



Aruba's ONLY English Vacation Newspaper

Cah'i Orgel: A key instrument in Aruban folklore music



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LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

SUNDAY: MARRYBELL MADURO SINGER 6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.	MONDAY: ANDERSON BAHAMON SINGER 6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.	TUESDAY: JEAN PAUL SAXOPHONIST 6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.	WEDNESDAY: MAILLEYN ALVARADO VIOLINIST 6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.	THURSDAY: MARRYBELL MADURO SINGER 6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.	FRIDAY: MAILLEYN ALVARADO VIOLINIST 7:00 TO 9:00 P.M.	SATURDAY: RICKY THOMAS GUITAR 6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.
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Springing forward: Is this the last time the clocks change?

This Sunday, March 8, 2026, millions of people across North America will perform a familiar ritual: at 2 a.m. local time, clocks will officially "spring forward" by one hour. While this annual shift often brings groans over lost sleep, it also marks the beginning of longer, lighter evenings as spring approaches. However, for a significant portion of the population, this particular time change may be their last.

The End of the Switch for British Columbia

The headline "last time the clocks change" is a literal reality for residents of British Columbia, Canada. The provincial government has finalized plans to adopt permanent daylight saving time (DST) following this weekend's shift. British Columbia will join the ranks of Yukon and Saskatchewan, which already observe a single time year-round. This move follows years of public consultation where an overwhelming majority of residents expressed a desire to "lock the clock" to avoid the health and safety disruptions associated with the biannual switch.

The Movement in the United States

While British Columbia is tak-



People look on October 29, 2010 at the astronomical clock in the Strasbourg cathedral in eastern France. Its main features, are a perpetual calendar (including a computus), an orrery (planetary dial), a display of the real position of the sun and the moon, and solar and lunar eclipses dates.

ing the plunge, the situation in the United States remains more complex. Under the Uniform Time Act of 1966, states are permitted to opt out of daylight saving time and remain on permanent standard time (as Hawaii and most of Arizona do), but they are currently prohibited by federal law from adopting permanent DST. Despite this legal hurdle, a growing number of states are preparing for a permanent change:

The 19-State Waitlist: At least 19 states—including

Florida, Washington, and Texas—have passed legislation to observe DST permanently. These laws are "triggered," meaning they will take effect only if the U.S. Congress amends federal law.

The Sunshine Protection Act: This federal bill aims to make daylight saving time permanent nationwide. While it famously passed the Senate unanimously in 2022, it stalled in the House and has faced similar hurdles in subsequent sessions. **The Daylight Act of 2026:** A

new proposal introduced in the House of Representatives in February 2026 suggests a compromise: shifting all clocks by 30 minutes permanently, effectively splitting the difference between standard and daylight time.

Why the Push to "Lock the Clock"?

The debate over changing the clocks is no longer just about convenience; it has become a matter of public health and safety. Research has consistently

shown that the abrupt shift in the spring is linked to:

Increased Health Risks: Studies indicate a spike in heart attacks and strokes on the Monday following the "spring forward".

Traffic Safety: Fatal car crashes temporarily increase in the days after the change due to sleep deprivation and darker mornings.

Productivity and Well-being: The American Academy of Sleep Medicine has noted that the seasonal change negatively impacts sleep schedules, mental health, and general alertness.

Preparing for the Shift

Regardless of the ongoing legislative battles, the clocks will indeed change for most this Sunday. To minimize the "spring forward" shock, experts recommend: **Gradual Adjustment:** Shift your bedtime 15 to 20 minutes earlier for several nights before Sunday.

Morning Sunlight: Get outside for early morning sun during the first week of DST to help reset your internal body clock.

Check Your Devices: While smartphones and computers update automatically, remember to manually adjust car dashboards, ovens, and wall clocks. □

How a new AI blood test is ending the era of "silent" liver disease



Blood for testing is placed on a holder at a New York Blood Center's Brooklyn Donor Center on August 13, 2024 in Downtown Brooklyn in New York City.

BALTIMORE, MD — For decades, the medical community has grappled with a frustrating paradox: the human liver is one of the body's most resilient organs, capable of incred-

ible regeneration, yet it is also one of the most stoic. It rarely complains until it is too late. By the time symptoms of cirrhosis or liver cancer appear, the damage is often irreversible.

But as of March 2026, that era of medical "guesswork" is coming to a definitive end. A groundbreaking AI-driven "liquid biopsy" has officially cleared clinical hurdles and begun its rollout across major U.S. hospital systems, promising to catch liver disease not just months, but years before it becomes life-threatening.

Cracking the Genetic Code

The technology, developed through a massive collaborative effort between researchers at Johns Hopkins and AI specialists in Silicon Valley, operates on a microscopic scale. Every day, our cells shed tiny fragments of DNA into our bloodstream. When an organ is under stress—even at a level invis-

ible to traditional scans—the patterns of these DNA fragments change.

The new AI tool, dubbed "HepaScan AI," uses deep-learning algorithms to recognize these "molecular signatures" of early-stage fibrosis. In trials involving over 15,000 patients, the test demonstrated a 94% accuracy rate in identifying Stage 1 liver scarring—a phase where the condition can often be entirely reversed through simple lifestyle changes or newly developed targeted therapies.

"We are moving from a reactive 'wait-and-see' model of medicine to a proactive 'detect-and-defend' model," says Dr. Aris Thorp,

a leading hepatologist involved in the rollout. "For the millions of Americans living with undiagnosed fatty liver disease, this test is quite literally a lifesaver."

A Ripple Effect for Public Health

The timing of this breakthrough is critical. With the rise of metabolic-associated fatty liver disease (MASLD), health experts had feared a looming "transplant crisis." The AI liquid biopsy offers a way to flatten that curve. Because the test requires only a standard blood draw, it can be integrated into annual physical exams, making high-level diagnostic power accessible to rural clinics and underserved urban centers alike. □

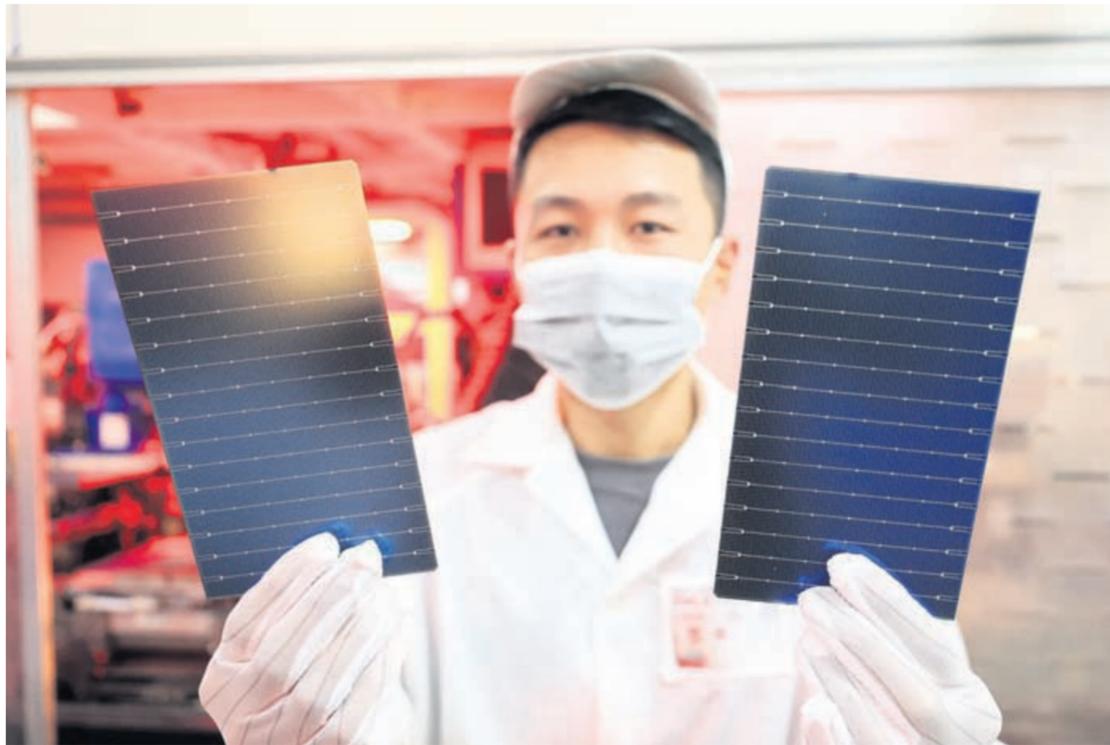
The Green Revolution: From silicon waste to living, biodegradable solar power

For decades, the "green" in green energy had a hidden, gray shadow. While solar panels slashed carbon emissions, their end-of-life reality was anything but eco-friendly. Most conventional panels are a complex "sandwich" of silicon, silver, and toxic lead, bound together by polymers that make them nearly impossible to recycle efficiently. Experts estimate that by 2050, the world could be facing 80 million metric tons of retired solar waste. However, a new wave of "living" and biodegradable technology is finally offering a solution that is green to the core. From Mexican biotechnologists using algae to Finnish researchers creating panels that "vanish" into the soil, the next generation of solar power is no longer just about harvesting light—it's about leaving no trace behind.

