



Annie Lane
Dear Annie

Being kind shouldn't cost you

Dear Annie: Please help me convince my 72-year-old husband to stop engaging in conversations with telephone solicitors. He gets several calls a day on his cellphone from car warranty companies, solar companies, etc., and he insists on letting them talk and ask questions for several minutes.

Eventually, he says something like, "Thank you for caring about me, I appreciate your call," before ending the call. The problem is that he answers questions and says "YES" on these calls. I have let him know that unscrupulous phone solicitors can sometimes use his answers to effect a scam on him. Please help!

—My Husband Is Being Taken Advantage Of

Dear MHIBTAO: Your husband sounds like a kind man who is genuinely interested in others. However, his kindness shouldn't be used against him. And, unfortunately, that happens far too often with phone and online scams. There are now protections consumers can put in place to stop the countless robocalls. Millions rejoiced when the Federal Trade Commission created the National Do Not Call Registry. Adding your name to the list makes it illegal for telemarketers to call you.

Most major phone carriers give you tools to identify, filter and prevent suspected robocall numbers from dialing or texting your phone. Some require an extra monthly fee to activate these services, but network-level blocking is free of charge across all the carriers.

Here's another feature available on any iPhone and Android — the ability to block specific numbers. Although this cannot possibly stop every robocall and spammer number, you can at least block recurring ones.

But be advised: If you answer the phone and the caller (often a recording) asks you to hit a button to stop receiving calls, just hang up. Scammers often use these tricks to identify and target live respondents. Once they know the number is active, you may be targeted by more calls in the future.

Knowledge is power, and now that you know some tricks to help stop the calls from coming in, you can help your husband not be the victim of a scam.

...

Dear Annie: In your response to the three workers who are tired of their boss taking coffee, I would like to offer some advice as well.

Being a manager at a company myself, these "employees" who feel the need to snub their boss might look at things from his point of view.

He is still keeping three people on payroll during a pandemic when most Americans cannot afford the essentials, and these three are worried about their coffee.

Perhaps if they offer to help pay the electric bill, the heating bill or the trash, water and janitorial bills, he would be inclined to pitch in for the coffee.

—Management in Colorado

Dear Management in Colorado: Your letter is a bit harsh, but I'm printing it because I always love getting multiple viewpoints.

Remember, the employees were not asking the boss to buy their coffee. They were upset because they brought their own coffee, and he was helping himself to it. Would you think the boss has a right to eat their lunch, too, because he is paying the utility bills?

Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

National NURSES WEEK



Celebrate nurses

This week is National Nurses Week, followed by National Skilled Nursing Care Week, and now more than ever it's important we celebrate these frontline workers.

In a normal, every day, run-of-the-mill sort of year, nurses deserve our thanks. They are often the first people you see when you visit the doctor and they are often the last you'll see.

But in over a year's time, nurses, along with so many other medical professionals, have been pushed and challenged like never before, and by now, we all know why: COVID-19.

We've heard stories from around the world how those in the medical profession have felt the pressures of the pandemic, a forcible bend-

Our opinion

ing applied to the medical profession by this medical crisis and they have stood tall in the face of these tests, standing alongside their medical kin to weather the storm.

Quite frankly, we can't afford to have a break in a nurse's defense. Their profession requires a selflessness that many of us wouldn't even recognize, and since early 2020 and now into 2021, the pressures have only multiplied and yet, there are nurses.

The same can be argued for those in the skilled nurses profession who have felt their own pressures. Those working in this profession account for many of the staff in

long term care facilities, and while their strains were different in many ways, they were in no way less important. These nurses cared for the most vulnerable of our population in situations that required the closing of nursing homes to outside family and friends. Their care came in isolation throughout most of this pandemic, but they continued on to ensure the elderly in their care continued to get the care they deserve.

And so we hope that you will join us in saluting the women and men in the nursing profession these next two weeks and continue to keep them in our thoughts.

We are proud of the work they do on our behalf and we continue to support them into the future.

Want broadband deployed statewide? Work with electric cooperatives

The COVID-19 pandemic created many challenges in the past year, including forcing school districts and business owners to figure out how to conduct operations on virtual platforms. That problem is exasperated in rural areas of the state that don't have high-speed internet access.

Surprisingly, even a full year after the pandemic's onset, 440,000 Minnesotans still do not have access to a wired broadband connection with 25 Mbps or faster speeds. Another 125,000 do not have any wired internet providers with services available at their place of residence, according to the organization BroadbandNow.

