



2013 FCFT President's Award



for Outstanding Advocacy for the Employees of FCPS

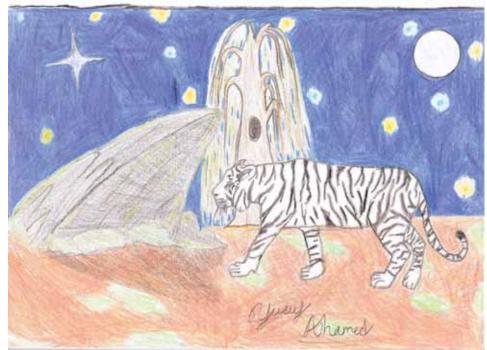
Megan McLaughlin (Braddock District)
Elizabeth Schultz (Springfield District)
Pat Hynes (Hunter Mill District)
Patty Reed (Providence District)
Sandy Evans (Mason District)
Dan Storck (Mount Vernon District)
Tammy Derenak Kaufax (Lee District)
Ryan McElveen (At-Large)
Janie Strauss (Dranesville District)
Pat Herrity (Supervisor: Springfield District)
Kaye Kory (Delegate: 38th District)

Other Award Winners:

Phyllis Pajardo (FCPS) Louise Epstein (FEC) Michael Hairston (FEA) Erica Hendry (media)

The Fairfax County Federation of Teachers would like to thank all of the 2013 award winners listed above for their consistent advocacy, proactive communications, and support of our workforce over the past year. We publicly acknowledge their efforts to make a difference in the lives of FCPS employees. Thank you for caring about us; it matters and is appreciated.





Welcome

Dear Readers:

This week, the Fairfax Station/Clifton/Lorton Connection turns over its pages to the youth and students.

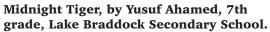
We asked principals and teachers from area schools to encourage students to contribute their words, pictures and photos for our annual Children's Issue.

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 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 south@connectionnewspapers.com, www.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



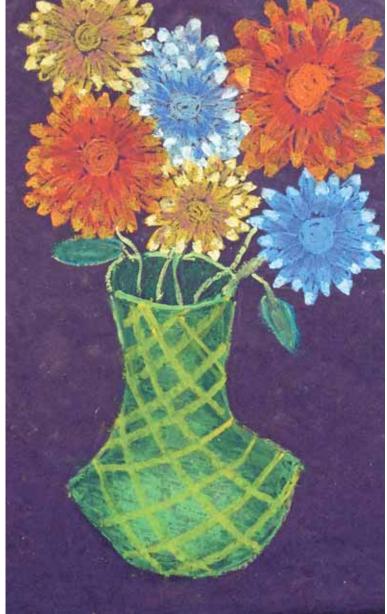
Noor Atari, 7th grade, South County Middle School.



By Anna Goetz, 6th grade, Keene Mill Elementary.



By Aimi Nguyen, 7th grade, Key Middle School.



By Joey Plancich, 4th grade, Fairview Elementary.

FAIRVIEW ELEMENTARY ART GALLERY



By Eduardo Rodas Medina, 4th grade, Fairview Elementary.



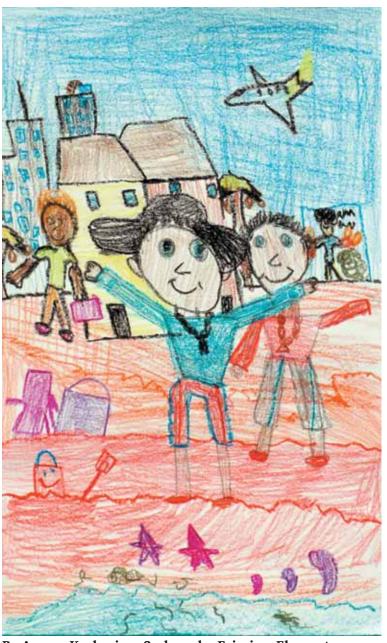
By Katelyn Sullivan, 2nd grade, Fairview Elementary.



By Lucy Thorton, 6th grade, Fairview Elementary.



By Lisa Kondo, 6th grade, Fairview Elementary.



By Arman Kasbarian, 2nd grade, Fairview Elementary.



By Anthony Ochoa, 2nd grade, Fairview Elementary.

Writing

I decided to write about writing. When you are writing either you are feeling creative or you are putting down thoughts. It is a way to say who you are, make a statement about something you believe in. Writing is a way to express yourself and show your emotions. It is one of the most powerful things in the universe, so write and let yourself be heard.

