

Relatives pressed into manual labor by aunt who lives alone

DEAR ABBY: Ten months ago, my aunt's 66-year-old live-in boyfriend died unexpectedly. She has no children and is left with a four-bedroom, two-bathroom house to take care of by herself. She has always been in debt (I think), and his final expenses only made it worse.



DEAR ABBY

inal bag to a more permanent urn. So far, I have managed to avoid taking care of her pool and cutting her grass, but it's only a matter of time before the neighbors stop doing it for her. I love my aunt, and she has done a lot for me over the years. I realize she has no kids to take care of her, but I don't think I should be expected to be her lackey for the next 30 years. How do I tell her I can't be responsible for taking care of her house without getting her upset or angry? Is it my place to say something to her mother and siblings? She has been very emo-

tional since the death, and we've all been walking on eggshells, but she won't go to therapy.

— **OVERWHELMED NEPHEW**

DEAR NEPHEW: Your aunt may not need a therapist as much as she needs a grief support group to help her work through her loss. Her mood swings, which I am sure surge and wane from day to day, are magnified by her money problems. Because the house and yard are now too much for her to handle alone, it might make sense for her to downsize and put the money she gets from selling the place to work for her. Of course, she should run the idea by her attorney or accountant before

making any decisions, but it might be the solution — not only to her problem, but also to yours.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I bought a house and moved in literally the day COVID was announced as a national emergency. I had planned to go around to our new neighbors and introduce ourselves, perhaps with a small gift (I'm a baker). That obviously hasn't been possible. We've had some over-the-fence interactions with a couple of neighbors, but I feel bad I haven't reached out to the others.

My husband and I are private, introverted people, but I still want to make ourselves known as approachable. Is it too late?

What's the protocol on introducing yourselves to neighbors? Given that everything is in flux and we still don't know if it's safe, I don't want to let that become an excuse to put it off indefinitely.

— **NEIGHBORLY**

DEAR NEIGHBORLY: It is not too late. A charming way to introduce yourselves would be to deliver — or have delivered — a small plant to each of your neighbors, with a short note explaining that you are new to the community, you are a professional baker and you regret that the quarantine makes it impossible to reach out in a more personal way. Be sure to include your address and phone number.

NEWS OF THE WEIRD

Flash of luck: Astronomers find cosmic radio burst source

A flash of luck helped astronomers solve a cosmic mystery: What causes powerful but fleeting radio bursts that zip and zigzag through the universe?

Scientists have known about these energetic pulses — called fast radio bursts — for about 13 years and have seen them coming from outside our galaxy, which makes it harder to trace them back to what's causing them. Making it even harder is that they happen so fast, in a couple of milliseconds.

Then this April, a rare but considerably weaker burst coming from inside our own Milky Way galaxy was spotted by two dissimilar telescopes: one a California doctoral student's set of handmade antennas, which included actual cake pans, the other a \$20 million Canadian observatory.

They tracked that fast radio burst to a weird type of star called a magnetar that's 32,000 light-years from Earth, according to four studies in the Nov. 4 edition of the journal *Nature*.

It was not only the first fast radio burst traced to a source, but the first emanating from our galaxy. Astronomers say there could be other sources for these bursts, but they are now sure about one guilty party: magnetars.

Magnetars are incredibly dense neutron stars, with 1.5 times the mass of our sun squeezed into a space the size of Manhattan. They have enormous magnetic



Andre Renard/University of Toronto via AP

Astronomers on Nov. 4, 2020, announced they used the Canadian Hydrogen Intensity Mapping Experiment radio telescope in Kaledon, British Columbia, Canada, to trace an April 2020 fast cosmic radio burst to our galaxy and a type of powerful energetic young star called a magnetar. A California doctoral student's set of handmade antennas also detected the burst.

fields that buzz and crackle with energy, and sometimes flares of X-rays and radio waves burst from them, according to McGill University astrophysicist Ziggy Pleunis, a co-author of the Canadian study.

The magnetic field around these magnetars "is so strong any atoms nearby are torn apart and bizarre aspects of fundamental physics can be seen," said astronomer Casey Law of the California Institute of Technology, who wasn't part of the research.

There are maybe a dozen or so of these magnetars in our galaxy, apparently because they are so young

and part of the star birth process, and the Milky Way is not as flush with star births as other galaxies, said Cornell University Shami Chatterjee, who also wasn't part of either discovery team.

This burst in less than a second contained about the same amount of energy our sun produces in a month, and still that's far weaker than the radio bursts detected coming from outside our galaxy, said Caltech radio astronomer Christopher Bochenek. He helped spot the burst with handmade antennas.

These radio bursts aren't dangerous to us, not even

the more powerful ones from outside our galaxy, astronomers said.

