

HER '63 BEETLE HAS A FAMILY HISTORY | Page 12

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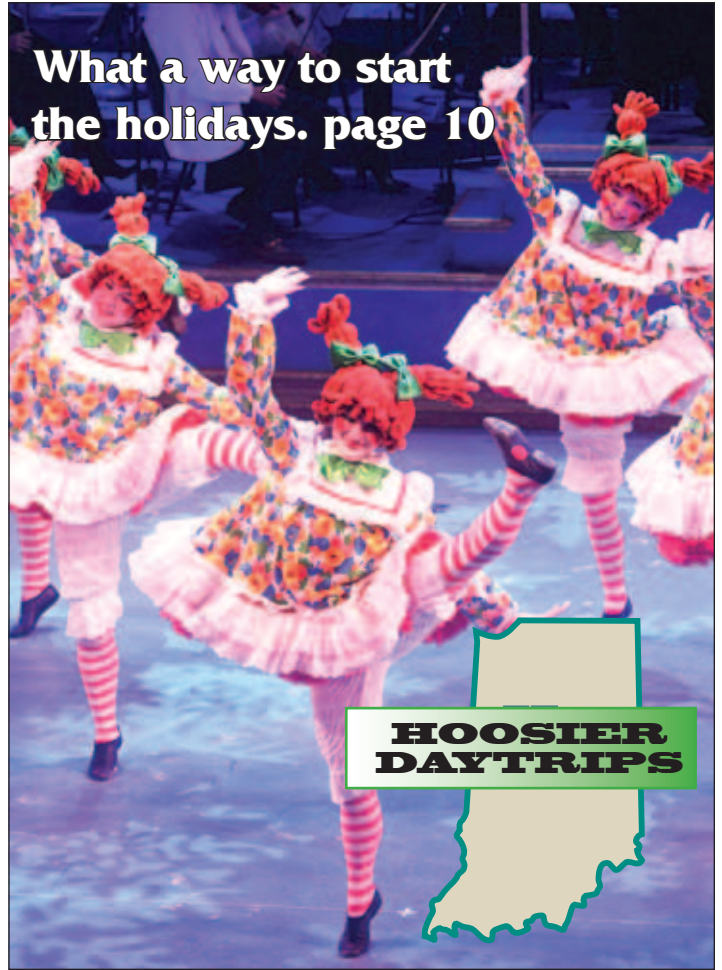
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in early March



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Sewing seasonal greetings

BY MARK MILLER

Virginia Joyner learned how to embroider on her mother's lap when she was five years old. That was more than eight decades ago. She transferred those skills to an embroidery machine and started experimenting with greeting cards about two decades ago. While she enjoys doing that, she refers to it as her "latest job." The real reason she continues to produce seasonal and special occasion greeting cards is so she can go to the farmers' market.

"I just love the market," she will tell you. "I enjoy talking with the people who come through, and it's more than just a community of vendors, it's another family." She can share stories of other regulars at the market and how they all look forward to their weekly gatherings.

She got hooked on the entire process while living in Paoli. She bought her first embroidery machine (she now has three) from her brother who owned a business in Clarksville that sold and serviced sewing machines and vacuums.

Cover Story

"He warned me at the time that I was buying myself another job," she says, chuck-

ling. "I guess he was right."

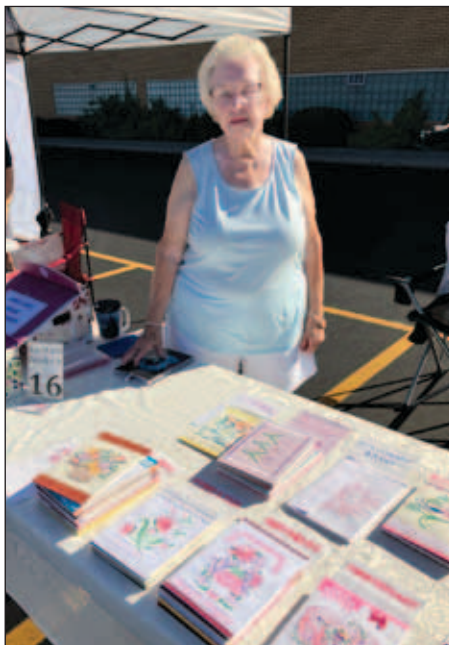
She found herself fascinated by what the machine could do and what creations she could come up with. "It was a whole new world, and I just started exploring. And then I thought maybe I could sell them."

She took her first cards to a farmer's market in nearby Orleans, Ind., and was hooked.

Her greeting cards, however, display only one aspect of a varied and sometimes difficult life that brought her to her current home in Geneva and her now-regular appearances at the markets in southern Adams County with her "Designs by Jinny."

— — —

Looking back, Jinny Joyner has worked third-shift most of her life, or running a farm and raising eight children, which was pretty much a 24-hour



At the Berne Farmers Market on a sunny Saturday morning this past September, Jinny Joyner always has a good selection of her embroidered greeting cards.



In the back bedroom of her Geneva home, Joyner spends her mornings producing the cards which she sells at two farmers markets and accepts special orders.

effort. Even when she owned her own business — which still goes by "Jinny's Cafe" in Bryant — she chose the third shift of the 24/7 truck stop. And for a number of years, she drove semi-trucks on the side.

Where to start?

"Well, when I was a child, I attended nine different schools in nine years," she shares. "And then I quit school at 15 and got married."

When her mother divorced after a difficult marriage, she and her siblings lived with an aunt who had five children of her own. "We walked to school every day in the snow, just like they say," she adds. When Jinny was 9 years old, her mother remarried and the family was reunited but moved to Muncie and then Selma, where she met her first husband. They moved to Ohio where they operated his parents' farmland — actually she operated the farm while her husband worked full time for a farm machinery dealer.

"I milked 21 cows every day, and we had hogs and chickens," she adds matter-of-factly. She also worked the 120 acres of crops while raising their eight children. "When you're young, you do

what you have to do."

