



NATIONAL  
GEOGRAPHIC

INSIDE: GAMES, JOKES,  
AND MORE!

# KIDS

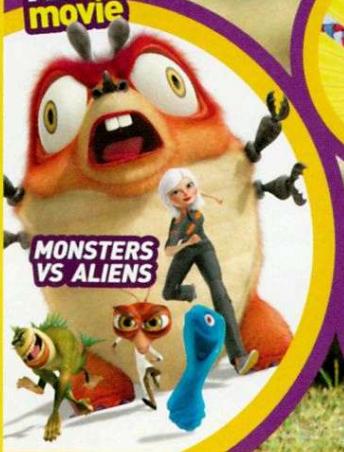
DARE TO EXPLORE  
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# 8

INCREDIBLE

## Elephant Stories

NEW  
movie



PAMPER  
YOUR  
PET



KAYAKING  
OTTER



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MARCH 2009  
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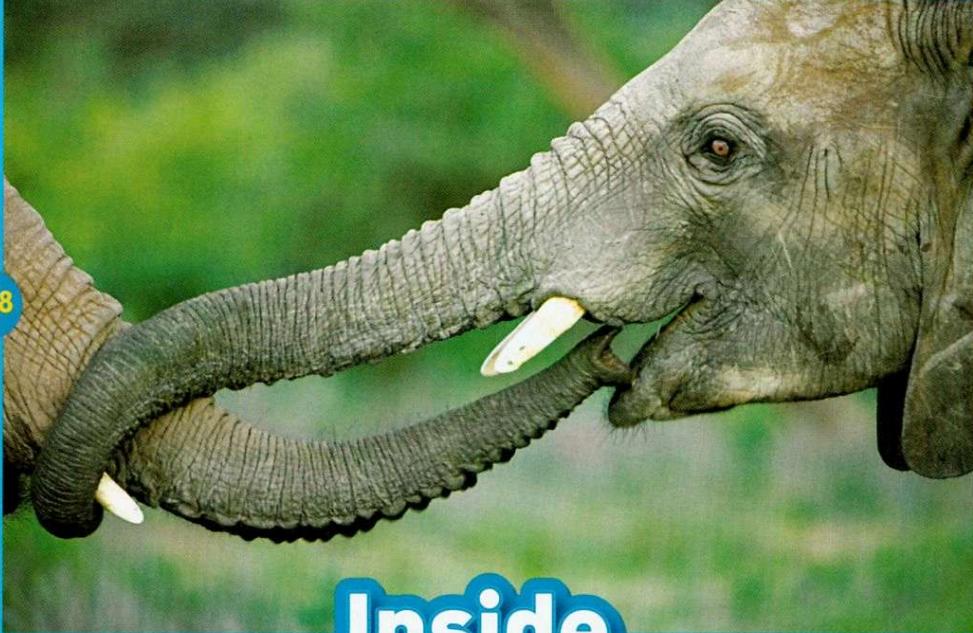
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You'll be amazed to discover what these smart and caring creatures do for each other.



### 24 The Truth Behind the New Movie Monsters vs Aliens

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## Just for KIDS online!

Go online for some fun with dogs! Learn about the Iditarod dogsled race, see pictures of dogs with jobs, and watch animal videos. [kids.nationalgeographic.com](http://kids.nationalgeographic.com)



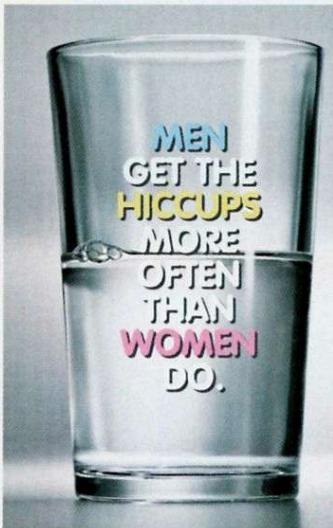
### On the Cover

The bond between an elephant mom and baby is strong.

COVER PHOTOGRAPH © NICOLOTTI MURIEL / PETER ARNOLD, INC.

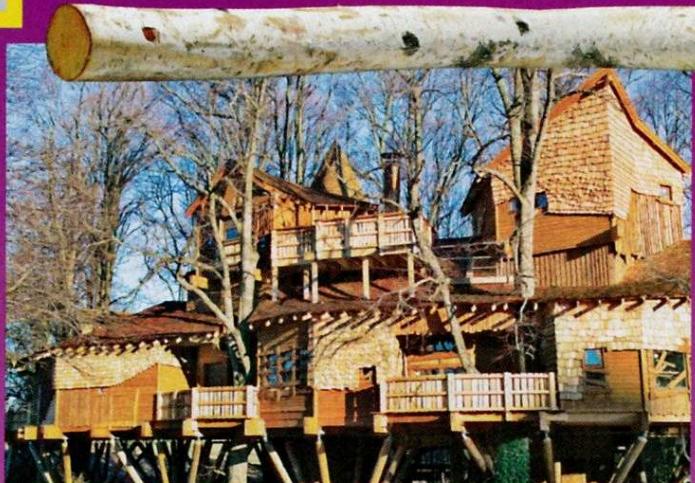
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## Check out these 9 outrageous facts.



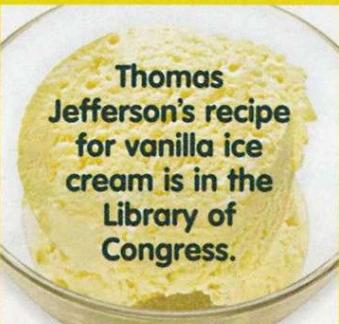
SMOOTH PEANUT BUTTER IS MORE POPULAR ON THE EAST COAST OF THE UNITED STATES; CHUNKY RULES ON THE WEST COAST.

