

Wacky fact

One in four high school/college graduation greeting cards are designed to hold money.

— greetingcard.org

SISTERS 2

Is yours your best friend?



INVENT 5

A day at Invention Convention.



PIRATES 8

POTC reviews. Thumbs down!



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A totally excited Katie Awad with Three Days Grace members Barry Stock, left, and Neil Sanderson.

# Being starstruck pays off

KATIE AWAD  
PLANET REPORTER

Last week, *American Idol* ended. That means a new season of *Canadian Idol*! I am a big fan of *Canadian Idol*, because I like to support Canadian artists. I think more people should be supporting Canadian musicians.

Besides the fact that we are a country of talented musicians, we're a country of likeable personalities. I have been fortunate enough to meet some Canadian artists. Each had been very friendly.

One weekend when my mom and I were on the subway, two people I would least expect to see walked in. It was *Canadian Idol*'s contestant Chad Doucette, and winner Eva Avila from Season 4. I nervously went to ask

Celebrities can be pretty approachable if you've got the nerve

Eva and Chad for their autographs, and they were more than happy to give them to me! She was talking to my mom and I, and she even said that she liked my purse!

Recently my dad and I went to a Raptors basketball game. On the jumbotron it showed Canadian singer Fefe Dobson. I thought that was really cool. During half time, I was a little bored, so I started looking around at the seats. I suddenly wasn't bored anymore. To my excitement I saw Aaron Solowoniuk, drummer of Canadian

band Billy Talent! I couldn't pass that up!

After the game, I dragged my dad with me and asked Aaron for his autograph. Again, I got it! He shook hands with my dad and I, asked us if we enjoyed the game, and gave his autograph to someone else! I didn't care that the Raptors won. The highlight of the night was meeting Aaron!

Another time, my mom and I went downtown to MuchMusic headquarters to watch *Much On Demand*. We didn't have tickets, but we figured we'd stand outside to watch. We had about an hour and a half until the show, so we decided to walk around and explore.

We had barely gone 10 steps when we got to the street corner

► Please see **Stars**, Page 4

TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT

# What is it with sibs & secrets?

**Q** I really, really, liked this one guy named Andrew at my school. I bumped into him at the movies and he told me that he liked me! A lot! I was sooo happy!

Turns out that my sister, who had taken me to the movie, heard us and now the whole school knows! Andrew is really embarrassed and so am I. I can never show my face to Andrew ever again! He started being really mean to me, and every time I look at him he either glares or rolls his eyes. I feel so ridiculous!

**A** Because we've had so many crush questions, like maybe a million (possibly more), I'm going to use my special magic advice powers to turn this into a question about sibs and secrets. What is it with sibs and secrets? Why can't they keep them? It seems like your sister was just itching for the chance to spread word of your crush all over your school.

I'm not saying this to make you mad because I have the same problem. Whenever I have a secret and my brother finds out, it's like an instant message has been sent to the world. I'm amazed at how quickly he man-



**Margo Varadi**

Send letters to Margo at [advice@brandnewplanet.ca](mailto:advice@brandnewplanet.ca)

ages to relay my deepest, most private secrets.

I remember when I got my first bra with my mom. The next day I was sitting in music class and one of my brother's friends shouted through the door, "Margo wears a padded bra!" I thought I might die then and there but of course I didn't. What bugged me most was that my bra wasn't even padded.

Siblings love embarrassing siblings. It's what they do; it's their purpose in life before the age of 18. If you seek revenge, they will seek far worse revenge. It's a vicious cycle.

Sadly, if you tell your sister how what she said made you feel bad, she'll just be more satisfied with herself.

In parenting books they always say to encourage good behaviour and ignore bad behaviour. You're probably best off just keeping your cool and pretending that you don't care. Don't let your sis think she's getting to you.

Clearly, Andrew is really immature and unable to keep his cool and that's why he's being mean to you. He doesn't mean to be mean, he just doesn't know what else to do.

Okay, one little bit of crush advice, one I give often, is to give him some space — space is always good, especially when life get complicated.

It usually helps to take a step back.

**Margo Varadi**, BNP's youth columnist, gives you the advice you'd expect to get from a big sister.



Just like the Duff sisters in *Material Girls*, Eve and Lindsey bond during hair and makeup sessions.

# Little sis keeps me grounded

**EVE SMITHWHITE**  
PLANET REPORTER

I stood in front of the mirror with my 11-year-old sister Lindsey, both of us doing our hair and makeup. I stopped and realized that not only has she grown so much, but she's grown to the point that she's taller than I am.

My whole life I've always been ahead. I got the new clothes, while she got my hand-me-downs. I got the bigger present, while hers was still three years down the road. Now, she has got ahead.

I've always felt like my sister and I have been total opposites, but not until this year have I realized how much we're alike.

I've grown up with one of the most brilliant people around, and I'm more than proud of her. Sometimes we BOTH wake up on the wrong side of the bed, and this is when the hurricane starts. We have identical tempers, which put together, causes a huge dilemma.

In this way, we are the same, but in countless ways we are dif-

ferent. Lindsey is not a morning person; pry her out of bed and you'll be kissing all 10 of your fingers goodbye. As for me, I can snap out of a tired trance in no time, and eventually get back into action.

Lindsey looks up to people, aspiring to what she wants to do with her life. I remember when she was 5, and she wanted to be a babysitter, because she thought

it was the coolest job in the world, and after that, a housecleaner.

