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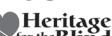
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Vol. 22 No. 28 January 19, 2026

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 neighbourhoods. 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

Every Thursday from 12:15 to 3:15: Open Game Play will be held at the River House at 179 Marine Street in Downton St. Augustine. Bring your own or use one of ours such as cards, scrabble, chess, etc. Free to attend. For more info, call 904-209-3655.

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Actual Size →

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?

(Flip bottom of page for answers)

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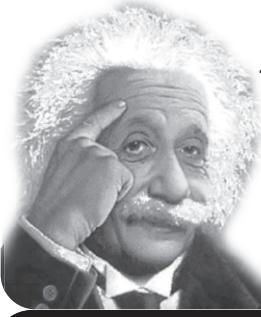
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