December 29, 2016

25 Cents

Alexandria Batzette Eteket Children's Gazette Packet 2016

Chloe Achieng, 1st grade,James K. Polk Elementary — Spider Web.

Home Sellers trust McEnearney Associates

McEnearney.com



Old Town \$949,000

A meticulous & complete 3-level renovation of the largest townhome in historic Wolfe Alley. This sunny, end-unit boasts marble baths, a fabulous kitchen, a gorgeous master suite, & a charming second level sunroom & terrace. 2 off-street parking spaces.

Joan Shannon 703.507.8655 www.JoanHome.com



Alexandria-Pommander Walk \$1,295,000

Stunning townhouse set back in a courtyard facing Lee St Park near the waterfront. The interior is like flipping through the pages of Architecturual Digest with top-of-theline updates. 3 bedrooms, 3.5 baths. bonus room/den. 2 fireplaces. Private lovely garden. Patricia Smith 703.728.4728 www.Pat4Pat.com



Old Town \$610,000

Opportunity awaits your personal vision in this historic "as is" Old Town property. Layout currently offers 2 master suites with separate entrancesgreat rental option once fully renovated. Deep backyard is ideal for entertaining alfresco. www.thegoodhartgroup. com/listings/714-wolfe/

Sue & Allison Goodhart 703.362.3221 www.TheGoodhartGroup.com

Serving the Washington, DC Metro Area since 1980. 703.549.9292 | 109 South Pitt Street | Alexandria, VA 22314



Alexandria-Belle Haven \$968,000

Uber charm in this updated, classic stone house. With three finished levels, a granite kitchen, three large bedrooms, three baths, and a screened porch this home is steps to 25 acres of parkland.

Janet Caterson Price 703.622.5984 www.JanetPriceHomes.com



Alexandria \$1,225,000

All-brick, custom, 1950s, 5-bedroom, 4-bath, 2-car garage home with reduced price. Hardwood floors, skylit kitchen opening to family room and decks overlooking the private and beautifully landscaped 1-acre property. Easy commute to DC. Ann Michael

www.AnnDozierMichael.com



Ginger Quinn 703.731.4139 www.McEnearney.com





McEnearner

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Washington, DC \$539,000

Huge 1-bedroom condo in the heart of Logan Circle with almost 900 square feet of living space. The open floor plan and floor-to-ceiling windows bring in loads of light and the extra large bedroom is a wonderful escape at the end of the day.

Michael Makris 703.402.0629 www.MikeMakris.com



Alexandria \$1,200,000

Opportunities like this don't come around often! Custom built and built to last. Sited on an acre of flat, fully usable land, there's plenty of room for pool, tennis court and expansion. 4-bedrooms, 3.5-baths, 3 fireplaces. It's also a gardener's dream Betty Mallon 703.989.8548

www.BettyMallon.com



Alexandria \$458,000

Beautiful 4-level townhouse convenient to 1-395 for a quick trip to DC. 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, including a private master suite with fireplace. Gorgeous hardwoods, renovated kitchen and new carpet! Attached 2-car garage.

Melissa Shelby 703.627.007 www.MelissaSellsVirginia.com



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JAMES K. POLK ELEMENTARY

Alexandria Gazette Editor Steven Mauren 703-778-9415 or gazette@connectionnewspapers.com



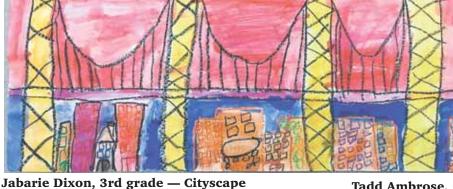
Mrs. Och's Class, 4th grade design quilt, pen and ink

Mrs. Weller's 1st grade class — Georgia O'Keefe **Poppy Flowers**

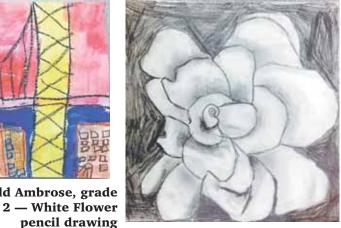
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Zainab, grade 4 — Pumpkin still life drawing

