

Finding solidarity with Ferguson

BY GRACE BADICK
CONTRIBUTING COLUMNIST

"Hands up. Don't shoot. Hands up. Don't shoot. Hands up. Don't shoot."

I stood in a crowd of people in a city park echoing this line on Saturday afternoon. Among the crowd could be seen old and young and people of all different shades of color. Children with signs that said, "Black lives matter," and "I want to grow up in a just world" sat on the ground in



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the front of the crowd with their parents. Onlookers and bystanders looked at the crowd with amusement and curiosity. Crowded around a small podium across the street from the federal courthouse, people disturbed and angered by the events in Ferguson, Mo., gathered in solidarity with the troubled St. Louis suburb.

I felt compelled to go to the rally feeling the indignation, confusion and sadness my counterparts at the gathering also shared. We listened to impassioned speeches by politicians and laypeople alike echoing the sentiment of "enough." We're tired of gathering because of events like the shooting of Michael Brown that

continue to happen, said one speaker. Another said it is time we create a new America continuing with the vision of Dr. King's "I have a Dream" speech. White, black, man, woman, transgender persons stood up and all said the same thing: Enough is enough.

And here I was, a white, middle-class, young woman, who — although having experienced sexism and victimization in other ways — has never been harassed because of the color of my skin. Here I was standing in solidarity with a family who lost a son, a community that is being brutalized by police, and a people that has a long history of oppression and discrimination. Here I was, holding a sign: "Dark skin is not dangerous" and "Peace in our streets."

As I stood there slightly uncomfortable, feeling out of place or at least out of my element, I was taken back to a summer when my understanding of solidarity was completely altered. The facilitator for the evening's discussion deconstructed our perhaps naïve and academic understanding of the word, but unfortunately did not help to reconstruct it. I left the evening and that summer thinking I could never really be in solidarity with anyone. I am not black. I am not homeless or poor. I am not gay. Yet, I feel it is important to stand in solidarity with these groups. What does that mean exactly?

To be in solidarity with another

does not mean you have to know someone's lived experience exactly. I am in solidarity with survivors of sexual assault because I've been there too. But I am also in solidarity with anyone who has been victimized or experienced trauma. I can say that because I get feelings of smallness, powerlessness, confusion, anger and disempowerment. I do have other lived experiences that bring me in solidarity with others who on the surface appear unlike myself. Yet, I am in solidarity with those whose lived experience does not match mine.

How does that work? It is because I choose to be conscious to their experience, to say, "I see you and validate who you are and what you have lived through or are going through." I can do this by also saying I may not really understand exactly what's happening, but I am choosing to be conscious to it and stand with you in it.

So, on a hot, August Saturday afternoon, I stood in solidarity with a community I have never been a part of and never will be, with a family who grieves the loss of a son, a people whose historical memory is wrought with oppression, violence, and pain. I stood with others who may or may not completely get what it is like to be attacked because of the color of one's skin. But we stood together, in solidarity, because enough is enough, and although hundreds of miles away from Ferguson, we wanted that

The Shade of Summer

by Avendor

A globe spins quietly in a room as a boy prays his mother's disease goes away. Time will come here soon enough he's said his peace, what else is there to say? So he opens the sliding glass door and walks out onto the sunlit terrace as a yellow monarch flutters by like a painting hanging somewhere in Paris. A pitcher of iced tea rests on a table. The boy pours himself a glass and finds no comfort in the words that "this too shall pass." He wants his mother back to her former self her affliction is killing the meaning of summer so he walks off into the orchard amidst the ghost of so many others. Who walked the earth in previous times full of hope, full of joy and commence stirring up the leaves swirling round the boy. He repossesses this sanctuary till evening comes around presses his forehead against a tree and lets the tears fall down. Then he comes home fixes himself a sandwich and some chips eats all by himself and stares at the crumbs remaining on his dish...

