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HERALDNEWS

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sneakers



BOOKSHELF



Twice in a 'Blue Moon'

The Washington Post

"Blizzard of the Blue Moon," by Mary Pope Osborne; ages 7-9; Random House Books for Young Readers (\$11.95)

"Journey to the Blue Moon," by Rebecca Rupp; ages 10 and up; Candlewick (\$15.99)

It's not often that two books by two beloved children's authors land in the KidsPost office on the same day. And when they both had "blue moon" in the title, we knew we had found something rare indeed.

"Blizzard of the Blue Moon" is Mary Pope Osborne's latest tale of mystery. This time Jack and Annie are in a location that might be familiar to many kids, New York City's Central Park. But the appearance of a unicorn guarantees that this tale is as magical as all their other adventures.

"Journey to the Blue Moon" is by Rebecca Rupp, author of "The Waterstone" and "The Dragon of Lonely Island." Her cast of characters includes Alex, a boy who has lost his grandfather's pocket watch; scavenger rats that can fly a spaceship; and a mysterious old lady.

By the way, the term "blue moon" refers to the second full moon occurring in the same month – a rare event. There were no blue moons in 2006. The next one in the United States will be May 31, 2007.

ABOUT YOU



Where you eat

The Washington Post

When not in school, where do kids 8 to 17 eat?

73 percent
At the table, with family

5 percent
In a fast-food place or restaurant

28 percent
In front of the TV

3 percent
In another room

6 percent
In my room

1 percent
In the car

SOURCE: GfK NOP research survey. (Note: Numbers add to more than 100 percent because of multiple responses.)

FUN FACTS

Time to rhyme

Wacky facts from World Almanac for Kids

■ May 12 is Limerick Day.
■ At many schools in Slovakia, students store their shoes in their school lockers and wear slippers to class.

■ The ancient Chinese thought of the constellation of stars that we call the Big Dipper as a chariot for the emperor.

Want to know more? Go online to <http://www.worldalmanacforkids.com/> for more fun facts and games.



Smile!

Taking care of your teeth is simple

By CATHY COLLISON
Detroit Free Press

Brush, brush, brush your teeth.

That's what we learned from Dr. Amy DeYoung, who is a pediatric dentist and president of the Michigan Academy of Pediatric Dentistry.

You need to brush at least two times every day, after breakfast and "definitely before bed," DeYoung says.

And if you have braces, try to brush even more often, DeYoung says, because food is more likely to get stuck in your teeth.

And brush your tongue too. That's right, brushing the tongue keeps bacteria away and your breath fresh. "Germs will hide on your tongue," DeYoung says.

DeYoung says that cavities are on the rise as busy kids do not always take a few minutes for brushing.

Dentists wage a constant battle against plaque – a sticky substance formed from anything we eat.

Plaque will stick to the teeth, and the longer it sticks, the more likely it can cause tooth problems.

How to brush

Your brush should always stay on the teeth and always keep moving. Brush the front, the back and sides without removing the toothbrush to get every tooth clean.

Dental dos and don'ts

Here are DeYoung's tips for better dental care. By the way, change your brush every three months, and throw it out if you've been sick. No need to keep those flu germs around.

■ It's a great idea to make flossing part of your routine as you grow older. It's another way to get food substances out of your teeth.

■ You should see the dentist once every six months.

■ Don't drink so much soda or fruit juice. These sugary drinks are "tough on your teeth." They are making America's cavities zoom up. And when you do eat something sweet or sticky (even potato chips have sugar), wash it down with water. In general, some of our "grab and go" habits for eating have put teeth in trouble, DeYoung says. Many fast and snack foods are loaded with sugar, and if you're eating on the run, you're not stopping to brush.

■ Do take care of your teeth and use mouth guards for sports. (You can brush out your mouth guard too – and of course, don't ever share one.)

Time for a checkup?

A study says tooth decay is on the rise among kids

By CLAUDIA ATTICOT
TimeforKids.com

The tooth fairy might be working overtime this year. According to the largest government dental study in 25 years, tooth decay in baby teeth has risen from 24 percent to 28 percent in children ages 2 to 5 since 1999. Before that, tooth decay had been on the decline for 40 years.

Food for thought

Experts believe that this new trend might have something to do with kids' eating habits. "Parents are giving their children more processed snack foods than in the past and more bottled water or other drinks instead of fluoridated tap water," said Dr. Bruce Dye, of the National Center for Health Statistics, who lead the study.

Bottled water often does not have the right amount of fluoride. Fluoride is a substance that is found in tap water. Research

has shown that at certain levels, it strengthens tooth enamel and helps prevent tooth decay. Many communities add fluoride to their water supplies to tap into this cavity-fighting power.

Processed snack foods tend to be loaded with sugar. Sweet, starchy foods stick to the teeth, forming a film. If that film is not brushed away, it can lead to tooth decay.

Children have 20 baby teeth. Most kids start losing their baby teeth when they are about 6 years old, but some fall out earlier. Dentists are calling for parents to take kids as young as 1 year old to the dentist to help prevent cavities.

A reason to smile

Thankfully, not all the news is bad. The study found that kids age 6 to 11 have fewer cavities. Experts think this might be due to the fact that more dentists are using dental sealants, or plastic coatings that

are applied to teeth to prevent decay.

Adults can also share in the good news. A serious form of gum disease called periodontitis has decreased by 50 percent in adults 20 to 64 years old. "Overall, we can say that most Americans are noticing an improvement in their oral health," Dye said.

PROJECT TIME

Dye a spring bouquet for mom

FamilyFun magazine

A pretty result that also teaches a science lesson.

How it works

Freshly cut flowers continuously draw water up through their stems, as through a straw. When the water reaches the petals, it evaporates through tiny pores, leaving the dye behind (dye cannot evaporate). Over time, it builds up, coloring the tips of the petals.

