



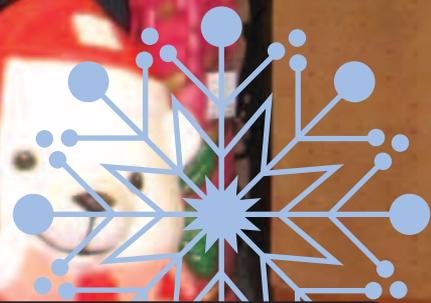
PLUS: A 'bucket-list' Hoosier destination for Dr. Who fans • More!

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page 3





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Introducing a new ‘detective’ series of stories

Beth Steury had always known that she’d been adopted as an infant, but when she learned that she had actually been abandoned on a doorstep in Angola, her curiosity was piqued. What drove her mother to take such a desperate measure? Would she like to know that she’s doing well? Does she have any sisters or brothers out there?

The story of answering those questions was told in our Fall Edition, and Beth’s experience in seeking those answers through DNA testing has brought her the opportunity to help others. She has also become involved in the National Association of Adoptees and Parents, which is organizing a “first-ever summit” to unite that group with other like-minded organizations. That event will be held in Louisville at the end of March; if you’re an adoptee or have had a “non-parental event,” you can contact her for more information.

The Berne resident is also a freelance writer



The DNA Sleuth

and an author of the “Choice Matters” series you can find on Amazon. She describes herself as “a ‘cheerleader’ for saving sex for marriage and an even bigger supporter of ‘renewed waiting’ because it’s never too late to make wiser, healthier decisions.”

Combining her writing ability with her detective skills seemed enticing. Hence, Senior Living magazine is pleased to welcome Beth as a regular contributor. We’ve transitioned the telling of her own story into what we hope is a long-running series of what might be considered “mystery stories” — Beth’s tales of helping others find their ancestry through the impact of this relatively new science of over-the-counter DNA testing.

Her first installment begins on page 8. Beth welcomes challenges, questions and comments. You can learn more about her at www.bethsteury.com or contact her at bethsteury@gmail.com

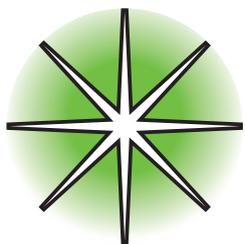
— The Editor



Hoosier Carl Erskine was a Dodgers great. His fight for human rights was even greater.

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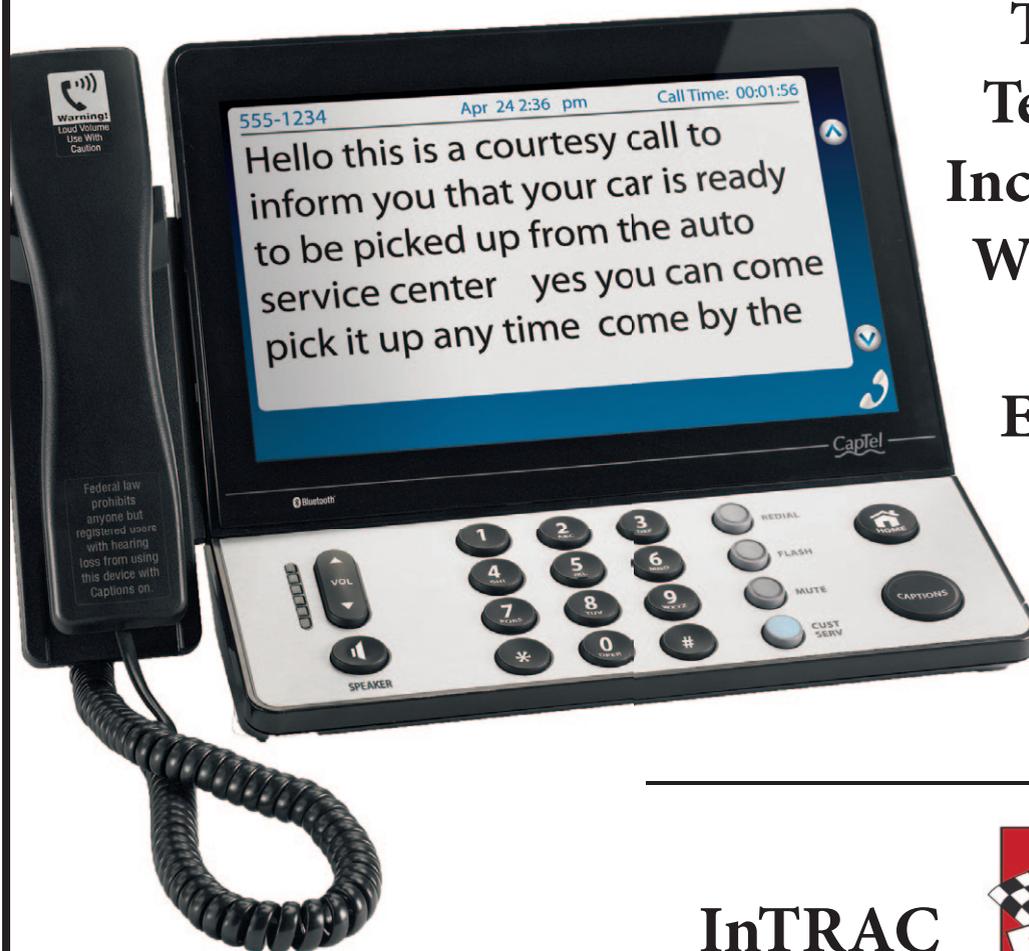
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Vintage Christmas decorations help seal a retirement 'deal'

BY MARK MILLER

There is some minor, and inconsequential, debate on what they call it. Jill Terhune refers to it as “a retirement gig.” Her husband of 43 years initially calls it “a business.”

“It’s only full time if you want it to be,” Tony Terhune says. It is definitely not a “job.” Later, they agree on calling it a “retirement deal.”

“That works,” she says.

Antiquing goes way back for the couple.

“I told her when we first met that my home was furnished in Early American Auction,” Tony shares with a chuckle. It was an early indication that, after 43 years now, Tony says “we think it’s working out.” They both enjoy going to auctions, which is a good thing because that is one of their main sources to stock their booth at Yvonne Marie’s Antique Mall in Decatur as well as their growing collection at their Bluffton home.

“Too many of them are online auctions anymore,” Jill says. “They’re just not as much fun.”

