

Centreville ♦ Little Rocky Run

CENTRE VIEW

DECEMBER 28, 2016 - JANUARY 3, 2017

25 CENTS NEWSSTAND PRICE

Jason (Mingyun) Kang,
12, 6th grade, Colin
Powell Elementary.



Children's Centre View 2016



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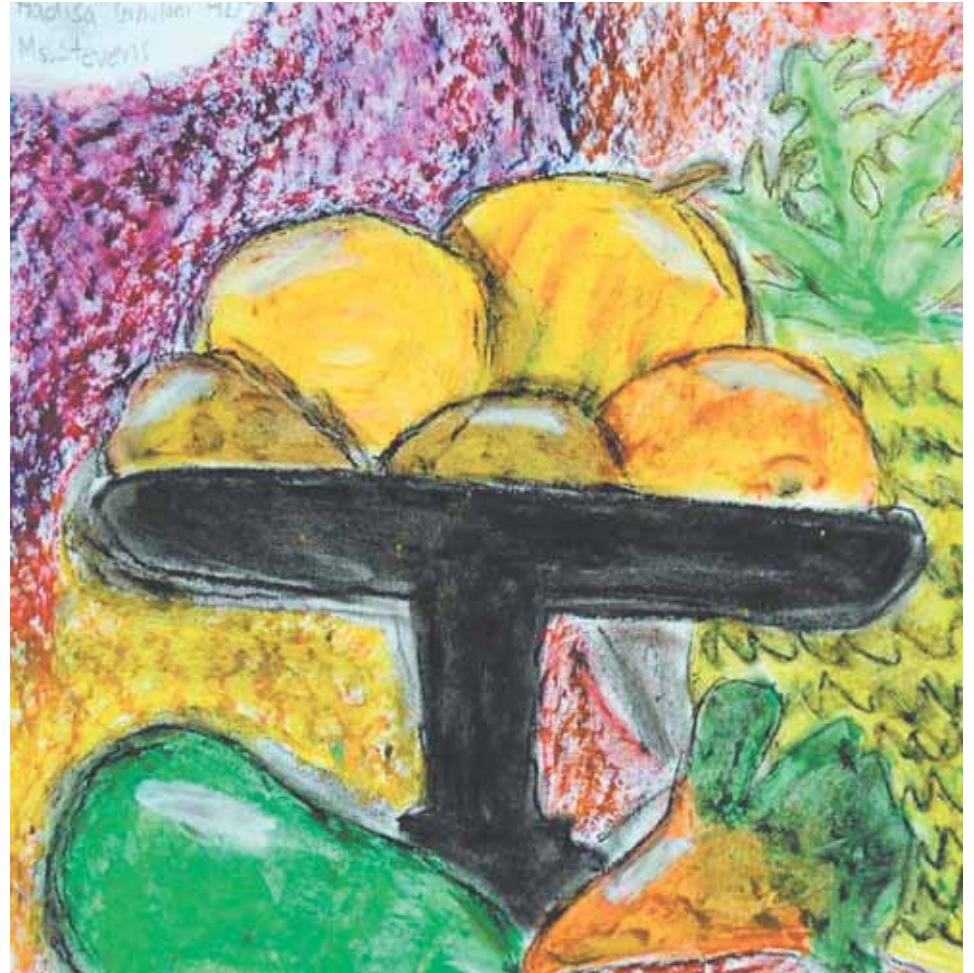
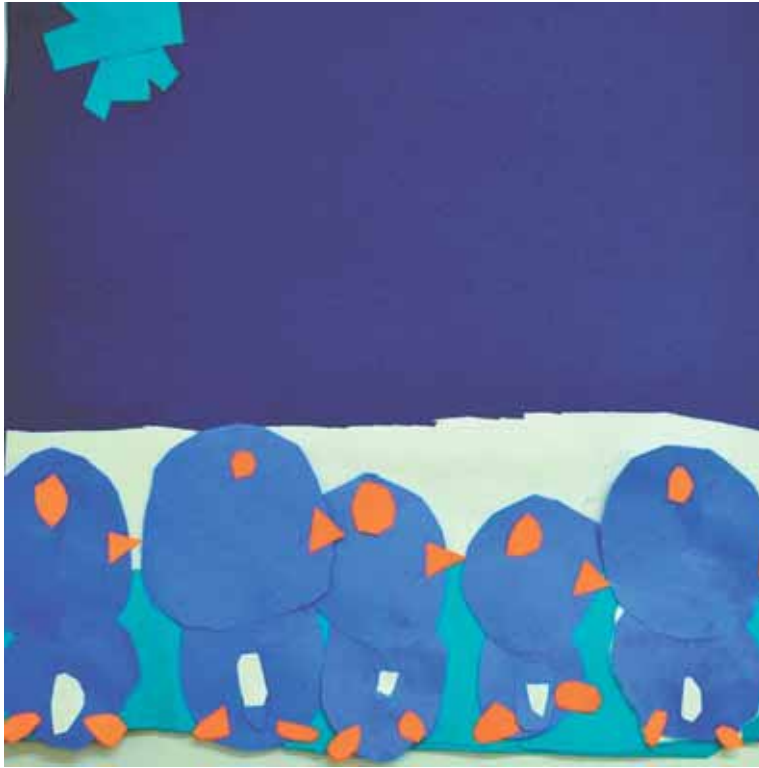
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Freddy Sandoval Lemus, 1st grade



Hadisa Ghulan, 4th grade



Erfan Sayed Mahmood, kindergarten



Hailey Kim, 6th grade



Jacob Lee, 3rd grade



Oliva Pak, 2nd grade



JoeJoe Vargo, Multi-Age



Kevin Mugari, kindergarten



Joanna Chen, 2nd grade

Welcome

Dear Readers:

This week, the Centre View 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 Centre View. 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 Centre View 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 centreview@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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DEER PARK ELEMENTARY



Adriana Martinez, grade 2



Ja'riyah Murray, grade 2



Carlos Arrow, grade 4



Darin Cardak, grade 4



Vivien Habermeyer, grade 6



Anisa Nur, grade 6



Rehmat Adnan, grade 6



Skylar Cowell, grade 6



Melina Kallis, grade 4

DEER PARK ELEMENTARY



Neva Lietzan



Ms. Schubert's grade 3 — Cultural Masks



Alexa Bergesen



Kiefer Swistak



Cassidy Heuser

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We “help the child to act, will and think for himself.”

— Maria Montessori

COLIN POWELL ELEMENTARY

What Makes A Good Friend?

