



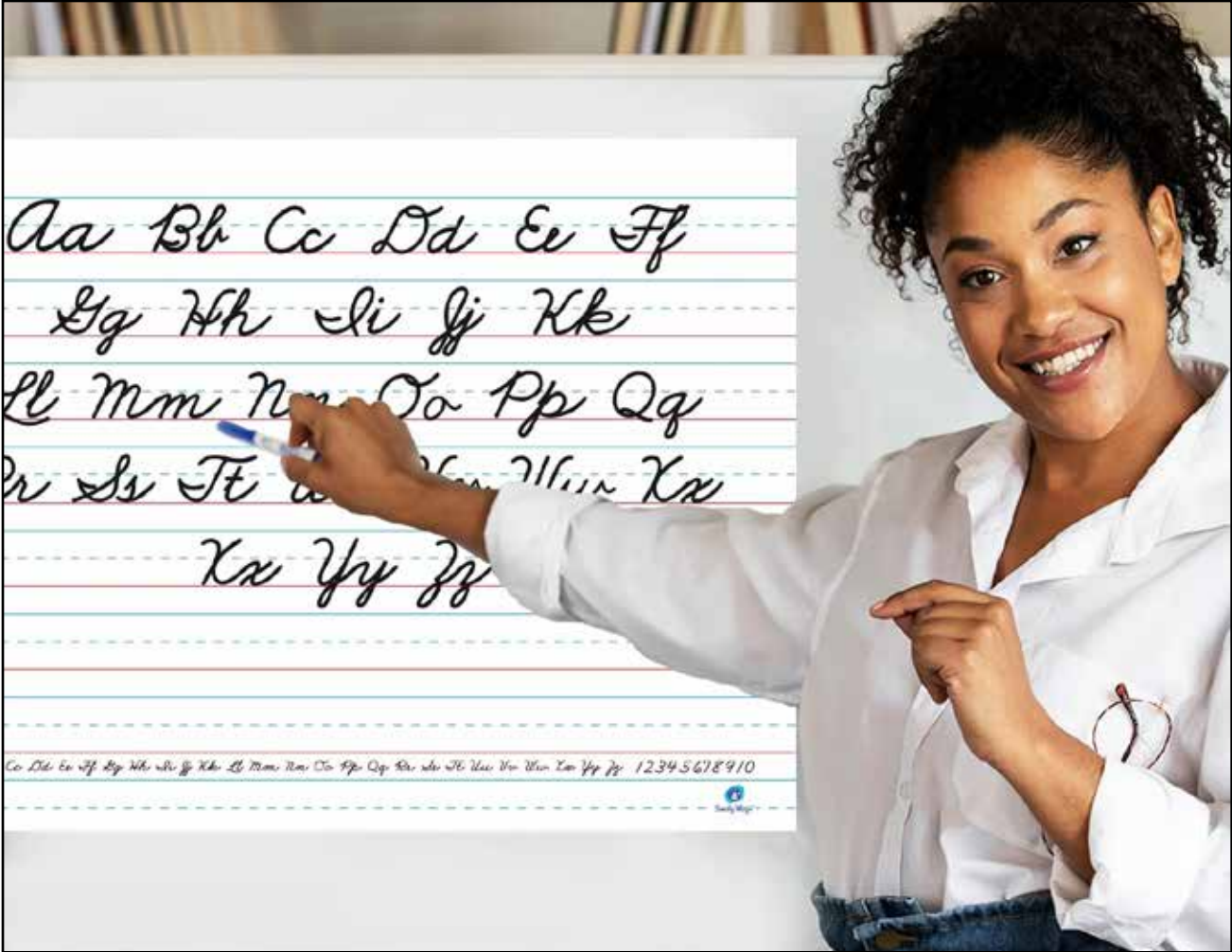
HOMELESSNESS IN CHICAGO



More than 58,000 Chicagoans were homeless in 2024. Volunteers may miss people living in abandoned buildings or in cars, or those staying at friends or neighbors’ homes, what’s known as “doubled up”. Doubled up homelessness is nearly three times more common than street and shelter homelessness in Chicago. The report also showed that Black Chicagoans are disproportionately affected, with more than 12,000 in shelters or on the streets and nearly 21,000 doubled up. While Black Chicagoans make up less than one-third of Chicago’s population, they account for more than half of those experiencing homelessness. In an average year, Chicago’s federally mandated point in time count shows 6,000-7,000 people living on the streets

or staying in shelters. The numbers dipped in the years after the pandemic due to the Covid Emergency Housing Voucher program, initially planned through 2030. But the Trump administration has announced those funds will run out this year. The coalition’s report also noted that there was 109,000 housing units left vacant in 2024, as the number of people who were homeless in Chicago increased. “We don’t have a lack of housing, we have a lack of affordable and accessible housing”, said M. Nelson, Manager of home-city policy for the coalition. The Night Ministry provides resources to hundreds of homeless people in tent encampments, in neighborhoods and at Chicago Transit Authority stations on any given day. It’s below freezing. How do they do it.

THE WRITING’S ON THE WALL



Whatever happened to cursive writing? In the age of typing, scrolling and voice-to-text, putting a pen to paper is increasingly rare but states including New Jersey, Georgia, Kentucky and California have recently enacted requirements to incorporate instruction on cursive handwriting. Language experts say the move is backed by science with cursive shown to improve reading, memory and fine motor skills in children. Recent articles have documented the slow death of a traditional subject in the elementary school curriculum. Since the 1970s, teaching penmanship, usually in the second or third grade, declined. Arguments for dropping cursive handwriting

include irrelevance block printing is now acceptable in replacing cursive, typing is far more efficient than handwriting. Standardized tests do not require handwriting – and its difficult for many students to learn who will not use it much for the rest of their lives. With the use of typewriters (introduced into businesses in the late 19th century) and now computers, cursive writing lessened dramatically. Educational arguments for keeping handwriting, however, stress tradition and heritage for students writing by hand, (e.g. the Declaration of Independence). Cursive handwriting helps students develop reading, communicating

cation, and hand-eye coordination. Latin in secondary school largely disappeared by the 1970s. Yet the language has made a slight comeback in the past few decades. Of the 10-plus million high school students who study a foreign language, a mere two percent take Latin as their foreign language. While most states, in past decades, have dropped cursive writing from elementary school classes, a few states have mandated teaching the handwriting skill (Texas second graders have to learn cursive writing by the third grade). Over 20 states have adopted some cursive writing requirement. Efforts to prevent the extinction of an endangered school subject

in North Carolina, Indiana and a few other states have led to legislative mandates that penmanship be taught in elementary school. That delaying action, will not alter the eventual disappearance of handwriting from the curriculum. Cursive writing will stick around in those states that continue their requirement for it and districts where parents want it for their children. But, for the majority of school districts, it’s goodbye. In China, calligraphy was one of the required learning tasks but it turns out to be one of the extra-curricula activities in higher education institutions, but not in grade and high schools.

Editorial & Opinions



*** On Feb. 9, 2022**, snowboard marvel Chloe Kim made history as the first athlete to earn a gold medal in the women's snowboard halfpipe event in two consecutive Winter Olympics. Four years earlier, she had also become the youngest winner of that event at age 17.

*** On Feb. 10, 1943**, duct tape was born when factory worker Vesta Stoudt, who packed WWII munitions, sent a letter to Franklin Delano Roosevelt outlining, with drawings, her idea to replace weak paper packing tape with a tougher and waterproof cloth version.



Monday, February 2, 2025



Saturday, February 14, 2025



Monday, February 16, 2025



The president was impressed enough to launch the suggestion into production.

*** On Feb. 11, 2012**, singer Whitney Houston was found dead in the bathtub of her suite at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, California. The cause of death was determined to be accidental drowning, with contributing factors of heart disease and cocaine.

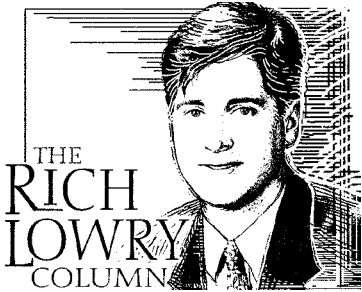
*** On Feb. 12, 1970**, Joseph Searles III became the first Black member of the New York Stock Exchange, following in the footsteps of Clarence B. Jones, who three years previously was the first African American to become an allied NYSE member, but without trading floor access.

*** On Feb. 13, 1861**, Col. Bernard J.D. Irwin, an assistant army surgeon serving in the first major U.S.-Apache conflict, volunteered to go to the rescue of 2nd Lt. George N. Bascom, who was trapped

with 60 men of the U.S. Seventh Infantry by the Chiricahua Apaches in southeastern Arizona, in what became the earliest military action to be awarded a Medal of Honor.

*** On Feb. 14, 1980**, playwright Lillian Hellman sued novelist and critic Mary McCarthy for libel, demanding \$2.25 million in damages. The case posed the tricky question of where the legal line stands between a critic's free speech and malicious libel.

*** On Feb. 15, 1961**, the entire 18 member U.S. figure skating team was killed in a plane crash in Berg-Kamphenhout, Belgium, while on their way to the 1961 World Figure Skating Championships in Prague, Czechoslovakia. Investigators were unable to determine the exact cause of the crash, though mechanical difficulties were suspected.



Minnesota officials should call off the mob

If Minnesota officials don't like President Trump's threat to invoke the Insurrection Act, maybe they should do more to tamp down the insurrectionary activity in their state. After an ICE officer was violently attacked by two illegal immigrants while making an arrest and shot one assailant in the leg in self-defense, anti-ICE activists — predictably enough — rioted.

In response to the unprovoked attack on the officer, Mayor Jacob Frey blasted ICE. Imagine, he implored, if your city "was suddenly invaded by thousands of federal agents that do not hold the values that you hold dear."

Minnesota elected officials might want to consider whether portraying federal law-enforcement officers as an alien invading force is the best way to convince President Trump that he shouldn't resort to the Insurrection Act. They sound like Confederate officials complaining about, say, the 20th Maine Infantry showing up within the city limits of Richmond, Virginia, circa 1863. But they can't help themselves — this is how they think.

A state representative named Liish Kozlowski thought the new shooting provided more evidence that ICE officers "are not here for public safety or for fraud or for the well-being of anybody, but to hunt and harm us."

Prior to the latest incident, Gov. Tim Walz implored Trump to "end this occupation." This mindset is why the elected leadership in the state has justified and encouraged a low-grade anti-ICE insurgency. It doesn't involve guns or bombs, but other tools of coercion and intimidation meant to make it impossible for the federal government to enforce the nation's immigration laws in the state.

ICE officers are operating among a hostile population, significant elements of which consider them an occupying force and are determined to expel them. This is "Free Palestine"

for the anti-ICE crowd. Apologists for the agitators say, as Ilhan Omar has maintained, that they are only recording ICE officers and holding them accountable. This is nonsense. The activists almost always have cameras, true, but they are obstructing ICE vehicles, yelling at ICE officers and, if the opportunity arises, trying to "de-arrest" people.

