

**STAMFORD TO HOST WORLD'S LARGEST CROSSWORD PUZZLE TOURNAMENT,**  
**FEATURING WORLD'S FIRST-EVER WORDLE CONTEST &**  
**SNEAK PEEK OF YALE STUDENTS' NEW "WORD NERD" MUSICAL**  
***Three Day Event Starts This Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup> at Stamford Marriott***

This week, hundreds of word-game enthusiasts from 32 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, and three Canadian provinces are coming to Stamford, Conn. for the American Crossword Puzzle Tournament (ACPT), hosted by Will Shortz, *The New York Times*' Crossword Puzzle Editor. The 44<sup>th</sup> event will be held on Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup> through Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Stamford Marriott Hotel & Spa on 243 Tresser Blvd.

The world's oldest and largest crossword competition will feature the world's first-ever Wordle contest and remarks by Josh Wardle, creator of the game craze. It marks the return of the in-person tournament, which was last held in March 2019, then was sidelined in 2020 and 2021 due to the Coronavirus.

"The American Crossword Puzzle Tournament is the perfect way for crossword lovers to test themselves and celebrate their passion," says former Stamford resident and tournament founder Will Shortz. "Over 500 contestants, ranging from ages 16 to 96, are already registered. People can continue to sign up for the contest until Saturday at 11 a.m." Eight crosswords, created especially for the 2022 event by leading puzzlemakers, will be presented over the course of the weekend. Each has a time limit of 15 to 45 minutes. Contestants earn points for accuracy and speed. On Sunday, prizes will be awarded in over 20 categories of skill, age, geographical location, and rookie status, including a \$5,000 Grand Prize.

**Spectators are welcome Sunday, starting at 11 a.m., for \$25 per person**, to watch the playoff round. At the same time, they will receive copies of all the weekend's puzzles.

"It's a joy to bring this back to Stamford after two years away on account of COVID," notes ACPT host Will Shortz. "For the first time this year's in-person competition will be conducted concurrently with a virtual contest, where online participants can compete with each other – just for fun, not for prizes." The entire event will be livestreamed and viewable online.

"Stamford is thrilled to welcome back this popular event that brings visitors, vitality, and dollars into our city and nearby towns, says Tom Civitano, director of sales and marketing for the Stamford Marriott Hotel & Spa. "All of our overnight rooms are booked into Sunday, and we have been directing additional business to other nearby hotels. The Stamford Marriott has a special affinity for this event, since its first tournament was held here in 1978 with 149 contestants. Look at it now!" The event was featured in the hit 2006 documentary "[Wordplay](#)," which appeared in theaters around the country.

"We welcome this tremendous event back to Stamford and hope that its participants and all visitors enjoy a terrific experience in the city, in Fairfield County, and across our drivable state," says Robert Murdock, President of the Connecticut Convention & Sports Bureau (CTmeetings), the State's official meetings and sports event sales and marketing organization, Murdock reports that the three-day event is projected to result in more than \$715,000 in revenue for the Stamford area as visitors stay in hotels, dine in local restaurants, shop, and enjoy nearby attractions. It is estimated to generate over \$41,000 in taxes for the State, and will support more than 270 hospitality industry jobs.\* (*\*Destinations International calculator*)

**The Weekend's schedule:**

**Friday, April 1:**

- Warm-up games and puzzles start at 8 p.m., including "*Behind the Scenes of the **Wordle** Craze*" presented by Josh Wardle, the game's creator, followed by the world's first Wordle contest — six rounds conducted live

on players' smartphones. Then a "Pick Your Poison" contest with novelty word puzzles. The evening concludes with a wine-and-cheese reception.

### **Saturday, April 2:**

- Puzzles #1-#3 will be presented from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Puzzles #4-#6 from 2:15 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.
- Evening entertainments start at 8 p.m.: **Palindrome Fight** — standup comedy based on palindromes (sentences that read backward and forward the same), followed by a palindrome-writing contest. Also, **Fact or Fake**, a trivia contest. And the **Annual Merl Reagle Award for Lifetime Achievement in Crossword Construction** presented to Emily Cox and Henry Rathvon, featuring live tributes.

### **Sunday Morning, April 3:**

- Puzzle #7 will be presented from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.
- At 11 a.m. there will be a live presentation of selected songs from "[Word Nerd](#)," a new musical by Yale University students, performed by cast members. The full musical premieres at Yale at the end of April.
- At 12 Noon, the **winners will be announced** in more than 20 categories, followed by **Playoffs** in the top three skill divisions. The three best-scoring contestants in each division will race to complete a final puzzle while standing at giant boards for everyone to watch. The playoffs will be announced live, as at a sporting event, by comedian/radio host Ophira Eisenberg and composer/puzzlesmith Greg Pliska.

**Production crews from HBO and Canada's CBC** will be covering the event.

► **To view the full schedule of in-person and virtual activities, or to register, go to [www.crosswordtournament.com](http://www.crosswordtournament.com).**

► **All in-person attendees, including entrants, their guests, and spectators must present proof of vaccination upon entry. Masks are strongly encouraged.**