

# The Thinker



Issue 3

66th Session

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## The United States Turns 250 Years Old

By Henry C.

This coming week, we celebrate the 250th “birthday” of the United States of America, but why, exactly? On the Fourth of July, we commemorate the day when Continental Congress officially adopted the Declaration of Independence.

In a letter John Adams sent to his wife, Dolly, in 1776, Adams said “The Second Day of July 1776, will be the most memorable Epocha, in the History of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated, by succeeding generations, as the great anniversary Festival.”

He believed July 2, the day the decree for independence was made, would be remembered as our nation’s birthday, as opposed to the Fourth of July, The day it was adopted.

To this day, we celebrate

the Fourth with fireworks and parties, but is it really the best date for our Nation’s Birthday? Let’s look at some other options.

One option is Nov. 15, 1777, the day that the Articles of Confederation were adopted.

This was the day our nation first had a written government. If this was our nation’s chosen birthday, we would celebrate the 250th anniversary next year.

Unfortunately, the Articles of Confederation had a number of problems. According to the National archives, under the Articles, states held too much power, and the government did not have the strength to regulate commerce, tax, or muster an effective war effort.

The Articles of Confederation were replaced by our modern Constitution, which was signed by the constitutional convention on Sept. 17, 1787.

## Gov’t Implements New Paycheck Tax

By Aahan C.

The GPGC government has passed a tax bill that deducts 64 cents from students’ weekly paychecks to help fund government salaries.

Under the bill, Representatives earn \$1.00 per week, Justices earn \$1.50, the Secretary earns \$1.50, the Vice President earns \$2.00, and the President earns \$3.00.

Many students interviewed supported the bill, saying government officials work hard and deserve to be paid.

“I agree with the Tax bill

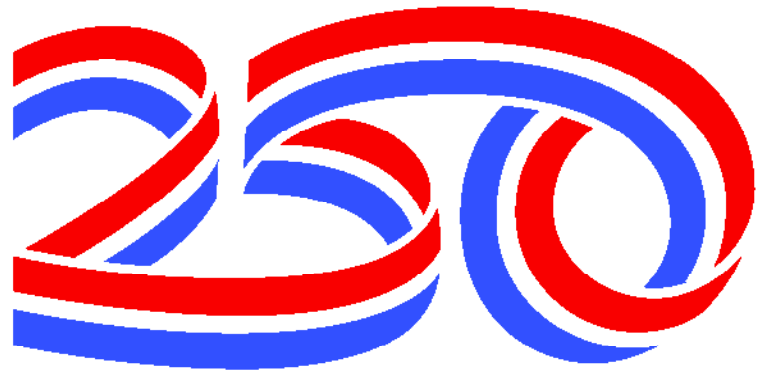
because it gives the government people payment as long as the taxes aren’t super high or impactful,” said Grad Patrick M.

Several students also said that 64 cents is a small amount and does not greatly affect their earnings.

However, some students opposed the tax, arguing money earned from good grades should not be taken away.

Others suggested small changes, such as rounding the tax to 60 or 65 cents.

## AMERICA



*By United States Semiquincentennial Commission and Chermayeff & Geismar & Haviv*

Our nation has run under the Constitution for 239 years. The document has been amended 27 times, and if its adoption were celebrated as our nation’s birthday, the 250th would be in

11 years.

Either way, as we approach the 250th anniversary of our nation’s existence, consider which one you think should be our nation’s true “Birthday.”

## Ticket Court Hears Cases

By Stella D.

This week’s ticket court primarily handled \$1 tickets about lockouts and other offenses.

Ticket Court, when Gifties can contest tickets they’ve gotten that week, typically happens on Monday and Thursday.

Housing staff hands out tickets for actions against the rules, and the ticket is deducted from their paycheck. At court, the ticket, the reason for it, and the counselor who gave it are announced. Gifties can choose to contest the ticket or accept it.

If the ticket is not contested, it will be enforced. If it is contested, the Giftie who received the ticket can explain

why they believe the ticket should be reduced or removed.

During court, the Giftie tells their side of the story, then the counselor describes theirs and why they gave the ticket. The justices then make a decision. They can enforce the ticket, reduce the fine, or remove the ticket.

There are three Justices, but there are two at a time at each court session, a counselor being there as a third to balance the decisions. Justices rotate at each court session. However, if a Justice gets a ticket then they are automatically not allowed to participate as a Justice.

