



CK Reporter of the Week
Reese Ascione, Golden

The Yellow Brick Road en pointe

"The Wizard of Oz" has long been a family favorite. From the lovable Dorothy Gale and her little dog Toto to the Wicked Witch of the West, the Land of Oz and its characters have captured the hearts of generations of Americans.

Now it is our turn to follow the Yellow Brick Road, straight to the Ellie Caulkins Opera House where the Colorado Ballet is putting on the second ever production of the Wizard of Oz ballet, after its debut in Kansas City, Dorothy's home state.

The Wizard of Oz is the brainchild of choreographer Septim Webre. In an astonishing feat, he managed to pull together three major ballet companies: the Kansas City Ballet, Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet, and Colorado Ballet. The three ballet companies joined forces nearly two years ago to shoulder the \$1.1 million budget together.

Featuring Dana Benton as Dorothy Gale and



photo/Kate Rolston

Morgan Buchanan as the Wicked Witch of the West, this production showcases a stunning blend of stereotypical ballet and theater, based on the original story as well as storylines and visual elements from the classic Warner Brothers' 1939 film.

As Dorothy and her companions make their way through Oz, various props and puppets join them, including the Wicked Witch's army of flying monkeys and the adorable Toto, a puppet operated by Benjamin Rose.

Morgan Buchanan has been with Colorado Ballet since 2009, and has been a soloist since 2016, so she has had her fair share of big roles with this company. However, this production is a little different.

"Usually, as a ballerina, you're in tutus or a sugar plum fairy, you're happy and generous. So any time I get to play a character that's not the typical ballerina, I really have a lot of fun with it," she said.

"Being on stage— there's no feeling like it.

I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world." -- Morgan Buchanan

Additionally, since this production draws inspiration from the film rather than traditional ballet attire, it is more difficult to dance in the costumes.

"We've done one run in costume so far ... the costume kind of threw me off. There's a hat that's pretty tall, and then there's also a skirt that's long and it's an outfit you don't normally wear when you're rehearsing."

As with pretty much any Colorado Ballet performance (*or any professional ballet for that matter*), the cast and crew work hard to create a stunning production where athlete meets art.

Ballet is extremely physically demanding and often the company will come off stage and need to take a sit down in order to catch their breath.

This certainly is not for the faint of heart (*or lung, take your pick*).



photo/Kate Rolston

"There's bad days in every profession," says Buchanan. "There are certainly times when you get offstage and you're panting and you're sweaty and your body probably hurts, and sometimes there's that little flicker in your mind. Why am I doing this to myself? But being on stage— there's no feeling like it. I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world."

The hard work the Colorado Ballet has put into The Wizard of Oz is certainly paying off.

With the seamless integration of props and sets in the production to the breathtaking leaps and twirls, this is an event that those who were lucky enough to snag tickets to will be fortunate to attend.

The show is in production here until Feb. 10. For information, go to <https://www.coloradoballet.org/>



By Maria Ciobanu,
14, a CK Reporter
from Denver

Great sequel, but you should read the first one

"The Hunt for The Mad Wolf's Daughter" by Diane Magras is a follow-up book to her previous novel "The Mad Wolf's Daughter."

I have to say that I think this sequel is really good and that it follows the story really well. Literally: This sequel picks up right after the first one ends.

You *have* to read the first book before you read this one.

I could really picture the whole book in my head. It had fantastic dialogue and terrific fluency.

The lord's uncle, Oswyn, who is greedy and wants the castle for himself, accuses Drest of murdering Lord Faintree, the knight she took prisoner in the first book, and she is deemed "a wolf's head."

This means that anyone who kills her gets paid.

The rest of her family is being hunted and they must leave to keep safe.

It is up to Drest to protect Lord Faintree while he recovers from his injury (*for more details, read the first book*).

Follow them on their adventures in this exhilarating, hard to put down novel!

My critiques of this book are similar to the ones I had of the first novel: Sometimes the book moves really fast and you don't know how the characters got from one place to another.

The vocabulary is pretty simple, but it is violent and can be a little scary or intense.



I also think that this sequel is darker than the first one, as Drest is engaged in more hand-to-hand combat and doing more "extreme stunts," so to speak.