The point of all of this is to create an atmosphere of violent intimidation and make every step ICE takes in the city as painful as possible.

If this is the work of "legal observers," as the euphemism has it, the Proud Boys at the Robert E. Lee statue in Charlottesville in 2017 were just "historic preservationists."

Jacob Frey says that the activists are protecting their city and looking out for their neighbors. In no other context, though, would the mayor make this claim.

If, say, the FBI arrests gangbangers in Minneapolis, it's not an assault on the Twin Cities — in fact, the opposite. As for neighbors, anyone arrested for any crime is someone's neighbor. Just because the guy stealing hub caps or dealing drugs lives in a neighborhood doesn't mean he gets legal immunity, or his neighbors get to try to prevent law enforcement from going after him.

Often, the "neighbors" that the activists are supposedly protecting, by the way, are other activists who have interfered with ICE and been detained.

In Trump's first term, "the resistance" was an over-the-top term that applied to the fervent opposition to Trump, including massive street protests that were obnoxious, but lawful. In Minnesota today, "the resistance" is a more apt phrase.

That's why the Insurrection Act is in play. It is an antiquated law with a vague trigger, allowing the president to use active-duty military forces and federalized National Guard troops to quell "unlawful obstructions, combinations or assemblages."


If Trump goes there, it would be a big deal. It would be better, first, to try to provide more protection for ICE officers with other law-enforcement assets and, better still, if Minnesota could turn off the anti-ICE insurgency.

Jacob Frey famously told ICE to "get the f*** out of Minneapolis." Now, he should tell the agitators to get the f*** off the streets.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

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Americanisms



"All that we see or seem is but a dream within a dream."
— Edgar Allan Poe

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VETERANS
★ POST ★

by Freddy Groves

Expansion of veterans cemeteries

The VA awarded \$77 million in grants for 20 veteran cemeteries across the country during fiscal year 2025. These grants will allow the establishment of the first state veterans cemetery in Alaska (to serve 12,000 veterans) and the expansion of 19 others.

Besides the establishment of a veterans cemetery in Alaska, the grants will allow expansions of existing veterans cemeteries in Arizona (2), Arkansas, Kansas, Kentucky (2), Massachusetts (2), Montana, New Mexico (2), North Carolina (3), Tennessee, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia and Wisconsin.

In fiscal year 2025, more than 43,000 veterans were buried in grant funded cemeteries, with 124 cemeteries supported since the program began in 1980. Over the years, grants have provided over \$1 billion to these state cemeteries. The goal: to provide burial access within 75 miles of home to 94% of all veterans.

As an added benefit, veterans who are buried in VA grant cemeteries are also included on the Veterans Legacy Memorial site (www.vlm.cem.va.gov).

The VLM is an online memorial with the records of over 10 million veterans who are buried at VA National Cemeteries, VA grant funded cemeteries such as the ones receiving grants this year, U.S. Park Service National Cemeteries, and many others. The Legacy page for each veteran is a place for family members, friends and former military comrades to add their own memories of the veteran.

To find a veteran's page, do a search on the VLM website. You need the veteran's first and last name, but you can fine-tune your search by adding year of death, the cemetery you want to search, the branch of service and other information.

If you want to add details to your veteran's legacy page, first look around at other pages to get an idea of the possibilities. You can add awards and decorations, career details, a military timeline, a biography, PDF documents that can include newspaper clippings, photos and much more.

To learn more about the VA's burial and memorial benefits, go to www.cem.va.gov/burial-memorial-benefits.

Strange
BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- Giraffes have no vocal cords but can still communicate with low-frequency sounds.
- In 1926, Clyde Barrow, of Bonnie and Clyde fame, was arrested with his older brother Buck for possession of a truckload of stolen turkeys.
- The first recorded cookbook was written in cuneiform on tablets in ancient Babylon around 1700 B.C.
- Gioachino Rossini's aria "Di tanti palpiti" was known throughout Europe as "the rice aria," since it was composed while he waited in a Venice restaurant for his risotto to cook.
- Sunsets on Mars are blue.
- Studies have suggested that the average human attention span is now about nine seconds — shorter than that of a goldfish.
- In 1820, Missouri imposed a \$1 bachelor tax on unmarried men ages 21-50. The short-lived law was designed to encourage marriage, population growth and family establishment in the new state.
- A Russian safari park became famous after a tiger named Amur didn't eat a goat that had been placed in its enclosure as live food.
- Detachable heads were used on Roman statues.
- The first U.S. submarine was a hand-cranked, pedal-powered wooden craft from the Revolutionary War dubbed "the Turtle."
- Astronauts sent to space can experience a kind of motion sickness known as space adaptation syndrome, or space sickness, with the most notable case inflicting former senator Jake Garn, whose bout was so disabling that his name became used as an informal measurement for the illness.
- Great Sand Dunes National Park allows visitors to race down all its dunes on custom-made sand boards and sleds.
- Incas believed that sunflowers were the physical manifestation of their sun god, Inti, on Earth, adorning temples and priestesses with them.

Thought for the Day: "Do not seek to follow in the footsteps of the wise. Seek what they sought." — *Matsuo Basho*

SENIOR
NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Avoiding the flu

There are some good tips out there for avoiding the flu this winter, and given the nature of the beast this time, it's to our benefit to pay attention.

If you've listened on the news, you know that the flu this year is worse than usual, arriving a month early and launching like a rocket. This one is an influenza A virus, but not the one they were predicting. The vaccine was created for H1N1, but surprise, surprise, what quickly emerged was the H3N2 mutation (also called subclade K), which the vaccine isn't geared up to tackle because it was created for H1N1. Hence the higher than expected number of cases. For the first time in years, the CDC is calling this a high severity for all age groups flu season. During December, in one week alone 19,000 people were admitted to the hospital.

Our job is to avoid the flu this year. Here is the advice from the CDC:

Get your flu shot. Even though the vaccine isn't aimed at the H3N2, it will still offer a bit of protection.

Wash your hands — all the time. Scrub for 20+ seconds or use a hand sanitizer that has at least 60% alcohol if there is no soap.

Wear a good mask if you go out.

Don't touch your face. If there are germs on your hands, that's how it will infect you.

Eat right, drink fluids, get enough sleep.

Get out those sanitizing wipes and disinfect the door knobs, kitchen cabinet handles and surfaces, everything that gets touched in your house.

Run your air cleaner, if you have one.

Stay away from sick people. Flu likely spreads via droplets in the air when sick people cough or sneeze or talk. On a scary note, people can have (and pass around) the flu a whole day before they even have symptoms.

Stay healthy!

KOVELS® Antiques
By Terry and Kim Kovel & Collecting

Kilim Rugs

A kilim is a type of rug that originated in Asia, falling into the broad category of Oriental rugs. The earliest known examples were found in China, and the most famous come from western Asia. Unlike pile-woven rugs, which have a thick, tufted texture made from thousands of knotted threads, kilims are flat woven, tapestry style, typically from wool. Their designs are usually geometric and often symbolic. Oriental rugs were introduced to western Europe and America by the 18th century.

Thanks to the quality of the weaving and beauty of the designs, they quickly became fashionable luxury items. They weren't just for the floor; paintings show them covering tables. Some decorators will hang them on the wall as decoration and extra insulation. The durable fabric, not to mention the attractive colors and patterns, also make them appealing options for upholstery.

This bench, which sold for \$594 at Thomaston Place Auction Galleries, is upholstered with a kilim. According to the description, it was made in the 20th century, but the fabric came from an earlier rug. It may have been a way to repurpose a worn or damaged rug, indicating that what we now call upcycling has been around for a long time.

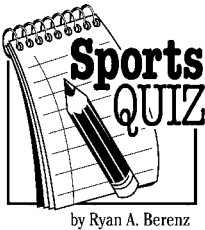


Rugs aren't just for covering the floor. An antique kilim rug, a style originating in Western Asia, found another life as upholstery for a 20th-century bench.

with elaborate decorations became popular in the late 19th to early 20th centuries. These are often collected today. Depending on their size and condition, bronze censers are usually worth about \$100 to \$400.

TIP: If you reupholster an antique piece of furniture, save some of the original fabric. Put it in an envelope and tape it to the bottom of the seat so future owners can know more about the original appearance. When selling a piece, this sort of history will add to the value.

- CURRENT PRICES**
- World's Fair*, medal, 1901, Alaska-Yukon-Pacific, gilt, embossed, three figures, William H. Seward bust, Seal of Seattle on reverse, black ribbon, medal, 1 inch, \$105.
 - Lamp*, electric, Quezal glass shade, iridescent gold, ruffled, brass base, curved stem, marked, Chase, early 1900s, 15 inches, \$200.
 - Toy*, horse, riding, folk art, painted, hair mane and tail, leather saddle, on platform, painted border, geometric, multicolor, wheels, Victorian, 23 x 28 inches, \$895.
 - Minton*, tazza, square bowl, ivory ground, slate blue panel, pate-sur-pate scene, seated figure, pierced handles, square base, gilt trim, early 20th century, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2 inches, pair, \$1,965.
- For more collecting news, tips and resources, visit www.Kovels.com
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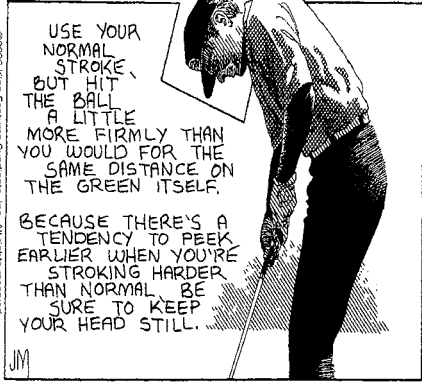


1. Which Hockey Hall of Famer and four-time Stanley Cup champion may be best known for the Canadian donut shop chain he cofounded in 1964?
2. Which NFL head coach compiled a 34-46 regular-season record with the Dallas Cowboys (1998-99) and Buffalo Bills (2010-12)?
3. What horse racing facility in Hallandale Beach, Florida, hosted the Breeders' Cup in 1989, 1992 and 1999?
4. What international agreement, signed in 1981, requires all member countries to protect the International Olympic Committee's five interlocking rings logo from unauthorized commercial use?
5. What university is known as "Sportscaster U." for its many alumni — including Marv Albert, Mike Tirico, Dick Stockton, Sean McDonough and Ian Eagle — with distinguished careers in sports media?
6. What two college football teams play for the Old Brass Spitoon rivalry trophy?
7. Name the Basketball Hall of Famer and Portland Trail Blazers head coach who was arrested in October 2025 as part of an investigation into rigged sports gambling and poker games.

