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America's 250th: Renewing the Eternal Flame of Liberty

Two hundred and fifty years ago a band of daring men gathered in the hot Philadelphia summer of 1776. They pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to a radical idea. All men are created equal. They are endowed by their Creator with unalienable rights to Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. Those immortal words rang out as a thunderclap against tyranny. Today, on this Semi quincentennial, we pause amid the noise of our fractious age to remember, to rejoice, and to resolve that this American experiment shall not perish from the earth.

I speak as one forged in the fires of optimistic vision, principled clarity, unyielding accountability, and the grounded faith of a son of the Florida heartland who has pastored souls, buried heroes at sacred grounds, and stood for ordered liberty in the public square. America is no accident of history. She is a covenant: blessed by Providence, sustained by the blood of patriots, and guarded by vigilant citizens who refuse to trade freedom for false security.

Look back across the centuries. From Lexington's shot heard round the world to Yorktown's victory, ordinary men and women risked everything. These citizens included farmers, tradesmen, and ministers. They took such risks because they believed government derives its just powers from the consent of the governed. The tree of liberty must occasionally be refreshed with the blood of patriots and tyrants. We stand as the shining city on a hill. We serve as beacon to every soul yearning to breathe free. In our time, we face the same timeless struggle. A bloated administrative state that strangles opportunity. It erodes sovereignty. It forgets that our rights come from God, not from Washington.

We have much to celebrate. In two and a half centuries, this republic has lifted more people from poverty than any other nation. It has defeated more tyrants and it has also unleashed more human flourishing than any civilization in history. Our farmers feed the world. Our innovators continue to push back the frontiers of knowledge. Our military is the greatest force for good ever fielded. It has liberated continents and stands ready still. Millions have crossed oceans not to escape America, but to embrace her. From the citrus groves of Florida to the factories of the Midwest, the American Dream remains alive wherever men and women embrace work, faith, family, and self-reliance.

Yet clouds gather. We have strayed from the Founders' vision of limited government. The concentration of power in unelected hands issues edicts. These edicts bypass the people's representatives, and they burden citizens with impossible regulations. Waste, weaponization of agencies, and the erosion of fiscal sanity threaten the very foundations. Trillions in debt that mortgages our children's future. We have normalized dependency, celebrated division, and too often apologized for our own exceptionalism. A government that spends more than it earns, regulates more than it protects, and divides more than it unites is a government drifting from its moorings.

But despair is not the American way. Our best days are yet to come when we return to first principles. The solution is not more government, but better citizens and wiser leaders. These men and women who understand that the Constitution is not a living document to be twisted. It is a covenant to be kept. We must secure our borders and restore the rule of law. We must slash wasteful spending, empower parents over bureaucracies, protect the unborn, and defend religious liberty. We must recommit to the truth that America is one nation under God.

Here in Florida's heartland, wildflowers bloom on family land passed down through generations. I see the republic's enduring strength. Neighbors help neighbors after storms. Veterans receive honor at sacred ground. Churches preach grace and responsibility. Young people awaken to the wonder of ordered liberty. This is the America worth preserving. It is not the caricature painted by coastal elites. It is the real country of Main Street values, entrepreneurial spirit, and quiet courage.

On this 250th birthday, let us resolve it anew. Teach your children the true story of our founding. Do not give them sanitized myth. Give them the gritty heroism of imperfect people pursuing a more perfect union. Read the Declaration aloud at family tables. Visit battlefields and monuments. Engage in the hard work of self-government. Run for local office and speak truth at school boards. Support leaders who wield the hatchet against waste and inefficiency. Lift up the principles that make us great. Reject cynicism. Embrace the discipline of faith, work, and vigilance.

Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. Every soul who has stood at a graveside knows that liberty's cost is measured in sacrifice and renewed daily in resolve.

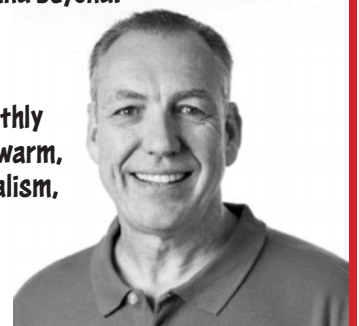
America, two hundred fifty years young: You are still the last best hope of earth. Let us, on this milestone, rededicate ourselves. We do not dedicate ourselves to perfection. We dedicate ourselves to the pursuit of that more perfect union. Let us stand shoulder to shoulder. Let us be faith-filled and freedom-loving. With God's help and our own sturdy hearts, the United States of America will shine brighter still for the next two hundred fifty years and beyond.

The torch is ours to carry. Let it burn bright.

Leland

Leland Shipp is the beloved "Voice of Southern Charm" at The Peddler's Post, where his monthly articles inspire unity, humor, and community pride across Citrus & Hernando counties. His warm, relatable voice and insightful commentary have made him a cherished fixture in local journalism, championing the values that make his region truly special. Believe it or not, he is also an accomplished author of psychological thrillers and horror.

Check out his work at: www.lelandshipp.com



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**July
3rd**

Join us for Patriotic Evening, Inverness' premier Independence Day celebration and a special community gathering in honor of America's 250th Anniversary. This free, family-friendly event brings residents and visitors together for a full day of freedom, hometown pride, live entertainment, food vendors, activities, and a spectacular fireworks display over Lake Henderson. The evening concludes with fireworks over Lake Henderson at 9:15 PM. Location: 268 N Apopka Ave, Inverness. Event Schedule 3-4:30 PM - Small Town Slam Wrestling at the Depot Pavilion, 5:30 PM - Nuthin' Fancy: A Tribute to Lynyrd Skynyrd, 7:45 PM - Hayden Coffman, 9:15 PM - Fireworks over Lake Henderson

4th

Hernando County's. Salute to America 250 at Sand Hill Scout Reservation located at 11210 Cortez Blvd, Brooksville, FL from 4:00 PM -- 10:00 PM. Join us for a historic Independence Day celebration as we honor the 250th Anniversary of the United States! Hernando County is going big for the Semiquincentennial. Bring the whole family to the Sand Hill Scout Reservation for an unforgettable day of patriotism, community, and entertainment. Admission: FREE Admission & FREE Parking! --Family Fun & Attractions-Explore our themed zones designed for all ages, Shop local vendors and artisans. Visit Heritage Hub Memorial Displays, enjoy Live Music & Entertainment and Stick around until the sun goes down for a breathtaking finish! We are lighting up the sky with a Grand Finale Fireworks & Drone Show.

4th

Join the City of Crystal River for a 4th of July Celebration at Kings Bay Park in Downtown Crystal River. General Admission (Free): Live Music: Performances by headliner Midnight Sun featuring Sada Davidson and local favorite TJ Brown! Kids Zone: A fun area for kids with games and activities brought to you by Seven Rivers Christian School! Food Trucks & Vendors: A variety of food and unique vendor offerings! Fireworks Display: A spectacular fireworks show at 9 PM, weather permitting! Festivities start at 4:00 PM.

3rd, 4th, 5th

Sons of the American Revolution, Withlacoochee Chapter -no meeting this month, but the George Washington Tent Experience will be at Hernando Fairgrounds July 4th Celebration from July 3-5. All are welcome to enjoy the full size replica of the GW Tent with costumed guides and historical interpreters. If you think you may have a Revolutionary Era ancestor or bloodline relative in the SAR or DAR, join us to learn how we can help you apply for membership. We have extensive programs in support of educating students, supporting veterans, scouting, JROTC, and more. If interested, contact dhitchcock@withsar.org. Also visit withsar.org and gwtent.org.

5th

Patriotic Family Fun Day brought to you by Dade Battlefield Society! Join us as we celebrate both our Nation and our park's birthdays with on-going old-fashioned games and relays, music and food. Game competitions start at 5 p.m. and pet parade at 6 p.m.. Event included with your park entrance fee of \$3/vehicle (or Florida State Parks Annual Pass). Location 7200 Battlefield Parkway, Bushnell, FL event from 3-7pm.

11th

Back to School Bash at Joy & Praise Fellowship located at 6670 N Lecanto Hwy from 10am-1pm! Bring your friends and family for an afternoon of fun, laughter, and a Back To School Celebration! There will be face painting, games, food, raffle prizes and giveaways galore! We also will be providing school physicals and free hair cuts.

22nd

Floral City Heritage Museum and Country Store presents "Secrets of the Museum from 2-3 pm at the Floral City Library located at 8360 E Orange Ave, Floral City. Learn the stories behind the exhibits at the Floral City Heritage Museum from the Museum Director himself, the one and only Tom Ritchie!

24th

America's 250th birthday Celebration continues with Comedy Night at The Valerie. Headlining our show is Rauce Padgett - 4-time winner of the Orlando Weekly Comedian of the Year. He'll be joined by Mariza Brussolo and Matt Hileman. Tickets available online at <https://valerietheatre.ludus.com/> Event is at 7pm located at 207 Courthouse Sq, Inverness,

**August
1st & 2nd**

The Citrus Community Concert Choir invites everyone to their summer program entitled, "Westward Ho!" This musical travelogue will take you to rolling rivers and lonely prairies. You'll hear the howls of Montana coyotes, the whispering desert winds, and even a train whistle. Follow along on dusty cowboy trails, see the yellow rose of Texas, and even peek in at an old fashioned barn dance. Saddle up your trusty pony, put on your best western duds, and join us for a yee haw good time CCCC will be making presentations of our annual scholarship awards at both venues. Concerts are Saturday, August 1st, at Hope Lutheran Church in Citrus Springs, and Sunday, August 2nd, at First Presbyterian in Inverness. Both begin at 3:00 and admission is \$12 at the door. Students are admitted free. Please see our website www.citruschoir.com for more information.

