

BRAND NEW
planet
Written by kids, for kids



Elves that go pop!

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Boulevard of golden dreams

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You could win a \$100 HMV gift certificate. Details inside

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KEITH BEATY/TORONTO STAR

Ring a ding ding Take an innie, like the praying mantis or money, and an outie to make a Switchring.



Ring around a rainbow

CATHERINE PATCH
SPECIAL TO PLANET

Is your best friend Fearless? Does she love polar bears and butterflies? Dragonflies and diamonds?

If your answer to any of these questions is yes, you can create a pretty piece of jewellery that lets her wear her message on her finger. Toronto designer Julie Dyck is the inventor of the Switchring, a system of interchangeable rings in a rainbow of colours.

The double-banded outer plastic rings in pink, lime green,

Mix and match means a bazillion possibilities

blue, red, purple (and more) hold a removable wedge insert that's printed with animals, abstract patterns, snowflakes and wearable words like Fearless or Friend.

Other inserts feature coloured "gemstones," flowers and a skull and crossbones design.

Your ring — or the one you give your friend for Christmas — is never the same ring twice. There are 40 wedge designs

and 11 colours of outer rings — so the combos are countless.

Switchrings are sold in packages of two wedges and two outer rings. That gives you four combinations for under \$10. Sizes are small, medium and large.

Switchrings have been used in fundraising campaigns for the Metro Zoo, Fashion Cares and the Ontario College of Art and Design.

The Switchring is available through switchring.com.

Catherine Patch is a Toronto Star reporter.

Rewind Capricorn

Aries (March 21-April 20): Now is the time to explore! Sure, everywhere's been mapped, but not by you. What if there's something cool out there no one told you about or they labelled "lame-arium"?

Taurus (April 21-May 20): You're supposed to reflect on the past 364 days on New Year's but that's so arbitrary. You should look back on your year now, so that in January you have more time for shovelling snow.

Gemini (May 21-June 21): It's the perfect time to start a new partnership. Success is likely whether it's dating, school or forming a crime-fighting team with your talking dog. You do have a talking dog, right?

Cancer (June 22-July 22): Take some time for yourself. Go ahead! Be selfish (not to be confused with shellfish. Don't be lobsters). You need your rest (not to be confused with zebra. They don't even sound alike.)

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): You've got a secret admirer! No. Not someone who admires your secrets. Being secretive is lame. Why would someone admire that?

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Remember how Spider-Man learned that with great power comes great responsibility? You're not a super hero but you still have chores and stuff. After that you can relax.

Libra (Sep. 23-Oct. 23): You and someone sitting in a tree, k-i-s-s-i-n-g! Actually, sitting in a tree could be dangerous. Maybe you just better kiss on a bench or maybe on the swings if you're feeling really risky.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 22): You will be calm like a monk meditating on the zen riddle "Is the sound of a falling tree when no one's around the same as the



Phantasm Starseer

sound of one hand clapping?" This will clear your head for lovin'!

Sagittarius (Nov. 23-Dec. 21): December is totally your month if you pay attention to metaphors. Taking the right staircase equals getting up in the world. Or perhaps take things one step at a time? Whichever.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 20): Hindsight is 20/20, so make plans for the past instead of the future, then erase the old dates and put on future dates! It's foolproof. Okay fine, YOU come up with a better plan.

Aquarius (Jan. 21-Feb. 19): Money problems? You could seek the advice of someone older than you, like your grandparents. There's a reason old people are on our money! But don't ask moose or loons.

Pisces (Feb. 21-Mar. 20): You'll have friends who think you're the bestest thing since full-contact ape ballet battle. What? You don't know about FCABB? You're totally missing out!

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Must-see TV

The Apprentice makes my Thursdays one of the most enjoyable days of the week. The show is one huge job interview, with 18 contestants working their hardest for their teams to win, but mostly to become *The Apprentice*.

Here's how the show works. There are two teams: Excel and Capital Edge. Every episode, the teams are given a task. For example, on one episode the teams had to design a character to advertise Dairy Queen's Blizzard.

While you are reading this,

there is probably an episode on tonight, and right after I'm done writing this. I'm going upstairs to watch it.

— Matthew Jordan, 11, Thornhill

Goodbye Martha

We all know what show the saying "you're fired" comes from. But who would ever think Martha Stewart would get her name on *The Apprentice*? After spending five months in jail over a stock sale, along with six months of house arrest, Martha was back in business.

With her daytime show ratings fading, Martha started *The Apprentice: Martha Stewart*. Stewart was now in competition with Trump. Martha once had stated in a magazine: "It was even discussed that I would be firing The Donald on the first show."

It was getting to be an impossibility for Stewart to juggle both her daytime as well as her *Apprentice*. Recently it was said that Martha's *Apprentice* will be having a two-hour finale airing on Dec. 21. So as we wave goodbye, the question still remains: How will Martha

bring in the money next?

— Megan Suggitt, Grade 9, Cannington

Are you a fan-fic fan?

Google "fan fiction" and you'll get tons of sites offering free online publication services for fan fiction. Fan fiction is a type of story that is based on a TV show, book, manga/anime, game and more. So a die-hard *InuYasha* fan would write a made-up episode with characters from *InuYasha*.

Now you're looking at me puzzled, saying, "How can this be fun? I get enough of this in

English class already!" Well, fan fiction isn't at all like English class. It is letting your mind play with the characters of your favourite series in the court yard of imagination.

Fan fiction must be proper English. Spellcheck your work and grammar and do not ever think about using the art of "chatspeak." It may be okay on MSN, but never when you're writing fan fiction.

Places where you can publish your work are fictionpress.com and fanfiction.net.

— Abdullah Shihpar, 12, Grade 7, Scarborough