

North Carolina lawmakers push for more partisan school board elections; labels may limit unaffiliated candidates

Some North Carolina school board meetings have devolved by bit, “North Carolina lawmakers have nearly tripled the number of partisan school boards across the state over the last decade — often over the objections of school board members themselves,” reports Kyle Ingram of The Herald Sun in Durham. “It’s a move some board members say is turning their school system from a hyperlocal, traditionally apolitical governing board into a contentious microcosm of national political debates.” Republicans in several other states are arguing for partisan school-board elections.

Ingram uses Craven County as an example where partisan labels were introduced in 2022. Commenting on board meetings since the partisan change, Carr Ipock, a registered Democrat who has served on the school board for over 30 years, told Ingram, “There was more focus on national agenda items than there was on ‘What can we do to make the school system better?’” Ingram adds, “Republican legislators argue that partisan elections help voters make more informed decisions by giving them an idea of a candidates’ philosophy via their party identification.”

Craven County, North Carolina (Wikipedia map) In North Carolina, “More than 1 in 3 school boards now elect their members in partisan elections — 10 years ago, it was 1 in 10. . . . In the 2022 midterms, nearly 3 in 4 partisan school boards elected more Republicans than Democrats,” Ingram reports. Chris Cooper, a political scientist at Western Carolina University, told Ingram, “In the short run, it makes it more likely that conservative policies will carry the day in school boards. . . . In the long run, it builds a farm team of Republicans who might one day want to run for higher office.” Partisan boards make it harder for unaffiliated candidates to run and win, Ingram reports. Blair Craven, chair of the Henderson County Board of Education, has served as an unaffiliated member of the board since his first election in 2016. Craven told Ingram, “In my seven years of being on the school board, I’ve never made a decision that I believe is Republican

Family & Marriage

A Happy Marriage

“Somewhere along the way, we must learn that there is nothing greater than to do something for others.” – Martin Luther King Jr.

“The Lord is near to the broken-hearted and saves the crushed in spirit.” – Bible (Psalm 34:18)

John and Jane had been married for several years. They had been faithful to each other and had never talked about divorce, or even separation, but they both were unhappy. They decided to talk to some close friends of theirs, who had been married for a long time and clearly enjoyed being together. This trusted couple was able to give them a different perspective and help them along the road to happiness together.

Even though we marry the love of our life and are committed to our marriage, we all face unhappiness from time to time. Sylvia Smith and Angela Welch, marriage and family consultants, offer the following advice to help unhappy marriages address their issues.

First, it is important to understand that marriage is between two imperfect people. We all make mistakes and must recognize that we need to seek forgiveness as well as to forgive. Men in particular have a difficult time with forgiveness. It seems to go counter to our macho image. But the real man is one who is willing to recognize his mistakes and take the necessary actions.

As we have noted here many times, communication is the key to a happy marriage. The silent treatment never works. Our spouse cannot read our mind. The ability to share our feelings of

hurt or unhappiness and to discuss them in a calm, honest, and trusting fashion is essential.

Functioning as a team is also vital. One-way communication is not adequate. We both must be willing to talk and to work things through together. This must happen not just when we have concerns to discuss. We must build a culture of constant mutual communication. Communication is typically more difficult for the husband than for the wife. Women usually want much more detail than men provide. As we have noted here many times in the past, men like to conquer and women like to connect. Connecting takes more communication than does conquering. Even though the Bible makes it clear that the husband is responsible for the final decision, it is also clear that input from the wife is necessary.

If communication and thinking together are going to work we must look for ways for that connection to occur. It does not just happen. It is very easy to get into a rut (we men do that quite well). Men tend to take things, including their wife, for granted. That’s not a good idea. Even after we are married, we should never stop “dating.” Although we think we know our spouse quite well, they are a unique person, different from us. I know personally it makes me upset when someone acts like they have me figured out and therefore can take me for granted.

Another key element to a happy marriage is to avoid playing the blame game. Our unhappy relationship is not all our spouse’s fault. Marriage is a joint endeavor. The longer we are married, the more we get to know our spouse,

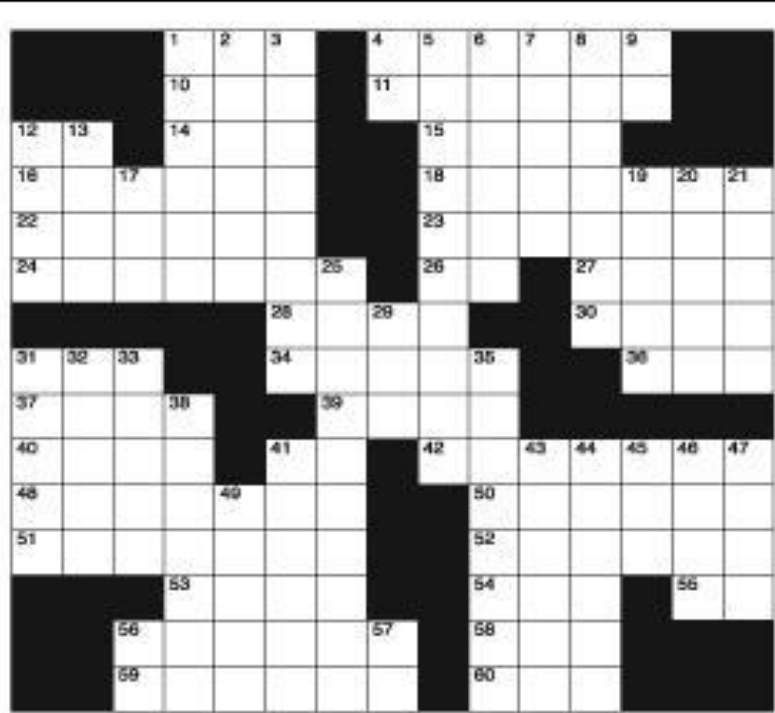


Roger Rollins, Family and Marriage Coalition

which includes faults we didn’t know were there. Often these faults are not big deals; they are just irritants. We either need to get over it and move on, or as noted above take the time to discuss it with our spouse, . . . and then move on. Frequently, faults we see in our spouse may be related to or triggered by our own character weaknesses.

