



# Potomac ALMANAC

"Burst of Fall,"  
Jessica Nah, Grade 8,  
Fourth Presbyterian School  
in Potomac

## 2013 Children's Almanac

DECEMBER 25-31, 2013

ONLINE AT [POTOMACALMANAC.COM](http://POTOMACALMANAC.COM)





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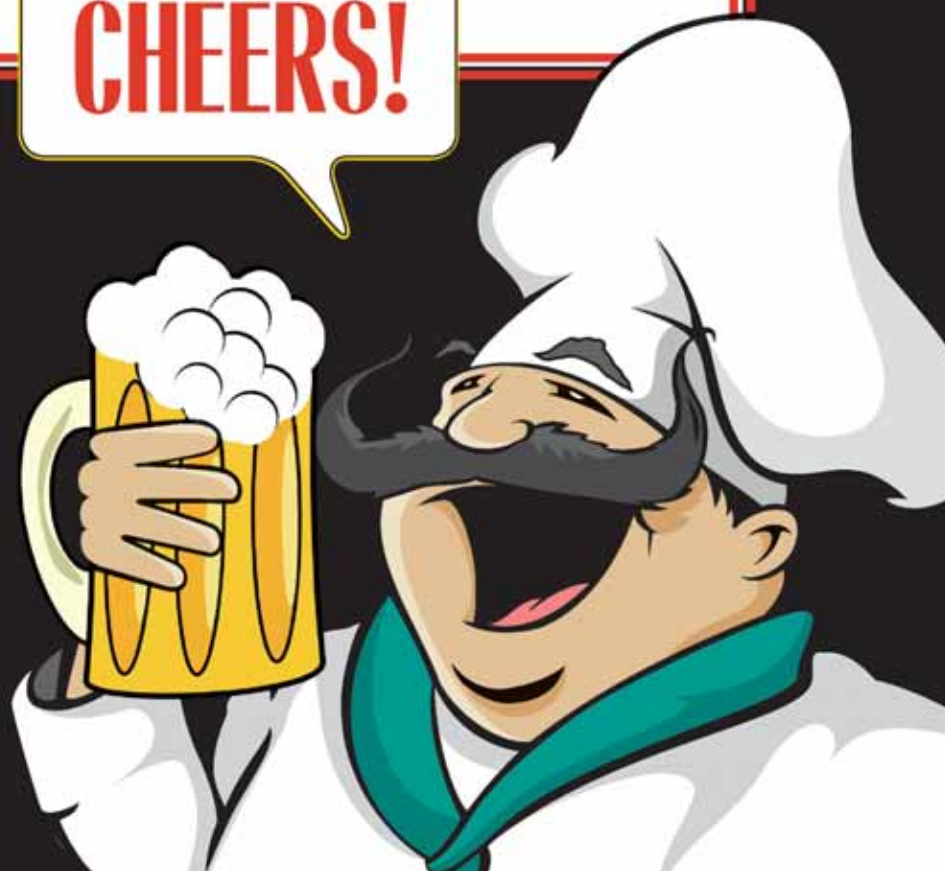
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# CHILDREN'S ALMANAC 2013

## Welcome

Dear Readers:

This week, the Potomac Almanac 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 Almanac. 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 Almanac 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 [almanac@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:almanac@connectionnewspapers.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



**Gabe Schneider, Grade 8, The Woods Academy**



**Grant Ettinger, Grade 3, Bells Mill Elementary School**



McLean School of Maryland

Gloria Kalnitskaya, Grade 4



**Ella O'Brien, Grade 3, Beverly Farms Elementary**

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**Anna, Grade 7, Norwood School**



# BEVERLY FARMS ELEMENTARY

## Air and Space Museum

If you enjoy learning about rockets and airplanes around the globe, you should go to the Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C. I like going to this museum because I can learn more about rockets and airplanes. I also like looking at the videos about the fascinating war airplanes. There is one rocket that is huge. It is about 10 feet tall and could travel far away from Earth. I hope you have a chance to go to the Air and Space Museum.

— ALBERTO E.

