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Connection
2009*

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CHILDREN'S CONNECTION 2009



Eli Donahue, Waples Mill Elementary School, 5th Grade



Peter Attia, Wolftrap Elementary School, 4th Grade

Welcome

Dear Readers:

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

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

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

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

EDITOR KEMAL KURSPAHIC



Katie Kerrigan, Thoreau Middle School, 8th Grade



Alessia Ucci
GRADE 1, MR. ARMSTRONG
LOUISE ARCHER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Alessia Ucci, 6 years old, Louise Archer Elementary



Wesley Kang, Vienna Elementary School, 4th Grade

Letters about Literature

Eric Triche's seventh-graders write letters to authors.

Dear Jerry Spinelli,

It was 1 in the morning, the middle of summer, and I was bored to death. I remember raiding my sister's bookshelf waiting for an amazing book to glide into my hands. That's when your book "Stargirl" first caught my eyes.

It was only till I reached the final page of the novel that I realized how much it had changed the way I think about the world. Now that I think about Stargirl in more depth, I've realized that maybe the "normal" people are really the different ones, that everyone has a Stargirl in them. The people we say are normal in my view are the ones who are holding back. We all just hide our inner selves to be reserved and "normal." The people who are always stiff and stressed should relax a little bit, dance in the rain, and do something weird and wacky for once. My main point is that it's okay to be different.

This book changed the way I think about being popular or being part of the "in crowd." Of course there's always going to be those time where you have thoughts like, "Oh, I wish I had her hair," or, "Man, she's so good at soccer, I wish I was too!" Now, I always try to find good qualities about myself that maybe some other people don't possess. You don't always have to be popular, but I think you should always be respected by others and not be excluded because of your differences.

"Stargirl" isn't just about a girl who's completely different and independent, but about a girl who is true to herself and what she does. Stargirl might sing happy birthday to people in the cafeteria, and dance in the rain; but she only does these things because she wants to, and is not afraid to show her true self.

With Sincere Regards,
Ava Shafiei

Dear Rebecca Stead,

Before I read "First Light," I really took my mom for granted. Your book really spoke to me personally when Lana and Thea talked about Thea's mother. Mia's very upsetting death made me stop, put down the book, and think what it would be like to lose my mother.

My mother is a wonderful, caring person, and I love her. I can talk to her about anything, and she stops what she is doing to give me her attention. I'll tell her about a problem at school, and she'll hold me tight, reassure me that grades are just a notice on what I need to work on to succeed, and help me get through it. Or if I have troubles with a friend, she'll point out what I did wrong, what they did wrong, and what to do next time. When I make a victory in this battle of life, she is always there to celebrate with me and make me feel so good inside.

Thea's mother Mia was a strong person in her life. Thea was inspired by her mother and continued to fight the battle her mother had begun. I want to do that too. I want to

be a marvelous mother like my mom.

Since I was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes last summer, my relationship with my mom has gotten extremely powerful. My disease is very challenging to deal with, but we have gone through it together. I was diagnosed in Seattle, Washington while staying with grandparents, and my mom was in Virginia. She flew back to be with me in the hospital, learned about the disease, and brought me to my new home. We tackle this challenge together. I can't bear the thought of losing her now.

But not all kids have mothers like that. Some mothers aren't there when they are needed most. Or they have passed away like Thea's mother. Then those children have to endure the hardships of not having a mother to talk to, even if they wanted to.

Because Thea grew up without her real mother, she became very strong and determined. It made her even more driven to finish what her mother has started. And because I grew up with my mother, I know what type of person and mother I want to be. Thank you for showing me and opening my eyes to what a wonderful mom I have, how blessed I am, and how grateful I should be.

Sincerely,
Kendall Langum

Dear C. S. Lewis,

Your book "Out of the Silent Planet" is AMAZING! It changed my ideas and feelings about extraterrestrials. I have always believed there may be life on other planets, and your book inspired and convinced me that there could be other life even if it did die out.

I am fascinated that you described Mars the way you did because when you wrote the book we didn't really know anything about the planet, and now some scientists believe what you described may actually have been true. In this generation, we have discovered there may have been life-sustaining water or other liquid on Mars as you wrote. You describe a planet that is dying, and many people now believe that Mars is a planet that died. There are craters running through it, and gullies once left from water just like you described in your book.

This makes me think: Was Mars a civilization that was created and then went extinct? Were we then created to take its place, and will we become extinct and another civilization be created in our place on, say, Saturn, until the perfect civilization that never dies out is formed? I wonder if you believe that life was once on Mars?

I love the way your characters represent the forces of good and evil in our lives. I love how the good Oyarsa and Eldils interact with each other and people. It makes me wonder what it would be like to live in the perfect world Earth will never be. I wonder what it would be like if man had not sinned and earth had not become the "silent planet." Imagine a world with no global warming, no pollution, no murderers, no wars, no disease, no birth defects, and no poverty. I have always tried to treat people right, and your book encourages me to continue to do so.

