

**MULTI-AWARD WINNING!**

**SCIENCE+ANIMALS+PUZZLES+PEOPLE+ARTS+PHOTOS+BOOKS+SPORTS+BRIGHT PINK DOUGHNUTS**

**THE WORLD'S BEST NEWS & FACTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

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**Making sense of the world**





**PICTURE PERFECT**

Announcing the winners of our annual Nature Photo Contest **p12**



**GRAND PRIZE**  
**Ages 11-14**  
**TWYLA**

**In Twyla's words:**  
 "This photo captures the breathtaking vitality of a wild horse—a symbol of the untameable energy of nature itself."





# This week's big news

## TRASH TOTAL

Globally, about 441 million tons of plastic waste is produced every year, and less than 10% of it is recycled.



Some plastic waste is recycled or properly discarded.

## Lego's plastic promise



The Lego toy company has pledged that 50% of the plastic in its bricks will be made from recycled or renewable materials by 2026 and 100% by 2032. The company will pay up to 70% more for materials made from ingredients like cooking oil but will not charge consumers more for its products.

# Study of plastic pollution released

A major new study examined how the world's plastic waste creates harmful pollution. The report, which was published in the journal *Nature* on September 4, draws attention to the millions of tons of plastic pollution that end up in Earth's ground, water, and air every year.

## What was the report?

Conducted by a team of researchers at the University of Leeds in the UK, the study was the first to look closely at how plastic waste is handled and why it becomes pollution. The research focused on plastic that goes into the open environment—including oceans, rivers, and mountains—rather than being recycled or properly disposed of in landfills or elsewhere. The team examined waste created locally in more than 50,000 cities and towns around the world. They then used artificial intelligence (AI), when a computer imitates human intelligence by learning as it goes along) to predict the total amount of plastic that ends up in nature.

## What were its major findings?

The study found that 20% of the world's plastic waste becomes plastic pollution, for a total of 57 million tons of plastic pollution every

year. According to the study, about 1.5 billion people in lower-income countries do not have reliable garbage collection services in their communities. When local governments do not gather and either recycle or safely dispose of plastic waste, people are forced to burn or dump it outdoors, where it becomes pollution. This occurs mostly in the southern half of the planet. The countries that generate more than half of the world's plastic pollution are India, Nigeria, Indonesia, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Russia, and Brazil. The US is 90th. Though people in low-income and middle-income countries generate less plastic waste overall, more of their garbage is disposed of improperly.



Plastic bottles are a major source of pollution.

## Why is this significant?

Plastic in the open environment breaks down into microplastics (tiny particles). These make their way into the air, drinking water, and food supply, posing a potential threat to humans, animals, and plants, the study's authors said. Early

research into microplastics suggests they can raise the risk of heart attack and stroke. "[Microplastics] are in the most remote places...the peaks of Everest, in the Mariana Trench in the ocean, in what we breathe and what we eat and what we

drink," said the study's lead author, Costas Velis. In addition, the study said, burning plastic releases chemicals into the air and generates greenhouse gases, which trap heat in Earth's atmosphere and contribute to climate change.

## How did people react?

While many environmental experts said the study sheds light on an alarming problem, some also felt it ignored important issues. These included the need to reduce the overall use of plastics and cut plastic production, which also generates greenhouse gases. Other experts said the study failed to address the practice of wealthier countries sending plastic waste to poorer nations to dispose of it. This plastic often ends up in illegal sites where it's dumped or burned. But Velis said the blame for plastic pollution does not lie with poorer countries and that it is "everybody's problem."

## What will happen next?

The study was released before a meeting sponsored by the United Nations (group of 193 countries) scheduled to take place in November in Korea, where an international treaty on plastic pollution will be discussed. Velis called for the treaty to include requirements for countries to do more to handle plastic waste properly. He also said higher-income countries should be required to contribute more money to solve the problem.





## Polio vaccines given in Gaza

More than 400,000 children in Gaza received vaccinations against polio, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). The widespread effort to combat the disease was launched in the Middle Eastern territory after Gaza reported its first case of polio in 25 years. A war has been taking place there between Israel and Hamas, a terrorist group, since October 7, 2023. Israel allowed for a humanitarian pause in the fighting so the vaccinations could be given.

The first two phases were carried out in central and southern Gaza. More than 2,000 workers gave the vaccine at hundreds of hospitals, food distribution centers, and other sites. Mobile teams traveled to remote areas to reach other children.

When *The Week Junior* went to press on September 10, the third phase of the campaign was underway in northern Gaza. The WHO hoped to vaccinate a total of about 640,000 children. While this pause in fighting is temporary, a more lasting ceasefire is being negotiated with the help of Egypt, Qatar, and the US.



A child receives the polio vaccine.



**DID YOU KNOW?**  
The Māori people make up about 20% of New Zealand's population today and have seven reserved seats in the country's parliament.

The new queen, Ngā Wai Hono i te Pō

## New Māori queen is named

A new queen has been crowned by the Māori, the Indigenous people (first to live in a place) of New Zealand. Ngā Wai Hono i te Pō officially became queen at a ceremony on September 5, following the death of her father, King Tūheitia Pōtatau Te Wherowhero VII, on August 30.

The Māori have lived in New Zealand since about the year 1300. The first Europeans arrived in 1642 and began taking land from the Māori and threatening their way of life. By 1840, Britain had formal control of the island. In 1857, the Māori organized a resistance to prevent further loss of their land, language, and culture. They also chose their first king.

Ngā Wai Hono i te Pō, age 27, is the eighth monarch and the second Māori queen. Her grandmother was the first. She is the youngest

child and only daughter of King Tūheitia, who began his reign in 2006. Although the role is mostly ceremonial, Tūheitia was outspoken in the months before his death as a new government began to threaten Māori rights in the nation. He encouraged unity and urged people to be proud of their Māori identity.

Thousands of people gathered to honor Tūheitia and see Ngā Wai Hono i te Pō crowned. The new queen sat on a carved wooden throne and was blessed with the same bible that was used to appoint the first Māori king. Ngā Wai Hono i te Pō represents a new generation of Māori leaders who are modern while also working to preserve Māori heritage. She holds a master's degree in Māori cultural studies and teaches Māori performing arts.



## IT'S AN AMAZING WEEK FOR...

### LOVING THE LIBRARY

September is Library Card Sign-up Month, when anyone who doesn't have a card is encouraged to get one. People who already have a card can try something new at their local branch, like joining a book club, tinkering in the makerspace, or listening to audiobooks.



### A SWEET CELEBRATION

In honor of Barbie's 65th anniversary this year, Krispy Kreme is serving four special doughnuts inspired by the famous doll. They're "the perfect blend of flavor and style, with nods to Barbie sprinkled into every bite," said a spokesperson for Mattel, the company that makes the dolls.

### DRAWING FOR DEMOCRACY

In Michigan's contest to design "I Voted" stickers for the 2024 elections, a drawing created by a 12-year-old earned howls of appreciation—and the most votes of the nearly 500 entries. Jane Hynous' werewolf in front of an American flag (shown at right) is one of nine stickers that will be available to voters in November. "It kind of just came to me," she said of her wild idea.







# National news

## CARING FOR THE LAND

In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed an act creating the National Park Service to manage the nation's parks and monuments.



Bison grazing at Grand Teton National Park

## Dam project completed



The largest dam removal project in US history has been completed on the Klamath River in California and Oregon. A dam is a wall-like structure that controls the flow of water. Returning the Klamath to its natural state allows salmon to swim freely through its waters, which the region's tribal nations had spent decades advocating for.

# National parks receive historic grant

The National Park Foundation (NPF), the fundraising organization of the National Park Service (NPS), announced that it has been awarded a \$100 million grant from Lilly Endowment. It is the largest grant ever given to national parks in US history, the NPF said.

## What happened?

Lilly Endowment, a nonprofit organization based in Indiana, was created in 1937 by the Eli Lilly drug company to support "the beauty and wonders of the natural world." The group's \$100 million gift to the NPF will help pay for programs to enhance and protect the park system, which consists of 430 parks, monuments, historic sites, and other properties in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and US

territories. This includes famous destinations such as Grand Teton National Park, Bryce Canyon National Park, and Yellowstone National Park, which was the first US national park to be established in 1872.

## How will the funds be used?

The NPF said the money will be directed toward funding four key priorities. It will be used to create more opportunities for young people to visit parks and to protect threatened ecosystems and wildlife. The grant will help the NPS accommodate its increased number of visitors. Last year, more than 320 million people visited a NPS park or site. Funds will also be used to tell the story of America's parks in a more complete way by including voices that have previously been left out.

## How did people react?

NPF president Will Shaforth called the gift "transformative" and expressed his gratitude to Lilly Endowment. Chuck Sams, the NPS director, said, "The impact of this gift will be felt in our parks and in surrounding communities for generations to come." The CEO of Lilly Endowment, N. Clay Robbins, said the organization was pleased to help ensure the vibrancy of our country's "marvelous" parks.

## What will happen next?

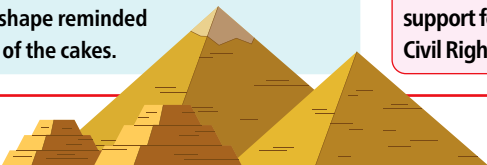
The funds from Lilly Endowment will be distributed to the NPS for its use. The NPF will also continue its efforts to raise \$1 billion for its Campaign for National Parks, a fundraising initiative to ensure that the NPS thrives.



## WORD OF THE WEEK

### PYRAMID

You might expect the word "pyramid" to come from ancient Egypt, but its origins came about later, in ancient Greece. The Greek word *puramis* described a pointy-tipped cake made of wheat and honey. It is thought that the Greeks used the word to describe the Egyptian tombs because their shape reminded them of the cakes.



