

## Old Media Meets New Media in Democrats' Debate

**A** talking snowman from Minnesota asked about global warming. A Virginia man played guitar and sang a question about high taxes.

Video questions submitted on **YouTube** shook up a recent Democratic debate. It was the first debate where candidates took questions from the public on video.

A moderator usually asks the questions. But for this debate, most of the questions came from young people. The questions were blunt, earnest, and sometimes odd.

News network CNN and the website YouTube co-hosted the debate. The event included eight presidential candidates from the Democratic Party.

About 3,000 video questions were posted on YouTube. CNN chose several for the TV debate.

Some questions were **moving**. Workers were shown at a refugee camp in Darfur. They asked candidates what they would do to help end the crisis.

A cancer patient asked about health care. She took off a wig to show her bald head.

Other questions were about global issues. Parents with children in Iraq asked about



**YOUTUBE ELECTION:** In 2004, YouTube and other video-sharing sites didn't exist. Now, online videos are playing a big role in the 2008 presidential race. Democratic candidates recently took questions from the public on video. News network CNN and YouTube hosted the event. Above are a few of the people who sent questions for the candidates. They asked about issues such as health care, gay marriage, and the war in Iraq.

the war. Another voter asked if candidates would talk to leaders of terrorist nations.

"Tonight is really something

of an experiment," said Anderson Cooper of CNN. Cooper was the moderator.

"The candidates on this stage

don't know how it's going to work."

So, how did it work? Some experts liked the format.

Michael Silberman works for an Internet company.

"It's a win for democracy," he said. "Average Americans ... now have the opportunity to ask direct questions of candidates."

Kiki McLean works for the Democrats. She said the questions made candidates speak "in real language." They often stick to scripts when they answer questions from a moderator.

Scripts were still a part of the event. Candidates got a chance to show their own videos.

John Edwards and Chris Dodd made fun of their own hair. Hillary Clinton told voters that "sometimes the best man for the job is a woman."

The format did not represent all people. Voters asking questions were good with technology. They owned computers.

But the Internet is already part of the political process. Candidates use sites like YouTube and MySpace to send voters to their websites.

The Internet might also be a part of future debates. CNN and YouTube will hold an event for Republican candidates in September.

## Wage Increase Will Help Poorest Workers

The lowest paid workers have a little more to spend.

Congress has raised the **minimum** wage. It was \$5.15 an hour. It is now \$5.85.

Workers got the raise in July. The last one was 10 years ago.

Next summer, the rate will go up another 70 cents. In 2009, it will go up 70 cents again. Then the rate will be set at \$7.25 an hour.

A full-time worker will make about \$15,000 a year.

Most states already pay more.

California pays \$7.50. That will go up to \$8.00 in January.

Illinois also pays \$7.50. It will be \$8.25 in three years.

Those states have big cities. The cost of living is high. Companies pay more to get workers.

Washington, D.C., workers also get more. Dishwashers get \$8.05. Lifeguards earn \$7.98.

Fewer than 20 states use the federal rate. Many are rural. They include Utah and Kentucky. Texas also is on the list.

About 1.7 million people got the lowest rate last year. Low-wage workers are usually young women. They are often black or Hispanic.

The raise may also help other workers. When the lowest wage goes up, others may get more, too.

Some experts do not like the law. They say it will not cut poverty. Some businesses may not hire new workers.

Others say they already pay more to get the best workers.

People who make the lowest wage are grateful.

Irene Cole is single. She has two children. She lives in Atlanta, Georgia. The state pays the federal lowest wage.

"From \$5.15 to \$5.85 ... That's a big raise. And we do thank you," she said.

