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Potomac ALMANAC



Children's & Teens' Almanac 2018

By Luis Barrenechea Arana, 11,
Grade 5, Potomac,
The Woods Academy

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CONNELLY SCHOOL OF THE HOLY CHILD



Fruit by Maggie Taishoff, Grade 11

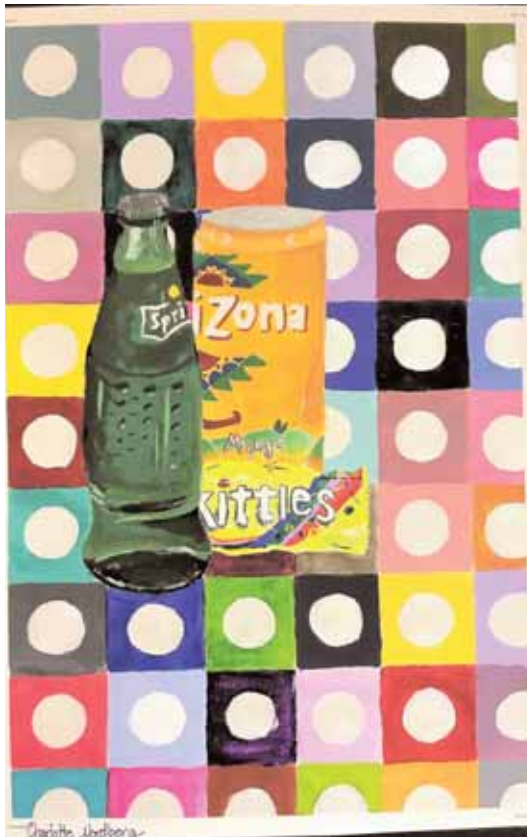


Foreshortening Drawing by Josie Ziemski, Grade 12

Self Portrait
by Halo
Lyman,
Grade 10



Self Portrait
by Matilda
Yemoh,
Grade 11



Pop Art
Cans and
Candy by
Charlotte
Nordberg



Pop Art
Cans and
Candy by
Verity
White,
Grade 12



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CHILDREN'S & TEENS' ALMANAC

HOOVER MIDDLE SCHOOL

Submissions from Mrs. Bryant's Grade 6 English class.

Culture

Every culture has traditions. My culture, for example, is Russian.

There is a tradition in Russia that on New Year, you stay up until 12:00 to greet the New Year. I started doing this since I was about 6 years old. The first time I stayed up 'till midnight I remember eating ice cream which technically was NOT part of the tradition. We did it just for fun. Another tradition which is also a tradition in America is to decorate the Christmas tree (which Russian people call it plain "elm tree" because not every person in Russia celebrates Christmas). In Russia, the tradition of decorating eggs is a tradition. We don't go on egg hunts, but it's still satisfying to put stickers on the eggs. There is also a luck game where two people charge their eggs that they are about to crack so they can eat them. Whoever's egg cracks first loses. But that just means that the people who win get to peel the egg themselves without any help which is weird since it's not a good thing. But it's still fun. I am in America but my family hasn't stopped any of them. Sure we added traditions like trick or treating on Halloween, but that just means that we get more fun things to do.

— ZLATA BOBYKINA

Thanksgiving

Last year's Thanksgiving was a very funny one in my house, especially considering that we were supposed to be in a different place altogether! Just a couple days before Thanksgiving last year, my family adopted a puppy. We were supposed to visit family in Delaware for Thanksgiving, but we ended up staying at home because 1) we just adopted our puppy (her name is Juno, by the way. She and my cat do not get along at all) and 2) because pretty much everyone in my family got sick. First my mom and I got sick, and then my brother, and my dad got sick on Thanksgiving day. However, I remember that the meal was very tasty and that it was a good Thanksgiving.

There was a fantastic pumpkin pie, and everything else was delicious, too. After dinner, Juno stole a turkey bone from the trash can and that made everyone laugh! This year, we have plans to go to Delaware again! fingers crossed no one gets sick!

— NINA LINGAN

I am the only one

I was the only one when I wore a peanut costume at the Beverly Farms Elementary School's 5th-grade Halloween parade. I wore a giant Mr. Peanut costume and no one else did. I was the star of the show. Everyone kept asking who I was and how I made the costume. Everyone was also knocking on my costume and looking in at me through the air holes. I was really happy about all the excitement. The costume was heavy, bulky, and big.

Then our class went outside. I clumsily shuffled down the stairs and out the door. We walked around the parents and everyone was taking pictures of me – even some people I didn't know! Then, we went inside and took off our costumes. We had a party with ice cream and a normal day after that. At the end of the day, I left school, happy and excited. When I got home, I was really happy with myself. It was amazing. When the night came around, I was really happy to see that no one on my block had a giant Mr. Peanut costume. I grinned and thought, "I am the only one."

