

# life at home

WITH NICOLE MIRANDA

Embracing unexpected opportunities in unprecedented times.

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"There is no crying in baseball!" is the famous line delivered by Tom Hanks in the 90's classic, *A League of Their Own*. This phrase from an old movie basically means: "toughen up" and "be strong." That is exactly what we need to do these days. This pandemic is testing our strength, and we won't give in and let it break us down. Just like so many obstacles we have faced in the past, especially 9/11, we will come out stronger than before. As we head into Memorial Day weekend, let's be strong for the families who have lost a loved one while serving in the United States Armed Forces. For those of you that have served or are still serving, thank you for your service.

## America's National Pastime

It's called a pastime for a reason. Unlike football and basketball, baseball has been around since the 19th century. It has been the sport that defines America the most, playing a massive role in America's culture overall. The history of baseball in the United States can be traced back to the 18th century, when boys and amateurs played a baseball-like game by their own informal rules using homemade equipment. The popularity of the sport grew into the amateur men's ball clubs of the 1830-50s, the semi-professional baseball clubs of the 1860s and the post-Civil War baseball fever which led to the first professional leagues during the 1870s.

Do you ever wonder why the 7th inning stretch is in the 7th inning? According to one popular tale, William Howard Taft, America's 27th president, is to thank for the ritual. In 1910, Taft attended the opening-day game of the Washington Senators at Griffith Stadium in the nation's capital and threw out the ceremonial first pitch (thereby inaugurating the custom of first-pitch tossing by the commander-in-chief). As the story goes, by the seventh inning the president, who tipped the scales at more than 300 pounds, was feeling cramped in his seat and got up to stretch his legs. The crowd, thinking the chief executive

was leaving, rose to its feet out of respect—and the stretch supposedly was born.

Music also became part of this 7th inning stretch. In 1976, Harry Caray, the announcer for the Chicago White Sox, popularized the singing of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game." When Caray moved over to the Chicago Cubs' broadcast booth in 1982, he continued the tradition. Today, the 1908 Tin Pan Alley tune—whose iconic chorus, of course, includes the line: "Just buy me some peanuts and Cracker Jack"—is played during the seventh-inning stretch at many major-league ballparks across the country. Fans are encouraged to sing along, and at some ballparks, the words "home team" are replaced with the team name.

Some of my favorite memories when my kids were little is taking them to a baseball game. Arriving early to a game to watch batting practice and trying to get their favorite players to sign a ball became a tradition. Let's hope baseball starts up again so we can get back to this tradition.

## MEET NICOLE

Nicole Miranda is a long-time Action team member who loves her job, her co-workers, sharks and finding ways to make people happy. She is the jack-of-all-trades at Action, juggling many balls and always looking to make life better for everyone.



## Baseball Movies

While there is no crying in baseball, there is sometimes crying in baseball movies! Baseball is older than movies themselves. Without baseball, many of the best movies would never have been made! "Baseball's story is the story of our lives, with heroes and villains, glory and scandal, triumph and failure, comedy and tragedy. It remains the most cinematic of our sports because it is, at its core, about human beings and their frailties and their glories." (Will Leitch, mlb.com, March 15, 2020)

My top 3 favorite baseball movies:

***Bull Durham*** - A movie that combines the craziness, the camaraderie and the romance of baseball better than any other movie. Conversations at the mound between pitchers, catchers and coaches. The lengths to which players will go to get out of a slump. Behind the scenes of how managers make decisions. And discussions about which hand to swing with in a fight. This movie covers all the bases!

***A League of Their Own*** - A comedy-drama based on a fictionalized account of the real-life All-American Girls Professional Baseball League (AAGPBL). World War II reallocated the talents of many of America's young, male athletes. Filling the void was a professional all-female baseball league that started up in the Midwest, funded by publicity-hungry Walter Harvey. The movie captures the heart of the game through the eyes of young women who played for the love of the sport and uplifted a country during trying times.

