Welcome to my birthday party. I thought it might be fun to share a “mini-ganza”.

**This is intended to be a social “mixer” activity:** I encourage you to form small teams with a mix of experienced puzzlers and novices. Of course, you’re welcome to ignore these puzzles during the party and solve them at home later if you’d prefer.

An “extravaganza” is a set of puzzles where individual puzzles yield answer words which, in turn, are used as “inputs” to a meta-puzzle. Often there are multiple rounds, and sometimes (as at the MIT Mystery Hunt) the meta-puzzles themselves yield solutions that are needed as inputs to a meta-meta puzzle. A “mini-ganza” is a small extravaganza with a single round.

For those who have not participated in a ’ganza before, here are some common tropes:

**Acrostics:** A puzzle might lead you to a list of words. Once the words are placed in the correct order, reading the first letter of each word spells another word, which is the answer.

**Diagonals:** Like an acrostic, but you take the first letter of the first word, the second letter of the second word, and so on.

**Indexing:** Like diagonals, but each word has some sort of “index” number associated with it by some mechanism, and the index numbers tell you which letter of each word to take.

**Numbers:** A puzzle might lead you to a list of numbers. (For example, one Mystery Hunt puzzle consisted of aerial photographs of mile marks on the Boston Marathon route.) Taking those numbers as indexes into the alphabet (1=A, 2=B, etc.) spells out the answer.

**Instructions:** A puzzle might consist of a list of instructions to follow. Often they’ll be concealed or disguised, but following the instructions will result in you having all the letters of your word.

**Disguise:** A puzzle type might be disguised as another type, or a puzzle that’s actually about the biblical prophets might be written using names of U.S. Presidents instead. Look beneath the surface and try to see what’s really going on; often there will be a detail in the surface that will break the illusion.

**Flavortext:** Each puzzle has a title and usually some additional introductory text. These are called “flavortext”. Sometimes they only give you a joke or the setup for the puzzle, but sometimes they also have subtle clues to what’s going on in the puzzle. It often pays to read them carefully and consider whether any of the words might have a second meaning.

**One more thing:** Sometimes the puzzle will provide the answer word or phrase directly, but sometimes it will provide a word or phrase which clues the final answer. Pay attention to the “enumeration” (the length of the required answer) to see if you need to take one more step.

**Confirmation:** A good puzzle will include some element that by itself isn’t a clue to the answer, but which will give you a sense of confirmation once you’ve found the correct answer.

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**Have fun and good luck!**
The Meta-puzzle

The answers from each of the other puzzles can be placed in one row of the pyramid. Copying the letters into the same-numbered square on the bottom will spell out the “meta-answer” to this puzzle set and its source.

A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
J

(Note: Puzzles A and B are not clued separately. Everything you need to solve them is on this page.)

Thanks to these three terrific testsolvers: Tinhorn, T McAy, & Tahnan.
C. I’m Playing Games with Your Mind
Welcome to American Top 40, I’m Casey Kasem.

Our first number is by an artist who has had a long career. Although this is the fortieth track he ever released on a major label, he didn't publish his Opus 1 until about thirty years later. Here's the first track from “The Stranger”, by *bzzzzt*.

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EVERYBODY HAS A DREAM
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Next up, a piece by a musician whose children followed him into the family business. This is number 40 of “the 48” by *bzzzzt*.