The Algae Breakthrough: Energy That Breathes

Leading this charge is Adán Ramírez Sánchez, a Mexican biotechnologist who, at just 23, was named an MIT "Innovator Under 35" for a radical concept: Intelligent Solar Biopanel.

Unlike rigid silicon cells, these semi-transparent green triangles are powered by microalgae and carbon nanotechnology. The panels function like a living leaf, us-



An employee shows photovoltaic cell modules, used in solar panels, at a factory which produces the modules for export to the U.S. and Europe, in Lianyungang, in China's eastern Jiangsu province on September 26, 2025.

ing photosynthesis to absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen while simultaneously generating clean electricity. "Our technology is the only multipurpose system in the world that provides well-being and health to occupants while giving a unique design to buildings," says GreenFluidics, the company manufacturing the panels. Because they are made from renewable marine resources, the panels are entirely biodegradable at the end of their lifespan. Beyond energy, they act as natural insulation, keeping buildings

cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.

"Transient Electronics": Solar Cells That Compost

While algae panels are transforming urban skylines, another breakthrough is targeting the future of "smart" agriculture. In a landmark 2025 study published in the *Journal of Materials Chemistry A*, researchers from Poland and Finland demonstrated organic photovoltaic (OPV) devices built entirely from soil-compatible materials. These "transient" solar cells use regenerated cellulose—

a plant-based material—to replace fossil-based plastics. They are designed to power sensors in fields or greenhouses for a set period and then, once their job is done, simply decompose into the earth. Key highlights of this "compostable" solar tech include: High Efficiency: Reaching a power conversion efficiency of 15.88%, proving that eco-friendly materials can rival traditional ones.

Carbon Electrodes: Replacing expensive and scarce silver with a newly formulated, soil-compatible carbon paste.

Environmental Safety: Water solubility tests have confirmed that these components do not harm soil quality or pH balance as they break down.

Powering Through the Clouds: The Fruit Waste Solution

Adding to the momentum is the AuREUS system, developed by Filipino engineer Carvey Ehren Maigue. This technology uses luminescent particles extracted from fruit and vegetable waste to capture ultraviolet rays. Even on cloudy days or in the shade, these particles convert UV light into visible light, which is then captured by traditional PV cells to generate power.

By turning agricultural waste into a high-tech solar concentrator, Maigue has created a circular system that can be applied to windows, walls, and even electric cars.

The Road to 2030: A Circular Economy

The shift toward biodegradable and organic solar technology comes at a critical time. Traditional recycling plants, like the ROSI plant in France, are working overtime to recover precious silver and copper from old panels. However, with silver supplies tightening and the "waste mountain" growing, the industry is looking for a more permanent solution. □

Renewables officially take the reins of the American grid

HOUSTON, TX — For decades, the American energy landscape was defined by the towering smokestacks of coal plants and the rhythmic thrum of natural gas turbines. But as of March 2026, the data is undeniable: the United States has crossed a historic structural tipping point. Renewable energy—led by a massive surge in solar power and utility-scale battery storage—is no longer just an alternative; it is now the dominant force driving the nation's electrical grid.

According to new year-to-date figures, renewable energy sources accounted for a staggering 88% of all new electrical capacity

added to the U.S. grid over the last year. Even more impressively, federal energy forecasts now project that wind, solar, and battery projects will make up 99% of all new capacity through the remainder of 2026. This shift marks the definitive end of the "fossil fuel era" for new infrastructure, signaling a future where the American economy runs on clean, homegrown power.

Economics Over Ideology

While environmental policy has played a role, experts note that the primary driver of this "Green Tipping Point" is cold, hard economics. The cost of solar and wind

generation has plummeted so significantly that it is now cheaper to build and operate new renewable sites than to continue running many existing coal or gas plants.

"We are seeing a market-driven revolution," says Elena Rossi, a senior energy analyst. "In states like Texas and Iowa, we aren't just building solar because it's green; we're building it because it's the most cost-effective way to keep the lights on. When you couple that with the recent breakthroughs in long-duration battery storage, the old argument that 'the sun doesn't always shine' is quickly becoming obso-



An aerial view of wind turbines at the Altamont Pass wind farm on January 13, 2026 in Livermore, California.

lete."

The Rise of the "Battery Belt" The most critical component of this transition has been the rapid deployment of battery storage. In 2025 alone, the U.S. added record-breaking amounts of storage capacity, allow-

ing the grid to "save" excess solar power generated during the day for use during peak evening hours. This has created a more resilient grid, particularly in regions prone to extreme weather, from the heatwaves of the Southwest to the winter storms of the Northeast. □

Bison herds 'reawaken' Yellowstone's prairies

Washington, United States

There are few symbols of the American West more iconic than the bison -- shaggy giants that once roamed in the tens of millions before being nearly annihilated by European settlers.

A new study published Thursday in *Science* finds that bringing North America's largest land mammals back to their ancient stomping grounds is breathing new life into grassland ecosystems, with benefits cascading across the food web.

Scientists have long suspected bison act as "keystone species," shaping prairie landscapes through grazing, wallowing and seed dispersal. Previous research has even suggested their vast herds help lock carbon in the soil.

But the latest findings, from Yellowstone National Park, reveal just how dramatic their influence can be for ecosystem health when they are allowed to roam freely through the wilderness.

By munching through grasses, bison speed up the nitrogen cycle, supercharging plants with nutrients.

The result: forage that is more than 150 percent richer in protein -- a gift to every creature that feeds on the prairie, from elk and deer to pronghorn and bighorn



Yellowstone's bison offer scientists rare insights into how large herbivores influence ecosystems.
Image: Pete Nuij

sheep.

"It truly is a reawakening of what had been there in the past," said Bill Hamilton, a co-lead author of the paper and professor at Washington and Lee University.

- Natural laboratory -

Bison herds were once so vast in the western United States that their hoofbeats rumbled like distant thunder. Early 19th-century estimates put their numbers between 30 and 60 million.

Then came the railroads. The building of the first Transcontinental line was

accompanied by a ruthless extermination campaign -- hunters shooting from trains, carcasses left to rot -- aimed not only at supplying hides but at starving Native Americans, for whom bison were a cultural and economic lifeline.

By the early 20th century, the species was teetering on the brink. Revival efforts eventually pushed their numbers back to roughly 400,000, but nearly all survive in small, tightly managed herds on private ranches or reserves.

Only in Yellowstone National

Park, home to about 5,000 animals, do bison still roam with something like their old freedom, covering nearly 1,000 miles a year on a 50-mile back-and-forth migration. For scientists, that makes the park a rare, living laboratory.

Between 2015 and 2021, a study led by National Park Service biologist Chris Geremia tracked the animals' movements and grazing patterns across their main habitats, measuring plant growth, nutrient cycling, soil chemistry and more.

- Balance restored -

They compared grazed and ungrazed patches, pairing field experiments with satellite imagery and GPS collar data to capture bison impacts across their migratory range.

Results show roaming bison keep grasses and wildflowers short, dense and protein-rich -- and plant communities surprisingly diverse.

"Grasses exude carbon into the soil after being grazed, and that actually stimulates microbial populations for up to 48 hours," explained Hamilton.

That microbial burst translated to more ammonium and nitrates for new growth -- a feedback loop that boosted both plants and animals. Bison dung and urine added another jolt of nitrogen, compounding the fertilization effect.

"We took that 150 percent increase and we calculated it across the whole migration (area), and it provides over three million kilograms more crude protein if you have bison," said co-author Jerod Merkle of the University of Wyoming.

Even areas that looked "mowed flat" by bison remained ecologically vibrant, with productivity and diversity intact. □

How Aledo's "discover the extra" is sparking a rural renaissance

ALEDO, IL — In the quiet stretches of Mercer County, where the horizon is dominated by the rhythm of the seasons, a new kind of harvest is taking root. It isn't corn or soybeans, but rather a fierce, entrepreneurial spirit that is breathing fresh life into the American small town.

At the center of this movement is the "Discover the Extra" initiative. Sponsored by the Mercer County Forever Fund, the program has become a national blueprint for rural survival in the 2020s. On Thursday night, community members gathered at the local VFW to hear from keynote speaker and rural advocate Andrew McCrea, marking a celebratory milestone: for the first time in

a decade, the town's Main Street storefronts are at 95% occupancy.

"Small towns aren't dying; they're just waiting for a reason to wake up," said Sarah Miller, a local boutique owner who opened her doors thanks to a microgrant from the initiative. "The 'extra' isn't just about money. It's about the extra mile a neighbor goes to help you fix a sign, or the extra hour a volunteer spends mentoring a high schooler on a business plan."

The "Discover the Extra" initiative operates on a simple but radical premise: rural communities cannot wait for outside corporations to save them. Instead, they must cultivate their "extra"



assets—the unique local heritage, the specialized craftsmanship, and the tight-knit social fabric that big cities often lack.

In Aledo, this has manifested in several tangible wins:

The Revitalization of the Historic District: Through the

Forever Fund, five historic buildings that were slated for demolition have been stabilized and converted into "maker spaces" where local artisans sell everything from hand-thrown pottery to custom leather goods.

