

WORLD TEEN



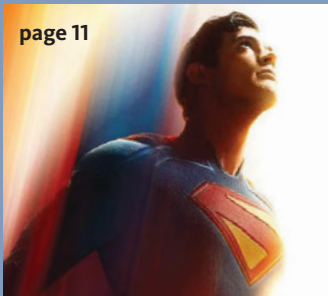
Putting the AI in Stargazing

Young scientist
Matteo Paz wins a
huge prize. [page 19](#)

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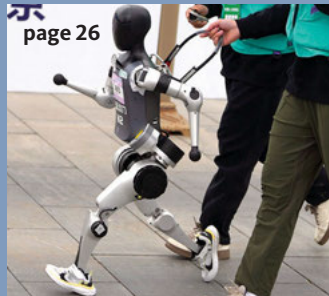
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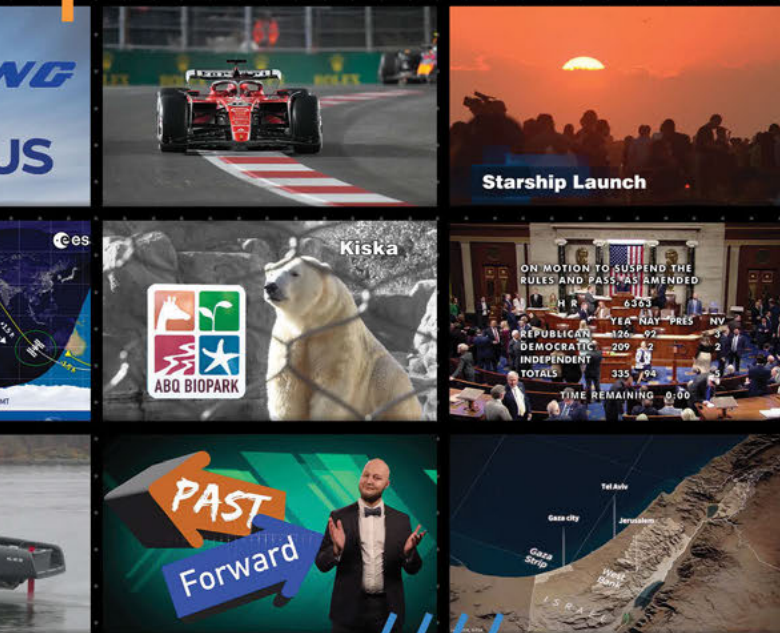
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SKILLN



THANK YOU

GUESS WORD GOT OUT YOU PUT AN END TO MEDICAL TESTING ON BEAGLES....

In April, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration announced plans to phase out animal testing for certain drugs. Shortly after, the National Institutes of Health shut down its controversial Maryland beagle lab, according to director Dr. Jay Bhattacharya in an interview with Fox News. Staff at the NIH lab reportedly infected beagles with pneumonia to test sepsis treatments. Both the FDA and the NIH say they will pursue human-based research and using AI models in place of animals in much future testing. Bhattacharya calls the new approach "a critical leap forward for science, public trust, and patient care."



GOD'S WORLD NEWS

WORLDteen, Issue 6, July, 2025 (ISSN #2372-7349, USPS #754-830) is published 6 times per year—September, November, January, March, May, July for \$35.88 per year, by God's WORLD News, God's World Publications, Inc., 12 All Souls Crescent, Asheville, NC 28803. Periodicals postage paid at Asheville, NC, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to WORLDteen, PO Box 20002, Asheville, NC 28802-8201. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Rebecca Potter, ASSISTANT EDITOR: Anna Smith, WRITER: Kim Stegall, CONTRIBUTORS: Jonathan Boes, EmmaRuth Potter, Bekah McCallum, DESIGN DIRECTOR: Rob Patete, GRAPHIC DESIGNER: Erica Hood, ILLUSTRATOR: Krieg Barrie. Member Services: (828) 435-2982, Advertising Sales: (828) 232-5432, advertising@wng.org, Mailing address: WORLDteen, PO Box 20002, Asheville, NC 28802-8201. Telephone (828) 253-8063. © 2025 God's WORLD News, God's World Publications, Inc.

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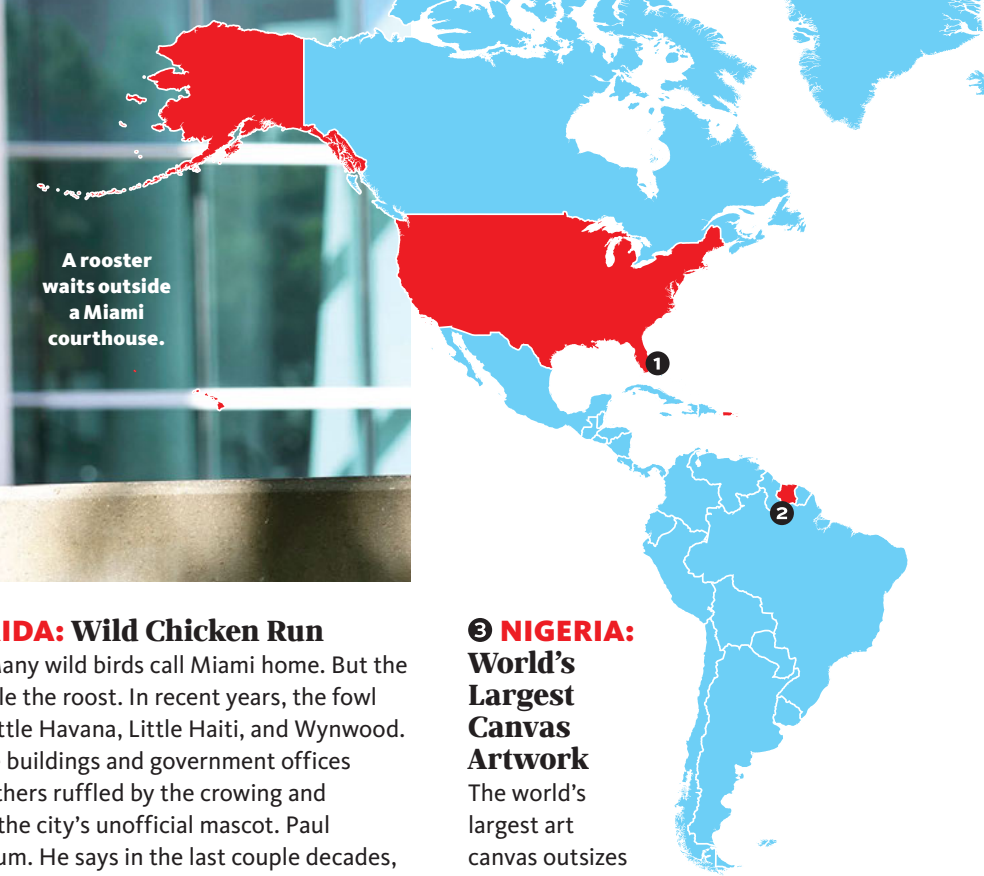


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Impact the World for Christ



A rooster waits outside a Miami courthouse.



1 UNITED STATES, MIAMI, FLORIDA: Wild Chicken Run

Flamingos and herons and parrots, oh my! Many wild birds call Miami home. But the poultry—roosters, hens, and chicks—now rule the roost. In recent years, the fowl flocks can be found in neighborhoods like Little Havana, Little Haiti, and Wynwood. But they also nest and strut among high-rise buildings and government offices downtown. While some people get their feathers ruffled by the crowing and clucking, many have selected the rooster as the city’s unofficial mascot. Paul George is a historian at HistoryMiami Museum. He says in the last couple decades, chickens migrated from backyards to public areas. George says chickens have a cultural connection to folks who grew up in rural areas of Cuba and other parts of Latin America: “They’ve always had these hens and roosters around.” Miami may need to accept that the downy denizens are here to stay.

3 NIGERIA: World’s Largest Canvas Artwork

The world’s largest art canvas outsizes most soccer fields. Kanyeyachukwu “Kanye” Tagbo-Okeke, age 15, created the 132,439-square-foot painting. The Nigerian teen is autistic. He doesn’t speak much. Autism affects the brain’s development, but it presents differently from person to person. Kanye loves to paint. In November, he created an enormous, multi-colored ribbon—the symbol for autism—surrounded by emojis. Guinness World Records declared it the world’s largest canvas artwork in April. But Kanye wasn’t merely trying to break records. Autistic Nigerian children have access to few resources. The teen hoped to raise funds for the Zeebah Foundation. That nonprofit is based in Abuja, Nigeria. It provides support for autistic children and their families. “I felt fine. Happy. Just fine,” said Kanye upon completing his work.



This book from 1766 is part of the archive.



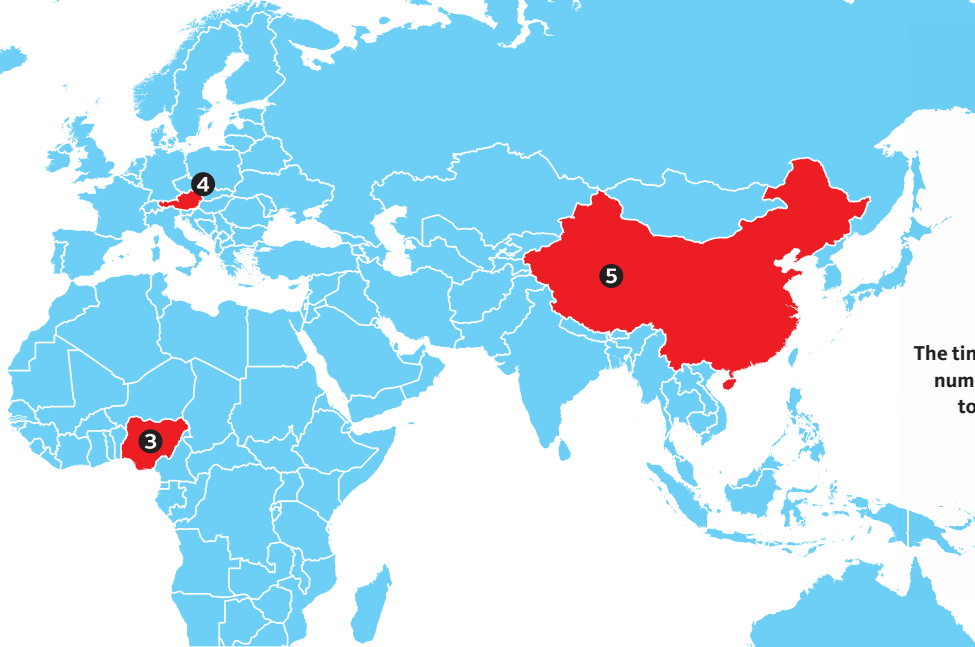
Rosa de Jong (left) teamed up with Lilly Duijm (right).

2 SURINAME: Saving Jewish History In April, a fire damaged historic buildings in Suriname’s capital city. The blaze in Paramaribo didn’t reach the Neveh Shalom Synagogue. But it did remind people of the fragile nature of important documents stored there. Located on the northeastern coast of South America, Suriname became home to thousands of Jews starting in the mid 1600s. The files told the stories of Jewish World War II refugees who fled Nazi Germany and settled in the Caribbean. Lilly Duijm, age 78, has worked for decades at the archive. But she lacked the resources to scan 100,000 files onto a computer. Dutch academic Rosa de Jong, who used the archive for research, provided equipment and volunteers. They digitized the synagogue’s birth records, land sales, and correspondence. De Jong says her work gave her a duty “to preserve the past that I’m building my career on.”



People walk on Kanye’s artwork!

AP PHOTOS



The tin holds numbered tokens.

6 NEW ZEALAND: Biscuit Tin Bills

In New Zealand, a quirky tradition still offers members of parliament who aren't part of the governing party a way to move proposed laws to the top of the agenda. The tradition began in the 1990s. It involves bingo tokens and a blue-and-white cookie (New Zealanders say "biscuit") tin. A tattered label taped to the container's side reads "Members' Bills." In this legislative lotto, an office staffer draws a random disc from the tin. The number corresponds to a bill. The drawing is a serious matter, with a black-robed clerk presiding. Whenever there's an empty slot on the parliament's agenda, the clerk selects a bill for debate using the biscuit tin. Parliament has passed many bills that came from the tin. Lawmaker Tim van de Molen calls the unusual system "typically Kiwi." Clerk David Wilson says it's worked well all these years, and besides, "People quite like it."