**The ongoing Community Events were moved online. You can find all the ongoing events in Citrus and Hernando County on our website at:
<https://peddlers-post.com/community-calendar/>**

The online Community Calendar is available for all local events found in Citrus & Hernando Counties. To have a mention of your event published in the paper your event must be FREE to the public or the proceeds of your event must go to a local Not-for-Profit or Church. Space is available on a First Come First Served basis.



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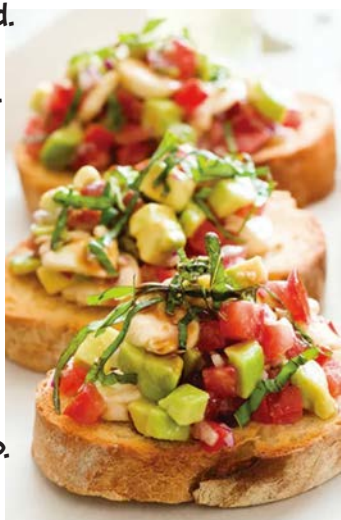
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K	Y	A	I	S	Y	N	R	F	T	E	R	X	B	I	I	P	A	F	C
R	S	U	A	M	C	E	H	G	A	E	P	D	G	M	T	Y	T	M	X
I	W	I	F	D	W	I	A	H	P	S	R	H	C	S	G	D	I	D	H
T	I	R	E	O	L	M	N	L	E	A	T	N	O	R	O	P	L	D	P
R	N	U	L	K	N	O	N	C	O	Y	L	D	O	G	U	C	S	R	P
A	G	F	W	F	H	A	O	W	I	Y	W	U	E	Y	T	W	I	N	C
I	S	N	T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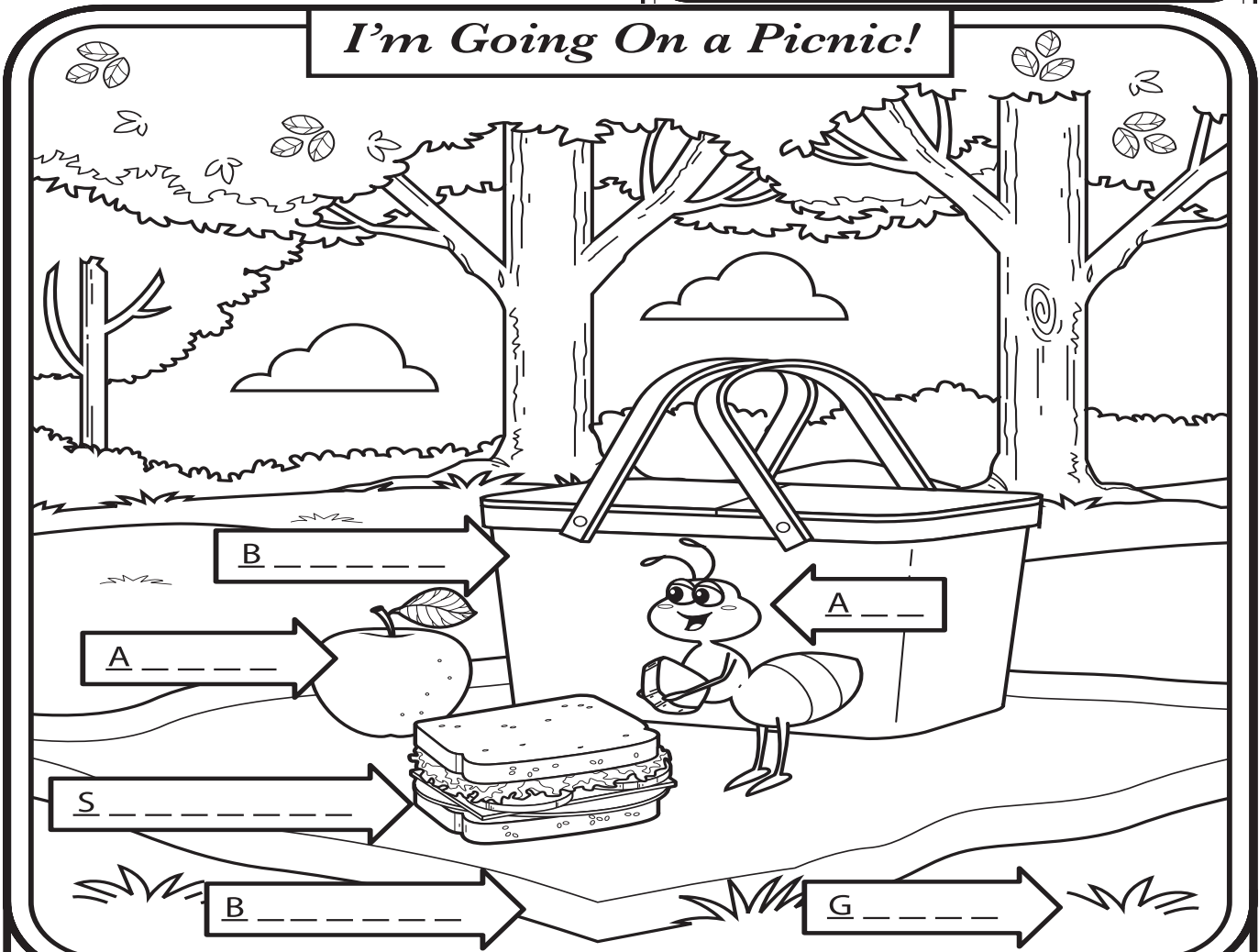
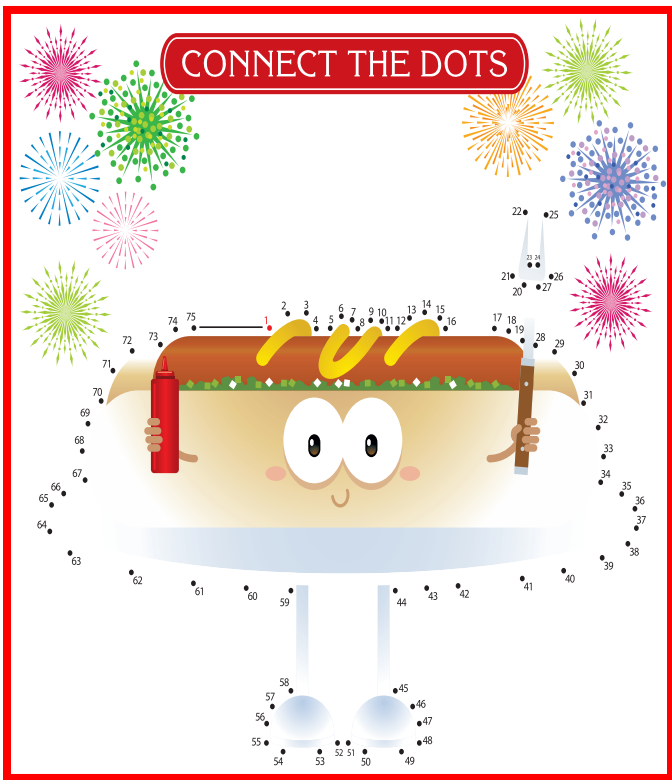
WORDS

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COMMUNITY
FITNESS
FLOWERS
GARDEN
GRASS
HIKING
LEISURE
NATURE
PARK
PATHWAYS
PICNIC
PLAYGROUND
RELAXATION
SOCIAL
SPORTS
SUNLIGHT
SWINGS
TRAIL
TREES
WELLNESS
WILDLIFE
YOUTH

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.



Answers:
1. Missing umbrella 2. Missing straps on life vest 3. Buoy in water
4. Older girl's hairstyle is different



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- Take a few slow, deep breaths.
- Mindfully move your body by doing some gentle stretches, swaying or twists that feel good.
- Take a few more slow, deep breaths.
- Decide how you'd like to show up for the rest of the day, then lead with intention!




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Why it pays to take time off from work

Paid time off is a perk offered by most employers that enables workers to enjoy time away from work while still getting paid. Although the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics says approximately 90 percent of private industry receives paid time off, a Glassdoor study found only 23 percent of Americans take all of their available vacation time. And of those who took vacation, 54 percent reported working while away.

The pressures of deadlines, demanding workplaces and the need to get ahead can lead to a lot of unused vacation time. This can be a mistake, as there are many benefits to taking time away from work.

- Recharge your batteries. Taking time off from work enables you to avoid mental and physical burnout. Psychology Today says you may gain new perspectives on workplace stressors and put plans in place to mitigate stress while on vacation.

