

# Cascades CONNECTION

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## *Children's Connection 2009*

Abigail Paredes, 7  
2<sup>nd</sup> grade,  
Lowes Island Elementary

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# CHILDREN'S CONNECTION 2009

## Welcome

Dear Readers:

This week, the Loudoun 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 2010 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 [loudoun@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:loudoun@connectionnewspapers.com), but you can reach us by mail at 1606 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 or call 703-778-9415 with any questions.



EDITOR STEVEN MAUREN

**Mack Reiley 5<sup>th</sup> grade, Guilford Elementary School**



**Marina Ramsis 4<sup>th</sup> grade, Guilford Elementary School**



**Tarun Vippa, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, Eagle Ridge Middle School**



**Haley Hodge 5th Grade, Dominion Trail Elementary School**

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# WORDS & PICTURES

## Where Has All the Time Gone?

Seven years ago, I sat at home watching Elmo with a sippy cup filled with orange juice in my hand. I was probably smart enough to read a book or draw a picture, but I wasn't smart enough to write an essay. Four years later, it's different. When I started my first year at Mill Run, I was terrified and alone. Today, I'm a confident young fifth-grader going on to a wonderful middle school, Eagle Ridge. During my elementary years, I did phenomenal activities, had important school subjects, and best of all, I had special teachers. I wish I didn't have to move on to middle school, but changes in life are sometimes better.

Over the years, I had many interesting activities. Every Friday at the end of the day, we would have something called Fun Friday. Fun Friday was when you had an option to have recess, use your imagination to create something with your friends, watch a pleasant movie, or read quietly. Most of the time I would play outside with my friends. A second way of hanging out with your friends and exploring something new are the field trips! All of the adventures we took were awesome! My favorite place I visited this year was Hemlock. The reason I liked this trip so much was because it was an outdoor adventure with lots of teamwork.

When I was in fourth grade, I went to the Udvar Hazy Air and Space Museum. When

we went there, an amazing surprise happened. A movie star, Shia LaBeouf, was shooting "Transformers 2: Revenge of the Fallen." Everybody, including me, was screaming so loud that the people outside the museum could hear. He was nice enough to give us his autograph. Not only were the field trips exciting, but field days are a blast! Every year, Mill Run provides Field Day to everybody in the school to make new friends and get pumped up. There are fifth-graders vs. teachers' race, Tug-A-War, and other fantabulous activities. Movie Nights are another thing that you can enjoy at this remarkable school. Movie Nights are when you can watch a wonderful movie with your friends, and eat some food. The last activity I'll remember that started back in third grade is the 20/20 Challenge. The 20/20 Challenge is a computer program that helps you develop your skills for the SOEs. In order to earn the special surprise, you had to do Study Island or SOL Pass for 20 minutes for 20 days or more. If you complete the task, Mill Run provided you a movie and a delicious snack.

Six years of elementary school mean six teachers that follow me along the road. I loved every teacher I have had since kindergarten. Every teacher I had has always helped me no matter what I needed. Every teacher I got just gave me memories to always remember. For my second-grade teacher, I had Ms. Schwigert. She was an



SEE WORDS & PICTURES, PAGE 17 **Abigail Paredes, 7, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, Lowes Island Elementary**

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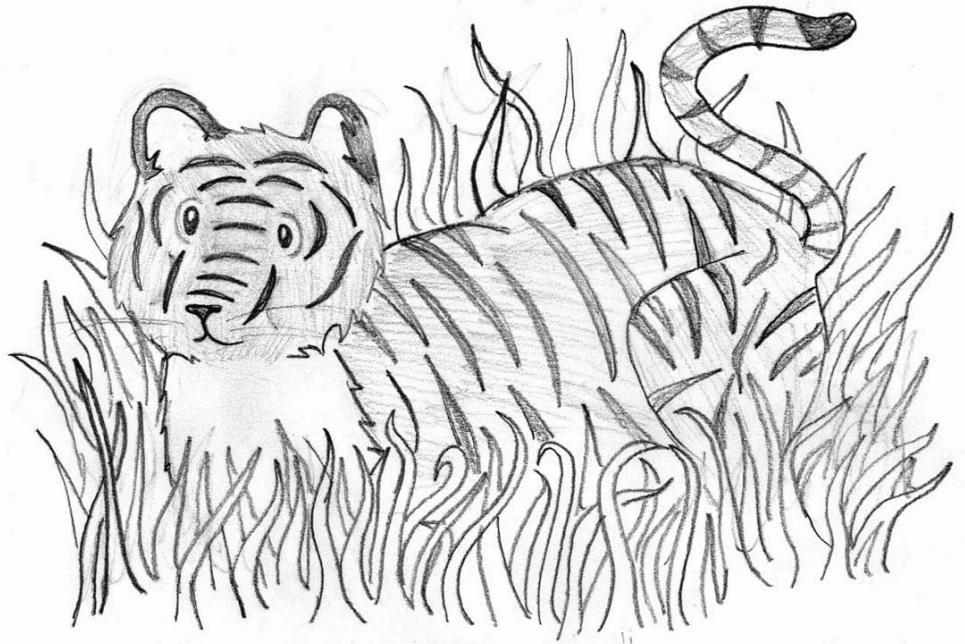
**Drop-Off  
Locations  
& Schedule  
for Tree  
Recycling**



