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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2022

Restaurants, youth sports to return Jan. 31

By Gordon Lambie

The Provincial Government announced the partial lifting of several health measures for this coming Monday, Jan 31, including the reopening of restaurant dining rooms at half capacity and the reintroduction of youth sports.

"Hospitalizations are not going down quickly," said Premier François Legault, stating that the goal in announcing the changes is to balance pressure on the worn-out healthcare system with the public pressure for the lifting of restrictions.

Legault announced two sets of changes to come over the next two weeks. On January 31, private gatherings will be allowed in homes again for up to four people or the members of two family bubbles. Restaurants and cafeterias will be allowed to reopen dining rooms, with the same limit placed on seating up to 50 per cent capacity. Visitor limits at long term care homes (CHSLDs) and private seniors' residences (RPAs) will also be increased, with residents in CHSLDs permitted up to two visitors (one at a time) and those in RPAs up to four (two at a time.)

Next Monday's changes also include the reintroduction of youth sports in groups of up to 25, but competitions remain off-limits for the time being.

As of Feb. 7 theatres, performance venues, and sports venues will be able to reopen at 50 per cent capacity up to a maximum of 500 people, and places of worship will also be allowed back at 50 per cent capacity up to 250 people. All of these locations will still require the vaccine passport, but Legault noted that funerals will not require the proof

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Leslie Bliss on turning 90



JOHNATHAN HOULE

Leslie Bliss preparing to clean his yard.

By Johnathan Houle Special to The Record

Born Jan. 26, 1932, onto a small dairy farm in a family with eight other children, Leslie Bliss spent most of his childhood in and around the farm, doing chores while following

in his father's footsteps.

He attended Holmes Model School and later Stanstead College where he learned one of his favorite pastimes, card games. His favourites are 500 and cribbage.

"I've been playing since I went to Stanstead College where I picked up

the game when guys from Bugbee Business College that I was friends with were missing a player. They invited me over and taught me how to play and I've enjoyed it ever since."

After leaving Stanstead College, Bliss then decided to work on the family

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## Weather



**TODAY:**  
A MIX OF SUN AND CLOUDS

HIGH -18  
LOW -27



**THURSDAY:**  
A MIX OF SUN AND CLOUDS

HIGH -9  
LOW -11



**FRIDAY:**  
SCATTERED FLURRIES

HIGH -4  
LOW -15



**SATURDAY:**  
LIGHT SNOW

HIGH -12  
LOW -20



**SUNDAY:**  
MAINLY SUNNY

HIGH -12  
LOW -19

## HAND IN HAND

# The Richmond, Danville & Drummondville area CLC



**C**LC schools (Community Learning Centres) across the province work collaboratively with community partners to support our students and the overall well-being of their families and the English-speaking community. The Richmond, Danville and Drummondville area CLC includes Drummondville Elementary, A.D.S. Elementary, St. Francis Elementary and Richmond Regional High School. Like many around us, the current pandemic context has brought us to refocus our efforts around our three long-term objectives: to ensure that the students coming into our schools are ready when starting kindergarten; that our students are engaged in their learning; and that our community has improved access to health and social services in English. With creativity and the strength of partnerships with local organizations and service providers we have many different activities and services being offered, with most of them being online. Here is a look at some of what is being offered at our schools and respective communities.

The **Online Reading Buddies** program is back this winter with the help of Townshippers' Association, the Centre for Access to Services in English and the Comité ÉLÉ du Val-Saint-François. The project will once again "buddy up" volunteer readers with a kindergarten student and their parent to read a story weekly via Zoom. We are currently

looking for volunteer readers to commit to a maximum of 1 hour a week in the late afternoons or early evenings for 8 weeks. We provide training and support on how to use Zoom and the reading platform. Volunteers who participated last year found the experience very positive and enjoyed sharing their love of reading with a young reader. All of them said they would recommend this program to other volunteers. If you are interested in being a reading buddy, please contact us at [richmondclc@etsb.qc.ca](mailto:richmondclc@etsb.qc.ca) or 819-437-4727

Our new parent-child **Ready, Set, Grow** program will start the first week of February. Parents and caregivers of babies and toddlers can participate in a group in person or in an online group in Val-des-Sources. This new program was created by dedicated local partners including Maison de la familles Les Arbrisseaux, Maison des Familles FamillAction, ValFamille, Literacy in Action, Townshippers' Association and CIUSSS de l'Estrie - CHUS. Families can register at [manseaug@edu.etsb.qc.ca](mailto:manseaug@edu.etsb.qc.ca) Follow the program's Facebook page for more details @earlyyearsRSGrow

Along with community partners and the teaching staff, the CLC has been working on various parent-child workshops for our preschool-age students. A workshop on Bedtime Routines took place in December with the Lennoxville District Women Centre. Another workshop about nutrition is in the works for our ADS and St. Francis families in collaboration with Townshippers' Association. The **Mini-Move** program will start up on Saturday mornings in February for Drummondville Elementary families. These outdoor parent-child activities aim to support the children's motor skills development and are offered in partnership with the Centre for Access

to Services in English. Supporting our four and five-year-old students and their families helps give them the boost they need to start their school years in a positive way.

Different projects supporting our students' mental health and emotional well-being will take place in our schools. For example, many teachers are taking part in projects offered through LEARN around the theme "I Belong", where students will be encouraged to reflect on their own identity and their place in the world and in their community. Online reading groups will also start up for our elementary school students, while Grade six and high school students will be invited to help prepare for the Summer Knights Read program. The CLC is also contributing to the production of a play by RRHS students. Stay tuned for more details this spring!

As an active member and coordinator in the cross-sector initiative, "Partners for the vitality of the English-speaking community of the Val-Saint-François and Des Sources", the CLC also administers and supports Community Microgrants projects and other initiatives that contributes to improved access to health and social services by the English-speaking community. This winter-spring, this will include working with our partners to launch a virtual health and wellness fair, co-hosting a psychological first aid workshop with the CLSC and supporting the increasingly popular Tea & Talk, a Townshippers' Association Seniors Wellness Initiative.

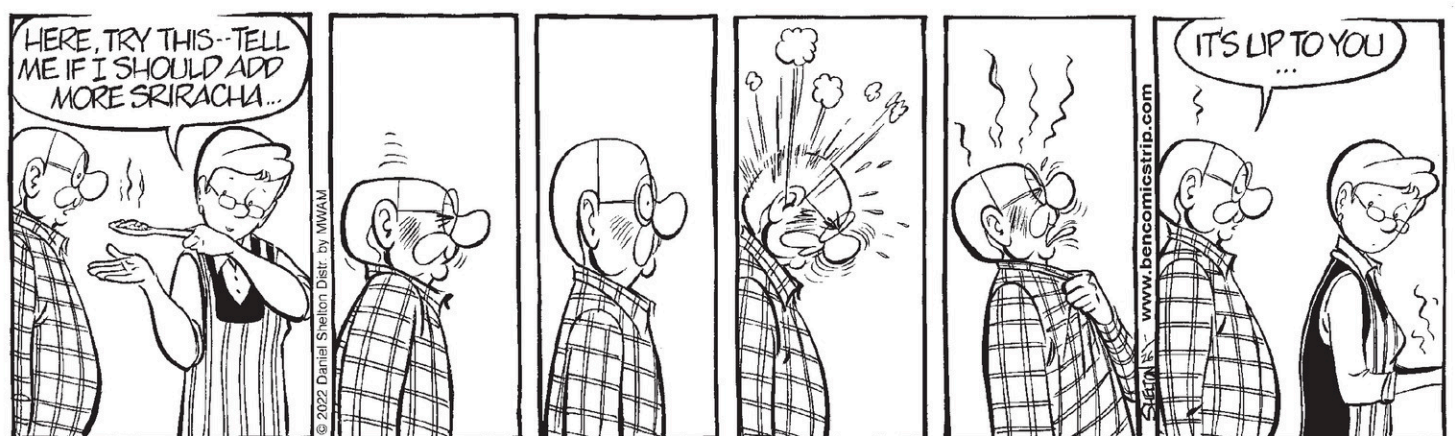
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## Ben by Daniel Shelton



# Local News

...Hamdache said he that he feels legislation like the CAQ's state secularism law makes it clear that the government wants to exclude Muslims from certain parts of society to such a degree that it is having negative impacts on the province.

## Sherbrooke groups to mark mosque attack anniversary this weekend

By Gordon Lambie  
Local Journalism Initiative

This coming Saturday evening a collection of Sherbrooke organizations will be hosting a public online gathering to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the Quebec City mosque attack. From 4 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. representatives of the different partner organizations will join together in a simple ceremony to remember the loss of Ibrahim Barry, Mamadou Tanou Barry, Khaled Belkacemi, Aboubaker Thabti, Abdelkrim Hassane, and Azzedine Soufiane, and to encourage and promote dialogue in the community.

"We want it to be a simple activity for everyone," said Abdelilah Hamdache, a representative of the Institut du Monde Arabe et Musulman de l'Estrie and one of the members of the group planning the event.

This marks the second year that the vigil will be taking place online, due to the constraints of the COVID-19 Pandemic, and the fifth year that a gathering of some kind will be held in the city in memory of the six muslim men who were killed, and the nineteen other worshippers injured in the 2017 attack.

