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Volume 2:47 February 9, 2026

**Everybody's Talking!**

**Blood alternative:** Japan is testing a new kind of blood, created in labs, to meet medical needs without relying on constant donations. Aiming to solve supply issues faced by many hospitals worldwide, researchers are exploring synthetic versions that carry oxygen and don't require matching blood types. The project is especially urgent in places like Japan, where a declining population means fewer donors but rising demand. Unlike real blood, these alternatives can be stored longer and used more flexibly in emergencies and remote areas. If the trials succeed, the technology could ease pressure on blood banks and reshape how hospitals and other health officials prepare for surgeries, accidents, and public health crises.

**Island wonder:** Socotra, an Arabian Sea island off the coast of Yemen, is so unusual it has been likened to another planet. Rugged mountains and dry plateaus rise above stretches of beach and sand, creating a dramatic landscape surrounded by turquoise water. The island shelters many lifeforms found nowhere else on Earth, making it a showcase of rare biodiversity. Among its most recognizable plants are the umbrella-shaped dragon blood trees, with their striking red resin. The distinctive flora give the land a surreal appearance, adding to its mystique. With its unique species and remarkable scenery, Socotra stands out as one of the world's great natural wonders.

**Grass legacy:** Near the highlands of Huinchiri, Peru, a hand-woven bridge stretches over a river, rebuilt each year by dedicated villagers. The design, passed down through generations, follows ancient methods that use tightly braided grass in place of steel or wood. Victoriano Arizapana, the community's bridge master, oversees the process from start to finish, continuing a tradition rooted in Inca engineering. Before work begins, an offering is made to the land, seeking protection. Once completed, the old bridge is cut loose and left to return to nature below. With care, Arizapana secures the final ropes. The bridge then opens for use, ready for another season of crossings.

**Book revival:** A centuries-old church has been reimaged as a multi-level bookshop blending history with modern design in Zwolle, Netherlands. The building's tall arches and long central aisle remain untouched, while new structures have been added along the sides without altering the original frame. Visitors can browse the collection, pause under restored paintings, or listen to the organ during events. The space offers a mix of fiction, nonfiction, and children's books, and also features a cafe. Upstairs, a replica skeleton hints at the site's medieval past. The building now operates as a functional retail space with room for events and community use. Everything fits without disrupting the building's original layout.

**Quoteable Quotes**

"Love is a canvas furnished by Nature and embroidered by imagination."  
—Voltaire

"Don't feel stupid if you don't like what everyone else pretends to love."  
—Emma Watson

**What's Happening**

**Toastmasters** meet weekly, 7PM Okanagan College, #131, 2552 10 Ave NE. Build confidence, meet friends, improve communication. Come to learn, stay for the fun.

**Reflections on Spiritual and Intellectual Growth** (from a Baha'i perspective). Everyone Welcome. Saturday February 14 at 1 PM in the Boardroom (across from office) in Piccadilly Mall. For more info call 250-804-8657.

**Do you have an event you wish to advertise free:**  
Send the info to [Coffeenewstns@gmail.com](mailto:Coffeenewstns@gmail.com)

**Trivia**

1. What country is known as the "Land of a Thousand Lakes"?
2. The musical *West Side Story* is a retelling of this Shakespeare play.
3. This light show happens when solar particles collide with Earth's atmosphere.
4. A horse's height is measured in \_\_\_\_.
5. Who wrote the song "This Land Is Your Land"?

**(Flip bottom of page for answers)**

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**(Over)**

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# Your Weekly Horoscopes

**ARIES**  
(March 20 – April 19)




Saturn is moving into Aries for the next two years. A likely challenge during this period will be finding a good balance of taking action vs. maintaining the status quo. Lucky numbers: 15, 16, 25, 26, 30, 47.

**LIBRA**  
(Sept. 23 – Oct. 22)




For the next few weeks, be aware of how much others are asking of you. Carefully consider whether you can meet their requests without sacrificing your own needs. Lucky numbers: 5, 13, 15, 22, 29, 46.

**TAURUS**  
(April 20 – May 20)




You may have an opportunity to develop a bolder leadership style over the next two years. This might require you to integrate a higher level of risk into your world view. Lucky numbers: 8, 11, 13, 18, 21, 38.

**GEMINI**  
(May 21 – June 20)




Your head and heart may be pulling you in different directions at the beginning of the week. If you can't reconcile this stalemate, consider waiting a few days to act. Lucky numbers: 3, 13, 30, 40, 45, 48.

**CANCER**  
(June 21 – July 22)




Have you considered how to expand your role in the world to aid humanity? The weekend may be a good time to translate this adjustment into outward action. Lucky numbers: 2, 12, 13, 27, 28, 47.

**LEO**  
(July 23 – Aug. 22)




At midweek, an opportunity to be of aid to a group, large or small, may emerge. It might require some sacrifice on your part, but still could be in your best interests. Lucky numbers: 9, 26, 27, 33, 37, 47.

**VIRGO**  
(Aug. 23 – Sept. 22)



For the next few weeks, you may lose interest in performing work that requires precision and detail. Consider what this process might say about your passion. Lucky numbers: 4, 5, 11, 18, 20, 32.

**PISCES**  
(Feb. 19 – March 20)



Your focus may be on what you value and how to achieve it. If you are confused about how best to proceed, try to wait until you are more clear about what you desire. Lucky numbers: 1, 2, 5, 10, 28, 47.

Lucky numbers this week: This week's odds favor Leo winners with the luckiest number being 33.

# Did You Know...

**Star sand:** On certain beaches in Japan, sand isn't made of tiny rocks but tiny star-shaped shells instead. These are remnants of microscopic sea creatures, leaving behind beaches dotted with natural and unusual patterns.

**Desert glass:** In the sands of Libya and Egypt, pale yellow glass pieces are thought to have been formed when intense heat from a meteor impact melted the desert surface. The result is a rare natural glass, admired for both its beauty and unusual origin.

**Tower watch:** Fire lookout towers began as wooden perches, later becoming sturdy steel cabins high above the trees. Once vital for spotting wildfires, they gradually were replaced by satellites and aircrafts. Many still stand as restored landmarks or retreats.

**Pregnancy pause:** Some mammals, including kangaroos, seals, and certain species of bears, can put their pregnancies on hold until conditions are more favorable for their offspring. This natural delay is one of nature's clever ways of protecting new life.

**Silent surprise:** Composer John Cage's piece 4'33" asks musicians to play nothing, turning audience sounds into the performance. Listeners soon realize true silence doesn't exist. Every shuffle, breath, or cough becomes part of the music.

# On the Lighter Side

Some dogs are pointers. Mine's a nudger. He's too polite to point.

Restaurant hostess to chicken: "We don't serve poultry here."  
 Chicken: "That's OK, I want a coffee."

Knock! Knock! *Who's there?* You. *You who?* Did you call me?

What do you call a story told by a giraffe? A tall tale.

Lots of people want to travel to the Netherlands to buy clogs. Wouldn't shoe?

# Answers

3. Aurora 4. Hands 5. Woody Guthrie

**Trivia answers:** 1. Finland 2. Romeo and Juliet

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