— JONATHAN DAVIS

Culture

My cultures that my family and I celebrate are Russian and Jewish ones. As for Russian traditions, my first language was Russian and we speak Russian at home. Both of my parents came from Russia and I enjoy making recipes that originated there. These include dumplings, pelmeni or vareniki. I plan to make pirogi, bigger "dumplings" that are more like pastries stuffed with meat, potatoes, mushrooms, or cabbage. My mom also makes her own version of Russian soups by adding a healthier twist to them. I adore traditional Russian foods, but sadly, my family and I don't (and can't) eat them very often. Foods from that area are often made with wheat, dairy, and sometimes egg.

Jewish holidays are not something that we exactly "celebrate" in my family. We attend celebrations only if our Jewish friends invite us. One year, our friends invited us to celebrate the Jewish New Year with them, and they had delicious foods such as honey-dipped apples, ham platters, matzo ball soup, poppy seed cake, and much more. From this I can guess that just like Russians, Jewish people like filling up a huge table all the way from one side to the other with food on holidays and celebrations. The only problem about the celebration of the Jewish New Year's was that everyone else sang songs in Hebrew; the only words I knew in Hebrew were Bat Mitzvah, Bar Mitzvah, B'nai Mitzvah and Mazel Tov.

— JULIANA BARSHAY

Swimming

It was a sunny afternoon during summer. I was going to a swim meet, when all of a sudden it began raining, and in summer you swim outside, but the swim meet still went on. The pool was freezing and worst of all it was a championship meet so it was a swim meet with only the best swimmers. This meet in particular only happens once every year. Therefore, the officials couldn't cancel the meet. Anyway, when it was my turn to swim, I gained a new best time and even got 5th place while racing against 12 year olds when I'm only 11. Even though it was FREEZING and raining during the whole entire time I swam, I still did great, got new best times, and had fun.

— LAUREN LEVINE

Global Warming

One Thanksgiving tradition that is very commonly known is eating a turkey. However, my family doesn't have this tradition. We don't have this tradition because eating turkeys for Thanksgiving can lead to one of our biggest problems in nature. Eating turkeys can increase our issue of global warming. Animals and humans both breathe in oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide. An average of 45 million turkeys are killed every year during Thanksgiving. Since so many people are in need of turkeys during Thanksgiving, people must breed turkeys in order to make more. Carbon dioxide has a major impact on global warming. The more carbon dioxide in the air, the bigger our global warming issue. If there is a large amount of turkeys then more carbon dioxide is in the air. This actually goes for many animals. My family doesn't eat meat too often because if more people eat meat then more animals have to be bred which contributes to global warming. If people ate less meat then our global warming issue would be slighter.

— DEEPA SHANMUGAM, 11

Orangutans

The orangutans of Borneo's rainforests are under threat

SEE HOOVER MIDDLE SCHOOL, PAGE 5

CONNELLY SCHOOL OF THE HOLY CHILD

**Paper
Headdress
by Noelle
Sommerville,
Grade 10**



**Pop Art
Cand and
candy by
Maria
Velasco
Basterra,
Grade 12**

The Potomac Children's Almanac

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Welcome

Dear Readers:

This week, the Potomac Almanac turns over its pages to the youth and students. We asked principals and teachers from area schools to encourage students to contribute their words, pictures and photos for our annual Children's Issue.

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

sponse, we will continue to publish more artwork and writings in 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 2019 calendars for early December, the deadline for submissions for next year's Children's Almanac. Please keep us in mind as your children continue to create spectacular works of art and inspiring pieces of writing in the coming year. The children's issue is only a part of our year-round commitment to cover

education and our local schools. As always, the Almanac welcomes letters to the editor, story ideas, calendar listings and notices of local events from our readers. Photos and other submissions about special events at schools are especially welcome for our schools pages.

Our preferred method for material is e-mail, which should be sent to almanac@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

CHRIST EPISCOPAL SCHOOL



**By Lily Buck, Grade 4,
Gaithersburg, teacher Luisa
Vargas**



By Elisabeth Loy, Preschool 3's, Rockville, teacher Luisa Vargas



Ronald Reagan



Barack Obama

Barack Obama

Hi there! My name is Barack Obama; I am going to tell you about my life. I was born in Honolulu, Hawaii in 1961 and I went to school in Hawaii and played basketball in high-school. I had a pet ape when I lived in Indonesia. I graduated from high-school in 1983 after that I graduated from Harvard law school because I wanted to be a lawyer. I married a woman named Michelle Robinson. I have two children – Malia and Sasha. Before I became the President of the United States, I worked as a community organizer in Chicago, Illinois. I was also a state senator and a United States senator and a professor.

In 2009, I became the 44th president of the United States of America. As a president, I really wanted to help people so I created Obama care. Obama care allows everyone to see a doctor when they are sick or if something bad happens like if you break your leg. I was the first African-American president. Now you know about my life.

