

**HOW TO SHOP AND SAVE  
AT SOME OF THE COUNTRY'S LARGEST  
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**DECEMBER 2023**

**FREE** It's our 28th Anniversary  
**Serving the communities of**

Lakeview, Roscoe Village, North Center and Lincoln Square



December, 2023

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

Volume 28, Number 1

# DELIVERING FOR AMERICA PLAN



## Delivering for America Plan

The **Delivering for America Plan**, a 10-year project, announced by the Postal Service in March 2021, will implement a transformation plan that will modernize the postal network, dramatically improve service across all mail and shipping categories and provide reliable and secure delivery of mail and packages to nearly 165 million addresses six and often seven days a week.

In the third year of its 10-year plan, the U.S. Postal Service reported a \$6.5 billion net income loss for fiscal year 2023. Postmaster General Louis DeJoy announced the loss saying this is the Postal Service's 16th net income decline since 2007. Officials said the service had recorded \$87 billion in annual financial losses since 2007.

The Postal Service generally receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations. So, the **Plan** involves cutting costs, including longer delivery times for some first-class mail and reduced hours for some post offices. It also started a series of price increases for first-

class stamps. Stamp prices have increased four times in 27 months since the **Plan** was made public. On Oct. 6, the Postal Service filed for another **stamp price increase to 68 cents**. The increase would take place on January 21, 2024, if approved by the Postal Regulatory Commission. First-class mail, used by customers for bills and letters, generated about \$24.5 billion, or about 31% of Postal Service revenue in 2023.

USPS Ground Advantage prices would increase by 5.4%, Priority Mail service prices would increase by 5.7%, and Priority Mail Express service prices would increase by 5.9%. The Postal Service is also seeking price adjustments for Special Services products including Post Office Box rental fees and some international mail services that included Registered Mail and international Mail insurance.

With the price of stamps going up to 68 cents, my Christmas card list next year will be trimmed down. It's always more personal to talk with the person on the phone or in person, so, **HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!**

# GOING TO THE DOGS



Illinois dogs are still giving postal workers a tough time. Illinois ranked sixth in the country for states with the most postal workers attacked by dogs while delivering letters or packages. Chicago also ranked sixth among 35 other metro areas with the highest amount of dog bites in the city – 226 dog bites in 2021 and 245 dog bites in 2022, beating out every other city except for Houston, Los Angeles, Dallas, Cleveland, and San Diego.

The neighborhoods with the highest number of complaints are mostly on the South and West sides, where resources for dogs and their owners, like dog parks and pet shops, are none to scarce. In Uptown, 127 complaints have been filed in the past four years, a higher number than all but a dozen of the city's 77 community areas. In the Lower West Side, including Pilsen, complaints numbered 260 and on the West Side, the Austin neigh-

borhood was the second highest with 252 complaints. These communities don't have any public spaces where dogs can run free and unleashed.

Armando Tejeda, a spokesperson with the city's Animal Care and Control said that Austin "has been historically under served by the city of Chicago". "When you compare it to places like **Lakeview**, there's almost a pet store on every other corner, there's vets all over the area, but everyone that lives in Austin, they're secluded from all these pet resources that other neighborhoods do have." Austin residents said that the most helpful things would be access to collars and leashes, vaccine and microchip clinics, pet stores, and communal spaces where dog owners could meet each other.

The Southwest Side communities of Wentworth Park and West Lawn, were successful in getting dog parks in

their communities. Alderman Marty Quinn (13th) helped coordinate the opening of these dog parks – Woof Lawn and Wentwoof. "I believe we're just touching the surface on the opportunities for collaboration with local veterinarians and with businesses like pet shops that sell dog food or dog toys," Quinn said.

Experts believe that communal dog walking spaces would help curb incidents of barking, growling, and potential biting as dogs familiarize themselves with each other and advocate for better training and socialization for dogs and stresses the importance of residents ensuring that dogs are vaccinated and properly leashed when not in designated off-leash areas.

Another issue is stray dogs. "If there's an area you're getting the majority of strays from and then bites are happening, I mean, something definitely needs to be addressed on our

part," said Armando Tejeda (ACC). The number of strays in the 37th Ward, increased by the hundreds in 2023. Ald. Emma Mitt said, "The tragic, once-in-a-lifetime, disastrous flooding which occurred in late June and early July this summer impacted the number of dogs which became suddenly unhoused due to flooded basements and houses."

**What to do if you are bitten by a dog**

Get medical treatment to prevent infection. Treatment is also important to document the bite in case the victim decides to bring a claim against the dog owner.

Victims can file a claim with animal Control by calling 311 or file a police report at a district station.

In most cases, a person's homeowners or renter's insurance will be responsible for damages.

We all love our pets. Let's keep them safe and others as well.



Editorial & Opinions



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THURSDAY



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MONDAY



TUESDAY



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WEDNESDAY



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On Dec. 11, 2008, Bernie Madoff, the founder and chairman of Bernard L. Madoff Investment Securities LLC, was arrested and subsequently convicted of fraud for the multi-billion-dollar Ponzi scheme that fleeced investors around the world for decades.

On Dec. 12, 1968, American actress Tallulah Bankhead died at the age of 66 from double pneumonia. A flamboyant personality with a huskily seductive voice and a flair for exhibitionism, her greatest success was as a stage actress (she was the inspiration for Blanche Dubois in "A Streetcar Named Desire"), though she also appeared in several prominent films and on TV and radio.

On Dec. 13, 1642, Abel Tasman, a Dutch explorer and merchant, reached the coast of South Island in New Zealand and named it Staten Landt. The first European in recorded history to land on the Australian island state of Tasmania, he claimed it for the Dutch crown, and it was named for him as well.

On Dec. 14, 1974, disaster film "The Towering Inferno," starring professional rivals Steve McQueen and Paul Newman, was released. The film was shot in sequence so all the actors looked authentically haggard and dirty as it progressed.

On Dec. 15, 1840, Napoleon Bonaparte received a French state funeral in Paris more than two decades after his death on the island of St. Helena, when his remains were exhumed and transferred to the Hotel des Invalides on the initiative of the French prime minister and King Louis-Philippe.

On Dec. 16, 1907, in order to demonstrate America's new presence as a world power, President Theodore Roosevelt embarked on a round-the-world cruise in a group of U.S. Navy battleships, making friendly courtesy visits to a number of international ports.

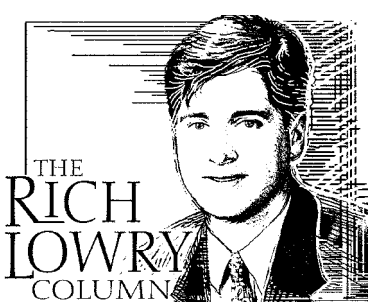
On Dec. 17, 1986, Special Agent Polifrone went undercover to lure out American mafia hitman Richard Kuklinski. Polifrone gave Kuklinski some fake cyanide to use for a murder. Kuklinski found out later that it was fake and decided not to go through with the hit but was arrested at a roadblock on his way home.

Americanisms

"Wisdom is never on the menu, you have to own the restaurant."

—Carrie Latet

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There's one easy trick to winning in 2024

Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. has a history, and a present, of promoting wild conspiracy theories. His independent bid for the presidency is quixotic at best. And yet a new Quinnipiac poll has him getting an impressive 22% in a three-way contest with Donald Trump and Joe Biden, and with a narrow lead among independents.

This should be less encouraging to RFK than a warning sign to the major parties that they are courting disaster by nominating two candidates so unappealing that a solid bloc of voters, at first blush, would prefer someone, anyone really, with the last name Kennedy.

Democracy is usually the art of giving voters what they want. But, apparently, not in 2024.

Usually the obvious political considerations prevail in presidential politics.

It was pretty obvious that Joe Biden was a stronger general-election candidate in 2020 than Bernie Sanders, and lo and behold, Biden rose from the dead and won the Democratic nomination.

Sometimes passion, calculated risk-taking, delusion or stasis overwhelm the obvious, though. When this happens to one party — think of the Barry Goldwater or George McGovern nominations — it often suffers a debacle. But what if both parties succumb to these forces at same time?

Then, you get a clash of weakness where each party risks throwing away a winnable race through its insistence on a desperately flawed nominee.

The Republican reaction to the likely re-nomination of President Biden is, in effect, "We'll see and raise your unpopular incumbent who looks like he could tip over at any moment with an unpopular former president who will likely be convicted of felonies next year."

The Democratic reaction to the likely re-nomination of Donald Trump is, in effect, "We'll see and raise your radioactive standard-bearer with a president who is trailing him in polls and who

most people think can't serve another four years."

Both parties think they are going to win anyway. Even if they are right, their chances of victory would go up appreciably if they switched away from their current presumptive nominees.

A generic Democrat who is not festooned with Biden's failures and weaknesses and is not in his or her 80s would almost certainly readily defeat Trump. (The unpopular Kamala Harris does not meet the definition of such a Democrat.)

A generic Republican who hasn't spent years making him- or herself hateful to suburbanites, who isn't wedded to ridiculous yarns about the 2020 election, and who isn't in serious legal jeopardy in multiple jurisdictions would almost certainly readily beat Biden.

According to the latest USA Today/Suffolk poll, Trump leads Biden on who's best to handle the economy, foreign affairs and the border, while surveys consistently find about three-quarters have doubts about Biden's ability to serve another four years. And yet the mandarins of the Democratic Party believe he's best suited to beating Trump.

On the other hand, despite all his troubles, Biden has a higher favorable rating (39% positive, 49% negative) than Trump (35% positive, 54% negative), according to a recent NBC News poll.

There's no doubt that Trump could eke out a win against Biden, the way he did against Hillary Clinton in 2016. But why settle for hoping for a narrow win against such a debilitated incumbent?

With Trump, the GOP will be asking the middle of the electorate to conclude, "We can't stand this guy and there's nothing that can make us change our minds about him, but things are so bad in the country that perhaps we should give him a try again, anyway."

Maybe that happens, but it isn't the strongest grounds on which to contest an election.

The parties show no sign of doing something different, though. Benefiting from incumbency, Biden is all but unchallenged, and Trump continues to have an incredible grip on Republican voters.

So, both parties will probably roll the electoral dice unnecessarily next year, and try to give the voters what they don't want, good and hard.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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VETERANS  
★ POST ★

by Freddy Groves

Alert: Disability Benefits Questionnaire Scam

The Veterans Administration Office of Inspector General recently issued a fraud alert. They don't do that very often, but this one is important: the Disability Benefits Questionnaire.

The DBQs are those forms you give to your health care provider that, along with information from your provider, lets the VA evaluate your disability claim. The fraud involves trying to get money out of veterans in exchange for getting a provider to fill out the questionnaire and getting the claim filed.

You do not have to pay to have that done. It's free at the VA or through their accredited representatives.

Per the alert, it's the initial filing that's free. Later, if there's an appeal, yes, there might be fees for that appeal. Apparently, the scammers are asking for a percentage of any payments that you get or fees to file your first claim.

And there's more: The scammers might want to send you to a different health care provider, claiming you'll have a better chance for higher benefits, likely by "finding" a diagnosis to get a better claims decision. For this reason they might even tell you to stay away from the VA exams. Worse, you might be asked to have your benefit payments deposited into the scammer's bank account.

To avoid the scammers, if you want help from a genuine accredited rep, go to the VA's database to see if your proposed rep is listed: [www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.asp](http://www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.asp).

If you have an accredited rep and there are fees, discuss them in advance and check to see if those fees are legit: [www.va.gov/ogc/accreditation.asp](http://www.va.gov/ogc/accreditation.asp).

Remember: Even if your rep is on the up and up, you're responsible for the accuracy of the information in your disability claim. Don't take chances. If you submit fraudulent paperwork, it's a federal offense.