***Field of Dreams*** - A sports fantasy drama that has become etched into American baseball folklore. An Iowa farmer named Ray, played by Kevin Costner, hears a mysterious voice in his cornfield. The voice calls out to him: "If you build it, he will come." Ray is ultimately compelled to act based on the pleas

from his corn field. In the face of derision and accusations that he had lost his mind, Ray builds a baseball diamond in the cornfield. Upon completion, the ghosts of great players emerge from the stalks to play ball, led by "Shoeless" Joe Jackson. But, going deeper, the movie uses the baseball as a vehicle to explore the depths of the human condition and how we relate to each other. The closing scene captures the essence of father-son relationships, calling all of us to be better in how we relate to those we love. Something we could all use these days.

For more baseball movies, go to <https://tinyurl.com/mlbmovies>.

## Get Lost in a New Podcast

Call me old fashioned, but I prefer to be cuddled up with a nice blanket and a hot cup of tea reading my book. My kids have been urging me to try listening to podcasts and I am finally going to give it a shot. From what I have read, the advantage of the podcasting format is that it offers endless variety and options. Any topic a person may be interested in can usually be found online in podcast format. You can tune in to anything and everything. There are uplifting tales of human connection on 'Modern Love', 25 years' worth of the inspirational 'This American Life', and even opportunities to dig in to your favorite true crime mysteries on 'Crime Junkie.' Due to everyone staying home, there are tons of new podcasts out there as people have more time on their hands, including 'Staying In with Emily & Kumail' from the couple behind the movie 'The Big Sick' as they fill your ears with conversation, honesty and humor as a way to deal with staying in. The one thing about podcasts that sounds great to me is that you can listen to them no matter what's going on around you. Most smartphones have a native Podcast app where you can download and listen to episodes (and most podcasts are free!). Check out the 21 best podcasts to listen to right now at <https://tinyurl.com/bestpodcasts2020>.



## EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

### Create Your Own Circuit

Circuit training is not only a fun way to get your workout in, but can also be one of the most productive workouts. The options are virtually limitless when it comes to designing a circuit-type workout. Not only can you get a great workout in by simply utilizing your own body weight, but also by incorporating some inexpensive at-home equipment. Include some resistance bands, kettlebells and medicine balls, and you'll never get bored and the "I have no time" excuse can never be used!

For those not totally familiar with circuit training, it involves putting together a series (circuit) of exercises that you can perform one after another with little to no rest between exercises. The minimal rest between exercises is an important part of the workout because you purposely don't want your body to achieve complete recovery during the circuit.

Some of the key benefits to circuit training include:

- Time efficient – circuits can be short yet very effective.
- Works the entire body – depending on how you design your circuit, you can easily achieve a total body workout
- Improves conditioning and muscular endurance – by constantly moving from one exercise to another, your heart rate will stay up and your muscle endurance will improve.
- They can be a FUN way to work out!

This type of training is a great way to complement your weight loss and strength training efforts. While there is no "perfect" circuit workout, a well thought out and properly designed circuit should be built to benefit your specific fitness level and goals. When selecting your desired exercises, you should mix together a combination of the following recommendations from Johnson Fitness ([www.blog.johnsonfitness.com](http://www.blog.johnsonfitness.com)):

- Resistance exercises to help build valuable calorie-consuming muscle
- Metabolic exercises that will increase your heart rate and help you burn calories throughout the day
- High intensity and low intensity exercises that will allow you to push through the workout

There is no perfect number of exercises to include when building a circuit. Although most consist of 6-12 exercises, the right number is up to you and should be based on what you want to accomplish in that day's workout. You could pick 12 exercises and perform one set of each with no rest between. Or you could choose 6 exercises and go through

the circuit 4 times. Circuit workouts can be intense and short (12-15 minutes), or they can be as long as 45-60 minutes.

The following are some suggested circuits from Johnson Fitness:

#### Circuit #1 – 12 Minute Bodyweight

Perform the following 6 exercises for 30 seconds each with little to no rest between exercises. Once you complete a full circuit, rest one minute before repeating for 4 total rounds.

