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Friday
March 13, 2026
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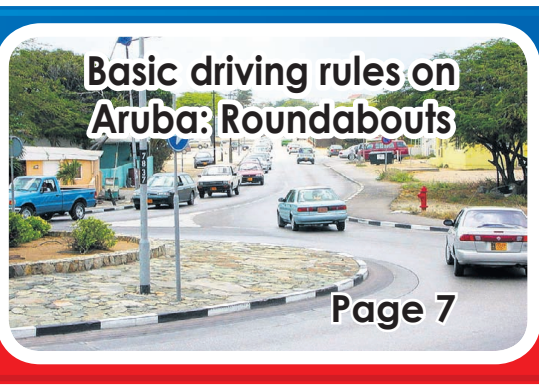
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Lab to table: The new frontier of “future-proof” produce

ST. LOUIS – Inside the climate-controlled corridors of the Danforth Plant Science Center, the future of the American dinner plate is being rewritten. While the outside world grapples with record-breaking heatwaves and unpredictable rainfall, a team of researchers has announced a breakthrough that could ensure the survival of the country's most essential fruits and vegetables.

The project, colloquially known as "Future-Proofing," represents a monumental shift in agricultural science. For decades, the goal of industrial farming was "yield at all costs." Today, the mission has shifted toward resilience.

Produce is on display on a grocery store's shelves on March 11, 2026 in Miami, Florida.

The end of the "Goldilocks" era

For over a century, U.S. agriculture has relied on a "Goldilocks" climate not too hot, not too dry, and remarkably predictable. However, as shifting weather patterns disrupt traditional growing seasons in the Central Valley of California and the Florida citrus groves, farmers have faced a grim reality: the crops that built the American economy are no longer suited for the American environment.

"We are essentially teaching plants how to handle stress," says Dr. Elena Rodriguez, the lead geneticist on the project. "It’s not just about surviving a heatwave; it’s about thriving in a world where the rules of nature are changing every single week."

Decoding the genetic shield

The breakthrough centers on a process called epigenetic priming. Unlike traditional GMOs, which involve inserting foreign DNA, this technique essentially "tunes" the plant’s existing genes. By exposed seeds to specific, non-lethal environmental stressors in a controlled setting, scientists can activate "dormant" survival traits.

The results, published this week, are staggering. Experimental batches of tomatoes and bell peppers—two of the most climate-sensitive crops were able to maintain their nutritional profile and flavor despite being grown in soil with 30% less water and temperatures 10 degrees higher than their natural limit.

Perhaps most importantly for the consumer, the scientists have prioritized flavor and texture. "Nobody wants a climate-resilient apple if it tastes like cardboard," Rodriguez jokes. "The goal is a 'future-proof' Honeycrisp that still snaps when you bite into it."

Economic security in every seed

The implications for the U.S. economy are profound. Supply chain disruptions during the early 2020s proved how fragile the global food network can be. By creating crops that can grow in a wider variety of domestic climates, the U.S. can reduce its reliance on long-haul imports and volatile foreign markets.

For the American farmer, this is a potential lifeline. Small-scale growers in the Midwest, who have seen their corn and soy yields fluctuate wildly, may soon have the opportunity to diversify into high-value produce that was previously restricted to warmer coastal regions.

"This is about sovereignty," says Marcus Thorne, a third-generation farmer who consulted on the project. "If I can grow a drought-resistant berry in Kansas, that’s a win for my family and a win for the kid in Chicago who needs fresh fruit."

The road to the grocery aisle

While the lab results are a cause for celebration, the transition to the supermarket shelf won't happen overnight. The next phase involves large-scale field trials across three different climate zones: the arid Southwest, the humid Southeast, and the variable Northeast. Skeptics point to the high cost of the initial seed technology and the potential for "biological monopolies" if the patents are held by a few large corporations. However, the research team has pledged to work with land-grant universities to ensure the technology remains accessible to independent growers.

A reason for optimism

In an era dominated by "climate anxiety," the "Future-Proofing" initiative offers a rare narrative of human ingenuity. It suggests that while we may not be able to stop the thermometer from rising immediately, we are not helpless in the face of change.

As the sun sets over the test fields in Missouri, the green shoots of "Version 2.0" tomatoes stand tall against a blistering wind. They are a living testament to the idea that the American spirit of innovation doesn't just build rockets and software it can also grow a better, more resilient dinner.❑

1 in 3 Americans say sacrificed for health care costs

Kara Pitt D’Andrea of Wisconsin speaks about the challenges of running a health care center during the State(s) of the Union Town Hall: For the People, Not Billionaires at Eastern Market on February 23, 2026 in Washington, DC.

Washington, United States

One in three Americans said they made some sacrifice last year like skipping a meal or rationing medicine to cover health care costs, according to a survey released Thursday.

High health care costs, especially compared to peer nations, represent a significant portion of many Americans’ strained budgets, prompting some to choose to drive less to save on gas, cut back on electricity and borrow money to make ends meet.

Gathered from responses by 20,000 participants last year, the West Health-Gallup Center survey estimates more than 82 million Americans resorted to at least one sacrifice to pay medical bills.

The most vulnerable and uninsured were most likely to cut corners, but 11 percent of well-off households also reported making trade-offs.

“When families across every income level are forced to choose between medical bills and paying their heating or electric bill, that’s not a personal budgeting problem it’s a systems failure,” said Tim Lash, president of the West Health Policy Center, in a statement.

The finding comes amid continued concerns about the rising cost of living, expected to once again be a key issue when voters head to the polls in November for midterm elections.

Another survey of 5,660 Americans at the end of 2025 from West Health found many Americans are delaying medical treatments and surgical procedures because of exorbitant healthcare costs.❑

Healing at the doorstep:

The vital mission of Baltimore's home-visiting nurses

In the quiet, early hours of a Tuesday morning, Sarah Jenkins, a registered nurse, isn't heading to a sterile hospital ward or a bustling clinic. Instead, she is navigating the narrow, rowhouse-lined streets of West Baltimore, carrying a medical bag that holds more than just a stethoscope and blood pressure cuff. It holds a lifeline for families who often feel forgotten by the traditional healthcare system.

Jenkins is part of a growing movement of home-visiting nurses in Baltimore, a city where the "zip code effect" can determine a person's life expectancy as much as their genetic code. These nurses are part of initiatives like the Maternal and Child Health programs and specialized geriatric outreach, designed to bring high-quality care directly to the living rooms of those most in need.

Bridging the Gap

The concept is simple but transformative: if a patient cannot reach the care, the care must reach the patient. In Baltimore, where public transportation can be unreliable and childcare is often a barrier to keeping appointments, the home-visiting nurse eliminates the "no-show" factor.

"When I walk into a home, I'm not just checking a pulse," says Jenkins as she prepares to visit a first-time mother. "I'm looking at whether the refrigerator is running, if there's lead paint peeling off the walls, and if the family feels safe. You can't see those social determinants of health from a 15-minute office visit."

For many residents in underserved neighborhoods, these nurses serve as primary care providers, educators, and advocates. They manage chronic conditions like hypertension and diabetes, provide prenatal education, and monitor infant development, all within the comfort and privacy of the patient's own environment.

A Data-Driven Impact

The results of these programs are more than just anecdotal. Recent data from Baltimore health advocates suggests that home-visiting interventions significantly reduce ER readmission rates and improve birth outcomes. By catching a spiked blood pressure reading or an infection early on a sofa in East Baltimore, nurses prevent the multi-thousand-dollar hospital stays that strain the city's healthcare infrastructure.

Furthermore, the trust built during these visits is invaluable. In a city with a complicated history regarding medical institutions, the consistent presence of a familiar face helps dismantle decades of skepticism. These nurses are guests in the home, a shift in power dynamics that fosters a stronger, more honest patient-provider relationship.

Challenges on the Front Lines

The work is not without its hurdles. Baltimore's home-visiting nurses often work in high-crime areas, navigating safety concerns alongside medical ones. Funding is also a perennial struggle; while the long-term savings of preventive care are clear, securing immediate grants and state funding remains a competitive battle. Staffing shortages, a national crisis in the nursing profession, are felt acutely here. The emotional toll of seeing systemic poverty firsthand can lead to burnout, yet the nurses who stay describe the work as "the purest form of nursing."