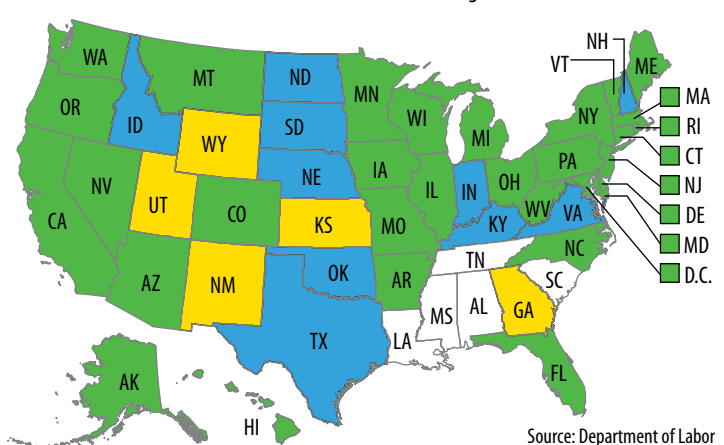
## Minimum Wage Laws in the U.S.

As of July 24, 2007

The federal minimum wage rose by 70 cents recently. It is now \$5.85 an hour. Thirty states and the District of Columbia already have minimum wages higher than the federal. Only 20 states will be affected by the wage increase.

### Basic Minimum Wage per Hour

- Less than \$5.85
- More than \$5.85
- \$5.85
- No state minimum wage law



Source: Department of Labor

**TRY, TRY AGAIN:**

# First Town Sold on eBay Is Back Up for Sale

The first town ever auctioned on the website eBay is up for sale—again. The town of Bridgeville, California, has already sold twice online. Sellers hope to find a permanent owner this time around.

Bridgeville is a tiny town in northern California. It is located along a river, in a pretty area. But the town itself is run-down. Only about 30 people live in Bridgeville. Most buildings need repairs.

Five years ago, the town made history when it went up for sale on eBay.

## Sold! To the Highest Bidder!

eBay holds online auctions. An auction (AWK-shun) is a type of sale in which people offer to buy an item at a certain price. Each offer is known as a bid. An item is sold to the person who makes the highest bid.

The price of an item rises with each new bid. The trick is to bid the most but still pay a low price for the item. The highest bidder promises to pay the offered price for the item.

## A Hard Sell

Bridgeville sold during its first auction in 2002. But the highest bidder backed out of the deal. So California banker Bruce Krall bought the town for \$700,000.

In 2006, Krall put Bridgeville back up for auction on eBay. He said he couldn't afford to keep fixing up the town. But he was able to sell it for much more than what he paid.

In August 2006, 25-year-old Daniel La Paille bought Bridgeville for \$1.25 million.

## A Shocking Event

La Paille lived in Los Angeles. He worked in the entertainment field. He also attended college.

After the sale, Bridgeville's future looked bright. La Paille brought in work crews to repair many of the town's homes. He started building a park.

But in November, La Paille killed himself. People in Bridgeville were shocked and saddened by his death. Without him, the repairs in town stopped. So did the building projects.

## A Proud Past

Bridgeville boasts some links to early American history. The town used to be a stop on the Pony Express.

The Pony Express was a short-lived mail service that lasted from 1860 to 1861. Mail carriers on horseback would race along a 1,966-mile trail that stretched from Missouri to California.

Each carrier would ride at a fast speed for 10 to 15 miles. Then he would hand off the mail to another rider. The Pony Express ran day and night. It greatly cut down on the time it took for mail to cross the country.

## An Uncertain Future

Today, Bridgeville includes some houses, a post office, and a café. Rose Valentine lives just outside town. She says it's in pretty bad shape.

"(Bridgeville) is kind of looking pretty shabby again. It's pretty sad," Valentine said.

The town is not listed on eBay this time. A real estate agent is handling the sale. The town is listed for \$1.3 million.

**A SIGN on Highway 36 marks the entrance to Bridgeville, California. The town is for sale for the third time in five years.**



**A MAN smashes up a hotel room in Madrid. The hotel invited stressed-out people to wreck rooms that will be remodeled.**

## Stressed-Out Guests Invited to Smash Up Hotel

You hear about it on the news from time to time: a movie star or rock star trashed a fancy hotel room. But how often do you hear of a hotel asking people to destroy their rooms?

