



CK Reporter of the Week  
Natalia Zavaleta, Lakewood

## Exciting tale of legendary battles



Living the life of a mercenary isn't complicated. You fight other people's battles for them and then get paid a generous sum.

You can get hired for many things such as finding weapons, saving some lives, and ending others. But what happens once you stumble across a war worth fighting?

There are many legends surrounding the famous Great Wall of China.

The movie "The Great Wall" tells the story of one of these legends.

Starring Matt Damon, this PG-13 action movie is sure to hold you spellbound every single minute.

Mercenary warriors William Garin (*Damon*) and Pero Tovar (*Pedro Pascal*) journey to the Great Wall of China during the Middle Ages in search of the legendary black powder (*gunpowder*), a weapon that can turn air

into fire.

Dodging hill tribes while searching for black powder, they encounter a monster that drags off their three companions before William kills it.

After a two-day ride, they once again end up being chased by the hill tribes and run almost directly into the Great Wall. However, shortly after arrival they are confronted with a situation they could have only imagined.

A legendary battle that happens every 60 years is about to begin.

This cycle echoes a similar one in our recent history, where great wars happen about every 80 years because everyone who remembers how terrible it was is dead.

Wave after wave of green monsters called *Tao Tié* assault the wall, taking orders from a well-

protected Queen without whose orders they become incapacitated.

The *Tao Tié* are based on a Chinese legend about a monster that was extremely greedy, and ate anything it could see. It even ate its own body!

It was punished for its greed with death, just as an ancient emperor in the movie was punished for his greed with the cyclical attacks of the *Tao Tié* hordes.

The graphics are impressive, to say the least. From the snarling, salivating *Tao Tié* to the explosions and fireballs, it all shows a very skilled special effects team.

The costumes seem mostly accurate, though less ornate and cumbersome than medieval Chinese armor.

However, while the other characters get dirty and stained, Commander Lin remains perfect, with immaculate hair and a flawless complexion, except for a smudge of dirt on her cheek at the end.

The character development is remarkable, with William changing from a self-serving, greedy liar to a man who understands the value of trust and teamwork.

I liked "The Great Wall" because of the stellar special effects, ingenious plot, breathtaking scenery, and the superb acting skills. Everything seems as if it actually happened.

With an ingenious plot that cleverly intertwines the worlds of fact and fiction, "The Great Wall" is a movie that is well worth the ticket price.

I would recommend this movie for anybody who likes action movies or has ever wanted to see Matt Damon shoot arrows at monsters with eyes in their shoulders.

However, you should remember that this movie is rated PG-13 for fantasy action violence and mild swearing.

"The Great Wall" is in theaters now.



By Maria Ciobanu,  
12, a CK Reporter  
from Denver

## Learning physics in the midst of an adventure

Twelve is the right age to learn how to use a homemade time machine, meet your dead father in the past, and somehow get home without getting caught in a time paradox, right?

On his twelfth birthday, Al gets a letter from his father who died four years earlier.

In it, his father asks Al to go back in time and prevent the accident that ended his life.

"Time Traveling with a Hamster" by Ross Welford tells the story of a brave young boy as he travels back in time to get his father back.

Al's father told him to act within a week and find his time machine. The one difficult part about following those instructions is that the time machine is at Al's old house.

