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## Middle School Weekly



Emphasizing both News and Academics

The Middle School Weekly is published in 34 4-page issues from August 29 to May 1 - except for two winter issues plus the summer bonus issue for a total of 35 issues.

September 24, 2007

Volume 22/5

1) In which mountains was the mummy of an Incan girl just put on display in Argentina found in ice atop a volcano in 1999?

**Answer: Andes.**

2) Name the country in the so-called Pacific Ring of Fire whose recent 41 earthquakes within 24 hours included an 8.4-magnitude quake centered off the coast of Sumatra that killed 9 people.

**Answer: Indonesia.**

3) Because it uses the Coptic calendar about 7 years behind the one used by most of the world, which African country bordering Somalia and Eritrea just rang in the new millennium?

**Answer: Ethiopia.**

4) Identify the U.S. pop group that gave a concert in Ethiopia as part of its millennium celebrations by naming the legume of African origin served on New Year's for good luck in the U.S. South.

**Answer: Black Eyed Peas.**

5) Which crop, yielding the so-called liquid gold that is one of Greece's best known exports, has been almost wiped out in the Peloponnesian peninsula by recent fires that destroyed the groves?

**Answer: Olives (Greece is world's 3rd largest producer of olive oil).**

6) In an unusual overlap of calendars, both the Islam and Jewish faiths this year began their holiest celebrations on September 12. Name either this Islamic celebration begun with the sighting of the new moon or the Jewish New Year that fell on the same day.

**Answer: Ramadan (lasts a month) or Rosh Hashana (holiday period lasts 10 days).**

7) What 5-letter word names the food that Italians recently boycotted for a day to protest its rising cost, meaning they gave up angel hair, fettucini, and other beloved varieties?

**Answer: Pasta (average Italian eats 119 pounds of pasta a year).**

8) Pasta makers blame the demand for biofuels for the increase in pasta price, in that which crop is used in both pasta and biofuels, leading to that crop's highest prices in a decade?

**Answer: Wheat.**

9) Give the Italian for the title of Verdi's hymn translated as "Hail Mary," which a soprano opera star sang at Pavarotti's funeral.

**Answer: "Ave Maria."**

10) Identify the U.S. navy spy ship that North Korea captured in 1968 and now exhibits as a major tourist attraction as a symbol of the Cold War era. Its name also designates a Native American village consisting of multilevel adobe or stone apartments.

**Answer: Pueblo.**

11) Name the state from whose Pamlico Sound tropical storm Gabrielle moved in, with its center just southwest of Kill Devil Hill before turning and heading back to the Atlantic.

**Answer: North Carolina.**

12) In which Great Lake did divers just find the wreckage of a carrier that sank in 1907 shortly after setting out from northwestern Wisconsin with its load of iron ore?

**Answer: Lake Superior (the vessel, the *Cyprus*, was transporting iron ore to Buffalo).**

13) As part of his observance of the 9/11 anniversary President Bush attended a prayer service at St. John's Episcopal Church on which square located near the White House named for a Frenchman who aided in the Revolutionary War?

**Answer: Lafayette Square (Bush also had moment of silence at 8:46 a.m., the time of the 1st attack).**

14) A lawyer for TV's *South Park* is trying to link up the movie-making industry with high tech so that such shows can be aired on the Web. What names are used to represent these industries in California, the latter centered in a valley near San Francisco?

**Answer: Hollywood and Silicon Valley.**

15) Identify the name for the **cooling** of waters now developing in the Pacific and likely to bring more Atlantic hurricanes by giving the feminine version of the Spanish name meaning "the child" used to name the **warming** of Pacific waters near the equator

**Answer: La Niña (its counterpart is El Niño).**

16) As a promotional gimmick, which item did baseball-card company Topps package on just 3 cards honoring George Washington and by virtue of this item carrying his DNA?

**Answer: Strand of hair (recent e-bay auction of 1st card found was halted for rule violation at \$8,300)**

#### **HISTORICAL EVENTS - September 24-30 (Questions 17-24)**

17) On September 25, 1513, which explorer became the first European to see the eastern shore of the Pacific, an ocean he called the South Sea?

**Answer: Vasco Núñez de Balboa (he was atop a peak in Panama).**

18) Which U.S. President collapsed aboard a train on September 26, 1919, after making 40 speeches in behalf of the Treaty of Versailles?

**Answer: Woodrow Wilson.**

19) Whom did President Washington appoint as the first chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court on September 26, 1789? His 3-letter surname also designates a crested bird.

**Answer: John Jay.**

20) On which river that rises in British Columbia did President Franklin Roosevelt dedicate the Bonneville Dam in Oregon on September 28, 1937?

**Answer: Columbia River.**

21) Name the Norman leader who landed in England with his army on September 28, 1066.

**Answer: William (I) the Conqueror.**

22) On September 28, 1939, which 2 countries agreed on a plan to divide Poland?

**Answer: Germany and Soviet Union.**

23) Admiral George Dewey returned from Manila to a huge welcome in New York on September 29, 1899, as the hero of which war?

**Answer: Spanish-American War.**

24) Name the baseball player who on September 30, 1927, hit his 60th home run of the season, setting a record that held for 24 years.

**Answer: George Herman "Babe" Ruth (Maris broke the record with 61 in 1961).**

25) Stating that  $(x - 4)(x + 3)$  is equal to  $(x + 3)(x - 4)$  is justified by what property of multiplication?

**Answer: Commutative (property of multiplication).**

26) If a baseball player has 5 hits in 12 at bats and is hitting .417, what is his teammate hitting if he has 7 hits in 12 at bats?