## THE WEEK IN HISTORY

### September 15, 1963

#### Church bombing shocks nation

On September 15, 1963, a bomb exploded at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, killing four young Black girls. The attack was carried out by racist people who opposed equal rights for Black people. The bombing outraged the nation and, despite the intentions of the attackers, increased support for social justice and was a factor in the Civil Rights Act becoming law in 1964.



The church





The candidates

## Debate for Harris and Trump

When *The Week Junior* went to press on September 10, the first Presidential debate between Vice President Kamala Harris, the Democratic nominee, and former President Donald Trump, the Republican nominee, was set to take place that night. Both candidates agreed to the rules for the event, which was to be televised live from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and moderated by ABC News anchors David Muir and Linsey Davis.



Beetlejuice  
Beetlejuice

## Sequel to popular film is big hit

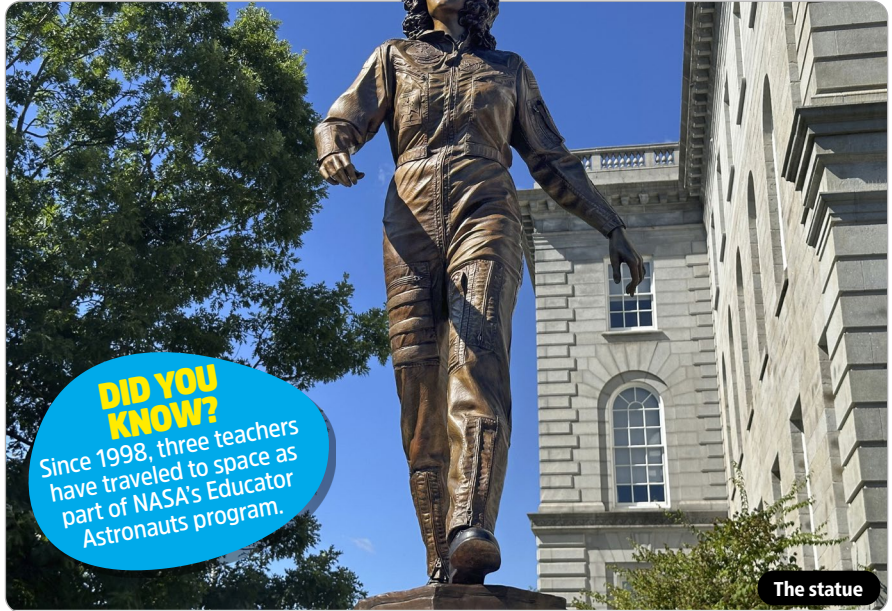
Tim Burton's *Beetlejuice Beetlejuice*, the long-awaited sequel to his 1988 classic *Beetlejuice*, earned \$110 million in US ticket sales in its first weekend. The total was the second-highest ever for a September movie opening. The comedy-horror film stars Michael Keaton, returning in his role as a funny demon who makes trouble for the Deetz family when they gather together at their original home.

## Stamp celebrates US history

The US Postal Service has issued a new Forever stamp to mark the 250th anniversary of the first Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia. The Continental Congress governed the 13 colonies during the American Revolution (1775–1783) and when the United States first formed. The stamp's 12 stars represent the colonies that were part of the first meeting.



The new stamp



The statue

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
Since 1998, three teachers have traveled to space as part of NASA's Educator Astronauts program.

## Statue honors a pioneering teacher

The state of New Hampshire has unveiled a statue of Christa McAuliffe, America's first civilian (non-astronaut) in space, on the grounds of its State House in Concord, the city where McAuliffe taught high school social studies. It is the first statue of a woman to be memorialized on the grounds.

In 1985, McAuliffe was chosen from more than 11,000 applicants to the Teacher in Space program, created by NASA, the US space agency. With her motto of "I touch the future, I teach," she sparked excitement across the US. Her mission was to deliver lessons to students from space.

On January 28, 1986, McAuliffe, who was 37 at the time, and six other crew members boarded the space shuttle Challenger in Cape Canaveral, Florida. Shortly after liftoff, the shuttle broke apart on live TV. Everyone on board was killed. Despite the tragedy, McAuliffe has been remembered for her innovative spirit ever since.

The statue, which is 8 feet tall and made of bronze, depicts McAuliffe in her spacesuit. It was sculpted by Idaho artist Benjamin Victor, who drew from discussions with McAuliffe's husband, Judge Steven McAuliffe, as well as his own memories of watching McAuliffe on TV to create the work. It is the first full statue of McAuliffe and joins several other honors—including schools, scholarships, a library, and a planetarium—that have been named after her.

The unveiling took place on what would have been McAuliffe's 76th birthday and was attended by NASA administrators, members of the Concord community, McAuliffe's former students, and her family.

The statue is "a symbol of the resilient human spirit that Christa embodies," NASA official Pam Melroy told the crowd. "Christa's impact on NASA transcends time. Her mission catalyzed change, leading to a safer, more inclusive, and more educationally focused space program."



A portrait of  
Christa McAuliffe

## THE WEEK'S SILLIEST HEADLINE

"Police officer fishes alligator out of community pool" *Yahoo News*







# Around the world



Some of the donkeys



## Piedmont, Italy Requesting socks for donkeys

A sanctuary that cares for more than 100 donkeys recently launched an appeal on social media, asking supporters to send long socks for the animals. The socks are used to prevent insects from biting the donkeys' legs, and striped patterns have been shown to be particularly effective. So far, Il Rifugio degli Asinelli (which means "The Donkey Sanctuary" in Italian) has received at least 180 pairs of socks and more than \$650 in donations.



Edmundo  
González  
Urrutia



## Venezuela Presidential candidate flees country

Venezuelan politician Edmundo González Urrutia has fled to Spain. González ran for president in Venezuela's election in July. Nicolás Maduro, who has been president since 2013, was declared the winner even though some evidence suggests that González won. When González disputed the election result, a warrant was issued for his arrest. He went to Spain for protection but said he'd "continue the fight" for democracy in Venezuela.



Officials  
welcomed  
the vaccines.



## Democratic Republic of the Congo Mpox vaccine delivery arrives

The first delivery of mpox vaccines (medicine that prevents an illness) has arrived in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The mpox virus causes a rash similar to chickenpox. More than 5,750 cases have been confirmed across Africa this year, and 90% of them were in the DRC. The US and other nations are donating about 380,000 vaccine doses for a rollout in October.

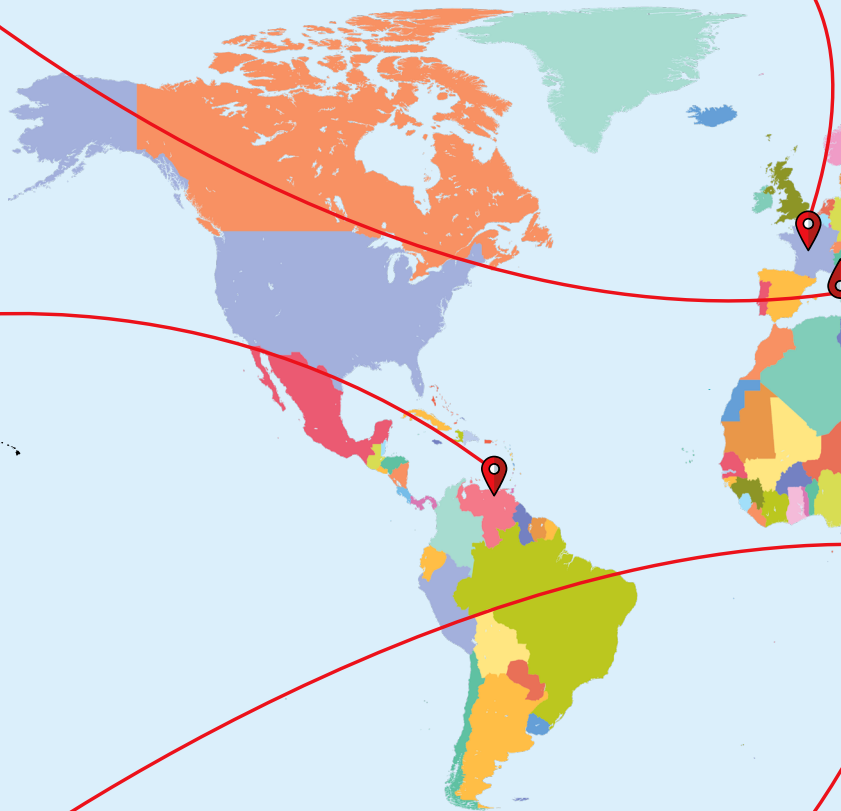


## France Protests against new leader

On September 7, more than 100,000 people joined protests across France after President Emmanuel Macron appointed Michel Barnier from the Les Républicains party as prime minister. The protest was coordinated by the New Popular Front, which currently holds the most seats in parliament and said its candidate should have been chosen instead.



Protesters  
in Marseille



## San Marino Historic soccer win

San Marino has won its first competitive soccer match, beating Liechtenstein 1–0 on September 5. The team from the small nation, which is completely surrounded by Italy, has the lowest ranking from FIFA (the global governing body of soccer). Their only previous win was an exhibition (friendly) match in 2004, also against Liechtenstein. Nicko Sensoli, age 19, scored the winning goal to bring San Marino its first official victory in the sport.



The game

GETTY IMAGES (4); ALAMY (3); THE DONKEY SANCTUARY; SHUTTERSTOCK (2)





Nicholas  
Winton Street

## Prague, Czech Republic Holocaust hero honored

A street in Prague has been named after Nicholas Winton, who rescued 669 children from the Holocaust (mass killing of 6 million Jewish people and millions of others by the German Nazi party in the 1930s and 1940s). Winton worked on the Kindertransport program, which brought 10,000 children from Nazi-occupied areas to the UK.



Vladimir  
Putin (right)

## Mongolia Russian president avoids arrest

Vladimir Putin, president of Russia, was welcomed to Mongolia's capital city, Ulaanbaatar, last week despite being wanted for war crimes. The International Criminal Court (ICC) issued a warrant for Putin's arrest last year, accusing him of illegally relocating children from Ukraine to Russia. As an ICC member, Mongolia is supposed to arrest suspects within its borders. This was Putin's first visit to an ICC member country since the warrant was issued.



