

# Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

DECEMBER 29, 2011

Acrylic painting,  
inspired by the  
sense of smell, by  
Eddie, Bryant  
Alternative  
High School.

## Children's Gazette 2011

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### Fabulous Contemporary in Lake Barcroft

Large living room with wood burning fireplace (plumbed for gas) and French doors to deck, dining room with wine closet and door to patio, top-of-the-line gourmet kitchen, large family room with skylight, slate floors and wood burning fireplace, spacious master suite with gas fireplace, skylights, ceiling fan, master bath, and deck with hot tub.

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ALEXANDRIA/Del Ray \$899,000



### Renovated Cape Cod in Del Ray

Expanded brick front-porch Cape Cod renovated head to toe features three bedrooms, three and one half baths, hardwood floors on two levels, new Silestone, maple and stainless kitchen with breakfast room, main-level den, screened porch, and elegant new baths. Three bedrooms and two baths on the upper level. Large lot with detached oversized garage.

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### Brick Colonial on Quiet Cul-de-Sac

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ALEXANDRIA/BELLE HAVEN \$849,500



### English Garden Charmer

This gracious six-bedroom home in the heart of Belle Haven could have been transported from the English countryside. With three finished levels of lovely, this home features a two-car garage, gleaming hardwoods, and gazebo/greenhouse.

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# CHILDREN'S GAZETTE 2011

## Welcome

Dear Readers:

This week, the Gazette 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.

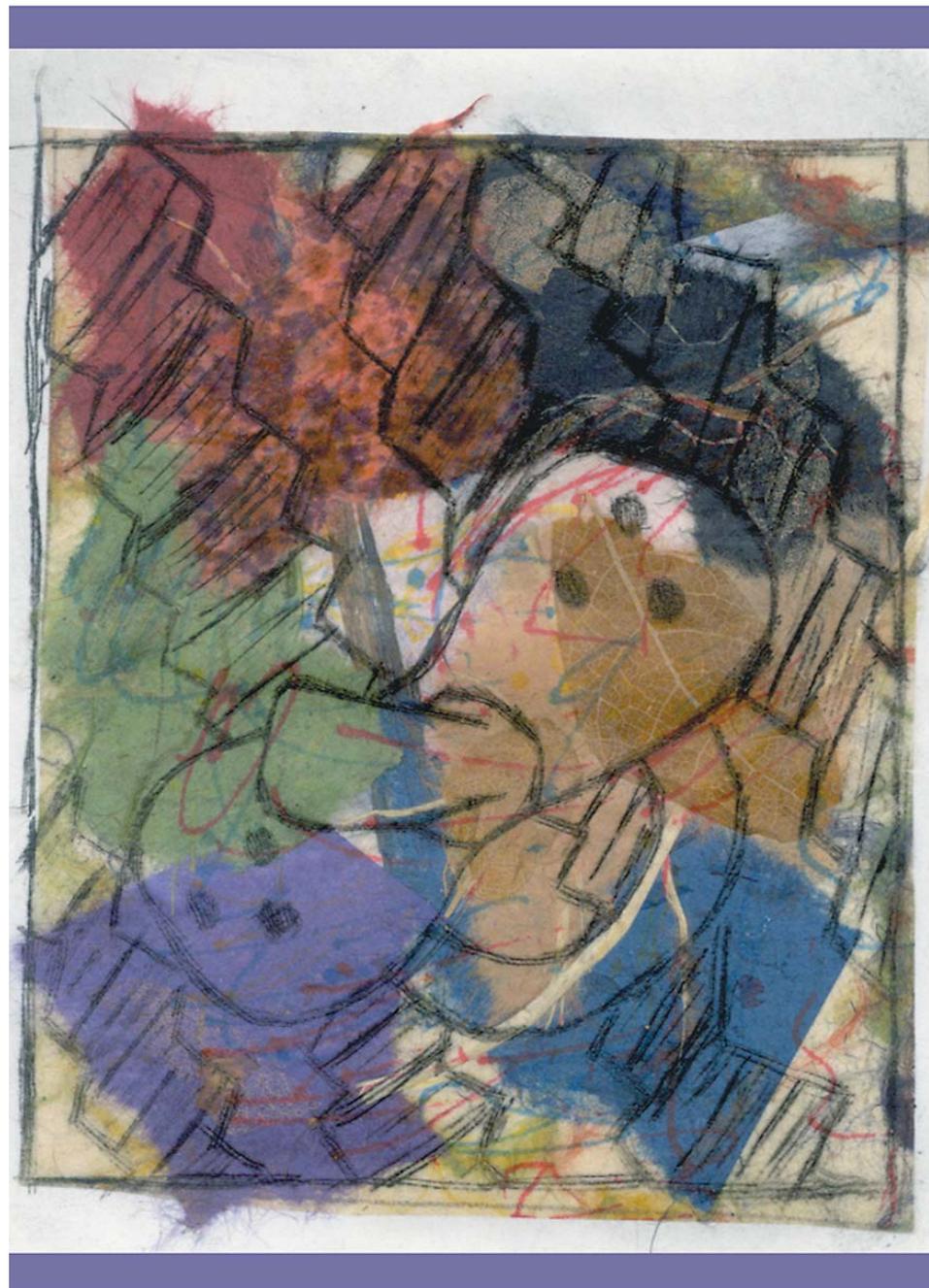
The response as always was enormous. While we were unable to publish every piece we received, we did our best to put together a paper with a fair sampling of the submitted stories, poems, drawings, paintings, photographs and other works of art.

