

Oak Hill ❖ Herndon
CONNECTION



Children's Connection 2012

The Fortune, by Ruchi Maniar, 13, eighth
grade, Rachel Carson Middle School

DECEMBER 26, 2012 - JANUARY 1, 2013

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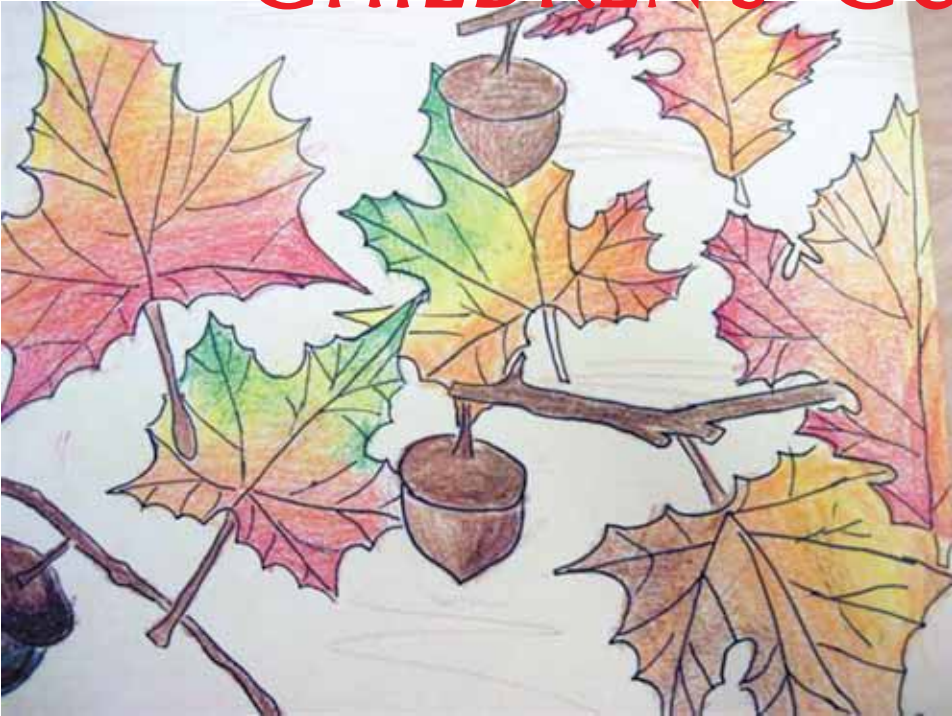
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CHILDREN'S CONNECTION 2012



By Betty Chen, Fifth grade, Floris Elementary



By Lauren Thrash, Second grade, Dranesville Elementary

Welcome

Dear Readers:

This week, the Oak Hill/Herndon Connection turns over its pages to the youth and students.

We asked principals and teachers from area schools to encourage students to contribute their words, pictures and photos for our annual Children's Issue.

The response, as always, was enormous. While we were unable to publish every piece we received, we did our best to put together a paper with a fair sampling of the submitted stories, poems, drawings, paintings, photographs and other works of art.

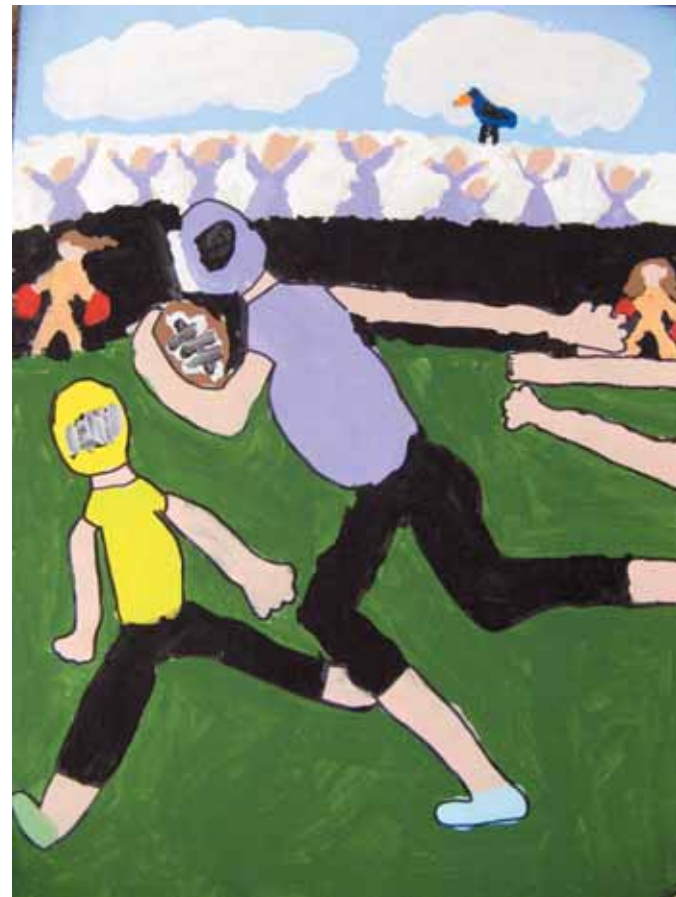
We appreciate the extra effort made by school staff to gather the materials during their busy time leading up to the holidays. We'd also like to encourage both schools and parents to mark their 2013 calendars for early December, the deadline for submissions for next year's Children's Connection.