— ELEN HOUSE,

GRADE 2, ROCKVILLE, TEACHER
MICHELLE ROBINSON



By Vera Dinh, PreK, Clarksburg, teacher Luisa Vargas



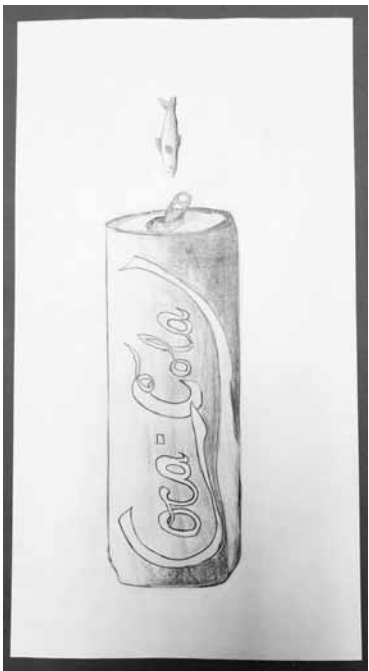
By Helina Yohannes, Grade 6, Silver Spring, teacher Luisa Vargas

Ronald Reagan

Hi, my name is Ronald Reagan. I was born February 6, 1911, in Illinois. I was a life guard. My father was an alcoholic. I had one brother. I married Jane Wyman and had two kids. Jane and I got divorced and then I married Nancy Davis. Nancy and I had two children, Patti, and Ron, Jr. I worked as a radio sports announcer. I also was a movie actor. I made 54 films. I played baseball. I was Governor of California. I was a funny guy, I once wore a clown wig to a meeting. I was the 40th President. I died in 2004. I hope you liked hearing about my life.

— MERCY MELESSE,

GRADE 2, SILVER SPRING, TEACHER
MICHELLE ROBINSON



**By Anika Dietrich, Grade 8,
Gaithersburg, teacher Luisa
Vargas**

The Chunk Of Eraser

So much depends upon
a chunk of eraser
Scraped and bitten
Sitting beside layers of homework.

— OLANTU DOSSA (INSPIRED BY
WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS).
GRADE 6, TEACHER NICOLE STONE



By Jackson Lopez, Grade 2, Rockville, teacher Luisa Vargas

School

Clock on the wall is close to three
 Tick tock tick tock rings in my ears
 until I'm free
 Can't hold it any longer I'm gonna
 scream
 Tick tock tick it's almost there
 I can see my hands shaking like ma-
 racas in the air "It's three!" I squeal
 Smack, smack
 I high five everyone in the hall
 Pack all my things getting ready for
 the haul
 I get outside, and the world looks
 cheery
 The birds sing louder

Tweet tweet
My friends seem happier laughing
around me
He he he
But the school looks newer and
brighter than the inside, Which looks
like a solar eclipse all the time
I wonder why this happens to us,
But my car is here,
So now I'm leaving in my ride.

— ESEY BERHE,

GRADE 6, GERMANTOWN, TEACHER
NICOLE STONE



Theodore Roosevelt

Theodore Roosevelt

Hi! My name is Theodore Roosevelt (or Teddy Roosevelt). I'm going to tell you about my life. I was born in 1858. I died in 1919. I lived in New York. Alice Roosevelt was my wife, she died and left me a widow. Alice and I had one child. My first lady is Edith Roosevelt, we had 5 children. My hobbies included boxing, swimming, tennis, climbing mountains, Judo, and hunting. I was a cowboy and the head of the rough riders. I won the Nobel Peace Prize. I was president for eight years. The teddy bear was named after me. Now you know about my life. BYE!

— NATHAN CUMMINGS,

GRADE 2, GAITHERSBURG,
TEACHER MICHELLE ROBINSON

Spider

The tiny spider Virtually invisible, Scurrying about Up ahead
 A fly buzzes,
 Straight into the trap
 Sticky, goey trap
 Tangled up
 Center of web
 Out of the corner of its eye
 It rushes,
 This eight legged beast
 Eyes narrowing,
 Then, BUUZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZzzzzzzzzzzZZzzz
 Bites, dagger
 Fangs, sink
 Into prey
 Fly no more:
 Can anyone
 See this
 Tragic
 Battle?

— IDA LIBEN (INSPIRED BY VALERIE WORTH),
GRADE 6, ROCKVILLE, TEACHER NICOLE STONE

HOOVER MIDDLE SCHOOL

FROM PAGE 3

Of extinction in the wild since logging for wild- born orangutans can mean certain death

Such beautiful creatures due to loss of habitat of human help are in need

Just for their very survival and this does seem sad indeed

To think that us humans are responsible for the destruction of natural habitat Worldwide

Every day hundreds of acres of rainforest in Indonesia destroyed

The home of the orangutans for human financial gain

Why we are the way we are beyond me to explain

That such beautiful creatures as orangutans in their home-places becoming rare

This World is for us to live in and with other life forms space to share

Every day in the rainforests thousands of old growth trees are cut down

For to furnish new homes for the wealthy in the far away big town

And the beautiful wild-born orangutans in large numbers losing out to human greed

The very thought of this is a very sad thought indeed.