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

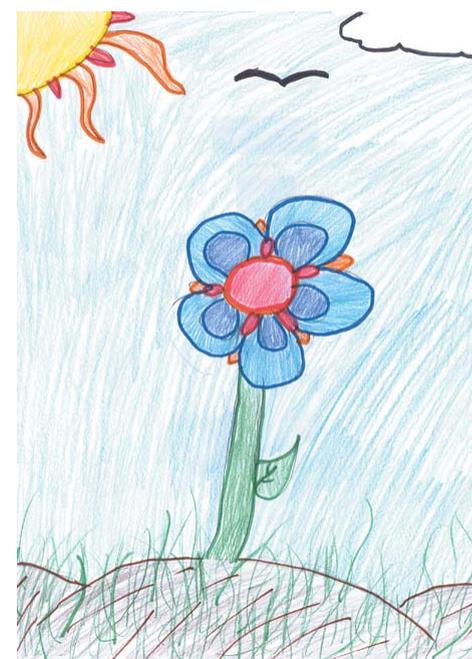
— EDITOR STEVEN MAUREN



**"Pacifier,"** dry point etching and chin collé, by Leslie, Bryant Alternative High School.



**Maggie Meares, Grade 2, Wayne Wood Elementary.**



**Jeweliette Harris, age 10, Grade 5, Hollin Meadows Elementary School: "Out There" Flower.**



**Ava Alonso, Grade 6, Wayne Wood Elementary.**



**Ethan M., Kindergarten, Browne Academy.**



# 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.

### This Just In

The Fairfax County School Board approved the 2012-13 school calendar. The first day of school will be Tuesday, September 4, 2012, and the last day of school will be Tuesday, June 18, 2013. View the complete calendar by visiting [www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu) and click on Calendars.



## 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/](http://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](http://www.fcps.edu) and click on Work for FCPS.

Stay informed about all the latest news from FCPS at [www.fcps.edu](http://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.