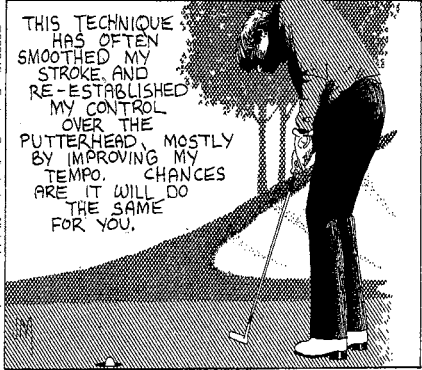
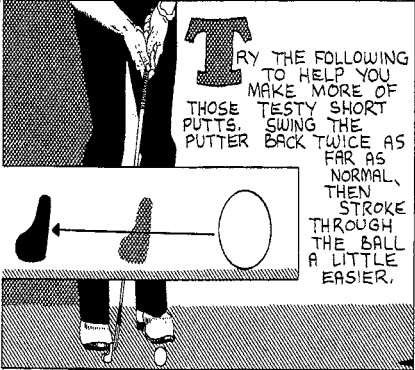
Answers

1. Tim Horton.
2. Chan Gailey.
3. Gulfstream Park.
4. The Nairobi Treaty on the Protection of the Olympic Symbol.
5. Syracuse University.
6. The Indiana Hoosiers and Michigan State Spartans.
7. Chauncey Billups.

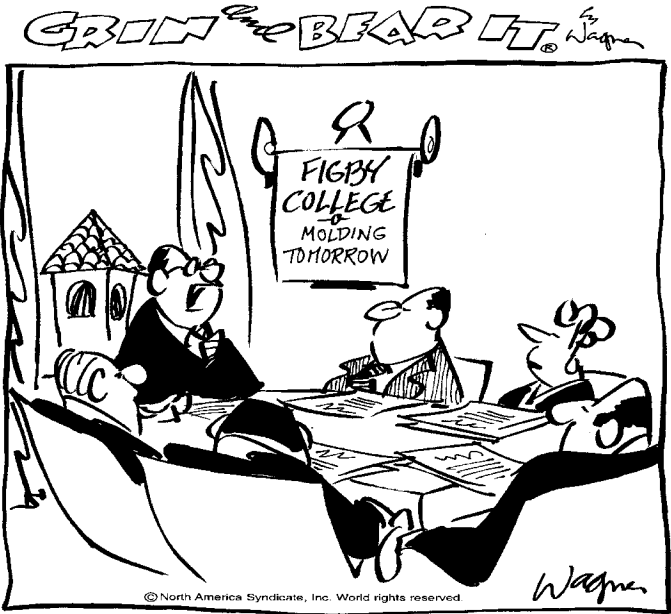
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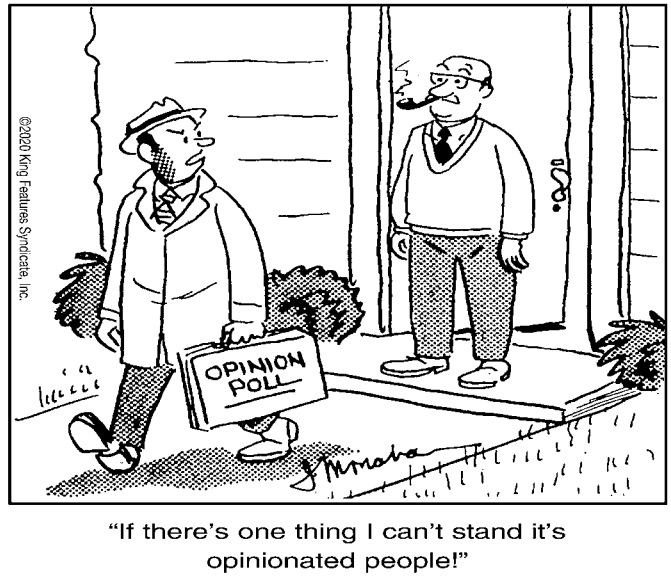
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STAN SMITH'S TENNIS CLASS



LAFF - A - DAY



Health



Using and Strengthening the Immune System To Prevent Cancer

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have read about using the immune system’s response as a mechanism to battle cancer (such as brain and pancreatic) and to reduce the devastating impact that cancer and its treatment has on humans. I understand current drug trials show promising results. How do doctors and scientists use the immune system to treat cancer? — J.W.

ANSWER: The concept of using the immune system to treat cancer is old, but the ability to do so has dramatically improved in the past few years. There are a few specific types of treatments that I’d like to highlight: Immune checkpoint inhibitors are treatments that release inhibitions on the immune system. (These “strengthen” the immune system, which has beneficial but also potentially toxic effects.) For melanoma, the most dangerous form of skin cancer, these treatments have revolutionized treatment and led to dramatically improved outcomes in people whose melanoma has spread. Response rates are up to 60% in a disease where the prognosis used to be dismal. The unleashed immune system can destroy cancer very effectively, but it also can attack healthy organs, with many people (between 10% to 60% depending on drugs and doses) developing damage to the skin, lungs, liver, thyroid, colon and heart. These toxicities range from mild to life-threatening. The body’s own immune cells can be genetically engineered to kill cancer cells. Chimeric antigen receptor T cells (CAR T cells) can be specifically changed to recognize cancer cells. This can lead to complete remission with some cancers, especially some leuke mias and lymphomas. Unfortunately, they can also attack the body, leading to neurological damage that can be very serious.

Developing cancer vaccines is a highly promising strategy for personalizing the immune system to attack a person’s own cancer. Although the United States has recently made dramatic cuts to its support of this research, researchers in other countries continue to study this. It can be used in combination with other traditional or immune-based treatments. The immune system can be used to help treat cancer effectively, but there is still the potential for serious side effects. ***

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am 89 years old and doing reasonably well, but I have noticed some loss of energy and a bit of my balance. I try to walk, do some exercises, and then hit the hot tub every day to help relax my joints. I recall reading an article about a study, which concluded that 15 minutes in a hot tub equated, cardiwise, to a 15-minute jog. I would really appreciate your opinion on this proposition. — J.D.

ANSWER: I read the study that I think you are referencing from Coventry, England, and the headline writers over-stated the more cautious conclusions of the actual study. Being in a hot tub or sauna does increase the heart rate and the ability of the heart to exert itself when done daily for four weeks in people with heart failure. Other studies have found that healthy volunteers also get small but significant improvements in their cardiac reserve, similar to (but not quite as much as) what would be expected with exercise. The benefits of exercise are well-known and large and go beyond the effects of the heart, while the benefits of regular hot-tub or sauna bathing appear to give some but not all the benefits of regular exercise. At age 89, there is a risk of heat-related injuries, including light-headedness and falling, so I would urge caution for new users not to use too high of a heat or stay in for too long, especially when first starting.

How Red Blood Cells Can Impact a Person’s A1C Level

DEAR DR. ROACH: I had an eye issue last year that led to blood tests resulting in an elevated A1C. I said that it wasn’t my blood; I am plant-based, exercise regularly, and don’t drink sodas or alcoholic beverages. Of course, they wanted to start me on medication for prediabetes, but I opted to see if I could fix it with dietary changes first.

I was told to limit bread, pasta and rice, among other things that vegans eat, and proceeded to lose a lot of weight. (I don’t have much to spare.) During my recent blood test, my A1C was still high at 6.1%. Looking into it a bit further, my physician’s assistant realized that low iron can impact A1C readings, and I have always had low iron. I take a supplement almost daily with an orange. Please tell your readers about this so as not to scare them into taking medicine that they might not need. There still may be something going on with me, and I will be getting more tests to be sure that this can be corrected. But I am somewhat relieved that it is not prediabetes. — M.K.

ANSWER: The A1C level measures the amount of sugar that is found on red blood cells. For most people, it’s an excellent indication of how high their blood sugar has been over the past few months. Half of red blood cells die after 60 days in most people, so the normal ranges of A1C are appropriate for people who have red blood cells that live a normal life. Several conditions lead to red blood cells that live much shorter than this. Sickle cell disease, autoimmune hemolytic anemias, and severe heart valve disease are among the diseases that have markedly shortened the lifespan of red blood cells. This can cause a person’s A1C level to be falsely low. A person with poorly controlled diabetes may have a normal A1C because the red blood cells don’t live long enough to accumulate as many sugar molecules on them. People with iron deficiency have slower red blood cell turnover or longer-lived red blood cells. This means that there is more time to accumulate sugar and a falsely elevated A1C level. Before we had the A1C test, we had blood sugar levels and glucose tolerance tests to make the diagnosis of prediabetes and diabetes. In people with abnormalities in their red blood cells, these are more reliable than the A1C level. ***

DEAR DR. ROACH: When I lay down, my toes tingle. This has been going on for several years. I’ve read that this is a sign of diabetes, but my annual physical shows that my sugar level is normal. — B.Y.

ANSWER: Tingling toes are a common symptom of neuropathy, but there are many types of neuropathies. So, it isn’t a diagnosis as much it is a description of a nerve problem. While diabetes is among the most common types of peripheral neuropathies, it isn’t the only one. Since both legs are affected, it is less

likely due to the direct compression of the peripheral nerve, which normally occurs on one side. The fact that it only occurs when you are laying down does suggest that there may be compression higher up, possibly in your spinal cord. Other neuropathies that normally affect both sides of the body include vitamin B12 deficiency and thyroid disease. Some medications can do it, but sometimes no cause is ever found. A neurologist is the ideal specialist to help diagnose this condition, especially one who specializes in neuropathy.

Man Experiences Symptoms of Excess Thyroid After MRI

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am a male who is 58 years of age. I recently had an MRI of my cervical spine, and just this month, I had a CT scan of my whole abdomen. Since then, I have had symptoms of dry eyes, weight loss and insomnia. I wondered if the contrast dye used for the MRI or CT scan can cause hyperthyroidism, as these are common symptoms for excess thyroid hormone. Do you think that I have hyperthyroidism? — G.L.

ANSWER: You are quite right that all these symptoms are commonly seen in people with excess thyroid. The weight loss is due to the increased metabolism of people with excess thyroid hormone. Insomnia is also common for similar reasons. Palpitations, tremor, anxiety, frequent bowel movements, and heat intolerance are all classical symptoms of excess thyroid hormone. You are also right that the iodine-containing dye from CT scans can precipitate hyperthyroidism in a person who is destined to get it. However, the risk of this occurring is low. There is no increased risk of thyroid disease with MRI dye. You could, indeed, have hyperthyroidism, and if you saw your doctor, you would very likely be tested. (I would certainly do so if I had a patient with these symptoms.) My experience is that these symptoms are not specific to thyroid disease, and it is probably some other cause. So, I would not be surprised if your thyroid tests were normal. ***

DEAR DR. ROACH: I recently got married again after being single for six years and have had five urinary tract

infections (UTIs) in 14 months. My primary care doctor, a urogy-necologist, and a urologist have all agreed on estradiol cream. I was basically put on this treatment for a prolapsed bladder and to build up my vaginal walls since I am sexually active again. After reading your recent column about hormone replacement therapy (HRT) in older women, I am concerned since I underwent menopause 20 years ago (instead of under 10) and just started this treatment two months ago. I might add that I had not had a UTI for 50 years prior, but vaginal dryness may be contributing to these UTIs. My doctor has not recommended a progestin, but I have also been introduced to taking a cranberry supplement once a day in tablet form to keep bacteria from multiplying. Would you have recommended the same treatment knowing that I have not had a period for 20 years? — L.E.

