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Fire

OCTOBER 4-10, 2026

Prevention Week

5 SIMPLE HABITS to reduce your risk of a house fire

Negligence is involved in nearly half of all residential fires. However, by taking simple, practical steps every day, you can significantly reduce your risk. Here are six habits to adopt in your daily routine to help prevent a house fire.

1. Use a timer when cooking. It'll prevent you from forgetting to turn off a burner if you get distracted.

2. Clean the kitchen as you go. Grease buildup on the range hood, oven or nearby surfaces can catch fire if overheated. Clean them immediately after you've finished cooking.

3. Fry food in a deep fryer. Using a pot of hot oil for frying food is quite dangerous. A simple spill can cause a fire.

4. Be careful with electrical connections. Never connect multiple extension cords together. Discard any cords that look damaged or emit abnormal heat.

5. Maintain your dryer correctly. Empty the lint filter before each use and clean the dryer vent periodically to prevent dangerous lint buildup.

Finally, purchase a fire extinguisher, if you haven't already, and check your smoke detectors regularly.

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FROM STEPHEN SCHWARTZ,
THE COMPOSER OF *WICKED*.

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Fall **OCTOBER** Car Care Month

YOUR CAR DESERVES THE BEST!

See and be seen: check your car's lights, cameras and wipers

As autumn progresses and days get shorter, your vehicle's visibility becomes essential. October is Fall Car Care month, the perfect reminder to get your car ready for winter driving. Perform these checks to ensure you can see clearly and that others can see you.

• **Maximize windshield clarity.** Wiper blades are your first defence against rain, sleet and road salt. The hot Arizona sun and sudden temperature changes cause the rubber to crack, creating streaks that impede vision. Inspect and replace worn blades to keep your windshield clear and maintain a sharp view of the road.

• **Confirm all lights work.** Lights are vital communication tools. Headlights, taillights and indicator lights alert other drivers to your presence and intentions. Because burnt-out bulbs are hard to spot from the driver's seat, a quick walk-around will help confirm your lights

and signalling system work properly.

• **Clean your lights and lenses.** Grime and road salt quickly dim your light output and cloud your car's camera lenses. Clean the housings on your headlights and taillights to ensure maximum light reaches the road. If plastic light casings appear cloudy or yellowed, a restoration treatment can significantly improve beam strength. If your car has external cameras, make a habit of wiping them clean.

• **Optimize headlight alignment and range.** Properly aimed headlights prevent glare for oncoming drivers and ensure you can see the road ahead. Always travel at speeds that allow you to stop within the illuminated area of your headlights. Don't wait for a dark night or rainy day to discover a visibility issue. Schedule your fall tune-up at Litchfield Auto Repair and ask them to inspect your lighting and wiper systems.



OCTOBER 2026

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"The plans of the
diligent lead to profit
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Proverbs 21:5

RIDE THE RAILS: Plan a train trip this autumn

Want to explore the country in comfort and ease? There's no better time than the fall for a railway getaway, and these benefits will make you want to ride the rails.

ECO-FRIENDLY. Trains are far less polluting than other means of travel, including gasoline-powered cars, cruise ships or planes. Reduce your environmental footprint. and travel by rail.

COMFORT. The seats on a train are generally very comfortable. You can stretch your legs, get up and walk around. Small tables built into the seats allow you to read, eat and entertain yourself for hours. Some trains even have private cabins available for reservations, where you can lie down and sleep in complete privacy.

SOCIALIZING. Meeting fellow passengers or chatting with the staff greatly enhances the enjoyment of a train trip. Trains designed for long-distance journeys feature common areas, such as dining cars. It's a perfect space for swapping stories and travel tips



DISCOVERIES. During stops, passengers are sometimes able to get off the train and explore the area around the station. You may find shops, restaurants, art galleries and more.

SCENERY. Admire some of the most beautiful regions of the country from your window or in an elevated panoramic car. Plan your trip for autumn and catch the spectacular scenery as the leaves are turning.

In short, the train has everything to appeal to people aged 50 and over who love to travel. Intrigued? Check out The Sunset Limited and the The Southwest Chief (via Flagstaff)


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Taking courses is rewarding at any age!

Do you have an insatiable thirst for knowledge but feel “too old” to go back to school? The good news for you is that many courses, workshops and training programs are designed specifically for people aged 50 and older. Why not give one a try?

