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# Exemplary leadership in water resource protection

*MRC municipalities honoured at the 2024  
Flamb'EAU Gala by COBAMIL*



**MARIA DIAMANTIS**  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for The North Shore News  
info@newsfirst.ca

## Recognition for five municipalities

The Thérèse-De Blainville Regional County Municipality (MRC) is proud to announce that several of its member municipalities received prestigious awards during the 5th annual Flamb'EAU Gala, hosted by the Conseil des bassins versants des Mille-Îles (COBAMIL). This organization is responsible for the integrated management of water resources in the Mille Îles River and Deux Montagnes Lake watersheds. The event, held on November 7 at the Cidrerie Lacroix, brought together nearly 100 water sector stakeholders from Montreal's northern suburbs to celebrate excellence in local water protection and sustainable management initiatives.

The municipalities of Blainville, Boisbriand, Rosemère, Sainte-Anne-des-Plaines, and Sainte-Thérèse were recognized for their outstanding contributions. "These distinctions highlight our collective commitment to innovation and tangible action for the protection of our water resources. They demonstrate the strength of our MRC when we unite efforts for sustainable development," said Eric Westram, Prefect of the MRC Thérèse-De Blainville and Mayor of Rosemère.

- **Blainville** received the prestigious *Porteur de Flamb'EAU* award for its innovative approach to drinking water management. "Our water consumption reduction program, supported by a communications campaign, new regulations, and financial incentives for adopting eco-friendly equipment, proves that urban development and resource protection can go hand in hand," stated Blainville Mayor Liza Poulin.
- **Sainte-Anne-des-Plaines** was also awarded the *Porteur de Flamb'EAU* award for its leadership in combating microbiological contamination. "The modernization of our sanitary infrastructure represents a major investment for our town. This recognition validates our commitment to improving environmental quality," said Julie Boivin, Deputy Prefect of the MRC Thérèse-De Blainville and Mayor of Sainte-Anne-des-Plaines.
- **Boisbriand** earned the *Special Monde Agricole* award, which highlighted the

▶ **Continued on page 3**

importance of the Fiducie agricole de Boisbriand (FAB) in protecting agricultural land. "This award acknowledges our vision for harmonious development that incorporates the protection of agricultural territories and sustainable water management," commented Boisbriand Mayor Christine Beaudette.

- **Sainte-Thérèse** received the *Coup de coeur* award for its innovative project to stabilize and secure the banks of the Rivière aux Chiens. "This project perfectly illustrates our commitment to protecting our waterways and ensuring community safety," emphasized Christian Charron, Mayor of Sainte-Thérèse.

### A testament to regional collaboration

The awards from the Flamb'EAU Gala are a testament to the shared vision and determination of the MRC Thérèse-De Blainville's municipalities to implement sustainable and effective water management practices. By working collectively and investing in innovative solutions, these cities are setting a standard for environmental stewardship and community well-being.

As the Flamb'EAU Gala continues to spotlight local initiatives, the Thérèse-De Blainville MRC remains committed to fostering collaboration and innovation for the sustainable management of water resources across the region.





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**Publishers:**

George Bakoyannis  
George S. Guzman

**General Director:**

George Bakoyannis

**VP Sales & Marketing:**

George S. Guzman  
sales@newsfirst.ca

**Graphic Design:**

Lareine Zakhour  
Elena Molter  
Thomas Bakoyannis

**Advertising:**

Jean Paul Chamberland

**Editorial Staff:**

Martin C. Barry  
Dylan Adams Lemaçon  
Maria Diamantis  
Renata Isopo

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# OPINION & Editorial



## Think beef prices are high now?

*Prepare for higher beef prices through 2025 and into 2026  
due to supply challenges*

Sorry beef lovers. Beef prices will likely remain high until mid to late 2025, possibly even longer. Droughts in North America have forced many cattle producers to reduce their herds, resulting in tighter supplies.

Higher food costs, elevated interest rates – crucial for the capital-intensive cattle industry – and downsizing herds have collectively pushed prices to record levels. As many producers exit the industry, the reduction in supply exacerbates the situation. For cattle producers, these high prices are welcome, but the story is quite different for consumers.