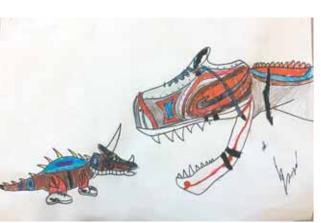


Tadd Ambrose, grade

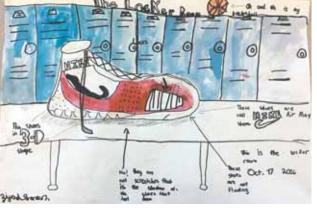




Noor Hijazi, Kindergarten — Apples Still Life in pastels



Tanween Syed, 5th grade — Nike Dinosaurs



Ziyad Sankoh, 5th grade - Nike Shoes by Lockers

Welcome

Dear Readers:

This week, the Gazette Packet 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 2017 calendars for early December, the deadline for submissions for next year's Children's Gazette Packet. 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 Gazette Packet 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 gazette@connectionnewspapers.com, but you can reach us by mail at 1606 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314 or call 703-778-9415 with any questions.

- Editor Steven Mauren

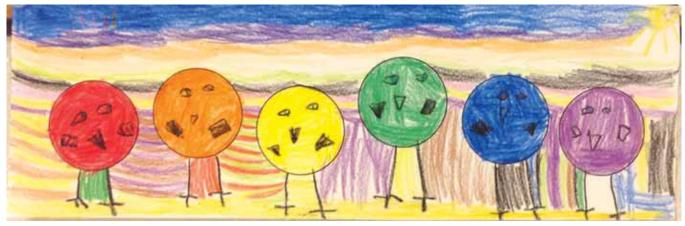
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A digital version of this publication and 14 sister publications available at www.connectionnewpapers.com/ documents

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For information on local content email gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

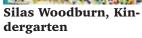
Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy



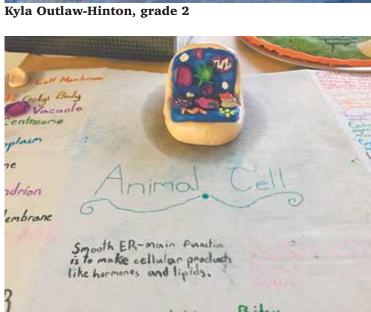
Ethan Posey, Kindergarten



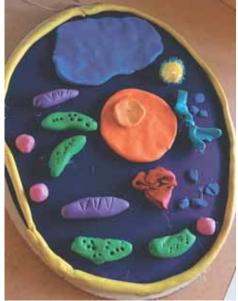




Veronica Holguin, grade 5



Bemnet Bitew, grade 5





Jaylyn Lovelace, Kindergarten

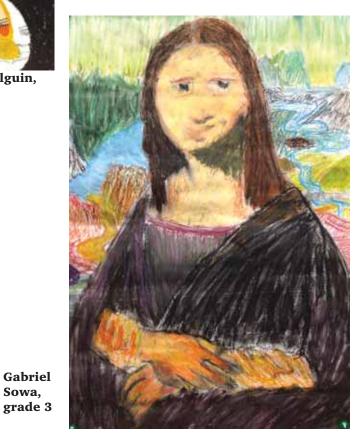


Sowa,

Iris Crouch, grade 5



Eleanor Bright, grade 3



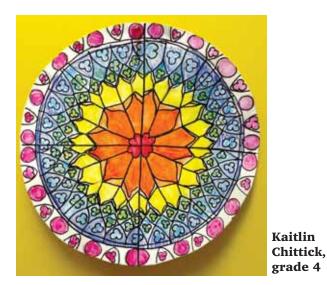
Sarah Boglione, grade 5

Alex Silva-Camillo, grade 5

Aiden McKelligan, grade 5 4 🏶 Alexandria Gazette Packet 🚸 Children's Gazette Packet 🚸 2016 - 2017

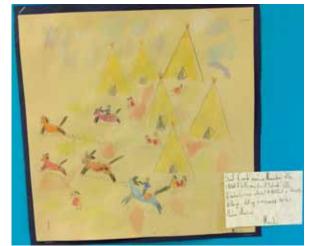


Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy





Meagan Reis, grade 2



Mercedes Garcia, grade 5



Anna-Sophia Coulombe, grade 1



Hayat Abdurahman, grade 5



Nora Mudd, Kindergarten



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CHARLES BARRETT ELEMENTARY



Sylivia Peters, 1st grade



Elodie Anderson, 4th grade



Ariana Escobar, 3rd grade



Marc Lopez-Lopez, 1st grade



Lara Colon, 1st grade



Abigail Shewchuk, 2nd grade



Olivia Anderson, 2nd grade



Grace Redican, 3rd grade





Elena Wear, 3rd grade

Ellie Hodge, 5th grade





Madeleine Sleeter, 4th grade Hayden Faulkner, 4th grade

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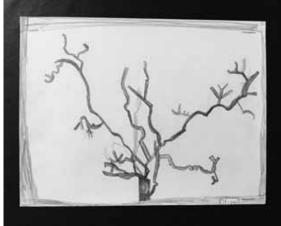