**Answer: .583.**

27) The square root of 180 is how many times as great as the square root of 20?

**Answer: 3.**

28) What is the simplified result for  $\frac{x}{3} - \frac{x}{5}$ ?

**Answer:  $\frac{2x}{15}$ .**

29) How many more legs does a spider, or arachnid, have than organisms called insects?

**Answer: 2 (spiders have 8 legs, insects 6).**

30) Give both the number of parts into which the spider's body is divided and the number of parts into which an insect's body is divided.

**Answer: 2 (head, abdomen for spiders) and 3 (head, thorax, abdomen for insects).**

31) In terms of eating habits, what name is given to an animal such as a coyote that today eats almost anything: poultry, snakes, pet food, doughnuts, fruits, grass, and garbage?

**Answer: Omnivore.**

32) Give the Latin for "dog" used in the coyote's species name \_\_\_\_\_ *latrans* and in the Southern Hemisphere constellation \_\_\_\_\_ *Major*, which includes Sirius, the Dog Star.

**Answer: Canis (Sirius is the brightest star in the sky).**

33) Identify the geometric shape that has traditionally been used to represent the Christian concept of the Holy Trinity, or Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**Answer: Triangle (St. Patrick allegedly used the shamrock to explain the concept of the Trinity).**

34) Name the present-day country having 70% of the sites named in the Bible's New Testament, such as Tarsus, Ephesus, and Antioch, and today known for its city of Istanbul.

**Answer: Turkey (Paul spent almost 20 years spreading Christianity to non-Jews in what is now Turkey)**

35) The international prototype for metric mass kept near Paris is mysteriously losing weight. What name is given to this metric measure, equal to 2.2 pounds in the U.S.?

**Answer: Kilogram (prototype, locked up near Paris, has lost about the weight of a fingerprint).**

36) U.S. life expectancy from birth recently rose to 2.1 years short of becoming an octogenarian, meaning a newborn can now expect to live to what age to the nearest tenth?

**Answer: 77.9.**

37) Name the 31-mile Manhattan subway line that just celebrated its 75th birthday, the train made famous by a Duke Ellington song.

**Answer: A-train (NYC's longest subway line, from 207th street in north to Queens on Long Island).**

38) Of sites along the A-train's route, identify either the Queens neighborhood called a park named for the form of oxygen once synonymous with "fresh air" but now linked with smog or the nearby bay named for the Caribbean island known for its reggae music.

**Answer: Ozone Park (heavily populated by immigrant groups) or Jamaica Bay.**

39) Name the Washington D.C. hotel whose "everything must go" sale prior to renovation led one buyer to pay \$45 for wall plaques designating its 2nd and 3rd floors since the burglars in the 1972 break-in of Democratic Headquarters stayed in rooms 214 and 314.

**Answer: Watergate Hotel (in Watergate complex, site of the burglary leading to Nixon's resignation).**

40) What 4-letter term names the marking used on items like linens or dishes to link them to a given business, and which the Watergate Hotel had long ceased to use since guests too often stole the items because of the significance of the marking?

**Answer: Logo (NYC's Plaza Hotel used logos, making its sale for renovation more appealing to buyers).**

#### SEVEN WONDERS OF THE WORLD, SOME OLD, SOME NEW\*

**Great Pyramids** . . . Only survivor of the original 7 wonders of the ancient world, located in Giza in Egypt

**Alexandria** . . . . . Site of the Pharos lighthouse of the original 7 wonders, named for the Macedonian who conquered Egypt in the 300s B.C.

**Zeus** . . . . . God depicted in the statue at Olympia that was in original 7 wonders

**Iraq** . . . . . Country that is the site of the one-time Hanging Gardens of Babylon that were among the original 7

**Colossus** . . . . . Statue in the harbor of Rhodes that was one of the original 7, the one whose name is linked with a word starting with C meaning "huge"

**Brazil** . . . . . Country whose huge Christ the Redeemer statue was named one of the new 7 wonders, located on a peak overlooking Rio de Janeiro

**Peru** . . . . . Country whose ancient Incan city Machu Picchu on an 8,000-foot mountain is one of the new 7 wonders

**C-O-L-O-S-S-E-U-M** . . Spelling of the name of the gladiator site in Rome voted a new wonder

**Jordan** . . . . . Country whose city of Petra carved from rock on a mountain is a new wonder, thanks to campaigning by King Abdullah and Queen Rania

**Taj Mahal** . . . . . Mausoleum at Agra built by Shah Jahan of India in the 17th century in memory of his favorite wife that was voted a new wonder

**Mexico** . . . . . Country whose Chichen Itza pyramid with a carving of the Mayan serpent god Quetzacoatl atop it was named a new wonder\*\*

**Acropolis** . . . . . "Higher city" or citadel of ancient Athens nominated as new wonder

**Easter** . . . . . South Pacific island nominated as new wonder because of its over 600 huge statues of people carved hundreds of years ago

**Eiffel Tower** . . . . . Iron and steel structure built for an 1889 the Universal Exposition in the "City of Lights" that was a nominee for the new 7 wonders

**Sydney Opera House** . . Australian hall with sail-like features atop nominated as new wonder

**Statue of Liberty** . . U.S. nominee for the new 7 bearing a poem by Emma Lazarus

**Stonehenge** . . . . . Stones set in circles on Salisbury Plain also nominated for the new 7

**Timbuktu** . . . . . Trading center in Mali in Africa dating to 1100s also nominated for the new 7, often named figuratively as an idiom for a faraway place

\*Original 7 from ancient Greeks; new 7 chosen by Internet poll July 2007 \*\*China's Great Wall is 7th new wonder