## Skiing in Colorado

So you want to go to Colorado and ski? Snowmass is a very snowy place to have fun. When you are tired of skiing there are lodges that you can rest for a while. The mountains are very tall and covered in snow. I can feel the strong wind blow against my hands. I can smell the fresh air zoom by me while I ski. I can taste the yummy food in my nice condo. I can see the glimmering snow and hear the chirp of birds above me. I really like Colorado and think you will like it too.

— SEBASTIAN M.

## Luray Caverns

Have you ever been to Luray Caverns? The stalagmites and stalactites are awesome. One was shaped like a big dog and others were shaped like Disney characters. On one part of our tour we went to an area where weddings have been held. When we came above ground we went to a small gift shop. I looked around but I didn't find anything to wanted to buy. If I get to go again, I might look for a crystal.

— SADIE H.

## Butler's Orchard

Do you want to learn about a place called Butler's Orchard? Butler's Orchard is located in Germantown, Maryland which is in the eastern part of the United States. There are many things you can do there. You can go on hay rides or go to an apple orchard. At the apple orchard you can pick apples and there is a place where you can make apple pies too. There is also a cornfield. Maybe you would enjoy making apple pies if you went to Butler's Orchard.

— RACHEL H.

## St. Thomas

Did you ever want to go to St. Thomas? St. Thomas is located in the Caribbean Sea. There are plateaus and coasts and beaches. One of the beaches I went to was called Cocoa Beach. I saw a sea turtle stay under water for 45 minutes and then for 30-40 seconds he got a couple of breaths before going under water again. I also saw huge plains and there are no mountains. St. Thomas has iguanas and lizards. What a beautiful place to visit and swim.

— LAURA M.



Esther Wei, Grade 5



Joanna Wei, Grade 1

## The Rodeo

The rodeo is a wonderful place to watch animals. The pigs and horses smell bad but it's a lot of fun to watch them. If you were to imagine a place full of games and a building filled with food and animals you will love the rodeo. There is a petting zoo and you can watch professionals wrestle bulls. You can even ride horses and get your face painted and go on hay rides. I hope you will get the chance to go to a rodeo one day.

— LUCIA M.

## Alaska

Did you know in the summer time in Alaska the sun stays up in the sky until 12:00 at night? People in Alaska live in log houses not igloos. Icicles sparkle in the winter time but only when it snows. I call Alaska a "winter wonderland" because it snows a lot. Did you know I was born in Alaska? Alaska is a beautiful place to visit and it is so much fun in Alaska.

— EMILY M.



Althea Bush, Grade 1

DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPHS BY  
MRS. MOLOZNIK'S 2<sup>ND</sup> GRADE CLASS

year 1653. It took more than 22 years to build. It was built by King Shah Jahan because his beloved queen, Mumtaz Mahal died. He really loved her and that is why he made the Taj Mahal.

— MYRA S.

## Camp Letts

Imagine a place that is noisy, fun and has a lot of activities. Think of a camp. Last summer my mom took me to Camp Letts. Camp Letts was really fun. I got to go on zip-lines. The zip-lines were high, but they were not over 10 feet. When I went zip-lining, I saw the beautiful sun coming in through the red, orange, yellow and green leaves on the trees. I also did archery, canoeing, kayaking, and met new friends. I made some friends with the counselors that work at the camp. One of them was names Bethany. There are cabins that you stay in while you are at Camp Letts. My cabin's name was Letts Lodge. I thought that Camp Letts was really fun and I might go again next year. I wish you could come and have as much fun as I did.

— ANGELICA H.

## Hershey Park

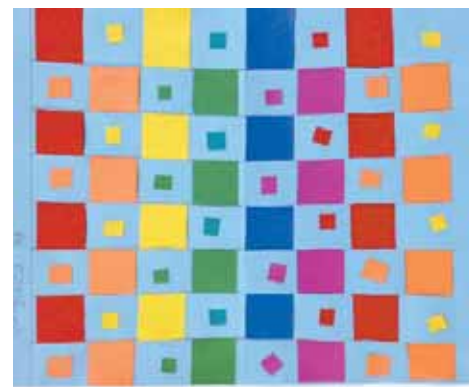
If you like rollercoasters, arcade games and waterparks, I know a place you will love. Hershey Park! The Sniper coaster goes fast and flips you upside down. I feel grossed-out when the ride is over. When you play arcade games you can win prizes. The claw game uses a controller to let you grab stuffed animals. I grabbed fifteen animals the last time I played. At the waterpark, there is a wave pool that moves you as if you were in the ocean. I hope you get a chance to go to Hershey Park and have as much fun as I did.