Please keep us in mind as your children continue to create spectacular works of art and inspiring pieces of writing in the coming year.

The children's issue is only a part of our year-round commitment to cover education and our local schools. As always, the Connection welcomes letters to the editor, story ideas, calendar listings and notices of local events from our readers. Photos and other submissions about special events at schools are especially welcome for our weekly schools pages.

Our preferred method for material is e-mail, which should be sent to herndon@connectionnewspapers.com, but you can reach us by mail at 1606 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 or call 703-778-9414 with any questions.

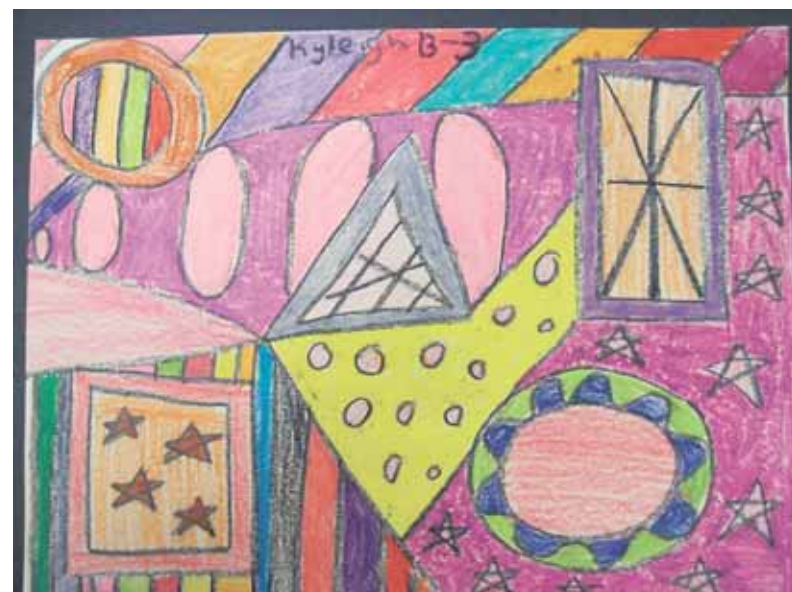
EDITOR KEMAL KURSPAHIC



By Aiden Smith, Fourth grade, Crossfield Elementary



By Caleb Easlick, second grade, Oak Hill Elementary



By Kyleigh Eversole, Third grade, Herndon Elementary

CHILDREN'S CONNECTION 2012

CROSSFIELD ELEMENTARY ART GALLERY

Artwork by Emily Muha's fourth grade art class.

