



New Year 2024  
New Laws



300 New Illinois laws  
for 2024

A new Illinois Municipal Code provides that an individual who is NOT A CITIZEN but is legally authorized to work in the United States under federal law is authorized to apply for the position of police officer subject to all requirements and limitations, other than citizenship, to which other applicants are subject. Effective January 1, 2024.

Minimum Wage  
Increase

In Illinois, the minimum wage will increase to \$14 an hour for non-tipped workers, \$8.40 an hour for tipped workers and \$12 an hour for youths under 18 working less than 650 hours per calendar year.

Illinois Paid Leave for  
All Workers Act

Illinois workers will now be able to take paid time off for any reason as the Illinois Paid Leave for All Workers Act goes into effect. Most employers in the state will be required to provide 40 hours of paid time off to their workers, and employees and request their days off with only seven days notice. If it's

an unplanned absence that could not be foreseen, they only need to request the time off as soon as possible.

House Bill 2245

Cracking down on car thefts and carjackings, this bill requires Illinois car manufacturers to establish a vehicle theft hotline to help locate stolen vehicles using their existing Global Positioning Systems (GPS). Car thefts and carjackings have been on the rise with data showing car thefts up 20% in 2022, compared to 2021.

Banning book bans

House Bill 2789 is a first-in-the-nation law prohibiting state funded libraries from banning or removing materials due to religious or partisan disapproval. This law is in response to the backlash in many local school districts against controversial books, particularly some championed by the LGBTQ community.

HB3924 Fentanyl Education

This bill requires high schools to teach about the dangers of fentanyl in all state-required health courses.

PERSON OF THE YEAR 2023

Time magazine has been based in New York city, since its first issue published on March 3, 1923. It was the first weekly news magazine in the United States. But, starting in March 2023, it transitioned to every other week.

Time's most famous feature throughout its history has been the annual "Person of the Year" (formerly "Man of the Year") cover story, in which Time recognizes the individual or group of individuals who have had the biggest impact on news headlines over the past 12 months. The distinction is supposed to go to the person who, "for good or ill," has most affected the course of the year; it is, therefore, not necessarily an honor or a reward. In the past, such figures as Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin have been Man of the Year. In fact, sometimes the Person of the Year isn't a person at all. The Person of the Year distinction can go to a person, but can also go to a group, an idea, or an object. For instance, the Computer was named Person of the Year in 1982 and The Endangered Earth (yes, the planet) took the honor in 1988. Ultimately, when it comes to the criteria for Person of the Year, there's apparently quite a bit of room for interpretation. Which brings us to the Person of the Year 2023 – Taylor Swift,



making her the first woman to appear twice on the cover since it began in 1927. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky was given the honor in 2022. She joins a small group of repeat designers, alongside several U.S. presidents and world leaders. Taylor Alison Swift was born on December 13, 1989 in West Reading, PA. Now, at age 34, she is a 12 time Grammy winner (3 albums of the year), 1 Prime time Emmy Award, 40 American Music Award (including Artist of the

Decade – 2010's,) 40 Billboard Music Awards and 23 MTV Video Awards. Time included her on its annual list of the 100 most influential people in 2010, 2015 and 2019. She was one of their "Silence Breakers" that the magazine spotlighted as a Person of the Year in 2017 for speaking up about sexual assault. She was everywhere in 2023 filling stadiums and breaking records. Taylor Swift has now become a billionaire at the age of 34, ranking 9th on the highest

earning entertainers of 2023. She was showered with keys to cities and street signs changed to her name. World leaders and mayors competed to bring her Eras Tour to their jurisdictions. Swift has had a Midas touch, improving the fortunes of every place she visits and business she celebrates. Just ask the NFL about its millions of new fans because of her relationship with a Kansas City Chiefs football player. If someone whom you



# Editorial & Opinions

Person Of The Year 2023  
Continued from front page

don't like happens to be chosen, remind yourself that **Time** isn't choosing the best person. They are choosing the most newsworthy person and you have to admit, Taylor Swift is definitely that. According to **Time**, Taylor Swift is **Time's** 2023 Person of the Year for spinning her story into a global legend. If only I could sing.



### Moments in time

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

- On Jan. 6, 2000, a severe flu outbreak in the United Kingdom caused National Health Service hospitals to be stretched to their limits, leaving many forced to cancel all nonemergency surgeries and facing intensive care bed shortages. The outbreak was blamed on a low rate of flu vaccinations.
- On Jan. 7, 1927, the first transatlantic telephone service was established. A three-minute call

## top ten

### AIRLINES IN THE WORLD: 2023

|                           |
|---------------------------|
| 1. Singapore Airlines     |
| 2. Qatar Airways          |
| 3. ANA All Nippon Airways |
| 4. Emirates               |
| 5. Japan Airlines         |
| 6. Turkish Airlines       |
| 7. Air France             |
| 8. Cathay Pacific         |
| 9. EVA Air                |
| 10. Korean Air            |

Source: Skytrax

### Martin Luther King Jr. Day


January 15th





- between New York and London cost about \$45, which would translate to roughly \$550 today.
- On Jan. 8, 1310, near the beginning of the Little Ice Age, when average temperatures around the world dropped by as much as 3.6 F (particularly in Europe and North America), the Thames River in London froze so thickly that bonfires were lit on it.
- On Jan. 9, 1768, British former cavalry Sergeant Major Philip Astley staged the first modern circus after discovering that if he galloped in a tight circle, centrifugal force would allow him to perform seemingly impossible acts on horseback. He drew up a ring and invited the public to watch him wave his sword in the air while riding with one foot on his saddle and one on his horse's head.
- On Jan. 10, 1845, poets Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning began the correspondence that would eventually lead to their secret courtship and marriage, which Elizabeth's father disapproved of so strongly that he disowned her. The couple then fled England for Italy, where they would live for 15 years until Barrett's death.
- On Jan. 11, 1915, Jacob Rupert and Colonel Tillinghast Huston purchased the New York Yankees for \$450,000. Rupert put up his share of the sale in cash, and within a decade had built Yankee Stadium, acquired baseball legend Babe Ruth, and won the first of the franchise's World Series titles.
- On Jan. 12, 1948, pacifist and spiritual leader Mahatma Gandhi began his final fast. Eighteen days later, he was assassinated by Hindu nationalist Nathuram Godse while on his way to address a prayer meeting.
- On Jan. 13, 1976, American inventor Ray Kurzweil and the National Federation of the Blind debuted the Kurzweil Reading Machine, the first omnifont optical character recognition system, which converts print to speech.
- On Jan. 14, 2004, the national flag of Georgia, also known as "the fivecross flag," was returned to official use for the first time in five centuries. Originally a banner of the medieval Kingdom of Georgia, it became popular again in the late 20th and early 21st centuries during the country's national revival.

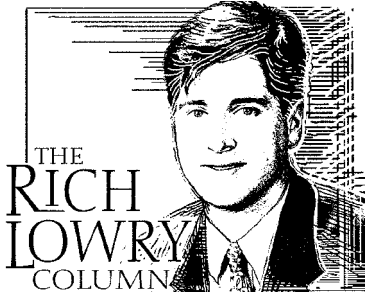
## Americanisms



"Last year's words belong to last year's language. And next year's words await another voice."

—T.S. Eliot

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### THE RICH LOWRY COLUMN

#### Where's the big immigration debate?

Do you remember the big national debate on whether the United States would adopt a policy to make the foreign share of the population the highest it's ever been?

Neither do I. For the simple reason, of course, that there wasn't one.

That doesn't mean that the policy wasn't adopted, through inertia and the Biden administration's imposition of a de facto open border for a large swath of asylum-seekers.

An analysis of Census data by Steve Camarota and his colleagues at the Center for Immigration Studies has found that a 4.5 million net increase in immigrants since Joe Biden took office has boosted the share of the foreign born to 15% , the highest ever recorded.

You know all the black-and-white photos of immigrants coming to Ellis Island, the lore about names being changed upon arrival, "your huddled masses yearning to be free"?

We are currently higher than that. We're eclipsing the Great Wave of Immigration with an even greater wave. We hit 14.8 in 1890 and 14.7 in 1910, in what were, until now, the most historic decades for immigration.

Just last month, the Census Bureau was projecting the foreign-born share of the population wouldn't hit 15% until in 2033. Now, we could keep going up from here. "If the immigrant population continues to grow," Camarota writes, "it will set new numerical and percentage records every year going forward."

A straight-line projection shows the share of foreign-born increasing to 15.5 by the end of Biden's term, and to an astonishing 17.3% by the end of a potential second term.

This is not the normal course of business. According to Camarota, the foreign-born population has grown on average by 137,000 a month since the beginning of Biden's term, higher than Donald Trump's pre-COVID-19

42,000 and Barack Obama's 68,000.

What accounts for this? Some of it is a COVID-19 bounce-back in legal immigration. But that's not responsible for the lion's share of the story. The Biden administration has boosted the foreign-born share of the population well above the pre-COVID-19 trend line.

It has done it by ignoring the law and greasing the skids for new arrivals even if they have no right to be here. Of the total net 4.5 million increase of immigrants on Biden's watch, 2.5 million of that is illegal immigrants. Most of that illegal number is solely a function of discretion and the administration's opposition to excluding bogus asylum-seekers.

The Biden administration's border policy has obviously been the subject of debate, including criticism from his own party. The overall number of immigrants, though, is rarely mentioned, and even treated as an almost illegitimate topic for public consideration.

This makes no sense. The foreign-born share of the population has consequences for schooling, welfare, wages, politics and the broader culture. It is at least as important, if not more so, than trade policy, Ukraine aid, the deficit, infrastructure or a whole host of other issues that are routine fodder for congressional debate and the Sunday shows.

It also should be subject to the approval of the American people and its representatives just like those other issues. We should affirmatively decide whether we want the foreign share of the population to be 15% and growing, or less than 15% and shrinking, and the mix of people who are coming — largely unskilled, or overwhelmingly higher skilled?

Instead, we treat immigration as something that happens to us, like the weather. (Although progressives now seek to influence the weather, so maybe this is a dated analogy.) It isn't. We are making the choices that have gotten us to this point.

The fact is that immigration has operated largely under its own power, and under false pretenses, since the immigration reform of 1965. One reason there's so little discussion of the underlying issue is that many people simply don't know the historic numbers involved.

In short, there's been no debate on 15%, and one, shamefully, doesn't seem in the offing.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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### Lakeview Newspaper

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VETERANS  
★ POST ★

by Freddy Groves

Veteran Suicides

Operation S.A.V.E. is a Department of Veterans Affairs training program designed to prevent suicide in veterans. While the program is geared for suicide-prevention coordinators, there are points that can be helpful for family and friends of veterans who might be at risk.

The initials themselves outline parts of the program:

- Signs of suicide
- Asking about suicide
- Validating feelings
- Encouraging help and expediting treatment

Those who work or live with veterans can help stop many veteran suicides. Here are some must-have resources:

- Go online and study the program that is given to VA suicide prevention coordinators. Google this title: Operation S.A.V.E.: VA Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training.
- Google “veteran suicide” and look for the PDF titled “Department of Veterans Affairs Operation SAVE Suicide Prevention.” As you scroll, don’t miss the Myths and Misinformation section, as well as the S.A.V.E steps.
- Go to [www.mentalhealth.va.gov](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov) and click “Suicide Prevention.” You’ll find a full menu of choices, including warning signs and resources.

The official guesstimate of the number of veteran suicides is 22 per day. As more people and groups read the “Suicide Data Report,” they eventually come to the conclusion that the number is low, for many reasons: Not all states participated in the survey and didn’t provide numbers. Information in some cases was provided by funeral homes (who got their information from family members) and not by the VA. Information from states with large veteran populations wasn’t used. Information wasn’t current, and so on. In other words, the problem might be even worse.

For more immediate help for yourself or someone you know, dial 988 and press 1. Or you can chat online at [www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net). Or send a text message to 838255 for free support.