The Youth Entrepreneurship Pipeline: A partnership with

the local high school now provides seniors with "starter kits" for service-based businesses, encouraging the next generation to build careers in Mercer County rather than fleeing to urban centers.

Sustainable Agri-Tourism: The initiative has helped traditional family farms pivot toward high-margin tourism, hosting seasonal "Farm-to-Table" dinners that draw visitors from across the Tri-State area.

The success of the program has caught the attention of regional policymakers. By focusing on local philanthropy and endowment-based growth, Aledo is proving that small towns can be hubs of innovation rather than relics of the past. □

Ivory Coast women tap newfound freedom as rubber farm owners

Toumodi, Ivory Coast

Ivorian farmer Affoua Mea decided one day she'd had enough. Despite years cultivating rubber trees on the plantation inherited from her father, her brothers still held the purse strings.

Last year, the 64-year-old bought her own piece of land thanks to an initiative aimed at closing the gender gap in agricultural land ownership in the west African country.

"The family plot belongs to all of us," she said, but added: "What they give me are crumbs. That's why I decided to start my own plantation."

Standing among the tall trees whose slim trunks are tapped for the white sap known as latex that is refined to make rubber, Mea savoured her newfound autonomy.

"I'm really independent and freer," she told AFP at the plantation in the eastern town of Bongouanou. Farming has long been the pillar of Ivory Coast's economy, but just five percent of women own agricultural land compared to 25 percent of men, accord-



Ivorian farmer Affoua Mea inspects the rubber tree seedlings on the family plantation in Bongouanou on February 27, 2026.

ing to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. Such inequality is not uncommon in sub-Saharan Africa, where women make up nearly half the workforce in the farming sector, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization says.

Mea was helped by the Association of Natural Rubber Professionals of Ivory Coast (APROMAC), which offers

women subsidies to buy rubber trees, at sometimes as much as 80 percent.

Now she is in control of her finances, Mea said she won't be passing her land down to her son. "I'll leave it to my daughter," she said.

- 'Do what I want' -

Holding a machete, her tunic knotted at the waist, Solange Kouakou, 45, also bought plants at reduced

cost to cultivate the land handed down by her father near the town of Toumodi. To fill a hectare (2.4 acres) of land, she paid 62,000 CFA francs (\$110) instead of 210,000 CFA francs with APROMAC subsidies.

"A lot of women say they, too, want to do rubber trees," she said.

Owning her own land means she makes around \$116 a month, which nev-

ertheless is still only around the minimum wage.

But "women who don't have their own money, if they need to pay for something, they ask their husband... I do whatever I want", she said proudly.

Her friend Jacqueline Tano, 44, followed suit. She bought rubber plants this year for her plantation, which spans half a hectare. Since 2009, around 2,500 women have bought rubber plants at low cost under the subsidy scheme offered to the least well-off.

APROMAC said demand had increased in the last five years when new subsidies exclusively for women were introduced.

Monthly contributions paid by producers finance the subsidy scheme.

- Cultural obstacles -

Women wanting to farm, however, can still face hurdles.

"In some places, girls aren't allowed to inherit a plot of land", a ban that is cultural rather than set by the law, said APROMAC member Jacqueline N'Guessan, who represents the country's women rubber producers. □

A landmark for humanity: Chile officially eradicates leprosy

SANTIAGO – In a historic triumph for global public health, Chile has been officially verified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as the second country in the world and the first in the Americas to eliminate leprosy. The announcement, met with international acclaim, marks the end of a centuries-long battle against one of history's most misunderstood and stigmatized diseases. The achievement follows decades of rigorous surveillance, community-led health initiatives, and a commitment to ensuring that no citizen was left behind. While the world has made significant strides against the disease since the introduction of multi-drug therapy in the 1980s, Chile's success provides a definitive roadmap for

other nations striving for a "zero-leprosy" future.

From Stigma to Science

For generations, leprosy (Hansen's disease) was synonymous with isolation. In Chile's early history, those diagnosed were often relegated to the fringes of society. However, the turning point came when the nation shifted its focus from isolation to integration. By treating leprosy as a manageable chronic condition rather than a social curse, Chile dismantled the barriers of fear that often prevented people from seeking help.

"This is not just a victory of medicine; it is a victory of compassion," said a spokesperson for the Chilean Ministry of Health. "We didn't just cure a disease; we restored dignity to

those who were once hidden away."

A Model for the Americas

Chile's strategy relied on a "boots-on-the-ground" approach. Healthcare workers traveled to the most remote corners of the Andes and the deepest reaches of the Patagonian fjords to conduct screenings and provide education. By integrating leprosy services into the general primary healthcare system, the government ensured that diagnosis was swift and treatment was free and accessible to all.

The WHO's verification process is famously stringent, requiring years of documented proof that there is no local transmission of the bacteria. Chile's ability to meet these standards highlights the strength of its

public health infrastructure and serves as a beacon of hope for neighboring nations in South America where the disease still persists.

The Global Ripple Effect

Chile joins a very exclusive club of nations that have successfully inter-

rupted transmission, following the precedent set by previous global leaders in the field. Health experts believe this milestone will trigger a "domino effect," encouraging international donors and governments to reinvest in the final push to eradicate leprosy globally. □

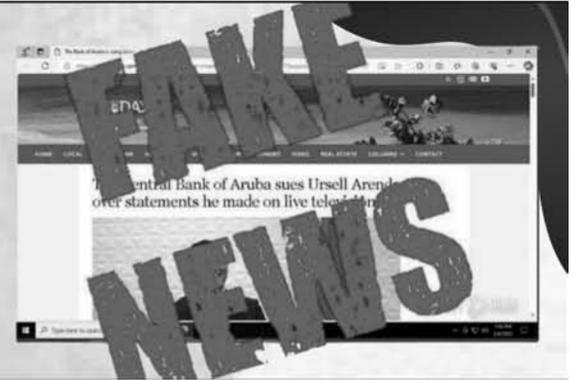


View of the city of Santiago and the Andes Mountains, taken from the Metropolitan Park on July 2, 2024.

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Mothers of Chibok pose for a photograph holding the Nutzy "Mothers of Chibok" product line during their visit to the Nutzy peanut butter factory in Lagos on February 27, 2026.

Nigeria's 'Mothers of Chibok' go from farm to factory

Lagos, Nigeria

Four Nigeria women whose daughters were abducted by Boko Haram in the infamous 2014 Chibok kidnapping set foot for the first time in two factories where they hope a new food line will help finance their families' education. Beaming with pride and dressed in colourful traditional gowns, they donned hairnets before entering the production area, where peanuts they cultivate at home are processed into peanut butter and products, and marketed under the new "Mothers of Chibok" label. "If we just sit back and do nothing, if we stop sending our children to school and stop going to our farms, that would mean accepting what Boko Haram wants, which is that Western education should be forbidden," said Yana Galang, 55, a mother of eight, including Rifkatu, who was abducted at the

age of 18 and whom she has never seen again. "The little money we have, we will spend it on nothing but our children's education, sending them to the best schools." In 2014, the abduction of 276 schoolgirls in Chibok, Borno State, sparked international outrage and the global "Bring Back Our Girls" campaign. Some girls subsequently escaped, others were freed years later, some with children they had during captivity. But 12 years on, around a hundred of the girls are still missing, leaving their families in constant anguish.

- A Better Future -

In Chibok, a poor farming village where residents primarily rely on growing maize, peanuts, millet and rice, the threat of attacks and kidnappings persists. Boko Haram and its rival,

the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP), still kidnap and terrorise local populations. Nine women from Chibok are collaborating with Zenfix Nigeria, a company that sells peanuts and nut products, and Ajrena Foods, producer of the Nutzy peanut butter brand, very popular in Nigeria. This partnership was supported by Joel Kachi Benson, director of the documentary "Mothers of Chibok," released in theatres last week, which chronicles the lives of these mothers. "I think the message is clear that evil will never triumph over good. And that these women are not broken. They might be grieving, but they're not broken. And all they need really is the support, the collaboration, the encouragement," said Benson, surrounded by the women. Some don't know if their daughters are even still alive. □

'Bunnings Croc' safe and sound after daring midnight rescue

A juvenile freshwater crocodile was successfully captured in a suburban Newcastle creek on Sunday night, March 1, 2026, following a tense 48-hour search that gripped the local community.

The "Bunnings Croc" Discovery

The unusual saga began on Saturday afternoon, February 28, when 12-year-old Lionel Saunders and his friends spotted the reptile in Ironbark Creek at Federal Park in Wallsend, located directly behind a local Bunnings Warehouse. Initially, the boy's mother, Stephanie Kirsop, was skeptical, suspecting the sighting might be a prank or a "log" until she saw video evidence from her son.

A Dramatic Midnight Rescue

Experts from the Australian Reptile Park, led by senior manager Billy Collett, were called in to handle the situation. After an unsuccessful attempt on Saturday, the team returned on Sunday night.

The Capture: Zookeeper Brandon Gifford spotted the crocodile's eyes reflecting in the water using a torch.