At one point, she is hanging from a rope on a cliff and is being shot at with arrows.

Despite these flaws, this book is a terrific sequel, full of great imagery and description!

I could really picture the whole book in my head. It had fantastic dialogue and terrific fluency.

Another thing that made it exceptional, were the thoughts in Drest's head. Diane Magras showed the thoughts, and it really contributed to her characterization.

I would totally recommend this book to everyone third grade and up.

But for it to make any sense, read the first one beforehand.

Packed full of action, crazy shenanigans and laughs, this is the book to read if you are down.



By Macy Gardner,
13, a CK Reporter
from Golden



Writing Is Fun!

How Would You Like To Be A Real Reporter?

Find out about all the cool benefits when you apply to be a Colorado Kids reporter at Colorado NIE.com or by emailing dplewka@denverpost.com.

Jeffcon lets high schoolers explore tech

JeffCon is an event for high schoolers in Jefferson county and the surrounding area to learn about technology, and sometimes even fiddle with it.

The event was hosted by the Jefferson County School District at their headquarters in Golden.

The schedule offered multiple classes Like Design an App, Build it Break it Wifi, and more.

The first class I went to was Design an App.

Participants were told to form groups of four or five, and were then given instructions. After a video about the new Microsoft Hololens, the class got to work.

The first portion of the assignment was to come up with an idea. Each group had different ideas, but mine settled on a multitasking app.

Next, group feedback meant presenting your idea to the other groups.

After that, we made a "wire frame" of our idea to present to the class. To make a wire frame, you had to draw what the app would look like when on a device and explain its uses.

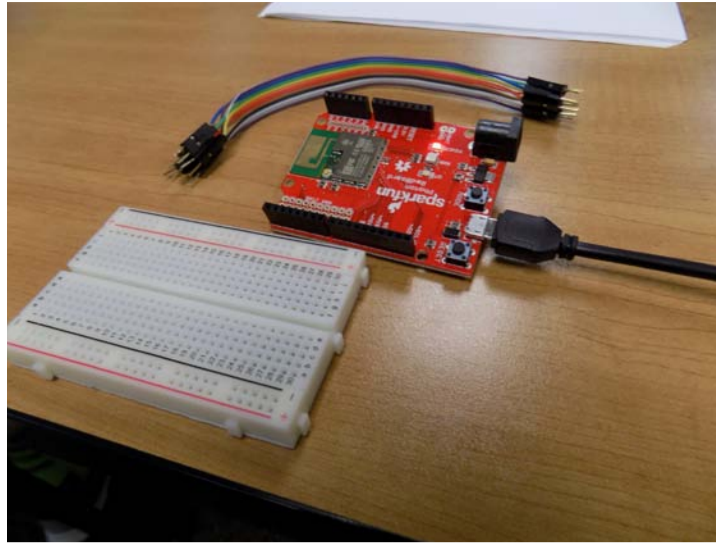
Finally, there was a vote.

After presentations, the class voted on which idea was best, and the chosen idea was sent to a Microsoft app development team for the Stem Saturday event, where it will be made from dream into reality.

Our winner was a universal remote app, to get rid of those useless remotes that only serve one function each.

In between the two hour hands-on design an app session and the first 50 minute interactive session, the lunch area was filled with booths consisting of

everything from colleges to a mini supercomputer to a VR headset stand, to the U.S. Army and Marines.



After that first interactive session, I took only the first of two more because I had to get back to my own school and classes, but I was able to take the Cisco IoT Hackathon session.

It was about small Wifi generators and a hands-on tutorial of how to make small circuits. I enjoyed the class despite some problems logging in on the district's computer.

Lunch consisted of a cookie, chips, and a sandwich of your choice, and merchandise like pens, shirts, and backpacks were given out at the front desk.

This was a really fun event that turned out even better than I expected.

This was the second year for Jeffcon, and it enlisted 20 schools and over 200 registered attendees.

If you are a high schooler in Jefferson County, make sure you're signed up for the next Jeffcon.

I think you would have a great time here, so long as you are at least somewhat interested in technology.