I've grown up with a crazy girl, but it's been a thrill ride. I can have my head way up in the

clouds, but I can always count on my baby sister to pull me back down.

She's the only person from whom I would ever accept an insult, a comment, a compliment or even a punch in the arm, and it will always be like that.

I plan on growing old still calling my sister to borrow clothes, and I hope it stays that way. A sister is a sister, but Lindsey is Lindsey.

**Eve Smithwhite**, 14, Grade 8, Scarborough

**I plan on growing old still calling my sister to borrow clothes, and I hope it stays that way.**

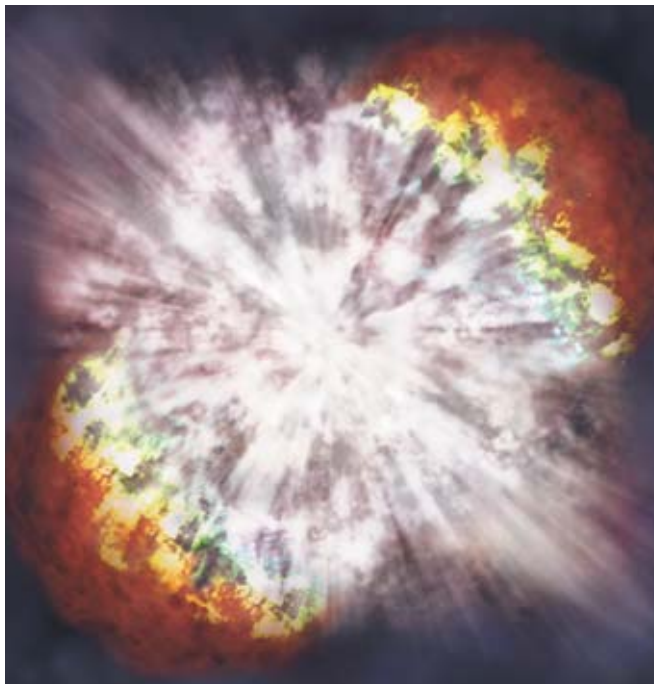


**BRAND NEW PLANET**  
"For people aged 9 to 14."  
**Editor:** Kathy Muldoon  
**Art Director:** Kathleen Doody  
**Web editor:** Rori Caffrey  
**Sports consultant:** Jaq LeBlanc  
**Address:** 1 Yonge St., Toronto ON M5E 1E6  
**E-mail:** [editor@brandnewplanet.ca](mailto:editor@brandnewplanet.ca)  
**Web:** [brandnewplanet.ca](http://brandnewplanet.ca)  
**Fax:** 416-869-4834

**Publisher:** Jagoda Pike  
**Sales Manager:** Theresa McVean 416-869-4531  
**Sales Representative:** Garo Aprahamian 416-869-4647

## IN THE NEWS

# Even stars can run out of fuel



**An artist's illustration** of a supernova that occurred 240 million light years away. A gargantuan explosion ripped apart a star perhaps 150 times more massive than our sun in a relatively nearby galaxy in the most powerful and brightest supernova ever observed, astronomers said this month.

**SHIVAM BHARADWAJ**  
PLANET REPORTER

There has been a great, wondrous, gigantic supernova in outer space. A supernova is an explosion that a star creates when it dies. Unfortunately, a star will always die — even our sun. When our sun dies, our galaxy will be lifeless, unless aliens live in the cold.

Why do stars die out? Well, all stars have a fuel that they run on. When the star uses up all its fuel, it will explode, making an immense explosion called a supernova. After the fireworks, the star becomes either a black hole, which will eat anything that comes in its way, or a rapid-moving neutron star.

This supernova that scientists have detected was about 100 to 200 times as big as our sun — that is a diameter of roughly 140 million to 280 million kilometres! The brilliant blast occurred about 240 million light years away! Though it was so far away scientists were able to view it.

There is good and bad news

about the supernova. Let's start with the good news. Well, our universe was created by a supernova. Therefore, if another supernova has occurred there is a chance of other planets forming and there is also a chance of life on other planets.

Unfortunately, there is also some bad news. This is that there is a star in our own Milky Way. This star has been flittering for over 200 years. It looks similar to the pictures of the final moments of the star before exploding. This could mean that the star in our Milky Way that is flittering may cause a supernova soon. If this happens it could become a black hole which could harm our Earth and surrounding territory. It could also release gamma radiation which will come near us.

This supernova is just like what Nathan Smith (University of California, leader of the observing team) called "truly monstrous" and "as massive as it can get."

**Shivam Bharadwaj**, 11, Grade 6, Mississauga

## Everyone's in on Stanley Cup bets

It's down to two teams — Anaheim and Ottawa. Who will win? That's up for big debate, not only in the average Canadian household, but also in the political arena. Premier Dalton McGuinty and California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger were betting on who would win the Stanley Cup when he visited T.O. on Sunday.

The Premier has just won another bet, with New York Governor Eliot Spitzer, who now owes the him a large bucket of Buffalo chicken wings. Also, earlier in Parliament, Liberal House Leader Jim Bradley (a Sabres fan) said that not all Ontario government members thought that Ottawa could win. A few days later they won.

