

The Jefferson Post

Thomas Jefferson
Middle School's
Student Newspaper

Spring is
FINALLY here!



April 2014

Issue 3

Thomas Jefferson Middle School, Arlington, VA

Outdoor Classrooms! New TJ Garden Plan Makes Room for Students

By Jefferson Post staff

“Can we have class outside?”

As the weather gets warmer, that’s where we all want to go. Often, our teachers say no, unsure where a class could sit outside. But with the help of a new PTA garden design, teachers will soon have new places to take us outdoors.

There is already a garden at TJ, which was founded in 2010 by a local Girl Scout troop. Since then, the garden has been supplying food—about 900 pounds of fresh produce a year—to the Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC).

But under the new plan, which was funded by a grant from

Arlington County Parks and Recreation, the garden will be expanded to include many more plants and outdoor seating.

Seating for classes. Outside!

According to Marney Michalowski, chair of the PTA Garden Committee, the plans include four new areas perfect for outdoor classes: a covered grape arbor, a Poetry Circle under trees where 24-30 students can sit on bales of hay, a covered picnic area with tables and benches for up to 36 people, and an outdoor amphitheater with seating for 100 people. (See Garden Map on page 3).

While much of the new garden

remains to be built and planted, “the space in and around the garden is available for use now!” Michalowski says. The Poetry Circle could be ready as soon as the bales of hay dry out from this winter’s rain and snow. The other areas will take more time.

The PTA plans to buy things like clipboards, gloves, aprons and boots to help support the outdoor classes.

Michalowski and the PTA hope teachers will use the garden to help teach all kinds of classes. “The Raingarden, Herb Spiral, Compost station, pond and rain exchange can support geography, history, language and cooking or nutrition (continued on page 2)

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An Interview with School Resource Officer Sean Blow

By Mina Al-Hashimi

This was Officer Blow’s first year as our school resource officer (SRO). Staff reporter Mina Al-Hashimi talks with him.

Q: How was your first year here at TJ?

A: My first year at TJ has been

a learning experience and very rewarding. This is my first year as a school resource officer.

Q: Have you ever worked at a school before?

A: Other than being a basketball coach, no, I haven’t worked at a school. My previous assignment



Officer Sean Blow

(photo by Ruth Haileselassie)

had been on the road as a patrol officer.

For the past two years, I was on day work. Prior to that, I was working the midnight shift. During my career, I had a

(continued on page 2)

Let's Have Class Outside! (from page 1)

lessons," she says. "The Shakespeare Garden and Poetry Circle are perfect for reading or writing. Hands-on math, science and art opportunities are many, throughout the garden" she says. The amphitheater, she notes, would be a great place to stage a play, or for more than one class to work together.

"I hope the outdoor classroom helps students feel relaxed and happy and excites them to learn in whatever way works best for them!" Michalowski says.

Besides the places for classes, the new garden design will be able to grow a lot more food. Michalowski says the garden has already planted corn, green beans and squash—The Three Sisters—and plans to plant traditional Virginia crops like cotton

and peanuts. They also hope to plant tomatoes, eggplants, five kinds of peppers, carrots, blackberries raspberries, pumpkins, herbs and lettuce. The lettuce is served in June at TJ lunches in the cafeteria.

The centerpiece of the new garden plan will be the World Garden, which will feature produce grown on the different continents of the world. (*see map on page 3*).

Can students take some of the produce home? Michalowski hopes the garden can grow enough food to allow for that, but for now, students should ask permission before picking anything.

The garden also hopes to help grow food for families at TJ who might be in need. "We know some of our students and fami-

lies can struggle to have enough food to eat so we hope the garden can make a difference for them. We want families to tell us what they would like the garden to grow," Michalowski explains.

Lastly, the garden is a place students can come back to, long after they leave TJ. "We've had kids return to help with the garden because they learned that they actually like a certain vegetable once they've tried it," Michalowski points out. "And they think it's fun to be in the garden!"

So, let's tell our teachers: we wanna go outside!

With contributions from Morgan Schlimme, Mina Al-Hashimi, Ida Heid, Jordan Artis, Mikayla Booth, and Ruth Haileselassie

Officer Blow, continued from Page 1

chance to work all three shifts (day shift, evening shift and midnight shift). Working patrol was exciting and I got an opportunity to respond to every call for service imaginable.

