Inishmore

Continued » 1E

one of the oldest, at the far corner of the site.

The broken grave slabs are labeled "VII Romani" — Seven Romans. These Roman pilgrims came to Inishmore to study, such was the reputation of Aran's schools in the early middle ages. Students flocked here from all over Western Europe.

According to tradition, monks who studied on Inishmore went on to found Conmacnoise and Glendalough, two of Ireland's greatest monasteries and themselves centers of learning for all of Western Europe.

The walls of Dún Aengus. MIRIAM DAVIS/SPECIAL TO THE ADVERTISER

Fort offers breathtaking views

After our encounter with Irish Christianity, we pack into the vans again, this time going more than a thousand years further back in time. We get out at the Dún Aengus visitors' center and head up the trail, a 20 to 30 minute hike up to the prehistoric fort.

Thankfully, it's stopped raining by now. The hike up the trail, climbing over stones slick with rain, as the trail gets steeper and rockier, is tricky enough. But the wind is still blowing, bringing a fresh, salty breeze from the Atlantic.

Perhaps taking its name from one of the kings of Irish mythology, Dún Aengus (Dún Aonghasa) is a Bronze Age fort, dating to about 800 B.C. Many scholars think that the site had a ritual purpose, but we don't know much more about it.

It's clear, however, that the fortress was built for defense. Dramatically perched at the top of a 300-foot cliff, the waves of the Atlantic crash below. The fort forms a D shape as four thick stone walls loop out from the cliff's edge, providing a fierce barrier for any attacker. In addition, the fort is also protected by a chevel de frise, densely packed stones stuck into the ground at an angle, something no cavalry would want to mount a charge against.

There's no rail or fence to prevent you from walking right to the edge of the dangerous cliff. I'm not brave enough to do it; I get as close to the edge as I dare to take a picture of the breathtaking drop to the ocean.

But some members of our party — mostly younger — peer over the edge. I just stare at the slate gray sea that disappears into the horizon, thinking that there is nothing between here and North America but ocean.

Fun, but complex lesson

By the time we've descended from Dún Aengus, we feel like we've earned our lunch. We head to Tí Joe Watty's, famous for its "Traditional Island Bar Food." I settle for a good Irish meal: fresh fish, a potato and Bulmer's cider.

As a special treat, the owner's daughter gives us a Gaelic lesson after lunch. Gaelic is the traditional language of the Irish.

By the beginning of the 20th century, it had almost died out. But when Ireland became an independent country, the ancient language was revived.

The Aran Islands are part of the Gaeltacht, the region of western Ireland in which Gaelic is officially recognized as the predominant language. Most people on Inishmore speak Gaelic at home.

Our lesson is fascinating. But Gaelic, a Celtic language related to Welsh and Cornish, is a complex language and at the end I am as confused by it as I was at the start.

After lunch, a few of us wander down to the stores near the harbor to shop for the famous Aran hand knit sweaters; Aran wool repels water, which is good because with the rain and the sea there's so much of it here. We only have a few minutes of browsing before we must to catch the ferry back to Galway.

But now I have a new favorite place in Ireland.

Miriam Davis, a former college history professor, is a full-time writer who lives in Montgomery. Her first book, "Dame Kathleen Kenyon: Digging Up the Holy Land," is about the most important woman archaeologist of the 20th century.

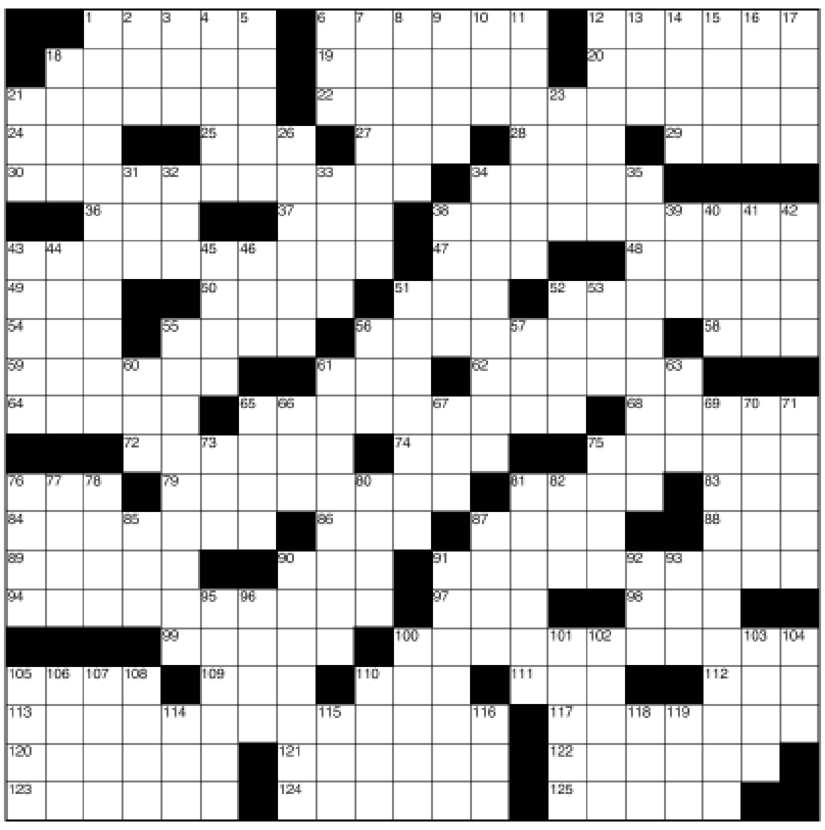
A scene from the 2010 Commerce for Canines parade.
PHOTOS BY AMANDA SOWARDS/ADVERTISER

