

Ode to Happiness for Sunday March 28 2021

Central Lagoon in Infrared



Image Credit & License: NASA, ESA, Hubble; Data Archive: MAST, Processing: Alexandra Nachman

Stars fill this infrared view, spanning 4 light-years across the center of the Lagoon Nebula.

Visible light images show the glowing gas and obscuring dust clouds that dominate the scene. But this infrared image, constructed from Hubble Space Telescope data, peers

closer to the heart of the active star-forming region revealing newborn stars scattered within, against a crowded field of background stars toward the center of our Milky Way galaxy.

This tumultuous stellar nursery's central regions are sculpted and energized by the massive, young Herschel 36, seen as the bright star near center in the field of view. Herschel 36 is actually a multiple system of massive stars. At over 30 times the mass of the Sun and less than 1 million years old, the most massive star in the system should live to a stellar old age of 5 million years.

Compare that to the almost 5 billion year old Sun which will evolve into a red giant in only another 5 billion years or so. The Lagoon Nebula, also known as M8, lies about 4,000 light-years away within the boundaries of the constellation Sagittarius.

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For Pilots, and non-Pilots: Once More into the Breach

- Before each flight, make sure that your bladder is empty and your fuel tanks are full.
- He who demands everything that his aircraft can give him is a pilot
he who demands one iota more is a fool.
- There are certain aircraft sounds that can only be heard at night and over the ocean. Most of them are scary.
- The aircraft limits are only there in case there is another flight by that particular aircraft.
If subsequent flights do not appear likely, there are no limits.
- "If the Wright brothers were alive today, Wilbur would have to fire Orville to reduce costs."
- In the Alaskan bush, I'd rather have a two-hour bladder and three hours of gas than vice versa.
- An old pilot is one who can remember when flying was dangerous and sex was safe.
- Airlines have really changed; now a flight attendant can get a pilot pregnant.
- I've flown in both pilot seats. Can someone tell me why the other one is always occupied by an idiot?
- You have to make up your mind about growing up and becoming a pilot. You can't do both.

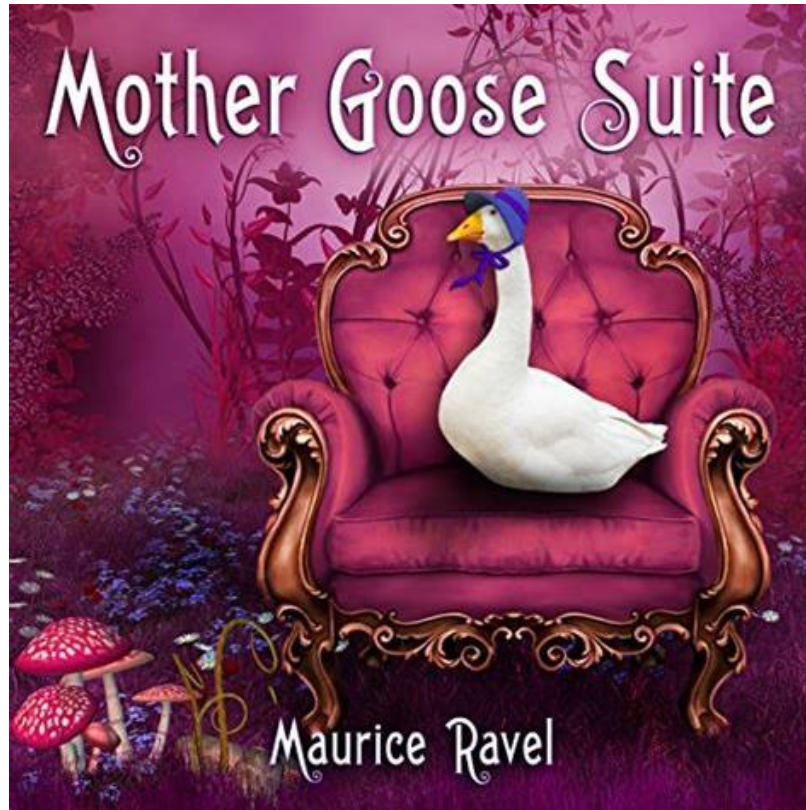
Amen

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Groaners

- I'm reading a horror story in Braille. Something bad is about to happen. I can feel it.
- My girlfriend said, "You act like a detective too much. I want to split up."
- "Good idea," I replied. "We can cover more ground that way."
- I'm glad I know sign language. It's pretty handy.
- EBay is so useless. I tried to look up lighters and it gave me 13,749 matches.
- My cross-eyed wife and I just got a divorce. I found out she was seeing someone on the side.
- My first job was working in an orange juice factory, but I got canned. I couldn't concentrate.
- A courtroom artist was arrested today. The details are sketchy.
- A Spanish magician was doing a magic trick. He said, "Uno, dos." and he disappeared without a trace.
- If you ever get cold, just stand in the corner of a room for a while. They're normally around 90 degrees.
- Two cheese trucks ran into each other. Debris was everywhere.
- My ex used to hit me with stringed instruments. She had a history of violins.
- I'm very pleased with my new fridge magnet. So far I've got twelve fridges.
- The last thing grandpa said before he kicked the bucket? How far do you think I can kick this bucket?
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Mother Goose Suite: Ma Mère l'Oye By Maurice Ravel