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Strange  
BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- Sweden has a ski-through McDonald’s.
- The world’s most expensive perfume, Clive Christian No. 1 Passant Guardant, will set you back a cool \$143,000 for a 30 ml bottle. Of course, it does come in a flask studded with 2,000 diamonds.
- A 2018 psychology study found that millionaires who earned their wealth are moderately happier than those who inherited it.
- George Washington moved his slaves in and out of Pennsylvania every six months to avoid their taking advantage of a law whereby slaves residing in the state for longer periods could claim their freedom.
- One billion hours of video are watched on YouTube every day.
- When Peter Benchley had trouble coming up with a title for his novel “Jaws,” his dad suggested “What’s That Noshin’ on My Leg.”
- Bored with your limited supply of cuss words? Try learning Latin, which contains about 800 obscenities to English’s approximately 20 (depending on how we define the latter).
- In 1924, half of the world’s cars were made by Ford.
- Folks who have difficulty recalling someone else’s name shortly after they’ve met can blame it on the “next-in-line-effect,” or having too much anxiety about themselves and what they’ll say next to focus on the name of someone to whom they were just introduced.
- A cyberchondriac is someone who scours the internet looking for details about their illnesses.
- Actor Frankie Muniz, who starred as the titular character in the TV series “Malcolm in the Middle,” doesn’t recall his time on the show, due to multiple concussions and TIAs (transient ischemic attacks).
- Fyodor Dostoevsky wrote “The Gambler” to pay off his gambling debts.

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**Thought for the Day:** “Don’t confuse your path with your destination. Just because it’s stormy now doesn’t mean you aren’t headed for sunshine later. Don’t lose faith.” — Trent Shelton

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SENIOR  
NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Don’t Give Up

This is not the world we grew up in, or even the world we knew for much of our lives. If my informal poll of friends and acquaintances is correct, we don’t like it much. The current state of the world has taken an emotional, physical and social toll on us. This isn’t the retirement we planned.

I hear:

We’re too trusting and it gets us into trouble when we fall for scams coming to us via phone, email and the internet, and resulting in identity theft and loss of money.

The pandemic locked many of us away, and we haven’t surfaced yet because COVID is still out there, as well as the annual flu and RSV (respiratory syncytial virus) this winter. Staying home seems to be the safest way to avoid it all.

And there’s the television news. Some of us have started only watching the first five minutes to catch the weather and then turn to a different channel to avoid the political scene and crime reporting, some of which unfortunately is happening in our own areas. Channels showing reruns of retro programs are getting a lot of our attention now.

No, we don’t like it much, and some of us wonder if we’re sliding into depression.

But there are ways to regain some of what we’ve lost, and a trip to our physician might be the best first step. Go, and tell him or her what’s going on with you. A simple blood test might point to a change in diet that could help how you feel.

At the same time, he might know of some community resources, even if it’s having meals delivered.

Reconnect with friendships that matter (even if it’s on the phone), ask if the library delivers books, become a pet foster parent, look for senior exercise videos on YouTube, etc.

Don’t give up.

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KOVELS®

Antiques  
& Collecting

By Terry and Kim Kovel

Antique Taxidermy

What comes to mind when you think of Victorian antiques? Silver-plated tableware, delicate porcelain dinner services, early photographs and daguerreotypes, and souvenirs commemorating Queen Victoria herself? How about taxidermy? Decorating with preserved animals became fashionable in England by the 1850s and caught on in America in the following decades.

This taxidermy bird diorama was made about 1870. It sold for \$3,410, more than twice its high estimate. If you are interested in buying or selling antique taxidermy, check your Department of Wildlife or Fish and Game for regulations. Some species are illegal to buy or sell.

Birds were especially popular in taxidermy. Bird feathers, and sometimes entire birds, appeared on stylish hats from about 1860 to 1920. Taxidermy was seen as an art and a science. Displaying preserved animals in the home was considered a way to show both interest in nature and mastery over it. However, not everyone approved of the trend. Opposition to hunting and killing birds in mass quantities led to the creation of the Massachusetts Audubon Society 1896. The name came from an earlier society founded by a student of wildlife illustrator John James Audubon’s widow. Similar groups appeared in other states and the National Audubon Society was formed in 1905. It is still operating today.

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**Q:** Years ago, I was given a 3-cent postage machine with a hand crank that was used in drug stores during the war years. It gives three stamps for a dime and was distributed by H.M. Branson Distributing Company, 2nd Street, Louisville, Kentucky. I’d like to know what it’s worth.

A: The first class postage rate was 3 cents from July 6, 1932, until Aug. 1, 1958. It was also the rate during World War I, from Nov. 2, 1917, to July 1, 1919. We found advertisements listing



Taxidermy birds were fashionable in the 19th century. Opposition to the trend led to conservation movements that still exist today.

the H.M. Branson Distributing Company as a distributor of Rock-Ola phonographs and Bally pinball machines in the late 1940s to the late 1960s. Any coin-operated machine sells. Vintage postage machines sell for about \$100. If rare, they sell for more.

\*\*\*\*

TIP: Clean the feathers on a stuffed bird with chunks of fresh white bread. After cleaning, spray lightly with hair spray.

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**CURRENT PRICES**

*Doorstop*, cat, lying down on oval rug, cast iron, black, green eyes, Albany Foundry, No. 77, 3 1/2 x 7 1/2 inches, \$585.

*Toy*, motorcycle, camouflage pattern, military man rider in uniform, leather strap with rifle, Union Cord on tires, key wind, siren, Arnold, 7 inches, \$925.

*Salt and pepper shakers*, sterling silver, frog form, textured backs, marked, Tiffany & Co., 1967, 2 x 2 inches, pair, \$1,375.

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

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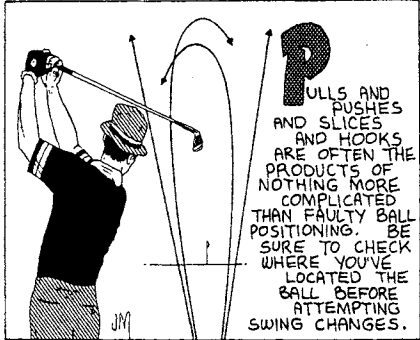


1. Who won the women’s gold medal at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships eight consecutive times from 1998-2005?
2. What player, nicknamed the “Latvian Laser,” made his NBA debut with the San Antonio Spurs in 2016?
3. Name the actor who starred as diminutive golf instructor Derk Dorf in the 1987 comedy short “Dorf on Golf.”
4. What wide receiver, the New England Patriots’ first-round NFL Draft pick in 1989, had his career cut short by a twice-broken kneecap from football and an eye injury from a bar fight?
5. Poland’s Anita Wlodarczyk is a three-time Olympic gold medalist in what track and field event?
6. Heisman Trophy winners Larry Kelley (1936) and Clint Frank (1937) both played for what college football team?
7. What two NHL teams combined for 11 ejections and 252 penalty minutes in a fight-filled 1984 playoff game known as “The Good Friday Massacre”?

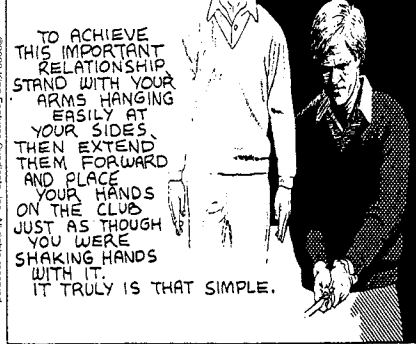
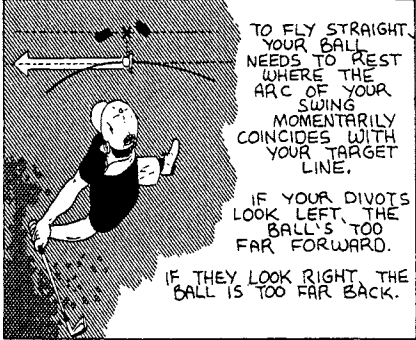
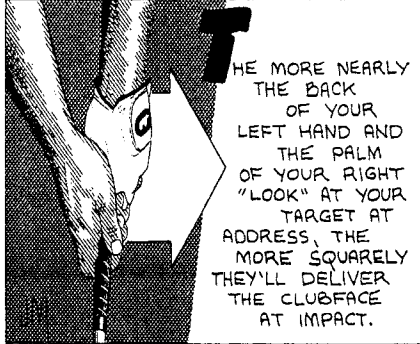
Answers

- Michelle Kwan.
- Davis Bertans.
- Tim Conway.
- Hart Lee Dykes.
- The hammer throw.
- The Yale Bulldogs.
- The Quebec Nordiques and Montreal Canadiens.

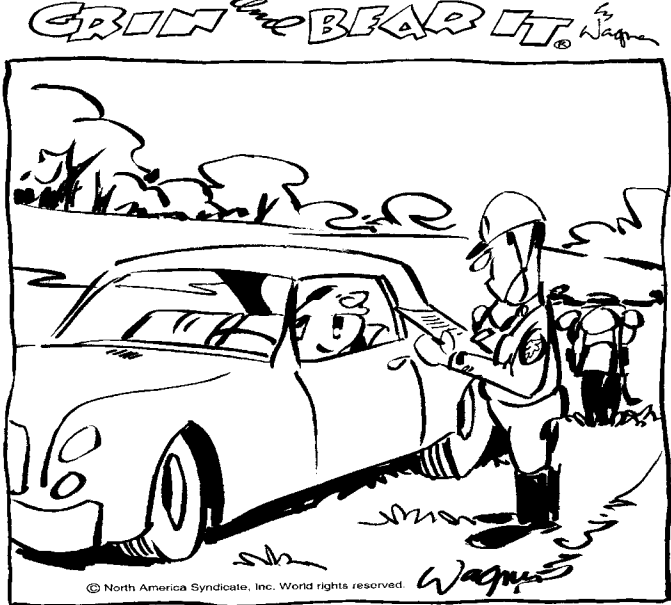
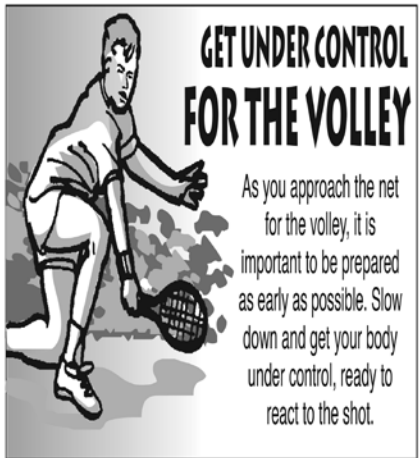
Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



STAN SMITH’S TENNIS CLASS



“I was a designated driver New Year’s Eve. Don’t I get credit for it?”

LAFF - A - DAY



“Don’t even say hello to him, Evelyn—he’s in no mood for it.”

# Health



## Ampullary Cancer Treatment Can Include Chemo Prior to Surgery

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** My husband was diagnosed with ampullary cancer. He has a tumor the size of a marble. We are told this is an aggressive cancer. My concern is that they are giving him chemotherapy before the Whipple surgery. Is this standard practice? — P.T.

**ANSWER:** The ampulla of Vater is an opening in the duodenum (the first segment of the small intestine), where the common bile duct releases bile and pancreatic enzymes to aid digestion. A cancer of the ampulla can originate from the pancreas, bile duct or duodenum, and these can all be aggressive cancers.

The standard approach in people with the possibility to be cured is called a pancreaticoduodenectomy, otherwise known as the Whipple procedure. Although this is a complex surgery that used to have a high mortality rate, the risk of death from the procedure in specialized centers is now about 1%.

Most people are familiar with getting chemotherapy after surgery to help remove any cancer cells that remain, a technique called “adjuvant therapy.” However, giving chemotherapy before surgery (“neoadjuvant chemotherapy”) has increasingly been used in people with ampullary cancer. The idea is to shrink the tumor to make it easier for the surgeon to remove completely. Chemotherapy may also kill any cancer cells that have already spread.

The decision of when to use chemotherapy depends on the individual’s situation, so I can’t tell you which would be better in your husband’s case, as I lack both the details of his tumor and the ex-

pertise. I can confirm that giving chemotherapy prior to surgery is being used in regards to ampullary cancer.

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**DEAR DR. ROACH:** I am 22. I had an electrocardiogram (EKG) last year, which indicated an incomplete right bundle branch block and early repolarization of the ventricles.

Are these two related to each other? Are they serious to any extent, since I don’t have any symptoms? How can my heart rate be normal if the ventricles repolarize early? — B.A.N.

**ANSWER:** Both early repolarization and an incomplete right bundle branch block are common findings in young people who are getting EKGs, usually as part of a school physical and often as an evaluation for athletes. Depolarization of the heart muscle is seen on the surface electrocardiogram and corresponds to the contraction of the ventricle (called the QRS waves). The muscle cells must then “repolarize” — that is, restore their electrical potential to get ready for the next contraction.

