

Children's Connection 2010

Self Portrait by
Psyche Moshed,
Grade 3,
Mosby Woods Elementary

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Best Wishes For The Holidays



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT

THE CONNECTION
to your community

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Mount Vernon Gazette

THE CONNECTION

Potomac
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CENTRE VIEW

CHILDREN'S CONNECTION



Kamila Adamczyk, Grade 3, Eagle View Elementary



Michelle Ha, Grade 4, Eagle View Elementary



Kawah Wahidi, Fairfax Academy

Welcome

Dear Readers:

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

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

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 will publish additional student writings and artwork on special pages periodically throughout the new year. We appreciate the extra effort made by school staff to gather the materials during their busy time leading up to the holidays.

The 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 Fairfax Connection, 1606 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314, send e-mail messages to fairfax@connectionnewspapers.com

— MICHAEL O'CONNELL, EDITOR



Johara Alangari, Fairfax Academy



Mya Robinson, Grade 3, Eagle View Elementary



Namita Kekre, Grade 6, Eagle View Elementary



Lea Minarikova, Fairfax Academy

ART GALLERY



Nina Lam, Grade 3, Eagle View Elementary



Yellow Feather by Angela Gavino, Fairfax Academy



Ashley Bohmb, Fairfax Academy



S. Nguyen, Fairfax Academy



David Thai, Grade 4, Fairfax Villa Elementary



Douglas Herr, Grade 1, Fairfax Villa Elementary

WRITING

Silly Soup

BY AUDREY YIN
GRADE 1, MOSBY WOODS ELEMENTARY

In Audrey's silly soup
There are apples and
Ants and alligators.

Silly Soup

BY EMILIANO IBARRA
GRADE 1, MOSBY WOODS ELEMENTARY

In Emiliano's silly soup
There are eels and
Erasers and eggs.

Silly Soup

BY HELEN VALLEJOS CASTRO
GRADE 1, MOSBY WOODS ELEMENTARY

In Helen's silly soup
There are horses,
Houses, and hair.

Silly Soup

BY STEVEN ZENG
GRADE 1, MOSBY WOODS ELEMENTARY

In Steven's silly soup
There are snakes,
Spiders, and sushi.

My Hair

BY SETH STRONG
GRADE 3, MOSBY WOODS ELEMENTARY

Decorates my face with softness.
In water, swishes around like the ocean.
Springs up like a rooster's tail.
Keeps me warm when it is cold!
I love my hair.

The Voice of Love

BY JAMES MANSFIELD
GRADE 5, MOSBY WOODS ELEMENTARY

It is not a choice
Without a bed to sleep in
You can still be loved.
It is not a choice
Without a high paying job
You can still be loved.
It is not a choice
Without money for a home
You can still be loved.
It is not a choice
Without a warm, healthy meal
You can still be loved
It is not a choice
Without respect from others
You can still be loved.
It is not a choice
You think you cannot be heard
We can hear your voice.

My Hands

BY WILLIAM HUGHES
GRADE 3, MOSBY WOODS ELEMENTARY

Oh, my handsome and strong hands!
Help me climb, eat, and pick up my sister.
Even help me tickle my mom,
And pick up heavy weights.
Oh, my handsome and strong hands!

My Mind

BY MARY WALTON PETERSEN
GRADE 3, MOSBY WOODS ELEMENTARY

My mind thinks when I need to. My mind is an attic where I store thoughts, memories and things I learned. I love my mind because it helps me through all my problems and puzzles. There are always things going on in that attic we all call a "mind." Some things that are in that attic come out through my hands.

Winter Horizon

BY RACHEL HERTZ
GRADE 3, MOSBY WOODS ELEMENTARY

Oh, winter horizon
Your peaceful light
Shines down
With a beautiful golden light,
Shining down only at night.

My Slick Feet

BY JACOB VEJVODA
GRADE 3, MOSBY WOODS ELEMENTARY

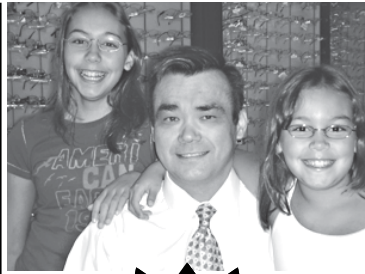
Feet, you are great!
You balance me,
You help a lot with running,
You help me with your strength,
You help me your control.
You are cool,
But not the same size.
You help me kick a ball.
Feet, you are great!

The Seahorse

BY KATIE BROWN
GRADE 2, WILLOW SPRINGS ELEMENTARY

Is a seahorse a fish?
Yes, it is a fish
But not the fish you would like on your dish.
I know it's confusing, but it's very amusing
That a seahorse is a fish.
A seahorse is weird lookin'
And we don't want it to be cookin'
They call it a horse
Because of the snout and it wanders about.
Now I've learned that a seahorse is a fish
And it's not the fish you would like on your dish!

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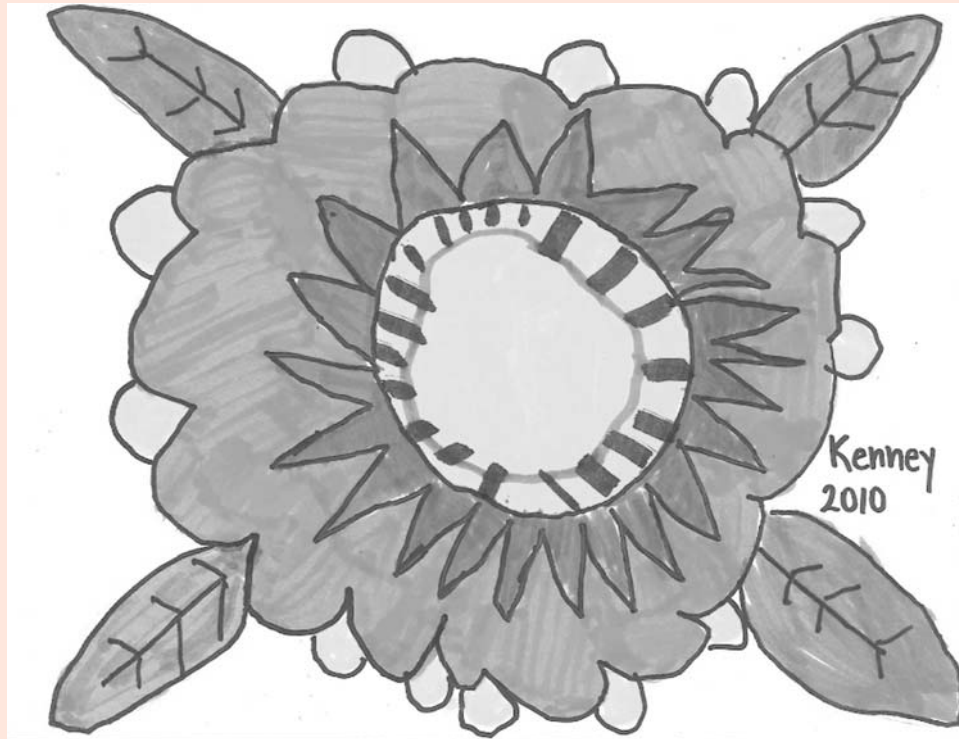
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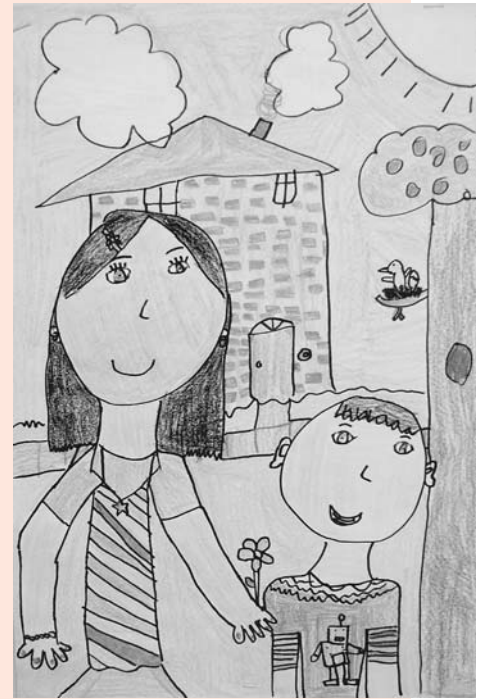

