

The Arlington Connection

Noura Lynch, 9,
grade 4, Arlington
Traditional School.

Children's Connection 2014

DECEMBER 31, 2014 - JANUARY 6, 2015

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CHILDREN'S CONNECTION

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 2015 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@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

OAKRIDGE ELEMENTARY



Kaya DeMarco, grade 4, Journey Collage, cut paper



Enrique Oliva Tecun, grade 3, "My Imaginary Journey," tempera and crayon



Solaka Ingram, grade 5, Identity Collage, cut paper and glue



Pinyao Lai, grade 2, "A Journey I Remember," oil pastel and watercolor



Elizabeth Simoes, grade 1, "Memory Journey Map," marker, paint and crayon



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CHILDREN'S CONNECTION

ARLINGTON CONNECTION EDITOR STEVEN MAUREN
703-778-9415 OR ARLINGTON@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

RANDOLPH ELEMENTARY



Valentino Saavedra, grade 2



Milkomen Geleta, PreK

Big Changes

Some people don't know,
How words can sting,
How you forget who you are,
They forget that there is hope.
When someone speaks up,
It causes a big change inside
You start to believe in yourself,
You start to feel pride.
You stand straighter and taller,
You don't look down,
You realize that just that
One kind word caused big changes.
— AMELIA KATULA, GRADE 5



Alejandra Hernandez Montesinos, grade 2



KenyaPalma Cruz, grade 3



Kimberly Quiroz Rivera, grade 2



Almaz Yohannes, grade 2

WILLIAMSBURG MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Ruined Half

We giggle and laugh as we leave our roadside shack, skipping along the road. I love feeling the rough ground with my bare feet hitting the Indian dirt. We count our coins and squeal. We have the perfect amount. I can already taste the C vala k ka in my mouth. I think

Jayashri tastes it, too.

Before long we have crossed a few hills, and Jayashri's eyes glaze over. She

mumbles something about a snake that's out to get her. I pretend not to notice. I do not interfere with her absent episodes until they upset her, or the people around her. I just slow down, because she is no longer running. As an older sister, I feel useless, frozen, and unable

to do anything. I hope this doesn't continue, or get worse. Then it might be one of her bad days, those days.

We arrive at the outskirts of the village, near the market place, and the misery begins.

Almost everyone has something to contribute. Some throw sticks and small stones. Others cuss and pull Jayashri's hair. One old man tells us our father should be exiled and the girls in

our family should be stripped naked and thrown out on the streets, our heads shaved.

I see a tear fall from Jayashri's face, and I know her absence has passed. For she

bare emotion. We buy our C vala K ka and shuffle along. As we walk back home, I unfold the wrapping and see what the man we bought the C vala K ka from gave us. He gave

us the burnt ones in the batch. Something tells me that was no mere coincidence.

My thoughts allow me to fall a victim to a man's extended foot. Pain seers through raw skin on my knee, poisoned by dirt.

"Shweta!" Jayashri gasps.

She does not waste an extra moment seeing if I am ok. She knows I am.

"Ajit will get you!" she screams after the man. "He will crawl through your walls, gormandize all your food, and poison your water with disease."

The man, a few yards away now, turned and looked shocked. But after a moment shuffled on. I decided not to comment on who "Ajit" was. She had mentioned him before, but never clarified his existence. All I knew is that he was a rat that she assumed we could see. I had never laid eyes on him, ever.

I brush myself and realize that one of the cakes fell out of my bag. This part of India is not muddy today, luckily. Still, one of the halves is ruined. I dusted it off with some success.

It is still edible, just not to my liking. I have no reason to complain. All the same it is a treat.

Jayashri does not say much for the rest of the way home.

We are greeted at the doorway of our home by our mother. MA acts as though my little Bahana is cured. MA is worried though; I can tell. The shack is as clean as a shack gets, and MA's makeup is done as if we are going to temple. Everytime we leave our village, she does these things. They are nervous habits. Jaya and I sit on a worn carpet on the dirt floor to eat our treats. The first bite is good,

but predictable. I guess I was expecting more from it. It is burnt and dusty, but my gut told me that was not the reason I was disappointed with it. I am happy to go to bed that night.

I wake, and Jayashri is not in the bed. My eyes widen and I realize that it was to be one of her bad nights. My parents work night jobs, so I have no adult to cry to. I panic as I hear someone leave the shack. I run after the noise hoping with all my heart that it is Jaya. I am lucky I woke up. Any later would have been too late.

There is no sense in tackling her; she will fight like it is her life. Hopefully, if I let her drift for awhile, she will finally see me lagging slowly behind her. Forever, at her side. At least that has worked before. . .

A few hills later, she stops suddenly. I let out a sob thinking she is back, but she is not.

Jayashri turns and crumbles to the ground, looking at something a few feet away from me.

She shrinks into a ball and tries to hide in the grass. She winces and shrieks at random moments. I know what she sees. I have seen that behavior before. She sees the extremists coming to burn our home. She cowers from their gunfire.

What I think she sees reminds me how lucky we were to have heard the rumors of the plan and flee to a nearby hill, only to watch our home be destroyed. It appears though she might think she is in the house. She calls my name in desperation, blind to my presence beside her crying for her return.

"Shweta! Shweta, make them go away!" She is completely oblivious to the calls that answer hers.

Desperate now she runs. "Jaya," I call, "the pond!"

She is headed straight for it. I know she cannot hear me though. So I run after her.

She never learned to swim. Restraining Jaya would save her life, even though she might see me as an extremist come to rid the world of the devil. She would be terrified, but she would live. So I leap. I leap so she does not drown.

Upon our landing, I reopen the cut presented by the man's foot. Alas, my pain is interrupted by Jayashri's screams. She tries to shove me off, but I have her arms and legs pinned. To see your little sister intentionally inflict injuries on you is heartbreaking. She claws

and kicks and bites, but I do not budge. If I let go, she will go in the same direction she was going in, and drown.

