

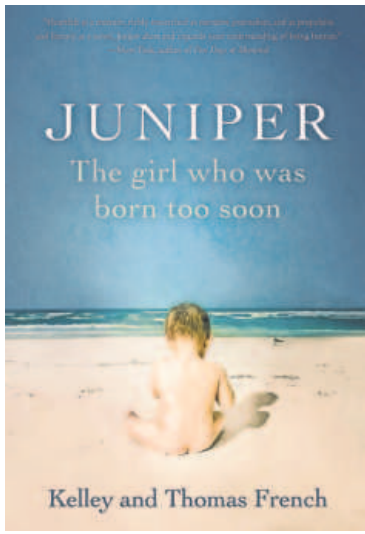
# 'Juniper': How love conquered all for a 'micro-preemie'

**Sharon Peters**  
Special for USA TODAY

She was a partially formed, 20-ounce mess of unknown problems and unknowable prospects when she came into the world, one day short of the 24-week gestational period doctors believe is the lowest limit of a baby having a shot at survival. Her lungs, digestive system and brain were underdeveloped; her eyes were still fused shut; her papery skin was so thin she couldn't be touched.

She hardly looked human. But the love her parents had for her was huge.

And when they — two journalists — describe in alternating voices the very different ways they experienced the rushing cascade of postnatal calamities that befell this "micro-preemie," as such babies are called, the impact is raw, rough and wrench-



ingly tender. With *Juniper: The Girl Who Was Born Too Soon* (Little, Brown, \$19 pp., ★★★★★ out of four), Kelley and Thomas French chronicle the daily turmoil. With



**Kelley and Thomas French with their daughter, Juniper, who was born at just under 24 weeks. Today, she's thriving.**

great honesty, they lay forth their darkest feelings and fears during the months it was unclear whether Juniper would live. Would their daughter, if she sur-

vived, be so damaged she could never forgive them for their efforts to save her? How many times would they have to adjust their hopes and expectations for her childhood? Would their marriage fall apart?

They could do nothing but watch as their tiny girl lay in an incubator, tubes connected to machines that did the work her body hadn't had time to develop the capacity to do. There was the chance that if she lived, she would be blind because of the high volume of oxygen she required. She could become addicted to the narcotics administered to keep her more or less pain-free; her kidneys might be ruined by the antibiotics she needed to fight infection.

Tom French made it his business to learn all he could about every hospital caregiver, in the belief one might race faster to save his daughter when she plum-

meted into crisis. He sat by Juniper's incubator and read *Harry Potter* books to her, the massive page count testament to his desperate hope she could live through the many days required to get to the end of each volume.

Kelley taped a picture of herself and Tom to the incubator so the baby would see it when she finally opened her eyes. She loaded an iPod with womb sounds so Juniper would be comforted.

In less adept hands, this story might have been overworked and overwrought. The Frenches understood that straightforward was the only way to tell it.

Two parents, flawed in many ways, very different from each other, have written of a singular experience that is presented with such grace it is an almost universal story of love and determination and strength. Happily, in the end, their daughter survived and now thrives.

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**MISSING**

**ALEXANDRA RODRIGO**

DOB: May 2, 2001  
Missing: Aug 13, 2015  
Age Now: 15  
Sex: Female  
Race: Am. Ind.  
Hair: Brown  
Eyes: Brown  
From: Portland, OR  
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## PUZZLES

**CROSSWORD**

BY Patrick Jordan

**"WANNA PLAY?"**

**ACROSS**

- Tight-fisted type
- Coco Chanel creation
- Slap the cuffs on
- Quitter's yell
- Butler's belle
- Notable period
- Street artist's signature
- Grafton's "\_\_\_ for Homicide"
- Filming area
- "The Wrestler" actress \_\_\_ Rachel Wood
- Leggy wading bird
- Hugh Laurie role for eight seasons
- Copper-colored cat breed
- "Follow closely, Fido!"
- Without delay, poetically
- Walks aimlessly
- Emilio Estevez, to Martin Sheen
- Risk getting bleeped
- Seat for a mall Santa's visitor
- Practice, as warfare
- \_\_\_ Rica
- Part of a machinist's hammer
- Boone or Crockett, notably
- Calisthenics activity
- Touches on
- Psoriasis reliever
- Toothed tool
- Stylish, to Austin Powers
- Scam element
- Pet scolder's adjective
- "The Little Mermaid" mermaid
- Striped stone
- Boar's abode

