



Get the Scoop!

*News Stories
Written by Kids—
for Kids*

Jeff Kinney Is Awesome—So's His New Book

by Reporter Ellie Divijak, Dove Mountain CSTEM K-8

Recently I was fortunate enough to do a Zoom interview with Jeff Kinney, author of Diary of a Wimpy Kid and Diary of an Awesome Friendly Kid series. Kinney will be in Tucson for a drive-through book event at Mostly Books on March 26.

Kinney said that he is looking forward to being in Arizona. "Some of my happiest memories as a father have been going through Sedona...and other parts of Arizona with my kids," He says. He is looking forward to visiting again with his family.

Drawing has always been a passion. "I actually wanted to be a cartoonist, like a newspaper cartoonist," Kinney says. He liked cartoons like Peanuts and Calvin and Hobbs when he was young. He began drawing in school during class because he has Attention Deficit Disorder. He said that his doodles and drawings helped him focus and do better in school.

He loved drawing, but as he got older he realized that his talent was more for cartoons than realistic art. When Kinney began Diary of a Wimpy Kid, he thought he was writing for grown-ups, but when he submitted his books, the publishing house told him that he had written a children's series!

Kinney shared that he collects about 750 jokes to help him with ideas for his book. This allows him to



throw out about one third or more. Kinney uses his life situations as inspiration, and he relates most to his character Greg, who is "not heroic" and just kind of an average kid in a middle class neighborhood.

When I talked with Kinney about his new book, he shared that it only took him two months to write because writing as Rowley is much easier than writing as Greg in the Wimpy Kid books. The Wimpy Kid books typically take about nine months each to write. I also asked why he decided that Rowley would not draw noses for his drawings in the Awesome books because I thought that was funny. He said he chose to give Rowley a younger feel than Greg. He also said that his brother never drew noses on his people and that annoyed Kinney, but it also gave him the idea.

I enjoyed talking with Kinney and found him to be an Awesome Adult to talk with about his life and books.

Get Cooking with Flying Aprons

by Reporter Aleena Rafiyath, BASIS Oro Valley

On Feb. 13, I had an awesome opportunity, also a birthday experience, to participate in a cooking class from Flying Aprons Tucson to celebrate the Chinese New Year of the Ox. Flying Aprons Tucson is a company founded by Michele Schulze—she loves cooking and wanted to bring people and cultures together. Cooking with culinary professionals, you can make foods ranging from the Yu Sheng salad, like I made, to sweet donuts!

Chef Devon Sanner was our guide to making this salad. He had worked at many restaurants and won awards such as Chef de Cuisine in 2009. Sanner was most recently Executive Chef at The Carriage House and Downtown Kitchen + Cocktails.

Interviewing Chef Devon at the end of the class, I asked him what his favorite type of cultural food was, the answer being all foods. I agree, for all foods have their own great taste!

Adapting to the new normal, Flying Aprons now does Zoom virtual classes. I picked up my ingredients, and I came home, set up, and started cooking. Together, everyone seemed to be focused. There were

no major issues, other than the occasional tech issues. Online cooking was much easier than I thought!

The Yu Sheng Prosperity Salad not only tastes amazing, but it has a meaning as well. This year it was a special dish to celebrate the Chinese New Year of the Ox. At the end of the dish, you take some of the salad and toss it in the air and say "Lo Hei," meaning to toss good fortune. The salad included so many different food groups, including a wide variety of vegetables, shredded fruit like mango and grapefruit, and smoked salmon! With the last dash of allspice and cinnamon over everything, we were ready to eat our delicious meal. Along with it, the meat was included in the Jiaozi, or potstickers, a great dish that goes hand in hand with the Yu Sheng salad. We used many spices and made our own dipping sauces.

To participate in more of Flying Aprons Tucson's cooking classes and learn more about the cost and class topics, go to the Flying Aprons Tucson website at flyingapronstucson.com.



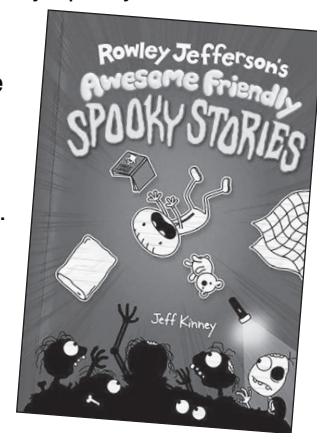
Spooky Stories Are Great Fun!

by Reporter Ellie Divijak
Dove Mountain CSTEM K-8

Jeff Kinney's new book, "Rowley Jefferson's Awesome Friendly Spooky Stories," was released March 16. This is the third book in the Awesome Friendly series, and it is spectacular! You'll like it if you enjoy somewhat spooky and funny stories.

There are lots of fun short stories told from Rowley's point of view. In my opinion, Rowley's point of view is fun and exciting, like it is being told by one of your friends. The Wimpy Kid books are told from Greg's point of view, and he seems to try to act older and more mature than Rowley.

Awesome Friendly Spooky Stories are unique because they have mini-stories inside the book, which is different from the other two Awesome books. All the spooky stories are not like each other—they all have their scary parts and funny parts.



My favorite spooky story is the first one in the book. Rowley starts growing hair all over his body and he does not know why. He tries to shave it but it comes back so he asks his parents, and they tell him that they are all werewolves!

Kinney told me that his favorite story is one of the last stories about Greg creating a monster for his science fair project. I highly recommend this book if you like thrills, scariness and humor.

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