

Oak Hill ♦ Herndon
CONNECTION

Children's Connection 2011

By Linzy Rivera,
4th Grade,
Herndon Elementary

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Transportation News and Inclement Weather Guidelines from Fairfax County Public Schools

Coming in January: The Superintendent's Proposed FY2013 Budget

FCPS Buses by the Numbers

FCPS operates one of the largest publicly owned fleets in the country. More than 1,500 school buses, using 6,500 separate routes, transport more than 110,000 students to school each day.

The average FCPS bus is 8.1 years old. Depending on the school district budget, FCPS purchases an average of 95 buses a year. When it comes time to replace a bus, the FCPS transportation department purchases buses that meet or exceed federal and Virginia state safety standards, have a record of reliability, have low projected average total cost of ownership with durable parts to minimize down time, and is sold by a dealership that provides an acceptable level of service and

responsiveness. The average purchase price for a new bus is \$114,000.

Did You Know?

Only New York City Department of Education transports more students by bus than Fairfax County Public Schools every day.



When the Weather Outside is Frightful

The holidays may be almost behind us but there is still plenty of winter ahead of us. Are you prepared?

Hat and mittens? Check. Shovel? Check. Ice scraper? Check.

But if you have children in Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), do you know where to get information about school closings and delays due to the weather conditions?

Whether snowflakes are fluttering or raindrops are pouring, Fairfax County Public Schools monitors weather conditions all year round. Weather conditions may necessitate schools open two hours late, close two hours early, or that school will be canceled for an entire day.

Students use various methods to get to school – they walk, take a bus, get dropped off by a parent, ride with another student, or drive themselves. The safety of students, staff, and parents is the primary consideration when FCPS is making a weather-related decision about schools.

If an impending weather event is forecast, FCPS staff gathers information about

weather, road conditions, mobilization plans from transportation sources, and other information to determine the impact on the school system. Weather conditions can vary significantly in different parts of the county. Often major roadways are in good driving condition, but neighborhood roads may be treacherous. The Superintendent is given the most up-to-date information from various sources in an effort to make a decision by 4:30 a.m. on whether to delay opening schools or cancel school for the day. If weather conditions worsen during the school day, the Superintendent may make a decision to close schools two hours early. Once the decision is made, the information can be found in the following locations:

- www.fcps.edu
- Red Apple Channel 21
- Keep in Touch email and text notifications
- FCPS Facebook page
- FCPS Twitter page
- Local tv news and radio stations

If school is canceled, the School Aged Child Care (SACC) program run by the Fairfax County Government, is also canceled for the day. Parents should have a plan for any last-minute child-care arrangements if schools and SACC programs are closed.



Getting To Know Us

FCPS Bus Driver Art Hurlock

Art Hurlock spends his days transporting more than 100 students to and from Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS).

Hurlock became a FCPS driver 11 years ago after managing the automobile maintenance shop for a large company. Although his wife would like him to join her in retirement, he says he has no intention of retiring any time soon.

"I really enjoy it. I like driving and I like the kids," he said. "That's why I'm still here."

FCPS has one of the largest school bus fleets in the nation traveling on more than 2,700 miles of roadway in Fairfax County.

"It's pretty amazing how the school district creates bus routes to make sure all the kids get to school," he said.

Knowing parents are relying on him to transport their children safely to and from school is not something Hurlock takes lightly. He admits the traffic in Northern Virginia is particularly challenging on snowy days.

"When I get home after driving in snowy weather, I just say, that was some day. I'm not just thinking about the 30 kids on my bus, but there are 60 parents who are counting on me too," Hurlock said.

He's been driving the same bus for the more than four years and logged more than 100,000 thousand miles on it.

"I really like what I do. I like the kids. I would say 99 percent of the kids are good and the parents are good to me too," he said.

Safe Routes to Schools

Fairfax County Public Schools is proud to participate in Safe Routes to Schools, an international effort to encourage more families to get out of their cars and onto their feet to enjoy the many benefits of safely walking and bicycling to school. Parents are encouraged to accompany their children to school and to work with their PTA or PTO to organize walking events.

"Walking is a simple way to incorporate exercise into your day," said FCPS Superintendent Jack D. Dale. "We encourage all FCPS students and families to participate in this program and walk or bike to school whenever possible."

The program promotes physical activity, pedestrian safety, and concern for the

environment. Several Fairfax County public schools have established a Safe Routes to School program and participate in bike and walk to school challenges.

For more information visit www.saferoutesinfo.org/.



Be a School Bus Driver for Fairfax County Public Schools

Fairfax County Public Schools has more than 1,200 bus drivers on its transportation team. Their primary goal is to ensure that students are transported safely to and from school. If you have a good driving record, enjoy working with children of all ages, can pass a physical exam and drug and alcohol screening, and have the ability to complete training, you are eligible to apply for a position. Starting pay begins at \$17.07 per hour, with five weeks of paid training. Learn more about how to become an FCPS bus driver at www.fcps.edu and click on Work for FCPS.

Stay informed about all the latest news from FCPS at www.fcps.edu. Check us out on Facebook and follow us on Twitter.

Watch the most recent School Scene and Insight broadcasts on Red Apple Channel 21.



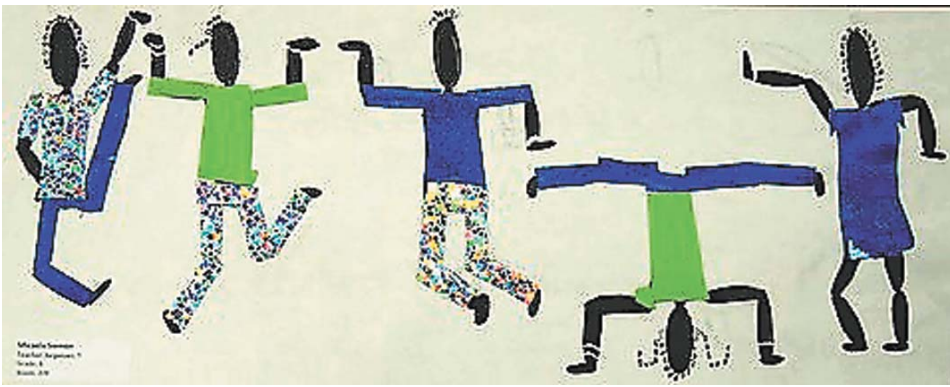
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CHILDREN'S CONNECTION 2011



**By Micaela Siemon, 4th Grade,
Dranesville Elementary**

Welcome

Dear Readers:

This week, the Oak Hill/Herndon 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 2012 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 herndon@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

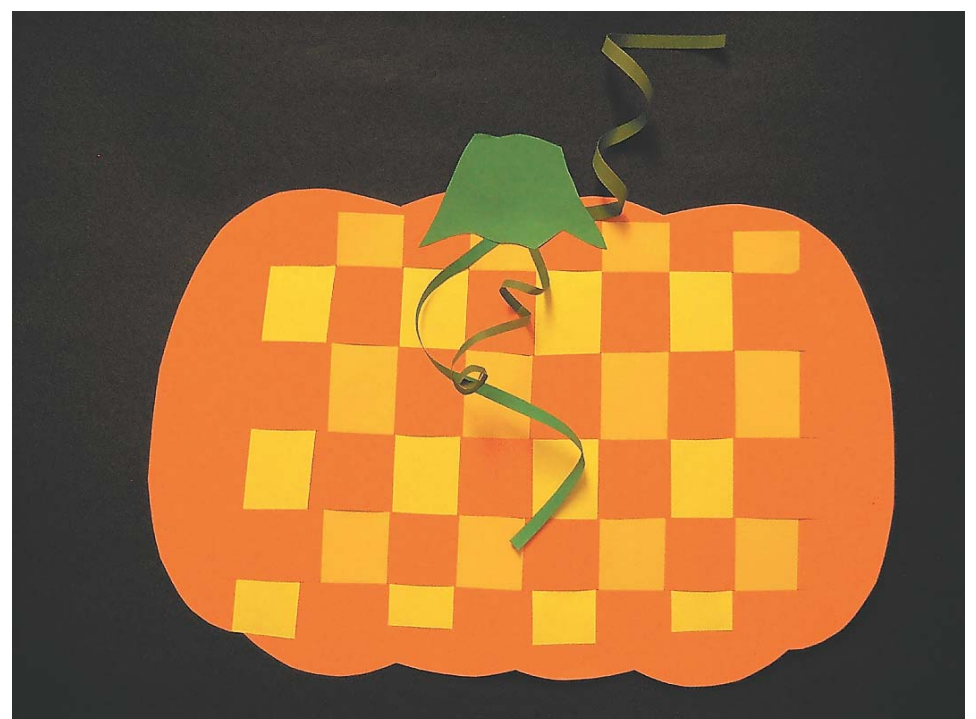


By Jennifer Paredes, 3rd grade, Herndon Elementary



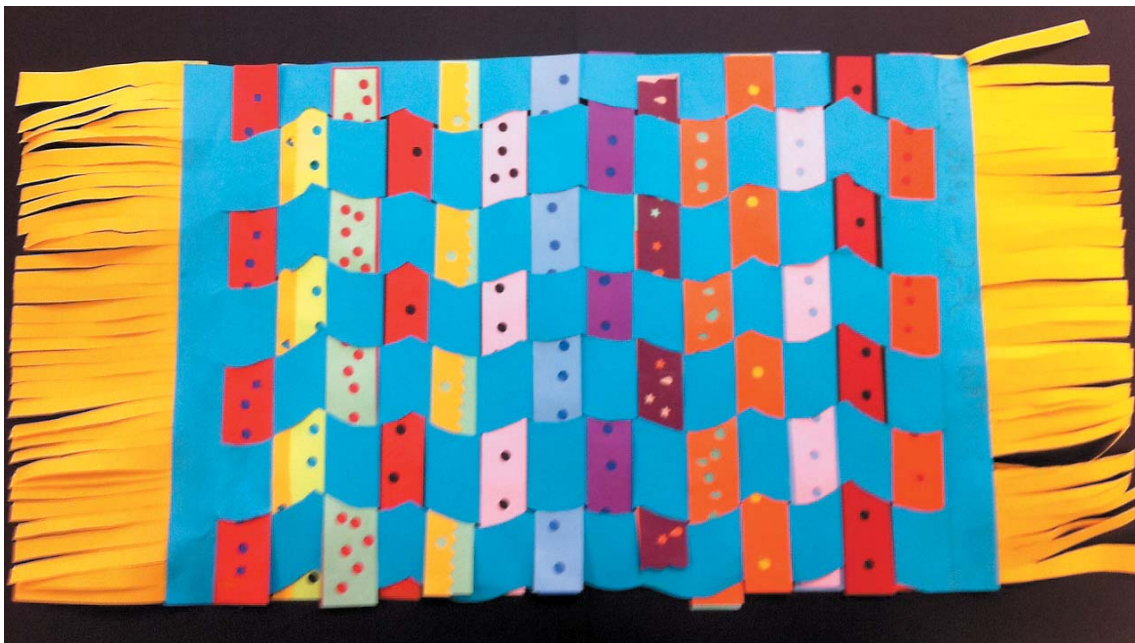
Alexandra Bethel Engle, 5th Grade, Dranesville Elementary

**By Amanda Smith,
3rd Grade,
Floris Elementary**



By Rodrigo Ramirez, Kindergarten, Herndon Elementary

CHILDREN'S CONNECTION 2011



By Annette Martinez, Herndon Elementary, 2nd Grade

Herndon Elementary Art Gallery



By Cindy Escobar Cerritos, Herndon Elementary, 6th Grade



By Abby Bachman, Herndon Elementary, 2nd Grade



By Marigrace Ivie, Herndon Elementary, 1st Grade



By Sachi Kataria, Herndon, Elementary, 1st Grade



By Kylie Finney, Herndon Elementary, 2nd Grade



By Brian Claude-Soliz, Herndon Elementary, Headstart

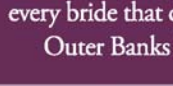
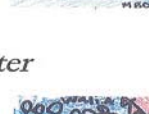
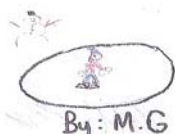
CHILDREN'S CONNECTION 2011



Tis the Season to...

