

Vienna and Oakton **CONNECTION**



Children's & Teens' Connection 2017

Pencil, by Danielle Clark,
James Madison High School,
Grade 12, Teacher: Marielle Mariano.

DECEMBER 27, 2017-JANUARY 2, 2018

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CHILDREN'S CONNECTION



By Yasmine McCarthy, 6, Grade 1, Marshall Road Elementary School, Vienna, Art teacher: Ms. Yanshun Sui (Yan's Art Studio)



By Vivian Yu, 11, Oakton Elementary School, Art teacher: Yanshun Sui

Welcome

Dear Readers:

This week, the Vienna and Oakton Connection turns over its pages to the youth and students.

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

The response as always was enormous. While we were unable to publish every piece we received, we did our best to put together a paper with a fair sampling of the submitted stories, poems, drawings, paintings, photographs and other works of art.

We appreciate the extra effort made by school staff to gather the materials during their busy time leading up to the holidays. We'd also like to encourage both schools and parents to mark their 2018 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 north@connectionnewspapers.com, but you can reach us by mail at 1606 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 or call 703-778-9414 with any questions.

EDITOR KEMAL KURSPAHIC



By Jack Gao, Grade 3, Colvin Run Elementary, Art teacher: Rachel Wiseman



By Scarlett Zhong, 9, Grade: 4, Flint Hill Elementary School, Vienna, Art Teacher: Yanshun Sui



Photo by Adriana Bates, James Madison High School, Grade 11, Teacher: Johanna Little.

CHILDREN'S CONNECTION



By Ellen Zeng, Grade 6, Residence: Great Falls



By Anna Suh, Grade 6, Residence: Vienna

Colvin Run Elementary School

Artwork submitted by Lauren Grimm, Art Teacher.



By Thamer Altamimi, Grade 5, Residence: Great Falls



By Eli Kozlowski, Grade 1, Residence: Vienna

By Maxwell Thompson, Grade 2, Residence: Vienna



Colvin Run Elementary

Artwork submitted by Rachel Wiseman (Art Teacher)

By Jordan Glover, Grade 3, Residence: Vienna



By Ryan Saxon, Grade 2, Residence: Vienna

By Kyra Ranakusuma, Grade 3, Residence: Vienna



CHILDREN'S CONNECTION

Vienna Elementary

What do the third graders think and say (Teacher: Cheryl Allen).

What makes a good parent?

A parent that keeps me safe and still does activities.

What is one thing that you would change about school?

5 hours of recess and 2 hours of P.E.

— QUINN BROWN, AGE 8

What is one thing that you would change about school?

I would make bullying against the rules everywhere. Also, I would make P.E. where you just run around talking.

What makes a good parent?

If they help you with homework, listen to you, and tell you they love you.

If you could give your parents, family or friends any gift that didn't cost money what would that gift be?

Hugs. Lots and lots of hugs.

—NOLA KENNEY, AGE 9

What do you want to be when you grow up?

An actor because you can be super famous.

—CARSON WRIGHT, AGE 8

What makes a good parent?

You need to watch your kids.



By Scarlett Zhong, 9, Grade: 4, Flint Hill Elementary School, Vienna, Art Teacher: Yanshun Sui

—LILY SIDDON, AGE 8

What do you want to be when you grow up?

I want to be a soccer player because I

love soccer. I also want to be a security guard, or maybe military, or a youtuber, NBA, football player, traveler, and work at a hospital.

—JAYDEN DONG, AGE 8

What makes a good friend?

A good friend listens to everything you say.

—MOLLY SCOTT, AGE 8

What makes a good friend?

Someone who includes people in their games and helps friends. Also, someone who stands up for friends is a good friend.

—CONNOR PRENTICE, AGE 8

What do you want to be when you grow up?

I want to be a mechanic or a football player in the NFL. I want to be a mechanic because my dad, mom and everybody in my family, and football is my life-long sport.

—JOEY PARRISH, AGE 8

What is your favorite animal?

Personally, I like sharks, tigers, and bobcats.

—ELLIE VAUGHAN, AGE 9

What is your favorite toy?

My favorite toy is my basketball hoop in my basement because I can pretend that I'm an NBA player.

—TOMMY MCKEE, AGE 8

If you could give your parents, family or friends any gift that didn't cost money what would that gift be?

So so so so so much love!

—RYAN CORDEAU, AGE 8

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CHILDREN'S CONNECTION

Yan's Art Studio Fairfax

Topic: flamingo; art-work submitted by teacher Yan Shun Sui

By Timmy Guo,
8, Grade 3,
Oakton
Elementary,
Yan's Art Studio



The Great Secret

There once was an old turtle
Whose hobby was to boast.
Every day he thought
Of things to boast about.