— BLAKE D.

## Niagara Falls

Have you ever wanted to go to a place with waterfalls, rocks and looks like paradise? Well, you can see this at Niagara Falls. Niagara Falls is located in the countries of Canada and the United States, which are both in the continent on North America. Niagara Falls is in between the United States and Canada so it's not close to any oceans. Niagara Fall is famous for its tall waterfalls. There are two falls, the Horseshoe Falls and the American Falls. The Horseshoe Falls is bigger, taller and wider than the American Falls. Niagara Falls is fun because there are a lot of restaurants, shops and there is a boat that goes so close to the waterfalls. One day I hope you can ride the boat and see how misty the waterfall are!

— SABRINA C.



Angelica Hu, Grade 2



# CHURCHILL HIGH

## The Journey Through the Hole

"Matt!" I heard a loud screech disturbing my concentration on the problem in front of me. "Matt John Brown! You had better be in this house by the time I count to 3 or you ain't getting any supper tonight! 1... 2... don't make me count to 3!"

"I'm coming! I'll just put this shovel in the back, then I'll come in to eat, I coming Ma!" I yelled back at her as I painfully used the rope to pull me out of the hole that all of my pride, work, and dedication disappeared into.

"Little Suzy is out in the back looking at the horses again, be good and get her. We don't want her to end up like the Miller's daughter, bless her poor little soul, she didn't know that horse was wild now." I sighed and dragged my feet toward the back of the house, but not before looking wistfully back at that hole. I started the whole idea when I was about 5, and now seven years later I got a hole as long as the Niagara Falls, as the people in town tell me and Pa as they stop by to look at it.

I slowly dragged my shovel and my feet until Ma yelled at me to pick it up. I dropped the shovel in my old hiding spot away from all six of my brothers, and out of harm's way. I picked up Little Suzy and walked in the farmhouse just in time to see Pa and all six of them come tromping through the nice floor I had just swept earlier that morning. "Little brother how's that hole of yours coming, you see China down there yet?" one of them said causing them all to snicker. Pa shot them a look and sat down to start prayers, we all followed. "Dear Lord please help our lands grow..."

As I lay there in my little bed near that small window, I stared up at that ceiling wondering what on earth I was going to do. I could get up but it would be hard to get to the hole without hurting myself. I could wait till morning, but then I would have to finish my chores, something in a time of urgency I would not do well.

Looking down at that hole and seeing how close I was made my mind up, tonight it was.

I got up with a candle in one hand and my hat in the other. I crawled through the window and threw myself off the roof knowing that I would land in the haystack. It was luckily that I knew where almost everything in the house was, because I could have landed in the vegetables.

I crept by the horses, grabbed my shovel and ran out to the front of the farmhouse, to my hole. I leaped down into the hole till I reach my perch I made

this morning (in the hole) to look at that shiny thing again. It was in a small hole but it was big enough for me to crawl through, inside it looked like a million stars, just staring back at me. I leaned inside to get a better look in the hole.

I fell.  
I woke up feeling the sun's first rays on my face, feeling the warmth. I got up groggily; last night's memories slowly coming back to me, I quickly looked around. "I don't think I'm at home anymore." I said to myself, trying to digest what I saw. The land was green, and it looked like it was near the mountains, but far enough not to feel cold. There was a cherry blossom with a swing attached to it leaning over a pond with the clearest waters you could see the fish in it. I looked at the farmhouse that was near the tree, and was amazed. The house had a pointy roof and at the corners of the house where the sides met, it each had a curve on all 4 sides. The roof was painted many colors making it seem like a rainbow. I walked up to the porch and slowly approached the door. I stood in front of it and stared at it real hard, wondering if I should knock.

