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Andrew VanDyke,
Eagle Ridge MS,
eighth grade.

Children's CONNECTION



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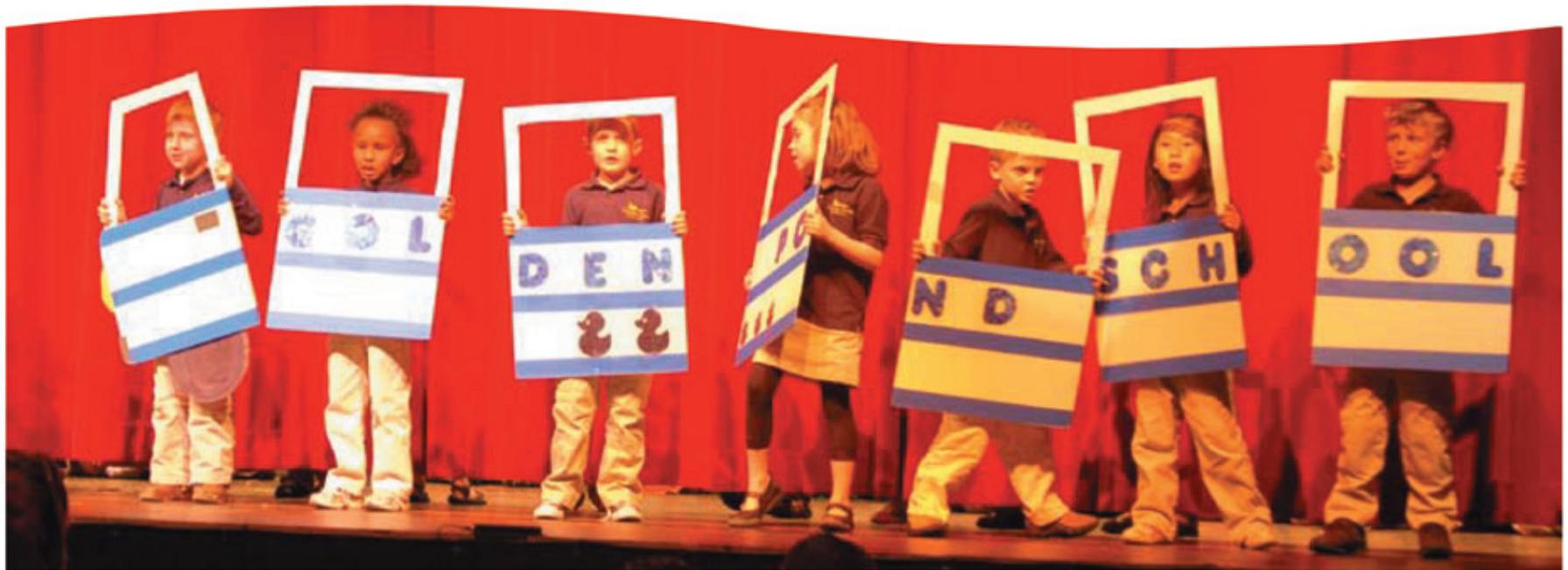
January 11, 2009	12:00 pm - 3:00 pm
January 27, 2009	9:00 am - 11:00 am
February 8, 2009	12:00 pm - 3:00 pm

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CHILDREN'S CONNECTION

ASHBURN CONNECTION EDITOR JENNIFER LESINSKI
703-917-6454 OR
LOUDOUN@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



Elise Readen, Stone Hill MS, seventh grade, teacher Meredith Warren.



Shilpa Gangietty, Steuart Weller ES, fifth grade, teacher Patricia Spaulding.

Welcome

Dear Readers:

This week, the Ashburn Connection turns over its pages to the youth and students of its communities.

We asked principals and teachers from our local schools to encourage students to contribute their words, pictures and photos for our annual Children's Issue. As well as a general call for submissions from the community through editorials.

The response this year was tremendous. As a result, we were able to publish only a fraction of the submitted stories, poems, drawings, paintings, photographs and other works of art in this issue.

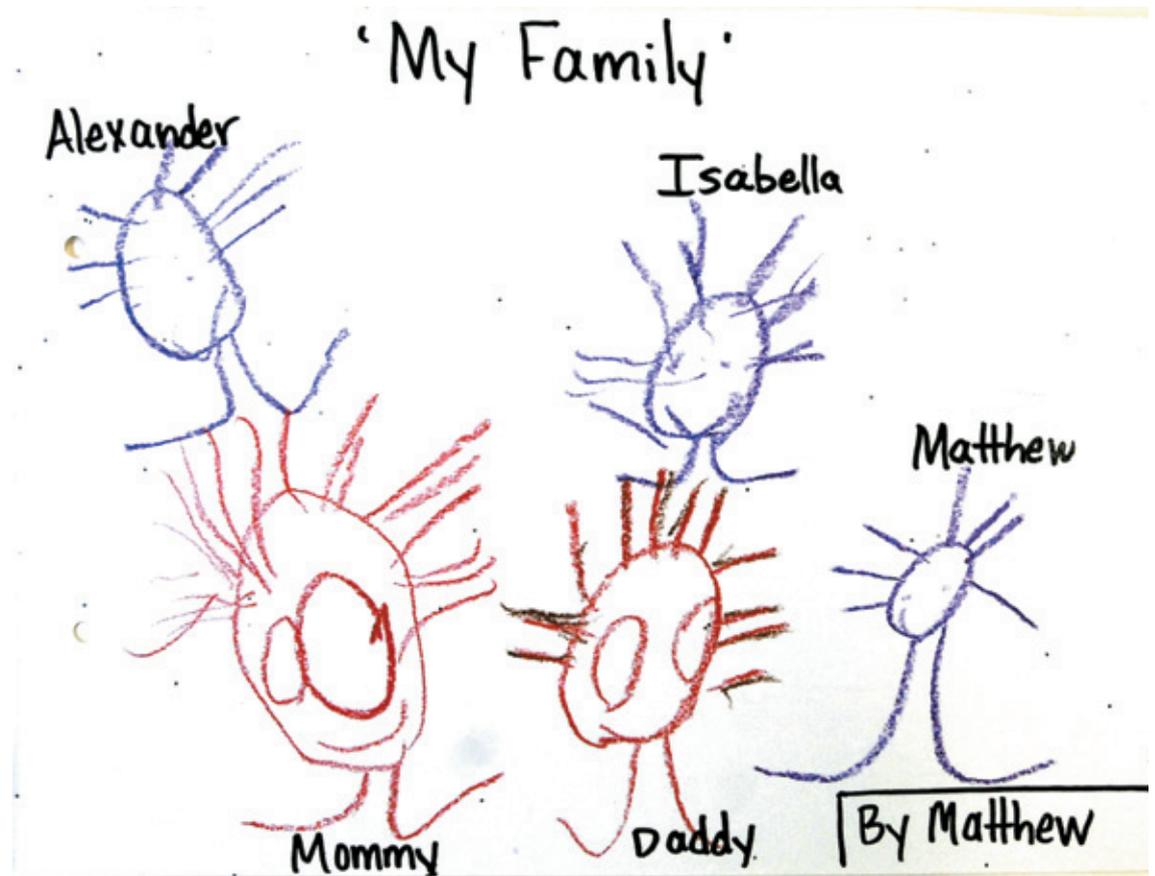
We appreciate the extra effort made by school staff

to gather the materials during their busy time leading up to the holidays.