Then he realized
He knew the Great Secret!
The turtle went out and about,
Egging animals to guess.

The animals went and left,
But only after one good guess!
They lined up like a coiling snake
Outside the old turtle's house.

At the end of the day
A wise lion was the last visitor
And he guessed once and for all-
"The secret is that there is no secret!"

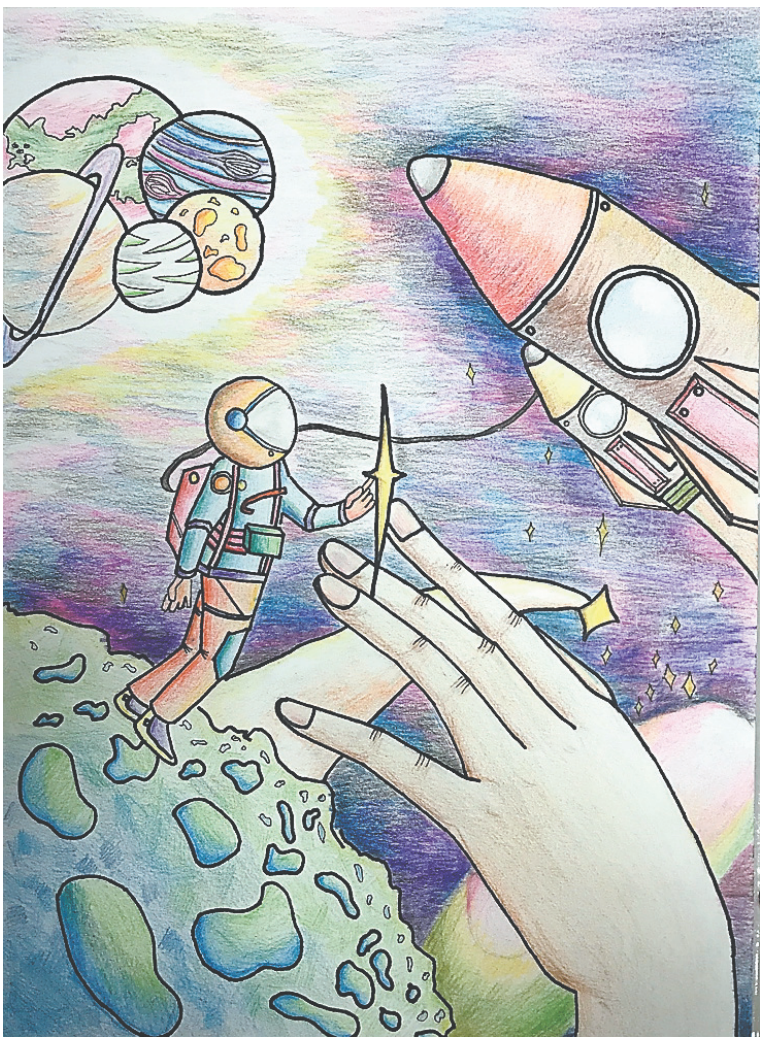
The old turtle gasped and said
"How did you know?
I promise not to boast
For the rest of my life!"

— DAHEE JEONG, 10, OAKTON ELEMENTARY, GRADE 4,
TEACHER: MICHELLE TARR

By Marissa Lin,
7, of Vienna,
Grade 2, Topic:
Halloween,
Type: Crayons.



By Marissa Lin, 7,
of Vienna, Grade 2,
Topic:
Eating Ice Cream,
Type: Markers.



Cynthia Yuxin Huang of Oakton, 11, Grade: 6,
Sunrise Valley Elementary, Reston
Teacher: Peter Huffer.

CHILDREN'S CONNECTION



My Favorite Class, by Ashley Yan, 6, Oakton Elementary



"My Sweet Home," by Ashley Yan, 6, Oakton Elementary

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JAMES MADISON HIGH SCHOOL



Photo by Frederick Lightner, Grade 11,
Teacher: Johanna Little



Watercolor, by Fatima Jerez, Grade 12,
Teacher: Brandy Carter.



Mixed media, by Myles Temple, Grade 9,
Teacher: Marielle Mariano.



Photo by Bailey Shannon, Grade 11,
Teacher: Johanna Little.