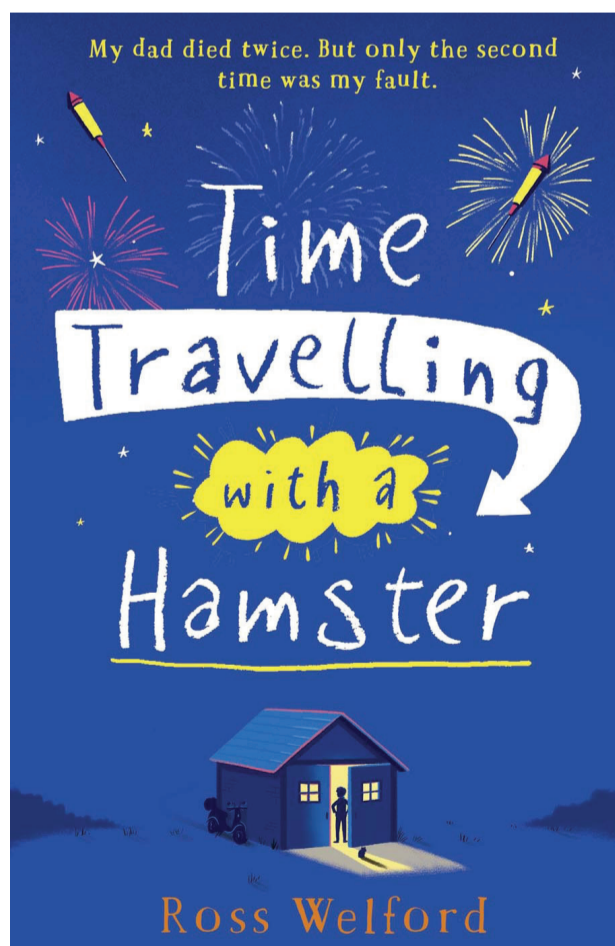
Sneaking in there in itself is hard to accomplish, but what is Al supposed to do once he finds it?

He has to make the choice to go back in time and change the past or live without a father, all while following laws of relativity and doppelgangers.

"Time Traveling with a Hamster" a fun book for kids 9 to 12.

It is packed with facts teaching about time paradoxes, Einstein's theories, and the laws of physics.

Kids will get a head start and learn these complicated ideas through the simple examples and analogies in this book.



An example of this is in one of the letters Al receives from his father. In it, he explains Einstein's Theory of Relativity through a goldfish analogy.

"It's like a goldfish in an aquarium," he writes. "He might understand everything there is to know about his environment: every rock, every stone, every bubble. . . but he doesn't know what people are, what cars are, what a fruit smoothie is, what a cup-winning goal looks like, or what any of it means, and that's because he simply cannot."

And, he explains, you "put your hand on a hot stove for a minute and it seems like an hour. Sit with a pretty girl for an hour and it seems like a minute. *That's relativity!*"

These ideas are enveloped in a heartwarming story that everyone should read.

If you're seeking to learn a few ideas or theories without putting in the effort, "Time Traveling with a Hamster" is the perfect book for you.

Go on! Impress your science teacher!



By Natalia Goncharova,  
13, a CK Reporter  
from Fort Morgan



**Limited to first 75 students.**

## Youth Journalism Day

**for 4th-8th grade students**

**Thursday, July 20, 2017**  
**7:30am to 5:00pm**  
**Metropolitan State University, Denver**

Student Cost for the Day: \$65 (includes breakfast & lunch).  
Spend the day with professionals learning about story writing, interviews and photography.

**Register today! Go to ColoradoNIE.com for a registration form.**  
**Call 303-954-3974 with questions.**




# T.A. Barron and the magic of heroism

**“W**aking up in the morning and thinking about kids, wife and Colorado wilderness makes me smile in the morning,” T.A. Barron has said.

perseverance, generosity, courage and hope.

Barron realizes that our society will hear a great deal about celebrities, so writing his book “The Hero’s Trail,” and setting up the foundation is his way to build hope that a legacy continues of young heroes and their real life impact.

“The Hero in Every Child” was the title of T.A. Barron’s session at the Colorado Council International Reading Association Conference in Denver this year.

Barron is the author of over 30 highly acclaimed books. His series about Merlin the magician has caught the fascination and wonder of numerous fans, and Disney is currently in production to bring the book to life in a film for many others to enjoy.

At his session at the conference, Barron shared how one of his first heroines, his teacher, encouraged him to write down the imaginative stories living in his head.

During his elementary years, he wrote a newspaper that allowed him the freedom to really channel his creative writing skills.

He was responsible for funding the printing of the paper with the little money he had, and often this teacher would make sure he had enough so the edition could go to print.

