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Week 50

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TIDBITS® RIDICULES **GENDER REVEALS**

by Janet Spencer

Come along with Tidbits as we attend the world's worst gender reveal parties!

- · Blogger and journalist Jenna Karvunidis accidentally started a new tradition in 2008. After several heartbreaking disappointments, she finally held onto a pregnancy long enough to find out whether she was having a girl or a boy. She baked a cake, secretly spreading the middle layer with pink icing. She invited friends to a celebration, cutting into the cake to reveal that she was expecting a baby girl. Pictures posted to her blog went viral. This was the first gender reveal party.
- This kicked off a fad that spread widely around the nation. By 2010, gender reveal parties had evolved in scope and method, ranging from simple to elaborate, including boxes filled with colored helium balloons, balloons filled with colored powder, fireworks, piñatas, smoke bombs, confetti bombs, and more.
- Karvunidis now regrets the fad that her original gender reveal party sparked, not only for the destruction caused, but because she doesn't feel that such a big deal should be made over the gender of a baby. "Celebrate the baby, not the gender" is her approach.
- Here are some stories of awful gender reveals ranging from tacky to tragic.
- When a couple in Florida found out they were expecting in 2019, they agreed the gender reveal should involve their pet alligator, Amos. The dad, a "nuisance wildlife trapper" for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, acquired the gator as a pet in 2000. To accomplish the gender reveal, he dangled a black balloon attached to a long pole in front of the alligator, a typical feeding technique. When the alligator chomped on the balloon, it exploded into a cloud of pink powder. Let's hope Amos got a nice fish dinner afterward for his trou-

Continued on page 2

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1 FAST QUOTE





Gender Reveals (continued)

ble.

- In 2018, Villa Italian Kitchen, a pizza and pasta chain based out of New Jersey, announced a "Gender Reveal Lasagna." They made it using white Alfredo sauce instead of tomato sauce, and mozzarella and ricotta instead of cheddar, so that the pink and blue dye that colored the sauce and the cheese would really stand out. For only \$140, customers received a lasagna big enough to feed 12, plus garlic rolls and salad. People who posted their lasagna gender reveal to social media were entered into a contest to win a free catered meal. There was mixed reaction to this idea, with people complaining that instead of blue for boys, it definitely looked more like green.
- The town of Turkey, Texas, was the site of a near-fatal gender reveal. On September 7, 2019, friends and family gathered to watch a hired crop-dusting plane fly over the party, dropping 350 gallons of either pink or blue water into the nearby fields. However, after disgorging the load of pink water, the low-flying plane was thrown off balance and stalled. It crash-landed on a neighboring farm. Both the pilot and co-pilot were injured but survived. The plane, however, was a total loss.
- A Texas couple incorporated a local zoo's hippopotamus for their gender reveal. The hippo, named Tank, resides at the Capital of Texas Zoo. Officials at the zoo assisted in planning the event. With a crowd gathered and cameras rolling, Tank waited with his mouth wide open at his regular feeding time. The father-to-be tossed in a watermelon, and when Tank bit down on it, the melon exploded into blue squirts. Watermelon is a favorite treat for hippos, and the blue filling was gelatin, a common dietary supplement. The video went viral, a publicity coup
- for both the zoo and the expectant mother.

 In July of 2018, a family gathered on the sidewalk of a Philadelphia neighborhood to set off a gender-revealing fireworks cannon. The fireworks tube, set up on a rickety stand, was unstable. As the fireworks burst into the sky, the launch tube tipped over, spewing pyrotechnics throughout the crowd. Screaming and scrambling, they ran for cover. "My wife was filming with my phone and I immediately grabbed my son and covered his face and ran," a partygoer reported. A few people were hit and suffered minor burns.
- An Australian gender reveal disaster involved using a car to spin donuts in a gravel parking area which caused blue smoke to spew forth. As the car continued to perform "burnouts," the smoke increased and flames appeared. The Queensland Police Service released footage of the incident, showing the abandoned car sitting in the middle of a cloud of thick smoke that turned from blue to black as flames surrounded the ruined vehicle. The driver was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle in a dangerous manner. There was no word on whether he was the dad.
- Trouble brewed at an Applebee's in Cleveland in 2018 when 20 people gathered for a gender reveal. The method they chose was a mass launch of confetti-packed poppers. When staff objected to the prospect of cleaning up all that confetti, trouble broke out. The manager insisted that the party take their big reveal outside, prompting the group to yell, curse, and threaten. The hostess was pelted with menus, and police were called. The result was a parking lot, sidewalk, and cars covered with confetti, and an unpaid tab left behind. Police were able to track down the perpetrators with the help of license plate numbers recorded by staff members, as well as a purse left behind in a booth. No word on whether it was a girl or a boy.
- Two of the worst gender reveals involved wildfire. In 2017, the expectant father added colored powder to a box of highly explosive Tannerite. He affixed the mixture to a target and carried it to an Arizona state park where the gender reveal was held. He shot the target with a rifle, spreading blue powder and flaming Tannerite in dry grass. The resulting conflagration, dubbed the Sawmill Fire, burned for two weeks, scorching 73 square miles. Over \$8 million was spent fighting the flames. The dad was sentenced to five years probation and ordered to pay restitution of \$500/month for the next 20 years, meaning that his newborn son will reach college age before restitution is paid.
- In 2020, a gender-revealing smoke bomb was detonated at El Dorado Park in California. The El Dorado fire scorched 35,538 square miles and cost \$23 million. It burned 20 buildings, including four homes, and forced thousands to evacuate. It wasn't extinguished until November. Firefighter Charles Morton, age 39, was killed while fighting the flames.



GOES GREEN

American refrigerators consume 7% of the nation's electricity. 25% of the average city apartment dweller's electrical costs go for refrigerators. Keep your refrigerator at 40 degrees, and keep the condenser coils in the back clean.



AMERICAN LEGION SMITH REYNOLDS







Smith-Reynolds American Legion Post #14 Announces Annual Christmas Tree Sale to Support Veterans

Vancouver, WA – November 3rd, 2025 – Smith-Reynolds American Legion Post #14 is excited to announce its Christmas Tree Sale, kicking off on November 30th. The sale will run through the holiday season, offering a variety of beautiful, fresh-cut Christmas trees to help you celebrate the season.



