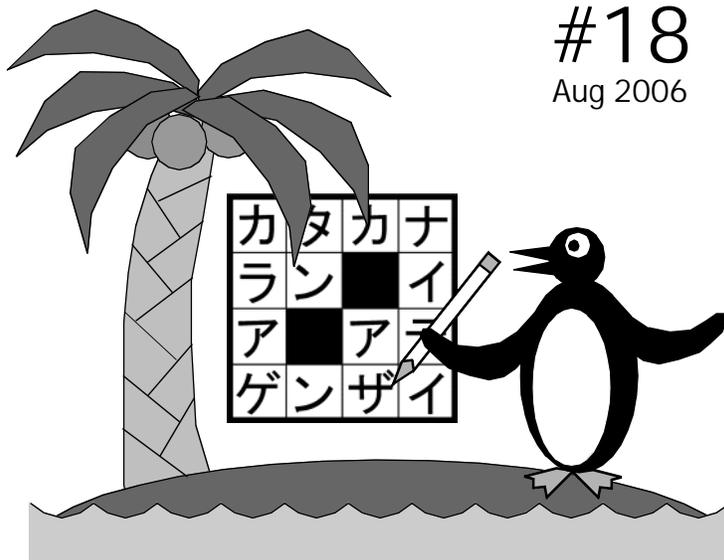


*"The trick is to leave everything out. That's the whole trick to drama. ... You've got to leave the narration out, because anybody can say 'Well, well, Jim, welcome back to Antarctica, I haven't seen you since we cured cancer together in 1985, how's your wife and is she still an albino?'"*

—David Mamet on *Fresh Air*, 3/14/06

# BENTO PUZZLE DIGEST

#18  
Aug 2006



## Colophon

*Bento 18* is published **August 2006**  
by **David Levine and Kate Yule**  
for **L.A.con IV**, the Worldcon in Anaheim, California

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## Art Credits

- **Cover:** David. (Why a penguin? Why not?)
- **Cauliflower Guy, Moon Bunny:** Brad W. Foster.
- **Puzzles:** All constructed by Kate.
- **Everything else:** Thank God for Dover Books.



## We're Eating More Beets

Nature's bounty arrives on Tuesdays this year.

It lands on our porch in a tidy wire-handled bushel basket. Last week it consisted of an onion, several assorted summer squashes, a half-dozen small red potatoes, leafy green lettuce, two slim cucumbers, a couple of turnips (one pink, one white), some short and rather lumpy carrots, and a bag of miscellaneous greens—kale and chard, I think. And, scattered at the bottom of the basket, a handful of snow peas. Love 'em. I string them and eat them raw.

We signed up with Pumpkin Ridge Gardens in March. We pay them \$54 a month, and from June through May they provide weekly home delivery of fresh, local organic vegetables. Yes, it's a little spendy, but consider the benefits.

First and foremost, the stuff is very, very good. Everything's harvested when it's ready to be eaten, not when it's ready to be shipped (and, face it, a lot of those vegetables that are supposed to continue to ripen on the shelf don't really). The sugars in potatoes and sweet corn begin turning to starch immediately when they're picked, so it makes a big difference that we get them right away—sometimes that very day.

Second, it's sustainably farmed. The vegetables we eat are not contributing to the destruction of topsoil, shedding pesticides or petroleum-based fertilizers, or being shipped around the world. Organic produce isn't really expensive; it's conventional produce

that's artificially cheap, because it doesn't include all the costs of its production.

Third, the variety and surprise factor. We have no advance warning and no control of what the basket will hold each week (though for the past few weeks zucchinis have been a given), which encourages us to sample foods we would have passed right by at the store—occasionally foods the store doesn't even carry, like the cute little globular cucumber we got the other week, or the heirloom radishes (who knew?). The farm helps by including a page of recipes in each basket. Subscription farming has taught us to love chard and kale, and beets are greeted with delight.

Fourth, "vegetables is good," we always say. Although both of us are unapologetic omnivores, we understand that a diet rich in fresh vegetables is much healthier than a diet that's heavy on meats and processed carbohydrates. If nothing else, veggies take up space in your stomach that could be occupied by something that's not as good for you. Of course, a mixed-vegetable korma with cashews, butter, and heavy cream isn't exactly low in fat, but you can't blame the veggies for that.

Fifth, our subscription supports local family-owned agriculture. By taking the last two months' payments up front as a deposit, the farmer obtains much-needed seed money (literally) and guarantees a steady income stream rather than putting most of the costs up front and most of the income at the end.

