

Mom's peaceful death leads to sibling war over her house

DEAR ABBY: My mom recently passed away at 91. She had a great life and went peacefully at home in bed during the night. I took charge of her medical care and finances after Dad died 10 years ago.

After Mom's funeral, my brother insisted he would move into her house while he remodeled it, which could tie up the house for a year. It made no sense to me. I am Mom's executor, and I felt it was unfair to me and my other brother. When I said no, he got really angry, accused me of many mean, untrue things and announced that he disowned me. I responded that I love him and he will always be my brother, but it was his choice.

The pain of losing my mom AND my brother has been awful. Now I'm working to sell the house, and he interferes and is mean every step of the way. But I have to move ahead and do my job. I don't respond to anything negative he writes. Have you some advice on how to repair our relationship? Maybe if he saw it in print he would realize we are family and none of this is helpful to any of us.

— DOUBLE LOSS IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR DOUBLE LOSS: Please accept my sympathy for the loss of your mother. If it's any comfort, estate problems like you're experiencing aren't all that unusual. Not knowing your brother or the degree to which he is self-centered, I'm having trouble understanding his overreaction. Was he desperate for a place to stay for a year?

I wish you had mentioned what your other brother thinks about this regrettable situation and whether he, too, was disowned. If he and your angry sibling are on speaking terms, perhaps he can help to mend fences. And hold a good thought. Sometimes time heals these kinds of wounds, once grief lessens and people regain their perspective.

DEAR ABBY: "Addicted in Kansas City" (Aug. 24) asked you for secular alternatives to Alcoholics Anonymous. There are parts of your response that I feel need clarification.

First of all, AA doesn't require lifetime attendance at meetings. AA doesn't "require" anything. (The third tradition states the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking.) Regular attendance at meetings is

encouraged but certainly not a requirement. Many people continue to go to meetings one or more times a week, while others stop or go only occasionally after a period of time.

The other point is tougher — and perhaps more subtle. AA encourages individuals trying to get sober to find a "God of their own understanding," a Higher Power, SOMETHING bigger than themselves. Many agnostics and atheists get and stay sober in AA.

AA is a spiritual program, not a religious one. This can be a difficult concept for people who are just coming in (and a great reason not to stay). That's one of the reasons AA encourages anyone new to attend different meetings, if possible, and check out other groups. In many cities there are meetings expressly for atheists and other nonbelievers.

— SOBER AND HAPPY IN ATLANTA

DEAR SOBER: Thank you for writing to clarify this. However, there are different programs (different strokes for different folks), which is why I also encourage anyone trying to achieve sobriety to research and explore the alternatives.

DEAR ABBY: How do I get a person to stop regifting me? Often it's her used clothes, used decor and knickknacks that she no longer wants. This person can afford nice things, which is why she thinks I would like her old stuff. I find it insulting when I get it in the form of a gift. It is always wrapped beautifully and presented as though I should be so grateful.

I might also add that this person will never keep a gift she receives if it's not exactly what she wants or matches her decor. How do I tactfully get this to stop?

— SECONDHAND ROSE

DEAR ROSE: If I selected a gift for someone and she didn't keep it — or exchanged it — I would give it one more try. If it happened again, from then on I would send a lovely card to mark the occasion, or a bouquet or plant. And if I was really ticked off, I would regift her gift back to HER.

P.S. Another thought: When you open her regift, smile and say, "Oh, honey. I can't keep this. You're too generous — and it looked too nice on your shelf."

Kepler telescope dead after finding thousands of worlds

By Marcia Dunn

Associated Press

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — NASA's elite planet-hunting spacecraft has been declared dead, just a few months shy of its 10th anniversary.

Officials announced the Kepler Space Telescope's demise Tuesday.

Already well past its expected lifetime, the 9 1/2-year-old Kepler had been running low on fuel for months. Its ability to point at distant stars and identify possible alien worlds worsened dramatically at the beginning of October, but flight controllers still managed to retrieve its latest observations. The telescope has now gone silent, its fuel tank empty.

"Kepler opened the gate for mankind's exploration of the cosmos," said retired NASA scientist William Borucki, who led the original Kepler science team.

Kepler discovered 2,681 planets outside our solar system and even more potential candidates. It showed us rocky worlds the size of Earth that, like Earth, might harbor life. It also unveiled incredible super Earths: planets bigger than Earth but smaller than Neptune.

NASA's astrophysics director Paul Hertz estimated that anywhere from two to a dozen of the planets discovered by Kepler are rocky and Earth-sized in the so-called Goldilocks zone. But Kepler's overall planet census showed that 20 to 50 percent of the stars visible in the night sky could have planets like ours in the habitable zone for life, he said.

The \$700 million mission even helped to uncover last year a solar system with eight planets, just like ours.

"It has revolutionized our understanding of our place in the cosmos," Hertz said. "Now we know because of the Kepler Space Telescope and its science mission that planets are more common than stars in our galaxy."