“Friends are like stars. You don’t always see them, but you know they’re always there for you.” — Unknown

Good friends are **F**aithful
Good friends are **R**espectful
Good friends are **I**ntuitive
Good friends are **E**ager
Good friends are **N**ice
Good friends are **D**evoted
Good friends will be cordial to you and lift your spirits when they are down and take them off the ground them. Good friends will stick to you like peanut butter and jelly.
Are you a good friend?
— HANNAH KIM, 11, 6TH GRADE

Storm

A loud booming crackle, soon followed by a flash of bright light. Rain chases thick drops to the damp dripping ground. The wind howls as I ask “will it ever stop?” I glance outside and dark grey clouds are swallowing the sky. Rain starts to slow, it’s ending.
— ELENA ABRIL, 11, 6TH GRADE

Darkness ...

Darkness is a thing that can bottle up emotions and cause one thing ... fear
Darkness can cure one thing, fear
Darkness is like a potion that wipes out your memories
Darkness is as fast as an energetic deer
Darkness waits for one thing to capture your feelings
But darkness is a bad thing that happens to you
Darkness can take over all your good in you
Darkness is a tiny thing that gets bigger and starts to brew
One thing that can defeat darkness is the good inside you
Good always defeats evil and the good inside of you can destroy darkness
You must embrace the feeling when you are good
If you defeat darkness, then it will be starkness
Darkness is bad but you can be the hero
Darkness is a unique thing that won’t come back any more times, zero
— SACHITH MANKALA, 11, 6TH GRADE

Hot Chocolate

I adore hot chocolate! It is my favorite drink in the winter! It is so easy to make! I like the marshmallows in the hot chocolate. When I taste the marshmallows it is soft as a bundle of clouds. It tastes so good as the marshmallows dissolves into the hot chocolate making it sweeter. I take a sip



Debbie Kim, 11, 6th grade



Alexis Blake, 12, 6th grade — Drawing on Tree

and it feels like the scorching sun! I drink the hot chocolate when I come back from playing in the snow. Outside felt like a freezer. My whole family drinks the HOT chocolate so we can get some energy. Hot chocolate is my favorite drink!
— RIA RAMPURIA, 11, 6TH GRADE

Christmas Morning

It is 9 a.m., my eyes open abruptly. The day is here! The day is here! It’s Christmas! I get out of my bed anxiously to wake up my family. I wake up my sisters by jumping on their beds. We then go on to wake up my parents. We all go rushing downstairs to the Christmas tree where all our presents are eagerly waiting to be opened. All of the gifts Santa brought for us looks incredibly AMAZING just by their gift wrappings! The gifts are screaming “Open me! Open me!” I was pleased by all the amazing gifts I got.
— SIA RAMPURIA, 11, 6TH GRADE

When I went swimming ...

The water was screaming at me. My body was shaking. As soon as I touched the water I was frightened ! Kind of expected for a 6 year old. The Swimming teacher yanked my hand and I fell in. Clunk, Splash, Splash. After a little while I got used to the water but when we went a little deeper and did freestyle. When it was my turn my teeth were chattering. My mom told me I could do it, so I tried. As soon as I pushed off the ledge I started splashing like a hippo. When I stopped I found myself drowning. My heart was racing as fast as a race car until the teacher came to help me. After that I am always careful. That is a moment I will never forget !!!
— SALONI BODAS, 11, 6TH GRADE

Marshalls Incident

Smack! “Ow! What’s your problem? Geez.” The angry-looking yet, furious man yelled. “Sorry” muttered my sister, Nadia. I stood there, laughing as hard as a hyena. Gradually, my laughter turns into giggles, until everything is quiet, but the screeching of the carts. So I decided to replay the event in my mind. It all started in Marshalls, when

my mother was shopping for clothes. Nadia and I were extremely bored. “Hey Wacuka, can you do this?” Nadia smirked, trying to act cool. She hooked herself onto a racket, and kicked herself straight into a man passing by.
— WACUKA NGATA, 11, 6TH GRADE

Nature

When I’m out in nature, I use my 5 senses to describe nature. I feel the sun’s warm, heat as if the sun is giving me a nice and cozy hug. And the rough, rumble tree bark against my hand. I can taste the sweet honey like flowers melt inside my mouth and the rich earthy soil making my taste buds tickle. I see the red juicy berries bunched up into groups and the colorful leaves that is ringing in my head that autumn is here. I hope these things will never change as this world is changing every second.
— HANNAH KIM, 11, 6TH GRADE

Behind the Door

Behind the door, behind the door, what’s behind the door?
Will it just be tile floor? What’s behind the door?
The ice cream man? Some ladybugs? A closet full of magic rugs?
I have to know! I’ve got to learn! I guess
I’ll give that knob a turn ... WOW! Look what’s behind the door!!!
— ELIZABETH BERNAT, 10, 5TH GRADE

My Book

I read my book all through the day I read it through the night it’s thrilling and adventurous but can give you a fright! I tried my best to close it up and set in on the floor, but when the pages made a close I had to read some more. When finally I’d finished reading every line of text I closed my book and hopped right up in search to find the next.
— ELIZABETH BERNAT, 10, 5TH GRADE

SEE COLIN POWELL, PAGE 7

Colors of the Rainbow

Red
Red is the color of a red delicious apple.
The shiny red surface glistens in the sunlight and lets out an illuminating glow.
Orange
Orange is the color of an August sunset.
The sun lets out a radiant orange flare that lights up the whole wide world.
Yellow
Yellow is the color of a buttercup flower that smells like a bottle of perfume.
Green
Green is the color of a meadow.
A meadow where whimsical creatures come and play and where you can sniff the flowers all day.
Blue
Blue is the color the splashing waves that tickle my toes as I read.
Indigo
Indigo is the color of a shiny smooth seashell that gleams and glows in the sunset.

— KATIE KIM, 11, 6TH GRADE

The Tortoise And the Hare

In the Tortoise and the Hare,
The Tortoise won.
The lazy hare,
Took a great long nap
But the tortoise still kept going
He never stopped,
And never gave up,
Until he crossed that finish line
But what if the hare never took that stubborn old nap?
The he would have won,
Fair and Square
There would be no moral of the story,
Instead, a happy ending
For those who have an evil heart
And wanted the cunning hare to win
But I guess the author
Wanted to teach a lesson,
To never give up,
Until the end.

— ELISA AHN, 11, 6TH GRADE

Color in life

Color, the vivacious elegance,
Shimmer, glitter a twinkling beam,
Saturated, it’s a delightful glow,
Rainbows are magnificent dashes,
Hue pops like soda,
It’s as bright as the sun and the stars combined,
Color is a charming grace it pleases everything from your clothes to nature!
Never fading it is like light,
Luminous it is so bright,
Dullness will never pass your eyes,
They’re no words to describe colors sight,
Color is the essential of life without it joy wouldn’t come easily.

— MELINA NEJADIAN, 11, 6TH GRADE



Ethan Clayman, 11, 6th grade — Dark Knight



Anika Sharma, 11, 6th grade



Chelsea Koo, 5, kindergarten — Daddy and Mommy

COLIN POWELL ELEMENTARY

FROM PAGE 6

Kings Dominion

“Warning: This ride may roll backwards ... Are you sure you want to do this?” I exclaimed!

