

# Snow has all the ingredients

## THEATRE REVIEW

By HARRY CURRIE  
SPECIAL TO THE MERCURY

### FERGUS

The Fergus Grand Theatre, formerly Theatre-on-the-Grand, is up and running for a fall/winter season, opening on Wednesday with a musical called Snow.

Snow is a reworking by Alan Argue of the classic fairy tale Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, obviously written with children in mind, and it's a good amateur children's piece from the book, lyrics and music right through to the production values and performances. Argue also directed.

It may not be Walt Disney or even Sharon, Lois and Bram, but a rather noisy crowd of students who entered the theatre was quiet, well-behaved and attentive while the performance was on, so the show obviously hit its target audience.

All the ingredients are there, from the wicked stepmother-Queen, the mirror which can only tell the truth to the narcissistic Queen, the Prince, and the seven dwarfs.

I only counted six dwarfs, though, and they were not Doc, Grumpy, Dopey & Co. because of the Disney copyright. Instead their names made up from the real names of the young folk playing the characters: Mary becomes Ramy, Kelley is Lekley, Evelyn is Nevley, Pearl is Prale, Taylor is Talory and Isabelle is Siballee.

Prince Charming took a bit of a hit in this version, however, for when the Wishmaster's assistant Peter asked to be some kind of a Prince so he could be around whenever Snow needed help he was turned into Snow's best friend and you guessed it a dog named Prince.

It's a pity the principals weren't wearing body or headset microphones, for their singing voices were a bit swamped by the recorded backings, and the back-



GEOFF ROBINS, GUELPH MERCURY

Amy Rae and Chris Mawley, left, and Megan Thomas who plays Snow, Mirror and Queen in the production of Snow are joined on set by Gregg Shanks, Peter, and Dwarf Lekley played by Kelly Morgan.

ings all had the melody doubled, also conflicting with the voices. The speaking voices were fine, however, and didn't need any amplification.

The cast did well: Amy Rae was Snow and choreographed, Gregg Shanks was the dog, John Bigelow was the Wishmaster and the Queen's henchman, Megan Thomas the nasty Queen, Bailey Mills the Enchanted Tree, Chris Mawdsley the Magic Mirror, Alan Argue, Donna Pritchard and Shannon Miller were the three cooks, and Mary Lloyd did a star turn as The Hag.

Snow continues at Fergus Grand Theatre through Saturday, October 18.

Other shows for the season are:

Oct. 22-25: Rob Goodale Productions Nunsense Jamboree.

Oct. 31: Woods Beatty Productions Centre Wellington Idol/Karaoke contest.

Nov. 1-2: Celtic Crossroads fundraiser

for Bernadette School of Dance championship trip.

Nov. 5-8: Rob Goodale Productions One Cup Left.

Nov. 14-16, 20-22: Elora Community Theatre warm family drama Dancing with Lughnasa.

Nov. 23: Kara Shaw in Concert in a blind young lady from Arthur at the piano.

Nov. 27: Rudolph, a school play hosted by Wellington County Museum.

Dec. 3-6: Not-So-Grand-Players We Want to Go Home.

Dec. 10-13: Humbug! Adapted from Dickens' Christmas Carol.

Dec. 14: Mission to Haiti fundraiser for Haitian children.

Dec. 18: Centre Wellington Singers Christmas Concert.

For further information and tickets call the box office at 519-787-1981.

# Science can do a lot for very ill patients but people should still be able to choose

It's said that "a picture is worth a thousand words". And the one that I recently saw in The Medical Post is one that's hard to forget. The picture shows a man totally paralyzed due to amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) commonly known as Lou Gehrig's Disease. To me it illustrates the best and worst of science.

Lou Gehrig's Disease is a frightful malady. It's an inch-by-inch slow paralysis that gradually and insidiously spreads throughout the entire body. The final phase is total paralysis, but with a normally functioning brain. Patients are literally "locked in" inside their bodies. At the end, patients drown in their own mucus. It must be as close to hell as one can imagine.