Kimchi

## South Korea Cabbage crops at risk

One of South Korea's most popular foods is at risk because of climate change, scientists say. Napa cabbage is one of the main ingredients of kimchi, a traditional dish made with spicy, pickled vegetables. Experts say heavier rainfall, higher temperatures, and an increase in pests are making it harder for farmers to grow the cabbage. New data shows the country has been importing more kimchi from other places, such as China.



Pope Francis  
in Vanimo

## Papua New Guinea Crowds gather to welcome pope

Pope Francis, the head of the Roman Catholic Church, visited the island nation of Papua New Guinea this week. He held a Mass (religious service) for 35,000 people in the capital city, Port Moresby, and addressed a crowd of 20,000 people in the remote town of Vanimo. The pope brought medicine, clothing, toys, and musical instruments to hand out during his visit.

## Shanghai, China Cats visit museum

Visitors were invited to bring their cats to an exhibition about ancient Egypt at the Shanghai Museum. Six "Meow Nights" have been held at the museum, inspired by the ancient Egyptians' worship of cats. These special nights allowed 200 people to bring their four-legged friends in pet carriers to see cat statues and mummies and have their photo taken with the cat goddess Bastet. Tickets for all six nights were sold out, and more are planned.



The purr-fect  
night out?





## The big debate

# Should pets be allowed on flights?

Many animal lovers bring their furry friends on flights, but others say it's not OK.

### What you need to know

- Many US airlines allow vaccinated animals to travel in the cabin with their owners, in a special carrier under the seat in front of them.
- Airlines allow dogs and cats and sometimes rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters, or small household birds.
- Passengers usually pay a fee of \$99 to \$150 per flight, per pet.
- US law ensures that specially trained assistance dogs, such as guide dogs for people who are blind, can fly on all airlines under most conditions.



Many people say their pets are part of the family. If they need to go somewhere for work or vacation, they often want to take their animals along, which can affect where, when, and how they travel. In the past, owners traveling by air had to put their pets in the cargo hold, a separate area in a plane that's underneath where passengers sit. In recent years, more airlines have started allowing pet owners to bring small cats and dogs into the passenger cabin, as long as the animals are inside a special carrier. Many people are allergic to animals, however, and others don't feel comfortable around pets. So what do you think? Should pets be allowed on flights?

### Yes—they're cute and bring joy

Veterinarians say flights can be distressing for animals in the cargo hold, where they're away from their families. Putting pets in cargo can also be very stressful for their owners. Letting animals travel in the cabin makes sense. They don't take up much space, and owners can look after them during the entire flight. It also means owners won't have to board their animals at a kennel or leave them at home with sitters, which is nerve-wracking and expensive. Besides, having pets on a plane can cheer up fellow passengers and members of the flight crew. Adorable animals can help make air travel more fun for everyone.

### No—people are the priority

Airplanes simply aren't set up for pets. Is an animal really going to be happy and calm on a packed flight with lots of activity and noise? And the space under the seat is very small, which is probably not comfortable. If an owner wants to check on their pet and opens the carrier even a crack, the animal could get out and run around the plane. That's dangerous and stressful for the flight crew and other passengers. There's also the chance that some passengers on flights could have allergies to animals or be scared of them. It's not fair to force them to deal with someone else's pet in an enclosed space.

**YES**

### Three reasons why pets should be allowed on flights

- 1 The cargo hold is distressing and scary for pets. They'll be safe and calm in the cabin.
- 2 Pets won't have to be left at home with a sitter or boarded in a kennel, saving money for pets' owners.
- 3 Having pets on planes can make traveling more pleasant for some passengers and crew members.

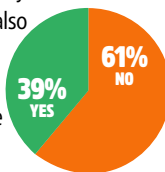
**NO**

### Three reasons why pets should not be allowed on flights

- 1 Pets don't belong in crowded, noisy, planes or tucked under a seat.
- 2 If an animal escapes from a carrier and runs around the plane, it's unsafe and stressful for everyone.
- 3 Some people are allergic to or afraid of animals. Their comfort and safety come before the well-being of an animal.

### LAST ISSUE'S POLL

Last issue, we asked if the driver should choose the car tunes. Most of you think passengers also get a say in what to play when they're on the road.



### What do you think?

Now that you've read a bit more about this issue, visit [kids.theweekjunior.com/polls](https://kids.theweekjunior.com/polls) so you can vote in our debate. Vote **YES** if you think pets should be allowed on flights or **NO** if you don't. We'll publish the results next week.

**The goal of the big debate** is to present two sides of an issue fairly in order to stimulate discussion and allow our readers to make up their minds. The views on this page do not reflect those of *The Week Junior*, and the page is not funded by third parties.





## Building tech for kids

Arjun Venkataswamy is a former high school math teacher now shaping technology that children use to learn. He's a lead developer of Amazon's Alexa Kids, a special version of the company's popular voice assistant, and he spoke to *The Week Junior* about his work.

### How did you begin your career?

I always loved building things, so I studied engineering in college. Then I became a high school math teacher. I was inspired by the great teachers I had growing up.

### What led you toward product development?

I think we all need to make sure kids have a great education, and with my engineering background, I was drawn to the intersection of education and technology. I went from teaching to consulting on software projects. Now I focus on creating engaging and safe experiences that cater to children's curiosity and learning preferences.

### What makes your job interesting?

I'm a product manager, so I oversee projects from concept to launch. This involves

understanding user needs and collaborating with engineers and designers to develop features that resonate with young users in particular. With Alexa, we noticed that kids ask a lot of questions about animals, so we wanted to enhance the experience and build on their curiosity.

One thing we did was bring in voice actors to answer questions as animal characters, such as an owl or a panda, as a fun alternative to the standard Alexa voice.



Alexa Kids devices

### What's your best advice for aspiring engineers?

Start playing and building now—don't wait until high school or college. Ask your teachers for help, and explore after-school clubs. With today's tools and resources, you'll be surprised by how quickly you can make your ideas real.



Arjun Venkataswamy

**FUN FACT**  
Amazon's Alexa voice assistant was inspired by a talking computer from the sci-fi TV series *Star Trek*.

## Big honor in books

Acclaimed cartoonist Roz Chast will receive the prestigious Best of Brooklyn (BoBi) award at the upcoming Brooklyn Book Festival in New York City. She is known for creating humorous *New Yorker* magazine illustrations and covers and her award-winning graphic memoirs. Chast has also illustrated children's books such as *The New Yorker Book of Kids' Cartoons* in 2001. The BoBi recognizes authors whose work captures Brooklyn's lively spirit, with past winners including children's book creators Jacqueline Woodson and Mo Willems.



Roz Chast



Udoth Ebaide Joy

## Riding into history

Nigerian biker Udoth Ebaide Joy has become the first Black woman to travel solo across East and West Africa on a motorcycle. The 32-year-old Afrobeats singer began her nearly 5,600-mile trip in Mombasa, Kenya, in early March, and completed it in Lagos, Nigeria, in late June. Joy rode through nine countries on a motorcycle named Rory, often riding more than 180 miles a day. Along the way, she made friends with local bikers and admired African landmarks such as Victoria Falls. "It made me decide that I will live my life to the fullest," Joy told the BBC.

## OVERHEARD

“ ”



**“There is no such thing as failure when you try.”**

Singer and actress Miley Cyrus, age 31, when accepting the Disney Legend Award at the D23 Expo, becoming its youngest recipient





# Animals and the environment



Australian sea lions

## Seals with sensors

To study how Earth's oceans are changing, a team of researchers in Antarctica fitted seals (below) with sensors that collect information on water temperature, pressure, and salt levels. Data they've collected has helped scientists understand how warm water affects melting ice shelves and learn about key spots where seals hunt for food.



## Sea lions help experts map the ocean

The ocean covers about 70% of Earth's surface, but only about 25% of the vast seafloor has been explored. To get a more complete picture of what lies under the waves, scientists in Australia have enlisted the help of sea lions wearing waterproof cameras.

Scientists typically use remotely operated vehicles and cameras to map the ocean floor, but this can be expensive, dangerous, and time-consuming. Sea lions, however, can dive 300 feet deep and cover distances quickly. They live partly on land but tend to swim out to sea for several days at a time, visiting different habitats across large areas of ocean.

For a new study, eight adult female sea lions from two colonies near South Australia were fitted with trackers and underwater video cameras. Each sea lion then returned to its normal life, diving in the waters near Kangaroo Island and Olive Island. The equipment recorded their locations and behavior while they engaged in activities such as foraging for food and teaching pups how to hunt.

Scientists studied about 89 hours of footage from 1,935 sea lion dives. The video footage showed six different seafloor habitats, including underwater meadows covered in seaweed, colorful sponge gardens, and reefs and boulders

inhabited by creatures like sea squirts and corals. Using the locations of these habitats and what was already known about the ocean floor, the team was also able to predict the terrain of some of the places the sea lions did not reach, which likely included more reefs and some areas of bare sand.

The footage provides a more complete picture of the ocean floor and how sea lions interact with their habitats. These results will help people better understand how to protect underwater habitats and the creatures that live in them, including sea lions and other endangered marine animals. Researcher Nathan Angelakis said that since studies of marine environments have traditionally been done from a human perspective, it was helpful to see the ocean from a sea lion's point of view. "I think that's an important shift," he said.