The ones that come from outside our galaxy and travel millions or billions of light-years are "tens of thousands to millions of times more powerful than anything we have detected in our galaxy," said co-author Daniele Michilli, an astrophysicist at McGill and part of the Canadian team.

Scientists think these are so frequent they may happen more than 1,000 times a day outside our galaxy. But finding them isn't easy.

"You had to be looking at the right place at the right

millisecond," Cornell's Chatterjee said. "Unless you were very, very lucky, you're not going to see one of these."

Even though this is a frequent occurrence outside the Milky Way, astronomers have no idea how often these bursts happen inside our galaxy.

"We still don't know how lucky we got," Bochenek said. "This could be a once-in-five-year thing or there could be a few events to happen each year."

Bochenek's antennas cost about \$15,000. Each is "the size of a large bucket. It's a piece of 6-inch metal

pipe with two literal cake pans around it," the doctoral student said. They are crude instruments designed to look at a giant chunk of the sky — about a quarter of it — and see only the brightest of radio flashes.

Bochenek figured he had maybe a 1-in-10 chance of spotting a fast radio burst in a few years. But after one year, he hit pay dirt.

Tracking one outburst is a welcome surprise and an important finding, he said.

"No one really believed that we'd get so lucky," Chatterjee said. "To find one in our own galaxy, it just puts the cherry on top."

— *Associated Press*

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weather

	TONIGHT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED
	Rain and snow showers	Cloudy	Cloudy	Windy in the a.m.; cloudy	Rain in the afternoon
Baker City	31	44 30	45 34	46 32	46 31
Comfort Index™	3	3	3	3	3
La Grande	36	46 35	47 42	51 37	47 35
Comfort Index™	0	3	2	3	0
Enterprise	32	44 31	45 43	51 38	44 35
Comfort Index™	2	3	5	7	1

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	38°	38°	39°
Low Thursday	11°	24°	19°
PRECIPITATION (inches)			
Thursday	0.00	0.00	Trace
Month to date	0.01	1.36	2.42
Normal month to date	0.35	0.79	1.12
Year to date	3.01	15.24	31.40
Normal year to date	8.62	13.66	18.75

AGRICULTURAL INFO.

HAY INFORMATION SUNDAY	
Lowest relative humidity	55%
Afternoon wind	S at 6 to 12 mph
Hours of sunshine	2.6
Evapotranspiration	0.05
RESERVOIR STORAGE (through midnight Friday)	
Phillips Reservoir	7% of capacity
Unity Reservoir	25% of capacity
Owyhee Reservoir	43% of capacity
McKay Reservoir	24% of capacity
Wallowa Lake	19% of capacity
Thief Valley Reservoir	19% of capacity
STREAM FLOWS (through midnight Thursday)	
Grande Ronde at Troy	984 cfs
Thief Valley Reservoir near North Powder	1 cfs
Burnt River near Unity	11 cfs
Umatilla River near Gibbon	114 cfs
Minam River at Minam	89 cfs
Powder River near Richland	18 cfs

THURSDAY EXTREMES

NATION (for the 48 contiguous states)	
High: 89°	Zapata, Texas
Low: -10°	Stanley, Idaho
Wettest: 5.89"	Norfolk, Va.
OREGON	
High: 56°	North Bend
Low: 2°	Burns
Wettest: Trace	Astoria

WEATHER HISTORY

On Nov. 14, 1972, a storm brought record deep snow for so early in the season. Albany, N.Y., received 17.3 inches, the earliest snowfall amounting to a foot or more. New Hampshire had up to 15 inches.