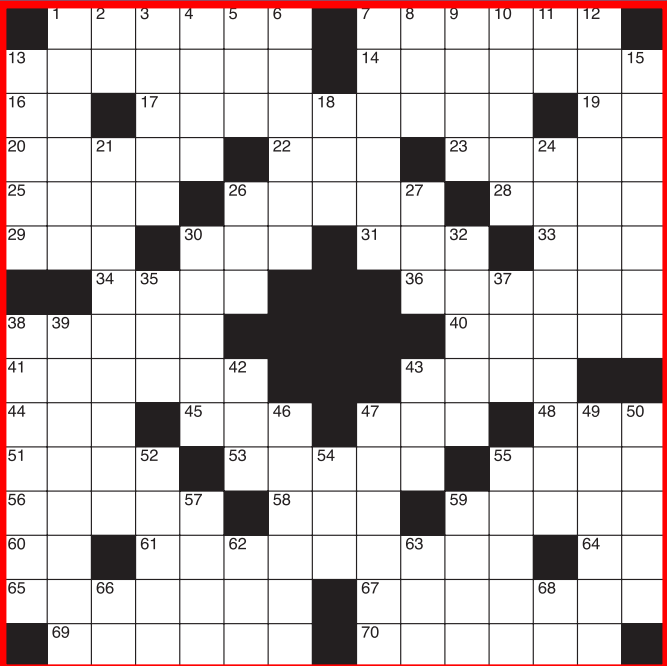
- Fuel creativity. Downtime activates creative thinking, which can spark innovation and more. Studies from Stanford and the University of California have shown people are 60 percent more creative after walking or taking short breaks compared to those who are at their desks all the time. Vacations can expand mental horizons.

- Increase productivity. Even though it sounds counterintuitive, working less can lead to getting more done. Companies that encourage time off often see higher engagement, increased innovation and lower burnout rates.

- Increase self-awareness of your value. Apart from avoiding burnout and being more productive, an important reason to take time off is because you've earned it. It is one way to set boundaries with an employer. If you don't take your vacation time, an employer may expect more and more from you.

- Strengthen relationships. When you're always in a work-inspired go, go, go mindset, it is easy to lose sight of what really matters. Taking time off enables you to connect with loved ones and engage in activities that bring you joy.

Taking advantage of paid time off from work can improve your mental and physical health and even benefit your career.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Mended
- 7. Hymns
- 13. Commercial transport of goods
- 14. Poked holes in the ground
- 16. They precede C
- 17. Branch of knowledge concerned with wealth
- 19. Larry and Curly's pal
- 20. Injured
- 22. Popular type of dance
- 23. Moon crater
- 25. American state
- 26. Places to lock valuables
- 28. Stalk that supports the capsule
- 29. Keyboard key
- 30. '___ death do us part
- 31. A type of cage
- 33. A place to sleep
- 34. Annual music awards show
- 36. Made over

CLUES DOWN

- 38. Hard, stony substance
- 40. Incantations
- 41. Long-legged, wading bird
- 43. Breathe noisily
- 44. Congressman
- 45. Rip off
- 47. Golf score
- 48. Popular pickup truck
- 51. Where infants sleep
- 53. Music term
- 55. Small opening in a surface
- 56. Musical term meaning "very"
- 58. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 59. Treats with powder
- 60. Email subject line feature
- 61. A British lawyer
- 64. Expression of laughter
- 65. Farmer's calendar
- 67. Seeds used as food
- 69. Eurasian shrubs
- 70. Periods of inactivity

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Hard things to kick
- 2. Collective of countries
- 3. Letter of Hebrew alphabet
- 4. One-time Alabama running back Eddie
- 5. One's sense of self-esteem
- 6. Of the teeth
- 7. Treat with care
- 8. Type of whale
- 9. Curved structure
- 10. Emits coherent radiation
- 11. One of the Gospels (abbr.)
- 12. Smallest interval in western music
- 13. Netherlands seat of government
- 15. Gives to charitably
- 18. Lout
- 21. Pastas
- 24. Release from restrictions
- 26. Female sibling
- 27. Title of respect

CLUES DOWN

- 30. Silver coins
- 32. Region in India
- 35. Partner to cheese
- 37. Dark or dusky
- 38. Pacific Northwest tree
- 39. Exaggerate
- 42. Toddler
- 43. Touch lightly
- 46. Fundamentals
- 47. Jeopardies
- 49. Curved structures
- 50. Isolated, flat-topped hills
- 52. Forming the bottom layer
- 54. Reciprocal of sine
- 55. Genus of Old World birds
- 57. New York college
- 59. Cloak
- 62. Kawhi Leonard's team (abbr.)
- 63. Vietnamese offensive
- 66. "The Great Lakes State"
- 68. "___, myself and I"

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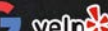
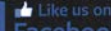
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JULY DAYS PAST

- July 1st 1863 Battle of Gettysburg begins in Pennsylvania, Union forces halt Confederate General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia
- July 2nd 1843 An alligator falls from the sky during a thunderstorm in Charleston, South Carolina
- July 3rd 1886 First New-York Tribune printed using the first commercial Linotype machine
- July 4th 1776 According to popular legend the Liberty Bell rings for the Second Continental Congress
- July 5th 1898 Lizzie Arlington becomes first woman to play professional men's baseball when she pitches 9th inning for the Reading Coal Heavers against the Allentown Peanuts
- July 6th 1776 American Declaration of Independence announced on front page of "PA Evening Gazette"
- July 7th 1456 A retrial verdict acquits Joan of Arc of heresy 25 years after her death
- July 8th 1778 George Washington headquarters at West Point for his Continental Army
- July 9th 1800 Mt. Vernon Gardens becomes site of first summer theater in US
- July 10th 1796 Carl Friedrich Gauss discovers that every positive integer is representable as a sum of at most three triangular numbers
- July 11th 1804 Vice President of the United States Aaron Burr mortally wounds former Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton in a pistol duel
- July 12th 1774 Citizens of Carlisle, Pennsylvania, pass a symbolic declaration of independence
- July 13th 1832 Source of Mississippi River discovered by American geographer Henry Schoolcraft
- July 14th 1870 The United States Congress grants Mary Todd Lincoln a life pension in the amount of \$3,000 a year
- July 15th 1870 Georgia, the last Confederate state, is readmitted to the United States
- July 16th 1769 Father Junipero Serra founds Mission San Diego the 1st mission in California
- July 17th 1867 1st US dental school, Harvard School of Dental Medicine, established
- July 18th 1955 1st electric power generated from atomic energy sold commercially
- July 19th 1692 Five more people - Rebecca Nurse, Susannah Martin, Elizabeth How, Sarah Good, and Sarah Wildes - hanged for allegedly practicing witchcraft as a result of the Salem witch trials in Massachusetts Bay Colony
- July 20th 1969 NASA's Apollo 11 lunar module, carrying Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin, lands on the surface of the Moon. Seven hours later, Armstrong becomes the first person to step on the moon at 10:56 pm EDT
- July 21st 1846 Mormons found 1st English settlement in California (San Joaquin Valley)
- July 22nd 1916 A bomb explodes during a Preparedness Day parade in San Francisco killing 10
- July 23rd 1829 William Austin Burt patents America's first typewriter, the typographer
- July 24th 1799 William Clark is willed the enslaved man York, who goes on to accompany him and play an important role in the Lewis and Clark Expedition
- July 25th 1775 Maryland issues currency depicting George III the trampling Magna Carta
- July 26th 1775 US Continental Congress creates United States Post Office (U.S.P.O.) in Philadelphia
- July 27th 1837 US Mint opens in Charlotte, North Carolina
- July 28th 1932 "White Zombie," the first feature-length zombie film is released in the US
- July 29th 1773 First schoolhouse west of the Allegheny Mountains is completed in Ohio
- July 30th 1932 X Summer Olympic Games open in Los Angeles, California
- July 31st 1809 First practical US railroad track, made of wood and designed for horse-drawn cars, is laid in Philadelphia

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The Nature Coast provides incredible natural resources, diverse experiences, and indescribable beauty to all who live here and visit here. Many relocate from large metropolitan areas due to those very characteristics. They breathe a sigh of relief when experiencing the clear skies, light traffic, and the peaceful silence. Many have lived here for years because they cherish the rural, natural beauty of Citrus County. Sadly, far too many folks take this for granted. How do we protect what we value? We all must understand what impacts the Nature Coast in order to make sound decisions and communicate those decisions to our county leadership.

At this time a proposal is under final consideration for rezoning 813 acres near the Holder Industrial Park, adding that land to the existing 500 acres. The intention of this rezoning to heavy industrial is to build a data center. Most people know very little about the impact of a data center on a community. The information contained in this article will increase your knowledge and awareness. Let's examine 4 specific impacts as well as the actions that many citizens are taking to stop this effort.

First and most notable to the residents of Citrus County is the impact on our aquifer and water availability. Everyone is acutely aware of our current water shortage. Daily life is greatly restricted. Building a data system, no matter how it is cooled, will use minimally thousands of gallons of water per day and potentially millions. However, there is also the impact of clearing 1300+ acres, covering it with concrete, thus removing the ability of the ground to absorb water back into the aquifer.

These challenges to our aquifer are well documented, but here are additional facts. The increasing withdrawal of water for new residential developments has outstripped the natural replenishment of the aquifer to the point that available water is now down to 17%, according to Bruce Kaster who monitors the agencies producing these statistics. That figure alone should be enough for all of our County Commissioners to say NO to any rezoning. In addition, as the freshwater pressure in the aquifer reduces, seawater migrates inland, contaminating the fresh water supply. Finally deep well injection is used as a means for disposal of wastewater. That injection is putting contaminated water (such as wastewater from data centers) into the same aquifer from which we draw our drinking water.

