

Since 1993



The Bowfin Inquirer



August 2025

Pizza/Potluck Block Party!

Saturday, September 6th

12 Noon – 2 PM

344 Bowfin St Backyard

Welcome to another (almost annual, since 1994) Bowfin Block Party! We hope many of you can come to meet your neighbors while partaking of yummy Round Table pizzas, as well as neighbors' favorite dishes, good conversation and fun.

Please RSVP to us if you'll be able to attend – and what dish(es) you'd like to share with the neighbors! You can **Email** us at editor@bowfininquirer.com with the subject heading "Block Party," **phone** us at 650 572 9153, or **drop by** 344 to let us know.



Aaron's Question Column



An assortment of titles by Charles Dickens

Question: A friend recently sent a link to this excellent site of illustrations used in Charles Dickens' novels:

<https://www.charlesdickensillustration.org/>

A Web search found quite a few pieces that strongly criticize his works for a variety of reasons.

Is Dickens still held in high esteem for his works? That is, are people of YOUR generation still reading and enjoying them?
-- Jerry

Aaron's Answer (A'sA): As this is a question more about youth culture than a fact or bit of history, I will write less formally and more opinionatedly than I normally do. Very few people of my generation read Dickens on their own, so few do that I would guess a large (at least large enough to be mentioned) portion of young people today couldn't name who he is, much less identify a single one of his works. Outside of classrooms, he rarely comes up, and when he does, it's often through cultural references, such as comparing people to "Scrooge" from A Christmas Carol, rather than through actually sitting down with the novels themselves.

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Solution to Last Month's Quiz

SPHERES FROM SQUARES

1. VENUS
2. JUPITER
3. EARTH
4. NEPTUNE
5. MERCURY
6. SATURN
7. MARS
8. URANUS

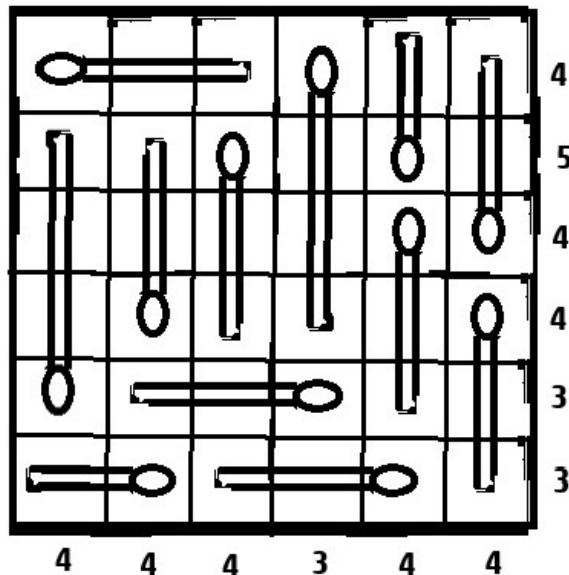
- A ninth world, had there been an O, was PLUTO

This Month's Quiz

MATCH PLAY

(from The Mensa Puzzle Calendar)

This grid contains unburnt matches of different sizes. You may burn any amount of each match, or leave the match unburnt. You "burn" a match by shading segments from the head (rounded end) to the tail, without skipping segments. The numbers outside the grid indicate the number of burnt segments in the corresponding row or column. Can you shade in the burnt segments to "match" the numbers?



Target Date for Next Month's Contributions:

September 15, 2025

Please reach us with your articles, news, photos, CHILDREN'S ARTWORK or ideas at

344 Bowfin, (650 572-9153) or email us at our email EDITOR@BOWFININQUIRER.COM or by

adding a NOTE on our website: BOWFININQUIRER.COM



Artwork by Meera K.



Artwork by Ronav K.

Aaron's Answers *continued from pg 1*

That said, English teachers still assign Dickens, and a handful of devoted literature students do read him seriously. For them, he's framed as a classic, both for his style and for the way he captured Victorian society. But this feels more like part of a curriculum than a living cultural presence. He is encountered in an academic context, not through youth choice or trend. Even when assigned, most refuse to engage with his works, and would rather use a tool such as SparkNotes.

This gap speaks to greater patterns in youth culture today. Attention is drawn toward shorter, faster, and more visual forms of media such as TikTok, YouTube, streaming shows, whereas Dickens requires long engagement and patience. His works remain important historically, but they don't align with the dominant habits of modern youth, where immediacy and accessibility often outweigh the depth that comes from nineteenth-century novels.

For that matter, I would say (to a lesser extent than Dickens) that the written word as a whole has fallen out of fashion among modern youth, replaced with, again, visually-engaging short-form content.

PJCC Cuts Ribbon on New Play Area

"Play Scape" - Aug 15, 2025



Now Appearing at Hillbarn Theatre



Eve and I ushered at the preview show, and we found it very funny (the laugh-out-loud kind!) and touching. The small cast of five includes two Actors' Equity members who do great jobs in three distinct roles. Though it's a comedy from the 1960's and some of its humor can seem a bit dated, it is an entertaining show that we think many of our neighbors might enjoy, too! Playing through September 14th. -- Jerry

An Autumn "To-Do" List for Homeowners courtesy of realtor, Lori Langmack

- ☐ Change HVAC air filter
- ☐ Examine and test the sump pump
- ☐ Seed the lawn (best time for strong grass in Spring)
- ☐ Inspect exterior for rodent or pest entry (tiny holes!)
- ☐ Prune tree limbs 6 feet from roof areas

