



Lakeview

December, 2016

"We don't make the news, we just report it."

Volume 21, Number 1

Interview

What price safety?



20 Questions

This month's interview is with **Rachel Canto** owner of Staging-Sells.com

Q. Where were you born and raised?

A. Chicago.

Q. Are you married? Any children?

A. No, I am not married. I have three children.

Q. Where did you attend school?

A. Schurz High School, Harrington Design School and Culinary School at the Art Institute.

Q. What is your favorite childhood memory?

A. Going to the beach with my family. We would Bar-B-Que the whole day and it was lots of fun.

Q. What was the worst job you ever had?

A. Cleaning out a dirty house.

Q. What hobbies or special interests do you have?

A. Finding stuff and reinventing it into something with great design.

Q. What is your favorite TV show, movie and book? What kind of music do you enjoy?

A. My favorite TV show is "Lucifer"; my favorite movie is "Once Upon A Time In America" and my favorite book is "Soul of a Chef." My favorite music is opera when I'm cooking.

Q. What country would you like to visit and why?

A. France, especially Paris, because of the architecture, culture food and fashion.

Q. If you could trade places with someone for a day, who would that person be and why?

A. Julia Child. She

Continued page 2



by George Rimel
Debra Moelter has been a crossing guard for over fourteen years. She has been a proud member of the Chicago Police Department until recently when they transferred the entire group of crossing guards in Chicago over to the Office of Emergency Management. She has been at her post on Lincoln Avenue down the street from Hamilton Elementary School in heat, rain and snow looking out for your children to make sure they get across the

street safely. She has seen it all from people trying to park over the cross walk illegally to most recently two women yelling at each other because a woman in a huge SUV blocked in a woman driving a Pontiac. When the woman in the Pontiac backed up and touched her bumper, they both got out of their vehicles and started yelling obscenities at each other almost coming to blows. The city of Chicago wants to take away their badges and make them change uniforms. But

the city has not granted a uniform allowance. The new union that represents them is SEIU (Service Employees International Union). This is all due to budget cuts, according to Mayor Rahm Emanuel. Chicago could lose as many as 729 guards. Ms.Moelter used to be able to call the police if she had a problem. She has been verbally abused while on the job, cursed at, and now if they call when there's a problem "No one comes" she stated. Doesn't seem like a dangerous job, how-

ever, Lois Klein Park located at 3538-3540 North Lincoln Avenue was named after a school crossing guard worked at this crossing, and was hit and killed by a driver. Not only is the job dangerous but the change to be transferred over to the Department of Emergency Management rather than the police makes the job much tougher, as they will no longer be protected by the authority of the Chicago Police Department.

What's on your mind?



"Trying to have a Holiday Season without my dad. He just passed away."
Catie Connor



"Stop the violence and put the guns down."
Victoria Muniz



"I run a local business and hope December will be strong."
Matt Newport

Editorials & Opinions



Interview from front page

was fearless and a great chef.

Q.What have been your three greatest achievements?

A.Going to school; learning to trust myself and my gut instincts and knowing when to be able to walk away.

Q.What have been your three greatest disappointments?

A.Fear; not listening to myself and not trusting my gut feeling.

Q.Who would you say had/has the most influence in your life?

A. My parents.

Q.What was the best advice you were ever given?

A.At Culinary School they taught me to make it work with what you've got.

Q.What is your pet peeve?

A.Dishonesty. Say what you mean and mean what you say.

Q.What would you like to do in your life that you haven't done so far?

A.Travel more and see the world and experience other cultures.

Q.Give a short explanation of what "staging" a house means?

A.Showing a home's potential to buyers. It involves painting, design and moving furniture. Smelly houses with animals are the worst.

Q.How and why did you decide to go into this business?

A.Freedom with design and clients. They have trouble making decisions and what I do makes everyone happy.

Q.What did you do for a living before starting this business?

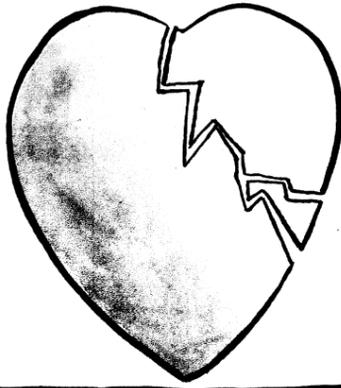
A.I owned a moving business.

Q.What improvements would you like to see made in the Lakeview community?

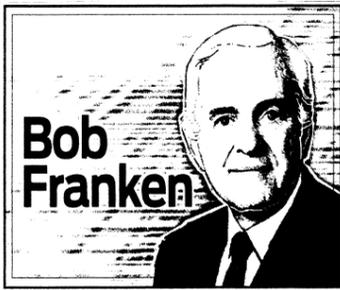
A.People aren't communal enough. They don't even know their neighbors and neighborhood. They need to talk to people. It's time to smile and be social.

Q.Do you have a motto for living your life?

A.Don't be afraid to try stuff. You'll learn a lesson that can make you better or you won't do it again.



DEBRA
WWW.WORLDHERALD



Pollyanna's America

It's one of our country's most-endearing qualities. It's also one of our most-frustrating ones: We always look for the bright spot. Well, I hate to be the bearer of bad news, all you American Pollyannas, but sometimes there is no silver lining. It's all cloud.

A case in point is the election of Donald Trump. Many of you are running true to form, determined to be optimistic.

It may have looked like a smile on President Barack Obama's face as he welcomed his successor to the White House, but perhaps he was really gritting his teeth when he wished Trump success. We can't really know what went on during their extended meeting behind closed doors, but we do know that the Donald — excuse me, the president-elect — had a deer-in-the-headlights look when he appeared before cameras, one we haven't seen since Dan Quayle.

But being naive and uninformed may end up being Donald Trump's most endearing qualities, compared with his other characteristics. First of all, he's appointed Steve Bannon to be one of his two right-hand men. Far right. The title is chief strategist, but it more accurately could be chief extremist. You can put as much lipstick on the Bannon pig as you want, but the fact is that before becoming a leader of the Trump campaign, Bannon had presided over Breitbart News, which is an outlet for the so-called alt-right movement.

"Alt-right" is another term for fascist, plain and simple. The more straightforward members of the movement are outspoken about their anti-semitism, their racism, what they call White Nationalism. At Breitbart, Bannon enabled the alt-right movement and its retreat far into the darkest pits of our country's hatefulness.

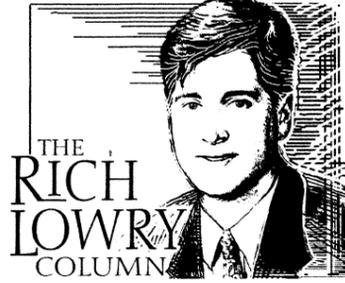
Now Bannon has oozed out of that swamp and into the White House. Suddenly many of the new converts to a Trump administration are painting him in warm and fuzzy colors. These are the same people who are trying to get a piece of the action, the Paul Ryans of this world, who as House speaker has jumped onto the Trump bandwagon. He's joined all the others who scoffed at Donald Trump, looked down on him as a buffoon but who are now sucking up big-time while maneuvering to get a place in his administration.

Meanwhile, the Democrats are doing what Democrats do, which is infighting, when they should be out fighting, planning their debacle recovery and coming up with effective tactics to resist. The only ones who are organizing at all are some high-school and middle-school students, who at least are showing that not everybody is willing to get caught up in the pretense that our national spirit might somehow, some way, carry us through.

Let's be honest: It very well might not. The best hope thus far is that the new administration's transition effort resembles some really bad slapstick movie. Barack Obama may want a smooth switch of power, but these people are more interested in revenge than anything else. Maybe the good news is that the bad-news plans of the Trumpsters is overcome by their gross incompetence.

So our glimmer of hope might be hopelessness. That's not much. So to those who insist on finding a happy ending, it's not here.

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The Muslim Registry That Wasn't

The first thing to know about Donald Trump's alleged proposal for a Muslim registry is that it isn't a Muslim registry. This has been lost in a freak-out that has some brave souls already promising acts of civil disobedience to disrupt and overwhelm the prospective registry.

The source of the fracas is a comment from Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach, a Trump immigration adviser and (excellent) candidate for Homeland Secretary director, to Reuters. Kobach noted that the administration might reinstate a Bush-era program tracking visitors to the U.S. from countries with active terrorist threats. This suggestion was spun into a first step toward herding our Muslim neighbors into internment camps.

Kobach was referring to the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System, or NSEERS, which placed special requirements on adult male visitors from countries like Saudi Arabia. Implemented after Sept. 11 — when, you might recall, adult male visitors from Saudi Arabia toppled the World Trade Center — it collected fingerprints and photographs when visitors from the select countries arrived and required them to check in periodically to confirm that they were abiding by the terms of their visas.

It also required that certain individuals from these countries who were already here go through a process of "special registration," including an interview with immigration officials.

This is a far cry from Franklin D. Roosevelt's notorious Executive

Order 9066 setting in motion the Japanese internment of World War II.

It is said that the Bush program didn't lead to the prosecution of any terrorists. According to the Migration Policy Institute, "The New York Times reported in 2003 that, out of roughly 85,000 individuals registered through the NSEERS program in 2002 and 2003, just 11 were found to have ties to terrorism."

Although tracking down anyone here who has ties to terrorism isn't necessarily something to sniff at, the Bush program proved best-suited to identifying visa overstayers. Of the 85,000 initial registrants, nearly 14,000 were put into removal proceedings. For the critics, this is an indictment.

But why shouldn't it be easier to deport visa-overstayers, who constitute about half of the population of illegal immigrants? If we are serious about our immigration rules, our approach to visa-overstayers from all countries should be much more restrictive and hardheaded.

The requirements of the Bush program were watered down over time until it was suspended by the Obama administration in 2011. But the program wasn't illegal or unconstitutional (the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in its favor). Nor was it immoral — foreign visitors should be subject to any reasonable strictures we impose in exchange for the privilege of coming here.

