



Maya not about to let skiing keep her off mobile device



Todd's hope that accompanying Maya down black-diamond bump runs at Winter Park would curtail screen time proved fanciful.

When not texting and skiing, Maya, 13, is a seventh grader at Hill Middle School in Denver. She continues to play soccer, do lots of art, and run scientific experiments outside in the snow in a robe and pajamas.



Maya teeth-carves Theo organic fair-trade sea salt dark chocolate square into passable rendition of goat's head



To help bulk up her 5'4", 85-pound frame, she signed up for a two-week summer camp at It's Sugar, where she ate nothing but sugar the entire time. Her weight subsequently ballooned to 85.3 pounds.



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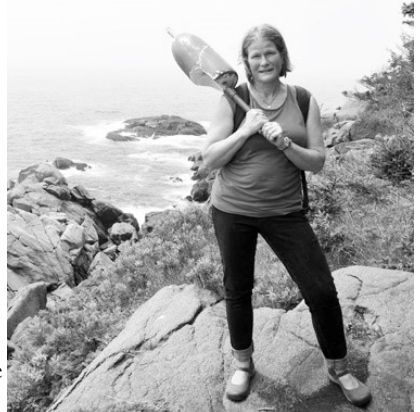
Todd avoids hyperbole in new book's title

"This is the single greatest book in the history of books about lasers changing the world," he added.

CAROL CAVORTS WITH DAVID BUOY

As Todd spent his Maine week at Frosty's in Brunswick, Carol and the girls explored Monhegan Island. There, Carol came across an unmoored lobster buoy, named it after a deceased pop star, and became inseparable with the plastic-and-Styrofoam floatie.

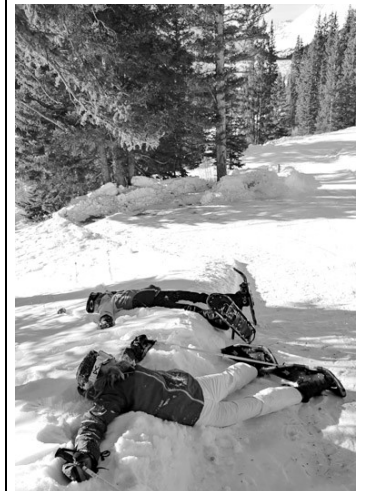
"It's a 'speak softly and carry a big stick' sort of thing, but with a more buoyant stick," she said. She added that, seeing as Earth's surface and the human body are both about two-thirds water, and that David once lived in the water, there must be some significance there. Carol has since created a holster for David, which allows the buoy to accompany her throughout her workday. Her Johns Manville colleagues describe it variously as "interesting," "threatening," and "barnacled."



Oscar perhaps slightly too-relaxed



Snowshoeing adventure ends in exhaustion before end of driveway



REMEMBER THE NEEDIEST!

Round-the-world paddleboard adventure ends prematurely

The joint Park City-Denver Neff "Teen 'Round-the-World Paddleboard Conquest'" ended shortly after departure when it was noted that Maya had failed to bring along a paddle. The public-relations team decided that, without the paddle, the adventure would become a "Teen 'Round-the-World Board Conquest,'" which no longer jibed with the expedition's marketing collateral.



Lily eschews visual faculties behind wheel



Aside from a brief, terrifying debut in which Lily, 15, confused brake for accelerator in a 355-hp Ford Flex, Lily's learner's-permit driving has gone so well that she now typically does so with eyes closed.

"I just use The Force," she explained.

The Denver East High sophomore figure skates six days a

to-brain, electro-encephalic learning via a device that looks deceptively like an old-lady hairdryer.

"I learned Chinese yesterday afternoon," Lily told her father, adding, "并且认为你花了数年时间学习日语."



Lily remains slightly taller than Maya, who insists on back-to-back comparisons every eleven minutes. Lily sees the writing on the wall, given that she's 2.5 years older and her feet are smaller than her younger sister's. She takes comfort in the knowledge that she can still kick Maya's butt.

Disclosure: there was no collusion in the creation of this Beacon.

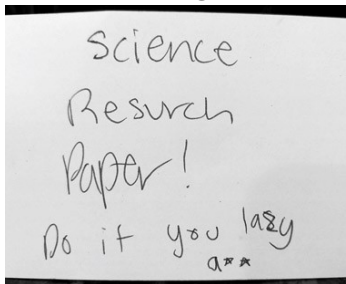


week. She also takes classes through Denver Online High School, which involves direct-

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REMEMBER THE NEEDIEST

Maya takes self-motivational high road



Todd independently re-invents underwater photobombing



Todd briefly credited himself with the first underwater photobomb, only to later find the distinction had been made in 1966, when a triggerfish photobombed a clownfish-anemone shot during a Jacques Cousteau production.

Todd continues to play soccer on a team sponsored by a marijuana dispensary, has published a book about lidar, and is working on a book with his friend and mentor John Rubadeau.

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Todd stays at Frosty's

Todd had intended to visit Monhegan Island and Acadia National Park while in Maine, but instead spent the entire week at Frosty's Donuts in Brunswick. "Rugged coastlines can wait," he said. "These chocolate-maple masterpieces – they can't."

Beacon available online

To mark the Beacon's 19th and final issue, the publisher has posted the complete oeuvre online at toddniff.com/beacon.

TRAVEL REPORT

The Neffs spent a great week with Todd's Uncle Court and Aunt Donna in Maine and Frosty's. Uncle Court pointed out icebergs after unwisely handing the "Summer Camp" controls over to Maya.



The family spent both spring break and Thanksgiving week with the Neff grandparents in AZ, where the girls and cousin Jake had far too few pool floaties.



Their old friends the Machas of L.A. joined them so Todd and Andreas could celebrate their 50th birthdays (3 days apart) in the snow-packed wilds of Alma, Colorado.