So why is its treatment the best of science? Dr. Niels Birbaumer, Professor of Neurobiology at the University of Tubingen, Germany, has taught patients suffering from ALS to use a computer by controlling their brain waves. This is a historical breakthrough in science in that it allows ALS patients to communicate entirely by thought alone.

Electrodes, placed on the patient's scalp, transfer signals from the brain to a computer. The patient then has to practice controlling his or her brain waves. Dr. Birbaumer admits it's not easy to train the brain to move a white ball up or down the computer screen and to select individual letters on the screen. But it is possible.

Brain-computerized thought is a very slow way to communicate even after the technique is mastered. For instance, it required 16 hours for one patient to write a letter.



DR. W. GIFFORD-JONES

### THE DOCTOR GAME

But one can argue, "so what"? Why does time matter? After all, these paralyzed patients are not going anywhere. Besides, it must be wonderful to be able to communicate imprisoned feelings to others. So one must congratulate Dr. Birbaumer and his colleagues for bringing some quality of life (QOL) to those suffering from Lou Gehrig's Disease.

But how much QOL? Dr. Birbaumer claims a technique has been developed to measure the QOL of patients on respirators. A research team compared QOL scores of 78 patients with ALS, 78 with depression and 92 healthy people.

Their conclusion? The QOL scores of ALS patients were lower than the healthy group as one would expect. But Dr. Birbaumer claims that their QOL scores remained within a normal range. In effect, he claims that ALS patients attached to respirators are not severely depressed and find their lives worth living.

I understand that no one knows how one will react until faced with similar catastrophe. But I find it impossible to believe that ALS patients have QOL scores in the normal range.

It's this side of science that concerns me. I found it hard to stop looking at this patient's picture, and tried to envision life under his conditions. The thought of being physically helpless, the need for a catheter to collect urine, enemas for bowel movements, and someone to feed and care for you 24 hours a day; the thought of looking out into space day after day, the inability to even scratch an itchy nose, are all horrifying.

So I find this research fascinating, but frightening. The ability of science to keep us alive long after we would normally have died. There is no doubt that some ALS patients prefer life under these conditions. I have absolutely no argument with their decision to survive at all cost.

But I have always believed in freedom of choice between life and death. The freedom to say, "I have had enough of this existence, and choose to end my life."

Some readers will disagree with me on this point. But we must all agree that more research funds should be available to put an end to this horrendous disease. Today we spend huge amounts of money on heart disease and little on degenerative nervous diseases.

So many readers have requested "The Gifford-Jones Living Will" that it's been reprinted. It can be obtained by sending \$5 along with a self-addressed stamped envelope to Dr. Gifford-Jones, First Canadian Medical Centre, 1 First Canadian Place, P.O. Box 119, Toronto, Ontario, M5X 1A4.

• Dr. Gifford-Jones's column runs on Thursdays.

able as that might be. Tonight: Indulge and treat yourself.

**CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)**

With the Moon in your sign, the cards are on your side of the table. Still, you might be unusually firm and direct about how you are feeling with a family member or a roommate. Tonight: Your night to play and party.

**LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)**

Sit back and take your time. You might find someone to be unduly sharp or difficult. Be reasonable in how you deal with this person. Express your feelings, but don't be surprised if there is unusual flak. Tonight: Follow a playmate's advice.

**VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)**

Reach out for an important group of people, whether it is many or few. A discussion could be hard, but it makes a big difference in what goes down. You might not have all the money facts clear. Tonight: How 'bout a night to yourself?

**LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)**

A "must" stand could have an impact on others, as well as you. Understand that although you might be uncomfortable, you are making a difference by clearing the air. A late lunch helps others open up to you. Tonight: It could be memorable.

**SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)**

Keep reaching out for more information, especially if you don't feel comfortable with what you are hearing. Your

ability to make waves and make others respond comes out. Tonight: Take off ASAP.

**SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)**

Work with someone else and you will find that though there are differences, the going will be easier. Swapping ideas often only makes an idea tighter and more effective. Tonight: Let go and play.

**CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)**

Others defer to you, though not easily. You have a way of handling difficult people that can surprise them. The ideas that you present are grounded. You can and do make a difference. Tonight: Say "yes" to an invitation.

**AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)**

Listen to what happens behind the scenes. You might want to share more of what is going on with you right now. Open up to discussions that involve both a co-worker and information you are hearing from a distance. Tonight: Kick up your heels.

**PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)**

Your ability to add to a situation is very strong. Your interest, however, might be making an arrangement concrete rather than nebulous. Tonight: Let the good times roll.

**BORN TODAY**

Rap singer Eminem (1972), stuntman Evel Knievel (1938)

• Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at <http://www.jacquelinebigar.com>

# Breakfast sets you up for a successful day

Have we all heard that breakfast is the most important meal of the day? Unfortunately rushed schedules, lack of appetite, coffee consumption and the snooze button often overshadow the desire to eat in the morning.

Breakfast jump starts the metabolism and boosts your blood sugar making it easier to concentrate, focus and learn. This is why many schools go out of their way to offer breakfast programs for kids called "Breakfast for Learning".

The morning meal however is not just "kids stuff". Research shows that adults who miss breakfast are more likely to be overweight. Without food in the morning, your metabolism remains slow thus burning less calories and leaving you with little appetite until later in the day. Unfortunately the hunger usually kicks in at full force by the end of the day and most breakfast skippers compensate by overeating in the evening leading to excess fat storage.

Think of your metabolism as a camp fire. As you sleep through the night your "flame" burns low. In the morning you need to stoke the fire by adding some fuel to get you burning strong again.

Don't be surprised if breakfast leaves you hungrier before lunch. Hunger is a good sign, indicating that your metabolism is burning through your food. A good breakfast and a small mid-morning snack will often mean increased energy and less eating at night time.

So what constitutes a breakfast of champions? For lasting energy remember to aim for a source of protein and carbohydrate. That would mean a minimum of two food groups from Canada's Food Guide. The protein could come from milk products or meat and meat alternatives. The carbohydrate could come from vegetables and fruit or grain products. Breakfast could be as simple as a piece of cheese and an apple on the way out the door or as complex as a veggie omelet with toast and juice.

One of the most common quick breakfast choices is cold cereal. A bowl of cereal with milk can provide carbohydrates, fibre, protein, calcium, iron



HEIDI SMITH

### NUTRITION FOR THE LONG RUN

and an array of vitamins and minerals. All cereals, however, are not created equal. Use your food label savvy and choose a cereal that contains whole grains, a good source of fibre and a moderate amount of sugar.

Here are a few quick label reading tips to choose a cereal that will fill you up, boost your energy and provide the necessary nutrients.

**Fibre:** Look for a cereal that has at least three grams of fibre per serving. Canadians need close to 30 grams of fibre per day and on average get only 12 grams per day. Cereal is an easy way to boost your fibre, feel fuller and stay regular! If your favorite cereal is low in fibre, try sprinkling a high fibre source such as All Bran or ground flax seed on top of your lower fibre favorite.

**Sugars:** Look for a cereal that has less than eight grams of sugar per serving. Eight grams of sugar is equivalent to two teaspoons of sugar. More than two teaspoons of sugar may spike and crash your blood sugar leaving you feeling sluggish and hungry mid morning.

A few examples of mainstream cereals that are high in fibre and lower in sugar include: All Bran, Bran flakes, Cheerios, Mini Wheats, Frosted Mini-wheats and Corn Bran Squares.

Tomorrow morning at the breakfast table, take a peek at the food label on your favorite cereal and see how it rates. Jumpstart your metabolism with a breakfast of champions.

• Heidi Smith is a registered dietitian specializing in weight management, lifestyle change and sport nutrition. She works out of the Health and Performance Centre at the University of Guelph.