Should we all support Ottawa just because it's in Ontario? I

### The View From Here

**ABDULLAH SHIHIPAR**



don't really care who wins the Cup this year. I look at the NHL as a competition between cities, not states or countries. If this was the case, then Canadian players wouldn't be playing for American teams.

In fact, some Leaf fans are supporting Anaheim and continuing the inter-province rivalry. Why? Well, because if Ottawa wins this year they figure Sens fans will rub it in our faces, and if it was us in the playoffs, Sens fans would be



CP PHOTO

**Premier Dalton McGuinty**, who won a bucket of wings, congratulates Senators' Chris Phillips after they knocked out Buffalo.

cheering against us.

It's not just Leafs fans that don't want Ottawa to win, it's all across Canada. In fact, a recent poll conducted by Decima Research showed 24 per cent of people said that Toronto was Canada's team, while Ottawa got a mere 15 per cent.

So, if you're feeling un-patriotic about not supporting Ottawa, hopefully this article has made you feel better. I am hoping that the Stanley Cup comes to Toronto next season (Go Leafs Go!). May the best team win.

**Abdullah Shihipar**, 14, Grade 8, Pickering

## MUSIC

# Maroon 5 issues worthy followup

## Maroon 5

It Won't Be Soon Before Long

JESSICA VILLANUEVA  
PLANET REVIEWER

It has been five years since the boys of Maroon 5 burst on to the music scene with their debut album. Now they're back, with a few minor changes in lineup, with *It Won't Be Soon Before Long*.

Drummer Ryan Dusick, who had injuries preventing him from playing, has left the band, leaving the others to recruit Matt Flynn. This sudden change did not at all affect M5's music, as shown in the new album. Their first album, *Songs About Jane*, topped the charts, going triple platinum in many countries. This set the bar high for future works to come.

Their first single, "Makes me Wonder," shows how much they've changed since "This Love," the song that established their successful career. They



AP PHOTO

**Maroon 5's** Adam Levine performs at Kids' Choice Awards in L.A.

have grown from the amateur love songs to more mature topics. "Makes me Wonder" expresses confusion with U.S. politics without making an imposing biased stance. "Give me something to believe in 'cause I don't believe in you anymore." It is a lively upbeat number, one of 12 eclectic songs on the album.

Taking the hook from Kanye West's "Heard 'Em Say," Maroon 5 pieced together a new song, "Nothing Lasts Forever." It's a slower jam about drifting apart: "The distance between us makes it so hard to stay/but nothing

lasts forever so be honest, babe/it hurts but it may be the only way".

Things speed up with "Little of Your Time" and "Wake Up Call," which shows how criminal Levine's mind can get.

This album uses more synthesizers and electronic sounds, which shows their skill in varying their musical ability and exploring other paths. There are no repeating rhythms or melodies, which make each tune a worthy single, and the album in its entirety worthwhile.

**Jessica Villanueva**, 14, Grade 9, Markham

# Celebrities aren't stuck up

► **Stars** From Page 1

where I could've fainted. It was Neil Sanderson and Barry Stock, drummer and lead guitarist of, you guessed it, Canadian band Three Days Grace! You can imagine my surprise. I was totally speechless. I was pointing and stuttering. I was trying to tell my mom what was going through my mind.

They started crossing the street, my mom pieced together what I was trying to say and she started to follow them. I'm not sure what it was she said to them (I was still standing starstruck on the street corner), but whatever it was, they stopped on the other side. I pulled myself together, and ran after my mom.

My memory is a little foggy about what all happened (don't forget how excited I was), but I do remember getting both of their autographs, and getting my picture taken with them!

As you can see, celebrities aren't always full of themselves. They can be quite polite and friendly. So the next time you happen to see someone you idolize, don't feel shy to go and ask for a picture or autograph. Chances are they'll say yes!

**Katie Awad**, 14, Grade 8, Scarborough

# One CD worth buying . . .

ADENA LIN  
PLANET REVIEWER

If I wasn't a rock fan before, I'd have to say that Three Days Grace has completely changed my opinion (with some help from Billy Talent). I have always been hesitant about buying CDs because they are expensive and I could be using that money for something else. My entire CD collection of my lifetime consists of four CDs, so you can understand how good *One X* was if I actually bought it.

First, I reluctantly borrowed it from a friend who wanted me to listen to the songs. After I listened to one song, I was immediately compelled to listen to the next one. I finished listening to

## One X

Three Days Grace

the album again and again. Finally, I decided that I had to own it for myself; it wasn't often that I liked EVERY song on a CD.

*One X* was worth every penny of the \$15 that I paid for it. The album has been out for almost a year, but I had never really paid much attention to it. Sure, I liked all the songs and music videos, but I never really considered anything more than that.

They are pretty similar to other bands out there (for example, Billy Talent, The Used, Linkin Park, Evanescence, etc). However, there's something about TDG

that makes them stand out a bit from the crowd. I think that it's their specific style or how they create the music that makes them sound so incredible.

Their second album, *One X*, has been criticized for being too autobiographical of the lead singer; the songs are all based on Adam Gontier's (the lead singer) life experiences. The lyrics really speak out to you, especially if you're going through a tough time in your life (maybe a breakup, a drug addiction, etc). "Animal I Have Become," was last year's most played rock song in Canada!

What are you waiting for? Go buy your own copy (unless you already own it)!