We lament in contrasting ways, Jayashri howls in desperation thinking any second she will leave this world, as my sobs display fatigue and sorrow almost wanting, myself, to leave

this world. And, as I struggle to subdue Jayashri, I think of everything I've been through. It guides me back to the sweet cakes. Mine did not taste of safe havens, the joy of imbecilic behavior, and good stories; it tasted just like a sweet cake. I realize I have grown up much too

early than healthy. I realize that this is because I must fend for Jayashri.

I conclude the meaning of my life is to do just that.

— ANA MERCEDES CONCHA, GRADE 6

The Arlington Connection

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CARLIN SPRINGS ELEMENTARY



**Dia de Muertos, Melissa Ortiz,
grade 5**



**Abstracted Landscape, Charnay
Baker, grade 3**



**Abstracted Landscape, Amanuel
Assefa, grade 3**



**The Stone Age Cave Art Mural (Detail),
Carlin Springs 5th Grade Students**



**Starry Night, Hermla Weldemkel,
grade 4**



**Autumn Leaves, Giancarlo Aparicio-
Paz, grade 3**



Skull, Peerless Morgan



**Zentangle, Anna Keffler,
grade 4**



**Owl Baby, Allison Reyes
Zelaya, grade 1**



**Native American
Blanket, Noeila
Cadiz, grade 2**



**Kandinsky
Circles, Elder
Ramos Garcia,
grade 1**



**Zentangle,
Jennifer
Lucio Reyes,
grade 4**



**Collaborative
Concentric Flower
Mural, Carlin
Springs 4th Grade
Students**



**"Someone's Inside my
Head," Betsy Rauda Gomez,
Pre-K**

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NOTTINGHAM ELEMENTARY



Lauren Neuman, grade 5, Bear Relief Print

Soccer vs. Football

I think that soccer is a better sport to play than football because you don't get hurt as much; it's better exercise to lose calories; everyone must learn more skills; and soccer is worldwide.

In soccer you still get hurt, but in football you can get fatal injuries because people are jumping on you.

In soccer, exercise is every step you take — usually you run 1 mile+ while you are on the pitch. All the running also makes you fast so you can get to the ball first. But, in football, you only run 100-300 yards, and you stop every minute.

To be successful you must be able to beat someone with skills which takes practice. All players have to learn how to dribble, pass, shoot and head the ball.

In football, you just need to learn one skill, like throwing, catching, running or tackling.

Finally, soccer is everywhere. You can find a pick-up game in almost every country in the world, but football is really only played in the U.S.A.

In my world, soccer outranks football.

— PETER MATTHEWS, 9.

GRADE 4



Kelsey Rucker, kindergarten, Seeing Lines and Shapes



Pilar George, grade 4, Self-Portrait



Quinn Leonard, grade 1, Beautiful Building



Sophie Thomas, grade 3, Sparrow



Brayden Zee, grade 2, Fall Leaves

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KENMORE MIDDLE SCHOOL



Astrid Molina, grade 8



Chloe Lanyi-Lari, grade 7



Erin Naft, grade 8



Alyssa Scott, grade 8



Chris Warner, grade 8



Justin Lott, grade 7



Kate Lis, grade 7



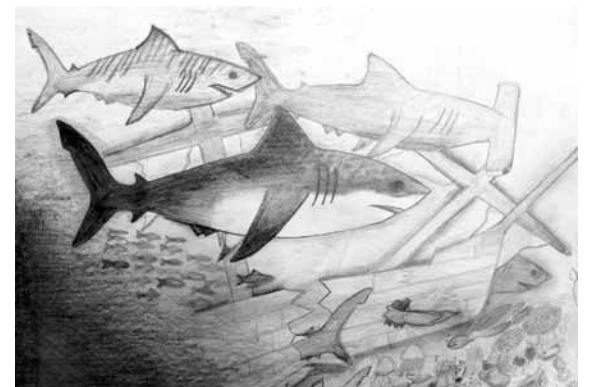
Max Penella, grade 7



Georgie Deane, grade 8, turtle



Jimmy Delgado, grade 7



Jorge Camacho



Tona Beck, grade 8



Josue Escalante, grade 8



Lamara Allen, grade 7



Michelle Rodriguez, grade 7



Paige Lewis, grade 8

ABINGDON ELEMENTARY

Winter

Drink hot chocolate
Play with lots of friendly kids
Having lots of fun!
— JOHN, GRADE 4

Snowboarding

Shredding snow downhill
Snowflakes passing through the air
Stopping with full speed
— FABIAN, GRADE 4

Christmas Cookies

I make cookies for
the holiday of Christmas.
I think they are great!
— SYDNEY, GRADE 4

Santa is Coming

Snowflakes dropping now
Santa is coming quickly
Presents coming now
— CAROLYN, GRADE 4

Snow

The snow makes a glow
that shines in the midnight light.
What a sight you see!
— SRIJON, GRADE 4

Hot Chocolate

Drink hot chocolate
in the freezing cold Winter
makes you toasty warm.
— JACOB, GRADE 4

Icicles

Frozen icicles
hanging on the windowpane
silently leaking.
— ELISE, GRADE 4

Decorating Trees

Decorating trees
Playing with the ornaments
Enjoying the fun
— ELLA, GRADE 4

Pouncing

Crouching quietly
Crunching softly in the snow
Leaping in the air
— ARYA, GRADE 4

Hot Chocolate

Puffy marshmallows
in burning hot chocolate
makes me toasty warm.
— GRACE, GRADE 4

Snowball Fight

Fighting in the snow
Making snow forts and snowballs
Laughing in the cold
— JASON, GRADE 4