ART GALLERY



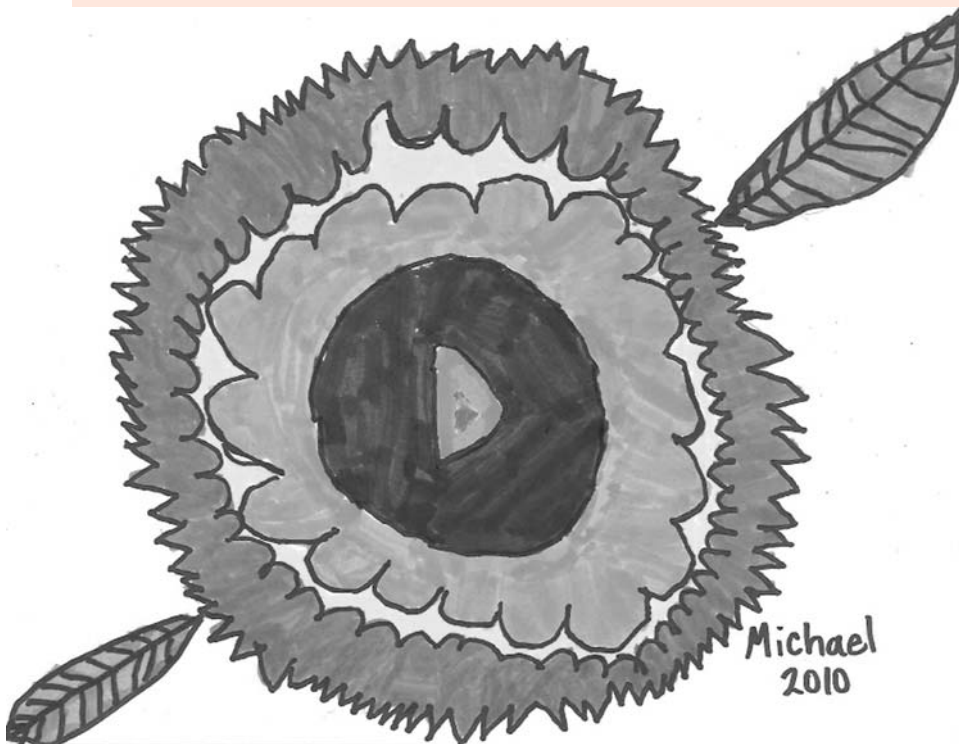
Ella Svarverud, Grade 2, Fairfax Villa Elementary



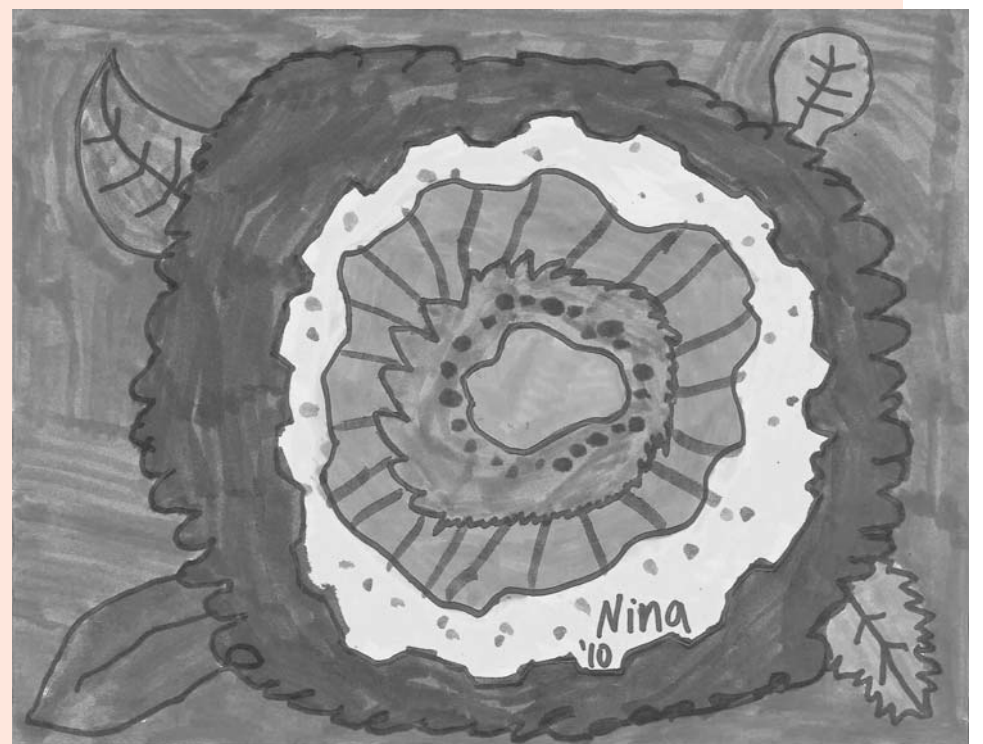
Kenney Lin, Grade 2, Fairfax Villa Elementary



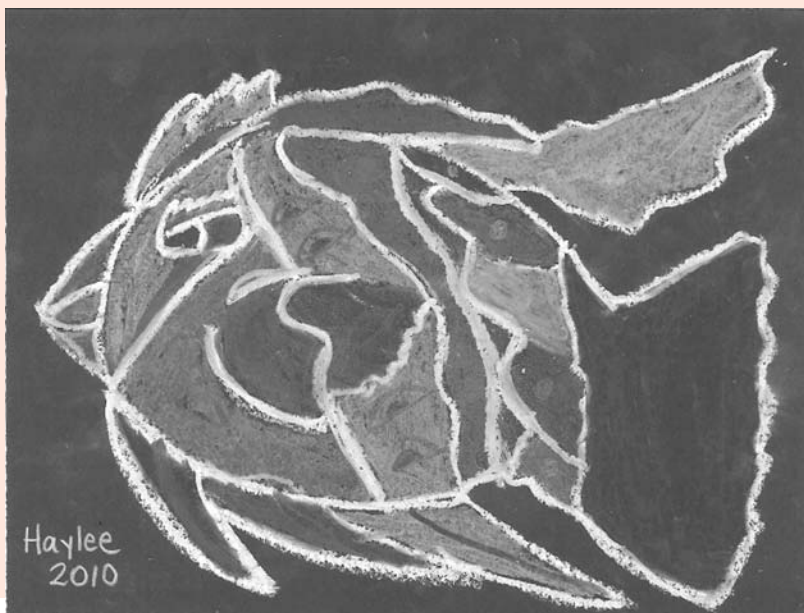
Tamara Nguyen, Grade 2, Fairfax Villa Elementary



Michael Owens, Grade 2, Fairfax Villa Elementary



Nina Cava, Grade 2, Fairfax Villa Elementary



Haylee Fernandes, Grade 4, Fairfax Villa Elementary



Humaira Ghazizadeh, Grade 4, Fairfax Villa Elementary

WRITING & ART

Artifact

BY ALEIGH GAMBONE
GRADE 4, WILLOW SPRINGS
ELEMENTARY

Fossil, pottery, ornament, tool
Now that's what I call an arti-
fact that's cool.

