

Answers to yesterday's holiday fun puzzles

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Puzzle 1: This was a word search consisting of the names of the twelve streets of central downtown Seattle. The unused letters spell out the message “Issaquah year’s supply hair conditioner”, which takes you to the Issaquah Costco. (In the real puzzle, the secret message was much odder but relied on an inside joke.)

Puzzle 2: The cryptogram decodes as follows:

“There’s no such thing as a stupid question.” Go to the information desk at Center House and ask if they have any tickets available for the Mariners game.

This was itself a bit of an inside joke, because my friend worked at the information desk at Center House and had to answer stupid questions like this one. (The Mariners play at Safeco Field, not Seattle Center.)

The clues at the end told you how to map each letter. For example, the first clue “adieu” says that the letter “A” in the cryptogram maps to “U” in the cleartext. The cryptogram was easy enough that my friends didn’t need the bonus help, but in case you did, here are the answers: adieu, brook, coolj, dweeb, essay, fungi, genre, humor, incus, johnq, kazoo, lyric, mymtv, novel, overt, poach, quaff, rolex, soyuz, turow, usurp, venom, wrong, xenon, yield, zebra.

Puzzle 3: This is a double-acrostic puzzle. (Instructions on how to solve a double-acrostic.)

Give every book fifty pages before you commit to it or give it up. If you’re over fifty, take your age and subtract it from one hundred—the result is the number of pages you should read before deciding. Time is too short to read something you don’t like.

The answers to the clues are as follows:

- A. yo-yo diet
- B. overdue
- C. University of Illinois
- D. refought
- E. fondue pot (my friend likes fondue)

- F. indecisive
- G. red-eye
- H. soggy (my friend hates soggy corn flakes)
- I. The Herb Farm
- J. stork (original clue referenced friends who are expecting their first child)
- K. eco-tourism
- L. abbey
- M. tiff
- N. thud
- O. Love-Sac (my friend has one in her living room)
- P. eighth (original clue used Seattle library trivia)
- Q. audio-book
- R. pink
- S. Asteroid (original clue referenced a meal we had there)
- T. roommate (original clue referenced her current one)
- U. tagged (she plays softball)
- V. Metro bus route fourteen (with which she's very familiar)
- W. effigy
- X. notary (my friend is a notary too)
- Y. trumpet

The secret message is "Your first Seattle apartment", where she was greeted by her first roommate!

As you can see, a lot of the clues used inside information. There are also several library-related clues since my friend volunteers for the Seattle Public Library, and the quotation itself was a bit of a gimme because my friend is a huge Nancy Pearl fan.

Puzzle 4

: A straightforward Jumble with a Seattle Center theme. Key Arena, Center House, Space Needle, Monorail and Fun Forest are the anagrams, leading to the destination Earth & Ocean, my friend's favorite dessert restaurant. At Earth and Ocean, she was treated to lunch including one of every dessert on the menu and a special visit from the dessert chef herself.

Puzzle 5: The solution to the riddle is "Sim + foe + knee = symphony", which led her to Benaroya Hall.

Puzzle 6: The first series consists of baseball-related terms: shortstop, pinch hitter, home run, umpire, triple, strikeout, sacrifice, infield, line drive, and center field. The second series consists of names of teams in the NBA: Super Sonics, Pistons, Hornets, Rockets, Celtics,

Clippers, Cavaliers, Mavericks, Timber Wolves, and Trail Blazers. The final words are “CENTRAL LIBRARY”, which of course takes her to Seattle Central Library, where the big party awaited her.

This was a very busy day for me, constantly tracking my friend’s progress through the puzzles, calling all her friends to make sure they were in position, then calling them again after she left to tell them where the party was going to be. (Didn’t want to risk them letting slip the final location with a casual remark like, “See you at the library!”) Amazingly, she stayed pretty close to the schedule I had sketched out, except at the very end where we needed to stall her for about a half an hour so she wouldn’t show up before her party guests!

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