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Mistletoe plants grow in the branches of hardwood trees in Kentucky landscapes. We use mistletoe for Christmas holiday decorating and the tradition of "kissing under the mistletoe" dates back to 16th century England. One species of American mistletoe is called Phora-

Mistletoe on Trees

dendron serotinum, meaning "tree thief", referring to its parasitic nature. There are many legends associated with mistletoe and ancient people were fascinated with the fact that the mistletoe remains green in winter while its deciduous tree hosts lose their leaves.

The true or leafy mistletoes (Phoradendron spp.) are most frequently associated with hardwoods growing in the southern two-thirds of the United States, generally below 40 degrees latitude. Northward extension is probably limited by winter cold temperatures. In Kentucky, we commonly see mistletoe present on ash, cherry, elm, hackberry, hickory, maple, oak, sycamore, tuliptree, walnut, and many other species. The degree of mistletoe parasitism varies over

the years. Following a cold winter with below-normal temperatures, the mistletoe dies back, but grows back in a few years. In mild winters, the parasitic plants flourish.

Mistletoe makes much of its own food, but is still a parasite. It sometimes induces galls, swellings or witches brooms at the point of attachment. Mistletoe seeds are spread by birds which feed on the berries. The seeds germinate on young smooth-barked tree branches where they germinate and penetrate the host. Mistletoe plants will tend to cluster where birds have been roosting. Mistletoe plants grow on twigs and branches of their host, extracting water, mineral elements, and some food from the tree. The osmotic pressure of mistletoe is higher than the host tree; therefore the parasite gets the water first and continues to respire even if the host tree is stressed. Mistletoes are most harmful to the tree during times of stress, and although the degree of damag-

ing may be low in the wild, they can harm trees growing in the already stressful urban environment. They can be controlled by pruning, if needed.

For more information, contact the Estill County Extension Office at 723-4557. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Educational programs of the Cooperative Extension Service serve all people regardless of race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin.



Slow Season
There is always a period of time where I barely get any birds at my feeder. So even though birds are scarce, I still hang a feeder with a mix of sunflower chips, peanuts and white proso millet, just in case someone shows up. That way, no one leaves hungry ... everyone's happy!
E-mail: birdingbits@jlr.com
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Remove all mulch and debris from around the tree, as it provides cover for mice as they feed on bark and roots.

Wrap the trunk with screen wire →
- enough below the ground to protect major roots, and high enough above the snow line to prevent rabbits from reaching the trunk.
- Brenda Weaver

SNOW LEVEL
GROUND LEVEL

Source: www.mortonarb.org

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Farm News

January 5-6, 2015

Kentucky Fruit & Vegetable Conference

The 2015 Kentucky Fruit and Vegetable Conference will be held January 5-6, 2015 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Lexington, KY. The hotel is located just off Newtown Pike. This meeting will be of great benefit particularly for new growers that are considering growing and marketing a crop, as well as for experienced growers. We encourage fruit and vegetable growers in Estill County to attend this very informative meeting.

This year we have sessions on commercial fruit and vegetable production, organic production, farmers' markets, small fruit production, agritourism, direct and wholesale marketing, greenhouse and high tunnel production, and the Grape and Wine Short Course. Pre-conference Sunday evening sessions include tree fruit, small fruit, and vegetable round table discussions.

Pre-registration is requested by December 19 but on-site registration at conference is accepted. Program and registration forms can be found by going to UK Horticulture Department web site at: http://www.uky.edu/Ag/CCD/2015_KYFVC_Program_REG.pdf or call 270-365-7541 (dial extension 216).

If you need more information, contact the Estill County Extension Service at 606-723-4557.

Starting April 1, 2015

Beef Producers Approve Check Off

Kentucky beef cattle producers voted to assess themselves an additional \$1 per head on cattle marketed in Kentucky in a statewide referendum held in November.

The final tally was 1,816 in favor of the state check off and 1,423 against. The assessment will take effect April 1, 2015.

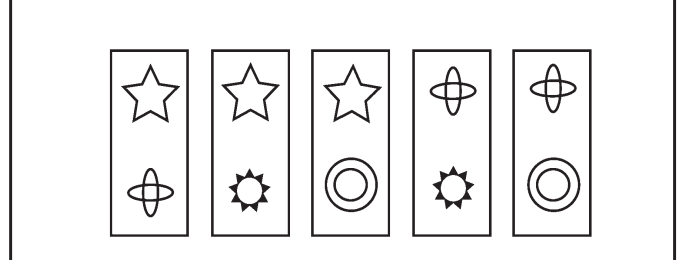
Producers who pay the assessment may request a refund from the Kentucky Cattlemen's Association in writing within 30 days of the date that the assessment is collected.

Stickeler's Puzzle



Based on the logic of the sequence below, what would the next panel look like?

HINT: Consider each card below to be the same upside down as right side up.