Saturdays- 10 AM to 6 PM Sundays: 12 Noon to 6 PM **Weekdays:** 3 PM – 7 PM



Located at **4607 NE St. James Rd, Vancouver**, this event not only provides festive trees for your holiday celebrations but also supports local veterans and their families. Proceeds from the tree sale will directly benefit programs and services for those who have served our country.

"By purchasing a Christmas tree from us, you're helping make a difference in the lives of our veterans," said John Wallace - Post Commander. "We invite the community to join us this holiday season, creating lasting memories, and supporting our heroes." Bring your family and friends and enjoy a warm holiday atmosphere while supporting a great cause.

For more information about the Christmas Tree Sale or other events at Smith-Reynolds American Legion Post #14, please visit #post#14christmastreesale or call (360) 696-2579.

Join us in spreading holiday cheer while honoring those who have served. Together, we can make this season truly special!



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Ricky Van Shelton, one of country music's most unmistakable voices, rose from the quiet hills of Virginia to the bright lights of Nashville with a sound rooted in sincerity, tradition, and pure emotion. Born on January 12, 1952, in Danville, Virginia, Shelton grew up surrounded by gospel hymns and classic country songs. Those early influences shaped the rich baritone that would later captivate fans across the nation.

Shelton didn't take the most direct route to stardom. Before music became his full-time calling, he worked a series of everyday jobs-painting houses, stocking store aisles, and doing whatever it took to keep his dream alive. When he finally headed for Nashville in the mid-1980s, he brought with him not just ambition but a deep respect for country's storytelling tradition. His debut album, "Wild-Eyed Dream," introduced a voice both timeless and contemporary. Almost overnight, he became a staple on country radio, delivering heartfelt hits like "Somebody Lied," "Life Turned Her That Way," and "I'll Leave This World Loving You." Shelton's style honored the legends he admired-George Jones, Merle Haggard, and Lefty Frizzell-yet carried a warmth uniquely his own. During the late '80s and early '90s, he became one of the era's defining traditionalists, stacking up multiple No. 1 singles and platinum albums.

But fame never pulled Shelton far from his roots. Known for his humility and grounded nature, he remained a down-to-earth presence in an industry that often demanded flash. In the 1990s, he stepped back from the spotlight to focus on his personal well-being and family life, choosing peace over pressure. Even after retiring from touring, he continued to be celebrated by fans who cherished his honesty, vocal power, and unwavering devotion to real country music.

Today, Ricky Van Shelton is remembered as a champion of the traditional sound-a singer whose voice could soothe, stir, and transport listeners with just a few notes. His influence lives on through his recordings, through younger artists who look to his style, and through fans who still find comfort in the sincerity of his songs.



He was an artist long before the stage-Shelton loved drawing and painting as a kid and later illustrated his own children's book series.

He published a collection of children's stories called "Tales From a Duck Named Quacker," inspired by bedtime stories he told his nieces and nephews.



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At one backyard gender reveal, Dad was supposed to kick a ball filled with colored powder, bursting it into a cloud. He slipped on wet grass and landed wrong, breaking his ankle which required a quick trip to the hospital. He was still in a cast when the baby arrived.

Laugh a bit with rupers

Q: Do you know what it'll be yet? A: With any luck, it'll be a human!





Harry Chapin 12/7/1942 Sammy Davis Jr. 12/8/1925 12/9/1922 Redd Foxx Emily Dickinson 12/10/1830 Brenda Lee 12/11/1944 **Bob Barker** 12/12/1923 Mary Todd Lincoln 12/13/1818 TIPETTS

Holidays & Observances This Week

12/7 Civil Aviation Day

12/8 Universal Human Rights Month

12/9 World Techno Day 12/10 **Human Rights Day** 12/11 Day of the Horse 12/12

Gingerbread House Day 12/13 Ice Cream Day









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Americanisms

"To me every hour of the light and dark is a miracle, every cubic inch of space is a miracle."

— Walt Whitman







- 1. TELEVISION: What is the name of the bloodhound featured on the sitcom "The Beverly Hillbillies"?
- 2. HISTORY: Which Chinese dynasty mostly built the Great Wall?
- 3. MOVIES: Which 2003 movie is about juveniles who are sentenced to work at a desert camp?
- 4. MUSIC: Which famous song begins with the line, "Hello darkness, my old friend..."?
- 5. ANATOMY: What's another name for the patella?
- 6. GEOGRAPHY: What is the capital of Chile?
- 7. FOOD & DRINK: Who perfected the Champagne method?
- 8. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What are the national flowers of Japan?
- 9. LITERATURE: Who wrote the novel "Love in the Time of Cholera"?
- 10. SCIENCE: Which wire is usually the main "hot" one in electrical work?





Low-Stress Holiday Entertaining Starts Here

The holiday season has officially begun, which means many of us are about to jump on a month-long juggling act involving gift lists, grocery lists, guest lists and the occasional existential crisis in the snack aisle. (Or is that just me?) But here's the good news: Holiday entertaining does not have to feel like auditioning for a cooking competition.

In fact, some of the best gatherings I've ever hosted were powered by simple food, mismatched napkins and the sheer charm of wonderful people being together.

This year, instead of stressing about elaborate spreads or complicated appetizers, let's bring the joy back to hosting with low-cost, low-fuss tricks.

Easy, Affordable Entertaining Tips

Share the Spotlight with a Potluck: Ask guests to bring a favorite side or appetizer while you handle the main dish. It lightens the load and the bill.

Create Instant Ambiance: Dim the lights, turn on lamps, light a candle -- instant cozy, no decorating required.

Set Up a Self-Serve Drink Station: A few bottles of vino, a pitcher of sparkling water, some citrus, ice and glasses let guests help themselves while you enjoy the party.

Think "Nibbles," Not a Buffet: Crackers, fruit, veggies and your cream cheese spread looks generous without draining your time or budget.

