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TIDBITS® PLAYS IN SNOW

by Janet Spencer

Snow may be the only thing on Earth that is simultaneously enchanting and annoying, completely necessary and extremely dangerous. But no matter if you love it or hate it, or both at the same time, snow is an essential part of the earth's ecosystem. Let's consider some of the more unusual aspects of snow!

- FLAKE FACTS**
- Scientists classify snow as a mineral, the same as salt or diamond: a naturally occurring solid inorganic material with a definite chemical composition and an ordered atomic arrangement.
 - Snowflakes are composed of ice crystals. A crystal is any matter in which ions, atoms, or molecules are arranged in a highly ordered three-dimensional lattice.
 - In fact, the word "crystal" comes from the Greek "krystallos" which means not only "rock crystals" but also "ice."
 - The largest single ice crystal ever documented measured just 0.39 inches (10 mm) from tip to tip. Most are much smaller than that.
 - Although a single airborne ice crystal is very tiny, it clusters with others as it falls to form snowflakes. An ordinary snowflake may consist of dozens or even hundreds of crystals clumped together.

(cont)

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SEE TESTIMONIALS ON PAGE 3

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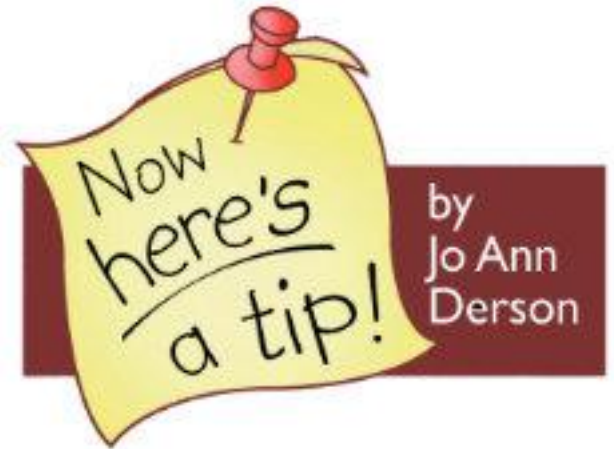
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FLAKE FACTS (cont)

- The largest snowflakes ever documented fell on January 27, 1897, near Missoula, Montana. The flakes measured ten inches (25 cm) wide and eight inches (20 cm) deep.
- Google commemorated the 125th anniversary of this remarkable snowfall event with a doodle depicting a giant cartoon snowflake crushing the landscape as it fell.
- The individual shape of a snowflake is based on air temperature, humidity level, speed of descent, and direction of movement as the snowflake falls.
- Chemistry teacher Andy Brunning subsequently discovered that those seven basic shapes result in 35 different sub-variations of flake shapes. He found that needle-like crystals form at 28°F (-2.2°C), while flat crystals form at temperatures of 23°F (-5.5°C).
- The declaration that no two snowflakes are alike arose from photographer Wilson Bentley, who became the first person to photograph a snowflake in 1885. He subsequently photographed over 5,000 snowflakes throughout his lifetime, and never found any duplicates.
- However, Nancy Knight worked for the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colorado, in 1988, studying high-altitude cirrus clouds. As a plane flew through the clouds during a snowstorm over Wisconsin, she collected snowflakes on chilled glass microscope slides covered with sticky oil. While observing them under a microscope, she actually found two snowflakes that were, for all intents and purposes, identical. (cont)



- To stretch your laundry budget, cut fabric softener sheets in half. They work just as well. Also, save them after they come out of the dryer. They make excellent dusters in the home.
- Love Sudoku? M.K. of Montana suggests that you might love it even more if you color code your grid. Each number 1-9 is assigned a color, and you solve the puzzle as normal, except you color in the box to denote your answer. When it's all finished, she says, "It looks like a colorful quilt."
- If the vegetables you are cooking give off an unpleasant smell, grab a small saucepan and simmer a bit of plain vinegar while cooking. It will negate the smell, and leave your house smelling pleasantly like mealtime afterward.
- "Cornstarch is great for itchy, rashy skin. This is true for babies' bottoms and for doggy bellies, which is what I use it for. My pup is allergic to grass but loves to romp. Sometimes his belly gets red, and I clean it with a mild soap and water, then give him a cornstarch rub. It sure helps." -- T.W. in Ohio
- Want to keep your cut flowers fresh longer? Add a teaspoon of chlorine bleach to the water and change it out every few days.
- Spruce up indoor greenery with a little mineral oil. To get your green plants' leaves shining and healthy, wipe them down with a clean cloth dipped in mineral oil. Rub off any excess.

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.

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Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



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Monika Klennert
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FLAKE FACTS (cont)

- Snow is just one of several different forms of precipitation. Other types include rain, sleet, graupel (soft hail), and hail.
- The word “graupel” comes from the German word meaning grain or granule.
- Frost is not considered snow or precipitation because it’s formed from water already on the ground.
- It’s been calculated that a typical snowflake takes about one hour to fall to the ground, descending between 1 and 4 mph (1.6 – 6.3 km/h), depending on conditions.
- Key West, Florida is the only place in the continental U.S. where it has never snowed. The lowest temperature ever recorded there was 41°F (5°C) on January 12, 1981.
- Which state is the snowiest? Surprise! It’s Vermont, followed by Maine, New Hampshire, and Colorado. Alaska comes in 5th. Not surprisingly, Hawaii and Florida are at the bottom of the list.
- A blizzard is different from a snowstorm, just as a hurricane is different from a tropical storm. For a storm to be classified as a blizzard, winds must be at least 35 mph (56 kph), with snowfall heavy enough to drop visibility to a quarter mile or less (0.4 km) for at least three hours.
- A “ground blizzard” is when it’s not snowing, yet strong winds blowing loose snow lowers visibility. A “snow squall” is a short-lived localized snowstorm.
- There are an average of 105 snow-producing storms annually in the U.S., each typically covering multiple states for several days.
- Snow falling through the air picks up nitrogen, a good fertilizer for plants, which is released to the soil when the snow melts. Snow insulates the roots of dormant plants and protects them from temperature swings, acting like mulch. (cont)



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★★★★★ I was highly impressed by the professionalism of John George and his assistant Rachelle. They assisted me in a modification of my child custody, and I would recommend them to anybody seeking help with family law. The preparation leading up to trial, as well as the actual trial went even better than I had hoped. Though the opposing attorney had a reputation of being "one of the best", I was beyond grateful to have John representing me. In comparison he was prepared, organized, factual, and professional, unlike the opposing.

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3. Three
4. The Bakersfield Three
5. CounterClock
6. Something Was Wrong
7. Dr. Death
8. The Binge Cases
9. Rachel Maddow Presents: Ultra
10. The Binge Crimes



Source: Apple

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21 Real Estate Facts

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STICKELERS Mrs. Terry Stickels

I can think of only one word that has five S's in its 8-letter makeup.

What word is that?

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TIDBITS

NUGGET OF KNOWLEDGE

The Ski-Doo snowmobile, first released in 1959, was originally supposed to be called the "Ski-Dog." However, there was a typo in the first batch of brochures, and the company decided to roll with it.