NO PRESSURE

Some universities and colleges allow older adults to audit classes rather than take them for credit. When you attend classes simply for the pleasure of learning, you can explore different fields at your own pace. Imagine indulging your curiosity without the stress of mandatory assignments and exams or the threat of an incomplete degree.

MULTIPLE POSSIBILITIES

The range of courses for older adults is varied and flexible. You might:

- Attend lectures on a wide variety of topics, such as artistic movements or world history
- Learn to use various computer tools
- Get an introduction to photography
- Improve your command of a second language
- Develop your writing skills

OPPORTUNITIES TO SOCIALIZE

Taking courses allows you to meet people who share your interests. This is particularly beneficial if you have fewer opportunities to connect with people after retirement.

Are you 50, 60, 70, 80 or older and looking to stimulate your mind while combating isolation? Find out about the courses available in your area.

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Celebrity Extra

by Dana Jackson

Q: Is it true that Helen Mirren and Pierce Brosnan didn't want to work with Tom Hardy on "MobLand" anymore? -- L.L.

A: While the Paramount+ series "MobLand" returned for its second season this September, it was rumored that star Tom Hardy wouldn't be returning for a third. His co-stars Helen Mirren and Pierce Brosnan recently denied that Hardy was a pill to deal with on set. Mirren stated that she loves working with Hardy, hopes to share more scenes with him in the future, and called him "the most amazing actor."

Chatter on the internet includes theories that Paramount started the rumors of Hardy being difficult because they didn't want to pay him his worth. Fortunately, the two



PHOTO CREDIT: IMDB

Tom Hardy, Pierce Brosnan and Helen Mirren (Mobland)

parties have come to an agreement because Hardy will be back for season three.

★ ★ ★

Q: What's Ben Affleck up to these days? Is he filming any upcoming movies? I only see him when the paparazzi takes a picture of him. -- S.D.

A: The Oscar-nominated Ben Affleck has been quite busy as an actor-writer-director-producer in recent years, including the upcoming movie "Animals."

In the political thriller, Affleck plays a mayoral candidate whose son is kidnapped. He and his wife, played by Kerry Washington ("Scandal"), must resort to extreme measures to rescue their child. The film will premiere on Netflix and in select theaters Oct. 9 and also stars Steven Yeun ("Beef"), Gillian Anderson ("The Crown"), and Ray Fisher ("The Piano Lesson"). Earlier this year, Affleck starred opposite his bestie, Matt Damon, in "The Rip" -- a crime thriller that also premiered on Netflix. Prior to this, he starred in "The Accountant 2" with Jon Bernthal.

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Speeding up our walking

Is it 10,000 steps per day we need to walk? Or is it 6,000 to 8,000? Or can we get by with only 3,000 to 4,000 steps each day?

The answer, apparently, is that it depends on who is giving us those numbers.

That 10,000 number started as an advertising ploy. Back in 1965 a Japanese company created a pedometer (step counter), and the name of it was similar to the 10,000 number in Japanese. It caught on from there as a goal to strive for, without much (or anything) in the way of actual research behind it.

We've been faced with everybody throwing out a number they claim is the optimum one for us to lower our risk of heart disease and risk of death -- leaving us confused about our best number.

Now, however, there might be something much simpler: Instead of counting steps, a new study has shown that increasing our walking speed might be just as good as

walking many thousands of steps each day at a slower speed.

Specifically, what they discovered is that walking fewer than 5,000 fast steps every day could be as good as walking 5,000-7,500 slower steps when it comes to lowering our risk of death.

And how fast is fast? According to the study in the British Journal of Sports Medicine, aiming for 80 steps per minute for fewer than 5,000 steps is as good as 60 steps per minute for over 5,000 steps.

The study had tens of thousands of participants with their information pulled from the UK Biobank, a worldwide database with the information on a half million volunteers, so this was a significant study.

To quote one of the study reviewers, "The biggest health gains often come from going from no activity to some activity. Even a few minutes of movement a day can start to improve your overall health and longevity."



Here's a Tip

by JoAnn Derson

Here's a tip for you waist-watchers out there: Wait until Halloween Day to buy the candy. The in-house sweets won't be haunting you throughout October.

Now's a good time to install weather-stripping or caulk to keep cold drafts out and expensive air conditioned air in. To find drafts, light a taper candle and run it very slowly along the cracks of your windows and doors. When you see the flame flicker, that's where you have a leak.

Now you can have your tea and clean something too. Teabags can be used to clean woodwork. Rub wood softly with a damp bag.

