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LAUGH-A-BIT WITH TIDBITS

Q: Why was the cell phone scared to go to the dentist?

A: He didn't want him to remove his blue tooth!



Q: What word has 5 letters and starts with "gas"?

A: Truck.

TIDBITS® PLAYS WITH AN

ETCH-A-SKETCH

by Kathy Wolfe

One of the world's favorite toys, the Etch-A-Sketch, was introduced in America in 1960, but was not invented in the U.S. Follow along as Tidbits explores the origins of this classic.

• Andre Cassagnes was an electrician in France in the 1950s. Assigned to a contract in a factory that manufactured an embossed wall covering, he was installing a light fixture in the building. The manufacturing process used an aluminum powder that had spattered onto the light switch plate. Cassagnes made some pencil marks on the cover and discovered that his pencil scraping showed up on the other side of the plate's protective decal.

• Using the principle of electrostatic charge, along with aluminum

powder mixed with tiny beads to prevent clumping, and a stylus, Cassagnes

devised a drawing toy that didn't need pencil and paper, one that caused artwork to disappear with an upside-down shake. The original design featured a joystick rather than the two knobs that are familiar, but he later modified it to the knobs that moved a stylus that scraped away the powder. A quick shake of the Etch-A-Sketch redistributes the aluminum powder, leaving a fresh slate. The left knob creates a horizontal line, and the right knob is for the vertical. Using both at once results in diagonal, circular, and

continued on page 3

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**VETERANS
 POST**

by Freddy Groves

**Rate increase for
 Veteran Directed Care**

Veterans with very serious and complex medical conditions will see a hefty increase in the amount of money paid for their home care.

Specifically, those veterans will now have their community and home care costs covered at a rate that is 100% of what would be charged at a VA Community Living Center -- a nursing home.

The benefit here is that veterans will then be able to stay home and take advantage of adult day care, skilled home health, a home health aide and Veteran Directed Care (VDC). This last is the most valuable for veterans as it targets veterans who need help with daily tasks (eating, bathing, grocery shopping, anything for daily living) and keeps them out of nursing homes.

Instead of being given staff and helpers by the VA, veterans and their families can choose who they want as care providers, including

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family members or friends chosen by the veteran (and respite services for the primary care provider), even interviewing and selecting the desired staff. And those helpers are paid.

Eligibility for VDC status requires that the veteran be enrolled for health care with the VA, have a VA primary care provider, meet eligibility criteria and need nursing home level services. Eligibility is not determined by specific medical conditions, but rather by the actual help and services that a veteran requires.

Veterans, if you're in danger of needing placement in a nursing home and would rather stay home, your first step is to talk to your primary care provider at the VA.

You should be directed to the Veteran Directed Care Coordinator, who will act as liaison to assist with analyzing goals and developing a plan, working out a budget, hiring helpers and monitoring the situation.

If you haven't signed up to receive Veteran Directed Care benefits because of the low payments (65% of what would be charged at a VA Community Living Center), this increase to 100% should help significantly. Work with the Coordinator on a budget to be sure it's manageable for you.

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- 1. FOOD & DRINK:** What is a bunch of bananas called?
- 2. MOVIES:** Who is Neo's nemesis in "The Matrix"?
- 3. MUSIC:** The Broadway show "Jersey Boys" is about which music group?
- 4. TELEVISION:** In which U.S. city is the sitcom "New Girl" set?
- 5. U.S. PRESIDENTS:** What is the name of the helicopter that transports U.S. presidents?
- 6. GEOGRAPHY:** The Lake of the Ozarks is in which U.S. state?
- 7. HISTORY:** When did construction begin on the Berlin Wall?
- 8. PSYCHOLOGY:** What fear is represented in the condition called claustrophobia?
- 9. ASTRONOMY:** Which planet in our solar system has the Great Red Spot?
- 10. LITERATURE:** Which country is the setting for the novel "The French Lieutenant's Woman"?

- answers
 page 7

By Fifi Rodriguez

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other more complicated lines.

