

The Thinker

Issue 2

65th Session

June 20, 2025



New Law Calls for Fewer Food Additives

By Kathy Barrios

School meals and snacks will look different in Louisiana starting in the 2027-28 school year after a new Louisiana law prohibited a list of additives in some snacks and breakfast and lunch foods.

Snacks like chewing gum and AirHeads, and breakfast and lunch foods including Froot Loops, yellow cake mix, butter and French bread fall under the list of foods prohibited in public schools under Louisiana Senate Bill 14, which passed June 8.

The bill prohibits certain ingredients from being served to students during breakfast

and lunch during school hours and during before- or after-care services. The law does not address foods sold in vending machines or at concession stands.

The bill also includes a provision for physicians to complete continuing education on nutrition, for schools to purchase food produced within the state and for food produced with seed oils to be labeled as such.

Louisiana's actions followed an April 30 executive order from Gov. Jeff Landry that urged the state's Department of Children and Family Services to remove soft drinks and candy from SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition

Assistance Program) benefits and incentivize the purchase of fruits and vegetables using SNAP benefits.

Landry's order came just after President Donald Trump signed a Feb. 13 executive order as part of a "Make America Healthy Again" initiative.

According to the Center for Science in the Public Interest, a food safety and nutrition advocacy organization, the additives included in the legislation pose significant health risks to the consumer, including but not limited to gastrointestinal issues, increased cancer risk, and genetic damage.

Prohibited Additives

Blue Dye 1 - Froot Loops
Blue Dye 2 - cupcake frosting
Green Dye 3 - canned vegetables
Red Dye 3 - candy corn
Red Dye 40 - Froot Loops
Yellow Dye 5 - yellow cake mix
Yellow Dye 6 - Air Heads
Azodicarbonamide - white bread
Butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA) - butter
Butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT) - Chex Mix
Potassium bromate - French bread
Propylparaben - canned meat
Acesulfame potassium - chewing gum
Aspartame - diet soda
Sucralose - Powerade

Gifties Go "Into the Woods" for This Year's Musical

By Christa Bell

This year's musical is "Into the Woods," a Tony Award-winning show that tells "the rest of the story" of several Brothers Grimm fairy tales.

Elayne Gabbert, musical director for the Governor's Program, said this year is her second time to direct the show but the first time it's been done at GPGC.

The original show, with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and book by James Lapine, first played on Broadway in 1987, where it won three Tony Awards (best original score, best book and best actress in a musical). The production ran for nearly two years, closing in September of 1989 after 765 performances. It has since had revivals and runs in multiple languages worldwide. Disney produced a film version in 2014, which grossed more than \$200 million and was nominated for several Academy Awards.

According to Music Theatre International, "The story follows a Baker and his wife, who wish to have a child; Cinderella, who wishes to attend the King's Festival; and Jack, who wishes his cow would give milk.

When the Baker and his wife learn that

they cannot have a child because of a Witch's curse, the two set off on a journey to break the curse. Everyone's wish is granted, but the consequences of their actions return to haunt them later with disastrous results."

The cast

Amelia L. as the Witch
Lydee F. as the Baker's Wife
Juan G. as the Baker
Jolie B. as the Narrator and Sleeping Beauty
AJ G. as the Mysterious Man
Lucas C. as Jack
Maddy W. as Jack's Mother and Granny
Madelyn W. as Little Red Riding Hood
Jonah C. as the Wolf and Cinderella's Prince
Blythe H. as Cinderella and Rapunzel
Tori L. as the Stepmom
Emery H. as Florinda (a stepsister)
Jude Y. as Lucinda (a stepsister)
Elizabeth B. as the Steward
Danny Martin as Rapunzel's Prince
Colette Tanner as the Giant
Kathy Barrios as Cinderella's Mom and Snow White