Second is the power demand. According to the proposal this data center would require the equivalent power needed for tens of thousands of homes. This places an enormous strain on Duke Energy as well as other utilities, requiring new high voltage lines, new transmission lines and possibly new generators in order to meet demand capacity. All of these expenses for expansion will most likely be leveraged across the customer base.

Doug Cliche, who designs and builds large scale data systems and facilities, shared facts about power for data centers. A hyperscale AI data center requires voltages ranging from 240 volts up to 35,000 volts. It can require a dedicated electrical substation covering five to twenty acres, miles of cabling, industrial chillers, diesel backup generators, and a continuous water supply for cooling, basically the electrical equivalent of what it takes to power a small city -- in perpetuity.

"This is not a building," Cliche says. "This is permanent electrical infrastructure." Let that sink in -- once built it has forever altered Citrus County.

Third is the noise and light pollution that results from 24/7 operation. The low frequency noise travels farther than perceived. It penetrates walls and structures more easily than high frequency noise. This level of noise is associated with sleep disruption, stress, and other health effects at prolonged exposures. The light emitted by the center, again 24/7 for security purposes, will also have an unending impact on our night skies.

Karen Baldwin, a former teacher, has documented the consequences of data centers across the country. Citing multiple studies she shared alarming statistics on respiratory, cardiac and mental health in communities in which data centers were established. The long term health risks of proximity to a data center have yet to be determined even though present day impacts are already on record. Finally the 24/7 light and noise pollution disrupts wildlife habitats including bird migration, bat populations, and sea turtle navigation to name a few. She shared this quote from a resident of Loudon County, VA, otherwise known as Data Center Alley: "There are no birds here anymore. The constant hum of the data centers

"The earth dries up and withers... the earth is defiled by its people; they have disobeyed the laws, violated the statutes and broken the everlasting covenant." Isaiah 24:4-5

“The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you reside in my land as foreigners and strangers.” Leviticus 25:23

has driven away wildlife.”

Fourth is the permanent change to the Nature Coast itself. Think about the neighborhoods and parks that will be impacted by this industrial rezoning. Four schools and 30,000 residents are within a 5 mile radius of the proposed Holder Industrial site. It is also close to several wildlife management areas, a nature preserve, and Hernando and Apopka lakes. The Nature Coast will not only be impacted by the depletion of its natural resources, but the landscape itself will be permanently altered. No longer will quiet nights and star-filled skies welcome us. No longer will our wonderful tree canopy protect our wildlife and the ground itself.

The growing urgency to protect the Nature Coast has activated a growing segment of our population. A number of citizens have proclaimed NO to the potential of a data center in Citrus County. Over 200 citizens of all ages attended a powerful community townhall on May 23, 2026 at the Hernando Old Schoolhouse organized by the No Data Center Citrus citizen-led organization. The attendees gained a better understanding of the issues and learned what must be done to protect our precious resource, the Nature Coast. Visit the website <https://nodatacentercitrus.org> to view the entire meeting on video and more importantly to submit letters to the Commissioners and the Planning and Development Commission.

Your action is needed. Over 6400 people have signed the online petitions protesting the rezoning and any attempt to build a data center in Citrus County.

If you have not signed the petition, please go to the website above and add your voice to the thousands who have spoken. Most importantly, attend the critical BOCC meeting on July 14, 2026, when the final vote is scheduled to take place. **Your voice matters!**

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July 1, 2026 9am: Citrus Springs Advisory Council
Citrus Springs Community Center 1570 W. Citrus Springs Blvd.
July 2, 2026 9am: Planning and Development Commission
Lecanto Government Building 3600 W Sovereign Path RM166
July 8, 2026 9am: Tourist Development Council
Lecanto Government building 3600 W Sovereign Path RM166
July 8, 2026 10am: Beverly Hills Advisory Council
Community Building One Civic Circle
July 9, 2026 3:30pm: Veterans Services Advisory Board
Citrus County Resources Center 2804 Marc Knighton Court
July 14, 2026 1pm: BOCC Regular Meeting
Citrus County Courthouse 110 N Apopka Avenue Room 100
July 15, 2026 9am: Special Magistrate-Code Compliance
Citrus County Courthouse 110 N Apopka Avenue Room 100
July 15, 2026 5pm: Affordable Housing Advisory Committee
Citrus County Res. Center 2804 Marc Knighton Court suite B
July 16, 2026 9am: Planning and Development Commission
Lecanto Government Building 3600 W Sovereign Path RM 166
July 22, 2026 8:45am: Fire Svc. Preliminary Budget Hearing
Citrus County Courthouse 110 N Apopka Avenue Room 100
July 22, 2026 9am: BOCC Preliminary Budget Meeting
Citrus County Courthouse 110 N Apopka Avenue Room 100
July 28, 2026 1pm: BOCC Regular Meeting
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July 7, 2026 9am:
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July 13, 2026 9am
Planning & Zoning Commission Regular Meeting
July 14, 2026 9am
BOCC Regular Meeting
July 28, 2026 9am
BOCC Regular Meeting
July 30, 2026
BOCC Special Budget Meeting
All Above Meeting will be held at:
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John Law Ayers Commission Chambers (Room 160)
20 N. Main Street, Brooksville
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and are typically available before the meeting

No Data Centers Of Hernando County, FL Facebook Group:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1555788379236100>

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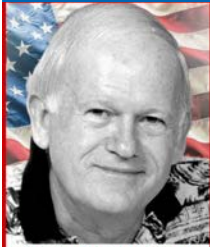
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"BUT HE SAID TO ME, 'MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR YOU, FOR MY POWER IS MADE PERFECT IN WEAKNESS.' THEREFORE I WILL BOAST ALL THE MORE GLADLY ABOUT MY WEAKNESSES, SO THAT CHRIST'S POWER MAY REST ON ME."

2 CORINTHIANS 12:9

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

WORDS

- BACKSTROKE
- BEACH
- BREASTSTROKE
- BREATH
- BUTTERFLY
- CHLORINE
- DEPTH
- DIVING
- ENDURANCE
- FLOATING
- FREESTYLE
- GOGGLES
- LANES
- LAPS
- LIFEGUARD
- OCEAN
- POOL
- SPLASH
- STROKES
- SUNSCREEN
- SWIMSUIT
- TOWEL
- TRAINING
- WATER

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

I POST A LOT OF FUN STUFF IN HERE FOR ONE REASON... SO THAT YOU MIGHT FORGET ABOUT YOUR PROBLEMS AND LAUGH, OR AT LEAST SMILE, FOR A MOMENT OR TWO. THAT IS WHAT MAKES ME HAPPY.



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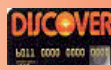
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Notable events in colonial America in 1776

The year the United States came to be was an interesting time to be alive, particularly for those living in colonial America. The American Revolutionary War began in 1776, and much of the year was marked by events stemming from that conflict. Below are some of the more notable events to take place during a year that has come to symbolize so much to generations of Americans.

- Thomas Paine publishes his 47-page pamphlet *Common Sense* in Philadelphia on January 10. Initially published anonymously, the pamphlet is considered a watershed moment in American history, as Paine's easily digestible writing style appealed to the masses, helping promote his arguments that encouraged common people to fight for an egalitarian government.
- The Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge takes place near Wilmington, North Carolina on February 27. The battle is sparked when loyalists, after storming across a bridge over Moore's Creek, attack a group of men they believe to be rebels. Though the engagement was brief, two loyalist leaders are killed, another is captured and the force is scattered. The failed attempt later complicated efforts to recruit loyalists in the area to fight.
- The Fifth Virginia Convention is held in Williamsburg between May 6 and July 5. The meeting of the Patriot legislature of Virginia ultimately leads to the declaration of Virginia as an independent state and the production of the Virginia Declaration of Rights, which asserts the state's right to reform or abolish any form of government it deems inadequate.
- Thomas Hickey becomes an early casualty of the burgeoning conflict between the colonies and England when the Irish-born soldier is the first to be executed by the Continental Army for "mutiny, sedition, and treachery" on June 28 in New York City. Hickey had been part of a protective detail for General George Washington but was briefly jailed for passing counterfeit money. During that brief

incarceration, Hickey told a fellow prisoner he was part of a conspiracy, and reports ultimately indicated he might have been part of a plot to assassinate General Washington, which proved enough to warrant his execution.

- An uptick incidents of violence between Native Americans and settlers in Kentucky was a ripple effect of the American Revolutionary War, and that increase in aggression was behind the capture of Jemima Boone and the Callaway girls on July 14. Days later Daniel Boone led a successful attempt to rescue his daughter and Elizabeth and Frances Callaway, who were the children of Colonel Richard Callaway, one of the first white settlers in Kentucky. A fictionalized version of the incident was included in James Fennimore Cooper's novel *The Last of the Mohicans*.
- The Great Fire of New York destroys as much as 25 percent of all buildings in New York City as it burns through areas in lower Manhattan on September 20 and 21. The fire broke out shortly after British forces began occupying the city. While each side accused the other of arson in the aftermath of the fire, historians dispute such assertions, noting the fire likely started with burning rooftop debris before windy conditions spread the conflagration to surrounding buildings.



