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# TIDBITS

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## TIDBITS EXAMINES THE FRENCH CONNECTION



Come with Tidbits as we find out how French bulldozed its way into the English language!

### Au Debut

\* English is a conglomeration of various languages. Some languages, such as Basque and Korean, developed in isolation from other cultural influences and are unique. However, English is a blend, composed primarily of German, Latin, and French, as these cultures were in constant contact. Linguists can pinpoint the exact date when the French invasion of the English language occurred, the point at which "Old English" began to morph into "Middle English.."

\* The turning point happened on January 5, 1066 A.D. That's when King Edward the Confessor, who had ruled England since 1042, died. He left no heir to take over the throne. His cousin, William, lived in Normandy, the area of France directly across the English Channel. William took advantage of the vacancy to invade England and seize the throne. Known as William the Conqueror, he took over in the year 1066 A.D. in what is called the Norman Conquest.

\* The word "Normandy" is French for "northman" referring to the "Norse" (which also means "north") because the Vikings invaded and conquered this northern coast of France around the year 900 A.D. *(more observations on page 2)*

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**Q: What do you call a French man wearing sandals?**

**A: Philippe Phloppe!**

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CRIM and BIAR IT <sup>by Wagner</sup>



"You've got to stop putting your foot in your mouth, Senator!"

## THE FRENCH CONNECTION

(Cont. from Front Cover)



\* William the Conqueror's first move was to kick out every Englishman who was in a public office and substitute Frenchmen instead. Government officials were now French, military leaders were French, the clergy were French, and merchants were French. Now, if an Englishman wanted to communicate with the people in power, he needed to speak French. The powerful, the elite, the cultured, and the wealthy only spoke French. Eventually, speaking French became a symbol of status.. Only the lowly spoke English.

\* It's important to note that in a day and age when most citizens were illiterate, most of the upper echelon who were doing the writing and the record-keeping did so in French rather than English. Therefore, they were at liberty to discard English habits of speech and substitute the French method of language instead. This influence remains today. Examples:

\* The use of "thee" and "thou" declined, replace with "ye" which morphed into "you" derived from the French "vous."

\* Some vocal sounds that French contributed to English include the "g" sound in mirage (from the French word for mirror), the "v" in vacation (from the French word for vacant), and the "z" in zigzag (entirely French).

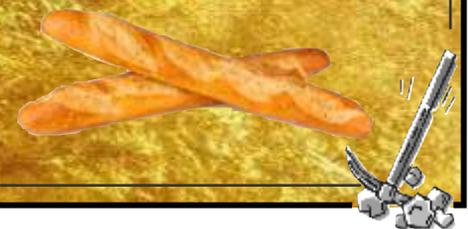
\* French scribes removed the English "gg" and used "dg" instead: brigg became bridge. They used "gh" instead of a single "h" turning niht into night. The single "u" was replaced by "ou" turning huse into house. The removed the commonly used "cw" and substituted "qu" so cwen became queen-- because they also contributed the double vowel, to signify a long vowel, such as "see." It was the French who decided we double up consonants after a short vowel, but not after a long vowel, so wh have sitt-ing and setting, but seating and siting.

(check out page 3 for the rest of the story)

## TIPBITS

### NUGGET OF KNOWLEDGE

"Baguette" is French for any long skinny thing: baguette magique (magic wand), baguettes chinoises (chopsticks), or baguette de direction (conductor's baton). But baguette all by itself denotes a loaf of bread shaped like a stick.



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## THE FRENCH CONNECTION

(cont. from page 2)



### Parlez -vous Francais?

\* It was during this French rule of England that the letter "H" started dropping from the beginning of words. The French aren't big on the "H" sound when it starts a word and many English accents followed suit. This is why we now have a silent "H" in words like hour and honor, and why some British say "an hotel" or "an historic place" as if the word started with a vowel and the H wasn't there at all.

\* The French introduced the impersonal "one" meaning that phrases such as "one does as one wants" which sounds thoroughly English, is actually totally French.

\* The French influence is why we now have an English word for animals when they're alive (cow, sheep, deer) and a French word for them when they're dinner (beef, mutton, venison). The lowly English dealt with these animals on the farm while the cultured French Normans encountered them when served by the chef for dinner.

\* Interestingly enough, all the words for closest family members are English: mother, father, daughter, son, while all the words for more distant relations are French: niece, nephew, aunt, uncle, cousin.

\* The French influence is particularly strong in areas such as government and politics. Crown, state, government, parliament, authority are all French. It's also prevalent regarding law: justice, crime, jury, evidence, parole. Military affairs are also largely French in origin: army, navy, battle, regime, captain. Religion is also full of French, including the word religion as well as sermon, saint, abbey. And because the French were very fashionable, we now have the French-derived gown, robe, satin, and embroidery.

\* Many French words are still spoken as the French would: corps, ballet, filet.

(read to the end on page 4)



February 8th, 2026 Puzzle Answers



## Puzzles4Kids Answer

What should you say to an angry polar bear?  
Nothing. Just run away!

### Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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



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# TOYS THAT SERVED

\* Here are some true tales about toys that served a purpose in the military.

\* The Red Cross and other charities were allowed to send care packages to U.S. and British soldiers held in concentration camps throughout Europe during the Nazi occupation in WWII. The British Secret Service approached the manufacturer of the board game Monopoly and asked them to participate in aiding the POWs. When they agreed, maps of areas surrounding the concentration camps were printed on silk and hidden in the game board. These could be folded without rustling and hidden in a cigarette pack. Small metal files and tiny compasses were also enclosed in the game board. Real local currency was hidden under the Monopoly money. Chess sets and playing cards were also used in this way.

\* The Slinky, first released as a toy in 1945, swept the nation in the 1950s. During the Vietnam War, radio operators discovered that a Slinky, when attached to the radio and then hurled into the

\* The ViewMaster went on the market in 1939. It was generally sold in souvenir gift shops, allowing adults to purchase an entire disk of photos of the local landmark instead of having to buy individual postcards. During World War II, the military purchased over 100,000 ViewMasters and distributed them to soldiers, along with disks depicting enemy artillery and aircraft, making quick identification much easier.

\* When the Japanese cut off much of the world's supply of rubber during WWII, General Electric went to work trying to invent a substitute. One of the results was the accidental discover of a rubber-like substance that became known as Silly Putty. Aside from being an amusing toy, Silly Putty has found several practical applications over the years. Astronauts had issues corralling their loose tools while in zero gravity because they would float away. The solution was Silly Putty: when a wad was plopped onto any surface, a tool could be affixed to the blob, staying in place while still being easily accessible.

\* In 2011, Ernie Fesenden attached a wireless camera to high-end remote control car and mailed it to his brother, who was stationed in Afghanistan. His brother, Staff Sgt. Christopher Fesenden, loaned it to a group of fellow soldiers who were going out on patrol. They used it to scout the road ahead of them for trip-wires. The little car hit a trip-wire and detonated, setting off over 500 lbs. of explosives. The lives of six American soldiers were saved due to the sacrifice that the little car made. Today, remote control toy cars are often used in a similar capacity.

\* While attempting to invent an aerosol spray-on cast for broken bones, researchers accidentally invented a product now called Silly String. Distributed by Wham-O beginning in the early 1970s, the novelty was a big hit with kids. It also became a big hit with soldiers. In 2006, soldiers in Iraq were attempting to clear buildings of trip wires that triggered explosives. They found that Silly String, which could be launched for distances of up to ten feet, was light enough to hang on otherwise invisible wires without triggering the explosives. Today, Silly String is shipped to the front lines all around the world.

**THE FRENCH CONNECTION**

(cont. from page 3)

### FINIS

\* Linguists also can pinpoint the moment French fell out of favor in England. When the French king Charles IV died in 1329, he left the throne without a male heir, resulting in a power vacuum. This is the point at which the English began the long fight to expel the French, in a conflict that became known as the Hundred Years' War. This on-again, off-again conflict actually lasted 116 years, ending in 1453 when the English King Louis XI agreed to a seven-year truce and resolved to resolve future disputes through negotiation rather than war. With the French now considered the enemy instead of the rulers, the French language fell out of fashion.

\* In 1476, a man named William Caxton brought the first printing presses to England. He was determined to translate all the available books into the English language. This required that the rules of spelling be solidified, which he largely decided very arbitrarily on his own. This was the dawn of modern-day English, now often referred to as "the King's English."

\* Henry IV (1367 - 1413) was the first English king whose first language was English. Henry V (1387 - 1422) was the first king of England to use English in official documents. English became the language of instruction at the University of Oxford, which had previously taught only in French or Latin.

\* It's estimated that about 29% of modern English words have their roots in French. Latin is responsible for another 29% while German is the source of about 26% of our words, with all other languages making up the rest. However of the 100 most frequently used words in the English language, the overwhelming majority come from German, while only one is French: the word "people" originated in France.

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highest branches of a tree, would act as an effective antenna. Subsequent investigation showed that the Slinky's metal coils receive radio signals at a frequency between seven and eight megahertz, thereby extending the range of the radio signals. It was incredibly simple to drape the wire over branches, quick to pull down when moving out and easy to store in a backpack while traveling.

### February 8th, 2026 Puzzle Answers

#### Even Exchange

Donna M. Pettman

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Menu, Minus    | 6. Oliver, Sliver |
| 2. Fender, Lender | 7. Stare, Scare   |
| 3. Starch, Search | 8. Falter, Filter |
| 4. Pilch, Pinch   | 9. Trade, Trace   |
| 5. Brisk, Brick   | 10. Noise, Poise  |

#### KNIGHT MOVES Answer

I <sub>6</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	E <sub>8</sub>
P <sub>.</sub>		L <sub>5</sub>
T <sub>4</sub>	N <sub>7</sub>	L <sub>2</sub>



#### PLOTLINE





# KANZI THE BONOBO

\* The bonobo, also called the pygmy chimp or dwarf chimp, is a type of primate that's known for being good-natured. One bonobo named Kanzi was born into captivity in 1980. He was immediately kidnapped and adopted by the reigning matriarch of the group, Matata. She had been captured in the wild.

\* Matata was entered into a study to see if she could be taught to communicate using symbolic pictures called lexigrams. While attending classes, baby Kanzi was looking over her shoulder. Matata failed to pick up the language, but Kanzi one day started using the keyboard lexigrams in a way that indicated he understood. On that very first day, he used the keyboard in 120 different ways, indicating the food he wanted to eat or the games he wanted to play. He'd touch the symbol for "grape" and then pull the grapes out of the fridge. He touched the sign for "apple" and then "chase" and then grabbed an apple and scampered away with it in a game of keep-a-way.

\* Kanzi eventually mastered almost 400 symbols in all and even understood rudimentary word order.



Later, it became apparent that he had also picked up a basic understanding of spoken English. In carefully controlled experiments, researchers proved over and over that Kanzi could understand many individual words as well as basic sentences. He was even able to follow spoken instructions - even when they were issued over the phone such as, "Fetch the carrots on the table in the kitchen and put them in the bowl in the living room" while ignoring other carrots and other bowls in other locations.



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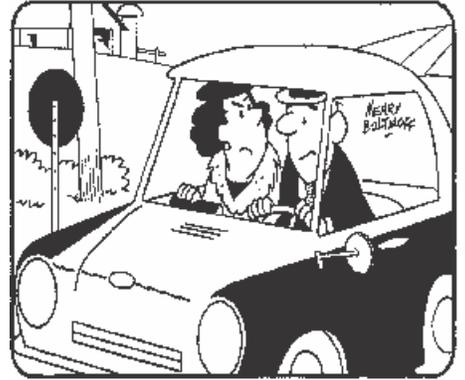
\* Kanzi also picked up signs from American Sign Language from watching videos of Koko the gorilla. Researchers did not teach Kanzi sign language, but merely showed him videos of Koko signing in order to amuse him. He quickly began signing completely unbidden and went on to learn many signs.

\* In a test that pitted Kanzi against a two-year-old human girl, they were each given 660 simple spoken instructions asking them to use various objects in different ways. Kanzi completed these tasks correctly 75% of the time, while the child did them correctly 65% of the time. When asked, "Feed the ball some tomato" the child was completely flummoxed, but Kanzi picked up a toy pumpkin and mimed feeding it tomato. In addition to the 400 lexigrams, Kanzi understood about 3,000 spoken words.

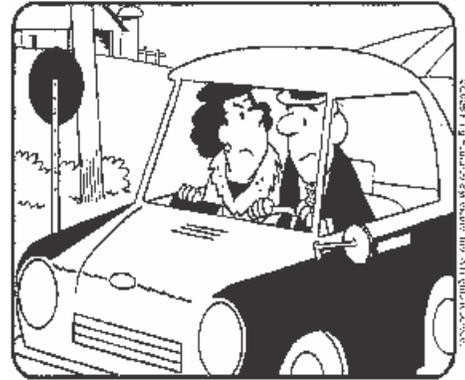
\* Children start to utter two-word sentences between 18 and 24 months. Kanzi reached the two-word sentence limit, and never grew very much beyond that. He could understand complex sentences, but not craft them himself.

\* Researchers would hide a grape under a cup, then ask Kanzi, "Where's the grape?" If the researcher was present when the grape was being hidden, Kanzi would not respond because he was perfectly aware that the researcher knew where the grape was. However, if the researcher had been absent during the grape-hiding, Kanzi would quickly point to the correct cup.

## HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Side mirror is moved. 2. Tire is different. 3. Sign is taller. 4. Door handle is different. 5. Fence is different. 6. Headrest is added.

\* Kanzi was perfectly capable of gathering wood, striking a match, starting a fire, and cooking scrambled or toasted marshmallows. Researchers taught him to craft crude flint knives by striking two stones together, but Kanzi preferred the easier method of hurling stones at the ground, causing to crack into pieces. He then learned to use the stone tools to cut a rope to retrieve a treat. He enjoyed playing Pac-Man and a simplified version of Minecraft.

\* Kanzi died in March of 2025, likely of heart disease. Kanzi was a happy, gregarious bonobo who enjoyed interacting with humans, and spent his last morning being his usual joyous self, playfully chasing other bonobos and relishing the day's enrichment surprises.

**TIPBITS**   
**Laughs!**

**Q: What is a French person's favorite game console?**

**A: The Wii! Wii Wii!**





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**THIS WEEK'S CELEBRITY BIRTHDAYS**

Jane Seymour	02/15/1951
Ice T	02/16/1959
Hal Holbrook	02/17/1925
Molly Ringwald	02/18/1968
Prince Andrew	02/19/1960
Cindy Crawford	02/20/1966
Alan Rickman	02/21/1946

**TIDBITS**



# Fun Fact

The ancient Roman festival of **Lupercalia** was conducted every year on February 15 by priests called Luperi. As a rite of fertility, the festival was associated with the god Faunus. Each ceremony included animal sacrifices, blood rites, and feasting. The priests would then run about the streets, slapping women with the skins of the sacrificed animals, which was said to increase their fertility.