By Aneesh Sreenivas



By John DeFranco



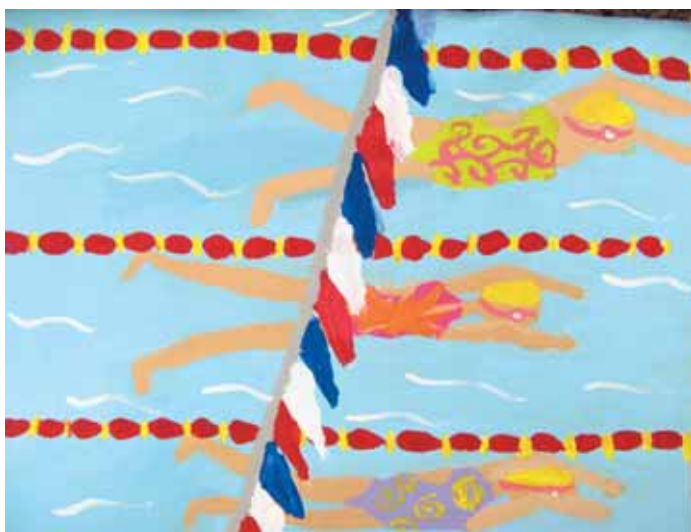
By Keaton Lazar



By Kylie McLean



By Nick Garrone



By Hailey Wang

WRITING SAMPLES FROM CROSSFIELD ELEMENTARY

The Best Gift Ever

The best gift I ever got was an iPad. It was a white Christmas and I was a very happy young girl. I woke up early and I saw this beautiful, wrapped present from my Grandpa. After that I woke up my brother and my parents. My parents said you can now open the present that inspires you the most. I then opened the present that I really liked and there it was, my first iPad, and second apple product I ever got. I was very happy and I wished my grandpa a merry Christmas in my heart.

— A POLDY,

10, OAK HILL, CROSSFIELD ELEMENTARY

A Good Friend

A good friend should be loyal and true

A friend should never lie to you

A good tip you should know Is that together you and friend should grow

Your friendship should be a breeze

Your friendship should flow with ease

You guys should be as close as can be

Nothing could separate you, not even the 7 seas

You should be so close, like being stitched together

You should be best friends forever and ever

— ELEANOR HALKETT, FIFTH GRADE, CROSSFIELD ELEMENTARY

What I Love About December

- Decorations
- Eating Cookies
- Candy Canes
- Elves
- Music
- Bells
- Eating Ham
- Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer

Some other things I like about December:

Snowmen, Presents, Family Coming Over, Putting Up The Christmas Tree, Ornaments, Hot Cocoa, Snow, Skiing Or Snow Boarding, And Many More Cheerful Stuff.

— A HUFF,

10, HERNDON, CROSSFIELD ELEMENTARY

My Favorite Animal

My favorite animal is a honey badger. It's my favorite because it has some cool traits. One of them is that their skin is resistant to arrows. The skin also is super stretchy. This is cool because when a predator bites, it can turn around and bite back also they're called a honey badger because they eat honey. They get the honey by sticking their hand in the hive and grabbing the honey. If they get stung it doesn't matter because they are immune to bee venom.

— ELIZABETH SULLIVAN, 10, OAK HILL, CROSSFIELD ELEMENTARY

Lost in Shenandoah

Only one mile of hiking was not much of a workout. I was in Shenandoah National Park and we were about to hike away from our cozy, air-conditioned rental in Big Meadows. It was early when my dad and I set off for Shenandoah Trail.

The scenery at the trail was beautiful. The sound of birds chirping was pleasure to my ears. After a while we realized we were lost. Soon I found the amount of Homo-Sapiens in our part was less. My dad was trying to use his phone gps, but no signal, No people, Nothing. We were in a terrible mess.

— DHARUV GRAMOPADHYE,

11, HERNDON, CROSSFIELD ELEMENTARY

The Alarm Clock

Tick tock tick tock tick tock Bing bang bam

The alarm clock, alarm clock Bing bang bam

Tries to wake me up as fast as it can

Roll roll try to turn it off Bing bang bam

I finally turn it off Have to get up now

Yells mom Boo hoo hoo

Don't want to wake up Want to stay in bed and

cuddle all up

— JESSIE TAYLOR,

10, RESTON, CROSSFIELD ELEMENTARY

The Best Gift

When I was 1 in fourth grade

SEE CROSSFIELD, PAGE 5

CHILDREN'S CONNECTION 2012

Ideas for a Better World

From Floris Elementary second graders.

To not litter, like throwing away plastic and things that are recyclable. Recycle is when things go to a place and can be used again. If we can make the world a better place where we live and the environment around us by not littering we can have a really good life. So when you see litter you know it's the wrong thing to do, follow the "green way" and you'll be much better. When you're talking to an adult say, "If you follow the green way you will also have a really fun life."

— ALEXANDRIA ROSELLE

My idea to make the world a better place is to have a super, hyper extreme, supersonic, extra large television! My TV can show you any channel you want; all you have to do is say the channel. It also has 3D and 4D mode! It can also move by itself, it is waterproof and it can also do anything you want it to do!

