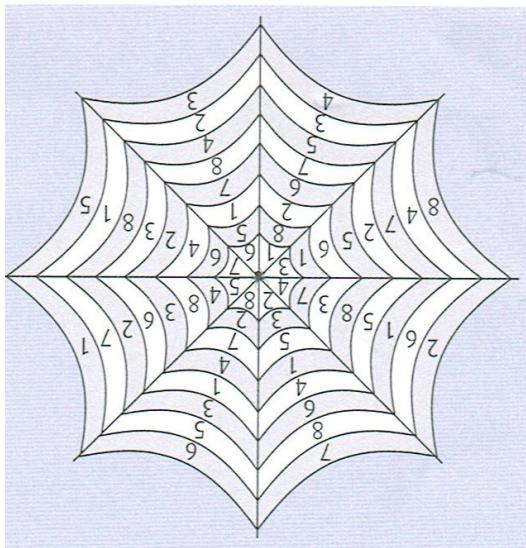
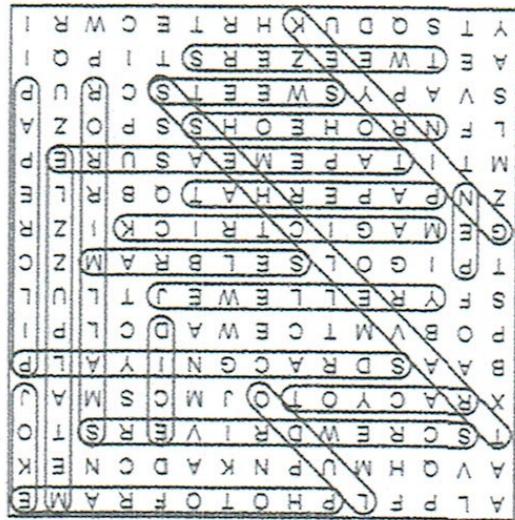


WORDSEARCH and SPIDOKU Solutions



Connected

December 2020 Issue 12



*May you be filled with the wonder of Mary,
the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the
angels, the eagerness of the shepherds,
the determination of the magi,
and the peace of the Christ child.*