• Cassagnes called his invention "L'Ecran Magique," which translates "The Magic Screen." Several French manufacturers passed up the opportunity, believing that Cassagnes wanted too much money. He sold the rights for the toy to the American firm Ohio Art Company, who ran a contest to name their new asset.

• Ohio Art launched the Etch-A-Sketch just in time for the Christmas, 1960 season. It was released with

a price tag of \$2.99 (about \$32 in today's money). Over 600,000 units were sold the first year.

• Although the Etch-A-Sketch debuted with its signature red color, there have been some variations over the years. In 1971, Ohio Art offered "Cool Blue" and "Hot Pink," and for the toy's 25th anniversary model, the company unveiled a silver Etch-A-Sketch with jeweled drawing knobs and a hand-carved signature at the top. This limited edition set buyers back \$3,750. Other special editions have included Hello Kitty and Marvel themes. There are also mini versions that attach to a keychain.

• The popularity of Etch-A-Sketch was revitalized in popularity when it was featured in a scene in the 1995 Disney Pixar movie "Toy Story," which provided a substantial boost in sales for the company. But by 1999, sales had declined again to the point that the company was in financial difficulty. Yet they were boosted again when the 1999 sequel "Toy Story 2" featured a scene with Andy's toy named "Etch," described by fellow toy Woody as having the "fastest knobs in the West."

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• Some professional Etch-A-Sketch artists have made their drawings permanent. California artist Nicole Falzone, known as the "Monet of the Magic Screen," creates intricate portraits on an Etch-A-Sketch and preserves them by drillings holes in the back of the case, draining out the aluminum powder, and gluing the knobs in place.

• In France, the Etch-A-Sketch is still called "L'Ecran Magique," while in Germany, it's called "Zaubertafel," which translates "magic board."
• Sales of the toy have topped 100 million since its introduction.

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Lawyers' gp.
- 4 Radiator sound
- 7 Explosion
- 12 Bottom line
- 13 Ref
- 14 — Ababa
- 15 Hindu honorific
- 16 Obstruction
- 18 Work unit
- 19 Incursion
- 20 Frog's relative
- 22 — Aviv
- 23 Chumps
- 27 Fan's shout
- 29 Owing money
- 31 Choir member
- 34 Like anchovies
- 35 Hour follower
- 37 Dog's foot
- 38 Yuletide tune
- 39 GPS suggestion

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	

DOWN

- 1 Plus
- 2 Small pack animal
- 3 Spanish girl-friend
- 4 Ride the waves
- 5 Suave
- 6 Memoir by Prince Harry
- 7 Infant
- 8 "Bad" cholesterol
- 9 Commotion
- 10 Bracketed word
- 11 Chiding sound
- 15 Painter Salvador
- 21 Slobber
- 23 Shoulder wrap
- 24 "You've got mail" co.
- 25 Agt.'s cut
- 26 Cloud setting
- 28 Rainbow
- 30 Code-breaking gp.
- 31 Great weight
- 32 Green prefix
- 33 Mets' div.
- 36 Ray of McDonald's
- 37 Writing instrument
- 40 Treasure stash
- 42 Lab liquids
- 43 "The Fraud" author — Smith
- 44 Justice Kagan
- 45 Enjoy gum
- 46 Power tool brand
- 48 FDR follower
- 49 Post-op area
- 50 Sailor
- 51 — Magnon

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Why spay/neuter programs work

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: You often write about feral cat control programs like TNR (trap, neuter, return) and advocate for spaying and neutering. But, do these programs actually work? Because I still see feral cats near my neighborhood every day. — Janine in Spring Hill, Florida

DEAR JANINE: Thank you for spotlighting feral cat programs! Yes, TNR and TNVR (trap, neuter, vaccinate, return) programs have been going on long enough that the organizations

running them have collected plenty of data showing that “community cat” populations have declined and stabilized. In fact, there’s an organization in your area, Paw Warriors Inc. (pawwarriorsinc.com), that supports these efforts and maintains a no-kill shelter for abandoned cats and feral cats who can no longer fend for themselves outside.