**Adena Lin**, 13, Gr. 8, Scarborough



**Adam Gontier** fronts Three Days Grace at this year's Junos.

## INVENTING

# It all starts with a big idea

Invention Convention: lots of work - and fun!

**NATHAN WONG**  
PLANET REPORTER

Think about all the everyday problems you run into. Don't you wish there was a solution or a product to fix every issue? Well, Invention Convention can help.

Invention Convention is a program run by a private company. It is run all throughout Canada. Kids in Grade 7 and 8 create a product, working in groups of 2 to 4. They then present their product to people in Toronto.

You need to know the three 'I's for Invention Convention. They are Investigate, Innovate, and Invent. First, you have to investigate. What are some problems in life you encounter? What possible solutions are there? You can also build on something that has already been invented.

Then you have to poll consumers. Ask them if they'd buy your product or think it's a good idea. Then you can make your final decision. If most people like it, you should stick with it, but if people don't like it, you should think of a new plan.

Next, you have to create a prototype. It can be difficult and discouraging if your plans don't work. You always have to have a backup plan.

The hardest part about Invention Convention for me was making a display board. You have to make it look good because you want it to grab people's attention as they walk by. The board is very large, so you need a lot of material to cover it.

Now you may think the convention sounds like a lot of work, but it does get better. You get to go to downtown Toronto and present your products to all the

people. Better yet, the media is there and you miss more than half a day of school! When you are there, you have to grab people's attention. If you just stand there, no one will come. You also have to be sociable and talk and explain how it works. That's what makes it fun too.

You present your product for about two hours! It becomes very tiring because you have to stand and talk for all that time. There is no food or drinks except for water.

My group consisted of three people including me. We decided, since we are a very lazy bunch of kids, that we should make an automatic hammer. The other reason we thought of this idea: Have you seen *The Simpsons* episode where Homer has an automatic hammer? We thought it would be cool to make that in real life.

We surveyed our class and 25 out of 26 would buy it, so we stuck to our plan. We encountered two big problems. The first

was that the hammer we had was too heavy for the motor we bought, so it wouldn't go up.

To fix this we decided to scale down and made a mini model. It worked until a classmate dropped it. It broke and because we had very little time to fix it (actually we ran out of time and couldn't fix it), we had to bring a product that didn't work. People still liked our idea even though it was broken. Citytv even interviewed us!

Some other cool inventions were the Rush to Brush. It was a toothpaste holder that sticks on the wall and to use it you just push back on the holder and toothpaste will come out. There was also an alarm clock that hits



**Matt Hunter**, co-host of History Television's *The Re-Inventors*, demos a re-creation of a flotation suitcase that was designed to save people during a shipwreck. The suit unfolds from the case.



you when you turn it off so you don't fall back asleep.

To get involved with this program you have to sign your school up. Ask your teachers about Invention Convention but it only happens once a year in Toronto. It doesn't cost any money to join but it does cost money to get supplies for your

invention.

Invention Convention is something I will never forget! It was a really cool and fun experience. To sign up you have to ask your teacher.

Check out [www.thelearning-partnership.ca](http://www.thelearning-partnership.ca)  
**Nathan Wong**, 12, Grade 7,  
Mississauga

**Automatic hammer worked until a classmate dropped it.**

## OPINION



AP PHOTO

Oprah Winfrey with students at her academy for disadvantaged girls in South Africa.

## Oprah's almost done it all

I would like to introduce you to my idol, Oprah Winfrey.

I know she needs no introduction, but I bet there's a lot you don't know about her! What did she do before *The Oprah Winfrey Show*? While still in high school Oprah worked at WVOL radio in Nashville. She then anchored the news at Nashville's WTVF-TV, co-anchored the 6 p.m. news and then became co-host of the local talk show, *People Are Talking*.

Oprah hosted *AM Chicago* which expanded to one hour and became *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. In 1988 she founded Harpo Studios in Chicago. (Did you notice Oprah spelled backward

is Harpo?) She was only the third woman to own her own studio! *The Oprah Winfrey Show* has remained the No. 1 talk show for 20 seasons in a row! It's viewed in 132 countries.

Her show, however, is not the only thing she has under her name. She started *O*, her magazine. She's appeared in many movies, including *The Color Purple* and *Charlotte's Web*. She's given thousands of dollars to provide students with a proper education through her charity, The Oprah Winfrey Foundation.

There's The Oprah Winfrey Scholars Program, which gives scholarships to students who will use their education to give

back to their communities. She's given \$10 million to build a school in South Africa for girls who would otherwise not get an education. The Oprah Angel Network has also raised more than \$50 million going to non-profit organizations.

I know, overwhelming isn't it? You name it, she's done it. Just kidding. But she does even have her own radio station now called *Oprah & Friends*, a new channel on XM satellite radio.

Many lives have changed thanks to this woman's compassion, leadership, and determination.

**Alannah Biega**, Grade 8, 13, Scarborough

## Don't judge our music!

Rock and roll music is my favourite type of music. How can you not like a loud rock and roll song whenever you put your iPod headphones in your ears.

But what bugs me is how people don't accept rock just because of the lyrics. They relate the lyrics to rebellion and things like that and then you get judged

just because you're listening to rock.

Rock is awesome. System of a Down and Alexisonfire are my favourites and when you actually listen to the lyrics they can be, well, questionable. And just because they are questionable people think that it is going to warp the people that listen to it

into rebellious punks and that is completely not true.

