

SECOND & THIRD QUARTER NEWSLETTER

THOMAS JEFFERSON MIDDLE SCHOOL

MAY 2016

A Message from Principal Boggan

The Virginia Board of Education has adopted a new resolution that will allow students to retake SOL tests taken in Grades 3-8 if they fail them with a score of between 375 and 399 or there are extenuating circumstances. Thomas Jefferson Middle School (TJMS) students will take SOL tests starting on Monday, May 16th and continuing through Friday, June 10th. The full calendar of SOL tests can be viewed on the TJMS webpage: <http://www.arlington.k12.va.us/Domain/3994>.

TJMS student scores will be reviewed by designated school staff as soon as scores are released. Parents/guardians of students who qualify for a retest will be contacted and asked to complete a consent form for their child to be retested. Only after that form is received or consent is confirmed by phone or email, will the student be retested. This form must arrive to the TJMS main office as soon as possible and no later than 2 days from receiving the letter in order for a test to be scheduled and the test retaken. Students scheduled to retake an SOL test will need to attend planned tutorial sessions before retaking a test to increase their opportunity of passing. Please note that the decision not to retake the test(s) will not impact the child's grade or academic record in any way and is a parental decision.

More details about SOL testing at TJMS will be on [Peach Jar](#) and on our school webpage. Should you have any questions, please contact me or the assistant principals, Ms. Ellen Smith or Mr. Vincent Jarosz at (703)228-5900.

Sincerely yours,
Keisha Boggan
Principal



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Special points of interest:

- SOL's are scheduled from May 16 — June 10!
- Community Service in Garden Every Friday
- VJAS at MWU: 5/17—5/19
- TJMS PTA Meeting: 5/17 at 7:00 PM
- Spring Sports Banquet : 5/25 at 6:30 PM
- TAB End-of-Year Celebration: 5/27 at 2:30 PM
- Memorial Day: 5/30 No School For Students
- Last Day to Apply for Summer School (Make-up and Strengthening Courses): 6/10
- Awards Ceremony: 6/16 at 1:00 PM
- Spring Music Trip to Busch Gardens: 6/3
- 8th Grade Promotion Ceremony: 6/22
- Last Day of School: 6/23
- Late Registration for Summer School: 6/30 at Carlin Springs Elementary

Owls

During 2nd quarter Reading students focused on reading strategies related to science texts. This included making predications, identifying key details and drawing conclusions. The students also worked in small groups as they read one of Carl Hiassen's novels. In the 3rd quarter, students shifted to practice reading skills that they will use with texts in social studies class, like identifying cause and effect relationships and the organizational pattern of a text. Together we read a biography about Barrack Obama. Students were able to compare his biography to one of their choosing.

In the 2nd quarter, Math 6 students tackled some very challenging concepts. We looked at the relationship between Fractions, Decimals, and Percent, and were able to use this information to analyze our eating habits. We also covered Ratios and began looking at Data and Statistics, and when to use specific measures of center. Math 6 students covered a lot of ground in the 3rd quarter as we began the final push toward SOLs. We began the quarter finishing up the Data Analysis unit where we were working to find mean, median, mode, and applying those Measures of Center to unfamiliar situations. The following unit had us calculating the probability of independent and dependent events to determine the likelihood of that event happening. We also learned how to solve Equations and graph Inequalities. We finished the quarter with Integers and Sequences. Only 1 more Unit on Measurement left this year before we begin our SOL review!

During 2nd Quarter, 6th grade English students worked on the Letters About Literature Unit. Over the course of the second quarter students learned about the different ways that books can give them wings. In turn, students identified a novel that has changed the way they see the world and crafted a letter to the author detailing how the author's words gave them wings of understanding, hope or courage. Some students entered their letters in the Letters About Literature contest that is sponsored by the Library of Congress. We continued to work on Word Study and the weekly independent reading requirement. For the 3rd Quarter, 6th grade English students worked on the Epistolary Fiction. Over the course of the third quarter students reviewed the elements of literature and read examples of epistolary fiction. Students then worked alone or with a partner to create their own piece of epistolary fiction. We continued to work on Word Study and the weekly independent reading requirement.