— BRIANNA FRANK

This isn't all,
I'm thankful for,
For it's just a list,
With stanzas 1 through...
5!

— JACK FARICY

Ode to Family

The joy and love they bring me,
The light they shine within me,
The feeling of being around them is truly lovely.
They bring me happiness like flowers blooming,
Warmth like the cozy fire,
The feeling of being around them is truly to my desire.
To my heart they're very dear,
In my heart they're always near.
My family, they comfort me.
A thanks to the joy and love they lead,
My one and only family,
And the joy and love they bring me.

— NOOR ALY, AGE 11

Culture

I arrived at the performance hall. All my dance jewelry was on along with my costume. When I walked in my dance teacher greeted me and directed me to the dressing rooms. I was the first one in my group to arrive. More people came in after a while. Once everyone had their costumes on and ready we did a few run throughs. My dance teacher was examined each of us making sure every movement was perfected. Finally it was show time. Everyone waiting for their song to come on, some even practicing. It was my turn to dance. My group got into their positions. The song started. When we exited the stage the next group was already lined up. We all wished them luck as we walked backstage. Their song started they and they entered the stage, just as nervous as we were. After the program was over we all got called onto the stage for one last round of applause. As the audience clapped my group looked at each other, it was over. We did well.

— MAITHRI VERMA, AGE 11

Heroes

I have two heroes. One of my heroes is the Polish Soccer player Robert Lewandowski. He is the striker for my favorite soccer team, Bayern Munich. I play striker on my soccer team. I have always wanted to be like him. I wanted to be scoring game winning goals in world wide championships against the best teams. My other hero is Adolf Dassler. He is the founder of Adidas. The company originally started with him and his brother but after an argument the brothers separated. Adolf managed through a depression and led Adidas to becoming one of the best sports brands in the world. Both of my heroes had obstacles and hard times. None of them were perfect all the time but in the most needed times they performed at top level. Their courage keeps on amazing me. I always wanted to be like them, my heroes, fighting with nothing and achieving everything possible.

— ARCADY LIZUNOV

Heroes

My grandmother is a hero in my eyes. She did not save the world or change it but she lived through cancer and my grandfather dying. I was on vacation with my family when my grandma calls and says that she had found that there was a bump on her left side breast. She said that she went to the doctor said that my grandmother who I call Nani had breast cancer. My nani was in the early stages so they said that they could do the surgery. They did the surgery and it went fine. Though first, they had to staple it up instead of stitch it. Then, they took out the staples and then stitched. After that my grandma had to go through chemotherapy. One day when my grandma was home sitting around after the chemotherapy my grandfather was angry about something and was coming down the stairs. He tripped, and fell, and broke his ribs. He went to the hospital they fixed it he survived the surgery. Sadly, though he died of pneumonia. My grandmother also has to deal with the finances and lawyers who are driving her up the wall to buy her house. My grandpa left us with a lot of paperwork, but she is pushing through it with help from my mother.

— SHIKHA KOPPIKAR, 11

Heroes

My hero is my grandpa – also my dad's dad. He was born in Iran. He was a wonderful and kind man. My uncle, or my dad's brother, told me a story about him. He said when he was in high school, many people were poor and didn't have good

SEE HOOVER MIDDLE, PAGE 11

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Excerpt from The Candlestick People

We rehearse, from bottom to top. It is good, but we have many huge mistakes. We decide to have a meeting every Saturday to practice our play. I am glad it is on that specific day because I am busy every other day of the week. I am just getting up when I notice something sticking out of my desk. It is a stick-it note. I put it in my binder. I will read it at home, I tell myself. I pack up, and am about to leave when Mister Jack comes over.

“Susan, you are doing splendid! Are you sure you didn't practice? I know you didn't, but that was amazing!” he said.

“Thanks! I love acting, but I never get to do it,” I confess.

“Well, keep up the good work!”

When I get home, I do my homework. When I finish, I get the stick-it note out. I read it. Then I read it again. And again. And again. And again. And again. I am STUNNED. The note said:

Helloe. Mi nam is unknow. I lov U. Met mi tomorrow @ the big tree After school.