The Leap: In a maneuver described as "something Steve Irwin would have been proud of," Collett dived from a boat into the murky water to secure the metre-long reptile.

Conditions: The team navigated low visibility and thick vegetation, nearly losing the animal 3 kilometers downstream from the original sighting before the final breakthrough.

Out of Place and Out of Time

The discovery has baffled authorities, as freshwater crocodiles (*Crocodylus johnstoni*) are native to the tropical north, roughly 2,000 kilometers away from temperate New South Wales.

Fate: Experts believe the animal was likely an illegal pet that was released after becoming too large or dangerous.

Survival: Had the crocodile not been caught, it would have likely perished during the upcoming Australian winter. □



Billy Collett jumped into the creek to rescue the croc
Photo: Australian Reptile Park

Create museum memories with the entire family!

Museums are an integral part of conserving and honoring cultures, and Aruba is no exception. Our Island has a wide selection of various museums for our locals and visitors to see. Take this opportunity to learn about our island and experience a different day beyond the beach. Let us introduce to you to these locations.

Museum of Industry Aruba

The Museum of Industry is located in San Nicolas. This museum presents the history of gold, aloe, phosphate, oil and tourism through elaborated displays and multimedia installations.

The Museum of Industry is situated in the Water Tower and narrates Aruba's industrial history which began in the 19th century. The Water Tower was built in 1939 and consists of three sections: the substructure, the high-rising vertical shaft, and the tank at the top. The Water Tower was purchased by the Monuments fund in 2003 so it could be restored and preserved as one of Aruba's monuments. The Museum of Industry is part of Aruban Museum Foun-



ation (FMA), which is a foundation that maintains, preserves, and protects the Aruban cultural sector, history, and nature. The museum of Industry is open daily from 9 am till 6 pm. For more information check out their Facebook page: Museum of Industry Aruba.

Archaeological Museum of Aruba

The Archaeological Museum of Aruba is located at Schelpstraat 42 in downtown Oranjestad. The renovated historic Ecury complex in downtown Oranjestad has been transformed from a family home to a modern museum that preserves Aruba's Amerindian cultural heritage. This 21st century museum is especially designed to preserve valuable artifacts dating back to the Pre-Ceramic

period of 2500 BC.

In the late 1980's AMA identified its need for an adequate housing for its collection and activities. After studying various options, a project proposal was drawn up, including the acquisition and restoration of historical buildings in downtown Oranjestad.

These historical buildings were formerly the property of the Ecury family. The "Ecury Complex", is a cluster of single and two-story historic buildings, mainly Dutch colonial architecture from the late 19th and 20th century on a plot of approximately 1,700 m2.

In 1997 the Aruban Government bought the complex for the National Archaeological Museum project.

In 2004 a financial agreement was signed with the European Development Fund and in 2006 restoration and construction work began on the monumental buildings and the new to build exhibition space. In December 2007 the key to the complex was delivered and the museum's employees moved to the new location. The final design for the exhibit was completed in November 2007 and the permanent exhibit, financed by the Aruban Government and the Union of Cultural Organizations (UNOCA), opened in July 2009.

At the new location the National Archaeological Museum Aruba uses approximately 500 m2 for its permanent exhibit. This exhibit showcases archaeo-

logical objects and conveys modern exhibition techniques information on the origin and culture of the first inhabitants of the island. The new permanent exhibit gives the visitor an insight into the cultures that inhabited the island in Pre-Historical and Early Historical times. The museum regularly hosts public seminars, special exhibitions and workshop for visitors to enjoy.

The museum is open daily from 9 am till 5 pm.

For more information check out the Facebook page National Archaeological Museum Aruba or website: www.manaruba.org

Editor's note: Pictures are property of the respective museums. □



Fun facts about the 'Lisinbein'

The 'Lisinbein' (Scolopendra gigantea), also known as the Giant Centipede, is one of the largest centipedes in the world and is found in Aruba. Its size and hunting prowess make it a fascinating, if often misunderstood, creature.

Despite its fearsome reputation, it plays a crucial ecological role that often goes unnoticed.

As an apex invertebrate predator, Scolopendra gigantea helps maintain balance in the ecosystem. Moreover, they themselves are a food source for birds such as the Crested Caracara (Warawara) and the Aruba burrowing owl (Shoco).

It controls populations of smaller invertebrates and even small vertebrates, ensuring that no species over-

populates, which could disrupt local biodiversity.

Its presence can indicate a healthy, functioning ecosystem. Its sensitivity to environmental changes makes it a bioindicator of ecological balance.

It can reach an impressive length of up to 30 centimeters (approx. 12 inches) and live for around 5 to 10 years in the wild. Its size and longevity makes it a significant and long-term part of the ecosystem.

A mother's love

In Scolopendra species, the 'mother' typically exhibits maternal care by curling around her eggs and newly hatched young. She stays coiled around the clutch, protecting it from predators and fungi, which are serious risks in the moist environments these centipedes

often inhabit. The mother maintains a clean environment for the eggs by carefully grooming them, which helps prevent fungal growth that could endanger the brood. This behavior may continue until the young centipedes have undergone their first molt, making them more capable of independent survival.

This form of parental care is beneficial in increasing the survival rates of offspring, as the mother's protection provides a safe 'environment' during their vulnerable developmental stages. It's a fascinating adaptation because it shows a form of care that resembles more complex behaviors observed in vertebrates.

No bark, but all bite!

The lisinbein is known locally for having a really painful sting. While venomous, the

Lisinbein is generally not aggressive toward humans unless provoked. Its role as a guardian of balance in the ecosystem helps protect the natural beauty of Aruba by keeping the ecosystem in

harmony.

Editor's note: Information and pictures provided by Ms. Natasha Silva from the Aruba Conservation Foundation. □



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The legend of the Kibrahacha tree



ORANJESTAD—The Kibrahacha is a famous tree known locally for its bright, yellow flowers that blooms for just three days. Scientifically known as *Tabebuia billbergii*, and in English as the Yellow Poui, this tree is native to the Caribbean islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao, and is considered among locals as one of the most spectacular trees on the island. But did you also know that the beautiful yellow flowers have a story behind them?

The Kibrahacha is said to have ex-

tremely hard wood—so hard that it can break an axe. In fact, that's what its name means in Papiamentu: "kibra" (break) "hacha" (axe). The flowers bloom around April and May, but this only last for about three days, as the flowers start to fall off and the tree starts growing its green leaves. The Kibrahacha is especially particular, as it's the only one among its neighboring trees to starts blooming first.

The legend of the Kibrahacha
Written by Hubert (Lio Boo)

One day Aterima, who lived west of the hill Sero Warawara, woke up one day to find her father sleeping in his hammock, suffering a bout of terrible fever. Her mother was very worried, and as was the custom in the olden days, asked Aterima to go fetch Kudawecha, who was an epistemophile, to come see his father.

Aterima wasted to time and went to go fetch Kudawecha. Upon telling Kudawecha that her father

was sick, he immediately accompanied Aretima back to her hut, where he encountered her father in a bad state. Not willing to waste any time, he told Aretima that the only thing that can cure her father is a home-made potion made out of the Kibrahacha flower. At the time the Kibrahacha was not yet in her blooming season, but the stubborn Kudawecha was determined to bring back Aretima's father back to health, and so off they went to the nearest Kibrahacha tree.

When they arrived at the tree, they saw that it was covered head to toe in thorns, with only a few closed flowers at the very top. Kudawecha, experienced veteran in all things Aruban flora and fauna, told Aretima to start plucking the thorns of the tree to climb to the top where the flowers are. Aretima, just as determined to save her father, didn't hesitate to start.

To her surprise, every time she plucked a thorn of the tree, a bright,

yellow flower bloomed in its place. The thorns were hard to pluck out, but Aretima continued plucking with enthusiasm and wonder at the unfolding sight before her. Not too long after she was able to fill her entire satchel with the yellow flowers.

Kudawecha, satisfied to see Aretima so happy and encouraged to help her father, took her back to her hut. Upon arriving back at the hut, Aretima's mother quickly made a tea out of the flowers and gave it to her sick husband. Miraculously, after just one sip of the tea, the father's fever left his body immediately, and he opened eyes and sprung up feeling new.

The next morning, they all visited the same Kibrahacha tree that saved the life of Aretima's father and they saw another miracle. The tree was covered again in the same bright, yellow flowers, with not a thorn in sight. And as the legend goes, from that day on, the Kibrahacha tree no longer produced any more thorns. □

Ever heard of the cah'i orgel? A key instrument in Aruban folklore music

(Oranjestad)—The cah'i orgel music box is an important and unique instrument that is used on the ABC islands in the Dutch Caribbean. This instrument is a staple in our folklore music, and its significance in the traditions of Aruba has and continues to bring together the old and young.

The origin of the cah'i orgel is said to have come from Europe around 150 years ago. A cross breed between the barrel piano and the organ, the most popular stories said that the instrument came from either England or Germany,

but made its way to Italy down to Venezuela, where in 1881, Mr. Horatio Sprock (1866-1949) from Curacao was first introduced to it. After that, Sprock made his own cah'i orgel "Josefina", and successfully debuted it on the streets of Barquisimeto. Back in Curacao, he started his own cah'i orgel business along with his brother Luis. In Aruba, it is said that the cah'i orgel was introduced by Rufo Wever, who later in his career became one of the composers for the Aruban national anthem.

