

SCRABBLE®

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E

U

R

H

B

T

C

Double Word Score

RACK 1

E

E

U

S

W

H

C

RACK 2

E

E

E

N

B

T

W

RACK 3

E

I

D

D

R

R

B

3rd Letter Triple

RACK 4

PAR SCORE 150-160

BEST SCORE 219

FOUR RACK TOTAL

TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. Finally, 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All the words are in the Official SCRABBLE® Players Dictionary, 5th Edition.

Answer below

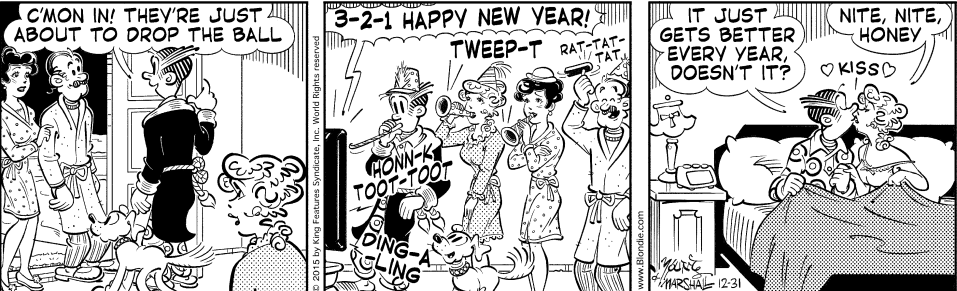
For more information on tournaments and clubs, email NASPA - North American SCRABBLE® Players Association info@scrabbleplayers.org. Visit our website - www.scrabbleplayers.org. For puzzle inquiries contact scrags@gmail.com.

12-31

NON SEQUITUR by Wiley



BLONDIE by Dean Young and John Marshall



HI & LOIS by Chance Browne



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE by Chris Browne



DENNIS THE MENACE by Hank Ketcham



JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

KEEOV

LIHDC

YREGSE

NOHHOC

12-31

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Here's to 2016!

This is fun!

WHEN THEY TOASTED AT THE NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY, EVERYONE WAS —

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

“ ”

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: EXCEL APART CLINIC KNOTTY Answer: The doctor would eventually feel at home in the new town, if he had enough — PATIENCE

Mastocytosis is rare disease of mast cell

Dear Dr. Roach: I'm a 50-year-old male. I recently retired from the military after serving over 21 years, deployed three times to war zones.

During this time, I received numerous vaccinations, including 11 anthrax shots. I've always had seasonal allergies, which seemed to get much worse about five years ago. I had been taking an antihistamine regularly for about 10 years.

I was sent to an allergist for allergy testing, and was told to discontinue taking the antihistamine for seven days prior to the testing. After the first two days, I was unable to do so because of hives and severe itching of my skin. I was skin-tested and was positive for many grasses, trees, etc. I've been on allergy immunotherapy since, which does seem to help.

Since then I moved to another state and resumed

DR. KEITH ROACH TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH

immunotherapy, and recently told my new allergist that when I discontinue my antihistamine, I have a severe itching reaction. He did not think that should happen, and so ordered some tests.

All were normal except an elevated tryptase level. He consulted with another allergist and re-ordered the test and some others. It came back elevated again.

They've told me I have mastocytosis, although they are not sure what to do about it.

They suggested I continue to take an antihistamine daily to control the itch, and to wait and see if things get worse, then get retested in six months, etc.

They've talked about doing a bone-marrow test at some point in the future.

What is mastocytosis?

What causes it? Was that the cause of my itchy skin and hives when I stopped taking the antihistamine five years ago?

Could my military deployment exposures have contributed to it? My anthrax shots? What can be done about it, other than take an antihistamine? What is its course? — S.K.

It sounds very likely that you have systemic mastocytosis, a rare disease of the mast cell, which is a part of the immune system. Vaccinations are not related to mastocytosis.

More than 95 percent of cases of mastocytosis are associated with a DNA mutation in the c-kit receptor, which causes activation of the mast cells and a release of chemicals from the mast cells. This is what causes the hives and the itching.

Mastocytosis also may

cause flushing, lightheadedness or fainting, or abdominal cramping and diarrhea. Mood swings and depression are symptoms that go unrecognized by both patients and doctors.

Symptoms often have specific triggers, and it's critical to identify these so they may be avoided, if possible.

High tryptase levels support the diagnosis, but a bone-marrow biopsy is the optimal way to make the diagnosis; it helps provide your doctor with some personalized information on what your course might be. High numbers of mast cells predict more-severe disease.

I must emphasize that mastocytosis can have a wide range, from a fairly benign condition to a very aggressive disease involving multiple systems.

Much more information is available at www.tmsforacure.com.

Bridge

by Frank Stewart

Emerging with 3NT

There are emergencies, and then there are situations that reflect a lack of planning. People can get the two confused.

At 3NT, South won the first heart with the ace and led a diamond to dummy's king. East won and returned a heart, and declarer took his queen and led a second diamond. With a 3-2 break, he would have had nine easy tricks: four diamonds, two hearts, two spades and a club.

But when West discarded, South had an emergency on his hands. He took the queen, led a spade to his hand and returned the jack of clubs to finesse, but when East had the king, the defense emerged with three hearts, a diamond and a club for down one.

overcalls one heart. What do you say?