They moved back to Indiana in the mid-1960s after her husband's family decided to sell their farms. They landed in Pennville and Jinny took her first third-shift job at Sheller Globe in Montpelier. At some point, she and her husband divorced, ending what she now calls "21 years of hard labor."

She began working as a waitress at what was then called the Bryant Truck Stop. She and her second husband purchased the business in 1972 and renamed it Bob & Jinny's Cafe. It was a 24-hour operation and Jinny chose the third shift in the kitchen. Part of her routine was baking cookies.

"For years, I put some cookies in our mailbox for our mailman every day," she shares with a smile. "I remember his wife once asked me to stop because he really didn't need them."

The 24/7 schedule was year-round, including Christmas, which "I always worked myself so my employees could have it off," she says. The only time it was closed was when her second husband, Bob, died in 1992. "He was a good man," she quickly adds.

"I couldn't find a key," she says. So



"This is where I live," Virginia Joyner jokes, referring to the back bedroom in her Geneva home which is filled with three embroidery machines, hundreds of spools of thread and walls filled with family photos. (Photos by Mark Miller)

they put a sign on the front door that they'd be back after the funeral, which is where the family had the post-funeral meal and gathering. Many of her regular customers were there.

With a daughter helping at the re-named Jinny's Cafe now, Jinny branched out into something that had always intrigued her: Driving the semi-trucks that filled her parking lot. She obtained her Commercial Drivers License and hit the road, at first delivering ingredients for livestock feed and then park-model mobile homes. She can relate a harrowing experience of her first trip to deliver homes to Fargo, North Dakota which forced her to navigate through the Chicago maze of congested interstate highways. This was long before the days of Garmin or GPS.

"I got lost seven times, and got help seven times," she smiles and adds, "but I made it."

Jinny married again in 2000 and continued work at the cafe and drive trucks, but in 2002 she decided to sell the cafe to her daughter and move back to Paoli to care for her aging mother. She took a job at the nearby Caesars Casino as a coat-check girl on, of course, third shift. "You'd be surprised how many people gamble all night," she adds. When the new casino at French Lick was being built, she applied and was hired on the spot as the third-shift cook in the employee cafeteria.

It was during this time that rather than drive trucks, she took up learning how

to use the embroidery machine she had purchased at her brother's store.

"After mom and my sister and brothers died, my kids thought we ought to move back up here to be closer to them," she continues. This was in October 2019 when they bought a home in Geneva, but her husband's health was beginning to falter. He died in July 2020. "Tom was a good man, too," she pauses.

The pandemic gave Jinny the opportunity to revive her embroidery "job," and as soon as things opened back up, she began setting up at the local farmers markets.

— — —

Jinny still maintains "something like a third-shift mentality, I guess you could say." Her daily routine is to rise about 4 a.m. and work on her cards until about noon. She estimates that each card takes about three hours to complete.

"During the winter, I am really building up inventory, because during the market season, it can be difficult to keep up," she says. She is a regular at two markets — the one in the parking lot of First Mennonite Church on Saturday mornings is the larger and lasts for five months from May through September. She also sets up each Wednesday afternoon in June, July and August at the Musselman Wellness Center in Berne.

"Birthday cards sell the most," she says, but the goal is to have at least a dozen in each category to take to the

markets. Exactly how many categories there are is difficult to say, but she easily lists anniversary, baby, wedding, and a variety of holiday cards.

"Christmas cards don't really sell during the market seasons so much,

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but I get a number of special orders for them,” she says. Besides offering her creations at the markets, she can be contacted via her email: vjoyner812@aol.com.

Jinny tries to keep active in other ways, including twice-a-week workouts at the wellness center. “I want to stay healthy and not be a burden on anyone,” she says. She also is active at High Street Church in Geneva which she cleans once a week and takes her turn as worship leader. And she keeps looking for new ways to produce her cards.

Meanwhile, several of her children have passed away. “I’m down to three now,” she says but adds there are a number of grandchildren. One of her surviving daughters has gone back to school after retiring from a successful business career. She has earned degrees as a nurse, a nurse practitioner, in psychiatry and is qualified to be an acupuncturist.

“But she doesn’t do any of them,” she says, “she just enjoys learning about all of that. Maybe she got that from me, because I like to keep learning and keep busy, too.”

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

BRAIN EXERCISE

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Truly unique Lincoln Highway eatery celebrates the Industrial Revolution

BY TANYA ISCH CAYLOR

When Google Maps recommended taking U.S. 30 to get to our destination — in this case, an out-of-state funeral — I chose to view our route through the lens of the Lincoln Highway, the nation's first to go coast to coast.



Hoosier Fun

This mind-set shift doesn't

eliminate the traffic or proliferation of strip-mall scenery. But it reminds me to google eateries connected with that historic corridor rather than settling for whatever chain restaurants happen to catch our eye.

My search led me to “the most unique restaurant on the historic Lincoln Highway,” according to the Indiana Lincoln Highway Association. Stopping at The Industrial Revolution Eatery and Grille in Valparaiso was like working in a museum visit on our trip.

What captures your attention first is the sculpture along the rooftop: A life-sized depiction of one of the 20th century's most iconic American photographs, “Lunchtime on top of a Skyscraper.”

Taken in 1932 during construction of Rockefeller Center in New York City, it captures 11 ironworkers perched on a steel beam 800 feet above the ground, legs dangling, merrily enjoying their midday repast without safety cables or harnesses.

This sculpture had quite a history before it landed on this restaurant's roof. The brainchild of Sergio Funari, a Sicilian immigrant who was enthralled by the photograph after arriving in New York City at age 21 with nothing but the clothes on his back, he began work on the project in 1999.

Funari completed the sculpture shortly after 9/11 and took it to Ground Zero, where it helped lift the spirits of those working to clean up the destruction of



This sculpture by Sergio Funari is based on an iconic photo (right) taken in 1932 during construction of Rockefeller Center in New York City, featuring 11 ironworkers eating lunch on a steel beam 800 feet above the ground. The sculpture on the roof of The Industrial Revolution Eatery and Grille in Valparaiso is one of several life-sized Funari pieces inside and outside the building. (Photo by Bob Caylor)



the Twin Towers.