That the so-called Muslim registry is now a thing, a subject of high duceon and hot debate, is testament to how the same media that complains about "fake news" is committed to manufacturing and driving its own narratives only loosely connected to reality. Whether the Trump administration revives a version of the Bush program or not, a similar campaign of obloquy will be directed at all of its immigration enforcement measures. It will have to pursue its agenda against a backdrop of media hostility and constant misinformation.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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2016 HOLIDAY SHIPPING DEADLINES				
	Coast to Coast	Cutting It Close	Where To Take It	Contact
U.S. Postal Service	Drop first-class letters and cards in your mailbox by Dec. 20; Dec. 15 for parcel post.	Priority (1-3 day) service by Dec. 21 Express Overnight by Dec. 23	Your local post office or arrange for carrier pickup. Use usps.com to order supplies, print postage and access a host of other services..	www.usps.com
UPS	Dec. 14, check transit times on website or at drop-off location.	Ship 2-Day Air by Dec. 21 or Next-Day Air as late as Dec. 22.	UPS Stores nationwide. Go to ups.com or call 800-789-4623 to find a location or schedule pickup.	www.ups.com; 1-800-PICK-UPS
Fed Ex	Dec. 16 for all FedEx Ground packages.	Overnight by Dec. 22; 2-Day Air by Dec. 21 for delivery Dec. 23; big spenders can utilize priority overnight or same-day delivery on Friday, Dec. 23 for Christmas Eve delivery (in some areas).	Any FedEx Office location or FedEx authorized shipper.	www.fedex.com; 1-800-GO-FEDEX



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Health



Why Is Alcohol Banned With Antibiotics?

DEAR DR. ROACH: I'm confused about the medical rule not to drink any alcohol while on antibiotics. After doing Internet research on reputable sites, I found, to my surprise, that the overwhelming medical opinion is that moderate alcohol use does not render most antibiotics ineffective. I do understand that alcohol should not be used with specific antibiotics, e.g. Flagyl, because of adverse physical reactions. I read that the warning not to mix alcohol with antibiotics stems from doctors fearing patients taking antibiotics to cure STDs would have lowered inhibitions and engage in unprotected sex. Could you please set the record straight for the public on this subject? — *K.L.*

ANSWER: I never learned the rule that alcohol shouldn't be taken while on antibiotics, with the exception of metronidazole (Flagyl), the combination of which causes extremely unpleasant nausea and vomiting, headache, shortness of breath and other symptoms. This reaction can happen to a lesser extent with sulfamethoxazole (a component of Bactrim or Septra) as well as other, less commonly used antibiotics such as tinidazole and some cephalosporins. The anti-tuberculosis drug isoniazid can cause liver damage in combination with excess alcohol.

In general, if you are sick enough to need antibiotics, it is prudent to avoid alcohol, and certainly to avoid excess alcohol. But alcohol does not render antibiotics ineffective. Preventing STDs is much better than treating them, since not all can be cured. Part of being sexually responsible is making good decisions. You are correct that people are more likely to make unwise decisions with even moderate amounts of alcohol. That's true with or without antibiotics.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I suffered from a very painful case of plantar fasciitis for longer than a year when my husband and I (both in our 40s) discovered that we were expecting a baby. I was terrified over the prospect for several reasons, including the already painful state of my feet. It turned out that my plantar fasciitis was completely cured by the end of my pregnancy.

Now, at 47, with a darling 3-year-old, I'm wondering if there is any way of preventing the condition from returning. My OB/GYN guessed that perhaps the hormones that make a pregnant woman more "stretchy" are behind my cure. Do you have any ideas about this? — *B.R.*

ANSWER: Plantar fasciitis is an inflammation in the strong band of connective tissue that runs from the heel to the toes and supports the foot. The major symptom is pain with walking, especially with the first step of the day.

Pregnant women are indeed more likely to suffer from plantar fasciitis. Most authorities feel it is the relatively fast weight gain of a normal pregnancy, but some blame the hormone relaxin, which loosens the pelvic and other ligaments. This can change your gait and cause abnormal stresses on the feet, causing plantar fasciitis. Your obstetrician is suggesting that relaxin is acting on your already-existing plantar fasciitis, which I haven't heard of, but it is an interesting thought.

For prevention, regular stretching of the calf muscles, wearing shoes with good support and maintaining a healthy weight can help prevent recurrence.

Can Too Much Walking Wear Out Our Knees?

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am a reasonably healthy 66-year-old male. I walk 5 miles a day. I have no knee problems. My doctor says I am walking too much and will wear out my knees. Do you agree? — *M.D.*

ANSWER: No, I don't agree at all. I think I understand why your doctor said that: osteoarthritis, the most common arthritis in the knee, used to be considered a wear-and-tear injury, and if that were the case it might make sense to protect your joints by not overdoing it. However, we believe now that osteoarthritis is caused by an injury to the joint, not by regular exercise. More importantly, studies show clearly that people who are very active don't have higher arthritis rates than sedentary people. Most important of all, people

with osteoarthritis who exercise get better, not only in pain and stiffness levels, but also in ability to walk.

Exercise is so good for your body, mind and spirit that this persistent myth needs to be corrected.

DEAR DR. ROACH: My relative is a 69-year-old who has smoked for 55 years. She has a terrible cough. I want her to cover her mouth with a hankie or tissue when she coughs. The coughing can go on for a few minutes. She insists that she is not sick, and that it's just allergies. I say she is spraying her sputum, and I might catch what she doesn't know she has. — *S.B.*

ANSWER: You don't need to be worrying about yourself. Although it is possible that she has pneumonia, most pneumonias are not transmitted from person to person, so the risk to others is low.

You need to be worrying about your relative. With this degree of cough, it is very likely that she has chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. What's worse, a small number of smokers with a cough like this have lung cancer. In all probability, she is fooling herself that she has only allergies. She needs to quit smoking, now, and also get evaluated.

DEAR DR. ROACH: When I was 60, my doctor told me to take a baby aspirin daily to prevent heart attack and stroke. So I did. When I was 70, a new doctor said the risk wasn't worth the benefit, so I stopped. I heard and read a lot more about the benefits of aspirin. But a friend of mine had a horrific nosebleed that was thought to be from the aspirin. I and a few of my senior friends are confused. Should we or shouldn't we take aspirin? — *A.H.*

ANSWER: When you see multiple opinions on a topic in medicine, it usually means there is conflicting evidence, and that certainly is the case with aspirin. The difference of opinion takes place at the highest levels: the United States Food and Drug Administration recommends, in general, against using aspirin to prevent heart attack and stroke in people who have not already had a heart attack or stroke. However, the US Preventive Services Task Force recommends aspirin in general for men age 45-79 and women age 55-79. The USPSTF makes no recommendation about men or women over age 79. Both groups agree that your physician should be helping you make the decision about whether to take aspirin.

Aspirin has the risk of causing bleeding, and the bleeding can be more serious than a nosebleed. A bleed inside the stomach or intestines can be life-threatening, and there also is a very small risk of bleeding in the brain.

As a physician, I prescribe aspirin for those at increased risk based on multiple factors, and do not prescribe aspirin to people at high risk of a gastrointestinal bleed. This is a judgment call about which physicians may differ.

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

There's No Excuse for Going Hungry

Did you get plenty to eat over Thanksgiving? Many seniors didn't.

Studies have revealed that far too many seniors (and young families, as well) are too embarrassed to ask for help, especially when it involves accepting that help in a public place, such as a food pantry.

If your situation is to the point where you're going hungry, there's no need to be ashamed of going to a food pantry. The folks who run them are very helpful and nice. In some places you'll be given a pre-boxed load of groceries, while in others you'll be able to go down the aisles with a cart and pick out what you need and want. There might be a sign above each section telling you to take one or two or three of each item. If a staff member smiles and whispers for you to take a couple more, do that.

At a food pantry, you're likely to receive canned fruits, vegetables, meats, tuna and stews; hot and cold cereals, as well as grits; pasta, beans, rice and single-serve containers of macaroni and cheese; coffee or tea; rolls and bread; fresh poultry, dairy and drinks.

Do you receive Meals on Wheels? Ask for help in a more private way by talking to your delivery person about how and where to access more food from a food pantry. You also can contact the Council on Aging (www.ncoa.org), a senior center or local churches to ask about food banks in your area. Transportation might even be provided if you don't drive.

Remember: The point of adequate nutrition is to stay healthy. The food is out there. You just need to accept what you need. And with cold weather, we all need more calories.

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Alone for the Holidays

What are your plans for the holidays? Big celebration with lots of family flying in from many locations? Having holiday dinners at the home of a child who's now taken over those duties? Jetting off on a lavish vacation? Or will you be alone over the holidays?

Some of us dread the holidays, not only because we'll be alone, but because they're not what they used to be ... children grown and gone, grandchildren too far away.

The key for many of us to get through the holidays is to stay busy. Here are a few ideas:

- Check the calendar at the local senior center and mark the events you'd like to attend. Especially consider going on any trip they've organized. Daytrips can be a great break, and you don't have to drive.

- Make calls now about volunteering, before all the positions are filled. Santa fund organizations often need people to deliver children's gifts if the parents have no car, or you can sort and wrap toys. Many churches host free holiday dinners and need cooks or servers. Does the humane society need dog walkers to fill in? The hospital might need extra help, even if you don't have a medical background. Even the library might need help keeping books shelved.

- Look in the newspaper for free holiday performances and take a friend along. Put an ad in the paper offering pet care. Many people don't want to board their cats or dogs. Offer to lead a singalong at a rehab center or children's hospital wing. Load up the car with friends who don't drive and go see the Christmas lights.

- Don't pack every day with nonstop activities, however. Take some time to yourself to rejuvenate, kick back, read, snack on holiday treats or watch movies on TV.