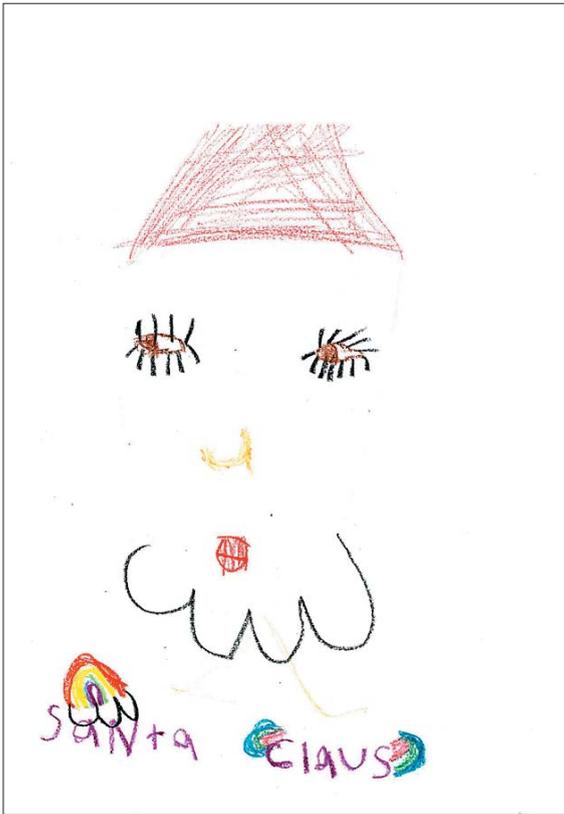


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2011 BUSINESS PARTNER OF THE YEAR

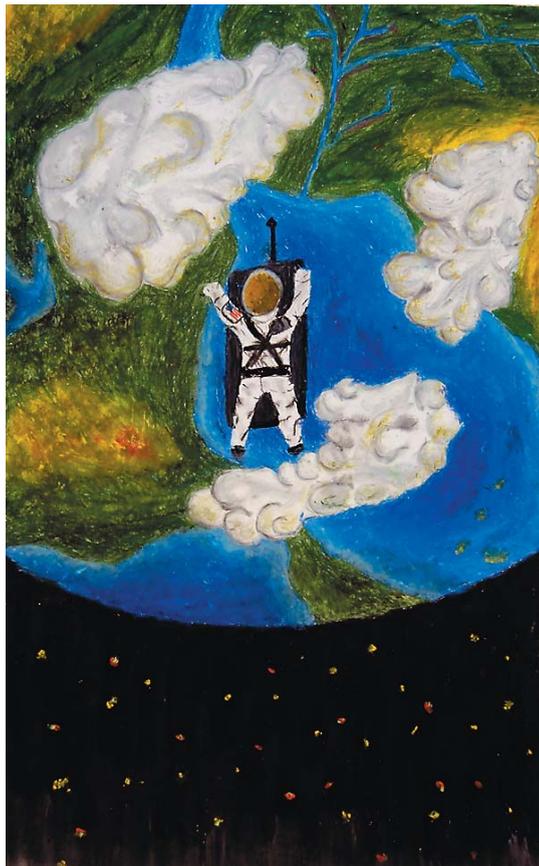
# GALLERY



**Santa: Stephanie Levy, age 6, Grade 1, Stratford Landing Elementary School,**



**Maria Afifa, Grade 5, Hollin Meadows Elementary School**



**Dream or Aspiration Project, oil pastel drawing by Momin, Bryant Alternative High School.**

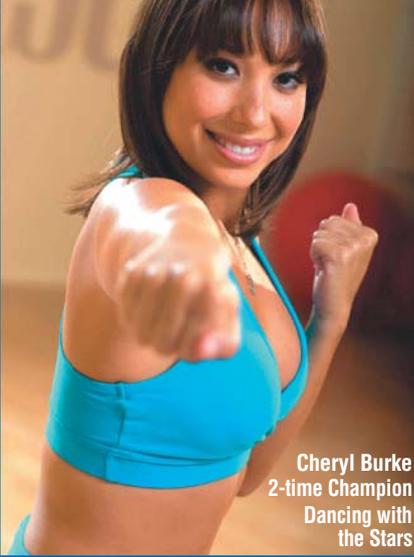


**Adam Neulight, age 10, 5, Hollin Meadows Elementary School: This is my dog climbing out of my oversized beanbag chair.**

## Six Crows

This torn-paper mural was made by the First-Grade Goats at Burgundy Farm Country Day School after reading *Six Crows* by Leo Lionni. This tale of conflict with a peaceful solution was part of our unit on Peace and Conflict Resolution. The children accepted the challenge of using paper that was torn. No scissors or markers could be used. The students who worked on this mural are: Aiden Weaver-Musgrove, Ashlynn Prisby, Chloe Dougherty, Dion Harris, Emi Summey, Estee Marcus, Harry White, Jordan Stewart-Mitchell, Kate Cantu, Madison Rawls, Olive Regan and Sarah King.





