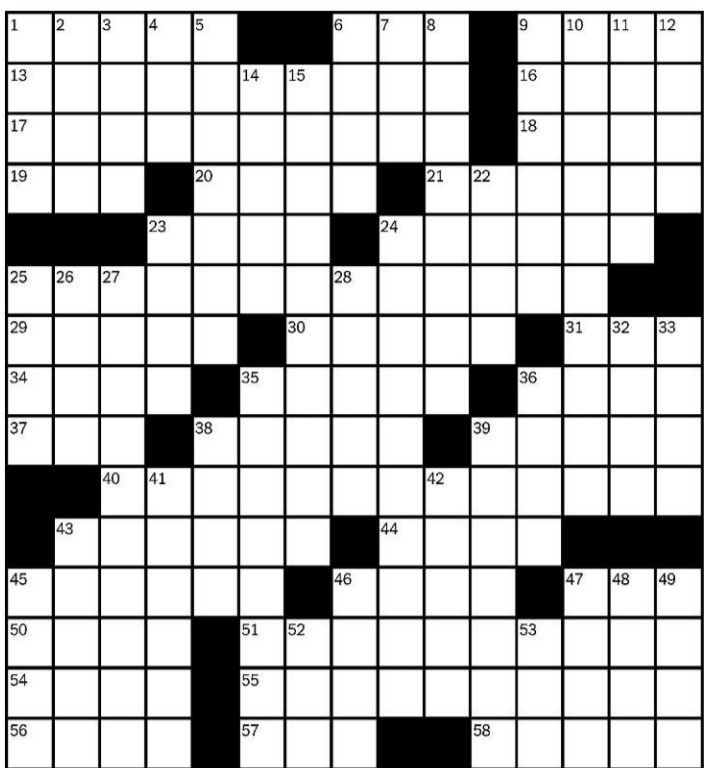


NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

No. 1115

- ACROSS**
- 1 Base for crème fraîche and caviar
 - 6 Shout of jubilation
 - 9 Cheryl Strayed memoir subtitled "From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail"
 - 13 Champing at the bit
 - 16 Activewear brand with a name inspired by flight
 - 17 Comment to the poorly hidden folder below "Snoozed," maybe
 - 19 A24 horror film in which Rory Kinnear plays multiple roles
 - 20 Vibing with
 - 21 Where Mozart's "Don Giovanni" and "La Clemenza di Tito" debuted
 - 23 Big meanie
 - 24 Quaint cooler
 - 25 Facetious question after mentioning something well known
 - 29 Duck, say
 - 30 Library section that may have comic books and beanbags
 - 31 Amount often added
 - 34 Actress Rooney of "Women Talking"
 - 35 "Cooties"
 - 36 Simple pajama top, casually "good!"
 - 37 Relent
 - 38 See 36-Down
 - 40 "Technically, that's correct"
 - 43 Gets rid of, as the oldest item in a programming cache
 - 44 Pompom, for a stuffed bunny
 - 45 Deal sealer
 - 46 Macy's or Wendy's, for instance?
 - 47 Crunchy lunch
 - 50 Sitar, technically
 - 51 To be determined
 - 54 One might be floated or flirted with
 - 55 "I can figure it out!"
 - 56 Birthplace of novelist Daniel Alarcón
 - 57 Film script abbr.