The Future of Community Care

As Baltimore continues to grapple with health disparities, the expansion of home-visiting programs is seen as a cornerstone of the city's public health strategy. Leaders are calling for increased integration between hospital systems and these "boots-on-the-ground" providers to ensure a seamless continuum of care.

For the families on Jenkins' route, the arrival of the nurse is the highlight of the week. It is a signal that their health matters and that the city has not turned its back on them.

"We are building a healthier Baltimore, one doorstep at a time," Jenkins says, closing her bag and heading to the next rowhouse. "It's slow work, but it's the work that lasts."❑

Stepping through the strife: miami's surprising new grief therapy

MIAMI – On a humid Tuesday evening in Liberty City, the rhythmic scuff of cowboy boots and sneakers against a polished community center floor creates a steady, hypnotic pulse. There are no clinical white walls here, no leather couches, and no heavy silences. Instead, there is the high-energy twang of country-fusion and the sharp, synchronized movements of sixty people performing a "grapevine" step in perfect unison.

This is the Soulful Strides Collective, a Miami-based grassroots movement that is redefining mental health recovery through the art of line dancing. While the activity is often associated with honky-tonks or wedding receptions, for this group, every "pivot turn" and "stomp" is a deliberate strike against the weight of trauma and grief.

RHYTHM AS A REFUGE

The initiative was founded by Elena "Ms. Dee" Walters, a retired social worker who lost her son to community violence three years ago. Finding traditional talk therapy too stagnant for her restless sorrow, she turned to the line dancing classes she had enjoyed in her youth.

The psychological benefits of the program are backed by a growing body of research into "somatic experiencing"—the idea that trauma is stored in the body's tissues and can be released through rhythmic movement. By synchronizing their steps with dozens of others, participants experience "collective effervescence," a sociological phenomenon that fosters deep emotional bonding and reduces feelings of isolation.

HEALING IN SYNC

For 64-year-old Ricardo Mendez, who joined the group after losing his wife to a long illness, the collective has been a lifeline. "I spent six months sitting in a dark living room," Mendez shares. "Coming here, I'm not 'the widower.' I'm just the guy who keeps messing up the third wall of the dance. We laugh, we sweat, and for an hour, the heaviness lifts."

The group's repertoire is as diverse as Miami itself, blending traditional country lines with Afro-Caribbean beats and hip-hop rhythms. This cultural fusion has attracted a multi-generational crowd, from teenagers dealing with school anxiety to seniors battling the loneliness of aging.

A MODEL FOR COMMUNITY WELLNESS

Local health officials are taking notice. With traditional mental health resources often overstretched or stigmatized in underserved communities, "movement therapy" offers a low-cost, high-impact alternative. The City of Miami recently approved a grant to expand the program to three additional community centers by the end of the year.

"What Ms. Dee has built isn't just a dance class; it's a public health intervention," says Dr. Julian Vance, a community psychologist. "It removes the clinical barrier. It's therapy disguised as a party, and that's why it works."❑

Scavenging ravens memorize vast tracts of wolf hunting grounds: study

New York, United States
The partnership between ravens and wolves goes back to Norse mythology -- Odin's birds scouted ahead and led prey to the god's canines, a relationship that provided food for all.
The myth has some roots in reality: when wolves have a successful hunt, ravens are often observed first on the scene and new research published Thursday in the journal Science put the legend to the test.

Two ravens, one of them carrying some food, fly over the coastline near the city of Nuuk, western Greenland, on January 28, 2026.

The study's findings suggest the birds are doing more than just tracking the hunters: they're using navigation and spatial memory techniques to scavenge with sophistication.
While "ravens are already well-known for their intelligence," lead author Matthias-Claudio Loretto told AFP, seeing these cognitive abilities "play out at a much larger scale in the wild" produced startling results.
Ravens weren't just following wolves they were clocking kill patterns, creating mental maps to support future food quests.
The international research team attached tiny GPS trackers to 69 ravens an impressive number considering the painstaking work in trapping the particularly observant birds.
"Even small changes in their environment can make them suspicious," said Loretto, who is at the University of Veterinary Medicine in Vienna, and began the research at the Max Planck Institute of Animal Behavior.
The team had movement data from 20 collared wolves in the famed Yellowstone National Park, a vast protected area in the western United States where wolves were reintroduced in the mid-1990s after 70 years of absence.
The park was uniquely suited to the study.
"This work would not have been possible anywhere other than Yellowstone," said co-author and wildlife scientist John Marzluff of the University of Washington.
Because the environment is open rather than densely wooded, both the birds and wolves are relatively easy to observe at long distances, he told AFP.

- **'Sophisticated' animal cognition -**
Over two-and-a-half years of monitoring, researchers were puzzled to find just one instance of a raven following a wolf for more than an hour even as the birds were still able to quickly arrive at a kill.
Deeper analysis showed ravens were in fact revisiting spots where wolves commonly took down prey animals like deer, elk or bison suggesting the birds were creating and memorizing a "resource landscape."
Some birds would fly nearly 100 miles (up to 155 kilometers) in a single day, seeking out places they seemed to expect might feature wolf kills.
It was "a much larger area than I ever imagined," said Marzluff.
Short-range cues still matter: ravens might be following signals like wolf howls to find fresh kills at shorter distances.❑

The gost in the desert: Arizona's newest resident, jaguar #5

In the rugged, sun-scorched expanse of southern Arizona, a rare and majestic ghost has reappeared. Wildlife researchers at the University of Arizona's Wild Cat Research and Conservation Center recently confirmed the presence of a new male jaguar, officially designated as "Jaguar #5.
"This discovery, documented in late 2025, has sent ripples of excitement through the conservation community, marking a significant milestone in the natural recolonization of the American Southwest.

A Rare Homecoming
For over a century, the jaguar (Panthera onca) was nearly a myth in the United States. Once roaming as far north as the Grand Canyon and even the mountains of California, the species was largely driven out by hunting and habitat loss. Today, the jaguar is listed as an endangered species in the U.S., with most individuals residing in Mexico. However, the appearance of Jaguar #5 proves that the "Sky Islands" of Arizona remain a vital corridor for these apex predators.
The new male was identified through high-resolution trail camera footage. Researchers noted his unique spot patternsnature's version of a fingerprint which confirmed he was an individual never before recorded in the state. He follows in the footsteps of famous predecessors like "El Jefe" and "Sombra," young males who crossed the border from Sonora, Mexico, in search of new territory.

The Struggle for Territory
The arrival of Jaguar #5 is more than just a biological curiosity; it is a testament to the resilience of the species. Experts suggest that as populations in northern Mexico face pressure, young males are naturally venturing north to reclaim ancestral lands. These cats are known for their incredible endurance, often traveling hundreds of miles through treacherous terrain to find suitable habitat.
However, the path for Jaguar #5 is fraught with challenges. Physical barriers at the border, such as walls and fences, present significant obstacles to natural migration. Conservationists argue that maintaining "wildlife corridors" unbroken stretches of land where animals can safely cross is essential for the long-term survival of the species in the U.S..

A Symbol of Hope
For many in Arizona, the presence of a jaguar is a source of pride. "It's a miracle to see them returning," noted one local wildlife advocate. The jaguar is a "keystone species," meaning its presence helps regulate the entire ecosystem by controlling prey populations.

