

# The Memorial Times

Spring 2018

Issue 2

## Principal's Corner

### Principals Corner:

Spring is here finally!! Trees are budding, flowers are pushing their way up through the earth's surface and warm weather will be here to last for weeks!! Students will be taking the PARCC Exam 5-8 soon- everyone will try to do their best on these exams. I want to congratulate students in advance for a job that I am sure will be well done. I also want to thank the excellent staff at Memorial School for helping to prepare students for these very important tests.

We are getting ready to end the school year and enjoy the 8th grade graduation. We also have exciting grade level trips to Washington, Boston, Sandy Hook, and New York City to look forward to.

Everyone, enjoy the beautiful spring weather, and remember to keep up with your academics. Your final grades are very important and you need to do the best you can. The conclusion of the school year is only a few weeks away, so let's enjoy it and do the best we can!!!



~Mr. Silverstein

## A LOOK INSIDE:

- **School Happenings**
- **Poetry and Literature**
- **Science and Economics**
- **How Tos**
- **Horoscopes**
- **Book Reviews**
- **Comics and Drawings**
- **Poems**
- **The Winter Olympics**
- **School Sports**

*"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams" — Eleanor Roosevelt*

## Editors Note

The year has sprung, and with that comes a new edition of the newspaper! The entire staff has worked tirelessly to achieve an enjoyable edition for all students. It's our pleasure to bring you the news from our school and community, accompanied by various works of literature and the arts. On behalf of the newspaper staff I hope you enjoy this edition as much as we did writing it.

Your Editor,  
Diya Patel

## A Note From the Advisor

It's been a long winter season, but Spring is finally here and the Memorial Middle School Newspaper Club is happy to release Edition 2 of our prided school newspaper. This particular edition of the newspaper touches upon a great variety of topics from space exploration and electronic currency, to book reviews and short stories. The writers worked very diligently to produce quality reading for the staff and students at Memorial School as well as the Woodland Park Community. I hope everyone has a lovely spring season and, as always, happy reading!!!

-Ms. Riviera

# The Seeing Eye

by Erin Ryan and Alissa Gencarelli

The Animal Club field trip to the Seeing Eye dog was a great experience! The organization raises puppies to become Seeing Eye dogs and trains the Seeing Eye dogs to guide people with blindness. The organization also takes care of the dogs and conducts and supports research on canine health and development. The types of dogs they breed are Golden Retrievers, German Shepherds and Labrador Retrievers.



Here is some history on The Seeing Eye. In 1927, a young man named Morris Frank read an article about dogs being trained as guides for blinded veterans of World War I. Frustrated by his own lack of mobility as a blind person, he wanted to write its author. Dorothy Harrison Eustis was an American training German Shepherd police dogs in Switzerland. When she received Morris Frank's letter, she agreed to help him. In return for Dorothy helping him, Frank said that when he arrived back in the United States he would spread good word about her and her training the dogs.

Here are some facts about The Seeing Eye:

- The Seeing Eye breeds about 500 puppies each year
- For each litter bred, the puppies are named by alphabet. For example, the first liter, they name the puppies starting with the letter A, the next liter B, and so on.
- Seeing eye has our school's name engraved in a brick
- The Seeing Eye opened its first headquarters in Nashville, Tennessee on January 29, 1929. They relocated to Whippany New Jersey in 1931.



The exterior of the Passaic County Jail

## Passaic County Jail Trip Q & A!

by Joey Granata

Have you ever been inside a jail or a prison? Recently, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students here at Memorial went to visit the Passaic County Jail in Paterson. They experienced a lot from the prisoners. The students heard the inmates talk about their life stories, how they ended up in jail, their regrets, etc. For example, they explained their offenses and charges (drugs, homicide, etc.). Below is a question and answer with some 8<sup>th</sup> graders that went on the trip.

**Q:** What was your first impression of the jail when you arrived?

**A:** "When we pulled up I was kind of scared but at the same time anxious to see if the jail was really how television shows picture it." **Christopher P**

**Q:** What did you think of the cell and kitchen area?

**A:** "The cells were very small and everything was cramped together. The kitchen was very dirty, unorganized and there was food all over the floors." **Chyna S**

**Q:** Did any of the prisoners scare you when you walked past the cells?

**A:** "No, if they just started to talk to me I would turn my head the other way to ignore them." **Diya P**

**Q:** Would you go to the jail again, and why/why not?

**A:** "No because it was disgusting, and I can't imagine revisiting that place. It was okay to go once, but I'd never go back." **Jaidyn D**

### ***Jail and Prison Facts***

~There are over 5,000 jails and prisons in the U.S.

~About half of the inmates in federal prisons are serving time for non-violent drug offenses.

~ Federal law currently requires a mandatory minimum sentence of five years for a first-time, non-violent drug offense.

