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Est. 1988

Vol. 5 No. 14 December 29, 2025

Everybody's Talking

Cave giant: Beneath a remote stretch of jungle in central Vietnam lies the world's largest known cave, a vast underground network named Son Doong. What sets it apart isn't just its size, but the strange, otherworldly features inside, like thick forests growing where the ceiling collapsed, and rivers that vanish into darkness. The cave includes towering rock formations, some as tall as buildings, and wide spaces big enough to fit aircraft. A local resident first stumbled upon it and researchers later mapped it, revealing an interior shaped by underground water over millions of years. To protect its untouched environment, access is limited. Even now, parts of the cave remain unexplored, leaving plenty of mystery underground.

Wave chaser: Across coastlines and rough seas, Pegleg Bennett has turned his unique path into a story of grit. Losing part of his leg as a child didn't slow him down, but became part of how he shaped his approach to riding waves. He crafted his own surf-adapted prosthetics, even drilling into them to improve movement. With each trip to new shores, he not only refined his skills but also helped push adaptive surfing into the spotlight. Using gear made from high-performance materials, he continues to lead by example, both in competition and as a mentor. Those around him, including others with physical challenges, have caught waves under his guidance. For him, it's not about limits but about what comes next.

Primate parenting: In Bristol, England, two young gorillas found an unexpected caregiver when their biological mothers couldn't raise them. Alan Toyne stepped in, blending human support with gorilla behaviour training. He wore textured vests to simulate fur and helped them eat alongside his own meals to mimic troop routines. Rather than isolating the infants, Toyne made sure they spent time with the other gorillas, building familiarity and social skills. The goal wasn't just survival, but preparing them for a proper return to their group. After months of care, they transitioned to surrogate gorilla mothers. What began as an emergency response became a lasting example of cross-species compassion.

Island evolution: Two types of palm trees evolved separately while growing side by side on Lord Howe Island, off Australia's coast. Scientists found that they bloom at different times depending on whether they grow in rocky or sandy soil, each type shaped by the microbes living underground. These changes created distinct species, supporting a rare concept called sympatric speciation. The palms likely came from mainland Australia and gradually diverged as they adapted to their surroundings. Researchers believe soil fungi influenced this split by forming unique bonds with each group. While Charles Darwin focused on isolation driving evolution, this case shows it can happen in close quarters, too.

Quoteable Quotes

“Always be a little kinder than necessary.” —James M. Barrie

“We should always allow some time to elapse, for time discloses the truth” —Seneca

What's Happening

Now through January 5th: A December to Remember Holiday Lights will be held on the Riverfront at Riverfront Esplanade, 179 S. Beach St., Daytona Beach. Large holiday lights display and nightly strolls along the Halifax River; lights and public displays run through Jan. 5. Free to attend.

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Trivia

1. All insects have antennae—T/F?
2. What did Fred Flintstone use to power his car?
3. This element of sunlight causes a sunburn.
4. Hippocrates wrote his oath for lawyers, doctors, or engineers?
5. “The Landlord's Game” was the original name for ____.

(Flip bottom of page for answers)

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(Over)

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Christmas in Killarney
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Your Weekly Horoscope

ARIES
(March 20 - April 19)

For the last several months, you might have felt that it took a lot of your effort to break out of an old emotional pattern. That dynamic could begin to shift now. Lucky numbers: 1, 6, 8, 13, 26, 31.

LIBRA
(Sept. 23 - Oct. 22)

Stability and commitment may be a focal point in a relationship for a few months. A conversation about what your requirements are in this regard is likely to be helpful. Lucky numbers: 12, 16, 17, 20, 30, 42.

TAURUS
(April 20 - May 20)

If you are looking to make structural changes in your life, what adjustment in your viewpoint would be helpful? Conversations with others about your beliefs could aid with this process. Lucky numbers: 5, 11, 22, 32, 35, 46.

SCORPIO
(Oct. 23 - Nov. 21)

You may be tempted to dig in your heels against opposition to your viewpoint and desires. Wait a few days before responding to others or taking any significant action. Lucky numbers: 3, 11, 14, 20, 31, 32.

GEMINI
(May 21 - June 20)

You may be overwhelmed by how much information is quickly coming your way. Consider developing a healthy coping mechanism now; this pattern may continue into 2026. Lucky numbers: 10, 15, 17, 33, 35, 47.

SAGITTARIUS
(Nov. 22 - Dec. 21)

You may have a lot of options to choose from at midweek. If they are pulling your heart and head in opposing directions, wait a few days to choose among them. Lucky numbers: 16, 18, 21, 23, 26, 27.

CANCER
(June 21 - July 22)

Six months have passed since your birthday. As we head into the new year, consider reviewing the goals you set then. What projects are ready for completion or change? Lucky numbers: 6, 17, 32, 41, 43, 46.

CAPRICORN
(Dec. 22 - Jan. 19)

For the next two weeks, be conscious of how you are communicating with a partner. What happens now could set the tone for your relationship during the next few months. Lucky numbers: 9, 14, 18, 21, 27, 30.

LEO
(July 23 - Aug. 22)

The childlike side of Leo loves moments of fun and play. This weekend may be a good time to schedule some downtime to do something that satisfies your inner child. Lucky numbers: 11, 15, 17, 21, 24, 30.

AQUARIUS
(Jan. 20 - Feb. 18)

An intellectual mindset may not work well in your interactions with others at the end of the week. This may be an invitation for you to develop a more sensitive approach. Lucky numbers: 8, 10, 11, 17, 27, 35.

VIRGO
(Aug. 23 - Sept. 22)

For the next few months, your sense of self may be highly sensitive to interactions with a partner. Both of you would do well to be very conscious of those exchanges now. Lucky numbers: 4, 13, 17, 18, 35, 38.

PISCES
(Feb. 19 - March 20)

This week you may experience low energy levels and a desire to retreat from the world. If you can, dial back on projects that require a large amount of your stamina. Lucky numbers: 2, 5, 11, 18, 36, 42.

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

Did You Know...

Stone king: Western Australia's Mount Augustus is known as the world's largest rock. Rising dramatically from surrounding plains, its central ridge stretches nearly 8 kilometres (5 mi.). Its impressive size and striking presence make it an unforgettable landmark.

Carbon clues: Ticks don't need sight to find people. Instead, they track the carbon dioxide we exhale. Along with body heat and movement, the scent helps them zero in on a host with remarkable accuracy. It's one reason ticks are so hard to avoid.

Not-quite solid: Glass may look solid, but unlike ice, its molecules never lock into place. Instead, they slow down into a dense, disordered jumble, leaving scientists debating whether glass is really just an extremely sluggish liquid.

Frosty bonus: When temperatures drop, carrots boost their sugar to shield their cells from freezing. This natural defence helps prevent damage. As a bonus, this gives us sweeter carrots to enjoy throughout the cold months.

Moon mementos: NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter has photographed shadows of several Apollo flags still standing on the Moon, even though Earth's telescopes can't pick them out. Years of intense sunlight have likely faded the flags to white.

On the Lighter Side

Knock! Knock! *Who's there?* Stephanie. *Stephanie who?* It's Stephanie going to be a nice day.

How does an octopus go into battle? Fully armed.

A turkey farm installed a gobblesone driveway.

There's nothing more odd than numbers not divisible by two.

Tom: "Have you ever seen a catfish?"

Jerry: "Sure!"

Tom: "How did it hold the rod?"

Answers

Trivia answers: 1. True 2. His feet 3. UV light 4. Doctors 5. "Monopoly"

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