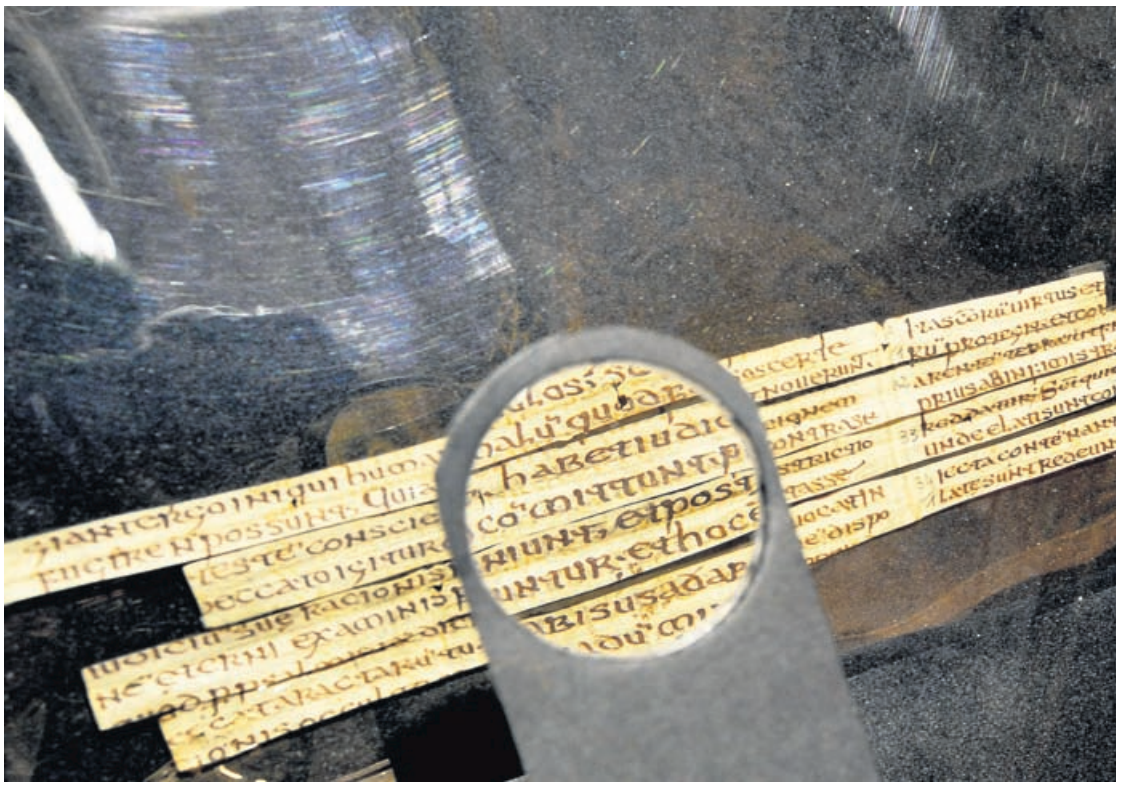
While some residents express concerns about living near a large carnivore, experts emphasize that jaguars are notoriously elusive and rarely interact with humans. Instead, they prefer the deep canyons and remote ridges where they can hunt deer and javelina in peace.

As Jaguar #5 settles into his new home, the world watches with bated breath. His journey represents a rare success story in an era of environmental decline a reminder that if we leave the door open, nature has a remarkable way of finding its way back home.❑

Lost page of legendary Archimedes palimpsest found in France

Paris, France
It all started off as a joke, a French researcher told AFP. But what the team found was a piece of history -- a long-lost page from a legendary manuscript by ancient Greek mathematician Archimedes which had been languishing, forgotten, in the archives of a French museum.
Archimedes, considered one of history's greatest mathematicians and inventors, lived in the third century BC in the city of Syracuse.
Among his many discoveries was the principle of buoyancy, which he struck while stepping out of a bath famously prompting him to shout "Eureka!".
This treatise and many others of his lasted down through the centuries on a manuscript called a palimpsest, which changed hands many times.

A palimpsest is a handwritten parchment that has had its original text scraped off before being written over, sometimes several times.
Victor Gysembergh, the researcher at France's CNRS research centre who found the missing page of Archimedes's palimpsest, told AFP it was a "treasure trove of lost texts from antiquity".
As well as Archimedes's mathematical breakthroughs, the manuscript contains his "philosophical, literary and religious" writings, Gysembergh enthused.
The palimpsest itself was not written by Archimedes's hand but was instead copied during the 900s AD.
Around two centuries later, the text was erased and reused as a Christian prayer book.



A picture shows fragments of a palimpsest from the VIIIe century of Pope Gregorio Magno at the Library of the Academy of the Lincei and Corsiniana, on March 30, 2016 during a press preview of the exhibition "The books that have made Europe.

- From Constantinople to Bezos? -
That was just the beginning of the journey for this unique manuscript, whose fate followed the twists and turns of history.
By the 1800s, it was held by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, including inside a library in Constantinople, modern-day Istanbul.
Danish historian Johan Ludvig Heiberg found the palimpsest there -- and took photographs of every page in 1906.
However, at some point during World War I, the document vanished without a trace.
It somehow wound up in the private collection of a French family, which eventually put it up for auction in 1998.
It was purchased by an anonymous Western businessman.

Insiders quoted by Germany's Der Spiegel newspaper claimed it was Amazon billionaire Jeff Bezos, although the true identity remains unknown.
But three of the palimpsest's 177 pages had disappeared.
This is where Gysembergh comes in.
"I am interested in palimpsests because they are a way to discover lost texts," said the lead author of a study in the German Journal of Papyrology and Epigraphy.❑

Under a Baroque fresco, Valentino returns to Rome

Rome, Italy
Italian fashion house Valentino returns to its roots on Thursday with a catwalk show in one of Rome's most spectacular venues, two months after the death of founder Valentino Garavani.
Around 800 people have been invited to the Palazzo Barberini, a lavish Baroque palace housing paintings by Italian masters Caravaggio and Raphael among others.
Valentino, known for dressing some of the world's most glamorous women, normally shows in Paris, despite having been established in the Italian capital in 1960.

But creative director Alessandro Michele has chosen to return to the Eternal City to showcase his fall/winter 2026-27 collection, the first for ready-to-wear since Valentino's death aged 93 on January 19.
Entitled "Interferenze" (interferences or disturbances), the early evening show will be held beneath Pietro da Cortona's spectacular fresco, "The Triumph of Divine Providence", which covers the large ceiling of the palazzo's grand salon.
As a teaser, Valentino posted online a video mixing some of the venue's most iconic images, including the ceiling fresco, Antonio Corradini's "La Velata" sculpture and Francesco Borromini's helical staircase.
Another hint at the show's theme was in the invitation, which arrived with a brass button covered in marble-like enamel.
Alongside was a fictitious expert attribution report naming it as the button missing from a bust of Cardinal Pietro Valier by Gian Lorenzo Bernini, currently on show at the palazzo.
"In Baroque portraiture, the detail is loaded with meaning: the button holds the fabric together, serving as a point of closure and control," the report said.
"Its absence, or lack of visibility, in Bernini's work introduces a minimal yet eloquent void, almost a reminder: vulnerability spares no image, not even that of power."

Strictly invitation only, and with a black-tie dress code, the show will nevertheless be broadcast live on Valentino's social media channels and also on big screens around Rome, Milan and Naples.

A picture shows a fresco on the ceiling of the Palazzo Barberini before the show "Interferenze" Fall/Winter 2026-2027 from Italian fashion house Valentino, in Rome on March 12, 2026.

- Synonymous with glamour -
Valentino had long been retired Michele is the fourth creative designer since the founder left in 2008 and the label is now majority-owned by Qatar investment fund Mayhoola.
French luxury group Kering also has a 30 percent stake.
But the designer's death prompted tributes from across the industry and Hollywood for a man who became synonymous with glamour and beauty.

Valentino trained and worked in Paris before opening his fashion house in Rome.
Over the following decades, he dressed A-listers from Jackie Kennedy and Elizabeth Taylor to Princess Diana and Julia Roberts.❑

Shepherd Baatyrbek Akmatov, 52, member of the three-generation Akmatov family of white yaks breeders, stands with a white yak grazing at a snowy pasture 3,000 metres high in the remote Kyrgyz mountains on February 2, 2026.

