



Week 27 ~ Edition 26

The Power of a Simple Act of Kindness

In a world filled with busy schedules, endless notifications, and daily responsibilities, it's easy to overlook the small things. Yet, research and real-life stories continue to show that simple acts of kindness can have a bigger impact than we realize.

A recent Gallup survey found that most Americans regularly experience or witness acts of kindness in their communities, and many people who receive kindness are more likely to "pay it forward" to someone else.

Kindness doesn't have to be grand or expensive. Holding a door, helping carry groceries, checking on a neighbor, leaving a generous tip, or simply offering a smile can brighten someone's day. In fact, many heartwarming stories making headlines this year involve ordinary people doing extraordinary things through simple gestures. Communities have rallied together to help crossing guards get reliable transportation, construction workers have lifted the spirits of a young child awaiting a heart transplant, and neighbors have stepped up to support one another in countless ways.

The best part?
Kindness is contagious.

(Continue on page 2)

(Cont. from page 1: The Power of a Simple Act of Kindness)

Experts say that when people experience kindness, they often feel inspired to pass it along. One good deed can create a ripple effect that reaches far beyond the original act.

As we move through our week, perhaps the challenge isn't finding more time—it's finding more opportunities. A kind word, a helping hand, or a moment of patience may be exactly what someone needs.

After all, making a difference doesn't always require changing the world. Sometimes it simply means making one person's day a little brighter.

Bits 'n Giggles Challenge of the Week:

Do one unexpected act of kindness for someone this week.
You never know how far that ripple may travel.

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 the nine numbers only once.

	+		-		= 1			
+		+		-				
	+		-		= 7			
×		-		÷				
	-		÷		= 6			
=		=		=				
90		7		2				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Store windows are moved. 2. License plate is missing. 3. Bow tie is added. 4. Bumper is missing. 5. Coat is longer. 6. Hair is longer.

Salome's Stars



ARIES (March 21 to April 19)

Is someone at work resisting your Aries charm? Hard to believe. But seriously, Lamb, you might want to back up your ideas with some solid data, then watch the "yeas" pile on.



TAURUS (April 20 to May 20)

Your hard work could pay off in ways that you didn't expect but certainly deserve. Tend to a pesky health problem now so that you'll be in top shape to tackle the new projects coming up.



GEMINI (May 21 to June 20)

Planning a family event can be stressful, unless you make it clear from the start that you're in charge. You might accept suggestions, but it'll be your decisions that count.



CANCER (June 21 to July 22)

You still have a way to go to bring a professional matter to a satisfactory conclusion. Meanwhile, an important personal situation could require more of your attention by week's end.



LEO (July 23 to August 22)

There's something about you Fine Felines that makes people want to tell you secrets. But once again, be wary of who's doing the telling. You might not want to be this person's confidante.



VIRGO (August 23 to September 22)

Creating a fuss about a family matter might get everyone's attention. But it might be better to talk one-on-one with family members in order to spare a loved one from unnecessary embarrassment.



LIBRA (September 23 to October 22)

You're making progress on a career move, albeit not as quickly as you had hoped. But stay with it. Meanwhile, your personal life takes an unexpected (but very welcome) new turn.



SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21)

If you feel like you've been unfairly treated in a workplace decision, correct the situation now while there's still time to do so. Arm yourself with facts and go to it. Good luck!



SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21)

Devising your own system of doing things might be the best way to handle an increasingly complex situation. But do it tactfully in order to avoid ruffling too many of your colleagues' feathers.



CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19)

A family member's health problem might once again require you to shift some of your current priorities around. But this time, make certain that other relatives will be around to help.



AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18)

Catching up on tasks that you've left undone will take a while to accomplish. But the sooner you complete them, the sooner you'll be able to take on another time-sensitive project.



PISCES (February 19 to March 20)

You might feel swamped by everything that you're expected to do. But take a moment to come up for air, then handle things one at a time. You'll soon get through them all.



BORN THIS WEEK:

Although you love being at home with your family and furry ones, you also enjoy traveling, exploring, and making new friends.



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Moments in time

• On **July 13, 2013**, Patrisse Cullors, a Los Angeles community organizer, read a friend's Facebook post expressing distress over the acquittal of George Zimmerman, who'd killed Trayvon Martin the year before, and replied to the post with the first instance of the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag.

• On **July 14, 1918**, Quentin Roosevelt, a 20-year-old pilot in the United States Air Service and the fourth son of former President Theodore Roosevelt, was shot down and killed by a German Fokker plane over the Marne River in France.

• On **July 15, 1953**, John Christie, one of England's most notorious killers, was executed. Four months earlier, police and a tenant in West London had discovered the remains of four women, one of whom was Christie's wife, at a house where he'd lived, and he was apprehended and confessed a week later. Detectives soon found additional bodies buried in the yard behind the house as well.

• On **July 16, 1862**, Ida B. Wells, a future educator, investigative journalist and civil rights activist, was born into slavery in Holly Springs, Mississippi. Motivated in part by racism within the women's suffrage movement, she would eventually found and co-found the NAACP, the National Association of Colored Women, and the Alpha Suffrage Club.

• On **July 17, 1996**, a TWA Boeing 747 jetliner headed for Paris exploded over the Atlantic Ocean, killing all 230 passengers and crew aboard and creating a fireball seen along most of the Long Island coastline. A highly criticized investigation ended two years later with the conclusion that the tragedy had been caused by mechanical failure rather than a suspected bomb or missile.

• On **July 18 1995**, "Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance," a memoir by a law professor by the name of Barack Obama, was published prior to its author's entry into the political realm. Thirteen years later, that largely unknown professor would be elected America's 44th president.

• On **July 19, 1952**, air traffic controllers in Washington, D.C., sighted UFOs flying over the White House and U.S. Capitol. More would appear a week later, but all were dismissed as simply a weather phenomenon.

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LAUNDRY DAY ADVENTURES

A LITTLE LAUGH GOES A LONG WAY! 😊

WHERE DID ALL OF MY SOCKS GO?

HMM... A MYSTERY WORTH SOLVING!

ONE FOR ME, ONE FOR ME, AND ONE FOR ME!

MY SOCK COLLECTION IS GROWING!

WOW... WHAT IS THIS?!

MY VERY OWN SOCK FORT!

WELL, AT LEAST SOMEONE THINKS I HAVE GREAT SOCKS!

