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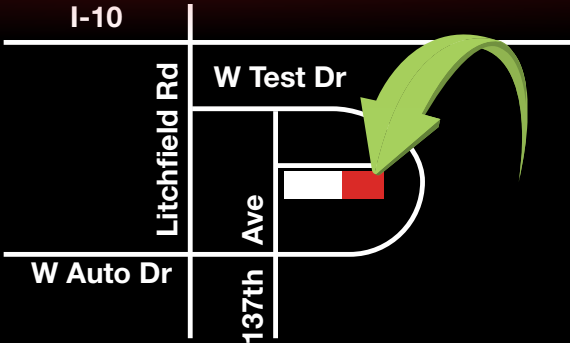
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To Those Who Serve and Save

Each May, we're given a powerful opportunity to pause and recognize the people who show up on our hardest days, the professionals who run toward emergencies when others step back. From EMS Week and National Police Week to Paramedic Services Week and National Nurses Week, this month is a collective tribute to courage, compassion, and commitment.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) professionals and paramedics are often the first on scene, delivering life-saving care under intense pressure. Police officers dedicate their lives to protecting communities, making split-second decisions in situations most of us can't imagine. Nurses, whether in hospitals, clinics, or community settings, are the steady hands and reassuring voices guiding patients through both crisis and recovery.

While each of these roles is distinct, they share a common thread: service above self. They work long hours, face emotional and physical challenges, and carry responsibilities that extend far beyond their shifts. Yet they continue to show up—with skill, resilience, and heart, demonstrating unwavering dedication to the people and communities they serve every single day.

This May, recognition goes beyond words. It's about genuine appreciation—thanking them, supporting them, and acknowledging the sacrifices they and their families make every day. Whether it's a simple "thank you," a community gesture, or organizational support, every bit matters.

To the EMS professionals, police officers, paramedics, and nurses: your dedication does not go unnoticed. You are the backbone of our safety and healthcare systems, and your impact reaches farther than you may ever realize.



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ACCESSIBILITY is for everyone

More than one in four U.S. adults lives with a disability, and at some point nearly everyone will need accessibility support. Disabilities are not always visible. Chronic illness, hearing or vision loss, and other conditions may limit how someone navigates public spaces or completes everyday tasks. These individuals may not use mobility aids but often benefit from patience, clear communication and a little extra space.

Age-related changes can also affect mobility, balance, memory and reaction time. Creating inclusive environments helps older adults remain active and independent.

Temporary disabilities — from injuries to short-term illnesses — can affect anyone. These experiences highlight how difficult it can be to access buildings, read signage or move comfortably through crowded areas.

Everyday actions can make a meaningful difference. Keep walkways, aisles and doorways clear, and never block ramps, curb cuts or accessible parking spaces. Hold doors when possible, offer a steady arm if someone appears to need support, and be mindful of seating so those who need it most have access. In conversations, speak clearly, face the person directly and be patient if they need extra time to respond or move.

In shared spaces and workplaces, aim for clarity and flexibility. Use large, high-contrast fonts on printed materials, avoid overly cluttered layouts and provide information in multiple formats when possible. Keep lighting consistent, reduce unnecessary noise and be open to simple adjustments, such as rearranging furniture for easier navigation.

Small, thoughtful choices help create environments where more people can participate fully and comfortably.



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"Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends."

— John 15:13

Digital Mother's Day gifts that feel personal

Virtual gifts can feel just as meaningful as something wrapped up with a bow. They're perfect for long-distance families, last-minute planners or those looking for an eco-friendly but sentimental gift.

DIGITAL SCRAPBOOK. Create an online scrapbook filled with photos, short notes and cherished memories. Platforms like Canva make it easy to design professional-looking pages using ready-made templates. Add captions from each family member and export the finished book as a PDF.

VIDEO MONTAGE. Ask family and friends to record short video messages sharing a memory, a thank-you or a funny moment. Combine them into one heartfelt film, add music and you have an emotional keepsake Mom can watch again and again.