This is the entire suite with full orchestra. There are those who feel there was no great music written in the 20th century or that the only thing Ravel wrote was Bolero, but I beg you listen to this start to finish and tell me what you think. It's 17 minutes in length. If you've only got 3 minutes, go to 13:40 and listen to Le Jardin Feerque.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5U7osEigQZM>

Sleeping Beauty for two pianos. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AzG-v85XvH0>

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Have Your Cake and Eat it Too?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uy54TBbzRew>

Gâteau is a bakery, cafe and tea room located in Warrenton VA. Its cakes, fillings and frostings are made from scratch using and organic ingredients. View with caution

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US report: Bald Eagle Populations Soar in Lower 48 States

By Matthew Daly



In this Nov. 20, 2020, file photo, a bald eagle grabs a fish from the Susquehanna River near the Conowingo Dam, in Havre De Grace, Md. The number of American bald eagles has quadrupled since 2009, with more than 300,000 birds soaring over the lower 48 states, government scientists said Wednesday in a new report.

(AP Photo/Julio Cortez)

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of American bald eagles has quadrupled since 2009, with more than 300,000 birds soaring over the lower 48 states, government scientists said in a report Wednesday.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said bald eagles, the national symbol that once teetered on the brink of extinction, have flourished in recent years, growing to more than 71,400 nesting pairs and an estimated 316,700 individual birds.

Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, in her first public appearance since being sworn in last week, hailed the eagle's recovery and noted that the majestic, white-headed bird has always been considered sacred to Native American tribes and the United States generally.

"The strong return of this treasured bird reminds us of our nation's shared resilience and the importance of being responsible stewards of our lands and waters that bind us together," said Haaland, the first Native American Cabinet secretary.

Bald eagles reached an all-time low of 417 known nesting pairs in 1963 in the lower 48 states. But after decades of protection, including banning the pesticide DDT and

placement of the eagle on the endangered species list in more than 40 states, the bald eagle population has continued to grow. The bald eagle was removed from the list of threatened or endangered species in 2007.

<https://youtu.be/wHmHag1zyFU>

“It is clear that the bald eagle population continues to thrive,” Haaland said, calling the bird’s recovery a “success story (that) is a testament to the enduring importance of the work of the Interior Department scientists and conservationists. This work could not have been done without teams of people collecting and analyzing decades’ worth of science ... accurately estimating the bald eagle population here in the United States.”

The celebration of the bald eagle “is also a moment to reflect on the importance of the Endangered Species Act, a vital tool in the efforts to protect America’s wildlife,” Haaland said, calling the landmark 1973 law crucial to preventing the extinction of species such as the bald eagle or American bison.

Reiterating a pledge by President Joe Biden, Haaland said her department will review actions by the Trump administration “to undermine key provisions” of the endangered species law. She did not offer specifics, but environmental groups and Democratic lawmakers criticized the Trump administration for a range of actions, including reducing critical habitat for the northern spotted owl and lifting protections for gray wolves.

“We will be taking a closer look at all of those revisions and considering what steps to take to ensure that all of us — states, Indian tribes, private landowners and federal agencies — have the tools we need to conserve America’s natural heritage and strengthen our economy,” Haaland said.