Beef has been a major driver of food inflation in recent months, outpacing general inflation. According to Statistics Canada, the price of beef stewing cuts has increased by 19 per cent in the last year, while beef rib cuts surged by 26 per cent. Even ground beef, often considered the most affordable beef option, has seen a 15 per cent hike in price over the past year.

These price increases build upon multiple price hikes in recent years. Given current trends, farmgate beef prices could continue climbing until mid-2025, breaking new records and prolonging the upward pressure on retail prices.

Unless you have a direct connection with a

rancher or luck into some exceptional deals, you should prepare to pay significantly more for your beef purchases. Within the broader meat category, beef isn't the only protein facing challenges – pork and chicken prices are also on the rise. The hog market has experienced similar upward pressure, which could lead to more expensive pork chops, ham, and bacon.

The situation is no different in the United States. A pound of ground beef is now at \$5.67, a record high and an increase of 43 per cent since January 2021. Beef, long considered a luxury protein, is now facing price points that could severely dampen demand for an extended period. While meat sales as a category fell three per cent in the latest quarter, according to NielsenIQ, the paradox is that American consumers are still purchasing beef, albeit at a steep cost.

We've seen this before. In 2015, beef prices at retail surged nearly 30 per cent within a few weeks, driven by drought-induced cattle sell-offs.

Consumers retreated from the beef category, and sales never fully recovered. The current situation, however, could be even worse. As of July 1, 2024, Canada's cattle herd was the smallest since 1987, despite the country now

having 15 million more people. The U.S. is experiencing an even more pronounced decline, with the smallest cattle inventory since 1951.

At some point, producers may attempt to rebuild their herds to take advantage of high prices, but this won't happen overnight. Economic uncertainty, including fluctuating interest rates and the U.S. presidential election, may cause the industry to delay any significant expansion.

Consumers should expect to see elevated beef prices through 2025 and into 2026. This trend is likely to hold, whether it's BBQ season or not. The beef industry faces a tough challenge in maintaining consumer interest amidst these high prices. Back in 2015, the price surge led to the closure of many butcher shops as consumers adopted more frugal approaches to buying animal protein.

As history has shown, when prices spook consumers, new habits form. This shift could have long-lasting consequences for sectors like beef, which are key to North America's agricultural economy. Keeping consumers engaged in the face of these price pressures will be a challenge, one that the industry must tackle head-on.

*Dr. Sylvain Charlebois*

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# Rosemère continues to shine with top Fleurons du Québec distinction



## MARIA DIAMANTIS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for The North Shore News  
info@newsfirst.ca

Once again, the Town of Rosemère has cemented its reputation as one of Québec's most beautiful municipalities. At the 2024 Fleurons du Québec awards held on November 21 in Saint-Hyacinthe, Rosemère retained its coveted 5-fleuron rating, marking the fourth consecutive time it has achieved this highest distinction. Out of 318 participating municipalities, Rosemère stands among just 23 to achieve this elite status.

The Fleurons du Québec program recognizes municipalities for their exceptional horticultural practices, sustainable development initiatives, and the aesthetic appeal of public and private spaces. The 5-fleuron rating places Rosemère at the forefront of municipal greening efforts, with this recognition valid through 2026. Accompanying the award is a detailed professional evaluation report that offers feedback and suggestions to guide further improvements.

## Standout features and top ratings

Rosemère's efforts were particularly lauded in the **Community Initiatives and Sustainable Development** category, where the town received a top score. Evaluator Mrs. de Chantal praised Rosemère for its forward-thinking approach, stating: *"Rosemère is not only very dynamic in terms of beautification and the environment, but it is also avant-garde."*

Key sites contributing to Rosemère's success include Bourbonnière Park and Hamilton House, both earning perfect scores for their

immaculate landscaping and the impressive number of mature plants and trees. Other top-rated locations include the **Public Works building** and the **H.-J. Hemens Library**, whose vibrant floral arrangements highlighted the skill of Rosemère's horticulturalists.

Evaluator favourites also included **Pioneers Park**, the **Bouthillier Marsh walkway**, and the **Rosemère train station**, each celebrated for their thoughtfully designed and meticulously maintained layouts.