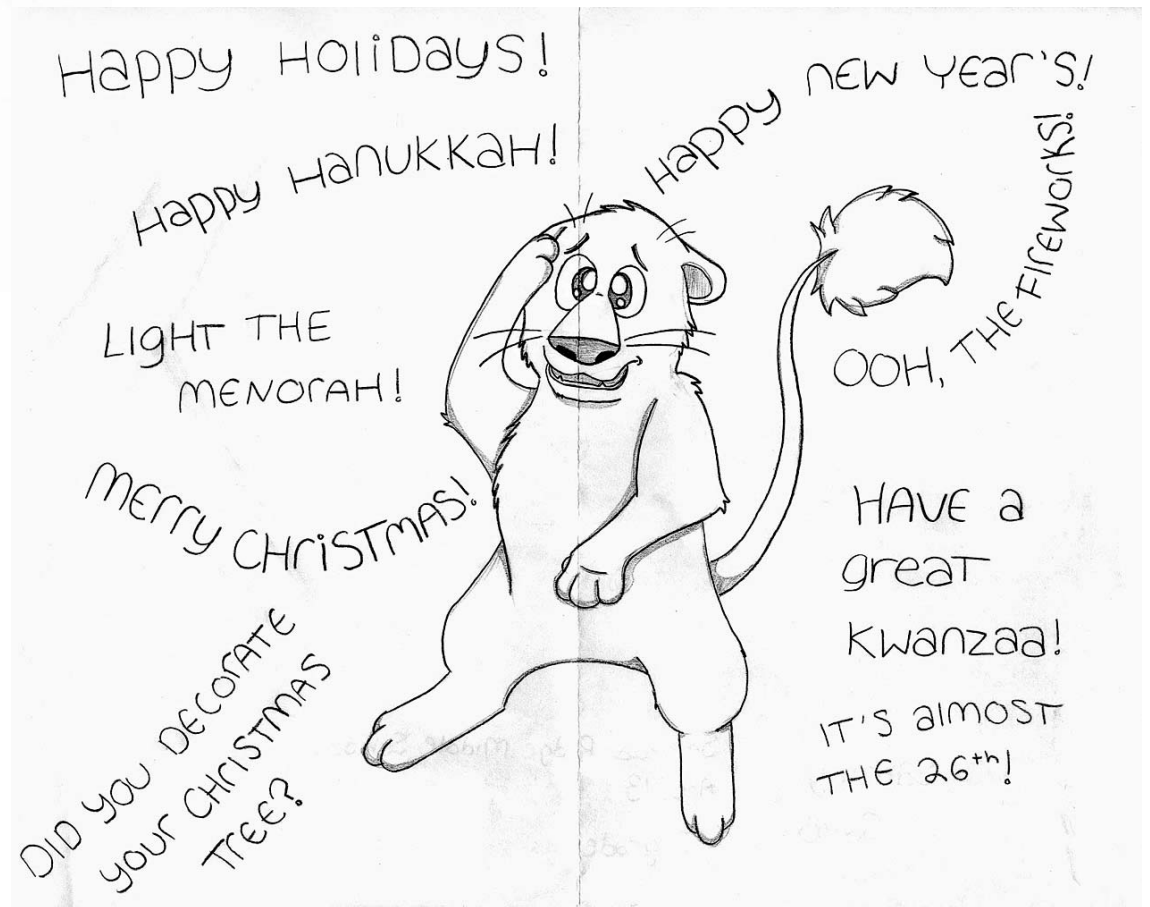
# WORDS & PICTURES



Rachel Winter, Seneca Ridge Middle School



Jillian Kazmierczak, Seneca Ridge Middle School



Sammy Savos, Seneca Ridge Middle School

## Winter

Out the window  
I can see  
Flakes falling  
Twisting, turning  
Around and around  
So cold.

Inside – warm and cozy  
Just the place  
You want to be –  
Inside looking out.

— KATHERINE ARMSTRONG,  
SENECA RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL

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## WRITINGS

### Winter

What could it be  
The blue swirls outside I could see  
Some small little creatures  
What could they be?  
Cold little scoops  
In the summer  
It's getting cold  
Oh bumper!  
People giving things  
For paper colored green  
There's still more stuff  
That you haven't seen  
Lots of licks  
On colored swirls  
Eating with lots of twirls  
Around with 2 wheels  
People ride  
Kids say "let's go hide"  
From bloomers  
To Coolers  
From here to there  
To every where  
The place I like until the end  
Is peace, love and happiness.  
— **Paula Barrios**, Seneca Ridge Middle School  
(I'm outside as I see my silhouette. The snow falls gently as I hear the echoing sounds of my footsteps. I look up to see the sky, it is gray and mellow. My mind is blank. It's as if the world is at peace with the horizon. This only means one thing ... Winter has come with a welcoming.)

### Mistakes

Have you ever given your very best at anything and it turned out perfect just the way you had hoped? Sometimes people get scared to give it their all in case it turns out bad or not exactly what they were going for. But in life, things change and when nothing goes right then go left. Learn to live with your mistakes because if you had done it differently you wouldn't be the same person you are today. So in life learn to take chances and risks because you only live once, and your life plan is not set in stone and I can almost guarantee you that something is going to change, so live in the moment.  
— **Ashley Schiffer**, Seneca Ridge Middle School

### Life

Life, the one thing that god gave everything. So why did he do it? Nobody knows why but we are glad that he did. Some have used their life for good and some have used it for bad. Creating a new life may be painful and tough but it is worth it. If people treat this new life well then it would be great for everybody. Treating life wrong can really make things different than planned. Life changes everything; giving life to another person or

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# WORDS & PICTURES

## DRAGON

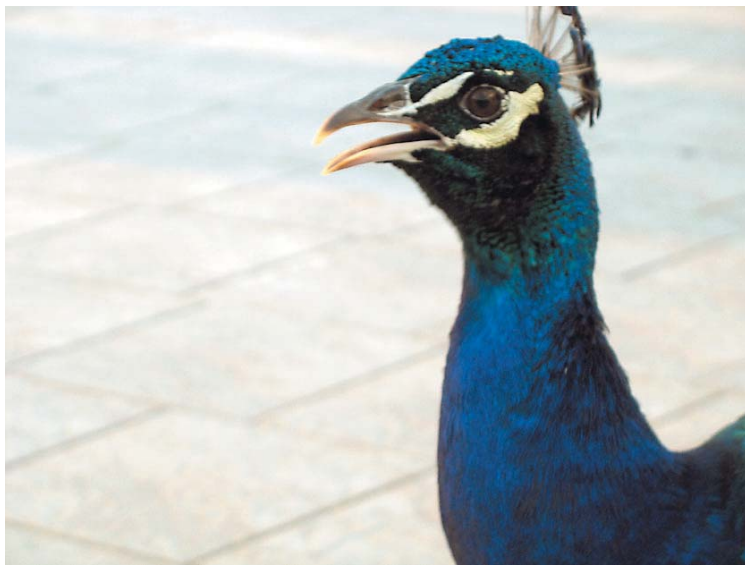
D aring  
 R aving size  
 A dventures by heart  
 G one with the wind  
 O nly to come back once again  
 N ever too far away with your  
 imagination  
 — **Catherine Ostrander**, 6th  
 grade, Seneca Ridge Middle School