Make Something You Can Ignore: Cream cheese dips and spreads shine here -- no wilting, no reheating.

Start with my "Mother of All Cream Cheese Dips," a simple base -- like a mother sauce -- that every other flavor can be built on. Use whatever you have: herbs, cheese, leftover roast veggies, odds and ends. It turns out a little different each time, always delicious and perfect for effortless appetizers or last-minute hostess gifts. The very definition of frugal and fabulous!

THE MOTHER OF ALL CREAM CHEESE DIPS

Yield: 1 1/2 cups Total Time: 1 hour 5 mins. 1 (8-ounce) block cream cheese, at room temperature 1/2 cup sour cream or mayonnaise, at room temperature

3/4 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon garlic powder

Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Optional Mix-Ins (use one, some, or all -- whatever's handy):

1 green onion, thinly sliced

1/2 cup shredded aged cheddar or other cheese

1/4 cup bacon crumbles

1/4 cup toasted almonds

Place the cream cheese in a bowl and beat with an electric mixer on high for about 2 minutes, until it's light and fluffy. Scrape the bowl, then add the sour cream or mayo, salt, garlic powder and pepper. Beat on high for another minute. Taste and adjust the seasoning -- this is your dip, after all.

Refrigerate for at least 1 hour so the flavors can get acquainted and settle in. Serve with breadsticks, pretzels, mini bagels, crackers or chips.

Note: The longer it chills, the better it gets, which makes this a perfect make-ahead recipe for busy hosts. Leftovers keep in the fridge for up to a week, although "leftover dip" is mostly a theoretical concept.

What else can you add? Truly anything else you love, like chopped herbs, leftover roasted veggies, a spoonful of pesto, diced olives, sun-dried tomatoes, everything bagel seasoning. This recipe is here for your creativity and your fridge clean-outs.

At the end of the day, people aren't coming over to evaluate your culinary skills or inspect your baseboards. They show up for laughter, warmth and the simple comfort of being welcomed. A cozy room, a low-stress menu and the delicious variety of potluck goodness is more than enough to make your home the spot everyone remembers.



www.JasonCoblentz.com One simple base, endless flavor possibilities: Make dips for every holiday gathering.

Lifestyle expert Patti Diamond is the penny-pinching, party-planning, recipe developer and content creator of the website Divas On A Dime -- Where Frugal, Meets Fabulous! Visit Patti at www.divasonadime.com and join the conversation on Facebook at DivasOnADimeDotCom. Email Patti at divapatti@divasonadime.com



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Mhy You Say (t

"On The House"



Anything distributed free of charge, courtesy of the management, is "on the house."

Originally, the house involved was an English pub or tavern. Owners often invited newcomers to sample their stock by offering a free drink. This small taste often whetted the appetite for more, and the barkeep could expect the sale of several more drinks.

Some U.S. states prohibit a barkeeper from offering freebies; in other regions, rising costs have made the custom obsolete. Despite this, we say that gifts to a consumer from a business owner are "on the house."

Excerpts taken from the book written by Webb Garrison

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GRINER BRANCE Nagan



"I wanted Roscoe to spend more time with the boys. ... What was I thinking?"



By Lucie Winborne

- * Picasso was once suspected of stealing the "Mona Lisa" from the Louvre. He was brought to court, where it was determined that he was indeed in possession of stolen art, but not da Vinci's masterpiece, and was let off with a warning.
- * Ice from seawater melts into fresh water.
- * The modern sense of the term "Black Friday" likely originated in the 1950s when Philadelphia police began using it to describe the chaotic traffic of shoppers and sports fans after Thanksgiving and before the Army-Navy football game on Saturday.
- * Jimmy Carter was the first American president born in a hospital.
- * Pepsi was originally called "Brad's Drink," after its creator, pharmacist Caleb Bradham, who believed it had digestive benefits.
 - * Volcanoes can create lightning.
- * Ulysses S. Grant's middle initial doesn't stand for anything. He was christened Hiram Ulysses Grant, and the initial was added by Congressman Thomas Hamer when he nominated Grant for West Point, thinking it stood for Grant's mother's maiden name.
- * Fewer than one in 10,000 people possess the gift of perfect pitch.
- * The world's largest beaver dam, located in Canada's Wood Buffalo National Parkand boasting a length estimated at more than 2,600 feet, is visible from space via satellite imagery.
- * Memorial Day's date was first chosen because it was when flowers would be in full bloom.
- * In 2012, Susan Warren, who owned a cleaning business, broke into a house but stole nothing. Instead, she washed coffee cups, vacuumed, took out the garbage, and dusted ... then left the homeowners, who were asleep upstairs, her phone number and a bill for her services on a napkin.

Thought for the Day: "If the world should blow itself up, the last audible voice would be that of an expert saying it can't be done." -- Peter Ustinov

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The Spats







Amber Waves







OK, THAT'S IT. WE ALL NEED TO START WEARING NAME TAGS.

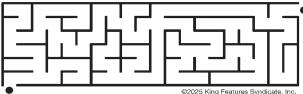
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas





Kids' Maze



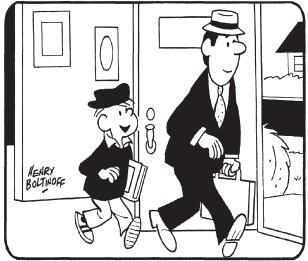


MOREISME

A child must reach the age of three before they are able to form these.

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

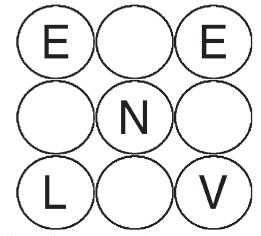


Find at least six differences in details between panels.



sleeve. 6. Book is smaller. 3. Hand is moved. 4. Collar is missing. 5. Stripe is added to Differences: 1. Picture frame is higher. 2. Doorknob is larger.

WORD SPIRAL



Fill in the missing letters to reveal the nine-letter word that starts at one of the four corners and moves clockwise around the perimeter before ending in the center.

CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: E equals B

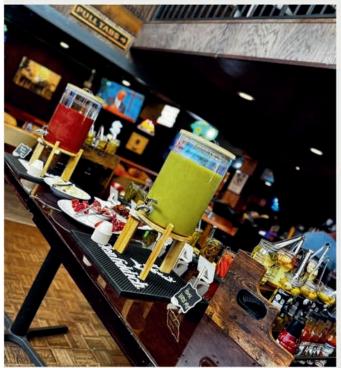
MAITOZOCPGQ OEGSC O

WPZAWTL GZ TOMLESV CJOC

NZAWAZR ORIAQMPQV RSZWOIAR:

PC'R OQ SNJPTT EAACTA.





SUNDAY MORNINGS

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braised short rib, scrambled eggs, bacon, cheddar, bl ranchero sauce, in a grilled flour tortilla with home frie sour cream, avocado cilantro sauce	
BYO BREAKFAST bacon OR ham, 2 eggs, home fries, toast	\$15
MORNING TOTS	\$15
tots, elk country gravy, shredded cheese, 2 runny eggs, ran	chero sauce
CHIMICHURRI CHICKEN HASH grilled chicken, potatoes, bell peppers, onions, 2 runr	\$17 ny eggs
FRENCH TOAST	\$14
2 pieces of texas toast, 2 strips of bacon, huckleberry compote, butter & maple syrup	strawberry
YOGURT	\$9
greek yogurt, Sithean Acres honey, Bluebird Bakery	granola

your choice of 2 breakfast entrees plus your choice of 1 trip per person through the bloody mary bar or a bottle of bubbles.

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DRINKS

FRESH SQUEEZED OJ \$7

FRESH BREWED COFFEE \$4

MIMOSA \$8.5 your choice cranberry, grapefruit or fresh squeezed OJ

MADRAS \$9 tito's vodka, fresh squeezed OJ, splash of cranberry, served tall

BLOODY BEER \$6.5 coors light topped with our house-made mary mix

BLOODY MARY BAR \$15

a stonejax rimmed glass with your choice Titos Vodka, Teremana Tequila or Aviation Gin. take a trip through the bloody mary bar & build your bloody mary just the way you like it! Add 3 cocktail shrimp \$3

now serving Sunday

Every Sunday 9:00am - 1:00pm

Washougal Times is now serving Sunday Brunch! Come join us between 9am-1pm and enjoy a variety of breakfast items and drinks.

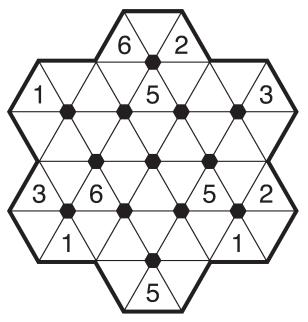


1826 E St Washougal, WA 98671 360-835-2488

NOMELHARE

by Japheth Light

There are 13 black hexagons in the puzzle. Place the numbers 1 - 6 around each of them. No number can be repeated in any partial hexagon shape along the border of the puzzle.



DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK:



◆◆ Medium ◆◆◆ Difficult



MAGIC MAZE •

EUROPEAN CANDY

QWTSQNKIFCZWURP MJHENCNZXUSQNLH J G E C Z I X O V T R P N S O LJHESPORDNODNOL CAYAW(MACARON)VTL TRPNKHHLESEKINY GMENALSCBTEBZEW XWUTUSIRPLANUMO O P M K L J E M M I G R A C O SRAMOEGUTAKTIKD DBAYXLDWUTSZEPA

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally Unlisted clue hint: Home of the U.S. Film Industry

Akanes Cuberdon Dumle

Geisha

Kit Kat Lokum London Drops Macaron

Mars Mentos Milka

Pirate Coins Rahat Spunk

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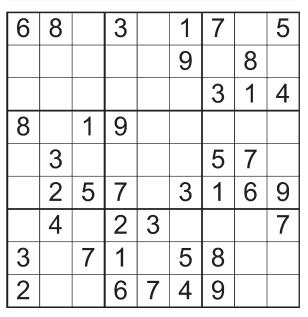
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Wishing

4 8 2 8 5 3 8 S 0 С Υ 0 Η S 2 2 6 3 6 3 5 5 8 0 Ε M 3 3 6 5 6 8 4 0 D 6 8 Ε R 2 3 Ε S Ε Ε ٧ Ν

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

Weekly SUDOKU



Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging ♦ HOO BOY!



TRIVIA NEWSFRONT

- 1. Can newborns taste salt and salty things?
- 2. At what age do babies cry with actual tears?
- 3. What percent of newborns regularly turn their heads to the right when sleeping on their backs?
- 4. Do babies have knee caps?
- 5. How big is a newborn's stomach?



Find a word and its anagram that can be filled into the blanks below.

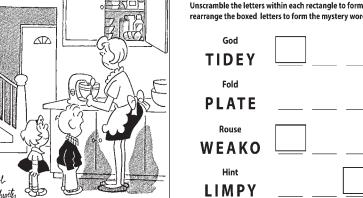
The prime minister told his secretaries

The prime minister to	a ms secretaries
that they had been wo	rking under the
misguided	that
governance of the south	ern provinces was
under their jurisdict	ion. Those five
provinces had been giver	ı
years ago to make the	ir own regional
regulatio	ns.

_ 0 _ _

SCRAMBLERS

Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag



" Is this the night we give Daddy the big welcome-home routine, or is

tomorrow

God TIDEY	
Fold PLATE	
PLAIE	
Rouse WEAKO	
Hint	
LIMPY	

10. Humpback, e.g.

TODAY'S WORD

Exchange by Donna Pettman

Each numbered row contains two clues and two 6-letter answers. The two answers differ from each other by only one letter, which has already been inserted. For example, if you exchange the A from MASTER for an I, you get MISTER. Do not change the order of the letters.

1. Kilt or a-line		Κ_		- —	Blouse or tee	_	н	_
2. Eight musical notes				_ V	Fuel rating	_		Ν
3. Self-serve meal				_ T	Shock absorber	_		R
4. Customer			_ R		General George	_	T	
5. Culpability	F _			_	Treasure house	V		_
6. Stay behind		N	Λ_		Recollect	_	_ T _	
7. Handmade blanket				_ Т	Feather	_		L
8. Splinter	_	L _		- — —	Shake from the cold	_	н	
9. Actress Halle	_	E _		_	Musician Manilow		Α	_

In one piece

_ _ A _ _ _



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Super Crossword

MECHANICS OF SOLVING

ACROSS

- 1 Has a snooze **5** Workout unit 8 Anti-DUI ad,
- 11 "The Maltese Falcon" hero 19 Conical-bore woodwind

maybe

- 20 Log chopper 21 Possess
- 22 Former airline to Rome
- 23 Composer of the 1938 ballet "The Incredible Flutist"
- 26 Squirrel-sized monkeys
- 27 Super-cold 28 Podded plant
- 29 What a dieter may reduce
- 31 Pressurereducing elastic stockings
- 34 Mork's home planet
- 35 German city 36 Ordinal suffix
- 37 Yvette's "yes" 38 "Gremlins" actress Cates **44** Folk great
- Bob 47 Edison's phonograph
- medium 49 Writer Rand 52 Prefix with

treat or trust

- - 81 Dog in "The Thin Man"

 - 87 "500" auto
 - 90 William of "Hopalong Cassidy'
 - 91 Its cap. is **Buenos Aires**
 - 94 Video surveillance

- 53 Bird bill **55** Booting out 56 Horn honk
- 58 Cleans up, as code 60 Hit PC game
- of the 1990s 62 Director Preminger
- 63 Heater along the bottom of a wall 67 Houston
- ballplaver 68 Ending for Gator
- 69 CIO partner 70 Greek vowels 75 Bracing wear
- for a bodybuilder
- 85 "Little" actress Rae 86 Mrs. with a
- famous cow race
- 88 Hone
- 93 Levy
- device, briefly (somewhat)
- 99 Bit of skin art 100 Timid

- 101 Cable TV channel for buying goods 103 Flee to wed
- 107 "I solved it!" 108 Type of needle-free
- syringe 111 ThinkPad power
 - source, e.g. 118 Cl- or Na+ 119 Gold, to Luisa 120 Zesty potato
 - chip go-with 121 Where nine key words in this puzzle
 - can be found 124 Word after poet or Nobel
 - 125 LA-to-MI dir. 126 Tea vessel
 - 127 Swing about 128 Evaluated 129 Lobed thing 130 Turndowns
 - 131 Actress Harper
 - **DOWN** 1 Not at all. quaintly
 - 2 Ancient calculator 3 Corals, e.g.
 - 4 Workout unit 5 Less ordinary 6 Brit living in
 - America, e.g. 7 Architect I.M. 8 Soil-enriching compound

- 9 Very muscular, in modern lingo 10 Year, to Nero
- **11** Like Weekend Update"
 - reports **12** "Alas and — 13 "Bosch"
 - actress Rogers 14 Lee of Marvel
 - 15 Component **16** Et — (plus others)
 - 17 Rinky-18 Relieve
 - 24 Person for whom a thing is named
 - 25 Kilt wearer 30 Butter-andflour mixture
 - 32 Crosswalk user, for
 - short 33 Coop female 37 Tree of
 - Illinois 38 Largest
 - dwarf planet – and hers 40 Aware of
 - 41 Revise text 42 Crooked
 - 43 Therefore 45 Venice beach
 - resort 46 Totally lost "That close call!"

- 48 Former Royals manager Ned **49** "Mamma
- Mia" group 50 In-favor votes
- 51 Chick's home 53 Indian religion
- founder 54 White heron 57 For each
- 59 Talks big 60 Ticked off 61 Crimean
- resort port 64 Curtsy, e.g. 65 How often
- the sun rises **66** Fix, as a fight
- 71 Osaka sash 72 Festival shelter
- 73 Actor Alan 74 River of myth 76 "Old Mac-Donald"
- letters 77 Lacks entity 78 Impend, as a
- deadline 79 Investments for later yrs. 80 Songwriter
- Laura 81 Helper: Abbr. 82 Old New
- York ballpark 83 Diplomacy 84 In — (mired)

- 89 Expert 90 Large inlet 92 Actor Lorne
- **95** Like a slingshot or a wishbone
- 96 Schmooze 97 Singer DiFranco
- 98 Pampering, for short 101 Cowboy doing a roundup, say
- **102** Eye affliction 104 Peter of
- "Becket" 105 Spongelike 106 Wears away
- 107 Grab (eat fast) 108 Actress
- Elfman 109 Hot rod fuel 110 Long -(winter
- undies) 111 Singer Falana 112 Santa -
- (hot winds) **113** Name of 12
- popes 114 Ripped 115 Small bills 116 Sidewalk
- smooches, e.g., for short
- 117 Melody **122** Leg it 123 Prez after



