



Veterans Day memorial unveiling at So. IL airport

By Mike Mohundro, WSIL
Special to Southern Illinois News

MARION, Ill. (WSIL) -- The Veterans Airport of Southern Illinois is inviting the public

to a special event on Veterans Day.

Next Tuesday, the airport will unveil a veterans memorial sculpture on the flagpole

island in front of the airline terminal. The event will start at 11 a.m. in the terminal lobby with coffee, donuts, and a short presentation.

Following the presentation, attendees will move outside for the unveiling of the sculpture. This event is an opportunity for the community to honor veterans and their service.



VETERANS TRIBUTE ISSUE



Vienna grad Jael Griesbach thrives in the US Navy near Chicago

By Mike Mohundro, WSIL
Special to Southern Illinois News

VIENNA, Ill. (WSIL) -- A Vienna High School graduate is making her mark in the United States Navy. Seaman Jael Griesbach is stationed at Naval Station Great Lakes near Chicago, Illinois.



Griesbach

Griesbach completed Basic Training and is now in Apprentice Technical Training, focusing on electrical systems and schematic diagrams.

"The Navy has been an incredible experience so far. It can be tiring at

times, but also exciting, rewarding, and full of opportunities to grow," Griesbach said.

She expressed how the Navy has taught her about teamwork and leadership, enhancing her resilience.

"I have come to realize just how important my family is, but I have also learned how capable I am of standing on my own," Griesbach said.

Superintendent Dr. Joshua Stafford praised Griesbach's dedication and service. "Seaman Griesbach embodies the spirit of Vienna High School," Stafford said.

Griesbach encourages students interested in the military to be proactive and reach out to resources. She recommends contacting US Navy Recruiters in Paducah.

States with greatest % of U.S. veterans

1. Alaska:
2. Wyoming:
3. Virginia:
4. Maine:
5. Montana:
6. South Carolina:
7. Nevada:
8. New Mexico:
9. South Dakota:
10. Hawaii:

Southern 7 Health Dept. partners with Grandparents for Vaccines Initiative

With measles and whooping cough cases rising to their highest levels in decades—and about 1 in 6 U.S. parents choosing not to vaccinate—Southern 7 Health Department is partnering with a new national group, Grandparents for Vaccines, to help share the importance of immunizations.

Grandparents for Vaccines launched on Grandparents Day and has quickly grown from a few hundred volunteers to thousands nationwide. The group focuses on personal stories rather than policy. Many grandparents remember life before vaccines—when diseases like polio and measles were common and often deadly.

"Grandparents have lived that life. Who better to help us under-

stand it?" said Shawnna Rhine, Southern 7 Community Outreach Coordinator.

The organization's YouTube channel features grandparents sharing their experiences and why they support vaccinations today. Founder Arthur Levin says the movement is about using "memory, trust, and experience to protect the next generation."

Southern 7 also reminds families that it offers Head Start and Early Head Start programs for eligible families in the region, serving children from 6 weeks to age 5.

To learn more or to share a story, visit grandparentsforvaccines.com or contact Shawnna Rhine at 618-634-2297 ext. 971161.

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VETERANS DAY 2025

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on Veterans Day.

A brunch will begin at 9:00 a.m., followed by a formal ceremony at 11:00 a.m. at the main medical center. Veterans, families, and community members are welcome.

Veteran Service Organizations and local partners will take part in the celebration.

The story of “Taps”

The 24-note melancholy bugle call known as “taps” is thought to be a revision of a French bugle signal, called “tattoo,” that notified soldiers to cease an evening’s drinking and return to their garrisons. It was sounded an hour before the final bugle call to end the day by extinguishing fires and lights. The last five measures of the tattoo resemble taps.

The word “taps” is an alteration of the obsolete word “taptoo,” derived from the Dutch “taptoe.” Taptoe was the command — “Tap toe!” — to shut (“toe

to”) the “tap” of a keg. The revision that gave us present-day taps was made during America’s Civil War by Union Gen. Daniel Adams Butterfield, heading a brigade camped at Harrison Landing, Va., near Richmond. Up to that time, the U.S. Army’s infantry call to end the day was the French final call, “L’Extinction des feux.” Gen. Butterfield decided the “lights out”

music was too formal to signal the day’s end. One day in July 1862 he recalled the tattoo music and hummed a version of it to an aide, who

wrote it down in music. Butterfield then asked the brigade bugler, Oliver W. Norton, to play the notes and, after listening, lengthened and shortened them while keeping his original melody.

He ordered Norton to play this new call at the end of each day thereafter, instead of the regulation call. The music was heard and appreciated by other brigades, who asked for copies and adopted this bugle call. It was even adopted by Confederate buglers.

This music was made the official



Army bugle call after the war, but not given the name “taps” until 1874.