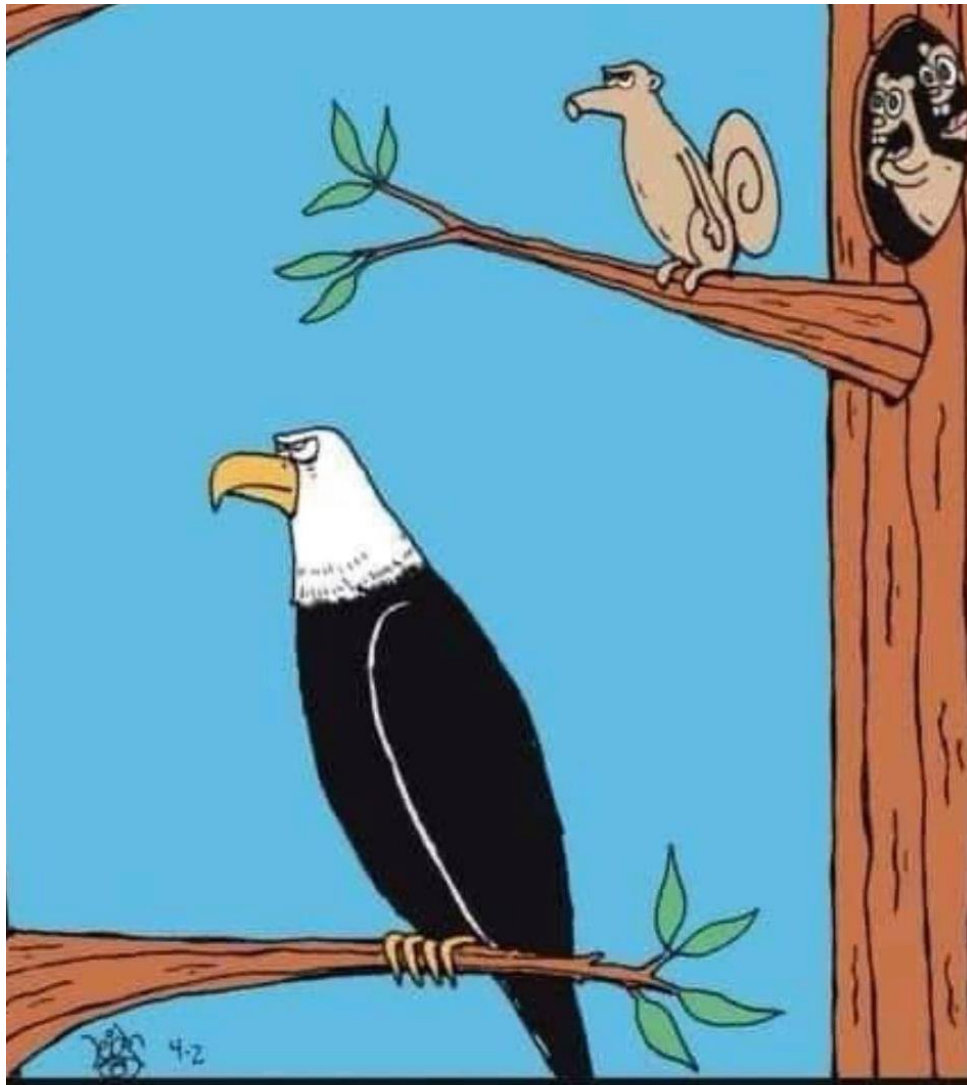
“We have an obligation to do so because future generations must also experience our beautiful outdoors, the way many of us have been blessed,” she added.

Martha Williams, deputy director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, called recovery of the bald eagle “one of the most remarkable conservation success stories of all time” and said she hopes all Americans get the chance to see a bald eagle in flight.

“They’re magnificent to see,” she said.

To estimate the bald eagle population in the lower 48 states, Fish and Wildlife Service biologists and observers conducted aerial surveys over a two-year period in 2018 and 2019. The agency also worked with the Cornell University Lab of Ornithology to acquire information on areas that were not practical to fly over as part of aerial surveys.

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To mock a killing bird

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Aged 118, the World's Oldest Living Person Will Carry the Olympic Flame in Japan

By Blake Essig, Junko Ogura and Emiko Jozuka, CNN

Tokyo (CNN) At 118 years old, the world's oldest living person is preparing to carry the Olympic torch this May in Japan.



Kane Tanaka, who has twice survived cancer, lived through two global pandemics and loves fizzy drinks, will take the flame as it passes through Shime, in her home prefecture of Fukuoka.

While Tanaka's family will push her in a wheelchair for most of her 100-meter (about 328 feet) or so leg, the supercentenarian -- a person aged over 110 years old -- is determined to walk the final few steps, as she passes the torch to the next runner.

CNN spoke exclusively with Tanaka, who has a new pair of sneakers for the event -- a gift from her family on her birthday in January.

"It's great she reached that age and she can still keep up an active lifestyle -- we want other people to see that and feel inspired, and not to think age is a barrier," said her grandson Eiji Tanaka, who is in his 60s.

Previous record holders for the oldest Olympic torchbearers include Aida Gemanque of Brazil, who lit the torch at the 2016 Rio Summer Games age 106, and table tennis player Alexander Kaptarenko, who ran with the torch at the 2014 Sochi Winter Games at 101 years old.

Life of a super-centenarian

Tanaka was born in 1903 -- the year aviation pioneers Orville and Wilbur Wright made history by completing the world's first powered flight.

She went on to have four children with the rice shop owner she married at 19 years old, and worked in the family store until she was 103. She has five grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

She lived through two world wars and the 1918 Spanish flu, although her grandson Eiji said: "I don't remember her talking much about the past ... She's very forward thinking -- she really enjoys living in the present."

And she is almost as old as the modern Olympic Games, which began in 1896.

When the Olympics were last held in Tokyo in 1964, Tanaka was 61 years old. When counting both the summer and winter editions of the games, this year's Olympics will be the 49th of her lifetime.