Her encouragement was huge and would be just the right spark to keep his imaginative embers smouldering.

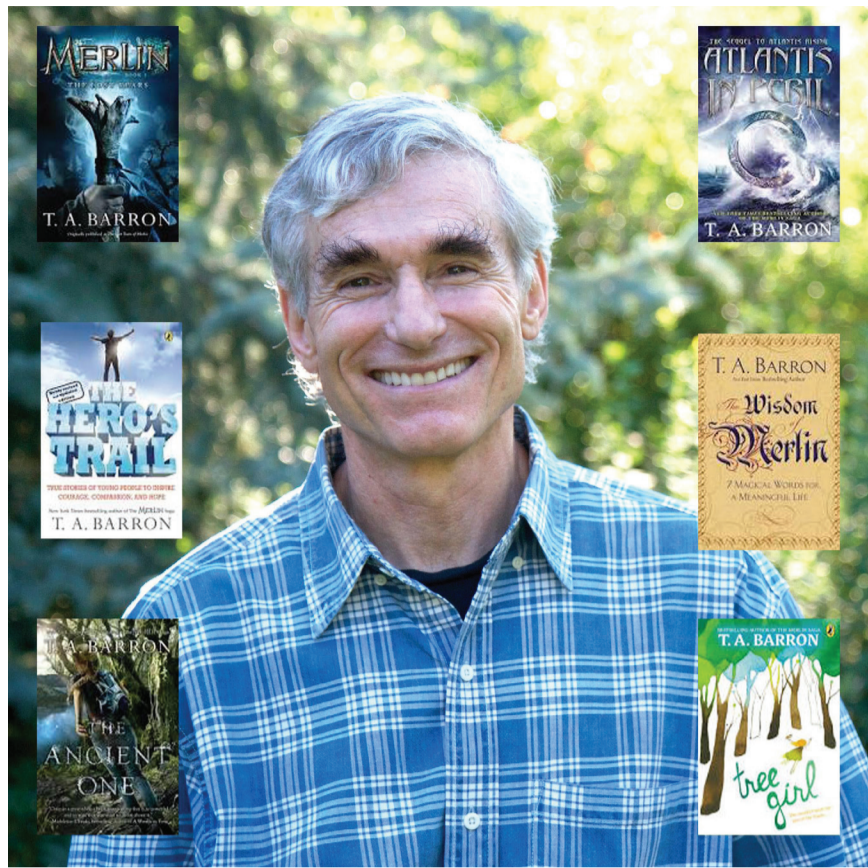
Another heroine Mr. Barron spoke of was his mother, Gloria, whose work with special needs children was inspiring.

He fondly told how his mom would give blind children “out the box” experiences such as touching huge birds and their wings so they could experience more of what flight was for birds.

She is also the inspiration and namesake for his foundation. The Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes recognizes 25 children a year who are at the forefront of wonderful things in their community.

Barron has a strong desire for children to understand the difference between celebrity and heroism.

He explains that a celebrity is defined by fame, easy to spot, but a hero is defined by character and traits that aren’t visible at all, traits such as compassion,



Courtesy photo

His new book, “The Wisdom of Merlin: 7 Magical Words of Meaningful Life” is

intended to give the reader insight on how to find a life that matters. I enjoyed meeting T.A. Barron; his compassion is contagious and as magical as Merlin.