BEST DAY EVER!

MORAL OF THE STORY:
SOME HEROES WEAR PAWS, NOT SHOES!

Americanisms

“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”

— *James Baldwin*

★ ★ ★

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- Time slows down so dramatically near a black hole that if you stood close enough to it, years could pass for the universe while just minutes passed for you.

- After trading \$3 billion worth of Pepsi-Cola to the U.S.S.R. in exchange for vodka, submarines and other military hardware, the Pepsi company briefly had the sixth largest military in the world.

- Iceland's parliament, the Icelandic Althingi, first formed in 930 A.D., is the oldest in the world.

- The tradition of carrying the bride across the threshold started in medieval Europe when many people believed that a bride was especially vulnerable to evil spirits through the soles of her feet. To guard her from such attacks, the chivalric groom would carry her into their new home.

- Los Angeles has the world's largest Korean population outside of Korea.

- In J.K. Rowling's "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone," dragon blood is revealed to be an effective oven cleaner.

- The Pyramids of Giza are the only Great Wonder of the ancient world still standing.

- During WWII, the Polish army adopted a brown bear named Wojtek into their ranks. The animal was fond of cigarettes and beer, and even received a promotion from private to corporal.

- A sloth can take up to two weeks to digest a single meal.

- Actress Roseanne Barr once attempted to run for president and got as far as filing with the Federal Election Commission, under the "Green Tea Party Ticket."

- Lightning isn't limited to thunderstorms, but can also occur in volcanic eruptions, wildfires and snowstorms.

- During certain periods in feudal Japan, executions of condemned criminals were used by some samurais to test their new swords.

Thought for the Day: "It's easy to make a buck. It's a lot tougher to make a difference." — *Tom Brokaw*

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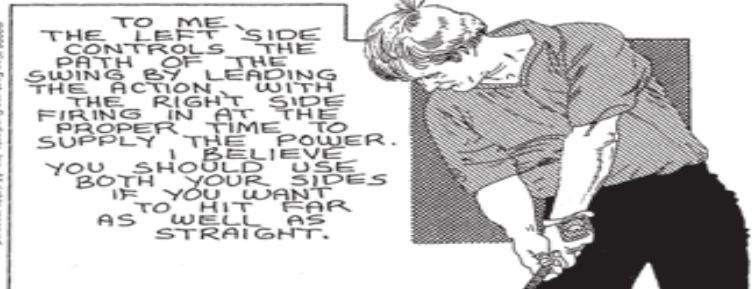
KNIGHT MOVES

R	V	T
R		E
O	U	E

Unlock the power of chess to find the eight-letter word of the day. Choose your starting letter carefully, then move around the square in a one by two fashion to get to the next letter.

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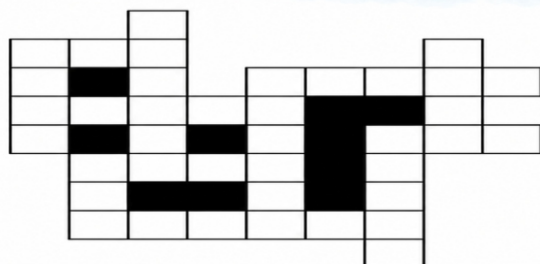


FEAR KNOT

By: rj johnson

DOUBT? ... OR DARE!

DMO
♥ ESPROU
ESPEH
♥ OSDH
♥ ESPRIH
♥ IPH
♥ RISA
ODERN
♥ ISP
♥ PLIDEM
♥ ANLER
♥ SMHE



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Unscramble these twelve letter strings to form each into an ordinary word (ex. **HAGNEC** becomes **CHANGE**). Prepare to use only **ONE** word from any marked (♥) letter string as each unscrambles into more than one word (ex. ♥ **RATHE** becomes **HATER** or **EARTH** or **HEART**). Fit each string's word either across or down to knot all twelve strings together.

Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

- MOVIES:** Who was the only actress to appear in the 1961 and 2021 film versions of "West Side Story"?
- GENERAL KNOWLEDGE:** Which month of the year has the most letters in its name?
- SCIENCE:** What protects the Earth from solar winds?
- TELEVISION:** What is the name of the bar in "It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia"?
- U.S. STATES:** Which state is home to the first Ben & Jerry's ice cream shop?
- LITERATURE:** What are the names of the two brothers in the "Hardy Boys" novel series?
- LANGUAGE:** What is a polyglot?
- FOOD & DRINK:** Which herb is most often used in traditional pesto?
- ANATOMY:** Membranes called pleurae cover the surface of which human organs?
- GEOGRAPHY:** What is the capital of South Korea?

ANSWERS

- Rita Moreno.
- September.
- The magnetosphere, an invisible magnetic bubble generated inside the Earth.
- Paddy's Pub.
- Vermont.
- Frank and Joe.
- A person who speaks several languages.
- Basil.
- The lungs.
- Seoul.

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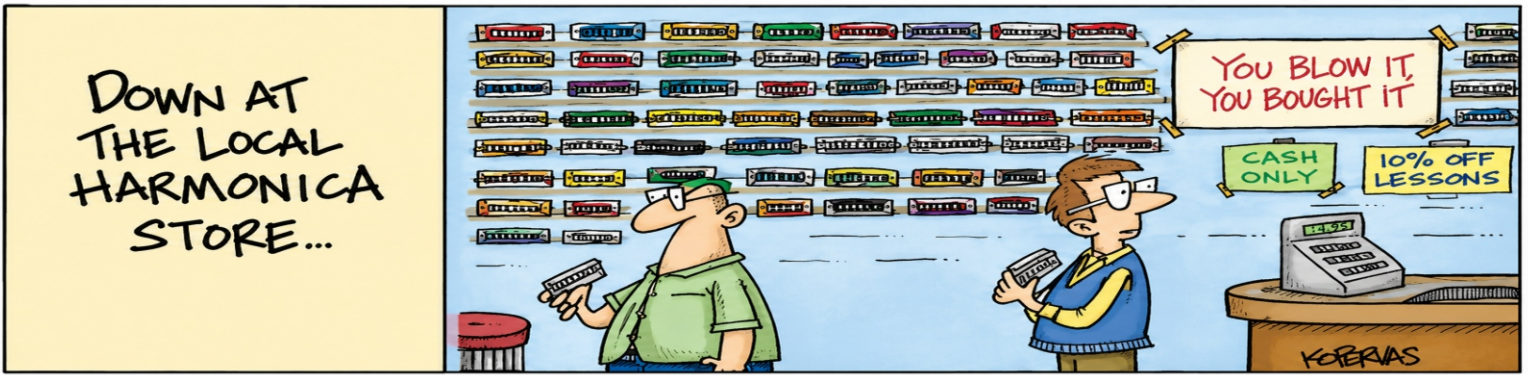
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“Of course, all those prices are just _____.”