Christmas

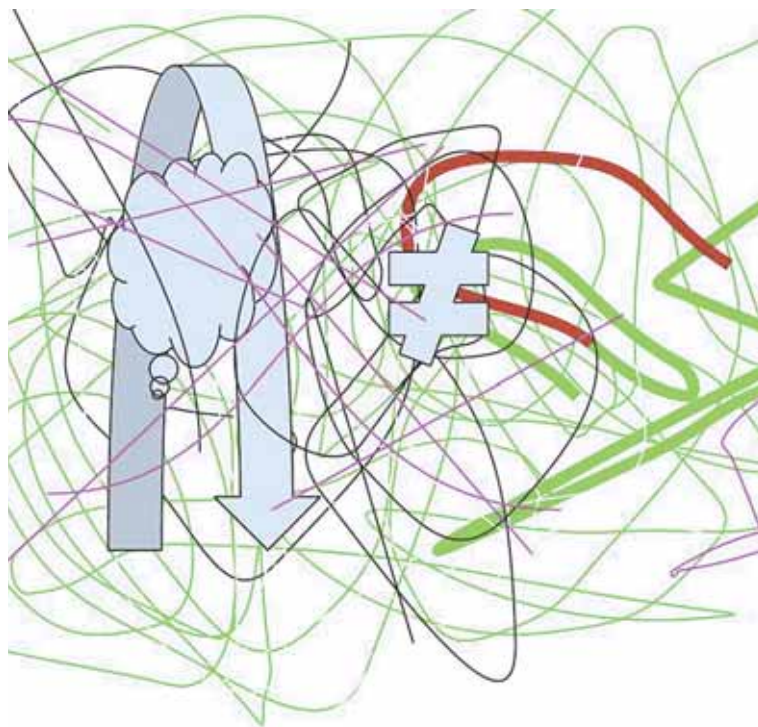
On Christmas when it
snows, drinking hot chocolate
keeps me toasty warm.
— MAHLET, GRADE 4

Snowflakes

These jewels are pretty.
Icy crystals, all are unique
Drifting on the breeze
— NATALIE, GRADE 4

Hot Chocolate

I love hot cocoa.
I love its marshmallows too.
It tastes really good.
— JOSEPH, GRADE 4



“qwertyuiopasdfghjklzxcvbnm,./;’[]\=-0987654321” by
Diego Aguilar, grade 3

Snow

Snow, white as can be
only comes in the winter.
It is crystal clear.
— VALERIA, GRADE 4

Snowflakes

Snowflakes so fragile
So many sizes and shapes
Drifting everywhere
— NOLAN, GRADE 4

Cozy

Back from snowball fights
Sipping my hot chocolate
Warmed by the fire
— CEDRIC, GRADE 4

Snow

Snow is a lot of
fun. Lots of hot chocolate
after in the snow.
— EMILY, GRADE 4

Christmas Tree

Need a Christmas tree
Can't be too small or too big
Needs to be just right
— EMILY, GRADE 4

Sledding Day

It is really fun.
You go super fast downhill.
Sledding is awesome.
— LARKIN, GRADE 4

Decorating a Tree

Bright colorful lights
It's sparkling in the house
Pink and green colors
— CAROLYN, GRADE 4

Snow

Soft, fluffy, white too.
Snow is truly beautiful.
Building snowmen, joy!
— SADIE, GRADE 4

Blizzard

Snow is falling down
Winter winds are coming east
Blizzard is coming
— OWEN, GRADE 4

The Worst Bad Hair Day Ever!

“Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhh! My hair!”
I yelled. “My hair!” “It’s, it’s...
ugly!” “Mom!” I yelled.
“Yes, sweetie?” said my mom.
She said it calmly.

“My hair!” I yelled.
“Oh my gosh, your hair looks
like a lion!” my mom said. Then
she screamed because my hair
was like a lion that had a bad hair
day.

My mom tried to brush my hair
but MY HAIR WAS EVEN MORE
PUFFY! I HATE my hair when it’s
puffy! “Grrrrr,” I thought. “Oh no,
it’s almost time to go to school!”
I said. I was so worried that we
didn’t have time to brush my hair,
but we had a lot of time to fix my
lion hair.

Then my sister came and
started to laugh. “Wow,
Jacqueline, your hair looks like a
lion!” “Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!” my sister
screamed so everyone could hear
her.

“Stop it!” I yelled right at my
sister’s face. I was feeling really
bad when my sister said that.

Then my sister thought and
thought about what she did
wrong. And my sister said, “Sorry.
I will be more nice to you.”

“Never be mean?” I said in a
cute voice.

“Never,” said my sister in a
sorry voice.

Finally my mom came. Me and
my sister were like, “You
were gone for so long!”

“Ok, honey, I brought some
water!” And then she put some
water on my hair. And then my
mom brushed my hair.


Finally my lion hair was gone!
My hair was nice and curly just
like I wanted it to be. I was so
happy. I said thank you to mom.
She said, “You’re welcome!” and
then she hugged me, too.

