



The
Arlington
Connection

Children's Connection 2013

Cardinal by Allison Sproles,
Grade 3, Nottingham
Elementary School

DECEMBER 25-31, 2013

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GLEBE ELEMENTARY

Writing by Christine Williams' second grade class.

The Connection received a generous number of submissions for the annual Children's edition and will continue to publish them throughout January.

My Friend Grandpa

Grandpa and I are best friends. My Grandpa fought in World War II and he survived! He retired because he wanted to go to school and see his friends.

Grandpa lives on Hilton Head Island in South Carolina. We like to go swimming together in his pool in South Carolina. Sometimes, we go to the beach together. We body surf, jump waves and ride the boogie board.

When we play miniature golf, neither of us win because my brother Tommy always wins. We enjoy fishing for big fish and having contests to see who can catch the most fish. Grandpa and I have enjoyable times together.

— ALEXANDER DEVENS, 7

My Best Friend and Me

My friend Michael and I love to play with each other. We like playing with legos. We both like playing magnet tiles. My friend says good things about me and I say good things about him, too.

— TIMORI DUNN, 7

R and J and Z

When I met James, we knew we would like each other. We started playing a Frankenstein Game and Zoe joined us. Everyone likes this game. The Headless Horseman is in it, too! It is amusing because we try to stop the bad guys from destroying the town. James and Zoe are my BFF's (Best Friends Forever).

— RILEY DENNIS, 7

Topey My Best Cat Friend

My Grandma and Grandpa's tabby cat, Topey, is my BCF (Best Cat Friend Forever).

Topey's name means speed bump. She likes it when I pet her. Sometimes, she sits on my lap and purrs. I like to pet her. Topey loves me because I love her.

— NATE BEARDSLEE, 7

Eliana's Friendship

My friend Eliana is my best friend. We sit next to each other at lunch. Sometimes, I play with her at recess. At recess, we hop from rock to rock in the reading garden. We sing at recess. She shows me respect by treating me kindly. We have known each other since we were in kindergarten.

— LILY SANTOS, 7

Friends

During my brother's second year of playing baseball, I met a girl named Claire.

While playing, during my brother's practice, I was introduced to Claire by our friend Elizabeth. Somehow, I mentioned Harry Potter, which caused Claire to pause. Claire stared at me. Suddenly, she let out a scream! "I love Harry Potter!" For two years, we played Harry Potter during practice. The last time I saw Claire at the park, the first thing she said was "...have you seen the half-blood prince?" I smiled.

— LUCY GRIFFITHS, 7

Loki Stalker

Loki, my tabby cat, is my very best friend. Loki is a male brown and gray tabby who, just like his name, is very mischievous. My brother Tor named Loki. Oh, I forgot to tell you that Loki is the Norse God of Mischief.

I always cuddle with him in the morning. When I get home from school, I play with him. When he is in a mischievous mood, he scratches the furni-

ture but I love him anyway. Loki loves everyone in our family and the feeling is mutual.

— LENKA BAUMAN, 8

BFF or Friends Always

My best friend is a high school girl named Charlotte. Charlotte takes care of me. We play games together.

We play outside, have a tea party or dress up. I love to play with Charlotte. We have so much fun together. We play at the park together, too. She makes me feel excellent!

— KATE VANDEVEER, 7

Great Friends

Friends communicate, friends treat friends the way they want to be treated and that's the way my friend James and I are to each other. Friends are fair to each other and act in a good sportsmanship like way during games. Friends help each other when they need it. When James and I make more friends, that means our fun is doubled. In Extended Day, James and I play with each other. James is my best friend forever.

— JAMES GAN, 7

My Best Friend

My Grandma is my best friend because she loves to play baseball with me. I am happy when my Grandma comes to visit and hugs me. When my Grandma is not around, I like to call her to see how she is doing. We don't live together but we still have a strong friendship.

— AIDEN DELACOURT, 7

An Unusual Friendship

My friend Anna is a wonderful, caring and helpful friend. We loved each other immediately. We have an interesting relationship. We almost have the same initials A.H. Our houses are very, very, far apart. In fact, she does not live in Arlington. Yet, our friendship is very, very close together.

— AINSLEY HIGH, 7

Alejadra and Me

My cousin Alejadra is my best friend. We play together with my toys. We paint and color, too. Alejadra and I go outside to play. One time when we were at the park, we went down the slide. We screamed and laughed until we cried. Alejadra is the best friend I ever had.

— ASHLEY BENITEZ MACHADO, 7

Sheltie Belly

Hunter, my Sheltie dog, is my best friend. Hunter is always happy when I come home from school. He jumps up high and licks my face. Hunter waits for me to shake his paw. I often read a book to him. I love him.

— DAVIAN PERETTI, 7

My Best Friend Lily and I

Lily is my best friend or BFF. Outside we love to play with each other.

Many times I sit next to Lily at lunch. Sometimes, we need to cheer each other up. At the end of the school day, when we are waiting for the bus to come take us home, we talk. Lily and I love having play dates with each other. Lily is my friend because we talk to each other and play with each other.

— ELIANA KIRSHNER, 7

Friendship, Friendship, Friendship

My friend Bryan is my truly best friend. He is someone that would not let me down. I see him frequently and I would not let him down. We tell each other stories.

SEE GLEBE ELEMENTARY, PAGE 11

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

CHILDREN'S CONNECTION 2013

Welcome

Dear Readers:

This week, the Arlington 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. Because of the response, we will continue to publish more artwork and writings throughout January.

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 2014 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 arlington@connectionnews.com, but you can reach us by mail at 1606 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 or call 703-778-9415 with any questions.

— EDITOR STEVEN MAUREN



Bella Zimering, Grade 4, Virginia landscape on iPad using Sketchbook Pro, Long Branch Elementary School



Anne Licato, Grade 3, Arlington Traditional Elementary School

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com



Tyra Johnson, 4, PreK, Mrs. Hodukavich, Arlington Traditional School



Ian Johnston, Grade 4, Figures in Motion, Nottingham Elementary School



Peerless Morgan, Grade 4, Line Landscape, Carlin Springs Elementary School

ARLINGTON TRADITIONAL SCHOOL

Haiku written by Anna Barba's class.

Weather

Today it's rainy.
The clouds are black and grayish.
I hope the sun comes.

— ABDURAHMAN O., 9

Waterfall

Water is falling.
It makes a beautiful sound.
It is a great sight.

— OWEN W., 9

Rain

Sprinkles from above
Drizzling so peacefully
Pouring down on me

— JACOB P., 9

Snow

Joy to the world! The
snow has come. Let Earth receive
your flakes! Oh, thank you!

— CHRISTOPHER T., 10

Hail

Falling from the sky
Frozen rain, hard, and icy
Forming in the air

— JOSEPH M., 10

Snow

Fluffy small droplet
Fun to jump in and fall in
Kids adore the snow

— KAIF M., 10

Snowstorm

Snow is everywhere
I cannot see anything
Struggle to walk in

— AVA W., 9

Hail

Baseball-sized ice cubes
Produced during thunderstorms
Watch out! Hard as rock!
Olivia B., 10

Snow

My clear, white color
I am always different
I fall dainty down

— JADEN C., 10

Snowflakes

Floating in the air
Tiny droplets of water
They melt on your tongue.