Orchestra member Matthias Meinharder carefully crafted his instrument.

4 VIENNA: World's "Corniest" Orchestra Lights go down as band members take the stage. This band doesn't *exactly* tune up before playing. Musicians might crinkle onion paper or tear cilantro leaves. The Vienna Vegetable Orchestra uses vegetables as instruments. Since 1998, the group has performed all over the world—340 concerts and counting! The orchestra even holds a Guinness World Record. Orchestra members use knives or drills to shape veggies into musical instruments. The group performs with carrot flutes, celery root bongos, leek violins, pumpkin triangles . . . Some instruments use more than one vegetable, like the "cucumberphone." It's made from a pepper, a carrot, and a cucumber. The food doesn't go to waste. After each performance, the orchestra treats audiences to fresh vegetable soup. Cucumberphone gazpacho, anyone?



Zhao lines up a shot.

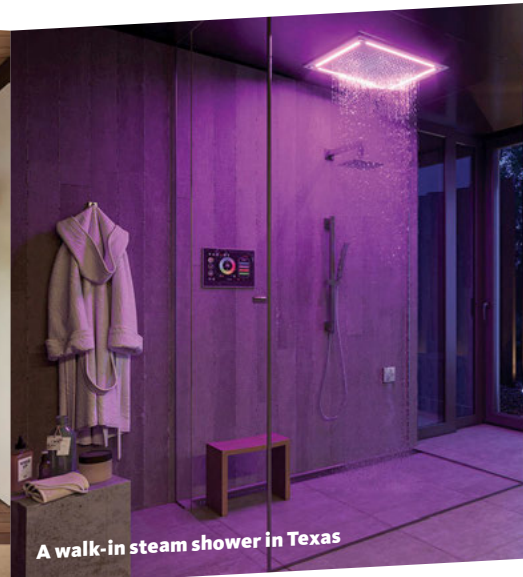
5 CHINA: Asia's First Snooker Champ Snooker is a game. It's something like pool but with a longer table and smaller pockets. Snooker players must "pot" the balls (get them into the pockets) in a specific order. The game was banned in China during the early Communist era. Eventually, that ban lifted. After China hosted the snooker Asia Open in 1990, the game grew in popularity. Players from the United Kingdom usually win international competitions. But on May 5, Zhao Xintong from China took the World Championship title. Zhao first picked up a cue at eight years old. His rise in the sport has been controversial, however. In 2023, he was accused of cheating. He was banned from the game for a time, and he still can't play in China. He returned to global competition last year as an amateur. Despite his amateur status, officials will let Zhao keep the \$663,000 in prize money.



A home gym in Aspen, Colorado



A meditation room in Austin, Texas



A walk-in steam shower in Texas

The Wellness Trend Comes Home

Stressed out? Have a spare bedroom or unused dining room? Some folks are turning parts of their homes into “wellness rooms.”

“Spaces for wellness, retreat, and recharging are all really popular right now,” says designer Gonzalo Bueno. “Small, sophisticated home gyms, music rooms, meditation rooms, and Zen gardens are some of the wellness spaces we’ve designed recently.” (Originating from Zen Buddhism, gravel or sand Zen gardens are intended to aid meditation, which is supposed to bring calmness.)

Bueno and his team combined several of these for a home in Austin, Texas. The home now has an outdoor Zen garden. Indoors, a meditation room and a soaking tub in the primary bath both face a calm green space.

During the coronavirus pandemic that began in 2020, many employees went home to work remotely. Events were canceled. Schools went online. With more home time, some families transformed dens into offices and extra bedrooms into workout zones.

Even after the end of the pandemic, that’s still happening. “Self-care” and wellness remain trendy. The terms refer to activities and behaviors meant

to improve physical and mental health. These might include making time to read and pray, relaxing in a warm bath, getting a massage, or taking a walk. Self-care is now a billion-dollar industry. Products and services range from hydrating face masks to multi-hour spa experiences.

Jack Ovadia, whose design firm is based in New York, creates wellness rooms that serve multiple functions, with both a sauna and a cold plunge tub.

“This is where you go to let go,” Ovadia says.

Not all wellness rooms are quite so serene.

“We’re designing more music rooms,” Bueno says. “We did a home gym with red accents, to bring in passion and motivating energy.”

Even folks with no extra space in their homes are intrigued. And public wellness spaces are also becoming places to gather. So-called social spas are popping up around the United States. They offer social activities as well as traditional spa services.

Our world is troubled and broken. Bad news comes into homes nonstop via smartphones and TVs. Home was once a family’s retreat from all that—a place of rest and calm. It is less so for many now. Amid chaos, people look for peace. God knows our needs and limits. (Psalm 103:14) He offers everlasting rest and peace in Him.

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.
— John 14:27



Jack Ovadia’s company designed this bathroom.

▶ Watch our WORLDteen Sidebar video about slow TV at gwnews.com/slowTV.

Thou Shalt Wrestle?

Churchgoers step into St. Peter's Anglican Church in northern England. They gather in wooden chairs beneath stained glass windows. The priest gives a short sermon and a prayer. Then the smackdown begins.

Tattooed wrestlers body-slam each other in a six-man tag-team battle. The congregation whoops and cheers.

Welcome to Kingdom Wrestling. It's the brainchild of 37-year-old Gareth Thompson. He's part preacher and part ringmaster. You might spot him wearing a T-shirt that reads "Pray, eat, wrestle, repeat." He also wrestles under the stage name "Gareth Angel."

Thompson suffered abuse as a child and became homeless as a teenager. During those years, he found an escape by watching pro wrestling. In 2011, he came to Jesus. But he didn't lose his love for wrestling.

"When I became Christian, I started seeing the wrestling world through a Christian lens," he says. "I started seeing David and Goliath. I started seeing Cain and Abel. I started seeing Esau having his heritage stolen from him. And I'm like, 'We could tell these stories.'"

So-called "pro wrestling" is much different than the actual sport of wrestling. It's not so much a competition as a show. Pro wrestlers create characters and storylines. Some frame themselves as villains, others as heroes.

"Boil it down to the basics; it's good versus evil," says Thompson.

But even if largely scripted (or "fake"), pro wrestling often glorifies violence and other unsavory behavior. Does that really belong in church?

In the United Kingdom, church attendance has declined for decades. According to a 2021 census, fewer than half of people in England and Wales consider themselves Christian.



Clockwise from top: Gareth Thompson body slams an opponent during a show at St. Peter's Anglican Church; Prayer happens in the ring; Visitors head to St. Peter's.

Churches try creative strategies to attract visitors.

Kingdom Wrestling draws about 200 people, young and old. Chris Moss and her husband got married at St. Peter's almost 50 years ago. "I think it's absolutely wonderful," says Mrs. Moss.

Some attendees and participants know little about church. "I'm mainly here for the wrestling," says 33-year-old wrestler Liam Ledger. He finds it surreal to see baptisms between wrestling bouts. Kingdom Wrestling baptized over 30 people in its first year.

"It's not church as you would know it. It's certainly not for everyone," says Reverend Natasha Thomas, head priest at St. Peter's. "But it's bringing

in a different group of people, a different community, than we would normally get."

Jesus invites all types of people into His Church. But how far should churches go to draw them in? Is it enough that crazy costumes and fake fights draw a crowd? Can the true gospel message still shine through the show?

A wild event might bring people in the door. But what keeps them there?

► **We'd love to hear what you think about unusual practices to attract people to church. Write to us at WORLDteeneditor@gwnews.com.**



Crashing the Oscars

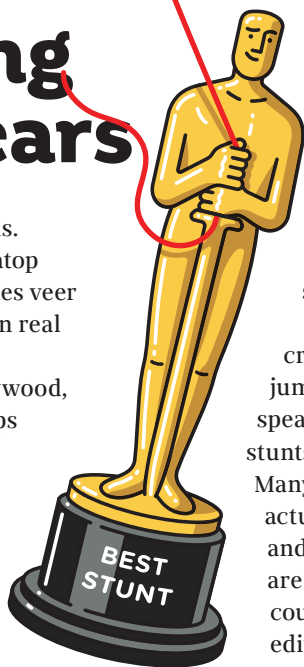
Cars soar across canyons. Heroes chase villains atop speeding trains. Motorcycles veer through crowded streets. In real life, these would be deadly situations. But this is Hollywood, and good stunt design keeps performers safe.

Soon, for the first time ever, the Academy Awards will hand out a statue for the best stunt design.

The Academy Awards (or “Oscars”) celebrate the year’s achievements in filmmaking. The Academy awards golden trophies for acting, costuming, scriptwriting, directing, special effects—almost every category you can imagine. *Except* stunts.

Many filmmakers have clamored for a stunt-focused awards category. At the 100th Academy Awards in 2028, that wish will finally come true.

“Since the early days of cinema, stunt design has been an integral part of filmmaking,” says a statement from



the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Stunts have spiced up the silver screen from the beginning. You know what stunts are. But what exactly is stunt design?

Hollywood’s crazy crashes and death-defying jumps aren’t *real*, strictly speaking. But filming these stunts involves real danger. Many action scenes feature actual vehicles, explosions, and dangerous drops. (Drops are aided by safety wires, of course. Those usually get edited out digitally.) Good stunt design makes these movie magic moments safe and spectacular. But stunt performers and designers get little recognition.

Director David Leitch has long pushed for a stunt-focused Oscar category. “Stunts are essential to every genre of film and rooted deep in our industry’s history,” he says, “from the groundbreaking work of early pioneers like Buster Keaton, Harold Lloyd, and Charlie Chaplin, to the inspiring artistry of today’s stunt designers, coordinators, performers,

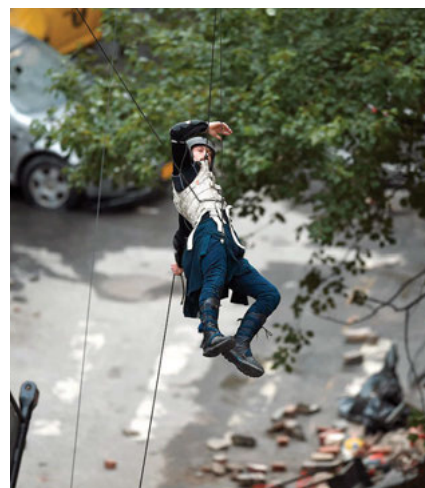
and choreographers.”

But just how much recognition will stunt designers actually receive? Not all Academy Awards are awarded during the live broadcast on Oscars night. Some categories receive prizes off-screen. It’s unclear whether stunt design will be part of the big show.

So some filmmakers remain skeptical. They also wonder exactly who will receive the prize. It takes whole teams to invent the stunts seen onscreen. Who takes home the prize if a film wins?

“It’s not like it was 100 years ago when there was one person designing it. It’s a collaborative effort,” says film director Chad Stahelski.

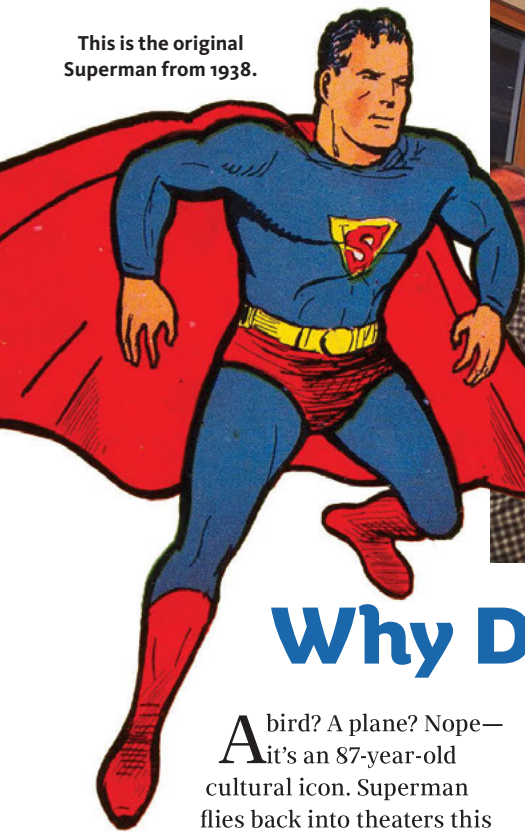
An on-screen stunt can go by in a split second. But it may require painstaking planning and preparation. Next time you see a motorcycle jump over a moving car, take a moment to appreciate the craft behind the crash.