Rather than focusing on weaknesses in our spouse, our marriage would be strengthened if we focused on their positive qualities. Maybe he isn’t much of a talker, or she talks too much. But he does keep me informed and listens to me, and she always has a positive attitude. “Don’t let negativity overtake what was once a wonderful marriage. Instead, focus on the positives and choose something to be thankful for every day.”

The Family & Marriage Coalition of Aiken, Inc. (FAMCO) was created to provide resources for you to succeed in your marriage and families. Roger Rollins, Executive Director, FAMCO, 803-640-4689, rogerrollins@gmail.com, http://www.aikenfamco.com. Let us know how we can help.

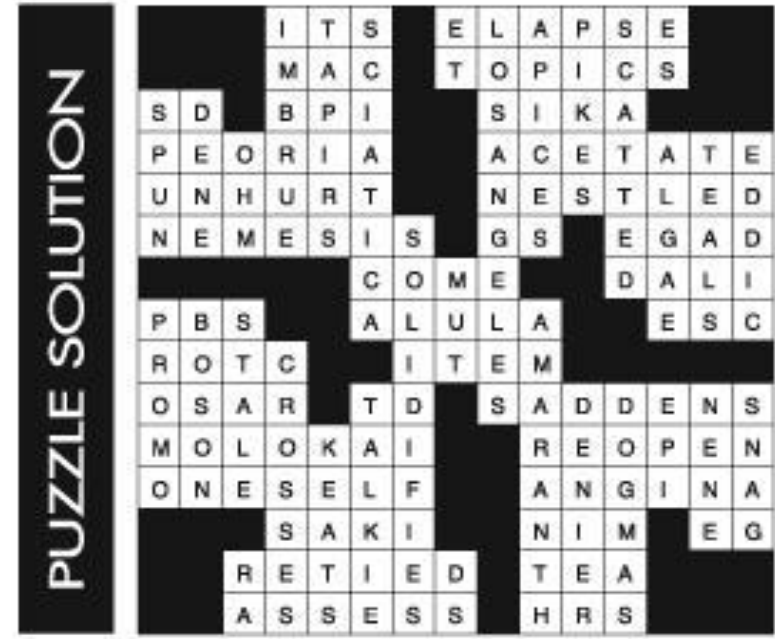


CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Belonging to a thing
- 4. Pass or go by
- 10. Partner to cheese
- 11. Subjects
- 12. U.S. State (abbr.)
- 14. Bits per inch
- 15. Forest-dwelling deer
- 16. Illinois city
- 18. A salt or ester of acetic acid
- 22. Wholly unharmed
- 23. Cuddled
- 24. Bane
- 26. Global investment bank (abbr.)
- 27. Oh my gosh!
- 28. Arrive
- 30. Famed Spanish artist
- 31. Home of “Frontline”
- 34. Group of quill feathers
- 36. Keyboard key
- 37. Army training group
- 39. Detail
- 40. Pole with flat blade
- 41. Football play
- 42. Makes unhappy
- 48. Island in Hawaii
- 50. Back in business
- 51. Of an individual
- 52. Painful chest condition
- 53. Tropical American monkey
- 54. Matchstick game
- 55. For instance
- 56. Even again
- 58. Popular beverage
- 59. Evaluate
- 60. Time units (abbr.)

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Stain one’s hands
- 2. Nocturnal hoofed animals
- 3. Back condition
- 4. Popular movie alien
- 5. City of Angels
- 6. Peaks
- 7. Infantry weapons
- 8. Left
- 9. Atomic #99
- 12. Told a good yarn
- 13. Vale
- 17. Resistance unit
- 19. Aquatic plant
- 20. Bluish greens
- 21. About some Norse poems
- 25. Reinforces
- 29. Egyptian mythological goddess
- 31. Supportive material
- 32. Subatomic particle
- 33. Expired bread
- 35. Cereal grain
- 38. Goes against
- 41. Walkie —
- 43. One who does not accept
- 44. Beliefs
- 45. Indicates near
- 46. Brazilian NBA star
- 47. Grab quickly
- 49. Romantic poet
- 56. College dorm worker
- 57. Set of data



SUDOKU

6	4							
								7
9				8	3		1	5
4					9		6	
				1				
		9		2			7	
				4	5			
								8
		7	3		6	2		

Level: Intermediate

Here’s How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

4	1	2	4	2	6	9	3	8
8	5	7	1	9	5	8	6	3
9	6	1	8	4	2	7	5	6
7	4	5	8	6	2	9	3	1
3	8	6	9	1	4	5	7	2
2	7	1	6	3	7	9	4	8
6	5	3	9	6	2	4	8	7
8	4	8	7	2	4	8	5	6
3	2	9	5	7	3	2	9	6

ANSWER: