

BRIEFS

Group wants to protect difficult Welsh names

They’ve always been a mouthful for foreign visitors to pronounce, but now legislators in Wales say the country’s tongue-twisting place names deserve legal protection. Protesters have objected to recent efforts to change historic monikers such as Y Faerdre, which dates to the Middle Ages, to Happy Donkey Hill to make it easier for non-native speakers. “If we are going to acknowledge that place names are important, then they must be protected,” Dr. Rhian Parry, of the Welsh Place Name society, told legislators. Another name thought to be under threat is Cwm Cneifion, in the popular Snowdonia region, which is considered too much of a struggle for most English speakers. Under the Historic Environment Bill, however, such names would be safe from meddling. Christine Chapman, spokeswoman for a local government committee, told the Western Mail: “It was surprising to hear that names that have been around for centuries have no statutory protection and could easily be changed.”

Hollywood studio shows scary props

Just in time for Halloween, the Warner Bros. studios in Burbank, Calif., have opened a special show of props and costumes behind some of cinema’s scariest films. Until Nov. 1, the studio tour will feature for the first time a selection of spooky mementoes including Freddy Krueger’s glove from A Nightmare on Elm Street, the cracked bedroom door from The Exorcist, and the skeletons from Tim Burton’s Corpse Bride. The Horror Made Here exhibit will also feature a display by Oscar-winning prosthetic makeup artist Christien Tinsley, the L.A. Times reported.

Cabin crew stuffed into overhead bins

Cabin crew on a Chinese airline were forced to squeeze into overhead baggage lockers as part of a bizarre hazing ritual. Kunming Airlines issued a statement vowing to stamp out all such forms of staff bullying after the pictures were posted online and quickly spread. A post on social media alleged that almost all of the flight crew were forced into the lockers by security staff after they had completed 30 to 50 hours of service at the airline, which is based in China’s southwest. Kunming Airlines, in a statement reported by the South China Morning Post, denied any knowledge of the bullying and said it had received no complaints from cabin crew.

Killing Koalas seen as path to salvation

Australia’s cuddly koalas, beloved by travellers seeking photogenic memories, could be killed off en masse if scientists have their way. Researchers quoted in The Australian say “aggressively” culling the marsupials is the best way to wipe out a chlamydia infection that is threatening them with extinction. They estimate that a 60 per cent reduction in chlamydia deaths would boost koala populations better than tackling other threats such as cars and dogs. In a study, the scientists found that culling the koalas would decimate their numbers, but that the population would rebound in four years and be higher after 10 years than under the two other scenarios: doing nothing, or treating the infected koalas. Culling “will lead to greater numbers of koalas in the end,” said study author David Wilson of the University of New South Wales.

Train trouble for Harry Potter fans

U.K. police say fantasy fans are taking their Harry Potter love too far by trespassing on railway lines for Hogwarts-inspired selfies. The British Transport Police has issued a warning after a couple with a young child were seen running on a train line near the Glenfinnan viaduct in the Highlands of Scotland, and two men were seen on the tracks taking photos. The Victorian-era viaduct is featured in several of the films about the teen wizard when it is crossed by the Hogwarts Express train.

Compiled by Andre Ramshaw, Postmedia News

New features at Toronto luxury hotel

Trump International adds gallery and pub tours, luxury cars and more

ROCHELLE LASH
SPECIAL TO MONTREAL GAZETTE

Trump International Hotel & Tower Toronto figures that its sophisticated patrons have done it all, so they have crafted a new roster of thrilling and sociable experiences. Trump’s guests expect something above and beyond. And, why not? The hotel is part of the hospitality empire of Donald Trump, flamboyant businessman and front-running U.S. presidential candidate, and it is one of only two establishments in Toronto on Forbes’ Five-Star list, along with the Four Seasons.

Here are some of the extravagant and exclusive new excursions as curated by Trump’s concierges and orchestrated by its new general

manager, Jean-Luc Barone, who is from France via many world capitals. Prices are per person, based on tours for two people, and are in addition to lodging rates.

For art lovers: Art connoisseurs can take a four-hour insiders’ tour by limousine of museums, galleries and historic sites to discover cutting-edge art and meet top dealers. You can customize according to your cultural passions. The one-year-old Aga Khan Museum of Islamic art is the newest, hottest game in town and the Sandra Ainsley Gallery exhibits exquisite glass and mixed media by Dale Chihuly and others. The tour also makes stops for refreshments, including at Bar Raval, Buca or Indie Ale House; \$485 per person, based on two people.

Drivers wanted: The Exhilarating Car Experience is a rare opportunity for luxury car aficionados to pilot super-charged machines, all in the same day: Audi R8 V10, Nissan GTR “Godzilla,” Ferrari F430 F1, Lamborghini Gallardo and Porsche 977 Carrera 4S. You’ll drive through the scenic vineyards of Niagara Peninsula with lunch overlooking the Falls, followed by Champagne and Cuban cigars; \$5,722 per person.

Hollywood on wheels: The Movie Hero Stunt Driving Experience promises an adrenalin rush in a BMW stunt car on a downtown lot, mastering such techniques as J-Turns, reverse 180s and a slalom course; \$3,093 per person.

Niagara from the sky: The Niagara by Helicopter & Vineyard Experience is pure drama. Guests will soar over the falls on a twin-jet helicopter and then indulge in a gourmet lunch at one of the area’s glorious wineries; \$4,855 per person.

What’s trending: The Trend Hunt-

IF YOU GO

Trump International
Hotel & Tower Toronto: 855-88-TRUMP/855-888-7867, TrumpTorontoHotel.com; 325 Bay St., Toronto. Rates start at \$430 (or \$510 for one-bedroom suites), including indoor saltwater pool, sauna, Wi-Fi, local calls, Nespresso, pillow menu, digital library, evening turndown, Tesla charging stations, Trump Kids and Trump Pets perks.

ing in Design & Art package takes guests around Toronto’s Queen St. West Art & Design District, named among the coolest in the world by Vogue magazine; \$485 per person. **Dinner is ready:** Top Chef Canada winner Karl Heinrich will share his wisdom at his Richmond Station restaurant. Fledgling cooks will recreate his signature dishes and enjoy a tasting menu with wine; \$229 per person.

A cold one, or two: The Craft Breweries Tour is a sociable pub-crawl to micro-breweries with tastings, food pairings and narration by an expert beer sommelier; \$192 per person.

Music, maestro: Trump guests can opt for a Night at the Toronto Symphony at Roy Thompson Hall, with a gift CD signed by the conductor; \$187 per person.

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