Sofia Ring, 5th grade



Karina DeJesus, 4th grade

DOUGLAS MACARTHUR ELEMENTARY



Oliver Bentz, grade 1



Sabrina Black, grade 1









Explorers Wanted

We are committed to offering students a well-rounded education, including ample time for the fine arts. Speech, drama, music, and art, plus design lab, are infused throughout the curriculum. Every day our students question, collaborate, create, and lead through our innovative academic program.

Preschool - Grade 8 Open House: January 10 at 9:00 a.m www.congressionalschool.org

> **BalletNova Center for Dance Classes begin** February 6th

3443 Carlin Springs Road Falls Church, VA 22041

> 703.778.3008 Info@BalletNova.org www.BalletNova.org

Aiden Clary, grade 1





Samantha Adams, grade 4



Evan Khanna, grade 4



MARTPHONE

Zoe Williams, grade 4

BALLETNOVA CENTER FOR DANCE

WINTER SPRING SEMESTER **REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!**

Ballet, Tap & More! / Ages 3+

\$50 OFF Tuition!* *New Students Only. Offer expires February 28

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SAMUEL TUCKER ELEMENTARY



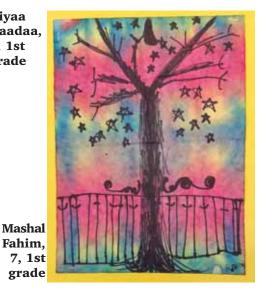
Bernice Wong, 9, 4th grade

Marcy Kunes, 6, 1st grade



Divid

Diyaa Daadaa, 6, 1st grade





Samar Hammad, 6, 1st grade











Madison Grey Duckett, 10



Rodney Jones, 11, 5th grade



Jackie Garcia, 7, 2nd grade

Megan Hagan, 8, 2nd grade 8 🔹 Alexandria Gazette Packet 🔹 Children's Gazette Packet 🔹 2016 - 2017



Irma Laratta, 10



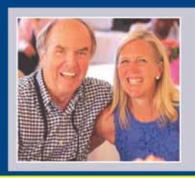
Ava Tompkins-Myers, 7, 2nd grade



Layal Alsabbagh, 9, 4th grade



Wilmer Munoz, 10, 5th grade www.ConnectionNewspapers.com



CHRIS WHITE

Planning to sell in 2017? Now is the time to call Chris & Peggy White! Leading the Area in Real Estate. SOLD!!!



9314 Craig Ave. \$635,000 Pristine Condition!

ruly exquisite proper-

5427 Grist Mill

Woods Way

\$899,000

ty! Spacious 5 Bedroom home on gorgeous, fenced level lot in premier location. Numerous features include: Bright open floor plan, Hardwood floors, gas cooking/ heat/how water, thermal windows, and garage. Large deck overlooks spacious grounds. Property is in pristine "move in" condition!



es, soaring high ceilings, and modern amenities typically found in \$1 Mil+ properties. Features include: 3 Fin levels, walk out lower level, 5BR's, 4.5BA's, Chef's kitchen, upgraded trim, hardwood floors, & 2 car garage. Custom deck and brick patio capitalize on gorgeous fenced grounds backing to park. Amazing Value!





nial on gorgeous large lot

in prime location near Potomac River. Features include: Updated custom kitchen, 3 finished levels, 4 BR's including spacious Master suite w/ balcony, 3 full baths, recently installed Andersen windows, oversize 2 car garage, expansive rear deck overlooks magnificent grounds which includes detached studio/office. Club





Thinking of selling next year? Now is the time to call!