Tanaka now lives in a nursing home, where she usually wakes at 6 a.m. and enjoys playing the strategic board game, Othello. Tanaka's family, who have not been able to visit her for 18 months during the Covid-19 pandemic, said staying curious and doing math are her secrets to keeping the mind sharp and body healthy.



Kane Tanaka, age 32 in 1935, is pictured in the center of the front row.

Tanaka is by no means Japan's only centenarian.

For the first time last year, Japan recorded more than 80,000 centenarians, according to the country's Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry -- marking the 50th consecutive annual increase.

In 2020, one in every 1,565 people in Japan was over 100 years old -- more than 88% of them women.

In Japan, women have a life expectancy of 87.45 years compared to 81.4 for men, government figures released in July 2020 showed.

In 2019, the Guinness Book of World Records certified Tanaka as the world's oldest living person, and now she has her sights on another milestone -- the record for the oldest person to ever live is held by a French woman, who died age 122.

"(Kane) said she wants to break that record," said Eiji Tanaka, her grandson.

Connecting generations

Tanaka's family said she hasn't been doing any training for the torch relay, but is excited to be a part of the Olympics.

"She has always loved festivals," Eiji Tanaka said.

But he warned her participation in May -- which is sponsored by a Japanese life insurance company -- will depend on her health and weather conditions.

The pandemic-delayed Tokyo 2020 Olympic Torch Relay starts in Fukushima prefecture on March 25, with several Covid-19 countermeasures in place, officials announced last month.

The torch will first go through regions affected by the devastating 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, marking the disaster's 10th anniversary, before traveling "around every corner of Japan," officials said.

The coronavirus restrictions include avoiding "the 3 Cs" -- closed spaces, crowded places, and close-contact settings.

Those who wish to view the relay from the roadside must wear masks, stay home if they feel unwell, and refrain from traveling outside the prefecture they live in.

Tokyo 2020 torch relay began [March 25](#) with infection measures in place Spectators have also been told to "support with applause ... rather than by shouting or cheering." The relay will be streamed live online.

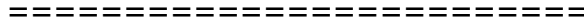
Torchbearers will be required to fill out a daily health checklist two weeks before the relay and refrain from activities that may involve a risk of infection, such as eating out or going to crowded places, officials advised.

Tanaka's great-granddaughter Junko Tanaka set up a Twitter account in January 2020 to celebrate the supercentenarian's life.

She tweets photos of her great-grandmother enjoying treats such as cake and soda pop, and shares her achievements and the exchanges she has with her relatives.

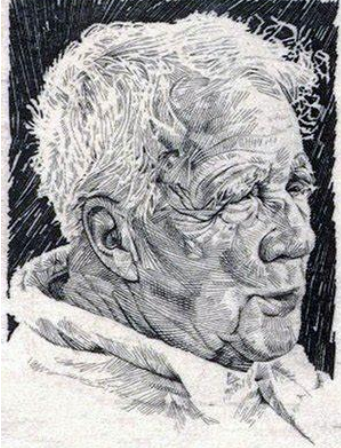
"I started a Twitter feed on her because it's quite amazing that at 118 she drinks Coca-Cola herself and plays Othello," Junko Tanaka said. "I might be biased because I'm related to her but I think it's kind of amazing -- I wanted to share that with the world and for people to feel inspired and to feel her joy."

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Poetry for Today

Robert Frost - 1874-1963



One of the most celebrated figures in American poetry, Robert Frost was the author of numerous poetry collections, including including New Hampshire (Henry Holt and Company, 1923). Born in San Francisco in 1874, he lived and taught for many years in Massachusetts and Vermont. He died in Boston in 1963.

To the Thawing Wind



Come with rain, O loud Southwester!
Bring the singer, bring the nester;
Give the buried flower a dream;
Make the settled snowbank steam;
Find the brown beneath the white;
But whate'er you do tonight,
Bathe my window, make it flow,

Melt it as the ice will go;
Melt the glass and leave the sticks
Like a hermit's crucifix;
Burst into my narrow stall;
Swing the picture on the wall;
Run the rattling pages o'er;
Scatter poems on the floor;
Turn the poet out of door.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FicIMcL1tU>

To the Thawing Wind; Judith Churman Choral Series

A Prayer In Spring



Oh, give us pleasure in the flowers today;
And give us not to think so far away
As the uncertain harvest; keep us here
All simply in the springing of the year.

Oh, give us pleasure in the orchard white,
Like nothing else by day, like ghosts by night;
And make us happy in the happy bees,
The swarm dilating round the perfect trees.

And make us happy in the darting bird
That suddenly above the bees is heard,
The meteor that thrusts in with needle bill,
And off a blossom in mid air stands still.

For this is love and nothing else is love,
To which it is reserved for God above
To sanctify to what far ends he will,
But which it only needs that we fulfill.