Puzzle by Alina Abidi

12/20

- 26 Chop choice
 - 27 One mailing it in?
 - 28 TV term that's becoming obsolete in the streaming era
 - 32 Vellani, portrayed by Ms. Marvel on film and TV
 - 33 Online notification sound
 - 35 Mother of Hamlet
 - 36 With 39-Across, scientist for whom a Cornell research institute is named
 - 38 Henry who co-founded Time magazine
 - 39 Tech journalist Kara
 - 41 Un canard ou un émeu
 - 42 Donna who wrote "The Secret History"
 - 43 Slip past
 - 45 Hair raiser?
 - 46 Subtle suggestion
 - 47 Like some tires
 - 48 Accompaniment for a tequila shot
 - 49 Oh-so
 - 52 "A ___ on both your houses!" (Shakespearean misquote)
 - 53 Fan of the Bulldogs
- DOWN**
- 1 Teem (with)
 - 2 Intermediate crocheting project
 - 3 Country that uses the Jalali calendar rather than the Gregorian
 - 4 Diarist Anais
 - 5 The "Aha!" of an aha moment
 - 6 You might use it to walk the dog
 - 7 It's a "me" problem
 - 8 Minuscule quantities
 - 9 Condiment served with rolls
 - 10 Exclamation after checking one's watch
 - 11 Operating system with a penguin mascot named Tux
 - 12 Go out with
 - 14 Style
 - 15 French connections?
 - 22 Whistle blowers
 - 23 Predator found in all oceans
 - 24 Unchanged when multiplied by itself, from the Latin for "same" and "power"
 - 25 Gospel singer Franklin

ANSWER TO THURSDAY'S PUZZLE:



CAROLYN HAX
Ex plays 'victim card' after husband's affair



BY CAROLYN HAX
tellme@washpost.com

Dear Carolyn: Some friends divorced a year ago after a 30-year marriage. It turns out the husband was having a six-year affair that the wife more than likely knew about. Husband is now engaged to the girlfriend. Ex-wife is on a rampage. She is not allowing any relatives or friends to talk with the husband's new girlfriend. She says it's a slap in the face if we interact with her. She has been flat-out rude and a bully to my wife and others. How do I handle this? It is causing a rift in our friend group. I believe she is really playing the victim card, while it appears to me she was equally at fault for the failed marriage.

— Bewildered

Bewildered: Wait — that's it? I'm sensing much conclusion drawn from not much fact: just, "the wife more than likely knew?" Unless the wife was a "rude" "bully" long before all this ... and you in the friend group were always basically Team Husband ... and maybe you all solemnly condemned the side piece but privately celebrated her as the dagger to a dreary marriage? Then your letter would

LEXIGO 12-20

Start at the double hexagon. Spell solutions to the clues below by winding your way through the grid. You can backtrack to use letters more than once. Each new word starts with the last letter of the previous word.

- 1. Old-fashioned R _ _ _ _
- 2. Spotted wildcat _ _ _ _ _
- 3. Where rubber meets road T _ _ _ _
- 4. Got a goal _ _ _ _ _
- 5. Hoodwink D _ _ _ _ _

RETRO, COELO, TRES, SCORED, DECEIVE
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make more sense — but also implicate the whole group in the marriage's failure and leave the ex-wife's claim to the "victim card" intact. Upgrade it, if she sensed your animus. Though why you'd pretend friendship remains unexplained. Habit? The facts just aren't stretching to fit. If bullying doesn't account for her half, then what does? Look. I am not a fan of a postdivorce "rampage" or attempts at control under even the most philandering circumstances. If she had asked me, then I'd have urged diplomacy, patience and trust — or aligning with her trusted few, or being well rid of you all. Basically anything but slappy ultimatums. But no matter what angle I take on this, you remain the one not even trying a sympathetic angle on an ex-wife in obvious distress after being publicly, dishonorably swapped out. Meanwhile, you've expressed no collateral discomfort with absorbing her ex's betrayal. So that's where I'd start if I were you: with a laugh test on your own blame assignments for the mess your friends made of all this. It's rarely black-and-

white, sure, but: 1. Not your marriage, you don't know. 2. It's rare to keep our own feelings out of it. If you just like the ex-husband more than the ex-wife, then at least have the self-awareness to know you aren't objective — and sit on your hands whenever you're tempted to point fingers at her to justify your sympathy for him. So, how to handle this, you ask. Based on the information given, the ex-husband was more out of line; nevertheless, you've decided not to penalize him as the ex-wife has insisted. Yes? If I read that correctly, then here's my advice: You can say this! To the ex-wife. Or your wife does, whoever is on the spot. Owning it is kinder and braver than trashing the ex-wife as some kind of rampaging harpy: "Both you and [ex-husband] are our friends. We don't condone what [ex-husband] did to you. But we're also not ending our friendship with him. "That means we're including [side piece], because they're engaged. We also will include you in everything. This is hard, but we love you and are committed to figuring it out."