WHY? Hard work done behind the scenes can make all the difference—and it’s worthy of acknowledgement and celebration.

Top left: A stunt driver is filmed on a beach for the movie *Fall Guy*. **Top right:** Don’t worry! The flame-retardant suit protects this stuntman. **Bottom right:** A stuntman stands in for Doctor Strange on the set of *Avengers: Infinity War*.

This is the original Superman from 1938.



CinemaCon attendees stand beneath advertisements for the latest Superman movie.

Why Do We Love Superman?

A bird? A plane? Nope—it's an 87-year-old cultural icon. Superman flies back into theaters this summer, and fans have the

Man of Steel on their minds. But what makes Superman such a lasting character? Some say the answer goes beyond the comic page or movie screen.

You might know the basics. Desperate parents place their baby boy in a spaceship to save him from the dying planet Krypton. The kid crash-lands in a Kansas cornfield. A Methodist farming couple—the Kents—name him Clark and raise him as their son. As a man, he combines his alien powers and small-town-American morals to become Superman.

But do you know the story *behind* the story? Writer Jerry Siegel and artist Joe Shuster invented Superman in the 1930s. They took inspiration from mythic heroes like Hercules. Both Jewish, they also drew inspiration from Old Testament figures like Samson.

Jewish influence infuses the Superman story. Many fans note how baby

Superman's escape from Krypton looks much like baby Moses' escape via floating basket. The hero's unbending morals could flow straight from the Ten Commandments.

Superman "believes that the sanctity of life is of the utmost importance," says James Gunn, director of this year's new Superman flick.

Writer Gene Luen Yang has written several Superman comics. As a Chinese American and a Catholic, he finds deeper meaning in the fantasy feats.

"Superman has two names—Kal-El, his Kryptonian name, and Clark Kent, his American name," says Yang. "I had a Chinese name at home and an American name in school. So even

though I'm a practicing Catholic, I was more drawn to his Jewish roots because that's where I could relate more."

He also sees biblical values in the Man of Steel. "The idea of self-sacrifice, the idea that you do good deeds without the desire to gain recognition. That's the whole point of secret identities," says Yang. In the comics Yang pens, he includes his own "lived experience of faith."

C.S. Lewis, author of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, wrote about the power of story. He calls the story of Jesus a "true myth." He says it's "a myth working on us in the same way as the others, but with this tremendous difference that it really happened."

Hero stories can remind us of our real-life need for a Savior—even in ways their creators never intended. People who don't know God can read such stories and sense that need. But we know what truly fills that hunger.

God came to Earth as a man. We couldn't save ourselves. So He laid down His life to rescue us. He's the hero we're searching for.



Gene Luen Yang with one of the Superman comics that he wrote

WHY? Fiction can point to real-life truth, sometimes even in ways the authors don't realize. And all truly great stories have elements of God's redemptive plan in them.



Watch our **WORLDteen** Sidebar video about animal superpowers online at gdnnews.com/superman.

Overcrowding, staff shortages, and crumbling buildings. The Federal Bureau of Prisons has myriad problems. Add Alcatraz to the list.

In May, U.S. President Donald Trump suggested resurrecting America's most infamous prison. He shared his plan to "reopen a substantially enlarged and rebuilt ALCATRAZ" in an online post.

Alcatraz is a 22-acre islet with views of the Golden Gate Bridge and San Francisco, California, skyline. Often referred to as "The Rock" in pop culture, Alcatraz housed notorious criminals like gangsters Al Capone and "Machine Gun" Kelly.

President Trump told reporters that reopening Alcatraz was "just an idea I've had." He hails Alcatraz as a model of the federal prison system's cherished history.

"In times past, we did not hesitate to lock up the most dangerous criminals," the President says, "and keep them far away from anyone they could harm."

In its heyday, Alcatraz was billed as the nation's most secure prison. Its

island location, frigid surrounding waters, and strong currents helped ensure no successful escapes from Alcatraz—officially. Five prisoners are "missing and presumed drowned."

The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) opened Alcatraz in 1934 and closed it in 1963. The site simply became too expensive to operate according to the BOP website—nearly three times more costly than any other federal prison. Much of the expense involved its island locale. People and goods had to be ferried 1.25 miles from shore.

Today, the National Park Service oversees Alcatraz as a popular San Francisco tourist destination.

Newly appointed BOP Director William K. Marshall III says the agency "will vigorously pursue all avenues to support and implement the President's agenda." He plans a study to decide "next steps."

But the BOP is struggling.

An Associated Press investigation uncovered some serious BOP concerns over the last few years. These include

criminal activity by employees, dozens of escapes, severe understaffing, and free flowing guns, drugs, and other contraband.

Cost-cutting measures have stopped some pay bonuses that may have helped retain and attract new staff. With fewer personnel, some workers put in long overtime shifts. Occasionally, prison nurses, cooks, and teachers do double duty as guards.

An official told Congress that more than 4,000 BOP beds—at least two prisons' worth—are unsafe because of dangerous conditions like leaking or failing roofs or toxic contaminants.

Critics want the BOP to fix prisons that currently house inmates before refurbishing a relic.

Will a shiny new Alcatraz send a message? Perhaps. Yet nearly every aspect of the prison system is a reminder of human wickedness. There's only one solution for that.

Will "The Rock" Reopen?



A bird flies above Alcatraz Island in the San Francisco Bay, California.



WHY? Throughout history, human wickedness has been "great in the Earth." (Genesis 6:5) But God's plans include "a future and a hope." (Jeremiah 29:11)

AP PHOTOS

AI Takes the Stand

Many witnesses may take the stand in a murder trial. But there's one person nobody expects to hear from: the victim.

Yet that's just what happened on May 1 in an Arizona courthouse. Christopher Pelkey died in a road rage incident in 2021. His killer, Gabriel Paul Horcasitas, had stood trial and faced sentencing. The victim's family brought an AI-generated video to court.

An avatar of Pelkey's likeness and voice spoke directly to his killer. He (or it?) claimed to forgive Horcasitas for his crime.

"I believe in forgiveness and in God who forgives," said AI-Pelkey. "I always have and I still do."

Of course, these weren't *actually* Pelkey's words. They were a digitally programmed guess at what he might have said.

Judge Todd Lang expressed appreciation for the video. He commended Pelkey's family for giving voice to Pelkey's forgiving nature, though the family wanted the killer to receive a maximum sentence.

Then he granted that wish. Horcasitas faces 10.5 years in prison.

Horcasitas' lawyer swiftly filed a notice of appeal. He says the judge relied too heavily on a fake video.

Across the United States, judges and lawyers wrestle with the proper use of artificial intelligence. Arizona's Supreme Court formed a committee specifically to research the use of AI.

"There's a real concern . . . that deepfake evidence will be increasingly used," says law professor Gary Merchant. "It's easy to create it and anyone can do it on a phone, and it could be incredibly influential because judges and juries, just like all of us, are used to believing what you see."

In March in New York, Jerome Dewald tried to use an AI-generated avatar as his lawyer. The fake lawyer appeared via video in court. Justice Sallie Manzanet-Daniels quickly noticed.

"Ok, hold on," said the judge. "Is that counsel for the case?"

"I generated that. That's not a real person," answered the plaintiff.

The judge called for the video to be turned off. "I don't appreciate being misled," she said.

Other burgeoning technologies also create legal conundrums. In Florida, a wedding venue owner named Miguel Albisu stood accused of assault. He claimed self-defense. To make his case, he asked the judge to don a virtual reality (VR) headset. In an odd sight, judge and lawyers alike sat in the courtroom with Oculus headsets obscuring their faces. They watched a recreation of Albisu's experience.

Fancy tech didn't help Albisu's case. The judge rejected his claim of self-defense.

Courtrooms exist to reveal truth. Can AI deepfakes and VR animations aid that goal? Or will they hinder it?



Christopher Pelkey's Army dress uniform and portrait stand on display at his mother's home.



Defense attorneys at the trial of Miguel Albisu wear VR headsets.



A deepfake video of former President Barack Obama



The AI-generated Christopher Pelkey

WHY? New technologies open new opportunities—and present new problems. And always, human error and sin must be taken into account.

Buy Now, Pay [Maybe] Never

Deferred payments have been around for decades. But the modern version of “buy now, pay later” has changed. Some people even use the plan to overspend and under—or never!—pay for their purchases.

“Buy now, pay later” (BNPL) sounds like a good idea: Take home the goods, and then pay gradually. Shoppers could leverage good credit scores into tangible merchandise. The plan also helped some people build credit with financial institutions. Good credit scores allowed them to finance big-ticket items like cars or houses. (See more at gwnews.com/bnpl.)

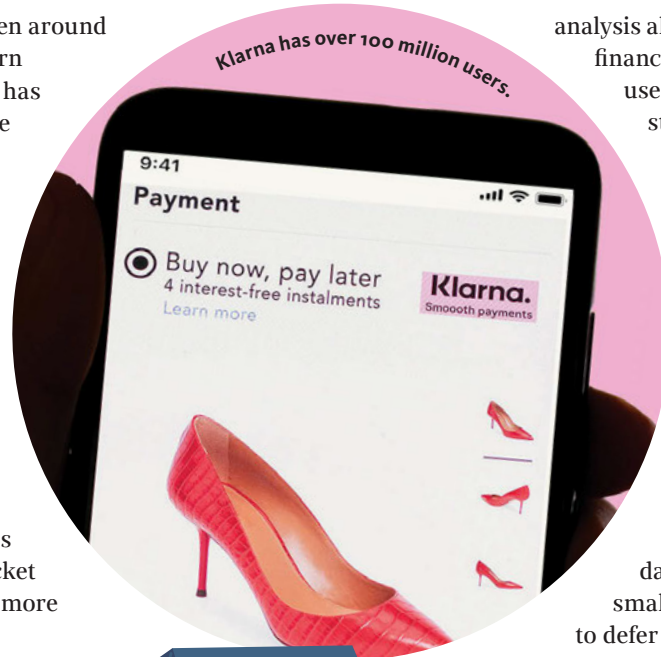
When the concept of BNPL began, people warned of the temptation to spend more than a person could pay back.

According to short-term lender Klarna, that’s exactly what’s happened. The company’s findings show BNPL borrowers keep falling behind on payments—even as they take out more loans for groceries, clothing, tech, and home décor (the top BNPL purchases).

Reports by Bankrate and Lending-Tree reveal the same issue: An increasing number of BNPL users are late with payments. But they keep buying.

Many of Jesus’ parables address money. They stress the dangers of greed and emphasize spiritual values over material ones. Most importantly, they encourage wise use of money for God’s glory.

Authors of a December 2024 Federal Reserve report say young people are among the most likely to defer payments. The



analysis also reveals, “Those . . . with fewer financial resources were more likely to use BNPL.” It also says those already struggling are the ones who “may be overextending themselves.”

Aside from buying beyond one’s means, there are other dangers of BNPL. These include high overdraft fees and credit card interest payments. These can raise costs and make payback more difficult.

The popularity of BNPL plans and the growing ways customers can use them have sparked public attention. These days, most online purchases—even small ones—give buyers the option to defer part or all of a payment. Even pizza delivery expenses can be delayed.

The Biden administration put some rules in place to deal with fees, interest rates, and return policies for BNPL services.

But the Trump administration has opted not to enforce those rules, choosing instead to focus on other issues. Consumer advocates say that without federal oversight, BNPL customers may have less legal recourse in the case of problems.