- Push-Ups
- Side Plank – Right
- Side Plank – Left
- Alternate Lunges w/ Overhead Reach
- Burpees
- Skaters

#### Circuit #2 – Bodyweight Build & Burn

Perform the following 6 exercise for 30 seconds each or pick a rep range (12-20) for each exercise with little to no rest between exercises. Once you complete a full circuit, rest one minute before repeating for 3-4 total rounds.

- Bodyweight Squats
- Jumping Jacks
- Renegade Rows
- Lateral Hops
- Push-Ups
- Scissor Steps
- Lateral Lunges
- High Knees
- Leg Drops
- Mountain Climbers

For more circuit ideas, check out <https://tinyurl.com/homecircuittraining>.

### What is on Everyone's Reading List These Days?

*The Gifted School*, by Bruce Holsinger, is one of Goodreads Best Fiction of 2019 recommendations. This deliciously sharp novel captures the relentless ambitions and fears that animate parents and their children in modern America. The novel brazenly explores the tension between actual achievement and potential and between raw talent and economic privilege.

And the latest from Action's library is *How to Not Be Wrong: The Power of Mathematical Thinking*, by Jordan Ellenberg. Don't be scared off by the reference to math! While this book is a tour of mathematical thought, it really is a guide to becoming a better thinker. *How Not to Be Wrong* shows that math is not just a long list of rules to be learned and carried out. Math touches everything we do: It's what makes the world make sense. Armed with the tools of mathematics, we can see the hidden structures beneath the messy and chaotic surface of our daily lives. *How Not to Be Wrong* shows us how.



### Host a Virtual Murder Mystery

What better way to take your mind off coronavirus than a Murder Mystery! The UK company Red Herring Games has described itself as offering ‘the best in murder mystery entertainment.’ Red Herring’s [multilayered games](#) can now be played in virtual gatherings through Zoom or Google Hangouts (<https://tinyurl.com/mmpartyvirtual>). They have games suitable for smaller groups of 6-20 people, kids’ parties and larger groups that can break off into multiple rooms.

There are a variety of side-splitting themes to choose from. *The Great British Bump Off* is certainly overflowing with surprises, *Murder on the Disorientated Express* sounds like a blast, *Death Actually* will keep you on the edge of your seat and you might want to go up to the lab and see what’s laid out at the *Little Rock Horror Shop of Murder!*

While Red Herring equips you with all the (digital) materials to make your evening of murder mystery excitement happen, you do need to take some initiative to facilitate the a good time for the whole group. Someone must assign the characters and distribute the booklets and scripts to all the players.

Embrace the theme of the game you are going to play and encourage the participants to dress accordingly. Go full formal if the game’s theme fits, or tap into decades of the past for themes that harken back to yesteryear. Get character descriptions and themes to players early enough that they can plan their attire to be appropriate to their character’s situation. Even online, dressing up can be a great component of the game. And you’d be hard-pressed to find someone who is into murder mystery parties that wouldn’t also be into an excuse to get dressed up!

Murder mystery party packs start at \$41.78. Head to the Red Herring Games website to peruse the options. Check out <https://www.red-herring-games.com/>

### Doodle Session

Do your kids like to doodle? Why not doodle with a professional? Brooklyn artist Mo Willems, the educational artist-in-residence at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC, is leading a free online drawing session every day at 1pm. Kids can see the magic behind the mind that came up with ‘Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!’, ‘Knuffle Bunny’ and many more contemporary classics. You can also catch previous sessions on YouTube. To learn more about Lunch Doodles with Mo Willems, go to <https://tinyurl.com/lunchdoodleswithmo>.

### VIDEO OF THE WEEK

## Wonderful World of Disney Parade

It’s been 14 years since the final performance—but now 160 former Disneyland Paris cast members living all over the world have dusted off their dancing shoes in quarantine to present, one more time, [The Wonderful World of Disney Parade](#). This Chim-Chim-Cheeroo story will brighten your day! (<https://tinyurl.com/wwofdisney>)

## RECIPE OF THE WEEK

# Marinated Beef Shish Kabobs

There is nothing like savory chunks of tender meat and veggies grilled over a flame for an easy outdoor meal that always satisfies. Marinating the meat not only imparts loads of flavor, but it also tenderizes it so every bite is juicy and delicious. And since beef kabobs cook quickly on the grill, they are great for summer entertaining and not to mention, kids love food on a stick! This recipe is one that my mother has been making for fifty years!

