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Jan.13-26, 2023

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Issue #00502

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TIDBITS® GOBBLES
FUNGI
by Janet Spencer

Fungi enter our lives in many different ways: the bread we eat; the yogurt and cheese we consume; the wine and beer we drink; the antibiotics we take for infections. Come along with Tidbits as we have fun with fungi!

A PERVERSIVE PLANT

- It's estimated that there are somewhere between 2.2 and 3.8 million species of fungi in the world, which is six to ten times more than the estimated number of plant species. It's estimated that only about 6% of all fungal species have been discovered. To date, only about 135,000 have been named.
- The word "fungus" generally refers to a single species, but if you are speaking of many species, then "fungi" is the plural. Why? Because it's Latin and that's how they did it in Rome. The same does not hold true for "octopus" vs "octopi" because "octopus" is Greek, so the plural is "octopodes."
- The fossil record shows that for 40 million years (20 times longer than humans have existed) the dominant life form was a fungus called Prototaxites which stood more than two stories tall, standing in a form reminiscent of today's saguaro cactus. They died out when vascular plants began their ascent.

turn the page for more

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FUNGI (cont)

- About 90% of plants depend on mycorrhizal fungi, which link them in shared networks sometimes referred to as the “wood wide web.” The word “mycorrhizal” comes from the Greek word for fungus “mykes” plus the word for root “rhiza” from which we also get the word “rhizome.”
- The trees manufacture carbohydrate molecules through photosynthesis, which they share with the fungus living at their roots. The fungus is able to spread farther and faster than the tree roots, reaching water and nutrients which it delivers to the tree, in a symbiotic exchange.
- Many types of fungus can live on the roots of a single plant, and many plants can connect with a single fungal network.
- Not all strains of fungus are beneficial to plants, and there are many types that kill the tree or plant they infect.

FUNGI AS MEDICINE

- After Alexander Fleming discovered the mold that produces the wonder drug penicillin, the search was on for other kinds of molds that would also serve the purpose. Throughout World War II, pilots serving in the war effort were asked to scoop up vials of soil from where ever they landed, and return those vials to a lab in Peoria, Illinois, to be tested for possible molds. Another woman was given the job to visit the local markets in Peoria in order to gather whatever moldy fruits she could find there. She was the one who returned one day with a moldy cantaloupe. The mold that was on that melon was just as effective at killing bacteria as the original strain, but produced it



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TIDBITS
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TRIVIA NEWSFRONT

1. What percent of birds use mud when building their nests?
2. How big is the giant African land snail, biggest snail in the world?
3. What insect is thought to be the strongest bug on earth?
4. How long is the world's longest beaver dam?
5. True or False: Some snails have hairy shells.

in far greater quantities. Much of the penicillin produced today springs from that moldy melon. (cont)

- Historical records show that many cultures have known of the healing properties of certain molds, with evidence that moldy soybean curds, moldy cheese, and moldy bread were used in poultices to heal wounds.
- One type of medication used to treat migraine headaches is derived from a fungus called ergot, which lives on certain grains. In the past, ergot infestations caused hallucinations and death throughout entire populations when the fungus-infested grain was milled into bread. Ergot is also the original source of LSD. But when specific alkaloids are isolated from ergot, it's an effective

TRIVIA NEWSFRONT ANSWERS

1. 5%
2. Up to 8 inches (20 cm) long on average
3. Dung beetle
4. mile (.8 km), in Canada
5. True; it helps them stick to wet leaves

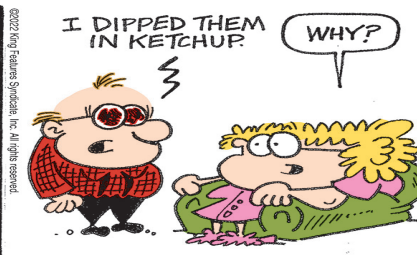
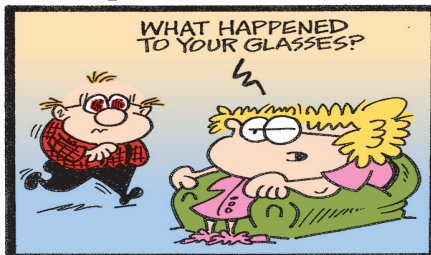
remedy for migraine.