So if you ask me I think that rock shouldn't be judged just because of the lyrics. And next time you hear someone listening to rock music full blast, don't judge the person.

**Ryan Hole**, 13, Grade 8, Toronto

## Check pre-paid cards carefully

Are MuchMusic Prepaid MasterCard really worth it?

Just as I was flipping through the channels, one of the commercials on MuchMusic really caught my attention. It was about MuchMusic Prepaid MasterCards. The idea of getting freedom from your parents and getting to use the money without begging them for money all the time seemed really cool. So I decided to get one.

However, after reading more about them on the site, I realized these cards aren't as cool as they make it seem on the commercials. The limit is set by your parents and they could even set it as low as \$5. Another downside to it is that it's not even a credit card. It's more of a gift card that you can use anywhere and your parents have to load it up every time the money's used.

Then there are limits to how many times you can load up the card. That's not all, since there are also membership charges, initial fees, load up charges and so many more. That doesn't sound anything like "freedom," which gets mentioned in the commercial.

The commercial only shows the good side of the card while covering up the disadvantages. If you're planning on getting one of these cards and are serious about it, you should have a look at the site and see what this is really about.

The company's just trying to make money by giving teens an opportunity to own something similar to a credit card. I'm definitely not getting one after reading the fine print. I think I'll just wait till I'm 18 to get a real credit card without these extra charges and limits.

**Vipal Jain**, 14, Grade 9, Mississauga

## READING

# He created Hamish

Sean Cullen on pirates, a \$5 coin and being red-faced on stage

ALEX DOWNEY-GING  
PLANET INTERVIEWER

Cheese pirates, orphan adventures and vomiting rabbits. It would only make sense that any book containing these things would be written by a comedian. Sean Cullen, Canadian comedian, actor and writer, has released his second children's novel, *Hamish X and the Hollow Mountain*.

Lift the bland paper cover to reveal a false cover "Great Plumbers and Their Exploits" which makes most adults look twice before mumbling "kids these days . . .". The second in the Hamish series is a bit better than the first (funny, but a long read), and details the continuous journey of Hamish X and his orphan friends as they search for the King of Switzerland (even though any textbook will tell you Switzerland doesn't have a monarchy). The author took a moment to answer some questions as he gets ready to take part in a new reading festival, Booked!, happening around Toronto June 7 to 9.

**What made you write or want to write the first Hamish X book?**

I wanted to write a book that my son Hamish might one day read and enjoy.

**What was your inspiration for the character Hamish X?**

Hamish X is loosely based on my son, who was once kidnapped by pirates.

**Will we be seeing more adventures of Hamish X and his friends in the future?**

There will be at least three Hamish X books: *Hamish X and the Cheese Pirates*, *Hamish X and the Hollow Mountain* and the third book that I am currently writing which is tentatively called *Hamish X Goes to Providence Rhode Island*.

**Do you read comic books?**

I read comic books occasionally. I like Neil Gaiman, Stan Lee's



Sean Cullen didn't realize fly was open during a performance.

work and Frank Millar, especially *The Dark Knight Returns*.

**If you could have any superpower, what would it be?**

I would most enjoy being able to fly because then I could yell at people and they wouldn't be able to catch me.

**What music do you listen to?**

I listen to a wide variety of music: Feist, Wilco, Frank Sinatra, Ron Sexsmith

**What TV shows do you watch?**

I enjoy *Dancing with the Stars*, *Battlestar Galactica*, *Deadwood*, *Smallville*.

**Do you think Canada should have a \$5 coin?**

Yes, definitely. It should be square and have a porcupine on it.

**What was your first job?**

My first job ever was delivering newspapers on Walkerfield Ave. for the *Peterborough Examiner*.

**As a comedian, have you ever forgotten what you were supposed to say while on stage?**

Not as a comedian, because I can always improvise, but when I was doing *The Producers*, the musical, I forgot what I was supposed to say and it was terrifying. Michael Therriault kept prompting me until I remembered. In the meantime, for that 20 seconds I thought I was going to die.

**What was your worst or most embarrassing performance ever?**

I opened for the Barenaked Ladies in a big theatre in Chicago and I didn't realize that my fly was open for the whole performance until someone in the front row pointed it out to me. Embarrassing.

**I remember once you were on Air Force and sang a politically correct version of the national anthem. It was really funny. Did you come up with that?**

I didn't write the lyrics for that version of the Anthem. The Air Force has some very funny writers and they wrote that sketch for me. Nice of them, huh?

Alex Downey-Ging, Grade 9, Toronto

## Schedule

There's a whole series of Booked! events at Historic Fort York and the Harbourfront Centre for readers 8 and up. Please call School Visits at Harbourfront Centre, 416-973-4774. Tickets are \$5 for one event, \$8 for two. Complete info at [www.bookedbetweenthecovers.ca](http://www.bookedbetweenthecovers.ca)

**Friday, June 8, 10 a.m.**  
Enwave Theatre  
**Barbara Haworth-Attard,**

**Carol Matas, and Kit Pearson**

read from new works that explore Arthurian legend (Kit Pearson's *A Perfect Gentle Knight*), the Spanish Inquisition through a teenage mom's nightmares (Carol Matas's *Past Crimes*) and the effects of WWII on a 15-year-old girl (Barbara Haworth-Attard's *Forget-Me-Not*).