HAPPY NEW YEAR



CHRIS WHITE 703.283.9028

www.chrisandpeggywhite.com chris.white@longandfoster.com Alexandria/Old Town Historic - 400 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 LONG & FOSTER

CHRISTIE'S

BURGUNDY FARM COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL



Amalie Carey Hirschmann, kindergarten



Carolina Jane Sramek, 1st grade

Kyria Baskin, kindergarten



Maggie Collier, kindergarten



Nevie Erickson, kindergarten



Mike Mahar, kindergarten





Joshua Miller, kindergarten





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Maggie Hole, kindergarten



Robbie Groshon, kindergarten



Teaghan Dunbar, 8th grade



Mira Joshi, kindergarten 10 🔹 Alexandria Gazette Packet 🔹 Children's Gazette Packet 🔹 2016 - 2017



Spencer Dinwiddie, 1st grade





Henson Lopez, kindergarten



Finlay Nunan, kindergarten Lola Ilic, kindergarten



Bea Smith, kindergarten Rosemary Periera-Kyle, kindergarten



Sava Djokovic, kindergarten

BURGUNDY I Am Thankful for...

I am thankful for my family. One person in my family that I'm thankful for is my mom. She is always nice to me and I'm glad she spends a lot of time with me. I'm also thankful for my dad. He's nice and fun to play with. I love both my dogs and I am thankful for them. Sometimes they jump on me but not that much. They play a lot, they lick me a ton, and they're fun to play with. I'm thankful for my grandparents too. They're very nice and fun to play with. I am also thankful for my cousins. They're nice and I really like playing with them. I am extremely thankful for my family.

DILLON DREIBELBIS, 3rd grade

I'm thankful for my family. My sister taught me how to be a nerd, she gives me candy, and she lets me snuggle her. My dad teaches me about life, watches The Simpsons with me, gets me stuff and snuggles me. My mom snuggles with me, she comforts me when she accidentally hurts me, and she makes my food. My dogs let me snuggle then, are cute and fuzzy, and comes to me when I'm sad. My brother protects me, pushes me on the swing, and finally, teachers me how to lick people (to annoy). My family loves me (and snuggles me) and that's why I'm thankful for my family. – Kate McNicholas,

3rd grade

I'm thankful for my family. Mom tells be that I can do anything and loves me to the moon and back. She tells me if anything is wrong. Dad tells me I can do anything too and he's kind and caring. I am thankful for my mom and dad because they love me so much. Stephanie is my cousin and she thinks I'm funny. I like spending time with her. My dog Coco loves me. She is like my own alarm. She wakes me up each morning by snuggling with me. She cheers me up on a bad day. I love my family into a million pieces and I'm so thankful that they are my family.

Alessandra Gonzalez-

Acevedo, 3rd grade I am thankful for lots of things, but one of them is my family. I'm thankful for my dad because he's smart and funny and he likes a lot of different types of food. He is loving and of course weird (in a good way!)

I am thankful for my dog Brady, and I love that he snuggles me and kisses me. He loves to eat treats and have human food.

I am also thankful for my sister because she cares for me and we love playing on electronics together! She also likes trying new foods!

I'm thankful for my mom too, because she cares for me and she kind and car-ing and loves to read! My mom and I love to snuggle!

I love my family and I always will! – Sophie Dougherty, 3rd grade



Evelyn Carpenter Holmes, kindergarten



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NEW REHEARSAL LOCATION IN ALEXANDRIA For Treble choristers, starting at age 8 Church of St. Clement 1701 N. Quaker Ln

If you love singing and making new friends join the premier youth choral program in the DC area Call to schedule an audition now!

Check out our programs: childrenschorus.com 202-237-1005

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PRE-OPENING BENEFITS

Exclusive Charter Club membership & special pricing until Jan 31, 2017 Save up to \$10,000

This holiday season could be the best time for your family to discuss concerns about a senior you all love

For care tips during the holidays and when they're over, please call The Kensington Team, who is always ready to help

he holiday season is a great time to share the joys of togetherness and tradition. But for families whose aging relatives are showing signs of decline, the holidays can also be stressful and even, sad.

If you notice that a senior family member seems more overwhelmed than overjoyed during the holidays, then use this opportunity to pay close attention to signs of concern, such as depression or confusion. While family is all together, talk among yourselves to consider the benefits of assisted living at The Kensington, such as:

- Best-in-class professionals to deliver excellence in care and service
- Licensed nurses on-site 24/7 to preserve wellness

- · Daily activities to keep isolation and loneliness at bay
- Housekeeping and maintenance to provide relief from homeowner demands
- Transportation to excursions to create routine opportunities for fun and enrichment
- + Exquisite dining to make mealtime enticing and nutritious
- · Safety and security measures to give you and your loved one peace of mind
- · Two unique levels of memory care to make every moment count and each day as joyful as it can be

For more information about care and lifestyle options, call and tell us about your family's needs.



