



Gamepuzzles.com Newsletter, Christmas 2009

Warm greetings to all our friends and customers and supporters!



This is our Holiday circular/newsletter to those who have emailed us or have ordered from us and provided their email addresses. We never give out our mailing list. If you don't want to receive any more emails from us, please reply with REMOVE in place of the text of this message. If you received this message in DUPLICATE, please put DUPLICATE in the subject line.

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WEBSITE UPDATES

... Holiday shopping notes

The holiday season is upon us, with only a few weeks until Christmas. Every year we do our utmost to ship your orders to arrive in time for Christmas. Please read our special holiday messages:

- Our Christmas card with a heart-felt greeting to the world:
www.gamepuzzles.com/xmascard.htm
- Gift shopping made easy:
www.gamepuzzles.com/holiday.htm
- About shipping to anywhere in the world, costs and deadlines:
www.gamepuzzles.com/shipxmas.htm
- Gift-wrapping available; choose a style (snowflakes or penguins):
www.gamepuzzles.com/giftwrap.htm
- Gift certificates available, in multiples of \$25:
www.gamepuzzles.com/giftcertx.htm

Kadon games and puzzles are always much-appreciated gifts. Please browse through our website's well-filled product pages, with many new items added this year. There's something for every puzzle wizard and game lover on your list. With orders received by December 6 we'll include a small bonus gift not given before.

... New releases for 2009

- Hexdominoes www.gamepuzzles.com/tiling.htm#HxD

The 21 hexagon pairs and 6 singles in a big round tray will surprise you with their versatility of color themes and schemes, and the incredible beauty of their artistic patterns. This set is simply adorable. From easy color separations to heroic Latin arrays (no two of same color in the samerow in any direction), color matches, patches and symmetries, this set will please all ages. Developed by Kate Jones, Paulo Bouhid and Glenn Iba.

- Q-Bix www.gamepuzzles.com/tiling4.htm#QB

A masterful optical-illusion set of 15 pieces composed of 1, 2 and 3 hexagons joined, look like a field of cubes. Solve hundreds of pleasing figures, each a visual treat. Invented by Christian Freeling, with games by Kate Jones.

- Bowties www.gamepuzzles.com/edgmtch5.htm#Bow

Ten cross-shaped tiles have all-different bowtie-shaped color pairs. Match them in intricate ways to create dozens of beautiful designs. The symmetries will astonish you. Created by Kate Jones.

- ChooChooLoops www.gamepuzzles.com/esspoly3.htm#CCL

A new kind of polyform set-polybends-connects quarter arcs into 26 graceful curvy track segments that wind around 36 islands with tricky connections. Created by Kate Jones to capture playfully the theme of trains.

... Special 25th Anniversary editions

- Octiles www.gamepuzzles.com/abstract.htm#OC
- Colormaze www.gamepuzzles.com/abstrct1.htm#CF
- Sextillions www.gamepuzzles.com/polycub2.htm#SX
- Tiny Tans www.gamepuzzles.com/prpuzzl2.htm#TY
- Pyramid Puzzles www.gamepuzzles.com/hottest4.htm#PY

... 25-Year Retrospective

This year's 25-year retrospective covers 1984 and the products we introduced that year. See "1984: Some things old, some things new" – www.gamepuzzles.com/1984notes.htm – for historical notes and a special salute to Quantum, www.gamepuzzles.com/abstrct2.htm#QM.

... The GAPE Award

For year-end 2008, Kadon presented the Gamepuzzles Annual Pentomino Excellence award – www.gamepuzzles.com/kadon.htm#bestow – to Kenneth Blackledge for his beautiful letters of the alphabet for Ten-Yen: www.gamepuzzles.com/ten-alph.htm. His award was an inscribed panel with his initials formed of a full set of playable Ten-Yen pieces: www.gamepuzzles.com/gape08.htm - Congratulations again, Ken!

... The GOPALS Award

Occasionally Kadon makes a special award to a fellow game company for outstanding work: the Gamepuzzles Originality, Perseverance and Leadership Salute. In 2009, we chose Looney Labs to receive this salute for their 20 years of making Icehouse and all its creative offshoots: www.looneylabs.com

Looney Labs is a small, independent game company that has for two decades consistently created well-thought-out, ingenious, original, delightful, stylish, well-made, hip and fun-to-play games and built a strong community of fans. In today's world that is an achievement, and we salute them: Andy Looney, Kristin Looney, and Alison Looney. Their award is an original design including some pyramids and the number XX. www.gamepuzzles.com/gopals09.htm

... Other website additions

- Our Search index is a useful page for finding games by type or by special category, cross-referenced from our regular sections. Some unique items are listed only here, not shown elsewhere in our website. And you are invited to suggest other categories you'd like to see here. We've recently added some new items here: www.gamepuzzles.com/search.htm
- Infrastructure upgrade – We've done a lot of changing and enhancing in the website. Here's a sporting offer – a small gift to whoever is first to find and tell us of any mistakes we may have made or missed! There's a separate gift for each mistake found. Email to webmaster: <mailto:kadon@gamepuzzles.com?subject=BlooperBounty>