Rip off wrapping paper
Eat hot monkey bread
Spend time with your family
Have a snow battle
Stay up to midnight opening the first present
Set up the Christmas tree, with glowing lights
Travel to faraway places
Play board games on snow days
Sip hot cocoa after playing in the snow
Catch sparkly snowflakes on your tongue
Eat yummy cookies
Make gingerbread houses
Sit on Santa's lap telling him your wishes
Snow tubing down an enormous hill
Warm up by the fire
Skating across the rink
Wear gloves and heavy coats to keep warm
Read Christmas stories with your family
To light the menorah on each night for 8 nights
Build a snowman with sticks, carrots, coal, and winter white snow
Shop at the busiest malls
String lights in the yard
Have laughter and joy with family and friends

By Students in Mrs. Shahidi's Class
4th Grade
Dranesville Elementary



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When I Grow Up

From Mrs. North's second graders at Floris Elementary.

I want to be a zookeeper when I grow up because I like animals and I would take care of them. I would make good new homes and give them nice clean food and water. The animals would like me a lot and that is why I want to be a zookeeper.

—MARCUS WILLIAMS, AGE 7

I want to be a scientist of ornithology. I want to help all endangered birds, like the scarlet macaw and the peregrine falcon. I want people to stop cutting down trees or else the bald eagle, scarlet macaw and the peregrine falcon will be extinct.

—MANAV NADRIGA, AGE 7

I want to be the President because it'll be fun. I will invite my parents and they will have fun in the White House. I'll make an invention called a "limet."

It is part limousine and part private jet. My rules will be that if anybody uses gasoline, they're going to be in jail for about three years. Using gasoline is bad for the earth and I want to save the earth. If anyone is using a motorcycle, I'll take the motorcycle away and give them a fine because they use gasoline. My parents and I will watch all of the movies, like Harry Potter. I know working as the President is hard work, but I will do my work and enjoy it.

—ISHA DEVGAN, AGE 8

When I become the principal, I will make the children read for 20 hours. If you did, you'll get smarter. You will write about the story you just read. You are going to grow up and I want you to be smart. If you can't read, just say "Please," four times and then you'll be finished.

—MIRA KANG, AGE 7

How to Make the World Better

Reflections from Mrs. North's second grade class at Floris Elementary.

I would give water to people who need it and pick up trash. I would give stuff to poor people, so they can have a fun time and play. People need to go around the world to help others. The people who don't have homes in different states, need help to get a home.

—KYLIE MOORE, AGE 7

My idea to make the world better would be to make a rule so people cannot dump trash in rivers. They should not do that because it's bad for the earth. You might go to jail if you do that.

—LOGAN BAUMLER, AGE 7

I Wonder...

Reflections from Mrs. North's second grade class at Floris Elementary

I wonder what I'm going to be when I grow up and what I'll be like. When will it be Hanukah? I wonder what I will get for my birthday.

—ELEANOR PERISTERE, AGE 7

since I was three years old! I also wonder why my friend, Nate, is always playing around with me. I like the "Diary of a Wimpy Kid," but why does Manny have buck teeth? Also, why is my brother sometimes not nice to me?

—TYLER SMITH, AGE 7

Where Earth Meets Sapphire Sky

LEAH K. BOLL, AGE 16

Strange tongues, foreign lands,
Wish you could be here again
In my arms, from whence was torn
My love for you, 'twas gently borne.
Throbbing beats and orchestra strings,
Mindless are the meanings of things.
These objects portray our endless love,
From Earth below to sky above
In the Abyss, you discover hope;
When in despair, the will to cope.
You bear your soul for all to see—
And I'll follow you through eternity.

The Joys of the Winter

BY NEHA KULSHRESHT
3RD GRADE, FLORIS ES

Walking down the white fluffy snow, and even though my face is freezing, when I close my eyes I smell happiness and freshness all around me. Snowflakes fall ever so delicately from the sky. Squirrels, deer and red foxes all scamper home to their families, for winter is the time to be merry and jolly!

I Strive

BY JOHN JACOB HENS
MURPHY
10TH GRADE, HERNDON

I strive
and I am satisfied
for I know
the world
cannot compete
with my thirst.



By Charlotte Tubbs, Rachel Carson Middle School, Grade 8



By Charlotte Tubbs, Rachel Carson Middle School, Grade 8



By Charlotte Tubbs, Rachel Carson Middle School, Grade 8

CHILDREN'S CONNECTION 2011



By Abigail Paredes, Grade 4, Lowes Island Elementary School



By Abigail Paredes, Grade 4, Lowes Island Elementary School

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CHILDREN'S CONNECTION 2011

Floris Elementary Art Gallery

By Jerry Tan,
Floris Elementary,
Grade 5



By Richard Ospina,
Floris Elementary,
Kindergarten

The Best Gift Ever

Reflections from Mrs. North's second grade class at Floris Elementary.

The best gift ever would be my championship game trophy for hockey. It means so much to me and every time I look at it, it makes me very very happy. That was the first championship game I ever won!

—JACK DOUGAN, AGE 8

My best gift ever, would have to be my laptop. I can play games on it and I can watch movies and TV on it. It is fun playing on my laptop!

—ANNE PECKHAM, AGE 7

My best gift ever is my hippo named Hippy. I got her when I was really young. She has a very flimsy neck and she is all purple. She is about six inches tall. I used a broken necklace for a leash.