Want to know what the VAOIG has been doing in your state and what they uncovered? Go to [www.vaoig.gov/reports/data-dashboard](http://www.vaoig.gov/reports/data-dashboard) and click on your state. That will give you all the reports they've done near you.

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Strange  
BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- That straight-line rise of bubbles in your holiday champagne glass is due to the soap-like compounds called surfactants that not only give the beverage its signature bubble chain, but also contribute to its unique flavor.
- If the human eye was a digital camera, it would have 576 megapixels.
- In 1994, a 75-pound bag of cocaine fell out of a plane and landed in the middle of a Florida crime watch meeting.
- Karl Josef Silberbauer, the SS officer who arrested Anne Frank and those in hiding with her during WWII, later bought a copy of Anne's published diary to see if he was mentioned in it.
- Alcohol kills one person every 10 seconds worldwide.
- Sand from the Sahara Desert, which contains phosphorus, is blown by the wind all the way to the Amazon rainforest, where it replaces the phosphorus annually washed away by rains and floods.
- While in prison in 1924, Adolf Hitler wrote to a Mercedes dealership in Munich to beg for a car loan for a limousine he admired, until his royalties for "Mein Kampf" came in.
- Chimpanzees can develop their own fashion trends.
- Christmas ham, originally a pagan tradition, was endorsed by the Catholic Church as a test of truthful conversion from Judaism.
- Actor Al Pacino was the first "face" on Facebook.
- Death penalty trials are 20 times more expensive than those seeking a sentence of life imprisonment without parole.
- Doritos originated from the leftover tortillas at Disneyland.
- English phrases such as "long time no see," "no go" and "no can do" come from literal translations of Chinese phrases.
- In Japanese mythology, Namazu is a giant catfish that causes earthquakes.

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**Thought for the Day:** "Every job is a self-portrait of the person who does it. Autograph your work with excellence."  
— Ted Key

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SENIOR  
NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Food Recalls

How does a food product get put on the shelves or in the freezers of our grocery stores without benefit of inspection? Especially when they're imported from another country? Inquiring minds would like to know how that happens.

We're not likely to get answers anytime soon. But we can, at least, get quick alerts when those items are recalled.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service is a good site to watch, or better yet, sign up for alerts. At this writing, there is a product (empanadas) under recall that the USDA is concerned might not be fit for human consumption. At the same time, there are two different dog foods that might be contaminated with salmonella, which can affect not only the dogs but the humans feeding the dogs. Then there are the meatballs with Listeria, the pork products that weren't inspected, the burritos with Listeria, the soup with undeclared allergens and much more. For more information on these recalls or to sign up for email notices, go to [www.fsis.usda.gov/recalls](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/recalls).

Food Manufacturing is another good site to watch for up-to-the-minute recall and alert information ([www.foodmanufacturing.com/recalls-alerts](http://www.foodmanufacturing.com/recalls-alerts)).

Recalls.gov is yet another site for recall notices, and not just food. The site also lists motor vehicles, boats, medicine, cosmetics and environmental products. To sign up for any or all of the alert categories, click "Sign Up for E-Mail" on the left side of the screen and choose those of interest. Of all the recall sites, this one is most comprehensive because of the variety of categories of products. For example, if you wonder if your vehicle has ever had a recall, you can enter its VIN. Or go directly to [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov).

Signing up for email alerts might be a good idea. If you find that you are getting duplicate information, you can always cancel one. But it's better to be informed and safe.

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KOVELS®

Antiques  
& Collecting

By Terry and Kim Kovel

Modern Furniture

Furniture functions stay more or less the same, but styles change according to advances in technology and the whims of fashion. Even if you're not familiar with the history of furniture, you can tell that a plain Pilgrim trestle table, an ornately carved Victorian sofa and a Bauhaus tubular steel chair belong to different eras.

This flame rocking chair, which sold for \$240 at a Leland Little auction, is unmistakably modern. It was made by contemporary artist Erin Stesch and was auctioned to support an organization that preserves modern residential architecture.

The modern furniture era is generally believed to have begun in the 1940s with the end of World War II and the societal changes and technological developments it brought. Customers wanted inexpensive, functional furniture for smaller living spaces. Companies had new materials to work with and new manufacturing methods. Designers created pieces that were both streamlined and organic, adding visual interest to comfort and practicality.

\*\*\*

**Q:** A relative gave me a ceramic vase several years ago, and I'd like to know more about it. It has raised and glossy owls and leaves. The bottom has an oval mark that reads "Amphora" in the middle and "Made in Czecho-Slovakia" in a border around that. Can you tell me anything about it?

**A:** The vase was made by Riessner, Stellmacher & Kessel Amphora. They were one of the best-known pottery makers in Teplitz, Bohemia, which is now in the Czech Republic. The mark you describe was used by the company from 1918 to 1939. The vase is earthenware with enameled owls, leaves and geometric decorations. A vase like yours recently sold for \$425.

\*\*\*

**TIP:** Grease stains on tablecloths or bed linens may come out if rubbed with shampoo made for oily hair.



Stylized shapes, light wood, bold blocks of color and unusual construction are characteristics of modern furniture. This flame rocking chair shows all four.

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CURRENT PRICES

- Moser glass vase, amethyst, etched gilt band with Amazon warriors, flared paneled form, bulbous bottom, circular stepped foot, marked Moser Karlsbad, 10 inches, \$310.
- Lamp, electric, desk, brown metal, hemispheric shade, hanging from C-curved arm, round weighted base, Kurt Versen, 21 x 14 inches, \$875.
- Quilt, Amish, pieced, diamond in a square pattern, center diamond made up of small pieced squares, red, blue, green, purple, blue ground, red squares in corners, green on reverse, Lancaster County, Penn., 92 x 92 inches, \$1,845.
- Advertising sign, Illinois U.S. 66, single-sided tin, embossed, black letters & border, white ground, marked National Colortype Co., 16 x 16 1/4 inches, \$2,240.

For more collecting news, tips and resources, visit [www.Kovels.com](http://www.Kovels.com)

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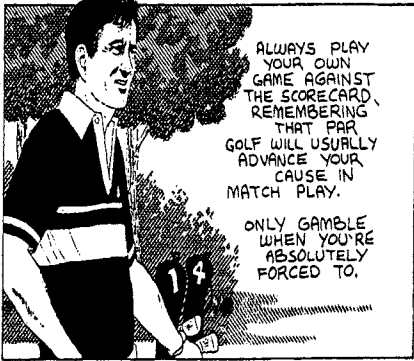
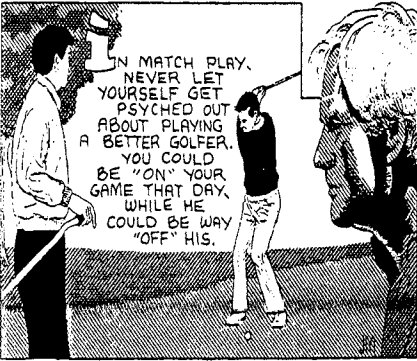


1. On Nov. 8, 1972, what cable TV channel launched with a broadcast of the New York Rangers vs. Vancouver Canucks game from Madison Square Garden?
2. What Miami-based sports agent penned the 2008 book "Next Question: An NFL Super Agent's Proven Game Plan for Business Success?"
3. Narendra Modi Stadium, Eden Gardens and Greenfield International Stadium are cricket grounds located in what country?
4. What two-time NASCAR Grand National Series champion (1962-63) was killed when his head struck a retaining wall during a race at California's Riverside International Raceway in 1964?
5. What indoor football league played its inaugural season in 2021 with teams Beasts, Glacier Boyz, Wild Aces and Zappers?
6. DaVarryl Williamson, a pro heavyweight boxer from 2000-2014, had a powerful right-handed punch that earned him what nickname?
7. Name the soccer star who scored both goals in the U.S. Women's National Team's 2-1 win over Norway in the 1991 FIFA Women's World Cup final?

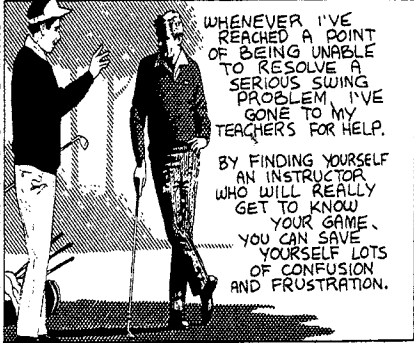
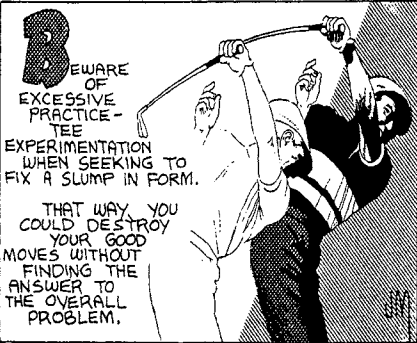
Answers

1. HBO.
2. Drew Rosenhaus.
3. India.
4. Joe Weatherly.
5. Fan Controlled Football.
6. "Touch of Sleep."
7. Michelle Akers.

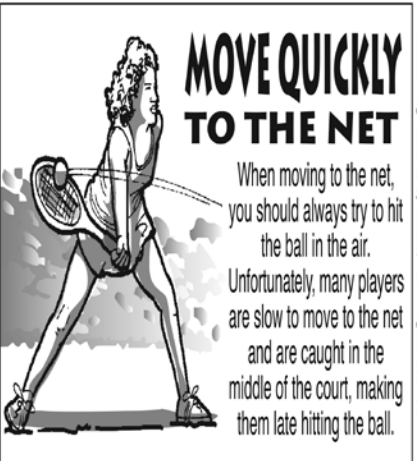
Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



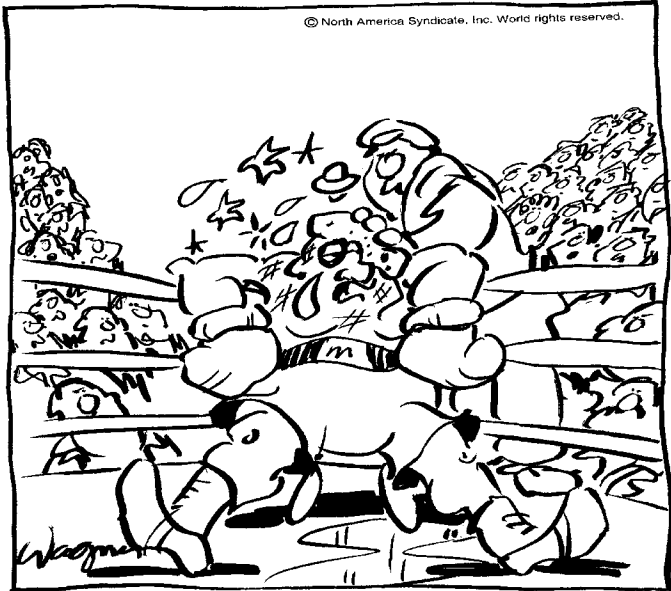
Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



STAN SMITH'S TENNIS CLASS



GRIN & BEAR IT



LAFF - A - DAY





# Health



## Mail-Order Meds Lose Efficacy if They’re Not Stored Properly

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** I am concerned, and have been for some time, about whether my prescriptions that arrive by mail are compromised, since they sit in vehicles with the sun beating through the windows, heating them up. Also, the plastic bottles in which the prescriptions are stored give off toxic emissions as they “broil” in the sun. The instructions that come with some of the meds warn about heat as well. My pharmacist told me that heat does affect a medication’s effectiveness negatively. So, if this is true, millions of us are taking important medications that are basically not doing the job. After all, the meds that arrive at pharmacies come in hot vehicles, too. What’s your take? — J.Z.