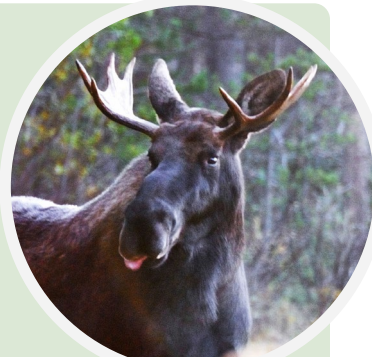
Attaching equipment to a sea lion's back



## PLACE OF THE WEEK

### Adirondack Mountains, New York

The Adirondack Mountains cover 6 million acres of land in northern New York. It's the largest protected natural area in the continental US, one of the first of its kind when it was created in 1892. The Adirondacks are made up of 12 counties, which include hiking trails and lakes (including Lake Placid, where the Winter Olympics have been held twice). More than 100 types of birds, including saw-whet owls and black-backed woodpeckers, live in the region. Black bears, coyotes, beavers, and moose can also be found throughout the mountains.



A moose





## SENDING A MESSAGE

Many poisonous frogs have brightly colored skin to warn predators that they are toxic.

A tomato frog



## Frogs make glue through their skin

Some frogs release a sticky, glue-like substance from their skin when they are attacked by a predator, such as a snake. Within seconds, the glue causes the frog to stick inside the other animal's mouth, preventing the predator from swallowing it. After a while, the frustrated predator may be forced to release the frog.

Although many studies have focused on poisonous frogs, little was known about this other defense mechanism until recently, when experts examined the glue of tomato frogs in Madagascar. Using high-powered

microscopes, they identified noodle-like proteins (chemical substances) that make the glue flexible, fast-acting, and strong.

The researchers also found similar proteins in another glue-producing species, Mozambique rain frogs. This suggests that a shared ancestor of both frogs may have developed a version of the proteins more than 100 million years ago. Eventually, each species developed the glue-making ability that saves its skin today. Scientists say the frogs' sticky slime could lead to the creation of new artificial glues for human use.

## Animal of the Week

Cagou



The cagou's population has almost tripled over the past seven years, scientists say. The flightless birds build their nests on the ground, making them easy prey, but recent steps to protect the endangered species have been successful.

- **LIFE SPAN:** 20 to 30 years
- **HABITAT:** Forests and shrubs in New Caledonia
- **SIZE:** About 21 to 30 inches, 1 to 2 pounds
- **DIET:** Lizards, worms, snails, and insects
- **FUN FACT:** The cagou's unusual call sounds similar to a small dog barking.



## Good week / Bad week



### Poweshiek skipperling

The John Ball Zoo in Michigan has released more than 1,200 Poweshiek skipperling butterflies into the wild as part of a conservation program. The endangered insects were once found across the Midwest, and experts hope they will recover.



### Japanese pavement ants

A honeybee species in Japan has a new strategy to defend itself against hive invasions by Japanese pavement ants. Researchers found that when an ant approaches, the bees use their wings to give the ant a powerful slap.



## "Why are some animals albino?"

Logan, 9, Maryland

### Bradley Lawrence

Animal curator,  
Phoenix Zoo

Albinism is a fairly rare condition in which an animal's body does not create melanin, a compound that produces color in skin, hair, scales, and feathers. In the wild, this poses challenges because most animals with albinism don't have the advantage of using their coloration to blend into their habitats.



An albino kangaroo

Do you have a question for an animal expert? Send it to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com). Learn more about the Phoenix Zoo at [phoenixzoo.org](http://phoenixzoo.org).





# Our contest winners!

More than 1,400 young photographers entered *The Week Junior's* annual Nature Photo Contest this year, sending in striking images of landscapes, trees, flowers, and animals. Every photograph displayed creativity, curiosity, skill, and an appreciation of the natural world.

The contest was divided into two categories: one for children ages 8 to 10 and one for ages 11 to 14. It was judged by Editor-in-Chief Andrea Barbalich, Creative Director Dean Abatemarco, Photo Editors Nataki Hewling and Lily Alt, and award-winning professional photographers Jesse Burke, Angela Ledyard, and Ami Vitale.

The judges had the challenging task of selecting 10 finalists in each age category, then a grand prize winner and two runners-up in each group. "The entries beautifully depicted just how stunning and astonishing nature can be when it's truly focused on," said Ledyard. "Every year I'm amazed at the incredible photo submissions we get, and this year's contest is no exception," Abatemarco said. "Congratulations to all our entrants and winners."

## ► "The Regal Eagle"

"This is a magical moment that allows us to see how majestic and beautiful this creature is in its natural habitat. I love that the focus is just on the bird, with the foreground and background blurred out. The beautiful lighting on the head and tail also accentuates the magnificence of this creature. Amazing shot!" — Jesse Burke



## ► "Glowing Gecko"

"The geometric arrangement of the gecko and leaf creates striking lines and shapes, enhancing the overall composition of the image. The masterful use of lighting and framing highlights the gecko's vibrant colors and intricate patterns, drawing the viewer's eye to both the subject and the elegance of its surroundings. Well done!" — Ami Vitale



## ▲ "Hershey Butterfly Atrium 2024"

"The butterfly is in perfect profile with its tongue circled up and closed, while the antennae are out and slightly moving, causing a little blur. That may be my favorite detail. I feel as if I'm looking at a moment in time that passed oh so very quickly, and I'm impressed that Rachael was able to capture this." — Jesse Burke



# Nature Photo Contest AGES 8-10



FINALIST  
**LEIYA**  
Age 9



FINALIST  
**AVISH**  
Age 8



FINALIST  
**YSATIS**  
Age 10



FINALIST  
**XAVIER**  
Age 9



FINALIST  
**MATYAS**  
Age 9



FINALIST  
**LYDIA**  
Age 10



FINALIST  
**JUNIPER**  
Age 10





# Nature Photo Contest AGES 11-14



## ◀ "Wild Eyes"

"This photo showcases a rare encounter. It was taken in the midst of an electrifying moment when the horses galloped toward the photographer's group. Congratulations to Twyla for the remarkable instinct to capture this encounter despite the initial impulse to move, highlighting the raw vitality of nature." —Ami Vitale



## ▲ "Transitioning Tree Frogs"

"What draws me to this photograph is the stark black background. I also love the fact that there is evidence of little tails on the tree frogs. It allows me to know that they're in a transitional state. I love how simple and clean the image is." —Jesse Burke

## ▶ "Speckled Bush Cricket Nymph on Yarrow Flowers"

"The position of the cricket on the plant makes this such a striking image. The diagonal lines of the white yarrow flowers balance with the green background, while the angle of the cricket runs opposite. The antennae bring it all together. Great composition!"

—Angela Ledyard





# Nature Photo Contest **AGES 11-14**



FINALIST  
**CADENCE**  
Age 12



FINALIST  
**WYNLAND**  
Age 12



FINALIST  
**ERICKSON**  
Age 11



FINALIST  
**FAITH**  
Age 13



FINALIST  
**MADISON**  
Age 11

FINALIST  
**TESSA**  
Age 12



FINALIST  
**NAVIKA**  
Age 12







## New theory on ancient pyramids

Scientists may have solved the mystery of how Egypt's oldest pyramid was constructed thousands of years ago. A new study concluded that ancient Egyptians used a sophisticated water system to build the Step Pyramid of Djoser, which is named after the Egyptian pharaoh (ruler) Djoser.

Built about 4,700 years ago, the pyramid is made of stone and clay and stands 197 feet tall. It is designed in six layers arranged like steps. Researchers have never been able to confirm how it—or any of the Egyptian pyramids—were built with heavy materials in a time before construction equipment, like cranes, existed.

A team of scientists led by Xavier Landeau of the CEA Paleotechnic Institute in France used a computer program to model different construction methods. They also studied maps and a nearby structure, known as the Gisir el-Mudir enclosure. The enclosure's purpose has been unclear to scientists for many years. In the study, however, the researchers determined that it was once a dam that held water from a nearby river.

The team believes that ancient Egyptians used the dam to create a “float” system to

move heavy stones and other construction materials. The water traveled through a moat and a series of tunnels and trenches, which served to filter dirt and debris out of it.

The clean water then pooled in a well 92 feet under the pyramid, filling two shafts inside the structure. As the water level rose, it worked like an elevator, carrying stones upward. The water could be drained and refilled as needed. The technique was likely used with other construction methods, like ramps.

This is not the first study to suggest that water played a role in building the pyramids. Earlier this year, scientists found that a branch of the Nile River once flowed near many pyramids. They suggested that the waterway was used to transport workers and building materials.

Some scientists have said they do not agree with Landeau's findings, however. One archaeologist (scientist who studies objects left by people long ago) told *Science News* that the Gisir el-Mudir structure would not have held enough water to power the lift system. Landeau and his team said there is more work to be done to further confirm their findings.



A statue of King Djoser

### Dozens of tombs discovered



Some of the objects that were found

Archaeologists working in the Egyptian city of Damietta uncovered 63 tombs full of treasure dating back 2,600 years. Damietta was once an important trade center. Egyptian officials said the latest find could help experts learn more about the city's role in international commerce.

The tombs held figurines that ancient Egyptians believed would help the dead in the afterlife. These are believed to come from Egypt's 26th Dynasty of the Late Period, which ran from about 664 to 525 BCE. Experts also found a ceramic vase containing 38 bronze coins (shown above), which is believed to have come from the Ptolemaic Era that ran from 323 to 30 BCE. Another tomb where wealthy and influential people were buried held Egyptian idols and religious symbols covered in gold foil.





## Arm bone changes ideas about “Hobbit” human

A new study found that a tiny human relative, nicknamed the “Hobbit,” was even smaller than scientists thought. Researchers examined 700,000-year-old fossils to gain insight into the species, called *Homo floresiensis*, which belonged to a group of human species called hominins.

The first *H. floresiensis* fossils were found in 2003 in the Liang Bua cave on Flores island in Indonesia. Scientists believed it was about 3 feet, 6 inches tall, with big feet and a small brain about one third the size of a modern human’s. But they were puzzled by its place on the human family tree.

The latest fossils, found in 2016 at a nearby site named Mata Menge, include eight teeth, part of a jaw, and an

upper arm bone. Based on the arm bone’s measurements, the scientists concluded that it belonged to someone who was no more than 3 feet, 4 inches tall. The fossil showed signs that the individual had stopped growing,

however, meaning it was an adult. The scientists said that indicates that the *H. floresiensis* individuals at Mata Menge were shorter than those found at Liang Bua.