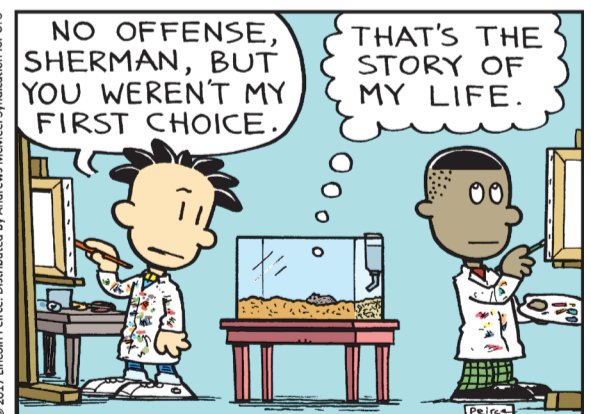
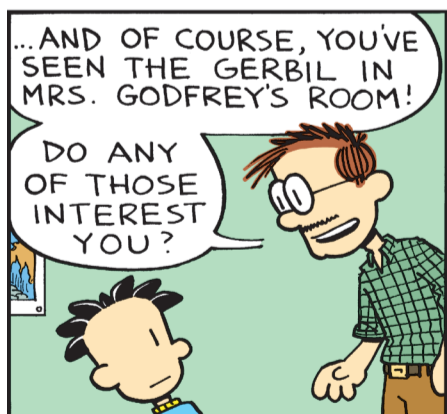
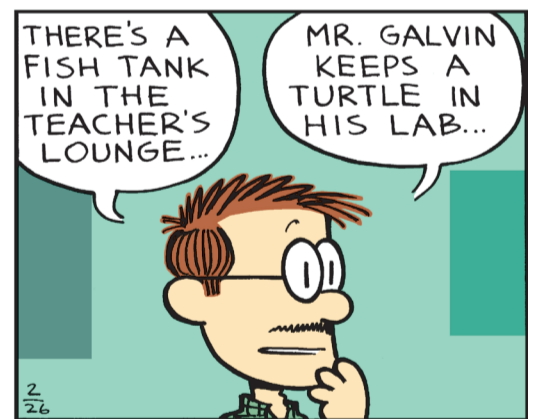
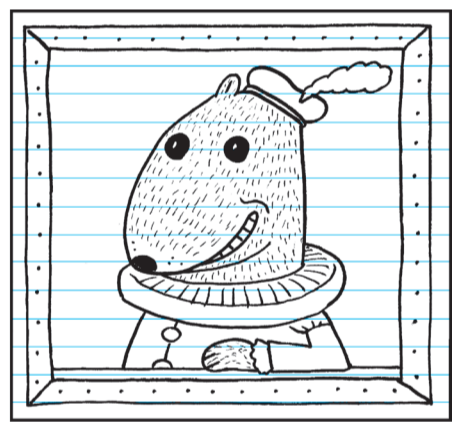
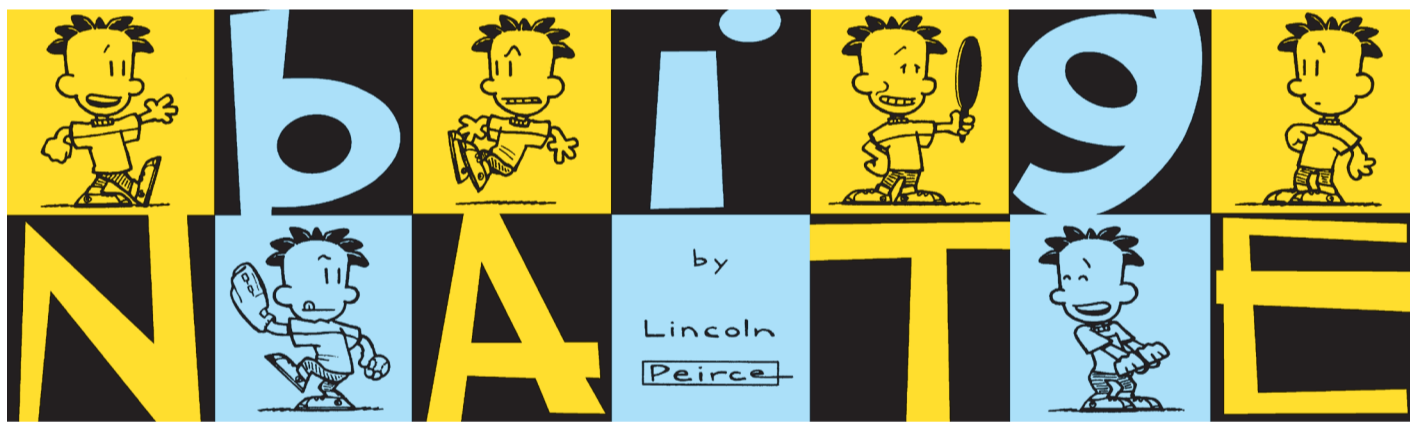
One of the best life lessons gained from the life-changing move, he said, was the great example it set for his wife and five kids: They got to see an up-close and personal guide for going after your heart’s desire.