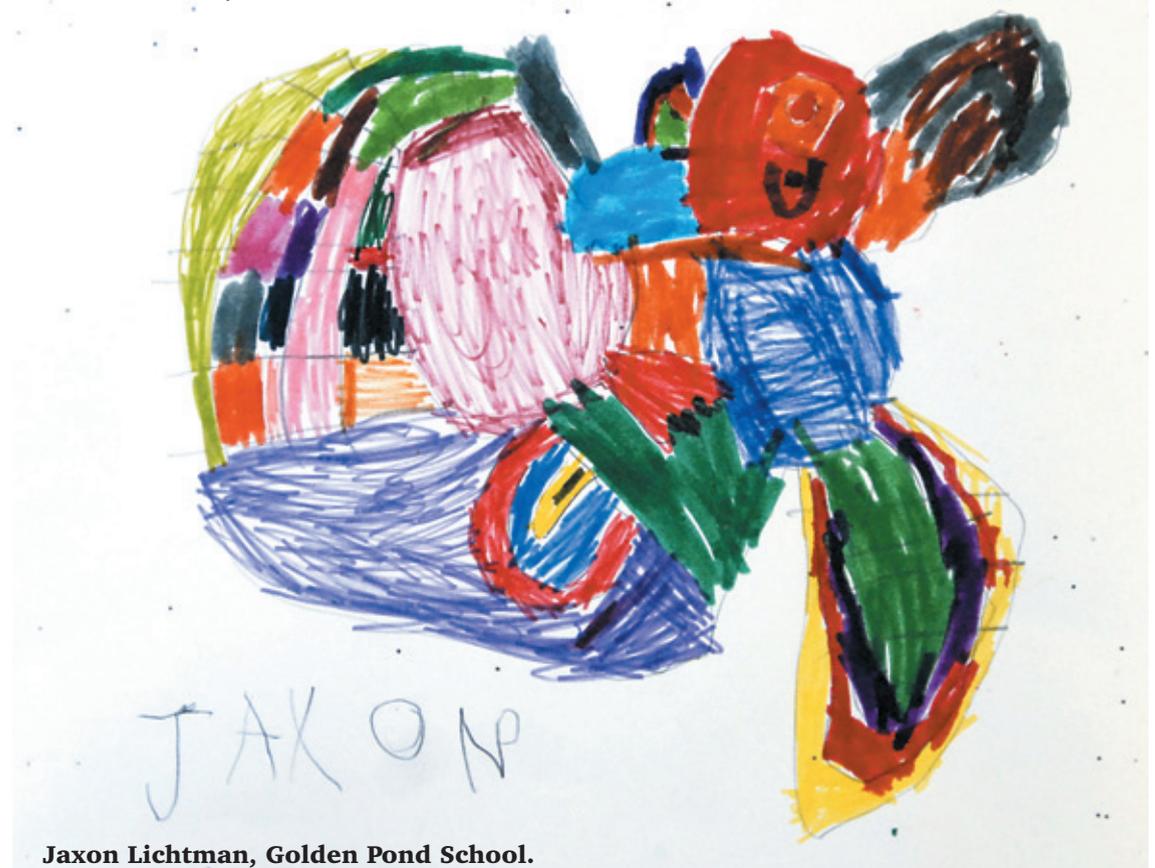
The annual Children's Issue is only part of our year-round commitment to cover education and our local schools. As always, The Connection welcomes letters to the editor, story ideas, calendar listings and notices of local events from our readers. Photos and other submissions about special events at schools are especially welcome.

Send information to: The Ashburn Connection, 7913 Westpark Drive, McLean, VA 22102 or send e-mail messages to loudoun@connectionnewspapers.com.

JENNIFER LESINSKI,
EDITOR



Matthew Thissel, Golden Pond School.



Jaxon Lichtman, Golden Pond School.

IN THEIR WORDS

I Can't Write a Poem

I can't write a poem,
Because it blasts in my head.
I can't write a poem,
Because it makes me nervous.
I can't write a poem,
Because it is too hard.
I can't write a poem,
Because it is boring as a dictionary.
I can't write a poem,
Because the words are too difficult.
I can't write a poem,
Because it makes my head hurt.
I can't write a poem,
Because my friends are distracting me.
I can't write a poem,
Because I can't find a topic.
I can't write a poem,
Because my brain turned off.
I can't write a poem,
Oh! I just can't write a poem.

Vasu Dhingani, 11
Fifth Grade
Mr. Bellwood's Class

Attack of the Exalafungi Hamster

Boom, boom, boom. That was all I could hear when my neighbor, Jessica and I were scurrying away from the Exalafungi Hamsters. We were well ahead but the Exalafungi Hamsters are known to be fast little rodents. Even though they ran fast, Jessica and I ran faster. When they were barely behind us, we hid behind huge space rocks to talk out a plan. Our plans consisted of placing all the Exalafungi Hamsters into a never landing space box. Once the battle was over (can't go into detail, too graphic for the kids) we hopped back on our space carts and headed back to Earth.

**BELMONT
RIDGE MS**

Vanessa Wilkinson
Sixth Grade
Ms. Cannon's class

When I went outside with my Language Art class, I saw grass growing as far as the woods stretched. While insects looked for food, the trees' leaves blew in

the breeze. Joggers and cars passed by on the road behind the woods. Birds were singing, bugs chirping under the rocks and soil, and a jet soared over head, its engine roaring like a lion. Houses sat along the left side of the woods while squirrels prepared for winter. A cat roamed along the rocks. The sights I saw that day were great.

Henry Turner, 11
Sixth Grade
Ms. Cannon's class

The Upside Down Times

There once was a time ...
When the sky was on the ground,
And the ground in the sky.
The sun shined in wavy ripples,
And the tallest mountain stood an inch above the ground.
The rivers disappeared with no reason,
And pies grew instead of grass.
The moon was red and blue,
And shooting stars were as cold as ice.
Jellybeans grew on trees,
And beach sand was put in tea.

This is how they lived in upside down times,
Though this is how the world looks to me.

Maddie Fulham
Sixth Grade
Ms. Cannon's class

I like to read books; it's easier than it looks.
It's like a walk in a park; except in the dark.

You can read different things, sometimes books say you can have wings.

You can never stop; it's just always going to pop.

Have you ever read some? It's just funny how fast they can come!

I hope you like my story, I know it's a glory!

Osney Murphy, 11
Sixth Grade
Ms. Cannon's class

Happiness is ...

Happiness is the sun so happy and bright. Except at night ... Sadness is the moon, looking so gray, even in the day.

Nicole Roenicke
Sixth Grade
Ms. Cannon's class

Finding Peace

The sun warms your neck and the chilly air cools the rest of your body. Daisies and sunflowers dance in the

breeze, and the sweet smell of the ocean fills your lungs. The waves crash on the rocks as the tide goes in and comes out. Seagull's caws fill the air joining the steady beat of the waves like a drum. Sit there and let your mind leave you and welcome the ocean as it fills your head with peace and comfort.

Alyssa Martin, 11
Sixth Grade
Ms. Cannon's class

Friends Forever

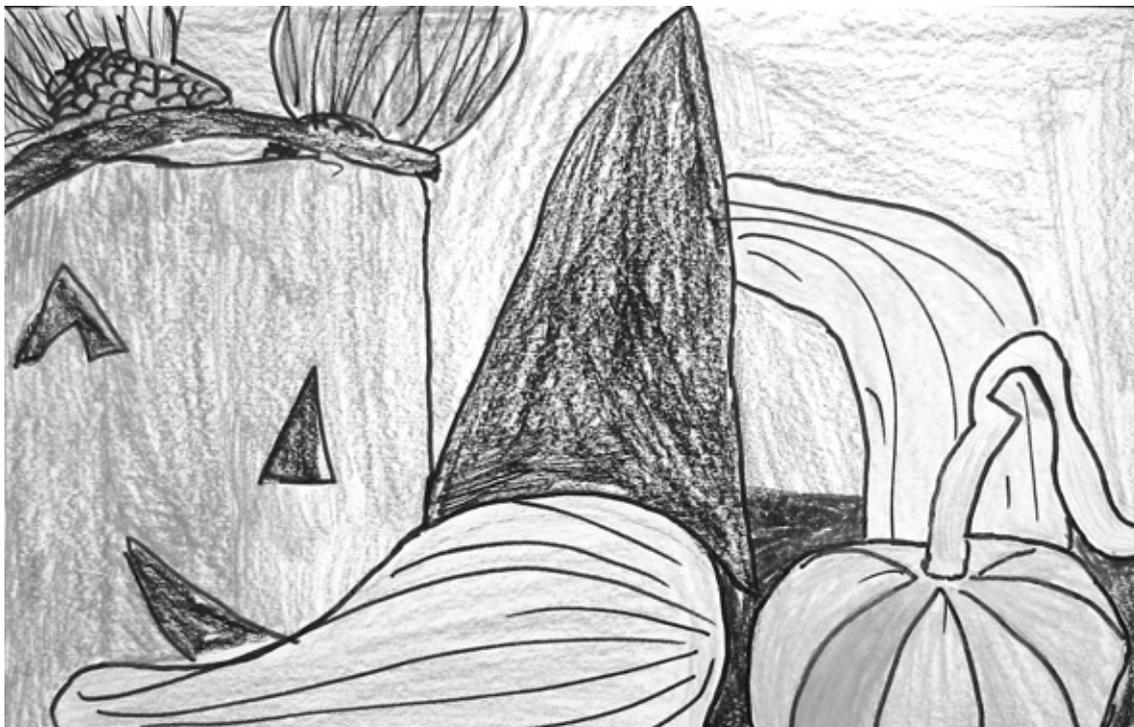
I'll never forget to wait for June 19, 2010. Though it's almost two years away I'll count down every day. My friend Julia Stembidge is a friend that everyone wishes for. She's a funny, fun, happy, crazy, caring, honest, and altogether a perfect friend. This summer Julia moved away to Williamsburg and is staying for two years. This was and is very hard on me because I've never had anyone so close to me leave. June, 19 2010, is exactly two years from when she left. These two years may last forever but those long years afterwards will last even longer and will make up for those two years I went with out her. Julia will never be forgotten for she is a true friend.

