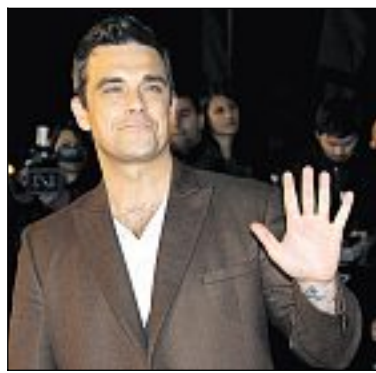


Monday, August 9, 2010

Lifeline

For entertainment news as it happens, visit the Lifeline Live blog at life.usatoday.com.

Off the marriage market: Robbie Williams married his American girlfriend on Saturday.



By Valery Hache, AFP/Getty Images

Take that, girls: Robbie Williams weds

British pop singer Robbie Williams married U.S. actress Ayda Field, 31, at his Beverly Hills mansion on Saturday. The couple have been dating since 2006. Williams, 36, famous for his solo hits *Millennium* and *Rock DJ*, got his start in the 1990s as a member of the boy band Take That.

'Inception' falls to that 'Other' movie

The Other Guys, the critically lauded comedy with Will Ferrell and Mark Wahlberg, stormed to No. 1 this weekend with \$35.6 million, according to studio estimates from Movies.com. The movie marked Ferrell's second-largest debut, behind *Taladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby*.

Several evenings with John Mellencamp

John Mellencamp and his band are set to hit the road this fall on their *No Better Than This Tour*, and they're kicking things off in the town where Mellencamp and his family make their home. The tour, which will celebrate the Aug. 17 release of his Rounder Records debut album, *No Better Than This*, will begin Oct. 29 in Bloomington, Ind., and will continue on to Nashville, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Kansas City, Chicago, Minneapolis, Cleveland, Detroit, Pittsburgh and three additional Indiana markets of South Bend, Fort Wayne and Indianapolis. While further dates are still pending, the tour is expected to continue through the spring of 2011. The tour brings Mellencamp's music to theater-sized venues.

Zsa Zsa gets ready to return home

Zsa Zsa Gabor is expected to be released from the hospital today. The Hungarian-born actress, 93, went into shock during her recovery from a broken hip. She suffered from a bad reaction to morphine.

Duchess of York clears up a royal mess



Ferguson: Paid her personal debts.

Sarah Ferguson, the Duchess of York, says she is trying her best to clear up her messy finances. The former wife of Prince Andrew said in a statement Sunday that she has paid all of her personal debts. Ferguson, who was caught on camera offering to sell press access to her ex-husband for cash, says she is doing everything she can to avoid having to declare bankruptcy over business debts.

Quiet Riot hopes for riotous bidding

The '80s heavy-metal band Quiet Riot — famous for such songs as *Cum on Feel the Noize* from the multi-platinum album *Metal Health* — is trying to fund a documentary of its history with an online auction that ends Sept. 2. Drummer Frankie Banali took up the cause after singer Kevin DuBrow died in November 2007. Fans can bid on an autographed photo that includes DuBrow's signature, dinner or a personal drum lesson with Banali in L.A., personalized platinum CD awards and their name in the film's credits. The auction is on kickstarter.com (search Quiet Riot).

By Cindy Clark with staff and wire reports
E-mail USATCMLifeline@usatoday.com



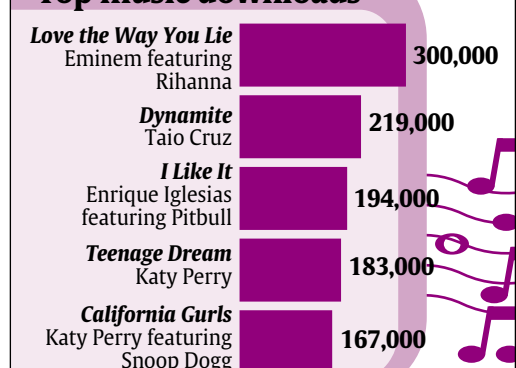
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Today's puzzles
Page 5D

USA TODAY Snapshots®

Top music downloads



By Steve Jones and Veronica Salazar, USA TODAY



By Nam Y. Huh, AP

Everything Lollapalooza

Over-the-top Gaga, 4D

A play date for families

Week 7 challenge, 7D

your Life

Whitney, Sarah Glaser by Brian Blanco for USA TODAY

Patricia Neal, star and profile in courage

Oscar-winning actress triumphed despite tragedies

From staff and wire reports

Patricia Neal was an Academy Award-winning actress known on screen for her husky voice and the quiet strength she brought to roles in such acclaimed films as *Hud* (1963) and *The Fountainhead* (1949) and the sci-fi classic *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951).