**Saturday, June 9, 10 a.m.**  
Enwave Theatre (\$10)

**Sean Cullen and Richard Scrimger** read from their latest books and give presenta-

tions on the joys of reading, writing and telling funny stories.

**Saturday June 9, 1:30 p.m.**  
Enwave Theatre (\$10)

**Julia Golding, Kenneth Oppel and James A. Owen**, together for the first time. Golding, author of the *Cat Royal* and *Companion Quartet* series joins Oppel, creator of the *Silverwing* and *Matt Cruse* series, and Owen, whose fans eagerly await the sequel to his novel, *Here There Be Dragons*.

## ENTERTAINMENT



AP PHOTO

**We're all tired** of seeing scenes from the POTC movie, so here's Johnny Depp and Orlando Bloom clowning during the movie's premiere in Japan last week.

# Pirate overload

**ILAN TZITRIN**  
PLANET REVIEWER

Everyone knows a great story has to have an effective beginning, middle and end. *POTC: At World's End* is not a great story. Due to the massive number of characters, subplots and twists, it's an overlong, tedious affair that reaches the "we don't care point" much too early.

Gore Verbinski, who has an above-average reputation with hits like *Mousehunt*, *The Ring* and *The Weather Man*, directed this third (and hopefully final) chapter of the trilogy, starting where *Dead Man's Chest* left off.

*At World's End* has no concrete plot; rather, it's a collection of many connected events, making it nearly impossible to summarize. Essentially it follows the crew of the Black Pearl, consisting of the previously deceased Captain Barbossa (Geoffrey Rush), rescued Jack Sparrow (Johnny Depp), Will Turner (Orlando Bloom) and Elizabeth Swann (Keira Knightley) sailing to the "end of the world" to bat-

tle a multitude of enemies.

Even our beloved Jack Sparrow isn't as charming as in the first two outings. This is mainly a problem with the script, which also adds no new jokes and recycles those that we've seen dozens of times before. The writers simply ran out of fresh ideas.

The picture had long-winded moments that seemed like they dragged to world's end (excuse the pun), like the first time Sparrow appears, and others that flew by without stopping for the already confused audience.

It's not all bad, however. The acting was splendid. Given the material, Johnny Depp was expectedly brilliant as Sparrow, and Geoffrey Rush as Barbossa. In fact, if the movie consisted of only Depp, Rush and Keith Richards (who barely had a two-minute mumbling cameo as Jack's father) staring at each other — I would have been content.

Also, there's an ultimately satisfying finale that is filled with stylish sword fights, great special effects and Hans Zimmer's

catchy music. Unfortunately, though, this last moment of hope ends in more unsettled knots, perhaps opening the door for another, completely unneeded sequel.

There's a scene in the film when Barbossa philosophizes with Sparrow. He says, "The world used to be a bigger place." Sparrow replies, "The world's still the same. There's less in it." The same can be said about the movie. It's just like the second one, a clone of the original, but there is much less wit, consistency and narrative effortlessness remaining — three things that made the first one such strong entertainment. Gore Verbinski is a man with great potential. It's time for him to get his hands on some new material.

Wait for the DVD.

*Note: Surprisingly this is the most violent Disney movie I have ever seen. The PG rating isn't well justified; there are numerous bloody sequences and a large number of deaths.*

**Ilan Tzitrin**, 13, Grade 8, Thornhill

## Enough of Pirates already!

### Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End

starring Johnny Depp, Orlando Bloom, Kiera Knightley

**KATIE AWAD**  
PLANET REVIEWER

Has the world had enough of *Pirates*? Well, I think I have. I have been a huge fan of the *Pirates of the Caribbean* movies, and along with many other people, I have been waiting impatiently for the third movie, *At World's End*.

I was a little disappointed. Watching a movie for three hours can make you become agitated, which I most certainly was! I think the movie was stretched too far.

The movie itself was all right. It was confusing at some points. There were so many things going on that the plot seemed to get lost. I did have a hard time following it, and understanding what was going on, even with a lot of talking.

I think there should have been more action scenes. The action scenes that were there were quite good. There was comedic relief that had you forgetting about the complicated plot for a few seconds. If I knew more of what was happening, I probably would like this movie more.

If you haven't seen the first two movies (which are much better), don't come to see this first. You'll be more confused than the rest of us!

I recommend all *Pirate* fans to see it, because there will be some enjoyment. When you do, make sure you stick around after the credits. There is a surprise you cannot miss. It seems to be preparing you for a fourth installment.

I think this is the end for *POTC*. Unlike Jack, it should be swallowed up by the Cracken, and remain in there!

**Katie Awad**, 14, Grade 8, Scarborough

## SPORTS

# Juniors deliver thrilling finale



ADAM  
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## Sports Central

Right now, the Stanley Cup Finals are underway and that's the biggest thing in hockey. But what about junior hockey?

Well, on Sunday the Canadian Hockey League (CHL) had its season end with an exciting 3-1 win by the Vancouver Giants over the Medicine Hat Tigers in the Memorial Cup final.

The Memorial Cup is an annual event that is to determine the best team in the CHL. There are four teams, which consists of the Ontario Hockey League (OHL) champions, Quebec Major Junior Hockey League (QMJHL) champions, and the Western Hockey League (WHL) champions. Also, there is a host team, which gets an automatic berth in the tournament.