Wish to kiss, unknow

— ASPYN BUCHANAN

Thanksgiving

My family celebrates Thanksgiving quite different from other families. First off, my family doesn't eat turkey. We have a turkey made out of tofu and cranberries! It isn't the most delicious thing I have eaten to put it nicely. We also celebrate Thanksgiving with an Indian twist. My mom usually cooks regular Thanksgiving foods like green beans and carrots but she adds Indian spices. Another one of our weird traditions has nothing to do with our culture. Every year my brother tries to get a Turkey in bowling. A Turkey is three strikes in a row. I love watching him do this. However, we do have one tradition that lots of families do during Thanksgiving. We always have an apple pie! Apple Pie is one of my favorite desserts and it's very special that we get to have it every year. We never really have guests for Thanksgiving but we still are a family. I really feel that during Thanksgiving my family has the opportunity to spend more time together. My dad works full time in a hospital and I don't always get to spend much time with him. But during Thanksgiving I am always extremely thankful to get to enjoy the time with my family. Maybe my family doesn't celebrate Thanksgiving traditionally but we still always have a great time!

— DEEPA SHANMUGAM AGE 11

Untitled

Hockey, the coolest sport on earth,
twas a favorite of mine,
Since my birth.

Dinosaurs, the ferocious beasts,
Their size diverse,
From buildings,
To beats.

Science, I think, is really neat,
Someday I want to make jets,
That attach to your feet.

The X-box one,
A great console,
If I play too long,
My eyes pay a toll.

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MCLEAN SCHOOL (UPPER SCHOOL)



By Ava L., Grade 12



By Ezra G., Grade 9



By Ethan Z., Grade 10



By Anastasia E., Grade 10



By Walker T., Grade 9

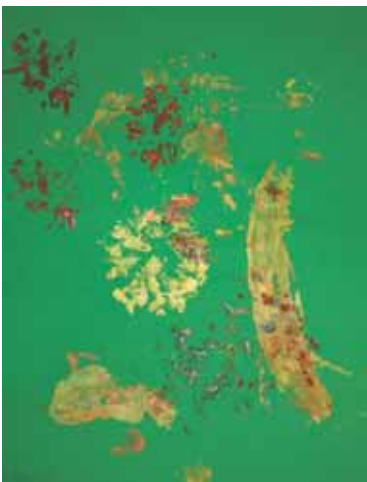


By Isa L-C., Grade 12



By Mia H., Grade 11 McLean School

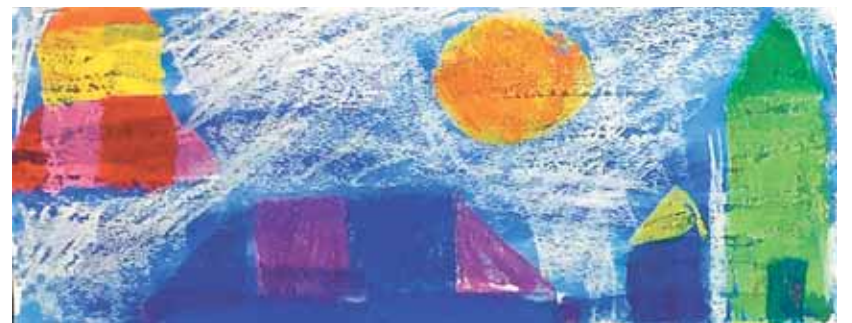
MCLEAN SCHOOL (LOWER SCHOOL)



By Nicholas



By Boyd H., Grade 1



By Taylor D., Grade 4



By Enzo R., Grade 2



By Max L.L., Grade 1



By Daniella M., Grade 4



By Leyu G., Grade 2

McLEAN SCHOOL (MIDDLE SCHOOL)



By Katherine Q., Grade 7



By Ethan L., Grade 7



By Sagan L-R., Grade 5



By Alyssa H., Grade 7



By Anna S., Grade 8



By Ella S., Grade 8



By Arielle R., Grade 5



By Kaitlyn F., Grade 6



By Caleb I., Grade 8



By Luke W., Grade 8



By Maya M-C, Grade 7



By Naomi A., Grade 7

NORWOOD SCHOOL



By Abby, Grade 7



Silkscreen by Cassidy,
Grade 7



By Louis Grade 1



By Catherine, Grade 4



By Karina, Grade 4



By NiuNiu, Grade 4



By Joseph, Grade 6



Austin, Grade 1



By Evelyn, Grade 5



Endangered Species – North Chinese Leopard by Gavin,
Grade 4



By Harper, Grade 7



Maryland Lighthouse by
Cole, Grade 2



By Inshera, Grade 8



Andean Bear – Habitat: Northwestern South America
Endangered Species

Endangered Species – Andean Bear by Jake, Grade 4

NORWOOD SCHOOL



By Kylie, Grade 8



Polar Bear – Habitat: Arctic region
Endangered Species

Endangered Species by Juliana, Grade 4



By Leena, Grade 2



By Victoria, Grade 1

My Last Chance

As I was on my way to my second move up meet, I was so nervous that I thought that I was going to puke. My heart beating 100 miles per hour. I felt dizzy, nauseous and I felt like I was having a panic attack.