In Social Studies 2nd quarter we finished our study of the 13 Colonies then spent most of the rest of the quarter studying the American Revolution. Students participated in a town meeting to argue as either a Patriot or Loyalist. We used what we learned to write editorials for our final projects. During the 3rd quarter our focus was on government. We studied our nation's early history and how the US Constitution came to be and how it has lasted for over 200 years. This included the three branches of both Virginia's government and the federal government. For our final project students created visual similes to describe our government.

In Science, Owls focused largely on preparing for the Science Fair in January. Each student designed and conducted an original experiment, and prepared a display board to showcase their findings. We are so proud of our student scientists and all of their hard work-- they really earned those snow days. Students also completed an IB unit on Energy Resources, in which they prepared proposals for new power plants in foreign cities, complete with 3-d models and environmental impact analyses. While Ms. Workman was away on maternity leave, Ms. Fahmy took students on a tour of the solar system during their unit on Astronomy. As spring arrived, Owls began their unit on Weather and Climate.

7th Grade Social Studies

In 7th grade social studies students have been investigating the changing role of government in the Economy. Students investigated the changes that came with the industrial revolution and the expansion of WWI. Students evaluated how our government dealt with crisis's such as the Great Depression, WWII and the Cold War. As we move towards the fourth quarter students will begin researching the electoral process.

Dragons

On April 15, Math and Science students had the awesome opportunity to participated in the 4th annual USA Science and Engineering Festival. Students had the opportunity to browse over 3,000 hands on activities.

Ms. McMorrow's students have completed their World War II unit and have begun a comparative government study for the Cold War. Students will use what their learned in 6th grade to compare and contrast different government and economic systems. This year, students will take the Virginia SOL's for Civics and Economics. Study Guides and topic lists can be found on google classroom.

Mr. Anderson's students explored the concept of 'struggle' throughout the third quarter. Students interviewed each other, wrote poetry, composed Flash Fiction, and organized relevant information about many of the struggles that bind us together.

During quarter 2 and quarter 3 the Math 7 team worked through solving equations and inequalities, functions and sequences, and proportions and similarities. The third quarter was highlighted by students presentations of a recipe that was special to them. Students shared their dishes on Friday April 1st in a feast for all Math 7 students! Students also used their knowledge of proportions to show how recipes could be adjusted to serve a different number of people.

8th Grade Science

We honed our science investigative skills doing Experimental Design Diagrams (EDD), gathering and displaying data through several labs such as the M&M lab, Crime lab, Oobleck lab, and finishing with the famous and delicious Ice Cream lab. We also learned the different kinds of data, how to use and analyze data and then to display it in graphs. All of these activities were to prepare us to do our very own individual science project, which was to be displayed during our Thomas Jefferson Middle School Science Fair in January. Also during this time we were studying about the five forms of energy and the difference between potential and kinetic energy forms. The law of the conservation of energy was used to explain why energy is never created or destroyed but simply transformed from one form into another.

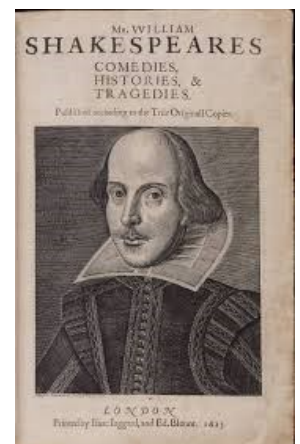
As we finished the unit on scientific investigation we began the subject of physics and the topics called motion and forces. We learned about reference points, motion, speed, velocity, acceleration including Sir Isaac Newton's three laws of motion, his universal law of gravitation and the topic of momentum. Unbalanced and balanced forces were used to determine how an object would react if at rest or under the conditions of constant speed or acceleration. Some classes participated in a unit on nuclear energy. Then we turned our work onto work (and simple machines). We performed labs using levers, inclined planes and pulleys to see how effort forces needed to move stuff vary with the distance traveled. For the last half of the quarter we transitioned into the chemistry portion of our year in physical science. After learning about the historical events of the atomic model we studied the structure of the atom. Secrets of the periodic table of the elements revealed to us why it is organized the way it is and how this can help us understand/predict chemical bonding and chemical reactions.

8th Grade English

We've also been busy in English. We began the quarter with our Shakespeare unit and read selected scenes of *The Taming of the Shrew* in class. We had the wonderful opportunity of seeing some of our favorite scenes from *Shrew* come alive in *Kiss Me, Kate* at The Shakespeare Theatre downtown. The students made some very interesting comparisons between the characters and common themes in both plays in the form of an essay.

