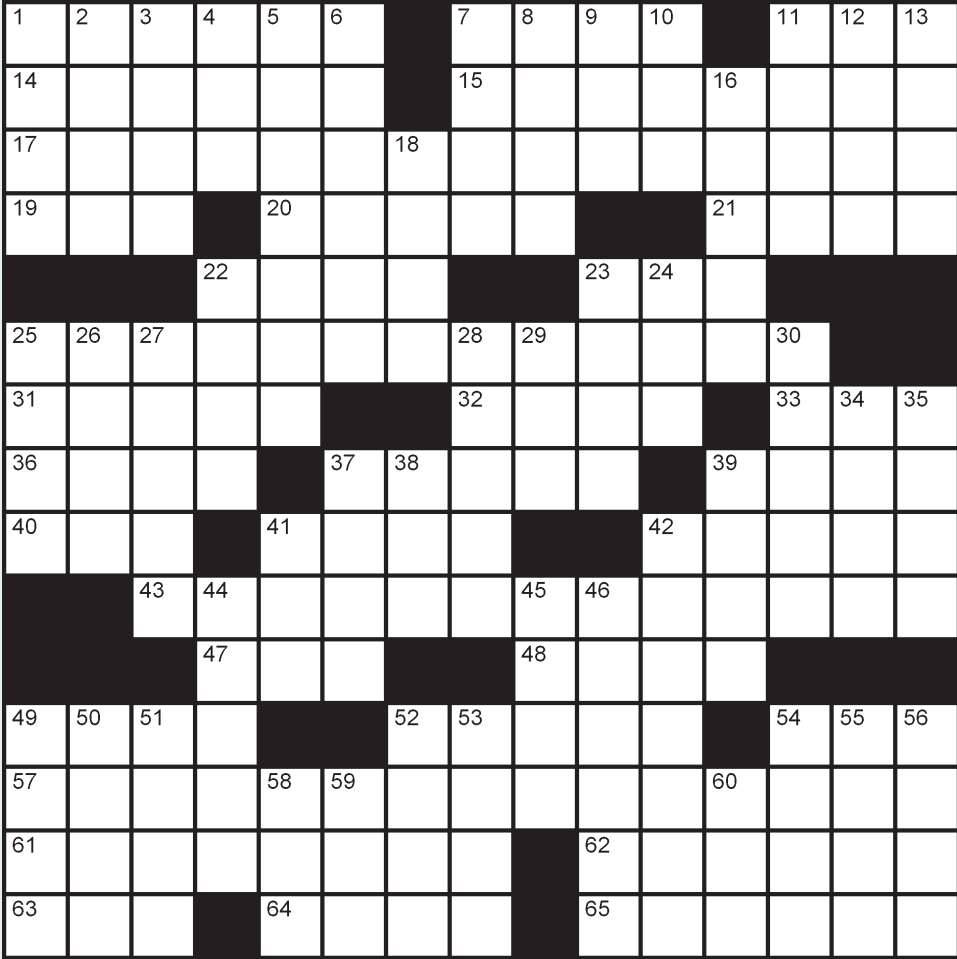


Runback by George Jasper

Universal Crossword edited by David Steinberg



- ACROSS: 1 Criticize harshly, 7 In ___ of, 11 Pizzazz, 14 Musketeer of note, 15 Shows for wannabe performers, 17 "Blonde" author (In this clue's answer, notice letters 8 to 5), 19 Donkey, 20 Revealed, 21 Weight-loss plan, 22 Dad, 23 Significant span, 25 "Go ahead, say it's my fault!" (... letters 5 to 2), 31 Microwaves, 32 Paintballs or snowballs, 33 Gift for a new employee, maybe, 36 Drink made with ice cream, 37 Iota follower, 39 Bird last seen in 1662, 40 Where to get a salt scrub, 41 Steady boyfriend, 42 Type of mustard, 43 '90s "Star Trek" spinoff (... letters 5 to 1), 47 Down ___ (memorized), 48 Wheels of fortune, perhaps?, 49 Pastrami place, 52 Put on, as a protest, 54 Boxing ref's call, 57 Timely response time, and a theme hint, 61 Like an Etch A Sketch or a whiteboard, 62 Cleaned in a finger bowl, say, 63 ___ Perignon, 64 Point of view, 65 Fuels, as a fire, DOWN: 1 ___ California, 2 Son of Ares, 3 Fish with flat bodies, 4 "Better Call Saul" network, 5 Neckwear clasps, 6 Daydreaming, for some, 7 Oral history, 8 2001 Apple release, 9 Symbol of slipperiness, 10 Number one card game?, 11 Tubular pasta, 12 Drink with a Tropical Fusion flavor, 13 (Listen up!), 16 Respectful address, 18 Medina resident, most likely, 22 Get the ball rolling?, 23 "Avenger" Peel, 24 ___ Speedwagon, 25 Resistor measures, 26 Proverbial bucket of bolts, 27 The jackfruit dish tam khamun, for instance, 28 Accept eagerly, 29 Volume-boosting box, 30 Vulcan Salute symbol, e.g., 34 Thick Japanese noodle, 35 No longer there, 37 Held on to, 38 Certain batteries, 39 Jurassic beast, for short, 41 "Come on, ___ pall!", 42 Negative aspect, 44 Films with large casts, 45 Mathematician Turing, 46 Humidor items, 49 Barred from competing, informally, 50 Capital of Italy?, 51 Actor Hemsworth, 52 Wear a pouty face, 53 Shade "thrower", 54 Mammoth growth, 55 Joint with a cap, 56 Long ones are unfavorable, 58 Fox's "Call Me ___", 59 Up in the air, briefly, 60 "The Coda Collection" co-founder Yoko

HOROSCOPES BY HOLIDAY MATHIS

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2021 Autumnal Equinox



When the night and day divide in equal parts, it's that magical time of the year celebrated by cultures ancient and modern -- the autumnal equinox. The pagan name for the fall equinox celebration is Mabon. The Druids celebrate with Alban Elfed and other harvest festivals around across the globe in the weeks to come. Happy equinox!