ANSWER: The bidding has improved your 11-point hand. The positional value of your A-Q of hearts has gone up, and your other high cards may be supported by partner's honors. You would insist on game with A 7 2, A K, J 7 6 5 2, J 10 4, and your actual hand is about as good. Bid at least 2NT. If vulnerable, to try 3NT would be reasonable.

North dealer

Both sides vulnerable

NORTH
♠ A 8 3
♥ 5 2
♦ K Q 4
♣ A Q 9 8 5

WEST
♠ 9 6 5 4
♥ J 10 9 8 4
♦ 3
♣ 7 6 2

EAST
♠ Q J 10
♥ K 7 6 3
♦ A 10 9 8
♣ K 3

SOUTH
♠ K 7 2
♥ A Q
♦ J 7 6 5 2
♣ J 10 4

North 1 ♣ Pass 3 NT
East Dbl Pass All Pass
South Redbl 1 NT
West 1 ♥ Pass

Opening lead — ♥ J

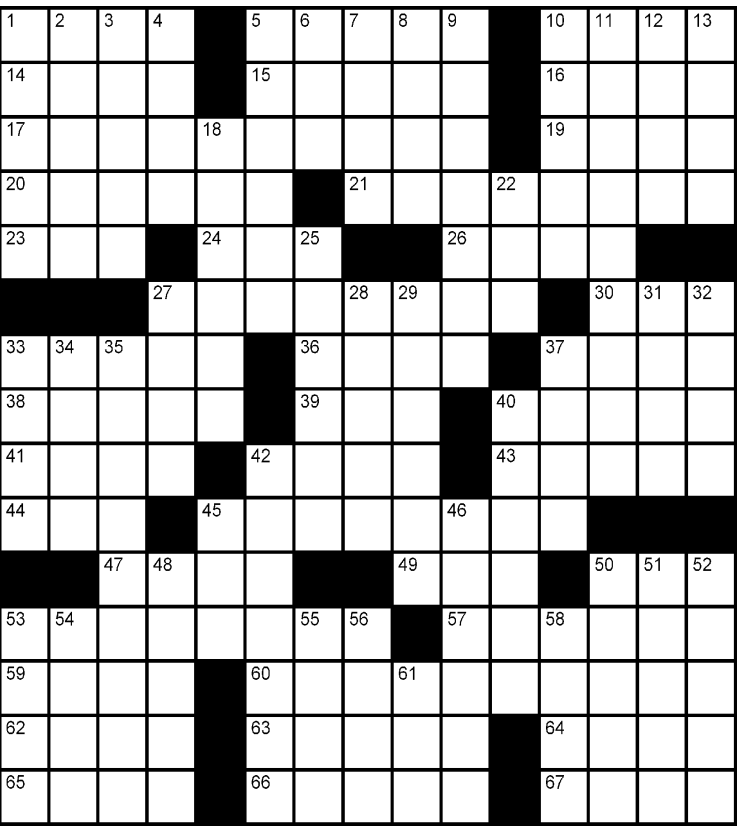
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The Daily Crossword

Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

ACROSS

- Up to the task
- Fence coating
- Complacent
- Marsh bird
- Strictness
- Become weary
- "Do I Move You?" singer
- Russian saint
- Promoting peace
- British party animal
- Magazine honchos
- Holiday in Hanoi
- James Merritt or Charles Edward
- Fresh catch hazard
- Can pull
- Wan
- Nevada resort
- Pigmented nevus
- Welcome benefits
- Have a meal
- Of sound quality
- Eugene O'Neill's trees
- Small steep plateau
- Decathlon part
- NFL prop
- Put off
- Sermon sign-off
- Close
- Healthy retreat
- Explosive
- Usher
- Love god
- Tropic of Cancer to Tropic of Capricorn area



Visit: ADailyCrossword.com

12/31

- Transmitted
- Gazed I
- ustfully

- Black-and-white whale
- Low digits
- "Superman" star
- Symbols of victory

- Gargoyle
- Recorded
- Shepard or Greenspan
- Orion feature
- Assist a hood
- Shoe part
- Macaulay Culkin movie
- Chess turn
- Saw to
- Video display
- Four-legged friend
- Kind of football kick
- Ship's poles
- Mall unit
- Twelfths of a shilling
- Regions
- British undershirt
- Sundae topper, perhaps
- Private area in a theater
- Stanley Gardner
- Arm of the Black Sea
- RPM part

DOWN

- Golfer with an army
- Bil or Zoe
- Wrinkles or dialogue
- Flair
- Material values
- Draw a bead on
- Composer
- Stravinsky
- Nary a soul
- Golfer from El Paso
- Shoulder warmer
- Load that is difficult to carry
- Compulsion
- Material
- Non-violent protests
- Holiday forerunner
- Triplets
- Wetland areas

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved

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

12-30

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Scrabble Solution

PAR SCORE 150-160

TOTAL 219

RACK 4 = 65

RACK 3 = 62

RACK 2 = 14

RACK 1 = 78

BRAND GRAMS SOLUTION

DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ K 7 2 ♥ A Q
♦ J 7 6 5 2 ♣ J 10 4. Your partner opens one club, and the next player

BEETLE BAILEY by Mort Walker



SNUFFY SMITH by Fred Lasswell



Conceptis Sudoku

Difficulty Level ★★★

12/31

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved

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

Difficulty Level ★★★

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