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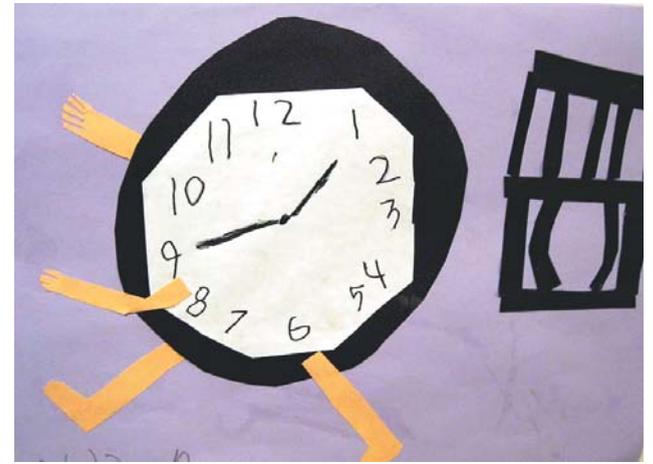
# TEMPUS FUGIT



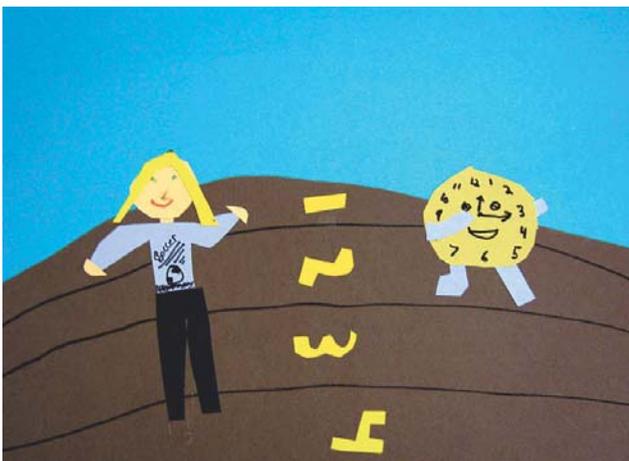
**Time Traveler, Max McCullough, Grade 4, Waynewood Elementary.**



**Time On My Hands, Kenan Aden, Grade 4, Waynewood Elementary.**



**Nathan Edgerton, Grade 4, Waynewood Elementary.**



**As Time Goes, Tess Moore, Grade 4, Waynewood Elementary.**



**Time Warp, Ian McLellan Grade 4, Waynewood Elementary.**



**Time Will Tell, Ava Arthur, Grade 4, Waynewood Elementary.**

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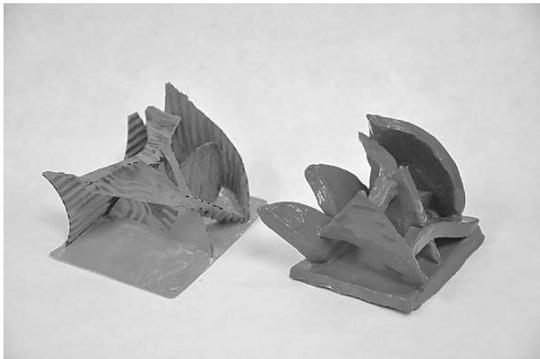


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## WORDS & PICTURES



From cardboard to clay, an introduction to slab construction by Juan, Bryant Alternative High School.



From cardboard to clay, an introduction to slab construction by Yuri, Bryant Alternative High School



Ceramic House, by Nazia. Bryant Alternative High School

## My Favorite Toy

BY KELLY THOMPSON  
O'MEARA  
AGE 14

A child's favorite toy is not something that is just decided, or happened upon. It is the child that forms the conclusion, after loving, playing and enjoying the toy more than any of the other toys the child may have. A favorite toy stands out from the rest. It is a toy that will always be remembered and played with, no matter how old the owner is. Personally, my favorite toys were 12-inch, World War II, G.I. Joe action figures. I received my first G.I. Joes for Christmas one year. They came with a scale sized, "Willie's" Jeep, that could fit three, 12-inch action figures, with room for a machine gun turret on top, moving, all-terrain, wheels, and two genuine G.I. Joes; an Intelligence Officer, and a Lieutenant. I was hooked instantly. The two figures looked like actors Gene Kelly, from the old black-and-white movie "Singing in the Rain," a favorite of mine at the time, and John Wayne, an American patriot. The similarities were amazing. Because of this, that is what I called them. The next Christmas, I received a miniature playset, with bomb-shelled walls, and a machine gun nest. This combined with my jeep, transformed my living room into allied England, the French countryside, and the Normandy Beaches on D-Day. I would also recreate scenes from another favorite movie of mine, "Kelly's Heroes," mainly because it was a World War II movie in which

the main character sharing my name, was played by tough, smooth talking, Clint Eastwood.