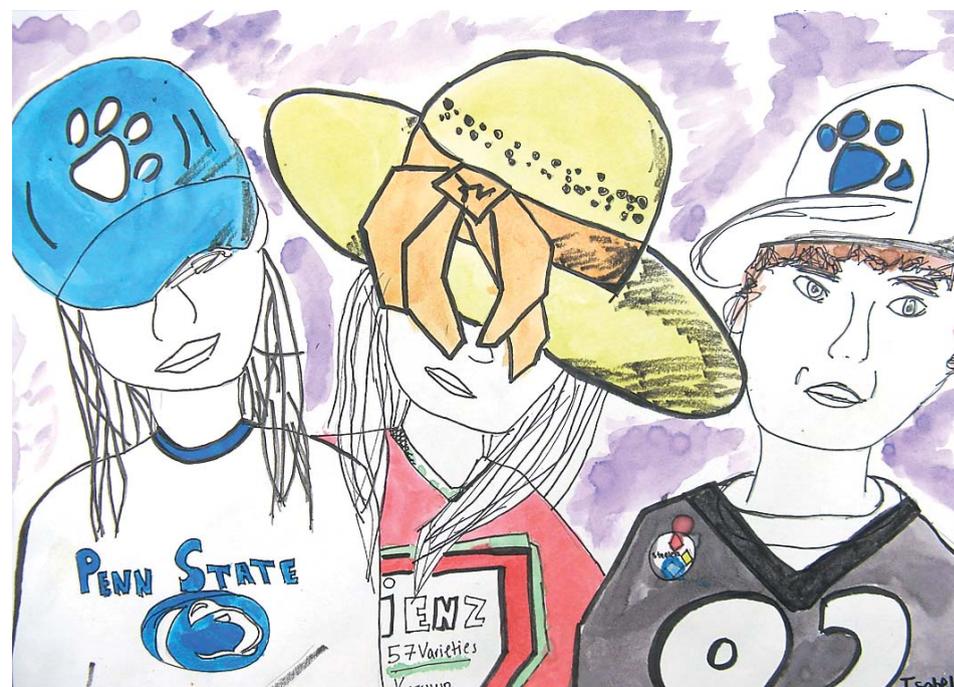
Best regards,
Dominic Cohen



Rachel Child, Thoreau Middle School, 7th Grade



Ben Collie, Thoreau Middle School, 7th Grade



Isabel Hagopian, Thoreau Middle School, 8th Grade

Dear Jesus, on Your Birthday...

Our Lady of
Good Counsel
students share
birthday wishes
for Jesus.

For your birthday, I will bring you a donkey. I think you will like this because you may not be tired when you travel. I also think it will be fun to feed.

Love,
Mark

For your birthday, I will bring you a donkey. I think you will like it because it will remind you of the day you were born. I also think you will like it because you can ride it.

Love,
Paige

For your birthday, I will bring you 20 bucks. I think you will like it because back then that is a lot of money. I also think you will like this because you can buy stuff with it.

Love,
Ben

For your birthday, I will bring you Frankincense, Mur, and expensive spices. I think you will like this because they are rare and valuable.

Love
John

For your birthday, I will bring you a picture of the world. I think you will like this because it will remind you that everybody loves you. I also think it will remind you of earth.

Love,
Sophia

For your birthday, I will bring you a sheet of math problems. It will look like this: $L+J = _ 2+2 = _ 3+3 = _ 4+4 = _$. I think you will like it because it will be useful. It will be useful because in the olden days you didn't have math.

Love,
Maeva

For your birthday, I will bring you a picture of the angel that told the shepherds you were born. I think you will like this because it was a sign that you were born. I'm Happy that this day was made. I wish you a Merry Christmas and I wish it to all!

Love,
Josie

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Fifth Grade Writers School

Wondering and opining in fifth grade.

My opinion about comic strips

BY BRIAN CHENG

I think about this subject pretty often. It mainly comes out when I'm reading the Sunday comics. You see them in The Washington Post while trying to get to an article. They just sit there pretty much every day. Most people skip them. But some take their time to read them, Garfield, Beetle Bailey or Foxtrot and even Blondie. I love every part about the comics.

It makes you see a different part inside the cartoonist's mind itself. In a way some people say "An apple a day keeps the doctor away." But I say, "A comic strip a day keeps the sadness away." It makes me jubilated to see them loitering on the page. It makes you laugh and consider the irony of it. It makes me wish that the world was less serious. It also makes you happy and carefree and you can relax and kick back too.

That's my opinion about comic

strips and why I love them so much.

A Winters Breeze

BY KATRINA FERENTINOS

As I look out the window,
And the winter wind sweeps cold over,

I realize that time has past and so have the leaves at autumns last.

I realize that my worries have gone,

Everything except for only one:
If this fall fell to winter so fast,

Will all become my past?
Will December turn to May?

Will my future go astray?
Will my hope make me mope?

Will the beautiful memories go away?

This I wonder in the cold winter breeze,

But I fall asleep without a wink or sneeze,

I know that time goes forward but for now,

So do dreams

Going Green

BY KAITLYN TURNER

Our world today needs to work

harder on going green. There are so many little things that you can do to help save the earth. Some of these things do not require very much effort. We can reduce, reuse and recycle, take shorter showers, and try not to make as much pollution. These simple things will help our earth.

We could use our cars less often and that would create less pollution. We can carpool. Putting more people in one car will mean fewer cars on the road. We can also bike and walk more, which will create less pollution and it's also good for you.

Recycling is just reusing things like paper, plastic, and glass so we do not have to make more. The little plastic rings around cans of soda get caught around animal's necks, which can kill them, so remember to cut them up before you recycle them.

These are just a few of the little things you can do which can make a big difference for our earth.