— MATTHEW QUIVEY

A car and a plane that has solar power would make the world a better place. They would use the power of the sun to control it. The

solar plane has solar panels to ignite its ion engines. Once in the air the plane acts as a glider. The world would be better because gasoline air pollution makes more CO2. The world could end up like Venus.

— ARNAV KRISHNAN

I would make a robot that can do anything you want! It has a bad guy detector. If it doesn't have a bad guy detector, then it will not do any bad things you say.

— ANISH SINGH

To make bigger and better companies for workers to get people out of poverty. If workers have more money they can have a bigger TV and the world will have more fun!

— ABHINAV POTLURI

I would invent a new car that you can lie down in with seatbelts on! I also want to make the world have no bullies or people that make fun of each other.

— CLARISSA DING

I think the world would be a better place if everyone picked up trash. The earth would be clean and sunny. If we all picked up trash and made progress we'd have a better world.

— ANNALISE WILLIAMS

WRITING SAMPLES FROM CROSSFIELD ELEMENTARY

FROM PAGE 4

my girl scouts troop went to a disabled girl's house to give her a Christmas tree. When we got there we started by putting up the Christmas tree and eating cookies and cake. Next it was time to decorate the tree, then to surprise her we went to get the presents so she could have a Christmas morning to look forward to. Everyone was so happy that we all sang Christmas carols, like Deck the Halls and Jingle Bells. Finally it was time for everyone to go home. I will never forget this experience.

— MADISON BRADLEY,
II, HERNDON, CROSSFIELD ELEMENTARY

and Ruth. But one day after school at the sandlot, they saw a boy, who was about 10 years old and was pitching. Jackie said he throws hard and fast. Ryan said let's ask him what his name is and if he wants to play on our team. Every one said ok. So they went up to him. Collin said what's your name? The boy said my name is Caden. Then Ruth said you want to be in our team? Caden said sure. When is practice? Ian said every day starting today. So they have eight people on the team. They were the best team in the little league majors.

— J AGHANYA,
10, CROSSFIELD ELEMENTARY

When I Grow Up

I love little kids and people always say I could be a teacher. I am trying to get the best grade I can get because I want to get into a great college. My grandparents always send college money and my parents give some to me too.

— GINNY HORVATH,
10, OAK HILL, CROSSFIELD ELEMENTARY

The Best Team

Once there were seven boys about 12 years old who are playing baseball. They need one more player then they could play real baseball and VS other teams. They always practice every day after school. Their names were Jake, Jackie, Michael, Ian, Collin, Ryan,

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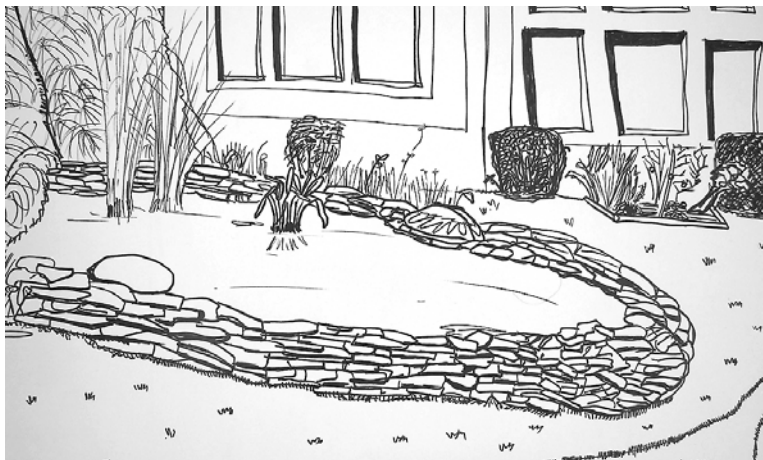
Tea Time, by Abigail Melton, 14, Eighth grade, Rachel Carson Middle School