"Our common goal is a just, inclusive and respectful society," Hamdache said, offering the attack as a demonstration of the fact that terrorism can impact anyone, regardless of their faith or cultural background.

"We need to show compassion and solidarity," said Jacqueline Belleau of Actions Interculturelles, another group involved in coordinating the event.

Belleau underlined the importance of the fact that the commemoration on Saturday is for everyone, pointing out that Actions Interculturelles is a non-political and non-religious organization, and that at least two local Christian churches will also be involved in the plan for the evening.

"We are trying to bring people together," Hamdache said, arguing that the more people actively work to



Abdelilah Hamdache speaking at a vigil held this past summer for the victims of an Islamophobic attack in London, Ontario. RECORD ARCHIVES/ GORDON LAMBIE

build an inclusive and just society, the better the results. "We are all supposed to work together," he added.

In a significant change from past years' commemorations, Saturday's event will not include any presentations from local politicians. Instead, the organizers said that a round-table meeting has been planned between the participating organizations and representatives of the federal, provincial, and municipal governments on Friday.

"We want to ask the provincial and municipal governments to follow in the footsteps of the federal government," Hamdache explained. Last year the Government of Canada announced that Jan 29 would be made the National Day of Remembrance of the Quebec City Mosque Attack and Action Against Islamophobia.

Asked about what impact the work of the last five years may have had on the cause of taking action against prejudice, the organizer argued that people should not make a perfect society their goal.

"It is impossible for society to all

think the same way," he said, calling difference of opinion human-nature.

Rather than try to make everyone think the same way, Hamdache argued in favour of giving a platform for what he believes is a mostly silent majority to speak up and work together on justice and mutual respect.

"Not everyone is open to talking about this, but fear of the other is everywhere, it is not just in Quebec," he said.

That said, Hamdache said he that he feels legislation like the CAQ's state secularism law makes it clear that the government wants to exclude Muslims from certain parts of society to such a degree that it is having negative impacts on the province. He cited the labour shortage, and the fact that parents are now being asked to help supply teach in the school system as examples of self-made problems on the

part of the government.

"It doesn't make any sense," he said, arguing that the government is so afraid of indoctrination by Muslim teachers that it has no faith in parents in the province to help guide their children's education. At the same time, however, he said that the point of exchanges like the one planned for Friday is to listen, as well as to offer concerns. "We respect the society's ways even if we don't agree with all of them," he said.

Friday's conversation will not be open to the public, but Hamdache encouraged everyone who is interested in coming to join the gathering on Saturday and indicated an intention to organize more events throughout the year.

To access Saturday's Zoom meeting, the ID code is 844 6771 7371 and the password is 053738.

## Covid

CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

of vaccination, although capacity will be capped at 50 people.

"We need to go slow," the premier said, "there is a lot of uncertainty."

The province reported 85 new deaths linked to COVID-19 on Tuesday, for a total of 12,936 since the start of the pandemic. There were also 3,278 people in hospital

with the virus, a decrease of 21 compared to Monday's information.

The total number of people in intensive care remained unchanged from Monday, at 263.

In the Eastern Townships there were 156 people in hospital with Covid, 23 of whom were in intensive care. The number of deaths in the region jumped up to 490, an increase of 16 from Monday's report.

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## Local News

*“What we see a lot is people are more anxious, stressed out due to the pandemic, and a lot more people who are discouraged, depressed, and have suicidal thoughts”*

## Mental health discussion expanded during pandemic

By Michael Boriero  
Local Journalism Initiative

Jennifer Bauer, an intervener and administrative assistant at Mental Health Estrie, witnessed a surge in phone calls at the beginning of the pandemic, however, demand for the organization's services has plateaued in the past few months.

There was a spike nearly two years ago because people were struggling to adjust to a new reality brought on by the rapid spread of COVID-19. According to Bauer, what the organization is seeing these days, though, is a mix of winter blues and endless pandemic protocols.

“I think some of the things that we're seeing is isolation, anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, and perhaps lately, a little bit more sensitive and being discouraged. It has been a long time since we've been in this kind of routine,” said Bauer.

She also noticed that the conversation around mental health has evolved throughout the pandemic, as people took to social media to open up about their struggles to adapt to dramatic changes to normal social interactions and for many, a life of solitude.

However, mental health remains a sensitive topic for a lot of people, Bauer explained, which is why she believes in the power of Bell Let's Talk Day. The conversation needs to go beyond just that one day, she

continued, but it's a great way to spark a necessary discourse.

“It's kind of a reminder that day to kind of ground ourselves again and remind ourselves that our mental health matters and it's important and it's easy sometimes to forget about that, so it's a great way to reopen and reignite that conversation around mental health,” said Bauer.

But while she acknowledges the importance of Bell's annual mental health initiative, Bauer wants people to remember that the conversation doesn't have to stop after Jan. 26. There are many mental health organizations in Quebec that work tirelessly throughout the year.

“It's also a reminder that Bell Let's Talk is one day, but we do have all of these wonderful organizations within our province, regionally, locally, that are here every single day of the year, so it's a reminder, too, that we're here and that we do provide these services,” said Bauer.

When asked about the services available to the English-speaking community in the Eastern Townships, she noted that there is a longstanding lack of English services in the region. However, according to Bauer, many organizations are trying to offer bilingual services.

“It has always been a struggle to find services in English in the area, but organizations are really working

very hard to try and do their best to offer both French and English and we obviously offer our services in English and try to accompany people as best as we can,” she said.

Tania Boilar, the director general at JEVI, a suicide prevention organization based in Sherbrooke, said she's grateful that her organization can offer both English and French services, something that, unfortunately, cannot be done across the Townships.

Boilar also pointed to a more pressing problem, which is the lack of general mental health services across the province. JEVI employees have been overwhelmed with work at times in the past two years, she explained, adding it highlights a nagging issue in Quebec.

“It's clear that there aren't enough mental health resources, whether we're talking about the health network, CLSC, or community organizations, it's clear that there aren't enough,” said Boilar, sharing that the answer is simple: give health care workers better salaries.

While she would also like to see the mental health conversation extend beyond Bell Let's Talk Day, Boilar is just happy that the conversation is even being had at all. It's still a taboo subject, she said, even with so many people sharing their mental health experiences on social media.

“For me, one day is better than zero

days, this is clear,” said Boilar, adding that she also supports initiative because the money raised by Bell is typically dispersed throughout community organizations across Canada.

Virage Santé Mentale Director General Pauline Beaudry told The Record that she has never experienced waiting lists as she has since the pandemic erupted in Quebec. Beaudry said she has roughly 15 people on her wait list trying to get help for mental health issues.

“What we see a lot is people are more anxious, stressed out due to the pandemic, and a lot more people who are discouraged, depressed, and have suicidal thoughts,” said Beaudry, adding that a lot of people have been suffering mostly from financial stress.

Although Canadians now have Bell Let's Talk Day, and social media seems to be an important outlet for many people, she believes there's still a long way to go to normalizing the topic of mental health. According to Beaudry, men continue to fall behind women in asking for help.

“I find it's better, however, there are people, especially men, that have more difficulty looking for help. I don't know if it's because it's taboo or if it's because they're embarrassed or feel weak because they need help,” Beaudry said.

## Leslie Woods

CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

farm until he purchased his own farm with the help of a federal grant in 1966. He spent many years farming cattle with his wife and three daughters until he eventually sold it in 2004, moving off the farm to a quiet townhouse in Ayer's Cliff.

Leslie Bliss celebrates his 90th birthday today (Wednesday, Jan. 26), and although it is a joyous occasion worthy of celebration, he finds it hard to celebrate with all that is going on. When asked how he was fairing, he replied, “Well, I'm lonely here, but my daughter comes in and we have a meal together once a day. I have my wood business and I go on drives, but it's been a tough two years.”

With his age group being among

the most vulnerable to COVID-19, many of his friends stay confined in their houses or in their care facilities, causing him to miss the normal interactions with friends and family that he once enjoyed. However, since the vaccine rollout began and now with booster shots available, Bliss is looking forward to a return to normalcy.

For Bliss, spending time visiting with loved ones was an important part of his life. Even the “card parties”, where people got together to play games of cards, were an irreplaceable pass-time. However, with continued concerns about the pandemic, it's unclear when card parties will be restarting. Bliss is not happy with the cancellations and restrictions on visiting friends, saying “It really gets under my skin that we can see gatherings

of hundreds of people close together in airports, and I can't even go next door to play a game of cards.”

Bliss has fond memories of the first time he ever played the game. “I remember coming home two dollars richer, and going home the next day three bucks poorer. They were good times,” he reminisced. To fill the long days, he has been immersing himself in two other passions: his wood business, and his tractor. When asked how he got into the wood business, Bliss replied, “My father handed me the axe when I turned eight years old, and I've been doing it ever since.” His impressive 82-year stint in the wood business shows no plans to stop either, as he is still one of the main suppliers to the local grocery store. He was originally approached with an offer to provide

several dozen bags of wood, which then grew to hundreds, and he has now provided close to 4,000 bags over the past six years.