“Yes!” Cried loudly my younger sister Eden.

We were buckled in our seats waiting for the operator to start the ride. Clickety- clack!

“Uh oh.” I said dreadfully. “This is it. What’s th-” whoosh! “Ahhhhhhh!” Eden and I were shrieking. Boom! “What was that noise? Ow. Oh, it’s the fire.” Up we went rolling around and I felt sick. Finally, we went back into the volcano ... chhhhhhh ... shhhhhh ...

“Yes, we did it!” Screamed Eden. “We did it.” I realized to myself.

— DANIEL ENWIYA, 11, 6TH GRADE

Dreams

(A free verse poem)

I was walking along the ocean when I came upon a prodigious hot ball of gas. It was setting down over the ocean.

I was walking upon the amber tide over the rainbow of colors. The moon came up with a thousand mini suns in the sky. It was a place called tomorrow, because tomorrow’s going to bring in hope.

I continued walking along the shore, when I stepped on a rough, wooden, log. A crab succeeded in biting me, the waves were trying to capture me! But I never lost hope, for tomorrow’s going to bring in hope.

I was in light, bright, spaces, never alone in the dark. I always knew where to go, unlike my real life at all. Dreams take you to wondrous places

I was running across the thick, green, forest, bright with sunlight. The trees were talking to me, tripping me up to my path. They said lose hope but I never did, for tomorrow’s going to bring in hope.

My dream told me that this dream is turning to reality, so you better remember this dream, for it’s going to help in your life. Remember, tomorrow’s going to bring in hope!

— PARVI CHADHA, 10, 6TH GRADE

Be Thankful

If there was nothing to be thankful for, what would you look forward to? There are so many things to be thankful for in the world.

I’m thankful for friends who are like shooting stars whom I can always look up to, teachers who give me knowledge like the stretching branches of trees. I’m also thankful for families who are like a pack of wolves to me. Including, my one and only sister who is like my milk for my cookies.

Be thankful when you’re laughing, for the happiness that you have. Be thankful when you wake up, for the new fresh day that you received.

But, just remember one thing

There is always something to be thankful for.

— SARAH KANG, 12, 6TH GRADE

What I Want To Be When I Grow Up

When I grow up, I want to be a teacher for deaf children. Many things inspired me to make that decision, like books and articles. As soon as I had decided upon my future, I knew it would take loads hard work to make it real. For one thing, I had to learn sign language. I checked out a book the size of my pillow from my school’s library, and had set to work right away. I brought it everywhere. I even brought it to lunch, where I shared my knowledge of sign language with my friends. By the end of the first day, I had learned the alphabet. My sisters wanted to learn too, so I taught them. We sent hand messages to each other at the diner table, made sign language shadow puppets on the wall, and wrote secret letters to each other, replacing the ABC’s with hand signals. But soon, It was time to take the book back, however I intend on learning more sign language in my later schooling years.

— KATHERINE BERNAT, 12, 6TH GRADE

The Mannequin Challenge

Have you ever heard the song “Black Beatles” by Rae Sremmurd? Well, this song is blowing up because of the Mannequin Challenge! Every time this song plays, people freeze, and act as if they’re a mannequin! This new trend is blowing up on all types of social media! Most of the time when someone is seen doing the Mannequin challenge, it is usually recorded. So, if you ever hear the song “Black Beatles”, freeze in action, and act like a mannequin!

— LILLIE AYOUB, 11, 6TH GRADE

Snow

As the snow falls down I see the elegant snowflakes, it comes glistening down freezing the lakes. I burst into joy as I see the white beauty, It puts a smile on my face as I smell it truly.

The brightness, the freshness,
It’s all a treasure just so precious!
As I close my eyes,
I hear the snow twirl and glide.

As I sit down near the Christmas tree,
All I can think about is how, I will have a blast when I ski.
I look at the ornaments that are as shiny as gold,
Then I see the snowflakes, that make my tree look so bold!

Winter is here,
It’s full of holiday cheer!
The snow makes it an adventure.
trapping us inside, and keeping us together.

— RIYA SHAH, 11, 6TH GRADE

Snowflakes

Snowflakes sparkle and glisten
Why at school I try to listen
Snowflakes fall like loops
When I fall it’s as loud as a chicken coop
Snowflakes in winter are a must
They are as crumbled as pie crust
Cuddle with something cozy yet soft
As I snuggle on my loft
Snowflakes silently fall
Piling up the snow very tall
Every snowflake is special like you and me
Just go outside and you will see

— LEILA LAJDEL

That Man

“Yay, we are going to the homeless shelter!” My sister said screaming into my ears.

Ugh, I don’t wanna go. I shoved my headphones into my ear. When we arrive my sister goes bashing out the car, “Whoop, we’re here!”

I roll my eyes, gosh. For most of the day I stand outside giving out snacks and drinks to strangers. I really want to go back home and snuggle in bed. I was about to go for a break but this old man stops me in my tracks. “Uh, hello, how can I help you? Snacks are over in that area.” I said pointing to a table in the distance.

He laughed. “Why do you seem down? Turn that frown upside down.” he said smiling.

I was so surprised! He didn’t have any teeth! I chatted with this interesting man man for awhile. He told me the world needs more positive people. I smiled and before I could’ve said thanks to him he left. How could a man like that be homeless? I wonder what happened to him. Till this day I love going to the homeless shelter but I’ve never seen that man since then. I always think of him.

— KIMANH TRAN, 11, 6TH GRADE

Just a Dream

You know when you have a dream and it’s so beautiful you don’t want to wake up? That’s what happened to me. Okay, so just imagine a beautiful periwinkle sky and a huge crystal blue pond with fish swishing. A crisp smell is in the air of sweet apples. There are outstanding purple swaying trees. Monarch butterflies flapping their wings and humming birds searching and searching sweet juicy nectar. Then after searching for hours they find a wonderland of violet and magenta colored orchids. After that there is a beautiful waterfall covered with dandelions. My dad woke me up. I still wonder what I didn’t see in my dream. I will try to dream of that beautiful meadow I was in again.

— TALIA NEOFOTIS, 6TH GRADE

Friendship Bracelets

No matter what, true friends are always there. They’re the ones to pick you up when you’re feeling down, to be your rock when you feel that you’ll explode. They’re the ones to keep you together. Like the threads of a string. Without the threads, the string would unravel. There would be nothing. That’s why friends exist. The more friends you get, the better. The threads will make more strings which will make a stronger bond. A bracelet, if you will. A bangle of fun. A circle of trust. A friendship bracelet. And just like friends, if you take care of it, it will last for the longest eternity.

— GRACE DE LA CRUZ, 12, 6TH GRADE

WESTFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

They Will Not Touch You

The night is cold and the moon is dark,
when silence is broken by one loud bark.

A little boy named Clyde
lies in bed, with eyes open wide.