Sometimes I would trudge around my house, pulling my jeep behind me, with Gene Kelly, and John Wayne riding inside, prepared to go into battle. I have many fond memories with those action figures. But while I was enjoying my G.I. Joes, I had other hobbies also. One of my other passions was soccer. I had recently joined a team called, "The Gray Wolves," and on that team was a boy named James. I became friends with James, and found that he loved G.I. Joes just as much as I did. I also found out that his family had to relocate from New Orleans to Virginia, after Hurricane Katrina flooded and destroyed their house. They were staying here with relatives, temporarily, while their house was being rebuilt.

Very soon, I realized I was in a difficult position. I knew that I had lots of toys, while he had little, due to the destruction of his house. Eventually, the question came from my mom: "Kelly, why don't you give some of your G.I. Joe toys to James?" she said, "His whole home was destroyed. I really think it would help him feel better." We had many discussions about what I should do. In my heart, I felt like it was the right thing to do, and I wanted to help a friend. On the other, more selfish side, I loved my G.I. Joes, and hated the thought of giving my precious collection away, even if it was for a good cause. I tried to avoid the conversation, up until our teams' final game and soc-

cer party at the home where James was temporarily staying.

Just as we were getting ready to leave for the party, I decided to make the right decision. I packed up several of my beloved G.I. Joes, and left for the party. When we got there, I showed him my G.I. Joes, along with a scale helicopter that I had added to my collection. He loved them. While I missed my favored friends, I was glad he enjoyed them just as much as I did. The joy on his face just confirmed that I had made the right choice in giving them to him.

I kept Gene Kelly, John Wayne, and the jeep, however. They remain my favorite toys to this day. They remind me of simpler, and happier times, when I was just a child with some action figures, and an imagination. I still look at them and even occasionally wheel them around my house, just for old time's sake. They bring back memories of the happy childhood I had, and I wouldn't trade those three toys in for all the money in the world. As for James, he successfully moved back to New Orleans, into his new home, and I haven't heard from him since, but I'm sure he appreciated the toys at the time. What I had learned that day was kindness and selflessness, along with realizing the love I had for my precious toys, my G.I. Joes. I had had so many memories with them, and although I had given some of them away, I will always keep Gene Kelly, John Wayne and my jeep, as an everlasting reminder of the fun times I had.

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# WORDS & PICTURES

## “Lightning Bolts”

By Kye S.

Browne Academy, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

One day in the marvelous, white, and beautiful Olympus, Zeus sent Hermes the messenger god to go destroy the dreadful, ugly Medusa, who was one of the three sisters known as “The Gorgons.” Zeus wanted Medusa destroyed because she fought with the Gods and turned people into stone. Hermes didn’t come back because Medusa had turned him to stone in her lair. Zeus was so furious about Hermes not returning, lightning shot out of Zeus’s finger tips. He was that mad! Zeus, impatient and full of rage, soon made lightning shoot around every place in the world. All the other Gods were trying to make him less angry but it didn’t work, instead he just got even angrier. While all this was happening, all the towns and forests were catching on fire.

It was a disaster. Zeus couldn’t control himself. Then Hera, the goddess of love and marriage said, “If Zeus doesn’t calm down, we’ll all be in danger.” Apollo, the God of the sun and music, had just come in fear and said, “I can’t watch these people suffer! I will go beg Medusa to unfreeze Hermes from stone.” He was off. It took him days to find Medusa’s lair. When he finally did, he could hear her snakes hissing so he knew he was close to her. Medusa called out, “Who dares to come here?” Apollo cried back, “I Apollo dare to come here!” Apollo just got to the point and said, “I have come for Hermes!” Medusa knew what he was talking about but she just messed around with him and said, “Why do you need Hermes?” Apollo answered, “Zeus is very angry and if he doesn’t find Hermes, all of Mt. Olympus could burn down!” Meanwhile, the city was just getting worse because Zeus wouldn’t stop firing lightning bolts everywhere. After all the bickering between Apollo and Medusa, she finally unfroze Hermes and Apollo and Hermes went home safe and sound after that day. Once they finally got back, Apollo was rewarded with a feast in his honor.