I was really nervous for this move up meet because this is my last chance to make it to the level that I want to be. A move up meet is where you have to score at least a 36.00 to be able to move up to the next level. The previous move up meet I was really nervous, so when I competed bars, I fell. Then I had a panic attack, but my coaches did not know how to handle a panic attack. So I was extra nervous for this move up meet.

When I was walking toward the building my heart was beating a million miles an hour. I stepped inside the building and I felt nauseous. I took a deep breath and headed to warm ups. I was so nervous.

My first event was floor. I was not too nervous for floor because floor is one of my best events. I competed floor, I stuck all my tumbling passes and did all my dance with straight legs and pointed toes. Next I competed bars and I stuck my dismount and I did not fall on my squat on like I did at the previous move up meet. And after that I competed beam. Even though beam is one of my best events I was still really nervous. I started my beam routine strong but then when I did my full turn I fell. A full turn is a skill where you turn on the ball of your foot all the way in a complete circle. I was so upset that I also fell on my dismount too.

It was finally time for vault. This my last chance that I could make it to the level that I want to be. I saluted to the judges and took a deep breath. Then I started to run as fast as I could down the vault runway. I felt like I was running in slow motion down the long blue runway. I jumped onto the spring board as hard as I could. I done a couple flips and turns and then I stuck my vault and saluted to the judges.

I was terrified that I would not make it to the level that I would like to be. When my coaches told me my score I felt like I was going to explode! I made it to level 7!

— COCO, GRADE 5

Happy

Not happy like I just got a baby kitten, happy
Not like I am about to see my best friend that I haven't seen in a billion years, happy
Not like I am about to go on the best roller coaster ever, happy
But that I am in school, happy
That I am with my friends, happy
That I am in a happy place, with happy people, kind of happy

— COLE, GRADE 5

Angry

I am angry.
Not about to explode angry.
Not on the ground temper tantrum.
Or screaming my head off angry.
But mildly angry.
Angry that it is a Monday.
Angry that the weekend is over.
Angry that I have a test first thing in the morning.

— EMMA, GRADE 5

Cookies

Gooley, yummy
Eating, baking, chewing
Chocolate chip, oatmeal, caramel, blondies
Enjoying, biting, savoring
Chocolatey, sweet
Brownies

— EMMA, GRADE 5

Jump!

"Umm is this safe?" I asked. I looked around nervously at the treetops which were dripping with water with dew. I tried unclasp my carbineer again but it wouldn't budge. I was worried about not finding my mom and staff not coming. I heard loud thunder rumbling in the side of my ear. I was at Adventure Park, Sandy Spring, MD. "Should I call staff?" I asked.

"Maybe you should yell STAFF and tell them that you are stuck in this tree and can't get your harness off!!" My friend screamed.

Why am I thinking that I will die in this ropes course? I actually don't really know? Stop daydreaming Francesca! I am going to be fine! Umm is it going to rain?

"Umm, Francesca it is starting to rain. I think we should call staff, now!" my friend said.

After 10 long minutes in the rain, one staff member came to rescue us. One slight problem was that he had no idea how to rescue us. After our long discussion about how to unclasp my carbineer I heard him say, "Umm, I think I need to get some more staff" I see him and more staff coming. They asked me one question.

"Where is your mom?" I think for a second. Nervously I said "I don't know, I think by the entrance?"

I start to see staff running to the entrance and that made me nervous. I had never seen staff running to get kids guardians before. I see my mom coming. I am so excited to see my mom. I hear "Francesca, are you ok? I knew something was wrong! What happened!" My mom asked quickly.

"My carbineer is stuck on the tree and staff did not hear me!" I hear staff talking to my mom, I start to get nervous? What are they saying? This might take a while, or we can't get her down?

I see a staff member climbing the emergency ladder to get to me. He quickly did the course and said "We have to hook this up to you and get you down!"

"Oh, good!" I said. He gently attached me to the harness and he said "jump!"

— FRANCESCA, GRADE 5

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THE WOODS ACADEMY Submitted by students of Charmaine Taverner.



By Alexa Powers, 11,
Grade 6, Bethesda



By Alice Harper, 13, Grade 7, Washington, D.C.



By Anna Clark, 5, Grade Kindergarten,
Washington, D.C.