The boy tries to count sheep,
But cannot sleep.

He imagines monsters behind the walls,
And creeping through the halls.

Looking for their next lunch,
They would eat him in one crunch.

Clyde gasps and almost cries:
In the corner, he sees two pairs of eyes!

Quick! He grabs his blanket and covers his head,
To hide from the eyes that glow dark red.

“Where is he?” the monsters wonder.
They do not see the blanket he is under.

Uh oh. In his throat, he feels an itch.
It does not go away, not one smitch.

Clyde trembles and his heart beats fast
How long is this going to last?

Then he coughs. Oh no!
The hungry monsters all know!

Clyde whimpers and soon hears,
From beside his bed, the sound he most fears:

A squeak, and then a creak.
No, Clyde does not dare peek

The monsters have all come.
They see him and say, “Yum!”

Something touches his knee
Clyde screams: “Don’t eat me!”

A voice says “But little boys taste good!”
Clyde thinks to run. If only he could.

He needs to escape some way.
Too late! His blanket is pulled away.

Two hands grab him and pull him close
Clyde cries but then smells the scent of a rose.

The monster is not eating him, it seems.
Instead it says, “You’re having bad dreams”

Clyde opens his eyes and sees, not claws or fangs,
But his mother’s glowing face. Over him, her long
hair hangs.

“Clyde, it’s okay. I’m here.”
She says softly as she holds him near.

He hugs her tight and again begins to cry.
She wipes his wet cheeks and the tears dry.

“It’s alright. I have felt what you now feel.
The monsters seem to be so real.”

Clyde nodded and looked around.
But there was no trace of them, no sight or sound.

“I learned to not fear them and you will too.
Besides, I will protect you: they will not touch
you”

In her arms and in the light,
Clyde knows the monsters are now full of fright.
— BETSY OSINAGA, 12TH GRADE

Something Sweet

He said meet me at two
As I put on my shoes;
To run out the door
I could have sworn
That as I left
I felt the breath
Of something sweet coming my way.

The creek was low
As I should have known
He would be waiting for me,
Under our sacred tree

Greeting me with a smile,
We always had a while
And I knew of something sweet coming my way.

We walked to the shores
Shrouded by thorns
Covered in dust
We knew we must.
Food we ate
Under the sun we baked
And something sweet was coming our way.

Finally at last
As we laughed
We splashed and played
And were merry all day
Not a care in the world
Happy at our core
Something sweet was near our way

Drying off in summer heat
Not too tired to be beat
Jumping over the trees
Not bothered by friendly bees
A tree a little too tall
And then a spectacular fall
And something sweet was in our way

Days like these
Beneath the trees
When all was fun
Under the sun
To him I'll commit
And I shall never forget
Of how something sweet had come our way.
— LAUREN PETERS, 12TH GRADE

The Bell Breaks The Silence

I see them running.
Up and down the playground stairs.
I sit by the whistling trees.
A notebook by my side,
Pencils and pens scattered along the rocky soil.
The entertainment from the constant, overrated
drama.
My curiosity takes a hold of me.
The small, black ants on my light up sneakers.
The dead, colorful leaves from the scattered
branches,
fall onto my lap.
The cold wind blows on my doodle covered note-
book pages.
My imagination comes alive on my pages where
my art is expressed.
It's peaceful,
Until the loud ringing of a bell breaks the sweet,
tranquil silence.
My once quiet mind is now dragged back into the
stressful equations of math,
And the loud chatter of people who don't pay
attention.
— RYAN RODRIGUEZ, 10TH GRADE

My Childhood

My childhood was a place full of thousands of
ideas that I could call my own. (They felt bright and
shiny and new, as if the world was hearing them for
the first time.

My childhood was a place where being vulnerable
was normal,
when you're young and defenseless, all you can
really do is trust and hope
that people will not hurt you.

My childhood was a place where I was not afraid
to cry in public over (the teddy bear at home goods
that my mom would not let me get
because it was ripped but I swore I could fix it but
she wouldn't listen.

My childhood was a place that I grew tired of at
age 12.
So, I stepped out the door and hid away the key
deep down in my pocket.

My childhood was a place I didn't miss until I was
13
when a man with brown eyes cut a hole in my
pocket.
— RYLEE RUSSLER, 10TH GRADE

Pseudo Vitae or The Gray Man with Gold in His Eyes

The bus shook violently on the rough pavement.
Light shattered off the snow and ice and cast the
world in a dusty, gray film. A weak column of light
fell upon a tall, heavyset man seated in the back
corner of the shuttle. His face was wide with large,
protruding eyes and his skin sagged on its boney
frame to the point that it seemed ready slip off.
Deep, dark bags sat under his glassy eyes. His irises
were grey like faded paper. They enclosed in them
pupils that could not see but a few inches forward.
He carried with him a walking stick and a large,
brown briefcase. In the case, there was a pair of
gloves, gardening shears, and a book: "Alien Plants
and Their Evolution." In the distance, he heard the
rasping of an old dog. His eyes turned to the win-
dow in an attempt to see but he could only detect
a dull sheet of gray and the dust falling in front of
his face. In a moment, the mist melted away and a
golden tint seemed to brush the air. In its glow, a
boy and his dog appeared laughing and barking as
they played. The man watched them for a brief
moment as the light played off their forms. Sud-

denly, the boy stopped playing and stared back at
the man. There was a crack like lightning as the bus
hit a pothole and the bus trembled. A voice over the
speaker declared this was his stop. The man stood
awkwardly and shuffled off the bus. He dismounted
and the beast went sputtering and shaking off into
the cold mist.

The man approached his final destination; a trail
head on a fading green mountainside. He stood
alone at the worn wooden post and stared down the
winding path ahead. He knew he would find what
he was looking for in these woods. As he was star-
ing, the trees that were still as stone only a moment
ago, trembled as if some being had blown breath
into them. A yellow light split the breaks in the for-
est like golden daggers pointing him down the road.
He followed their direction as quickly as he could.
His bones ached with every step but he staggered
onwards. He could feel his life being sucked out of
his body and into the unknown. As he struggled
forward, he saw a young man with broad shoulders;
a wide, square jaw; and eager, bulging eyes at his

side. The young man hacked through the under-
brush as sweat poured down his face in little golden
beads. The old man stared at this distorted mirror
as he followed longingly. They moved at the same
pace although the old man looked as if he should
be miles behind.

