

PLUS

BLAKE SHELTON'S
NEW SHOW, P. 3

CHOCOLATE
COOKIES WITH
RUM! P. 8

"DON'T
EVER
EVER
GIVE UP
ON YOU"

SHERYL LEE RALPH

From Dreamgirls to Abbott Elementary, this award winner is living out loud and loving it

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WALTER SCOTT'S **Parade** Personality



WALTER SCOTT ASKS...

BLAKE SHELTON

The Voice coach, 46, is partnering with Carson Daly on a new celebrity game show, *Barmageddon* (Dec. 5 on USA Network), taking place at Shelton's Nashville bar, Ole Red, where their celebrity friends will compete in over-the-top bar games. WWE Hall of Famer Nikki Bella will host, Daly will be behind the bar and Shelton will take the stage with his house band for music sing-alongs.

Was *Barmageddon* your idea? Well, this is a show about games and drinking, and it was definitely cocktail inspired! Carson and I came up with the initial idea backstage at *The Voice* after we finished taping one evening. One drink led to another and we talked about playing games...and *Barmageddon* was born. Or at least conceived!

Who will be some of your celebrity guests? Let's just start with my superstar wife, Gwen, playing against Sheryl Crow. My buddies and racecar champs Clint Bowyer and Jimmie Johnson face

off in an episode. We have singer Chris Young, who's had huge hits in country music, and we toured together, taking on singer Elle King in a hilarious episode. Trace Adkins—who's like a skin tag, I just can't get rid of him—takes on Tennessee Titans Coach Mike Vrabel. We've got Lil Rel and Malin Akerman from the acting world in an episode together, so it's really a fun mix of people from all realms.

What kinds of games will you be playing? We took games that everyone knows, like cornhole and curling, amped them up and now you have supersized air-cannon cornhole, drunken "axe hole" and my own version of darts, which is called "sharts." We also have curling, which we amped up to be "keg curling"—so yes, there's some actual drinking involved!

How much music will there be on each episode? The music is a mix of songs with me and the house band, and some surprise performances too.

What does Nikki Bella add to the camaraderie as the host? Nikki has been entertaining people for decades! She's dominated the world of wrestling with WWE, so she knows how to light up an audience and host a party. *Barmageddon* is all about having a good time, and Nikki fits right in!

Carson Daly is behind the bar. How good of a bartender is he? Carson is many things. A great friend, creative, hardworking, a talented host, but he's a terrible bartender! It shouldn't be that hard to mix a cocktail! Thankfully most of the drinks are simple or it's just refilling a beer. Otherwise, we would be in big trouble.




Blake Shelton is the reigning champ when it comes to choosing the winning performer on *The Voice*. As of press time, he'd won eight times in 22 seasons. His wife, coach Gwen Stefani, has won once.

Will season 23 of *The Voice* really be your last? *The Voice* changed my life for the better and it's been successful beyond my wildest dreams. The live [shows] for this season have already started and I'm looking forward to season 23 in the spring!

When you stop coaching, what will you do? Oh, there's lots to do! *Barmageddon*, tour, work on the farm—I'll be busy.

Do you and Gwen have plans for more duets? Music is one of the foundations of our relationship and we've had fun and been fortunate enough to have two number one songs together. I'm releasing some new Christmas songs this year and one of them is "Cheer for the Elves," a song she recorded on her last Christmas album. So, you can bet we're going to always collaborate on music in some way. It's just how we're wired.

Loretta Lynn made music until she was 89. Is that your plan? I'm not sure I'm worthy to be mentioned in the same breath as Loretta Lynn, but I've been singing since I was a kid. All I ever wanted to do was sing country music and record songs that people wanted to listen to and get played on the radio. Music is in my blood and that's never going to change. 

How much has Blake Shelton made on *The Voice*? Go to [Parade.com/blake](https://www.parade.com/blake) for his net worth.

The Parade Don't Miss List

Here's what's on our radar this week. Go to [Parade.com/entertainment](https://www.parade.com/entertainment) for more.

Johnny Cash: The Redemption of an American Icon (Dec. 5-7, in theaters)

This documentary recounts a low period in Cash's life and career, focusing on the making of his famous album, "Man In Black," while the legend was stuck in a cycle of depression and drug addiction. The core focus of the film is the iconic country star's road to redemption and his return to an "unshakable faith" that would influence some of his most famous songs, like "The Man Comes Around." The documentary features John Carter Cash, Sheryl Crow, Tim McGraw, Marty Stuart, Wynonna Judd, Jimmie Allen, Alice Cooper, Franklin Graham, Joanne Cash Yates, Greg Laurie and many others, along with tapes from the Cash family archive.



Humming holiday tunes? Go to [Parade.com/music](https://www.parade.com/music) for the stories behind 25 festive songs.

Idina Menzel: Which Way to the Stage?

(Dec. 9, Disney+)

Idina Menzel may be one of Disney's most beloved princesses as *Frozen's* Elsa, but the *Wicked* star had a dream of her own: to headline a concert at Madison Square Garden in her hometown of New York City. In the documentary, *Idina Menzel: Which Way to the Stage?*—which focuses on the life and career of the Tony winner—we see that dream come true, following a national tour during which she juggles the challenges of being a working mom with a grueling travel schedule.