- A strain of moldy fungus kills other fungi. Extracts from it are used to treat fungal infections such as ringworm and thrush.

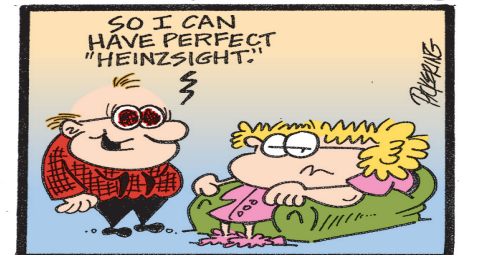
continued pg. 4



The Spats



by Jeff Pickering



* The end of the year is a great time to pick up next year's holiday decorations at a discount. Before you pack away your holiday lights, ornaments, cards, etc., do an inventory and see if you are able to find what you need to complete your look at a slashed price.

* Computer grocery lists can make not only shopping easier, but organization as well. Keep a file listing all the items you usually purchase from week to week. You can even create sections based on where certain items are located throughout the store. This will ensure you don't miss something, necessitating a return trip to the store. Stay organized to save money.

* "Keep a small package of antibacterial wipes in your car to clean your hands after pumping gas. Not only is there any potential gas to get off your hands,

but these handles don't get cleaned often, and are very dirty." -- R.D.

* "If you have extra papers that are only printed on one side, save them. You can cut them in quarters and staple several sheets together to make scrap paper pads to keep near the telephone or on the fridge. They are handy, and you'll be re-using material, which is good for the environment." -- U.L.

* Putting up new calendars? Before you toss your old one, be sure to look through it for important anniversaries, and cut out and save any pictures or art that might be reusable for craft projects.

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GRIN and BEAR IT



"It was touch and go there for a while, getting that lampshade off his head."

Strange BUT TRUE

BYLINE: By Lucie Winborne

* Martial arts icon Bruce Lee could throw a single grain of rice into the air and catch it with chopsticks.

* A 2009 study found that lost wallets were 88% more likely to be returned to their owners if they contained a photo of a baby. Barring that, you're also more likely to recover one if you typically carry pictures of a puppy, family members or an elderly couple.

* The word "checkmate" comes from the Arabic "shat mat," or "The king is dead."

* Want your candles to burn longer and drip less? Put them in the freezer for a few hours before lighting them.

* In what must qualify as one of the oddest marketing campaigns ever created, Burger King launched one that entitled customers to a free Whopper if they unfriended 10 Facebook friends. Those folks would receive a message explaining that their digi-

tal relationship was less valuable than the sandwich. Hey, we like Whoppers too, but really!

* Dolphins have been witnessed amusing themselves by creating underwater bubble rings.

* There's a Google Map for Mercury, Venus, Earth's moon, Mars, Pluto, three out of four of Jupiter's moons, and all but one of the round Saturnian moons.

* Leonardo da Vinci often bought caged animals just to set them free.

* Early 19th-century composer Robert Schumann had an interesting, if grisly and ineffective, method of attempting to cure any disease he had or might have: plunging his hands into the guts of recently slaughtered animals.

* Sid Nouar, owner of the 1000&1 Signes restaurant in Paris, was the first deaf person to open a restaurant in France. It is also staffed entirely by deaf employees.

Thought for the Day: "Take action. An inch of movement will bring you closer to your goals than a mile of intention." -- Steve Maraboli

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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| | | 6 | | 7 | 4 | 3 | | | | |

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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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Dallas cager, for short
- 4 Reindeer herder
- 8 Persian leader
- 12 Hit CBS series
- 13 Vicinity
- 14 Roof overhang
- 15 Like some salad dressings
- 17 Frat letters
- 18 Duo
- 19 Sikhs' headwear
- 21 Enjoy, as fine food
- 24 Luau bowlful
- 25 Guitar's kin
- 26 Yule quaff
- 28 Desert flora
- 32 Simple
- 34 Drench
- 36 Lunch hour
- 37 Pesto herb
- 39 Super Bowl VIP
- 41 P followers
- 42 Joke
- 44 Learned one
- 46 Sans
- 50 Lucy of "Elementary"
- 51 Coup d' —
- 52 "Deathtrap" playwright
- 56 Impetuous
- 57 Toy block name