THE WORLD'S MOST EXPENSIVE TREE HOUSE, LOCATED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, COST \$7 MILLION.



THERE CAN BE ABOUT A BILLION BACTERIA IN YOUR MOUTH RIGHT NOW.

CROCODILES HAVE BEEN AROUND FOR ABOUT 200 MILLION YEARS.



SCIENTISTS BELIEVE THAT SATURN'S RINGS WILL EVENTUALLY DISAPPEAR.

BETWEEN 1912 AND 1918,



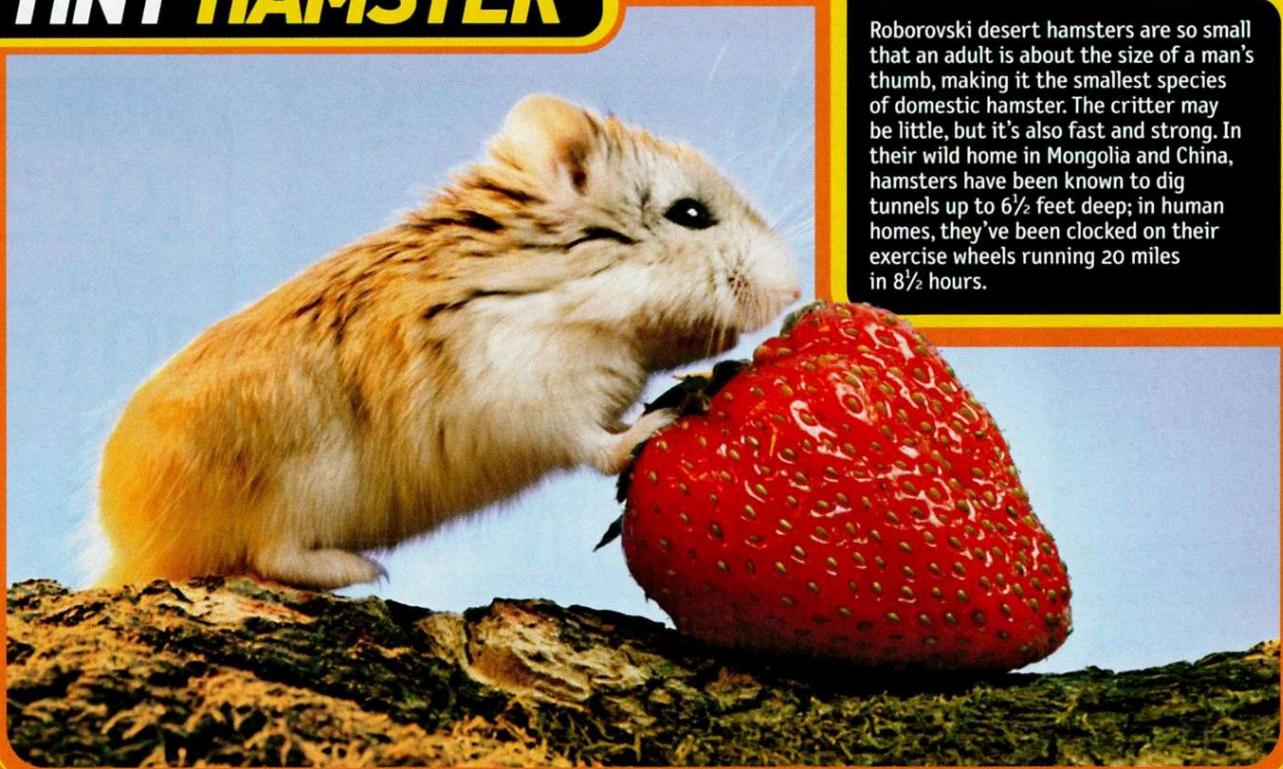
YOU COULD TAKE YOUR MONEY TO WASHINGTON TO BE WASHED AND IRONED.



ASTONISHING  
STORIES FROM  
THE FILES OF

# Guinness World Records

## TINY HAMSTER



Roborovski desert hamsters are so small that an adult is about the size of a man's thumb, making it the smallest species of domestic hamster. The critter may be little, but it's also fast and strong. In their wild home in Mongolia and China, hamsters have been known to dig tunnels up to 6½ feet deep; in human homes, they've been clocked on their exercise wheels running 20 miles in 8½ hours.

© MAXIMILIAN WENZLER / ALAMY [HAMSTER] © GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS LIMITED  
WHEELER, RACE [INFORMATION PROVIDED BY © 2009 GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS LIMITED]

## WOMAN GROWS BEARD



Yes, Vivian Wheeler has a beard. The woman who holds the record for the longest beard on a woman is proud of what makes her different. Wheeler started shaving her face when she was 7 years old but decided more than 15 years ago to just let her beard grow. When last measured, the longest strand was 11 inches long. Wow!

## CRAZY RACE

You've probably competed in a 3-legged race. But have you tried a 31-legged race? That's what Japanese sixth graders did, and one group finished so fast—164 feet in 8.8 seconds—that they earned a record for the fastest 31-legged race. The event was organized to teach the kids to work together. The winning group learned that setting a record is pretty cool, too.