My Secret Love

BY HEATHER POYNER

From your white to your brown,
when I see you I can never frown.



Charlotte Baskerville, Thoreau Middle School, 7th Grade

When I see you I shiver, it's like cupid shot an arrow from his quiver.

I love your whipped cream; you make me want to scream.

Your smell is so divine. You're oh

so fine.

How long will it be, until you finally see?

You make me high; I'm all over my pumpkin pie.




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A Good Friend

By SARAH FRANKLIN
FIFTH GRADE

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them
to be
there
for
you.

They can always bring a smile to your face when you need one. You can always have someone to play with if you get bored, or need something to do or someone to listen. I love my friends for who they are, whether they are always there for me, funny, or good to be around. This is what makes the best of good friends!



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Sarah Franklin, 5th Grade, Louise Archer Elementary School



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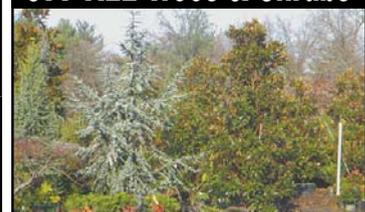
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Best Gifts Ever Given

Keith Hirsch's fifth-graders write about the best gifts they ever gave.

The best gift I ever gave was when I did what ever my friend said. She told me to listen to her for a day and I did. First she told me to jump on the bed 50 times. I said NO! But, I still did it to make her happy. After that I asked her if I could sit down for a minute. She listened to me then. We went to the mall. There was a policeman there and she told say there's a emergency. We were in luck that wasn't a real policeman, it was fake. It was Halloween today. Then she asked for an ice cream sundae and I gave it to her. I listened to her for the rest of the day.

— **Yashna Verma**

One day when I went shopping with my Mom I then remembered that it was Wiki's birthday. So I went to my Mom and told her she told me "I'll get something for her don't worry" but I said I want to get her something very special from me. So I then thought of softball and I quickly looked at a Charm Bracelet Store. So I and Wiki both love softball so I got a softball charm bracelet. It shimmered and shined like a diamond



Keith Hirsch's fifth-graders in a class picture.

in a mine. It was silver and I called it the Silver Softball! It shined like ice before people go skating. As soon as I bought this beautiful, shiny, softball bracelet I could just imagine how Wiki would react. She jumped up and gave me the tightest hug like it was a snake wrapping around me.

— **Ashley Ballenger**

The best gift I ever gave was a glass flute charm for my mom. It gleamed like diamonds, and when my mom first saw it could have sworn her heart missed a beat. She was astonished at the gorgeous object lying in her lap. My mom was a professional flute player, so it was better than just a plain old charm. She wasn't actually profes-

sional, but she can play by ear. I can still remember being in the shop, thinking, That would be perfect for Mom! I exclaimed to my dad, "Please let me get that flute charm for Mom! It's perfect for her!" Dad agreed and I snatched it up to check out. It was a perfect gift!

— **Christina French**

I gave my grandpa a kit to shine his shoes to look sparkly. Whenever I see him at church on Sundays, his shoes look spit shined like he just bought them from the store. His black smooth leather shoes always look shiny. When I see his snake skinned casual shoes when the sun hits them a little it looks vibrant in color. Although he doesn't wear casual shoes every day except for special occasions, his shoes always seem to be perfectly in shape. When I gave him his gift he loved it and said he will use it everyday.

— **Jasemine Drake**

One day during recess I was playing ping pong with Alex, Luke, and some other friends. Later,

Putri came and wanted to play, but the boys wouldn't let her. Putri started to feel sad and cry, but I stood up for her. After I got her to stop crying, I convinced her to stand up for herself. Honestly, Alex and Luke looked pretty embarrassed. It took awhile but it was worth it because from then on she always stood up for herself and others. In the end, she was very good at ping pong. Also, when she won she said "Thank you" with a gleam in her eye. Just then the bell rang for us to go inside. I gave the gift of confidence.

— **Rose Turner**

The best gift I ever gave to someone, was when I massaged my grandmother's back. I do it a lot and it makes her feel good. I love doing it because I use cream and I'm doing a nice thing for her. It's nice and fun at the same time! Whenever I do it she looks like she is asleep. She looks so happy when I do it. She says I do it like a professional. I think it's the best gift I ever gave because it makes someone I love happy!

— **Shaazia Ahmed**

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Nate Reed,
Vienna
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Road Trip

By VIKRAM SARDANA
SEVENTH GRADE

The road stretches endlessly ahead.
Cars zoom by on the dark asphalt.
Trees lined up on either side,
Stand guard like soldiers
Waiting for an inspection.
Inside the car conditions are cramped.
The engaging voice on the audio book
Draws us into another world.
Providing a brief but welcome respite

From my sibling's jostling elbows.
The sun crawls across the sky.
Then dips below the horizon.
The vibrant trees become dark looming figures.
The twinkling lights beyond the trees
Dispels our feeling of isolation.
We finally arrive at our cousin's house.
We exult as though we won a million dollars!
Stretch our limbs, hug our cousins.
Our exhaustion magically vanishes.
A faint thought lingers ...
Soon we will have to repeat this day-long journey.