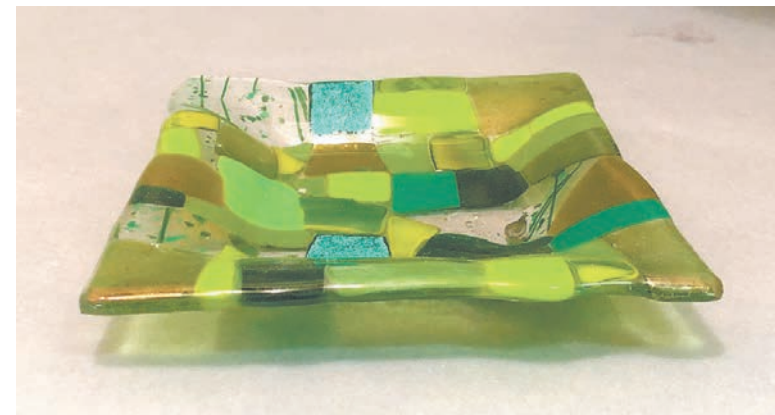
Pen and ink, by Philana Quan, Grade 12,
Teacher: Brandy Carter.



Digital painting, by Alexander Rapavy, Grade 12,
Teacher: Genette Boyle.



Typography, by Katherine Perez, Grade 10,
Teacher: Genette Boyle.



Seaweed, by Paige Harrington, Grade 12, Fused glass,
Teacher: Julia Bargo.



Textured Bowl, by Tommy Bechtle, Grade 12,
Teacher: Julia Bargo.

Madison Art Gallery



Girl, oil, by Krissa Rehberg, Grade 12,
Teacher: Brandy Carter.



Pencil, by Caitlin Moore, Grade 11,
Teacher: Marielle Mariano.



Sand & Sea, by Nadine Stilson, Grade 12, Pottery,
Teacher: Julia Bargo.



Ocean Breeze,
by Savannah Neuner, Grade 10, Pottery,
Teacher: Julia Bargo.



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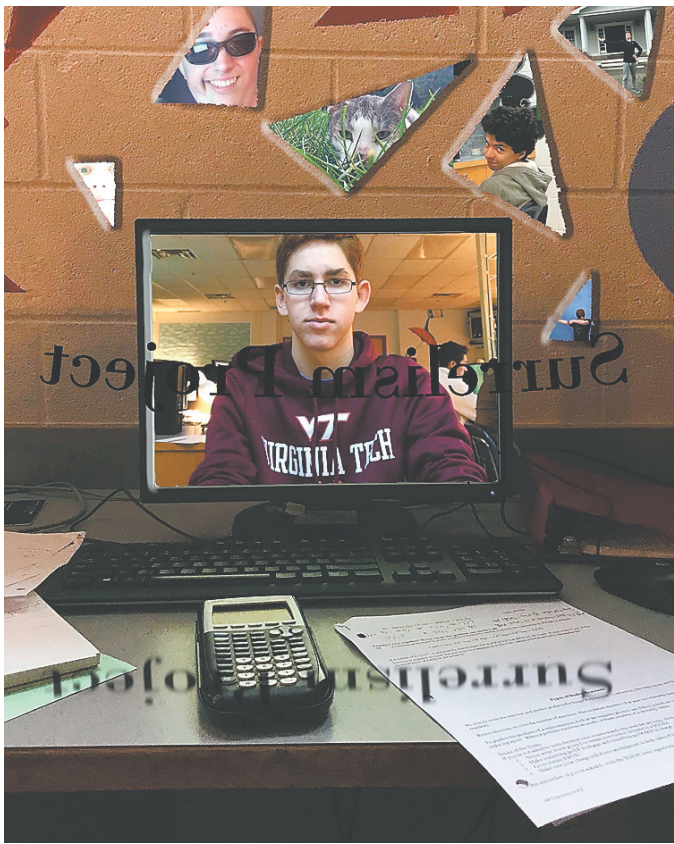


