to supply 1.5 million households for one year — short of where it stood last year. Oroville has climbed above last year's levels, but the amount of water flowing out is starting to match water flowing in following a dry January, Macon said.

Looking ahead, Anderson says it's a matter of waiting and watching whether spring brings more rain and snow, and how quickly summer heats up.

"The challenge then becomes, well, what does summer look like? Does it heat up really fast? Do we end up with a lot of heat waves?" he said. "Or do we get a little bit of a break with some cooler weather?"

*CalMatters.org is a nonprofit, nonpartisan media organization explaining California policies and politics. Read more at [calmatters.org](http://calmatters.org).*

## Newest California trend: Recalling officeholders

### COMMENTARY

Recalling public officials has become trendy in California, reflecting increasing polarization due to the Covid-19 pandemic and increasing crime.

By Dan Walters  
CalMatters.org  
Feb. 20, 2022



Geographically, economically, demographically, culturally and ideologically, San Francisco and Shasta County are polar opposites, but their voters have one thing in common: a willingness to throw out officeholders who displease them.

A few weeks ago, voters in Shasta County Supervisor Leonard Moty's district voted to recall the Republican former police chief, who had been accused of being insufficiently critical of the state's Covid-19 decrees. Recall leaders were tied to the right-wing militia movement.

Last week, San Francisco voters recalled three school board members accused of neglecting children's education in their zeal to promote uber-progressive political causes, such as changing the names of schools to reflect current ideological dogma.

The power to recall officeholders,

lodged in the state constitution more than a century as a hedge against corruption but rarely used over that span of time, has suddenly become trendy as the Covid-19 pandemic and rising crime rates increase cultural and political polarization.

By any rational standard, Shasta County's Moty is a conservative Republican but ran afoul of the hard right's intolerance of anything other than complete adherence to its demands that Shasta refuse to follow state pandemic directives.

Had it not been for the pandemic, the San Francisco school board's flights of ideological fancy probably would have been tolerated, but parents became incensed about the slow reopening of schools and the board's decision to stop merit-based enrollments at prestigious Lowell High School.

The school board recall was so popular that prominent local politicians, including Mayor London Breed, endorsed it. Breed will name successors to the ousted trio.

Although Gov. Gavin Newsom shrugged off a weak effort to recall him last year, most recall campaigns that gather enough signatures to make the ballot succeed, including that of Gov. Gray Davis in 2003 and the occasional

drives to oust state legislators.

We are likely to see more recall elections soon, including one already qualified with San Francisco District Attorney Chesa Boudin to target. He's accused of refusing to vigorously prosecute criminal cases brought to him by local police.

Similar allegations are being hurled at a Boudin predecessor, George Gascón, who is now district attorney of Los Angeles County, and a petition drive to recall him is underway. Boudin, Gascón and several other blue county district attorneys have implemented less punitive prosecutorial policies but rising crime rates and increasing public concerns about crime have generated backlash.

In the wake of the Shasta County recall, there's another campaign underway in another rural county, Nevada, with similar dynamics.

The Sacramento Bee reported, "In Nevada County, a group of activists allege that officials have overstepped their authority when it comes to Covid-19 contact tracing, lockdowns and other public health measures that 'violated religious freedoms and individual liberty.' They're seeking to recall the five-member board for committing 'crimes against humanity.'"

According to the Bee, recall

proponents see county supervisors as "part of a corrupt system under Dr. Anthony Fauci that is forcing a dangerous and untested vaccine on the masses, refusing to treat patients with ivermectin, and stripping them of their liberties by monitoring them for contact tracing."

Not surprisingly, the wavelet of recalls has generated suggestions in the state Legislature for changing the process, some to make it more difficult to qualify a recall for the ballot, others that would effectively negate the recall of a governor.

Perhaps the recall is being overly used or even misused at the moment, but it remains a valuable check on arrogant officeholders. Changing it could have unanticipated and negative consequences, so we shouldn't be too eager to make radical reforms.

*Dan Walters has been a journalist for more than 60 years, spending all but a few of those years working for California newspapers. He has written more than 10,000 columns about California and its politics.*

*CalMatters.org is a nonprofit, nonpartisan media organization explaining California policies and politics. Read more at [calmatters.org](http://calmatters.org).*



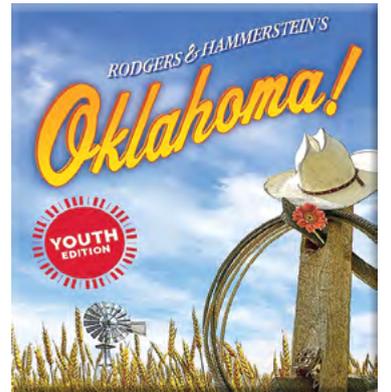
# Oklahoma!: Youth Edition at Redding's Cascade Theatre

Redding Christian School Performing Arts presents *Oklahoma!: Youth Edition*.

The Rodgers & Hammerstein's *Oklahoma: Youth Edition* is a one-hour adaptation of the beloved musical, designed especially for young performers.

Performances are scheduled at the Cascade Theatre at 7 p.m. March 4 and 5 and a 3 p.m. matinee on March 5.

Tickets are \$13 youth, \$15 senior and \$16 adult and are available online at [cascadetheatre.org](http://cascadetheatre.org) or by calling the box office at 530-243-8877.



## Boston-based Twisted Pine in Mt. Shasta March 26

"They were once bluegrass," wrote The Boston Globe, "but...this Boston band has become something else, a wider version of string band, boundary jumpers akin to outfits like Punch Brothers, Nickel Creek, and Crooked Still." Praised by NPR for their "upbeat, poppy vibe; energetic, driving rhythms; and virtuosic solos," Twisted Pine is slated to make a north state appearance when they perform at 8 p.m., Saturday, March 26, at Jefferson Center for the Performing Arts, 1124 Pine Grove Dr., Mt. Shasta. Tickets are \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door. Go online to [jeffersoncenterforthearts.com](http://jeffersoncenterforthearts.com).

## Mount Shasta Student Art Show opens March 12

The Mount Shasta High School Student Art Show is scheduled to open March 12 from 4 to 7 p.m. at the Siskiyou Arts Museum, 5824 Dunsmuir Ave., Dunsmuir, and continues through May 7.

Under the guidance of their teacher, Melody Shah, this body of work represents a range of styles, subject

matter, and techniques by students at all levels of high school art practice during the 2021 school year.

For more information, go online to the Siskiyou Art Museum's website [siskiyouartsmuseum.org](http://siskiyouartsmuseum.org), find their Facebook page, or call and leave a message at 530-235-4711.

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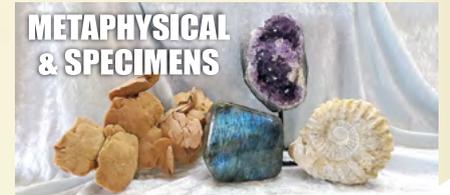
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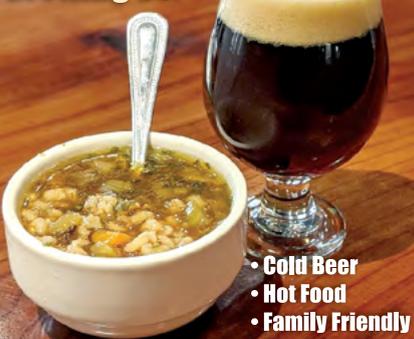
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