## Exploration

Explore the North  
 Explore the South  
 Explore the West  
 Explore the East  
 Though we think we've discov-  
 ered everything  
 Many things are left unknown  
 From an element to a large body  
 of water  
 Anything can be explored  
 — **Brian Bolanos**, 6th grade, Sen-  
 eca Ridge Middle School

While I walk across the cement  
 ground,  
 All of a sudden, I hear a loud  
 Crunch  
 I turn behind me to see what it  
 was  
 Then I see the leaf, broken in  
 tiny bits  
 I took pity on the leaf

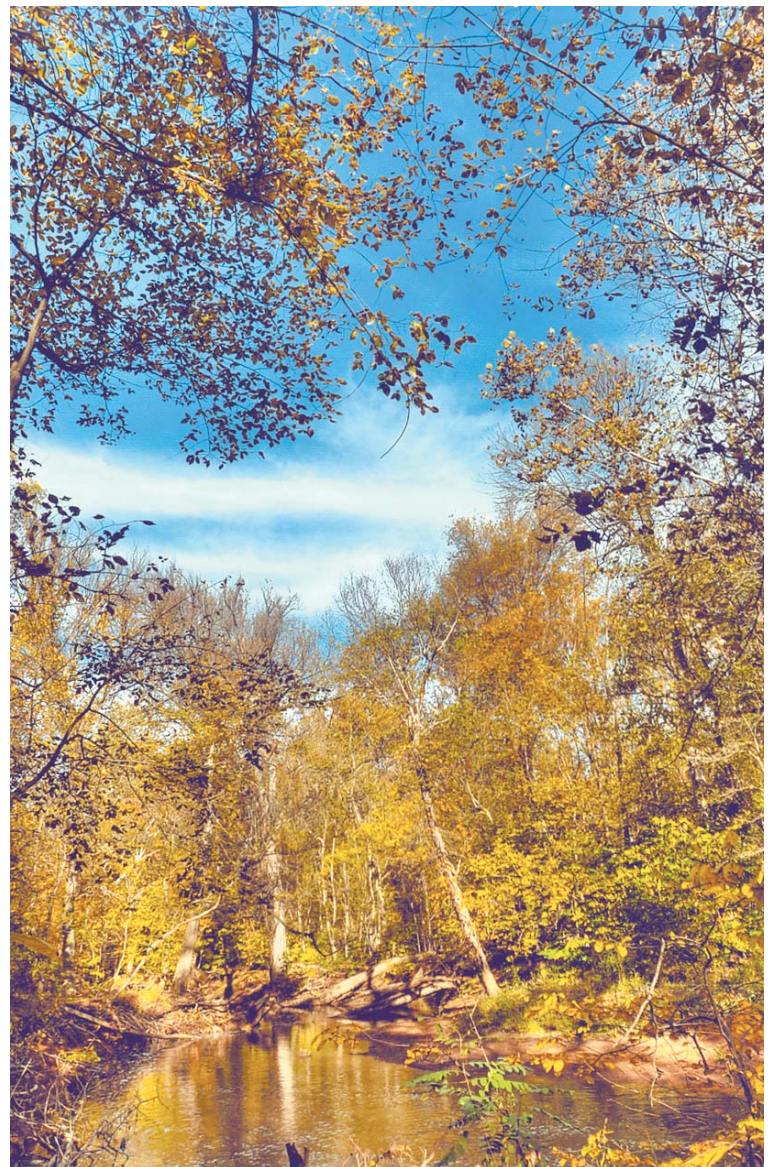
CONTINUED, PAGE 15



**Ayalasomayajula**, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, Eagle Ridge Middle School



**Sienna Mai**, 7<sup>th</sup>  
 grade,  
**Seneca  
 Ridge  
 Middle  
 School**



**Sienna Mai**, 7<sup>th</sup> grade, Seneca Ridge Middle School

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# GALLERY



**Alyssa Gentry, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, Eagle Ridge Middle School**



**Caroline Fowler, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Eagle Ridge Middle School**



**Sam Baumgartel, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, Eagle Ridge Middle School**



**Rozalia Szustak, 7<sup>th</sup> grade, Eagle Ridge Middle School**



**Jacob Lough, 7<sup>th</sup> grade, Eagle Ridge Middle School**



**Chase Stanga, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Eagle Ridge Middle School**



**Meagan Eckl, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Eagle Ridge Middle School**



**Melissa Hart, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, Eagle Ridge Middle School**

Winter Haiku

Is freezing cold white  
Animals are shivering  
Snow from the sky, fun

Matthew Perez  
Age 6  
Grade 1  
Meadowland Elementary School  
Sterling, VA

Sharks

Fins, swimming, eating  
Gobbling up fish with teeth  
Weired creepy eyeballs

Anthony Marrero  
Grade 2  
Meadowland Elementary School  
Sterling, VA

Tiger

Runs fast, sharp claws  
Sharp teeth eat meat, hunters  
Black and orange, fight

Jose Garcia-Portillo  
Grade 2  
Meadowland Elementary  
Sterling, VA

Dogs

Dogs sleep to feel good  
Like to eat cats and dog food  
Pet my dog, soft fur

Meadow Tinbarren-Padilla  
Grade 1  
Meadowland Elementary  
Sterling, VA

Mouse

Are grey, cute, sleepy  
Sleeps in trees, likes to eat cheese  
Sees chipmunk outside