FALLS CHURCH

Information Center: 1212 W Broad St, Falls Church, VA | 703.992.9868 | www.TheKensingtonFallsChurch.com

George Washington Middle School



Abigail Thompson, 7th grade





Brock O'Hearn, 6th grade



Casey Jackson, 7th grade Evelyn Ipsen, 6th grade



Charlie Martin, 8th grade



Daviana Robles-Monge, 7th grade



Pedro Sanchez Ayala, 7th grade



Sierra Garcia, 7th grade



grade



Caroline Mitchell, 8th grade



Kirin Mackey, 8th grade



Josiah Dalmida, 7th grade



Kimberli Fuentes, 7th grade



Fatima Benamar, 8th grade

Lily van Goethem, 6th grade



Dominguez, 8th grade





Julianne Joven, 8th grade





Helen Cooper, 7th grade



Anna Rigby, 8th grade

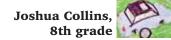


Ayla Subyak, 7th grade

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Janae Holster, 8th grade







Julianna Sabatini, 8th grade



Sammy Ghedira, 8th grade

Riley Bucholz, 8th grade

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Jacqueline Aguirre Ardon, 8th grade







Shevlin Jaffe, 7th grade

Sarah Elpers, 8th gradeh



Mara Boggess, 7th



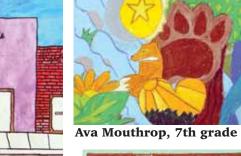
Karen Vasquez Perez, 8th grade





Carolines Miles, 8th grade

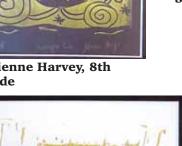
Maren Rice, 6th grade





Mark Warren, 7th grade

Julienne Harvey, 8th grade

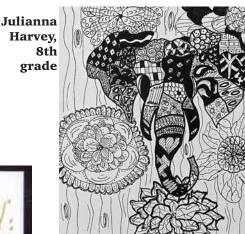




Madeline Anderson,

7th grade







Malachi Quigley, 6th grade



Freyr Pounds, 8th Reese Eelkema, 8th grade



Corrine Miranda, 7th grade Regina Allen, 8th grade www.ConnectionNewspapers.com



Nelson Martinez, 8th grade



Mkiah Hatfield, 7th grade



Milagro Reyes, 7th grade Alexandria Gazette Packet 🛠 Children's Gazette Packet 🛠 2016 - 2017 🛠 13

Jerald J Littlefield, MD Ophthalmologist

Announces his return to full time practice in his Alexandria office Located at 428 S. Washington St. Alexandria, VA 22314

> Office hours Monday - Friday: 8:30 AM to 4 PM

For appointments call (703) 837-1800

Welcome back Dr. Littlefield!



Art Gallery



This collaborative art puzzle was created by students at James L. & Juliette McNeil Preschool Academy/Hopkins House. The students involved in this collaborative were in infants, toddlers, preschool and our Kindergarten Prep classroom. Each of the six classrooms were given five pieces of the puzzle and materials and asked to paint the puzzle pieces and then use materials to decorate the puzzle. This puzzle shows the unity of our classrooms.

WASHINGTON STREET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH PRESCHOOL



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Owls Class (4- and 5-year-old class) — Stars bread People

Congressional School



Morgan Tracy, 12, grade 7 — Purple Flowers



Frogs Class (4-year-old class) — Gingerbread People

St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School

Cafeteria

Laughter echoes through the cafeteria. A room full of energy and life with kids running and mingling. Their voices thundering around the room. Two people, different in their own ways, putting boundaries aside and finding similarities rather than pointing out differences. Handmade food from all cultures served on vibrant red plates and friendly faces giving everyone their share. The whole room is one big chaotic mess and your point of view all depends on if you are willing to find the magic.

— Skye Schofield-Saba, 8th grade

The Book of Life

A giant crane almost touching the sky — towering living spaces looking over the small worn down motel. A small forest in the middle of the city with children running around. A path through the houses that places you in an overgrown forest. People running free through the trees, laughing and having fun. A cute little building filled with wonderful books that others have enjoyed. You can either live life or read about life.