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FLAKE FACTS (cont)

- A well-known rule of thumb is that ten inches (25.4 cm) of snow equals one inch (2.54 cm) of rain. This turns out to be an inaccurate myth, as the water content of any snowfall varies significantly according to conditions. It may be as high as the 100-to-1 ratio for light, fluffy, cold snow or as low as three-to-one for warm, dense, wet snow.
- Snow can change how it sounds outside. Fluffy, new snow can muffle sounds. Snow that melts and then freezes again can make everything sound louder.
- Syracuse, New York, is regularly on the list of "snowiest cities in the U.S.," along with the nearby towns of Buffalo and Rochester, New York, and Erie, Pennsylvania. All these areas suffer from "lake effect snow" coming off Lake Erie, which often dumps upwards of 100 inches (2.54 m) or more of snow throughout the region each season.
- Worldwide, the most snow to ever fall in 24 hours happened in Capracotta, Italy on March 5, 2015, when 100.8 inches (2.56 m) of snow fell in a day.
- The most snow in the U.S. in 24 hours fell in Silver Lake, Colorado in 1921 when 75.8 inches (1.9 m) of snow came down.
- The most snow to ever fall in one year fell in Mount Rainier, Washington in 1971 when 102 feet (31 m) of snow fell over 365 days.
- On March 30, 1992, after a particularly harsh and snowy winter, the Syracuse Common Council officially outlawed further snowfall until December 24, 1992. Alas, it snowed several inches just two days later.

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- Montana's Flathead Lake looks shallow due to its crystal-clear water, but is actually 370 feet deep.
- The expiration date on bottled water is for the bottle, not the water.
- In 2004, farmers in India used Pepsi and Coca-Cola instead of pesticides because they were cheaper and got the job done just as well. Not surprisingly, Pepsi and Coca-Cola strongly disagreed.
- After eating a large meal, lions can sleep for up to 24 hours straight.
- People used to use bread to erase pencil marks, until Edward Naine accidentally picked up a piece of rubber instead of breadcrumbs in 1770 and -- voila! -- decided to start selling rubber erasers.
- Two Bosnians had been talking in online chatrooms for a while when they decided it was time to meet in person. They discovered they were a married couple who had been cheating on each other with each other. They ended up divorcing.
- One French cafe, La Petite Syrah, charges 7 euros for a coffee to rude customers but only 1.40 euro to patrons who are polite to the waitstaff. The cafe is located, perhaps unsurprisingly, in Nice.
- Penguin egg whites turn clear when they're boiled.
- Michael Jackson was said to request that his wine be served in Diet Coke cans whenever he was on a flight. He didn't want his kids to see him drinking alcohol.

HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Pillow is larger. 2. Picture on wall is moved. 3. Mouth is different. 4. Necktie is added. 5. Apron is different. 6. Wristwatch is added.

Thought for the Day:

"A good conscience is a continual Christmas." - Benjamin Franklin
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Laugh a bit with **TIDBITS**

Q: Who are the snowman's parents?
A: Mom and Popsicle!

WORD LADDERS

Can you go from FAILS to KINDS in 6 words?
Change one letter for each rung in the ladder.

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KINDS

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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!

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WASP _____

Enue

RAISE _____

Smooth

MYCARE _____

Prance

VORTAC _____

TODAY'S WORD



"While you were gone, the house seemed _____ except for the sink!"

KOVELS' ANTIQUES & COLLECTIBLES

By Terry and Kim Kovel
PHOTO CREDIT: Kovels.com

PHOTO CAPTION: Merry Christmas! There's a version of Santa Claus for everyone who celebrates.



Santa Figures

Santa Claus comes in many forms. While he is ultimately inspired by the historical St. Nicholas of Myra (today Demre, Turkey), a fourth-century Greek bishop, he is influenced by British, German, Dutch and Scandinavian folkloric figures.

According to today's traditions, he lives at the North Pole. So it might seem odd that the country store Santa figure pictured here, which sold for \$441 at Garths' Auctioneers & Appraisers, holds an American flag. But the Santa Claus we know in the United States was developed here.

European immigrants brought their Christmas traditions with them. In 1823, American poet Clement Clark Moore published "A Visit from St. Nicholas," probably better known as "'Twas the Night Before Christmas," establishing the image of Santa Claus as "a right jolly old elf." Cartoonist Thomas Nast cemented this image in popular culture with his illustrations for Harper's Weekly starting in the 1860s. L. Frank Baum, who set out to write a quintessentially American fairy tale with "The Wizard of Oz," published "The Life and Adventures of Santa

Claus" in 1902, depicting Santa as a founding child raised by fairies and granted immortality after a lifetime of good deeds.

One of the most enduring images of Santa comes from the Coca-Cola advertisements designed by painter Haddon Sundblom starting in the 1930s. From Europe to the Americas, and from history to folklore to advertisements, Santa can make himself at home anywhere.

Q: Where can I find the value of a set of Peter Pan Records sung by the Caroleers?

A: The Caroleers were a group of mostly unknown vocalists who recorded children's music for several companies during the 1950s, '60s, and '70s. They recorded for Peter Pan Records beginning in 1952. The Caroleers recorded several Christmas albums in 78 RPM, 45 RPM, and LP formats. Millions of their records were sold. Many sell on eBay for \$5 or less today. A few sell for about \$10. Some sites ask much more. Rarity and condition determine price. Go to a local store that buys and sells vintage records to see what your set sells for in your area.

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 "Waterloo" group
- 5 Financial pro
- 8 Sci-fi vehicles
- 12 Starring role
- 13 — Royal Highness
- 14 Worn-down pencils
- 15 Nose and mouth covering
- 17 Move like a butterfly
- 18 Short sock
- 19 Curved fasteners
- 21 Shoe width
- 22 Tropical tree
- 23 Santa's helper

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
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54					55				56			
57					58				59			

- 26 Highland hat
- 28 Prettify
- 31 Painter Joan
- 33 Coffee vessel
- 35 A few
- 36 Glasses, slangily
- 38 Bro's kin
- 40 Compass dir.
- 41 And others (Lat.)
- 43 Goal
- 45 Filmed anew
- 47 Lubricate
- 51 Mountain ht.
- 52 Gathering organized via social media
- 54 Jai —
- 55 Sailor
- 56 Skater Lipinski
- 57 Chorus syllables
- 58 Govt. lender
- 59 ABA member
- 9 Spectacular lunar phase
- 10 Last write-up
- 11 Bygone fliers
- 16 Bump into
- 20 Sheepish remark
- 23 German river
- 24 Sass
- 25 Comp for a foodie
- 27 "— Miniver"
- 29 LBJ's successor
- 30 Formerly known as
- 32 Spencer of "Hidden Figures"
- 34 — Falls
- 37 Blue
- 39 Round Table titles
- 42 Certain jobs
- 44 Maestro Zubin —
- 45 Genuine
- 46 Big name in scat
- 48 Latin 101 word
- 49 Type
- 50 Online auction site
- 53 Science room

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1. LITERATURE: Which Victor Hugo novel was made into an animated Disney movie?
2. MUSIC: In the song "The Twelve Days of Christmas," what was the gift on the eighth day?
3. GEOGRAPHY: Where is the Kalahari Desert located?
4. HISTORY: Who was the first African-American justice on the U.S. Supreme Court?
5. BIOLOGY: What is the process called in which a nonreproductive cell divides in two?
6. MOVIES: In the movie "Elf," what is the name of Santa's sleigh?
7. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is the largest mammal on Earth?
8. U.S. STATES: Where did the first organized celebration of Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) take place in the U.S.?
9. ASTRONOMY: Which planet is the smallest in our solar system?
10. TELEVISION: Which 1980s-1990s TV family sitcom had a holiday episode titled "A Very Tanner Christmas"?