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!

Shield				
MARRO				
Laud				
XELOT				
Mug				
NITES				
Tower				
PIERS				

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OLIVE & POPEYE

By Randy Milholland



DIVAS ON A DIME

By Patti Diamond



Why Dot Cakes Are the Perfect Dessert for America's 250th

★ Birthday ★

For America's 250th birthday, I had visions of creating something historically significant. Perhaps a colonial recipe, Maybe a dessert inspired by early American kitchens.

Then reality arrived carrying a deadline.

Instead, I found myself making the internet's latest obsession: The Viral Dot Cake.

The funny thing is that the more I learned about the trend, the more appropriate it seemed. Dot Cakes aren't fancy. They're layers of cake, frosting and colorful sprinkles. They're cheerful, nostalgic and designed to be shared. In a year filled with grand celebrations, perhaps that's exactly the kind of dessert we need.

Sometimes the things that bring people together are surprisingly simple. Here's the funny part: The internet's favorite dessert isn't an elaborate goldleaf freckled show-piece or a complicated bakery creation requiring trips to three stores and a monastery.

It's basically birthday cake. Like the kind of cake that we remember from childhood, Colorful, affordable, nostalgic and easy to share. Dot Cake captures something we often forget: Joy doesn't have to be expensive or complicated.

The original viral Dot Cakes are typically made in small cups or jars with layers of cake and frosting topped with a thick blanket of colorful nonpareils.

hpareils. of For Independence Day, I gave mine a patriotic twist by tinting the cake batter red blue and topping each cake with nonpareils or dots.

The beauty of Dot Cakes is that they're more about fun than perfection. Use a homemade cake or a boxed mix. Make frosting or open a can. The goal is a familiar birthday-cake flavor, plenty of frosting and a festive sprinkle topping that makes people smile.

PATRIOTIC DOT CAKES

Yield: 4 (9-ounce) cakes

Total Time: 40 minutes plus cooling

1 white cake mix, plus ingredients called for on package

Red and blue gel food coloring

1 batch frosting (recipe follows) or 1 container prepared frosting

1 cup nonpareil sprinkles, aka dots

4 clear jars, cups or ramekins (8- to 10-ounce size)

QUICK & EASY FROSTING

8 ounces cream cheese, softened

3 tablespoons butter, softened

1 (7-ounce) container marshmallow creme



The Dot Cake gets a red, white and blue makeover just in time for Independence Day.



BAKING NOTE

Preheat oven to 325° F. Prepare a half-sheet pan (13 inch by 18 inch by 1 inch) with non-stick spray and line it with parchment.

it with parchment. Alternatively, use a 9 by 13 cake pan.

Prepare cake batter according to package directions. For thin red and blue layers, divide the batter between two bowls. Tint one bowl red and the other blue using gel food coloring.

Spread the colored batters side by side in the sheet pan and bake for 20 minutes.

Alternatively, simply bake the cake according to package directions in a 9-by-13-inch pan. Bake until done and cooled completely.

To make the frosting, beat cream cheese, butter and marshmallow creme with an electric mixer until smooth and fluffy. Refrigerate. This frosting firms up beautifully when cold.

To Assemble:

Using a round cutter slightly smaller than your serving cups, cut cake rounds. Place one round in the bottom of each cup. Add a layer of frosting. Repeat with additional cake and frosting layers as desired.

Finish with a smooth layer of frosting on top. Use an offset spatula to get a perfectly smooth surface. Pour sprinkles onto a plate and gently turn each cake upside down and press the tops of the cakes into the sprinkles until completely covered.

Refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to overnight before serving.

These cakes travel beautifully, making them perfect for potlucks, picnics and Independence Day celebrations.



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

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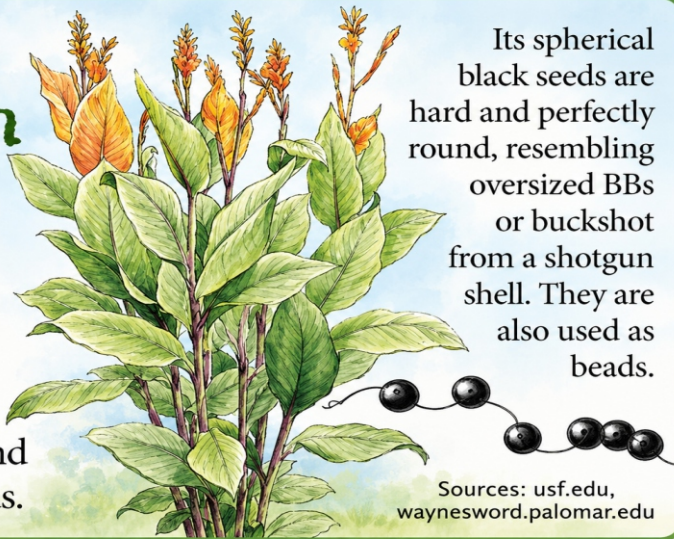
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The Garden Bug

Indian shot is another name for *canna indica*, a wildflower of the Caribbean and tropical Americas.



Its spherical black seeds are hard and perfectly round, resembling oversized BBs or buckshot from a shotgun shell. They are also used as beads.

Sources: usf.edu, waynesword.palomar.edu

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SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Stay aware of recalls

Sometimes the list of recalls mentioned on the evening news makes us wonder what else we're not hearing about.

Here are a few current ones:

There is a recall on 25-milligram blood pressure medication chlorthalidone tablets due to what the FDA says is "failed dissolution specifications." Over 11,000 bottles across the country are affected.

And we have the 125,000 vehicles that are being recalled again because the repairs weren't completed correctly the first time the vehicles were recalled. While there are a few issues in those recalls, the problem with the clutch might be the most important — it can leak fluid and cause a fire.

In some cases we really have to wonder how mistakes were allowed to get out the door. We have dark chocolate raisins that have undeclared peanuts in them. We have saline nasal spray with mold in it, ricotta cheese with listeria and vitamins with salmonella.