A friend forever.

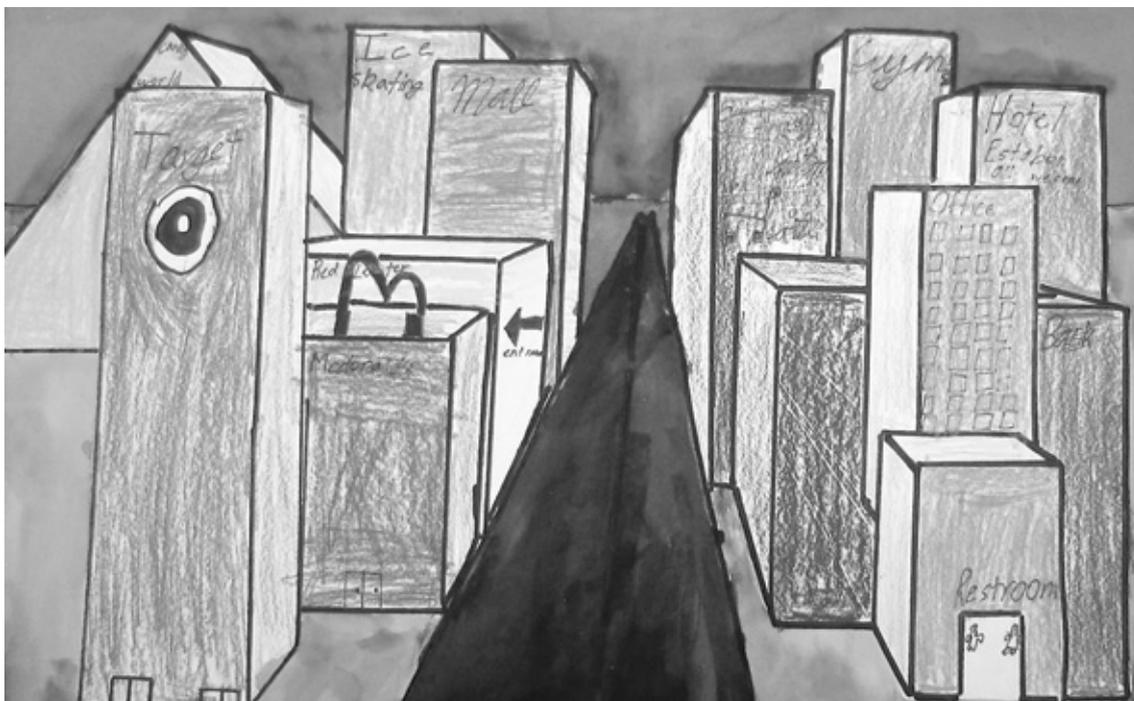
Sarah Boyle, 11
Sixth Grade
Ms. Cannon's class

SEE WORDS, PAGE 15

ART GALLERY



Charlotte Rieckhoff, Cedar Lane ES, third grade, teacher Bianca Kramer.



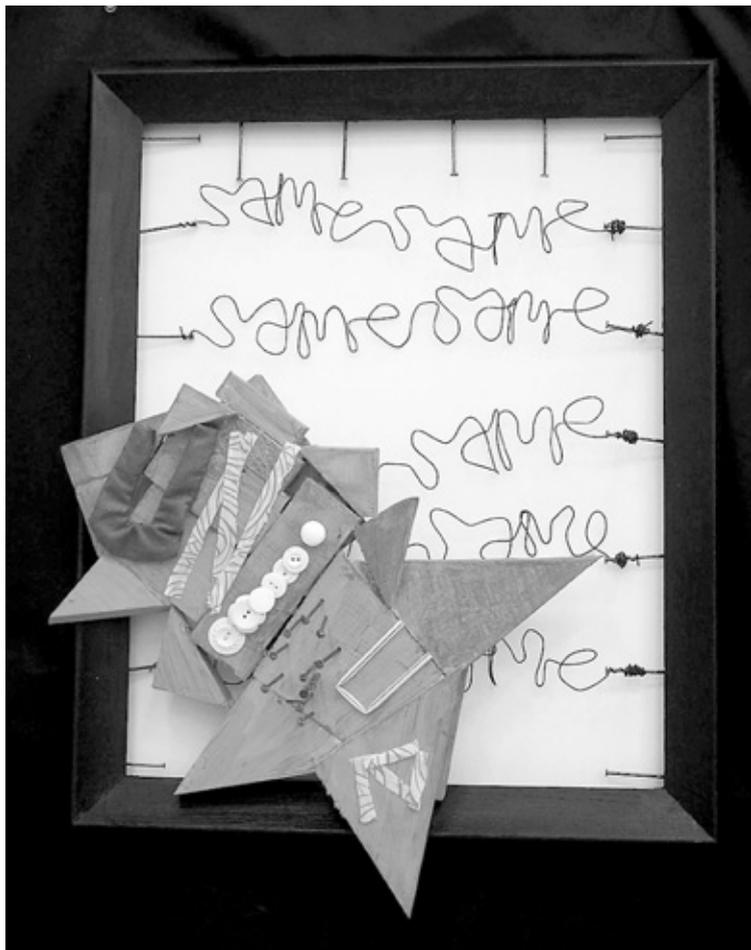
Jay Thurn, Cedar Lane ES, fourth grade, teacher Bianca Kramer.



Allison Maly, Cedar Lane ES, fifth grade, teacher Bianca Kramer.

**CEDAR
LANE ES**

ART GALLERY



Ashey Schmidt, Freedom HS, 12th grade, teacher Augusta Dadiego.



Seana McCroddan, Freedom HS, 12th grade, teacher Augusta Dadiego.

Lauren Jameson, Freedom HS, 12th grade, teacher Augusta Dadiego.



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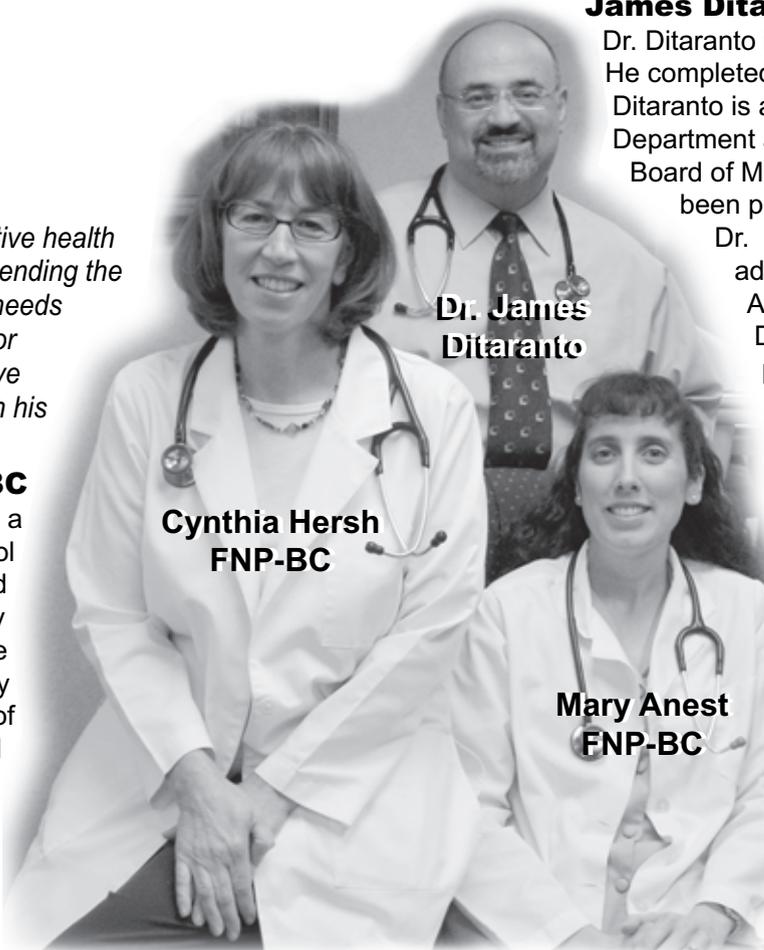


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Cynthia Hersh, FNP-BC

Cynthia grew up in Pennsylvania and is a graduate of Sacred Heart Hospital School of Nursing. She worked as a registered nurse in neurosurgery and emergency medicine for many years. In 1999 she graduated from Creighton University magna cum laude with a Bachelor's of Science degree in nursing and in 2001 with a Master's of Science advanced practice nursing degree specializing in family medicine. She has worked in emergency medicine, urgent care, and family medicine, and is a member of IOTA Tau National Honor Society for Nursing.