CURATED PLAYLIST. Build a personalized soundtrack for your mom. Include songs that remind you of road trips, childhood memories or quiet evenings together. A playlist on a music service like Spotify or Apple Music becomes a daily reminder of how much she means to you.

CUSTOM DIGITAL ILLUSTRATION. Commission a digital portrait of your mom, your family or even a special shared moment. Many artists offer downloadable artwork, making it easy to order, receive and share a truly personal gift the same day.

Digital gifts prove that thought, creativity and connection matter more than packaging, especially on Mother's Day.

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Mother's Day

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Hollywood by Tony Rizzo

Meryl Streep will play Joni Mitchell in Cameron Crowe's upcoming untitled film. Crowe's last effort was the documentary "David Crosby: Remember My Name" (2019). Did you know that Streep is the voice of the alien "Rocky" in "Project Hail Mary"? Her next film, "The Devil Wears Prada 2," opens on May 1.



COURTESY OF 20TH CENTURY STUDIOS

Meryl Streep as Miranda Priestly in "The Devil Wears Prada 2"



Another "Devil Wears Prada 2" star Anne Hathaway didn't have any films that were released in 2025, but she's been one busy lady in 2026! She filmed the psychological drama/thriller "Mother Mary," which opened on April 24. She also stars in "The Odyssey," which opens on July 17; the sci-fi thriller "The End of Oak Street" with Ewan McGregor (out on Aug. 14); "Verity" with Dakota Johnson and Josh Hartnett (due on Oct. 2); and director Ron Howard's war drama "Alone at Dawn," with Adam Driver and Betty Gilpin (no release date as of yet).



Returning "Devil Wears Prada 2" star Emily Blunt will also be seen in the sci-fi film "Disclosure Day" with Oscar winner Colin Firth, Josh O'Connor, and Colman Domingo, which releases in theaters on June 12. Blunt is no stranger to sci-fi -- "A Quiet Place" (2018) grossed \$341 million, and "A Quiet

Place II" (2020) grossed \$297.5 million. She's currently producing and starring in the romantic film "Walk the Blue Fields," which is based on Claire Keegan's bestselling book.

Blunt's husband, John Krasinski -- who wrote and directed both of the "Quiet Place" films -- has completed "Jack Ryan: Ghost War" for Amazon Prime Video, which drops on May 20. He's currently working on "A Quiet Place III" for a July 2027 release.



PHOTO CREDIT: IMDB

Stanley Tucci

Last but not least, "Devil Wears Prada 2" star Stanley Tucci is married to co-star Emily Blunt's sister, Felicity. (They wed in 2012 and have two children.) Before this, Tucci was wed to social worker Kathryn Spath from 1995 until her death in 2009. They had three children together, and he also raised her two children from her previous marriage after her death.

He was perfect as Paul Child, the husband of Julia Child (Meryl Streep) in "Julie & Julia" (2009), which is one of my favorite films. His cooking show "Stanley Tucci: Searching for Italy" ran for two seasons on CNN from 2021-2022, while "Tucci in Italy" has been running on National Geographic since 2025. Between travel-logging Italy and raising seven kids, Tucci doesn't have much time to sit on his "tucci"!

Here's a Tip

by JoAnn Derson

"If you add a teaspoon of sugar to your biscuit mix or to the dough for rolls, it will help them to brown well and they will come out of the oven with golden tops." -- J.R. in Michigan

"Got an odd job coming up? Before you go out and purchase an expensive limited-use tool, check with your friends and neighbors to see if you can borrow instead of buying. Check with local hardware stores to see if it's cheaper to rent it, too." -- S.L. in Kentucky

Add a small bit of boiling water to a glass of iced tea to clear it up if it is cloudy. You can do this to a pitcher just before serving.