When he is not doing his wood business, Bliss is often clearing his and his neighbors' driveways with his trusty John Deere. After asking about why he continues to clean his own driveway at his age, he said, “I used to do a dozen or more, but I'm slowly giving them up. I'm still doing the ones beside me because I love running the tractor and it gives me a chance to get out.”

Though he may be 90 years old, he refuses to let his age catch up to him as he continues to split his own wood, live in his own house, and plow his own yard. According to Bliss, it's the only thing keeping him out of trouble.

# Public opinion conflicted on truck convoys

Ministers and Canadian Trucking Alliance respond in unison

By Geoff Agombar  
Local Journalism Initiative

Three federal ministers and the president of Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) released a joint statement Tuesday, reacting in a single voice to gathering focus on a country-wide protest rolling toward Ottawa.

Ministers Omar Alghabra, Seamus O'Regan, and Carla Qualtrough combined their positions as heads of the Ministries of Transport, of Labour, and of Employment, Workforce Development, and Disability Inclusion, respectively, with that of CTA president Stephen Laskowski.

Together, they endeavoured to signal a unified respect and understanding for the realities of the transport industry during the pandemic. They stressed the unique position of truckers at the centre of acute economic and social challenges of this moment, such as inflation, supply chain bottlenecks, and labour shortages.

"The global COVID-19 pandemic continues to have an impact on all Canadians. Within the trucking industry, the pandemic has led to unprecedented challenges. Despite these circumstances, truckers have delivered for Canadians," they said, jointly.

"As the pandemic continues, it remains critical that essential goods reach Canadians as quickly as possible," the statement continued. "To reach this goal, and to bolster Canada's economic recovery and long-term competitiveness, it's important to tackle two major challenges facing industry - supply chain constraints and labour shortages."

Initially, government responses focused on the high rate of vaccination among truckers and marginal effects on inflation. This shift in tone seemed

to signal a recognition that public perception of the convoy protests was not rooted in the recent cancellation of exemptions from cross-border travel restrictions for unvaccinated truckers.

Instead, the convoy rapidly accrued a much broader symbolism. Donations and commentary snowballed online. Cars and trucks manifested in British Columbia, Alberta and Windsor, ON. The "Freedom Convoy 2022" campaign displayed early signs of pent-up strength and momentum as the conversion from online talk into real-world action and assembly accelerated.

By midafternoon Tuesday, a GoFundMe campaign launched on Jan. 14 by Tamara Lich, secretary of the fledgling federal separatist Maverick Party (formerly Wexit Canada), to support convoy participants' fuel costs topped \$4.6 million in donations from more than 60,000 donors, including individual donations up to \$11,000.

Locally, Kevin Fowler has long experience in North America's trucking industry, including pilot car and route surveyor for oversized transportation, flatbed, refrigerated freight, and as an owner-operator, as well as in operations, dispatch, safety, loss prevention, logistics, and business development. Currently, he manages Logistics and Business Development from his office in Richmond, QC, for the dry van division of P&N Trucking Services Ltd., headquartered in Ontario.

Reached by phone, Fowler had no comment about the convoys. His company's fleet operates within Canada, so the cancellation of border exemptions does not affect their operations. Plus, passions are high, so the consequences of wading into debates are unpredictable.

Fowler is willing to share perspectives on current realities in the

domestic industry, however.

Last week, he had drivers coming back from the Maritimes with reports of empty shelves, "We saw grocery shelves down in New Brunswick that were empty. Fresh produce, fruit and vegetables, and the meat section. It was unfortunate. That was last Tuesday afternoon."

Fowler expresses worry that truckers will catch blame for shortages. "We're seeing more and more of this. Truckers are going to be the ones... Transport companies are going to be the ones people are going to give flack to."

Companies like Fowler's are suffering supply chain issues as well. "Right now, if I had three times as many trucks and three times as many drivers on the road, I could be working all of them. And I can't because, with supply chain demands since the beginning of Covid, we can't get trucks. We can't get trailers. We're even having a hard time sourcing parts to repair our trucks that are currently on the road. And that's horrendous. We're looking at recycling and upcycling eleven-year-old trucks to keep them running."

Fowler says his company orders a certain number of new vehicles each year, with delivery spread out across the calendar. "Normally we disperse them quarterly. If we replace ten trucks a year, we'll do two to three a quarter just to keep a steady growth and maintain cashflow. And this year we're getting hardly any of them. Probably less than 30 per cent of the trucks we need and ordered."

"[The dealership] cannot give us delivery dates on the new trucks that we've ordered. We're normally taking possession now of trucks that we ordered last June. They're telling us now that the trucks we ordered last June, we may see one or two of them in the final quarter of 2022."

"A lot of them are most probably assembled already," Fowler speculates.

"It's just, they're waiting for these same microprocessors and microchips that everybody is waiting for. Those issues there, plus a delay in the supply chain."

Referring to trade magazines and Statistics Canada, Fowler has seen reports of huge numbers of drivers needed in Canadian transportation. His own experience leads him to believe those numbers are underestimated. "Industry-wide, they say we're lacking about 70,000 active drivers. I think we're up closer to probably 100,000 to be realistic. With the people that want to leave the workforce and people that are getting ready to retire, I think it's a lot closer to 100,000."

In that perspective, Fowler admits to questioning recent changes that could pressure thousands more truckers out of the workforce.

Recent reports in Reuters, including comments from Laskowski, cite CTA estimates that "10 per cent to 20 per cent, or between 12,000-22,000 Canadian truck drivers, and 40 per cent, or 16,000 U.S. truck drivers traveling into Canada would be sidelined by upcoming mandates," and that "the industry was short some 18,000 drivers even before the mandate."

Mid conversation, Fowler does offer to go on the record as he shares his personal reservations about the constitutional implications of public health regulations, while stressing his own choice to get vaccinated. "I feel they are infringing on our human rights and freedoms. I have nothing against vaccination. I am vaccinated. Where I have my issue is telling citizens of the country or the province where you can and cannot go, and what you should and should not do. I have a huge issue with that, and I think a lot of people in this country do. And, this convoy that's headed toward Ottawa, I hope it gets the attention it deserves."

## Quebec extends deadline for recycling pilot projects

Record Staff

RECYC-QUÉBEC has recently published its mid-term report on seven pilot projects that began last summer. According to a press release issued on Monday, this interim report has also been submitted to the consortium of beverage producers and retailers at the heart of these projects.

"I would like to thank the citizens, retailers, beverage producers and municipalities of Quebec who have contributed to this important step towards a modern and expanded deposit system," said Environment Minister Benoit Charette.

The organization responsible

for the province's management of residual materials noted the pilot projects, which were supposed to conclude at the end of January, will be extended until March 31, 2022. This move will allow further equipment testing during the winter period.

The provincial government will use the new date to prepare the transition to a modernized system. RECYC-QUÉBEC has already invested \$1.3 million to set up the pilot projects. The organization is giving another \$175,000 for the extension of the pilot projects.

The pilot projects are testing innovative concepts based on population density with a view

to recovering beverage containers that will be refundable under the upcoming regulations. There are roughly 20 performance indicators guiding the collection of data.

The organization has been collecting data on social acceptability, as well as environmental, operational and financial performance. The first few months of operation have shown a positive response from Quebecers. They are returning containers in large numbers.

There have been nearly 8.5 million products brought back to the return points. And it has been observed that the products are in excellent quality with a contamination rate of less than three per cent. Public participation

is crucial to the success of the pilot projects.

RECYC-QUÉBEC President and CEO Sonia Gagné is quoted in the press release, explaining the importance of continuing the pilot projects. The projects allow the organization to measure effectiveness of the deposit system and increase operational performance.

"We have all learned a great deal in the first six months of testing and have achieved a key objective, which is to gather strategic information to continue moving forward with the plan to modernize and expand this system that will handle more than 4 billion containers," she said.

# EDITORIAL

We found that when recognizing words and making simple decisions about them, competitive Scrabble players used a different network of brain areas than those who didn't play Scrabble competitively.

## The Wordle craze: Why do we love puzzles, and are they good for our brains?

By Penny Pexman  
Professor of Psychology, University of Calgary

In recent weeks, a web-based word puzzle called Wordle has become a popular daily distraction. Suddenly, millions of people are focused on their vocabulary of five-letter words, and are newly aware of concepts like letter frequency and letter position as they strategize about the best opening words and faster solutions.

For these people, Wordle is captivating. Previous research can help us understand how our brains respond to word games, and why we love them.

Wordle is a single-player puzzle that combines elements of several games, including Scrabble and Battleship. My colleagues and I have studied Scrabble as a way of understanding how language is processed in the brain, and how that processing changes with experience.

### This is your brain on Scrabble

Competitive Scrabble players are people who spend a great deal of time playing Scrabble, competing in Scrabble tournaments, memorizing word lists and practising anagramming – shuffling sets of letters to create different words.

Much like chess players, competitive Scrabble players are ranked in an international rating system based on tournament results. We recruited competitive players from Scrabble tournaments and clubs and gave them a series of tasks to understand how all of this Scrabble practice and play alters their mental processes.

In our first study, we found that competitive Scrabble players recognized words faster than those who didn't routinely play Scrabble, particularly when words were presented vertically. Vertical word presentation is unusual in written English but common in Scrabble, and competitive players are very good at recognizing vertical words.

