



Ned Hickson

Don't tell my wife I may have blown a chance at \$5 million

It's not every day I receive an email from a Zimbabwean prince who needs help relocating \$20 million into an American bank account as soon as possible. In fact, I'd say I only get this type of email — at the very most — once a week. And each time, I immediately delete it because, let's be honest: Who wants to spend time figuring out how to access their online bank account?

Besides, having my checking account suddenly jump to

over \$20 million — I think — would look a little suspicious. *I'm sorry Mr. Hickson, but you don't have money in your account to cover...Oh, wait a minute. Scratch that. Will this bagel be everything?*

At the same time, what if it was true? What if a South African prince really WAS trying to move millions of dollars into the online account of a complete stranger? And what if my wife found out that I'd deleted his email dozens of times? And what if, after discovering this, she was sitting next to me when 20/20 began telling the story of how Booger Jones of Snakegut, Ala., became a multi-million-

aire after figuring out how to access HIS online bank account to help a Zimbabwean prince?

(And furthermore, why is it that, even after using Spell Check, the word "Zimbabwean" still looks wrong?)

Because of these nagging questions, I decided to do a little investigative work and make absolutely sure there was no "Booger Jones" living anywhere in Alabama.

To my surprise, I found 14 of them.

Which is why I decided to answer Prince Mbagi's plea for help. Now, in order for you to fully understand the scope

of his situation, I will summarize:

Prince Mbagi, the son of a wealthy Zimbabwean farmer killed by members of the South African government, is trying to find someone in America who will "inherit" his family fortune in order to keep President Mugabe from stealing it. As a show of appreciation, this person will receive \$5 million.

The only thing Prince Mbagi needs is an online account to transfer his millions to.

The first step was to contact Prince Mbagi at kmbagi@phantomemail.com, which, I discovered, is an

email service providing "completely anonymous internet accounts."

Naturally, this made perfect sense for someone in his dire situation.

What didn't make sense was that I needed a password in order to leave a message. Because I didn't know it, I did the next logical thing — which was to try cracking the secret password by entering random combinations of the word "Booger."

Haha! Not really; that would be silly!

I contacted the webmaster, explaining that I was trying to help a Zimbabwean prince looking for someone who

could be trusted with \$20 million.

His reply was swift: *I have no idea what you're talking about.*

Best of luck.

— Booger Jones.

Needless to say, I didn't make contact with Prince Mbagi. I did, however, learn how to spell "Zimbabwean."

Wait....

See what I mean? It still looks wrong!

Ned is a syndicated columnist with News Media Corporation. His book, "Humor at the Speed of Life," is available online at Port Hole Publications, Amazon Books and Barnes & Noble. Write to him at nedhickson@icloud.com.

Rotary scholarships can be family affair

Getting a Rotary scholarship is "all in the family" for Shasta Hoberg McMullen and daughter McKenzie McMullen Kramer.

Both mother and daughter credit Rotary Club of Florence with giving them a head start in their professional lives.

"I was honored to receive a Rotary scholarship in 1975," Shasta reveals. "Because of that, I was able to study accounting at the Florence campus of LCC while working at my very first job at Copeland Lumber."

Today, Shasta manages the office at Hoberg's Complete Auto Repair. It's a family business all the way, with husband Kevin managing the automotive end of the business while also co-chairing Rotary Auction 2016 with Kim Erickson of Oregon Pacific Bank.

Kramer, their daughter, received her scholarship in 1999 and used it to study psychology and speech commu-



COURTESY PHOTO

From left, McKenzie McMullen Kramer and her mother Shasta Hoberg McMullen both earned Rotary Club of Florence scholarships.

nication at Western Oregon University. Today, McKenzie works as a customer service representative for Central Lincoln PUD in Reedsport.

"Paying for college can seem impossible," McKenzie says, "and this scholarship in conjunction with others made that possible for me. It

showed me that others believed in me enough to support me in my dream of going to college."

Since the Rotary auction began back in the 1960s, the Florence club has awarded more than \$1 million in scholarships to local high school students. Many have returned to Florence to work in local businesses and contribute back to the community.

On Saturday, March 12, Rotary will do it all over again when, at 5 p.m., more than 250 creatively costumed characters will gather at the FEC for the next Rotary Auction.

It may look like all fun and games, but the underlying theme is putting "Service Above Self" and having the opportunity to make dreams come true for more of this community's young people.

The auction is sold out, although a few individual tickets may be available.

For information, call Craig Sanders at 541-999-1713.

Firefighters prep for annual St. Patty's Day Spaghetti feed

The Siuslaw Valley Firefighters' Association is sponsoring its annual St. Patrick's Day Spaghetti Feed on Thursday, March 17, from 4 to 7 p.m. at 2625 Highway 101.

Tickets are \$8 for adults and \$4 for children aged 12 and younger. There will be unlimited spaghetti, salad and bread, and desserts will be available for an extra cost.



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