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TIDBITS® CELEBRATES MARDI GRAS PARADES

by Patricia L. Cook

Next week, on February 21, many people around the globe will celebrate Mardi Gras. This issue of Tidbits will "laissez les bons temps rouler" (let the good times roll) as we explore this celebration.

- The city most associated with Mardi Gras in America is New Orleans. Mardi Gras is French for "Fat Tuesday," the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, which begins the Christian season of Lent. It is also the last day of the Carnival season. "Carnival" season is a period of feasting and fun that always begins on January 6, which in Christianity is the Feast of Epiphany, following the "Twelve Days of Christmas." While mostly celebrated in areas where Roman Catholicism is predominant, Epiphany is celebrated in other churches as well.

- In New Orleans, parades happen for several weeks before Mardi Gras, but the largest and probably most famous happen on the last weekend before and through Mardi Gras day. There are about a dozen held in New Orleans on Mardi Gras Day, with even more in the suburbs.

- Mardi Gras, Ash Wednesday and Lent are all important times for Catholics. Ash Wednesday is the first of 40 days (excluding Sundays) prior to Easter that make up Lent. Lent is a time of preparation for Easter, when the resurrection of Jesus Christ is celebrated.

turn the page for more!

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1. MAPS: U.S. Interstate 10 ends in Los Angeles, but where does it begin on the East Coast?
2. SCIENCE: In 1959, physicist Richard Feynman was the first to propose what kind of technology (on a small scale)?
3. LITERATURE: What was Ernest Hemingway's middle name?
4. MUSIC: What American folk-music group is famous for their song "Keep on the Sunny Side"?
5. MEDICAL TERMS: What is a more common name for the medical condition "pruritus"?
6. SPORTS: Where will the 2014 Olympic Winter Games be held?
7. ARCHITECTURE: What famous architect's residence in Wisconsin was called Taliesin?
8. LANGUAGE: What are the comparative and superlative forms of the word "little"?
9. MOVIES: In "Cast Away," what was the name that marooned actor Tom Hanks (Chuck Noland) gave the volleyball that washed ashore?
10. GEOGRAPHY: What is the capital of Brazil?



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- Save smaller bits of leftover veggies in a large freezer-safe container or bag in the freezer. When it's full, make vegetable soup.
- "Be sure you use bathroom fans correctly, turning on to remove steam but turning off to keep from pumping out heat. This is equally important in the summer, when you pump out valuable cooled air. Many people don't think of fans this way, and they end up running for hours." -- R.D. in Mississippi
- Keep salt or baking soda by the stove for small, quick cleanups. A good dose of salt will stop an egg from running all over the place. Dip a damp cloth in baking soda for a handy scrub. Although a handful of either might work in a pinch on a small flare-up on the stove, you should have a fire extinguisher close by for fires.
- "I used to comb through last year's calendar for important yearly dates when transferring them to the new year's calendar. This year I have gotten smart. At the end of the month, before turning the page, I highlight the items I'd like to put in next year's calendar. When I look back, I won't have to search through all the entries for the good stuff." -- U.L. in Ohio
- "I just spent a lot of time cleaning my mother's bathtub in a long-neglected bathroom. To keep it from mildewing, I used paste wax to protect the walls. You can use car wax for the same purpose, and many people know about this helpful tip. But I wanted to add a caution: Walls only; do not wax the inside of the tub, especially if you have an elderly resident (or a child). And make sure to have a nonslip mat in the tub at all times." -- A Daughter in Oregon



TIDBITS QUOTE

"Campaign behavior for wives: Always be on time. Do as little talking as humanly possible. Lean back in the parade car so everybody can see the president." -- Eleanor Roosevelt

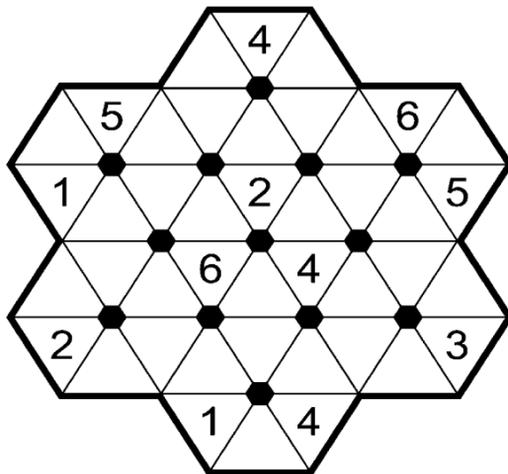
PARADES (continued)

