Issue 94 - November 2026

THE Local Life

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Hello.
And welcome to the November edition of The Local Life.

Over the next couple weeks there are a number of festive events for you to enjoy. Hartford lantern parade followed by the light switch on both take place on Saturday 21st November. Hartford Christmas Fayre is the week later, on Saturday 28th November and the Christmas craft market & brunch cafe at St John's Church Hall in Sandiway is scheduled for Saturday 5th December. More details on these events plus others taking place throughout the month can be found on the community pages.

Are you involved with an upcoming event and would like to feature in the next edition? Please send over the details and you can feature on the community section free off charge.

Did you know that along with this magazine we also have 2 other publications? If you are a local business owner or sole trader and are looking to grow your visibility and increase customers locally, please get in touch to discuss this further. More details on the distribution areas for each magazine can be found on page 12. Get in touch today and your business could be featured in the next edition!

Rodgers Carpets still have availability to transform your home with a new carpet or flooring before Christmas. Are you looking to upgrade your flooring? Get in touch with Lee to discuss your requirements and browse their range of products. See their advert on the front cover for further information.

Have a great month!

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Some of the articles included in this edition

Cheese & Wine



A Dogs Life



Guy Fawkes Night



Christmas Spending



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The Art of Cheese & Wine

By M.J

You have now completed the six-week summer holiday challenge, so treat yourself to a timeless and satisfying cheese and wine pairing. Whether you're hosting, preparing a picnic, or simply enjoying an evening at home, the right pairing can transform two excellent ingredients into an unforgettable tasting experience. By understanding a few basic principles, you can confidently create combinations that highlight their best qualities.

Balance

The key to successful pairing is balance. Generally, younger, milder cheeses pair well with lighter wines, while aged or stronger cheeses benefit from wines with greater complexity and structure.

Classic Pairings

Brie

Creamy Brie pairs beautifully with an unoaked or lightly oaked Chardonnay like Chablis. The wine's fresh acidity cuts through the richness of the cheese, creating a smooth, balanced bite.

Goat's Cheese

Tangy goat's cheese is a natural companion for Sauvignon Blanc. Its bright citrus flavours and crisp acidity complement the cheese's fresh, earthy character.

Cheddar

Mature Cheddar has a rich, nutty flavour that stands up well to the bold tannins and dark fruit notes of Cabernet Sauvignon.

Blue Cheese

Blue cheese and Port offer a perfect contrast. The wine's sweetness balances the cheese's salty intensity, producing an indulgent finish.

Parmesan

Aged Parmesan has savoury, crystalline notes that pair wonderfully with the bright acidity and cherry flavours of Chianti.

Texture

Texture plays an important role in pairing. Soft, creamy cheeses often benefit from wines with lively acidity, while firmer cheeses pair well with wines that have more body and tannins.

Sparkling wines are especially versatile because their bubbles cleanse the palate, making them excellent companions for creamy cheeses such as Camembert or triple-cream varieties.

Sweet Wines

Many people assume cheese should only be served with dry wines, but sweet wines can produce memorable pairings. Blue cheeses, washed-rind cheeses, and certain aged hard cheeses often become even more complex when matched with a dessert wine.

Building the Board

If you're serving multiple cheeses, choose a variety of textures and strengths. A balanced board might include:

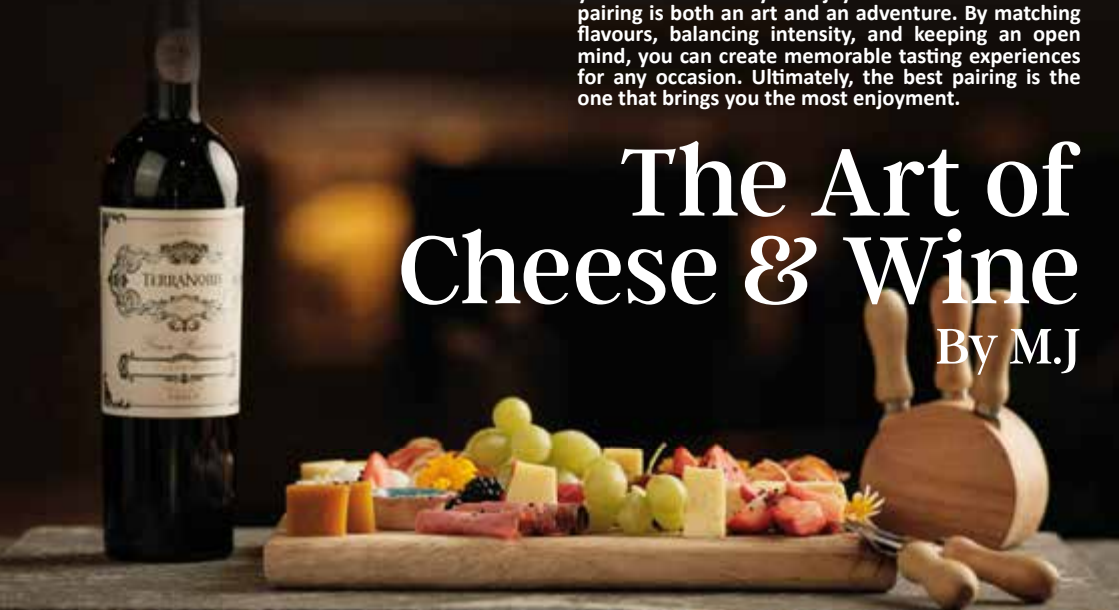
- Soft, creamy cheese
- Semi-hard cheese
- Aged hard cheese
- Blue cheese
- Fresh goat's cheese

Accompany them with fresh fruit, grapes, dried apricots, nuts, artisan crackers, crusty bread, and honey or fruit preserves.

Be Confident

Although traditional pairings provide an excellent starting point, personal taste should always come first. Some of the most enjoyable discoveries come from trying unexpected combinations. Host a tasting with friends and compare different wines with the same cheese.

There are no absolute rules, only guidelines that help you discover what you enjoy most. Cheese and wine pairing is both an art and an adventure. By matching flavours, balancing intensity, and keeping an open mind, you can create memorable tasting experiences for any occasion. Ultimately, the best pairing is the one that brings you the most enjoyment.



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One of the most common mistakes is driving off immediately after starting the engine on a freezing morning. Modern cars don't need lengthy warm-ups, but they do benefit from being driven gently for the first few miles. Heavy acceleration before the engine has reached its optimum operating temperature places unnecessary strain on vital components.

Short journeys can also take their toll. If your typical drive lasts only a few minutes, the mechanical systems rarely have time to move into full efficiency. In the same way as your engine and battery work better when getting up to speed, try combining several errands into one journey so as to be kinder to both your engine and your wallet.

Tyres are another area that's often neglected. Driving with pressures that are too low increases fuel consumption, accelerates tyre wear and affects handling. Fortunately, checking tyre pressures takes only a few minutes and should become part of your regular routine.

Ignoring warning lights is perhaps the costliest mistake of all. That small amber symbol on the dashboard may represent a relatively inexpensive fix today, but left unchecked it could develop into a far more serious and expensive repair, so stick to your service schedule.

Then there's the paintwork. Bird droppings, tree sap and road salt aren't simply cosmetic annoyances - they can gradually damage your car's finish if left untreated.

Finally, driving style makes a difference too. Harsh braking, rapid acceleration and hitting potholes at speed all place additional stress on suspension, tyres and brakes.



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Remember, Remember The 5th of November



Catholicism in England was heavily repressed under Queen Elizabeth I, particularly after the pope excommunicated her in 1570.

Dozens of priests were put to death while Catholics were not allowed to celebrate their religion. When King James took to the throne in 1603 it was hoped this would change, but in 1604 he publicly condemned Catholicism, calling it a superstition, and called for priests to leave the country.