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Financial Statement

Don't Spend It All In One Place

Have you decided where you're going to spend your Social Security windfall? The average recipient will see an increase of \$5 in monthly benefits in 2017, a whopping 0.3 percent increase. Broken down into real numbers, the average retiree will now receive \$1,360 in monthly benefits.

Of course, this is a bonus after last year, when we saw no increase whatsoever, while prices around us rose

on nearly everything: food, shelter, prescription drugs. The adjustment is based on the annual Consumer Price Index, which apparently rose just enough to get us that \$5.

If you're under full retirement age and get Social Security benefits, the maximum income you can make (before they start taking \$1 for every \$2 you earn) will go up to \$16,920 per year. The year you reach full retirement age, you can earn up to \$44,880 before they take out a dollar for every \$3 you earn. Once you reach full

retirement age, there's no limit on your earnings.

Go online to www.ssa.gov/cola for more details. Don't forget to scroll down and view the history of the Cost of Living Adjustments. It wasn't that long ago that the increase was 3.6 percent (2012) and 5.8 percent (2009).

If you'll be filing for Medicare in 2017, but because of your age won't be filing for Social Security, beware. It's possible you'll be in that group who will pay more per month for Medicare than others who are "held harmless"

from increases. Go to Medicare.gov to read about the 2017 Part B premiums.

So ... where shall we spend our windfall? There are approximately 60 million of us who will get that extra money starting in January. At \$5 apiece, that comes to \$300 million a month.

Thought for the Day: "It's good to have money and the things that money can buy, but it's good, too, to check up once in a while and make sure that you haven't lost the things that money can't buy." — *George H. Lorimer*



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Season's Greetings



DON'T LET THE ATM RUIN YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING

The holidays are a time to give, but all those ATMs seem to do is take, take, take. Sure they give you money, but not before taking some for themselves. Three dollars there, two-fifty here: before you know it, your holiday shopping adds up to a whole lot of out-of-network ATM fees. That's not the case with Total Access Checking. Everything the out-of-network ATM takes, we'll give you right back. So, where ever your holiday shopping takes you this year—whether it's a local boutique or a mall six states away—every ATM is free.

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Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

1. FOOD & DRINK: What is another name for the filbert nut?
2. TELEVISION: What was Chandler's last name on the comedy series "Friends"?
3. ARCHITECTURE: Who designed the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.?
4. LANGUAGE: Where did the term "the blind leading the blind" originate?
5. MYTHOLOGY: In one of Hercules' fabled labors, he had to slay a beast that kept sprouting new heads. What was its name?
6. U.S. CITIES: What city carries the nickname "Iron City"?
7. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: The direction of starboard on a boat means what?
8. LITERATURE: What famous Latin American author wrote the novel "The General in his Labyrinth"?
9. MUSIC: Where did the Rolling Stones get their name?
10. MONEY: Prior to the euro, what was the name of Greece's currency?

Answers

1. Hazelnut
2. Bing
3. Architect Maya Lin
4. Hindu texts, the Upanishads. The phrase also appears in the Bible.
5. Hydra
6. Pittsburgh
7. The right side of a boat when looking forward
8. Gabriel Garcia Marquez
9. From a Muddy Waters blues song
10. The drachma

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FLASHBACK

POP ROCK & SOUL TRIVIA BY HARPER

1. Which Chattanooga group was originally called The Roosters?
2. Name the Canadian group that netted its second gold record with "Laughing."
3. Who released "Tiger Feet" in 1974?
4. Which Heatwave song made it to the R&B charts in 1977?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "The old house is still standing tho' the paint is cracked and dry, and there's that old oak tree I used to play on."

Answers

1. The Impressions. The group was inducted into the 1998 Grammy Hall of Fame for their hit "People Get Ready."
2. The Guess Who, in 1969. It came out first on their "Canned Wheat" album.
3. Mud. The song played a part in the 2012 Summer Olympics opening ceremony in London.
4. "Boogie Nights," later covered by KC and the Sunshine Band.
5. "Green, Green Grass of Home," by Tom Jones in 1966. In the song, a man dreams that he's back at his childhood home, but awakes to find himself a prisoner on death row. The song was first released on the country charts in 1965, but it was Jones who made it a worldwide No. 1 hit.

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top 10 movies

1. **Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them** (PG-13) Eddie Redmayne, Katherine Waterston
2. **Dr. Strange** (PG-13) Benedict Cumberbatch, Chiwetel Ejiofor
3. **Trolls** (PG) animated
4. **Arrival** (PG-13) Amy Adams, Jeremy Renner
5. **Almost Christmas** (PG-13) Kimberly Elise, Omar Epps
6. **Hacksaw Ridge** (R) Andrew Garfield, Sam Worthington
7. **The Edge of Seventeen** (R) Hailee Steinfeld, Haley Lu Richardson
8. **Bleed for This** (R) Miles Teller, Aaron Eckhart
9. **The Accountant** (R) Ben Affleck, Anna Kendrick
10. **Shut In** (PG-13) Naomi Watts, Charlie Heaton

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COUCH THEATER DVD PREVIEW

BY SAM STRUCKHOFF

PICKS OF THE WEEK

Suicide Squad (R) — A gaggle of super-villains are rounded up to form a special team that bickers its way through waves of underdeveloped enemies in a no-holds-barred assault on Marvel's domination over super-ensemble movies. The titular squad includes assassin Deadshot (Will Smith); Harley Quinn (Margot Robbie), the Joker's steady girlfriend; some boomerang guy (Jai Courtney); a special-forces guy (Joel Kinnaman); and a host of other hastily introduced characters you'll struggle to like. Viola Davis plays the government official responsible for sending this motley bunch against the Enchantress (Cara Delevigne), an evil super-witch.

First off, this ain't "The Avengers." These heroes are anti-heroes. Also, Jared Leto's much-hyped version of the Joker makes an appearance — and that's it, an appearance. You'll be grateful it's brief, because it's hard to imagine listening to that strained voice for much longer.

Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children (PG-13) — Jake (Asa Butterfield), a teenage boy raised on his grandfather's tall tales, finds himself in a little corner of time and space where he gets to see how real the fantastic stories are. After a bit of time travel, Jake finds himself on a Welsh island where Miss Peregrine (Eva Green) looks after a class of children with bizarre abilities — a floating girl, an invisible boy and so on. The inhabitants are threatened by non-peculiar human society that fears them, and another group called the Hollows (led by Samuel L. Jackson) that wants them for nefarious purposes.

Adapted from a young-adult novel series of the same name, the movie toys with how to properly pace itself. The first act really limps along. When things really get rolling, director Tim Burton finds some surreal imagery to indulge in like he likes to do. The plot eventually starts whirring so fast

that it's difficult to keep track of all the time-loops, dread beasts and peculiarities.

Florence Foster Jenkins (PG-13) — OK, no more superpowers. This one has a woman who lacks a special talent (singing), and still manages to be inspiring and filled with life. Florence (Meryl Streep) has always been in love with music and dreamed of being a celebrated opera singer. She's an awful singer, but she's also a wealthy New York elite, and her husband (Hugh Grant) is determined to make her dream come true before she loses her battle with syphilis. Also, it's the 1940s and people really need entertainment. Streep's performance is charming, but you can't help but see her smiling at herself on the inside with each mangled note.



Paramount Pictures

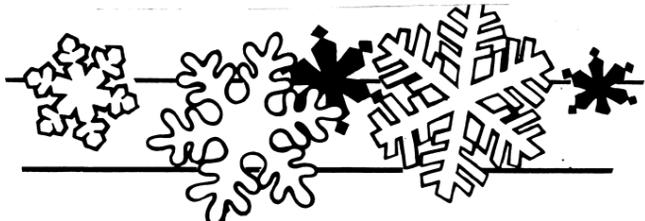
Meryl Streep, Hugh Grant in "Florence Foster Jenkins"

Ben-Hur (2016) (R) — A Judean prince (Jack Huston) is betrayed and enslaved in the Roman Empire. His quest for "Gladiator"-style revenge, however, is thrown off-course by a coincidental encounter with Jesus of Nazareth (Rodrigo Santoro), who inspires our protagonist to practice mercy and forgiveness. This epic journey tries to match the theatre-shaking thunder of its predecessors with wild computer-generated sequences, including the big chariot race at the end. Unfortunately, director Timur Bekmambetov ("Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Slayer") doesn't have much to add to this dusty story.

TV RELEASES

- Duck Dynasty: Season 10**
- Fear the Walking Dead: Season 2**
- Harley and the Davidsons**
- Chicago Cubs Season 2016 World Series Collector's Edition**
- The Twilight Zone: The Complete Series 2016 Blu-Ray**

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top ten

World's Best-Selling BEERS

1. Snow
2. Tsingtao
3. Bud Light
4. Budweiser
5. Skol
6. Yanjing
7. Heineken
8. Harbin
9. Brahma
10. Coors Light

Source: Business Insider

TOP VIDEO RENTALS AND SALES

Top 10 Video On Demand

1. **Bad Moms** (R) Mila Kunis
2. **Sausage Party** (R) animated
3. **Star Trek Beyond** (PG-13) Chris Pine
4. **Nine Lives** (PG) Kevin Spacey
5. **Independence Day: Resurgence** (PG-13) Liam Hemsworth
6. **Ghostbusters** (PG-13) Melissa McCarthy
7. **The Legend of Tarzan** ... (PG-13) Alexander Skarsgard
8. **Nerve** (PG-13) Emma Roberts
9. **Central Intelligence** (PG-13) Dwayne Johnson
10. **Lights Out** (PG-13) Teresa Palmer

Top 10 DVD, Blu-ray Sales

1. **Sausage Party** (R) Sony
2. **Star Trek Beyond** (PG-13) Paramount
3. **Bad Moms** (R) Universal
4. **Independence Day: Resurgence** (PG-13) FOX
5. **Ghostbusters** (PG-13) Sony
6. **Ice Age: Collision Course** ... (PG) FOX
7. **The Legend of Tarzan** ... (PG-13) Warner Bros.
8. **X-Men: Apocalypse** (PG-13) FOX
9. **Outlander: Season Two** (TV-MA) Sony
10. **Captain America: Civil War** (PG-13) Disney

Source: comScore

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What's Hot in Hollywood



by cindy elavsky

HOLLYWOOD — When **Bradley Cooper** was shooting “American Sniper,” his director, **Clint Eastwood**, told him about his problems trying to schedule **Beyonce** to film his planned remake of “A Star Is Born,” because of her concert appearances. He finally gave up and suggested Bradley should take it on as his first directing project. Bradley mulled it over and decided to look for a female singing star to fill the shoes of **Judy Garland** (in the 1954 version) and **Barbra Streisand** (in the 1976 remake). He approached **Lady GaGa**, and she said “yes.” Not only is he set to direct and star in it, but he’s got a release date from Warner Brothers — Sept. 28, 2018.