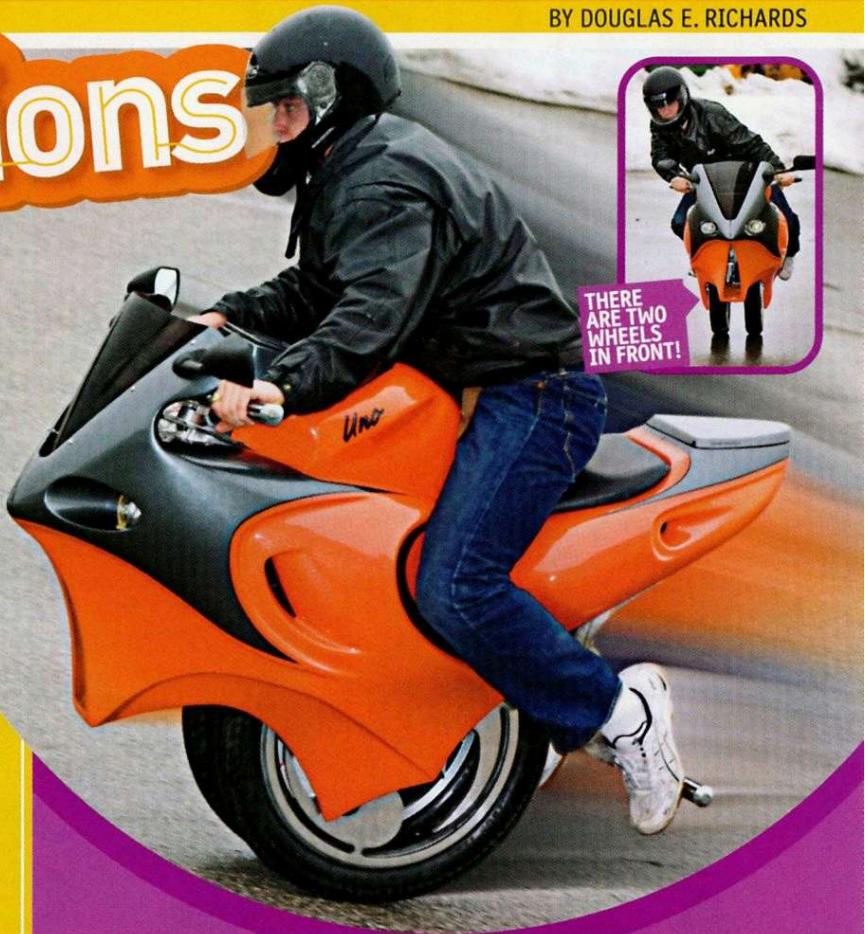
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# COOL inventions

BY DOUGLAS E. RICHARDS

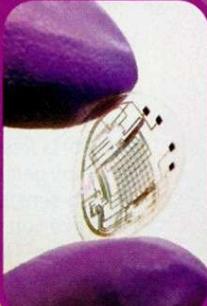
## ULTRA-COMPACT VEHICLE

Thrilled with the ride, you zip along on the smallest, coolest looking vehicle ever. Instead of front and back wheels, its two wheels are side by side—and just inches apart. From the side it looks like a unicycle from the future. It's the Uno, a vehicle much smaller and more maneuverable than even a motorcycle. It's electric, so it doesn't pollute, and its top speed is about 15 miles an hour. An internal, high-tech gyroscope, controlled by body movements, keeps you balanced. Lean forward to accelerate, to the side to turn, and backward to stop. The Uno's inventor? An 18-year-old inspired to build a nonpolluting way to get around.



## SUPERHUMAN VISION

Ever wish you had eyes that could zoom in on objects far off in the distance? Or watch television, surf the Web, or play a video game on a display that hovers in front of you wherever you go? The ability to do all of this and more may be in your future. Scientists have created a bionic contact lens containing electronic circuits one-thousandth the width of a human hair. In future versions a miniature display could be added to the lens to project images that only you can see. The bionic lens won't block your vision or bother your eyes. These contacts might even make Superman jealous. While his eyes can see through walls, only yours will be able to surf the Web!



## FLEXIBLE LIGHT-UP KEYBOARD

As you head over to a friend's house for a sleepover, you know you'll want to play computer games even after "lights out." So you grab your Bendi Board keyboard, roll it up, and stuff it into your backpack. Lightweight and flexible, these keyboards are easily portable. And typing in the dark is no problem. Just flip a switch and the Bendi Board glows with its own light. It's quiet, too, so no one will hear you clicking as you conquer new levels. Even spilling your midnight snack on it is no big deal. The Bendi Board is waterproof, so cleanups are easy.



# viDEO game CENTRAL

## VIRTUAL VACATION

It's spring break! Even if your family isn't taking a dream vacation to some awesome place while you're out of school, you can "travel" to a fun destination on your own. Try any of these three games to take a virtual trip—without leaving the comfort of your own home.



### ANIMAL CROSSING: CITY FOLK

#### Wii

Think of this game as a way for all your friends who live far away to travel to see you. In *Animal Crossing*, players get to create their own virtual home that friends can visit online. Furnish yours with items from the Gracie Grace fashion boutique, or design your own paintings and carpets to impress your visitors. Once you've given your friends the grand tour, you can head out together to go digging for treasure, build a snowman, or maybe try some fishing.

» **TIP #1** Don't like the look of your character? Head over to Harriet's Beauty Salon and you can do more than just change your hairstyle—you can find a mask that looks just like any of your Mii people.

» **TIP #2** Try playing the game during holidays in the real world to watch the virtual characters in your town celebrate. You can dig for eggs on Easter, wear a costume on Halloween, or celebrate New Year's Eve.



### SIX FLAGS FUN PARK

#### Nintendo DS

Is your idea of a vacation a trip to an amusement park? This video game version of a Six Flags theme park is always open, and you don't have to convince your parents to take you anywhere! Choose from 32 mini-games to play either alone or with friends. It has all the standard games you might expect, such as batting cages and boat racing, plus stuff you could never do in real life, such as help Joe Space Hero save the universe. You can also play crazy versions of Skee-Ball (roll cannonballs at the pirates) and Whac-A-Mole (keep those scary ghouls in the ground).



