

Singer and actress

newsday.com/kidsday

Singer and actress Sofia Carson

BY ANTHONY RODRIGUEZ, **JACKSON ROSARIO, EMILY SCIARRONE** AND MARINA TRGO

Kidsday Reporters

e met singer and actress Sofia Carson when she was in New York recently. Her latest single is titled "Back to Beautiful," and she starred as Evie in the Disney Channel movie "Descendants 2."

Tell us about your new album. What are the acoustics of it?

Oh, you know, it's so surreal to be creating my album. I've been doing it since I was younger than you guys. There's a song I'll be releasing soon that I'm really, really excited about. So it's a really beautiful ballad.

Do you blast the radio and sing when your songs come on?

Absolutely! Me and my sister in the car, we turn all the windows down. Turn the music up and just scream at the top of our lungs.

Do you collect all of your own Sofia Carson dolls?

You know what, I don't. But luckily Disney Channel will send me a doll every time it comes out. Which is even so surreal to say that I have dolls. But I have a lot of them. But I need to start collecting them. That's a really good idea.

Were your parents overprotective when you were growing up?

That's a great question. I think they were the perfect combination of protective and giving their children freedom. I think a parent has to be protective over their kids and teach them right from wrong. And [there are] so many incredibly important things that a parent teaches us and guides us through life. I think they were



Singer and actress Sofia Carson hung out for a bit with Kidsday reporters, from left, Marina Trgo, Jackson Rosario, Anthony Rodriguez and Emily Sciarrone.

the perfect balance.

Did you wear braces when you were growing up?

I did. I really had an awkward stage, guys. There were braces. It wasn't cute. I wore glasses.

If you could be in a rock band, which one would you be in?

I would probably be in Aerosmith.

When you were little, did you like going to sleepovers?

At sleepovers I loved playing dress-up. We would dress each other up and pretend we were modeling down a runway or be in a music video.

Tell us what you liked about "Descendants 2."

The incredible music, epic, epic dance numbers. And really, really beautiful story lines between the four because they each do a lot of growing up and they teach really beautiful

When you were little, did you watch Disney Channel?

It was the only channel on my TV. As in not physically, but it was like the only channel I would play. And, yeah, I was obsessed with Disney Channel, from "Lizzie McGuire," "That's So Raven," "Hannah Montana," "Wizards of Waverly Place," "High School Musical." I was obsessed, obsessed, still am with Disney Channel.

Do you ever get stage fright?

Yeah. It is one of those moments when you have a severe case of the butterflies, but ... you also get so excited and so thrilled to be able to do what you love. And just the urge to make sure you do your very best is kind of what takes over.

Do you have any collections?

I used to collect snow globes. I loved snow globes growing up. And every Disney park we would go to, I would buy a snow globe.

Have you ever accidentally broken part of the set while shooting a scene?

Um, yes. I'm very clumsy. And I also don't sew, and Evie, in "Descendants," she designs clothes. And the first for me there is a scene that when you guys watch it again, you'll know what I'm talking about. It opens with Evie on her sewing machine, and Mal talking to her. And I didn't know that I actually had to sew. So when they called "Action," they're like, you just press this button, do this, do this and do that. And go. And I was like, uh, I didn't tell anyone that I didn't know how to do it. So Penny called action. I don't know what I pressed, but I pressed the wrong thing, and the sewing machine fell onto the floor. And the dress broke in half. And they had to take me inside and teach me how to sew to shoot the scene, so [now] I actually do sew.

When do you go at red and stop at green?

When you're eating a watermelon!

Savannah Brown

What do you call a sleepwalking nun?

A roamin' Catholic.

Dominick Utano

What did the beaver say to the tree?

"It's been nice gnawing you."

— Krithika Vuavala

Why is the clown sad?

Because he lost his funny bone.

- Erin Horigan

What did one toilet say to the other?

"You look a bit flushed."

- Ryan Stefane

Where does bad light go?