**Taken from <http://www.newsweek.com/eighteen-facts-you-need-know-about-us-prisons-308860>**

## Show Review: One Punch Man

by Ben Mendoza

100 push-ups, 100 sit-ups, 100 squats, and a ten kilometer run once a day for four years. Seems impossible, right? Especially for a guy that looks as silly as this character does. The outcome is even *more* astonishing. Being able to destroy an enemy in – you guessed it—one punch. After saving a child from certain death, he trained so hard that he literally went bald. With great power, comes many rivals, and responsibility. This show is full of laughs and action. Be sure to tune in on Netflix and watch the series.



## Finish the Lyrics

by Jaidyn Dillon

1. I been movin' calm, don't start no trouble with me  
Tryna keep it peaceful is a struggle for me  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. 'Cause I'm tired of the fake love, show me what  
you're made of Boy, make me believe  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What's fun about commitment?  
When we have our life to live  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Haven't I made it obvious? Haven't I made it clear?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Wait, can you turn around, can you turn around?  
Just wait, can we work this out, can we work this  
out?  
\_\_\_\_\_

1. Don't pull up at 6 AM to cuddle with me; God's Plan by Drake
2. But hold up, girl, don't you know you're beautiful?  
And it's easy to see; Meant to Be by Bebe Rexha feat. Florida Georgia Line
3. Yeah, we're just young dumb and broke but we still got love  
to give; Young Dumb and Broke by Khalid
4. Want me to spell it out for you? F-R-I-E-N-D-S Friends by Marshmello
5. Just wait, can you come here please? 'Cause I want to be  
with you; Wait by Maroon 5

## The "Jeopardy" Assembly





## Bitcoin: Future or Fad?

by Christopher Perez

Exchanging money may not be of interest to you, however, have you ever heard of Bitcoin? You're probably thinking: Why do I need to know about this stuff now, I'm only in middle school! Bitcoin is an online currency that can be used to trade goods and services, with vendors who accept Bitcoins as a payment option. Its creator, Satoshi Nakamoto, is a mysterious legend who has not identified his real identity to the public. As of April 2018, one bitcoin is worth \$7,037.02 USD and is continuing to fluctuate in price.

There are numerous benefits to investing in Bitcoin. Investors of Bitcoins are making a great deal of money right now. If you bought \$100 worth of Bitcoin in May of 2010, it would be worth \$72.9 million today! Bitcoin is also the most liquid, meaning the price changes so often, of all cryptocurrencies or online currencies. Not to mention, there is no middleman for Bitcoin; no single entity or government has control over the currency, and no fees or taxes can be applied to it.

While Bitcoin may seem perfect, there are many flaws. First, it is not real, but instead, virtual. Bitcoin is a mathematical algorithm and is not tangible. The value of Bitcoin is based on the market, which can change at any time. For instance, at one time the value of Bitcoin quickly plunged \$200 in a small moment's notice. This is bad compared to the fact that real currencies move in small ranges when they change in value. Last, an investor cannot reverse his/her transaction. Therefore, if you sent Bitcoins to the wrong person or address, it is gone forever (unless the person is nice enough to refund the Bitcoins to you).









Now that you know a little more about Bitcoin, do you think it is or will be the future of currencies or a fad?



This chart illustrates the change in price of Bitcoins, from July of 2014 to predicted values in October 2018.

## The Spring Sun Signs

by Daniella Mencia

Aries  21 Mar - 19 Apr	Taurus  20 Apr - 20 May	Gemini  21 May - 21 Jun
Cancer  22 Jun - 23 Jul	Leo  24 Jul - 23 Aug	Virgo  24 Aug - 22 Sept
Libra  23 Sept - 22 Oct	Scorpio  23 Oct - 22 Nov	Sagittarius  23 Nov - 20 Dec
Capricorn  22 Dec - 20 Jan	Aquarius  21 Jan - 19 Feb	Pisces  20 Feb - 20 Mar

*Spring. It is the beginning season of the sun signs! If you are unfamiliar with how horoscopes work, find your birthday above. Then, look for your sign below and read on to determine your season's fortune.*

**Aries-** You will be more organized and determined than you usually are, your talent will be recognized, your health will be excellent and teamwork will reward you. Don't worry that you're wasting your energy. You're in for a good year!

**Taurus-** You'll have a peaceful and happy life with occasional bumps in the road. Money will be easy to find and calmness awaits you if you don't worry about small things. Make the most of this year!

**Gemini-** You'll be fresh and anew if you don't worry. You'll have a wonderful year if you don't get frustrated over things that are small. Luck is on your side!

**Cancer-** Don't waste your energy on destroying people. Communication is important to keep friends and close bonds with family. Don't find excuses to not relax. Be optimistic and things will eventually turn out well!

**Leo-** 2018 is an excellent year for the Leo sign! Fight through drama that may come your way and you'll eventually reach the top. Remember to stay in contact with the ones you love.

**Virgo-** 2018 will be a very busy year for the Virgos. You will be happy to finish old projects and begin new ones. But, don't get so busy that you get sick due to too much work. This will be a good year!

**Libra-** This year, you should relax and give yourself a break. Enjoy every day and don't be afraid. This year will be fascinating and worry-free for the most part!