**ANSWER:** All medicines should be stored in a cool, dark place, as direct sunlight and heat can damage their effectiveness. Studies have proven that medicines sent by mail order can indeed get out of their published temperature range. While this happens most often in mail-boxes, I understand your point about medications “broiling” in hot temperatures during the shipment itself. Liquid medicines, hormones and nitroglycerin are among the most sensitive. Medicines that need to be dosed exactly, such as transplant rejection medicines, biologicals, and seizure medicines, are also particularly likely to cause problems if they are damaged during shipping. Although some medicines are supposed to be shipped in packaging with cold packs and insulation, this isn’t always the case. I recommend using a local pharmacy, but many people have prescription plans that require them to use mail order. Many states have requirements about custom-

ers using retail pharmacies. If that’s not the case for you, try to make sure that the medicine will be delivered when you are available to receive it. If you have a temperature-sensitive medicine, such as the ones I mention above (you can ask your pharmacist about others), request that your mail-or-order pharmacy sends it in special packaging during warm weather. You might also consider having them shipped to a place where they will be put into a temperature-controlled environment right away.

\*\*\*

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** Since I developed bronchiectasis, I have lost 15 pounds. I can’t seem to get an answer as to why this disease would result in weight loss. Can you shed any light on this? — E.K.G.

**ANSWER:** Bronchiectasis is a lung condition similar to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). It develops after a lung infection occurs in a person who is at risk due to a number of possible underlying conditions. Weight loss with chronic lung disease, like COPD and bronchiectasis, is common. There are many possible reasons. One is that breathing can be hard work! It takes extra energy (as much as 10 times more energy) to breathe with chronic lung disease. Some medications used for bronchiectasis promote weight loss, often through poor appetite. Bronchiectasis is an inflammatory condition, so this can also lead to appetite suppression. Although many healthy people want to lose weight, losing weight with chronic lung disease is a bad sign and a reason to make some dietary changes. I’ve often advocated for nuts and nut butters; the healthy fat in them contains a lot of calories, and fat is easier on your lungs, since it makes less CO2 than protein or carbohydrates. You also need to maintain muscle strength. Finally, a new serious diagnosis always leads to a change in how we think of our bodies, so depression (which often exacerbates weight loss) is not uncommon. Your doctor or a mental health professional can help.

## How to Distinguish Heart Disease Symptoms From Panic Attacks

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** How can you tell with at least a moderate degree of certainty that you might really have a

heart or blood pressure problem, as opposed to just having an anxiety attack that is less serious? — D.S.

**ANSWER:** A panic attack is an abrupt change in mental state. They are usually unexpected, sometimes with or without identifiable triggers. Symptoms of a panic attack vary from person to person, but among the most common are feelings of heart palpitations; sweating; trembling or shaking; shortness of breath; chest pain or discomfort; dizziness; numbness or a “pins and needles” feeling; abdominal pain or nausea; feeling abnormally hot or cold; feeling detached from one-self or from reality; and a fear of dying, losing control or “going crazy.” Most of us have had some of these feelings from time to time, and some of these symptoms are identical to ones of heart disease, specifically of angina pectoris — the classic symptom of poor blood flow to the heart. There are many conditions, both medical and psychiatric, that can cause these symptoms as well, so acquiring a moderate degree of certainty isn’t always easy. A very careful history exam helps. With chest pain due to heart disease, for example, symptoms are commonly brought on by exertion; whereas with a panic disorder, there might not be a trigger, or it may be triggered by psychological stress. Some people have highly specific triggers, such as open spaces or needles. Some people can trigger a panic attack just by worrying that they are going to have one. The time course of the symptoms can be very helpful. With a panic attack, the attack starts, and chest discomfort (for example) will then occur. In people with heart disease, chest discomfort starts, and then people will get anxious. I had a wise cardiology professor who told me to always consider heart disease even if a person’s history is suggestive of a panic attack. I generally check their blood pressure and order an electrocardiogram, blood testing (including thyroid tests) and sometimes other tests when considering the diagnosis of a panic attack. There is very effective treatment available for people with panic disorder (people with recurrent unexpected panic attacks that lead to avoidant behaviors), both through therapy and medication. But your question implies that being pretty sure of the diagnosis is wise before dismissing the possibility of cardiac disease or other medical diseases.

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**DEAR DR. ROACH:** I’m sure you’ve answered this question before, but how important do you think the digital rectal exam is for a 70-year-old man with normal findings in his PSA tests? My previous doctor who retired would routinely do them during my annual physical, but my current doctor said it’s my choice. So, I’ve opted not to have it done. Thoughts? — Anon.

**ANSWER:** The PSA test is much better at diagnosing than a finger is. There are cases where a clinician felt a tumor that would have been missed by the PSA test, so there is some small benefit to the digital rectal exam. But the benefit is quite modest. There are men who have come to expect that part of the exam and feel unsatisfied without it, just as there are some men who absolutely refuse it. So, a wise clinician gives the patient the choice after explaining the small benefit and non-existent risk.

**Hyaluronic Acid Can Improve Joint Pain, but Isn’t Recommended**

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** A friend recommended hyaluronic acid for joint pain in my wrist and hand. I have been taking 180 mg once a day for a couple months now and have experienced notable success. I also feel that my neck pain and range of motion in my neck have improved. My question is, what exactly is hyaluronic acid? Is it safe, and are there any side effects I should be aware of? — T.E.

**ANSWER:** Hyaluronic acid is a naturally occurring substance composed of long strings of sugar. Because of this structure, it carries a great deal of water, so it acts as a shock absorber and lubricant for several places in the body, including the joints. Hyaluronic supplements are usually purified from chicken cartilage, but can also be produced by bacterial fermentation. The body makes about 5,000 mg of hyaluronic acid daily. Multiple studies on injections of hyaluronic acid have shown that it is only slightly better than a placebo at treating arthritis, especially of the knee. I have stopped recommending injection treatments to my patients with knee arthritis, as they are quite expensive. Oral hyaluronic acid, however, is inexpensive. There have been several small studies showing benefit (again, mostly for the knee rather than the neck), but I couldn’t find any well-done large studies that

were convincing. There is very little harm from hyaluronic acid. None of the studies I’ve read found any serious side effects; however, that doesn’t mean it is completely safe, since supplements aren’t regulated the way prescription medicines are. But I can conclude that oral hyaluronic acid is possibly effective and probably safe for treatment of osteoarthritis. The studies have mostly used doses in the 100-200 mg range, but I have seen supplements for sale that have 20 mg or less of hyaluronic acid. I’m glad you are taking a similar dosage to what is shown to be effective.

\*\*\*

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** I have had muscle twitches in virtually every part of my body for about 50 years now. These fasciculations usually occur somewhere on my body every day. My legs and arms are the most common areas. There is no discomfort, and they rarely last more than a minute or two. Why do these occur, and should they be of any concern? I am an active, healthy 58-year-old male who isn’t on any medication. — D.I.

**ANSWER:** Muscle fasciculations are common. Most people get them from time to time, sometimes in the small muscles like the eyelid and sometimes in the large muscles like your legs and arms. Fasciculation can be a sign of a serious neurological problem, such as a lower motor neuron disease. If the muscle doesn’t receive proper neurological signals, it increases its receptors so that the muscle can be easily stimulated, causing twitching. If you had suddenly developed this, especially with weakness or atrophy of your muscles, that would be very worrisome, and you should see a neurologist right away. However, since it has been going on so long, it is very unlikely to be a serious disease. You probably have benign fasciculation syndrome, which, as its name suggests, is not a worrisome condition and usually does not worsen over time.

*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](mailto:ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu).*

# Financial

**HOW TO SHOP AND SAVE AT SOME OF THE COUNTRY’S LARGEST DEPARTMENT STORES**

Department store businesses in the U.S. have dropped by more than half in the past 10 years. (Farewell to Lord & Taylor and Sears). In spite of the industry’s struggles, department stores are still a great place to shop and save, especially at this time of year.

**MACY’S THE STAR REWARDS PROGRAM**

It gives you access to dis-

counts and the store’s Star Money credits (good for 30 days) that you can spend both in stores and online.

**MACY’S SALE DAYS**

Special markdown events happen frequently throughout the year, including Friends and Family. One Day Sales and Lowest Prices of the Season events with markdowns of up to 60%. Also, don’t miss Star Money Bonus Days, when loyalty program members can rack up points faster toward Star Money.

**MACY’S BACKSTAGE**

Many locations offer this T.J. Maxx-like discount department. Also don’t miss Last Act clearance.

**THE APP**

Once it’s on your phone, you can access your rewards account, Star Money, coupons and more.

**KOHL’S KOHL’S CASH**

For every \$50 you spend during special sales events, you get \$10 in credit, which can be used during redemption dates marked on the cash.

**KOHL’S REWARDS**

You get \$5 Kohl’s Cash for very \$100 worth of purchases, plus extra coupons.

**SENIOR DISCOUNTS**

People 60 and older get 15 percent off on Wednesdays at Kohl’s stores. Be sure to bring ID!

**NORDSTROM**

Special Sales. Wait for the Half-Yearly sales, held in early winter and late spring, and the Anniversary sale, held in summer, which offers free shipping and returns. Nordstrom Rack doesn’t

participate in these annual events, but you can return sale items to the discount store’s locations.

**THE NORDY CLUB**

With a free membership, you can collect points toward Nordstrom Notes to spend in stores and online. Plus you get free basic alterations on clothing purchased at Nordstrom and access to invitation only events, such as makeup workshops. Download the app.





# HAPPY HOLIDAYS

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FLASHBACK

POP, ROCK & SOUL TRIVIA

BARBER

1. How did Mitch Ryder get his stage name?

2. Where was the Beatles' last live show?

3. Name the first Beach Boys song to top the charts in the U.S.

4. What song was Bobby Hebb best known for?

5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Though I know you're the kind of boy who only wants to run around, I'll keep waiting and, someday darling, you'll come to me when you want to settle down."

Answers

1. He spotted the name in a New York City phone book. He added "The Detroit Wheels" for the name of his band, and they were off and running.

2. Candlestick Park in San Francisco, California, on Aug. 29, 1966. The crowd numbered only 25,000, with 7,000 tickets not sold, even at a reduced price. That could have been due to Lennon's comments one month earlier about the Beatles being more popular than Jesus.

3. "I Get Around," in 1964.

4. "Sunny," in 1966. Numerous others released covers of the song around the world.

5. "One Fine Day," by the Chiffons in 1963. The song has been used in many soundtracks, including "The Flamingo Kid" (1984) as well as an episode of "The Simpsons."

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

• When the D-Day forces landed on the beaches of Normandy, France, on June 6, 1944, Adolf Hitler was asleep. None of his generals dared to send reinforcements without his permission, and no one even dared to wake him, since he'd issued strict orders not to be disturbed.

• On its one-year anniversary, NASA's Curiosity Rover sang the "Happy Birthday" song to itself on Mars.

• Atomic bomb tests were a major tourist attraction in Las Vegas during the 1950s.

• Microplastics aren't an issue only in the world's oceans and ice caps. Researchers have discovered the tiny particles in clouds over Japan's Mount Fuji and Mount Oyama.

• A study found that students who chewed gum earned better math test scores than those who didn't.

• Ever wonder why our friends across the pond wish each other a "Happy Christmas" as opposed to Americans' "Merry Christmas"? In the 19th century, the word "merry" also meant intoxicated, so they wanted to separate it from public insobriety

• When staying at hotels, guests are more likely to interact with female robots, especially if they have human-like features, than male robots.

• Next time you're feeling stressed, try reaching for a hunk of chocolate: The sweet's smell increases theta brain waves, which triggers relaxation.

• In 1987, Marvel Comics celebrated the wedding of Spider-Man, aka Peter Parker, and his red-haired, green-eyed, longtime girlfriend Mary Jane Watson with a grand, live-action ceremony at New York's Shea Stadium. Guests of the happy couple included actors costumed as the Fantastic Four, Captain America and even the Hulk.