At the Manger

World Nativity Traditions

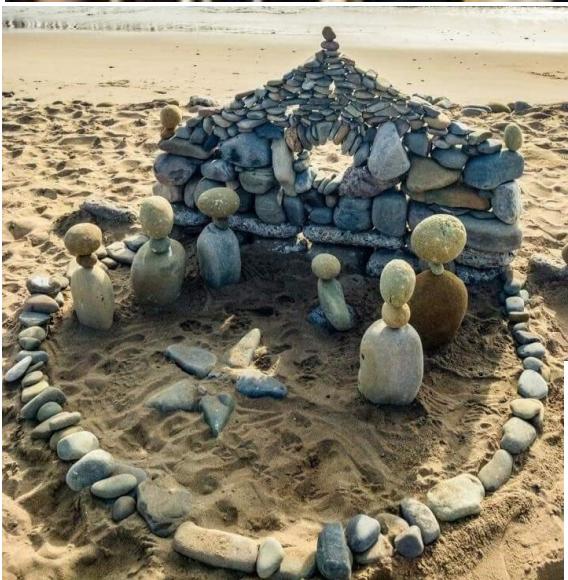
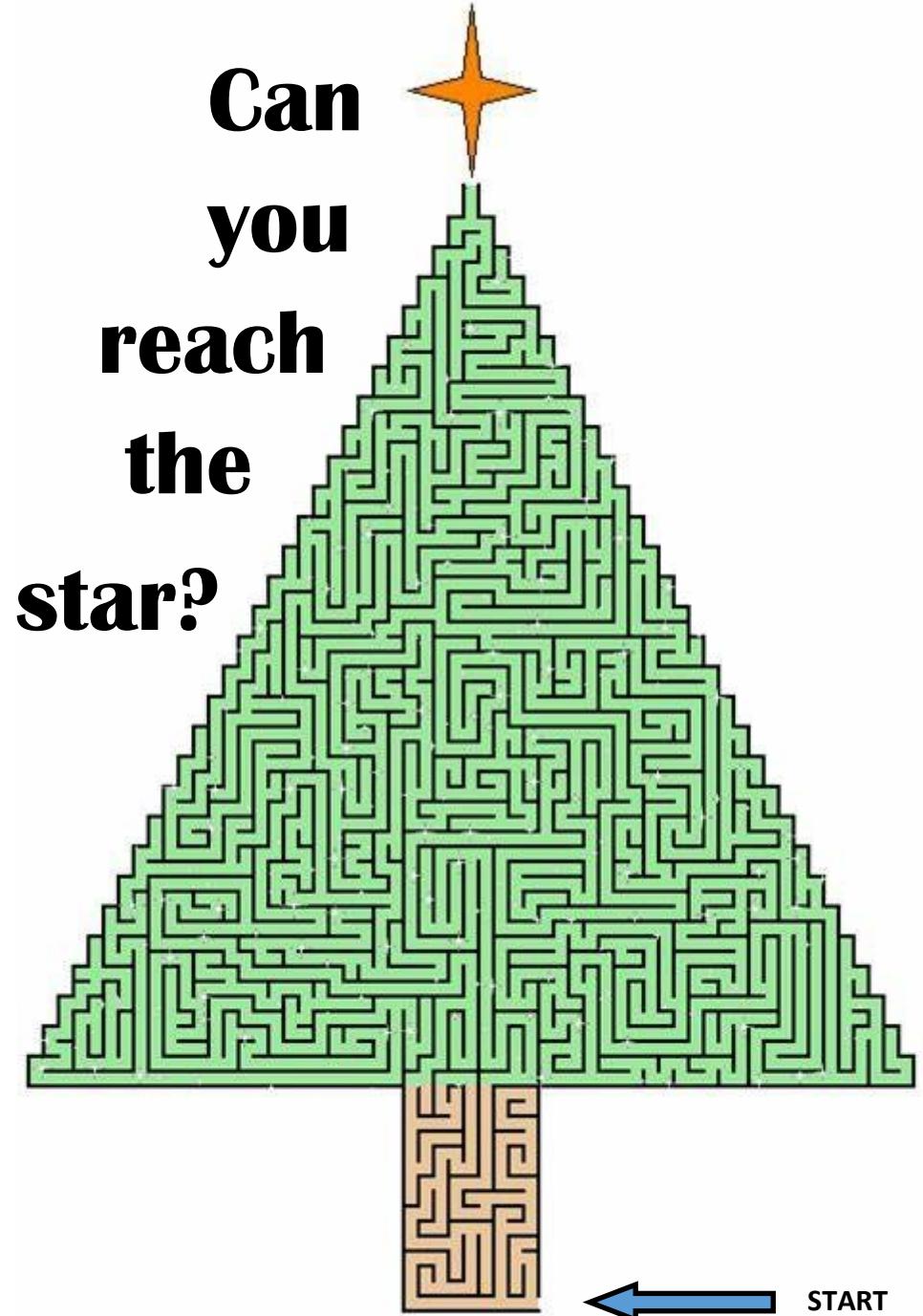


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Can
you
reach
the
star?



Meaningful Messages (cont'd)

If you think you are beaten, you are;
If you think you dare not, you don't;
If you would like to win, but think you can't,
It's almost certain you won't.

If you think you will lose, you have lost;
For out of this world we find;
success begins with a person's will;
It's all a state of mind.

If you think you are outclassed, you are;
You have to think high to rise.
You have to be sure of yourself
Before you can ever win a prize.

Life's battles don't always go
To the stronger or faster man;
But sooner or later the person who wins
Is the one who thinks he can.