"PEOPLE PRAY FOR THE CAKE. THEN GOD GIVES THEM THE BATTER, EGGS, OIL, ICING, PAN, AN OVEN, THEY GET FRUSTRATED AND LEAVE THE KITCHEN." LET THAT SINK IN. SOMETIMES YOU HAVE EVERYTHING RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU, BUT HOW BADLY DO YOU WANT IT?

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Blueberries make for flavorful additions to cookies, too

Cookies are a versatile treat that can incorporate a wide range of ingredients. There's no rules when it comes to making cookies, which means amateur bakers can take to their kitchens and whip up a batch of these beloved treats with whatever they have on hand in the pantry or refrigerator.

Blueberries might be a go-to ingredient when baking a pie at home, but they also make for a delicious addition to a freshly baked batch of cookies. This recipe for "Butter Cookies With Blueberries" from Lines+Angles is a testament to the versatility of blueberries when it comes to crafting homecooked baked goods.

Butter Cookies With Blueberries (Makes 20 to 24 servings)

- 3/4 cup butter, softened
- 2/3 cup granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons light corn syrup
- 1 pinch salt
- 3 large eggs
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2/3 cup almond meal
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 cup dried blueberries, chopped

1. Preheat the oven to 400 F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a large mixing bowl, cream together the butter, sugar, corn syrup, and salt. Add the eggs one at a time, beating after each addition.
3. Add the flour, baking soda, almond meal, and spices. Stir to form a smooth mixture; fold in the dried blueberries.
4. Spoon the mixture into a piping bag fitted with a round piping tip. Pipe 1-inch rounds onto the baking sheet (or use a teaspoon to place small mounds of the mixture on the sheet.)
5. Bake until golden and set, 10 to 15 minutes.
6. Remove from the oven and carefully transfer the cookies to a cooling rack to finish cooling.



Notable quotes from American presidents

Americans will celebrate the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the United States throughout 2026. Many a notable leader has influenced the country in its 250-year history, and the following are some notable quotes from American presidents over the course of the nation's history.

- "If we can but prevent the government from wasting the labors of the people, under the pretense of taking care of them, they must become happy." Thomas Jefferson, 1802
- "Peace is the best time for improvement and preparation of every kind; it is in peace that our commerce flourishes most, that taxes are most easily paid, and that the revenue is most productive." - James Monroe, 1817
- "Officeholders are the agents of the people, not their masters." - Grover Cleveland, 1886
- "In the history of mankind, many republics have risen, have flourished for a less or greater time, and then have fallen because their citizens lost the power of governing themselves and thereby governing their state; and in no way has this loss of power been so often and so clearly shown as in the tendency to turn the government into a government primarily for the benefit of one class instead of a government for the benefit of the people as a whole." - Theodore Roosevelt, 1903
- "Governments do not make ideals, but ideals make governments." - Calvin Coolidge, 1926
- "No government is perfect. One of the chief virtues of democracy, however, is that its defects are always visible and under democratic processes can be pointed out and corrected." - Harry S. Truman, 1947
- "Mankind must put an end to war - or war will put an end to mankind." - John F. Kennedy, 1961
- "A president's hardest task is not to do what is right, but to know what is right." - Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965
- "American has never been united by blood or birth or soil. We are bound by ideals that move us beyond our back-grounds, lift us above our interests and teach us what it means to be citizens." - George W. Bush, 2001
- "Change will not come if we wait for some other person, or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek." - Barack Obama, 2008 (delivered while campaigning for president in an election Obama ultimately won)

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WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

There are four differences between Picture A and Picture B.



Answers:
1. Extra light in background 2. Missing cell phone 3. Hamburger is changed to a hot dog 4. Clock on wall



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Warning signs of mental health issues

The significance of measures to protect mental health has garnered renewed attention in recent years. As that shift has taken place, measures to safeguard mental health have become vital components of the health and wellness routines of people from all walks of life.

Education is an important component of mental health care. While mental health issues were once stigmatized, education has helped to raise awareness about mental illness and how common it is among people of all ages, countries, and socioeconomic backgrounds. One of the first steps to educate oneself or others about mental health is to learn the warning signs and symptoms that someone might be dealing with mental illness. The National Alliance on Mental Illness notes each illness has its own symptoms, but there are some common indicators that characterize various conditions. According to the NAMI, signs of mental illness in adults and adolescents may include:

- Excessive worrying or fear
- Feeling excessively sad or low
- Confusion when thinking or difficulty concentrating and learning
- Extreme changes in mood, including uncontrollable highs or feelings of euphoria
- Feelings of irritability or anger that are prolonged or strong
- Reluctance to engage with friends and avoidance of social activities
- Difficulty understanding or relating to other people
- Alterations in sleeping habits or feeling tired or lacking energy
- Changes in eating habits, such as increased hunger or lack of appetite
- Changes in sex drive
- Difficulty perceiving reality. These difficulties may be marked by delusions or hallucinations, in which a person experiences and senses things that don't exist in objective reality.
- Inability to perceive changes in one's own feelings, behavior or personality, a lack of insight known as anosognosia
- Excessive consumption of substances like alcohol or drugs

Did you know?

When embarking on a road trip, drivers may want to avoid doing so between late afternoon and early evening. **According to the National Safety Council, evening rush hours, which is generally considered to be between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. on weeknights, is a dangerous time to be on the road due to increased traffic.** But drivers should know that evening rush hour is not the only time when it's dangerous to be on the road, particularly in summer. According to the NSC, fatal crashes peaked between 8 p.m. and 11:59 p.m. in the spring and summer of 2023. That's something road trippers can keep in mind, particularly if they're planning lengthy trips and aspiring to drive as many hours as possible in the hopes of arriving to their destinations as quickly as possible. By avoiding driving between the hours of 4 p.m. and 11:59 p.m., drivers can steer clear of traffic jams and avoid times of day when driving is most dangerous.



- Multiple physical ailments without obvious causes, such as headaches, stomach aches, and vague and ongoing aches and pains
- Thoughts about suicide
- An inability to carry out daily activities or handle daily problems and stress
- An intense fear of weight gain or concern with appearance

Parents should know that even young, school-aged children can experience mental health issues or illness. The symptoms of such conditions in young children may manifest behaviorally, which the NAMI notes occurs because kids are still learning how to identify and talk about their thoughts and emotions. Young children dealing with mental health issues may exhibit these symptoms:

- Changes in school performance
- Excessive worry or anxiety. Children may exhibit these symptoms by fighting to avoid going to bed or school.
- Hyperactive behavior
- Frequent nightmares
- Frequent disobedience or aggression
- Frequent temper tantrums

The World Health Organization estimates that more than one billion people across the globe are living with mental health conditions. More information about mental illness can be found at nami.org.



"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" 2 Timothy 1:7

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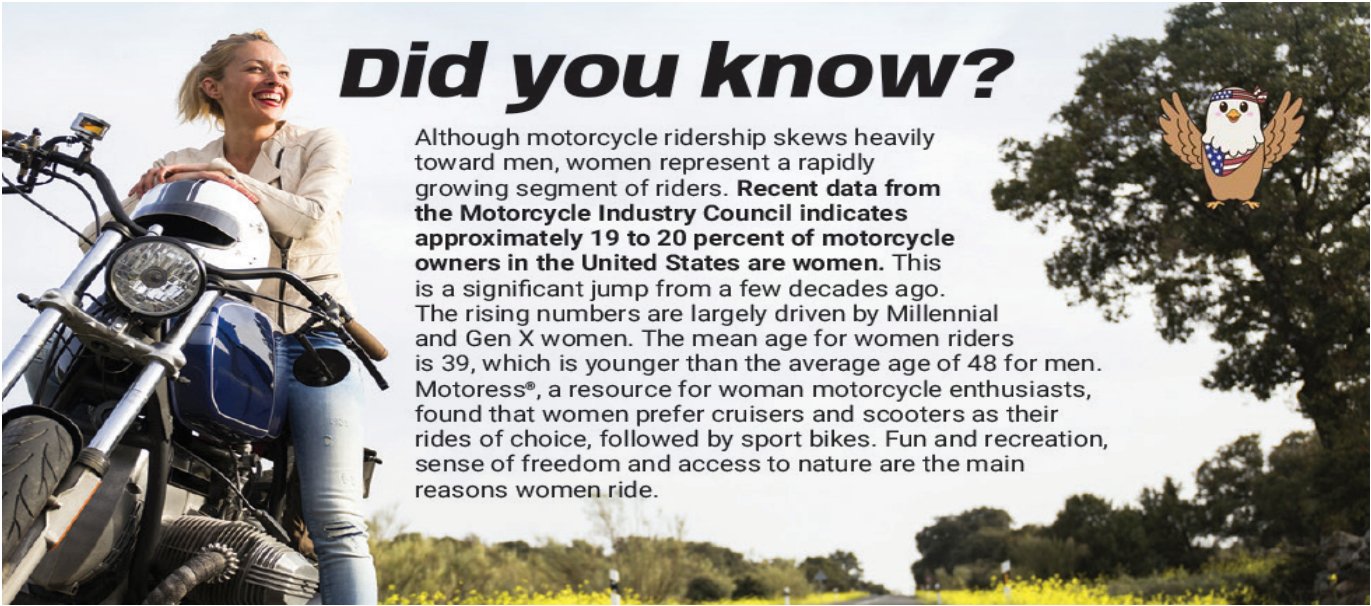
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Did You Know?