Q: Do you have any big concerns about TJ students and how they act?

A: So far, I have not had any concerns with the students or the way they act.

Q: What are some things that you think all TJ students need to know about their personal safety at school?

A: All in all, the areas around the school and Arlington County as a whole are safe places. I would like for students to always be aware of their surroundings. Also, if something doesn't feel right or doesn't look right, don't hesitate to call the police. Lastly, for students walking to school, when you cross the street, make sure you make eye contact with the driver of the car to make sure they see you. Also, take headphones off when crossing the street.

Q: Some people don't understand why a police officer needs to be in a school. Can you explain that?

A: The SRO program was started in the 1950s, and the goal was to improve the relationship between the school community and the police. The primary role of the SRO is not to arrest students, but to take action if necessary. The SRO provides expertise on safety programs, alcohol and drug use programs, and crime prevention. Also, in this day and age with school shootings becoming more common, the SRO has become more welcomed into schools by all.

Q: Tell us something about yourself.

A: I'm originally from Virginia Beach. I graduated from Radford University, where I majored in accounting and played basketball. I also served in the U.S. Army. My favorite sports teams are the Washington Redskins, the Los Angeles Lakers, and the Washington Capitals.

Q: Why didn't you become an accountant?

A: Shortly after graduating college I had a job in accounting, but wanted to follow the family tradition and join the military...When my original enlistment was up, the only option I had was to stay at Fort Hood... I was homesick and decided to get

out of the Army and move back to Virginia Beach to be closer to my family.

Q: Do you have a family of your own?

A: I have a girlfriend and two kids (Aaron, 3 1/2 years old and Vivianne, almost 2 years old.)

Q: Do you live near here?

A: I live in Stafford, Va.

Q: Do you think TJ is a good school education-wise?

A: When I heard I was going to be assigned to TJ, I researched the school and found out about the IB program. So I would say yes, I think TJ is a good school education-wise. I'm glad to be a part of TJ.

Q: Thank you!



THOMAS JEFFERSON MIDDLE SCHOOL EDIBLE SCHOOLYARD DESIGN

Seating: Seating will be provided for all students in the garden for a total of 300 seats. The seating will be provided in the form of benches and tables. The seating will be provided in the form of benches and tables. The seating will be provided in the form of benches and tables.

The design will allow for an open garden with an outdoor kitchen, a shaded gathering space for 24-30 students, sitting on bales of hay. There will be a lot and vegetable growing beds. The garden will be a lot and vegetable growing beds. The garden will be a lot and vegetable growing beds.

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The Poetry Circle will be a shady gathering space for 24-30 students, sitting on bales of hay.

The Grape Arbor has seating for outdoor classes.

The World Garden will feature plants grown on different continents, and seating for 24 people.