The team said *H. floresiensis* was so small because of where it lived. They believe it descended from a hominin called *Homo erectus*, which arrived on Flores about a million years ago. *H. erectus* did not have any big predators on the small island. Since it didn’t need to be large to survive, it shrank over time and became *H. floresiensis*.

**WOW!**  
There have been many human species, but only one has survived: *Homo sapiens*, also known as modern humans.



The Mata Menge arm bone (far left) next to a Liang Bua arm bone and the *H. floresiensis* skeleton it came from

5 cm



The gold from e-waste as a powder (right) and a solid nugget

## Turning garbage into gold in the UK

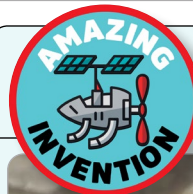
The Royal Mint, which makes the UK’s coins, is using a chemical process to extract gold from e-waste, like old mobile phones and laptops, and turning it into jewelry and coins.

Each year, more than 68 million tons of e-waste is produced globally. It often contains precious metals like gold, silver, and copper but is burned or thrown into a landfill, which harms the planet. The metals go to waste.

In the new process, the e-waste is dipped in a chemical solution that

extracts the gold. The solution is filtered, leaving behind pure gold powder. The process takes seconds, is less harmful to the planet, and removes more than 99% of gold.

As people use fewer coins, the mint has been losing income. This new process could bring in up to \$35 million a year, which would help the mint continue to operate and keep its employees. Next, experts hope to expand the technology to collect other precious metals.



## Water that is made from air



A can of SKY WTR

Most bottled water is taken from underground sources, which are a limited resource. But a new type of canned water is pulling moisture from thin air at a solar-powered “water farm.”

SKY WTR uses “hydropanel” technology. Solar panels power fans that draw in air and push it

through a material that absorbs moisture. The moisture is collected as clean, filtered water. Because the process is powered entirely by sunlight, it can take place in remote, dry locations. The company that makes SKY WTR hopes it could help address a global water shortage.





# Sports

## Athletes shine at the Paralympics

The 2024 Paralympic Games, an international sports event for athletes with physical, visual, or intellectual impairments, took place in Paris, France, from August 28 to September 8. The Games were held at the same venues as the Paris Olympics and featured 22 sports and 549 medal events. China won 220 medals, the most of any country. Great Britain finished in second with 124, and Team USA had the third most with 105, including 36 golds. Here is a look at some highlights from the competition.

### PARA SWIMMING

Star swimmer Jessica Long earned two of Team USA's 30 medals in the pool. First, she pulled off a big comeback to win the women's 400-meter freestyle S8, the same event she won at the Paralympics in 2004 when she was age 12. (In some Paralympic sports, athletes with similar disabilities compete against one another, so competitions are labeled by disability classification.) Then, she won gold in the 100-meter butterfly S8. It was the 18th gold medal and 31st overall medal of her career.

Among Team USA's other swimming standouts was Ali Truwit,

who was competing for the first time as a Paralympian. Truwit, a former member of Yale University's swim team, was bitten by a shark in 2023 and part of her left leg had to be amputated. She won silvers in the women's 100-meter backstroke S10 and 400-meter freestyle S10.

### WHEELCHAIR RUGBY

Sarah Adam, the first woman to compete on Team USA's wheelchair rugby team, helped the US reach the gold medal match on September 2. They lost to Japan, 48–41, but Adam and teammate Chuck Aoki were the top scorers for the US in the game with 14 tries (goals) each.



Sarah Adam

### PARA ATHLETICS

Team USA won a total of 38 medals in track and field. After earning a silver in the 100-meter T54, a wheelchair race, and a bronze in the mixed 4x100

meter universal relay, a mixed disability race, seven-time Paralympian Tatyana McFadden became the most decorated American track and field athlete of all time, Olympian or Paralympian. One of her relay teammates, Hunter Woodhall, also won the men's 400-meter sprint T62. His wife, Tara Davis-Woodhall, won the long jump gold at this year's Olympics.



**TRIPLE VICTORY**  
For the third straight Paralympics, Team USA won gold in women's sitting volleyball.

The top finishers from the men's 400-meter T62 race: Johannes Floors of Germany (silver), Hunter Woodhall of the US (gold), and Olivier Hendricks of the Netherlands (bronze)

### PARA CYCLING

Members of the US para cycling team won eight medals. Six-time Paralympian Oksana Masters, who has competed in cross-country skiing (sitting) and biathlon in the past, won golds in two events: the women's road race H5 and the women's individual time trial H4-5. She has now won 19 Paralympic medals overall, including eight golds. Elouan Gardon, age 18 and the youngest-ever member of the US para cycling team, won a bronze medal in the men's 4,000-meter individual pursuit C5 event. He had never raced in a cycling event before this summer.

### PARA ARCHERY

Matt Stutzman, who is known as the "armless archer," won gold for the US by defeating China's Ai Xinliang in the compound archery championship match on September 1. Stutzman had entered the elimination round in 19th place. This was his fourth Paralympics and first Paralympic gold.

### WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

On September 7, the US men's team secured their third consecutive gold medal by defeating Great Britain, 73–69. They are the first men's wheelchair basketball team to win three Paralympic golds. The next day, the US women took silver after losing to the defending champions, the Netherlands, 63–49.

### PARA TAEKWONDO

On August 29, Zakia Khudadadi of Afghanistan made history by becoming the first athlete from the Refugee Paralympic Team (RPT) to win a medal. The RPT is for people who have had to leave their home countries due to war, conflict, or human rights violations. Khudadadi won bronze in the women's 47 kilogram category. "This medal means everything to me," she said afterward.



Oksana Masters



Matt Stutzman





**WOW!**

At the US Open, Aryna Sabalenka hit forehand balls at an average speed of 80 miles per hour.



Aryna Sabalenka



Jannik Sinner

## New US Open champions crowned

The US Open tennis tournament took place from August 26 to September 8 in Queens, New York. It is one of the four most prestigious tennis competitions in the world, known as Grand Slams. This year, the women's singles champion was Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus, the second-ranked women's player in the world, and the men's singles champion was Jannik Sinner of Italy, the number one men's player. It was the first time either had won the US Open singles title.

Although an American did not win a US Open title this year, US players had a great showing. For the first time since 2003, two American men and two American women made a Grand Slam singles semifinal. Those that advanced to the final were sixth-seeded (ranked) Jessica Pegula, who had knocked out the number one women's player,

Iga Swiatek, in the quarterfinals, and 12th-seeded Taylor Fritz. He became the first American man to reach a Grand Slam final since 2009.

In the women's final on September 7, Sabalenka beat Pegula in two sets, 7-5, 7-5. Pegula came back from being down 5-2 in the first set before Sabalenka won it. She came close to taking the second, but Sabalenka held her off and won four games in a row to secure her victory. She now has three career Grand Slam titles.

In the men's final the next day, Sinner beat Fritz in three sets, 6-3, 6-4, 7-5. After dropping the first two, Fritz had an opportunity to win the third set and keep the match going. He was up 5-3 at one point, but Sinner responded by winning the final four games and earning his second career major title.

## SPOTLIGHT ON...



### Rachael Rose

AGE: 22 SPORT: BASKETBALL  
TEAM: WOFFORD COLLEGE

**Family game** I've been around basketball my whole life. My four siblings played, and I grew up going to my older brother's games at Binghamton University and my older sister's practices. I love the competitiveness of basketball and how five individuals can come together as one.

**Role model** Growing up, I loved watching Moriah Jefferson play for UConn. She is 5-foot-6, and I am 5-foot-7. I was constantly told that as a player I am "too small." Watching someone my size win four National Championships motivated me to keep working and prove people wrong.



**Workout plan** I spend as much time as I can in the gym every day. In the offseason, I work on creating new skills while improving techniques. I practice difficult shots so I'm confident taking them. I always finish my days by making 100 free throws. I do a long-distance run once a week and hill sprints twice a week to help build mental toughness.

**Court mentality** Losing is never fun, but it helps you remember how good it feels to win. I take losing very seriously, and it helps me work harder.

**Top goals** My biggest accomplishment was winning the regular-season Southern Conference Championship in 2023. This upcoming season, my last one in a Terrier jersey, I want to win the SoCon championship and make the NCAA tournament.

**Her advice** Know the difference between "hard work" and "outwork." If you strive to outwork everyone, you'll always be one step ahead.



## COACH OF THE WEEK

Coach's Name: **Fred Egerer**

Team: **State College Warriors Lacrosse**

**"Coach Fred is the best coach for lacrosse you could ever have! If we are having problems, he takes time to help us. During games, when we are on the sidelines he helps us improve! He takes risks, but it always works out. He worked on playing goalie with me and made it really fun! He got people to play positions they didn't know they would love. Last but definitely not least, he lets us scrimmage or play something else really fun!"** Katrina, 11, Pennsylvania



To nominate a Coach of the Week, send your coach's name, photo, sport, and team to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com). Include your name, age, state, and a few reasons why your coach is great.





# Arts and entertainment



## Inside the world of Pixar

A traveling exhibit reveals how the animation studio uses science and technology to create its films.

An exhibit at the Carnegie Science Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, is giving movie fans a chance to learn how computer-animated films are made. *The Science Behind Pixar* takes visitors through every phase of production and highlights how the films incorporate science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). The exhibit has been touring the US and will be in Pittsburgh until January 5.

*The Science Behind Pixar* was developed by the Museum of

Science, Boston, and Pixar Animation Studios, the company that created films such as *Toy Story*, *Finding Nemo*, and *The Incredibles*. In the exhibit's introductory movie, visitors learn that one animated scene can be lit by 230 virtual lights. "You never think about how much work and detail go into these films until you see something like this," Carnegie Science Center director Jason Brown told *The Week Junior*.