intended to give the reader insight on how to find a life that matters.

I enjoyed meeting T.A. Barron; his compassion is contagious and as magical as Merlin.



By Abigale Morris, 13, a CK Reporter from Aurora



## Too much checking may bring on too much stress



**T**here’s no denying that the recent elections added stress to American lives, no matter which candidates they favored.

For the first time since they began surveying people for stress in 2007, the American Psychological Association found an increase in stress.

It may be hard to control how politics ramp up stress, but the survey found another stress factor that you can do something about.

In 2005, only seven percent of adults used social media. Now that percent is up to 65 percent, and even higher among young people: 90 percent of Americans between 18 and 29 are connected.

How connected? Forty-three percent of Americans say they constantly check their electronic devices.

Those “Constant Checkers” are paying a price in peace of mind: On a scale of 10 for stress, they

score a 5.3, while the average for everyone (including them) is 4.4.

“Constant checking” isn’t just for adults: While 94% of parents said they control their kids’ use of social media, 58% reported that they felt their kids are connected at a harmful level.

Worst of all? Nearly two-thirds of adults said it’s important to unplug and chill out for awhile.

But only 28% said they ever really do.

photo/ Ed Yourdon

# Motor City classics make the audience sing

**"M**otown the Musical," which played recently at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, is a live show sure to get your toes tapping in no time.

Nicknamed the "Motor City" due to its prominence in the automobile industry, Detroit, Michigan, was also a musical hotspot through the 60s and into the 70s.

This was largely due to Berry Gordy Jr. (played by Chester Gregory)'s startup record label, Motown.

Gordy's label was the start for many classic icons such as The Jackson Five, Diana Ross, Stevie Wonder, and many more.

Gordy altered social expectation by fighting for African-American musicians and bringing new music to mainstream America.

The musical tells the true story of Gordy's journey, from 1959 all the way 'til the close of Motown.

Along the path of following his dreams, Gordy falls in love with Diana Ross, which adds a romantic aspect to the story.

I particularly enjoyed this musical because it had everyone singing in their seats and participating.

At one point, the audience was asked to join hands during a performance by Alison Semmes of Diana Ross's "Reach Out and Touch (Somebody's Hand)."

I liked this because it spread the message that we are all in this together.

The audience was also presented with the opportunity to join in singing along with the actors, which made the show much more engaging.

The musical, however does touch on heavier subjects such as segregation, and

includes some infrequent crude language.

Therefore, I would say this is for ages 13 and up.

However, it is a unique way of learning some American history.

Having the story acted out provides a different source of knowledge rather than a textbook.

This makes learning more engaging and gives people the opportunity to somewhat experience what that time in history was like.

The intricate costumes and set designs bring you back to the setting of the story, making it all come to life.

The musical is directed towards older generations, as the songs date all the way back to the 1960s.

However, it was still fun for everyone, because you are guaranteed to know at least one song that you can sing along to.

Though it was only in Denver for a brief period of time, there is always the chance of it returning.

If so, I would highly recommend you put this on your list of things to go do.

It is a definite must see!



By Lauren Walters, 13, a CK Reporter from Denver

# New Somali president working for peace

**T**he East African nation of Somalia has a reputation for terrorism and constant civil war, but this month's election of a new president has brought hope of improvement.

Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed, known by the nickname "Farmajo," was sworn in as president last week and admitted from the start that solving Somalia's problems won't be easy.