Cynthia Hersh
FNP-BC

Dr. James
Ditaranto

Mary Anest
FNP-BC

James Ditaranto, D.O

Dr. Ditaranto is a Board Certified Family Medicine Physician. He completed his Family Practice Residency in 1986. Dr. Ditaranto is a former Chairman of the Family Medicine Department at Reston Hospital Center and served on the Board of Medical Planning for Loudoun County. He has been practicing in Loudoun county for over 13 years.

Dr. Ditaranto's special interests include pediatric and adolescent health care. His other interests include Attention Deficit Disorders in children and adults. Dr. Ditaranto also includes a special place in his practice for all his geriatric patients.

Mary Anest, FNP-BC

Mary is a family nurse practitioner with board certification from the American Nurse Credentialing Center. She received her undergraduate nursing degree from Bob Jones University in Greenville, SC, in 2003. After working on an orthopedics unit and then a high-risk obstetrics unit, she attended Binghamton University in Binghamton, NY, for her graduate nursing degree. She worked as a teaching assistant during her graduate studies. She received her Master's degree in 2006. Her marriage in 2007 moved her to Allentown, PA, where she worked in the central education department of St. Luke's Hospital & Health Network in Bethlehem, PA.

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IN THEIR WORDS

STONE HILL MS

If you think about it, we're really all the same. I know that someone reading this is going to go, "Pfft, yeah right. I'm nothing like you." Maybe not, but we're all human. You, me, the person sitting next to you, whoever they may be. So why is it so difficult to see past our differences?

Last Friday, I had Language Arts class first thing in the morning. In class, we have writing prompts written on the board that we have to com-

plete. Today's was one word, "Freak," written in big letters on the board. I thought nothing of it, finished my prompt and moved on. It wasn't until I got home that I actually started to think about it. Freak. It seemed a normal enough word, but for some reason it bugged me. Why would anyone call anyone else a freak? Because they were insecure and it made them feel better? Or because they were scared of someone who was different from them? Or maybe you're just fooling around with your friend

and don't actually mean it. But what do you mean when you do mean it?

That was what prompted me to write this article for the peer newsletter. Just one word, freak. One word, freak or not, could change a whole person's life. So next time you want to call someone a freak, just remember that you're not all that different. Would you want someone calling you a freak?

Elise Readon, 12
Seventh Grade

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WORDS

Freyja Bergthorson's eighth-grade class.

My Camp

During the summer I go to a camp called Conductive Education in Arlington, Va.

This camp is designed for kids that have Cerebral Palsy. A year-round facility is run in Chantilly. Conductive education was developed in Hungary. The kids happily leave their wheelchairs at the door. They walk in to the room, and do active stretching exercises. Conductive education is a life skill based program.

FARMWELL STATION MS

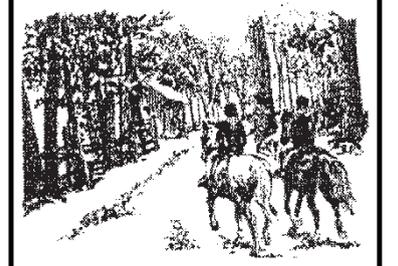
I love conductive education because I get out of my wheelchair for six hours. This past summer, with the help of my walker I was able to walk like a cheetah on the prowl all the way down the twenty foot hallway. When I finally get to the end of the hall I sit down on a wooden, slotted stool with my hands on my knees. One of the things I love about conductive education is the equipment doesn't have support on it at all. During lunch the counselors are always upbeat and never discourage us from our goals. They push us to walk because they know how important it is to us. Every day when I would walk into my classroom I saw some of my friends smiling as they were stretching. Sometimes I just wonder where I would be if it wasn't for conductive education.

Amy Stone

My Amazing Super Mom

My mom is like superwoman.

SEE FARMWELL, PAGE 12



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Dr. Tracey Nguyen

ART GALLERY



Alexandria Corley, Dominion Trail ES, third grade.



Artist of the Week

Haley Luft, Dominion Trail ES, third grade.

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Nelly

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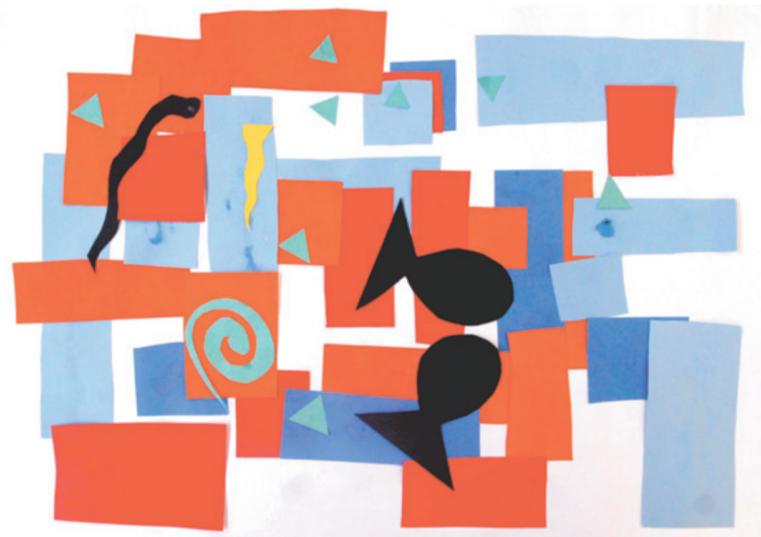
ART GALLERY



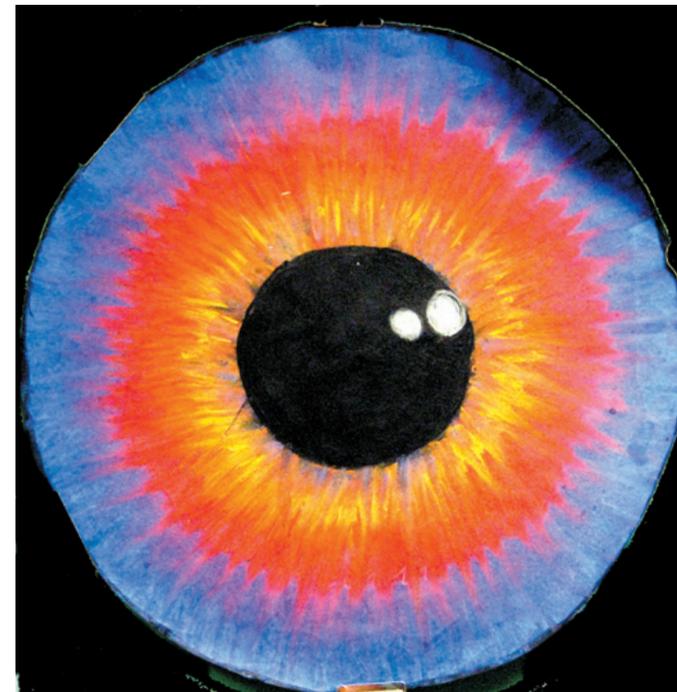
Tyler Durante, Golden Pond School.



Camryn Thompson,
Cedar Lane ES,
fourth grade,
teacher Bianca Kramer.