The Mending Wall



Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them made,
But at spring mending-time we find them there.
I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;
And on a day we meet to walk the line
And set the wall between us once again.
We keep the wall between us as we go.
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
We have to use a spell to make them balance:
'Stay where you are until our backs are turned!'
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.
Oh, just another kind of out-door game,
One on a side. It comes to little more:
There where it is we do not need the wall:
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
He only says, 'Good fences make good neighbors.'
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
If I could put a notion in his head:

'Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it
Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offense.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down.' I could say 'Elves' to him,
But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
He said it for himself. I see him there
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
He will not go behind his father's saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well
He says again, 'Good fences make good neighbors.'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rMXB-C2iKpM>

The Mending Wall - Robert Frost - Read by Leonard Nimoy

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MegaMilk: Charting Consolidation in the U.S. Dairy



By Katie Jones

Today's dairy industry looks very different to how it did just 30 years ago.

Milk production in the U.S. has increased by a whopping 50% over that time frame—yet, the total number of dairy farms has dropped by three-quarters.

Fewer and larger farms now have the lion's share of all U.S milk cow inventory. While they have the ability to produce more competitively priced dairy products and provide more value to consumers, it is causing financial devastation for small farmers.

The graphic above uses data from the USDA to chart the rapid consolidation of the American dairy industry between 1992 and 2017.

The End of the Small Dairy Farmer?

In the U.S., the dairy industry is one of the fastest consolidating industries in comparison to almost all other agricultural sectors.

Between 1992 and 2017, small commercial farms with 10-99 cows saw an average decline of 70%. These farms accounted for 48.5% share of all U.S. milk cows in 1992. In 2017, that number stood at just 12.2%.

Over time, small farm production has been replaced by that of bigger and more consolidated "megafarms"—a move that can be attributed to the many benefits that scale brings, such as lower costs of production and the potential to compete in the international market.

Share of U.S. milk cow inventory (by year)

Herd size	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	2017
1-9 milk cows	0.9%	0.7%	0.6%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
10-49 milk cows	19.5%	13.8%	9.2%	6.8%	5.9%	3.6%
50-99 milk cows	29%	24.5%	19.1%	13.8%	11.1%	8.6%
100-199 milk cows	19%	18%	15.4%	12.8%	10.6%	9.4%
200-499 milk cows	13.7%	15.3%	14.7%	13.8%	12%	12%
500-999 milk cows	8%	10.2%	12.2%	12.5%	11.3%	10.7%
>999 milk cows	9.9%	17.5%	28.8%	39.9%	48.7%	55.2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The Need For a Survival Strategy

While small dairy farmers simply cannot keep up with larger farms encroaching on their turf, they also have fluctuations in dairy prices to contend with. Milk prices fell in 2018, narrowing the gap between milk prices and feed costs so much that another wave of farm closures ensued.

To make matters worse, many small dairy farmers are close to retirement age, and according to the USDA, exits are more likely if the farm operator is 60 or older.

Despite the hardship facing small dairy farmers, analysts suggest that consumer backlash against large-scale production could present opportunities for small dairy farmers to create premium artisanal products. However, such initiatives would be entirely dependent on the state of the economy and where consumer's values lie.

The Wider Implications

With milk production shifting to larger farms, a range of both direct and indirect impacts are being felt across the country.

For example, milk production is now predominantly focused in fewer states such as California and Wisconsin, which together accounted for almost 33% of all U.S. milk production in 2018.

In larger farms, the herds are typically confined to tight spaces— rather than grazing in pastures—making animal welfare an issue for many of these farms. Concern over waste contamination and air pollution also brings the environmental sustainability of larger farms into question as they come under more pressure to reduce their impact on the planet.

Changing Tastes

Looking beyond the production of milk, changing consumer preferences could result in the most transformative effects on both large and small scale dairy farmers.

While rising populations are increasing the demand for dairy, per capita milk consumption declined by 24% between 2000 and 2017 in the United States. Consequently, the largest dairy producer in the country, Dean Foods, filed for bankruptcy in 2019, followed by another major milk producer, Borden Dairy, just two months later.

Experts claim that changing consumer preferences, along with competition from other beverage categories, are responsible for 90% of the total dairy decline.