- Another term used for Mardi Gras is "Shrove Tuesday." Shrove is the past tense of "to shrive" and means "to go to or make confession." Mardi Gras is known as the day to party. In New Orleans, when the clock strikes midnight, Lent starts, and the party ends. Mounted police lead a parade of street cleaners, clearing and cleaning the city.
- Historians believe that French explorers Iberville and Bienville held the first American Mardi Gras on March 3, 1699. After a very difficult journey down the Mississippi River, they landed about 60 miles south of New Orleans. They had a small celebration and named the area "Pointe due Mardi Gras." Bienville also established "Fort Louis de la Louisiane," which later became Mobile, Alabama. Many say that the first official Mardi Gras was held in Mobile in 1702. (During this time, before the Louisiana Purchase, Mobile was part of Louisiana.)
- For many years, New Orleans and other French settlements of the South marked the Mardi Gras holiday with street parties, masked balls and lavish meals. When the Spanish took control of New Orleans, they abolished the rowdy celebrations. The bans were in force until Louisiana became a state in 1812.
- Secret societies or clubs, called krewes, started forming as early as 1781. The first was the Perseverance Benevolent & Mutual Aid Association. Krewes started the parades as we know them today and keep them going. The krewes are private, non-profit organizations whose members plan and pay for their parades, costumes, throws and more. There are no sponsorships or city funds used.
- By the late 1830s, there were processions of masked people with carriages and riding horseback. Newspapers started announcing the Mardi Gras events in advance. More krewes formed, and today there are more than 50 parades in the Greater New Orleans area.
- On February 24, 1857, the Mistick Krewe of Comus, a secret society of businessmen, organized a torch-lit procession with rolling floats and marching bands. This began the parade traditions that persist today. The parade was followed by a ball for the krewe and their guests.
- Today the elaborate, invitation-only balls for the many krewes begin when Carnival Season starts on January 6. Each krewe elects a king and queen and their court. They wear masks and are never officially revealed; except for Rex, who as the King of Carnival, is revealed the day before the parade.

continued on next page

SNOWFLAKES by Japheth Light

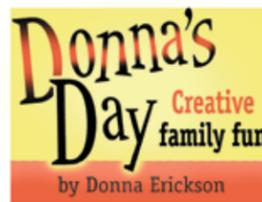
There are 13 black hexagons in the puzzle. Place the numbers 1 - 6 around each of them. No number can be repeated in any partial hexagon shape along the border of the puzzle.



DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆

◆ Easy ◆◆ Medium ◆◆◆ Difficult

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Mighty Fine Salsa and Homemade Chips

Homemade salsa stirred up with sun-ripened tomatoes from our backyard vines is a special treat reserved for summertime snacking. That's what I thought until our neighbor Bryce popped by during a January snowstorm with a bowl of his "Mighty Fine Salsa" to warm us up. But how did he do it? After all, fresh tomatoes can be rather peaked, tasteless and expensive at the market this time of year. "It's all in the secret ingredient," he whispered. "Canned tomatoes. No one will ever know." And he's right. This salsa is not only mighty fine, but mighty tasty, too. Make up a batch, and add fun-shaped homemade chips. Why eat boring triangular chips out of a bag when your kids' can cut whimsical cookie cutter shapes from flour tortillas? Just pop them in the oven, and they'll be crisp and ready to dip into the salsa. Here's how:

Easy Mighty Fine Salsa

- 1 28-ounce can diced tomatoes, slightly drained
- 1/2 cup fresh jalapeno pepper, seeded and quartered (see note below)
- 1/2 medium yellow onion, quartered
- 3 garlic cloves
- 1/2 cup fresh cilantro
- Juice from one lime
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt

1. Pour 1/2 can of tomatoes into a food processor or blender, add remaining ingredients and blend and pulse until well chopped and fairly smooth. Add remaining tomatoes and pulse/blend briefly.
 2. Leave on the counter for an hour to combine flavors before serving with Fresh-Baked Fun Chips. Refrigerate leftover salsa. Makes about 3 cups.
- Note: The juice of jalapeno peppers can be irritating. Wear plastic deli-style gloves when handling. Avoid hand contact with your eyes.

Fresh-Baked Fun Chips

- 6-8 medium flour tortillas
- Vegetable oil
- Salt (optional)
- Assorted metal cookie cutters
- Kitchen scissors (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. Warm a tortilla on a lightly oiled skillet. Place it on a cutting board and cut into shapes with metal cookie cutters. Use scissors to cut your own designs or alphabet letters.
3. Set shapes closely together on a cookie sheet covered with parchment paper. Brush or spray shapes lightly with oil. Continue with remaining tortillas.
4. Bake 8-10 minutes or until crisp and lightly browned. Sprinkle lightly with salt, if you wish, and serve. Serves four to six.

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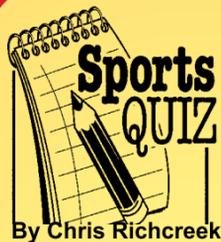
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1 When Philadelphia's Roy Halladay won his second Cy Young Award in 2010, he tied the mark for the longest gap between Cy Young Awards (seven years). Who else did it?
2 From 1986 through 2006, the San Francisco Giants had three managers. Name two of them.

3 In 2010, Ryan Mallett broke the University of Arkansas record for most career TD passes. Who had held the mark?
4 How many times during his 31 seasons did the NBA's winningest coach, Don Nelson, lead a team to the playoffs?
5 Who were the last two remaining active NHL players to have played in the 1980s?
6 How many times did the Japanese women's soccer team fail to beat the U.S. before defeating the American team in the 2011 World Cup final?
7 In the final race of his career in 1920, Man o' War defeated the 1919 Triple Crown winner in a match race. Name the losing horse.

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Sweater is different. 2. Lamp is missing. 3. Bulletin board has been added. 4. Door is missing. 5. Item missing from wall board. 6. Fencil is gone.