"I have pets that leave hair and dirt on the couch. When I wash my cushion covers, I put them back on the pillows when they are not quite dry. They stretch better when they are a little bit damp." -- H.P. in Arizona

Paws Corner by Sam Mazzotta



Preventing Animal Cruelty: Small Actions, Real Impact

Stories of animals rescued from hoarding situations, breeding mills and neglect are increasingly common — and they can leave people feeling helpless. But meaningful action doesn't require owning a pet.

Awareness is a powerful first step. Paying attention to animals in everyday surroundings can reveal signs of trouble. Pets that appear underweight, fearful or consistently confined outdoors may need help.

Community involvement strengthens these efforts. Neighbors can compare observations, share concerns and stay informed through private group chats. Knowing how to contact local animal control or law enforcement — and providing detailed reports — can make interventions more effective.

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Teen teaches seniors about cyber security

Tejasvi Manoj, a 17-year-old from Texas, was named in 2025 as TIME magazine Kid of the Year. Her claim to fame? Teaching seniors how to avoid cyber scams.

Her reasoning for the task was personal -- her grandfather was nearly hit by a scammer who was pretending to be a relative demanding money. Thankfully the grandfather called another relative before he hit that "send" button.

This is one brilliant young lady. Not only does she teach cyber security at senior centers, but she developed an online teaching program called Shield

Seniors (www.shieldseniors.com/About-us). While the site isn't fully up and running yet, it's one we will need to keep an eye on when it does start.

Have you heard of TED Talks? TED is a platform where the best and the brightest among us give short talks on all types of topics. If you want to see this sharp young lady during her TED talk, go online to www.youtube.com/watch?v=v3800D3xHQo. If you want to hear more from her while you're on YouTube, put her name -- Tejasvi Manoj -- in the search box. You'll be impressed.

Two years ago there were 860,000 scams reported by seniors and \$4.8 billion was lost in one year alone. Why is it scammers come after us? They perceive that we have a lot of money (after all, we're retired, so we must be rich, right?)

We didn't grow up in the tech generations -- taught to handle digital devices by the age of 3 and able to easily spot scams.

We're also, to our occasional detriment, too polite and trusting when we talk to others. It makes it all too easy for a scammer to manipulate us on the phone.

To learn more about how to avoid scams, go online to the Federal Trade Commission website (ftc.gov) and put "scammers," "scams against seniors" or "senior scams" in the search box.



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Strange But True

by Lucie Winborne

An 1898 book predicted the Titanic's sinking 14 years before it happened.

During the 1904 Tour de France, Maurice Gerin jumped on a train and caught a ride between cities to get ahead of the other cyclists.

Antarctica is the world's largest desert, as it is a polar ice desert with very low precipitation.

As a young, poor artist, Pablo Picasso once burned his own paintings to keep warm.

Pretzels were originally created by monks around 610 A.D. to reward children for learning prayers, with their shape designed to resemble arms crossed in prayer.

In 2018, scientists at Caltech played a microscopic game of tic-tac-toe built from DNA.

Feeding pigeons in Venice, Italy, is prohibited to protect historical monuments.

Michael Phelps's total of 28 Olympic medals places him ahead of more than 160 nations in the all-time gold medal rankings.

Starting the year AGAIN

Many people approach the new year with resolutions, only to find that by midyear, few have been maintained. As a result, some choose to revisit their goals and establish new intentions for the months ahead.

Common challenges include maintaining consistent routines. For example, setting aside time each day for online language learning—such as using Duolingo—can be difficult to sustain, even with structured, user-friendly programs that track daily progress.

Physical activity is another area where consistency often falters. Seasonal conditions, such as winter weather or facility closures, can disrupt plans for regular walking or exercise. With improved conditions, however, opportunities to resume these routines increase.

Continuing education is another frequently postponed goal. A wide range of free online courses is available through organizations such as Coursera, MIT OpenCourseWare, Harvard University, Stanford University and The Open University, offering accessible options across many subjects.

