**Americana – Explorers – October 23, 2010**

**I. Introduction**

Last month, we talked about America the Beautiful and some of the landmarks, monuments and unique features of our beautiful and BIG country.

Today, we’ll talk about some of the explorers who discovered the vast land that makes up America. An Explorer is “a person who investigates (or “checks out”) unknown regions and places”. These are the brave men and woman that set off into different parts of our country. They ventured into unknown lands to help their country grow.

We are doing this topic because in October, we celebrate Columbus Day. Christopher Columbus is one of the most famous explorers in American history. You’re going to meet him and some of the other explorers in our very own game show.

**II. Program – game show American Explorers/America’s Got Explorers**

**Narrator:** Welcome to the 2010 “America’s Got Explorers!” It’s the fabulous game show where you, the American children of Americana, get to vote for your all time favorite American explorer! Yes, those brave men and women who discovered our land, from the first discovery of our shores to the opening of the West are vying for your vote. Our contestants tonight want to tell their stories, strut their stuff, and win the sweet prize of being America’s Favorite Explorer! So, without further ado, I give you the first of our contestants – Christopher Columbus!

**Christopher Columbus**: Hi, I’m Christopher Columbus – Chris for short, and I wanna be your favorite explorer! In 1492, King Isabella and King Ferdinand sent me off from Spain with 3 ships – the Nina, the Pinta and the Santa Maria -- to look for new routes to get to India. Well, on the way, we ran into some new land. I discovered America (it was kind of an accident – but don’t tell anyone, ok?) We opened up a whole new world!

(Chris, and three others, “sail” across the stage)

 COLUMBUS CHANT

**Narrator:** There you have it folks, Christopher Columbus! Let’s give him a hand! And now, please welcome our next great explorer, Juan Ponce de Leon!

**Ponce de Leon:** Hola. My name is Juan Ponce de Leon, and I should be your favorite explorer because I discovered one of America’s favorite places! In 1513, I set sail from Spain with three ships to find the magical waters of the Fountain of Youth. Unfortunately for your parents, I did not find the water that would keep people young, but I DID discover the powerful current of the Gulf Stream and the sunny land that you call Florida! It’s got sun, water, and many years later became the home to Disney World. Now, THAT is muy bueno!

**Narrator:** Thank-you, Juan! Okay, folks, now I know it seems like all our early explorers were working for the Spanish king & queen, but fear not! We’ve got explorers of our country from all over the world! Direct from England via Holland, please welcome – Henry Hudson!

**Henry Hudson:** Thank-you, Thank-you. I’m Henry Hudson, and I should be your favorite explorer because so many things are named for me. AND, I’m very international. I was an English sailor and navigator. In 1609, I set out looking for a western sailing route to Asia, and ended up discovering and settling what we know as New York area. You may have heard of the Hudson River, Hudson Straight and Hudson Bay which are all named for me. Because I sailed for a Dutch company, the New York area was originally a Dutch colony.

Song: SARASPONDA

**Narrator:** Thank-you, Henry! Now, folks, you may be thinking, Hmmm, they’ve discovered America what more could they explore? Well, hang onto your hats, folks, because there’s lots more exploring to come. Ladies and gentlemen, please give a warm, America’s Got Explorers welcome to….Daniel Boone!

**Daniel Boone:** Howdy, folks, and thanks! After this new land became a country of 13 colonies, I headed out into the western frontier through the Appalachian Mountains to explore and settle a new state, called Kentucky in 1778. Before there was Kentucky horse racing and basketball, there were Shawnee Indians who weren’t too happy about me and my settlers taking over their land. But without me, we’d a’stayed in the East and never explored the frontier. And that’s why I should be your favorite explorer!

**Narrator:** Thank-you, Daniel! My, we’ve seen a lot of explorers, but we’re not done yet! Our next contestants are an amazing trio – give it up for Meriwether Lewis, William Clark, and Sacajawea!

**Lewis and Clark**: Thank-you, folks! I’m Lewis, and this here’s Clark. From 1804 to 1806, we led first the overland expedition undertaken to the Pacific coast and back. We were soldiers, and President Thomas Jefferson asked us to go check out the land that the US bought in the Louisiana Purchase. He wanted us to see what we got for our money and what the new land offered. We saw it all, to make sure you could have it all! We get a lot of credit, but we could not have made it without our faithful guide, Sacajawea.

**Sacajawea:** Hello. I am Sacajawea. I was a Shoshone Indian who guided and acted as interpreter and negotiator for Lewis and Clark on their exploratory expedition. I led them from North Dakota to the Oregon coast and back. During the journey, my son was born, so I carried him on my back as we went on our mission. In 2000, the US made a gold dollar coin with my image on it.

**Narrator:** What a group! Can anyone top that act? Well, my young friends, that is for you to decide! Next up, the group who claims to have “settled the West” for us – The Westward Expansion and the Pioneers!

**Westward Expansion. Main Pioneer**: (Have group “rush across the stage in front of speaker): We heard stories about the vast land in the west. Many of us were immigrants who arrived in the US and had to live in crowded, dirty cities. We wanted space, and the government was offering “free land” if we promised to farm and work it. We were part of the US’s Manifest Destiny or the belief that it was American’s duty and destiny to conquer the west. There were also those who moved out to California in search of gold believed to be there. Our hard work made our country truly from “sea to shining sea” and that’s why we’re competing to be your favorite explorers!

**Narrator:** Well, folks, we’ve seen some amazing explorers here today, and only one can win. But before we vote, there’s one more, one “final” frontier left to talk about. You’ve met the explorers who discovered the East, you’ve met those who settled the West. Now, meet the explorer who took us out of this world – Neil Armstrong!

**Astronaut/Neil Armstrong:** Thanks! Hi, folks, I’m Neil Armstrong. I was a navy aviator and test pilot before I joined the astronaut corps. I first went into space in 1966, but I am most famous for commanding the 1969 Apollo 11 mission. I became the 1st person to step onto the moon and said "That's one small step for [a] man, one giant leap for mankind." Come on, now, get up, take a step, and say it with me!

**Narrator: Reintroduce and audience vote**

**III. Conclusion –** Exploring is looking into something that is unknown. America was founded by people looking for new lands, so exploring and investigating is part of our American culture and identity. There are still many places and things left for us to discover. What do you want to explore?