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

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## Salome's Stars



**ARIES** (March 21 to April 19) A gracious Lamb can learn more about a problem-filled situation than one who is openly suspicious of what could be happening. A friend might offer some well-directed advice.



**TACRUS** (April 20 to May 20) Getting adjusted to an unexpected change might be difficult for the Bovine, who prefers things to go according to plan. But help could come from a most welcome source.



**GEMINI** (May 21 to June 20) This could be a good time to get a head start on some career-related plans. The sooner you check out the pluses and minuses, the sooner you can act on your information.



**CANCER** (June 21 to July 22) A personal situation that you thought would no longer present a problem could suddenly produce some surprises. Try to sort things out with the help of your trusted colleagues.



**LEO** (July 23 to August 22) An upcoming move holds both anticipation and anxiety for Leos and Leonas who have some big decisions to make. Advice is plentiful, but it's up to you to decide which way you want to go.



**VIRGO** (August 23 to September 22) Someone from a previous project could provide valuable guidance on how to handle a current problem, especially where it might involve a legal matter.



**LIBRA** (September 23 to October 22) A business situation presents some unexpected complications. But rather than trying to handle them all at once, it would be best to deal with them one at a time.



**SCORPIO** (October 23 to November 21) You just might get what you want despite the odds against it. In any event, be sure to thank all the people involved who believed in you and went to bat for you.



**SAGITTARIUS** (November 22 to December 21) Before you even hint at an accusation, remember that you'll have to prove what you say. So, be sure that you have what you need to back up your comments.



**CAPRICORN** (December 22 to January 19) A romantic situation takes an unexpected turn that favors some Sea Goats but causes others to reassess how they've been handling the relationship.



**AQUARIUS** (January 20 to February 18) A surprise turn of events could unsettle the Water Bearer. But it might also help to open up an entirely different way of working out an important matter.



**PISCES** (February 19 to March 20) A smoothly running operation could bump up against an obstacle. This is where your ability to assess situations and make adjustments can restore things to normal.



**BORN THIS WEEK:** Your kindness is legendary, and so is your strong sense of responsibility. You most likely do well in humanitarian efforts.

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February 8th, 2026 Puzzle Answers

**SCRAMBLERS**  
 solution  
 1. Caramel; 2. Code;  
 3. Inside; 4. Inept  
**Today's Word**  
**INCOME**

**Sticklers Answer**  
 1) stimulate — ultimate, mutilates  
 2) percussion — superionic  
 3) aligned — leading, dealing  
 4) gander — garden, ranged, danger



\* **On Feb. 16, 1959**, Fidel Castro was sworn in as Cuba's prime minister after leading a guerrilla campaign that forced right-wing dictator Fulgencio Batista into exile. Castro, who became commander in chief of Cuba's armed forces after Batista was ousted on Jan. 1, replaced the more moderate Miro Cardona as head of the country's new provisional government.

\* **On Feb. 17, 1972**, the 15,007,034th Volkswagen Beetle rolled off the assembly line and broke a world car-production record held for more than 40 years by the Ford Motor Company's Model T, which was manufactured from 1908 to 1927.

\* **On Feb. 18, 1930**, Elm Farm Ollie earned the remarkable distinction of becoming the first cow to fly -- and be milked -- in an airplane. Her milk was then boxed and parachuted to waiting spectators on the ground.

\* **On Feb. 19, 1473**, Nicolaus Copernicus, regarded as the father of modern astronomy, was born in Torun, a city in north-central Poland on the Vistula River. He would become the first modern European scientist to propose that Earth and other planets revolve around the sun.

\* **On Feb. 20, 1977**, an episode of the TV sitcom "Seinfeld" titled "The Pothole" debuted, with the inclusion of a storyline in which the eccentric character Kramer adopted a stretch of the fictional Arthur Burghardt Expressway via the real-life Adopt-A-Highway program.

**On Feb. 21, 2016**, quadruple amputee Kyle Maynard reached the summit of Mount Aconcagua, South America's tallest mountain, after bear-crawling up the nearly 23,000-foot peak without the use of his prosthetics. Four years earlier, he'd climbed Africa's Mount Kilimanjaro in the same manner.

\* **On Feb. 22, 1983**, Arthur Bicknell's play "Moose Murders" made its Broadway debut at New York's Eugene O'Neill Theater, and closed the very same night, earning it the unfortunate description by The New York Times as "the standard of awfulness against which all Broadway flops are judged." After the curtain fell on cue, there was no applause, leading one cast member to remark that "I don't think there ever was a show in the history of Broadway where you took a bow to silence."

