

Whyville Dispatch

November/December 2007
Health Lifestyle Entertainment

HAND WASHING

Don't catch a cold

HOLDING A SNEEZE

Trying not to blow it!

LOW CARB VS. LOW FAT

What does that mean?

KELLY CLARKSON

December Rain

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Amare Stoudemire,
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Dear Reader,

Thank you for picking up a Whyville Dispatch! We hope you enjoy this issue of our magazine. Inside, we've got interviews with the famous singer Kelly Clarkson and NBA star Amare Stoudemire. Also, we've got tips on deciding which is better, low carb or low cal, tobacco, washing your hands and one of our readers shares her and her sister's experience of battling anorexia.

Bi-monthly, we'll bring you reports, interviews, tips, and more. They won't be about things that *we* want you to know; they will be on topics that middle schoolers have told us they care about: health, mind, body, social, academic issues that you encounter in your daily life. Many of them will even be written by middle schoolers just like you.

The Whyville Dispatch is brought to you in partnership with Whyville the virtual world, where nearly 3 million citizens, mostly middle schoolers, from all over the world come to chat, play, and learn together in an environment that's fun, safe, and free. The goal of Whyville, both the virtual world and the magazine, is to promote awareness, critical thinking, engagement, and communication. We believe that when you care about something, you want to be aware of the surrounding issues. You'll think carefully and critically about it. You'll want to do something about it, and you'll probably tell your friends, your parents, your teachers about it. We want you to tell *us* as well.

That's how we will come full circle to bring you the next issue of the Dispatch. We will be basing the articles on your feedback and suggestions. So, submit your thoughts, questions, comments, and interests by emailing dispatch@whyville.net. We might put your question or idea, anonymously of course, in Whyville to get opinion and feedback from our citizens. They'll be happy to weigh in.

Best regards,
The Whyville Dispatch



PUBLISHERS

Jay Goss
jay@whyville.com
Shael Trunk
shael@dispatchmagazine.com

EDITORS

Ethel Sale
ethel@whyville.com
Courtney Lear

BUSINESS DIRECTOR

Eric Greenwald
eric@whyville.com

ART DIRECTOR

Waleed Rashidi

CONTRIBUTORS

Adela Popikova, Michael Fong, Kelly Moore, Ph.D.,
Deadly6, Brooker93, Wuzgurl2 and Maglina



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PHONE: 626.683.3129 · E-MAIL: dispatch@whyville.com
300 S. Raymond #7, Pasadena, CA 91105

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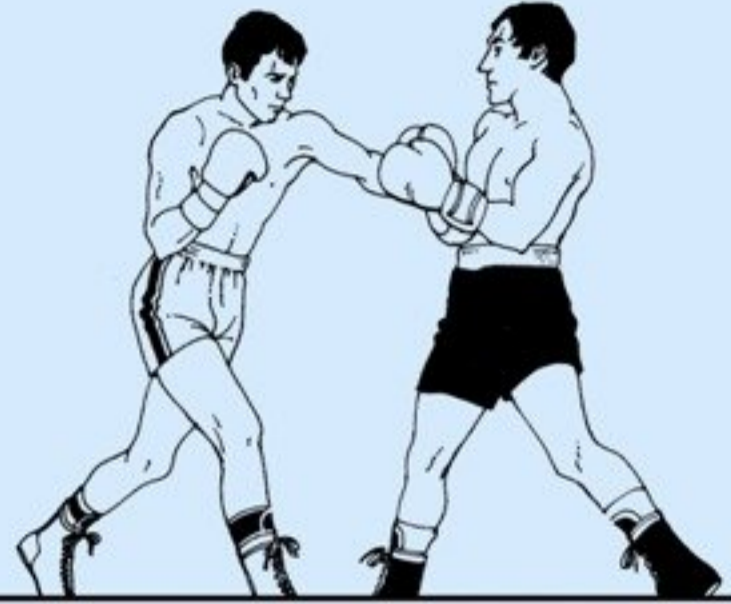
HAND WASHING

Scrub, scrub, scrub

+PLUS: Health Center :: Flu Shots
Basketball Star Amare Stoudemire... and more!



LOW CARB VS. LOW FAT



STAT:
 "Don't you think we need to be focused more on health than appearance? And I think that sometimes Americans have become obsessed with being skinny rather than really being concerned about being healthy. And being healthy will mean that you're not overweight."
 — Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, who personally lost over 100 lbs.



Two popular diets face off

By Adela Popilkova

The holiday season is the most difficult time of the year to maintain a healthy diet. Foods high in fat, carbohydrates and sugar are everywhere and for those who eat in excess the holidays can pack on the pounds. As the rate of obesity in the United States climbs to unprecedented levels, finding the ideal the ideal weight-loss diet has become increasingly important. People in the United States spend \$33 billion each year on weight-loss products and services, yet fewer than 25 percent of people trying to lose weight actually follow recommendations for reducing calorie intake and increasing exercise. The most popular diet methods are low fat and low-carb diets. Comparing the effectiveness of the two is an ongoing area of study and remains hotly debated within the health profession. Knowing the ins and outs of each type of diet can help you make better-informed eating decisions during the holidays and throughout the year.

Low fat diets limit the intake of fat, thereby decreasing the amount of fat that will ultimately be stored in the body. By keeping the body's access to outside fat sources low, the body will theoretically use its own stores when that type of fuel is called upon, thus reducing body weight. One of the bigger complaints about the traditional low fat diet is that the recommended calories do not satiate a person's appetite, leading a person to consume far more total calories than the recommended daily amount. This may be overcome, in part, by consuming healthy snacks throughout the day in order to avoid overeating at mealtimes.

Low carbohydrate diets limit the intake of carbohydrates. When the body's preferred source of fuel (carbohydrates) is limited, the body theoretically burns more fat, and this in turn leads to weight loss. People on a low-carbohydrate diet often experience greater improvements in blood sugar control. One additional proposed benefit behind the success of the low carbohydrate diet is that because higher-fat foods are allowed, a person becomes satiated faster and often consumes less overall calories than the person on the low fat diet.

So, which diet is more effective for long-term weight loss — low fat or low-carb diets? This proves to be a trick question because the answer is both, if modified. The best diet doesn't take an all-or-nothing approach but rather differentiates between healthy and unhealthy carbs and fats. Fiber-rich and complex carbohydrates like whole grains provide many health benefits, as can unsaturated fats like olive oil. What the dieter wants to avoid are simple carbohydrates and trans- and saturated fats. In other words, instead of no carbs or no fats, consider no unhealthy carbs AND no unhealthy fats.

Moderation in eating habits, selecting nutrient rich foods, limiting consumption of saturated fats and oils and getting adequate physical activity is the truly winning combination. The American Dietetic Association cautions that no single diet fits everyone and that the key is to burn more total calories than you consume. When combined, the old mantra of "eat less, exercise more" has been proven to be the most effective way to lose the fat in the long term. When we take the balanced approach, it is possible to learn from both the low fat and the low-carb diets.



