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Issue 2013-6

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TIDBITS® CONSIDERS DOLPHINS

by Janet Spencer

The cerebral cortex is the part of the brain that thinks, imagines, and plans. The larger it is, the more intelligent the animal. A dolphin's cerebral cortex is larger than a human's. Dolphins also have more folds in their brains than humans do. Let's take a look at what dolphins can do.

- Like bats, dolphins navigate perfectly, even when unable to see, by using sonar. In the forehead of each dolphin is a pocket of oil or fat called the melon. This is used to focus the sound of the sonar blasts into a beam, like a magnifying lens focuses light. The sound bounces off an object and returns to the dolphin as an echo, containing information on the size, texture, and movement of the object. The dolphin receives the echo through fat deposits in its jaw.
- A dolphin can identify objects up to half a mile away, detecting an item as small as a vitamin pill at the far end of a large pool. They also have manners when sounding their echolocation and avoid 'spraying' others with sound, focusing their sonar through a narrow window between other dolphins.
- Dolphins may be able to make sounds loud enough to stun fish. One researcher who went swimming in a pool with an agitated dolphin had his eardrum burst by such a sound. Some scientists theorize dolphins may use sonar to project images into the brains of other dolphins.

turn the page for more!

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- GEOGRAPHY:** The island state of Bahrain lies in what body of water?
- HISTORY:** In what year did Germany invade Poland?
- CARTOONS:** What is the name of Donald Duck's girlfriend?
- NATURAL WORLD:** What part of the cotton plant is known as the "boll"?
- MOVIES:** Which actor produced and starred in "Bonnie and Clyde"?
- MYTHOLOGY:** In Greek mythology, which god is associated with winged sandals?
- MILITARY:** In Great Britain, what is the Victoria Cross awarded for?
- ANIMAL KINGDOM:** What is a group of porcupines called?
- ENTERTAINERS:** What famous singer/song-writer was born with the name Stevland Judkins?
- MUSIC:** According to the song, where does Johnny B. Goode live?



by Jo Ann Derson

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- To store asparagus, trim off the ends and wrap the spears in a few paper towels that you have dampened. Keep it in the fridge for two days max. This will keep it very fresh and tasty.
- "To stretch your food dollar -- especially now that the weather is colder, and soups and stews are daily fare -- substitute peas, beans and lentils for meats whenever possible. Not only will this semi-vegetarian diet keep your food dollars down, it will make you healthier, and it's a more eco-friendly diet." -- K.F. in Connecticut
- If you add dried fruit or raisins to your batter for cakes or muffins, roll them or shake them in flour first. This will prevent them from sinking down to the bottom of the pan.
- Bathroom fan reminder: When you leave your bathroom fan running excessively, you are pumping heat out of your house. Set a timer for 10 minutes maximum, and then turn it off.
- "Old pantyhose can be washed and cut up to use as stuffing for a toy. The same is true for other lightweight materials. This can be a good way to get one more use out of something rather than putting it in the trash bin." -- P.L. in Pennsylvania
- If your bathtub has a grainy or rough texture, try soaking the bath in vinegar, either by adding a large bottle to some water and plugging it up, or by laying down a towel and soaking it in vinegar. Scrub and remove.

TIDBITS[®] presents TRIVIA NEWSFRONT

- When tested, could dolphins tell the difference between identical rods made of aluminum and copper?
- When tested, were dolphins able to tell the difference between identical balls that were barely different in size?
- How long do dolphin calves suckle from their mothers before being weaned?
- How deep can a dolphin dive?
- What is the collective term for a group of dolphins?

DOLPHINS (continued)