— AMINA L., 10

Rain

Its droplets are wet
It is sometimes a bit strong,
but it's good for plants.

— LIANA RT., 9

Wind

Swaying through bushes
Makes leaves fall off their own tree
A careful light breeze

— JULIA T., 9

Snow

Frozen rain droplets
Big snowmen are created
Dancing while it falls

— JULIANA C., 10

Weather

Very natural
You sometimes get very wet
It is also fun!

— VICTORIA H., 9

Earthquakes

Scary and intense
Rumbling for destruction
Beware, the earthquakes

— JACK V., 9

Frost

Covering windows
Droplets of white on the grass
Is cold to the touch

— CHARLOTTE M., 9

Rain

Dripping down quickly
Water droplets in the sky
Rain will get me wet

— DARLA T., 9

Rain

Raindrops are falling
Falling from the big grey cloud
Falling from the sky

— THI L., 9

Tornado

Lots of swirling winds
Everywhere there's destruction
Very dangerous

— MALIK T., 10

Snowflakes

Freezing tiny balls
Drifting down beautifully
White frozen droplets

— PEARL M., 9

Snowflakes

White, falling thin flakes
So briskfully falling down
Landing in their place

— DANIEL G., 9

Hurricane

The great wild beast
Much destruction and despair
Beware of my grip

— PEARSON F., 9

Art by Mrs. Hodukavich's PreK class



Elias Alvarenga, 4



Grace Gultom, 4



Huria Ahmed, 4



Joshua Rosada, 4



Mahdeea Eshal, 5



Miguel Valencia Cuadros, 4



Nelson Calatayud, 4, PreK



Rayan Bouchareb, 4



Allae Chokmane, 4



Yohanna Kinfe, 4

Droplets

Azure droplets fall
Forming a light blue puddle
It will never last.

— MARINA CM., 10

Rain

Soft as a cat paw
Clear as air in the sunlight
Cheerfully falling

— LUKE H., 9

The Arlington Children's Connection

is published by
Local Media Connection, LLC.

A digital version of this publication
and 14 sister publications available at
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MORE FROM ARLINGTON
TRADITIONAL, PAGE 8

ARLINGTON TRADITIONAL SCHOOL



Ella
Hamlin,
Grade 3



John P.,
Grade 3



John
Allen,
Grade 3



Admissions Information Session for Parents

Wednesday, January 8, 2014

Two sessions: 8:15 AM and 7 PM

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7:30 PM

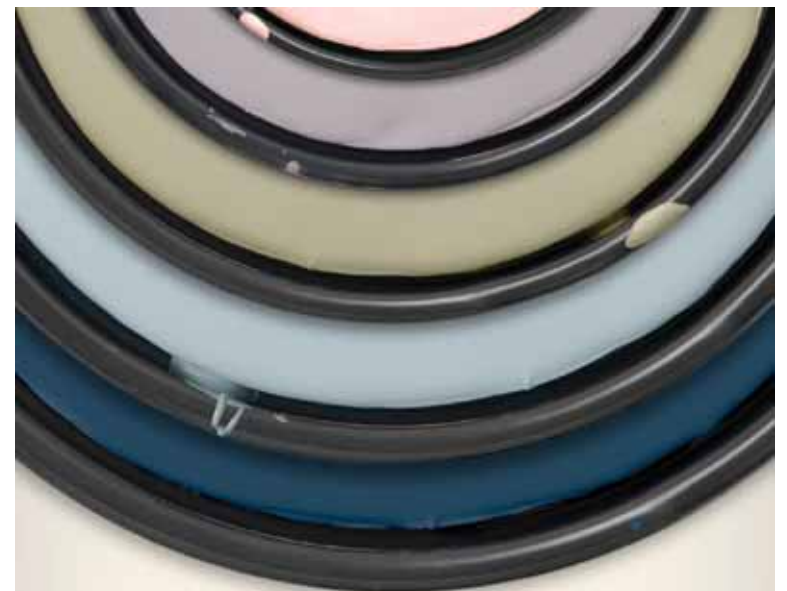
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CARLIN SPRINGS ELEMENTARY



Camila, Pre-K — Lines and Colors

Luis Sanchez,
Grade 5 —
Portrait Value
Study



Nathnael, Grade 3 — Leaves Composition



Nathnael, Grade 3 —
Day of the Dead



Barbara, Kindergarten — Concentric Circles



Margot Rodriguez, Grade 4 — Starry Night

Claudia Palacios, Grade 5 — Star Students

WASHINGTON-LEE



Students during Spirit Week, by Eileen Breslin, Grade 12, Washington-Lee High School.

What Is Your Favorite Word and Why?

"Zephyr."
"Zephyr?" Mike asked.
"Yes," answered the strikingly seasoned and wrinkled man sporting a weathered, coarse countenance. "Don't you know?" he inquired, with a curious twinkle in his weary eyes. "It's a light, gentle breeze." The year is 2006.
We are in Bodies in Motion Physical Therapy, which is owned by Mike Mastrostefano and located in the grey-stoned building on the margin of the bustling and hurried frenzy of West Broad Street; the distant humming of motor engines is muddled by the shielding defense of the surrounding glass windowpanes vigilantly standing guard on the sixth floor, only occasionally letting in a stream of light.
Once a travel softball player eager to destroy a fastball streaming low and outside with my forcefully powerful swing ready in the on deck circle, today I instead find myself confined to my long deceased grandfather's dusky, sullen wheelchair. Stuck. Isolated. Restricted.
Zephyr. Zephyr is not confining.
The subtle, gentle, yet stirring sound of the "Ze" followed obediently by the soft and comforting "phyr" sweeps me off to an escape of soothing serenity, where the warm wind blows freely, softly whispering to me its secrets. As each fresh wave

of crisp, cool air approaches, I am gripped by its prickling sensation; my body shivers. I am awakened to the reality of the day, the present moment, and all of the life that surrounds me. I hear the rhythmic cadence of my breath as I inspire, and I know I am still here. I exist.

— EILEEN BRESLIN, GRADE 12

TAYLOR ELEMENTARY

Sequoias

Standing tall, looking far,
Sequoias are what they are.

Surviving through lightning, peaceful not frightening,
Sequoias are what they are.

They give us air, but they don't make pears,
Sequoias are what they are.

They are tall, but they won't fall,
Sequoias are what they are.

— JOHN EVANS, GRADE 3.

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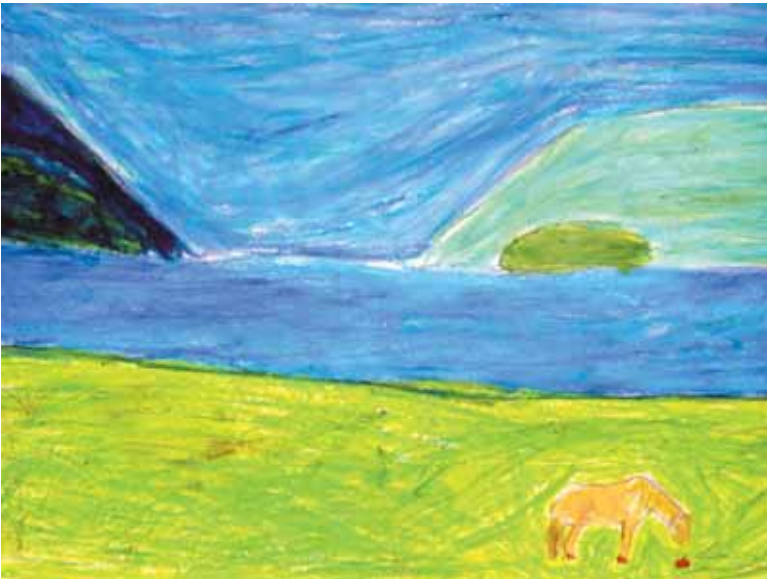
Submissions by Sarah Zoller's art students.



