

ASTRO FORECASTS

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE HEAVENS?

by Tina Mews

Aries

Right now it is essential to pay extra attention to your everyday life and personal domain. Communicate your feelings and thoughts in a way that others can understand you. Re-evaluate the things you take for granted and embrace ways of doing things that create harmony and comfort in your surroundings.

Taurus

Use this moment in time for exploring your relationship to your personal resources, possessions and values. What are the things you believe you cannot survive without? Make sure to maintain a balance between giving and receiving and keep utilising your creative gifts for a higher purpose.

Gemini

Avoid dissipating your energies into too many directions. Multitasking is great but doesn't always produce the results that you desire. This could be a time of personal growth and development if you manage to remain focused on your path. The North Lunar Node in your sun sign might bring opportunities for a new start over the next 18 months.

Cancer

You are searching for new goals on the horizon while unresolved issues in your personal relationships seem to surface. Tread carefully but speak your mind with truth. You might need to spend some time alone pursuing your spiritual and creative practices to counterbalance inner restlessness.

Leo

When you take a humanitarian approach your sense of self grows beyond any expectations. Then recognition for your personal achievements become pleasant rewards. Share your vision with those who resonate with you. Expect changes to take place regarding your close associations and circles of friends.

Virgo

A changed view of the world might now consolidate as important changes to your career path. Review your needs involving others more thoroughly. Focus on attracting those people and circumstances that are supportive of your greater goals.

May

When the Sun journeys through the sign of Taurus the focus of attention turns towards practicality and productivity. Since ancient times Taurus has been associated with the fertile and innate riches of the Earth. In Australia, especially here in Northern NSW it is one of the best times in the year for connecting with the natural cycles and growing your own food. While the world has been in shutdown mode, gardening won in popularity to the point that it has been difficult to purchase seeds or seedlings! With the help of the Coronavirus, our attention has been redirected to what is essential to life.

May starts with a Mercury/Uranus conjunction in Taurus inviting us to be inventive and remain open to new ideas while tapping into our own creative potential. Uranus is closely associated with the myth of Prometheus who stole the fire of the gods to bring it to mankind. He broke with traditions, disregarded the principles of the ruling patriarchs in the name of evolution and progress. After so many countries have put their economies on halt, the big question arises, where do we go from here? What are the lessons learned and how can we do things differently now? We need inspiring brilliant minds to step forward and contribute their ideas to further our collective evolution by combining humanitarian, ecological and economical concerns. We truly have reached the opening of a new world era, the awakening of a global consciousness that requires completely new approaches to what we value and how we do things in our personal lives but also as a society. Uranus, the archetypal force of disruption, chaos, and liberator from old patterns, journeys through Taurus until 2026. On a collective level, the entire world is moving through a time of rapid transformation for the next few years.

The most important cosmic events of the month are the ingress of the Lunar Nodes into Gemini and Sagittarius on May 5 (until January 19, 2022) followed by the Venus retrograde cycle on May 14. The Lunar Nodes signify our collective focus for the next 18 months. They shift from security focussed Cancer/Capricorn onto the communication and mobility axis of Gemini/Sagittarius. The South Node is in Sagittarius while the North Node in Gemini. The South Node indicates areas which need to be cleansed and where we have to let go of old habits while the North Node points towards areas of new growth. With Gemini, an air sign, at the north, we are encouraged to learn about the truth and communicate our thoughts while being aware of our socio-cultural conditioning that may infiltrate our decision making. Gemini/Sagittarius is the axis of education and travel. We can expect great changes in these areas. Most likely, we will continue to see a downturn in air travel, especially

the long distance ones, while we will spend more time locally. Education, especially tertiary education has already widely moved online, which affects the way universities are going to operate in future. Also mental health issues (Gemini) will be in focus because of the current crisis and its stressful impact on many individuals and families. And of course, we are much more concerned with the quality of the air that we breathe in, as it could carry dangerous germs and contaminants.

The Full Moon on May 7 in Scorpio is the largest Full Moon of the year because of its closeness to Earth. While Taurus is concerned with the land, its fertility and productivity, Scorpio likes to dig for the subterranean riches including the truth. Scorpio is not afraid to expose reality for what it is! Venus, the planetary ruler of Taurus, symbolises our feeling nature, emotional intelligence and sense of values. Venus will be in Gemini for a prolonged period (April 4 – August 8) and starts her retrograde phase on May 14 (until June 26). We are reminded to reflect upon the areas in our lives where we collectively and/or personally have invested more than we can afford. Personal and business relationships that are based on faulty standards and superficial gains have to be reviewed in order to create a new balance that is sustainable. Maybe this Venus retrograde cycle initiates a much needed transformation of values and handling of natural riches with a truthful comparison between real costs and benefits.

Saturn starts his 4 ½ month retrograde cycle on May 12 (until Sept 29), while Jupiter will be retrograde for four months (May 14 – Sept 13). Pluto just entered his retrograde phase on April 25, so with so many planets in reverse motion, we are moving towards a time of increased review and deeper reflection. Venus in Gemini reviews how we socialise, Jupiter in Capricorn reviews our ethics, morals and beliefs while Saturn in Aquarius reflects on our relationship with authority and control. Saturn is also in square with Uranus – and these two planets will remain in a square alignment until early 2023. They represent the core issue of confinement versus freedom. Shall we trade our rights to freedom and privacy in exchange for protection of threat from the coronavirus? The New Moon on May 23 in Gemini in trine with Saturn in Aquarius encourages us to take responsibility by knowing the details and making informed decisions. This is easier said than done as Mercury and Venus are forming a stressful square aspect with illusive Neptune in Pisces. Using our powers of discrimination will be essential as it will take some effort to dig for the truth and distinguish between facts and fake news.

Navigation by the Stars: Personal and/or Relationship Astrology; Life Cycles and Your Year Ahead: Plans, Directions, Concerns for 2020/21; contact Tina on 0457-903-957, email: star-loom@hotmail.com
Zoom Webinar: "A Change in Frequency: Uranus in Taurus & Saturn in Aquarius from 2020 to 2023", May 23, 10.30 am – 1 pm; Bookings: star-loom@hotmail.com or contact 0457 903 957

Libra

It is said when Venus, your planetary ruler, comes close to Earth, her influence is more practical and 'heavy' and less idealistic and 'light'. Rethink your direction. Try to strike a balance between following your ambition and being inspired by new ideas that can shift people's perspectives.

Scorpio

You have directed your energy towards community work and networking with people who support your cause. Now it is time to re-evaluate your joint projects. Look below the surface before making any commitments, especially regarding your finances.

Sagittarius

Right now important changes are taking place in your relationship dynamics. To avoid misunderstandings do not assume anything; you may misread the feelings of others. It is a good moment in time to focus your energy on completing creative projects that have been left unfinished.

Capricorn

Prepare for changes in your daily routine and consider a new health regime. You might have to deal with altered responsibilities at your workplace or even a job change. Welcome these changes and counterbalance them with some free-style creative projects

Aquarius

Your detached approach to life allows you to objectify when others are feeling torn between opposing forces. At the same time it is important to express yourself creatively and affectionately. Venus, the 'feeling good' planet wants you to reflect on what brings you real happiness and joy.

Pisces

This might be a very important period in your life when exploring your ancestral past could bring very valuable insights. Connect with your emotional needs and what motivates you on a deeper level. Honest communication of your inner experiences will help improve family relationships.



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by Marilyn Devlin

I'm feeling tired, pooped, drained... traversing strange yet familiar lands. I've lost all sense of time... one day tumbles into the next.

My day-to-day hasn't changed a great deal... yet it has. I feel lost in time and space. Travelling light years yet not moving an inch. Emotions – familiar, new and strange activate my body and she reacts. My head, as usual is full of possibilities. Images of new worlds descend. It's heaven and hell all mixed into one.

It feels both normal and strangely weird. I'm me but I'm not. Not sure who and how or what I am. So much moving about, yet standing completely still.

I know so much... yet I know absolutely zilch. I can see it all, yet I haven't a clue. It's like being on super wash... tumbled around in a giant drum... yet lying on an island beach in the middle of paradise.

Can someone tell me what's going on? We fumble our way through the fog. Thank the gods and goddesses for the homing beam inside us. Thanks for the knowing... even a tiny thread. It's a light in the darkness.

There's a lot going on inside. I don't feel fearful or paranoid... I have total trust that the new is arriving. That's a deep visceral knowing. Each day is not much different to my norm but it feels like something else, something major's going on. Bit like that super wash. As Earth moves through her cleansing, so do we.

As humans we're vulnerable. Incredibly vulnerable. Stress affects us badly. Any loose or vulnerable bits in our body are exaggerated when stress enters the scene.

We're accustomed to our thinking mind. The cortical centre of our brain. We're used to reasoning. Making sense of things. Working things out. Finding solutions. We have language to converse... we've learnt the steps we need to take in life.

But at the moment something else has taken the stage... our primal brains' in overdrive. We may not be conscious of its presence... we're intelligent, reasoning people after all. But what are all those strange body sensations, aches and pains... total exhaustion?

What happened to my motivation? My drive to do and be. Where did my energy go? Who am I again? Will I ever be the same on the other side? Will there be another side?

We've developed heaps as humans... at least our social systems *appear* to have. But underneath it all we share the same responses as our animal friends. Our primal brain is set on survival.

And when survival is threatened... a whole lotta new responses take over. Sigh...

What will it be like at the end of it all? Who will I be? What will I be doing? Will I still be alive? Where will I be?

Yeah... *they* discuss plans to head back to normal. Makes me really nervous. "NOOOO..." I scream inside, "not normal... we can't go back there."

How will we move ahead? Can we make that 180 degree turn? What will it take? Do we have it in us as a collective? How can we achieve such a monumental step?

Change everything.

Sigh... I think too much.

Our body needs heaps of care right now... all our fields, body, mind and emotions. Kinda like having major surgery. Who knows what's happening inside... but it feels a lot.

May's always a big Lunar month... the Scorpio Full Moon, known as Wesak... the celebration of Buddha's life and teachings. This month's also the famous Venus Retrograde cycle. Venus's influence is considerable... both personally and collectively; as she weaves and births her Magick Stars... during her eight-year dance with Earth and Sun.

Think back to June 2012... June 6th, I remember it clearly. A cycle was begun which is now coming to a close... as Venus begins the creation of a new Magick Star.

Get lots of rest if you can... take special care.

Nimbin Trivia Time

by Eclectus

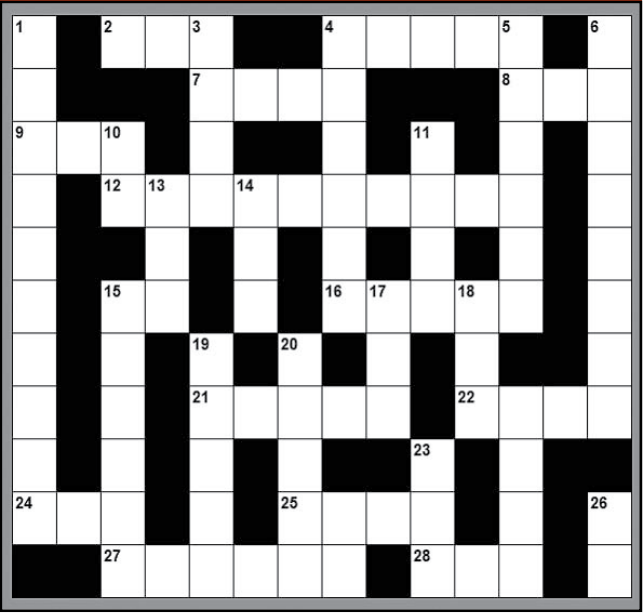
1. What is the gentleman on the right holding?
2. Where was the 2003 Dzongkha-language road movie *Travellers and Magicians* set?
3. Who was the first British scientist to be elevated to the House of Lords? Bonus point for the year of accession. Five bonus points if you can give the value of the physical property of matter they identified.
4. Africa is a massive continent. How many African countries are there?
5. Who is regarded as the greatest racing driver never to win a world championship?
6. What predatory animal known as a Red Devil can be a serious threat to humans?
7. Which musician recently posted "If this gets 1000 fire emojis in the comments I will drop this song tomorrow. If it gets less than 1000 I will delete the file and move to Tibet" on Instagram?
8. What is the difference between a carat and a karat?
9. Are Blue Tiger, Dusky Knight, Fiery Jewel, Indigo Flash and Scarlet Jezebel: 19th century English novels; birds; butterflies; erotic 20th century artworks; flowers; or gay movies?
10. Trace elements, also known as micronutrients, are required by plants and animals in only minute amounts, but some are essential to health and wellbeing. Can you name five that are essential to both plants and humans?



- Answers
1. It's a Klein bottle. A giant one! As with any decent Klein bottle, it has no inside, no outside, no edge and, therefore, encloses zero volume. (Photo courtesy: kleinbottle.com)
 2. Much more than just a road movie, *Travellers and Magicians* was the first feature length movie shot in the Land of the Thunder Dragon, Bhutan, in the Eastern Himalayas. It was directed by Khyentse Norbu and starred Tshewang Dendup.
 3. Lord Kelvin, a most notable mathematician, physicist and engineer of the 19th century, was elevated to the peerage in 1892 for his important work on the Laws of Thermodynamics. He is best remembered for establishing the value of absolute zero, the temperature at which matter has the lowest possible energy (although "matter" is not a very accurate term at the quantum level). The value is 0 K (kelvins, named in his honour) or -273.15 °C.
 4. 54, from Algeria to Zimbabwe.
 5. Sir Stirling Moss of the UK. He entered 529 races winning 212 across a wide range of categories, including Formula One, road races, endurance races and rallies His last race was in 2011 at the age of 81. Sadly, Moss died at 90 (years of age, not miles per hour) in April this year after a long illness.
 6. The Humboldt squid (*Dosidicus gigas*) is also known as the red devil or *diablo rojo*. This carnivorous cephalopod can grow to 2.5m and 50kg. They hunt in large packs, flashing red and white, reaching speeds up to 25km/h. In attack, they grasp their prey at speed using beak-like suckers with razor sharp teeth that drag the victim to a large sharp central beak. They have been known to attack humans causing serious injury.
 7. Adelaide rapper Allday, ahead of his new track release in April, 'OT7'.
 8. The carat is a measure of the mass of gemstones. One carat is equivalent to 200 milligrams, therefore a diamond weighing one gram would be a 5 carat gem. The karat is a measure of the fineness of gold out of 24 parts, therefore 18 karat gold is 75% pure and 24 karat gold is 100% pure. Neither should be confused with the carot which is usually a long, orange, cone shaped root vegetable, though sometimes round and sometimes purple but always worth vastly less.
 9. Butterflies of North East New South Wales.
 10. Five trace elements considered essential for both plants and animals are copper, iron, manganese, molybdenum and zinc.

Nimbin Crossword

2020-5
by 5yc



- Across**
2. Shot from the grassy knoll? (init.)
 4. Alaskan research project perturbing the ionosphere and create a global mind control field (init.)
 7. Greek aniseed liquor
 8. Expression of surprise?
 9. Pinch off?
 12. Chemicals added to aircraft contrails to modify climate and population control
 15. Located
 16. "The King" – still alive at eighty-five?
 21. Anonymous poster leaves online breadcrumbs of the truth behind the "storm"
 22. Large flightless birds
 25. Yearning?
 26.51 – Roswell site, where a UFO and its pilot are stored
 28. 9/11 was an job.
 29. "..... chicken" – ibis
- Down**
1. (and 6 down) Speculations on hidden truths? (10,8)
 3. Port city in Osaka bay
 4. Rough and harsh?
 5. Moon alignments
 6. See 1 down.
 10. Political Correctness
 11. Capital of the largest country wholly in Europe
 13. Straight? (slang)
 14. Soviet/Russian fighter jet
 15. Graduates?
 17. Wired network connecting a building or campus
 18. Cold H2O
 19. Genus of the horse, donkey, onager and zebra
 20. Work into dough
 23. Show your behind
 24. Vaccinate?
 27. Dangerous new cellphone tech, as illegal as this answer

Solution: Page 28



MISS SOMETHING?
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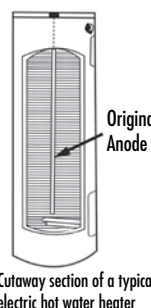
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Nimbin Crossword Solution

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Is Eau de B.S. the new patchouli?

by Simon Thomas

There was a time when I found it quaint to see chemtrails posters festooning the cafés of our Rainbow Region, with their terrifying claims and dire grammar. I was tickled by the slavish devotion of my friends to the latest super-food served up by the lucrative healthy eating industry, and the way that a humble herb could be assigned with the power to solve every problem known to society.

We chose not to vaccinate our own kids in the 90s after being handed a dog-eared manila folder filled with horror stories from the immunisation frontline. Not that I thought it doesn't work for anybody, but it was just not for us.

I was a connoisseur of conspiracy theories, shouted from soap-boxes in Sydney's Domain, and was fascinated by how "free thinkers" could be duped by the most self-serving of gurus. It was endearing, harmless even.

The age of social media has changed all that.

Now that we are living through a true global crisis, I find my once comforting Facebook echo chamber reverberating with an ever more polarising din of fiercely-held views gleaned almost entirely from YouTube propaganda and bleakly partisan memes.

Welkom boys and girls to Amsterdam; city of canals, bicycles, coffee shops and casual, matter-of-fact sexuality.

And look, before we get any deeper into the underbelly of the Dutch psyche, let's get one thing straight. One might think that a city where everybody gets around on a pushbike would be a bit slower-paced. Think again. Stepping from one's front door feels like stumbling into the path of "Le Tour".

Lycra-clad lowlanders hurtle past at break-neck speed, trikes with barrows at the front bark at your shins, and tiny electric Biro cars also feel perfectly at liberty to drive on the narrow bits of footpath.

I couldn't hazard a guess at how many times we'd barely leapt out of the way as various tiny vehicles whooshed past, missing us by millimetres.

Then again, we left a slew of white-faced, traumatised Dutchmen behind us, grateful at having avoided a fatal crash.

We're staying at a friend's place in Amsterdam, and even though it's an old, three-story canal house, the décor inside was definitely re-cycled and hand-made. We feel right at home.

Next morning we're off to explore the city; not 100% certain which direction the city might be in. After a few warm-up blocks in the wrong direction, we turn our faces towards the distant sun and weave our way into the centre of the metropolis, which in this instance is Station Centraal.

The main arteries leading away from here are seething with humanity, and it's along these streets and in the

The problem with the social media business model is that the only currency is clicks. There is no prize for integrity, accountability is pitifully absent, and sheer deception is rewarded even by those who recognise it. Many people share vile rhetoric spat from the mouths of their avowed foes just to demonstrate how delinquent these people are, seemingly unaware that every share is a reward, and every click is encouragement to continue along the same deranged path.

Fear and outrage are the drivers, and any hint of nuance is punished with a barrage of meaningless propaganda, much of which is generated in Russian troll factories or fossil-fuel-funded think-tanks. In their crusade to discredit the science of climate change, conservatives have intentionally dismantled our trust in science and crippled our powers of critical thinking.

Well-funded organisations identify and mercilessly exploit endemic, often justified fears within the progressive side of politics, thereby harnessing an army of social media warriors to spread their misinformation and exacerbate fault-lines on the political left. Divide and conquer.

Suddenly, the so-called mainstream media, which at least has accountability to their shareholders if nothing else (I wonder where the NGT

fits into this), is considered to publish only fabrications, while anything that reeks of bullshit is trumpeted as Truth.

Back in February, when the Covid-19 news story became Godzilla, I predicted that the first person to link the incendiary topic of 5G with the epidemic would make their fortune. Better still, throw in vaccination for added clicks. This is not because of my psychic powers, but because I have made YouTube videos myself, and I know how the paradigm works.

Still, I was shocked when so many of my friends rabidly shared a video created not by a virologist or specialist in EMF, but a professional liar who has made his career publishing books about reptilian shape-shifting aliens who supposedly crossed the galaxy in order to work in a bank. That sure puts a commute from the western suburbs into perspective.

The result of all this is that we now live in a post-truth society where a narcissistic sociopath who lies from the moment he opens his eyes until whenever he finally stops tweeting in the early hours can be elected to the most powerful position in the world – complete with control over enough nuclear weapons to turn the entire planet into a toxic wasteland at the touch of a button.

Is this the free-loving society that the Aquarius founders imagined?



narrow alleyways connecting them that the coffee-shops proliferate. We visited

many (purely for market research purposes), but their psychedelic interiors didn't encourage us to hang about, so we flowed over to the gallery quarter, where they've sensibly clustered a whole swag of serious ones together.

The huge Rijks Gallery, the Van Gogh Gallery and the Moco Museum and Gallery, which was exhibiting Banksey, Dali and Warhol. So much feckin culture!