Ultimately the actress, who died of lung cancer Sunday at 84 surrounded by her family at her home in Edgartown, Mass., became just as famous for the tragedies that hit her and her family in the 1960s. That she overcame those misfortunes to once again become an award-winning performer is as much a part of her legacy as are her movie and TV roles.

Neal won a best-actress Oscar for her role opposite Melvyn Douglas and Paul



By Mark Humphrey, AP

Indomitable spirit: Neal kept performing years after her illness.

Appreciation

Newman in *Hud*. Less than two years later, she suffered a series of strokes at age 39. She fought valiantly to regain her speech and the ability to walk, returning to the big screen in 1968 in *The Subject Was Roses*, for which she received another best-actress Oscar nomination.

The actress was married for 30 years to the late Roald Dahl, the British writer

famed for *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *James and the Giant Peach* and other tales for children. They had five children. They divorced in 1983 after she learned he was having an affair with her best friend.

Before her marriage, she'd had an ill-fated affair with actor Gary Cooper, her co-star in *The Fountainhead*. He was 47 and she was 22 at the time.

A daughter died of measles in 1962, and her infant son nearly died in 1960 when his carriage was struck by a taxi.

In her 1988 autobiography, *As I Am*, she wrote, "Frequently my life has been likened to a Greek tragedy, and the actress in me cannot deny that comparison."

In 1971, Neal played Olivia Walton in *The Homecoming: A Christmas Story*, a made-for-TV film that served as the pilot for the CBS series *The Waltons*. It brought her the first of her three Emmy nominations.

"You can't give up," she said in a 1999 Associated Press interview. "You sure want to, sometimes."



Oscar winner: Patricia Neal in a scene from the 1963 film *Hud*.



By Eileen Blass, USA TODAY

Hoofbeats and heartbeats: Amish romances are set among serene farms and tranquil scenery, much like this rural road in Lancaster County, Pa.

Romance in Amish country

Novels about chaste longing are selling at a brisk pace

Cover story

By Deirdre Donahue
USA TODAY

It's plain and simple: The Amish inspirational is one of the fastest-growing genres in romance publishing.

For many readers today, it's all about the bonnet. In our sex-soaked society, nothing seems to inflame the imagination quite like the chaste.

In popular series such as Beverly Lewis' *Seasons of Grace*, Wanda Brunstetter's *Indiana Cousins* and Cindy Woodsmall's *Sisters of the Quilt*, the Amish fall in love while grappling with religious taboos and forbidden temptations.

And it all happens in über-quiet settings brimming with hand-sewn quilts, horse-drawn buggies and made-from-scratch Pennsylvania Dutch specialties such as shoofly pie.

"It's a huge, huge, huge trend," says romance blogger Sarah Wendell, co-author of *Beyond Heavily Bosoms: The Smart Bitches' Guide to Romance Novels*.

Who are the Amish? In a 21st-century world, the strictest among them live a 19th-century lifestyle. They are a religious, Christian-based farming com-

Please see COVER STORY next page ▶



Cover to cover: *Autumn's Promise* is in stores now. *The Bridge of Peace* arrives Aug. 31; *The Thorn*, Sept. 7.

'Talent' enlists a dozen-odd YouTube acts

Singers, rope-jumper, dancers, juggler aim for the semifinals

Video variety: The YouTube 'Talent' semifinalists

By Gary Strauss
USA TODAY

Mandel: "Raw talent" in videos.



By Chris Haston, AP

As if TV's oddest reality show competition couldn't get any weirder, an accordion-playing pooch and a flaming pizza juggler are about to join the competition on NBC's *America's Got Talent* (Tuesday, 9 ET/PT).

Pup, a 7-year-old mutt, and Ohio pizzeria owner Patt Miller are among 12 new acts chosen from 20,000 audition YouTube videos submitted for inclusion on the show, which has traditionally relied on live auditions, including some 70,000 this year.

The YouTube candidates were culled to about 40, then winnowed to 11 by AGT producers and show judges Howie Mandel, Piers Morgan and Sharon Osbourne. YouTube viewers selected Pittsburgh's Jackie Evancho — a 10-year old opera singer — to

kind of scary." Mandel, whose taste for kooky acts has at times put him at odds with the seemingly more sophisticated tastes of Morgan, says the YouTube acts, including Pup and Ed Heiss, his guitar-playing sidekick, may not realize what's in store for them. (Mandel has been doing stand-up comedy for 30 years.)