— JACQUELINE GARCIA
CEJA, GRADE 3

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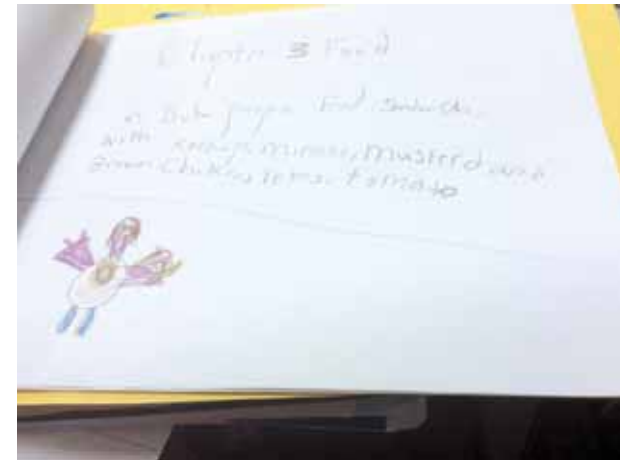
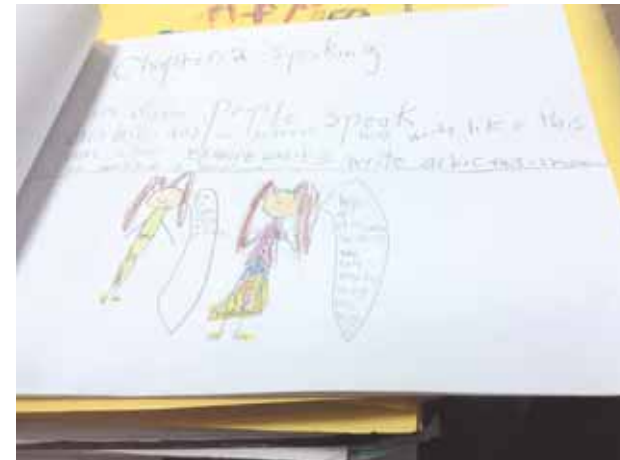
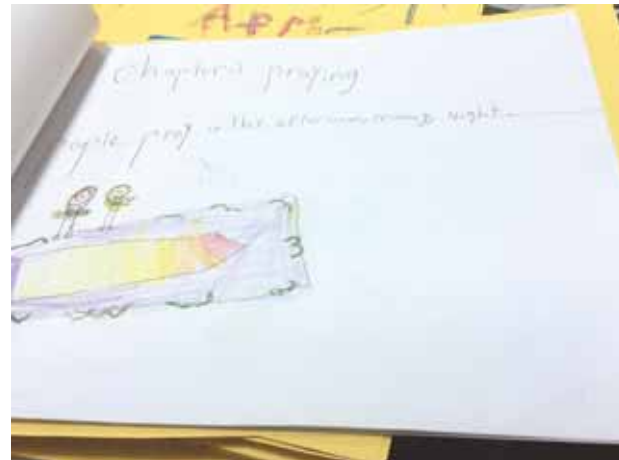
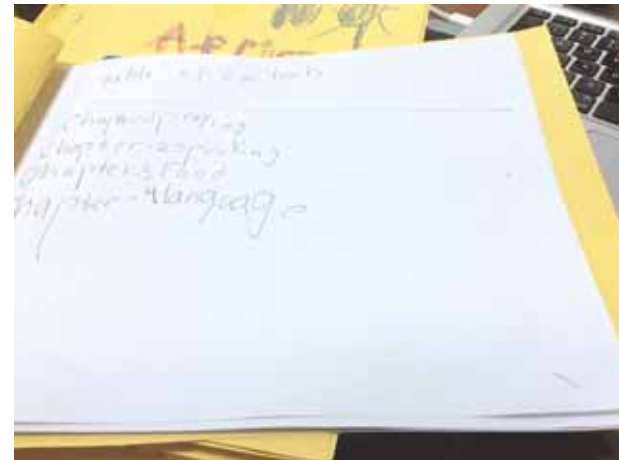
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CAMPBELL ELEMENTARY



Picture story by Filio Ramakis, 6, grade 1

CAMPBELL ELEMENTARY WRITING

Bee

The bee is as fast as a cheetah,
Its eyes are as black as night.

Watch out people,
Watch out for the BIG BEE!

— STEPHANIE DAGET, 10,
GRADE 5

Silly Dog

My dog gave me a lick.
She gave a playful "yap!"
"GO GET THE STICK!"
I yell. She's a silly ol' chap!

— SIBEAL ZANOL, 10, GRADE 5

SPACE

I am a curious place filled with rumors
Many are true, some are not
But, there's some life far far away
That will soon be discovered

— FABIO ROCABADO, 10,
GRADE 5

The King

The king has a gold crown,
but he has a big frown.
His clothes are not even,
thanks to his tailor Steven.

— AYAAN SYED, 10, GRADE 5

Make Up Artist

Decorating people's faces,
Making the perfect shade,
Making people happy for who they are

Beautiful Rose,
— STEPHANIE DAGET, 10,
GRADE 5

Math

I think math is the best thing in the world. A reason that I like math is because you learn the operations and I enjoy doing that. Some of my favorite math things are story problems that have multiplication and division. I also like math because by knowing it you can go all around the world. I love math for lots of reasons and maybe you do too.

— ETA, 8, GRADE 3

Hanukkah

Hannukah is my favorite holiday of the year. We eat a potato meal and it is called latkes. We play a game called

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dreydl. Sometimes I go up to New York to celebrate Hanukkah. Hannukah is always a special holiday to me because it is fun.

— AMELIE COHRSEN, 8,
GRADE 3

Shopping at Macy's

Shopping at Macy's takes a lot of time. First you need to look for clothing with the color and design you like. Also, you have to add some accessories to make you stand out. Next, you have to try on your clothes to see if they actually fit you. When you shop, you need a lot of time but when you put on your new clothes, it will be worth it.

— ANNA PRITCHARD, 8,
GRADE 3

Campbell Elementary School

Campbell is a great school for kids. Students get to have great teachers. Kids at Campbell get to learn so much from the teachers. Students have lots of time for reading, math and social studies. In math we learn a lot of division and multiplication. Students also have art, P.E., music, and Spanish. Students mostly like library. Campbell is a great school.

— GRACE HERNANDEZ, 8,
GRADE 3

Dismissal

Dismissal is the best part of the day. When it's the end of the day there are less rules. I also like the end of the day because sometimes I get to help another teacher along with my friends. When it's the end of the day I get to play with my friends at Extended Day. It's pretty obvious that I like dismissal better than the first part of the day.

— MALEK BEN HAMOUDAH, 8, GRADE 3

Kids Should Not Do Chores

Kids should not do chores. They should be able to play video games or read a book all day after school. Also, parents say chores are so easy to do. So, if they are so easy, why can't they do it? Kids look forward to relaxing after school and don't want to do chores. Kids are born to play and not do chores.

