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September 14, 2026

Everybody's Talking

Tentacle tunes: In Sweden, a musician known for building unusual instruments turned a home aquarium into a tiny music studio. Instead of practicing alone, he designed a keyboard that could be pressed by an octopus using its arms. The setup took patience, with time spent letting the animal get used to the instrument and its surroundings before any sounds emerged. Progress came slowly, helped by simple rewards that encouraged repeated movements across the keys. Over time, short patterns replaced random taps, creating something that resembled a tune. The project drew attention through online videos that showed careful training, steady progress, and an unexpected mix of music, design, and animal behaviour.

Living canvas: In labs around the world, artists practice agar art, building pictures by guiding the growth of bacteria and fungi. Their work begins in shallow dishes filled with agar, a clear gel that lets microbes spread and form colour as they multiply. Rather than brushing strokes, creators place tiny samples with care and then wait as shapes slowly appear on their own. Different organisms grow at different speeds, which adds texture and contrast. The results range from animals to abstract scenes, all shaped by living material. An annual contest run by a microbiology group has helped bring this practice to a wider audience. The process blurs the line between experiment and artwork in a way that keeps surprising viewers.

Hydrogen debut: In San Bernardino, California (U.S.), a new kind of passenger train is carrying riders without burning diesel or drawing power from overhead wires. The train blends hydrogen fuel cells with onboard batteries, creating electricity as it moves and releasing only water vapour. Built for regional routes where full electrification can be hard to justify, the design lets trains run much like before while changing what happens under the floor. Local agencies see it as a practical option for lines needing cleaner operation without major rebuilding. Similar technology has already been tested overseas, giving planners confidence it can scale. Engineers are now tracking how it runs day to day to help decide where it could fit next.

Fog harvest: Along the dry hills near Lima, Peru, residents are collecting fresh water from the air using tall mesh panels that catch passing mist. When fog moves through the nets, tiny droplets cling to the fibres, merge, and drip into channels below. The gathered water is stored nearby and used for washing, small gardens, and daily needs where pipes don't reach. These setups work best in places with steady fog and light winds, even when rain is rare. Community groups help install and maintain the nets, keeping the systems running locally. Similar projects have appeared in other fog-prone regions facing water stress. The approach shows how small tools can reshape life in dry landscapes.

Quoteable Quotes

"I am not afraid of storms, for I am learning how to sail my ship." *~ Louisa May Alcott*

"A calm mind brings inner strength and self-confidence." *~ Dalai Lama*

What's Happening

Want an event, major attraction or sport publicized? E-mail countrycoffeenews@shaw.ca or phone 403-304-4767 to have it printed here at NO CHARGE!

☛ **Leslieville Block Party**: Saturday, September 12, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Show 'n Shine, vendors, food and live music. 3rd Street, Leslieville.

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August's contest winner was June Wilson, who will receive a $40 gift card from Sobeys after spotting the hidden Coffee News Guy while reading the publication at the Bang's Bistro. *Congratulations!*

Trivia

1. Who created the comic strip character *Garfield*?
2. The human body has 32 permanent _____.
3. What is the fastest land animal?
4. The fictional school attended by Harry Potter is Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and _____.
5. Mount Kosciuszko is the tallest mountain in Australia, New Zealand, or Indonesia?

(Flip bottom of page for answers)

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Your Weekly Horoscope

ARIES
(March 20 – April 19)

Over the next decade, humanity will be experiencing a major urge toward an evolution in consciousness. What role do you want to play to see that this shift is successful? Lucky numbers: 7, 13, 14, 26, 44, 46.

TAURUS
(April 20 – May 20)

The Universe will be encouraging you over the next few years to undergo a transformation in your spiritual nature. Flowing with events will make the process easier than resisting them. Lucky numbers: 2, 11, 12, 17, 24, 48.

GEMINI
(May 21 – June 20)

Geminis can tend to live in their heads. However, this week, you may encounter deep, passionate emotions that feel uncomfortable and ask you to live from your heart for awhile. Lucky numbers: 3, 5, 18, 19, 28, 33.