Abi Burkholder, Grade 5 — Split Face Self Portrait



Jason Chavez-Sorto, Grade 5 — Split Face Self Portrait



Hogan Bingel, Grade 4 — Virginia Landscape



Fletcher Tait, Grade 4 — Virginia Landscape



Justin Feira, Grade 3 — Land of Warm and Cool Colors



Leo Delogu, Grade 3 — Land of Warm and Cool Colors



Rachel Lincoln, Grade 1 — Fall Tree



Paul Gulick, Kindergarten — Seeing Faces



Anderson Bricksin, Grade 3 — Sparrow



Tess Monticello, Grade 4 — Figures in Motion



Phillip Johnson, Grade 3 — Mosaic Dog



Anna Haik, Grade 3 — Mosaic Cat



Daniel Duke, Grade 2 — Fall Leaves



Sanah Gupta, Grade 1 — Fall Tree



Caitlyn Loke, Kindergarten — Seeing Faces



Jack Burkholder, Kindergarten — Seeing Faces

ARLINGTON TRADITIONAL SCHOOL

The Connection received a generous number of submissions for the annual Children's edition and will continue to publish them throughout January.

Bor-do, Robots

One day there was a mean guy who owned half of California. He took over it with all his money. He got all his money by stealing it, he almost had all the money in the state [California]. He had been seen building robots in his laboratory, but he is hated throughout the whole world.

Bor-do is going to try to take over the world and that's what the whole world thinks but does not know. Bor-do is his name, he is 69. He is working in his secret lab. No one has seen him, because he is invisible. He has a pet gecko who is a very important now he made his first robot. Military, Army, Navy are all attacking but just dying because Bor-do has too many weapons on the sides of his house.

"All I need to do is duplicate these robots then I'll TAKE OVER THE WORLD!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!" In the laboratory he is duplicating 1,000 robots per minute. He has to be stopped!!!!

Then his gecko asked him "can I go into the real world??" "NOOOOOOOOO!!!!!" said Bor-do "No, no, no!"

"Why not?" asked the gecko.

"Because when I open the door, people will attack and come in my house," said Bor-do. "Plus I can't trust you, you can ruin my plan." "O.K." said the gecko.

One year later... "I finally finished my robots. I got 900,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 robots now to take over the rest of California, then USA [Greenland and Canada, too]; then Europe, then the top of Asia; then the bottom, then Australia; then I will make Antarctica warmer with my robots powers, then Africa, last but not least, South America, oh and I almost forgot, every island in the world! Yay! I'm so excited for this! I should have 100,000,000 robots left at the end. One year later, I took over the world, wait, no only California. It will take too long to take over the world. I will die, but I will still try."

Then his gecko asked "Why don't you just enjoy what you have now?" "Because I want MOOOOREEEE!" The helicopter that is invisible is going to start attacking on the count of three. I push this button that will free the robots who will build me a fortress around the world and take over with me.

Then the gecko says "Are you sure you want to do this? I think it's a mistake."

"Nonsense. It's perfect," said Bordo. So he pushed the button but the gecko slapped it out of his hands just in time.

"I thought you were bad and I stopped you now. The world's remotes are down there and you can go down there. HA HA."

Bordo got angry so he pushed the gecko out. This was a big mistake because if the gecko survived, he could tell the world about his plan. So he went back to his fortress. He let his robots out from there and that's what was World War 3. The robots could fly. People couldn't. Luckily everyone in the world

evacuated to Africa, Australia, and South America because those were his last three stops and everyone knew, because of the gecko, the robots used half of their gas on the USA when there were only 10 people to kill and they were killed. They did not get out. Once he was done with that he went to Europe. He got mad when there were 20 people there. He went to Asia but when he was in Europe, everyone went to his Fortress where his robots were. He searched every state, then he thought they went to another planet.

So he got on his robot and wore a special suit to go out of the universe. They went to check the planet. They got in his lab. Half of his robots ran out of batteries. So he was scared but the people found an explode button. They pushed it and all the robots exploded and it exploded in Bordo's face and he died. The whole world was happy.

There was no damage done to earth just 50 people killed and they had special graves. The gecko started a commercial and got lots of money off it. Remember you can save 15 percent or more on car insurance.

— ALEX MURPHY

Bowling

It was in Beijing when this story happened. "What is a parallelogram?" Mr. Zhang asked. First Lilan's hand went up then Jiaxing's hand and then everybody else's hand except for Xinyi's hand.

Xinyi was a very quiet young boy who lived with his mother and father at the banks of the Nile river. He was a lad that never spoke unless spoken to. All he

wanted to do was be heard. Xinyi is smart and athletic and is better than most young Chinese boys, but never shows it.

The next day the school council put all the posters up and on his way to math class Xinyi took a peek at the posters just like last time there was nothing new until he saw a peek of pink paper so he looked at it and was so exciting because they were having a bowling tournament. Xinyi was so excited that he almost screamed out loud with joy but he managed to keep it to himself.

Then he finished reading the poster and it said that everybody could join, so Xinyi thought maybe this could make me popular and maybe this could help me be heard so Xinyi signed up.

Xinyi couldn't wait for the tournament because Xinyi knew he was really good at bowling. Every night Xinyi crossed off a day on his calendar, until one day when he looked at his calendar and noticed that the bowling tournament was tomorrow.

So that night Xinyi ate all his vegetables tonight so his parents wouldn't have to stay up all night waiting until he finished them and then he wouldn't get a good night sleep for the bowling tournament tomorrow (even though he hated his beans he got through with it..

After a good night sleep, Xinyi woke up in the morning of the bowling tournament, but checked his calendar just to make sure it was right. Then Xinyi remembered that it wasn't right and it wasn't time to get ready for school because Xinyi set his alarm clock to go off at 6:00 in the morning instead of 6:30 because he wanted to watch his cartoons

for 30 minutes.

Then Xinyi thought how stupid of him to do what he needed to get well rested for the big day. Xinyi tried going to sleep but he couldn't because of the big day on his mind so Xinyi thought maybe I could practice my bowling while I wait.

After Xinyi practiced his bowling skills for 30 minutes than he got dressed and ready to go on the bus to school. He finally got there and then when everybody was settled in then he made the announcement that everybody who was going bowling had to go to the principal's office. Once everybody got there he told us that we were taking a bus to the bowling institute.

Once we got there they put the game board up. First I was playing Lilan and I creamed her 167-76. Then I played a few more people and beat them too and then I realized I was in the finals.

I was against Jiaxing the coolest and the 2nd smartest kid in school, but I was surprised when I went home celebrating my win. It felt so easy. The next day everybody talked to me and I finally got my wish.