Later, while wending our circuitous way home, I spotted a small, back-street coffee shop... seats outside, reggae inside, nothing fancy. Just a coffee machine and a price list. A small purchase later and we're back out into the evening, with Diana looking for the perfect "Canal at Sunset" photograph.

Not sure if we found it, but at some point later we realised that we were totally, completely and hopelessly lost. At night, one canal with glittering lights and arched

bridges looks a bit like all the other canals with...

At a much later hour we turn a corner, recognise some pornographic street art (pictured) and we're saved. In the process, our discombobulation has broken that bloody daily record, which now stands at 22.7ks.

It's Wednesday! I awake to the knowledge that I've just slipped into my 8th decade, and a weighty sense of responsibility descends upon me. There's an election on back home and we have to cast our votes!

Tear off to The Haag, find the Aussie Embassy, and revel in the thrill that freely exercising our democratic rights to choose our government always gives us.

At the embassy they're expecting us, and I guess our obvious joy just infected the room like Corona because before long everybody's laughing like drains.

We left, knowing that if the rest of Australia followed our lead we'd be coming home to a Green government and

by Bob Tissot

dancing in the streets.

Which is what we encountered back in Amsterdam: dancing in the streets, and large groups of people with drinks in their hands walking about singing and chanting in Dutch.

We heard the words "Ajax" and "Champions League", and worked out it was football-related. The fireworks and singing went on all night.

In the morning, the town was awash with small, wandering clumps of fans, some only just vertical, and all like zombies flowing in a singular, general direction.

It was mesmerising, and before we knew it and virtually against our wills we'd been drawn along with the flow.

The crowd was bloody massive, beer flowed like water, and we soaked up the vibe for a few, then left them to it. We heard that over 100,000 people turned up for the mayor's free tribute party.

Early next morning we're getting on the train.

Knee-jerk response

During these weird times I find it crazy that the knee-jerk response to what was most important was toilet paper!

As the philosopher Seneca said, “Until we have begun to go without them, we fail to realise how unnecessary many things are. We have been using them not because we needed, them but because we had them.”

In my lifetime, toilet paper was there so we used it without even thinking that it was trees we were flushing down the toilet. Only one generation ago, my mother remembers cutting the phone book into quarters and hanging them up in the loo.

A friend told me she cut an old face-washer in half, soaked it in a bowl of water, wrung it out and it made an excellent wipe after urination. I gave it a try and discovered it was great. I’m saving shitloads of dunny paper. Remember that urine is sterile, unless you have a urinary tract infection. There are fewer bacteria in urine than in tap water. So, rinsing out those washers at night is safe.

Stephen Hawking said, “Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change,” and it seems that many people are doing really well at it.

Kudos to all the Mums and Dads out there who are home-schooling their children. At least when the kids go back to school, people



The world according to Magenta Appel-Pye

will have a much greater appreciation of just how demanding a job teaching is, and they might show a bit more respect. Not to mention realising that teachers deserve to get paid better.

Hats off to the teachers who have had to put their lives on the line for their students and also to suddenly learn how to connect with other students on-line.

Stay safe.
“Difficulties strengthen the mind, as labour does the body.” – Seneca



Difficult

Dear SSHS,
My husband’s tennis mates voted me ‘The Most Difficult Wife’. Should I be flattered or infuriated?
– Mag Pye, Mullumbimby

She says

OK, I admit, this is my question and I’m not sure how to think about it. When I’m feeling good about myself, I swell with pride to think of what a harridan, a virago, a vixen, an Amazonian princess warrior I am.

I pity those other tennis wives who have not scored this trophy because, after all, any win is a win.

Being a Libran, I have equal bouts of feeling down and insecure. In those times I wonder why they thought of me as a fishwife (no offence to those who married fishermen), a harpy, a termagant.

What were the criteria and what, pray tell, did my husband tell them about me?

I can’t get this information out of him; he claims he forgets but I know he’s lying. On the other hand, I can’t help but be thankful that he wants to stay married and therefore omits some things that would probably hurt me.

As for Norm, I think this proves he’s a champion. He may seem compliant and a schmuck but on the inside he’s strong. He stays when things get rough.

He’s (mostly) calm and patient. He’ll hang around if I want to fight and will give me space if that’s what I ask for. Yes, he can tame the shrew in me and he deserves an award for that.

However, my friends might just vote him Most Annoying Husband if I told them some of the things I have to put up with!

Hey, all relationships have to learn how to deal with these times. The most important thing is to forgive and move on as quickly as possible.

As for Most Difficult Wife, I think I’ll get a plaque made and hang it on the front door.

HE says

WTF! I’m tempted to just bat this one back to my beloved Bag for Life and tell her to pick another question.

The very fact she is putting me in this tricky situation perhaps bears out the astute judgment of my Friday night comrades. However, I’ve decided to be brave and rise to the challenge.

My Gentle Little Lamb and I have been together for 22 years now, whilst I have been playing tennis with my brothers in arms every Friday night for nigh on 25 years.

Aside from the thwacking of tennis balls and the consumption of copious quantities of beer and other substances, we have lively discussions on many topics including the weird and wonderful ways our wives require us to keep them happy.

So yes, in one such discussion it was declared that I have the most difficult wife.

I couldn’t wait to get home and tell her, because I knew the little scorpion would be well pleased, which she was, despite the feigned indignation.