- What You Can Buy for \$25 Dollars – this playful "Chinese menu" page of 12 special items has just been revised. Choose by the numbers. It had started out as a specialty page for our 25th Anniversary and now has some surprising boons for the price-conscious. Do check this out. www.gamepuzzles.com/buyfor25.htm
- Our printable catalog has been overhauled and now has color images; it's printer-friendly as 24 standard pages, in three .pdf files. Very condensed descriptions and small illustrations make this just a useful portable reference, not a substitute for the detailed website gallery. You'll need Adobe Reader to view it. You can print it in color or gray. A printable order form is appended after page 24. www.gamepuzzles.com/catalog/catalog.htm
- See more stories and news here: www.gamepuzzles.com/newtopic.htm

... Our interactive features of the season:

- It's the season to try your hand at our very tricky memory game of matching little teddy bears in mixed-up combinations of colors: www.gamepuzzles.com/memory4/memory4.htm
- They are a little easier than the very confusing Christmas trees: www.gamepuzzles.com/Christmas/christmas.htm
- All our interactive, online-playable games and amusements are listed here, some with hidden links to make a game even of finding them: www.gamepuzzles.com/website.htm
www.gamepuzzles.com/website.htm#memory
www.gamepuzzles.com/website.htm#amuse
- Our gift to you, a long-secret link full of goodies and surprises: www.gamepuzzles.com/balloons.htm

... Our challenges still open to the World (win a prize):

- Arc Angles—form one closed matched loop of all 25 tiles, with the minimum enclosed area. www.gamepuzzles.com/pentuniv.htm#AA
- Ten Yen—find new congruent shapes with all 3 colors
www.gamepuzzles.com/polycub3.htm#Ten
- La Ora Stelo—solve longest series of trapezoids with polyores:
www.gamepuzzles.com/ferroul4.htm and Contest 2 with new figures:
www.gamepuzzles.com/los-contest2.htm
- The Octo Clock— arrange 8 numbers as a clock face to meet goals.
www.gamepuzzles.com/g8-clock.htm
- The Mini-Quiz series—we've published 7 so far, all still open. No one has fully solved Quiz No. 6. We are curious and curiouser...
www.gamepuzzles.com/quiz.htm
- The 25-Hole Challenge—fit thirteen Vee-21 tiles (V-trominoes) rigidly into their tray with no slipping or sliding...
www.gamepuzzles.com/25holes.htm

SPOTLIGHT - Jack Acly - Kadon's stalwart data jockey

We welcome Jack to the family. On February 1, 2009, while Kate was on the Florida tour, Kadon lost its incumbent bookkeeper with nary a moment's advance notice, and with boxes of data waiting to be processed. Jack heroically stepped in and brought our records up to date over several months, learning inch by inch to handle the various tentacles of income and outgo, who and what. We're very grateful, and besides, he's a great guy with wonderful warmth and humor. Here's more about him plus a nice picture:

www.gamepuzzles.com/helpers.htm#Jack

THE NEXT GENERATION

- Here are more pics of our youngest fan, sent in by his mom, one of our heartiest supporters: www.gamepuzzles.com/youngfan.htm and our youngest beta-tester: www.gamepuzzles.com/dan-choo.htm

IN THE MEDIA

... The Games 100

We're thrilled to report that Games Magazine's annual Buyer's Guide to Games, featuring their selections of the 100 best games, in the December 2009 issue has chosen our La Ora Stelo as the puzzle of the year for 2010:

www.gamepuzzles.com/pentuni2.htm#LOS

This unique and beautiful set invented by Jacques Ferroul is a first in recreational mathematics: a polyform set of golden triangles. It has a huge number of combinations and figures to solve, and more are being discovered all the time. Jacques offers a couple of contests for interesting new research.

... IPP28 Panel on Education

In August, at the International Puzzle Party in San Francisco, a panel on "Puzzles in Education" led by Stan Isaacs presented views by Bill Ritchie, Scott Kim, Tanya Thompson, Andy Liu and Kate Jones. Puzzles are excellent teaching tools, but it takes a lot of outreach work to persuade teachers and schools to invest in them. Not only the shortfall in budgets but the lack of experience and confidence by teachers has stood in the way of wider use of good puzzles, especially math-related ones, in classrooms. And even those that are found in classrooms are there not as part of the curriculum but only as busywork for the brighter students who finish their classwork early. Yet, as we've said frequently: bright minds deserve such puzzles; others need them.

Kudos to Bill Ritchie and his company, www.ThinkFun.com, for their years-long efforts to bring more puzzles into math education.

... Kate's Blogs

- <http://kates-takes.blogspot.com> has only a few entries but might be thought-provoking, anyway. The Halloween/election limericks are funnybut heavy. The climate-change essay on October 15, 2009, is not what you'd expect. Your comments are invited.
- www.livejournal.com/users/puzzlelady/ has a lot of questions, not many answers, and some good links. The climate-change essay shows up here, too. Your comments are invited.