Delude

BY AJ KIM
GRADE 4, WILLOW SPRINGS
ELEMENTARY

Mislead, dupe, trick, deceive
Don't be a fool and always be-
lieve.



Rachel Lee, Grade 6, Wakefield Forest Elementary

One Terrible Toddler

BY GRANT PISNER
GRADE 6, WILLOW SPRINGS ELEMENTARY

There aren't a whole lot of people who can brag that they were kicked out of not one, not two, but three preschools before they even started kindergarten! No, I was not and I am not a juvenile delinquent, but it seems I was sort of a bad kid when I was little.

When I was barely two years old, my mom went back to work and left me with Terry. She was a child care provider who watched me in her big farmhouse in Clifton. There were several other babies and toddlers there. She had a large garden that we could dig in, many toys, and the first big screen TV I had ever seen. Terry was an older lady who had kids that were all grown up. I got kicked out of Terry's for saying bad words in front of a baby.

My mom decided to try out a preschool. Preschool had worked for my brothers, so why not for me? Well, here's why not! From the start, it was not a good match. They gave me a bowl of tiny dinosaurs to sort by color. Instead, I turned the bowl over, made it into a mountain, and had a dinosaur battle. I used sound effects and all that. They could not seem to get me to keep still. I was always running off and even seemed to disappear. The worst thing was that the other kids would then follow me. My favorite place to go was the closet where I would hide under piles of coats and gloves. When about three or four other kids disappeared into the closet with me – that was the last straw! The preschool said it would be best if I found a different place to go.

Next, I was enrolled at another preschool. This was a bigger class, lots of toys, more noise, and many more activities. I was more likely to fit in. All was going along just fine until one rainy day. My teacher had told us that on rainy days we could bring in videos since we could not play on the playground. I brought in *Peter Pan* to watch. The teacher promised that we would watch it, but then later in the day she chose a different child's movie. It was a bad movie about some fairies flying around and making trees live a second life or something like that. I was so mad that I grabbed a little chair and held it up like I was going to throw it. Well, they told my parents I was "not allowed to return because of the chair incident." On my way out I felt sad until I saw a bowl of delicious sugar cookies; my frown disappeared and so did the cookies.

My parents were running out of choices. Then, miraculously, they found a great preschool. It was amazing; I have to say it was the best school ever! Every day when it was sunny outside we would get to go to the pool. They had a huge playground, and at the time there were cicadas. I loved playing with them on the playground. I made houses for them out of rocks and leaves and branches, I raced them, I even found an albino one! We also had a reading time that I loved because they had books with lots of pictures, about 6 words to a page, and cool fiction stories. The only problem with this preschool was that I couldn't stay longer because I had to graduate and needed to start kindergarten – and that's another story to tell for another day.

The thing I learned from these situations was not to give up. If you look hard enough, eventually you will find a place where you fit in.

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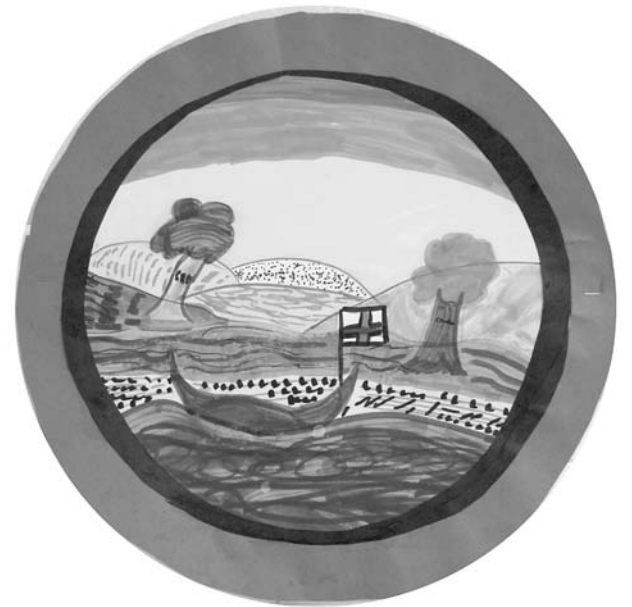
ART GALLERY



Aiden Cory, Grade 4, Fairfax Villa Elementary



Caleb Walker, Grade 4, Fairfax Villa Elementary



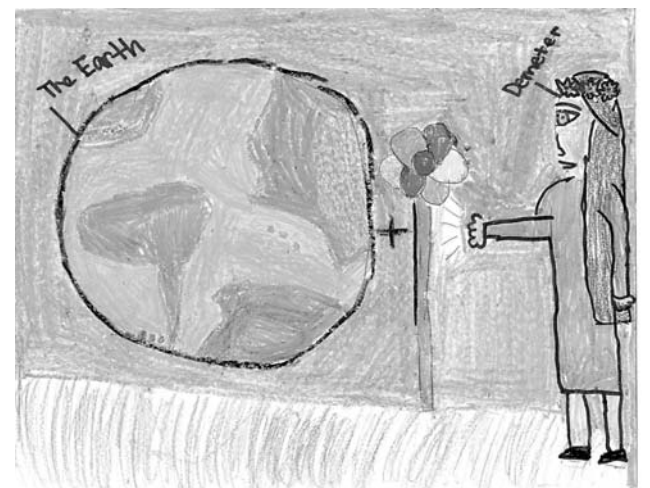
Hiroki Cook, Grade 4, Fairfax Villa Elementary



Ryan Krahulec, Grade 4, Fairfax Villa Elementary



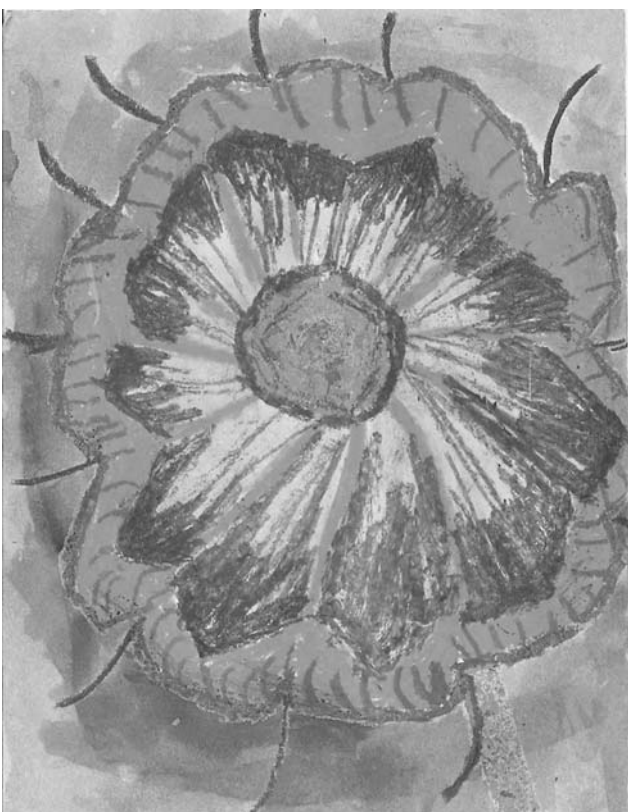
Wenjie Lin, Grade 4, Fairfax Villa Elementary