Early repolarization is a normal variant where the ventricle gets electrically ready for the next beat faster than average. In fact, one way to be sure that the EKG finding really does signify early repolarization is to put the person on a treadmill to raise their heart rate. The early repolarization will then go away, since faster repolarization is appropriate for a quicker heartbeat.

About 15% of young athletes with early repolarization will also have an incomplete right bundle branch block, which represents slowing of the electrical impulses within the ventricles and a widening of the QRS complex.

Fortunately, these findings almost never represent serious disease in people without any symptoms.

## Patient With PBC Needs Calcium Supplements Amid Normal Levels

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** I am a 60-year-old female who was diagnosed with primary biliary cholangitis (PBC) in 2020. At the time, I had a bone density scan that showed osteopenia of the left femoral neck with a T-score of -1.3. My 10-year risk of any fracture was 6.9%, while my risk for hip fractures was 0.5

%. My hepatologist wants me to take a calcium supplement, even though my calcium level has always been normal. I have always been over-weight and led a very sedentary way of life. I had vitamin D tests done yearly, but the deficiency was, negligently, never addressed by my doctors.

So my first question is, do I really need to take this supplement? I am concerned that too much calcium may do more harm than good, and my osteopenia may not have been caused by my PBC.

The other question is, would taking vitamin K2 along with vitamin D and calcium help absorb vitamin D better so that it would not accumulate in my kidneys and damage them in the process? — R.Z.

**ANSWER:**PBC is an autoimmune disease where the body attacks the bile ducts. Without treatment, it can cause loss of the bile ducts, eventually leading to cirrhosis and liver failure. Since ursodeoxycholic acid has been available, fortunately the majority of people with this condition have a normal life expectancy. Few develop cirrhosis.

A lesser-known complication of PBC is osteopenia and osteoporosis. There are several theories as to why this occurs, including decreased growth factors and toxicity to bone-producing cells. Low vitamin D and, possibly, vitamin K2 may play a role as well.

It’s important for all people with osteopenia or osteoporosis to have adequate calcium in their diets. Calcium blood tests are not a reliable indicator of calcium stores in the body, since inadequate calcium intake will cause the body to take calcium out of the bones so that the blood levels remain normal. You can be severely deficient in calcium and dangerously osteoporotic with normal calcium blood levels.

Ensuring adequate dietary calcium then becomes of the utmost importance. If you aren’t getting 1,000-1,200 mg of calcium in your diet, then changing your diet to add more or taking a supplement is recommended. Kidney stones are a complication of calcium supplementation, and there is controversy surrounding whether the calcification of blood vessels is more likely in people who take calcium supplements. For these reasons, dietary calcium is preferred, if possible.

Many people with osteoporosis need supplemental vitamin D to keep their blood levels in the recommended range,

which is 30-48 ng/mL (75-120 nmol/L) for a person with PBC and osteopenia, in my opinion. Although studies in Japan have shown benefit when using vitamin K2 supplementation in people with osteoporosis, I don’t generally recommend it, based on multiple other studies that failed to produce a benefit.

However, for bone disease associated with PBC in particular, K2 is reasonable for those who wish to try it. Vitamin K2 works through its mineralization effect on the bone itself. By carefully monitoring vitamin D blood levels, you can avoid the unusual complication of vitamin D excess.

Finally, becoming less sedentary will help, even if it’s walking an extra 10-20 minutes a day.

## Estrace Cream Is Safe to Use in Woman Who Had Melanoma

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** I am a 70-year-old woman who has been using Estrace vaginal cream weekly for several years. I am in excellent health, work out daily, run half-marathons and have my own business. I take 10 mg of atorvastatin daily. Ten years ago, I had melanoma removed from my arm.

My concern is the use of Estrace. My gynecologist recommended that I use it after a Pap smear, but my primary care physician is not of the same mind. I would appreciate your opinion on this. My mother had breast cancer in her 80s, my sister had uterine cancer, and my brother passed away from bladder cancer. — C.S.

**ANSWER:** As far as the safety of using estradiol (Estrace), the bioidentical hormone to major natural estrogen, I am definitely of the same opinion as your gynecologist. When used topically, it works on the vulva and the lining of the vagina, keeping the tissue healthy.

Without estrogen, the tissues that line the female perineum can become atrophic (thinned), predisposing a woman to discomfort, infections and incontinence. The Pap smear may have resulted in a finding that was suggestive of vaginal atrophy (increased neutrophils). Without treatment, the labia can even fuse together.

With long-term use, the estrogen levels in the body are only slightly higher in women who use topical estrogen compared to those who do not, so the absorption into the body is minimal. The only

case where I get concerned is with someone who has a personal history of an estrogen-sensitive tumor, such as endometrial cancer and some breast cancers. In those cases, I discuss options with both the patient and their oncologist.

\*\*\*

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** Are you aware of any correlation between celiac disease and restless legs syndrome (RLS)? My 72-year-old husband has had RLS for decades. He currently takes gabapentin and pramipexole, but still has symptoms. Plus, he has periodic limb movement disorder (PLMD), which occurs while he’s asleep. He isn’t aware of it, but it can keep me awake; we sleep in separate beds when it gets bad. — C.S.

**ANSWER:** The terminology can be confusing. Most people with RLS have periodic limb movements of sleep (PLMS), which sound very similar to your husband’s symptom. PLMD is a separate sleep issue that doesn’t include other RLS features, such as an uncomfortable sensation in the legs while they’re at rest that causes an urge to move them. A person with RLS often has PLMS, but doesn’t have PLMD.

There is an increased risk of RLS among people with celiac disease. Most authorities tie these two together through iron deficiency. Unless celiac disease is managed with meticulous attention to diet, the body has difficulty absorbing iron.

Iron deficiency is very frequently found in people with RLS, and iron deficiency makes RLS worse. The diagnosis of iron deficiency needs to be made carefully because most people with RLS and iron deficiency do not have anemia. A ferritin level, rather than a blood count test, is the best initial test. If he does have iron deficiency, then treatment with iron supplementation can sometimes dramatically improve those nighttime symptoms.

*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

**What is an annuity?**

An annuity is an insurance product that works as an investment tool by paying out a fixed amount of money over a certain term.

**What are the most common types of annuities?**

Annuities fall into two broad categories: fixed and variable.

Fixed annuities provide a guaranteed return and don’t correlate with the stock market. So if a company guarantees a specific return,

you’ll get that return or more on your money. There is no stock market risk with a fixed annuity.

Variable annuities are the opposite: The interest rate fluctuates and they correlate with the stock market. Because variable annuities involve risk, there is the potential to lose money.

**How do annuities work?**

An individual contributes to the annuity either with a lump sum or through payments. The money is invested by the annuity provid-

er and grows over time by earning interest.

**Why do people use annuities?**

To provide income. People who want to ensure they have cash flow during retirement may use an annuity to guarantee a set amount of money each month. Annuities can also pass along directly from the insurance company to the beneficiaries, avoiding the probate process.

**What’s the difference between an annuity**

**and a life insurance policy?**

One buys a life insurance policy to provide a tax-free lump sum benefit for a beneficiary upon the policyholder’s death. An annuity can provide income to the investor during their lifetime, typically to help with retirement.

**Do you need to be retirement age to purchase an annuity?**

No. You can access up to 10% of the amount each year without a surrender

charge. Both qualified and non-qualified annuities require you to be age 59.5 before withdrawing funds. If you withdraw before that, the IRS imposes a 10% tax penalty on earnings.

Selecting an annuity is often based on your financial situation. If you’re looking for a safe, steady growth investment, then a fixed annuity can be smart. If you have a higher risk tolerance, then a variable annuity is for you.





Photo courtesy of Shutterstock

# Self-Care for a Successful NEW YEAR

**FAMILY FEATURES**

Resolving to commit to better self-care can happen any time of the year, but there’s something about the calendar flipping to a new year that signals a fresh start. It’s the perfect starting point for new habits and a new approach to protecting your overall wellness.

Self-care takes many forms. Maintaining a well-balanced diet and getting plenty of exercise are some ways to promote your physical health. So is taking good care of your body’s largest organ: your skin. When it comes to mental health, getting organized is a surprisingly effective way to manage stress and keep your goals on track so you feel a sense of accomplishment.

Start working toward a new year where your wellness is front and center with these ideas for simplifying and personalizing your journey. Look for more lifestyle advice and helpful wellness tips at [eLivingtoday.com](http://eLivingtoday.com).



**Plan for Success in the New Year**

Give yourself a boost toward tackling this year’s goals by getting organized. A planner can help you keep important information at your fingertips while making it easy to keep tabs on appointments, deadlines and more. You can even track progress against new habits or journal your way toward a healthier diet. Some people prefer physical planners they can write in and update manually while others find a digital version in a smart device is more convenient.



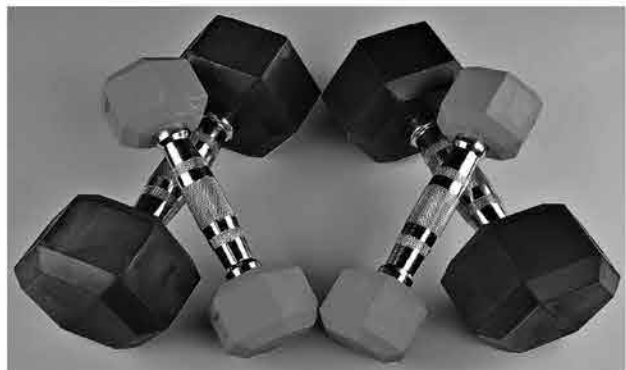
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Eating whole grains has never been this easy or tasty. Convenient and ready in just 10 minutes, Minute Rice’s Instant Brown Rice and Rice & Quinoa are must-haves for busy families. For those in need of an on-the-go option, Minute Rice Cups, including Brown Rice, Brown & Wild Rice, Brown Rice & Quinoa, Multi-Grain Medley and Jasmine Rice & Red Quinoa, are ready in just 60 seconds. Start the year off right and discover more time-saving solutions at [MinuteRice.com](http://MinuteRice.com).



**Make Skin Care a Personal Priority**

Your skin tells an important story about your overall health. Protecting it from harsh elements and sun damage can help ensure your skin stays supple and strong, providing the barrier it’s meant to as it protects the rest of your body. Even seemingly minor irritations like dry skin can be problematic as scratching or cracking can lead to wounds and infection. Rely on a regular moisturizer and be conscious of applying sunscreen whenever you’ll be outdoors.



**Introduce Weights for Your Workout**

Whether you’ve hit a plateau or you’re just bored with your workout, adding dumbbells can introduce a whole new dimension by helping build muscle and burn more fat. Rotating muscle groups lets you give your muscles a chance to recover between workouts. The options are nearly endless, so think about how you’ll use them, where you’ll store them, whether shape or color matters and how much you want to spend.



**Put Your Best Foot Forward**

If stepping up your fitness game is part of your plan for 2024, be sure to start on the right foot with the right footwear for the job. Runners in particular should be conscious of quality shoes. Look for ample cushion, comfortable ankle support, overall quality construction and a snug fit that gives your toes some wiggle room. Even slight variations can affect your comfort, so trying on different options is likely your best path toward finding the perfect fit.



**Prepare for Healthier Eating Habits**

Portion control is a common challenge when you kick off a healthier eating plan. One way to keep your meals on the modest side is preparing them ahead of time. Meal prep containers make it easy to have freshly prepared foods in moderate portions ready whenever you’re ready to eat. Look for compartments that let you enjoy a main dish and at least one side, and be sure the containers seal tightly to keep food fresh and prevent leaks.



FLASHBACK

POP, ROCK & SOUL TRIVIA

BY MICK HARPER

1. Name the girl group that had a No. 1 hit with “Will You Love Me Tomorrow?”

2. Who released “The Name Game”?

3. What was the first song Tom Jones released that topped the charts?

4. Who wrote “Give Peace a Chance”?

5. Name the song that contains this lyric: “In the crowd of a million people I’ll find my valentine, And then I’ll climb to the highest steeple and tell the world he’s mine.”

Answers

1. The Shirelles, in 1960. The Satin-tones came back with an answer song called “Tomorrow and Always,” borrowing the original melody, but they forgot to credit the songwriters.

2. Shirley Ellis in 1964. The song, also called “The Banana Song,” used nonsense words and syllables to make changes to someone’s name.

3. “It’s Not Unusual,” in 1965. It was the second song he’d ever released. Several other artists quickly released covers, including The Dells and Brenda Lee.