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 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 | | |

- 58 Here, to Henri
- 59 BPOE members
- 60 Beloved
- 61 Fanatic
- 9 "Funny!"
- 10 Bard's river
- 11 Big name in oil
- 16 Farm female
- 20 Sinbad's bird
- 21 — luck (accidental success)
- 22 Furniture brand
- 23 At once
- 27 Jewel
- 29 French chicken dish
- 30 Undecided
- 31 "Meet Me — Louis"
- 33 Pizza slices,
- often
- 35 Sports bar sets
- 38 Asian language
- 40 Wan quality
- 43 Screen Actors —
- 45 Compete
- 46 Existed
- 47 Slanted type (Abbr.)
- 48 Chore
- 49 Sloth's home
- 53 Khan title
- 54 Post-op area
- 55 Little louse

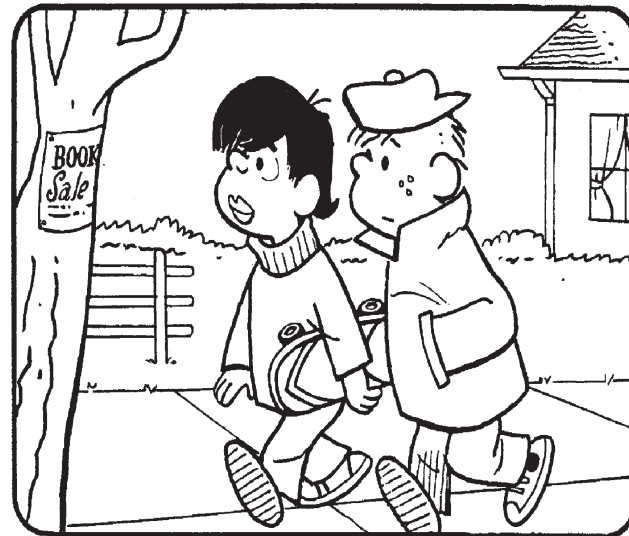
DOWN

- 1 Roman 1105
- 2 "— was saying ..."
- 3 Wine producers
- 4 Snorkeling site
- 5 Altar constellation
- 6 Impudent
- 7 Settle a debt
- 8 Belgrade native

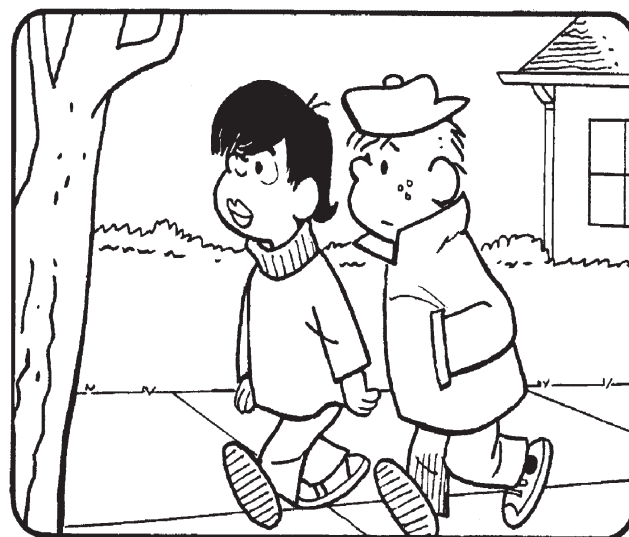
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Poster is missing. 2. Fence is missing. 3. Arm is moved. 4. Skateboard is missing. 5. Pocket is missing. 6. Curtains are missing. 7. Pouch is moved. 8. Hat is moved.

TIDBITS® Laughs!

Q: What do you call a lazy kangaroo?
A: A pouch potato!



DIVAS ON A DIME
By Patti Diamond

PHOTO CAPTION: Dried beans are a budget-friendly substitute for meat protein.

Dried Beans Are Power Packed for Pennies

In January we're filled with fresh resolve to make the new year better than the last. For many people, that means reigning in both our waistlines and our wallets. If I

told you I have one solution to both problems, and you said, "You're full of beans," you'd be right.