One of her favorite auction stories goes back to shortly after they were married. She had her eye on an antique high chair and cradle. After winning the bid, the other final bidder, an elderly lady, approached her and said “Honey, I figured you could use those more than I would.”

“I didn’t have the heart to tell her that we weren’t even thinking of kids yet,” she recalls with a laugh. “But we did use them with both of our children and our grandkids.” Of which there are three.

Technically, it is a “business,” since Terhune Antiques was officially founded in 2019. Tony had spent his career working in Fort Wayne in the defense contract division of Magnavox which became Raytheon and then Hughes Aircraft. Jill retired from Family Centered Services in Bluffton the same year. It was just a natural transition, Jill shares.

“We had been long-time shoppers and customers here,” she says, referring to the sprawling, three-story mall in



Jill and Tony Terhune at their booth in Decatur’s downtown antique mall. While they keep some Christmas items on display year-round, these shelves are totally devoted to their vintage collections after Labor Day.

downtown Decatur. “When we told (the mall’s proprietor) that we were retiring, she suggested we set up a booth.”

“It’s been fun,” Tony quickly adds.

Vintage Christmas decorations, particularly tree ornaments, have long been one of Jill’s favorites. Several years ago, Tony came across some larger “blow-molds” — the hollow plastic figurines with a light bulb inside. They date mostly to the 1960s.

“I bought a couple and found out that

people love them,” he says. “They’re an easy sell.”

Although they hesitate to say they “specialize” in the blow-molds and other vintage Christmas items such as the also-popular ceramic Christmas trees, they have definitely kept a sharper eye out for these items for their booth in Decatur. Christmas items sell year-round but are obviously more popular each year after Labor Day. Jill will begin to add a few more items in July,

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Ceramic Christmas trees, dating mostly from the 1950s and '60s, are experiencing a renewed interest among antique shoppers as are the "blow-molds" — lightweight plastic molds with a lightbulb inside — which were highly popular in the 1960s. The Terhunes have also found that Halloween blow-molds are equally popular. Jill Terhune has always had a passion for antique ornaments, having used them exclusively over the years on their trees at home. There are also plenty to choose from at the Terhune's booth in the Decatur antique mall. (Photos by Mark Miller)



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but “about Sept. 1, I change over several shelves with the Christmas items we’ve found,” she says.

Browsing in their booth, you will find a few items with a local connection, such as Adams County Sesquicentennial plates or a unique Lincoln National Bank savings book. Tony does have an extensive collection of Bluffton memorabilia, but you will not find them here. “They’re not for sale,” he says.

In addition to the auctions, both online and in person, the couple’s adventures include garage and estate sales. And while it could be a full-time “gig,” it is far from that. Retirement for the Terhunes includes travel and at least a few weeks each winter in warmer latitudes. In their absence, family members keep an eye on the booth and the mall’s proprietor will let them know if something major sells, leaving an empty spot.

“It’s just been something we’ve enjoyed and now it’s something we can do together,” Tony says.

That’s a pretty good “deal,” indeed.

Do you have a story to tell or know someone who does? seniorliving@adamswells.com

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Hoosier legend's graceful push against injustice drives new film

BY MARK BENNETT

The Tribune-Star (Terre Haute)

Sure, Carl Erskine experienced October glories while pitching the Dodgers to National League pennants and World Series titles, and throwing a pair of no-hitters.

He left an indelible mark on baseball history, for sure.

Erskine made a bigger impact on Hoosier and American society through friendship, fatherhood and refusing to accept injustice. And he did it all with the grace of a smooth pitching windup and the power of a 95-mph fastball.

That legacy fills a 90-minute documentary "The Best We've Got: The Carl Erskine Story" released earlier this fall. It's the latest release by Hoosier filmmaker Ted Green, whose credits include documentaries about Eva Kor, Bobby "Slick" Leonard, John Wooden and other Indiana icons. Each film shares a commonality.

"I really like to tackle subjects that celebrate the human spirit," Green said.

Erskine's life fits that criteria well.

"The guy slowly, over time, moved mountains," Green said. "He changed the culture of an entire state."

He spent much of his boyhood years in Anderson alongside his best friend, Johnny Wilson. They hung out in their neighborhood, ate and played sports together. Wilson became Indiana's Mr. Basketball, and Erskine grew into a major-league pitching ace for the Brooklyn and Los Angeles Dodgers from 1948 to '59. Erskine is white, the late Wilson was black. That seems routine today, but their friendship began in 1930s Indiana, barely a decade after the Ku Klux Klan held power in the state's government.

"Every cultural force was pushing Carl away from Johnny, and Carl did the opposite," Green said.

Years later, Erskine was a Brooklyn Dodger and teammate of Jackie Robin-



Carl Erskine, a native of Anderson, played his entire Major League Baseball career with the Brooklyn and LA Dodgers. Jackie Robinson once said that "No Dodger, none, understood more about what was happening (racially) than Carl did."

son, who endured racist taunts, threats, harm and ostracization from fans, opponents and even his own teammates at times as he broke pro baseball's color barrier in 1947. A few seasons after his breakthrough, Dodgers families gath-

ered outside Ebbets Field in Brooklyn before a game. Erskine saw Robinson's wife and son sitting alone, strolled over and chatted

with them, then got ready for the game and played.

The next day, Jackie Robinson walked over to Erskine and said, "Carl, I want to thank you for what you did yesterday." Erskine gave him a baffled look, and asked Robinson, "For what?" Robinson

was grateful that Erskine talked to Rachel and their son at the picnic.

"Really, it was Carl Erskine who was Jackie's biggest supporter on that team, especially in the area of race," Green said.

In his humble style, Erskine credits Robinson with initiating their bond. During spring training in 1948, Erskine was a pitcher with the Dodgers' Fort Worth, Texas farm club, and Robinson was in his second year in the big leagues with Brooklyn. Robinson watched Erskine pitch and later walked across the field, shook Carl's hand and asked his name, and then said, "You're not going to be in the minor leagues very long."

"It was a boost to my career, and it started a real friendship," Erskine said.

Just months after Erskine retired from baseball at age 32, his wife Betty gave birth to their fourth child, Jimmy. He was born with Down syndrome. The Erskines were encouraged to institutionalize their son, and go on with life. They rejected such an idea, brought Jimmy home and formed a grassroots support group of parents of Down syndrome children. When the family went, Jimmy went, too.

"What made Carl and Betty so unique was, they didn't just bring their child home ... They took him everywhere they went," Green said.

And when a World Series champion pitcher did that, the world noticed.