— IRENE WILLIAMS

Cave Boy

I am trapped in a cave. I, Johnathon, biggest troublemaker in the world, am trapped in a cave. I can hear a soft rumble that is getting loud — wait, I should start from the beginning right. All stories need a beginning, so here goes.

Oh, and before we start I will tell you what I look like. I have brown hair, blue eyes and white skin. I wore a blue short

sleeve shirt and red shorts that day. Ok, now lets begin the story. Oh, and just so you know I have an annoying brother who is 2 and a half, a sister who is 12 and also annoying and safety concerned parents. I am 10 years old and in 4th grade. I am tall for my age, the tallest kid in my class. I am always on the top row on picture day.

Now the story begins. It all started one day in June in 2013. I was walking across a dessert.

"Johnathan there are holes everywhere get back here."

"I will be fine," I said.

"No you will not," said my mom.

"Yes I will," I shouted back.

"No you won't."

"Yes I wiiiiiiiiiiiiii," I said as I fell down a hole and into a cave.

I am alone I thought. My parents are gone. I can do fun things! I did fun things for a long time and soon got hungry, thirsty and bored. I was ready to complain when a pizza oven fell in the cave with a baked pizza in it. There was also grape juice.

This is great I thought. After a few nights I started getting tired of the food I had. So here I am trapped in a cave with nothing but grape juice and pizza. The rumble is getting very loud. A storm is coming I thought. I had an idea. I will build a roof.

I climbed up some rocks but I was too late. It started pouring and the cave flooded.

"Nooooo!" I shouted. I heard a rustling sound. Was it a ghost? No! it was my brother, Brandon! "Lets go," he said. We climbed out of the cave. I saw my mom and gave her a hug and that is how I got

trapped in a cave.

— SARAH LOW

France and Me

Prologue: "We're moving to Paris!" I exclaim. My name is Nina! But let me get back on track. I'm an average height, skinny, 14-year-old girl. And all I want to do is to stay here in North Carolina. This summer my dad told me we were moving to Paris, France. I was really upset. But little did I know I was going to have the time of my life.

Chapter 1: I'm having butterflies as we board the plane. I don't know what I expect. As we board the plane, my butterflies stop. As we take off, I fall asleep. I wake up as we are touching down.

Wow! How long did I sleep? I must have fainted. Weird.

Chapter 2: As we are getting off the plane, a boy and a girl are talking and run into me. "Sorry," I say. I try and keep walking, but the girl wants to talk. I am not much of a people person. At school, I didn't talk to anyone except teachers. "Bonjour!" She says in a heavy French accent. "I am Rosa and this is Peter."

"Hi," I say. "We are exchange students from a school in Washington, D.C.," She goes on. "Oh, cool." I reply. "I think I should catch up with my parents," I say. "Oh, can we walk with you?" she asks. How can I say no?

Chapter 3: I really got to know more about Rosa, but Peter just stared at me the whole time. It really made me nervous. But there isn't really a good way to say please stop staring at me, so I just

stuck to Rosa. We are living in the two apartments across the road from each other. "You are going to love Paris," she tells me. I nod, but I'm not so sure.

Chapter 4: Rosa does most of the talking and, for a while, I actually forget that this isn't a vacation. We've been walking behind my parents this whole time and they haven't even said anything. They just keep smiling like they just won the lottery. I think I know why, but I hope I'm wrong. They are super happy I'm talking to people my age. I guess it's good I am.

Rosa's mom picks up her and Peter while me and my parents walk down to the pier to pick up our car that was brought here on a ferry.

Once we have our car, we drive into town. There are people everywhere, lining the streets. When we find our address, I'm shocked at what I see.

Chapter 5: Our building is huge! It's so elegant! From my bedroom window I can see the Eiffel Tower!

That night we have croissants Mom bought at a nearby bakery. I have a hard time going to sleep. I sit up and look out the window above my bed. I think of how welcoming the city looks from here. I start to feel tired and I fall asleep with the lights of Paris shining below me.

Chapter 6: The next morning, after breakfast, Rosa and Peter show up at my door asking my mom if they can show me around France for the day. My mom's crazy smile comes back as she tells them I would love to. So I go with them.

As soon as we get outside Rosa's good girl look goes away, replaced by a mischievous smile. She walked over to a pair of motorcycles. "Hop on," she says and

pats the seat of the blue bike. "You can ride with Peter." Peter blushes as Rosa says this. I have to admit I am kind of nervous about riding on a motorcycle.

"Don't worry," Peter whispers to me as we get on, as if he has read my mind. I realize that this is the first thing Peter has said to me. He starts the engine and speeds off so fast, I have to hold on to him.

Chapter 7: Soon we reach the beautiful iron structure of the Eiffel Tower. Peter parks the motorcycle and helps me off. "So do you want to take the elevator or the stairs?" Rosa asks.

"Elevator. Definitely elevator," I reply. I know Rosa was just teasing. "Let's go up," Peter says. "Don't forget the picnic basket," Rosa replies. Peter goes over and takes a basket from Rosa's pink bike. "Get ready for a day-long picnic at the top of the Eiffel Tower." Rosa announces. "Awesome," I say.

Chapter 8: So we take the elevator to the top. The view from the top is breathtaking. You can see every house, building, and bakery in all of Paris! We set up a picnic blanket at the edge of the iron railing. For a while we just sit and chat, but around lunchtime, we all start to feel hungry. "Maybe we should take out the food," Rosa suggests.

"Yes!" me and Peter say in unison. So Rosa takes out baguettes, croissants, and tons of different types of cheeses. We stuff ourselves until all that's left is the wrappings.

Chapter 9: We watch the sun set over the city. Then I get a call from my mom. "Time to come home." she says. "Okay. Be right there."

For dinner I just have an apple be-

cause of the feast I had for lunch. Then I fall into a dreamless sleep. The next morning, Rosa and Peter show up and tell my mom that they would like to take me out for the afternoon. So we get on our motorcycles and speed off to the Louvre.

Chapter 10: We got to see the Mona Lisa. Peter tried to mimic her, but ended up looking like a someone stuck him with a pin. Me and Rosa busted out laughing. The guard got really ticked off and told us to move along. We saw about a thousand other paintings before we went to a bakery.

When I got home, I had a slice of lasagna my mom had made. (Yeah, I know that lasagna is Italian.) I was up for two hours later then usual texting Rosa about how much fun we're going to have tomorrow.

Chapter 11: The next day, I woke up really early and am ready when Rosa and Peter come. Today we are going to have a picnic under the Arc de Triomphe. We hop on our motorcycles and ride down to the Arc. We have a day-long picnic, like at the Eiffel Tower, and chat about what we should do tomorrow. "I'm sure there are so many other places to see," I say, "You know what? I think Paris won't be so bad after all."