And the pancake mix we use for Sunday morning breakfasts? Undeclared soy and milk. How about the cheese bread and garlic croutons? Salmonella. How about the fruit ice pops we give to the grandkids? Milk, pecans, pistachios and both yellow and red dye.

Our pets aren't left out of the mistakes. One freeze-dried brand of cat and dog food has levels of vitamin B-1 that are too low.

Sometimes recalls don't immediately make it to the evening news, and it's up to us to stay on top of these things. Start a weekly habit of checking the various government recall websites. Go to www.foodsafety.gov and click on "Recalls." Or see the food safety website (www.fsis.usda.gov/recalls). Go online to www.recalls.gov and you have a choice of consumer products, vehicles, boats, food, medicine, cosmetics and environmental product recalls to review. You can click on recent recalls or do a search through the recalls.

Stay aware — and stay safe.

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Low point

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★ MAIN STREET ★ WORD OF THE *Week*



SERENDIPITY

(ser-en-DIP-i-tee) • noun



★ **MEANING:** Finding something wonderful when you weren't expecting it.

USE IT:

“
Finding a parking spot right in front of the store was pure **serendipity**!”

DID YOU KNOW?

The word **serendipity** was inspired by an old story called The Three Princes of Serendip. The princes had a knack for making lucky discoveries by accident. Today, we use the word whenever something unexpectedly good happens!



THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE



Try using **serendipity** in a conversation this week. You might surprise someone—and maybe even discover a little **serendipity** yourself! ♥



BRAIN TEASER!

Can you unscramble this week's word?

Y T I R D I P E S N E

SMILE OF THE WEEK



♥ Sometimes the best moments in life are the ones you never planned. ♥



KEEP LEARNING. KEEP SMILING. KEEP IT LOCAL!



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Puzzles4Kids

by Helene Hovanec

WORD FUN

Study the two words on each line to find the ONE letter in the left column that is NOT in the word in the right column. Write the extra letter on the blank space. Then read DOWN to answer this riddle:

WHAT FRUITS ARE ALWAYS COMPLAINING?

SECRET	_____	STEER	_____	CASHEW	_____	CHEWS
PHRASE	_____	HEAPS	_____	SIMPLE	_____	MILES
APACHE	_____	PEACH	_____	CASPER	_____	RACES
GARBLE	_____	LARGE	_____	GRILLS	_____	GIRLS
				RECIPE	_____	PRICE
				MESSES	_____	SEEMS

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MINI SUDOKU

5				1	
		2		3	5
2	5				
1					3
			1		4

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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Classic Maze Toons



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CRACK THE CODE!



Each number stands for a letter.
Use the code key to fill in the blanks
and crack the secret message!

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

1

8 1 18 18 5 20 15 18 3 11 !



2

19 5 18 4 5 9 14 7 3 1 20 8 .



3

12 5 6 15 18 4 9 5 19 9 12 !



4

1 20 20 5 18 2 5 3 15 13 5 .



BONUS CHALLENGE!

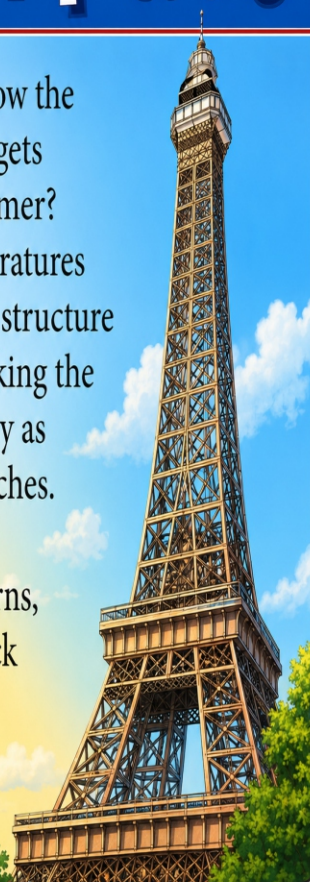
What's the secret word?
23 15 18 20 9

Think, Decode,
and Have
Some Fun!

★ USE YOUR BRAIN, HAVE FUN, AND CRACK THE CODE! ★

Fun Fact

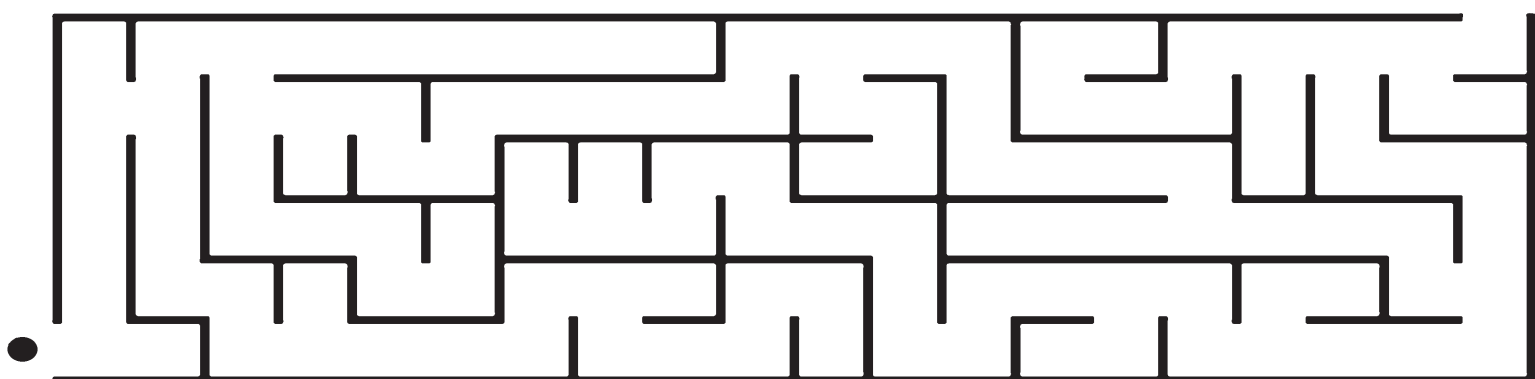
“Did you know the Eiffel Tower gets taller in summer? When temperatures rise, the iron structure expands, making the tower grow by as much as 6 inches. When cooler weather returns, it shrinks back to its normal height.”

