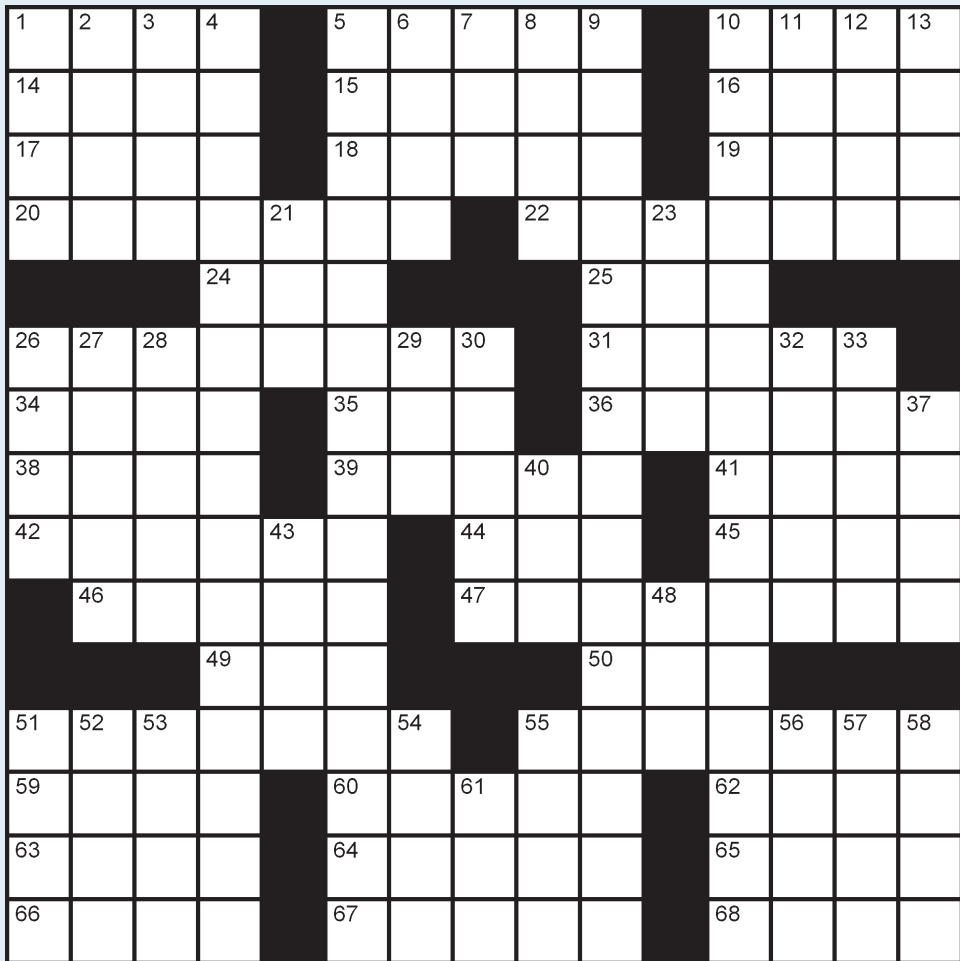


Adding Roman Numerals by Paul Coulter

Universal Crossword edited by David Steinberg



- ACROSS**
- 1 Mix with a spoon
 - 5 Flower's deer friend, in a Disney film
 - 10 Support for a crow's nest
 - 14 Actress Anderson
 - 15 Out of bed
 - 16 Big name in beauty stores
 - 17 All excited
 - 18 Barely defeated
 - 19 Cash advance
 - 20 Course to follow
 - 22 Some siblings
 - 24 Tik
 - 25 King of France?
 - 26 Olympian who might weave through gates
 - 31 Channel that shows college games
 - 34 Name for an unknown commenter
 - 35 Medical research agcy.
 - 36 :::
 - 38 Brat
 - 39 Say hello to
 - 41 Longtime columnist Bombeck
 - 42 Beach headwear
 - 44 Website info section
 - 45 Marvel Comics group
 - 46 Bloodsucker
 - 47 Curtail
 - 49 Nickname that rhymes with "Clay"
 - 50 Relative of -esque
 - 51 Trust in
 - 55 Shoes named for a British university
 - 59 Tel
 - 60 Whiz at setting up office PCs
 - 62 Chain that sells links?
 - 63 Fodder holder
 - 64 Addition symbol?
 - 65 Wrestler/actor John
 - 66 Coin opening
 - 67 "Family Ties" mom
 - 68 3:00, on a compass
- DOWN**
- 1 Hit, as a handball
 - 2 Ancient Roman's attire
 - 3 When a tense NBA situation may occur
 - 4 *Exactly atop a golf course clump? (Note each starred clue's number)
 - 5 *Quitting a bad habit?
 - 6 Bryant of "SNL"
 - 7 Flavor enhancer: Abbr.
 - 8 Some visit violets
 - 9 *Man of La Mancha, when beating around the bush?
 - 10 *Decision about which many-screened theater to patronize?
 - 11 Succulent whose gel is mostly water
 - 12 Asterisk
 - 13 Shades around sunglasses?
 - 21 Misery
 - 23 Meh
 - 26 Elliot of the Mamas and the Papas
 - 27 Invalidate
 - 28 Everybody's opposite
 - 29 "Dear" one
 - 30 Larceny or piracy
 - 32 Representative Torres
 - 33 Not fulfilled
 - 37 Showing sound judgment
 - 40 Organ with a canal
 - 43 Lot or plot measure
 - 48 Nonmedical research agcy.
 - 51 Low-pitched voice
 - 52 Bad to the bone
 - 53 "___ & Stitch"
 - 54 And others, for short
 - 55 Assayers' rocks
 - 56 Name hidden in "clearheaded"
 - 57 Gets dressed in
 - 58 Couple's clash
 - 61 Ask intrusive questions