The first time taps was played at a military funeral may also have been in Virginia soon after Butterfield composed it. Union Capt. John Tidball, head of an artillery battery, ordered it played for the burial

of a cannoneer killed in action. Not wanting to reveal the battery’s position in the woods to the enemy nearby, Tidball substituted taps for the traditional three rifle volleys fired over the grave. Taps was played at the funeral of

Confederate Gen. Stonewall Jackson 10 months after it

was composed. Army infantry regulations by 1891 required taps to be played at military funeral ceremonies.

Taps now is played by the military at burial and memorial services, to accompany the lowering of the flag and to signal the “lights out” command at day’s end.

A few words about our flag

For more than 200 years, the American flag has been the symbol of our nation’s unity, as well as a source of pride and inspiration for millions of citizens.

Our flag has been a symbol of liberty to the oppressed, it has

been a symbol of hope in times of sorrow and strife, it has been a symbol of freedom to every nation in the world.

In September of 1814, Francis Scott Key was so moved by seeing the Stars and Stripes waving after

the British shelling of Baltimore’s Fort McHenry that he wrote the words to our national anthem The Star Spangled Banner.

It is worth noting that the flag Key saw was the 15 star and 15 stripe U.S. flag. In 1818 a new law specified the

flag should return to 13 stripes, with a new star to be added with each new state admission.

In 1892 the flag inspired Francis Bellamy to write the “Pledge of Allegiance,” our most famous flag salute and patriotic oath.





Happy Veterans Day.

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Thanksgiving weekend travel tips

Thanksgiving is consistently one of the busiest travel holidays of the year. In fact, AAA indicates that, in the United States, it may be the most traveled of all the holidays, with record numbers of both drivers and air travelers. In 2024, nearly 80 million Americans were expected to travel over Thanksgiving weekend. The Wednesday before Thanksgiving is a particularly busy day on the roads, but high volumes continue throughout the weekend.

A high demand for travel during this time of year means individuals wanting to

see friends or family for Thanksgiving should plan accordingly. These tips, courtesy of AAA and the Transportation Safety Administration (TSA), can make Thanksgiving travel go more smoothly.

- Book flights early. If you are able, secure flights early in the day and use personal time off from work to fly in to a destination at the beginning of the week. The propensity for flights to be delayed or canceled increases as the day and week goes on. An early departure may increase the chances of a flight leaving on time. Also, the TSA reports that the Tuesday and Wednesday before

Thanksgiving, as well as the Sunday after, are the busiest days for Thanksgiving air travel. Choosing an alternative day to fly may mean smaller crowds and less stress.

- Consider TSA PreCheck®. TSA PreCheck is a paid program that enables you to get through security lines faster. Interested parties must verify their identities through a third-party service that handles PreCheck applications, and await confirmation of approval. A TSA PreCheck membership lasts for five years. This membership offers consistent time savings at the airport with dedicated PreCheck

lanes, and the benefit of keeping items like laptops and liquids in your bag.

- Consider traveling by train. If Amtrak services your destination, taking the train may be the least stressful way to travel over Thanksgiving. In addition to not having to navigate roadways or sit in traffic, you won't face security screening like you will at the airport. Once on the train, there is Wi-Fi, nice views and efficient travel. Trips booked in advance are more affordable than booking closer to the holiday.
- Pack light. Avoiding the baggage carousel can shave

much time off of travel. Plus, there's no risk of luggage getting diverted or not making it to your final destination. A carry-on bag is the way to go for ease, particularly if you must get on a different flight if the original one is delayed or canceled.

- Service your car. If road travel is planned for Thanksgiving, make sure your car is in good condition for a road trip. Be up-to-date on oil changes, make sure the tires are properly inflated and double-check your emergency preparedness kit prior to leaving. It also may be a good idea to invest in

AAA benefits, which afford extra peace of mind in the event of a breakdown as well as savings on travel-related expenses, such as lodging.

- Pack your patience. In addition to your holiday essentials, it is wise to also pack some patience this Thanksgiving travel season. Leave extra time so you're not racing to your destination and can calmly contend with people also looking to get home for the holidays.

Thanksgiving means turkey and trimmings, but also millions of people traveling to give thanks alongside those they love.



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Host a memorable Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is a cherished holiday across much of North America. Canadians enjoy this day of gratitude, gathering and savory feasts in early October, while Americans celebrate Thanksgiving near the end of November.

According to Pew Research, 74 percent of survey respondents plan to attend Thanksgiving dinners with others, while 34 percent will host from their own homes. For those preparing to welcome guests this year, blending planning with heartwarming traditions can create a truly memorable Thanksgiving experience.

Start planning early

Menu and guest list planning can take more than two weeks, followed by a few days allotted to do some meal prep. The New York Post reports many people spend five hours actively cooking on Thanksgiving Day. AllRecipes.com indicates most



Thanksgiving hosts spend around seven hours in the kitchen overall. By drafting a clear timeline for shopping, prep, cooking, and cleanup and delegating various tasks to others, Thanksgiving hosts can enjoy the holiday more.