That's what the NH Hoteles hotel chain in Spain did this summer. The chain wanted to remodel one of its Madrid hotels. Instead of hiring a company to wreck the NH Alcalá Hotel's insides, owners had a different idea. Why not offer some stressed-out people the chance to let out a little of their stress?

## Fight or Flight

Stress is a feeling of great strain. It can affect both the body and mind. It can also affect how a person acts. People under stress may feel angry, scared, tired, sad, confused, or frustrated, among other things.

Sometimes stress can become severe. It can cause a **physical** response. Such a response gets the body ready to deal with real, or with what seems to be real, danger. The heart races, hands get cold and sweaty, and muscles tense. The body gets ready to run away or to fight something.

"Who hasn't dreamed, in the middle of a stress attack, of breaking everything around them?" read a statement from NH Hoteles.

## Using Stress to Get Press

NH owns 335 hotels in Europe, South America, and Africa. The chain hoped to create some publicity with its smashing idea.

## A Smashing Success

A team of **psychologists** chose 30 "highly stressed-out people" for the job.

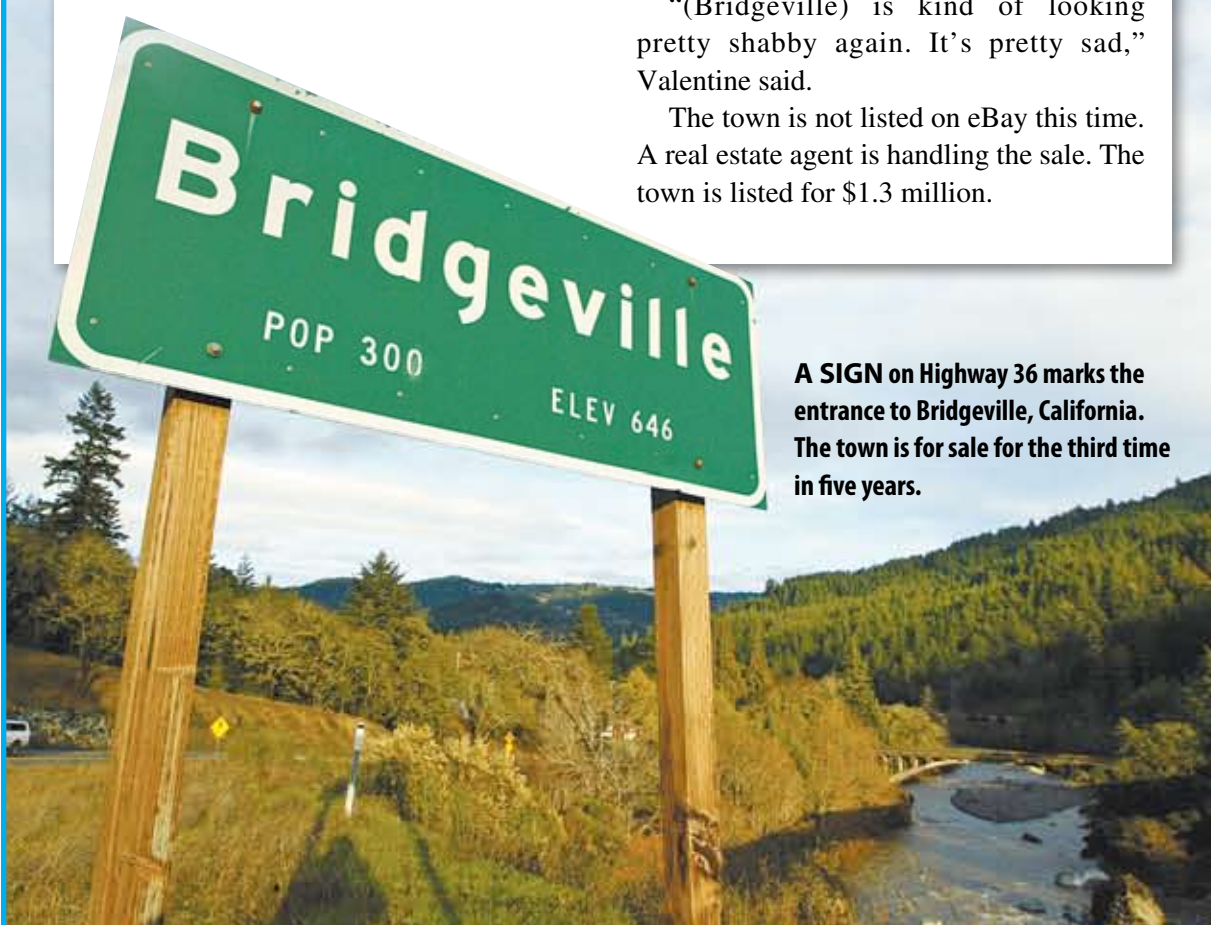
Members of the one-of-a-kind wrecking crew wore safety gear to protect them during their rampage. They put on dust masks, eye shields, helmets, and gloves. Then they went wild.