When The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences re-signed with ABC to broadcast the Oscar Awards until 2028, it was with the proviso that it take a backseat in decision-making and not interfere. ABC was hot for **Jimmy Kimmel** to host, but The Academy insists that the hosts be movie people. They’re considering using multiple hosts, and **Matt Damon**, **Andy Samberg**, **Mike Meyers**, **Tom Hanks** and **Justin Timberlake** are on the short list. That should give the Academy more diversity. The awards air Feb. 26.

Tom Cruise has “The Mummy” rising June 9, and the \$80 million crime-thriller “American Made,” with **Domhnall Gleeson**, coming Sept. 28, followed by the July 2018 release of “Mission: Impossible 6.” By the time “M:I 6” is released, Cruise will be 56 years old and maybe a grandfather.

Dwayne Johnson will follow “Baywatch” (out May 19) and “Jumanji” (Dec. 22) with “Rampage,” based on the classic 1980s video game featuring apes and monsters destroying cities, due in April 2018.

Wonder why **Meryl Streep** hasn’t announced any new projects? Could it

HOLLYWOOD — The just released film “Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them” is from the mind of **J.K. Rowling**, who created it as a prequel to her “Harry Potter” franchise. The film stars Oscar-winner **Eddie Redmayne**. However, Redmayne didn’t want to commit himself to the four sequels that are planned, so **Johnny Depp** was cast in a cameo role that could be expanded to the sequels. It looks like Redmayne hasn’t changed his mind, because Depp has been announced for the first sequel, which starts shooting next year.

Depp’s recent track record hasn’t been too good. In 2013 he had two films, “The Lone Ranger” and “Transcendence,” which barely made their budget back. In 2015, “Mortdecai” was a dismal failure, despite having **Gwyneth Paltrow** as his co-star, and “Black Mass” was less than a success. And though “Alice in Wonderland” made more than \$1 billion, the sequel made only \$300 million, at a cost of \$120 million.

Next year we’ll see “Pirates of the Caribbean” in May, followed by the remake of **Agatha Christie’s** “Murder on the Orient Express,” coming Nov. 17. The original starred **Albert Finney** as Hercule Poirot, with a star-studded cast of **Lauren Bacall**, **Ingrid Bergman**, **Sean Connery**, **John Gielgud**, **Vanessa Redgrave** and **Richard Widmark**, among others. So who has been announced as Depp’s co-star? **Josh Gad**!

Then we’ll get the “Fantastic Beasts” sequel in November 2018. It’s sure to be foolproof, like the “Caribbean” franchise has been. Look for Depp to announce other projects as he tries to forget the failure of his marriage to **Amber Heard**.

Warren Beatty ends his 15-year absence from moviemaking with his new film, “Rules Don’t Apply.” His last film, “Town & Country” (2001),

HOLLYWOOD — The honeymoon is over for **George Clooney**. No, not his marriage; after taking some time off, he’s chosen his next two projects. And while Clooney will direct and produce (with his partner, **Grant Heslov**), he will not act in them. Shooting began last month in Los Angeles for “Suburbicon,” with **Matt Damon**, **James Brolin**, **Julianne Moore** and **Oscar Isaac**.

George’s second project is producing (with **Steven Soderbergh**) the spin-off of the “Ocean’s 11” trilogy, “Ocean’s Eight.” Director **Gary Ross** has assembled an incredible cast with Oscar winners **Sandra Bullock**, **Cate Blanchett** and **Anne Hathaway**, as well as **Dakota Fanning**, **Helena Bonham Carter**, **Sarah Paulson**, **Mindy Kaling** and **Rihanna**. They’ve begun shooting on the streets of New York for a June 2018 opening.

Matt Damon’s next releases are “The Great Wall,” opening Feb. 17, and “Downsizing,” with **Kristen Wiig**, **Alec Baldwin**, **Neil Patrick Harris** and **Christoph Waltz**, arriving in late 2017. **Julianne Moore** heads the “Kingsmen” sequel, “Kingsmen: The Golden Circle,” due June 16, and “Wonderstruck,” with **Michelle Williams**, upcoming.

Brie Larson, this year’s Oscar winner for “Room,” has been shooting films back to back. The gigantic epic that is “Kong: Skull Island,” opens March 10, followed by “Free Fire,” with **Armie Hammer**, opening in April, and the musical “Basmati Blues,” with **Scott Bakula** (who definitely doesn’t sing on “NCIS: New Orleans”) awaiting a release date. “Glass Castle,” with **Naomi Watts**, **Max Greenfield** and **Woody Harrelson**, also is in need of an opening date.

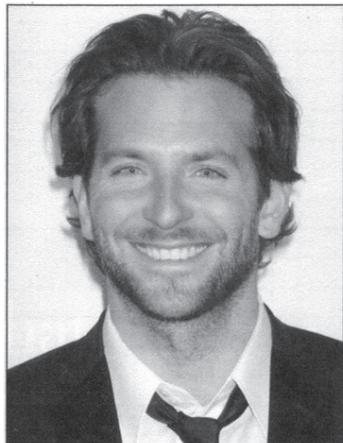
Jacob Tremblay, who turned 10 last month, was in the Funny or Die parody film, “Donald Trump’s the Art of the Deal: The Movie” with **Johnny Depp** (as Trump), **Jack McBrayer**, **Patton Oswalt**, **Alfred Molina**, **Henry Winkler** and **Ron Howard**. He’s also co-starring in “Shut In” (no, not

HOLLYWOOD — In August, we told you not to believe those headlines in the tabloids claiming that **Tom Hanks** and **Rita Wilson** were having marital problems and getting a divorce. In early October, Star Magazine and the National Enquirer splashed headlines about their alleged impending divorce, and Tom and Rita’s lawyers have made them print a retraction, under pressure.

Have you noticed there’s never any dirt about **Donald Trump** in the tabloids? My inside source at American Media tells me that allegedly, Trump pays American Media — parent company for the Star, the National Enquirer, OK, The Globe and Radar on Line — \$1 million a year NOT to write about him! And we all know a little hush money does a lot of talking!

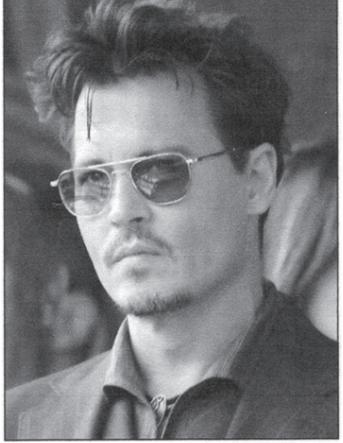
Is the end in sight for reality TV? The 29th season of “The Amazing Race” (which has aired 330 episodes and won 10 Emmys), which has already been filmed, has been bumped to mid-season. Of the 87 hours of prime-time broadcast hours aired every week this season, only nine hours are reality shows and three hours are “The Voice” alone. Reality TV ruled the summer ratings, thanks to “America’s Got Talent,” “Survivor,” “Big Brother” and “Tyler Henry, Hollywood Medium.” Even game shows on ABC — “The Match Game,” “\$100,000 Pyramid” and “Family Feud” — did well. But there has been a lot of rumbling that “Keeping Up With the Kardashians” is teetering on the edge of cancellation.

The networks and cable stations are feeling the heat from Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu and the emerging YouTube station, now that they are all producing original programs, some far superior to the networks. The reality craze began as a result of a Writer’s Guild strike, and it’s ironic that scripted shows such as “NCIS” (the long-



Depositphotos

Bradley Cooper



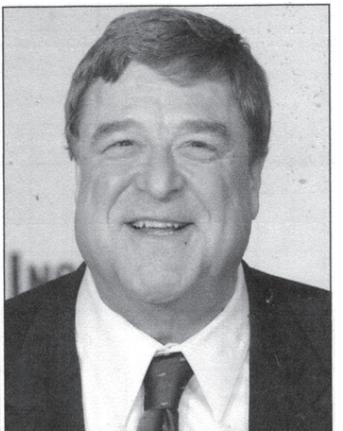
Depositphotos

Johnny Depp



Depositphotos

Brie Larson



s_bukley/ImageCollect

John Goodman

time No. 1 scripted show) are pushing reality shows out.

When we lost **Gene Wilder** on Aug. 29, everyone fondly remembered him in “Willy Wonka.” The film cost \$3 million and only grossed \$4 million, but in 1971 it still put them in the black. The 2005 remake, “Charlie and The Chocolate Factory,” with **Johnny Depp**, cost \$150 million and grossed \$475 million. Now a remake is in the wind, possibly of **Roald Dahl’s** second Wonka book, “Charlie and the Great Glass Elevator” (1972). The musical “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory” is a big hit in London, and invades Broadway in April.