Ah, the humble bean. Here we have a budget-friendly vegetable protein with great fiber, loaded with vitamins and minerals, free of cholesterol and saturated fats, with a low glycemic index. Mix them with grains, and you have a complete protein that can replace the protein in meats. At a mere 25 cents per serving, dried beans are economical enough to feed the masses.

I recommend dried beans because they're about one-third the cost of canned beans. Dried beans, properly prepared, taste much better, have better nutrition and less sodium. How many other times do you get a superior product for less money? So, keep some canned beans in your pantry for when you need convenience above all else. But for beans that taste so good you won't want to share them, read on.

It takes minimal active time to prepare beans, and it's easy work. It's mindless stuff you can do while you're on the phone with your sister.

As dried beans cook, they absorb the cooking liquid and triple in size. So 2 cups (1 pound) of dried beans will yield 6 cups of cooked beans. Incidentally, many recipes call for 15-ounce cans of beans, which is 1 3/4 cups of cooked beans.

Beans are prepared in three steps -- clean, soak and cook. Unless you're using a pressure cooker, then you can skip the soak.

First, inspect the beans, discarding any discolored or cracked beans and removing any rocks or debris. Beans are an agricultural product, and grit happens.

Next, we soak. Soaking beans allows them to rehydrate before cooking. Another benefit is that soaking reduces the phytic acid that can cause gassiness. You don't need to soak split peas or lentils. These speedy beans only take about 30 minutes to cook.

Place 1 pound of cleaned beans in a large pot. For an overnight soak, add 8 cups of water and place in the fridge for eight to 24 hours. For a short soak, add 12 cups of water and bring to a boil on the stovetop for 5 minutes. Remove pot from the heat and let the beans soak in hot water for an hour. When finished, drain and rinse the beans in a colander.

Finally, we cook. To cook on the stovetop, cover the beans with fresh water by 2 inches, optionally adding one minced onion and 2 teaspoons salt, and bring them to a boil. Then lower the heat and simmer for 60 to 90 minutes, depending on the variety of bean (follow package directions), or until the beans are tender. To test for tenderness, mash a bean against the side of the pot with a spoon.

To cook in a pressure cooker, such as an Instant Pot, place 1 pound beans, 8 cups water, one minced onion, two bay leaves and 1 1/2 teaspoons salt in the inner pot of a pressure cooker. Secure lid on Instant Pot and close valve to "seal."

Cook on high pressure for the following times: black beans, 30 minutes; chickpeas, 40 minutes; kidney beans, 35 minutes; pinto beans or navy beans, 25 minutes. Allow the pot to naturally release 20 minutes before doing a quick release.

Wishing you an abundant New Year and cool beans!

Lifestyle expert Patti Diamond is the penny-pinching, party-planning, recipe developer and content creator of the website Divas On A Dime -- Where Frugal, Meets Fabulous! Visit Patti at www.divasonadime.com and join the conversation on Facebook at DivasOnADimeDotCom. Email Patti at divapatti@divasonadime.com

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- Yeasts are single-celled members of the fungal kingdom. If yeast is added to wheat, the result is leavened bread. If yeast is added to grape juice, the result is wine. Sake comes from rice which has been partially rotted by fungus, after which yeast is added to ferment it. Yeast plus partially germinated barley seeds results in beer.
- Mushrooms vary in protein content from 10% to 45%, but regardless of their protein level, they beat every other vegetable's protein content. Only milk, eggs, and meat contain more protein than mushrooms.
- Half of all the mushrooms grown commercially in the U.S come from Chester County, PA. The industry began in 1886

when William Swayne decided to grow mushrooms there, because all of the horses that ran the public transportation in Philadelphia were stabled there, and mushrooms grow well on horse manure.

- One species of fungus discovered amidst mining waste is one of the most radiation-resistant organisms ever found. It's even been found inside the reactor at Chernobyl.
- Some fungi capture and consume nematode worms in the soil. When plant matter becomes scarce, they release an attractant when nematodes are nearby. Some species deploy sticky nets or adhesive branches, while others produce nooses that inflate instantly when touched, ensnaring the victim. Oyster

mushrooms commonly sold in supermarkets paralyze nematodes with a single toxic droplet on the tip of a root, giving the root enough time to digest the worm. Others release spores that “swim” through dirt, chemically drawn towards the scent of nematodes. They attach themselves to the body of the worm, and then sprout, sending fungus harpoons through the worm.