For decades, the University of Florida and the University of Central Florida have had TNR/TNVR programs. Both reported a significant reduction in feral cat populations after the first one to two years -- over 66%. Kittens were put up for adoption, and the remaining adult cats were returned to their colonies. The feral cat population remained

small but stable afterward. In Washington, D.C., Alley Cat Allies, an advocacy organization formed in 1990, started a TNR program with a feral cat colony. Within seven years, the colony dropped from 54 to just six adult cats; these remaining cats lived longer, healthier lives with the last cat passing away at age 17!

The studies found that TNR/TNVR programs were highly effective even if just over half of a colony was treated. Fewer kittens were born, fewer diseases were transmitted between cats, and fewer fights took place.

When you next see a feral cat near your neighborhood, look closely to see if they have a “tipped” ear (a chunk cut out of the top). This shows that the cat was trapped and neutered or spayed, and that the colony is being monitored.

Send your tips, comments or questions to ask@pawscorner.com.
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W M O N K E Y S H I N E H V E
T S R E N I H S D N A E S I R

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
Unlisted clue hint: CRANIAL, COMPUTER

- Bahrain
- Drain
- Drivetrain
- Ingrain
- Monkeyshine
- Moonshine
- Outshine
- Refrain
- Restrain
- Rise and shine
- Shoeshine
- Spit-shine
- Sprain
- Sunshine
- Terrain

answers on page 7
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Fun Fact

The country with the highest number of dogs is the United States with 90 million, followed by Brazil with 60 million and China with 58 million. The Philippines own 20.5 million and Thailand has 18.5 million. Surprisingly, the country that has the most dogs owned per every 100,000 in population is Portugal, with 28,890.

Source: worldpopulationreview.com

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Weekly SUDOKU

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

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!

answers on page 7
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Baked Alaska Citrus

Here's a new wintry dessert your family will ooh and ahh over. It's a take on traditional Baked Alaska that you may have enjoyed at a fancy restaurant. This mini version is much easier, using fresh grapefruit in its own "bowl" instead of cake, but still keeps the wow factor with billowing warm meringue on top and chilly ice cream nestled inside.



Timing is everything. Do some simple prep work beforehand. Then, as the table is being cleared after your main course, preheat the oven and whip the egg whites while your child spoons fruit into the grapefruit bowls and tops each one with ice cream and mounds of sweet meringue.

GRAPEFRUIT BAKED ALASKA

- Makes 6 servings
- 4 grapefruits
- 6 scoops vanilla ice cream
- 3 egg whites (1/2 cup) at room temperature
- 1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

One hour or more before serving:

1. Prepare grapefruit by cutting evenly in half crosswise. Use a grapefruit knife to cut out fruit sections. Place in a bowl and drain juice (enjoy drinking it for a snack). If grapefruit is rather tart, add some sugar. Cover and refrigerate.

2. Remove and discard membranes in six of the halves to form hollow "bowls," and discard the two remaining grapefruit halves. (You are using 6 halves for the dessert, but the fruit from 4 grapefruits to have ample servings.)

3. Pre-scoop ice cream in six rounds

on a tray lined with wax paper or plastic wrap. Place back in freezer.

15 minutes before serving:

4. Heat oven to 400 degrees. Line baking sheet with parchment paper or foil. Ask one of your kids to spoon the refrigerated grapefruit pieces evenly into the six grapefruit "bowls" and set them on the baking sheet.

5. In a mixing bowl, beat the egg whites until frothy and foamy with an electric mixer set at low speed. Add the cream of tartar. Increase speed until soft peaks form. Start adding the sugar slowly, a tablespoon at a time. Let your kids

watch as the mixture changes and enlarges, and glossy, stiff peaks form.

6. Set an ice-cream round in the center of each fruit-filled bowl. Immediately spoon the glossy, stiff meringue on top and seal edges around the cut grapefruit rim with a butter knife. Bake in the middle of the oven for 5 minutes, or until meringue is golden.