"There was definitely raw talent in the YouTube videos, but it was hard to tell if they recorded themselves 40

times and how they'll perform under pressure live on stage in front of an audience. It could be sink or swim," Mandel says. Still, Jackie, the young opera singer, could become a fast viewer favorite and last well into the competition, he says.

Wednesday's results show will include a performance by another self-made Internet star, Judson Laipply, the motivational speaker whose 2006 *Evolution of Dance* video has been watched nearly 150 million times.

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People

A-Rod nabs A-list hotties as well as he hits baseballs

With all-star lineup of women, what's the allure of Yankee slugger?

By Arienne Thompson
USA TODAY

Alex Rodriguez hit his 600th home run Wednesday after being stuck for nearly two weeks at 599, but when it comes to A-list ladies, the Yankees slugger has no trouble knocking them out of the park.

First was Madonna, followed by Kate Hudson and, most recently, Cameron Diaz, who coyly told *Harper's Bazaar* in its August issue, "I grew up with the Dodgers, but now I'm a Yankees fan."

His luck with the ladies raises the question: What exactly is A-Rod's appeal?

"Once you date one beautiful woman, other beautiful women want to know exactly what it is about him that made him so attractive," PopSugar.com editor Molly Goodson says. "Even though it seems odd that all

these A-list women would want to date the same man, they want to know what all the fuss is about, too."

No doubt that "fuss" has plenty to do with the 35-year-old's good looks, fat bank account and dreamy green eyes.

"Outside the arena of sports and celebrity, some of the things that make a guy a real catch are good looking, great body, makes a ton of money, enjoys partying and is super confident," *Details* magazine's Alex Bhattacharji says. "He has all those attributes."

Whatever it is, he has something that women from the A-list can't seem to get enough of — for better or worse.

In a 2008 divorce filing, Rodriguez's now ex-wife Cynthia says the marriage was irretrievably broken due to Rodriguez's extra-



2007 photo by Darron Cummings, AP
Married life: Alex Rodriguez and his then-wife, Cynthia, at the U.S. Open.



2008 photo by Jim Rogash, Getty Images

Heckled by Madonna: Boston Red Sox fans wave pictures of Madonna as Alex Rodriguez prepares to bat at Fenway Park in July 2008.



By George Pimentel, Getty Images, for Creative Artists Agency
At the Super Bowl: Rodriguez and Cameron Diaz hit the parties before the big game.

marital affairs. The filing came just months after the birth of the couple's second child in April 2008, and during the period when Rodriguez was spending time with Madonna.

At the time, Cynthia's mother, Evangeline Scurtis, lashed out at her former son-in-law.

"I'm not mad at him, I'm sad for him," she told *New York's Daily News*. "We knew this was going to happen. We anticipated this. This didn't happen overnight. Actions speak for themselves."

However, that rakish image seems to have only upped his cachet.

"There's a sense of entitlement about him that probably makes him incredibly appealing as a bit of a bad boy to women," Bhattacharji says.

Even his image as a stoic, media-shy athlete, a la Tiger Woods, hasn't diminished his sex appeal.

"He has a certain amount of personal charisma, at least one-on-one, if not the ease in front of the camera that we see in movie stars. He's very charismatic and likable in person," Bhattacharji adds.

Charisma and cash are part of the picture, but Bhattacharji and Goodson also argue that there are specific reasons why Madonna, Hudson and Diaz were drawn to the A-Rod flame: physique, a good time and age-appropriateness, respectively.

Like many major athletes, he's turned his body into his temple. "He has an Adonis-like physique; he's made himself into a physical specimen," Bhattacharji says. "I think history's shown that Madonna is not immune to such goods."

Then there's the good time. "Kate Hudson

seems like when she falls for someone, she falls very hard, and very fast," Goodson says. "It was fun (for her) to be around during the playoffs and during (A-Rod's) World Series run (in 2009). But as soon as the season ended, it was like, 'Now what? We're done!'"

And, for 37-year-old Diaz, Rodriguez may have the maturity she's seeking. (Her last public relationship was with Justin Timberlake, nearly 10 years her junior.) "He's a little closer to her age, and he's sort of come through (scandal)" pretty much unscathed, Bhattacharji says.

Goodson contends that Diaz "seems like the most logical fit" of the three.

"They actually have sort of similar backgrounds; they're both Latin. She's very sporty, herself, and people think of her as like one of the guys. She's fun and not high-maintenance," she says.

Good fit or not, the future of the Diaz-Rodriguez relationship remains unclear, and there's no telling which star he may draw next.

"I think he will have the ability to be a player for a while," Bhattacharji says. "He's a single guy. He's not Tom Brady, who's gonna find one and settle down. He had that. He was married and had a very stable home life. He's really enjoying the single life and, you know, more power to him."