Yak hack: Kyrgyz want the world to love their blonde bovine beauties

Kara-Saz, Kyrgyzstan
Dozens of white yaks frolicked in the pristine snow of the vast Kyrgyz mountains, butting heads and locking horns as their herders watched on from their horses.
The Akmatov family have been breeding their variety of the cattle which normally have dark-brown hair for the past 15 years, and see their growing flock as a symbol of the white yak's revival in a country plagued by climate woes.
Peeking curiously from under their milky manes as they bellowed guttural sounds, the 300 or so yaks stood bemused at the sight of rare human visitors to their pasture, 3,000 metres up in the remote mountains of Central Asia.
"The cold drops to -40C at night... But the yaks can graze freely, they love the mountains and the cold," shepherd Amantur Akmatov, 30, told AFP.
Amantur is the youngest of the three-generation family of breeders alongside his grandfather Tashtanbek, 88, who developed the herd, and father Baatyrbek, 52. The herd has been growing slowly, with each female giving birth to a calf roughly every other year.
Yaks hold deep cultural and symbolic importance in the traditionally nomadic country, but their numbers plummeted after the collapse of the Soviet Union.
Government support has helped double the population since the late 1990s to more than 60,000.

Organic milk, strong wool
As the sun set over the mountains, the yaks' distinctive black silhouettes dotted the horizon.
Despite the high altitudes, the yaks still face predators. Around 20 have fallen prey to wolves in recent months.
Armed with a hunting rifle and clad in all-white overalls, a thick hat and balaclava to protect him from the cold, Amantur climbs onto his horse for a two-hour wolf patrol every morning at 6:00 am.
"The wolves torment them. We fight them, defend ourselves, and sometimes shoot them," he said.
The walls of his living room adorned with an array of wolf furs are testament to his marksmanship.
Bishkek is promoting yaks as a sustainable option in a rural, landlocked country that is heavily exposed to adverse effects of the changing climate.
"Yak farming is a promising sector, especially in the face of climate change and pasture degradation," the agriculture ministry told AFP.

Grazing on isolated high-altitude pastures, they reduce pressure on rural land, and the animals are "resistant to cold, drought, poor pastures and therefore perfectly adapted to regions affected by climate change... and soil degradation," the ministry added.❑

Chilean Architect Smiljan Radic (C) gives a press conference from inside the 2014 Serpentine Pavillion at the Serpentine Gallery in Hyde Park, central London, on June 24, 2014.

Chile's Smiljan Radic Clarke wins Pritzker architecture prize

New York, United States
Chile's Smiljan Radic Clarke, whose modern buildings can sometimes appear "deliberately unfinished," is the recipient of this year's Pritzker Prize, considered the Nobel of architecture, organizers announced Thursday.
The 60-year-old Radic, a native of Santiago, creates "optimistic and quietly joyful" structures, the jury said in its citation.
Radic is best known for his Serpentine Gallery Pavilion in London a translucent donut-shaped fiberglass shell resting on locally sourced rocks and the Vik Millahue Winery in his home country, set among the Andes mountains and the vineyards.
The Teatro Regional del Biobio in Concepcion, Chile resembles a paper lantern.

"If architecture gives shape to the ways in which people live, Radic's work produces spatial experiences that feel at once surprising and entirely natural," the Pritzker jury said.
"His buildings may appear temporary, unstable, or deliberately unfinished almost on the point of disappearance yet they provide a structured, optimistic and quietly joyful shelter, embracing vulnerability as an intrinsic condition of lived experience."
The panel hailed Radic who has created buildings and installations across Europe and at home in Chile for "reminding us that architecture is an art."
First awarded in 1979 to modernist Philip Johnson, the Pritzker Prize has honored many of the profession's most influential figures including IM Pei, Oscar Niemeyer, Frank Gehry, Rem Koolhaas and Zaha Hadid.
It honors a living architect for "significant achievement" in the field. Last year's award went to China's Liu Jiakun, who lives and works in his birth city of Chengdu. His projects known for their minimalism and use of designs that fit local context -- include the Museum of Clocks in that city.❑

Basic driving rules on Aruba: Roundabouts

(Oranjestad)—Have you ever felt confused when you're driving on the highways or backstreets of Aruba? Then we present a simple guide to some of the basic rules of Aruban traffic, along with some tips for things to look out for.

Speed limit
Legally, the speed limit on the four-lane highways is 80 km/h. This speed limit also counts for the main roads that are connected to the highways. The minimum speed is 50 km/h. Most people drive around 60 km/h on the main roads and about 70 km/h on the highways. There are also areas that indicate a speed limit on a sign; these are usually around populated and school areas.

The four-lane highways contain the left-lane, also known as the "fast" lane for each direction. Here is where vehicles can drive up to the maximum speed. However, legally it is not permitted to drive for long periods of time on the left lane. This lane is primarily designed for drivers to switch lanes before a roundabout, for example, if your exit on the roundabout is on your far left. The general lane to drive in—both at maximum and minimum speed—is on the right lane.

Roundabouts
Speaking of roundabouts, it is important to know where you have to enter and drive on the roundabout to make your exit. A good rule of thumb is to count the exits starting from your right side. So, exit 1 would be on your right; exit 2 would be straight ahead; exit 3 would be on your far left and exit 4 would lead to the road paralleled to the one you're on, heading in the other direction.

Most roundabouts have these 4 exits, so they are relatively simple. When you're driving on the four-lane highway, it is important to know when to switch to the left lane to make your exit: if your exit is on your far left (exit 3), then you need to switch to the left lane on the high way before nearing the roundabout so you can take the path that leads you directly to your exit. If your exit is on your right or if you're going straight ahead, you can keep driving in the right lane of the highway.

It's also important to know that vehicles about to enter the roundabout must yield to those already on it. A good rule of thumb is to look out if someone is coming from your left side.

However, other roundabouts can be quite tricky to navigate…

Watty Vos Boulevard (the "paperclip" roundabout)
Probably the biggest roundabout on the island, the "paperclip" roundabout on the Watty Vos Boulevard is one of the trickier roundabouts that could—and has—caused confused among both tourists and locals. However, once you take a good look at it, it's fairly simple. The basis is just the same as a regular roundabout (left exit? left lane! etc.), but instead of having four different exits like on a regular roundabout, now you have two extra; one on the right and the other on the left side of the roundabout. The rules don't change at all, you just have to keep an extra eye open.

Airport roundabout
Ah, yes. The infamous airport roundabout. The favorite roundabout amongst local, because of its easy (hard) lanes that never (always) cause confusion among drivers. Sarcasm aside, this roundabout can be tricky to enter, especially when you're driving from the direction of the airport heading. When you're driving away from the airport reaching the roundabout, you'll be faced with three lanes. The far right lane is to take the exit 1 out heading east (right lane of highway). The middle exit is used for exit 1 (left lane of highway), 2 and 3. The far left exit is used to only exit on exit 3 (left lane of highway) and 4.

"Las Americas" roundabout
The Las Americas roundabout is located farther west from the airport roundabout. This roundabout may look like a regular roundabout—and for the most part, it is. However, when you are driving from the east going in the direction of town, please take note that there are two exits on your right.

When you're driving towards this roundabout, you'll notice that the road becomes wider, splitting into two lanes. The right lane is used to take the first and second exit on the right. If you want to exit straight ahead, you must drive on the left lane!

It's always scary to drive in new places where the traffic may look and work differently, but once you get it right once, you'll get the hang of it in no time. Additionally, all roundabouts and roads on Aruba have signs and arrows painted on the road to help guide you. So take your time, keep your eyes open and don't forget to wear a seat belt!❑

Skipp y Winnie Speed: A couple from Hudson, NY, who loves Aruba

(Oranjestad)—Skipp and Winnie started coming to Aruba in 1984 and since then they came back once every year. After a few years, it turned to two times per year and now they come three times per year! In total, they visited Aruba over 100 times.

They love the people and throughout the years have brought their family and friends to the island. Skipp has had garage for 62 years and still works every day. Winnie was a school teacher for 35 years and now works as a volunteer in their community.

Throughout the years they met a lot of people on the island and got to know the tourist area better, and saw the development of Aruba. They are grateful that Aruba has welcomed them with open arms and we for sure as just as happy that Skipp and Winnie has chosen our home for the past 42 years!❑

Adriaan Laclé: One of Aruba's richest men in the twentieth century

(Oranjestad)—The name Adriaan Laclé may ring a bell to locals as one of the main roads on the island, but about a century ago, Adriaan Laclé was a rich businessman, well-known for his generosity, wealth, and taste.

Adriaan was born in 1866 and was the eldest of six children. Not much is known about his childhood upbringing or any of his earlier business ordeals, but during his hay day he often helped people get loans, was a well-established trader, and owned several plots of land. In fact, he commissioned the construction of the famous La Quinta Carmen manor—now a restaurant. Though he himself never lived in the beautiful manor, his own house also reflected his success and good taste. Today his house still stands in good condition and can be found in the back streets of main street Oranjestad.

Regarding his personal life, it has been said that he was married twice during his lifetime. He had his first daughter during his first marriage but lost his wife soon after her birth. During his second marriage, he fathered 16 children. However, it has been said that only 11 of those 17 made it past 18 years of age. Perhaps two of his most well-known daughters are Maria Monica Laclé and Maria Veneranda Laclé, who went on to marry successful brothers Eloy Arends and Maximilian Arends, respectively. Their houses are still standing; Eloy and Maria Monica's mansion functions as the townhall, used to host civil marriages, while Maximilian and Maria Veneranda's house stands on the opposite side of the road to them—though currently under renovation after years left in ruin.❑

Source: De Kolibrie op de Rots (en meer over de geschiedenis van Aruba) by Evert Bongers.

Russ and Cindy honored as Goodwill Ambassador for 25 years of visiting Aruba!

(Oranjestad)—Aruba Today is delighted to share the honoring of Russ and Cindy Otoski as Goodwill Ambassadors for 25 years of dedicated love for the island.

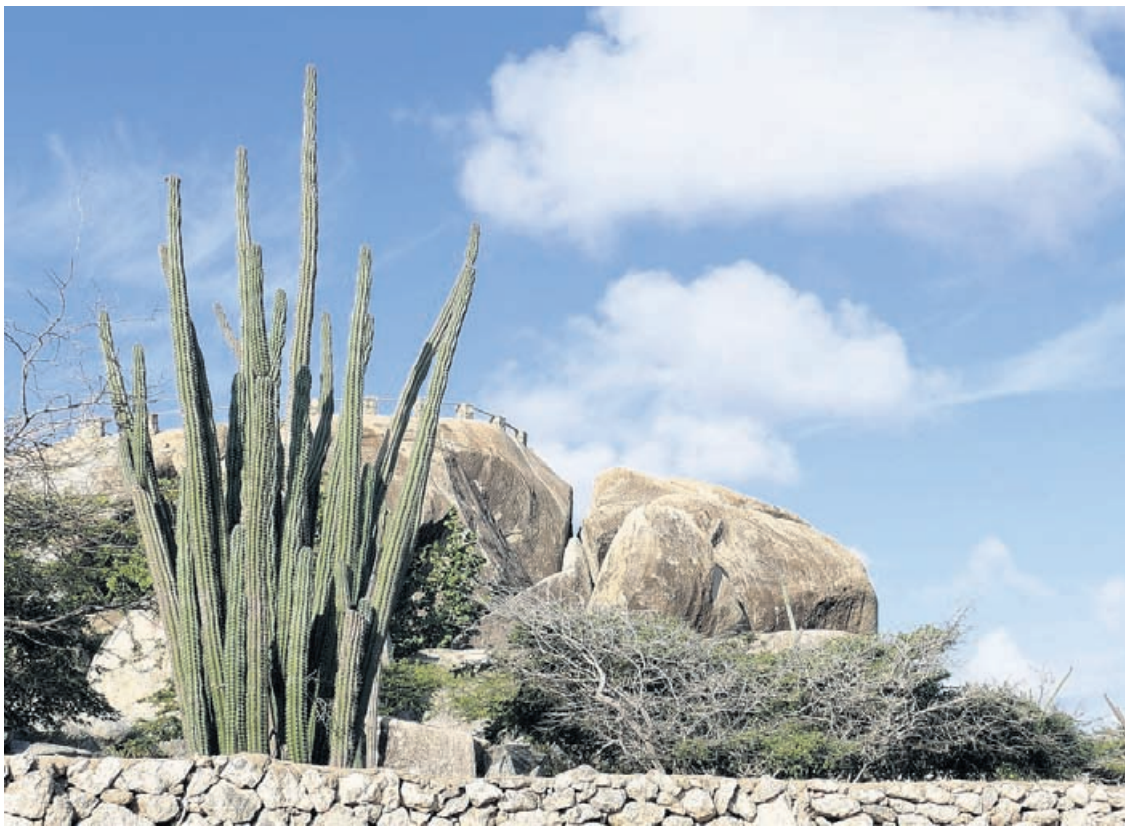
The Aruba Tourism Authority surprised them with a beautiful framed certificate. "It was awesome that our dear friend, Linda Garcia pinned Aruba pins on us," Cindy shared.

Making this occasion extra special is that their son Russell Sims, daughter in-law Heather, and grandson Wright, were there to share this moment. Wright is the family's 4th generation visitor to the island. Cindy's father, Robert A. Woelkers, was the original Aruba lover who started the tradition of yearly family vacations to Aruba.

Congratulations to the Russ and Cindy and thank you for cherishing our home like we do!❑

Ayo & Casibari: Aruba's famous rock formations

(Oranjestad)—The Ayo and Casibari Rock Formations are known locally as one of the crucial sites to have in your "off-road" trip itinerary. These naturally formed rock formations as just one of the few places on the island that hold a rich history of our culture and of our ancestors.



Ayo

The Ayo Rock Formation is located in the northern part of the island, right on the road that leads you to the Black Stone Beach, and close to the Natural Bridge. The Ayo is a fenced terrain that consists of several giant boulders, resting neatly on top of or side by side each other, adding gorgeous natural architecture to the surrounding "mondi"*. This is also one of the few sites to contain prehistoric markings of our indigenous ancestors. The Ayo Rock formation contains stairs that lead you to the top of the highest boulder, offering a breath-taking view of the Aruban backyard. The Ayo is usually quiet, as it is situated farther away from the busier parts of the island. However, this is just another charm of the site: the quiet area and the refreshing breeze offer a sense of comfort and peace.

Casibari

Probably the busier rock formation site, the Casibari is situated more in the center of the island, much closer—and more accessible—to the general public. Just like Ayo, Casibari is a fenced area containing several boulders that lay on top or lean on each other. The best aspect of the Casibari Rock Formation is the accompanying view when you climb up the top of the round, flat bolder. For this position, you can see the majority of the island and the ocean in the south.

Both sites are open free to the public, 24 hours a day. However, unless you are taking a trip with a professional tour guide, there are no guides at the sites to help you climb the rock. So, do be careful when trudging on the boulders, and make sure to befriend any roaming goats you see along the way!

*Mondi: what we call our Aruban wilderness. We don't have forests, or deserts, but we do have mondi!❑

Papiamento words and phrases you may want to know!

(Oranjestad)— Aruba is a melting pot of different nationalities, cultures and languages. Primarily for this reason, the average Aruban can understand and speak Dutch, English and Spanish relatively well. However, as much as we pride ourselves in being able to communicate with almost everyone, we cherish our native tongue Papiamento above all else. Want to learn some common words in our language? Here are a few basic words and phrases that can get you a hat tip from an Aruban.

When you arrive at the airport in Aruba, one of the first words in Papiamento you may encounter is "Bon bini." Bon bini in Papiamento means welcome, and is probably the most famous Papiamento word for tourists.

Hi! Bye!

To be fair, there is no unique way to say "hello" in Papiamento—at least not officially. We often just use the English "hello" or "hey", or Dutch "hallo" to greet someone. We do however, always follow it up with "con bay?" or "con ta?" Con bay is a shortened version of "con ta bay?", which essentially means "how are you?"

The word "con" in Papiamento means "how?" and is pronounced with a rounder "o" sounds, like in the English word "cone". "Ta bay" refers to how you are doing.

When we say goodbye, we use the word "ayo" (not like the Ayo Rock Formation, but also…kinda?). We may also use "te oro", which means "see you later".

Greetings during the day

Most, if not all, languages have different ways to greet according to the time of day, and Papiamento is no different. Since Papiamento is heavily influences from Portuguese and Spanish, some of these phrases may look very familiar.

Bon dia is used in the morning, up to about noon. Bon dia essentially means good morning. The word "bon" means "good", and while "dia" does not directly mean "morning" in English, it is used often to refer to the morning time.