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Prelude 16, G Minor
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Written in a frenzy during the last summer of its composer’s life, this is one of the true classics of all time. It’s the Symphony #40 by *bzzzzt*.

```
K. 550
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Although the most famous oratorio by this composer was about Jesus, he also wrote many operas and oratorios about characters from the Jewish bible. In addition to Esther, he wrote Xerxes, which actually has nothing to do with the story of Purim, but gives us a timely tie-in. Coming in at number 40 in his Werkverein (catalog of works), here is a excerpt from Xerxes by *bzzzzt*.
The composer of “Carnival of the Animals” also had a dark side, as witnessed in his Opus 40. Here is the “Danse Macabre” of *bzzzzt*.

**Ouverture.**

The composer who loses his hearing could have been a tragic tale of a brilliant career cut short, but this man's creative genius refused to be silenced. After he wrote the second of the nine symphonies that would change Western music forever, he penned his first “Romance for Violin and Orchestra.” This is the Opus 40 of *bzzzzt*.

**DANSE MACABRE**

*Poème Symphonique*

A composer who loses his hearing could have been a tragic tale of a brilliant career cut short, but this man's creative genius refused to be silenced. After he wrote the second of the nine symphonies that would change Western music forever, he penned his first “Romance for Violin and Orchestra.” This is the Opus 40 of *bzzzzt*.

**Romance No.1 in G Major**

(for Cello and Orchestra)

Op. 40

Finally, we have a dedication to a leader who knows no fear, to whom we say, as Moses said to Joshua, *chazak ve-ematz!* And remember, keep your feet *bzzzt-pop-click-BOOM!-sizzzzzzzzzzzle*
E. Remember the Sabbath Day, to Keep it Holey

It once happened that Eltzaphan, Tzaphenat-Paneach, Tzelophechad, Tzephania, and Tzipporah were sitting in B’nei-B’rak, studying the laws of Shabbat, and in particular the thirty-nine categories of prohibited activity, which are listed below.

On Shabbat, it is prohibited to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PREPARING BREAD</th>
<th>PREPARING CLOTH</th>
<th>PREPARING HIDES</th>
<th>CONSTRUCTION AND FINISHING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Plant</td>
<td>12 Shear</td>
<td>25 Trap</td>
<td>32 Write</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Plow</td>
<td>13 Launder</td>
<td>26 Slaughter</td>
<td>33 Erase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Reap</td>
<td>14 Comb</td>
<td>27 Flay</td>
<td>34 Build</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Bind sheaves</td>
<td>15 Dye</td>
<td>28 Salt</td>
<td>35 Demolish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Thresh</td>
<td>16 Spin thread</td>
<td>29 Tan</td>
<td>36 Extinguish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Winnow</td>
<td>17 Mount the warp</td>
<td>30 Scrape</td>
<td>37 Ignite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Select</td>
<td>18 Loop</td>
<td>31 Cut</td>
<td>38 Strike the final blow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Grind</td>
<td>19 Weave</td>
<td></td>
<td>39 Carry between domains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Sift</td>
<td>20 Unwind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Knead</td>
<td>21 Tie</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Bake</td>
<td>22 Untie</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23 Sew</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24 Tear</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

“Forgive me,” said Tzelophechad, “What’s so weevil about violating Shabbat?”

“It doesn't auger well,” replied Eltzaphan.

“You might end up in the hot place — or at least someplace worm,” added Tzipporah.

“You mean sheol, the bit (like the one I was thrown into, that was filled with scorpions),” explained Tzaphenat-Paneach.

“You might get a cheap drill from it, I suppose,” added Tzephania.

Then they started discussing which of the prohibited activities they enjoy during the week. Tzipporah said, “I like activities whose letters are in alphabetical order.”

Tzelophechad said, “I like activities with a silent letter at the beginning but not at the end of the word.”

Tzephania said, “I like activities which, when spelled backwards, form a different verb that might describe what God did to the sea.”

Tzaphenat-Paneach said, “I like activities formed with letters only from the first half of the alphabet.”

Eltzaphan said, “I like activities which, when the last letter is removed, spell the name of a baseball stadium that is no longer in use.”