This support is not without risk. A few years back we signed up with a farm that had a bad year. The baskets got skimpier and

skimpier, until by late summer we were getting just dried-out heads of garlic and the occasional cabbage. Finally they had to admit that the crop had failed, and the deliveries stopped.

It was an important lesson. Even today, even in America, crops fail. As food consumers we are usually insulated from this truth. By sharing the risk, we may have helped that farm survive a bad year.

The other downside of the magic vegetable basket is that *the damn things keep coming!* The zucchinis, as you might guess, are major offenders. Even though we signed up for only a half share, it's often more than the two of us can eat, and many a lovely fresh lettuce and perky green onion has eventually gone to the compost bin rather than our tummies. And if we happen to be out of town on Tuesday... well, we can have the basket delivered to a neighbor, or give it to charity, but the vegetables grow and ripen whether we can take them or not. Another important lesson.

Zucchini jokes aside, though, we're very happy with this year's harvest so far. We're helping the environment and the local



economy, we're enjoying delicious, nutritious home-cooked meals, and we're making new friends in the vegetable kingdom.

A slow-roasted beet is a simple and delicious thing. —DDL

### Roasted Beets

Wash beets well. Trim the greens, but do not cut off tail with carving knife. Wrap each beet in aluminum foil. Bake in 350° oven for 45 minutes. Rub beets with a couple of paper towels to remove skins, uttering "Hoo! Hoo! Hot!" and staining fingers purple. Slice. Butter. Salt. Pepper. Eat.

### Greens and Walnuts

0. Put 6-8 cups water up to boil.
1. Toast ½ cup walnut pieces in a 350° oven for 10 minutes or until fragrant.
2. Wash a pound of greens (chard, kale, beet greens, etc.).
3. Simmer the washed greens 10 minutes, uncovered. Drain.
4. When greens are cool enough to handle, chop coarsely. Also chop some onion and 4 cloves of garlic. Mushrooms go well too.
5. In a large skillet, heat a tablespoon of olive oil and saute the onion etc. briefly. Add greens and continue to saute 5 minutes. Add a pinch of salt and 2 Tb mirin if you have it.
6. Add the walnuts and serve immediately. —KY

## I Think I'm Learning Japanese

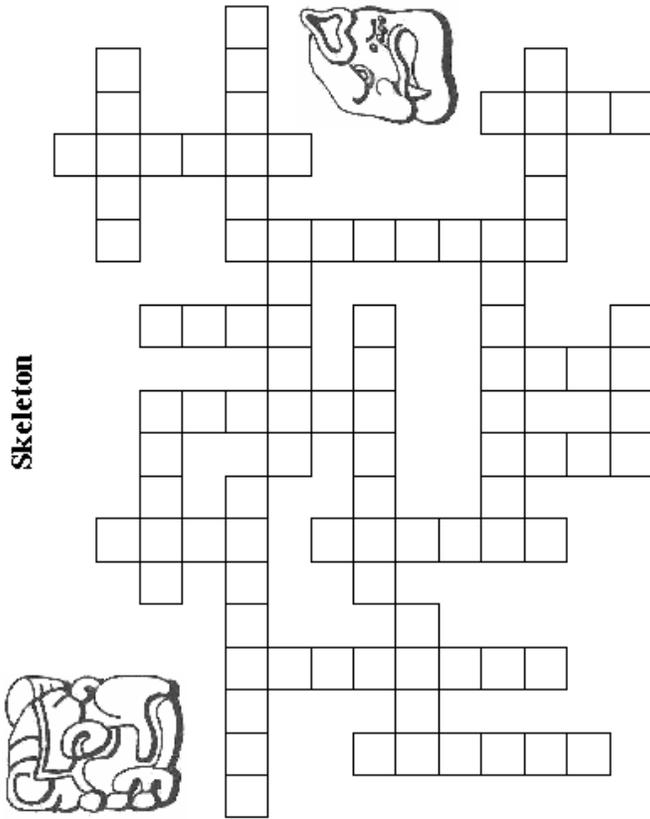
Worldcon or square dancing—it seemed clear we were going to end up in Japan one way or the other, so I started chipping away at Japanese a few years ago. Goals:

- Read the *katakana* and *hiragana* "alphabets"
- Recognize a few basic *kanji*: Entrance/Exit; Men/Women/Other; Danger! Giant Lizard!
- Basic politeness phrases: Thank you, good morning, excuse me, please say that again excruciatingly slowly
- Ask where the restroom is (Extra credit: Understand answer)
- Obtain food: "Does that have bean paste? Two, please... no, that one over there."