—Elizabeth James, 6th grade, Fairview Elementary

My Favorite Animal

Do you have a favorite animal? Well, I do. Mine is the panda. I love pandas because they are fuzzy, black and white, and so adorable! Also, they are so loving and chubby and awesome. I love going to the zoos because I love to see the panda exhibit.

—Abby Sawin, 4th grade, Fairview Elementary

What I'm Looking Forward to this Year

In this upcoming year I'm looking forward to art class. I like class because I get to learn more techniques, how to shade things and places in with black markers and other colors. I hope later this year we will get to paint and learn some new paint techniques. I would also like to learn how to draw castles.

—Nathan Hodum, 6th grade, Fairview Elementary

Dad

A dad is cool.

Dad is a person I love.

—Anna Littleton.

Dad is my best friend.

3rd grade,
Fairview Elementary

T-Bone

The best pug on earth Bouncing everywhere Oh, how you snort Nice soft fur Everybody loves pugs

—Hannah Mallow, 3rd grade, Fairview Elementary

Library

Learning Center
I read books
Books, books, and more books
Reading on a rainy day
Awesome books
Read, read, read
Yummy cookbooks

—Jaclynn Knight, 4th grade, Fairview Elementary





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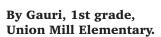


metropolitan

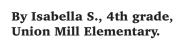
Union Mill ELEMENTARY ART GALLERY

> By Dylan E., 2nd grade, **Union Mill** Elementary.















By Margaret (Mia) E., 6th grade, Union Mill Elementary.



Registration for recital participation closes January 15th

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dancers

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'Best Dance Studio' -- Family Magazine 'Best of Virginia' - Virginia Living Magazine 'Best of NoVa' - Northern Virginia Magazine

Winter Wiggletoes

(ages 2-3) Session

Starts in January

Our Soldiers

KATIE BALLOU,
 9TH GRADE,
 WEST SPRINGFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

It is a winter morning in Texas, and the air is cool. My mouth is dry and my anxious fingers fumble with the zipper on my sweater. Music plays behind the chatter of the patient families. We stand on a huge field in front of the First Calvary's Headquarters at Fort Hood Texas. The American flag waves as if America can feel the excitement of the families. The smell of pine drifts on the cool air and into my nose. The familiar smell comforts me and calms my nerves.

A voice comes over the speaker and announces the arrival of the soldiers we have been waiting for. A bus pulls up and my stomach fills with anxious butterflies. We see booted feet file off the bus and march into formation behind it. All the families are cheering and clapping. I can hear the low rumble of the bus as it pulls away, revealing the soldiers. They march onto the field and I cannot see their faces well, but I know they are searching for their families. The National Anthem plays and two mounted First Calvary Horsemen ride across the field atop their horses. We say the Pledge of Allegiance and have a moment of silence for the soldiers who will never be able to return home. During all of this, I am staring at one man who is in the front row of the lined up soldiers. The man on the speaker then announces that we can finally be reunited with our loved ones.

I run past my family and the other families. I look around. I was only a four-foot-eleven fifth grader, so it is hard to look over the top of the towering soldiers and their families. I then catch a glimpse of a man. I see only the back of him, but I know who he is. He is looking for something. I look at his hat and it has a very familiar name on it: "BALLOU." I run to the soldier and tap on his shoulder. He turns around. His face lights up and he picks me up. I take in everything about Dad: his Old Spice cologne, the familiar roughness of his uniform, and his hugging arms.

"Katie," his voice shakes and I smile because I know that dad will never leave again.



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- Our band was established in 1974 and has been the recipient of many awards over the years, to include the Music in the Parks Award.
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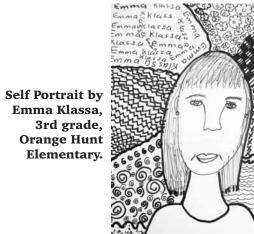
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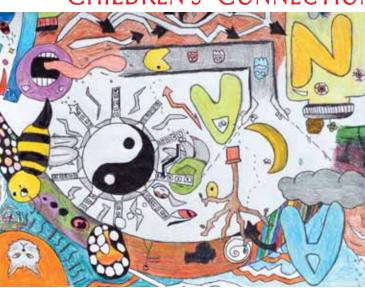
Pink Flamingo, by Bhaavya Jilludumudi, kindergarten, Orange Hunt Elementary.



Super Helper, by Katie Newnum, 1st grade, Orange Hunt Elementary.