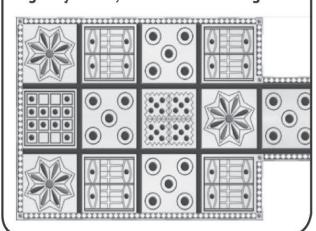
Moments

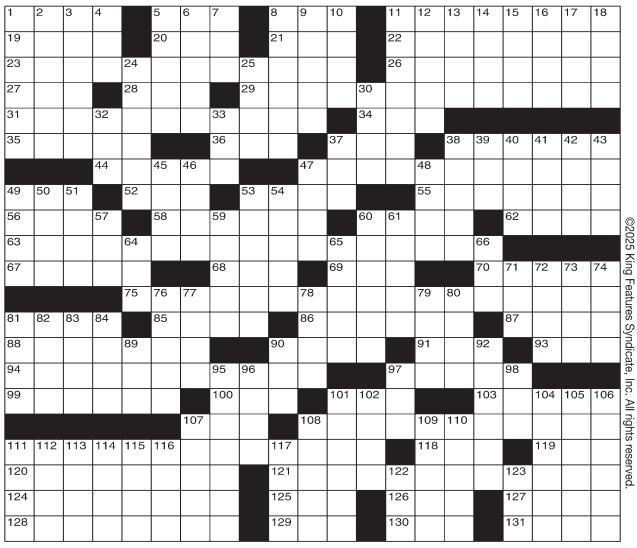
- * On Dec. 8, 1985, The Byte Shop opened in Mission Valley, California, selling the first 50 Apple-1 computers at a price of \$666.66. Nowadays, collectors shell out hundreds of thousands of dollars for them.
- * On Dec. 9, 1979, scientists announced that smallpox had been eradicated. Carrying about a 30% risk of death for those infected, it remains the only infectious disease affecting humans to have officially been eliminated.
- On Dec. 10, 1869, Wyoming granted women the right to vote. Some male supporters were motivated by loneliness as much as or more than justice, since the territory had more than 6,000 adult males but only 1,000 females, and it was hoped the latter would be more likely
- to settle in the area if they could vote. On Dec. 11, 1934, following a 13-year struggle with alcohol addiction, stockbroker Bill Wilson took his last sip of booze. The following year, he founded Alcoholics Anonymous, which aimed to treat alcoholism as a disease
- and not a moral failing. On Dec. 12, 1899, George F. Grant, an African American dentist from Boston, received a U.S. patent for the world's first golf tee. He gave away a few copies of his creation, but was neither a professional marketer or inventor, and made no money on his product before his
- * On Dec. 13, 1942, Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels detailed in his journal his contempt for the relatively humane treatment of Jews in Italian-occupied territories, stating that, "The Italians are extremely lax in their treatment of Jews. They protect Italian Jews both in Tunis and in occupied France and won't permit their being drafted for work or compelled to wear the Star of David."
- * On Dec. 14, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln announced a grant of amnesty for his sister-in-law, Emilie Todd Helm, the widow of a Confederate general, under the Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction, which allowed former Confederates amnesty if they took an oath to the United States. While Helm received the pardon, though, she never took the required oath.

Fun Fact

The "Royal Game of Ur" is the oldest playable board game found in the world so far. In 1922, Sir Leonard Wooley led a team that discovered two sets of this game in a tomb near the site of ancient Ur, in southern Iraq. It has been dated to be roughly 4,600 years old.

Sources: gamecabinet.com, gdkeys.com, britishmuseum.org





JAR JAR BINKS



- Ahmed Best was a jazz musician from the Bronx when he joined the energetic percussion group called Stomp, touring with them for several years. Along the way, Ahmed became skilled at the acrobatic body percussion that characterized Stomp's performances. At one show in 1996, a casting director in the audience noticed how limber Ahmed was. At the time, the casting director was looking for someone to play the part of an alien in the first Star Wars prequel, "The Phantom Menace." The character's name, suggested by George Lucas' young son, was Jar Jar Binks.
- Ahmed Best was thrilled and did his best to work with the producers and directors to come up with what turned out to be history's first CGI hybrid character. Lucas patterned the part after Disney's Goofy, and Ahmed came up with the voice, the moves, and the pratfalls accordingly. Jar Jar Binks was supposed to provide comic relief, appealing to children.
- However, Ahmed Best was unprepared for the backlash of ridicule that resulted when the movie was released in 1999. Jar Jar Binks was compared to a Jamaican mammy, a Vaudeville black-face minstrel, or a stereotypical plantation slave. Ahmed was accused of racism, although he is black. Ahmed was so distraught over the derision that one day, he nearly threw himself off the Brooklyn Bridge, feeling that he had unintentionally destroyed the movie franchise he had adored.
- Nearly 20 years later, Ahmed Best brought his young son to the place where he nearly jumped. He took a picture of himself and his son at that spot, and posted it to Twitter, explaining the whole story of how he nearly ended it all. This post went viral.
- Now people come out of the woodwork to apologize to Ahmed Best. Suddenly, his story was all over the media, and he started receiving calls. One of them was from the producers of "The Mandalorian" who offered him a new role: that of Jedi master Kelleran Beq, handsome and brave. He nailed the role.
- Meanwhile, the character of Jar Jar Binks was also redeemed, with experts pointing out how the entire story arc hinged on his actions. Here are some facts you might not have known about Jar Jar Binks, the hero.
- Jar Jar Binks was a member of the species called Gungans, native to Naboo. Gungans are amphibious and can hold their breath underwater for extended periods, making them comfortable both in water and on land.
- The costume, which cost about \$100,000, gave actors something to interact with, and a focus for animators. It was a cross between a duck-billed dinosaur, an emu, and



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a heror

- Michael Jackson wanted the role, but Lucas worried his fame would overshadow the part.
- When the movie was lampooned on "The Simpsons," the character was named "Jim Jam Bonks." When it was spoofed on "South Park," he was named "Joon-Joon."
- In a 2018 Saturday Night Live skit, guest star Natalie Portman reprised her role of Queen Padme Amidala. In the sketch, she holds a gun to the head of an actor and shouts, "Say something [expletive] nice about Jar Jar Binks!"
- Jar Jar Binks went on to become a Junior Representative for his people in the Galactic Senate, serving alongside Amidala once she became the planet's senator.
- Despite the largely negative fan reaction to Jar Jar Binks, the film was the biggest box office hit in 1999, bringing in over \$400 million.



- 1. Which group released "You Really Got Me"?
- 2. Mel Carter had two hits that topped the charts. What were the songs?
- 3. Who wrote and released "Coming Up"?
- 4. Who released "Sowing the Seeds of Love"?
- 5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "When I see her comin' down the street, I get so shaky and I feel so weak, I tell my eyes look the other way."

4. Tears for Fears, in 1989.
5. "I Go to Pieces," by Peter and Gordon, in 1965. Written by Del Shannon, it was the duo's first song that hadn't been written by two of the Beatles, John Lennon and Paul McCartney. The song made it to the top 10.

the "freaky version."

Gold" in 1966. 3. Paul McCartney, in 1980. He recorded the song at his Scotland farm one track at a time, beginning with drums, then guitars and finally vocals. John Lennon called that

"little green."
2. "Hold Me, Thrill Me, Kiss Me" in 1965, and "Band of

I. The Kinks, in 1964. The buzzy guitar sound was created by slicing open the speaker on the amp and sticking pins in it for the vibration. They named the amp "...."