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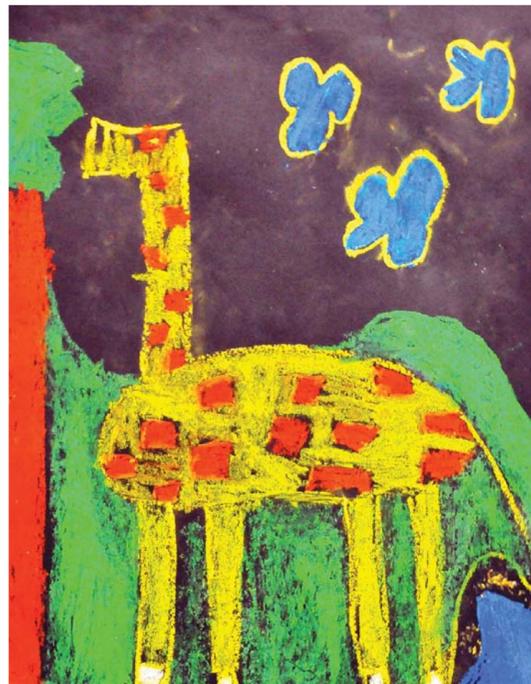
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Dylan Crotty, 1st Grade

Life in Third Grade

Mrs. Makharita's third-grade students share their thoughts and experiences.

A Good Quality Person

BY ROBERT GREENE
I think a "perfect" person should be kind, think before speaking and care for others. As impossible as it is to be 1,000,000 years old and be living, it is impossible to be 100 percent perfect. You can't please everyone always. Also, in the same way, it's impossible to be 0 percent perfect since everyone has good and bad points. I think every person is at least 25 percent good. So try to be the best you can!

Atoms, molecules, and more!

BY GRACE FREEMAN
Well most of us know that anything we can touch, feel, taste, hear, or smell is matter, right? Well do you know what makes up matter and what makes up what makes up what makes up matter? Well what makes up matter is called atoms. Atoms are the building blocks of every speck of matter. Atoms are made up of three parts. They are protons, neutrons, and electrons. Protons are half of the main part of the atom and give a negative charge. The other half is called neutrons. Neutrons give a positive charge. There are always the same number of protons and neutrons. The last part of the atom is an electron. Electrons orbit the atom and give it its electricity.

My Mom Ate a Cricket

BY MAX LEE
One night, at a fancy dinner My mom thought she ordered a winner
But by mistake The waiter gave her a cake. She took a bite And screamed in fright For there was a cricket inside. My mom ate a cricket. She was so mad she flicked it.
On the bus she had a fuss About the time she ate a cricket. She made so much noise The bus driver thought it was boys. When she got home she called The restaurant on the phone To yell at them about the time she ate a cricket.

My Most Embarrassing Moment

BY OTILIA DANALACHE
One day in preschool someone asked me if I liked watermelon. I said yes because I thought it meant popsicle so after I said yes I said, "My favorites are purple, blue, pink and orange." Then they said their favorite was red. Then I went to my teacher and told her the same thing. That night I went home and asked them what watermelon meant and they told me. Then I started laughing so hard. The next day when I saw my teacher I cried of embarrassment, and there it was most embarrassing.



Matthew DeSenti, Kindergarten



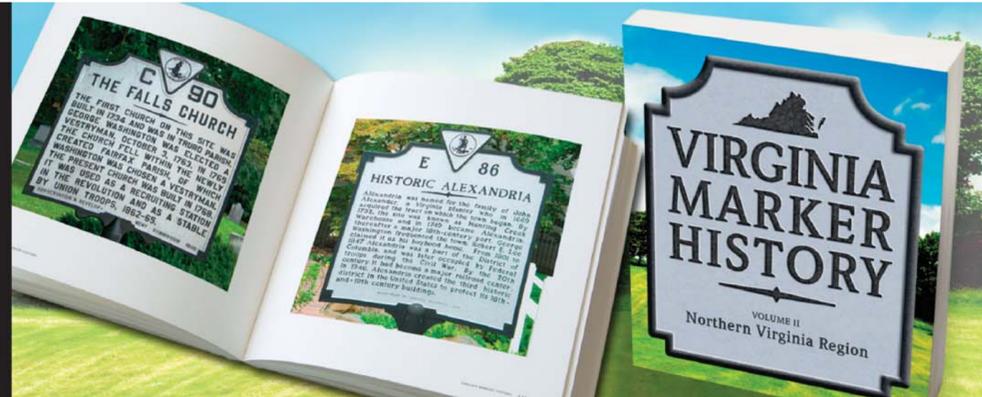
Abigail Xu, Kindergarten



Ciara McCarty, Kindergarten

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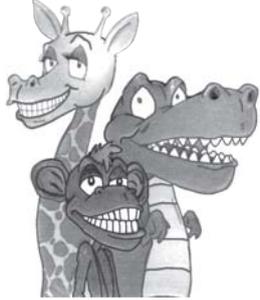
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LOUISE ARCHER
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Third-Grade Musings

Students of Natacha Moore's third-grade class share thoughts and wisdom.

What Makes a Good Parent?

BY ELIAS LANDEROS

Well first ask my mom. If that doesn't work out then I'll give you my opinion. First you have to find a babysitter if you have a job. If you're a home mom or dad, forget about that. If you have time, play games with your child. Take them out for dinner once in a while or breakfast or lunch. Sign them up on a team. Make sure he or she has a lot of friends. When they have a nightmare let them sleep with you or read a book. If you do all this already then you're a good parent. If you don't, it's fine, but keep working on it.

