

# New neighbors rally around family of former cheerleader

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One family's nightmare of nearly losing their teenage daughter's life, an incident which occurred in Kansas, has brought forth notable service efforts for them in their new home, Perry, Utah. At just 18 years old Elizabeth "Ellie" Renae Prewitt had the world at her fingertips, a confident, athletic, three-time All European Cheerleader and as an artist was just beginning her pursuit at defining her adulthood when her life was nearly cut short.

According to her stepfather, John Bartlow, a Master Sergeant in the United States Air Force, everything changed in an instant on Dec. 20, 2017, when they received the call that Ellie had been found lifeless in her Kansas apartment, the fervent efforts of EMTs were able to revive her, she was now in the hospital and unresponsive.

There was more than just concern about their daughter's fight for her life, they have been given few answers regarding the events that led up to her near death experience. John Bartlow said that he and wife Jennifer, faced intense emotions when they were informed that Ellie had attempted to take her own life however, this was soon refuted by physical evidence that came to the attention of her physicians and was then reported to the police changing the urgency of an investigation that now has been ruled out as a suicide. This investigation got a slow start as it was three days after the incident when physicians contacted law enforcement and the scene was finally surveyed for physical evidence by the Topeka, Kansas Police Department, which covers the area of Missouri and Kansas where the incident occurred. Ellie's case was assigned to a homicide detective, as she was not expected to survive, but she is beating the odds.

The Bartlows want justice for Ellie, in many ways Jennifer Bartlow said that it would have been easier to believe that she tried to end her own life and that this is a consequence of her own actions. But, it is unfathomable to know that this was inflicted upon her by another person a person who is likely walking about freely while Ellie is locked in unable to tell her own story. Their goal is getting her a voice, because this person stole her voice from her.

"I used to worry about sex trafficking, drunk drivers, getting in with the wrong crowd... I never worried about my daughter being strangled by another person," said Jennifer Bartlow.



Ellie Prewitt's senior photo, before her strangulation and brain injury.

Ellie had a presence that was well-known by her peers, she stood up for underdogs and believed that everyone deserved a chance to be themselves. She lived an energetic, free-spirited life full where she constantly challenged herself to improve whether it be through her cheer leading, track or art. Ellie was one of five high school students to have her art displayed at the Nelson Atkins Art Museum and she wanted so much to further her education to become a children's art therapist. Like all teenagers, she made decisions that weren't always the greatest, but she had a light and direction in her life that was unquestionable to all who knew her. She was looking forward to graduating from high school and seeking out cheer leading scholarship opportunities as she prepared for college.

Being accustomed to moving with a military family, Ellie opted to move near her biological father to finish out high school in Missouri, where she called home, and had secured her position as a cheerleader. The distance was difficult for her mother, but Ellie was strong-willed and determined to take this on herself and she tried to live as independently as possible.

Ever since Ellie was young she was always a helper with her mom, who suffered from migraines frequently. Ellie was self-sufficient and helpful to when her mother was a single parent. Jennifer Bartlow said, "She was always the one taking care of other people, and now is our turn to take care of her."



Ellie Prewitt was a three-time All European Cheerleader for her high school when the family was stationed at Aviano Air Base, Italy.

Ellie suffered massive injuries including a heart attack and anoxic brain injury due to oxygen deprivation of at least ten minutes. Ellie may never recover, but her family is one of faith and believe that miracles can happen.

Ellie spent months in the hospital and at a long-term care facility before she was able to return home. The incident occurred in Kansas, while her family now resides in Perry, simply making arrangements for her to be treated at the Promise Hospital in Salt Lake City took case managers care and parental gumption to make arrangements for Ellie to be closer to family. The cost of transport with the medical equipment required to sustain Ellie's life was great, and through the kindness of charitable organizations like Angel Flight matching the lowest ground transportation quote the Bartlows were able to get Ellie to Utah.

"We have been blessed by great friends, family, church groups, co-workers, Air Force agencies, and neighborhood groups that have helped support us and even raise donations just to get her back to Salt Lake City just 70 miles from our home instead of the nearly 1,000 miles where the tragic event happen. Now, we are at a point in her care where she has made enough progress to come home for in-home nursing care but we are not really prepared for this. We still need to make some additional modification to get her around in the house and travel with the family easier," wrote the Bartlow parents on their website dedicated to Ellie's story called ItsAbotHER.com.