Rufo Wever was a young



musician in 1937 when he established his own cah'i orgel business on the island. Before that he experimented with his uncle's cah'i or-

gel, and he over the years he learned to build and repair the instrument. In fact, he was incredibly skilled in this, and he was one of the few to have recognized from the start that the cah'i orgel is an instrument that needs preserving.

As mentioned, the cah'i orgel is a music box. Made from mahogany wood, it contains a cylinder with a maximum of eight music pieces. By rotating the lever on the front side of the box, the cah'i orgel produces music similar to that of a piano, and is accompanied often by someone else

playing the "wiri", a percussion instrument made out of steel and reminiscent to the Spanish guiro. Back then, you would often also find someone playing the triangle alongside the cah'i orgel and wiri. In Aruba, the cah'i orgel and wiri is used for traditional music genres, such as the Aruban waltz, tumba, mazurka and more. Fun fact: another name for the cah'i orgel is the "tingilingi box." □

Source: "E Cilinder Magico entre Aruba y Curaçao" by Marilyn Alcalá-Wallé, Herta Parabirsing-Balentina and Nidia Rosaria-Wallé.

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How Aruban beaches came to be!

(Oranjestad)—We've talked about the best beaches to visit on the island before, but have you ever wondered how Aruba got its white, sandy beaches, and why there's a clear difference between the northern and southern shores? Here are some fun facts about the development of Aruban beaches. How did Aruba get its white, sandy beaches?

Aruba's beaches have developed over the span of thousands

of years. Waves crashing on the rocky formations along our coast line (which consists mainly of coral reefs) have started to wear and tear the reefs over time, resulting in its gradual breakdown. Fish that feed off corals also contribute to this—one small bite at a time. Over the course of thousands of years, as waves continue to crash and fish continue to eat off the corals, sand starts to accumulate around the area. However, whether the sand stays there is another ques-



tion to be answered, and this is where we highlight the biggest difference between the northern and southern coast of the island.

The sand that accumulates around a torn coral reef is swept away along with the debris by the ocean stream. However, in areas where it's shallow and the stream is weaker, the sand tends to stick to the bottom faster. This is why the beaches in the south—the areas with weaker stream and shallower ocean floors—has sand that stretches for miles. In contrast, the northern area, where the stream is much stronger and the ocean floor is much deeper, there is no sand

present—they were swept away with the current!

Why is the north deep, but the south shallow?

Aruba is a continental island. The island actually forms part of South America, and the space between Aruba and the South American continent is simply referred to as land that runs under the ocean. This is why it gets gradually deeper in the south, whereas the ocean floor in the north runs steeply to the bottom. □

Source: archival document provided by the National Archive of Aruba (ANA).

“Aruba to me is like seeing an old friend”

ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional

purposes without compensation. Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from Barry and Connie Robb from Wintersville, Ohio. They wrote to us saying: “Aruba to me is like seeing an old friend. We always looking forward to coming back every February and seeing our island friends.”

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers! □



Surf's Up: Favorite places to catch waves in Aruba

ORANJESTAD – Whether you are a salt-seasoned surfer looking for a thrill, or just looking to wet your toes in a little ocean adventure, Aruba has amazing places to learn and practice surfing! Although more known for the calmer waters of Palm Beach, Eagle Beach and Mangel Halto, Aruba also has some special places to thrill your senses. Because of strong winds and breezes, Aruba is perfect for wind and kite surfing. You will surely notice kites in the air as you drive around the wilder, rougher areas on Aruba's east side.



There are plenty of surf shop rentals to help you with your gear, and there are also a lot of tutors if you're looking to try for the first time and need a little help. These can be found around the island, and will surely come in hand if you want to try a new experience!

With that said, here are Aruba's favorite surf spots!

Andicuri

Andicuri is recognized as the best place for body boarding. Because of the

rough waves, this beach is better suited for those with more experience in surfing. However, the beach with two bluffs one on each side is worth a visit, if only to watch the exciting show presented by the surfers.

To go to Andicuri, you will need a 4x4 vehicle and drive from the ex-Natural Bridge Center. Alternatively, you can make it an adventure by going on a hike!

The scenery is unique and beautiful on its own.

Reaching Andicuri Beach can be an adventure in itself, as it can be difficult to find and is only accessible by 4x4 vehicle or walking from the ex-Natural Bridge center, but the impressive scenery makes it all worthwhile!

Arashi

Arashi, a beach located

close to the California Lighthouse, is a good spot for learning and having fun if you're lucky! The waves at Arashi are usually calm, but with just the right weather, a swell forms attracting all the local surfers to the area.

Boca Grandi

Boca Grandi is at the most southern spot in Aruba, and is a popular spot with experienced surfers. Close to the famous Red Anchor and

our beloved Sunrise City – San Nicolas, a trip to Boca Grandi can easily turn into an all-day trip to this area of the island. With a beautiful beach (although it is not allowed to swim here, because of strong currents), you can enjoy a relaxing time combing the beach for driftwood, coral, and little crabs and snails.

Hadicurari

Here is where you will find most of the action for surfers in Aruba. With a variety of surf shops and schools in this area, you will find it easy to get in on the action. Hadicurari is also the site of the Aruba Hi Winds World Challenge, which takes place usually in June/July, and it is the largest windsurfing competition in the Caribbean!

Malmok

If you're a beginner, this is your spot. There are also various shops to rent gear and receive lessons, facilitating learning and just trying out a new experience. The beach is also popular for paddleboarding and other watersport activities. □

Lessons from our elders: Plants and fruits for medicinal use

(Oranjestad)— Though western medicine is now widely used for common illnesses and to keep our bodies healthy and happy, it is still very common in every household in Aruba (and around the world) to have staple home remedies that is passed on through generations. Here are some tips that our elders have passed on to us over the years.

Sweet potato

According to our elders, sweet potato is mostly useful for low blood pressure. People who suffer from low blood pressure were advised to eat sweet potato 2 to 3 times a week. However, if you have high blood pressure, it is best not to eat too much sweet potato, as this raises blood

pressure. Sweet potatoes are also great for people who work hard labor jobs, and it's been said to be aid blood circulation in the body, as well as help those with hemorrhoids or diarrhea.

Many of our elders opted to plant sweet potatoes themselves, mostly because of how easy it was to do so. Cut the end of a sweet potato let it sit in shallow water until it starts to sprout. Then you may plant it in the ground. Sweet potatoes need plenty of water to grow, especially in the first week in the ground. It was said that once you start to notice the ground crack underneath the flowers, it is time to harvest. This should happen around month 3.

Pomegranate

Pomegranates are also one of the easier fruits to plant and harvest. Originated from Persia, this plant can grow almost everywhere. In Aruba, there are many homes that have a tiny or big pomegranate tree. You may be wondering what the difference is between a small and big pomegranate tree, for which the answer is based on harvest time. Tiny trees produce tinier pomegranates that can be harvested early on. Contrarily, big trees produce bigger pomegranates, but they need enough time to fully ripen before harvesting, otherwise you might end up with bitter seeds. Pomegranate trees are also very easy to plant. In essence, if you just throw the seeds on the ground, they could



grow into a tree.

In terms of medicinal use, pomegranate skins are said to have a few benefits for our health. According to customs, pomegranate skin tea can help those that suffer from diarrhea. Dried pomegranate skin tea is also good for people who have worms. Pome-

granate flowers can be boiled to make a drink and this can be used for irritated gums; just take a swig and let the tea sit in your mouth for a couple minutes.

Source: Remedi i Kustumber di nos Bieunan (Medicine and Customs of our Elderly) by Dinah Veeris □

The district of Savaneta: A quick history guide to the island's first capital



(Oranjestad)—Before Oranjestad became the island nation's capital, Aruba's first capital was the district of Savaneta. Here is where the cultural identity of Aruba was born, and from where the rest of the island developed into what it is today.

Savaneta is said to have been the first place where the Caquetio inhabitants first stepped foot on the island. Though there isn't hard evidence to back this up, but considering the legend of the Cacique Arua, it is believed that there were already movements on Aruba and Savaneta around 88 AD.

The Caquetios probably made their way to the island either from Venezuela, Colombia or other Caribbean islands in the region, but with good weather it was relatively easy for them to travel back and forth in their canoes. So, since the Caquetios discovered the island, Aruba found her first form of civilization.

It wasn't until 1499 when Aruba met another group of people who set foot on the island: the Spanish explorer Alonso de Ojeda. De Ojeda first took notice of Aruba off the coast of Venezuela, during his exploration of the Latin American country. This was on August 9th, 1499. However, de Ojeda didn't actually sail to the island till 4 days later, on August 23rd, 1499. This was the beginning of the Spanish era on Aruba (1499-1636).