The kabbalists found a hidden meaning in this narrative. They noticed a particular correlation between the (near)-homophones in the first part of the aggadata and the favorite activity of each person. Placing those correlations in chronological order, the mystics of Tzefat dug in to the text and pulled out its secret.
F. Additive Identity Crisis
Despite appearances, there is no cipher involved. Pick a number, any number....
G. Whistling in the Dark

DON'T BE LED ASTRAY!

THE CONVERSION FROM ANALOG TO DIGITAL WAS AS PREDICTABLE AS CLOCKWORK....

ACROSS OUR SOCIETY, EVERY SEGMENT PLAYED ITS ASSIGNED PART.

THE LEFT WAS THERE SEVEN DAYS A WEEK, BUT THE RIGHT DIDN'T SHOW UNTIL THE END.

ONLY ONCE, ON TUESDAY, DID WE LOSE OUR HEAD AND APPEAR OUTLESS.

ON MONDAY AND FRIDAY, THOUGH, WE COULD ALL SEE THE BOTTOM LINE:

AMERICA ISN'T READY FOR DIGITAL TV. WE STILL HAVE A MILLION VCRS FLASHING 8.88.88.88

(NOTE: THIS PUZZLE WAS WRITTEN BEFORE CONGRESS PUSHED BACK THE CONVERSION FROM FEBRUARY TO JUNE. IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE TO THE WORKINGS OF THE PUZZLE.)
**H. Following Directions**
You must wear your roux with a difference.

*Ingredients:*
- 11 Clues, listed alphabetically by answer
- 58 Boxes
- 22 Ligaments

1. Solve the clues
2. Determine which answer fits in each set of boxes.
3. Transfer your answers into the boxes, one letter per box.
4. Using the ligaments, reduce the answers to a final clue phrase
5. Sift your vocabulary to find an answer that matches the final clue phrase

*Yields:* A hyphenated word

---

**Summer drink**
**Prepare challah dough**
**Garbonzo**
**Cornish game ___**
**Certain giblet**
**Parer, e.g.**
**Boiled cornmeal**
**Kind of steak**
**Escargot**
**Brand of mint**
**Tool for making creme brulee**

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[Diagram of boxes and ligaments]
1. Q.E.D.

Please check carefully for errors; making corrections once the text has been prepared for printing can be costly!

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### J. Takeaways

Answer each clue in round 1. From each pair of clues, the letters you've entered are your “takeaway” --- your “action item” --- that is, your clue for the next round.

For example: Given the clues “push” and “back of the neck”, and the blanks “S H _ _ _ + A P E”, you’d answer “SHOVE + NAPE” and get “OVEN” as your takeaway to the next round.

In round 2, we’ve made it a little harder by taking away one of your clues: you’ll have to figure out where the dividing line is between answer words.

In round 3, we’ve taken away another bit of help: You’ll have to figure out which of the outer words goes with which pair of answers. The outer words (in alphabetical order, with the breaks given) are: CA____ EN, GO____ OSE, STE____ ER, and WI______ S.

In round 4, we’ve taken even more away. The outside fragments don’t form words, so you can’t guess which order they go in: but the fragments in alphabetical order are RO, S, SO, and TEX. On the other hand, the two five-letter words you take away from round 4 are not clues --- they combine to form a two-word phrase, which you can “take away” as your answer to this puzzle.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Baseball, e.g.</th>
<th>Electrify</th>
<th>Trailblaze</th>
<th>Representative</th>
<th>Erupter</th>
<th>Greek letter</th>
<th>Steal</th>
<th>Shellfish</th>
<th>Pad</th>
<th>Seep</th>
<th>Rope</th>
<th>Beneath</th>
<th>Pitcher Martinez</th>
<th>Den</th>
<th>Guthrie</th>
<th>Camp bed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S____ + ____ I Z E</td>
<td>L O ____ O M</td>
<td>L E ____ + ____ N T</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blemish</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Idle</td>
<td>Equip</td>
<td>Retein</td>
<td>Deserve</td>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Sign</td>
<td>Metric prefix</td>
<td>Greek capital</td>
<td>Point out</td>
<td>Bullish?</td>
<td>And</td>
<td>Slacks</td>
<td>Dishes</td>
<td>Blend</td>
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<th>Round 2</th>
<th>Round 3</th>
<th>Round 4</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CA____ EN</td>
<td>GO____ OSE</td>
<td>STE____ ER</td>
<td>WI______ S</td>
<td>RO____</td>
<td>S____ + ____ A M</td>
<td>Group</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>____ O A + ____ M</td>
<td>Idle</td>
<td>Equip</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>K E E + ____ N</td>
<td>Retein</td>
<td>Deserve</td>
</tr>
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<td>Sign</td>
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<td></td>
<td>B A N + ____ K</td>
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<td>K I + ____ NS</td>
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<td>A B ____ E D</td>
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