—SARAH FAJER, AGE 7

I don't know when I got it, but I wouldn't give it away for a million dollars! It's Teddy! I got him when I was born, I think. It is my stuffed animal that I sleep with now. When I think of giving him away, I feel really really sad. I never ever want to give him away. Teddy is the best gift ever!

—DAPHNE NGO, AGE 7

To me, the best gift ever is my family. My family does a lot of things for me. Everyone in my family cares and loves me. I also love them. Because of them, I have the things I need to survive. My family buys things for me that I want and need.

—COLIN LUONGO, AGE 8

The best gift ever would be something that makes you happy. It is warm to the heart. Nothing in the world can make you happier than this. You can go somewhere else to see it, but in your heart, it's always there. It is a sight like no other. It's breathtaking! It's so sad when you leave it. It's family. You're always with family. Even if you leave, they're always there for you.

—NATE OWEN, AGE 8

The best gift I ever got is life. I got life on the day I was born. It is my best birthday gift ever! Everybody has life, but everyone's life is different. Some people think life is just nothing, but boring. But to me, life is everything. Just remember all of the great things that happened in your life. Without life, those things wouldn't have happened! You wouldn't be on the earth without life. You start life by being a baby, then a kid. When you are 21, you are an adult! Here comes the exciting part in life – doing things you've never done in your life when you were a kid! See. Life is EVERYTHING!

—SHAINA BANDURI, AGE 7

When I was born, my Nana gave me this stuffed animal and whenever I see it, it makes me think of good things. His name is Bluey and I have two of them. One of them is squishy and the other is hard. The soft one is the one I like better. I sleep with one every night. Sometimes I sleep with both! About three years ago, when I was four, my sister and I would have dinner and we would bring stuffed animals. I would usually bring both of them. The reason I have two is because if I lost one, then I still would have one. The only reason I say that is because it's happened before. I call it Bluey because he's blue and when I was little I named him that. I love him so much!

—JAMES LERNER, AGE 8

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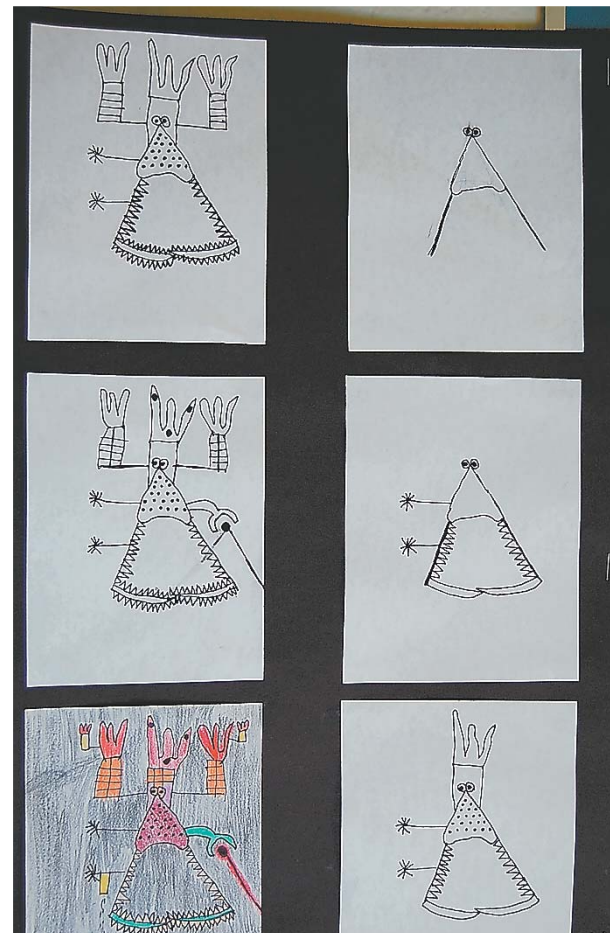
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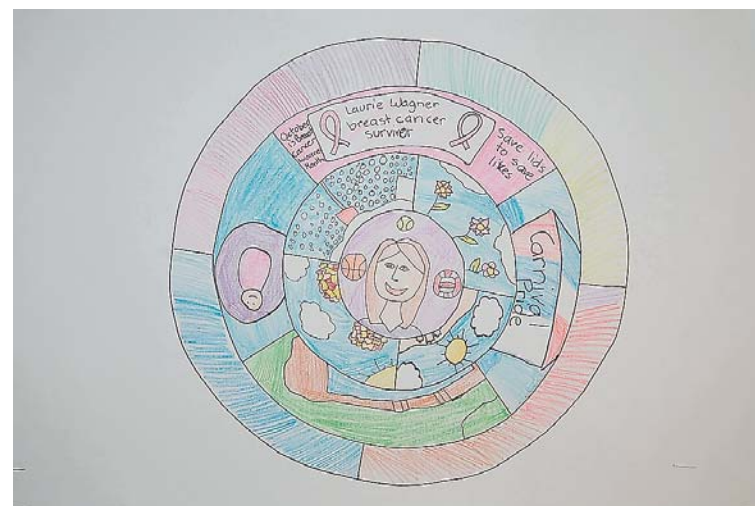
By David Luo, Floris Elementary, Grade 4



By Daniel Antunes, Floris Elementary, Grade 1



By Neha Kulshreshtha, Floris Elementary, Grade 3



By Brooke Wagner, Floris Elementary, Grade 5



By Bowen zhang, Floris Elementary, Grade 2



By Anirudh Jammula, Floris Elementary, Grade 5

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Art from Herndon Elementary

By Erik Siguenza,
3rd grade,
Herndon Elementary



By Wilfredo Pineda,
3rd grade,
Herndon Elementary

By Tea Geary,
1st grade,
Herndon Elementary



By Mackenzie Koch,
3rd grade,
Herndon Elementary

CHILDREN'S CONNECTION 2011

Little Hoot

BY ANANYA VAVILALA, 5TH GRADE
FLORIS ELEMENTARY

On a beautiful sunny morning, up on a branch, in a little house, there lived a cute little fellow named Little Hoot. Little Hoot was a very jolly little owl. He loved to go to owl school. He also loved playing hide-n-seek with all his friends.