— MATT LISS, 8, GRADE 3

LONG BRANCH ELEMENTARY



Jalayah Chatman, grade 4



Sassan Fiske, grade 4



Maya Jones, grade 4



Henry Gerber, grade 1



Micah Blerman, grade 1



Finn Barrett, kindergarten



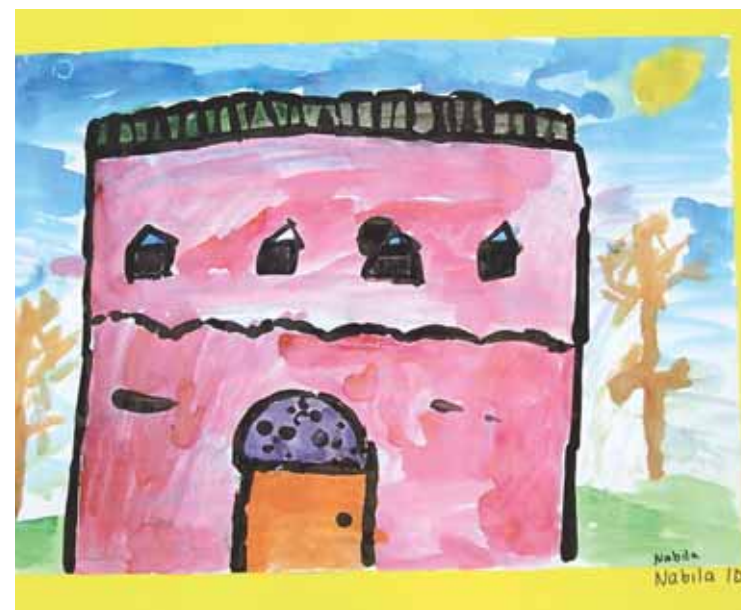
Derick Moore, kindergarten



Allison Park, grade 1



Reagan Schlimme, grade 4



Nabila Sagota, grade 1

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SWANSON MIDDLE SCHOOL

This is the Reason I Didn't Finish My Homework

Algebra homework is slow business. Each problem is like a tiny step down a ginormous, spiraling staircase. My plan was to finish it up quickly and efficiently before I moved on to my English homework. Each day was a routine: Algebra homework first to get it over with, then anything else that came afterwards. That was what was expected each day. So I would get home, lug my book bag into the kitchen, pull out my huge binder and algebra textbook, and begin.

What I didn't expect to hear was a blood curdling scream emerging from downstairs.

I ran, fast as I could, to get to the basement. Even though it would only be about five short steps away to reach my brother in pain, it seemed that the descent would take longer than the metaphorical algebra staircase described in the above paragraph.

My mother had beat me there, and was holding Evan, my brother, by the shoulders. There was blood. Everywhere. Dripping down from where Evan held his face to his wrist; some had dripped on my mother's jeans, and some onto the staircase. My legs froze – which sounds cliché but it's not – as they always did when I panicked. "Go get some ice." Mom ordered in her strict, business-like tone. My legs melted enough to run back up the stairs to the freezer. I think that the cool, flat ice pack in the palm of my hand was as much of a relief to me as it would be to Evan.

The blood, which had dripped onto his wrist, had crusted over now and turned into red-brown blotches. I could see his legs shaking, his screams now a white noise. Mom waited for him to calm down before saying in an even tone, "Evan, you're going to need to take your hand away from your eye. I need to see what's happened. Take your hand away from your eye, please, honey."

When Evan didn't comply, Mom repeated it again. And again. And again until finally, Evan drew his hand away from his face.

A huge dent ran right on top of his eye, gushing blood. It wasn't a cut or a gash; more like the delicate skin had just popped open. It was also deep. I thought that it slightly resembled the Grand Canyon, but I didn't get time to further examine it because in seconds Evan's hand was on his eye again.

Mom sucked in air through her teeth. "Can you stand up, Evan? Can you walk?" she asked. Evan nodded weakly and followed Mom up to the kitchen. "Love you, Grace Ann. I'll be back, okay? I'm running Evan to the ER."

I have to admit I was still panicking

a little at this time. Evan gets injured all the time from skateboarding and shrugs it off. I had never seen anyone – him or my mom – look so distressed. Mom grabbed a bag of chocolate chips and shoved them in her pocket. For a moment I was able to find humor and say, "Hoard chocolate chips much?" Mom smiled too.

"They're for Evan," she headed to the door where Evan waited. "I don't know how long we'll be but I'll text you. I love you."

"I love you. Good luck, Evan."

He didn't respond, just walked away.

Evan ended up with twelve stitches right above his eye, which would give one the impression that he had two eyebrows on one side of his face. Anyway, it was one of those instances that seemed worse in the moment than it probably was. It turned out that while Evan was practicing skateboarding, he landed on one side of his board a little too hard. This created a lever which sent his board flying to his face, hitting his eye. The only two good things that Evan got out of this experience were a whole free bag of chocolate chips and a day off of school.

I never did finish my algebra homework that day.

— GRACE ANN BROWN,
GRADE 8

I am

I am a girly girl

I am full of glitter, sparkle and light pink

I am ballet feet pounding on the floor when I dance

I am England, as a fairy-tale of fairies

I am kittens, cuddly, fluffy, and lovable

I am mayonnaise, I am so smooth, soft and silky

I am Piano music, playing the keys gently and gracefully

I am a feather, lightweight, bubbly and preppy.

I am etiquette, manners, politeness, and love.

I am acceptable, honored, and passionate.

I am proud of others, giving and respectful

I am not jealous, aggressive, nor rude

I am delectable with a smile on my face as wide as the earth around the sun

I am serious, but I take things as fun as a merry go round with friends

I am who I am, like me or not, I am happy with myself

I am a person who others might want my life.

I am a girly girl, and I stand across a crowd of 7 billion people.

— MARIAM AL-BARAZANCHI,
GRADE 8



Self-Portrait by Olivia Springberg, grade 8

Winter Wonderland

Winter, Winter, Winter
It's a magical day
People stay and sing all day
It's a world full of play.

World full of love,
Happiness and joy,
You'll enjoy this time of year
Especially when you play.

People, people, people
Come on out and let's stay
Snow as soft as blanket
I'm sure you will enjoy.

Trees covered in snow,
snowflakes cover the sky
Children smile and laugh all day
They sure will remember this time.

Cold breeze and warm sun
Such a magical day
Christmas trees and mistletoes
Santa is on his way.

Marshmallows and Hot Chocolate
Kids opening gifts
Laughter is heard all the time,
Santa made the day.
— LUKA GABITSINASHVILI,
GRADE 8

Opaque

Who I am is hush-hush.
I'm opaque
or try to be.

On the key to who I am
but never want to be;



Photo by Beyla Richman, grade 8

the lock has turned:
forgotten, gone.
I have thrown away the key.

The one who can't hurt,
can't fail,
only succeed,
is the one who I chose to be
or not to be.

When it comes to keeping secrets
all I seem to keep
is me.
— CHARLOTTE HOWARD,
GRADE 8

My Own Evergreen

Maine lobster buoys bob
Among the pointy green,
And the little rocking horse creaks
Inside the glittering screen.