They swung huge hammers into TV sets and broke down bedroom walls. They tossed beds and desks around wildly. They left the hotel a total wreck. But that was the whole idea.

Psychologist Laura Garcia Agustin said such a smash-up would help relieve stress. The activity would trigger the brain to release pain-relieving endorphins (en-DOR-finz). Endorphins are chemicals that ease pain and create a feeling of well-being.

## Not a Total Mess After All

In September, the wrecking crew will be invited back to the Alcalá hotel. At that time, they will be able to see inside the new and improved hotel. Hopefully some of the crew members will feel like less of a wreck inside as well.



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# COMPUTER MODEL OF Ancient Rome OFFERS TRIP TO THE PAST

What would you do if you could travel back in time to **ancient Rome**? You could visit the Colosseum (kahl-uh-SEE-uhm), an arena where armed men battled wild beasts. You could study the paintings on temple walls. You could enter buildings that have long since crumbled to ruins.

Without a time machine, you may have to rely on a computer.

## Visiting the Past

A group of scientists have come up with a way to view ancient Rome. The team created a computer-based model of the city, as it appeared in the past. The team said the project is the largest and most complete copy of a historic city ever created.

The computer program shows Rome, Italy, as it looked in A.D. 320. The images of the city are in 3-D. That means they do not look flat. 3-D scenes appear to have depth. They look more solid and real than flat images. That's why the city is called a virtual (VUR-choo-uhl) city. Something that is virtual seems to be real, but it isn't.

## Real Rome vs. Virtual Rome

Ancient Rome was the capital of the Roman Empire. It once ruled large parts of Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. Ancient Romans produced texts, works of art, and buildings that people still study and admire today.

Virtual Rome lets people explore the ancient city as if they were really there. Users can even see things that ancient Romans could not.

For example, users can see the tunnels where lions were kept underneath the Colosseum. Or, they can view carvings on the tops of temples and arches.

## Not Built in a Day

Virtual Rome took 10 years and \$2 million to build. Bernard Frischer, from the University of Virginia, led the project.

Frischer worked with experts from Virginia, California, Italy, Germany, and Britain. The group included computer experts, **archaeologists**, and architects.

Virtual Rome shows the city at the peak of its power in 320. At that time, about 1 million people lived in the busy, lively city.

Frischer's team "rebuilt" almost the entire city. They used high-tech scans of modern Rome and research about the ancient city. The team used the same computer programs that modern architects use to plan building sites. That helped them create precise models for the screen.

## Too Good to Be True

Virtual Rome has nearly 7,000 buildings. It details the insides of about 30 buildings. Among other places, viewers can look inside the Senate and the Colosseum.