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Strange BUT TRUE

- It was 19th-century German philosopher, composer and poet Friedrich Nietzsche who made the following sage observation: "At times one remains faithful to a cause only because its opponents do not cease to be insipid."
- Despite all the cartoons you've seen throughout your life, rabbits generally prefer greens to carrots, and mice would rather eat grains and fruit than cheese.
- The area that is now the state of California had a population of about 700 in 1854. In 2010, the population had increased to 37,253,956. In the span of just over one and a half centuries, the population increased a whopping 53,000 times.
- Rice paper is not made from rice. It's made from the pith of the rice paper plant.

PARADES (continued)

- The Krewe of Rex, organized in 1872 by a group of businessmen, came up with the idea to have a King of Carnival. They held the first parade during the daytime. This krewe introduced the Mardi Gras song ("If Ever I Cease to Love"), the flag and the colors of purple, green and gold. Meaning was assigned to the colors in 1892: Purple for justice, green for faith and gold for power.
- While most parades require crowds to simply watch and applaud when floats pass, Mardi Gras crowds work hard to catch "throws." This tradition started in 1871. The most popular throws are beads, plastic cups and doubloons. Doubloons are aluminum medallions, like large coins, that depict the parade theme on one side and the krewe's emblem on the other. The first medallions appeared in 1884, with the Krewe of Rex, and the start of doubloons like those given out today started in 1960 also with Rex.
- The actual name for the Krewe of Rex is the School of Design. Rex, the King of Carnival, arrives by a boat that crosses the Mississippi River on the night before Mardi Gras. When Rex arrives, the Mayor of New Orleans presents him with the key to the city.
- One of the most popular and "different" parades held during Mardi Gras in New Orleans is put on by the Krewe of Zulu. This krewe started in the early 1900s, with their first official appearance as Zulus in 1909. The group started from a group of black men who belonged to a Benevolent Aid Society. These societies were the first forms of insurance in the black community where, for annual dues, members received financial help when sick and financial aid when needing to bury deceased members.
- Zulus made a distinct impression on Mardi Gras crowds in 1909 by being totally different. They wore raggedy pants and had a quartet singing in front and behind their king. The king wore a "lard can" crown and carried a "banana stalk" scepter.

continued on next page

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- You may be surprised to learn that, according to the National Sleep Foundation, 33 percent of all preschoolers have a TV in their room, and 20 percent of infants and toddlers have one.
- If you ever make a trip to Italy (lucky you!) and visit the town of Modena, be sure to go to the bell tower. There you might see an item that is, to the best of my knowledge, unique in the world: a wooden bucket that started a war. In 1325 a group of soldiers from the then-city-state of Modena raided rival city-state Bologna and returned home with the bucket. Greatly desiring to get the bucket back, Bologna declared war. The war raged on for years, but Bologna never did get its bucket back.
- If you're a schoolteacher in Arkansas, you should be aware of an arcane law there: If you bob your hair, you'll be ineligible for a pay raise.

Thought for the Day: "A committee is a cul-de-sac down which ideas are lured and then quietly strangled."
 -- Sir Barnett Cocks

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PARADES (continued)

- Another difference with the Zulu Parade is their unusual throws. Possibly as early as 1910, the krewe made their mark by throwing coconuts, known as "Golden Nuggets." In the early years the coconuts were in their natural "hairy" state, but a few years later, the krewe started handing out beautiful painted and decorated coconuts.
- In 1988, the Louisiana Legislature passed a law dubbed the "Coconut Bill" that excluded the coconut from liability for injuries arising from the Zulus handing out coconuts in their parades.
- Louisiana is the only state where Mardi Gras is a legal holiday.

**FAMOUS LANDMARKS:
THE GRAND CANYON**

Can you imagine the looks on the faces of the first people who saw the gigantic hole in the ground that is now named the Grand Canyon? This Tidbits will go deep into the canyon for some interesting information.

- Originally established as a Forest Preserve in 1893, then Grand Canyon Game Preserve in 1906 and a National Monument in 1908, the massive canyon was destined for greatness. Three years after the National Park Service was created, Grand Canyon National Park was established in 1919. The park is famous worldwide, hosting around 5 million visitors per year. That is even more than America's first national park, Yellowstone.
- Encompassing 1,218,375 acres (49,3059 ha) of northern Arizona, Grand Canyon National Park is one of the Seven Wonders of the World. It is 277 miles (446 km) long, 5,000 feet (1524 m) deep and about 18 miles (29 km) wide.
- Great environmental variety exists in the Grand Canyon's large expanse of land. The elevation ranges from 1,200 feet (366 m) near Lake Mead to 9,165 feet (2793 m) above sea level at the North Rim. Scientists have identified five life zones in the park: Lower Sonoran, Upper Sonoran, Transition, Canadian and Hudsonian. Think of it this way: You can see variations in the ecosystem within Grand Canyon National Park that are similar to what you would see if you traveled from Mexico to Canada! From desert plants to mountain trees — They're all there. From the North Rim to the canyon floor, the temperature can vary up to 35 degrees.

continued on next page

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

	-		x		28
+		-		÷	
	x		+		19
x		x		+	
	x		+		24
30		16		15	

DIFFICULTY: ★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult ★★★ GO FIGURE!