He even liked when Mama Owl said it was time to practice pondering.

"Practice your pondering, Little Hoot." said Mama Owl.

"Okay." said Little Hoot.

"Now practice your staring." said Mama Owl.

"Okay, Mama." said Little Hoot. Staring right, staring left, staring right and staring left.

But there was one thing that Little Hoot absolutely did not like – bedtime! He absolutely did not like bedtime because when you are an owl you always have to stay up late, late, late. That's just the way it was. "All my other friends get to go to bed so much earlier! It's just not fair!" said Little Hoot.

"If you want to grow up to be a wise owl you must go to bed late," said Papa Owl. "Besides, don't give a hoot about what time your little friends go to bed, in this family we go to bed late. Rules of the roost, got it?" asked Papa Owl.

"Okay," said Little Hoot.

"Play for one whole hour and then you can go to bed." said Mama Owl.

"But it's already dark and why do I have to stay up one more whole hour? It's not fair!" said Little Hoot.

"Little Hoot, those are the rules of the roost and we do not ever complain about them." said Mama Owl.

"Hmph!" said Little Hoot. So off he went. Little Hoot thought to himself, when I grow up I'm going to let my kids sleep as early as they want.

Little Hoot pretended to be a knight. He played swords and pretended to kill a dragon. He climbed and played on the jungle gym. He built a very big fort. He made a big pile of leaves and jumped in them. He jumped on the bed until he got tired.

So then he went and told Mama Owl that he was tired.

Mama Owl said, "But you still have ten more minutes to play."

"But..." protested Little Hoot.

"Don't make me repeat myself," Mama Owl said.

"Fine," said Little Hoot. So off he went.

Little Hoot counted, "One minute, two minutes, three minutes, four minutes, five minutes, six minutes, seven minutes, eight minutes, nine minutes, ten minutes. There, I played for one whole hour!" said Little Hoot. "Now can I go to bed?" Little Hoot asked.

"Yes, now you can go to bed, but..." said Mama Owl.

"Whoo-hoo, Hoo-whoo, Whoo-hoo!" said Little Hoot, and he flew right into bed.

"Little Hoot, wait!" stalled Mama Owl.

"What about a bedtime story, and don't forget a glass of water!" added Papa Owl.

But it was too late. Little Hoot was already fast asleep. Snooze, snore, drool. Mama Owl and Papa Owl tucked Little Hoot in bed and gave him a peck on the cheek.

The Pumpkin Pie Escape

BY HANNAH KING, 5TH GRADE
FLORIS ELEMENTARY

It was a week until Halloween and every pumpkin in Spookesville was worried about what was going to happen to them. It is, of course, every pumpkins dream to become a jack-o'-lantern, so nobody was worried about that. Every pumpkin was worried about being baked into a pumpkin pie. It was a pumpkin's worst nightmare!

Every pumpkin in the local patch was thinking about that exact thing as the Johnson family glanced over them. "I want that one," shouted Mary Johnson pointing at Sarah Seedling.

"I want a pumpkin too," cried her 3-year-old brother Max. "I like that one," he pointing to Vinnie Vine.

"Dad and I would also like one," said Mrs. Johnson. "Hmmm...how about this one." She patted Jerry Jack-o'-Lantern.

"Mommy, can I carve my pumpkin into a jack-o'-lantern?" asked Mary

SEE PUMPKIN PIE, PAGE 11

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CHILDREN'S CONNECTION 2011

Pumpkin Pie

FROM PAGE 10

on the way home from the pumpkin patch.

"Sure honey. What do you want to do with your pumpkin Max?"

"I want pumpkin pie, I want pumpkin pie," cried Max.

"Okay. Dad and I want pumpkin pie too, so Mary's can be a jack-o'-lantern and the other two I'll use for pie." Meanwhile, after listening to this whole conversation with bated breath, Vinnie Vine and Jerry Jack-o'-Lantern began freaking out.

"How are going to get out of here!?" shouted Vinnie Vine.

"I got it," Sarah Seedling exclaimed. "We can open the trunk and jump!"

"But then you won't become a jack-o'-lantern," reasoned Jerry Jack-o'-Lantern.

"What's more important, my dream or your lives? Let's go on three. 1, 2, 3!" shouted Sarah Seedling. She lifted the latch and they all tumbled out into the crisp fall air. They skidded to a stop and began rolling toward the dew covered grass.

"What are we going to do now!" shouted Vinnie Vine the most pessimistic of the group.

"Let's start rolling," said Sarah Seedling. Days and nights went by and miles and miles they traveled until they came across a cute little town nestled in a valley and surrounded by huge mountains stretching toward the sky. "Mommy, come quick! Look at these pumpkins!"

"Wow honey. Do you want to take them home?"

"Yeah!" the little girl replied. A split second later they were swept into the arms of a little girl and her mother.

When they arrived at the little girl's house they soon realized that Halloween was that very night! When the little girl entered the room she scooped up Vinnie Vine and took him into another room. To the other pumpkins horror 1 hour later pie smells wafted in from the kitchen. Vinnie Vine could not be saved.

The next time the little girl came back into the room she took the quivering Jerry Jack-o'-Lantern away. As Sarah Seedling sat there loneliness and cold crept toward her. She tried to think happy thoughts, but the image of pumpkin pie kept creeping into her mind.

Now it was her turn. She felt herself being lifted into the little girl's arms and carried into the kitchen. There she was placed onto a wooden table. It felt like a huge weight was lifted off her chest when she saw that Jerry Jack-o'-Lantern was carved into a jack-o'-lantern. She smiled at him and he gave her a big, toothy grin. As the knife sunk into her skin and her face began to take shape she couldn't help feeling the happiest she had ever felt.