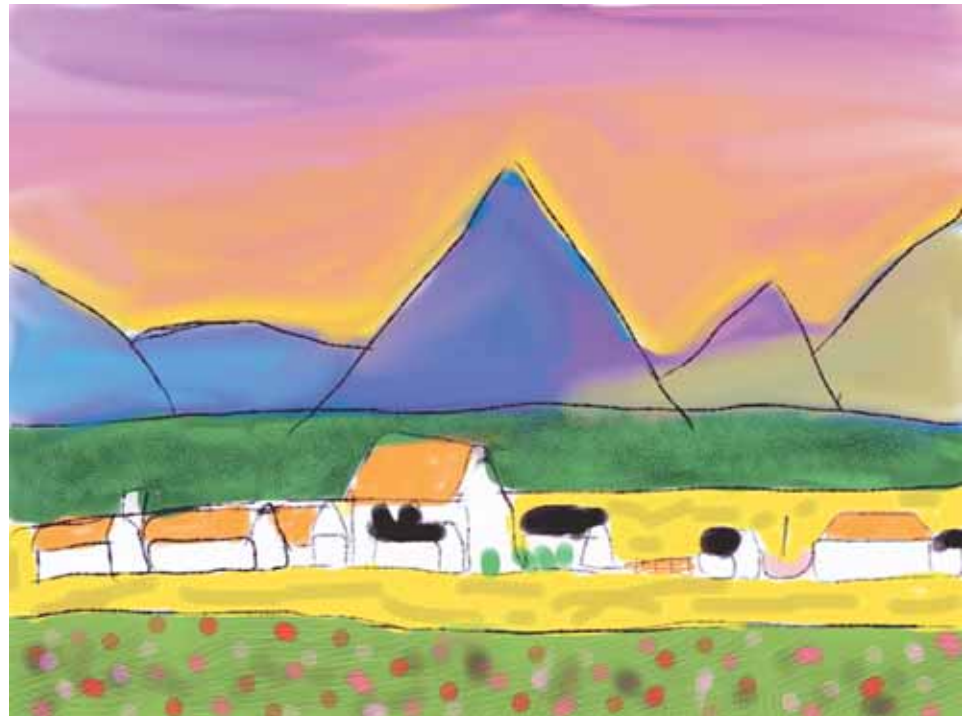
— SOPHIE FRY

MORE FROM ARLINGTON TRADITIONAL, PAGE 15

LONG BRANCH ELEMENTARY



Amanda Moseng, Grade 4 — Virginia landscape on iPad using sketchbook pro app



Eliza Hall, Grade 4 — Virginia landscape on iPad using sketchbook pro app



Josiah Hardney, Grade 4 — Virginia landscape on iPad using sketchbook pro app



Melina Axelrad, Grade 4 — Virginia landscape on iPad using sketchbook pro app

ARLINGTON TRADITIONAL SCHOOL

The Connection received a generous number of submissions for the annual Children's edition and will continue to publish them throughout January.

him very happy. To this day many people still drink Bob's coke.

— ELLIOT NEWMAN

Bob and the Coke Factory

A long time ago in Madison, Wisconsin there lived a man named Bob.

Bob was a state lobbyist at the capitol of Wisconsin. One day he received a bonus of \$1,000 for a job well done. Now he has enough money to buy his very own soda factory, which he had always wanted since he was a little boy.

One day Bob fell asleep and a famous crook named Rick STOLE HIS MONEY FOR THE SODA FACTORY!

When Bob woke up he realized that someone robbed him. Bob called #911 to tell the police that his money was gone. The police thought Bob's story was so tragic it was featured on the local news.

Because of the news story someone called in a tip about Rick and the police found both Rick and the money. The police returned the money to Bob and Rick was arrested and thrown in jail for life.

Bob was finally able to buy his soda factory which he named Coca-cola (COKE) which made

Girta and Zirta

This story is of me, Girta, and my sister Zirta. It all started in sixty-billion B.C. when the first dinosaurs roamed the Earth. Now, most of these dinosaurs were friendly but not all of them.

We lived in a cave about six feet tall and a deep inside. Zirta and I were playing chess, the way I had just invented it, and was teaching Zirta how to play.

"Chessmate!" she said. "No, no, no. It's checkmate," I told her. Zirta looked confused.

"Ugh!" I grunted. "Let's just play checkers or something."

"Check-what?!" Zirta asked looking more puzzled than ever.

"Never mind," I said.

Suddenly, a big rumbling came from out of the cave.

"What the prehistoric patties was that?!" Zirta shrieked. "Mom isn't that big, is she?"

"No, I think she was running wind sprints on her way home yesterday."

I peered out of the cave and almost instantly peed my pants. I saw the T-Rex and thought we were doomed.

"Come on!" Zirta exclaimed.

"What- what are we doing?" I stuttered.

"Fighting it, of course," she told me. Of course. Of course.

Why wouldn't I have thought of that? We exited the cave, feeling brave and courageous.

We took the dinosaur by surprise from behind. We jumped on its back and slashed like a wolf that saw meat of its favorite kind until it hit the hard, dry, ground.

"Whoa! Did we just do that?" Zirta said referring to the unconscious dinosaur lying on the ground.

"I – I think so," I said a little louder than a whisper.

"Huh," said a familiar voice. "Nice work you two."

"Mom!" we both yelled and ran to her and jumped into her arms. We both felt tired and fell asleep as she carried us ever so lightly home.

The End

— NOAH MARINO

June and Her Trip

I let go of the rope and the hot air balloon went up to the sky. I loved traveling but I also loved going on a hot air balloon. I smiled looking out and seeing the view.

Then I heard a voice call out "June!" I looked out and saw my dad. I slowly pulled down the rope to get closer to the ground. Then I put my hot air balloon on the ground, tied it, and got off. Then I went to my room. I checked my calendar and my mouth dropped. In two days the hot air balloon worldwide competition starts!

The rules are that you have to design your hot air balloon and the most creative hot air balloon wins. I was worried. I quickly got a sheet of paper, grabbed some crayons, and was ready to draw. Until I realized I did not have a clue what my design would look like. I was worried. I did not know what to do! I first thought maybe a striped pattern. But I don't think it was very creative. Since I didn't have any ideas I asked my parents for help.

My dad said, "How about a rainbow"? No, probably somebody will have the same idea.

SEE ARLINGTON TRADITIONAL, PAGE 12

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

GLEBE ELEMENTARY

FROM PAGE 2

Bryan and I have the strongest relationship in the world.

— FINN STECHERSMITH, 7

My BFF Madison

My BFF, Madison, has always been there for me. We watch movies and eat dinner together. I don't know what I would do without her. At Christmas time, we give each other presents. We always go to summer camp together. Last year during summer camp, we did a play. The best part about the play was

we got to talk to each other! I couldn't ask for a better friend.

— ZOE FLIAKAS, 7

Bichon Buddy

My dog Georgie is my best friend or BDFF (best dog friend forever). I don't know what I'd do without him. When I wake up, Georgie is there to lick me every morning.

When I am riding my bike, Georgie comes and tries to catch up. Georgie is an exceptional friend.

— ABBY LITTERST, 7

ARLINGTON TRADITIONAL SCHOOL

Hiking Escapade

Joe Knocker really liked hiking and climbing, but one day that backfired. So one day I was hiking in the woods, oh by the way i'm Joe. I am lost in the Shenandoah Forest. I need to get home.

It was quiet, too quiet. All of a sudden I heard a rustle. I spun around just in time to see a man in black slip a burlap sack over my head.

It was a bumpy ride but I finally got the sack taken off my head. I was sitting in a strange room tied to a metal chair. I noticed several terrorists dressed in black. There was a metal door with two men inside arguing. They were talking very loudly. "He is the one. He is strong enough."

"No he is too stocky and too tall."