Walter D Wintle

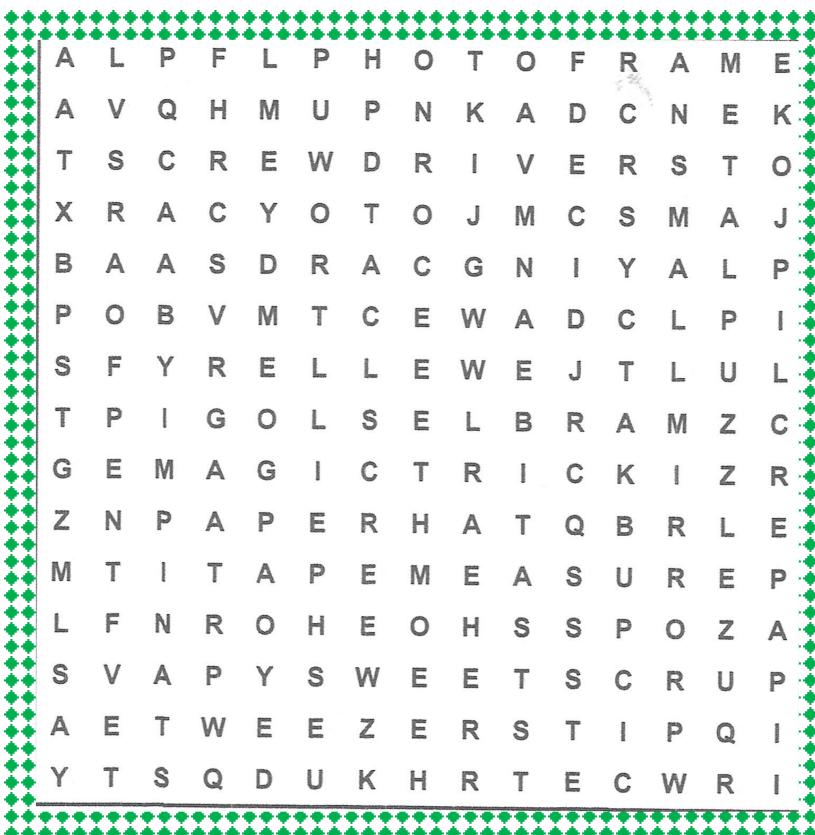
Quotation for this week

"I have learned that there is more power in a good strong hug than in a thousand meaningful words"



WORDSEARCH

Found in Christmas Crackers



DICE - JEWELLERY - JOKE - KEY RING - LUDO

MAGIC TRICK - MARBLES - METAL PUZZLE - PEN

PAPER CLIP - PAPER HAT - PHOTO FRAME - SWEETS

PLAYING CARDS - SCREWDRIVERS - SHOE HORN - TWEEZERS

SMALL MIRROR - TAPE MEASURE - TOY CAR - TRAVEL CHESS



Meaningful Messages

- Once a country region area was devastated by drought and all the villagers decided to pray for rain. On the day of prayer, all villagers gathered, but only one boy came with an umbrella.

That is Faith

- When you throw a baby into the air, it will usually smile and laugh because it knows it is safe and you will catch it.

That is Trust

- Every night we go to bed without any assurance of being alive the next morning, but still we set the alarm clock to wake us up.

That is Hope

- We plan big things for tomorrow in spite of zero knowledge of the future.

That is Confidence

- We see the world suffering, but still, we get married and have children.

That is Love

- On an old mans T shirt was written the following. . .'I am not 80 years old; I am sweet 16 with 64 years of experience'

That is Attitude

**Have a wonderful day and remember good friends
are the rare jewels of life - very difficult to find
and impossible to replace.**