Conventional wisdom has long suggested adults should drink eight glasses of water each day, but the Mayo Clinic notes daily water consumption recommendations depend on variables that are unique to each individual. For example, people who engage in activities that make them sweat, like exercise, will need to consume extra water to make up for the loss of fluid. Water consumption needs also may change with the seasons, as people are more likely to lose fluid when temperatures are high and cause people to sweat than they are when temperatures are moderate or low. The Mayo Clinic notes high altitudes can increase the risk for dehydration, which may require people in high altitude locations to drink more water each day. People dealing with certain medical conditions, including bladder or urinary infections, or illnesses that cause fluid loss due to vomiting or diarrhea also may need to consume extra water each day to avoid dehydration.



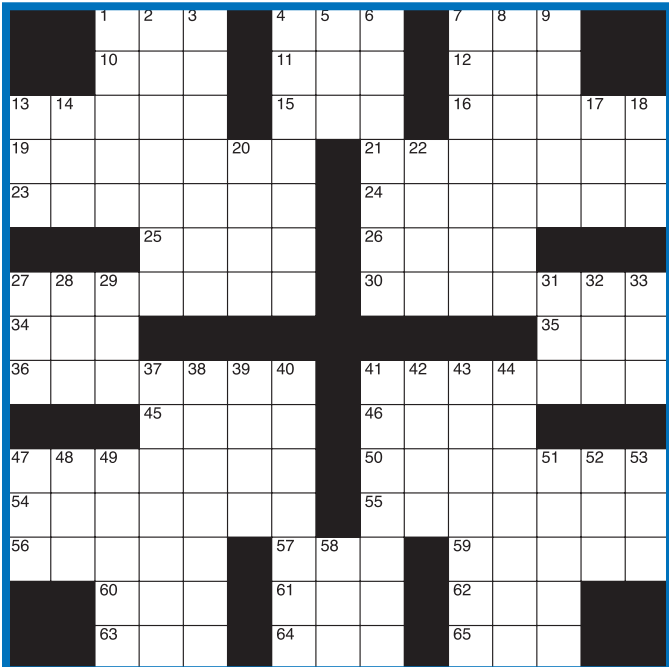
For example, people who engage in activities that make them sweat, like exercise, will need to consume extra water to make up for the loss of fluid.



Did you know?



Although motorcycle ridership skews heavily toward men, women represent a rapidly growing segment of riders. Recent data from the Motorcycle Industry Council indicates approximately 19 to 20 percent of motorcycle owners in the United States are women. This is a significant jump from a few decades ago. The rising numbers are largely driven by Millennial and Gen X women. The mean age for women riders is 39, which is younger than the average age of 48 for men. Motoress®, a resource for woman motorcycle enthusiasts, found that women prefer cruisers and scooters as their rides of choice, followed by sport bikes. Fun and recreation, sense of freedom and access to nature are the main reasons women ride.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Tire pressure measurement

4. Request

7. Clairvoyance

10. 007's creator

11. Adult male

12. God of battle (Scandinavian)

13. Cloths spread over a coffin

15. Breeze through

16. Ladyfish genus

19. We all take them

21. Earl's jurisdiction

23. Members of U.S. Navy

24. Rummy-like card game

25. Affected by injury

26. Member of a Semitic people

27. Withdrew from a union

30. Woman's cloak

34. Spanish river

35. Prohibit
36. Something you can take

41. Dish soap brand

45. Ottoman military commanders

46. Ancient Italian-Greek colony

47. Makes somber

50. Discuss again

54. A tool to inject

55. Support

56. Informal term for money

57. Catch doing something wrong

59. Prehistoric people

60. Large African antelope

61. Vehicle

62. Georgia rockers

63. High resolution microscope

64. Pitching statistic

65. Attempt

CLUES DOWN

1. Indoor plant

2. Marketable

3. Rather

4. Collected

5. A bag-like structure in a plant or animal

6. Irish hip-hop trio

7. Ageless

8. Course requirements

9. Pokes at

13. TV channel

14. They --

17. Cooking material

18. Investment account

20. Iron-containing compound

22. Swiss river

27. Small coin (French)

28. Electronic countermeasures

29. Taxi

31. Helps little firms

32. Unhappy
33. Midway between northeast and east

37. Glowing

38. Item to be addressed

39. An informal body of friends

40. Intrinsic nature of something

41. Neural structures

42. Brews

43. A place for ships

44. One who sings holiday songs

47. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)

48. Scottish town

49. The most worthless parts

51. Sticky

52. Put to work

53. Precursor to the EU

58. Retrospective analysis (abbr.)

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Page 28 - Peddler's Post

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How to support the heartbeat of your neighborhood

Small businesses drive the economic engine and often reflect the character of a local community. When people choose to shop at a local business over a big box retailer, they aren't just making purchases, they're making an investment in their communities.

The United States Chamber of Commerce says small businesses employ nearly half of the American workforce and represent 43.5 percent of America's gross domestic product (GDP). Small businesses are a critical component of the national economic ecosystem and the cities and towns where they are located. Research consistently shows that a far greater percentage of every dollar spent at a local business stays within the community compared to each dollar spent at a big box retailer. Those funds ultimately circulate to schools, essential services and parks. Local businesses also help create jobs.

There are many ways to support local businesses in your area.

- Think local first. Shifting spending habits may require looking to neighborhood stores before clicking on the cart on an e-commerce site. Small shifts like visiting a farmer's market for produce or utilizing a local boutique for unique gifts can create a positive impact.
- Advocate for the business. Social media engagement is a powerful, often free, marketing tool. Anyone can boost the visibility of a business by taking to social media to

spread the word. Tagging businesses in photos, checking in on social media, following accounts and liking posts, and writing positive reviews can encourage others to support local businesses.

- Go with local services. Supporting local businesses goes beyond retail shops. People can support local businesses by hiring a local fitness instructor, accountant, website designer, plumber, and more. Hiring local service providers keeps specialized skills within the community and can result in more personalized service.
- Purchase gift cards. Buying a gift card to a local business allows shoppers to share the experience with another, and potentially create a repeat customer. This is support that a local business can use.

By choosing and supporting local businesses, communities remain vibrant and successful.



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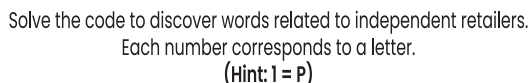
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- Clue: Make money

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People who spend any measurable amount of time outdoors likely have crossed paths with various flying insects that cohabitate in a typical yard. Some of the most ardent pollinators and pest control agents also have the potential to be dangerous if provoked. While most bees, wasps and hornets are content to go about their business, their stingers can make these insects formidable foes, particularly to those who are allergic.

According to The Best Bees Company, there are more than 20,000 known species of bees and more than 100,000 known species of wasps worldwide. Those who don't want to get too up close and personal with stinging insects may not know how to tell the different types apart. Bees, wasps and hornets are distinguished by their behavior, waist and body texture.

Bees: If it has a fuzzy body, it's a bee. Bees tend to be non-aggressive and may be carrying pollen on their backs. They also live in wax hives. You'll likely see bees flitting from one flower to another in the warmer weather. Honeybees will die after one sting, advises PBS, but bumblebees and carpenter bees have smooth stingers that will not get stuck, enabling them to sting again.

Wasps: Wasps are stinging insects which can be social or solitary. Wasps have smooth, shiny bodies and narrow waists. They can be bright black and yellow or black and white. Wasps can sting repeatedly, says The Spruce, but they may not always be aggressive; it depends on the species. Yellowjackets are a type of wasp. They are sensitive to threats and not afraid to use their stingers. Another way to distinguish wasps from bees is that wasps hang their legs down while flying and bees keep them tucked in.

Hornets: Hornets are wasps and tend to be social in nature. They only construct paper nests and can be more aggressive than other types of wasps. The Old Farmer's Almanac says hornets can be highly defensive with more painful stings, and also may be larger and rounder in size than other wasps. In the United States the one true hornet species is the European hornet, which nest in trees.

It's impossible to avoid bees and wasps entirely, but individuals can be mindful of where they are making their nests. As these insects are important to the ecosystem, it's key not to exterminate them haphazardly. If a nest is problematic, it's best to have a professional come and relocate or remove it safely.





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	9		3	1	4	6		
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This Italian comfort food hits the spot

"Comfort food" is an umbrella term that refers to a wide array of dishes. For fans of Italian food, there may be no dish that fits the comfort food mold better than lasagna. Lasagna can be made with a wide array of ingredients, and each iteration of it qualifies as comfort food. That's certainly the case with this recipe for "Lasagna With Zucchini and Meat Sauce" from Lines+Angles.