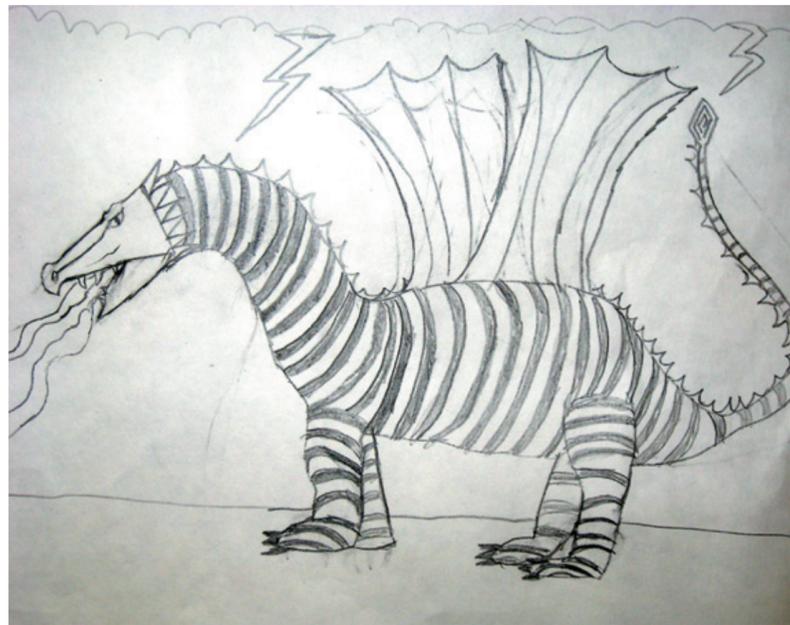
Jeff Lee, Dominion Trail ES, third grade.



Jasmine Alvarado,
Eagle Ridge MS,
seventh grade.



Luis Miguel Castro, Freedom HS, 12th grade, teacher Augusta Dadiego.



Keshav Bhakta, Rosa Lee Carter ES, third grade, teacher Mrs. Unger.



Brady Scott,
Eagle Ridge MS,
sixth grade.



Hima Gonuguntla,
Eagle Ridge MS,
sixth grade.

IN THEIR WORDS

EAGLE RIDGE MS

Grape Juice

One scorching summer day, Jenna and her opossum, Mac, was sitting in their living room bored to death. And to make matters worse, Jenna was dying of thirst so she opened the fridge in search of something cool to drink. She chose a glass, her mom's fresh homemade grape juice and poured herself some. Abruptly she heard Mac whimpering. She ran over to her whimpering opossum to see what was wrong. She screamed in surprise, there was a pool of yellow and purple

liquid on the floor.

"Mac! Did you pee on the ground again?"

Mac innocently looked up at Jenna, his eyes saying "What?!" Jenna looked around and spotted the source of the liquid. It was burning a hole through the carpet. Panic stricken, she sprinted back to the kitchen to find something to calm herself. But instead, what she found made her heart beat faster. The once half filled glass of grape juice was now on the floor surrounded by what seemed not a half glass of grape juice, but a half a tank of grape juice. "How did that happen?"

thought Jenna. She turned around to find Mac trying to escape the giant tidal wave of grape juice and a speck of yellow, but maybe that was her imagination. Mac squeaked for help, "I'm coming Mac!" hollered Jenna.

But before Jenna could get to the drowning opossum another tidal wave overtook her. Oh no! She couldn't help Mac anymore. He wouldn't be happy that she had lied to him. Desperate for help, she reached for the phone and found out that it was broken. "How will I call the cops or warn anyone of this terrible catastrophe?" All of a sudden her

mother busted through the door yelling "TRA LA LAAAAA!!! I'm coming to save you and your pet opossum!" Then a tidal wave of grape juice overtook Jenna's mom. Jenna shouted, "We're doomed of good now. O Jenna tried to reach the surface, but she hit the surface instead. "I can't breathe," screamed Jenna. Mac opened the door and all the grape juice spilled out of house. "Mac you're a genius!" said Jenna.

By the time Jenna was out of the house the grape juice had already gotten to her head. Jenna was starting to act a little strange. Mac was trying to pull

Jenna's mom out of a juice soaked tree. "Mac? Where are you Mac? Can you get my grape juice for me? I left it on the kitchen counter," said Jenna. When Jenna's mom was finally out of the tree she helped Jenna get some of the terrifying grape juice out of her brain. Once most of the grape juice got out of Jenna's brain she hugged Mac and told him to get the police.

When the police arrived, they immediately started investigating how the grape juice got in the house. "Ma'am I'm sorry to say this but, your house has been abducted by aliens," said the officer.

Jenna screamed and Mac bit her leg. Suddenly she was in front of the fridge with Mac beside her. Jenna realized that she was dreaming. She was still thirsty and was about to pick up the grape juice but remembered her dream and took the milk instead, just to be on the safe side. When she was done she set of to look for Mac. She found him in a puddle of yellow liquid. "Mac? Did you pee again on the carpet?" asked Jenna. Mac guiltily looked away as if to say "oops."

Jennifer Du, 12, and
Dorothy Yan, 12

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IN THEIR WORDS

FROM PAGE 8

She is a hardworking single mother. Whenever I need something she is always there.

She is probably the most energetic adult I know.

My mom is always down for anything, you will never find her bored.

My mom loves to travel around the world.

Sometimes she can be unfair and strict,

But isn't every mom?

That's just what makes her my mom. She's the best!

Ethel K Velasquez

Rain

FARMWELL STATION MS

Have you ever seen the rain? I mean really seen it. How it falls in patterns blurring your vision?

How each ripple they make echoes the one before it, but gives off its own melody? They represent who we are, who we will become, and who we once were. They represent the hearts of young children, clear and unsoiled. They represent the hard times that we all got through.

My favorite memories are of the rain. When my brother and sister and I used to run and dance in its presence, as it rolled off our umbrellas and came to rest in the puddles below our feet. When I was sitting by the windowsill in my pajamas, watching it engulf the ground, soaking it with water, as I pulled the blanket tighter around my shoulders. In the summer, swimming as it poured down around me. Standing in the middle of the street with my arms out

spread, drenched to the skin, laughing as I spun in circles with my friend. These memories will stay with me forever, and so will the rain.

I went through a hard time in my life when I wasn't sure which way to turn, and the rain filled my heart. At this time it represented the tears I let no one see, the way my heart bled, the way I kept falling, always hitting the ground. Not the happy memories I cherished. Not the life I had once lived. Yet it still understood me the way no one else could. When I didn't want answers, or advice, I just wanted someone to truly listen. Now, when I close my eyes, I can still see that rain, and remember. But when I open my eyes I can see the rainbow it lead me through to see.

Abigail Bauer

My Hero

I really admire my mom. I don't really tell her it that much, but I really do, more than she knows. She divorced my dad a couple years back and I know she's been really stressed out raising us, basically (she has a boyfriend) alone. She has to deal with her not-so-cooperative boss, my sister, and me every day. Honestly, I just recently realized how hard it must be to have that weight on her shoulders when she is raising two spastic, hormonal, teenagers and dealing with her job, for our sake. The amount of stress she can handle is absolutely superhuman. Trust me, my sister and I are both extremely difficult and stubborn people and I can't even imagine what she goes through everyday, physically and mentally, to make sure we're happy and healthy. I really love and admire her for everything she does. She has a lot to deal with and I really try to help her keep

things off of her "to-do" list. I think she's a really strong woman for all the things she endures everyday and she deserves a lot of respect. She tries so hard and she's my hero.

Jennifer Greene

Mrs. Dooley

As you go through your education life you realize that some teachers will be mean and some will be increasingly nice and cool.

The teacher that I had last year was Mrs. Dooley. She was my 7th grade English teacher. She is medium-height, has brownish hair and a winning smile that could light up Broadway.

You want a teacher that makes you feel good inside. That's the majority of what Mrs. Dooley does. Her laugh can make you laugh. She has done millions of things but, the biggest thing is she sets you up only for preparation for the future. When you think about grammar it's no so appealing but, when Mrs. Dooley teaches it, that's all you want to talk about. She also doesn't make you feel like a student but, more like a friend who is telling you what to do in a nice way.

It changed the meaning of what I think about school and education. English this year is so much easier than I thought it would be because of that preparation I got. So, thanks Mrs. Dooley.

Emily Jorns

Write

loudoun@connectionnewspapers.com



Julia Blondin, Dominion Trail ES, third grade.

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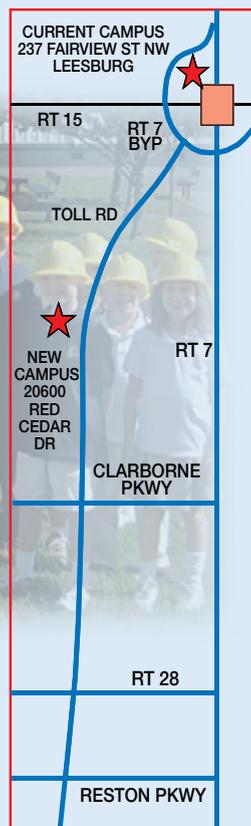


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IN THEIR WORDS

STUART WELLER ES

Patricia Spaulding's fifth-grade class.

What Would Be the Perfect Pet? Why?

