

COMING UP NEXT ON NEWSDEPTH...

LOTS OF ATTENTION IS BEING PAID TO OHIO'S NASA STATION THIS WEEK - AS A NEW MOVIE ABOUT FEMALE HEROES IN THE SPACE AGENCY HAS SOME YOUNG LADIES 'HERE' ...EXCITED FOR THEIR OWN OPPORTUNITIES.

IN A BUSY WEEK, THE PRESIDENT-ELECT HOLDS HIS FIRST NEWS CONFERENCE IN MONTHS –

SEES HIS CABINET APPOINTEES BEING QUESTIONED – 'AND' PREPARES FOR HIS INAUGURATION...

WHILE NEWSDEPTH IS CHECKING OUT THE 'PETS' WHO ARE MOVING TO THE NATION'S CAPITAL; AS THE NEW PRESIDENT TAKES OFFICE –

AND 'THIS' WAS A SURPRISE HONOR FOR A NOTED AMERICAN; AS THE PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF FREEDOM... GOES TO A 'REGULAR JOE'.
NEWSDEPTH IS NOW!

THE SENATE GIVES DONALD TRUMP'S CABINET THE THIRD DEGREE, AS CONFIRMATION HEARINGS BEGIN IN WASHINGTON.

HELLO, EVERYONE. I'M RICK JACKSON. THANKS FOR JOINING US TODAY.

IN THE LAST FEW WEEKS, WE'VE TOLD YOU ABOUT PRESIDENT-ELECT TRUMP'S CABINET – AND, NO, IT'S NOT THE KIND YOU FIND IN YOUR KITCHEN. A PRESIDENT'S CABINET IS MADE UP OF HIS TOP ADVISORS – A GROUP OF PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE GOVERNMENT. THE PRESIDENT GETS TO SELECT THEM, BUT, BEFORE THEY CAN GET TO WORK, OUR CONSTITUTION SAYS THEY MUST FIRST BE APPROVED – OR CONFIRMED -- BY THE U.S SENATE.

RIGHT NOW, THE SENATE IS BRINGING IN TRUMP'S CABINET PICKS ONE AT A TIME AND ASKING THEM TOUGH QUESTIONS, SOMETIMES FOR MORE THAN ONE DAY - TO DETERMINE IF THEY'RE RIGHT FOR THE JOB – THESE ARE CALLED CONFIRMATION HEARINGS.

LAST WEEK, CONGRESS VETTED TRUMP'S ATTORNEY GENERAL NOMINEE JEFF SESSIONS, A SENATOR FROM ALABAMA, WHO WAS THE FIRST SENATOR TO ENDORSE TRUMP DURING HIS PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN. THE ATTORNEY GENERAL IS THE HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, WHICH IS IN CHARGE OF ENFORCING LAWS.

CONGRESS ALSO GRILLED TRUMP'S PICKS FOR SECRETARY OF STATE

AND SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION, AMONG OTHERS.

THIS WEEK, THE POTENTIAL EDUCATION SECRETARY IS BEING QUESTIONED.

EVEN THOUGH MEMBERS OF SENATE GAVE TRUMP'S CABINET A LITTLE TALKING TO, THEY'RE STILL EXPECTED TO CONFIRM ALL OF THE PICKS.

LAST WEEK, AT HIS FIRST OFFICIAL PRESS CONFERENCE AS PRESIDENT-ELECT, TRUMP PRAISED HIS CABINET.

TRUMP: “I’m very proud of the cabinet, I think they’re doing very well.”

THE PRESIDENT -ELECT ALSO WENT OVER SOME PLANS FOR HIS FIRST FEW MONTHS IN OFFICE, SUCH AS THE REPEAL OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT, ALSO CALLED OBAMACARE.

TRUMP: “It will be repeal and replace, it will be essentially simultaneously.”