ANSWER: The risks from estrogen replacement in postmenopausal women are from systemic estrogen — meaning estrogen that gets absorbed into the blood. This includes estrogen pills and patches. Topical estrogen, such as vaginal creams, rings and gels, are not well absorbed in the body and do not significantly increase the risk of heart disease, which is the major reason that I recommended caution to women who under-went menopause more than 10 years ago. Similarly, progestins need to be used in women with a uterus when they’re taking systemic estrogen — but not topical estrogen. (Topical estrogen is absorbed slightly in women with atrophy of the vaginal lining, so it is always worth a consultation with an oncologist for women with estrogen-sensitive tumors, such as breast cancer.) I don’t generally advise systemic HRT more than 10 years postmenopause, but there still may be some times when it’s appropriate after a thorough discussion between a woman and her doctor. In your case, however, the risk of heart disease, breast cancer or blood clots is negligible from topical estrogen. ***

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.

Financial

CHANGES TO SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE IN 2026

1. Cost of living adjustment. Inflation went up in recent months, a 2.8% percent COLA for 2026 for people receiving Social Security and Supplemental Security Income payments. That’s up from a 2.5% percent COLA. The Social Security Administration estimates that the average retirement will rise

by about \$56 a month, from \$2,015 to \$2,071.

2. Medicare premiums. The standard monthly premium for Medicare Part B, covering doctor visits and outpatient treatment, increased almost 10 percent to \$202.90 up from \$185 in 2025. The Part B deductible rose to \$283 from \$257 before services are covered. And the Part A inpatient deductible is now \$1,736, up from \$1,676.

3. Social Security taxes. Most workers’ earnings are taxed at 12.4 percent to pay for Social Security, half paid by the employee and half by employers. Self-employed people pay the full 12.4 percent. The amount of income subject to this tax is being raised to \$184,500 (up from \$176,100 in 2025).

4. Qualifying for Benefits. The first step in qualifying for Social Security retirement benefits is having at least 40 Social Security credits. You

accumulate up to four credits a year by paying Social Security taxes on the money you earn. That threshold is being raised in 2026. For every quarter in which you earn at least \$1,890 in taxable work income, you’ll get one Social Security credit. The threshold per quarter last year was \$80 lower.

5. Tax Relief. A new tax break for people 65 and older will reduce taxable income by as much as \$6,000 for eligible taxpayers. (\$12,000 for couples). That deduction

is phased out for people with earnings over \$175,000, or couples with earnings over \$250,000.

6. Social Security earnings test. In 2026, beneficiaries who will not reach their full retirement age during the calendar year will have \$1 withheld from the Social Security payment for every \$2 in work income above \$24,480 (up from 23,400 om 2025).



1. Name the group that released “Heart of Glass.”
2. Who released “The Boys Are Back in Town”?
3. Which group released “The Boy from New York City”?
4. Who were The T-Birds and The Pink Ladies?
5. Name the 1958 cover of the song that contains this lyric: “Evening shadows make me blue when each weary day is through, How I long to be with you.”

Answers

1. Blondie, in 1979. It was their first No. 1 single. The song was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 2015, and Rolling Stone ranked the song as No. 138 in their list of 500 greatest songs of all time in 2021.
2. Thin Lizzy, in 1976. With the group being Irish, it’s not surprising that the song topped the chart in Ireland.
3. The Ad Libs, in 1964. A year later, the Beach Boys would release an answer song, “The Girl from New York City.”
4. They were the boy and girl groups at Rydell High School in “Grease.”
5. “My Happiness,” by Connie Francis. Her 1958 cover of the 1948 original climbed the charts but didn’t quite make it to the top. It would have been her first chart-topper.

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



• File this one under safety AND energy smarts: Clean the dryer vent after every load. Clean the dryer vent screen monthly with a gentle soap and water bath. Rinse well and dry thoroughly before inserting back into your dryer.

• “I used to struggle with plastic wrap every time I tried to use it. But now, it’s a breeze since I learned to do these two things: One, keep plastic wrap in the freezer. It unrolls evenly, not one side or the other. Two, use a serrated knife to cut it instead of relying on the metal strip down the side of the box. You lay it out on the counter, and just run the knife down the edge you want to cut. Works like magic, and it’s no longer frustrating.” — G.S. in Georgia

• Store an apple or two with your potatoes to keep them from sprout-

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- The Statue of Liberty was originally brown.
- Parrotfish are among the sleepest of sea creatures, averaging around a good 13 hours of rest per night. When not dozing, they spend as much as 90% of their time eating algae that grows on coral reefs.
- Reindeer eyes change color according to the seasons — they’re golden in the summer and blue during winter.
- The at symbol was invented more than four centuries before email was.
- The U.S. Postal Service employs a sharp-eyed group of folks whose job is to determine where to send letters and packages with illegible addresses. They work their magic at the USPS Remote Encoding Center in Salt Lake City, Utah, the first facility of its kind and now the only one still standing.
- Just 43 people have been known to have “golden blood,” the rarest of blood types.
- Potatoes are potato plants that also grow tomatoes. The hybrid occurs when a tomato plant is grafted onto a potato plant, a relatively easy thing since they’re both members of the solanum genus of the nightshade family.
- Leonardo da Vinci’s famous painting “The Last Supper” originally included Jesus’ feet.
- Portland, Oregon, was named in a coin toss in 1845 between Asa Lovejoy and Francis Pettygrove when the two couldn’t agree on a suitable moniker for their new land claim.
- Cacti aren’t native to most deserts.
- The human stomach can expand to hold as much as a 2-liter soda bottle, since its inner surface, the mucosa, is lined with folds called rugae that unfold and stretch out to accommodate food as it arrives.

Thought for the Day: “If you break your neck, if you have nothing to eat, if your house is on fire, then you got a problem. Everything else is inconvenience.” — *Robert Fulghum*

top 10 movies

1. **Avatar: Fire and Ash** (PG-13) Sam Worthington, Zoe Saldana
2. **Zootopia 2** (PG) Ginnifer Goodwin, Jason Bateman
3. **The Housemaid** (R) Sydney Sweeney, Amanda Seyfried
4. **Marty Supreme** (R) Timothée Chalamet, Gwyneth Paltrow
5. **Anaconda** (PG-13) Jack Black, Paul Rudd
6. **The SpongeBob Movie: Search for SquarePants** (PG) Tom Kenny, Clancy Brown
7. **David** (PG) Brandon Engman, Phil Wickham
8. **Song Sung Blue** (PG-13) Hugh Jackman, Kate Hudson
9. **Wicked: For Good** (PG) Cynthia Erivo, Ariana Grande
10. **Five Nights at Freddy’s 2** (PG-13) Josh Hutcherson, Piper Rubio

Fun Fact

Some jellyfish create their own light. This light is a result of energy released by certain chemical reactions that occur within the tissues of the jellyfish. It is called “bioluminescence.” It enables them to camouflage themselves from predators, lure their prey and even “communicate” with other jellyfish.

Source: www.originaldiving.com

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“83rd Golden Globe Awards” (TV-PG) — Nikki Glaser is back to host another round of the Golden Globes, and the ceremony is already available to stream in its entirety. Leading the pack in the film category is “One Battle After Another,” while “The White Lotus” inched past the rest with six total nominations to top the TV category. Dame Helen Mirren, who has extensive credits in film and television but won her Academy Award for her portrayal of Queen Elizabeth II in “The Queen,” will be honored with the Cecil B. DeMille Award. Meanwhile, for the Carol Burnett Award, the recipient is none other than our Carrie Bradshaw, Sarah Jessica Parker (“Sex and the City”). If there’s any award show that’ll keep you watching this season, it’s this one, so don’t miss it! (Paramount+)

“Zootopia 2” (PG) — The sequel to Walt Disney Animation Studios’ “Zootopia” (2016) not only brought in more money at the box office than its predecessor, but it also became the highest-grossing film that the company has ever produced. Ginnifer Goodwin reprises her role as lovable bunny cop Judy Hopps, and the satisfyingly sarcastic Jason Bateman is back as fox Nick Wilde. Officially partners now at the Zootopia Police Department, Judy and Nick begin working on a case where they must pursue Gary De’Snake (Ke Huy Quan), a viper who is the first snake to appear in Zootopia in years. During their investigation, they get mixed up with the Lynxley family, a powerful pack of Canada lynxes, and must also prove their innocence to clear their names and avoid becoming fugitives. Out now to rent! (Amazon Prime Video)

“Ponies” (TV-MA) — Emilia Clarke (“Game of Thrones”) and Haley Lu Richardson (“The White Lotus”) are the leading ladies of this new spy thriller series premiering on Jan. 15. Set in Moscow in 1977, Bea (Clarke) and Twila (Richardson) are two women working as secretaries at the American embassy, and both of their husbands are undercover CIA operatives. When they receive news that their husbands have died in a mysterious plane crash, both women are desperate for answers and agree to start working in intelligence. As the women are gently integrated into the world of espionage, they get closer to figuring out a large-scale conspiracy involving the Cold War. All eight episodes are out now to stream. (Peacock)



Courtesy of MovieStillsDB

Emilia Clarke, left, and Haley Lu Richardson star in “Ponies.”

“People We Meet on Vacation” (PG-13) — Scoot over, “The Kissing Booth” and “To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before”! I have a feeling this new rom-com that is out now to stream will be Netflix’s next success in the genre. Based on the novel by Emily Henry, it follows best friends Poppy (Emily Bader) and Alex (Tom Blyth), who live far apart from each other but agree to go on one week of summer vacation together for a decade. Although the two couldn’t be more different from each other, one always encourages the other to step out of their comfort zone, all while exploring different parts of the world together. But with the promise of vacations together for 10 years straight, will it be possible to keep the relationship platonic? Watch and see! (Netflix)

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by Jo Ann Derson

ing. Be sure to check them often.

• Cut cotton pads in half to double your supply. They are typically big enough for two uses, and you can always use two halves if you need a whole.