I think the perfect pet would be a dog. I choose a dog because a dog is loyal and I have a dog. With a dog you can hug them, but cats would scratch you. Dogs and puppies are really playful and want to be around you. Dogs love to swim and go camping. Dogs don't sleep much and they can guard you. Dogs love to be held and kept around you. If you love exercise, they don't go in a litter box, they go outside. So a dog would be the perfect pet for me.

Abigail Willis

Do You Agree That Giving Is Better Than Receiving?

My thought is yes it is better to give than receive because when you give they automatically give back with a present that will live for life. It also teaches you how to share with other people. The most important thing about giving is don't go crazy with it like buying electronics for a person if they want it and you want to make them happy. If you want to give, make sure they're special to you and give them a present that they can keep for life. It's also good to give to people that are poor and want to have something special. Just remember to make it special for them.

Anthony Oakes

My Family's Favorite Tradition

My family's favorite tradition is Christmas because most of our family comes from Louisiana to spend Christmas with us and we get lots presents. Last year we had this huge Christmas party and most of our friends came and it was a lot of fun. At the party we played darts, Ping-Pong, pool, and other games. Most of the kids went on our trampoline in the back yard. All of the adults watched the football games on TV. When it was day time most of the kids and adults played football. That is why Christmas is my family's favorite tradition.

Blake Ramsey

ART GALLERY

ROSA LEE CARTER ES



Bright Hus, Rosa Lee Carter ES, fourth grade, teacher Mrs. Harrop.



Aaleah Chou, Rosa Lee Carter ES, first grade, teacher Miss Linn.

son we went to San Francisco was to celebrate my grandparents 70th birthday. I met a lot of relatives. I had so much fun. I want to go back and ride the cable car again!

Erica Resurreccion

A Memory of My Summer

My summer was the best summer ever because I went to India! India is where I was born and my family lives there. I went there because it was my uncle's wedding. In India a wedding has lots of parts. There is the Mendi ceremony, Jogoue, obviously the marriage then reception. The marriage brought family together. That include my cousins. It was a long flight but it was worth it.

Other fun things we did was play cricket. Cricket is an Indian sport. It's like baseball but you go back and fourth. Something else is kite flying. Kite flying is more fun in India because you can walk on roofs were I live. There are also fun but hard kite flying competitions.

Gobind Chinayna

If You Could Meet Any One Living or Who Has Lived in This World Who Would It Be and Why?

I would love to meet president Barack Obama. One friend I would love to come with me is Morsal because we are both

major Obama fans. We would both love to go because we want to see the white house and get advice from him. One more reason why I like Obama is because I want to trade lives and see how it would be like to be the president. I also like him because he cares so much for other religions and world peace.

Hira Ahmad

The Best Gift I Ever Received

The best gift I have ever received is my Nintendo Wii. I picked my Nintendo Wii as the best gift I have ever received because that is the new game system (2007). All the games I have for the Wii are very fun. Plus, it came with the game Wii Sports. I have played that game so much I have 1,000 points on boxing which means I am on the level that says "Pro." The Wii is also cool because you can play Gamecube games on it. You can also hook it up to the Internet to download other games like Super Mario 2 or Donkey Kong 3. That's why I think my Nintendo Wii is the best gift I ever received.

Hugh Harrell

It Is Better To Give Than Receive

The reason why it is better to give than receive is because many kids and adults are hungry. Also, when you give it increases your chances to get a present from that person when they are able to give. They will look up to you as a kind person if they are younger and will say they are in your debt if they are adults. It should give you lots of joy to

SEE WELLER ES, PAGE 19



Ramya Bhaskara, Rosa Lee Carter ES, third grade, teacher Ms. Fiddler.

IN THEIR WORDS

Mrs. Oynes' fourth-grade class.

Friendship J

Friendship is like trying different ice cream flavors, and really enjoying it. You pick out a flavor or friend and you start doing things together. You go to the mall, museum, and ice cream store. You laugh and talk. The food taste so good when your with a friend. You decide to add other flavors or friends.

Anna Mai

Friendship

Friendship is like writing a song because every time you add a note to a song you add to your relationship with a new potential friend or song. Each note adds to the melody or the growing fascination with the character traits that person. The lyrics are the final step to writing a song or friendship. It is like when your friendship is at its peak. You'll do things together more often. You are best friends. It is the happiest time in your relationship. The song is now completed.

Joey Ruggiero

Friendship

Friendship is like surfing the perfect wave. Both are exciting, fun, and adventurous, exposing you to the new world and new things. When surfing you could fall off the wave and crash, which is a gamble you have to take to have a friend.

When you first paddle out to a wave it may make you nervous, like meeting a potential friend. Paddling out to get to the wave is like telling someone about yourself. A wave has up and downs just like friendships, but it is well worth if

you end up with a good friend.

Connor Hite

Friendship

Friendship is like baking a cake. First you have a mix or potential friend. You have to mix in milk, oil, butter, and eggs to the mix. This is when you communicate and find out about each other's character interest. You then begin hanging out a lot. This happens when all the ingredients are mixed nice and creamy. Set the friendship by baking your cake with lots of conversation. Add lots of icing or activities to make your friendship special.

Daria Morris

My Monster

My monster's name is Super Spike. He eats steak and turkey. He likes the Chargers. He plays soccer. He likes to jog in the morning. He has a pet shark named Super Teeth. He plays another monster named Frecko. I love my monster.

Rafat Abu Ghannam

Horses Haiku

Flowing manes and tails
Their breath comes out in warm puffs
Hooves crunch in the Snow

Mali Selman

Winter Haiku

Kids playing in snow
Diverse snowflakes falling down

Sleds zipping down hills

Matthew Marcusen

Puppies

Cute, soft, and lovely
I love puppies here
and there
Puppies make me
smile!

Dani Kugler

Major League Baseball 2008

Sox lose the playoffs,
Rays lose in the World Series
Phillis win the series

Aylon Gerrig

Flying Dog

One day I saw a flying dog
Way up in the sky
Birds were singing all around him
They were so very high
I yelled, "How do you do!"
And then he replied,
"I'm feeling very blue."
So I cheered him up with pie,
Then he said, "Bye!"
He went flying
Way up in the sky!

Catie Randolph

Winter Poem

Drinking hot cocoa with marshmallows
Sitting next to a toasty warm fire
Having snowballs fights
Shoveling the driveway

That's winter!

Rebecca Oh

Winter

Winter looks like clear sparkly skies and marshmallows on the ground.
Winter smells like my Grandma's yummy cookies right from the oven.
Winter tastes like steamy hot chocolate with whipped cream on top.
Winter feels like an icy breeze on your face and snowflakes on my tongue.
Winter sounds like kids sledding and laughing with their friends.

Alex Policaro

Snowy Days

On snowy days you play outside in the cold winter day.
You ride on sleds and you go down hills in the white snow.
When you're done you go inside and enjoy a nice cup of cocoa.
Snowy days are cold but can be fun too!

Brittany Coffman

Winter Poem

Sledding down big hills are so much fun.
Icy cold snowballs shaped as a bun.
Sipping cocoa
Come along and let's be loco

Yasmine Boswell

Winter Haiku

Crunching through the snow
Piles everywhere
Snow plows
Heap them higher and higher
Snowmen popping up everywhere

Children making snow angels

E.J. Harten

Winter

Winter falls in breezy winds and whirling snow
You will never see a leaf on a deciduous tree
Play turns to building snowmen
And drinking cocoa after hours of play.

Anshul

A Blanket a White

Look at the white puffs of snow
It's like a blanket of white
A blanket of cold
Time to warm up
With Cocoa
Keeping warm use Mom's blanket
And only play in the white blanket of snow

Kevin Burns

Winter Poem

Snow starts falling on the terrain
Kids start diving in the snow
When they are frozen they warm their hands by the fire
And their stomachs with hot cocoa

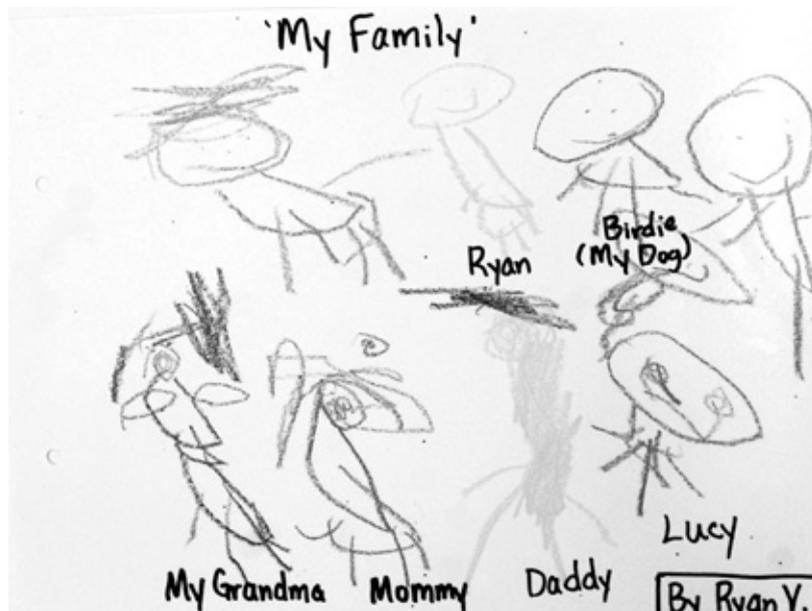
Spencer Strei

Black Cat

Black Cat — big and fat
Living next door to my flat
Ignoring me
I plead but he does come
Big, fat, so adorable
What's with you big, fat cat!