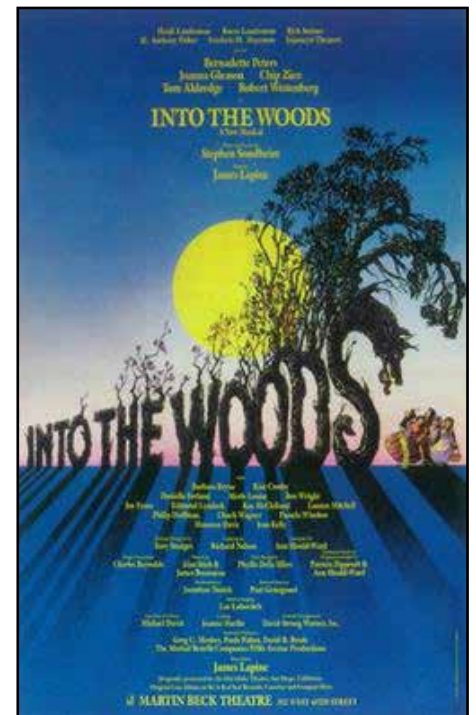


Photo from Wikipedia
The original Broadway windowcard

Observance Days Cover Breaks, Kissing, Eclairs

By Lucas C

Every day that passes there are multiple holidays you have probably never heard of or knew existed.

The websites National Day Calendar and National Today are two sources for lists of “national” and international days of observance.

Take Back the Lunch Break day

June 20

Swedish company Tork made this holiday to boost employee morale and well being. This holiday is important because having a positive outlook on work can significantly improve productivity according to a Gallup poll from 2017. According to a study conducted in 2017 by Tork, employees who take lunch breaks are more likely to report being efficient.

Kissing day

June 22

National Kissing Day is a holiday that we can trace back to the U.K where international kissing day started before we created our own National kissing day. Some of the benefits of kissing is the fact that it can relieve stress and also burn calories. Historians believe kissing originated in India. Four major texts in the Vedic Sanskrit literature. Dating from 1500 B.C reference the supposed earliest forms of kissing.

Positive Media day

June 22

Media companies choose what you see and national positive media day was made to get them to push positive and uplifting messages. This is important because 33 percent of people get their news from television according to a 2024 Pew Research Center study. What tends to sell the most is not very positive and rides on fear and negativity, so this day is supposed to show people there are still many positive things going on.

Chocolate Eclair day

June 22

Eclairs are pastries covered in chocolate with a cream filling. Unlike doughnuts, eclairs are elongated and not round. They are made from a dough called pate a choux. Once baked, the eclair is light and crispy on the outside and hollow on the inside making it the perfect avenue for transporting creamy vanilla or chocolate creme.

International Pineapple day

June 27

This day celebrates pineapples across the world. Pineapple day is celebrated all across the world because of pineapple’s delicious flavor. Even though pineapples are commonly associated with Hawaii, pineapples actually come from South America. Hawaii is the biggest producer of pineapples in the world but countries like Honduras, Mexico, and Costa Rica.

Dinosaur of the Week

By Elizabeth B.

Cretoxyrhina Mantelli

This prehistoric mackerel shark existed from 107 to 73 million years ago and is more commonly referred to as the Ginsu shark because its feeding mechanism is compared to the “slicing and dicing” of Ginsu knives.

According to articles published by the Kansas Academy of Science and the Public Library of Science journal, the shark was among the fastest sharks to ever exist, with calculations suggesting it swam at about 12 km per hour with burst speeds up to 70 km per hour. For comparison, modern-day great whites have been modeled at speeds up to 56 km per hour. The fastest modern shark, the shortfin mako shark, has been modeled at speeds up to 70 km per hour.

Cretoxyrhina mantelli was found in sup-tropical to tropical oceans, including the Western Interior Seaway, an inland sea that split the U.S. in half. Fossils have also been found in modern-day Europe, Israel and Kazakhstan.

Fossilized stomach content of the Ginsu shark suggests it ate many of the marine megafauna

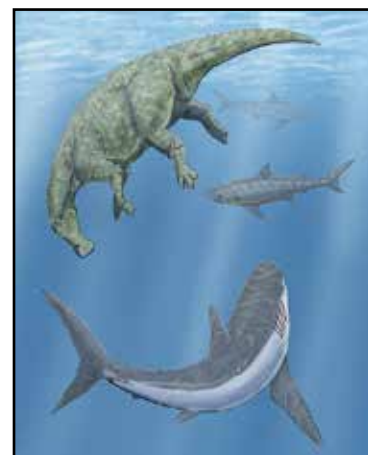


Photo from Wikipedia

An artist's rendering of a cretoxyrhina mantelli and two other ancient sharks circling a dead Claosaurus.

found in the areas where it lived, and there has even been a fossil of a pteranodon (a flying dinosaur) with Cretoxyrhina teeth found in its vertebrae.