- Answers
1. "The Hunchback of Notre Dame."
 2. Eight maids a-milking.
 3. Southern Africa.
 4. Thurgood Marshall.
 5. Mitosis.
 6. The Kringle 3000.
 7. The blue whale.
 8. Mobile, Alabama.
 9. Mercury.
 10. "Full House."
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"Good news, Senator! Most Americans believe you didn't know anything and still don't know anything."



Introducing a new pet to your cat

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I recently adopted a year-old puppy. "Max" is a friendly, well-socialized dog, and during the trial stay a month ago, my 10-year-old cat, "Nora," seemed to tolerate him. Well, on the second day that Max was home, he started barking excitedly. Nora sprang up and attacked him, cornering Max on the sofa. She batted him around the snout several times. Now, Max slinks out of the room anytime that Nora appears. How can I make peace between them? -- Gerry G., Manchester, New Hampshire

DEAR GERRY: I'm sorry to hear that! Introducing a new pet into an established household can be stressful for both pets and sometimes unpredictable. And any negative interactions that occur -- from hissing and barking to an all-out boxing match -- can make future harmony nearly impossible to achieve. One or both pets may begin to exhibit behavioral issues like aggression, soiling in the house, chewing and scratching, and more.

For the foreseeable future, you'll need to manage and monitor all interactions between Max and Nora. As soon as they begin to react negatively, they need to be separated.

Reintroduce the two gradually. I recommend taking Max for a nice, long walk before each meeting so that some of his puppy energy is worked off beforehand. Work intensively with Max on basic commands like sit, stay, lie down and come here. When Max is in the room with Nora, have him sit or lie down close to you -- they don't have to meet face to face. Limit interaction time to five minutes or less at first, then gradually increase the time.

How do you keep peace between pets in your house? Tell me about it at ask@pawscorner.com.

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ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Don't be sheepish about asking more questions before making a major decision at your workplace. Meanwhile, your personal relationships continue to improve.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) You might be rushed into renewing an old, cold relationship. But do you really want a reheated romance when there's a chance to warm up with someone new?

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Someone tells you something that could lead you to rethink your plans for the holidays. Get the full story before you make a decision.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) A financial matter that had you in a dither is finally being sorted out as more facts become available. A perplexing personal matter also clears up.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) You face a slew of new tasks at home and work. So, as much as you love being a social Lion, be careful not to overdo it at those preholiday parties.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) Unexpected news could cause some minor adjustments in your holiday planning. Defer a decision about a financial matter until you have more facts.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) A project might not be bringing you the results you'd hoped it would by now. But stay with it -- things will soon begin to turn around.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) A budding personal relationship continues to develop. Things also improve in your career, although some problems still need close attention.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Mercury is finally stationing direct in your sign after a few weeks in retrograde. This will give you motivation to take care of any outstanding tasks before the holidays.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Allowing a misunderstanding to go unchallenged could jeopardize the plans you've made for the upcoming holidays. Clear the air now.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) While you should be open to suggestions on how to plan for the holidays, you should also be firm in saying "no" to anything you disagree with.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) Get out from under all those holiday preparations and immerse yourself in a world of music. You'll soon feel refreshed, revived -- maybe even reborn!

BORN THIS WEEK: You believe in the truth and have little patience for those who try to hide it. You would make an excellent judge.

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TIDBITS presents **QUIZ BITS**

1. Is it ever too cold to snow?
2. What does the word "igloo" mean in the Inuit language?

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: X equals O

SVJ JXFIDXGQ SXHGIUTHE
SOIKOIU XU HXK T CTNI FQ
KYUNIQ KX DI JYMMYCIHK?
FXTJK MIUKVTHCQ!

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Weekly SUDOKU

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

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!

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SNOWFLAKES

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: ◆◆◆

◆ Easy ◆◆ Medium ◆◆◆ Difficult

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HealthBits

By Dr. Holly Carling

MINERALS: THE FOUNDATION FOR A HEALTHY BODY

Often overlooked when counseled on eating well, is the benefits of minerals. They are not just beneficial, but essential!

Minerals are the foundational material by which function is dependent. When constructing a building, the strength of the foundation determines the structural integrity of the rest of the building. To skimp here compromises the entire “health” of the building. The body is no different.

When analyzing the diets of patients, mineral deficiencies rank highest. We spend so much time concerned about vitamins and proteins, that the lowly minerals, the foundation of all life, get forgotten. Yet minerals initiate function in nearly every organ in the body. For instance, the thyroid needs iodine, the pancreas needs chromium, the prostate zinc, the adrenals need copper and sodium, the pituitary manganese, etc. If these minerals are deficient in the diet, it is no wonder the organs become deficient in function as well. The body can’t do something with nothing!

The form of minerals ingested is critical. No mammal or human eats dirt, even when starving, yet that is what many people are buying in the form of supplements. Not just dirt (ground up rock) but ground up shells and metal, coal tar, petroleum products and chemicals from a laboratory. If we could digest and assimilate these, we could just go out and eat the sidewalk

or the asphalt! But we can’t.

As with all things in nature, there is orderliness. Minerals, to be assimilated, must be organic. In other words, it has to first be broken down by microorganisms in the soil, and then taken up by plants. From there, we humans (and animals) eat the plant and are able to metabolize the minerals in a form the body recognizes and can use. “Inorganic” minerals means it has not passed through the vegetable kingdom first, and becomes a challenge to our health, instead of an asset.

Minerals are most abundantly found in vegetables, especially the green and green-leafy type: spinach, kale, Swiss chard, broccoli, cabbage, lettuces, green beans, asparagus, and others such as cauliflower, sweet potatoes, carrots, beets and other root vegetables. The nice thing about food sources of minerals is that you get them in their synergistic proportions as nature intended, without man interjecting what HE thinks your proportions should be. That is why it is important to get your mineral supplements from plant sources, not from ground up junk.

As doctors Timothy O’Shea, Janet Lang and others have taught us, vitamins and minerals are biological complexes. They are not individual isolated compounds anywhere in nature. As such, they need the various co-factors, biological actions, and synergistic processes that nature intended, to be complete enough to be an asset to our physiological needs.

Anything less compromises the very foundation of health that we are trying to accomplish with a healthy diet!

Want to hear more from Dr. Carling? Check out our podcast. Search for VitalHealth4You on your favorite podcast listening app or go to vitalhealthcda.com/podcasts/



Dr. Holly Carling is a Doctor of Oriental Medicine, Licensed Acupuncturist, Doctor of Naturopathy, Clinical Nutritionist and Master Herbologist with over four decades of experience. Dr. Carling is a “Health Detective,” she looks beyond your symptom picture and investigates WHY you are experiencing your symptoms in the first place. Dr. Carling is currently accepting new patients and offers natural health care services and whole food nutritional supplements in her Coeur d’ Alene clinic. Visit Dr. Carling’s website at www.vitalhealthcda.com to learn more about Dr. Carling, view a list of upcoming health classes and read other informative articles. Dr. Carling can be reached at 208-765-1994 and would be happy to answer any questions regarding this topic.

