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Everybody's Talking!

Root signals: In forests of the Dolomites in northern Italy, researchers observed trees adjusting their internal energy during a solar eclipse, with the largest, most established ones shifting long before any shadow crossed the canopy. Using low-power field equipment, the team detected electrical activity moving between trunks, including faint responses from broken stumps still rooted in place. It seemed to be a shared, timed reaction from the trees themselves. The findings hint at an underlying system of awareness, quietly led by older trees. Though not visible from the forest floor, the patterns suggested a kind of group timing. It may be that trees don't just grow together, but they "think" together, too.

Steep ride: In the Swiss Alps, a cable car climbs one of the steepest, open-air tracks in Europe. Originally built to move supplies for a mountain dam, it now carries visitors up the slope for the views. The car travels backward with no roof and just a bar across your legs, which adds to the thrill. It moves at a slow pace, but the sharp incline makes the ride feel more intense than expected. From the top, you can follow a lakeside trail or hike down to the village of Handegg. The mountain scenery includes forests, cliffs, and snowy peaks. The starting point is only accessible by stairs, so it may not suit everyone. Still, the ride offers a rare way to explore the high alpine landscape.

Pinball panic: Long before it became a popular pastime, pinball was seen in many parts of the U.S. as a dangerous threat to society. In the 1940s, the machines often were linked to illegal gambling and organized crime. Critics said they targeted young people and drained their money, especially since early versions didn't even have flippers, instead relying on chance. Mayors and judges launched aggressive campaigns against the games, raiding shops and smashing machines as part of public crackdowns. Pinball was blamed for encouraging bad habits, wasting time, and causing trouble in neighborhoods. Despite the bans, the game's appeal didn't fade, it just went underground for a while.

Pillar greenery: Along a crowded expressway in Mexico City, towering supports have been coated with layers of climbing plants and living foliage. These upright plant walls use recycled materials and filtered rainwater, kept thriving by a sensor-based system that tracks moisture and temperature. The design not only softens the harsh lines of traffic, it turns old infrastructure into something unexpectedly alive. Commuters say the air feels fresher and the view more calming. Beyond the visual impact, the project has created jobs and inspired new ways of thinking about public space. It's a functional mix of greenery and design that makes better use of space most people had stopped noticing.

Quoteable Quotes

"Every now and then a man's mind is stretched by a new idea or sensation, and never shrinks back to its former dimensions."
—*Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.*

"Simplicity, patience, compassion. These three are your greatest treasures."
—*Lao Tzu*


What's Happening

69th Houston Money Show – FREE! Lone Star Convention Center, 9055 Airport Road at FM 3083, Conroe. Friday, Jan. 16, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday, Jan. 17, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sell your coins, your gold and silver and jewelry for cash! Fun kids activities on Saturday include Treasure Chest Grab, Put-A-Penny-In-Slot Game and Youth Numismatist Auction. Go to HoustonCoinShow.org for a list of events.

2026 MLK Unity Parade - Jan. 19 in Downtown Houston originating on San Jacinto & Pease street beginning at 10 a.m. The parade's theme is 'Embracing the Oneness of Humanity' featuring more than 300 culturally diverse performance groups from across the nation and around the world. www.mlkgrandeparade.org

Let's Get Crafty Adult Program - Stop in for Afternoon Crafts for the Soul. This month's project is making Book Journals/Scrapbooks. Jan. 23 from 2 to 3 p.m. at Charles B. Stewart Library, 202 Bessie Price Owen Dr., Montgomery.

Job Fair - Jan. 27, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Lone Star Convention & Expo Center in Conroe. Pre-fair workshops will be held at the Conroe Chamber office on Jan. 22 from 9 a.m. to noon and Jan. 26 from 1 to 4 p.m. Workshops will cover resume writing, interviewing skills, LinkedIn, and how to stand out from the competition. The Job Fair and the workshops are free for job-seekers, though pre-registration is required for the workshops by visiting conroe.org/jobfair.

Scan here to see more What's Happenings: 

Trivia

1. A pangolin is a mammal—T/F?
2. Does nutmeg come from an evergreen or deciduous tree?
3. The ____ Decimal System catalogues items in a library.
4. What volcano in Italy destroyed the city of Pompeii?
5. Who wrote the book *Wicked*, a novel set in Oz?

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Your Weekly Horoscope

ARIES

(March 20 - April 19)



You may get a boost of
ambition and energy in
the middle of the week.
But be careful about
being overly aggressive
with others whose assis-

tance you might need now. Lucky
numbers: 14, 21, 30, 31, 37, 47.