ARIES (March 21-April 19). As you commit to seeing your situation and your role in it more clearly, you will discover who you are, what you want and what matters deeply to you.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). The call is to action swift and sure. Once you have decided, follow through with the whole of you. Hesitate and you'll lose power. Wait and it will only get harder and harder to influence the situation.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Today offers you a free ticket to a different perspective. All you have to do is be willing to check your own way of seeing things outside the door. You can pick it back up on the way out.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Your psychic senses tingle today and you are especially aware of people who are in need. What they need and how you may help is harder to pinpoint. Or you could just ask!

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Your values are different from those of another, but that does not have to be a relationship deterrent. The fact that you have values, know them and uphold them well is extremely attractive and an excellent thing to have in common.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You already know the right thing to do in general, but the specifics hang you up. It feels like you're working harder than you need to. Look around for the person having an easier time of it and start asking questions.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). There's a distraction monkey on your shoulder ready to interrupt any task that doesn't promise instant gratification. If you're to achieve your goal, he must be ignored.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Know what you're getting into. Step back to see how things and people are connected. One move will have the sort of domino effect that people make videos about; an intricate spiral of collapsing pieces.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The outcome you desire will be achieved through persuasion. However, if your subject feels at all manipulated, the effect will be lost. Build attraction. It is the most powerful persuasion.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You're driven by the spirit of cooperation. Your personal efforts revolve around organizing and supporting others. You create an orderly atmosphere around you so people can understand what to do and fall into line.