» **TIP #1** Check every tree and trash can. Some of them hold hidden items you can find.

» **TIP #2** Try talking to kids wearing different costumes to find a few special messages.

» **TIP #1** The Wii MotionPlus attachment is what makes the controls in *Resort* even better than the last *Wii Sports*. If you want to try any of the two-player games, make sure you have an extra MotionPlus attachment for the other Wii remote.

» **TIP #2** In *Sword Play*, use the B button to block your opponent's moves, and then immediately follow up with some swipes of your own to win.

### Wii SPORTS RESORT

#### Wii

Prefer somewhere tropical for your virtual vacation? It's always sunny on the beautiful island of *Wii Sports Resort*. Since all of its ten mini-games use the Wii's motion-sensing abilities, it even feels like you're out on the beach having fun! Hop on a Jet Ski and cruise across the ocean. (Steer by holding the Wii remote and Nunchuk attachment out in front of you and moving them like real handlebars.) Or

you can teach your dog to catch a Frisbee. (Guide the angle and how far the disk goes by how you wave the Wii remote in the air.)



# green scene

BY JILL YAWORSKI

## CREATE A HUMMINGBIRD GARDEN!

**S**eventeen different species of colorful hummingbirds live throughout the United States—probably near you. These tiny birds, with their sparkling iridescent feathers, are fun to watch as they dart from flower to flower. Use plants native to your area to create a garden that will attract hummingbirds to your yard. By growing native plants you'll have a garden that thrives naturally and is good for the environment. Here are some hummingbird favorites to plant in your garden.

A hummingbird's wings beat 40 to 80 times a second.

Hummingbirds are the only birds that can fly backward.

Hummingbirds can hover in midair.

For more about helping the Earth, go online.  
[preserveourplanet.com](http://preserveourplanet.com)

### TO ATTRACT HUMMINGBIRDS

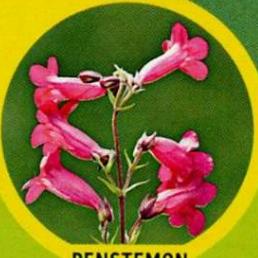
Hovering all day can be exhausting, so hummingbirds need to refuel often. They feed on the flowers' nectar, which is rich in energy. A hummingbird can drink half its weight in just one day. Hummingbirds will feed from any nectar-producing flower, no matter what its shape or color. Attract your feathered friends by filling your garden with these "flight fuel" flowers.



BEE BALM



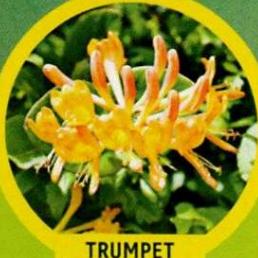
TEXAS SAGE



PENSTEMON



TRUMPET CREEPER



TRUMPET HONEYSUCKLE



o-nid









KNOCK.







# 8 INCREDIBLE ELEPHANT TALES



Family comes first for these  
smart and caring creatures.



BY SCOTT ELDER  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL NICHOLS, NG STOCK

**A**frican elephants are the biggest land animals on Earth. Standing as tall as 13 feet and sometimes weighing more than 6 tons, these jumbos aren't dumbos. Elephants have the largest brains of any land mammal, and that includes you! Of course, elephants aren't as smart as humans; our brains are bigger compared with the size of our bodies, and that relationship is one key to intelligence. Still, in the animal kingdom they're practically geniuses. Here's how elephants show their smarts in the wild.













BY MARGARET McMULLAN

# Sea Turtle R

## How veterinarians healed this badly injured cr

The green sea turtle was in trouble. Its shell was badly damaged. The reptile's rear flippers were unable to move, and its rump kept floating above the surface of the water. Luckily a marine biologist on his boat spotted the struggling turtle. He lifted the sea turtle and put it into his fishing boat, keeping it wet as he steered toward shore. The turtle protection program he contacted arranged for the sea turtle to be rushed to the Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA), in Florida.

**THE TURTLE** was not fully grown, so the CMA couldn't tell whether it was a male or a female. On the charts, they wrote "undetermined," but they named the turtle Pete.

The biologists determined Pete could not move his hind flippers because he had been struck by a boat. He was malnourished, too. If Pete hadn't been brought in that day, the turtle certainly would have died.

Pete's rescuers at the aquarium put him on antibiotics to help him fight infection, and they fed him fresh squid. After a few months, Pete's shell began to heal, but he still swam in the same unusual way—head down, rump up. Everyone realized if they released Pete back into the sea, he would never be able to swim away from danger. Most likely, sharks would kill him or a boat would hit him again. So for the next five years, Pete lived at the aquarium with other turtles, eating squid, fish, and romaine lettuce.

One day, the CMA got a call from the Shedd Aquarium, in Chicago, Illinois. They had recently lost a sea turtle and offered Pete a new home at Shedd's coral reef habitat. Everyone agreed that Pete would do well at the new aquarium. The CMA packed up Pete in a crate, safely covered with foam and damp towels so his skin wouldn't dry out. Then they flew him in an airplane to Chicago.