If I can make any kind of small talk with Japanese fans, that will be gravy.

My methods are haphazard. I've taken Japanese 101 at the community college twice now, an evening course I refer to as "Beginning to Think About Introduction to Conversational Japanese." If you want to discuss "Where is the teacher's new apple?" I'm your man! I've made flash cards, copied out pages of *kana*, looked at mnemonic systems for them, deciphered whatever I could of wasabi labels and children's picture books. I watch anime (*Spirited Away*, *Read or Die*, *The Story of the Trapp Family*) with the Japanese subtitles on and try to recognize anything whatsoever as it goes past.





Place the listed words into the grid, one letter per square.

NEBULA  
PHOBOS  
PKDICK  
SKYLARK  
CAMPBELL  
CAMPBELL  
RHYSLING  
STURGEON

HUGO  
MAFF  
LOCUS  
SEIUN  
WHITE  
AURORA  
CLARKE  
DITMAR

AEON  
BSFA  
DUFF  
FAAN  
HOGU



### Magic Kingdoms

*Princess Academy* by Shannon Hale caught my eye because the cover seemed so unlike the title: girls in simple dresses walk single file across a craggy grey landscape, watched by a handful of disinterested mountain goats. The story grabbed me and didn't let go. The girls live in a small village that survives on stone quarrying. (I love that these are working people, and their work is relevant to the plot.) Suddenly they are told the Prince will marry one of the girls, and all must have a crash course in Department etc. The story looks at what it is to be a kingdom, what it is to be a princess, what it is to be a small town girl. Is Mount Eskel the center of the world— or the back of beyond? There is family, friendship, danger, and just a touch of magic. I recommend it.

Whereas Clare Dunkle's *The Hollow Kingdom* seriously creeps me out. Kudos to the intelligence and courage of the plucky Victorian heroine, but hasn't anyone else noticed that she *loses*? By which I mean *is forced to marry someone evil*? OK, we're supposed to see that Marak has a heart of gold that lurks under the superficially loathsome goblinish exterior, which she comes to know & love etc. etc. Dunkle undercuts that by making him abnormally pretty (for a goblin). Is Kate really learning to see the beauty in his waxy grey skin? Or just relieved that he's not nearly as grotesque as his subjects?

And, bottom line: the Goblin King is determined from day one to kidnap this human girl and lock her into his underground

kingdom forever, to be raped and bear his child, will she, nill she. Period. His idea of "caring" for her is to drug her as needed so she won't be distraught at the binding ceremony (which involves knives, shackles, a sword, a snake...) Yes, he always tells the truth. He is completely *honest* about not allowing anything to get in his way. Gee, that makes me feel better.

*Princess Academy* could have had a similar problem at its heart—marrying off someone unwilling. It resolves it with respect for all concerned. *Hollow Kingdom* is a horror story, and for me the largest horror is that it is being praised as a delightful romance for young readers. —KY

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*"But see, it's not cross-dressing if you're Mongolian."*

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### Quantum quandaries, or, Quite a Couple

*Journal entry: September 23rd*

Over in **enthiomaniac's** LiveJournal, she said  
 "Relative to each other:  
 a couple = 2  
 a few = 3-5 or so  
 a couple < a few.  
 Back me up here?"

This led to a lively spate of comments. It also led to David and I lying in bed at seven in the morning debating the lower limits of "many" and whether two of something could ever be "a few". We

agreed that Manyness depends on both the object concerned, and one's expectations. Four toddlers can be Many; four jelly beans, not so much. David contends that three is never Many. Not sure; think he's right.

Then there's Some, Several, and A Lot.

"Quite a few" isn't few at all! "Quite a lot" is emphatically a lot. Aren't you glad you're a native speaker? You know not to even try to say "quite a many" or "quite several".

David wants to write this up in detail. "It wants diagrams" sez he. "I wish you joy of it," say I, which led by way of Aubrey and Maturin to a discussion of whether we ourselves are 21st-century people, or 20th-century people who stuck around.

He just popped out of the shower to tell me that "very few" can be *more* than "a few", because it's a proportion and not a quantity.