In May 1604 a handful of Catholic dissidents, Guy Fawkes, Robert Catesby, Tom Wintour, Jack Wright and Thomas Percy met at the Duck and Drake inn in London. Here, Catesby proposed a plan to blow up the Houses of Parliament with gunpowder, which they all supported with an oath. Other conspirators later joined what became known as the Gunpowder Plot.

Although Catesby was the ringleader, Fawkes has been the one who gained the most publicity, mainly after spending around ten years fighting for Spain against Protestant rebels in the Spanish-controlled Netherlands. He also asked the King of Spain to help with an English rebellion against James. By 1605 Fawkes was calling himself Guido rather than Guy. Also, by using the alias John Johnson, he served as the caretaker of a cellar below the House of Lords. This was where the plotters stockpiled gunpowder. The plan was that Fawkes would light a fuse on November 5, 1605, during the opening of a new session of Parliament.

This would result in the death of James and his eldest son, meanwhile, fellow conspirators would kidnap James' daughter Elizabeth and install her as a puppet queen who would be married off to a Catholic to restore the monarchy in their faith. However, there was an anonymous tip-off and a search party found Fawkes in the cellar late on November 4, next to 36 barrels of gunpowder and some matches. He was tortured in the Tower of London by order of King James.

Fawkes and his surviving co-conspirators were all found guilty of high treason and sentenced to death in January 1606 by hanging.

Soon after the plot was revealed, Londoners celebrated with bonfires and Parliament designated November 5 as a day of thanksgiving. This has now become a time to set off fireworks, light bonfires and burn effigies.

The demands for 'penny for the Guy' come from Fawkes' first name. Little is known about the earliest celebrations however in areas such as Carlisle, Norwich, and Nottingham, local councils provided music and artillery salutes. Canterbury celebrated 5 November 1607 with 106 pounds of gunpowder and 14 pounds of match, and three years later food and drink were provided for local dignitaries, as well as music, explosions, and a parade by the local militia. While the annual rituals are more festive and fun than religious and monarchical, it is ironic that the history and perception of Guy Fawkes himself has taken on new meaning.

Rather than being seen as a religious extremist and terrorist he has become known as something of a populist hero. His life has been romanticised in tradition and culture and celebrated globally. Yet had the plot been a success, it would have killed everyone in Parliament, with the neighbouring area being destroyed. Ultimately, Guy Fawkes would have been complicit in one of the biggest terrorist acts in British history.

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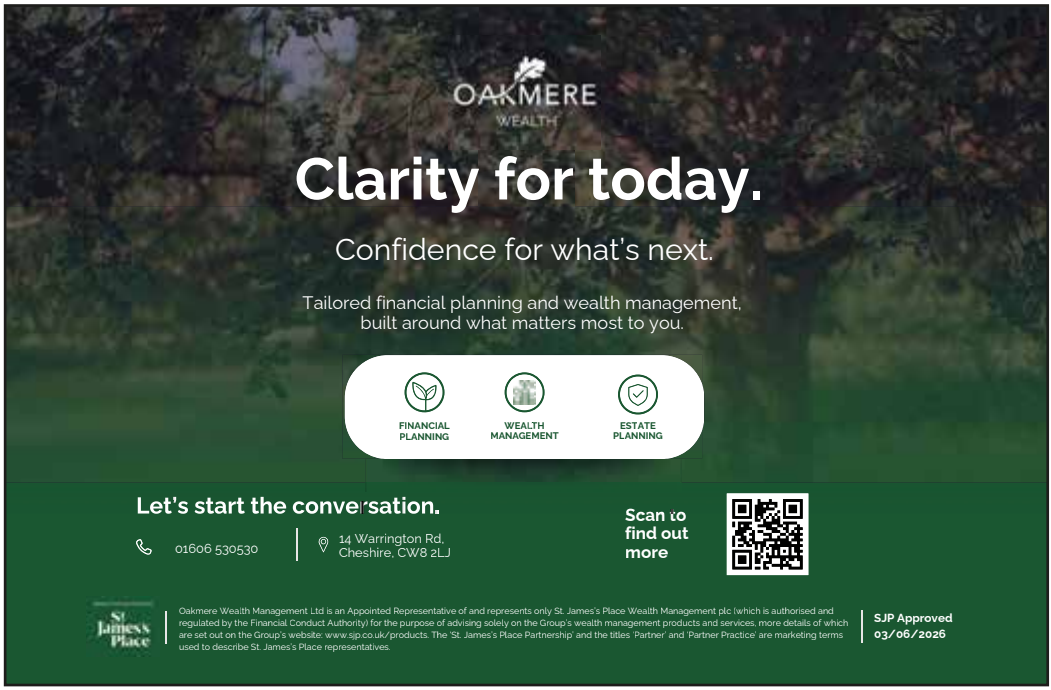
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For many dogs, winter is simply another excuse to charge through muddy fields, chase fallen leaves and return home thoroughly soaked. But while the colder months can be great fun, they also bring a few seasonal challenges that every owner should be aware of.