Do we really need a mini-series about **Roger Ailes** and **Gretchen Carlson’s** sexual harassment problems? **Cameron Diaz** or **Charlize Theron** could play Carlson, and **John Goodman** could play Roger Ailes if he was willing to regain some of the 100 pounds he recently lost. What an “ail”ing proposition.

be her last film, “Florence Foster Jenkins,” with **Hugh Grant**, which cost \$29 million but earned only \$44 million, has made her more cautious?

Burt Reynolds will be back on the big screen, playing a real-estate mogul, with the Dec. 2 release of the crime/thriller “Pocket Listing,” with **Rob Lowe**. The film, completed in 2015, had problems getting distribution until now.

Also hitting screens the same day is “The Comedian,” starring **Robert De Niro** and a great cast, including **Leslie Mann**, **Cloris Leachman**, **Danny DeVito**, **Edie Falco** and **Harvey Keitel**. The following week we’ll see Oscar-winner **Natalie Portman** as **Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy** in “Jackie,” with **Peter Sarsgaard** and **John Hurt**, and “Office Christmas Party,” with **Jason Bateman**, **Olivia Nunn**, **Kate McKinnon** and **Jennifer Aniston**.

Every year I try to avoid using the “C” word for as long as I can, but without using it now, that last film would be called just “Office Party.”

starred **Beatty** with **Diane Keaton**, **Goldie Hawn**, **Garry Shandling**, **Andie McDowell** and **Charlton Heston**. The film’s release was delayed three years because of script rewrites, production delays and losing cast members for reshoots because of the delays. The final cost was \$90 million, with earnings of only \$10.4 million. The negative reviews devastated **Beatty**, causing a lack of enthusiasm to make another film.

He’s written, produced, directed and starred in his new film, with **Annette Bening** (his wife), **Matthew Broderick**, **Lili Collins**, **Alec Baldwin**, **Candice Bergen**, **Dabney Coleman**, **Ed Harris** and **Martin Sheen**. **Beatty**, 79, playing **Howard Hughes** in his 50s, forbids a young actress, under contract to him, from having a relationship with her driver, his employee. Hopefully, he’ll be able to recoup his \$26.7 million budget on this one.

Beatty’s always been able to NOT make the rules apply to him, but can he shave 25 years off his looks? MAKE-

again!) with **Naomi Watts** (now in theaters); “Wonder” with **Julia Roberts** (April 7); “The Book of Henry,” also with **Naomi Watts** (June 16); and “Burn Your Maps,” with **Virginia Madsen** and **Vera Farmiga**, awaiting a release date.

Ryan Reynolds, who scored a bullseye with “Deadpool” (\$58 million cost/\$782 million gross), will hit screens in May in the sci-fi thriller “Life,” with **Rebecca Ferguson** and **Jake Gyllenhaal**, and “The Hitman’s Bodyguard,” with **Samuel L. Jackson**, **Gary Oldman** and **Selma Hayek**, out Aug. 20.

NBC/Universal is planning to reboot “Knight Rider” yet again. From 1982-86, **David Hasselhoff** was the man with the talking car, “Kitt.” Then there were the TV movies “Knight Rider 2000” and “2010,” followed by “Team Knight Rider” (1997) and a reboot with **Justin Bruening** (2008-09). This time out they are turning things over to “Fast & Furious” director **Justin Lin** to ramp up the action. They’ll keep trying until they get it Knight ... we mean right. Knight Rider, don’t give up your day-rider job!

Q. Oh, my gosh! I can’t believe the cliffhanger for “How to Get Away with Murder”! Please tell me I don’t have to wait until next fall to see how this all pans out. — **Nancy F.**, via email

A. You won’t have to wait 100 long for “HTGAWM” to return. Right now, the show is on winter hiatus and will return to ABC on Thursday, Jan. 19, at 10/9c. SPOILER ALERT: I can’t wait to see the aftermath of Wes’ (played by **Alfred Enoch**) grisly death, discover who killed him and placed him in **Annalise’s** (**Viola Davis**) house before caught it fire, and see the events that led up to poor **Waitlist’s** demise.

I also am thrilled to report that Jan. 19 marks the return of “Scandal,” which makes its sixth-season premiere right beforehand at 9/8c. You might recall that “Scandal” was scheduled for a midseason debut this year to accommodate star **Kerry Washington’s** real-life pregnancy. However, this does mean that it will be a slightly shorter season — 16 episodes instead of 22. I don’t think that’s necessarily a bad thing, though: To me, it just means that every episode will have that much more bang for the buck, and I can’t wait!

Q. Will “The Path” be back for another season? If so, can you give me any hints as to what we can expect? — **Paula T.**, Birmingham, Alabama

A. Hulu did indeed order a second season of this thrilling drama, and starts streaming the first episode Jan. 25. “The Path” follows the **Meyerist** Movement as its followers try to make sense of **Dr. Meyer’s** (**Keir Dullea**) mysterious departure.

Tormented by strange visions, **Eddie** (**Aaron Paul**) struggles with a new life in the secular world, while **Sarah** (**Michelle Monaghan**), despite her skepticism of **Cal** (**Hugh Dancy**), now stands beside him as **Co-Guardian of the Light**. When **Sarah** finally learns of **Cal’s** dark past, she buries the truth



ABC/Bob D’Amico

Viola Davis

for the betterment of the Movement. **Cal** and **Sarah**, now closer than ever, strive to atone for their misdeeds, while **Eddie**, confronted with the meaning of his visions, discovers the truth of **Dr. Meyer’s** departure.

Q. Is it true that “The Lion King” is being remade? Why? The movie is perfect as is. — **Kelli Y.**, via email

A. Actor-director-producer **Jon Favreau**, who brought us the live-action remake of “The Jungle Book” this past April (and it was recently announced that he is making a sequel), is at the helm of the live-action remake of “The Lion King.” **Walt Disney Studios** has stated that the reimagining is on the fast track to production and will include the songs from the original — written by **Elton John**, **Tim Rice** and **Hans Zimmer**





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IMPRESS GUESTS WITH ELEGANT APPETIZERS

FAMILY FEATURES

Bringing an element of elegance to your holiday celebration is easy when you start with party-pleasing ingredients, and great tasting food often starts with dairy. Foods like milk, cheese and yogurt not only enhance the flavor and texture of dishes everyone loves, but they also add high-quality nutrients to support the health and wellbeing of your guests.

Each of these recipes features a different variety of cheese as the essential ingredient for success. These decadent, elegant apps, which can be prepared in minutes, are sure to be party favorites. Find more ideas for serving up an elegant, yet simple menu your guests will love at MilkMeansMore.org.



Spinach and Artichoke Stuffed Mushroom Caps

Recipe created by The Lemon Bowl on behalf of Milk Means More

Prep time: 20 minutes
Cook time: 25 minutes
Servings: 24

- 24 large mushrooms, stemmed and reserved
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, grated
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 cups chopped frozen spinach, thawed and drained
- 1 can artichoke hearts, roughly chopped
- 2 cups crumbled feta cheese
- 1/2 cup minced onion
- 1 pinch chili flakes
- 1 pinch minced scallions

Heat oven to 350 F and place mushroom caps in single layer on baking sheet lined with foil.

Mince reserved mushroom stems and heat olive oil in large saute pan over medium-high heat. Add garlic and mushroom stems to pan along with salt and pepper. Saute 2-3 minutes, or until mushrooms are softened. Add spinach and artichoke hearts to pan and cook until heated through, about 3-4 minutes. Remove from heat and place mixture in large mixing bowl. Stir in feta cheese and onion. Adjust seasoning, to taste.

Using small cookie scoop, add 2 tablespoons filling to each mushroom cap. Bake mushrooms 20-25 minutes, or until mushroom caps are softened. Sprinkle with chili flakes and minced scallions to serve.



Holiday Baked Brie

Recipe created by Foxes Love Lemons on behalf of Milk Means More

Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 14 minutes
Servings: 8

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 8 ounces button mushrooms, sliced
- kosher salt
- ground black pepper
- 1 Brie round (8 ounces)
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1/4 cup pomegranate arils
- 1/4 cup shelled pistachios
- crackers or toasted bread

Heat oven to 350 F.

In large skillet, heat butter over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms; cook 8-10 minutes, or until deep golden brown, stirring frequently. Season with salt and pepper; remove from heat.

Place Brie on parchment paper-lined rimmed baking pan; drizzle with honey. Transfer to oven and bake 5-7 minutes, or until inside of cheese is softened, but outside remains intact.

Transfer Brie to serving platter; top with pomegranate arils, pistachios and mushrooms. Serve immediately with crackers or bread.

Butternut Squash Queso Dip

Recipe created by Rachel Cooks on behalf of Milk Means More

Prep time: 5 minutes
Cook time: 15 minutes
Servings: 10

- 12 ounces butternut squash puree, frozen
- 1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 finely diced red onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 can (10 ounces) petite diced tomatoes and green chiles
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
- 8 ounces Monterey Jack cheese, shredded

Place unwrapped squash in microwave safe bowl and heat in microwave 5 minutes at 50 percent power, or until thawed.

In large saucepan, heat oil over medium heat. Add onion and cook 4-5 minutes, or until translucent. Add garlic and cook 1 minute, or until fragrant.

Add squash, tomatoes, cumin and chili powder, and bring to boil over medium-high heat.

Reduce heat to low and add cheese. Stir until melted and serve immediately.

Parmesan Crisps with Basil and Sun-Dried Tomato

Recipe created by Art From My Table on behalf of Milk Means More

Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 15 minutes
Servings: 8

- 6 ounces shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 8 basil leaves
- 8 sun-dried tomatoes, jarred

Heat oven to 375 F.

On baking sheet, make eight flat circles out of 1 1/2 tablespoons cheese each. Bake cheese 5 minutes, or until just beginning to turn golden.

Using metal spatula, remove crisps from pan immediately, placing on rack or plate to cool.

Place vinegar and sugar in small saucepan and boil until mixture is reduced to about 1/4 cup and is thickened.