- It is difficult to study the language of dolphins because when there are two or more dolphins present, it is impossible to tell which animal is making which sounds. However, a scientist developed a microcomputer that's fastened by suction cups to each dolphin's head. It records each sound and the time it was made, which can be matched up to videos made of the dolphin to see what the animal was doing at the time.
- Dolphins identify themselves and each other with "signature whistles" that act as a name. They express emotions by repeating their "name" in different "tones of voice." Researchers have recorded and identified signature whistles of individual dolphins. When those dolphins are taken into separate tanks for medical care, they repeat their names with variations that scientists interpret as fear or apprehension, communicating their state of mind to other dolphins.
- Dr. Jarvis Bastian, a University of California psychologist, taught two dolphins named Doris and Buzz a game. They were taught to press the lever on the left when they saw a flashing light and the lever on the right when they saw a steady light. Then he taught them a new twist: when the light came on, Doris had to wait until Buzz pressed his lever first, then she was to press her lever. When they had this down pat, Dr. Bastian then placed a barricade between the two dolphins so that they couldn't see each other. Only Doris could see the light. When the light was flashed, Doris waited for Buzz to press his lever. Buzz, not knowing the light was on, did nothing. Doris then gave off a burst of whistles and clicks, and Buzz immediately pulled the correct lever. He pulled the correct lever every time the test was repeated.
- Dolphins in the oceanarium in San Francisco were taught to "clean house." They received a reward of fish for each piece of trash they brought to their trainer. A dolphin named Mr. Spock kept on bringing a steady stream of soggy bits of paper. Finally, the trainer discovered that the dolphin had hidden a big brown paper bag in a corner of the pool, and was tearing off a tiny piece at time.

continued on next page

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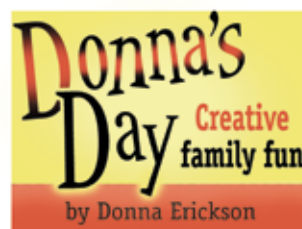
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C B Z E R E H C T I P C Y W V
U S R Q P N M L J I H F E D C

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

- | | | | |
|---------|----------|---------|---------|
| Capsule | Dumpster | Luggage | Silo |
| Cask | Eggshell | Pitcher | Tanker |
| Cocoon | Flask | Pouch | Thermos |
| Corral | Jar | Safe | |

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"Create a Card" Kit for Valentine's Day

I love getting homemade cards and personalized notes from my kids, don't you? But sometimes they need a little extra prodding -- a bit of help to get the creativity flowing. If you have young children in your house, give them a "Create a Card" kit this week for some do-it-yourself valentines. You'll be giving a little gift to get another heartfelt gift started. If you're a grandparent, assemble inexpensive mini kits for each of your school-age grandchildren (as a hint, hint: "I'd love a homemade card from you"). Send the assembled kits in the mail, and who knows, you might in turn find a surprise "craft with a heart" delivered to YOUR address come Feb. 14. Here's how:
A Valentine-making starter kit in a box might contain red, pink and white construction paper, lace or paper doilies and a small bag or tin can filled with valentine stickers, cut-outs from vintage valentine cards, conversation heart candy, buttons, pieces from old jewelry, sewing trim such as rickrack and ribbon, glitter, etc. Add a new marker in a fun color, a pair of decorative-edge scissors from a craft store and a new glue stick. Tuck in envelopes and some postage stamps, too. Or, make mini kits to give to grandkids, cousins and friends. They might contain a small tablet of colorful paper, heart stickers and a valentine-themed stamp and inkpad. Put the items together in a sandwich bag or in a clear cellophane gift bag with a decorative ribbon for a nice presentation. Extra idea: Share this fun "sealed with a heart" tip with the kids. Once they have signed and inserted their homemade valentine cards into envelopes, they can seal them with a kiss -- and even their thumbs. A child may press her thumb onto an inkpad and then onto the closed flap of the envelope with the first print angled to the right. Make a second thumbprint to the left to create a one-of-a-kind heart shape.

Donna Erickson's award-winning series "Donna's Day" is airing on public television nationwide. To find more of her creative family recipes and activities, visit www.donnasday.com and link to the NEW Donna's Day Facebook fan page. Her latest book is "Donna Erickson's Fabulous Funstuff for Families."

TIDBITS WORD POWER
Unscramble this word:
STEBEDAI

This word means: *A disease common to humans that dolphins also suffer from, in which blood sugar is poorly regulated.*

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.

	+		÷		5
x		+		x	
	÷		+		11
÷		÷		÷	
	x		-		6
21		2		3	

DIFFICULTY: ★★★
★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

1 2 3 4 4 5 6 7 9

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Sports QUIZ

By Chris Richcreek

- Name the winningest left-handed pitcher in Boston Red Sox history.
- Who was the manager the only time the Arizona Diamondbacks won 100 games in a season?
- In 2011, the SEC became the second conference to hold the top three spots in The Associated Press college football poll. What conference was the first?
- Name the last NBA team before the Cleveland Cavaliers in the 2011 draft to have two of the top four overall picks.
- Wayne Gretzky is the all-time NHL leader in career assists with 1,963. Who is No. 2?
- In 2012, American Vincent Hancock won his second consecutive Olympic gold medal in skeet shooting. How many other men have won consecutive golds in the event?
- Who was the youngest player to take part in golf's Ryder Cup?