Medical/Health Disclaimer: The information provided in this article should not be construed as personal medical advice or instruction. No action should be taken based solely on the contents of this article. Readers should consult appropriate health professionals on any matter relating to their health and well-being. The information and opinions provided here are believed to be accurate and sound, based on the best judgment available to the author, but readers who fail to consult appropriate health authorities assume the risk of any injuries.

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VETERANS ★ POST ★

By Freddy Groves The OIG Always Comes Through

Things are going to be different in 2025. If there's one thing I hope, it's that the Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General isn't hit with any budget or staffing reductions. As time goes on we need them more than ever to dig out, investigate and expose all the problems in the VA.

The PACT Act of 2022, for example, required screenings for toxic exposures -- as well as training for the VA medical staff to do those screenings. Within a short time, screenings had been done on 4 million veterans out of the 9 million who were enrolled in VA health care. That's approximately 45% of the total. Training for staff, however, didn't come close. When additional training was required, only 21.4% of staff completed it, which means that a lot of veterans were screened by staff who hadn't done all of their training.

Then there is the matter of communication that the VA OIG exposed: A "package manager" computer program at the VA bundles up the documents for a veteran's claims and then sends them off to a printer. The VA OIG discovered that, because nobody was paying attention to the problem, over 2 million packages weren't printed ... because nobody hit the "send" button. The veterans, therefore, did not receive the communications from the VA, which might have been asking for more evidence for a claim to be processed or notification about a claim decision and information about options for responding to that decision.

Equally valuable are the frauds that the OIG nails. A recent scam involved a pharmaceutical company that offered a particular test kit, claiming that the kit could diagnose a certain condition. Then they were able to push the very expensive therapy drug they produced for that condition. Kickbacks were involved, of course. The company ended up paying \$47 million for their scam.

Keep your fingers crossed. In a perfect world, the VA OIG will maintain an adequate budget and staffing. Doubling it would be better.

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- How big is the largest snowplow blade in the world?
- Where is the largest snowplow blade in the world located?
- This Canadian province set the record for the most snow angels made simultaneously over multiple locations, with over 22,000.
- This city in the U.S. holds the record for most snow angels made in a single place, with just under 9,000.
- What percent of the world's fresh water is frozen as ice or snow?

**DONNA ERICKSON'S
BEST BITES**

BYLINE: By Donna Erickson
PHOTO CREDIT: Donna Erickson

Dive Into an Octopus Lunch Surprise

Turn a ho-hum Saturday meal into a memorable family activity when you dive into this "Octopus Lunch Surprise" recipe! With a few simple ingredients that kids love, your imaginations can soar when everyone creates an underwater scene right on their plates.

Make a shopping list, pick up what you need together, and you'll soon be on your way to playing with your food kid-style!



Here are the ingredients you'll need for 4 servings:

- 4 standard-sized hot dogs
- 6 ounces spinach fettuccine, cooked according to package directions (substitute shell-shaped pasta, if you prefer)
- 4 slices of bread
- 4 slices of cheese or cheese spread
- Cookie cutters in fish or star shapes
- 2 whole cloves or raisins
- Several cocktail-sized sausages such as Hillshire Farm Beef Lit'l Smokies (optional)

Here's the fun: For each "octopus," slice a hot dog down the center lengthwise, leaving approximately 1 1/2 inches at one end of the hot dog intact. The uncut end will be the head of the "octopus." Hand your child a pair of clean and easy-to-handle scissors. Let them cut each of the halves in half lengthwise, then in half again. Be careful to keep the strips attached to the solid top portion of the hot dog. You will now have 8 arms. Cut a few arms in the small cocktail-sized wieners, if you wish.

An adult should place the hot dogs in a pan of boiling water. Watch how the "octopus" arms immediately curl as the hot dog heats through and the casing tightens. Carefully remove from the pan, and set each one with the head upright and legs dangling outward on top of a mound of hot, buttered spinach pasta (the seaweed). For the eyes, insert 2 whole cloves or raisins next to each other into the top portion.

Set a small sausage or two (to represent squids) along the side of the plate, chasing after the octopus. Serve with toast that has been cut into sea-themed shapes with cookie cutters. Top with cheese spread or cheese slices cut into the same shapes.

Extra Learning Fun: Watch a short, popular video on your computer showing the discovery of octopuses manipulating discarded coconut shells and using them for protective shelter. View it and read more interesting information about octopuses with your family at NationalGeographic.com. Search the site with these keywords: "octopus" and "coconut shell."

Donna Erickson creates relationships and community through food and fun. Find more to nourish and delight you at www.donnaerickson.com.

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TIDBITS WORD POWER
Unscramble this word:
CHEERSROT

City in New York State consistently wins the title of the snowiest city in the U.S., averaging over 100 inches (2.5 m).

MINI SUDOKU

	4	2			
	3				5
			3		6
4				5	2
	2			3	

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 6-box square contains all of the numbers from one to six.

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Micro Crossword By Elizabeth C. Gorski

Across

- Ink squirter
- Measure of prevention?
- Basketball shot
- Banana coverings
- Lang. of Leeds

Down

- Boozers
- Earth-shaking event
- Loosen, as a brooch
- Sheetcake layer
- Football watching venues

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- By Ryan A. Berenz
1. What businessman is the founder, chairman and CEO of Monumental Sports & Entertainment, which owns the NBA's Washington Wizards, the NHL's Washington Capitals and the WNBA's Washington Mystics?
 2. The Cyclone Taylor Trophy is awarded annually to the MVP of which NHL hockey team?
 3. Name the Las Vegas Aces player who tied Liz Cambage's single-game WNBA scoring record with a 53-point performance in August 2023.
 4. Pro softball pitcher, LPGA Tour golfer and U.S. Women's National Basketball Team player Joan Joyce coached softball (1995-2022) and women's golf (1996-2014) for what college team?
 5. Name the Los Angeles Dodgers first baseman who hit the first walk-off grand slam home run in World Series history.
 6. Ed Anzalone, better known as "Fireman Ed," is a superfan famous for leading cheers at what NFL team's home games?
 7. During a 2015 Indianapolis 500 practice session, what driver was critically injured in a crash when a piece of his car's suspension impaled his left thigh?

- Answers
1. Ted Leonsis.
 2. The Vancouver Canucks.
 3. A'ja Wilson.
 4. The Florida Atlantic Owls.
 5. Freddie Freeman, in 2024 World Series Game 1.
 6. The New York Jets.
 7. James Hinchcliffe.
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TIDBITS GOES LONG.....

TIME magazine's list of "The 100 Most Influential People of the 20th Century" includes Coco Chanel, the only fashion designer to receive this honor.