Create a smart and

masterful menu

Americans consume about 46 million turkeys on Thanksgiving, according to Electro IQ. Naturally, turkey remains a focal point of Thanksgiving dinners. Many other side dishes can round out the meal, but hosts are urged to stick to familiar recipes or test new ones

in advance to reduce stress. Simple, elegant offerings that are tried and true will be well received.

Set the tone with decorating

Outfitting a home in beautiful fall decor can help create the mood for Thanksgiving. Hosts can incorporate

rich, autumnal hues in browns, golds and reds. A floral centerpiece or cornucopia in fall-toned flowers is fitting. Small pumpkins or gourds outfitted with tags can be used for name cards to help seat people at the table accordingly, separating anyone who may clash.

Foster inclusivity
Thanksgiving is about food, but it also is about warmth and connection with others. Having guests share things they are thankful for or offering a pre-meal prayer helps set a thankful tone. Pew Research Center indicates that 65 percent of Thanksgiving dinners include a prayer or a blessing.

Set aside extras

Thanksgiving may be a holiday of excess, with many holiday hosts cooking up more than everyone can possibly consume. Inviting extra people to dinner who may no longer have extended families may ensure that food will be finished; otherwise, having plenty of to-go containers at the ready enables guests to take home leftovers so they don't go to waste.

Hosting a memorable Thanksgiving holiday is about the joy of sharing moments with friends and family and enjoying delicious food.

Let's talk turkey

Thanksgiving is a time for celebrants to express gratitude for all that they have. Thanksgiving presents an opportunity for friends and loved ones to gather around a dinner table and enjoy a delicious meal together. Turkey frequently is at the centerpiece of Thanksgiving feasts. Many may be surprised to learn how turkey and other foods came to be such integral components of the Thanksgiving meal. Here are 12 facts about turkey and more, courtesy of Foodprint, Kansas Farm Food Connection, AgHires, and Business Insider.

1. When talking about turkey, getting the names for these birds right is necessary. Many people say "Tom Turkey" at Thanksgiving, but hens (female) birds are more commonly found at the table than a Tom (male) turkey. Poult are young turkeys. Toms are more likely used for deli meats, cutlets and ground meat because they are so much larger.

- 2. Americans eat roughly 46 million turkeys on Thanksgiving.
- 3. As many as 2,500 to 4,500 calories may be consumed by a single person during the Thanksgiving meal. That's more than the recommended calorie intake for an entire day for most healthy adults.
- 4. The "Turkey Talk-Line" is sponsored by Butterball. Turkey experts are on call during the holiday season to answer questions.
- 5. It typically takes 14 to 18 weeks for a turkey to reach maturity. Heritage breeds descended from wild flocks will take longer to mature.
- 6. It is not confirmed that turkey was at any "first Thanksgiving" meal. Accounts vary and only allude to "fowl" being consumed.
- 7. Despite being more inclined to run, turkeys, particularly wild ones, are able to fly. Domesticated turkeys may not be able to fly because they are bred to be heavy for more breast meat.
- 8. Dark meat in

- poultry is associated with muscle use because working muscles require extra blood vessels to deliver oxygen, making meat darker. Turkey predominantly run, so their thighs are known for being rich with dark meat.
- 9. Around 88 percent of Americans will eat turkey for Thanksgiving dinner.
- 10. Television dinners were born from turkey leftovers in 1953. The meat was packaged in aluminum trays with various side dishes.
- 11. Jellyed cranberry sauce is a common complement to turkey. Ocean Spray indicates more than five million gallons' worth of jellyed cranberry sauce is purchased for Thanksgiving.
- 12. Despite eating all this extra food, the average holiday weight gain is only about four-fifths of a pound, according to the New England Journal of Medicine.
- These turkey facts can make for good Thanksgiving dinner table conversation this year.



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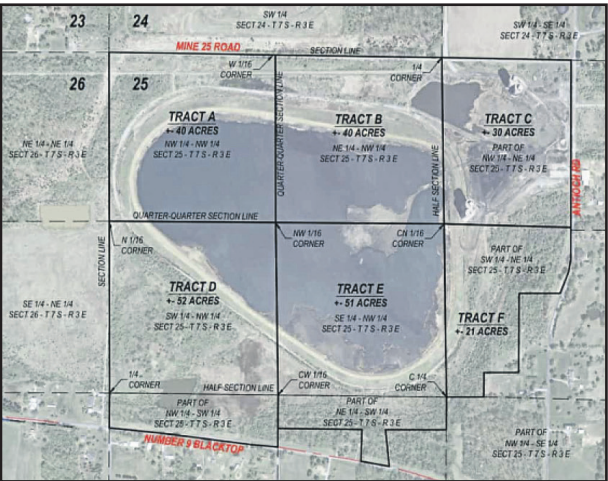
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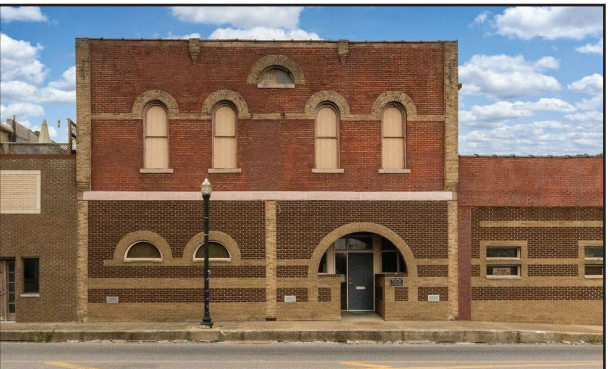
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Notable monuments to veterans across the United States