Lasagna With Zucchini and Meat Sauce
Makes 9 servings

2 large zucchini, rinsed and trimmed
Salt
12 dried lasagna noodles
1 pound ground beef
1 1/2 teaspoons ground black pepper
1 small green bell pepper, rinsed, trimmed and diced
1 onion, peeled and diced
8 ounces tomato paste
15 ounces canned tomato sauce
3 1/2 tablespoons red wine
2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
1 egg, beaten
2 cups low-fat ricotta cheese
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
2 cups grated Parmesan cheese



1. Preheat oven to 325 F. Coat a deep 9 x 13-inch baking pan with nonstick cooking spray.
2. Slice zucchini lengthwise into very thin slices. Sprinkle slices lightly with salt; set aside to drain in a colander.
3. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the noodles and cook until al dente, 8 to 12 minutes. Drain, immerse in cold water to cool and drain again. Lay the noodles in a single layer on a baking sheet and cover with plastic wrap.
4. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, set over medium-high heat, cook and stir the ground beef and black pepper for 5 minutes. Drain excess grease from pan. Add in green pepper and onion; cook and stir until beef is no longer pink. Stir in tomato paste, tomato sauce, wine, basil, and oregano. If sauce is too thick, add a small amount of warm water. Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer sauce for about 20 minutes, stirring frequently.
5. Meanwhile, stir egg, ricotta, and parsley together in a bowl and mix well.
6. To assemble lasagna, spread 1/3 of the meat sauce into the bottom of prepared pan. Then layer 1/3 of the cooked lasagna noodles, 1/3 of the zucchini slices, 1/2 of the ricotta mixture, 1/3 of the mozzarella cheese. Repeat the layers ending with a layer of zucchini followed by a layer of noodles. Spread Parmesan cheese evenly over the top; cover with foil.
7. Bake for 45 minutes. Remove foil; increase oven temperature to 350 F, and bake an additional 15 minutes. Let stand for 5 or 10 minutes before serving.

Tip: This may be assembled a day ahead. Refrigerate until ready to bake.



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Summertime hydration strategies

Summer is a season to spend outdoors soaking up some sun. But all that time outdoors can pose some health risks if people are not careful. The dangers of overexposure to the sun are well-documented. Sunburn is one such threat that can not only lead to discomfort, but also increase a person's risk for skin cancer. But sunburn is easily prevented with the use of sunscreen, and that's not the only summertime threat that's easily avoided.

Dehydration occurs when the body loses more fluids than it takes in. Come the dog days of summer, it's easy to lose fluids when spending time outdoors. Sweating is one way to lose fluid on a hot day, but there are myriad ways to avoid dehydration once the hot weather kicks in.

- Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink water. According to NHS Inform, the national health information service of Scotland, thirst is typically the brain's way of warning individuals that they are dehydrated. So it's unwise to wait until you're thirsty to drink water. A proactive approach can help to prevent dehydration, especially when spending time outdoors on hot days.

- Take breaks for water. A mid-morning coffee break or a mid-afternoon snack break are part of many people's daily routines. You also can incorporate drinking water into your daily routine. When pouring your morning coffee or tea, pour yourself a glass of water as well. When reaching for a mid-afternoon snack, pour yourself another glass of water.

- Keep a water journal. Documenting your daily water intake is one way to overcome forgetfulness in relation to remaining hydrated. Smartphone apps like Water Reminder and Plant Nanny can help people remember to drink water throughout the day. For those who prefer a more traditional approach to journaling, keep a small notebook near your desk or in your pocket when going outdoors so you can always know when your most recent water break occurred.

- Look to foods to stay hydrated. Drinking water isn't the only way to ensure you stay hydrated. Various foods are loaded with water. Henry Ford Health® notes that watermelon, berries, bell peppers, and grapes are water-rich foods that can help you stay hydrated.

Dehydration can creep up on hot summer days and put people in serious jeopardy. That's why it's imperative that people make a concerted effort to hydrate and do not wait until they're thirsty to enjoy a glass of water on a hot summer day.



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Meet Lori coming to us from Spring Hill, FL! When she is not finding hidden objects in the Peddler's Post you can find her on the hunt for Mermaids ("The Mermaid Trail") around Hernando County. She likes everything about the Peddler's Post! Her and her husband have a competition who can find all the differences in the "What's the Difference" puzzles, and she likes all the blessings she finds throughout the pages! She said she was excited to see me bring the bags back and she had to get one and I am glad she did as we enjoyed meeting and had a wonderful conversation.

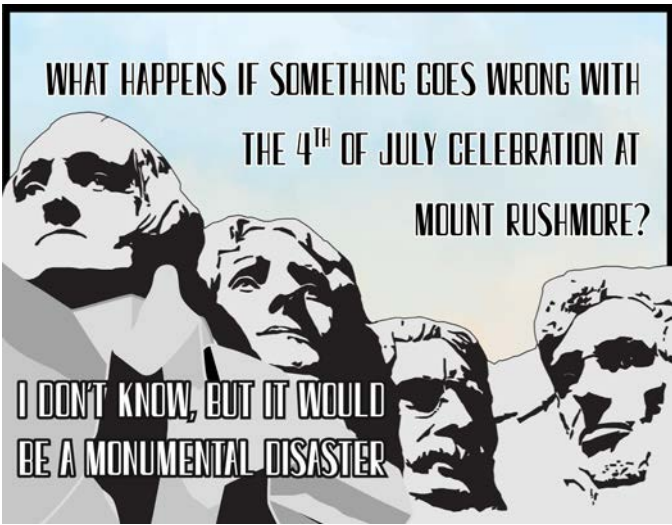


Meet Denise coming to us from Brooksville, FL. She was gracious enough to invite me into her beautiful home where we had a nice chat. She is newer to the area coming up from the Odessa area to join her daughter and be closer to her beloved granddaughter Olivia! Denise likes the thing to do page as it lets her know what is going on in the community, the stories and of course the puzzles. Cool fact is that she is growing a new generation of Peddler's Post fans keeping the love of puzzles alive by sharing the fun with Olivia. When she is not winning cool bags you can find her gardening, making doll clothes, and swimming.



Meet Sue coming to us from Citrus Hills, FL. Sue and her husband came to Citrus County after 17 years in Vero Beach. When she is not reading the Peddler's Post and grabbing Veggie's at Hernando Fresh Market, she enjoys going to her granddaughter's volleyball games and reading recipes. When reading the Peddler's Post, she enjoys reading all the comics and jokes back and forth with her husband Jim, reading the various articles, and checking out all the different advertisers because she likes to support local. We had a nice chat about healthy eating and it was a pleasure to meet both Sue and Jim!





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Safety first at the beach

When the sun is shining and the temperature is warm, a day at the beach can be the perfect balm for whatever ails you. Is it any wonder that so many vacations or day-long excursions revolve around spending time at the shore?

Although a beach excursion can be the ideal way to rest and recharge, individuals should be mindful that there is the potential for some danger. Safety is essential when visiting coastal locations. The following are some safety hazards to keep in mind and how to navigate them.

Rip currents: Rip currents are powerful, channeled currents of water that flow away from the shore. The National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration notes rip currents can occur at any beach. Lifeguards call rip currents "drowning machines" since they are implicated in most water rescues. They are very dangerous for weak or non-swimmers because they can pull people away from the shore rapidly. If a person gets caught in a rip current, it is important to swim parallel to the shore until escaping the current. Only then can the person try to get back to the beach.

Hookworms: There is a reason why companion animals may not be allowed on the beach during the swimming season. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says hookworm is a parasitic infection contracted when larvae in sand or soil contaminated by animal feces burrow into exposed skin. It is common in moist, warm climates. Keeping cats and dogs away from the beach, wearing sandals, and using beach mats or towels when on the sand can help prevent hookworm contraction.

Jellyfish: Jellyfish can be a wonder to behold, but crossing paths with a jellyfish can be a painful experience. The National History Museum says jellyfish have survived for more than 500 million years. These invertebrates are gelatinous and jelly-like, with a curved, bell-shaped body with tentacles hanging down. The tentacles can be covered in stinging cells called cnidocytes. Beach-goers should heed warnings about jellyfish in the water, but also be mindful of ones washed up as they can still sting if the tentacles are wet.

Sand fleas: Despite the word "flea" in the moniker, sand fleas are not insects or parasites. Terminix says they are small, shrimp-like crustaceans. While sand fleas do not seek out people to bite them, certain species can leave