Sean Tran  
Grade 1  
Meadowland Elementary School  
Sterling, VA

Cats

They eat mice, cat food  
Running fast, sleeping, fishing  
Wake up, time to eat

Justyn Courier  
Grade 1  
Meadowland Elementary  
Sterling, VA

Zebras

Have black and white stripes  
Eating grass, drinking water  
Run fast from lions

Julian Velasquez  
Grade 1  
Meadowland Elementary School  
Sterling, VA

Bear

Bear, big roaring teeth.  
Huge open mouth, brown, big claws.  
little ears, big fish.

Cecilia Ramirez-Canales  
Grade 2  
Meadowland Elementary  
Sterling, VA

Birds

Flying, eat berries  
Feathers, red, yellow, blue, green  
Carry worms to nests

Bryan Garcia-Portillo  
Grade 2  
Meadowland Elementary School  
Sterling, VA

Berries

Juicy, red, sweet, good  
Sour, blue, purple, small, big  
Good for eating seed

Rene Barrera  
Grade 2  
Meadowland Elementary School

# ART IN 3-D

David Speroni,  
8<sup>th</sup> grade, Eagle  
Ridge Middle  
School



Emily Murphy,  
8<sup>th</sup> grade, Eagle  
Ridge Middle  
School



Margaret Zeller, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, Eagle Ridge  
Middle School

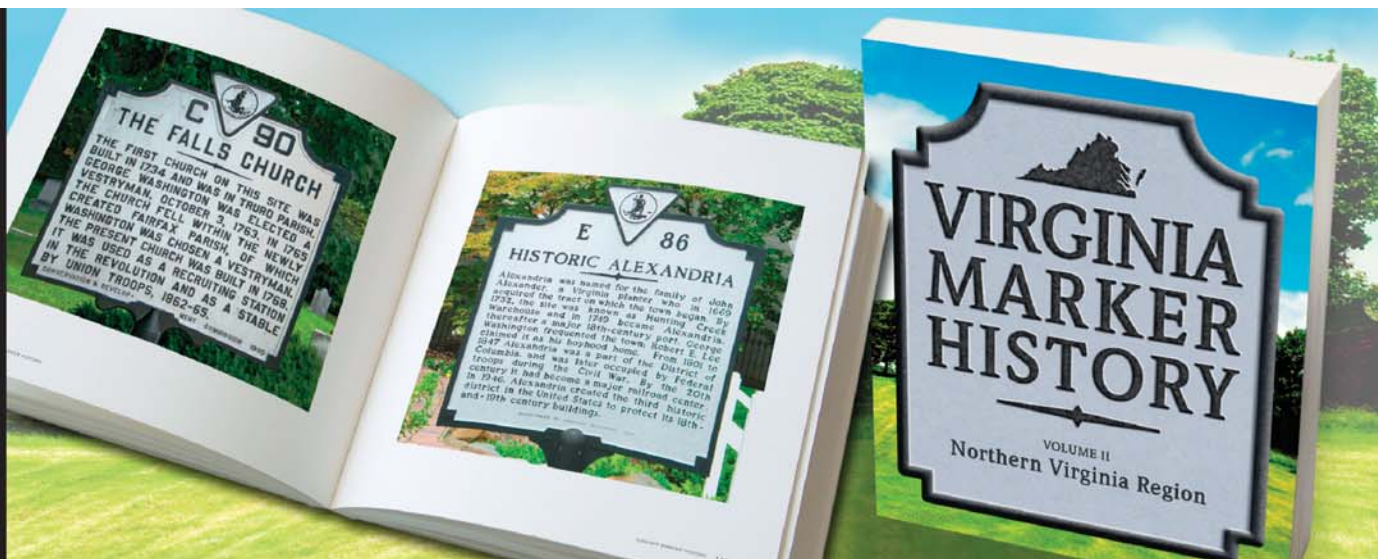


Heather Brown, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, Eagle Ridge  
Middle School



Samantha Bour, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Eagle Ridge Middle School

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# ROLLING RIDGE ELEMENTARY



Mario Naranjo, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, Rolling Ridge Elementary School



Javier Sagastume, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, Rolling Ridge Elementary School



Olivia McMichael, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, Rolling Ridge Elementary School



Jonathan Hernandez, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, Rolling Ridge Elementary School



Anaeva DeAngelis, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, Rolling Ridge Elementary School



Abbey Link, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, Rolling Ridge Elementary School



Beverly Funes, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, Rolling Ridge Elementary School



Ashley Romero, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, Rolling Ridge Elementary School



Diorama: Amanda Nielsen, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, Rolling Ridge Elementary School

*At the Holiday Season*  
Our Thoughts Turn Gratefully to Those  
Who Have Made Our Progress Possible.

It is in This Spirit We Say...

Thank You and Best Wishes for  
the Holidays and a Happy New Year.