He then took the sculpture on a national tour, only to have vandals steal one of its figures. The missing piece was found six months later in a wooded area in Queens, New York. Funari repaired the damaged ironworker, who rejoined his co-workers on tour.

The sculpture was eventually purchased by Mike Leeson, an entrepreneur and steel company owner who wanted to create some art of his own when he opened The Industrial Revolution in 2010. His focus: American ingenuity and innovation, with a spotlight on the importance of the steel industry in U.S. history.

Though we were initially disappointed to discover the building is not a refurbished factory, we appreciated the details of its construction, from the exposed distressed steel beams to the handles on the restroom doors, which are made from the actual wrenches used to connect those beams.



This life-sized sculpture of a worker on lunch break saluting first responders shares his seat with patrons awaiting a table at The Industrial Revolution Eatery and Grille in Valparaiso. (Photo by Tanya Caylor)

Continued on page 23

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The DNA does it again

Teamwork solves a 70-year-old mystery

BY BETH STEURY

In the last DNA Sleuth column, I introduced you to Karen and her granddaughter Kaitlyn. I'm thrilled to share with you the rest of Karen's story. It's been an emotionally charged several months for her and those who love her. DNA opened the door to information closed to her for seven decades.



**The DNA
Sleuth**

Karen's story from the beginning ...

In the spring of 1954, David and Rosemary adopted two little girls. The three-year-old they named Karen Sue and the one-year-old they named Jean Ann. One of Karen's earliest memories with her new family remains vividly clear these many years later.

"My dad would sit us down on the brown carpeting near the dresser and tell us that we were their little girls, that they would always love us, and that we were sisters." And he would show the girls the adoption papers that made David and Rosemary their legal parents.

They were raised in St. Marys, Ohio, knowing they'd been born in Lima. Karen recalls that Jeanie enjoyed tattling on her big sister Karen who always seemed to be in trouble.

Fast forward to 1971. At the age of 20, Karen became pregnant, and her parents

sent her to the St. Elizabeth's Maternity Home in Indianapolis where she was known by the last name Floyd, an alias assigned to her by the home. This was common practice during what's been dubbed the "Baby Scoop Era" from the mid-1940s to the early 1970s.

In March of 1972, she gave birth to a baby girl she named Misty. "I was alone to hold her for two days and decide what to do," says Karen, sharing another powerful memory. "The adoptive parents were waiting to have her. I can still remember that day."

Karen remained in the Indianapolis area, never again to reside in her home state of Ohio. A neighbor introduced her to Michael who she married in 1975, and together they raised two daughters and a son.

As Karen neared 60, the longing to find the daughter she'd never forgotten intensified. Her sister-in-law Ann, a genealogy enthusiast, helped Karen launch a search for Misty. Not surprisingly, their efforts were unsuccessful, hampered by sealed adoption records. And time marched on.

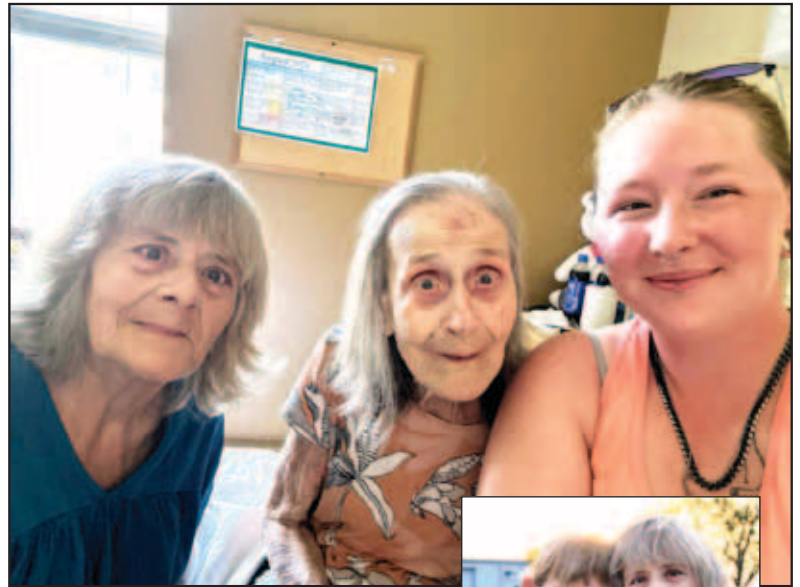
In late 2022, Karen's granddaughter Kaitlyn purchased a 23andMe DNA test for each of them. While Kaitlyn was interested in learning about her ethnicity, Karen had two reasons for complet-

ing the test. She hoped the results might lead her to Misty and maybe she'd learn something about her own biological family as well.

Kaitlyn, who always knew that her "Nanny" had been adopted, dove into sorting her grandmother's DNA matches. The searching duo soon connected with a third cousin match, genealogy-loving Jackie, who offered loads of information on ancestors many-generations-past. But the question of who Karen's birth-parents were and where on Jackie's family tree Karen fit eluded the enthusiastic searchers. And no matches pointed toward Karen's relinquished daughter Misty.

While Karen was a little apprehensive about what, if anything, her DNA results would reveal, Kaitlyn charged ahead. She ordered "Nanny" an Ancestry test, hoping for additional matches to aid both searches. I connected with Kaitlyn via a Facebook DNA search group just days before Karen's results came in. Regular readers will know by now how I gravitate toward adoptees from Indiana and Ohio. I was excited about helping them any way that I could.

Kaitlyn, with her detective hat firmly in place, proved an amazing partner in the search. Many a night, messages



Above, granddaughter Kaitlyn, right, and "Nanny" Karen, left, meet Karen's biological mother Helen, center, in the Ohio nursing home where she now lives. At right, Karen meets her paternal half-sister Mary for the first time. (Photos provided)



flew between us as we scoured Karen’s Ancestry results, connecting these new matches with those from 23andMe and incorporating bits of info from cousin Jackie.

