

Astronauts stuck in space; Christmas feels in New York; Falcon watch grips Melbourne; and Bluey's mega keepy-uppy.

Hello and welcome to Squiz Kids Today ... your fresh take on what's happening in the world around you.

I'm Bryce Corbett

It's Wednesday, November 12 -

In Squiz Kids Today ... Astronauts stuck in space; Christmas feels in New York; Falcon watch grips Melbourne; and Bluey's mega keepy-uppy.

That's what's making news, kids' style ...

THE LOWDOWN

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It sounds like something out of a science fiction movie - except for a bunch of actual humans it's real - as news filtered down to planet earth this week that a group of astronauts are stuck in space after their space station was hit by space junk.

Three astronauts aboard China's Tiangong space station in orbit above Earth were all set to hop into their rocket and return to Earth last week when it was discovered it had been hit and damaged by a piece of space debris.

We've talked before in the pod how there are literally millions of pieces of space junk in orbit above the Earth - bits of old satellites and spaceships and rockets that humans have sent up there and have never come back down.

The astronauts are ok - and are expected to be back down on earth soon. Much sooner than the American astronauts whose return to Earth from their space station last year was delayed by more than 9 months. Yikes ... that's a long time to spend spinning around above Earth in a tin can ..

Meanwhile: in other space news: a mission to Mars is set to blast off sometime this week which will see robot-piloted twin rockets head for the red planet to do a bunch of experiments to discover why it lost its atmosphere billions of years ago.

That's billions with a b, people ... sometimes science makes my brain explode ..

SPIN THE GLOBE

Each day we give the world globe a spin and find a news story from wherever it stops .. and today we've landed in New York City - where it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas ..

The Rockefeller Plaza Christmas tree is among the most famous Christmas trees in the world. Every year it is decorated and lit and stands tall above the ice rink at the base of the iconic Rockefeller Plaza building - a symbol of the festive season that shines around the world.

And this year - the festive season is already in full swing as the tree was craned into place over the weekend.

I say craned because it's 22 metres high .. a Norway spruce pine tree, grown in a field 250 kilometres from New York City and trucked into the big smoke on the back of a truck.

Now it will have more than 50,000 lights strung through it - imagine untangling those! – and a star plonked on top that - get this - weighs 400 kg and features 70 spikes with about 3 million crystals embedded on them.

How beautiful ...

ANIMAL KINGDOM

Speaking of beautiful ... bird lovers in Melbourne have been glued to YouTube watching a live feed of a building ledge 34 storeys above the city - as Falcon Watch once again becomes a thing.

For years now a peregrine falcon has been laying eggs in a nest it builds on the sky-high window ledge - and this year is no exception. A new batch of chicks hatched in September and a live feed YouTube channel has been showing them slowly growing,

gaining weight and starting to stretch their wings in preparation for taking the leap and undertaking their first ever flight.

And how does the mummy falcon get them to take that terrifying first leap? By catching and killing pigeons and flying with them in her talons, past her hungry chicks, tempting them to step off the ledge.

Amazing. Though maybe not so much if you're a pigeon ..

And yes, of course, I've stuck a link to the YouTube live feed in today's episode notes.

You're welcome.

POP CULTURE CORNER

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You just can't keep a good blue heeler down ...

Before New York City gets fully into Christmas mode - it has to first of all get through another major national holiday .. and that's Thanksgiving. And if you live in New York City - that means the Thanksgiving Parade down Fifth Avenue.

It's the parade where massive inflatable balloons - some the size of buildings - of all your favourite superheroes and cartoon characters make their way down the famous boulevard of the Big Apple - as adoring crowds line the footpaths.

And making a triumphant return to the parade this year is our very own favourite cartoon pup - Bluey ..

A huge, balloon version of Bluey will bounce along in this year's parade at the end of this month - playing a giant-version of keepy uppy ... how cute.

XMAS PROMO (FRIDAY)

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(sleigh bells) Can you hear that? That's the sound of Christmas fast approaching .. and we couldn't be more excited.

As we continue the countdown to sleeps until Christmas - here's your chance to get into the Christmas spirit.

As per Squiz Kids tradition, we've managed to convince Santa Claus himself to hop into the Squiz Kids Q+A hotseat again this year – answering ANY questions you might have for him. It's your chance to say hi to the big fella and ask him how he makes the magic of Christmas work - from reindeers, to elves, to toy workshops and sleighs. If you have a question you'd like Santa to answer

THE S'QUIZ

This is the part of the podcast where you get to test how well you've been listening ...

1. Which planet is a twin-rocket robot-piloted mission heading for in our solar system?
2. What sort of birds are nesting on a ledge of a building 34 storeys up in Melbourne?
3. Approximately how many crystals are embedded on the 70 spikes of the Rockefeller Christmas tree star?

SHOUT OUTS

It's Wednesday, November 12 ... birthday of actors Ryan Gosling and Anne Hathaway ..
awwww.

Today's also a special day for these Squiz Kids, celebrating a birthday today...

Ella from Indooroopilly, Harriet from Fernvale, Harry from Exeter, Saphira from Wagga Wagga and Nathan from Five Dock.

Belated shoutouts go to...Matthew from Marsden Park and Chase from Tent Hill Lower.

Classroom shoutouts go to... class 6/7K with Mrs Khan at Canberra Girls Grammar, class 5OC with Olly at Lyneham Primary School, class 6P with Mrs Zarounas and Mrs Malouf at St Josephs Catholic Primary School in Riverwood, class 3/4N with Mr McKenzie at Minchinbury Public School and class 5K at Koorringal Public School and a big happy birthday to their teacher Mrs Klemke!

And finally: a special shoutout goes to class 4A with Ms Abreu at Forest Lake State School .. It was such a pleasure to meet you all yesterday and do a session of Newshounds with you and your local MP, Milton Dick ... hope to see you all again soon!

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. Mars
2. Peregrine Falcons
3. 3 million

Don't forget .. if you've got a birthday coming up and you want a shout out - or, if you're after a classroom shout out- drop us a line at squizkids@thesquiz.com.au or fill out the form on our website.

Well - that's all we have time for. Thanks for listening to Squiz Kids Today - We'll be back again tomorrow

In the meantime ... get out there and have a most excellent day ... over and out.