On May 11, 2018, the transition was made possible from long term care in a hospital setting, to being cared for in her own home. Ellie has made slow progress from the "Acute Brain Injury (the event)" through the "Coma" Stage



Ellie Prewitt was recently recognized during a cheer competition. Her own cheerleading accolades have been touted on news websites like stripes.com



Ellie Prewitt clears a hurdle during her time competing on her high school track team.



Volunteers work to expand the Bartlow family's driveway to make access easier loading Ellie in and out of their vehicle.

and is nearly out of the "Vegetative" Stage to the "Minimally Conscious," now the next and last stage is "Recovery of Consciousness."

The daily care for Ellie has brought the family together, younger sister Makayla, is partially homeschooling in order to assist her mother with Ellie's physical needs. Jennifer Bartlow bears the brunt of the daily routine, trying to get Ellie out of the house. This is a significant challenge because Jennifer Bartlow herself has a tumor on her spine and lifting of her daughter may not be possible in the near future if the issue is exacerbated. Makayla is also recovering from a recent surgery with additional upcoming surgeries scheduled to correct an issue with each of her ankles.

The physical challenge of transporting Ellie has been complicated by the layout of the house, a home which they consider to be a blessing because of the relative ease they have had in making modifications to accommodate Ellie's needs. However, the landscape was one area that had to wait to tackle, the access to a selfbuilt ramp is only available through the backyard. This means that parking in the driveway, Ellie would then be trekked around through a gate into the backyard, and across the grass and down a hill to make it to the ramp in order to come and go from their home.

John Bartlow was greatly concerned about his wife's strength and ability to handle that required excursion, particularly because they had not faced a Northern Utah winter with Ellie after her injury and snow would certainly complicate the workaround. His occupation is a fixed income, and the sole income for the family, there are no pay bumps for working over-

time in the military. The family has had to rely on the generosity of friends, family and even strangers to make the changes necessary to accommodate Ellie's medical equipment. Connections have been made with several charitable organizations who have been integral to this point.

Plans were made to create a driveway into the backyard, through the generosity of companies like J.B. Parsons Company who discounted materials and donated the aggregate for the back curb and driveway. Labor was provided by coworkers, neighbors and members of the Perry First Ward who stepped up in a way that made the Bartlows emotional. "We haven't been able to get out and meet a lot of our neighbors but they still came out, they still helped," said Jennifer Bartlow, "You don't really expect the people you don't even know to help you out. They are still contributing, time, money, equipment, resources."

Jennifer Bartlow said that they have lived in so many places, most recently Italy, and have had a sense of community with the military, but what they have experienced in Utah has put that to

shame. They are so overwhelmed by the desire to serve, this has shifted the Bartlows plans as they now have decided to stay put after John Bartlow's upcoming retirement.

These displays of support buoy the family through their storm. One of the most difficult challenges that Jennifer Bartlow struggles with are the assumptions, many people assume when they see Ellie in her current state that she has always been that way, or that she never had any quality of life; but the family makes each medical decision in love and in faith. There have been comments on social media that question their life prolonging efforts, but Jennifer Bartlow made it clear, "You want to do what's right and do right for her. God kept her alive, we didn't do that. She was never in a position where her body was failing, there wasn't an opportunity for a "pull the plug" situation." She takes this as a sign that Ellie is still in there fighting for her own life.

"God will take her when he's ready, and I'm not going to be the one who makes that decision. My

"Ellie" on page 11



Ellie is pictured on a family ice skating excursion being pushed by youngest sister Daniela.



An excavator was used to pull up sod to prepare for a back driveway at the Bartlow home, in order to make transporting Ellie less strenuous.



OurCommunities: Promontory

Udy busy with rodeo, Wheatleys name newborn

By Winnie Richman  
Correspondent  
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Without a doubt, this year was one of the Box Elder County Fair and rodeo's best years. It was run smoothly by Joan Rhodes and her committee members. "Thank you" is inadequate to express all our levels of appreciation, but is truly meant.

Boyd Udy attended all the rodeo events Wednesday through Saturday. He was thrilled that the rodeo committee had a saddle bronc event on Wednesday evening that had about 25 contestants for 19 of which were the PRCA Rodeo's top contendersthe National Finals Rodeo to be held in December.

Wednesday evening also had a girls breakaway roping event for the first time. The winner won the event in 2.2 seconds.