## A shared achievement

Mayor Eric Westram expressed pride in Rosemère's continued success, emphasizing the collective effort behind the town's recognition:

*"We are very honoured to receive this award once again. Rosemère is not only maintaining its achievements but also improving its rating compared to the last classification. This recognition is shared with our residents, merchants, institutions, and municipal employees who work together to sustainably beautify our living environment. Let's continue to take pride in these 5 fleurons, which confirm Rosemère's place among Québec's most beautiful municipalities!"*

## About Fleurons du Québec

The Fleurons du Québec program promotes horticultural excellence across the province by evaluating and rating municipalities on a scale from zero to five fleurons. The initiative has far-reaching social, economic, environmental, and tourism benefits.

As Rosemère continues to innovate and grow, this latest recognition underscores its commitment to environmental stewardship and the beauty of its community spaces, serving as an inspiration for municipalities across Québec.



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# The growing challenge of fostering independence in Quebec's children

**MARIA DIAMANTIS**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for The North Shore News  
info@newsfirst.ca

In Quebec, concerns are rising among educators and child development specialists about a decline in children's ability to perform basic tasks independently. From tying shoelaces to managing time without digital distractions, many children struggle with life skills once taken for granted. This trend is influenced by several factors, including increased screen time, a decline in outdoor play, and shifts in parenting practices.

## The impact of escalating screen time

Quebec's youth are spending more time in front of screens than ever before. Recent data reveals that 94% of children aged 6 to 17 use electronic devices regularly, with nearly 45% clocking over 10 hours online per week. This rise in screen exposure has been linked to

developmental challenges. Studies show that excessive screen time can impede language development, attention spans, and social skills while contributing to behavioral issues like heightened frustration and anxiety.

In classrooms across the province, teachers notice the impact. "They seem disconnected from real-world activities," a primary school educator shared. "We hear more about their achievements in video games than anything they've done outdoors or with friends."

While technology itself is not the enemy, experts stress the importance of mindful use. The Quebec government has launched initiatives to study the effects of screen time on children and is exploring policies to promote healthier habits.

## A decline in outdoor play

The days when children spent hours climbing trees, riding bikes, or building forts have become rare in urban and suburban areas of Quebec. Outdoor play, crucial for develop-

ing motor skills, creativity, and resilience, is increasingly replaced by structured activities or screen-based entertainment.

Safety concerns, busy schedules, and urbanization have limited opportunities for unstructured play. Some Quebec communities have introduced 'free play zones' to encourage children to engage with nature, but participation remains inconsistent. "Children need the freedom to explore and solve problems on their own," one teacher explained. "This is how they develop confidence and adaptability."

## Parental practices and autonomy

Modern parenting trends also contribute to the issue. Overprotective behaviors, often rooted in genuine care, can inadvertently hinder children's ability to become self-reliant. Parents are quick to step in, whether it's completing homework or resolving social conflicts, leaving children fewer opportunities to navigate challenges independently.

Additionally, the convenience of digital devices as pacifiers during idle moments can undermine important lessons in patience and social interaction. For instance, handing a child a tablet to keep them entertained in a waiting room may prevent them from learning how to occupy themselves creatively or engage in meaningful conversations.

## Finding a balance

Addressing this multifaceted issue requires collaboration among educators, parents, and policymakers. Encouraging outdoor activities, setting boundaries for screen time, and fostering a culture of independence are critical steps. Quebec is already exploring ways to tackle these challenges, including government-supported initiatives to promote physical activity and regulate screen exposure.

By taking a balanced approach, Quebec can ensure its children grow into capable, resilient individuals prepared for the complexities of modern life.






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# Suspicious **fire under** investigation in Sainte-Thérèse

**MARIA DIAMANTIS**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for The North Shore News  
info@newsfirst.ca

The Régie de police Thérèse-De Blainville is currently investigating a suspicious fire that broke out in the early hours of November 28.

Authorities responded promptly to an emergency call reporting a fire near a vehicle parked in the driveway of a private residence. Both police officers and firefighters were dispatched to the scene, where they successfully brought the fire under control. A safety perimeter was established to secure the area, and fortunately, no injuries were reported.