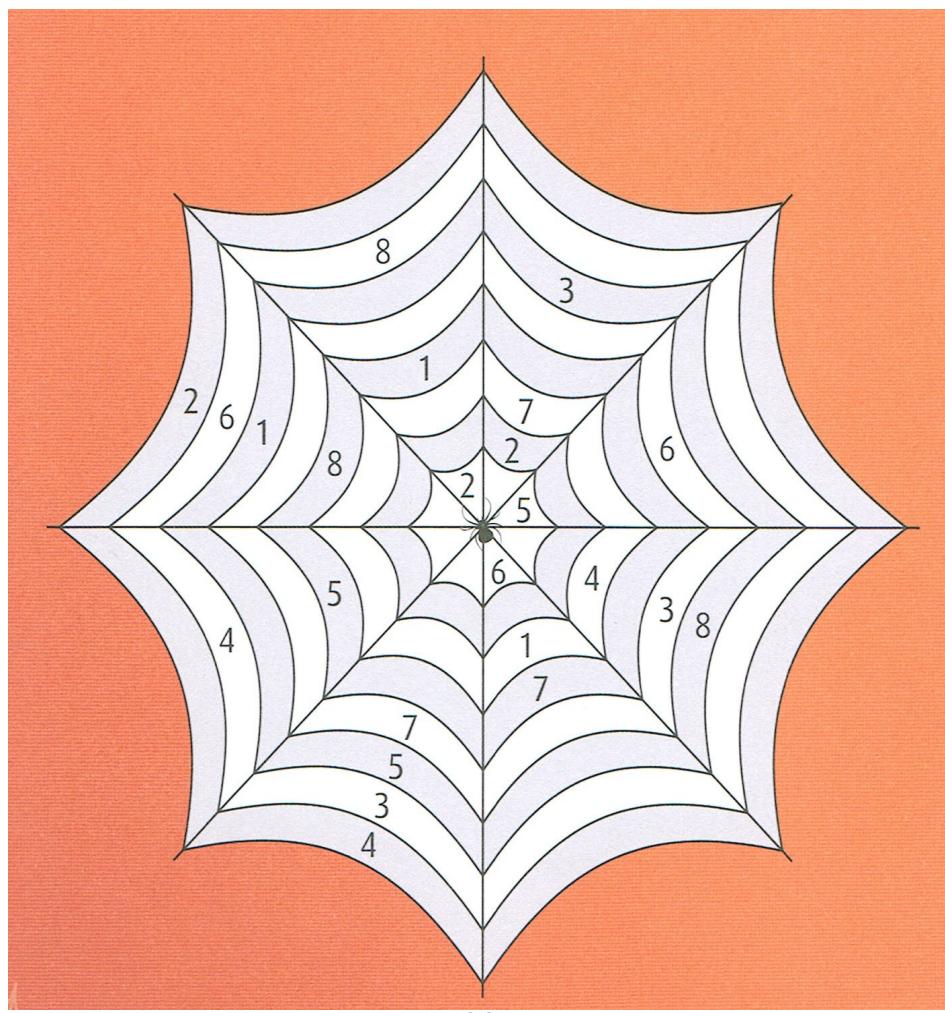


Spidoku

In the spider's web, each of the eight segments should be filled with a different number from 1 to 8, in such a way that every ring contains a different number from 1 to 8.

The segments run from the outside of the spider's web to the centre, and the rings run all the way around. So that you can see the rings more clearly, we've shaded them light grey and white.

Some numbers are already in place. **Can you fill in the rest?**



INSPIRATION



My day today, oh so nearly started with tears. I couldn't help myself. I fought hard against them but the water wanted to flow.

Curse the BBC and their reporting of Kevin Sinfield's seven marathons in seven

days on behalf of Motor Neuron disease and especially for his friend, Rob Burroughs who was diagnosed with this illness almost a year ago. In case you don't know, these guys are professional rugby league players who were at the top of the tree in terms of skill and success, being part of the Leeds Rhinos team, England and GB teams. To help Kevin on his last marathon the BBC put together an excellent montage of clips from friends and families encouraging him to complete the last run. Those people included two other

sportsmen who had contracted MND, Dodie Weir and Stephen Warnock. As they and Rob Burroughs voiced their encouragement through vocal chords ruined by the illness tears welled up. The video was inspirational; Kevin Sinfield's successful endurance test was inspirational; those three afflicted sportsmen were inspirational.