We also found that Scrabble players quickly recognized words without fully processing word meaning. This is probably because in Scrabble, you need to know whether different strings of letters make up legal plays, but you don't actually need to know what those words mean.

We also used brain imaging to study how all those years of intensive practice might have altered brain processes for language in competitive Scrabble players.

We found that when recognizing words and making simple decisions about them, competitive Scrabble players used a different network of brain areas than those who didn't play Scrabble competitively. Scrabble experts made use of brain regions not typically associated with word meaning retrieval, but rather those associated with visual memory and perception.

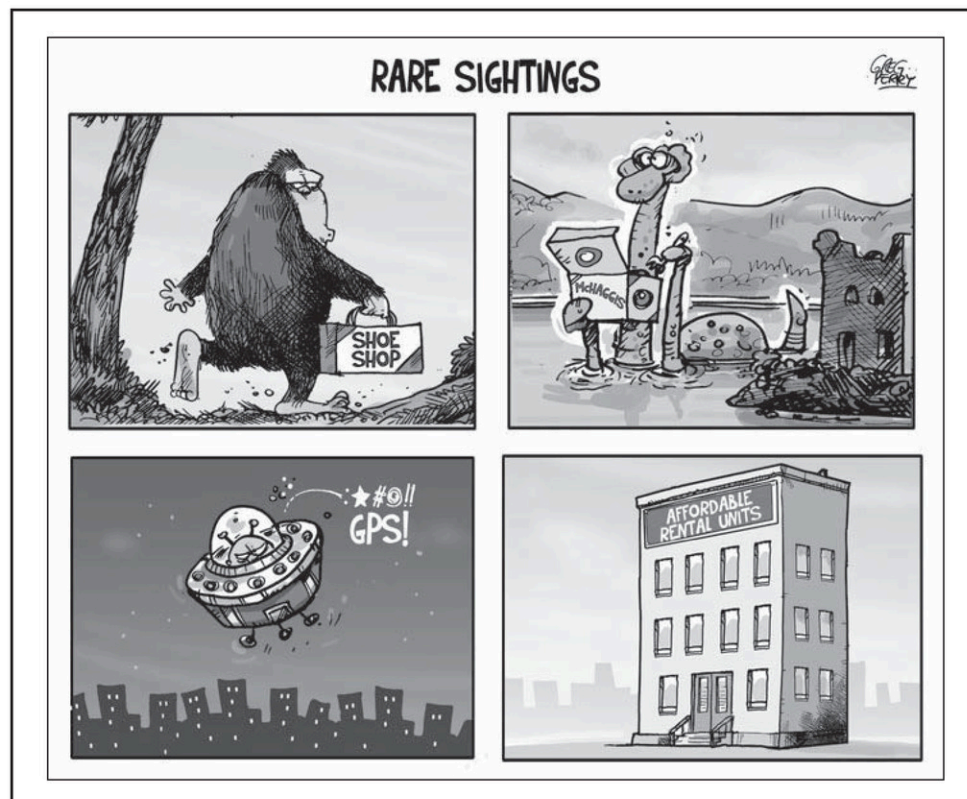
### A Scrabble habit makes you ... good at Scrabble

We wondered whether the effects of Scrabble practice that we observed in competitive players have benefits beyond Scrabble. Does playing lots of Scrabble make you good at anything else? The answer seems to be no.

We investigated that question by giving competitive Scrabble players and a group of Scrabble non-experts a task that was similar to Scrabble but used symbols instead of letters. In that task, Scrabble players were no better than anyone else in terms of their processing speed or accuracy.

We also investigated whether Scrabble expertise protects players from the effects of brain aging. Again, the answer seems to be no. Older Scrabble players still show the normal effects of aging, like slower processing speed.

In both Scrabble and Wordle, players need to search their word memory based on letters, shuffle letters across positions to find solutions or plays – the meaning of the words is irrelevant.



Because of these similarities, many of the brain processes involved in Scrabble are probably also engaged when solving Wordles.

Our research with people who are not Scrabble experts shows that mental processes start to change quite quickly when people are asked to take on a new word recognition task. That means it's very likely your Wordle habit has already caused slight changes in the brain processes you use to solve the puzzles.

Those changes help you to play Wordle, but probably don't help you with anything else.

### Why do some people love puzzles?

Wordle has become a habit for millions, but for others it's not appealing.

There are probably lots of reasons for this, but one explanation could be differences in what people find motivating. Some people enjoy puzzles and thinking challenges more than others. This type of motivation is referred

to as need for cognition, and people who have a high need for cognition tend to seek out mental challenges like word games and puzzles.

In Scrabble, there are usually multiple possible plays that could advance the game, but Wordles have a single right answer. With only one Wordle released per day, everyone is solving the same puzzle. The online game's sharing options also allow us to share our results with others without giving the answer away.

That means Wordle is also creating an opportunity for shared experience at a time when many people are feeling disconnected from others. A Wordle habit is not likely to make you smarter or ward off brain aging, but it may give you a daily dose of complex cognition combined with social interaction – and that can be a very good thing.

This article was originally published at [theconversation.com](http://theconversation.com)

## Letters

### Congratulations on Mont Orford Improvements

The mountain offers so much recreation to the public and especially with the pandemic people can get outdoors and enjoy all the amazing facilities the mountain has to offer.

It is interesting to note that the road to Mont-Orford was built by German Prisoners of War during World War Two and the rope tows that took the skiers up the slopes were made by German Navy prisoners of War.

Where the chalet now sits was where the prisoners ate their meals. A lot of changes since those days.

DON MARTIN  
MELBOURNE, ONTARIO

The Record welcomes your letters to the editor. Please limit your letters to 300 words. We reserve the right to edit for length, clarity, legality and taste. Please ensure there is a phone number or email where you can be reached, to confirm authorship and current town/city of residence. Names will not be withheld but the address and phone number of the writer are not published, except by request. Please email your letters to [newsroom@sherbrookerecord.com](mailto:newsroom@sherbrookerecord.com). Preference is given to writers from the Eastern Townships.

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# Olympic men's hockey

## Canada mixes youth and experience

By Joshua Clipperton  
The Canadian Press

Canada is turning to a mix of youthful exuberance and battle-scarred experience in its quest for Olympic men's hockey gold minus the country's NHL stars.

Eric Staal, 37, and Mason McTavish, 18, are two centres bookending the 25-man roster announced Tuesday for the upcoming Beijing Games.

Staal will be looking for his second Olympic gold medal after winning on home soil 12 years ago in Vancouver — a month after McTavish turned seven years old.

Also heading to China after the NHL bowed out of the tournament last month because of COVID-19 concerns are 19-year-old defenceman Owen Power, the No. 1 pick at the 2021 draft, 20-year-old goaltender Devon Levi and 22-year-old forward Jack McBain.

And while there's no Sidney Crosby or Connor McDavid to be found, Canada has plenty of NHL miles on a roster that also includes professionals playing in North America, Europe and Russia.

Making up part of the veteran forward group with Staal assembled by general manager Shane Doan and the rest of Hockey Canada's brain trust are Daniel Winnik (36), Adam Cracknell (36) and David Desharnais (35), while defencemen Jason Demers (33) and Mark Barberio (31) are some other names fans might recognize.

"I have so many fond memories of competing at the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver and winning a gold medal on home ice," Staal said in a press release. "The Olympics are the pinnacle of sport, and I know our entire team is grateful for the opportunity."

Hockey Canada and the national governing bodies of the sports' other powerhouses had been banking on NHLers going to Beijing until last month when the league nixed plans after close to 100 games were postponed because of the coronavirus.

"The management group and coaching staff have worked diligently to evaluate and select players that we believe will give us the best chance to win a gold medal," Doan said in a release. "It truly is a special honour to be able to represent your country at the Olympics."

"We know this group of athletes and staff will embrace the opportunity and make all Canadians proud."

There isn't nearly as much runway for preparations compared to 2018 when the NHL skipped the Games for financial reasons, but 10 of the players named Tuesday suited up for Canada at Russia's Channel One Cup in December with Claude Julien behind the bench.

Doan and Julien were also set to lead Canada at the Spengler Cup, which was cancelled because of COVID-19, and were on standby as replacements in the event the NHL withdrew.

Following a training camp and exhibition game in Switzerland, the Canadians will travel to Beijing before playing one more warmup contest

against the United States.

Canada opens tournament play Feb. 10 against Germany before taking on the U.S. (Feb. 12) and hosts China (Feb. 13) to close out round-robin action in Group A.

Canada struggled to score goals in securing bronze four years ago in Pyeongchang when the youngest player on the roster was 25, but has more skill up front this time with the likes of Staal, Desharnais, McTavish — the third overall pick last year by the Anaheim Ducks — Josh Ho-Sang and McBain.

There's also a significant age gap.

McTavish was in diapers when Staal went No. 2 overall to the Carolina Hurricanes in June 2003, while Power had yet to celebrate his first birthday.

McTavish, who was returned to junior by Anaheim and will be playing on his sixth team this season, and Power were both focal points for Canada at the world junior hockey championship before the under-20 tournament was cancelled because of COVID-19 last month.