• Right-handed people tend to chew food on their right side, while left-handed folks are prone to chewing on their left.

\*\*\*

Thought for the Day: "Experience is a hard teacher because she gives the test first, the lesson afterwards." — Vernon Sanders Law

top 10 movies

1. **The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds & Snakes** (PG-13) Rachel Zegler, Tom Blyth

2. **Trolls Band Together** (PG) Anna Kendrick, Justin Timberlake

3. **The Marvels** (PG-13) Brie Larson, Teyonah Parris

4. **Thanksgiving** (R) Patrick Dempsey, Ty Olsson

5. **Five Nights at Freddy's** (PG-13) Josh Hutcherson, Piper Rubio

6. **The Holdovers** (R) Paul Giamatti, Da'Vine Joy Randolph

7. **Next Goal Wins** (PG-13) Michael Fassbender, Oscar Kightley

8. **Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour** (PG-13) Taylor Swift, Amanda Balen

9. **Priscilla** (R) Cailee Spaeny, Jacob Elordi

10. **Killers of the Flower Moon** (R) Leonardo DiCaprio, Lily Gladstone

COUCH THEATER

BY DEMI TAVERAS

"Minions: The Rise of Gru" (PG) — Steve Carell's grouchy, yet lovable supervillain, Gru, first appeared on the big screen in 2010 during the box-office sensation "Despicable Me." The film quickly evolved into the highest-grossing animated franchise of all time, and "Minions: The Rise of Gru" was no different than its predecessors, garnering close to \$1 billion. Starring Carell as Gru and Pierre Coffin as the minions, the latest film in the franchise takes us back to 1976 where an 11-year-old Gru dreams of becoming a supervillain. But with ambitions as high as Gru's, he can't go it alone and will need to find some assistance — specifically in the form of a yellow banana-loving species of creatures. Out now. (Peacock)

"The World to Come" (R) — Winner of the 2020 Queer Lion award at the Venice International Film Festival, this drama film taking place in 1856 New York stars Katherine Waterson ("Fantastic Beasts") and Vanessa Kirby ("The Crown") as two respectively married women who feel severe isolation in the farmlands they live in. Both being married to emotionally lacking men, and being devoid of children, the two women start spending their downtime together and find meaningful solace in their shared moments. Eventually, they find that their bond is much deeper than friendship. Waterson and Kirby are an incredible lead duo; their performances as actresses excellently sync up to the profound and poetic dialogue of their characters. Out now. (Hulu)

"Little Richard: I Am Everything" (NR) — Known as the "Architect of Rock and Roll," Richard Penni-

man, aka Little Richard, was a pioneer of his genre and lives on as a legend of popular music and culture. This documentary, which features tons of archival footage and interviews with his family and other musicians, dives into his legacy and explores his influence as a Black queer icon. It also touches on how he inspired other artists of his time and the many eras of music yet to come. The film depicts a very nuanced story that centers on the fact that Little Richard "was an omni being who contained multitudes" — he was unabashedly everything." Out now. (Max)

Greta Fernandez, left, and Natalia de Molina star in "Elisa & Marcela."

Courtesy of Netflix

What's better?  
A great story  
or  
A great idea?  
Lakeview Newspaper  
Thoughts to think about.

top ten

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2. Ultraviolet, Shanghai, China \$1,422

3. Masa, New York, U.S. \$950

4. Alchemist, Copenhagen, Denmark \$722

5. Guy Savoy, Paris, France \$696

6. Restaurant De L'Hôtel De Ville, Crissier, Switzerland \$458

7. Per Se, New York, U.S. \$425

8. Kyoto Kitcho Arashiyama, Kyoto, Japan \$373

9. Restaurant Le Meurice, Paris, France \$315

10. Ithaa Undersea, Maldives \$279

Source: GOBankingRates

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Now here's a tip!

by Jo Ann Derson

and use your dull scissors to cut strips.

• Store popcorn in the refrigerator. You will have less unpopped kernels, because the cold temperature makes them heat more evenly. — W.A. in Massachusetts

• Got chewing gum stuck in your hair? Rub with a spoonful of peanut butter. Massage into the gum-stuck hair. The oil in the peanut butter breaks down the gum, and you then can comb it out or wash out residue once you pick away the globs. How about on your clothes? Remove the garment and stick it in the freezer for several hours. The gum hardens, and you can literally peel it off in chunks. Use an old toothbrush to brush out any remaining crumbs of gum.

• On internet memes, they call them "life hacks," simple tricks to save you perhaps time, money or simply frustration. Here's mine: Place a bowl near your entryway. Place your keys in the bowl when you come home. They stay there until you leave. No more lost keys. Now more life hacks for your tip file. — JoAnn

• Put a dryer fabric softener sheet on the back of a fan. It sticks and will distribute a fresh scent through your room. — T.I. via email

• Put an apple in the potato bag to keep them from growing buds. Check often. — E.W. in Oregon

• Sharpen your scissors by cutting through aluminum foil. All you have to do is fold a piece over on itself

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

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# What’s Hot In Hollywood

HOLLYWOOD — In his book “Being Henry: The Fonz ... and Beyond,” Henry Winkler revealed, “Even in the midst of ‘Happy Days,’ at the height of my fame and success, I felt embarrassed, inadequate. ... At every reading, I would lose my place, or stumble. I would leave a word out, a line out. I was constantly failing to give the right cue line, which would then screw up the joke for the person doing the scene with me. Or I would be staring at a word, like ‘invincible’ and have no idea on earth how to pronounce it or even sound it out.”

He continued, “Everybody in the cast was warm and supportive, but I constantly felt I was letting them down.” It wasn’t until Winkler was 31, years into his role in “Happy Days,” that he was diagnosed with dyslexia. “All the misery I’d gone through had been for nothing,” he explained. “All the yelling, all the humiliation, all the screaming arguments in my house as I was growing up — for nothing. ... It was genetic! ... and then I went from feeling this massive anger to fighting through it.”

Winkler is not alone. Many well-known people like Steven Spielberg, Whoopi Goldberg, Jennifer Aniston, Richard Branson, Jay Leno, Danny Glover and Keira Knightley have dealt with dyslexia.

\*\*\*

Michael Fishman, who portrayed D.J. Conner for 10 seasons of “Roseanne” and four seasons of “The Conners,” was notified by showrunners that he wouldn’t be returning for season five of “The Conners.” He appeared in 36 episodes and directed five episodes as well. Fishman, 42, who is a father of two children, admitted, “I am excited for the opportunities coming in the next chapter of my career.”

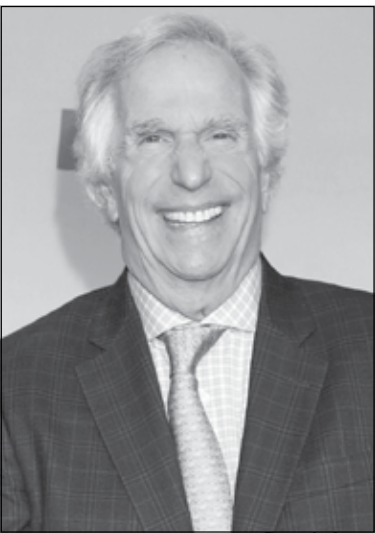
\*\*\*

It’s time to say goodbye to some longtime favorite shows: “The People’s Court” (26 seasons); “Judge Mathis” (24 seasons); “Jay Leno’s Garage” (seven seasons); “Yellow-stone” (five seasons); “Barry” (four seasons); and “Magnum P.I.” (four seasons on CBS and one on NBC).

\*\*\*

The upcoming reboot of “Highlander” has been confirmed by Lionsgate. While “Highlander” has a huge fan base, it’s a wonder that a reboot is happening. The 1986 film starred 28-year-old Christopher Lambert and Sean Connery, and it only grossed \$12.8 million with a \$19 million cost. “Highlander II: The Quickening” (1991) cost \$34 million and grossed \$15.6 million.

Adrian Paul also starred as Duncan MacLeod in a “Highlander” TV series from 1992-1998 and co-starred with Lambert in “Highlander: Endgame” (2000), which cost \$25 million and grossed \$15.8 million. In addition, Paul was in “Highlander: The Source” (2007), which cost \$13 million and



Actor Henry Winkler (“Happy Days”)

only grossed \$213,205 worldwide. Obviously, they made money from TV showings, but never as a big-screen attraction. Now the reboot with Henry Cavill is confirmed for next year. Cavill admitted that he wanted to make “Highlander” because he’s been a fan since he was a “lad.” Even though he’s 38 (10 years older than Lambert was), he is Superman after all!

HOLLYWOOD — Jada Pinkett Smith’s revelation in her book “Worthy” that she and husband Will Smith have lived apart for seven years didn’t endear her to readers, and her book is being considered a “flop.” It’s been out-sold so far by Arnold Schwarzenegger’s “Be Useful: Seven Tools for Life,” Britney Spears’ “The Woman in Me” and even John Stamos’ memoir “If You Would Have Told Me.”

\*\*\*

Not written in a book was Meryl Streep’s admission that she and her sculptor husband of 45 years, Don Gummer, have been living apart for six years. (She’s 74, and he’s 76.) A representative on behalf of Streep admitted: “While they will always care for each other, they have chosen lives apart.”

Their four children all became actors. Henry Wolfe Gummer, 43, is a singer-songwriter and actor (“The Good Shepherd”). Mamie Gummer, 40, acted in “The Good Wife” (2010-15); “The Good Fight” (2018); “Cake” (2014); and “Ricki and the Flash” (2015), along with her mother and Rick Springfield.

Grace Gummer, 37, is a Theatre World Award winner for the revival of “Arcadia” in 2011. She was also in “The Newsroom” and “American Horror Story: Freak Show,” and had regular

roles in “Extant” and “Mr. Robot.” Louisa Jacobson (Gummer), 32, appeared in the HBO series “The Gilded Age.” Not quite the Fonda family, but an up-and-coming showbizzy family no less.

\*\*\*

Tom Cruise’s “Mission: Impossible — Dead Reckoning Part One” opened on July 12 and grossed only \$567.5 million against its \$291 million cost. Paramount hoped “Part Two,” which was set to open in June 2024, would make a hefty profit, but their hopes were temporarily dashed when they were forced to move the opening to May 2025 due to the actor’s strike.

Their silver lining is that after delaying “Top Gun: Maverick” from July 2019 to May 2022 due to the pandemic, they grossed well over \$1 billion. They’ve also pushed back “A Quiet Place: Day One” until June 2024, and Sony’s “Paddington in Peru” has been moved to January 2025.

\*\*\*

Director Matthew Vaughn gave us “X-Men: First Class” (2011) and the “Kingsman” trilogy, to name a few of his credits, but now he wants to remake the original “Star Wars,” which starred Mark Hamill, Carrie Fisher and Harrison Ford back in 1977. Vaughn admitted, “Everyone is going to go bat\*\*\*\* crazy, but let’s bring it on.” He also advised Disney that “if you want a new generation, make the movie for them. The old generation, hopefully, you make it well enough that they enjoy it.”

But for now, though, Lucasfilm is focused on expanding George Lucas’ universe beyond the Skywalker saga and not planning to retell his story with new actors.



Actress Jada Pinkett Smith (“The Matrix Resurrections”)

## celebrity extra

by Dana Jackson



Former NFL Quarterback Tom Brady

**Q:** I thought Tom Brady was going to become a football commentator after he retired. Who is he working for now? — P.T.

**A:** The seven-time NFL-Super- Bowl-winning quarterback signed a huge deal with Fox before he retired earlier this year. However, he’s not expected to take the mic away from current co-analyst Greg Olsen (with Kevin Burkhardt) until the 2024 NFL season begins. Brady has stated that “decompression is important,” explaining that he wants to excel at commenting and avoid jumping into the role immediately.