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VETERANS POST

by Freddy Groves

Are You an MVP?

The Department of Veterans Affairs has been working on a huge database to study how genes affect health. The project is going to be huge when finished. The VA Office of Research & Development has now passed the 100,000 mark in the number of volunteer veterans who have signed up to be part of the program. Within the next six years, it expects more than 1 million veterans to sign up.

The Million Veteran Program (MVP) is designed to be a database accessible by researchers who are studying all the diseases and illnesses that have struck veterans through the years: diabetes, cancer, post traumatic stress disorder, heart disease and others.

The goals are to learn new ways of treating and preventing illnesses, discover why certain individuals are more prone to developing certain diseases and to study why certain medicines work better than others.

Participation is easy. You'll fill out a form, allow access to your VA medical records, provide a blood sample, take a test for grip strength and lung function, and not much more.

For more information, go online to www.research.va.gov/MVP. Additionally, there's a video at the site if you want to learn more about MVP.

Privacy is a big deal. No researcher will have access to your name, address, birth date or Social Security number. They'll use bar codes on your samples so you're not identified. Insurance companies won't have any access to the data.

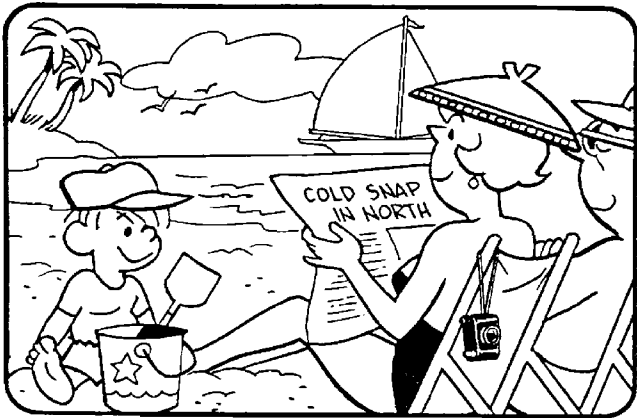
There are 40 sign-up locations across the country, listed and linked on the website. If you receive health care at one of those sites, you can schedule an appointment by calling 1-866-441-6075, or talk to your local clinic. A study visit only takes about 20 minutes.

Will you be one of the million who helps this project?

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.

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



CAN YOU TRUST YOUR EYES? There are at least six differences in drawing details between top and bottom panels. How quickly can you find them? Check answers with those below.

DIFFERENCES: 1. Tree is missing. 2. T-shirt is missing. 3. Shovel is smaller. 4. Sail is different. 5. Hat is different. 6. Camera is missing.

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DOLPHINS (continued)

Off the shores of a town called Laguna in Brazil, dolphins and men have teamed up for generations. Fishermen line up in the shallow water off the shore with their nets. When the dolphins locate a school of mullet, they "herd" the fish towards the fishermen. While the fishermen fill their nets, the dolphins feast on the leftovers.

At the Kewalo Basin Marine Mammal Lab in Hawaii, trainers were working with two bottlenose dolphins. Together the two trainers tapped two fingers of each hand together, making the symbol for "in tandem." Then they both threw their arms in the air in the sign language gesture that meant "creative." The instruction was, "Do something creative together." The two dolphins broke away and began swimming around the tank together. Then in perfect choreography they leapt high into the air while simultaneously spitting water out of their mouths. Because dolphins don't normally carry water in their mouths, it was obviously a move that had to be planned and synchronized before they left the water, proving that this was not a matter of two dolphins playing Follow the Leader. When more games of "Tandem Creative" were played, the dolphins did such things and backpedalling and then waving their tail flukes, or doing simultaneous back flips. The trainers were always surprised.