That night was one of the best nights of their lives. As children walked by chattering, they put on goofy faces to make them laugh. Also, to make the night even better, Sarah Seedling could have sworn she saw Vinnie Vine etched into the sky by the stars, this time smiling.

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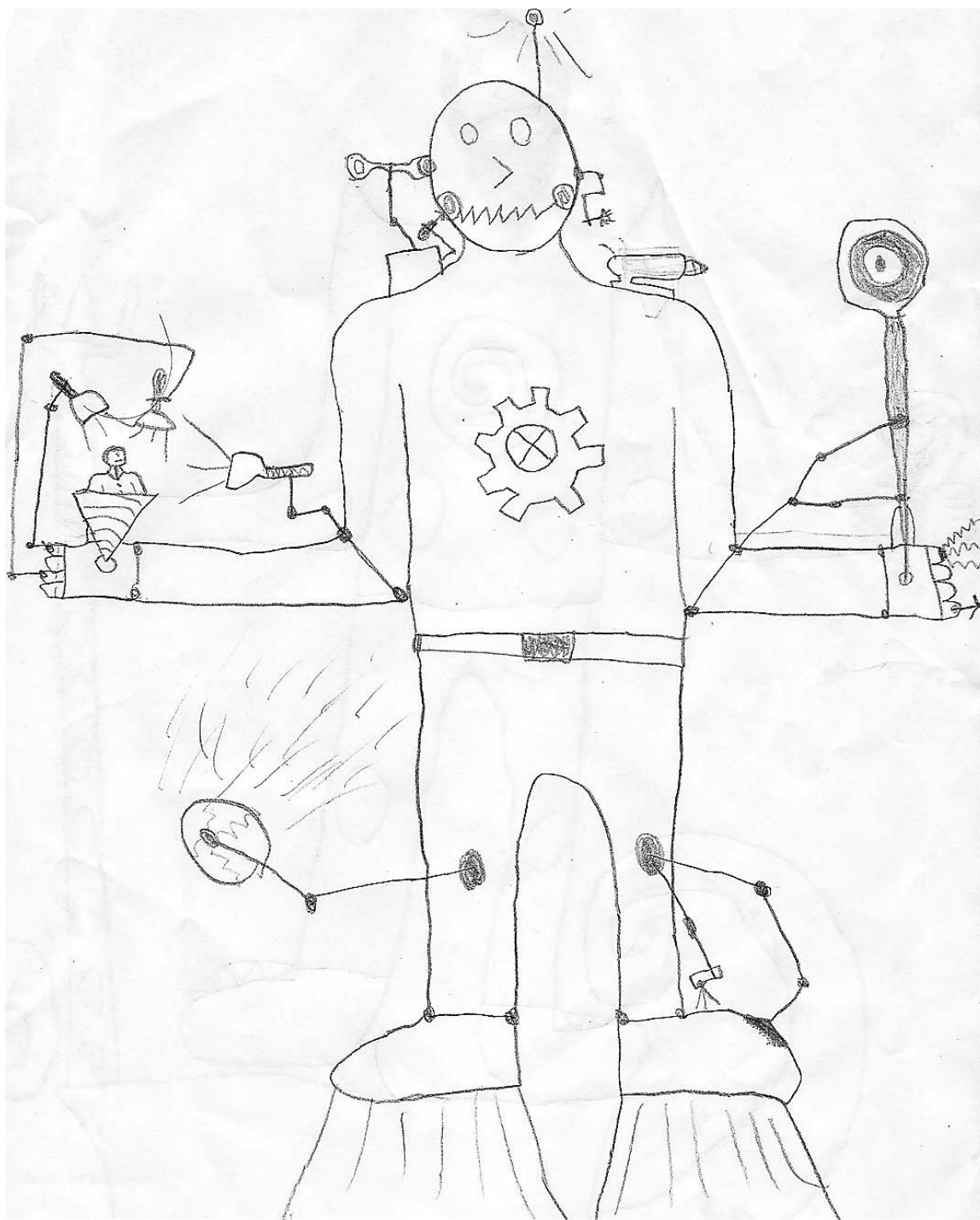
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CHILDREN'S CONNECTION 2011



By Conrad Tubbs, Rachel Carson Middle School, Grade 7

Hope

Hope,
Is the ability to move on,
To learn from mistakes,
And become a better person.

Hope,
Is the sun that rises,
every morning,
and the moon that shines,
every night.
Hope,
Are the people who love you,
for who you are,
and believe in you.
Hope is love,
and love is hope.
So never lose hope,
and never lose love,
keeping moving forward.
This one life,
is meant to be lived once,

and once is enough,
if lived right...

BY REHAN AHMED
AGE 16, HERNDON

Travelers of the World

BY REHAN AHMED
AGE 16, HERNDON

We are explorers,
and travelers,
of this crazy
twisted
fantastic world.
We sail boats,
and drive cars,
and fly planes,
through the sea of faces,
and the roads of pain,
and skies
filled with memories.
We are always discovering
something about
us
and other people
each and everyday

Poems submitted by Flint Hill School 4th graders.

Fun

Fun is splashing in the pool,
And stargazing in the night.
Fun is carving pumpkins,
And eating delicious sticky buns.
Fun is spending time with peers,
And going to amusement parks.
Fun is cuddling with furry friends,
And the not-so-furry ones too.
All of this stuff is fun
But there is one more thing
And the thing that is fun,
Is sharing this with you!

—JULIANNE CUEVO

Recess

I'm just standing here when I could be,
Swimming the Nile or,
Hiking Mount Everest or,
Playing basketball or,
Soccer,
Even devouring fondue,
But no I'm just standing here, like a statue.
I could be eating,
Salmon or,
Tuna or,
chocolate or,
Steak to,
Or pasta and pizza,
But, no I'm just standing here,
like a scared possum.
I could be playing,
Tag or,
Rocks or,
I could be even running,
I enjoy all of these things,
and I wish I could do these things,
But, no I'm just standing here.