"We made this documentary to show firsthand how important it is to pursue your passions and lean on those around you in times of hardship," said Menzel, 51. "This documentary was a joy to make, and I hope it resonates with my fans and new audiences alike who find themselves balancing motherhood, work and marriage while chasing their own dreams. [I hope it] inspires others to keep pushing forward."



Pinocchio (Dec. 9, Netflix)

It took 14 years, but Guillermo del Toro is finally bringing his stop-motion vision of *Pinocchio*, the classic tale about a puppet magically brought to life, to the screen.

Newcomer Gregory Mann voices the title role, Cate Blanchett is Spazzatura, Tilda Swinton is the Wood Sprite, Finn Wolfhard is Candlewick and

Ewan McGregor is Sebastian J. Cricket.

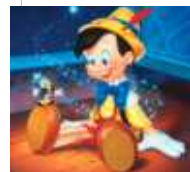
"In our story, Pinocchio is an innocent soul with an uncaring father who gets lost in a world he cannot comprehend," said del Toro, 58. "He embarks on an extraordinary journey that leaves him with a deep understanding of his father and the real world." The director of *The Shape of Water* and *Pan's Labyrinth* saw the film as a kid.

"Pinocchio saw the world the way I saw it. I was a bit enraged that people demanded obedience from him so I wanted to make a film about disobedience as a virtue, and to say that you shouldn't change to be loved."



SO MANY PINOCCHIOS

Italian writer Carlo Collodi wrote *The Adventures of Pinocchio in 1883*. Since then, there have been many depictions of the woodcutter and his wooden son (18 from Walt Disney Pictures alone!), including these.

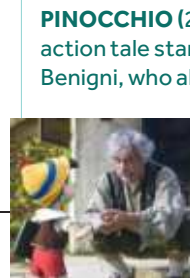


PINOCCHIO (1940) The original animated film has scared and delighted children for decades.



THE ADVENTURES OF PINOCCHIO (1996) The wooden puppet was played by Jonathan Taylor Thomas, who was the voice of young Simba in *The Lion King* in 1994 and a regular on *Home Improvement*.

PINOCCHIO (2002) This live-action tale starred Italian Roberto Benigni, who also directed.



PINOCCHIO (2022) Robert Zemeckis's version featured Tom Hanks as Geppetto.



Something From Tiffany's (Dec. 9 on Prime Video)

"I'm just crazy about Tiffany's," says Audrey Hepburn's Holly Golightly in the 1961 film, *Breakfast at Tiffany's*. She claims a visit to the store can cure her "mean reds"—a case of depression worse than the blues. "Nothing bad could ever happen to you at Tiffany's," she says. Now, 60 years later, we have a second film with the iconic jewelry store in the title. The romantic comedy *Something From Tiffany's* stars Zoey Deutch, 28, and Shay Mitchell, 35, and follows a woman whose life gets upended when an engagement ring intended for someone else leads her to the person she's meant to be with.

It turns out that the iconic store on the corner of 57th Street and Fifth Avenue and its wares have been featured in a surprising number of movies and shows. Here are a few others.



FRIENDS SEASON 6, EPISODE 13 (2000)

Reese Witherspoon plays spoiled sibling Jill Green in "The One With Rachel's Sister," where she sports a blue bag from Tiffany's after a shopping spree.

SLEEPLESS IN SEATTLE (1993)

Walter (Bill Pullman) gives Annie (Meg Ryan) an engagement ring during a visit to New York on Valentine's Day. We see the interior and exterior of the store. Spoiler: We also see Annie returning the ring to Walter later.

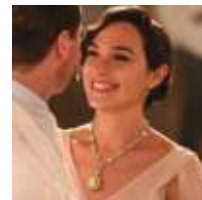


OCEAN'S THIRTEEN (2007) The heist in this third installment of the *Ocean* adventures is Tiffany diamonds, supposedly worth \$250 million.

SWEET HOME ALABAMA (2002) The mayor's son, Andrew Hennings (Patrick Dempsey), plans a surprise wedding proposal to Melanie Carmichael (Reese Witherspoon) in the Tiffany store. Like the character in *Sleepless in Seattle*, Melanie does not end up keeping the ring.

DEATH ON THE NILE (2022)

Tiffany & Co. jewelry is all over the place in this Kenneth Branagh remake of the Agatha Christie story. Linnet Ridgeway Doyle (Gal Gadot) receives a 128.54 carat yellow diamond necklace as a wedding present from her husband, Simon Doyle (Armie Hammer); Euphemia (Annette Bening) sports gold and diamond jewels from the Jean Schlumberger line, and Jacqueline De Bellefort (Emma Mackey) wears jewelry from the Victoria collection.



SEX AND THE CITY: THE MOVIE (2008)

This time Sarah Jessica Parker as Carrie is wandering around Tiffany's like a latter-day Audrey Hepburn in the opening of the movie. She sports a gold Elsa Peretti Bone Cuff during the scene.