To remove stubborn hard water deposits from a shower head (without removing it), do this trick: Add white vinegar to a zipper-top bag. Submerge the shower head in the vinegar and draw the bag up tightly around the stem using a rubber band to secure it around the showerhead. Leave it overnight. Remove, scrub and shower to release the deposits.

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Here's a Tip

"Moving? Use foam plates as separators for your dinner plates. Use kitchen towels to wrap serving platters. If you have a box that separates glasses, drop a spice jar into each glass. Use all the space and you'll have less boxes to move." -- P.L. in South Carolina

* Use plastic wrap to secure items together or in hard to wrap shapes.

Borax can be used to keep sidewalks free of weeds. Simply sprinkle a little Borax on the sidewalk and sweep into the cracks. This is a very effective weed killer, but it will also kill your grass if you use too much, so keep it in the cracks only!

"Have a stripped screw? Place a wide rubber band over the head and insert your drill. The rubber band fills in the stripped spots and makes the drill catch the screw. It works most of the time." -- D.D. in Nebraska

If you have a sticky zipper, try running candle wax along the zipper face, then zipping it up and down a few times.

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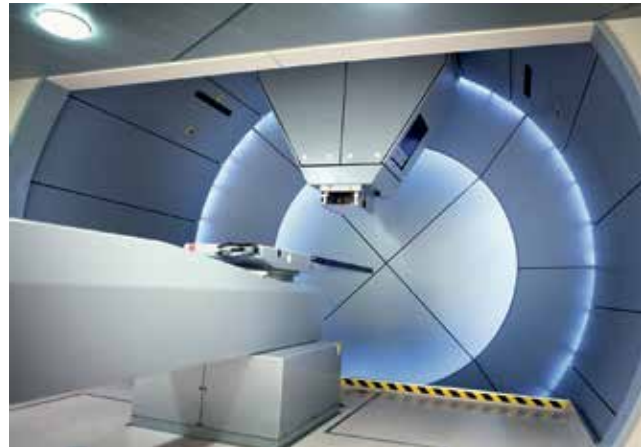
October is
**BREAST
CANCER**
Awareness Month

—  —
Awareness, support and hope

Progress in the fight against breast cancer

Breast Cancer Awareness Month takes place every October. It's a time to raise funds and spread information in support of those working to reduce the incidence of breast cancer and improve treatments. These efforts have brought about promising results. Recent advancements include:

1. **Proton therapy.** This innovative radiation therapy treatment allows for the precise targeting of cancer cells in a patient, reducing the risk of damage to healthy organs and tissues.
2. **Antibody-drug conjugates.** By combining two types of drugs, this approach delivers chemotherapy to cancer cells without affecting healthy cells.
3. **Integration of AI into blood testing.** Projects are exploring the use of artificial intelligence to analyze blood tests and better identify individuals at high risk of developing breast cancer.
4. **3D bioprinting.** Using this technology, researchers recreate tumors using a patient's



own cancer cells. The models are then used to test the potential effectiveness of various treatments for that patient.

Thanks to the tireless work of experts and the financial support from government, charities and the public, the fight against breast cancer is making steady progress.

Want to donate or get involved? Look for fundraising and volunteer events in your area. You can also visit www.cancer.org to learn more about opportunities to help.





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FALL ESCAPE: Arizona wine country

When autumn brings cooler days and golden light, Arizona wine country invites you to slow down. From the Verde Valley near Sedona to Sonoita, Elgin and Willcox, there's plenty to explore—and savor.

TASTINGS. Ready to discover new flavors? Explore Arizona-grown wines at local wineries and tasting rooms, from bold reds to refreshing whites and rosés. Ask about regional grapes, find a favorite and bring home a bottle.

PICNICS. Pair your outing with a leisurely lunch and a beautiful view. Look for wineries with patios, terraces or picnic areas where you can enjoy Arizona's wide-open skies and autumn scenery. Check food options and outside-food policies before packing your basket.

PARTICIPATION. Want a closer look at winemaking? Look for seasonal events, vineyard experiences or opportunities to meet the winemakers. Arizona's grape harvest often begins before fall, so check winery calendars early for harvest activities.

LEARNING. Curious about what makes Arizona wines distinctive? A guided vineyard or winery tour reveals how elevation, climate and soil influence each glass. Ask about availability and reservations, and bring your questions about grape varieties and food pairings.

Discover Arizona wine country's flavors and landscapes. Browse www.visitarizona.com/experiences/culinary/wineries to plan your route, then confirm tasting-room hours before heading out.



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Could smart technology provide greater independence at home?