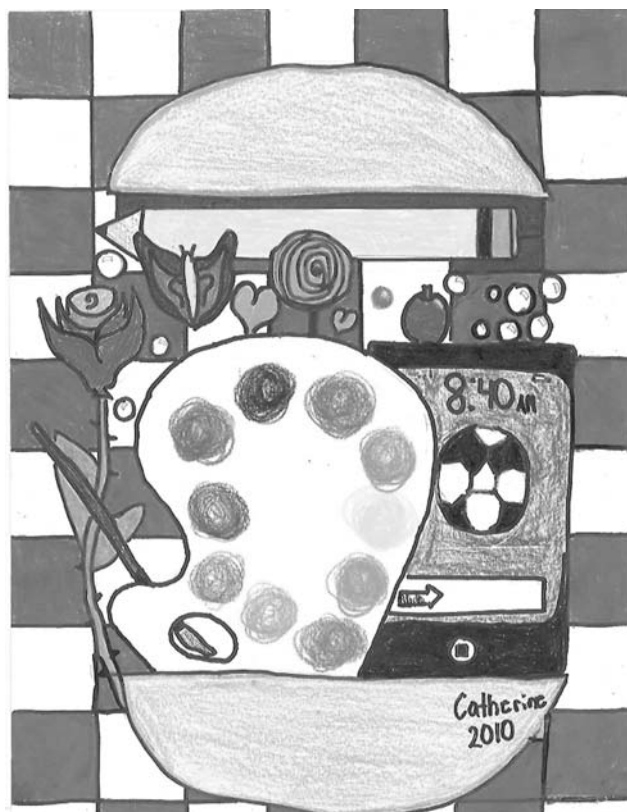
Demeter Myth by Shivani Das, Grade 5, Fairhill Elementary



Caitlyn Harthun, Grade 5, Mosby Woods Elementary



Aaron Perzan, Grade 5, Fairfax Villa Elementary



Catherine Leighy, Grade 6, Fairfax Villa Elementary



Mackenzie Pacquing, Grade 2, Mosby Woods Elementary

WRITING

We Love You A Lot

BY JULIA GERMANO
GRADE 5, WILLOW SPRINGS
ELEMENTARY

We love you a lot
For our country you fought
For the men and the women who
put up the fight
All through the day and all
through the night
As the stars glow bright
For us you fight
We honor you every day
For you we pray
We love you a lot
For our country you fought

Imposter

BY SYDNEY GOLDSTEIN
GRADE 4, WILLOW SPRINGS
ELEMENTARY

Cheater, fraud, trickster,
phony
Imposters are full of
phony boloney.

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WRITING & ART

The Scariest Haunted House Ever

BY SAM BALINT
GRADE 6, WILLOW SPRINGS ELEMENTARY

My white mask glistened in the moonlight on the night of Halloween. The bulky bag of candy I held brought sweat to my face. I questioned whether I should enter the haunted house, which stood before me.

Matt, my friend and neighbor, persuaded me to travel inside. He said we would just "fly by" it. My final verdict: I should defeat one of my greatest fears, the haunted house.

We strolled throughout the dreaded nightmare, unknown of the mysteries the house held in store. I was stricken with an emotional threat. Matt was becoming more and more panicky as time passed. I then gained a sense of pity for him as we walked.

The last part of the haunted house was near; I could see the moonlight coming from the exit. I was getting a slight thrill from Matt's scared behavior. We approached a door, taunting us of reaching the outside world. A bowl of candy sat there, intriguing our taste buds. Then, BAM! A horrifying mask plummeted downward right front of us. Matt dashed outside while I tagged along, grabbing a piece of candy.

It was a fantastic experience for me after all, but Matt was scared to the bone. I learned that surprisingly great things can emerge from trying new things. I overcame my trembling fear.



Charity Dulay, Grade 6, Willow Springs Elementary

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WRITING

What is the best thing about being a student at Robinson?

BY AMANDA MOELLER
GRADE 8, ROBINSON SECONDARY

All though most people love the cafeteria, locker bay, or the class rooms, I love the hall. You know that long hall from the main door that leads all the way down to the middle school locker bay. It's like a personal tour, showing you most of the school. When you're all alone in that hall you feel like the most important person in the world. My feet echo softly from the steps each foot makes and looking at each locker bay, amused by all the different colors they are themed as. I even love that awkward feeling you get when someone passes you the other way. Oh that warm feeling knowing you're not an intruder, it's your school, it's your home. So I'm going to keep walking that hall for it's my favorite part about Robinson.

When I Grow Up ...

BY COLLEEN M. MULROONEY
GRADE 8, ROBINSON SECONDARY

When I grow up, I want to be a diplomat. No I'm not one of those people who pick some occupation out of a hat and say, "I want this one!" I actually *like* studying foreign language and other cultures. In fact, that's what I do in my free time. I'll just go on the computer and choose between going on Google translate or Culturegrams. The only thing I like better than that is doing my Chinese homework. No kidding. I don't even know what I'll do without it over summer vacation. Anyway, I really want to be a diplomat, and I'll take the Foreign Service test as many times as I need to in order to succeed.

4 Good Reason

BY ALIVIA CORWIN
GRADE 7, ROBINSON SECONDARY

Life,
Is what they've given me
As they watch and encourage me
While I jump around and try to sing
They tell me I'm a star to be
But I know I'm no prodigy.

They teach me to be strong
And hold me when I'm weak
And even when I'm stupid
They with still believe.

They yell with good intention
But I might take it wrong
And embarrass me on purpose
Because they think its fun.

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And enforcing their ways
Because they want me to outlive them
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So I'll live life to the fullest
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ART & GALLERY