I did and a few minutes later a plump medium-sized woman and a tall strong man behind her opened the door. But I was taken back when I looked at their eyes, they were black and they were ovals.

They were both smiling, the women said, "Welcome home Matt." Then they both motioned me to follow them into the house, and without argument I did.

"Don't forget to plant the carrots Matt!" Mother yelled from the house, her voice carried by the wind to me. "I will!" I exclaimed back, as I laid there on that hot summer, near the pond. I was about to get up when I noticed something so strange my curiosity got the best of me and I got up and leaned over the roots of the cherry blossom. It was a hole, but not something that an animal could have made. It couldn't have been Father, I thought to myself, I had I strange feeling like I've done this. I leaned over the hole until my head was in the hole; I then felt something crumble under me.

I fell.  
I woke up feeling tired; memories returning back to me, one set of parents, one me. I glanced around, a farmhouse, but no cherry blossom. "Matt?" I heard Little Suzy crawl over to me and place her hand on my face.

She stared at me with such intensity, I wonder if something was wrong. Then she said in a whisper, "You have been away for a long time, where have you been?"

— HARINI BABU, 15,  
10<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

## LET'S TALK Real Estate



by Michael Matese

### Inside Out: Personalizing the Luxury Home

The vibrant market for luxury homes is one that is defined by constant change, keeping pace with a modern world and the changing needs of its unique clients. Over the past decade, the very definition of luxury has seen a dramatic shift—in the past, the measure of square footage was the primary aspect defining a property as a "luxury home". Today, both the market and the clientele have adjusted their needs, wants and long-term goals when purchasing luxury real estate. Gone are the days of the "McMansion", traded in so that luxury homeowners can trade up. Elegance, amenities and attention to details are the qualities the modern homebuyer is interested in. The new definition of "luxury home" places more emphasis on the ease, comfort, convenience and magnificence of the home's details, features and amenities, rather than the space that they take up. The livability of the modern luxury home is the key feature that modern buyers are looking for, a measured consideration of four main factors: the flexibility of their living space, the storage area available, the entertainment areas and their features and the stress-free ambiance created by the home's amenities. Fun, fitness, attention to detail, technological conveniences and security are the new premiums in luxury homes. Space is nice—but what's in the space is the key selling point of the modern world of luxury homes. Home designs incorporating fun, leisure, flexibility and fitness are at an all-time high demand. Privately located master suites, walk-in showers and whirlpools, split vanities, home fitness facilities, state-of-the-art media rooms, completely equipped functional offices, well-designed generous closets, in-law suites, home wine cellars and upstairs auxiliary kitchens are a few of the more popular features the contemporary luxury home buyer is looking for. Home automation and security are technological additions that make luxury homes stand out, even in the specialized market, with many modern luxury homes having daily automated chores programmed into their operating systems, allowing homeowners more free time—and automated security systems allow phone and internet access, so homeowners can relax while they're away, confident that their home doesn't appear empty while they're away and secure in their ability to "check in" remotely. Home swimming spas, in-home saunas, private bathroom suite spas, massage rooms, treadmill pools, endless pools, luxury home theatres, game rooms and professional kitchens are also rising in popularity, emphasizing the idea of the luxury home as a relaxing, indulgent refuge from the fast-pace of the stress of the outside world. As more and more homeowners seek a more casual, elegant approach to their entertaining, big vistas, outdoor kitchens, greenhouses, solariums, atriums and porte cochères are becoming popular additions that can increase a home's value and overall attractiveness to potential buyers, as well as being features that allow current luxury homeowners added years of comfort and enjoyment over time, resale value.

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## BELLS MILL ELEMENTARY



Zack Mantz

### WRITINGS All I Want is Another Snowman!!

Hi I'm a snowman. I don't have many friends, I mean kids are alright but I really want another snowman to keep me company.

Anyway the kids who made me are all nice like: Millie, Tom, Wendy and the twins Rebecca and Mike. Then there's a group of

mean kids like: Kelly, Sam and Max. Look at how many kids there are and compare that to the one little snowman, me.