The Commerce for Canines parade will take place 4 p.m. Thursday downtown.

THE SUNDAY CROSSWORD

In the Moooood

by Merl Reagle
November 4, 2012



ACROSS
1 Seasoned seamen
6 Walk down the runway
12 Navy destroyer, to 1 Across
18 Traffic stopper
19 Kids' book, "___ Takes a Bawth"
20 Relaxed
21 Uganda's capital
22 He wrote, "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform"
24 Bruin, in the Baja
25 Man's nickname
27 Clever remark
28 Pt. of AARP
29 Pond denizen
30 "Saturday Night Fever" co-star
34 Socialite Duke
36 Newspaper page div.
37 Saturn model, once
38 Ex-coach of the 2006 Super Bowl-winning Pittsburgh Steelers who is now a game analyst for "The NFL Today"
43 In a disapproving manner
47 Trip need, perhaps
48 Cumberland Gap explorer
49 Hem's partner
50 Satirize, with "up"
51 Mythical avian
52 Enjoy a day off
54 Boddington's Pub ___
55 "Shall we?" reply
56 Officemate
58 "Indeed ___"
59 White House dog, ca. 1990
61 Sheepish remark
62 Takes off
64 Key of Beethoven's "Eroica"
65 Ex-presidential adviser Brent
68 1, 2 or 3
72 Handbag holders
74 That girl
75 Madness
76 Metric opening
79 It can drive horses nuts
81 Fellow
83 Job for a seamstress
84 Wednesdayish
86 Trains like the one mentioned in "12 Angry Men"
87 Adonis's slayer
88 Honey grubber
89 See 38 Down
90 Flamenco cry
91 "Blithe Spirit" penner
94 Vodka cocktail
97 Thole insert
98 Be a harpy
99 Pony's paces
100 Popular candies
105 Harry Potter's lightning bolt, for example
109 Cozy intro?
110 Euclid's conclusion?
111 Regulating org.
112 Stop running around, perhaps
113 What a son of the beach might say
117 Plays the siren
120 Food court lures
121 Chef who kicks things up a notch
122 "Keep perusing"
123 Oracle site
124 White's style-manual partner
125 Agree to ___

DOWN
1 Often acidic critic
2 St. Moritz sight
3 Green span?
4 Dutch export
5 Alley pickup
6 Apply appliqué
7 Ex claim
8 "The valley ___"
9 Sword part
10 Start of a Faulkner title
11 A ___ (very young)
12 Stratagem
13 Skater Midori
14 Pond denizen
15 Mob boss
16 On the ocean
17 Unhip sort
18 El ___
21 Down for the count
23 Puzzling bird
26 Winning gestures
31 B. Friedan co-founded it
32 Everyone
33 Faucet word
34 Bruise
35 Dried out, in a way
38 With 89 Across, lose one's advantage
39 Misfortune
40 Kiva builder
41 Oklahoma city
42 Betting setting
43 "Naughty you!"
44 Where most of I-5 is
45 "Aha"
46 Basketball victory souvenir
51 Motel victims?
52 Card game
53 "My Name Is Asher ___"
55 Toto, for one
56 Cornfield cry
57 Field judge
60 Vegas opening
61 "___ Life of Johnson"
63 Devil's advocacy?
65 Fire
66 USN rank
67 Roulette bet
69 What has no wheels and flies?
70 Less cordial
71 Done on a keypad
73 Preschoolers?
75 ___ *de triomphe*
76 Muslim leader
77 Minuteman's home
78 Cousins of paeans
80 Robt. ___
81 Force
82 Shakespeare prince
85 Servicewoman, once
87 Old airline
90 Power problems
91 ___ sight
92 ___ roll
93 Servicewoman, once
95 1960s dance
96 Countenance
100 Tiny island nation
101 Domingo's domain
102 Decreased
103 Nothing, at Notre Dame
104 Ave. crossers
105 Bunch
106 Fundamental
107 Over the hill, briefly
108 Freeway access
110 River in Germany's Hesse region
114 Curmudgeon's cry
115 Invoice fig.
116 Yellowstone grazer
118 Camel hazard?
119 Ore. neighbor

See Solution: Page 6E

Dogs

Continued » 1E

The first two parades took place during midday (and last year's was rained out, Turbet said), but the new late afternoon hour may allow folks who work downtown to stick around and visit with the dogs for longer, she said.