As for Olsen, his contract with Fox doesn’t end until the 2026 season concludes, so where that will leave him once Brady joins the booth is still uncertain.

\*\*\*

**Q:** I started watching cable TV again and wonder if I’ll still be able to watch my favorite classic Christmas movies this season. Is “It’s a Wonderful Life” on cable? What about other classics? — K.J.

**A:** With so much programming to choose from on network and cable TV as well as a plethora of streaming services, you could probably find holiday entertainment on your screen 24 hours a day. Fortunately, the old classics are still around.

“It’s a Wonderful Life,” which was first released in 1946 and stars James Stewart and Donna Reed, will air on NBC on Dec. 24 at 8 p.m. ET. Prime Video, Roku, FuboTV and DirecTV Stream will also carry the movie in December, if not sooner. Two versions of “A Christmas Carol” (1984 with George C. Scott and 1999 with Patrick Stewart) are also available. Scott’s will air on TCM on Dec. 18, as well as on Starz, Tubi and Roku, while Stewart’s will air on TNT on Dec. 14 and on DirecTV Stream.

TNT is also continuing its tradition of airing “A Christmas Story” marathon- style on Dec. 24 at 8 p.m. for 24 hours straight. It’ll also be available on that same channel during other times in November and December, so be sure to check your cable guides.

TVLine.com has a wonderful comprehensive guide online of over 100 old and new holiday films and specials. Search for your favorites and discover new ones at www.tvline.com/lists/christmas-tv-movies-2023-schedule-netflixhallmark- lifetime/.

\*\*\*

**Q:** How is Marcia Cross doing since her cancer diagnosis a few years ago? I haven’t seen her since “Desperate Housewives,” so I hope she’s doing well. — C.D.

**A:** Marcia Cross, who first made a name for herself in the 1990s as Dr. Kimberly Shaw on “Melrose Place,” became even more of a household name as Bree Van De Kamp on another hit show, “Desperate Housewives.” Unfortunately, five years after that show concluded, Cross faced a battle she didn’t expect — a cancer diagnosis. During a routine exam, her doctor discovered an abnormality that, after further testing, was discovered to be anal cancer. Cross underwent chemotherapy and radiation, and has since been in remission.

She’s also still acting, most recently in the Netflix series “You” and the Fox series “Monarch,” the latter of which was unfortunately canceled. However, once the SAG-AFTRA actors’ strike is over, I’m sure that Cross will be back on our screens posthaste.

Send me your questions at NewCelebrityExtra@gmail.com, or write me at KFWs, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.

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# Make the Holidays Magical with Hearty Meals



Roasted Chateaubriand with Red Wine Gravy and Lemon-Garlic Asparagus

**FAMILY FEATURES**

Capturing the magic of the holidays often happens at the dinner table as loved ones toast the season with stunning meals worth celebrating. This year, call the entire family together and make your festive feast truly memorable with pairings that offer favorite flavors for all.

Starting with tender cuts of meat hand-trimmed by master butchers at Omaha Steaks, these dishes from chef David Rose call to mind the extravagant holiday gatherings of yesteryear with modern twists you can claim as your own.

Roasted Chateaubriand with Red Wine Gravy and Lemon-Garlic Asparagus offers classic taste while Pepper-Crusted Prime Rib with Creamy Horseradish Sauce and Crushed Potatoes brings some zing to the kitchen. For seafood lovers looking to make a splash at this year's get-togethers, Crab Stuffed Lobster Tails with Dirty Rice provide a savory, succulent pairing worthy of the season.

Visit OmahaSteaks.com/Blog to find more recipes fit for the holidays.

## Roasted Chateaubriand with Red Wine Gravy and Lemon-Garlic Asparagus

Recipe by Omaha Steaks Executive Chef David Rose  
Prep time: 15 minutes  
Cook time: about 90 minutes

- Chateaubriand:**
- 1 Omaha Steaks Chateaubriand (2-4 pounds)
  - kosher salt
  - ground black pepper
  - 1/4 cup grapeseed oil
- Red Wine Gravy:**
- Reserved chateaubriand juices
  - 1 medium shallot, small diced
  - 2 garlic cloves, minced
  - 1 1/2 cups red wine
  - 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
  - 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
  - 2 1/2 cups water

- 2 beef bouillon cubes
  - 1 tablespoon stone ground mustard
  - kosher salt, to taste
  - ground black pepper, to taste
- Lemon-Garlic Asparagus:**
- 1/4 cup olive oil
  - 1 pound jumbo asparagus, stems trimmed and spears blanched in salted water
  - 1 pinch kosher salt, plus additional, to taste, divided
  - 1 pinch ground black pepper, plus additional, to taste, divided
  - 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
  - 2 garlic cloves, minced
  - 1/2 lemon, juice only
  - 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- To make chateaubriand: Pat chateaubriand dry with paper towels. Season on all sides with salt and pepper; bring to room temperature, about 30 minutes.

Preheat oven to 250 F.

In large cast-iron pan, bring grapeseed oil to high heat. Sear chateaubriand on all sides until golden brown, 2-3 minutes per side.

Remove chateaubriand from pan, reserving pan drippings; place chateaubriand on wire rack-lined baking sheet. Bake according to cooking chart for cook time and desired doneness. Use meat thermometer to ensure doneness.

Rest chateaubriand 15-20 minutes. Slice to desired thickness.

To make red wine gravy: Bring cast-iron pan with reserved chateaubriand drippings to high heat then add shallots and minced garlic. Brown 30 seconds. Add red wine and deglaze pan, cooking until reduced by half, about 3 minutes.

Reduce heat to medium and whisk in 2 tablespoons butter and flour until all clumps have disappeared and mixture is well-incorporated, 3-4 minutes.

Add water and bouillon cubes; bring to boil then whisk in stone ground mustard.

Reduce to low heat and simmer until achieving sauce-like consistency, 7-8 minutes.

Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Turn off heat and whisk in remaining butter until fully melted and emulsified into sauce.

To make lemon-garlic asparagus: In large saucepan, bring olive oil to medium-high heat.

Add asparagus and season with salt, ground black pepper and crushed red pepper flakes. Sear undisturbed about 1 minute.

Turn asparagus and add minced garlic, sauteing about 10 seconds. Add lemon juice and continue sauteing until reduced by two-thirds, about 1 minute.

Turn off heat and add butter, stirring until emulsified into pan sauce. Season with salt and ground black pepper, to taste.

Serve chateaubriand with lemon-garlic asparagus and red wine gravy.



Crab Stuffed Lobster Tails with Dirty Rice

## Crab Stuffed Lobster Tails with Dirty Rice

Recipe by Omaha Steaks Executive Chef David Rose  
Prep time: 15 minutes  
Cook time: 30 minutes  
Servings: 4

- Dirty Rice:**
- 2 cups jasmine rice
  - water
  - 1/2 cup vegetable oil
  - 1 pound Omaha Steaks Ultra-Premium Ground Beef
  - 1 tablespoon kosher salt, plus additional, to taste, divided
  - 1 teaspoon black pepper, plus additional, to taste, divided
  - 1 teaspoon garlic powder
  - 2 teaspoons smoked paprika
  - 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
  - 1 medium red bell pepper, small diced
  - 2 green onions, minced
  - 1 cup small diced yellow onion
  - 1/2 cup tomato-based soffrito
  - 3 1/2 cups chicken broth
- Crab Stuffing:**
- 3/4 cup mayonnaise
  - 2 teaspoons seafood seasoning
  - 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
  - 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
  - 1/2 lemon, juice only
  - 20 butter crackers, finely crushed
  - 1 pound jumbo lump crab meat

**1 teaspoon kosher salt**  
**1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice**  
**4 Omaha Steaks Cold Water Lobster Tails (5 ounces each), halved lengthwise**

To make dirty rice: Rinse jasmine rice with water until water is clear. Drain.

In large saucepot, bring vegetable oil to medium-high heat.

Add ground beef, 1 tablespoon salt, 1 teaspoon black pepper, garlic powder and smoked paprika; saute 5 minutes until browned.

Using slotted spoon, remove browned beef and set aside.

Add butter to pot then add red bell pepper, green onions and yellow onions. Saute 2 minutes until lightly caramelized.

Add soffrito and jasmine rice to pot; saute 1 minute. Add cooked ground beef and chicken stock; bring to boil. Once mixture boils, reduce heat to simmer 10 minutes. Turn off heat and leave lid on pot 5 minutes. Fluff rice with fork and season with salt and pepper, to taste.

To make crab stuffing: In medium bowl, whisk mayonnaise, seafood seasoning, Dijon mustard, Worcestershire sauce and lemon juice.

Gently fold in crushed butter crackers and crab meat. Set aside.

To make crab stuffed lobster: Preheat oven to 425 F.

Stir melted butter, salt and lemon juice. Brush lobster tails with butter mixture.

Divide crab stuffing into eight portions. Stuff each lobster tail half with crab stuffing, pressing stuffing into lobster. Place stuffed lobster tails on aluminum foil-lined sheet pan and bake 10-12 minutes, or until golden brown. Serve with dirty rice.

## Pepper-Crusted Prime Rib with Creamy Horseradish Sauce and Crushed Potatoes

Recipe by Omaha Steaks Executive Chef David Rose  
Prep time: 10 minutes  
Cook time: about 2 1/2 hours  
Servings: 4-6

- Creamy Horseradish Sauce:**
- 15 ounces crema or sour cream
  - 1/3 cup mayonnaise
  - 2 tablespoons horseradish
  - 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
  - 2 tablespoons minced fresh chives
  - 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
  - 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
  - 1 teaspoon hot sauce
  - 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, plus additional, to taste, divided
  - 1/2 teaspoon white pepper, plus additional, to taste, divided
  - 1/4 teaspoon onion powder
  - 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
  - 1/4 teaspoon smoked paprika
- Pepper Rub:**
- 3 tablespoons kosher salt
  - 1 tablespoon ground peppercorn medley
  - 2 teaspoons ground guajillo chili
  - 1 teaspoon dried thyme leaves

- Prime Rib:**
- 1 Omaha Steaks Boneless Heart of Prime Rib Roast (4 pounds)
  - pepper rub
  - 1/4 cup grapeseed oil

- Crushed Potatoes:**
- 1 pound baby red skin potatoes
  - cold water
  - 1 pinch kosher salt, plus additional, to taste, divided
  - 1/4 cup olive oil

**2 garlic cloves, minced**  
**2 tablespoons finely minced Italian parsley**  
**ground black pepper**

To make creamy horseradish sauce: In medium bowl, whisk crema, mayonnaise, horseradish, vinegar, chives, Worcestershire sauce, lemon juice, hot sauce, 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1/2 teaspoon pepper, onion powder, garlic powder and paprika until well-incorporated. Season with additional salt and white pepper, to taste.

To make pepper rub: In small bowl, stir salt, peppercorns, chili and thyme.

To make prime rib: Pat prime rib dry with paper towels. Season on all sides with pepper rub and bring to room temperature, about 30 minutes.

Preheat oven to 250 F.

In large cast-iron pan, bring grapeseed oil to medium-high heat.

Sear prime rib on all sides until golden brown, 2-3 minutes per side.

Place seared prime rib on wire rack-lined baking sheet. Bake according to cooking chart for cook time and desired doneness. Use meat thermometer to ensure doneness. Cook until internal temperature is 10 F below desired doneness.

Rest prime rib 15-20 minutes. Slice to desired thickness.

To make crushed potatoes: Preheat oven to 425 F.

Add potatoes to stockpot. Cover with cold water by about 1 inch and add 1 pinch salt. Over high heat, boil 8-10 minutes, or until fork tender. Drain and completely cool with running cold water.

Once cool, carefully crush potatoes with palms until skin breaks and potatoes are slightly crushed.

In medium bowl, whisk olive oil, garlic and parsley.