No Country for Old Farms

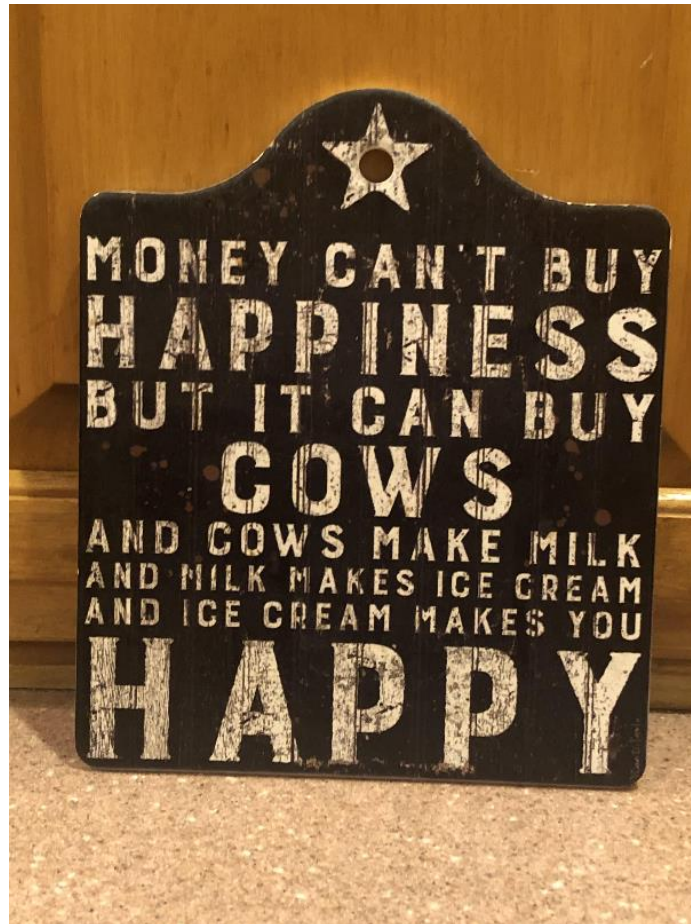
The confluence of changing economics and an aging population of farmers has brought the U.S. dairy farming industry to a tipping point, and the near future is likely to bring a fresh wave of dairy farm closures.

I don't see anything that would give them hope at this point. The best advice I can give to these folks, dairy farmers, is to sell out as fast as you can.

– Joe Schroeder, Farm Aid

As smaller farms continue to disappear from America's rural landscape, the impacts of consolidation will not only affect dairy farmers, but entire rural communities too.

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Paraprosdokians.....Say This Three Times....Fast

OK....don't...but read what they are and enjoy!

Paraprosdokians: (Winston Churchill loved them) are figures of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected, and generally humorous. Some are close to oxymorons.

1. Where there's a will, I want to be in it.
2. The last thing I want to do is hurt you. But it's still on my list.
3. Since light travels faster than sound, some people appear bright until you hear them speak.
4. If I agreed with you, we'd both be wrong.
5. We never really grow up, we only learn how to act in public.
6. War does not determine who is right -- only who is left.
7. Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.
8. To steal ideas from one person is plagiarism. To steal from many is research.

9. I didn't say it was your fault; I said I was blaming you.
10. In filling out an application, where it says, "In case of emergency, Notify:" I put, "DOCTOR".
11. Women will never be equal to men until they can walk down the street with a bald head and a beer gut and still think they are sexy.
12. You do not need a parachute to skydive, you only need a parachute to skydive twice.
13. I used to be indecisive, now I'm not so sure..
14. To be sure of hitting the target, shoot first and call whatever you hit the target.
15. Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.
16. You're never too old to learn something stupid.
17. I'm supposed to respect my elders, but it's getting harder and harder for me to find one now.

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Care for a Flight with the Blues?



<https://youtu.be/E4zA07fwJ24>

This young lady found something better than sleeping pills.

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Something Sneaky Here



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Candidate for Oldest Known Earth Rock...Found on the Moon



Was the oldest known rock on Earth found on the Moon? Quite possibly.

The story opens with the Apollo 14 lunar mission. Lunar sample 14321, a large rock found in Cone crater by astronaut Alan Shepard, when analyzed back on Earth, was found to have a fragment that was a much better match to Earth rocks than other Moon rocks. Even more surprising, that rock section has recently been dated back 4 billion years, making it older, to within measurement uncertainty, than any rock ever found on Earth.

A leading hypothesis now holds that an ancient comet or asteroid impact launched Earth rocks into the Solar System, some of which fell back to the Moon, became mixed with heated lunar soil and other rocks, cooled, and re-fragmented. The video features an internal X-ray scan of 14321 showing multiple sections with markedly different chemistries.

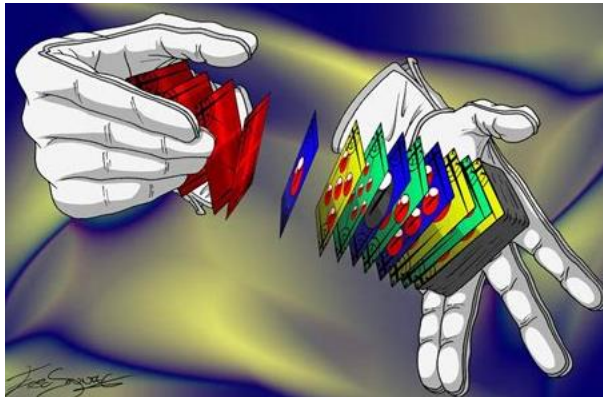
Moon rocks will continue to be studied to learn a more complete history of the Moon, the Earth, and the early Solar System. Friday marks the 50th Anniversary of the Apollo 14 landing on the Moon.