"The problems Somalia is going through have been building up for more than 20 years and to solve all of those problems may take more than another 20 years," he said, according to Voice of America. "I would like to solve all those problems within the next four years I am in office but I can't."

Farmajo told his audience that security problems are a major issue, but that may not have been necessary: His inauguration was held at the airport in Mogadishu because it has higher security than elsewhere, and there was fear of an attack by the Al-Shabbab terrorist group.

He said one of his goals is to rebuild Somalia's army.

Security in the country is enforced in large

part by armed forces from other African Union nations, and their agreement ends in 2018.

He also said it is important to build peace among the many clans that make up the Somali population. Armed struggles for power among leaders of these clans has been a major problem in the country.

Another issue Farmajo has promised to work on is that of drought.

Like much of East Africa, Somalia has suffered from a series of droughts in the past several years, and it's hard to build up a farming economy in a desert land even if you have the money for improved facilities and peace in which to build them.

At this time, Somalia has neither.

Clearly, Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed has some hard work ahead, but his election is seen as a good sign for Somalia's future.

Still, he is wise not to promise too much too soon. According to the United Nations, 6 million Somalis are in need of humanitarian assistance and three million are in famine areas.

Four years will certainly not be enough time.



Above, Somali's new president, Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed, known as Farmajo. He has told his nation that he can only begin, not complete, the work of bringing them peace and a strong economy. (AMISOM Photo/Ilyas Ahmed)



## Sudoku

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

**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

**On this date in 1784, John Wesley founded the Methodist Church, so our answers this week will each begin with the letter "M."**

1. The island where you would find lemurs
2. Examples of this fruit are Crenshaw, honeydew, Persian and water.
3. "The Father of the Constitution," he wrote much of that document and served as our fourth president.
4. Type of sweet/bitter jam or jelly made from citrus fruits and their peels.
5. First name of the First Lady
6. Stringed instrument from Italy, related to the lute and tuned similarly to a violin but with double-strings that are plucked
7. Historic Denver high school, alma mater of Denver Mayor Michael Hancock, as well as Wellington Webb, Rudolfo "Corky" Gonzalez and Micheal Ray Richardson.
8. Rabat is the capital of this nation in northwestern Africa
9. Very tiny monkey from South America
10. Gardener whose vegetables Peter Rabbit snuck in to eat.

(answers on Page Four)

# Half a century of protection paying off for Florida's manatees

**O**ne of the first animals on the Endangered Species List when it debuted in 1967 was the Florida Manatee.

The huge, gentle water-dwellers were losing habitat in Florida's waters, and they were also losing their lives to the propellers of speeding pleasure boats.

The most visible protection for the manatees was the posting and enforcement of speed limits for boats in the rivers and coastal waters where manatees lived, and, by the turn of the century, the annual count of the animals numbered 1,935.

The number frightened naturalists and manatee fans, but the most recent count has them smiling:

In this year's survey, there were 6,620 "sea cows" spotted in Florida's waters.

That's encouraging, especially since it's the third year in a row that the manatee population has been over 6,000.

But many experts are not ready to move the manatee from "endangered" to "threatened" yet.

Too many manatees still have scars from boat propellers, they say, and manatees have been hanging around near power plants: If Florida switches to cleaner power in future years, it could eliminate those warm water spots.

Still, those who love the manatees have really loved this year's head count! photo/Keith Ramos,USFWS



# Beyond These Four Pages!

## Hot Links to Cool Sites!

### NASA's Space Place

<http://tinyurl.com/ckspace>

### NIE Special Report

<http://tinyurl.com/ckniereport>

## How to become a NextGen Reporter!

<http://tinyurl.com/colokidsreporter>



## To read the sources for these stories

Manatees

Somalian Elections

Constant Checkers and Stress

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

## Sudoku Solution

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

## Brainteaser Solution



(see Page Three)

10 right - Wow!

7 right - Great!

5 right - Good

3 right - See you next time!