In an ironic twist, Lending-Tree’s website offers sound advice to BNPL users: “Just because you can borrow the money doesn’t mean you should.”

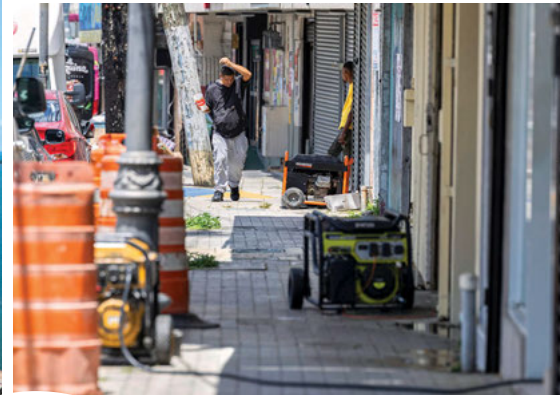
The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty.
— Proverbs 21:5



WHY? Services like BNPL can help buyers learn wise money handling. But they also may tempt people to greedy, reckless, or careless spending.

TOP: AP PHOTO • BOTTOM: DARUMO/GETTY IMAGES

Can Puerto Rico Lure Global Business?



Clockwise from far left: Tractor trailers and containers fill a shipping yard at the San Juan port in Puerto Rico. Generators line the sidewalk as shops try to remain open during a prolonged power outage in San Juan. CEO of Invest Puerto Rico, Ella Woger Nieves.

A global trade war may offer hope for Puerto Rico’s fragile economy. As officials work to convince global companies to relocate to the island, longstanding challenges persist.

President Donald Trump has promised increased fees on imports, or goods coming in from other countries. Economists call these *tariffs*. (Read more at gwnews.com/tariffsday.)

Higher tariffs could help Puerto Rico. The island is a U.S. territory, so goods coming to the States from Puerto Rico aren’t subject to the fees. That could prompt companies to relocate or expand operations on the island. So Puerto Rican government agencies are touting the country as a prime business locale.

“The tariff issue is a controversial one,” says Governor Jenniffer González. “But for Puerto Rico, it’s a great opportunity.”

Currently, Puerto Rico’s economy is shaky. The government is still emerging from a historic bankruptcy. It also struggles with chronic power outages. Will that unstable infrastructure dissuade investors?

So far, local government officials have identified 75 to 100 companies that might consider relocating, says Ella Woger Nieves. She’s CEO of Invest Puerto Rico, a group that promotes the island.

“This is the moment to plant those seeds,” she says.

The companies on the list represent numerous workforce sectors including aerospace, medicine, and production of medical devices.

Sergio Marxuach works at the Center for a New Economy. He says trying to attract more companies—especially in the medication and medical device fields—makes sense. His advice to the government would be “to begin there because you already have a footprint.”

Marxuach also sees possibilities for drawing defense and security businesses—like drone tech or undersea surveillance systems. He adds that Puerto Rico’s U.S. jurisdiction is key for those industries.

The response of many CEOs and

companies so far is “wait and see” how the tariff war plays out, Marxuach says.

But despite tariff advantages and strong U.S. ties, Puerto Rico can’t escape its apocalyptic energy problems. Complete blackouts occur often. Crews are still repairing the power grid after 2017’s Hurricane Maria devastated the island.

In Miami, Florida, WORLDteen spoke with a Puerto Rican businessperson who commutes frequently from San Juan to the U.S. mainland. She didn’t want her name used but declared, “My electricity was out for three months, and I live in the capital!”

She believes widescale corruption is part of the island’s problems. Asked about Puerto Rico’s allure for business, she says, “Nobody wants to go there.”

“It’s a problem only God can fix,” the WORLDteen reporter observed.

The reply came quickly. “Amen.”



The flag of Puerto Rico

“The Herds”



Puppeteers rehearse in the Kinshasa Botanical Garden in Democratic Republic of the Congo.



Puppeteers rehearse with a kudu puppet in Cape Town, South Africa.

In the Kinshasa Botanical Garden, a troupe of animals stands at attention. Then handlers begin moving the herd slowly through the woods. Eventually, they pick up speed and break into a run. These are no ordinary trainers or beasts: They are puppeteers operating life-sized cardboard creatures in a massive public art project.

City sprawl, weather patterns, poor urban planning—whatever the reason, wild animals seem to have less room to roam than ever before. Concerned citizens wonder whether putting furry faces—even cardboard ones—to the problem will help lead to a solution.

“The Herds” is an on-the-move, multi-month-long theatrical performance. Trained performers studied animal movements. They learned to replicate them using giant multi-jointed puppets. Cardboard monkeys, a gorilla, leopards, gazelles, a giraffe,

a kudu—and more of God’s grand creations—represent animals fleeing Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Puppets and puppeteers have undertaken a 12,000-mile journey to highlight the loss of these creatures’ natural habitats.

Students from London’s Wimbledon College of Arts and artisans from Ukwanda Puppets & Designs Art Collective in South Africa made the puppets. They used plywood for the basic structure, rubber cords for ligaments, and lots of cardboard for



Puppeteers move cardboard animals in canoes in Lagos, Nigeria.

BOTTOM: KASHOPE FAJE/88 LIFE STUDIOS

on the Move



Puppeteers move a zebra puppet.



A cardboard leopard walks the streets of Dakar, Senegal.

shape and texture. They built the animals using mostly eco-friendly materials—since conservation was key.

The puppets started their journey in Kinshasa, the capital of DRC. According to the performance storyline, the animals are forced from their natural habitats. Heading north, they'll stop in 20 cities along the way to the Arctic Circle.

Congolese artists played an integral part in the opening act for “The Herds.” As the project moves north, artists from other countries will become involved. Some will add animals native to their various habitats to the migration. By journey's end, there

could be about 150 cardboard animals.

The team that developed “The Herds” also performed “The Walk” in 2021. For that drama, 12-foot-tall puppet “Little Amal” drew attention to the global refugee crisis.

Tshoper Kabambi is a Congolese filmmaker and producer for “The Herds” in DRC. He says the main goal is to raise awareness of the animals' plight. “Nature is very important to us,” he says.

After departing Kinshasa, “The Herds” moves to Lagos, Nigeria, and Dakar, Senegal, and beyond.

“The Herds” artistic director Amir Nizar Zuabi was also involved in “The Walk.” With this project, he hopes to “connect communities along this route to tell one massive story.”



Important city stops for “The Herds” include Lagos, Dakar, Marrakesh, Casablanca, Madrid, Barcelona, Paris, Venice, London, Aarhus, Copenhagen, and Stockholm, ending with a final performance in the Arctic Circle.

WHY? God created humans to rule over animals—and to care for them. Protecting animals shows that we respect God's order and take His instructions seriously. (Genesis 1:26, Proverbs 12:10)



Watch our **WORLDteen** Sidebar video about “The Herds” online at gwnews.com/herds.

Lady Jane, Is It You?

Tree rings, a cargo mark, and scratches are clues in a royal mystery. Might a newfound painting be the only “live” portrait of England’s shortest-reigning queen?

King Edward VI was the only surviving son of Henry VIII. He was also the first monarch raised Protestant after his father’s notorious split from the Catholic church.

Lady Jane Grey was Edward’s cousin. Highly intelligent, she spoke multiple languages and admired Plato. Her mother was King Henry VIII’s youngest sister. Most importantly for Edward, Jane was a Protestant.

On being told in 1553 that he was terminally ill, 15-year-old Edward bypassed his older sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, and named Jane queen. Mary was Catholic, and Edward wanted to prevent the realm from reverting to Catholicism.

Jane would reign for just nine days.

On July 19, an outraged Mary seized power and had Jane convicted of treason. The next year, Queen Mary ordered Jane executed. She may have been as young as 16.

Few known paintings of Jane exist, all painted after her death.

Until now.

Researchers from conservation group English Heritage believe a privately owned painting could be the only portrait of Jane made while she was alive. It is currently displayed at Wrest Park, a country estate near London.

Researchers worked with art experts and scientist Ian Tyers to date the portrait. Tyers specializes in dendrochronology, the dating of tree rings.

Tree-dating indicates the painting’s wooden panel was likely constructed between 1539 and 1571. The



Conservator Rachel Turnbull examines a portrait believed to be of Lady Jane Grey at Wrest Park in Bedfordshire, England (above); The merchant or cargo mark that is identical to the one on a royal portrait of Edward VI (inset); An X-ray scan of the portrait (right)



boards could have been used while Jane lived.

Another clue is a merchant or cargo mark on the wood. It’s identical to one on a royal portrait of Edward VI. The mark suggests that the sitter was important at the time of the painting.

Infrared studies reveal changes in the portrait. At some point, someone scratched out the subject’s eyes, mouth, and ears. Destroying images of foes—especially religious ones—was a way to show disapproval. Similar scratches appear on a known image of Jane in London’s National Gallery.

Analysis beneath the surface shows the subject’s eyes once looked in a different direction and that the subject’s clothing was more elegant. These findings may support the theory that the sitter fell from a higher station. English Heritage conservator

Rachel Turnbull believes after Jane’s death, the image was “toned down into subdued, Protestant martyrdom.”

Not everyone agrees that the image depicts Jane—during her life or not. Some historians argue the portrait is another woman entirely.

But Turnbull supports the possibility that “we are looking at the shadows of a once more royal portrait of Lady Jane Grey.”

WHY? The God-given impulse to solve mysteries can lead people to search for God and to embrace one of the greatest mysteries of all: “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Colossians 1:27)



Matteo explains how his AI model works.

hundreds of billions of detections from over a decade. Kirkpatrick suggested he and Matteo “take a little piece of the sky” and look for variable stars.

Matteo expanded the goal. He made an AI model that sorted through *all* the raw data. It looked for tiny changes in infrared radiation. Such radiation is invisible to human eyes, but it emits heat. It’s the energy we feel from sunlight.

Kirkpatrick and Matteo kept working after the summer to perfect the AI algorithm. They were able to detect 1.5 *million* potential new objects. Kirkpatrick told *Business Insider* that prior to Matteo’s work, no one had tried to use the entire data table to detect and classify variable objects.

The use of long-wave infrared allows scientists to observe objects that were previously hidden by interstellar dust.

Caltech researchers are already making use of Matteo’s catalog, called VarWISE. They study binary star systems. (Those are two stars bound by gravity that orbit a common center. Think of them as “twins” in space.)

How will Matteo spend the \$250,000 prize? He says it’ll go towards college. The sensible teen runs a project that helps teach school-age children about the basics of finances.

Matteo told BBC, “If I could give one piece of advice to young people with ambition—just start it. You are never going to know before you start where you could go.”

The heavens declare the glory of God. — Psalm 19:1

Starstruck Teen Wins Science Award

Outer space fascinates Matteo Paz. It has for years. His mother took him to public stargazing lectures at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) while he was in elementary school. That galactic curiosity paid off. Now a teen, Matteo created an AI model that analyzed years of NASA telescope data. He tracked 1.5 million potential new (previously unidentified) space objects. That includes supernovas and black holes. Not too shabby for an 18-year-old.

Matteo’s work took first prize in the 2025 Regeneration Science Talent Search, a national competition run by the Society for Science. The award included a gift of \$250,000.

It all started when the high schooler attended the summer Planet Finder Academy at Caltech in 2022. Matteo studied astronomy and computer science under mentor Dr. Davy Kirkpatrick.

Kirkpatrick had been working with data from the retired NEOWISE infrared telescope. NASA launched NEOWISE in 2009. The telescope was designed to watch for near-Earth

asteroids and comets. But it also collected data on variable objects. Those are things in the sky that change in brightness over time.

It was Kirkpatrick’s idea to hunt down these objects in NEOWISE’s understudied data. There were

Matteo holds his prize.



WHY? We learn more about God’s character when we study what He made. Space holds grandeur that is worth investigating.

Plant Carnivores Turn the Tables

Pink tentacles tipped in clear droplets. Lime green spikes fringing a lima bean-shaped pod. Giant burgundy urns with ruffled collars. With their bright colors, uncommon forms, and sweet aromas, carnivorous plants are pretty on the outside. Inside, they can be deadly.