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Stickeler's Answer on Page 11

Wishing Well®

7	5	2	7	2	5	6	4	3	4	7	3	7
D	E	U	O	N	X	S	E	E	V	U	N	B
6	7	5	3	2	8	7	4	5	2	3	7	4
T	T	E	J	U	C	V	E	R	S	O	A	N
8	2	6	2	4	2	3	7	4	3	7	5	2
H	U	E	A	T	L	Y	N	F	H	I	C	C
3	2	7	2	4	6	8	7	6	2	3	2	3
U	O	S	U	A	A	H	D	R	M	T	O	
6	2	4	7	4	7	3	4	6	4	2	8	4
Y	S	L	E	M	S	R	E	P	E	H	R	T
8	5	4	6	5	6	5	2	6	5	4	5	2
M	I	I	R	S	O	E	I	G	M	N	I	P
6	8	4	5	8	5	8	6	8	6	8	6	8
R	E	G	N	D	D	L	E	I	S	F	S	E

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: L equals G

QXTTGQDPL NGX CAGTFC NGXA
IZJJEJ IRDEF GP ORF MFZUR,
IRZO UGXEC ORF AFQXEO MF?
QZPCN FLLG.

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CryptoQuote

AXYDLBAAXR is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each week the code letters are different.

TYAFDRLZI TYAL XB ROY
EQZXLRLXI: RCL FZYRYRGFL
QBS RCL YJIYMLRL. — QBYB

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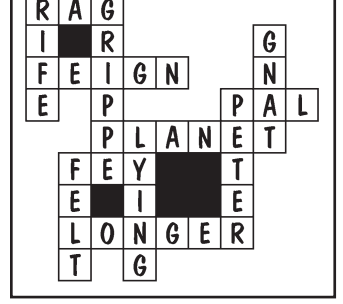
Puzzle Answers

December 24, 2014

Puzzles4Kids Answer

What has two heads, three arms and three legs?
A robot with spare parts.

FEAR & KNIGHT answer



Letter Box Solution

R	T	K	W	C	E	O	H	I
C	W	I	O	R	H	K	E	T
O	E	H	T	K	I	C	W	R
H	I	C	R	O	W	E	T	K
T	K	E	I	H	C	R	O	W
W	O	R	K	E	T	H	I	C
I	C	O	H	T	K	W	R	E
K	H	T	E	W	R	I	C	O
E	R	W	C	I	O	T	K	H

Even Exchange answers

- Butter, Bitter
- Scout, Scott
- Garnet, Garner
- Prove, Prose
- Limber, Lumber
- Tarry, Tardy
- Donkey, Monkey
- Lodger, Logger
- Chose, Chore
- Ample, Apple

Weekly SUDOKU Answer

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

King Crossword Answer

Solution time: 21 mins.

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

Bible Trivia Answers

Casey's trivia book "Know It? ... or Not?" is available from BearManorMedia.com

Bethlehem; (5) Herod; (6) Zero; (2) 2 years; (3) Nazareth; (4) ANSWERS) Matthew/Luke;

Farm News

U.S. Dept. of Agriculture

Greater Protection for Fruit, Vegetable Growers

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has announced that greater protection is now available from the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program for crops that traditionally have been ineligible for federal crop insurance. The new options, created by the 2014 Farm Bill, provide greater coverage for losses when natural disasters affect specialty crops such as vegetables, fruits, mushrooms, floriculture, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, turf grass, ginseng, honey, syrup, and energy crops.

"These new protections will help ensure that farm families growing crops for food, fiber or livestock consumption will be better able to withstand losses due to natural disasters," said Vilsack. "For years, commodity crop farmers have had the ability to purchase insurance to keep their crops protected, and it only makes sense that fruit and vegetable, and other specialty crop growers, should be able to purchase similar levels of protection. Ensuring these farmers can adequately protect themselves from factors beyond their control is also critical for consumers who enjoy these products and for communities whose economies depend on them."

Previously, the program offered coverage at 55 percent of the average market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of expected production. Producers can now choose higher levels of coverage, up to 65 percent of their expected production at 100 percent of the average market price.

The expanded protection will be especially helpful to beginning and traditionally underserved producers, as well as farmers with limited resources, who will receive fee waivers and premium reductions for expanded coverage. More crops are now eligible for the program, including expanded aquaculture production practices, and sweet and biomass sorghum. For the first time, a range of crops used to produce bioenergy will be eligible as well.

"If America is to remain food secure and continue exporting food to the world, we need to do everything we can to help new farmers get started and succeed in agriculture," Vilsack said. "This program will help new and socially disadvantaged farmers affordably manage risk, making farming a much more attractive business proposition."

To help producers learn more about the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program and how it can help them, USDA, in partnership with Michigan State University and the University of Illinois, created an online resource. The Web tool, available at www.fsa.usda.gov/nap, allows producers to determine whether their crops are eligible for coverage. It also gives them an opportunity to explore a variety of options and levels to determine the best protection level for their operation.

If the application deadline for an eligible crop has already passed, producers will have until Jan. 14, 2015, to choose expanded coverage through the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program. To learn more, visit the Farm Service Agency (FSA) website at www.fsa.usda.gov/nap or contact your local FSA office at offices.usda.gov. The Farm Service Agency (FSA), which administers the program, also wants to hear from producers and other interested stakeholders who may have suggestions or recommendations on the program. Written comments will be accepted until Feb. 13, 2015 and can be submitted through www.regulations.gov.

These new provisions under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program were made possible through the 2014 Farm Bill, which builds on historic economic gains in rural America over the past five years, while achieving meaningful reform and billions of dollars in savings for the taxpayer. Since enactment, USDA has made significant progress to implement each provision of this critical legislation, including providing disaster relief to farmers and ranchers; strengthening risk management tools; expanding access to rural credit; funding critical research; establishing innovative public-private conservation partnerships; developing new markets for rural-made products; and investing in infrastructure, housing and community facilities to help improve quality of life in rural America. For more information, visit <http://www.usda.gov/farmbill>.

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