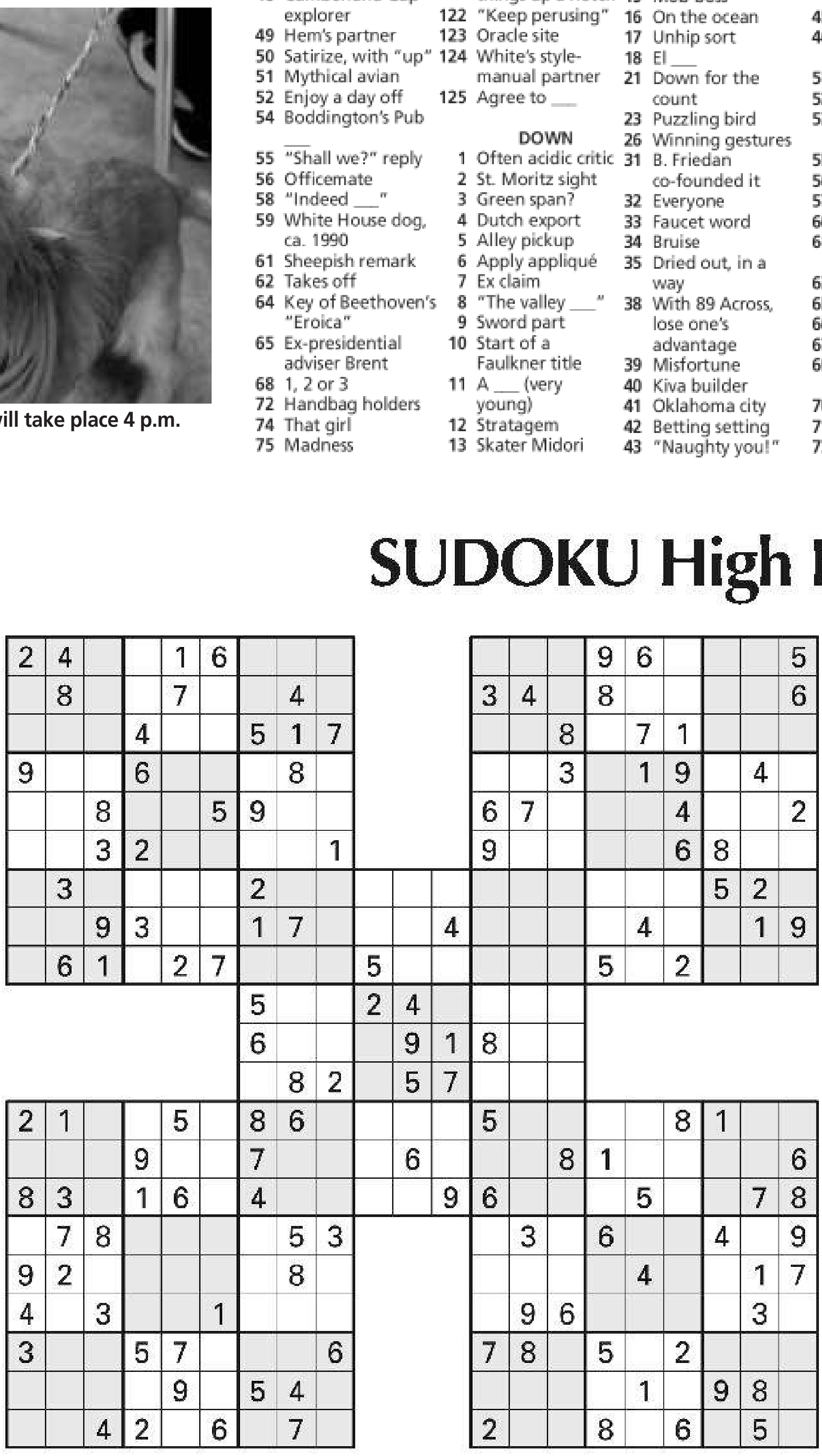
People seeking new pets might meet the dog of their dreams after the parade, but there will be a required visit to the shelter afterward to complete the necessary paperwork.

Adoptions for dogs at MHS are $150 for puppies and small dogs and $95 for large dogs, with some exceptions.

WANT TO GO?

What: Commerce for Canine Parade
When: 4 p.m. Thursday
Where: Begins at the corner of Coosa and Tallapoosa Streets and winds up at The Alley downtown
Admission: Free
Information: Go to www.montgomeryhumane.com or call 409-0622.

SUDOKU High Fives



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PREVIOUS SOLUTION

HOW TO PLAY: Sudoku High Fives consists of five regular Sudoku grids sharing one set of 3-by-3 boxes. Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition. The numbers in any shared set of 3-by-3 boxes apply to each of the individual Sudokus.

11-4-12