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— Eleanor Roosevelt

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TIDBITS

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The Garden Bug Holiday cactuses

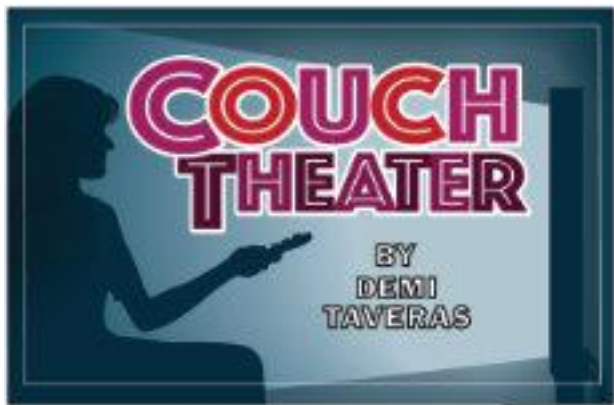
"Thanksgiving cactus"
(Schlumbergera truncata) displays broad, pointy leaves and may bloom from late October through November.

"Christmas cactus"
(Schlumbergera bridgesii) has scalloped, flat leaves and may bloom from late November to late January.

"The Easter cactus"
(Rhipsalidopsis gaumeri) displays rounded scalloped leaves, sometimes with "beads," and may bloom from mid-March through April. - *toxa house*

Sources: glazebout.com, Suny Zoo Gardens

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BYLINE: By Demi Taveras



Photo Credit: Courtesy of Apple TV+

Photo Caption: Scarlett Johansson, left, and Channing Tatum star in "Fly Me to the Moon."

"Fly Me to the Moon" (PG-13) -- This film deemed as a "rom-com drama" tells an intriguing story about marketing specialist Kelly Jones' (Scarlett Johansson) efforts to improve NASA's public image during the Space Race. Kelly moves from New York to Cocoa Beach, Florida, to start work at the Kennedy Space Center, where she meets launch director Cole Davis (Channing Tatum), who disagrees with her marketing strategies. However, their opposing energies cause a romantic spark to develop between them, even though Kelly is

hiding the fact that she's also been secretly tasked with creating a fake moon landing just in case the Apollo 11 mission doesn't succeed. Ray Romano and Woody Harrelson co-star in the film, which is out now to stream. (Apple TV+)

"Our Little Secret" (TV-14) -- Lindsay Lohan ("Irish Wish") and Ian Harding ("Pretty Little Liars") star opposite each other in this Christmas rom-com out now; although for a Christmas movie, the holiday spirit is lukewarm at best. Focusing more on the amusement of its incredulous story rather than the elements needed to tell the story properly, "Our Little Secret" follows exes Avery (Lohan) and Logan (Harding) who receive the surprise of a century when they bump into each other at their new significant others' family Christmas celebration. Realizing their new partners, Cam and Cassie, are siblings, Avery and Logan agree to keep their romantic past a secret so that they can make it through the holiday without any hiccups. The highlights of the film were the quips made by the supporting cast, specifically Kristin Chenoweth, Dan Bucatinsky and Judy Reyes. (Netflix)

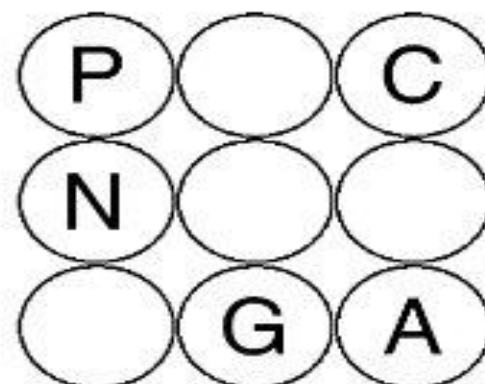
"The Wonderful World of Disney: Holiday Spectacular" (TV-PG) -- Alfonso Ribeiro and Julianne Hough trade the "Dancing with the Stars" ballroom for Disney to host this holiday special out now! In this 1-hour-and-20-minute spectacular, viewers can enjoy performances of their favorite holiday songs and a few new songs from Disney films like "Moana 2" and "Mufasa: The Lion King." Look out for musicians such as Elton John, John Legend and Pentatonix, as well as familiar faces like Auli'i Cravalho, Seth MacFarlane and Leslie Odom Jr. The performances were filmed in Disney resorts located in Florida, California and Hawaii.

(Disney+)

"Super/Man: The Christopher Reeve Story" (PG-13) -- This documentary, out now, recounts the life of actor Christopher Reeve, who is known best for his role as Superman in the 1978-1987 "Superman" films. But Reeve's career spanned over 30 years, with many television, theater and directing credits to his name. Unfortunately, in 1995, Reeve suffered a spinal cord injury after falling from his horse, which paralyzed him from the neck down. Fortunately, though, it catapulted him into activism as a result, and he began advocating for disabled people and spinal cord injury research. In the doc, there is ample footage of Reeve and his wife, Dana, as well as his children, Alexandra, Matthew and Will. Actors Jeff Daniels, Susan Sarandon, Glenn Close and Whoopi Goldberg were also interviewed for the film. (Max)

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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.
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TIDBITS QUOTE

"Snow provokes responses that reach right back to childhood."
-Andy Goldsworthy

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Y W O O R A K C U B O U R K O
P N H O L E J H M O O D O O V
F A D B R Z T A B X V T H O R
Y H U L L A B A L O O Y O P Q
O M K I B H G F W D L D O M B
Z Y W O V U T N R L I Q H A O
N L O K B O O Z A K I H A H F
D C A Z X W V B S K U S W S R

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
Unlisted clue hint: AN INK DESIGN ON THE SKIN

Ballyhoo	Cuckoo	Shampoo	Wahoo
Bamboo	Hullabaloo	Skidoo	Waterloo
Buckaroo	Kangaroo	Taboo	Yahoo
Bugaboo	Kazoo	Voodoo	