At last they came to an open meadow with yel-
low flowers shifting back and forth in the wind. The
whole field was ablaze in their light but it was not
a joyful scene. There was a sickness to the flowers,
a slight green tinge that tainted their beauty. The
man almost collapsed in despair. He looked down
at his grey and faded hands. He could almost see
the skin blowing off them like dust. He sank into the
ground without the intention to rise again. He
stared at the flowers that now seemed only to taunt
him. Then, a deep yellow rod of light cast its light
in the center of the field. The man tried to stand but
found that he could not so he set forth on his hands
and knees and crawled towards the light. Rocks and
twigs tore his clothes and scrapped his body but he
persisted. When at last he reached the center, he

saw a single, golden flower. Its three petals opened
gracefully to the sky. It seemed to exude life. Nu-
merous thorns were arranged on its thick stem. The
old man reached into his bag, pulled out his glove
and shears and cut the flower from its base. He
lifted it towards the sky and admired it. In its glow
he saw himself as a young man again. Tears began
to streak down his face as he envisioned the life he
would have once again. He crushed the flower in his
hands and a golden syrup flowed down his arms.
His cracked lips were on the cusp of receiving the
treacle when a dark cloud formed and blocked out
the sun. A low rumble like a an angry dog shook the
trees. A deafening boom engulfed the meadow as
a white bolt struck the man where he held the plant
and shot down through his body to the earth. The
bolt took his soul with it and the man fell to the
ground. The flower rolled out of his hand and
rerooted itself to the ground. It stood itself up as its
petals turned a sickly yellow-green.

— RACHEL HALL



Jake
Fugate



Alexandra
Hicks



Kieren VanPelt



Kristen
Blersch

Courage

I walked into the building confidently and faced
the other people at the mall. I was told not to leave
my house after what the terrorist did in France.
Everyone in my family told me not to go to the mall.
In France, Muslims were being hurt and the girls’
hijabs were being ripped off. After World War 3,
Muslims are at the brink of extinction. I was walk-
ing into a scarf shop to buy a new hijab when I was
hit in the head harshly with a metal rod. Well that’s
what my mother said.

I awoke to find myself covered in bandages and
looked into a mirror. I found myself with the word
terrorist written across my forehead and one of my
eyes was turning purple. My ears rang and my head
throbbled. I looked at myself and wet my hand in the
sink. I slowly pulled my hand up to my head, wip-
ing off the word from my forehead. I returned to the
bed and sat down. I kept sitting and thinking of
what I did when the doctor came in. He hurriedly
checked if I was ok. I asked him what was wrong.
He said I was in a coma for 8 years. I looked at him
in shock and told him to continue. The doctor said
I changed the whole world from their thoughts of
Muslims and we now have a new understanding of

— AYAH MIRZA, 9TH GRADE



Muslim people. He called my mom and the rest of
my family. We exchanged hugs and cried for a long
time. My mother looked a lot older than before; she
had wrinkles in new places around her face and bits
of her white hair popping out of the hijab. I was
happy that my courage brought peace to the world
of Muslims.

Civil Rights Explored in Westfield's Art Gallery

The artwork in the Westfield Art Gallery focuses on civil rights, inspired by the summer reading book "March" by U.S. Rep. John Lewis.



Civil Rights itself has different meanings depending on who you ask, and that diversity is shown in Westfield High School's art gallery. Given the theme "Civil Rights," Westfield High School artists delivered stirring depictions of the issues associated with Civil Rights: today, tomorrow, and yesterday. The artists took the topic and ran with it, providing pieces that made statements about everything from religion, women's rights, social issues, the civil rights movement led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and beyond.

The variation in interpretation, intensity of the topic, and strength of the artists' passions on the subjects combined to present the audience with pleasantly jarring pieces. Though different stylistically, they all firmly asserted ideas concerning the artists' version of civil rights. Commonly addressed were current threats to or changes that need to be made in order to ensure these rights. The artists each had a message to get across to their peers. Whether it was about the school's dress code, Black Lives Matter, or religious freedom, the emotions behind the art are astonishingly deep and tangible. Clearly, the students are well informed, both about current events (detailed in the art referencing today's social issues: racism, homelessness, income inequality, etc.) and past (referenced most often in photographs depicting the racism of America in the 1950s or 1960s).

Sundry textures and mediums make the gallery available to all art fanatics, even the pre-fanatic. Photographs, crafted beautifully in black and white, make strong declarations about memories and race. One other photo makes use of color to draw emphasis to the central figure, a young woman making a statement about body image.

Even amongst a common medium, there is incredibly strong variety in interpretation and artistic choice. Newspaper was used frequently in these projects, but the voice of the artists kept each one singular. Some projects had newspapers as backdrops for their central idea. Others used cut-out or drawn-on words and images to make their arguments. An example is a project that had flowers arranged in a peace symbol over top of a news and black paper backdrop, with three people holding hands at the bottom (one woman, with men on either side of her). The rights this artist wants to support are gay rights.

One image that I found especially powerful was "Dress Code," a piece of artwork that was simple, yet boldly called out the school system (within the walls of a school, mind you) on its unfair dress code policy. Set atop a black backdrop, a single pink camisole is laid, crumpled. Strewn across the image are words: appalling, outrageous, desperate, inappropriate, shameful, disgusting. In addition, two phrases are shown: "she's asking for it ..." and "put a jacket on ..." This is not the only art that addresses gender inequalities, but it is the one I believe did it most powerfully. Not only did the artist make his/her topic easy to understand, but he/she chose words and phrases that make you connect with his/her intentions and sympathize with young women within the school system.

The most heart-wrenching part of this type of artwork is that so many people relate to it. We can all see the pain behind the art and that is what we feel a connection to. Our hearts reach out to the hurt of the artwork and we discover that we are not alone in our emotions.

At the base of it, everyone has a stake in civil rights, which is why this topic is so perfect and invited such versatile products. Everyone has had the feeling of discrimination, suffered due to flaws in our current society, though some admittedly more than others. These flaws and feelings find their home in the gallery, a neighborhood of anguished representations of civil rights. This is why a trip to the art gallery, a small promise of time, is so very necessary.

Not all galleries can claim to be current, reflective, and relevant all at once. Moreover, not all art has a meaning that can be found with ease, especially not by the casual aesthete. The intentions behind these pieces are clear, and the emotions they evoke are reflective of what we all feel we have experienced or have seen someone else experience: inequality. The "brush strokes" of these artists paint a picture familiar to us all, bring form to the feelings we all keep inside of ourselves, mostly unspoken but forever felt. To have your emotions captured beautifully within the heart and art of another is an incredible experience, one I recommend to readers everywhere.

Whatever your preference, whatever your opinion, the group of work put together by the artists of Westfield High School captures a certain desperation prevalent in the civil rights movements of any generation. Bring your parents, grandparents, younger or older siblings, and yourself down to the Westfield High School Art Gallery to experience the rich, gritty impressions of civil rights.

— HAYLEY SHANKLE, 10TH GRADE



From Westfield's Art Gallery

"Can you please go in there for me?" I ask.

"Sure what are besties for?" says Mary. She goes into a shop, and brings handfuls of candy. Mary and I giggle and start to eat the candies. But I couldn't stop having the uneasiness in my stomach.

"Mary, I hope I'm actually free," I say siddily.

"Don't worry you will be soon," says Mary.

