

# HOMEEDGAZETTE

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**A newspaper written by home-educated children  
For the home-educated community.**

**ALL ABOUT THE HOME-ED WORLD WE LIVE IN WONDERFUL NEWS THIS MONTH**

## EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH GABRIEL SOTELLO

(By Editor-In-Chief, Elye Cuthbertson)

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### Joke Junction

**What do you call a belt with a  
watch on it?**

Answer to joke in next issue.

*The answer to last issue's joke (What  
do you get when you cross a Smurf  
with a cow?)  
Blue Cheese!*



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF  
KENSINGTON  
AND CHELSEA

A little while ago, the Kensington & Chelsea council were going to force Sophie Sotello's son Gabriel Sotello, who home-educates, to go to school. The whole thing went to court, and in the end, she lost, and the order was given for Gabriel to go to school. However, Sophie refused, and did not send her son to school. But when she appealed, the council dropped the case, so Gabriel can still home-educate.

Gabriel agreed to answer some questions about it all, so here they are:

#### **Have you been home-educated all of your life?**

Yes, I have been home educated all my life (and my older siblings before me. My older brother had five months false start age 4 ½).

#### **What do you enjoy about being home educated?**

What I enjoy about being alternatively, "home-" educated is having the freedom to learn what I want, like coding and Mandarin, coaching, social media and enterprise. I like cooking with my brother and friends, playing music (piano, guitar or singing, outgrown Jr. Choir). I am proud to be setting up my own company and writing my LinkedIn profile, exploring learning for modern day society, technology in edu-Versity.

#### **Why do you think the LEA wanted to send you to school?**

I think the LEA wanted to send me to school because they want money (nudge, consumer psychology). The tri-borough council only cares about their own interests without accountability and transparency. I have my own virtual school and I make friends through new education paradigm's creative approach to learning. Children learn what they live, right?

#### **Were you worried about what would happen?**

At times the trial at criminal court made me think about the home-ed law, Magna Carta and worry a little for the impact it had on my mum, but I found out mum could appeal and I believed in Lady Justice.

#### **How did you feel when the whole case was over?**

I feel relieved now that it's over. I feel like I finally have freedom to be who I am and to enjoy myself, to enjoy the summer and meet friends.

## REVIEW OF THE PHEONIX

(By Oscar Hornberger)



Since I learnt to read I've been a big fan of comics, especially The Beano. Last year a friend told me about a new comic called The Phoenix and I think it's one of the best comics available.

The Phoenix is a weekly comic that comes through my letterbox every Friday. It's difficult to say what the best age range is. I'm 11. My brother is 8 and he loves it, and my friend's sister is 17 and she loves it too. Even adults love it.

The Phoenix has all sorts of stories in it, in different styles. There are usually about 8 stories in each issue. Some of the stories are series with cliffhangers every week. Other stories are complete 2-page stories, and the characters come back the next week with a different story. 'Troy Trailblazer' is an EPIC space adventure set in the future. This is my all time favourite story! 'Bunny vs. Monkey' is a hilarious and very silly story that's new every week. 'Useleus' is a funny adventure story that is sort of based on the Ancient Greek story of Ulysses. 'Von Doogan' is a story where each episode is a puzzle that you have to solve. Some are easy some are hard. There's also an art page, news and jokes.

The price on the cover is £2.99 but its better and cheaper to subscribe at: <http://www.thephoenixcomic.co.uk>. It's available as a real comic that comes though the post, or as an ipad app.

P.S. If you want to read an issue first, you can go to the website and download a digital issue for free.

## FoC 2015

(By Aaron Cuthbertson)

Recently, Aaron Cuthbertson did a course called Festival Of Code, which, you guessed it, is a coding course. Here is a personal experience article about it.

This being my first Festival of Code, walking into the first day I was fairly intimidated by it all. It was a massive competition, and when I started the week I really didn't know what to expect or what the atmosphere would be like. I had some coding experience before, but in very different settings to this, and I was fairly nervous about the week ahead. However, the centre I was at was very welcoming: we spent the morning going over the competition to make sure everyone knew what would be happening, and then generally brainstorming some ideas. By the afternoon there were already some ideas floating about, and before the day was out I had a team with a project to work on for the rest of the week.

The next week was a mixture of new ideas, excitement and frustration; a normal mix for any coding project. Across the week we added new ideas and new features, scrapped old ones as we realised they would not be plausible to implement in the time we had, rejoiced when the code worked and banged our heads against the wall when it didn't. Five days (and many hours' worth of coding) later however we had an almost complete project, and were on our way to the weekend section in Birmingham.

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## GAMES REVIEW

(By Noah Sargentson-Wilk)

### WHERE CAN YOU GET PC GAMES?

The place where I get all my PC games is a website and app called Steam:

<http://store.steampowered.com>

It's a really good app where you can download all kinds of games! Steam also has a really good gaming community that is easy to get into.



Planetside 2 is a MMOFPS (Massively Multiplayer Online First Person Shooter) in which war is waged on four continents with as many as two thousand players fighting with and against you. The game is highly focused on co-operation, usually within a faction (see below), and an organized assault can be the tipping point of any battle. You can join one of three factions:

The Vanu: crazy alien worshipping people with plasma guns. The Terran Republic: "Oh we are so high and mighty" jerks. The New Conglomerate: "DESTROY THE TERRAN REPUBLIC!"

Each of the four continents (Amerish, Esamir, Hossin, Indar) is formed of a series of "tiles"; at the beginning of the game the ownership of these is equally divided between the three factions. The aim of the game is to capture every tile, and you do that by either (if it's a small base/tile) capturing a computer terminal, or (for bigger strongholds) capturing up to four control points. Some of the larger bases have tank and aircraft terminals as well. If one faction captures an entire continent, they get a few bonuses, then after a few hours the continent resets.

This game is constantly receiving updates from the developers. More continents are planned for the future.

Gameplay: 8/10. Originality: 9/10. Ease of play: 8/10

Community: 7/10. Developers: 7/10. Graphics: 7/10

Generic Awesomeness: 8/10

Price: FREEEEEEEEEEEE!

Links: [http://planetside.wikia.com/wiki/PlanetSide\\_2](http://planetside.wikia.com/wiki/PlanetSide_2)      [Wikihttps://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daybreak\\_Game\\_Company](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daybreak_Game_Company)

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## EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH 3D ARTIST CHRIS BLACK

Chris Black, a 3D game artist, agreed to be interviewed by the HOME-ED GAZETTE. So here is his EXCLUSIVE interview:

**As an artist, how much do you have to work with other members of the team such as animators and programmers? Do you need to learn about their roles to better work with them?**

I am currently a lead artist which means I organize and coordinate a team of artists and animators. All artists have a different style to their art so its up to me to ensure they all stay consistent with the whole game. An art team can just be a couple of people up to many hundreds depending on the scale of a game. On a larger game I might be more specialized like lead character artist who would just lead a team of character artists. I have worked on very large games but I prefer smaller games as there is more creative control and more opportunity to do interesting art.

All artists have to work closely with game designers and programmers to ensure the art they produce works in the game for gameplay reasons and for technical reasons. For example I may make part of a level too dark and the player will get lost so game design might ask me to place some lights. The art also has to work on a console so often I may have to change the art so a programmer can make it run more efficiently. Making games is always about getting the best possible result in the most efficient way possible. While I don't have to understand programming or game design I do have to understand many principles of game development so I can make the best possible art. If a game is too weighted towards one area the whole game will suffer I am sure you have played games which looked amazing but were not fun to play. Making a game is very much a team effort and the talent involved is often from all over the world so you have to learn to work with different cultures and languages too. I love this too because its amazing to meet people from all backgrounds and cultures with the same passion.

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As lead artist I also report to the art director who is responsible for the overall look of the game and to make sure the art is completed to schedule and budget.

(Continued on page 4)

## EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH 3D ARTIST CHRIS BLACK

(Continued from page 3)



(A game Chris Black helped make, called Beyond Eyes)

### How do you get started in the games industry, and do you have any tips for aspiring game artists/3D modellers?

I originally trained as a graphic designer/illustrator as that was the "closest" college course to what I wanted to do. I had to order books from the USA and teach myself at home, nowadays it's different; there are lots of online tutorials and provided you are self motivated you can pretty much teach yourself. Many of the people I work with in games are self taught. I have to be like this for all my working life as the software and techniques change constantly as do the demands of games companies.

There is an absolute certainty in everything though, and that is an ability to draw. You must have a talent and you must practice that talent everyday, the computer is simply a tool and without good artistic talent as a basis no amount of clever software will ever make good art. A good artist can adapt, learn and apply their talent to any project regardless of software or computing power.

There are a number of specialist areas I would suggest. Any potential applicant focus their skillset to their strengths and choose a field of specialty. This might include animation, environment art, special effects, user interface design, character artist and many others.

Another good route is when you have practiced enough at home and think you have a decent enough portfolio you can get involved with others and perhaps form a team, there are many online communities who make games for fun.

If making games was easy everyone would do it, its incredibly frustrating and hard work there are many other easier ways to earn a living! If you do this it must be a passion you can't just do it because you like playing games.

## HOME-ED PROFILE



This issue's Home-ed Profile is with Laura Sommers, who answered the questions for her daughter, Isabelle. (If you want to answer these questions for the Home-ed Profile, then contact [homegazette@gmail.com](mailto:homegazette@gmail.com))

### Q. 1: Have you ever been to school? If so, do you like being home-ed better than going to school?

She has never been to school or nursery. I do ask her if she would like to go to school as a lot of her friends have just started school. I explain how long the day is, that she would have to go everyday, sit and learn whether she felt like it or not, and 'I' her mum would not be there. She firmly says she prefers to learn at home.

### Q. 2: What is the reason you became home-ed?

We decided to home school as class numbers too big, school too rigid, teaching out of date, one size doesn't fit all, school starts too young (her nursery friends, 4 years-old, have written homework!), school doesn't encourage creative thinking or prepare you for the real world, false environment, same ages within class doesn't correlate to real world environment, poor curriculum, school too hard to get into.

### Q. 3: Do you like being home-ed? If not, why? If so, why?

She says she likes it but would like to see more children during the day.

### Q. 4: Do you think being home-ed is more productive than going to school?

She's doing very well with reading, math's etc. And she loves French. Teachers tell me that she's very articulate and seems older than her age, this always surprises me as we do very little sit down work. Her learning is very much part of her everyday experiences which interest her and she enjoys. So yes I'd say her time and her learning is much more effective than being in a class room environment day in, day out.

### Q. 5: What do you think is different about being home-ed rather than going to school?

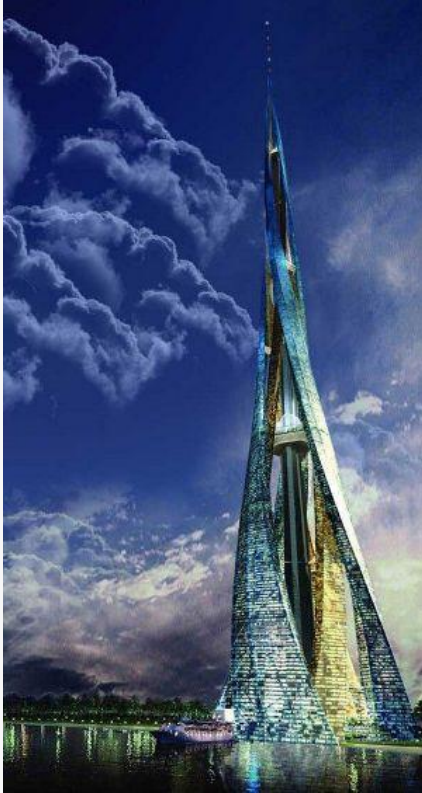
Freedom of choice, freedom to make decisions and take an amount of responsibility for ones own learning. It's very spontaneous which keeps a love of learning and life fuelled. If she wants to learn about spiders and their environment in the Amazon that's what we do, even if I'd planned to do something different. We all find this an advantage, the whole family can join in (there's 3 children in our family) and one to one learning seems to be a luxury at school and rarely given, at home it's the norm.

