The Door That Opens After Closing Time

By **Douglas B Vandergraph**

A locked door can be perfectly reasonable. A shop has hours, a public office has a schedule, and the people who work there need to go home. Still, we all know a different kind of door: the one that remains shut because nobody has thought to ask whether the person on the other side needs an invitation.

A new parent may hesitate to join a community activity because the baby will be noisy. An older resident may stop attending when walking across a parking lot becomes difficult. A family going through an embarrassing financial season may avoid gatherings where everyone is asked to bring something. From outside, absence can look like indifference. Inside, it may feel like a barrier nobody else can see.

Jesus repeatedly stepped toward people who had been left out. He called people by name, made room at tables, and refused the idea that human worth depended on reputation or usefulness. His welcome went beyond saying that the door was open; he made it possible for someone to come through.

Hart County can practice that kind of welcome without creating another committee. Someone can offer a seat close to the entrance. A family can quietly say that no contribution is expected. A friend can make the walk from the parking lot together, slowing down without making it an event. These gestures are small enough to be missed in a report and large enough to change a person's week.

The challenge is to stop measuring hospitality by the number of people who already know how to participate. Ask instead who wanted to come but could not. Ask who received an invitation but needed help accepting it.

There will always be doors that close at the proper hour. The door of neighborly care should be different. It can open after the meeting, after the meal, and after the crowd has gone home.

HART COUNTY SOLID WASTE
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PUBLIC NOTICE

Residential Garbage Rate Change

Due to rising operating costs, Hart County Solid Waste will increase the garbage collection rate to $30.00 per month per garbage can effective January 1, 2027.

Senior citizens who are 65 years of age or older qualify for a reduced rate of $25.00 per month for one garbage can.

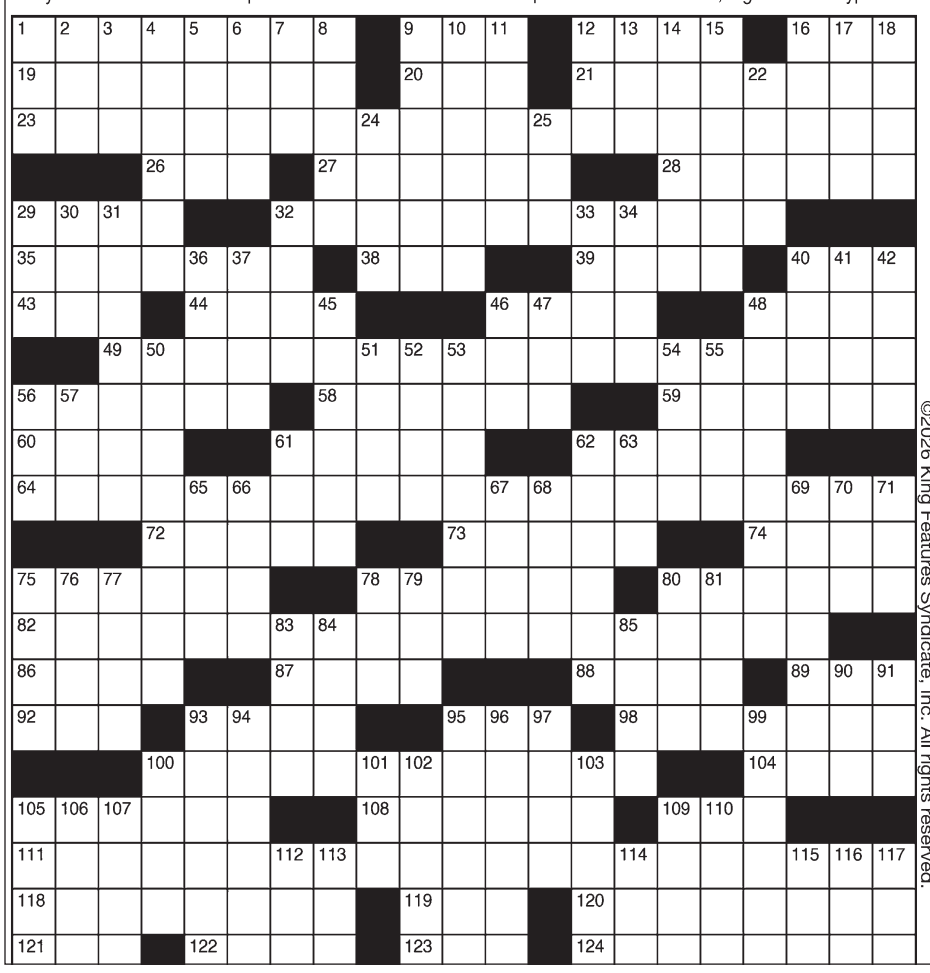
Additionally, customers who pay for the entire year in advance during the month of January will receive one month of service free of charge.