"So what's going on," I said. The men came out. "The reason we brought you here is because we need you to steal a rare chemical from a testing lab in Louisiana."

"Wow, you got the wrong guy, I will not steal that chemical."

"We're sending you in tomorrow," one man said.

The guards didn't search me for weapons so I picked the lock. I went to where I was earlier and opened the big iron door and I paralyzed one man with a pressure point and knocked out the other man. I called the cops and got a ride to the airport and bought one ticket. So all was well but after that I will never go hiking again.

— GUS HAMLIN

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—Sir Philip Gibbs



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LONG BRANCH ELEMENTARY

ARLINGTON TRADITIONAL SCHOOL



Adam Mirmira, Grade 1 — Tree Painting



Chilugen Davaajav, Grade 1 — Tree Painting

FROM PAGE 10

My mom said, “How about fireworks in the night sky?” Perfect!

Nobody will probably have that idea! I rushed to my room and got a blue crayon. I then started coloring the night sky with a midnight black crayon. It looked great!

After I finished I looked at the drawing and it was amazing! I then realized I had to go to Color. It is a store that will design your hot air balloon. I grabbed my design and told my parents that I was going to Color. Then, when I got there I asked if they could design this for me. “In one day? Sure!” she said.

I sighed with relief then I ran back home. The next day I rushed to the store and they handed me the new hot air balloon. I was so excited! I then realized it was time to go to the competition! I ran to the competition. The place was full of people! When I walked in I saw people going to stations where you would release your hot air balloon.

I found a station and went to work then someone said over the loud speaker, “Get ready contestants! We are about to begin!”

I had my balloon ready. Some people gasped as they walked by. I was so happy! Then someone over the loud speaker said, “Welcome to the competition!”

Everyone clapped. After that I had to get in my balloon and let it go. I did. It floated in the sky. I saw other balloons go up, too. The judges were looking at everyone’s balloons. I was very nervous. One of the judges said to pull down our hot air balloons. When everyone did that he said “It was a tough one but the winner is June!” I gasp and I cheer. I am so happy! My parents rush up to me and hug me. I just won!

— SARA KEEGAN

The Move

Hi, my name is Nikki. I am a fashion designer in New York. I have a pretty good life; a nice roommate, a big house, a pet dog named Cookie and an awesome job. Until one day when I was sitting in my office working on my frozen ice dress and I got a phone call.

I put down the dress and grabbed my phone off my desk. I checked the caller ID and it said “Dad.” “That’s weird,” I thought. Dad never calls, so I picked up the phone because it must be important.

“Hello, Nikki!” he said.

“Hello,” I said uncomfortably.

“I have some good news,” he announced.

“Yeah! What is it?”

“You are moving!”

I was so shocked I made him repeat the sentence over again.

“Well, my friend works for a school and they need a new substitute teacher.”

“Dad, I am totally NOT moving.” I said. “I am more successful here than I am at teaching, I know that! I will just have to prove to you that I am better here then teaching. Deal?”

“Deal,” he said. Then I hung up.

The rest of the afternoon I sat thinking about how I was going to prove to my father that I was right. An hour passed by of me flipping through my calendar to find any special events coming up. Then it hit me. My friend and I were having a big fashion show on May 7th and I could invite my dad!

The next day I called my dad and told him about my plan. “OK,” he said “I will be there at 6:00.”

After putting on my nicest dress and brushing my hair he was here. I led him into the living room and gave him some warm coffee. I was tired at the moment, but I put a smile on my face and talked and talked and talked until I was so tired

I couldn’t move my mouth. I told him that I needed to catch up on work and quickly went to bed.

The next morning I fed me and my dad eggs and pancakes and then my models came. I gave them their first outfits and led them into our guest room. I unlocked the runway room door and got the chairs set up while my friend was collecting tickets. When all the guests arrived the show began.

The expressions on my dad’s face were amazed. I could catch him muttering words to himself, but I was mostly focused on the models. When the show was over, my dad told me that he had never seen such beautiful clothes in his life! Then you would never guess what he did next! He said I could stay and donated \$70,000 to my company. Then I told everyone that he was the best dad EVER!

— MIA MURPHY

Time Warp

Natalie felt so bored that she couldn’t concentrate. She munched another Snickers bar and wondered when school would ever end. The reason she was bored was because her dad had announced, in his usual jolly voice, that they were going on another “family fun trip” thanks to another business breakthrough. Honestly, Natalie thought he was trying to impress her so she could act more like a rich kid.

Anyway, this time they were going to a cave with a pool at the bottom. They were going swimming in it. The grand total was this: 9,000,000 dollars. Of course this was like 5 cents to a multi-trillionaire.

When the bell rang for break, Natalie felt an upcoming sense of dread.

Outside was the major bully and champion puncher, Zachary. Zachary had a record for punching almost every person in the school. Natalie’s dad had told her to tell a teacher, but Natalie didn’t want to look like a snobby rich girl. Instead, she tried to tell him to stop and consider being nice. Obviously, Zachary didn’t listen. Natalie prepared herself and walked outside. Almost immediately, Zachary came towards her.

“Hey, Natalie! Want a little punch to go with your outfit?” he said.

Natalie gave him an exact response, “No thank you.” Zachary looked stunned. No one ever said no to him. Natalie took advantage of this distraction and ran.

Right after school, a limousine parked in front of the classroom window. Natalie got up with authority and went into the waiting vehicle. Once inside, she noticed her father sitting next to her.

Normally he stayed home. But this time, he had brought her little black rolling backpack with all the supplies she needed. The limousine groaned and moved on. After a long ride, Natalie dared to ask where they were going. “The Galapagos Islands,” said her father.

Five train rides and two cruise ships later, Natalie was ready to go to the cave. Her dad warned her to stay quiet because it was an “honor” to go there. Natalie agreed. Once they were inside, Natalie forgot about being a rich kid and having to do everything her father said. She waded in and smelt the air. It smelt of salt water and dreams. Natalie waited until everyone had left — then she started to explore.

At the bottom of one of the underwater caves Natalie found a curious artifact. It looked like a gemstone carved into the form of a compass with a needle. She tried to wipe off the water and then something weird happened. The compass/gemstone began to glow!

She felt a large tug and suddenly she

wasn’t in the cave anymore.

Natalie was in a vortex of colors and shapes. She heard voices calling her to get out quickly. She tried but failed, and began to locate the sources of the voices. Thousands of children her age were surrounding her!

A boy stepped forward. He was wearing a suit (Natalie thought that was weird) and had black hair with icy blue eyes. “Salutations,” he said. “Have you come to save us?”

“Wait, what? I just got here! You should be helping me, not the other way around!” Natalie shouted. “I don’t even know where in the world I am!”

The boy looked stunned, quite like Zachary.

“My name is Peter. You are in a time warp.”

Now it was Natalie’s turn to be stunned. As the landscape became clearer, Natalie noticed that they were once again in a cave.

“What did you mean about me saving you?” said Natalie after she had calmed down.

“In two days, this mountain we live in will explode, in a way you call an eruption. All will be destroyed. There’s no way out, and the item we need to survive is lost. We were you hoping you would have it.”

Natalie was intrigued. “What is the item?”

“It was called the Rescuer. It looks like a compass made of gemstones. Have you seen it?”