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**February 8th, 2026**

Super Crossword												
Answers												
E	N	I	I	L	E	P	E	R	A	I	P	S
L	E	A	S	H	E	S	A	L	T	A	R	S
M	A	J	O	R	A	P	P	L	I	A	N	C
O	R	E	O	S	N	O	W	B	L	A	I	R
H	F	A	I	H	F	A	M	I	T	Y	A	I
A	M	S	T	E	L	T	O	E	D	O	A	K
R	A	Y	D	U	S	T	B	R	O	W	N	M
A	P	A	R	I	A	M	S	N	E	E	P	A
C	N	I	G	M	A	C	N	T	A	W	A	R
B	R	I	I	S	H	P	R	I	M	E	M	I
E	A	S	T	E	R	S	T	D	S	O	N	T
N	Y	T	O	L	A	Y	E	U	P	T	O	R
J	O	H	N	S	O	N	G	R	A	S	S	O
I	N	E	P	E	I	S	U	E	Z	A	R	R
A	P	I	A	R	Y	H	E	N	P	H	A	I
M	A	Y	B	E	E	T	L	E	S	E	E	R
A	D	U	L	T	C	K	S	T	C	E	D	
R	E	C	O	I	L	C	H	U	R	C	H	I
A	L	C	O	T	T	P	A	L	L	O	R	I
T	E	A	M	E	D	O	W	L	E	T	S	M

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**TIDBITS ONE MORE FACT**

It's been claimed that the English language doesn't really exist because it's actually just very badly pronounced French. French can still recognize about 15,000 words in French.

## Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps

OK, SON, JUST PICK OUT YOUR FAVORITE LURE AND WE'LL SEE IF WE CAN GET A BITE TODAY.

ALRIGHT, HERE WE GO. DROP IT DOWN THE HOLE.

NOW WE WAIT. THOSE FISH SHOULD COME ALONG AND SNATCH IT UP!

SERIOUSLY? PAINTED PLASTIC, FULL OF HOOKS, AND YOUR ISSUE IS IF IT HAS GLUTEN?

The rose variety "**Gertrude Jekyll**" was named "World's Favourite Rose" by the World Federation of Rose Societies at its May 2025 convention held in Fukuyama, Japan. Rose enthusiasts all over the world love its vibrant pink color, its elegant shape, large blooms loaded with petals from late spring through fall, and its exquisite perfume. A Gertrude Jekyll rose needs a minimum of 4 hours of sunlight per day during the growing season, well-draining soil and adequate air circulation around it.

— Brenda Wean

Source: [theincajournal.info/national](http://theincajournal.info/national), [www.bhg.com](http://www.bhg.com), [www.rosejournal.com](http://www.rosejournal.com)

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Look inappropriately

Type of beam

Car buyer's enjoyment

Before each row of replicated letters from the answer boxes on below and scan along to make a new word. When complete, the top and bottom words will have no letters in common.

1 subject is a synonym of "fisher." Help your beginning a new word with the letter.

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Answer in the February 22nd Issue

## 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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Answer in the February 22nd Issue

# BINGO

**Are You Ready for Some Fun?! Then Grab Your Dauber & Get 'Er Done!!**

**Friday Night**  
 Elks Lodge Bingo  
 Doors Open 4:30 pm  
 Games Start 6:30 pm

**Sunday Afternoon**  
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 Games Start 1:00 pm

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## Weekly SUDOKU

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

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 3-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

**DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK:** ◆◆◆

◆ Moderate    ◆◆ Challenging  
 ◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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Answer in the February 22nd Issue

## GO FIGURE!

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.

	-		÷	=	1			
+		+		+				
	-		×	=	16			
+		÷		-				
	-		+	=	11			
=		=		=				
16		1		1				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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## Even Exchange

by Donna Pettman

Each numbered row contains two clues and two 6-letter answers. The two answers differ from each other by only one letter, which has already been inserted. For example, if you exchange the A from MASTER for an L, you get MISTER. Do not change the order of the letters.

1. Young female horse	I	Foxiness	C
2. Restaurant server	___ I ___	Mr. Mitty or Crankie	___ L ___
3. Son of William the Conqueror	___ A ___	Seauslie	___ C ___
4. Sluggish creature	S	Fabric	C
5. Code inventor	___ R ___	Mickey or Minnie	___ U ___
6. Alternate route	I	Wolf down	V
7. Boxer Sonny	___ O ___	Eavesdrop	___ E ___
8. Grinch's quiet kin	___ O ___	Anglo-British	S
9. Deep red gem	___ T ___	Harvest	___ R
10. All of it	I	Sloop or Woody	I

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"I wondered why you never returned my \_\_\_\_\_"

### 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!

Plan  
DANAGE   

Cache  
RHOAD   

Glow  
LEGAM   

Brisk  
DRAIP   

TODAY'S WORD

\_\_\_\_\_

Answer in the February 22nd Issue

### WORD SPIRAL

B		N
		E
H	O	

Fill in the missing letters to reveal the nine-letter word that starts at one of the four corners and moves clockwise around the perimeter before ending in the center.

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Answer in the February 22nd issue

### KNIGHT MOVES

A	Y	S
I		L
L	C	F

Unlock the power of chess to find the eight-letter word of the day. Choose your starting letter carefully, then move around the square in a one by two fashion to get to the next letter.