<https://youtu.be/V0UBZh6Hf-s>

Video Credit: NASA, Astromaterials 3D, Erika Blumenfeld et al

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The Magic World of...Well, Magic



Lawrence Crowley is an amateur magician I met at a weekly get together of fellow geezers, most of whom live in or around Healdsburg, CA. I asked him to recommend some top-notch wizards, and he sent me a list. Rather than dump them on you in one heady clump, I'm going to spread them out over a number of Odes.

First up, Shin Lim



Shin Lim, is a Canadian-American magician, recognized for his use of card manipulation and sleight of hand. He is known for elaborate close-up card magic routines, during which he remains silent with the tricks set to music. Originally educated to be a pianist, Lim took up magic as his career after being diagnosed with carpal tunnel syndrome.

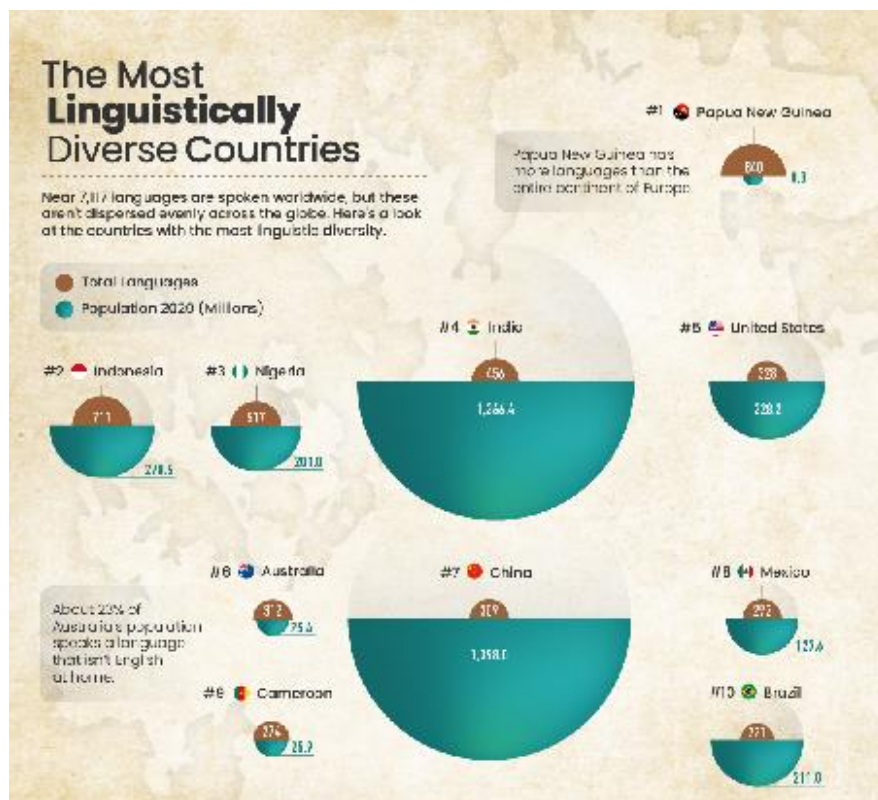
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTyk53q8u08>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iG6N_u7n6eI

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Ranked: The Most Diverse Countries by Language

Thousands of languages are spoken worldwide, but only a fraction are used widely. In fact, the speakers of 23 languages account for more than half of the total global population.



Despite this, there are still pockets around the globe that are rich in linguistic diversity. Here's a look at the top 10 countries where the most languages are spoken.

These numbers include established and immigrant dialects.

Top 10 Countries with the Most Languages

Despite a population of just 8.8 million, Papua New Guinea comes in first with a total of 840 languages spoken across the country. To put things into perspective, that's almost 12% of the world's languages spoken in an area that's roughly the size of California.

Rank	Country	Tot Languages	Pop 2020 (M)
1	Papua New Guinea	840	8.8
2	Indonesia	711	270.6
3	Nigeria	517	201.0
4	India	456	1,366.0
5	United States	328	328.2
6	Australia	312	25.4
7	China	309	1,398.0
8	Mexico	292	127.6
9	Cameroon	274	25.9
10	Brazil	221	211.0

A likely reason for the country's linguistic diversity is its isolation from modern life. Over 80% of Papua New Guinea's population lives in rural areas and has minimal contact with external influences or other tribes.

Second on the list is Indonesia, with 711 different languages used throughout the country. Like Papua New Guinea, a major factor that could explain its language diversity is its geography—Indonesia is made up of around 17,500 islands (although more than 7,000 of them are uninhabited).