Books

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TOP AUTHORS PICK THEIR

FAVORITE BOOKS

What are the brightest, most-popular authors reading this holiday season? *Parade* asked ten of them to share some of their all-time favorite books. For a comprehensive list, go to [Parade.com/bestbooks](https://www.parade.com/bestbooks) for the Top 222 Books of All Time. —Michael Giltz



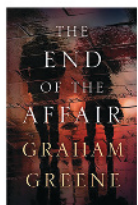
PATTI CALLAHAN HENRY



Author of *Once
Upon a Wardrobe*

**Favorite: *The End Of The
Affair* by Graham Greene**

"Graham Greene was inspired to write this novel from his own affair with a woman named Catherine Walston. There is nothing like it and it reads better every single time I pick it up—or listen to Colin Firth read it. It's a love story, and yet it's so much more."

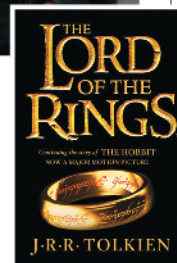


GEORGE R.R. MARTIN

Author of *A Song of
Ice and Fire*, adapted
into the HBO series
Game of Thrones



Favorite: *The Lord Of The Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien
"It will surprise no one to learn that my favorite fantasy novel is *The Lord of The Rings*. Fantasy is the oldest branch of literature, with roots that go back as far as Gilgamesh and Homer, but Professor Tolkien redefined the genre, and every fantasist since has been writing in his shadow."



SCOTT SPENCER

Author of *Endless Love*

**Favorite: *Pale Fire* by
Vladimir Nabokov**

"You're always on thin ice



when you say a book is the greatest of all time—or even the greatest of the year in which it was first published. But I feel terra firma beneath my feet when I say *Pale Fire* by Vladimir Nabokov is the most astonishing work of fiction I have ever read."



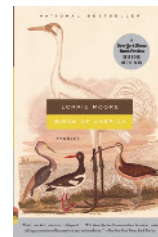
SHERMAN ALEXIE

Author of *The Absolutely True
Diary of a Part-Time Indian*

**Favorite: *Birds Of America*
by Lorrie Moore**



"It is hilarious and heart-wrenching in equal measure. I've reread this book at least 20 times and I think that's always the best sign of greatness."

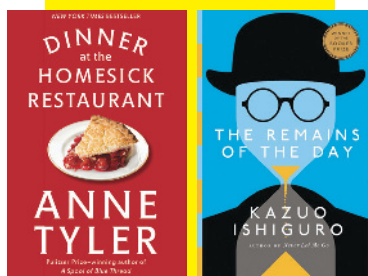


Love *Outlander*?
Parade.com/ten has the
scoop on the next book.



ANNE TYLER

Author of *Dinner at The
Homesick Restaurant*



**Favorite: *The Remains
of the Day* by Kazuo
Ishiguro**

Writer Anne Tyler said
yes when asked to con-
tribute to *Parade's* list of
the best books of all
time—on one condition:
The only book she want-
ed to talk about was *The
Remains of the Day*, the
story of an English butler
so devoted to service he
misses his chance at
love. "I don't think I'll
ever forget the heart-
stopping moment near
the end when the central
character all at once un-
derstands that his entire
life has been wrong," she
says of the book hailed
as an instant classic on
publication in 1989.



JULIE OTSUKA

Author of *The Buddha in the Attic*

**Favorite: *The Complete Short Stories of
Ernest Hemingway* by Ernest Hemingway**

"I'd somehow managed to avoid reading Hemingway until my early 30s, when I was first beginning to write. I'd always thought he was 'not for me'—I'm not white, I'm not a man, I've never stalked a lion, I haven't been to war. And yet, as soon as I began to read him, I could not stop."



THE COMPLETE
SHORT STORIES OF
**ERNEST
HEMINGWAY**

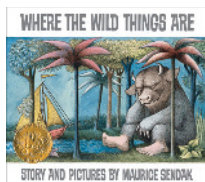


MATTHEW PAUL TURNER

Author of the children's
book, *I Am God's Dream*

**Favorite: *Where The Wild
Things Are* by Maurice Sendak**

"This is a perfect children's book because it's one of the most delightful to read aloud, offering moments to read quietly, in almost a hush, and also lines to read loudly with growls and snorts. I love that I was able to introduce my kids to a story that I loved when I was their age."

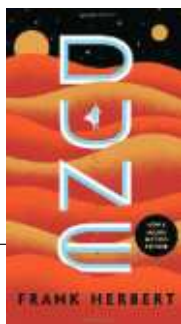


BEVERLY JENKINS

Author of *Indigo*

Favorite: *Dune* by Frank Herbert

"It appeals to the fantasy/sci-fi lover that I am," Jenkins says. "*Dune* is also the ultimate romance, and that appeals to me as well. Lady Jessica was told by her Order to birth a girl child, but her love for her Duke overrode that directive. She gave Leto a son instead. Without that love, there'd be no Paul. And without Paul, there'd be no *Dune*."