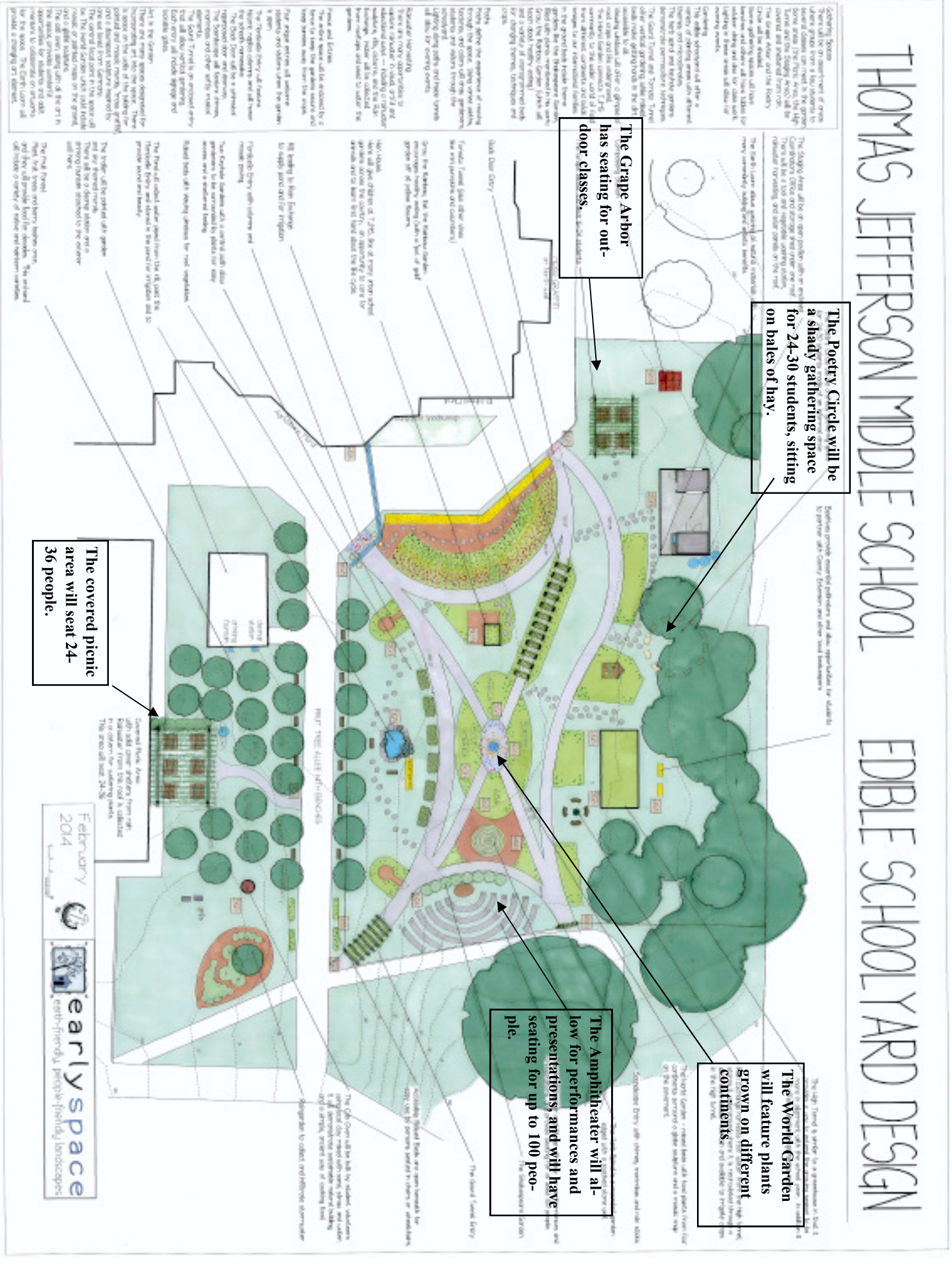
The Amphitheater will allow for performances and presentations, and will have seating for up to 100 people.

The covered picnic area will seat 24-36 people.

February 2014



early space
early-friendly, people-friendly landscapes



Our Advice Column: Ask Dr. Jefferson B

(Gentler than a yellow jacket, Dr. Jefferson B will solve all your problems)



Dear Dr. Jefferson B:

How do I ask someone out on a date—especially if he/she is shy?

—A Random Fan

Dear Random Fan:

First off, make sure that you know him/her first. Nobody is going to want to go out with someone they don't even know, but if your crush knows you and has spoken to you before, they are more likely to accept your offer.

Next, it's important not to ask when you are in an area with many people, or where you may be overheard. This situation could be disastrous, especially since you said your crush is shy. If he/she knows others may be listening, they may be likely to decline or just walk away, simply out of embarrassment.

When you do ask him/her out, be sure to ask about a casual daytime date so there isn't as much awkwardness as a nighttime

one. Really, a date is just hanging out with someone and getting to know them—don't make it sound like more than that.

Also, if he/she says no, don't keep asking or pressuring them. Don't forget, even if the two of you don't end up going out, you can still be close friends. However, if you pressure them, you two will probably never be on comfortable speaking terms again.

Good luck!

Dear Dr. Jefferson B:

My brother stole my money. I don't know how to get it back. What should I do?

—Confused

Dear Confused:

Thanks for coming to us with your question! We all understand where you're coming from—siblings take things that aren't theirs all the time. However, you need to stay calm instead of losing your temper.