Almost lost in 2013 because of equipment failure, Kepler was salvaged by engineers and kept peering into the cosmos, thick with stars and galaxies, ever on the lookout for dips in the brightness of stars that could indicate an orbiting planet.

"It was like trying to detect a flea crawling across a car headlight when the car was 100 miles away," said Borucki said.

The resurrected mission became known as K2 and yielded 350 confirmed exoplanets, or planets orbiting other stars, on top of what the telescope had already uncovered since its March 7, 2009, launch from Cape Canaveral.

In all, close to 4,000 exoplanets have been confirmed over the past two decades, two-thirds of them thanks to Kepler.

Kepler focused on stars thousands of light-years away and, according to NASA, showed that statistically there's at least one planet around every star in our Milky Way Galaxy.

Borucki, who dreamed up the mission decades ago, said one of his favorite discoveries was Kepler 22b, a water planet bigger than Earth but where it is not too warm and not too cold — the type "that

could lead to life."

A successor to Kepler launched in April, NASA's TESS spacecraft, has its sights on stars closer to home. It's already identified some possible planets.

TESS project scientist Padi Boyd called Kepler's mission "stunningly successful."

Kepler showed us that "we live in a galaxy that's teeming with planets, and we're ready to take the next step to explore those planets," she said.

Another longtime spacecraft chasing strange worlds in our own solar system, meanwhile, is also close to death.

NASA's 11-year-old Dawn spacecraft is pretty much out of fuel after orbiting the asteroid Vesta as well as the dwarf planet Ceres. It remains in orbit around Ceres, which, like Vesta, is in the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter.

Two of NASA's older telescopes have been hit with equipment trouble recently, but have recovered. The 28-year-old Hubble Space Telescope resumed science observations last weekend, following a three-week shutdown. The 19-year-old Chandra X-ray Telescope's pointing system also ran into trouble briefly in October. Both cases involved critical gyroscopes, needed to point the telescopes.

Hertz said all the spacecraft problems were "completely independent" and coincidental in timing.

Now 94 million miles from Earth, Kepler should remain in a safe, stable orbit around the sun. Flight controllers will disable the spacecraft's transmitters, before bidding a final "good night."

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weather

	TONIGHT	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE
	Partly cloudy	Times of clouds and sun	Occasional rain	Spotty showers	A stray morning shower
Baker City	34	53 38	50 31	47 30	46 23
La Grande	41	53 42	50 38	48 36	47 30
Enterprise	38	50 40	48 36	46 33	46 29

Comfort Index takes into account how the weather will feel based on a combination of factors. A rating of 10 feels very comfortable while a rating of 0 feels very uncomfortable.

ALMANAC

TEMPERATURES	Baker City	La Grande	Elgin
High Thursday	47°	56°	57°
Low Thursday	34°	45°	48°

PRECIPITATION (inches)	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Thursday	Trace	0.17	0.42
Month to date	Trace	0.17	0.42
Normal month to date	0.03	0.06	0.08
Year to date	5.24	13.09	23.49
Normal year to date	8.28	12.89	17.63

THURSDAY EXTREMES

NATION (for the 48 contiguous states)
High: 92° Camanillo, Calif.
Low: 1° Bodie State Park, Calif.
Wettest: 2.99" Reserve, La.

OREGON

High: 71° Roseburg
Low: 26° Burns
Wettest: 0.49" Florence

WEATHER HISTORY

A hurricane reached New York City on Nov. 3, 1861. Flooding from torrential rain lasting for 20 hours brought out thousands of rats. Residents of the city chased the rodents with their hunting dogs.