“No, sorry.” Instantly, she felt guilty for lying. She felt in her pocket and was immediately satisfied. The compass was still there. She decided to play along, though. These people could help her with Zachary! She took the Rescuer out of her pocket. “Is this what you meant?”

As soon as they saw it, everyone bowed down before her.

“The Rescuer has been found!” announced Peter.

Natalie felt awkward. She didn’t know what to do. She stared at the Rescuer. As she looked at it, the needle pointed North. She didn’t think that was serious, but she told Peter just in case. She also told him about Zachary, and asked for his help. He told her to stay brave, whatever happens, and tell the bully “no.” He also told everyone to get ready to move North.

“Why?” asked Natalie.

“Whichever way the needle points we must go.”

Natalie took his advice and went with the others. The hike took long but it was worth it. After hiking twenty miles, they look back and saw a cloud of dark smoke coming from the mountain. It was headed towards them! They all ran as fast as they could. They were headed toward a large rock with blue hieroglyphs written on it. Peter explained it was a portal, and the people here had come from different times to this rock and got trapped.

“It’s only one way, but with the Rescuer, you can get through,” said Peter.

“What about you?”

“We’re not coming. Only you can go.”

Natalie screamed at him, although she regretted it. The crowd overwhelmed her. She was carried to the rock and pushed. Suddenly, she was back in the first cave again. Her dad came in and called her, despite his own warnings to stay quiet. She came unwillingly, remembering the people in the time warp.

Later than day at school, a new group of students was introduced. One of them had bright blue eyes and a suit. Natalie winked at Peter. He winked back. He pulled his new desk next to hers and they talked all lesson long. Natalie was happy she’d found a good friend!

— MARIA SOUKUP

ARLINGTON TRADITIONAL SCHOOL



**Ashley Uquizo, 4, PreK,
Mrs. Hodukavich**

**Saron
Meselework,
4, PreK,
Mrs.
Hodukavich**



Aquakid

I woke up early this morning and swam to the surface for air. I'm sure you're thinking "He's a whale." Well you're wrong. I'm just a human living underwater.

Great! Now you think I'm a merman, but I'm not. My best friend Jerris meets me at the surface.

"Hi Zack," he said.

"Hi Jerris," I say.

By the way Jerris is a great white shark.

Anyway, I want a sword. Why you ask, because swords make me feel cool.

"Have you heard about the battle?" Jerris asked.

"No," I say.

Well Jerris said "I'm going to leave you if you can't fight." Then he left.

Weeping, I swam along the seabed when I saw whale bones. I took some and swam to Jerris's

house.

I knocked and he answered. I asked him if he could help me make a sword. He said yes. One day later it was finished just in time for the battle.

During the battle Jerris and I stuck together. Suddenly someone yelled one of their sharks is unshark! I knew I had to battle him, so I said bye to Jerris and left. I swam to the unshark and my jaw fell open. It was a kraken! I swam up to the kraken and started spitting insults. The kraken shot his tentacle at me. I dodged the tentacle, then I took a hold of it, then cut it. Then I swam up to the kraken and sliced its eyeballs, blinding it. I did one final slash to the head and slew it.

After the battle, I went looking for Jerris and found him. We both swam to each other with tears of joy.

— GRIFFIN LO

MORE FROM ARLINGTON TRADITIONAL, PAGE 15

NOTTINGHAM ELEMENTARY



**Anna Israel, Kindergarten
— Seeing Faces**



**Cara Atkins, Grade 2, — Native Americans
Celebrating the Sunset**



**Eishra Ashura, 4, PreK,
Mrs. Hodukavich**

**Victoria
Sanchez,
5, PreK,
Mrs.
Hodukavich**



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Saint Ann Catholic Church

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The Daze of My Life

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



Every three weeks I have chemotherapy. Every three months I have a CT Scan. And every three months – after that scan, I have an appointment with my oncologist to discuss the results. And before any of the above, the Wednesday before my Friday infusion, I go for my pre-chemo lab work to determine if my levels are up to protocol standards in order to allow me to even get treatment two days hence on Friday. Accordingly, I live my life in three-week/three-month cycles. And after each infusion/appointment, the cycle begins all over again. Unlike a credit card expiration date that renews for three years, my expiration date, such as it is presumed to be, renews for only three months – or shorter if my scan results and lab work are discouraging. And I can live with that; I have been living with that. But short-timing like this can play mind games, as I alluded to in last week's column. Though I usually know whether I'm coming or going, I don't always know whether I'm standing pat or betting on a future.

And since I'm not a betting man – or much of a gambler, I usually stand pat and act as if life will go on as it sort of has: with fits (not literally) and starts, with some good results – and some not so good results. On balance though, my results have been above and beyond the expectation of my oncologist. And in a peculiar way, that's what I sort of live for: to surprise my doctor. There's no better feeling I have than to see my oncologist smiling back at me, almost inexplicably, as to why I've been able to live for as long as I have. Though I've always maintained a positive outlook and kept my sense of humor, I can't really speak to whether these two traits would have convinced my oncologist that my initial "13 month to two-year" prognosis was merely a starting point, not the end game that he had predicted. Moreover, given the severity of my original diagnosis: stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer; metastasized, inoperable, terminal; and supported by all the less-than-encouraging, life-expectancy-challenged statistics from your favorite cancer society, I am in fact living proof that what has gone around is not always what goes around. Patients are different. Lifestyles are different. Drug/medication interactions are different. Commitment levels to alternative methodologies are different. In general, there are many variables. As bad as the diagnosis/prognosis was, I never gave up hope, never gave in to my disease – emotionally.

Now whether there's a rhyme or reason to my exceedingly good fortune – or whether I'm just incredibly lucky, I can't say for sure. Certainly I don't have any definitive keys to the kingdom, so to speak, that have enabled me to live free and not die. I just try to take each day as it comes, and not expect too much and not overreact to what symptoms/feelings I may be experiencing. As my father used to say, every day that he would wake up is a good day. And since I've been waking up now going on five years, in spite of my many three-week/three-month intervals, I'm happy to say: keep those intervals coming; it may very well be what's been keeping me alive.

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

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NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

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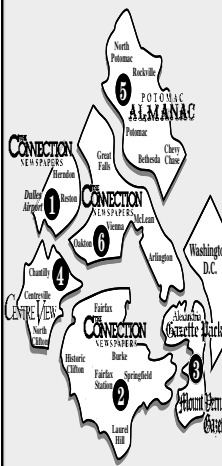
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IMPROVEMENTS

Hawaii Adventure

Boom! Fireworks blast up into the air. My name is Eliza and I live in Hawaii where there are many festivals and parties. I am at a festival where there are many games and friends to play with.

I am looking for my friend Casie, but got distracted by a group of girls dressed up dancing around a palm tree, singing songs and shooting fireworks into the warm, humid air above. Many people were sitting around them laughing and singing along. I decided to watch too.

I sat down next to them on the sandy warm ground and as I watched them I fiddled with a sand crab that was digging in the sandy ground. I looked up at the fireworks being shot into the air above and watched them fall to the ground below as they slowly faded off into mid air.

Next came a song I knew and so I sang along with the small chorus around me. After that song was done I put the sand crab back in the hole it was digging and looked down at my arms. I had been sitting there for a while right under the sun, which caused a sunburn to slowly spread itself around my shoulders and onto my back. I don't like sunburns but, I did not care because I got them all the time.