Abigail Lee, Grade 5, Eagle View Elementary



Celia Mendoza, Grade 5, Eagle View Elementary



Ergi Masati, Grade 5, Eagle View Elementary



Hauren Buchanan, Grade 3, Eagle View Elementary



Alexa Gubanich, Grade 3, Eagle View Elementary



Daniella Contreras, Grade 2, Eagle View Elementary



Hannah Kang, Grade 5, Eagle View Elementary



Louis Yang, Grade 3, Eagle View Elementary



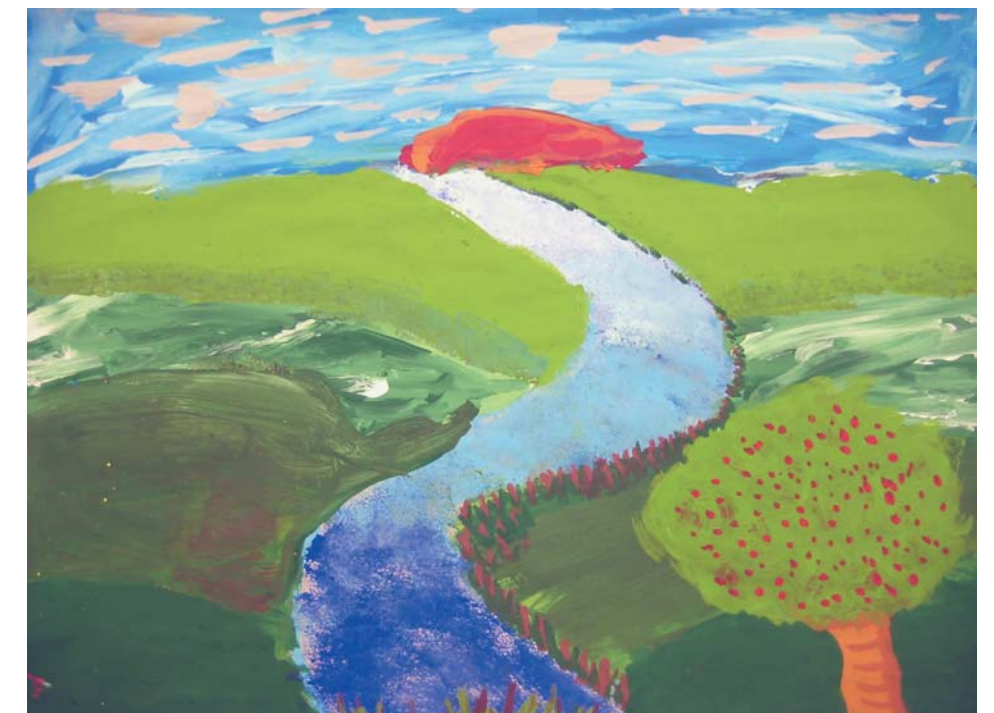
Alexandra Mazeas, Grade 6, Eagle View Elementary



Dung Tran, Grade 6, Eagle View Elementary

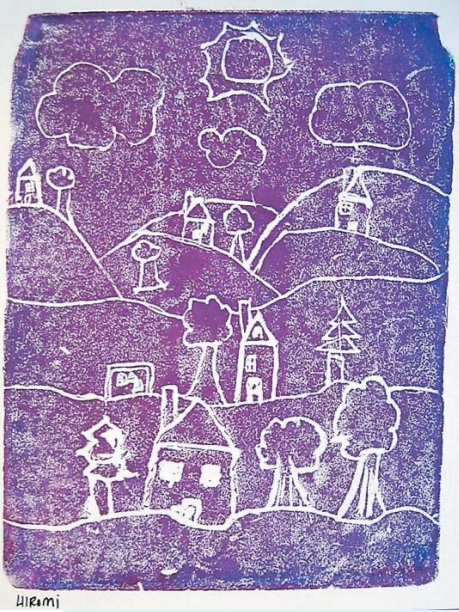


Julianne Guzman, Grade 5, Eagle View Elementary

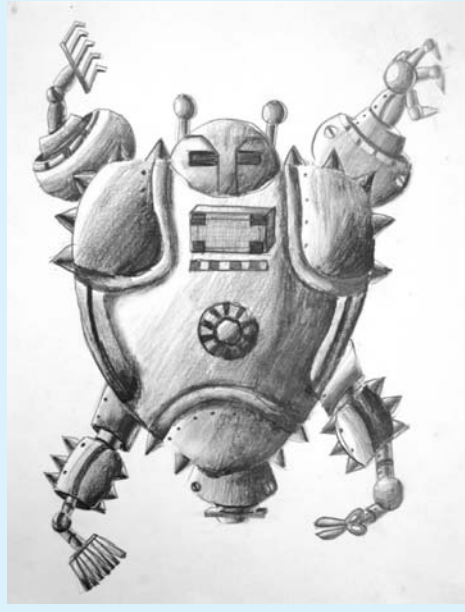


McKayla Witt, Grade 5, Eagle View Elementary

ART GALLERY



Community Landscape by Hiromi Yoshizaka, Mosby Woods Elementary



Form Robot by Adam Kim, Grade 6, Mosby Woods Elementary



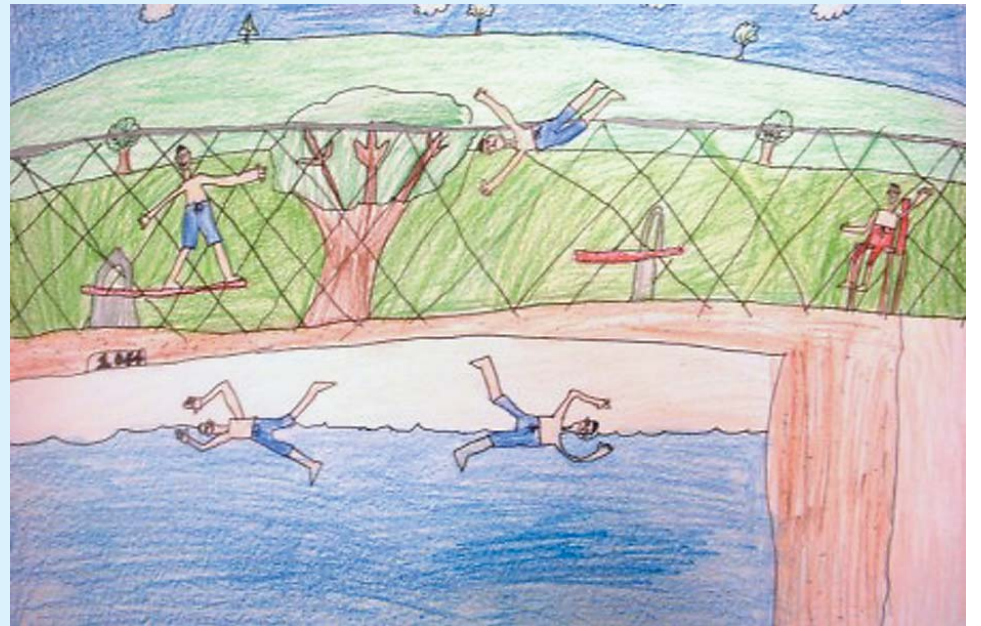
Amanda Ruby, Providence Elementary



Caroline Pitches, Providence Elementary



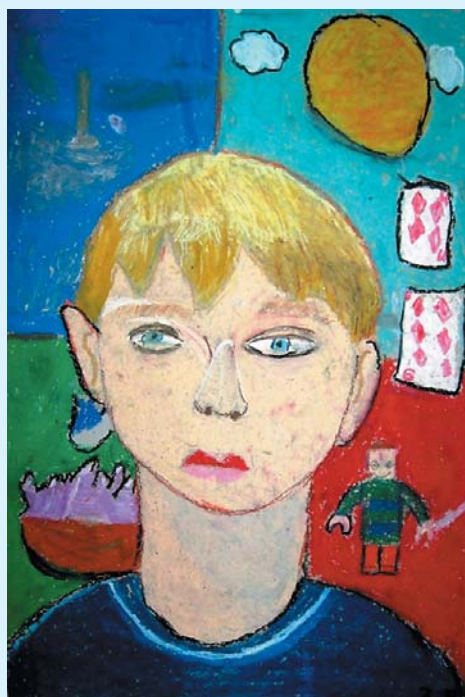
Allison Valladares, Providence Elementary



Connor Smith, Providence Elementary



Kevin Bennet, Grade 3, Mosby Woods Elementary



Self Portrait by Zachary Roberts, Grade 3, Mosby Woods Elementary



Eugene Lee, Providence Elementary



Grace Keller, Grade 4, Wakefield Forest Elementary

WRITING & ART

Middle School

BY ELIJAH KING

GRADE 7, ROBINSON SECONDARY

Life can be very hard, with all
the people you meet,

But never let the drama sweep
you off your feet.

