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Everybody's Talking

Lonely house: On a rocky outcrop high in the mountains in Italy, a structure has become known as "the world's loneliest house." Called Buffa di Perrero, it is in the Dolomite Mountains on Monte Cristallo. The brick dwelling, with windows, two doors, and a slanted roof, is embedded on a ledge nearly 3,000 metres (over 9,000 feet) above sea level. Italian soldiers are thought to have built the house during World War I as a place to hide and rest. To reach it, visitors must travel on the Via Ferrata Ivano Dibona ("iron path"), which consists of steel ladders and cables. For the original builders, getting materials up the mountain would have been quite a feat.

Cow virtual reality: Virtual reality (VR) headsets aren't just for people to use to experience simulated scenes. Cows can use them, too! Izzet Kocak, a farmer from Aksaray, Turkey, wanted to encourage his cows to produce more milk in the winter, when they are cooped up in a barn. He used technology developed by veterinarians that fits VR headsets to the animals and plays scenes of green pastures. A study conducted on this unique idea showed that the cows grew calmer and less stressed. Kocak tested the devices with two cows in his herd and found that with the VR goggles they did, indeed, produce more milk.

Dancing driver: A bus driver in Orlando, Florida (U.S.), knows how to bring joy to one little girl. Mom Brette-Ashley Schmitt of Rochester, New York, was on vacation with her family, including her young daughter Emerson. As their bus arrived at their stop, Emerson's favourite song, Taylor Swift's "Shake it Off," was playing through the public address system. Excitedly, she told the driver she loved the song and started dancing. Despite what was probably a busy schedule, the driver chose to enjoy the moment; he turned up the volume and started dancing in his seat, smiling and laughing along with Emerson. Schmitt was thankful to the driver for taking the extra time to make her daughter smile.

Fingerprint island: Baljenac (or Bavljencac) Island is a fingertip-shaped island in the Adriatic Sea off Croatia's coast. The island also looks like a fingerprint when viewed from above. That's because this 0.14-square-kilometre (0.09-square-mile) island has over 23 kilometres (14 miles) of waist-high walls made of piled-up rocks. From the air, the long rows of walls look like the labyrinth of ridges on a fingerprint. The walls protect crops from the high winds common in the area. No one lives on the island, and farmers come from Kaprije, another island nearby, to plant the crops. Most likely, the walls have been there since at least the 19th century.

Quoteable Quotes

"Every right is married to a duty; every freedom owes a corresponding responsibility."
—Russell Kirk

"I'd rather regret the risks that didn't work out than the chances I didn't take at all."
—Simone Biles

What's Happening

Jan 28 - Swimming and Snowflakes Come down and embrace the chilly weather at the Bioclean aquatic Center. The pool will be transformed into a winter wonderland with decorations, DJ, lights, free hot chocolate and more! For more info call 780-875-4497

Jan 30 - Will's Jams This prodigy will give you a morning of pure fulfillment with his witty wordplay and sing-along choruses the perfect kick-start to the day. Horizon Stage 10am, more info at www.horizonstage.com

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Trivia

1. Who wrote the Pink Panther theme?
2. Who paddled the Kon Tiki?
3. The Le Mans car race was first run in 1923, 1934, or 1950?
4. Which elephant has larger ears—African or Asian?
5. Who is the Scottish author of Treasure Island?

(Flip bottom of page for answers)

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Reader of the Month
Heath Bowen from Grande Prairie

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Your Weekly Horoscope

ARIES
(March 21 - April 20)

You may be experiencing difficulty communicating with others, especially a romantic partner. Consider putting aside any old emotional wounds. Look for an opportunity that will be agreeable to all involved. Lucky numbers: 12, 16, 27, 32, 35, 44.

TAURUS
(April 21 - May 21)

An unusual or unexpected event may make you see something in a relationship that was never quite visible before. Now might be a good time for a gentle conversation about it. Lucky numbers: 6, 8, 19, 21, 31, 48.

GEMINI
(May 22 - June 21)

You may have a strong desire to explore possibilities for projects that are in alignment with your values. However, waiting a few weeks to implement your plans may be best. Lucky numbers: 3, 6, 16, 17, 34, 35.

CANCER
(June 22 - July 22)

Cancer natives sometimes prefer to be foot soldiers rather than generals. At this time, however, you may willingly assume the mantle of leadership to achieve something important to you. Lucky numbers: 15, 16, 22, 28, 30, 37.

LEO
(July 23 - Aug. 23)

How have you defined good fortune in life? Now may be a good time to reexamine that definition and to see how it fits in with your sense of self. Lucky numbers: 2, 15, 20, 23, 40, 41.