Karen’s hesitancy turned to excitement as the pieces fell into place, marking a path toward a married couple, Harry and Helen, as Karen’s parents. While Harry had passed in 2006, we found no evidence that Helen, born in 1929, had passed away. Karen summed up our collective surprise when she exclaimed, “No one expected her to be alive!”

Kaitlyn’s persistent efforts located Helen in a nursing care facility in Kenton, Ohio. There was no question — Nanny and her granddaughter wanted to meet her. But the discovery produced new, large, looming questions. What condition might Helen be in? Would she remember the events of 70 years ago? Would stirring up those memories upset her?

We’d also tracked down Mary, a paternal half-sibling, living less than an hour from Helen in Port Jefferson, Ohio. Ten years younger than Karen, Mary had heard rumors about her dad, Harry, having two daughters prior to being married to her mother. After connecting via telephone, the sisters were anxious to meet in person. Would they look alike? Share other similarities?

The answers could be found only one way. So, a date was set for Karen and Kaitlyn to trek from central Indiana to central Ohio. The weekend adventure began on Saturday with dinner in Celine where Mary and Karen felt an immediate and intense connection. “You wouldn’t have known they just met in person for the first time,” Kaitlyn later shared with me.

Sunday found Karen and Kaitlyn at the nursing home in Kenton. Kaitlyn’s mother Holly, now living in Germany, and her Aunt Heather, participated via video in what had to be a nerve-wracking yet joyous occasion. Thanks to Helen’s long-term memory being mostly intact, with a bit of prodding, the story unfolded.

Helen had lost her firstborn daughter — Shirley — a child matching Karen’s age and physical description at the time of her adoption. When asked if there was a second, younger daughter, Helen said no. But she confirmed being married to and divorced from Harry, and she

Continued on page 19

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What a way to start the holidays!

BY ROD KING

As holiday shows go there is none better than the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra's Yuletide Celebration. In fact, it's the largest orchestra-produced holiday production in North America. It has everything: dancing, singing, beautiful costumes and a wonderful version of "The Night Before Christmas" story.

The venue is the beautiful Hilbert Theater on the circle in downtown Indy. Yuletide goers are greeted under the marquee by a host of larger-than-life costumed characters who are more than willing to pose for photos. Inside, there are even more. A 30-foot-tall tree dominates the lobby and an organist is playing carols. Children and grandchildren are eagerly awaiting the reading of "How Grinch Stole Christmas." The atmosphere is light and festive and is a great build-up to the two-hour stage show.

Hosting the performance will be popular vocalist Sandi Patty. This year marks her 10th time to host Yuletide. She'll not only sing several songs, but will change gowns and perform with the ensemble.

Santa takes center stage. At first a couple Santas enter from stage right and begin tap dancing. They're quickly joined by a few more until they fill the entire stage. There are 30 of them who conclude their dancing with a kick line reminiscent of the Rockettes of Radio City Music Hall in New York City. Tap dancing Santas have been an audience pleaser and staple of the show since the symphony's initial Yuletide presentation 38 years ago.

Another eye-catching specialty will be the Holly Jolly Dollies. Dressed as Raggedy Anns, the Dollies will spell various holiday greetings with large



HOOSIER DAYTRIPS

building blocks and even throw in a salute to the local sports teams. It looks chaotic as the Dollies assemble words with their blocks but everyone seems to know where they need to be to make sure the words are correct. It's one of the most fun segments of the show.

There's plenty more. A number of specialty dance, vocal and instrumental presentations make for a great change of pace. And, you'll be surprised and amazed at the novelty performers.

Enthralling is the only way to explain "Twas The Night Before Christmas" story. Black-clad puppeteers enter down the main aisle with a cartoonish Santa and his reindeer on 10-foot-tall poles. On stage Santa is lowered into a chimney and out pops a life-size Santa who goes about delivering gifts as the music swells and the story unfolds.

With the children snug in their beds,



Long a staple of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra's Yuletide Celebration are the tap dancing Santas who end their routine with a kick line reminiscent of the Rockettes at Radio City Music Hall in New York City.

Santa goes back into the fireplace and the puppeteers depart back up the center aisle.

Providing smooth transitions between segments and an overall grand musical flow to the show is the 65-musician Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra under the direction of conductor Jack Everly. The tightly choreographed production has a cast of 50 singer/dancers and a crew of 40 back stage, making sure costumes are ready for changes and scenery is set to go on stage. There are no dead spots because everything is kept moving. It's non-stop action.

The show runs from December 6 through December 23. Tickets are available by calling the ISO box office at 317-639-4300.

To get your holiday season off to glorious, colorful, rousing, fun start, plan to attend the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra's Yuletide Celebration.

The writer, a Fort Wayne resident, may be reached at coknoll75@yahoo.com



Strong voices and elegant costumes provide color to the program which is backed by the 65-member Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra. (Photos courtesy of the ISO)



WHERE PEOPLE COME TO HEAR

Most adults received their last hearing screening when they were in grade school. It is a good idea to have your hearing checked yearly when you are an adult at least once during your annual physical.

This screening becomes your baseline, so that later, if you do suffer hearing loss, your hearing specialist can compare your loss to your baseline. This will create a better picture as to how severe your loss is, so that you can be treated appropriately. At Beltone our hearing screenings are always complimentary. It's our way of giving back to the communities we serve.

Hearing Loss Makes Your Brain Work Harder

New research shows that adults with hearing loss experience a 40% faster decline in cognitive abilities. This suggests that the entire brain may be struggling to fill in the gaps caused by untreated hearing loss. Thankfully research is showing that when hearing loss is detected early and treated with hearing aids, the brain can reorganize itself back to its usual operation.

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All in the family



Terrie Moser's '63 Beetle is back home again in Indiana

BY BOB CAYLOR

When Terrie Moser's husband offered to restore a car for her, she reached far into her past — into her family's past in fact.

Her husband, Steve, is well accustomed to preserving family heritage with family cars. He has a 1966 Ford Fairlane, the same one his dad bought for him when he was 16.