Bon tardi

In the afternoon to early evening hours, we use "bon tardi" to greet people, which means "good afternoon". "Tardi" actually comes from the word "atardi", which directly translates to "afternoon". However, the shortened "tardi" is used to keep the rhythm on the phrase. And the same could be said for our last greeting of the day.

Bon nochi.

You guessed it, "bon nochi" means "good night". Just like "tardi", "nochi" is actually the shortened version of the word "anochi".

Yes…no…maybe?

The affirmative and negative expression is very simple in Papiamento. Just like Spanish, our yeses are "si" and our no's are "no". Pretty easy right? If you want to gain some extra points from younger locals, you can also say "se", which is a more casual affirmative used mostly by the younger generation.

However, do note: some older generations may find this improper and not respectful, so keep that in mind.

Thanks man…

Lastly, a word that we can also say more often is "danki", which means literally "thank you". "Danki" is derived from the Dutch word "bedankt". Though we don't really have a translation for "I appreciate it" in English, we do use "masha danki" to convey the message. "Masha" means "a lot" or "very", so "masha danki" means "thank you very much".❑

Birds of Aruba: Soaring through the blue skies

(Oranjestad)—Aruba's nature is very diverse and is home to several beautiful and majestic wildlife. Among these is the bright Trupial, whose angelic voice is always heard with the rising sun; the cuddly parakeet, always in company of another, and the majestic Warawara, a mighty bird that can be seen soaring in the clear blue skies.

Trupial

Icterus icterus, or known locally as the Venezuelan or Orange Troupial, is a striking songbird whose bright orange feathers can be spotted from a far distance. Known to be the first bird to sing at the first sign of sunrise, this beloved songbird likes to wake up with a tune. But don't let their angelic songs fools you; the Trupial can be a bit aggressive towards any threat, protective over their nesting spots—nesting spots they most likely stole from other birds. Trupials can be seen regularly, often in trees or on top of a cactus.

Photo Credit: Daniel Ruben Gonzalez

Prikichi (parakeet)

The Brown-throated Prikichi (Aratinga pertinax) became the national bird of Aruba back in 2015, at the request of Aruba Birdlife Conservation. The bright green, adorable parakeet usually flies in flock of 30 or more, but its population has been declining since the 2010s. Prikichis are a shier breed than the trupial, often flying away at the sign of any threat. They use termite nests for breeding spots and feed mostly on seeds from the Kwihi tree, Divi Divi tree and fruits.

Photo Credit: Daniel Ruben Gonzalez

Warawara

The Warawara or Caracara is one of the biggest birds found in the Aruban mondi. At a heigh of 41 to 60 cm, their wingspan can measure up to 125 cm. Known as the "garbage man", this bird of prey mostly feeds on dead animals. Its coat is dark brown, with a cream-colored neck, orange face, thick beak and long legs. The Warawara prefers to build its nest in the middle of tall cacti and produces a rattling, screaming sound, throwing its head back onto its back while calling.

While these birds are a beautiful sight to behold, it is very important to keep your distance and respect their habitats. This is how we protect our wildlife. By admiring the beauty of Aruba in a safe and respectful manner, we can do our part in protecting our sacred nature.❑

Photo Credit: Aruba Birdlife Conservation

Forgotten gems: Open air movie theaters

(Oranjestad)—During the span of over 100 years, Aruba only saw five open air movie theaters. Now practically obsolete on the island, these theaters were once frequently visited by locals and migrants in the 20th century.

The first open air theater was constructed in 1920 and was commissioned by Shon Eduard (Eddy) de Veer. This theater was located at the Hotel Colombia in Oranjestad, which is now where the Aruban census office is located. The theater was simple; it only consisted of a screen, and visitors had to bring their own chairs to enjoy the popular silent movies of the time.

American migrants who worked in the refinery and lived in the Lago Colony in Sero Colorado also had their piece of the pie with their Open air Theatre, which formed part of the Esso Club, also known as the Pan-Am Club. It was at this theater that "Talkies" were first streamed, movies with sound. This theater mostly streamed American blockbusters for the American expats, this way making sure that these migrant were not missing out on entertainment from their home land.

In the 1950's and 60's, Savaneta saw their own open air theater, located in front of the Marinier's Kazerne (Marine Barracks). This theater was mostly visited by the neighboring marines, who didn't have much entertainment other than movies at that time.

The last and most recent open air theater was constructed in the form of a drive-in theater. A popular American concept, the Drive Inn located in Balashi was a hot spot for teenagers, who had the habit of cramming all their friends in one car to go see the movies. For this phenomenon there was a separate price that you had to pay called the "car crash".

This theater closed around 2012, but was re-opened during the pandemic in July 2020, where movies were streamed on a gigantic screen set up in front of stacked containers. However, this nostalgic form of entertainment did not last very long as it was closed again only a year or two later. Nowadays you can still see the stacked containers when you drive near the bridge in Balashi.❑

Source: "De kolibrie op de rots en meer over de geschiedenis van Aruba" by Evert Bongers.

ARUBA TODAY

CROSSWORD

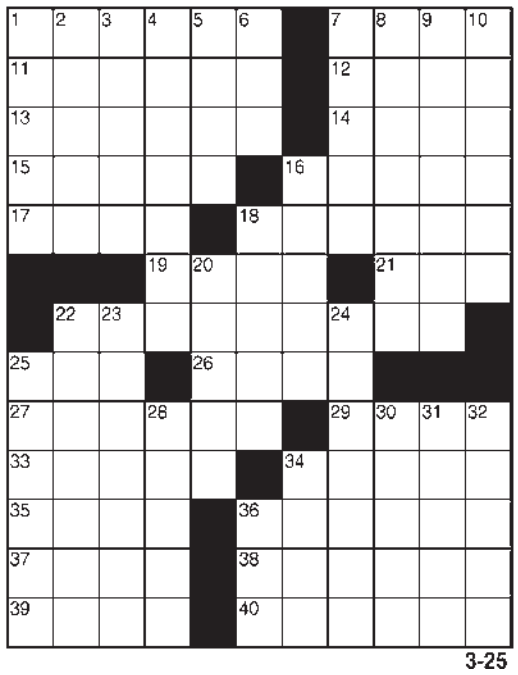
By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Little lad
7 Standard
11 Holiday event
12 Open space
13 Bankrupt
14 Veto
15 Dined at home
16 "Love Story" writer
17 Holler
18 Placid
19 Norse trickster
21 Got together
22 Quadrilateral type
25 Runner Sebastian
26 Stratum
27 Come to
29 Crimson Tide, for short
33 Light lunch
34 "Eat up!"
35 Ninny
36 Genetic oddity
37 Take it easy
38 Skilled ones
39 Needle features
40 Galileo's crime

DOWN

1 Mist
2 — cuisine
3 "The Tempest" sprite
4 Cream soda flavor
5 Perfect place
6 Spectrum end
7 Au naturel
8 Folding art
9 Akin
10 Croquet need
16 Grab
18 Yarn buy
20 Made a choice
22 Take to the impound lot
23 Become aware of
24 Satellite
25 Rook
28 Hudson and Jackson
30 Visibly stunned
31 Breath fresheners
32 Fidgeting
34 Slacker address
36 — jongg



3-25

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.

3-25 CRYPTOQUOTE

M N T G N P S X H W B B N

Q N G H W Z F P S X O I F O C N Y K F M 'O

U F S L F U F C Q G N H W O .

— K I F G S X B H . B K I Y S J

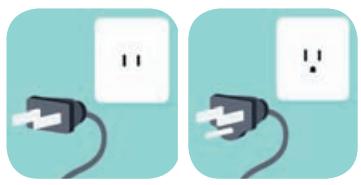
Cryptoquote: THE TREES WILL TELL THEIR SECRETS TO THOSE THAT TUNE IN. — STEVEN MAGEE

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 basicbut 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 occurs, 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

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

Difficulty: ★★★★ 3/13

Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty: ★★★ 3/12

Despite reputation, bonobos are aggressive, particularly toward males: study

Washington, United States

Historically considered a more peaceful species than their chimpanzee cousins, bonobos are actually just as aggressive but target their ire most often at males, according to a study published Wednesday.