REPEAL MEANS TO REVOKE OR STRIKE DOWN A CONGRESSIONAL ACT – BUT IT’S NOT AS EASY AS SPLASHING SOME WHITE OUT ON THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT. THE U.S CONSTITUTION DOESN’T MAKE ANYTHING EASY – AND THAT INCLUDES REPEALING A LAW. IT’LL BE A LENGTHY PROCESS THAT WILL INVOLVE BOTH THE SENATE AND HOUSE DRAFTING REPEAL BILLS, VOTING, AND COMPROMISING.

THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT PROVIDES HEALTHCARE TO MORE THAN 10 MILLION PEOPLE. AMERICANS ARE SPLIT ABOUT THE LAW.

BUT IT’S NOT ALL TENSION AND TOUGH QUESTIONS IN D.C. IN FACT, THE WHITE HOUSE WAS A VIRTUAL LOVE-FEST LAST WEEK. AS ONE OF HIS LAST ACTS AS PRESIDENT, OBAMA HELD A SPECIAL GATHERING TO BID FAREWELL TO HIS VICE PRESIDENT AND BFF JOE BIDEN. THE STATE ROOM SENDOFF FEATURED A SPECIAL SURPRISE. BRIAN TODD HAS THE STORY.

[PKG]

THANKS BRIAN. WELL, PRESIDENT OBAMA CERTAINLY ISN’T HIDING HIS FEELINGS ABOUT HIS BUDDY JOE...AND YOU DEFINITELY DIDN’T HIDE YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT LAST WEEK’S POLL QUESTION! LET’S TAKE A LOOK...

WE ASKED: DO YOU BELIEVE FRACKING SHOULD BE ALLOWED ON PUBLIC LAND? AND A WHOOPING 85% OF YOU SAID NO. LET’S FIND OUT WHY YOU VOTED THIS WAY BY TAKING A PEEK INSIDE OUR INBOX.

ALAN FROM ANKENY MIDDLE SCHOOL STARTS US OFF, HE WRITES: FRACKING FOR NATURAL GAS ISN’T EXACTLY THE MOST ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY WAY TO OBTAIN ENERGY. IT USES A HUGE AMOUNT OF WATER, AND CAN CONTAMINATE UNDERGROUND AQUIFERS. THAT’S WHY FRACKING SHOULD BE PROHIBITED ON PUBLIC LAND. THE MUCH CLEANER SOURCES OF ENERGY -- HYDROELECTRIC, GEOTHERMAL, SOLAR, WIND, AND EVEN BURNING BIODIESEL ARE MUCH BETTER ALTERNATIVES AND SHOULD BE INVESTED IN, CONSIDERING THE RAPIDLY DEPLETING SOURCES OF FOSSIL FUELS.

ROCKY FROM COLUMBIA MIDDLE SCHOOL, WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE EFFECTS OF THIS DRILLING PROCEDURE ON THE ENVIRONMENT, TELLING US: I THINK FRACKING ON PUBLIC LAND IS WRONG. FOR ONE, IT COULD CAUSE SERIOUS CONTAMINATION, 2., IT WOULDN’T BE EXPLORE-ABLE ANY MORE. I AM A BOY SCOUT AND I WANT TO TAKE CARE OF THE ENVIRONMENT.

MS. CORN’S 4TH GRADE CLASS AT WINDSOR ELEMENTARY, SENT US THIS REPORT: MY CLASS VOTED NO, FOR THE FRACKING POLL! FRACKING SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED. EMMA SAID THAT IF IT IS IN A MEADOW OR A FOREST, IT CAN INFECT THE WATER. OTHER STUDENTS AGREED RYAN THAT IT COULD INFECT TREES AND PLANTS, WHICH DESTROY FOOD FOR HERBIVORES AND SHELTER. WHEN THAT HAPPENS THERE

WILL NOT BE FOOD FOR CARNIVORES. THEY WILL STARVE AND THE WATER FOR ALL ANIMALS WILL MAKE THEM SICK ALONG WITH HUMANS.