"Carl says it was Johnny [Wilson] and Jackie [Robinson] who prepared him for Jimmy," Green said. Erskine wrote a book, "The Parallel," in 2012 comparing the prejudice and rejection Robinson experienced with that of Jimmy and other people with disabilities.

"There was a point in time that I had a realization of what a parallel it was," Erskine said by phone Wednesday morning from his home in Anderson.

Green's film highlights those relationships and Erskine's push against injustice. It features comments from broadcaster Bob Costas, former Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels, Special Olympics International chairman Tim Shriver, late

Where to watch...

- "The Best We've Got" will soon be available to view on several streaming channels. For the latest update, visit www.carlerskinofilm.com. DVDs and Blu-rays can also be purchased by contacting the producer at tedgreeniv@gmail.com

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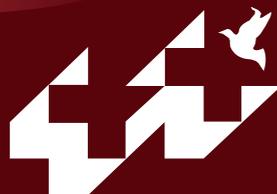


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Unraveling a mystery for a Geneva family

BY BETH STEURY

Thursday, March 16, 1918, Richmond, Indiana — A weeks-old baby boy found alone and crying in a room at the Kelly Hotel. Hotel employees cannot locate parents who may have used a fictitious name at check-in.



The DNA Sleuth

News of the abandoned baby made headlines in the morning edition of the Richmond Item and the evening edition of the Richmond Palladium. Both articles detailed the incident at the city's Kelly Hotel, quoting the penciled note pinned to the abandoned infant that instructed he must be named "Glen Leslie." Authorities took the healthy baby to the Home for the Friendless in Richmond.

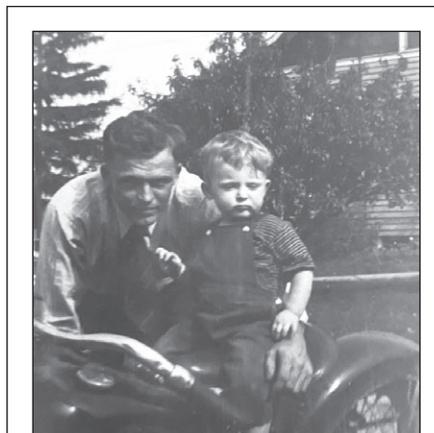
Within two weeks, this wee one found a home with Ervin and Mae (Beeler) Pontius of rural Geneva. The young couple gave their adopted son a name of their own choosing, Robert Eugene. In later years, they shared with him what little they knew about his beginnings, including the contents of the note indicating the name his biological parents had chosen for him.

The details surrounding Robert's birth and abandonment remained unknown throughout his 60 years. The family seldom spoke of the mystery, but it would seem the situation was never far from Robert's mind as he and his wife Beatrice (Yoss) named their firstborn son "Glenn Leslie." As far as the family knows, no probing into the circumstances surrounding Robert's birth ever took place. But the story surfaced from time-to-time of Robert's suspicion that, on at least one occasion, he was being followed at the Bluffton Street Fair.

Could it have been someone from his unknown past keeping tabs on him?

After Robert's death in 1978, his son Dick Pontius found the manila envelope that for decades had protected the newspaper clippings and the paperwork that finalized his father's adoption. Perusing the fragile documents reignited the decades-old questions. Dick and his siblings had grown up among many of his mother's extended family who hailed from Adams County. But a big question-mark hung over his father's side of the family tree, and Dick assumed it always would.

In March of this year, Dick shared his father's story with local writer and reporter, Jim Langham. Both my daughter and husband happened upon the front-page article in the Berne Witness before I did. And both shot me an urgent text



Robert Pontius and his first-born son whom he and his wife chose to name Glenn Leslie in honor of Robert's unknown biological parents.

Chubby, Blue-Eyed Baby Deserted; Inheritance Awaits It Says Note

A chubby four-weeks-old baby boy, rolled his blue eyes smilingly at the Home of the Friendless Friday morning, and emitted "baby talk." The baby didn't realize that its mamma and papa had deserted it upon the tender mercies of the world Thursday night. The baby doesn't even know its own name.

The baby was found Thursday afternoon at the Kelly hotel on North E street, with a note pinned to its clothes. Police Friday were trying to locate the parents who registered as "Harry Johnson and wife." It is believed that the parents have left the city.

The following note, written in pencil, was found pinned to the baby's clothing:

"When you read this you will have found my baby boy.

"For a time, at least, I am forced to give him up. For financial reasons my marriage must remain a secret for a time. In after years his inheritance may amply repay you for any expense you may incur.

"He is a priceless treasure and only grim necessity causes me to part with him. I pray you give him the name he must bear—Glen Leslie. It may lead to his discovery later.

"I beg you to be kind to my Glen. Keep the cross as a certain proof of

his identity. We are not Catholics. It is just a keepsake."

The baby was taken by the police to the Home of the Friendless, and Elizabeth Candler, probation officer, is seeking a home for it. It was well dressed in clean, white clothing, and other clothing was left with it.

21 SELECTS LEAVE FOR CAMP MONDAY

Official notices were sent out Friday to the 21 selected men who will leave for Columbus barracks, Columbus, O., next Monday afternoon. The men are ordered to report at the court house Saturday afternoon at 2 o'clock, and if any of them fail to receive their notices in time their names in this list are to be regarded as an official order of the chairman of the selective service board said.

Following are the men who will leave Monday:
Sherman Kortright, Floyd M. Wilson, George W. Hieger,
Lawrence E. Taylor, Wallace Kendall, David B. Baker,
Raymond Schuneman, Russell L. Fye, Frank E. Wikemeyer,
Claude ...

message, insisting that I'd be interested in the story. They were right. Solving the mystery of my own foundling beginnings had left me thoroughly bitten by the genetic genealogy bug and that fascination kept me on high alert for opportunities to seek answers that only DNA could uncover.

Within hours of reading Jim's article, I tracked down Dick. Would he be interested in my help to investigate this century-old mystery? He was indeed interested. He put me in contact with his nephew Neil, his sister Sandra's son, a long-time genealogy enthusiast. I was elated to learn that Neil managed his mother's DNA test results on Ancestry.com's consumer testing site. Would he be open to sharing those results with me, so that we could dive into Robert's DNA via his daughter Sandra's test results?

Neil readily agreed to invite me to view and sort his mother's DNA matches, as the nearest relative to Robert who had tested. Next, I spoke with Dick's niece Devin, a brother's daughter, who shared Dick and Neil's passion for solving the mystery of where and from whom the Kelly Hotel baby came. She too was eager to help, and now, the team was in place.