Alonso usually didn't stop at every island or land he saw, especially not in the Caribbean. He would often take notice of land from afar and continue sailing. However, Aruba was an exception. He had heard that there were "quebracho" (Kibrahacha) trees on the island, which were commonly used to produce dye or paint. But since these trees could not be found in Savaneta, he continued to search in the area of what is now known as Santa Cruz. The best way to transport the tree barks was via a route passing through Savaneta, and so the first road between Savaneta and Santa Cruz was made.

The Dutch colonial era (1636-1805)

During the 80-year war between The Netherlands and Spain, Dutch explorers and merchants began to travel to the ABC islands. Once they landed in Aruba, they deported the

small Arawakan and Spanish community that was living on the island. This was the beginning of colonization of the ABC islands by the Dutch empire. Around the same, the West Indian Company (WIC) was born. Bonaire and Curacao were mostly used for plantations, where the Dutch had transported slaves from Africa. Aruba, on the other hand, was mostly used to raise cattle and to house the haring factory. The Dutch had often forced the indigenous community to work for them.

In 1636, when the Netherlands won the war against Spain, the country surrendered the islands to the Dutch.

The Dutch administration appointed the island's first commander, an Irish man named N. Williams. Because the Dutch were interested in other Caribbean islands and countries in South America, they imported Dutch merchants and business men, all of whom resided in Savaneta. This way, Savaneta officially became the island's first capital.

However, at the end of the 18th century, the commander at the time, J.R. Lauffer, moved his office to what is now "Horse Bay" in Oranjestad. Because the highest office on the island moved away from Savaneta, the capital lost its title to what was called then Playa.

How Savaneta got its name

The name Savaneta probably has a Spanish origin. It was said that when the Spanish climbed a hill

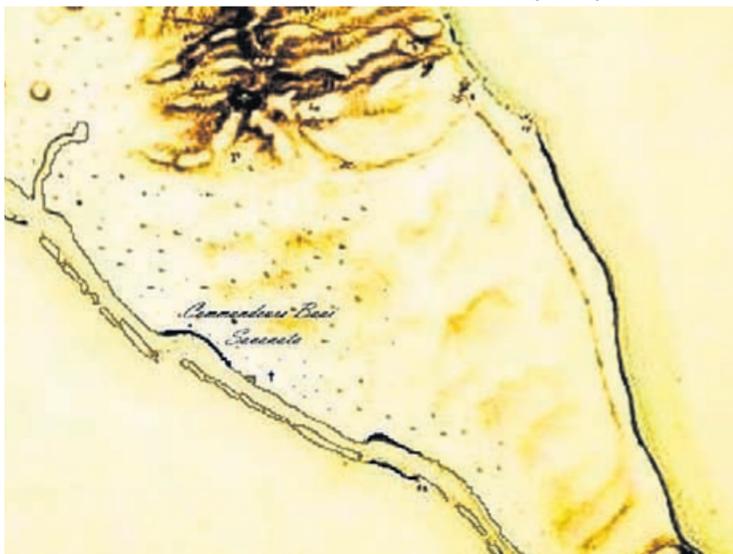


called Yara, they saw that the area was mostly open and had no big trees. In Spanish, such a land area is called a "sabana".

Because of its land surface, Savaneta was a great place to construct cattle farms. From here, the farmer culture on Aruba was born. Before the Aruban Gold Rush and the construction of the Refinery in San Nicolas, most residents were farmers, and Savaneta had many inhabit-

ants that farmed fruits and vegetables. They also continued the tradition of raising cattle, like goat, sheep, pigs and horses. Savaneta was one of the first places on the island to have a general farming culture. From this culture, many other traditions were born, like the Dera Gay Holiday that we celebrate every year on June 24th. □

Source: *Historia di Savaneta (History of Savaneta)* by Adolf "Dufi" Kock.



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CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

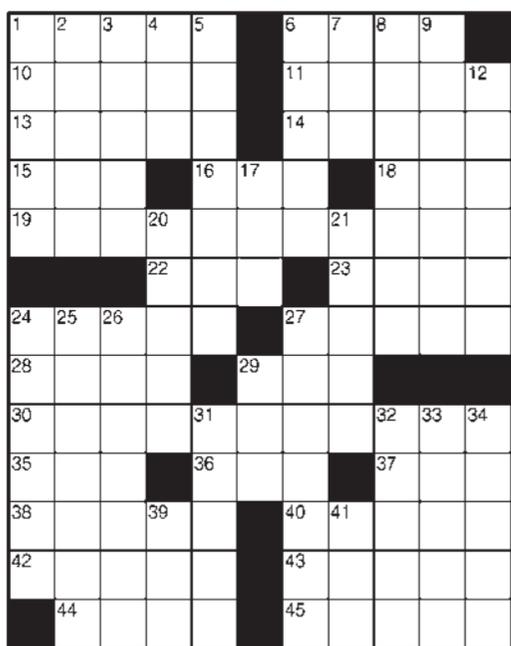


ACROSS

- 43 Fleet-based
- 1 Walk proudly
- 6 Rotisserie part
- 10 The ones here
- 11 Diminishes
- 13 Watch a second time
- 14 In the know
- 15 Had lunch
- 16 Total
- 18 Director Spike
- 19 Part of a Swiss timepiece
- 22 Director Howard
- 23 Formerly
- 24 Hitter's turn
- 27 Ranch animal
- 28 Noggin
- 29 In addition
- 30 Part of a mattress
- 35 Flop
- 36 Lobed organ
- 37 Rawls or Reed
- 38 Make blank
- 40 Coral island
- 42 TV's Leary

DOWN

- 1 Sipping aid
- 2 Letter before iota
- 3 Stopwatch button
- 4 Take advantage of
- 5 Golfer's start
- 6 Marsh
- 7 Fido's foot
- 8 Queued up
- 9 Roman dramatist
- 12 Folk's Pete
- 17 Ensign's org.
- 20 Origami creation
- 21 Copter part
- 24 Tolerated
- 25 Like some profs
- 26 Colorful kerchief
- 27 Choir member
- 29 Airport screening
- 31 Baseball's Pee Wee
- 32 "— Lucy"
- 33 Pitcher Ryan
- 34 Shore birds
- 39 Plop down
- 41 Scot's cap



3-20

A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

3-20

CRYPTOQUOTE

H U G V ' K M V G R R X H A X H E

D G L Z U H E A G J L T B H V B ,

N H K Z L T K J L Z G L A X H A M Z V E .

— Z . F . R X H K Z

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Cruise ship Schedule: March 09 - 15 2026

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
MON	09	BRITANNIA	07.00	18.00	B	1
		MARELLA DISCOVERY 2	08.00	20.00	C	1
		CARIBBEAN PRINCESS	08.00	22.00	I	1
TUE	10	SERENADE OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	B	1
		NORWEGIAN SKY	13.30	22.30	C	1
		OASIS OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	I	1
WED	11	CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE	07.00	17.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL MAGIC	09.00	22.00	C	1
THU	12	BRILLANCE OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	B	1
		OCEANIA ALLURA	11.00	23.00	C	1
SUN	15	STAR PRIDE	06.00	18.00	C	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.



Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.



Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

	4	7						6
		9		4	8			
2					4	3		
		8		4	7		3	
		2	8		9			
	7			2	5	1		
5				1				
			9		7	2		
					3			

Difficulty: ★★★★★

3/7

Answer to previous puzzle

5	9	3	6	8	1	4	7	2
8	4	2	7	5	9	1	3	6
1	6	7	3	2	4	5	9	8
7	1	5	2	4	6	9	8	3
9	2	6	8	1	3	7	4	5
4	3	8	5	9	7	2	6	1
6	7	1	9	3	2	8	5	4
3	5	4	1	7	8	6	2	9
2	8	9	4	6	5	3	1	7

Difficulty: ★★★

3/6

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AI investments fuelling global patent growth: U.N.

Geneva, Switzerland

The number of international patents filed last year for digital communications technology and semiconductors grew strongly, reflecting the surge in artificial intelligence investments, the United Nations said Friday.

Across the board, international patent applications rose 0.7 percent in 2025 to 275,900 filings worldwide, the World Intellectual Property Organization, the UN agency dealing with patenting and innovation, said in an annual overview. WIPO chief economist Carsten Fink said that underneath that modest growth, innovation activity was strong in digital technologies.

Digital communication, the top category among international patent filings, grew by six percent last year, as did applications for semiconductor patents. They recorded the fastest growth rates among the top 10 the major technology fields in 2025, Fink told a press conference.

"This pattern clearly reflects the continuing importance of digital technologies as a driver of innovation worldwide," he said.

"It also likely reflects the surge of investments in artificial intelligence, which is increasing demand for advanced computer infrastructure and chips."