Zeus apologized for all the damage he caused and he and everyone else made the world a livable place again. Once they were done Zeus said, “Try not to make me mad if you don’t want a repeat of this!” and everyone smiled and nodded and said, “Oh, yes,” and went on with their lives.

Now and then, Zeus will remember this event and start to get a little angry. That is why we still see lightning!



Will C., Grade 1, Browne Academy



Joe S., Grade 2, Browne Academy



Matthew W. Grade 2, Browne Academy



Jaime W., Grade 3, Browne Academy



Rachel D., Grade 3, Browne Academy



Rodney R., Grade 3, Browne Academy

## A Monster Of Clouds

By Sanjay R.

Browne Academy, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

High on Mt. Olympus, Hermes, messenger of the gods, came with a huge delivery box. He flew to

Zeus’s chair but he wasn’t there. By asking other gods and goddesses, he found out that Zeus was looking for him. He called to Zeus. Zeus followed the trail of Hermes’s voice. Eventually, they found each other. Apparently, Zeus had somehow found out Hermes had mail for him and he was supposed to

get it the day this was happening. Hermes was going to give it to him, but Zeus couldn’t wait any longer for his mail. The mail had two parts. One was a wonderful view of a lovely meadow attached to a forest on earth. The meadow had perfect kelly-green grass without a single blade yellow or brown.

The forest had trees with energetic light-green leaves and woody brown trunks. The second part of the delivery was ... magic! Zeus was stunned. How could anyone get real magic in their hands but him? Zeus casted a spell. Tall, beautiful flowers sprouted out of

SEE MONSTER, PAGE 14

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

# CHILDREN'S GAZETTE



**Stanhope Fairbanks**

## Helping Childhelp

My name is Stanhope Fairbanks. I am 9 years old, in the fourth grade. I love helping people.

This year I decided to help Childhelp. It is an organization for the prevention and treatment of child abuse.

Its community center provides coats and jackets to families in

need. I worked hard this past year and collected 1,078 coats and jackets. It will help keep children warm so I feel real good about that.

**Stanhope Fairbanks**, age 9, 4th grade, Belleview Elementary School



## 'A Dog's Christmas'

It's a photo of my dog wandering about our tree.

— **Halley Roy**, Hollin Meadows Elementary, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade



"Ethiopia," ceramic tile project by Frezer, Bryant Alternative High School

On his 3rd tour in Iraq in 2008, Spc. Josh Schictl was driving a Humvee which was hit by two IED's. He suffered life-threatening injuries to his face and head. Despite the quick work of medics, Spc. Schictl lost his right eye and nine teeth. Nearly all of the bones in his face were broken but were stabilized before transport to Walter Reed Medical Center. He also suffered a TBI.

Wounded warriors and their families struggle for years to recover physically, emotionally and financially from the sacrifices they make in wartime. Operation Homefront seeks to walk with them on their journey and ease the hardships they face. The DC Metro Chapter assisted Josh and Emily with transitional housing, household furnishings, holiday gifts and grocery gift cards during these difficult times.

There are many ways you can work with the DC Metro Chapter to assist local military families like Josh and Emily.

People ask us everyday how they can show their appreciation and gratitude for the sacrifices made by military families. One way you can do this is to let the DC Metro Chapter fill the gap for military families as they adjust to the 'new normal' after being deployed or wounded in combat. Send your tax deductible donation before Dec. 31st to help us meet next year's needs.