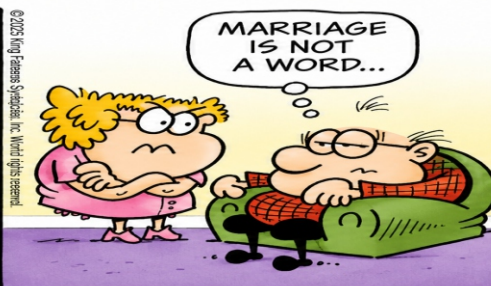
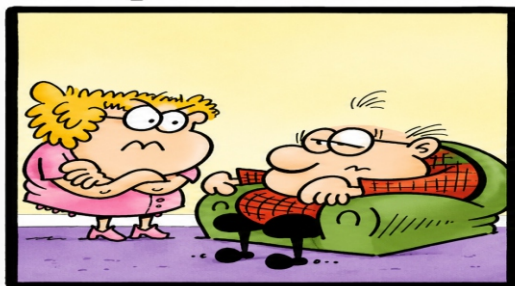


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Kids' Maze





Wishing Well®

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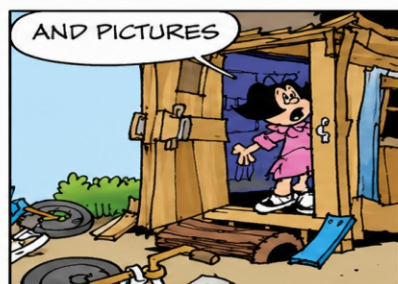
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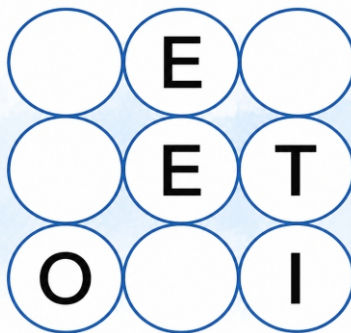
by BUD BLAKE



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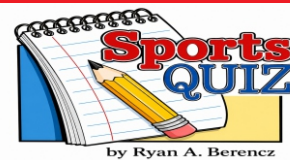


WORD SPIRAL



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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1. Which racetrack, site of the 1959 Formula 1 German Grand Prix, had a 43-degree banked turn known as the "Wall of Death"?
2. What large-scale video display, produced by Mitsubishi Electric, was first installed at Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles for the 1980 MLB All-Star Game?
3. In April 2001, 43 people were killed in an over-capacity crowd surge during a soccer match at Ellis Park Stadium, located in which country?
4. Who knocked out "Oklahoma Giant" Carl Morris 14 seconds into the first round of a December 1918 heavyweight boxing match in New Orleans?
5. The NFL's 1979 rule banning tear-away jerseys was inspired by and informally named after what Cleveland Browns running back?
6. In December 2021, which team defeated the Oklahoma City Thunder 152-79, making the 73-point win the biggest blowout in NBA history?
7. In 1974, Ted Giannoulas first donned the costume of which world-famous sports mascot?

Answers

1. AVUS (Automobil-Verkehrs- und Übungsstraße).
2. Diamond Vision.
3. South Africa.
4. Jack Dempsey.
5. Greg Pruitt.
6. The Memphis Grizzlies.
7. The San Diego Chicken.

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TOY BOX Memories

**NEW
WEEKLY
SERIES!**

THIS WEEK:

The Story Behind the SLINKY

"It's amazing how one simple toy has entertained generations."

Few toys have become as iconic as the Slinky. This simple metal spring has been tumbling down stairs and bringing smiles to faces for more than 80 years.

The Slinky wasn't actually invented as a toy. In 1943, naval engineer Richard James was working on springs designed to stabilize equipment aboard ships. One accidentally fell from a shelf and "walked" across the floor. James immediately realized he had discovered something special.

Together with his wife, Betty, the couple named it the Slinky, a word meaning graceful and sleek. In 1945 they demonstrated the toy in a Philadelphia department store. Nearly 400 Slinkys sold in just 90 minutes!

Today, millions of Slinkys continue to delight children and adults alike, proving that sometimes the **simplest** ideas become the **greatest** toys.



**Still
Making Kids
& Adults
Smile!**

OVER THE DECADES, THE SLINKY HAS:

- ★ Been sold in more than 90 countries.
- ★ Appeared in movies, television shows, and commercials.
- ★ Even traveled into space with NASA astronauts to demonstrate zero gravity.

A Slinky may look simple, but its motion is actually a fascinating example of physics involving gravity, momentum, and stored energy.

DID YOU KNOW?

A standard metal Slinky contains about **80 feet** of wire when stretched out straight!



TOY TRIVIA!

Q: In what year was the Slinky first sold?

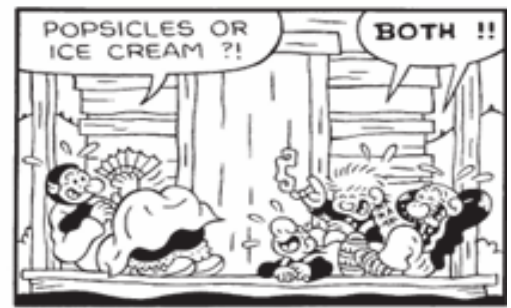
Answer: 1945

MEMORY LANE

Did you have a Slinky when you were a kid? Share your memories with us!



★ OLD TOYS. BIG MEMORIES. NEW GENERATIONS. See you next week for another toy from the past!



top 10 movies!

1. **Toy Story 5**
(PG) Tom Hanks, Tim Allen
2. **Disclosure Day**
(PG-13) Emily Blunt, Josh O'Connor
3. **Obsession**
(R) Michael Johnston, Inde Navarrette
4. **Backrooms**
(R) Chiwetel Ejiofor, Renate Reinsve
5. **Scary Movie**
(R) Marlon Wayans, Shawn Wayans
6. **Masters of the Universe**
(PG-13) Nicholas Galitzine, Camila Mendes
7. **Star Wars: The Mandalorian and Grogu**
(PG-13) Pedro Pascal, Brendan Wayne
8. **The Death of Robin Hood**
(R) Hugh Jackman, Jodie Comer
9. **Leviticus**
(R) Tyallah Bullock, Stacy Clausen
10. **Michael**
(PG-13) Jaafar Jackson, Nia Long

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Fireworks and pets do not mix

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I am so frustrated by the incredible amount of fireworks set off by neighbors on July Fourth. My two dogs, "Skip" and "Marbles," cower in the farthest corner of the house and are emotionally wrecked for days afterward. People need to be considerate of pets and not set off unregulated fireworks in neighborhoods. They should go and watch the professional fireworks displays instead; it'll be a better experience for everyone. — Jill S. in Orlando, Florida

DEAR JILL: You're absolutely right, and thank you for telling them. There is no reason to set off loud fireworks in the driveway or backyard; it's a dangerous activity (14,700 injuries and 11 deaths occurred in 2024, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission). Loud fireworks stress out pets to the point that many need medical attention. Some dogs and cats react aggressively to the sudden loud noise, turning and snapping at anyone in reach.