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A GREAT DATE FOR QUITTERS

As the Great American Smokeout celebrates its 31st anniversary, there's never been a better time to quit smoking *By Julia Kadatko*

Sponsored by the American Cancer Society, the first Great American Smokeout occurred in 1977 as a day to challenge people to quit smoking cigarettes for just one day. While the hope is that this day will lead to a smoke-free life, the Smokeout brings people together to take at least a step in the right direction. As the event celebrates its 31th anniversary on Nov. 15, more people than ever will take the challenge and so should you! For those ready to participate in this year's Smokeout, the following list shows the health benefits you can expect from quitting.

20 minutes after quitting: Your heart rate drops.

12 hours after quitting: The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.

Two weeks to three months after quitting: Your circulation improves and your lung function increases.

One to nine months after quitting: Coughing and shortness of breath decrease; cilia (tiny hair like structures that move mucus out of the lungs) regain normal function in the lungs, increasing the ability to handle mucus, clean the lungs and reduce the risk of infection.

One year after quitting: The excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's.

Five years after quitting: Your stroke risk is reduced to that of a nonsmoker 5-15 years after quitting.

10 years after quitting: The lung cancer death rate is about half that of a continuing smoker's. The risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, cervix and pancreas decrease.

15 years after quitting: The risk of coronary heart disease is that of a nonsmoker's.

There are, of course, other immediate rewards to quitting smoking. Among the many negative effects that cigarettes cause, these damaging effects begin to reduce quickly and noticeably:

- premature wrinkling of the skin
- bad breath
- stained teeth
- gum disease
- bad smelling clothes and hair
- yellow fingernails

In the first few weeks, someone who quits smoking will also notice that food tastes better, sense of smell returns to normal and ordinary activities like climbing stairs no longer leave one out of breath. Ex-smokers also experience fewer illnesses from cold and flu viruses and reduced rates of bronchitis and pneumonia. Of course, with how expensive cigarettes have become, quitting will also keep a lot more money in your wallet. Great American Smokeout participants can enjoy all these benefits for a day, and hopefully they will take advantage of them for a lifetime.

The information above comes courtesy of the American Cancer Society. For more information about the organization or the Great American Smokeout, please visit www.cancer.org and www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/ped_10_4.asp



ANOREXIA

A personal story about an eating disorder

By Deadly6



About a year ago my sister went through a disease called Anorexia Nervosa. Anorexia is an eating disorder where people starve themselves because they are convinced they are overweight.

It was scary to see how small she got. I would try to get her to eat but she'd always tell me that she wasn't hungry. It started all of the sudden. My sister came home from school and told me that she had eaten a big lunch so she still wasn't hungry. I remembered making her lunch earlier that morning and didn't remember making it big at all. I wasn't sure about it so I confronted her but she had told me that she had bought from the lunch line. The following days I would watch her at lunch. She would throw her lunch away right off the bat and just sit there with her friends until they finished eating. I was shocked that she had lied to me and that she wasn't eating. I would try to catch her before she locked herself into her room when she got home but she didn't ever want to talk about it. I tried to force her to eat. I was scared that she would die of starvation. I decided to hold an intervention which included everyone that cared about her. After the intervention, it took a couple of days but it kicked in to her that we really did care and that we did want to help her.

Faith061: "I really thought that she was going to make me do something

that I didn't want to do. I mean it's my life. I didn't realize that so many people care about me. They explained to me that I didn't want to live my life starving myself to be skinny; I already was! But no matter how I looked at it, I thought I was fat. I could look in the mirror for hours and I would still wish to be skinnier. That's when I turned to anorexia. I really didn't know what I was doing to myself."

If you have a family member that has an Eating Disorder, they need a lot of support. Talk to them. Suggest they see a trusted adult, a counselor or a doctor to help them begin the battle of curing their eating disorder. Be prepared for denial, resistance, and even anger. But no matter what their reaction may be the consequences of ignoring the problem can be harmful to their health, even to the point of death. If you are suffering from an eating disorder, remember that you are not alone. Take Faith061's example and realize the harm you are causing physically to yourself and emotionally to others. Look at "Facts About Eating Disorders" for more details about the disease and "Where to Find Help" for support.

ANOREXIA NERVOSA

Ten Warning Signs

- Deliberate self-starvation with weight loss
- Intense fear of gaining weight
- Refusal to eat or highly restrictive eating
- Continuous dieting
- Excessive facial/body hair because of inadequate protein in the diet
- Compulsive exercise
- Abnormal weight loss
- Sensitivity to cold
- Absent or irregular menstruation
- Hair loss

Anorexia Symptoms

1. Weight

Individuals suffering from anorexia are usually 15% below ideal body weight. It's important to remember that not everyone who is of a low weight is anorexic; it is those who refuse to maintain a normal body weight. Another complication caused by anorexic starvation is stunted growth.

2. Intense Fear of Gaining Weight or

Becoming Fat, Even if Underweight

This intense fear is powerful enough to cause individuals to diet to the point of starvation. A person with anorexia is hungry but he or she is afraid to eat. Often specific foods are avoided, especially those that are high in fat and calories. A person with anorexia constantly thinks about food – how many calories, how many fat grams, how much exercise is needed if you eat a cookie? These thoughts begin to control a person's mind 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A person's entire life can be centered on this obsession with food, depriving that person of joy in friends, fun and family.

3. Body Image Problems

When a person with anorexia looks into a mirror he/she does not often see an accurate reflection. A person with anorexia sees him/herself as fat, even if he/she is dangerously thin. This is a very frightening experience and feels very real – driving the person to diet. It is

difficult for him/her to understand that a very low weight and dangerous dieting habits can actually be fatal. The death rate for anorexia is higher than for any other psychiatric illness.

Effects of Anorexia

- Malnutrition
- Dehydration
- Ruptured stomach
- Serious heart, kidney, and liver damage
- Tooth/gum erosion
- Depression
- Low self-esteem
- Shame and guilt
- Impaired family and social relationships
- Mood swings
- Perfectionism

Where to Find Help

National Association for Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders
<http://anad.org/22385/22427.html>
 Hotline: (847) 831-3438



HAND WASHING

by Wizgurl2



“Wash your hands!” How many times have you heard that from your parents? You might think they’re just nagging you, but washing your hands is actually the best way to ward off a cold. You can put yourself at risk of catching germs every time you touch your eyes, nose or mouth. In fact, one of the most common ways people catch colds is by rubbing their nose or eyes after the cold virus has gotten on their hands.

Here are some situations when you should wash your hands:

- after using the bathroom
- after blowing your nose or coughing
- before eating, serving or preparing food
- after touching pets or other animals
- after outdoor activities
- after visiting anyone who’s sick

I asked some of the citizens in Whyville some questions about washing their hands and here are some of their responses.

“I think washing your hands is very good so you don’t get bacteria on them...It is important to wash your hands multiple times a day,” Hot171.

“It’s good to wash your hands so you don’t spread diseases and colds...If not, we’ll get sick and miss out on fun,” Sessy1232.

Follow these simple instructions to properly and thoroughly wash your hands:

- Use warm running water to wet your hands and lather using a bar or liquid soap (antibacterial soap is probably best)
- Rub your hands vigorously for about 15 to 20 seconds (singing the ABC’s is about the same amount of time), scrubbing the back of your hands, in between your fingers and under your fingernails
- Rinse well and dry your hands with a clean towel or paper towel

It’s that time of year again, flu season. Much worse than the common cold, the flu ruins your appetite, may cause vomiting, fever and chills. Forget getting out of bed. Although you may only suffer for two to seven days, wouldn’t it be best to avoid it altogether? Getting an annual flu shot may save you from being bed ridden.

The flu, called influenza, is a respiratory illness caused by specific viruses. A flu shot helps prepare your body for exposure to viruses that may cause the flu. The shot includes a small amount of the actual flu-causing virus, which is injected into your body. It may not sound like the best idea but the small dose can do more good than harm. The amount of the virus is small and simply prepares your immune system for exposure later. Your immune system will make antibodies for the small portion of virus it comes into contact with. The antibodies are markers that will train your body to fight off the virus next time it comes around to keep you from getting sick. It boosts your immunity to the virus so hopefully when it comes your way your body will be ready to fight it off. There is a small chance that your immune system won’t be up for the battle against the injection and you may get sick. However, the flu shot is your best defense, rather than simply hoping you won’t get sick.

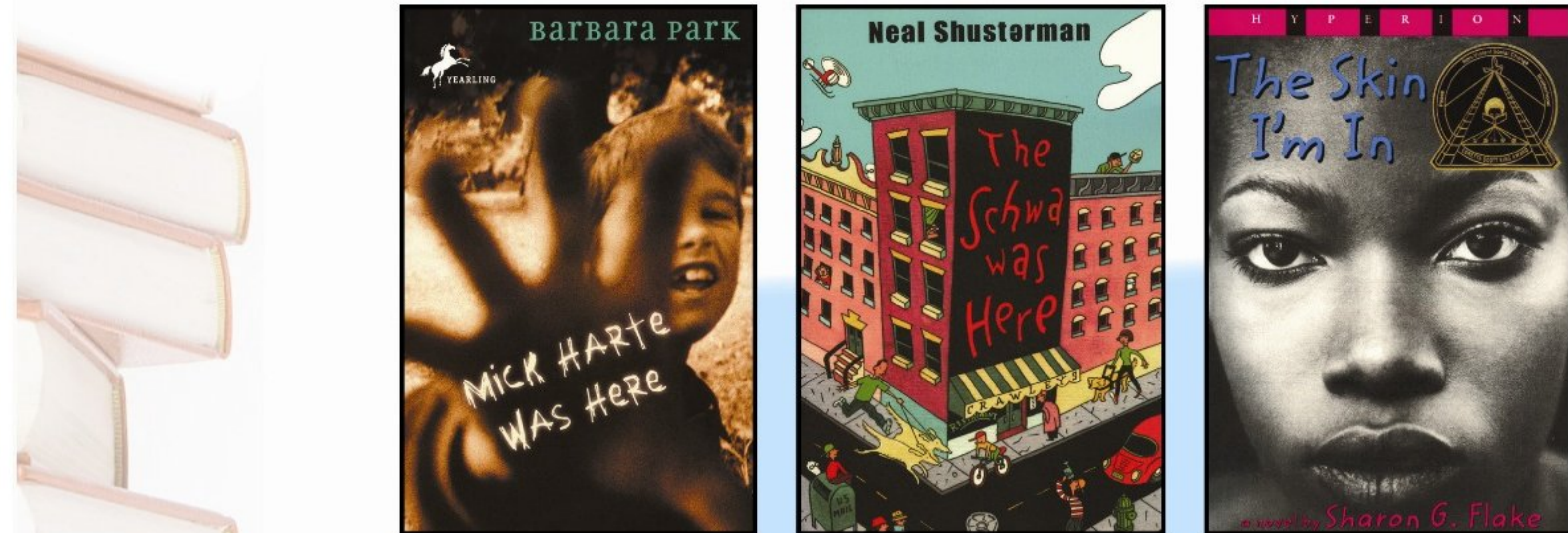
But if you’re already immune why get one every year? The flu is impossible to cure because there are so many different strands of the virus. So essentially, every time the flu comes around it is a different virus causing your pain. If you get a flu shot this year it won’t protect against the new virus next year putting you at higher risk of getting sick. While the thought of a syringe may make you cringe, getting a flu shot now may save you from a lot of misery later.



Flu Shots

Beneficial or harmful?

By Brooker93



Read Any Good Books Lately?

Five great reads to remember By Kelly Moore, Ph.D.

Strategy of the Month: Visualizing

di-rec-tor (d_-r_k't_r, d_-) n. A film director is a person who directs the making of a film. A film director visualizes the script, controlling a film’s artistic and dramatic aspects, while guiding the technical crew and actors in the fulfillment of his or her vision.

So what’s the definition of a director have to do with reading books anyway? Good readers are like film directors! Readers need to visualize what they are

reading and imagine it in their mind ... just like a movie director. While you read books this month and in the future, make a movie in your mind. Picture in your mind what is happening in the book. By changing the words on the page into pictures in your mind you will better understand what you read.

This month check out these books and direct your own movie by visualizing what you read. Who knows, the next academy award could be awarded to you!

Day of Tears by Julius Lester

This novel, which is based on the largest slave auction in American history, will give you many opportunities to make a movie in your mind by visualizing what you read. This book is told through flashbacks and flashforwards and takes the reader through Emma’s story, a slave girl who was sold during an auction. This piece of historical fiction will give readers a glimpse into the injustice of slave life.

Chicken Boy by Frances O’Roark Dowell

“When you learn about chickens you will learn about life.” If you’re wondering how this happens, you need to read this book! The main character, Tobin McCauley, wonders how he will ever fit in with his peers. If you’ve ever felt invisible you may want to read this book about a teenager who deals with arguments, troubled relationships and even death. (Oh, and there’s even some mention of chickens!)

The Schwa Was Here by Neal Shusterman

This book tells it like it is! The Schwa Was Here is told in typical teenage speech. When you read and visualize this book it’s like the characters are talking right in front of you. This book introduces readers to Calvin Schwa who has a most unusual relationship with “Antsy” who is using the Schwa to

make some quick cash. If you’re interested in offbeat books about quirky characters and love/hate friendships, as Antsy would say “just shut up and listen!”

The Skin I’m In by Sharon Flake

It’s hard being a seventh grader struggling with security and self esteem. No one knows this better than Maleeka Madison, a girl who learns to deal with mean spirited peers, love interests, her own skin color, a clique of nasty girls, and a teacher she doesn’t know if she can trust. This book takes a look at how a teenager is trying to have the social standing among her friends while still maintaining a decent academic standing. If you’ve ever wondered about the skin you’re in, this is the book for you!

Mick Harte Was Here by Barbara Park

The author of this book writes, “I don’t want to make you cry. I just want to tell you about Mick. But I thought you should know right up front that he’s not here anymore. I just thought that would be fair.” This story is told by Phoebe, Mick’s sister, who copes with her own pain by recalling her brother’s tragic death in a bicycle accident. If you are in the mood for a heart-wrenching novel, this is a book for you!