In varying shades of pink and purple,
The ballet shoes dance,
And next is a wooden Pinocchio,
Stepping from branch to branch.

The three kings gaze down,
Each one bearing their gifts,
And the El Morro fort looms above,
A great and mighty cliff.

Toot and Puddle hang side by side,
Between them, the lucky nut,
And Winne-The-Pooh sleds away,
As through the tree he cuts.

Mickey and Minnie giggle together,
A cowboy boot walks alone.
The wooden geese flock underneath,
And the buffalo decides to roam.

There are pine cones and snowflakes,
Both pumpkins and sea shells,
Golden stars and a white dove,
And an eighth note containing a bell.

And also one of Dorothy's slippers,
And too many birds all together.
Not to mention the pure white angels,
Each with wings of feathers.

Then there are the snowmen,
And the little candy canes,
That my brother and I receive,
Each one bearing our names.

And don't forget the baseballs
Or the nerdy government ones,
That bask in the colored lights,
As they hang in our tree when the day is done.

Look past the solid objects,
And into the beyond.
Look into the memories,
And the moments that have moved on.

Look through your own evergreen,
At the things that hang along.
— ISABELLA FRYMOYER,
GRADE 8

Crazy

Like Norman with a wig
Or Lizzie with an ax
The crazies howl
On the prowl
Some call them innocent
Some say confused
Others say murder
I say greatly abused

— HANNAH ROSMAN,
GRADE 8



"Earthbound Angel" by Sarah Superata, grade 8



Photo by Grace Cogley, grade 8



Carson Prayer, grade 8

TAYLOR ELEMENTARY



Joy, grade 3



Matteo, grade 3



Elizabeth, grade 3



Ella, grade 3



Maddie, grade 3

WESTMINSTER SCHOOL

Stars

The stars smile down at me
They rock me to sleep
At night they wake me up
They go back to sleep at daybreak
They have bright, sparkly eyes
I love the stars,
They love me back
— CATHERINE KIM, GRADE 3
(CURRENT GRADE 4)

Winter

Winter comes, pushing fall away
It breathes its icy cold breath
Chilling my spine
Crying, rain turns to snow
It sleeps with a blanket of white
As it comes, it freezes the land
The world feels blank
There is nothing in sight
Winter takes over day and night
The cold winter
— ALEXANDER HEARN,
GRADE 3
(CURRENT GRADE 4)

Grandmother

Her gray dry hands holding mine
Resting so quietly on a blue quilt
After dinner she turned and whispered
Not all bruises hurt
Divine in the day all dressed up
So many years ago
Older now but laughing
The cancer did not get her
How come she feels so tired
Every minute counts
Remember
— MICHAEL PANDULA,
GRADE 5
(CURRENT GRADE 6)

The Sea

The wind blows through my wavy hair
here and there I listen
to the sounds of the Earth
I jump happily through the wicked sand
Tumbling to my feet and tasting the

air

Seeing the sea and sun
gleaming bright like shining stars
fish swimming by
beauty strikes everywhere
but my happiness beats it all
with my moonlight fun
— CHRISTINA BURAVTSOVA,
GRADE 6
(CURRENT GRADE 7)

The Waving Tree

I wave alone at the motionless tree
Shivering against the relentless gale
But to my surprise it waves back at me
The blazing warmth of my hears can set sail
Greeting me with arms so grand and ornate
The branches of joy have now fully grown
Winter winds sing with the voice of a mate
With my waving tree there is no alone
— KENNETH LIN, GRADE 7
(CURRENT GRADE 8)

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1/28/2015 Neighborhood Outlook
1/28/2015 Winter Fun, Food, Arts & Entertainment;
Valentine's Preview

FEBRUARY

2/4/2015 Valentine's Dining & Gifts I
2/4/2015 Wellbeing – National Children's Dental Health Month
2/11/2015 HomeLifeStyle
2/11/2015 Valentine's Dining & Gifts II
Valentine's Day is Feb. 14 • Presidents Day is Feb. 16
2/18/2015 A+ Camps & Schools
2/25/2015 Pet Connection Pullout

MARCH

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Luz Argueta-Gutierrez, 11, grade 5, zen



Pearson Frank, 10, grade 5, zen



Amina Luvsanchultem, 11, grade 5, zen



Jack Vu, 10, grade 5, zen



Olivia Grant, 11, grade 5, zen



Lexi Dyer, 9, grade 4



Jennifer Gonzalez Gudiel, 9, grade 4



Evan Obenberger, 9, grade 4



Caroline Grotos, 10, grade 4



Anne Licato, 9, grade 4



Ben Tsai, 9, grade 4, mask



Tyler Kaufflin, 8, grade 3



Susannah Erwin, 8, grade 3, owls



Sophia Lander, 8, grade 3, mask



Samantha Gilbert, 9, grade 3, dragon



Pia Douliery, 8, grade 3



Miya, grade 3



Lexis McGolerick, 8, grade 3, dragon



Jessica Galdo, 8, grade 3, mask



Eli Martin, 9, grade 3



Elaine Chu, 9, grade 3, mask



Ainsley High, 8, grade 3



Nico Docena, 7, grade 2



Sudathri Sharma, 7, grade 2



Miia Kreek, 6, grade 1

GLEBE ELEMENTARY

Delaware Park

I went to Delaware Park with my friends Ella, Will, their parents and my brother Keane. When we first got there, we paid for tickets. My brother Keane bumped his knee on a bench. He had to go to the first aid place. Luckily, he was okay. We went off to jump on the Stampede Slide. What is the Stampede Slide? Glad you asked. It is my favorite slide if all time. I think I went on it five times! The Stampede Slide is a slide that you slide down your belly on a mat. The two slow or boring slides were the ones with the tubes. I beat Ella and Will's dad in a race. I didn't go on the Anaconda because the line was so long. Ella, who did wait, said it took an hour! Wow! We went to the Splash Park and got wet. After that, we ate hamburgers and french fries. Delaware Park was a special place for a special trip.