• “Make a cream lipstick last longer and stay cleaner by using a make-up brush to apply. Your skin picks up more of the lipstick than necessary, one reason why we blot our lips afterward. But the brush uses only what you need. And there’s less bacteria transfer.” — Y.R. in Massachusetts

• Studies have shown that you spend more and make worse decisions when grocery shopping at peak hours. To be a saver on the family food bill, pick a time to shop when you’re not rushed; have a list; know the sales ahead of time; and eat before you go.

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

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Easy Bites for the

BIG GAME

FAMILY FEATURES

Whether you're tailgating with friends or hosting a watch party at home, every football fan needs a game plan to crunch, dip and cheer their way through opening kickoff, halftime and right down to the final play of the game.

Some of the best game day grub is hearty and savory but adding layers of flavor and texture can take recipes to the next level. For example, these Burger Bowls feature all the classic ingredients of a great burger, just without the bun. A tasty option for gluten-free guests or those who are cutting carbs, the bowls are made with Dandy Iceberg Lettuce from Duda Farm Fresh Foods, which boasts a

legacy of quality, innovation and consistency in fresh produce cultivation since 1926.

Pulled pork, another tailgating treasure, gets an instant upgrade with the crunch of a fresh coleslaw topper and zesty pickled celery and jalapenos on the side. The winning play is to use crisp, fresh celery for the best flavors and a satisfying crunch with every bite. Since celery is 95% water and high in fiber, it leaves fans feeling comfortably full and ready to root for their favorite team.

This season, keep your snacks fresh and healthy while winning prizes like product coupons and gift cards to stock up for the next game through the Dip It to Win It Sweepstakes. Visit dudafresh.com to learn more and find additional game day recipes.



Burger Bowls
Recipe courtesy of Casa de Crews
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 10 minutes
Servings: 4



- Burger Bowls:**
- 2 cups French fries, homemade or frozen
 - 2 tablespoons olive oil
 - 1 small yellow onion, diced
 - 1 pound ground beef or ground turkey
 - 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
 - 1 teaspoon garlic powder
 - 1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt
 - 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
 - Dandy Iceberg Lettuce, shredded
 - 2-3 Roma tomatoes, diced
 - pickle chips or spears, chopped
 - cheddar cheese, shredded

- Burger Sauce:**
- 1/3 cup mayonnaise
 - 2 tablespoons ketchup
 - 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard or yellow mustard
 - 1 tablespoon pickle juice
 - 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
 - 1 teaspoon onion powder
 - 1 teaspoon garlic powder
 - 1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika

To make burger bowls: Cook French fries according to package directions. In medium skillet over medium-high heat, heat olive oil. Add onion

and saute until translucent, 5-7 minutes. Add ground beef to skillet, breaking up meat with spatula. Add Worcestershire sauce, garlic powder, paprika, salt and pepper; brown until cooked through. Drain and discard excess liquid and grease.

To make burger sauce: In jar, mix mayonnaise, ketchup, mustard, pickle juice, Worcestershire sauce, onion powder, garlic powder and paprika well to combine.

Assemble bowls with layer of shredded lettuce, 3-4 ounces ground beef, diced tomatoes, pickles, cheddar cheese and 1/2 cup fries.

Drizzle with burger sauce and mix well.

Tip: Burger sauce can be made in advance and stored in refrigerator in jar with airtight lid.

Pulled Pork Sandwiches with Pickled Celery and Jalapenos

Recipe courtesy of The Adventure Bite
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 10 hours
Servings: 9-10

Dandy Celery, cut and pickled jalapenos coleslaw (optional) potato salad (optional) baked beans (optional)

Place pork in slow cooker. Mix barbecue sauce, garlic and pepper. Pour over pork shoulder. Cook on low 8 1/2-10 hours or high 6-7 hours. Shred meat and serve on buns with pickled celery and jalapenos. Top with coleslaw, if desired. Serve with potato salad or baked beans, if desired.

- 4 1/2 pounds pork shoulder or Boston butt
- 26 ounces sweet and spicy barbecue sauce
- 1/2 tablespoon garlic
- 1/2 tablespoon fresh cracked black pepper
- fresh sandwich buns

5 Health Benefits of Whole Milk for Kids

FAMILY FEATURES

Forget the outdated nutrition advice that told parents to skip whole milk. A growing body of research is turning that idea on its head, making it time to rethink what "healthy" means for growing kids.

For decades, families have been told low-fat milk is the best choice once children turn 2. However, those recommendations were largely based on data from adults, not children. Today's evidence paints a different picture – one where whole milk supports kids' growth, development and long-term health.

"Parents are often surprised to learn whole milk isn't just safe – it's beneficial," said Jaclyn London, MS, RD, CDN, nutrition consultant and spokesperson for Dairy Farmers of America. "When we look at the latest research, whole milk provides the high-quality protein, healthy fats and essential nutrients kids need during key stages of development – without increasing risk for obesity or heart disease."

With 13 essential nutrients and vitamins – including calcium, vitamin D and protein – real dairy milk is a simple, nutrient-dense staple. It's also an easy addition to family favorites like Breakfast Cookies and Homemade Cream of Tomato Soup.

Here are five research-backed reasons to feel confident about choosing whole milk.

Whole milk is not associated with higher obesity rates. Multiple large-scale studies from "The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition," the "International Journal

of Obesity" and "Preventive Medicine Reports" show children who drink whole milk have lower or similar body fat levels compared to those drinking reduced-fat milk.

Whole milk does not increase risk of heart disease. According to "Advances in Nutrition," whole milk does not increase cardiometabolic risk in kids; in fact, it's associated with better vitamin D levels with no adverse effects on cholesterol or glucose.

It's nutrient-dense and supports optimal growth. All types of milk, including whole, provide essential nutrients like calcium, protein and vitamins A and D – all critical for bone development and healthy growth in children, per "Nutrition Research Reviews."

Kids like the taste – and that matters. Children often prefer the taste of whole milk over low-fat versions, according to the "Journal of Dairy Science," which can lead to more consistent consumption.

Adults may benefit, too. Among adults, full-fat dairy is associated with greater satiety, improved blood sugar regulation and a reduced risk of metabolic syndrome, according to a study published in "Nutrition & Metabolism," helping reframe full-fat dairy as part of a balanced diet.

Learn more at DFAMilk.com.



Homemade Cream of Tomato Soup
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 20 minutes
Servings: 4

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 medium white onion, chopped
- 1 1/2 teaspoons finely chopped garlic
- 1 can (28 ounces) crushed tomatoes
- 1 tablespoon parsley flakes
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 tablespoon roughly chopped fresh basil leaves
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2-3 cups milk
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- basil leaves, for garnish (optional)



In 2-quart saucepan over medium-high heat, heat olive oil; add onion and garlic. Cook, stirring occasionally, until tender, 2-3 minutes. Add tomatoes, parsley and baking soda. Cook until mixture comes to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook 10 minutes. Stir in basil and honey. Stir in milk to reach desired consistency. Cook over medium-high heat until heated through, 2-3 minutes. Add salt and pepper, to taste. Garnish with basil leaves, if desired.

Breakfast Cookies

Prep time: 20 minutes
Cook time: 15 minutes
Servings: 12

Heat oven to 350 F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper; set aside.

In large bowl, stir oats, flour, brown sugar, baking powder and salt. In medium bowl, stir butter, milk, egg and vanilla until well mixed; add to oat mixture. Stir until combined and evenly moistened.

Drop 1/4 cup dough onto prepared cookie sheets. Slightly flatten dough with hand. Bake 15-17 minutes, or until lightly browned, firm to touch and baked through. Move to wire rack to cool.

Variations: Add maple syrup and crumbled bacon; sliced almonds, dried cherries and almond extract; semisweet chocolate chips and banana pieces; or peanuts and peanut butter.

- Cookie Base:**
- 2 1/2 cups old-fashioned oats
 - 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
 - 1/3 cup firmly packed brown sugar
 - 1 teaspoon baking powder
 - 1/8 teaspoon salt
 - 1/4 cup butter, melted
 - 1/2 cup whole milk
 - 1 egg
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Good Housekeeping

Meal-in-a-Bowl Minestrone

The ideal antidote to a dreary day, this protein-packed soup is as tasty as it is nutritious, with broccoli, carrots, zucchini, green beans, tomatoes, cannellini beans and macaroni simmered in light chicken broth.

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1½ cup chopped onion
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 4 cup water
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 can reduced-sodium fat-free chicken broth (1¾ cups)
- 1 cup small whole-wheat pasta (such as elbow macaroni)
- 1 medium carrot, cut in 4 pieces lengthwise and diced
- 1 can no-salt-added cannellini beans
- 8 ounces broccoli rabe, cut bite-size
- 1 medium zucchini, cut in half lengthwise and diced
- 4 ounces green beans
- 1 cup packed parsley leaves
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan
- 1 pound plum (Roma) tomatoes

1. Heat 1 teaspoon oil in a heavy 5- to 6-quart pot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Stir in onion; cover and cook 5 minutes or until golden, stirring occasionally. Add 2 teaspoons garlic; cook 30 seconds until fragrant.

2. Add 4 cups water and the broth; bring to a boil. Add pasta and carrot; boil 5 minutes. Reserve ¾ cup of the cannellini beans; stir rest into pot along with broccoli rabe, zucchini and green beans. Return to a boil and boil 5 minutes or until pasta and vegetables are tender.

3. Meanwhile puree remaining beans, 5 teaspoons oil, 1 teaspoons garlic, 1/4 cup water, parsley and the cheese in a food processor or blender.

4. Remove from heat; stir tomatoes into soup. Stir in the parsley mixture or serve it alongside. Serves 4.

TIP: Broccoli rabe stems cook tender, meaning that unlike collards and kale, you don't need to pull the leaves off the stems. Cut off (and discard) the stems just below the string or wire tie binding them. Remove the tie, and hold on to the bunch as long as you can while you slice the stalks and leaves. Wash well before cooking. A bunch of broccoli rabe usually weighs around 1 pound.

Good Housekeeping

Fettuccine With Lemony Shrimp

Light and aromatic with the scent of fresh lemon, this pasta dish looks and tastes as good as any restaurant meal, but can be created at home in just 30 minutes. It serves six, so invite some friends over.

- Salt and pepper
- 2 large leeks
- 1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1½ pounds shrimp
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 1 pound fettuccine
- 1 tablespoon margarine or butter
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh basil leaves
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves
- 1 lemon

1. Heat large covered saucepot of water to boiling on high. Add 2 teaspoons salt.

2. Trim and discard root and dark green top from leeks. Discard any tough outer leaves. Cut leeks lengthwise in half, then crosswise into 1/4-inch-wide slices. Place leeks in large bowl of cold water; with hand, swish to remove any sand. Remove leeks to colander. Repeat process with fresh water, changing water several times until sand is removed. Drain leeks well.

Good Housekeeping

Chicken and Mushrooms with Brown Rice

Earthy mushrooms and satisfying whole grains make this chicken-and-rice dish an ideal dinner option for losing weight in the new year.