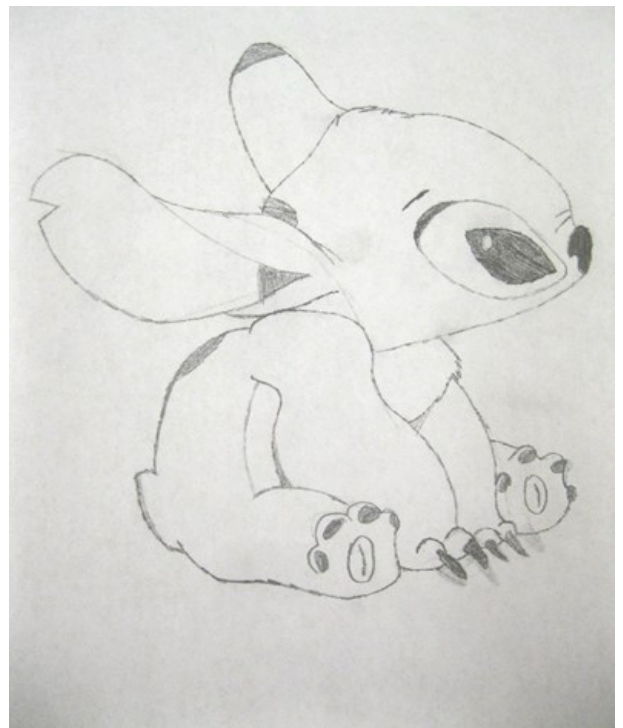
**Scorpio-** 2018 for Scorpio will be easy! If you work hard, then you will be able to relax later. All will be well in the long run!

**Sagittarius-** Sagittarius sign will have an amazing 2018! Your life will be filled with happiness and fulfillment!

**Capricorn-** This is the year where you can do more. Be sure to focus on your dreams and work hard towards making them come true!

**Aquarius-** This year will be great for the Aquarius! This year will be full of balance and happiness!

**Pisces-** If an important competition comes up, you'll do great. You will do well on your tests, life or school. If you feel unsure of yourself, remember you are perfect just the way you are!



Stitch by Luca Vapore

## The Most Terrifying Enemies in Subnautica

by Mohammed Abualouf

Subnautica is a survival adventure game developed and published by Unknown Worlds Entertainment. After your ship, the Aurora, crashes on the oceanic Planet 4546B, you must craft your survival to, well, survive. Along with its story, such as the Degasi survivors, the highly contagious alien bacterium known as the Kharaa, and the story of the other Aurora survivors, this oceanic planet is extremely vast. This leaves room for the most intriguing of creatures. Mostly enemies. But fear not, because I will lead you through some of the most terrifying of enemies.

*Reaper Leviathan* -The Reaper Leviathan is a feared enemy throughout the entire game. You will most likely find them near the wreckage of the Aurora, the Crash Zone, the Crash Zone Mesas, the dunes, and the mountains. One thing is certain: they are MASSIVE.



This creature is just a little shorter than a Cyclops. The Reaper Leviathan species was responsible for the destruction of the "Deep Grand Reef" Degasi Seabase. One of the most unique features about the Reaper Leviathan are the maroon mandibles sticking out of their head. They use these mandibles to grab the player. If you are in a Seamoth, then it will demolish it, leaving you time to hopefully outrun your terrifying pursuer with your Seaglide (they measure in at 55 meters.) My bit of advice: if you hear its highly audible roar, run. Or swim, actually.

*Ghost Leviathan*- This leviathan class creature that belongs to the fauna category is currently the second largest aggressive creature in Subnautica. It will spiral up and charge to attack a target. While it is charging, it will open its mouth and make a loud, echoing screech. In my opinion, the Ghost Leviathans' mouth is probably the scariest looking. If the attack is successful, it will inflict 85% damage to the player and then swim away as if it has lost interest. According to the Subnautica Wiki, "*The Ghost Leviathan has a soft, transparent outer membrane covering a muscular, blue, inner body which features many darker blue stripes, four yellow, bioluminescent eyes as well as six, possibly vestigial fins on the torso section.*" Trivia time! The old sound for the Ghost Leviathan was two people screaming and the noises of a bull. They can be found in the Dead Zone, Grand Reef, the Lost River (Bones Field, Ghost Forest, Mountains Corridor), and the Northern Blood Kelp Zone. A juvenile sizes up at around 67 meters, while an adult measures at a whopping 107 meters. Steer clear of them, or else you'll end up as a mere ghost.

*Mesmer* - Don't be fooled by its pretty looks. These things will LITERALLY mesmerize you! If you face a Mesmer, your PDA will tell you, "*It is your primary directive to swim closer to that beautiful creature... Swim closer... Swim closer now... It looks so friendly... Do not resist... Don't struggle... Go closer.*" The Mesmer will start to swim closer to you as it attracts you in. When it (or you) get close enough, it will attack by opening its body and thrusting its spiked tentacles, dealing 35% damage to the player, followed by fleeing. Their common locations are the Bulb Zone, the Crag Field, the Kelp Forest, the Kelp Forest Caves, the Lost River, the Bones Field, and the Mushroom Forest. Remember that when you encounter a Mesmer, you must [ERROR 5764] swim closer...do not resist...