As we age, many of us want to remain in our own homes, or at least stay there for as long as possible. Despite the challenges this may pose in terms of mobility or safety, certain technological tools could help elderly people maintain their independence and make it easier for them to continue living at home.

The principle of home automation

Smart home technologies already on the market enable anyone to remotely control or preprogram household features like lighting, heating and appliances. Someone with an injury or disability affecting their mobility could program a sensor to turn on the light as soon as they enter a room, saving them the trouble of walking to a conventional light switch.

Applications for older people

Experts are developing tools that go beyond helping older people with their daily lives. New smart home technologies may also improve communication with medical and emergency services. These features could take the form of:

- Indicator lights that activate at night to help a person find their way back to bed if they become disoriented
- Vital-sign monitors that trigger alerts if a suspicious deviation from the norm occurs, relaying the information to caregivers or emergency services
- Programs to assist with meal preparation or automate steps to improve safety, such as a stove burner that turns off automatically

There's every reason to believe that many more innovations currently being tested will become available in the future. In the quest to improve the lives of older people.



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Beware the supplements on TV

by Matilda Charles

If you're home during the day and have spent much time with the television on, you've no doubt been inundated with advertising for supplements that promise to change your life. By the time you've heard those ads 30 times you can probably quote them word for word. And at some point you might even be tempted to place an order.

Don't do it.

Just because companies create slick ads that sound like they'll solve all our problems doesn't mean their products are safe to use, especially if you take any prescription drugs or have a medical condition.

Supplements are not approved by the Food and Drug Administration. The FDA doesn't evaluate those types of products and doesn't conduct any trials to check their safety and recommended dosage. The supplement companies are required to tell you this in their advertising, but it's in the tiny text at the bottom of the TV screen that's impossible to read.

Learn all you can about potential drug interactions.

Go first to www.drugs.com and click on the Drug Interaction Checker. Type in the name of your drug. Then type in the name of whatever you're considering taking and see what it says.

I tried this with one of my prescription drugs and added one of the frequently advertised products and it showed 11 potential drug interactions. There were also some possible uncomfortable side effects, even without the possible drug interactions.

Seniors are especially targeted by the manufacturers of supplements, hoping we'll believe their claims if we see those ads often enough. It's a billion-dollar industry. Before you dial that number on the TV screen, dial your doctor's office and ask if the supplement is something you should have.



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Speeding up the process

An executive order was recently signed that will reduce the time it takes to secure our benefits. The order, signed by President Trump, is titled "Accelerating Access to Veterans' Benefits and Employment Opportunities." It accomplishes this by requiring the Department of Defense and the VA to work together and share records from the first day a veteran joins the military.

In the past there have been delays in accessing benefits -- education, job training, healthcare and all the others -- when a veteran leaves active-duty service, mostly due to antiquated records management.

Now, within 180 days, the order requires the VA and the Department of Defense to update the information technology that will let them share information from day one of a veteran's service.

Also within 180 days they will create digital tools to streamline the process of a veteran applying for benefits and training offered by the Department of Labor.

Within one month they need to be able to share all the health files and records of a veteran immediately when they are discharged from military service.

Within 120 days, working with Health and Human Services (HHS), the Office of Management and



Budget (OMB) and others, the various departments will review any current contracts for information technology to ensure that the contracts include the requirement that any systems with veteran files and health records be compatible with the technology and systems used by the VA and the Department of Defense.

Have you ever known any government activity to move this fast? And that's not all.

Within 180 days every veteran leaving the service will either be hooked up with jobs in their field (if desired), enrolled in career and tech education or training (again, if desired), and connected with a veteran's rep who will help with applications for home loans, job placement, education benefits, disability compensation or healthcare.

One thing not to miss is the Department of Defense's Project Patriot Pipeline (www.mypatriotcareer.mil). This huge website has a wealth of information for veterans, service members and military spouses looking for career development and opportunities.