- One researcher put a rotten block of wood on a surface, allowing it to become infested with a rotten-wood loving fungus. The fungus put out root-like “feelers” called mycelium, which spread out in all directions like a fine white fuzzy circle. Then the researcher put another rotten block nearby. The moment the mycelium touched the new block, all of the mycelium on all other sides of the old block ceased their growth, while the growth quickly thickened where the mycelium touched the new block.
- Then the researcher did a follow-up experiment: as soon as the mycelium touched the second block, she removed the first block and scraped all of the mycelium off of it. When she replaced it, now with only undeveloped spores attached to it, the spores sprouted into new mycelium which reached out in the original direction of the newly placed block.

**People Worth Remembering
ROBERT EARL HUGHES**

- Jon Minnoch has held the world record for the heaviest human ever to live since 1978 when he died at the age of 42, weighing in at 1,400 lbs. (635 kg). But before him, Robert Earl Hughes held the record at 1,071 lbs. (486 kg).
- Robert Earl Hughes was born in 1926 and grew up in Fishhook, Illinois. He weighed 9 lbs. (4 kg) when he was born.
- When he was a few months old, he came down with whooping cough. Although he recovered, doctors theorize this illness damaged either his thyroid or his pituitary gland. His mother gave birth to two more boys. Robert’s brothers grew normally, but Robert grew extraordinarily fast.
- By the time Robert entered the first grade at age seven, he stood a few inches taller than his classmates, but weighed 225 lbs, (102 kg) about the same as his teacher, a grown man.
- At ten, he weighed 378 lbs. (171 kg). A doctor predicted he’d be dead by the age of 15 due to the stress on his heart.
- Still, Robert was phenomenally intelligent, reading everything he could get his hands on, and never forgetting a thing.
- At 14, Robert weighed nearly 550 lbs. (249 kg) and could not move well. He quit school because he could no longer walk there, and his family did not own a vehicle to drive him.
- By 16 he weighed 600 lbs. (272 kg) and stood 5 feet, 9 inches (175 cm). He was unable to perform simple tasks. Yet, all who knew him said he ate normal amounts of food and was never a glutton.
- A local news reporter visited with Robert and described



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him as a wonderful conversationalist, full of humor, with a pleasant personality.

- In 1946 when he was 20, he and his family attended the local Fall Festival, where he pushed the scale past 700 lbs. (317 kg). He attracted a crush of observers, and sold 160 photos of himself. By day’s end, he had grossed \$240. In 1947, Robert decided he wanted to see the world.
- He began with local fairs and festivals, travelling in a horse-drawn wagon, and earning up to \$100 for an appearance. Throngs paid 25¢ to see him, and another 25¢ for a photo. Newspapers covered his appearances. Newsreels featured him. One fan built a reinforced chair for him which he used for the rest of his life. His brother’s wife sewed his enormous clothing. By the age of 23, he tipped the scales at 800 lbs. (363 kg) and a single shirt required a length of fabric 9 feet wide (2.7 m) and 18 feet (5.5 m) long.
- For seven years, Robert travelled the country, transported in the back of a pick-up truck.
- In 1954, at the age of 28 and weighing 946 lbs. (429 kg), Robert signed with a carnival and became a sideshow. He bought a carnival trailer that had once belonged to the travelling Siamese twins, which allowed him to perform at one end and live in the other end. By now he could only walk 20 feet without resting, but he was earning more than ever before.
- While on tour in Indiana in 1958, he complained of a rash and fatigue. Doctors connected three blood pressure cuffs to fit his arm. A doctor diagnosed measles. Within hours, he died. His body was shipped home and he was buried in Fishhook, next to his parents, in a

continued pg. 6

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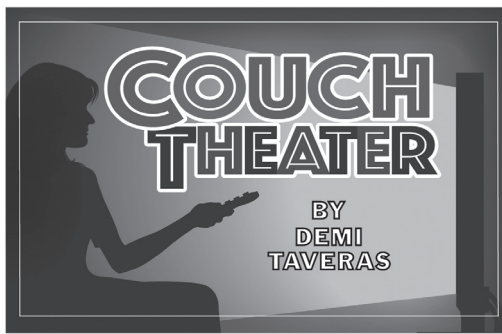
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ROBERT EARL HUGHES

specially made casket the size of a piano case. He was 32 years old, and weighed two pounds lighter than his heaviest weight ever: 1,071 lbs. (486 kg).