HOROSCOPES BY HOLIDAY MATHIS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2021 Venus Retrograde Opportunity



The "getting to know you" stage of a relationship is enlivening. Curiosities are pursued and questions answered. In the process, you clarify what excites you. But why wait for a new relationship to explore what you're about? Venus retrograde is an opportunity for pondering and self-reflection regardless of relationship status.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). What once made you happy no longer does, yet the memories have you holding on. There's no reason to rush it. Give yourself permission to follow new joys and all will evolve naturally.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You've a lucky knack for making intelligent, intuitive guesses. There are things you couldn't possibly know about that you nonetheless get right on the first try.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Go soft on yourself and others. In later days, you will all benefit from tapping into deeper wells of inner strength but for now, it's unnecessary.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You might spend a good portion of your day doing someone a favor. It's not wasted time. You'll enjoy figuring things out and you'll build up goodwill you can cash in later.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). It's disempowering to start too many projects at once because you never get to feel like you're winning at any of them. Narrow your task list so you can see and celebrate its completion.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You make it your personal responsibility to uplift everyone you meet. It's as though you're dusted with good cheer and a little of it rubs off on each person you touch.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You can stay on track unenthusiastically, but it's so much easier to perform when the energy is high and emotive. A cheering section will bring out the best in you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You will correctly assess what you can do. This sounds like it should be a given but it doesn't happen as much as people think. Correct assessment will be a key component of your success.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Though it's not your intent, you'll influence those around you because your style shines through all you do. By just doing what comes naturally to you, you'll shape the way they think and behave.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). While for many people it would be enough to meet expectations, you aren't completely happy until you've exceeded them. Picking the right person to work with is half the battle.

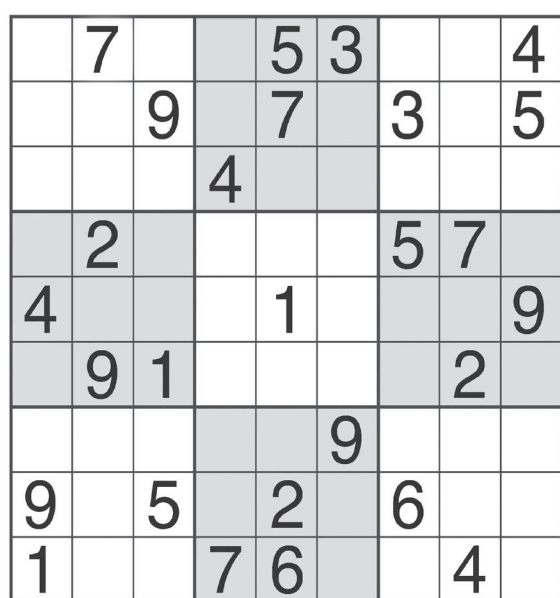
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). If you're an imposter, then you're onto something. Acting "as if" will be crucial to your success. Keep pretending until it feels real. Next thing you know, it will actually (SET ITAL)be(END ITAL) real.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You are complex and multifaceted but you won't show that to just anyone. You wish to make a certain kind of impression, so you'll simplify things. Organize your mind around a single motto

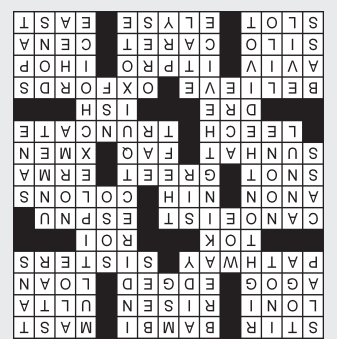
TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Dec. 19). You'll pause, assess your relationships and determine where you most would like to make a difference. You'll uplift or even save someone. Bolstered by a giving high, you'll start projects, make deals and advance your own interests. Upgrades in transportation and seeing more of the world will be a theme. Taurus and Cancer adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 3, 11, 4, 44 and 29.