Independence, by Alice Wang, 13, Eighth grade, Rachel Carson Middle School

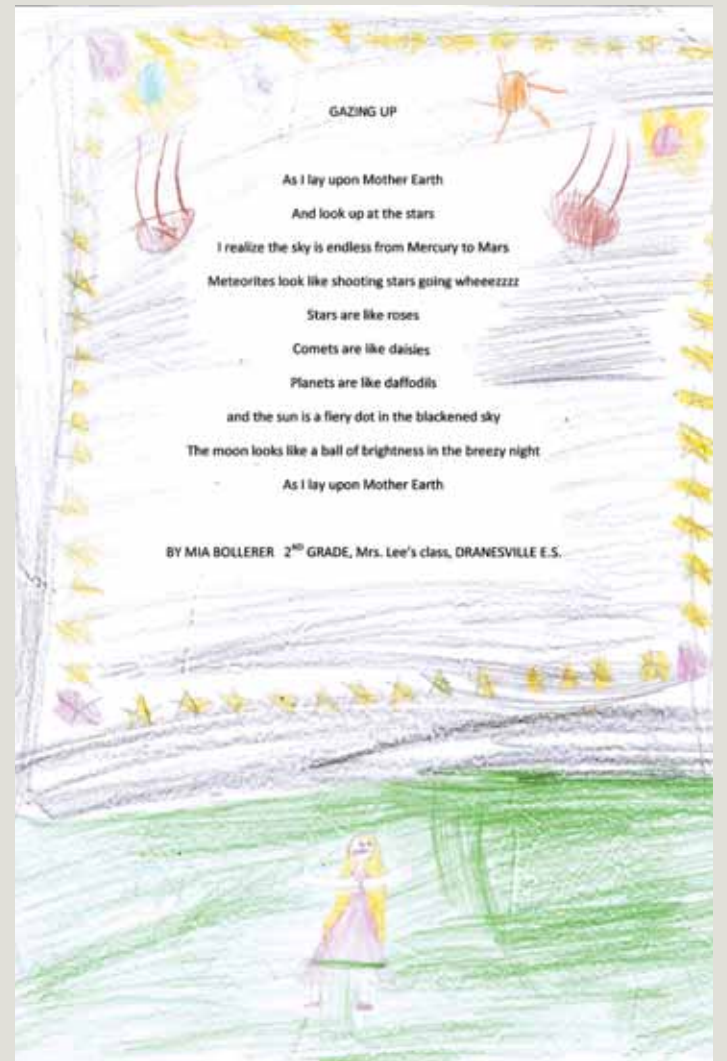
RACHEL CARSON MIDDLE SCHOOL ART GALLERY

Untitled, by Darja Loidap, 13, Eighth grade, Rachel Carson Middle School



Courtyard, by Caroline Kulczcky, 14, Eighth grade, Rachel Carson Middle School

The Logic of a Dream, by Chiara Lynn O'Neill, 13, Seventh grade, Rachel Carson Middle School



Gazing Up, By Mia Bollerer, Second grade, Dranesville Elementary



River Bend and Powhatan, by Noah Dyer, Second grade, Dranesville Elementary

CHILDREN'S CONNECTION

CREATIVE WRITING FROM HUTCHISON ELEMENTARY

From Ms. Curran's fifth grade class.

A Gift to Parents

If I would give my parents a gift it would be love and I would be nice to them. I would give them love because it does not cost any money and another gift would be to be nice and I would care for them and respect them. I love them and I always will and this comes from my heart.

— ARMONDO

I give my parents a nice breakfast and a card that says I love you.

— BIANCA C.

If I Could Give My Parents a Gift That Didn't Cost Money

If I could give my parents a gift that did not cost money I would give them hugs and kisses or a card that I made with love and a t shirt that I decorate or a nickels and a bracelet that I will make by hand or a book that has a Pic of me and my mom or my dad or my home made cupcakes and cookies and a cup of milk to go with it or a note book that has all my good drawings in it of me and my mom or dad all so I will give them a letter that says thank you and I will make lunch for them and I will give a pic of me and my dad or me and my mom all so a pic of my sister and me and a big drawing of my mom and dad's country and I will clean the whole house for them and let them watch TV and all so organs all the stuff in the house.

— BIANCA GONZALEZ

I will behave one day. I will give a hug.

— BRIAN MORENO

What I would give to my parents is a list that says what I can do to help them. I want them to rest because they always work for me, now I will work for them. I would put these things on the list-wash my clothes, wash dishes, clean the room, clean the bathroom, clean the whole house. Like I said they work for me, now I will work for them. I really appreciate what they do for me because they try to buy whatever I want and I want them to feel good, I don't want them to feel bad and to not make them feel bad I have to be on my best behavior.

— BRYAN RAMOS BARELA

If I give my mom and my dad a present that will not cost money, I would make a breakfast in bed

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and in the afternoon they will eat lunch.