## INGREDIENTS:

### Marinade

- ½ cup olive or salad oil
- ¼ cup soy sauce
- ½ cup Taylor N.Y. State burgundy wine (cooking wine)
- ¼ tsp powdered ginger
- 2 cloves garlic
- ½ tsp black pepper
- 2 tablespoon ketchup

### Kabobs

- 1 ½ pounds sirloin steak or sirloin tips, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 16 mushroom caps
- 8 metal or wooden skewers
- 2 green bell peppers, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 red bell pepper, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 red large onion, cut into 1-inch cubes (about 3 onions layers each)

## DIRECTIONS:

In a medium bowl, mix the marinade ingredients together. Reserve 1 tablespoon of the marinade.

Place the cubed meat into a large plastic zip-tight bag and pour all but the reserved marinade over it, then seal and squish to coat well. Place in the refrigerator up to 24 hours to marinate. This is also a good time to place wooden skewers (if using instead of metal) in water to soak.

Preheat grill to high heat while preparing the kabobs. Chop all vegetables into chunks that are roughly the same size as the cubed steak, keeping 3 layers of onion together in each chunk. Drizzle vegetables with the reserved marinade.

Thread alternating pieces of meat and vegetables until the skewers are filled, aiming for 4-5 pieces of steak on each skewer.

Place kabobs on the grill directly over the heat and reduce heat to medium-high. Grill for 8-10 minutes, flipping every 2-3 minutes, until the meat is cooked medium-rare to medium and the vegetables start to char just around the edges.

Remove from the grill and rest for 5 minutes before serving.

The longer you marinate the meat, the more flavorful the end product will be. You can leave the steak in the marinade for up to 36 hours! You can also add tomatoes, pineapple and potatoes to the kabob. Serve with baked or grilled potatoes, sweet potato fries, side of rice and salad or any of your favorite side dishes!

## SOLUTIONS TO LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD PUZZLES

M	A	G	I	C		R	A	T	S		M	A	R	S		
A	B	A	T	E		E	C	H	O		A	L	E	C		
T	U	L	S	A		P	R	O	M	E	N	A	D	E		
S	T	A		S	N	E	E	R	E	D		M	I	N		
				N	E	I	L	S			E	R	O	D	E	
C	A	N	A	D	A			M	I	N	E					
A	B	E	T			G	A	T	O	R		H	A	M	S	
P	E	R	U			A	T	O	N	E		E	R	I	E	
O	D	O	R			R	O	Y	A	L		A	I	D	E	
				A	S	A	P			A	T	T	A	I	N	
S	T	A	L	K				M	I	N	I	S				
C	A	N			I	S	L	A	N	D	S		L	E	T	
A	R	G	E	N	T	I	N	A			S	T	O	L	E	
R	O	L	L			A	V	O	N			U	N	C	L	E
S	T	E	M			G	E	R	E			E	T	H	A	N

M	Y	B	A	D		N	A	S	A		D	U	E	S		
D	E	R	M	A		A	T	O	N		I	S	N	T		
S	W	A	M	P		P	O	N	G		N	A	T	O		
		C	A	P	T	A	I	N	S		L	O	G	I	N	
S	C	E	N	E	I			E	T	A		E	R	E		
H	A	L			R	E	M	I	T		D	O	S	E	S	
U	T	E	P			D	O	N			F	L	U			
		S	T	R	A	Y	B	U	L	L	E	T	I	N		
				O	W	E		R	I	O		S	N	O	B	
T	A	M	P	A		L	E	E	R	S		D	D	E		
I	R	A			S	H	E			A	T	R	E	S	T	
P	O	N	C	H	O	V	I	L	L	A	I	N				
T	U	N	A			R	I	D	E			R	A	I	N	S
O	N	E	G			S	T	E	W			E	T	A	I	L
E	D	D	Y			E	Y	E	D			D	A	L	L	Y