A Winter Day

BY JAELYN COURTNEY

On a nice winter day you should not go outside and play. You should stay inside and get your PJs on and put your favorite TV show on. Then get a nice warm and thick blanket on your body. Then before you lay down first you have to make hot chocolate. Now you can lay down. You can even take a little nap, then when you wake up you will be wide awake and ready to go outside with everybody and have some fun. Finally after you are done playing you can take another little nap. You know little naps won't hurt you!

Boys Treated Better than Girls

BY JULIA CONDON

I think that boys are treated better than girls. In Africa boys go to school and girls don't. In the Declaration of Independence no girls signed it. Sometimes boys brag about how good they are in sports. Back then, girls were made to work and clean. Boys could hunt and play. A lot of boys back then got a lot of jobs. Before my mom and dad were born women weren't even allowed to vote. That's why I think boys are treated better than girls.

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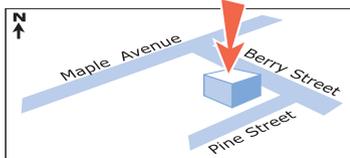
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Thankful Fifth-Graders

Students in Mrs. Connell's class was asked what they were most thankful for this holiday season.



Kana Furukawa
Grade 2, Mrs. Beall
Louise Archer Elementary School
"My Farm"

Kana Furukawa, Louise Archer Elementary School, 2nd Grade

I am thankful for many things but the most important thing is my community. I am thankful for my community because without it I wouldn't have a house. Mostly I am thankful for the schools, so that we can learn and get an education. I'm thankful for my teacher Mrs. Connell for teaching me math. And Ms. Toth for teaching me science. I'm thankful for the mayor for making good decisions and making my community a better and safer place. Those are the reasons why I am thankful for my community.

— **Rubley**

I am thankful for education and the educational system. Without it, we would not be as smart as we are and humans would be less successful. School is also interesting and we have awesome teachers like Mrs. Connell, Mrs. Toth, and Mrs. Culbertson, who help us learn and teach us things like respect for deadlines. At school we learn social skills that we'll need later in life. The knowledge and skills we obtain while at school will help us get better careers later in life. Education is one thing I am thankful for.

— **Donnelly**

I'm so thankful for is my family! I'm thankful for my dad because

he is fun to play with and my dad can always put a smile on my face when I'm sad. I'm also thankful for my mom. I can talk to her about anything and she makes me feel comforted. I have two sisters to be thankful for also. They are Clare and Julia. Clare is fun to play games with and Julia is creative and very sweet. This is my marvelous family! I love you Dad, Mom, Clare, and Julia!

— **Condon**

I'm thankful for my family. My mom is nice, loving, and caring. She supports me. I can talk to her about anything. She wakes me up in the morning and takes me to the bus stop or to school. My dad is funny and nice. He's my basketball and volleyball coach. He takes me to ice-skating on Saturdays. When I fall he supports me and encourages me. My Grandma is nice and caring, and patient. She spoils me with her amazing food. She lets me eat ice cream in bed while watching TV! I'm thankful for my family.

— **Farmar**

The most important thing I'm thankful for is my family. They're the most important to me because they care for me. They care if I'm sick or hurt, and always help. For

example, when I broke my collar bone, my whole family helped me get comfortable. Next, they're always good to be around when I'm sad or mad. They sit with me to make me feel better. Lastly, they are a lot of fun! We play games and watch movies. I love my family, and don't know what I would do with out them!

— **Franklin**

I'm thankful for my friends because they're nice to me (mostly). Also, I like my friends because I feel free around them. I can just joke around them and have a good time. They will also play sports with me, like swimming, soccer, basketball, and lacrosse. That is why I'm thankful for my friends.

— **Bock**

A very important thing in life is just to let go and have fun. I have lots of fun in my life, and that's all because of my amazing friends. I'm really thankful for the times they stand up for me when I'm getting teased, or when they comfort me when I'm feeling down. When I have a good laugh with them and share secrets, it makes me think about how lucky I am to know them. I am so thankful and fortunate to have them in my life.

— **Stefanick**



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VIENNA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A Gift for My Parents

BY JANE TURNER, 5th Grade

If I gave my parents a gift using no money it would be a collage. I would use all of our family photos from family outings and events such as family vacations when we are playing in the ocean waves or digging in the sand. That would make it super special because we enjoyed those events and outings. My collage would be very bright and colorful. I would also use old drawings from my brothers as well as mine. Some of the drawings I would include are the ones my brothers and I gave them a long time ago and some other ones that are their favorites. I think my parents would hang this up in our family room so people could enjoy it. This wonderful gift would show that I love and appreciate them a whole lot.

I would give this great gift for a couple of reasons. This collage would show sweet memories from some of our favorite moments my family had. I know this gift would be special to my parents because I made it by myself and put a lot of effort into it. My collage would be great to hang up and enjoy because it would be full of color and happiness. I think my wonderful

present would make my parents very happy.

My Best Friend

BY CLAIRE KRISKO, 5th Grade

My dad's job sent our family to Germany for two years. The thought of leaving my friends was dreadful. Once we arrived I did not just make a new friend I made a new best friend. Her name was Hannah D. One day we crossed paths and it just happened we were best friends then and there. We found out that we are neighbors too! We had sleepovers almost every night. For two years we were inseparable.