The Future of Language Diversity

While it's clear that a multitude of languages still exist, around 40% of the world's languages are at risk of dying out. Even in parts of the world where immense linguistic diversity remains, languages are disappearing with each subsequent generation.

In efforts to combat this, organizations like the United Nations are actively trying to promote and protect these endangered languages.

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Game Changers

Apollo 13 Astronauts Statue Lands at Space Center Houston

By Robert Z. Pearlman for Space.Com



| The Apollo 13 statue at Space Center Houston depicts Jim Lovell (at center), Fred Haise (at left) and Jack Swigert at the moment of their recovery after the ill-fated mission. (Image credit: Space Center Houston)

NASA's Apollo 13 crew has landed in Houston — permanently and perpetually.

James Lovell, Fred Haise and the late Jack Swigert have been immortalized as a bronze statue now on display at Space Center Houston, the official visitor center for NASA's Johnson Space Center in Texas. The life-size sculpture recreates the moment on April 17, 1970, when the three crewmates stepped out of a helicopter onto the deck of an aircraft carrier, marking their safe recovery after the "Houston, we've had a problem" ill-fated moon mission.

"Through our new Apollo 13 sculpture, we are educating the public how innovation, perseverance and true teamwork can achieve incredible success," William Harris, president and CEO of Space Center Houston said in a statement. "We thank The Grainger Foundation of Lake Forest, Illinois for their generous contribution allowing this historic moment in space exploration to be shared with the world and inspire the next generation of explorers."

https://www.space.com/apollo-13-statue-space-center-houston?utm_source=Selligent&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=SDC_Newsletter&utm_content=SDC_Newsletter+&utm_term=3058026

Originally planned as the third U.S. mission to land astronauts on the moon, the Apollo 13 flight became one of survival after an oxygen tank explosion tore through the spacecraft's service module. Instead of landing on the moon, the lunar module was used as a lifeboat as the crew struggled with freezing temperatures and limited capabilities to return to Earth.

The sculpture's placement, in the same building that houses one of the last remaining Saturn V moon rockets, serves to honor both the Apollo 13 astronauts and the flight controllers in Mission Control at Johnson Space Center who worked around the clock for more than five days to ensure the crew's rescue.

The Apollo 13 statue at Space Center Houston depicts Jim Lovell (at center), Fred Haise (at left) and Jack Swigert at the moment of their recovery after the ill-fated mission.

The statue captures Lovell, Haise and Swigert in their light blue flight suits, white converse sneakers and dark blue U.S.S. Iowa Jima recovery ship ball caps. Each astronaut stands on a step descending from the helicopter, with Lovell in front looking to his right, Swigert a step up looking to his left and holding his cap and Haise waving forward from the top.

The seven-foot-tall (2-meter) statue was created by Colorado-based sculptors and brothers George and Mark Lundeen, working with fellow artist Joey Bainer. The three previously collaborated on "The Eagle has Landed," a statue of Apollo 11 astronauts Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins, which was installed outside of the Apollo/Saturn V Center at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida for the 50th anniversary of the first moon landing in 2019. (An identical statue was erected outside Appleton International Airport in Wisconsin in 2020.)

The Apollo 13 statue is the Lundeens' second time sculpting Swigert's likeness. They previously created the late astronaut's statue that stands today in National Statuary Hall at the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington D.C. (Swigert was elected to the U.S. House

of Representatives representing Colorado in 1982 but died of cancer before being able to take office.) A replica Swigert statue is on display at Denver International Airport.

Documentary filmmaker Steven Barber presented the Apollo 13 statue project to Space Center Houston and advised on its execution. The photo-realistic mural of the U.S. Navy Sea King helicopter that serves as the backdrop to the statue was created by Houston graphic designer Blake Dumesnil.

Apollo 13 astronauts Jim Lovell (at center), Fred Haise (at left) and Jack Swigert on the deck of the USS Iowa Jima aircraft carrier after splashing down from the ill-fated moon mission and being recovered by helicopter on April 17, 1970.

The Apollo 13 statue can be accessed by the public as part of the Rocket Park stop on Space Center Houston's NASA Tram Tour, included with admission. The sculpture is presented beside the "Apollo 13: Failure is Not an Option" exhibit, presented by JSC Federal Credit Union, which includes artifacts from the mission.

In addition to the new sculpture, Space Center Houston is also currently hosting "Apollo: When We Went to the Moon," a touring exhibit co-produced by the U.S. Space & Rocket Center, which celebrates the legacy of the Apollo-era through the experiences of the engineers and astronauts who lived through it. Open through May 2, the exhibit includes an opportunity to sit in a replica of the lunar rover and a chance to see intricate models of satellites, spacecraft and rockets, including the Russian space station Mir.

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