A PROBLEM

Dolphins frequently hang out with schools of tuna. Fishing for tuna used to entail only poles and lines, but in the 1960s, the tuna fleets switched to mile-long nets called purse seines that are wrapped around an entire school and closed like a draw-string purse. Unable to reach the surface, dolphins drown. When one member of their pod becomes entangled in a net, the other dolphins stay to help it rather than fleeing. This causes many more to die. The population of spinner dolphins decreased by 80 percent in the 1970s due to tuna fishing. Most major tuna companies now purchase "dolphin-safe" tuna. The price was raised by a few cents to cover the cost of new nets which would allow dolphins to escape. Unfortunately, some foreign tuna companies still use the old methods. Furthermore, many people in the world consider dolphin meat a delicacy.

continued on next page

DOMESTIC * WILD GAME PROCESSING

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SLAUGHTERING

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emissions comes from livestock and their, well ... emissions.

- Many professional matchmakers say that one should never date a person who is younger than half one's age, plus seven years.

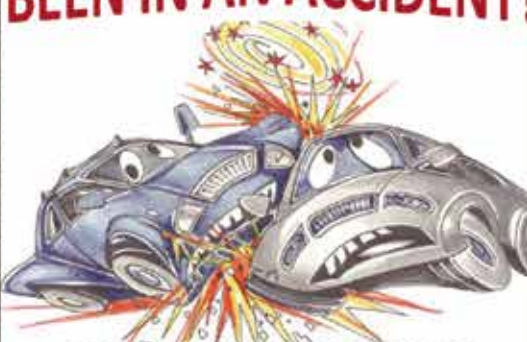
- The average human walks approximately 100,000 miles in the course of a lifetime. If that walking were done in a straight line on the equator, you would circle the Earth four times.

- In the early 1990s, a couple in Milwaukee was curious about the value of a painting they had displayed in their home, so they invited an art expert to evaluate the piece. The painting in question turned out to be of little relative value, but the expert noticed another work, a still life with flowers, that the owners believed to be a reproduction of a Van Gogh. Imagine this couple's surprise when the work turned out to be an original 1886 painting, which later sold at auction for \$1.4 million.

Thought for the Day: "A bride at her second wedding does not wear a veil because she wants to see what she is getting." -- Anonymous

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By Arnold Boss

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-Keepersbooksite

"During June, 1938, I have been laboring continuously in checking material previously copied for use in my "History of Plural Marriage Among the Mormon People". Most of this material I copied from old records in the Deseret News vaults. It has been a secret work, and has been unusual the way permission has been extended to me to have access to the vault. I have hidden my real purpose in going there, but much courtesy has been extended to me. Obviously, if it was known what I was searching for, and the material copied, this privilege would have been denied me." - Arnold Boss

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| 32 Spry | 58 Skaters' venue | 9 "The Daily Show With — Stewart" | 30 "Say It — So" |
| 33 Relaxation | 59 Out of control | 10 Pismire | 31 — Vegas |
| 34 — de deux | 60 Switch positions | 12 Another way to say 7-Down | 35 The Red or the Black |
| 36 Lug | 61 Two, in Tijuana | 19 Floral neck-wear | 38 Thee |
| 37 Bother | | 21 Genetic letters | 40 Request |
| 39 Washington city | | 23 Space | 42 Ballroom dance |
| 41 Half-hour TV show, often | | 25 Authoritative command | 45 "Once — a time ..." |
| 43 Blond shade | | 26 Hebrew month | 47 "Amores" poet |
| 44 Hawaiian feast | | 27 Take out of context? | 48 Gambling game |
| 46 Eccentric | | 28 Earl Grey's kin | 49 Tibetan herd |
| 50 Note from the boss | | 29 Hindu | 50 Biz deg. |
| 53 54-Down stat | | | 51 Shade tree |
| 55 Eye layer | | | 52 Cattle call? |
| 56 United nations | | | 54 Auto fuel |

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CAUSES OF DEATH

- Heart disease
- Cancer
- Stroke
- Auto accidents
- Intentional self-harm
- Accidental poisoning
- Falls
- Car occupant
- Firearm assault
- Pedestrian

Source: National Safety Council

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TIDBITS

NUGGET OF KNOWLEDGE

Dolphins and anteaters are the only mammals who do not have REM sleep. However, with dolphins, one half of the brain will show a typical sleep EEG, while the other half has a normal waking EEG. During the next sleep cycle, the brain halves will be reversed.