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## Oriental Rug Cleaning

*Wishes You  
and  
Yours  
a*

*Happy Holiday  
From  
all of Us*



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# WORDS & PICTURES

FROM PAGE 8

It had no way of knowing I was walking  
 It had no armor to protect itself  
 I scoop up the remains and bury them  
 So they could make new life  
 Maybe when I'm older  
 I will see a tree where I planted the leaf  
 I will remember what I did  
 And will not feel pity for the leaf any more  
 — **Lara Lilly**, 6th grade, Seneca Ridge Middle School



**Ebonie Powell, Guilford Elementary School**

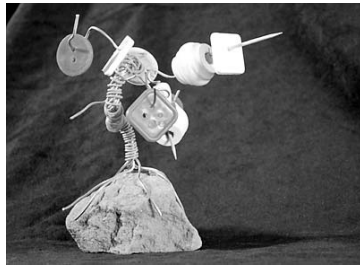
## Nature

When I walk into the forest,  
 My mind sparks alive  
 Like a firefly on a warm July night  
 Later I come upon a brook,  
 So I stop and Listen  
 To the water swiftly flowing by;  
 I hear the enchanted music emerging from the creek  
 This gentle tune calls me to follow it  
 Further on the river I follow  
 Until nature beckons me to wait  
 And smell the air  
 It smells like pine trees, even though none are near  
 The scent warms my heart,  
 Although I am chilled to the bone



**Stephanie Cano-Estrada, Guilford Elementary School**

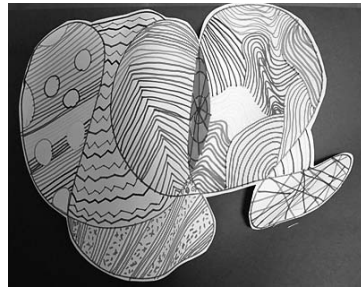
Long after river's end,  
 I watch dandelion puffs float through the air;  
 Dancing and twirling like little white fairies  
 Each unique, yet beautiful  
 I feel the breeze blow the red leaves,  
 Littering the ground  
 As if sweet candy  
 Hidden under orange and brown,  
 Oh, little red leaves, I search for you  
 Nature, you know all true,  
 You lead me into the dark  
 — **Maddie Rose**, 6th grade, Seneca Ridge Middle School



**Eric Mendez Argueta, Guilford Elementary School**



**Sarah Pham, Guilford Elementary School**



**Kaitlyn Perry-Walls, Guilford Elementary School**



**Randy Hernandez Guevara, Guilford Elementary School**



**Hector Garcia, Guilford Elementary School**

## ROLLING RIDGE ELEMENTARY

### What Is Dear To Me

Dear big brother,  
 You are cool! I miss you. When are you coming to our home? Tell Grandma hi. I like your BenTen game. I hope you are happy. Have a good Christmas in El Salvador.  
 — **Brian Galeas**, age 9, 3rd grade, Rolling Ridge Elementary

### Happiness

Money can't buy happiness. Happiness is something that no one can take away from you and no one can make you be happy. Happiness is when you are happy. I am happy when I spend time with

my family. Happiness is a time when you see someone you love or you win a prize. I also feel happy when someone I love is happy. It's very good to know when someone I love is happy. No one can be happy for you and you can't be happy for someone. You have to know how to use your time in order to be happy. You must be loved to be happy. When you are punished you may be happy but keep in mind that no one can take happiness away from you. It is your natural right.  
 — **Hevenly Padron**, age 8, 3rd grade, Rolling Ridge Elementary

### How I Felt

I felt good when I was able to ride a bike, a scooter, and a skateboard. I got them for Christmas and my birthday at Wal-Mart.  
 — **Sergio Hernandez**, age 8, 3rd grade, Rolling Ridge Elementary

### My Favorite Gift

The best gift I ever got was my Xbox Live because that's my favorite thing to play with. I like it because my brother was so nice to give it to me. I got it in 2007. I got it because my brother didn't want it anymore.  
 — **Alan Rodriguez**, age 8, 3rd grade, Rolling Ridge Elementary

### What is Dear To Me

My Wii is dear to me because it

was the best thing I've gotten from my Dad. My Dad said it is special because it cost a lot of money! I like to play it every day.  
 — **Ron Phung**, Age 8, 3rd grade, Rolling Ridge Elementary

### Something That Is Dear to me

What is dear to me is that in one month my cousin's dad will get \$4,000 dollars! They could buy a brand new house or a motorcycle to ride on.  
 — **Robert Aparicio**, age 8, 3rd grade, Rolling Ridge Elementary

### Something That Is Dear To Me

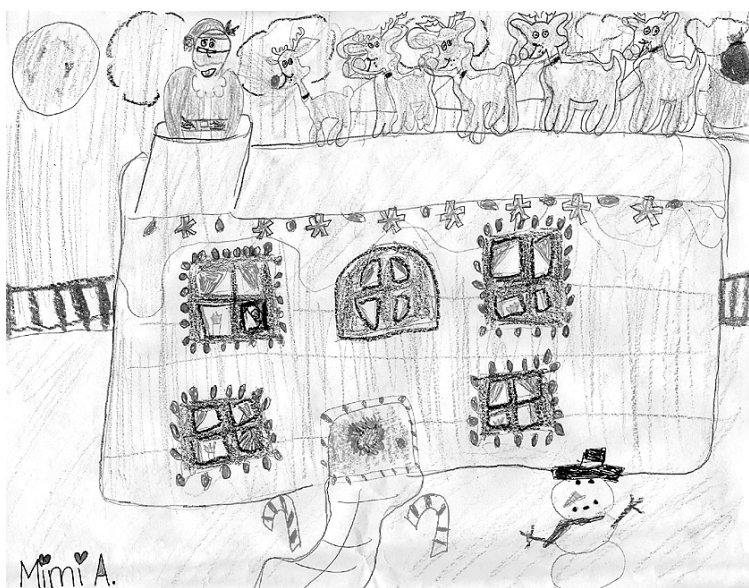
Something that is dear to me is a letter I got from my aunt in El Salvador. It is dear to me because it was the first card I ever got from her. The card said, I love you and other things like that. I'm going to write back to her. I hope she is happy when she reads my letter.  
 — **Mercedes Polanco**, age 8, 3rd grade, Rolling Ridge Elementary

### The Best Gift

The best gift I ever got was a Vikings jersey. I have had it since last month. My older brother gave it to me for my birthday. I like it because the Vikings are my favorite football team.  
 — **Daniel Torres**, age 9, 3rd grade, Rolling Ridge Elementary



**Rubby Bonilla, Guilford Elementary School**



**Mimi Abusaif, Seneca Ridge Middle School**

# WORDS & PICTURES

## USC/Ohio State

I am writing about USC and Ohio State. Three things about USC and Ohio State before you read the paragraph is, they are both college football teams, they are in the top 25, and they are both good.