*Sea Dragon Leviathan* -...closer... Oops, sorry about that. Oh no, not the Sea Dragon Leviathan! THIS. GUY. IS. HUGE. Take notice of that. This carnivore can only be found in the Inactive Lava Zone and Lava Lakes. As you could already infer, you might want to rather take damage from anything BUT this. The Sea Dragon Leviathans' bite is an instant death. Its swat is 40% damage, its fire breath is 20% damage, and its meteors inflict 80% damage. This creature is one of the oldest creatures on Planet 4546B. Trivia time! The sounds of the Sea Dragon Leviathan were made by combining the real sounds of an elephant, a bull, and a tiger. It has a story that explains how the Kharaa became so contagious. According to the Subnautica Wiki and the story on the PDA, "*A little under a thousand years ago, a Sea Dragon Leviathan Egg was taken by the Precursors and contained within the Disease Research Facility for testing, however, the parent Sea Dragon pursued the Precursors back to the facility and laid waste to it, resulting in the Kharaa Bacterium being released onto Planet 4546B, causing the Precursors to put the planet into quarantine.*" Deep, right? So basically, this behemoth was RESPONSIBLE for the Kharaa bacterium being released into Planet 4546B. Fear the Sea Dragon Leviathan... also, WHY is there LAVA in an OCEANIC planet!? Video game logic, I guess.



# Have You Ever Wanted to be on Mars? You Might

## Have a Chance!

by Chyna Sinclair

### Atacama Desert



As much talk as we've heard about life on Mars, this evidence might actually justify our hopes. In Chile's Atacama Desert which is one of the driest and most inhospitable places on Earth, a community of bacteria has taken root. This bacteria can survive a decade without water. The research done should put to rest the doubts of many. Since the soils in this location closely resemble those on Mars, these small bacteria may give hope to those seeking life on Mars similarly hostile surface. The Atacama Desert stretches inland 1,000 kilometers from the Pacific coast of Chile, and rainfall can be as low as 8 millimeters per year. There's such little precipitation that there's very little weathering, so over time the surface has built up a crusty layer of salts, further discouraging life there.



### Research

Dirk Schulze-Makuch, an astrobiologist at the Technical University of Berlin, and his team collected samples from eight places in the Atacama—from the coast eastward to the driest places—over 3 years. They gathered materials a month after a record-setting rain in 2015, and then followed up with yearly collections in some of the same places in 2016 and 2017. They sequenced all the copies of a gene known to separate bacterial species to determine what was in those samples and recovered some full genomes (complete sets of DNA). The researchers also did a test to determine the proportion of DNA that came from living cells. Finally, they evaluated the amount of cellular activity including different molecules and acids that resulted from the activity to looking at additional evidence of life. The coastal samples contained the most number and diversity of microbes, but in 2015, there were signs of life even in the driest spots. Following a rainfall event, there is a flush of activity and cells are replicating.

### Results

Overall, the coast proved most hospitable in both rainy and dry years. In general, the amount of ATP (type of molecule) was 1000 times greater than more inland sites and the amount of breakdown products followed a similar trend, the team reports. The genomes showed, too, that at least a few bacteria were reproducing in the coastal regions and perhaps elsewhere. In a survey, the researchers only identified the bacteria whose DNA resembled DNA already in bacterial databases. What they found in the Atacama were familiar to some degree. During the rainy year, bacteria along the coastal region resembled the community typical of sandy soils. DNA from drier areas belonged mostly to bacteria found in very dry deserts or in salt flats. The research done can prove that the Atacama Desert can serve as a working model for Mars.

### Autism Awareness Door Decorations:



**Autism Awareness Fact:** *Autism affects 1 in 68 children in the United States this year 2018*

# Civil Air Patrol

by Patrick Ryan

The Civil Air Patrol (CAP) is the civilian auxiliary of the United States Air Force. Since Civil Air Patrol's creation before the US became involved in World War II, this organization of citizen Airmen has been committed to serving the United States. The CAP was founded on Dec. 1, 1941, to mobilize the nation's civilian aviation resources for national defense service. Over the past 75+years, CAP has evolved into a premier public service organization that still carries out emergency service missions when needed both in the air and on the ground. As a member of the CAP, you will learn discipline, motivation, and the CAP core values: integrity, volunteer service, excellence, and respect.

This information taken from the national website regarding a description of the CAP as "A Total Force Partner" and Auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, Civil Air Patrol is there to search for and find the lost, provide comfort in times of disaster, and work to keep the homeland safe. Its 56,000 members selflessly devote their time, energy and expertise toward the well-being of their communities, while also promoting aviation and related fields through aerospace/STEM education and helping shape future leaders through CAP's cadet program. (<https://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/about/who-we-are/>)

One adventure you can go on as a member includes Orientation Flights, where you can actually fly the plane. As a CAP member, I completed my first orientation flight recently and it was a blast! There is also cadet basic encampment where you can get special training. During the week-long encampment, cadets will attend classes covering topics such as military airpower, core values, and a drug-free lifestyle. Cadets will participate in physical fitness and drill ceremony activities daily. The encampments take place over the summer when everyone is out of school.