1 2 3 5 6 7 8 9

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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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THIS WEEK'S CELEBRITY BIRTHDAYS

Judy Blume	2/12/38
Stockard Channing	2/13/44
Florence Henderson	2/14/34
Jane Seymour	2/15/51
John McEnroe	2/16/59
Hal Holbrook	2/17/25
Jillian Michaels	2/18/74

TIDBITS

Holidays & Observances This Week

2/12	Plum Pudding Day
2/13	Clean Out Your Computer Day
2/14	Valentine's Day
2/15	National Flag Day in Canada
2/16	Do a Grouch a Favor Day
2/17	National Chocolate Covered Anything Day
2/18	National Maple Syrup Day

Good Housekeeping
Mussels Marinière with Bacon Frisée Salad
 Planning a romantic dinner for two? Serve this mussels dish with bacon frisee salad and a fresh baguette.

2 slices thick-cut bacon, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
 2 tablespoons sherry vinegar
 1 small (4 to 5 ounces) head frisee, leaves separated
 Pepper
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 tablespoon margarine or butter
 1 medium (6 to 8 ounces) onion, finely chopped
 2 cloves garlic, crushed with press
 1 cup dry white wine
 3 pounds mussels, beards removed, well-washed
 1/2 cup packed fresh parsley leaves, finely chopped
 1 small (7 ounces) baguette, cut in half and toasted

1. In 12-inch skillet, cook bacon on medium 6 to 8 minutes or until crisp and browned. With slotted spoon, transfer to paper-towel-lined plate; set aside. To drippings in skillet, add vinegar and cook 1 minute on medium. Pour into medium bowl (do not scrape browned bits from bottom of pan); add frisee and 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper. Toss to coat.
 2. In wide 8-quart saucepot, heat oil and margarine on medium-high until margarine melts. Add onion and garlic and cook 2 minutes or until almost translucent, stirring. Add wine and heat to boiling. Add mussels, stir once, cover and cook 1 minute. Stir again, cover and cook 1 to 2 minutes longer or just until mussels open; do not overcook.
 3. Immediately divide mussels and cooking liquid between 2 large serving bowls and top with parsley. Divide salad between 2 serving plates and top with reserved bacon. Serve mussels and salad with baguette.

• Each serving (includes mussels, salad and half a baguette): About 790 calories, 39g total fat (11g saturated), 66mg cholesterol, 1,420mg sodium, 73g total carbs, 8g dietary fiber, 33g protein.

THE GRAND CANYON (continued)

- While there are a number of lodging choices for visitors, there is only one lodging facility below the rim of the Grand Canyon. Phantom Ranch is only accessible by hiking or mule trip and for hardy travelers who want to see more than the rim. The rustic architecture of Phantom Ranch and other structures designed by the Fred Harvey Company is referred to as "parkitecture."
- The Fred Harvey Company started working on structures in the park in the early 1900s. When the Grand Canyon Railway, an extension of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad, was brought to the South Rim of the canyon in 1901, housing for visiting guests was needed. The Fred Harvey Company, working with a railroad architect, built the El Tovar Hotel 20 feet (6 m) from the edge of the South Rim in 1905. The beautiful, rugged building is sometimes called "the most expensively constructed and appointed log house in America." It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- John Wesley Powell, a Civil War hero and geology professor, recorded the geology and geography of the Green and Colorado Rivers and the Grand Canyon after two historic trips in 1869 and 1871. His trips opened up new interest and provided much information for the future with his mapping of the wild Grand Canyon area.
- The Grand Canyon is a magnificent place for both a family vacation and studying nature. The Colorado River and canyon walls are full of scientific evidence about the history of the area. Both evolutionists and creationists are intrigued by the area, and even though they disagree about life origins, they agree that the Grand Canyon is one of the most amazing natural features on earth.

SAGUARO CACTUS

One of the largest symbols of the American West lies south of the Grand Canyon in the Sonoran Desert. The saguaro, pronounced suh-wah-ro, is the world's largest cactus.

- The Sonoran Desert covers 120,000 square miles (310,799 sq km) in southwestern Arizona, southeastern California, most of Baja California and the western half of Sonora, Mexico. Saguaros grow exclusively in the Sonoran Desert, but not all areas of the Sonoran have the plants. They generally do not grow in areas that are above 4,000 feet (1219 m) in elevation. They will not survive freezing temperatures.
- Saguaros are found in southern Arizona and western Sonora, Mexico. A few stray saguaros may be found in southeast California. Most of these giants are near Tucson, Arizona. There are approximately 1.6 million saguaro cacti plants growing within Saguaro National Park, divided into two districts east and west of Tucson.

continued on next page



Q: I have a cast-iron doorstop that has been in my family for at least three generations. It is a rabbit dressed in top hat and tails. The item is in fairly good condition. -- Beth, Amarillo, Texas
A: Your doorstop was probably manufactured by National Foundry and is valued in the \$75 to \$150 range, according to "Kovels' Antiques and Collectibles Price Guide" by Ralph and Terry Kovel (Black Dog & Leventhal books). Doorstops were especially popular during the late Victorian-era.