For the 1963 VW Beetle he restored for Terrie, there was a longer trip and a more distant relative involved. The Beetle is one she remembered from her teens, when she would ride around in it with cousins. Her second cousin, Glynn Stevens, bought it at a garage sale, drove it for several years, then parked it.

"He parked it there on their land, and it sat there for years and years," she said. Finally her cousin decided he could part with the derelict Beetle. Terrie and Steve drove to Tom, Oklahoma, to pick it up.

In many ways, the Beetle they brought home to Adams County was worse than

it appeared at first sight. It had succumbed to a traditional VW weakness — its floor was severely rusted. The floorboard had so many holes that its battery, beneath the rear seat, rested on a patch made of license plates.

Steve worked some striking modifications into the car, which they named "Patsy," after Glynn Stevens' wife. The most fundamental difference is that instead of the stock 1.2-liter engine, it has an engine displacing more than 1.6 liters. That replacement makes the difference between adhering to historical accuracy and achieving highway speed.

As Steve tells it, "50 was the top end ... It couldn't get out of its own way."

Its wiring is new. And its beautiful upholstery — well, calling it beautiful tells you that it's definitely not original Beetle upholstery. It's a custom burnt-orange and white pattern that echoes the two-tone color scheme of the Beetle's exterior.



It's Terrie Moser's car, but her husband, Steve Moser, did the restoration.

The Volkswagen Beetle was first imported to the United States in 1949; only two VWs were sold here that year. But through the course of the 1950s, it became the best-selling four-cylinder car in the United States. It blazed a trail for a raft of other small imports from Europe and Japan, but none outsold the Beetle.

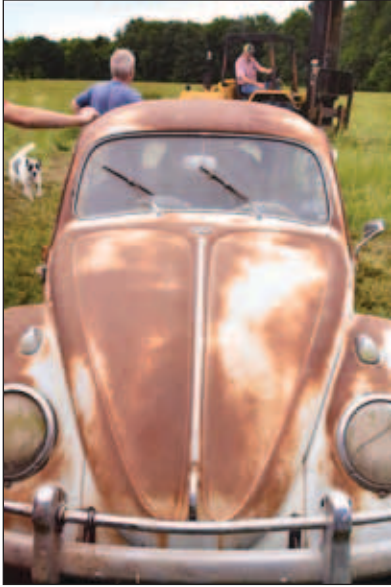
By the time the last Beetles were manufactured in 2003, 21 million of the cars had been sold worldwide, making

it the best-selling car ever.

Though Patsy the Beetle shows more than 74,000 miles on its odometer, it's not adding many miles these days. Its workouts are mostly confined to a few joyrides and trips to classic-car shows.

But even silently garaged, their Beetle carries on a Moser family tradition of preserving automotive and family history simultaneously.

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



At left and above: Steve and Terrie Moser went to Oklahoma to retrieve this Volkswagen Beetle from a cousin of Terrie's who had owned it for decades, resulting in the finished restoration. Below: Steve swapped out the stock 1.2-liter engine for a 1.6-liter for more power. The car now features a custom interior that echoes the two-tone exterior. (Photos by Bob Caylor)



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Avoid travel troubles in '25

From selfish seat leaners to bogus travel sites, here's how to steer clear of problems

BY CHRISTOPHER ELLIOTT

I was stuck in seat 36J on a flight from Tampa to Zürich, Switzerland, and before the plane even started down the rain-slickened runway, the passenger in front of me turned to her companion and asked, "How do I recline this seat?"

Recline the seat? Bad idea!

Edelweiss Air,

the Swiss charter airline I was on, offers a scant 31 inches of seat pitch in economy class. I'm 6-foot-1. The physics translates into nine hours of torture on an overnight flight.

As a traveler, you can spot trouble, too — and with travel hitting more records, there's plenty of trouble to be spotted.

"Travel problems can be mitigated before they become problems," says Harding Bush, associate director for security operations at Global Rescue. But it takes something that's in short supply today: situational awareness, research, and common sense.

I learned a lesson from the Swiss seat leaner

Back to my overnight flight airline disaster. I peered over the seat and saw that the passenger was short and she also seemed to be articulate and well-dressed. Surely, someone like this would never lean her economy class seat all the way back, I thought. I don't need to say a word.

Wrong. No sooner had they served dinner (which was unfit for human consumption) than she jammed her seat as far back as she could. Her seat nearly locked my knees in place. I was already half asleep, but my son, who was seated next to me, took a picture of the spectacle. I was wedged in like a cork in a bottle of Port. There was not even an inch between her seat and my face.

"Never be afraid to speak up," says Becky Blanton, a writer and frequent traveler from Richmond, Va. "But don't be a Karen, or a jackass, or demanding



**On
Travel**



and rude. That doesn't get you anywhere."

I'm embarrassed, but I didn't say anything for the duration of the flight. I just suffered quietly. In retrospect, I should have struck up a friendly conversation when she asked about reclining the seat. I could have said something like, "Save a little space for me, maybe?"

But Blanton is right — don't be a pushover. But also, don't be a jerk.

What kind of trouble should you expect when you're traveling?

Trouble comes in all shapes and sizes when you're going somewhere. Here are a few recent run-ins our readers have had.

• **The fake cop:** Every trip has its risks. For Lauren Milligan, a career advisor from Glen Ellyn, Ill., it was a run-in with a fake traffic cop.

Good thing she'd brushed up on Mexican scams before her last vacation. Sure enough, on the way home from an outdoor market, they were pulled over by a fake cop, who quickly offered to settle her "ticket" for a cash payment. (The fake cops demand you pay your ticket immediately.) She talked her way out of the fake ticket by saying she had to fly back to the States the following morning and had no cash. "¡Que aventura!" she says.

• **The ding and dent scam:** Here's one of the biggest problems travelers run into when they rent a car: a bill from their car rental company for damaging their car. I've also seen this in

hotels and vacation rentals.

There's only one way to avoid that problem: Take "before" and "after" photos of the vehicle, including the license plate, VIN, and dashboard readings (mileage and fuel level). And if there's even the smallest ding or dent, ask for a different car.