Top each crisp with 1 fresh basil leaf and 1 sun-dried tomato. Drizzle balsamic reduction over top.





Omelets to the Rescue

Christmas brunch is a holiday tradition at our house, and eggs are always the star of the show. Year after year, eggs have been my choice for a healthy and inexpensive way to feed a crowd. My Oven-Baked Omelet recipe is quick and easy to make, and delicious for breakfast, brunch or even a light supper.

This recipe offers a creative way to prepare and serve a buffet-style brunch. I love providing my guests with their choice of different types of precooked meats, diced vegetables and a variety of cheeses to personalize their omelets. The savory tomato topping and the ingredient selections can be pre-cooked the day before, refrigerated and reheated to save time.

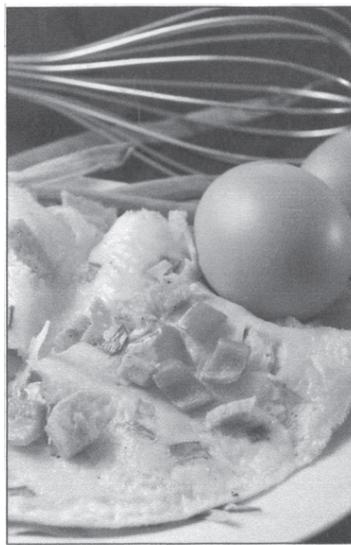
OVEN-BAKED OMELETS

The precooked toppings for these oven-baked omelets can be set up buffet style and quickly reheated in the microwave, using an electric skillet or on the stovetop in a saute pan.

Cooking oil spray, butter or vegetable oil for saute and baking pans

- 6 large eggs, separated
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 1 teaspoon pepper
 - 1 tablespoon grated onion
 - 3 tablespoons flour
 - 2 tablespoons Italian Seasoning
 - 1/2 cup each, precooked meat and vegetable toppings*
- Cheese for sprinkling or topping: Parmesan, Cheddar,*

*American, Gouda, Goat cheese, etc.
andouille sausage, salmon, Canadian bacon, ham, pork sausage, pork or turkey bacon, black beans, mush rooms, baby spinach leaves, chopped green onions, diced zucchini, diced squash, chopped onions or bell peppers, sliced black olives, etc.



Depositphotos.com

1. Heat oven to 350 F. Grease two 8-inch round cake pans with cooking oil spray, butter or vegetable oil. Place pans in the oven to heat. In a large bowl, beat together egg whites and 3/4 teaspoons of the salt with an electric hand mixer until soft peaks form. Do not overbeat.

2. In another bowl, mix the egg yolks, remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt, pepper, grated onion, flour and Italian seasoning. Beat until the mixture is thick and thoroughly blended. Gently fold in the egg whites. Spread mixture in the hot cake pans. Bake for 15 minutes, or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean.

3. Use a knife to loosen the omelets from the sides of the pans. Invert the layers, bottom-side down, onto serving plates. Cut the omelets into wedges. Cover the pieces with foil to keep warm.

4. Have your guests select the precooked meats and vegetables of their choice. Add 1/2 teaspoon oil to medium saute pan, and heat over medium-high heat. Add 2 to 3 tablespoons of the pre-made tomato topping per serving to the pan, and heat for 2 minutes over low heat. Mix your guest's topping selections with the hot tomato topping and mix until warm, about 2 minutes. Spoon the topping mixture over the omelet slice. Sprinkle with cheese, if desired. Serve immediately with sliced fruit and hot biscuits or rolls. Serves 12.

NOTE: If using a microwave, mix 2 to 3 tablespoons of the tomato topping and your guest's precooked topping choices together in a bowl. Microwave on high for 1 minute.

Tomato Topping:

- 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- 8 ounces cherry tomatoes, diced
- 1 tablespoon Italian seasoning
- 1 clove garlic, finely minced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper

Using a medium pan over medium-high heat, heat the oil. Add cherry tomatoes, Italian seasoning, garlic, salt and pepper. Saute for 5 to 8 minutes, until the tomatoes begin to soften.

Comfort foods



by Healthy Exchanges

Holiday Brunch Scalloped Potatoes

Something special for the breakfast brunch this holiday season!

- 3 cups (10 ounces) shredded loose-packed frozen potatoes
- 1/2 cup finely chopped onion
- 1 full cup (6 ounces) diced Dubuque 97 percent fat-free ham or any extra-lean ham
- 3/4 cup (3 ounces) shredded Kraft reduced-fat Cheddar cheese
- 1 (10 3/4-ounce) can Healthy Request Cream of Mushroom Soup
- 1/4 cup fat-free milk
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley flakes
- 2 hard-boiled eggs, diced

1. Heat oven to 350 F. Spray an 8-by-8-inch baking dish with butter-flavored cooking spray.

2. In a large bowl, combine potatoes, onion, ham and Cheddar cheese. Add mushroom soup, milk and parsley flakes. Mix well to combine. Fold in eggs.

3. Spread mixture into prepared baking dish. Bake for 45 minutes. Place baking dish on a wire rack and let set 5 minutes. Divide into 4 servings.

HINT: Raw shredded potatoes, rinsed and patted dry, may be used in place of frozen potatoes.

Good Housekeeping

Ham and Cheese Breakfast Bake

Pop this easy make-ahead dish in the oven for the perfect holiday brunch!

- 2 1/2 cups low-fat milk
- 8 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon chopped thyme
- 1 large baguette, sliced
- 8 ounces Cheddar cheese
- 8 ounces thinly sliced deli ham
- 1 tablespoons snipped chives

1. Spray square 2-quart baking dish with nonstick spray.

2. In bowl, whisk milk, eggs, mustard, thyme and 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper to blend.

3. Arrange half of bread, overlap mixture over bread; sprinkle with light and creamy. At low speed, beat half of Cheddar. Top with ham, then in flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, repeat layering of bread, milk and salt and egg yolk. Knead in almonds. Cheddar. Cover dish; chill 1 hour or up to overnight.

4. Preheat oven to 350 F. Bake 50 2 inches apart, on ungreased large to 55 minutes or until golden and cookie sheet. Gently press a cherry custard is set. Let stand 5 minutes half on top of each ball. Bake 15 minutes before serving. Garnish with chives. Serves 6.

Great-Grannie's Coffee Cake

This super simple coffee cake is celebrity Tyra Banks's family recipe.

- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups packed brown sugar
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/4 cups vegetable oil
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 3 large eggs
- 1 1/2 cups buttermilk
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon

1. Heat oven to 350 F. In large bowl, mix flour, brown sugar, granulated sugar, salt and nutmeg until no lumps remain. Stir in vegetable oil. Reserve 1/2 cup mixture for topping; set aside.

2. Into mixture in large bowl, stir baking powder, baking soda, eggs, buttermilk and cinnamon to topping. Spread batter in greased 13-inch by 9-inch pan; sprinkle with topping. Bake 45 minutes until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

Good Housekeeping

Greek Christmas Cookies

- 1 cup butter or margarine (2 sticks)
 - 2 cups confectioners' sugar
 - 2 cups all-purpose flour
 - 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 - 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
 - 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
 - 1/8 teaspoon salt
 - 1 large egg yolk
 - 2 cups blanched almonds, ground
- About 1 cup red candied cherries, each cut in half

1. Heat oven to 350 F. In large bowl, with mixer at low speed, beat butter with confectioners' sugar until blending.

2. Roll dough into 1-inch balls (dough will be crumbly). Place balls, lightly browned.

3. With wide spatula, transfer cookies to wire rack to cool. Repeat with remaining dough and cherries. Makes about 6 dozen cookies.

• Each serving: About 75 calories, 4g total fat (1g saturated), 1g protein, 9g carb., 3mg cholesterol, 40mg sodium.

Grandma's Fresh Cranberry Relish

This easy, no-cook relish will have your guests fighting over who will take home the leftover relish!

- 1 bag (12 ounces) cranberries, (3 cups)
- 1 medium Granny Smith apple, peeled, cored and cut up
- 1 medium Gala apple, peeled, cored and cut up
- 1 small navel orange, unpeeled and cut up
- 2/3 cup sugar

In food processor, with knife blade attached, pulse all ingredients until coarsely chopped. Spoon into serving bowl; cover and refrigerate until well-chilled, about 3 hours or up to 4 days. Makes 4 cups.

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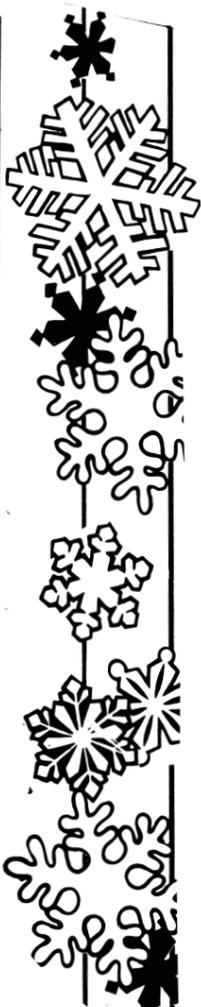
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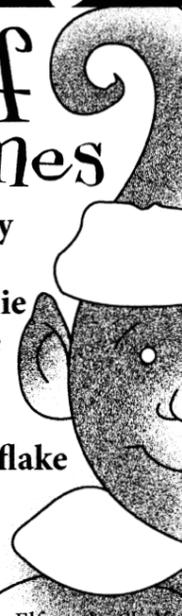
Home for the Holidays

Top Ten

Elf names

1. Buddy
2. Elfie
3. Charlie
4. Jingle
5. Fred
6. Jack
7. Snowflake
8. Max
9. Jolly
10. Bob

Source: The Elf on the Shelf



Christmas Around the World

By Sabrina Napolitano

In America, Christmas means Santa Claus, brightly decorated Christmas trees and gingerbread cookies. But other countries celebrate Christmas in their own special way! Take a look at some of the unique Christmas traditions below and share them with your family. It's a fun way to learn about a new culture, and might even provide some ideas to spice up your own Christmas.

