Solution to **METAPUZZLE**:

The eight puzzle answers can be grouped into four pairs -- first with fifth, second with sixth, and so on -- such that the latter is generated from the former by replacing a pair of letters with the word "STAR" (as in the wildcard pattern '*'). For instance, DOTING becomes STARTING by replacing "DO". The four bigrams in order spell the final answer to the metapuzzle, **DOUBLOON**.

It was possible to answer the metapuzzle by recognizing this pattern before seeing all the answers. In fact, knowing the metapuzzle solution makes it possible to deduce the remaining puzzle answers by applying the pattern on the known words. This is a process known as backsolving.

Congratulations to Jevon Heath, who first submitted the correct meta answer on our website. And congratulations to all of you who have been solving our puzzles these past weeks.

We hope you've enjoyed our column and puzzles over this past term, and maybe even learned a thing or two. If we've piqued your interest and you're looking for more puzzles, check out our website for links to other puzzle hunts and resources, and also an archive of other puzzles we've written. Want to get involved in writing puzzles? Send us an email!

We will leave you with one final puzzle from our own mystery hunt last weekend. This one is special in that there is no flavortext or body -- the entire puzzle is just its title. As always, if you think you have the answer, feel free to submit your answer online.

Good luck on finals, and have a great summer. We will see you all next year!

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