I smile. Even though we are best friends, I can't help thinking we're so different. We go to different schools, different restaurants, and even different public restrooms. The only reason is because she is white and I'm not. I arrive home, and see my mom busy cooking food. My mom works as a helper in a white person's house. She doesn't earn much money. My mom is always sorry for not doing more for me.

Next morning, I head for school. Mary doesn't go to the same school as me, and I always think that is the saddest thing. My school doesn't have many classrooms. We have to squeeze in. I can't even properly walk in there. Today, the kids are excited

about some news. They say that some kids in our school will actually riot by riding in the front section of the bus. This is a very risky thing as they could get arrested. But I couldn't help but feel a thrilled by the news.

Next day, the kids rioting in the bus didn't come to school. Kids say they got arrested. They are only 13 years old.

"Hey Mary," I say.

"Hey ... um, I have to tell you something," Mary says.

"Yeah, what is it?"

"My mom told me not to hang out with you anymore."

This words from Mary hurt me so much. "What do you mean? But why?" I ask.

"She says we're different. And she even says that I could fall into wrong path when I'm with you,"

"OK," I murmur. I walk toward the playground, feeling the loss she just had. There are white kids in the playground, pointing at me. I just head home.

I felt angry at this society. The society that parts the people into two. And treating them differently. I wanted to change it.

Next morning, I head to school with full preparation. I gathered some people. We are going to have a riot in a restaurant. At the end of the school, we go into a white only restaurant, sitting there, ordering food. The people in this restaurant look startled. The waiter isn't even coming, instead a manager comes and tells us to get out. We refuse.

"We have the authority to be treated like a real human sir," I say.

The next day, we come to the same restaurant and start our riot. There are less customers in the restaurant. The restaurant people called the police, and they take us away. After we're released, our story spreads. People are angry that 13 year olds got dragged out by police for going into a restaurant. After this, many people started the riot of going into the white only restaurant. This would bring some differences I thought. I'm always waiting for freedom.

— AMY HONG, 9TH GRADE



The Westfield Art Gallery features a wide array of intriguing artwork that represents the creative nature of all of its students. However, the gallery lacks diversity of technique and message as is common among most student galleries. Walking around it was apparent that the artwork featured was the result of a handful of assignments with one overarching theme. This is not a negative point necessarily; it makes sense to have a common thread connecting the ideas presented in the same gallery but those ideas lacked a sense of organic origins. Again, this was neither surprising or disappointing in a student gallery and it is not say the pieces did not show impressive technique, original thought, or sincerity. However, very few students

broke the mold of the expectations resting on their work. What I find most fascinating about studying a piece of art is the inspiration that began it. It is difficult to be given an assignment and then search for inspiration within those confines. What I like to see in response to strict guidelines is rule breaking and different interpretations of the prompt. This is why I found the piece featured above so invigorating. It took the given topic, engaged multiple techniques to create a work of art that speaks clearly and boldly without the aid, or hindrance actually, of cliches, and separated itself from the other pieces beside it. To me it was by far the most unique and thought provoking art piece featured in the gallery.

The piece is composed of a photograph printed on a distressed cloth bound in an embroidery hoop. It is abstract in nature and relatively open to different interpretations. I see it as a statement on gender equality and the struggle of woman in a society that does not value the individuality of the human spirit. The photo depicts a person covering their face with their hands in apparent shame or hopelessness. The embroidery hoop is locked around the photo, trapping the individual in their moment of distress. I was initially drawn to the piece by its texture and emotional appeal. It is framed on every side by pieces of similar substance and depth to one another. The surrounding works are all featured on the same allotted rectangles of paper, and while they do demonstrate careful thought and good technique, they do not have a strong voice as the piece above does. This piece of artwork displays a heightened level of emotional maturity and cultural awareness of the artist who created it. The artist was able to take their idea and realize it in a way that it could be appreciated by others in many different ways. Whether it is coincidence of matching tastes and opinions or a true discovery of artistic potential, I found this piece incredibly moving.

I am proud of all the artists at Westfield and the support our programs offer to all creative individuals and their endeavors, and I hope I don't come off as arrogant or conceited when I chose to highlight a particular piece over others. Art is a tricky thing to judge and my interpretation and personal influence should not be taken with absolute importance. Perhaps my opinion was influenced by my perceptions that art should be attractive to the eye. There were many pieces that I overlooked because they did not appeal to my superficial tastes or my expectations of what art should look like. I hope that any artist who reads this article challenges my views and continues to strengthen their voice in the process. I too am in the process of creating my own voice as a fellow creator so I understand the difficulty of forming unique ideas and the sting of critique. However, good art and good writing are forged by the same hand of constructive criticism so it is of value to every artist, of any medium, to accept criticism as part of the creative process.

This exhibit and art as a whole should be a celebration of our differences, including our artistic or ideological differences. My point of disappointment with the artistic ideas presented in the gallery was not actually with any specific piece or number of pieces disagreeing with my tastes too much. It was with the lack of differences presented between pieces. I did not feel many pieces of artwork reached out to me to change my views or opinions. I think anyone else who values creative endeavors will share my belief that one of the most important roles an artist fulfills is being a catalyst for ideological change. This is a message to all people who wish to create something meaningful: no restriction is absolute, no topic is so finite, no rubric holds enough weight that you should put your unique perspective aside to fit within it. Art starts from a point of original perspective and personal meaning and the finished product should reflect that.

— RACHEL HALL, 12TH GRADE

MONTESSORI OF CHANTILLY



Nate Brandwine, 5



Rubiana Perez, 5



Brynn Albert, 5



Moritz Kohn, 5



Sheherbano Makhdum, 5



Tej Vangala, 6



Austin Pollock, 6



Jacob Gonzalez, 5

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Limerick:

There once was a frog called Wug
He lived under the castle's rug
But then came a lizard
And a blue robed wizard
Who ate the frog in a coffee mug

Haiku:

I'm writing haikus
They are very hard to write
So I won't write them

Cinquain:

Home
Friendly, warm
Laughing, playing, working
Smell of love in the air
Home

Free Verse:

The crispy crunch brings sweet,
watery juice down my cheek
And it looks so tasty, red and sleek
You can hear the crunch, like a
storm of thunder
The fresh and sweet bite soothes
my hunger
You can feel the smoothness of the
lush green shell
Everyone likes it very well
And they always go back for sec-
onds
Watermelons

— AMIT ERRAGUNTLA, II.

6TH GRADE

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DEER PARK ELEMENTARY

What Do I Want To Be When I Grow Up?

When I grow up I want to be a gymnast because sometimes instead of walking I do cartwheels. And sometimes instead of walking and doing cartwheels, I do walking handstands. When I do gymnastics in front of people they clap and they say, "Well done!" And I say, "Thank you." My favorite time to do it is when I am happy. My parents encourage me to be a gymnast and my family does, too. When I go anywhere I do anything I can that's acrobatic. Gymnasts are amazing!

