HAPPY 25TH BIRTHDAY TO THE HUBBLE TELESCOPE

THE HUBBLE SPACE TELESCOPE has become such an important part of astronomy that it’s hard to remember that, when it sent back its first images in 1990, it was seen as a failure and became the target of jokes.

It’s particularly hard to remember that if you weren’t born 25 years ago, when Space Shuttle Discovery placed Hubble into orbit around the Earth.

The mirror on the Hubble had a flaw, and critics and late-night comedians pounced on it mercilessly. However, NASA was able to make some adjustments, and then a 1993 Shuttle mission installed a complete fix.

Since then, the Hubble has not only sent back images of space that have delighted casual viewers, but has been a priceless resource for thousands of astronomers and for hundreds of thousands of research reports.

Besides what it’s taught us about space, Hubble provided another lesson: Don’t give up without trying again.

Photo/NASA

WHERE THE WILD AFRICAN DOGS ARE

ATTENTION dog lovers! You will absolutely love the African Wild Dogs at the Denver Zoo!

By Leah Garza, 13, a CK Reporter from Westminster

The zoo recently added two males, Jesse and Taco, to join their two existing female wild dogs, Tilly and Cheza.

The boys are still very nervous from their recent move.

Among African Wild Dogs, the girls tend to be much more active than the boys. The female dogs love to run around and play with each other, while the boys are lazier and love to sleep all day.

The male and female dogs have been kept apart since Taco and Jesse moved in, but the zookeepers are going to try to introduce all of the dogs sometime this week.

They believe that doing so will make the boys much more active!

African Wild Dogs may look like hyenas with their neat coat patterns, but the two animals are truly nothing alike.

These dogs also are not like the dogs that you have at home.

They certainly will not snuggle with you, let you pet them, or play fetch, and even those born in captivity only ever approach a human during feeding time.

The dogs eat up to three pounds of horse meat a day, and sometimes will eat an entire rabbit.

The females can have up to 19 puppies at a time! Luckily, the dogs love to take care of the pack and all dogs help take care not only of puppies, but also of old and sick pack members.

African Wild Dogs do not bark, but make high pitched, extremely loud birdlike sounds, that are also known as singing.

During breeding season, the males makes such a high pitched noise to get the females’ attention that zookeepers actually wear something over their ears to block out the noise!

Unfortunately, the African Wild Dog is on the endangered species list, mostly due to man killing them off, and also moving into their habitat, pushing them more toward their natural predators, lions.

The funny thing is that, at the zoo, the dogs are located next to the lions at the zoo.

Be sure and take a look at them on your next trip there!

Photo/The Denver Zoo

WERE YOU BORN TO BE BITTEN?

EVER been on a hike where one person was constantly swatting mosquitoes while others were not bothered very much?

Were you that poor person?

If so, it’s not just your imagination: About 20 percent of people really do attract mosquitoes more than others of us do, and it is apparently something they are born with.

Researchers at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine took 18 pairs of identical twins and 19 pairs of fraternal twins, and had each pair stick one arm each in with mosquitoes.

For the identical twins, who share all their genes, there was no difference in which one the most mosquitoes chose to bite.

But for the fraternal twins, who are not genetically the same, one twin’s arm was sometimes far more tasty.

Scientists hope to find the responsible gene and a way to counteract it, to fight insect-spread diseases.

Photo/USDA

CK Reporter
Madeline Kawnak, Aurora

April 28, 2015
Pessimistic character hurts novel

Phaet Theta, main character of “Dove Arising,” by Karen Bao, is anything but a normal girl.

By Sophia Khan, 11, a CK Reporter from Northglenn

Most people barely recognize her and the ones who do have but a mere memory of her. No one in the lunar colony has ever heard her talk since her father died nine years ago.

She usually tries to stay inconspicuous and she melts into the shadows, watching, observing. Her only friends are the plants she cultivates in Greenhouse 22 and her best friend Umbriel who is more than happy to do all the talking for her.

But one day all of this changes when her mother Mira is taken by beaters, military officers with high rankings that use their power for cruelty.

In order to protect her siblings and try to save what is left of her family, Phaet must enlist in the Militia, the harsh army that protects her planet.

“Dove Arising” has beautiful word choice, the words flow beautifully together to create an image of every setting Karen Bao describes.

However, the descriptions may get a little violent for some readers’ liking.

It has realistic characters with obvious flaws who go through mind-blowing character development.

This book teaches the value of the arts that we take for granted with technology today, but more times than not the book becomes very depressing due to the main character’s pessimistic view on the world.

Phaet is very honest with the reader the entire book but her cynical thoughts soon become a nuisance and can also be very upsetting at times.

The rules and politics of this dystopian world also become very confusing and make the book harder to read.

The book’s pace goes a little too quickly and does not give you enough time to adapt to the characters’ habits, personalities, and lifestyle.

“Dove Arising” by Karen Bao seemed like a mediocre book but it might excite older audiences with more interest in science fiction.

Noted in brief: New additions to some favorites

Here are some new books in series that we have previously reviewed. Check with your local bookstore or library for details about these new titles.