What I love about her is she could be so laid back one moment and the next she could be screaming her head off. We love the same things, read the same books sometimes we could finish each others sentences because we thought the same things. Hannah is more than my best friend she is my soul mate no matter where we are or what separates us we will be there for each other. When I think of Hannah the saying "You never know how much you love someone till they're gone" comes to mind. I miss her so very much and wish she was with me but I know I will see her again.



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John McClorey
March 27, 09

Drawings by John McClorey, 5th Grade, Our Lady of Good Counsel.

VIENNA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Winter, Friends and Family

Vienna Elementary third-graders share their poetry.

Winter

BY CAROLINE SALWEN

BRRR! In winter it's cold, but mostly chilly!
HOT! Chocolate is hot but it feels so good in your mouth.
WEEEEE! You slide on the ice with boots on your feet!
HHHHH! CINNAMON is great; it smells so good!
In winter the trees are bare like your back.
The snow comes from the gray, gray sky.

Winter

BY EMMA TYCH

When you sled, it is fun to go fast.
How fast can you go?
When it is snowing,
Do you go outside to play?
If you go outside,
Do you sled or do you throw a snowball?
If you sled,
You will have fun
On the soft and slippery slopes.
Have some hot chocolate!
Then do it all again
Until you fall down laughing!

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Winter Fantasy

Making snow angels here and there,
Throwing snowballs every where.
Shoveling snow into an enormous pile.
Flying through the air
Landing with a plunk!
Into the soft bed of snow.

Friends

BY EMME PHILLIPS

I like my friends to be sweet, just like sugar
A lot of my friends are very caring
When they do something nice
I have some very cool friends.
Their names are Max, Caroline, and Rohan.
I have a lot of other friends too!
Friends are special to me.

My Family

BY JULIA LEAS

My family makes me feel really good
When I accomplish something.
Does your family make you feel good
When you accomplish something?
I love when my family comes over at Thanksgiving,
Christmas, and birthdays.
I get very excited when I go over to my Grandmom's and poppop's house
Every Sunday for pancakes!!!
I have aunts, uncles, grandparents, a mom, a dad, a brother,
And an awesome dog named Barney!!!
I love when my family comes over for breakfast.
We usually have BACON!!!
My family makes me feel really great!

Winter

BY MAX BUTLER

Winter snow glistens in the morning.
Morning birds chirp their beautiful early morning song.
I wake up and go to the window.
I see a deer eating bark.
A cardinal comes and lands on my windowpane.
A frog hibernates underground.
I get dressed and I go outside.
I sled down an icy hill.
I see birds make their nest.
Trees lose their leaves so brown.
I see some snow falling down.
Winter snow glistens in the morning.

A Great Winter

BY NOAH KHORRAMI

Winter is fun, so is snow.
I can wear my snow gear!
White snowflakes fall from the sky.
I like how it glides from the sky.
I wear a jacket outside to see them.
I see a new year coming ahead.
I see my birthday coming.
I wear my mittens out in the snow.
So come out! The snow is almost water.
I take my snow gear off
And get ready for spring.
I am ready.
Do you have shorts and short sleeves,
Even some sun glasses?

Fifth Grade

BY ANJALI SARDANA
SECOND GRADE

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Exiting new things to learn.

BY KILEY SINCLAIR

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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/manufacture. 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

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-William Van Horne

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21 Announcements

21 Announcements

21 Announcements

21 Announcements

OBITUARY

Christal Ann Sudduth, 77, of Oceanside, CA passed away on November 25, 2009. Mrs. Sudduth was born on July 1, 1932 in Los Angeles, CA. She earned a Bachelor's degree from UCLA in 1954 and later taught pre-school for many years. Christal married then-Lt. JG Roger Sudduth on June 5, 1954. They travelled the world together, both in the Navy and as civilians, with Roger retiring as a Captain in 1977.

She is survived by her loving husband of 55 years, Roger of Oceanside, CA; daughter, Lesley Barnard of San Diego, CA; son, Lawrence Sudduth of Arlington, VA; sister, Joy Denman of Washington D.C.; grandchildren, Devin Elliott of Ft. Myers, FL, Allyssa Sudduth and Robert Sudduth both of Marlborough, CT. She was preceded in death by a son, Darryl Sudduth, in 2001.

A Memorial Mass was celebrated at 5:00pm, on Saturday, December 5, 2009 at Saint John Vianney Catholic Church on Balboa Island, CA. The Committal will be held on Tuesday, April 13 at 11:00am at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, VA. Arrangements are by Poway-Bernardo Mortuary.

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

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I Am A Good Person

BY ANNE ELIZABETH GILES
FOURTH GRADE

I wonder how big the world is
I hear birds singing pretty songs
I see clouds shaped like flowers
I want a necklace for Christmas
I am a good person
I pretend I am in a magic land
I feel the wind blowing on my face
I touch a spinning globe
I worry about family and friends
I cry about good people when they die
I am a good person
I understand the words my parents say
I say bullies are mean
I dream many things about the earth
I try to help my family
I hope to get a dog
I am a good person

A brilliant rainbow forms
Out at the mountains
Stars blink colors
All kinds of different colors
Reflecting on the ice
They form a tinkling song
Like a glockenspiel
A soft comforting sound

In the deep seas
Waves crash
Deep blue reflects
All that surrounds it
Dolphins splash and play
Clicking and sloshing
Deep, deep comfort it brings
How nature sings
The soft high deep
Beautiful sounds
All in harmony
Forming the most
Wonderful song

What I Love About Christmas

BY ANNIE COWMAN
SIXTH GRADE

Jolly jingle bells are ringing,
Joyous carolers are singing.
Snowflakes landing on my tongue,
Songs of the holidays are sung.
Lights light the streets.
You say Merry Christmas to everyone you meet.
Naughty or nice.
You give, no matter the price.
Decorating the Christmas tree,
Baking cookies. Yummy!
Snowflakes, sleigh bells,
Reindeer and that evergreen smell.
Merry Christmas to all and to all a goodnight!