- China pulling clear of US -

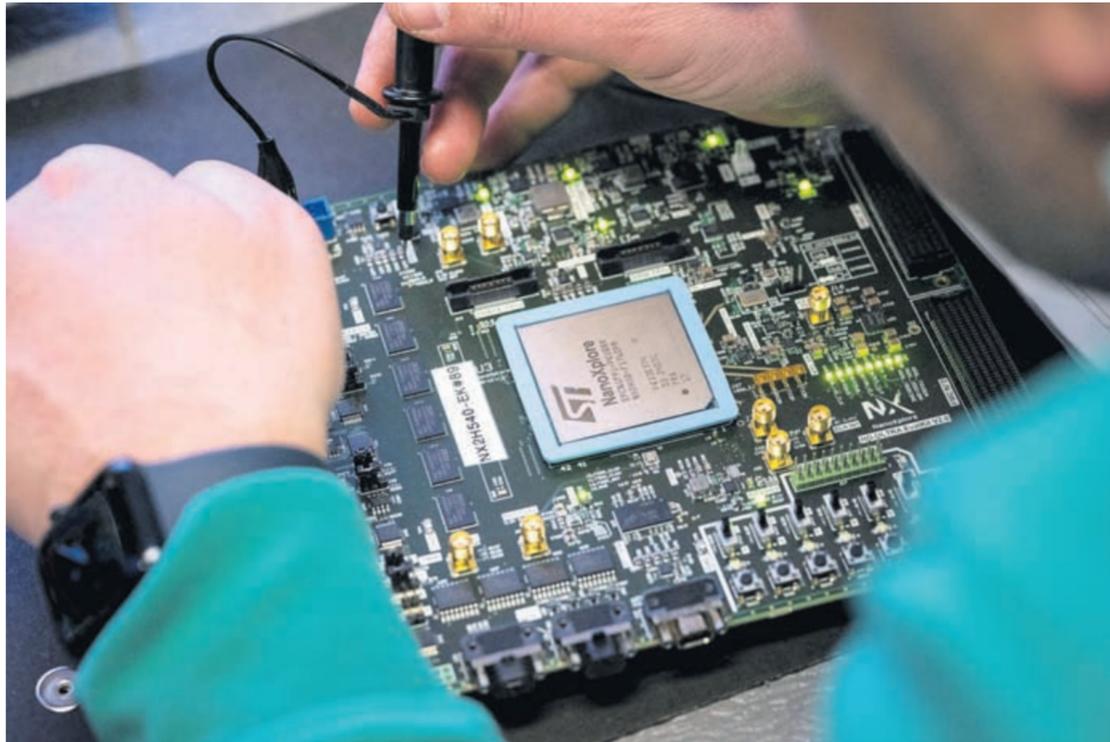
China filed the most international patent applications last year with 73,718, up 5.3 percent.

The United States submitted 52,617 down three percent, and its fourth consecutive year of decline.

They were followed by Japan with 47,922, South Korea with 25,016 and Germany with 16,441.

Chinese tech giant Huawei has been the top filer since 2017 and stayed there last year with 7,523 patent applications, ahead of South Korean rival Samsung (4,698), US firm Qualcomm (3,227) and South Korea's LG Electronics (2,400).

Overall, 16 of the top 20 applicants were in the information and communi-



A technician checks the quality of programmable semiconductor components for the space industry in the NanoXplore company's laboratories in Sevres, Paris suburbs, on January 9, 2026.

cations technology sector. "International patent filings particularly in digital communication and semiconductor technologies reflect how digital technologies continue to drive the global innovation landscape," WIPO chief Daren Tang said in the report.

"AI is the latest engine of this growth and will increasingly transform how we innovate."

Among the top 100 patent filing companies, 32 are from Japan, 24 from China and 17 from the United States.

- L'Oreal leading trademarks -

The total number of inter-

national trademark applications dropped by 1.5 percent to 64,150 in 2025. The largest number came from the United States (10,997), followed by Germany (6,106), China (5,636), France (4,026) and Britain (3,871).

Among companies, French cosmetics giant L'Oreal stayed on top for the fifth consecutive year, with 274 applications. US gambling products firm Light and Wonder surged to come second with 105 applications.

As for applications for international protection of industrial designs, the number swelled by 9.4 percent, concerning 28,588 designs.

The biggest category was for recording and communications equipment. China led in the number of designs filed with 5,911, followed by Germany (4,530), the United States (3,882), Switzerland (2,285) and Italy (2,015).



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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

Harry Styles fans head in one direction: to star's home village

Holmes Chapel, United Kingdom

Boasting a centuries-old church, quaint pubs and rolling green countryside, Holmes Chapel looks like many other English villages. But having played a formative part in Harry Styles' rise to global superstardom, nothing can be as it was for the village near Manchester, in northwest England. Fans from around the world dubbed Harries flock there year-round to pay homage at several sites linked to the "Watermelon Sugar" singer. With the ex-One Direction member releasing a new album and staging a Manchester concert Friday, recent weeks have been extra busy.

"I've been looking forward to this day for too long!" Spanish student Elena Garcia, 21, told AFP as she visited this week with two friends.

Like other Styles pilgrims before them, they stopped by the village train station where the ticket office has become a shrine of sorts, as well as the bakery where he once worked.

And, of course, they made their way to a spectacular viaduct where Harries have for years been leaving messages after Styles wrote his own name there in the 2013 One Direction biopic "This Is Us".

The 32-year-old pop sensation is also famously said to have had his first kiss be-



A poster of English singer Harry Styles is pictured at the train station in Holmes Chapel, north west England, on March 4, 2026.

neath its 23 arches. "It was just beautiful," Katharina, 22, another of the trio, from Germany, said of the site known as Harry's Wall. "Having the name on the wall's a big thing."

These days, fans are encouraged to sign and leave behind small slate stones to preserve the 180-year-old viaduct's brickwork.

- 'Demand' -

Holmes Chapel population nearly 7,000 has welcomed thousands of Harries over the years.

Numbers swelled after he played two huge gigs in Manchester in 2022, according to the Holmes Chapel Partnership non-profit.

It handed out 5,000 maps showing Styles points-of-interest the following year. It then started offering near-daily guided tours for much of 2024.

Peter Whiers, who heads the partnership, noted the response was "phenomenal" with people "arriving at all sorts of different times a day" to see the sights. "It became a little bit difficult to meet the demand," he noted.

"For every one person on the guided tour, there were probably another 10 that came here and did it under their own steam."

Bartender Chloe Thomason, a self-proclaimed su-

perfan from nearby Congleton, was one of the 11 guides hired after acing an 80-question exam about Styles and Holmes Chapel. The 24-year-old who is set to attend Friday's album-reveal concert cherished the period.

"I loved finding out about everybody... how they found Harry, if they were a new fan, an old fan... and it was just so good."

The tours are now self-guided, with the partnership offering an online version for fans worldwide who cannot make it to Holmes Chapel.

- 'Heights' -

Styles moved to the village

as a youngster, attending schools there and later beginning his journey to A-list status on trains to London for 2010's The X Factor. At the auditions he described it as "quite boring" but "picturesque".

Later that year, he was chosen to be part of One Direction, remaining in the boyband until a late 2015 indefinite hiatus.

Its members launched solo careers and none has enjoyed more subsequent success than the boy from Holmes Chapel.

At Mandeville's Bakery, fans take selfies next to a full-length poster photo of a teenage Styles wearing an apron, taken when he worked there part-time.

Down the road, a Chinese restaurant he reportedly took Taylor Swift to when they briefly dated more than a decade ago is also a magnet for Harries.

Meanwhile the station now features a mural bearing his image, designed by two local artists.

Graham Blake, the station master for 28 years, can still remember the budding performer bound for the capital.

"I knew he had talent. He used to sing on the platform... 'Kings of Leon' and stuff like that," he told AFP. "He had a good voice but I never thought he'd reached the heights that he has now. It's incredible. But it's all hard work." □

Exploring life's lessons through baseball: The Ancient Wisdom of Baseball

In a unique blend of sports and philosophy, Christian Sheppard's new book, *The Ancient Wisdom of Baseball: Lessons for Life from Homer's Odyssey to the*

World Series, invites readers to explore timeless virtues through the lens of America's favorite pastime.

A Journey Through Innings
Structured as a series of

nine "innings," the book draws parallels between the ancient Greek virtues of courage, prudence, and temperance and the lessons learned on the baseball field. Sheppard argues that each baseball game, when viewed from the right perspective, reenacts an ancient myth, offering insights into the human condition and the complexities of life.

The Cubs' Historic Win

One of the book's highlights is a close examination of the Chicago Cubs'

dramatic 2016 World Series Championship win. This event serves as a backdrop for Sheppard's reflections on victory and its deeper meanings, prompting readers to ponder what such triumphs reveal about resilience and hope in the face of adversity.

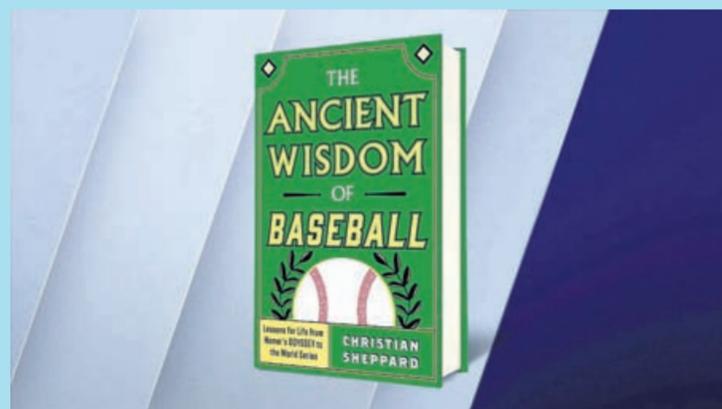
Humor and Heart

In addition to its philosophical insights, *The Ancient Wisdom of Baseball* is infused with humor and personal anecdotes. Sheppard shares his experiences of raising his daughter

while instilling in her the values derived from both ancient myths and the game of baseball, creating an endearing narrative that resonates with parents and fans alike.