### Q. 6: If it were completely up to you, would you go to school or be home-ed?

From Isabelle's words, be home schooled (with a big smile) because I'd have to stay there all morning, it's much better staying at mummy's school!!!

## THE TALLEST BUILDING IN THE WORLD FROM 147 METRES TO ONE MILLION KILOMETERS!

(By Toby Hornberger)



I like tall buildings. They look good and they're fun to visit. 4500 years ago Egypt's pyramids were built and everybody who saw them was amazed that they were super high. But the tallest pyramid is only 147m high! The tallest building in the world today is the Burj Khalifa in Dubai. It is 828 metres high. But in 2017 it will be overtaken by another building called Sky City 1 in Shanghai, China. It will be 838 metres high, so 10 metres higher than the Burj Khalifa.

But then in 2020 the Kingdom Tower in Saudi Arabia will be finished. It will be exactly one kilometre high! But guess what! Soon after that the Burj Murrak in Kuwait will be finished and that's going to be 1 metre higher than the Kingdom Tower – 1001m. Seriously, making tall buildings is really competitive!

In the next 10 years there might be around 35 buildings taller than the Burj Khalifa. But Dubai will probably still be the winner because in 2025 the Dubai City Tower will be finished. It will be 2400m high. That's more than a mile! It's going to look really cool and it will even have a dock for cruise ships.

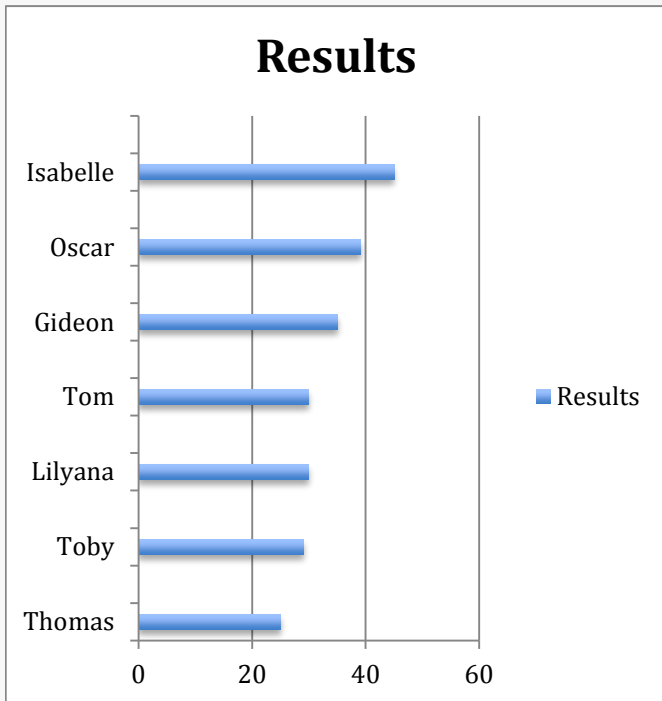
Some of the awesome designs that might be made in the future are the Millenium Challenge Tower (Kuwait), X-Seed 4000 (Japan), Bionic Tower (Hong Kong) and Ultima Tower San Francisco USA. Look them up if you want to know more.

There are rules about tall buildings. It doesn't help to build on a mountain - they only measure from ground level. Also spires and antennas count as height. The Burj Khalifa has about 40m of antenna. Dubai City Tower will have 400m of antennas! That's higher than Britain's highest building – the Shard in London (327m) - and that's just the antenna.

Then by 2100 there may be a space elevator that will be a million kilometres high. This will be for taking parts into space so that space stations can be made in space. Another idea is the Launch Loop that will launch spaceships and satellites into space. It will be 'only' 80 kilometres high.

Is the race to build taller and taller buildings really cool, or really silly? What do you think?

## LICKALIX COMPETITION WINNER!



The winner of last issue's competition is Isabelle Sommers!

Her guess was 45.

The results are left.



WIN!  
5 LICKALIX ICE LOLLIES!