DOLPHINS (continued)

- Sailors in the late 1800s came to depend on a generous porpoise known as Jack to guide them through the French Pass, a dangerous rocky waterway off the coast of New Zealand. Jack piloted every ship that came through the treacherous currents until 1903, when a drunk passenger on a ship called the Penguin shot and wounded him. Fortunately, Jack recovered and resumed his duties. For an additional nine years, he guided all ships- all except the Penguin.
- In 1999 when 5-year-old Elian Gonzales found himself alone and adrift at sea after his mother and her companions drowned while escaping from Cuba, he survived by clinging to a floating inner tube. When rescuers found him, he was surrounded by dolphins who had broken waves for him and driven away sharks for the two terrible days he floated alone in the ocean.

OVERCOMING THE ODDS:
JEANNETTE RANKIN

- Jeannette Rankin was born on a ranch in the Montana Territory in 1880, nine years before Montana became a state. As a young woman, she worked in poverty stricken areas of New York, trying to improve conditions for immigrants. This experience led her to become deeply humanitarian. She wanted to devote her life to progressive reform.
- As she worked for women's rights, she correctly concluded that a lot of the ills of society were caused by women's inability to vote, which she claimed amounted to nothing short of "taxation without representation." Hired as a field secretary for the National American Woman Suffrage Association, she was instrumental in getting women the right to vote in North Dakota in 1913.
- In 1916, she ran for congress in her home state of Montana, and was elected to the House of Representatives, becoming the first female member of congress. It was another four years before the 19th Amendment guaranteed all women in the U.S. the right to vote. In congress, she worked tirelessly on behalf of social issues such as women's rights, child protection, and prohibition.
- As the first woman in congress, she got a lot of attention. When congress voted on whether or not to enter World War I, she was one of 50 people who voted against it. This action brought a lot of ridicule her way, but she defended her vote saying, "I felt the first time the first woman had a chance to say no to war she should say it."
- She failed in her bid to be re-elected, and went to work instead as a lobbyist, pressing for reforms to reduce the nation's infant mortality rate. In 1939 she ran for congress again, basing her campaign on an anti-war platform.
- Her brother, who was wealthy and well-connected, financed and organized her second campaign for Congress. Largely due to his assistance, she won another term. She unseated Jacob Thorkelson, who had been been using his single term to advocate a Nazi agenda.

continued on next page



KIDBITS

Junior Whirl by Hal Kaufman

WORD WATCH! Lots of words contain the names of animals and other creatures spelled out within them. There's an ox in box, for instance, a cat in scat, a rat in brat, a bee in beet, an ant in rant, a bat in batch, an otter in potter, a bear in beard, a hare in harem, etc.

Names of the four subjects pictured at right contain the names of certain birds. How quickly can you identify the subjects and name the birds?

1. Crown, 2. Ballroom, 3. Wrench, 4. Bowl, 5. Owl.

HALF HAZARD! Half of 12 is as much greater than four as twice this number exceeds a score. What number is that? Solve this in your head, if you can.

The number is 11.

TRICK TAKES SOFT SOAP

THREE toothpicks, a dish of water and some soft soap are required to perform this magic trick. Carefully place the three toothpicks in the water to form a triangle (see small inset above).

Now, gently stick an index finger straight down into the water at the center of the triangle. Alakazam, not! Nothing happens; the triangle remains intact.

Next, coat the same index finger with soap, and again gently insert it into the triangle.

Alakazam, zot! This time the toothpick triangle immediately disbands. Give it a try.

STAGE SHOW! What can you draw to complete the Western stage show above? To find out, insert lines dot to dot.

LUN SPOT COLOR BY NUMBERS

HAT CHECK! Three cheers for our pal in the three-cornered hat. Coloring code: 1—Red. 2—Lt. blue. 3—Yellow. 4—Lt. brown. 5—Flesh tones. 6—Green. 7—Dk. brown. 8—Dk. blue.