THE POTATO BLIGHT

- A single acre of reasonably fertile cropland can yield an annual harvest of 6 tons of potatoes. Because they grew so well in Ireland, they became a staple crop. They were easy to grow even in difficult soils; were impervious to invading armies who tended to burn down wheat and oat fields; did not require a trip to a mill but could be taken directly from the ground to the cookpot; kept well all winter long; and were nutritious.
- By the late 1700s, a typical Irish family of six consumed about 250 lbs (113 kg) of potatoes every year. It was the mainstay of their diet.
- The Irish were so dependent upon the potato for sustenance that when the potato blight first hit in 1845, killing one-third of the crop, they were left vulnerable. When the blight spread over the course of the next two winters, leaving potatoes blackened and mushy, the populace began to starve, and became vulnerable to diseases.
- It's estimated that half of Irish people born between 1830 and 1930 left Ireland, fleeing from the famine. It wasn't until 1996 that Ireland reported a net gain in population instead of a loss.
- Although the potato blight also hit the U.S., there were so many other crops being grown in America that no one starved.
- It was years before researchers understood that a fungus was responsible for the potato blight. When potato farmers piled old potato vegetation at the edges of their fields, they were unknowingly stockpiling the source of the infection by providing an unending source of spores. When the weather warmed in the spring and fresh new potatoes were planted, the spores blew in the wind. If they landed on potato foliage while the leaves were wet, they infected the new sprouts.
- Once the fungus landed on a potato leaf, it bored into the plant, releasing enzymes that digested the plant to provide nourishment for the fungus, which also killed the potato plant.
- The potato tubers were safe as long as they remained underground, but would turn to mush as soon as they were dug up and exposed to the fungus spores floating in the air.
- Because the fungus needed to land on wet leaves to survive, the blight was particularly bad during the extra rainy season in 1846, tapering off somewhat during dryer years. Blights recurred in 1872 and 1879, but by then Irish farmers had grown less dependent on potatoes and had other crops growing.
- By 1890 it was discovered that the blight was killed if a field was dusted with copper sulfate, ending the blight for good.
- Today, about 20% of the U.S. population claims at least partial Irish history due to the blight.
- In 1914, German authorities ordered that all surplus foodstocks were to be stored in the cities. Thousands of pounds of potatoes were



BYLINE: By Demi Taveras
Photo Credit: Emma Corrin and Jack O'Connell star in "Lady Chatterley's Lover."

Photo Caption: Courtesy of Netflix

"Lady Chatterley's Lover" (R) -- Emma Corrin ("The Crown") and Jack O'Connell ("Skins") star in this steamy romantic drama, which recently

premiered on Netflix. Based on the novel by D.H. Lawrence, Corrin plays Constance Reid, who marries Baronet Clifford Chatterley and becomes Lady Chatterley. Clifford gets injured fighting in World War I and returns paralyzed from the waist down, which causes a big rift in their marriage. Left feeling unwanted by her husband, Constance tries her best to hide her unhappiness, until she meets gamekeeper Oliver Mellors. An attraction builds between Constance and Oliver and blossoms into a love affair that ultimately can't thrive in secrecy. (Netflix)



"Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan Season 3" (TV-MA) -- John Krasinski reprises the role of CIA agent Jack Ryan for the third season of this action series, out now! The first season followed Jack as he ventured out from his CIA analyst job to become a field agent. In the second season, he was stationed in Venezuela in the middle of intense political warfare. Now, Jack is called to Rome by a mysterious source, who gives him information about a secret Russian plot in Eastern Europe that could lead to a third World War. Facing his most challenging time ahead, Jack must go within and learn to become his own authority. Amazon confirmed that this would be the second-to-last season of the series, with talks of an eventual spin-off starring Michael Pena. (Prime Video)