— Емма Hughes, 8тн grade

Gallery



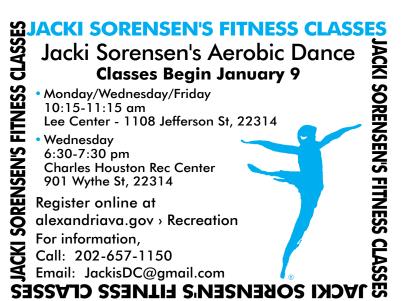
Jane Reynolds, 4, pre-Kindergartner, Agudas Achim Preschool — Self-Portrait



Alice Reynolds, 7, 2nd grade, Mt. Vernon **Community School — Self-Portrait**



Patricia Rue, 11, grade 6, St Rita's School - In September 2016, the Athenaeum in Alexandria held an afternoon of calligraphy and music.



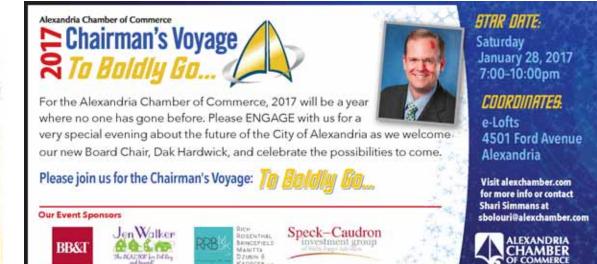
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OPEN HOUSE January 13, 10:00am

For more information, contact Director Jasmine Milone at (703) 549-7931 or visit www.wsumc.com/preschool

Washington Street United Methodist Church Preschool's primary ministry is teaching God's unconditional love and acceptance, and learning to live lovingly. We provide a child-centered, nurturing environment that enables young children to develop to their fullest potential, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, and cognitively.



Discover Burgundy creativity!

We're thrilled to share Burgundy students' art and writing in this issue of the Alexandria Gazette Packet!



BURGUNDY

Af Burgundy, the fine and performing arts curriculum is integrated with core academic studies. To further enhance arts education, we're preparing to build a new Arts & Community Center!

Discover more about this project and our one-of-a-kind learning environment for students age 4 through grade 8 by visiting us!

Call 703.329.6968 to RSVP for our upcoming open house Sunday, January 8, 2-4 p.m. or schedule a personal tour of our 25-acre Alexandria campus just off the Beltway.

Burgundy Farm Country Day School 703.329.6968 · www.burgundyfarm.org www.facebook.com/burgundyfarm

MATTHEW MAURY ELEMENTARY

November 30,2016 Dear Alexandria citizens: My name is Fallyn Howard and I am in second grade I work people to Stop Smaking It is a big waste of time and It is not good at sole for it because of the Smake Do you want to die? I don't the Smake cad block Semens Wings It does not schell good at all I believe people should stop Smaking. For Fallyn Howard From Zoe Z. November 30,2016 Dear people of our somewingty. My name is Zoe Zoger. I am a second gode at all I believe people should should never imake because it is not good at all I believe people should stop Smoking. For Fallyn Howard From Zoe Z.	November 30, 2016 Dear Citizens My name is Hudson Press I am a student at Matthew Maury Elementary School. I think you should not text when driving. It is not safe first of all. This is why you should not text when driving, you might go through a red light to might crash and hurt someone And your phone might break. And you should just wait to anser your phone. Anser the phone when you are out of the car Plese, plese don't text when driving. Sincerely, Hudson Press
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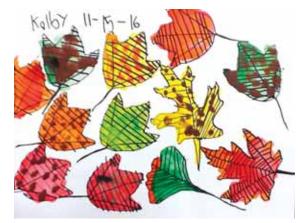
Using persuasive writing, second grade students chose a topic they cared about to write a letter to the community.

Dear	Alexa	Indria	citiz	leks	
MY	ham	e is	Made	line	
100	K. I	think	Dogs	ate	way
Way	better	- than	cats	ate.	Dogs
are	loyal	and	playful.	Cats	
just	Sleep	and pu	irtf.	Dogs	ale
playt	Sleep Pal, nice	and	friet	vly (creature
Here	are	Some	example	s of	why
dons	ate be	tter	than C	ats: 1	Dogs
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cats			1 its		
time	of year	to add	pt a d	on fal	r wa
amily	to Si	ncerelly	Made	the C	ook

AM
November 28 2016
pear people of the
(ommunity,
I think that
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while driving. Sa
~ red Light. Joa
can wait for the
text. If you text on a
drive you can get
emested by the police
Driving you mit not
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is dangoris to text
while Driving.
Sin certy Finn Klaas