At this juncture, I should point out that this took place 10 fucking years ago!

Along with many other things I’ve said and done even further back than that, she’s never let it go. We can consider her response to her own question as her acceptance speech for this truly prestigious award.

Fact is, I’ve always been attracted to women of substance. I like them strong and feisty, powerful and intelligent. I dunno, maybe I’m a masochist, but somehow, I’m also proud of my little she-devil for taking out The Most Difficult Wife prize.

I’m often amused whenever my tennis buddies encounter Magenta how obsequious they become in her formidable presence.

As for me, I can handle her, no problem. Truth is, she’s a pushover.

“Every treasure is guarded by a dragon.” – Saul Bellow

Dialogues

by S Sorrensen

Hello? Is that you, Peter?
Yes. Peter here.
Where are you? I thought you were in the house. Is everything okay?
I’m fine.
Where are you?
Turn on your video. Top right of your screen.
Okay, I can see you... Whose bathroom is that?
It’s our bathroom, Marie.
Oh. Yes. I can see the window you haven’t fixed. Jeez, Peter, why are you Zooming me from the bathroom?
It’s the new way of communicating. Since the lockdown, everybody is doing it. Isn’t it great?
We can talk and see each other. How are you?
We’re in the same house, Peter. You’re in our bathroom. What are you doing there?
I needed a private space away from you, otherwise Zooming you would be a bit stupid.
It IS stupid, Peter. I’m in the next room. You could come into the kitchen and talk to me.
It’s not the same, Marie. I feel that –
It seems ridiculous to –
Remember the time delay, Marie. Remember the time de –
Oh yes. I thought you’d finished. We’re talking over each other.
That happens even when we’re talking in person.
We don’t –
What do you mean? You always –
Look, we need a signal so we know when the other has finished talking. That way we can listen properly.
Like what?
We could say ‘over’. Over.
Oh my god...
And? (Over.)
What? Oh... Over.
So, how has the lockdown been going for you, Marie? Over.
Good... No, actually, I hate it.
Ahem...
Over. (Jeez...)
Well, it must have been nice to spend some time with your partner. Your busy lives had kept you separated a fair bit, I hear. Over.
Why are you talking like this? You ARE my partner, Peter. You know what it’s been like. It’s been awful. Over.
Thank God for Zoom, eh? People are really connecting again. Over.
Okay, Peter. I’ll play along: How has the lockdown been for you, Peter? Over.
Oh it’s been great. I’ve had time to get things done around the house. Things that have



needing doing since –
That’s nonsense! You’ve been depressed. Watching Star Trek replays and drinking beer. You never –
I didn’t say ‘over’! I wasn’t finished! You always do that. Over.
Well, why did you say you’ve been doing things around the house? Over.
It’s what people do. No-one actually knows what you’ve been doing so you can, you know, make stuff up. Over.
You mean lie? Over.
On social media it’s not lying. It’s... projecting your ideal self to others. It’s like a better life. Over.
Better than your real life? Okay. How’s it going with your beautiful partner, Marie, Peter? Over.
Fine. Over.
It’s not fine, Peter. Over.
Okay, it’s not. That’s why I needed to talk you. We seem to have a bad connection when we do real-life talking. Like it’s a Telstra line or something. That’s sad, Marie. Over.
I didn’t think you wanted to talk. Over.
Well, we’re Zooming at least. Over.
Yes... Maybe we could meet in person. I think that’s legal. Talk over a glass of wine, without having to say ‘over’ over and over. Over.
What are you doing at 7 o’clock this evening? I could meet you in the lounge room, corner table. I have a bottle of shiraz, somewhere. Over.
Yes. I can see it on the kitchen shelf. That’d be good. Over.
I love you, Marie. Over.
I love you too, Pete.
Ahem...
Over. And out.

Well congratulations. Way to lower the curve, comrades. I am amazed at your efforts and the outcomes that Australia has managed so far in this pandemic. We are now testing everyone with upper respiratory symptoms – to eliminate hidden community transmissions.

Not many people are taking up the government spyware option; considering it’s being managed by the government’s most error prone and incompetent minister, it’s hardly surprising.

Truly we should just ask Facebook and Twitter and Instagram to share our private data with the government instead of just other businesses – they know who is where when 24-7. They don’t pay tax – it’s the least they could do.

The real job we have ahead of us now is how do we give the damn thing to everyone in a measured and controlled way.

Lowering the curve was never about eliminating the virus, just slowing its uptake. It was never a question of ‘if’ we were going to get it, but ‘when’.

So now that our system is reinforced and there are adequate supplies of personal protective equipment and ventilators etc we can slowly turn the tap and let the virus run its course.

The possibility of getting a working high-efficacy drug or vaccine seem increasingly slim, and a long way off. This present level of social and economic quarantining can’t be



Revenge of the Loon

by Laurence Axtens

maintained. People will get more and more blasé – the kids will go back to school and share, share, share.


I expect we may get some spikes in the curve and need to reinstitute restrictions – it’s fairly tricky slowly sharing the virus throughout the community.

Eighty percent of us won’t even notice, 20% of us won’t like it much, and 5% will need serious help and of them a percentage will die. It’s not a comfortable fact, but most of them will be aged and ill.

It’s a time of great sadness, so try to be kind.

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New deputy principal at NCS



My name is Simon Graham and I have been appointed as the deputy principal at Nimbin Central School.