Veterans Day honors the millions of men and women who have sacrificed much to serve in the United States military. Veterans Day is commemorated each year on November 11 because it was that day in 1918 when an armistice was reached between combatants

in World War I, which estimates suggest claimed the lives of as many as 22 million people. There are many ways for Americans to celebrate veterans on Veterans Day. Visiting war memorials can instill a greater sense of appreciation for the men and women

who have served in the United States military. The following are some notable war memorials honoring veterans across the United States.

Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is an iconic memorial

located in Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia. Cemetery officials note New York Congressman and World War I veteran Hamilton Fish, Jr., played an integral role in establishing the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier by proposing legislation that provided for the internment of one unknown American soldier killed during WWI. Guards are now present at the tomb 24/7, and visitors, including U.S. presidents and foreign dignitaries, typically lay a wreath at the tomb to honor the sacrifices of all U.S. veterans.

Korean War Veterans Memorial

The Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. honors the roughly 1.5 million American veterans who fought alongside forces from the United Nations in a conflict that lasted from 1950 to 1953. Nineteen sculptures depicting U.S. servicemen on patrol

during the conflict are among the many notable components of this moving memorial, which also features a wall and pool of remembrance that display the names of the more than 36,000 Americans killed during the Korean War.

Liberty Memorial

The Liberty Memorial in Kansas City, Missouri, was built in 1926 to honor the brave American service members who lost their lives in World War I. The Liberty Memorial, which is now known as the National World War I Museum and Memorial, is an iconic landmark in Kansas City that features the Liberty Memorial Tower, which rises 217 feet about Memorial Courtyard and 268 feet above the North Lawn. The top of the tower emits a flame at night to create a stunning visual. Memory Hall on the east side of the Liberty Memorial Tower containing a portion of the Panthéon de

la Guerre, an iconic French painting that depicts the Allied nations of World War I.

USS Arizona Memorial

The USS Arizona Memorial in Honolulu, Hawaii, is dedicated to preserving the memories of the sacrifices of servicemen who fought in the Pacific theater throughout World War II. The memorial marks the resting place of more than 1,100 sailors during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, an event that led to U.S. involvement in World War II. The memorial is accessible exclusively by boat and the sunken remains of the battleship USS Arizona straddle the site.

These are just four of the many notable landmarks that commemorate the sacrifice and service of U.S. military members over the course of the nation’s history.

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GOOD EATING

Thanksgiving Sides

‘Tis the season for eating!

As we look toward the holidays of Thanksgiving and Christmas, we are sharing some of our favorite easy to make side dishes. Wishing you and your family a happy and blessed Thanksgiving!!

Classic Green Bean Casserole

Ingredients

1 can (10 1/2 ounces) Campbell’s® Condensed Cream of Mushroom Soup or 98% Fat Free Cream of Mushroom Soup or Unsalted Cream of Mushroom Soup

1/2 cup 2% milk

1 teaspoon soy sauce

4 cups cooked cut green beans

1 1/3 cups French’s® French Fried Onions *(amount divided in recipe steps below)*

can add less or more to make it right for you.

Heat the oven to 350°F. Fold in the soup, milk, soy sauce, beans and 2/3 cup onions in a 1 1/2-quart oven safe casserole until all ingredients are combined. Season the mixture with salt and pepper.

Bake for 25 minutes or until hot and bubbling. Stir the bean mixture. Sprinkle with the remaining 2/3 cup onions.

Bake for another 5 minutes or until the onions are golden brown. Let green beans rest a few minutes before serving to help the flavors meld and the casserole settle. Store leftovers in an oven safe dish for easy reheating.

Instructions

If preparing using Unsalted Cream of Mushroom you can add salt to taste. Our test kitchen found that 1/4 teaspoon of salt enhanced the flavor of the recipe and contributes an additional 98.3 mg of sodium per serving, but you



Sweet Potato Bake

Ingredients

3 cups cooked and mashed sweet potatoes

1 cup sugar

1/3 cup butter melted

2 eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg

¼ cup heavy cream, half and half, or whole milk

Topping

3 tablespoons butter, melted

1 cup brown sugar

1/3 cup flour

1 cup chopped pecans or walnuts

Instructions

Preheat oven to 325 °F. Mix sweet potatoes, sugar, spices, 1/3 cup butter, eggs and vanilla. Beat with an electric mixer until smooth. Add cream, mix well. Pour into greased casserole dish (1 1/2 quarts). Add topping. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes.