The Botanical Garden of Bogotá held an exhibit called *Let yourself be trapped* this past spring. The display featured hundreds of carnivorous plants. *Carnivorous* means “flesh-eating.” Certain types of plants practice this method of getting nutrients.

In the book *Carnivorous Plants*, authors Aaron M. Ellison and Lubomir Adamec identify the usual animal-plant operating method. Animals roam freely; plants stay put. Animals eat solid food; plants obtain nutrients from soil, water, and sunshine. Animals might eat the plants—but not the other way around. Carnivorous plants turn the tables.

Found on every continent except Antarctica, scientists recognize more

than 700 species of carnivorous plants. Like most flora, they use photosynthesis to generate energy. But these “flesh-eaters” also capture, kill, and consume insects and sometimes other very small animals to get key nutrients missing from their swampy, boggy diets.

They do so using built-in traps. [Cue spooky music.]

God gave carnivorous plants several ways to snare lunch. Some use an internal vacuum system to suck prey inside. Others use a sweet, sticky substance that lures creatures and doesn’t let go. Still other plants use light tricks to confuse their quarry. The animal thinks it sees an exit light—instead, it’s a trap. Other snares involve pitfalls or snapping traps. Most trapping methods include variations on the theme, like backward-pointing hairs, pools of poisonous goop, and trap doors.

The Venus flytrap is one of the best-known carnivorous plants.

Insects venturing onto these plants tickle tiny hairs that trigger leaves to shut while spiky teeth seal insects inside. The leaves crush the prey. Enzymes then help the plant digest it.

Insects are a carnivorous plant’s most common target. However, large plants have been known to consume small birds, mammals, or amphibians like tadpoles.

The giant montane pitcher plant of Borneo is the largest of all carnivorous plants. It sports urn-shaped traps that can grow more than 16 inches tall. A plant’s pitcher-like vessel can hold almost a gallon of liquid—enough to drown and dissolve small mammals like mice.

God cares for the lilies—and carnivorous plants too! In addition to beauty, He gave them ways to gather food . . . without moving a muscle.

Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, . . . Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. — Luke 12:27



Drosera spatulate is also called spoon-leaved sundew.



A visitor takes a close look at a Venus flytrap.



A giant pitcher plant



A Venus flytrap nabs a fly.



The Heliamphora plant is a pitcher plant.



A Drosera capensis flower



WHY? The Creator took great pains to create a beautiful and fascinating world. Carnivorous plants are part of His ingenious work.

Kid Citizen Scientists Find New Tardigrades



diverse habitats of the animals.

“It would simply take me weeks, if not months, to get to all these islands” the children visited, tardigrade expert Piotr Gąsiorek told *Smithsonian Magazine*. He is the lead author of the study.

Though she be but little, she is fierce. — William Shakespeare

Shakespeare wasn't describing tardigrades in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Yet the saying fits. These miniscule creatures are survivors—of boiling, dehydrating, freezing, and more. And Danish schoolchildren have discovered new species of the fierce critters.

Tardigrades (also known as water bears or moss piglets) are some of God's most resilient creatures. They're so small, they're visible only under magnification. Enlarged 40 times, tardigrades look more like blubbery caterpillars than fuzzy bears.

Research about the eight-legged animals is scarce. A 2015 study led by biologist Thomas Boothby revealed that tardigrades adopt genes from other organisms like plants, fungi, and animals. Scientists believe this helps them survive extreme conditions.

How extreme? Tardigrades can live in temperatures from -328 to 304° Fahrenheit!



The Danish student citizen scientists collected bits of algae, lichen, and moss.

Without water, tardigrades dry out. Their teeny digestive tracts, nervous systems, and other organs slow down. Dehydrated but not dead, they can survive for decades! Unusual proteins protect the tardigrade's cells while waiting for water. Rehydrated, the water bears wiggle into action.

Scientists wanted to know more about survivalist tardigrades. But collecting samples was daunting. So the Danish National Center for Science Education, or Astra, unleashed citizen-scientists in a so-called Mass Experiment.

Nearly 30,000 Danish children ages seven to 16

helped. Armed with instructions, cameras, magnifying glasses, and UV lamps, they scoured woods, creeks, bogs, and cemeteries. They collected 8,000 bits of algae, lichen, and moss.

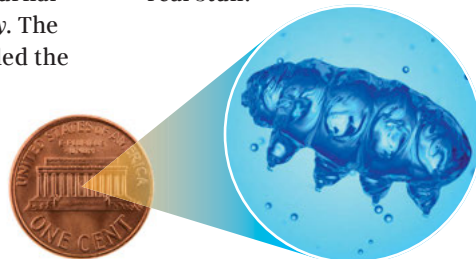
“When so many students go hunting,” reads a Danish press release about the experiment, “they will most likely also find unknown species of bears.”

The students' input appeared in the journal *Frontiers in Zoology*. The research quadrupled the number of known tardigrade species in Denmark and revealed the

Of 8,000 collected, researchers ended up with almost 700 usable samples. Among those, they identified 41 tardigrade species not seen in Denmark before. At least nine were entirely “new to science” according to Gąsiorek.

Tardigrade studies have real-life benefit. Scientists have used the animals' talent for drying out and reviving to develop preservation methods for medicines. These are valuable in locales with limited electricity or refrigeration. Researchers hope tardigrades will someday help with studies of aging, outer space, and more.

Mass Experiment coordinator Lene Christensen told *Smithsonian Magazine* many students have developed interest in science because “they were out in nature doing the real stuff.”



A tardigrade's size ranges from 0.05 mm to about 1.5 mm. This is just slightly larger than the distance between two columns in the Lincoln Memorial on the back of a penny.

WHY? While Ecclesiastes says, “There is nothing new under the Sun,” there is still much for people to discover and explore in this big, wonderful creation.



During a hike in his hometown, Guo Qingshan snapped a scenic photograph. In it, a hill resembled a resting dog. The picture quickly became popular—and a tourist hotspot was born.

Have you ever seen the “Man in the Moon” or noticed faces in electrical outlets? (Go look for yourself!) Maybe you see animals in clouds, smiling people in car grills, or a crying child in marble tile. People may unknowingly seek familiar shapes for safety or comfort. Some say the human brain is wired that way. And who did the wiring? God did!

Scientists call the tendency to see an image—often a face—in a pattern or object *pareidolia* (*pear-eye-DOLE-ee-uh*).

Susan Magsamen studies pareidolia at the Pederson Brain Science Institute. In *Johns Hopkins Magazine*, she says pareidolia “may enhance focus, mood, creativity, imagination, and agility in problem-solving because you’re seeing things in a different way.”

Scientists hope pareidolia research will aid diagnosis of certain types of dementia. It might also help in rehab for folks with illness or injury.

After hiking, Guo reviewed his photos. Pareidolia struck. He noticed something he hadn’t seen in person: Caverns in the rocks created drooping eyes; a tree-covered ridge became a dog’s snout at the edge of China’s Yangtze River.

Guo captioned his image “Puppy Mountain.”

“I was so excited and happy when I discovered it,” Guo says. “The puppy’s posture is like it’s drinking water, or it’s looking at some fish.”

Guo posted his image on a Chinese social media app. It received 120,000 likes within 10 days. On another platform, the hashtag #xiaogoushan—Chinese for “Puppy Mountain”—drew millions of views.

Many people traveled to the mountain in Yichang to see the

dog-like hill for themselves. Some brought their canines along for photo sessions.

“Puppy Mountain here I am!” one social media poster gushed.

Yang Yang lives over an hour from “Puppy Mountain.” She drove there with her friends and her two-year-old poodle, Yang Keyi.

“I was really happy to see the mountain,” she says. “Puppy Mountain’ and my own little dog really match.”

After Guo’s photo went viral, people shared their own captures of the same view. Many hadn’t noticed the dog shape before. Some commented on how the dog’s appearance has changed over the years.

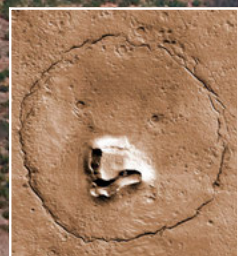
Yichang resident Shi Tong shared a photo from 2021. “After I saw the ‘Puppy Mountain’ photo online,” he says, “I realized that I have been to this place before. I thought it looked like a dog at that time too!”

Ahhh, pareidolia **hindsight** is 20/20.

Puppy Mountain Fetches Fans

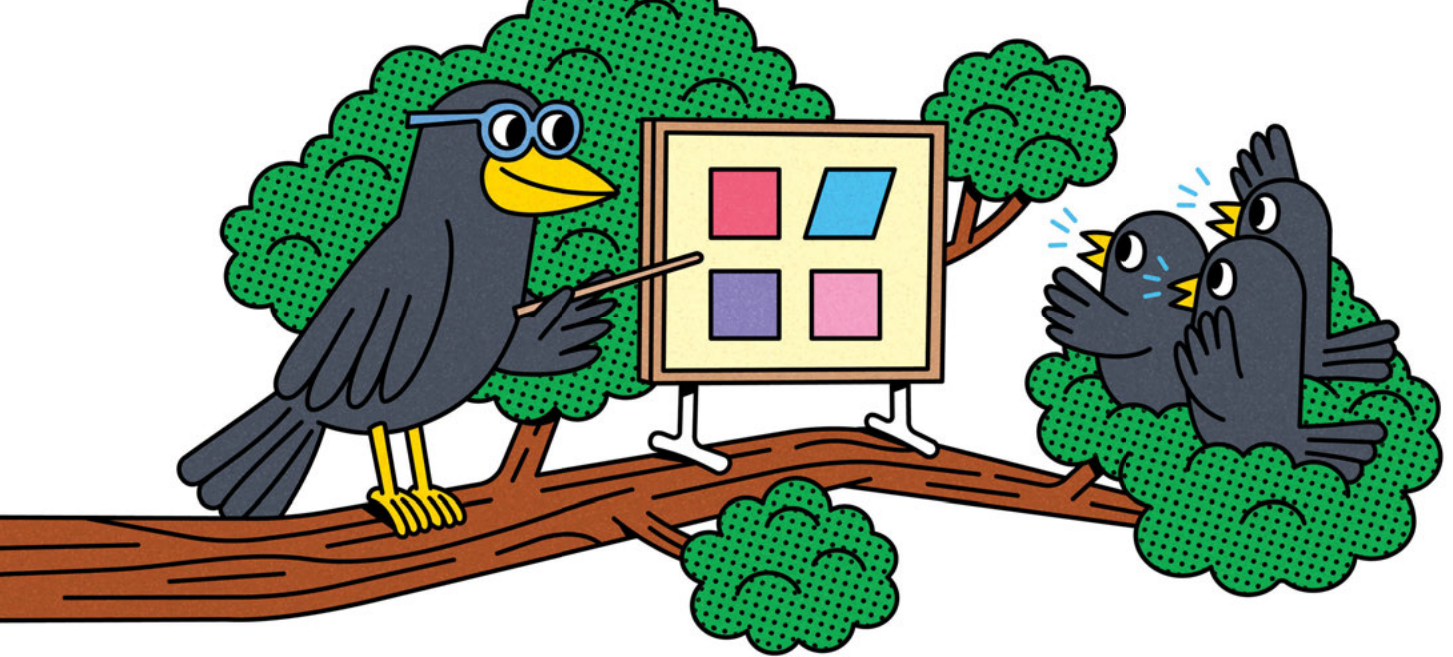


An outlet, a cup of coffee, and the landscape of Mars . . . where else do you see a face?



Zhang Yali poses for photos with her dog near “Puppy Mountain.”

WHY? God wired the human brain to send and receive billions of signals every second and to seek purpose and order from what we experience around us.



Smart Crows Spot the Differences

Are you smarter than . . . a crow? Turns out, crows can peck—er, pick—out an item that doesn’t belong in a set of images. Is it because they’re smart or because they’re well trained?

According to a new study, crows can view a series of shapes and find the one that’s different.

Researchers know that humans recognize shape uniformity. But brain biologist Andreas Nieder claims his study marks the first time scientists have shown geometric perception like this in a non-human species.