TURN OR BURN

It may be tempting to keep that summer glow after the prime tanning months have passed, but think twice before turning up the rays in a tanning bed. Tanning is the result of exposure to UVA (Ultraviolet-A) rays, which cause the body to produce melanin, a pigment that makes skin darker to prevent burning. Therefore, a coveted bronze tan is actually the body's reaction to too much radiation and the first sign of skin damage. The same UVA rays that achieve golden skin may also lead to certain types of skin cancer, such as melanoma. The UVA rays with the fake-bake method are the same that you would get from prolonged exposure to the sun, making them just as dangerous. The fact is, there is no safe tanning bed. The best solution is to keep UVA exposure minimal. However, if you have your heart set on golden skin, there are safer

Whyville HEALTH CENTER

Dispatch

alternatives to faking a healthy glow and without the harmful rays. Sunless self-tanners, basically a tan-in-a-bottle, contain dihydroxyacetone (DHA), which gradually stains the dead cells in your skin's outer layer to mock up a tan. However, be extra careful when applying to avoid a streaky or orange result. Some salons also offer mist tans that spray tanning solution all over the body to ensure an even glow. [Courtney Lear]

JAW AND (DIS)ORDER

A federal proclamation in '97 decreed that November would become the annual TMJ Awareness Month. TMJ stands for Temporomandibular Joint and refers to the jaw joints. "That's great," you might think. "When do we celebrate national Kneecap Awareness Month?" The reason TMJ merits extra publicity is that an estimated 10 million people, including teens, suffer TMJ disorders, and most cases go untreated. The most common symptom of TMJ disorder is intermittent, aching pain in the jaw joint and surrounding area. TMJ disorder can lead to headaches, lack of sleep or discomfort when eating or speaking. Other symptoms include: being unable to open the mouth comfortably; clicking, popping or grating sounds in the jaw joint; locking of the jaw; an uncomfortable or awkward bite; neck, shoulder and back pain; and/or swelling on the side of the face. For more information regarding TMJ treatment or related programs, visit tmj.org. [Jeffrey Elbel]



FACT OR FICTION?

If you lick a freezing pole, your tongue will stick.

FACT: Yep, it's true, and it can make for quite the embarrassing school day should you find out the hard way. So, what do you do if your tongue gets stuck? First, use the heel of your foot to kick yourself in the butt for even trying it. Second, if there is someone nearby, ask him or her to bring warm water and splash it on and around your tongue to thaw the area. Don't use cold water or saliva because that will make it worse. Finally, if there is no warm water available, quickly move your (hopefully gloved) hands over the area near your tongue. This should thaw the pole enough to gently pull free. Just make sure, whatever you do, don't try to yank your tongue from the pole because it could tear. Talk about a sticky situation! [David Jenison]

TO HOLD OR NOT TO HOLD IN SNEEZES

It's cold season and catching a cold almost always means an assault of sneezes. When I don't have a tissue around, I usually try to hold my sneezes in. No one wants snot everywhere. But is stifling sneezes a bad thing? Sneezing is a very common thing; everyone sneezes. Whether it's a cold, allergies, or something tickles your nose--you sneeze. Sneezing is your body's answer to nasal irritation, when you have a cold, a virus causes swelling and irritation inside your nose. When the inside of your nose is irritated a message is sent to your brain and muscles to create a sneeze. As far as snot goes, it is technically called mucus, which is produced by glands in the mucous membrane. It traps particles like dust and bacteria. When you sneeze, the dust and bacteria come out, and the mucus goes along with it. The question remains, is holding a sneeze in good or bad? According to Dr. Lisa Harris, a family doctor based in Richmond, Virginia, "The pressure from holding in a sneeze can damage your eardrums." So, spare your hearing, do not hold in your sneezes. If you are currently having the sniffles-or whenever you do, it would be wise to not suppress your sneezes. Simply cover your mouth and make sure you have tissues on hand. [Maglina]



BY THE NUMBERS

Turkey, Turkey, Turkey!



45 number in millions of turkey eaten each Thanksgiving

157 number of bones in a turkey

194 number of calories with skin on turkey breast

86 pounds of the largest turkey raised

28 days is how long it takes for a turkey egg to hatch

161 number of calories of a skinless turkey breast

AIDS AWARENESS: INFORMATION IS KEY

The HIV/AIDS epidemic has impacted global societies for decades. To date, over 22 million people have died from HIV or AIDS-related causes, leaving close to 42 million people who still live with the disease. Every day, 14,000 new cases of HIV infections are reported and half of those cases are people between the ages of 15 and 24. The World Health Organization began observing World AIDS Day in '88 in an attempt to educate people about the disease, including its treatment and prevention. The observation also gave people the opportunity to remember those who have died from AIDS-related complications and to help those currently suffering from the disease. On December 1, World AIDS Day will reach its 18th year and yet the need for more awareness, research and treatment has never been greater. This year, take a moment to educate yourself about HIV/AIDS-prevention and consider how you might be able to help ease the suffering of its victims and encourage the powers that be to do whatever it takes to eradicate this horrible disease. For more information, visit www.worldaidsday.org. [Nelson Zevallos]





A December To Remember

Kelly Clarkson captures new moments with the intensely personal *My December*

By Waleed Rashidi

“Oh, really? I didn't even know that!”

Kelly Clarkson just fell into total surprise as she's informed that a song she popularized in the States over five years ago has now become a smash hit across the pond. “A Moment Like This,” Clarkson's sublime send-off from the inaugural season of *American Idol* after topping her curly-locked competitor Justin Guarini, recently charted, this time performed by the winner of *American Idol*'s U.K. equivalent, *The X Factor*.

“Who covered it?” she asks. *Leona Lewis*. “Leona Lewis?”

The name doesn't ring bell.

Lewis' version of the syrupy ballad sold some 50,000 downloads in a mere half-hour, shattering digital sales records. Although Clarkson didn't write it, this particular song laid the foundation for her quick path to a professional music career, which, unlike some of her *Idol*-winning peers, eventually led to superstardom. For Clarkson, the song's 51-spot leap to the Hot 100 perch broke The Beatles' record for the largest-ever jump to No. 1, a distinction “Moment” held until just recently when Maroon 5's “Makes Me Wonder” made a 63-spot jump.

“‘A Moment Like This’ for me musically was definitely about the show,” she says. “It was perfect for what happened and the lyrics fit perfectly, like [it was] at the end of a movie. I probably wouldn't have sang that song ever on my own album, but I love that I did it for that show and I love that I have it.”

Well, she now shares it, yet the song's existence in another set of capable hands is, in a sense, a metaphoric passing of the torch, as it's no longer exclusive to Clarkson's fame. And in comparison to her most recent efforts, it isn't even in the same playing field. In fact, Clarkson's focus today is in knocking out some promotion, both in print and over the airwaves, for her most personal full-length release to date, *My December* – a far cry from her earlier straight-laced pop days.

“I'm at *Leno*, we're doing [*The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*] tonight, so we're going to do camera blocking,” says the Grammy-winning singer. “That was interesting, camera blocking, that sounds cool. I know words like that!”

She surprises herself with the minutiae she's gained about the industry, but it's not all that much of a surprise from an outsider's perspective. The affable, quick-talking 25-year-old Texas native is a bona fide superstar and we're pretty sure she knows it. She has taken control of her career (via a recent well-publicized split with her management and reported tangles with RCA boss Clive Davis), her songs (Clarkson appears as both co-writer on all songs and as *My December*'s co-executive producer) and even the actual process of recording (the album's last song featured vocals personally cut by Clarkson – more on this later). Quite frankly, she's looking a lot better for it, notwithstanding the setback she was handed after the cancellation of her hotly-anticipated summer tour. Though the album's first single “Never Again” fell short of the No. 1 spot (though still cracking the Top 10), *My December* is an excellent example of this artist's shining bid for a little creative and administrative autonomy.