**AT HIS FIRST CHECKUP** at Shedd, x-rays revealed something in Pete's throat. An object was lodged in his esophagus. Vets guessed that the object was a coin Pete must have come across somewhere and swallowed. Sea turtles eat almost anything. The

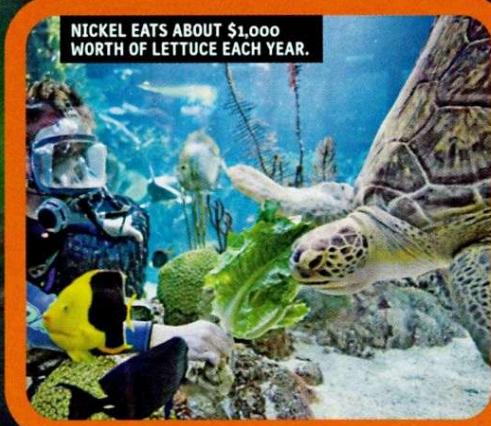
veterinarians used an instrument with a small retrieval tool and removed a 1975 nickel.

**DURING THE PROCEDURE**, the vets discovered one other thing. Pete had matured and grown to about 124 pounds. It was now possible to determine that Pete was in fact a female. Pete got a new name: Nickel.

Because of the boat accident, Nickel will always swim the same way—rump up. But if you go to Chicago and visit the Shedd Aquarium, you will see that Nickel's shell has healed, although she still has a noticeable scar.

Nickel loves to wake up from a nap beneath her spot in the coral and swim up to the platform built for her above water. She knows that aquarium staff will be there to feed her romaine lettuce or special sushi wraps, conduct training sessions that prepare her for health checkups, and scratch her shell. Even though a turtle's shell is hard, it's very sensitive because it has thousands of nerve endings. When anyone scratches her back, Nickel swims in closer to encourage her human friends to continue the scratching she enjoys. The staff at Shedd call that the Nickel-tickle.

NICKEL EATS ABOUT \$1,000 WORTH OF LETTUCE EACH YEAR.



THE INJURED SEA TURTLE ADJUSTS TO A NEW HOME AFTER BEING RESCUED.



# rescue

## feature



HUNTING WITH GOLDEN EAGLES  
IS TRADITION AMONG THE  
KAZAKH PEOPLE OF

# Mongolia

BY JEREMY SCHMIDT

**G**alloping on horseback across a rocky plain, a man rides with a golden eagle perched on his hand. As a hare darts out from behind a boulder, the eagle launches into the air, streaking after the hare like a missile.

With a seven-foot wingspan and bone-crushing claws, golden eagles are fierce hunters that can spot prey a mile away. But this eagle is not hunting for herself; she's claiming prey for her master.

### Feathered Friends

The bird's owner, named Baitolda (BUY-tol-dah), is a member of a group of Kazakh (KAH-zahk) people who have trained eagles for hundreds of years. For these Kazakhs, who live in the remote Altay Mountains of Mongolia, a country in Asia, these birds of prey are both hunting companions and honored family members. Eagle hunters, called *burkitshi* (ber-kuht-SHEE) in the Kazakh language, are some of the most respected members of their community. And Baitolda is one of the best.

### Basic Training

Teaching these wild predators to hang out with humans is no small feat. Burkitshis have to become experts on how the birds behave.

"The eagle must depend on the hunter for food," says Baitolda. "If she learns how to feed herself, she might go wild and not come back."

One of Baitolda's techniques is to set the bird on a high boulder, hold up a

rabbit leg and call, "Kaa, kaa," to get the eagle to speed toward him. He steadies himself as the bird lands with one powerful claw gripping his padded glove and the other grasping the rabbit leg. The eagle quickly learns the lesson: returning to her owner's glove means lunch!

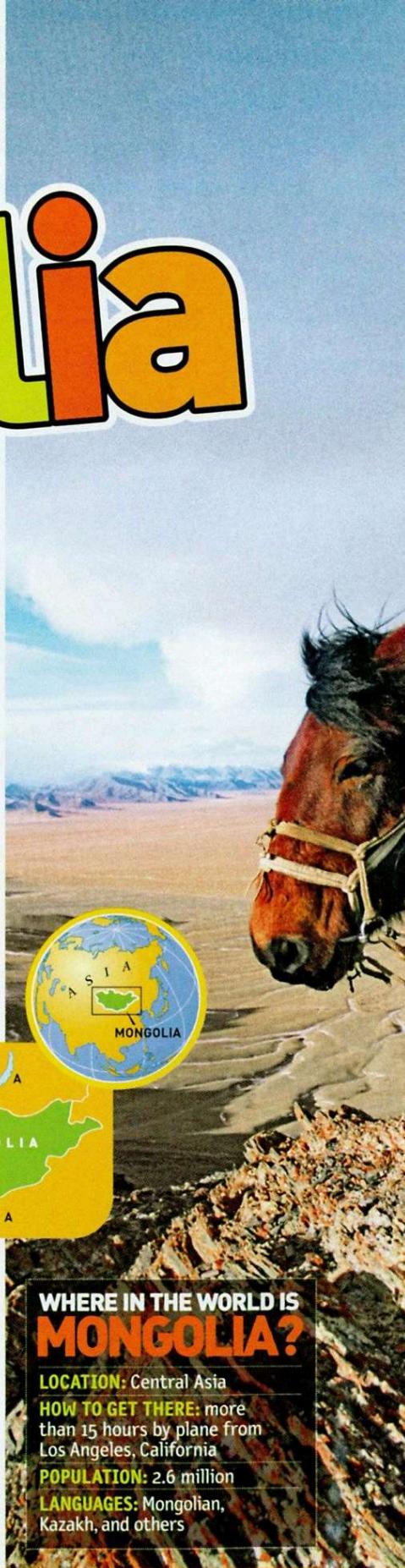
### On the Move

Baitolda is one of about 150,000 Kazakhs who still live a traditional nomadic lifestyle. When the seasons change, families load up camels, and sometimes trucks, with their belongings and trek through the mountains on horseback to find fresh pastures for their sheep and goats. Only in winter do families return to permanent houses built from bricks made of mud.