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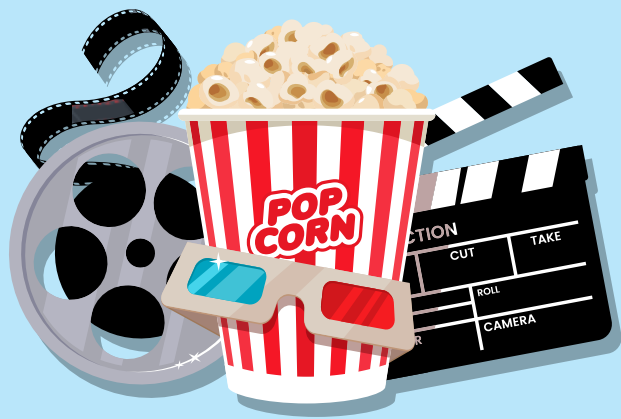
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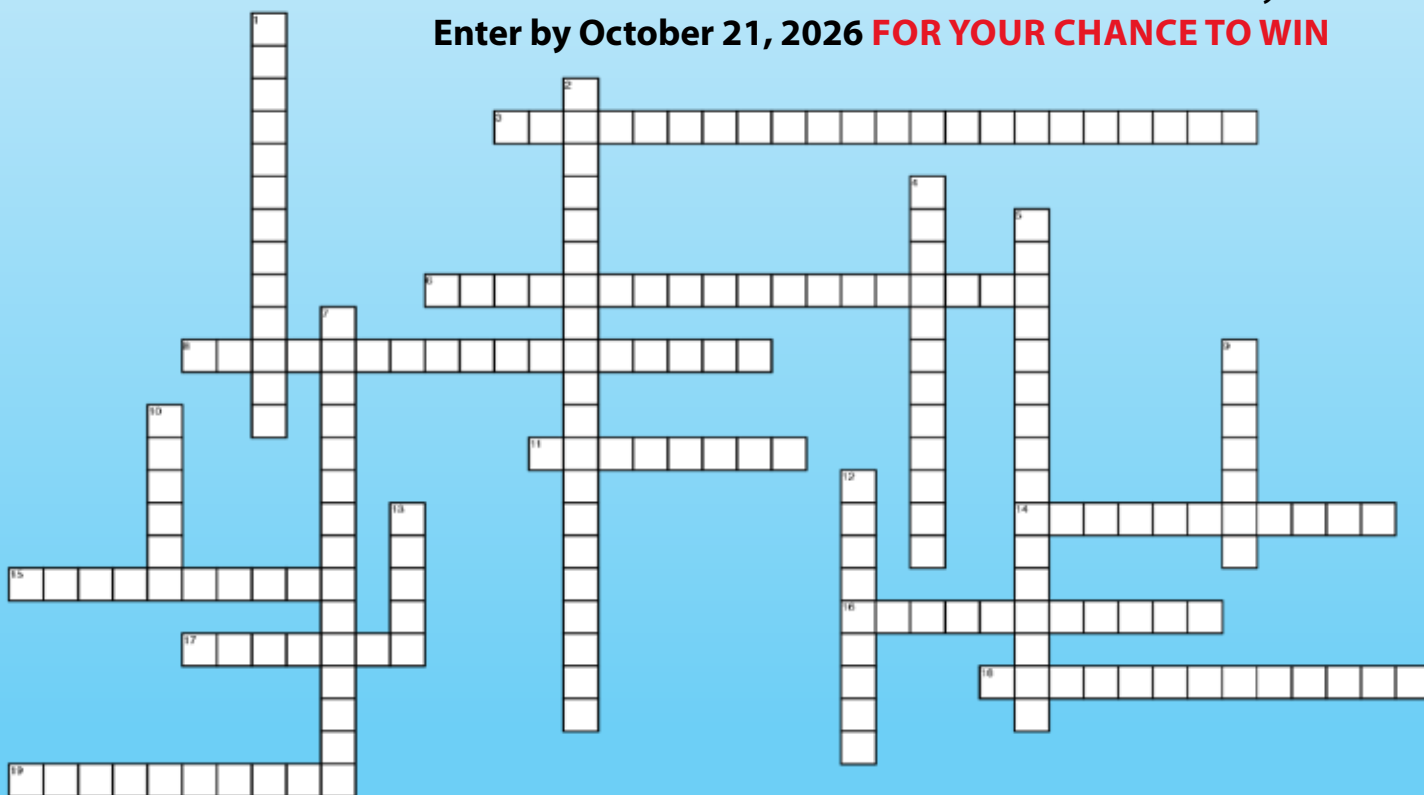


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Answers to the clues can be found in this month's West Valley Star ads.*

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ACROSS

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 3 WHAT WOULD YOU RISK | 15 VA ACCREDITED |
| 6 emergency repairs to full replacements | 16 create a unique strategy |
| 8 The 2027's ARE IN STOCK | 17 CUSTOM MENUS HOLIDAY PARTIES |
| 11 UPGRADE YOUR COMFORT TODAY | 18 \$29 TUNE UP |
| 14 First Responder Discount | 19 Installation of Gutters |