— LANEY NEWBORN, 3RD GRADE

If I Could Give My Parents a Gift That Doesn't Cost Money

If I could give my parents any gift that didn't cost money, it would be a bracelet, a scrapbook, a card, or a picture. I like crafts and those would be special ones that I can make. It would be just for my great parents because I love them as much as I love God. My parents love homemade presents by us. They would be very, very special presents.

— ABBIE KO, 3RD GRADE

What Do You Want To Be When You Grow Up?

When I grow up I want to code because I want to make video games. I want kids to have fun. The game I'm going to make is basically about strategy and tracking the enemy team. I want kids to play a game so that they can learn how to code like me.

— BENNY LUCAS, 3RD GRADE

THE NYSMITH SCHOOL

Done!

A Palindrome
Puzzles
Forming pieces fallen down
Cast shapes, curved edges
Incite vision fitting together then
Forming pictures
Colors separate ...swirling, defining clouds of colors in each
Corner



Erica Brill, grade 6

My Favorite Animal

My favorite animal is a cheetah because they look nice and peaceful. They are also the fastest land animal on the planet. I also like their spots because they are black and black is one of my favorite colors. To me, cheetahs also have a nice way of living. When they hunt, they look amazing. Cheetahs also look awesome! They are fast and I'm fast. I think cheetahs should also be pets, but they are too dangerous.

— OLIVER HUH, 3RD GRADE

My Favorite Animal

I want a dog because they are fluffy and cuddly and so cute and they are my favorite animal. They are good pets to play with. You can take them on a walk. You will also get a workout. That is why a dog is my favorite animal.

— KYLIE HEFLIN-WHITE, 3RD GRADE

What Is Your Favorite Animal?

Dogs are my favorite animal. I love dogs so much that I would like to have one. I love dogs because of their fur, their color, and the type of dog it is. You can have it as a pet. Dogs are cute and they can come in many sizes. Their eyes and nose are cute. It can be hard work to walk and feed the dog. Dogs are the best pet ever.

— CLARKE TERRELL, 3RD GRADE

The Pike

My family and I have a little cottage on an island in Canada. We had just started our three week vacation there. We were all very excited because we were inviting over some new friends. I was extra excited because a storm was about to hit, and is is amazing to watch storms on the water!

Our new friends were here! I was a little bored by the conversation, so I decided to go fishing. As I was walking down the rocky path, I felt a sense of pride. There was no direct source of it, I just felt grown up, and independent. I was proud I was fishing by myself. The clouds were dark and you could tell a good storm was coming. I knew I wouldn't be fishing for very long. I was bobbing my hook up and down where the tiny Rock Bass would usually swarm it. No luck. I was about to give up, when suddenly a huge fish blasted out from under the dock. It was a Pike! The fish I have always wanted to catch. Right there I could almost touch his pointy, slimy, head, and short, but sharp teeth. I was blinded by the size of this fish. I carefully lowered my hook right next to his mouth. With hope draining, he swam back under the dock. For a second I stood there in awe. I got up to change my lure. At that very moment, that three steps I needed to take, I felt a rush. I don't even now recall if it was anxiety or excitement. I could see the clouds coming in. A feeling of bad luck put a taste in my mouth. The only thing I could hear was my own breath. I wobbled back to the dock. The Pike was gone. I was about to try again, but I heard a rumble of thunder. I was half relieved, and half devastated. When I look back on this event now, it brings back excitement. I might not have caught that Pike, but I came back with good memories, and an amazing fish story!

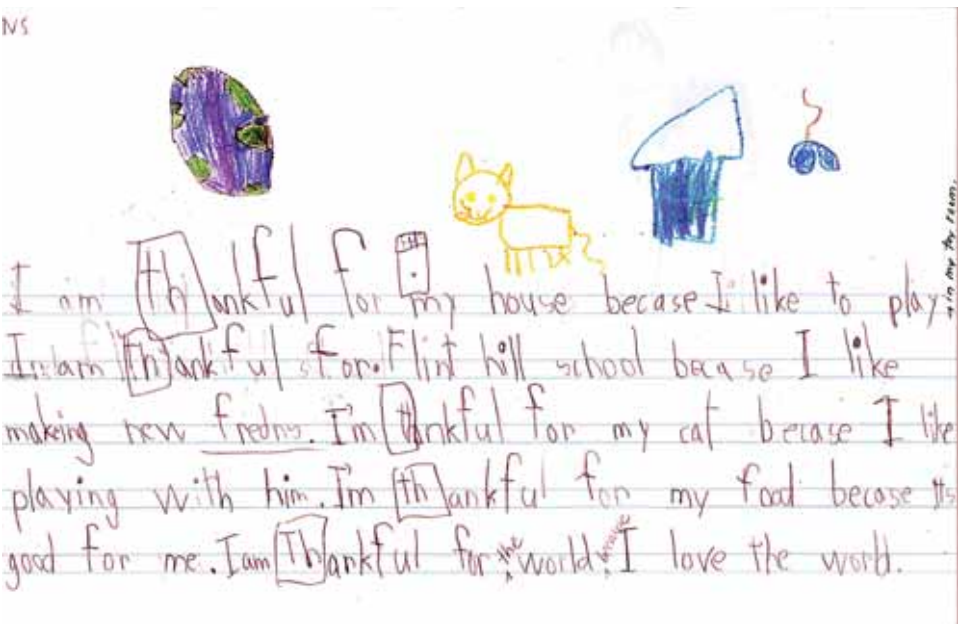
— LILY SPAULDING, 6TH GRADE

If I Could Give My Mom a Gift

If I could give my mom a gift, I would give her 1,000 hugs because I love her with all my love. She is so so thankful for me. She is there for me. She protects me. I love her because she loves me so I have to protect her if she protects me. I love my family with all my love. When I come back from school I give my mom a hug. I love my mom with my whole heart.