You will meet different people
every day and every week,

But never ever let your self-
esteem spill or leak.

The halls are crowded with
people all like a blur,

Different races and religions'
mixed and stirred.

Carpets, tiles, and bricks all
cover the floor,

The homework is piling up,
more, and more.

Rushing to classes, running to
math

Barely have time to even take a
bath.

With all of fun and all of the sad
times

Look at me, I still have time to
make all these rhyme
something's will go right, but some
things will go wrong

You will get used to it and days
will never seem long.



Karen Ma, Grade 3, Willow Springs Elementary

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WRITING

The Story of Christmas

By EMMA FREEMAN
GRADE 7, ROBINSON SECONDARY

I can hear the clomps of Reindeer heels stomping on the roof
Ashes from the fireplace shake out in one big poof.

I smell the cold winter snow and I saw his big old grin

I couldn't help and see Santa Claus, with white hanging from his chin.

All dressed in red, with a big black belt, he looks and sees me there,

He paused and said "No presents for you, no, you get your share!"

So I'm stuck here on Christmas morning with the whole family, loving,

And smiles on my siblings' face, I am left here with nothing.

"What did you do to deserve this coal; it must have been real bad!"

My siblings holler and laugh at me, for I was very mad.

What is the best thing about being a student at Robinson?

By PAIGE RATHBURN
GRADE 7, ROBINSON SECONDARY

To me, being a student at Robinson is a privilege. For almost my whole elementary years, I went to a private school. I grew up with uniforms, strict rules, and little freedom. I thought if I went to Robinson, it would be so hard with the schedules and

school. Now that I have come to Robinson, I absolutely love it. I can choose my outfits, have fun electives, have time between classes, make new friends and so much more. I love Robinson's spirit and way of working with the kids. I think everything about the school is great and I am so excited for the new things heading my way.

What do you want to be when you grow up?

By AMANDA MOELLER
GRADE 8, ROBINSON SECONDARY

Writing is what I want to do. Yes, there are many different types of writing and I love them all but my true passion is writing tragedies. People ask me all the time why I would like to write sad books and act like I'm completely crazy. Have you ever seen a movie that made you cry? Most likely it wasn't because of what happened but it was because of the scenario. The sad music sets the tone, where they are could be scary and sad, and almost always when a character in a movie cries, you cry too. In books they don't have all that visual stuff just writing and your imagination. I feel that a book is a true masterpiece if just how someone wrote a scenario can make you feel sad and cry. True art is when a writer uses such detail to make a reader feel sad for someone who might not even be real! If you have ever read a book that made you cry you probably understand that emotion you get. I think it's magical and I want to write those heart touching books.

PS3 Review

By TONY KHA TANG
GRADE 6, FAIRHILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

With the built in Wi-Fi and the whisper quiet system the Playstation 3 is the Ultimate gaming system. Not only can it play Blu-Ray discs and normal DVDs you can stream the internet using Wi-Fi without paying! (Playstation Network)

The first Playstation game system was called the Playstation in 1994 that system was very popular back then BUT then came the Playstation 2 the MOST popular gaming device back then and NOW!! But hold your breath 6 years later came the ultimate gaming system the PS3, with HDMI out and 20-60 GB of space this was the top system in 2006 the PS3 had people waiting in line for 2 DAYS just to get the PS3! The retail price for the PS3 was \$500 for the 20 GB but \$600 for the 60 GB, but that didn't stop the buyers. But the last and most latest PS3 gaming system is the PS3 Slim it has a lot of same things but the main differences are 1. It is 30% lighter. 2. Can't play PS2 games. 3. Its Slimmer 4. It has only 2 USB ports.

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WRITING

Video Games

BY COLLEEN M. MULROONEY
GRADE 8, ROBINSON SECONDARY

Look, I know that there are a bunch of adults out there have lots of bad things to say about video games. It's true that there certainly are boundaries to the amount of time people should spend playing them, but they really are wonderful. No, I'm not talking about games with mindless violence like in *Call of Duty* or *Resident Evil*. I'm talking about games that require thought, like *Fire Emblem* and *Legend of Zelda*. There was even a study in 2009 stating that children who play video games score higher on IQ tests than those who don't, so reconsider the hostilities you have toward electronic games today!

What is one thing you would change about school?

BY MADY HANTON
GRADE 7, ROBINSON SECONDARY

If I could change one thing about school it would be to allow pets. I have a pug, Daisy, at home and I don't get to spend much time with her. I get home earlier than I used to, but then I have to do homework. Daisy sleeps with me at night then I wake up and go to school. I love Daisy so much, and it would be fantastic if I could spend my day with her! Whenever I see that scrunched up little face my whole heart swoons. She is my own personal sun. I know Daisy will snort her way into your heart too!

What makes a good parent?

BY PAIGE RATHBURN
GRADE 7, ROBINSON SECONDARY

There are so many qualities that I think of as a good parent. Well, to start it off, I believe that a good parent should really appreciate everything about their child. Something very important is to give your child the support and help they need to live a successful life. A parent is very important to a child's life. They help them through the bad and praise them through the good! My parents are so important to me. They help me with everything and get me through even the hardest times. We all need the love and happiness that our parents give us.

The Greatest Gifts

BY JAMES VAUGHN
GRADE 5, WILLOW SPRINGS ELEMENTARY

The gift I would give
That did not cost any money
Would be the gift of love and happiness to my family.
If my friends ever needed support, I would give them support.
And those are the greatest gifts.

Hershey Park

BY JACOB JUNG
GRADE 3, WILLOW SPRINGS ELEMENTARY

It's a piece of chocolate! It's a roller coaster! No...it's Hershey Park! I would like to go to Hershey Park next summer because it was so much fun the first time I went there. I had the best time ever.

I would go to the chocolate factory. I would buy chocolate syrup to put on my morning pancakes. Then I would make my own chocolate to eat after. I would watch a chocolate movie about how to make chocolate. Then I would buy the Hershey that weighs five pounds!

My next stop would be the roller coaster. My first time riding a roller coaster I rode a super fast one. You are supposed to be a certain height to ride a roller coaster and I would like to ride the highest one.

Last I would go to the zoo near Hershey Park. I would see the sea lion do amazing tricks. Then I would see the running bird scurrying across the ground and the king cobra with a crown on its head.

Now you know why I would go to Hershey Park...the yummy chocolate, the daring roller coaster and the beautiful nature there.

Surf

BY RYAN O'CONNOR
GRADE 8, ROBINSON SECONDARY

The wind blew across the sunbathed waters,
As I looked out into the endless light blue hue expanding forever,

This reminds me of what I can do if I put my heart into it,

Sky is the limit,
I can do anything,
I close my eyes,

As I run my hands over my newly waxed carbon fiber board I take a deep breath,
I breathed in the forever salty air,

I hear the endless waves pounding the sand yet the sand is never harmed,

The seagulls preach,
I wrinkle my toes through the small grains of sand,
I hear the faint humming of a far out boat,
I hear voices laughing and shouting,
I slowly open my eyes and begin my journey,
To the surf.