But what had I gotten myself into? With two generations of the family now

engaged and eager for answers, I worried I might have built up their hopes foolishly. In my five years of using genetic genealogy to determine biological family lines, this was the oldest mystery I'd tackled. And I'd hoped for closer DNA matches than the second-cousin-level match that topped the list of relatives. I decided to push aside the nagging concern that the answers had been buried for too many decades, and I reminded myself that I liked challenges. Armed with an entire free afternoon, a continuous supply of Diet Coke, and a go-get'em attitude, I dove in, mentally prepared for a long (weeks, months?) search.

I reviewed the content of the penciled note left with the infant. I sensed both desperation and youth in the plea to care for the baby boy, "a priceless treasure." I felt the anguished emotions oozing from between the lines, depicting a young couple caught in a frantic situation. The fact that the note indicated "for a time, at least, I am forced



Dick Pontius, right, and his niece Devin. The pair have been part of the "team" trying to solve the mystery of Dick's father's ancestry.

to give him up," highlighted the naïve hope that the parents would be able to reunite with their child in the future.

I tucked the name "Glen Leslie" in a side pocket of my brain and began to explore Sandra's DNA results and build a family tree for the matches. Several hours into this first session, I discovered a Glenn Leslie (first and middle name) born in 1897 in the Anderson, Indiana,

Continued on page 22

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'Who' knew?

Store, museum devoted to sci-fi show is bucket-list destination for 'Dr. Who' fans from all over

BY TANYA ISCH CAYLOR

On Nov. 23, 1963, the premiere of a British TV show was delayed by several minutes of updates on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Despite poor ratings of that initial episode, by 1971 British youngsters were digging through specially marked boxes of Kellogg's Sugar Smacks, hunting for toys from what would go on to become the longest running science-fiction show in television history.

It wasn't until 1980 that PBS began airing "Doctor Who" in the central Illinois town where Keith Bradbury was growing up. He was hooked by the time-traveling hero's zany yet scary adventures. But unlike other kids who were into Star Wars or Star Trek, he couldn't find the collectible toys he craved.

In 1998, 25 years after the Doctor's debut, Bradbury — now living in Camby, Ind., near the southern edge of Indianapolis — began using the Internet to find the collectibles he missed out on as a kid, building the inventory for "Doctor Who North America."

As the only Doctor Who store and museum on the continent, it's become a bucket-list destination for the show's most ardent fans. Visitors have come from as far away as Hawaii.

On the day we went, a mother burst in the door a few minutes after we arrived, asking if there was a restroom. She'd driven all the way from Charlotte, N.C., as a special birthday treat for her 14-year-old daughter, who insisted they get to their destination as soon as possible, without stopping for a bathroom break.

Doctor Who was already half a century old before we saw our first epi-



Hoosier Fun



Keith Bradbury owns Who North America, the only store and museum in the United States devoted exclusively to "Doctor Who," the longest running science-fiction show in television history. It's located in Camby, just south of Indianapolis. (Photos by Bob Caylor)

sode. Though my husband is a longtime science-fiction fan, he never bothered to check out the show after it began airing on PBS because he figured there was too much backstory to catch up on.

A New Yorker magazine article on the show's anniversary convinced us otherwise. And it was true: Because the Doctor's always having to explain himself to the characters he encounters, even a novice viewer is at least slightly more

ter's ability to regenerate into a new body as needed. We began watching during the tenure of the 10th Doctor, played by David Tennant. The series is currently on its 14th Doctor (Ncuti Gatwa). The character's name, and why he calls himself a doctor, are never fully explained, which is a long-running joke on the show.

Most fans' favorite is the one they originally encountered. Thus Bradbury remains a Fourth Doctor fan, while Heidi Adcock-Bauer, the 14-year-old from North Carolina, is obsessed with the 12th Doctor.

Bradbury has merchandise on sale from all 14 Doctors, as well as the various companions and villains the Doctor has encountered in his (or her) travels. (The 13th Doctor regenerated into a female body.)

A constant throughout is the Tardis, the Doctor's time machine that resembles a blue telephone booth but is recognizable to British fans as a police call box. (Another long-running joke: It's "bigger on the inside.")

The museum naturally skews toward the earlier Doctors. The character on



This 1971 box of Kellogg's Sugar Smacks featured the Third Doctor on Doctor Who, John Pertwee, and included one of six "badges" featuring characters on the show. It's on display in the museum at Who North America in Camby, Ind.

in the know than the befuddled citizens of whatever time period he's arrived in.

The secret to the show outliving its actors lies in the 900-year-old charac-

that 1971 box of Sugar Smacks, for instance, is the 3rd Doctor, played by John Pertwee.

Enough time has passed that the 1960s are one of the eras the Doctor travels to — including JFK’s assassination, the event so closely tied to the show’s origins.

My personal favorite episode was the time the 11th Doctor and his entourage encountered Leonardo Da Vinci. Once the threat to that time period had been vanquished, the Doctor transported the incredulous artist to a modern-day museum, where the Doctor asked the curator to give his views on the artist’s work.

It was priceless to watch the guide expound on the greatness of Da Vinci without realizing that very artist was standing right in front of him. Even better was watching Da Vinci’s shock in learning that someone actually appreciated his paintings.

We had fun exploring the store, and enjoyed chatting with the visitors from North Carolina, one of whom had a British accent.

Cora Adcock takes a photo of her birthday girl, Heidi Adcock-Bauer, in front of the Tardis, a time machine resembling a British Police Call Box, on display at Who North America. The store maintains a website at www.whona.com



Heidi’s mother, Cora Adcock, said she is originally from England, and Heidi was born there. Sometimes, she lamented, it seems that’s all they have in common, besides a shared crush on the 12th Doctor, Peter Capaldi.

“My younger daughter and I are both into nature and horses and so forth, but Heidi has been really fixated on science fiction and Doctor Who for like the last year and a half,” she said.

Cora Adcock admitted that “my brain

kind of shuts off” whenever she’s watching science fiction — which leads her teenage daughter to accuse her of not being interested in the things she’s interested in.

“This trip,” she said, “is to sort of balance things out.”

From the look on Heidi’s face as she careened around the store, it worked.

The writer, a Wells County resident, can be reached at tischcaylor@gmail.com.

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Indiana's largest art collection is at Haan Mansion Museum in Lafayette

BY ROD KING

The Haan Mansion Museum of Indiana Art in Lafayette is, to say the least, a most unique place.