The United Kingdom

The British celebrate much the way we do in America, but with an added twist. During Christmas dinner, they'll tear apart Christmas "crackers" — cardboard tubes wrapped in decorative paper made to resemble a large sweet. Inside is a paper hat, small toy and a riddle or trivia. The paper hats are normally worn at Christmas dinner, which usually consists of roast beef or goose. For dessert, the British will have a nice Christmas pudding, traditionally made with dried fruits held together by egg or suet.

Poland

Christmas Eve in Poland is very important. As the country is largely Catholic, most Poles will fast during the day and eat a special dinner after the first star is seen in the sky. This meal is traditionally meat-free. Before dinner, the family will break bread together using an Oplatek — a wafer embossed with religious imagery. The eldest member of the family will break a piece of the wafer first while a prayer is said, passing it around until each member has one.

Italy

The Italians love to use nativity crib scenes to tell the Christmas story. In fact, it's not uncommon for nativity crib scenes to be very grandiose, sometimes covered in candles and decorative paper. The largest nativity crib scene is in the Italian city of Naples, with more than 600 objects on it! Typically, Italian families eat a light fish dinner on Christmas Eve before going to Midnight Mass. One of the real treats of an Italian Christmas are the sweets such as struffoli, balls of fried dough drizzled in honey.

Australia

Down Under, it's actually summertime during Christmas! Even though it's hot, that doesn't stop the Australians from celebrating. Many decorate their houses with Christmas bush, a

native tree with white flowers that turn red in the summer. Australians even have their own Christmas carols, such as "Six White Boomers," which tells the story of Santa using kangaroos to delivery presents in Australia's summer weather.

Ghana

Ghana is a coastal country in Africa where Christmas is celebrated starting Dec. 20. During Christmas Eve services, there usually is a lively celebration with drums and dancing. For their Christmas meal, Ghanaians tend to eat okra soup, porridge and a yam paste called "fufu," which is usually dipped in the soup.

Argentina

It's also warm in Argentina during Christmas, so the meal on Christmas Eve may be eaten in the garden or even be a barbecue. A popular dessert is pan dulce, literally, "sweet bread." In addition, there are usually fireworks. Some Argentinians also will light "globos" — small hot air balloons made of paper with light inside. They release them into the night sky, and globos can be seen floating all over Argentina on Christmas Eve!

Philippines

If you visit the Philippines during Christmas, you may see "parol," a bamboo pole with a lighted star on it, usually decorated with colored Japanese paper or cellophane. It's the most popular Christmas decoration in the Philippines. On Christmas Eve, there is a large midnight feast with family, friends and even neighbors known as Noche Buena. Some of the dishes found laid out on the table might be lechon (roasted pig), bibingka and puto bumbog (steamed rice cakes), as well as white rice. Of all the Asian countries, the Philippines has the largest concentration of Christians and Catholics, so Christmas is widely celebrated.

Strange BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

• Between 1659 and 1681, it was illegal to celebrate Christmas in Massachusetts. If you were caught celebrating, you would be fined five shillings.

• St. Nicholas is actually a historical figure, although the name was spelled differently. St. Nikolaus was the bishop of Myra in Asia Minor, and he died on Dec. 6, 343. In different regions of the world he is known as Klaus, Nickel, Sünnerklas, Seneklos, Pelznickel, Knecht Ruprecht, Weihnachtsmann and Christkindl. Sometimes he travels on foot, and sometimes he's shown riding a white horse, a reindeer, a mule or even a goat.

• In 1712, Cotton Mather said, "The Feast of Christ's Nativity is spent in Reveling, Dicing, Carding, Masking, and in Licentious Liberty ... by Mad Mirth, by long Eating, by hard Drinking, by lewd Gaming, by rude Reveling." Doesn't sound much like today's celebrations, does it?

• If you think that Christmas has only recently become a nightmare of consumerism, consider that as early as the mid-1820s, Santa Claus was being employed to sell Christmas goods.

• Clement Clarke Moore, the author of "A Visit From St. Nicholas" (more popularly known as "The Night Before Christmas"), was born during the American Revolution and died during the Civil War.

• The first image of a Christmas tree to be printed in the United States appeared in Boston in 1836. It was an illustration to a book written by a German immigrant.

• There is no Biblical or historical reason to place the birth of Jesus on Dec. 25. It was only in the fourth century that the Church officially decided to observe Christmas on Dec. 25.

Thought for the Day: "At Christmas play and make good cheer./ For Christmas comes but once a year." — Thomas Tusser

• My personal holiday rule is simple: When in doubt, leave it out. There is so much to do, and we want to cover it all, but my best memories of holidays involve the people whom I spend time with, not the place setting or the exact perfect gift. — Happy Holidays,

Test Your Christmas I.Q.

1. What instrument was the carol "Silent Night" first played on?
2. Electric Christmas-tree lights were first used in what year?
3. Good King Wenceslas was king of what country?
4. In North America, children put stockings out at Christmastime. What do their Dutch counterparts use?
5. The poinsettia, a traditional Christmas flower, originally grew in what country?
6. In Syria, who traditionally distributed Christmas gifts?
7. In Tchaikovsky's ballet "The Nutcracker," who is the nutcracker's main enemy?
8. What popular Christmas song was actually written for Thanksgiving?
9. What is the day after Christmas known as?
10. When visiting Finland, Santa leaves his sleigh behind and rides on what animal?

Answers

1. Guitar
2. 1895
3. Bohemia
4. Shoes
5. Mexico
6. The Wise Men's camels
7. The King of the Mice
8. Jingle Bells
9. Boxing Day
10. A goat

NEW YEAR'S QUOTES

"The etiquette question that troubles so many fastidious people on New Year's Day is: How am I ever going to face those people again?" — Judith Martin (*Miss Manners*)

"Celebratin' New Year's Eve is like eatin' oranges. You got to let go your dignity t' really enjoy 'em." — Edna Ferber

"A New Year's resolution is something that goes in one year and out the other." — Author Unknown

"The fresh start is always an illusion, but a necessary one." — Eleanor Clark

"Ring out the old, ring in the new, Ring, happy bells, across the snow: The year is going, let him go; Ring out the false, ring in the true." — Alfred, Lord Tennyson

"An optimist stays up until midnight to see the new year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves." — Bill Vaughan

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By Samantha Mazzotta

No Stud Finder? No Problem

Q. I'm planning to hang some pictures around my new apartment, but a friend told me I need to be sure to locate the studs in the wall first. I know these are the vertical boards behind the wall, but I'm not sure how to find them. Do I need to buy some kind of special equipment? — *Jamie, via e-mail*

A. You could buy an electronic stud finder at your nearest home-improvement store, but if you don't want to shell out \$20 or more for a one-time picture hanging project, you can learn to locate wall studs without help. And if you still can't locate the studs, or just want the extra assurance, you can go ahead and buy a stud finder (preferably one that also has a built-in laser level, which is very convenient).

Studs are usually spaced about 16 inches apart. This varies, however. Above doors and windows, studs may be doubled or tripled up to support a heavier load. But along a wall, they're pretty evenly spaced apart. That's helpful to know once you've located a stud, because you have an idea how much space is open on either side.

Studs are always located in specific areas: in each corner of a room, on either side of the window frame, and on either side of the doorframe. They also are typically next to light switches and outlets (a couple inches to the left or right) because electricians often attach the fixture's box to the side of a stud. I say "often" and "typically," because every once in awhile an outlet is just set into the drywall.

You can combine a couple of low-tech methods to locate the rough position of wall studs. The first is to simply tap the wall and listen. First tap on the location of a known stud (the corner, for example). Then tap the wall a few inches to the right or left. You should hear a hollow sound away from the stud. The area of the wall that has a stud should sound solid.

The second method is to measure 16 inches from the known stud. Tap the wall at the end of the tape; if it sounds solid rather than hollow, you know you're at another stud.

Because you're hanging pictures, and I'm assuming relatively light ones, it's more important for you to locate the spaces between the studs, rather than the precise width and location of each stud. (If you are hanging really large, heavy frames, the studs play a more important role.)

Once you've got a general location for the studs, you can measure and mark the spots where you want to hang pictures.



Trying to arrange several pictures on a single wall? Trace the outline of each frame onto blank paper, cut them out, and arrange the outlines on the wall to figure out the layout ahead of time.

Does Your Septic Tank Need Pumping Out?

Q. How often do I need to have my septic tank pumped out? I keep getting calls and postcards from a local company saying I have to do it every year. — *Jim S., via email*

A. How often your septic tank actually needs to be pumped out varies

depending on the size of the tank, the number of people in your home, and local or state regulations regarding septic tank maintenance.

First things first, however. How long has it been since your tank was last pumped out? If it's been more than six years, or you honestly can't remember, it's probably time.

If you know how long it's been since the last cleaning, the size of the tank will help you figure out when next to have it pumped out. For example, if you have a 500-gallon tank, and your home has four residents, the tank should be cleaned once per year. If there are only two residents in a home with a 500-gallon tank, a cleaning is only needed about every two and a half years.

The purpose of pumping out the tank is to remove solid waste, or sludge, which builds up over time. Too much sludge reduces the efficiency of the septic system and can block or damage drain pipes, causing a backup into your house (ugh!) or damage to the drain field through which liquid waste is safely disbursed.

Even with a cleaning schedule in place, once a year you should have a technician come out and check the sludge level of the tank. If the sludge level is too high — past the halfway mark — a cleaning is needed, along with an evaluation of the system to make sure everything is working correctly.

Finally, a check of local and state regulations concerning septic tanks can save you some grief in the long run. Some municipalities mandate more frequent tank cleaning due to groundwater quality issues, and at least one county in Florida is requiring residents to completely replace tanks that are more than 40 years old.