Giving a Gift

BY SIERRA YOUNG
GRADE 7, ROBINSON SECONDARY

If I had to give my parents a gift that didn't cost money it would be as much of my time as I could give them. I love spending time with my parents. We get along with each other very well. We bicker, but we'll talk about the problem and then get over it. The things I like doing with my parents are watching movies, watching tv, bike riding, going out to eat, playing games (including the wii) and going on trips. During my fourth grade birthday party, my friends and I were playing Disney's High School Musical Sing It, and Wii Boogie. My friends and I forced my dad to sing Fabulous by Sharpay (Ashley Tisdale) on the High School Musical Sing It game, the funny thing with my dad was that he sang it in a "girly" high pitched voice. We told my mom to sing a song and she chose ABC by the Jackson 5 on Wii Boogie. My friends and I were back-up dancers and singers; we had a lot of fun. I'd do anything for my parents; they're the best thing that could ever happen to me.

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ART GALLERY



Elisa Luckabaugh, Providence Elementary



Elizabeth Breslin, Providence Elementary



Eliza Radoll, Providence Elementary



Conner Hewlett, Grade 2, Wakefield Forest Elementary



Yasmin Vaziri, Grade 2, Wakefield Forest Elementary



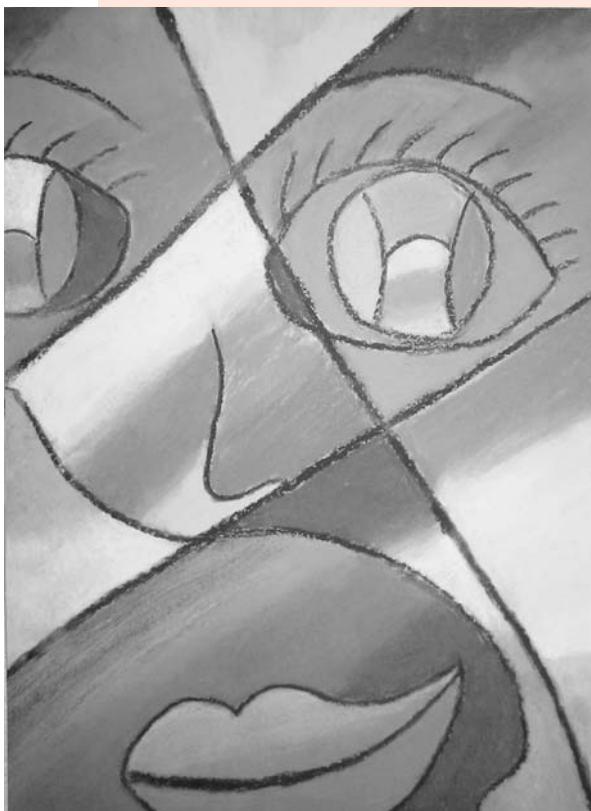
Isabela Frigerio, Grade 5, Wakefield Forest Elementary



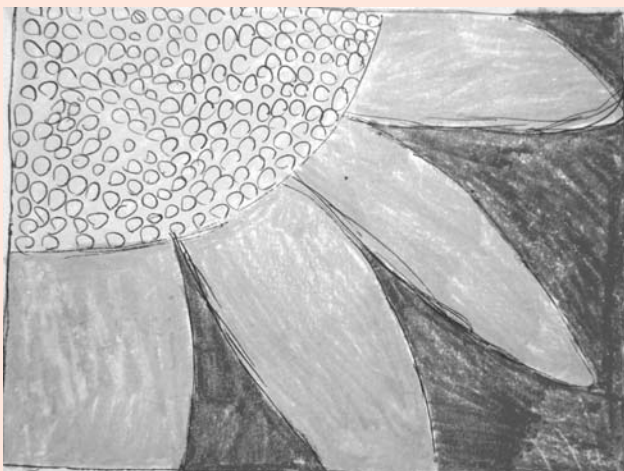
Emma Hartzler, Grade 5, Wakefield Forest Elementary



Effie Inglefield, Grade 1, Wakefield Forest Elementary



Emma Heslep, Grade 5, Willow Springs Elementary



Jena Jaso, Grade 6, Willow Springs Elementary

ART GALLERY



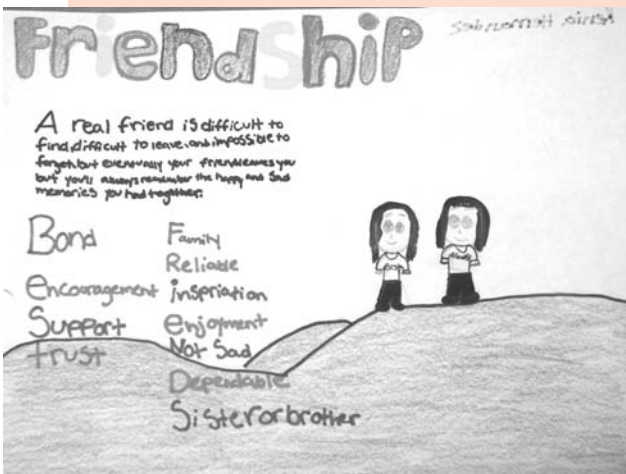
Deon Nguyen, Grade 6, Fairhill Elementary



Emma Patterson, Grade 6, Fairhill Elementary



Judy Ko, Grade 6, Fairhill Elementary



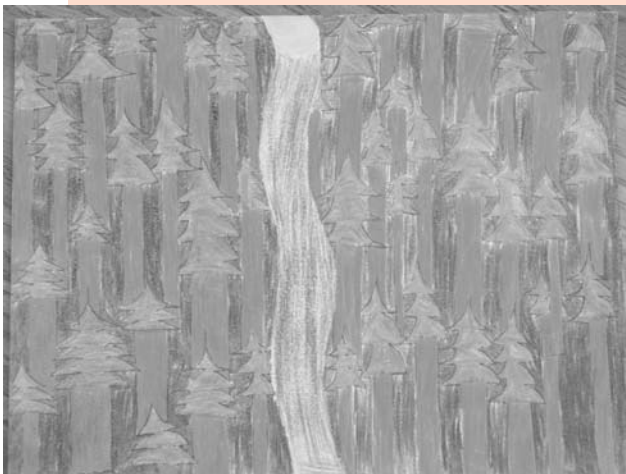
Kenia Hernandez, Grade 6, Fairhill Elementary