Photo and story by Jack Vanourek, 13, a CK Reporter from Littleton

Fun book for spy fans and younger readers

"Jada Sly, Artist & Spy" by Sherri Winston is a kid's novel that any kid interested in spycraft will love.

It follows the story of Jada Sly, an artist, dancer, and martial artist moving from Paris back home to New York City after her mother's death.

Jada is sure that her mother isn't dead, but in fact went undercover as a spy, and, when she starts seeing strange people following her, Jada knows she's right.

She teams up with the secret spy club at her school to investigate the mysterious people, such as creepy Allister Highbourne who works at her dad's art museum.

Will all these sightings lead Jada to her mom, or only lead her further from the truth?

I enjoyed reading this book.

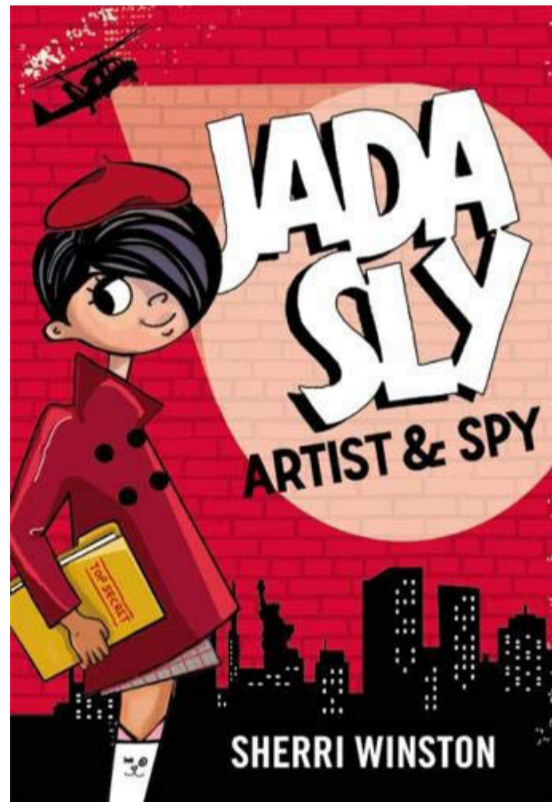
It is very suspenseful, and you only really learn what's going on at the very end of the book.

Sherri Winston makes this style fun, though. Jada had a spunky attitude, and her thoughts are very relatable.

Whenever the grownups are keeping things from her, she makes sure to find out what's really going on.

Subtlety is a key factor in this novel, and I love how every aspect of the story builds until the very end.

The characters are fun and very diverse, and the way



they interact is very meaningful.

This is a good book for people ages nine to fourteen, because it does have some fight scenes that could scare younger kids.

On the other hand, the book might feel a little bit simplistic for older readers.

I know a lot of people have fun pretending to be a spy, though, and this kid spy adventure will definitely scratch that itch.

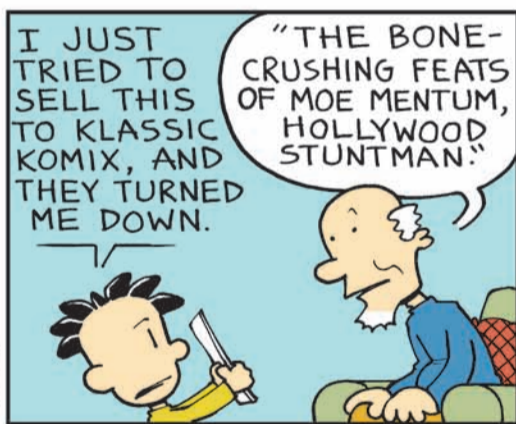
People who enjoyed the "Spy School" series by Stuart Gibbs will also enjoy this book. While the stories themselves aren't similar, the general topic and reading level are.

"Jada Sly, Artist & Spy" is a good read for anybody who likes novels about rebellion and secrets, as well as suspense novels.



By Sylvia Goodman, 13, a CK Reporter from Centennial

Big Nate



Researchers close in on disease that's killing sea stars



In October, 2013, a disease began killing sea stars off the West Coast and, five years later, has wiped out between 80 and 95 percent of the marine animals.

The mysterious disease, known simply as "sea star wasting disease," causes wounds to appear on their arms, which may then drop off. As it gets worse, the sea star dissolves into a goo and dies.