Solomon's Seal" is the common name for a number of species in the genus Polygonatum.

These plants display broad, alternating leaves and many clusters of bell-shaped flowers that dangle along each stalk. They prefer rich, moist, well-drained soil, partly or fully shaded. They are drought-tolerant once established, have few insect or disease problems, and are not favored by deer. Beside their use as garden plants, they are used medicinally, and also prepared as food. - Brenda Weaver

Source: hort.extension.wisc.edu



Sports Quiz

- 1. What New Orleans Saints receiver crashed helmetfirst into a sideline TV camera during a 1971 win over the Dallas Cowboys?
- 2. What three events make up horse racing's Canadian Triple Crown?
- 3. What women's pro tennis tournament was first played in 2021 in Cluj-Napoca, Romania?
- 4. At the 2000 Sydney Paralympic Games, what country's basketball team forfeited their gold medals after it was revealed that most of their players had no mental or physical handicap?
- 5. What Major League Baseball team owner claimed to have engaged in a fistfight with two fans in a hotel elevator during the 1981 World Series?
- 6. According to NBA rules, what is the maximum pressure (in pounds per square inch) of an official basketball?
- 7. What starting pitcher for the Kansas City Royals won two AL Cy Young Awards (1985, 1989) and was named MVP of the 1985 World Series?

SPORTS STORIES NEW RULES



Tom Dempsey, neworleanssaints.com

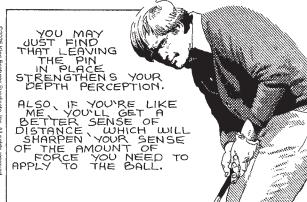
As various sports have evolved, new situations have led to the creation of new rules. Here are the stories behind a few.

- Tom Dempsey was born missing the toes on his right foot. This did not stop him from a career as a kicker in football. He was outfitted with a blunt-nosed half boot that ended where his foot ended, which was an improvement over having a half-empty shoe with newspaper stuffed in the toe.
- In 1970, in a game where the New Orleans Saints were up against the Detroit Lions, Dempsey was wearing this half-shoe when he kicked a game-winning, record-setting 63-yard field goal for the Saints.
- Some people complained that his disability, corrected by the specially made shoe, gave him an advantage. The Dallas Cowboys president insisted that his remarkable kick be entered into the record books with an asterisk next to it, explaining the special circumstances of the feat.
- In response to the controversy, seven years later, the NFL passed Rule 5, Section 4, Article 3, Item 7, which states that all shoes used to kick a field goal, regardless of the disability of the kicker, must conform to the specifications of a normal shoe. In other words, a prosthetic is allowed, but only if it matches the uniform requirements of players who are not wearing a prosthetic. It was called the Tom Dempsey Rule.
- Dempsey was upset by this new rule and went to the Commissioner to object. The Commissioner reassured Tom that his record was grandfathered in and would be unaffected by the ruling. Dempsey held the record for 43 years until it was broken by Matt Prater, who kicked a 64-yard field goal while playing for the Denver Broncos in 2013.
- Pat Venditti was born ambidextrous, able to use either hand equally well. When he became a pitcher in the minor leagues, he was a switch pitcher. He was playing for the Stanton Island Yankees in 2008 against the Brooklyn Cyclones when Ralph Henriquez stepped up to bat. Ralph was a switch-hitter. So now a switch-pitcher was throwing against a switch-hitter.
- Seeing Venditti preparing to pitch with his right hand, Henriquez stepped to the right side of the plate. Venditti then prepared to pitch with his left hand, and Henriquez stepped to the left side of the batter's box. Venditti switched hands again; Henriquez switched sides again. This continued until the Umpire called a time-out and tried to figure out how to handle the situation.
- It was the bottom of the 9th. The Cyclones were behind by five runs with two outs. Finally, it was decided

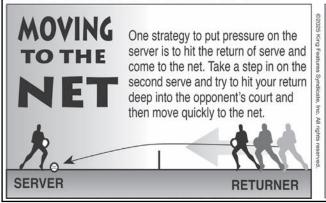
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Down the line If you hit the return Crosscourt down the line, you will have a shorter distance to run to get into proper net position than if you hit the ball across the court. × Longer run Shorter run

that Venditti would pitch right-handed, and Henriquez would bat right-handed. Venditte struck him out.

- Major League Baseball later added a rule, specifying that a pitcher is required to indicate which hand he intends to pitch with, and is obligated to use that hand for as long as the batter is at bat. The pitcher is allowed to switch hands in between batters.
- Rule 5, Section 4, Article 4, Item 8 of the NFL rulebook states simply that no adhesive or slippery substances are allowed. This rule originated with Lester Hayes, who played for the Oakland Raiders. He started using a sticky-tacky substance to help him catch the football. In a single season, Hayes caught 13 interceptions, setting an NFL record. He then started slathering his entire uniform in glue. In 1981, the Lester Hayes Rule outlawed the use of any such substance.





INTERESTING SPORTS FACTS THAT HAPPENED IN DECEMBER



On December 21, 1891, Dr. James Naismith invented and played the first game of basketball.



The first NFL Championship game was played in December 1933, where the Chicago Bears beat the New York Giants.



The 2016 MLS Cup final on December 10, 2016, was the first in league history to have no goals scored during regulation and overtime, with the Seattle Sounders winning 5-4 on penalties.



From 1947 to 1971, NHL games were played on Christmas Day, but the tradition was ended to give players a holiday break.



2002: Katie Hnida became the first woman to play in an NCAA Division I-A game.



2012: Johnny Manziel became the first freshman to win the Heisman Trophy.





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SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Here's to a Better 2026

Here we are, ready to wrap up another year. And there's a new one just around the corner. What can we learn from this year to help us in the next one?

Many seniors have had a rough time financially, and it doesn't look as though things are going to get better soon. Grocery costs have been a big part of that. What we've learned is that every time we go to the store, the items we usually buy will cost more and more. And the cost of the coat we've been eying is much more than last year. And our electric bill just isn't going to go down.

