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Everybody's Talking

Health shift: In a major public health move, Poland has launched a nationwide program offering free checkups to younger adults. Carried out at clinics across the country, the plan includes lab work and health history screening, aiming to catch warning signs of illness early. It focuses on those ages 20 to 40, encouraging preventative habits before symptoms appear. The initiative also addresses gaps in earlier systems that left many without proper follow-up. Experts say early testing can reduce long-term cases of heart disease, thyroid issues, and diabetes. With growing demand on the country's healthcare services, this approach should ease pressure over time. The rollout comes as Poland faces staffing shortages and rising medical needs.

Buried network: In the heart of Leuven, Belgium, archaeologists unearthed sections of ancient Roman plumbing crafted from hollowed tree trunks. The wooden system had been tucked beneath layers of swampy earth, its preservation aided by the damp conditions. Experts believe this setup was once part of a broader water system used to serve a Roman outpost positioned along a key military route. The location's distance from Rome hints that infrastructure reached even to the quieter corners of the empire. The trunks appear to have carried water across a stretch now hidden under the modern city. Researchers plan to carefully preserve the wood, offering a rare glimpse into how practical needs shaped ancient settlements.

Fungal fix: A new kind of diaper is using fungi to reprocess waste. Instead of lingering for centuries in landfills, these diapers contain a pouch of cultivated spores that activate when tossed out. Moisture triggers the fungi, which then digest the material from within, converting it to nutrient-rich soil and mycelium. The concept comes from a team blending entrepreneurship with fungal science, hoping to shift how single-use items are handled. Unlike traditional disposal methods, this approach avoids heavy processing or emissions. The key lies in enzymes that break down plastic at its core, dismantling stubborn compounds naturally. Subscription access now gives environmentally minded families a simple way to reduce their footprint.

Rice murals: In the countryside of northern Japan, a small village has reimagined farming fields as enormous natural canvases. By planting different, varied-colour rice strains, residents craft massive seasonal images that only fully come into view from elevated platforms. From above, portraits, cultural tributes, and pop culture figures emerge in full clarity. The designs shift with each phase of the growing cycle, creating a moving display that changes by the week. The work reflects not only artistic skill but also ties to local identity. Footpaths, shuttles, and small towers welcome onlookers throughout the region. This unusual blend of agriculture and visual art turns the rice season into a public celebration.

Quoteable Quotes

"In a gentle way, you can shake the world." —Mahatma Gandhi
"When the roots are deep, there is no reason to fear the wind."
—Proverb

What's Happening

Friday, January 9th at 10am: Creative Weaving Workshop
will be held at the Ormond Beach Regional Library, 30 S. Beach
St., Ormond Beach. Free basket-weaving class for adults materials
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Your Weekly Horoscope

ARIES**(March 20 - April 19)**

Your usual, assertive dynamic may be stymied midweek. Consider borrowing a page from Libra's playbook: approach the situation with grace and tact. Lucky numbers: 9, 10, 32, 33, 39, 41.

TAURUS**(April 20 - May 20)**

Your talent for plowing through obstacles may stall at week's end. Following a more intuitive path might help, but could require you to step out of your comfort zone. Lucky numbers: 20, 21, 28, 29, 32, 45.

GEMINI**(May 21 - June 20)**

Geminis often use a mental framework to approach the world. For the next two months, how might you apply this skill to do something that would serve others? Lucky numbers: 3, 9, 17, 18, 29, 44.

CANCER**(June 21 - July 22)**

Is your current life in alignment with what you love and value? Being out of sync is especially hard for Cancers. Look for an opportunity to change the situation. Lucky numbers: 11, 12, 13, 23, 33, 44.

LEO**(July 23 - Aug. 22)**

An astrological aspect for the next two months is focused on being of service to others. How might you use your natural leadership abilities to aid in this effort? Lucky numbers: 15, 16, 18, 21, 23, 31.

VIRGO**(Aug. 23 - Sept. 22)**

Serving others is a theme for Virgo. For the next two months, you may have an opportunity to examine how well you are aligned to this and what changes to make. Lucky numbers: 4, 13, 29, 31, 40, 47.

Lucky numbers this week: This week's odds favour Capricorn winners with the luckiest number being 7.

Did You Know...

Bite strength: The masseter, the muscle in your jaw, can clamp down with surprising force when you chew. Though small, it's often considered one of the body's strongest muscles, proving that power doesn't always come from size.

Cloud creators: In the Amazon rainforest, trees help kickstart the rainy season by releasing moisture through their leaves. This process, called transpiration, fills the air with water vapour, helping clouds form before ocean winds even arrive.

Space survivor: Tardigrades are tiny creatures often called "water bears." They can handle deep freezes and radiation that would destroy most life. Their survival tricks fascinate scientists looking for ways to help life endure in space.

Day time: Due to slowing rotation, Earth's day grows by about 1.8 milliseconds every hundred years. Many millions of years ago, a day lasted several hours less. This shows how much our planet's pace has quietly shifted over time.

Shower spark: Ed Robertson, lead singer of Barenaked Ladies, composed the theme song for the TV show *The Big Bang Theory* while showering. That playful tune became a huge hit, bringing the band lasting success.

On the Lighter Side

What do llamas like to eat? Llama beans.

Sign at a pottery shop: "Feats of Clay!"

I asked my friend, Nick, if he had 5 cents I could borrow. But he was Nicholas.

Mother: "Son, wake up it's 20 to 8."
Son: "In whose favour?"

Knock! Knock! Who's there? Taylor. Taylor who? Taylor your sister to pick up her toys.

Answers

3. Florida 4. Avocado 5. A kid

Trivia answers: 1. National Velvet 2. Winston Churchill

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