Topping

Mix together 3 tablespoons butter, brown sugar, flour and nuts with fork; sprinkle over top of casserole.



Broccoli Rice Casserole

Ingredients

5 tablespoons butter

1/3 cup panko

1 large onion, chopped (about 1 cup)

16 ounces frozen chopped broccoli (about 5 cups)

1/3 cup reduced fat (2%) milk

2 cans (10 1/2 ounces each) Campbell’s® Condensed Cheddar Cheese Soup

3 cups cooked long grain white rice (use leftover cooked rice or start cooking the rice before assembling the other ingredients)

1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese (about 4 ounces)

Instructions

Guess what? You can save prep time by adding the rice uncooked! Just make sure to use converted long-grain rice (think Uncle Ben’s® Original) instead of regular. Add 1 cup uncooked converted long-grain white rice and 1 cup water or Swanson® Chicken Broth at the end of step

Bake, covered, for 40 minutes or until the rice is tender.

Heat the oven to 350°F. While the oven is heating, melt 1 tablespoon butter in a small bowl and mix in the panko. Heat the remaining 4 tablespoons butter in a 12-inch skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and cook until tender-crisp.

Stir the broccoli in the skillet and cook until tender-crisp. Stir in the milk, soup, rice and cheese. Cook and stir until the cheese is melted. Season with salt and pepper. Pour the broccoli mixture into an 11x8x2-inch baking dish. Sprinkle the panko mixture on top.

Bake for 30 minutes or until hot and the panko mixture is golden brown.

Easy Homemade Stuffing

Ingredients

2 small onions diced

4 ribs celery diced

2/3 cup butter

1 ½ teaspoons poultry seasoning or ½ teaspoon ground sage

black pepper

salt to taste

12 cups dry bread cubes

2 to 4 cups chicken broth see notes

2 tablespoons fresh parsley

1 tablespoon fresh herbs sage, thyme, and/or rosemary

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

In a large skillet, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the onion, celery and poultry seasoning (and rosemary if using). Reduce the temperature to medium low and cook until tender, about 10-12 minutes. Cool slightly.

In a large bowl, combine the bread cubes, onion mixture, parsley and fresh herbs.

Pour 1 cup of broth ovetop and toss the cubes. Add the remaining broth, a little bit at a time until cubes are moist (but not soggy) and gently toss. You may not need all of the broth. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Place the bread mixture in a serving dish, dot with additional butter if desired and cover.

Bake 35 minutes, uncover and bake an additional 10 minutes.



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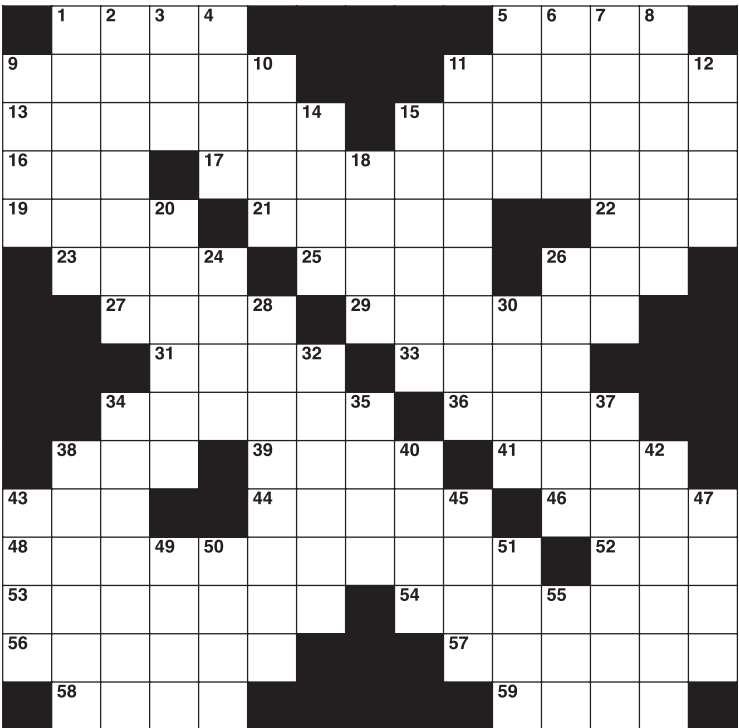
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Crossword Puzzle