Listen listen
Very, very carefully
Listen, hear Earth breathe
Breathe with it
Breathe with Earth's patterns
Earth was made to be conserved, not destroyed.

Book Review for 'Young Zorro: The Iron Brand,' by Diego Vega

BY EMMA NELSON
FIFTH GRADE

An adventurous story of El Zorro's childhood, this book is great literature for fans of the famous black-masked bandit. This book is filled with suspense, mystery, and danger. Follow headstrong Zorro and quiet Bernardo on their adventures and discoveries as they try to find the missing people taken from their beloved Los Angeles.

Haiku

BY EMMA NELSON
FIFTH GRADE

Relaxing, cool stream
Water rushing
Quiet and alone.

When I Grow Up

BY KANA FURUKAWA
SECOND GRADE

When I grow up, I want to be a farmer. When I am a farmer I would also own a petting zoo for kids and at the same time. I would own a market with the stuff I grow and make out of the natural and capital resources at my farm. My farm would also have some extra homes for people in need with some orchards, a bog, and some gardens for people to harvest with their own hands. My little brother and I would own the farm together.

Down in the Meadow

BY BROOKE SHIN
FOURTH GRADE

Down in the meadow
The moon shines
Brightly oh so brightly
Silver and white rays
Dappling the bright healthy leaves
Coating the lush green grass
Singing a silver song
Chiming like bells
Silver bells
Down in the forest
The sun shines
The rays blinding
Light gold and yellow
Covering the leaves
With golden-rainbow light
Touching the petals gently
Ringing like bells
Golden bells

Outside the window
Wind whistles
Raindrops dance
Drumming on the window
Day and night alternating
Light peeks out through the dark gray clouds

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When I Grow Up ...

Vienna Elementary fifth-graders write about their aspirations.

Crowing up to be a medical scientist is what I want to be. I love to see scientists do their experiments because it's so interesting what happens to the results of their experiment. Some experiments look yucky, weird, or awesome. Experiments also make noise like crunching or cracking if the scientists did something wrong. If I were a scientist right now, I would hear the mixing of my experiment. I would also feel and taste the cures, they can probably feel like: soft, hard, or smooth. The scientists also throw in a flavor in the mixture so the kids can like it.

Do you want to know why I want to be this kind of scientist? Because I want to make cures for the world! Medicines, in my opinion.

— ARCHANA NAKKARA

When I grow up I want to be an entertainer, because I adore singing, acting, and dancing. To me it

would be exciting to be famous with everyone having your picture on their wall and thinking you're awesome. But most of all kids look up to you as a role model.

Speaking of role models, my big inspirations for everything I do are Selena Gomez and Demi Lovato. Selena and Demi have been living my dream for almost a year now and I am still amazed at their talents. Selena Gomez is a singer, actress and dancer so she really is a good inspiration. Demi Lovato is a singer and actress not a dancer but still inspiring. A lot of stars get upset because they have to travel a lot, except that my family and I love to travel so this will be an amazing opportunity to go around the world.

I have been dancing and singing since I was two, and acting was just something I picked up and enjoyed. But sometimes acting takes over because my mom says I'm very dramatic. Dancing is a great sport to do because it has a



Chris Blake, Wolftrap Elementary, 3rd Grade

whole bunch of qualities, like it's fun, energizing, and gives you a lot of strength. This summer I started travel dance and the challenge has been much harder but I have gotten a lot better, and I'm now going to Nationals. I am very talkative and loud, so I can hold a note for a pretty long time and still have a bit of breath left. Over all I am just very comfortable on stage and when I'm up there it feels like home. If I were to become famous, my life would change forever.

— CARTER LEE MERGLER

When I grow up I want to be a soccer player because its good for you, you get exercise, and it's not rough like football. You also get to work together as a team. To lots of people seeing a soccer game is fun but to me it's better and more fun to really play the game. My dad inspired me to play soccer. He told me that I was made for the game. And it's kind of true. I have four trophies. When I was 7 I went to Africa for two years. Within those two years I learned how to play soccer really well. My team

was the Camels. That was our school mascot at the time. My dad did not coach but he really cheered me on. Soccer was also the only sport to play there so I played soccer more there than I do now. But still thanks to that trip I like soccer a lot more.

For some people soccer can be very enjoyable. To me, soccer is the best sport to play. It's so easy. All you need is a ball and then you can play. That's why soccer is the most popular sport in the world. How do I know? They play it everywhere that I have been and that's a lot. You also get to play with your friends if they are on your team. The best part is that you get to be free and score goals to win. That's why you should play SOCCER!

— DAVID MADRIL

My dream job is being a forensic scientist for N.C.I.S. Watching the TV show called N.C.I.S got me interested in being a forensic scientist because it looked really enjoyable. I also think it would be awesome to work with blood, chemicals, dead people, etc. The reason I think I would be excellent for this job is because I'm good at solving mysteries. Also since I'm good at technology it would be helpful when I have to hack into computers.