Inspector Karine Desaulniers provided further details about the ongoing investigation. "Investigators will be meeting with witnesses, and a forensic technician specializing in fire scenes will be conducting a thorough analysis on-site," she explained. "The goal is to determine the exact causes and circumstances surrounding this fire. At this stage, no arrests have been made, as the investigation is still in its early stages."

While the precise origin of the fire remains unclear, the circumstances have raised suspicion, prompting a detailed inquiry. The forensic technician's work will include gathering evidence, analyzing patterns of fire damage, and identifying potential accelerants or other signs of foul play. This meticulous approach aims to piece together what transpired before and during the incident.

Authorities are calling on the public for assistance in shedding light on the case. Any information related to the fire can be shared confidentially by contacting the police at **450 435-2421**. Witness accounts and community input could play a critical role in advancing the investigation and possibly identifying those responsible.

Suspicious fires such as this one are treated with the utmost seriousness, as they can pose significant risks to property and life. The swift response of emergency services in this case prevented potential escalation, ensuring the safety of nearby residents. However, the event has understandably raised concerns in the Sainte-Thérèse community.

The police department has assured residents that they are committed to uncovering the truth behind the incident. While investigators proceed with their work, the public is urged to remain vigilant and report any unusual activity that might be connected to the fire.

This incident serves as a reminder of the importance of community awareness and cooperation in ensuring neighbourhood safety. More updates on the case are expected as the investigation progresses.



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# Rosemère's 2025 calendar highlights community initiatives and accessibility



**MARIA DIAMANTIS**  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for The North Shore News  
info@newsfirst.ca

The Town of Rosemère is gearing up to release its annual municipal calendar for 2025, a staple for many residents who rely on

it for essential dates, local events, and town services. Beyond its utility, this year's calendar serves as a window into Rosemère's broader

commitment to community well-being and inclusivity.

Set to be available at various town locations starting December 5, the calendar is shaped by the theme of Rosemère's age- and family-friendly policy (MADA-Familles). The photographs, curated with care, provide insight into initiatives aimed at making the town a more accessible and welcoming place for residents of all generations. From projects focused on infrastructure to programs catering to families, the calendar doubles as a visual record of the town's progress.

Mayor Eric Westram described the calendar as a tool that reflects more than dates and deadlines. "This year's theme emphasizes the sense of community and quality of life that Rosemère strives to foster," he said.

The town has also made accessibility a priority for this year's distribution. In addition to being available at five municipal locations, the calendar can be downloaded online. For residents with mobility challenges, there's an option to request a mailed copy, ensuring the resource reaches those who need it most.

While the calendar is a practical guide for many, it also underscores Rosemère's efforts to engage its citizens in shaping a town that is as inclusive as it is functional. Its availability at multiple locations and in digital format reflects the town's evolving approach to sustainability and accessibility.

Rosemère's 2025 calendar is not merely a tool for staying organized—it's a reflection of a community's shared vision for inclusivity, connection, and progress.



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# DIRECT ANSWERS

## FROM WAYNE & TAMARA

### STANDING ALONE

**Q** My mother-in-law of 17 years is a nasty, difficult European woman who has been in America for 45 years. I don't know if we're having a culture clash, a personality clash, or both. For starters, in the beginning when my husband and I lived together she called me a whore, then the day after the wedding she asked me to call her mom. I refused.

We've been having loud arguments ever since. This upsets my children, so three years ago I stopped talking to her. It took her two and a half years to figure out that's what I was doing. She causes major marital problems as my husband refuses to protect me from her. He says she's always been that way, so tune her out. That's what he's done since high school.

Well, I can't tune people out. She criticizes my cooking, states I shouldn't have married her son, then denies it all when I confront her. I am considering a divorce over this as I can't live with someone who doesn't support me. Yet I don't want to break up the family.

Marianne

**A** Marianne, G.K. Chesterton wrote, "There are no words to express the abyss between isola-

Wayne & Tamara

tion and having one ally. It may be conceded to the mathematician that four is twice two. But two is not twice one; two is two thousand times one."

Sometimes a man doesn't realize a woman values him for his ability to protect her from harm. If the man won't stand up for her, she will lose respect for him. When your husband was growing up, he treated his mother like annoying music on the radio. He couldn't turn her off, so he learned to tune her out.