Midyear can serve as a natural opportunity to reassess priorities and set new, achievable goals. A simple online search for ideas—such as resolutions focused on mental well-being or personal development—can provide helpful starting points.

For those who have successfully maintained their original resolutions, this may also be an opportunity to build on that momentum with additional goals.



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HEALTH WATCH

Should you be concerned about the health effects of scented candles?

Do you love scented candles but wonder if they're bad for your health? Candles do release air pollutants when they burn, since all forms of combustion produce harmful particles. But does that mean you should stop using them?

The good news is that scented candles don't pose much of a health risk if you use them properly. Always light candles in a well-ventilated area and let them burn for only a few hours at a time. Above all, don't burn several candles at once.

Experts also recommend limiting candle use around pets, children, older adults and people with asthma.

Paraffin-free candles are the safest option for your

health and the environment. Choose candles made from soy, beeswax, coconut or rapeseed wax. When selecting scents, look for candles made with non-toxic fragrances or high-quality essential oils.

Visit our local specialty shops to find handmade, scented and eco-friendly candles, or check out Arizona candlemaker Coco Luz on Shopify (www.cocoluz-candles.myshopify.com). Crafted with intention, CocoLuz candles are handcrafted using organic coconut wax and premium essential oils



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May is American

Stroke Month

Be a stroke hero: act F.A.S.T.

Stroke is a leading cause of disability in the U.S. and a top cause of death. American Stroke Month is a great time to learn the warning signs and act quickly.

REMEMBER F.A.S.T.

Face drooping – uneven smile or numbness

Arm weakness – one arm feels weak or numb

Speech difficulty – slurred or unclear speech

Time to call 911 – every minute matters; nearly 2 million brain cells die each minute without treatment.

Other symptoms may include numbness, confusion, trouble seeing or walking, and severe headaches.

WOMEN AND STROKE

Women face a higher stroke risk than men, with Black women most affected. Risk factors include pregnancy, preeclampsia, and birth control. Women may also experience nausea, vomiting, or unusual fatigue.

PREVENTION MATTERS

You can reduce your risk by maintaining a healthy lifestyle and managing diabetes, blood pressure and cholesterol. If a doctor has prescribed you any medication, take it exactly as directed.

This American Stroke Month, commit to protecting your health. For more information on stroke awareness and prevention, visit stroke.org.

Thought
for the Day:

"Life doesn't come with a manual, it comes with a mother."

- Unknown

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Supporting the Honor Flights

Honor Flights for 2026 are underway, giving veterans free trips to Washington, D.C., to visit memorials like the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the World War II Memorial while being honored at special ceremonies.

These trips rely heavily on volunteers who assist with wheelchairs, logistics, meals, transportation, and airport navigation. To get involved, visit honorflight.org and use the "Find a Hub" feature to locate your local group.

While flights are free for veterans, they depend

on sponsorships and donations. Individuals can contribute financially, donate airline reward points, or support programs like TLC flights, which provide end-of-life trips for seriously ill veterans and a caregiver.

Since its founding, Honor Flight has served over 339,000 veterans, with more than 37,000 still on a waiting list. Charity Navigator awards the organization a 4-star rating.

To learn more about Honor Flights, see the website, call 937-521-2400 or email info@honorflight.org.

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Making ends meet can feel harder than ever with the rising cost of living. Check out these proven tips to help you save money on three essential services.

Electricity Reduce your energy usage by:

- Lowering the temperature in your home when you're away. Ideally, install a smart thermostat to manage it automatically.
- Taking short showers instead of baths, as hot water consumption is very expensive.
- Looking for air leaks in every room and sealing them to reduce heating and cooling costs. Every little bit counts!

Telephone Pay less for your plan by:

- Calling your current provider and negotiating your plan. If you've been a customer for a long time, the company will often try to keep

you by offering a better rate.

- Visiting other providers' websites if your current company isn't cooperative. You may find a much better deal.