To prism!

Sean Hores

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Kidsday reporter Erin Horigan and her instructor take on the waves at Surfer's Way camp.

Surf's up, go for it

BY ERIN HORIGAN Kidsday Reporter

Surfing feels like an adventure that takes me to a new world. At first I feel the sand between my feet.

Then, I feel like I am floating through the clouds. When the waves come, they take me and my surfboard with them fast, like a race car. I have to keep my balance.

When you fall, you get back up and try again. The volunteer surfer keeps me safe and gives me directions. Sometimes I get nervous, but I still love it. Being on the ocean makes me feel calm.

Surfer's Way (surfersway.org) is a nonprofit organization that uses volunteers to take kids with autism and special needs surfing. I have been surfing with them in Long Beach for four years. I have autism, and doing this gives me confidence and a love for the ocean. Their motto is: "Empowering Children with Special Needs."

Every summer I look forward to Surfer's Way coming to Long Island to take me surfing!

Let's go camping!

BY SAVANNAH BROWN Kidsday Reporter

You have to plan before you go to a campsite. Or you could even camp out in your backyard.

There are a lot of campsites around Long Island, and some might be near you. Some local campgrounds are McCann's in Greenport, Indian Island in Riverhead, Blydenburgh County Park in Smithtown and Sears Bellows County Park in Hampton Bays.

I also like to camp upstate in the Adirondacks, and two of my favorite grounds are Blue Jay and Stewarts



Pond. The campsites in the Adirondacks are really awesome because they have a lot of hiking trails.

The supplies you need will depend on how many days you go camping.

If it's in your backyard, you just need a tent to sleep in, a sleeping bag and a flashlight. When you wake up, you can go right into your house to get something to eat.

Friends squabble but stay besties

BY NATHANAEL MONAHAN AND ANTHONY RODRIGUEZ

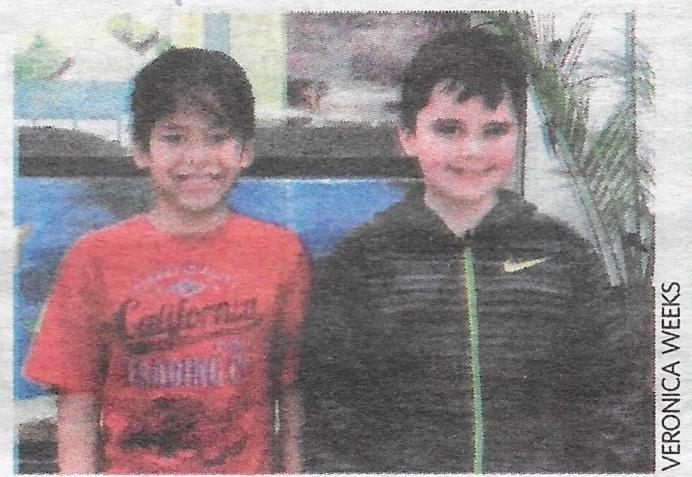
Kidsday Reporters

an best friends still be friends if they argue or fight? Two Kidsday reporters take on that question.

ANTHONY: In my perspective, best friends can argue and still be best friends. For example, my best friend, Nate [Nathanael], and I argue all the time, whether it's on what game to play or what to have as a snack.

One argument with Nate I really remember is when I gave him some of my birthday candy. He took a special piece that I was saving for later. When I left the room, he took it and ate it! I was really mad at him, but I forgave him . . . eventually.

NATE: When you fight with your friend you might say, "I am not your friend



Kidsday reporters and best friends Nathanael Monahan, left, and Anthony Rodriguez.

anymore!" Well, hopefully you are still going to be friends. You might go through periods when you have fights all the time and then none for a while.

One time at Anthony's house, I took his sour candy that he wanted. He got really mad. I said sorry to him, and we made up. We get into a lot of verbal fights but not most of the time, and they are usually short. This is why you can be best friends and still get into fights.