Just like water and electricity, broadband has quickly emerged as an essential service, and border-to-border broadband access is a state priority.

Historically, when large companies win state and federal grants to expand broadband access, they often cherry-pick a path serving larger population centers to enhance profits. This approach, while beneficial for investors, results in islands of unserved and underserved communities that become even more difficult and expensive to reach. Without a financial incentive to serve the smaller and more rural areas, they are bypassed time and time again for larger, more profitable



Darrick Moe
President, CEO Minnesota Rural Electric Association

service areas.

In the 1930s, a similar situation unfolded in rural Minnesota. For-profit utilities had the opportunity to bring electricity to rural communities, but many of those companies chose not to build power lines in the areas. Fast forward 90 years, and profitability is now preventing deployment of broadband in rural communities.

With a primary mission of serving the needs of the communities they serve, not-for-profit electric cooperatives came to the rescue for rural America by stringing power lines in smaller, less populated areas. Today, electric co-ops can be an asset in making broadband accessible to all Minnesotans.

Unlike any for-profit business or governmental entity, electric cooperatives already have the critical infrastructure in place that is needed to bring broadband to every corner of the state. Minnesota's 44 distribution cooperatives serve 1.7 million Minnesotans in all 87 counties and operate the largest distribution network in the state

with more than 135,000 miles of electric lines.

Minnesota's electric cooperatives can be part of the solution to bridge the digital divide. The cooperative business model, existing infrastructure and proven history make electric co-ops natural champions for deploying broadband to rural America. However, there is a legal challenge that must be addressed first.

Currently, if an electric co-op wants to deploy broadband or partner with a telecommunications company to deploy broadband, they must first get a newly signed easement agreement from every landowner that gives the co-op express permission to use the easement for broadband purposes. However, obtaining new easements is an extremely time-intensive and expensive task.

To address this legal challenge, the Minnesota Rural Electric Association has worked with state legislators to draft HF 686/SF 1304. This bill would allow co-ops to use their current electric service easements to also deploy broadband, providing they give easement holders six months' notice in a bill insert or via first-class mail and recognize a landowner's right to commence legal action or seek damages for a fair market decrease in property value.

This legislative bill

supports Governor Walz's initiatives to develop strategies to unlock the benefits of universal access to broadband for all communities in Minnesota while supporting inclusion, equity and children's initiatives. High-speed internet services are essential to community development, economic growth and prosperity, and educational attainment across the state.

State legislatures in at least 18 states have ushered in better rural connectivity by passing new laws that enable electric cooperatives to expand high-quality internet access. It's time for Minnesota to join this group of progressive leaders by helping to bring high-speed broadband access to unconnected rural communities.

Deploying broadband is a significant financial investment and often requires several organizations to collaborate on bringing solutions to impacted areas. While it may not be financially prudent for every electric cooperative to participate in deploying broadband, passage of this bill will provide Minnesota with another tool to bridge the digital divide.

Darrick Moe is the president and CEO of the Minnesota Rural Electric Association, a nonprofit trade association serving Minnesota's electric cooperatives.

ONLINE POLL

Gov. Tim Walz recently said there is hope the Minnesota State Fair could look somewhere close to normal this year. What are you most excited for in this year's State Fair?

- Food
- Rides
- Concerts
- 4-H

Poll active tonight at 5 p.m.

Austin Daily Herald

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Evan Frost/MPR news

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Joyce Poshusta
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Mower County Board of Commissioners

Commissioner Polly Glynn - Chair (Second District)
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HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY?

Email a letter to newsroom@austindailyherald.com or mail it to 310 2nd St. NE, Austin, MN 55912

Throwing a wrench into the mental game

Echoes from the Loafers' Club Meeting

I'm not sure. I can't believe you don't know how old you are. I used to know, but I think I'm older than that now.



Al Batt
Herald Columnist

Driving by Bruce's drive

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. When I was a young and cherubic chucklehead, a neighbor kid traded two toads for an ancient baseball glove of mine, which was more of a potholder than a glove. He threw in enough slugs in a coffee can to feed the toads for a week. My father said that two toads for that baseball glove wasn't a fair deal. I had to give the neighbor kid one of his toads back. I raised peafowl for years. I did so because the peafowl is the national bird of India. Nah, that's

not true. I raised them because of the peacock's beautiful tail with eyespots. The peacocks flew to the top of tall oaks and called loudly, "May-awe!" I make the same sound when I hit that sensitive place on my elbow. Some people call it the funny bone, but there's nothing funny about hitting it. It's the crazy bone. If you had a slight imagination, it sounded as if the bird was crying for help. I know, because the neighbors, the Hollands, phoned my mother to ask who needed saving.