But we've also learned that the people who run the food bank are kind and helpful. And we've learned that we can get one more year out of our winter coat. And we've learned that wearing a vest at home can make up for the one degree we turn down the thermostat.

While it wasn't as bad as during the Covid pandemic lockdowns, our sense of isolation this year was made worse by finances because we didn't dare spend on too many lunches out with friends. For some of us, the sense of loneliness and anxiety took a toll on our health.

But all is not lost. We can look for free activities that bring us in contact with others: Book clubs at the library, art classes at the local museum and board games at the senior center all give us opportunities to socialize. Ask about organizing a karaoke night!

Even exercise can be free and can combine fitness with socialization. Look for pickleball at the rec center, and chair yoga at the senior center. Do you have an Advantage plan that covers Silver Sneakers workout classes?

The New Year can be better than 2025. Make your plans!



By Terry and Kim Kovel

Art Glass



Glass can be extremely difficult to identify and date. Fortunately for collectors, the vase pictured here is signed and dated: Lundberg Studios, 1977. Lundberg Studios, founded in 1970 and still active, makes iridescent glass with shapes and patterns reminiscent of famous art glass makers like Tiffany. They are not copies or reproductions but contemporary pieces taking inspiration from older styles.

When it comes to contemporary glass (which Kovels defines as glass made after about 1970), the highest prices usually go to sculptural, avant-garde pieces made with unconventional techniques; simpler, more traditional pieces can be bargains. For example, this vase at Rivich Auction sold for \$94 -- a fraction of the value of similar-looking vases from the art nouveau and art deco eras of the early 20th century. But remember, all it takes for a contemporary piece to become an antique is time.

For more collecting news, tips and resources, visit www. Kovels.com.



December is a great time to spread some holiday cheer! Here are some ways:

- · Donate food, toys, books, or blankets to shelters and food banks.
- Donate blood.
- · Send care packages or cards to deployed soldiers.
- · Donate to a charity in someone's name.





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Planning for a Christmas Puppy

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I know you're probably going to scoff at this, but we want to give our kids a puppy for Christmas. The whole cute scene by the Christmas tree, and all. This isn't a last-minute decision, as we have been talking about it for several months. We feel that our children, who are 10 and 8 years old, are old enough to play a role in the puppy's care and training. Of course, we will take the lead in all matters. My husband researched the best family-friendly breeds, and we've contacted three different breeders to tell them our plan. What do you think? -- Zoey in Knoxville, Tennessee

DEAR ZOEY: You'll get no scoffing from me. If there's a "right" way to give kids a Christmas puppy, this is it. Rather than a spur-of-the-moment decision, you're both putting a lot of thought and planning into this. You have a realistic view of the kids' contribution to the puppy's care and training. You are talking with multiple breeders and communicating your plans to them. This is the responsible way to bring a new pet home.

Be ready for the wrinkles, however. You're adopting a living thing, and they grow by their own schedule. Good breeders will emphasize that they don't guarantee puppies will be ready for homes by a specific date, so have a contingency plan if the puppy isn't mature enough to come home on Christmas Eve. Your kids will be just as thrilled, and you can stage the "reveal" later so you can capture those family photos.

Building a little flexibility into your puppy plan will give you the opportunity to pick the exact breed of dog you'd like, and to meet the puppy ahead of time to determine its temperament.

Send your tips, comments or questions to ask@pawscorn-

Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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Pinecone



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I can be shy in new spaces. I need a family who will let me take things at my own pace as I learn about new things. Once I come out of my shell, I have lots of love to give. If there are kids in my new home, I would like to meet them before going home. An adoption counselor can tell you more.



southwesthumane.org





Larry was originally a street cat from Yakima, but now lives with his family in Ridgefield. Although he's tiny, he's a tough little guy and is always ready to rumble with his brother!



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Sports Quiz Answers 1. Danny Abramowicz (his cracked helmet is in the Pro Football Hall of

2. The King's Plate, Prince of Wales Stakes

3. The Transylvania Open. 4. Spain.

5. New York Yankees owner George Steinbrenner.

Trivia Answers

2. The Ming dynasty.

3. "Holes."
4. "The Sound of Silence" by Simon &

5. Kneecap.

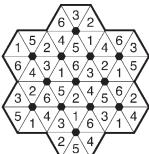
6. Santiago.

named Dom Perignon.

8. The cherry blossom

10. Black, although red

solution



MEMORIES

Word Spiral Answer

Declaration about a firefly or ladybug that

CryptoQuip

prefers ascending surfaces: It's an uphill beetle.

TRIVIA NEWSFRONT ANSWERS

The words are impression and

2. 4 to 8 weeks

4. No, not till age 3 5. The size of a walnut





ANSWERS

EUROPEAN CANDY

Weekly SUDOKU _

1 3 5 4 9 2 8 6

2 5 7 8 3 1 6 9

1 4 9 2 3 8 6 5 7

3 6 7 1 9 5 8 4 2

2 5 8 6 7 4 9 3 1

Even Exchange

SCRAMBLERS

solution 1. Deity; 2. Pleat; 3. Awoke; 4. Imply

> Today's Word **PAYDAY**

8 6 7 3 1

9 5 6 4 2

1 2 5 7 8

7. Quilt, Quill

9. Berry, Barry 10. Whale, Whole

9 2

7 1

3 6 4

DNODNOL)

Fame).

and Breeders' Stakes.

6. 8.5 PSI (the minimum is 7.5 PSI). 7. Bret Saberhagen.

1. Duke.

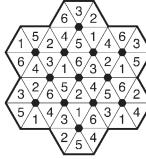
Garfunkel.

7. A Benedictine monk

and the chrysanthemum. 9. Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

also can be hot in twowire circuits.

NOMELTHRES



ANSWER

VELVETEEN

TIPETS GOES LONG.

One Iowa family tried to make their own gender-revealing cannon using colored powder and gunpowder poured into a pipe. However, they accidentally created a pipe bomb. When the fuse was lit and the bomb went off, Granny was hit by shrapnel and died.