DOWN

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Enhanced Naturally | 9 EXECUTIVE LUXURY |
| 2 BEST OF 2026 | 10 CRAFTED FOR EVERYDAY LIVING |
| 4 HAPPY HOMES | 12 teaming up to be prepared |
| 5 Just COMFORT | 13 KEEP YOUR HOME SAFE! |
| 7 \$500 OFF | |

OFFICIAL CONTEST RULES. Solve the crossword puzzle and mail it in to win. The answers to all crossword clues are found in ads appearing in this edition of West Valley Star. The answers may contain ALL OR PART of a company name. When entering an advertiser's name, there are no spaces, no LLC, or Corporations. Must be 21 or older to enter the contest. Employees of the West Valley Star or its advertisers are ineligible. A drawing will be held from all correct entries. One winner will receive dinner for 2 and 2 movie passes. One winner will receive a consolation prize of 2 movie passes. Winners will be notified by phone, and prizes will be sent by mail.

Check www.westvalleystaraz.com for any corrections or announcements. Scan and email completed puzzles to info.westvalleystar@gmail.com or...

Name _____

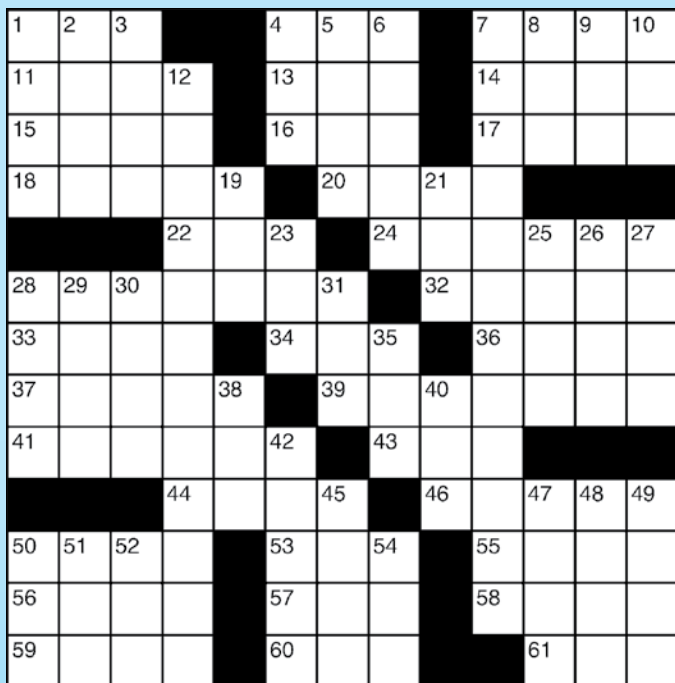
Address _____

Phone _____

email _____

Mail puzzle with answers to:

West Valley Star Puzzle, P.O. Box 5731, Sun City West, AZ 85376



ACROSS

- 1 Hot tub
- 4 Gore and Pacino
- 7 Poet Teasdale
- 11 Sod
- 13 Architect I.M. --
- 14 Sty cry
- 15 Play opener
- 16 Up to
- 17 -- Minor (bear constellation)
- 18 Bas-relief medium
- 20 Leave out
- 22 Grass shack
- 24 Paper fastener
- 28 Mosque tower
- 32 Florida game fish
- 33 Optimist's credo
- 34 Apprehend
- 36 Pharmaceutical
- 37 Transmits
- 39 Baking potatoes
- 41 Orders of pancakes
- 43 "Don't Start

Now" singer
Lipa

- 44 Intimate
- 46 Tactics
- 50 "Star Wars" knight
- 53 Resistance unit
- 55 "East of Eden" twin
- 56 At the summit of
- 57 Pint-sized
- 58 Belafonte song
- 59 Orange veggies
- 60 Matching pair
- 61 Arced tennis shot

DOWN

- 1 Men-only
- 2 Brownish purple
- 3 -- and crafts
- 4 Likely
- 5 Floral rings
- 6 Sari fabrics
- 7 Light lunch order
- 8 Televisé
- 9 ICU pros