A member of the "Triple Gold Club", along with that previous Olympic triumph, he also won the Stanley Cup in 2006 and world championships in 2007, Staal hasn't played in the NHL since last season's run to the final with the Montreal Canadiens, but recently suited up with the AHL's Iowa Wild in preparation for Beijing.

The veteran of 17 NHL seasons has 441 goals and 593 assists in 1,293 regular-season games to go along with 59 points in 83 playoff contests.

Power is the big name on the back end after the six-foot-six defenceman with Michigan of the NCAA went No. 1 to the Buffalo Sabres last summer, but is also at least 10 years younger than the rest of Canada's blue line.

The roster has lots of top-end experience mixed with youth on forward and defence, but the crease is likely the biggest question mark entering the tournament.

Levi, who was named tournament MVP for Canada's silver-medal performance at last year's world juniors, has put up gaudy numbers in the NCAA with Northeastern this season, sporting a .948 save percentage and a 1.47 goals-against average, but remains largely untested.

Matt Tomkins, 27, and Edward Pasquale, 31, are the other goaltenders on the roster, with the latter's three games as a member of the Tampa Bay Lightning in 2018-19 the extent of the trio's NHL experience.

There are also three returning players from the 2018 squad in forward Eric O'Dell and defencemen Maxim Noreau and Mat Robinson.

Canada won gold with NHLers in 2002, 2010 and 2014, but hasn't topped the podium in an Olympic tournament that wasn't best-on-best since 1952.

The NHL went to five straight Games between 1998 and 2014, but declined to participate four years ago in a tournament that was won by the Russians.



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## Death



### Wendy Elizabeth (nee Cleveland) LODGE

November 20, 1947 – January 17, 2022

It is with great sadness that we announce the peaceful passing of Wendy Elizabeth Cleveland (Lodge) at the CHUS Fleurimont on January 17, 2022, at the age of 74, with her family at her side.

Wendy was the beloved wife and best friend to her husband Brian Howard Lodge and the loving mother to Paul (Angela Filion) and Tanya (Shawn Fowler) and the special Geema to Madison, Tyler, Hailey and Aidan.

She was a wonderful sister to Harold (Rachel), Joann, Susan (Carolyn), Clair (Cindy), Lydia (Hector) and Lucy (Brian). Wendy will be missed by her faithful companion Lance. She will be sadly missed by many other family members and special friends.

Wendy will always be remembered for her beautiful smile and her love for life. You may be gone but you will never be forgotten in our hearts.

Special thanks to the doctors and staff at the Val des Sources Hospital and the CHUS Fleurimont for their excellent care and kindness.

Due to Covid restrictions, a private visitation was held on January 22, 2022 for the family, at the Cass Funeral Home in Richmond.

A celebration of her life will be held in the spring at Danville Protestant cemetery, date to be decided at a later time.

Donations to the Heart and Stroke Foundation or the charity of your choice in Wendy's name would be greatly appreciated.

<https://www.heartandstroke.ca/>

## Death

## In Memoriam

GIFFORD, Marina (nee Sells) - In loving memory of a dear wife, mother and grandmother who passed away nineteen years ago, January 26, 2003.

*A special smile, a special face,  
In our hearts a special place.*

*Memories are a gift to treasure,  
Ours of you will last forever.*

Loved and missed

ALTON  
CHILDREN and  
GRANDCHILDREN



# Datebook

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2022

Today is the 26th day of 2022 and the 37th day of winter.

**TODAY'S HISTORY:** In 1837, Michigan was admitted as the 26th U.S. state.

In 1950, the Indian Constitution went into effect, marking the birth of the Republic of India.

In 1998, President Bill Clinton denied allegations of an extramarital affair during a televised speech.

In 2020, NBA great Kobe Bryant and eight others onboard were killed in a helicopter crash near Los Angeles.

**TODAY'S BIRTHDAYS:** Douglas MacArthur (1880-1964), military leader; Maria von Trapp (1905-1987), matriarch of singing family/memoirist; Paul Newman (1925-2008), actor; Jules Feiffer (1929- ), cartoonist/writer; Scott Glenn (1939- ), actor; Gene Siskel (1946-1999), journalist/critic; David Strathairn (1949- ), actor; Eddie Van Halen (1955-2020), guitarist/songwriter; Ellen DeGeneres (1958- ), comedian/talk show host; Wayne Gretzky (1961- ), hockey player; Vince Carter (1977- ), basketball player; Sasha Banks (1992- ), professional wrestler.

**TODAY'S FACT:** The first Library of Congress was burned (along with the rest of the Capitol building) by British soldiers in 1814, and its 3,000 books were destroyed. The library was rebuilt in part through the purchase of President Thomas Jefferson's personal library of 6,487 books in 1815.

**TODAY'S SPORTS:** In 1986, Chicago crushed New England 46-10 in Super Bowl XX, as the Bears' renowned defense held the Patriots to 7 yards rushing.

**TODAY'S QUOTE:** "I'm not a rock star. Sure I am, to a certain extent because of the situation, but when kids ask me how it feels to be a rock star, I say leave me alone, I'm not a rock star. I'm not in it for the fame, I'm in it because I like to play." – Eddie Van Halen

**TODAY'S NUMBER:** 1.37 – weight (in pounds) of the Cullinan Diamond, the largest gem-quality diamond ever found. The 3,106.75-carat gem was discovered in the Premier Mine near Pretoria, South Africa, on this day in 1905.

**TODAY'S MOON:** Between last quarter moon (Jan. 25) and new moon (Jan. 31).

## IMST breathing exercises can help lower blood pressure



ASK THE DOCTORS by Eve Glazier, M.D., and Elizabeth Ko, M.D.

abdomen; the external intercostal muscles of the rib cage; and, to a lesser degree, the abdominal muscles.

Unless someone is actively exercising, breathing is a largely passive event. With the resistance created by the devices developed for IMST, it's possible to tone and strengthen the muscles that are used in breathing while otherwise remaining at rest.

IMST has long been used to aid in recovery after spending time on a ventilator and to help people living with breathing disorders such as COPD and asthma. But, as you mention, research conducted two years ago at the University of Colorado in Boulder linked daily practice of IMST to improved blood pressure. Last spring, the results of a small study published in the Journal of the American Heart Association added to the evidence regarding the benefits of the practice. Researchers divided 36 adults, aged between 50 and 79, each with high blood pressure, into two groups. One group used the IMST breathing device set at high resistance. The other participants, who made up the placebo group, used the same breathing device, but set at very low resistance. None of the people in the study knew which group they had been assigned to.

The participants were asked to do 30 breaths per day, six days a week. After six weeks of the five-minute practice, systolic blood pressure (that's the top number) in the high-resistance group dropped 9 points.

It's an improvement that continued another six weeks, even without IMST practice. The group also saw a rise in biomarkers that are associated with improved arterial health and a drop in inflammation associated with heart disease. Similar changes were not seen in the low-resistance control group.

Although the reasons for the improvements to blood pressure and vascular health are not yet clear, researchers said they suspect the practice of IMST prompts the body to increase production of an important molecule known as nitric oxide. It's a vasodilator, which means that nitric oxide helps the blood vessels in the body to widen and relax. This lowers blood pressure and increases circulation.

We're glad that you'll be speaking with your cardiologist before moving forward with IMST. Although the practice has proven safe for a wide range of participants, it's still important that anyone considering it should consult with their health care provider before beginning.

*Eve Glazier, M.D., MBA, is an internist and associate professor of medicine at UCLA Health. Elizabeth Ko, M.D., is an internist and assistant professor of medicine at UCLA Health.*

*(Send your questions to askthedoctors@mednet.ucla.edu, or write: Ask the Doctors, c/o UCLA Health Sciences Media Relations, 10960 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1955, Los Angeles, CA, 90024. Owing to the volume of mail, personal replies cannot be provided.)*



Fig 16

> If this feels like a math test, visit [mathliteracy.ca](http://mathliteracy.ca) or call 1-800-303-1004.



# Dear Annie

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2022

**Dear Annie:** Am I the only one who is annoyed by the lack of customer service in our country today? I am in my 70s, and I vividly remember the days when I would call a hotel to make a reservation. A live human being would answer the phone and handle my request.

Now we have to use our computers to find the hotel. Very often, the phone number on the hotel's website goes to a third party that books the reservation and knows nothing about the actual hotel. If you ask a question like, "Do you keep the swimming pool heated?" the answer is that the person on the phone doesn't have the faintest idea.

It used to be easy to call an airline to make a reservation. Once again, real people answered the phone – usually on the first or second ring. You could ask questions, change your mind, find alternatives and hang up with your flight and seat secured just the way you wanted it.

Now calling an airline requires waiting, being put on hold and being given a series of choices; everything is designed to send you back to your computer to proceed online. At my age, this is incredibly frustrating, especially because I remember when the airlines took pride in customer service.

How about dealing with your bank? I remember the days when I knew my banker and could call her up to ask a question, and she was always courteous, personal and efficient. Now I feel like you need a degree in computer science just to get the answer to a simple question.

The same is true with medical care. For many years, our family had the same doctor, who took pride in his practice as a family physician. He died in his sleep in his mid-80s during the lockdowns, and my wife and I are still trying to find a family doctor with a private practice. We have found some very good doctors, but they are all

affiliated with corporate-run hospitals, and you can feel that your visit is being timed. Everything is on the clock, so you are ushered in and out. It is so impersonal!