I'm going to go eat breakfast now. —KY

## Let Go of My Mouse Ears, I Know What I'm Doing

As faithful readers will no doubt recall, we attend the international gay square dance convention (called Convention by its attendees) as well as the world science fiction convention (Worldcon) each year. Convention has about 1000 dancers, while the Worldcon has 3000-5000 fans, but because square dancing takes up more floor space, they use similarly sized hotels. And for obvious sociological reasons, both conventions tend to be held in large and cosmopolitan cities.

Now, all of this is par for the course for us when it comes to travel planning. Obsessiveness really came into its own with Kate's discovery of RideMax, inexpensive software that, given a specific date and a list of the rides you want to ride, produces a customized optimum itinerary for you based on the latest available data about crowd dynamics and ride status. (And I mean the *latest*—when the remodeled Pirates reopened, RideMax provided revised touring plans, factoring in the effect on traffic inside the park, within days. The programmer quit his day job and works on RideMax full time; he and his family visit Disneyland constantly to keep the database fresh.) RideMax also provides some specific touring hints which I haven't seen anywhere else.

We attacked Disneyland full tilt the morning after our arrival. Armed with information, clear goals and sunscreen, we were at the turnstiles at 6:30 a.m. for a 7:00 Early Entry (part of the 3-day pass). These days that's only good for Fantasyland and little more—still quite worthwhile—by the time the park opened fully, we'd been on Peter Pan, the Matterhorn, the Teacups, Alice in

Which leads to a certain, shall we say, *déjà vu*. We've wandered the nether reaches of the Escher Hyatt for Track 2 Chicago as well as two Chicons. *Bucconeer* (1998) and *Crack the Crab* (2000) were both at the Baltimore Convention Center. And the Royal York in Toronto hosted Cloverleafs & Maple Leafs in 2002, followed by Torcon III the very next year.\*

This year the inevitable has finally occurred: same city, same hotel, same summer. We attended Wish Upon a Thar at the Anaheim Marriott over the Fourth of July weekend, and we'll be back for L.A.con IV in late August.

And Anaheim means... we're going to Disneyland! Twice! Which, us being us, calls for proper preparation, where "proper" might be read by some as "an obsessively anal-retentive degree of."

We started off with the latest edition of Sehlinger's *Unofficial Guide to Disneyland*, an incredibly valuable book which offers clear-headed reviews of each ride, attraction, and restaurant in the park and detailed touring plans that are guaranteed to reduce your time in line. We bolstered this with tips from web sites such as *MousePlanet.com* and *LaughingPlace.com*, where Disney fanatics with too much time on their hands post amusing and useful snark about what to expect from the remodeled Pirates of the Caribbean ride and which park has the prettiest Captain Jack Sparrows.

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\* *If you are neither a fan nor a dancer, you will have to guess which of these are the science fiction conventions and which are the square dance conventions. Hint: "Bucconeer" is not a square dance call.*

Wonderland, Snow White, Space Mountain, and Buzz Lightyear. Woo hoo! Things slowed down a little after that—many of the Fantasyland rides are barely two minutes long, while at Indiana Jones, it's five minutes at a brisk walk just to get from the entrance to the boarding platform. When it's running. Which it wasn't. Except when it was. Anyway, life happens, plans get tweaked, and we still did 14 different rides by 3:00, some of them twice.

We went back to the hotel for a nap and dinner, then returned in the evening for another round. The next day we visited Disney's California Adventure, and square dancing started. On the 4th of July, after five days of dancing, we did a brief return blitz of our most favorite rides before our flight home. (And the blisters on my feet are much better, thanks.)

This might sound horribly premeditated and un-spontaneous, but it was way cool! The main thing that Disney does better than anyone else on Earth is attention to detail. From the evil queen who peeks briefly from behind a curtain above the Snow White ride every few minutes to the notes on the bulletin boards inside the factory at Monsters, Inc., Disneyland rewards attention. And because we were following a plan and moving quickly, instead of wrangling about what to do next or broiling in line, we had the energy to observe and enjoy.

It was like being in a parallel universe from most of the crowd. While they stood in lines with wait times of 45 minutes—60 minutes—80 minutes!—our longest wait was for lunch. We walked right into the Haunted Mansion, for instance, during a

parade. Disney's new FastPass system made a huge difference. (FastPass is an interesting exchange: Disney says "We'll give you a shorter wait in line if you help us balance the load by riding when we tell you to." Free, timed tickets are available at many of the most popular rides. The secret to making it really pay off is knowing that you don't have to come back *during* the one-hour window printed on the ticket; the ticket is actually good *any time thereafter* on the same day. Learned this online.) We got kind of blasé about it.

