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## Up Front

*Looking for Canada.*  
By C.J. Hadley

I hate to admit it, but technology has passed me by. My cell phone was so old it was almost too heavy to carry. You could recognize it in some '70s movies. I didn't know how to text (actually the phone couldn't) and nothing was automatic.

But at Christmas I got an iPhone. It must be up to date because a woman talks to me or writes to me sometimes from inside the device, even when I'm not asking for her presence.

I was in a parking lot outside a Shell station in Reno recently, trying to pick up lunch for my 92-year-old friend who had just moved into an assisted living place. She didn't want to go out and was sick of the bland food (the place must have an English cook like me). She requested a hamburger with all the fixin's, and actually guided me to the gas station. Unfortunately, the joint only had a deli—no hamburgers—and offered foul-smelling fare including onions, pickles, salsa and pastrami (all of which I'm violently allergic to).

I tried to call my friend to request an alternate choice but when I dialed in with my new phone, she didn't answer. All was quiet. Maybe it was busy and I didn't recognize the new sounds. Maybe her phone was as smart as mine and her lady didn't think she wanted to talk to me. Anyway, by that time I'd forgotten her phone number, so while I was raking around for her number on the front seat of my truck, I said (to myself, I thought), "Dammit, I need Marge Bennett." And, knock me down with a quirt, that phone said "Okay" and dialed her up. Marge even said "Hello CJ" before I told her it was me and then she ordered a turkey sandwich, a soda and a salad!

With that iPhone I can get online. I can GPS my way to Vegas (not that I can afford to go anywhere after buying that phone). One

day, I barely touched the picture of the microphone on the home page that looks like the one used by Walter Cronkite and asked, "When is it going to snow in Carson City?" She answered, "Nothing in the forecast for the foreseeable future" (or words to that effect).

With precipitation 10 percent of normal in fall and no snow in the Sierra Nevada by early January, that's not a good omen. But as magic as this woman is, apparently she can't bring rain or snow. If she had that gift, I would have sent her off to help New Mexico, Colorado and Texas.

What worries me about all the iPhone's intriguing offerings is what else does it know about me? I hope not much, even though I'm

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*I always know what my Great Dane, Gen. George S. Patton, is talking about. He and I are on the same technological level.*

pretty sure it knows where I'm going even before I've made a plan. I've even tried to figure out how to turn that talking woman off so that I can keep my life private, but that, apparently, is a lesson yet to be learned.

A couple of days after my gas station incident I went to a performance of Nevada Opera in Reno with a couple of friends. I was carrying my new phone because I didn't dare leave it home alone. I told them about my extraordinary experience with the sandwich, but while we were oohing, aahing and babbling, I got a note from my ever-present phone woman. She said, "Sorry, I can't give directions to Canada."

I hadn't even asked, so maybe she's not as dangerous as I thought because, honest, I have no intentions of leaving town. ■

## RANGE

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