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Answer in the February 22nd Issue

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**STICKELERS** (siv)  
by Terry Stickels

What is the last number in this logical number sequence?

45 99 198 1089 10890 20691 ?

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Answer in the February 22nd Issue

### FEAR & KNIGHT

By: rj johnson  
DOUBT? OR DARE!

- UYG
- EGSAKT
- CHEAD
- NAUL
- ♥ ROIGNE
- AKY
- ♥ RUCE
- MOKUA
- GKE
- UARKEE
- ♥ REGUS
- NSCY

Unscramble these twelve letter strings to form each into an ordinary word (yes, HANGED becomes CHANGE!). Prepare to use every ONE word from any marked (♥) letter string as each unscrambles into more than one word (yes ♥ RATHER becomes HATER or EARTH or HEART!). In each string a word is either across or down to knit all twelve strings together.

Answer in the February 22nd Issue

Repeat After Me:

### CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Substitution is accomplished by line and eraser.

Clue: K equals L

VTTFAVX L YEHI KGVXTO  
EBTVPAK BG HEB L KLOXT  
IEVC GS YTLB, L YLV FTHKLOTF

"CVAST'P BGG PIGOB."

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Answer in the February 22nd Issue



*Pate-de-verre*

The Daum glass factory of Nancy, France, is famous for its cameo glass, but that isn't the only kind it made. When Jean Daum founded the factory in 1875, he made cut and enameled glass. His sons Auguste and Antonin started an art glass department in 1885, adapting to the art glass movement and art nouveau style of the time. The company started making more ornate types of glass like cameo glass and pate-de-verre. These were very old techniques, but newly popular as they experienced a resurgence in the 19th century. Pate-de-verre was made in ancient Egypt. The term means "glass paste." It is made by combining ground glass with an adhesive and molding this mixture into forms. It proved to be a good fit for the art nouveau period, when designs drew inspiration from the natural world, especially flowers and plants.

Glassworks like Daum made pate-de-verre pieces with three-dimensional flowers. They are often valuable today. This Daum vase made to look like a bunch of daffodils sold for \$2,125 at Heritage Auctions.



\* \* \*

**Q:** I have a collection of Beanie Baby bears that would like a new home. How can I find them a good one?

**A:** The resale market for Beanie Babies has been ongoing since the fad exploded in the 1990s. It is still active, although prices are not as high as they were during the original craze. Social media websites like Facebook Marketplace or Craigslist can help you find Beanie Babies collector clubs that may be interested in your bears.

They may also sell at estate sales or toy auctions. Websites like eBay and Etsy are also popular places to sell; but if you use them, remember that asking prices are not the same as sold prices. You will see Beanie Babies listed for thousands of dollars on these sites, but that is what the seller is asking, not necessarily what buyers are paying. To see more accurate values on eBay, check "Sold Items" under Advanced Search. There are also several websites specifically for Beanie Baby collectors, like tycollector.com and beaniebabiespriceguide.com, that can help you find the value of your bears. Of course, if you are looking to donate your Beanie Babies and they are in excellent condition, you should contact local charity groups or local hospital.

\* \* \*

**TIP:** If you like vases of fresh flowers, buy custom-cut pieces of glass to protect wooden table and chest tops from water stains.

\* \* \*

CURRENT PRICES

**World's Fair**, banner, 1876, Philadelphia International Exhibition, Centennial, George Washington portrait, multicolor, jacquard, blue fringe, silk, 10 1/2 x 7 inches, \$160.

**Trunk**, nagamochi, lift lid, lacquer, gilt armorial devices, scrolling leaves, latch closure, handle, paper lining, Japan, late 1800s, 14 x 29 x 17 inches, pair, \$500.

**Rug**, soumak, six medallions, blue field, red, orange, brown, ivory, stylized flower border, Uzbekistan, 9 feet 6 inches x 5 feet 7 inches, \$745.

\* \* \*

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

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February 1st, 2026 Puzzle Answers

**TIDBITS QUOTE**

*"We don't just borrow words; on occasion, English has pursued other languages down alleyways to beat them unconscious and rifle their pockets for new vocabulary."*

~ James Nicoll

ALWAYS FREE  
**TIDBITS**  
ALWAYS FUN

**SNOWFLAKES**  
solution

Go Figure!  
answers

2	+	8	×	7	=	70
+		+		-		
4	-	3	×	6	=	6
÷		+		+		
1	+	5	+	9	=	15
=		=		=		
6		16		10		

February 8th, 2026  
Puzzle Answers

**CryptoQuip**  
answer

People should be very prudent when selecting beverage containers. Choose your bottles wisely!

