



HUMAN INTEREST

Monday, January 25, 2010



Meet Brennan LaBrie, World's Youngest Olympics Reporter

WA - Brennan LaBrie is much like any other seasoned journalist descending on Vancouver for the Winter Olympics. He runs a successful newspaper in his hometown of Port Townsend, Wash. He's found a national audience as a blogger for Time magazine. And he's interviewed Apolo Ohno, among other star athletes, in the run-up to next month's Games. The difference? Brennan is 10 years old. The ambitious young cub reporter, who publishes the Spruce Street Weekly in his neighborhood back home, will reportedly be the youngest journalist at the Games, filing reports for the Time for Kids Web site, as well as the Tacoma News Tribune. Just don't expect amateurish coverage. This kid's a pro. "I'll be covering all the events and the games and giving up-to-the-minute new reports," he tells Washington's Peninsula Daily News.

"To me, it's more than athletics and the numbers and scores. It's really about the people." LaBrie, chosen as one of 12 Time for Kids reporters for this school year, has already interviewed Team USA bobsledder Bree Schaaf and champion speedskater Ohno. "He is so amazing. I was so surprised that he was a regular guy," LaBrie says. LaBrie's mentor, Port Townsend video blogger Jack Olmsted, says the young reporter is ready for the big time. "Basically, he's arrived," Olmsted says. "He's 10 years old, the sky's the limit. Age is not an issue. He's on his way. He's a journalist. He's communicating with 4.5 million kids around the world." It figures to be a busy few weeks for LaBrie. Asked what he'll do when the Olympics are over, he replies: "Probably take a nap." To see Brennan in action, [click here](#)

Grumpy-looking Blobfish in Danger of Being Wiped Out



UK - So you think you've had a bad day?... spare a thought for the world's most miserable-looking fish who is now in danger of being wiped out. The unfortunately named blobfish has already acquired a reputation for looking sad thanks to its miserable mush. The bloated bottom dweller, which can grow up to 12 inches, lives at depths of up to 900m making it rarely seen by humans. But thanks to increasing fishing of the seas. Down Under the fish is being dragged up

with other catches. Despite being unedible itself, the blobfish unluckily lives at the same depths as other more appetising ocean organisms, including crab and lobster.

Farmer Saves Piglet with CPR



LA CENTER, WA. - A newborn piglet cheats death, thanks to a quick-thinking farmer and a nurturing dog in Washington State. Meet Pig Pig, a young female piglet who would rather run with the dogs than play with her own species. "She just doesn't even have any interest," said farmer Heidi Olson. After all she was raised by a red heeler after her own mom died after giving birth. "The only problem is now the pig thinks she's a dog," said Olson. Heidi Olson says Pig Pig's amazing story almost ended just two days after she was born. As the only surviving piglet of her litter, Heidi says her mother almost crushed her after becoming ill with complications with birth.

Olson said, "The mother pig was so sick she actually laid on her and didn't realize it." When Heidi's husband finally realized it, the tiny piglet was in rough shape. "She squished her flat. She was flat as a pancake, no heartbeat. Cold." But like any animal-loving farmer, he took action. "He did the first thing that came to mind which is mouth to snout." After about five minutes of CPR, Pig Pig began to breathe on her own. She was alive but with no mother to feed her, saving her would be difficult. That's where the dog comes in. Heidi decided to put Pig Pig with a litter of red heeler puppies to see whether their mother could look past the obvious differences. "The momma dog looked at me like, 'are you crazy?' But nature took over and her mothering instinct took over and she brought her in as one of her own," said Olson. A couple of months later and despite a little bit of an identity crisis, Pig Pig is thriving. After a rough start, the Olsons say she deserves a long, healthy life. "Time to go back. She is not going to be eaten, she is going to be the pig pet." VIDEO [HERE](#).

Interspecies Friends



Interspecies Friends is a photoblog all about animals of different species either being friends or at least not killing each other. Sometimes, even predator-prey relationships are nullified by sheer cuteness, as with this rat and cat.

<http://interspeciesfriends.blogspot.com/>

And the Award for Best Documentary Goes to... CHIMPCAM



UK - The first film to be shot entirely by chimpanzees will premiere on the [BBC](#) on Wednesday, as part of a natural history documentary called "Chimpcam," the BBC reported. The chimps were given a chimp-proof camera, designed especially for them, and complete creative control over what they filmed. Researchers will use the footage to observe how chimpanzees perceive the world and each other. According to the BBC, The chimps were given two challenges: The first was to teach the chimps how to use a touchscreen to select different videos. The second challenge was to give the apes a "Chimpcam", a recording camera housed in a

chimp-proof box. Initially, the chimps were more interested in each other than the video technology, as two male chimps within the study group vied to become the alpha male, disrupting the experiment. But over time, some of the chimps learned how to select different videos to watch. Watch [HERE](#)

US to Lift 21-year Ban on Haggis



UK - Haggis and its traditional accompaniment, whisky. Haggis was banned by US authorities in 1989 because they feared its main ingredient - minced sheep offal - could prove lethal. Smuggled and bootlegged, it has been the cause of transatlantic tensions for more than two decades. But after 21 years in exile, the [haggis](#) is to be allowed back into the [United States](#). The "great chieftan o' the puddin-race" was one of earliest casualties of the [BSE](#) crisis of the 1980s-90s, banned on health grounds by the US authorities in 1989 because they feared its main ingredient - minced sheep offal - could prove lethal. Some refined foodies might insist it always has been

and always will be: in the words of Robert Burns, in his Ode to a Haggis, looking "down wi' sneering, scornfu' view on sic a dinner". But now, as millions of Scots around the world prepare to celebrate Burns's legacy tonight with an elaborate, whisky-fuelled pageant to a boiled bag of sheep innards, oatmeal, suet and pepper, its reputation has been restored, on health grounds at least. For the past two decades, Americans of Scottish descent - of whom there are at least 6 million - have been forced to celebrate Burns' night without a true haggis, much to their distress. There are stories of Scots smuggling in a haggis for their starving cousins, risking deportation in the process. Others are said to have secretly tried to create homemade, bootleg haggis, desperate to sample that particularly peppery concoction. Meanwhile, butchers in the US have tried, and failed, to make their own versions of the pudding without using the vital ingredient: sheep. "It was a silly ban which meant a lot of people have never tasted the real thing," said Margaret Frost, of the Scottish American Society in Ohio. "We have had to put up with the US version, which is made from beef and is bloody awful." The long-running campaign by Scottish ministers to reverse the ban has been reinvigorated by [Alex Salmond](#), the Scottish National party leader, since he became first minister, privately lobbying US officials during his visits there. The reverse in policy from the US department of agriculture is now expected by Salmond's government after the World Organisation for Animal Health decided that sheep lungs no longer carry a risk of contamination by scrapie, a close variant of mad cow disease, or bovine spongiform encephalopathy. The latest sales figures suggest haggis is more popular now than ever. Nearly £9m worth were sold in the UK alone last year, the 250th anniversary of Burns' birth, up by 19% on 2008. Richard Lochhead, the Scottish environment secretary, was delighted. "I am greatly encouraged to hear that the US authorities are planning a review of the unfair ban on haggis imports," he said. "We believe that reversing the ban would

deliver a vote of confidence in Scottish producers, and allow American consumers to sample our world-renowned national dish."

Central Talent Booking