SUN & MOON

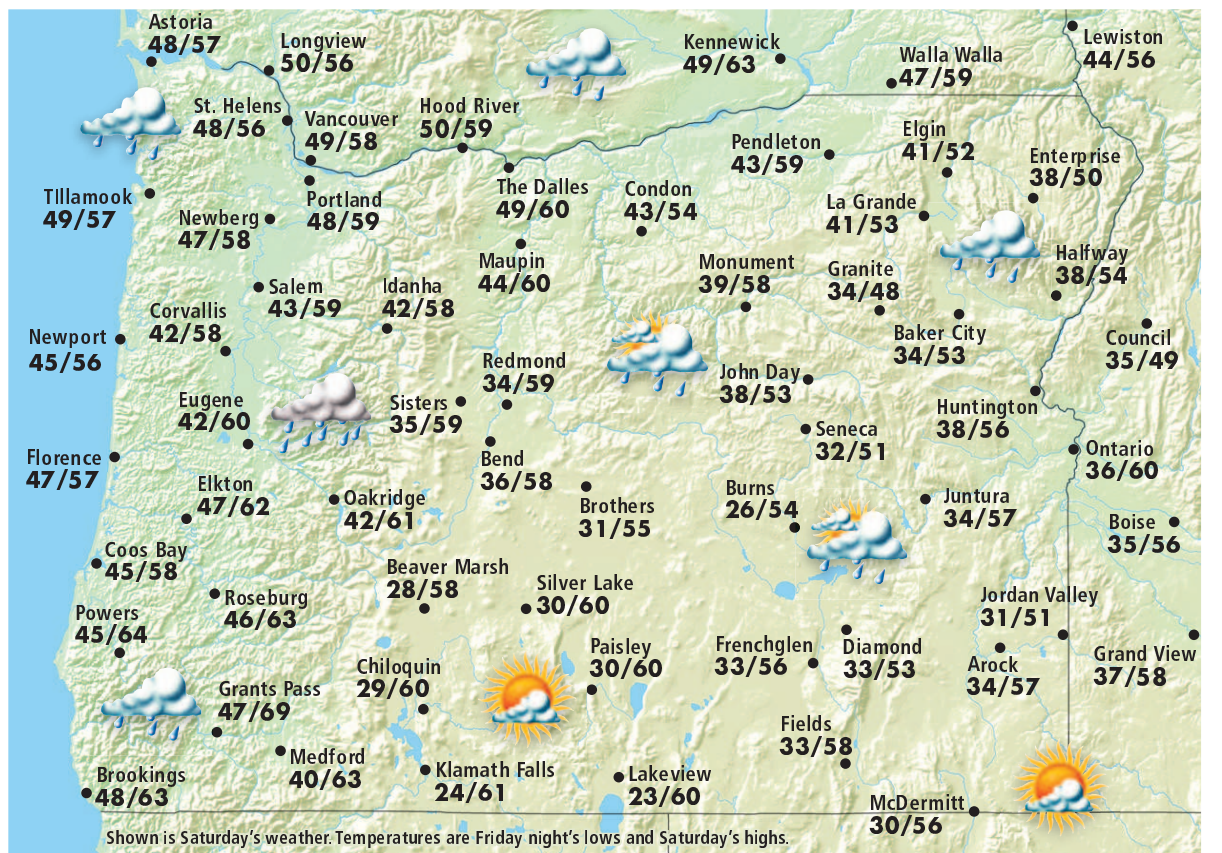
	FRI.	SAT.
Sunrise	7:33 a.m.	7:34 a.m.
Sunset	5:39 p.m.	5:37 p.m.
Moonrise	1:29 a.m.	2:42 a.m.
Moonset	3:38 p.m.	4:08 p.m.

MOON PHASES



AROUND OREGON AND THE REGION

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REGIONAL CITIES

City	SAT.	SUN.	City	SAT.	SUN.
	HI/LO/W	HI/LO/W		HI/LO/W	HI/LO/W
Astoria	57/49/r	58/47/r	Lewiston	56/47/pc	56/43/r
Bend	58/43/pc	54/32/c	Longview	56/51/r	58/48/r
Boise	56/42/pc	52/37/r	Meacham	50/41/pc	48/37/r
Brookings	63/48/pc	58/47/r	Medford	63/40/c	58/43/r
Burns	54/33/c	53/23/r	Newport	56/49/pc	57/47/r
Coos Bay	58/48/c	60/47/r	Olympia	55/49/r	55/43/r
Corvallis	58/47/pc	60/42/r	Ontario	60/42/pc	56/35/r
Council	49/38/pc	45/34/sh	Pasco	63/48/pc	62/40/r
Elgin	52/43/pc	50/39/r	Pendleton	59/49/pc	57/42/r
Eugene	60/46/pc	60/42/r	Portland	59/51/pc	60/48/r
Hermiston	63/50/pc	63/45/c	Powers	64/48/c	60/47/r
Hood River	59/50/pc	60/48/r	Redmond	59/39/pc	57/31/c
Imnaha	53/46/pc	52/39/r	Roseburg	63/47/c	61/46/r
John Day	53/44/pc	50/36/r	Salem	59/48/pc	52/36/r
Joseph	49/39/pc	47/35/sn	Spokane	51/42/r	61/47/r
Kennewick	63/51/pc	63/42/r	The Dalles	60/47/pc	61/47/r
Klamath Falls	61/30/c	58/28/pc	Ukiah	51/40/pc	47/36/r
Lakeview	60/32/c	57/28/c	Walla Walla	59/50/pc	57/46/r

Weather (W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, f-ice

RECREATION FORECAST SATURDAY

ANTHONY LAKES Spotty showers	38	22
MT. EMILY REC. Spotty showers	47	35
EAGLE CAP WILD. Spotty showers	42	26
WALLOWA LAKE Spotty showers	54	37
THIEF VALLEY RES. Spotty showers	59	34
PHILLIPS LAKE Showers	53	34
BROWNLEE RES. Showers around	61	39
EMIGRANT ST. PARK Showers	51	37
MCKAY RESERVOIR Windy	64	46
RED BRIDGE ST. PARK Spotty showers	58	41



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