Time is of the essence
My job was to hold the

light and to run and get a wrench of a specific size as my father did emergency repairs on some mechanical thing. I repeated the wrench retrieval process until I'd garnered the correct size. I was a gregarious gofer, a fine fetcher and a terrific toter. One day, after many miscues wherein the wrong wrench insisted on jumping into my hand and I'd no need to count my steps, I walked the entire toolbox of wrenches to the repair site. My father smiled. He'd taught me to use my head instead of my feet.

What's in a name?

I walked down the trail as a group of birders followed me. I was in good company as I pointed out birds, flowers, green darter dragonflies, paper wasps and cabbage white butterflies. One of the group introduced himself as Bjorn and asked where

he might see a white-faced ibis. I said, "Bear." He gave me a puzzled look. "Bjorn means bear," I said. He didn't know that, but asked what my name meant. "Doofus," I replied.

Someone's ear was on the floor

I found a lucky four-leafed clover. It had only three leaves. I decided good luck would come in handy on a visit to the barber. The barbershop was busy. There was a barber queue. I sat down and waited my turn. I tried not to think about the weather. Once I start contemplating the weather, I don't know where to stop. When asked what I'd been up to, I said, "Pad kid poured curd pulled cod." Researchers from MIT had dubbed this tongue twister the world's most difficult. I heard crickets in the barbershop. The barber said that before he got started, he needed to

know if I'd brought a hat. Then he asked if I wanted my hair cut shorter or longer. I told him to measure twice and cut once.

Bad joke department

The world's record for the longest drum solo was 10 hours and 26 minutes. It was performed by the child sitting behind me on a flight from Los Angeles to Tokyo.

What's the opposite of a croissant? A happy uncle.

The three words that best describe me are "lazy."

Does anyone else have difficulty remembering the abbreviation for Maine or is it just ME?

Customer comments

Birds stopped me in my tracks. I showed a yellow-crowned night heron to a group of birders. One asked, "Is it supposed to be here?" I said, "It's OK with me."

Bob Janssen of Golden

Valley said, "If I could have only one book on a desert island, it'd be "Braiding Sweetgrass."

Nature notes

An odor, called petrichor, lingers when rain falls after a dry spell. The term was coined in 1964 and refers to the pleasant smell of oils released into the air by plants during a rain, chemicals produced by soil-dwelling bacteria, and ozone.

Raging hormones caused a robin to fight with his reflection in the window glass. I could focus a bright light on the glass or cover the outside of the window with plastic cling, cardboard, butcher paper, newspaper, car wax or soap to discourage his actions.

Meeting adjourned

"We can't help everyone, but everyone can help someone."—Ronald Reagan

Kari Hall a welcoming face

Any time you enter Mayo Clinic Health Systems-Austin, your visit or stay is enhanced by the greeters at the door, the information desk volunteers, and often by others who are in place to help make you as comfortable as possible.

In charge of that element of patient care here and in Albert Lea is Kari Hall with the impressive title of Supervisor for Access and Navigation Specialists, Volunteer and Patient Services.

Kari grew up in Adams, in a family who volunteered often. She joined in that activity for church events, mission trips, Legion and other civic activities. She said she followed the example of her parents and friends and found giving her time to others was very rewarding.

This interest in helping people led her to a degree in law enforcement. However, when the volunteer coordinator position for Mayo in Austin and Albert Lea came open, that seemed like a good fit. She especially loves the interaction with the volunteers. They come from all walks of life, but have in common the same feeling she has,



Carolyn Bogott
American Association of University Women

Notable Women of Austin



Kari Hall

that giving to others adds meaning and purpose to living.

Kari works with the Auxiliary organization to accomplish the many services provided to patients and visitors. Volunteers are available at the information desk to give directions or to accompany patients to their appointments. They also deliver flowers, make calls for patient transport, push

wheelchairs for patients, and respond to other calls for assistance. Currently they may also assist with COVID screening. In pre COVID times they also had a coffee cart to offer coffee to those hospital patients whose diets permitted it, and to visitors.

Also, before COVID, some volunteers were trained to give non therapeutic hand massages, "Caring Hands," to inpatients and to those coming for outpatient surgery.

Other services provided by volunteers are acting as liaisons between medical personnel and outpatient surgery patients to support them and those who accompany them. Newborn caps are knit by volunteers, who help with blood drives and currently are assisting with the COVID vaccination clinic.