And then we met a family of refugees from the regular universe. While waiting for the show at the Golden Horseshoe (Billy Hill and the Hillbillies, an absurdly funny and talented bunch of bluegrass musicians), we were seated next to an exhausted family who were wondering to each other whether Splash Mountain was worth the 50-minute wait. I asked if they knew how to use FastPass to cut the wait to five minutes.

They didn't even know it existed.

Okay, I admit that it took advance research to know how to exploit all the little quirks, like the any-time-thereafter trick and the somewhat baroque limits on how many passes you can hold for which rides. But the basics are explained on the colorful map that everyone gets as they pass through the turnstile. And the FastPass machines and "Return Lanes" are at the entrance of each major ride, with helpful Disney employees to answer questions, right next to the other line that says "Abandon all Hope Ye Who Enter Here."

Odds are, that family of four had been planning this vacation for months. They'd spent upwards of a thousand dollars on transportation, lodging, food, and tickets before they even entered the park. But they hadn't taken the time to find out how the park worked, and so large chunks of the day were going down the drain. If they'd noticed FastPass at all, they must have thought it was for someone else—people with special tickets somehow, or guests from the Disney hotels. When actually it is available, and very useful, to anyone who can read directions and plan an hour ahead.

A lot of things in life are like that, I think. Which is why we love information so much. —DDL



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*"How can it be music if nothing's spinning?"*

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### Wong's King Chinese Seafood

*Journal entry: December 24th*

We went out for Chinese (traditional today in some circles). Had the "Deep Fried Milk" appetizer. Mmmm, wonderful! Like a fresh hot cream-filled donut without the donut. The inside was a delicate pale green....

One of the main dishes we chose ("Crab meat with Vegetables") turned out to be one of a class of Chinese dish that I do not have a name for. The ingredients vary, but they come in a shallow glass pie plate, covered in a colorless translucent sauce with shreds of egg white like egg drop soup. Garlic, ginger, peppers, sesame oil, any seasonings at all—Nope. *Nada*. Zilch. I'd like to avoid ordering any more of these, but how do you ask the waitress "Does this come with dino snot?" —KY

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*"We discovered that the David needs dusting often."*

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### Dear Bento

Archaeological diggings at #1905 have uncovered letters of comment sent in 2004 from Roger Waddington, Guy Lillian, and Hope Leibowitz; and illos from Brad Foster. We grovel.

### Roger Waddington

Norton, Malton, North Yorkshire, England  
9 Oct 2004

Treasure trove indeed, to find two issues of Bento in one envelope. Which gives a clue that there's no deadline to meet, that I can sit and enjoy them and just as leisurely, pen this reply. (In a manner of speaking.)

*[Yes, and then we'll go and misplace the LoC until the day after we go to press. Teamwork, that's the key, teamwork!]*

Actually, in this electronic age, here's another one who's still using their steam-powered typewriter. More out of necessity: living in a small house, I have to keep the printer tucked away in its box and only taken out when it's really needed. For small notes and one-page letters, it's far easier just to haul my portable out.... I'm doing my bit to save the planet. There must have been reams of paper and gallons of Tip-exx wasted in my fannish career before being computerised; now I can edit out all my mistakes on screen without ruining even a single sheet.

*[Trust me, Roger; having your printer tucked away in the bottom of that cupboard is the single best way you can save paper.... Roger also encloses a clipping from the Daily Mail about a shortage of doctors in northern England, and the gap between theory and practice—in this case, between the English spoken by imported Austrian doctors, and the Yorkshire spoken by their patients. An extensive glossary has been prepared, explaining such*

statements as “*Our lass is badly, her trotter’s manky*”, and the doctors have been told to go see *Brassed Off* and *The Full Monty*.]

**Kathy Taylor** <kathy-taylor@blueyonder.co.uk>

Mon, 22 August 2005

Hi David, it was nice to meet you briefly at Worldcon, I’m the one who came up to you after the panel not to talk about the panel but to enthuse about having found Bento in the fan room a convention or so back.

I enjoyed Bento 17 and agree wholeheartedly about the excellence of *Battlestar Galactica*; I was one of those who nominated 33 for a Hugo and I was delighted it won. I didn’t watch the original version back in the seventies, perhaps I was the wrong age. The bit I saw once made me cringe with embarrassment at its toe-curling awfulness.