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1¼ pounds skinless, boneless chicken thighs
- 1 package (10-ounce) sliced cremini mushrooms
- 2 medium stalks celery, thinly sliced
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme leaves
- 1 can (14- to 14-1/2-ounce) chicken broth
- 1 cup instant brown rice
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper
- 8 baby summer squash, halved and steamed

1. In 12-inch skillet, heat oil or medium-high until hot. Add chicken and cook, covered, 5 minutes. Reduce heat to medium; turn chicken and cook, covered, 5 more minutes. Transfer to plate.

2. To same skillet, add mushrooms, celery and thyme; cook 5 minutes or until vegetables are softened, stirring occasionally. Add broth, rice, wine salt and black pepper; heat to boiling.

3. Return chicken to skillet. Reduce heat to low; cover and simmer about 12 minutes or until juices run clear when thickest part of chicken is pierced with knife, and rice is cooked. Serve with squash. Serves 4.

• Each serving (without squash) 340 calories, 13g total fat (2g saturated), 118g cholesterol, 595mg sodium, 21g total carbohydrate, 3g dietary fiber, 35g protein.

Good Housekeeping

Portobello Parmesan

Stuff mushrooms with marinara, mozzarella and breadcrumbs for an easy, delicious dinner that will satisfy meat lovers and vegetarians, alike.

- 4 large portobello mushroom caps
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup marinara
- 4 slices fresh salted mozzarella
- 1/4 cup panko

Freshly grated Parmesan, sauteed kale and sliced baguette, for serving

1. On foil-lined, rimmed baking sheet, place portobello mushroom caps smooth sides down; spray with non-stick cooking spray and sprinkle with salt. Bake in 450 F oven 10 minutes.

2. Spoon 1/4 cup marinara sauce into each cap; top each with mozzarella slice, then 1 tablespoon panko. Spray all over with nonstick spray.

3. Bake 15 minutes longer or until cheese has melted and mushrooms are tender. Garnish with freshly grated Parmesan. Serve with sauteed kale and sliced baguette. Serves 4.

• Each serving: About 395 calories, 24g fat (11g saturated fat), 22g protein, 30g carbs, 6g fiber, 690mg sodium.

Good Housekeeping

Fontina and Pepper Pizza

When cooked on the grill, homemade pizza becomes a gourmet affair. Add roasted peppers and fresh herbs to the mix, and you've got dinner suitable for company.

- 1 pound fresh pizza dough
- 6 ounces Italian Fontina or Provolone cheese, shredded
- 2 jarred roasted red and/or yellow peppers, thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh marjoram or thyme leaves

1. Prepare outdoor grill for covered, direct grilling on medium-low.

2. Cut dough into 4 equal pieces. On one end of oiled cookie sheet, with fingertips, spread and flatten 1 piece of dough to about 1/8-inch thickness. (Edge does not need to be even.) On same cookie sheet, repeat with another piece of dough. Repeat with a second oiled cookie sheet and remaining dough.

3. Place all 4 pieces of dough, oiled side down, on hot grill grate. Cook 2 to 3 minutes or until grill marks appear on underside (dough will stiffen and puff).

4. With tongs, turn crusts over. Working quickly, arrange one-fourth of Fontina and one-fourth of peppers on each crust. Cover grill and cook pizzas 3 to 4 minutes longer or until undersides are evenly browned and cooked through.

5. Transfer to cutting board; sprinkle with marjoram. Cut into wedges. Serves 4.

Tip: Look for fresh pizza dough in the dairy section of your supermarket, usually sold near the tortillas. (Frozen pizza dough also is available, but it takes several hours to thaw before it can be used.) Or you can purchase dough from a local pizzeria; they'll usually sell it to you in 1 pound balls if you ask.

• Each serving: About 465 calories, 18g total fat (9g saturated), 49mg cholesterol, 640mg sodium, 57g total carbs, 3g dietary fiber, 18g protein.

Good Housekeeping

Chilled Corn and Bacon Soup

Light but lush — it's thickened with late-season corn, low-fat milk and a Yukon gold potato — this refreshing farm-stand soup is summer's answer to cold-weather chowders.

- 4 slices thick-cut bacon, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 large shallot, finely chopped
- 3 cups fresh corn kernels
- 1 large (8 ounce) Yukon gold potato, peeled and shredded
- 1/8 teaspoon smoked paprika, plus additional for garnish
- 2/3 cup water
- 4 cups (1%) low-fat milk
- Salt and pepper
- 1/4 cup packed fresh cilantro leaves

1. In 12-inch skillet, cook bacon on medium 6 to 8 minutes or until crisp and browned. With slotted spoon, transfer to paper towels to drain. If making ahead, cover and refrigerate up to overnight.

2. Drain and discard all but 1 tablespoon fat from skillet. Add shallots and cook on medium 2 minutes or until golden and tender, stirring occasionally. Add 2 1/2 cups corn, shredded potato and paprika. Cook 2 minutes, stirring, then add water and cook 7 minutes or until liquid evaporates and vegetables are tender.

3. Remove skillet from heat and transfer corn mixture to blender. Add milk and 1/8 teaspoon salt and puree until mixture is very smooth. Cover and refrigerate until soup is very cold, at least 3 hours and up to overnight.

4. To serve, divide among serving bowls. Top with bacon, cilantro, 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper and remaining 1/2 cup corn. Garnish with paprika. Makes 4 servings.

• Each serving: About 375 calories, 12g total fat (5g saturated), 23mg cholesterol, 750mg sodium, 54g total carbohydrate, 5g dietary fiber, 17g protein.

Comfort foods

Made fast
and
healthy



by Healthy Exchanges

Southwestern Pasta Salad

What could be better than gathering together with family and friends, and celebrating with food, fellowship and fun? Take this layered pasta salad to the next "potluck" and be sure to enjoy yourself!

- 1½ cups cold, cooked rotini pasta, rinsed and drained
- 1/4 cup fat-free Ranch dressing
- 2 cups finely shredded lettuce
- 1 cup chopped fresh tomato
- 1/4 cup chopped green onion
- 1/4 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 3/4 cup fat-free mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup chunky salsa
- 3/4 cup shredded reduced-fat Cheddar cheese

1. In a medium bowl, combine rotini pasta and Ranch dressing. In an 8-by-8-inch dish, layer lettuce, rotini pasta, tomato, onion and green pepper.

2. In a small bowl, combine mayonnaise and salsa; evenly spread dressing mixture over vegetables. Sprinkle Cheddar cheese evenly over top.

3. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. Divide into 6 servings.

• Each serving equals: 143 calories, 3g fat, 7g protein, 22g carb., 465mg sodium, 1g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 Starch, 1 Vegetable, 1/2 Meat.

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Crime

Robbery on West Belmont Avenue and Clark Street.	Robbery on North State Street and Division Street.	Theft on the 2000 block of North Milwaukee Avenue.	Theft on the 100 block of West Goethe Street.	Shooting on the 1000 block of West Catalpa Avenue.	Burglary on the 3400 block of West Addison Street.
Robbery on the 700 block of West Division Street.	Assault on the 4300 bloock of North Hazel Street.	Assault on the 2300 block of Wewst Addison Street.	Theft on the 500 block of West Webster Avenue.	Burglary on the 4500 block of North Lincoln Avenue.	Robbery on the 6200 block of North Leavitt Street.
Burglary on the 2600 block of North Halsted Street.	Theft on the 800 block of West Newport Avenue.	Assault on the 4700 block of North Clarendon Avenue.	Theft on the 4400 block of North Broadway.	Burglary on the 800 block of West Irving Park.	Assault on the 1300 block of North Homan Avenue.
Shooting on the 1000 block of West Catalpa Avenue.	Theft on the 300 block of West Racine Avenue.	Vandalism on the 400 block of West Evergreen Avenue.	Assault on the 400 block of West Diversey Parkway.	Robbery on the 2300 block of North Ashland Avenue.	Theft on the 2000 block of North Milwaukee Avenue.
Burglary on the 4500 blco of North Lincoln Avenue.	Theft on the 1900 block of West Winona Avenue.	Theft on the 1700 block of West Honore Street.	Theft on the 1100 block of West Howe Street.	Robbery on the 4200 block of North Kedzie Avenue.	Vandalism on the 5000 block of North Sheridan Road.
Assault on the 800 block of North State Street.	Theft on the 4600 block of West Clarendon Avenue.	Vandalism on the 1000 block of North Wood Street.	Theft on the 1500 block of West Cleveland Avenue.	Shooting on West Farragut and North Lincoln Avenue.	Robbery on the 4700 block of North Pulaski Road.
Burglary on the 800 block of West Irving Park Road.	Shooting on West Carmen Avenue and North Sheridan Road.	Theft on the 1900 block of North Stockton Drive.	Theft on the 1100 block of North Noble Street.	Vandalism on the 5500 block of West Armitage Avenue.	Arrest on the 2400 block of Howard Street.
Burglary on the 2300 block of West Lawrence Avenue.	Vandalism on the 4600 block of North Clarendon Road.	Burglary on the 1400 block of North Wood Street.	Theft on the 4600 block of North Marine Drive.	Shooting on the 1900 block of North California Avenue.	Assault on the 6500 block of North Sheridan Road.
Assault on the 800 block of West State Street.	Theft on the 1400 block of North Dayton Street.	Assault on the 3100 block of North Sheffield Avenue.	Theft on the 800 block of North Dearborn treet.	Shooting on West Carmen Avenue and North Sheridan Road.	Assault on the 7000 block of North Clark Street.
Robbery on the 800 block of North Bishop Street.	Theft on the 800 block of West Montrose Avenue.	Robbery on the 900 block of North Sunnyside Avenue.	Theft on the 1900 block of North Stockton Drive.	Theft on the 800 block of West Montrose Avenue.	Theft on the 1100 block of Howard Street.
Robbery on the 2300 block of North Ashland avenue.	Vandalism on the 500 block of North Sheridan Road.	Theft on the 500 block of West Melrose Street.	Shooting on the 3700 block of West Armitage Avenue.	Assault on the 2100 block of North California Avenue.	Burglary on the 3400 block of West Addison Street.

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At least 473 burglaries were reported in Illinois last year at businesses offering video gambling - compared to 358 in 2024, when \$1.9 million was stolen. Many incidents involve crews of masked bandits smashing through doors and windows, wielding sledgehammers and other tools. In the first two weeks of January, were 40 cases.

What’s Hot In Hollywood & Gardening

HOLLYWOOD -- Once upon a time, Hollywood had larger-than-life male stars who female fans dreamed of -- handsome, virile men who'd sweep them off their feet and free them from their humdrum lives. Clark Gable, Cary Grant, Tony Curtis, Rock Hudson, Tab Hunter and Troy Donahue had huge female followings. But the movie industry has changed. Television came along and shrunk these matinee idols into a TV set. Today movie fans demand more than broad shoulders and handsome faces. Now they demand complicated storylines in great scripts.