Our third annual poetry slam was a success; a large number of students participated and captivated the audience! Students winning highest scores from our judges were: Nicole Romera-Ospina, Eman Noraga, Jason McPhee, Lily Loughney, and Anamitra Baura.

After Shakespeare, we began our cross-curricular Family Migration unit with Geography. The students had a wide selection of realistic or historical fiction to choose from to read while they examine their own family history and a country of origin. We have been conducting small-group book discussions and blogging with each other about our research and our chosen books.



Chinese

In the second quarter, Mrs. Yan's Chinese-I and Introduce to Chinese students further extended their language skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing simple Chinese characters, phrases, and short sentences. Students were able to apply these language skills into simple conversation and classroom activities.

Chinese-I students were able to speak and write about a friend and friend's name, age, date of birth, grade level, address, and his/her hobbies. Chinese-I students demonstrated their ability to read and write about date, time, school schedule, and after school activities.

Introducing to Chinese students explored the changes of four seasons, learned to ask and answer questions about date, time, school schedule, and time for school activities.

In the third quarter, Mrs. Yan's Chinese-I and Introducing to Chinese students extended their learning through celebrating Spring Festival (Chinese New Year), the most important and celebrated holiday in Chinese culture in late February. Through preparing and participating in the celebration, students learned how to name clothes and Chinese attires, name some traditional Chinese food and drinks, describe the taste of some Chinese food, state preference for one thing over another, and know some Chinese traditions for Spring Festival celebration.

Furthermore, Chinese-I students learned how to name hobbies and sports, state preference for one hobby over another, ask and give directions to places, know the locations of some famous manmade and natural features in China.

Introducing to Chinese students explored major cities and their geographic location in China. They were able to identify different types of houses and different rooms in a house. They created floor plans of their dream houses and presented the dream houses to their peers.

French

Intro to French

Students have been learning by creating interesting stories which are used for listening, reading, speaking and writing. Class time is fun as we explore songs, movement, and communicating with our classmates. We have begun reading "Brandon Brown Veut un Chien" and we're thrilled that we can read and understand a story entirely in French!

French 1

Students have learned about how to describe likes and dislikes and to express how much they like something (a little, well or a lot). We are exploring the French education system by exploring differences in class schedules. Some students are ready to move to France after learning about the two hour lunch period! They are also learning how to describe people, courses and to tell time. We are enjoying our "song of the week" and learning about popular artists from France, Canada, Rwanda and Belgium. We completed the entire novel "Brandon Brown Veut un Chien" by acting out scenes and creating movie trailers.

Latin

In the 2nd quarter, the 6th grade Intro to Latin class learned about Greco-Roman mythology, Olympian gods, Roman numerals, and early Roman history. Latin I students learned the present, imperfect, and perfect verb tenses, and nominative and accusative noun cases. They also studied Roman theater, burial practices, and the founding of Rome. The Latin II students learned about life in Roman Britain and ancient Alexandria, and about Latin infinitives, the pluperfect tense, and irregular verbs.

On November 22nd-23rd, 15 Jefferson Latin students traveled to Richmond to participate in the Virginia Junior Classical League Convention. They submitted classically-themed art work, participated in contests, took tests, played Roman games, and had lots of fun with the 2,000 other Latin students from around the Commonwealth who attended the convention. Here are the Jefferson results:

Academic Tests

Elliott Brown - 4th place in the Roman Life test
Kate Dubois - 10th place in the Mythology test
Chase Hildebrand - 4th in Classical Geography, 10th in Roman Life
Sufia Kaddouri - 10th place in Roman Life
Will Kisor - 2nd in Roman History, 7th in Roman Life
Andrew London - 4th in Roman Life
Michael Mockler - 5th in Roman Life, 9th in Classical Geography
Ethan Nissenson - 6th in Roman Life
Walker Polestak - 10th in Roman Life
Sage Rasmussen - 6th in Roman Life, 2nd in Classical Geography
Lizzy Schoen - 8th in Mythology
Sofia Sosa-Olivares - 8th in Roman Life, 9th in Latin Derivatives, 4th in Mythology
Topher Zane - 10th place in Mythology

Art Projects

Isaac Endo - 5th place for his Latin children's book project
Chase Hildebrand - 9th place for his mosaic art project
Sophia Thimmesch - 5th place for her oil painting art project

Other

Topher Zane - 4th place for his Dramatic Latin Interpretation performance

On December 17th, Latin students from all over Arlington celebrated Saturnalia, the ancient Roman winter festival, at Yorktown High School. Students enjoyed a potluck banquet, Roman games, gladiatorial combat, impromptu art, fortune telling, and many more activities. Over 150 students attended this year, one of our largest Saturnalias yet!