Contour Drawing of Shoes by Rebecca Payton, 5th grade, Orange Hunt Elementary.



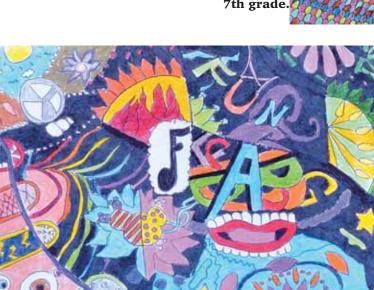
By Aaron Schaum, 8th grade.

Transformation

How to transform your doodle drawings into a work of art!

BY STUDENTS AT KEY MIDDLE SCHOOL

By Mariel Miranda Marquez,



By Antonio Barr, 8th grade.



By Christine Nguyen, 7th grade.









By Sierra Sterns, 7th grade.



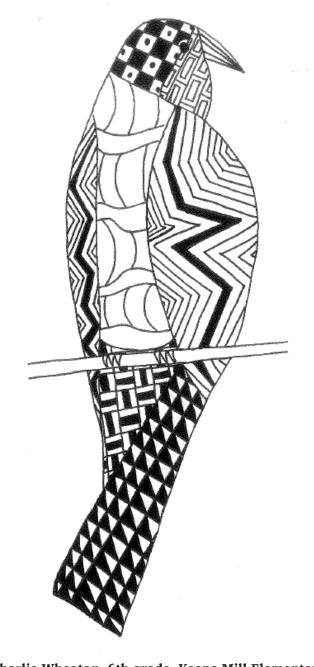


By Anna Goetz, 6th grade, Keene Mill Elementary

A Riddle

Its home is nowhere. It is nothing. It is something. It's known as cold and cruel. It's known as warm and welcoming. It is the guardian of the sky. Answer: the wind

-Addie Merlo, 6th grade, Keene Mill Elementary



By Charlie Wheaton, 6th grade, Keene Mill Elementary

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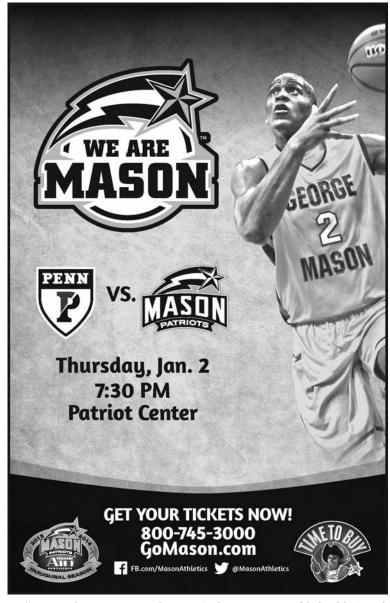
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South County Middle Art Gallery

By Katrina Tran, 8th grade, South County Middle School.





By Abby Frye, 8th grade, South County Middle School.



By Chamber Lucas, 8th grade, South County Middle School.



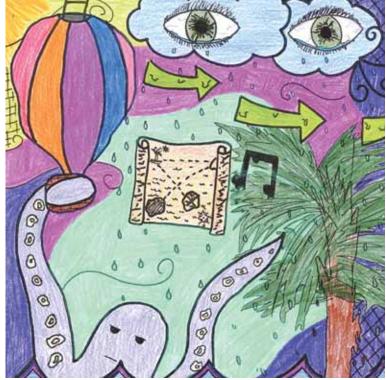
By Aubrey Taradash, 8th grade, South County Middle School.



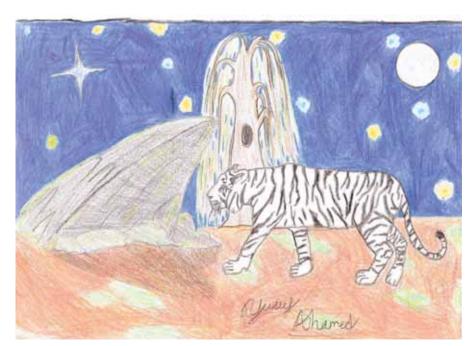
By Marcus Hancock, 7th grade, South County Middle School.



Juliana Samar, 8th grade, South County Middle School.



By Michela Marafino, 8th grade, South County Middle School.



Midnight Tiger by Yusuf Ahamed, 7th grade, Lake Braddock Secondary School.

The Fairfax Station / Clifton / Lorton Children's Connection

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CHILDREN'S CONNECTION

LAKE BRADDOCK SECONDARY SCHOOL REFLECTIONS

When I Grow Up...