You get the picture. Fireworks are not fun for pets, and they can injure themselves or others in a frenzy of fear.

Great, some of you are saying; how does that help my pet? I know that completely stopping neighborhood fireworks is difficult, perhaps impossible.

As a pet owner, you can take proactive steps to keep your pet comfortable. Talk to the veterinarian and create a strategy. For example, take your pet for a long walk or play session in the afternoon of the Fourth of July to tire them out. Before sunset, give your dog or cat anti-anxiety medication and set up a cozy nook — or even their carrier crate — with their favorite blankets, water and snacks. This can help them stay calmer during the hours after sunset as random fireworks go off.

Send your tips, comments or questions to ask@pawscorner.com.

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Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps

I JUST DON'T KNOW HOW TO OPERATE THE PHONE. I THINK IT'S CALLED A "SMARTPHONE" BECAUSE IT REALLY MAKES YOU FEEL DUMB.



THIS

could be

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MAGIC MAZE

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DAY

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
Unlisted clue hint: THE FOUNDING —

Anthem
Democracy
Festivals
Fireworks

Flag
Food
Liberty
Loyalty

Music
Parades
Patriotism
Picnics

Pride
Sacrifice
Unity

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VETERANS ★ POST ★

by Freddy Groves

Avoid foreclosure on a VA home loan

The VA Partial Claim Program begins now. The purpose? To help veterans avoid foreclosure on their homes.

The program was started last summer when the VA Home Loan Reform Act was signed into law. In this partial claim program, the VA can pay up to 25% of the unpaid principal.

Veterans in danger of losing their home to foreclosure should call the mortgage servicer to find out about eligibility to participate in the partial claim program.

To be eligible, you must have a VA loan, not FHA or conventional. The home has to be your primary residence; no vacations homes or investment properties can qualify. You have to be at risk of default on the loan. And, the biggie here, you have to prove you can make your payments.

It's not a handout, but it can be a hand up. One of the first steps is that the VA will advance funds to bring the mortgage current and then the veteran needs to prove he or she can stay current by making payments on a trial basis for three months.

If a trial repayment doesn't work, it's possible that a loan modification might (although those can be risky if the interest rate goes up on the new loan). There are a number of ways for veterans to keep their homes (it helped 173,000 veterans last year alone). Some of those include making modifications to traditional loans, disaster modifications, and 30- and 40-year loan modifications.

If you're having trouble dealing with your mortgage servicer, call the VA at 877-827-3702 and press 6 to get help.

Mortgage servicers have until November this year to get the program into their system.

For information on avoiding foreclosure, see www.va.gov/housing-assistance/home-loans/trouble-making-payments. Scroll down to see the seven ways to avoid foreclosure.

As always, beware the possibility of scams. If you suddenly receive calls about foreclosure help, don't give any information. Instead, call the VA or mortgage servicer yourself to be sure who you're talking to.

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Weekly SUDOKU

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

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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KOVELS® Antiques & Collecting

By Terry and Kim Kovel —

Glass Shades

The invention of the electric light bulb didn't just introduce an improved, more convenient, safer light source. It gave designers new inspiration. As the use of electric lights spread during the late 19th to early 20th centuries, lamps with colorful opaque glass shades became popular. They made beautiful decorations, whether on or off, and the intense electric light shining through the glass often gave the design a whole new look.

Tiffany, Handel, and Pairpoint made the most famous lamps of the time. They have stunning, high-quality shades made with complex techniques, and the bases are usually bronze and often have intricate designs or figural shapes. Unsurprisingly, they can sell for tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars today — a windfall if you've inherited one but a bit of an extravagant purchase for most collectors.

Similar lamps made by the many other companies active at the time may not quite reach those heights, but especially striking and well-made examples can still sell for impressive prices, even without a known maker. Even though its maker was not identified, this lamp sold for \$3,000 at Woody Auction. Its light blue, orange, and caramel-colored glass panels make an eye-catching combination, especially with the ornate scrolls, wreaths, and flowers on its metal frame. A lighted base adds to its appeal.

★ ★ ★

Q: Our handpainted Nippon chocolate set, including a pitcher and five cups and saucers, has been in our family for over 60 years. It is decorated with roses and gold and has a blue mark on the base with a leaf. We are wondering what it is worth so that we can list it correctly in our estate.

A: The leaf mark was used by the Morimura Bros., who opened their pottery company in 1876. In

1904, they founded the company that was later known as Noritake, one of the most famous names in 20th-century Japanese ceramics. Morimura and Noritake used the maple leaf mark with the words "Nippon" and "Hand Painted" starting in 1891. The mark could be blue, green, or magenta, Nippon chocolate sets the size of yours, with the blue leaf mark and similar decorations, have sold for about \$150 to \$300 at recent auctions.

For a more precise estimate, you may want to contact a collector's club, like the International Nippon Collector's Club (nipponcollectorsclub.com), or an auction house or dealer that sells similar ceramics. To list the value of your estate, you may need to get a professional appraisal; however, they tend to be very expensive and may not be necessary if the value of the item is under a certain amount.

★ ★ ★

TIP: When changing an antique, like rewiring a lamp or reupholstering a chair seat, keep the old pieces and parts you remove. When you sell your antique, the new owner will pay more if the old parts are part of the history.

★ ★ ★

CURRENT PRICES

Game, mahjong, bone tiles, wood case, foldout front, brass mounts, two top handles, label, Mah-Jongg Sales Co. of America, San Francisco, 7 x 8 x 8 inches, \$100.

Carousel, horse, jumper, walnut, front hooves raised, painted, multi-color saddle and blanket, carved mane and tail, rectangular base, 47 x 55 1/2 inches, \$290.