ELIZABETH STROUT

Author of *Olive Kitteridge*

**Favorite: *The
Collected Stories*
by William Trevor**

"William Trevor is so precise and so gentle and can flip over a sentence in a heartbeat. He writes about the lives of ordinary people, who are all—of course—extraordinary. One of my favorites is called 'Mrs. Silly' about a young boy sent to boarding school and his lovely mother who embarrasses herself on their visiting day. It's a quiet, honest killer of a story."



TIM O'BRIEN

Author of *The
Things They Carried*

**Favorite: *The Stranger*
by Albert Camus**



"I'm always moved by how un-
moved the book's protagonist
is in the midst of shattering
circumstances. (Yet, by and
large, don't we all 'recover' and
somehow move on from lost
loves and dead mothers and
our own misdeeds?) The book
is among the novels that made
me dream about writing one of my own."



YOUR NEW FAVORITE

Christmas Cookies!



There's a good chance you have the ingredients to make these festive cookies from the new cookbook, *Preppy Kitchen*, by blogger and YouTuber John Kanell. In the book, the former middle-school math and science teacher shares the best-loved recipes he cooks for his husband and their twins, Lachlan and George, on their farm in Connecticut.

RUMMY CHOCOLATE CRINKLE COOKIES

- ▶ 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- ▶ ¾ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- ▶ 1 tsp espresso powder (like Medaglia D'Oro Espresso Instant Dark Roast Coffee)
- ▶ ¾ tsp baking soda
- ▶ ½ tsp kosher salt
- ▶ ¾ cups granulated sugar, divided
- ▶ ½ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- ▶ ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted
- ▶ 1 large egg, at room temperature
- ▶ ¼ cup aged or spiced rum
- ▶ 2 tsp vanilla extract
- ▶ ½ cup powdered sugar, plus more for dusting

1. In a medium bowl, sift together first 4 ingredients. Whisk in salt. In a large bowl, combine ½ cup granulated sugar, brown sugar, butter, egg, rum and vanilla. Whisk until well combined. Using a silicone spatula, fold flour mixture into sugar mixture until dough is uniform. Cover; refrigerate at least 2 hours and up to overnight.

2. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line 2 rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.

3. Sift ½ cup powdered sugar into a small bowl. In another small bowl, place remaining ¼ cup granulated sugar.



4. Scoop dough with a spoon and roll into 1-inch balls. Roll each dough ball in granulated sugar followed by powdered sugar. Place dough balls 2 inches apart on one of the prepared baking sheets. Lightly sift powdered sugar over the top. Chill remaining dough balls (probably about half the dough) and coat in sugars just before baking.

5. Bake 1 sheet at a time until cookie edges are set and cracks have formed, about 10 minutes for gooey-center cookies and up to 12 minutes for fully baked but soft cookies. Cool completely on pan. Store cookies in an airtight container for up to 4 days. **Makes about 2 dozen.**

John



ORANGE LINZER COOKIE WREATHS

"You can use any kind of jam sandwiched inside these cookies," says Kanell, "but I prefer orange marmalade because it's sweet but not too sweet, with just a little bit of bitter to keep you coming back for more." If you use marmalade with large, thick strips of zest, he advises pulsing it in a food processor to break them up.

Visit
[Parade.com/
chaicookie](http://Parade.com/chaicookie)
for Taylor Swift's
Chai Cookies
recipe.

FIRST COOKING MEMORY

"Growing up, we had a weekly pizza night, and my brother and I would get to shape the dough, spread the sauce, choose toppings and add cheese to ours. It's a memory I've recreated with my children on our pizza nights."

FAVORITE HOLIDAY RITUAL

"Gathering around the table for a big meal with family. And we have certain Christmas recipes that get made every year. There's a roast turkey, a *bûche de Noël*, my mom's special herbed rice and, of course, holiday cookies!"



TOP BAKING TIP

Bake cookies one sheet at a time on the middle rack for the most consistent results. "Ovens also tend to have hot spots towards the top and bottom, so baking your cookies on the middle rack is one way to keep them nice and golden," he says.

MUST-HAVE INGREDIENTS

Cocoa powder, vanilla extract ("it really adds so much flavor"), superfine sugar for making meringues and a variety of flours (all-purpose, almond, bread and whole wheat). Kanell also favors European butter, which is richer and creamier than American butter, thanks to more butterfat.

In a large bowl, sift together $3\frac{1}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp kosher salt and $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp baking powder. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, beat 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened, and 1 cup granulated sugar on medium speed until creamy, about 3 minutes. Add 1 large egg and 1 tsp vanilla extract; continue beating until fluffy, about 2 minutes, stopping to scrape down sides of bowl as needed.

Reduce mixer speed to low and slowly add flour mixture. Beat just until a dough starts to form, 1-2 minutes. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured work surface; knead gently into a ball. Divide dough in half. Shape each half into a disk; wrap tightly in plastic wrap. Chill at least 45 minutes and up to 3 days.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

On a lightly floured surface, roll out each dough disk to about a $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch thickness. Use a $2\frac{1}{4}$ -inch round cutter to cut dough into rounds, rerolling scraps as needed. Place half the rounds 1 inch apart on one of the prepared baking sheets.