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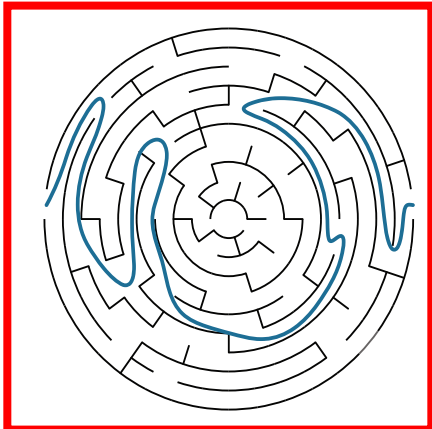
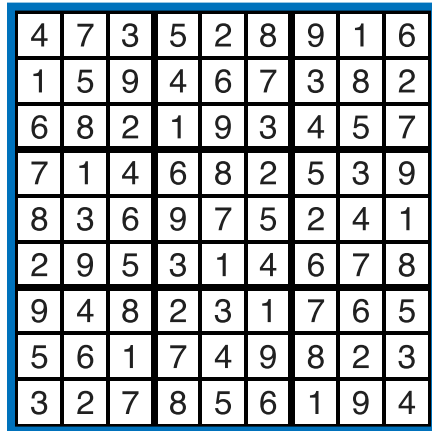
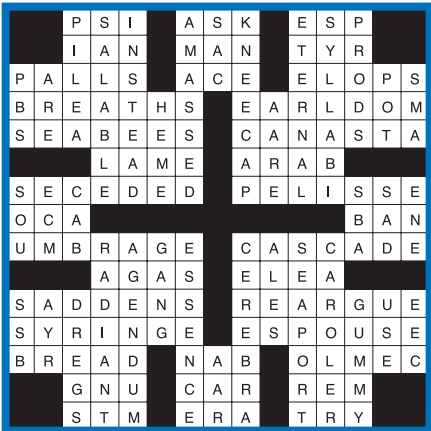
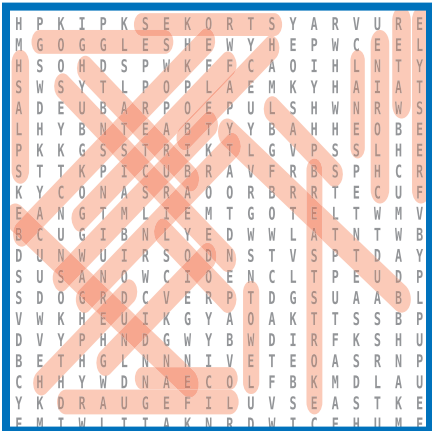
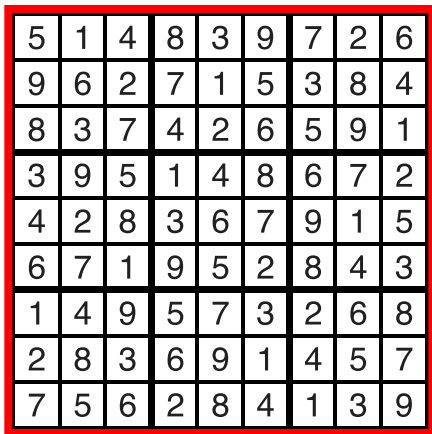
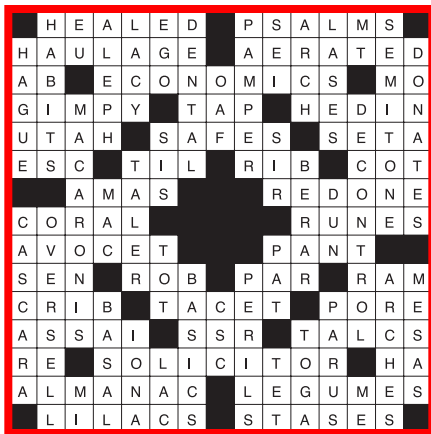


itchy, red welts if they come into prolonged contact with the skin. This may be more pronounced for women or girls when sand fleas become trapped between swimsuits and the skin. Sand fleas are more active during cooler, low-light periods like early morning or evening.

Beach debris: Glass beverage containers should not be brought to the beach, as there is the risk of breakage and shards becoming left behind. Cuts from broken bottles can lead to infection. Beach-goers also need to be mindful of other debris that can wash up on the beach, particularly after strong storms. Unfortunately, medical waste, trash, and drug paraphernalia can wash up on the shore. Wearing sandals or water-safe shoes can protect feet.

A carefree day at the beach is a staple of summertime. However, people must be mindful of potential hazards when enjoying a day at the beach.





THERE WERE 5 HIDDEN "FATHER'S DAY MUGS" IN THE JUNE EDITION!

WE HAD NINE PLAYERS AND 3 WINNERS!

THE MUGS WERE ON PAGES 2, 2, 9, 15, 20, 24, 26, 32, 36!

I think the best thing I ever did in my adult life was start digging deep and asking myself why I am the way I am and do the things the way I do. It takes a ton of work and intentionality, but getting to know yourself on a deeper level will help you thrive.



Did you know?

Many people are familiar with the general guideline that recommends drinking eight to 10 full glasses of water and other beverages a day. But what about hydration and companion animals? Ensuring a dog, cat or other pet is getting enough water is complicated. After all, one cannot force a pet to drink. However, Figo Pet Insurance says, on average, a healthy adult dog needs between one-half and one ounce of fresh water per one pound of body weight, daily. Therefore, a 50-pound dog will require anywhere from 25 to 50 ounces of water a day, or roughly three to eight cups of water. Cats often require less water, but still should have constant access to fresh water. Temperature will impact how much pets need to drink. In hot weather or after exertion, pets will need more water to regulate body temperature. PetMD also says that pets that eat dry food (kibble) may generally drink more water than those who eat wet food, as the latter receive more moisture from their diet than the former. Pet owners should discuss concerns about water intake with veterinarians if something seems amiss. Gently pinching the skin near the pet's shoulder blades can offer a quick assessment of proper hydration. The skin should return to normal immediately. If it doesn't, the pet may be dehydrated. Also, pets who are drinking excessive amounts of water may have an underlying health issue, which also should be promptly addressed by a vet.

Drinking water is essential for good health, especially when warm temperatures increase the risk for dehydration.

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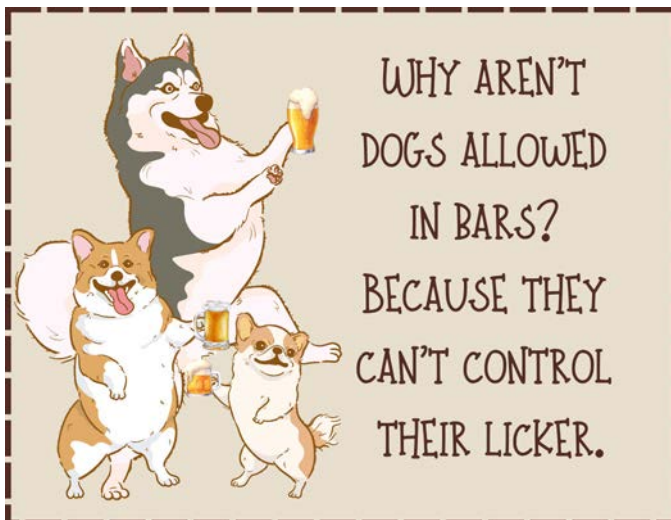
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Gus's Animal Gossip

Tips to keep your pet in the yard

Few can resist the call of the great outdoors, and that includes the family pet. Pets can gain a lot by spending supervised time outdoors, which offers opportunities for exercise and mental stimulation.

While time in the yard can be good for pets, there are some notable dangers pet owners must be aware of. The ASPCATM notes that ticks, blue-green algae, insects like bees, wasps and hornets, and toxic plants are just some of the back-yard hazards that can jeopardize pet health. Of course, there's also the risk that pets wander off when spending time outdoors. No matter how attentive pet owners are, pets may bound off in pursuit of wildlife or simply wander off out of curiosity. Pet owners looking to avoid such scenarios can employ these measures to keep their furry friends in the yard.

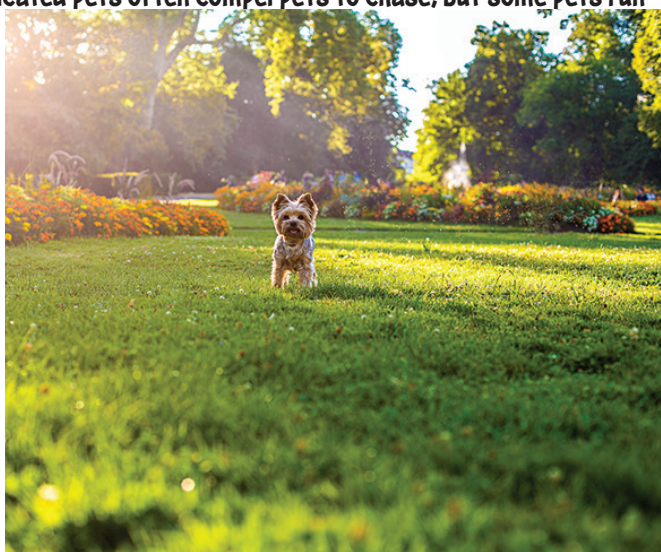
- Spay or neuter the animal. The American Animal Hospital Association notes that intact pets have an innate drive to reproduce. That's true for both male and female pets, and the compulsion to reproduce increases pets' desire to roam in search of a mate. Spaying or neutering removes that hormonal desire, which is one of a handful of reasons to spay and neuter a pet.

- Erect a fence around the property. Fences are sometimes characterized as "great neighbors," and they're also effective at keeping some pets within a yard. Some pet owners opt for invisible fencing, but many animal advocacy organizations note this option can be inhumane. For example, VCA Animal Hospitals notes that some animals may ignore the audible signal that warns pets to remain in the yard, which then leads to the discharge of an electric stimulus similar to a shock. That can be painful to the animal. A traditional, physical fence will not harm the animal, and it will prevent the pet from seeing animals on the other side of the fence that may compel it to chase.

- Protect animals from loud noises. Wildlife and other domesticated pets often compel pets to chase, but some pets run out of fear of loud noises. Pet owners are urged to keep their pets indoors during times when loud noises can be expected. Holidays when fireworks are shot off, mornings when loud lawn mowers or leaf blowers are used, and the sound of thunder all can frighten pets and compel them to flee.

- Reconsider your landscaping. Pets may run when they see wildlife enter the yard, and that wildlife then runs away upon recognition that a pet is on the chase. When choosing plants for your property, pick plants that are unlikely to attract wildlife. In addition, remove bird feeders from the property, as they tend to attract small animals like chipmunks that many pets cannot resist chasing.

A runaway pet is a scenario no pet owner wants to confront. Some simple strategies can greatly reduce the risk a pet will run away when spending time in the yard.



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