First off, the mansion was originally the state of Connecticut's pavilion at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. They wanted their building to represent a country gentleman's home. The mansion has three above-ground floors and a full basement for a total of 15,000 square feet. It also has seven fireplaces, four-and-a-half baths, tall porch columns, an open interior circular balconied second floor and crystal chandeliers.

It was specifically designed to be dismantled and moved after the fair. Mr. and Mrs. William Potter purchased it, had it taken apart and shipped to Lafayette where it was reassembled and became their residence. Bob and Ellie Haan acquired it from the Potters, lived in it for 31 years and raised their three boys there.

Long-time art enthusiasts, the couple began attending auctions and buying paintings. Over the years they assembled the largest collection of paintings by Hoosier artists in the state. It features many of the works of T.C. Steele (one of which was on display in the Fine Art Pavilion at the St. Louis World's Fair) along with works by other members of the famous Hoosier Group of artists from the late 1800s as well as the Brown County Art Colony.

One room is full of massive Renaissance Revival furniture including an 1875 Wooten desk made in Indianapolis, a table from the Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C. during Lincoln's presidency and a Bremen orchestral music box from Switzerland that literally has all the bells and whistles and can play 72 songs.

In 2014, the Haans started adding ceramics to their collection, locating and

**HOOSIER
DAYTRIPS**



Lighting the main atrium is this elegant chandelier. Mr. and Mrs. William Potter purchased the home and had it shipped to Lafayette where it was reassembled for their residence. Bob and Ellie Haan acquired it from the Potters and lived in it for 31 years. The house is now operated by a foundation, but the Haans serve as docents.

Top right: The Haan collection displays the many faces of art ranging from metal, glass, clay and fabrics to jewelry, fiber arts and this contemporary ceramic swivel chair by Hoosier Marvin Bartel.

At right: On display are several large ceramic vases that came from the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. There is also a Tiffany clock from the 1893 Chicago Exposition.



purchasing three enormous vases from the St. Louis World's Fair, a Tiffany clock from the 1893 Chicago Exposition and a contemporary ceramic swivel chair by Hoosier Marvin Bartel. Now the collection displays the many faces of art ranging from metal, glass and clay to fabrics, jewelry and fiber arts.

Behind the house is a sculpture garden with 27 works by some of the state's top sculptors. It also includes a .2-mile wheelchair accessible loop trail. The trail is open during daylight hours year-round and is free. In the woods behind the woods is a challenging nature trail.

If you're fortunate to be there when either of the Haans is present, you can

count on getting a wonderful tour. In fact, you'll probably leave knowing more about Indiana art and artists than you ever thought was possible.

Haan Mansion is open Wednesday through Saturday from 1 to 4 p.m. Self-guided tours are \$10 for adults and \$5 for youths five to 17. To get there, drive west on Ind. 124 to Peru and then take U.S. 24 to Ind. 25 and follow it into Lafayette. At 9th Street turn left and drive up the hill to East State Street. Take another left and you'll find the Mansion 100 yards ahead on the left. The museum's website is www.haanmuseum.org

The writer, a Fort Wayne resident, may be reached at natrod2002@yahoo.com



Constructed in 1904 to be the Connecticut pavilion at the St. Louis World's Fair, the structure has seven fire places, four-and-a-half baths, three above-ground floors and a full basement. It was designed to be dismantled and moved after the exposition.

Photos by Rod King

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How to avoid surprise rental car charges

BY CHRISTOPHER ELLIOTT

Brad Cross expected to pay just \$350 for a Honda Accord he rented in June for four days from Avis in Salt Lake City. Instead, the car rental company broadsided him with a surprise \$2,974 charge to his credit card.



“Avis said the rental was extended into a one-way rental and dropped in another state,”

says Cross, a software developer from Maple Grove, Minn. “But that wasn’t me.”

The charge, it turns out, was a mistake (more on that later), but customers are being hit with more “surprise” rental car charges these days — some intentional, some not.

Gone are the times of simple, transparent charges. Hidden fees — also known as junk fees — recently drew the ire of President Biden, who has promised to crack down on them in travel and beyond.

But there are ways to avoid these higher charges. Whether it’s an erroneous bill like Cross’s or a smaller unexpected fee, here are a few tricks.

What are the most common car rental fees?

Car rental fees are up 14 percent this year, according to J.D. Power. The charges include fees to offset the cost of renting at an airport and extras for fuel and insurance. Here are the most common charges.

Additional driver fees: If there’s more than one driver, your car rental company may charge extra. The company may waive the fee if it’s your spouse or if you’re a frequent renter.

Fuel purchase options: Car rental companies will offer to fill up the tank at a premium, so you can avoid having to refill before returning the vehicle. You can avoid this fee by filling the tank on your own. Also note that rental companies don’t refund you for unused fuel.

Insurance: Agents at the counter will try to upsell customers on insurance.

And it’s a hard sell. They may tell you that your auto insurance policy isn’t enough or that your credit card won’t cover you — both usually untrue. The extra insurance can sometimes double the cost of your rental. To avoid this upsell, read your cardmember agreement or auto insurance policy to make sure you have coverage.

Junk fees: These can include airport concession fees (which cover fees the company pays for operating at the airport), license recovery fees (which cover the cost of a car’s license and registration) and even a tire disposal fee. You can’t negotiate these fees off your bill, but they’re usually disclosed before your rental, so you can avoid locations that charge them.

Avoid renting at the airport

One of the top complaints from travelers is the extras added to bills for concessions or airport transportation. These are not new, but airports are almost constantly raising them. Airports charge these to car rental companies and sometimes use the money to build car rental

facilities. Last year, Honolulu International Airport opened a new \$377 million car rental facility funded by a \$4.50 surcharge added to every renter’s bill.

“Airport concession fees can increase your bill by up to 20 percent,” says Roger Broussard, a frequent traveler who publishes a site for pilots.

His advice for lowering your car rental bill: “Avoid renting a car at the airport,” he says.

You can use the courtesy van to get to your hotel and rent from there. Or you can catch a ride-share to an off-site location, though that cost could be more than the extra cost for renting at the airport. Bear in mind, though, that some car rental locations near the airport are also charging fees, so you’ll have to pay attention to the fine print.