The buildings and statues in virtual Rome look as they did before modern pollution dirtied them. Crumbled buildings and temples stand restored in the virtual city.

## The Road to Knowledge

The rebuilt city can be used in a number of ways. Scientists can run tests to learn how many people could fit in certain buildings. Scholars can create a resource for research. Students can learn history in a new, exciting way.

"This is the first step in the creation of a virtual time machine, which our children and grandchildren will use to study the history of Rome and many other great cities around the world," said Frischer.

Virtual Rome will be updated whenever experts make a new discovery.

Currently, anyone can visit the city at <http://www.romereborn.virginia.edu>. Users can take video tours and look at photos of certain parts of the city. Experts are still researching an online version that would allow users to explore the city themselves.



**SCIENTISTS** have created a computer-based model of ancient Rome. Many of the city's 7,000 buildings can be seen above. Chariot races were held at Circus Maximus (left).

## THE COLOSSEUM

(at left in photo) hosted sporting and entertainment events. At right is the Arch of Constantine. It was made to celebrate Emperor Constantine's victory in battle.



**IN THE** foreground is the Ludus Magnus, where gladiators trained. Gladiators fought animals in the Colosseum as sport. An underground tunnel linked the Ludus Magnus with the Colosseum.

**THE BASILICA** of Maxentius was built around A.D. 310. It was used as a courthouse and meeting hall. It had a concrete roof. Most basilicas at the time had wooden roofs.



Photo credits: Bernard D. Frischer, University of Virginia, 2007.

## Women Should Run with the Cows, Spanish Group Says



The running of the bulls happens every year. It is in Pamplona (pahm-PLOH-nah), Spain. Bulls (male cattle) run through the city streets. People race ahead of the bulls. They try to avoid the bulls' horns and hooves.

Some people think the run is a test of speed and courage. Most of the runners are men.

But a group of Spanish women put out a **challenge** this year. They said that cows (female cattle) should be allowed to run.

The women put a note on a student website. The title of the note was "Cows Want to Run."

The note said that women could run with cows. The idea was a joke. Cows don't have horns. They are not dangerous.

But that doesn't mean females don't want to race, the note said.

"Cows, like bulls, have four legs too, and [want] to run," it said.

Cow runs would make the festival better, the note said. They would offer "total equality between ... men and women."

Many people sent messages in favor of cow runs.

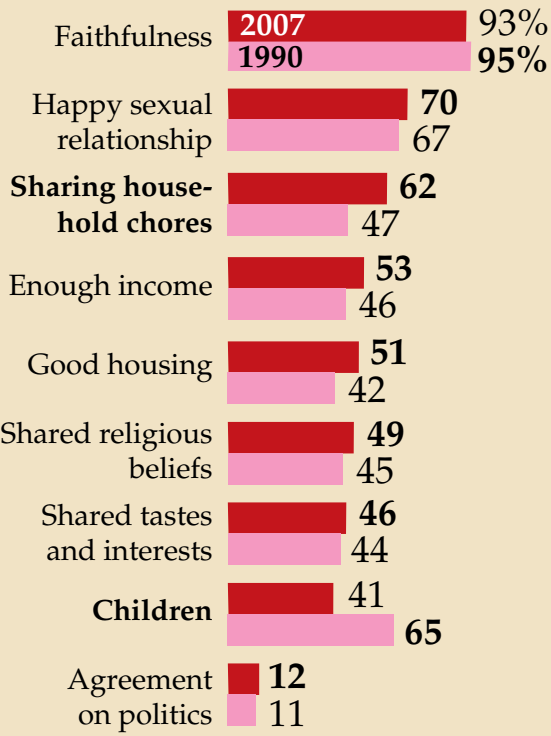
The runs occur during the San Fermin festival in Pamplona. The events begin early in the morning. They often follow all-night street parties.

At 8 a.m., six bulls charge into the streets. They race along an 875-yard path. The race goes from a holding pen to the city bullring. Runs are held each morning for eight days. Sometimes people are hurt or killed. Since 1924, 13 people have died during the running of the bulls.