... Kate in social media

- Facebook, www.facebook.com/puzzlelady
- Twitter, <http://twitter.com/gamepuzzlelady>
- LinkedIn, www.linkedin.com/in/puzzlelady
- Flickr, <http://www.flickr.com/photos/puzzlelady/>

ON THE ROAD

- IPP29 – San Francisco

The 29th International Puzzle Party was held in August 2009 in San Francisco. Dick and Kate drove cross-country and combined business with sightseeing of the many natural beauties of the great Southwest, with a stop-over for an art show in Boulder, CO, which meant hauling the whole booth rig 8000 miles. The travelogue is composed entirely of Twitter entries: www.gamepuzzles.com/ipptrip09.htm

- Boulder, CO

Enroute to San Francisco, we set up the booth in a rented tent and relished the mountain scenery in the background at Howard Alan's very fine 2nd Annual Boulder Festival of the Arts on 29th Street. Here is a photo of our display:
www.gamepuzzles.com/ipptrip09.htm#CO

- 26th season at the Maryland Renaissance Festival, Fall 2009

Our arcade-style pavilion, Ye Olde Gamery, is a favorite attraction at the Maryland Renaissance Festival. In 2009 there were some mighty muddy weekends, but the fans showed up anyway.

Our noble crew who entertained the thousands of visitors each day, in regal garb, deserve an extra "huzzah!" for their stalwart performances throughout the 9 weekends. Our gratitude and appreciation go to our hard-working office manager, Josiane Smith, for assuring that our stock boxes were always resupplied; and to our Gamery regulars: the Lady Eileen Shaivitz, and m'Lords Thomas Atkinson, Daniel Austin, Arthur Blumberg, Richard Grainger, and Steven Joel Zeve. A hearty cheer for our vivacious Goose mistress, Rolinda Collinson, who attracted even the King and the royal court for several games full of gusto in front of our pavilion. Picture here:

www.gamepuzzles.com/renfest.htm#king

And special kudos to these wonderful relief helpers on certain days: Eric Bare, Seth Bonder, and Dick Jones. Great job, guys!

Our game master, "Sir" Richard Grainger, has updated his challenge game stats: since 1991, tracking the scores of 16 seasons, he has played a total of 10,628 games of Squint and won 8746 of them. He's batting .823. Players who best him win a wooden token of some value, but most are never redeemed. Some of these little disks of wood end up in trophy cases...

More stories and pictures here: www.gamepuzzles.com/renfest.htm

- TEDxMidAtlantic, a unique conference of fascinating people, at Maryland Institute College of Art's Falvey Hall, Baltimore, November 5, 2009:

Kate had one of the biggest thrills that an inquiring mind can have. Invited to attend this independent TED event, she had the very great pleasure of seeing Will Noel in person talking about his continuing work of decoding and translating the Archimedes palimpsest housed at the Walters Art Gallery. That's the famous manuscript that describes Archimedes' Square that Kadon makes –

www.gamepuzzles.com/histfun.htm#AS –and Will even showed a graph of this oldest puzzle in the world and its 536 solutions. See his talk online:

<http://tedxmidatlantic.com/live/#WillNoel>

- Art Shows

From mid-January through April, Kate appears in art shows throughout Florida. The summer months she travels to the Midwest. Confirmed upcoming show dates for 2009 and 2010 are posted on our calendar page. New ones are added as they are confirmed: www.gamepuzzles.com/showlist.htm

If you're in the area, do stop by and say hello.

CONNECTING

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We take all 4 major cards—American Express, Discover/Novus, Visa, Mastercard – and we accept PayPal. We also honor checks, money orders, bank transfers, and occasionally cash. Orders are gladly received online, by mail, school purchase orders, phone, and in person at shows. See all our contact information here:

<http://www.gamepuzzles.com/contact.htm>

Please let us know when your email address changes, and keep us on your Safe Senders list. We'll never spam you nor give out your private information.

OUR HOLIDAY MESSAGE

We still can't improve on how we have said it before, so we send these words of wishes for the holidays once again...

"Thanks for your continuing support, and best wishes to all of you from all of us at Kadon! By any name that you celebrate these days, let there be a spirit of love and kinship, and the light of understanding.

"In times of turmoil, let us hold fast to truth and honor, to our love of life and liberty, that someday there will be "Peace on Earth" among all of us who share this planet, so small and fragile and beautiful, and unique in all the vastness of Space and Time.

"Intelligent life, infinite possibilities, infinitely precious... keep that flame alive."

You can see this message with a nice picture of our Christmas tree on our website. The tree was hand-built from plywood, assembles like a puzzle, and features live candles during our traditional Christmas Eve ceremony. Each candle embraces a wish and illuminates a hope. At the very top is a crimson rose, symbolizing love.

<http://www.gamepuzzles.com/xmascard.htm>

-- Kate Jones