The squadron that I am a member of is the Curtiss-Wright Composite Squadron. We have our weekly meetings on Tuesday nights at the Red Cross Building in Fairfield, NJ. My orientation flight was out of Essex County Airport in Fairfield. If you are thinking about joining, you can attend three meetings to make sure it is for you before committing to the unit. You must also be at least 12-years old.

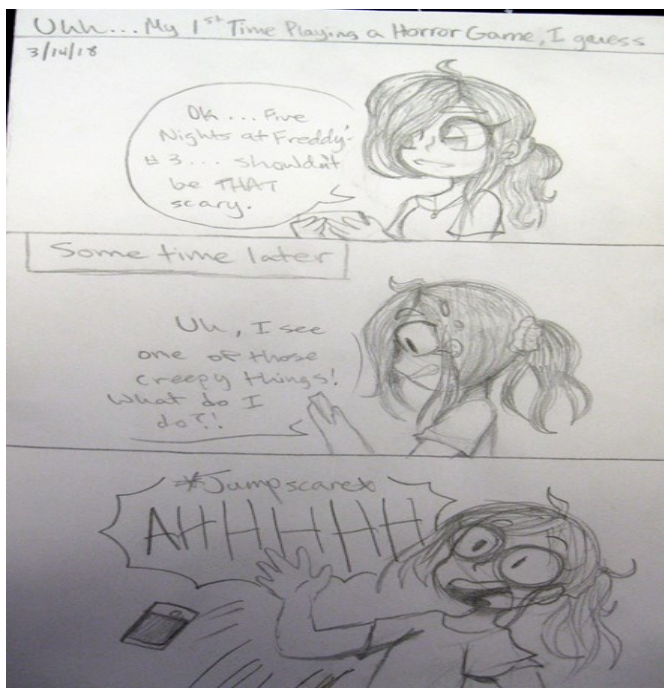
Just a few pointers, if you are thinking about joining. Bring a water bottle, notepad and a pencil and do not talk while other people are talking. That will not go over too well with senior members. Once you have made the decision to join the unit, we have three different types of uniforms. The first the ABUs (Airman Battle Dress Uniform). That is the uniform we wear most of the time. We also have a dress blues uniform, which is a ceremonial uniform. Our third uniform is a black t-shirt with gray sweat pants for physical training days.

I have learned so much in the six months since I have joined CAP. Besides my orientation flight, some of the exciting things we have learned are flying drones, the latest news in aerospace travel, building virtual rockets, and learning about safety. I recommend trying the CAP to anyone interested in aviation, aerospace and serving their country. The senior members are great leaders and make everyone feel welcome. It is a chance to meet new people in a new environment.

If you are interested in joining here is the Unit Web Address: <http://curtiss-wright.njwg.cap.gov/>







*Uhh... My 1<sup>st</sup> Time Playing a Horror Game, I Guess*

by Fariha Khan

## Ideas Come to Life

by Grace Martinez

Kids are known for their imaginations. But, too often, their ideas are shot down by adults that see no practical use for them. However, one website might change that. LittleInventors.org is a website that allows children to connect with manufacturers that will help them bring their ideas to life. Some inventions include: a scooter for four, a rolling lamp, and shoes that make shapes in the dirt when you walk. The website is the brainchild of Dominic Wilcox. He is a British inventor that firmly believes in the unique ideas of children. He originally held nineteen workshops that let children ages 5-12 sketch their ideas. The workshops produced over four hundred and fifty sketches. One thing lead to another, and LittleInventors.org was created. Although not all entries are made a reality, young creators receive constructive feedback on how to improve their inventions. If you have a vision that you wish to share with the world, visit LittleInventors.org.



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## Fariha's Poetry Corner

by Fariha Khan

April is here, and it's also National Poetry Month! This month, dedicated to poetry, was established in 1996 by the Academy of American Poets. To celebrate, here are a couple of my own poems:

### Ocean Galaxy

The salty water ripples  
 And between your toes it tickles  
 The sun goes to sleep  
 Then the moon leaps  
 Then there are the dancing stars  
 Burning so bright, so far  
 All so clustered together happily  
 Altogether, it's your own galaxy  
 Everything reflects in the  
 shimmering ocean  
 The waves hit against you in a calming motion



### Memory's Tune

Everyone has a song that touches them  
 Whether it's only a tune or the words of a poem  
 The sound of the summer laughs or the winter's hum  
 The trickling piano or the beat of the drum  
 The feelings of the memories  
 The same song in your head that spreads like the  
 branches of trees  
 Whether they're sharp and hurtful  
 Or they're full of life and hopeful  
 Or just the remembrance of the good old days  
 Whenever that one song plays



# Book Recommendations

by Betule Zaher

In our school, we have tons of books. From classroom libraries to the school library to Mrs. Barreto's office, books are everywhere. Instead of borrowing books for a short period of time, however, there is the opportunity to purchase some for yourself. You can do so through Scholastic Book Club as well as the school Book Fair. Here are some of the titles we recommend this year! Happy reading!