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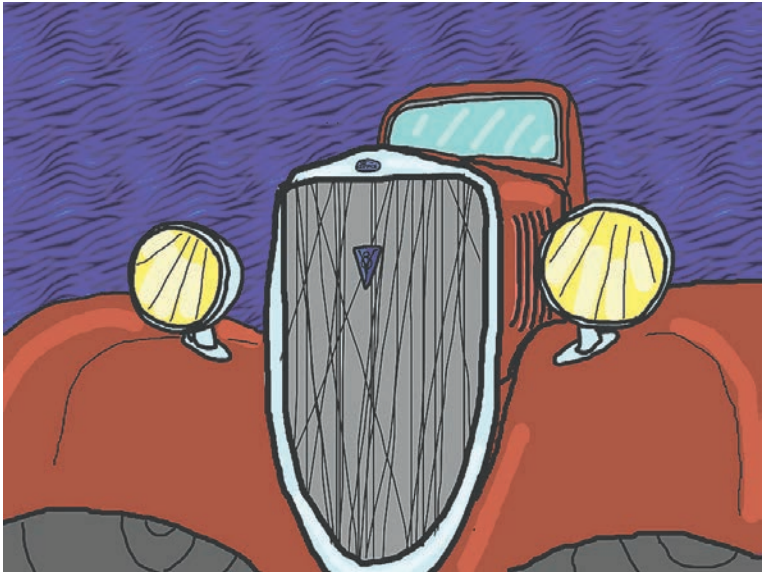
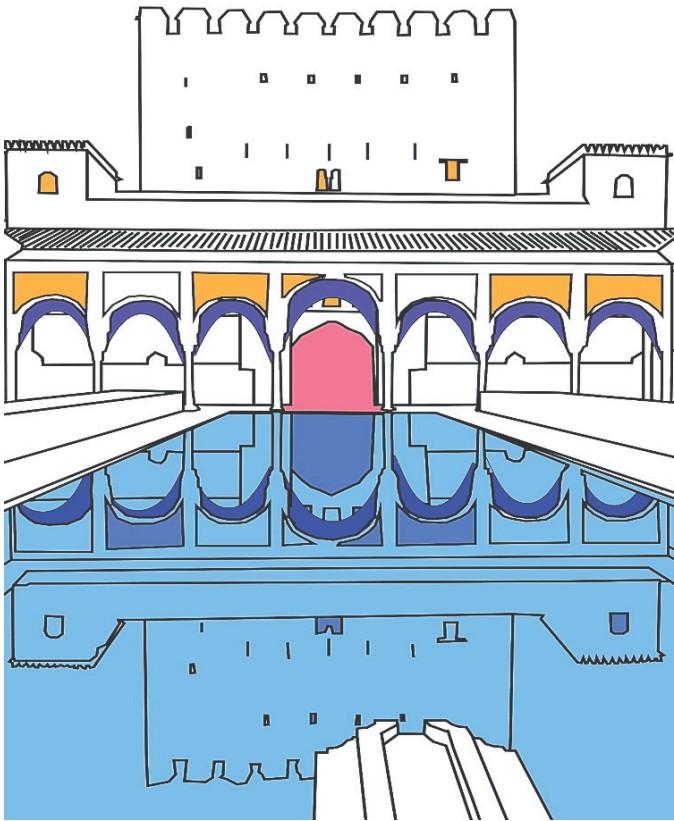
JAMES MADISON HIGH SCHOOL

Madison Art Gallery

**Surreal, by Luke Cann, Grade 11,
Teacher: Deirdre Forgione.**



**Graphic design, by
Joshua Nagy, Grade 12,
Teacher: Genette Boyle.**



**Digital drawing, by
Jonathan Headrick, Grade 11,
Teacher: Genette Boyle.**



**Digital painting, by Noah Rupy, Grade 11,
Teacher: Genette Boyle.**



**Digital drawing, by Andrea Lu, Grade 11,
Teacher: Genette Boyle.**

CHILDREN'S CONNECTION

By Aaron Shaw of
Vienna, 6,
Sunrise Valley
Elementary
School, Reston,
Teacher:
Ms. Barna



By Elliot Shaw, of
Vienna, 6,
Sunrise Valley
Elementary
School, Reston,
Teacher:
Ms. Bowser

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CHILDREN'S CONNECTION

Cooper Middle School

Writings submitted by teacher Lindsay Bovenzi

My Family's Danish Tradition

My family has a tradition that I find extremely entertaining. It's similar to a game known as White Elephant, but with its own twists. We play with about 10 or more people, a cup, a timer and a pair of die. We group up in a circle, set the timer to 10 and roll the die. If someone gets a 6 or higher they can take a gift from under the tree, if they score higher than a 10 they can take a gift from someone, we repeat, passing the die among us and stealing gifts.

I love this nail biting game because it's a fun and friendly way to entertain yourself and family during the holiday. There are also lots of tricks that can be used to win. For example, if you have a lot of gifts, you can take a long time rolling the die so that it doesn't get to other people. I remember the one time where I had 6 of the 10 presents, there are barely any feelings that can compare to that. I recommend this game to anyone who wants to try something new this Christmas. Remember, don't get too competitive, it's just a game! Have fun!

—SEBASTIAN MOLLER OF MCLEAN, 14.

GRADE: 8

Following in the Footsteps of a Champion

Perfection is what it takes. Confidence is what it takes. Endurance is what it takes. Dedication is what it takes. Rising to the top isn't easy. It isn't something that takes a week, a month, or even a year. Winners don't stop when victory is achieved. My mother never has, and I never will.