This year the WHL's Vancouver team hosted and faced off against Medicine Hat, the Plymouth Whalers, and Lewiston MAINEiacs.

Plymouth and Lewiston are both from the U.S., but they have teams in the CHL, and were champions in their league. Plymouth is from Michigan but plays in the OHL, Lewiston is from Maine but plays in the QMJHL.

Plymouth lost in the semifinal 8-1 to Vancouver. Also, Lewiston lost in the tiebreaker 5-1 against Plymouth, which took place because the two teams had the



REUTERS PHOTO

**The Vancouver Giants** rally around the Memorial Cup after beating Medicine Hat Tigers on Sunday.

same round robin records.

In the final, the winning goal was scored with about five minutes left in the game by Michal Repik which was his third of the tournament. An empty net goal was scored a few minutes later to seal the deal.

What made this win so special is that these teams met in the WHL final, but Medicine Hat won Game 7 in double overtime! Then when the teams met again in the round robin of the Memorial Cup, the Tigers won 1-0.

Milan Lucic of Vancouver was the tourney's MVP. He had seven points in five games.

This was Vancouver's first Me-

morial Cup in their six year history, but head coach Don Hay has won the Memorial Cup three times before, twice with the Kamloops Blazers as a head coach in 1994 and 1995. He also won as an assistant coach in Kamloops in 1992.

The game was close, but Medicine Hat was outshot 40-15. In fact, Medicine Hat only had two shots on goal in the third period. For most of the game it was hard to tell who would win. The goalies were good, the players were working hard, and, most importantly, the game was tied.

During the tournament, CHL award winners were announced.

John Tavares of the Oshawa Generals, who I interviewed earlier this year for BNP, won the CHL Player of the Year. Also Team Canada junior goalie Carey Price of the Everett Silvertips was the Goaltender of the Year.

Next year, the Kitchener Rangers of the OHL are hosting the Memorial Cup, in case you want to see it on TV, or you might be able to go to a game.

It's too late this year to watch the Memorial Cup, but next year, remember to turn on the tube, or you could be yelling your brains out in Kitchener!

**Adam Laskaris**, 11, Grade 6, Toronto

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## EVENTS

# Street Sense ready to run

The Belmont Stakes are shaping up to be THE race to watch

**SHELDON HAROLD WISEBERG**  
PLANET REPORTER

Over the past two years, the world has seen some pretty amazing events in horse racing's American Triple Crown: in 2005, 50-1 longshot Giacomo won the Kentucky Derby, and then in the second race, the Preakness Stakes, champion Afleet Alex, who was third in the Derby, nearly went down after clipping heels with another horse named Scrappy T. Amazingly, he ran off to win the Preakness.

The next year Barbaro won the Derby by 65 feet (6.5 lengths). This was the greatest margin by a Kentucky Derby winner in 60 years. Then he shattered his right hind leg in the Preakness Stakes. For eight months, his owners tried to keep him alive. Unfortunately, he was put down in late January because of laminitis (a severe hoof disease).

This year's Triple Crown was



AP PHOTO

**Curlin**, left, inches up on Street Sense to win the Preakness in Baltimore earlier this month.

by far one of the most exciting in history.

In the Kentucky Derby, Street Sense went from 19th position (out of 20) all the way to second, right behind Hard Spun, the leader. Then he flew past Hard Spun in the homestretch to win

the mile and one-quarter race in 2 minutes and 2 seconds.

At the Preakness Stakes, Street Sense was favoured to win at odds 6-5. However, he did not win. Curlin, who finished third in the Derby, was the winner by a head. When the horses thun-

dered into the home stretch, Street Sense flew into the lead. It looked like he had the race won from there, but then Curlin got right behind Street Sense and the two rode down the stretch to the wire (finish line). In the final stride, Curlin managed to stick his head out to snatch the victory from the Derby winner.

Now, who will win the Belmont Stakes? The Belmont is the final and longest race of the Triple Crown. The mile and a half race demands speed, stamina, and the will to win.

So who will win: Street Sense, or Curlin? In my opinion, it will be Street Sense, because even though Curlin is a son of Canadian stallion Smart Strike, whose daughter was third in the Queen's Plate, "the Canadian Derby," Street Sense has raced more times than Curlin.

Who knows, maybe Curlin will win. Or Hard Spun. He was second in the Derby and third in the Preakness. He still has a good chance. I guess we'll just have to wait till the Belmont Stakes is run on June 9.

**Sheldon Harold Wiseberg**, 11, Grade 6, North York

## Luminato shines light on all ages

**RYAN BOBKIN**  
PLANET REPORTER

Luminato means light in Italian. From June 1 to 10 Luminato, the Toronto Festival of Arts & Creativity will bring light to Toronto in a brand new way, with events for all ages.

Part of Luminato is the opening of the brand new Michael Lee-Chin Crystal at the Royal Ontario Museum Saturday, June 2 at 9 p.m. with the opening ceremonies followed by a concert, A World of Possibilities, with music in the ROM Plaza.

The next day, from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., there are free guided tours of the new crystal. For

more information go to [www.rom.on.ca](http://www.rom.on.ca).

Another great event is the show *Spirit Horse*, about two First Nation children who travel through time with a mystical Spirit Horse, a present from their grandfather. It's a new adaptation of the hit show, *Tir Na N' Og*, and plays June 4 at 7 p.m. at the Lorraine Kisma Theatre for Young People. Tickets, \$20, at [www.luminato.com](http://www.luminato.com).