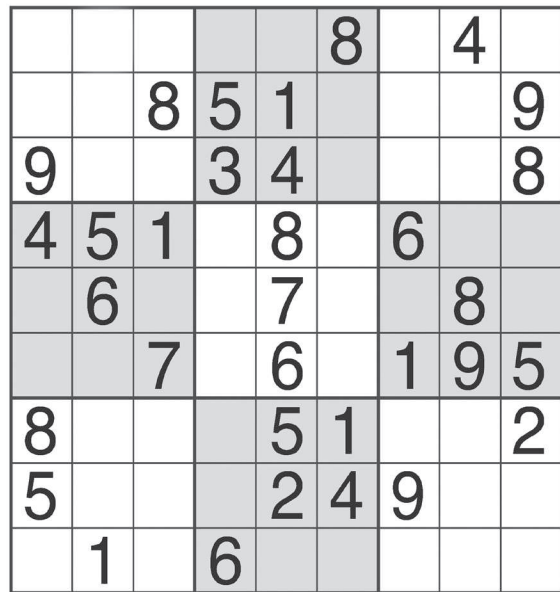
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). When you see someone in need of assistance, you spring into action. Your movement will wake up the many people who don't notice too much outside of their own thoughts.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). People do their own growing, often despite themselves. So while you can't make another person grow up, you can, and will, contribute to circumstances that favor growth.

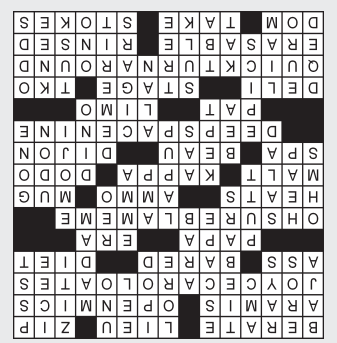
TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (SEPT. 22). This solar return features unexpected twists, unexplainable luck and a revolving cast of characters to sparkle up your social life. A change in your work turns an obligation into an opportunity to learn and earn. You'll educate and celebrate others, building your legacy with each event. Scorpio and Sagittarius adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 5, 20, 40, 16 and 30.

Universal SUDOKU

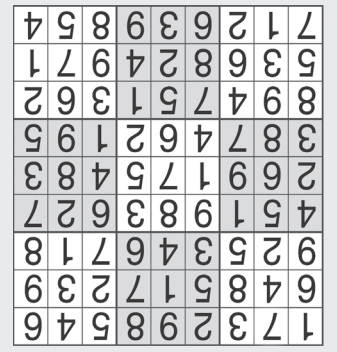
Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

