



Crossword – By Thomas Joseph

Bridge – By Steven Becker

Word Sleuth

ACROSS

43 Play part

1 Crew members

44 Spin

6 Party spreads

11 Tickle

12 Skirt

13 Less common

14 Like Loki

15 Tourist stop

16 Chateau owner

18 Pindar work

19 Bulldog backer

20 Overhead trains

21 Zilch

23 Gives for a time

25 Dadaist Jean

27 Marlin's home

28 "Get lost!"

30 Makes a choice

33 Corp. bigwig

34 Mass of gum

36 Workout unit

37 Writer Ring

39 Count start

40 "Tomorrow" singer

41 Horrible

DOWN

45 Long sandwiches

46 Staff symbols

Yesterday's answer

1 Oscar winner Cotillard

2 Mystery writer Cross

3 Got through a crisis

4 Jargon suffix

5 Act the waiter

6 Some change

7 Scads

8 Made money

9 Old autos

10 Prophetic ones

17 Poorly

22 Time-table abbr.

24 Role for Keanu

26 Plains natives

28 Medium meeting

29 West of Hollywood

31 Prof protector

32 Trances

33 Come into conflict

35 Sketched

38 T. Rex, for short

42 Question of identity

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11									12
13									14
15									
18				19					20
21				22		23			24
			25		26		27		
			28			29		30	31
33				34				36	
37				38				39	
40						41		42	
43									44
45									46

Test your play

1. You are declarer with the West hand in Six Diamonds, and North leads the jack of spades. How would you play the hand?

West: ♠A, ♥A, ♦A, ♣KQJ102, ♠K943

East: ♠KQ63, ♥KJ95, ♦43, ♣762

2. You are declarer with the West hand at Three Notrump. North leads the seven of spades, on which South plays the queen. How would you play the hand?

West: ♠KJ5, ♥A, ♦KQ8, ♣Q106

East: ♠642, ♥K105, ♦A62, ♣AJ93

3. You are sure to make the slam if the opposing clubs are divided 3-2, so all of your thoughts should be centered on how to overcome a 4-1 or 5-0 club division. By far the best approach, after winning the spade lead with the ace, is to play as many trumps as necessary until the opponents have exactly one trump remaining. You deliberately do not draw this last trump, but instead next play the ace of hearts and A-K of clubs. If both opponents follow to both clubs, you draw the missing trump and concede a club trick. If the clubs divide 4-1 or 5-0, and the ace or king of clubs gets trumped, you score the rest of the tricks because the player who ruffs is forced to return a spade or a heart to dummy. If the clubs divide 4-1 or 5-0 and neither the ace nor king gets ruffed, you next lead the deuce of trump, hoping that the player who wins with the missing trump will be forced to return a spade or a heart. Let's say you win the spade queen with the king and try a club finesse. If it loses, South will return a spade, and if North started with five spades to the A-10, you go down one. Alternatively, you could win the spade lead, cross to the king of hearts and take a heart finesse through South. If this lost, you'd still be in trouble because you'd have only eight sure tricks. You could then try a club finesse but again would go down if it lost. The safest line of play, though, is to let South win the first trick! This assures the contract whether North has four or five spades. Let's say South returns a spade at trick two. When you play the jack, North may or may not take his ace, but the contract is safe either way. Assume he ducks. You next try the club finesse, confident that if it loses, South cannot harm you. If he has a spade to play, it means North started with only four of them, and you finish with nine tricks. If South has no more spades, you also have at least nine tricks.

Tomorrow: Club play saves the day. ©2026 King Features Syndicate Inc.