During my annual physical, our old doctor would spend a few minutes chatting after he took a series of tests. I once asked him why he did that, and he said it was to observe my eyes, my mental clarity and a host of other things that were visible just by observing. Oh, to have a doctor like that back again!

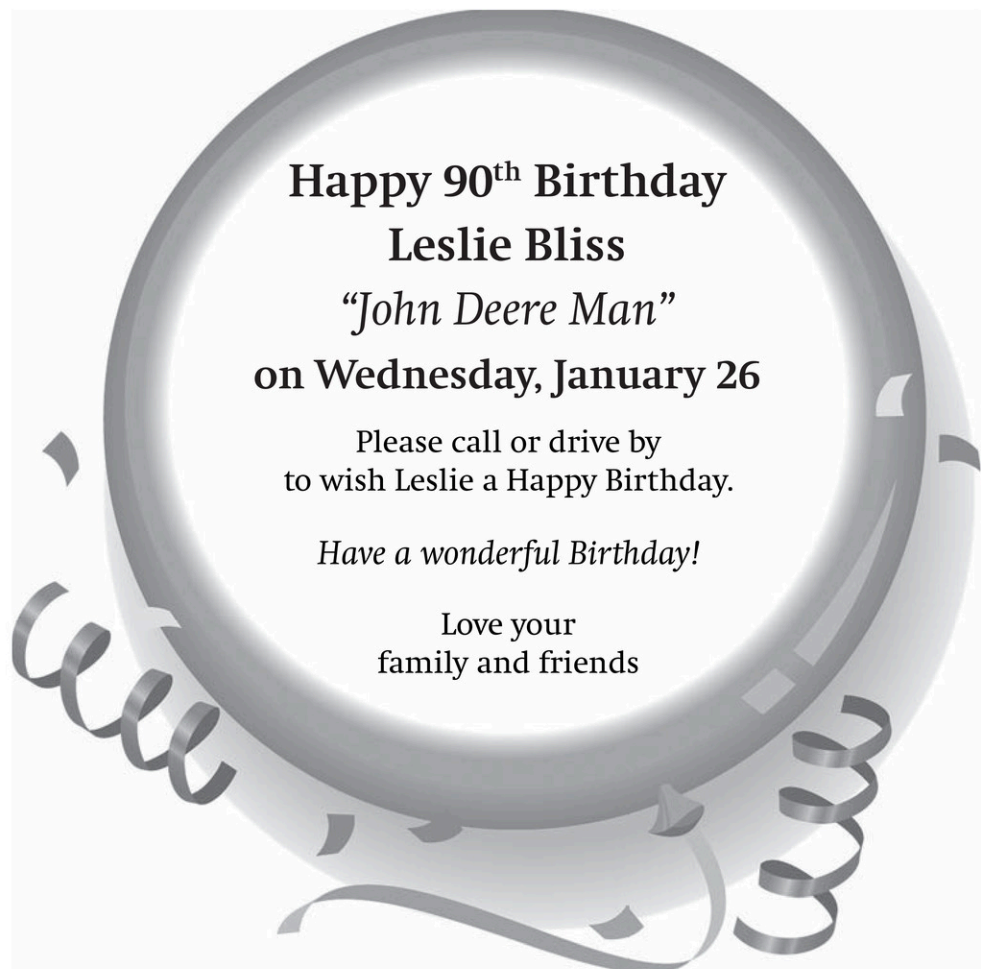
We see this impersonal approach to "customer service" everywhere. How many businesses can you call on the phone and a real person answers it? There are very few, and they are confined mostly to small businesses.

No doubt the new technology has made things more efficient in the long run, but individual people live day to day, not in the long run, and I am concerned that this lack of individual attention is driving me crazy. Am I the only one who has noticed the change? – Too Impersonal

**Dear Too Impersonal:** Yours is one of many letters I have received on this topic. I am printing it because you give some good examples of frustrations that we are all coping with in 2022. I am younger than you, but I do sense that you are right – that companies used to place a greater emphasis on interacting with their customers. I would be curious to see any feedback from other readers or from executives at large companies who believe that bigger is better, even if it makes the customer feel smaller.

*"How Can I Forgive My Cheating Partner?" is out now! Annie Lane's second anthology – featuring favorite columns on marriage, infidelity, communication and reconciliation – is available as a paperback and e-book. Visit <http://www.creatorspublishing.com> for more information.*

Send your questions for Annie Lane to [dearannie@creators.com](mailto:dearannie@creators.com).



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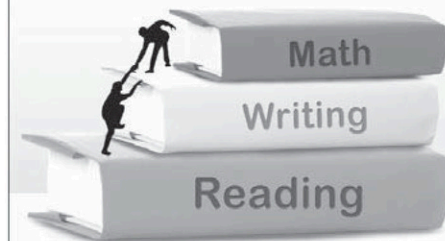
## GET COOKING WORD SEARCH

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

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

### WORDS

- ADJUST
- BREAKFAST
- CHOPPED
- COOKING
- CULINARY
- DESSERT
- DINNER
- FOOD
- GARNISH
- HOLIDAY
- INGREDIENTS
- KITCHEN
- LUNCH
- MEALS
- MEASURE
- MIXING
- PLANNING
- POT
- PRESENTATION
- RECIPE
- SEASONINGS
- SLOW
- SNACK
- TASTE



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### CELEBRITY CIPHER

by Luis Campos

Celebrity Cipher cryptograms are created from quotations by famous people, past and present. Each letter in the cipher stands for another.

"DR PRRO GSAR THPOPREE, GSAR  
BSGFJEEHSP, GSAR VSZ, GSAR  
WJMIKXRA. H ORNHPHXRWZ DJPX  
XS BSPXAHCMXR XS XKJX."  
— RWWRP ORIRPRARE

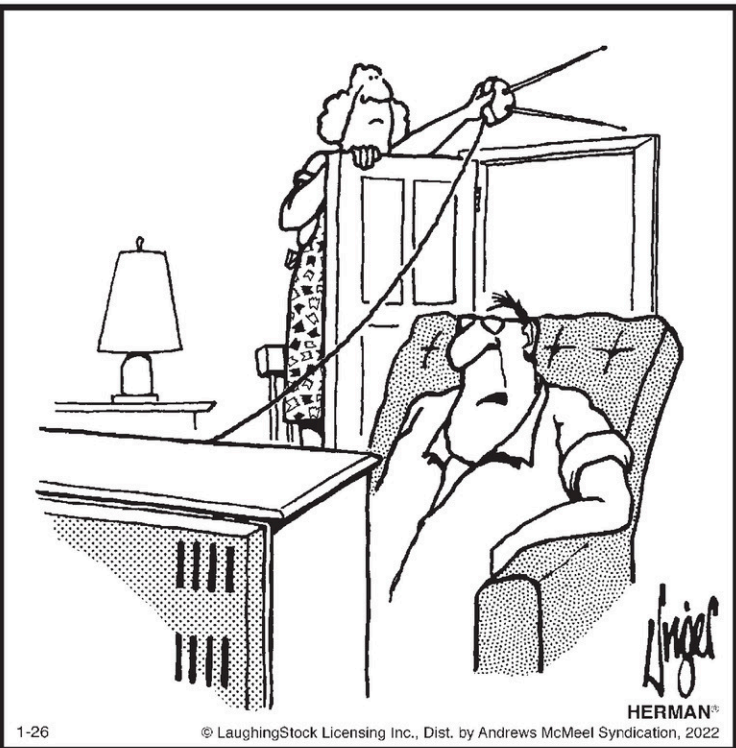
Previous Solution: "Everything you want to be, you already are. You're simply on the path to discovering it." — Alicia Keys