I tend to think of myself as one who has performed well, however, the real champion in my family isn't me. Emily Ash Morin started her life as the daughter of a veterinarian in a small suburb just outside of Lafayette, Indiana. In rural Indiana, she was fortunate enough to find an equestrian trainer with the experience to raise her up to the national levels. While thriving with her horses, she didn't halt her education. Now an ophthalmologist working in Vienna, Virginia, she stills chisels out time in her hectic schedule to do what she loves.

Her numerous accomplishments could never be replicated, nevertheless, she has inspired me to work my hardest in both riding and school. Even more, she's always been the one behind me, cheering me on, helping me, and lifting me up in the case of a fall. Some families may play basketball, or soccer. My mother and I don't just ride, but we learn together. Mistakes teach us patience, and preparing horses teach us ethics.

—GABRIELLE MORIN OF MCLEAN, 12.

GRADE: 7

Dream More, Live More

"I have a dream. I have a dream that one day, random or expected, a miracle falls into my hands. I have a dream to have flashing lights, crowds of people, and cameras surrounding me from every angle. I have a dream that my family, friends, and people I care about support me through thick and thin. That might be a difficult dream, but I believe that I have a dream." - Cyrine Belghith.

Acting is something I have been wishing for since when I was a small, innocent toddler to this moment in time. Whether it was my birthday, 11:11 pm/am, or a penny in a pond, becoming an actress has always been my desire. "Wish upon a star," they say; something I have been doing for years. I hope, just one day, that star decides to shine brighter than it has before and come down to make my dream as bright as it is.

Although, with every dream or opportunity comes the challenges. Far, deep into the mind, comes doubt. It is one of the worst emotions to deal with. Giving you the doubt to ever reach your dream, the doubt to ever follow the path you want to be on is a horrible feeling.

Not only that, but opinions come into place. Even if you might not want to hear them sometimes, they will always come back to haunt you. "You'll never make it. You should become something that's actually realistic," you should this and that.

But, something also tells me that I shouldn't listen to those opinions. If you believe you can get to that path without hurting anyone or giving up on yourself, go ahead and live your life. Don't listen to what others think of you or what other misleading things they need to say, listen to the positive thoughts coming to you. Wake up, smile, and tell yourself, "Today is my day." Your day to shine, to fly, and to live your dream because, "You have a dream."

—CYRINE BELGHITH OF RESTON, 12

Stepping Into the Spotlight

"For our next singer, we will be having...Ella Ramchand!" announced my singing teacher, Ms. Tuvin. I froze in for a split second, then turned my worried eyes to my mother. She grinned and nodded, motioning for me to stand up. My hands were sweaty, and my legs were stiff. My stomach seemed to be rolling around in circles, twisting and turning with nervousness. It was my first time ever singing in front of a large group and I was absolutely petrified.

I slowly rose from the hard gray seat and began the long walk to my teacher. She flashed me a huge grin and I smiled back weakly, turning to face the crowd.

"H-h-hi, my name is Ella Ramchand and I will be s-s-singing *The Wizard and I* from the m-m-musical *Wicked*." I stuttered. Not one kind face seemed to be in the audience.

I was destined to fail and I knew it. I climbed up the metal stairs, clutching the railing so tightly that my hands turned white, and shuffled over to the microphone. Instantly, my perspective changed. The cramped boxy room looked enormous and everyone's eyes were on me intently, scrutinizing me carefully.

Suddenly, the accompanying pianist began playing the opening theme.

The spotlight beamed down upon me as my eyes darted around the room, looking for someone, anyone, with a kind face who I could focus on. A single person stood out to me, my best friend Aarti.

She smiled at me encouragingly and I felt a wave of relief wash over me. At least there was one person who would support me no matter how I did. As the pianist dashed out the opening chords, I beamed out at the crowd and my song began.