It is my privilege to be involved in the Rugby League family as a chaplain for Dewsbury Rams, and I know how close-knit a family it is. There is a closeness between the sporting heroes and the supporters that is much deeper than most other sports that I



INSPIRATION (cont'd)

am familiar with. Perhaps it is a throwback to the days when footballers would be seen getting on the local bus with the fans on the way to the match, I don't know. These fans have already responded in an amazing way to Rob Burrough's illness, doing various charitable activities. Other players have also taken part; I know that one of our lads did a marathon earlier in the year for Motor Neuron Disease (MND)

Inspirational. I think that should be one of the words for this year too, not just for Advent. Captain Tom's achievements were an inspiration.

The presentation of various ceremonies by the BBC during lock-down situations has been inspirational.

The discovery and production of a vaccine for COVID-19 in just 10 months has been inspirational.

The way in which people have responded to help others in deep need has been inspirational.

But what about us, you and me. What have we done that could also be called an 'Inspiration'? You know, it doesn't have to be something big or grand. Nobody is asking you to run seven marathons in seven days. In school we used to sing a hymn that said something like:

'Little drops of water, tiny grains of sand make the mighty oceans...' (I cannot remember the rest, but you get the idea I am sure!)

The little acts of kindness, mercy, compassion, caring and love are all tiny pixels that make up a bigger picture.

And that is enough to inspire anyone.

These words were penned by Major Cliff Alchin, who looks after the Salvation Army's, work in the city of Leeds.

Well worth reading.....cont'd

He memorized everything he heard! Photographic hearing! WHAT A SKILL SET. It took 3 days and every sandwich maker requested to work with Nicky. He immediately was accepted by the entire crew.

After his shift he would join the rest of his crew family, Drinking Coke like it was water! It was then that they discovered another Rainman-esque trait. Nicky was a walking/talking perpetual calendar! With a perpetual calendar as a reference, they would sit for hours asking him what day of the week was December 22, 1847. He never missed. This uncanny trait mesmerized the crew.

His mom would come in at 2 on the dot to pick him up. More times than not, the crew would be back there with him hamming it up. As I went to get him from the back, his mom said something I will never forget. "Let him stay there as long as he wants. He has never been accepted anywhere like he has been here." I excused myself and dried my eyes, humbled and broken hearted at the lesson I just learned.

Nicky had a profound impact on that store. His presence changed a lot of people. Today I believe with every fibre of my body that Nicky's hiring was no accident. God's timing and will is perfect.



This Christmas, I hope we all understand what we are celebrating.

We are all like Nicky. We each have our shortcomings. We each have our strong points. But we are all of value. God made us that way and God doesn't make mistakes. Nicky certainly wasn't a mistake. He was a valuable gift that I am forever grateful for.

A huge "Thank You" to those who have given items for the magazine - these are always welcome. If you have any feedback or would like to discuss any of the content in "Connected" 01234 212919 or 07720260213
se.grant@btinternet.com

Received from a friend today. Well worth reading:-

In 1979, I was managing a Wendy's Café in Florida. Unlike today, staffing was never a real problem, but I was searching for a someone to work 3 hours a day only at lunch.

I went through all my applications and most were all looking for full time or at least 20 hours per week. I found one however, buried at the bottom of a four inch stack that was only looking for lunch part time. His name was Nicky. Hadn't met him but thought I would give him a call and see if he could stop by for an interview. When I called, he wasn't in but his mom said she would make sure he would be there.

At the appointed time, Nicky walked in. One of those moments when my heart went in my throat. Nicky suffered from Downs Syndrome. His physical appearance was a giveaway and his speech reinforced the obvious. I was young and very sheltered. Had never interacted on a professional level with a mentally disabled person. I had no clue what to do, so I went ahead and interviewed him.

He was a wonderful young man. Great outlook. Task focused. Excited to be alive. For only reasons God knew at that time, I hired him. 3 hours a day, 3 days a week to run a grill.

I let the staff know what to expect. Predictably the crew made sure I got the message, "no one wants to work with a retard." To this day I find that word offensive. We had a crew meeting, cleared the air, and prepared for his arrival.