Here are a few things about USC. Their awesome uniform colors are red and gold. They have a really cool freshman quarterback named Matt Barkley. And sadly, which really stinks, they lost three of their last four games. Now here are a few things about Ohio State, their OK uniform colors are gray and scarlet. Ohio State also has a pretty good sophomore quarterback named Terrell Pryor. Last, Ohio State has won all of their last four games. Something they both agree on is they both hate Michigan.

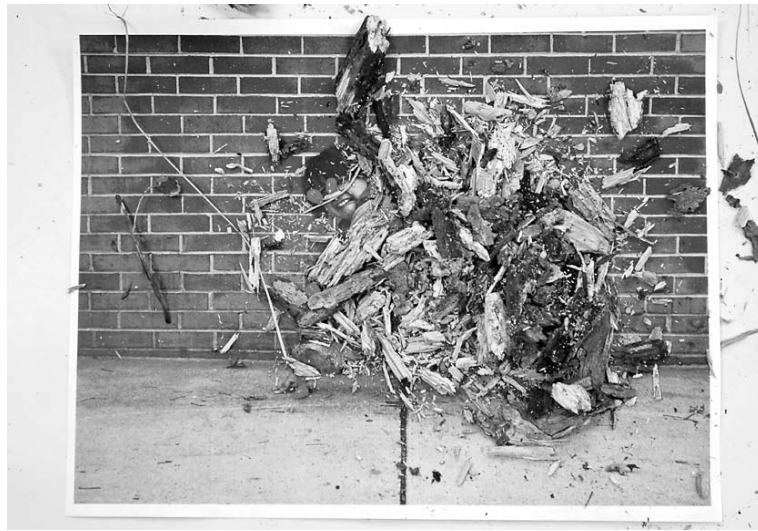
— **Trey St. Francis**, Age 10, Sterling Elementary, Mrs. Ballard's 5th Grade Class

## The Three Rock Types

I have been studying about three amazing types of rocks. The rocks are igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic. I can't wait to tell you about these rocks!

What's cool about igneous rocks are they formed by lava from the earth's mantle! An awesome thing is igneous rocks are made by how they cool; if they cool fast they are called fine-grained. And if they cool slowly they are called coarse-grained. Isn't that cool? Some magnificent examples of fine-grained are pumice and obsidian. Some extraordinary examples of coarse-grained are gabbro and granite. The great elements of igneous rocks are feldspar pyroxene, quartz and mica. So that is what I want to tell you about igneous rocks.

The extraordinary rock I like is sedimentary rock! What's cool



**Danylo Giron, Guilford Elementary School**

about sedimentary rocks is they grow in layers. Did you know that the awesome sedimentary rocks are sediments that are squeezed and stuck together? Another cool thing is most sediment is dropped by moving water! One of the extraordinary sedimentary rocks is conglomerate; it is formed by pieces of larger sediment and most are formed in shallow water! Another awesome sedimentary rock is limestone; it is the mostly calcite and they are formed in the ocean! As you can see those are some cool facts about sedimentary rocks!

Do you know about metamorphic rocks? Well, I'm going to tell you about them! Metamorphic are made up from heat and pressure — it's awesome! One of the magnificent metamorphic rocks is gneiss! What's cool about gneiss is it has light and dark bands!

The last extraordinary rock I'm going to tell you about is marble! Do you know what is awesome about marble? Marble is formed from lime stone! So those are some great facts I want to tell you about metamorphic rocks!

Did you like those paragraphs? If you did, you should go home and make a rock collection; it will be fun! So as you can see those

are facts about the igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rocks!

— **Delaney Wiegand** in Mrs. Whiting's Class, Grade 5, Sterling Elementary

## Chocolate Chip/Oatmeal

Hello Reader! Today I'm going to tell you some fantastic things about chocolate chip cookies and oatmeal raisin cookies. I'm also going to tell you about how they're the same.

Chocolate chip cookies have chocolate chips in them, but oatmeal raisin cookies have oatmeal and raisins in them. Chocolate chip cookies are more popular but oatmeal raisin cookies are less known.

An interesting fact is that oatmeal raisin cookies are actually healthier for you than chocolate chip cookies.

Some excellent similarities are they're both treats. Cookies are sweets. They're both outstanding cookies because if you like milk you got a good pair — milk and cookies. They're both made with ovens, unless you buy them from a store.

So as you can see, chocolate chip and oatmeal raisin cookies have outstanding things how they're different and the same.

— **Jack Taylor**, Age 10, Fifth Grade at Sterling Elementary in Mrs. Ballard's Class

## Winter/Summer

I'm going to tell you how summer and winter are alike and different. I will tell you how winter varies, then how summer isn't the same and lastly how they both are similar. I enjoyed comparing these two seasons.

Winter is very unique and this is how. It has very cold temperatures. Sports such as skiing, snowboarding, riding on sledges, etc., can only be enjoyed in the winter. Dahlias and roses cannot grow in this harsh season. You will only get snow and sleet in the win-



**Melina Medina, Guilford Elementary School**

ter. Holidays like Martin Luther King Jr. and Presidents' Day take place in this season. I hope you have a marvelous winter.

This very hot season is up next, its summer. Outdoor swimming, volleyball, and tennis are played in the summer. Some summer plants are dahlias and roses. There is no snow or sleet because of the warm weather. The Fourth of July (Independence Day) is celebrated in the summer. I cannot wait for summer to arrive.

Both seasons (winter and summer) are very similar. You will notice that both seasons have seasonal sports. Evergreens survive both winter and summer. There is rain during both of the seasons. Winter and summer both have many Holidays. That is how these seasons are alike.