Business and Information Technologies

In addition to completing sample job applications and designing business cards, 8th graders delved into a unit on MS Access. They created a country database, entered statistical data from the CIA World Factbook, and ran queries to produce reports. Creating graphs and data tables gave 7th graders in the Digital Input class experience with numerous tools on MS Excel. Those skills can be applied to students' science fair projects. 6th graders became more adept at using the drawing tools in MS Word by creating flyers modeled after an IBMYP poster. The Yearbook Staff continues to move forward on the **2016 Journeys**. If you have not yet ordered, yearbooks are available! Pick up an order blank from Ms. Myers in Lab 82 or from the Main Office.

8th graders completed a unit on personal finance and career exploration. They created and managed a budget, filled out mock job applications, and learned the skills needed in a successful job interview. 4Q will focus on creating a business card and learning how to manipulate MS Access.

Digital Input Technologies - Using Windows Moviemaker, seventh graders developed a 30 second elevator pitch. They introduced themselves to a potential "employer", shared their positive traits and skills, and explained how they could make positive contributions to a selected business or organization. During 4Q, students will program ALICE to create a 3D animation project.

Using drawing and text tools in MS Word, sixth graders created a flyer outlining 10 reasons why IB encourages creative, critical, reflective learners. Classes also created a PowerPoint illustrating each IB learner profile.

Band

During 2nd quarter, all band students presented an outstanding Winter Concert on December 9. Since then, Concert Band Blue (6th grade) classes have been performing from the Sound Innovations method to develop music reading and performance skills. Concert Band Gold and Symphonic Band have are learning music for the District Band Assessment on Friday, March 4 at Madison High School. Symphonic Band will perform at the W-L Pre-Assessment Concert on February 17 and Concert Band Gold will perform during the Wakefield Pre-Assessment Concert on February 25.

Despite the many inclement weather days disrupting our performance plans, 3rd quarter was eventful for the Jefferson Band Program. Concert Band Blue learned music from our "Sound Innovations" method book and started working on "full band" music. Concert Band Gold performed at the Wakefield Band Pyramid Concert on February 25, while Symphonic Band performed during the Washington-Lee Pre-Assessment Concert on February 17. Concert Band Gold performed for "Comments Only" at the District XII Middle Band Assessment on March 4, while Symphonic Band performed and earned an "Excellent" rating during the same event.

During fourth quarter, all bands prepared for the Spring Band Concert on Wednesday, May 4, and will continue preparing for the Spring Trip to Busch Gardens Williamsburg on Friday, June 3.

Technology Education

The 6th graders (Introduction to Technology) studied Simple Machines through the Brain-Pop app and constructed a series of projects with the LEGO Mindstorm Robotics kits. The 7th graders (Inventions and Innovations) designed, constructed, and launched high pressure water rockets. Lessons were provided on the uses of rockets, the history of rockets and their technological impacts on our world, and how rockets work. The 8th grade class (Technological Systems) completed the construction phase of their manufacturing design project, while employing 8 different power machines. Then they designed, constructed, and launched motorized model rockets. Both rocket launches in the 7th and 8th grades were performed by the students working in teams while performing specific duties in simulation of a real life technological event. All 3 classes finished the semester with an open-ended engineering design challenge. Students solved technical objectives through the design cycle and prototypes were tested to determine the best designs. The Tuesday ActII class continued the Lego Robotics-NXT activities and completed a series of programming design challenges of ever increasing complexity. The class culminated in the exciting Battle-Bot competition. The Thursday ActII class (Transportation Engineering) completed the steps of the IB Design Cycle in building and testing Mag-Lev vehicles; and a spirited race-competition capped off the activities.