## Refugee by Alan Gratz Ages: 9-12

Refugee is a realistic/historical fiction novel based on three children looking for refuge. Josef is a Jewish boy living in Nazi Germany in the 1930s. With concentration camps threatening to take him away, he and his family hop on a boat halfway across the world. Isabel is a Cuban girl in 1994. With riots ruining her country, she and her family set off on a raft hoping to regain safety in America. Mahmood is a Syrian Muslim boy in 2015. His homeland has been ripped a part by violence and destruction. He and his family set out on a course for Europe. Although these kids are separated by decades and continents, they all have meaningful stories to share.



## R.I.P. Eliza Hart by Alyssa Sheimel Ages: 12-18

Ellie thinks that going to a boarding school in California surrounded by water would cure her claustrophobia. Once Ellie arrives, she discovers that her childhood best friend Eliza Hart is also a student there. Ellie becomes eager to revive their friendship. However, Eliza spreads rumors about Ellie saying that she's a liar and a stalker. In addition to that, Ellie's fear of people, and finding out about her phobia, causes Ellie to become an outcast. When Eliza Hart is found dead, Ellie is determined to find out what happened to the girl who was her friend turned bully. Her roommate Sam steps in to help her since to everyone else, she looks like a suspect. As the walls begin to close in around her, can Ellie clear her name and find out the truth about Eliza Hart? Her hunt for the truth will force into the open and deep into her childhood with Eliza Hart.



## **Yay It's Finally Spring!**

by Zahara Faulkner

Yay, it's finally spring! I personally love the spring because of the weather; it is not like fall or winter when it is too cold and it is not like the summer when it is too hot. It is just right. Another thing that I like about the spring is the rain. There are three reasons I like the rain. Reason number one: it is not snow. Reason two: I like to stand outside to feel the rain on my face. Reason three: the fact that it waters the flowers, trees, bushes, etc. All of the rain gets the plants ready for summer. By the summer, all the plants will be covered with green leaves or colorful petals. The spring is truly amazing, yes it is. It is not just the weather or the rain I love about spring, it is the animals too. The birds begin to chirp in the spring. Their songs are so pretty. Sometimes in the spring, I get to see the groundhog that lives over by my house. But there is one animal that I don't like that comes out in the spring. The skunk. They come over by my house all the time (they stink). Once again, I will say that the spring is truly amazing. It might have some stinkiness, but the season truly has some wonders as well!



## **How to Decorate for a Spring Party**

by Zahara Faulkner

Spring is a very beautiful season. It's perfect for both indoor and outdoor parties. If you would like tips on how to decorate for either occasion, read on. For starters, you will have to get tables. Round or rectangular— whatever you want. The next step is to get tablecloths. It doesn't matter what color you choose, but it will be the base color to your party. In this case, I will use lavender for my base color since I would personally put lavender tablecloths on my tables. The next step is to get balloons and balloon weights. The balloon weights I would choose would be silver and the balloons would be silver, purple, and gold. Then, all you have to do is get the plates, silverware, table décor, cups and chairs. The plates I would choose would be white with gold cups. The silverware would be silver and the table décor would be purple flowers in a clear vase and purple with silver and gold confetti on the tables. The chairs— black with an option to put white cushions on them. That is how to decorate a simple outdoor or indoor party. Another tip for an outdoor party is to duct tape the tablecloths down in case of strong gusts. Have fun partying!



# Freesia

by Yastika Singh

Freesia stared out of the clear glass window as she lounged on a comfy chair trying to focus on her novel, but only achieving to read three pages in an hour. Things were not looking good outside. Sunny skies were breaking the norm of gray clouds behind gray clouds. The grass looked unusually green and were those... birds chirping? The dirt looked thawed and there were tiny buds on the trees. Correction. It looked treacherous outside. Freesia bit her lip in nervousness. What was wrong with the world? Why was it February, yes *February*, and already looking like Spring? Her mother had insisted she let her turn on the air conditioning a little bit because it was seventy-five degrees outside. Freesia had argued and argued until she was hoarse but to no avail- she still had turned it on.

Now, as she sat curled on the comfy chair with a woolly blanket and heavy jacket wrapped around her like a boa constrictor squeezing the life out of its prey, she sighed. It would be so nice to not have to worry about the cold and getting sick and Spring. Freesia had recovered from a rare, but almost deadly illness that had lasted for years last summer. Now that it was almost Spring, she was dreading the next few months for obvious reasons. With Spring, came kids playing outside, which led to her friends asking her to come and play with them, and her refusing politely and smiling, while secretly crying inside because of course she wanted to play with them, but was way too scared to risk falling sick again. Her parents were somewhat amused by her constant fear of being outdoors. On the contrary, they encouraged her to go out a little with her friends. They said she needed to “live a little”, whatever that meant, but Freesia would much prefer to stay wrapped up in the house not risking anything and only communicating with her friends digitally or occasionally, face to face, when they came over. She actually preferred Winter over Spring because then at least there was no pressure to “live a little”.