Boyd is also a draft horse enthusiast. On Tuesday, all day, there were many entrants in the various draft horse classes. He describes the whole day as "super good."

Wednesday evening the action classes were held. At that time, Boyd's daughter, Jessica, handled the reins of Boyd's black draft horses for the very first time. "She did good," Boyd said. "It makes my heart swell. She hadn't done any driving for about ten years." This writer saw her and decided she was a seasoned professional.

Capping the evening off, the team of 24 horses hitched four abreast and six long came prancing into our rather small arena. They had two drivers; Leon Ben-

nett handled the reins for the back eight horses and Troy Haviland handled the reins for the front 16 horses. Each driver had a man behind him keeping the excess reins reeled in, in order to give them as needed back to the drivers. The length of the whole rig from the noses of the four front horses to the back of the highly polished wagon was 100 feet. Boyd said, "You won't see this anywhere else." He said of the draft horse section of the fair. "It was super good."

Boyd's wife, Kris, had a part in the fair parade, so Boyd helped her with that. Boyd was "just thrilled" with the whole fair. "Now it's back to work and loving this cool weather."

Zane and Laura Wheatley have decided to name their baby daughter, Nora Louise Wheatley. She weighed in at seven pounds, eleven ounces. Laura's family came everyday after Laura came home; her mother, Susan Hendricks, her mother-in-law, Janie Wheatley, and her sister, Betty, all helped out all week. The four older sisters are eager babysitters, but only for holding, not for transporting. "I appreciate all the meals people have been bringing here," Laura said. "I feel really good now."

Winnie Richman says "Hi," to Mr. and Mrs. Rampton who she saw at the Box Elder County Fair Jr. Livestock Auction on Saturday. They and their children were in 4-H horse activities years ago with Winnie's kids.

Winnie is real proud of Reagan and Brantzen Richman for placing their lambs in the blue ribbon category of the sheep classes.

Winnie said, "Thank you," to all the people at the fair who helped her in any way. Josh Dallin, our new county extension agent, went above and beyond the call of duty for her. Thank you.

Winnie did go to see the wonderful 24-horse hitch on Tuesday evening of the draft horse show. The team not only performed some maneuvers in the arena, but also backed up a good distance.

On Sunday, Winnie went to church. For the first time in years she was able to walk normally up the steps; left, right, left, right, holding for balance onto the hand-rail and not heaving or feeling the bone-on-bone grating in her knees. She attended choir practice, Sacrament meeting and did her library job as usual. Lyle came out early Sunday morning to feed the cows and calves hay. "We sure need rain," he and Winnie agreed.

Starr Mitchell gathered a few ripe peaches off their old peach tree. It turns out peaches need a few cool nights to finish ripening. She was able to get four pints of peaches canned. They were sweet and juicy.

Jim and Starr purchased some more small bales of hay for winter use. They have them all covered in case of rain.

The two of them drove up into the mountains for firewood for their fireplace. They cut the wood up there, but brought it home to split into burning size pieces.

Actually the pair are just helping where they can and also tending Gabi and Madi. Gabi is in school now and loving it.

"Ellie" continued from page 10

faith is the only thing that keeps her going," said Jennifer Bartlow.

The prognosis for Ellie's life was short following her injury, the neurologists have been helpful but don't see enough marked improvement to be hopeful. Jennifer Bartlow has faced a dichotomy that she would never wish on another mother. She compares the quality of life for Ellie before and after her injury-- as if her daughter were two separate people. She is learning to mourn the lively, energetic daughter who used to be a cut up and was a lot to handle; and is now beginning to learn how to decipher physical responses to interpret needs.

At times Jennifer Bartlow flips between past and present tense when speaking of Ellie, Jennifer Bartlow said, "In a lot of ways I've mourned the loss of that daughter. Almost two separate people learning to get to know another one, it's almost like starting over

with a newborn baby, learning those cues."

Ellie has made marked improvement, for those family members who see her responses daily, however, programs like physical therapy have been denied by their insurance company because the improvements are not considered measurable and the injury has been too prolonged. Her family continues to work with her on physical therapy using techniques they were taught. Jennifer Bartlow has made it a priority to seek out physical assistance for her daughter since Ellie's physical strength and endurance was very important to Ellie. Seemingly simple tasks like gripping a ball and releasing are major signs of progress, Jennifer has a video on her phone where Ellie vocalizes what sounds clearly like "mom," and the day of the interview for this article Ellie first lifted and twisted her left hand, all previ-

ous movement had taken place only on her right side.