A WEEKS

Capt. Fred Roberts with Kidsday reporters Angelina Augusta and Victoria Hand on the Yankee III.

Charterboat is the way to explore the bay

BY ANGELINA AUGUSTA AND VICTORIA HAND Kidsday Reporters

he Yankee III charterboat out of Captree offers fun experiences for the summer. We went on this boat with our class to explore oceanography on the Great South Bay.

We spent the day dredging, seining, looking through
microscopes and visiting the
wheelhouse. We were
amazed at all the creatures

we got to observe, and the coastline was gorgeous.

The boat also takes passengers out to fish. We interviewed the captain, Fred Roberts, on his boat.

What is the strangest thing that you have ever caught?

Sharks! A thresher shark that was about 7 feet long.

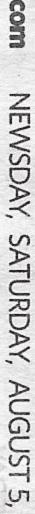
What is your favorite thing about your boat?

My favorite thing is when we have a good day fishing and I get to see everyone come off the boat in a great mood.

What is your favorite fish to catch?

I like bottom fishing, where you put the hook down on the bottom. I like sea bass, fluke and flounder fishing.

Read the full interview at newsday.com/kidsday and learn more about the charterboat at yankee3.com



2017



Kidsday reporter Dominick Utano tests the Global Water Quality kit.

Experiment in water filtering

BY DOMINICK UTANO

Kidsday Reporter

ments I did.

reviewed the science kit Global Water Quality: Build Your Own Water Filter (\$14, Thames & Kosmos). I thought it was fun and interesting because you can turn your dirty water into clean water. I would recommend this product for people who really want to see how their tap water becomes clean water. You should be supervised by a parent when you try this. These are two of the experi-

EXPERIMENT 1:

FILTERING DIRTY WATER

I used a teaspoon of dirt from my houseplant. I mixed the dirt with tap water and poured it into the kit's stack of cups. When the water passed through the top cup, the bigger pieces of dirt stayed in the cup. As the water passed through the sand in the second cup, it looked like it was getting a lot cleaner. When the water passed through the wadded-up filter paper, it looked really clean. At the end, when the water got to the bottom, it looked like I could drink it. **EXPERIMENT 2:**

water after I filtered it.

FILTERING COLORED WATER I noticed that the blue water did not filter into clear water. I think it's because the size of the particles in the dye are smaller than the tiny holes in the crumpled-up filter. There was no change in the blue

Something fishy in our class

BY CHASE ALFIERO, LIANA GENTILE, **BRADY PARK AND JASON RULAND**

The Salar

Kidsday Reporters

ave you ever been in a classroom that has trout? Our class has. We raised them all school year-long and then released them this spring. Our teacher, Mrs. Veronica Weeks, went upstate to get the eggs. When she came back with them, we were all so excited. She had to keep them cold and drove slowly to get them here safely.

Many trout hatched from their eggs in our special egg basket. Our trout tank temperature had to be kept between 52 and 55 degrees. Our trout grew so much. Each afternoon, we would check the trout tank to see if everything was OK. We

recorded the temperature and our observations in our trout journal. They ate like crazy twice a day.

We loved to take pictures of the trout to see how much they'd grown. We also had a webcam over the tank so we could watch them any time we wanted.

In April we released 58 brown trout into the Nissequogue River. We

> started with 61, so it was a great success.



KIDSDAY STAFF ARTIST / MAGGIE FLAHERTY, MERRICK

Explore a hatchery

The Cold Spring Harbor Fish Hatchery & Aquarium has a lot of trout and other fish. It has the largest living collection of New York State freshwater reptiles, fish and amphibians. Visitors can tour the two aquarium buildings and eight outdoor ponds, feed the trout and actually catch the trout and take them home. We met our teachers there to watch eggs being extracted from a female trout.

FUN FACTS ABOUT TROUT

- They are the oldest fish in the world.
- Trout need to live in very, very cold water.
- Rainbow trout get their name from their beautiful colors.
- Rainbow trout are predators and will eat almost anything they can catch, including insects, smaller fish and crustaceans.