“Bling! Bling! Bling!” Her phone went off, alerting her of a call. Freesia reached for her phone and saw the caller ID. It was her good friend Riley. “Hello?” she answered. “Hey Freesia! What’s up?” Riley asked politely. “Nothing, just reading.” Freesia sighed. “Well, how would you like to come with me, Drea, and Elana to Thyme Park at 4:00 today? There is a flower show there and my mom wants to go. She told me you guys could come too. It seems like we haven’t hung out in such a long time, right?” Riley gushed. Freesia glanced at the floor in guilt. She knew very well she had been avoiding her friends ever since the weather had gotten nicer. “Um, yeah definitely. About the flower show, I have to ask my parents first. Text you later?” There was a pause on the other end. “Sure that’s fine. I hope they say yes. I have to go now. See ya!” “Bye.” Freesia ended the call.

She felt like she was the rope in a game of tug of war. One part of her really, really wanted to hang out with her best friends and have a good time. The other part of her was scared to death at what might happen if she actually went. It was one of those times when you can’t decide what you want your parents to say. Soon, Freesia had escaped from the jackets and blankets and scarves of protection, and went to the kitchen to learn what her parents’ verdict would be.

“Mom, Dad, Riley just called me and asked if I wanted to go to Thyme Park with her, Drea and Elana at 4:00 today to see a flower show. Her mom is taking them.” Freesia waited uncertainly, not knowing what to expect.

Her parents glanced at each other in surprise and delight.

“Of course you can go. We’re glad you’re going to get some fresh air and live a little.” Her dad exclaimed.

Her mother beamed and her hazel eyes glinted in happiness. She was a keen gardener and loved the outdoors. You could tell from her messy bun and comfy overalls.

“Freesia, I’m so proud of you. You’ll be fine, I promise you.” Freesia smiled uncertainly. She was excited to go but knew she was going to wear a Winter hat and jacket. “Thanks. I have to go call Riley back. She skipped back and rang Riley up.

“Hi. What did they say?” an excited voice traveled through the phone. “They said I could come! I can’t wait. I’ll see you then Riles.”

“Yes, that’s awesome. Okay, meet us at the welcome sign to the park.” Riley replied happily.

“Ok, bye!” Freesia hung up.

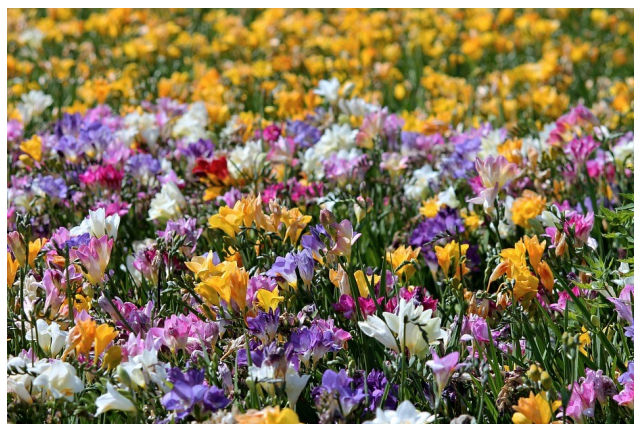
Soon, it was 3:45. Freesia slid on her coat and yanked a woolly hat on her dark hair.

“I’m ready! Can we go?” Freesia called. Her dad came down at that moment.

“Yeah let’s go. Freesia, are you sure you’re going to wear all that? It’s almost eighty degrees.” Her dad pleaded with her.

“Perfectly sure. I’m not taking any chances.” She bounded to the car, already sweating, and the car was moving moments later. Thyme Park was only a mile away and the car rolled into the parking lot a mere minute later.

“Have fun, okay. Call us if you need anything. And you can always take off your hat.” Her dad told her. “Bye Dad!” Freesia ran over to the welcome sign where her friends were. “Hey guys!” she called to them.



“Hi!” they chorused back. Riley, Drea, and Elana were all wearing short sleeves and shorts. “Hi Mrs. Parks. How are you?” Freesia inquired politely. “Hello Freesia. I’m fine thanks. Are you girls ready?” “Yeah let’s go!” Riley exclaimed. There were long plastic tables with smooth white tablecloths covering them. On top were vases of flowers of all different colors. There were hydrangeas, roses, lilacs, lavender, violets, and many more types of flowers. Each bunch was arranged in an artistic style so it was like viewing paintings. Freesia spotted red and yellow freesias and grinned. The group started at one end of the table.

“Wow!” Elana whispered, voicing everyone’s thoughts. They gazed at the bunch in front of them: it was an arrangement of red, white and blue flowers in the shape of an American flag. As they went down the table gazing at the different arrangements, the temperature began to swell. It grew hotter and hotter, and there Freesia was dressed for an Ice Age. She soon was sweating so much she couldn’t take it anymore. She whipped off her wooly hat and sighed in immense relief.

“Way to go Freesia! See, you’ll be absolutely fine.” Riley cheered. Freesia grinned. It felt like her world had been expanded, partly because of the fact that the hat had been half covering her eyes. She began to skip lightly as she walked from bunch to bunch.

