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Everybody's Talking

Masked bandit: A home in North Ridgeville, Ohio (U.S.), was the site of a masked robbery. The robber was not human, and it didn't steal anything. However, it did make quite a mess. The villain was a raccoon, which had somehow found its way into the home. The owner realized something was amiss after finding the mess, and then discovering the source of the problem. A raccoon was taking a nap in the dishwasher. Police were summoned, and patrolman John Metzo answered the call. Metzo managed to get the animal out of the dishwasher without hurting it, then encouraged the animal to leave the premises. No charges were filed.

Iron shoes: There are various ways to exercise to stay strong and healthy, but a Chinese man decided to take his workout one step further, literally. Zhang Enshun, who hails from Yulin City in Guangxi province, puts on a pair of “iron shoes” and tries to walk. The iron shoes are actually steel plates that he straps to his shoes. He started with one plate and has progressed to four, which together weigh a total of 150 kilograms (330 pounds). He tries to gradually increase the distance he is able to walk in these shoes, and he practices tai chi while doing it. Exercise experts don't advise trying this type of workout without first receiving training from specialists

Garden community: An intriguing landscape design exists in Nærum, Denmark, in the northern outskirts of Copenhagen. Known as the “round gardens,” they are actually oval-shaped allotment gardens, laid out between public housing and traditional housing. This creation was designed in 1948 by renowned landscape architect Soren Carl Theodor Marius Sorensen. Still in use today, the gardens consist of 40 hedge-encircled plots of land measuring approximately 25 x15 metres (82x49 feet), within which an owner can build a cottage and design their own garden plots. The plots do not have driveways leading to them, meaning that inhabitants are encouraged to walk to their cars, which helps them get to know their neighbours in the process.

Pretty in pink: Bruna Carolina Peres, who lives in Brazil's state of Parana, has been nicknamed “Bruna Barbie.” That's because she has opted for a lifestyle with a theme that revolves around the well-known Barbie doll. She has become famous on the internet for her posts, which show her living in a world of pink. Almost everything in her house is a shade of pink, including carpets, counters, cupboards, pillows, and bedspreads. She has a few black-and-white pieces and a blue room designed with the male Ken doll in mind. Her wardrobe also is all pink, from jackets to sunglasses and from blouses to belts. Images of Bruna Barbie have garnered millions of online followers, and she earns money from her videos. Peres, the woman behind this media sensation, is a law school graduate.

Quoteable Quotes

“Words are the physicians of a mind diseased.” -Aeschylus
“The older I grow the more I distrust the familiar doctrine that age brings wisdom.” -H.L. Mencken

What's Happening

JAN 19-30. Banff Lake Louise SNOWDAYS. The sts of downtown Banff transform into winter galleries with giant snow sculptures and Lake Louise turns into a frozen wonderland of Ice Magic. Speciality cocktails and menus can be found at an array of restaurants for the Tribute Craft Spirit Festival.

FEB 13-15. Sundre Winterfest. Family Day Weekend FUN. Visit sundrewinterfest.com for all this years competitions and events.

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Trivia

1. What is bonsai?
2. What is a government run by nobility called?
3. Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune all have rings—T/F?
4. Who discovered penicillin?
5. What is the most destructive insect in the world?

(Flip bottom of page for answers)

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Your Weekly Horoscope

ARIES

(March 21 - April 20)

The astrological environment now is offering you an opportunity to move toward healing. Hard work is possible at this time and may be best directed inward, rather than focusing on others. Lucky numbers: 2, 5, 7, 18, 26, 40.

LIBRA

(Sept. 24 - Oct. 23)

Perhaps you are confused about a source of conflict right now? It may be best not to overly focus on it and to let the situation play out for a while. Lucky numbers: 3, 5, 8, 9, 35, 43.

TAURUS

(April 21 - May 21)

You may have high energy to apply to new endeavours. Perhaps consider how your efforts can be geared toward service to others, in a way that aligns with your values. Lucky numbers: 16, 18, 21, 22, 40, 43.

SCORPIO

(Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)

An old karmic pattern may be coming to the surface at this time. Such events are lessons, meant to help you shed any unhelpful behaviours that are holding you back. Lucky numbers: 1, 8, 9, 17, 39, 41.

GEMINI

(May 22 - June 21)

You may feel that anything is possible right now. However, there is also the potential for being overly idealistic or optimistic. Perhaps you should consider tempering your expectations. Lucky numbers: 5, 9, 11, 23, 38, 43.