Place crushed potatoes on aluminum foil-lined baking sheet and toss lightly with olive oil mixture. Season potatoes on both sides with kosher salt and ground black pepper, to taste. Roast potatoes until crisped and golden brown, 15-17 minutes.

Serve prime rib with crushed potatoes and creamy horseradish sauce.



Pepper-Crusted Prime Rib with Creamy Horseradish Sauce and Crushed Potatoes



Comfort foods

Made fast and healthy

by Healthy Exchanges

Buffalo Wing Pizza Bites

If you're looking for the perfect foot-ball snack, give this recipe a try. One minute it will be there, and the next it will be gone.

- 1 (8-ounce) can Pillsbury Reduced Fat Crescent Rolls
- 1/2 cup Kraft Fat Free Blue Cheese Dressing
- 1/2 cup Kraft fat-free mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon chili seasoning
- 2 full cups diced cooked chicken breast
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 1/2 cups shredded Kraft 2 Percent Milk Cheddar cheese

1. Heat oven to 400 F. Pat crescent rolls into a rimmed 10-by-15-inch baking sheet, being sure to seal perforations. Bake for 6 to 8 minutes or until light golden brown.

2. In a small bowl, combine Blue Cheese dressing, mayonnaise and chili seasoning. Spread mixture evenly over partially baked crust. Evenly sprinkle chicken and celery over dressing mixture and top with Cheddar cheese.

3. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes. Place baking sheet on a wire rack and let set for 5 minutes. Cut into 24 squares. Serves 12 (2 each).

TIP: If you don't have leftovers, purchase a chunk of cooked chicken breast from your local deli.

• Each serving equals: 167 calories, 7g fat, 12g protein, 14g carbs, 384mg sodium, 117mg calcium, 0g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 Protein, 1 Starch; Carb Choices: 1.

Comfort foods

Made fast and healthy

by Healthy Exchanges

Auld Lang Syne Dip

Add a dip to your vegetable and cracker tray that won't add extra pounds to your hips this holiday season.

- 1 (8-ounce) package Philadelphia fat-free cream cheese
- 1/2 cup Kraft Fat Free French Dressing
- 1/4 cup Land O Lakes no-fat sour cream
- 1/4 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon dried onion flakes
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley flakes

1. In a large bowl, stir cream cheese with a sturdy spoon until soft. Add French dressing and sour cream. Mix well to combine. Stir in Worcestershire sauce, onion flakes and parsley flakes.

2. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. Gently stir again just before serving. Makes 8 (3 tablespoon) servings.

• Each serving: About 52 calories, 0g fat, 4g protein, 9g carb., 301mg sodium, 91mg calcium, 0g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1/2 Meat, 1/2 Carb.; Carb Choices: 1/2.

Good Housekeeping

Green Pea and Lettuce Soup

Serve this simplified version of the delicate French classic with our Ham and Cheese Pitas. Assemble sandwiches while the soup cooks; bake them while blending the soup.

- 2 teaspoons margarine or butter
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped

- 1 can (13 3/4 to 14 1/2 ounces) chicken broth
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen peas
- 1 head Boston lettuce (about 10 ounces), coarsely chopped
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon dried thyme leaves
- 1/2 cup fat-free (skim) milk
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- Chives for garnish

1. In 4-quart saucepan, melt margarine or butter over medium heat. Add onion, and cook, stirring occasionally, 5 minutes or until tender. Stir in chicken broth, frozen peas, lettuce, salt, pepper, thyme and 1 cup water; heat to boiling over high heat. Reduce heat to low; simmer 5 minutes. Stir in milk.

2. In blender at low speed, with center part of cover removed to allow steam to escape, blend pea mixture in small batches until smooth. Pour soup into large bowl after each batch. Return soup to same saucepan. Heat through. Stir in lemon juice, and remove from heat. Transfer soup to serving bowl; garnish with chives. Makes 4 (1 1/2 cup) servings.

• Each serving: 120 calories, 3g total fat (1g saturated), 1mg cholesterol, 835 mg sodium, 17g carbohydrates, 8g protein.

Good Housekeeping

Glazed Ham

This is an easy and delicious ham to serve at Christmastime. For variety, brush the orange glaze on a roast turkey!

- 1 12-pound fully cooked smoked whole ham
- 2 tablespoons whole cloves
- 2 (10-ounce) jars orange marmalade
- 1 cup orange juice
- 2 tablespoons prepared mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 cup dark seedless raisins
- 1 (15 1/4-ounce) can pineapple rings for garnish
- Maraschino cherries and parsley sprigs for garnish

1. With sharp knife, remove skin and trim all but about 1/4-inch fat from ham. Stud ham with whole cloves. Place ham, fat-side up, on rack in large roasting pan. Insert meat thermometer into thickest part of ham, being careful that pointed end of thermometer does not touch bone. Bake ham in 325 F oven 2 1/2 hours. If ham browns too quickly, cover with a tent of foil.

2. After ham has baked 2 1/2 hours, prepare glaze: In 2-quart saucepan over medium-high heat, heat marmalade, orange juice, mustard, ground cloves and ground ginger to boiling. Reduce heat to low; simmer 5 minutes. Brush some of the glaze over ham; bake 30 minutes or longer until meat thermometer reaches 140 F (about 15 minutes per pound). Add raisins to remaining marmalade mixture; heat through and keep warm.

3. To serve, place ham on large, warm platter; garnish with drained pineapple rings, maraschino cherries and parsley sprigs. Serve with remaining marmalade mixture. Makes 18 servings.

• Each serving: About 380 calories, 16g fat, 80mg cholesterol, 2,300mg sodium.

Comfort foods

Made fast and healthy

by Healthy Exchanges

Cheesy Garlic Potatoes

This is a great side dish to accompany any meat — from a simple chicken breast to your favorite meatloaf recipe.

- 1 (10 3/4-ounce) can Healthy Request Cream of Mushroom Soup
- 3/4 cup chunky salsa (mild, medium or hot)
- 1 1/2 cups (6 ounces) shredded Kraft 2 Percent Milk Cheddar Cheese
- 1 teaspoon dried minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley flakes
- 3 1/2 cups (18 ounces) diced cooked potatoes

1. In a large skillet sprayed with olive oil-flavored cooking spray, combine mushroom soup, salsa and Cheddar cheese. Stir in garlic and parsley flakes. Cook over medium heat until cheese starts to melt, stirring occasionally. Add potatoes. Mix well to combine.

2. Lower heat and simmer for 10 minutes or until mixture is heated through, stirring occasionally. Makes 6 (3/4 cup) servings.

• Each serving equals: 185 calories, 5g fat, 10g protein, 25g carbs, 658mg sodium, 233mg calcium, 2g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 1/2 Starch/Carb, 1 Meat; Carb Choices: 1 1/2.

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 blended. Increase speed to high; beat until light and creamy. At low speed, beat in flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, salt and egg yolk. Knead in almonds.

2. Roll dough into 1-inch balls (dough will be crumbly). Place balls, 2 inches apart, on ungreased large cookie sheet. Gently press a cherry half on top of each ball. Bake 15 minutes, or until bottoms of cookies are 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.

Good Housekeeping

Chocolate-Dipped Pretzels

Pretzels dipped in sweet, chocolate candy coatings are super simple to make (and even easier to eat!). Create different varieties of pretzels by mixing up the types of chocolate bars you use.

- 16 mini Hershey's chocolate bars
- 12 medium pretzels

1. Roughly chop one variety of mini Hershey's chocolate bars. Melt, dip half of each pretzel into the chocolate, then transfer to a wax paper-lined rimmed baking sheet; refrigerate until set. Repeat with other varieties of chocolate.

Comfort foods

Made fast and healthy

by Healthy Exchanges

S'more Cake Brownies

Enjoy a couple of these yummy holiday chocolate treats without guilt.

- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- Sugar substitute to equal 3/4 cup sugar, suitable for baking
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 cup fat-free yogurt
- 1/3 cup fat-free mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3/4 cup water
- 1 cup miniature marshmallows
- 6 tablespoons purchased graham cracker crumbs
- 1/4 cup mini chocolate chips

1. Heat oven to 350 F. Spray a 9-by-13-inch cake pan with butter-flavored cooking spray.

2. In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar substitute, cocoa, baking soda and baking powder. In a medium bowl, combine yogurt, mayonnaise, vanilla extract and water. Add liquid mixture to dry mixture. Mix gently just to combine.

3. Spread batter evenly into prepared cake pan. Bake for 15 minutes. Evenly sprinkle marshmallows over top of partially baked brownies. In a small bowl, combine cracker crumbs and chocolate chips. Sprinkle crumb mixture evenly over top.

4. Continue baking for 10 to 15 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Place cake pan on a wire rack and let set for at least 10 minutes. Cut into 16 brownies. Makes 8 (2 each) servings.

• Each serving equals: 170 calories, 2g fat, 4g protein, 34g carb., 352mg sodium, 2g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 1/2 Starch, 1/2 Fat

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# Crime

**Robbery** on the 5000 block of North Lincoln Avenue.

**Burglary** on the 3400 block of Touhu Avenue.

**Assault** on the 5300 block of North California Avenue.

**Burglary** on the 4800 block of North Hamilton Avenue.

**Theft** on the 1400 block of West Belle Plaine Avenue.

**Assault** on the 2100 block of West Fargo Avenue.

**Burglary** on the 3600 block of North Southport Avenue.

**Assault** on the 4300 block of North Broadway.

**Burglary** on the 3600 block of North Southport Avenue.

**Vandalism** on the 6400 block of Nprth Richmond Street.

**Theft** on the 1500 block of West Sherwin Avenue.

**Vandalism** on the 4500 block of North Drake Avenue.

**Assault** on the 800 block of West Belle Plaine Avenue.

**Assault** on the 3800 Ablock of North Ashland Avenue.

**Theft** on the 3300 block of North Ashland Avenue.

**Arrest** on the 1000 block of West Irving Park Road.

**Theft** pn the 5600 block of North Tidge Avenue.

**Theft** on the 4700 block of North Racine Avenue.

**Vandalism** on the 3100 block of North Clifton Avenue.

**Theft** on the 3900 block of North Lake Shore Drive.

**Vandalism** on the 4400 block of North Wolcott Avenue.

**Assault** on the 4700 block of North Albany Avenue.

**Assault** on the 6400 block of North Sheridan Road.

**Assault** on the 800 blpck of West Agatite Avenue.

**Vandalism** on the 2800 blocko of West Montrose Avenue.

**Vandalism** on the 6300 block of North Oakley Avenue.

**Assault** on the 2700 block of West Logan Boulevard.

**Vandalism** on the 5700 block of North St Louis Avenue.

**Assault** on the 5900 of North Glenwood Avenue.

**Theft** on the 3700 block of North Southport Avenue.

**Vandalism** on the 1600 of West Granville Avenue.

**Theft** on the 1500 block of West Greenleaf Avenue.

**Theft** on the 6800 block of North Lakewood Avenue.

**Theft** on the 4800 block of North Lincoln Avenue.

**Shooting** on the 1000 block of North Milwaukee Avenue.

**Arrest** on the 800 block of North Orleans Street.

**Burglary** on the 100 block of West North Avenue.

**Theft** on the 900 block of West Belmont Avenue.

**Burglary** on the 4800 block of North Hamilton Avenue.

**Theft** on the 1400 block of West Belle Plaine Avenue.

**Assault** on the 400 of West Rosyln Place.

**Vandalism** on the 3100 block of North Clifton Avenue.

**Robbery** on the 3500 block of North Broadway.

**Assault** on the 2700 block of North Logan Boulevard.

**Assault** on the 800 block of West Agatite Avenue.

**Arrest** on the 900 block of North Wood Street.

**Theft** on the 2500 block of West Thomas Street.

**Theft** on the 3900 block of North Lake Shore Drive.

**Assault** on the 4700 block of North Albany Avenue.

## Beat Meeting Recaps

### 1922 (North of Belmont, East of Damen)

There has been a 20% decrease in thefts from this time period last year. Of them, 9 were from buildings, such as package thefts in mail rooms/foyers. 13 were of catalytic converters, which is higher than other beats in 19. 5 were of bike thefts, 3 of which were in multi-units where the door/gate was open. Please make sure that if you live in a multi-unit building to keep the common door locked at all times. Robberies are up from this period last year (3 to 11). There were 5 motor vehicle thefts; 2 were Hyundais; there was also an unsuccessful attempted theft of a Hyundai that failed due to it having the anti-theft update. There was 1 arrest made on a carjacking. There was another arrest made on a robbery to a business, where the clerk called 911, gave a good description of the offenders, and the police found and arrested them nearby. There are also 2 people of interest in custody on the recent Lincoln robberies.

### 1432(Armitage/Western/River)

Good news on this beat – robberies are far down from what they were last period. Last period there were 19; this period there were 4. Auto thefts are also down from 15 to 9. Of the 9 that occurred, 4 were Kias or Hyundais. Auto thefts are also down from 18 to 8. Half of the 8 thefts were catalytic converters. Burglaries were up from 5 to 6; most were businesses or garages, including shared garages. If you have a shared garage, please make sure it is always closed.

### 1921 (North of Belmont, West of Damen)

Thefts are down 11% from this time last year. An arrest was made on a theft of a bike from a building. This is a reminder to always lock up bikes, especially if you are in a multi-unit dwelling. 11 of the thefts were catalytic converters, which is up in the district. 19 will be having another catalytic converter painting/registration event in the future; make sure to follow their social media for the date. Burglary is down 60% from last year – one was to a business, the other to residence. There was an arrest made on the one to the residence – the owner saw the criminals in his house on his security cameras, and called 911 while they were in there. The police showed up while they were still there, and arrested all of them. There still is concern about Blue Light bar. The owner was there and said they do make calls to the police when they see anything, including anything outside the bar, and they have staff clean up the area after closing.

### Call for Artists – Large Scale Lakeview Mural

The Lakeview Public Art Committee, in partnership with SSA 27, is accepting qualifications from interested artists for a Large – Scale 48’x22’ Mural to be installed on the side of Central Savings Bank (1601 W. Belmont.)The purpose of this high-profile mural will be to serve as a symbolic gateway, welcoming those entering Lakeview Roscoe Village and will be the centerpiece of the Lincoln/Ashland/Belmont Intersection dubbed, “Lakeview Center,” for years to come.

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## COCA-COLA PLAYED A PART IN SANTA'S IMAGE

Before Coca-Cola decided to use his image for advertising, Santa looked more spooky than jolly. Then, in 1931, the beverage company hired an illustrator named Haddon Sundblom to depict the jolly old man for magazine ads. Now, kids see visions of sugarplums instead of having Santa-themed nightmares.



## RUDOLPH WAS A MARKETING PLOY

Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer first appeared in 1939 when the Montgomery Ward department store asked one of its copywriters to create a Christmas story for kids that the store could distribute as a promotion. In the first year alone 2.4 million copies were distributed and late in 1949 Gene Autry recorded the song "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer". The adorable movie featuring the island of misfit toys and Herbie the elf hit the airwaves (and our hearts) in 1964.



## "JINGLE BELLS" WAS ORIGINALLY A THANKSGIVING SONG

Turns out, we first started dashing through the snow for an entirely different holiday. James Lord Pierpont wrote the song called "One Horse Open Sleigh" for his church's Thanksgiving concert in the mid-19th century. Then in 1857, the song was re-released under the title we all know and love and it's still among the most popular Christmas songs today.



## ASTRONAUTS BROADCAST "JINGLE BELLS" FROM SPACE

Turns out, we first started dashing through the snow for an entirely different holiday. James Lord Pierpont wrote the song called "One Horse Open Sleigh" for his church's Thanksgiving concert in the mid-19th century. Then in 1857, the song was re-released under the title we all know and love and it's still among the most popular Christmas songs today.



## IT'S RUMORED THAT EGGNOG ORIGINATED IN MEDIEVAL BRITAIN

Although there's no official confirmation on who invented eggnog, most historians agree that eggnog originated in medieval Britain. Eggnog was an upper class luxury since they were the only ones who had access to the milk, sherry and eggs required to create the original version. Monks in the Middle Ages added figs and eggs and called the drink "posset" while the wealthy kept with the simple recipe and used it for toasts or big events. Research shows that eggnog most likely became associated with the holidays due to a lack of refrigeration. It became a drink for the more common man in America because of the larger farming opportunities and more access to cows and chickens.



## WE SHIP A TON OF PACKAGES AT THE HOLIDAYS

Last year, the U.S. Postal Service processed more than 11.7 billion pieces of mail and packages during the holiday season. That includes gifts for loved ones, holiday cards, Christmas letters to Santa and of course, those dreaded credit card bills from all the gift shopping..



## THIS CHRISTMAS GIFT HELD A LIFESAVING SECRET

During World War II, the United States Playing Card Company joined forces with American and British intelligence agencies to create a very special deck of cards. They distributed them as Christmas gifts to soldiers, but they also helped Allied prisoners of war escape from German POW camps. When wet, individual cards peeled apart to reveal maps of escape routes.



## MISTLETOE IS AN APHRODISIAC

The holiday decoration isn't just pretty. It's also an ancient symbol of fertility and virility — and the Druids considered it an aphrodisiac.



## THE TERM "XMAS" DATES BACK TO THE 1500S

Contrary to popular belief, "Xmas" is not a trendy attempt to "take Christ out of Christmas". "Christianity" was spelled "Xianity" as far back as 1100. X, or Chi, is the Greek first letter of "Christ" so "X" and back in the fourth century, Constantine the Great often referenced the shorthand version. Some say it was as early as 1021 that the abbreviation "Xp-mas" was used to reference the holiday, which was later shortened to "Xmas."



## AMERICANS SPEND NEARLY \$1,000 A YEAR ON GIFTS

According to the National Retail Federation's most recent data, consumers spend an average of \$967.13 on the holidays.



## EVERGREENS ARE AN ANCIENT TRADITION

The tradition of Christmas trees goes all the way back to the ancient Egyptians and Romans, who decorated with evergreens during the winter solstice to signify that spring would return. Evergreens reminded them of all the green plants that were to grow once the sun returned.



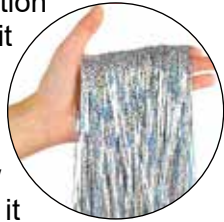
## HANGING STOCKINGS STARTED BY ACCIDENT

Legend has it we hang stockings by the chimney with care because one year a poor widowed man didn't have enough money for his three daughters' dowries, making it difficult for them to marry. Generous old St. Nick dropped a bag of gold down their chimney one night and into the freshly washed stockings the girls had hung by the fire to dry. After that, the tradition stuck!



## TINSEL HAS A STORIED HISTORY

Tinsel was invented in 1610 in Germany. It was spun from real silver and then hammered out and was more of a luxury decoration than the cheap tree trimming it is today. The U.S. government once banned tinsel because it used to contain poisonous lead, but no need to worry now — it's just plastic. That said, it should still be kept away from young kids and pets since it can be a choking hazard.



## CANDY CANES ORIGINATED IN GERMANY

The National Confectioners Association says a choirmaster originally gave the red-and-white-striped candies to young children to keep them quiet during marathon church services back in 1670. It wasn't until a German-Swedish immigrant decorated his tree with candy canes in 1847 that they became popular as a Christmas candy. Nowadays, they're available in a wide variety of colors and flavors like cherry, green apple and watermelon.







### Clivia blooms

In autumn, stop fertilizing your clivia plant and place it in a cool room for about 6-8 weeks; this is essential for flower bud formation. Water very sparingly until flower buds appear. Just as winter enters its bleakest stage, you will be rewarded with a bouquet of lovely bright-colored flowers. When the flowers fade, cut the stalk at its base to prevent seeding. - Brenda Weaver

Sources: [www.chicagobotanic.org](http://www.chicagobotanic.org), [worldoffloweringplants.com](http://worldoffloweringplants.com)



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### Pots and plants in winter

Your outdoor pots and their plants need protection from the cold. Large wooden or concrete planters can be left in place and their plants covered with straw or mulch. Clay, ceramic or glazed pottery may crack when it's cold out, so wrap them with bubble wrap. With smaller containers, you can group them and wrap them all up together, or move them inside. Pots and their plants can also be buried in the ground and covered with soil or mulch. - Brenda Weaver

Source: [extension.psu.edu](http://extension.psu.edu)




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### Cranberries

Commercially-grown cranberries grow in bogs, but cranberries can be grown on dry land. Determine the pH of your garden soil, as cranberries need a soil pH of less than 5; also, make sure you have very well-draining soil. Cranberry plants need about three months of temps in the 32°-45°F. range to trigger a dormant phase. Fruit of the cranberry plants may appear the year after planting, but more likely the second year depending on the number of pollinators visiting your plantings. - Brenda Weaver

Source: [www.gardeningknowhow.com](http://www.gardeningknowhow.com)



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### Quotes worth your time

“Once again, we come to the Holiday Season, a deeply religious time that each of us observes, in his own way, by going to the mall of his choice.”  
- Dave Barry

“I refuse to join any club that would have me as a member.”  
- Groucho Marx

“No man has a good enough memory to be a successful liar.”  
- Abraham Lincoln

“Behind every great man is a woman rolling her eyes.”  
- Jim Carrey

“Wine is constant proof that God loves us and loves to see us happy.”  
- Benjamin Franklin

“I am not a member of any organized political party. I am a democrat.”  
- Will Rogers


“Happiness is having a large, loving, caring, close-knit family in another city.”  
- George Burns

“Peace cannot be kept by force, it can only be achieved by understanding.”  
- Albert Einstein

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\*Rates referenced are the UPS® Ground Retail Rates effective as of 7/10/16 and USPS Priority Mail rates effective as of . New competitive UPS Ground rates vs. the Post Office®. Comparison is made by comparing UPS and USPS® retail rate charts of similar weight and distance. Neither UPS nor USPS dimensional weight factors were used in this comparison. Individual package comparison may differ when considering dimensional weight factors. For more information, see the terms and conditions on [ups.com/rates](http://ups.com/rates). For exact rates, come to The UPS Store. Priority Mail rate does not include the published charge of \$2.65, which provides up to \$100 indemnity coverage for a lost, rifled or damaged article. See [ups.com](http://ups.com) for more information. All rates subject to change. Priority Mail is a registered trademark of the United States Postal Service.