SPELLBINDER

SCORE 10 points for using all the letters in the word below to form two complete words:

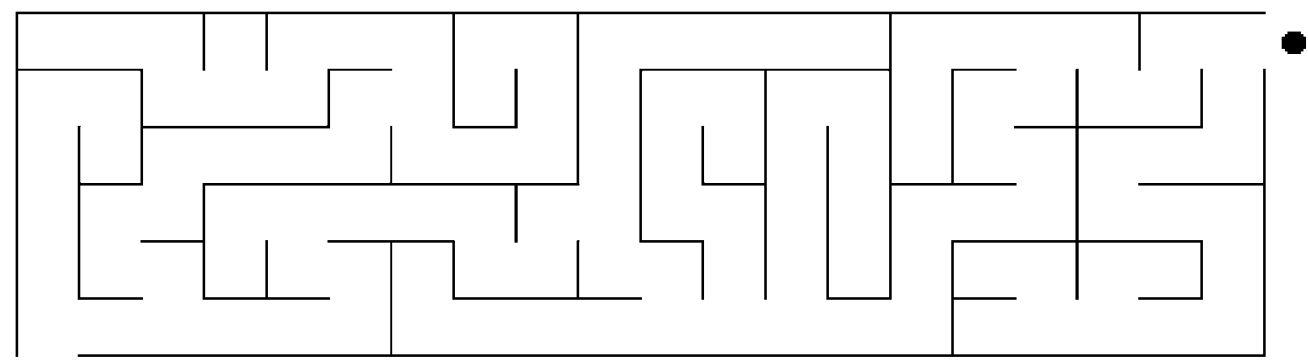
TEASPOON

THEN score 2 points each for all words of four letters or more found among the letters.

Try to score at least 50 points.

Possible two-somes: Tape, soon.

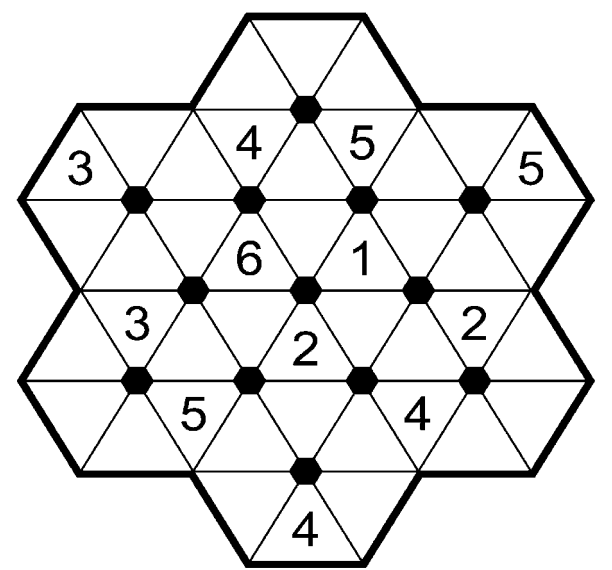
Kids' Maze



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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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JEANNETTE RANKIN (continued)

- Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Jeannette Rankin was the only member of congress to staunchly vote against entering World War II, saying, "As a woman, I can't go to war and I refuse to send anyone else." She is now remembered as the only person in congress to vote against entering into both World War I and World War II.
- When her term ended in 1943, she returned to her home in Montana and spent several decades out of the political spotlight. However, with the social turmoil caused by Civil Rights, Viet Nam, and the fight for women's equality, she returned to social agitation, and worked to organize marches, mobilize the downtrodden, and set up foundations.
- She considered another run for Congress in the 1970s in order to vote against U.S. involvement in Viet Nam. By then she was in her 80s. She continued to write about issues of social importance until she died in 1973 at the age of 92. Although some people consider her to have been outrageously unrealistic, others praise her as an inspiration. Even to this day, the Jeannette Rankin Scholarship fund she set up continues to provide for the education of low income women across the United States.
- "I may be the first woman member of Congress," she observed upon her election in 1916. "But I won't be the last." And upon her election in 1940, she said, "No one will pay any attention to me this time," the victor predicted. "There is nothing unusual about a woman being elected."

BEETLE JUICE

So you're not interested in eating bugs? Well, you better start reading the ingredients labels a bit more closely...