Gifties must attend court if they get a \$1 ticket or greater, but

**See Court on page 4**

# Wash+Anti-Bac is Best for Clean Hands

By Alanna G.-J.

If you find yourself in a sticky situation this summer, science says hand sanitizer is OK, but antibacterial soap is the best at sanitizing hands when coupled with good hand washing technique.

Every day, we touch hundreds, even thousands of objects that carry a wide range of bacteria. But how can we make sure our hands stay clean?

I did an experiment this spring to test whether cleaning hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer kills the most bacteria.

Soap and sanitizer can clean our hands, and paper towels and hand dryers can dry them. According to a 2020 article by UCLA Health and an article written by UCI Health both in 2020, studies show hand sanitizer can be better at killing bacteria and most viruses, while using soap can remove chemicals.

On the other hand, according to Real Clear Science, if hands are washed correctly, hand dryers can circulate the bacteria, while paper towels absorb the water and bacteria from the hands.

Soap and hand sanitizer all have pros and cons. For example, soap can effectively remove all dirt, microbes and chemicals

on the hands but can be annoying to do it all the time like washing your hands before food preparation, eating, and touching your face, etc. On the other hand, hand sanitizer is more precise at killing bacteria but probably cannot remove or inactivate harmful chemicals we may come into contact with.

To perform the experiment,

agar is placed in petri dishes so the bacteria will consume the agar as food and grow into colonies called colony forming units or known as CFUs, according to Revolutionary Science. We count the colonies

to understand the results of our experiment.

Not only will soap and sanitizer keep your hands clean, so do paper towels and hand

dryers. Studies have shown that, germ-wise, paper towels and dryers are tied.

According to Real Simple, a 2020 meta-analysis of 23 studies comparing the two suggests that neither poses a serious viral or bacterial risk. But this depends on the type of hand dryer a person is using and studies said that when you consider the

environmental impact, however, high-speed dryers win. Hand dryers considering the criteria for someone wanting to have a less impact environmentally, are better overall.

When looking at the results of the experiment, the anti-bacterial soap dried by paper towels, there was a 48% reduction from 155 to 80 bacteria colonies. When using the hand dryer there was a 76% reduction from 564 to 138.

For the anti-bacterial soap, both the paper towels and hand dryer had a 100% reduction, with the number of colonies going from 40 to 0 for the paper towels and 37 to 0 for the hand dryer.

The hand sanitizer with a lower ethanol content (62% ethanol) had a 93% reduction of bacterial colonies from 45 to 3 and the high ethanol content (75% ethanol) had an 88% reduction from 296 to 35.

Based on the results, antibacterial soap was better overall than any other soap and sanitizer.

The results showed that the order of best to worst for sanitizing your hands was Antibacterial soap> Hand sanitizer low ethanol> Hand sanitizer high ethanol> Regular Soap Blow dry> Regular soap paper towel dry.

Antibacterial soap killed 100% of bacteria that was on the hands and the drying method did not matter. But low ethanol sanitizer was better than high ethanol.

## Handwashing Options Best to Worst

1. Antibacterial soap
2. Hand sanitizer low ethanol
3. Hand sanitizer high ethanol
4. Regular Soap blow dry
5. Regular soap paper towel dry

## Weekends Feature Games and Fun

By Arav P.

### Friday:

Friday is not an official weekend, but it's the beginning of the free time for Gifties in the program. On Friday, we do soccer, movie night and bank. Soccer is fun when you have people to play with, especially when the World Cup is going on. We had a movie night where we watched the "Princess Bride," which is a classic for the program.

### Saturday:

Saturday was full of activities. For breakfast we had Pop Tarts, Cereal and Juices. For lunch we had sandwiches with chips like every other weekend. Dinner was chili with Fritos. We generally didn't do anything but play Super Smash Bros till near afternoon. Afterwards, we went to Carc to buy dresses, and a lot of people bought good dresses. The best part of the day was when we went to the dance and had a lot of fun, danced to a lot of iconic songs, and threw shoes on the floor as a part of a dance. Overall, it was better than the normal weekday at the program.

### Sunday:

On Sunday, most of the people woke up late, and that's why they missed the Albertson's trip where Arav P. and AJ T. were saved by the coupons Cruz W. had, and they got a lot of free stuff.

When we came back from Albertsons, we had a Star Trek marathon on TV. We were supposed to play outside sports, but we couldn't, so Robert and Jessica Markstrom brought board games and the new Magic the Gathering Marvel edition cards to play with.

After that, we had dinner, and we went to Sweet Frog. A lot of people had fake birthdays registered on their Sweet Frog app for a \$5 coupon.

## Bepuzzlement Answers

Logic Puzzle Answer  
Answer: The girl was hoping she could see the boy again at her sister's funeral.

Answer: A Map

Riddle Answers  
Answer: An echo

# World Cup: US Advances to Round of 32

By Alanna G.-J.

USA completed its game with a 2-0 score against Australia, moving on to its first round of 32 since 2010.

To start the game, Cameron Burgess of Australia scored an own goal for the USA.

At minute 43, Alex Freeman scored the first and last goal for the USA. Officials ruled the goal valid after using the video review.

This is the USA's second time to win both opening games and qualify for the next round of the tournament.

Spain made a great comeback with a final score of 4-0 against Saudi Arabia after Spain tied with Cabo Verde. This game helped Spain rise back to the top of predicted World Cup winners.

At minute 10, Lamine Yamal scored a goal for Spain to give their team a head start. Ten minutes later, between minutes 21-24, Mikel Oyarzabal scored two goals in a row which put Spain up by three goals in less than 30 minutes.

At the start of the second

half, Hassen Altambakti of Saudi Arabia blundered with an own goal that gave Spain a larger point lead.

Around minute 90+5, Ferran Torres scored the last goal of the night but the goal wasn't counted since Torres was offside.

After this game, Sweden was got their payback after their game against Tunisia with a final score of 5-1.

Five minutes into the game, Netherland's Brian Brobbey scores a goal for their team and at minute 17, Brobbey attacked again and scored another goal which brought the Netherlands up by two points before the 20 minute mark.

Although at minute 45' Sweden did attempt to score a goal and did slam it into the net, the goal was not counted due to the offside rule. During the second half at minutes 47 and 54, Cody Gakpo scored two insane goals for the Netherlands which brought the score to 4-0.

Even though the Netherlands was up by four points, Sweden still had hope to make a comeback. At minute 59,

Sweden's Anthony Elanga scored the first goal of the night for Sweden, but it wasn't enough.

At minute 89 Crysencio Summerville scored the final goal of the night for the Netherlands and the game finished with a final score 5-1.

Argentina and Lionel Messi played another wonderful game, ending with a final score of 2-0 against Austria.

At the beginning of the game, Messi was given a penalty kick and missed but redeemed his mistake later, scoring at minutes 38 and 90+5.

Messi set a new record for the number of goals scored in a World Cup by a single player.

Colombia won its second World Cup game after going against DR Congo with the final score of 1-0.

At the start of the game Colombia's Luis Díaz scored a goal for Colombia that was not counted because he was offside.

As the game progressed, Colombia finally broke through Congo's defense and Daniel Munoz scored the goal for Colombia at minute 76. After the

game, Colombia officially moved on to the round of 32 for the next part of the World Cup.

After Portugal's tie against DR Congo, Portugal's team, especially Ronaldo, made a comeback during their game with Uzbekistan with a final score of 5-0.

At the first six minutes of the game, Ronaldo scored the first goal for Portugal, proving to the media he hasn't lost his spark. At minute 17, Nuno Mendes scored the second goal for Portugal, giving them the huge advantage needed to defeat their opponents.

Even after Portugal had two goals, Portugal didn't ease up one bit. At minute 39, Ronaldo scored his second goal of the game which put the score at 3-0. During the second half of the game at minute 60, Uzbekistan decided to help Portugal by accident by scoring an own goal that would bring the score to 4-0.

Finally at minute 87, Rafael Leão scored the final goal of the game which finished with a final score of 5-0.

## Weekly Book Review

# Homer's The Odyssey is Familiar, Classic

By Saradha J.

*[warning for spoilers]*

For ages, The Odyssey has served as a large cornerstone of European culture. It has been widely referenced in a vast number of media around the world, and the influence of this epic is present to this day.

The Odyssey, penned by Homer around 700 BC and retold in more recent years, follows a man and his crew on their journey to return to their homeland in Greece. Odysseus, the king of Ithaca, along with two hundred of his men, set sail for their home country after a ten-year-long

war. They are optimistic on their voyage, spirited by their recent victory in the Trojan war, and they are eager to return to their families. It's not long until their hope quickly sours. Before they know it, they have upset the Greek gods.