For your chance to win five delicious LICKALIX ice lollies, you have to come up with your own flavour of ice-lollie, and the best one will win!

Enter by sending your guess to [homeedgazette@gmail.com](mailto:homeedgazette@gmail.com).

*Rules: All entries must be received by the 10th of October, 2015. Only entries received by the deadline will be considered. The judge's decision is final. The winner will be announced in the next issue. By entering, you are agreeing to have your winning photo as well as a photo of you receiving the prize in this paper and used by LICKALIX in their social media. The winner will receive their lollies in person – no postal option available. Family of The Editor may not enter.*

## PARKOUR

(By Benedict de Nobrega)



Previously I wrote about climbing. Another sport I really enjoy is parkour (sometimes referred to as freerunning).

Although in reality parkour has been done for millennia, it is a relatively new sport, which began in the suburbs of Paris in the 1980's. People such as David Belle and Sebastian Foucan helped bring it to popular attention during the last 20 years or so due to movies, documentaries, etc. However, a lot of people still don't know much about what parkour really is. Wikipedia describes it as: 'Practitioners aim to get from A to B in the most efficient way possible. This is done using only the human body and the surroundings for propulsion, with a focus on maintaining as much momentum as possible while still remaining safe.'

It is suitable for anyone who can move. My dad and my little sister both do parkour, as well as my brother and myself. My grandfather even tried a bit after seeing how much fun we all have.

The only rule in parkour is to NEVER use your knees. Parkour involves a lot of vaults, jumps, running and climbing. Some of the techniques used in parkour on include a wall run and the dash vault. Here are links to a couple of tutorials I made with a friend from Wefew: <http://youtu.be/hUjvCa6ItW8>  
<http://youtu.be/kmOpxxBIB7c>

I enjoy the way parkour uses my whole body in many ways that I used to think were impossible. This in turn has given me more self-confidence in all aspects of life. If you're interested in trying parkour for yourself, there are many classes available, which can be found online.

## FoC 2015

(By Aaron Cuthbertson) (Continued from page 2)

The competition works so that over the week you code something that uses open data (and data that is openly available, such as Google Maps) at a center near you over the week. At the weekend there is an optional (but highly important) part where all the centres travel to Birmingham where the competition takes place. Your group presents your project to judges as part of a heat, the winners of which go through to semi-finals and then finals. While the competition is the focus, it's also a great place to meet new people and try out new things: there's always lots of other workshops to do there when not competing in or watching the competition.

Our centre travelled up together by train: the journey was mostly spent coming up with our presentation and discussing the competition and coding in general. Once we arrived, we staked out a spot near some plugs (which were valued below only food and wifi at the event) and polished up our presentations and projects. The next morning the heats began, and we really started to see some of the amazing projects on display there. From duck boats to banking apps, there was an enormous spread of different types of apps, games or other projects. Such an enormous spread in fact, that the heats ran on late and we almost missed lunch... However, the projects there were still hugely impressive; some for their ideas, some for their code and some for their design, but all were worth watching.

The rest of that day and the next were spent trying out the cool stuff on display there and watching the semi-finals and finals. There were stalls from the RAF, Minecraft projects, and more. There was even a stand from O2 Think Big, the centre I was at, who provide funding, training and support for young people with a great idea or project: and obviously the Festival of Code is a prime place for people like that. The finals were also amazing to watch: the projects were interesting and impressive, and the judging panel asked very interesting questions.

While my project didn't get through, it was still an amazing experience to build it and see the other projects at the festival. Across the week I learnt a huge amount about programming, and it inspired me to try lots more new projects I never would have tried before the festival. I highly recommend looking into it if you enjoy coding, and if coding isn't your thing some of the projects are definitely worth looking at. You could even try mine out!

O2 Think Big's Website: <http://www.o2thinkbig.co.uk/> Festival of Code's Website: <http://festival.yrs.io/>  
Website for the Projects: <http://hacks.youngwiredstate.org/events/festival-of-code-2015>  
My Project!: <http://hacks.youngwiredstate.org/events/festival-of-code-2015/explain-my-technology>