A family friend once explained to their children that Ellie now lives like "Sleeping Beauty," and there is always a hope that something will come wake her up, their young son was quick to respond that he would kiss her to wake her up. That is just one of the moments of levity that the family has found along the way, the Bartlows are full of hope and remain optimistic, but are coming to peace with the possibility that Ellie may never recover.

Jennifer Bartlow said, "If she doesn't wake up from this, she has had a full life. She has traveled and experienced so much. She's swam in the ocean, she's skied the Alps, more than a lot of people that have lived a lot longer than her...She was an athlete, she got to live that dream: Being a champion...She did get to do a lot of things that some of us only get to dream about."

"Calendar" continued from page 9

Friday, Sept. 15

Suicide prevention 5k Run/Walk

Brigham City Suicide Prevention is hosting the third annual suicide prevention walk at Pioneer Park, 800 West Forest Street, registration will begin at 4:30 p.m. It is \$15 to register which includes a t-shirt and live entertainment provided by singer Brenn Hill. In addition, a fundraising Dutch oven dinner will be held concurrently, the price is \$20 per plate, dinner tickets must be purchased in advance. Additional information and dinner tickets are available at brighamsuicidprevention.org

Thursday, Sept. 20

Hope Helps Heal town hall event

Northern Box Elder County Suicide Prevention Coalition is sponsoring a town hall meeting featuring Kevin Hines, mental health advocate, motivational speaker and Golden Gate Bridge suicide attempt survivor. The meeting will take place at Bear

River High School, 1450 South Main Street, Garland, at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are complimentary, but limited, they are available through Eventbrite.com

Fine Arts Center

**Peach Days Melodrama Tickets:** This year's Melodrama is "Litt'l Red and the Red Ryders in Trouble Times in Cactus Gulch." Show times for this Musical Melodrama are Thursday and Friday, Sept. 6 and 7, at 8 p.m.and Saturday Sept. 8, at 2, 4, and 6 p.m. at the Center. Tickets are \$6 per person or \$25 per family and are available online or at the door as available.

**Wonderland Auditions:** "Wonderland" is a musical version of "Alice in Wonderland" and auditions to perform in this show will be held on Tuesday, Sept. 11. This is for students ages 8-18 with the performance on the Center's stage the first weekend in December.

**Open Mic Night:** This activity will be Saturday, Sept 15, at 7 p.m. It is a family-friendly environment, and is open to any interested persons to share their talents on stage or to listen. Performers can get their original works burned to a CD for free. There is no charge for performers; however, a \$2 donation for non-performers is suggested. Light refreshments will be served

**Fall Classes:** The 2018 Fall after-school and evening class schedule is now online. Classes are starting in mid to late September. Preregister online, by phone or in person. Classes are subject to sufficient pre-enrollment. Music, theater, and puppetry classes

es will end with a performance. Some scholarships available based on income. More information, including registration procedure, fees, instructors, and additional information is available online, by phone, or in person at the Center.

**Visual Art Classes:** Intermediate Drawing; 4-5 p.m. Mondays starting Sept.17 for 10-18 year olds. Teen Drawing, 5-6 p.m. on Tuesdays starting Sept. 18 for 8 weeks for grades 8-12. Master Art Exploration, 4-5 p.m. on Thursdays starting Sept. 20 for elementary students. Intermediate Photography, 6:30-8:30 p.m. on Mondays starting Oct 8, Paint Party, 1-3 p.m. the second Saturdays of Oct. and Nov. (sign up for each day individually)