All 3 grades completed their Production Shop safety certifications and Power Machine training. The 6th graders in Introduction to Technology acquired skills on 4 machines, 7th graders in Inventions and Innovations were trained on 6 machines, and the 8th graders in Technological Systems gained competence on 9 machines. Putting these skills to use, each class accomplished a project intended to simulate design and production in the real world. The 7th graders just completed a team assembly-line activity in a competition format and the 8th graders completed a manufacturing engineering project. Students in Act II-Robotics Engineering are studying real world Robotics technologies, constructing robotic systems with Lego NXT kits, and programming the Robots while learning movement and sensor control. In Act II-Transportation Engineering students are studying real world transportation systems, evaluating current problems and solutions, gaining Production Shop certification, and recently started their STEM design challenge, which is to design, construct, and test a CO2 Dragster.

Family and Consumer Sciences

In November, FACS students completed a Babysitting Unit, with some 7th and 8th grade students earning their Red Cross Babysitter's Certification. In December, all students practiced sewing and mending skills. 6th graders completed felt ornaments, 7th graders used the sewing machine to create a pillow or drawstring bag, and 8th graders created an "upcycled" stuffed animal project. In January we developed our financial literacy skills, and 7th and 8th grade students finished the semester with an Interior Design project.

Family and Consumer Sciences Continued

All FACS classes began with a unit on Strengthening Family Relationships and Communication. Students have been completing weekly chores at home to contribute to their family and learn skills for self-management. In our second unit (Food Preparation), 6th grade students have been learning how to measure ingredients and use kitchen tools and appliances safely. They tested their measuring skills by making their own Cake in a Mug. 7th grade students have been preparing foods from different regions around the USA, like home-made mac and cheese from the South. To end the Foods Unit, 7th graders are participating in our Grilled Cheese Challenge. 8th grade students have been exploring various cuisines from around the world, making Fresh Spring Rolls (Thai) and Lemon Scones (UK). Their final project is to design and create their own healthy snack recipe.

Theater Arts

The second quarter was filled with many marvelous theatrical creations. The 6th grade actors finished designing and building their own Greek masks. They are now decorating the walls of the drama classroom. Then they left Ancient Greece and journeyed into the world of Tableau. They learned how to perform this acting technique. Culminating in a final performance where they brought classic fairy tales and folk tales to life with tableau. All of these performances can be found in our Google Classroom group.

The 7th grade actors also explored the performance technique, Tableau. They devised two different Tableau performances: "Who I Am" and "To Walk In The Shoes of Others". As usual, all teams created amazing and honest performances. The actors finished out their semester with showcase titled "The End". They performed scenes and monologues that showed off all of the skills and talents of these young actors.

The 8th grade actors began the 2nd quarter becoming playwrights. They wrote their own monologues and then performed them. The characters and stories that they created were unique. Like the 7th grade, they also ended their time in drama class with the "The End" Showcase. Some of the scenes performed, were from To Kill A Mockingbird and The Outsiders.

All actors have been creative and busy 3rd quarter. The 7th and 8th graders began their quarter learning about pantomime. They studied the history and practiced the technique. After creating some pretty funny performances, both grades focused their talents on creating powerful pantomime performances. The 8th graders, took on social issues and devised performances that showed their insights on racism and teen suicide. The 7th graders created a pantomime performance in honor of Mr. Holland. The 6th graders started their year off where theater began, Ancient Greece. They focused their study on two elements of the Ancient Greek Theater: the chorus and masks. To demonstrate their knowledge of a Greek chorus, they performed the poem "The Whatifs" by Shel Silverstein and we are now designing and making our own masks. Expect to see them completed and decorating your home very soon.

Visual Arts

8th grade students revisited one point perspective and designed graffiti words that looked three dimensional. In their ceramics unit they designed Japanese garden lanterns and made figures out of clay. 7th grade students learned about mixing and layering watercolor paints and produced several paintings. In their African mask unit, they researched the peoples and masks of sub-Saharan Africa. Each student created their own three dimensional mask influenced by the masks they studied. Sixth grade students painted up a storm with some pretty impressive results. They concluded the semester with one point perspective drawings of cities.

A fresh batch of students started visual arts this semester. Each student made their own sketchbook which they will use all semester. 8th grade students started with value scales and shading which they put to use in their still life drawings. They also made steampunk style insects and arachnids from air dry clay and metal hardware. These fantastical creatures are quite impressive.