By Gabriela Pabon, 10,
Grade 5, Frederick



By Bernard Harman, 11, Grade 6, Bethesda



By Christian Reese, 12, Grade 6, Bethesda



By Kye Driscoll, 6,
Grade 1, Gaithersburg



By Joey Kucik, 12, Grade 6, Kensington



By Ian Farmer, 7,
Grade 2, Bethesda



By Olivia Monaro, 7,
Grade 1, Bethesda



By Jack Powers, 13, Grade 7, Bethesda



By Sibel
Ozan, 10,
Grade 5,
Rockville



By Dariush Namin, 11, Grade 5, Potomac

HOOVER MIDDLE SCHOOL

FROM PAGE 5

clothes. But my uncle had better clothes than most people. One day, my uncle met a boy and he was really poor. This older kid made fun of him, so my uncle hit the bully and they started fighting. At the end, he ended up with a broken thumb. The boy with rags said thank-you and they became best friends. One day at the Bazaar, my uncle and my grandpa saw his friend and his dad working there and realized he was very poor. My grandpa just stared at my uncle's friend and his dad. The next day, my uncle realized all the kids at the school did not have their usual rags. They were all wearing nice suits! My uncle didn't know why but soon realized it was my grandpa who paid for all those suits. My grandpa died before I was born but I know he was very kind and thoughtful. That is why my grandpa is my hero. I love him a lot.

— DARIA TAVAKOLI, 11

Culture

My parents both originate from China, and almost all my relatives are from China. Therefore you might think that we have a lot of Chinese culture in or house. However in reality that is not totally true. Even though all my family members are from China, my mom, dad, and I have really changed our ways. We are becoming more of an American family, but we still keep some major traditions. Such as during Chinese New Year we would go to celebrations hosted by other Chinese-Americans, or we would go out with some of our friends to eat a big feast at a Chinese restaurant. Also during the Moon Festive another Chinese holiday we would eat mooncakes a Chinese delicacy only made during the festival. Even though we are Chinese and celebrate Chinese holidays we also celebrate American holidays, such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, Labor Day, and more. During Thanksgiving we have a big Thanksgiving dinner with all our friends. Also during Christmas we usually go on vacation or stay at home by the Christmas tree. Even though we are Chinese, my parents have moved here from China to start a new life and we have embraced American culture. We are keeping

CONNELLY SCHOOL OF THE HOLY CHILD

Riley Clark

Sister of three best friends who grew up fighting over the remote and taking turns sitting in the front seat on the way to school, a fluffy, furry, and blonde friend who enjoys long walks and a belly rub that hits the spot, sixty-four uplifting peers who support me in my studies and cheer for me on the lacrosse field

I wonder how much wood could a woodchuck chuck, if a woodchuck could chuck wood, why school starts when I am still half-asleep and puffy eyed at what seems to be the crack of dawn, what designs, patterns, and fabric my dream wedding dress will have

I am happiest when my littlest sister spreads her contagious laugh, I am singing at the top of my lungs with my friends to the song "American Girl" by Tom Petty, I lay in my benevolent bed that is as warm, snuggly, and floats like a cloud, I have a Venti Carmel Macchiato in my hand to start a new, fresh day, my friend, Fiona, fiddles her fancy and fierce flute.

I am a lover of a box of chocolate covered salted caramels that melt in my mouth, a classic pair of sneakers that complement my favorite pair of vintage ripped jeans, the meaningful moments I spend with my dad discussing my earnest effort in the game, dancing in the torrential rain, carefree and covered in mud while laughing like a hyena, the little things, like finding change in my backpack to spend at the vending machine

I am as stubborn as a mule when I have to admit I am wrong, a colorful butterfly without a clue as to where I want to land next, not ready to say goodbye to my brother when he leaves for college, too eager to get my license and embrace my freedom

— RILEY CLARK

MRS. MOYLAN, ENGLISH 10H CLASS

Kate Distefano

Lover of furry, fluffy, cuddly, lovable, pretty puppies, big, bold smiles that hug my heart like a soft blanket on cold winter nights, the beauty of the

traditional traditions and celebrating new traditions in America.

— ZACHARY LI, 11

Heroes

My hero is my mom because she is amazing and funny, and unique. If I need someone to talk to about an issue she helps me. Everything she does for me is amazing. She always thinks of me before anything, makes dinner, buys me clothes, and helps me when I need it. She also gives me good advice and comforts me and makes me feel loved. I love spending every moment with her, and we always have a blast.

She shows me to be me and to be funny, and unique in my own way. Another reason I look up to her is because she had breast cancer and during that time it was extremely hard for her and she fought through it for us which shows me to be even more brave than I already am. She would get IV's in her arms and she got really sick from it and I was so little that it's hard for me to remember but I do remember I was very upset and scared. Now she is very strong. This shows me that whatever happens to think of how my mom did it and reflect off of it. This is why my mom is my hero. Also she's funny. One example of that is our jokes and when I talk to her she just always brings a smile to my face. My mom is kind, caring, and strong.

