

THE PUBLIC SERVICE PUZZLER

AUGUST 2024

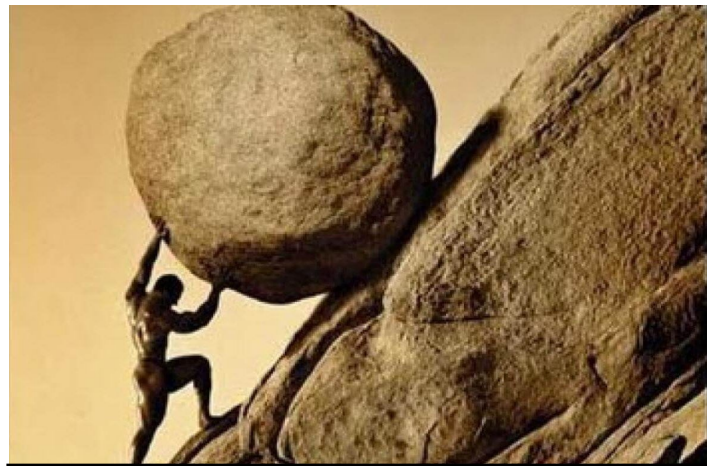
Editor: Rob Casimir

THIS PUZZLE IS IMPOSSIBLE*

I'll tell it to you straight: I've never been one of those fancy-talkin', brief-readin', Sweetgreen-critiquin' *Big City Lawyer* types; I'm a simple man — and if there's a single rule I live my life by, it's this: do not disrespect Albert Einstein. If there are two or more rules I live my life by, then, admittedly, those rules are probably the ones found in [Chapter 68 of the City Charter](#): the Conflicts of Interest Law of the City of New York. This month, we're going to talk about both of these things.

Because the fact of the matter is, immediately after furnishing my fellow public servants with *what I believed to be* a delightfully complex logic puzzle capable of priming municipal minds for a deep and reflective consideration of Chapter 68, those very same public servants turned around and *annihilated it*. And I do mean *immediately*.

Last month was by far the most popular *Public Service Puzzler* in a while (which is good!), but it was also — and I think you'll find this very believable — the least respectful to Albert Einstein's puzzle-making abilities, which was one of the top things he was known for in his time (behind “being so photogenic” and “the Special Theory of Relativity”). I love seeing enthusiasm in folks' answers, but some of the answers were delivered with a pugnacious zest of “Take that, Einstein” or “Look at me: I am the Einstein now” or “Go back to astrophysics, puzzleboy,” which all seemed quite superfluous to the requirements of submission.



You, attempting to overcome this impossible challenge.

I get it: when you see “Einstein” in a puzzle, you make certain assumptions. And with so many City employees managing to reach the correct solution of “**WATER + ONE YEAR POST-EMPLOYMENT COMMUNICATION BAN**”, people were riding high and feeling good. Riding highest of all was [Charlotte Yih](#) of the Comptroller's Office, who was this month's winner after being randomly selected from among all the correct submissions. And I'm happy for her. But I'm not happy about the insufficient respect *Puzzler* fans are putting on Big Al's name; that's why, in this month's *Public Service Puzzler*, I'm giving you all a logic puzzle that you will not solve.

And you shouldn't! It would be much better for you, as a City employee, to spend your *Puzzler* time this month simply reviewing the [Gift Rule](#) or how to [Submit a Moonlighting Waiver](#) — literally any-

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thing, to be honest, but investing precious minutes of your singular mortal life trying and failing to solve this municipal-ethics themed puzzle. This is Einstein's Puzzle 2: Einstein Harder. It is Einstein Harder with a Vengeance. This puzzle will open up and then devour you like *Jumanji* — you will learn to survive on jungle berries and non-poisonous frogs before you finish this puzzle. Do not do this puzzle.

That said: it would be cool if someone managed to solve it, somehow. And so, as a special reward for doing the impossible, the winner of this month's *Public Service Puzzler* will receive one-of-a-kind special recognition, taking a place of absolute, unalloyed honor above the *Puzzler's Hall of Champions*. Think that could be you? Then [submit your correct answer](#) to the puzzle below before September 20th, 2024 and prove me wrong!