That's why a little preparation can go a long way towards keeping your four-legged friend happy, healthy and safe.

Surface

One of the biggest changes comes after every walk. Roads and pavements are often treated with salt and grit to prevent ice, but these substances can irritate a dog's paws. Rinsing their feet with warm water once you get home helps remove any residue and reduces the likelihood of sore pads. It's also worth checking between the toes for small stones, ice or debris that may have become lodged during a walk.

Visibility

As temperatures fall, visibility becomes just as important as warmth. If you're walking before work or after sunset, reflective collars, leads or coats can make your dog far easier for motorists and cyclists to spot. A small clip-on LED light is another inexpensive way to improve safety during dark winter evenings.

Age

Older dogs deserve a little extra care at this time of year. Just as colder weather can make stiff joints more noticeable in people, arthritis symptoms may become more uncomfortable for senior pets. Shorter, more frequent walks, combined with a warm place to rest at home, can help keep them comfortable. If you notice your dog becoming reluctant to climb stairs or jump into the car, it's worth discussing the changes with your vet.

Toxins

Winter also brings hidden hazards. Antifreeze is highly toxic to dogs, even in tiny quantities, so any spills on driveways or roads should be treated seriously. Seasonal treats such as chocolate, mince pies and certain festive foods should also be kept well out of reach, however convincing those pleading eyes may be.

When poor weather limits long walks, don't forget that mental exercise is just as valuable as physical activity. Puzzle feeders, scent games and short training sessions can provide welcome stimulation on days when venturing outside is less appealing.

You may also wonder whether your dog needs a coat. The answer depends largely on the breed. Thick-coated dogs often cope perfectly well in cold weather, while smaller breeds, puppies, older dogs and those with short coats may appreciate an extra layer on particularly chilly days.

Winter doesn't have to mean staying indoors. Crisp mornings, frosty fields and woodland walks are among the season's greatest pleasures for dogs and owners alike. By taking a few sensible precautions, you can enjoy everything winter has to offer, knowing your canine companion is safe, comfortable and ready for the next adventure.



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How to develop a Christmas spending plan that actually works.



Every year, millions of us make the same promise: this Christmas will be different. We'll plan ahead, stick to a budget and avoid the dreaded January credit card bill. Yet somehow, by the time the decorations come down, many households are wondering where all the money went.

The good news is that festive overspending isn't inevitable. In fact, a few smart habits, started in November, can make all the difference.

The first step is surprisingly simple: decide how much you can genuinely afford before you buy a single gift. It's tempting to shop first and tot up the damage later, but setting an overall budget helps every purchasing decision that follows. Don't just think about presents, either. Christmas spending also includes food, drink, travel, decorations, wrapping paper, parties and those unexpected last-minute purchases that always seem to appear.