Often, people just do things to get a reaction. If you get upset, you're only doing what your brother wants.

However, your brother may not have had the intention of annoying you by taking your money. He may just have wanted to buy something and didn't know how any other way to get it. If this is the case, talk to him about it. Make sure to be steadfast in getting your money back, but also suggest other ideas on how to get whatever he wants.

On the other hand, if he is just trying to upset you, stay strong and don't lose your temper. Confront him and make sure you get your money back. If he doesn't give it to you, tell your parents or guardians. Make sure that this is a last resort though—the last thing you want to do is tattle.

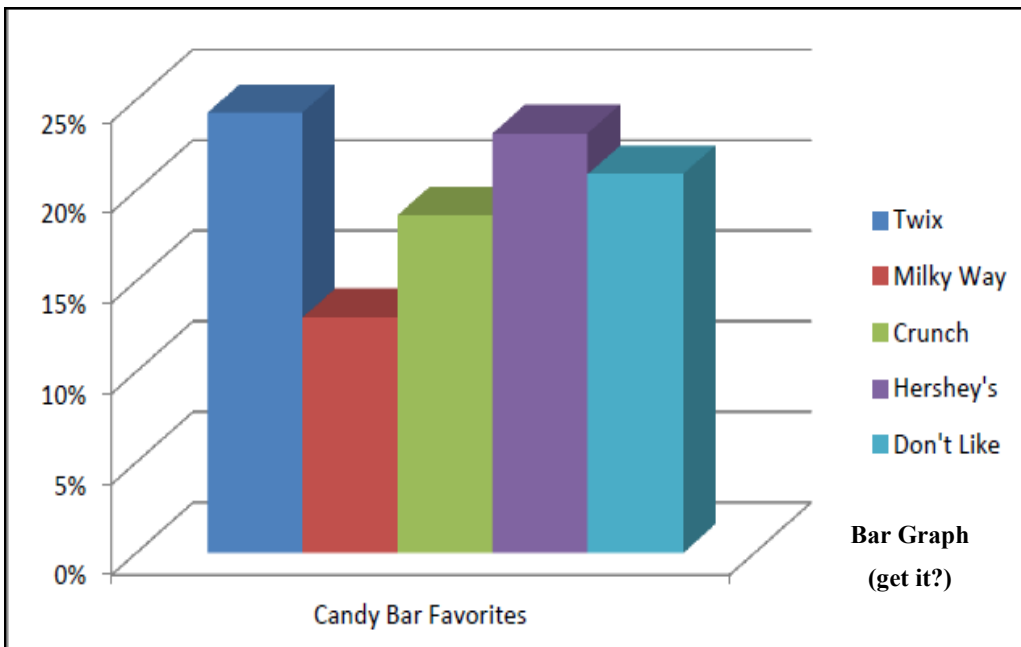
I hope I've solved your problem!

Sincerely, Dr. Jefferson B

Look for Dr. Jefferson B's **Advice Box** in the library. Leave a note if you need advice. The wise Doctor promises to write back in the next issue. Don't worry, your identity will be protected!

We Asked TJMS:

What is Your Favorite Kind of Candy Bar?