I feel so grateful and privileged to have been given the opportunity to lead in such a beautiful school. Although it is very different and challenging times we currently live in, I am very much looking forward to meeting all the staff, students and community of NCS.

I am a proud Wailwan man, originally from the small rural community of Gulargambone. I have taught in Moree, Kempsey, Lightning Ridge and Kingscliff.

My teaching experience is in science and agriculture, prior to leadership,

with my last appointment being 13 years as head teacher science at Kingscliff High School.

My philosophy on teaching and learning has always been based on the best interests of the students, so the school community at NCS can rest assured, I am and always will be leading the school with a strong focus on continuous improvement, care, compassion and achievement.

I embrace the school motto: *success through diversity*; and look forward to encouraging and supporting our students and community.

"Til we meet, please stay safe.
Regards, Simon.

Spacially distant, socially close

by Mark Piper

What is the role of school in the education of the child?

Is it, as Benjamin Hoff suggests, where those who failed at tests needed to have started earlier and to have spent more time in front of a computer? (*The Te of Piglet*, 2003) Or is it, as Sir Ken Robinson claims, a place where creativity goes to die, designed around an Industrial Revolution era response to provide literate works to be 'Human Resources'?

Or are they places where the potential of an individual can be developed to ensure that each new generation can bring forces of continuous renewal to the social order?

When remote learning was suddenly dropped on us here at Rainbow Ridge School, we knew that we could not expect our parents/ carers to act as teachers, because the parent/ child relationship is so different to the child/ teacher relationship.

We needed to support our families in the delivery of interesting subject material that enabled the young people in our care to progress but that took into account a huge range of social and domestic arrangements.

The key to our approach was, and still is, a daily rhythm. To this end, all families and staff were invited to speak a morning verse at the same time. This was not something that was broadcast via Zoom,

or other on-line resources, but something that everyone who took part in knew that the rest of the school community were doing at that time: spacially distant, socially close.

The staff met, a metre and half apart, towards the end of the Easter holidays, and planned what term two would look like. The first priorities were to make the tasks achievable and for the family unit to be working on the same subjects at the same time.

So the teachers agreed on common topics and a universal timetable, so siblings could practice music at the same time or follow a Chinese recipe and cook a meal together. The afternoon was timetabled for family project time, with things such as gardening or a building project or completion of household chores.

The materials and instructions were created and put into learning packs, as

well as uploaded on to Google Drive. The access to computers is strictly limited to the parents and carers to access the resources, the children are not using computers for their learning.

Keeping channels of communication open is of vital necessity, especially during such testing times and whilst some teachers are working from home, all have made themselves available to support their families either on the telephone or via email.

I am very proud of my colleagues and of our school in what it has achieved, in a very short space of time and how all have held fast to their intentions and dedication to deliver a human-based education that aims not to mould the coming generation in the image of the current existing social order.

I wish you all well and hope that you are safe and faring the storm with humour and humility.



Preschool is open

Nimbin Preschool is open for children, as advised by the NSW Education Department, our funding body. Please call us to discuss attendance or enrolment. Our director, Katie, is happy to hear from you.

This month we hear from one of our parents, Elly, about her long-standing relationship with Nimbin Preschool:

My connection to Nimbin Preschool began in the early 1980s, when my mum and other local parents founded the preschool, in a little-used section of the Nimbin A&I Pavillion, where it remained for 30 years.

I held many fond memories of the preschool, where I began a number of lifelong friendships. I enrolled my eldest child there in 2011, the same year the school finally moved into a purpose-built building in the grounds, and have had at least one of my three kids enrolled for the past nine years.

Over this time, the preschool has become a deeply important part of our extended family. The love and trust that I have for all of the educators makes me feel so blessed that my kids get to have these people as their mentors and teachers.

They each bring a different range of skills and interests that complement each other beautifully, and I value the nurturing, knowledge and empowerment that each of my children have received.

I particularly value their focus on the importance of our natural environment, their inclusivity, their understanding of the importance of art as communication, and their truly child-led approach to learning. The rights of the child and the value of childrens' voices, thoughts and ideas are central to the philosophy at Nimbin Preschool.

The kids are instrumental to developing the program at the school, which has produced some incredible experiences over



the years; from a life-sized bamboo whale skeleton in the yard, to visiting the turtle rescue centre in Ballina to deliver a donation raised by the kids; learning Bundjalung from Uncle Gilbert, and enjoying many dance parties, performances and gatherings.

The preschool grounds become more beautiful with every year, and thanks to the generosity of the A&I Society they have a huge and thriving vegetable garden adjacent to the school, along with chooks, guinea pigs, and of course Gidget, the trained educational therapy dog.

I will be very sad to leave the school next year as my youngest grows beyond it, and I encourage all local parents to pop down to the preschool in Cecil Street and check it out.