Notre Dame head coach Marcus Freeman celebrates with quarterback Riley Leonard (13) after a touchdown against Army on Nov. 23 in New York.

Notre Dame, Indiana seek state supremacy in playoff meeting

Field Level Media

It is rare for the Notre Dame football program to experience a first-time event. However, the Fighting Irish, whose first game took place in 1887, are set to make history Friday night. No. 7 seed Notre Dame (11-1) will host No. 10 seed Indiana (11-1) in the first-ever playoff game at Notre Dame Stadium in South Bend, Indiana. The winner will advance to the quarterfinals of the College Football Playoff tournament, where it will take on No. 2 seed Georgia on New Year's Day in the Sugar Bowl in New Orleans. Notre Dame coach Marcus Freeman told his play-

ers to stay focused as they approached the Friday game. "It's something I've been preaching to the guys, ... that we've been in a playoff situation, really, since Week 3," Freeman said, referring to the aftermath of an upset loss to Northern Illinois. "And we understand that. Every game that we play in is a version of a playoff game, in our minds. "So, continue to understand they don't have any added pressure for this one that you haven't had for the previous 10 (games). Our guys understand that. That's going to be the message that I continue to reiterate and that's, 'Just focus on the way we prepare, and we'll handle it.'"

Indiana also is entering newfound territory as its magical season continues. The Hoosiers have thrived in Curt Cignetti's first season as coach. They have the best record through 12 games in school history, and they are coming off a 66-0 victory against Purdue that marked their largest win against an FBS opponent in school history. Nobody will confuse Indiana's football history with that of Notre Dame's. The Hoosiers never won 10 games in a season until this year. They have not won a bowl game since the 1991 season. They have two Big Ten Conference titles — in 1945 and 1967. Yet, under Cignetti, they have a chance to

show again that this year is different. "To me and my guys, in my mind, it's just another game," Cignetti said. "You prepare for this one like you prepare for all of them. I think for our players, they're going to be excited to play and excited to prove something. ... "At the end of the day, it's just football. The game is going to be won or lost between the white lines. I want them to go out there, fly around, have a little swag and play the way we can play." Indiana quarterback Kurtis Rourke is a big reason for the team's confidence. He has passed for 2,827 yards, 27 touchdowns and four interceptions this season. Justice Ellison (811 rushing yards, 10 touchdowns) and Ty Son Lawton (634 rushing yards, 12 TDs) lead the attack out of the backfield. Elijah Sarratt is the top target in the passing game with 49 catches for 890 yards and eight touchdowns. Notre Dame is led by dual-threat quarterback Riley Leonard. He has passed for 2,092 yards, 16 touchdowns and five interceptions and has rushed for 721 yards and 14 TDs. Jeremiyah Love has a team-high 949 rushing yards and 15 touchdowns. He injured his knee in a 49-35 victory against Southern California in the regular-season finale but is expected to play, according to Freeman. "The past two weeks leading up until now, the preparation has been really good," Freeman said. "You have some guys that have been able to recover." This will be the first meeting between the in-state programs since 1991, as well as the first postseason matchup between the programs. Notre Dame leads the series 23-5-1, including 13-1-1 in South Bend.

Ex-NFL star Vick to be head coach at Norfolk State

BY ALEX BUTLER
UPI.com

Former NFL star quarterback Michael Vick accepted an offer to become the head football coach at Norfolk State, he announced on social media. "It's an honor to announce that I'll be the new head coach of Norfolk State University," Vick wrote Tuesday on Face-



KIRBY LEE USA TODAY Sports, file
Former NFL quarterback Michael Vick said he has accepted an offer to be the football coach at Norfolk State University.

book. "Looking forward to coming back home." Vick, 44, retired from the NFL in 2017. Later that year, he worked as a coaching intern under Kansas City Chiefs coach Andy Reid. He was hired in 2018 to be offensive coordinator for the Atlanta Legends of the Alliance of American Football.

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Lienholder: Santander Consumer USA, PO Box 961288, Ft Worth, TX 76161
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