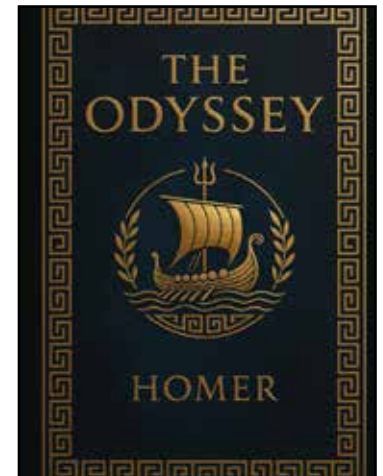
The return home quickly turns into an escape; Odysseus and his crew are forced to dodge the attacks of gods and monsters on their travels.

Overall, the fast pace of the retelling of this epic makes for an immersive read. With the tale having served as inspiration for a number of writers and artists, reading this epic felt familiar in

spite of the fact that this was my first time seeing it. The sirens, cyclops, and other mythical monsters that are present are already well-known in other pieces of media.

While Odysseus is shown to have a number of shortcomings, The Odyssey is told as a typical hero's tale; after a long struggle, Odysseus returns home to Ithaca to be reunited with his wife and son.

Upon reading this, I understood why it was so deserving of the title of a classic. The storytelling was elegantly done, and it was fascinating to note the inspiration that artists



Cover from American Book Warehouse

today have drawn from Homer's writing.

# Opinion: Wind, Solar Takes Larger Share of New Energy

By Lucas C.

In 2025, clean energy, or sustainable energy that has minimal negative impact on the environment, made up almost 90% of all new energy supply for the United States, according to EnvironmentalAmerica.org, and CleanPower.org, two clean energy organizations.

This is important as it helps to lower air pollution and other side effects which helps Gifties' health. Clean energy is cheaper than fossil fuels, meaning its growth lowers prices as creating and distributing goods becomes cheaper.

Clean energy has also risen to take up a larger share of the U.S. energy market, with solar and wind reaching 17% of all energy supply in the U.S, up from nearly 1% in 2005 according to the website for the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Wind and solar power overtook coal, which only makes up for 16% of the energy supply in 2025 compared to the early 2000s where it accounted for roughly half according to Climatecentral.org.

Solar energy had massive

growth, making up close to 61% of energy growth and meeting all daytime demand growth in 2025 between the hours of 11am and 6pm eastern standard time. The amount of solar energy added is similar to 2024 with the main difference being battery addition more than doubled, making solar energy last for longer and help meet demand for longer throughout the day by storing surplus energy according to ember-energy.org, a clean energy think tank.

In the past couple of years, though, solar and wind energy have dropped in price by \$100 and \$250 (per megawatt hours) respectively to \$50 and \$60 (per megawatt hours) respectively, between the years 2010 and 2025 according to Climatecentral.org.

There are many reasons that countries and organizations choose to move away from fossil fuels and to clean energy: some are cost parity, climate change, and pollution, but one that is less talked about is reliable energy sources, an example being the Russia-Ukraine war. Russia's invasion of Ukraine exposed many countries to supply disruptions and geopolitical turmoil, which triggered a global

energy crisis as countries that were once reliant on Russian oil and gas scrambled to find alternatives. With the European Union (EU) planning to phase out Russian gas, and oil by 2027.

The idea of having energy that isn't reliant on other countries and doesn't have chokeholds like the Strait of Malacca and the Strait of Hormuz, which can be shut down and controlled by foreign powers, according to fletcher.tufts.edu

The changes happening in the U.S are even more exemplified worldwide as, in 2025, there was a 40% increase in all clean worldwide Solar energy alone supplied three-quarters of the increase while solar and wind together met almost all of it (99%), pushing total clean generation slightly above overall demand growth and fossil fuels falling by 38 terawatt-hours in 2025 according to ember-energy.org

Fossil fuels also fell worldwide, with 2025 marking the first year since the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 without an increase in electricity generation from fossil fuels; this is only the fifth year this has happened since the turn of the century. The

fall in fossil fuels is mainly due to China and India where fossil generation fell, which was driven by continuation of switching to clean power and moderate demand growth. Combined, China and India made up 42% of global fossil generation in 2025. Their falls offset small increases in the US, EU, and other economies, leading to a minor fall in fossil generation at a global level according to ember-energy.org

Nuclear power has also had growth as another major low carbon alternative, growing by 35 terawatt-hours. In the U.S, the Department of Energy issued The \$17.5 billion American Nuclear Supply Chain Loans that will help to finance five eligible projects sponsored by utilities and energy companies nationwide in order to accelerate the deployment of 10 large-scale commercial nuclear reactors across the United States by up to three years. Each of the 10 reactors will generate 1.1 GW of power, with the combined power output from all 10 reactors providing enough electricity to power nearly 10 million American households according to energy.gov.