Faulty Faucet Causes Homeowner Headache

Q. We self-installed a kitchen faucet last year, an expensive single-lever unit with a faucet that curves up several inches high so that there's plenty of room for pots and pans underneath. For several weeks now, whenever I turn off the water, a thin stream of water continues trickling out of the faucet for several minutes. I make sure to push the lever all the way down when I turn it off, but that doesn't fix it. How do we repair this? — *Joyce G., Burlington, Vt.*

A. If you saved the manufacturer instructions or warranty card, dig that paper out and look for a customer service number.

The most likely problem with the faucet is a faulty cartridge, and in a unit that was only purchased about a year ago, that part should be covered in the faucet's warranty. Contacting the manufacturer through the number given on the manual or warranty card will connect you with a troubleshooting department that can walk

you through additional steps to determine whether a replacement cartridge is needed.

If you can't find those documents, go to the manufacturer's website and look up the faucet model — a manual may be available online along with a contact number. Or, if it's out of warranty but you have the receipt, contact the store where you bought the faucet; some home-improvement stores have return or parts replacement policies in place for many of their items, particularly pricier ones.

If the manufacturer (or the store) agrees that it's a cartridge issue and is covered, it will send you a replacement cartridge. A new set of O-rings also should be included; if not, you'll want to purchase the correct-size rings for your faucet model at the home-improvement store.

The beauty of a cartridge faucet is that compared to older valve-type faucets, replacement is almost a breeze. You don't have to struggle with re-seating the valve stem — praying that you haven't ground the re-seating tool around too far. Instead, you just pop in the new cartridge and replace the faucet seals. You shouldn't have to worry about servicing that faucet again for several years.

There are a number of online videos that detail the replacement of a kitchen faucet cartridge, which should help you with the repair.

Storing Garden Tools

Q. I read recently that the best way to store all of my lawn tools for the winter is to rub them with linseed oil and then hang them up. Linseed oil seems like kind of a pricey way to do it, and I don't have a lot of space to hang up tools. What do you recommend? — *Karl G., Buffalo, N.Y.*

A. Linseed oil is considered a good medium to protect wood-handled tools, but there also are wood-conditioning blends available — some of them contain linseed oil among the ingredients, others don't. The oil protects the handles from cracking as the wood expands and contracts from cold and hot temperature changes, dryness or humidity.

The metal surfaces of your hand tools should not be coated with linseed oil. Instead, clean them well, removing debris and any spot rust. Some people even sharpen trimming tools one last time for the season. Then, put a light coat of protective oil on the metal portions, including the blades and any hinge points. (Some people wipe motor oil onto the blades, but oils developed for lawn tools are available at hardware stores.)

Raw linseed oil is very slow drying (we're talking weeks or months here) and can stay tacky for a long time. That makes it great for certain applications where slow drying is preferable. For tool handles, that's not preferable (or enjoyable).

Boiled linseed oil dries faster, but keep in mind that most brands are treated with certain chemicals to get it to do so. If you're determined to use an "all-natural" product to treat wood handles, be aware of this when purchasing this type of linseed oil.

An important caveat when using linseed oil, either raw or boiled, is that it is considered a fire hazard.



For garden tools that have a lot of rust, brew up some strong black tea and soak the blades in it for a couple of hours. The surface rust should wipe right off! —

Collecting
by Larry Cox

Q. I have about a dozen older movie posters, including "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof," "Portrait in Black," "Lady Killers," "True Grit" and "Where's Papa?" Whom can I contact to find out what they are worth? — *Steve, Palm Springs, Calif*

A. Conway's Vintage Treasures is recommended to both buy and sell movie memorabilia. The address is P.O. Box 40962, Providence, RI 02940.

Q. I have a large collection of 78-rpm recordings, mostly Victor Red Seals and many recorded on just one side. The artists include Alma Gluck and Paul Whiteman. What are records of this vintage worth? — *George, Albuquerque, N.M.*

A. Most Victor Red Seal recordings from the early years of the last century are valued in the \$1 to \$5 range depending on artist, desirability and condition. Caruso made recordings at Victor, but the most valuable are those issued on other, earlier labels such as Pathe and Zonophone.

Q. I have an RCA console television set, Model 17T, which was originally purchased in about 1950. I hope you can tell me its value. — *Arlene, Haverhill, Mass.*

A. I checked with three collectors who seem to agree that your set is probably worth in the \$75 to \$150 range. Televisions produced after 1948 are fairly common and do not create that much interest with collectors. As with most collectibles, there are always exceptions such as the 1975 Panasonic "Flying Saucer" model (\$600) and the 1960 Philco "Predicta" (\$500).

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The Garden Bug
Christmas rose blooms in early winter in mild climates, and late winter or early spring where the soil freezes hard. Native to Europe and western Asia, this plant loves shade or dappled sun and moist soil. It ranges in many colors from white and cream to pink, rose, burgundy and light green. Amend the soil with plenty of organic matter, such as aged leaf mold and compost. They are deer- and vole-resistant and spread nicely on their own.

- Brenda Weaver

Source: www.hgtv.com, www.whitetlowerfarm.com



Gifts for Bird Lovers

Give a little sunshine to the bird lover in your life. Consider these bird-themed items: coloring books, T-shirts, wall calendars, pocket planners, journals, sketch books, note cards, coffee mugs, jewelry, fun plastic plates, tote bags, field guides, binoculars and on and on. Be creative. Enjoy the holiday season!



A Full and Thankful Heart

Sometimes I like to sit on a chair in front of my patio doors and watch the birds while I eat my dinner. I think about how grateful I am for the good life I have, and how a yard full of songbirds makes it even better. Life is filled with joy.



Winterizing tools
 Remove all dried dirt with a wire brush, rinse and dry thoroughly. Sharpen dull tools using a whetstone or file. Sand off any rust spots with fine sandpaper and coat the metal with vegetable oil. Wipe a thin coat of linseed oil on wooden handles to prevent cracks. Store hand tools in a bucket of sand soaked in oil to further deter rust, and hang large tools after prepping for storage. Fully drain your garden hoses, repair any leaks or damaged sections, and coil and tie them for storage.

- Brenda Weaver

Source: www.motherearthnews.com

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Quotes worth your time

Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.
 John F. Kennedy

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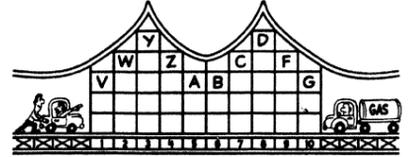
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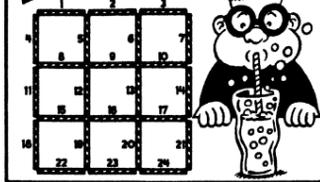
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A WORD BRIDGE!



PUZZLE CARD



The bridge above contains 10 supporting words. We give you the first letter of each word, plus plenty of hints.

1. Vitality and energy.
2. What we all work for.
3. World War II soldiers.
4. A Greek god.
5. Your goal in life.
6. A clothing protector.
7. A casual conversation.
8. Silly, foolish.
9. A person who snitches on someone (sl).
10. A type of feeling.

A BUBBLY BAFFLER! Billy knows how to remove eight of the straws in our drawing and have four squares left. Do you?
Answers: 1. Vern 2. Wages 3. Yanks 4. Zeus 5. Arm 6. Bob 7. Chat 8. Daffy 9. Pink 10. Gut
Answer: Remove straws 2, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16 and 23.

Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



DO TELL! Mel fell, Ed fled, Jan ran, Pat sat, Sue flew, Dave gave, Frank drank, Kate ate and Bert hurt. Can you think of some more similar name rhymes? Give it a try.

DON'T GET BOXED IN! How many squares and rectangles can you form by connecting the dots in our drawing?
Answers: We found 20 rectangles and squares of various sizes. Did you miss the two squares that you can form diagonally in the center?

THE "S" PYRAMID! As you move down the word pyramid shown here, each word contains the same letters as the word above it, plus a new letter. We give you all the S's. Here are some hints from the top down:

1. Symbol for sulfur (given).
2. For instance.
3. To seek an answer.
4. What we do in the sun.
5. Birds have them.
6. Cars must have them.
7. Large drinking cups.
8. Sweet places to work.

Answers: S, as, ask, ask, beak, beakers, beakers, bakers

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering

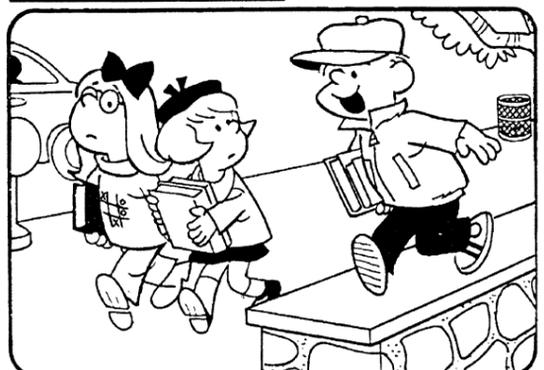


BY AL SCADUTO

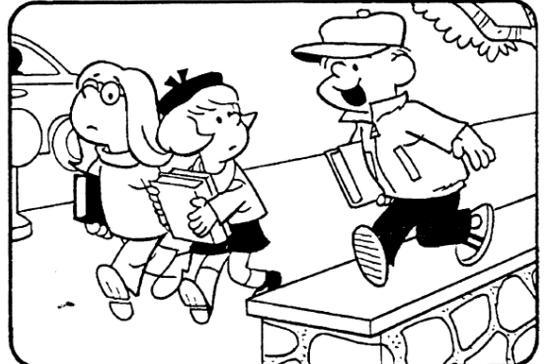


HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTIHOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Bow is missing; 2. Sweater design is missing; 3. Jacket is shorter; 4. Book is missing; 5. Arm is moved; 6. Trash can is missing.
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Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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Thank to N. SCHWARTZ, FT. LAUDERDALE, FL.

Thank to E. LOPES, SACRAMENTO, CA.

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