It's not that he disagrees with you. He knows she's a problem. The dispute is how to react to her bad behavior. A book we recommend is Susan Forward's "Emotional Blackmail." It is a primer on how to handle annoying people like your mother-in-law.

In countries where women are free to initiate divorce, divorces are usually initiated by women. When a woman gets to the end of her rope, it no longer matters if her husband is finally ready to act. It is as if a switch has been thrown, and there is no turning back.

If your husband doesn't deal with this problem, then he's left the choice up to you. He needs to realize this. The Susan Forward book can help you both, but if he won't confront his mother, then in six months we may get another letter from you. That letter will begin, "I met this man...."

### THORNY CONSEQUENCES

**Q** What do you think about a woman who has children, remarries, and still keeps her ex-husband's name while married to a new man? Is it for the sake of the children? I don't see that is the case with my fiancé's ex because she has no problem abusing him or me or both of us in front of the children. She's even driven down the road in a fit of rage screaming profanity about us with the children in the car. How do we know that? Because we heard it over the cell phone.

Giovanna

**A** Giovanna, her decision about her name is neither here nor there. It is a decision totally within her control and totally beyond yours. If she wants to call herself Elvis Presley, Mother Goose, or Punxsutawney Phil, she can. Since this is something you can do nothing about, let it go.

You are faced with more serious problems. Your life is about to be linked with a woman whose behavior is out of control. How are you going to deal with her? How are you going to protect the children from her rage? These are the questions you need to answer. Once again, we recommend Susan Forward's book "Emotional Blackmail."

Wayne & Tamara

WAYNE & TAMARA MITCHELL are the authors of YOUR OTHER HALF ([www.yourotherhalf.com](http://www.yourotherhalf.com))

Send letters to: Direct Answers, PO 964 Springfield, MO 65801-0964

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Week of DECEMBER 8 TO 14, 2024

The luckiest signs this week:  
GEMINI, CANCER AND LEO

**♈ ARIES**  
You may find yourself deeply contemplating the need to develop your spirituality in line with your beliefs. You might consider taking a pilgrimage to nourish this inner exploration.

**♉ TAURUS**  
You must be vigilant about washing your hands when seeing family and friends to protect your fragile immune system. It's crucial to take some well-deserved rest to rebuild your strength. You must balance your social commitments with your personal well-being.

**♊ GEMINI**  
You must manage your time wisely. You must make sensible choices to strike the right balance between duty and pleasure. This will give you a sense of harmony in all aspects of your life.

**♋ CANCER**  
You'll contemplate going on a relaxing getaway. You may have already made reservations. Planning some me-time will infuse a welcome sense of anticipation into your daily routine.

**♌ LEO**  
Challenges and unexpected events may come your way, requiring you to address neglected tasks. Once you overcome these challenges, new opportunities will arise. This will bring a sense of renewal and give you cause for celebration.

**♍ VIRGO**  
You'll finalize a professional agreement that will lead to significant transformations. Your determination and competitive spirit will propel you to new heights, whether in your personal or professional life.

**♎ LIBRA**  
You have a busy week ahead with lots of details to take care of. Practice letting go and take on a new philosophy that aligns with your values to alleviate stress and give you a more serene outlook on life.

**♏ SCORPIO**  
All eyes will focus on you this week. You'll be the recipient of extra recognition. Your ability to accomplish important tasks will open doors to professional advancement.

**♐ SAGITTARIUS**  
You'll be encouraged to shake up your daily routine by accepting several invitations to go out. These moments of escape will help brighten up your week, whether on a personal level or in the company of a loved one.

**♑ CAPRICORN**  
If you have real estate aspirations, this is the week to act. You may decide to redecorate your home before Christmas to create a cozy atmosphere that will impress your family.