LILLY FROM RUSHWOOD WOULD HAVE A PROBLEM IF FRACKING INVADED HER SPACE: NO, I DON'T BELIEVE THAT FRACKING SHOULD BE ALLOWED ON PUBLIC LAND. TAKE RUSHWOOD ELEMENTARY FOR INSTANCE. IF PEOPLE FRACKED ON RUSHWOOD'S LAND, THERE WOULD BE HUGE TRUCKS AND A LOT OF CONSTRUCTION WORKERS! WHICH WOULD PROBABLY MEAN AT OUTDOOR RECESS WE WOULDN'T BE ALLOWED TO GO ON THE GRASS AND PLAY! THAT WOULD MEAN THAT THE KIDS WHO PLAYED FOOTBALL WOULDN'T BE ALLOWED TO PLAY FOOTBALL ON THE SOFT, GREEN GRASS!

EVA FROM BELLEVUE ELEMENTARY DISAGREED, WRITING:
I VOTED YES IN THE POLL. I WANT TO HAVE ELECTRICITY SO THAT I CAN WATCH NEWSDEPTH.

WELL, WE CAN'T ARGUE WITH THAT! THANKS TO EVA, LILLY, MS. CORN'S CLASS, ROCKY, AND ALAN FOR SHARING YOUR DEEP THOUGHTS WITH US THIS WEEK – YOU REALLY DRILLED DOWN TO THE CORE ISSUES!

AND A SPECIAL SHOUT OUT TO MR. REMINDER'S 3RD GRADE CLASS AT MEMORIAL ELEMENTARY – THEY SENT US A GREAT BATCH OF LETTERS – WITH SOME VERY PERSUASIVE WRITING...AND DRAWING! WE THOUGHT THIS LITTLE DOODLE FROM AMANDA SENT A PRETTY CLEAR MESSAGE! BOY, I ALMOST FEEL BAD FOR FRACKING... IN YOUR LETTERS, MANY OF YOU CITED HEALTH CONCERNS AS YOUR REASON FOR VOTING NO TO FRACKING. WELL, ONE HEALTH CONCERN THAT WE KNOW MANY OF YOU STRUGGLE WITH IS ALLERGIES. YOU CAN BE ALLERGIC TO ALMOST ANYTHING, BUT ONE OF THE MOST COMMON IS A PEANUT ALLERGY. ABOUT TWO PERCENT OF CHILDREN IN THE UNITED STATES SUFFER FROM PEANUT ALLERGIES AND THAT NUMBER IS CONTINUING TO GROW, BUT SOME NEW GUIDELINES ARE HOPING TO CHANGE THIS...LECIA BUSCHAK HAS THE STORY.

For years, peanut butter was off-limits to children under 3 years old – parents were told by health organization that peanut products could hurt their young children, and they should introduce peanuts to their toddlers with extreme caution.

But no more! New guidelines from the National Institutes of Health are now recommending introducing peanuts into children's diets as early as possible, to protect them against peanut allergies later in life.

Scientists say there's an early window where the immune system is still forming and you can basically vaccinate your child with small doses of peanut products. Good news, babies!

THANKS LECIA. ONE THING THAT WE HAVE TO NOTE: ONCE YOU'VE DEVELOPED AN ALLERGY, IT'S IMPORTANT TO STAY AWAY FROM WHATEVER CAUSES IT. SO, IF YOU ALREADY HAVE A PEANUT ALLERGY, EATING PEANUTS AT THIS POINT WON'T HELP – SO DON'T EVEN TRY IT! TRUST ME, THAT WON'T END WELL.

SUFFERING FROM ALLERGIES IS CERTAINLY NO FUN, BUT MANY STUDENTS HAVE MORE DEBILITATING HEALTH CONCERNS. FOR CHILDREN WHO SUFFER FROM A BIRTH DEFECT ON THE SPINAL CORD CALLED SPINA BIFIDA, SIMPLY WALKING CAN BE A STRUGGLE, AND THEY OFTEN REQUIRE USE OF A WHEEL CHAIR. ALL THIS CAN MAKE THEM FEEL VERY DIFFERENT -- AND SOMETIMES LONELY. BUT ONE GROUP OF STUDENTS HAS

FOUND AN UNLIKELY WAY TO INCLUDE STUDENTS WHO STRUGGLE WITH SPINA BIFIDA. RAE DANIEL HAS THAT STORY.