WORD SLEUTH • WOMEN IN THE SENATE

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

Thursday's unlisted clue: WILKENS

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Friday's unlisted clue hint: MARGARET CHASE —

Baldwin Boxer Cantwell Caraway Collins Feinstein Gillibrand Harris Hutchison Klobuchar Murkowski Murray Snowe Stabenow Warren

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DAILY CRYPTOQUOTES – HERE'S HOW TO WORK IT:

A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

6-26 CRYPTOQUOTE

L A N B N ' K Y X D E O O X M R G E L N
K X K X J L Z K Z J Z L A N B ' K
K L B X Y T K A X G O C N B .
— B E U A Z B C O . N S Z Y K
Yesterday's Cryptoquote: DANCE FIRST. THINK LATER. IT'S THE NATURAL ORDER.
— SAMUEL BECKETT

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

COACHED MORE THAN 1000 NBA GAMES

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

Horoscope – By Georgia Nichols

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

ARIES (March 21-April 19) ★★ Fasten your seatbelt! This morning, you might feel concerned, even irritated about shared property or a money issue. As the day progresses, you feel warmhearted, especially to family. Accidents and travel changes might occur late in the day. Be alert! Tonight: Explore and learn! **TAURUS** (April 20-May 20) ★★ Be patient with partners and close friends this morning. Fortunately, as the day wears on, relations with others are warmhearted. You'll enjoy conversations and short trips. Keep an eye on your possessions to protect yourself against loss at the end of the day. Tonight: Check your finances. **GEMINI** (May 21-June 20) ★★ Today has some challenges. It begins with optimism with your work, your health or a pet. You might see how to boost your income. Later, you

might feel annoyed with someone, and late in the day, unexpected events with partners and close friends will occur. Stay chill. Tonight: Listen and cooperate. **CANCER** (June 21-July 22) ★★ You'll wake up with playful optimism this morning. However, challenges with kids or romantic partners might put a damper on your mood. Then later in the day, unexpected changes, high-tech glitches, staff shortages and power outages are likely. Oops. Tonight: Get organized. **LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22) ★★ This is a feel-good day. Enjoy a second cup of your morning brew and count your blessings. Avoid tension with parents and authority figures. (You don't need this.) As the day wears on, social plans suddenly change. Parents should be vigilant to avoid children's accidents. Tonight: Socialize. **VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) ★★ You're full of big ideas this morning! You might want to take a short trip. (Could be anything.) Be smart and avoid arguments about politics, religion and controversial

issues. Stay calm. Stock the fridge, because late in the day, something unexpected might change your home routine. Be ready. Tonight: Relax. **LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) ★★ This morning you have a warm feeling in your tummy about your finances. They look good. However, you might have a quarrel with someone about money or something you own. Pay attention during the rest of the day to avoid accidents -- verbal or physical. Stay sharp. Tonight: Conversations. **SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) ★★ The Moon is in your sign today dancing with Jupiter, giving you a warm feeling in your tummy. All is well. Steer clear of arguments with partners and close friends. Late in the day, stay alert to avoid something unexpected that impacts your money and possessions. You snooze, you lose. Tonight: Check your possessions. **SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) ★★ This day begins in a gentle, warm way that makes you feel good. You might be annoyed with a co-worker, but it's minor. However, after the Moon changes into your sign, you'll feel restless and impul-

sive. An unexpected exchange with a spouse or partner might catch you off guard. Tonight: You win! **CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) ★★ It's a friendly morning! You have a lot to look forward to. Be patient with kids and romantic partners, because squabbles might arise. However, after the Moon changes signs today, something unexpected might affect your job, your health or even your pet. Be alert. Tonight: Privacy. **AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) ★★ You're high-viz today. In fact, people admire you, especially at work. Don't get sucked into arguments with bosses or supervisors. (Run for cover.) Later in the day, parents should be vigilant about their kids. Social plans might suddenly change. Tonight: Be friendly. **PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20) ★★ You might be excited about travel plans or doing something socially today or something related to sports or your kids. Perhaps romance is in the air. It's a nice way to begin your day. Avoid arguments later in the day, especially if your home routine is interrupted. Tonight: You're admired.

Jumble THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

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

E A A W R
I D R G I
E D V N O R
H B G T U O

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Yesterday's Jumbles: ROUGH KNELT Answer: The lawyer made sure the will was totally foolproof -- making it -- "HEIR" TIGHT

(Answers tomorrow) EIGHTY AFFRAID

BEING A COMPLETELY NORMAL 1, 3, 5, ETC. COMES WITH ---

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