CLUES ACROSS

1. Difficult

5. Coarsely ground corn

9. There’s one for the “world”

11. Loved Romeo

13. Sticky situation

15. Pelvic areas

16. An informal debt instrument

17. Cannot be repaired surgically

19. A device attached to a workbench

21. Related on the mother's side

22. Sound unit

23. __ Sagan, astronomer

25. Utah city

26. A disappointing effort

27. Steal goods during a riot

29. Wakes up

31. Hair salon service
33. Serenaded

34. Looked intensely

36. U.S. Air Force expert Robert F.

38. A type of cast

39. One’s duty

41. Where golfers begin

43. Make a mistake

44. Semitic sun god

46. Ancient Greek City

48. Having had the head cut off

52. A place to stay

53. Unwise

54. Most unnatural

56. Dennis is a notable one

57. Ointments

58. Students’ exam

59. Leaked blood

CLUES DOWN

1. Brave

2. Act of awakening

3. Jest at

4. Sandwich store

5. Chapter of the Koran

6. Dismounted

7. Small vehicle

8. Irked

9. One who earns by disreputable dealings

10. Monetary unit of Samoa

11. Long, mournful lamentation

12. Weight unit

14. Alone, single

15. Decreases

18. Indicates beside

20. Worn by exposure to the weather

24. A body of traditions
26. College students’ ultimate goal

28. Amino acid

30. Nasal mucus

32. US government entity

34. Swinish

35. Legislative body in Russia

37. Grant an exemption to

38. Put in advance

40. Satisfy

42. Felt

43. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls

45. Witnesses

47. Picnic invaders

49. Gasteyer and de Armas are two

50. Ancient person of Scotland

51. Cheerless

55. Unwell

PUZZLE SOLUTION



Word Search

TAKE A BREATH WORD SEARCH



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

ANSWERS IN THIS SECTION.

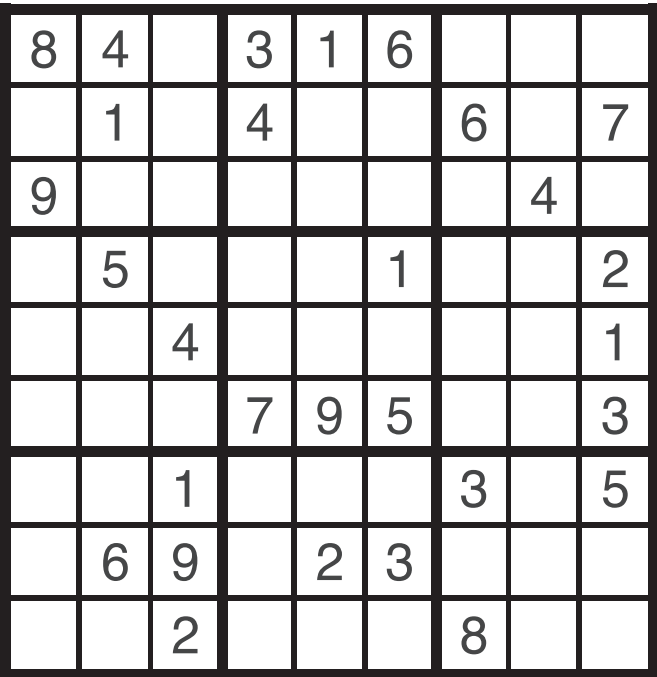
WORDS

- AIRFLOW
- ALVEOLI
- APNEA
- ASTHMA
- BRONCHI
- CAPILLARIES
- CARBON DIOXIDE
- CILIA
- DIAPHRAGM
- DYSPNEA
- EMBOLISM
- GAS EXCHANGE
- HEMOGLOBIN
- HYPERCAPNIA
- HYPOXEMIA
- LUNGS
- OXYGEN
- PERFUSION
- PNEUMONIA
- RESPIRATION
- SPIROMETRY
- TIDAL VOLUME
- VENTILATION
- VITAL CAPACITY

Sudoku Puzzle

How it Works:

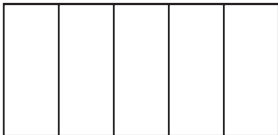
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle! Good Luck! **ANSWERS IN THIS SECTION.**



Word Scramble

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to breathing.

H O T U M



Answer: Puck

Guess Who?

GUESS WHO ?

I am an actress born on November 6, 1988 in Arizona. I appeared on stage for the first time as a youth. I've played several prominent roles, and won my first Academy Award in 2016 in a musical romantic comedy film about pursuing dreams in Los Angeles and a second in 2023 for a dark comedy role.

Answer: Emma Stone

Coloring Fun



VICTORIOUS

Living...in a troubled world

Good life and longevity

By Teresa LeNeave
leneave2@comcast.net

Every generation has desired “the good life” and longevity. Since the beginning of time man has imagined and sought for the fountain of youth. Not an actual fountain, but an herb, a root, a tea, a lotion, a peptide, or a hormone that extends life or at least postpones the effects of aging. But, who wants longevity in this life without the connection of the good days attached to it?

I Peter 3:10-11 says good days are the result of the words we speak, how we treat people and the choices we make. Peter said, “Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit; let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it” (ESV). That is more than a mouthful, but it’s clearly a recipe for

a better life, if not a healthier life. The good life is not comprised in the neighborhood we live in, the car we drive or even the job we have. In every survey I read that describes what most people want out of life, the overwhelming consensus is peace and happiness. Those things start in the heart. My belief is that peace and happiness come from a relationship with God and knowing he loves you. Even then, I don’t believe a person can be truly happy unless they have healthy relationships with people around them. Research has determined the well-established fact that social people are happier and healthier. On average, they live longer and enjoy life more.