Even though I want to be a forensic scientist, I also want to be a dance teacher. Then when I thought over it, I decided I can be a forensic scientist and just dance as a hobby. Being a forensic scientist is going to be very hard like lifting an elephant, but I'll last.

Although I like to travel a lot I won't be doing much like the field agents will. I don't really mind this because I don't travel much any ways. Since I'm more of a stay at home person I won't mind staying in my office. Soon to be N.C.I.S employee of the month coming through!

— NICOLE PAPATHANASSIOU

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The Colors of Poetry

Charlene Blake's fifth grade class writes poems about their favorite colors.

Red

BY ABHI ADITYA

Red is the aroma of raspberry pie baking in the oven.
 Red is the resonance of cardinals singing joyfully.
 Red is the flavor of pomegranates at dawn.
 Red is the scene of rubies flaring in the sunset.
 Red is the symbol of love and also the sign of war.
 Red is the view of cherry splattered over one's face.
 Red is the petal of a tulip in a bouquet.
 Red is the blood on the battlefield of the soldiers who have passed.
 Red is the velvety nylon used on a curtain.
 Red is the landscape of apples growing in miles and miles of trees.

Aqua

BY CRISTINA BUSCH

Aqua is the color of my favorite planet, Uranus.
 Aqua is the taste of Twister blue fruit punch.
 Aqua colored hibiscus smells as sweet as apple pie.
 Splash! Boom! Bash! The waves of Bora Bora are as clear as a glass of water.
 Annie acts out as an aqua-colored anemone monster.
 Aqua is like blue raspberry candy.
 Aqua is the color of the sky above me.

Blue

BY SHERIEF EL-GHAZAWI

Blue is the blanket that you cuddle with like a bear.
 Blue is the endless flavor of a blueberry that you slurp with your tongue.
 Blue is the swooshing sound of a crashing ocean wave.
 Blue is the fresh scent of a blue raspberry.
 Blue is a blueberry sitting as still as a brick.
 Blue is the color of an ice cold, soothing Popsicle on a hot sunny day.
 Blue is a bored blue-suited businessman on the beach in the Bahamas.
 Blue is the soft shirt that you wear at a time when you feel lonely.
 Blue is the color of Neptune seen through a telescope.
 Blue is the color of a bluebell flower given to someone you love.

Orange

BY NADY SOE

Orange zaps your tongue like a tangerine!
 Orange looks like a blazing wildfire spreading fearlessly.
 Orange is a water gun squirting in people's eye.
 Orange smells fresh, sunny and bright like sunshine at the seashore.
 The sound of orange reminds me of birds singing early in the day.
 Orange feels calm and mellow.



Philana Quan, Vienna Elementary School, 4th Grade

Orange is a swirl like the colors of Saturn.
 Orange is a peach at the peak of freshness.
 Orange is a tiny goldfish swishing side to side.
 Orange makes me feel awake in the morning.

Blue

BY J.B. STEWART

Blue is the sound of the ocean waves crashing on the beach.
 Blue is the smell of flowers blooming in the spring.
 Blue is the juicy taste of blueberries in my mouth.
 Blue is the fifth color of the rainbow shining in my eyes.
 Blue is the sound of blue jays chirping on a sunny day.
 Blue is the smell of an air freshener that has been sprayed.
 Blue is the color of the writing folder our class uses.
 Blue is the taste of blue cotton candy ice cream.
 Blue is the feel of a silky blue suit that I wear on special occasions.
 Blue is the softness of my clothes filled with Downy fabric softener.

Green

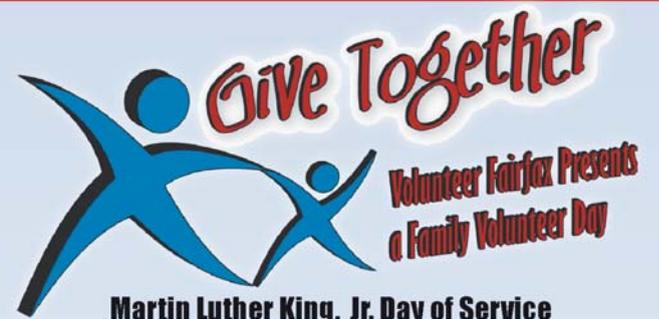
BY AMY PADILLA-VIAMONT

Green is the color of money.
 Green is looks like leaves.
 Green is the color of a new tree developing.
 Green is the color of grass.
 Green is as yucky as mold.
 Green is the color of a grasshopper.
 Green is the color of a frog.
 Green is the perfect color for alligators.
 Green is the color of an iguana.
 Green is the color of a tiny inchworm.

White

BY SULEIMAN ALSAED

White is the color of snow on a thriving winter day.
 White clouds roaming around a clear sky.
 White polar bears lumping around with their amazing fur coats.
 White is a paper as floppy and loud as a lion.
 White arctic fox when I see my brother's cooking.
 White, white, white as white as an unripe watermelon.
 White is a fluffy rabbit when it goes to sleep.
 CRASH! BOOM! ... I see the beautiful white car crash into the tree covered in snow.
 White tasty dairy milk tastes cold and soothing.
 White is snow feeling cold and smooth.



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