"Don't leave the rental car location if you are not 100 percent satisfied with the condition of the car," says Tom Hariman, an attorney from Clarksville, Md. "Even if you are in a hurry."

• **Bogus travel sites:** Yep, they're still out there, and they're pretty clever. Scammers try to mimic or impersonate popular travel websites, spoofing familiar branding, logos, and company verbiage. They're so convincing that even an, ahem, experienced consumer reporter sometimes has trouble recognizing them.

Darius Kingsley, head of consumer banking practices at Chase, said there's an easy solution. Go directly to the website instead of finding it through a search. "Always pay through the service's official website," he says. Going off-site or paying with a money transfer is just asking for trouble.

• **Unruly guests:** When you travel, your powers of observation are important, says Kellee O'Reilly, a consultant and frequent traveler from Wayzata, Minn. For example, if you're having a romantic dinner at a restaurant, look around.

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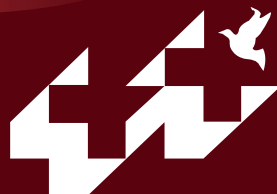


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Christmas tissues, towels and soap

Finding the balance between my thriftiness and celebrating the holidays

BY BETH STEURY

Early December always finds our household in full-scale, operation-Christmas mode. We had to kick it into high gear this year what with Thanksgiving falling within the last three days of November.



You see, we maintain a strict “no Christmas until after Thanksgiving” rule, devoting ourselves throughout November to all things fall and Thanksgiving — and I love every minute of it. Right down to the pumpkin spoon rest on the stove, the various leaf and pumpkin shaped dishes hosting an assortment of autumn-themed snacks and confectionaries, and the Beanie Baby turkeys (yes, we have two) on the entryway bookshelves.

While I admit to some mental Christmas planning in November, we immersed ourselves fully in this year’s unseasonably warm fall while delighting in the mix of still blooming flowers next to the rich autumn hues of a plentiful array of pumpkins and gourds.

On the morning after Thanksgiving, we flipped the switch to all things Christmas, turning our time and attention to the shopping, the baking, the card sending, the music, the holiday entertaining, and of course, the decorating. Festive splashes of red and green, gold and silver surrounded by the warm glow of Christmas lights.

Imagine my joy when, about a dozen years ago, I stumbled upon Christmas-themed tissues boxes. (You can’t — imagine my joy, that is.) I scooped up several, calculating how soon I could swap the regular ol’ tissue boxes for the special holiday ones. I may or may not have suggested to the family that they “go easy” on their use of tissues, pointing out that toilet paper would work just as well for a drippy nose. But fearing they would be lacking in the self-control and/or paying-attention department, I tucked the special tissues away until moments before the holiday company arrived throughout the month.

The next year when I dashed to the



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store to snag more boxes of Christmas-themed tissue than I'd purchased the previous year, I found just three beat up boxes. Beat up as in apparently, someone had used these oh-so-special red, green, and gold adorned boxes as a kickball. Because I knew I would see the with every glimpse of their sorry state were I to buy them, I left the store empty-handed. I consoled myself on the drive home. I'll find some online. And sure enough, find them I did, in all of their holiday splendor. Three beautiful boxes for only \$19.86. I nearly choked at the price. My love of all things Christmas collided with my thrifty nature, and my cost-consciousness won.

You'll be relieved to know that I did come upon a few less festive yet somewhat-holiday-festooned boxes of tissue that stood in for the stunningly-decorated ones from the previous year. I'm sad to report though, that in recent years, both the supply and selection of Christmasy tissue boxes has dwindled. Might it be that too few folks share my utter delight with holiday tissue boxes? It pains me to consider this very likely scenario.

Christmasy kitchen and bathroom towels also hold a special place in my heart. Over the years, my collection has grown — a gift here, a sales rack that beckoned there, and I inherited some when my mom passed. She also liked Christmas towels. Unlike tissues that run out each year, the same holiday towels can be enjoyed from year to year. But, because I want these beauties to stay nice, I used to ration them in a similar fashion as the tissues, only hanging them in place when the arrival of December guests was imminent. But a very-Covid, no-entertaining Christmas in 2020 convinced me to use and enjoy the holiday towels and tissues every day in December.

It's now a tradition we've continued to observe.

In line with my tendency toward frugality, I once resisted purchasing wonderfully scented, seasonally decorated, and holiday-themed hand soaps. But a particularly enticing discount campaign a



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A holiday favorite from an old friend's kitchen

Christmas is almost here. If you're short on time and cash, I suggest making this delicious recipe for spiced pecans. I whipped it up in less than 15 minutes. Allow 30 minutes for them to cool and you are ready to scoop these luscious gluten-free snacks into cute jars with ribbons attached to hand out as nice gifts.



The recipe couldn't be simpler. Make it with kids to give them the great feeling of creating a yummy culinary delight.



This recipe comes from the cookbook of the Missions Committee of Sonlight Wesleyan Church of Bluffton. The copyright date is vague – 1968-1987. I'm guessing it's closer to the latter years, due to the good condition of the

cookbook, which I purchased in a local online auction.

This recipe was submitted for the cookbook by an old friend – Betty Surbaugh. Betty's kitchen was cozy and I can imagine her making these tasty treats for friends and family.

Spiced Pecans

- 1 pound pecan halves
- 1 egg white
- 1 Tbsp. water
- 1 c. sugar
- 1 t. salt
- 1 t. cinnamon

In large bowl beat egg white and water until foamy, not stiff. In small dish mix sugar, salt and cinnamon. Pour nuts into egg white and stir until coated. Add sugar mixture, stirring until coated (I used my hand for both steps). Spread on foil lined cookie (I used two 9"x12" pans covered with parchment paper). Bake for 30-45 minutes in 300-degree oven. Let cool for 30 minutes. You may have to break sections apart to place in gift bags or on a tray. This makes eight cups.



For more vintage recipes visit www.KayleenReusser.com

The writer, a Bluffton resident, may be reached at kjreusser@adamswells.com

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The DNA Sleuth

Continued from page 9

certainly remembered her young daughter Shirley.