## MTG Recruits Staff, Content

Special to The Thinker

Miles to Go is a journal of student work published at the end of every program.

Students can participate by submitting original stories, poetry and art and by working on the publishing staff doing layout, selecting photos and doing artwork for individual pages.

Gifties can submit any original work, and staff members will select the pieces they want to include. Submissions can be emailed to [milestogo@gpgc.org](mailto:milestogo@gpgc.org) at any time this summer until July 10.

Gifties interested in joining the Miles to Go staff should email their applications by July 1 to [milestogo@gpgc.org](mailto:milestogo@gpgc.org). Positions needed include selection committee, Editor, Layout Editors, Photo Editor and Doodle Master.

Please see Mrs. Bell, Kathy Barrios, coordinator of housing, or director Josh Brown if you have any questions.

## Court

Continued from page 1

even if they didn't get a ticket they can still watch.

Talking during court can earn Gifties a ticket for Contempt of Court. Gifties can also get it if they contest for fun or if they don't report to court if they got a \$1 ticket or more.

Money collected from tickets goes back into the program's fund and is used to pay student salaries.

In a 2015 article by current coordinator of housing Kathy Barrios, she listed the funniest tickets of all time. Among those was a 2013 PDA ticket for Kadi and Shimer's.

This hilarious event happened during the summer of 2013. From what I've been told, Kadi R. and Jakob S. had been trying to get a PDA ticket for a while at this point (no one really knows why).

They were sitting in the common room of their suite with a counselor, Tanner, and an eye witness. Then out of nowhere, they began stage kissing one another. Tanner gave them a PDA ticket, which, of course, was why they did it. Who would've thought they would have finally gotten their wish of their very own PDA ticket?

# Magic Releases New Collab Deck/Set

By Patrick M.

Wizards of the Coast released a new Magic the Gathering set today called “Marvel Super Heroes.”

The new set is a Universes Beyond set that adds Marvel characters and items to Magic.

Magic the Gathering has two main types of sets; these sets are Universes Beyond and In-Universe.

The differences between these are very important if a person wants to only collect certain sets or if people want to learn the lore

of Magic.

Starting off with what Universes Beyond sets are: according to Harle Quins Games, Universes Beyond sets are crossover sets, where characters, items, and events are turned into cards for Magic.

These sets bring new gimmicks that are normally only seen in that set, and they let people see their favorite characters in Magic. These sets are also considered “non-canon,” which means that they do not affect the storyline of Magic.

According to the official

Wizards of the Coast MTG product site, these sets include different franchises such as Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Avatar: The Last Airbender, Spider-man, Final Fantasy, Marvel, and more.

Next, there are In-Universe sets that are “canon” and continue the storyline of Magic. According to the official MTG website, these sets bring in new mechanics that will more than likely return, and it also brings in new characters and lore.

These sets are completely original and are the core of

Magic. According to the official Wizards of the Coast MTG product site, some newer In-Universes sets are, Secrets of Strixhaven, Lorwyn Eclipsed, Edge of eternities, and Tarkir: Dragon Storm.

The new Marvel set has Jumpstart Boosters, making it easier to learn and collect the cards. There is going to be an option to go to the mall this weekend, if a person is interested in buying cards or packs for the new set they can go to LVL 1 Gaming in the mall to purchase cards.

## Animal of week Humuhumunukunukapua’a

By AJ T.



Humuhumunukunukuāpua’a, also known as the reef triggerfish, is the state fish of Hawai’i and is one of several species of triggerfish. According to the Waikiki Aquarium, it is found in coral reefs in the entirety of the Western Pacific Ocean from North to South and Eastern Central Pacific. It is also found in the Indian Ocean from East to West and the Southeast Atlantic Ocean and it lives around 0 to 50 meters in depth.

It has a small second dorsal spine which is used to lock its main spine into an upright position. When sheltering in a small crevice, this locking helps protect the fish against a predator.

The Humuhumunukunukuāpua’a is mainly known for its large snout and blue lips. It has strong teeth and a terminal mouth which help aid in scraping food off surfaces. Along the dorsal side and anterior end of the fish, it has an orange-brown coloration and a white belly.

The reef triggerfish’s mouth sits directly at the end of its snout. It also feeds on crustaceans such as isopods from the sandy ocean floors, according to the Waikiki Aquarium.