4. Former Beatle John Lennon, in 1969.

5. “Where the Boys Are,” by Connie Francis in 1961. The song was used as the theme song in the 1961 film of the same name. Francis eventually recorded the song in six other languages.

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

• In 1837, Thomas Saverland took Caroline Newton to court for biting off part of his nose after he forcibly kissed her at a party.

• The original Xbox had sound snippets of real space missions.

• Korean college students once launched a protest against the amount of air in potato chip bags by building a raft out of them and sailing it across a river.

• When Michael Orchard broke into his neighbor’s burning home to rescue their dog, his heart was in the right place but his timing wasn’t: The house fire was merely his LSD-induced hallucination.

• Frozen cow manure was the first-ever puck used in a hockey game.

• The word “thug” comes from 1350s India and the Hindi word “thag,” which means “deceiver” or “thief” or “swindler.”

• Ten thousand light years away from Earth, a huge cloud 1,000 times larger than our solar system’s diameter contains enough alcohol to fill 400 trillion pints. To drink it all, everyone on Earth would have to drink 300,000 pints each day for 1 billion years.

• A violin known as “the Blackbird,” carved entirely from stone, produces sound comparable to traditional wooden violins.

• Research has shown that people born in September, October and November are more likely to live 100 years or longer.

• French performer Michel Lotito, aka “Monsieur Mangetout,” or “Mr. Eat All,” could hardly be accused of being a picky eater, having earned a Guinness World Record for strangest diet. His gastronomic feats included downing bicycles, razor blades and even an entire airplane.

• Much like humans, chimpanzees use strategic high ground for reconnaissance on rival groups during “chimp warfare.”

\*\*\*

Thought for the Day:

“Every day the clock resets. Your wins don’t matter. Your failures don’t matter. Don’t stress on what was, fight for what could be.”

— Sean Higgins

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top 10 movies

1. **Wonka**  
(PG) Timothée Chalamet, Gustave Die

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

3. **The Boy and the Heron**  
(PG-13) Soma Santoki, Masaki Suda

4. **Godzilla Minus One**  
(PG-13) Minami Hamabe, Ryunosuke Kamiki

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

6. **Wish**  
(PG) Ariana DeBose, Chris Pine

7. **Napoleon**  
(R) Joaquin Phoenix, Vanessa Kirby

8. **Renaissance: A Film by Beyoncé**  
(NR) Beyoncé, Blue Ivy Carter

9. **Poor Things**  
(R) Emma Stone, Mark Ruffalo

10. **The Shift**  
(PG-13) Kristoffer Polaha, Neal McDonough

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top ten

Highest-Earning Entertainers OF 2023

1. Genesis.....\$230 million

2. Sting.....\$210 million

3. Tyler Perry.....\$175 million

4. Trey Parker & Matt Stone.....\$160 million

5. James L. Brooks & Matt Groening.....\$105 million

6. Brad Pitt.....\$100 million

7. Rolling Stones.....\$98 million

8. James Cameron.....\$95 million

9. Taylor Swift.....\$92 million

10. Bad Bunny.....\$88 million

Source: Forbes

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COUCH THEATER

BY DEMI TAVERAS

“Barbie” (PG-13) — The highest-grossing film of 2023, clocking in at \$1.4 billion, is finally out on streaming! Margot Robbie stars as the titular character in director Greta Gerwig’s fourth feature film, opposite a very sassy Ryan Gosling as none other than Ken. The film follows Barbie in Barbieland as she experiences an existential crisis after waking up one day and no longer being “stereotypically perfect.” With the help of Ken, Barbie travels to the real world in an attempt to find the child who’s playing with her — her “owner,” if you will — so that she can return to her perfectly pink life. So far, its director, lead actress and supporting actor are all nominated for Golden Globes, and the film itself is nominated in the Best Motion Picture and Cinematic and Box Office Achievement categories. With the cultural movement that “Barbie” became this summer, the last nomination should be theirs for the taking! (Max)

“Saltburn” (R) — “The Banshees of Inisherin” star Barry Keoghan jumps into the role of Oliver Quick, a misunderstood, straight-edge student at Oxford University who struggles to fit in with his classmates. After a coincidental meeting with a popular student named Felix (Jacob Elordi), Oliver becomes fast friends with Felix and eventually gets invited to spend the summer at Felix’s family estate, called Saltburn. The estate is buzzing with bizarre characters who filter in and out of the lavish property, including fellow Oxford student Farleigh

(Archie Madekwe) and family friend Pamela (Carey Mulligan). As the summer comes to an end, Oliver realizes that the life he enjoyed at Saltburn is the only life he wants to live. Out now, this psychological thriller is director Emerald Fennell’s sophomore film, her debut being “Promising Young Woman,” which also features Mulligan. (Prime Video)

“Beau Is Afraid” (R) — Directed by Ari Aster (“Midsommar”), this film features Oscar winner Joaquin Phoenix — and got Phoenix his seventh Golden Globe nomination. He plays Beau, the son of a wealthy businesswoman named Mona, who grew up to become a very anxious, accident-prone adult. Beau receives news that his mother died in an accident as he was on his way to visit her, and as if his astronomically bad luck couldn’t possibly get worse, he gets into an accident himself after hearing the news. While the date of his mother’s funeral looms closer, all of his plans to get there goes awry, and Beau surrenders to a series of trippy experiences that push him to let out the grief and guilt surrounding him. With an ensemble cast of Patti LuPone, Nathan Lane, Michael Gandolfini and more, this surrealist horror film is out now, after a disappointing box-office release. (Paramount+)

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Barry Keoghan, left, and Archie Madekwe star in “Saltburn.”

Courtesy of Prime Video

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Now here's a tip!

• Before you use your grater to grate cheese, give it a quick shot of nonstick spray. It will keep the cheese from gunking up in the grate. If you need softened butter for a recipe, you can grate it from frozen and it will soften up very quickly, but not melt like in a microwave.

• Eliminate odor of peanut butter after you wash the jar by rinsing it with white vinegar. I use peanut butter jars for storing things in my shop because they are a good size and the twist off top is very secure. One time, the jar smelled like peanut butter and I guess a mouse decided he'd like to get a taste. I found the gnawed-on jar on my outside workbench. Luckily, there wasn't anything in it. — T.E. in Georgia

• I have found a new way to grocery shop and stay on budget. I use my calculator as I am going through, and add up as I go. Once I hit my budget, I can't get anything else,

so I have learned to get the things I really need first (most of them on the perimeter of the store), then shop the aisles for other things. I have stayed on budget for two months, when before I had been going over budget a lot! — E.O. in Oregon

• Clean your cellphone screen often. This is especially important if you have a smartphone. We use our fingers nonstop to touch the phone, then put it directly up to our face. It's a germ's paradise. Just remember: A quick swipe with an alcohol cloth might save you from getting the flu this season. Stay healthy!

• When heater season is in full effect — like now — I keep a spray bottle of water to which I add two tablespoons of liquid fabric softener. I spritz the house from time to time, and it will add humidity as well as a pleasant scent, but it also keeps my carpets from making my kids little zappers (from static buildup when dragging their feet!). — M.A. in Ohio

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



# What’s Hot In Hollywood

HOLLYWOOD — The long-awaited third sequel to “Beverly Hills Cop” adds “Axel Foley” to its title and has completed shooting for a 2024 release by Netflix. **Eddie Murphy**, **Judge Reinhold**, **Paul Reiser**, **John Ashton** and **Bronson Pinchot** are back in their original roles, plus **Kevin Bacon** and **Joseph Gordon-Levitt** as new additions.

**Jerry Bruckheimer**, who produced the original film and the first sequel, has been trying to get Murphy on board again for years, and it was worth the effort, considering the profits for the three “Beverly Hills Cop” films (1984, 1987 and 1994) were \$735 million. That translates into \$1 billion in profits today. Netflix hasn’t said if it’ll have a theatrical release or hit their streaming platform straightaway.

\*\*\*

Also getting a reboot is “The Karate Kid,” which has **Jackie Chan** stepping into the shoes of the late **Pat Morita** to star opposite **Ralph Macchio’s** Daniel LaRusso. Chan previously played Mr. Han (based on Mr. Miyagi) to **Jaden Smith’s** “Karate Kid” in 2010.

\*\*\*

This year’s Oscar winner for Best Actor, **Brendan Fraser** (for “The Whale”), who is currently starring in “Killers of the Flower Moon,” has chosen his next project. He’ll play a down-and-out actor living in Tokyo who gets hired as the token American for a Japanese rental-family company, which takes him on an unexpected trip of self-discovery through the roles that he plays in other people’s lives. It’s filming in Japan and is called (what else?) ... “Rental Family.”

\*\*\*

**Tim Allen** and **Tom Hanks** are in serious talks with Disney for “Toy Story 5,” even though Allen said, “You wonder if four was too many; is five too much?” But “Toy Story’s” screen-writer promises, “If I didn’t get this right, I wouldn’t do it.”

Before you run to tell your kids, you should know that it’ll take somewhere between 2026 and 2028 to be released.

\*\*\*

**Brad Pitt** is fulfilling his fantasy of being a Formula 1 race car driver in an upcoming film. **Jerry Bruckheimer** is also producing this untitled action-drama, co-starring **Javier Bardem**. Pitt plays a former racer who had a horrible crash and is brought out of retirement by Bardem to mentor a rookie prodigy.

\*\*\*

No one is talking over at 20th Century Studios or Disney about why they suddenly decided to farm out “The Bikeriders,” starring “Elvis” Oscar nominee **Austin Butler**. It was scheduled to open Dec. 1 in theaters after several stops on the fall film festival circuit, including Telluride, but Disney abruptly took it off their calendar and shifted it over to Fo-



Courtesy of Paramount Pictures  
**Eddie Murphy as Axel Foley in “Beverly Hills Cop III” (1994)**

cus Features for release early next year.

The film, which also stars **Jodie Comer** and **Tom Hardy**, will not qualify for the upcoming Oscar deadline. Maybe Disney was worried because ... “Elvis has left the building!”

HOLLYWOOD — **Sir Michael Caine**, who has now officially retired at 90 (his last film being “The Great Escaper” with the late **Glenda Jackson**), confirmed to the BBC: “I keep saying I’m going to retire. Well, I am now. I figured I’ve had a picture where I’ve played the lead and got incredible reviews.”

He continued, “The only parts I’m liable to get now are 90-year-old men. Or maybe 85. I thought, well, I might as well leave with all this. What have I got to do to beat this?” After over 160 films, he deserves to enjoy the fruits of his labor!

\*\*\*

**Bryan Cranston** has also announced that he will be taking a hiatus from acting in 2026, stating: “It’s not going to be like, ‘Oh, I’ll read and see what I’m going to do.’ No, it’s a pause. It’s a stop. I won’t be thinking about [work]. I’m not going to be taking phone calls.” He plans to live in France with his wife in a small village and pursue gardening.

Cranston, who at 67 has been in 67 films and 96 TV episodes, will be seen in the Apple TV+ three-film franchise “Argylle,” with **Henry Cavill**, **Bryce Dallas Howard**, **Catherine O’Hara**, **Ariana DeBose**, **John Cena** and **Samuel L. Jackson**, due Feb. 2, 2024. In addition, Cranston is currently completing “Everything’s Going to Be Great,” with **Allison Janney**, **Simon Rex**

and **Chris Cooper**.

\*\*\*

But the real shocker is that **Nicolas Cage** is the actor who truly plans to call it quits! He revealed, “I may have three or four more movies left in me. I thought, ‘Okay, my dad died at 75. I’m going to be turning 60. If I’m lucky, I have maybe a good 15 years and hopefully more.’ ... It occurred very clearly to me that I want to spend time with my family.”

Cage has two sons — **Weston** (32) and **Kal-El** (18, named after Superman). With wife **Riko Shibata**, he also has a daughter, **August Francesca**, born last year. Among his five wives were **Patricia Arquette** and **Lisa Marie Presley**. He’s also the nephew of **Francis Ford Coppola**.

Cage’s most memorable films were “The Rock” (1996); “Con Air” (1997); “Face/Off” (1997); “City of Angels” (1998); the “National Treasure” franchise (2004-07); the “Ghost Rider” films (2007-11) and over 100 more films. Cage was nominated twice for an Oscar, winning Best Actor for “Leaving Las Vegas” (1995) and nabbing a nomination for “Adaption” (2002), opposite **Meryl Streep** and **Chris Cooper** (who won for Best Supporting Actor).