1. Madagascar 2. melon 3. (James) Madison 4. marmalade  
5. Melania (Trump) 6. mandolin 7. Manual High 8. Morocco  
9. marmoset 10. Mr. McGregor

## Correction

Last week's Brain Teaser gave the wrong name for Wilbur Wright's brother Orville. Thank you to the clever readers who pointed out our foolish error!

# Stories in the Stars: Perseus

## The Story

**P**erseus is one of the greatest heroes in Greek mythology, so it's only right that his constellation has the best special effect of all. More about that later.

The story of Perseus could fill a book, but the part that shows up in the sky has to do with his quest to slay the Medusa and save his mother from a very bad king.

That king wanted to marry his mother, who wasn't interested. Perseus was a young man with a hot temper, and, as he argued with the king, he promised to bring him quite a present: The head of Medusa, a horrible creature so ugly that the sight of her face would turn you to stone.

Perseus went through many adventures in search of Medusa, but he eventually found her cave and managed to cut off her head by looking at the reflection in his shield instead of straight at her.

Then he started home with his awful trophy, flying with the help of some winged sandals the god Hermes had lent him.

That's when he first saw Andromeda, on the eastern edge of the Mediterranean.

Poor Andromeda was chained to a rock at the water's edge, and the sea monster, Cetus, was about to gobble her up.

Perseus landed on the beach, where her father, King Cepheus, and her mother, Queen Cassiopeia, were watching. They told him she was being sacrificed to the monster so he wouldn't destroy their city.

Perseus thought there was probably a better way to solve that problem, so he flew up in front of Cetus, warned Andromeda to shut her eyes, and pulled the head of the Medusa out of its bag. The monster turned to stone and Perseus took Andromeda home to be his queen.

They lived happily ever after. One of their sons, Perses, founded Persia, and another was the father of Heracles, or, as the Romans called him, Hercules.

And when Perseus, Andromeda, Cepheus and Cassiopeia died, they were put in the heavens, along with the sea monster, Cetus.

There's a lot more to the story of Perseus than just the part that ended up in the sky, but if they put it all up there, there'd be no space left for anyone else.



## The Stars

**P**erseus isn't as easy to find as Cassiopeia's "W", but it does look a little like the letter "A" with the top pointing towards Cassiopeia.

To find Perseus, face north and find Cassiopeia. Hold your arms out and make fists to use as measuring devices. Perseus is about two fist-widths to her east, also along the Milky Way. The brightest star in Perseus is Mirfak, which is in the middle of the constellation.

Mirfak is a yellow supergiant, more than 60 times bigger than our sun, and, since it's the brightest star in the constellation, it's also known as Alpha Persei.

If you are out on a nice dark night without a lot of streetlights and other distractions, you'll see that Mirfak seems to be surrounded by dust. With binoculars or a small telescope, you can tell that this "dust cloud" is a cluster of stars. That star cluster is called the Alpha Persei Cluster.

Perseus is important to stargazers because it is where you look in August for the Perseid star showers. You can begin to see them as early as July, but around August 12, you might see as many as 100 shooting stars each hour, and most of them will look as if they were coming from Perseus.

Of course, they're not -- they're coming from particles left behind by a comet. The earth passes through this space debris in August and, as the rocks and ice hit our atmosphere, the result is a real light show!

But the Perseids are not the "special effect" you were promised. That is the star Algol, which is in the portion of Perseus which represents the head of the Medusa.

Algol comes from the Arabic al-Ghul, which means "The Demon." (We get our English word "ghoul" from "ghul.")

Algol is a double star, but one of the stars is much bigger and brighter than the other. As they orbit around each other, the dimmer one sometimes passes between the big, bright one and the earth, making a slight eclipse.

That means Algol is bright for a little over two days and 20 hours. Then, for about nine hours, it gets dim before it becomes bright again.

Scientists call it an eclipse, but storytellers know: It's the eye of the horrible Medusa, winking at YOU!



## NEXT WEEK: Orion

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

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