Yesterday the mean gang came up to me and stole my nose, it was MISERABLE! Now I'm sitting outside watching the horizon I see people! Yay it's the nice kids, Millie went up to me and said "we brought you something!" Then I saw Mike come around the corner with his wagon, inside was what I'd always hoped for inside was

SUBMISSIONS FROM  
SOPHIA WANG'S  
THIRD GRADE CLASS.



Hannah Newman

another snowman and a snowdog! We lived happily for a while but now we have another problem, spring!!

— ALEX SONNABEND,  
GRADE 3

### The Snowman Contest Begins

One day three little girls were playing outside. Their names were Audrey, Leah and Alex. They were like the three musketeers. They always played with each other. Then one day, Audrey, Leah, and Alex decided to have a who can build the biggest snowman contest!

Alex said, "I am going to win this contest!"

"Oh no you're not". Leah said, "You are going down."

"Guys, you should start on your Snowman because I am already started on my base, and you are just wasting your time arguing with each other," Audrey said. Then the other two girls started to build.

In the break time, the three girls had hot cocoa. "Mmm," said the



Matthew Shubin

SEE BELLS MILL, PAGE 7



Lauren Turner



Devesh Pande

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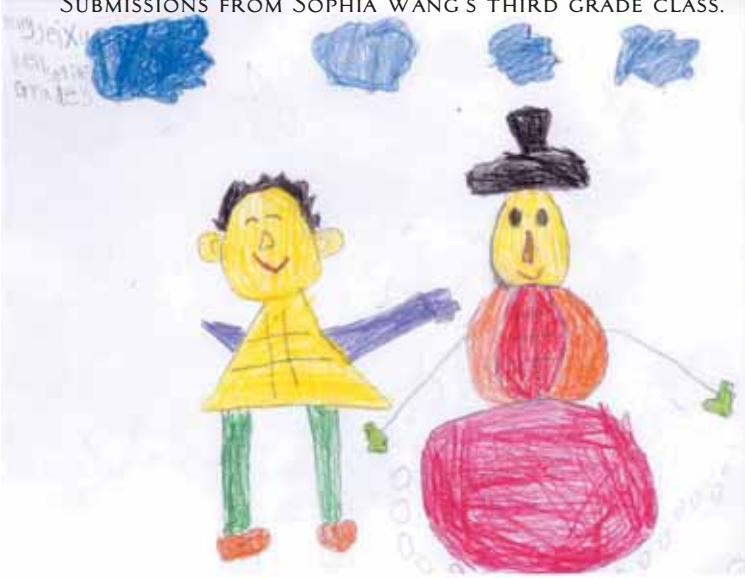
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# BELLS MILL ELEMENTARY

SUBMISSIONS FROM SOPHIA WANG'S THIRD GRADE CLASS.



Jay Xu

FROM PAGE 6

three girls. "Best cocoa I ever had in my life," they all said at once. They licked their lips. "That was delicious," they said.

After they were finished, they went straight back to building.

The girls began to get cold, so they went inside to get some scarves. They decided to get some mittens and gloves too eventually. What a day to be outside in such cold weather!!

Then Leah started to get close

to the end. I thought that she had hurried a little too much.

Then the judging time came. My mom announced the winner. "And the winner is Harrison!!"

"What?" we all said. We had not noticed that Harrison had been making the most beautiful snowman in the world. "Fine," we all said. "Harrison wins."

"Yeah!!" Harrison said. Then it was settled.

The End

— AUDREY BENFORD, 8.  
GRADE 3

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## NORWOOD SCHOOL

### The Fox

"Jack!" my dad hollered up the stairs. Oh no, I thought. Did he know about the smuggled candy that I was eating right now? Or did he know about the glass I had broken earlier that day? My dad's voice cut through my trance like a knife. "Get down here now! You will not believe what is outside."

"Coming," I called. I raced down the stairs and stopped at the front door. Outside a red fox with white stripes, spread-eagle on the ground lay asleep in our front yard. I gasped, waking the fox. It ran into our bushes. I was sad and depressed when it left. It was not seen again.