Getty Images
Hudson: A strike-out, of sorts.

Cover story

Readers yearn for immersion in a less-hecktic world

Continued from 1D

community that shuns most modern conveniences such as phones and TVs, and they travel by horse and buggy. They marry among their own faith; the women wear bonnets and modest, drab clothing, the men wear brimmed hats and grow their beards. Children are taught in one-room schoolhouses, and education ends in the eighth grade. Traditional courtship rituals include "Sunday evening singing" group gatherings, where boys and girls can meet. Premarital sex is verboten.

So what is their appeal to modern readers? Remember when Kelly McGillis' modest Amish beauty enraptured Harrison Ford's homicide detective in the 1985 hit *Witness*? His tough contemporary cop, who pretended to be Amish to protect the widow Rachel Lapp and her young son, saw a whole new world when he lived amid the closed community of barn-raisers and farmers.

With Amish inspirations, which are shelved under "religious fiction" in bookstores like Barnes & Noble, "readers get to peer inside the Amish community, and it is not like our own community," says McDaniel College English professor Pamela Regis, author of *A Natural History of the Romance Novel*. "Simplicity is a hallmark of that community, and simplicity is powerful."

Longing to connect

The original creators of the Real Simple life were a group of 16th-century European Protestants who embraced the biblical injunction to turn away from the world. Their descendants are often called "The Plain People." The largest Amish communities in the USA are in Pennsylvania, Indiana and Ohio.

While more liberal Amish and Mennonite groups allow members to drive, the Amish inspirational novels focus on the strictest of the strict — the no-car,

Corrections & Clarifications

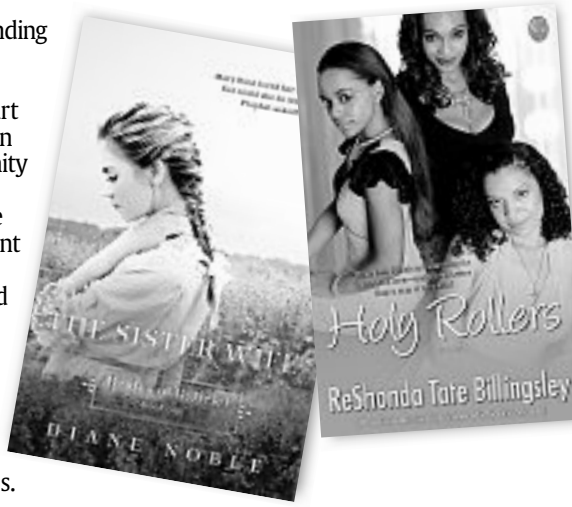
USA TODAY is committed to accuracy. To reach us, contact Standards Editor Brent Jones at 1-800-872-7073 or e-mail accuracy@usatoday.com. Please indicate whether you're responding to content online or in the newspaper.

In a story Aug. 6 about county fairs, the photos were taken by Drake Hokanson and Carol Kratz, authors of *Purebred and Home-grown: America's County Fairs*.

Other religions are spiritual sisters in romance

The Amish aren't the only religious group finding their way into romance novels:

- **The Shakers.** In *The Seeker* by Ann Gabhart (Revell, \$14.99), a young Kentucky woman follows her ex-fiancé to a Shaker community in 1860.
- **Mormons.** *The Sister Wife* by Diane Noble (Avon Inspired, \$12.99), set in the turbulent 1840s, centers on a young Mormon convert who must share her beloved husband with another woman.
- **Baptists.** In *Holy Rollers* by ReShonda Tate Billingsley (Gallery, \$15), three African-American Houston women — life-long pals who have spent their 20s dating pro athletes — attend a conference for Baptist ministers looking for soul mates.



Courtesy of the author
Brunstetter



Courtesy of the author
Dauids



Light Photography
Woodsmall



By Mary Lou Zinsner
Shepard Gray



Gene Photography
Lewis

no-electricity crowd.

And that low-tech lifestyle creates a small-town atmosphere, which has deep appeal for readers who may find Wi-Fi-only connections emotionally isolating. "Even within your own neighborhood, you feel alone," says Jane Little of the influential romance blog Dear Author. In an Amish inspirational, "we're all one big family," she says.

Professor Regis points out that since the 19th century, American women have devoured sentimental novels celebrating faith and family, hearth and home. But unlike, say, *Little House on the Prairie*, fans don't need to time-travel to see the Amish. They only need visit tourist-friendly Lancaster, Pa., to witness the Amish in action, which adds to the genre's allure.