- The cochineal beetle lives on prickly pear cactus plants in places such as Peru and the Canary Islands, sucking their sap. The eggs of the beetle, wrapped inside a cocoon, are bright red. In fact, the eggs are so red that a pregnant female cochineal beetle whose body harbors unlaidd eggs will, if squashed, yield a bright red pulp. Long ago the Mixtec Indians collected the female cochineal beetles and crushed them to a powder. The dried bug dust was used to create a color-fast red dye for fabrics that is still used today. It's considered to be superior to all synthetic dyes. But these red bugs color more than just clothing.

continued on next page

Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



PetBits™ Curbing Hairballs

By Samantha Mazzotta
DEAR PAW'S CORNER: My cat, "Chester," coughs up a big hairball about once every two weeks. Is this unusual? How can I stop it? -- Grossed Out in Chicago

DEAR GROSSED OUT: Coughing up the occasional hairball isn't unusual for most cats, but if it seems to be happening more frequently, getting a professional opinion is important. Schedule a checkup for Chester with his veterinarian, and bring along the next hairball (or two) he coughs up in the meantime.

The vet can check for any underlying condition, as well as check the hairball for traces of blood, plants or other items of concern. The vet will make sure Chester's general health is good for his age (or not), and can offer suggestions and possibly medication to reduce the frequency at which your cat is horking up hairballs.

Hairballs are formed due to a cat's habit of cleaning its fur with its tongue. The rough tongue tends to pick up stray hairs and dander, which the cat swallows. Most of the time, this hair passes through the digestive tract without a problem. But occasionally this does not happen, and the cat regurgitates the hair (and other stuff matted into it). If Chester gets an otherwise clean bill of health, the vet probably will recommend using a hairball preventative. The most common type is a petroleum jelly-based treat that is licked off the end of your finger. Chewable hairball treats also are available; these contain mineral oil and should be given sparingly. "Hairball control" cat foods contain extra fiber (usually cellulose) to help push excess hair through the digestive tract.

Send your questions or comments 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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Moments in time
 THE HISTORY CHANNEL

- On Feb. 14, 278 A.D., Valentine, a holy priest in Rome in the days of Emperor Claudius II, is executed. Claudius the Cruel had banned all marriages and engagements. Valentine defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret.
- On Feb. 17, 1904, Giacomo Puccini's opera "Madame Butterfly" premieres at the La Scala theater in Milan, Italy. Set in Nagasaki, Japan, "Madame Butterfly" told the story of an American sailor, B.F. Pinkerton, who marries and then abandons a young Japanese geisha, Cio-Cio-San, or Madame Butterfly.
- On Feb. 11, 1916, Emma Goldman, a crusader for women's rights and social justice, is arrested in New York City for lecturing and distributing materials about birth control. She was accused of violating the Comstock Act of 1873, which made it a federal offense to disseminate contraceptive devices and information through the mail or across state lines.
- On Feb. 13, 1920, The League of Nations, the international organization formed at the peace conference at Versailles in the wake of World War I, recognizes the perpetual neutrality of Switzerland. The League also established its headquarters in the Swiss city of Geneva.
- On Feb. 16, 1959, Fidel Castro is sworn in as prime minister of Cuba after leading a guerrilla campaign that forced right-wing dictator Fulgencio Batista into exile. The United States initially recognized the new Cuban dictator but withdrew its support after Castro nationalized U.S. assets on the island.
- On Feb. 15, 1965, in accordance with a formal proclamation by Queen Elizabeth II of England, a new Canadian national flag is raised above Parliament Hill in Ottawa, the capital of Canada. Canada's national flag was to be red and white with a stylized 11-point red maple leaf in its center.
- On Feb. 12, 1973, the release of American POWs from the Vietnam War begins in Hanoi as part of the Paris peace settlement. Operation Homecoming was completed on March 29, 1973, when the last of 591 U.S. prisoners were released and returned to the United States.

TIDBITS™ GOES LONG.....

Aristotle caught dolphins, tagged their tails, and released them in an effort to learn more about them. He was the first person to discover that dolphins are very territorial, sticking to a single area all their lives. He also found that they easily live to 30 years in age, sometimes exceeding 40.

HealthBits™

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

Shingles Pain Lingers After Rash Is Gone

DEAR DR. DONOHUE: Two years ago I had shingles, and I now suffer the aftereffects of it. The sores went away in a month, but the stinging, burning, throbbing pain is still with me. I cannot wear clothing over the affected shoulder. No medicines have eased the pain so far. Is there any help? -- M.L.

ANSWER: You now are dealing with postherpetic neuralgia, pain that lingers long after the shingles rash has gone. The virus that causes shingles is the same virus that causes chickenpox. Almost every adult on this continent harbors that virus, now called herpes zoster. It lives on in nerve cells. From time to time, at older ages, it awakens from its hibernation, travels down the nerve to the skin and causes an outbreak of blisters on a red base. The outbreak goes away in about three weeks. Pain can linger for a long time -- months, to years. In traveling down the nerve, the virus damaged it.