Q: I have a Victorian-era Bible that was published in Glasgow, perhaps during the 1880s. It has a deluxe binding with metal latches and thick back and front covers. Letters found in the Bible are from the 1890s. It is in excellent condition, and I would like to determine its value. -- Judith, Placitas, N.M.
A: I contacted several used and rare book dealers who told me that most highly decorative Victorian-era Bibles sell in the \$75 to \$150 range, depending on condition and content. By content, I mean personal family information recorded in its pages. A Bible from the Civil War period could be quite valuable if it has information pertaining to the war or was owned by a historically important family. William J. Chamberlin is vice-president of the International Society of Bible Collectors, and verily I say unto you, he might be able to determine the value of your Bible. His contact information is 6413 Snow Apple Drive, Clarkston, MI 48346; and research@biblemuseum.org. It is always good manners to enclose a SASE when contacting an expert or source listed in this column.

Q: I know that you have answered questions about Fiesta dishes, but I have an unusual product made by this company and wonder if you can help me determine how much it might be worth. In my mother's estate is a lamp with a syrup pitcher base and a post-metal bottom. It is in cobalt blue. -- Cynthia, Buckeye, Ariz.
A: I found your lamp referenced in "Warman's Fiesta Ware: Identification and Price Guide" by Mark F. Moran (Krause, \$24.99). According to Moran, your lamp with original shade is worth about \$350.



King Crossword

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ACROSS

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15			16						17			
		18			19		20					
21	22			23		24						
25			26		27		28		29	30	31	
32			33		34		35		36			
37			38		39		40		41			
			42		43		44		45			
46	47	48			49		50					
51					52		53			54	55	
56					57					58		
59					60							61

DOWN

1	Billboards	7	Aquarium	corpulent	35	Old man
2	Automaton,	8	Eyeball coats	38	Verily	
3	Modern-day	9	Pork cut	40	Singer	
4	Complains	10	Concept	43	Disinfectant	
5	Embrace	11	Manhandle	44	brand	
6	Ottoman	12	Piercing tool	45	Chap	
	bigwig	13	Taste	46	Spar	
		14	Futile	47	Wading bird	
		15	Staffer	48	Antitoxins	
		16	Sweet	49	Old portico	
		17	potato kin	50	Spinning stat	
		18	Peruke	51	Coffee break	
		19	Fight	52	hour	
		20	Go	53	Scuttle	
		21	sightseeing	54		
		22	Duel tool	55		
		23	Less			

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TIDBITS®
top ten

Must-Try
EXOTIC
Fruits

1. Rambutan
2. Jackfruit
3. Passion Fruit
4. Lychee
5. Star Fruit
6. Mangosteen
7. Kumquat
8. Durian
9. Dragon Fruit
10. African Cucumber

Source: Hotel Club

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TIDBITS®
NUGGET OF
KNOWLEDGE

Pre-Lenten celebrations take place in many countries around the world, especially in places where significant Roman Catholic populations live. Brazil celebrates a weeklong Carnival. In Canada, Quebec City hosts its huge Quebec Winter Carnival. The Venice, Italy, Carnevale is famous for its masquerade balls, with history dating back to the 13th century. German celebrations include parades, costume balls and a tradition of women cutting off men's ties. In Denmark, Fastevlan is similar to America's Halloween.

by Jeff Pickering

The Spats



SCRAMBLERS

Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag!

Cancel

Wander

Agent

Move

TODAY'S WORD

KIDBITS

Puzzle Card

HOW MANY different-size "squares" are in the above drawing?
Answer: 27

Junior Whirl
by Charles Barry Townsend

JUNK FUNK FOND FOOD

SOME SALTY PROBLEMS!
In this type of puzzle you are given a word that must be changed into another word in a series of moves. During each move, you must change one letter in the previous word so as to form a new word. In our example, we changed JUNK to FOOD in four moves. See if you can change each of the following words in four moves — and in less than five minutes.

1. FORE to HAND
2. POND to LAKE
3. MAIM to WELL
4. RATS to PEST
5. SCOW to BOAT

AN ODD CHALLENGE! Challenge your friends to devise a way for a farmer to put 21 pigs in four pens and still have an odd number of pigs in each pen. Our drawing shows how this is done with the fourth, larger pen surrounding the other three pens. In this way, each pen contains an odd number of pigs.

PAR HERE IS FOUR! At the right is a Word Square. Can you find the four five-letter words that match the definitions below? All words used must read the same across and down.

C	A	D	D	Y
A				
D				
Y				

Answers: 1. Caddy, 2. Aerie, 3. Drama, 4. Dimes, 5. Yeast.

"If not now, when?"

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HealthBits™
To Your Good Health
By Paul G. Donohue, M.D.

Sciatica: Big Nerve Can Be Big Problem

DEAR DR. DONOHUE: I am a 78-year-old woman, and five months ago I came down with sciatica in my left leg underneath the buttock. It's very painful. I'd like to know if there is something that can be done. -- S.M.

ANSWER: The sciatic (sigh-ATTIC) nerve is the body's longest and largest nerve. It springs from nerve rootlets that emerge from the spinal cord in the lower back. Those rootlets intertwine to form this big nerve. It travels from the back, through the buttocks and down the leg to the foot. Anything that presses on or irritates the nerve in its long course gives rise to sciatica (sigh-ATTIC-uh), painful inflammation of the nerve.