Living in matriarchal societies, the gentle-eyed primates once dubbed "hippy apes" are far from violence-free, a group of European researchers reported in the journal Science Advances.

They studied 13 groups of bonobos and nine groups of chimpanzees who conversely live in patriarchal systems and are well known for their aggressivity in zoos, seeking to find out which is more prone to attacks.

Measuring different types of aggressive behavior, both physical and not such as throwing objects, intimidation, or biting and slapping they found "no overall differences in absolute aggression rates between the two species."

However, differences emerged "in how the aggression is distributed among group members," co-author Nicky Staes told AFP.

"In chimpanzees aggression mostly comes from males and is directed towards both males and females, whereas in bonobos aggression levels are quite equal in both sexes but are mostly directed at males," she said.

This undated handout picture provided by the Kokolopori Bonobo Research Project shows bonobos grooming each other at the Kokolopori Bonobo Reserve in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

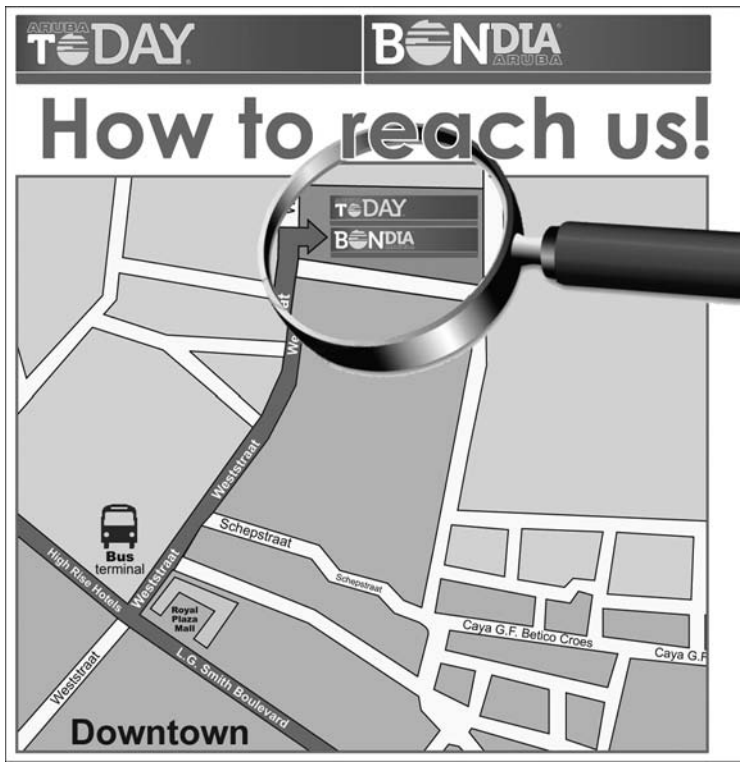
Emile Bryon, another co-author, said that, as bonobos live in female-dominant groups, the fact that both females and males direct most of their aggression toward males surprised researchers.

"Dominant individuals compete amongst each other for resources," he said, so "one could expect aggression among bonobo females. But our study says otherwise."

The relative lack of aggression among female bonobos could be explained by the species' well-studied use of sex to defuse conflicts, or the aggression may be "redirected towards males, who become buffers in the females' competitive dynamics," Bryon said.

- Aggressive ancestors? -

The authors noted limitations to their findings due to the apes living in captivity, where food is not as much of a source of tension, but highlighted the variability of aggressiveness in both species.❑



ARUBA TODAY

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Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V. Acc. #23951903
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San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours
Tel.524 8833

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San Nicolas:
Centro Medico: Tel.584 5794

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Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic
+297 588 0539

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American Airlines	**582 2700**
Avianca	**588 0059**
Jet Blue	**588 2244**
Surinam	**582 7896**

AID FOUNDATIONS

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Tel. 582 5051

Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous
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For Russia's 'Mr Nobody', Hollywood leap feels 'unreal'

Paris, France
Two years ago he was a videographer at a small-town Russian school, filming patriotic lessons and morning drills in the wake of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.
This weekend Pavel Talankin will walk into Hollywood's biggest night as the co-director of an Oscar-nominated documentary exposing the propaganda and indoctrination of children in Russian schools.
Such vertiginous twists of fate should be "illegal", Talankin joked, speaking to AFP from Los Angeles.
"If you had told me two years ago that things would be like this, I would have laughed in your face," said Talankin, who previously worked at a secondary school in the industrial town of Karabash in the Urals.
"It's unreal things like this just don't happen."
"Mr Nobody Against Putin," nominated in the Documentary Feature Film category, is based on hours of footage Talankin smuggled out of Russia after teaming up with US filmmaker David Borenstein.
After the invasion of Ukraine, Russia outlawed all criticism of the military, and cooperating with foreigners could lead to treason charges.

Pavel Talankin, a teacher, videographer and filmmaker from Russia, who today lives in Prague, poses during a photo session in Prague on June 27, 2025.

Talankin fled the country in the summer of 2024 with the hard drives containing what would become a 90-minute documentary, leaving behind his mother, brothers and sisters.

- Mingling with stars -

The film won a BAFTA award in London last month for best documentary, one of the last major ceremonies before the Oscars. Monica Bellucci read out the winning title, while Prince William watched from the front row.
Talankin, who turned 35 on Wednesday, looked dapper in his bow tie.
"I liked how I looked in it. I kind of felt like I belonged with them," he said, laughing.
He expressed regret that he did not get a chance to speak with the future king, but he has had plenty of opportunities to rub shoulders with Hollywood royalty during the traditional pre-Oscar events.
Last month's Academy Award nominees' luncheon and "class photo", where Talankin is pictured in the centre next to Benicio Del Toro, was a bit of a shock.
"I went out for a smoke. And walking toward me was Leonardo DiCaprio," he recounted. "I was a bit stunned, because never in my life had I imagined a scenario where I'd go to the smoking room and Leonardo DiCaprio would be coming straight at me."
But apart from celebrity lunches and selfies with the likes of Timothee Chalamet, life continues as usual, said Talankin, who has been learning English as he shuttles between the United States and Europe to promote the film.

"Of course, it's nice that people are watching the film, coming to screenings, and asking questions -- that people aren't indifferent," he said. "But I wouldn't go so far as to say that my star has risen."
But even if he does his best not to show it, his life has been an emotional roller coaster.
While the documentary received positive reviews in the West, Russian propaganda has launched a smear campaign against him.
"There has been so much pressure on him," said Radovan Sibrt, one of the film's producers.
"But Pasha seems to be handling it fine so far. With ease and nobleness," he said, using the videographer's informal first name.
He said Talankin's voice was getting "stronger and stronger".

The film has proved polarising even among anti-Kremlin Russians.
Some have criticised its raw, unpolished feel, while others argued that children were filmed without parental consent.
"Sometimes filming this way is the only way to get information," Talankin said. ❑

Caviar, truffle and chicken pot pies: what Hollywood will eat at the Oscars

Los Angeles, United States
Hundreds of pounds of caviar, black truffle, sushi and tomahawk steak have been shipped to Hollywood for the traditional lavish Oscars after-party this Sunday.

A tray of salmon with Black Pearl caviar is displayed in Hollywood, California, on February 25, 2025 during a media preview of the food, beverages and decor for the Governors Ball, the Academy's official post-Oscars celebration, which will immediately follow the 97th Oscars ceremony on March 2.

They will be washed down with thousands of bottles of tequila and champagne at the Governors Ball, where newly minted Academy Award winners get their statuettes engraved while fellow A-listers feast, dance and gossip.
"We make 25,000 small plates," said Wolfgang Puck, the celebrity chef who is returning to take charge of the party's menu for a 32nd consecutive year.
"You can have Japanese food, you can have Austrian food, you can have always the best steak," the Austrian-born restaurateur told AFP, as he seared a juicy tomahawk at a Tuesday press preview event.
At a time when diet pills are ubiquitous in Los Angeles, Puck joked that Tinseltown's famously weight-obsessed stars can have their Miyazaki beef "with Ozempic instead of spinach" if they prefer.
Quantities matter at a party of this scale: Puck anticipated that 1,200 of his traditional chicken pot pies will require 50 pounds (22 kilograms) of black truffle, served alongside 70 pounds of caviar, 1,000 plates of macaroni and cheese, and more than 200 pounds of tomahawk steak.