Hardest hit have been ochre sea stars, a common species that comes in pink and purple and is considered a "keystone species." This means it is critical to maintaining a health marine ecosystem.

But researchers have sprung into action to both study the disease and search for a cure, and they are

beginning to find some information that can be seen as good news, if not a complete turnaround.

One study has shown that certain bacteria that live on the stars can fight off the disease, but it's not clear if this is something the animal develops once it has the disease or is already there and is why the disease is not fatal for that particular sea star.

One promising sign is that the sea stars that survive the disease appear to have offspring that are also able to survive.

This offers hope that, in time, there will be new generations of ochre sea stars that are not nearly as vulnerable to the wasting disease.

photo/ D. Gordon E. Robertson

Young Adult novel a good read for early teens

Do you enjoy realistic fiction? Maybe drama? In "Testimony From Your Perfect Girl" by Kai Hart Hemmings, Annie Tripp, a 16 year old, has everything she could possibly want – fancy clothes and accessories, exclusive ice-skating lessons, a large and modern house in the mountains of Genesee, Colorado.

That is, until now. After her father, an investor, is accused of scamming hundreds of people, she and her brother Jay are sent to live with their stranger of an Aunt and Uncle in Breckenridge.

When they arrive, they are unpleasantly surprised by their new home. It is much smaller and "messier" than what they are used to.

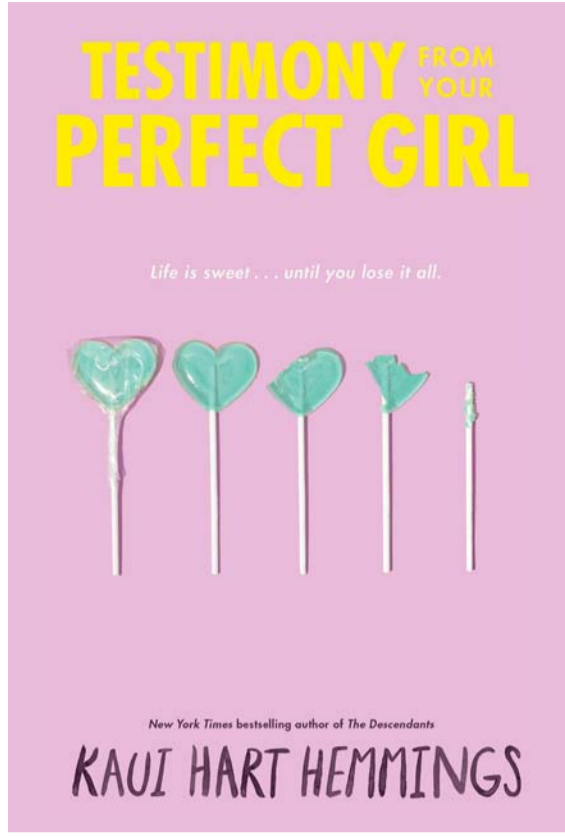
Additionally, they must "stay undercover" and temporarily change their last name to "Town."

They must also pretend to be Uncle Skip's nephew and niece visiting from his brother's family.

I enjoyed this book because it included believable characters and was realistic fiction.

Some of the characters included Annie; Jay; Sammy, their younger brother; Mr. and Mrs. Tripp, their parents; Aunt Nicole, Mrs. Tripp's sister; her husband Uncle Skip; and Cee, Annie's former best friend.

Throughout the book, the author was able to create realistic scenarios that both Annie and Jay had to live through.



Towards the end, I found that I started to admire Annie because she learned a lot of lessons from living in Breckenridge, and was trying her very best to be a better person and change her perspective about life.

I also appreciated the detail and elaborate descriptions of every setting, which enabled me to clearly picture every one; When Annie and Jay went out into town, I was able to imagine every detail.

Note: Though there aren't any curse words in the first three chapters, be prepared when beginning the fourth.