On June 2 and 3 the Muhtadi International Drumming Festival will include performances from musicians representing tons of cultures, from noon to 8 p.m. both nights at Queen's Park. On the last weekend of Lum-



**The Lee-Chin Crystal** at the Royal Ontario Museum, above in an architect's drawing, will be unveiled as part of Luminato.

inato, experience all the world's great carnivals in one place. Carnivalism is a free festival at the Harbourfront Centre that celebrates carnivals from all over the world. There is art, film, dance, jazz, opera, family, and children's events and much more.

Now, those are just some of the highlights of the festival. There's more music, dance, theatre and visual arts. Most of it is for free. For info on all events go to [www.luminato.com](http://www.luminato.com).

**Ryan Bobkin**, 10, Grade 4, Toronto

# SUPERSLACKERS

## STEVEN CHARLES MANALE'S SUPERSLACKERS



# LOTS OF LETTERS



AP PHOTO

**Plush Webkinz** surround New York's Beatrice and Aliona, both 8, while they play on the website.

## Just can't stop playing WEBKINZ!

I love Webkinz! I can't stop playing it. I have the Chihuahua and the White Poodle. There are tons of different pets. They have frogs, dogs, cats and horses and they come with items that you can't buy at the W Shop. When you type in your secret code, attached to your Webkinz, you get a Webkinz balloon and your rare item with a medium room.

You can add rooms and the sizes are small, medium and large. You can get a backyard too. They have all sorts of fun games. My favourite game is Polar Plunge. Go to [webkinz.com](http://webkinz.com) to see all the pets. If you love animals, you'll love Webkinz!

— *Kaitlin Balram, Grade 3, Scarborough*

### Cheaters hurt us all

I am writing about last week's Brand New Planet's article "Hey cheater, thanks a lot!" This article was written by one of my fellow schoolmates, Rohan Balram.

The fact is, he is right. I, too, had to write the changed test, and it was really hard. I actually almost failed! (I don't usually fail.) One student made my marks go down the drain, and for what? So they could get a good mark on their test! That really is dishonest, and really low.

Why can't people just study like they're supposed to? Work hard like we're meant to? For that, the rest of the students had to write a different and harder test.

This particular student should think about what he did, and correct his wrong, for his own good.

— *Carlos Lozares, 13, Grade 8, Scarborough*

### Project dos and don'ts

If you have trouble completing school projects on time, here are some tips to keep in mind:

#### Dos

✓ Make sure you have all of the materials you need.

✓ Have a plan, maybe a rough copy.

✓ Do your research before you start, and be familiar with your subject and information.

✓ Follow and consult any guidelines and rubrics you're given; that's what they're there for. This will keep you on track and tell you what you need to do to get a good mark.

✓ Get a second opinion; family and friends can point out anything wrong with your project, or any possible improvements.

#### Don'ts

✗ Don't wait until the last minute to do your project. You never know how long it'll take, or if something will go wrong (trust me, I speak from experience).

✗ Don't rush to get your project finished, or slack off. Instead, take your time, be careful and do a good job.

Keep these tips in mind the next time you are assigned a project, and you're sure to do better. Good luck!

— *Nancy Li, 13, Grade 8, Scarborough*

### Gotta dance!

I have been dancing for five years.

I was in jazz. I was shy at first but I came out with a bunch of new friends. I remember being called down to the stage with my

cute pink tie-dyed top and purple skirt. I started to get butterflies and then the stage went black.

They rushed us out onto the stage. We got into our positions and then in less than a minute the pink and blue lights burst through the blackness.

We waited 16 counts into our song "Celebration Now" and when we began, I felt confident and was smiling all the way through.

After the performance my mother brought me up on the balcony above the crowd to watch the other performances. The next group that came on was an older hip-hop class. They were amazing! They had energy and rhythm.

I wanted to dance just like them. So when I was about 9 or 10 I started hip-hop at PSB dancing school. I loved it so much that I did it again the next year with my best friend.

This year my best friend and I started senior tap for the first time. At first we were both confused and slow; I slipped a few times, ha ha!

We didn't know what they meant by a "maxi for" or a "grab off" but we got it sooner than later. Now we are very good and

know all of the tap lingo. .well, most of it.

— *Laura Vernon, 13, Grade 8, Scarborough*

### Summer vacation boring?

Sure, you're happy to be free, but sometimes, summer vacation gets a little boring. There are endless possibilities for two months of relaxation. Here are some things to do:

Go somewhere for a few weeks: New York (shopping central), Thunder Bay, Australia, China, France (bonjour!)

You can go camping, but remember to double-check what you're bringing and book ahead of time on the campsite website.

Go to a friend's house, invite a few over for a small party or sleepover.

Go outside and bike, rollerblade, skateboard, skip, or go to the park with some friends or family.

Do one-day activities like Canada's Wonderland (book a fast-pass), the Ontario Science Centre, Marine Land or African Lion Safari.

Playing on the computer is fun too, and try visiting [www.miniclip.com](http://www.miniclip.com), [www.neopets.com](http://www.neopets.com) and [www.addictinggames.com](http://www.addictinggames.com).

— *Amy Li, 11, Gr. 5, Scarborough*