There are more than 50 hands-on interactive activities in the exhibition, including one where visitors use magnetic

robot body parts to build a friend for the character WALL-E and one about how gravity affects the way an animated character moves. The exhibit also features personal stories from animators about their lives and careers. "Even if you are a super art-focused person, it's important to understand and appreciate how technology can help you hone your craft," Brown said.

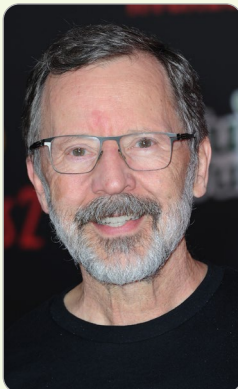
Brown told *The Week Junior* he hopes the exhibit will inspire the museum's visitors — and that each person will find at least one element that will "make them think differently, excite them, or foster a rush of creativity."



### 3 facts about Pixar

#### Early days

The studio was founded in 1986 by Edwin Catmull (right), Alvy Ray Smith, and Apple co-founder Steve Jobs. There were 40 employees at the start, and Pixar now has more than 1,200.



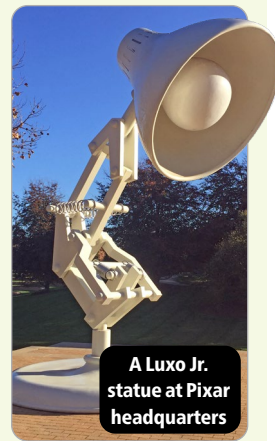
#### Historic hits

Pixar's first feature film, 1995's *Toy Story*, was the world's first entirely computer-animated movie. This summer, the studio's film *Inside Out 2* (right) became the highest-grossing animated feature of all time. It has earned more than \$1.6 billion worldwide.



#### Star symbol

Luxo Jr. was a lamp character in Pixar's 1986 short film *Luxo Jr.*, the first 3D computer-animated film nominated for an Oscar (top film award). The lamp became an icon for Pixar and appears at the start of its films.







Omnium Circus

## A circus that celebrates diversity

Circus companies are known for impressing and amazing their audiences with incredible feats. The mission of Omnium Circus, which is currently touring the US, is to open people's eyes in those ways and more. It includes able-bodied performers as well as several with different abilities, such as a dancer who uses a wheelchair and a deaf poet who performs using American Sign Language. The circus will stop in Arizona, New Jersey, New York, and North Carolina this fall, then travel to more states in the spring.

Omnium Circus was founded by Lisa B. Lewis, who is now its executive director. She told *The Week Junior* she wanted the circus to include performers of different races, genders, and abilities so anyone could see the show and feel represented onstage. "Omnium is the Latin word for 'of all and belonging to all,'" she said. Each performance is designed to be accessible

to attendees with different abilities, too, she said, so everyone can experience the magic of a circus.

Not all Omnium Circus stars are in every show, but company members include Stephanie Little Thunder Morphet-Tepp, a hair hang performer who is of Indigenous (first people to inhabit an area) heritage; the King Charles

Troupe, a unicycle basketball team; and record-holding speed juggler Tersit

Asefa Dersu. One of the show's aerialists, Jen Bricker-Bauer, was born without legs. She performs moves while hanging onto long silks attached to the ceiling. In addition, the circus' music, which is pre-recorded, is performed by people with disabilities.

Lewis would like audience members to leave each show seeing the magic in everyone, both onstage and off. "It plants seeds of change for our whole society," she said.



Stephanie Little Thunder Morphet-Tepp

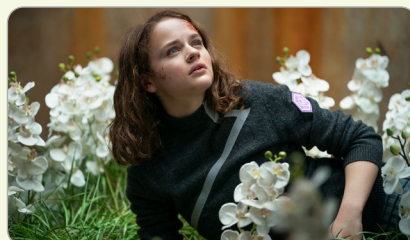


## THIS WEEK'S WATCH LIST



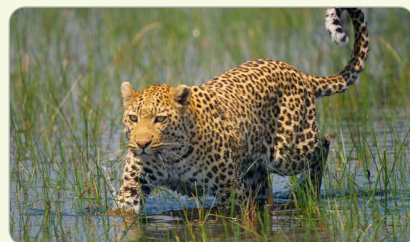
### Lego Star Wars: Rebuild the Galaxy (Disney+)

In this new *Lego Star Wars* special, nerf-herder Sig Greebling uncovers a powerful artifact in a hidden Jedi temple. It thrusts him into a warped galaxy where heroes are villains and villains are heroes. Sig must become the unexpected savior who can restore balance and set things right.



### Uglies (Netflix)

Based on the best-selling sci-fi books by Scott Westerfield, this new film is set in a future where everyone has mandatory cosmetic surgery at age 16 to become "Pretties." When teen Tally Youngblood's friend goes missing, she uncovers dark truths about her world. It is rated PG-13.



### Big Cats 24/7 (PBS)

Travel to Botswana's Okavango Delta for an up-close look at the daily lives of lions, leopards, and cheetahs. In this documentary, cameras follow the big cats day and night as they face wildfires and droughts, hunt for food, and protect their young.



## READER RECOMMENDS



### Holes PG (Hulu, Disney+, or rent on other platforms)

"This super-cool movie is based on a novel by Louis Sachar. It is about a boy named Stanley Yelnats, whose family has been cursed because of his 'no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing great-great-grandfather.' After Stanley is mistakenly blamed for stealing expensive sneakers, he gets sent to Camp Green Lake. Kids there have to dig huge holes in the desert, allegedly to build character. He meets kids with nicknames like Zero, X-Ray, and Armpit. My favorite is Squid because he's tough but also funny. *Holes* is an awesome movie with lots of adventure, mystery, and cool characters." David, 12, Wisconsin

Do you have a film or TV show to recommend to other kids? Send your review to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com).





## On screen

**GLOBAL GAME**

Quiddball, a sport inspired by quidditch, is played in nearly 40 countries.



**Harry Potter:  
Quidditch Champions**

# A sports game for Harry Potter fans

**H**arry Potter: Quidditch Champions is a magical new sports game. It is out now for the PlayStation systems, Xbox platforms, and PC. The Nintendo Switch version will be released in the fall.

As Harry Potter fans know, quidditch is a team sport played while flying on broomsticks. Players try to score points by throwing a ball called a quaffle through hoops, while another player chases a ball called a snitch. The last quidditch video game came out in 2003.

Quidditch Champions features several different game modes, challenges, and competitions. As a free game, it kicks off with six distinct characters you can control, including Harry Potter, Ron and Ginny Weasley, and Draco Malfoy. More are likely to be made available, whether by earning them in the game or in paid expansion packs. You can also create other

characters or even put your own avatar on one of the teams: Gryffindor, Ravenclaw, Hufflepuff, or Slytherin. All of the sport's four positions—chaser, seeker, keeper, or beater—are playable, but it may take time to get the hang of riding through traffic, firing balls through hoops, stopping shots, and seeking out the elusive golden snitch. Plus, the action on the pitch is fast.

The game's main solo adventure is Career Mode, which starts a player off as a young recruit for the school team. Your character can practice at the Burrow, the Weasley family's home, then compete at Hogwarts Academy and its rival schools. After those competitions, it's on to the big Quidditch World Cup.

Of course, since quidditch is a team sport, you don't have to play the game alone. You can compete with friends in local matches or even team up in online mode for some winning magic.



**Draco Malfoy**



### PODCAST OF THE WEEK

#### POPCORN BRAINSTORM! JOKES & TRIVIA FOR KIDS

All major platforms

Each episode of this podcast covers a Netflix series or movie and related trivia. The show about *Jurassic World: Chaos Theory*, for example, is filled with dinosaur facts, while the *Unicorn Academy* episode reveals which country's symbol is a unicorn.



### WEBSITE OF THE WEEK



#### ZOOBORNS

[zooborns.com](http://zooborns.com)

This site covers news about animal births at the world's top zoos and aquariums. You'll also find live webcams, including one from the penguin enclosure at the Maryland Zoo, the Kansas City Zoo and Aquarium's polar bear cam, and a collection of photos and videos of newborn animals.



### VIDEO OF THE WEEK

#### WHY WE SAY "OK"

[tinyurl.com/TWJUS-WhyOK](https://tinyurl.com/TWJUS-WhyOK)

Learn about the surprising history of the term "OK." This video traces its roots back to Boston, Massachusetts, in the 1830s and explores its connections to the language of the Choctaw Nation. It also examines why brands like Kleenex and Kraft wanted to have "K" in their names.







## BOOK OF THE WEEK

# Gracie Under the Waves

By Linda Sue Park

(HarperCollins)

Gracie convinces her parents to take the family on a snorkeling trip to Honduras, a country in Central America, over school break. Even her younger brother, Ben, who didn't like the feel of a snorkeling mask a few years ago, is excited to see the colorful fish near the coral reefs. When they arrive in Roatán, an island off the coast, they snorkel at a small reef and spot several species of fish, including the vibrantly colored Fairy Basslet. But when they're snorkeling the next time, Ben accidentally bumps into Gracie and she cuts her leg on the coral. The wound becomes infected and she needs to spend a few days out of the water. Her family travels to a nearby marine park, where they learn that the coral reefs are in danger from pollution, climate change, and other factors. The more Gracie learns about the reefs, the more she wants to help. What can she do when she can't even go in the ocean? Filled with facts about marine life, this short novel provides ideas about how you can help protect coral reefs. Subplots involving sibling squabbles and a new friendship make the story even more



## ASK THE AUTHOR

### Linda Sue Park

We spoke to the author of the Book of the Week.

#### What inspired this book?

My love of snorkeling and my concern for the planet.

#### Do you share characteristics with Gracie?

Like Gracie, I love planning things, and we are both older sisters. But my little brother was not quite as difficult as hers!

#### How can kids help the environment?

Talk about it and think about it every day. Keeping the

environment front of mind will help you spread the word about its importance to others.

#### What's your favorite vacation memory?

It was the first time I saw the ocean. I grew up in Illinois, and when I was 8 years old, we went to Massachusetts. I thought the ocean was so cool.