A Call to Reflect

As readers delve into Sheppard's reflections, they are encouraged to consider how the lessons of baseball can be applied to their own lives. The book serves as a reminder that, much like the game itself, life is filled with challenges and opportunities for growth. □



Qualifier Diane Parry ends Venus Williams' desert dream

Indian Wells, United States

Seven-time Grand Slam champion Venus Williams was sent crashing out at Indian Wells on Thursday, falling in three sets to French qualifier Diane Parry.

The 45-year-old Williams, playing on a wild card at the prestigious ATP/WTA Masters 1000 event, rallied from a set and a break down to force a third set, but Parry, ranked 111th in the world, stormed through the decider for a 6-3, 6-7 (4/7), 6-1 triumph.

"It's always so fun," Williams said. "Of course, losing isn't fun, but it's great to play in front of a home crowd."

While the Californian star is enjoying competition since returning last July from a 16-month hiatus, Williams was mum on the chances fans would see her and sister Serena play together this year.

"You'll have to ask her that," Williams said to the question that has bubbled in the tennis world since 23-time Grand Slam champion Serena re-entered the anti-doping testing pool. While Williams remains in search of her first win of the year after first-round exits at the Australian Open and in Austin, Texas, she said



Venus Williams of the United States returns a shot to Diane Parry of France during Day 2 of the BNP Paribas Open at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden on March 05, 2026 in Indian Wells, California.

Thursday's game wasn't a good gauge of her game.

"I think today is not the kind of day that you want to assess," she said. "The conditions are impossible. Also, my match in Austin the conditions were impossible. "In Austin I refused to relent and change my game and I lost very quickly. Today I tried to adjust. It's not easy. You can't trust anything that you do out there."

The 23-year-old Parry, who

was born after Williams had won the first four of her Grand Slam titles, said despite the conditions she could feel the force of Williams' game.

"Even if it wasn't pretty tennis today because of the wind, you can still clearly see the quality of her shots -- forehand, backhand -- as soon as she gets a ball she can attack, there's little chance you're getting it back.

"You can imagine what it

was like when she was at her best," said Parry, adding it was "an honor to be able to play against a legend of our sport.

"I watched more of Serena, the greatest player of all time, but I think a lot of people forget the career that (Venus) has had.

"When, during the warm-up, the announcer gave a brief summary of her career, you think, 'Oh right, that's really something.'"

- 'Solid' -

In men's first-round action, Bulgarian veteran Grigor Dimitrov booked a second-round meeting with top-seeded Spaniard Carlos Alcaraz with a 6-4, 5-7, 6-4 grudge match victory over Terence Atmane, who had beaten the former world number three in Acapulco last week.

"I think I started the match really well, but it was just difficult to maintain a solid level," Dimitrov said. "It could have gone either way, but I was able to stay very strong in the most important moments."

Dimitrov, a 2021 Indian Wells semi-finalist, now gets a shot at Alcaraz, who is undefeated in 12 matches in 2026 and beat Dimitrov in the fourth round here last year.

Alcaraz, whose Australian Open triumph in January made him at 22 the youngest man to complete a career Grand Slam, will launch his bid for a third Indian Wells title on Saturday.

Second-seeded Jannik Sinner of Italy launches his campaign for a first Indian Wells title on Friday, headlining the night session against Czech qualifier Dalibor Svrčina. □

Ohtani homers as Japan thrash Taiwan at World Baseball Classic

Tokyo, Japan

Shohei Ohtani blasted a home run to ignite Japan's World Baseball Classic campaign as the defending champions thrashed Taiwan 13-0 in their tournament opener in Tokyo on Friday.

Los Angeles Dodgers superstar Ohtani's grand slam set the tone as Japan scored 10 runs in the second inning alone in front of around 42,000 fans at the Tokyo Dome.

Their dominance meant the game was cut short after seven innings under the so-called mercy rule.

"Everyone stayed focused after my home run and that gave us a good start," said Ohtani.

"It was our first game so everyone was a little uptight, but we wanted to be ag-

gressive and attack the ball."

The result gave Japan a dream start to the tournament as they go in search of a record-extending fourth title.

Taiwan, who were backed by a large and noisy traveling support, lost their second straight game following Thursday's defeat to Australia.

An expectant Tokyo crowd that included Puerto Rican music star Bad Bunny and American actor Timothee Chalamet packed the stands for their first glimpse of Ohtani at this year's tournament.

Japan manager Hirokazu Iwata said having the 31-year-old in his team "helps us a lot". "It wasn't only Ohtani because after

his grand slam we scored a lot of runs," said Iwata.

"We'll try to keep this going for the next three games." Ohtani hit a double off the first pitch of the game but Japan were unable to get on the scoreboard

as Taiwan starting pitcher Cheng Hao-chun saw off the danger.

There was nothing Cheng could do when Ohtani smacked a grand slam home run in his next at-bat to put Japan up by four

runs.

"Watching Shohei's pre-game routine impressed me," said Iwata.

"He knows how to get ready for the big games."

- 'Best in the world' -

Japan's batters were not finished there and they went on to rack up six more runs before the second inning was over.

They added three more in the third inning as things went from bad to worse for Taiwan.

Taiwan manager Tseng Hao-jiu said his team could not live with Ohtani's quality.

"He's the best in the world, I can't describe how good he is," said Tseng.

"With one swing, he changed the entire game." □



Japan's Shohei Ohtani hits a grand slam home run during the World Baseball Classic (WBC) Pool C first round game between Japan and Taiwan at the Tokyo Dome on March 6, 2026.

LeBron James breaks NBA all-time field goal record in Lakers loss



LeBron James #23 of the Los Angeles Lakers shoots and scores against Zeke Nnaji #22 of the Denver Nuggets to become the NBA's all-time field goal leader during the first quarter at Ball Arena on March 5, 2026 in Denver, Colorado.

Los Angeles, United States

LeBron James broke the record for most field goals made in NBA history Thursday, though the latest milestone in his glittering career did not to stop the Los Angeles Lakers from crashing 120-113 to the Denver Nuggets.

James, who already held the NBA all-time points record, sailed past Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's 15,837 field goals with a fadeaway jumper in the first quarter.

The 41-year-old has played a record 23 NBA seasons, and has stoked rumors of possible retirement in recent weeks, telling reporters in January: "I don't know what the future holds."

James, who scored 16 points in Thursday's loss, appeared to injure his left elbow in the fourth quarter, after he was shunted off the court and landed on the legs of a cameraman.

Play was halted as he was substituted out. James returned to the court for the game's final two minutes, but in evident pain.

It was a wire-to-wire win for the Nuggets, though the Lakers had closed to within one point with two minutes remaining.

"They're a difficult team to beat," said Nikola Jokic, who grabbed another triple-double including 28 points, 13 assists and 12 rebounds.

"We scored when we needed."

The result could prove crucial to playoff qualification, with the Lakers sitting in the final automatic spot in sixth, just behind the Nuggets.

They are two games clear of the Phoenix Suns, who lost 105-103 to the Chicago Bulls.

James's career tally of well over 43,000 points is nearly 5,000 more than second-placed Abdul-Jabbar, whom he passed back in 2023.

James reached the points record earlier in part because Abdul-Jabbar played much of his career before the introduction of the three-pointer, but the field goal record is further testament to his longevity and prowess.

- 'Super fun' -

Elsewhere, Victor Wembanyama scored 38 points and grabbed 16 rebounds as the San Antonio Spurs brushed aside the Eastern Conference-leading Detroit Pistons 121-106.

The French 7-foot-5 prodigy was near-unplayable as the Spurs notched up their second straight wire-to-wire win, and their 13th victory from 14 games.

"Any game between top seeds should be impressive. For us, it was super fun," said Wembanyama.

"It wouldn't have been fun if we didn't... dictate the game. I think we led for 48" minutes, he added. Wembanyama was ably supported by De'Aaron Fox with 29 points, as the second-placed Spurs moved within three games of West-topping Oklahoma City Thunder. For the Pistons, it was rare back-to-back losses, despite star man Cade Cunningham showing grit in a losing cause with 26 points.

The Golden State Warriors bested the Houston Rockets 115-113 in an overtime thriller.

The Warriors had led until the end of the third quarter, before a madcap finish saw 12 lead changes, with regular time ending 101-101.

Kevin Durant scored a huge three-pointer to bring the Rockets back to a one point deficit with a minute of overtime left. But having made a league-best 36 consecutive free throws, Durant then missed two in a row, leaving his team who are locked in a tight race for the third seed in the West agonizingly short. It was a key win for the Warriors, whose form had slumped and left them clinging to eighth spot, with injuries to star players including Stephen Curry. □

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