Hart County Solid Waste appreciates your continued support and understanding as we work to maintain reliable service across our community.

11/26/26 Super Crossword — BEINGS AMONG THE BLOOMS

ACROSS
1 "The Breakfast Club" bunch
9 Successors of LPs
12 Chores, e.g.
16 Thurman of "Burnt"
19 Not too hard to construct
20 Oval portion
21 Sea east of Italy
23 Start of a riddle
26 Singer Yoko
27 Neighbor of an Ethiopian
28 Instrument with over 30 strings
29 Madeline of "High Anxiety"
32 Riddle, part 2
35 Hard to find
38 Even one
39 Feels poorly
40 Show — (films, plays, TV, etc.)
43 "Assuredly!"
44 Emulate a supermodel
46 Bull's-eye hitter
48 Do a fall yard chore
49 Riddle, part 3
56 Deceive
58 Most liberated
59 Puts in the crosshairs
60 Yuletide
61 Huge meal
62 Louvre Pyramid architect
64 Riddle, part 4
72 Raise, as a flag
73 Earthen cooking pots
74 Soul singer India
75 Cincinnati citizen, say
78 Less certain
80 Be nippy with, as a pup
82 Riddle, part 5
86 Omit
87 Page for think pieces
88 Post-shower powder
89 Bride's vow
92 Ares, to Zeus
93 "I" problems
95 Gun, slangily
98 Largest city in Scotland
100 End of the riddle
104 In the past
105 British noble, in brief
108 "Mrs." with an infamous cow
109 "She's the one"
111 Riddle's answer
118 Result of a shaving slip
119 Tucson-to-Tulsa dir.
120 Delights in the flattery, maybe
121 Styled like
122 Late-night host Meyers
123 Garnet, e.g.
124 Zooms past

DOWN
1 Sporty German auto
2 "Yay team!"
3 Alias lead-in
4 Wyoming range
5 Place in hock
6 "Peek- —!"
7 "McQ" actor Gulager
8 "That '70s Show" character Michael
9 Guy driving a taxi
10 Given to reverie
11 La — (Italian opera house)
12 Tip container
13 Lofty verse
14 Pelé's nation
15 Peaceful protests
16 Provo's state
17 Performer acting silently
18 Big PC brand
22 Poker cost
24 Nick Jr.'s "explorer"
25 Band booking
29 Door opener
30 Hoppy drink
31 Shook a leg
32 Admit to it, with "up"
33 Seniors' org.
34 Tubular pasta
36 Tablet since 2010
37 Use a ballot
40 Saloons
41 Giant in retail furniture
42 Liveliness
45 Consequence
46 Two, in Chile
47 Toward a boat's stern
48 Think deeply
50 It's spun by hip gyration
51 River to the Caspian
52 — majesty (treason)
53 Allows to go with no punishment
54 Accessory for Superman
55 Stadium level
56 Genetic helix
57 Near-eternity
61 Hi- — (some stereos)
62 Trapped by habit
63 Show hosts, in brief
65 Tiger sound
66 Funny Fey
67 Roman 152
68 Cassini of fashion
69 Quitter's statement
70 Vardalos of the screen
71 Catch on to
75 Bettors' calculations
76 Savior
77 Clicked-on symbol
78 "— done it!"
79 Gave grub to
80 Banknote
81 Peruvian ancient
83 Jack or hammer, e.g.
84 — facto
85 — to riches
90 ICU worker
91 Be indebted
93 Sets foot in
94 Pressure felt by a jet pilot
95 "Bonanza" star Lorne
96 Degraded
97 Actress Garr
99 Morally degraded
100 Colon's meaning in an analogy
101 Vie for the affection of
102 Bull on a bottle of glue
103 Fractions of newtons
105 "— -Ca-Dabra" (1974 song)
106 Not fictional
107 Chichén — (Mexican ruins)
109 Abhor
110 Irish Gaelic language
112 Stomach
113 Utmost
114 Hiatus
115 ALF et al.
116 Pencil remnant, e.g.
117 CIA type



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CROSSWORD ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE A5

Weekly SUDOKU

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

11/26/26

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all the numbers from one to nine.

Weekly SUDOKU — Answer

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

Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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