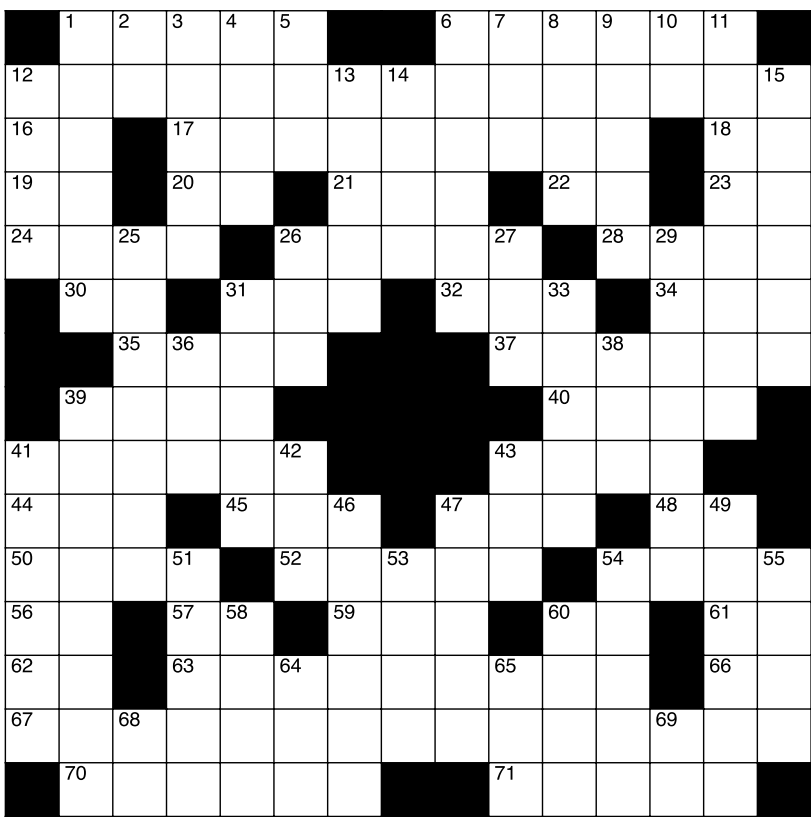
**Music/ Singing Classes:** Youth Vocal Performance, 4-5 p.m. on Tuesdays Sept.11-Dec.11 for 8-14 year olds. Children's Choir, 4-5 p.m. on Tuesdays for 5-7 year olds.

**Theater/Puppetry Classes:** Shadow Puppetry, 4-5 p.m. on Mondays Sept. 24-Oct. 29 for ages 11 years and up. Elementary Theater, 4-5 p.m. on Thursdays Sept.12-Nov.15 for grades 1-5. Intermediate Theater, 5-6 p.m. on Thursdays Sept.12-Nov.15 for grades 6-9.

**Preschool Classes:** September through May. No pre-registration needed. For children 3-5 years, accompanied by an adult, includes a craft. Puppet Story Hour; 2nd Fridays at 9:30 a.m. Music Story Hour: 4th Fridays 9:30 am. Recommended \$2 donation per child.

The Brigham City Fine Arts Center is located at 58 South 100 West in Brigham City. The telephone number is: 435 723-0740.

Fun & Games



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Where to shop
- 6. A descendant of Shem
- 12. NBA big man "Boogie"
- 16. Integrated circuit
- 17. Voice
- 18. Larry and Curly's buddy
- 19. Beloved English princess
- 20. Used to emphasize
- 21. Sun worshippers want one
- 22. Atomic # 44 (abbr.)
- 23. Lincoln's state
- 24. Selects
- 26. Organs present in invertebrates
- 28. Self-immolation by fire
- 30. Trauma center
- 31. Automobile
- 32. Mustachioed actor Elliott
- 34. Something to do at auctions
- 35. British School
- 37. San Diego ballplayers
- 39. Drumming pattern
- 40. One-time Portuguese currency
- 41. Honor
- 43. Beaches have it
- 44. Folk singer DiFranco
- 45. Electronic data processing
- 47. Where wrestlers ply their trade
- 48. The Peach State
- 50. Boat post
- 52. Omitted from printed matter
- 54. Witnesses
- 56. Indicates position
- 57. Atomic # 18 (abbr.)
- 59. Obligated to repay
- 60. Lead prosecutor
- 61. Sun God
- 62. The Ocean State

- 63. Seek opportunity without scruples
- 66. Keeps you cool
- 67. Achievements
- 70. A beloved street
- 71. Analyze minutely

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Cooks need one
- 2. A mystic syllable
- 3. Male parents
- 4. Greek goddess of discord
- 5. U.S.-based church (abbr.)
- 6. Movies have lots of them
- 7. Greek goddess of the dawn
- 8. Influential naturalist
- 9. Ancient town
- 10. Atlanta-based rapper
- 11. Animosities
- 12. Pop singer
- 13. Speak
- 14. One who lives in northern Burma
- 15. Not liquids
- 25. A framework
- 26. Peter's last name
- 27. Plants have it
- 29. To shorten a book
- 31. French philosopher
- 33. Murdered in his bathtub
- 36. Greek letter
- 38. A hiding place
- 39. Crazy supporters
- 41. Winged nut
- 42. Doctor of Education
- 43. Unhappy
- 46. Popular celeb magazine
- 47. \_\_\_ and greets
- 49. Poke holes in
- 51. Beloved Mexican dish
- 53. Monetary unit of Angola
- 54. More wise
- 55. Pouches
- 58. Hindu's ideal man
- 60. Type of gazelle
- 64. Revolutions per minute
- 65. Energy unit
- 68. Cerium
- 69. Canadian peninsula

On this day...