# Time to let daughter accept responsibility

**Q:** My daughter, 22, recently asked me to go to the local mall with her. She wanted to drive. She hit my hand repeatedly as I tried to lower the radio volume. She was talking and laughing and didn't accept my suggestions regarding where to park. We picked up what we needed from a store and my daughter went to the car as I was paying, for both her purchases and mine. She said a buggy had hit and dented my car - it was resting on the driver's front side. We recently bought this new car to replace my old one which was too expensive to fix. My daughter works full-time, and earns the same amount as my husband. Who should pay the \$500 repair bill? She feels I should pay the full amount (she also lives with us rent-free). - Fed Up Mom

**A:** First, the simple answer: She pays fully, or, you each pay half. Now for the hard part: This relationship needs repair more than the car. I gave you two options on the payment because it's clear you've yet to let your daughter take responsibility for her actions and you can't change everything overnight. By sharing the bill (many will disagree) you're starting to make a point. As a mother, I see the familiar traps after years of caring about her: you know better where to park, and that loud music is distracting, so why not tell her? Because she won't learn that way. She either pays at least half, or doesn't get to drive your car again. Then, start looking at her paying something towards the household or putting aside that money towards getting her own place.

**Q:** My first cousin's son is having a Bar Mitzvah celebration soon. My ex and his girlfriend are invited, despite ongoing bitterness between us. My cousin admitted the family is no longer close with my ex and doesn't see him socially, but they

have a business connection. My cousin knows that they're both rude to me in public and create scenes. I said I can't attend if they're present. It will also be uncomfortable for some other family members. They didn't need these two guests, it's going to be a huge event. Am I wrong not to attend? Am I wrong to be angry/hurt with my cousin? - Pushed Out

**A:** Stay home with a good book or video, or possibly better, good company. The damage is already done. Your cousin can't take back the invitation; and you shouldn't expose yourself to discomfort and humiliation. Your cousin's motivation inviting this couple was misguided, though likely meant no harm. The Jewish tradition of celebrating family pride in having a son reach Bar Mitzvah age 13 - an historical transition to "manhood" - has no requirements to include business associates. Your cousin was over-generous, but didn't think it through. Of course you're hurt. But the anger is between you and your ex; forgive your cousin. Let other relatives know, gently, that you can't be at events where your ex is present.

• Tip of the Day: Helping a grown child accept responsibility is a crucial role of parents.

• You can write to Ellie Teshler c/o The Guelph Mercury, 8-14 Macdonell St., Guelph, N1H 6P7 or e-mail: [ellie@thes-tar.ca](mailto:ellie@thes-tar.ca)

ELLIE

# Horoscope

## Forecast for Friday, October 17, 2003

By JACQUELINE BIGAR

### FRIDAY BIRTHDAY

You are unusually stubborn and want what you want when you want it. This year, you might need to lighten up some and understand where others are coming from. You cannot successfully buck the establishment. Put your effort into work, and you will gain enormously.

### ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19)

No one knows better than you that it's Friday. You will buckle down to the tasks at hand, determined to get the job done. In fact, you might do such a good job of screening out others that someone could get annoyed. Tonight: Finally, a good time is had by all.

### TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

Verify information, as difficult as it might seem to absorb. You might not like what you hear, but you do know what has to happen. Allow greater creativity and fun into your life later on. Tonight: Kick up your heels.

### GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

Dealing with misinformation could take up a large part of your day. You might need to take a strong stand with someone you care about, as uncomfort-

**SILENT BUT DEADLY**

Carbon monoxide is invisible and odourless and can kill you in no time at all. Only a carbon monoxide detector can alert you to this deadly gas. Install one today.

**ABBAMANIA**  
The Rock Musical  
Oct. 24 at 8:00 p.m.  
Tickets \$32 Main Stage

**CARROLL BAKER SHOW**  
Oct. 25 at 8:00 p.m.  
Tickets \$28 Main Stage

Tickets - 519.763.3000  
[www.riverrun.guelph.on.ca](http://www.riverrun.guelph.on.ca)  
**River Run Centre**