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Super Crossword

TEEPEES

- ACROSS**
- 1 The United States' landmass, with "the"
 - 9 Rafter's challenge
 - 15 Shul scroll
 - 20 Another similar thing
 - 21 Barack and Michelle
 - 22 Give the slip
 - 23 Like babies who throw tantrums when you try to put diapers on them?
 - 25 News outlets
 - 26 RBI or ERA
 - 27 Film lead-in to "Cop"
 - 28 Photo —
 - 29 More nimble
 - 30 Trellis climber
 - 32 Having a sore mouth from working long hours at a kissing booth?
 - 36 Joint a sock often covers
 - 39 Chipped in, in poker
 - 40 Beckett title character
 - 41 Intense fire used as an energy source?
 - 46 Pie — mode
 - 49 Abbr. on a road map
 - 50 With 44-Down, decay of building timbers
 - 51 Colon part
 - 52 Communist Joseph
 - 55 Egyptian god of the dead
 - 57 Declaration while pointing at a group of workers on strike?
 - 62 Scent sensor
 - 63 George at Gettysburg
 - 64 Airy melody
 - 65 Statement when you're nearly ready to complete a collage?
 - 72 The "A" of "A-Rod"
 - 73 Depart
 - 74 Air out
 - 77 Mesmerizing horse movement?
 - 83 Limb-bending muscle
 - 85 Is theatrical
 - 86 Pod item
 - 87 Color grade
 - 88 Actress Gastayer
 - 89 Tangle of hair
 - 90 Inherent hanging-down position?
 - 96 SeaWorld whale, once
 - 100 Fake identity
 - 101 Fuels (up)
 - 102 "It won't hurt to snoop a little!"?
 - 107 Body of eau
 - 108 Kind of acid in vinegar
 - 109 Debt note
 - 110 Architect Saarinen
 - 112 "Slung" food
 - 116 St. — (Caribbean getaway)
 - 117 Hassle of tracking down a missing retirement payment?
 - 121 Vintage song
 - 122 Stress
 - 123 Spiritual self
 - 124 Foundations
 - 125 Peanut butter cup brand
 - 126 Bread browners
 - 6 Indian dish
 - 7 Height: Prefix
 - 8 The whole —
 - 9 King, in Caen
 - 10 Belly muscles
 - 11 Jean — (perfume brand)
 - 12 Windows ad catchphrase
 - 13 Language of Copenhagen, to locals
 - 14 New jet in '68
 - 15 Worked as an office sub
 - 16 Carry too far
 - 17 Howard Stern's area
 - 18 "Bye, Brigitte"
 - 19 Bodily pump
 - 24 Conductor Georg
 - 29 "Every seat sold" abbr.
 - 31 "La Traviata" composer
 - 33 Spy novelist Deighton
 - 34 Shareable PC file
 - 35 Vainglory
 - 36 Chef's tie-on
 - 37 "Untrue!"
 - 38 Maryland congressman — Mfume
 - 39 Even a bit of
 - 42 Taxis gp.
 - 43 Mag bigwigs
 - 44 See 50-Across
 - 45 High degree
 - 47 Falsification
 - 48 Cookout pest
 - 52 BBQ rod
 - 53 Mosaic piece
 - 54 On the go
 - 56 Withdraw
 - 57 — Aviv
 - 58 Deli meat
 - 59 Footfaraw
 - 60 Model S car
 - 61 Otherwise
 - 63 Long skirt
 - 66 Balm plant
 - 67 Meshes
 - 68 A fifth of fifty
 - 69 D.C. donor
 - 70 Abbr. on a road map
 - 71 Dallasites or Houstonians
 - 75 — word (single-occasion coinage)
 - 76 Plate holders
 - 77 Skirt edge
 - 78 Diva Sumac
 - 79 Broken bits of ceramic material
 - 80 Tax doc. pro
 - 81 House animal
 - 82 Novelist Santha Rama —
 - 83 Festivity
 - 84 Pigeon perch
 - 87 Males
 - 90 Rapa — (Easter Island)
 - 91 Solar beam
 - 92 Frazier foe
 - 93 Sheet fabric
 - 94 Website visit unit
 - 95 Pilot Amelia
 - 97 Actress McDaniel of "Gone With the Wind"
 - 98 Comes up
 - 99 Nero's 2,100
 - 102 Bigwig
 - 103 Florida city
 - 104 "Uncle" crier, perhaps
 - 105 Explorer — de León
 - 106 Stratagems
 - 107 Disney film of 2016
 - 111 Nevada city
 - 113 Highest point
 - 114 — -Pei
 - 115 Mama birds
 - 117 Golf average
 - 118 Ending for opal
 - 119 Extra NBA periods
 - 120 — Plaines

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19			
20								21						22							
23							24							25							
26					27					28			29								
		30	31				32		33	34			35								
36	37	38					39						40								
41							42				43	44	45				46	47	48		
49				50						51				52	53	54					
55			56				57	58	59	60			61								
62							63						64								
		65		66	67						68	69	70					71			
			72							73						74		75	76		
77	78	79					80	81	82					83	84						
85							86						87					88			
89							90				91	92	93	94			95				
		96	97	98	99						100						101				
102	103							104	105	106							107				
108								109					110		111			112	113	114	115
116								117				118	119					120			
121																					
124																					



Moments in time

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

- On Dec. 23, 1982, Chaminade University of Honolulu, a school with only 900 students, beat the top-ranked University of Virginia by a mere five points in one of the most stunning upsets in American basketball history. As ESPN's Chris Berman remarked, "We can't tell you what happened, but the No. 1 team in college basketball has lost to -- we don't even know who they are."
- On Dec. 24, 1851, a fire at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., destroyed approximately two-thirds of its 55,000 volumes, including most of Thomas Jefferson's personal library.
- On Dec. 25, 1962, the film adaptation of Harper Lee's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel "To Kill a Mockingbird" opened in Los Angeles. It was nominated for eight Oscars and won three, and the American Film Institute rated lead character Atticus Finch as the greatest movie hero of the 20th century.
- On Dec. 26, 1820, Moses Austin, a merchant turned mine owner, met with Spanish authorities in San Antonio to ask permission for 300 Anglo-American families to settle in Texas, in the hope of recovering from bankruptcy via the establishment of a new colony. His request was approved, but he died before he could carry it out, so the task was completed by his son, with more than 20,000 arrivals eventually succeeding in making Texas an independent state.
- On Dec. 27, 1944, President Franklin D. Roosevelt ordered his secretary of war to seize properties belonging to the Montgomery Ward company after it refused to comply with a labor agreement, announcing that the government would "not tolerate any interference with war production in this critical hour."
- On Dec. 28, 1908, the worst earthquake in recorded European history struck the Straits of Messina in southern Italy, leveling the cities of Messina and Reggio di Calabria and ultimately causing the deaths of an estimated 100,000 people.
- On Dec. 29, 1170, Archbishop Thomas Becket was murdered in Canterbury Cathedral by four of King Henry II's knights, apparently on his orders. Four years later, Henry was forced to do penance at Becket's tomb, and his efforts to end the separation between church and state came to an end.

SENIOR NEWS LINE

By Matilda Charles

Our challenge for 2025

"Your mission, should you choose to accept it ..." Remember that quote, from the "Mission: Impossible" TV show? The show (1966-1973) tasked members of the team with stopping enemy forces, a job that seemed to be impossible but really wasn't. That's our challenge for the New Year, to stop the "enemy forces" who are the scammers that want to steal our money, our identification and our peace of mind.

Some ideas for staying safe:

Ask your senior center to host a seminar about scams aimed at seniors.

Don't click on links in email or text messages.

Don't answer the phone if you don't know who it is. If a caller says they're from your bank, hang up and call the bank to see if they really did call you.

Don't give out any information over the phone, no matter who it is. The IRS, Medicare or Social Security aren't going to call you to ask for your account numbers or threaten to have you arrested.

If a caller asks, "Can you hear me?" never say "yes." That one word will be recorded and give them permission to authorize charges on your credit card, or to make a payment. Just hang up. If a company claims you're having a virus problem with your computer and wants access to fix it, just hang up.

Never announce on social media that you're going away on vacation. It alerts thieves that your house will be empty.

Go online and search for scams against seniors. Become familiar with all the tricks thieves use to get you to let down your guard. Learn about the red flags for the grandparent scam, the lottery scam, the counterfeit check scam, the undelivered package scam ... there are just so many of them, and they rob seniors of billions of dollars each year.

Make your goal for 2025 to not fall for any scams. It's not impossible.

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WHAT HAPPENS IN ASSISTED LIVING?

A typical day in an assisted living community is often filled with warmth, comfort, and activities that promote both well-being and joy. It's a space where seniors can enjoy their independence while receiving the support they need, all within a nurturing environment that feels like home.