I was surprised by how many ways the two seasons are alike.

— **Naqia Zaveri**, Age 10, Mrs. Bell's class, Sterling Elementary

## Kit Kat/Skittles

What are the differences between Kit Kat and Skittles? Skittles have gelatin and Kit Kats are made with chocolate. Kit Kat is a Hershey product and Skittles are non Hershey products. But both of these candies are yummy, made in the U.S.A., and my favorite candy. This is a bunch of delicious information on these two pieces of candy; it is probably making you hungry. Got to get those pieces of candies!

— **Weini Ogbagiorgis**, Age 10, Sterling Elementary, Ms. Davenport's 5th Grade

## How to Make a Snowman

- 1 Roll a big snowball
  - 2 Make a medium snow ball
  - 3 Then make a small snow ball
  - 4 Get two sticks and 5 buttons
  - 5 Put 2 buttons on for eyes
  - 6 Put the sticks in for arms
  - 7 Put the rest of the buttons on the medium snow ball
  - 8 Put a carrot for the nose
- And that is how to make a snowman!

— **ASHLEIGH GERTIG**, AGE 8, 3RD GRADE, ROLLING RIDGE ELEMENTARY

## How to Make a Snowman

- First: roll one big ball.  
Next: roll a medium ball and put it on top of the first ball.  
Then: roll a small ball and put it on top of the medium ball.

Next: get two equal sized rocks for eyes, five rocks for a mouth, a carrot for the nose, a scarf, and two sticks for the arms.

## Liberty

Liberty  
I'm talking liberty  
I'm talking Freedom, independence

I'm talking sovereignty, self-rule, autonomy

I'm talking self-government, rights, authority, permission

I'm talking liberty  
— **Kevin Pham**, 10 years old  
Countryside Elementary School, Fourth Grade

## The Great Firework Festival

Last July I saw big huge sparkly fireworks. I saw the cloud of smoke floating through the sky. I could smell the smoke. I could hear the sound of the fireworks when they burst into flames. I went to the fireworks with my family. My uncle, aunt, cousins, grandpa and grandma — we all went in a grassy place and took a couple of beautiful blankets on the ground and watched the sparkly fireworks.

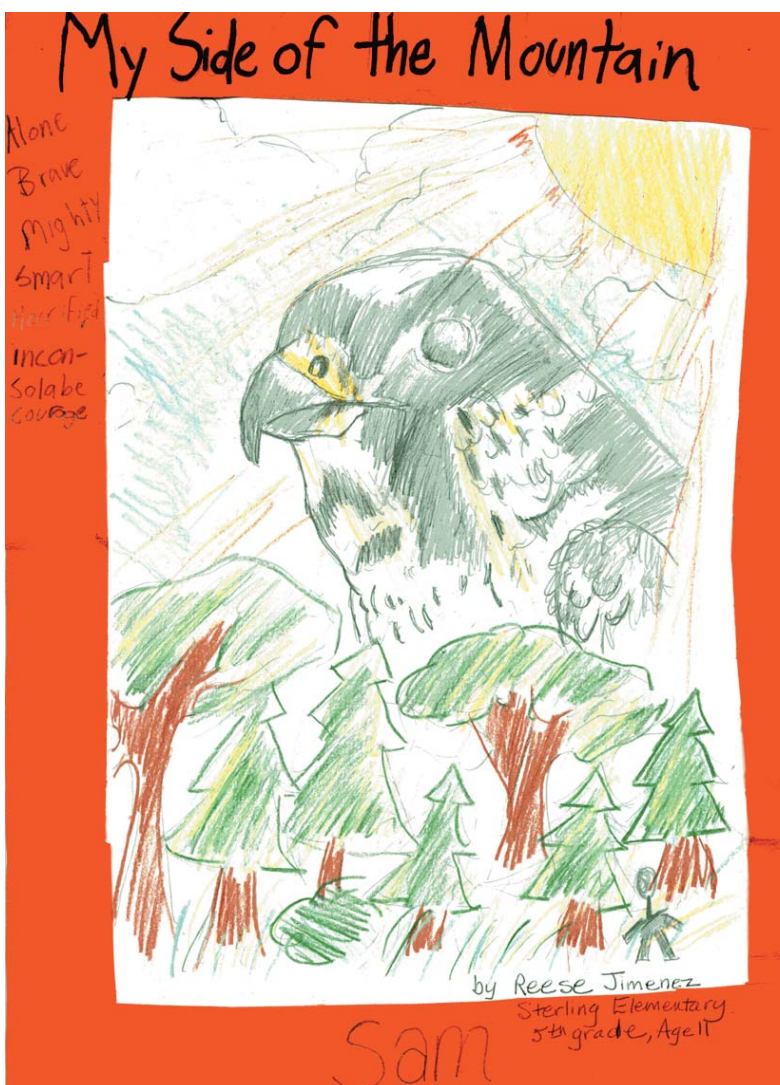
— **Olivia Hornung**, Age 7, Second Grade, Sterling Elementary

## At the Beach

I was at the beach and the waves were big and the water was cold. The water was gleaming in the sunlight, speed boats were everywhere, and people were paragliding above the water. When I walked in the water I could feel the cold water on my feet. The sunlight hit my eyes. I wished I brought my sunglasses.

— **Aditya Anand**, Age 7, Second Grade, Sterling Elementary

# WORDS & PICTURES



**Reese Jimenez,**  
age 11, 5<sup>th</sup>  
grade,  
Sterling  
Elementary  
School

## Where Has All the Time Gone?

FROM PAGE 5

astounding educator. The way she taught reading rocked! Mrs. Sovereign was my third-grade teacher. She was unforgettable, and I will remember her forever. What made her so outstanding is that she was always there for us no matter what the problem. For one test, we got to make pudding as part of it, and she would always give us Oreos because we were great! Another fantastic teacher was my teacher in fifth grade, Mrs. Williams! She is an outstanding and a pleasant teacher. She makes teaching fun for her and fun to learn for us! With her enthusiasm, you'll never fall asleep in her class. Mrs. Williams, Ms. Schwigert, and Mrs. Sovereign are three teachers I will never forget.