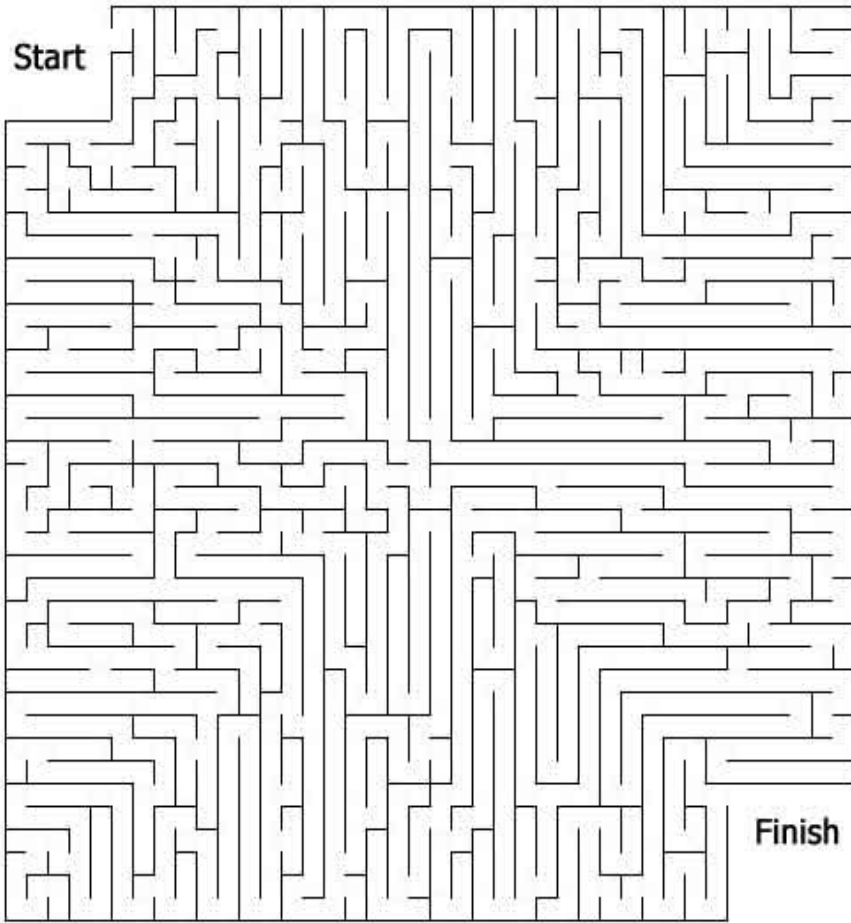


Out of 177 TJ students surveyed by the *Jefferson Post* staff, **Twix** was the candy bar of choice with 43 votes. Milky Ways got 23 votes, Nestle's Crunch bars got 33 votes, and Hershey's chocolate bars got 41 votes. Meanwhile, 37 students polled said they didn't like any of the choices.

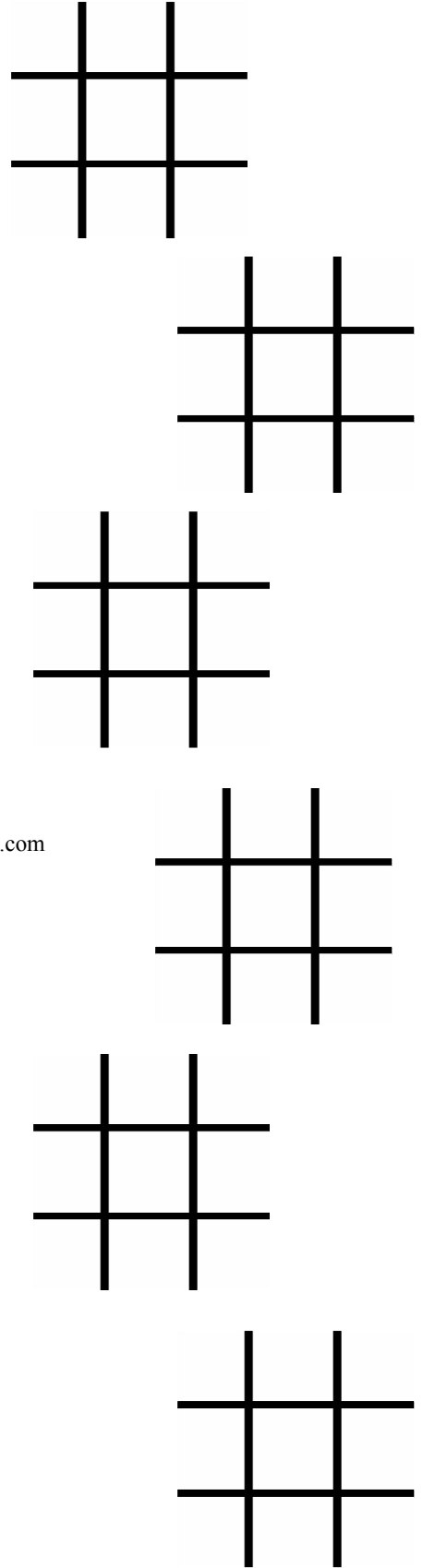
—polling by Mikayla Booth, Mina Al-Hashimi, and Ruth Haileselassie

—data compiled by Mikayla Booth

Readers Asked for More Games, So Here They Are....