When foraging for food it remains close to its home or forages in shallow reefs away from living coral. This fish is considered an omnivore.

## Best of World Cup Week 2

By Cruz W.

The second week of the World Cup was filled with dominant performances, exciting goals, and teams taking control of their groups. As the tournament continues, several players and teams have separated themselves from the competition.

The best goal of the week came from Cristiano Ronaldo of Portugal in their 5–0 victory over Uzbekistan.

Ronaldo made history by becoming the first player ever to score in six different World Cups. His goal was not only historic but also showed his incredible longevity and finishing ability on soccer’s biggest stage.

Portugal’s dominant performance helped them take control of their group, according to the website, World Cup match results.

The best player of Week 2 was Lionel Messi of Argentina. Messi continued his incredible tournament by leading Argentina to a 2–0 victory over Austria. In the match, he became the all-time leading goal scorer in World

Cup history, adding another remarkable achievement to his legendary career. His leadership and offensive creativity have been key factors in Argentina’s success so far, according to the website World Cup match results.

The best team of Week 2 was France. After defeating Senegal in Week 1, France followed up with a convincing 3–0 win over Iraq. Their balanced attack and strong defense have made them one of the most complete teams in the tournament.

With stars like Kylian Mbappé leading the way, France looks like a serious contender to win the World Cup, according to the website, World Cup match results.

Week 2 showed why the World Cup is one of the most exciting sporting events in the world. With records being broken and teams fighting for a place in the knockout rounds, fans can expect even more thrilling action in the weeks ahead.

# Next Week Brings Chance of Rain, Heat

By Emma M.

Next week's weather is mostly sunny at the beginning of the week, however, toward the end of the week it becomes partly cloudy with a chance of isolated thunderstorms in the afternoons. Bring your rain gear just in case!

The winds won't be very strong which is good because we don't need papers flying everywhere.

The humidity is average, being from 50% to 70%. The temperature is warm with the high being an average of around 92 degrees fahrenheit. The low is around 77 degrees fahrenheit.

It's going to be a hot one, folks. That's your weather for next week and let's hope that it is as good as this week's.

# Art Prompts

By Lucas J. C.

## Weekly theme: Mythical Creatures

**Saturday**  
Giants

**Sunday**  
Mermaids

**Monday**  
Dragons

**Tuesday**  
Pheonixes

**Wednesday**  
Unicorns

**Thursday**  
Wyrms

**Friday**  
Sea Monsters

# Seen and Heard

*Saradha J. getting two bowls of plain yogurt mixed with strawberry Fanta*

*Arav P. casually drinking a mix of every soda from the soda dispenser*

*"At least we're not Mexican."*

- Juan G. and Alanna G.-J. (simultaneously)

*"What if the plural of moose is 'Moosei'?"*

- Henry C.

*"Excuse me, Kenneth."*

- Arya G.-J. to Lucas C.

*"Bigggg Joeeee, Bigggg Joeeee"*

- Alanna G.-J., Jude Y., Juan G., Aahan C., Keerat S., and Emery H. (In Perfect Harmony)

*"I'm hungry."*

- Zoe L.

*"Hi, hungry, I'm Zoe"*

- Patrick M. (in response)

*"I saw flying bread, what do you expect me to do?"*

- Jude Y.

*"That PB and J Tasted like green beans"*

- Abram Miller

*"I don't have a pencil."*

- Cruz W. (A pencil is right in front of him)

# Bepuzzlement

By Henry C.

## Riddles

I speak without a mouth and hear without ears. I have no body, but I come alive with wind. What am I?

I have cities, but no houses. I have mountains, but no trees. I have water, but no fish. What am I?

## Logic Puzzle

A girl's mother just recently passed away and she and her sister planned the funeral together. On the day of the funeral, the girl meets a boy who she immediately falls in love with. At the end of the funeral, the girl forgot to give the boy her contacts and the boy was never to be seen again. A few weeks later the girl kills her own sister. Why?

# MTG Submissions Due July 10

## Jokes of the Week

By AJ T.

What did 20 do when it was hungry? "Twenty eight."

Why wasn't the cactus invited to hang out with the mushrooms?

He wasn't a fungi (Fun-Guy).

## Editorial Staff:

Lucas C.  
Aahan C.  
Henry C.  
Stella D.  
Saradha J.  
Emma M.  
Patrick M.  
Arav. P.  
AJ T.  
Cruz W.