— JOANNA CABRERA

If I could give any gift to my parent that didn't cost money it would be...Origami! Origami is something you create out of paper. I really like origami, so do my parents. Once I made a heart for Mother's Day, she still has it. Origami is my favorite hobby and it is a good gift!

—IMTIHAN MAHMUD

If I could give my parents a money free gift it would be... A hug and good grades because they always like it when I get good grades. They always smile, sometimes they give me presents . but I just want them to give me a smile most of the time.

— ISAIAH ALLEN

A gift I would give my dad is a small airplane made out of clay that I made because it doesn't cost any money. Also because he works at a place that has airplanes. Another gift I would give my dad is card that I made because it comes from the heart and it doesn't cost any money and another reason is because I can write about why he's the best dad and tell him why am I thankful for what he does for us. So that's what I would I give to my dad.

— JESSICA TODAS

I would cook my parents a homemade breakfast. I would wake up before them and whip up a special treat of bacon, eggs, sausages, waffles, fresh strawberries and a nice cup of cold orange juice. Then I'd bring it up to them and hug them and have a good time.

— NINA LIEU

If I could give my mom and dad any gift that does not cost any money I would make her a bracelet saying that I love them so much. I would also give them a homemade breakfast and I would take them outside and have a nice family snowball fight. I would ... make them a card to say that I love them and that thank you for all the things they have done for me. Also, I would make my mom a hot coffee. And, I would make my mom something out of clay. I would give my mom a huge hug I mean really big!

—JOCELYN DOMINGOS

If I could give my parents a gift that did not cost anything it would be a pretty homemade card and a bunch of hugs and kisses and home-made breakfast in bed. I will do everyone's chores and I will clean the car and organize their rooms.

—RUTH ALARCON ESPINOZA

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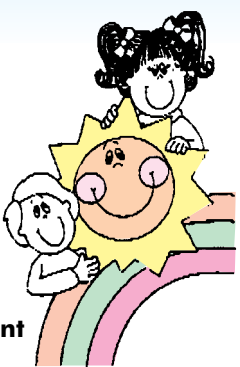
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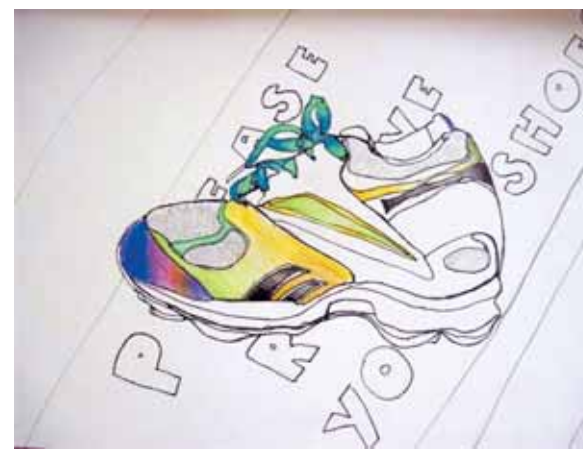


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CHILDREN'S CONNECTION 2012

FLORIS ELEMENTARY
ART GALLERY

By Parmnoor
Dhaliwal,
Second grade



By Angeline
Phan, Fifth
grade



By Matthew Krelovich, Fifth grade, Floris Elementary

Autobiographical Poems

By KEVIN FU/FIFTH GRADE
FLORIS ELEMENTARY

Funny, smart, energetic, crazy
Brother of Lani
Lover of chocolate, basketball, family
Who feels too tired to start the day, too alert to go to bed, and happier when he is outside
Who fears heights, scary movies, and sometimes Ms. Bliss
Who would like to see more of the world, more rainbows, and more smiles

By NEEL MANDAPATI/FIFTH GRADE
FLORIS ELEMENTARY

Awesome, cool, smart, kind
Brother of Aneesh
Lover of Mom, Dad, and Aneesh
Who feels Friday is the best day of the week, life is fascinating, and death is sad
Who fears bad grades, scary houses, and cockroaches
Who would like to see The Great Wall of China, Venice, and Bombay

By SANJANA MEDURI/FIFTH GRADE
FLORIS ELEMENTARY

Energetic, Crazy, Unpredictable, Sporty
Sister of Lavanya Meduri
Lover of basketball, books, math
Who feels safe at home, sleepy in bed, thirsty in the summer
Who fears solar flares, buffalo stampedes, and earthquakes
Who would like to see Egypt, The Taj Mahal, Paris



