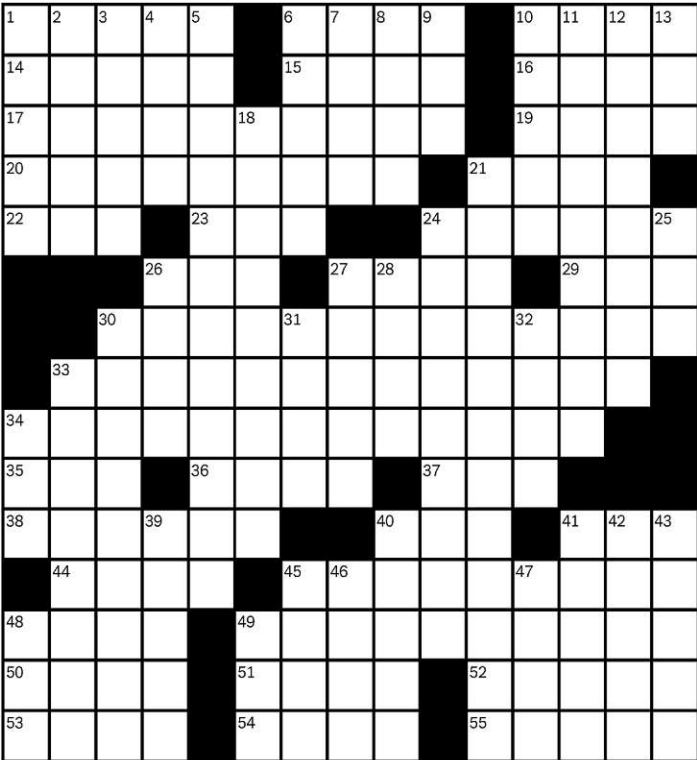


NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

No. 0711

ACROSS

- 1 Armies
6 Big-eyed, in a way
10 Accouterment for a queen
14 Acquirer of GeoCities and Broadcast.com during the dot-com bubble
15 Butter in South Asian cooking
16 Prayer, essentially
17 Examines something in more depth
19 Prefix with directional
20 Outpace the syllabus, say
21 Laughfest
22 They might pop up from time to time
23 Bolted
24 Submit
26 Supermodel Alek
27 Katy Perry song with the lyric “Louder, louder than a lion ‘cause I am the champion”
29 “Don’t Worry Kyoko” singer
30 One on the fast track?
33 What might come with a twist or two
34 “You’re warm”
35 Hookups
36 “Poppycock!”
37 Peppery
38 First-rate
40 Phanerozoic, for one
41 Isaac Asimov novel “Murder at the ____”
44 “Please, take this off my hands”
45 Tales are related about them
48 Org. with the pioneering Artemis program
49 Features of many documentaries
50 Colonial group
51 Tiptop
52 Actress Rapp of “Mean Girls”
53 Fundamental unit in logarithmic equations



Puzzle by James McCarron

8/15

- 54 It may drip in the winter
55 Cries of annoyance

DOWN

- 1 Sea serpent of myth
2 Four-____(like some shells)
3 Most Iranians
4 Ordered
5 Event requiring special specs
6 Nash who wrote “The cow is of the bovine ilk; / One end is moo, the other, milk”
7 “Hold on there, cowboy!”
8 Dirty
9 Kind of coin that features a Buddhist temple on one side
10 Cuddle, in a way
11 Pedro ____
12 Oscar-winning screenwriter for “Talk to Her”
13 One with a watch
18 Seal the deal
21 Film star whose name consists of two presidents

- 24 Was destined to fail
25 1952 Olympics locale: Abbr.
26 “Breaking Bad” antihero
27 Alternative to French
28 Kind of cavity
30 Sties, say
31 Machine workers?
32 “How ____ Your Mother”
33 Restaurant chain where chefs make onion volcanoes
34 Animated internet pic

- 39 Make vanish
40 One making introductions
41 Play ground?
42 Military topper
43 Fools
45 2017 animated film set in the Land of the Dead
46 Directs
47 Indie folk’s Bon ____
48 Collar
49 Car pool transport

ANSWER TO THURSDAY’S PUZZLE:



CAROLYN HAX

Friend group ignores summer birthday



BY CAROLYN HAX
tellme@washpost.com

Dear Carolyn: I’m in college, so my friend group is not together during the summer. Two of us are from one place (City A) and three are from across the country (City B). The City B friends all have birthdays during the school year. I threw each a party at my apartment, baked them their favorite type of cake and got them a present I really thought they would enjoy. I put in a lot of thought and effort to try to make them feel special.

My birthday is in the summer, so my City B friends sent me birthday wishes via text. I was calling them the other day, and they brought up their birthday ideas for our other City A friend, who also has a summer birthday. One of them even mentioned he had already sent his present.

I know not everyone prioritizes birthdays the way I do, but I’m struggling to not take this personally. Any advice?

— Summer Birthday

Summer Birthday: Not taking things personally may be the most useful advice there is for moving forward — especially since we tend to think more things are about us

LEXIGO®

8-15

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.**

D

A

R

E

G

E

C

H

M

N

I

T

A

1. Buzzing tree insect

C _ _ _ _

2. Stage skill

_ _ _ _ _

3. Aladdin’s benefactor

G _ _ _ _

4. One or the other

_ _ _ _ _

5. Another shot at victory

R _ _ _ _ _

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than they really are.

The case for taking this personally is a decent one, though. I’m sorry.