Jesus himself said the most important commandment is to love the Lord your



God with all your heart, your mind, and your strength and the second commandment is like unto it: love your neighbor as yourself. To me that equates to relationships that are meaningful. People caring about people. Not taking the opportunity to say something negative about another just because the opportunity arises. It means, bridling our tongues. In the Bible, James says the tongue

“sets on fire the entire course of life, and is set on fire by hell” (James 3:2 ESV). We are not getting any younger. Who knows how long we will live? None of us know, but one thing is certain: we should live our lives well. Experts tell us that the future is here. We will live longer and longer. We may even live to be 120 or more, but what good will that do without peace and health?

Getting older is interesting, but it holds many challenges. Most of us have concerns about getting dementia. Cancer. Heart attack. Stroke. The list goes on and on. Health guru’s tell us genes most definitely play a role in the longevity of our lives, but so does attitude, a healthy diet, a spiritual relationship and exercise. The good life does not mean a life without problems, because in

the very same chapter Peter said we will suffer and have trials in this life, but not to be afraid or fearful. People will age very different. All people will have good and bad days, but we are more than overcomers through Christ Jesus. Everything in the universe ages in different ways. It is the way of life. It’s the natural order of things. But we have a lot to do with our own health and happiness. Adding Jesus to it will make a big difference. When Peter tells us, “For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil and his lips that they speak no guile; let him eschew evil (turn from evil) and do good; seek peace and pursue it”, then maybe he’s giving us a tip on the concept of aging well. One of my favorite scriptures is “A merry heart doeth good like a medicine,” (Prov 17:22).

Can we explain what we believe?

Dr. Billy Holland

The foundation of the Christian faith, along with the hope of eternal salvation in the next life, is based on the torturous death and glorified resurrection of the only perfect individual we know as Jesus Christ. When we trust that His sacrificial blood is the only payment for our forgiveness and our hope for redemption, we become reborn, a new spiritual creation within His family and kingdom. Do you believe that trusting in this God-man is the greatest demonstration of love the world has ever known? Since this miraculous event happened over 2000 years ago, do you know why you believe these promises are true? Let’s go a little further. Have you ever had a life-changing encounter with the

person called the Son of God? Did you know that just believing there is a God, or that Jesus is real, is NOT the same thing as giving all of your heart, mind, and soul to Him? Pastors are not the only ones who are called to explain and teach God’s word; every person who has invited Christ to be their Lord and Savior should spend every available moment focusing on Him and getting to know Him more intimately through prayer and study. This is how His children become His fearless, wise, mighty, and overcoming warriors. Over the last 100 years, the number of people interested in researching the Bible has increased. I’m not referring to those who want to draw closer to God, but rather the progressive intellectual critics who try to refute and disprove what

is written. These are not your casual readers who accept what someone says on the surface or are satisfied with the idea of just believing by faith. Similar to how those who must prove everything according to science, these individuals are intense and seek more difficult answers than are discussed in church classes. In fact, if one of these agnostics were to present their views in church, most would be considered a heretic or worse. I have several friends around the country, and we have interesting discussions about God and the Bible. As I mentioned, we have many questions about Christianity that are often left to speculation. I’ve read some of the textual critics who take pride in being able to pin a preacher against the wall who has

been in Christian leadership most of his life. I’m writing this small article not to discourage you who are followers of Christ, but to blow the trumpet of warning about how important it is to know what we believe. Especially in the last 60 years, while the nominal Christians have been spiritually asleep, these scholars have been hard at work trying to see if what the text says is actually correct. I know that many will say, That’s a huge waste of time and is offensive to those who trust God, but how can we condemn those who have sincerely given their lives to researching every jot and tittle of the Bible? It’s one thing to know what something says, and it’s another thing to explain what it means. This is true with the Bible, as there are individuals

who have memorized what is written, but do they know how to translate the original languages into our modern English? For example, I’m not saying that I agree with what Bart Ehrman teaches, but he is recognized as a highly respected Biblical scholar who focuses on the textual criticism of the New Testament, the historical Jesus, and the origins and development of early Christianity. For anyone to debate him on Biblical topics, they would need to bring their A-game of theological research, and not just answers like, “I believe this because that’s what my grandmother said.” My point is that all Christians should not only stand for their convictions, but have the ability to prove why they accept and trust them. The reason

why all Christians are not dedicated theologians is that it’s much easier to accept a meal than to cook one. Most people say I do not have time to study the Bible, while spending several hours a day watching TV and playing on their phones. I encourage every follower to take a scholarly approach to understanding religious texts, including their faith-based views so they can be instant in season and out of season to give an answer. II Timothy 2:15 is not only about gaining knowledge, it’s taking the time to rightly divide His word and be enlightened by God’s divine revelation. Dr. Holland is an ordained minister, chaplain, and author. Read more about the Christian life at billyhollandministries.com

USDA Update on Coordinated Federal Response to Protect United States from New World Screwworm

Under the decisive leadership of U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) continues to make substantial progress on our sweeping, five-pronged plan to protect the nation's livestock, wildlife, and agricultural communities from the threat of New World screwworm (NWS). This whole-of-government effort reflects the Trump administration's unwavering commitment to safeguarding America's agricultural economy and domestic food supply. As of October 17, NWS has not been detected in any animals or traps in the United States.