Michelle Truong, Grade 6, Fairhill Elementary



Kimberly Eastridge, Grade 6, Fairhill Elementary



Raef Khan, Grade 6, Fairhill Elementary



Erin McKee, Grade 3, Willow Springs

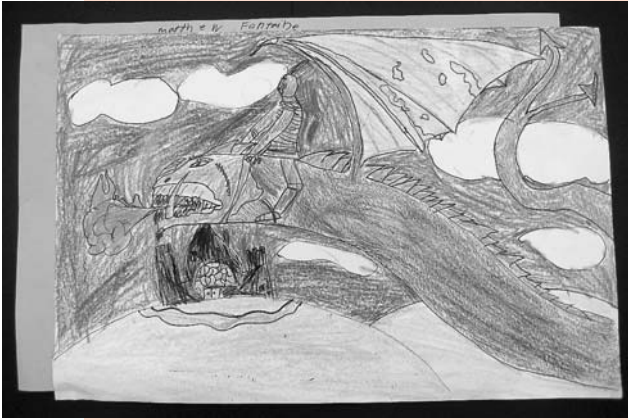


Julia Heath, Providence Elementary



Ella Maier, Grade 1, Wakefield Forest Elementary

ART GALLERY



Matthew Fontaine, Grade 4, Mosby Woods Elementary



Neighborhood Development by Meghan Texiera, Grade 6, Mosby Woods Elementary



Snow Fun! By Zoe Gordiyenko, Grade 1, Mosby Woods Elementary



Enrique Torres, Providence Elementary



Julia Shirley, Providence Elementary



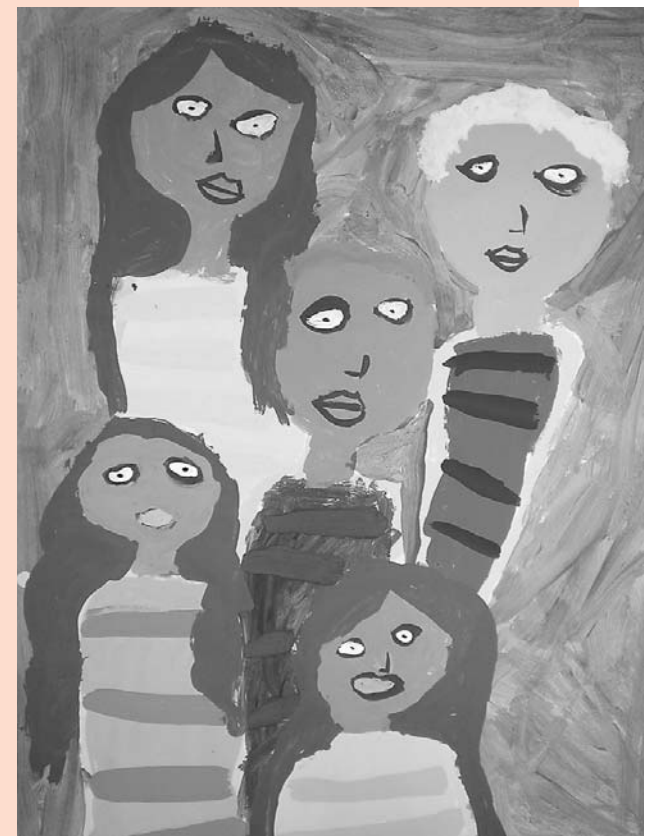
Ava Moore, Grade 1, Wakefield Forest Elementary



Margaret Anderson, Providence Elementary



Ariana Ishaizay, Grade 1, Willow Springs Elementary



Stephanie Christianson, Grade 1, Wakefield Forest Elementary

WRITING & ART

Artistic?

BY ALEXANDRA WANIEL
GRADE 6, WILLOW SPRINGS ELEMENTARY

Have you ever won a contest or competition and everyone congratulates you? You feel so good about yourself afterwards. It has definitely happened to me before! The most memorable moment of my fourth grade school year was when I won the rain barrel decorating contest. My previous school had a courtyard, and they decided to have a contest for who presented the best design to be painted on a rain barrel. Since I enjoy art, I entered a picture for the contest. My design was a sun looking down upon two flowers... a tulip and a daisy.

One day, I reached school and realized that the morning announcements would be revealing the contest winners. I unpacked my backpack and started working on my morning work. My teacher, Mrs. Talbot, edged toward the projector to turn on CNC, our school's news cast.

The sixth graders appeared and began disseminating their daily script routine. I wasn't paying attention to the news, but what happened next couldn't be ignored! I had never heard my name called on CNC before, and I wasn't dreaming! I had won the rain barrel decorating contest! My teacher congratulated me as my class clapped.

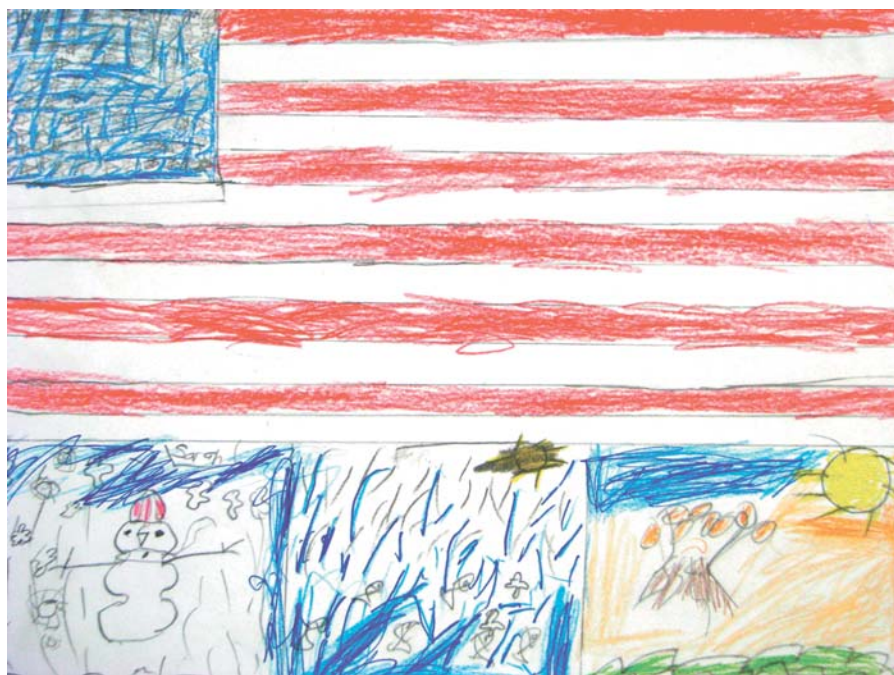
My artwork was displayed in the hallway with a first place ribbon placed on it. There were second and third place winners as



Julie Kovach, Grade 5, Willow Springs Elementary

well, but the first place winner was responsible for painting their design on the rain barrel.

To this day, the barrel sits in the courtyard of Clifton Elementary School, collecting water for the courtyard gardens. Whenever I see my friends from Clifton they tell me how good of an artist I am and whenever they look at the rain barrel they always think of me. This event helped me realize that I am a better artist than I thought I was. I will treasure this memory forever!



Sarah Arkoh, Grade 6, Fairhill Elementary

My Favorite Season

BY AIDAN LEDELL
GRADE 4, WILLOW SPRINGS ELEMENTARY

My favorite season is autumn. I like autumn because of the calmness, the colors of the leaves, and the start of school.

The main reason I like autumn is because of the calmness. I like the calmness because of the very still feeling it produces. I also treasure the peace. The other seasons are really too busy, and I feel less stressed in autumn.

The second reason I like autumn is because of the colors of the leaves. I like the colors of the leaves because of the natural beauty of the vivid reds, joyful blues and calming yellows. I also like the colors because of the way they bring a rainbow down to earth.

I also like autumn because school starts. I like school, as school means education and I treasure education. I also love to learn! I also like to meet my new teacher and class.

Autumn is my favorite season...what is yours?

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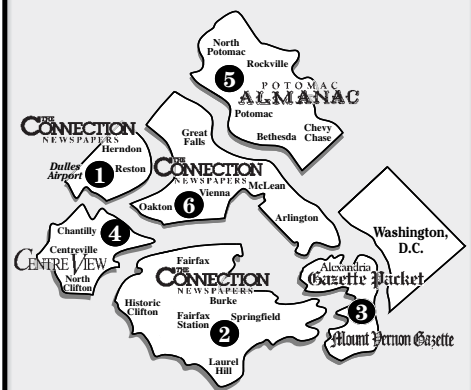
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