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Everybody's Talking

Cat handbags: A woman in Japan, known as Pico, designs handbags that look like real cats. Using faux fur, a handbag might appear to be a pure white kitten, a black and white cat about to pounce, or a green-eyed grey feline that wants to cuddle. One of Pico's creations is a knapsack which, on the wearer's back, looks like a house cat on its haunches clawing at a screen door. Pico's work became known on social media, but she makes them in limited numbers because she is busy raising her young children.

Car museum: Many famous automobiles have appeared in movies over the years. Anyone with a hankering to see their favourite movie vehicle can visit the Celebrity Car Museum in Branson, Missouri (U.S.). More than 100 such cars are collected there, from the Ford Explorer in Jurassic Park to the Flintstone's granite car to the Batmobile from the 1966 TV series. The museum is the brainchild of the Velvet family, who have been car collectors for years. Displays change because the family regularly buys and sells cars. Visitors are welcome to pretend to be a movie star behind the wheel.

Body art: Born in Italy, Johannes Stötter is an artist who is an impressive body painter. He uses human models as his canvas and creates realistic looking animals, insects, reptiles, fish, and more. As the models can't stay in place indefinitely, he takes photos of the finished work. Often, it's difficult to tell there is a human being (or two) in the photo. For example, he painted two models to look like a crocodile. He painted one curled-up model to look like a beautiful butterfly. Two models, one on top of the other, appear to be a scaly lizard. Aside from his painting, Stötter is also a trained musician.

Crazy furniture: A furniture maker from Auckland, New Zealand, has found a way to make his creations unique. Henk Verhoeff uses his carpentry skills to design and make furniture that looks like it's warped or cracked - but it is not. In reality, every drawer opens perfectly on a dresser that appears to be crooked and broken, and a hole in the door of a side table is camouflage for miniature shelves on the inside. It is quite a feat for Verhoeff to accurately cut the angles so the moving parts work properly. Verhoeff's work became known when his daughter posted some images on social media.

Quoteable Quotes

"Goodness is the only investment that never fails." —Henry David Thoreau

"Oh who can tell the range of joy Or set the bounds of beauty?" —Sara Teasdale

What's Happening

Feb 1 to 28-Hypothermic Half Marathon 10K Virtual event - participate from any location you choose! Run in support of Justsocks.ca - a volunteer operated charity providing new socks to those in need across Canada. www.hypothermichalf.com

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Trivia

1. What did amateur astronomers Alan Hale and Thomas Bopp discover in 1995?
2. The five basic senses are hearing, sight, smell, taste, and what?
3. A vicissitude is a legal exception or a change of luck?
4. What are the Leonids?
5. A fedora is a type of wild cat or a felt hat?

(Flip bottom of page for answers)

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SERVING ALBERTA'S BUSINESS COMMUNITY SINCE 2005

Recipe of the month

Valentine's Day Brownies

3/4 c. unsalted butter
4 oz. unsweetened chocolate
4 oz. semisweet chocolate
1/2 c. all-purpose flour
1/2 c. unsweetened cocoa powder
3/4 tsp. salt

6 large eggs
1 c. granulated sugar
1 c. packed brown sugar
2 tsp. vanilla extract
vanilla frosting, for decorating

Total time: 40 mins. Yield: 16 servings

- 1 Heat oven to 350°F. Line 13-inch by 9-inch pan with foil; grease foil.
- 2 In 3-quart saucepan, melt butter and chocolates on low, stirring. Remove from heat.
- 3 In bowl, whisk flour, cocoa and salt. In large bowl, with electric mixer on high speed, beat eggs until blended. Gradually add sugars; beat until tripled in volume, about 10 minutes.
- 4 Fold in chocolate mixture and vanilla, then flour mixture. Pour into pan. Bake until toothpick inserted near centre comes out almost clean, 28 to 32 minutes.
- 5 Once cool, cut brownies into hearts freehand or using a heart-shaped cookie cutter. (Tip: Don't let the trimmings go to waste - you can even crumble them onto a sundae!)
- 6 Pipe on store-bought frosting to create cute chocolate "conversation hearts."