During the journey, Baitolda's eagle rides on his hand and has a perch inside the family's sturdy tent—called a yurt, or *ger* in Mongolia. But the eagle also earns her keep. The foxes and hares she catches provide fur for the family's winter clothing—a necessity in temperatures that can dip to minus 40°F.

### Back to Nature

When an eagle turns eight, Kazakhs traditionally release the bird back into the wild to forget her training. As a *burkitshi* named Khopei (KOH-pie) says, "They have to live free to make more eagles."



### WHERE IN THE WORLD IS MONGOLIA?

**LOCATION:** Central Asia

**HOW TO GET THERE:** more than 15 hours by plane from Los Angeles, California

**POPULATION:** 2.6 million

**LANGUAGES:** Mongolian, Kazakh, and others

### ▼ LEARN TO SPEAK KAZAKH!

FATHER: *ake* (ah-KEH)

MOTHER: *ana* (ah-NAH)

HELLO: *sahlem* (sah-LEM)

THANK YOU: *rakhmet* (rakh-MET)

GOOD: *jaqsy* (jahk-SUH)



# FunStuff

games, laughs, and lots to do!

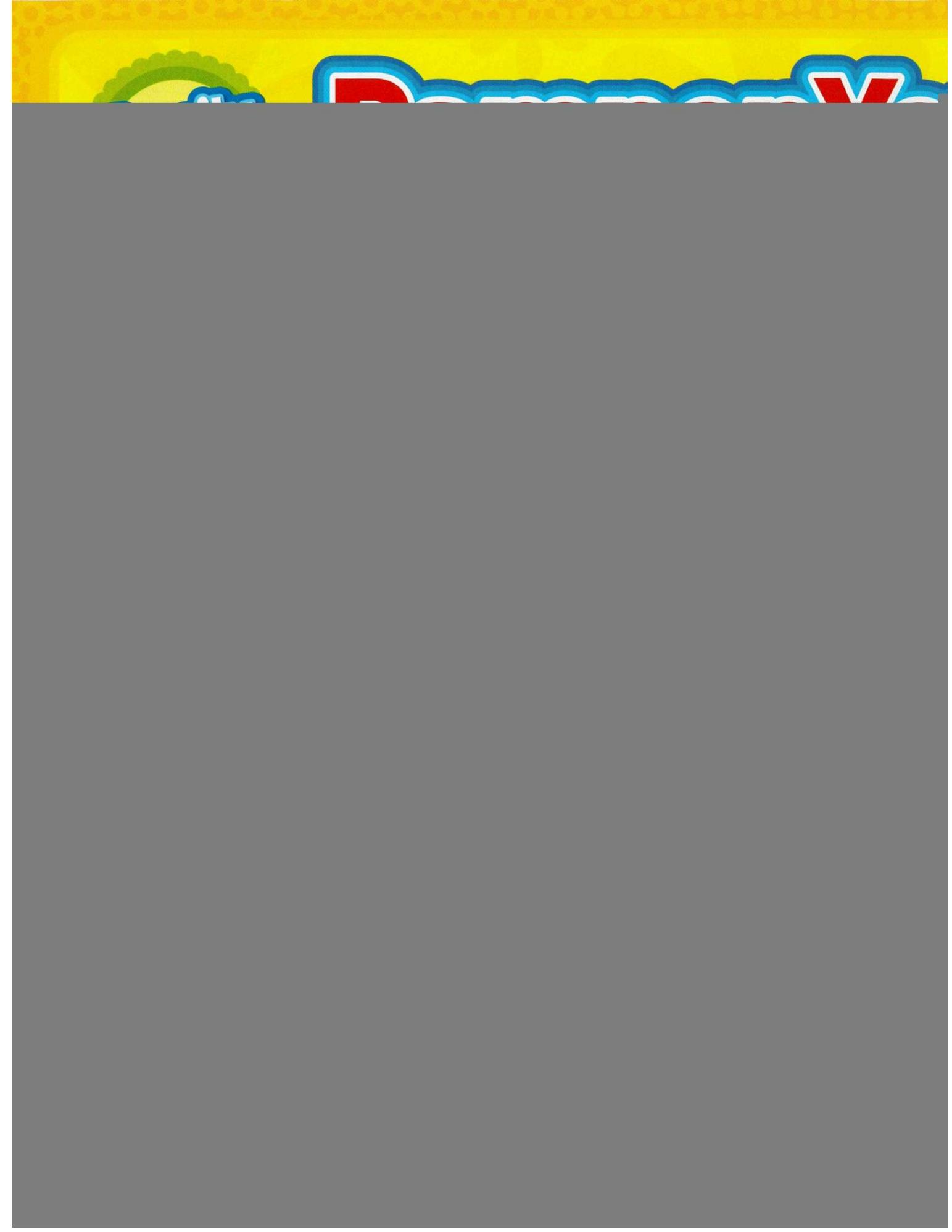


## Mousetrap

A tiny mouse has sneaked into this restaurant and caused chaos. Find 20 things in the dining room that the mouse has nibbled on, and then find the mouse. We've circled one nibble for you.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 34





# ur Pets!



## Happy Birthday Cake

### YOU WILL NEED

- SEVERAL CANS OF WET DOG OR CAT FOOD
- ASSORTED DOG OR CAT TREATS

### WHAT TO DO

Shape the wet food into cake layers. You can use plastic containers as molds. Decorate the cake with kitty or doggie treats. Sing "Happy Birthday" and watch your pet dig in. Remember to monitor your pet to make sure it doesn't overeat.



