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from author **Stephen Monk**

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www.coffee-news.ca Est. 1988

Vol. 18 No. 52 December 27, 2021

Everybody's Talking

Beacon of colour: A lighthouse in Spain will never be the same again. That's because artist Okuda San Miguel used his talent to make the once-white Faro de Ajo lighthouse in the country's Cantabria region into a colourful beacon. With the Bay of Biscay as the building's backdrop, the extravagant array of different shades of blue, purple, red, orange, and yellow are eye-catching, to say the least. The colours adorn the 16-metre (52.5-foot) tower in geometric shapes that work together to form images of birds and animals. The artist named his creation "Infinite Cantabria."

Folding house: The tiny house movement is on a roll. Someone who is interested in this way of living might want to investigate the tiny houses built by a company in Latvia. Not only are the houses tiny, they are also foldable. Using a patented hinge system, these houses can be easily "unfolded" and set up almost anywhere. Once opened and ready for occupancy, these dwellings seem bigger than they actually are, thanks to thoughtful design, and they come with plumbing and electrical systems pre-installed. A permanent foundation is not necessary, and if the owner wants to change location, the house can be folded up and moved elsewhere.

Icy phenomenon: Kazakhstan may be cold in the winter, but people brave the chilly temperatures to view an interesting attraction. That sight is a "volcano" from which steam and water erupt, rather than lava. Called an "ice volcano," it is located on a snowy plateau near the city of Almaty. The volcano is actually a big mound of snow and ice that measures approximately 13.7 metres (44.9 ft.) high. It's hollow on the inside because an underground hot spring blows water and steam into the air. In winter, the water freezes and builds up, causing the big mound to develop.

Middle of nowhere: What has become known as "the loneliest house in the world" is on an island where no one has lived since the 1930s. Pictures of the house show why it has this nickname. Located on the island of Ellirey, in the Vestmannaeyjar archipelago south of Iceland, the white house sits on a green hill and is completely surrounded by the sea. Maintained today by a hunting association, the house has no accoutrements of modern living, such as electricity, running water, or indoor plumbing. It does, however, have a sauna.

Quoteable Quotes

"To understand everything makes one tolerant."
—Madame de Staël

"Love consists in this, that two solitudes protect and touch and greet each other."
—Rainer Maria Rilke

What's Happening

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Trivia

1. The bird known as the kookaburra is native to what country?
2. Col. Harland Sanders created what company?
3. Which Jamaican tangelo has an unflattering name related to appearance?
4. Where was the first Disneyland resort located?
5. What is another name for the Irish frame drum?

(Flip bottom of page for answers)

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Recipe of the month

New Year's Eve Pineapple Cheese Ball

2 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened	2 tablespoons finely chopped onion
1 can (8 ounces) unsweetened crushed pineapple, drained	2 teaspoons seasoned salt
1/4 cup finely chopped green pepper	1-1/2 cups finely chopped walnuts

Optional: Assorted crackers and fresh vegetables

Total Time: 20 min. prep + chilling
Yield: 1 cheese ball (3 cups)

► In a small bowl, beat cream cheese, pineapple, green pepper, onion and seasoned salt until blended. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes. Shape into a ball (mixture will be soft); coat in walnuts. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Serve with crackers and vegetables if desired.

An ideal addition to any festive holiday party or get together!

Source: <https://www.tasteofhome.com>

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Your Weekly Horoscope

ARIES (March 21 - April 20)

For the next few days, you may feel out of balance or experience a conflict within yourself. If so, be careful not to project your emotions onto others. Lucky numbers: 7, 26, 28, 31, 35, 48.

TAURUS (April 21 - May 21)

At this time, you may experience a sudden and urgent desire for freedom. If so, look for ways to satisfy that need without radically disrupting all aspects of your life. Lucky numbers: 3, 8, 15, 25, 32, 41.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

Those with strong Gemini energy can experience a sense of duality from two competing motivations. If you are feeling frustrated by this, channel it into positive activity until the moment passes. Lucky numbers: 1, 2, 13, 21, 38, 41.

CANCER (June 22 - July 22)

Your sense of self may be conflicting with who you are in an important relationship. If so, have a discussion with the other person in that relationship about redefining your roles. Lucky numbers: 2, 3, 5, 14, 45, 46.

LEO (July 23 - Aug. 23)

Others may not fully understand who you are or what you want right now. If so, making an adjustment in how you interact with them may generate a better outcome. Lucky numbers: 1, 5, 9, 13, 20, 40.

VIRGO (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23)

There is an opportunity now for heightened quickness and clarity of thought. If you are interested in writing something, the next few days provide a potentially good window for success. Lucky numbers: 4, 12, 16, 19, 35, 44.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23)

You may experience confidence at this time that comes from a good balance of ego drive versus emotion. If so, it may be wise to take advantage of this opportunity. Lucky numbers: 6, 13, 32, 33, 38, 43.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)

Your emotions may be focused now on what role you want to play in the world. If so, look deeply at what your heart tells you about what to do next. Lucky numbers: 4, 5, 12, 21, 26, 33.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 - Dec. 21)

Do you have a project you feel is outside of your comfort zone? If so, the energies right now encourage you to apply both discipline and innovation toward it. Lucky numbers: 10, 20, 25, 26, 43, 44.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 20)

If you have been stymied in understanding a particular person or situation, pay attention. The next few days may provide valuable information or a breakthrough to help resolve the matter. Lucky numbers: 9, 13, 16, 21, 28, 39.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)

Plucking information out of the ether is a known talent for many born under the sign of Aquarius. If this describes you, that ability may be heightened right now. Lucky numbers: 5, 7, 10, 13, 15, 21.

PISCES (Feb. 20 - March 20)

There may be an opportunity now for you to expand your horizons through greater imagination and intuition. However, you should also keep your natural idealism grounded in a sense of reality. Lucky numbers: 11, 15, 18, 31, 35, 43.

Lucky numbers this week: This week's odds favour Libra winners with the luckiest number being 33.

Did You Know...

Island language: On the Caribbean islands of Curaçao, Aruba, and Bonaire, people speak a language called Papiamentu. A creole language, it is influenced by both Portuguese and Spanish. Over 250,000 people speak it on a regular basis.

Clap together: Castanets are often used in Spanish-style dancing. They are a percussion instrument made of two hollow pieces of wood or other material, tied together. Players hold them in their fingers and snap them together.

Which hand? People who are right-handed prefer to use their right hand for most functions, and if they are left-handed, they prefer to use their left hand. Those who are ambidextrous can use either hand with equal ease.

Thankful holiday: Thanksgiving Day is a national holiday in Canada and the U.S. Although it has the same name, it takes place at different times. In Canada, it's the second Monday of October; in the United States, it's the fourth Thursday in November.

Word game: A word that results from putting together two or more words, or parts of words, is called a portmanteau. The English language has many of these words, such as "brunch" (breakfast and lunch), "smog" (smoke and fog), and "dramedy" (drama and comedy).

On the Lighter Side

At the end of a concert, the pianist boasted that he played everything by ear. Heard in the audience: "That explains it. I didn't think those sounds could be made by human hands."

Moe: Why are you sleeping under that old car?
Joe: Because I want to wake up oily in the morning.

Knock! Knock! Who's there? Wren. Wren who? Wren in Rome, do as the Romans do.

Apparently, you can not use "beef stew" as a password. It's not Stroganoff.

Who do you call to clean a filthy haunted house? The Ghost Dusters.

Answers

Trivia answers: 1. Australia 2. Kentucky Fried Chicken 3. Ugli fruit 4. Anaheim, Calif. (U.S.) 5. Bodhran

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