Dental, tool cabinet, quartersawn oak, hinged lid, pullout front, three folding shelves over 10 drawers, marked, H. Gerstner & Sons, 15 1/2 x 16 x 9 inches, \$420.

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



Colorful opaque glass was a popular choice for decorative lampshades in the late 19th to early 20th centuries.



• Use a carabiner clip to hold the handles of grocery bags together. They will roll about less in the trunk and are easier to carry into the house when you get home.

• “Many people keep some pet food outdoors. If you have problems with ants in your pet’s food if feeding outside, you will like this trick: Place the bowl of food into a larger pan filled with water. The ants can’t cross it, and it has the added bonus of being another source of water for the animals. Be sure to change it frequently, and put out plenty of fresh water sources for outdoor pets”. — P.Y. in Alabama

• “We unexpectedly had our friends visit with their granddaughter. Since it was unplanned, and we aren’t used to little kids, we were unprepared. My quick-thinking husband split open a garbage bag to use as a protective liner on the bed in case of an accident.” — D.D. in Oregon

• Witch hazel is an old remedy for bruises and bumps. You can find it in the first aid aisle by the peroxide and rubbing alcohol. Simply moisten a folded paper towel, and park it right on the bump (never near the eyes or mouth). It prevents bruising and can lessen swelling in some cases.

• Need to cross out a note so nobody can read it? Take this tip to the scratch pad: Instead of scribbling over something to be crossed out, write random letters over your words until the whole thing is illegible.

• “File this under you CAN teach an old dog new tricks: While watching videos on a cellphone with my daughter, I found out that a pair of folded sunglasses really works as a fantastic stand.” — C.E. in Maine

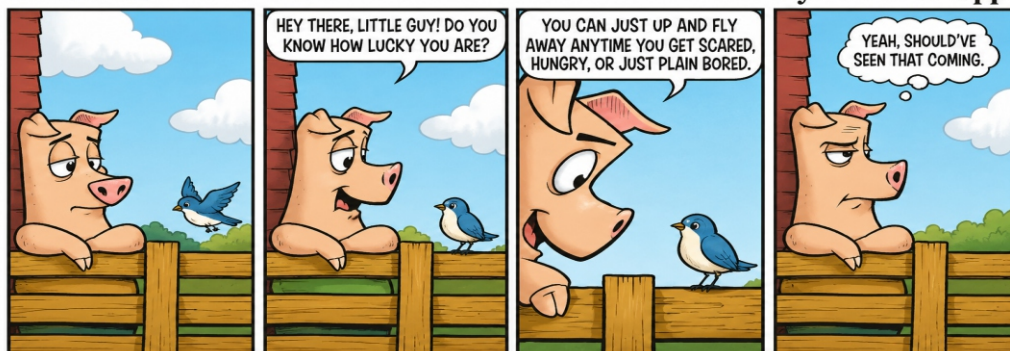
Send your tips to *Now Here's a Tip*, 1800 Pembroke Dr., Suite 300, Orlando, FL 32810.

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“I object! Counsel is leading the witness!”

Amber Waves



1. Name the artist who had a solitary hit with “Sunshine.”
2. Which song was Barry Sadler best known for?
3. Name the group that had hits in 1967 with “Happy Together” and “She’d Rather Be with Me.”
4. Wham! consisted of which two artists?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: “Don’t know much about history, Don’t know much biology, Don’t know much about a science book, Don’t know much about the French I took.”

Answers

1. Jonathan Edwards, in 1971. The song, released on Edwards’ debut album, lifted the mood of a lot of people during the Vietnam War. The song was later covered by Juice Newton and the Isley Brothers.
2. “The Ballad of the Green Berets,” in 1966. The song stayed at No. 1 on the charts for five weeks.
3. The Turtles. Two of the members, Mark Volman and Howard Kaylan, started performing as Flo & Eddie while they were in the middle of contract problems.
4. George Michael and Andrew Ridgeley.
5. “Wonderful World,” by Sam Cooke, in 1960. The song has been covered by several others over the years, including Herman’s Hermits in 1965. In 1978, the song was used in “Animal House.”

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GOT A BUSINESS?

— LET'S GET —
PEOPLE TALKING!



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Breaking the Bank!



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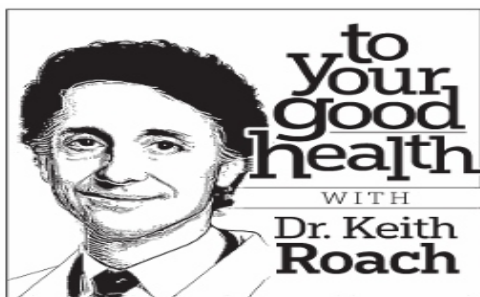


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Opiate Prescriptions for Pain Don't Provide Relief to Patient

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have horrible neck, shoulder, back and hip pain, which are all from different traumas. I've been seeing a pain doctor for the past 14 years. I started out by taking 5 mg of Vicodin and 4 mg of trazodone. Over the years, my prescriptions have been raised to 7.5 mg of oxycodone four times a day and 800 mg of ibuprofen three times a day. I see my doctor every two weeks, and during these visits, I normally get shots (different ones in different places).

My problem is that my pain medicine isn't working anymore. Will I have to keep raising the dosage? I can't take it easy as I'm my husband's sole caregiver. He's had multiple strokes, and his leg was just amputated. Is there any other medication I can add to my current list that might help? Or is there a better pain medicine than oxycodone? — A.S.

ANSWER: I'm very sorry to hear about your predicament. Being a full-time caregiver while trying to deal with your own medical problems is a very difficult situation that many of my patients (and their caregivers) have been in. The most important advice I have is that opiates like hydrocodone (Vicodin is a brand name for hydrocodone and acetaminophen) and oxycodone aren't good long-term options for most people. As you've found, the dose often needs to be increased just to maintain the same pain relief.

The body gets used to the dose of opiates — a response that is called "tachyphylaxis," which is caused by decreasing the sensitivity of the receptors that opiates bind to in the brain. I've seen people get on exceedingly high doses of strong opiates without receiving adequate pain relief. Unfortunately, side effects of high-dose opiates can include

severe constipation, to which the colon doesn't become accustomed to.