# Kids Don't Make the Marriage, Survey Finds

## Marriage Views

Fewer Americans see children as key to a good marriage. Today more people think sharing household chores will help their marriage last than having children will.



SOURCES: Pew Research Center, AP, 2007

**F**ew Americans think children are the key to a happy marriage. Many Americans think sharing chores is more likely to help their marriage last than having children will.

### The Happy Couples

In July, the Pew Research Center released a survey on marriage and parenting. Researchers asked 2,020 adults to rank the keys to a good marriage.

Subjects had to rate nine issues in order of importance. Some of the issues were about income, faithfulness, household work, and children.

The study results surprised researchers. Children ranked eighth out of nine. That was nearly last place.

### Children or Chores?

In a 1990 survey, children ranked third among the same nine issues. Nearly 65 percent of adults said children were “very important” to a good marriage. By 2007, only 41 percent of adults agreed. The Pew survey showed a drop of 24 percent in 17 years.

In 2007, children ranked as much less important than good housing, enough income, sharing chores,

and faithfulness. In fact, 62 percent of adults listed sharing chores as key to a happy marriage in the 2007 poll. That’s compared to 47 percent in 1990.

### Married—With Children?

The study results didn’t suggest that parents love their children any less than in the past. Eighty-five percent of parents listed their children as the greatest source of joy in their lives.

The results did suggest that adults think of marriage and parenthood as separate issues.

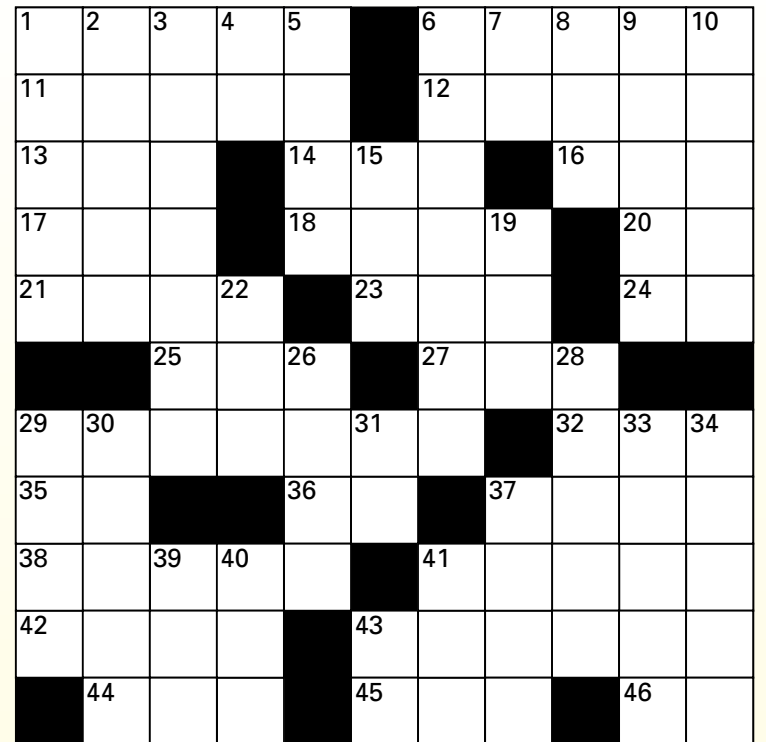
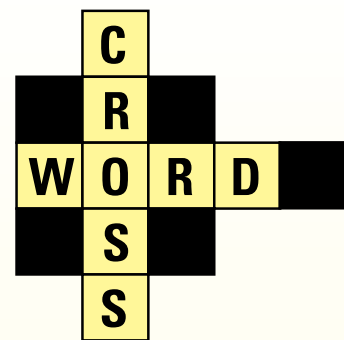
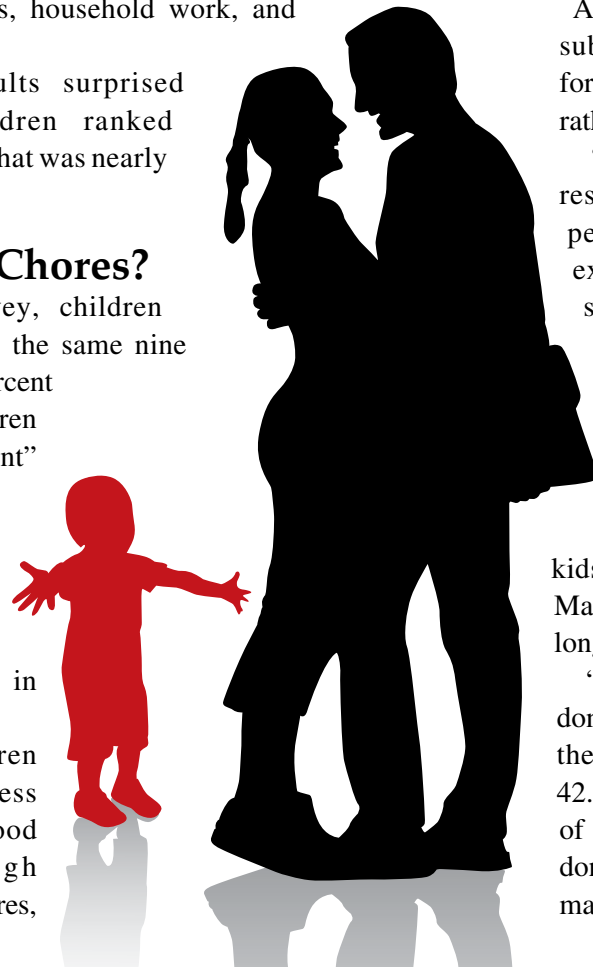
At a rate of nearly 3 to 1, subjects said marriage was for the happiness of both adults rather than raising children.