Cage’s upcoming film releases are: the horror thriller “Long Legs,” with **Alicia Witt** and **Blair Underwood**; the action-horror film “Arcadian,” opposite 20-year-old **Jaeden Martell** and 18-year-old **Maxwell Jenkins**; and the Australian-Irish psychological thriller “The Surfer.” When your next three upcoming films are described as “action, horror and thriller,” maybe it’s time to break out of the “Cage” and do a rom-com or musical! Merry Christmas, everyone!



Depositphotos  
**Nicolas Cage (Upcoming in “Long Legs”)**

## celebrity extra

by Dana Jackson



Depositphotos  
**Andre Braugher (“Homicide: Life on the Street”)**

If **Frasier** gets renewed for another season, perhaps **Pierce** and **Leeves** will pop in for a guest appearance like **Bebe Neuwirth** (Lilith) and **Peri Gilpin** (Roz) did this year.

\*\*\*

**Q:** I’m enjoying the new series about **Cary Grant**. **Jason Isaacs**, the actor who plays him when he’s older, looks so much like him. Is he related to **Oscar Isaac**? — **W.W.**

**A:** No, they’re not related. Their last names differ by one letter. **Jason Isaacs** is also a Brit, while **Oscar Isaac** (of “Star Wars” fame) grew up in Miami.

**Blue-eyed Isaacs** is sporting what look to be brown contact lenses and black frames to play **Cary Grant** in the limited series “**Archie**,” which you can stream on **BritBox**. The show gets its title from Grant’s birth name, **Archibald Alec Leach**. It chronicles his life in Hollywood, where he meets and marries actress **Dyan Cannon** (“**Heaven Can Wait**”).

You might recognize **Isaacs** from his other credits, including **Lucius Malfoy** from the “**Harry Potter**” movies, **Colin Ayres** from “**The West Wing**” and **Capt. Lorca** in “**Star Trek: Discovery**.”

Send me your questions at [NewCelebrityExtra@gmail.com](mailto:NewCelebrityExtra@gmail.com), or write me at **KFWs, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803**.

**Q:** Is the acclaimed series “**Homicide**” available to stream anywhere? I’ve looked on all the major ones like **Netflix** and **Amazon** and can’t find it. — **K.S.**

**A:** NBC’s “**Homicide: Life on the Street**” isn’t available to stream yet, but according to an article on **TVLine.com**, that could change soon. The series aired in the 1990s and starred **Yaphet Kotto**, **Richard Belzer**, **Melissa Leo** and **Andre Braugher**. **Braugher** recently passed away at the age of 61 after battling lung cancer. His untimely death has fans inquiring why “**Homicide**,” the show that launched his career, isn’t available to stream anywhere. In addition to its incredible acting,

“**Homicide**” was known for its dramatic montages set to music. Securing the rights to air these songs, instead of dubbing them in with other music, has been a huge goal of **NBC** and **Universal**. It’ll be well worth the wait once the show can be seen and heard as it originally aired.

\*\*\*

**Q:** Why isn’t the actor who played **Niles** in the new “**Frasier**” reboot? Is he going to show up anytime soon? — **K.J.**

**A:** Unfortunately, the new “**Frasier**” series, which is streaming exclusively on **Paramount+**, is missing a few memorable supporting characters. **Kelsey Grammer** is, of course, reprising his iconic comedy character of **Frasier Crane**, which he originated on “**Cheers**” before the character moved to **Seattle** and got his own series. But there’s no **Niles**, **Martin** or **Daphne**.

Sadly, **John Mahoney** passed away from throat cancer in 2018. **David Hyde Pierce** and **Jane Leeves** are both alive and well, but their characters, **Niles** and **Daphne**, are not a part of the new cast. **Pierce** recently told the **Los Angeles Times** that he had several other projects in the works and that he “never really wanted to go back” to “**Frasier**.” He further explained that he “loved every moment” of doing the original series, but that he wanted to do other things.

Those things include co-starring in the lovely **HBO** series “**Julia**,” where he plays famed chef **Julia Child’s** husband, **Paul**, opposite **Sarah Lancashire’s** titular character. He’s also starring in **Stephen Sondheim’s** new **Off-Broadway** musical “**Here We Are**.”

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# Set the Menu for a Successful Year



BLT Wraps with Avocado Spread

FAMILY FEATURES

If your goals for 2024 include a healthier lifestyle and added nutrition, your mission is likely to start with a refreshed menu. Add a few newfound favorites to this year’s rotation like wraps, salads and smoothies to power each day and propel yourself toward wellness success. These easy-to-make, better-for-you recipes offer simple solutions to keep your goals on track without taking

flavor off the table. Begin busy days with an energy boost from a Strawberry Oatmeal Smoothie then tackle lunchtime cravings or make family dinner a cinch with BLT Wraps with Avocado Spread. For a hearty salad to pair with favorite meals or enjoy all on its own, this Roasted Cauliflower and Potato Spinach Salad is an ideal way to make 2024 your best year yet. Visit Culinary.net to discover more nutritious solutions in the new year.

## Wrap Your Way to a Nutritious Year

Planning and executing a more nutritious menu can often be thwarted by lunchtime cravings or busy weeknights that leave little time to cook at home. Rather than giving in to those takeout temptations, turn to easy recipes you can create yourself with just a few simple, on-hand ingredients. Grab tortillas out of the pantry and a few favorites from the refrigerator to make these BLT Wraps with Avocado Spread, which are perfect for meal-prepping weekday lunches or whipping up at a moment’s notice for a family dinner. Bacon, a nearly unanimous favorite, teams up with a homemade avocado spread, lettuce and tomatoes for fresh taste without the hassle. For a satisfying meal without leaving behind health goals, serve with a hearty salad or Spanish rice and banana peppers on the side.

### BLT Wraps with Avocado Spread

Servings: 4

- 8 slices bacon
- 1 avocado, peeled and pitted
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1 lime, juice only
- 1/2 teaspoon hot sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 4 flour tortillas
- 4 large red leaf lettuce leaves
- 2 large tomatoes, cut into 1/4-inch slices

### Spanish rice (optional) banana peppers (optional)

In large skillet, cook bacon until crispy. Drain on plate lined with paper towels. Set aside. In medium bowl, mash avocado, sour cream, lime juice, hot sauce, Worcestershire sauce and salt with fork until combined and smooth. Spread thin layer of avocado mixture over tortillas. Layer with lettuce leaves, tomatoes and bacon. Fold sides up and roll. Serve with Spanish rice and banana peppers, if desired.



Strawberry Oatmeal Smoothie



Roasted Cauliflower and Potato Spinach Salad

## Fresh Flavors for the New Year

If you’re among those looking to set goals and wellness intentions for the new year, it’s important to equip yourself with the right tools, whether information or inspiration, to help support you on your journey toward a healthier lifestyle. That can start with something as easy as elevating your menu and the ingredients you keep on-hand. For example, Fresh Express offers more than 100 varieties of fresh, healthy and convenient ready-to-eat salads, including the French Blue Cheese Salad Kit, which combines a nutrient-dense salad mix of fresh baby spinach, spring mix, red cabbage and carrots, and is enhanced with aromatic blue cheese, crunchy garlic brioche croutons and a savory French blue cheese dressing. Available in the refrigerated produce department, the kit can be paired with better-for-you ingredients like roasted cauliflower and seasoned potatoes to make this Roasted Cauliflower and Potato Spinach Salad in less than an hour. Visit freshexpress.com to discover more recipes and find a store near you.

### Roasted Cauliflower and Potato Spinach Salad

Prep time: 15 minutes  
Cook time: 40 minutes  
Servings: 4

- 1 small head cauliflower, cut into florets
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 2 teaspoons Italian seasoning, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, divided
- 1 pound fingerling potatoes, quartered
- 1 package (8 ounces) Fresh Express French Blue Cheese Salad Kit

Heat oven to 425 F. In large bowl, toss cauliflower florets with 2 tablespoons olive oil. Sprinkle with 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning and 1/4 teaspoon salt; mix well. Arrange in single layer on sheet pan. Bake cauliflower 30-40 minutes, tossing once halfway through, until tender and lightly charred. Cool. In bowl, toss potatoes with remaining olive oil. Sprinkle with remaining Italian seasoning and salt; mix well. Arrange in single layer on sheet pan. Bake potatoes 20 minutes until tender and lightly browned. Cool. Place greens from salad kit in large bowl; add roasted vegetables. Drizzle with dressing from salad kit; mix well. Top with croutons and blue cheese from salad kit.

## Start Each Day Strong

Giving your mornings a delicious boost doesn’t have to be a chore. In fact, it can be just as easy as it is delicious with a fresh, fruity smoothie ready in a matter of minutes. Just six blended ingredients are all you need to make this Strawberry Oatmeal Smoothie, a creamy solution that makes for a nutritious, refreshing and filling breakfast before heading out the door.

### Strawberry Oatmeal Smoothie

- 1/2 cup rolled oats
- 1 banana
- 14 frozen strawberries
- 1 cup soy milk
- 1 1/2 teaspoons sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

In blender, grind oats. Add banana, strawberries, soy milk, sugar and vanilla extract then blend until smooth. Pour into glass or to-go container and serve.



## Good Housekeeping

### Green Pea and Lettuce Soup

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

2    *teaspoons margarine or butter*  
1    *medium onion, finely chopped*  
1    *can (13¼ to 14½ 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.

## Good Housekeeping

### Ham and Cheese Pitats

The whole family will love these tasty sandwiches — they make a nice meal with any hearty winter soup.

2    *(6-inch diameter) pitats*  
2    *teaspoons Dijon mustard*  
8    *slices (about 4 ounces) cooked ham, thin*  
2    *ounces (1/2 cup) Jarlsberg light cheese*

1. Heat oven to 475°F. Slice each pita horizontally in half, and place cut-side up on large cookie sheet.

2. Spread 1/2 teaspoon mustard on each pita half. Top each with 2 slices ham and 2 tablespoons cheese. Bake 5 minutes or until cheese melts and pitats are toasted. Cut each sandwich in half to serve. Makes 4 servings.

## Good Housekeeping

### Pork Tenderloin With Roasted Grapes

Sneak in the healthy stuff: Kids will love the sweet flavor of roasted grapes.

1    *teaspoon fennel seeds, crushed*  
2    *teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil*  
1    *whole pork tenderloin (1 pound)*  
3    *cups seedless red and green grapes (about 1 pound)*  
1/2    *cup chicken broth*

1. Heat oven to 475°F. In cup, combine fennel with 1/2 teaspoon coarsely ground pepper and 1/2 teaspoon salt; use to rub all over pork.

2. In 12-inch skillet with oven-safe handle (or with handle wrapped in double-thickness of foil for roasting in oven later), heat oil over medium-high heat until hot. Add pork and cook 5 minutes, turning to brown all sides.

3. Add grapes and broth to skillet; heat to boiling. Cover and roast in oven 15 to 18 minutes or until meat thermometer inserted in thickest part of pork reaches 150°F. Internal temperature of meat will rise about 5°F upon standing.

4. Transfer pork to warm platter. Heat grape mixture to boiling over high heat; boil 1 minute or until liquid thickens slightly. Slice pork; serve with grapes and pan juices. Makes 4 main-dish servings.

## Good Housekeeping

### Granola-Yogurt Parfait

Lose weight with this satisfying low-fat breakfast option that takes less than 5 minutes to prepare.

1/2    *cup fresh or frozen (partially thawed) raspberries or other favorite berry*  
3/4    *cup vanilla low-fat yogurt*  
2    *tablespoons low-fat granola*

1. Into parfait glass or wineglass, spoon some raspberries, vanilla yogurt and granola. Repeat layering until all ingredients are used. Makes 1 Serving.

\*Each serving: About 255 calories, 3g total fat (2g saturated), 10g protein, 47g carbohydrate, 12mg cholesterol, 160mg sodium, 5g dietary fiber.

## Good Housekeeping

### Chicken Parmigiano Mini Meatloaves

1    *pound ground chicken*  
1    *large egg*  
1/4    *cup plain dried bread crumbs*  
1/4    *cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese*  
1/4    *teaspoon salt*  
1/2    *cup marinara sauce*  
1/2    *cup shredded mozzarella cheese*

1. Heat broiler. Line broiling pan (without rack) with foil. Spray foil with nonstick cooking spray.

2. In bowl, mix chicken, egg, bread crumbs, Parmesan, salt and 1/4 cup marinara sauce just until blended. In foil-lined pan, shape meat mixture into four 4-by-2-inch oval loaves.