It's likely the shark was very similar in size to modern-day great white sharks, according to a 2009 article in the Journal of Paleontology. Scientists speculate the shark probably shared a hunting style with today's great white sharks, ramming into prey at high speeds and killing it with one blow or maybe scavenging.

The two are distantly related, but great whites evolved later on in history, managing to avoid the extinction events that Cretoxyrhina, and the rest of its evolutionary tree, could not.



Photo from Wikipedia

The Western Interior Seaway existed roughly over the present-day Great Plains of North America.

Bepuzzlement Answers

Logic Puzzle Answer
Answer: If the labels are lies, the box that says gold or bronze must contain silver, so the box that says gold can neither have gold nor silver, so it has bronze. Therefore, the one that says silver contains gold.

Riddle Answer
A coffin
Nothing

Weekly Book Review

Project Hail Mary

By Lucas C.

Andy Weir's book "Project Hail Mary" is like a roller coaster, but with aliens and spaceships.

(This review will contain spoilers.)

The story of "Project Hail Mary" is about humanity's last-ditch attempt to save the Earth from Astrophages, which are single-celled organisms that live on a star, absorbing a large portion of the star's energy, which causes the star to produce less light and heat. If the Astrophages did this to the sun, it would kill most life on Earth. Humanity's last hope now lies on the spaceship Project Hail Mary.

Project Hail Mary is an interstellar spaceship that will send three humans to Tau Ceti, a star 11.9 light years away from Earth and the only other star where Astrophages are located, to figure out why Astrophages aren't killing Tau Ceti.

The book focuses on Ryland Grace, the only surviving member of Project Hail Mary who has lost his memories. As the book progresses, Ryland starts to remember why

he's on Project Hail Mary.

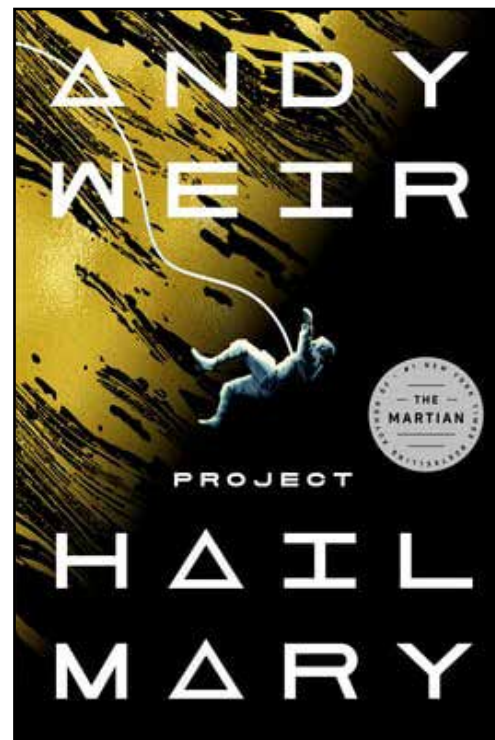
The spaceship Hail Mary arrives at Tau Ceti at the start of the book, dropping Ryland Grace in a different star system. Slightly after he awakes he runs into another spaceship sent by aliens. Rocky is an alien that looks like a spider, and he was also sent to Tau Ceti to find a solution to the Astrophage problem plaguing his star.

The most interesting part of this book in my opinion is the aliens. Rocky was described in a completely different way that other aliens are described in science fiction. He feels like he could be something you could meet when going into space.

The Astrophages are also very interesting with the science Weir used to describe how they were able to live on the sun, how they store the energy and the solution to beating them.

The book also takes on a roller coaster of emotions because just when you think things are going well, something else happens, creating new problems.

Ryland Grace is also a character you can empathize with because of his character



development and how he changes in the two different halves of the book.