After the spotting, my mom and dad explained that the fox that I thought was a really, really cute puppy dog was a vicious cute puppy dog, I did not believe them at all.

— JACK, GRADE 4



**Alex, Grade 3, Norwood School**



**Christian, Grade 7, Norwood School**

Waiting through the winter,  
Brutally locked in a shed like an unwanted animal,  
Cold and lonely on the rough floor,  
Waiting impatiently for summer to come.

— JAKE, GRADE 7



**John, Grade 4, Norwood School.**

The roller coaster went twisty, up and down, all upside down. The ride was unbelievable. When the roller coaster ride was over, I said, "That was magnificent!"

— MICHELLE, GRADE 3

### The Big, Big Tornado

One day I was at a play date when I saw a big, big tornado! It was out the window. I screamed!

I showed it, but Lauren said come play. She did not see the tornado. I tried to tell, but she did not listen.



**Michael, Grade 7, Norwood School**

The tornado stopped. I stopped too. Lauren said, "Come play!" I had fun. We had a really fun play date.

— CAROLINE, GRADE 1

### The Hershey Factory

One morning in a village where I live I woke up. It was my birthday! At the breakfast table a birthday gumbo that my mom made was waiting.

After eating a delicious gumbo we went to the Hershey Factory! I loved the Hershey Factory. It was the biggest factory in the world. My mom let me get

SEE NORWOOD, PAGE 11

### The Pirate and the Tooth Fairy Turkey Princess

(a mixture of writing and telling)

The tooth fairy turkey princess lived in a castle collecting little turkey's teeth. A pirate always wanted white teeth instead of green, but he never brushed.

So he snuck into the tooth fairy's castle. He crept up to her tooth collection and picked up the golden box of teeth. He ran to the stairs, stepped on the magic step, and the stairs started to turn into a slide.

Aghhhh! The pirate landed in front of a magic mirror and tried to put the teeth

in. They fell out all over.

The tooth fairy turkey princess swooped down and took the teeth and put them back in the box. She showed the pirate how to brush his teeth. He finally had white teeth.

The End

— LANEY, KINDERGARTEN

### The Water Tube

Dragged through the air and sea,  
The sun shining upon me,  
The shattered angry waters,  
Standing arrogantly before me,  
Shrieks of fear and glee,  
Bracing for the searing pain.

### The Amazing Roller Coaster: The Wild Cat!!!!

I was shaking, I was so nervous. "Will I die?" I thought. Suddenly it was our turn. I looked around for a quick escape. My dad said, "You'll be fine."

I haltingly got into the roller coaster and buckled up. Swiftly the roller coaster started. I was hanging on so tight that my hands were red. It was moving so fast that I was screeching. "Ahhhh.....!!" I shrieked.

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# WOOTTON HIGH

## The Color Blue

Blue was the color of his eyes, when you said hello for the first time. If someone had asked, you would have sworn you could see your whole life play out in those eyes. Blue, the sky above your head; sometimes obscured by clouds, but always there, solid and endless.

Blue was the color of the chipped paint on the old truck he drove when he took you out dancing. You never really liked dancing, but you danced with him.

Blue was the water at the lake, as you sat side-by-side with the blue-eyed boy, watching the waves gently lap against your toes.

Blue was the color of the bag he packed when he walked out the door, stuffed full with the memories of your life together. When the worn-out truck drove away, it felt like your heart was in the passenger seat next to him, getting smaller and smaller in the distance, leaving you hollow and empty.

And suddenly, the blue sky shatters and falls to your feet, and the blue in the lake is laced with choppy, white-tipped waves. Blue is the color you see as your blue-eyed boy falls in love with someone who is not you.

— SOPHIA MENCONI, 15,  
GRADE 10  
MR. IANNUZZO’S CLASS

## NORWOOD SCHOOL

FROM PAGE 10

whatever I wanted, so I got some Kisses and I got a cookie too. Boy it was the best day ever! Well, the best day ever at the Hershey Factory!

— ADA, GRADE 1

## The First Day I Went to First Grade

It was the day before first grade! I was really excited. I brushed my teeth and went to bed. After that I woke up and put on my blue birthday dress. Then I went downstairs and went into the kitchen. I was so excited! I had cereal for breakfast. Then I went to school. It was lots of fun!