“Marriage today, like the rest of our lives, is about personal satisfaction,” one expert said. “[We] think we should leave [relationships] if they become unsatisfying.”

### Making a Marriage Last

The results suggest that adults don’t think having kids holds marriages together. Marriage and parenthood are no longer linked in their minds.

“When I think of marriage, I don’t think of children ... I have them,” said Sarah Vassiliou, 42. “But with marriage, I think of a husband and a wife, and I don’t think it’s the children that make that work.”



#### ACROSS

1. Disney deer
6. Offspring of a horse and donkey
11. Vote into office
12. Not together
13. Had a snack
14. Against
16. For
17. Ready, \_\_\_\_, go
18. Chase animals for food
20. Sink \_\_\_\_ swim
21. Stumble
23. Ball holder in golf
24. Prefix in “refill”
25. Small pinch or bite
27. Ewe’s mate
29. Thick glasses to protect the eyes
32. Word on a light switch
35. Quick \_\_\_\_ a wink
36. Tool for chopping wood
37. Mix
38. Frightening
41. Beach area
42. Book part
43. Of \_\_\_\_
44. Fishing pole
45. Tiny insect
46. Football score, for short

#### DOWN

1. Wild animal
2. Change
3. Gathering of a club or business
4. Time before A.D.
5. What you scratch
6. Proper ways of behaving, as at the table
7. Higher
8. One trip around a racetrack
9. Mistake
10. Shop
15. Three strikes
19. Iced or hot drink
22. Hog
26. Take part in a game
28. Engine
29. Show surprise
30. Grouch on “Sesame Street”
31. Prefix that means “former”
33. At the head of the line
34. Let out of jail
37. Close
39. In the past
40. Meat or wine color
41. Male child
43. San Francisco’s state, for short

#### Last Week’s Puzzle



Crossword puzzle answers are also available at [www.newreaderspress.com](http://www.newreaderspress.com).

### off the mark.com by Mark Parisi