Tic Tac Toe Boards



Source of Maze: www.allkidsnetwork.com Source of Connect-the-dots: gonnafly.squidoo.com



The Jefferson Post

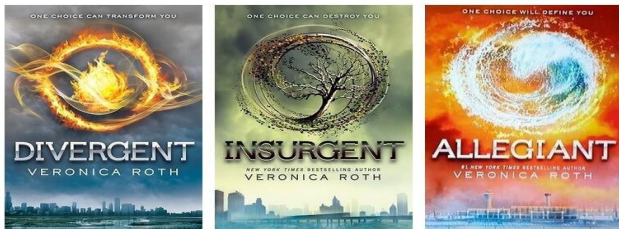
A quarterly publication written by the students, for the students.

A limited number of print copies now available!

For a full-color version, visit our link on the TJMS homepage

<http://apsva.us/Domain/1676>

Contact us at: tjmsjeffpost@gmail.com



TAB Book Review “Allegiant” by Veronica Roth

(WARNING: SLIGHT SPOILERS)

Set in a dystopian universe, “Allegiant” is the third book in the “Divergent” series. In the story, there are five factions, each representing a character trait exemplified by those within it. The book follows Tris, a teenager who is “divergent,” which means that she fits into more than one faction.

In the first book, she had just discovered her “divergence” and the consequences that went along with it. In the second book, she began to fight the close-minded society and leader of one of the factions, Jeanine Matthews, who was attempting to kill all Divergents. In the third book, the society begins to crumble as the factions disintegrate and people are let loose on the street. Tris, a few of her friends, and others decide to venture outside the “fence,” a, well, fence surrounding the city that no one enters or exits.

When the group leaves, they stumble upon a science facility that has been monitoring them for years, and even put the faction system in place as an experiment. Soon, Tris and her close friends are faced with a troubling decision as an important (and nearly life-or-death) deadline nears.

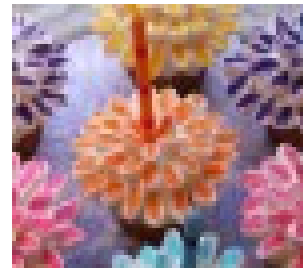
Personally, I don’t care for “Allegiant” as much as I did for Veronica Roth’s first two books, “Divergent” and “Insurgent.” Slowly, “Allegiant” became less of an excitement to read and more of a chore. I felt as if it was dragging on too long, and the decisions and actions of the characters stopped making sense.

Overall, I would recommend “Divergent” and “Insurgent,” but I didn’t care for “Allegiant” much at all.

Recipe Corner

This issue’s featured recipe:

Spring Flower Cupcakes



This recipe is easy, using a cake mix and canned frosting.

Ingredients:

1 box cake mix
1 cup buttermilk - use in place of the water
Vegetable oil - same as listed on box
4 eggs
paper or metallic cupcake cups

For Frosting:

cup canned white frosting
1 bag mini-marshmallows
decorating sugar

Directions:

Mix and bake cupcakes according to cake mix instructions. Set on a baker’s rack to cool.

Frost cooled cupcakes with vanilla frosting. Use kitchen shears to cut 22 mini-marshmallows on a diagonal. Dip the cut side of each marshmallow into the colored decorating sugar. Start on the outer edge of the cupcake and place the marshmallows sugar side up, close enough together to touch. Repeat for 2 more rows with the same color petals. Repeat for all of the remaining cupcakes.

—Mikayla Booth

Source: www.babble.com

Given that “Insurgent” has a cliffhanger ending, I would suggest just reading “Divergent” and leaving the rest up to your imagination.

—Annie Zetkolic

Totally Useless Trivia:

Did you know....

- A sneeze travels out of your mouth at over 100 mph?
- The penguin is the only bird that can swim and not fly?
- Pearls melt in vinegar?
- “Chinese” fortune cookies were actually invented in America, in 1918, by Charles Jung?

—trivia collected by Nishta Gautam

Source: gsl.net