10 Rap sheet letters

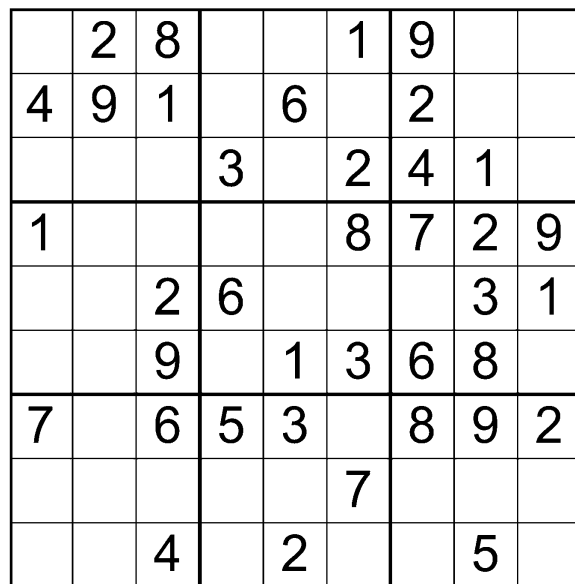
- 12 Popular British dish
- 19 Owned by us
- 21 The "I" of TGIF
- 23 Sawbuck
- 25 Skin opening
- 26 LummoX
- 27 Heart charts (Abbr.)
- 28 Avoid
- 29 "Rhyme Pays" rapper
- 30 "Peter Pan" pooch
- 31 Roofing goo
- 35 Future flower
- 38 Enjoy Vail
- 40 "How's it goin'?"
- 42 Bamboozles
- 45 Biblical pronoun
- 47 Exam format
- 48 Vacillate
- 49 Elitist
- 50 Comic Leno
- 51 JFK info
- 52 -- Perignon
- 54 Bumped into

Answers on Page 30

Time to beat: 22 minutes

Sudoku

by Linda Thistle



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.

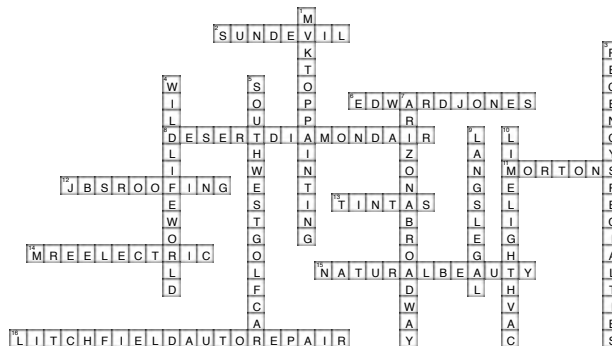
DIFFICULTY: ★

★ MODERATE ★★ CHALLENGING ★★★ HOO BOY!

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Answers on Page 30

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RECIPE

Slow Cooker Garlic Parmesan Chicken and Potatoes

INGREDIENTS

SERVINGS: 4

8 bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs

½ teaspoon dried basil

½ teaspoon dried oregano

¼ teaspoon dried rosemary

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

2 pounds baby red potatoes, quartered

2 tablespoons olive oil

4 cloves garlic, minced

½ teaspoon dried thyme

1 cup freshly grated Parmesan

2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley leaves



INSTRUCTIONS

Season chicken with basil, oregano, rosemary, salt and pepper, to taste.

Melt butter in a large skillet over medium high heat. Add chicken, skin-side down, and sear both sides until golden brown, about 2-3 minutes per side; drain excess fat and set chicken aside.

Place potatoes into a 6-qt slow cooker. Stir in olive oil, garlic and thyme; season with salt and pepper, to taste. Add chicken to the slow cooker in an even layer.

Cover and cook on low heat for 7-8 hours or high for 3-4 hours, or until the chicken is completely cooked through, reaching an internal temperature of 165 degrees F.

Serve immediately, sprinkled with Parmesan and garnished with parsley, if desired.

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4 tips for soft, fluffy towels

Reduce the amount of detergent

Towels, because of their absorbent nature, tend to soak up excess detergent. The residue left behind compromises the fabric's softness.

Make friends with white vinegar

Add a cup of white vinegar to the washer before starting a load of towels. It dissolves detergent crystals and eliminates odors. It's even more effective with warm or hot water.

Avoid liquid fabric softeners

Over time, fabric softener breaks down the fibers that help towels absorb water effectively and keep them soft. Natural wool dryer balls make a nice

alternative to conventional fabric softeners.

Maintain your washing machine

Don't forget to clean your washing machine from time to time. Run a hot cycle without clothes. Add a quarter cup of bleach or use cleaning tablets designed to be placed directly in the drum.

That's it! By using these tips, you'll get soft towels in every wash.