While I don't know the details of the traumas that led to your chronic pain, a pain medicine specialist will usually use a combination of different medications to help. This might include injections; low-dose or microdose opiates; antidepressant medicines that help with chronic pain, such as duloxetine or amitriptyline; antiseizure medicines that help with pain, such as gabapentin; and physical therapy.

Anti-inflammatory drugs like ibuprofen sometimes provide significant pain relief when used in combination with other medicines. However, very high doses (you are on the highest recommended dose) can cause toxicities.

I do want to make it clear that tachyphylaxis is the usual response to opiates, especially at a high dose, but it isn't universal. I have patients who do very well with moderate amounts of opiates and remain on a stable dose with adequate control of their pain. Physicians should always consider the risks of opiates before prescribing them for long-term use.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I'm an 82-year-old woman with sluggish gut issues. I recently heard a doctor say, "Don't take fiber supplements because they mess up your gut," and "Don't take laxatives. Take stool softeners, and it's OK to take them every day." I'm skeptical of both statements. What do you say? Thank you. — E.G.

ANSWER: The only statement I wholeheartedly agree with is that it's OK to take stool softeners (such as docusate) daily. I disagree with the recommendation against fiber supplementation. Fiber is very helpful for both diarrhea and constipation, and it also has other benefits, including modestly lowering cholesterol.

However, when fiber supplementation isn't enough, then laxatives such as polyethylene glycol 3350 (MiraLAX) are a very reasonable choice. People who need laxatives every day should still discuss this with their physicians to be sure that there's not some other medical reason for the constipation.

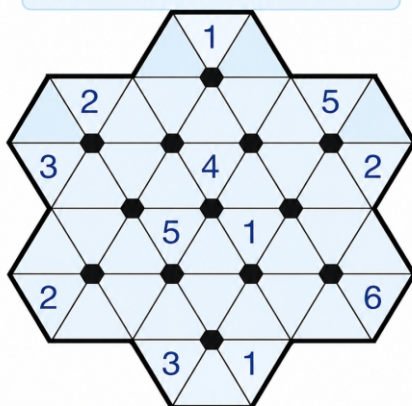
Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.

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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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STICKELERS^(sic)

by Terry Stickels

Here are some anagrams of well-known people, with hints in parentheses. Try your luck at deciphering their names.

- 1) Screen is a storm (director)
- 2) Knew the shaping (physicist)
- 3) Bar bet, uh? (Hall of Fame baseball player)
- 4) Unsocial print (American author)
- 5) Cool ego energy (American actor)

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Make Deviled Eggs for Fourth of July and Summer Gatherings

Nothing sparks memories of family picnics and barbecue get-togethers like a platter of bright yellow-and-white deviled eggs! Sometimes dressed up with a dusting of paprika and capers or fancy sprigs of garden dill and chives on top for the yum of it, they welcome all ages to the buffet table to taste and enjoy.

Deviled eggs are a homemade dish involving several steps. You may take a shortcut by buying precooked and peeled hard-boiled eggs at some markets, but for most families, the basics begin with boiling the eggs just right.

Here's my standard method for making perfect hard-cooked eggs: Place eggs in a medium saucepan and cover with cold water 1 inch above the eggs. Bring to a full rolling boil on medium-high heat (no lid). Turn off heat, cover the pan, and let eggs sit for 10 minutes.

Immediately plunge the eggs in a bowl of cold water (I add a few ice cubes) to chill them rapidly so that the eggs release easily from the shell when peeling. Remove from water. Refrigerate eggs, or peel for this recipe.

DEVILED EGGS

Makes 12

- 6 large hard-cooked eggs, peeled
- 3 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 2 teaspoons of prepared mustard

depending on taste, or 1/2 teaspoon dry mustard

- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper
- Paprika (optional garnish)
- Sprigs of parsley, chives, or finely chopped scallions (optional garnishes)

Cut eggs lengthwise in half and remove the yolks. Set whites aside on a serving platter. Mash the yolks in a mixing bowl with a fork or pastry blender. Stir in mayonnaise and seasonings, and continue to mix until smooth.

Spoon or pipe mixture with a star tip (for a fancy presentation) into the egg-white halves and dust with paprika, if desired. Let kids top with parsley, chives or scallions. Or create a unique garnish using family favorites, such as sliced grape tomatoes, bacon bits, smoked salmon, pickle relish, capers, or grated cheddar cheese.



Cook's Note: Substitute mayonnaise with 3 tablespoons plain hummus, or make a half-and-half mixture of sour cream and Greek yogurt. Add a few drops of Tabasco or vinegar for an extra kick.

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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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 "Chocolat" actor
- 5 Audio giant
- 9 Prune
- 12 Antioxidant berry
- 13 Egg
- 14 — budget
- 15 Plumbing problem
- 16 Firsties
- 17 TiVo precursor
- 18 Foolproof
- 19 Sch. URL ender
- 20 Borscht base
- 21 Sailing hazard
- 23 — Victor
- 25 Daughter of Muhammad
- 28 Lynx
- 32 "West Side Story" role
- 33 Prefix meaning "water"
- 34 Ocean bottoms
- 36 Grapevine talk
- 37 Chow down
- 38 "— was saying ..."
- 39 Scoff
- 42 Half of bi-
- 44 Sod
- 48 Napoleon's title (Abbr.)
- 49 Mideast gulf
- 50 Verifiable
- 51 Brit. record label

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51					52				53			
54					55				56			

- 52 Get up
- 53 Perimeter
- 54 Lobbyists' org.
- 55 Pitch
- 56 Reddish brown
- 7 Outlying area
- 8 Ambulance letters
- 9 Zero, in tennis
- 10 Formerly
- 11 Section
- 20 Date night hire
- 22 D-Day beach
- 24 Some Pacific salmon
- 25 Passing craze
- 26 Chemical suffix
- 27 Gratuity
- 29 LP successors
- 30 NPR's Shapiro
- 31 Pinnacle
- 35 Recording site
- 36 Olympic swimmer
- Rowdy
- 39 "M*A*S*H" vehicle
- 40 Tennis star
- Raducanu
- 41 Grand tale
- 43 Legendary loch
- 45 Language of Pakistan
- 46 Carpets
- 47 Shoe fillers
- 49 Illustrations

DOWN

- 1 June honorees
- 2 Beige
- 3 Two of a kind
- 4 Specialist in the heating/cooling industry
- 5 Grocery store
- 6 Roman poet

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