"Bros" (R) -- Bobby Lieber (Billy Eichner) is a podcast host and museum curator who greatly enjoys the single life. But when he's out with a friend at a nightclub, Bobby meets Aaron Shepard (Luke Macfarlane), who Bobby's friend deems hot but boring. Amid their stark differences, the two begin to date and get to know each other. Their connection begins to get stronger, but Aaron still finds Bobby too intense, while Bobby doesn't appreciate having to minimize his behavior for others. The odd couple must learn to accept each other's differences in order to make their relationship prosper. Out now on streaming, "Bros" is one of the first gay rom-coms produced by a major studio. (Peacock)

"Into the Deep" (R) -- In this thriller, a young woman named Jess living on an island meets a young man named Ben and invites him to a party. The two hit it off and return to Ben's docked boat, but when Jess awakens, she realizes Ben set sail while she was asleep. And now, she is stuck on a boat with him in the middle of the ocean. Jess accepts it as yet another adventure, but things begin to escalate when Lexie, an unconscious woman on a jet ski, crashes into the boat. The two rescue Lexie, but Lexie begins to put doubts about Ben into Jess' head. Jess is at a loss of who to trust, as time ticks by for her to find a way off the boat. Premieres Dec. 30. (Hulu)

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subsequently stored in damp, warm, humid basements. A few of the spuds carried spores of the blight with them, where they found conditions perfect for replicating. The entire supply turned into a back mushy mess. A year later, as Germans struggled to feed the country during World War I, copper was in such short supply that there was none available to create the copper sulfate needed to keep the blight at bay. The crop failed two years in a row and the populace began starving. Some historians feel that the population was so weakened by shortages caused by the blight that their downfall was already in the making by the time the U.S. joined the fray in 1917.



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!

- Lore **GLENE**
- Pierce **REAPS**
- Belief **AIDE**
- Place **RESTIN**

TODAY'S WORD

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 I, you get MISTER. Do not change the order of the letters.

- | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|
| 1. Icy rain | ___ L ___ | Sugary | ___ W ___ |
| 2. Exemption | ___ V ___ | Restaurant server | ___ T ___ |
| 3. Pinky or pointer | F ___ | Dawdle | L ___ |
| 4. Ice cream serving | ___ C ___ | Boat with one mast | ___ L ___ |
| 5. Student of Socrates | ___ A ___ | Mickey's pooch | ___ U ___ |
| 6. Red gemstone | ___ T ___ | Jennifer or James | ___ R ___ |
| 7. Hunger after | ___ V ___ | Fad | ___ Z ___ |
| 8. Take out a loan | ___ O ___ | Rabbit hole | ___ U ___ |
| 9. Dracula's title | ___ N ___ | Tennis yard | ___ R ___ |
| 10. Dark tea | ___ O ___ | Watermelon shape | ___ B ___ |

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Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



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Laugh a bit with TIDBITS

Q: Where is a cat most comfortable?
 A: On the fur-niture!

TIDBITS QUOTE

“If an animal does something, we call it instinct; if we do the same thing for the same reason, we call it intelligence.” -Will Cuppy



PAW'S CORNER By Sam Mazzotta

How to Give Your Pet a Healthy, Happy New Year

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: This week, many people are celebrating their newest gift to the family: a cute puppy or kitten, duck or chicken, or pocket pets like hamsters and Guinea pigs. It's also a time to form new resolutions in anticipation of the New Year.

I hope that new pet owners' first resolution will be to establish a relationship with a veterinarian with expertise in their specific pet. Some pets need to start or continue a vaccination schedule so that they grow up healthy. Puppies are at risk of contracting parvo virus, for example, so bolstering their immune system is very important.