— ELLA RAMCHAND OF MCLEAN, 12, GRADE 7



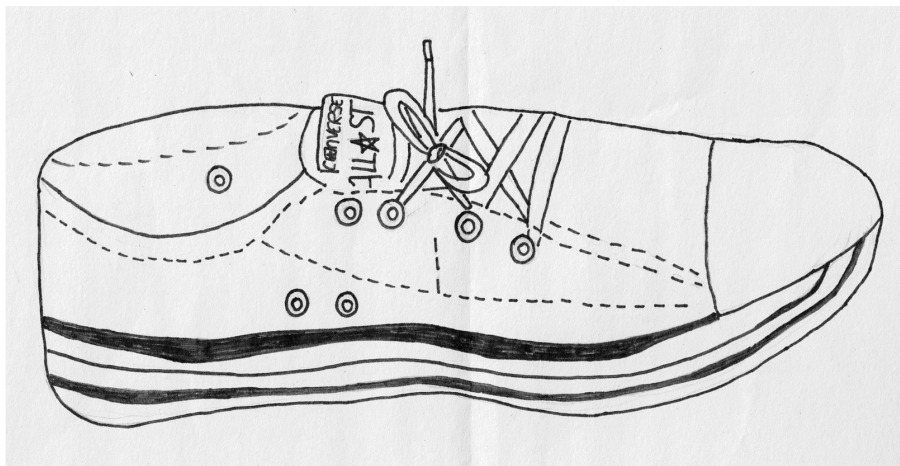
Family, by Annabelle Li, 7, of Oakton, Yan's Art Studio, Teacher: Yanshun Sui



By Yasmine McCarthy, 6, Grade 1, Marshall Road Elementary School, Vienna, Art teacher: Ms. Yanshun Sui (Yan's Art Studio)



By Vivian Yu, 11, Oakton Elementary School, Art teacher: Yanshun Sui



My Shoe

Uma Smolinski, 11, Grade 6, Colvin Run Elementary

CHILDREN'S CONNECTION



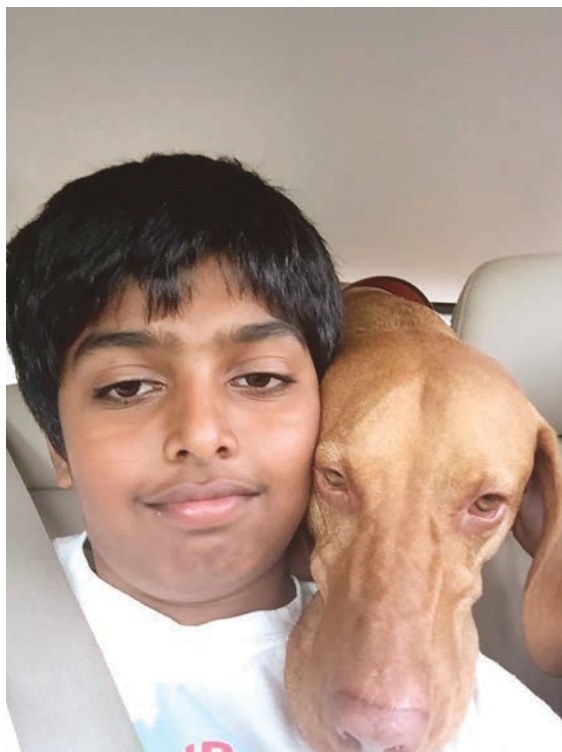
By Hannah C. Zhao, 6, first grader at Oakton Elementary, Teacher: Lisa Prohoniak.



Mysterious Footprints

BY AJIT SIVAKUMAR/GREAT FALLS
GRADE 6 AT FOREST EDGE ES, RESTON

In the middle of the night, I heard a bang. I gazed around my room and flicked the lights on. I saw muddy footprints leading out of my room. They were not regular footprints because they were paw shaped. I assumed that it was my dog so I followed the footprints down the stairs. I made my way down to the kitchen. Munching noises were coming from a cabinet so I walked over to it. I nudged it opened and saw something unexpected, a raccoon. It looked me straight in the eyes, and then leapt out of the cabinet and went to an open window which I had not noticed previously. I scurried over to the window and slammed it shut. I went to check on my dog. He was peacefully sleeping and made a grunting noise when I got close. I decided everything was fine so I went upstairs to my room to see how the creature gained entry to my room. It was obvious when I walked in. My window was also open and there was a ladder sticking into it. Surprised, I nudged the ladder away from my window and closed my window shut. Then I glanced at the clock, turned off the light, and went right back to my cozy bed.



Self Portrait: Chase and me

By Scarlett Zhong, 9,
Grade: 4, Flint Hill Elementary School, Vienna,
Art Teacher: Yanshun Sui



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CHILDREN'S CONNECTION

What to Get a Teenager for the Holidays

With the holidays just around the corner, hoards of parents rush to get all sorts of gifts for their children. The most common item: electronic devices. The new generation of teenagers have been exposed to advanced technology ever since they were born. Anywhere you go, you can find teenagers glued to their phones, unaware of their surroundings. So why are teenagers being gifted even more electronics when they're already addicted to them?

An alternative to electronics for a teenager's holiday gift is something really meaningful. Many people don't realize that deep down, teenagers will actually appreciate gifts that aren't technology based. Some of these gifts can be cute notebooks and pens, sports related items, fun sewing kits, and old fashion record players.