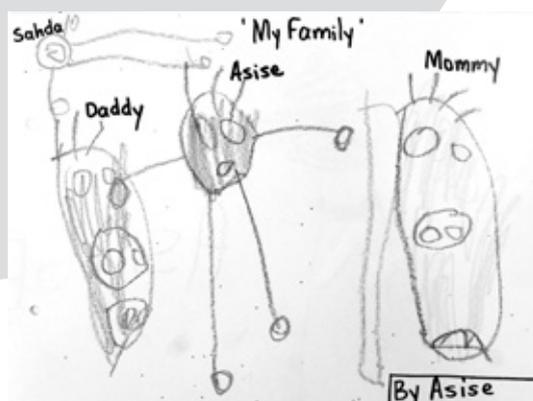
Lauren Chang

ART GALLERY



GOLDEN POND SCHOOL

Ryan Vulgamore, Golden Pond School.



Asise Pinder, Golden Pond School.



Gabriel Nieves, Golden Pond School.

WORDS

FROM PAGE 4

As I came out on one afternoon on a sunny day, I could breathe the sweet air in my mouth. I could hear the air planes go by, but everything else was silent. I can smell the grass as if it is wet and soggy like a puddle of slimy mud. I can feel the dead and prickly grass on my legs. I can see all kinds of things. I can see green and brown grass and trees of yellow, green, and orange. I can see fallen logs, full size or half. I can see the grass roaming on and on getting higher and higher, but yet lower and lower. The grass smooth and rough. Dirt all around with little bugs flying on and on. The amazing things I saw that day. The driveway is beyond the trees. Grass is smooth straight across the field. Then it just stops and gets rough the rest of the way. You should have been there for what I saw that day.

Brenna Lee, 11
Sixth Grade
Ms. Cannon's class

My Diamante Poem

Mad, Fire
Flaming, Burning, Boiling
Red, Volcano, Blue, Ocean
Cooling, Freezing, Chilling

Justin Credo, 11
Sixth Grade
Ms. Cannon's class

Writers are lords of their characters by written word;

Able to create, complicate and destroy on a whim;

An idea that to the slave on the page seems quite absurd

Making the protagonist like a puppet stranded on a limb.

The author's duty to create conflict demands a cold heart

The master of the pen must compromise his "child"

Who wanders the mountains and is prey for a hunter's dart.

Spinning a climax that leaves the reader beguiled,

The imagination behind the adventure remains impartial

When deciding the character's fate, at the end of the story

To love then sacrifice his fictional friend seems controversial.

Writers are lords of their characters by written word.

Tanner Karafa, 11
Sixth Grade
Ms. Cannon's class

When Mrs. Cannon announced that we are going outside I got so excited. We sat down in the grass and started to observe. First I saw people walking through the woods with their dog. There were trees that had fallen, and trees that were bent. The bent ones looked cool because I had no idea that trees were capable of doing that. There was a blue sky with not many clouds in it. The clouds were white and soothing. The sun beat down on me, and I just felt like I was in Heaven. When I looked up at the sun I couldn't even open my eyes it was so bright. I stood up for a minute, and saw a pile of rocks with cat tails growing around it. The tree's leaves were changing color! It was so beautiful, with oranges, yellows, and browns. I felt all the grass beneath my feet. It felt like, well I can't really tell what it felt like, but it felt good. I also heard the crickets chirping and it was soothing yet annoying. I got mad because it was time to go. I didn't want to leave because I love nature.

Jade Dimitrov, 11
Sixth Grade
Ms. Cannon's class

IN THEIR WORDS

EAGLE RIDGE MS

Cindy Underhill's eighth-grade classes, answer the question: If you had \$50,000, to what charity or organization would you give the money?

If I had \$50,000, I would donate it to Food for the Hungry. They are an international relief and development organization that works with churches, leaders, and families to help provide resources for those that live in poverty. They are often the first ones to help at a disaster providing food, shelter, and medical care. They work in over 26 countries, and searches the U.S. recruiting people to help serve the poor and help transform their lives. Donating the \$50,000 to them would help save lives and help those in poverty across the world.

Jackie Deffer
Block 1

Home they could buy if they had money
Or rent a new place
Eager to help out another
Less in debt they would be
Easier life with money
Sacks of money I will give them
So happy we all will be

Giovanni Sack
Block 4

Fifty dollars to each homeless person
I will feel proud
Feeling like I could've kept money to myself
The churches will be happy
Homeless people will get lucky.
The world needs this
Our people deserve something
Homeless shelter
All \$50,000 to them
New start, delicate money

Donate to the homeless shelter
Live with more money
Lucky, thankful, rich
Sacks of money

Andy Tran
Age 13
Block 6

The morning was still young
When a woman walked up to the door.
Melancholy was she
When she spotted a package on the floor

She looked back down the road,
Past the sign that read, "American Cancer Society."

The only life she saw,
Was a small, round toad.
She looked back at the package,
Its paper white like snow.
Its pattern intricately designed,
Holding secrets she would soon know.

A single golden envelope,
Was tied to the box with a blood-red string.

The woman dared open it,
Wondering what was in this thing.
"For you," the word read,
and the woman's mouth fell open wide.

For this single letter told her,
A check for \$50,000 was inside.

Alex Price
Age 14
Block 7

Caring for somebody that needs help
Helping other people instead of always thinking
about yourself
Always thinking about others

Red Cross is a great charity that helps others

All people could use the \$50,000 to pay hospital bills

To always try to help someone when

you can
You become a better person by helping others

Ryan Green
Age 13
Block 8

If I were given \$50,000,
I would spend it on the Animal Shelters'

Creatures with Collars
For those that were hurt would get a second chance

Their life I would help to renew
In hopes that they are well-treated
My donation will keep them undefeated

Their horrid stories touch my heart
One of the reasons I want to do my part
I'll make their life assured;
their happiness is my reward

Sarah Mason
Age 13
Block 1

Find someone to give it to
If I had \$50,000 to make someone's life better

Hope you know who to give it to or donate to

You are so nice to give to someone in need

Help people who don't have much
Nice job!
Do your best to help

Do what you can or what you will
Like helping out in any way
Donate love from you to people in need

And you will feel right in every way.

Will Parkin
Block 4

If I had \$50,000, I would give it to the people who are sick or dying and don't have enough money to go to the doctor or a hospital. I think that, no matter who they are, if they get hurt and have to go to the hospital, they should. Thousand of people a year need to be helped, but they don't have enough money, so I want to help make sure that no one has

to live like that.

Alexa Otto
Age 13
Block 6

If I had \$50,000 to give to a charity,
I would divide up the money
Because many charities are important to me

\$15,000 shipped across the Atlantic to save the Africans from various diseases.

That way, they don't have to live life in a panic.

\$15,000 to those less fortunate than us —

people that struggle for food, and live on a bus
\$20,000 to find a cure for cancer and any other diseases that don't have an answer

If you add up everything,
It equals \$50,000
It also equals a happier life for every living being.

Taylor Galownia
Age 13
Block 7

A while ago, I found \$50,000, and I turned it into the police. After 10 days, they said I could have it, but I didn't want to keep it. I'm giving it all to the multiple sclerosis research foundation. My friend's mother has multiple sclerosis, so I want to help her find a cure.

Connor Brawley
Age 14
Block 8

There are some very unfortunate children who are born or diagnosed with cancer at a very early age. Some children don't know what life is like without the disease, and that is why I would donate \$50,000 to a hospital devoted to curing cancer. I believe everyone has a chance to see the world and live freely, without anything holding them back. This money could save lives of children so that they can have a normal life.