"Here you have this agrarian society that is closed to outsiders right in the middle of the Northeast," says Wendell. "It's both historical and contemporary."

And popular: On Sept. 7, Beverly Lewis, queen of the genre, will launch a series called *The Rose Trilogy* with *The Thorn* (Bethany House, \$14.99).

Set in Lancaster, the series fol-

lows two very different sisters. An impulsive marriage to the non-Amish Brandon has thrust Hen into the modern world, from whose alien, materialist values she wants to shield her young daughter. Meanwhile, dutiful Rose is torn between two suitors.

More titles on the way

Also hitting stores:
► Cindy Woodsmall's *The Bridge of Peace* (WaterBrook, \$13.99, Aug. 31). Book 2 in Woodsmall's Ada's House series focuses on dedicated Amish schoolteacher Lena Kauffman as she struggles to help a rebellious male student. Meanwhile, an Amish husband named Grey Graber tries to mend a marriage grown cold.
► Wanda Brunstetter's *Lydia's Charm* (Barbour, \$14.99, Sept. 1). After the death of her husband, an Amish woman moves to Charm, Ohio, to help her mother care for her grandfather. Gifts from a mysterious admirer begin to arrive on her porch.
► Shelley Shepard Gray's *Autumn's Promise* (Avon Inspired, \$12.99, in stores). A 24-year-old Amish man and a 19-year-old

"English" (what the Amish call the non-Amish) woman with a past fall in love.

Harlequin has three Love Inspired Amish titles coming: Two from Patricia Davids — *The Doctor's Blessing* (a non-Amish M.D. and Amish nurse-midwife clash) and *An Amish Christmas* — plus *Courting Ruth* by Emma Miller. For many readers, the novels' appeal is what they don't include — things like graphic violence and profanity. "A lot of people say I just want to get away to a place where it's quiet, where people are thoughtful and respect each other, where they go to bed when the sun goes down," says Steve Oates, vice president of marketing at Bethany House, which publishes Lewis.

Another thing Amish inspirations lack: sexual content. Even the Marquis de Sade might blush at some of today's more frisky romance covers, but combine romance and Amish? Forget "bonnet rippers" with bearded love studs and rocking buggies — a shy girl in a white cloth cap is the traditional inspirational jacket fare.

For Beverly Lewis, pushing the envelope means writing about an

Excerpt

Hearing Dat and Adam called a cheerful "Willkumm" to Yonnie outside, she assumed he'd come to borrow a tool. She shook off the image of handsome Yonnie sitting in his buggy, nonchalantly holding the reins. True, she'd enjoyed his company quite a lot before Henry Stahl had started seeing her regularly. But that was back last year, when Yonnie and his family had first arrived from Indiana, and Yonnie had only asked to go walking after Singing a few times.

— From *The Missing* by Beverly Lewis

Lewis says "readers tell me my books make them feel less stressed. It's a slower-paced world ... where people know how to talk to each other."

Even more exotic to most secular Americans are the values the Amish cherish: humility, obedience and pacifism. (The Amish are conscientious objectors.)

"It's about submission to God, the church, the bishop, your father, your family, then to each other in a community setting," says Lewis. And if you are a woman, "it means surrendering your will to your older brother and to your husband if you marry."

"They take their Scripture straight up," says Lewis, pointing out how in 2006 the Amish astonished the world by forgiving the gunman who shot and killed five little girls at a one-room schoolhouse in Nickel Mines, Pa., then reached out to the killer's widow and family.

Outsider view

With their spiritual focus and emphasis on turning away from the secular world, Amish inspirations are enormously popular with evangelical Christian readers. "These books affirm the importance of living a Godly life," says Dear Author's Little.

Little is not a fan of the books, believing that they inaccurately romanticize Amish culture. She's not alone. In Ohio, some Amish leaders have banned members from reading the books. Out of respect for the Amish, Lewis' novels are not sold on amishbooks.org, says general manager David Bercot. While Bercot is not Amish, he has friends who are. "They feel her novels do not present a realistic portrayal of the Amish way of life and way of thinking," he says.

The problem isn't the idea of Amish romance — his website sells Linda Byler's Amish romance novels, for instance. Rather, it's Lewis' "English," or outsider, perspective, that's an issue. But whether Amish communities like it or not, "it's a genre that is here to stay," says Bethany's Oates.

And now mystery writers are boarding the best-seller buggy. Hitting stores Sept. 28 is P.L. Gaus' *Blood of the Prodigal* the first in a six-book Amish-Country Mysteries series being reissued by Plume. In December, look for Marta Perry's *Murder in Plain Sight*.