“Our time with Helen was full of laughs and tears. We were full of all kinds of emotions,” says Kaitlyn. A happy Nanny and granddaughter left the nursing home with a promise to visit again.

Boy, would I have liked to be a fly on the wall for those first visits.

Kaitlyn’s tech-savviness combined with dedication and persistence had paid a big dividend. Karen had hoped to find answers to the “who” questions but also the “why” and the “how.” Meeting Helen confirmed the “who,” but the details of “how” and “why” Shirley was removed from Helen’s custody remained sketchy. Had Helen tried to get Shirley back? Had Harry known that his daughter(s) were being adopted? And what about Jeanie?

Before a second visit to Helen, a DNA test confirmed that Karen and Jeanie were indeed full sisters. And when they gently asked Helen, again, about another daughter, she briefly remembered a Ruth, although the memory seemed to quickly waft away. Helen did remember then-Shirley-now-Karen from the previous visit. She looked at her daughter and asked, “Shirley, how did you find me?”

This visit drew the attention of the home’s staff as news of the mother-daughter reunion had already circulated throughout the facility. Grasping the importance of what was happening, the staff excitedly popped in and out of Helen’s room to witness the family reunion.

Karen, who gladly answers to the name Shirley to make it easier for Helen, looks forward to spending more time with both Helen and Mary in the future. In the meantime, she’s trying to process all that she discovered and accept that some questions will likely never get answered.

She’s enjoying sharing pictures from the visits with family and friends, and she loves hearing folks exclaim about the resemblance between mother and daughter. At this time, Jeanie has chosen not to meet either Helen or Mary, a decision the rest of the family respects.

Karen finds it both mind-boggling and sobering to discover that, for a short time, Helen lived less than an hour

from her in the Anderson area. And she’s finally beginning to understand the deep longing she’s experienced for Ohio, a yearning that for decades urged her to visit whenever she could. She admits to being surprised by the feelings of loss and anger woven between the happiness and smiles.

While she’s excited to have found family on each side of her biological family, the discovery reminds her of the many years they lost. Those are both sentiments that I identify with on a deep level.

The search for Misty continues. While an adoptee can utilize DNA matches with siblings, aunts/uncles, nieces/nephews, and generations of cousins to aid their search for biological family, a birth mother must match directly with the child she relinquished or the child’s children/grandchildren. And while more states now allow adoptees to access their original birth certificates, no state offers birth mothers access to their relinquished child’s information.

Using Misty’s birth date and a memo-



Full sisters Karen and Jeanie at play soon after being adopted. (Photo provided)

ry of Karen’s, that the adoptive parents may have been from New York, we’ll keep looking while crossing our fingers that Misty or her children will take a DNA test.

DNA does not lie, and I’m happy about that. Because genetic identity matters.

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

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What older adults should know this RSV season

Each year, up to 160,000 older adults living in the United States are hospitalized and as many as 10,000 die due to respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). It is a highly contagious virus that spreads through close contact with infected individuals, typically increasing during the fall and peaking in winter.

While most people with RSV develop mild symptoms, like that of a common cold, RSV can cause severe illness in older adults, especially those with certain medical conditions, like chronic lung disease, chronic heart disease or a weakened immune system. That's why the American Lung Association, with support from GlaxoSmithKline, is encouraging adults at increased risk for severe illness to protect themselves against RSV. Here's what they want you to know:

Severe Illness is Preventable

In 2023, RSV vaccines became available to help protect older adults from severe RSV illness, however, according to the most recent data, only 24% of older adults received it. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends RSV vaccination for adults aged 75 and older, and adults ages 60 to 74 at increased risk for severe RSV disease. You can get vaccinated any time, but the best time to receive an RSV vaccination is late summer and early fall before RSV starts to spread in the community. If you have already received an RSV vaccine, you do not need another one. Talk with your healthcare provider about whether RSV vaccination is recommended for you.

"Vaccination is critical to saving lives and reducing hospitalizations during the respiratory virus season, but unfortunately, not enough older adults are getting vaccinated and disparities persist that put some populations at increased risk of severe illness," says Albert Rizzo, MD., chief medical officer of the American Lung Association.

National Immunization Survey data shows that RSV vaccination rates vary, with 27% of white/non-Hispanic adults having received a vaccine, compared to 21% of Black/non-Hispanic adults, and 15% of Hispanic/Latino adults. At the



same time, Black and Hispanic/Latino populations have higher rates of underlying conditions that increase the risk of severe RSV illness.

Healthy Habits Can Also Help Stop the Spread

In addition to vaccination, you can help stop the spread of RSV with these

everyday actions:

- Washing your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds
- Covering your coughs and sneezes with a tissue
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick
- Staying at home when you are sick and avoiding close contact with others
- Cleaning frequently touched surfaces
- Taking steps for cleaner indoor air

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. However, if you do get sick with RSV this winter, be sure to watch for signs

of severe illness, such as shortness of breath and worsening symptoms, and seek prompt medical attention if needed," says Dr. Rizzo.

For more information about RSV in adults and to learn steps to prevent severe illness, visit Lung.org/rsv.

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Enjoy extra time with family thanks to this simple, flavorful appetizer

The holiday season is a special time unlike any other period over the course of a calendar year. A festive atmosphere undoubtedly contributes to the unique, warm vibe of the holiday season.

Increased opportunities to spend time with family and friends also make the holiday season special. Such gatherings may take place at restaurants or other public spaces, but many families also celebrate by welcoming friends and relatives into their homes each December. Hosting is no small task, particularly when hosts must feed a crowd. However, choosing simple recipes, such as this one for “Green Asparagus Wrapped In Roast Beef” courtesy of Lines+Angles, can free up time to socialize with loved ones.



