

LAURA ON LIFE

Checking Out The Underground Home

We visited an underground house the other day. It is an interest of my husband's. He says it's because he wants to save money on our electric bills, but that is just how he sells it to me.

Most men were born to live in caves. It is where they feel most comfortable. If it weren't for women, mankind would still live in caves. We wanted windows so we could let the light in. Thanks to all that light, we now see every speck of dust on every surface. Maybe there are some advantages to cave living.

I went along to humor my husband, but also to ask the questions that wouldn't occur to him like, "How do you get rid of the stalactites?" and Do



Laura Snyder

your pupils stay permanently dilated after living in a cave for a year?" When we pulled into the driveway, we saw a Spanish-looking hacienda, complete with curved arches, stuccoed walls and terra cotta overhangs. Behind the arches was a sheltered patio and behind that, a bank of tinted windows.

Looking around, I thought, "So where's the cave?"

The owners came out to meet us. They didn't look like cave people, so they must live in the hacienda.

I was in no real hurry to see the cave (ok, underground house), so I was more than happy when they invited us into the warm and cozy hacienda. It was absolutely breath-taking!

The living room was huge with a 15-foot domed ceiling and the modern look of hardwood floors and perfectly matched but comfortable furniture. They had a fireplace that they said was "just for looks," because they hadn't used it in 22 years. The U-shaped kitchen featured the

same high ceilings as the living room. It also boasted beautiful cabinetry and opened to a cozy dining room.

The huge windows in the front of the house combined with the high, domed ceilings gave the house a feeling of lots of space and light.

The bedrooms each had those huge windows and high-domed ceilings as well. The bathrooms and the laundry rooms were the only rooms that had no windows. I always thought that windows in bathrooms were kind of silly anyway. What's being done in a bathroom is private. Why would you want a window in there?

These hacienda people were pretty smart. The cave people could probably learn

something from them. This was the way to live! The sun, the space, the airiness.

My husband started asking questions about how much the electric bill was for this house, as if that mattered. Look at this place! Who cares how much the electric was? Our gracious hosts gave us an impossibly low figure. I thought, that was probably just for lights. They wouldn't need any during the day because of those huge windows. They must use natural gas for heating this amazing place.

Nope. No gas bill at all. Huh? Beautiful and inexpensive living? How could that be? And when would we be seeing the cave?

I nudged my husband

during a discussion with the owners about geothermal heat and solar power. "Where's the underground house?" I whispered.

He stared at me as if I had lost my marbles. Then he gave me a pointed look and rolled his eyes. After thirty years of marriage, I recognize that as the You-are-being-stunningly-ignorant Look.

This? This was the underground house? No way! Where were the stalactites?

Laura Snyder is a nationally syndicated columnist, author & speaker. You can reach Laura at lsnyder@lauraonlife.com Or visit her website www.lauraonlife.com for more info.

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Fill the puzzle so that every row, every column, and every section contain the numbers 1-9 without repeating a number

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

Check today's issue for the solution to the puzzle.

EA Book 18 #1

**Missouri Valley Shopper**

The identity of the featured celebrity is found within the answers in the puzzle. In order to take the TV Challenge, unscramble the letters noted with asterisks within the puzzle.

ACROSS

1. Actress on "The Big Bang Theory" (2)

9. Tupperware top

10. "___ Impact"; 1998 Robert Duvall movie

11. Electrical resistance unit

13. Water retention problem

15. Home for Nanook of the North

17. Role on "NCIS: Los Angeles" (2)

18. "___ Joe: The Rise of Cobra"; 2009 Dennis Quaid movie

20. "Clarissa Explains ___ All" (1991-94)

21. "___, ___ be in England ..." (Robert Browning)

23. Word in the title of Jason Segel's series

24. 1957-58 war drama series

25. "Prelude ___ Kiss"; 1992 Meg Ryan movie

26. 1988 Martin Sheen film

29. "Man ___ Fire"; 2004 Denzel Washington film

30. Actor on "Modern Family" (2)

34. ___ nothing; extremes

36. Singer Frankie

38. GI's destination in the 1970s, for short

39. Words to Brutus (2)

42. Stacey's man

43. Actor on "Desperate Housewives" (2)

6. "___ the Air"; 2009 George Clooney film

7. Soft drink

8. Word of mock surprise

9. "Dancing With the Stars" judge (2)

12. "America's ___"

14. "Spider-___"

16. African antelope

19. "___ Wonderful Life"

20. "House of ___ Corpses"; 2003 Karen Black film

22. Initials for Sharif

23. Head-to-toe measure: abbr.

27. "What'll ___"; Irving Berlin song

28. Setting for "The Golden Girls": abbr.

30. "Sesame Street" fellow

31. Pac. coast state

32. "P.S. ___ U" (1991-92)

33. Actor Rex ___

35. "___: A Dog"; 1957 Carroll O'Connor film

37. Butterfly catcher's need

40. Initials for Magnum's portrayer

41. Casual farewell

Chris Matthews

Solution

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