— EMI BERNSTEIN

Persistence

I remember one time when I was doing homework, I realized that it was really time consuming. I wanted to quit right then and there, but then it hit me. The fly hit me. There was a fly buzzing around our room. It was annoying and it was bothering me. I chased it around the house until I couldn't see it anymore. It was gone. I was sad because I did not like that fly. Then I remembered about my homework. Ugh. I went downstairs and saw it. Homework. I decided that if I wanted to get a good grade, I had to do my homework. So I did. The next day I turned it in and got 2/2 points. Yay for me! THE END

— JONATHAN DAVIS

night sky's shimmering stars that stretch across the beautiful abyss above us, making us feel like a speck of dust in the astronomical universe, the feeling as I dive underneath a monstrous wave in the ocean and feel it pulling me while I emerge feeling powerful and revitalized by the brisk water

Happiest when life is like a big, friendly smile, cheering me up when I am down, when I am in a peaceful, composed and soothed state of mind where life is like the land of Milk and Honey, I am in a car with all the windows rolled down, listening to loud country music on a summer night, wishing the moment could last forever, eating scrumptious, delectable, savory, mouthwatering meals prepared by my mother who cooks means as finger-licking as Gordon Ramsay

Wants to travel to the jaw-dropping streets of Italy that are a kiss of culture, the tranquil, tantalizing, top-notch, beaches of Turks and Caicos where the water is clear like a polished glass window, to the 1960s, where life was like a scene in Grease, and girls wear their hair big and bold, to all of the beautiful, serene, peacefully enchanting sunsets in the world, where the bright sun seems to melt into the horizon like a popsicle on a hot summer day

Hopes life will be as beautiful as a butterfly, where I can spread my wings and soar, flying high and only looking up, my funny, winsome, darling dog will live forever, so I can always have her by my side, I will find a husband who makes me happy like a sunny summer day where my mind is clear and my worries cease to exist, my grandmother is looking down on me from heaven, like someone at the peak of a mountain gazing at the life beneath them

I am afraid of slithery, skinny, sneaky, sly snakes that appear out of nowhere, failure and disappointing my loved ones, giving me a feeling of embarrassment as I feel my face turn red hot, creepy, dark, places where I am in solitude, longing for the touch of my mother's hands as she comforts me

— KATE DISTEFANO

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Back to Abnormal



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Now that the drama of the last five weeks – and the last three columns – is mostly over, life can return to its previous/usual ebb and flow of cancer highs and lows.

For the moment, what I don't know: the effect on my "Adam's Apple" tumor (as I will call it) of the aggressive, every-three-week-infusion-schedule I've been on since early October, is definitely not hurting. Though I am under no delusions about what my next CT scan might show, I also have no confusion as to the road ahead: stay positive and remain engaged and live life with the least amount of focus and conversation on the dominating fact that I was diagnosed with an incurable form of cancer: non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV, almost 10 years ago. A diagnosis which came with a "13 month to two year" prognosis.

By most accounts, I shouldn't be writing this column – or doing anything else for that matter. I should be somewhere else – doing absolutely nothing, so far as we know, anyway. And I don't mean lying on a chaise lounge somewhere soaking in the local culture as I try not to sunburn in the midday sun. I mean... well, I presume you know what I mean.

But here I am, alive and reasonably well; not boasting, just saying.

Because, as amazingly fortunate as I am to still be anywhere nearly 10 years post diagnosis, there's a part of me that believes not so much in what I've done to support my chemotherapy/conventional treatment (non-Western alternatives) as in thinking I've fallen through some crack somewhere and have been forgotten by whatever reaper is sowing these things.

Granted, he/she/it has a lot of work to do and an incredibly long list to get through; still, as the centuries have confirmed, eventually, everyone's die is cast.

Having survived so long when so few of the thousands of similarly diagnosed cancer patients have not, certainly gives this one pause. But the pause passes quickly and is taken over by positivity; as in I must remain positive about the negative and not allow any semblance of "woeing" about me or moaning and groaning about what I'm able to do or disabled and unable to do. Never!

I have been given the gift of life and I see no point in looking that gift-horse in its mouth. It is my job, if it could even be characterized as such, to keep my head down and keep moving forward, figuratively speaking. There is no point in thinking backwards or wondering who, what, where, when and how. The point is the future, not the past.

Unlike the country music song by Tim McGraw, "Live Like You Were Dying," I don't want to live like I'm dying. I want to live like I'm living. A living which takes into account the good, bad and the indifferent.

If I stray from what I perceive to be my usual path, I will know that I'm doing so for a reason: cancer.

And since I never want to reinforce a negative, let alone give it room to roam, I will continue to try and take it all in stride and be grateful along the way for the life I've been granted and try not to weaken in my resolve to not let others be adversely affected or diminished by my situation.

I pretty much do whatever I want to do anyway. Though there are many things I can't do (particularly, bending), there are still many activities I am able to enjoy.

To quote Spock from Star Trek: "The good of the many outweigh the good of the few." A bit of a stretch I know, but I hope you get the association.

For me to survive the ordeal of cancer requires taking the emotion out of it. The highs and lows must become evens. And the levels and test results which occasionally have become odds, merely moments in time and subject to change.

If I am to finish this race, time cannot be of the essence, time must be what I make of it.

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

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