CANCER
(June 21 – July 22)

Early in the week, you may experience a burst of energy that can jump start your endeavours. This potential won't last long so be sure to take advantage of it. Lucky numbers: 14, 25, 27, 43, 45, 46.

LEO
(July 23 – Aug. 22)

Leos sometimes live for themselves alone. This period, however, encourages you to think about where your life would be better served in a larger context that serves others as well. Lucky numbers: 9, 10, 24, 28, 35, 47.

VIRGO
(Aug. 23 – Sept. 22)

Service to others is an important theme for Virgos. The question now is whether your focus has been too small. How can you make a greater contribution in the world? Lucky numbers: 4, 13, 20, 30, 33, 46.

LIBRA
(Sept. 23 – Oct. 22)

Libras are most often focused on those in their inner circle. Consider, however, how your skills can be brought to bear helping humans create more harmony in the outer world. Lucky numbers: 12, 16, 22, 26, 28, 38.

SCORPIO
(Oct. 23 – Nov. 21)

Your intuitive insights are dialed up again early in the week. As always, be sure that the other person really wants to hear this information before you share it. Lucky numbers: 5, 11, 15, 17, 18, 29.

SAGITTARIUS
(Nov. 22 – Dec. 21)

Your natural optimism is heightened at mid-week. It may be a good time to initiate a new endeavour. Just be careful not to over-reach. Crossing the Rubicon doesn't guarantee success. Lucky numbers: 8, 24, 34, 35, 42, 48.

CAPRICORN
(Dec. 22 – Jan. 19)

Ambition is good in moderation. If you have been working too hard recently, come up for air. Add something, or some one, into your life that will bring you pleasure now. Lucky numbers: 1, 9, 21, 34, 41, 44.

AQUARIUS
(Jan. 20 – Feb. 18)

Some of us are here to aid humanity's evolution over the next decade. Whether you like it or not, consider accepting that your Aquarius energy places you among them. Lucky numbers: 6, 11, 16, 22, 24, 42.

PISCES
(Feb. 19 – March 20)

Neptune in Aries may feel uncomfortable for you, after all the years it spent in Pisces. However, Aries can give you the energy and courage now to manifest your vision. Lucky numbers: 4, 12. 17, 21, 35, 43.

Lucky numbers this week: This week's odds favour Sagittarius winners, with the luckiest number being 35.

Did You Know...

Hidden flow: Divers exploring caves in Mexico have linked two submerged passageways, uncovering an underground river running at least 95 miles (154 km). Their find hinted at even more unseen routes below the surface, suggesting an even larger network.

Giant bloom: A rare plant known as the *Rafflesia arnoldii* in the rainforests of Indonesia produces the world's largest single flower, spreading several feet across. It survives by drawing what it needs from a host plant and releases a powerful scent that makes its presence hard to miss.

Water divide: About 97 per cent of Earth's water is salty ocean water, leaving only a small fraction as fresh water, which is mostly found in ice, groundwater, and surface sources. That tiny share supports drinking supplies and everyday use for billions of people.

Polar palms: Fossil evidence shows that palm trees once grew in what is now subarctic Canada. These tiny traces date to a period roughly 48 million years in the past, revealing that the region stayed warm year-round during that era.

Coral heart: Heart Reef is a naturally formed, heart-shaped coral patch in the Whitsundays, sitting within Australia's Great Barrier Reef. A pilot first noticed its outline during a flight, and today it is protected so people view it only from the air.

On the Lighter Side

What kind of music might you hear in space? Neptunes!

Let's all give a hand to these sock puppets!

Knock! Knock! Who's there? Whale. *Whale who?* Whale you be mine?

People say I look better without my glasses on. But I can't see it.

Sydney: I must have sneezed 50 times today. Do you think there is something in the air?
Allen: Yes, your germs!

Answers

Trivia answers: 1. Jim Davis 2. Teeth 3. Cheetah 4. Wizardry 5. Australia

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