IT'S NOT UNCOMMON TO SEE A DANCE TEAM AT A BASKETBALL GAME.

Nats: Music

BUT THIS ROUTINE BY THE CENTRAL HEIGHTS HIGH SCHOOL DANCE TEAM MIGHT BE MORE UNIQUE. IT INCLUDED TWO YOUNG GIRLS WHO HAVE SPINA BIFIDA. . WHICH CONFINES THEM TO A WHEELCHAIR.

ONE OF WHOM WAS FIVE YEAR OLD RYLEIGH,

Laurie Tyner/ Dance Coach, Ryleigh's Teacher: "I went to my dancing team captain. I said I think we have something here. I think it would be so wonderful if we did a dance with these little girls that have spina bifida to show that they can do what anybody else can do."

PUTTING HER ALL ON THE FLOOR. . YOUNG RYLEIGH ROSE UP AND DANCED FOR A CAUSE.

"But the words immediately spoke to us about these little girls. That they will rise up and they will do anything that the heart does for the people that they love and for themselves."

Nats: Music

BUT THIS WAS MORE THAN JUST MORE THAN JUST A ROUTINE.

"We are raising money for playground equipment. She does not have any handicap accessible playground equipment at this time besides balls or a sand pit and we want actual playground equipment for her."

Ryleigh Kobel/ Kindergarten:

"That's good because I would like to have my own swing."

TEAM MEMBERS SAY IT'S SOMETHING THAT THEY'LL ALWAYS REMEMBER.

"She made us all feel really good and just positive all the time."

Chelsea King/ Dance Team member:

"All the likes and the shares. It's not about that. It's the way it impacted us as people and us giving them that opportunity so I will always remember it forever."

A DANCE. . BUT ALSO THE LOVE YOUNG RYLEIGH HAS FOR HER TEACHER. . TO ALLOW HER TO RISE UP AND DO ANYTHING.

"I love her so much."

"I love you too Ryleigh."

WOW, WHAT AN INSPIRING STORY. BY INCLUDING RILEY IN THEIR ROUTINE THE GIRLS IN THE DANCE TEAM NOT ONLY MADE A NEW FRIEND, BUT ALSO HELPED TO RAISE MONEY FOR HER TO HAVE A SPECIAL PLAYGROUND. BUT WHAT EXACTLY DOES THIS SPECIAL PLAYGROUND LOOK LIKE? UP NEXT, ONE TEACHER IN GEORGIA TAKES US ON A TOUR OF HER INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUND.

{PLAYGROUND PKG}

LOOKS LIKE THEY WERE HAVING FUN SOME FUN ON THAT MERRY-GO-ROUND. I'M ALMOST FEELING DIZZY!

YOU HEARD EMILY MAX MENTION HER GOAL WITH THE NEW PLAYGROUND – AND IT'S NOT TO MAKE HER KIDS FEEL DIZZY! IT'S TO MAKE THEM ALL FEEL INCLUDED – AND NOW WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! IN OUR POLL THIS WEEK, WE WANT TO KNOW: DO YOU HAVE ANY FRIENDS OR FAMILY WITH SPECIAL NEEDS? AFTER YOU VOTE, WRITE TO US AND TELL US SOME WAYS THAT YOU MAKE THEM FEEL INCLUDED AT HOME OR SCHOOL. WE KNOW YOU ALL HAVE BIG HEARTS – AND EVEN IF YOU'RE NOT REACHING OUT TO PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS NOW, WE HOPE YOU CAN THINK OF SOME WAYS TO MAKE THEM FEEL MORE INCLUDED IN THE FUTURE.