— DRAKE WILLIAMS,
GRADE 2

Virginia Beach

One day my dad told me that we were going to Virginia Beach! I was so happy! My Uncle, my dad, mom, and brother Noah went. It took four hours. We stopped for frozen yogurt. There was traffic! When we finally made it, I jumped out of the car. We went to the water. I jumped in small but strong waves. Some of the waves were so strong that it could knock you down. I stayed in a hotel called Holiday Inn. We stayed for two days. Our hotel breakfast was wonderful. Back at the beach, I was buried in the sand. I played tennis with my uncle and swam with my dad. Virginia Beach was the best trip ever.

— EALNATHAN TESFAYE,
GRADE 2

The Zoo

I went to the zoo with my mom, dad, sister and brother. First, we saw the different kinds of animals. We saw a very, very tall giraffe. I was amazed. We went into the caves. My sister and I were scared in the caves because it was dark. We saw other animals. It was amazing! We got cotton candy. Yum! My feet were tired after walking. It was the best trip ever.

— EMY BATSAIKHAN, GRADE 2

My Eighth Birthday

My most memorable birthday was my 8th birthday when I got a Nintendo 309 with Pokemon. I started playing and I

never wanted to stop even to go to school! After about three weeks, I won the game so I now want Super Smash Brother. It was the most memorable gift.

— ROKAS VISMANTAS,
GRADE 2

My Favorite Moment

My most favorite moment is when I did a flip off the diving board. I was waiting in line for my turn and finally it was my turn. I thought I was going to do a pencil jump but then I didn't since I wanted to do a flip. I asked my mom and dad. They said, "maybe". I said "please!" They said, "yes." Then, I went up the stairs and I was quivering on the steps. Then, I was walking onto the edge. Then, I took a deep breath and I did a flip off the diving board. I made a big splash! I was so happy! I did it again and again. Then, I did it and I landed on my back!

— KOSTYA COOK, GRADE 2

When I got a Dog

When I got a dog, I was five. I was at my dad's house with my step brothers and sisters. My dad went to the pet store with me. We bought a dog. He is a pit bull. His name is Abel. He is black and white. His eyes glow. We came home with Abel. Abel jumped up and down like it was meant to be, like he already knew what was going to happen. It was the best day ever.

— TALIN YOUNG, GRADE 2

My Dad and I Wrestling

My most favorite moment is when my Dad and I were wrestling. I laugh and scream. I love it! It is so much fun. I laugh so hard. His dogs jump with excitement. That is the best moment in my life!

— GAGE GERMAN, GRADE 2

My Dog Scooby

My most favorite moment was when ... I got my dog Scooby. He has black fur and little green eyes. When I first got him, I was sad because he had to leave his dog family in Pennsylvania. My dad cheered me up by saying that I could play with Scooby when we stopped for gas on the way home. I heard Scooby barking and crying in the back of the car. When we finally got home to Arling-

ton, I played with Scooby for a long time. I went to sleep with Scooby's warm fluffy fur on me. The next day, I saw Scooby trying to show me something. I realized he wanted to go on a walk. I woke up my parents and we went on a walk. I went to school and when I came back, Scooby jumped on me and licked me. He was so happy to see me!

— STAS GWIEZDZINSKI,
GRADE 2

My Cousin's House

I went to my cousin's house for a sleepover. I stayed for four days. My cousin put nail polish on my nails. It was fun! We went outside and played. We played hide and seek. I went back inside to eat and watch t.v. I went to my cousin's house for a sleepover.

— HADIYA MUDDASAR,
GRADE 2

My Birthday

When it was my birthday, I got two DS. For the first time, I got a Nintendo thing. My favorite game is New Super Mario Brothers Two. I love Nintendo! It's awesome! I beat Roy so it was Iggy's turn to steal the peach. I haven't finished Iggy's part, but I still have fun. I love New Super Mario Brothers 2. Now, I can dream about defending Roy.

— JONATHAN MARKOWITZ,
GRADE 2

How I Got Annie

My favorite moment was when I got my dog Annie. In November, we were all thinking and talking about a name. We came up with Annie. In December, while we were at the press club to see Santa. We told him we all really, really wanted a dog. On Christmas Day, we came down the stairs but no dog whatsoever. There were tons of toys and a dog cage. On top of the cage was a note saying we would go to buy a dog! Well, we were so happy! We all got into the car and got our dog Annie. She has black eyes and white fluffy fur. We love her!

— JACK KEANE, GRADE 2

Arcade

My most favorite place is an arcade. The arcade is called Dave and Busters. I go there with my friends and my mom. We play lots of game and have fun. We play car games and soccer. We get prizes and lots of tickers. We eat cake, too.

SEE GLEN, PAGE 15

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Amelia Petty, grade 3



Eleanor Gaugh, grade 5

Level Best



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

If I wanted to rationalize the benefit of delaying my heretofore every-three-week chemotherapy infusion from three weeks to four and now on to five, possibly six – and that's dependent on improved results from a second/maybe even third retest upcoming (this retest a bit more involved than drawing blood) – I would say it's only fitting that I should have a break/brake; after all, it is the holiday season when all good things; yada, yada, yada. If only it were that simple.

But simple is the last thing that a cancer patient's life can be characterized as being; whether they have been "prognosed" as "terminal" as I was, or are at the beginning (diagnosis), middle (under treatment and surviving under circumstances too numerous and varied to list) or end of their cancer-affected life. And so for me to expect smooth sailing at any time during this process is totally and entirely unreasonable – and mostly, I haven't. I'm just lucky to be in a boat with a few provisions still left in it. Ergo, this column is not a complaint, just an update, as the previous few columns had sort of led you regular readers on a bit of a walk in my shoes, although one likely without the neuropathy nearly six years of non-stop chemotherapy can exact. Still, I am mostly upright, up and about and able to handle any and all activities, especially those relating to daily living. However, right now I worry that after two consecutive three-week-interval, pre-chemotherapy lab results specifically measuring my creatinine levels (which reflects kidney function), and a second retest as well, all indicated too high/abnormal (a first-time occurrence), thereby preventing my regularly scheduled Alimta infusions – twice – if I have indeed crossed the Rubicon, so to speak. Obviously, it serves no particular purpose for me to invoke history, especially history with which I have very little familiarity. However, if some of what I've read concerning this historical event is true – the event's significance notwithstanding, it has partially led to the creation-and-then-acceptance of a word/s/phrase's figurative meaning – then I sure hope my die has not been cast.