**Word Spiral**  
**Answer**  
**WACKINESS**



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**Strange BUT TRUE**

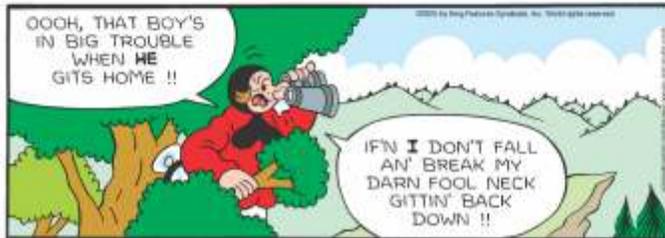
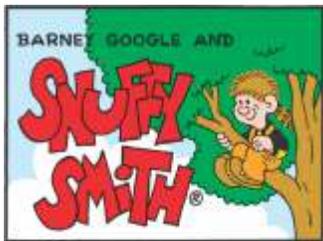
By Lucie Winborne

- \* Actor Paul Newman once said he was tired of people asking him to remove his sunglasses so they could see his famous blue eyes, confessing that his stock response was, "I would take off my sunglasses, madam, but my pants would fall down."
- \* Six million pounds of space dust settle on Earth every year.
- \* The Bahamas once boasted an undersea post office, Sea Floor Bahamas, established in 1939, which allowed mail to be posted with a unique "Sea Floor" postmark, which became a hit with stamp collectors until the office closed in 1942.
- \* Many birds' feathers weigh more than their bones.
- \* A hill in New Zealand is named Taumatawhakatangihangakoauauotamateapokaiwhenuakitanatahu.
- \* Astronauts on Mars won't just make plans based on temperature, but will also need to consider tau, the level of particulate matter in the atmosphere. High tau levels will block sunlight to solar-powered rovers.
- \* A coyote can hear a mouse moving under a foot of snow.
- \* Since 1971, Lake Superior State University in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, has issued permits to unicorn hunters.
- \* The 1967 Outer Space Treaty forbids any nation from trying to own the moon.

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- \* Pelé is the only soccer player to ever be a part of three different World Cup winning teams.
  - \* "Beauty and the Beast" was the first animated film to be nominated for Best Picture. It lost to "The Silence of the Lambs."
  - \* Wisconsin is known as the Badger State because the area's lead miners used to spend winters in tunnels burrowed into hills -- like badgers.
  - \* Honey hunters in Mozambique use special calls to recruit the services of birds known as honeyguides, which lead the hunters to bees' nests.
- \* \* \*
- Thought for the Day: "Imperfection is beauty, madness is genius, and it's better to be absolutely ridiculous than absolutely boring." -- Marilyn Monroe  
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**TIDBITS GOES LONG.....**

The word "saute" is French, meaning "jumped" or "bounced," because the cooking technique involves tossing the food in a hot pan, causing it to jump due to the sizzle of hot oil. Souffle comes from the verb meaning to puff up or inflate. The word cuisine is French for kitchen.

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\* "Keep cats indoors during very cold weather. They are particularly vulnerable to freezing. If you can leave the curtains drawn on a window where Kitty can look outside and sunbathe, she probably will be happy." -- M.R. in Washington

\* This is some good advice given to me by my grandmother if you have lots of outdoor or feral cats in your area: Start your car with a bang -- on the hood, that is. When the overnight temperature dips, cats know to find someplace that is wind-shielded and off the ground, and sometimes, that means they will climb up into your engine area to hunker down. If your car starts, they can be hurt or even killed. Give the hood a knock to let a cat know to get out quick.

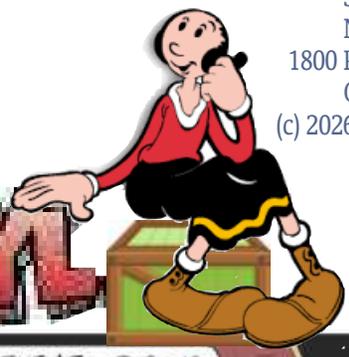
\* Pet paws need extra care in the cold months, especially dogs that must be walked in icy and snowy conditions. Here's a great tip from Y.L. in New York: "I keep a small towel with me on my daily dog walks, but I also wash off my dog's paws with a warm washcloth when we return. Another thing I do is to rub petroleum jelly into her pads once a day. They really take a beating having to go out three times a day in salty, muddy, cold conditions. She won't wear doggie booties, so this works best for us."

\* If you keep birds, a reminder: Never preheat pans on high heat, especially nonstick pans. They can let off a chemical that you or I cannot even detect, but can be a health hazard for your bird friend that is in the kitchen area. Don't keep birds in the kitchen when cooking.

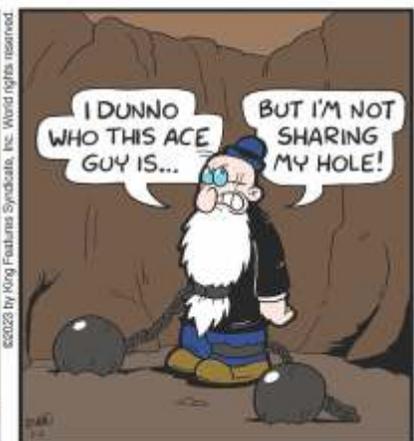
\* Spread a teaspoon of peanut butter thinly on a paper plate, then when the dog is busy with his treat, you can trim his nails. Or sometimes just having it nearby as a promised treat can do the trick to distract your pet. Good luck!