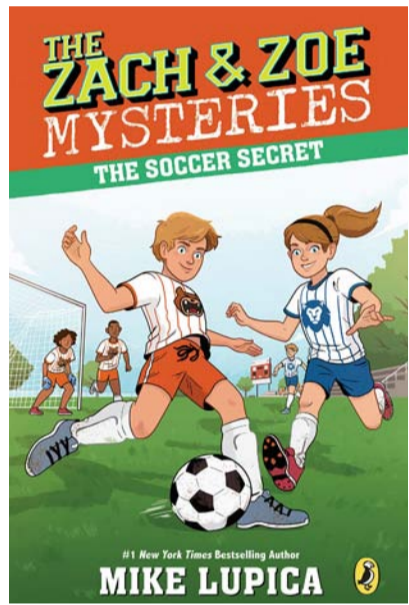
Also, there are certain topics in this book that should not be read by a younger audience. This definitely a Young Adult book for those seventh or eighth grade and up.

Overall, it was a great read. I enjoyed the realistic characters and the in-depth details. It quickly became a favorite of mine.



By Avery MacKenzie, 13, a CK Reporter from Fort Collins

Latest 'Zach and Zoe' is fun but could be better



Zach and Zoe have a new case! "The Soccer Secret," by Mike Lupica, is finally here.

The book starts out with Zach and Zoe starting off their soccer seasons.

Everything is going fine until the twins receive a package addressed to Zach.

Inside is a Bears' team jersey.

But why would someone send Zach a jersey if he already has his?

The twins are trying to find out who sent the jersey and why, when they receive good news: Cousin Anthony is coming!

But Anthony's visit has brought more strange news: The Bears (Zach's team, not Zoe's) are going to have a new coach!

Now the twins have another mystery to solve: who is this new coach?

I liked this book, but I felt like it was directed more towards younger kids.

There wasn't as much about soccer as I hoped there would be,

and the book also felt short, so the mystery wasn't as suspenseful.

I gave the book to my 8 year old brother to read, and he thought that it was a good read.

He did say that he wished that the mystery was better drawn out, but he enjoyed reading it anyway.

He also said that he appreciated how, rather than having most of the characters be friends, most of the characters were family members.

I think that this newest Zach and Zoe book lacks some of the suspense of earlier titles, but is a great gift for a younger child.



By Lizzie Intriago, 11, a CK Reporter from Aurora

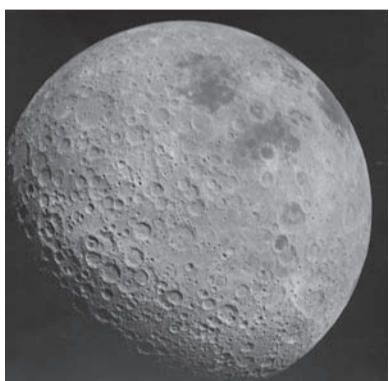
Chinese wake up on the cold side of the Moon

The China National Space Administration made history January 3 by landing the first probe on what people often call "the dark side of the Moon."

Now, to start with, it's not the dark side of the Moon, simply the far side.

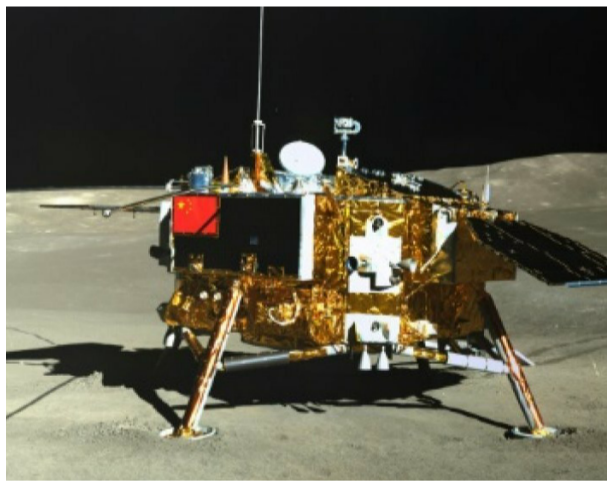
It's an oddity of our moon that its rotation (*spinning on its axis*) and its revolution (*orbiting around the Earth*) are the same, so that it always shows the same face to us.

That means that we had never seen the far side of the Moon until we launched space craft that went far enough out to have a look. This photograph of the far side of the Moon was taken by the crew of Apollo 16.



photo/NASA

As you can see, it's not dark at all. When we are seeing a "new moon,"



photo/China National Space Administration

we're seeing the dark side, while the side that faces away from us is fully lighted by the Sun.