Using a $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch cutter, cut center out of remaining rounds. Place 1 inch apart on the other prepared baking sheet.

Bake cookies one sheet at a time 12-15 minutes or until edges are just starting to brown. Cool completely on baking sheets.

To garnish, use a fingertip to spread a spot of orange marmalade on top of cutout cookie. If desired, press on a piece of fresh rosemary sprig and thinly sliced cranberry and add golden sprinkles. Let marmalade dry a few minutes; lightly dust all over with powdered sugar.

On flat side (most likely underside) of each solid cookie, spread about $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp marmalade and top with a cutout cookie. Gently press to adhere. Repeat with remaining cookies. Store in an airtight container up to 4 days. Makes about 20 sandwich cookies.

LIVING OUT

A TONY NOMINEE, EMMY
WINNER FOR *ABBOTT
ELEMENTARY* AND SINGER
AND SPEAKER OF THE
TRUTH, SHERYL LEE RALPH
GIVES US A LESSON IN
BELIEVING IN YOURSELF.

BY NICOLE PAJER

When winning an award, most actors take the stage in awe, rattle through a list of names to thank and wipe a few tears from their eyes. But at this year's Emmys, Sheryl Lee Ralph used her moment to show her appreciation in a different way. She accepted her statuette for Best Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series by taking a deep breath to compose herself, then belting out the opening lines to "Endangered Species" by jazz artist Dianne Reeves: "I am an endangered species, but I sing no victim song. I am a woman. I am an artist. And I know where my voice belongs."

Ralph, 65, had everyone in the crowd standing and clapping wildly before transitioning into an inspirational monologue. The actress, who won for her role of Barbara Howard in *Abbott Elementary*—becoming the first Black woman to claim the category in 35 years—dedicated her award to her fellow dreamers, proclaiming "I am here to tell you that this is what believing looks like. This is what striving looks like. And don't you ever, ever give up on you." That's exactly what Ralph has done throughout her career, staying persistent in pursuit of her dreams. She spoke with *Parade* about her journey.

LOVE

Want more great TV?
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midseason](https://www.parade.com/midseason)
for winter's
hottest shows.



Ralph's Emmy hit, the critically acclaimed *Abbott Elementary*, was created by Quintia Brunson (bottom, center).

CHASING THE DREAM

Ralph was born in Connecticut and raised in Jamaica and Long Island by a college professor dad, Stanley, and fashion designer mom, Ivy, whom she credits for much of her inspiration and drive. "I'm an immigrant child, and my mother came here with a dream, and it wasn't just for herself, but it was for her family as well," she says. "The people still to this day talk about Miss Ivy and what she meant to them, how she cared for them, how she inspired them," she says. Ralph became interested in acting at Rutgers University and after graduation, she embarked on what has become a nearly five-decade performing career, full of noteworthy performances.

On stage, she's portrayed Deena Jones in 1981's original *Dreamgirls* on Broadway, a role that landed her a Tony Award nomination, Madame Morrible in *Wicked* and Elyse in *The First Wives Club*. She starred alongside Denzel Washington on the big screen in *The Mighty Quinn*, and is known for roles in *To Sleep With Anger*, *The Distinguished Gentleman*, the *Sister Act* sequel, *Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit*, and as the voice of Rita in *Oliver and Company*. And on television, she's appeared in everything from *Moesha* to *The Jeffersons*, *Designing Women* and more. Along the way she had two children with first husband, Eric Maurice, divorced, and got remarried to Pennsylvania State Senator Vincent Hughes.

But continuing to stay relevant in show business throughout the years, Ralph admits, was not always easy, even for someone as driven as she was. And at one point along her journey, she almost quit acting. "My daughter was in junior high, and things had slowed down a bit," she recalls. She ran into a casting agent whose child went to her kids' school and was asked what she had been up to. "I said, 'Well, I haven't been acting much.' The agent stopped in her tracks and said, 'If you haven't been acting much, it's because you don't want to act much,'" Ralph recalls. This caused her to reexamine her entire career, from her goals to how she was being marketed to the industry. "It was a wake-up call and it worked great for me," she says. "I got new representation. I got new thoughts on myself. And I just went for it. That was the best thing I could ever do," she says.

Another best in her life has been ABC's new hit, *Abbott Elementary*. The mockumentary created by Quintia Brunson about a predominantly Black school in Philadelphia has been a dream. "I'm working with a great cast and crew on a series that is perfect for the time that we are in right now," she says. "I've got a boss that's half my age, and I adore



On Broadway, Ralph got a Tony nomination for her role in *Dreamgirls* and knocked everybody's socks off in *Reggae*, *Wicked* and *Thoroughly Modern Millie*.





Ralph married Pennsylvania State Senator Vincent Hughes in 2005.

ACCORDING TO *SHERYL*

FAVORITE HOBBY "Sleep! When we were first together, my husband would always laugh. He was like, 'Why do you sleep so much?' And I'm like, 'Why do you sleep so little? You think that four hours a night is good for you?' Give me seven to eight hours. I'm fine."