#### Dream vacation spot?

My favorite trip was snorkeling in the Galápagos Islands in the Pacific Ocean.



## 4 books to celebrate Hispanic culture

Hispanic Heritage Month takes place from September 15 to October 15.



### Benny Ramirez and the Nearly Departed

By José Pablo Iriarte

(Knopf Books for Young Readers)

Benny is the only person who can see the ghost of his grandfather, who was a famous musician. He teaches Benny how to play the trumpet, and the results will have you laughing out loud. This ghost story is more heartwarming than scary. Ages 8–12

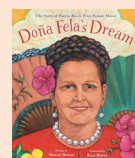


### The Daggers of Ire

By J. C. Cervantes

(HarperCollins)

The author of the popular Storm Runner series has written a new fantasy novel. Esmerelda is the descendant of a witch, and she wants to find a spell that will make her father less sad about her mother's death. But then a storm hits the town and all the magic disappears. It's up to Esmerelda to save the place she loves. Ages 8–12



### Doña Fela's Dream

By Monica Brown,

illustrated by Rosa Ibarra

(Little, Brown Books for Young Readers)

Felisa Rincón de Gautier (1897–1994) was the first female mayor of San Juan, the capital city of Puerto Rico, a Caribbean island that is a US territory. She was affectionately known as Doña Fela. This picture-book biography explores her inspiring life. Ages 6 and up



### Maven Takes the Lead

By Yamile Saied Méndez

(HarperCollins)

In the first installment of a new Girl Scouts Novel series, Maven volunteers to lead her class at her school's robotics competition. Some classmates doubt her abilities, but she intends to prove them wrong. This inspiring story is likely to appeal to fans of series like The Baby-Sitters Club or The Questioners. Ages 8–12

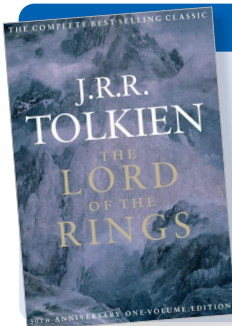


## READER RECOMMENDS

### The Lord of the Rings By J.R.R. Tolkien

"This book follows Frodo, a hobbit from the Shire, as he journeys to the Dark Lord's realm to destroy the Ring of Power by throwing it into lava. At his side are many others, including his faithful companion Samwise. The constant action will keep you on the edge of your seat, and I admire Samwise's unwavering loyalty and love for Frodo throughout the series." Eliana, 11, Missouri

Do you have a book to recommend? Send your review to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com).







## How to...

### DID YOU KNOW?

The American Discovery Trail is the longest trail in the US—about 6,800 miles across 15 states.



# Go for a hike outdoors

Enjoy the sights and sounds of nature while taking a long walk.

Now is a great time of year to take a hike—which is really a long walk in nature. The weather is cooler, the days are still fairly long, and trees may be just beginning to change color. Choose a weekend morning or afternoon, and ask family and friends to head out for a hike with you. Here's how.

### Pick a path

The first step is to choose where you're going. You can keep it simple and walk around a local park. Or you could make the walk more of a hike and head to a trail at a local nature preserve or state park. To find family-friendly trails near you, go to [alltrails.com](https://alltrails.com). You can search for trails by different criteria, such as how close they are to home, length, or level of difficulty.

### Get prepared

You'll want to wear sturdy sneakers or hiking boots. Add an extra layer of clothing, such as a light jacket, that you can put on and take off as needed. Grab a backpack that you can use to carry a hat, water, and nutritious snacks, like trail mix or apples. You could also pack extras, such as binoculars for viewing animals from a distance and a pencil and notebook for sketching.

### Add excitement

To get your group to take notice of nature on your walk, you could create a scavenger hunt. Make a list of items to look for. At the start of the hike, distribute copies of the list with pencils. As hikers find the items, they cross them off their list. The goal is to be the person who finds the most items. Your list could include flowers or leaves of different colors, spider webs, and mushrooms.

### Seek out signs of animals

If you see flattened plants, it may be a sign that an animal was recently resting there. Animal tracks, feathers, nests, and animal droppings are also signs that animals live in the area. If your hike takes you near a stream or lake, you may be more likely to see animals, since many like to be near a water source.

### Tread lightly

One of the main rules of spending time in nature is to "leave no trace." This means you want to leave the trail as it was when you found it. Carry out all your trash, and don't take any leaves, flowers, or branches from trees or bushes. You want to keep them there for the wildlife and other hikers to enjoy.



Look for fall colors.

### Types of trail markers



Many trails have markers to help guide you on the path. Here are a few kinds and what they mean.

**Blazes** Trails may use a system of "blazes" (marks) painted on trees or rocks. Colors have different meanings depending on the trail. For example, white rectangles may mark a trail's path. Find out what the blazes on your trail mean before you start your hike.

**Affixed markers** Some trails use markers made of metal, plastic, or wood. They are often nailed to trees at eye level.

**Flags** Some trails are marked with flagging tape or ribbon tied around trees and are meant to be easily spotted from the trail.





## FUN FACT

Sneakers got their name in the 1880s from their quiet rubber soles, which allowed wearers to “sneak” up on others.



# Doodle fun designs on your sneakers

## What you'll need

- Canvas sneakers
- Pencil
- White eraser
- Water-based acrylic paint pens, like Posca (note: permanent markers might bleed)
- Optional: tissue paper or newspaper to stuff into the sneakers

## Instructions

1. Ask a parent for permission before you decorate a pair of sneakers.
2. Decide on a design. You can pick a theme (like food, dogs, or music) or draw a mix of things.
3. Pick a palette. You could use all the colors in the rainbow or stick to a simple black-and-white scheme. You could also choose a limited palette. Black and yellow were used for the dog sneaker shown above, for example.
4. If you want a firm surface for drawing, stuff sneakers with tissue paper or newspaper.
5. Optional: You can lightly sketch a design in pencil first. Use a white eraser to make corrections. Wipe off the eraser dust completely.
6. Use the paint pens to make doodles. To keep the colors clean and bright, start with lighter colors and let them dry.
7. Layer on the darker colors, such as black outlines, last. Allow them to dry, and enjoy!



## LIFE HACK

## BRIGHTEN YOUR FRIEND'S DAY

Offering a kind word to someone can make their day. So why don't people do it more often? Research shows that many people underestimate the positive impact their words have on others. If you want to brighten someone's day, try giving a compliment. Be sincere. For example, you might tell a friend that you noticed something amazing they recently did or said. You can also make someone feel better with encouragement when they need it, such as, "Hey, you've got this!" You could also offer a gesture to brighten a friend's day, such as by sharing a special playlist or simply reaching out to make a plan to spend time together.

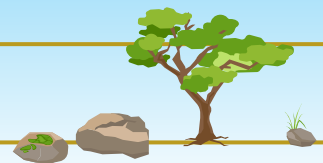


Your words can lift others.





# Puzzles



## Keyword crossword

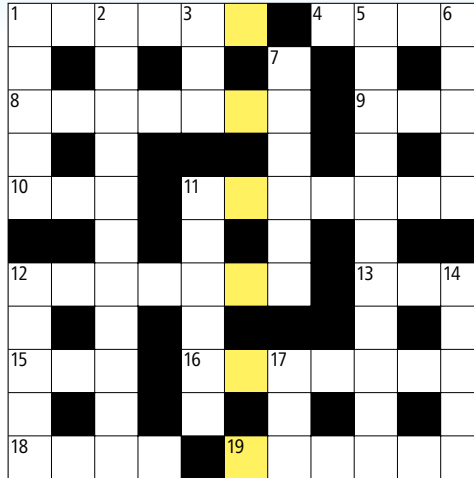
Once you have completed the crossword, transfer the letters in the yellow boxes, in order, into the boxes below to get the answer to the Keyword question.

### ACROSS

- 1 One of the theater masks represents this
- 4 Sport with a miniature version
- 8 Coating for an apple on Halloween
- 9 Item inside a shirt showing size or laundry instructions
- 10 The "smoke" that rises from a volcano is actually this
- 11 Fall suddenly and quickly from a great height
- 12 System of writing designed to be touched, not seen
- 13 Drink served hot in the winter and iced in the summer
- 15 Hooting bird
- 16 Preparing hot food
- 18 Bird of prey known for its long-distance vision
- 19 Roald Dahl or Judy Blume, for example

### DOWN

- 1 Powdered ingredient in hot chocolate
- 2 Floating treat in hot chocolate
- 3 Structure built to hold back water
- 5 Kind of doctor who asks if you can read rows of letters
- 6 Have a battle
- 7 Loose-fitting shirt a woman may wear
- 11 Home fit for a king or queen
- 12 Open structure for a carnival game
- 14 *Inside Out* character depicted as flaming, boxy, and red
- 17 Item used to move a rowboat



Keyword question: What color is the easiest to see at night?



## CODE CRACKER

In this coded list of things that have numbers on them, every letter has been replaced with a substitute. The same substitutions are used throughout the list. Hint: Every X here is an uncoded C. Use the letter patterns you find to crack the code.

☒ ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐  
X M S X H

☐ ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐  
L A X H S N X F Q L T

☐ ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐ ☐  
U F Q X S L A

☒ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐  
X F M A W L F Q

ANSWERS  
CAN BE  
FOUND ON  
PAGE 29.

## THREE FOR ALL

Sort this list into three familiar three-part phrases, like THREE-RING CIRCUS or SALT LAKE CITY.

OVER THAT ABOUT PASSING BEND  
THROUGH BACKWARDS HOW JUST

## Cutting room

Divide this grid into five sections so each section consists of five adjacent boxes containing the numbers 1–5. The sections may have different shapes. (NEED A HINT? Check the bottom of the page.)

2	2	4	2	4
3	1	3	5	1
1	5	2	3	5
2	4	3	5	1
1	5	4	3	4

## Spot the difference

These two pictures of a nature hike appear to be the same, but take a closer look. There are actually five differences. Can you see them?