'The Other Side of Summer'

BY IZET HADZIBAJRAMOVIC

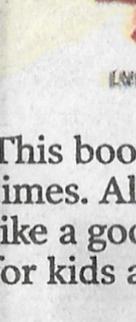
Kidsday Reporter

read "The Other Side of Summer" by Emily Gale (Harper Books). It is an emotional book about coping with something depressing. Summer's brother, Floyd, dies in a bombing. Summer is dis-

> traught, but she's not the only one. Her dad is trying to look past the death, her mom is just a shell of sadness and depression, and she is more angry than usual.

> The only thing left of Floyd is his guitar. When Summer plays it, a weight is lifted off her. It's almost magical, maybe a little too magical. But the guitar alone won't help her move past his death. She meets new friends and

says goodbye to old friends. This book will make you sad, angry and happy at times. Also, the book can be mature at times. If you like a good adventure and some fun, I recommend it for kids ages 8 to 12.

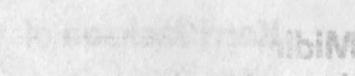


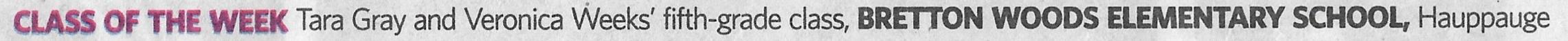












for kids, by kids, mostly

Go all-out at SportsPro Camp

BY EMILY SCIARRONE

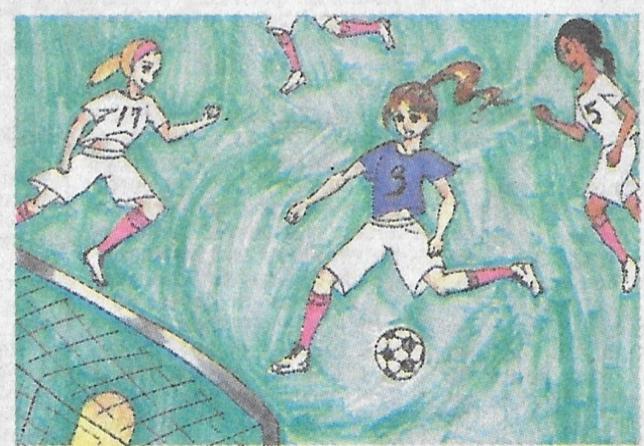
Kidsday Reporter

ould you rather your kids sit at home watching TV for hours or get active and attend SportsPro Camp? Your child can start at the age of 3 and go until age 15. If you are a working parent, this is a great option during the summer.

It's at the Suffolk County Community College Grant

Campus in Brentwood.

You probably are wondering what we do there. We play tennis, dodgeball, capture the flag, basketball and kickball. We also go



KIDSDAY STAFF ARTIST / KIMBERLY TE, MANHASSET

swimming, eat lunch and do many more exciting activities. Some days we even have competitions. Every counselor is super nice, some are funny, some are creative, some are fun, but most of all they are amazing. They make the day even better than what it already is.

If you want to have the best summer ever, go to SportsPro. Learn more at sportsprocamps.com

When it's hot and humid, run with it

BY EMILY SCIARRONE

Kidsday Reporter

ummer is a great time to kick your running into high gear. But it also can be a big challenge when the weather gets hot and humid. It may seem you're slowing down, but the heat can make you stronger if you run with it instead of trying to beat it.

Did you know it takes about two weeks for your body to run more efficiently in warmer weather? When running in the heat, it is important to stay hydrated. It's also important to be dressed appropriately. Wear sneakers, and also wear shorts or capris and a tank top or T-shirt. To protect your skin from sunburn, it's smart to wear a hat and sunscreen. For the latest running gear, you can check out stores such as Sayville Running Co. and Runner's Edge in Farmingdale.