But who knows, really? And even though this cancer stuff is all very personal – and my circumstances are unique to me as a cancer patient – I try not to take it personally, if that makes any sense? Somehow, I try to minimize the negative effect of any of it, mentally, that is. As concerns me and my treatments (starts, stops and fits), it has always been about what happens next. Until there's no more next, there's always what's next. Now I have a third round of lab work next week and a 24-hour creatinine clearance collection in the interim to measure my levels as accurately as possible to help determine what happens next. Hopefully, levels will reduce, and more of the same treatment which has resulted in my unexpectedly long life expectancy and most recent "shrinkage," can continue. But of course, there are no guarantees either. Oh, there is one: this process is excruciating.

Nevertheless, somehow the patient (or at least this patient) has to be patient and life has to be lived. Otherwise the cancer wins. And to quote Brian Dennehy, a/k/a Sheriff Cobb, from the movie "Silverado," completely out of context: "We can't be having any of that now, can we?"

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

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Bilguun Batbold, grade 1



Neida Guerra, grade 1



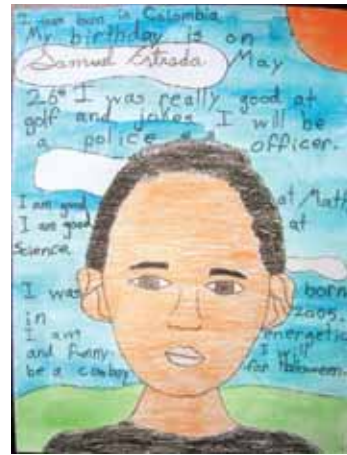
Natalie Lozano, grade 1



Kamal Amiral, grade 1



Josue Estrada Barco, grade 1



Samuel Estrada Zapata, grade 3



Egshiglen Perenlei, grade 3

GLEBE ELEMENTARY

FROM PAGE 13

That was the best time in my life.

— SOPHIA DENITTI, GRADE 2

Disneyland

I went to Disneyland when I was three years old. I went for rides, lots of rides! The rides were fast. My head spun. I loved meeting each character. We met Mickey, Minnie, and Donald. I loved going to Disneyland. The place is wonderful. I enjoyed it a lot!

— AKSHAY KUCHBHATIA, GRADE 2

My Wii

I got my Wii at Target for my birthday. I was so excited! When we got home, my dad opened the box. It came with another game. I sat down with my dad and played it for the first time. My Dad taught me how to play. I love Wii!

— ERICK ESTRADA GUZMAN, GRADE 2

My Dad and I

My dad and I love wrestling. I am better than my dad. he gave me twenty-three darts and we played. When he plays with me, I feel happy. I wish he could read the bible and play with me instead of going to work. I love playing with my dad.

— JOSE ORELLANA HERNANDEZ, GRADE 2

Football

My most favorite moment is playing football at a football game. I am so fast. I always get a touchdown when I run with the ball. I love football!

— JAMESON CARL, GRADE 2

Roller Coaster Ride

I am going to tell you about a special moment in my life. I was in Florida at Disneyland. We were just about to board a roller coaster called Thunder when my sister Parker started shaking. She was

only three at the time. I anxiously jumped on with my family following behind me. The roller coaster creaked as we started up a steep hill. Then, it stopped. Everything was still. Suddenly, it went fast downward. The coaster raced down the hill. We were laughing and screaming with our hands up. Fireworks started to go off. Finally, it stopped. We were all so dizzy. "That was a really good ride!", I said. The fireworks continued to go off. What a memorable ride!

— MADDIE MATTHEWS, GRADE 2

My Trip to Great Wolf Lodge

When driving in my car for two hours going to Great Wolf Lodge, I got tired of sitting in the car. Finally, we arrived. My eyes were widening as I saw that Great Wolf Lodge was gigantic. We walked inside the humungous building. My dad took my brother and I to a window that shows you the whole, entire watermark while my mom got the key for our room. We walked over to our room. We

had bunk bunkbeds! We got into our bathing suits and went to the watermark. The first water ride we went on was a tiny slide. Then, we went on a slightly bigger water slide. Next, we had a wonderful dinner with music playing. We saw people dressed up as wolves. When we went back to our room, I knew that I had had the best time ever.

— GABY VENEZIA, GRADE 2

The Morning Hike

One of most favorite times, in my life, was when I went on a Morning Hike. This was the first time my little brother Ian went hiking with my mom and I. It all started on November 30, 2014 in the morning. I woke up happy. The very first words my mom said to me was "We are going hiking with Ian." My heart jumped for joy! Right away I made trail mix. Trail mix is M&Ms, goldfish, pretzels and popcorn. We set off. Ian was impatient in the car. First, we looked at a hawk and owls. Next, we hiked in the woods. After that, we all ate lunch because it had been a great morning hike.

— FIONA MCCLUSKIE, GRADE 2

WAKEFIELD HIGH SCHOOL



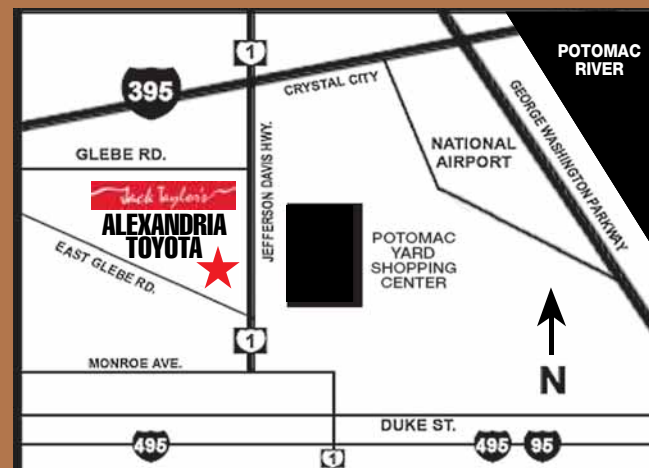
"A Lost Step," by Marisa DeFranco, 16, class of 2016

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