FAVORITE MOVIE
Black Orpheus (1959)



LAST BINGE
Succession

her. And God is good." But she does acknowledge that the role of old-school kindergarten teacher Barbara Howard took her by surprise. "At first, I was just like, 'Oh, well, here we go. Another role that I can absolutely play with my eyes shut,'" she says. Ralph was initially interested in portraying Ava, the inept principal character. "It was something that I could do very easily, but people would probably not see me as that," she says. But when Brunson told her, "Absolutely not. You are the perfect Barbara Howard," Ralph found herself in a role she absolutely adores. "This is probably the first time that I've ever really watched myself in a show, because I just like it so much," she says.

PRACTICING SELF-CARE

Having a positive mindset is very important to Ralph, both on and off set. She starts her days off with an affirmation. "First thing I do every morning is look in the mirror and love what I see," she says. "That whole 'Good morning, gorgeous,' that's old news for me. It has always been 'Girl, look at you. You look fabulous. Just the way you are.' I love to encourage myself." She credits this to her parents who nudged her to appreciate herself at a young age. "I'm a child of the '60s. If you didn't encourage yourself, it was not easy to make it out of that time in life," she says, only half joking.

Ralph has a work ethic of steel but has learned if she doesn't balance it with some TLC, she's not able to devote her full self to her craft. That's why she makes a point to check in with herself daily. "I love having full-on conversations out loud, balancing the pros and the cons and saying, 'Okay, where are we going? How are we doing this? How are we making this happen? What is the plan? How are we feeling? How can we feel better?' I'm telling you some of the best conversations I've ever had have been with myself," she says.

Health and wellness are not new to Ralph. "My mother always believed that your body is your temple. My dad said it's your castle and you have got to take care of it," she says. Her parents, she says, were very clear about what happens in every decade of life and how

MORNING WAKE-UP ROUTINE Warm water, followed by tea or "fake coffee" made from barley or chicory root

EXERCISE MANTRA "Like the song says, you've got to 'Move it, move it...'"

RELAXATION TECHNIQUE Box breathing (inhaling for four seconds, holding for four seconds, exhaling for four seconds and repeating)

FAVORITE COLOR Bling!

SURPRISING FACT "I played the violin as a child."

FAVORITE TRADITIONS "Christmas on the beach in Jamaica, indulging in local cuisine like black cake and rum punch, and giving big gifts in tiny boxes."





Ralph's mother "Miss Ivy" (who passed in 2018) taught her that "your body is your temple."

you need to adjust your routine accordingly. So, while aging in Hollywood means she's doing it in front of a lens, she's learned to see growing older as a privilege. "I'm doing what I can. And you look at me, what I can do is pretty damn good because I put my best into it," she says.

POWERING THROUGH THE HURDLES

Adopting a positive mindset hasn't always come easy to Ralph. "There are moments where you forget even the best lessons that you've learned," she says. She's made a point to be transparent throughout the years, speaking about some of the hardships she's experienced and the things she's done to bounce back. "In my 20s, when things were out of hand for me as a young actor, and it seemed as though everybody else was in control, I took control by not eating," she says. "We now know that that is called anorexia, but back in the day, they just thought I was losing my mind." She credits the support of her family and early intervention for getting back on track.

She also experienced depression in the aftermath of her 2001 divorce from first husband, Eric Maurice, with whom she shares two children (Etienne Maurice and Ivy Maurice, now 30 and 27). "I looked in the mirror and I just started crying. And it was so unusual for me," she says of the moment she realized she was more than just sad. "And I was just like, 'I think I need to talk to somebody; I need some help.'" Deciding to leave her marriage, she says, came down to wanting to have her children see her at her best. "I couldn't be my best in that relationship, so I had to make a choice to be my best outside of it," she says. With the help of her family, "a great therapist," who worked with her and her family together, and her friends, she was able to improve her mental health.

"You get challenges in life. And it's all about how you are going to work through those challenges," says Ralph. "For me, it has all been about how do you move forward?" She strives to not get "stopped by the negativity but propelled by the positivity," as she describes it. She's also learned that her state of mind is a choice, and choosing to be happy has become her default throughout the years. "A lot of people say, 'But it's not that easy,'" she says. But this is something Ralph practices daily. "I'm a pro at being my best self. I'm a pro at relaxing myself. I'm a pro in bad situations, finding my best self, because that's how I've managed to carry on. That's how I've managed to move forward."



Ralph's many TV and film roles include *The Mighty Quinn* with **Denzel Washington**, *The Jeffersons*, *Designing Women*, *Moesha* and *The Distinguished Gentlemen*.





Ralph's children Ivy and Etienne Maurice joined her on the red carpet for the film *Just Getting Started* in 2017.

THE JOY OF GIVING BACK

Another way that Ralph stays healthy is by focusing on others. She is a big proponent for animal adoption and loves to spend time with her rescue puppy, Oscar. "Rescue dogs, animals, cats can be great self-care," she says. "If you need one, don't go out and buy one, go to the shelter. Give the animal the patience that you probably should be giving yourself."