—LUKE McDUFFIE

Vehicles vs. Nature

Trucks trucks lots of trucks honking their horns like mad boars
OINK! OINK!
Cars cars crashing into cars like a stampede of mad cows
MOO! MOO!
The cool breeze on my face was like an ocean breeze in the Chesapeake
Bay
WEOEOOOEEEEEO!
Whoosh!
An eagle swoops over my speed boat!

Vroom!
I was at my supersonic.
Boost I
try to race it
but it was as fast as the speed of light "way to fast for my speed boat"
I thought.

—CONNOR CECCONI

These Aliens

These aliens are from planet Mars
They eat our brains like candy bars
These aliens come down in UFOs
These aliens have green bodies
As if they were ugly toads
These aliens have a leader
And that leader's name is Elka
So I took a hold of my electric chair
And wiped out the whole army!

—MAGGIE MCBRIDE

CHILDREN'S CONNECTION 2011



By Sofia Augenstein, Flint Hill School, Grade 3



By Ava Reilly, Flint Hill School, Grade 3

Poetry by Flint Hill School 3rd graders.

Winter Snow

BY WILLIAM WADE DEVINNEY

Light as a feather,
There's a change in the weather!
It's snowing on a winter's day.
I wish that winter wouldn't go away.
Now would you please come out to play?

Pencil

BY CAROLINE RICH

Pointy and perfect when they come
out of the package
Eventually, makes a beautiful story
Never nibble at the end of it
Creative juices flow out as I use it
It dances across the page
Lives in my desk

Late For School?

BY SAVIE SEEBALD

I'm late for school,
I miss the bus,
I don't know what to do.
I have no clothes,
I called the school, but they didn't answer.
When I finally looked at the clock I saw
It was only 6:00!

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BY THEO CHAN

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SCHOOL NOTES

Natalie Chanfreau of Flint Hill School has been named as a 2011 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist.

Four Oakton High School students have been named as 2011 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists: **Tony S. Lee, Cameron H. Lindsay, Zachary J. Sturm** and **Gabrielle R. Tate**.

Herndon residents **Robert Smith, Kyle Poulsen, Thomas Patchan, Sean**

McLendon, Michelle Gervasio, Jenna George, Jeff Dera and **Mark Brown** have been named as members of the Marching Virginians at Virginia Tech.

Oak Hill residents **Jenny Wertheim** and **Alyssa Homyk** have been named as members of the Marching Virginians at Virginia Tech.

Ten Langley High School students have been named as 2011 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists: **Allison S. Brady, Saba**

Eskandarian, Jimmy J. Fang, Jamison G. Fox-Canning, Nathaniel C. Howe, Dylan J. Kriz, Debbie R. Pan, Spencer C. Shabshab, Holliday L. Shuler and **Andrew J. Stewart**.

Six McLean High School students have been named as 2011 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists: **Nana-Kwabena A. Abrefah, Daniel J. Lee, Eric R. Leimkuhler, Elizabeth McGrady, Justin Nam** and **Brian Tong**.

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21 Announcements

21 Announcements

21 Announcements

Fairfax Water

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CONNECTION RULE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION/REDEVELOPMENT

On December 6, 2011, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors (BOS) held a public hearing regarding an ordinance to establish exclusive water service areas and maximum allowable rates, fees, and charges within Fairfax County for water service. At the same meeting, the BOS enacted the ordinance as Section 65-6-13 of the Code of Fairfax County. Section (a) of the ordinance provides that effective 12:01 a.m. December 7, 2011, Fairfax Water will be the provider of retail public water service within Fairfax County, Virginia, for any new construction or redevelopment of any dwelling unit and any residential or non-residential structure, unless Fairfax Water determines it cannot make water service available due to a utility-related reason.

The ordinance requires that any determination by Fairfax Water that it cannot make service available be made in accordance with policies, rules, or regulations established by Fairfax Water for the purpose of establishing when a utility-related reason exists that prevents it from supplying water. The ordinance further requires that the policies, rules, or regulations be adopted by Fairfax Water after notice and a public hearing.

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 12, 2012, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its proposed CONNECTION RULE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION/ REDEVELOPMENT. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water's offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA.

A copy of the proposed rule can be viewed on our Web site at <http://www.fairfaxwater.org>. Those wishing to speak at this hearing or desiring a copy of the proposed rule should call Ms. Eva Catlin at 703-289-6017. Interested parties may submit written comments to PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water
Public Hearing Comments
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All written comments must be received by close of business on Wednesday, January 11, 2012 to be included in the record of the public hearing.

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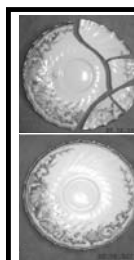
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- Ralph Waldo Emerson



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-Ethiopian Proverb

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State of Flux



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As much as I delude myself – and others – into thinking that Kenny's-life-living-with-cancer is just another bump in the road, I suppose it's only fair, after two and one half years of weekly writing about it, to admit the truth: I wish it were a bump in the road, but it's more like a sinkhole. Emotionally, physically and every which way including loose.

Most days I manage all that I'm expected to, reasonably well. There are other days however, not so much. Sometimes those days relate to something cancer-related: medication, scan, appointment, chemotherapy – or cancellation or change of any of the preceding; or it can be unrelated, specifically, but related generally, as everything becomes when you're categorized as "terminal."

Having employed various mechanisms – and rationalizations since my initial symptoms appeared in late December, 2009 – which ultimately led to my subsequent stage IV lung cancer diagnosis two and one half months later, compartmentalizing has been my greatest ally. A real-life version of "the vault" from a Seinfeld episode, a place where information is stashed for safekeeping and secrecy. However, "the vault" is all mental. It's not protected by doors and locks. Fort Knox it's not. In fact, gaining entrance is fairly easy. And once inside, it's akin to opening a Pandora's Box of your greatest fears; ruling your roost; beyond your control.