TODAY'S CLUE: B equals B

### REALITY CHECK

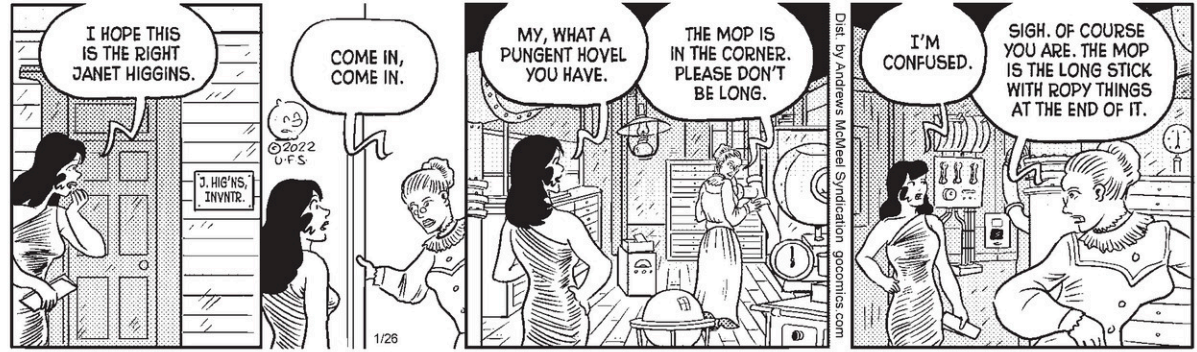


### HERMAN

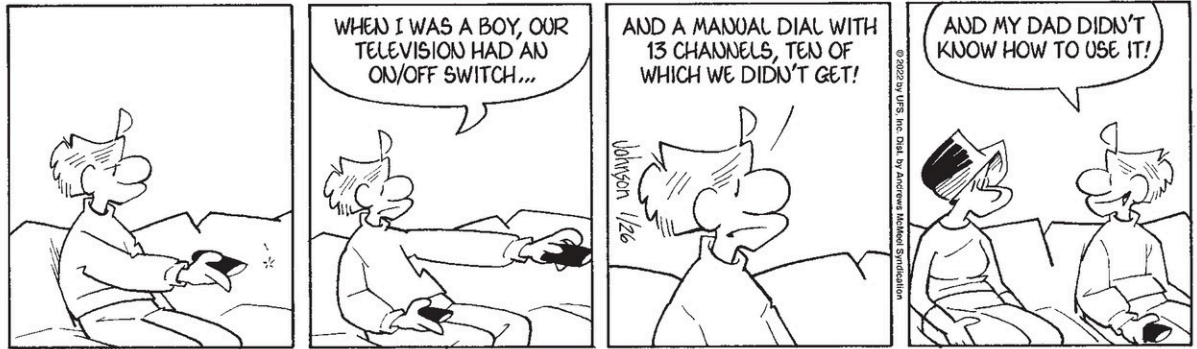


"That's it, perfect ... keep it there and call the cable company."

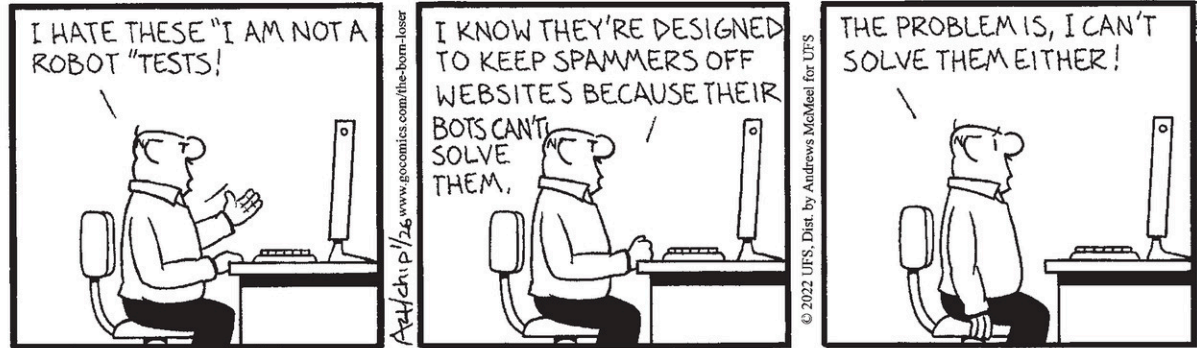
### ALLEY OOP



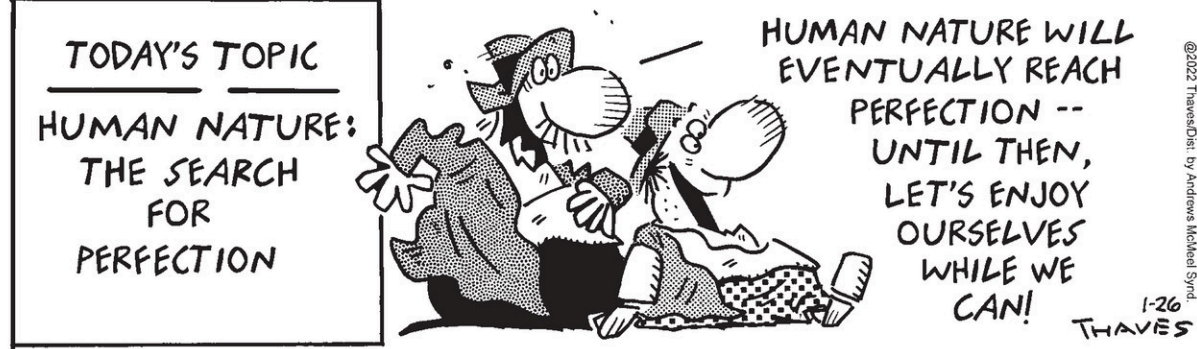
### ARLO & JANIS



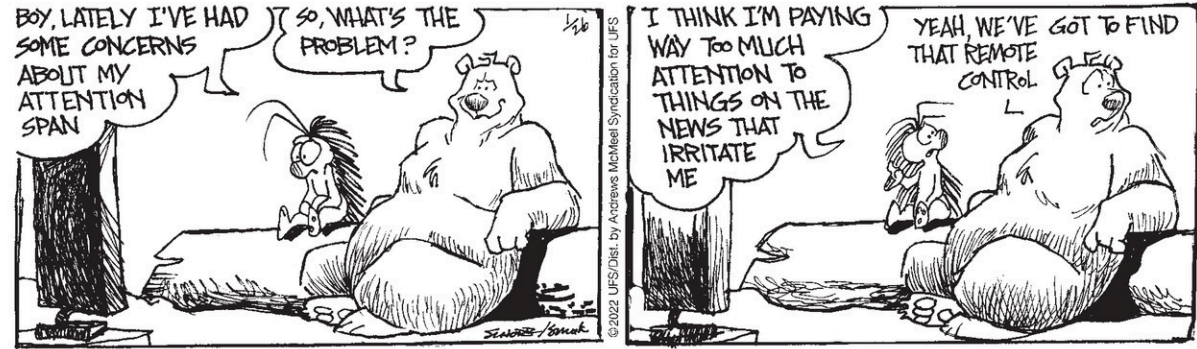
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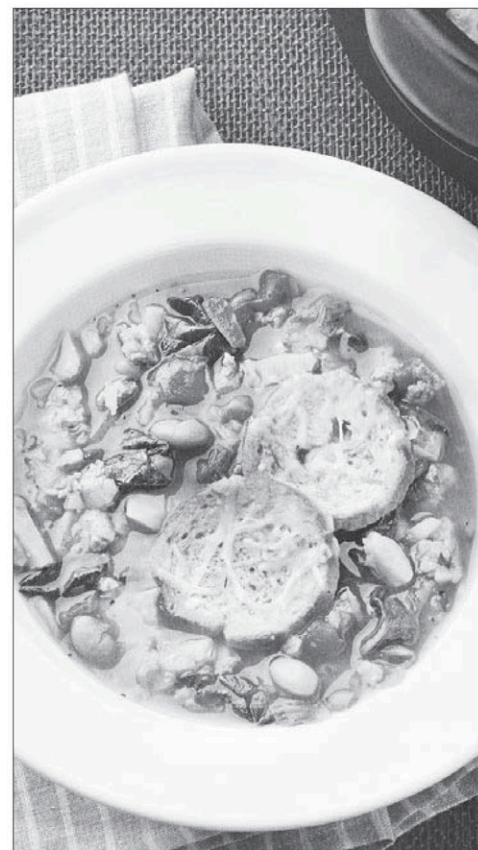
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Family Literacy Day Life Literacy Canada

## A Valentine's dinner to warm you up

Treating that special someone in your life to a delicious meal can be done any time of the year, but is especially poignant and romantic on Valentine's Day. Even though plenty of people may be tempted to dish up gourmet fare, comfort foods can be equally appealing, especially on a cold February day.

Soup can be both filling, tasty and customized with individuals' favorite flavors. Italian seasonings and ingredients are on display in this recipe for "Hearty Tuscan Soup" from "Season's Best: Fast, Fun & Fabulous" by The Pampered Chef™ Test Kitchens. Try it for a satisfying Valentine's meal for two or more.



**Hearty Tuscan Soup**  
 Serves 8

- 2 15-ounce cans reduced-sodium pinto beans
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 8 ounces Italian turkey sausage (about 2 links), casings removed
- 1 large onion
- 1 medium sweet potato, peeled
- 4 garlic cloves
- 4 cups unsalted chicken stock or chicken broth
- 1 14.5-ounce can fire-roasted diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 tablespoon Pampered Chef™ Rosemary Herb Seasoning Mix
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 package fresh baby spinach leaves, washed and dried
- 16 melba toast rounds
- 3 tablespoons shredded Italian cheese blend

1. Drain and rinse pinto beans in a small colander. Transfer half of the beans to a food processor; process until almost smooth. Set aside both whole and mashed beans.

2. Heat oil in a Dutch oven over medium heat 3 to 5 minutes or until shimmering. Cook sausage 4 to 6

minutes or until no longer pink, breaking into crumbles.

3. Wedge onion, then chop. Cut sweet potato into chunks, then coarsely chop. Add onion, sweet potato and garlic to Dutch oven; cook and stir 5 to 6 minutes or until onion is softened.

4. Stir all beans, chicken stock, tomatoes, seasoning mix, and pepper into Dutch oven. Cover; bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium; simmer, covered, 10 minutes.

5. Preheat broiler. Remove Dutch oven from heat; add spinach. Cover; let stand 2 to 3 minutes or until spinach is wilted. Top soup with melba rounds; sprinkle with cheese.

6. Place Dutch oven 2 to 4 inches from heating element. Broil 2 to 4 minutes or until croutons and cheese are lightly browned. Ladle soup and croutons into bowls.