*[I got all of my friends together to watch the premiere of the original version. We had a bad feeling even before the opening credits (“Some people believe life here... began Out There”) and by the end of it we were laughing. But I did watch the whole series (it’s all there was, at the time) and didn’t give up completely until the unwatchably bad Galactica 1980. —DDL]*

The three dimensional nature of Baltar in this version is amazing. It was an early moment with him that made me rapidly upgrade the potential of the series. They were drawing random lottery tickets to see who was going to be rescued in the shuttle and the poorly sighted old woman asked Baltar what her number was. I was expecting him to predictably claim that number as his own

**Vicki Rosenzweig** <vr@redbird.org>

26 August 2005

Thanks for Bento 17. 17 is one of my favorite numbers, and this Bento lived up to that expectation.

My favorite in this issue is, of course, Rocky Horror’s Picture Show; I seldom laugh out loud when reading, but was chortling through most of this. I say “most” because while the second part, starting with “And friends,…” is definitely true to the spirit of both sources, it didn’t tickle me in quite the way the first half did.

Did you buy any of the nightlights with the eyestalks and navels? *[No, we didn’t. We have a glow-in-the-dark Archangel Michael in the bathroom from our visit to Mont St. Michel.]*

I’ve been having definite Bento déjà vu at work the past few days, as various editors discussed whether it’s Eentsy-weentsy or Itsy-bitsy or what kind of spider, with side wanders into the correct spelling of “Eentsy-weentsy.”

**Dave Howell** <dave@grandfenwick.net>

28 August 2005

Yay! Bento! Tasty little morsel {gulp} darn small mutter mutter eat it again!

Now, regarding the commentary on David Bratman’s LoC: it says here “...David [Levine] often remarks on the way the recipe lists ‘jar of sauerkraut’ as an ingredient, and the jar in turn does the same.”

and save his own life when my expectations were confounded by his sending her forward! I gave a mental hurrah and mentally pushed this into could it be a B5 successor category? There were many other excellent moments but that first ‘self-sacrificing coward’ one started to show me the potential for greatness in the show.

“Who’ll be Mother” rang a bell. I live near London and my husband was due into the city for an interview when the first set of bombs went off. Fortunately he’d planned to get a later train and suffered no worse than transport chaos and everyone’s shock. I’ve thought and prayed about it. I don’t understand and could never in any sense condone but without understanding we can’t move forward. A metaphorical cup of tea all round seems a good idea.

**Jerry Kaufman** <JAKaufman@aol.com>

23 August 2005

We enjoy the entire Friday night lineup on Sci-Fi, though by the time *BG* comes on I’m feeling a bit sleepy from the workweek. So sometimes I find the show a bit surreal, but only because I’ve blinked out during some scenes. (Even though I use the CPAP at least some of each night, I still tend to have sleep apnea symptoms; I’m simply not getting enough sleep.)

I have already found an excuse once to quote the line, “I think the word you’re looking for is ‘aphasia.’” I hope for many more.

David, your mash-up of Rocky Horror and “Alice’s Restaurant” is just brilliant.

I have not been able to parse this in a way that would seem to be the intent of the sentence, but the unintentional structures are awfully fun.

1. The recipe includes an ingredient “jar of sauerkraut.” The jar lists as an ingredient, “jar of sauerkraut.” You are apparently using Klein’s Famous Hyperspatial Sauerkraut instead of some tawdry common brand.

2. David remarks on how your recipe lists “jar of sauerkraut.” The jar, in turn, remarks on how your recipe lists “jar of sauerkraut.” You are apparently using Disney’s Famous Animatronic Sauerkraut, or Minsky’s Special Reserve Artificially Intelligent Sauerkraut, instead of some tawdry common brand.

3. When you fix sauerkraut, David often remarks upon the recipe. The jar, in turn, fixes sauerkraut. You are taking advantage of Sheherazade’s Remarkable Jar of 1,001 Sauerkrauts which can be emptied many times yet will always fix more sauerkraut for dinner tomorrow, instead of some tawdry common brand.

As I mentioned at the start, I quite honestly cannot figure out what that sentence was supposed to tell me. But then again, I don’t want to know, because it can’t have been as interesting as what it actually DID tell me.

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*“Had a busy day so far... Got up and threw the robot in the pool, then headed out for my meeting with Mr. Therapist.”*

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**Claire Brialey**

Croydon, Surrey, UK

banana@fishlifter.demon.co.uk

Monday 29 August 2005

I think this is the first time I've ever managed to get it together to send a letter of comment to *Bento*. It feels a bit inadequate to say that I've always liked *Bento* and sorry about the past eight years.