I can list some of the postherpetic neuralgia medicines. Two are antidepressants -- nortriptyline and amitriptyline -- given not for depression but for pain relief. Cymbalta (duloxetine) is another antidepressant that can lessen postherpetic pain. Lyrica (pregabalin) is an anti-seizure medicine that's approved for this problem. Neurontin (gabapentin) is another seizure medicine used for control of the lingering pain of shingles.

Capsaicin lotion, cream or gel (Zostrix, Capsin, R-Gel) is applied directly to the involved skin. A higher concentration of capsaicin comes as a patch that's applied in the doctor's office, left on for an hour and then removed. Treatment can be repeated in three months. It's called Qutenza. Another skin patch is the Lidoderm patch. The latest medicine is Gralise, an extended-release form of gabapentin -- Neurontin. It requires fewer doses.

The entire shingles story is covered in the booklet on that topic. Readers can obtain a copy by writing: Dr. Donohue -- No. 1201W, 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: I get my calcium by drinking milk. I believe natural sources are the best sources of vitamins and minerals. The problem is that whole milk raises my cholesterol. My father died of a heart attack at a young age. Does skim milk have as much calcium as whole milk? -- R.T.

ANSWER: Skim milk contains a little more calcium than whole milk. An 8-ounce glass of whole milk has 291 mg of calcium. The same amount of skim milk has 300 mg.

DEAR DR. DONOHUE: Many months ago, my feet turned numb. The numbness has spread up to my knees. It has made me quite unsteady when I walk. My doctor can't find a cause or treatment for this. Can you suggest anything? -- L.O.

ANSWER: Your description fits peripheral neuropathy, a deterioration of nerve function, often of the leg nerves. The causes for it are many. Frequently, however, a precise cause can't be determined. You need to make an appointment to see a neurologist as soon as you can.

BEETLE JUICE (continued)

- Now let's take a look at candy, especially chocolate candy such as chocolate covered raisins, chocolate mints, chocolate coated peanuts and so forth. Anything that tends to get sticky is covered with shellac.
- What exactly is shellac? Shellac comes from the poop produced by the scale beetle *Laccifer lacca*, which lives in India and South Asia. The beetle makes a living eating tree sap, particularly of several species of soap-berry, acacia, and fig tree. It then excretes digested sap and covers itself with a hardened shell of this resinous matter to protect itself from predators while it goes through its larval stage.
- Dye made from cochineal beetles is called carmine. In the 1800s food manufacturers began to use carmine to dye sausages, candy, jam, shrimp, maraschino cherries, and other things. The cosmetic industry used it to color lipstick and rouge. The pharmaceutical industry used it to color pills. Carmine was a very common until a red dye made from coal tar became more popular in the 1870s. However, when coal tar dyes were found to be carcinogenic, carmine came back on the scene. Look at the ingredients of red foods and beverages in your supermarket today for either "carmine" or "cochineal extract." Many kinds of juice, yogurt, ice cream, cough syrup, gelatin, and candy may contain beetle powder for coloring. The advertising for such products may legitimately claim, "All natural ingredients!" because, after all, what's unnatural about a beetle? If you don't want to eat crushed beetles, look for 'artificial coloring' on the ingredients label.
- In 1996, some 640 metric tons of cochineal was harvested in Peru. That accounts for 85 percent of the world's production.
- Twigs covered with these bugs are then scraped off, and the scrapings are ground up, washed, melted, filtered, dried, and dissolved in denatured alcohol to form a varnish for furniture.
- Food grade varnish, a type of confectioner's glaze, can also be produced from *Laccifer lacca* which is very popular with food manufacturers because it maintains its gloss even in high humidity; it doesn't get sticky or dull; and it adheres easily to many food surfaces.
- Of course, the label is not going to list bug poop as an ingredient. No, it's usually got a sugar coated name such as 'confectioner's glaze or 'resinous glaze.'

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 Arsenio Hall 2/12/55
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 Ice T 2/16/59

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Weekly SUDOKU
 by Linda Thistle

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		8		4	5		1	
1	6			7				4

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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