A bulging back disk can press on the nerve. Arthritic spurs on the spine are another source of irritation. A collapse of a backbone from osteoporosis is another trigger for pain, and the pain can be in the lower back, the buttocks or down the leg to the foot.

Have you tried Tylenol (acetaminophen) for pain relief? Aleve, Advil, Motrin and the many other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs dull pain and quiet inflammation. Icing the painful back area for 10 to 15 minutes three times a day is another way to numb pain. If ice doesn't work, turn to heat -- hot compresses or a heating pad.

Stretching the back might take pressure off the nerve. Sit on a firm chair with feet on the floor and knees shoulder-width apart. Turn slightly to the left. Then, with your right arm dangling down between the knees and left arm dangling down on the outside of the left knee, bend down to the floor as far as you can and hold that position for five seconds. Straighten up and reverse the process by turning to your right and arranging your arms with the right arm outside the right knee and the left arm between the knees. If this exercise hurts, stop. If it doesn't, perform five bends each, to the right and then to the left. Do the exercise three times a day.

Five months is a long time to put up with back pain. I'm not sure if self-treatment will do much for you. You need a doctor's intervention, along with physical therapy.

The booklet on back pain delves more deeply into its causes and treatments. To order a copy, write: Dr. Donohue -- No. 303W, Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. Enclose a check or money order (no cash) for \$4.75 U.S./\$6 Canada with the recipient's printed name and address. Please allow four weeks for delivery.

DEAR DR. DONOHUE: Some time ago, you answered a letter from an 80-year-old lady who asked if she still needed to have mammograms. I say an unqualified yes. Two years ago, at the age of 82 1/2, my mammogram detected cancer. Surgery was followed by radiation. Two years later, I am feeling fine and doing well. -- A.S.

ANSWER: Experts argue about the value of mammograms late in life. Stories like yours make me side with those who promote having mammograms as long as a woman is in reasonable health. If a woman has an estimate of living at least four more years, mammograms are a good idea.

LAFF - A - DAY

LOCKER ROOM

1. FORE
2. POND
3. MAIM
4. RATS
5. SCOW

"Don't be afraid to go out there and kill yourselves. We've got plenty of reserves."

SAGUARO CACTUS (continued)

- Saguaro cacti can grow up to 60 feet (18 m) tall and weigh as much as an elephant! These desert giants can live to be about 200 years old. The plants do not sprout their arms, or branches, until they are about 70 years old. While some saguaros never grow branches, some can be found with as many as 25 arms!
- Saguaros have white flowers that bloom in late spring and red fruit in the summer. The cactus blossoms are the official state flower of Arizona.
- These fascinating giants provide food and shelter for many animals. Some that may be found high in the branches of saguaros are bats, birds and owls. Harris' hawks and cactus wrens love the saguaro.
- Gila woodpeckers use their strong beaks to hollow out nest holes in the stems of the saguaro cactus. The holes dry out to form a scab that becomes a safe, dry, cool place for eggs to hatch and baby birds to grow.
- When gila woodpeckers abandon their nests, tiny elf owls move in. The world's smallest owls, at about 5 inches (13 cm) long, make the world's largest cactus their home. They hide in the daytime and search for insects, spiders and small lizards at night.
- While the flying critters on a saguaro may not seem too scary, the crawling critters that live in or near the base are. The desert scorpion and desert tarantula are two that hide under rocks and in grasses nearby.
- Two rats, wood rats and kangaroo rats, build nests in the ground around saguaros. Wood rats eat cactus flesh, which is poisonous to most animals. They have strong stomachs that allow them to break down the poisons. Kangaroo rats have strong back legs that allow them to hop across the hot desert soil quickly.

continued on next page

R.F.D.



by Mike Marland

TIPBITS
WORD POWER
 Unscramble this word:
PAGPELIAN

This word means: *A small gift given with a purchase, by way of compliment or for good measure; bonus. (Mainly used in southern Louisiana and southeast Texas.)*

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Valentine's Sundae Dessert Bars
 by JoAnna M. Lund

18 (2 1/2-inch) chocolate graham crackers
 4 cups sugar- and fat-free vanilla ice cream
 1 (4-serving) package sugar-free chocolate cook-and-serve pudding mix
 2/3 cup nonfat dry milk powder
 1 cup water
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 2 teaspoons reduced-calorie margarine
 1/2 cup miniature marshmallows
 3 tablespoons chopped pecans
 1/2 cup reduced calorie whipped topping
 4 maraschino cherries, halved

1. Arrange 9 graham crackers in a 9-by-9-inch cake pan. In large bowl, gently stir ice cream until slightly softened. Coarsely crush remaining 9 graham crackers and stir into softened ice cream. Spread mixture gently over graham crackers in cake pan. Cover and freeze while preparing topping.
2. In medium saucepan, combine dry pudding mix, dry milk powder and water. Cook over medium heat until mixture thickens and starts to boil, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Stir in vanilla extract, margarine and marshmallows. Drizzle hot mixture evenly over ice cream mixture. Sprinkle pecans evenly over top. Re-cover and continue to freeze for 2 hours or until firm.
3. Let set at room temperature for 10 minutes. Cut into 8 servings. To serve, top each with 1 tablespoon whipped topping and a maraschino cherry half. Makes 8 servings.