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West Valley Star

Strange But True

by Lucie Winborne

The first documented carrots were purple, yellow and white. Orange carrots became popular in Europe in the 1500s, and many food historians believe Dutch growers promoted them to honor the Dutch royal family, the House of Orange, during a politically charged period in the Netherlands.

When resources were scarce during World War II, some German and Austrian banks printed emergency banknotes on wood, leather and playing cards.

Electric eels and electric rays possess enough electricity to kill a horse.

Swimmers, surfers and fishermen sometimes wear pantyhose under or instead of swimwear because their nylon mesh prevents many types of jellyfish stingers from touching the skin.

The \$2 bill was once considered unlucky due to its ties to gambling.

The Latin phrase "Pecunia non olet" ("Money does not stink") derives from a urine tax levied by Roman emperors Nero and Vespasian in the first century A.D.

Hollywood by Tony Rizzo

When Jacob Elordi snapped, "Don't ever tell me what to do," at an official at the Venice Film Festival, the Italian press dubbed him a diva! Elordi first rose to fame after starring in three "Kissing Booth" movies for Netflix, and he's admitted on several talk shows that he hated doing these films. But his latest film "The Dog Stars," with Josh Brolin and Guy Pearce, fell short of expectations, grossing \$39 million against its \$110 million cost.



Jacob Elordi



Josh Heuston

Further complicating his life is Josh Heuston, a 29-year-old lookalike who starred in the Australian series "Dive Club" and in "Thor: Love and Thunder" (2022). He also had a role in the survival horror film "Dangerous Animals" (2025), which cost \$2 million and grossed \$9.2 million. Elordi better watch his back!



Tom Jones says that he was fired as a judge on "The Voice UK" due to a "financial difficulty with insurance" because he's 86 years old. But according to Jones, "The Voice UK" then had the nerve to tell the press that they wanted to refresh the show. "With a new coaching lineup, there wouldn't be a chair for me," he stated in a social media post.

He added, "They offered a much-reduced role where I would make an appearance, but without actually being involved from the start." Jones was a judge on the show since its inception in 2012.

When I shot stills for the CBS special "Cinderella at the Palace" in 1978, I spent a whole day following Sir Tom Jones around, and he couldn't have been nicer, kinder or more agreeable. I wish we had "The Voice UK" here in the United States so I could not watch it!

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Strange But True

Studies show women are 18% more likely to be attracted to the color blue.

Before founding Wendy's, Dave Thomas helped struggling KFC franchises in Columbus, Ohio, turn themselves around in 1962. He was paid with 45% ownership. When he sold his share back, he used the money to open his first Wendy's.

Sean Connery was once stopped for speeding by a policeman named James Bond.

The first animal ever cloned, the famous sheep Dolly, was named for singer-songwriter Dolly Parton.

Early hairspray formulas often used shellac, a resin secreted by female Kerria lacca bugs.

The Wizard of Oz's full name is Oscar Zoroaster Phadrig Isaac Norman Henkel Emmanuel Ambrose Diggs. He called himself OZ because the other initials spelled P-I-N-H-E-A-D.

Frida Kahlo is the only Mexican woman to have a major solo exhibition at the Louvre.

The first pet insurance in America was purchased in 1982 to protect the dog playing the title role in "Lassie."

3 myths about STBBIs debunked

Education about sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections (STBBIs) is now more comprehensive and widespread than in the past. Still, certain myths persist. Here are three that have now been debunked.

1. STBBIs can be transmitted via a toilet seat

If a person with an STBBI sits on a public toilet seat, the chances of the pathogen responsible for the infection surviving until another person sits on it are practically zero. Experts state that, even if the pathogen survived, the probability of these bacteria or viruses coming into contact with a specific part of the body or damaged skin tissue to cause an infection is infinitesimally low.

2. Absence of symptoms rules out the possibility of an STBBI

Even if unprotected sex occurred several weeks ago and no symptoms have appeared, it's still possible that an STBBI was transmitted. The same is true for two committed partners who



stop using condoms without being tested. Science reveals that most infected people are unaware of their status because they don't develop any symptoms.

3. The only cause is unprotected sex

The sharing of drug injection equipment like needles or the use of poorly sterilized or unsterilized tattoo and piercing tools are high-risk practices, as they facilitate the exchange of bodily fluids. This can result in the transmission of blood-borne infections such as HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C. In addition, don't share sex toys or accessories with anyone, as they can also spread an infection.

STBIs should be taken seriously, so it's essential to be well informed. To learn more or to schedule a screening appointment, contact a medical or sexual health clinic in your area.

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