What this means for China's Chang'e-4 probe is that it landed on the dark side of the Moon, because, as you probably remember, we had a full lunar eclipse a few weeks ago, which means our side of the Moon was facing right into the Sun.

With no atmosphere, the Moon doesn't store up much solar energy, and the Chinese probe found that

out for sure: It woke up this past week as the first rays of the Sun arrived, and recorded a temperature of minus 190 degrees Celsius, which is about minus 310 degrees Fahrenheit.

By comparison, the lowest temperature ever recorded on Earth was minus 128.6 degrees Fahrenheit, in Antarctica.

The probe had been asleep for a very smart reason: It runs on solar power and so, while its side of the Moon is turned away from the Sun, it's better to save battery power by turning off. But the Chinese space agency admitted it was surprised by how cold it was.

They also found that the soil on that side of the Moon is colder than at the site where the Apollo missions had landed, but said that may be a difference in the type of soil and that's part of what they are there to investigate.

Getting information back to Earth is a challenge for Chang'e-4. When the first Apollo missions circled the Moon, they "went dark" while on the far side, with no transmissions reaching Houston.

Chang'e-4 has an advantage, because China has satellites circling the Moon. Chang'e-4 sends data to them, and they are in an orbit visible both to Chang'e-4 and Earth so can forward the data back home.

Sudoku

		3		5	
	1	5		6	
1		2	3		
			1		6
	3				
					2

Rules: Every row across, every column down and each of the six smaller boxes must contain numerals 1,2,3,4,5 and 6, one time and one time only.

The solution to this week's puzzle is on Page 4.



Brainteaser

Although *Día de la Constitución* was celebrated yesterday, today is the actual anniversary of the adoption of Mexico's constitution in 1917, so our answers this week will each begin with M.

- Two American presidents had the first name "James" and a last name that started with "M." This is one of them.
- ... and this is the other.
- This Canadian city is the second-largest French speaking city in the world.
- Comics company that brings us Spider Man, Thor, Captain America and the Hulk.
- The male of this common species of duck has a bright green head.
- She was the original author of the "Baby-Sitters Club" series of novels.
- Tiny monkey species found in South America
- Bittersweet type of jam made from citrus fruits that includes their shredded peel
- You'd have to visit this state if you wanted to see Mount Rushmore.
- In 1776, this word meant "fancy." Today, it's a type of pasta. (*Don't put it in your cap!*)

(answers on Page Four)

Beyond These Pages!

Hot Links to Cool Sites!

NASA's Space Place

<http://tinyurl.com/ckspace>

NIE Special Report

<http://tinyurl.com/ckniereport>

Headline Geography

<http://tinyurl.com/ckgeography>

Pulse of the Planet

<http://tinyurl.com/ckpulseplanet>

How to become a Colorado Kids Reporter!

tinyurl.com/COkidsReporter



To read the sources for these stories

Far Side of the Moon

Sea Star Deaths

go to <http://www.tinyurl.com/ckstorylinks>

Au Pays d'en Haut (To the High Country)

Chapter Ten – Now What?

(Our story so far: Campbell's decision to try to haul the canoes over a waterfall instead of making a portage has led to a wrecked boat, lost and damaged bundles of goods, and death and injury to several voyageurs.)

Campbell looked at the broken canoe and the pile of soaked supply bundles next to it, at the man whose broken shoulder was being wrapped up by one of the other voyageurs, and out into the river, where men were wading to retrieve the two bundles that had not washed downstream.

Then he sat down heavily on a log and put his head in his hands.

The men watched him for a moment and then began to unload the other two canoes and pile their bundles of supplies on the shore. Four men started down along the riverbank to search for their missing comrades.

By the time the other two canoes were unloaded and hoisted up on shore, Campbell had stood back up, but he still seemed uncertain about what to do next. Even if the canoe could be repaired, it could not be fixed there, and not right then.

And though some of its cargo was lost and some ruined, there was still too much left to fit in the other two canoes.

Campbell kicked the damaged canoe and said something harsh and angry in English.