Morning: A Fresh Start

The day begins on a peaceful note. Residents can wake up at their own pace, knowing that assistance is always available if needed. A hearty breakfast is served in the dining room, where everyone can enjoy nutritious, home-prepared meals while chatting with friends. The atmosphere is warm and inviting, and it feels like catching up with family over coffee. After breakfast, residents might choose to participate in gentle exercise classes designed to energize the body and mind or catch up on current events. There might be a visit from one of the favorite pets from our pet therapy partners, or musical entertainers that invite everyone to sing along!

Mid-Morning: Activities and Social Time

After breakfast, the day opens up with a variety of engaging activities. Some may join a group for an art class or music therapy session, while others may prefer a stroll in the beautifully landscaped courtyard. There's always something to do, whether it's a bookclub, a crafting session, or even a friendly game of bingo. Social events like these help create bonds among residents (and those caring for them), by keeping the atmosphere

vibrant and full of life.

Afternoon: Relaxation and Recreation

After a delicious lunch, residents have time to relax or pursue personal hobbies. Some may retreat to their rooms for a nap or to enjoy a quiet afternoon of reading. Others might head to a common area to watch a movie or enjoy a card game. The community might have a scenic drive or a picnic in the park planned. Staff members are always present, offering a helping hand or friendly conversation.

Evening: A Cozy End to the Day

Dinner is another opportunity for socializing, with delicious meals tailored to different tastes and dietary needs. As the day comes to a close, residents can unwind with a variety of evening activities—like enjoying a cup of hot chocolate and watching the sun set in the courtyard together, watching a classic film, or simply relaxing in one of the walk-in bathtubs with a little Epsom salt and essential oil. The day ends on a cozy note, ensuring that everyone feels happy and at home.

In assisted living, every day is filled with moments of joy, connection, and comfort, where each resident can live life at their own pace while being part of a caring community. Call me today for a free consultation in navigating assisted living and memory care options.



Becky Georgius

Sales and Marketing Director

The Lodge Assisted Living and Memory Care Communities

208-457-3403

Even 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. Rowland's Potter	___ _ R ___	Hale	___ _ D ___
2. Lone Ranger's steed	___ I ___	Serving tray	___ A ___
3. Thirsty cloth	___ _ L	Steeple	___ _ R
4. Baseball hit man	___ A ___	Toast topping	___ U ___
5. Sticky tag	___ B ___	Boutonniere location	___ P ___
6. Use one's ears	___ _ E _	Boxer Sonny	___ _ O _
7. Make a call	___ H ___	Inclined to	___ R ___
8. Silent	___ _ E _	Homemade blanket	___ _ L _
9. Heap	___ T ___	Hovel	___ H ___
10. Hand gun	___ _ L	Engine cylinder	___ _ N

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Wishing Well®

6	2	5	4	7	6	2	7	8	7	2	7	5
H	C	A	P	A	A	R	C	B	T	E	I	P
2	5	6	2	5	7	2	5	7	4	2	7	2
A	P	P	T	L	O	I	A	N	L	V	S	E
6	8	5	8	2	5	7	6	4	3	8	4	5
P	E	U	I	P	S	J	I	A	Y	N	N	E
6	2	8	7	5	4	2	6	3	2	8	6	3
N	E	V	U	F	A	R	E	O	I	E	S	U
5	2	6	5	3	6	8	7	5	7	2	5	3
O	O	S	R	T	L	N	S	Y	T	D	O	H
6	7	5	3	6	7	6	3	7	3	8	7	8
I	I	U	R	E	F	S	I	I	V	T	E	I
4	3	6	8	7	6	4	6	8	4	6	4	6
H	E	A	V	D	H	E	E	E	A	A	D	D

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.

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GO FIGURE!

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

	+		-		= 11			
-		+		-				
	-		+		= 5			
+		÷		×				
	+		+		= 11			
=		=		=				
4		11		14				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

DIFFICULTY: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

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Americanisms



"Be a rainbow in someone else's cloud."
— Maya Angelou

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FLASHBACK

POP, ROCK & SOUL TRIVIA BY MICK HARPER



1. Name the original title of the Beatles film "Help!"
2. What was a deuce coupe in the Beach Boys' song?
3. "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction" was a big hit for which group?
4. What was Jesse Belvin's biggest hit?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "All we need is a drummer, for people who only need a beat."

Answers

1. "Eight Arms to Hold You." In the 1965 musical comedy, a sinister cult (complete with mad scientists) is after Ringo, who has a special ring they want.
2. The deuce coupe was a 1932 Ford Model 18. The same model car also appeared in "American Graffiti" in 1973.
3. The Rolling Stones, in 1965. The song topped the charts in the U.S., but in the U.K. it was played on pirate radio stations at first because it was considered to be too suggestive.
4. "Goodnight My Love" in 1956. Belvin died at the age of 27 in a suspicious car accident after playing a concert in 1960.
5. "Dance to the Music," by Sly and the Family Stone, in 1967. It was their first song to get into the Top 10. Thirty years later the song was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame.

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Amber Waves



MY FIRST OFFICIAL JOB. MOM WILL GIVE ME \$5.00 TO SHOVEL THE ENTIRE SIDEWALK.

WOW, THE SNOW IS BEGINNING TO SURE PICK UP. IT IS REALLY STARTING TO COME DOWN.

THE SIDEWALK HAS BEEN TAKEN CARE OF. YOU CAN PAY ME NOW. I OUTSOURCED IT TO DAD.

by Dave T. Phipps

Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



RECOGNIZE THAT IN PITCHING OR CHIPPING YOU'RE PLAYING A RECOVERY SHOT. THAT MEANS YOU'VE MADE A MISTAKE OR GOTTEN AN UNLUCKY BREAK.

BECAUSE, EITHER WAY THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO ABOUT THAT. PUT IT OUT OF MIND — DON'T LET ANGER MAKE YOU COMPOUND THE ERROR.

APPLY YOURSELF EXCLUSIVELY TO THE UPCOMING SHOT — TO RECOVERING AS WELL AS YOU POSSIBLY CAN.

top 10 movies



1. Moana 2
Auli'i Cravalho, Dwayne Johnson
 2. Wicked
(PG) Cynthia Erivo, Ariana Grande
 3. Gladiator II
(R) Paul Mescal, Denzel Washington
 4. Red One
(PG-13) Dwayne Johnson, Chris Evans
 5. The Best Christmas Pageant Ever
(PG) Kynlee Heiman, Judy Greer
 6. Bonhoeffer: Pastor. Spy. Assassin.
(PG-13) Jonas Dassler, Phileas Heyblom
 7. Venom: The Last Dance
(PG-13) Tom Hardy, Chiwetel Ejiofor
 8. Heretic
(R) Hugh Grant, Sophie Thatcher
 9. The Wild Robot
(PG) Lupita Nyong'o, Pedro Pascal
 10. A Real Pain
(R) Kieran Culkin, Jesse Eisenberg
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TIDBITS

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CryptoQuote

AXYDLBAAXR is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each week the code letters are different.