You gave us *Bento* #16 ages ago, I know—perhaps in Boston? I have this memory of Mark bearing *Bento* back to the room, fan hunter-gatherer style, one evening when I'd succumbed to bed earlier than he had; but maybe that was in Toronto and you posted #16 to us instead. See what happens when I don't keep up.

I liked your Glossary. I'm sure we do have similar expressions but can't bring many to mind. Simon Hoggart, who writes a Saturday column in *The Guardian* newspaper, was encouraging readers a few months ago to send in their own family sayings stemming from events that will be familiar—and funny—to only a handful of people, but which they continue to use regardless. I suspect he'll be getting a Christmas book out of it. Favourites of mine that he quoted in his column include:

- 'When my mother offered her friend a second helping of cake, she replied, "Just a small piece, like you gave me last time." This naturally became the standard family response to any offer of seconds.' (Catherine Moss, Horsham)

are vulchitrudinous, vulchacious creatures to the bottom of their dark little natures. I have watched Anna & Mo nearly give heart attacks to at least half a dozen unsuspecting people. Then again, if I read *Bento* 17 correctly, that's what vulching is all about.

Beta, on the other hand, sits quietly and waits. (If Beta had slightly more evil intentions, it might qualify as Lurking.)

**Kathryn Ice, author of the "vulching" piece, replies:**

Personally, I never thought that tortoises could lurk or vulch. I always think of vulching happening above my head; you learn something every day. I suppose they live long enough to become Zen masters of the art ... beats trying to sit in the lotus position wearing a hard shell.

Ralphie the yellow cat used to follow Mom's box turtle, Max, on his rambles around the house and yard. Always about 2 feet away and behind him. Totally fascinated.... He thought a moving rock was the coolest thing on the planet!

**Will Martin**

4 Sept 2005

[Will learned the hard way not to read *Bento* and drink at the same time.] Sputter. Much cleaning of keyboard (hey it's just water). [He shared one of our linos with friends—the one about the F-shirt] Received blank stares; these were geeks, perhaps not of the first order, but then, I'm not that ascendant either. Thursday night, fully 24 hours later, one of them finally said "I get it!" The

- 'My daughter and son-in-law love cooking Indian food. Once they assembled a samosa as big as a baking tray. The recipe was helpful up to the bit where you had to cook the thing. The next instruction was: "Simply lift the giant samosa." Now we use it whenever we are following difficult instructions, assembling flatpack furniture, for example.' (D. Brodie, Cambridge)
- 'At Twycross Zoo my mother stared at a silverback gorilla sitting on a tree stump. "Bugger me," she said. "It looks just like a statue of Cardinal Wolsey." It's amazing in how many situations since then this phrase has been appropriate.' (David Johnson, Leeds)

Actually I realise we do have one of these. Following a short-hand description by my mother of a relative that shouldn't have been funny at all, and a series of conversations between Mark's father and uncle where we never established if they were actually talking about the same people, we tend to use 'You know, the one with the leg' to point to a description of a person or place which is clearly meaningful to the person imparting the information but doesn't help at all in terms of identifying them for the listener.

**Allan Hurst <allanh@kiscc.com>**

31 August 2005

Finally, I have a verb which *almost* explains the behavior of my tortoises. They vulch! They vulch everyone who enters the house.

Anna & Mo, our box turtles, are much better at it than Beta, our desert tortoise. Anna & Mo almost never stop vulching. They

other than said he understood from the start, but didn't think it was amusing. Tough crowd.

*Bento* is almost like having Kate and David around for a weekend; speech and thought patterns are altered, the view of the world is slanted ever so.

**Chris Garcia <garcia@computerhistory.org>**

Thu, 8 Sep 2005

Frank Wu kindly gathered Fanzines for me at Interaction and *Bento* was one of the joys he delivered. Imagine my surprise when I opened to the first and the first short piece was all on my precious San Jose Museum of Art. I think I've seen those things and thought that they were slugs and that the divot in the middle was a navel, but I could see it going either way.

Not a fan of the new *Battlestar Galactica*, mostly because of the major impact the original had on my science fiction TV viewing habits. I loved Dirk Benedict and Lorne Greene. They were just what my vision of science fiction actors were for many a year. I've seen a couple of episodes and they are interesting, but I still have love for the original, even though I know in my bones that it's an inferior project.