As she approached an arrangement of black and gold flowers in the shape of a bee, though, a sickening sensation came over her. For most, it would have just been a sneeze, but for her, it meant constant worrying about if she was sick again. And she had taken off her hat too. *I’m doomed* she thought. Freesia’s face scrunched up and “Aachoo!” It was actually a very small sneeze, but to her, the world was ending. Freesia buried her face in her hands and squatted down.

“What’s wrong Freesia?” Her friends gathered around her. “I’m going to get severely sick again and it’s because I took off my hat. I knew I shouldn’t have taken the risk. Aachoo! Aachoo! Aachoo! Oh great!” Freesia stood up and sneezed some more.

“Freesia, I don’t think you’re sick. The way you’re sneezing, it sounds to me as if you’re allergic to these tulips.” Mrs. Parks announced. She was a pediatrician. Freesia glanced up at her.

“Really? Wow. Does that mean it wasn’t my hat that caused it?”

Mrs. Parks shook her head.

“See, Freesia. We told you nothing would happen. Now let’s get away from these tulips unless you actually *do* want to fall sick.” Drea laughed.

Freesia beamed and the group walked away from the sight. Instantly, she felt remediated. Freesia sighed as they continued on- this time in a peaceful way. Now she could enjoy the flower show for real. Maybe Spring wouldn’t prove to be all that horrendous.

# March Madness

It was an exciting season for the Woodland Park Basketball Travel Teams !! The boys’ team made it to the semi-finals, while the girls’ team competed in the Championship game against Woodbridge, where they lost by only one point. Great effort by both teams!



Photo credits: Alyssa Garcia

# The Winter Olympics

by Kaitlyn Amanullah

The 2018 Winter Olympics were very exciting to watch! The Olympics were held from February 8-25. The games started on February 8<sup>th</sup> and the Opening Ceremony vehemently started on the 9<sup>th</sup>. The games were held in the beautiful mountainous region of Pyeongchang, South Korea. South Korea prevailed over Munich, Germany and Annecy, France during the International Olympics Committee meeting. This is the first time that South Korea has held the Olympics. An initial defining moment in the history of the Olympics was when the divided countries of North Korea and South Korea marched together. The Winter Olympics consisted of 15 sports with both team and individual events. These events included: alpine skiing, biathlon, cross-country skiing, freestyle skiing, Nordic combined, ski jumping, snowboarding, curling, bobsled, figure skating, hockey, luge, short track, skeleton and speed skating. During the Rio Olympics, 558 athletes represented the United States, and in the 2018 Winter Olympics 244 athletes were represented.

## The Results:

The 2018 Winter Olympics lived up to its high expectations. The competition ended on Sunday, Feb. 25, 2018. The USA won a total of 23 medals, with 9 being gold. Norway achieved the most medals with a total of 39 medals, 14 being gold.

The US won gold in the following categories:

- Men's Curling
- Men's Ski Half Pipe Freestyle Skiing
- Men's Halfpipe
- Men's Slopestyle
- Women's Cross Country Skiing Team Sprint Free
- Women's Giant Slalom
- Women's Ice Hockey
- Women's Halfpipe
- Women's Slopestyle



There were many exciting events during the events. Some of the most memorable include the Women's Cross Country skiing, where athletes Jessie Diggins and Kikkan Randall of the USA won gold after being in 3<sup>rd</sup> place for almost the last 30 seconds of the competition. The two didn't give up and won the medal for the US.



## My Thirteenth Winter: A Book Review

by Jenna Troiano

This book was all about a girl's life story who was born with a learning disability, but is very gifted in the field of writing. The author, Samantha Abeel, had been diagnosed with dyscalculia, a learning disability which affects a person's ability to learn sequential processing such as math, grammar, and spelling. She tells her life story in the order in which events happened. In each chapter, there is a piece of writing in italics which is a direct memory from her past. She had many difficulties in school, struggling with the basic skills such as counting money, telling time, and doing simple math such as 5-2. At first, these problems weren't really much of a big deal, but as she grew older, she struggled more and more. Her self-esteem considerably lowered, and she began having panic attacks. These attacks caused Sam to distance herself from her friends and family, not wanting to participate in anything her friends or family wanted her to participate in. One day, she discovered writing and fell in love with it immediately. Writing became her way of coping with her issues and escaping the criticism of everyone around her. It gave her a voice that she couldn't speak out, but rather write out. She wasn't really good with grammar, but she still wrote and edited her pieces with the help of her English teacher and mother.

She wrote a lot of beautiful poetry, each one special and relating to her life in different ways. She wrote most of her pieces corresponding with artwork done by her mom's friend, Charlie. Together, the combination of art and poetry sent readers visuals and made them feel what Sam intended them to feel. After a lot of writing, Sam and her teacher decided to work together to turn Sam's poetry into a book. Many people bought and read her book and were absolutely touched by it. Some people who read the book were young children and adults who also had learning disabilities, while others were adults who decided to pursue jobs relating to learning disabilities. Basically, by publishing her book, Sam inspired and helped many people, young and old. This book was very inspirational and powerful, and readers will never forget this amazing story of a girl who smiled through her problems and accomplished things not many people could accomplish at her age.