Here we go: every month, eight City agencies send a couple "ethics liaisons" to meet at a conference and exchange information and printed materials about Chapter 68 of the City Charter. The two liaisons from each City agency always serve in the same civil service title, always drive and arrive to the meeting in the same agency vehicle (never misused!) and, for reasons not yet fully explored, always share a favorite Mayor. Beyond that, we know only that:

1. Daniella from DCAS and her fellow ethics liaison work as Administrative Assessors.
2. The pamphlet "The Revolving Door" was brought by the liaisons who drove a Fiat and love Mayor Lindsey.
3. The ethics pair of Owen and Victoria arrive together and prefer Michael Bloomberg.
4. Stan and Hannah from FDNY like Giuliani more than anyone.
5. Jenny from NYPD and her partner work as Community Coordinators and drove to the meeting in a Jeep.
6. Monica and her partner Alex borrowed the pamphlet "On Confidentiality."
7. Mathew and his partner like Bill de Blasio and brought the pamphlet "Gratuities Ban" to share.
8. Irene works at the same agency as Oto, and both are Training Specialists.
9. The pamphlet "\$50 Gift Rule" was borrowed by the liaisons driving a Ford.
10. The Office of the Comptroller employees are both Facilities Engineers who brought the pamphlet "City Resources".
11. The Dept of Buildings liaisons are both Appraisers who borrowed the pamphlet "Serving on Boards".
12. Paul and his fellow liaison liked Mayor Wagner.
13. Veronica from Dept of Finance and her partner like LaGuardia.
14. Rick and his fellow liaison brought the pamphlet "Serving on Boards" and they drove a Honda.
15. One pair of liaisons brought the pamphlet "Moonlighting" and borrowed the pamphlet "Gratuities Ban".
16. The pair who drive a Dodge love Ed Koch.
17. The pair who work as Procurement Officers borrowed the pamphlet "Moonlighting".
18. The pair who work as Tech Specialists drive a Subaru.
19. Pamela and her partner drive a Toyota and brought the pamphlet "On Confidentiality".
20. Pamela and her partner borrowed the pamphlet that the liaisons from the Department of Social Services brought.
21. Robert and his partner like Dinkins and borrowed the pamphlet on "Misuse of Position".
22. The Parks liaisons work as Administrative Assistants.
23. "Misuse of Position" was brought by the pair driving a Chevy.

So the question to this conundrum is: who likes Ed Koch? And for extra credit: can you find out everything about everyone from just this information? I think you probably can't, as I've said previously: this puzzle is impossible. But if someone proves me wrong? Well, that hero will find a once-in-a-Puzzler-lifetime prize waiting for them. So get to it! (Or don't.)

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THE PUBLIC SERVICE PUZZLER HALL OF CHAMPIONS

LUKE SZABADOS – BUILDINGS

AMY HOM – DFTA

ELISABETH TOPALTZAS – DORIS

CHRISTOPHER LYNCH – LAW DEPT

HUNTER IGOE – LAW DEPT

**HEATHER MURAKAMI – HONOLULU ETHICS COM-
MISSION**

MELISSA HESTER – ACS

MARY LANE – FINANCE

KATIE MILLER – NYC TLC

EVA GAMBINO – FINANCE

TOBY SINGER – DEP

ROBERT ROLANDI – FINANCE

JAMES TOBACK – OCME

FLORENCE MALLETT – FINANCE

SHAWNORA GULLEY – BUILDINGS

MELINDA GALDERON – OCME

IVAN SANTIAGO – DSS

WILLIAM FLETCHER – NYPD

STYLIANI KARPADAKIS – OCME

BERNARD BRAUN – LAW DEPT

NIGEL O.O. MANUEL – BUILDINGS

MICHELE SIMENSKY – LAW DEPT

NANCY SULTAN-LORMIL – BUILDINGS

SHIVAJEET CHAKRABORTY – TLC

CHARLOTTE YIH – COMPTROLLER

GARFIELD S. SCARDER – SCA

SARAH ROBERSON – PARKS

KIMFA CARRINGTON – DOT

VINCENT RIVELLESE – BRONX DA

YVONNE CHOW – DSNY

SIMONE KING – DOT

ALEXANDER YELLEN – NYCHA

LISA BRANDQUIST – DSNY

KELLAN STANNER – PARKS

PUI CHING – SBS

SANDRA COLLYMORE – FINANCE

JAMES DAVIE JR. – BUILDINGS

ROLANDA OSBOURNE – FINANCE

EUJEAN PARK – SBS

CHRIS K. PAPA – ACS

KATHY TUZNIK – DDC

MONICA DOYLE – FINANCE

DIANA HERRERA – FISA-OPA

MARIE SAMPLES – OCME

LAURA GODFREY – DCA

JOHN RAYALI – FINANCE

TORREY FISHMAN – MOIA

MICHAEL LEVARIO – APPOINTMENTS

PETER KONTOGIANNIS – DEP

EUGENE MASSEY – DOHMH