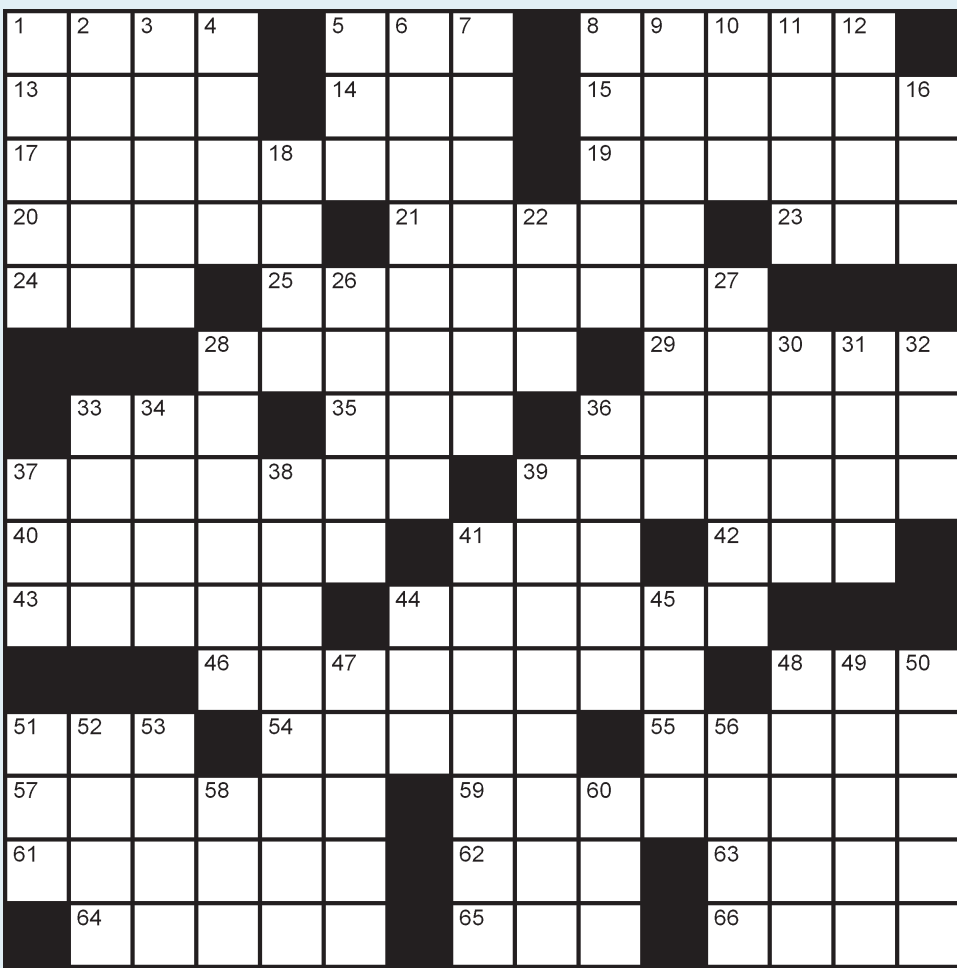


SOLUTIONS



Don't Burn After Reading by Parker Higgins

Universal Crossword edited by David Steinberg



- ACROSS: 1 Testy response to "What a fun puzzle!", 5 Sixth sense, for short, 8 *Juice pouch brand, 13 Boy, in Bolivia, 14 Sound of relaxation, 15 "How curious ...", 17 Hypothetical situation, 19 Short trailer, 20 Thing to discuss, 21 Fade (out), 23 For example, 24 Tiny queen's subject, 25 Got a bit closer, 28 Fanny, 29 Embarrassing misstep, 33 Venue for a facial, 35 "White" or "Red" follower, 36 "Wow, that's neat!", 37 *What casts short shadows, 39 *Some lie on top of blankets, 40 Laptop part used for shortcuts, 41 Jardin ____, Tuileries (Paris park), 42 Catan resource, 43 Inauthentic person, 44 Quinoa and teff, 46 Scatter, 48 Early programmer Lovelace, 51 Unrefined, 54 Secret supply, 55 Goods, 57 Estevez in "Repo Man", 59 Beach trip essential, or any of three squares in this grid that affects the starred clues' answers?, 61 Be overly fond of, 62 It might need a massage after getting bruised, 63 Muslim prayer leader, 64 *Vitamin D source, 65 ID on an IRS form, 66 "Rent" actor Diggs, DOWN: 1 App that has stories, for short, 2 Send after, as an attack dog, 3 Clumsy, 4 "Beloved" author Morrison, 5 Musician's asset, 6 Cry directed at a boat, 7 *Arizona NBA player, 8 Referenced, 9 Had a healthy diet, 10 TV ad for a good cause, 11 "Dress for Less" sloganer, 12 Lightbulb, in comics, 16 *Partner of "various", 18 Grp. co-founded by Helen Keller, 22 Casual top, 26 Writing assignment, 27 Chips that may be loaded, 28 Bombed, 30 Author Jonathan Safran ____, 31 Golfer's heads-up, 32 Chi-Town trains, 33 Guitarist's opportunity to impress, 34 Plants' places, perhaps, 36 Desert haven, 37 Go out early?, 38 Mockery, 39 Big embraces, 41 *Summer shifts?, 44 College app stat, 45 Novice, in gamer lingo, 47 Word after "rolling" or "stepping", 48 Candy store's smell, e.g., 49 Radioactive process, 50 "I'm an open book!", 51 *Feature of the Krypton skyline, 52 "Famous" cookie man, 53 Currently dating, 56 Landed, 58 Hawaiian graduation gift, 60 Prefix for "smoking"