Inside the hot-pink property

## A paradise decorated in pink

A home that looks like a real-life Barbie Dreamhouse was recently put up for sale in New Jersey. The house was fully decorated in bubblegum pink and had three bedrooms, a home theater, and a gaming and craft room. Homeowner Kate Gabrielle said movies from the 1960s inspired the decor. Although the property didn't immediately attract a buyer, its colorful style was popular on social media. One fan said, "I feel like it would be impossible to have a bad day living here."



Go big and go home.

## Man has a giant-sized hobby

Meet the UK man making gigantic clothespins, keys, pencils, and plugs. Steve Wainwright started making huge versions of everyday objects after retiring from working as a paramedic. He said, "I looked at my tape measure and thought, 'I wonder if I can build this 10 times its size?'" So he set about making a giant tape measure the size of a table. Wainwright said he decided to make all his items 10 times their original size because the math was easy to do. He now displays the colossal creations around his house, where they are a hit with people passing by.



Swing by sometime!

## Swing with a dazzling view

Thrill seekers can now fly 393 feet above Berlin, Germany, on Europe's highest swing. Visitors take the elevator up to the 35th floor of the Park Inn Hotel and then climb a few stairs to reach the swing, which is on the hotel's roof. People pay about \$27 per ride and wear a harness for safety. The minimum age to ride is 14, and riders ages 18 and under must have permission from a parent or guardian. The swing has attracted more than 100 visitors a day since it opened in June. One visitor said, "After the first few swings, you get used to it and you feel free."



Are rats living the suite life?

## The five-star rodent resort

It's not just humans who need vacations—even rodents sometimes need to take a break from the rat race and put their paws up. Now Leanne Brydon is offering luxury stays for rodents at Arlo's Ratty Hotel in Blackpool, England. Brydon has five rodents of her own and started the hotel to look after rats when their owners are on vacation. The new guest house offers "five-star" treatment for up to 15 rats at a time, with toy-filled cages and room to roam free in the evenings. Is this story real, or have you sniffed out a lie?\*

\*"Real! Brydon set up the hotel at her house after struggling to find someone to care for her pets when she went away. She named the hotel after her pet rat, Arlo. "I just absolutely love rats," said Brydon. "I'd fill my house with rats if I could."





# Your turn

## Editor's note

Every year when the entries to our Nature Photo Contest start coming in, our staff is amazed by the quality and quantity of the submissions. This year more than 1,400 children from across the US sent in an image, and each one was impressive. We spent hours deciding on the finalists, the runners-up, and the winners—and it wasn't easy! Ultimately, the grand prizes went to Twyla in the 11–14 age group and Aayush in the 8–10 age group. You can see their winning photos on our front and back covers as well as in our full coverage of the results, which includes the runners-up and finalists in each group (p12–15). Our most enthusiastic congratulations to all of them and to every child who entered. Thank you, also, to our esteemed judges, professional photographers Jesse Burke, Angela Ledyard, and Ami Vitale. They all commented on how thoughtful, creative, and respectful of nature the entries were. We agree!

**Andrea Barbalich**  
Editor-in-Chief



## Providing food during school breaks

“This year I received a \$250 grant from environmentalist Jane Goodall's Roots and Shoots program for my project idea “Pantry Packs.” With the grant money and other donations from my school and community, I made food packs for students who might go without something to eat on the weekends and during breaks from school. I was able to make about 140 packs for students. I was also able to provide extra boxes of snacks that local schools could distribute to students before spring break. My school and friends and family helped to make the project so much bigger than my original proposal. I really enjoy helping others and hope to do this again in the future.”



Amelia, 12, Missouri

Have you done something interesting or raised money for a cause you care about? Whatever you're up to, we want to hear about it at [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com).

**RIDDLE OF THE WEEK**  
What word is always pronounced incorrectly?  
“Incorrectly”

## CHARITY OF THE WEEK



### American Institute for Stuttering

This group supports people with stuttering (a communication disorder involving disruptions in a person's speech). It offers speech therapy for children and adults and provides access to opportunities to practice public speaking in a safe space. It also counsels parents on creating a supportive home environment. Find out more at [stutteringtreatment.org](http://stutteringtreatment.org).



## Nominate a charity!

If there's a nonprofit you'd like to see featured in the Charity of the Week column (at left), we'd love to hear about it. We are eager to feature national organizations that receive top scores for effectively helping others. Write two to three sentences explaining what the group you're nominating does and why it's important. Please include a link to the group's website, along with your first name, age, and the US state you live in. Have an adult email your nomination to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com). Some organizations may be featured in future issues.



**THE WEEK**  
Junior

**IT'S YOUR TURN**

Email your news, views, and photos to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com).





## BOOKS YOU LOVE

We enjoy receiving photographs of children showing us the books they've loved reading! Have an adult email a photo to us at [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com), along with anything you'd like to say about the book.

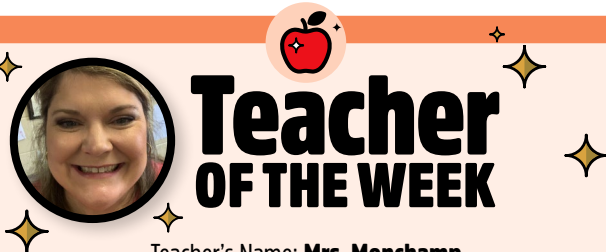


"I enjoyed reading *The Lost Rainforest* because it has a magical world with exciting, edge-of-the-seat twists." **Rayan, 8, California**



"*The Last Fallen Moon* is an exciting and adventurous book about a girl whose life changes and how she deals with it." **Dayna, 9, Texas**

"We met Malia Maunakea, the author of *Lei and the Fire Goddess*, at our library! We thought it was cool that she has ADHD like us." **Aubrey, 11, and Charlie, 11, Hawaii**



## Teacher OF THE WEEK

Teacher's Name: **Mrs. Monchamp**  
School: **Chaffin Middle School**

"Mrs. Monchamp amazes me every day. She is my favorite teacher, and everyone loves her. She explains everything so well and makes honors social studies seem easy. She gives us study guides for tests because she wants us to succeed. She is an incredible teacher. We love her so much, and she is moving grades so she can teach us another year. I hope she knows that she is a very valued teacher."

Ava, 13, Arkansas

**Nominate your teacher for Teacher of the Week!**  
**Send your reason for the nomination, a photo of your teacher, and your school's name and address to [hello@theweekjunior.com](mailto:hello@theweekjunior.com).**



## Puzzle answers (from page 26)

C	O	M	E	D	Y	G	O	L	F
O	A	A	B	P	I				
C	A	R	A	M	E	L	T	A	G
O	S					O	O	H	
A	S	H	P	L	U	M	M	E	T
B	R	A	I	L	L	E	T	E	A
O	L	A				R	E	N	
O	W	L	C	O	O	K	I	N	G
T	O	E	A	S	E				
H	A	W	K			W	R	I	T

Keyword answer: yellow

### Code cracker

clock  
deck of cards  
bar code  
calendar

### Three for all

bend over backwards  
how about that  
just passing through

2	2	4	2	4
3	1	3	5	1
1	5	2	3	5
2	4	3	5	1
1	5	4	3	4



**Quiz answers (from page 30)** 1 c) Sea lions 2 True 3 a) New Hampshire 4 The first meeting of the Continental Congress 5 False. She is the second. 6 China 7 b) Honduras 8 False. They release a sticky substance. 9 Motorcycle 10 a) 2009 11 False. He is a former high school math teacher. 12 Omnium Circus 13 a) Draco Malfoy 14 True 15 b) 393

We want to hear from you! To have your letters, photos, nominations, recommendations, or ideas considered for inclusion in the magazine, please include your full name, age, and state with your submission. By emailing your submission to us, you give *The Week Junior* consent to publish it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian's permission before sending anything to us.





# Quiz

## How much of this week's news can you remember?

1 Scientists in Australia have attached cameras to which animals in order to study the seafloor?

a) Walruses b) Manatees c) Sea lions

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

2 True or false? The Step Pyramid of Djoser is the oldest pyramid in Egypt.

True ☐ False ☐

3 A bronze statue of Christa McAuliffe in a NASA spacesuit was unveiled in the capital city of which US state?

a) New Hampshire b) New Jersey

c) New Mexico

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

4 A new Forever stamp marks the 250th anniversary of what event in US history?

5 True or false? Ngā Wai Hono i te Pō was crowned the first Māori queen in New Zealand.

True ☐ False ☐

6 Which country won the most gold medals at the 2024 Paralympic Games?

7 What country do Gracie and her family visit in the new book *Gracie Under the Waves*?

a) Belize b) Honduras c) Panama

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

8 True or false? Tomato frogs release a slippery substance when they are attacked by a predator.

True ☐ False ☐



9 Udoh Ebaide Joy is the first woman to travel alone across East and West Africa on what type of vehicle?

10 Taylor Fritz was the first American man to reach a tennis Grand Slam final since what year?

a) 2009 b) 2013 c) 2017

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

11 True or false? Amazon product developer Arjun Venkataswamy is a former high school science teacher.

True ☐ False ☐

12 What is the name of the circus founded by Lisa B. Lewis to showcase performers with diverse abilities?

13 Which character is one of the first six you can control in the video game Harry Potter: Quidditch Champions?

a) Draco Malfoy

b) Charlie Weasley

c) Viktor Krum

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

14 True or false? A recent study found that a human relative known as a "Hobbit" species was smaller than previously thought.

True ☐ False ☐

15 Europe's highest swing flies how many feet above the ground?

a) 282 b) 393 c) 434

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

ANSWERS  
CAN BE  
FOUND ON  
PAGE 29.

## THE WEEK Junior

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“  
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by keeping me up to  
date with news.  
”

— Elizabeth



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**In Aayush's words:**

"This juvenile Black Hawk-Eagle was so close to me in the lush green forest in Costa Rica. I was mesmerized by its beauty."