## EASY

### Free Printable Crossword Puzzle #7

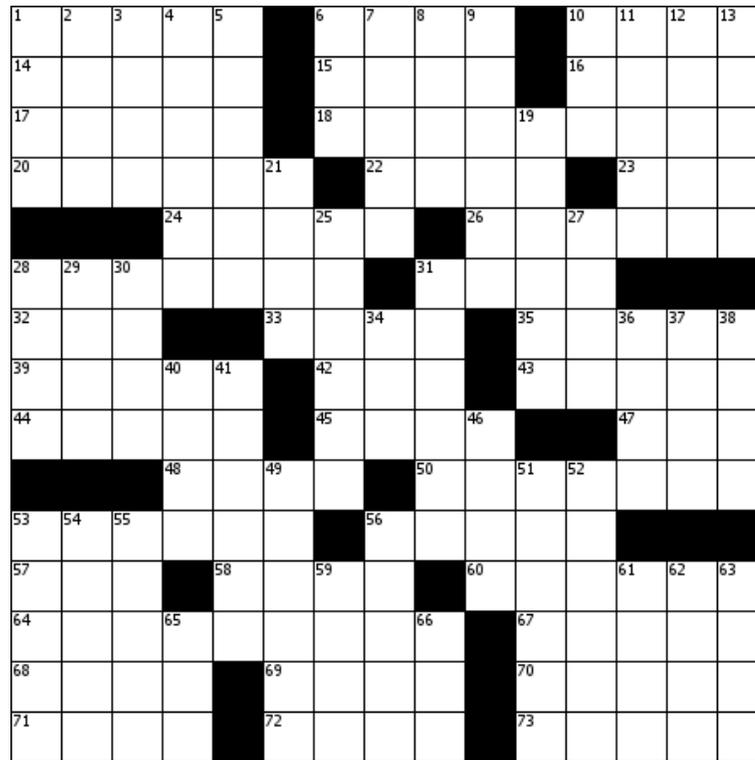
This is the Daily Crossword Puzzle #7 for **May 14, 2020**

Find the solution at

<http://onlinecrosswords.net/81524>

#### Across

- 1. Atlantic or Indian
- 6. Corn spikes
- 10. Besides
- 14. Mold
- 15. Kilt wearer
- 16. Ladder step
- 17. Speech defects
- 18. Knife user's tool
- 20. Groups of eight
- 22. Greek Cupid
- 23. \_\_\_\_ whiz!
- 24. Audibly
- 26. Intense beams
- 28. Point winners
- 31. Fashion magazine
- 32. Writing tablet
- 33. Bugle call
- 35. Bricklayer
- 39. Scent
- 42. Horse's mouthpiece
- 43. Range
- 44. Bit of parsley
- 45. Show the way
- 47. Wrestler's pad
- 48. Saga
- 50. Loafer ornaments
- 53. Cavern
- 56. Evil spirit
- 57. Steal from
- 58. Own
- 60. Empower
- 64. Functional
- 67. Directional symbol
- 68. Mexican coin
- 69. Locks
- 70. Taunt
- 71. Eve's garden
- 72. Singer \_\_\_\_ Fitzgerald
- 73. Fall flower



#### Down

- 1. Capital of Norway
- 21. Arrange
- 49. Despise
- 2. Fashionable
- 25. Employable
- 51. Brahms piece
- 3. Bridge position
- 27. Bench
- 52. Catches
- 4. Materialize
- 28. Health clubs
- 53. Search blindly
- 5. Snuggle
- 29. Complain
- 54. Lassoed
- 6. Highway curve
- 30. Smell
- 55. Overweight
- 7. Hurt
- 31. Landed manor
- 56. Satan
- 8. Shout
- 34. Crusted dessert
- 59. Small bottle
- 9. Walk leisurely
- 36. A few
- 61. Annoying child
- 10. Exist
- 37. Track shape
- 62. Come in last
- 11. Forward thrust
- 38. Seines
- 63. Washstand item
- 12. Scoff
- 40. Catcher's glove
- 65. \_\_\_\_ Howard of "Happy Days"
- 13. Monsters
- 41. Writer \_\_\_\_ Christie
- 66. Period of note
- 19. Biblical hymns
- 46. Notre \_\_\_\_