HOROSCOPES BY HOLIDAY MATHIS

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2021 Libra Season Commences



As we glide into Libra season, we are reminded that Libra is the only inanimate image in the zodiac, scales of justice that stand alone, nary a blindfolded lady to uphold them. Considering the difficulty of getting an accurate measurement from any instrument touched by human hand, the lack of humanity in Libra's justice only speaks to its purity.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You're open to seeing yourself how others see you. Their opinions aren't necessarily more accurate than yours, but the blend of several views creates the kind of clear picture that makes obvious your next success move.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). One impediment to learning is thinking you should know something already. Better to admit what you don't know and gather experience than to unnecessarily stumble around in the dark.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Certainty causes you to take great risks and use powerful tactics to further the mission. But if there's even a shadow of a doubt, as there will be today, watch and wait for more illumination on the matter.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You'll step into a role you haven't played before -- a natural fit. It's new territory and yet oddly familiar, which allows for ease and grace in these early stages.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Brainstorm new friendship rules. With good social boundaries, you can avoid having another one of those conversations in which people feel better after sharing their feelings and pain with you, but you feel worse.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). The resolve has always been in you; it just hasn't been brought out quite this powerfully before. Now exciting projects, ideas and plans give you a surge of transformational courage.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Maybe it seems like you're acting out of character, but really, it's just that certain people bring out rarely seen sides of you. The unpredictability of this fascinates even you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You don't have to say or do anything for people to feel your energy. You take care of your own heart, happiness and focus. You send out the sweet, attractive energy, and people respond in kind.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You'll be inspired by the people you meet and the stories you hear. You may not realize the good you do for others just by giving your supportive attention and listening well.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). As gardeners know well, many seeds look alike. It's early, and the ideas are folded in on themselves -- pure, featureless potential. Put them in dirt to see what happens. If it's not what you want, you can always try again.

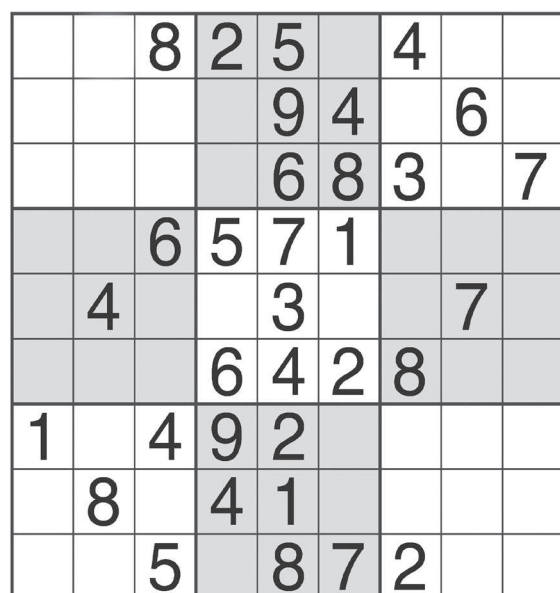
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Conforming to certain culture norms is sometimes necessary to survive, fit in and influence others. But conforming all the time is soul-crushing. You feel a rebellion coming on.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). The bear who wants honey bad enough is willing to risk bee stings. You're much cleverer, though, and will stand by watching until you figure out how honey can be had without a chance of getting stung.

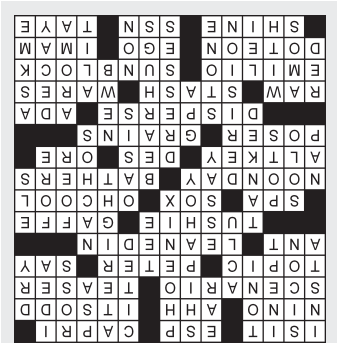
TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Sept. 23). The encouragement of your surroundings will be unmistakable. All you have to do is take steps toward the destination and wild bounty pours forth. This is a product of excellent alignment. What you need to give is precisely what they need to receive and vice versa. Keep it rolling; luck follows movement. Leo and Aquarius adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 18, 2, 22, 16 and 5.

Universal SUDOKU

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆



SOLUTIONS