**DOWN**

- Makes a duck face, maybe
- Concerning, on a gridiron
- Some jazz improvisation
- Tiny toymaker
- "Zebra," on the gridiron
- Declining stage
- Serengeti charger
- Graze, say
- Mrs., in Mexico
- Western grouse
- Jacket variety popularized by the Beatles
- Sign of spring
- Pour pan drippings over
- Carrier's parter in lithography
- Klondike strike
- Maker of the Sierra and the Yukon
- Perlman of "Cheers"
- Number on an almanac cover
- Slider's target
- Second word of "The Raven"
- Sounded like a carillon
- Fraternity membership
- "When all \_\_\_ fails..."
- Review on Yelp, say
- Sail support
- "As \_\_\_ on TV"
- KFC piece
- Date with an M.D.
- Kimono-clad entertainers
- Red-and-white soda container
- Come-\_\_\_ (enticements)
- In a feeble way
- Program-launching symbol
- Doorframe pieces
- Convoy menace of WWII
- Like the Missouri River's waters
- World-weary
- Oater badge shape
- Doesn't just sit
- Amusement park cry
- Hothead's emotion
- Quit running
- Gone by

**Wednesday's Answer**

NASAL BONE ACRE  
CROCE OVID URAL  
REARS ZANE DUNK  
APOLLO LANDING  
SITIS ETC  
BASTED SPAN HAT  
ASTI SWAMI TSA  
SPECIAL OLYMPICS  
SEA GLARE AMOK  
INK LAME RESETS  
HBO PINT  
COLOSSAL OLIVE  
BLUE HIKE ICARE  
ROSE ARIA SHIRK  
APEID WENT TENSE

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**WORD ROUNDUP**

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek 10/6

Find and Circle:  
Six words with OR in the middle  
Five three-syllable countries  
Four one-syllable colors  
Two eating utensils  
Dolphin's fin

Wednesday's answer: TABLET THIRST THROAT TROUT TINT / TAURUS LIBRA ARIES LEO / FAVORITE MEDICINE POSITIVE / CUBA PERU IRAQ / EAST WEST

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**QUICKCROSS**

By John Wilmes 10/6

Cracker brand  
Sharpen  
Actress Gray  
Cracker brand  
"Believe" singer  
Actress Loughlin  
Component  
Actress Julie

Wednesday's Answer  
SAFE  
KNOX  
INRE  
PATS

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**SUDOKU**

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 (no repeats).

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

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**SUDOKU FUSION**

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x2 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 (no repeats).

6					1
	1		4		
3		2	6		
		4	5		2
		6		4	
4					6

DIFFICULTY RATING ★★★★★  
Wednesday's Answer

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

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**UP & DOWN WORDS**

By David L. Hoyt and Russell L. Hoyt 10/6

1. **NOT**

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_ **JOB**

Clues:  
1. Like a human  
2. 100, often  
3. Make the initial goal  
4. "Star Trek: \_\_\_"  
5. Business card data  
6. Helpful spot  
7. White-collar position

Wednesday's Answer  
SAY NO RETURN HOME OFFICE TOWER OVER WITH

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**DON'T QUOTE ME**

Basketball coach Pat Summitt offers this advice.

Rearrange the words to complete the quote.  
CLIMB GOALS HARDER IS MAKE SEEK STAY TOP

“IT'S \_\_\_\_\_ TO \_\_\_\_\_ ON \_\_\_\_\_ THAN IT \_\_\_\_\_ TO \_\_\_\_\_ THE \_\_\_\_\_ CONTINUE TO \_\_\_\_\_ NEW \_\_\_\_\_.”

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**TXTPERT**

Today's theme: Religion

Use the phone keypad to decode the clues.  
For example: 2 could be A, B or C, and 5678 could be OBT

Across: 1. 242735, 6. 2354383, 7. 44638476, 9. 6665, 10. 746

Down: 2. 4355, 3. 7673, 4. 72224, 5. 737666, 8. 686

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