By Eryn Rhodes, Fifth grade



By Brooke Wagner, Sixth grade



By Eryn Rhodes, Fifth grade



By Lily Coticchia, Fifth grade



By Eryn Rhodes, Fifth grade



By Jesse Vasquez, Second grade

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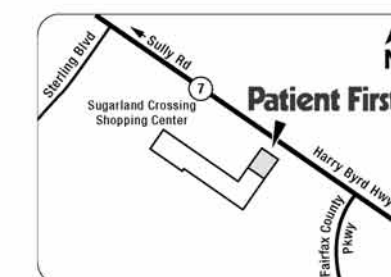
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CHILDREN'S CONNECTION 2012

The Best Gift Ever

From second graders at Floris Elementary.

When I was a 1-year-old I got a stuffed animal. I named it Bear. My mom's friend gave it to me. I used to chew on the corner and it still has a hole today. I sleep with it every night and I don't have bad dreams. I'll keep it always and share it with my kids someday.

— AIDAN MOHR

The best gift ever is my iPod Touch! I play Angry Birds on my iPod. It's fun. I have a blue iPod Touch. It's an iPod Touch 5.

— ILYAS AHMAD

The best gift ever would be to get a gold medal in gymnastics. It would be really cool for that to happen.

— DANICA DOUGAN

When I was just born my mom gave me a pink blanket. I didn't get used to it when I was 1 or

younger, but when I was around 2 years old, I would drag it around the house. I really, really liked it! I still really like it, and if I don't sleep with it, I don't sleep well. I named it Pinky. I take it wherever I go (not including outside places). I will always remember it as my best give ever!

— SYLVIA CHENG

I Wonder....

Why Stonehenge was built and what was it made for? Does the legend of the Bermuda Triangle really exist? Are UFO's (unidentified flying objects) real? I wonder why there are so many hurricanes hitting the USA. How did the dinosaurs really die out? What era is after the Mesozoic era? I wonder what gold is on the Periodic Table. How can polar bears breathe under water? I wonder why the world is the way it is...

— KAUSHIK SIRUVURI

What would the world be like if there were dinosaurs in Virginia? I feel like they might protect us. I

hope they store food because then they wouldn't have to waste our food. I think they'll have good manners. Well, we will have to see!

— PARMNOOR DHALIWAL

What my teacher will wear tomorrow? What will we do in PE? What will happen tomorrow? When Christmas is here? Will I go to the mall with my friend, Rayna? I wonder!! I am getting crazy!

— MANTRA VIVEK

I wonder who was the first person, what and where was the first lake, why are there deserts? Which was the first state, country or continent? There are a lot of mysteries in the world.

— BRIAN DU

I wonder why the world is round? People used to think it was flat. I wonder why stars twinkle. I wonder why castles have moats? I wonder why lots of things happen? I hope I learn the answers to all of these questions later.

— ZAHRA IZZI



By Vivian Li, Fifth grade, Floris Elementary

Winter

By Dean Zhang, 12, Seventh Grade Rachel Carson Middle School.

The trees are losing leaves to the frosty weather. The squirrels are eating acorns. The bears hibernate. Insects take shelter. People sleep in. Birds fly south to escape the winter chill. Snow falls from the sky making the world a white wonderland. Kids come out to play! And on December 25th, Christmas comes. Winter is a time to play, rest, and sleep. That's how life is. Winter

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CHILDREN'S CONNECTION 2012

ARTWORK FROM HERNDON ELEMENTARY



By Lily Pickworth, Second grade, Herndon Elementary



By Jacob Fast, Fourth grade, Herndon Elementary



By Roman Painter, Second grade, Herndon Elementary



By Diana Ibanez-Sosa, Second grade, Herndon Elementary



By Navaeh Johnson, First grade, Herndon Elementary



By Alaina Ruffin, Sixth grade, Herndon Elementary

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**By Nura Behgoman,
Sixth grade**