There are many types of races on Long Island. Running a 5k can be great challenge for a beginner.



Kidsday reporters Anthony Rodriguez and Emily Sciarrone head out for a run during cooler weather.

You can join a club to help you get started — for example, the Greater Long Island Running Club (glirc.org), Long Island Road Runners Club (lirrc.org) and New York Road Runners (nyrr.org).

Some places to run are on a track at your local school or at a state park. Running in different

areas keeps it interesting.

Running isn't just a fun sport, it also helps you stay in shape. People of any age can get out there and run. If you are trying out for a school sport, running can help you get ready. But most of all, try to make it a part of your life.



Name or nickname?

BY PATRICK CUNNINGHAM AND CHRISTIAN JENNY Kidsday Reporters

e were wondering if kids would rather be called by their real names or their nicknames, so we asked all the fifth-graders in our school.

The survey asked what the person's real name is, what their nickname is, and if they like their real name or nickname better.

As you can see, a lot more kids prefer to be called by their nickname. They think it is a little more personal and fun. It makes them feel special. Other kids just like the name their parents gave them and would rather not have a nickname.

Getting to know reptiles

BY AVA BRADY, JACKSON ROSARIO, ALEXANDER SINATRA AND DOMINICK UTANO Kidsday Reporters

Suffolk County Community College in Brentwood. There were more than 150 vendors there to sell reptiles, amphibians and arachnids. We saw snakes, spiders, scorpions, and we got to hold almost all of the different species that were there.

We talked to several of the people who were selling creatures that some people consider scary. They were kind and helpful. They let us hold everything, even tarantulas, scorpions and snakes. Here are our questions and their answers:

JACKSON ROSARIO

What's your favorite reptile?
A spider ball python.
What is the smallest reptile you sell?
A dwarf gecko.
What was your first reptile?

A leopard gecko.

What is the worst starter reptile for

someone with no experience?

A green iguana or a reticulated python.

AVA BRADY

Which of the reptiles that you sell lives the longest?

A leopard gecko, which can live up to 20 years.

DOMINICK UTANO

Can you tell the age of a reptile by its size?

Not always, some of my smallest reptiles are my oldest.

ALEXANDER SINATRA

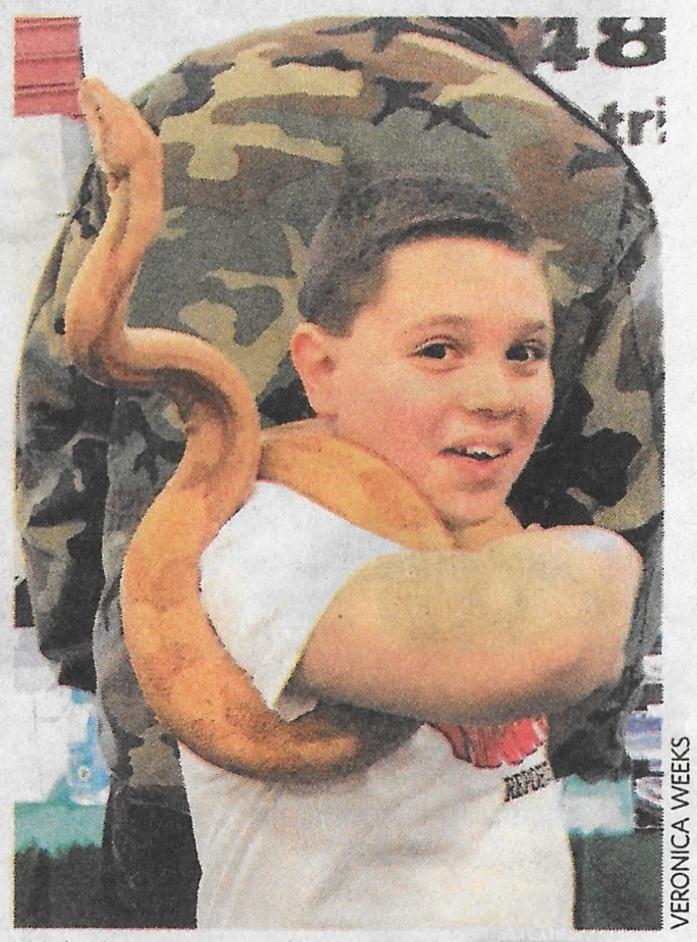
Is it better to feed a snake frozen rats or live?