Vigilance and Preparedness at Home

With the support of industry, state, and Tribal partners, the United States remains vigilant against and fully prepared for possible NWS incursions. USDA is deploying intensive surveillance and monitoring systems; investing in NWS innovation; and supporting robust response activities in Mexico and Central America. Our teams are in place along the U.S. border, deploying over 113 NWS-specific traps and lures across high-risk areas of border states, and leveraging thousands of fruit fly/ insect traps aligned all along the Southern border. At least 22,210 *Cochliomyia* flies from traps in all locations have been submitted to NVSL for identification, with no NWS detections to date.

USDA has conducted extensive U.S. training efforts and over 50 stakeholder meetings, increasing regional awareness of NWS and enabling more comprehensive suspect case reporting and response. Outreach and response materials, including the NWS Disease Response Strategy, ensure coordination between USDA, states, and industry in advance of a U.S. case. Earlier today, USDA also shared the NWS Response Playbook, an operational plan with detailed strategies of how USDA will work with States and other partners if we had an

NWS detection within our borders.

In addition, USDA examines all wildlife captured in high-risk counties in Texas for signs of NWS infestation. To date, more than 1,600 wild animals have been examined, with no evidence of NWS found.

Cross-Border NWS Response and Collaboration

Although Mexico continues to confirm new cases of NWS, the overwhelming majority of these remain in the far southern part of the country, with no significant northward expansion over the past several months. The two northernmost detections (approximately 70 and 170 miles from the U.S. border, respectively) occurred in Nuevo León in young cattle transported from Chiapas, Mexico. While the ideal number of cases in the northern parts of the country is zero, Mexico's ability to conduct rapid surveillance and notification has ensured these transportation-related cases remain isolated incidents. USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) continues to coordinate sterile insect transport and release at prioritized locations in Mexico and is providing close oversight on nearby surveillance activities.

On August 19, USDA and Mexico's agriculture authority, SENASICA, signed a collaborative NWS Action Plan with detailed actions about trapping, surveillance, and movement protocols that will help stop the spread of the parasite. The plan allows for U.S. audits of Mexico's response. USDA is also helping SENASICA to implement a more risk-based trapping plan, with the installation of 960 traps north of the current Mexican aerial dispersal zone. USDA has assisted Mexico with hiring over 200 surge staff for fly trapping and animal movement controls within Mexico, and the Mexican government has authorized 168 NWS checkpoints for official inspections, preventative treatment, and wound care. These immediate response protocols have resulted in at least

7,245 animals within Mexico receiving timely treatment for NWS. Southern U.S. ports of entry remain closed to livestock imports as part of ongoing efforts to maintain robust safeguards

Sterile Fly Dispersal and Production

Mass production and targeted dispersal of sterile flies remain critical components of our effective response. USDA continues to produce 100 million sterile flies per week from the COPEG facility in Panama, and is also investing \$21 million to support Mexico's renovation of an existing fruit fly facility in Metapa—which will double NWS production capacity once complete. With ongoing support from APHIS technical experts, Mexico anticipates this sterile

fly production to begin as soon as summer 2026. To expand our domestic response capacity, USDA has also begun construction on a sterile fly dispersal facility at Moore Air Base in Edinburg, TX that is projected to begin operating in early 2026. APHIS is also expediting design and construction of a sterile fly production facility in Southern Texas, with a targeted maximum capacity of 300 million sterile flies per week. Once combined with the 200 million sterile flies, we are projected to have access to by next summer, this will approach the approximately 500 million sterile flies per week that USDA produced when it successfully eradicated NWS populations from large swaths of the United States in the

1960s and 1970s.

Innovation and New Tools

APHIS examines all wildlife captured in high-risk counties in Texas for evidence of NWS infestation; more than 1,600 wild animals have been examined to date with no evidence of NWS. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently approved new therapeutic tools that are effective against this pest, in case cases are confirmed in U.S. animals. Furthermore, USDA has committed up to \$100 million towards breakthrough technologies through the NWS Grand Challenge, which will solicit ideas to develop new therapeutics, enhance sterile fly production, and advance NWS traps and lures. USDA is also exploring the suitability

and effectiveness of technologies like e-beam and x-ray sterilization and genetically engineered flies.

Unified Federal Response

USDA has established a dedicated New World Screwworm Directorate within APHIS focused on coordinating and implementing the Secretary's plans. USDA is collaborating closely with the following agencies to ensure a unified federal response to NWS: Department of the Interior, Department of Energy, Department of War, Department of State, Environmental Protection Agency, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Customs and Border Protection, Food and Drug Administration, and others.

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