## DIFFICULT

### Free Printable Crossword Puzzle #1

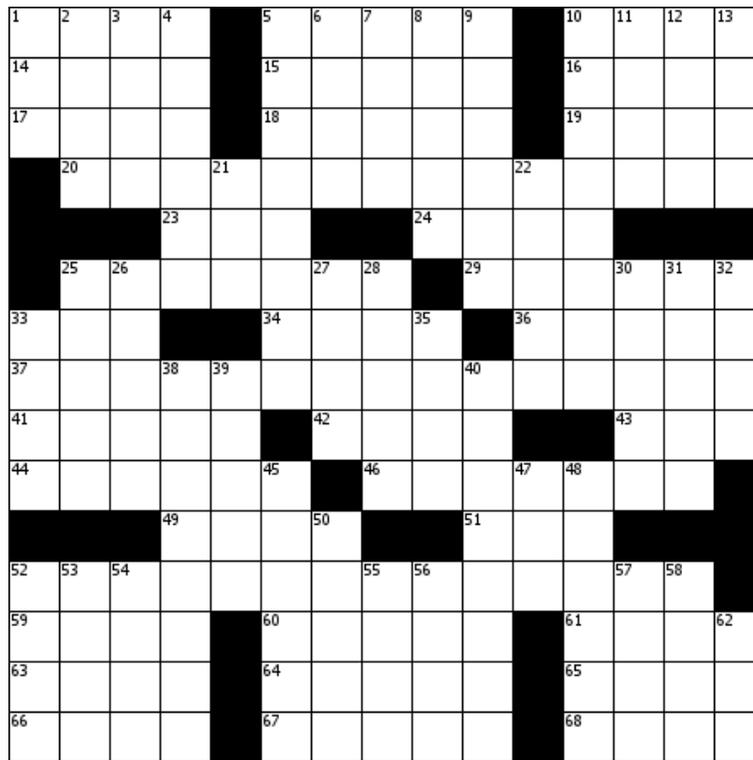
This is the Daily Crossword Puzzle #1 for **May 14, 2020**

Find the solution at

<http://onlinecrosswords.net/6892>

#### Across

1. Storm preceder
5. Lamb or veal items
10. Waist band?
14. Moises in the majors
15. Condor's digs
16. Piedmont wine center
17. Kind of drum
18. Lariat in the Southwest
19. Fiction enthusiast?
20. French, to some
23. IV x XIII
24. Sean Connery, among many
25. Put aside
29. "Bragh" preceder
33. Radical '70s org.
34. Sitting on
36. Prepare for knighthood
37. Mae West's asset?
41. Kuwait biggie
42. He jumps through hoops
43. Apt. grouping
44. S. England county
46. Places of "action"
49. "\_\_\_ Mia"
51. Brew holder
52. 1979 Doobie Brothers hit
59. Tommy of Mets' history
60. It's projected
61. Off course
63. Show fury
64. "Awake and Sing!" playwright
65. Mudville group
66. Is off the mark
67. Action after an alarm
68. Freshly



#### Down

1. It'll take you for a ride
2. Cry of dismay
3. Diet successfully
4. Flexor or extensor
5. Traveling amusement show
6. Take, as advice
7. Kind of contract
8. Pocket breads
9. Meeting with a medium
10. Greeting an officer
11. It covers plenty of ground
12. Type of beetle or party
13. Take on
21. Black gold
22. Russian author of "The Lower Depths" (Var.)
25. Replay effect, briefly
26. Rutger \_\_\_ of "Blade Runner"
27. Frat letters
28. Prescription data
30. Kind of surgeon
31. Lysol targets
32. Matador boosters
33. Food fish
35. HS junior test
38. Nick-of-time types
39. "Wunderbar!"
40. Most subject to chance
45. Earth mover
47. Home in the hills
48. Spiny lizard
50. Living quarters
52. Colt's kin
53. Operatic prince
54. Kind of miss
55. Part of YSL
56. Wee pest
57. Half a matched set
58. Shore prospector
62. Arrow wood