SAGITTARIUS

(Nov. 23 - Dec. 21)

Now is a good time to consider where you are in your profession and what you want your legacy to be. The potential exists to make some positive changes. Lucky numbers: 3, 15, 20, 29, 31, 32.

CANCER

(June 22 - July 22)

You may feel stymied in your efforts right now. If so, examine your fears. Think about how an adjustment in your view of the situation can mitigate obstacles or restrictions. Lucky numbers: 14, 15, 19, 33, 41, 43.

CAPRICORN

(Dec. 22 - Jan. 20)

In the last few weeks, there may have been communication difficulties or breakdowns with mechanical objects, such as your car. This should improve over the next several weeks. Lucky numbers: 13, 16, 28, 36, 40, 44.

LEO

(July 23 - Aug. 23)

Have you recently experienced a sudden or unexpected change in your life? If that is the case, consider examining any conflicts that you feel about your life's direction. Lucky numbers: 4, 7, 11, 22, 24, 27.

AQUARIUS

(Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)

At the beginning of the week, there is the potential for a reset in some area of your life, possibly regarding your spouse. Don't let this opportunity slip by. Lucky numbers: 12, 19, 31, 36, 42, 44.

VIRGO

(Aug. 24 - Sept. 23)

Some other zodiac signs are usually considered charismatic in a way that Virgo is not. Right now, however, you have the potential to be successful in persuading others to your viewpoint. Lucky numbers: 18, 20, 22, 30, 31, 46.

PISCES

(Feb. 20 - March 20)

Midweek, there is the potential to balance your ego drive and emotions. This may provide an opportunity to manifest your Pisces empathy without losing yourself in the process. Lucky numbers: 6, 8, 9, 27, 28, 31.

Lucky numbers this week: This week's odds favour Aquarius winners with the luckiest number being 31.

Did You Know...

Salty spread: Australians love their Vegemite, but visitors may have to acquire a taste for it. This brown paste is made from yeast extract, and it is very salty. It's usually enjoyed on toast or with cheese.

Thai island: There is an island in the Gulf of Thailand called Koh Chang, which means "Elephant Island" in Thai. It is known for its rugged beauty and its beaches, including Lonely Beach and White Sand Beach.

Good cooks: Many different kinds of chefs contribute to a kitchen's production. For example, a sauce chef (or saucier) prepares sauces, gravies, soups, and stews, while a pastry chef (or patissier) looks after the baking.

Sinking feeling: The captain of the *Titanic*, which sank in the Atlantic Ocean on April 15, 1912, was Edward Smith. Actor Bernard Hill portrayed him in the 1997 movie of the same name. The real captain perished when the ship sank, leaving behind a wife and daughter.

Canadian star: Mary Pickford (1892-1979) was born Gladys Smith in the city of Toronto, Ontario. She was a famous actress of the silent screen era. Movies she starred in include *Hearts Adrift* (1914) and *The Poor Little Rich Girl* (1917).

On the Lighter Side

What did the grapes say when the hippo stepped on them? Nothing. They just let out a little wine.

Barry: "That parrot is talking about American history, math problems, and English literature."

Larry: "That's because it used to be a teacher's pet."

What happens when a dog eats garlic? His bark becomes worse than his bite.

Knock! Knock! Who's there? Lion. Lion who? Lion on a block of ice can send shivers down your spine.

What do you get if you cross an antelope with a journalist? A Gnus reporter.

Answers

Trivia answers: 1. Japanese art of growing dwarf trees 2. Aristocracy 3. True 4. Sir Alexander Fleming 5. Desert locust

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Savoury Winter Soup

2 pounds ground beef
 3 medium onions, chopped
 1 garlic clove, minced
 3 cans (10-1/2 ounces each) condensed beef broth, undiluted
 1 can (28 ounces) diced tomatoes, undrained
 3 cups water

1 cup each diced carrots and celery
 1 cup fresh or frozen cut green beans
 1 cup cubed peeled potatoes
 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley or 2 teaspoons dried parsley flakes
 1 teaspoon dried basil
 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
 Salt and pepper to taste

Prep Time: 20 min. Cook Time: 6 hours
 Yield: 14 servings (3.5 quarts)

① In a large skillet, cook beef and onions over medium heat until meat is no longer pink. Add garlic; cook 1 minute longer. Drain.
 ② Transfer to a 5-qt. slow cooker. Stir in remaining ingredients. Cover and cook on low until vegetables are tender, 6-8 hours.

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