Frozen rats are better because there is less chance of the snake getting injured.

If you have kids, are they OK around reptiles?

Yes, children are nice to the reptiles.

It was an amazing experience for us because many of us have never



Kidsday reporter Alexander Sinatra makes friends with a snake at the Reptile Expo in Brentwood.

been to a Reptile Expo before. We saw lot of different types of reptiles such as crested geckos, leopard geckos, Jackson's chameleons, snakes and even a sulcata tortoise.

How we raise quail in our class

BY PATRICK CUNNINGHAM AND RISHABH DHOLAKIA

Kidsday Reporters, 10, Hauppauge

In our class we do many different things for nature. One of them is to hatch bobwhite quail. We hatch bobwhites because their favorite food is ticks. Each year we check the tick population in our area, and each year we see that the tick population is going down.

In the spring, we get more than 100 eggs and an incubator. We put them in the incubator and put a live webcam above the incubator to watch the eggs hatch. After the chicks hatch, we put them in a playpen. The kids get twigs and leaves to keep them busy. When they are three weeks old and have the strength to fly, we take them to Caleb Smith State Park in Smithtown. We keep them outside in a special pen so they can get used to the outdoors. In the summer, we get to see them get released into the wild.

To hatch bobwhite quail, you need many different things. First you need a license for hatching them. You also need the eggs and an



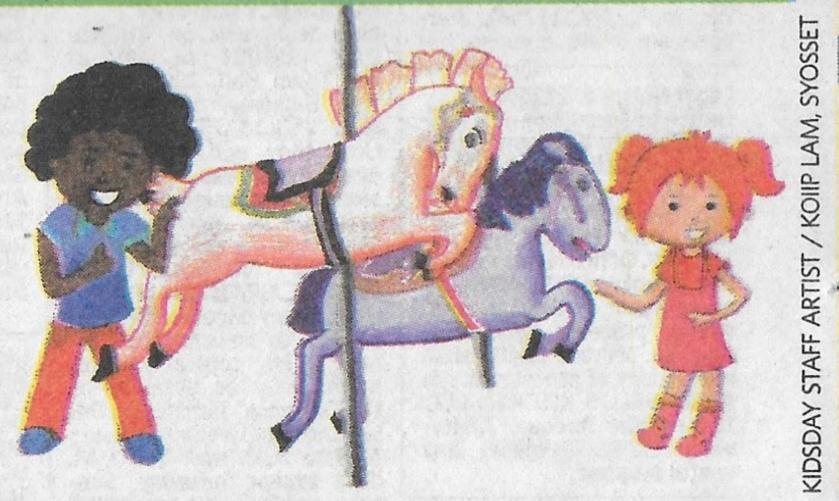
Kidsday reporters Patrick Cunningham, left, and Rishabh Dholakia with equipment used to raise quail in their classroom.

incubator. After they hatch, you need a place to keep them, so you need a playpen. It can't be a regular playpen because it needs a red light, or the quail will fight among themselves. You also need to crush their food and put marbles in their water so they don't drown themselves. Then you should start introducing them to white light and sunlight.

Bobwhite quail are interesting. There are 44 species of quail and more than 22 subspecies of northern bobwhite quail. A bobwhite quail can lay more than 100 eggs a year. The eggs are white and take about 25 days to hatch. Full-grown males are up to 10 inches tall. They are called bobwhite quail because the call they make sounds like "bobwhite."