WE'VE SEEN A FEW STORIES NOW ABOUT MAKING PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT FEEL LESS ALONE – AND, HERE IN OHIO, OUR CAPITAL CITY HAS A LONG HISTORY OF HELPING THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS. IN FACT, COLUMBUS IS HOME TO THE VERY FIRST PUBLIC SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND – BUILT WAY BACK IN 1837.

UP NEXT, KNOW OHIO'S MARY FECTEAU TELLS US ALL ABOUT OUR STATE CAPITAL.

IT'S CALLED "THE CROSSROADS OF OHIO" BECAUSE COLUMBUS IS THE CITY IN THE MIDDLE OF OUR HEART-SHAPED STATE -- AND IT MAKES SENSE THAT THE CITY AT THE CENTER SHOULD BE OUR STATE CAPITAL, BUT THIS WASN'T ALWAYS THE CASE!

BEFORE 1816, THE STATE CAPITAL HOPPED BETWEEN CHILLICOTHE AND ZANESVILLE, BUT WHEN OHIO BECAME A STATE IN 1803, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS DECIDED THEY NEEDED A CITY PLANNED ESPECIALLY FOR THE STATEHOUSE AND ALL THAT HAPPENS IN THE GOVERNMENT. THEY WANTED SOMEWHERE THAT WAS CENTRAL AND HAD ACCESS TO WATERWAYS FOR TRAVEL.

THEY DECIDED ON LOCATING THE STATE CAPITAL "ON THE HIGH BACK OF THE SCIOTO" RIVER AND NAMED IT COLUMBUS, AFTER CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS. PRIOR TO 1812 COLUMBUS DIDN'T EXIST, SO PLANNERS HAD THEIR WORK CUT OUT FOR THEM! THEY GOT TO WORK BUILDING THE CITY FROM THE GROUND UP. THEY PLOTTED OUT LAND AND PUT LOTS UP FOR SALE. BY 1813 THE STATE'S JAIL WAS BUILT. IT WAS QUICKLY FOLLOWED BY THE CITY'S FIRST SCHOOL, CHURCH AND NEWSPAPER. IN 1814 THE FIRST STATEHOUSE WAS BUILT – BUT IT'S NOT THE ONE THAT WE USE TODAY, SINCE IT WAS REBUILT IN IN THE 1860'S AFTER A FIRE.

COLUMBUS TOOK OFF PRETTY QUICKLY BUT IT TOOK UNTIL 1834 FOR ENOUGH PEOPLE – 4,000 – TO BE LIVING THERE BEFORE IT COULD BE CONSIDERED A CITY AND NOT JUST A VILLAGE. ITS POPULATION REALLY STARTED TO RISE DURING THE CIVIL WAR WHEN IT SERVED AS A TRAINING BASE FOR UNION SOLDIERS AND AS A PRISON CAMP FOR CAPTURED CONFEDERATE SOLDIERS.

ROADS AND CANALS WERE BUILT TO CONNECT COLUMBUS EVEN MORE TO THE REST OF THE STATE AND THIS HELPED PUSH IT INTO THE ECONOMIC SPOTLIGHT. AFTER THE CIVIL WAR MORE FACTORIES MOVED INTO THE CITY. THEY MADE EVERYTHING FROM BROOMS TO CARRIAGES.

IT GREW AS AN EDUCATIONAL HUB TOO WITH THE FOUNDING OF THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, WHICH IS NOW ONE OF THE LARGEST UNIVERSITIES IN THE NATION.

FROM A PLOT OF EMPTY LAND ON THE SCIOTO RIVER TO A BOOMING CAPITAL CITY, COLUMBUS IS NOW A HOME FOR LEARNING, CULTURE, GOVERNMENT – AND MORE THAN 800 THOUSAND PEOPLE!

THANKS MARY. COLUMBUS CERTAINLY HAS GROWN INTO A BUSTLING CITY. LIKE MARY JUST SAID, ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION WAS ONE OF THE BIG REASONS THAT IT WAS CHOSEN AS THE SPOT FOR OUR STATE CAPITAL.