Universal SUDOKU

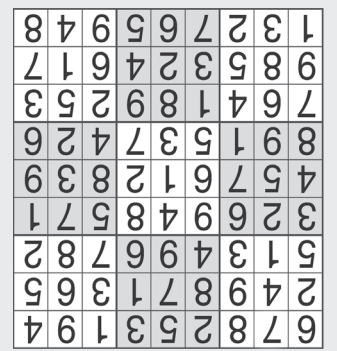
Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

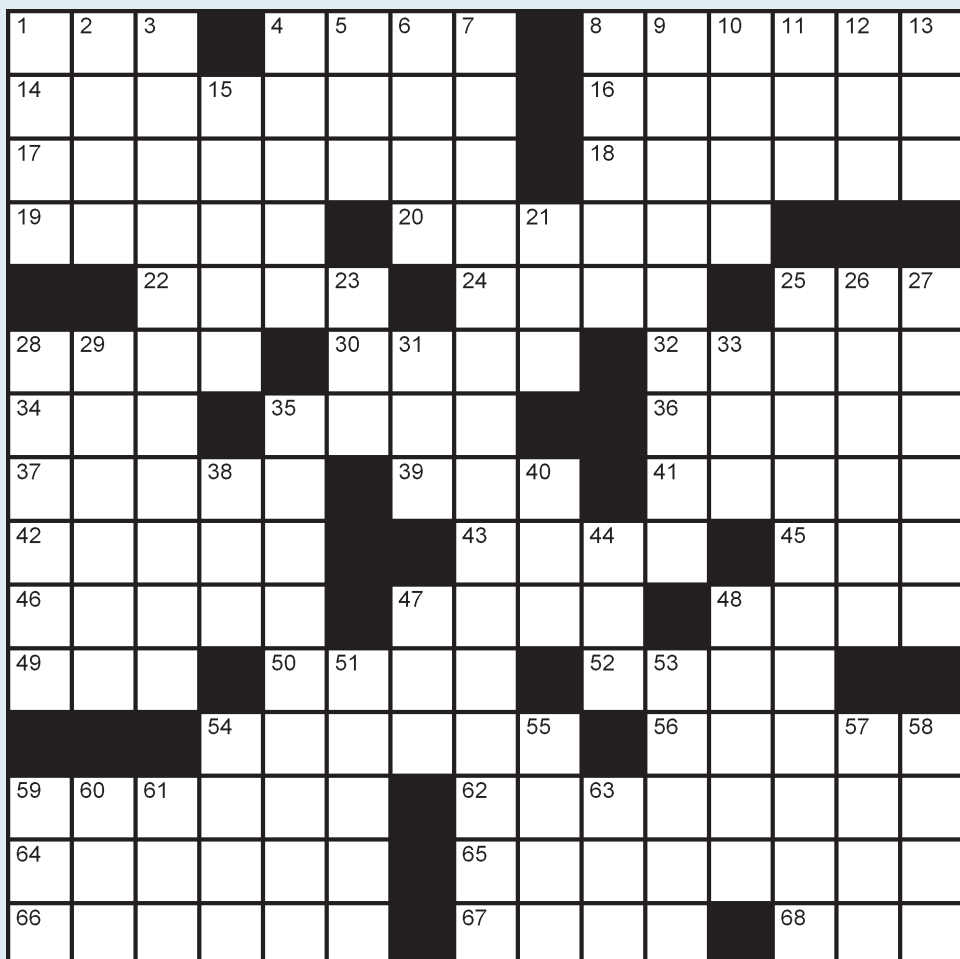


SOLUTIONS



Lost in the Woods by Rachel Fabi and Brooke Husic

Universal Crossword edited by Amanda Rafkin



- ACROSS**
- 1 Web page to check before calling a help line
 - 4 Presentation at an expo
 - 8 Ice cream units
 - 14 "You betcha!"
 - 16 Rhyming meal served family-style
 - 17 Go-betweens
 - 18 Cut down?
 - 19 Some graphic novels
 - 20 /// in bowling
 - 22 Not that
 - 24 DIYer's site
 - 25 Tight-lipped
 - 28 Overabundance
 - 30 Power bowl berry
 - 32 Give a take
 - 34 ___ Kippur
 - 35 Faux
 - 36 Renee's "Chicago"
 - 37 Bohemian dance
 - 39 "No ___!" ("Not a chance!")
 - 41 Rubbish
 - 42 Knitting purchase that anagrams to "Nikes"
 - 43 Siestas
 - 45 State below N.J.
 - 46 Savory quality
 - 47 Improved, like parmesan
 - 48 Questionable
 - 49 "You are here" diagram
 - 50 Hit, like with snowballs
 - 52 Macy Gray's hairstyle
 - 54 Depends (on)
 - 56 Wood that becomes a St. Louis landmark when you remove its first letter
 - 59 Not outdoors
 - 62 How telecommuters work
 - 64 Word before "justice" or "license"
 - 65 Errs
 - 66 Declare
 - 67 9-digit IDs
 - 68 Short-sleeved shirt
- DOWN**
- 1 Reel piece of work?
 - 2 Japan's continent
 - 3 Major advancement (In this answer, unscramble squares 7-11)
 - 4 Man Booker Prize winner Kiran
 - 5 Prefix for "car" or "chic"
 - 6 "Black Girl, Call Home" author Jasmine
 - 7 Getting along (squares 2-6)
 - 8 Female role model
 - 9 Encrypted terms (squares 2-8)
 - 10 Singer Redding
 - 11 Choose (to)
 - 12 "Star Wars" pilot Dameron
 - 13 The "S" in CST: Abbr.
 - 15 Opposite of left
 - 21 Sushi tuna
 - 23 ___ Paulo
 - 25 Area with both deciduous and coniferous trees ... and a theme hint
 - 26 Org. with Goodwill Ambassador Serena Williams
 - 27 In a sheepish manner
 - 28 Material in plaster of Paris
 - 29 Words before "no hands!"
 - 31 Loops in on an email
 - 33 "___ favor"
 - 35 Hands-and-feet spa treatments (squares 3-6)
 - 38 Rapper Lil' ___
 - 40 CFDA Fashion Awards host Issa
 - 44 Canoodling in a booth, e.g.
 - 47 Broadway actress Stroker
 - 48 Steamed
 - 51 Choose (to)
 - 53 Dental string
 - 54 B-mitzvah, e.g.
 - 55 Spots
 - 57 One of 78 in this puzzle
 - 58 What good PR might generate
 - 59 Bitter beer
 - 60 "Sorry ___ sorry!"
 - 61 Word between "ready" and "go"
 - 63 Portal with a Bing search

HOROSCOPES BY HOLIDAY MATHIS

MONDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2021 Nick of Time Money Luck



On the day before the winter solstice, Mercury in powerful Capricorn forms a fortuitous agreement with Uranus in the sign of money to sprinkle some much appreciated financial goodwill over the scene. In these last moments of the season, order your priorities then submit to a joyful holiday rush.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Some habits are hangovers from a time when such behavior was necessary. When the necessity left, the habit stayed. Now it's either a fond memory or a waste of motion; you decide.