And on those days when control is lost and emotions/energy run down – and negative, and depression sets in: wallowing is easy and giving in to it provides a peculiar sort of calm/a why-fight-it sort of attitude. After experiencing this sort of mental meandering multiple times, I can actually tell/feel when it's happening; not before, definitely during and almost always after. It's never easy. However, it is unfortunately a condition with which I am all too familiar.

Assessing its particular cause, other than the obvious cancer connection, is also part of the problem. Knowing and understanding its origin provides me with another peculiar sort of calm. What I have determined is that, as an adjunct to the compartmentalization I regularly employ, my subconscious is weakening under the continual stress of the diagnosis/prognosis. It works so hard to maintain my calm exterior that occasionally it loses its ability to do so, sort of like a rubber band that eventually loses its elasticity. The pulling and tugging and stretching on me emotionally has the identical physical effect that a rubber band would experience under similar demands. And so I snap, sort of (although I don't shoot across the room): I get sullen and lethargic.

Sometimes, I feel like the character Odo (Rene Auberjonois), the Changeling/shapeshifter from Star Trek, Deep Space Nine. In order for Odo to maintain his "humanoid form" 16 hours a day, rather than exist in his normal, restful, "gelatinous state," it required constant vigilance on Odo's part (emotionally, physically; who knows really, it was Science Fiction). As such, there were moments (episodes) when he just couldn't function normally in his humanoid form; the stress internally to maintain his shape was simply too great. It was only when he returned to his quarters and his bucket that he could relax and regain his composure.

Unlike Odo, I don't have a normal state to return to: I only have my "new normal" (Kenny-with-cancer at age 57). And some days I wonder if pretending I don't have cancer might be causing me more problems than admitting to it would. As Dr. Sidney Freedman from the classic television show M*A*S*H said in his farewell episode, "Ladies and gentlemen, take my advice, pull down your pants and slide on the ice." Or not.

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

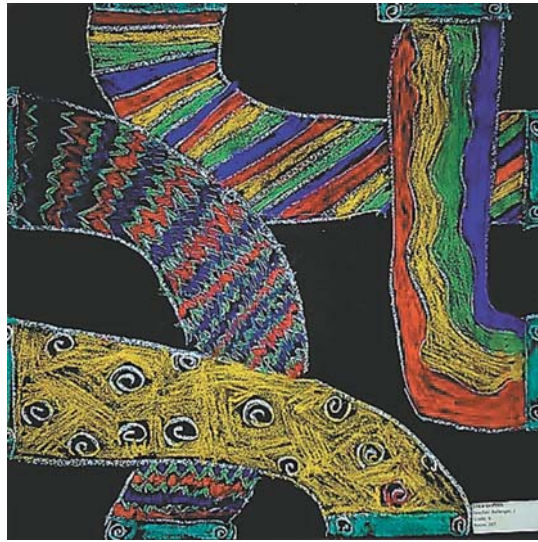
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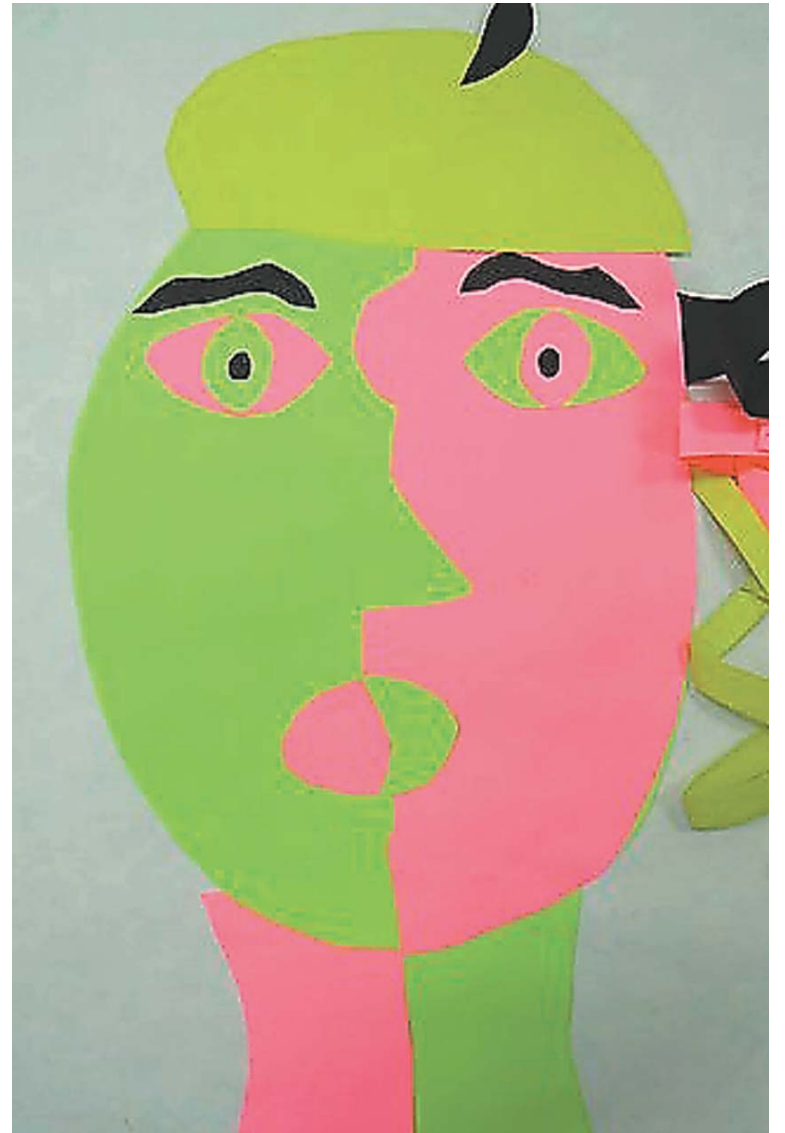
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