NOW ONE COMPANY IS SCOUTING COLUMBUS AS THE POSSIBLE HOME FOR A NEW ADVANCED FORM OF TRANSPORTATION. UP NEXT OUR SCIENCE CORRESPONDENT MARGARET THOMPSON TELLS US HOW THE SAME TECHNOLOGY THAT FUELS SPACESHIPS MIGHT BE TAKING TRAVELERS FROM CHICAGO AND PITTSBURGH TO COLUMBUS.

A MAGNET THAT DOESN'T STICK TO YOUR REFRIGERATOR SEEMS PRETTY USELESS RIGHT? NORMALLY WE USE THE OPPOSITE NORTH AND SOUTH POLES OF MAGNETS TO ATTRACT THEM TO EACH OTHER OR TO METAL OBJECTS, BUT ENGINEERS ARE USING THEM IN A DIFFERENT WAY. IT'S PRETTY COOL AND SUPER FAST!

RIGHT NOW 35 CITIES IN THE WORLD ARE FIGHTING TO BE THE FIRST PLACE WITH THE FASTEST TRAIN. AND OUR OWN STATE CAPITAL OF COLUMBUS IS AMONG THE FINALISTS WHERE THE NEW TRANSPORTATION COMPANY IS LOOKING TO BUILD. THE RAIL, WHICH LOOKS MORE LIKE A TUBE, IS CALLED HYPERLOOP.

IT WILL BE MUCH FASTER THAN ANY ROLLER COASTER YOU'VE EVER RIDDEN. 700 MILES PER HOUR FAST.

CHECK THIS OUT. PEOPLE WILL RIDE IN THE CARS OF THE TRAIN – CALLED PODS. THEY ARE LEVITATED OFF THE GROUND BY THE USE OF MAGNETS THAT ARE REPELLING EACH OTHER. WINGARDIUM LEVIOSA!

THEN THROUGH THE USE OF MORE MAGNETS THE PODS ARE PULLED AND PUSHED THROUGH A TUBE, ALL ALONG STILL JUST FLOATING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE TUBE. THIS IS CALLED ELECTRIC PROPULSION AND IT IS ALSO BEING LOOKED AT TO SHOOT ROCKETS AND SATELLITES INTO SPACE.

TO KEEP THE POD MOVING AND CUT DOWN ON THE FRICTION, THE AIR IN THE TUBE HAS LESS PRESSURE. IT IS LIKE THE AIR THAT IS HALFWAY BETWEEN US AND SPACE, A BIT LIGHTER AND EASIER FOR PLANES TO TRAVEL THROUGH.

WHAT ELSE IS REALLY COOL- THE TUBES CAN BE BUILT ABOVE GROUND OR BURIED UNDERNEATH IT SO THERE WON'T BE ANY NEED TO STOP AT TRAFFIC INTERSECTIONS. OH AND IT IS PRETTY CLEAN ENERGY. HYPERLOOP WON'T GIVE OFF ANY DIRTY POLLUTION INTO THE AIR!

IF THE HYPERLOOP IS BUILT IN COLUMBUS IT WILL CONNECT TO CHICAGO AND PITTSBURGH. IT COULD TAKE JUST A HALF HOUR TO GET TO CHICAGO INSTEAD OF FIVE AND A HALF HOURS BY CAR AND ONLY 15 MINUTES TO GET TO PITTSBURGH INSTEAD OF THREE.

ANYONE ELSE GETTING EXCITED? THE COMPANY BUILDING HYPERLOOP IS EXPECTING TO GET THE FIRST RAIL UP AND RUNNING BY 2021. FINGERS CROSSED COLUMBUS MAKES THE TOP OF THE LIST!

THANKS, MARGARET. WE KNOW YOU ALL LOVE LEARNING ABOUT SCIENCE! WELL, SCIENCE – AND MATH -- IS AT THE CENTER AT THE NUMBER ONE MOVIE AT THE BOX OFFICE THIS WEEK -- "HIDDEN FIGURES." IT IS BASED ON A TRUE STORY ABOUT BLACK FEMALE MATHEMATICIANS WORKING AT NASA DURING THE 50'S.