Send your tips to:  
Now Here's a Tip  
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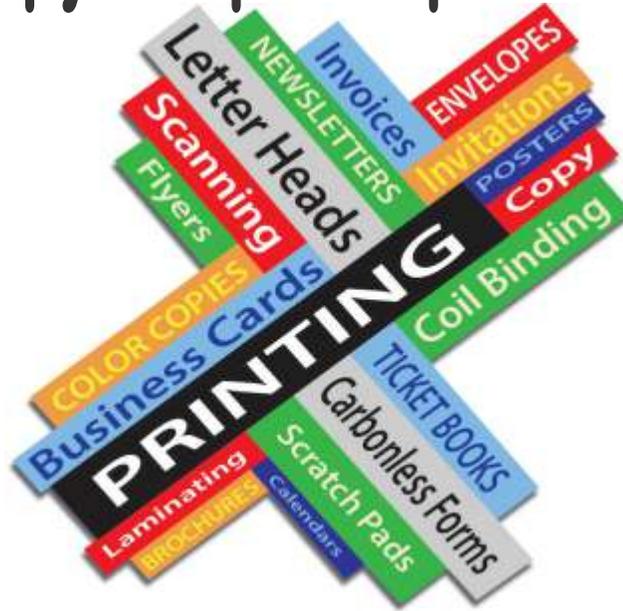


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by Matilda Charles

**Courses on AARP**

Are you a member of AARP? Even with the recent price increase (from \$15 to \$20 per year), there is still a lot to recommend it.

The AARP Skills Builder for Work section is a valuable benefit, even if we're not still working, because the skills can be helpful to us now for our cognitive health, memory and task focusing. To develop the courses, AARP has partnered with MindEdge Learning, an online company that provides professional development and higher education classes. MindEdge was created by Harvard and MIT for interactive, self-paced learning. There are even credits and certificates for completion. It was the Communication section of the MindEdge website that caught my eye, and I zeroed in on Advanced Grammar. The MindEdge Studio section looks fun as well, with an introduction to drawing course. Start by looking at AARP's Skills Builder page ([www.aarp.org/work/skills-builder](http://www.aarp.org/work/skills-builder)), or see [mindedge.com/course-catalog](http://mindedge.com/course-catalog) for the available courses.

There's more to AARP's course offerings, however. Put "courses" in the search box of the main site ([www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org)). Right at the top of the page are courses for defensive driving for older drivers and the online smart driver course. (Ask your insurance agent if this course could get you a discount on your insurance premium.) Use the dropdown menu to narrow your selections.

If what you really want is online games, AARP has those, too. Remember FreeCell Solitaire, the game that came installed on the first computer we ever owned? It's on the AARP games page. (There is also Classic Solitaire for the purists among us.)

The Games Center has arcade games, daily crossword, word games and a special section for members only. If you want a real mind-stretcher, look for the 10 x 10 game.

To save on the cost of an AARP membership, consider signing up for three years for \$55, which saves you a few dollars.

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**February 8thm, 2026**

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**TIGER**

by BUD BLAKE



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# King Crossword

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		

## ACROSS

- 1 Table support
- 4 Mosque leader
- 8 Island near Java
- 12 Terre Haute sch.
- 13 Terse denial
- 14 Poetic tributes
- 15 Ecol. watchdog
- 16 Faints
- 18 Word list, for short
- 20 Japanese pond carp
- 21 Sty chow
- 24 Rebuffs
- 28 Review in detail
- 32 Pesky insect
- 33 Friendly leader?
- 34 Albacore and yellowfin
- 36 Playwright Levin
- 37 Finn's floater
- 39 Revamp
- 41 Vampire, by nature
- 43 Nobelist Walesa
- 44 Bar bill
- 46 Savory taste
- 50 Begin anew, as on January 1
- 55 — Angeles
- 56 California valley

- 57 Egyptian river
- 58 Book-spine abbr.
- 59 Afternoon affairs
- 60 Darkens
- 61 Oklahoma city

## DOWN

- 1 Schreiber of "Ray Donovan"
- 2 Hockey legend Phil, to fans
- 3 Avocado dip for short
- 4 Rorschach pattern
- 5 Curly's brother
- 6 Devoured
- 7 Moo juice
- 8 Fan disapproval
- 9 Pt. of speech
- 10 Author Harper
- 11 Leb. neighbor
- 17 "Mayday!"
- 19 Bat wood
- 22 Egg
- 23 Prison-related
- 25 Rice or Auburn (Abbr.)
- 26 Naked
- 27 Rating unit
- 28 Basil or thyme
- 29 Smoothie berry
- 30 Cushy

- 31 Yard tool
- 35 Locks down
- 38 Block-dropping video game
- 40 Resistance unit
- 42 Scoundrel
- 45 Connection
- 47 Edison's middle name
- 48 Disposition
- 49 Actress Fisher
- 50 Retired jet
- 51 Dead heat
- 52 'I — Rock"
- 53 Half of XIV
- 54 Shade tree

Answer in February 22 Issue

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## Out on a Limb



by Gary Kopervas

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