Tatum Lawson, 6, 1st grade



Kolby Keating, 6, 1st grade



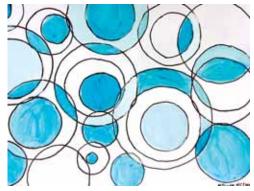


 Julia Diehl, 7, 2nd grade
 Maggie Balderston, 7, 2nd grade

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Aniyah Richardson, 9, 4th grade



Anisa Afrin, 9, 4th grade www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

MATTHEW MAURY ELEMENTARY



Lucy Thomas, 10, 5th grade



Jacob Jordan, 10, 5th grade



Adam Mughloo, 5, Kindergarten



Ryan Palmer, 6, 1st grade



Natasha Yoo, 8, 3rd grade www.ConnectionNewspapers.com



Ziyon Jones, 10, 5th grade



Kayden Smith, 8, 3rd grade



Andrew Dick, 5, Kindergarten



Luke Clark, 8, 3rd grade



Ivey Malleck, 8, 3rd grade



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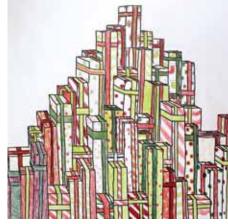
Alexandria Country Day School



Colin Carpenter, 4th grade



Maddie Oehler, 8th grade





Peyton Zarate, 6th grade



Ari Lyubinsky, 3rd grade



Allison Bruehs, 6th grade





Gabby Ros, 7th grade



William Heather, 3rd grade



Zachary Roberts, 2nd grade

All Alone

- "What do you wanna do?" Anna asked, flopping down onto a beanbag. Benjamin and I shrugged. Just then, Grandma walked in. "Go play outside!
- It's a beautiful California day.' We obeyed, going to the backyard. "Let's go on
- the swing," I suggested. "Nah, let's go in the forest instead ... Alone."
- Anna said. "I know the way." "What?" I asked. At the same time, Benjamin said, "I don't think
- that's a good idea. "You heard me. Alone. Unaccompanied. Without

an adult." I got the chills as I thought about being in the forest alone.

The forest was actually just palm trees, but there were fallen logs, a creek, and even occasionally pomegranates, not to mention the strange glow of the sun peeking through the palm leaves.

- I frowned. "But Grandpa can't take us, he's busy." I pointed out.
- "That's okay, I know the way," Anna answered. "I live here, you know,"
- Don't get me wrong, I loved the forest. Climbing, running, jumping, all of it. But without an adult? "Well-" I started to talk but I was cut off by Anna. "Meet you by the forest rock!" she said, as she started running

Benjamin and I glanced at each other. "This isn't a good idea, but let's go," he said with a frown. I grabbed a sweatshirt, then ran outside with

Benjamin on my heels.

Anna was sitting at the forest rock, picking her nails. "What took you so long?" she asked. We started walking along, Anna in front. We

kept on walking, stopping to climb trees and such. We came across a pile of junk. There was a wheelbarrow, tricycle, a lamp, a shovel, and a mop. Grabbing the wheelbarrow, Anna said, "Here, someone hop in!"

Benjamin started to, but I said, "Wait! That might be dangerous!"

Anna rolled her eyes. "This is mine. It's safe." We kept going instead, then a minute later stopped to climb a rock. Once we were all on top, I peeled off my sweatshirt and looked at my watch. It was 4:45. I looked out at the forest.

I couldn't see our house. Oh no. Are we lost? Do any of us know the way back? My thoughts raced. "We need to go back, it's getting late."

"Fine. Let's go." Anna replied. Why was she always so sure of herself? I wondered. Still, I didn't know where to go, so I followed her back down the rock. As she led us through the forest, I started to relax.

Then, she turned left, even though the wheelbarrow was on the right. "The way we came is ..." My voice trailed off, as

Anna didn't seem to hear. She kept on walking, so I followed. She was always sure of herself at the forks, turning right, left, left again, straight at the fork of three paths. I lost track.

Then, at 5:00 exactly according to my watch, she stopped.

I immediately asked, "What happened? Are we home?" Anna was quiet, but Benjamin decided to speak up.

"She led us the wrong way. We're lost," he announced.

We're lost. Only two words, but with a great meaning. We're lost, I thought, as I took it in. Lost. I bit my lip, tasting the blood.