Your vet also can provide advice and tips for caring for pets. Guinea pigs, hamsters and rabbits communicate happiness or distress in unique ways that a new owner may not be familiar with. Puppies are wiggly and energetic. Kittens are curious and fearless. Vets can help new owners navigate these waters and provide regular checkups to help keep pets healthy. -- Dedicated Vet in Boston

DEAR DEDICATED: Thank you for sending this! Establishing a care routine with a veterinarian is so important. It should sit at the top of owners' to-do lists, along with providing comfortable, warm bedding, a clean and safe environment and, especially for puppies, a daily training routine. Mark your calendar with key dates, including checkups with the vet, appointments with a trainer and regular resupplies of food, litter, bedding, and everything else your new pet needs.

Here's to a happy, healthy and fun New Year with your pet!

Send your New Year pet pics to ask@pawscorner.com, and we may share them in a future column!

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FLASHBACK

By Mick Harper

1. Which artist wrote and released "Abracadabra"?
2. What was Phil Vassar's "Just Another Day in Paradise" about?
3. Name the singer who wrote and released "All Around the World" on her debut album.
4. Which group released "Careless Whisper"?
5. Name the song that contains these lyrics: "In a cafe or sometimes on a crowded street, I've been near you, but you never noticed me."

Answers
 1. The Steve Miller Band, in 1982. The song was ignored by U.S. record companies ... until it became a chart topper in Europe. The song was then released in the U.S., and it shot to No. 1.
 2. The 2000 country/pop crossover single (from his debut album) was about homelessness.
 3. Lisa Stansfield, on her "Affection" album in 1989. The song received a nomination for a Grammy for Best Female Pop Vocal Performance. Stansfield had won the "Search for a Star" competition at the age of 14 in the U.K. in 1980.
 4. Wham!, in 1984.
 5. "My Cherie Amour" by Stevie Wonder, in 1969. The song was originally titled "Oh, My Marsha." Legend says that once record producers got involved, they wanted to add a French flavor to it similar to the Beatles' "Michelle" and changed the name.

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. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: N equals Y

CSZK SWNEXR SZ BZXLEXBD GD
 SIJS QDGJHD CIDDK IJLD XZ
 BJKJBESN SZ HZXR QZW SIEXRC.

DVD VECI!

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SCRAMBLERS

solution

1. Legend
2. Spear
3. Idea;
4. Insert

Today's Word

GRANDPA

Even Exchange

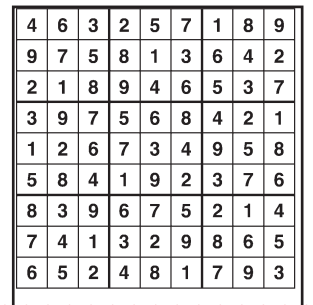
answers

1. Sleet, Sweet
2. Waiver, Waiter
3. Finger, Linger
4. Scoop, Sloop
5. Plato, Pluto
6. Garnet, Garner
7. Crave, Craze
8. Borrow, Burrow
9. Count, Court
10. Oolong, Oblong

CryptoQuip

answer

Stop trying to convince me that female sheep have no capacity to long for things. Ewe wish!



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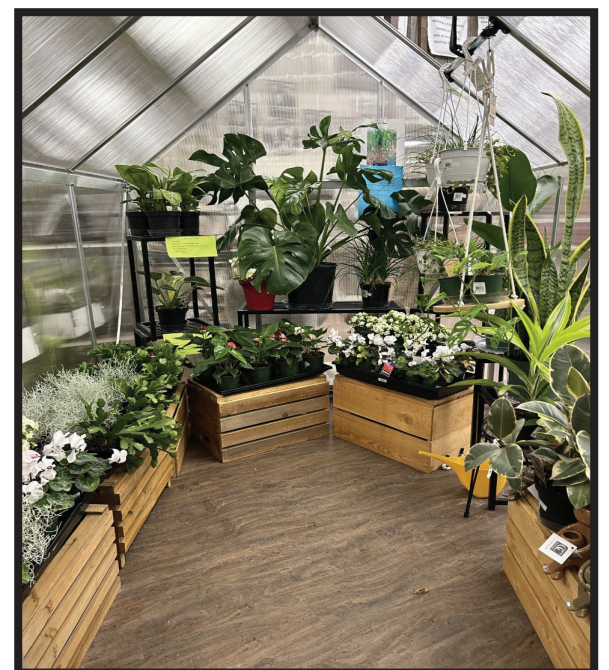
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