"Monsieur, we can portage everything beyond the falls," Toussaint, one of the older voyageurs, said quietly. "There we can cache anything we can't carry and come back for it later."

Campbell kicked the canoe again, hard. Then he spoke. "Six more days. I promised to have everything delivered in six more days."

"Well, yes," Toussaint replied, "but, you know . . ."

But he didn't finish the sentence. Campbell might have been able to deliver the supplies in eight more days or nine, but certainly not six. Now it would take even longer.

Some supplies were destroyed, two men were likely dead and another might never be able to do hard work again, two other men had deserted, and none of it was because of bad weather or bad luck.

There was nothing comforting for the kindly old voyageur to say.

"We should spread these things to dry," Marcel suggested. "It is not yet noon. We can still get everything to the other end of the portage by nightfall. We'll take these wet things last."

He looked to Campbell for a nod, or a wave, or anything that looked like permission to start, but, before Campbell could respond, the voyageurs all stopped and looked up the portage pathway.

Four Aboriginal men carrying rifles walked into the clearing and looked around. They quickly focused their attention on the damaged canoe and one of them asked a question.

Marcel looked over at Toussaint, then around the clearing. "Can anybody understand him?" he asked.

Charles, another of the older voyageurs, drew closer. "It sounds like Slavey, but I don't think it is," he said. "I think they're Beaver."

He spoke to the men and they listened intently and said something back to him.

"They're Beaver," he said. "I can't really talk to them, but Slavey is pretty close. I think we can figure out a few things. What do you want me to tell them?"

Again, the men turned to Campbell, and Toussaint prompted him. "If we had three or four horses, we could pack what we could fit into the canoes and then carry the rest to the first fort overland. Faster than coming back for it, and we'll need horses once we get there anyway."

Campbell seemed to come alive. "Yes, ask them if they have horses," he directed.

Charles spoke a few words to the men, who responded by repeating one of the words. He nodded and they said something else. "They want to trade for guns and ammunition," he said, then listened as one of the Indians said something else. "Also blankets and tools."

"We can do that," Campbell agreed. "When they bring the horses."

Charles parlayed again with the Beaver. "They want some salt pork now," he said.

"I want to see the horses first," Campbell said, but Charles shook his head.

"It's not that," he explained. "They're a hunting party. They can go home with food now and bring back horses, or else they need to keep hunting. But they were sent out to find food."

One of the voyageurs laughed and made a pantomime gesture of shooting a rifle at one of the casks of salt pork, which the Beaver understood and chuckled at, too.

Campbell nodded agreement. "Tell them this is part of the price of the horses," Campbell said as the cask was opened, but Charles shrugged.

"I don't think the two languages are close enough for me to explain that," he said. "Anyway, this is a gift to thank them for stopping to help us. We will talk about the horses later."

Once the Beaver left with sacks of salt pork, the men began to make the long portage around the rapids. Meanwhile, the men who had gone to search downstream had returned with one body, which they buried under an aspen tree, carving his name on it as a marker. The man who had steered the canoe was never found.

The voyageurs finished carrying everything to the spot above the falls and bedded down for the night. The two remaining canoes had been packed and the sun just risen when the hunting party returned with four horses and several other members of the band to help with the trading.

They had even brought a translator, dressed in native clothing but with a thick black beard that made it clear he was a white man, even before the group had come close.

"I understand you need horses," the white man said in French, with an accent so familiar that it reminded Antoine of home.

He only had to look closely for moment before he knew why: "Alexis!"

Text c. 2014, Mike Peterson – Illustrations c. 2014, Dylan Meconis

For a teaching guide, go to <http://tinyurl.com/ckserial>

Sudoku Solution

6	2	3	4	5	1
4	1	5	2	6	3
1	6	2	3	4	5
3	5	4	1	2	6
2	3	6	5	1	4
5	4	1	6	3	2

Brainteaser Solution



(see Page Three)

10 right - Wow!

7 right - Great!

5 right - Good

3 right - See you next time!

1. & 2. - Madison and Monroe 3. Montreal 4. Marvel 5. mallard
6. Ann Martin 7. marmoset 8. marmalade 9. Montana
10. macaroni

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