There are a few factors that differentiate Clarkson's new effort from previous releases. First, the album is largely produced by David Kahne (along with Clarkson's longtime production team of Jason Halbert and Jimmy Messer). Kahne's discography includes albums by Paul McCartney, Tony Bennett, Sublime, The Bangles and The Strokes, and Clarkson says his no-holds-barred approach was instrumental to the final outcome of *My December*.

“I call him ‘Rain Man’ because he's very mathematical-almost about music,” says Clarkson. “He's passionate about it, but it's in a different

way. He hears music differently than most people, which is great – a great addition to the team. He's done so many things and he's fearless. He's not afraid to do something. He does things because he believes in them, and he's not trying to make things be a hit.”

In another bid to ensure that Clarkson didn't make *Breakaway* part two, she notes that Kahne introduced a host of veteran players that wouldn't normally appear on a pop-rock album's roster, like bass virtuoso Mike Watt, originally of SST Records hardcore trio The Minutemen.

“That's the thing, I don't want people to think that's strange,” says Clarkson of her punk rock pairing with Watt. “I want people to think that me being on *Idol Gives Back* with Jeff Beck, or me being on something with Joe Perry playing, or me being on a Reba event, or me having Mike on the record – I don't want to be pigeonholed, that's my worst fear. I think what happens, seeing other artists, is that you get afraid. You think, ‘Oh, people aren't going to follow me because they're so used to this formula,’ but I don't want a formula. So far, that's worked and it's nothing like *Breakaway* ... I never want to be afraid to try new things. It's supposed to be a creative business, it's supposed to be fun, it's supposed to be a learning experience, and I don't want to miss that just because I'm trying to be the No. 1 girl all the time.”

Additional proof is in the bold recording steps that Clarkson took. Though she spent approximately two months in an actual recording studio, *My December*'s closer, “Irvine,” found Clarkson as the de facto recording engineer inside her home.

“I recorded that song in my closet in Texas,” she says, “like on GarageBand (a recording software package) on my Mac. I was in my closet by myself, and it was one take. I didn't want to sing it again. I didn't even put up a mic. It's the mic on the Mac. That's how it sounded. You can hear the humming of the computer in the track. You can hear me clicking on it. That click, that's me punching that mouse thing on there to start the track.”

Clarkson originally intended to record the song as just a rough idea to send to her producers, but the vocal take persisted all the way to the final product.

“I never want to be afraid to try new things. It's supposed to be a creative business, it's supposed to be fun, it's supposed to be a learning experience, and I don't want to miss that just because I'm trying to be the No. 1 girl all the time.”

“When I sent it to [my production team], they were like, ‘You can't re-record that. It's not ever going to be like that. You're so vulnerable,’” she recalls. “Even if everything's not perfect, it's perfect. It's imperfectly perfect, if that makes sense. We were more interested in making a piece of work that we were all proud of, and something that's different than what's on the radio, and

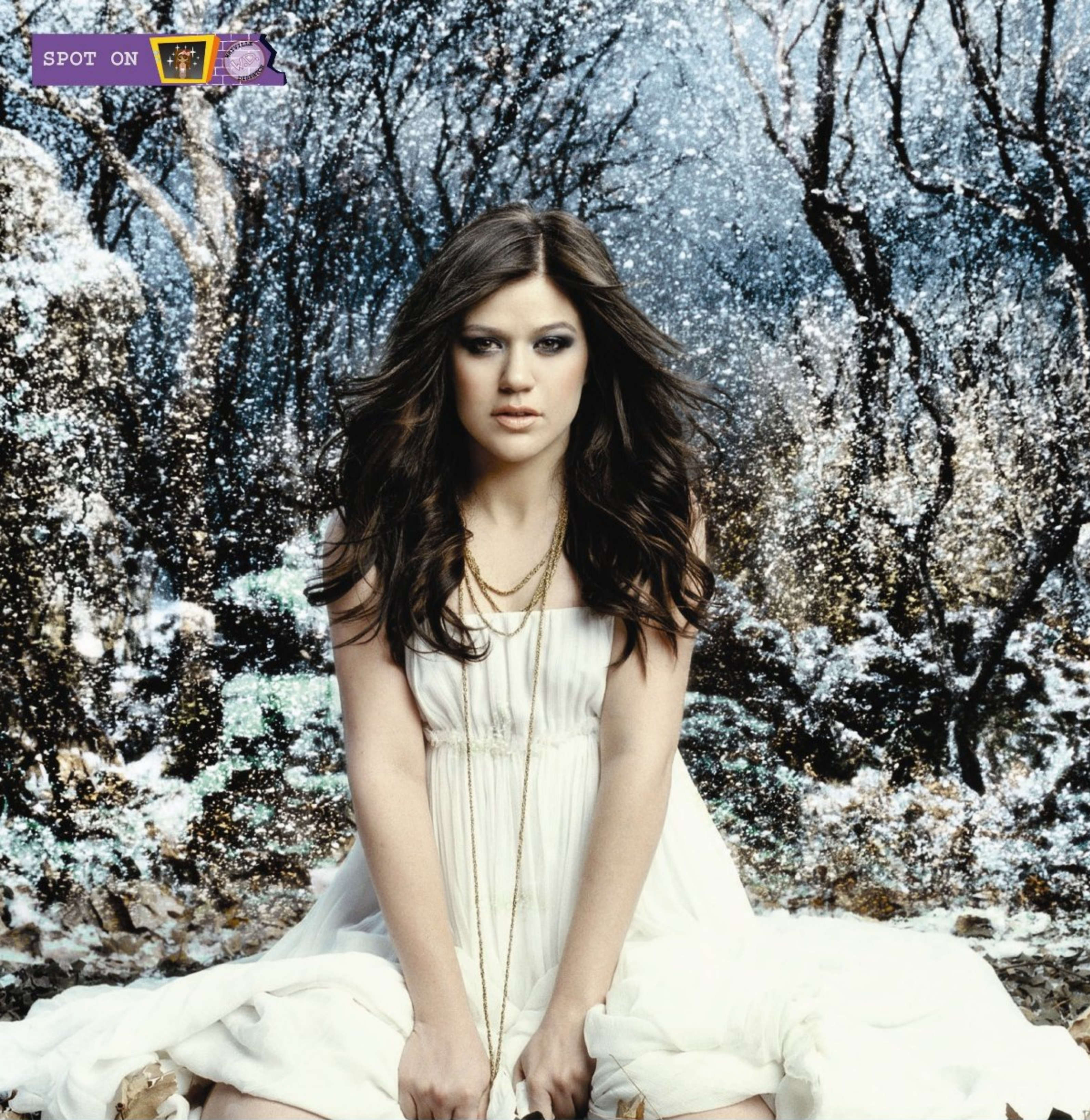
something that's new. It's a little aggressive of an approach, but it's an evolution as well.”

Crack open *My December*'s liner notes and one sees that Clarkson's lyrics are also moving on an evolutionary scale. Phrases appear darker and more introspective than before, and album opener “Never Again” sports prose that's just a few rungs shy (though cleaner) of Alanis Morissette's sternly worded *Jagged Little Pill*.