Try the ‘pay now’ option

One way to avoid cost overruns is to settle on a price before you rent the car. You can book through an opaque site such as Hotwire, which offers prepaid “Hot Rate” rentals, allowing you to choose a rental location but not

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the agency, which is revealed after you book. The price you see is the total price you'll pay. The risk there is you could get a rental agency with poor reviews.

"To avoid surprises, you can use the 'pay now' option when booking a car," advises Julie Flores, vice president of operations at Rate Highway, a car rental technology firm. "Not only will you see exactly what the final taxes and fees are going to be, avoiding any surprises, you can also get a modest discount by paying upfront for the rental."

Dave Dzurick, a retired broadcast engineer from Tucson, recently discovered EconomyBookings.com, a site that offered several prepaid options. He used it to rent a Hertz sedan in Victoria, British Columbia.

"I paid everything up front, and there were no surprises," he says.

But there's a catch: The "pay now" rates, while sometimes cheaper than "pay later," can be nonrefundable.

Take photos of your vehicle

Continued on page 24

BRAIN EXERCISE

Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9. Answers on page 24.

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On patrol in the Vietnam jungles

AC grad carried first aid supplies instead of a weapon

BY KAYLEEN REUSSER

After graduating from Adams Central High School in Monroe in 1966, Rodney “Rod” Maller worked as a mechanic and attended mechanic school in St. Louis, Missouri, before being drafted into the Army in February 1969.

When Maller registered as a conscientious objector, he was assigned as a medic. Brooke Army Medical Center (then Fort Sam Houston Medical Training Center) in San Antonio, Texas was the Army’s only base that provided training for medics headed to Vietnam.

For two months Maller and other young medics-in-training learned how to administer first aid, CPR, and bandages. They applied splints and sutures, IV’s, shots, and learned how to deal with knife cuts, heat stroke, spider bites, punji stick injuries, and more.



Adams Central graduate Rod Maller served as a medic in Vietnam. He came home to establish Craigville Diesel Service but is now retired. (Photo provided)

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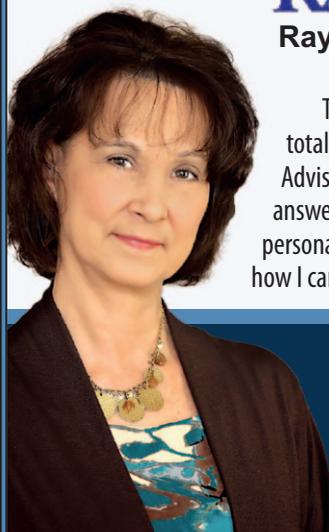
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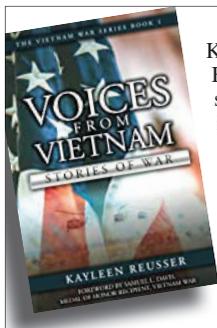
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Upon arriving in Vietnam and assigned to HQ 1st Infantry, 2nd Battalion, 18th Infantry, Company C, Maller with his aid bag strapped to his back accompanied patrols of usually 20 men through jungles and tall elephant grass. As Maller



Kayleen Reusser, of Bluffton, has written a series of books, sharing the stories of area veterans. This is an excerpt from “Voices from Vietnam.” It is available at The News-Banner office in Bluffton and on Amazon.

didn't carry a weapon, he was placed in the middle of the single-file formations.

“The front and back positions were too dangerous as the Viet Cong ambushed many groups,” he said.

When a soldier found a bag on the ground and opened it, a heavy vapor filled the air. The soldier stumbled, his eyes tearing. He hollered in pain.

Maller assessed the noxious agent was probably tear gas powder tossed from a plane. He quickly instructed a sergeant to hold the soldier's now-reddened eyes open while he poured water from his canteen to flush out the gas. Maller continued with the water treatment until the

soldier could see, though everything continued to look fuzzy.

Later, Maller learned the doctor on the chopper who treated the injured soldier approved of Maller's technique of water cleansing. With-

out it, he believed the soldier would have been dead within two hours as the gas would have entered the bloodstream through the eyes.

At the end of the two-week patrols, the troops returned to their fire support base for a day of rest and the opportunity to sleep inside a building, eat a hot meal, and take a shower. They slept on pallets at the fire base to keep away from rodents.

Maller's unit operated next to the Cambodian border near Tay Ninh in a section called “Angel Wing.” Due to its proximity to Saigon, the American government sprayed a substance nicknamed

“Agent Orange” due to the color of the stripe on the barrels it was transported in. It was an attempt to protect residents and troops by killing tall grass surrounding it.

Following his discharge from the Army in November 1970, Maller worked at a farm implement dealership before starting a business — Craigville Diesel Service — with family members in 1975. He had flashbacks about the war for a year, but they eventually ceased. In 1978, Maller married and he and his wife, Pat, became parents to a daughter.

Today, Rod Maller is retired. Possibly due to his exposure to contaminants in the war, he battles diabetes, kidney, heart, and lung problems. But he firmly believes his experiences in Vietnam were good.

“I learned how to listen and have respect for authority and work as part of a team,” he said. “Everyone should go through military training because it would benefit them.”

Do you have a story to tell or know someone who does? kjreusser@gmail.com

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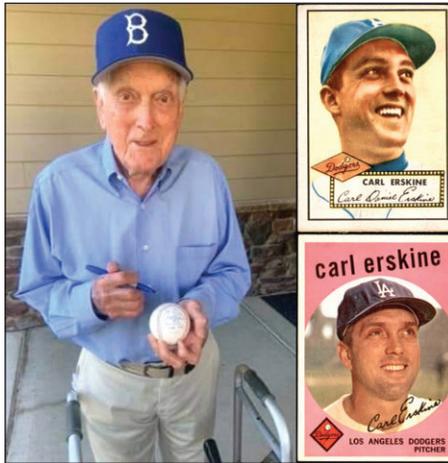
Continued from page 6

Dodgers play-by-play man Vin Scully and the late Pacers coach and Terre Haute native Bobby Leonard. It was Leonard who urged Green to focus a film on Erskine's life.

Erskine, now 95, watched "The Best We've Got" premiere in Anderson, seated alongside Betty. "It was very exciting to see the film, and it was well done," Erskine said shortly after that event in October.

The words of Costas, Scully, Daniels, Leonard and others flattered Erskine. "It was very humbling and I was very appreciative," he said. "Those are people from my life that I admire a great deal."