The last real superstar is Tom Cruise, who has prevailed for 40 years as a major movie star. Getting moviegoers to sit through seven "Mission: Impossible" movies is a major miracle. At 63, he still does physical stunts that would make a younger man flinch.

Cruise has announced that his next project is "Digger," a black comedy directed by Oscar-winning director Alejandro G. Inarritu; it also stars Jesse Plemons, Riz Ahmed and John Goodman. Principal photography began in November 2024 and wrapped on May 3, 2025. It's due out this October.

Cruise stands alone as the biggest star on the planet. George Clooney is very talented, but his latest effort, while successful, was Netflix's "Jay Kelly." Ryan Reynolds has slowed down, choosing to give his time to other business ventures. After you've written, produced and starred in a film that grossed \$1.3 billion ("Deadpool & Wolverine"), tax people will tell you not to work for a year or two if you want to keep some of the money. This explains why Reynolds only has "Animal Friends," "Avengers: Doomsday," and "Mayday" (for Apple TV+) on his schedule.

Hugh Jackman is currently on screen in "Song Sung Blue," and he also has an upcoming role in "The Sheep Detectives" this May. In addition, Jackman will play the titular character in "The Death of Robin Hood," but there's no release date as of yet.

Nipping at their heels are the up-and-coming headliners. Glen Powell has "How to Make a Killing" coming on Feb. 20 and "The Great Beyond," which doesn't have a release date yet. Jacob Elordi saw his "Frankenstein" film gross \$480,678 (against a \$150-million cost) before it hit Netflix three weeks later. He'll next star as Heathcliff in the "Wuthering Heights" remake due in February. He also has "The Dog Stars" coming in March.

Tom Holland hits screens on July 17 in "The Odyssey," then in "Spider-Man: Brand New Day" on July 31. Dwayne Johnson has the live-action "Moana" releasing on July 10 and an untitled "Jumanji" sequel releasing in December.

Timothee Chalamet, who is currently in "Marty Supreme," has "Dune: Part Three" coming on Dec. 18. Ryan Gosling has "Project Hail Mary" releasing in March and "Star Wars: Starfighter" releasing in May 2027. Jeremy Allen White



Courtesy of Warner Bros.

Clark Gable (An example of a larger-than-life movie star.)

has "The Mandalorian and Grogu" releasing in May and "The Social Reckoning" releasing on Oct. 9.

Cruise better watch his back; these young bloods are cruising to bruise him!

HOLLYWOOD -- During Hollywood's Golden Age, movies had their own royalty with queens such as Greta Garbo, Marlene Dietrich, Jean Harlow, Merle Oberon, Katharine Hepburn, Bette Davis and Joan Crawford, to name some. They were major influences on women's fashion. Garbo was eloquent, while Harlow was brassy but sexy. When Hepburn and Dietrich wore pants, it suddenly became alright for all women to wear pants. They were melodramatic to a fault, playfully sexy, or downright bawdy. When Eleanor Powell took on Fred Astaire, their dance duet was thrilling, opening the door for Ginger Rogers to be Astaire's partner, which was movie-musical magic! Crawford, who allegedly started in X-rated films, became a dancer in early musicals, and then she became the queen of the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer lot. When she made "What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?" (1962) (against Davis' objections), it proved that negative chemistry could be dynamite!

Our current leading ladies are a lot different than the glamorous stars whom the major studios literally created and promoted.

Zendaya, 29, started her career by lending her voice to three films before appearing in seven major films. When she became Spider-Man's leading lady in four films, she also became Tom Holland's love interest off-screen as well. The engaged couple have completed their fourth

"Spider-Man" movie (due on July 31). But Zendaya didn't stop there. ... She has "Dune: Part Three" coming on Dec. 18 and "Shrek 5" out in June 2027. She also has extensive TV credits, including the upcoming third season of "Euphoria."

Nicole Kidman, who is one of the highest-paid actresses in films today, began making movies in 1983 and has completed over 90 films. In the process, she won an Oscar for "The Hours" in 2003, a SAG Award, six Golden Globes, and two Emmys. Upcoming for her in September is "Practical Magic 2," as well as "The Young People."

Kidman also starred in 26 films that were made for TV and several series, including the Amazon Prime Video series "Scarpetta," which drops in March, and Apple TV+'s "Margo's Got Money Troubles," which drops in April.

Margot Robbie's 31st film was "Barbie," and her take of the \$1 billion box-office grosses was \$12.5 million. Her 36th film, "Wuthering Heights," opens on Feb. 11.

Sandra Bullock has made about 50 films, won an Oscar for "The Blind Side" (2009), and was paid \$70 million for "Gravity" (2013) and \$20 million for "The Lost City" (2022). Her film with Kidman, "Practical Magic 2," opens in September.

Scarlett Johansson's 80 films have grossed over \$15.4 billion worldwide. Her most recent effort was "Jurassic World Rebirth." She has Netflix's "Ray Gunn" and the crime drama "Paper Tiger" coming in 2026.

Today's female stars aren't brainless beauties in gorgeous gowns but beauty-less brains who are less concerned with show business and more concerned with the business of "show!"



Courtesy of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer
Actress Greta Garbo for "Conquest" (1937)



by Dana Jackson

Q: What ever happened to Mickey Rourke? He appeared to be making a comeback in the movie where he played a wrestler, but I haven't seen him in anything since. -- D.S.

A: It's hard to believe, but Mickey Rourke is now 73 years old. However, his career actually isn't slowing down. It peaked in the '80s with starring roles in movies like "9 1/2 Weeks" and "Angel Heart." He made a comeback in 2008 with "The Wrestler," which even earned him a Best Actor Oscar nomination. During the decades between these two time periods, he acted in dozens of projects.

Now it's 2026, and again, if you look at his resume, he's staying busy. In the early 2000s, he had roles in hit films like "Sin City" and "Iron Man 2." Most recently, he's starred in little-known films like "Jade" and "The Roaring Game," but unfortunately these don't appear to be paying the rent, as he was recently served with an eviction notice for \$60,000 in unpaid rent.

Rourke has six upcoming projects, however, including the horror film "3 Days Rising" with Peter Greene, who passed away last month.

Q: When is the new series about the NFL with William H. Macy coming out? I need something to watch after football season ends. -- B.T.

A: While a premiere date hasn't been announced yet, we do have more information about the series thanks to one of its stars, William H. Macy, who shared a few details on the red carpet at the Critics Choice Awards. Currently, we know its title is "The Land" and that Macy plays the owner of the Cleveland Browns, but it's not a biopic. The Browns are the featured team "nominally" only, as Macy put it, and the scripts are "brilliant." He expanded on this by saying, "They're Shakespearean. It's about football, but oh, my lord, the plots are so profound, and I'm having the time of my life."

The series is created by Dan Fogelman ("This Is Us" and "Paradise"), who knows a thing or two about family dramas. Christopher Meloni ("Law & Order: SVU") will play the head coach, with Sam Corlett ("Vikings: Valhalla") and Tanner Zagarino ("Shrinking") cast as his sons. Mandy Moore ("This Is Us") and Chloe Bennet



Courtesy of Searchlight Pictures
Mickey Rourke in "The Wrestler" (2008)

("Dave") will play Macy's daughters. Chace Crawford ("The Boys") will play the Browns' general manager.

Q: I read that Evangeline Lilly has brain damage from a concussion. Was it something that happened recently or while she was on "Lost"? -- T.D.

A: The "Lost" star Evangeline Lilly suffered a serious concussion after fainting earlier this year in Hawaii. She was on the beach when she passed out and hit her head on a boulder. She recently shared on Instagram that almost every area of her brain is "functioning at a decreased capacity" since the accident. According to Entertainment Weekly, the actress has suffered from fainting spells throughout her life, but no medical cause has been found. She's come to accept them and believes that the "checking out" is a result of [her] little soul reaching her limit."

Send me your questions at
NewCelebrityExtra@gmail.com.

Among the northern tribes of Europe, the *jól* (Yule) was an important festival, though the exact dates for its celebration varied from location to location. Around midwinter, an entire tree trunk would be carried into a feasting hall and set ablaze, to burn for many days.

As the people feasted, sacrificed and celebrated around this burning Yule log, they would implore their gods to bring back the warmth and light of summer, so they could grow crops and feed their families in the coming year. This tradition is one of the world's oldest.

- Brenda Weaver

Sources: matreeservice.com, valkyrja.com, www.almanac.com

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• Resolve to incorporate more sustainable methods in your gardening habits, such as improved water conservation and more organic practices in your soil preparation.

• Resolve to reach out to the community more using your gardening skills. Perhaps you could donate your own flower arrangements to local senior activity centers, or donate your canned produce to a food pantry.

Source: www.almanac.com

- Brenda Weaver

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As snowflakes form in the clouds and fall to the earth, they collect nitrogen and other particulates like sulfur from the atmosphere. These nutrients will serve as natural fertilizers later on. As these flakes collect on the ground and form thick, mounded heaps of snow, this provides excellent insulation and shelter for the vulnerable garden beds beneath. The soil, the organisms in the soil and root systems are now protected from severe temperature fluctuations and icy winds. As the months become warmer, the melting snow gently releases moisture and nutrients into the soil.

- Brenda Weaver

Sources: nsidc.org, www.almanac.com, mothernatureapprentice.com

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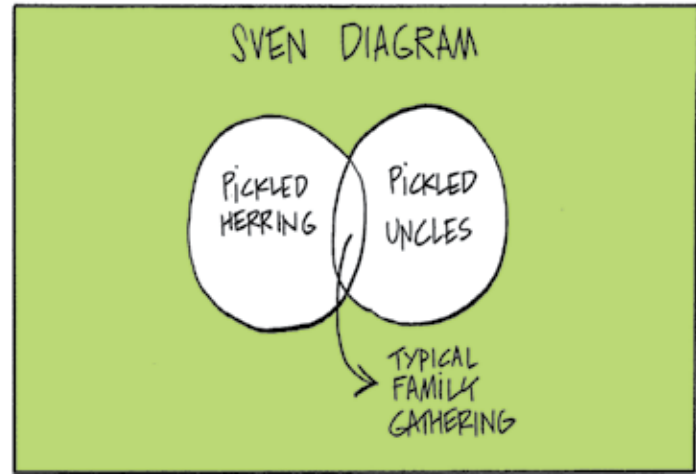
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Comics

Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas





SVEN DIAGRAM








Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps











'The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



Puzzles4Kids

by Helene Hovanec

WORD FUN

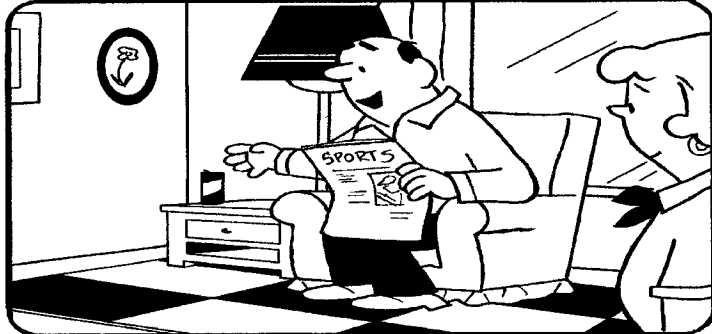

Study the two words on each line to find the ONE letter in the left column that is NOT in the word in the right column. Write the extra letter on the blank space. Then read DOWN to answer this riddle:

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WINTER ARRIVES?