“I just went through a really sour relationship, man,” she responds. “[We were] just two people that were not right for each other. It ended up that I started writing [the album] about that, but then I started thinking about the situation I was writing about. It almost turned into this whole mockery of the whole Stepford Wife kind of thing. I don't know, like people still living back in the '50s thinking that mentality is going to work now. I love my job, and I do sacrifice a lot for it, but I want to. It's hard to be in a relationship with me, I get it ... [relationships are] not easy anyways. Dating is awkward. It's even harder under a big ol' spotlight.”

Clarkson later tones down *My December*'s overall perspective, in which she asserts that she's not always writing about sour romances.

“I think what happens with me a lot, even with the last record, is that everybody thinks that I write about a breakup,” she says. “It sounds funny when you listen to my music, but it's not ... even ‘Because of You,’ that's not about a breakup. Even ‘Walk Away,’ that wasn't about a breakup on the part that I wrote. I don't always write about that. ‘Judas’ and ‘Hole’ and ‘Can I Have a Kiss’ and ‘Maybe’ and ‘Be Still,’ those are all not about relationships, or they're not about a guy in the relationships. But I get what you're saying, they're ‘Don't Waste Your Time,’ ‘How I Feel’ and ‘Never Again.’”



“Actually, the whole thing is very personal and it’s the most intimate project obviously,” she adds. “The whole point of this record is that it’s very narcissistic. The whole record is about me, learning about me. I’m in my 20s and I’m changing everyday and I haven’t settled down, so I do go through relationships, good and bad, and I think that a lot of people assume that everything’s about relationships and some guy who did me wrong. Especially if you listen to ‘Can I Have Kiss’ or ‘Maybe,’ those are all like, ‘It’s my fault.’ I’m not blaming anyone. I get it. It’s like I’m trying to work on it, I’m trying to fix it.”

Perhaps Clarkson will have it all rectified by her next album – described as “acoustic country blues-rock” with some hard-rock moments – which she says she’s already started. “It’s got a little Bonnie Raitt feel, it’s got a little Patty Griffin feel. Obviously I’m not *that*, but it’s got that kind of feel on there, a little Miranda Lambert feel. It’s different and I like it.”

And different can only describe Clarkson’s life since she took top honors on *American Idol*. She recently returned to the show for a special appearance on *Idol Gives Back* and hopes to use her fame and fortune to delve into more charitable causes in the coming years. Not bad for a girl from Texas who, at one point, hoped to become a marine biologist (“When I was kid, I thought I would love it, but then I saw *Jaws*”).

Clarkson’s years in the spotlight even allowed her to share some special moments with one her favorites, Aerosmith’s Steven Tyler, with whom she paired up at a recent photo shoot.

“It’s like a dream come true,” she says. “Everybody knows that I’m a huge fan – he does, too. He was a lot of fun. He’s definitely a rock star. He’s all about having a good time and getting things done.” Then Clarkson, speaking from the core of her own experience adds, “And that’s hard to do!”

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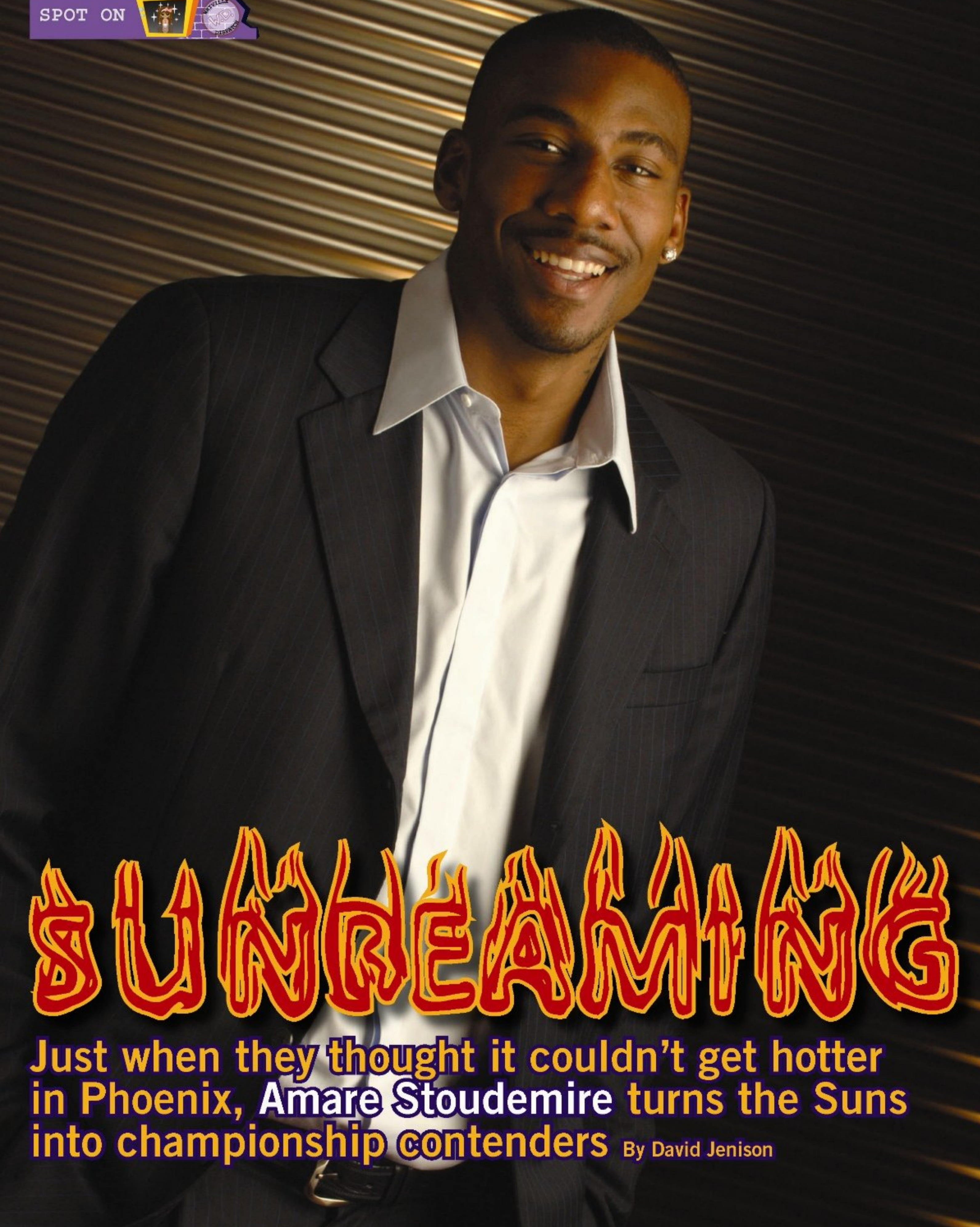


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SUNDREAMING

Just when they thought it couldn't get hotter in Phoenix, Amare Stoudemire turns the Suns into championship contenders By David Jenison

Entering the NBA in 2002, Amare Stoudemire was the only high school player selected in the first round of that year's draft. At the time, the focus was on international players, notably Chinese center Yao Ming, but it was Stoudemire who finished the 2002-2003 season as Rookie of the Year. The Phoenix Suns big man has since earned a bronze medal with the 2004 Olympic Team and runner-up MVP honors at the 2007 NBA All-Star Game. Stoudemire, known for his charitable work in the Phoenix community, recently spoke with *Whyville Dispatch*.