— DANNALIA REYES TURCIOS, 3RD GRADE

FLINT HILL SCHOOL



Nicholas Scheoneman, 6, Centreville, 1st grade

WILLOW SPRINGS ELEMENTARY



Ashley Hwang, 10, grade 5 — The Library



Angela Guo, 11, grade 6 — Running with a Pet

VIRGINIA RUN ELEMENTARY



Ian Gleasman, 9, 3rd grade



Mina Ghobrial, 6, 1st grade



Benjamin Herndon, 2nd grade



Bailey Walker, 10, 5th grade



Allyson Medina, 5th grade



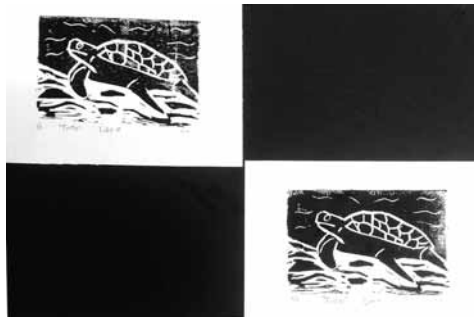
Emily Campos Villalta, 3rd grade



Jocelyn Hernandez, 4th grade



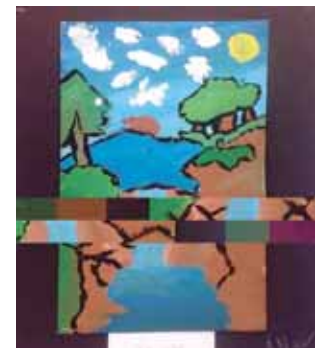
Lorenzo Rossi, 1st grade



Luke Carballosa, 6th grade



Grayson Spence, 10, 4th grade



Andrew Newkirk, 4th grade



Angelina Antezana, 2nd grade



Kaylee Walker, kindergarten



Nathan Laiti, kindergarten



Nur Islam, 6th grade



Devin Berry, 11, 6th grade



Emily Bachman, 11, 6th grade



Sophia Jankowski, 11, 6th grade



Kenneth Wang, 2nd grade

Seldom Wrong But This Time I'm Write

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



Because of the change in some of our publication deadlines for December, I have had to write multiple columns weeks in advance, somewhat unusual for me. Typically, I write my column five days before publication, so time-wise, I'm fairly current and emotionally present as well. Writing ahead, as December dead-lines (it's nothing new. I've been managing to accommodate these deadlines for years) is still a bit off-putting. Though I want to think ahead and live like I have a future; as a cancer patient, it's difficult not to live in the present. Thinking, feeling, projecting ahead, seems presumptuous almost.

This is not to imply that I have to somehow presume a future and write about cancer subjects — or not, which have not yet happened. Hardly. My columns are rarely time-sensitive or date-specific. Still, my columns are generally better written when I'm writing from current feelings, facts, circumstances, etc. And though many of the feelings, facts and circumstances relating to my condition don't exactly change on a daily, weekly or even monthly basis (thank God!), surprisingly, my reaction to them sometimes does. Moreover, writing multiple columns at one time also forces me to pile onto myself emotionally the effects of my disease. Which, if you must know, I'd rather not do. In fact, if there's any way I can not think about my situation, that's a 'way' I'd like to be.

Not that I moan and groan or woe is me about my age 54-and-half-terminal-diagnosis, as those who know me or have regularly read my columns likewise know; but sometimes I'd prefer not to have my hand forced. And even though reading or hearing about other people who have been diagnosed with lung cancer, or who have succumbed to its ravages, doesn't bother me — too much, really (I've matured); occasionally, I'd rather be blissfully ignorant.

Although I readily admit that being ignorant too long concerning my disease is hardly penny-wise but it is most definitely pound-foolish. The trick is, somehow not getting consumed by one's circumstances and maintaining an optimistic point of view. And since I'm a funny guy (though not really fun), I am able to humor myself — and others, so these less-than-ideal circumstances under which I attempt to thrive are not overwhelming, except when forced to confront my demons and focus on myself when newspaper deadlines are advanced and jumbled and I'm having to write four columns in two weeks instead of writing one column in one week.

Though it's not exactly trouble, it is to quote Jerry Seinfeld from a long-ago Seinfeld episode, "something." 'Something' I could likely live without, but 'something' unfortunately I must live with, every December. But I'm a "big boy," as my father used to tell me, with "broad shoulders" (figuratively speaking to my ability to handle the load), so I'll manage. In fact, in another paragraph, I will have completed the task and the presumptive weight of it will be off my 'broad shoulders.'

Now I can relax a little bit, exactly what one (especially this one with cancer) needs. Between the holidays and advanced deadlines, the column-writing and the ad-selling; I'm living and learning with my ever-evolving circumstances (further from the beginning or closer to the end; I never know).

Nevertheless, I am extremely happy to have been there and finished doing it yet again. I hope to see you all back here next year. Happy Holidays!

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

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PUBLIC HEARING FOR TOWN OF CLIFTON PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE TOWN CODE

JANUARY 3, 2017

Notice is hereby given that the Town of Clifton Town Council will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, January 3, 2017 at the Town Meeting Hall, 12641 Chapel Road, Clifton, VA 20124, at 7:30 P.M. to review and implement proposed changes to the Town Noise Ordinance and other items pertaining to the control of noise in the Town Code Chapter 5. The proposed changes are available for review and downloading on the Town's website at www.clifton-va.com and a hard copy may be examined at the Clifton Post Office, 12644 Chapel Road, Clifton VA, 20124. All interested parties are invited to attend and express their views with respect to the proposed changes to Clifton's Town Code.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR TOWN OF CLIFTON PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE TOWN CODE

JANUARY 3, 2017

Notice is hereby given that the Town of Clifton Town Council and the Town of Clifton Planning Commission will hold a joint Public Hearing on Tuesday, January 3, 2017 at the Town Meeting Hall, 12641 Chapel Road, Clifton, VA 20124, directly after the Town Council's public hearing at 7:30 P.M. to review and implement proposed changes to the following: 1) Fee schedule for applications and other items pertaining to the administration of ARB applications in the Town Code Section 9-23 f; and, 2) Regulation of mobile temporary structures Section 9-17 a. The proposed changes are available for review and downloading on the Town's website at www.clifton-va.com and a hard copy may be examined at the Clifton Post Office, 12644 Chapel Road, Clifton VA, 20124. All interested parties are invited to attend and express their views with respect to the proposed changes to Clifton's Town Code.

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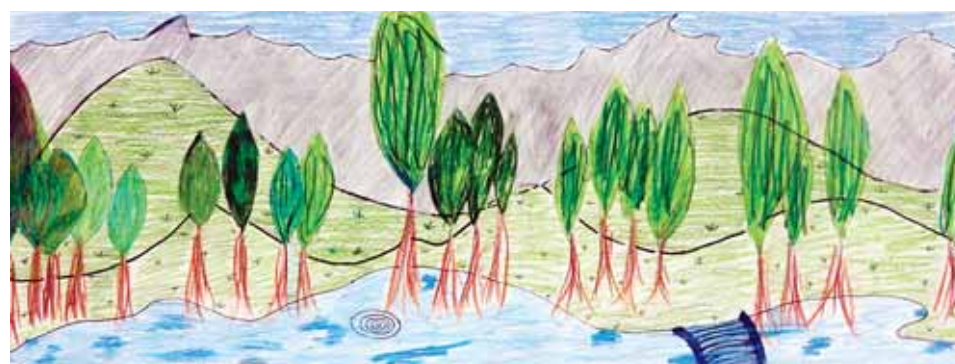


Angelo,
1st grade —
Family
Grocery
Shopping

Taye, 1st grade —
Family Grocery
Shopping



Anthony Yu, 5,
kindergarten —
Nursery



Carol, 6th grade — Landscape



Stephanie, 6th grade — Landscape



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