7. Serve immediately on dessert plates.

Donna Erickson creates relationships and community through food and fun. Find more to nourish and delight you at www.donnaerickson.com.

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 By Terry and Kim Kovel

VENETIAN GLASS

Venetian glass has been prized since the 13th century, but it has never been stuck in the past. The Venini glass factory in Murano has been at the forefront of modern design since it was founded in 1921. It also brought in talent from other parts of Europe.

In 1936, Paolo Venini hired the company's first freelance designer, Tyra Lundgren. She was also the first woman to design for the company. Like many modern designers, Lundgren worked in several media, including ceramics and textiles.

By the time Paolo Venini met her, she had years of experience designing glassware for major companies. She worked at the famous Moser factory in Karlsbad, known for its heavily enameled pieces and later experimental glass, in the 1920s.

Her designs for Venini rendered forms from the natural world, like birds, fish, leaves and flowers, in the clean, abstract



Venetian glass factories brought modern style and international influence to their products. This leaf-shaped bowl made by Venini was the work of Swedish designer Tyra Lundgren.

lines of modernism. They are some of her most enduring works. This leaf-shaped dish by Venini, which sold for \$756 at a Wright auction, was made in 1995 from a design Lundgren created in 1938.

Q: My brass spyglass has been in my family for years, and I was wondering if there was anything you might be able to tell me about it. If there is a way you might tell me what it would be worth, I would appreciate it. There is a small dent on the end cap.

A: Brass spyglasses were made throughout the 19th century and used for surveying, for nautical purposes and by hobbyists. Most follow similar designs, with three or four draws and a wood or leather grip. Some are marked with the maker's name on the end cap or eyepiece. It is extremely difficult to identify the maker of an unmarked spyglass. There were many makers throughout England, France and the U.S. Brass spyglasses sell for about \$150 to \$300 at auctions.

The dent on yours will probably not affect the value unless it affects its function. Most antique spyglasses and telescopes show signs of wear and age. For more in-

formation, you may want to contact a collector's club like the Antique Telescope Society (antiquetelescopesociety.org) or a science museum in your area. Your library may have books on the history of telescopes or collecting scientific instruments.

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Teddy bear, Shuco, panda, mohair, black and white, yes/no, glass eyes, stitched nose, 13 inches, \$595.

Furniture, chest, painted, blanket, painted, sailor on shore, mermaids, on stand, green paint, door, shaped base, signed, Martha Cahoon, 13 1/2 x 29 1/2 x 18 inches, \$1,455.

For more collecting news, tips and resources, visit www.Kovels.com

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

- | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|
| 1. Center | ___ I ___ | Interfere | ___ E ___ |
| 2. Semi or pickup | ___ U ___ | Racer's path | ___ A ___ |
| 3. Love interest | ___ M ___ | Snowy particle | ___ K ___ |
| 4. Football pass | ___ R ___ | Of the backbone | ___ N ___ |
| 5. Washington's pen | ___ L ___ | Blanket | ___ T ___ |
| 6. Cartoon canary | ___ E ___ | One score | ___ N ___ |
| 7. Actress Symone | ___ N ___ | Composer Maurice | ___ L ___ |
| 8. Actress Day | ___ I ___ | Frat houses | ___ M ___ |
| 9. Human being | ___ E ___ | Preacher | ___ A ___ |
| 10. Humpbacked or Orca | ___ A ___ | Undivided | ___ O ___ |

answers on page 7

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



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• "I purchased a roll of reflective tape to mark our basement stairs. It reflects the light from the open doorway at the top of the stairs, and I can turn the downstairs lights off before heading up. I had some leftover, so I put a strip on my dog's collar. When I let him out at night, I can shine a flashlight and spot him instantly, since the tape is more visible in the night." — V.R. in Pennsylvania

• Tongs lost their clip? Use the rubber band from a bunch of broccoli to hold the ends together in storage.