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Domestic life will be improved by implementing one key change. This behavior might feel strange and forced at first but with repetition it quickly becomes comfortable.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Don't advise or instruct. People don't like to be told what to do today. Model everything you want to see in others. They'll likely follow your lead but even if they don't, at least you benefit from living your ideal.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). What comes around goes around, and rather immediately today. This fact favors you since you're inclined to make contributions that are helpful, supportive and loving.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Oddly, too much politeness can be impolite. If it sets a tone that makes people uncomfortable, it defeats the purpose of manners. Besides, people get bored with predictability. Your unexpected behavior will delight.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Long after others have given up, you will still be holding on. It shows heart, yet your tenacity doesn't feel like effort because you're naturally inclined to follow through.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You've been working in the dark, metaphorically. Someone must know where the light switch is. Your inquisitiveness will save the day. You'll ask more people better questions.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You're not trying to win someone over, rather you just want to express yourself and you're in no mood to go small. Your boldness will make a difference.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Everyone in the group is committed to meeting a common goal. You may not technically be the team leader but it will fall to you to keep everyone motivated.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Maybe you've been sharing a little too much. The good stuff is meant for you, too. The world is your poem to read; your mystery to solve; your beauty to reveal in.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Your stellar work ethic disallows you to anything but your best. Today, this will entail taking more than your share of responsibility and continuing on long after the glamour has worn off.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Stick to your plan. You might have to pass on a spur-of-the-moment opportunity but you won't really be missing out. Right now, it's more important to keep your word to yourself. In time, you'll do everything you want to do.

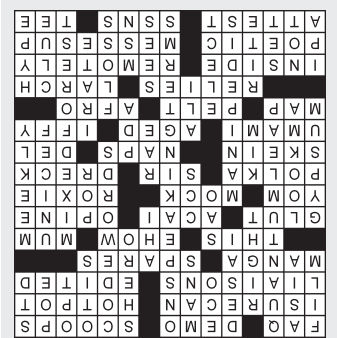
TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Dec. 20). Reality flickers. There's the sense that this could finally be the real world... Then, in an instant, life streams in as surreal or sublime. You'll absorb and assimilate all even when you don't feel in charge of it. Your courage opens opportunity. You're a graceful surfer of circumstance and a powerful provider. Gemini and Aries adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 4, 33, 2, 19 and 6.

Universal SUDOKU

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



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆



SOLUTIONS

