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Vol. 5 No. 16 February 23, 2026

Everybody's Talking

Chocolate cloud: People in Olten, Switzerland, looked up one morning to find cocoa dust drifting through the sky like light brown snow. A problem with factory ventilation sent the chocolate particles outside, where a gust of wind carried them across part of the town. A car was lightly dusted, and the factory offered to pay for cleaning. The company said the powder wasn't harmful, and production continued soon after. Locals described the scene as strange but harmless, with the air briefly carrying a hint of sweetness. While the event was unexpected, it caused no real trouble and left a few people amused. Sometimes even a factory glitch can sprinkle a little delight into the day.

Chairs open: In parks and town squares across Canada, a retired social worker has set out two chairs, offering a seat and an ear to anyone who needs to talk. His sign promises a listening ear, no strings attached, and no judgment. People pass by, some hesitant, some curious, but many eventually sit and share whatever's on their minds, from heartbreak to personal growth to moments of joy. He brings his own life experience to the table, but keeps the focus on the other person. There's no clock running, no pressure to explain, and no need to hold back. He travels wherever he's invited, sustained by donations and the kindness of others. For him, giving time is simply another way to serve with care.

Tree technique: In the steep terrain near Kyoto, Japan, a clever tree-growing method called daisugi lets multiple trunks grow straight up from a single base. This centuries-old practice was developed when timber was scarce, and it helped solve the need for strong, straight wood without clearing forests. Instead of cutting down trees, locals used careful trimming techniques, shaping growth to come from the same root. The result looks like a leafy hand reaching upward, with tall, narrow shoots that can be harvested every couple of decades. The main tree can keep producing wood for generations. The technique stands out as one of the rare ways trees can keep giving without being cut down.

Mountain passage: Plans are underway to carve a ship route through solid rock in coastal Norway to avoid dangerous, open-sea crossings. Instead of battling rough winds and high swells near a remote peninsula, vessels will be able to travel straight through the mountain itself. The plan includes reinforced entry points and clear safety rules to reduce the risk of ship collisions inside the tunnel. Sealed barriers will help keep water out during the deep underground excavation work. Once completed, the passage will handle a steady mix of commercial and passenger ships. Conditions in this area have challenged sailors for generations. The project is designed to improve safety and simplify everyday navigation for vessels.

Quoteable Quotes

"Today is the only day. Yesterday is gone." —John Wooden
 "Healing takes courage, and we all have courage, even if we have to dig a little to find it." —Tori Amos

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Trivia

1. What is the capital of Bulgaria?
2. Who directed the film Young Frankenstein?
3. Which Beatle was first to cross Abbey Road on the album cover?
4. This is the oldest known kind of tree in the world.
5. This German highway is famous for its sections without a speed limit.

(Flip bottom of page for answers)

(Over)

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Your Weekly Horoscope

ARIES
 (March 20 - April 19)

 Subtle feelings of emotional stress may arise in the mid- to late week. Some flexibility might help you process any information emerging from your unconscious. Lucky numbers: 1, 2, 10, 12, 14, 29.

TAURUS
 (April 20 - May 20)

 You may be ambitious to step into a new arena that better reflects your authentic self. At week's end, be aware of feeling conflicted because this change might be scary. Lucky numbers: 3, 12, 21, 34, 36, 38.

GEMINI
 (May 21 - June 20)

 Things may be a bit chaotic this week. You might be busy and subject to information overload. Catalog the data you receive, but wait to make important decisions. Lucky numbers: 6, 9, 11, 15, 25, 45.

CANCER
 (June 21 - July 22)

 At midweek, you may want to retreat into your shell. Even if you can't fully disconnect now, consciously find some moments of quiet space for yourself. Lucky numbers: 16, 17, 19, 29, 40, 45.

LEO
 (July 23 - Aug. 22)

 In time for the weekend, you may want to break loose and have some fun. Enjoy, but remember "all things in moderation," so you don't have regrets come Monday. Lucky numbers: 4, 6, 8, 11, 40, 41.

VIRGO
 (Aug. 23 - Sept. 22)

 For the next few weeks, your normal skill set may be disrupted. If your work requires detail and precision, be careful to continually double check everything. Lucky numbers: 13, 16, 28, 34, 41, 44.

LIBRA
 (Sept. 23 - Oct. 22)

 Libra's skill of tactful, diplomatic communication can help defuse problems between conflicting parties. But for the next few weeks, such situations may get bogged down. Lucky numbers: 7, 9, 31, 38, 39, 40.

SCORPIO
 (Oct. 23 - Nov. 21)

 A Scorpio theme is communicating intuitive insights to others. For the next few weeks, this may be stressful. Perhaps postpone difficult conversations, if you can. Lucky numbers: 14, 30, 32, 42, 43, 44.

SAGITTARIUS
 (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21)

 You may receive conflicting information this week, pulling you in different directions. Resolving it might require finding a balance between your head and your heart. Lucky numbers: 9, 14, 15, 20, 23, 37.

CAPRICORN
 (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19)

 Nurturing is not a word most would use to describe Capricorns. But at midweek, you may find an opportunity to nurture a project, another person, or even yourself. Lucky numbers: 8, 14, 19, 26, 39, 43.

AQUARIUS
 (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18)

 Aiding humanity's evolution is the long-term Aquarius challenge, which can seem like a Sisyphean task. At week's end, your leadership may attract partners to help. Lucky numbers: 2, 3, 17, 18, 23, 30.

PISCES
 (Feb. 19 - March 20)

 Carefully consider information you may receive over the next few weeks. Details may be fuzzy or even deceptive. Be cautious in using it to make any decisions. Lucky numbers: 5, 7, 16, 26, 38, 46.

Lucky numbers this week: This week's odds favour Leo winners with the luckiest number being 11.

Did You Know...

Wind riders: A dandelion seed drifts with surprising ease, using tiny filaments that let air slip through and create a gentle vortex. Though delicate and full of empty space, this clever design carries the seed far across fields and beyond.

Immortal trick: A certain jellyfish that is no bigger than a fingernail, the *Turritopsis dohrnii*, has an unusual ability. It can reset its life when stressed. Instead of reaching a natural end, it shifts back into an earlier stage, a cycle that lets it begin again and again.

Salt vaults: Deep underground in Kansas (U.S.), a salt mine holds government files, hospital records, and Hollywood films. Its stable climate and secure depth keep treasures intact, turning the mine into an unlikely archive.

Sticky secret: Long before modern glue, people heated birch bark to make a black tar that secured tools to wooden shafts. Strong and versatile, this Stone Age invention worked so well it was used for thousands of years.

Wing ears: Some butterflies have tiny ears tucked near their wings, and can actually hear people talking. In a certain group, puffy veins on their wings may even help funnel sound into those hidden ears.

On the Lighter Side

Knock! Knock! Who's there? Sing. Sing who? Whoooo!

What do you put in a barrel to make it lighter? A hole.

The seafood salad was shrimply awful.

I came home today to find my piano sitting on the porch. It forgot its keys.

Mom: "Rabbits live in warrens, foxes in dens, birds in nests. What is your room?"
 Son: "A mess?"

Answers

Trivia answers: 1. Sofia 2. Mel Brooks 3. John Lennon 4. Britstecone pine 5. Autobahn

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