Shriver is the son of Eunice Kennedy Shriver and the late Sargent Shriver, who co-founded the Special Olympics in 1968. Erskine quietly brought notoriety to those games for people with intellectual and physical disabilities by attending with his son, Jimmy, who competed annually on the Indiana State University campus, where the Indiana Special Olympics began in 1969. The documentary includes rare footage of early Spe-



A more recent photo of Carl Erskine alongside two baseball cards from his playing days.

cial Olympics competitions at ISU.

Decades earlier, Erskine had played minor-league baseball at Memorial Stadium in Terre Haute as a member of Danville, Illinois' Three-I League club.

The Indiana Special Olympics and Erskine's presence there with his son opened eyes. That was especially enlightening in a state where the horrific practice of compulsory sterilization of people with mental disabilities began in

the early 20th century, as Green's documentary explains.

"When you have somebody of that stature in a sports field, people remember it," said Terre Haute's Marlene Lu, past board president of the ARC of Indiana, a nonprofit group advocating for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. ARC founded a vocational training facility for disabled folks in Muncie, the Erskine Green Training Institute, named for Carl and former Indiana University basketball standout Steve Green, whose daughter Jessica was born with Down syndrome.

Green's film project includes an educational element related to Erskine's life, similar to that aspect of his 2018 documentary on Holocaust survivor and Terre Hautean Eva Kor, "Eva: A-7063." Along with the new film's release, a related set of educational materials for Indiana K-through-12 school students will be made available through a partnership with Special Olympics and Duke Energy. The program is called EPIC as the Erskine Personal Impact Curriculum.

Story and photos courtesy of The Tribune-Star, Terre Haute.

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Preventing scams and fraud this holiday season

Scams and fraud are more deceiving these days, reaching you in more ways than ever before. The FTC reported 2.8 million fraud reports from consumers in 2021 alone, with reported fraud losses increasing 70 percent from 2020 and more than \$5.8 million.

Scammers begin their traditional uptick at the start of the holiday season, and identity theft protection expert Carrie Kerskie says being aware of what new cyber and phone fraud trends to look out for is your biggest defense against unwanted fraud.

“The more that we can get this information out there the better,” Kerskie recently told T-Mobile Stories, “Unfortunately when it comes to technology, privacy and identity theft, the same old advice that was given 10, 15 years ago is still the gospel of what you’re supposed to do. And that is outdated. None of it works. It’s not true, it’s not relevant anymore.”

Scammers have expanded from targeting consumers with only traditional email and phone calls. The most recent trending scams are occurring using person-to-person payment platforms or P2P, remote access software and even public Wi-Fi.

Kerskie says the most desirable accounts to criminals include bank accounts, mobile phone accounts, credit card accounts and Amazon accounts. Now, with P2P payment platforms, criminals can get access to your bank account and use it to transfer money within moments.

The latest tactic that concerns Kerskie is using remote access software to gain access to everything on your computer without having to directly ask you for things like your social security number, bank account or credit card number. While many workers use remote access software safely from their companies’ IT departments, criminals are also using this software in their scams.

Criminals also try to access your information in settings like coffee shops or libraries using public Wi-Fi. A laptop or smartphone using public Wi-Fi can easily fall victim to scams. An easy fix is to use your smartphone’s wireless data and hotspot to help keep your personal information secure.



Kerskie says there are ways to keep scammers and fraud at bay ahead of the holiday shopping season.

Prioritize Privacy: Kerskie says, if it’s easy for you, it’s easy for a criminal. Privacy means having strong and unique passwords with a minimum of 12 characters, and for pins using random numbers and taking advantage of extra security. Enabling multi-factor authentication on your various apps and accounts will also protect yourself from potential threats.

Use Available Resources: Take ad-

vantage of the free anti-fraud safeguards offered by your mobile carrier. Most will include enhanced caller ID, scam ID and blocking, which flags suspicious calls and gives customers the option of blocking those numbers. Some carriers also offer a free second number to keep their personal number personal, or even change their primary number completely.

Validate or Eliminate: Whatever potential threat you come across via email, text message, letter or even a phone call, try to validate the information. If you cannot confirm the information is true or confirm the senders’ validity, throw it away, block the phone number or email address and report it as spam or junk mail.

Understanding how potential cyber threats and fraud work will help protect you this holiday season and beyond.

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Unraveling a mystery for a Geneva family

Continued from page 9

area. Could this then-21-year-old man be Robert's father? I argued with myself that noting the father's name would have been too obvious, leaving the parents likely to be discovered and then prosecuted for abandoning their child. But the technologies that make such searches common place today didn't exist a century ago. And, while I noticed the spelling discrepancy of "Glen" versus "Glenn," I'd discovered many searches ago that spelling was of much less importance in days gone by than it is today. It was truly a different era.

I took a break, vowing to return the next day with fresh eyes to further confirm or deny what could be the discovery of Robert's biological father. Some twenty-four hours later, when I retraced the clues that pointed to this Glenn Leslie, I came to the same conclusion. The evidence? Glenn's brother's granddaughter and a grandson matched Sandra at the second-cousin level. That granddaughter's son matched at the second-cousin-once-removed level. Also, Sandra's DNA matched both Glenn's mother's and father's lines. These DNA connections, paired with the name in the note, built a strong case. This was likely as close as we were going to get.

According to archived records, Glenn had fathered only one other child, a son who died of pneumonia at 14 months. That would make confirmation via a closer relative of Glenn's—a child or grandchild—impossible.

I shared the news of a highly probable father identification with the "team." Their excitement fueled my enthusiasm to dig further into the DNA results in search of Robert's mother.



Robert Pontius in his younger years.

The matches on this side were fewer, further removed, and seemed less connected to each other. Days turned into weeks with only minimal progress and most of that in the form of elimination. While Glenn had been married multiple times, none of those wives appeared to be Robert's mother.

Three weeks after embarking on this journey, I had lunch with Dick and his niece Devin. Together we gingerly examined the century-old adoption papers declaring that "Glen Leslie," referring to the infant by the name indicated in the note, would henceforth be known as "Robert Eugene Pontius."

I shared photos of the elder Glenn Leslie generously given to me by the second-cousin DNA match who had

cozied up to the intriguing mystery and lent his detective skills to the search. Although he'd never met the brother of his grandfather, he knew him by way of family stories and his own genealogy research as the "unofficial family historian." He promised to poke around a bit and make inquiries among his cousins. But the extended passage of time meant that few folks still living had even met Glenn, who passed in 1958 at the age of 61.