Your game against the Dallas Mavericks last March was a classic. The Suns were down six points with 31 seconds left, and then after tying the game with two second left, the Suns won by two points in double-overtime. Describe what it's like to play in a game like that.

Stoudemire: "That game was very intense with a lot of hype going into it. Both teams were at the top in the West, so everybody was expecting a showdown, and that's what they received."

Was that an exhausting game or did the excitement carry you?

Stoudemire: "I was pretty energized the whole time. With the Suns, we brought so much and we're always in great shape, so the double-overtime wasn't that tiring for us."

You were runner-up in the voting for MVP at the All Star Game. How was your All-Star experience this year and how does it feel to be voted one of the best players in the game?

Stoudemire: "That was fun. You know, a lot of people and the media didn't think I could bounce back from such a severe injury, and I was able to come back and be the runner-up for MVP, so that was a pretty good time."

You had two big knee surgeries that kept you out the entire 2005-2006 season. How hard was it to come back? Was it like starting from scratch?

Stoudemire: "Yeah. It's definitely tough. You got to prepare yourself for the ups and downs. It takes time to recover from an injury that severe, and that's what I did. I took my time with it, and I made sure I was ready to play."

Is there a big temptation to come back too early?

Stoudemire: "Yeah, it is a temptation. You know, you're a competitor and you want to play. You want to be able to help the team win, especially when we had a chance to win the championship last year. It was tough for

me to sit and watch."

You're also on the national team again for the Olympics. It must be exciting to compete for a gold medal.

Stoudemire: "Yeah, I'm very excited. You know, we definitely need to get the gold medal. It's something that I always dreamed of doing."

You have a good shot at winning a gold medal and an NBA championship. How would you compare the two?

Stoudemire: "I don't know, I don't have either yet..."

...as goals...

Stoudemire: "I think they're both similar, you know what I mean? You definitely want to represent your country to the best of your ability, and you also want to become a champion in this league. I think both are huge."

With the Suns, there's a certain style of play and a relatively consistent roster. It's a different team for the Olympics. Will you have to make any major adjustments?

Stoudemire: "No, I don't think so. I think it's pretty similar. You know, we had the same coach and staff with the U.S.A. team as we had with the Suns, so the offense is pretty much similar. For me personally, it doesn't really matter what the offense is, I can stay right with it."

I read that the lyrics of Tupac Shakur meant a lot to you as a teenager. What was it about his music that inspired you?

Stoudemire: "It was a lot about his music. I think he had a positive message, and the way he delivered it was awesome. It was huge for me because I was growing in a similar situation, you know? The things that he was saying I could relate to, and it was great. He was some artist!"

You moved between six different high schools when you were growing up?

Stoudemire: "Yeah."

Isn't it difficult to try to learn and stay consistent in sports when you move that much?

Stoudemire: "Yeah, it is, but you gotta stay focused. It has to be a constant goal. You have to have that strong mindset on what you want to become or what type of player you want to be. Regardless of your hardships or what have you, you still got to maintain and stay very focused on your goals and achieve 'em. You know, you gotta stay focused."

When you were drafted in 2002, you were the only high school player in the first round. Did you have any apprehension about declaring for the draft instead of going to the University of Memphis like you had planned?

Stoudemire: "Not at all, not at all. I think it was a great decision from my standpoint. I was the first player ever to get [the Rookie of the Year award] right out of high school, so it wasn't a bad decision at all. I think from an education standpoint, you know, college is very important, but I am starting to take college courses this summer. As far as the game, I thought that I was ready for the league and I was."

That's fantastic that you're taking college courses. Do you know what your main focus of study will be?

Stoudemire: "Not quite yet. You know, I'll be working towards a degree, so I have to take my core classes first. Once I take my core classes, then I can focus on a major."

I wish more athletes did that. Why was it important for you?

Stoudemire: "I think education is key. Regardless of how old you are, you still can learn some things. I look at myself as a student still, of basketball and of life. It's only right to receive an education."



What recommendations do you give young people that are debating between the draft and college?

Stoudemire: "They changed the rules so they can't go in the draft right out of high school anymore, but I think you just gotta prepare yourself to become a man, you know? You enter the NBA, and it's all adults and it's an adult lifestyle. You have to prepare yourself to become a man mentally, physically and also from an educational standpoint."

When you were a rookie, what's one thing you really had to work on as a player?

Stoudemire: "When I got to the pros, the first thing I had to work on was... I'm not quite sure. When I got drafted, I was a student just studying veteran players and learning from those guys. I would pretty much try to learn as much as I could. That was pretty much my mindset coming out of high school."

You set all kinds of records for a rookie coming out of high school. How did you absorb all those career landmarks?

Stoudemire: "It was something that I focused on. I just wanted to be a trendsetter coming out of high school. I think the fact that I was able to have a great rookie season just built

my confidence."

Having grown up a fan of Michael Jordan, what was it like playing against him when he came back with the Wizards? Was it surreal?

Stoudemire: "No doubt about it, but it was great. I asked him a personal question. I was like, 'Mike, what does it take to become great?' He was like, 'Kid, you seem like you already got it.' That was so inspiring for me."

Tell me about your foundation.

Stoudemire: "I named my foundation Each 1, Teach 1 because I believe that if every person teaches and helps each other, life can be better for everyone. My goal is to teach kids to stay off the streets and inside the books. I'm a big fan of teaching others, and I hope I can inspire kids to do the same."

You're also working with Arizona's governor on mentoring programs. Can you tell me about that?

Stoudemire: "I am really happy to support and be involved with the Governor's mentor initiatives. I believe in what Governor Napolitano is doing, and I commend mentors for the work they have done. Kids should embrace mentors and not be afraid to

communicate with them. I had a mentor, Coach Bernie Hayes, who made a big impact on my life. I definitely wouldn't be where I am without him."

You were actually on *Wheel of Fortune* and won. What was that experience like?

Stoudemire: "It was fun. I had a great partner who willed us to a win. It was my first time ever being on *Wheel of Fortune*, and I had a blast."

Who was your partner on *Wheel of Fortune*?

Stoudemire: "I have no idea." (laughs) "Yeah, I have no clue, bro."

You were also on *The Apprentice*. What did they have you do?

Stoudemire: "I guess it was four groups that set up an All-Star Celebrity Game. They set the game up with, you know, maybe 13 players, and I was sort of the MVP of the game, so that was nice."

Lastly, do you have any guiding principle in your life that you'd like to share with kids?

Stoudemire: "Just stay humble."