3. Place pan in broiler 5 to 6 inches from source of heat and broil meatloaves 15 minutes or until no longer pink inside. Spoon remaining 1/4 cup sauce over loaves; sprinkle with mozzarella. Broil 1 to 2 minutes longer or until cheese melts. Makes 4 main-dish servings.

## Good Housekeeping

### Steamed Broccoli With Buttery Herb Crumbs

Bags of broccoli flowerets make prep time a snap for this tasty side dish.

1    *lemon*  
3    *tablespoons margarine or butter*  
4    *slices bread, torn into 3/8-inch pieces*  
1    *garlic clove, crushed with garlic press*  
1/4    *cup packed fresh parsley leaves, chopped*  
2    *bags (12 ounces each) fresh broccoli flowerets*  
1/4    *teaspoon salt*  
1/8    *teaspoon ground black pepper*

1. From lemon, grate 1 teaspoon peel, and squeeze 2 tablespoons juice.

2. In 12-inch skillet, melt 2 tablespoons margarine over medium heat. Add bread and cook until golden, about 8 minutes, stirring often. Stir in garlic, parsley and lemon peel; cook 30 seconds. Remove skillet from heat.

3. Meanwhile, add about 3/4-inch water to wide-bottomed 5- to 6-quart saucepot. Place collapsible steamer basket (about 11 inches in diameter) in saucepot; heat water to boiling over high heat. Add broccoli to steamer basket; cover and steam 5 to 6 minutes or until tender-crisp.

4. Transfer broccoli to serving bowl; toss with salt, pepper, lemon juice and remaining 1 tablespoon margarine. Sprinkle crumbs on top. Makes 8 servings.

## Good Housekeeping

### Lucky Asian Steak Noodle Bowl

In many Asian countries, people eat long noodles on New Year's Day to lengthen their life. One catch: You can't break the noodle from your plate to your mouth.

8    *1 pound sirloin steak*  
      *Salt*  
      *Pepper*  
1    *tablespoon olive oil*  
2    *tablespoon rice vinegar*  
2    *teaspoon sesame oil*  
1    *teaspoon chili paste*  
1    *cup spiralized carrots*  
1    *cup frozen shelled edamame, thawed*  
1/2    *cup mint*  
1/2    *cup cilantro leaves*  
      *Toasted sesame seeds and sliced scallions, for serving*

1. Cook buckwheat soba noodles per package directions. Rinse with cold water; refrigerate.

2. Meanwhile, pat sirloin steak dry and season with salt and pepper. Heat large skillet on medium-high. Add olive oil, then steak, and cook to desired doneness, 5 to 7 minutes per side for medium. Let rest at least 5 minutes before slicing.

3. In large bowl, whisk together rice vinegar, sesame oil, chili paste and 1/2 teaspoon salt. Add soba noodles and spiralized carrots (thawed if frozen) and toss to coat. Fold in edamame, mint and cilantro leaves. Top with sliced steak, toasted sesame seeds and sliced scallions.

• Each serving: About 545 calories, 22 g fat (7 g saturated fat), 37g protein, 540mg sodium, 53g carb, 3g fiber.

## Comfort foods

Made fast  
and  
healthy



by Healthy Exchanges

### Creamy Tuna Macaroni Salad

Sandwiches, no matter how good, can get mighty boring. Perk up your lunchbox with this tuna pasta salad.

2½    *cups uncooked elbow macaroni*  
1¼    *cups frozen cut green beans*  
1½    *cups frozen cut carrots*  
3    *cups water*  
1    *(10¼-ounce) can reduced-fat cream of celery soup*  
1/2    *cup fat-free mayonnaise*  
1    *teaspoon dried parsley flakes*  
1/4    *teaspoon lemon pepper*  
2    *(6-ounce) cans white tuna, packed in water, drained and flaked*  
1/4    *cup finely chopped onion*

1. In a medium saucepan, combine uncooked macaroni, green beans and carrots. Cover with water. Bring mixture to a boil. Cook over medium heat for about 10 minutes or until macaroni and vegetables are tender. Drain and rinse under cold water.

2. In a medium bowl, combine celery soup, mayonnaise, parsley flakes and lemon pepper. Add drained macaroni mixture, tuna and onion. Mix well to combine. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours. Gently stir again just before serving. Serves 6 (1 full cup each).

• Each serving equals: 222 calories, 2g fat, 19g protein, 32g carb., 405mg sodium, 3g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 2 Meat, 1 1/2 Starch, 1 Vegetable.

## Good Housekeeping

### Pineapple-Pom Fruit Melange

This herbaceous blend of pineapple, pomegranate seeds and grapes is much better than your average fruit salad. It doesn't hurt that the jewel-toned pomegranate is in its prime come January.

1/4    *cup sugar*  
1    *sprig fresh rosemary, slightly bruised with side of knife*  
1/2    *teaspoon vanilla extract*  
      *Pinch salt*  
4    *large navel oranges*  
1    *pound pineapple chunks*  
1    *pound large seedless grapes, halved*  
1½    *cup pomegranate seeds*

1. In a small saucepan, combine sugar, rosemary, vanilla, salt and 1/4 cup water. Heat on medium-high just until sugar dissolves. Remove from heat; cool completely.

2. With sharp paring knife, cut off tops and bottoms of oranges, then cut off peel. Working over large bowl, cut segments out of oranges into bowl; discard membranes. To bowl with orange segments, add pineapple, grapes, pomegranate seeds and rosemary syrup, tossing until combined.

3. Serve immediately, or cover and refrigerate up to 1 day. Makes 8 servings.

• Each serving: About 160 calories, 2g protein, 40g carbs, 4g fiber, 310mg sodium.

## Good Housekeeping

### Hot White Chocolate

A touch of almond extract gives this comforting winter-warmer a deliciously nutty aroma.

1    *quart milk*  
3    *ounces white chocolate, finely chopped\**  
1    *tablespoon sugar*  
2    *teaspoons vanilla extract*  
1/4    *teaspoon almond extract*

1. In 2-quart saucepan, heat milk to simmering over medium heat.

2. With wire whisk, stir in white chocolate, sugar, and vanilla and almond extracts. Heat mixture 3 minutes or until chocolate melts, stirring occasionally. Pour into warm mugs to serve. Serves 4.

\*Or use one 3-ounce Swiss confectionery bar, or one-half 6-ounce package white baking bar.

• Each serving: About 290 calories, 15g total fat (10g saturated), 37mg cholesterol, 140mg sodium, 27g total carbohydrate, 10g protein.

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# Crime

**Shooting** on the 4900 block of North Monticello Avenue.

**Robbery** on the 7000 block of North Western Avenue.

**Assault** on the 4100 block of West Irving Park Road.

**Robbery** on the 6100 block of North Lincoln Avenue.

**Robbery** on the 1200 block of North Milwaukee Avenue.

**Robbery** on the 4700 block of North Magnolia Avenue.

**Robbery** on the 800 block of West Irving Park Road.

**Theft** on the 3300 block of North Halsted Street.

**Theft** on the 3100 block of North Southport Avenue.

**Vandalism** on the 6000 block of North Winthrop Avenue.

**Burglary** on the 2100 block of West Lawrence Avenue.

**Assault** on the 1300 block of North Elston Avenue.

**Arrest** on the 1300 block of North Elston Avenue.

**Theft** on the 2600 block of North Elston Avenue.

**Assault** on the 4300 block of North Sheridan Road.

**Assault** on the 3400 block of North Clark Street.

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

**Theft** on the 2900 block of North Broadway.

**Theft** on the 1100 block of North Ashland Avenue.

**Theft** on the 1100 block of West Hutchinson Street.

**Theft** on the 1600 block of North Milwaukee Avenue.

**Theft** on the 2000 block of North Damen Avenue.

**Assault** on the 1300 block of North Milwaukee Avenue.

**Assault** on the 5600 block of North Winthrop Avenue.

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

**Vandalism** on the 1100 block of North Frontier Avenue.

**Theft** on the 1900 block of North Damen Avenue.

**Assault** on the 2500 block of North Halsted Street.

**Vandalism** on the 1900 block of West Wabansia Avenue.

**Theft** on the 3100 block of North Clark Street.

**Theft** on the 900 block of North Michigan Avenue.

**Theft** on the 3100 block of North Clark Street.

**Vandalism** on the 1000 block of North Nobel Street.

**Vandalism** on the 1300 block of North Wood Street.

**Theft** on the 800 block of West Wrightwood Avenue.

**Assault** on the 1600 block of North Leavitt Street.

**Assault** on the 4600 block of North Lincoln Avenue.

**Theft** on the 4400 block of North Broadway.

**Assault** on the 4600 block of Northwestern Avenue.

**Burglary** on the 4500 block of North Broadway.

**Theft** on the 2600 block of Elston Avenue.

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

**Theft** on the 2800 block of North Orchard Street.

**Theft** on the 5200 of North Wayne Avenue.

**Theft** on the 1700 of West Fullerton Avenue.

**Burglary** on the 4500 block of North Sheridan Road.

**Theft** on the 3000 block Of North Halsted Street.

**Vandalism** on the 3000 block of North Fremont Street.

**Theft** on the 5500 block of North Sheridan Road.

**Burglary** on the 1600 block of West Le Moyne Street.

**Robbery** on the 4700 block of North Magnolia Avenue.

**Assault** on the 4300 block of North Sheridan Road.

**Assault** on the 3400 block of North Clark Street.

**Vandalism** on the 6000 block of North Lincoln Avenue.

**Vandalism** on the 1300 block of West Albion Avenue.

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

**Vandalism** on the 6200 block of North Kenmore Avenue.

**Theft** on the 3300 block of Touhy Avenue.

**Theft** on the 2400 of West Hutchinson Street.

**Theft** on the 2400 block of Howard Street.

**Theft** on the 3800 block of West Belle Plaine Avenue.

**Vandalism** on the 2100 block of West Arthur Avenue.

**Assault** on the 5600 block of North Windthrop Avenue.

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

**Vandalism** on the 6900 block of North Ravenswood Avenue.

## Corruption At Its Worst

A study published by the University of Illinois, Chicago, in 2022, ranked Illinois as the second most corrupt state in the union with 4 out of the last 11 governors serving time in prison.

**Rod Blagojevich (2003-2009):** Convicted in 2011 amid numerous allegations of corruption, including an attempt to profit from President Barack Obama’s vacated U.S. Senate seat and served nearly eight years of his 14-year sentence in federal prison before former President Donald Trump commuted his sentence.

**George Ryan (1999-2003):** He was indicted after leaving the governor’s office in 2003 for leveraging his public office and allegedly trading government contracts and leases for personal gain. He went to federal prison in 2007 to serve for the offenses he had committed during his time as governor and as Illinois secretary of state from 1991-1999.