Once you've settled on a figure, divide it into categories. Knowing you have £350 for gifts and £250 for festive food is far easier to manage than trying to keep one large total in your head.

November also happens to be one of the best months to shop - but with a note of caution. Black Friday and Cyber Monday can offer genuine bargains, but not every deal is as generous as it first appears. Some retailers increase prices in the weeks beforehand before advertising impressive-looking discounts. Taking a few moments to compare prices online or use price-tracking tools can help you separate the real savings from clever marketing.

Another useful tactic is to make a gift list before you begin browsing. Shopping without a plan often leads to impulse purchases, duplicated ideas or buying something simply because it's on offer. Knowing exactly who you're buying for – and having a rough budget for each person – keeps spending under control and reduces the temptation to add "just one more thing" to the basket.

It's also worth remembering that thoughtful rarely means expensive. Experiences, homemade treats, framed family photographs or subscriptions tailored to someone's interests can often leave a stronger impression than another generic gift destined for the back of a cupboard.

If you're worried about overspending, consider paying as you go rather than relying on credit.
Using cash, a debit card or a dedicated Christmas savings pot makes it much easier to see where your money is going and avoids interest charges creeping into the New Year.

Finally, don't underestimate the value of finishing early. Buying gradually throughout November not only spreads the cost but also removes much of the stress that accompanies last-minute shopping. You'll have more choice, fewer queues and a far better chance of sticking to your budget.



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Collins Kitchens, Kingsley, Cheshire



Chocolate Olive Oil Cake

Rich chocolate meets fruity olive oil in a moist, elegant cake.

Ingredients

Cooking spray

3/4 cup (180 ml) water

1 1/2 cup fine espresso powder

298g granulated sugar

170g all-purpose flour

42g cocoa powder

1 teaspoon Diamond Crystal kosher salt

3/4 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

2 large eggs

1/2 cup whole buttermilk

1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil,

1 tablespoon vanilla extract

Confectioners' sugar, for dusting

Method

Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C). Now lightly spray a 9-inch round cake pan with cooking spray. Line the bottom of pan with parchment paper, and set aside.

In a small bowl, whisk 3/4 of a cup of water and espresso powder until fully dissolved, about 30 seconds. Set aside.

In a large bowl, whisk granulated sugar, flour, cocoa, salt, baking powder and baking soda. Add eggs, buttermilk, olive oil, vanilla, and reserved dissolved espresso powder. Stir until combined, then pour the batter into a prepared pan.

Bake until a wooden pick inserted into centre of the cake comes out with just a few moist crumbs – this should take between 40-45 minutes. Then transfer the cake to a wire rack and let it cool in the pan for 15 minutes.

Using a butter knife or offset spatula, gently loosen edges of cake from pan.

Invert the cake onto wire rack and return it right side up. Let the cake cool to room temperature, then transfer to a serving plate, carefully peeling off the parchment paper.

Finally, drizzle with additional olive oil, dust with confectioners' sugar, and serve with vanilla ice cream, if using.

Notes:



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PUZZLES

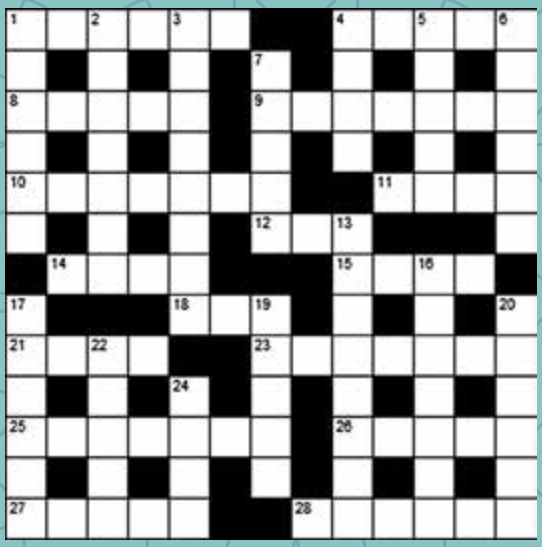
Crossword Clues

Across

1 seldom (6)
4 principal, boss (5)
8 builder (5)
9 acrimony, bad blood (3, 4)
10 complainer, grouch (7)
11 astound (4)
12 venomous snake (3)
14 joist (4)
15 wildcat (4)
18 investigate, intrude (3)
21 effortless (4)
23 ostracize (7)
25 dock, port (7)
26 countrified (5)
27 seventh zodiac sign (5)
28 utilize (6)

Down

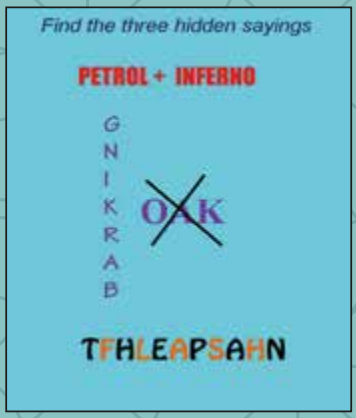
1 renovate (6)
2 courage (7)
3 track and field event (4, 4)
4 serene (4)
5 buffoon (5)
6 crime (U.S) (6)
7 North African country (5)
13 plucking-tool (8)
16 non-partisan (7)
17 deadly (6)
19 covet (5)
20 composition, mélange (6)
22 scour, clean (5)
24 physical, mental and spiritual discipline (4)



AA Milne, Conan Doyle, CS Lewis, Ella Wilcox, Emile Zola, Emily Bronte, Geoffrey Chaucer, HG Wells, Ian Rankin, Jean Kerr, JM Barrie, John Keats, John Knox, John Ruskin, John Updike, Judy Blume, Karl Marx, Samuel Pepys, Sandburg, Saul Bellow, Seneca

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

Mindbenders

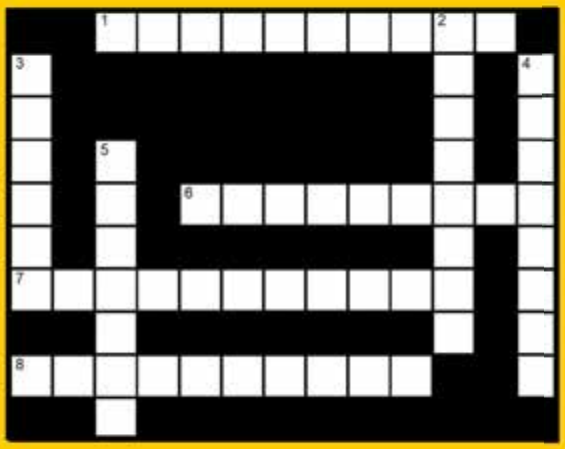


Sudoko

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

Kids' Page

Have fun with our Bonfire Night crossword



ACROSS

1  5,5

6  3,6

7  6,5

8 

DOWN

2 

3 

4 

5 

WORD LADDER

Turn POP into FUN
Change one letter each time

POP
FUN

Stay Safe on Nov 5th!

Follow the firework code



Bonfire Night Crossword Solution

WORD LADDER SOLUTION

POP
POP
PUP
PUN
FUN

Community Events & What's On....

FREE pages for charities and non-profit making organisations



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Community Events deadline for the December edition is **13th November**

Please email Charlie - thelocallife@btinternet.com

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Puzzle Solutions

Mind Benders

1. Add fuel to the fire
2. Barking up the wrong tree
3. Flash in the pan

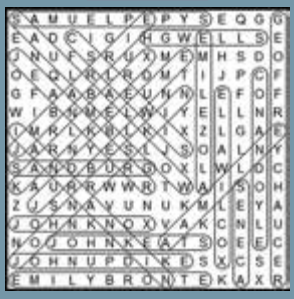
Crossword



Sudoku

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

Word Search



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