Insurance Lower your premiums by:

- Requesting quotes from several insurers. Make sure the coverage offered is comparable. Prices can vary a lot.
- Bundling your policies, such as car and home insurance, with the same insurer to take advantage of discounts.
- Increasing your deductible to reduce your premium. Just make sure you can afford to pay that amount if you ever need to make a claim.

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MAY IS OLDER AMERICANS MONTH



Seniors: second careers that continue to shape the country

Celebrated every May and led by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Older Americans Month is an opportunity to recognize the ongoing contributions of older adults. Today, one of the most powerful ways Americans 55 and older continue to shape the nation is through second careers.

Where seniors make an impact

Older adults excel in roles that benefit from lived experience, sound judgment and strong interpersonal skills, including:

- **Entrepreneurship and small business ownership.** According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 51 percent of small business owners start at age 55 or older. Their financial stability, industry knowledge and problem-solving skills help ventures thrive and support younger entrepreneurs through mentorship.
- **Education and tutoring.** Recent estimates show

62 percent of U.S. paraprofessionals are age 40 or older, with a growing share over 55. Older adults bring patience, communication skills and real-world insight that boost student confidence.

- **Healthcare support roles.** The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports individuals 55+ make up nearly one in four healthcare workers. They are well-suited for roles like patient advocates and care coordinators due to empathy, reliability and composure.

- **Community advocacy and nonprofit leadership.** Adults 65+ volunteer at some of the highest rates, contributing over 1 billion hours annually. Their commitment and perspective strengthen local organizations and programs.

Older Americans Month is a reminder that experience remains one of the nation's most valuable resources.



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- 1 Before & After School Childcare
- 2 emergency repairs to full replacements
- 3 It's heating up.
- 7 POWERING HOMES. BUILDING TRUST
- 8 WRAPPED IN LOVE
- 12 AUTO HOME BUSINESS LIFE

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Solve the crossword puzzle and mail it in to win. Answers to the clues can be found in this month's West Valley Star ads.

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...

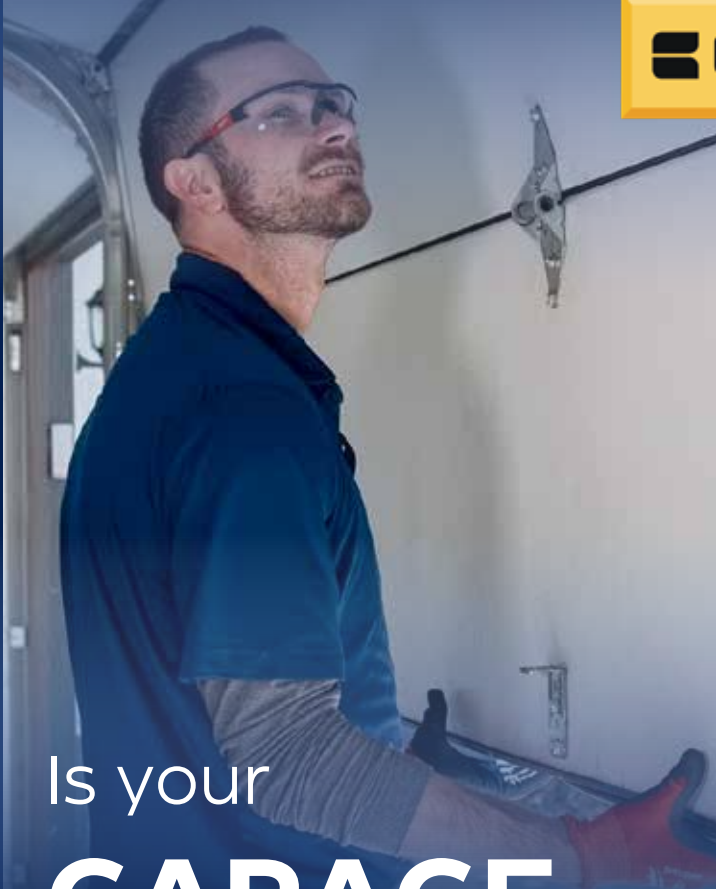
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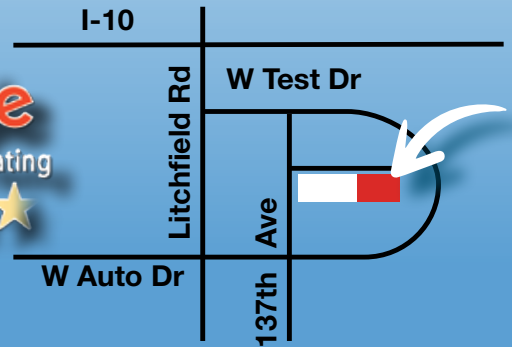
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RECIPE