Source: www.goodhousekeeping.com

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Your Weekly Horoscope

ARIES (March 21 - April 20)

You may likely act on some of the more unusual impulses you feel. You might crave excitement, and be stimulated to start taking steps to fulfill a dream or an ideal. Lucky Numbers: 3, 13, 26, 29, 39, 43.

TAURUS (April 21 - May 21)

Much work may be needed to achieve your current financial goals. Quality might be important to you right now. You may desire comfort and ease, and find that you have a taste for luxury. Lucky Numbers: 8, 19, 23, 39, 42, 48.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

You may be able to grasp new concepts very easily. Don't be impatient with delays. You might be able to get your message across to others via written or spoken word. Lucky Numbers: 5, 17, 28, 35, 41, 47.

CANCER (June 22 - July 22)

You may go to extremes to achieve health and happiness. You might feel that this is the time to achieve the impossible! You could overcome your fears with great effort. Lucky Numbers: 10, 11, 22, 23, 43, 44.

LEO (July 23 - Aug. 23)

Your impressions may lead you to those who can help. Enjoy the social activities that you might have in your plans. You may need to turn a sad story into a positive lesson. Lucky Numbers: 1, 6, 10, 23, 34, 49.

VIRGO (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23)

You may have to begin appreciating yourself for being mature, patient, and responsible, given the situation. Once you do, you might want to start planning for future opportunities. Lucky Numbers: 1, 2, 12, 13, 35, 46.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23)

Allow yourself enough playtime, as well as sufficient rest time to rejuvenate your energy. Dreaming of new places to travel may give you a real thirst for adventure. Lucky Numbers: 3, 17, 22, 29, 40, 45.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)

Keep your goal in mind and try to use a little patience to help you discuss a particular situation. Distrust or a sharp tongue may not help you reach out to loved ones. Lucky Numbers: 9, 14, 24, 29, 44, 48.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 - Dec. 21)

Your nurturing talents may be required by family members. Through your caretaking skills, you might show how much support you are willing to give to others. Lucky Numbers: 11, 34, 37, 40, 43, 47.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 20)

Try not to let your inner feelings cause you to behave badly. Get excited about learning new skills. Share your enthusiasm with those who need to see your sensitive side. Lucky Numbers: 11, 15, 22, 26, 33, 37.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)

A minor setback or delay could happen. Find new ways to resolve a deadlock regarding concerns at work. You may want to try your best to maintain a low profile. Lucky Numbers: 3, 17, 20, 37, 40, 44.

PISCES (Feb. 20 - March 20)

You may feel upstaged by events that have occurred. Previously hidden aspects of the situation might now be revealed. Be patient and kind with those around you. Lucky Numbers: 7, 11, 14, 22, 24, 42.

Lucky numbers this week: This week's odds favour Capricorn winners with the luckiest number being 11.

Did You Know...

Tennis star: Born in Osaka, Japan, in 1997, Naomi Osaka is one of the world's best female tennis players and first Asian player to reach the top tier. Encouraged by her father, she started playing at age three.

Paved with wood: Before the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, this American city's streets were constructed out of wooden blocks. Today, only two or three alleys made of wood remain, and they have been restored and preserved.

Flat and white: A landform near Sydney, Australia, called Wedding Cake Rock looks like its name. The fragile, flat, white limestone formation is markedly different and differs from the darker sandstone near it.

Unusual ride: The Dodo Manège is a children's carousel in the Jardin des Plantes in Paris. Rather than the usual horses, children ride on extinct or endangered animals, such as the dodo, the horned turtle, and the panda.

Music and movies: Jamaican American composer and pianist Don Shirley (1927-2013) was famous for his performances with the Don Shirley Trio, which featured piano, bass, and cello. He is the subject of the 2018 movie, *Green Book*.

On the Lighter Side

Do you want to hear a joke backwards? Start laughing.

What's red and moves up and down? A tomato in an elevator.

Teacher: "Class, when I ask you a question, everyone answer at once. How much is 6 x 3?"
Class: "At once!"

How do you fix a broken gorilla? With a monkey wrench.

I have hands but I can never clap. What am I? A clock.

Answers

Trivia answers: 1. Comet Hale-Bopp 2. Touch 3. Change of luck 4. Meteor shower 5. Felt hat

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February 2

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