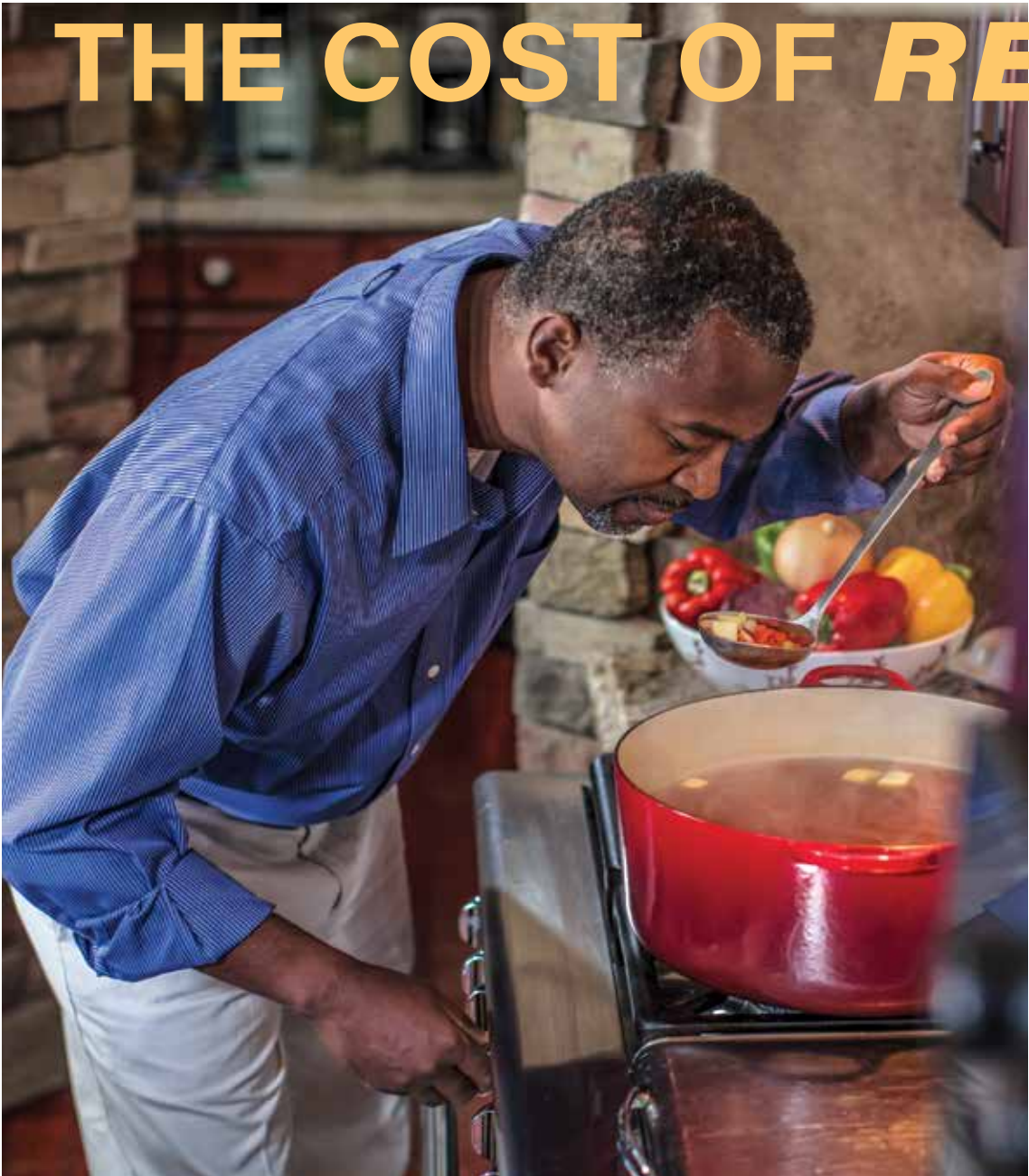
**Daniel Walker (1973-1977):** Pleased guilty in 1987. Committed bank fraud and perjury while working at a savings and loan company outside Chicago in the years after serving as governor. He served just 18 months of his seven year prison sentence.

**Otto Kerner (1961-1968):** convicted in 1973. The first former governor to be convicted of federal corruption charges in Illinois. He was convicted for bribery involving horse-racing, conspiracy and income tax evasion. “Mr. Clean” – Kerner’s nickname as governor, was accused of trading political favors for racetrack stock he secretly purchased in 1966 while governor. At the time of his conviction in 1973, he was a judge for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, appointed by President Lyndon Johnson. Kerner’s corruption conviction not only made him the first Illinois governor to be convicted of a crime, but also made him the first sitting appellate judge to be convicted in U.S. history.

**For the fourth year in a row, Chicago is America’s most corrupt city, according to a report from the University of Illinois at Chicago.**

Most recently, Michael J. Madigan was indicated by a federal grand jury on racketeering and bribery charges. Gov. Pritzker came under federal investigation regarding his property tax bill and had to repay the money. The Cook County inspector general described it as a “scheme to defraud” and former alderman, Ed Burke, found guilty of racketeering, bribery and extortion awaiting sentencing.





# THE COST OF *RESILIENCY* DURING POWER OUTAGES

FAMILY FEATURES

**S**afeguarding your family, home and finances from disaster starts long before an extreme weather event occurs. When destructive storms challenge the electric grid’s reliability and cause loss of power for an extended period, many facets of everyday life are disrupted.

Unexpected power outages can impact vital communications, transportation and access to important businesses. It can also cause food spoilage or water contamination and prevent the use of medical devices. Protecting your loved ones and property starts with a plan.

“My family was without power for three days after a tornado touched down two blocks from our home,” said Matt Blashaw, licensed home building contractor, real estate agent and host of various HGTV shows. “I partner with the Propane Education & Research Council (PERC) because I realized the importance of not only having an emergency plan but the need for a reliable energy source, like propane, to power a standby generator to keep my family and home resilient. In addition to providing peace of mind, a propane standby generator could lower a homeowner’s insurance rate and simultaneously raise the home’s property value. It’s a win-win-win in my mind.”



Matt Blashaw

According to PERC, the average homeowner will experience 3.5 power interruptions in a two-year period. Even short outages lasting less than four hours can cost homeowners an average of \$1,250 in spoiled food, hotels, damaged electronics and more.

To avoid a financial burden caused by power outages, consider a reliable propane standby generator as a key part of resilient design. It allows a house to:

- Resist hazards brought on by electric grid failures, such as spoiled food, loss of heat or air conditioning, hotel costs and more
- Continue providing the primary function of a home – protection
- Reduce the magnitude or duration of a disruptive event to a property and its impact on the homeowners

While no amount of preparation can stop the forces of nature, planning ahead to manage blackouts can have a significant impact on you and your family. Consider these tips from Blashaw and the experts at PERC.

## 5 TIPS TO STAY PREPARED AHEAD OF STORMS

**Make a Plan**

Creating a plan that assesses the risks of the region where you live and addresses potential disasters is a key step toward safety in an emergency. Gather your family and discuss how you’ll receive emergency alerts, where you’ll shelter, how you’ll evacuate and how everyone should plan to communicate, if the need arises. Think through needs specific to your household such as ages of residents, critical medications, dietary needs, child care, pet care and more. Putting a plan in place means you and your loved ones can react quickly when time is of the essence.

**Prepare Your Propane System**

Regardless of what weather may be on the horizon, it’s important to ensure your propane tank is ready. Take a few minutes to know where the gas shutoff valve is located on your propane system in case the propane needs to be turned off in the event of an emergency. Call a propane professional to inspect the system before restoring it.

On average, a 500-gallon tank can hold enough propane to meet the annual energy needs of a single-family home. A local propane supplier will come to the home and fill the tank, providing energy for key appliances that use propane even if the fragile electric grid is down.

As the season transitions to winter, mark the tank with brightly colored stakes or flags that are higher than anticipated snow depth; this ensures propane personnel can always locate it during scheduled refills, even during the toughest conditions.

**Secure Doors and Windows**

When storms and high winds are expected, one easy way to protect your home and family members is to secure all exterior doors and windows. Start by checking seals to keep out wind and water, which can cause damage. Secure outdoor furniture and trim vegetation like bushes and trees to avoid flying debris shattering windows during high winds.

**Have a Backup Power Source**

When the electric grid is interrupted, the loss of power can impact systems like smoke and fire detection, refrigeration, air conditioning and heating, and other health and safety equipment. When a homeowner purchases a backup standby generator, a licensed technician installs the unit outside the home and wires it to the home’s circuit breaker. When a power outage occurs, the



generator automatically senses the disruption of service and starts the generator’s engine, which then delivers power to select appliances in the home in as little as 10 seconds after an outage.

Available in a variety of capacities to fit the needs of any size of home, propane backup generators are versatile and can power several major appliances throughout a home including lights, refrigeration, heating and cooling equipment and critical medical equipment. For homes that already operate on propane, consider running important systems and appliances like the furnace, water heater, stove and fireplace on propane. The more appliances powered by propane, the smaller

and less expensive your standby generator can be.

Plus, propane is environmentally friendly and won’t degrade over time like other fuel sources, ensuring the backup generator reliably powers your home to give you added peace of mind. As a low-carbon emissions energy source, propane is part of a wide path to achieving a low-carbon future. Its abundance, along with the growth of renewable propane, means propane can be used now and for generations to come.

**Pack an Emergency Kit**

Regardless of the emergency you’re facing, being prepared means stocking up on food,

water and other supplies that can last your family multiple days. Although an emergency kit is largely a collection of basic household items, it’s important to have the kit packed, stored and secured ahead of potential disasters to save time and energy. Some basics to pack include gallon jugs of water, non-perishable food, flashlights and extra batteries, smartphone chargers, sanitation supplies like trash bags and moist towelettes, a first-aid kit and basic tools. Also consider items based on individual needs like prescription medications, eyeglasses, essentials for infants and pet food.

Find more resilient storm preparedness solutions at Propane.com.



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**2024**



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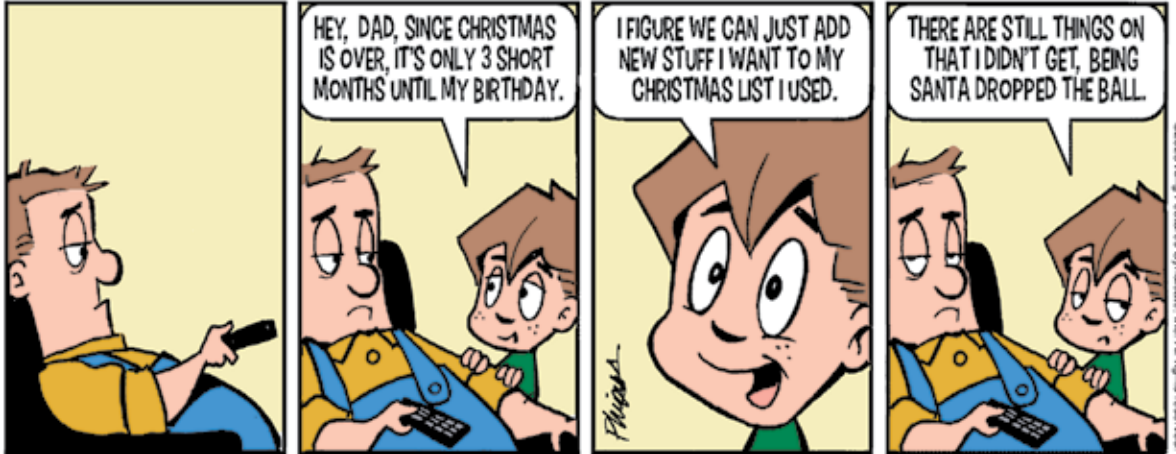
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by Gary Kopervas