— MELINA, GRADE 1

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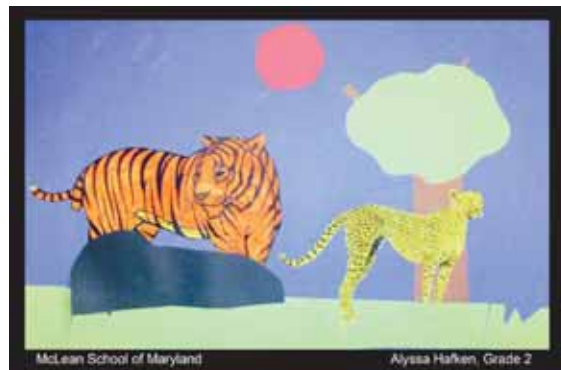

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# WORDS & PICTURES

## Cherry Blossoms

Fading  
Pink blossoms  
Falling

One  
At a time  
Slowly

Soft  
Like many pieces  
Of cloth

Blowing  
Off the trees  
On the ground

Beautiful  
Pink blossoms  
Falling down  
Forever

— JULIAN CHRISTENSEN,  
4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE, BULLIS SCHOOL  
4/16/2013

## Leaves

Leaves  
Rattling  
Like  
Humans  
Swaying  
Side  
To side

Excited  
Waiting  
To get  
Chosen  
By the  
Wind

Seeing  
the world  
Around it  
Never  
Knowing  
Unhappiness

— JULIAN CHRISTENSEN,  
4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE, BULLIS SCHOOL  
5/3/2013



**Caden Campbell, 6, Grade 1, Blessed Sacrament School, Chevy Chase**

**Audrey Y. Li, 11, Grade 6, Ms. Larrain, Cabin John Middle School — Sister Magic**



**Sarah Z. Cohen, Grade 10, Richard Montgomery High School — Self Portrait**

## Thanksgiving

Giving Thanks  
For what and whom  
we have

Seeing Relatives,  
Festive Turkey Dinner,  
Playing Family  
Games

Delivering Food  
to People  
in Need,  
Giving Back  
For what we are  
Blessed with

Giving Thanks  
For whom and what  
we have —  
Thanksgiving!  
— JULIAN CHRISTENSEN, 9,  
4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE, BULLIS SCHOOL  
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#243

THE WOODS WORD OF THE DAY: #243

# padilinguist

*n: A student who gave iPad support saying, "Happy to help" in Spanish while walking away.*