In 2019, 44 volunteers gave 5,932 hours to our medical center.

The auxiliary also has periodic fundraisers and has made contributions of equipment to many of the departments at the medical complex, and also has supplied Beanie Babies to be given to young children having surgery.

Kari's love for people

and her generosity of spirit strengthen her work administering this part of our fine medical care. Her philosophy that "You never get a second chance to make a first impression" is an excellent rule by which to live, especially for her volunteers. Thank you to Kari Hall for her work enhancing our medical center experience!

For more information about the Austin Branch of AAUW, contact Sue Grove sue.grove@riverland.edu or Carolyn Bogott cbogott@charter.net. The American Association of University Women, now AAUW, is open to anyone who has completed a two-year degree or beyond. AAUW welcomes men who support our objectives and there are student memberships available. AAUW has been empowering women since 1881. We support equity and education for women. Scholarships are offered, as well as help in litigation in cases dealing with sex discrimination. We are the most important and highly respected research and lobbying organization dealing with women's issues such as equal opportunity and job equality.

Putting light on tint

Question: If a person has a medical exception to a specified window tint level (per medical prescription by medical provider), do you have to register that exception/prescription with the state? Or register the car that has the applied tint?



Troy Christianson
Ask a Trooper

Answer: It is not necessary to notify the Department of Public Safety Driver Vehicle Services (DPS-DVS) in Minnesota. DVS doesn't place window tint/medical restriction on the driver's license or on the vehicle's registration. Drivers will need to have a prescription or proof from their doctor regarding the medical need to have tinted windows below the 50% light transmittance plus or minus 3%.

The proper document will need to be in the vehicle to show law enforcement upon request. The document will need to specifically state the minimum percentage that light transmittance may be reduced to satisfy the prescription or medical needs of the patient; and the prescription or statement contains an expiration date, which must be no more than two years after the date the prescription or statement was issued.

If the window tint is below the state minimum of 50% light transmittance, that vehicle may be stopped by law enforcement, as the officer will not be aware of the medical exemption.

In Minnesota, you can have your windows tinted to a light transmittance of 50%, but not less. Light transmittance is the amount of light that is required to pass through both the window and the tint film. Before any tint material is applied to your windows, a vehicle comes from the factory with tint already

inside the glass material. No window comes from the factory at 100% light transmittance. My experience has been that most vehicles are already at 75% before any modifications.

- No vehicle can have any tint to the front windshield.

- Passenger cars are limited to 50% on all side and rear windows.

- Pickups, vans, and SUVs are limited to 50% on the front side windows.

- Pickups, vans, and SUVs are not limited on the rear side and rear windows. (Can be less than 50% behind the front seat).

- Squad cars, limousines, and vehicles used to transport human remains by a funeral establishment are not limited on the side and rear windows.

Troopers have window tint meters in their patrol cars and will test the windows for the legal percent of light transmittance if they look to be below the statutory limit. If they are found below the legal limit, the driver may be issued a citation.

You can avoid a ticket — and a crash — if you simply buckle up, drive at safe speeds, pay attention and always drive sober. Help us drive Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths.

If you have any questions concerning traffic related laws or issues in Minnesota send your questions to Sgt. Troy Christianson — Minnesota State Patrol at 2900 48th Street NW, Rochester MN 55901-5848. (Or reach him at, Troy.Christianson@state.mn.us)

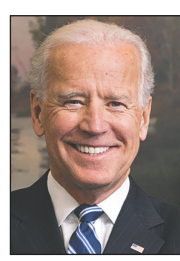
AP FACT CHECK: Biden overstates how many Americans immunized

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden on Monday vastly overstated the number of Americans who've been vaccinated against COVID-19. And when addressing the racial gap in vaccinations, he claimed progress that is not apparent in the statistics.

A look at his remarks in Portsmouth, Virginia:

BIDEN: "When I got elected, I said in the first 100 days we'd get 100 million people vaccinated. I was wrong; we got 230 million vaccinated."



Biden

THE FACTS:

No, he misstated both his promise and the results. Biden confused the num-

ber of shots administered with the number of people vaccinated.

Biden initially promised 100 million shots would be administered in his first 100 days, doubled that goal in late March, and surpassed it before the 100 days were up in late April.

But many of those shots were second Pfizer and Moderna doses.

Altogether, close to 148 million people in the U.S. have received at least one dose and close to 106 million have been fully vaccinated — not 230 million. As of Monday, almost 247 million shots have been given, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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