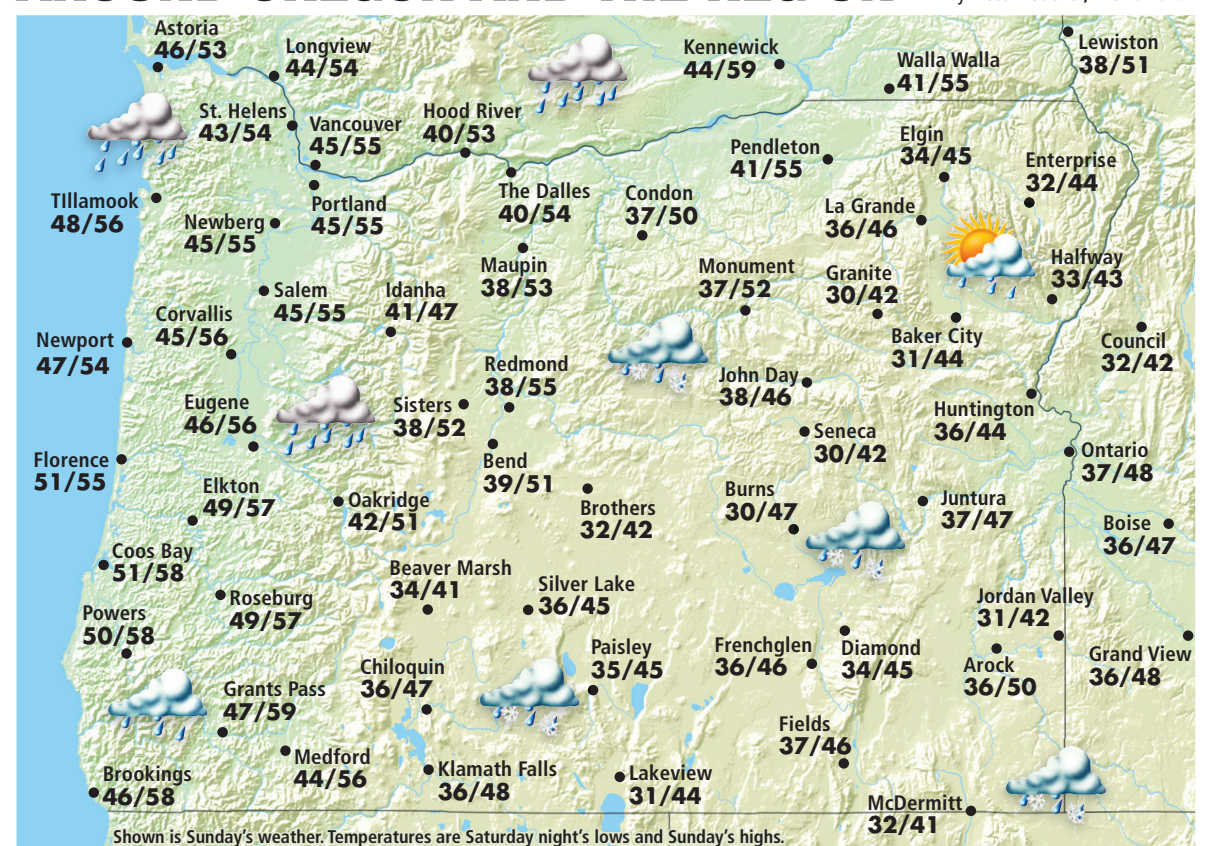
SUN & MOON

	SAT.	SUN.
Sunrise	6:50 a.m.	6:51 a.m.
Sunset	4:23 p.m.	4:22 p.m.
Moonrise	5:58 a.m.	7:21 a.m.
Moonsset	4:22 p.m.	4:58 p.m.

MOON PHASES				
New	Nov 14	First	Nov 21	Full
			Full	Last
			Full	Dec 7

AROUND OREGON AND THE REGION

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REGIONAL CITIES

City	SUN. HI/Lo/W	MON. HI/Lo/W	City	SUN. HI/Lo/W	MON. HI/Lo/W
Astoria	53/43/c	55/47/r	Lewiston	51/40/c	48/42/c
Bend	51/38/c	58/43/pc	Longview	54/45/sh	55/46/r
Boise	47/39/r	55/39/c	Meacham	44/34/sh	46/41/c
Brookings	58/54/r	62/53/c	Medford	56/44/r	63/45/c
Burns	47/30/c	63/28/c	Newport	54/45/r	56/48/r
Coos Bay	58/49/r	54/48/c	Olympia	52/41/c	52/43/r
Corvallis	56/43/r	60/44/c	Ontario	48/38/r	54/38/c
Council	42/35/sn	44/32/pc	Pasco	58/43/c	49/40/c
Elgin	45/34/sh	47/40/c	Pendleton	55/41/c	51/43/c
Eugene	56/46/r	62/44/c	Portland	55/46/r	56/48/c
Hermiston	58/41/c	53/40/c	Powers	58/51/r	68/52/c
Hood River	53/40/r	50/41/pc	Redmond	55/38/c	61/41/c
Imnaha	47/33/c	49/46/c	Roseburg	57/47/r	64/47/c
John Day	46/37/c	51/40/c	Salem	55/44/r	58/44/c
Joseph	43/31/c	45/42/c	Spokane	45/36/c	44/36/c
Kennewick	59/41/c	48/39/c	The Dalles	54/43/r	50/43/c
Klamath Falls	48/32/r	56/34/c	Ukiah	44/34/c	47/41/c
Lakeview	44/30/sn	54/31/pc	Walla Walla	55/44/c	51/43/c

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

RECREATION FORECAST SUNDAY

ANTHONY LAKES	PHILLIPS LAKE
A little snow	A little snow
29	42 30
MT. EMILY REC.	BROWNLEE RES.
A little snow	Cloudy and chilly
38 32	45 35
EAGLE CAP WILD.	EMIGRANT ST. PARK
A little snow	A little snow
32 21	43 30
WALLOWA LAKE	MCKAY RESERVOIR
Cloudy	Cloudy and milder
43 31	55 41
THIEF VALLEY RES.	RED BRIDGE ST. PARK
Cloudy	Cloudy
44 30	46 35