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Comics

Out on a Limb

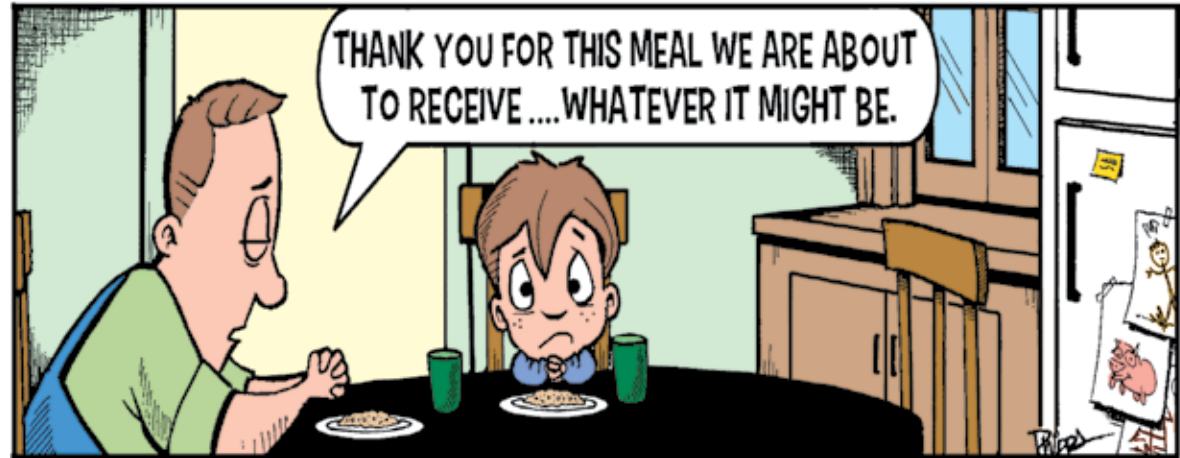


by Gary Kopervas



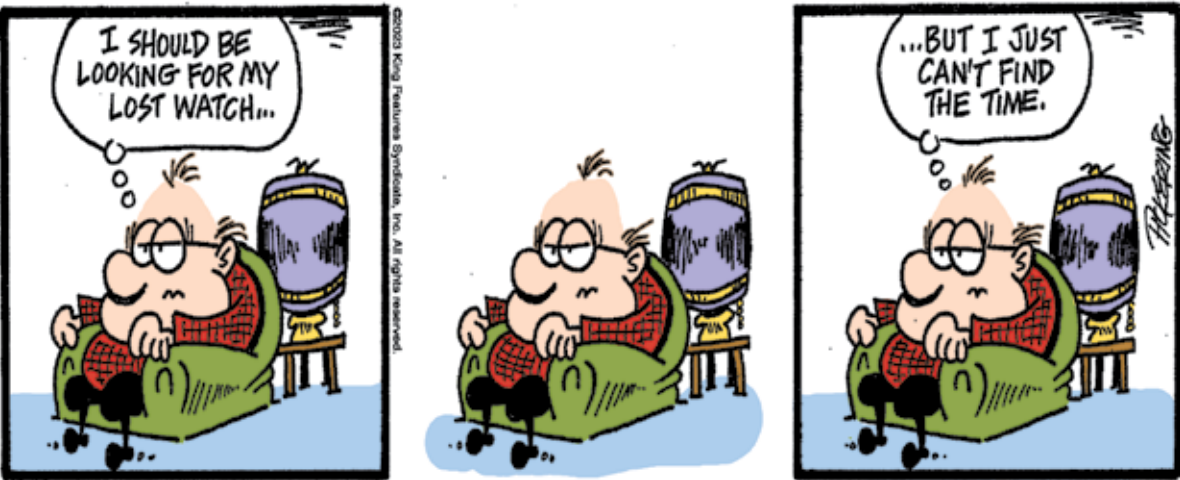
Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



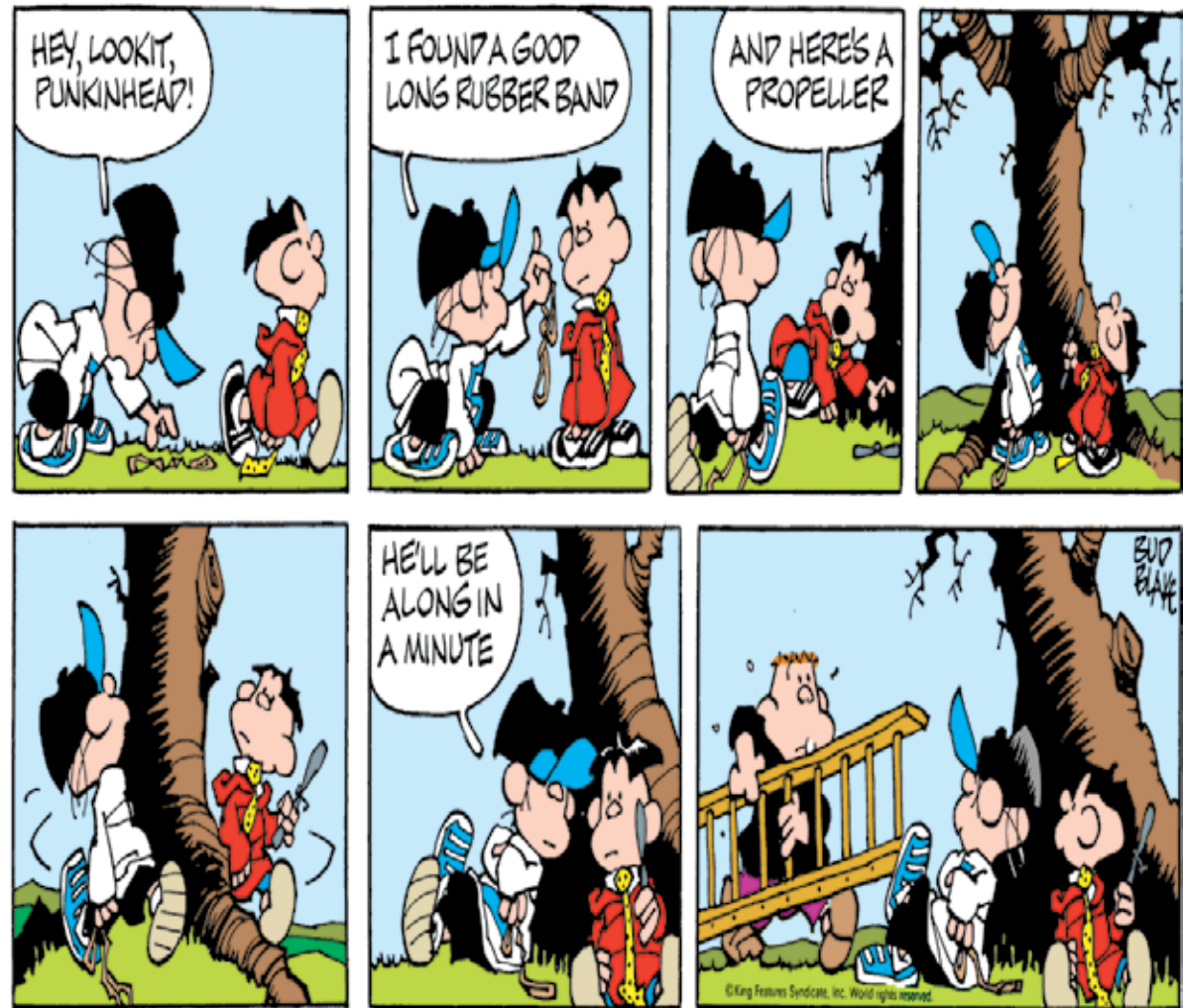
The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



Puzzles4Kids

by Helene Hovanec

RIDDLE SEARCH – CLIMATE WORDS

Look up, down, and diagonally, both forward and backward to find every word on the list. Circle each one as you find it. When all the words are circled, take the UNUSED letters and write them on the blanks below. Go from left to right and top to bottom to find the answer to this riddle: **What's the term for when it's raining turkeys and birds?**

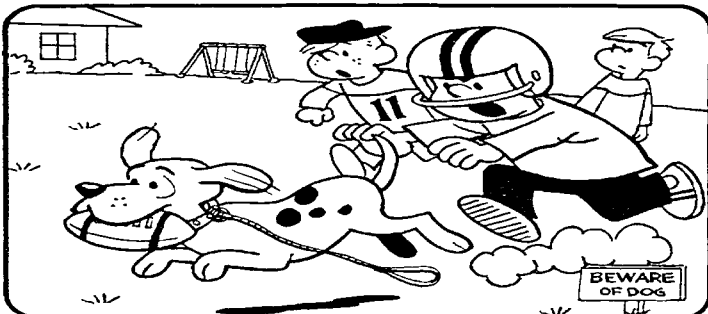
AIR MASS  
BALMY  
BLIZZARD  
CALM  
CHILLY  
CLOUDY  
COLD  
COOL  
DRY  
FAIR  
FLOOD  
FLURRY  
FOGGY  
GUST  
OZONE  
RADAR  
RAINBOW  
RAINY  
SMOG  
SNOWFALL  
THAW  
WET

S	M	O	G	Y	R	R	U	L	F
F	N	O	W	U	T	L	F	Y	O
O	Z	O	N	E	S	W	L	N	G
W	E	A	W	A	H	T	O	I	G
O	T	H	E	F	C	R	O	A	Y
B	L	I	Z	Z	A	R	D	R	L
N	F	C	O	O	L	L	D	A	L
I	A	B	A	L	M	Y	L	D	I
A	I	R	M	A	S	S	O	A	H
R	R	Y	D	U	O	L	C	R	C

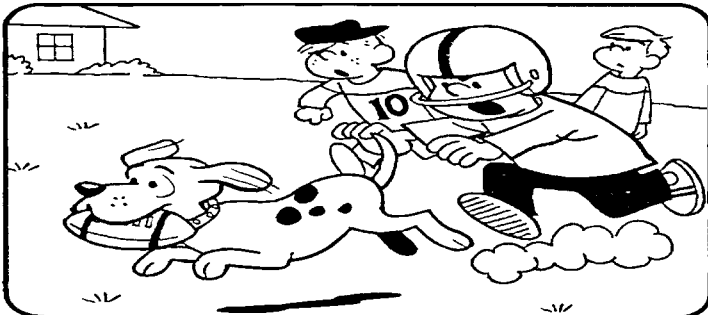
Riddle answer: \_\_\_\_\_

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

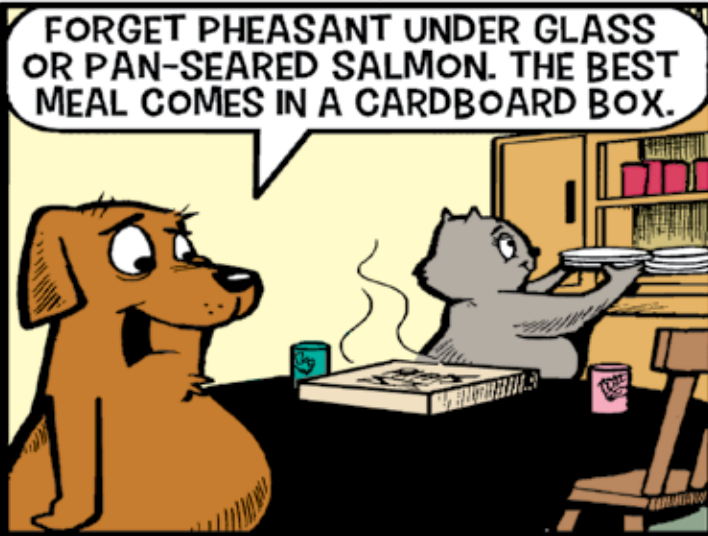


Find at least six differences in details between panels.



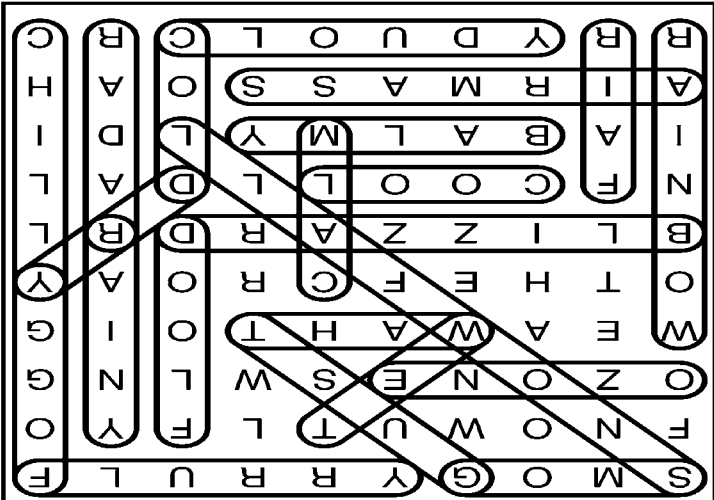
Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



Fowl weather.

Riddle Answer:







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