• Each serving equals: 191 calories, 3g fat, 7g protein, 34g carb., 199mg sodium, 1g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 2 Starch/Carb., 1/2 Fat.

PetBits™

Be a Responsible Pet Owner
 By Samantha Mazzotta

February is Responsible Pet Owners Month, and while I sometimes grouse about events that designate a specific period of the year to do something that should obviously be done every single day, I think it's a worthy way to enlighten new pet owners or those thinking about getting a pet on how to care for that pet. So, how can you be a responsible pet owner?

If you're considering getting a pet:
 --Study and learn all you can about the pet or breed you're interested in.
 --Consider adopting from a shelter or rescue.
 --Avoid buying dogs from puppy mills, at flea markets or other sketchy places.
 --If buying from a breeder, research and consider carefully before making a purchase.

If you already have a pet:
 --Spay or neuter your pet.
 --Do more than just provide food, water and shelter: Give your pet lots of love and attention.

--Teach your children how to properly care for pets and how to play responsibly with them.
 --Provide regular, daily obedience training to your dog.
 --Keep your cat indoors.
 --When taking your dog out for a walk, follow your town's leash laws and pick up after it.
 --At dog parks, follow the posted rules. Owners who don't follow rules can put the park at risk of being shut down. Don't be that guy.

There are, of course, many other ways to be a responsible pet owner. But this is a good time to review the way you care for your pets, the routines you've fallen into, the training you've meant to start -- and to plan new fun and activities for your pets and family.

Send your questions or tips to ask@pawscorner.com, or write to Paw's Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. For more pet care-related advice and information, visit www.pawscorner.com.

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AMBER WAVES By Dave T. Phipps



VETERANS POST
 by Freddy Groves

Vets With ALS Now 100 Percent Disabled

Back in 2008, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) was classified as a presumptive for service-related disability, and benefits were given. The level of disability was classified at 30 percent, with frequent rechecks as time went on and the disease progressed. It was that ever-changing rating that held up a lot of benefits and needed equipment.

An item in the Federal Register for Dec. 20 says that the disability evaluation criterion has been revised. Veterans who have ALS now will be considered 100 percent disabled and much of the paper chase will be dispensed with.

The jump from 30 percent to 100 percent could mean a significant increase in benefits money. At 30 percent disability, a single veteran would be eligible for \$389 a month. At the 100 percent level, that amount goes up to \$2,769. The amount increases if there is a spouse or children.

Additionally, there might be Special Monthly Compensation (SMC) monies due to the level of disability.

ALS is found in those veterans who served in Gulf I back in 1991 at a rate twice that of those who served elsewhere. Initial research was published in the Neurology journal in 2003. A second study determined that the rate also was twice that of the general population. Hardest hit were those in the Army and Air Force. Initial research was even able to narrow down a time frame for exposure: Between August 1990 and July 1991. An environmental trigger was suspected.

Studies done later, in 2005 and 2009 at Harvard, found that veterans in any branch with any military service anywhere were 60 percent more likely than the general population to be diagnosed with ALS. After fine-tuning the data, service in war was suspected as a component. But a 2006 review concluded that any military service is related to increased risk for ALS.

Write to Freddy Groves in care of King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or send e-mail to columnreply@gmail.com.

Moments in time
 THE HISTORY CHANNEL

- On Feb. 16, 1848, romantic composer Frederic Chopin plays his final concert in his adopted city of Paris, 18 months before his death from tuberculosis at the age of 39. After fleeing his native Poland, he spent the rest of his life amid the high society of France.
- On Feb. 19, 1851, an angry mob in San Francisco's business district "tries" two Australian suspects in the robbery and assault of C.J. Jansen. Vigilantes were fairly common during the Gold Rush boom in San Francisco, and they were so well regarded that they took over the Democratic Party in the late 1850s, and some became respected politicians.
- On Feb. 18, 1885, Mark Twain publishes his famous and controversial novel "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn." At the book's heart is the journey of Huck and his friend Jim, a runaway slave, down the Mississippi River on a raft.
- On Feb. 13, 1915, The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) is formed. ASCAP collects and distributes royalties for copyrighted musical works. Today, ASCAP reports that it distributes more than \$800 million in royalties annually to its members.
- On Feb. 14, 1929, Sir Alexander Fleming, a bacteriologist, discovers penicillin. Having left a plate of staphylococcus bacteria uncovered, Fleming noticed that a mold, similar to the kind found on bread, had fallen on the culture and had killed many of the bacteria.
- On Feb. 15, 1933, president-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt escapes an assassination attempt. Deranged, unemployed brick layer Giuseppe Zangara shouted, "Too many people are starving!" and opened fire with six rounds. Zangara's extreme action reflected the anger and frustration felt among many Americans during the Great Depression.
- On Feb. 17, 1966, Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys rolls tape on the first take of "Good Vibrations." Six months, four studios and \$50,000 later, he finally completed his 3 minute, 39 second symphony, pieced together from more than 90 hours of tape recorded during literally hundreds of sessions.