The whole time I had been sitting there the sun had been streaming down on my back and I had gotten really hot. I quickly went to go ask my mom if I could get my swimsuit from my cozy, small, straw hut I shared with my mom.

My mom said, "Ok. Do you want me to come with you?"

I said, "Mom, I am 12 years old and our hut is close by."

"Alright, but do be careful and come straight back. Do not dilly-dally, you don't want to miss too much of the festival."

"I know. I will not. Bye, I'll be back soon." I started walking quickly down the path that led to my house. I looked around. There was no one around me. I guess they had all gone to the festival.

I kept walking and walking then in the woods beside me I saw an animal leaping away from me farther and farther. I never got to see what kind of animal it was.

Then I started thinking about the time when I went swimming and I went so deep into the water that the water turned gray and dark then all of the sudden an animal whacked right into me. I felt the scales and saw a black tail all smooth and shimmer. I smelled the odor of the animals breath all around me in the big bubbles. Then I looked back up and round me and stopped thinking about that.

There was still no one around me, but then I noticed that I was not familiar with where I was. I started to feel the slightest bit of worry and panic. I started to wonder if I had gone the wrong way and now was lost in the maze in the rain forest. The huge rainforest, all alone, with no one around me. I looked up at the bright green roof above me made of the tops of trees with cracks of the sun shining through.

Then in the tops of a tree I saw a very rare baby bird sitting in a branch. My fear was lost and I started climbing up the tree slowly, being careful to not scare it. When I reached with my fingers, I could not touch it yet but once I had climbed a little farther up I would be able to.

All of the sudden a huge, shimmer, blue bird flew in making me so scared I lost my grip and came tumbling down. At the same time, the bird was swooping towards the ground diving towards a black, big, shiny beetle. I kept falling towards the ground too. I closed my eyes and then thump. I landed on something.

I opened my eyes. I was riding on the huge bird's back. I held on tight as I watched the ground close by and then the bird flew up to the sky and now I was soaring above the tree tops. It was a beautiful sight. Then I saw the beach and festival and I said to the bird please go down. The huge bird amazingly responded by swooping towards the ground and tilting one wing to let me off. I stepped off and said thank you as the bird flew away.

I went to my mom and she said, "My goodness where have you been?"

I said, "On the bird's back, above the treetops, in an adventure."

— ANNABELLE ERWIN

I am Cinnamon!

Prologue: It wasn't so long before an adorable quokka, Cinnamon's life changed from ordinary

(perfect) to extraordinary (the bad kind).

The fresh-aired forest was always Cinnamon's home. It was calm, peaceful, restful, relaxed, etc. The forest also had moss hanging over trees, little pools of water to drink from, and of course lots of trees. It's mild, cool, and breezy. The temperature will most likely to be around 70 degrees Fahrenheit and rains at least twice a month. Everything was perfect...

Cinnamon's father was a patient soul. He died in a tree-falling accident, which was caused by lightning. The accident set their den on flames and burned it in a blink. Luckily no one was hurt — except Cinnamon's father. Cinnamon's father, so full of life who suddenly disappeared and left Cinnamon and his mother scrambling for food and shelter. Cinnamon's mother later got sick because of all the hard work.

You would never understand Cinnamon unless you really look into his shiny, black eyes. All quokkas live in Australia. Their head and body length are 40-54 centimeters (15.7- 21.3 inches). Their tail length are 24.5-31 centimeters (9.6-12.2 inches). Their scientific name is Setonix Brachyurus. All quokkas' weight are 2.7- 4.2 kilograms (6-9.3 pounds). Only 7,850- 17,150 mature individuals surviving now.

Chapter 1: "Mom?"

"Yes?"

"Why are you leaving me?"

"I'm hurt."

"What caused it?"

Silent.

"Mom?"

"Yes?"

"Good-bye."

"Farewell to you, too."

Chapter 2: After Cinnamon's mother's death, Cinnamon went to his friends' dens but their dens were either abandoned or vanished. It was the first time he ever felt so lost in his life.

He tried to make new friends but it wasn't as easy as it used to be. Animals ignored him and sometimes chase him off. The food and water was running out and Cinnamon dared himself to go back to his family's den's food storage but he backed up every time because he was afraid that he might find his dad's dead body.

"It is just a food storage," he thought. "No big deal!" Just one night, Cinnamon went out for food — as usual. He froze when he heard a low growl. He expect it to belong to a bear and shortly enough, he found himself standing before an enormous brown bear with its teeth showing.

"What are you doing here, fool?" the bear growled.

"I... I am here for food." Cinnamon shivered with fear as he squeaked. "Don't expect me to give you food, then!" after that, the bear leaped at Cinnamon with his claws unleashed. Cinnamon barely escaped but he managed to crawl under a manmade fence while the bear bumped into it and later lost patience and did a slow U-turn with lots of growling.

Chapter 3: It was sunrise when Cinnamon was woken with the song of the birds. He was relieved that the worst moment had passed. He took a big sniff and smelled the fresh moss hanging from trees. He took another deep breath, the fresh air passed throughout his lungs. Then he breathed out comfortably. When Cinnamon turned, to his surprise, he saw a stream that separated him and the other cliff. In that stream were mean, mad alligators. For the moment, he heard heavy footsteps behind him. He tried to think of a way to get across, but all he could think of was to jump across. Suddenly, Cinnamon felt gentle but big hands clasped around his hips.

He struggled when the creature turned him around to meet his eyes. "Hello," the creature (whom he called Furry) said. Cinnamon gulped. He relaxed when the creature put him down. "My name is Liz. I'm a zoo-keeper," she paused, "I'll call you Crispy."

Cinnamon didn't run away, he stayed. He went closer when he saw food. Yes, food! Liz beckoned him to eat. Cinnamon ate the food berries in two swallows. For the first time since his mother died, he felt joy rushing through him.

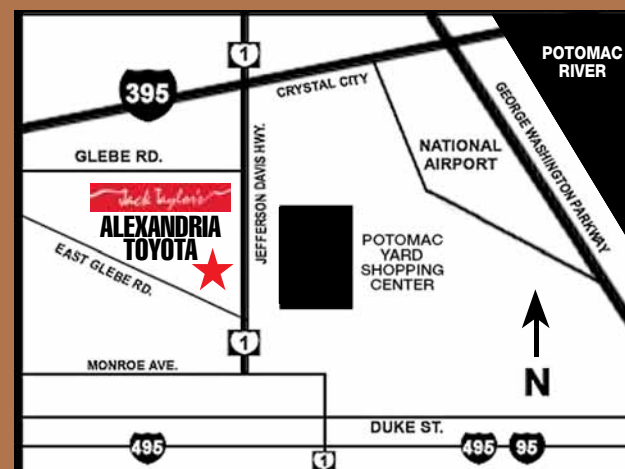
Chapter 4: Liz took Cinnamon to the CEAZ-Central Endangered Animals Zoo. "Look guys!" she said, "I haven't seen this kind in a while." Then she cradled him as if he was a baby and put him in a big, open shelter. Grass, food, water, and even playtime! Perfect, thought Cinnamon.

"This is where I want to be. Want."

— LILLIAN SUN

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