OKECX HED XPVRFNHENI
SJD AKXS LKODEYFN YKEBD
HMHPNHZND SK JFAHVPSI.
— IDJFCH ZDER

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TIDBITS PUZZLE ANSWERS

WORD POWER
Answers:
1. CHEERSHOT

TRICKY WORDS
Answers:
1. 40 feet long (100 ft) and 4 feet high (12 ft)
2. 1960s
3. New York City
4. Newark, New Jersey
5. 1960s

MINI SUDOKU
Answer

5	4	2	1	6	3
1	3	6	2	4	5
3	6	1	5	2	4
2	5	4	3	1	6
4	1	3	6	5	2
6	2	5	4	3	1

QUIZ BITS
Answers:
1. What does the word "quint" mean?
2. What does the word "quint" mean?

SNOWFLAKES
solution

WORD LADDER
Answer
FAILS, FALLS, FILLS, FINES, FINDS, KINDS

Even Exchange
Answers:
1. Shark, Shark
2. Shark, Shark
3. Shark, Shark
4. Shark, Shark
5. Shark, Shark
6. Shark, Shark
7. Shark, Shark
8. Shark, Shark
9. Shark, Shark
10. Shark, Shark
11. Shark, Shark

Weekly SUDOKU
Answer

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

"ODD" WORDS

Go Figure!
answers

9	+	6	-	4	=	11
-		+		-		
8	-	5	+	2	=	5
+		+		x		
3	+	1	+	7	=	11
=		=		=		
4		11		14		

Sticklers Answer
The word is "assesess."

Word Spiral Answer
PACKAGING

CryptoQuote
answer
Words are singularly the most powerful force available to humanity. — Yehuda Berg

MINI SUDOKU
Answer

5	4	2	1	6	3
1	3	6	2	4	5
3	6	1	5	2	4
2	5	4	3	1	6
4	1	3	6	5	2
6	2	5	4	3	1

CryptoQuip
answer
Was somebody wondering whether or not I like my turkey to be succulent? Moist certainly!

Super Crossword
Answers

A	M	E	R	I	C	A	S	R	A	P	I	D	S	T	O	R	A	H			
S	O	M	E	S	U	C	H	O	B	A	M	A	S	E	V	A	D	E			
P	A	M	P	E	R	R	E	S	I	S	T	A	N	T	M	E	D	I	A		
S	T	A	T	R	O	B	O	O	P	S	S	P	R	I	E	R					
I	V	I		A	L	L	P	U	C	K	E	R	E	D	O	U	T				
A	N	K	L	E		A	N	T	E	D		G	O	D	O	T					
P	O	W	E	R	I	N	G	I	N	F	E	R	N	O		A	L	A			
R	T	E		D	R						D	O	T		S	T	A	L	I	N	
O	S	I	R	I	S		T	H	A	T	S	T	H	E	P	I	C	K	E	T	
N	O	S	E		M	E	A	D	E		L	I	L	T							
I	C	A	N	A	L	M	O	S	T	P	A	S	T	E	I	T					
A	L	E	X								L	E	A	V	E		V	E	N	T	
H	Y	P	N	O	T	I	C	P	R	A	N	C	E		F	L	E	X	O	R	
E	M	O	T	E	S		P	E	A		H	U	E		A	N	A				
M	A	T					N	A	T	U	R	A	L	P	E	N	D	E	N	C	Y
S	H	A	M				A	L	I	A	S			G	A	S	E	S			
N	O	H	A	R	M	I	N	P	R	Y	I	N	G		M	E	R				
A	C	E	T	I	C		I	O			E	E	R	O		H	A	S	H		
B	A	R	T	S			P	E	N	S	I	O	N	H	E	A	D	A	C	H	E
O	L	D	I	E			A	C	C	E	N	T		I	N	N	E	R	M	A	N
B	A	S	E	S			R	E	E	S	E	S		T	O	A	S	T	E	R	S

King Crossword
Answers

Solution time: 24 mins.

A	B	B	A		C	P	A		U	F	O	S
L	E	A	D		H	I	S		N	U	B	S
F	A	C	E	M	A	S	K		F	L	I	T
A	N	K	L	E	T		U	B	O	L	T	S
				E	E	E		P	A	L	M	
E	L	F		T	A	M		A	D	O	R	N
M	I	R	O		U	R	N		S	O	M	E
S	P	E	C	S		S	I	S		N	N	E
				E	T	A	L		A	I	M	
R	E	M	A	D	E		G	R	E	A	S	E
E	L	E	V		F	L	A	S	H	M	O	B
A	L	A	I		T	A	R		T	A	R	A
L	A	L	A		S	B	A		A	T	T	Y

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TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH
By Dr. Keith Roach

Liver Specialist Recommends Removing Cyst Growing in Size

DEAR DR. ROACH: I was diagnosed with several liver cysts over 15 years ago. My primary doctor and I followed the growth of the cysts by ultrasound, and one is increasing in size. We did an MRI with and without contrast to take a look at the cyst. The radiologist stated that the cyst looked "complex" and, for a lack of a better word, unusual.

A liver specialist's consult revealed that we could remove it if I wanted to. The doctor stated that he just had a patient who had a cyst, and it was cancerous. He felt that it may be best to remove it, but it's not urgent to do so.

I would appreciate your take on this situation. -- L.S.

ANSWER: Simple liver cysts are common, and even when they are large, they do not need to be removed unless they cause symptoms. However, any other cyst than a simple one needs to be carefully evaluated. There are many possible causes, including various types of cancer, especially a mucinous cystic neoplasm, which can be associated with invasive cancer.

I looked at both the ultrasound and MRI reports you sent, and although it seemed to me that the radiologists thought this was likely a simple cyst with some bleeding, they could not be sure. Furthermore, the growth in the size of the cyst is concerning.

In some cases, it's reasonable to wait and redo the scans in 6-12 months when the risk of a cancerous cyst is low. However, since the liver specialist (who has much more experience than I do) is concerned enough to recommend surgery, I don't understand why you would want to wait. I suspect the surgery will prove that it was a benign cyst, but you'll probably sleep

better at night once you know for certain.

The surgery is normally done laparoscopically, and although it's usually a very safe and effective surgery, there is always a small risk for complications. You should speak with a surgeon.

DEAR DR. ROACH: Do you have any comments on the use of metformin for weight loss and prediabetes? I am a 57-year-old woman. -- B.S.

ANSWER: That's one question I can answer based on very good data. The National Diabetes Prevention Program looked at this very issue. Subjects in the study (who averaged 51 years of age and were overweight with prediabetes) were treated with metformin, an intensive lifestyle-behavioral-change program that aimed for a low-fat diet and 150 minutes of exercise per week, or a placebo.

The diet and exercise group had the best response, decreasing the rate of new diabetes by 58% compared to the placebo group. However, the metformin group also had a benefit, with a 31% decrease in the rate of new diabetes diagnoses.

Personally, I recommend both. Metformin does help a bit with weight loss, but taking it along with some diet changes and exercise would likely have a much better response than metformin alone. We don't recommend a low-fat diet anymore, instead emphasizing whole fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and very few processed foods. A registered dietician would be a valuable partner in helping with the diet of your regimen. You don't need to exercise for the whole 150 minutes, but it's a goal you can work toward.

New studies show that drugs like semaglutide are even more effective at preventing diabetes, but they are very expensive and often not covered by insurance.

Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.

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TIDBITS GOES LONG.....

Townfolk in Malmedy, Belgium, set a world record for the most lights on a Christmas tree on December 10, 2010, with just under 200,000 lights. There were 350 ten-foot strings of lights, each lit with 576 lights.



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