IT IS A STORY MANY DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT UNTIL NOW. THAT IS WHY NASA GLENN SPONSORED AN EVENT FOR YOUNG STUDENTS, PARTICULARLY GIRLS, TO SEE THE MOVIE SO THEY MIGHT UNDERSTAND WHY MATH AND SCIENCE IS IMPORTANT. IDEASTREAM'S DARRIELLE SNIPES HAS THIS WEEK'S BUCKEYE BEAT.

[PKG]

THANKS DARRIELLE. AS YOU SAW, WOMEN HAVE BEEN AN IMPORTANT PART OF NASA'S SPACE PROGRAM FROM THE VERY THE BEGINNING – AND, TODAY, FEMALE ASTRONAUTS ARE GETTING MORE RECOGNITION FOR THEIR WORK AS THEY FLOAT IN SPACE ALONG WITH THEIR MALE COUNTERPARTS.

THIS WEEK OUR A PLUS GOES TO A FEMALE ASTRONAUT WHO IS BREAKING ALL KINDS OF NASA RECORDS. WHEN SHE ARRIVED AT THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION LAST MONTH, PEGGY WHITSON BECAUSE THE OLDEST WOMAN IN SPACE AT AGE 56. AND, WHEN SHE RETURNS FROM HER LATEST MISSION THIS SPRING, SHE'S ALSO EXPECTED TO BREAK THE RECORD FOR MOST TIME SPENT IN SPACE BY ANY ASTRONAUT, MALE OR FEMALE. ALTOGETHER WHITSON HAS SPENT MORE THAN A YEAR OF HER LIFE IN SPACE!

FOR SPACE-WALKING INTO THE RECORD BOOKS, ASTRONAUT PEGGY WHITSON GETS AN OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD A PLUS!

BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO TAKE A WALK IN SPACE TO GET OUR A PLUS! WE LOVE FEATURING YOU – AND THE GREAT THINGS YOU DO IN YOUR CLASSROOMS ON OUR SHOW. SO, IF YOU'VE DONE SOMETHING WORTHY OF SOME EXTRA ATTENTION, SNAP A FEW PHOTOS, AND WRITE TO US ABOUT IT! YOU COULD BE OUR NEXT A PLUS.

SPEAKING OF -- NEWSCAT THINKS HER PICK THIS WEEK SHOULD LAND HER AN A PLUS! BUT I'M A LITTLE SKEPTICAL...

[NEWSCAT INTRO]

OH, WOW! THAT'S A FIRST! NEWSCAT'S ALREADY AT HER COMPUTER READY TO GO! BUT WAIT A MINUTE! WHAT'S SHE LOOKING AT?

OH, JEEZ...NEWSCAT'S STILL FLIPPING THROUGH HER ART GALLERY...C'MON, CAT! SHOW US OUR PETTING ZOO PICK!

NEWSCAT WANTS US TO KNOW THAT IT'S NOT JUST A NEW PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT HEADING TO WASHINGTON. THERE ARE SOME NEW PETS TOO! FOR THE SCOOP ON PRESIDENTIAL PETS, PAST AND PRESENT, CLICK THE PETTING ZOO BUTTON ON OUR WEBSITE. THANKS NEWSCAT!

AND, AS ALWAYS, WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU. AFTER YOU VOTE IN OUR POLL, WRITE TO US. SEND YOUR E-MAILS TO NEWSDEPTH AT IDEASTREAM.ORG - OR MAIL YOUR LETTERS TO 1375 EUCLID AVENUE, CLEVELAND, OHIO 44115.

YOUR LETTERS MUST BE RECEIVED BY MONDAY AFTERNOON TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE NEXT SHOW.

YOU CAN ALSO TWEET AT US @ NEWSDEPTH OHIO.

THANKS FOR WATCHING, I'M RICK JACKSON. WE'LL SEE BACK HERE NEXT WEEK.