HOARSE	___	SHORE	REFILL	___	FLIER
SAUCER	___	CARES	SEVERE	___	VERSE
JESTER	___	JEERS	HATING	___	NIGHT
LOCUST	___	CLOTS	RAVENS	___	SNARE
MAPLES	___	LEAPS	WONDER	___	DROWN
PEANUT	___	TAUPE	BASSET	___	BEAST

HOCUS-FOCUS


BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Differences: 1. Arm is shorter. 2. Window sill is higher. 3. Bow is larger. 4. Paper is longer. 5. Lampshade is different. 6. Sleeve is different.

Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



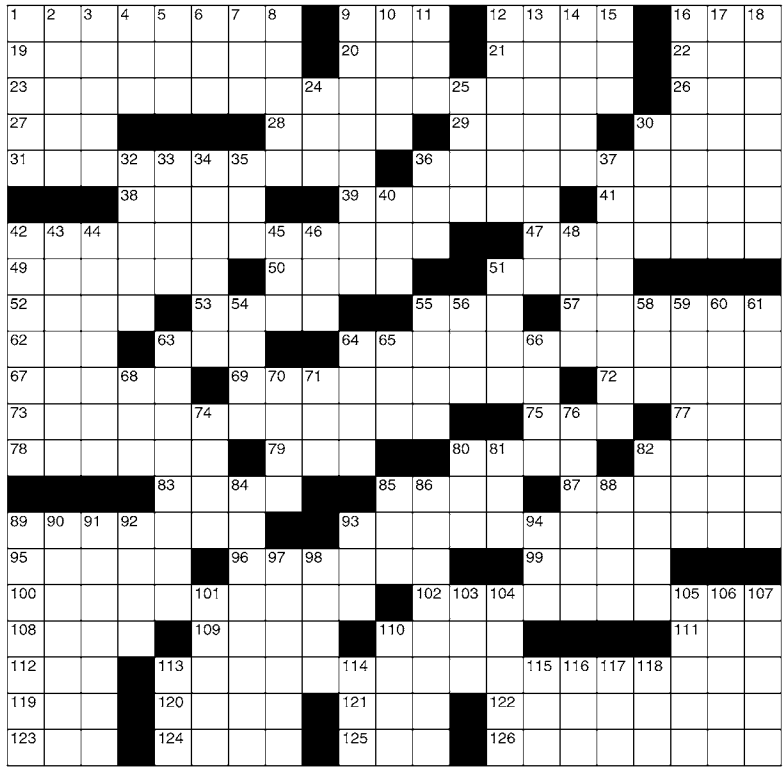
Puzzles4Kids

Answer

HOARSE	A	SHORE
SAUCER	U	CARES
JESTER	T	JEERS
LOCUST	U	CLOTS
MAPLES	M	LEAPS
PEANUT	N	TAUPE
REFILL	L	FLIER
SEVERE	E	VERSE
HATING	A	NIGHT
RAVENS	V	SNARE
WONDER	E	DROWN
BASSET	S	BEAST

Crossword

Super Crossword



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- ACROSS**
- 1 Easy to carry
9 CFO's deg., perhaps
12 Hacks off
16 U.S. soldiers
19 Priest, at a baptism
20 Alley—
21 Pendant gem
22 Period
23 Medical operation led by a wizard?
26 Phone no.
27 Crusty treat
28 Harbinger
29 Make sharp
30 Toon skunk
31 Bow shooter's attention?
36 Manhole lid, e.g.
38 —avis
39 Sad, to Sartre
41 City in western New York
42 Muscat native who regularly attends Mass?
47 Kia crossover SUV model
49 —of the North" (1922 documentary)
50 Denivation of a word: Abbr.
51 Tax IDs
- 52 London or Leeds native
53 Onetime Texaco rival
55 Mined stuff
57 Turks and — Islands
62 Olive of "Popeye"
63 Grill residue
64 Like a cream-colored skeleton?
67 Make flush
69 Enclosed bill of fare?
72 Showed on TV again
73 Actor Silver portraying a guy escaping a burning building?
75 With 55-Down, "My treat"
77 And the like: Abbr.
78 Face-off participant
79 Elev.
80 Kismet
82 152, to Cato
83 Remainder
85 500-sheet paper unit
87 Comic Kevin
89 Roster in a mob film
93 Preparing to install a steam outlet?
- 95 One-off, as a committee
96 Vouch for
99 Writer Seton
100 Winter storm conditions?
102 Sort who doesn't think before speaking?
106 Speak wildly
109 Litigant
110 Polite request starter
111 Pro-gun gp.
112 Soft & —
113 Feature of this puzzle (hint: string together the letters omitted from the starts of 10 long answers)
119 Lofty verse
120 Notion, in Nantes
121 Banquet dispenser
122 Irredeemable
123 Boise-to-Fresno dir.
124 Scottish loch
125 Mil. draft org.
126 Stays with, as an agenda
- 2 Broadcast studio sign
3 Federer of tennis
4 Deadlock
5 "Life of Pi" director Lee
6 Gas grill meas.
7 Maui wreath
8 Hosp. trauma pro
9 In a demure way
10 Cap'n's underling
11 "Much — About Nothing" (1996 "Simpsons" episode)
12 Sign off from a computer
13 Candor
14 Whittled
15 Devious
16 Settle a score
17 "Let me say it again ..."
18 Southern Italian city
24 Very tall bird
25 Letters after pis
30 Flag holder
32 "... unless I'm wrong"
33 City in Texas
- 34 "Star Trek: The Next Generation" actor
35 Cereal grass
36 Singer
37 Swift pirate ships
40 Border
42 In a plane, e.g.
43 Gymnast
44 Dyemaking compound
45 "— So Shy"
46 Ear: Prefix
48 Like many '90s albums
51 Actor Penn
54 — Tzu (dog)
55 See 75-Across
56 Dark bread
58 "— done it!"
59 "Thelma" novelist
60 Big speech
61 Matching up, as files
63 Vampire
64 "So —" ("Very well")
65 NHL's Bobby
66 When la lune shines
68 Actor Gerard
70 Orderly
- 71 Rams' org.
74 "— chic!"
76 Rent payer
80 Suet, e.g.
81 Roadie's load
82 Suez, e.g.
84 Positions
85 Hi— picture
86 Steps onto a subway, say
88 "River" New Age artist
89 Coiffures
90 Drivers' licenses, e.g.
91 TV show created by Barbara Walters
92 Rob of "The Stand"
93 Edition: Abbr.
94 —di-dah
97 Dissertations
98 Actress Garr
101 Digression
103 Author Rand
104 Relief sounds
105 Patella sites
106 Artist Max
107 "Midnight Cowboy" role
110 Bus, bosses
113 60 secs.
114 Letters after mus
115 Decay
116 Prefix with dermis
117 Nov. follower
118 Type



Those Annoying Little Nips

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: We took our 2-year-old German shepherd to the vet last month to have a cyst removed. The surgery went fine; however, ever since Max came home he has been "playfully" biting and nipping at our hands and arms. We thought we trained him out of this behavior. Why has he resumed it? — Mary G. in Greenville, S.C.

A: Ouch! A playful nip from a puppy can be annoying, but from a nearly adult dog — especially a big German shepherd — that nip can be downright painful. Puppies first exert this behavior with their littermates. Light biting and nipping (mouthing) is a form of play, but like all play, it has a purpose: The puppies are testing each other, trying to see who is the dominant pack member. If you've ever observed the mother of this litter, you know that the puppies rarely try this behavior with her — because she's the pack leader. Those little nips are silenced by a low but meaningful growl from the parent.

Mouthing is not an acceptable behavior in your home, either, and active and playful dogs often go through months of consistent training and reinforcement to curb their urge to nip at family members. Max was trained not to do this, but now he has started up again.

Max may have reverted to this behavior because of the stressful event that just took place. Being stretched out on a table, knocked out and operated on can upset anyone, and in this case Max could feel that his place in the world has been upended.

However, just because your dog may be feeling insecure, it does not excuse his behavior. Reinforce his earlier training. Establish the fact that you are the "pack leaders" and will not tolerate playful bites. Keep to a consistent training (and feeding and sleeping) schedule, especially for the next couple of months. Getting Max into his regular routine and letting him know you are still in charge may be the reassurance he needs that everything is all right.

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Horoscope



ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Romantic aspects are high at this time for single Lambs who are looking for love. Warm and fuzzy feelings are also at enhanced levels for Rams and Ewes who are in paired relationships.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) This week favors what Taureans dote on — namely, love and money. Look for more meaningful relationships for both singles and pairs, as well as an improved financial outlook.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) All lingering shreds of a recent bout with boredom are dissipated as you eagerly accept a challenging offer. Your positive mood persuades others to join you in this venture.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) You might need validation for a possible solution to a situation that involves someone close to you. Consider asking a trusted friend or relative to help you with this problem.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) Investigate carefully before agreeing to assist a friend or colleague with a personal problem. There might be hidden factors that could emerge later on, which will create problems for you.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) Your decision to work with an associate rather than go it alone, as you first proposed, brings an unexpected bonus. Be careful not to be judgmental. Allow for free and open discussion.

LIBRA (September 23 to October

22) A loved one's health problem could, once again, make demands on your time and attention. But this time, make some demands of your own, and insist that others pitch in and help.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) This is a good time for the traditionally staid Scorpion to plan adjustments in your day-to-day schedules. Be more flexible and allow for more impromptu, off-the-cuff actions.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Avoid creating unnecessary fuss over a situation that you don't approve of. If it's going to work, it will do so despite your objections. If it fails, it will do so without a push from you.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Working with a trusted colleague could open your mind to exploring some considerations that you previously dismissed. Meanwhile, the weekend brings news from a loved one.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) Resolving a recent problem leaves you in a good position to strengthen your influence on how things get done. But continue to encourage ideas and suggestions from others.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) A new friend suggests an interesting opportunity, but check it out before you snap at it. It might be a good deal for some people, but it might not work in helping you reach your goals.

BORN THIS WEEK: You have a way of helping people solve their problems, making you a respected counselor and trusted friend.

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Weekly SUDOKU

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

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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

Super Crossword

Answers

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

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