The 7th grade students made ceramic puzzle boxes and mugs from clay. They also spent a considerable amount of time working on two point perspective. After our field trip to the National Museum of African Art they began researching an African ethnic group in preparation for our mask unit.

6th grade students painted with tints, shades and blends to create a colorful portfolio of paintings, ask them to share them with you. They are finishing up their clay unit in which they made emoji's, fish and a coil vessel. They will be glazing and taking home these pieces in the next quarter.

Chorus

During the second marking period, the 7th and 8th grade chorus participated in the Wakefield Pyramid Concert on November 4. Act II, 6th, 7th and 8th grade choral students all performed a successful Winter Concert on December 14. The 6th grade chorus was invited to perform for the APS Department of Instruction at the Syphax Education Center on December 18 and were very well received. After these performances, students have been continuing their study of music literacy through reflection, vocabulary and sight singing. 7th and 8th grade students prepared for their District Assessment (our version of an SOL) which took place Saturday, March 5.

During the third marking period, 7th and 8th grade chorus students were busy preparing their performance for the Virginia Music Educators Association District XII Choral Assessment on March 5. Students were assessed on two contrasting pieces of choral repertoire from a graded list and on sight reading an eight measure example of music. The chorus earned an overall Excellent rating, with stage score of Excellent and a sight reading score of Superior. The 6th grade chorus continued their study of music literacy and began preparing for their spring performance. All classes are now selecting repertoire and prepared music for the Spring Concert taking place on Wednesday, May 11, and the Spring Trip to Busch Gardens on Friday, June 3.

Orchestra

Our orchestra students presented a Winter Concert on December 15th, along with Jefferson's choral program. The Chamber and Virtuosi orchestras prepared music for the South Arlington Orchestra Pyramid Concert at Wakefield on February 10th and the String Ensemble looks forward to Strings Day, an interactive session with members of the Arlington Philharmonic String Quintet, on January 29th. All ensembles are preparing for their performances this spring, ranging from District Assessment in March, to Solo & Ensemble Festival in April.

This quarter saw our Virtuosi and Chamber Orchestra program's participation in 2 performances. The first one, the South Arlington Pyramid Orchestra concert, was hosted by Phaedra Long, Wakefield High School's orchestra director and featured a well-received program involving elementary and middle school students from many of our Arlington schools ending with selections by Wakefield's orchestra. On Saturday March 5th, all orchestras took part in the District 12 Orchestra Festival at Marshall H.S. in Falls Church, each presenting a warm-up and 2 prepared selections for a 3-judge panel. The String Ensemble performed for "Comments Only" and our Chamber Virtuosi Orchestra earned an overall score of "Good," for stage performance, with an "Excellent" in sight-reading. Several students also took part as soloists or chamber musicians in the April 22nd All-District Solo & Ensemble Festival at Cooper M.S. in McLean, VA. During 4th quarter, all ensembles will be busy preparing music for our Spring Concert on Monday, May 9th and for the June 3rd Spring Trip to Busch Gardens.

News from the Library

It's hard to believe, but the end of the year is in sight. All books will be due and need to be returned in early June (probably by **Friday, June 3rd**) so we can begin our end-of-year preparations. Lost items will need to be paid for so we can replace them.

But even after books need to be returned to the Library, we still want students to read! The Jefferson Library has e-books and e-audiobooks that students can check out! The books are free, and there are a lot of great titles—and lots of new titles added recently!! All students with iPads, phones, or other devices can use these e-books using apps they download to their devices—**MackinVia** and **BryteWave K-12**. Directions are available from the Jefferson homepage (put your cursor on **Library** and click on **E-Books**). Or see Ms. Wall if you have any questions—it can be a bit confusing to set up the first time, but it works really well after that ;)

There are lots of great summer activities available through the Arlington Public Library.

- The summer reading program starts on Saturday, June 4th—that's when registration begins. There will be prizes when students have read 5 (Bronze medal), 10 (Silver medal), and 15 books (Gold medal)! You can get more information and sign up for summer reading at library.arlingtonva.us/a-z-list/summer-reading/middle-and-high-school-summer-reading/
- And there will be lots of fun activities, crafts, and movies at all of the branches throughout the summer.

I will be posting reminders about public library activities and other book-related information on the Jefferson Library Twitter account. Please consider following the **Jefferson Library Twitter account @JeffersonReads**