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Everybody's Talking

Channel triumph: After falling in love with open-water swimming, Melanie Barratt, a former U.K. Paralympian, became the first blind woman to cross the English Channel. Starting from Dover and reaching Cap Gris Nez Beach on the French coast, she swam the full distance in less time than anticipated, guided by the faint visibility of a bright kayak beside her. Though swimming had once been her escape from isolation, it's now become her source of strength. With no visual markers in the open sea, she relied on instinct and training honed through past races in lakes and rivers. Her athletic background gave her confidence, but this journey was a personal test unlike any other. The cold water was intense, but the sense of freedom outweighed the fear.

Safety stir: At Canada's University of British Columbia, researchers have developed a simple but powerful tool: a drink stir stick that detects spiking drugs in seconds. Called Spikeless, the device changes colour when substances like ketamine or GHB are present, offering a fast, affordable layer of protection. An anti-violence advocate working with the team stressed that safety tools shouldn't put the burden on individuals to protect themselves. Instead, they believe the hospitality industry should take responsibility by making drug testing a standard part of service. The goal is to see these sticks be available at bars and clubs throughout the world. It's a small action that could help shift the culture of safety in nightlife.

Urban shift: In Barcelona, Spain, the city grid is getting a community-centred rethink through a model known as "the superblock." These zones restrict through-traffic and reclaim streets for pedestrians, trees, and cyclists, creating calmer, greener neighbourhoods within the existing layout. Inspired by a vision from the 1800s, the approach revives an idea aimed at providing fresh air and sunlight to all residents. Today, instead of smog and horns, superblock residents find play spaces, benches, and gardens where busy roads once ran. Though early changes sparked frustration, especially from drivers, the benefits of slower, shared streets have grown more apparent. With each new conversion, the city edges a bit closer to breathing more easily.

Ice secrets: When a glacier broke apart off the coast of Antarctica, scientists on a research vessel took the opportunity to dive beneath the icy surface. What they discovered stunned them. Corals, sponges, and creatures like sea spiders and icefish were thriving where sunlight never reaches. The team used a robotic submersible to scan the deep floor, uncovering signs that life had been quietly flourishing for generations. These ecosystems have existed below ice nearly 150 meters (492 ft.) thick, far from any sunlight or surface nutrients, thriving on underwater currents as the key to their survival. Alongside the rare sightings, the crew collected samples that might belong to previously unknown species. It seems even the coldest places are full of surprises.

Quoteable Quotes

"There is nothing stronger in the world than gentleness."—*Han Suyin*

"With hope, a mind is always free." —*Amy Tan*

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1. Does a lobster have 8, 10, or 12 legs?
2. The _____ Magazine published the original Sherlock Holmes stories.
3. Which Winter Olympic sport requires the use of brooms?
4. Two dogs and a cat find their way home in the story The Incredible _____.
5. Swahili is the official national language of several countries on this continent.

(Flip bottom of page for answers)

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Your Weekly Horoscope

ARIES

(March 20 – April 19)



You may have an opportunity this week to finally close the chapter on an old emotional wound. It likely will require making an adjustment in your view of the situation. Lucky numbers: 5, 6, 10, 12, 34, 36.

TAURUS

(April 20 – May 20)



Midweek emotional volatility may tempt you to be stubborn about something you want. Taking a break and relaxing with something pleasurable might be a better approach. Lucky numbers: 9, 16, 18, 22, 23, 43.

GEMINI

(May 21 – June 20)



Toward the week's end, you may find yourself overwhelmed when a lot of information comes your way. Wait a few days and then decide on any necessary changes. Lucky numbers: 8, 16, 18, 19, 25, 28.

CANCER

(June 21 – July 22)



The energy this week might generally be very beneficial for you and your endeavours. However, be careful to resist any temptation to go overboard in your actions. Lucky numbers: 6, 17, 23, 28, 42, 47.

LEO

(July 23 – Aug. 22)



Leos like to stay in the light of their sun. But early this week, looking into the darkness of the unconscious may serve you. See how you might integrate what you find. Lucky numbers: 16, 19, 23, 32, 33, 38.

VIRGO

(Aug. 23 – Sept. 22)



Virgos tend to focus on concrete information from their senses. Early week, however, it may be useful for you to incorporate any intuitive insights you receive. Lucky numbers: 10, 17, 18, 40, 43, 44.

LIBRA

(Sept. 23 – Oct. 22)



You may run into a stalemate with others at the beginning of the week. Can you find a compromise? If not, wait a few days for the situation to improve. Lucky numbers: 2, 6, 10, 17, 33, 41.

SCORPIO

(Oct. 23 – Nov. 21)



You may be inundated with intuitive insights for the next few weeks. It is important to find a healthy means to regularly unplug from others while this is in effect. Lucky numbers: 11, 14, 17, 18, 25, 31.

SAGITTARIUS

(Nov. 22 – Dec. 21)



At week's end, you may find that you hit a stalemate because your head and heart are not in sync. Try to take a deep breath and wait a few days to see if it passes. Lucky numbers: 1, 3, 20, 22, 25, 32.

CAPRICORN

(Dec. 22 – Jan. 19)



Capricorns often exhibit quiet, serious demeanours. But early this week may offer an opportunity for you to make a more emotional connection to others, if you seek it. Lucky numbers: 7, 28, 33, 34, 37, 47.

AQUARIUS

(Jan. 20 – Feb. 18)



It could be especially important this week to take a deep breath and count to 10 before speaking. Comments you make in anger may well come back to haunt you later. Lucky numbers: 3, 6, 13, 22, 34, 36.

PISCES

(Feb. 19 – March 20)



The weekend may be a good time to do an assessment of what is and isn't working in your life right now. This may be particularly true about your relationships. Lucky numbers: 4, 7, 18, 19, 27, 30.

Lucky numbers this week: This week's odds favour Cancer winners with the luckiest number being 17.

Did You Know...

Scary dial: When the horror film *Scream* hit theatres, its chilling phone scene did more than startle viewers—it sent them shopping. In the months that followed, Caller ID use tripled in North America. Suddenly, knowing who was calling became essential and not just convenient.

Air music: The theremin is an electronic instrument played without touch. Musicians control pitch and volume by moving their hands near two antennas. Shifts in position control pitch and volume, creating eerie, voice-like tones. Once a sci-fi soundtrack staple, the instrument is quietly making a comeback.

Global huh: All over the world, people say something that sounds like "huh?" From villages to cities, the sound shows up in everyday conversation when listeners don't understand. It's one of the few words nearly universally understood across languages.

Sky dance: In the 1970s, Canada's national airline, Air Canada, added a mirrored dance floor to the upper deck of some transatlantic flights. Passengers flying between Toronto and Europe could stretch their legs and show off their moves, high above the clouds.

Dessert fruit: The Blue Java banana has a creamy texture and a flavour often compared to vanilla ice cream. Its pale flesh is smooth and sweet, making it a treat that can be enjoyed raw or cooked. It's a tropical twist on dessert.

On the Lighter Side

What did the big bucket say to the little bucket? You look a little pail.

There are 10 kinds of people in the world. Those who understand binary and those who do not.

If at first you don't succeed, don't try sky diving.

Patient: "Doctor, people keep ignoring me."

Doctor: "Next, please!"

Knock! Knock! *Who's there?* Dare. *Dare who?* Dare, dare. It's OK.

Answers

Trivia answers: 1. 10 2. Strand 3. Curling 4. Journey 5. Africa

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