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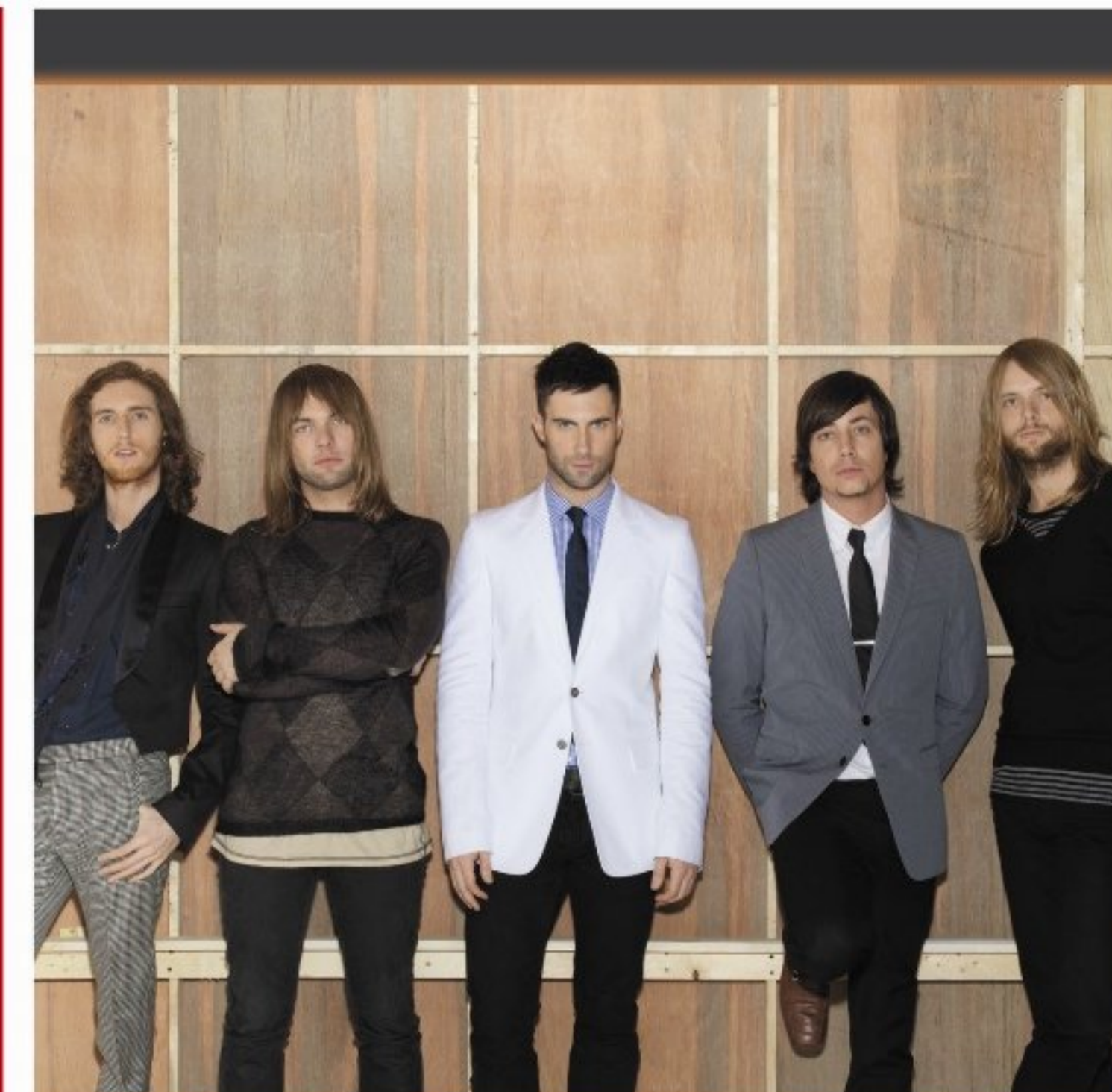
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Tips and Tricks to WingFling

by lantest1



The Airfield, accessible from Whyville's Bus Menu, is home to a fast-paced game called WingFling.

Similar to Whyville's classic Cafeteria food sorting and trash cleanup games, WingFling allows you to earn fast clams by using your quick reflexes. There's no limit to the clams you can earn. The clams you earn at WingFling are only limited by your plane building potential!

Here are some tips that can help both novice and experienced players:

- When you first enter WingFling, you'll likely see somebody else already playing. If you want to start fresh without interrupting the game in progress, go to another room! There are 24 other rooms to choose from if you want to get some solo practice.

- The place where the plane parts are dropped is called a bay. There are three bays. Dedicating each bay to a different plane color is usually the best way to build the most planes, based on how the plane parts roll off the conveyor belt.

- Of the three bays, you don't have to build the first plane in the first bay. It's advisable to take the nearest plane part to its closest bay.

- When you first start, grab parts right off the end of the conveyor belt. It's pretty close to two of the bays, so it's very efficient to drop parts into these bays and then go back to the conveyor belt to get your next part. With a little luck you'll be close to completing a couple of planes before parts start filling up your storage bins.

- Participants should be holding a plane part at all times. Each held part means a free bin that can be used to store a useful part for a different plane. This strategy effectively speeds up the plane building process.

- As the plane parts roll down the conveyor belt faster and faster, your bins will also fill up at a faster rate. If you see more parts of one color filling up the bins, make that color plane a priority!

With these tips (and a little luck), you could be building five, 10, or even 20 (or more!) planes per session!

ON THE STEREO: CD REVIEWS

BY COURTNEY LEAR

Justin Lanning

Behind These Eyes

Singer-songwriter Justin Lanning believes in himself. The 21-year-old Los Angeles native eagerly pursued his music career on his own terms, refusing to sign to a record label. His hard work and determination resulted in his first self-released album *Behind These Eyes*. The 12 tracks echo his positive attitude and new age spirituality while his sweet voice sings sentimental lyrics about love, girls and finding your inner strength. Highlights from the album include the radio worthy single "Take My Breathe Away," the piano driven "Fingertips," and the title track. The album as a whole is an upbeat pop-rock recording that Lanning can call it all his own.



sticks to the same formula. "Grip Like a Vice" is the first of the eleven tracks that bursts out with a diva rap over a steady rotation of orchestration and heavy beats. "Doing It Right" is their quintessential pep squad anthem while "Titanic Vandalism" could have been used by Quentin Tarantino for a Kill Bill fight scene. "Flashlight Fight" also upped the Brit's street cred with Public Enemy's Chuck D taking the mic. *Proof's* energy, creativity and charm make cheerleader rants seem legit. Go, Team, go!

The Cheetah Girls

The Party's Just Begun Tour

The Cheetah Girls gained their fame as a fictional female pop group on The Disney Channel only to become a real, recording, touring pop group. The singing, dancing trio, Adrienne Bailon, Sabrina Bryan and Kiely Williams of the group 3LW (original member Raven Symoné left the group to pursue her solo career), gave their fans more than they bargained for when they came from the TV screen to the stage. *The Party's Just Begun Tour* chronicles the girls' headlining tour. The live CD has live versions "Strut," "Dance with Me," "Girl Power," and "Cheetah Sisters," from their two previous albums, along with a new song, "Falling for You" performed with pop perfection in front of their cheetah fans.



The Go! Team

Proof of Youth

The Go! Team deserves the exclamation point. The English bunch's mash up of school yard chants, lady MCs, '70s hooks and b-boy beats transcend genre and inevitably make you want to get up and well, go! In line with the success of their debut album *Thunder*, *Lightening*, *Strike*, *Proof of Youth*



Sudoku Classic

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusive.

Good luck!

Difficulty Rating ★★☆☆☆

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