The question, "what you'd you like to be when you grow up?" seems like an impossible one to answer. As for me, it never has been. The reason? I've always been intimidated by this question, and so, I've chosen to manipulate it. With all other jobs, we're are defined as one person; doctor, teacher, lawyer. But with my dream job, I can be whomever I wish to be. I can create whichever circumstances I wish, whatever people I can conjure, and within whatever time period I want. I answer to no one, except my pen and my characters. The world is at my fingertips. By being this job, I can escape the inevitable labels of a job waiting for me, and I can create my own. This is why, when I grow up, I want to be a writer.

-Laura Kirk,

7th grade, Lake Braddock Secondary

What you do when you grow up depends on your personality, interests, and strengths. When I grow up I would like to work in a job that involves politics, so I will start as a lawyer and work my way up to higher positions. Any job with politics involves interacting with people. I like talking to people and learning their opinions on different matters. I want to become a politician to help our country be the best country it can be.

— Nandhana Nair,

7th grade. Lake Braddock Secondary

A Gift for My Parents

If I could give my parents a gift that didn't cost money, then I would give them less stress. My parents are always there for my sister and me whenever we need help. Every day I wake up at 6 a.m., go downstairs, and my mom is waiting for me with breakfast on the table. Whenever I need help with math, my dad is there to help me. These are just a few of the many things that my parents do for me. Thanksgiving was just three days ago, and I definitely had something to be thankful for.

> ALEX AHN, 7th grade,

Lake Braddock Secondary

The Best Thing That Has Ever Happened to Me

I've had many good days, and quite a few great days, but the best day ever was the day I spent at the Epcot amusement park in Disneyworld. The crown jewel of that day was when my dad, sister, and I rode a ride called Test Track. After coming out of the ride, my sister and I were very excited about the ride. After finding my mom and gramma talking to a Disney employee, we told them that they had to ride it with us. They agreed, but before we could leave, the employee offered us a Magic Moment. That essentially means she would take us right up to the front of the line and put us in the first car of the ride. Bypassing the 45 minute wait, and having the ride of our life, that was the best thing that has ever happened to me.

—Tess Saadvandi,

7th grade.

Lake Braddock Secondary

The best gift I ever received was when

I got my dog. When I was 3-years-old,

my mom and dad surprised my brother

and me by taking us to the shelter to

adopt a dog. There were two dogs that

we liked; one was a yellow Labrador

retriever and the other was a shepherd

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Presbyterian

Clifton Presbyterian Church... 703-830-3175 Presbyterian Church 703-764-1310

Sikh

Sikh Foundation of Virginia...703-323-8849

mix. My parents left it up to my brother and me to choose. We both shouted at the same time,"We want the yellow one." Now ten years later, we still love "Duke" as much as the day we picked

Duke

- Nicholas Margraf, 7th grade, Lake Braddock

The Best Christmas Gift

The absolute best gift that I could give to my parents would be helping them when renovating our new house this holiday season. Examples such as, helping take down wallpaper, painting, or just keeping my siblings under control so they're not bothering my parents while they're working. I would do this by asking if I could help, trying my best and making sure I know what to do for them. That is the best Christmas gift I could give them this year.

–Nevan Carter,

7th grade.

Lake Braddock Secondary

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My Favorite Toy

My favorite toys are Legos. One reason is that you can build with them and take them apart. Secondly, you can collect pieces called mini-figures which are in Lego sets. Mini-figures are fun to collect because you can make videos with mini-figures. Finally, what makes Legos cool is that every year the makers of Legos come out with new sets so you won't run out of sets to build. That is why Legos are my favorite toy.

-Jackson Daughters,

4th grade, KINGS GLEN ELEMENTARY

What Makes a Good Friend

What makes a good friend? A good friend is always nice to her friends. A good friend also really doesn't care what game you play. A good friend is outgo-ing. A good friend helps people. Also, a good friend is always looking for more friends if someone is lonely. Do you think this is what a good friend is? I do.

- LAUREN TIPPET,

4th grade, KINGS GLEN ELEMENTARY

Field Trip to Jamestown

Fourth Graders should all go on a

Reflections

field trip to Jamestown. If you don't go, then you will never learn more facts about Jamestown. You will visit the river where the water made the colonists sick. You'll also have so much fun at Jamestown. You can explore the ships. You'll see all the things you learned about like the fort. Most importantly, every Fourth Grader should go because you will have an awesome time.