But her true life's work is her D.I.V.A. Foundation, which she founded in 1990 as a memorial to the many friends she lost to AIDS. "As an original company member of *Dreamgirls* on Broadway, it was the best time of my life. And then the worst happened when my friends were just dropping dead of this disease," she says. "I saw how the world's reaction was so terrible, how easy it was to hate on people for their sexual preference, or their gender or whatever." Ralph started D.I.V.A., "Divinely Inspired Victoriously Aware," to help raise both funds and awareness for HIV/AIDS and other life-threatening diseases. "And now we're focused on overall health awareness," she says.

These days she spends her downtime encouraging people to get their check-ups and prioritize preventative health. "We try to deliver messages even to men that say, 'I know you're afraid of getting your PSA numbers, but you can get a blood test [for prostate health]. Things have changed. Go take care of yourself.' For women, it is important to get your mammogram when you need it," she says. She's also pushing for open dialogue and support around women and their periods, pregnancy and the transition into menopause.

THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT

After an upcoming holiday trip to Jamaica, Ralph is excited to hop into whatever her career brings her next, she says. But at the moment, she's enjoying how every character she has portrayed in the past has led her to this Emmy award-winning point, noting that in so many ways she is living the life of Deena Jones from *Dreamgirls*. "Deena Jones came from a singing group, wanted to do something important, wanted to make a difference, wanted to have a family and a happy life," she reflects. Then, she thinks back to her first movie, *A Piece of the Action*, with Sidney Poitier and Bill Cosby,

where she played an unruly juvenile delinquent named Barbara Hanley. "I believe that Barbara Hanley has grown up to become Barbara Howard, understanding that she has done the best that she could for herself, and is now doing it for others as a teacher," says Ralph. She finds the circle revelation to be absolutely beautiful. "I'm very thankful!" she says.

And that Emmy? For Ralph, it is all about change. The recognition has caused her to reflect on the times in her life when she felt like she was doing her best work and was often overlooked. Nowadays, she's celebrating her persistence. "You can say the industry wasn't



Ralph was only the second Black woman to win the Outstanding Supporting Actress Emmy. The first was Jackée Harry for a show called *227*, 35 years ago.

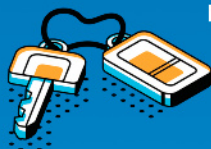
ready, you can say that people didn't realize that diversity was important and other people should be invited to the party. But I believe my award is what change really looks like. Because I've been here doing the work that people say is outstanding," she says. Her Emmy is now right beside her bed, and she goes to sleep and wakes up next to it with a big smile on her face. **P**

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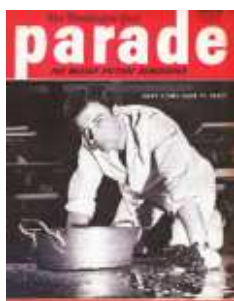
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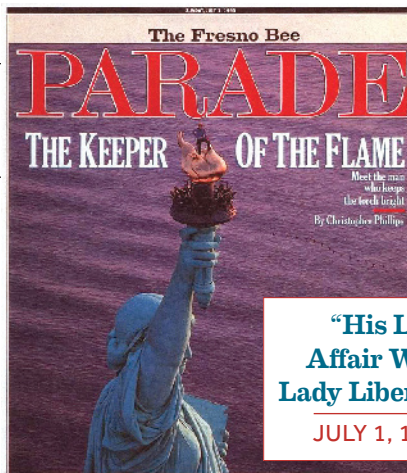
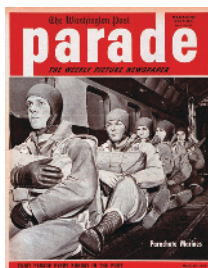
WORKING FOR AMERICA

It was Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson who said, “Be humble. Be hungry. And always be the hardest worker in the room.” Johnson, who worked as a dishwasher when he was just 13 years old, would appreciate this peek into the *Parade* Vault. The magazine has told thousands of stories about jobs over 80+ years, but here are a few that capture that classic can-do American attitude. As former baseball player Sam Ewing said, “Hard work spotlights the character of people. Some turn up their sleeves. Some turn up their noses and some don’t turn up at all.” These folks? They turned up. —Anne Krueger



The World War II Years

During the 1940s, *Parade* highlighted dozens of men and women whose work involved serving our country on the battlefield and off. Among them was the “girl chemist developing secret weapons against battle-front diseases,” the soldier on KP duty, the military policeman, the female factory worker assembling a bomber’s nose and the parachuting marines.



“His Love Affair With Lady Liberty”

JULY 1, 1990

“I’m nobody special. How did I get so lucky?” That’s Vietnam veteran Charlie DeLeo, 42, the son of Greek and Italian immigrants talking about his place of employment. The job? Since 1972, DeLeo has been the sole “keeper of the flame” of the 305-foot Statue of Liberty, keeping every inch of the 29-foot, 2,500-pound torch clean and burning bright (that’s him in the torch on the cover). “Most men don’t ever discover their calling,” he told *Parade*. “I’ve found mine.”