Grilled Beef Salad

INGREDIENTS

SERVINGS: 4

14 ounces sirloin steak
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon butter
1 peach, sliced
4 cups mixed greens
1 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
½ cup walnuts, toasted
Salt and pepper to taste

For the vinaigrette

3 tablespoons mayonnaise
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon honey
1 tablespoon water (or more)
Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Remove the steak from the refrigerator and let sit for about 20 minutes until it reaches room temperature. Season the meat with a generous amount of salt and pepper.
2. Heat a cast-iron skillet or barbecue grill over high heat, then drizzle a little oil into the pan. Sear for two to three minutes on each side for a rare steak, or longer if preferred. Remove from heat, cover loosely and let stand for 8 to 10 minutes.
3. In the same pan or on the grill, melt the butter and grill the peach slices for one to two minutes on each side, until charred and lightly caramelized.
4. In a small bowl, whisk together the vinaigrette ingredients, using water to adjust the texture as needed.
5. Divide the greens among four small plates. Add cilantro and sprinkle with toasted walnuts.
6. Slice the beef against the grain into thin strips. Arrange the slices on the salad. Add the grilled peach slices, then top with vinaigrette. Serve immediately.



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Biodiversity includes all living species—plants and animals—within a given environment. It directly impacts quality of life by supporting climate regulation and helping prevent natural disasters.

When biodiversity declines, ecosystems become unbalanced and vulnerable. Species disappear, and the effects ripple across human health, safety, the economy and natural resources. For example, failing to protect pollinators like bees puts global food systems at risk. Healthy ecosystems also help reduce erosion, flooding and extreme heat.

Protecting biodiversity starts with simple actions—

- Plant native species to support pollinators.
- Stay on trails, take trash with you and avoid picking plants.
- Reduce pesticide use and choose eco-friendly practices.
- Allow natural growth areas for wildlife habitats.
- Buy sustainable, local products when possible.

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Q: I saw that Alec Baldwin was back in court again for the unfortunate shooting on the set of his movie. I thought that all the charges against him were dismissed. -- **C.W.**

A: Alec Baldwin was charged with involuntary manslaughter for the accidental death of cinematographer Halyna Hutchins, but a judge dismissed the case with prejudice (meaning that



PHOTO CREDIT: DEPOSITPHOTOS

Actor Alec Baldwin
("Rust")

it couldn't be refiled) a year later. A settlement was reached between the movie's ("Rust") producers and Hutchins' family. But now Baldwin is in civil court with a suit that was filed by gaffer Serge Svetnoy for emotional distress. That trial is set to begin October.

★★★

Q: When is "Dexter" coming back, and which show will it be? I remember there were two new ones. I want to catch up on the episodes. -- **S.L.**

A: "Dexter: Resurrection" stars Michael C. Hall in the titular role and continues the story where the original "Dexter" series left off. They just began filming season two in April, so I'd expect

it on Paramount+ sometime toward the end of 2026. (But don't quote me on that!)

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ANSWERS TO PUZZLES ON PAGE 22

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