Nieder and other researchers tested two lab crows. The **carrion** crows are no strangers to math-based tests: They regularly play computer games designed to test their math

prowess and can count on a level with toddlers.

Still, scientists wanted more from these lab-bound bird brains.

For Nieder’s study, the crows stared at six shapes on a computer screen. Scientists wanted the crows to peck the shape that was different from the others—the intruder.

“Initially, we presented some very obviously different figures,” Nieder told NPR. “For instance, five moons and one flower.”

When one of the crows pecked the bloom, it got a snack of bird seed and mealworms, which are apparently *Yummo!* if you’re a crow.

The birds caught on, and researchers switched the game up. They started showing the crows shapes instead of pictures. The

shapes included parallelograms, irregular quadrilaterals, and plain old squares.

For the shape test, the crows might see five perfectly square squares—and an off-kilter one. Researchers wanted to know whether the crows could still locate the intruder, or outlier—even if the differences were slight.

The crows understood the assignment. They pecked their way to scientific stardom by correctly

distinguishing among parallel lines, right angles, and more.

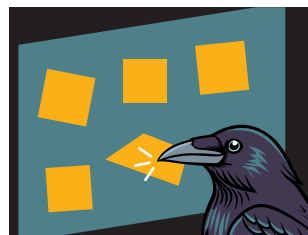
Nieder’s study “Crows Recognize Geometric Regularity” appears in the online journal *Science Advances*. The results surprised the researchers.

Brain scientist Mathias Sablé-Meyer expected highly trained baboons to ace a shape test. But he “wouldn’t have expected crows to.” He admitted to NPR, “It seems the primates couldn’t swing it.”

“The evidence is actually quite convincing,” Sablé-Meyer says. He then poses another question about the crows’ counting abilities: “Where does that even come from?”

Christians know the answer: Just as with humans, any gifts the birds have come from their Creator. (James 1:17)

“Claiming that . . . only humans can detect geometric regularity is now falsified,” says Nieder. “Because we have at least the crow.”



The counting crows identified the obviously and the not-so-obviously different shapes.



WHY? The animal kingdom is full of creatures that reflect the creative genius of the Creator God.



A child in Guatemala eats Plumpy'Nut. Edesia Nutrition produces the nutritional lifesaving peanut paste.



workers' go-to tool for treating malnutrition.

Today, getting RUTFs to starving children is a giant, complex process with many parts. Farmers supply ingredients; companies make paste; shipping firms transport packets; non-profit groups distribute the food. Supply chain delays complicate getting food to those who need it.

Hard evidence about what RUTFs do and don't accomplish is elusive. Many scientists believe RUTFs help treat the immediate threat of severe malnutrition in young children. Yet the long-term success of RUTFs is unclear.

Edesia CEO Navyn Salem believes her product is vital. She compares Edesia's brand, Plumpy'Nut, to baby formula. She says when America faced a formula shortage, U.S. parents didn't just switch to cookies.

"We don't make a nice-to-have food," she says. "You can't replace it with something else."

Whoever gives to the poor will not want. — Proverbs 28:27

Looks Like a Condiment, Works Like a Meal

Eating food squished from a tube might sound unappetizing to some. But for many children around the world, nutrient-rich therapeutic food packets sustain life and restore health.

Therapeutic food is made especially for health purposes. It is high in vitamins, minerals, and other important nutrients. It's also calorie dense, so malnourished people can gain needed weight quickly.

Most often, hospitals, nursing homes, and other care facilities use therapeutic foods as dietary supplements. Worldwide, they help feed poor and hungry children as meal replacements.

Experts say 45 million children under age five suffer from being underweight or malnourished.

Studies show that one type of ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF), peanut paste, seems to help. The paste contains ground peanuts, powdered milk, sugar, and oil.

MANA Nutrition and Edesia Nutrition produce the paste. These U.S. companies are key links in the RUTF global supply chain.

The two compete for government contracts to make RUTFs. After the U.S. government recently cut funding, MANA experienced a weeklong shutdown. Since then, it has continued producing with help from donors. Both companies hope for the return of government subsidies to fund production.

Inside MANA's factory, workers roast locally sourced peanuts. Rollers separate kernels from skin,

grind peanuts into paste, and blend with powdered sugar. Kettles heat the product to kill bacteria. Machines pump the sticky paste into what look like oversized condiment packets.

The packets don't need refrigeration and have a two-year shelf life. That's important for people in remote areas with spotty electricity. Each packet contains 500 calories and provides nutrients necessary for early brain development. Three energy-packed RUTFs daily can help restore a malnourished child to health in six weeks.

At around \$40 for 150 packets, this "miracle food" has become charity

WHY? God commands us to care for those less fortunate. How that looks differs from person to person. Some minister to souls, others to bodies.

CHILD: AP PHOTO • PLUMPY'NUT: COURTESY OF EDESIA NUTRITION

Follow the Money: College Sports on the Ropes

A growing number of universities are shaking up their sports programs. The changes come as athletic programs anticipate payments due to recent lawsuit settlements—and compensating athletes going forward. The result: Some sports won't make the cut.

In April, three rulings against the National College Athletic Association (NCAA) resulted in \$2.8 billion in settlements. College athletes sued their schools for denying them the opportunity to earn money from their names, images, and likenesses (NILs), as well as from accepting advertising endorsements and media appearances. (Read more about NIL on our website: gwnews.com/hsinfluencer.)

The court found schools were profiting, but athletes weren't. Some say the ruling echoes a biblical ideal: "The laborer deserves his wages." (1 Timothy 5:18) Others suggest the scholarships and education the athletes receive are the "wages" due.

Still, a judge ruled schools must **compensate** past athletes and athletes

going forward. Each school that is part of the NCAA will share as much as \$20.5 million with athletes next year. Talented athletes at big schools will expect money, but the expense is new for the schools. Athletic departments must decide which sports deserve their dollars.

Here's what's happening:

High-profile sports like football and basketball usually bring in the most money. Top-tier athletes in those sports can expect robust compensation. They will demand the most to keep them from transferring elsewhere.

Many athletes in so-called non-revenue sports may be completely down for the count. These sports will likely take a back seat at many schools—as will tens of thousands of athletes in this group.

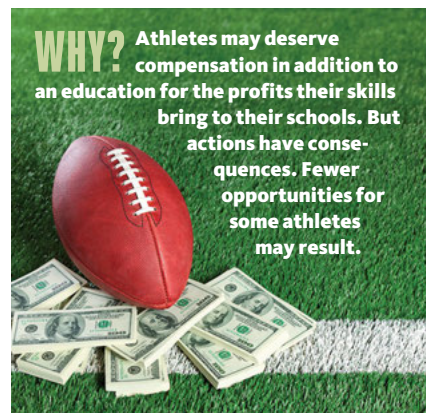
The new rulings include roster limits too. That means schools will allow fewer students on their teams (from about 125 to 105 in NCAA football). Critics say the change could

keep thousands of second-string players from getting scholarship money or being allowed to play.

Changes have already begun. In the wake of the NCAA settlements, the University of Texas El Paso (UTEP) dropped its women's tennis program entirely. Cal Poly discontinued swimming and diving. Grand Canyon shuttered men's volleyball. The schools ended the programs to save money for other sports.

What's to come from a future so uncertain that some schools are ending decades of sports tradition? Patrick Rische is executive director of the sports business program at Washington University. He says nothing is off the table, including the end of the 119-year-old NCAA.

"There is going to be more competitive pressure on all universities to step up or else they'll fall behind," Rische says. "You've got to ask yourself, does it make sense to continue to carry particular programs?"



Can Humanoid Robots Go the Distance?

Like a scene from a sci-fi movie, two-legged robots ran alongside humans in China in April. Is this one small step for 'bot-kind? Or a giant leap for robotics?

Chinese researchers have developed robots that dance, execute karate moves, and even make hot tea. But 'bots with speed and endurance—without overheating and breakdowns—haven't been a focus of tech titan China.

That changed for Chinese engineers tasked with entering robots in the 2025 Beijing Yizhuang Half Marathon. The 13.1-mile race was meant to showcase China's robotics prowess.

"The [half] marathon is not only a challenge of physical endurance for robots but also a test of breakthroughs in artificial intelligence by the development teams," local official Li Quan said in a press conference.

For most 'bots, the challenge proved too much.

Just before the April 13 race, Beijing had to postpone due to strong wind forecasts. Organizers didn't say who or what was most at risk. But most people believe the conditions were more likely to be a danger to robots than humans.

On April 19, the rescheduled race featured some 12,000 human runners and 21 two-legged humanoid robots at the starting line.



The Tien Kung Ultra robot runs in the Humanoid Robot Half-Marathon (top). A man uses a leash to keep a robot on track (right).



Ranging from 2' 5" to 5'9" tall, some 'bots sported sneakers, singlets, tracksuits, kneepads, or propellers. Some ran headless to reduce weight; some lost their heads mid-race.

The robots navigated a course running parallel to the human course. Teams of human operators supported the 'bots. Many handlers carried controllers to regulate the automatons. Most held leashes to keep the 'bots on track.

For safety, a divider separated the two courses. It proved its worth at least once when a robot careened into the barrier, dragging its handler to the ground.

Organizers had rules for the robot participants. The 'bots had to appear human-like, especially in their movements. That meant no wheels allowed.

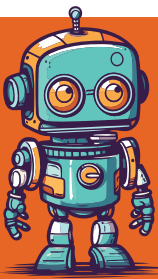
The bots were allowed battery swap pit stops. Of course, most mortal runners took pit stops too, gulping down energy drinks, water, and food.

Only six robots finished the course. *Wired* writer Zeyi Yang attended the race. He wrote, "Almost every robot fell down and faced overheating problems."

The Tien Kung Team built the winning robot: Tien Kung Ultra. The speedy machine fell once and needed three battery changes. Nevertheless, it claimed victory among the nonhumans, crossing the finish line in 2 hours, 40 minutes, and 42 seconds—1 hour, 38 minutes behind the human winner.

"The half-marathon certainly showed off the design flaws of these robots," Yang thinks, "far more than their capabilities."

For now, it seems robots aren't quite ready to boldly go the distance.



WHY? Robots made by humans can do amazing feats. The human body is even more amazing, made by God to run the race of life as we "look to Jesus the founder and perfecter of our faith." (Hebrews 12:1-2)

A Bigger, Better Atom Smasher

How do scientists unlock the mysteries of physics? Sometimes it's just a matter of smashing things into each other really, really fast.

Since the 1930s, scientists have used particle accelerators—or “atom smashers”—to study the building blocks of nature. The biggest such device is the aptly named Large Hadron Collider, or LHC. It has operated since 2008. On March 31, scientists unveiled plans for an even larger machine: the Future Circular Collider, or FCC.

This atom smasher would form a 56.5-mile loop along the French-Swiss border near Lake Geneva. It could start working in the mid-2040s. CERN (the European Organization for Nuclear Research) has been working on the project for nearly a decade. The FCC would create about 10 times more energy than the LHC. Its work could “open the door to the unknown,” suggests Italian scientist Giorgio Chiarelli.

But what exactly do atom smashers do?

All matter is made of *atoms*. Atoms have smaller parts called protons, neutrons, and electrons. And those have even smaller components. Scientists fire up atom smashers to release these mind-blowingly small particles.

Despite all the advanced science, colliders function on a basic idea. If you smash protons together hard and fast enough, bits and pieces will fly off. Among these bits and pieces, scientists hope to discover new *subatomic* (smaller than an atom) particles.

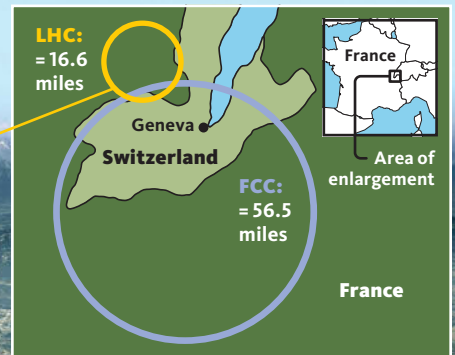
But making that actually happen? That's where the brain-bending physics come in.