“They Fight Oil Spills”

APRIL 10, 1977

Meet the Coast Guard’s four-year-old National Strike Force, a team of men who at a moment’s notice jumped on ships or planes with their pumps and other equipment to try to contain or clean up oil spills or other environmental disasters.

“We’re like a fire department,” Lt. Cmdr. Barry Chambers, 35, told *Parade*. “When the alarm sounds, we get moving.” Among them were divers, pumping mechanics and experts in cleaning and rehabilitating waterfowl. It was hard work—60 percent of it spent away from home with some jobs lasting three months. But it was also satisfying, said Lt. John Clay, 26, who had a degree in oceanography.

“I grew up in the environmental revolution. I’m excited about the freedom we have to experiment and get involved.” (The Force is still hard at work in 2022).



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to sign up for daily stories.



“Civilians Who Keep Traffic Moving”

MARCH 31, 1974

“That shapely blonde directing traffic at Broadway and 34th Street in New York isn’t a motorists’ mirage,” wrote *Parade*. “She’s a mother of six named Dorothy Donoghue.”

The sexist introduction aside, the article went on to celebrate the new 300-strong army of Traffic Control Agents (TCAs) who were keeping city streets unsnarled across the U.S. Donoghue, 32, who received a starting salary of \$8,500 and worked 11:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., had to learn the ropes. “I was shaky at first,” she said, especially when a bus approached. “If they don’t stop, you have to blow your whistle, walk up and put your hand right up in front of them. It’s not easy.” But, clad in her orange and white striped Day-Glo vest and white gloves, she’d learned some tricks: “Once you’re firm with drivers and keep them moving they’ll pay strict attention to you.”

Ask Marilyn

| BY MARILYN VOS SAVANT |

For more Numbrix puzzles, go to
Parade.com/numbrix.



Send questions to
marilyn@parade.com



**CAN CHOCOLATE BE DECAFFEINATED?
I WOULD LOVE TO HAVE A CUP OF HOT
CHOCOLATE IN THE EVENINGS, BUT MY
REACTION TO CAFFEINE IS TOO STRONG.**

—Marie Travers, Hemet, California

Try a cup of hot white chocolate, which has no caffeine. The flavor is as delectable as its cousin, but a bit more buttery, with a hint of vanilla, along with creamy undertones. The color is actually a pale ivory, and, like commercial milk chocolate, it contains milk.

White chocolate drinks vary the way other chocolate drinks do, but all chocolate comes from cocoa beans. When liquefied, the chocolate liquor (which is not alcoholic) contains two components: cocoa solids and cocoa butter. Only the solids contain caffeine. The more cocoa solids are in the final product, the darker the chocolate and the more caffeine it contains. White chocolate contains only cocoa butter, so it has no caffeine.

Yet another ingredient in chocolate is highly stimulating: theobromine, which is a more potent cardiac stimulant than caffeine. (Caffeine, by contrast, penetrates the blood-brain barrier more readily.) Cocoa solids have even more theobromine than caffeine, but white chocolate has neither.

Find solutions to Marilyn's puzzles and this week's Numbrix on the next page!

Numbrix®

Complete 1 to 81 so the numbers follow a horizontal or vertical path—no diagonals.

	77	78					58	53	
	76			61				52	
		81					15		
	36			25				2	
	35	28					8	1	

CLASSIC ASK MARILYN

THE MATH PROBLEM

OCTOBER 2, 1994

By inserting any of the four mathematical signs (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) between the digits 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9, can you make them equal 100?

All of the digits must remain in that order.

—Bobbie Ray Mazur,
Wellesley, Massachusetts

A BRAINTEASER FROM MARILYN

FEBRUARY 13, 1994

You have an aquarium with tropical fish, some of which are silver with blue stripes, while others are blue with silver stripes. One evening, you notice the cat staring at the water. Suddenly you notice that each silver fish with blue stripes has as many identically striped tankmates as oppositely striped ones, with each blue fish with silver stripes has only half as many identically striped tankmates as oppositely stripes ones. How can that be? And what is the lowest number of fish that must be in the tank?

SOLUTIONS

THE MATH PROBLEM

The answer is: There are hundreds of solutions to that problem, so instead of listing them all, let's make it a little more difficult by restricting ourselves to the plus and minus signs. In that case, there are still many solutions, but perhaps the simplest one is:

$$123 - 45 - 67 + 89 = 100$$

MARILYN'S BRAINTEASER

The answer is: **SEVEN**

There are four silver fish with blue stripes, and three blue fish with silver stripes. Each silver fish with blue stripes, then, has three identical and three opposite tankmates. And each blue fish with silver stripes has two identical and four opposite tankmates.



Numbrix®

December 4, 2022

71	70	69	68	67	66	57	56	55
72	77	78	63	64	65	58	53	54
73	76	79	62	61	60	59	52	51
74	75	80	45	46	47	48	49	50
39	40	81	44	17	16	15	14	13
38	41	42	43	18	19	10	11	12
37	36	27	26	25	20	9	2	3
34	35	28	29	24	21	8	1	4
33	32	31	30	23	22	7	6	5

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