In the end of the book we see him leave the idea of going back to Earth and instead saves Rocky and Erid (Rocky's planet).

Which is Better? Sharks vs Dolphins

By Henry C.

About 520 different species of sharks are known to science



Photo from Britannica.com

A shortfin mako shark.

according to the World Wildlife Fund, but despite this large number only 5-10 fatal shark attacks happen every year.

The number of dolphin species is much smaller, with only 32 recognised species according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association.

The favored sea creature among Gifties varies between each person. Aahan C. thinks dolphins are better.

"Dolphins make cute noises, swim fast, and jump out of the water," he said.

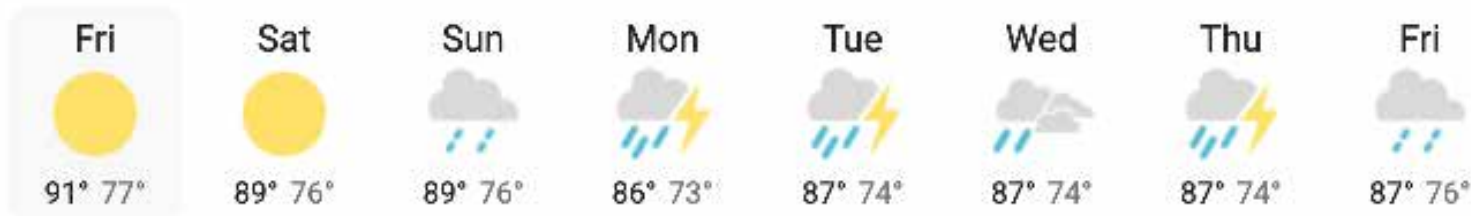
However, Elizabeth B. said "Sharks are the best because they're cute



Photo from The Marine Mammal Center
Common bottlenose dolphins

and misunderstood. They're villainized by the media."

Weekly Weather Forecast



Art Prompts

By Elizabeth B. and Henry C.
(Don't forget to submit your work to *Miles to Go!*)

Saturday

Dinosaurs

Sunday

Middle Ages

Monday

Sundials

Tuesday

Futuristic

Wednesday

Modern Day

Thursday

Pirates

Friday

Time

Seen and Heard

"Kathy said no smashing balls." -*Juan G.*

"Cabbages, cabbages! Barely even human!" -*Abe Miller*

"I don't care about your natural food coloring, I want my red 40!"
-*Blythe H.*

"Amelia, if you stage a coup I'm writing you a ticket."
-*Ryan Byrne*

"I'm medieval."
-*Jonah C.*

"Did he take his clothes off?! Yes!" -*Madelyn W.*

"I didn't know Will Smith was an actor!" -*Emery H.*

"He's living his double life. George is actually Chappel Roan."
-*Kathy Barrios*

"Quitters never quit and winners never win!"
-*Jude Y.*

"Isn't this giving Ethel Cain?" -*Blythe H.*
"It's giving Susan B. Anthony." -*Elizabeth B.*

Seen

Jonah finding out he's colorblind in musical.

Bepuzzlement

By Henry C.

Riddles

The one who makes me sells me,
The one who buys me never uses me,
and the one who uses me never knows he is using
me.

What am I?

Poor men have me,
Rich men need me,
I am faster than light,
and if you eat me, you will die.
What am I?

Logic Puzzle

There are three boxes: one says gold, one says
silver, and one says gold or bronze. All of the labels
are lies.

Each metal is only in one box.
What is in each box?

Word of the Week

By Henry C.

Octothorpe

oc·to·thorp
another term for the pound sign (#)

"Eight thorps" -*Jonah C.*

"Eight openings to another
dimension." -*Emery H.*

"Eight thorns" -*Aahan C.*

"A Octopus that drives a
Ford." -*Juan G.*

"Eight big thorps" -*Jude Y.*

"Eight orbs." -*Maddy W.*

"An octopus from Thorpe Bay
Ontario." - *Robert Markstrom*

Want to Write for The Thinker?

All Gifties and staff are
welcome to submit articles to
The Thinker. Deadlines are
Wednesdays. Submit articles to
thethinker@gpgc.org.

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