Until a decade ago when consumer DNA testing became a reality, none of this would have been possible. But thanks to companies like Ancestry, 23andMe, and My Heritage, and more recently, the work of genetic genealogy pioneer CeCe Moore, discoveries like this have become everyday occurrences. Who would have ever imagined that a teaspoon of saliva could provide information to populate unknown branches of a family tree?

While we've not yet uncovered the identity of Robert's mother, the team has not given up. New DNA matches come in almost daily, and I'm hopeful that soon a match will provide the link to the final piece of this puzzle. In the meantime, we tread lightly, mindful that the riddle we're longing to unravel contains secrets that Robert's parents took pains to hide, for reasons we will likely never know. I can't help but wonder whether they ever tried to find the son they felt forced to abandon. While he didn't live to see the unveiling of his biological family tree, Robert's remaining children and grandchildren are excited to learn about the ancestors whose DNA they carry.

Do you have a mystery or question for The DNA Sleuth? bethsteury@gmail.com



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How to create the perfect Charcuterie Board



Are you hosting a holiday party and looking for a simple way to impress your guests?

The Texas Roadhouse Butcher Shop is sharing steps for building an eye-catching and mouth-watering charcuterie board that will add color, flavor and variety to your holiday table.

1. Grab a platter or surface to display your charcuterie. Anything will work, even a simple cutting board. Just be sure to choose a size that you can fill completely.

2. Use dishes or ramekins of mismatched sizes, shapes and colors to hold dressings, toppings and sauces. This will keep your board clean and add fun visual details to the display.

3. Include two to four cheeses of contrasting flavors and textures to please all palates, and to complement other elements of the board. The varieties you select should represent these basic categories: hard cheese, (such as Chardonnay Bellavita-no) soft cheese, (such as brie) and blue cheese (such as French Roquefort).

4. While a traditional charcuterie board typically sticks with cured meats, the holiday season is the perfect occasion for adding depth and richness to your feast with grilled meats, such as filet, sliced into strips. Whether you are firing up the grill or preparing on a cooktop, allow any cooked meats to rest well before adding them to your board.

5. No charcuterie board is complete without some crunch. Add two to three options like pita crackers, crusty breads or toasted baguettes that will stand up to the weight of your meats and cheeses.

6. Now, add some brightness and sweetness to your board. Fresh fruits like blueberries, strawberries and green grapes, and preserves such as peach pepper jam, will add contrast to rich, salty meats and cheeses. Don't forget seasonal sweets and treats like soft peppermints, peanut brittle, chocolate dipped pretzels and candied nuts.

7. You'll want your charcuterie board to look as if it's overflowing. So, as you're building it out, start with the largest elements like the cheeses and meats first, followed by smaller items like crackers, fresh produce and sweets. Fill in any holes with sprigs of aromatic rosemary for trimming, along with additional portions of the smaller items. The various elements of the board should pair well together, so it's okay if they touch.

For additional hosting tips, visit trbutchershop.com.

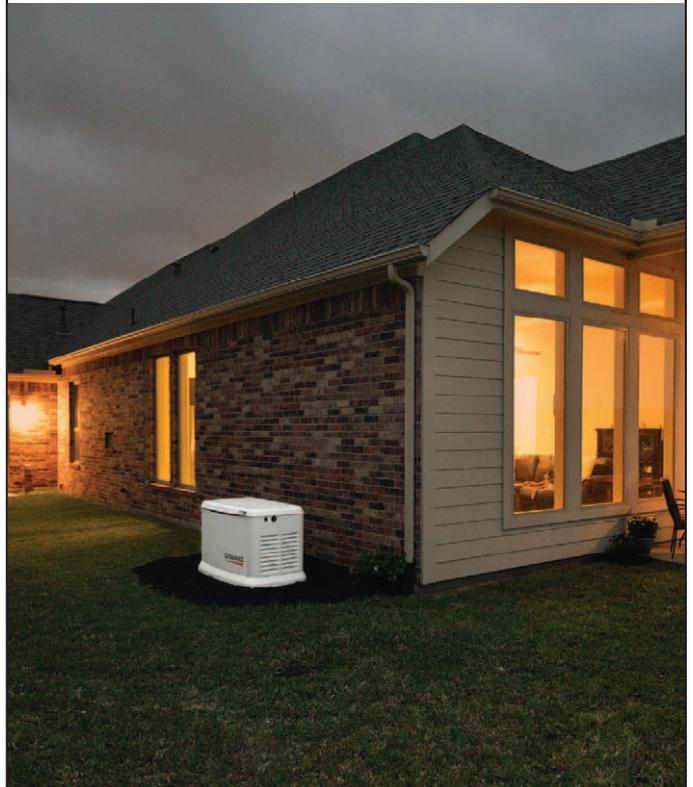
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Solution to puzzle on page 15

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 3 | 1 |
| 3 | 8 | 4 | 9 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 5 |
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| 5 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 7 |
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| 8 | 3 | 9 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 2 |
| 2 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 8 |

Avoiding surprise rental charges

Continued from page 15

Travelers say car rental companies are adding a lot of “gotcha” charges after the rental. For example, when Shanna Schultz dropped her Sixt rental car off in Paris after a family vacation, her company tried to charge her an extra \$200 for a missing trunk cover. Fortunately, Schultz is a travel adviser and knows the pitfalls of renting. She had taken a video of the entire rental when she picked it up.

“I showed the car rental company the video footage from when we had rented the car,” she says. “It showed that the trunk cover in question had not been in the vehicle to begin with.”

The car rental company dropped its claim.

She says taking images of your rental is the best way to avoid a billing surprise. “Before you even put your luggage inside, take a video,” she advises. “Inside, outside, up and down: You never know where they will say that the charge came from.”

Can Avis fix this overcharge?

When Cross called Avis about the

nearly \$3,000 charge, the company asked him for his return receipt. But Cross had already thrown away the receipt. He did, however, have a gas receipt that put him near the airport on the day of his return. It wasn’t enough.

“Unfortunately, we were unable to find any discrepancies in our system regarding the return date,” Avis said in an email. “At this time, we are unable to make any corrections or issue a credit to your account.”

I asked Avis to take another look at his case. It turns out the company had confused Cross’s rental with someone else’s vehicle. It apologized for the misunderstanding and credited his card \$2,624.

Cross was persistent, which may be the most effective way to avoid paying a surprise car rental charge. He kept contesting his bill, with a little help from me, until someone finally agreed to fix the charges.

Christopher Elliott has authored a number of travel books. His columns appear weekly in USA Today and the Washington Post.

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