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"After 9/11, it occurred to me that any disaster where you can get a pretty accurate count of the dead is only a medium-sized disaster."  
—nancylebov

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**Brad W Foster** <bwfoster@juno.com>

Irving, TX  
Fri, 9 Sep 2005

In regards to "Rocky Horror's Picture Show," the "voice" I actually heard in my head until the very end of reading this was Andy Griffith! I've got an old comedy album from the late fifties, and one of the cuts is Griffith doing his early stand up, long before the movies and TV stuff, talking about going to his first football game, and not really understanding what was going on. And the style and cadence is exactly what the style is here. How weird....

**Lloyd Penney** <penneys@allstream.net>

Etobicoke, ON  
CANADA  
September 15, 2005

[Apropos of things I mentioned selling at Orycon:] We have *Promised the Moon* by Stephanie Nolen, who is currently the Johannesburg correspondent for the *Globe and Mail*. A marvelous book about a part of history few of us knew about. I wish she'd come back from Johannesburg, she'd make a great guest at our local con with what she's learned about the women's astronaut corps.

Give us your list of buttons, Kate—if Nancy Leibowitz can do it, so can you. [The buttons I sold were from the store's usual suppliers of such, probably *Northern Sun* or *Syracuse Cultural Workers*.] My favorite is one Yvonne had made for her terrifically

tacky Hawaiian shirts. It says "I'm ugly, and Yvonne dresses me funny." Someone had to ask for the converse—"I'm funny, and Yvonne dresses me ugly." [Good for them! In square dancing, sometimes the caller will say "All the sexy ones promenade!" I've only once been in a square where all eight dancers claimed that status.]

Just spent a weekend at some friends' house with four cats. All range from affectionate to mildly insane, and the affectionate one, named Momcat, spent most of the day curled up on my lap, and most of the night curled up with me and Yvonne in our bed. Our hosts have said they might as well stuff Momcat in our luggage. I've been half-tempted to accept, and turn our apartment into a cathouse.

I know some Americans are disgusted at the commercialization of everything in their lives, and unfortunately, 9/11 has been easily commercialized, namely as a television movie. I prefer Britain's response—we shall not be afraid, and then they are not afraid, but brave and stoic in such terror-based grief. Britain has been afraid, but they have been quiet in their resolve, while many Americans wear their grief and fear on their sleeves. I believe that America is deeply afraid of the world, and 9/11, the British and Spanish bombings, and now even Hurricane Katrina, have made America more afraid. I hope that the aid heading in from around the world will tell most Americans that they have little to fear from their friends.

[Deeply afraid of the world? Not necessarily. I for one am more deeply afraid of my own government than of any outside forces. And they aren't bombing the Mid-East out of fear, they're doing it for profits and power.]

A shame about Erg, but it is good to see Terry Jeeves in a locol again.

**Susan Francis** <susan.francis@ntlworld.co.uk>

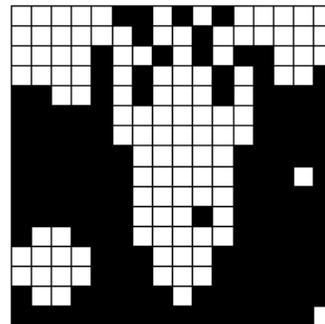
Colchester  
19 September 2005

Thank you for Bento 17. I have a few other Bentos ... Bentoi ... but not 16 (unless a bit of my brain has been washed since), so I haven't seen your Declaration and other good things referenced in the loccol. The latest is Good Thing in Small Package as usual.

I guess the red peppers in the Nerve Gas Chicken recipe are what I call chilli peppers. Red peppers to me are like green peppers, but red (also available in yellow). Not that I'm going to make anything called Nerve Gas Chicken anyhow, being (as I can't be the first to say) chicken myself.

**We also heard from:** Mark Manning (mailing from Malta), John Hertz, KRin Pender-Gunn, Hope Leibowitz, Eric Lindsay, Henry Welch, Anne Marie Merritt, Guy Lillian, and David Bratman (Index Card of Comment).

### Solutions



1	5	8	4	2	3	9	7	6
9	7	3	1	6	8	4	5	2
6	4	2	9	7	5	1	8	3
3	2	9	7	5	6	8	4	1
8	1	7	3	4	9	6	2	5
5	6	4	2	8	1	3	9	7
4	8	5	6	3	2	7	1	9
7	3	1	5	9	4	2	6	8
2	9	6	8	1	7	5	3	4