Green Asparagus Wrapped In Roast Beef

Makes 4 servings or 8 appetizers

- 8 thick asparagus, woody ends removed
- 8 slices roast beef, cold, trimmed of excess fat and gristle
- 1 cup cottage cheese
- 2 scallions, or spring onions, chopped
- Salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

1. Blanch the asparagus spears in a large saucepan of salted, boiling water for 2 to 3 minutes until tender to the bite.

2. Drain and refresh immediately in a large bowl of ice water. Remove from the water after 3 minutes and pat dry. Season with salt and pepper.

3. Spread the slices of roast beef with the cottage cheese. Place an asparagus spear at one end of the slice and roll into a cigar shape, enveloping the asparagus in the center.

4. Arrange on a platter and sprinkle with chopped scallion before serving.

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Total time: 15 minutes

Difficulty: Easy

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Hand-painted inspirational quotes adorn the “misfit brick” walls inside The Industrial Revolution in Valparaiso, which are overlaid with distressed steel. Owner Mike Leeson’s favorite, according to the restaurant’s website, is this one by Thomas Edison: “If we did all the things we are capable of doing, we would literally astonish ourselves.”



“Mom’s Famous Doubleshift Pot Roast” is used as a topping on this burger from The Industrial Revolution. The Valparaiso eatery has been named “the best themed restaurant in Indiana” by Eat This Not That, as well as “the most unique restaurant on the Lincoln Highway” by the Indiana Lincoln Highway Association. (Photos by Bob Caylor)

Truly unique eatery

Continued from page 6

Century-old “misfit bricks” bore hand-painted quotes from luminaries such as JFK, Vince Lombardi and Thomas Edison.

A steel fabricated train, suspended from the ceiling, travels above diners’ heads before disappearing into a tunnel that leads into the kitchen. A miniature Funari figure rests by the tunnel as the train passes by. Other Funari sculptures are incorporated inside and out, including a life-sized worker on lunch break who shares his seat with patrons awaiting a table.

The museum-quality art and industrial comfort food — the restaurant’s website labels it “upscale industrial” —

captivated us so much that we stopped for another meal on the way back from the funeral.

I was drawn to Mom’s Famous Double Shift Pot Roast, but was more intrigued by the way it was incorporated into other dishes than the entree itself. It was a topping on my burger on our first visit, and was featured on my brick oven-fired “Opportunity Pizza” on our second visit.

My husband, Bob, was tempted by the Beef Stroganoff, but ultimately settled on Patrick Henry’s Liberty Chili, which was surprisingly sweet, and the Legendary Meatloaf, which he pronounced just about perfect.

Given that both visits occurred the weekend before the election, I’d been a bit concerned, noting the American flag

toothpicks in the online food photos, that this restaurant might have morphed into a partisan outpost in the years since it opened.

But like a museum, the ambience was solely focused on its subject matter. Of the many screens inside, none were tuned to Fox News or CNN. Most featured documentaries such as “Modern Marvels,” the long running History Channel program focusing on science, history, technology, engineering, architecture and industry.

It was a welcome relief to enjoy a space celebrating the best of America without having to choose sides.

The writer, a Wells County resident, is the author of “A Swiss Banker in Indiana Farm Country,” available on Amazon and at Faith & Life Books in Berne. She can be reached at tischcaylor@gmail.com.

Christmas tissues, towels and soap

Continued from page 17

few years ago pulled me in. I relented, concluding that these still-somewhat-splurgy bottles of foaming hand soaps fit perfectly into our holiday atmosphere. And no one has complained that the smallish amount of water I add has detracted from their handwashing experience.

Which reminds me of a soap-related incident that happened last Christmas during the tricky transition time between Thanksgiving and Christmas. My grandson marched out of the bathroom inquiring, “Gram, why are we still us-

ing the fall soaps?” I had everything in place for Christmas except for the soap. He’d caught me. I instructed him to choose a Christmas soap from the bottom drawer in the big bathroom and place one at each sink. He’s always been my best helper when it comes to holiday decorating.

In early-November, as I considered the potential Christmas tissue yearly challenge, an intriguing thought materialized. Honestly, I don’t know why I didn’t think of this sooner. Of course, it would have been a much grander idea five or so years ago when the boxes

boasted more shimmer and shine. But still.

Why not carefully flatten the empty tissue boxes, press each box between a layer or two of the gift-wrap tissue paper I carefully preserve from year to year, and store them in one of the Christmas décor totes? Then, next year, pop the box into its original shape, and insert the mound of tissues from a plain, ol’ — probably cheaper — tissue box. If carefully taped closed, no one will ever know. An idea that checks both the thrifty and the holiday spirit boxes. Now, what could be better?

The writer, a Berne resident, can be reached at bethsteury@gmail.com

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Solution to puzzle on page 5

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

Avoiding travel troubles in '25

Continued from page 14

“If you see a family with three unruly children, ask the host to seat you somewhere else,” she says. Always be a step ahead to avoid trouble, and ask the staff to become your ally.

This applies to other situations as well, including hotels with potentially bad rooms, airline seats, and even a rideshare driver who gives you an “off” vibe, she says. Think two or three moves ahead like a chess game.

• **Say something:** What do all these things have in common? Smart travelers are proactive when it comes to staying out of trouble. They anticipate everything from dented rental cars to bogus sites, and they speak up right away instead of waiting for someone to address the problem.

“Don’t settle for the dregs when you were promised high quality,” says Mitch Krayton, a travel advisor based in Denver.

Oh, and one more thing.

Want to stay out of trouble?

Don’t forget to do this

How not to become a statistic? Well,

one of best ways to sidestep trouble is to pack your manners.

“Remain pleasant,” says John Gobels, chief operating officer of Medjet, an air medical transport program for travelers. “That’s the number one way of preventing escalation. You could approach the situation with hostility, but honestly, you will get your problem handled much, much better if you’re nice.”

Next year, travel trouble can come in many forms, from seat leaners to rowdy travelers. And while the problems don’t fit into a neat category, the solutions do. Look around, be prepared and use common sense. You would be shocked by how many travelers fail to pack these simple strategies when they hit the road.

Then again, if everyone did, I might not have a job.

Christopher Elliott has authored a number of travel books. His columns appear weekly in USA Today and the Washington Post. email him at chris@elliott.org.

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