The reason for this apparent addiction to technology for teenagers has many causes. First of all, when one kid use technology, everyone else wants to have it too, to fit in with the trend. During teenage years, it is very stressful, from grades, to romance, to social life. When teenagers experience stress, technology becomes an instant way to find relief. Just like alcohol and tobacco, although technology is nowhere near as bad as those, it gives the same pleasure, an escape from reality.

For those debating on what to gift a teenager for the holidays, something to consider are sincere gifts unrelated to technology. This will bring a teenager out of their technology bubble, leading to a different happiness than the addictive technology pleasure. So, go get a nice present for a teenager, or even hand make it! They will love it even more than an electronic device!

ANNIE ZHANG OF MCLEAN,
13, GRADE 8, COOPER
MIDDLE SCHOOL, TEACHER:
LINDSAY BOVENZI.

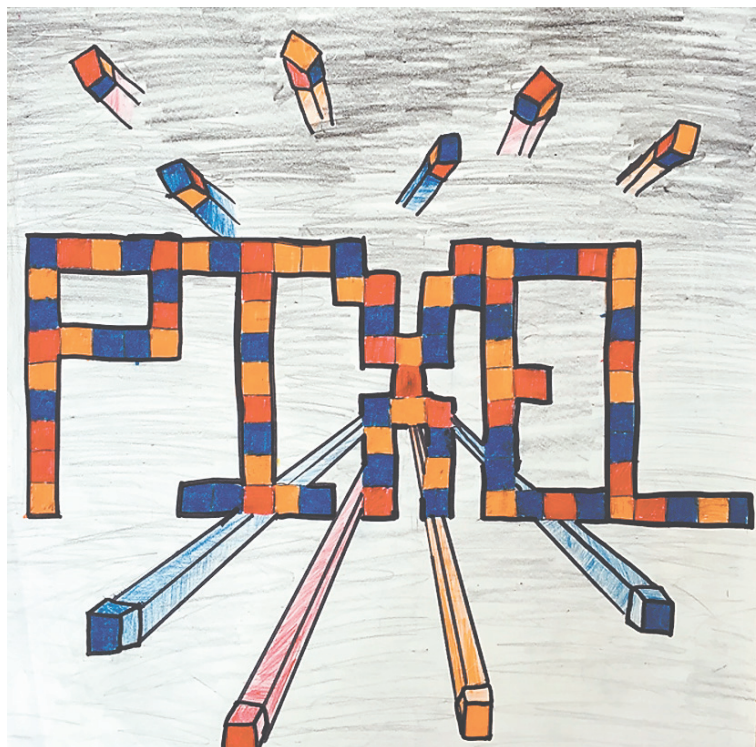


PHOTO BY ANNIE ZHANG, GRADE 8, COOPER MIDDLE

Congressional School



**Imaginary Self Portrait by
Sara Auer, Age 13, 8th
Grade, McLean**



Pixel by Evan Judge, Age 10, 5th Grade, Oakton

BULLETIN

Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

HOLIDAY SOBER-RIDE

Free Sober Rides. The annual Holiday SoberRide program will operate 8 p.m.-4 a.m. each night from Friday, Dec. 15, 2017-Monday, Jan. 1, 2018. area residents age 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may download Lyft to their phones, then enter the code in the app's "Promo" section to receive their no cost (up to \$15) safe transportation home. WRAP's weekly Holiday SoberRide promo codes will be posted at 2 p.m. on Dec. 15, Dec. 23 and Dec. 31 on www.SoberRide.com.

TUESDAY/JAN. 9

English as a Second Language Classes. 7-8 p.m. at St. Mark Christian Formation Center, 9972 Vale Road, Vienna. Come help 150+ adult learners master the English language, prepare for American citizenship, learn to converse fluently in English, improve their writing skills, and integrate into the local community. Call 703-980-9380, email stmarksesl@gmail.com, or visit www.stmarksesl.org.

THURSDAY/JAN. 11

English as a Second Language Classes. 7-8 p.m. at St. Mark Christian Formation Center, 9972 Vale Road, Vienna. Come help 150+ adult learners master the English language, prepare for American citizenship, learn to converse fluently in English, improve their writing skills, and integrate into the local community. Call 703-980-9380, email stmarksesl@gmail.com, or visit www.stmarksesl.org.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Are You A Caregiver? Shepherd's Center of Oakton Vienna Caregivers' Support Group takes place first & third Thursday of each month. February 2nd and 16th, 2017 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Join us at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax (UUCF) - Program Building, 2709 Hunter Mill Rd, Oakton, VA. For more info contact facilitator, Jack Tarr, 703-821-6838 jtarr5@verizon.net.

