



The Bowfin Inquirer



July, 2022

Bowfin Block Party Returns!

344 Bowfin St. Backyard
Sunday, August 21st
Noon - 2PM

Eve and I are eager to host another block party in our backyard, after a two-year hiatus due to Covid. Not to suggest that Covid is completely gone (see later in this issue), but we believe that social distancing, vaccinations and therapeutics now make it safe and sound enough to join together to celebrate our wonderful Bowfin St.!

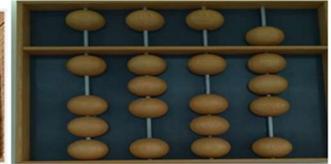
Rather than preparing hotdogs and hamburgers, we'll be ordering pizzas from Round Table (up to 10 Large ones), and we'll also have some soft drinks in liter bottles.

In all other respects, this will be a pot-luck. **If you plan to attend, please contact us at editor@bowfininquirer.com or neighbor Palu Dedhia (308) at paludedhia@gmail.com**, who is helping us coordinate the event. Let us know what you'd like to bring, and what toppings you'd like to see on the pizzas.

Aaron's Answers



A Suanpan Abacus



An Abacus Clock

Question: (This is a pun on 'summer') The abacus was an early calculating machine, capable of helping with summing and other mathematical operations. Can you fill us in on the abacus' origins and whether abaci are still in use these days?

-Jerry

Aaron's Answer: The Abacus is an ancient calculating tool used by mathematicians throughout history to perform simple operations with numbers such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and square and cube roots. The origins of the abacus are unknown, preserved abaci and mentions of abaci can be found in Eurasian countries from around the same time period.

Abaci are made of many beads strung together on strings or sticks. Math is done by manipulating the beads in various ways to get the desired answer. Abaci are still in use in many eastern countries, and shopkeepers around the world use abaci as cheap alternatives to calculators. Few western countries still use abaci, and very few schools in the western world teach abaci use to students. Visually impaired students are taught how to use abaci while their peers are taught hand-written methods, but both groups transition to calculators at later ages, with the visually impaired using calculators with answer reading functionality.