• "I am an avid craft sewer. One trick I have used that was passed down from my mother is to save the bar soap when it gets to a sliver. Then I use it to trace patterns on cloth. I like it better than chalk. It makes a clear mark that 'sticks.' But it will wash right out when you

are done." — J.W. in Kansas

• Use an old vegetable peeler in the shop to sharpen pencils.

• "Diaper rash hurts. The best medicine, in my opinion, is a little diaper-free time for baby. But there are times when it's not practical to let the little one go about pants-free. When you just can't air-dry an angry baby bottom, you can help dry the skin up with a couple minutes of warm air from a hair dryer." — P.M.

• Wrap the metal end of your paintbrush with masking tape before painting. Then you can peel it off and there's no stuck-on paint.

• Store plastic wrap in the refrigerator or even freezer to keep it from sticking to itself.

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 1800 Pembroke Dr., Suite 300, Orlando, FL 32810.

Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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

- TRIVIA ANSWERS**
1. A hand, and each banana is a finger.
 2. Agent Smith.
 3. The Four Seasons.
 4. Los Angeles.
 5. Marine One.
 6. Missouri.
 7. 1961.
 8. A fear of cooking.
 9. Jupiter.
 10. England.
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- Even Exchange**
 Donna M. Pettman
1. Middle, Meddle
 2. Truck, Track
 3. Flame, Flake
 4. Spiral, Spinal
 5. Quill, Quilt
 6. Tweety, Twenty
 7. Raven, Ravel
 8. Doris, Dorms
 9. Person, Parson
 10. Whale, Whole

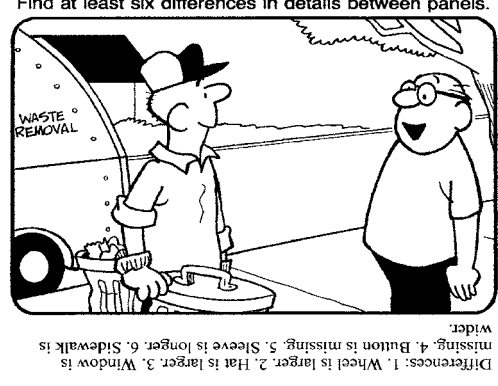
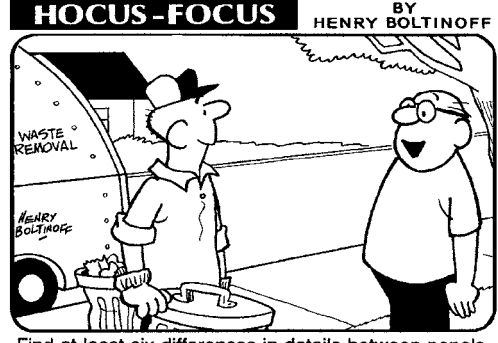
RAIN OR SHINE

King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 26 mins.

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



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Strange BUT TRUE

by Lucie Winborne

• Ever wonder where the term “jaywalker” originated? Back in the day, “jay” was slang for a foolish person. So when pedestrians ignored street signs, to their own peril, they were labeled jaywalkers.

• Relative to their body size, barnacles have the largest sex organs in the

animal kingdom.

• During World War II, Charles Richard Drew, a Black physician, developed blood banks for military personnel. However, when he discovered that the military was separating blood donations according to race, he quit working for the Red Cross.

• Some beaches in the Maldives glow in the dark.

• If you have a daily routine, some scientists believe that your dog can tell when you’re coming home by the amount of your scent that’s left in the house.

• As astronauts spend months traveling to Mars, their eyeballs may change

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Thought for the Day: “I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.”
— Isaac Newton

shape. Some scientists believe this is due to pressure from fluids that won’t drain from their heads, thanks to low gravity.

• Ackwards is an old English dialect word for a creature lying on its back that can’t get up.

• In the popular Roadrunner/Wile E. Coyote cartoons, the latter character shouldn’t have been outwitted by his desperately hunted prey, since coyotes typically outpace roadrunners by a good 23 mph.

• According to a poll of 11,000 Americans, 84% of vegetarians and vegans return to eating meat.

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