Why had I let Anna drag us into this? We are going to be in so much trouble if our parents find out.

Benjamin started talking. "Don't worry, it's going to be okay." I could smell the lie in his words. He was just comforting himself.

The part of my brain that I only used at school turned on. I started walking in circles, going further out each time. I looked around for something to redirect us.

Meanwhile, Benjamin was arguing with Anna, who crossed her arms and pursed her lips."I'm not

a GPS! Everyone makes mistakes!" I heard her say. Suddenly, I caught a glimpse of something or ange.

It was up high, but I realized it was my sweatshirt. I must have accidentally left it on the rock! I realized.

"I know the way back," I announced. I felt as if a war was over and my sweatshirt was a victory flag.

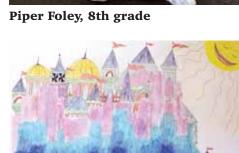
> See All Alone, Page 19 www.ConnectionNewspapers.com



Alexandra Feeley, 6th grade



Ben Moore, 4th grade



Sarah Wood, 6th grade



Woodley Bohannon, 1st grade



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Alexandria Country Day School

All Alone

From Page 18

We all ran toward the rock, then climbed up, sat down, and relaxed. It was already 5:30. "We really need to get going,"I said.

At the fork, we turned right, then paused at the wheelbarrow so we could all catch our breath. Whew! That was exhausting." I panted, as I considered the whole ordeal.

Benjamin and I both immediately looked at Anna, waiting for a smart alec comment, but for once, she was quiet. I felt like I had been struck by lightning. She had

nothing to say?

"Well ... Let's get going." I said. "Wait, Laura," Anna said, grabbing my arm. I nodded at Benjamin to keep on going. I turned back toward to Anna.

"I know it was my fault we got lost. You and Benjamin tried to warn me, but I was too stuck up to listen," she confessed. The anger I had been feel-

ing since we got lost finally melted away. That's okay, I should have been bolder in pointing out the danger. Now we both know to not take dangerous risks. Also, it doesn't hurt to forgive and forget," I smiled.

"Let's go play on the swing," Anna offered, and we walked side by side to join the laughing, playing children already there.

– Laura Duffield, 5th grade

Scooter Falls

Today was the day. Today, I would go down my biggest hill yet. Yes, the biggest hill in the neighborhood.

"Are you sure you want to do this?" My dad asked. I felt a chill run down my spine. I started to sweat. "Lauren are you okay?" I didn't say anything, he asked again. "Lauren are you okay?"

"Uhh ... Oh, yeah, I'm fine," I answered. I felt an

energy run from my arms down to my hands. I squeezed the handle bar.

With my face and chest up tall, I walked out of my old dusty garage. On the inside, I had butterflies in my stomach and my heart was thumping. Thump, thump, THUMP! The only reason that I'm doing this is to show that I'm not a sissy, I thought. "Here ... I ... goooo!" I pushed off, going much faster than I intended. Everything was a blur. All of the sudden, I heard a voice.

"Lauren, look out for that branch!"

I looked behind me to see who had yelled. I don't know how to use the brakes! I panicked. Suddenly, I remembered the time I had played basketball against my dad.

"You'll never be able to make a basket on me. You're too much of a sissy, Lauren," he had taunted. Although it was typical trash-talk, it stuck with me.

Dad's wrong, I thought. I'm not a sissy. I can be brave. Then I remember I'm still on my razor.

Almost like it happened in slow motion, I slammed my foot down on to the concrete driveway. I flew off my razor. For a brief moment, I felt like I was a little bird learning how to fly. Then, I hit the ground with a loud THUNK.

I could not breathe. I was crying like a baby without a blanket. My tears rolled down the street. Tears of joy and hurt. I started to laugh. I'm not a sissy! I thought, as I lay on the ground. I did it! My dad rushed to my side and picked me up. I

felt like I was being wrapped up in a blanket. He walked me up the street. I saw my mom run outside, "What happened sweetie? "She yelled. Still crying, I managed to answer.

"I was going too fast on my razor and fell." That night my dad came up to my bedroom to kiss me goodnight.

"Do you still think I'm a sissy?" I asked.

"Of course not," he said immediately. "You are the bravest kid I know. Just try not to hurt yourself next time!"

— Lauren Applegate, 5th grade

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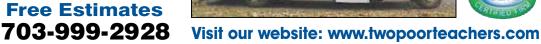
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