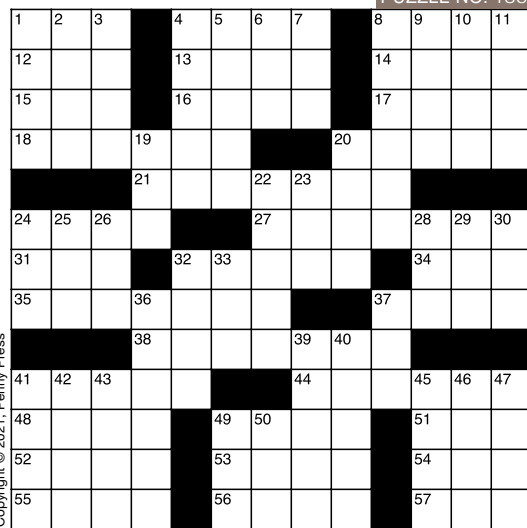
**♒ AQUARIUS**  
You'll be asked to express yourself candidly. However, make sure you have the right information to avoid confusion. You may need to translate a text to clarify things.

**♓ PISCES**  
You may be tempted to make expensive purchases. However, you must manage your budget, whether for Christmas gifts or luxurious splurges. You'll need to find an outlet for your overburdened mind.

# Coffee Break

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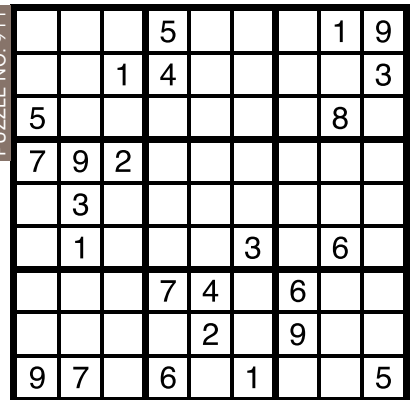
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- 4. Dull pain
- 8. Pace
- 12. Be ill
- 13. Tool housing
- 14. Barrier
- 15. Kind of neckline
- 16. Torso parts
- 17. Plus
- 18. Tooth coating
- 20. Bothered
- 21. Unvarying
- 24. Route
- 27. Dried grapes
- 31. Wiggly fish
- 32. Yaks
- 34. Lamp fuel
- 35. Revive
- 37. Exclusively
- 38. Revolved around
- 41. Poison \_\_\_\_
- 44. Completion

### DOWN

- 1. Roof overhang
- 2. Debtor's burden
- 3. Small bug
- 4. Pale
- 5. Hot-dog topping
- 6. With it
- 7. Asner and McMahon
- 8. Throngs
- 9. Speak
- 10. Differently
- 11. Walk heavily
- 19. Damp dirt
- 20. Showy flower
- 22. Former French coin
- 23. Dobbin's morsel
- 24. KO counter
- 25. Above, in poems
- 26. "Cakes and \_\_\_\_"
- 28. Charged atom
- 29. None
- 30. Tricky
- 32. Fashionable
- 33. That girl
- 36. Burns with water
- 37. Kooky
- 39. Depart
- 40. Log
- 41. Couch
- 42. Aware of: 2 wds.
- 43. Food store
- 45. At leisure
- 46. Mr. Coward
- 47. Acquires
- 49. Half of a bikini
- 50. Thump

# Sudoku

PUZZLE NO. 911



### HOW TO PLAY:

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 only once.

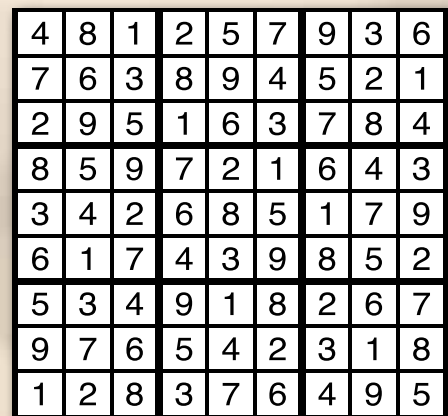
Each 3x3 box is outlined with a darker line. You already have a few numbers to get you started. Remember: You must not repeat the numbers 1 through 9 in the same line, column, or 3x3 box.

## Last Issue's Answers

### CROSSWORDS



### Sudoku



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- Raspberries
- Blueberries
- Canary Melon
- Broccoli
- Romaine Hearts (3)
- Tomatoes (2-3)
- Sweet Potatoes (3)
- Mushrooms
- Beets (2lbs)
- Yellow Onions (2lbs)
- Acorn Squash
- Garlic (Argentine)
- Lemons (2)
- Apples (3)
- Clementines (6-7)
- Bananas (4-5)
- Mango (bio)
- Mystery Item (Daikon / Lo bok)

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