> —Amanda Morcelo, 4TH GRADE.

KINGS GLEN ELEMENTARY

Go to Work with Your Dad

I think every kid should go to work with their dad. You should go to work with your dad because it is amazing seeing where your dad goes every morning. It does not matter where you dad works because at least your dad has a job. If you go to work with your dad, you get to spend more time with your dad. So, every kid should go to work with their

> — Savannah Clark, 4th grade,

Kings Glen Elementary

A.J. Green

A.J.Green of the Cincinnati Bengals is a very good football player. He is very fast and tall. He can make plays over the players that are on the other team. A.J. can also run for 81 to 100 yards on the

field. He can jump very high to catch the ball in the air. He is probably the tallest player in the NFL. He should be in the Hall of Fame. A.J. Green is a great football player.

David Solomon,

4th grade, KINGS GLEN ELEMENTARY

Washington, D.C.

Washington, D.C. is the best city of all cities. First, it has an awesome museum. The museum teaches you about animals, how time began, and it shows you artifacts found in a digging site. It has great traffic. You can get to places faster. You can do the kite festival in the spring. So go to Washington, D.C. You'll be glad

> - Gus Polnow, 4th grade,

KINGS GLEN ELEMENTARY

The Best Gift Ever

My family has always been there for me and always cared about me. I realize that my best gift isn't a video game or a bicycle; it's my family who I am thankful for. They are the ones who buy me clothes and feed me food. My mom, dad, and brother are better than a present. Instead of getting presents for Christmas, I should give my presents away. I already have all I need.

– Joshua Bonar,

6th grade, Franconia Elementary

A Gift I Always Want The Real Spirit

My best gift ever was not my Xbox 360. My best gift ever was not getting a Wii. I got a gift that was even better than hockey! My best gift ever was waking up and seeing snow out the window, then seeing my mom with hot chocolate. My brother and I watched as the snow was falling down and we sipped our hot, sweet goodness. Now that is the best gift

> Nour Chirchi, 6th grade.

Franconia Elementary

of Giving

The spirit of giving to me is all about giving to people who need, not want. It's all about smiling and thanks. Giving is one of the best words. I learned that it is better to give than to receive. I have even felt the happiness that runs through your body when you give.

— Eva Perry,

6th grade,

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By Jessica Olmedo, 8th grade, Key Middle School.

Everyday

Everyday I wake up knowing that today is different

Everyday I recall my dreams wishing they were real

Everyday I walk down stairs with a smile on my face

Everyday I mess up

Everyday I want someone to talk to

Everyday I hang out with my friends Everyday my friends help me forget what I did

Everyday my friends inspire me to do my best, never give up, and put my best foot forward Everyday my friends have my back and I have

Everyday I find a new dream to work towards Everyday I believe I can do anything which I

Everyday you might try to tear me down but I will always smile Everyday you fake your way to the top

But everyday I know that if I believe in my dreams then one day I might inspire you to do the same

RACHEL SCOUT STROHECKER, 6th grade, Sangster Elementary

The Last Swing

The dead grass and gravel crunch under my sneakers. A cool, crisp, breeze cuts through the still, dry, air like a knife. A chickadee chirps in the branches of a tall pine. Walking alone on the familiar, worn path, I arrive at a small playground and sit down on my favorite swing. It creaks and groans, being un-oiled and well used. As I swing, a rhythm starts. Back, forth, creak, back, forth, creak. My breathing matches the steady beat of the swing. I look into the horizon and see the tops of the Cascade Mountains, were painted. While I gaze, I inhale the cool evening air and sigh. This is my last time at this park, my last time looking at this sunset, my last as a tear, silent as the night, rolls down my

blending into a pale pink sunset that looks as if it time on this very swing. I hop off and walk home

> Gracie Moore, 6th grade, Sangster Elementary



By Milton Ramirez Flores, 8th grade, Key Middle School.

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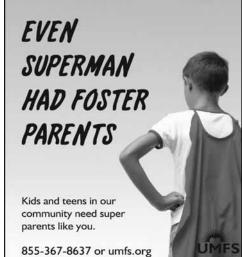
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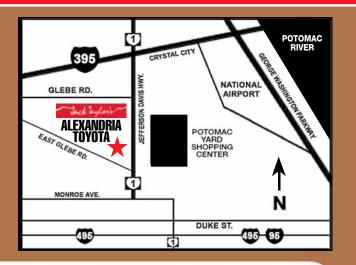
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