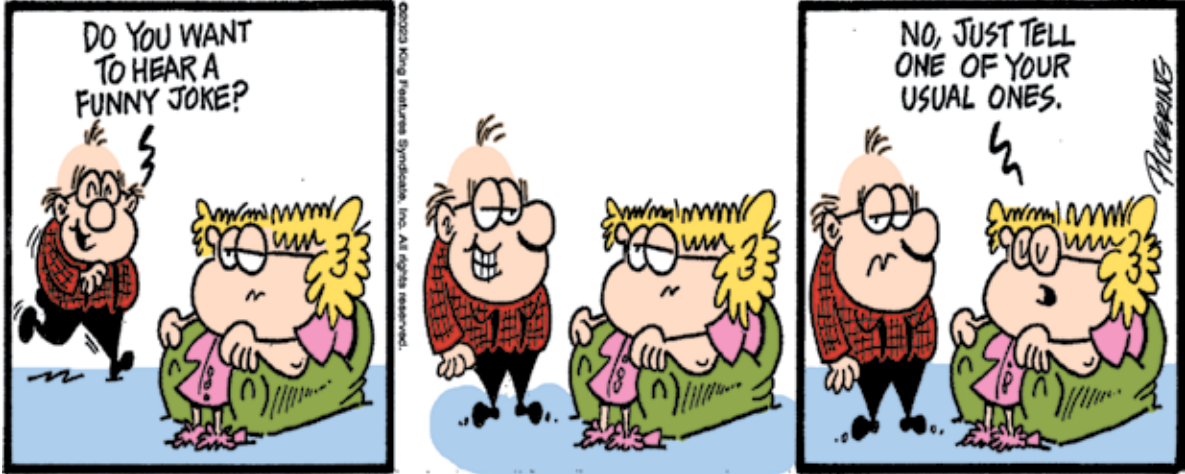
Amber Waves

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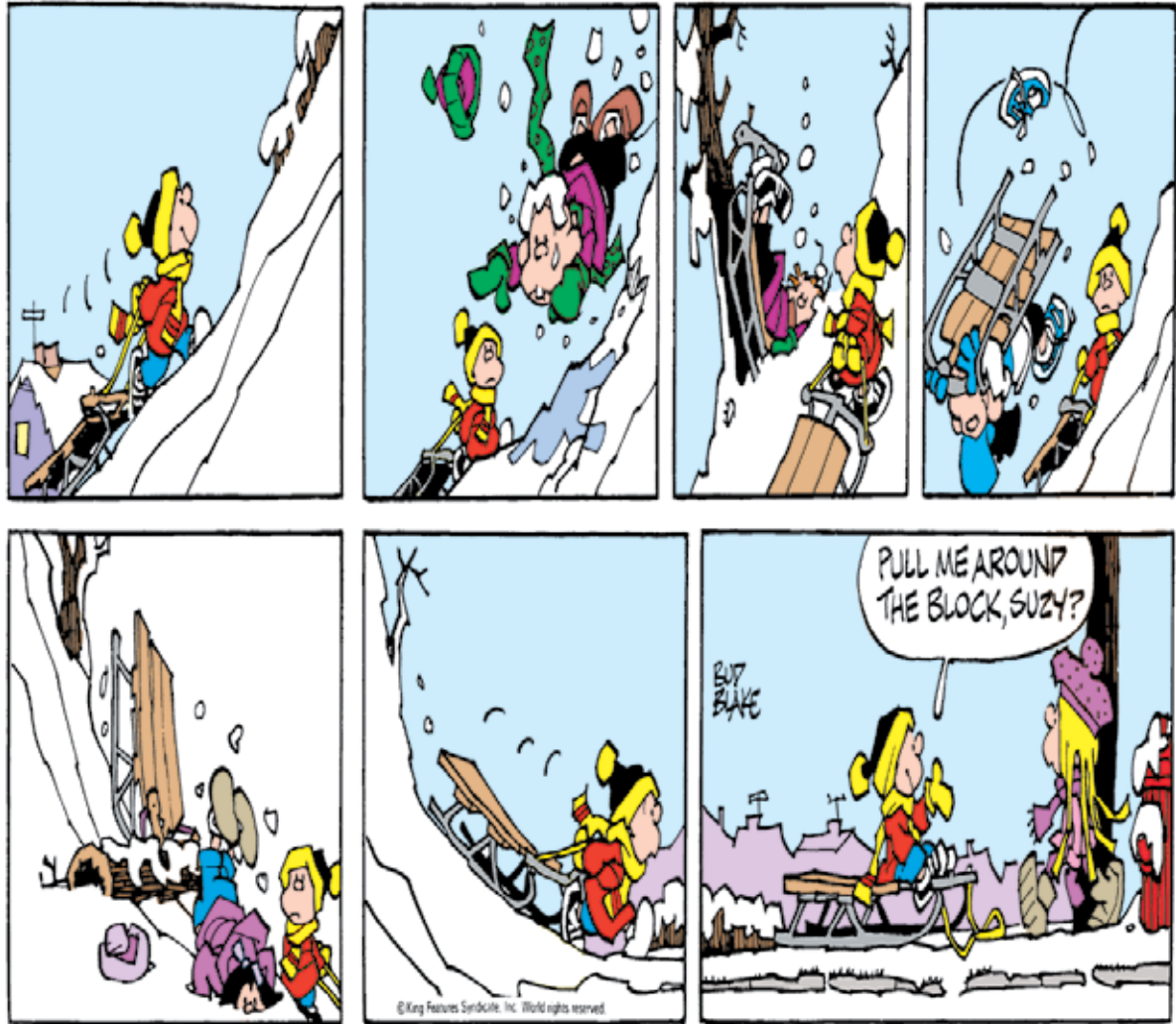
The Spats

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TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



Puzzles4Kids

by Helene Hovanec

RIDDLE SEARCH – ART MATERIALS

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 do you give an artistic dog for Christmas?**

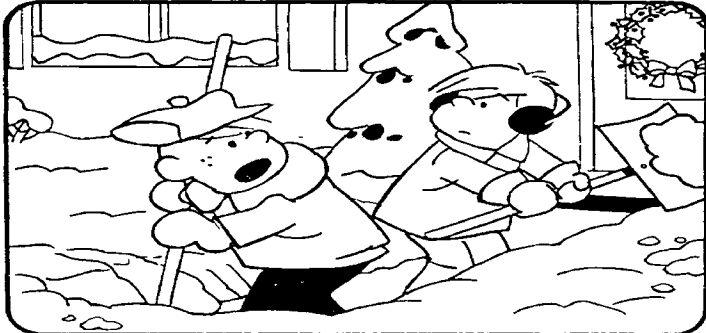
- BEADS
- BRUSH
- BUTTONS
- CLAY
- CORD
- ERASER
- FABRIC
- FEATHERS
- GLITTER
- GLUE
- PENS
- Q-TIPS
- ROPE
- STAMP
- STAPLER
- STENCIL
- STICKERS
- THREADS
- YARN

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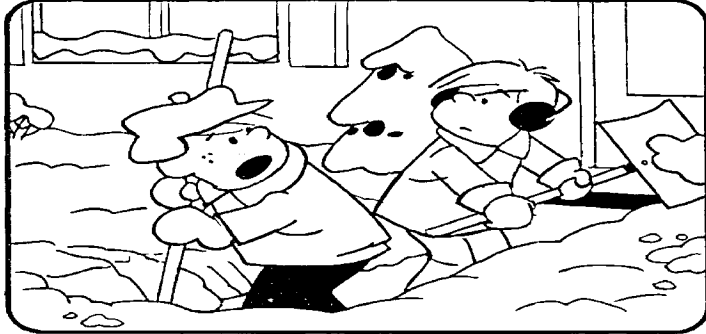
Riddle answer: \_\_\_\_\_

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

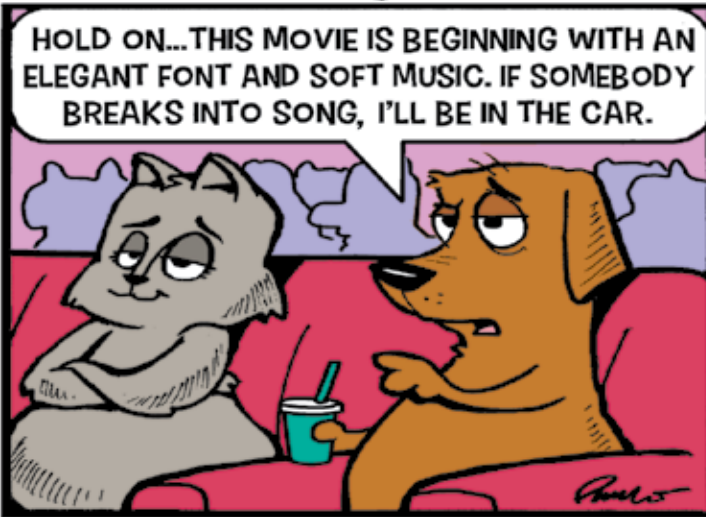


Find at least six differences in details between panels.

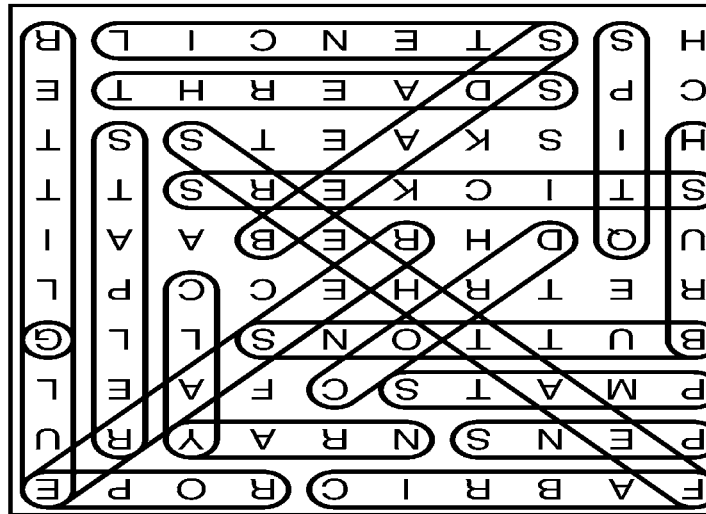


Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



Fetch-A-Sketch.  
Riddle Answer:







# Trendy Takes on Kitchen and Bath Design

**FAMILY FEATURES**

**D**esigning a new home, remodeling your own or simply rethinking aesthetics and decor all require a little imagination and a lot of inspiration. A quick online search brings up hundreds if not thousands of thoughtful ways to make your kitchen or bathroom match your desired style from modern to traditional or anything in between.

All those results can be slightly overwhelming, however. Rather than having a go at it alone, rely on the professionals to guide you toward looks that are all the rage and fit a variety of budgets. Consider these on-trend design ideas from the kitchen and bathroom experts at Wellborn Cabinet, whose whole-home solutions double as functional and beautiful.

## Kitchen Trends

**Let it Flow:** Open concepts have become quite common as it allows the kitchen to feel like one large room where loved ones and guests can intermingle as opposed to an enclosed space. This flowing openness lends continuous visibility to the area ranging from the (seemingly) always active kitchen to gathering spaces in the dining and living rooms. An open

floor plan also helps connect design aesthetics from each room to the next.

**Opt for Concealed Storage:** Pots, pans, knives and all your favorite kitchen gadgets need hidden somewhere. Rather than taking up valuable pantry space, turn to a stylish storage solution from Wellborn Cabinet's line of pullout cabinets that give you the room you need. With options ranging from pullout peg boards to sleek tray dividers, these clever contraptions can help you stay organized while making functionality beautiful.

**Incorporate Smart Tech:** Trends aren't exclusively about aesthetics – practicality via technology is equally important for those looking to update their kitchens to the 21st century. Devices like smart refrigerators that allow you to take inventory from an app, smart lighting that brightens and dims to save on electricity and voice assistants that help you keep track of recipes are all trendy paths toward a top-of-the-line kitchen.

**Bring in Organic Touches:** Organic modern is in, which means adding organic touches using natural materials like stone and wood in your cabinets, countertops, flooring and more. Achieve a warm vibe with these organic elements paired with a neutral color palette (soft whites and earthy tones) and natural light.



### 4 Alternative Uses for Kitchen Cabinets

If you love the look of beautiful kitchen cabinets and appreciate their functionality, try incorporating them throughout the house with these ideas.

- **Home Office** – As working from home continues to rise in popularity, you might need that extra storage space around or above your desk whether it's in a full-blown office or a nook in the den.
- **Laundry Room** – Uppers and lowers alike can help you stow away detergents, cleaning products, laundry baskets and even last season's wardrobe.
- **Mud Room** – All those shoes and jackets need space somewhere, and kitchen cabinets in the mudroom can help you contain the mess.
- **Garage** – Whether your garage serves as a secondary entertainment area, home gym or simply storage for outdoor tools and toys, cabinets allow you to organize (and hide) that equipment.



## Bathroom Trends

**Add Accents that Pop:** Obvious accents like bold pops of color and unique patterns come to mind, but you can also make your bathroom stand out by experimenting with materials, accessories and shapes. Think eye-catching cabinet hardware, fun mirror shapes and open-shelf decor that grabs attention without overdoing it.

**Show Off Wood Vanities:** As an important area you'll use to get ready for each day, vanities should be purposeful and practical but can also brandish your personal style. Types and sizes may vary but one look seeing an upward trend, according to Wellborn Cabinet's design experts, is the use of natural tones and textures like woodgrain to complement the rise in popularity of warm colors in recent years.

**Go for Decorative Lighting:** The same tired light fixtures in bathrooms can feel drab and dreary. Evaluate the amount of natural light available (often at a premium in bathrooms) and decide if you can go more subdued or need to effectively and efficiently illuminate

the area. Bell-shaped, wall-mounted sconces next to mirrors are in vogue, as are glass globes to complement ample natural light. For a true touch of modern flair, consider dramatic accent lighting like underlights on a floating vanity that do double duty as a convenient nightlight.

**Make it Spa-Like:** Lavish luxury is the goal with a spa-like bathroom in the comfort of home. Organic materials, natural light, traditional decor and, maybe most importantly, an oversized soaking tub are at the core of this look. While it may sound counterintuitive, you can actually create your own oasis with some simple, budget-friendly aesthetics. The first step for many is to incorporate more storage using sleek cabinets, shelves and wall-mounted hooks to achieve a decluttered look. Next, simply replace your old showerhead and faucet with spa lookalikes and stock up on plush, fluffy towels for that luxurious appearance without a complete remodel.

Find more design inspiration by visiting Wellborn.com.







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