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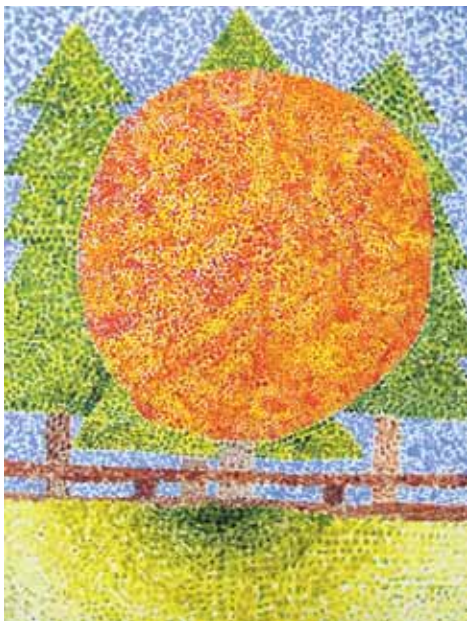
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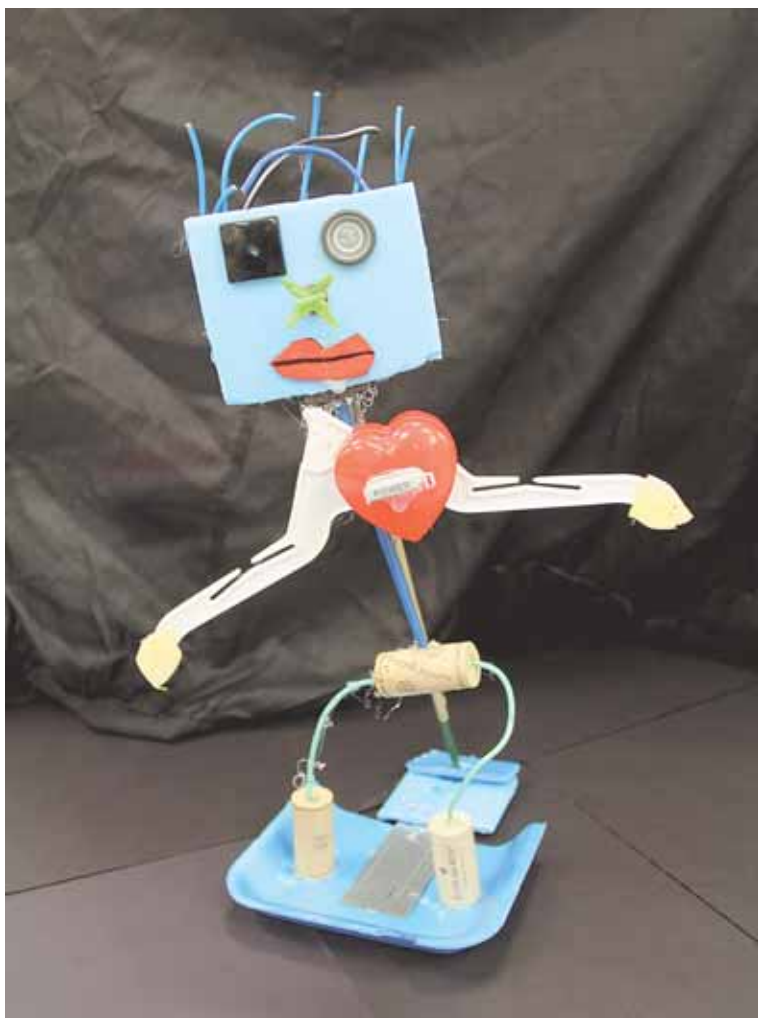
**Anna Gray, Grade 8 —  
Burst of Fall**



**Kathryn O'Halloran, Grade 8 — Burst of Fall**



**Laura Wormald, Grade 8 —  
Burst of Fall**



**Mikey O'Halloran, Grade 6 — The Garbage Man, Trash to Treasure**



**Naomi Flores, Grade 8 — Fred, Trash to Treasure**



**Nick Shawley, Grade 7 —  
Formal Space Chicken, Trash to Treasure**



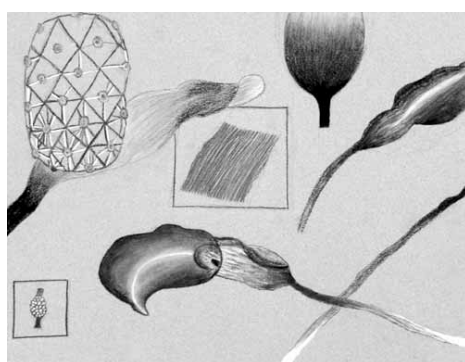
**Jessica Nah, Grade 8 —  
Serum's Board, Trash to Treasure**



**Kathryn O'Halloran, Grade 8 — The Lilly Model, Trash to Treasure**



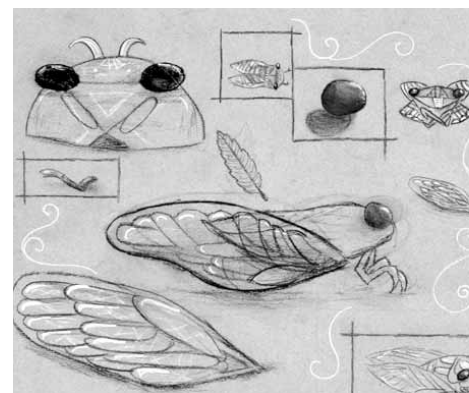
**Naomi Flores, Grade 8 — Garlic**



**Laura Wormald, Grade 8 — Calla Lily**



**Mary Stuart Murray, Grade 8 —  
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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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