If you are planning on hatching bobwhite quail, we hope we helped you

get motivated and taught you some things you may need to know. Before getting started, search for websites to find out the work involved.



The Disney Vacation Club

BY EMMA BOTTITTA, AVA BRADY AND MARINA CERRATO Kidsday Reporters, 10, Hauppauge

he Disney Vacation Club is a vacation timeshare program. We pay for points that we then use to stay at any Disney World Resort all around the world. If you are a club member, every 10 years you will get invited to stay at a Disney resort for free. You also have a choice to do a meal plan or not. The meal plan includes dining and snacks.

When you stay at Disney World you will get a special bracelet called a MagicBand. It has your FastPass, dining plans, hotel room entry, and access to anything else you have planned at Disney.

When you go a Disney park, you will have to scan your MagicBand to get into that park. When you want to go on rides, you scan your MagicBand for a FastPass, which means you can go into the faster line. This is great when the parks are crowded.

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THE WASHAT, THORSOMI, AUGU

Our class menagerie

BY AVA BRADY, MARINA CERRATO AND KRITHIKA VULAVALA

Kidsday Reporters, 10, Hauppauge

active pets. Prepare to be blown away into a jungle when you hear about these amazing pets in our classroom!

Our first pet is Boris. He is a Russian tortoise. He is very energetic and constantly tries to get out of his tank. We take him out of his tank sometimes. He loves to be out of his tank with us. He is a great class pet.

Maggie is our lop-eared bunny. She needs a big cage. She loves to make lots of noise and dig in her cage. She also loves to eat. Don't put your fingers in Maggie's cage!

Nike is our Russian dwarf

hamster. He is a marathon runner, like our teachers. He is either running around or getting his sleep. He also loves trying to stay hydrated. He is tiny but mighty.

Marshmallow is our lionhead bunny, who is as white and fluffy as a marshmallow.

Clover is our red-eared slider turtle. We got her for St. Patrick's Day last year. She loves sunning herself on her rock. She usually sleeps on the bottom of her tank, so her head reaches upward when she breathes.

Banana is our parakeet. We got him when two girls told our teachers that there was a parakeet outside on the playground. Mrs. Weeks went and rescued him. We reached out to the community to see if

anyone lost a pet, but no one claimed him. So our teachers decided to keep Banana as a class pet. He is the loudest in the classroom.

We got Tiki last year at a reptile expo. He is a crested gecko. He has a tank that is filled with leaves and branches. We barely see him because he is camouflaged. His tank needs to be sprayed with water twice daily because he needs a moist habitat to survive.

We have two fish in our goldfish tank. Their names are Big Bertha and Mr. Chubbs.

Well, that's it with our awesome pets. They make coming to school fun just for having them in our classroom. We love being able to hear the sound of nature because they are with us.



Kidsday reporters Krithika Vulavala, left, Marina Cerrato and Ava Brady enjoy a visit with the class pets.

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'Unusual Chickens' takes you on a romp

BY ANTHONY RODRIGUEZ

Kidsday Reporter, 10, Hauppauge

he book "Unusual Chickens for the Exceptional Poultry Farmer" by Kelly Jones (Knopf) is very exciting with great surprises. It is about a girl named Sophie who has just moved far away from Los Angeles, where she used to live, and inherits her great-uncle Jim's chickens. When you meet her first chicken, Henrietta, you start to figure

out what the title means. This chicken and all the rest have unusual powers.

Sophie's chickens are Henrietta, a bantam white leghorn; Chameleon, a barred Plymouth Rock; Roadrunner, a bantam black

(NOPF BOOKS

frizzle Cochin; Rocky, a buff Orpington; and three speckled Sussex.

Along the way Sophie makes friends. Her best friend's name is Chris. She also makes an enemy, Ms. Griegson, who tries to steal Sophie's chickens. Ms. Griegson's chicken is a shape-shifting chicken that can go from a redtailed hawk to Rhode Island Red.

I recommend this book if you like comedy and adventure. Or if you like chickens.