But the cosmos, your friendships and your self-regard don’t have to end with this one slap to the face. You can absorb it and still move forward with your optimism and self-love intact. And your place in the friend group.

It just takes willingness to accept this as data instead of (only) rejection. Then consider what it’s telling you.

For example: In any group, some members are always closer to the center than others. OK. Now — what does that mean about others, automatically? Outer rings.

Ergo, every group ever has delivered this such epiphany to someone: “Oh. It’s me. I’m outer ring.” Placement is not worth, it’s just member dynamics. It may shift over time. In a different group you might slot in somewhere else.

Another example: Your way of conducting friendship — the birthday-attention baths, say — are lovely and well-meant, but some people adore attention and others don’t. So friends may love you but not get you. Or, they give

back to you generously! ... in their ways, which you value less than birthdays.

Now, we both could also be overreacting to an experiment with a meaningless sample size. Maybe the only difference between your friend’s birthday gift and your birthday text was a random impulse purchase.

But it’s still not a bad idea to make peace with hard data, for a few reasons.

First, when you’re deciding who will be central to your life, it’s important to choose people who won’t hurt you intentionally. But you will get hurt occasionally nonetheless. It’s part of caring. You can’t turn off your hurt feelings, but inviting them into your range of unavoidable experience tends to keep them a manageable size.

Second, it’s how you become a better person and friend. Not taking things personally moves you forward, yes, but if you want to *grow,* then have the guts to hear your feedback.

With this group I suggest, come fall: pay more attention but maybe lavish a little less; diversify socially; and hold off on drawing conclusions.

Tennis legend Seles is battling myasthenia gravis

Field Level Media

Nine-time Grand Slam champion Monica Seles is battling a new challenge: a neuromuscular autoimmune disease called myasthenia gravis.

The 51-year-old Seles is going public about the condition she was diagnosed with three years ago. It causes muscle weakness in the arms and legs and bouts of double vision among other symptoms.

Seles was noticing odd changes around five years ago and it eventually became apparent to her that something major was wrong.

“I would be playing (tennis) with some kids or family members, and I would miss a ball,” Seles said, according to The Guardian. “I was like, ‘Yeah, I see two balls.’ These are obviously symptoms that you can’t ignore.

“And, for me, this is when this journey started. And it took me quite some time to really absorb it, speak openly about it, because it’s a difficult one. It affects my day-to-day life quite a lot.”

There currently is no cure for the disease.



ROBERT DEUTSCH USA TODAY NETWORK

Nine-time Grand Slam champion Monica Seles, 51, revealed she is battling a neuromuscular autoimmune disease called myasthenia gravis.

Seles, of course, had a different hurdle earlier in life as she was stabbed with a knife by a fan during a 1993 match in Hamburg, Germany. Seles was 19 at the time and would be away from the sport for 27 months due to both physical and mental anguish.

Seles won eight Grand Slam titles prior to the stabbing and reached the finals of all four majors in 1992, winning three of them. She won the Australian Open for the third straight time months before the stabbing.

After she returned, Seles won just one Grand Slam

title – the 1996 Australian Open.

“I had to, in tennis terms, I guess, reset – hard reset – a few times,” Seles said. “I call my first hard reset when I came to the U.S. as a young 13-year-old (from Yugoslavia). Didn’t speak the language; left my family. It’s a very tough time.

“Then, obviously, becoming a great player, it’s a reset, too, because the fame, money, the attention, changes (everything), and it’s hard as a 16-year-old to deal with all that. Then obviously my stabbing – I had to do a huge

slam singles titles, two have come at Flushing Meadows, N.Y., (2000, 2001).

When she takes the court for the tournament later this month, Williams will become the oldest participant in women’s singles at the U.S. Open since Renee Richards played in 1981 at age 47.

Williams made her return to ATP play in July at the D.C. Open after not

reset.”

Decades later, Seles is now adjusting to a “new normal” and looking to move forward with the next version of herself.

“Really, being diagnosed with myasthenia gravis: another reset,” Seles said. “But one thing, as I tell kids that I mentor: ‘You’ve got to always adjust. That ball is bouncing, and you’ve just got to adjust. And that’s what I’m doing now.’”

Seles decided to reveal her condition and use her platform to help educate people about the little-known disease.

“My MG journey over the past 5 years has not been an easy one,” Seles said in a statement through argenx, a company partnering with Seles to raise awareness at the upcoming U.S. Open. “I felt isolated and defeated as many of the activities I enjoyed were no longer physically possible for me. I’ve since realized that by sharing my story, I can raise awareness of this disease, empower patients to advocate for themselves and help them connect with the MG community for support.”

Seles retired from professional tennis in 2008 and was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame one year later. She won 53 tournaments and spent 178 weeks at No. 1, sixth-most all-time among female players.

playing over the previous 16 months. Her first-round win over Peyton Stearns made her the oldest to win a singles match in 21 years. She also won a doubles match with partner Hailey Baptiste.

Williams lost her first-round match last week at the Cincinnati Open, 6-4, 6-4 to Spain’s Jessica Bouzas Maneiro.

Williams granted wild-card entry to US Open singles

Field Level Media

Venus Williams secured entry into the main draw of her 25th U.S. Open when she received a wild-card invitation Wednesday to play women’s singles.

Williams, 45, already had received a wild-card invitation to play mixed doubles with Reilly Opelka.

Williams last appeared at the U.S. Open in 2023 and last won a singles match at the event in 2019. Of her seven grand