It's no easy task to make two protons collide. They need to hit dead center. That's like two archers trying to make arrows collide midair—except, imagine if those arrows were microscopic! These protons must move *fast*. The LHC accelerates them to nearly the speed of light. To achieve those speeds, it uses very powerful magnets. The magnets send particles through an almost 17-mile underground loop. A loop shape provides enough space to pick up the necessary speed. And these magnets must stay *cold*. Pipes filled with liquid helium keep them at about -456° Fahrenheit.

The whole process is very costly. The LHC itself cost about \$9 billion to build. The new collider's estimate is at least \$16 billion. But some scientists say the research is worth it.

“History of physics tells that when there is more data, the human ingenuity is able to extract more information than originally expected,” says Chiarelli.

The LHC has already helped humans discover more about the universe. In 2012, it revealed the Higgs boson particle. The Higgs boson is associated with the Higgs field, which gives other particles their mass. This discovery has taught scientists about the nature of matter itself. What might an even more powerful tool uncover?



WHY? The universe remains full of mysteries to solve. When we explore those mysteries, we learn more about our Creator.

LOONA ABACA VIA REUTERS

CERN, or the European Organization for Nuclear Research, operates the Large Hadron Collider.



KJ Muldoon plays with his siblings.

Gene Editing Gets Personal

KJ Muldoon's genetic condition is extremely serious. But Baby KJ is thriving—for now. A new treatment helped researchers edit his genetic code. The process could someday help others too.

A study in the *New England Journal of Medicine* describes KJ's case. KJ has a rare gene anomaly that affects about one in a million babies. He lacks an enzyme that helps remove the body's waste products. Certain chemicals could build up in his blood and become toxic. Some babies with the condition need liver transplants.

KJ's parents, Kyle and Nicole Muldoon, wanted to help their son. "We were . . . weighing all the options, asking all the questions," Nicole says.

"We prayed, we talked to people, we gathered information," Kyle adds.

The Muldoons opted for an experimental treatment. A team at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Penn Medicine, and their partners created a custom CRISPR (gene-editing) therapy. (Read more at gwnews.com/crispr.) Doctors used the tech to correct a tiny but dangerous glitch in KJ's genetic code.

It's tempting to think of differences as mistakes. But God doesn't make errors. He purposely formed every

human from the beginning. (Psalm 139:13-14) Conditions like KJ's are a result of the Fall into sin. But still, God uses such conditions—and scientists who invest time and expertise to help—for good.

After customized treatment, KJ eats more normally, recovers better, and requires less medication.

Researchers caution that they'll need to watch the tot for years to come. Still, small milestones "like a little wave or rolling over" are big deals, his mother says.

Gene therapies can be extremely expensive. To help pay development costs and generate more profit, researchers usually focus on common disorders.

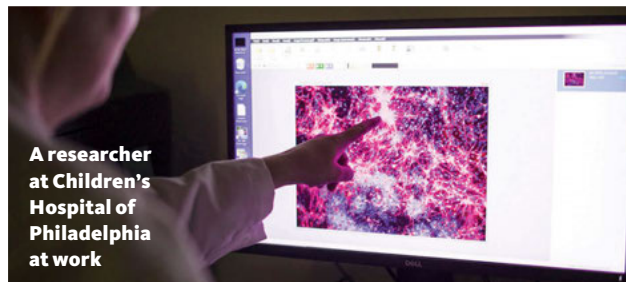
Gene editing expert Kiran Musunuru says his team's work on KJ—funded in part by the National Institutes of Health—showed that

creating a custom treatment doesn't have to be overly expensive. The cost was "not far off" from the cost of an average liver transplant and related care, he says.

Plus, scientists won't have to redo the startup work every time they create a customized therapy, researcher Senthil Bhoopalan says. This research "sets the stage" for treating other rare conditions.

Doctors hope personalized treatments like KJ's may soon become available for millions of people with rare genetic conditions.

Researcher Carlos Moraes says, "Once someone comes with a breakthrough like this, it will take no time" for other teams to apply the lessons and move forward. Moraes predicts advances in the field "in the next five to 10 years." He adds, "We're pretty much ready."



A researcher at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia at work

WHY? Medical advances like gene editing can bring relief to those suffering with disease. Within the bounds of biblical ethics, that is a worthy endeavor.

A Liver on the Outside

Can a pig organ help a human patient's liver heal? U.S. researchers will soon test whether livers from gene-edited pigs could help people with sudden liver failure. The idea is that a pig liver could temporarily filter a person's blood outside the body so his or her own organ can rest and perhaps heal. The treatment may help keep patients alive while they wait for donated liver transplants. And because the porcine organ isn't transplanted into a human body, some ethical concerns about xenotransplantation might be alleviated. (See also gwnews.com/xenotransplantation.)

Pig producer eGenesis genetically modifies its swine so their organs are more humanlike. It teamed up with OrganOx. That company makes a device that helps preserve donated livers before transplantation.

Other researchers have done experimental pig kidney transplants. But in this new study, researchers will attach the kidneys externally to study participants.

The trial will enroll up to 20 patients who don't qualify for liver transplants. OrganOx's device will pump participants' blood through the pig livers. Each patient will be connected for 72 hours. Researchers will then monitor the patients' health for a year.

If part of a human liver is removed, the organ can regrow to a normal size. Could having a pig liver filter the patient's blood for several days give the human liver opportunity to grow healthier?

An estimated 35,000 people in the United States are hospitalized each year with liver failure. Viruses or overuse of drugs such as acetaminophen can cause that damage.

The liver is an essential organ. It cleans toxins from the blood. It makes bile, a fluid that helps the body digest fats, and produces essential proteins and hormones.

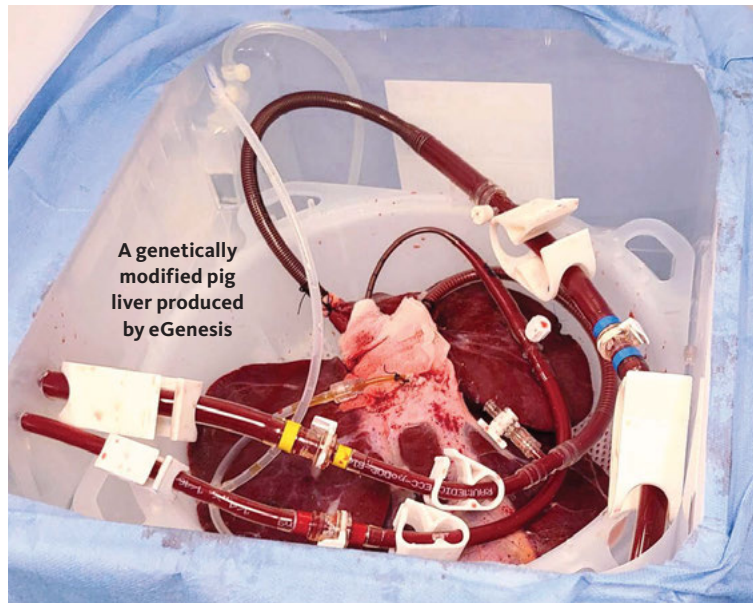
There are few treatment options for liver failure. Death rates are as high as 50%. Many don't qualify for a liver transplant or can't get a match in time.

Researchers previously attached pig livers to four recently deceased donors' bodies. That attempt indicated that pig livers could support some functions of a human liver for two to three days. This approach to using pig livers is a bit like dialysis for patients whose kidneys are failing. The dialysis machine externally filters waste and extra fluid from their blood.

Organ transplants from animals are controversial. Is it wrong to transplant animal organs into the bodies of God's image-bearers? Is it proper to treat animals as pure resources for humans? Or did God purposefully design in a similar physiology for human use to save lives, perhaps in this way?



Pigs: For more than just bacon!



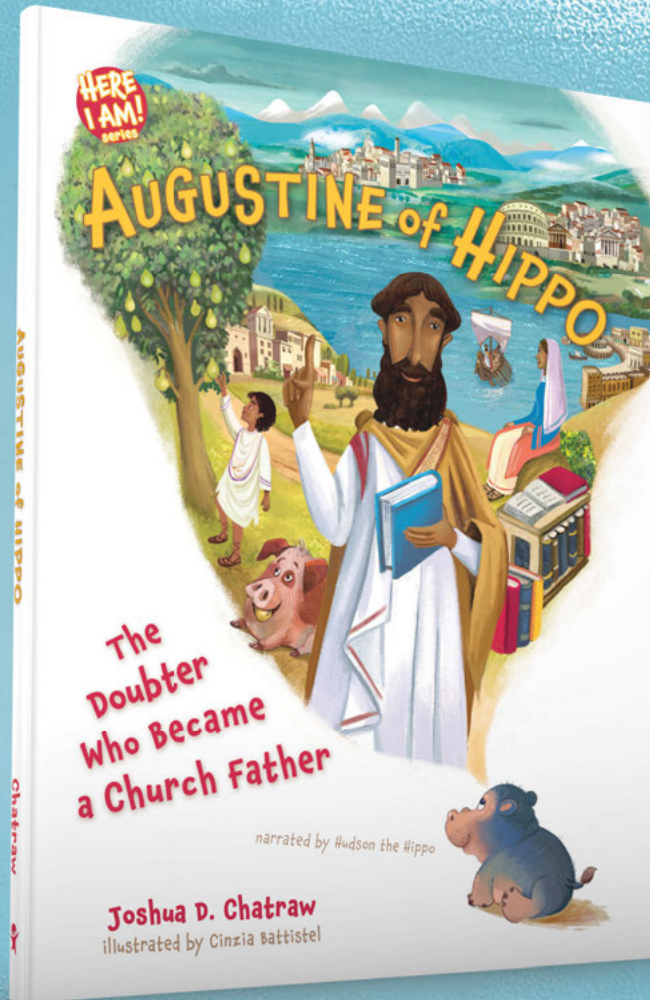
A genetically modified pig liver produced by eGenesis



WHY? There aren't enough donated organs for people who need them. Researchers look for additional ways to save lives.

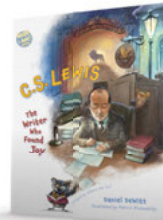
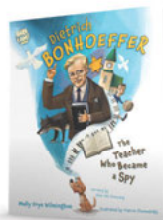
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through Augustine's story of transformation: running away from God to
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Write Your Own Lede



Uh oh! We've mixed up our ledes! Help us put them back together.

Journalistic stories often open with a "lede"—a sentence that gives the reader the most important information right away. A good lede hooks readers so they keep reading. Write your own using the guide below.

Keep in mind: All the choices come from somewhere in this issue. But they're bound to get a little

scrambled up. Feel free to rearrange the terms to make your lede feel more newsy.

Example: If your name is Andy, your favorite color is blue, your favorite season is spring, and you were born in May 2017, your lede would be: "Lady Jane Grey painted portraits of world leaders at the pro wrestling church at halftime to discover new particles."

Pick a "WHO" based on the number of your birth month:

1. A bigger, better atom smasher
2. A Danish schoolchild
3. A New Zealand politician
4. A tiny tardigrade
5. Lady Jane Grey
6. Matteo Paz
7. Superman
8. A pro wrestler
9. Former President George W. Bush
10. An AI avatar lawyer
11. A snooker expert
12. A running robot



Pick a "what" based on your favorite color:

Blue: painted portraits of world leaders

Green: fed on trapped insects and ate their body parts

Red: photographed a puppy-like mountain

Yellow: won the award for best stunt

Purple: discovered new species of tardigrades

Pink: found a portrait of Great Britain's shortest-reigning queen

White: cured a genetic disease in a baby

Black: operated life-size animal puppets

Orange: bought now and paid later

Clear: convinced a business to move to save on tariffs



Pick a "where" based on the first letter of your first name:

- A: at the pro wrestling church
 B: in Central Africa
 C: on Puppy Mountain
 D: in the microscopic biosphere
 E: in the Arctic Circle
 F: in an AI-generated video
 G: in Alcatraz prison
 H: on a film set
 I: outside a wellness room
 J: on the planet Krypton
 K: in Puerto Rico
 L: at the subatomic level
 M: at a college football game
 N: in the Wisconsin Supreme Court
 O: at London's Wrest Park
 P: at Planet Finder Academy
 Q: in London's National Gallery
 R: at the Botanical Garden of Bogotá
 S: in a crow's nest
 T: at a half marathon course in Beijing
 U: in an operating room
 V: in someone's bloodstream
 W: at a Yankees game
 X: in the White House
 Y: inside a biscuit tin
 Z: in virtual reality



Pick a "when" based on the last digit of your birth year. (Example: If you were born in 2010, your number would be "0.")