## Pooch Shampoo

### YOU WILL NEED

- 2 CUPS BABY SHAMPOO
- 2 CUPS WATER
- 2 CUPS APPLE CIDER VINEGAR
- 1/2 CUP GLYCERIN  
(AVAILABLE AT PHARMACIES)

### WHAT TO DO

Mix all ingredients in a large pitcher, then pour the liquid into clean, recycled bottles for easy use. When washing, keep the soap out of your dog's eyes and mouth, and rinse well. Ask your vet how often your dog should be washed.



## Mouse Catnip Toy

### YOU WILL NEED

- TWO COLORS OF FLEECE
- BUTTON THREAD
- NEEDLE
- DRIED CATNIP
- UNCOOKED RICE
- THREE 10-INCH LENGTHS OF RIBBON

### WHAT TO DO

1. Cut out a six-inch square of fleece and fold it in half. Keeping the fold on the bottom, cut out the mouse shape shown above. Be sure to cut through both layers of the fleece.
2. Starting at the mouse's nose, use small stitches to sew the sides tightly together along the mouse's spine. (The knot in the thread should be on the inside of the nose.) Leave the last two inches of the back open.
3. Fill the toy with a mixture that is equal parts catnip and uncooked rice.
4. Continue sewing. When you reach the last quarter inch, stack up the ribbons and sew one end of the stack into the opening. Stitch through the ribbons and fleece about six times in the same place, or until secure.
5. Braid the ribbons together to about halfway down the tail, then knot. If you wish, sew on fleece ears in a contrasting color and use black thread to stitch the eyes and whiskers.

## Cool Collars

### YOU WILL NEED

- FABRIC COLLAR THAT FITS YOUR PET • NONTOXIC 3-D FASHION PAINT • TACKY GLUE • PLASTIC GEMS AND BEADS

### WHAT TO DO

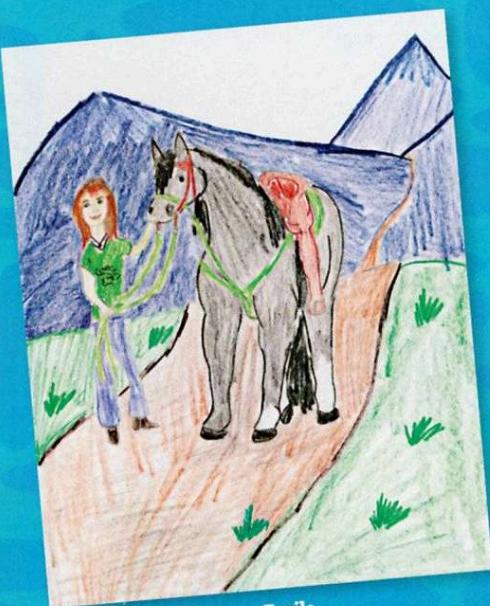
Paint a design or your pet's name on the collar. Let dry. Glue on gems and beads. Lay flat and dry overnight. Make sure the gems and beads are secure before putting the collar on your pet.



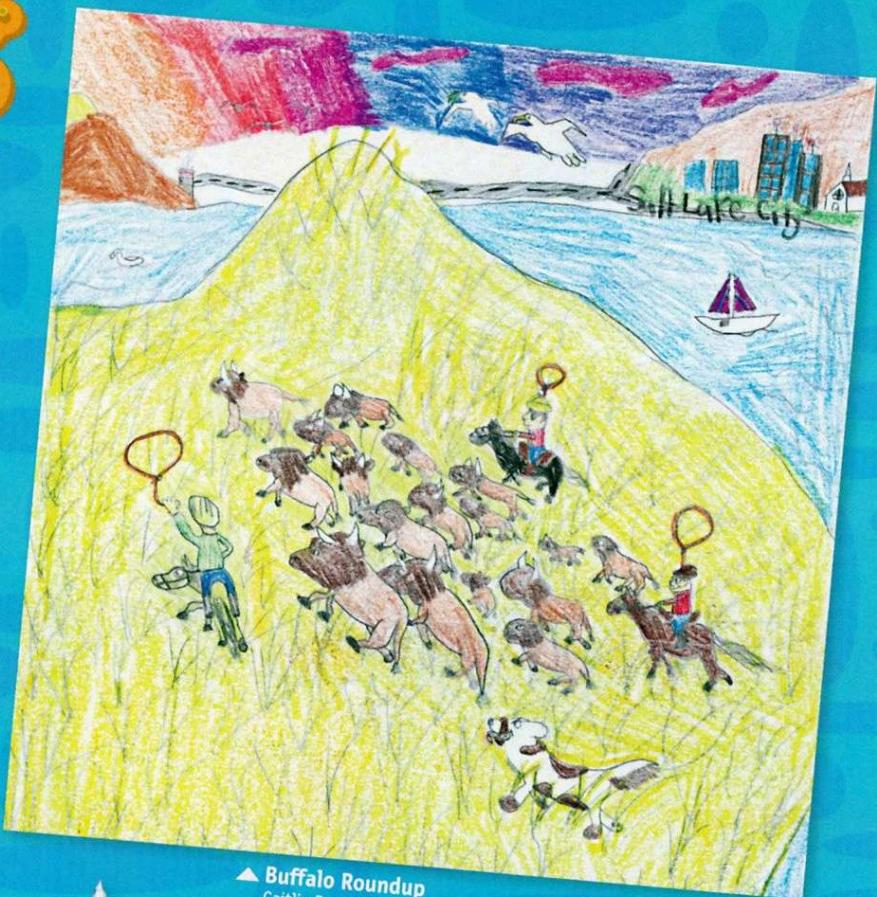
# Art Zone

## COOL ADVENTURES

NG KIDS show off their sense of adventure in these daring drawings.