TAURUS

(April 20 - May 20)



This week, you may get
a sudden insight that
has been trying to break
through for a while.
Energy and discipline
now could be available to

you to manifest this possibility. Lucky
numbers: 10, 15, 24, 34, 43, 44.

GEMINI

(May 21 - June 20)



Geminis tend to accumu-
late bits of information,
simply to have the knowl-
edge at hand. For the
next few weeks, you may
have an opportunity to

use it to help humanity at large. Lucky
numbers: 5, 12, 18, 36, 41, 43.

CANCER

(June 21 - July 22)



The focus for Cancers is
often their immediate
family and friends. How-
ever, the Aquarius energy
this month encourages
you to adjust your view

toward humanity as a whole. Lucky
numbers: 3, 7, 24, 27, 34, 46.

LEO

(July 23 - Aug. 22)



It has been about six
months since your birth-
day. Did you set a new
plan then? Now would be
a good time to review
progress and think about

any changes you may need to make.
Lucky numbers: 2, 4, 13, 29, 36, 39.

VIRGO

(Aug. 23 - Sept. 22)



You may experience a
lack of confidence at
midweek. This could pass
in a few days, so be
patient and acknowledge
any feelings of depression.

Retreat may be beneficial now. Lucky
numbers: 8, 12, 13, 23, 28, 44.

LIBRA

(Sept. 23 - Oct. 22)



The desire to maintain
peace can be very strong
for some Libras, but also
can create an unhealthy
balance. You may feel
strongly, midweek, that

this dynamic needs to change. Lucky
numbers: 6, 13, 25, 28, 45, 48.

SCORPIO

(Oct. 23 - Nov. 21)



Communicating your
intuitive insights and
truth to those who would
prefer to turn away from
them is difficult. At the
week's end, you may have

more endurance for this effort. Lucky
numbers: 12, 17, 24, 25, 41, 44.

SAGITTARIUS

(Nov. 22 - Dec. 21)



A theme for Sagittarius is
to develop a philosophy
that is genuine, and they
often advocate this to
others. You may be inter-
ested now in how this

connects to humanity's evolution.
Lucky numbers: 7, 11, 15, 18, 29, 46.

CAPRICORN

(Dec. 22 - Jan. 19)



Capricorn ambitions often
are directed at generating
success in their own lives.
This month, the universe
may ask you to step out
of your comfort zone to

help others succeed. Lucky numbers:
11, 21, 22, 26, 30, 46.

AQUARIUS

(Jan. 20 - Feb. 18)



Pluto is fully anchored
into Aquarius, signaling a
critical period of human
evolution for the next
decade. Aquarius energy
is strong now, providing

an opportunity in this regard. Lucky
numbers: 1, 8, 9, 28, 42, 47.

PISCES

(Feb. 19 - March 20)



This week you may find
yourself going back over
territory of the past sev-
eral years. Now is the
moment to achieve one
final insight that you

could take into the future. Lucky
numbers: 4, 12, 13, 31, 33, 35.

Lucky numbers this week: This week's odds favor Taurus winners
with the luckiest number being 15.

Did You Know...

Flutter vision: Butterflies can see ultraviolet patterns on
flowers, invisible to human eyes, that help them find nectar.
Some species also migrate remarkable distances, crossing vast
landscapes each year on their seasonal journeys.

Echo magic: Ancient amphitheaters were built with curved
designs and stone materials that carried voices across vast
crowds. Even without modern equipment, their structure let
every word and note ring out clearly.

Berry bounce: Fresh cranberries have a fun trick. If you
drop one, it should bounce, showing it's nice and firm. This
little test helps people pick the best berries for festive sauces,
relishes, or chutneys at home.

Billboard bans: Some cities have taken down outdoor
advertising altogether, removing giant signs from streets and
buses. Supporters say these ads clutter public spaces, while
critics argue they bring revenue and consumer choice.

Green alarm: That sweet smell of fresh-cut grass is actually
a chemical distress call. When damaged, plants release airborne
signals called green leaf volatiles (GLV). These warnings even
attract helpful insects. Call it nature's version of a silent alarm.

On the Lighter Side

Knock! Knock! *Who's there?* Jess. *Jess who?* Jess me and my
shadow.

What only starts to work only when it's been fired? A rocket.

Some cats are great bowlers, such as alley cats.

When everything is coming your way, you're in the wrong
lane.

Teacher: "The plural of mouse is mice. What is the plural of
baby?"
Student: "Twins."

Answers

Trivia answers: 1. True 2. Evergreen 3. Dewey
4. Mount Vesuvius 5. Gregory Maguire

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