SAGUARO CACTUS (continued)

- Giant saguaros are home to several kinds of snakes, including diamondback rattlesnakes. These snakes can be eight feet long (2.5 m) and have poisonous, deadly bites.
- One of the few lizards of the world that has a poisonous bite, the gila monster, also lives near saguaro cacti. This monster hunts small mammals, birds and their eggs, and other lizards. Gila monsters have bright orange and black patterns on their scaly skin and can grow up to two feet (60 cm) long.
- There are more critters not covered in this Tidbits that live in, on or near saguaros. When you see a large saguaro cactus and are tempted to stand close for photographic memories, think again. Maybe it is better to take those photos from a distance!

Laugh a bit with **TIDBITS**

Q: To the band at the Mardi Gras ball: Can you please stretch the party a little longer?

A: Sorry sir, this is not a rubber band!



The Garden Bug
Gather a container, some soil, gravel and some small plants. If using a lid, use plants that like high humidity; an open terrarium can have plants that don't need as much moisture. Put gravel on bottom, then soil, then place plants as you want them to appear. Add water carefully, being careful not to flood the container.

Make a terrarium

Source: www.makeandtakes.com

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

- | | | | |
|----------|-----------|--------|---------------|
| Couplets | Fireworks | Lunar | Red envelopes |
| Dog | Gifts | Monkey | Snake |
| Dragon | Goat | Rabbit | Tiger |
| Duilian | Horse | Rat | |

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495 South 1750 West	Springville	(801) 489-5577
570 North Main Street	Spanish Fork	(801) 798-9827
855 East 100 North	Nephi	(435) 623-0300

Payson Chamber of Commerce

PERFORMING ARTS AND CULTURAL EDUCATION CENTER

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801-616-6288
The Happy Paper For Happy Valley

Payson

Visit our website for valuable Coupons and Updates at: paysoncitychamber.com
February Biz of Month - You Rock!

Morganson's Custom Frames & Sew Forth
Kelly and Rebecca Morganson, Owners
51 South Main Street, Payson 801.465.9133
stitchesandsewforth.com

February 15, 2012 - Wed

"Tidbits of Utah County" Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening at Dalton's Fine Dining Restaurant 11:45 am at 21 South 100 West, Payson, Utah.

Feb. 22, 2012 - Wed

Ribbon Cutting - "H & R Block" 10:00 a.m. 399 S. 100 W.

March 1, 2012 - Thu

Ribbon Cutting - "About Time Technology" 12:00 Noon 58 N. 1100 W.

March 6, 2012 - Tue

Business of the Month/Biz Leads Group - "Payson Market" 11:45 a.m. 586 N. Main

Chamber of Commerce: Colin Logue, Publicity, utahavenueinsurance@gmail.com. 801.609.8699 801.609.8699; for more information and to join/renew membership with Payson Area Chamber of Commerce, please contact Carolyn Bowman, 465.2634 paysonchamber@yahoo.com

Pleasant Grove

"Beau Jest"

Performance dates are March 2-19th on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Monday evenings. There will also be a Saturday matinee on March 17th. Please call Kathryn Little at 801-836-8104 for more information.

Santaquin

Santaquin Recreation - Hunter Safety Course

Get certified before the big game draw ends March 1st! Classes will be Feb 14, 15, 21, 22, and 25th. Get you DWR permit (you can get it at Stringhams True Value) and come pay for the class \$5 at our office.

45 W 100 S, Santaquin, UT 84655 · 801.754.5805 santaquin.org

Hours Mon - Fri: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Spanish Fork

THE GOOD LIFE EXPO - HOME, HEALTH & HOBBIES @ Sp. Fork Fairgrounds April 13 & 14, 2012 - The Show will provide exhibits and demonstrations related to home & garden improvement, family health and nutrition products, favorite hobbies & preferred pastimes. There will be something of interest for every guest.

EXHIBITORS - You will reach more people in TWO DAYS than you would normally reach in TWO MONTHS. Call Roger @ 801.616.6288 for more information.

Springville

Mondays - Monday Family Fun-Flatable night

During Open Public Swim. \$12 per family. *NOTE* Only Coast Guard Approved flotation devices will be allowed in the pool. Location: 1015 E 900 S Price: \$12 per family / \$3.50 adult / \$3 children (ages 3-14)

ANSWERS

SPORTS QUIZ

- Atlanta's Tom Glavine -- 1991 and 1998.
- Roger Craig, Dusty Baker and Felipe Alou.
- Clint Stoerner, with 57 (1996-99). Mallett finished with 62.
- Eighteen times.
- Mike Modano and Mark Recchi, both of whom retired before the 2011-12 season.
- Twenty-five times.
- Sir Barton.

King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 25 mins.

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

Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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

Go Figure!

answers

9	-	5	x	7	28
+		-		÷	
6	x	3	+	1	19
x		x		+	
2	x	8	+	8	24
30		16		15	



- Jacksonville, Fla.
- Nanotechnology
- Miller
- The Carter Family
- Itching
- Sochi, Russia
- Frank Lloyd Wright
- "Less" and "least"
- Wilson
- Brasilia

WORD POWER ANSWER

LAGNIAPPE

SCRAMBLERS

solution

- Negate;
- Travel;
- Envoy;
- Shift

Today's Word:

EVERYTHING