My dad always has told me to "Study really hard" and "Do your homework". Those words are words that you should never forget. Studying for tests and quizzes are important to your life's education. Of course, doing your homework is also very important. Even though it seems like your teacher just gives you homework to torture you. They give it to you so you can practice and better understand what you are learning about.

In elementary school, we've had many subjects. One of our favorites was D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education). I started D.A.R.E. in fifth grade. D.A.R.E. is a program when a Deputy comes to our classroom and tells us about drug, smoking, peer pressure, and how to stand up for yourself. I loved D.A.R.E. because it showed every-

one and my class and I how dangerous drugs can be to you and what they can do to you! I learned how to stay on the safe path! Another school subject we had was science with Ms. Page. She was my fifth grade science teacher! She was the best because she let us dance, and we did thrilling projects with her. Ms. Page always tells the best stories and she always has a great sense of humor! Another teacher that is as great as Ms. Page is our art teacher, Mr. Browning. He is an extraordinary teacher who showed us how to be unique, yet stay at a certain level. Art is a way of showing your creativity and imagination. P.E., short for Physical Education, is a perfect way of stretching, exercising, and building your muscles. The fabulous P.E. teachers, Mr. Kilgannon and Ms. Blakeney, taught me how to get fit and eat healthy.

It is time for me to move on, and make new changes in my life. I am feeling melancholy and excited at the same time. There's going to be tears in my eyes because I won't be able to see my previous teachers in the hallways. This fall, my feet are going to step onto the floors of Eagle Ridge, and I'm excited about that. I'll be missing everybody that attended or taught at Mill Run because of his or her kindness. When I was in Kindergarten, first, second, third, and fourth grade, I used to say on the last day of school, "Bye! See you next year!" Unfortunately, this year, all I have to say is, "Goodbye!" In my heart, I'll always know that I am a Mill Run Mountain Lion.

—**Jenny Lee** and **Taylor Huffman**, Eagle Ridge Middle School

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# Oil's Well That Reads Well



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

In the pantheon of things (subjects) with which I have absolutely no knowledge (and even less interest) are cars and more specifically – and especially, their repairs. The head of a pin would likely provide sufficient space for that knowledge. So when something as routinely simple as an "Oil" light illuminates on my car's dashboard, my immediate reaction/assessment is "Oh...! Now what do I do?" What little I do know to do, reactive though it may be (as opposed to proactive as it should be), is to consult the owner's manual provided by the dealer/manufacturer. However, since there are 352 pages in that manual, I'm not instinctively able (even though oil begins with the letter "o") to seek and find the answer to my question. That question being, as simply as my limited knowledge can determine is, "What kind of oil do I put in my car's engine?"

Knowing what information I wanted though, did not assist me in finding it as I flipped through the hundreds of color-coded and headline/categorized pages/sections, so I went to the back of the manual, the glossary of terms if you will, to see if the very specification information for which I was looking was somehow identified. Sure enough, it was. Oh boy, was it!

The terms are listed alphabetically so I scanned/flipped the pages until I found the grouping for the letter "O." And there, to my nearly uncontrollable joy, I found the exact answer I was looking for. And found it in such Kenny-level English that I thought it worth mentioning and focusing on as fodder for this week's column. Reading the listings under "Oil," from top to bottom I read, "Oil Changing;" "Identification Symbol;" and then the *pièce de résistance* and the choice I could not actually resist – or believe my eyes – which enabled me to find the answer to my oil question, was printed the following: "What kind of oil do I put in my engine?" Can you believe that? A manual written just for me, and a category/answer to my question that was so perfectly suited to its owner's minuscule level – and total lack – of knowledge, that it prevented even a "Bozo" like me from clowning-up this much-needed repair/replenishment. You can't imagine (although maybe you can) the sheer joy and relief I experienced, when after stressing-up the usual anxiety brought on by these kinds of car-related conundrums (the appearance of an "idiot" light; aptly named), and then holding this voluminous owner's manual in my hands as well with a simple answer apparently not in the offing, that I was able to, in relatively short order, find the answer and find it so obviously stated that, my usual mental anguish concerning this mechanical mishmash was completely eliminated.

When I saw in the owner's manual that the section/page that I needed to get to was in fact the exact question to which I was desperately seeking a simple – and quick – answer, I busted out laughing and said, "Finally, a manual that I can understand." Simple pleasures for a simple person. Now that's what I'm talking about!

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

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## 21 Announcements

### Notice of Initiation of the Section 106 Process: Public Participation

Clearwire Wireless Broadband, an FCC-licensed wireless provider in the State of Virginia, is proposing the installation of telecommunications equipment on an existing lattice utility tower at W & OD Trail and Grace Street, Herndon, Fairfax County, Virginia 20170. The proposed development will include a 9' x 13' lease area for equipment. Members of the public interested in submitting comments on the possible effects of the proposed project on historic properties included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places may send their comments to Alex Bos, Rescom Environmental Corp., P.O. Box 6225, Traverse City, MI 49696 or call 1.231.947.4454. Project Reference #: 0910133

## 21 Announcements

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## COUNTRYSIDE ELEMENTARY



Cecilia Kane, age 6, Countryside Elementary School



Zaria Martinez, age 6, Countryside Elementary

### WRITINGS

FROM PAGE 7

thing can really change the life of the creator (or creators). So why is it that when the creator is an old greedy selfish person, when a new life comes it just changes that old greedy selfish person into a caring per-

son? Nobody knows but most people like how that works. If god never gave us life, then what would happen to the planet? Be thankful that you have yours and that I have mine. So how will you treat your life? Make that change.

— **Darin C. Diep**, Seneca Ridge Middle School

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