- 0: during a criminal trial
1. while writing comic books
 2. before a meal of vegetable soup
 3. in 1553
 4. while performing surgery
 5. after analyzing shapes on a computer screen
 6. during the Great Depression of the 1930s
 7. at halftime
 8. during church
 9. while leaping a motorcycle over a helicopter



Pick a "why" based on your favorite season:

- Summer: to cure genetic diseases
 Fall: due to the ruling of the Arizona Supreme Court
 Winter: to attract people to church
 Spring: to discover new particles



BONUS: Does your lede get your creative juices flowing? Keep writing! Imagine how the story came about, consider questions readers might ask about your lede, and write a second paragraph filling out your news story. Then, give it a headline. Send your imaginary news story to WORLDteeneditor@gwnews.com. We'll share it online and maybe put it in print!

Please include: first name, last initial, age/grade, and city and state you live in.

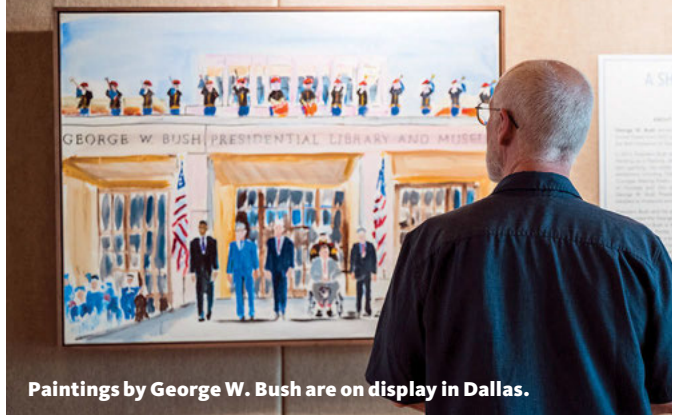


A family arrives at Leavitt's Country Bakery.

Bakery Mural Can Stay Leavitt's Country Bakery can keep its mural of pastries. (See gwnews.com/mural.) The Conway, New Hampshire, zoning board had determined the painting couldn't remain because of its size. Officials said that if the art didn't show what's sold inside, it wouldn't be considered a sign. Then it could stay. But a U.S. district judge ruled in favor of bakery owner Sean Young in his free speech lawsuit. Towns "can regulate the size of signs or the number of signs permitted," says Young's lawyer. "But what they can't do is pick and choose what signs to regulate based on what they depict."



A student rests during his health class on sleep.



Paintings by George W. Bush are on display in Dallas.

A President and an Artist What does a president do after he retires from the highest office in the land? At least one picks up a paintbrush. Former president and current artist George W. Bush has brushed portraits of world leaders and U.S. immigrants. Now 35 of his new works are on display at the George W. Bush Presidential Center at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. One painting depicts a 2013 photograph of then still-living former presidents. The exhibit, *A Shining City on the Hilltop*, reflects SMU's nickname—The Hilltop. It also echoes former President Ronald Reagan's famous term for America: "shining city upon a hill."

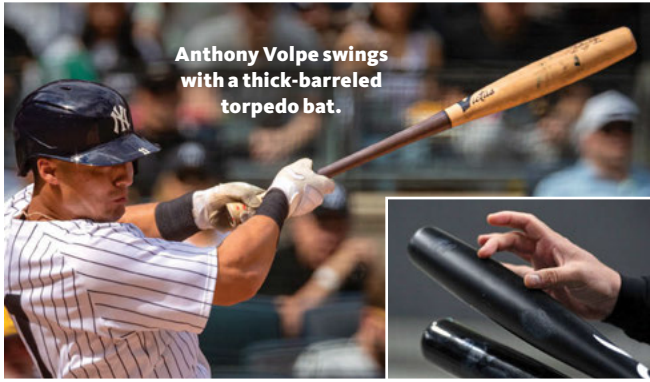
"Journalism has really turned into a life-threatening profession in Belarus."

— independent journalist **Ksenia Lutskina**, who was released from a Belarusian prison after serving half her 8-year sentence. Convicted of conspiracy to overthrow the authoritarian government, Lutskina was released due to a brain tumor requiring medical attention. A watchdog group says Belarus is Europe's leading jailer of journalists.



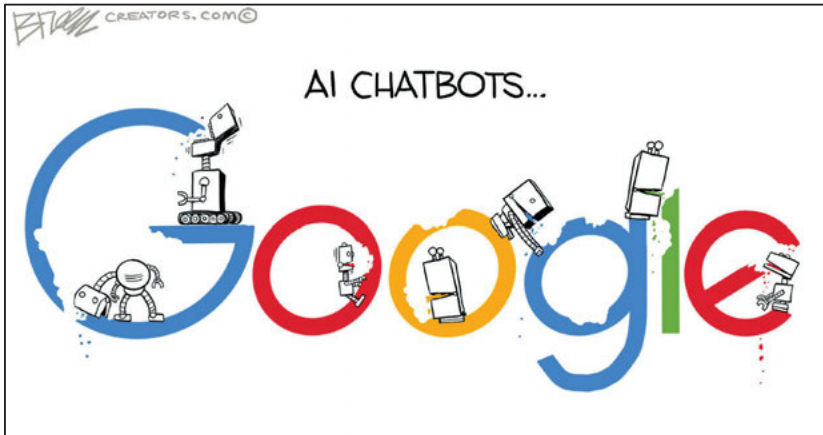
Ksenia Lutskina

Hey, Teens: Learn To Sleep! Scrolling social media, group chatting, staring at screens at night—teens are losing sleep. Research shows teens need eight to 10 hours per night. Few get more than six. The sleep-deprived brain struggles with emotions, decision-making, focus, and impulse control. Experts further believe too little sleep contributes to the youth mental health crisis, increased anxiety, and teen driving accidents. Now some schools want to teach teens how to get a good night's rest. They stage "sleep interventions" with slumber tips. High schooler Nathan Baker now puts away his phone by 8pm. He avoids late-night snacks and TV. His results amaze him. "I feel a lot better," he says. "Life is so much more simple."



Anthony Volpe swings with a thick-barreled torpedo bat.

Swing That Torpedo Bat! The “torpedo bat” has baseball fans and players raving. Designed by Victus Sports in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, this bat style looks a bit like a bowling pin. Last year, Victus produced about a dozen. But when the 2025 baseball season opened, the New York Yankees set a team record of nine home runs in one game. The batters used torpedo bats. Now Victus makes hundreds of the trendy lumbers each week. Players like how the thicker barrel connects with the ball. A fancy bat still can’t replace good old-fashioned skill. “You’ve still got to hit the ball,” says Phillies All-Star shortstop Trea Turner.



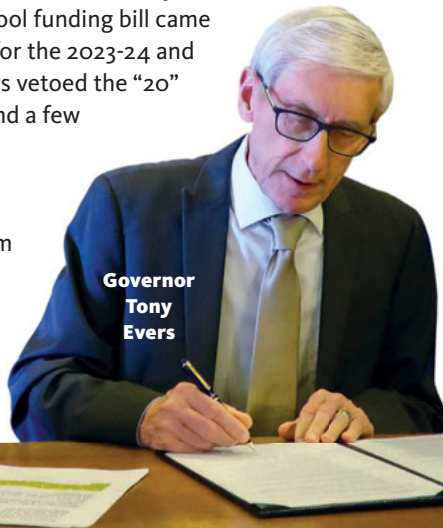
The caterpillar wears a case made of insect parts.

Very Creepy Crawlies God made some strange creatures. A carnivorous caterpillar in Hawaii wears the remains of its prey. It creeps along spiderwebs, feeding on trapped insects and decorating its silk case with their body parts. Researchers think the case might act as camouflage, allowing the “bone collector” to feast on the spider’s ensnared meals without getting caught. Scientists also spotted a carnivorous New Zealand snail laying an egg from its neck. What looks like a tiny hen’s egg emerges from an opening below the head of the large *Powelliphanta augusta* snail.



An egg emerges.

How Powerful Is a Veto? U.S. state governors have power to veto new state laws. Wisconsin governors can strike out individual words and phrases. In 2023, Governor Tony Evers tested the limits of the power. A school funding bill came to his desk. It proposed an increase for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years. Governor Evers vetoed the “20” and the hyphen in the ending year and a few words. Now the increase lasts until 2425—four whole centuries! Some lawmakers cried, “Abuse of power!” Wisconsin law forbids governors from vetoing letters to make new words. But Governor Evers says he didn’t veto letters—he vetoed numbers. This year, the Wisconsin Supreme Court took his side. The altered law stands.



Governor Tony Evers

QUIZ MY READING: 1. B, 2. B, 3. B, 4. A, **WORDS TO BANK:** 1. A, 2. B, 3. A, 4. C, 5. B, 6. B, **VIZ-QUIZ:** D **MIND STIR:** Answers will vary but may include: 1. The foods deliver vitamins, minerals, and proteins in calorie-dense, portable servings to rapidly restore health to the malnourished. 2. Yes, because colleges bring in huge amounts of money by promoting certain star athletes, or No, because the cost of an education is adequate compensation for those who play sports for their schools



Noodle on It

EXPLAIN IT (pages 22-25)



QUIZ MY READING

1. What is *pareidolia*?

- a) an inclination to look on the negative side of every issue
- b) the tendency to see images in a pattern or object

2. What were the crows in the study able to accomplish?

- a) counting to 1,000 by 10s
- b) recognizing an outlier shape

3. What is an *RUTF* and how is it used?

- a) a comfort food that can remind refugees of their home countries
- b) a ready-to-use therapeutic food used to help treat malnutrition

4. How will some NCAA schools help pay back past athletes and compensate future ones?

- a) impose roster limits and drop "non-revenue" sports
- b) charge more for admittance to athletic events

WORDS TO BANK

1. *hindsight*

- a) understanding gained after the fact
- b) a compulsion to look over one's shoulder
- c) a dreamlike vision

2. *carrion*

- a) a pigeon that transports messages
- b) the decaying flesh of a dead animal
- c) a bird used for lab experiments

3. *proress*

- a) extraordinary ability
- b) weakness
- c) hunting skills

4. *therapeutic*

- a) relating to a god or gods
- b) seeing things as connected
- c) healing, health-giving

5. *subsidies*

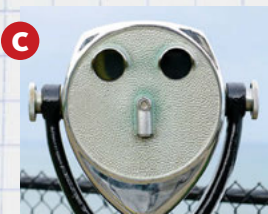
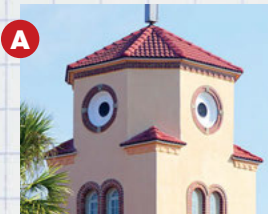
- a) whole, organic, highly nutritious foods
- b) benefits or aid granted
- c) laws of the land

6. *compensate*

- a) pay as a tip for good service, as in a restaurant
- b) pay to recognize injury, loss, or suffering
- c) conceal or hide a wrong done to a person or business

VIZ-QUIZ

Which one of these is *not* an example of *pareidolia*?



MIND STIR

1. What are the benefits of the processed and packaged therapeutic foods made by companies like MANA Nutrition?
2. Should college athletes be paid for their "name, image, likeness" in addition to the compensation they receive in the form of tuition, room, and meals? Explain why or why not.

Quiz answers on page 33

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PLANTING



TENDING



HARVESTING



STORING



CLEANING



PACKAGING



MILLING



BAKING

FROM OUR FAMILY TO YOURS. ALL DONE ON THE FARM.

*BUILDING NEWS LITERACY
TO BETTER LIVE OUT THE GOSPEL*



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