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Vol. 20 No. 33 August 14, 2023

Everybody's Talking

Roundabout way: Thank goodness a roundabout in Denbighshire, Wales, is only busy with traffic a couple of times a day. Otherwise, the people who live in the centre of it might have gone crazy by now. Clwyd Howatson and his wife and son occupy a bungalow situated smack dab in the middle of the roundabout, which was completed in 1980 after his parents, the late David John and his wife Eirian Howatson, had already lived on the spot for 20 years. The current occupants have other family members who visit often, and no one has any intention of giving up their unusual piece of property. It's their home, after all.

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Viking mania: A Bosnian man changed his life goals after watching "Vikings," a television series that dramatized the life of Ragnar Lodbrok, a legendary Norse hero. The man binge-watched the TV series, becoming a huge fan in the process. Calling himself "Ragnar the Bosnian Viking," he started wearing tunics, grew a long white beard, and braided his hair. He embraced the Viking culture by making artifacts in his workshop, including a Viking boat and intricately designed Viking shields and axes, which he sells. A goal for this modern Ragnar is to build a Viking village, which he hopes will become a tourist attraction.

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Desert oasis: There is a kind of Eden in the Gobi desert in Mongolia that has been nurtured by a man named Baraaduuz Demchig. About three decades ago, the now-elderly man wanted to find a way to grow crops in the arid environment. However, the plants would be blown away by the wind. To protect the area, he planted elms, and it worked. Today, the trees stand watch over such crops as apples, black currants, raspberries, and sea buckthorn. Reclaiming some of the desert land and making it productive provides an important source of food for locals, many of whom are also planting trees to protect their own crops.

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Going backward: Driving in reverse is not the easiest thing to do, but it is a necessary skill that drivers should have. To prove that backwards driving is doable, a man named Chandramouli of India's Tamil Nadu state decided to try to break the record for the longest distance driven in reverse gear in less than 30 minutes. He accomplished the feat by going backwards within that time frame for 16 kilometres and 140 metres (approximately 10 miles) on a bypass road. He did the task safely. That was his motivation for challenging the record: He wants young drivers to be aware of the need to drive with skill and safety in mind at all times.

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Quoteable Quotes

"The more elaborate our means of communication, the less we communicate."
—Joseph Priestley

"If you can give your child only one gift, let it be enthusiasm."
—Bruce Barton

What's Happening

Ongoing - Fresh Community Market Whitecourt District Chamber of Commerce Presents: The Fresh Community Market. Held each Saturday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm until September 23, 2023. For more information, please visit the Whitecourt Chamber of Commerce's website.

Ongoing - Whitecourt Farmers' Market The 2023 Farmers' Market Season will run on Tuesdays from 11am to 2pm until October 3, 2023. For more information on upcoming markets, follow the Whitecourt Farmers Market group on Facebook.

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Trivia

1. A hexagon has four, six, or eight sides?
2. Thomas Edison invented the phonograph—T/F?
3. The game mahjonn originated in what country?
4. Brontophobia is fear of brontosauruses, thunder, or dump trucks?
5. This is the vertical post that divides window panes.

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Your Weekly Horoscope

ARIES
(March 20 - April 19)

Where is an old emotional issue causing a problem in your current relationship? Think about what common pattern is shared in both situations and then make adjustments as needed. Lucky numbers: 4, 21, 23, 30, 32, 42.

TAURUS
(April 20 - May 20)

You may come across an opportunity to take a risk on a new project, but may also run into a challenge requiring you to believe in yourself and your endeavour. Lucky numbers: 10, 31, 42, 44, 45, 47.

GEMINI
(May 21 - June 20)

You might find it easier to get in touch with your emotions at midweek. In doing so, information may bubble to the surface that was hidden in your subconscious. Lucky numbers: 6, 13, 14, 18, 26, 38.

CANCER
(June 21 - July 21)

How do you see yourself as a romantic partner? An opportunity may emerge for you to shape your role in a way that better suits who you are now. Lucky numbers: 8, 12, 22, 38, 47, 48.

LEO
(July 22 - Aug. 22)

At midweek, you may have an opportunity to do a monthly reset of your emotions. This time you may want to direct that reset to your beliefs around love and marriage. Lucky numbers: 13, 14, 24, 26, 27, 33.

VIRGO
(Aug. 23 - Sept. 22)

The motivation for Virgos is usually accomplishing a goal rather than taking credit for it. Now may be a good time to toot your own horn, so that others remember your value. Lucky numbers: 11, 31, 32, 42, 44, 45.

LIBRA
(Sept. 23 - Oct. 22)

Your charm and diplomacy may be highlighted now. You can use these to help others, but make sure you don't take on more than you can handle as you do so. Lucky numbers: 12, 16, 19, 23, 25, 38.

SCORPIO
(Oct. 23 - Nov. 21)

You may find you have a high level of ambition now. If there is a goal you haven't been able to manifest before, now may be the time to try. Lucky numbers: 14, 27, 29, 38, 40, 42.

SAGITTARIUS
(Nov. 22 - Dec. 20)

Your Sagittarius optimism may get a boost midweek. How do you want to use this energy to plan something new? You may want to wait a bit to implement it. Lucky numbers: 1, 4, 10, 34, 39, 46.

CAPRICORN
(Dec. 21 - Jan. 19)

Capricorns often project a serious attitude. Right now you may have the potential to incorporate a more relaxed energy to achieve a balanced viewpoint about your life situation. Lucky numbers: 3, 9, 23, 41, 45, 47.

AQUARIUS
(Jan. 20 - Feb. 18)

The energy pattern at midweek radiates warmth and optimism. How can you incorporate these qualities positively into your communications with others, now and once this influence passes? Lucky numbers: 7, 21, 30, 37, 42, 44.

PISCES
(Feb. 19 - March 19)

Pisces can sometimes be a bit of a "wet blanket." At week's end, however, you may have an opportunity to adjust your demeanour to radiate the best qualities of this sign. Lucky numbers: 5, 10, 22, 24, 35, 42.

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

Did You Know...

Night treat: Queen of the Night is a nickname for the cactus *Epiphyllum oxypetalum*. This plant produces beautiful white flowers, but only at night, and the flowers wilt before the sun comes up. It's a rare event to witness.

Coffee alternative: Someone who wants the taste of coffee but not the caffeine could choose chicory as an alternative. This root, which is roasted and ground, can be steeped like tea or brewed like coffee.

Yummy fruit: The Kiwano, also called the horned melon, is native to sub-Saharan Africa. True to its name, its orange skin is covered with horny protuberances. The flesh tastes like a cross between a cucumber and a lemon.

Rock band manager: Brian Epstein (1934-1967), who was manager for the rock group The Beatles, was working in his family's Liverpool, England, record store when he met the group. He became their manager in 1962.

Icy treat: The world did not always have what are known as Popsicles. In 1905, an 11-year-old American boy named Frank Epperson accidentally left a soda drink outside overnight, with a stick in it, and the liquid froze.

On the Lighter Side

A really bad gymnast walked into a bar.

Patient: "Doctor, I am having trouble sleeping."
Doctor: "Lie on the edge; you'll eventually drop off."

What do you call a bird stuck at the North Pole? A brrrrrrrd.

Words that soak into your ears are whispered, not yelled.

Knock! Knock! *Who's there?* Ivan. *Ivan who?* Ivan working on the railroad.

Answers

5. Million
Trivia answers: 1. Six 2. True 3. China 4. Thunder

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