The Five O’Clock Ghost (The Haunted Library) by Dori Hillestad Butler

In September, Maria Ciobanu called this series “a very good balance of suspense, mystery, and fantasy.” (6 and up)

Hazardous Tales: The Underground Abductor (Nathan Hale) Reid Strieker praised this history-based graphic novel series last summer, saying it “keeps readers trapped with its entertaining but educational stories and comics.” (8 and up)

Stick Dog Dreams of Ice Cream by Tom Watson (Stick Dog)

Mreedul Gupta enjoyed an earlier book in this series, calling it a combination of “delightful mystery, suspense and humor,” but admitted that, while it is listed as a book for ages 8 to 12, “the

Beyond these four pages

The story about the Hubble Space Telescope tells how people made fun of it when it had problems, but now are delighted with its success.

Look through today’s paper for a story or picture of someone or something that is considered a failure. (Don’t forget the sports section!) Is the criticism fair? Could it be turned around? If so, how?
The United Kingdom is headed for elections May 7, and, unless the polls are wrong, it is not likely there will be a clear winner. That makes the election interesting to watch, but you need a little background first, since, while our government is based in several ways on the British system, there are some big differences.

The United Kingdom uses a Parliamentary system, in which voters do not choose the prime minister directly, the way Americans choose a president, although the two positions are quite similar.

Instead, voters choose their local representative for the House of Commons, which is similar to our House of Representatives. There are 650 members of the House of Commons, and they get to choose the prime minister who will appoint the cabinet and lead the government.

This means that whichever political party wins a majority of seats in Commons gets to vote in their party leader as prime minister.

This might be simple, if there were only two political parties in the UK. But there are a total of 464 parties registered.

Most of these are very small and probably won't win a single seat, but there are several that are large enough that, while they won't win a majority, they could gain enough seats to keep either of the two largest parties, Labour and Conservative, from getting a majority of seats.

Right now, it looks like the winner will be whichever of the large parties can persuade one or more smaller parties to agree to vote for their party leader as prime minister.

This is called a “coalition government,” and it means that, while the smaller parties will join the major party in voting on most legislation, that larger party will also have to agree to support the smaller party on matters that it cares most about.

The Scottish National Party will probably be the minority party that makes the difference, though the Plaid Cymru party from Wales could also be part of a coalition. In a very close election, even a small party like the Greens could add just enough seats to form a majority.

It will be fascinating to track this election. You'll find information to help understand it all at ColoradoNIE.com.
E ver since Chris Soentpiet was a child he wanted to either be a teacher, an artist, or a police officer. Two of those dreams came true.

Soentpiet, who appeared at this year’s CCIRA conference, is an illustrator and author of many children’s books and a fine-art painter and, before he became an artist, he was briefly a kindergarten teacher.

Soentpiet has illustrated many books including “Coo-lies,” “Brothers,” and “Happy Birthday to You,” using watercolor for most of his paintings.

It takes him a long time to figure out what the illustrations are going to be, but, once he knows the setting the author is using for a book, he can make good illustrations.

He says it usually take him eight hours a day for two weeks for each picture.

He takes photos of live models to help with the illustrations. Soentpiet has used his wife, his old kindergarten students, and even himself as a model.

He sketches each illustration, and, after many draft thumbnail images, he is ready to paint.

He paints the background first so he can determine the value and lighting of the main object in the illustration.

Multiple coats of water color paint are used to get the color he wants.

Soentpiet says that most of his books are based on history.

He wanted to be a writer when he was in 3rd grade but wasn’t completely sure, until, by 5th grade, with the help of his teacher, Mrs. Miles, he was certain.

Norman Rockwell, Soentpiet’s favorite illustrator, also inspired him to be both a better writer and illustrator.

Two of Those Dreams Come True for Artist

Joshua Kirrinkol lives in two contradictory cultures: Born in Amboseli National Park, Kenya, Kirrinkol grew up in a Maasai village, herding cattle and constantly moving around looking for better grazing land.

From there he found his way to Aspen, where he works at the St. Regis Hotel.

Kirrinkol’s leaving Kenya was both a benefit and a problem for his family.

The problem was that there was one less person helping with the cattle.

It was a benefit because Kirrinkol has a duty to help his village out financially and report to them about the world.

He is on a quest to find an organization that will help him provide health care to the Maasai, as the nearest hospital to his village is a four-hour drive away.

He is also speaking at Colorado schools to educate kids about the distinctive Maasai culture.

Maasai clothes are easily recognizable and the many forms of their language also make the Maasai stand out in a crowd.

“There are 42 different Maasai tribes and 42 different languages,” Kirrinkol said.

There are many contrasts between the daily life of a Maasai child and the daily life of a typical Coloradoan child.

For example: most kids here live near other people, whereas, with the Maasai, Kirrinkol remarked, “our neighbors are wild animals. When you go outside you just see a giraffe or a lion.”

Maasai people go to great lengths to seek out one another.

“There is a Maasai man in Mississippi right now. I am trying to figure out a way for him to come to Colorado to talk to schools with me,” Kirrinkol said.

The Maasai will work together to adapt to the modern world yet keep their traditions strong.

For more information on the group Joshua Kirrinkol works with, the African Conservation Centre US, catch the live link at ColoradoNIE.com