Haven of Northern Virginia Support Group. 703-941-7000, www.havenofnova.org or havenofnova@verizon.net.

Virginia Chronic Pain Support Group Meets from 1:30 - 3 p.m. the 2nd Wednesday of each month at Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine, 6829 Elm St., Suite 300, McLean. Group leader, Jodi Brayton, LCSW. 703-532-4892.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

RSVP, a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org or call RSVP at 703-403- 5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit www.rsvpnova.org.

Shepherd's Center of McLean-Arlington-Falls Church, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean continues to have an urgent need for new volunteers to help area senior citizens get to and from their medical and therapy appointments. To find out more about the Shepherd's Center and how you can volunteer to provide transportation and other services, call the Center at 703-506-2199 or e-mail the Center at info@scmafc.org. The Center's website is www.scmafc.org.

Master Gardener Training. The Fairfax County Master Gardener Association offers plant clinics, home turf training or speakers for homeowner's meetings. Fees vary. Visit fairfaxgardening.org or call MG Help Desk at 703-324-8556 for more.

Volunteers Needed. PRS is looking for empathetic and caring volunteers to make phone calls to older adults who may be feeling socially isolated. The commitment is one 3-hour shift per week for one year. Located in Arlington. Ages 21 & up. Intensive training provided. Learn more and apply: <https://prsinc.org/caring-volunteering/>. Questions? Email lpadgett@prsinc.org.

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"Cansir"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Though I want to treat the disease – and my having been diagnosed with the disease, with respect, I don't want to treat it with the utmost reverence. I mean, it's not the Pope. It's an affliction, not an affection. Certainly not one worth embracing anyway. But definitely one which needs engaging.

Treating and living with lung cancer shouldn't be a vertical-type, up or down, either-or set of options. There should be more integration with non-Western, holistic and alternative approaches rather than, as has been my experience: you're on your own; and your oncologist, generally speaking – or potentially legally-labile from speaking, knows/say less about it than you the patient.

I've tried to straddle this line going on nearly nine years now. Adhering to the conventional wisdom/treatment didn't seem like enough. Perhaps hearing the extremely grim prognosis that I received on Feb. 27, 2009 : "13 months to two years," affected my thinking. Perhaps hearing the equally grim likelihood – statistically referencing, of living beyond five years (low single digit percentage); heck, even living beyond two years, might have given me pause as to what course of treatment: chemotherapy, I was starting and why. But what did I know? I had just been blindsided and then bewildered as to why and how I was going to live the rest of my life.

Yet here I sit, nine-years old, so to speak. Some days I believe my amazing good fortune has to do with the treatment and care I've received from my oncologist and staff at the Infusion Center. Other days, I think it has to do with some of the alternatives I've assimilated into my life. Though I can't honestly include exercise in that life, I have modified my diet somewhat and most definitely can mention vitamins, supplements, alkaline water and apple cider vinegar, among a few others; along with a positive attitude with mostly good humor, as important elements. It hasn't been easy, but it has been me. Meaning, I am proud of how I've managed a bad situation and so far, not made it worse.

Though I am somewhat unique, statistically measuring, in how long I've survived (however, I'm not exactly 108-year old Paul Edgecomb/Tom Hanks from the movie "The Green Mile"), I don't know that the varied steps I've taken and the humor and attitude with which I've put one foot in front of the other are likewise unique.

Of the many patients/survivors I've met along this way, many, if not all, have exhibited similar good humor and more of a can-do attitude quite frankly, than I. I've always been happy to make their acquaintance and eager to hear their stories, as they have been interested in hearing mine. Although cancer is not exactly catchy, I've found that, in speaking/sharing with fellow cancer survivors, what goes around comes around. And what 'that' is that is going around is, to invoke The Beach Boys: "Good Vibrations," and that is catchy and healthy too!

When I was first diagnosed – and caught up in my own circumstances, I was not interested – too much, in interacting with other lung cancer patients/survivors. I was more concerned with my own fragile emotional state and was afraid that exposing myself to more bad news: other "terminal" lung cancer patients' stories would weaken my resolve.

I don't recall how many months or years it was before I realized how wrong I had been. Weaken? My involvement with fellow lung cancer patient/survivors has only strengthened my resolve. Has that openness and appreciation for my fellow lung cancer patient extended my life? I'd like to think it has.

But if it hasn't, I guess the jokes on cancer. And that's a laugh with which we can all live.

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

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