Social distancing reflections

String or micro inverter?

by Benny Zable

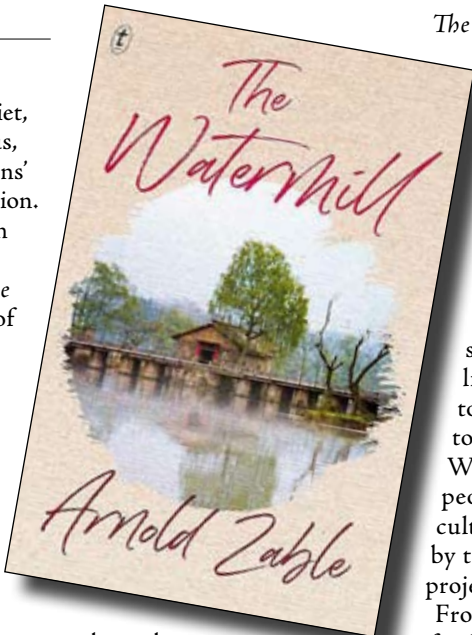
Nimbin is so wonderfully quiet, thanks to a virus, slowing the race of humans' activities towards extinction. In this time I have been reading my brother Arnold's latest book, *The Watermill*. It is a series of four true stories about displacement, betrayal, survival and resistance, a great page-turner as it takes me on an imaginary journey to places and a past that makes me appreciate my sheltered life here in paradise.

The first story is about a time he spent teaching English in a remote part of China soon after the Mao cultural revolution. The story is framed by his silent conversation with the water-miller outside the agricultural college he was teaching at.

The second is from one who survived the Pol Pot's/ Khmer Rouge massacres in Cambodia.

The third is about a performer who was part of a theatre troupe that helped empower holocaust survivors during and after being liberated from the concentration camps. In super realist detail, Arnold paints with words past and present of landscapes, places, portraits of stories of refugee migrant experiences living on the run.

The final story in this book has a number of Australian stories intertwined therein related. We meet with Wurundjeri elder who



The *Watermill* can be purchased online through Booktopia and some bookshops. See: www.booktopia.com.au/the-watermill-book/9781922268556.html

These stories are a stark reminder of the lies many of us were told in school. It echoes today's betrayal of the Wangan and Jangalingou people, whose land and culture is being decimated by the Adani coal mining project.

From the extinguishment of title to their land it has progressed under the radar of the Covid-19 lockdown, to them now being barred permanently to re-enter and access their camp. It is far from over, as more backers are pulling out from this project.

Also I checked out *Planet of Humans*, an eco-documentary from environmentalist Jeff Gibbs, developed over many years, now released to view on YouTube by its executive producer Michael Moore: <https://planetofthehumans.com>

It raises questions about many current environmental sustainable energy industrial fixes, showing sadly much destruction of the natural environment. The documentary does raise many inconvenient truths.

A positive is happening as many in lockdown are staying local and going back to the garden during this pandemic.

shares her knowledge of the land and the story of her great-great-uncle's stand against the invaders, and the gradual healing over time.

Interwoven are the tales from a Kurdish refugee family who survived the seas to settle in Melbourne, with flashes of my parents, haunted by the past while carving out a life raising three children in a single-fronted terrace cottage in Carlton.

The Melbourne Age newspaper sums up this book: "Zable seeks to ennoble lives that otherwise remain unheralded. His work recognises the basic decency of ordinary people and honours their struggles in the face of adversity".

A live-streamed conversation with Arnold, recently hosted by Sami Shah at the Wheeler Centre, can be viewed at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHM6Hz_TOqc

by Fabien Prevost
Rainbow Power Company

The heart of each photovoltaic installation contains a photovoltaic inverter. It will transform the energy collected by the solar panels into usable electricity.

However, there are two main categories of inverters whose differences are little known: string inverters and micro-inverters.

In order to help you understand and choose your equipment well, we are studying here the major differences, advantages and disadvantages of both types of equipment.

String inverter

In the case of a solar system connected to the grid, the string inverter is connected at the end of series of solar panels. There is only one inverter for all the panels.

The advantage: the price. This type of system with a single inverter limits the overall investment cost compared to a system equipped with a micro-inverter for every panels.

This is the most suited system for most well-exposed roofs.

The downside: its production. The string inverter does not produce less, but in the event of a panel failure or shading event, the entire string of panels suffers in output.

Indeed, the serial connection reflects the possible technical failure of a panel on the other panels of the same chain.

So if any panel in the string is adversely impacted that no longer produces full capacity or zero, the whole string is



impacted. By example, the final consumption of the kit of 10 solar panels (in a string) may therefore be only 10% of its capacities here, i.e. a loss of 90% of production.

Micro inverter

In the case of a solar system equipped with micro-inverters, each panel is connected to one micro-inverter. There are therefore several micro-inverters.

The panels are no longer connected in series; the micro-inverters are connected in parallel, each panel being connected to its own micro-inverter.

The advantage: guaranteed and optimised production. In fact, in the event of a panel failure, the other panels always produce optimally. Having electricity distributed between each panel or pair of panels ensures optimal production of the entire system.

By example, the final consumption of the kit of 10 solar panels can therefore be ensured here at 90% of its capacity, ie a loss of 10% of production. Panel level monitoring on an individual basis also ensures early fault detection.

In addition, micro-inverters are recommended for small installations because the least

powerful string inverters generally start from 1500 W (6 panels).

Micro-inverters also allow an easy upgrade of your system, indeed, micro-inverters allow you to add panels to your installation at any time, without having to re-string the whole system.

The downside: the price, because there are more inverters compared to the string inverter system and micro-inverter technology is also more advanced, the price is felt.

It's up to you to choose your formula with these elements in mind. Price should not be the only factor. Think long term!

RPC is your trusted authority on solar power. We are still doing site inspections, keeping the recommended social distancing.

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