Nicky showed up for work right on time. He was so excited to be working. He stood at the time clock literally shaking with anticipation. He clocked in and started his training. Couldn't multi task, but was a machine on the grill. Now for the fascinating part.....

Back in that day, there were no computer screens to work from. Every order was called out by the cashier. It required a great deal of concentration on the part of all production staff to get the order right. While Nicky was training during his first shift, the sandwich maker next to him asked the grill man/trainer what was on the next sandwich. Nicky replied, "single, no pickle no onion." A few minutes later it happened again. It was then that we discovered Nicky had a hidden and valuable skill.



A Gift at Christmas

The local judge at the Crown Court asked the defendant, "What are you charged with?" "Doing my Christmas shopping early," replied the defendant. "That's not illegal" said the judge.

"How early were you doing this shopping?"
"Before the shop opened," replied the defendant.

As the Christmas season descends, we're seeing countless commercials of things we're supposed to buy. The implied promise is that if you give this, or if you receive that, then you'll be happy. Certainly, there's a rush of excitement in receiving a very special gift. But for the most part, you probably can't remember what you got for Christmas last year, even though it seemed so important then.

Last Christmas I saw a magazine with a cartoon in it. It showed a woman, laden with Christmas parcels, who had been doing her shopping. She had found her way into a church and sat down exhausted in one of the pews. She was explaining to the vicar 'I'm so sorry vicar, but this is the only place I can get away from Christmas'.

I wonder what the time of preparation for Christmas with all the shopping is like for you? Is it exhausting and anxious? Do you long for the peace that passes understanding? Christmas, commercially at least, cannot live up to the promise, to the standards we've set in our minds. At best, Christmas is a promise of greater things to come. However, it's not Christmas that will give us life; it is of course the greatest gift of all, **Jesus Christ**.

"My purpose is to give life in all its fullness". John 10:10.

If you were to give me a Christmas gift and I never opened it, you would be disappointed. And it would be a worthless gift, because I don't receive the benefit of a gift I never opened. Jesus Christ is God's gift to you and me . Yet some of us have gone Christmas after Christmas and

A Gift at Christmas (cont'd)

never opened the best gift of all: God's gift of salvation.

Why even celebrate Christmas if you're not going to open the biggest gift? It doesn't make sense to leave unwrapped ie gift of your past forgiven, a purpose for living, and life in all its fullness?

In the Old Testament Isaiah told us that God's gift would come via special delivery, a son born of a virgin. This son would be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)

Hundreds of years later God couldn't prepare the gift of Christ Jesus coming into the world without a Mary. He needed more than just a devout person, someone who attended synagogue and said her prayers. The baby Jesus needed a body to live in! So Mary offered the gift of hers:

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." (Luke 1:38)

Of course, Christmas is a time for that shopping to be done and for those gifts to be given. Rick Warren the church leader and writer says

"The prophets gave their promises. Mary gave her body. Joseph gave his reputation. The innkeeper gave his stable; the shepherds gave their time, and God gave His Son"

What are you giving for Christmas?



Healing For The Troubled Heart

It was on 11th April 1965 that I first came into contact with a gentleman, who was one of my teachers and he has continued to inspire and influence me since that time. Harry Read, now into his 90's has an amazing gift of writing poetry . He has published a number of books, all of which are an inspiration in themselves.

The words below were first written four years ago, and now even more so feel fitting for me to share with you,
Harry commented "If you consider the verses appropriate you might favour sharing the verses so that even more may find them to be a means of grace".

In these most sensitive of days
In tenderness, the Lord draws near.
He feels the sadness in our praise,
The cheerfulness that costs us dear

And, in his tenderness, he tells
That his nativity is more
Than angel songs and Christmas bells:
It is for us whose hearts are sore;

That we, who love and loved so much -
And feel by sorrow set apart -
Should know the loving, living touch
Of him who heals the troubled heart.

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart!"

I have overcome the world."
(John 16.33)

With every blessing,

Harry (16.12.20)