...in 1972, six members of the Arab terrorist group known as Black September, dressed in the Olympic sweat suits of Arab nations, jumped the fence surrounding the Olympic village in Munich, Germany, carrying bags filled with guns. Guards saw them, but paid little attention because athletes often jumped the fence to return to their living quarters.

The terrorists, carrying machine guns, entered the apartments of 21 Israeli athletes and officials, Black September took hostages before demanding the release of 234 prisoners—most of whom were Arab terrorists. The demands were refused, but the terrorists and the hostages were taken to Furstenfeldbruck airport by helicopter and given a plane.

The German government planned an ambush at the airport. Three terrorists were killed by sharpshooters, but the others were able to hide. One terrorist threw a grenade into a helicopter where five hostages were tied up, killing them all. Another terrorist fired his machine gun into another helicopter, killing the remaining hostages.

Twenty hours after Black September begun their attack, a German police official, five terrorists, and 11 Israeli athletes were dead. Three of the terrorists who survived were imprisoned but were set free a month later when Arabs hijacked a Lufthansa 727 and demanded their release.

Horoscopes

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20

Aries, surround yourself with people who have more experience than you and can offer advice. Listen to the pearls of wisdom they may share with you.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21

Taurus, a new coworker may come to you with questions because you are an expert in a particular area. This presents a good opportunity to serve as a mentor.

GEMINI – May 22/Jun 21

Expensive items have been on your mind, Gemini. However, this may not be the best time to make big financial decisions. Give them a little more thought.

CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22

Sometimes going about the same schedule day after day can put you in a rut, Cancer. Change up one aspect of your daily life, and you may notice a big difference in your mood.

LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23

Leo, if you have been mulling over going back to school, then now is your opportunity to enroll in a vocational class or take college courses for more credit.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22

Virgo, your creative side will be on display this week as you can showcase crafts or artwork that is inspired by the colors of autumn.

Put your thoughts in motion.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23

You are very good at compromising, Libra. This is one reason why people like you as a friend. However, do not compromise your own ideals to go along with every plan.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22

Scorpio, enjoy socializing with your friends this week. You have been on the go so much that it is time to settle down and enjoy a break and some good conversation.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21

Try your best to turn a situation that could easily get out of control into one you can manage more easily, Sagittarius. It will probably require some quick thinking.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20

Family matters come to the forefront this week, Capricorn. You may find yourself in the middle of a siblings squabble. Fortunately, things will blow over quickly.

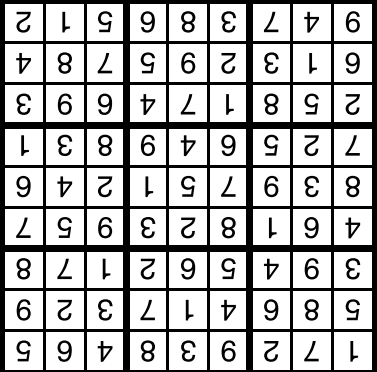
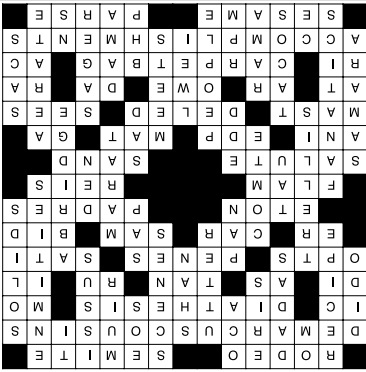
AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18

A series of events at work may have you thinking about a change in position and/or career, Aquarius. Don't make any rash moves just yet.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20

Try to take emotion out of all your decisions this week, Pisces. Lead with your head instead of your heart, especially where work is concerned.

Answers (don't peek)



Information for "On this Day" is provided A+E Networks, written by History.com staff. Website: http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history, or gleaned from other sources.

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