(Metro Creative)

# SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

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

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PREVIOUS SOLUTION

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

**HOW TO PLAY:**

Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.



THE RECORD

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# NEA Crossword Puzzle

# Your Birthday

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2022

what's available and how you can use your skills to surpass your expectations. Dig in and put your energy where it will turn a profit for you. Connect with like-minded people.

**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22) - Stop and rethink your next move. Emotions will escalate if someone makes changes that don't fit your intentions or plans. Be persistent and head down the path that makes you feel comfortable.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) - Get into the groove and keep up with what's current. Staying fit, socializing, networking and participating in something uplifting will lead to new connections and a healthy routine.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) - Revisit the past to figure out the best way to handle someone or something that is causing you grief. Show restraint when someone asks for too much. Look out for your interests and protect your assets.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) - Keep an open mind, but don't be gullible. Helping others is honorable, but make sure you don't get left doing all the work yourself. Leave plenty of time to take care of your needs.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) - Put your energy where it will do some good. Finish what you start before you head out with friends. Take your responsibilities seriously, and you'll avoid criticism and complaints.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) - Stand up for your beliefs and put your reputation on the line. Having confidence and living up to your promises will affect the way others respond to you. Share your thoughts with a loved one.

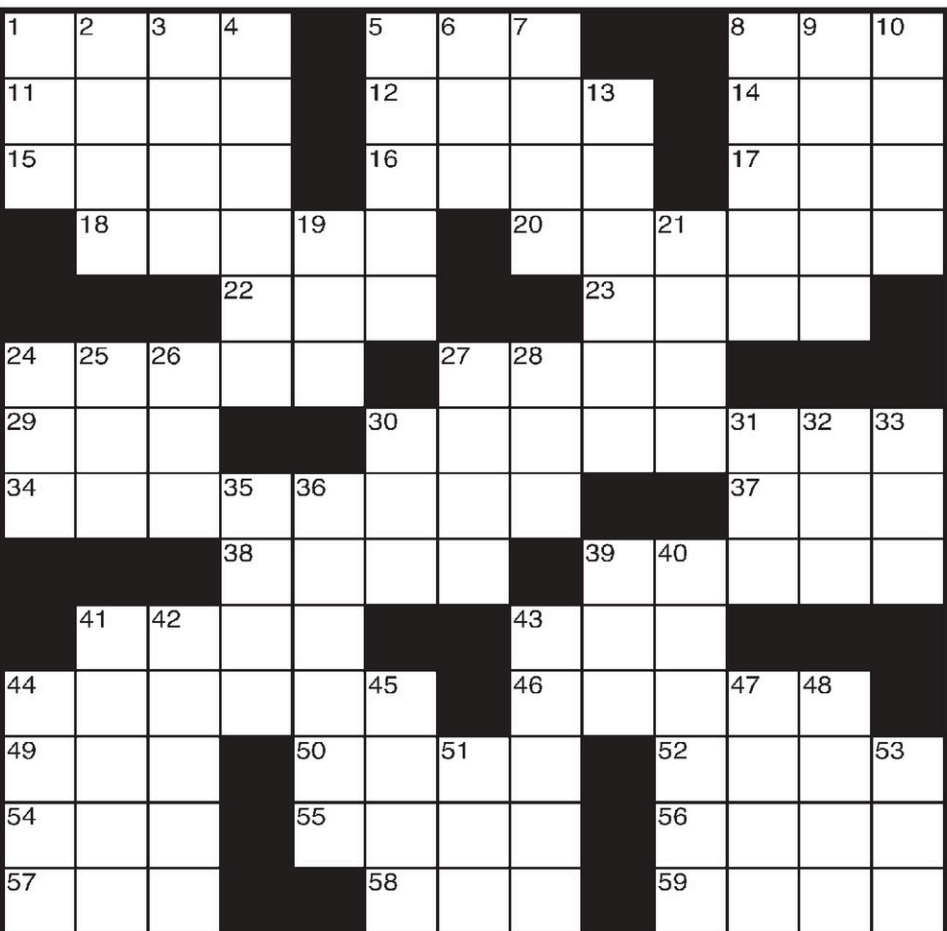
## Answer to Previous Puzzle



- ACROSS**
- 1 Fine sediment
  - 5 Hot tub
  - 8 Pointed tool
  - 11 Medicinal plant
  - 12 Unmannered one
  - 14 Mauna —
  - 15 Bellow
  - 16 Water pitcher
  - 17 Taro dish
  - 18 Leafy lunch
  - 20 Froth
  - 22 Bradley and Sneed
  - 23 Large African lake
  - 24 Cabinet parts
  - 27 Former Mets ballpark
  - 29 Plunder
  - 30 Downcast
  - 34 Tibia
  - 37 Bikini half
  - 38 Bullpen stats
  - 39 Navigates
  - 41 Catastrophic
  - 43 Opposite of post-

- 44 Tart
  - 46 In good time
  - 49 Ms. Hagen of films
  - 50 Adds sound effects
  - 52 Cash substitutes
  - 54 Plead
  - 55 Out of control
  - 56 "Puppy Love" singer
  - 57 Previous to
  - 58 "Have you — wool?"
  - 59 In case
- DOWN**
- 1 Utter
  - 2 Cousteau's islands
  - 3 "Damn Yankees" vamp
  - 4 Bank employee
  - 5 Enjoys a snowy slope
  - 6 "Bam!"
  - 7 "The Clan of the Cave Bear" author

- 8 Head dog
- 9 Solicited
- 10 Refuge
- 13 Shipping inquiry
- 19 Commercials
- 21 Easier said — done
- 24 JAMA readers
- 25 Cry of wonder
- 26 Sapporo sash
- 27 Male offspring
- 28 Tint
- 30 Big extinct bird
- 31 Crime-fighting org.
- 32 Web addr.
- 33 Refrain syllables
- 35 Caligula's nephew
- 36 Starr or Vaccaro
- 39 Mexican Mrs.
- 40 TV antenna
- 41 Talk out of
- 42 Sketch
- 43 Bother-some
- 44 Grease job
- 45 Arizona city
- 47 Sole
- 48 Hearty laughs
- 51 — mot
- 53 Warmed the bench



Stay poised and ready to take on whatever comes your way. Don't let the changes others make sway you in a direction that doesn't help you excel. Spend less money, sell off what you don't need and work to resolve stressful situations that stand between you and the life you want to live. Map out a plan and inch your way to the finish line.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) - Be secretive regarding your plans. Check out what it will take for you to head in a meaningful direction. Feeling good about what you do will lift your spirits and encourage you to work hard.

**PISCES** (Feb. 20-March 20) - Find a unique way to invest your time, money or skills, and it will help you gain respect, recognition and support. Put more energy into initiating the changes that will make your life better.

**ARIES** (March 21-April 19) - Stick to what and who you know and trust. Refuse to let your emotions take control when dealing with a friend or loved one. Play fair and expect the same from others.

**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20) - If you pivot from one thing to another, you'll lose sight of your goal. Stick to your original plan, then move forward. A steady pace will lead to bigger and better opportunities. Enjoy time with a loved one.

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 20) - Leave nothing to chance. Do your part to live up to your promises. Refuse to let anyone interfere with your progress or tempt you to do something you know you shouldn't. Be wary of extravagant offers.

**CANCER** (June 21-July 22) - Explore

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2022

## A third trip to the nine-card well

By Phillip Alder

You must have heard that things go in threes. Well, after seeing two deals containing a nine-card diamond suit in two days, I was confident that I would soon see another.

It took about a month, and then it was in clubs, not diamonds. But there were nine ... count 'em!

I opened with a gambling three no-trump, showing a solid seven-card or longer minor suit with no side ace, king or void. After West overcalled four hearts (how would that contract have fared?), my wife bid four spades (how would that do?), and East passed, I was torn. But then I recalled the famous riddle: What do you call a nine-card suit?

Trumps! So I bid five clubs, which was passed out.

I think most humans would have led a high diamond, but West preferred the heart king: two, four, nine. West shifted to the diamond king: four, nine, queen. Robot signaling is non-existent. They simulate deals based on the auction, using double-dummy analysis to determine the average result of each defensive play, and choose the one with the best average. So, annoyingly, West then cashed the diamond ace to defeat

North		01-26-22	
♠ A K J 10 6 5 2			
♥ 5 2			
♦ 10 6 5 4			
♣ —			
West		East	
♠ 8 4		♠ 9 7 3	
♥ A K J 8 7 3		♥ Q 10 6 4	
♦ A K J		♦ 9 8 7 3	
♣ 9 6		♣ 7 4	
South			
♠ Q			
♥ 9			
♦ Q 2			
♣ A K Q J 10 8 5 3 2			
Dealer: East			
Vulnerable: Neither			
South	West	North	East
			Pass
3NT	4♥	4♠	Pass
5♣	Pass	Pass	Pass
Opening lead: ♥ K			

the contract. I was relieved when I noted that four spades should have also gone down one. As long as the defenders stopped North from ruffing a heart in the dummy (South), my wife could have taken only seven spades and two clubs. The defense against four hearts is harder. If North leads the spade ace and continues with the spade king, South must ruff partner's trick and cash two club winners. Meaty!