Making My World a Better Place T-Shirt Design, Collage, by Liam G, Kindergarten

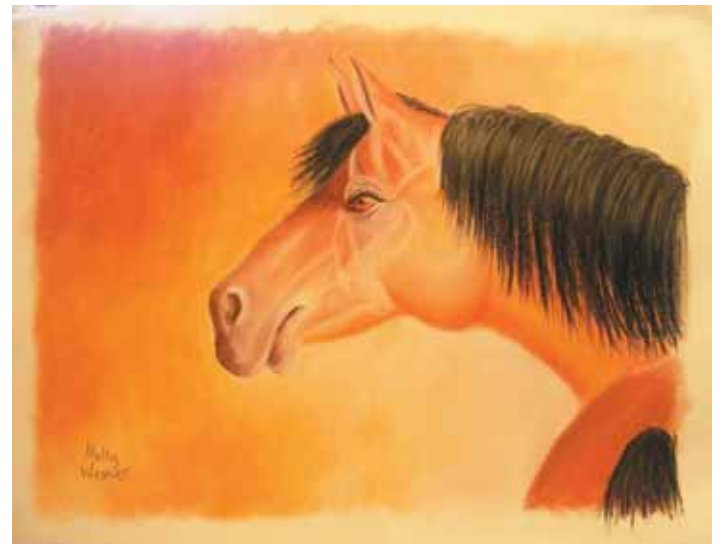


Set the Table, Collage, by Clayton D., Third grade

**By Gabriella Biggs,
Kindergarten**



**Artwork by Molly Weaver,
15, of Oak Hill,
ninth grader at Bishop
O'Connell High School.**



CHILDREN'S CONNECTION 2012

ARTWORK FROM OAK HILL ELEMENTARY



By Kathy Li, Fifth grade, Oak Hill Elementary



By Griffen Doolittle, Fifth grade, Oak Hill Elementary

By Andrew Hofinger, Second grade, Oak Hill Elementary



By Sophie Diccox, First grade, Oak Hill Elementary





By Cynthia Huang, First grade, Oak Hill Elementary



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What Am I Thinking?



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

What I think I feel. What I'm afraid to think I feel. Moreover, is what I feel symptomatic of what I'm afraid to feel? Is it the cancer doing what cancer so often does: create pain and suffering? Or is it simply an older age than I've ever been: middle age, manifesting itself with all the associated mental, physical and emotional adjustments that come along with living longer than you ever have? Unfortunately, the timing of all of it couldn't be more problematic in my determining whether any pain or discomfort I feel is symptomatic of a cancer on the move or characteristic of an age whose effects I'm only beginning to understand.

The underlying and complicating factor to my constant self-assessment is that I don't want to think any of the physical effects I feel are the cancer. I want to believe they're middle age. As a result of this continual denial, I neglect to admit that what I think I feel is potentially cancer-significant and presume instead that it's just another day in middle-age paradise (alive and reasonably well; not terminal) – it's befuddling, sort of. Am I being incredibly stupid, stubborn and irresponsible with respect to not acknowledging certain symptoms that might be e-mail-worthy to my oncologist or, have I found the key to living with cancer: not making too much of anything?

I feel this because I worry that once I open that door, I'm likely going through to the other side – and likely not coming back. As my father jokingly asserted about his car: "If I don't take it to the dealership, they can't find anything wrong with it." The related advisory concerning life and health that I've often heard is: once you're admitted to the hospital, you're not coming out – alive. It's a slippery slope between the fear and loathing (with attribution to Hunter S. Thompson) of being sick and lying in a hospital bed versus what the medical professionals don't know not being able to hurt me. (I know, I might as well be Judy Garland in "The Wizard of Oz" clicking my heels together three times: I don't have cancer. I don't have cancer. I don't have cancer.)

But the fact that I'm still alive and not just beating the life-expectancy odds I was given, but smashing them to smithereens, is a kind of reinforcer to "what I feel" and "what I'm afraid to think I feel." Having survived for as long as I have might just be blind luck or inherited DNA doing what I had no reason or expectation to believe it could: enable me to survive the stage IV non-small cell lung cancer with which I was originally diagnosed and live beyond the "13-month to two-year prognosis" that went along with it. Or, however, why ever I'm doing what I'm doing, or not doing what I'm not doing or not admitting what is likely symptomatic – or not; all this confusion, juxtaposing and double-negative rationalizing might somehow make a positive.

I realize this haphazard approach is hardly a strategy, but perhaps it is and has been so far, a means not to my end. And considering that I haven't reached that end as yet, maybe the means are justified? No one knows for sure, and that's what I'm counting on. It's too late to stop now; heck, why would I? See you next week.

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.

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