PUZZLES

By Grace Badick

Answers on page 6

Crossword

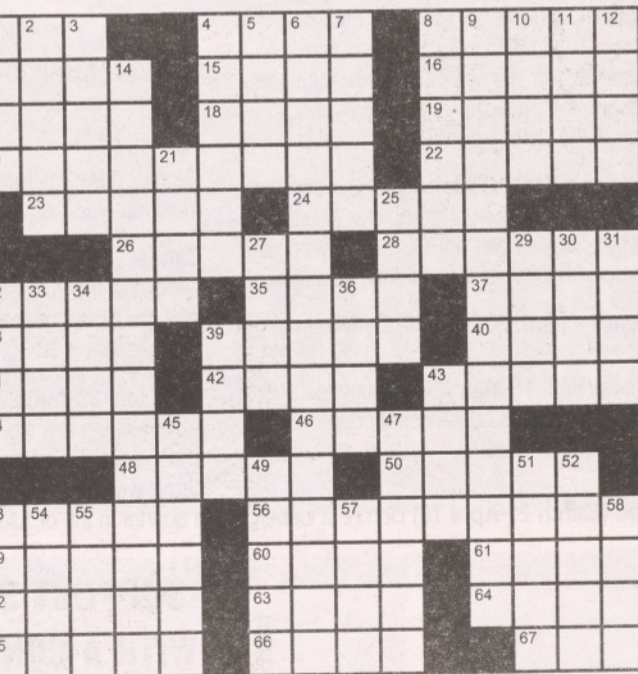
Across

1. Absorb, with "up"
4. ___ Bell
8. Pageant prize
13. Snare
15. Religious figure
16. Dental filling
17. Mideast chief: Var.
18. Indian leavened breads
19. Fill with joy
20. Marked by resistance
22. Tiny openings
23. Plant of the nettle family
24. Set of principles
26. ___ a high note
28. Sealed, closed, shut
32. Japanese cartoon art
35. First-aid ___, pl.
37. Somewhat, in music
38. Delhi dress
39. Give me a ___!
40. Turkish leader
41. Brother of Abel
42. e.g. Babe Ruth, Mickey Mantle
43. Angry
44. Demand
46. Store
48. Stockholm native
50. Vernacular

53. Muse of love poetry
56. The offering of bread and wine during Eucharist
59. King or queen
60. Person of action
61. Machu Picchu builder
62. Dig discovery: Var.
63. Percussion instrument
64. Rice Krispies sound
65. Long lock
66. Whirling water
67. Beast of burden

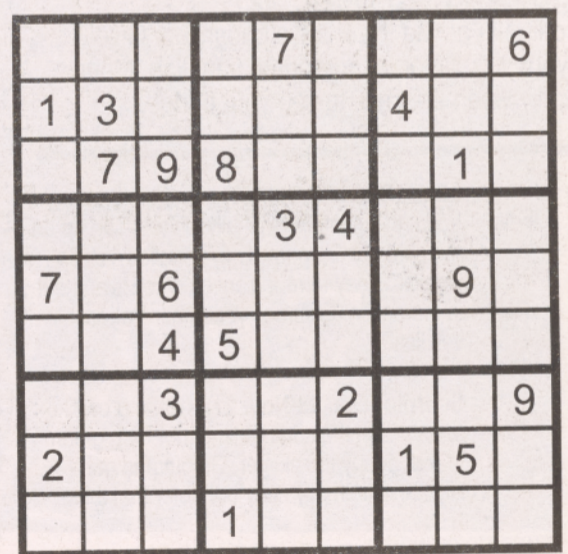
Down

1. Hollywood Boulevard sight
2. Type of sea snail
3. Monetary unit of Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Nepal
4. Like some windows
5. A "superfood"
6. Sustenance picked up at the gas station
7. Outbreak

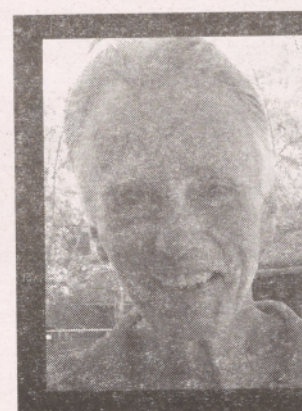


8. Tie accessory
9. In the place of parent
10. Banned apple spray
11. Part of A.P.R.
12. Affirmatives
14. U.K.'s equivalent of a president, pl.
21. Trig figure
25. Outer part of corn
27. Gumbo vegetable
29. A toy for jumping around on
30. Authentic and typical
31. Wyle of "ER"
32. Fungal spore sacs
33. Indian bread
34. Pupil's locale
36. Currency of Bangladesh
39. Memory unit
43. Blender sound
45. Important
47. Religious leaders
49. Artful move
51. Fixin' to
52. Killer whales
53. Once, long ago
54. Rhine tributary
55. Toward one side of a ship
57. Ward (off)
58. Blabs

Sudoku



The objective of Sudoku is to fill in all the blank squares with the correct numbers from 1 to 9. Every row, column and square must include all digits, 1 through 9, in any order.



This man works. So does Street Roots.