A new sushi station will feature five chefs preparing handrolls and nigiri.
Piper-Heidsieck champagne and Dassai sake will be served along with wines from Domaine Clarence Dillon and movie-themed Don Julio tequila cocktails.
This year's offerings include the "Best in Show," the "Golden Cut Margarita," the "Maestro Martini" and "The Sequel," made with gold vanilla edible paint streaked along the side.❑

Italy, USA and Canada advance at World Baseball Classic

Houston, United States
Unbeaten Italy advanced to the World Baseball Classic quarter-finals by routing Mexico 9-1 on Wednesday, allowing the fancied collection of United States stars into the last eight as well.

A night after the Italians delivered a stunning upset of the Americans to leave them on the brink of elimination, they overwhelmed Mexico to win Pool B with a 4-0 round-robin mark.

Vinnie Pasquantino blasted three solo home runs -- the WBC's first three-homer effort while Jon Berti added another and the Italians ended Mexico's hopes and pushed the USA into the quarter-finals.

"We're in a good spot. That was unbelievable," Pasquantino said. "I don't know what I'm feeling right now. We weren't supposed to win the pool, we thought we could and we did. It's pretty special."

The Italian captain taunted the Americans, whose team of top Major League Baseball talent had to sweat out the Mexico-Italy outcome. A Mexican victory with enough runs scored would have ousted the Americans on a tie-breaker.

Zach Dezenzo #4 of Team Italy scores in the eighth inning against Alejandro Kirk #30 of Team Mexico during the 2026 World Baseball Classic at Daikin Park on March 11, 2026 in Houston, Texas.

"You're welcome USA," Pasquantino said. "We were thinking of you guys over at your hotel. Glad you guys could join us in the party."

Canada defeated Cuba 7-2 in Puerto Rico to eliminate their Caribbean rivals never before ousted in WBC pool play and capture the Pool A crown with the hosts also advancing.

The Canadians will make their WBC quarter-finals debut against the United States on Friday in Houston while Italy will face Puerto Rico on Saturday.

"Whatever happens next, we're going to be ready for it," said Pasquantino.

Italy seized the lead on Pasquantino's solo homer in the second inning and Berti made it 2-0 with a solo homer in the fourth.

The Italians grabbed a 3-0 edge in the fifth when Jac Caglionone walked, stole second base, advanced to third on J.J. D'Orazio's single and scored on Dante Nori's bunt single.

D'Orazio and Nori later scored on a single by Jakob Marsee.

"Once we scored four runs, it was like we had better win this thing," Pasquantino said. Pasquantino added another solo homer in the sixth and Sam Antonacci scored from first on a fielding error in the seventh.

Mexico averted a shutout when a bases-loaded ground out by Alek Thomas scored Joey Meneses.

But Pasquantino, a third baseman for the MLB Kansas City Royals, smashed his third solo homer in the eighth.

Zach Dezenzo singled and scored in the eighth on an Andrew Fischer double for a 9-1 Italy edge.

- Canada ousts Cuba -

In Puerto Rico, Abraham Toro's homer gave Canada a 2-0 lead in the fifth inning. Bo Naylor added a run-scoring double and Otto Lopez followed with a two-run single in the sixth for a 5-1 Canada edge and the Cubans never threatened from there.

Japan and South Korea advanced from Pool C in Tokyo while Venezuela and Dominican Republic qualified from Pool D in Miami.

The Dominicans' 7-5 victory over Venezuela to capture the Pool D title set up the last quarter-final pairings with South Korea to meet the Dominican Republic on Friday and Japan to face Venezuela on Saturday. Those games will be in Miami, where semi-final games are set for Sunday and Monday ahead of Tuesday's championship clash.❑

Bane powers Magic over Cavs for fifth NBA win in a row

Washington, United States
Desmond Bane scored 35 points, including a crucial late three-pointer, to spark Orlando's 128-122 victory over visiting Cleveland on Wednesday, stretching the Magic win streak to five games.

Bane went 12-of-19 from the floor, 2-of-3 from three-point range, and added six rebounds and six assists for Orlando, who improved to 36-28 for the season.

"The thing I loved about it most -- I thought we just came into it with the right mindset, right mentality," Bane said.

"Knew what it was going to take. We were able to get it done."

Paolo Banchero added 25 points while Tristan da Silva scored 23 as the Magic, winners in eight of their past 11 starts, pulled into fifth in the Eastern Conference, three games back of fourth-place Cleveland (40-26).

"We're playing the right way and I think we're sacrificing for each other on both ends of the floor. It's not my turn, your turn -- it's our turn," Bane said.

"We're buckling down, getting stops on the defensive end. That's allowing us to get out and run and play free. It has been fun."

James Harden led the Cavaliers with 30 points on 11-of-16 shooting, hitting 5-of-9 from three-point range. Donovan Mitchell added 25 for Cleveland.

Orlando pulled away in the fourth quarter but three-pointers by Harden and Mitchell lifted the Cavs within 122-120 in the final minute.

Bane answered on a three-pointer from the sideline with 17 seconds remaining and added three late free throws to seal the triumph.

"I was able to get free, Jalen Suggs was able to hit me right on target and I let it fly with confidence," Bane said of his key three-pointer.

New York improved to 42-25 and moved 1.5 games ahead of Cleveland for third in the East by ripping host Utah 134-117.

Mitchell Robinson #23 of the New York Knicks jumps for a pass at the rim against Cody Williams #5 and Oscasr Tshiebwe #34 of the Utah Jazz during the first half of their game at the Delta Center on March 11, 2026 in Salt Lake City, Utah

Jalen Brunson scored 28 points and added a game-high eight assists to spark the Knicks while Jordan Clarkson added 27 off the bench, O.G. Anunoby had 22 points and Karl-Anthony Towns contributed 21 points, seven rebounds and seven assists.

Brice Sensabaugh scored 29 points to lead the Jazz (20-46).

At New Orleans, Trey Murphy scored 28 points and Dejounte Murray added 27 to lead the host Pelicans over Toronto 122-111.❑

Djokovic ousted by Draper at Indian Wells as Alcaraz marches on

Indian Wells, United States
Novak Djokovic was dumped out by Jack Draper in a slugfest Wednesday as the defending champion won 4-6, 6-4, 7-6 (7/5) to reach the quarter-finals at Indian Wells.
World number one Carlos Alcaraz sailed into the last eight of the Masters 1000 event for the fifth straight year and there were straight-sets wins for Daniil Medvedev and Cameron Norrie.

But Britain's Draper did it the hard way, wearing down 38-year-old Djokovic in a punishing third set to deny the Serb superstar his first return to the quarter-finals since he won his fifth Indian Wells title in 2016.
"I came out here tonight and I won that match through determination and trying to problem-solve and do my best and have a great attitude," said Draper, who kept the former world number one on the move with multiple drop shots.
The margins were razor-thin over the first two sets. The tide turned on an epic point in the opening game of the third that saw both players chasing down drop shots and scrambling for lobs before Djokovic sealed it with an overhead for a 40-30 lead.

Jack Draper of Great Britain celebrates match point against Novak Djokovic of Serbia during Day 8 of the BNP Paribas Open at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden on March 11, 2026 in Indian Wells, California.

He flopped on the court exhausted and was on his knees again after Draper won the next point. Djokovic would go on to hold serve, but he said it was the difference in the match for him.
"One point," he said. "It was great winning that point in that game, but I just ran completely out of gas."
Draper broke Djokovic in his next service game, but couldn't close it out when he served for the match at 5-4.
The reprieve wasn't enough for Djokovic, who led 4-3 in the tiebreaker but couldn't hang on.
"He played a sloppy game to close it out 5-4, and, you know, I got the crowd, you know, backing me, and I felt the energy," Djokovic said. "It was, like, maybe I'm gonna take this one. It was so, so close."

Draper, playing just his second tournament since missing the better part of six months with an arm injury, was delighted.
"To come out here against Novak, for me the greatest tennis player there is, I'm just incredibly proud of myself," he said.❑