Jordan Engbreth
Age 13
Block 1

If I had \$50,000, I would give money to the poor because I want everyone to be happy this holiday season. I would buy for them warm coats, fuzzy boots, and big hats so they would stay warm in the cold weather. For the children, toys of every kind so they can choose the perfect one for them, and it will bring a smile to their faces. I would provide lots of food so everyone can gather together with their whole family and have a wonderful holiday.

Lauren Mosesso
Block 4

The trees are growing
The cars are rolling
The leaves are falling
And life is still going
But not for everyone.

In this case, I am talking about kids who have cancer. That's why St. Jude's is one of the hospitals that help kids that don't have enough resources. They treat everyone in a very special way, and it doesn't matter if they are rich or poor. All that matters is to keep them healthy and under control. I would give \$50,000 to St. Jude's Hospital. Right now, they need it more than I do. The money would be a light of hope and strength to their life.

Paola Flores
Age 13
Block 8

If I had \$50,000, I would donate it to the Humble Place, which is a school in Uganda, Africa, for young children. The kids are very poor and are orphans. They either lived with their grandparents or other family before coming to live at the school. I know about The Humble Place because my church started the school. Humble stands for Helping Ugandan Mwana by Loving Example. Mwana means children in the Ugandan language. I think this is a very worthy cause and I would donate my money to this school.

Christine Mackrell
Age 13
Block 7



Clarissa Seminario, Eagle Ridge MS, eighth grade.



Christine Mackrell, Eagle Ridge MS, eighth grade.

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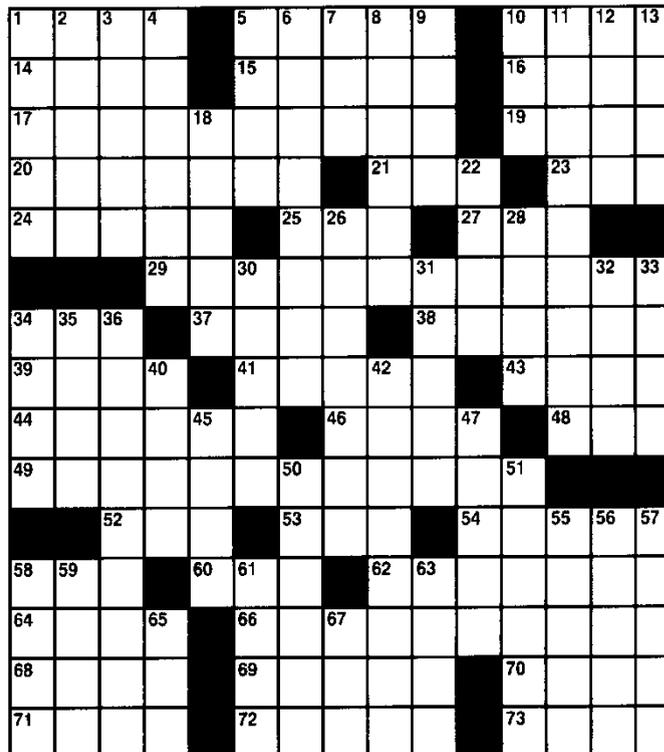


Nothing is too small to know,
and nothing too big to attempt.
-William Van Horne

NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

Edited by Will Shortz

No. 0414-1



Puzzle by Alan Arbesfeld

ACROSS

- List ender
- Most populous member of the British Commonwealth
- Sneakers brand
- Part of the Hindu trinity
- Booze
- Door sign
- Leisurely lyricist?
- Playground cry
- Teacher
- Place for a nap
- Mischief-maker
- Intravenous injection
- Mouths
- Center
- Side view of a composer?
- Coal carrier
- Did in
- Arousing
- Actor Guinness
- Burdens
- "Could be better"
- Knock down
- March org.
- Led
- Cheerful composer?
- Back at sea

- Kind of tax
- La Scala offering
- Before toweling off
- Hermit's home
- Movie promo
- Graph line
- Assault on a lyricist?
- See
- Nash of note
- Place for embroidery scissors
- Polo need
- Sympathy
- Bruce or Laura

- Show participant
- Carpe — (seize the day)
- Measure
- Wheels for big wheels
- Norse hammer thrower
- Perks
- Saucers, maybe
- Church leader
- Remainder, in Rouen
- Actress Kudrow
- Greenspan concern: Abbr.

- Muslim journey
- Spread out on the dining table
- Reason for some hisses
- Young rhino
- One with drive
- Story
- Serb foe
- Dark time, maybe

- Treated maliciously
- Tickle pink
- Come again
- Actor Alan
- Stinger
- Northern major-leaguer
- "Look out . . ."
- Go on and on
- Hardly a neat house
- Vitamin info, in brief

DOWN

- Massachusetts quartet
- Type squiggle
- To have, in Le Havre
- Permitted
- Words said with a nod
- More restricted
- Dull brown
- Polar buildup
- Prefix with nautical
- Gardens, N.Y.

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

L	I	A	R	S	R	A	P	S	R	O	S	A
A	N	G	E	L	I	S	E	E	O	W	E	S
S	C	A	P	E	C	A	R	T	U	N	I	T
T	H	R	O	U	G	H	P	U	T	G	E	N
			T	O	E		L	E	H	R	E	R
P	O	N	C	H	O	C	L	E	A	R		
O	N	E	O	N	E	H	I	S	I	E	N	A
S	C	R	U	B	A	I	M	E	D	G	E	D
H	E	D	G	E	S	L	A	B	E	G	A	D
			H	A	I	T	I	E	R	R	O	R
V	E	R	D	U	N	A	T	E				
E	M	I	R		D	O	U	G	H	F	A	C
N	O	G	O		O	G	R	E		O	R	A
U	T	E	P		O	L	I	N		R	E	N
E	E	L	S		R	E	S	T		M	A	T

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Christopher Rochon,
Dominion Trail ES,
third grade.

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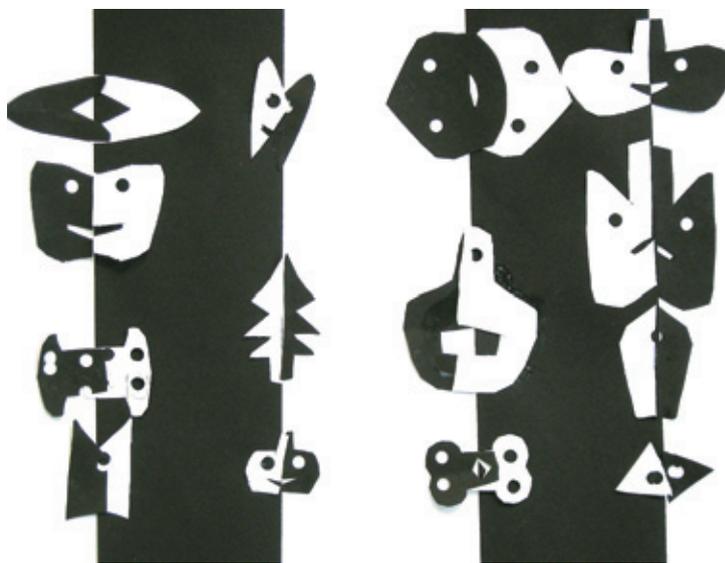
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Cedar Lane ES,
first grade,
teacher
Bianca Kramer.



Vivian Vu,
Rosa Lee Carter ES,
fourth grade,
teacher
Mrs. Harrop.

IN THEIR WORDS

FROM PAGE 13

get a present, right? If that is true than just think how much joy they will feel. It is sort of like the Warmgiving when we donated clothing to poor people. That number has greatly increased because of the great economy crisis the banks have caused. The families who bought the shares became poor and many families that use the stock market lost money. Would you feel better to give yourself a present for Christmas or buy them a present or donate to a cause which will help them. No matter how much the U.S. government helps, it will never get rid of the damage it caused, so why not help a family and give. Many children and families are starving and cold while we are warm and cozy inside our houses eating delicious dinners. So why not give them something to remember something that will make them remember you. You should give them stuff and not wait to receive a present. It is way better to give then receive.

Jane Zhao

My Favorite Family Tradition

My favorite family tradition is Christmas Day. I like Christmas because you get to open colorful presents. You can get together with friends and family. Have a nice goose or something good for dinner. You get to play with your new gifts. You can see what your friends and family got. You can decorate the tree. Have some good pumpkin pie. You can listen to Christmas music. You can have fun snowball fights. That's why Christmas is my favorite family tradition

Jonathan DiNovo

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