▲ **With My Horse on Trails**  
Haley Sheedy, 14  
New Carlisle, Indiana



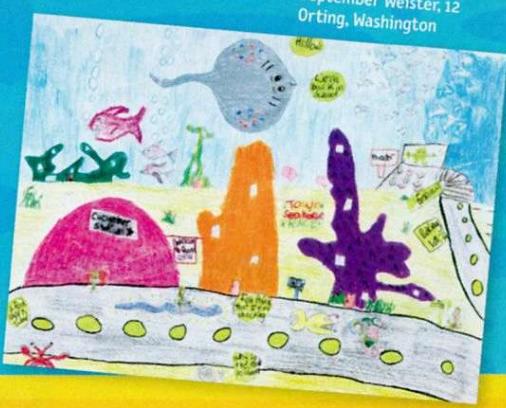
▲ **Buffalo Roundup**  
Caitlin Bryant, 12  
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**Kennedy Space Center** ▶  
Dmytro Kusen, 10  
Farmington, Connecticut



▲ **The Ganges River,**  
in Kolkata, India  
Kinjal Dey, 7  
Peoria, Illinois

▼ **Quarrel Coral**  
September Weister, 12  
Orting, Washington



## Answers



"Mousertapp" (page 30)

Mars rover, satellite  
Bottom row: Saturn,  
comet, shuttle, Goop.  
Middle row: space shuttle, moon.  
Top row: galaxy, starburst, moon.  
"What in the World?" (page 31)

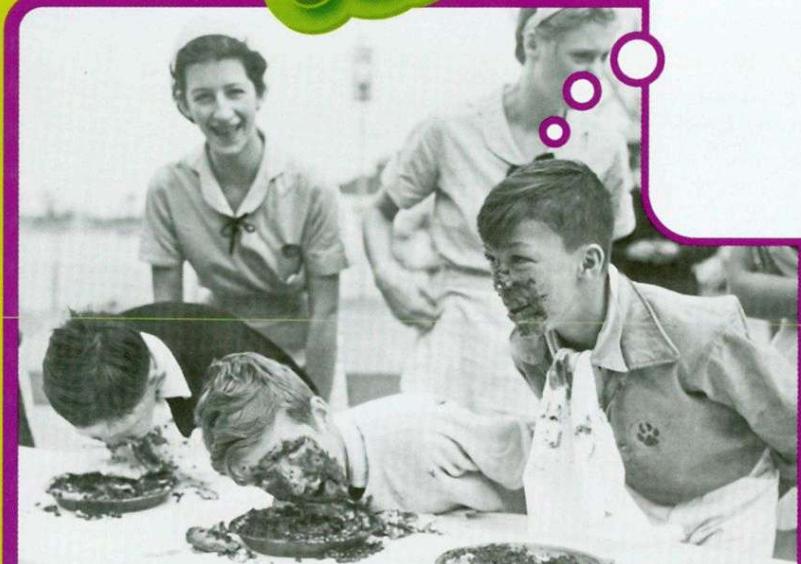
### Draw an original cartoon character.

Send your original drawings to  
NG KIDS—Cartoon Character Art Zone  
P.O. Box 98002  
Washington, DC 20090-8002

Include your name, address, phone number, date of birth, a title for your drawing, a statement that it is your own work, and the name of your parent or guardian. Your parent or guardian must sign a release for publication of your illustration. Submissions become the property of the National Geographic Society, and all rights thereto are transferred to the National Geographic Society. Submissions cannot be acknowledged or returned. Selection will be at the discretion of NG KIDS.

# Back Talk

Do I have anything on my face?



What do  
YOU think  
this kid  
is thinking?

1. Fill in the thought balloon.
2. Cut out the entire picture (or make a photocopy of it).
3. Mail it along with your name, address, phone number, and date of birth to NG KIDS, Back Talk, P.O. Box 96000, WASHINGTON, DC 20090-6000. Selection for publication in a future issue will be at the discretion of NG KIDS.

## From the November Issue



You have something in your teeth.

Lily Friedrichsen, 11  
Sutherland, Iowa

Hand over the spoon and no one will get hurt.

Jacob Denson, 9  
Raleigh, North Carolina

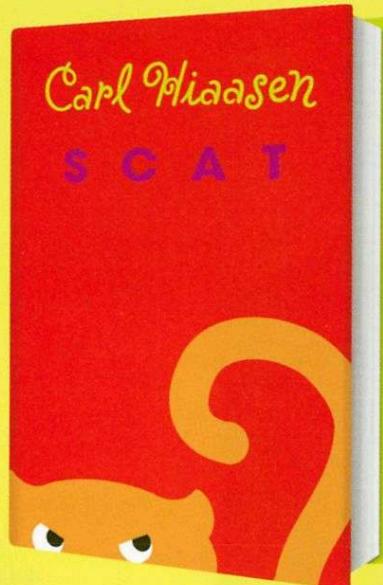
Do you know the muffin man?

Bethany Toscano, 11  
Hemet, California

Hey, I'm not in Ratatouille.

Edward Cieszynski, 10  
Mequon, Wisconsin

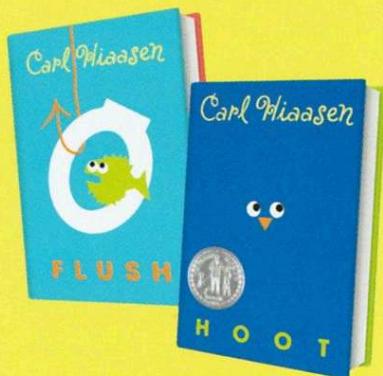
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PART  
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