VIRGO
(Aug. 24 - Sept. 23)

Virgos are known for being practical and well grounded. Those qualities might receive a boost in the middle of the week, and you may use them to complete detail-oriented tasks. Lucky numbers: 9, 21, 34, 35, 44, 45.

LIBRA
(Sept. 24 - Oct. 23)

You may find that your natural ability to be diplomatic will be highlighted at the end of the week. This may be a good time to plan a social event. Lucky numbers: 11, 19, 23, 39, 41, 42.

SCORPIO
(Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)

Is there an issue that keeps resurfacing and blocking you from making progress? Perhaps it is the effect of an old karmic event. Consider what steps you can take to clear it. Lucky numbers: 7, 12, 14, 15, 27, 39.

SAGITTARIUS
(Nov. 23 - Dec. 21)

For the last couple of months, have you felt that your normal level of energy and ambition has been diminished? This dynamic could begin to abate over the next couple of weeks. Lucky numbers: 1, 4, 5, 8, 18, 46.

CAPRICORN
(Dec. 22 - Jan. 20)

Your natural Capricorn leadership qualities may be highlighted now. You might use this to accomplish much, if you are careful not to get into an unnecessary conflict of ego with others. Lucky numbers: 16, 17, 20, 27, 31, 38.

AQUARIUS
(Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)

Are you feeling out of sync now with those closest to you? Strive for clear communications and a willingness to adjust your viewpoint about something important to all of you. Lucky numbers: 10, 11, 31, 34, 40, 47.

PISCES
(Feb. 20 - March 20)

You might consider taking a retreat day at the end of the week. Quiet contemplation may give you practical insight into a situation that has been confusing you until now. Lucky numbers: 6, 12, 14, 17, 18, 33.

Lucky numbers this week: This week's odds favour Capricorn winners with the luckiest number being 27.

Did You Know...

Japanese treat: Sashimi, the Japanese specialty, is thinly sliced, fresh, high-quality food (typically fish and seafood) that is served raw, usually with soy sauce. The types of fish used in this dish are often tuna, yellowtail, mackerel, and salmon.

Tricky trickster: Leprechauns are part of Irish folklore. In popular imagination, they wear green, have beards, and stand about three feet tall. The mischievous creatures make shoes for a living and keep a pot of gold in the forest.

Dryer solution: For environmental reasons, some people are avoiding using dryer sheets to reduce static cling in their laundry. An alternative is multiple-use, natural wool dryer balls, which fluff up the wet clothes, reducing friction.

Cute as a puppy: When puppies are born, they don't have teeth, and they can't see or hear. They find their mothers by using their sense of smell.

Rubber duckies: In 1992, containers with almost 30,000 rubber duckies, the bath toys that kids love, fell off a cargo ship in the Pacific Ocean. The currents took them around the world, helping scientists learn about ocean movements and waves.

On the Lighter Side

Mutt: "I'm learning to be a barber."
 Jeff: "Will it take long?"
 Mutt: "No, I'm studying all the short cuts."

Why are pickles so slow? They tend to dilly-dally.
 I know lots of jokes about pole vaulters, but none of them go over well.

Knock! Knock! Who's there? Gucci. Gucci who? Gucci-gucci-goo!

What do you call a food court when you're on a diet? A craveyard.

Answers

Trivia answers: 1. Henry Mancini 2. Thor Heyerdahl 3. 1923 4. African 5. Robert Louis Stevenson

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Recipe of the month

Festive Guacamole Appetizers

2 tubes (8 ounces each) refrigerated seamless crescent dough sheet
 1-1/2 teaspoons taco seasoning, divided
 20 pretzel sticks, broken in half
 4 ounces cream cheese, softened

1 cup guacamole
 2 medium sweet yellow peppers
 1 medium sweet red pepper
 1 medium green pepper
 Chopped fresh cilantro, optional

Prep Time: 1 hour Bake: 10 min. + cooling Yield: 40

- Preheat oven to 375°. On an ungreased baking sheet, unroll one tube of crescent dough and press into a 13x8-in. rectangle. Prick with a fork; sprinkle with 3/4 teaspoon taco seasoning. Repeat with remaining dough and seasoning.
- Bake until golden brown, 10-12 minutes. Transfer to wire racks to cool completely.
- Cut each rectangle crosswise to make 4 strips (about 8x4-in.). For trees, cut each strip into 5 triangles, reserving scraps at each end for another use. For trunks, insert a pretzel piece into the base of each triangle.
- Beat cream cheese and guacamole until smooth; spread over trees. Halve and seed peppers. Cut 40 stars from yellow peppers using a 3/4-in. star-shaped cookie cutter. Dice and julienne remaining peppers for tree decorations. Decorate trees with pepper pieces and, if desired, cilantro. Refrigerate until serving.

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

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