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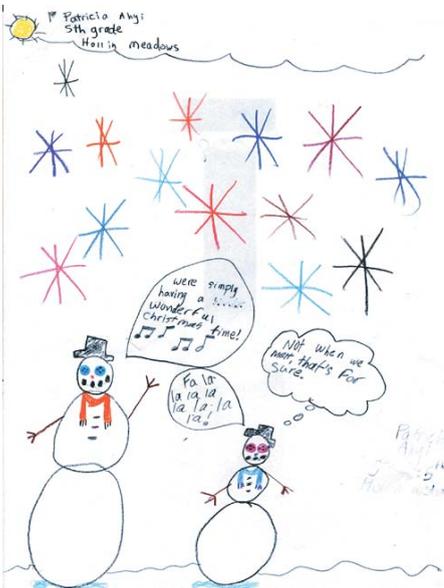
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# GALLERY

**Hollin Meadows ES**  
Mrs Fineran's 5<sup>th</sup> grade students



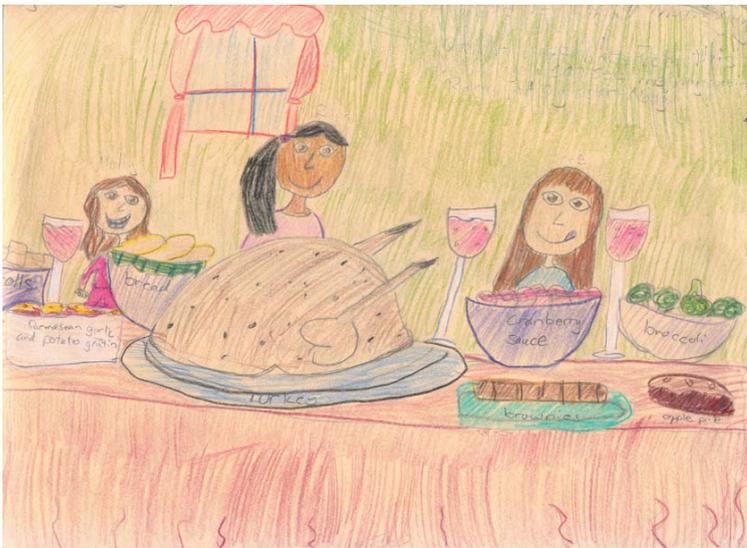
**Patricia Ahyi**



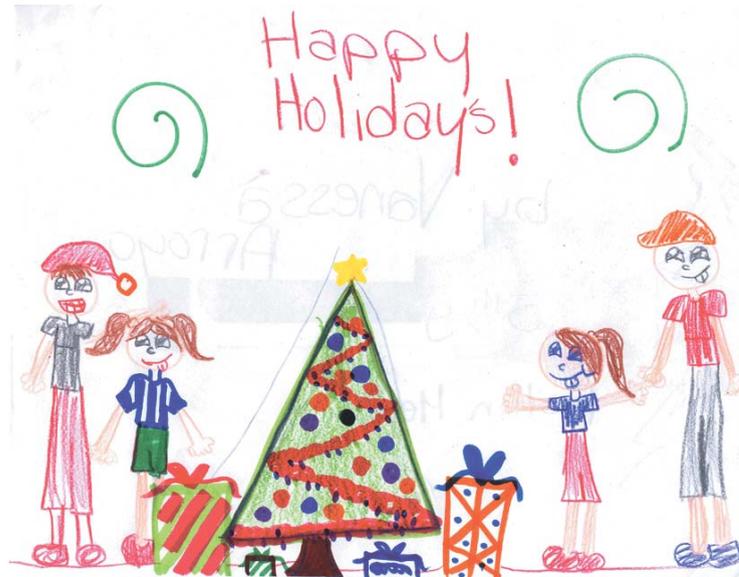
**Farrin McMaster, age 10**



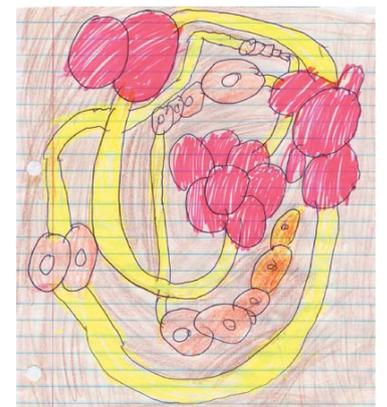
**Leonel Hernandez, age 11**



**Bridget Kennedy**



**Vanessa Arroyo, age 10**



**Ashutosh Khanal, age 10**



**Ashley Douglas, age 10**



**Roy Cervantes Castro, age 10**



**Vanessa Board, age 10**



**"I drew a picture of a family and TV saying, 'It's finally Christmas' and the family is unwrapping presents around the Christmas tree and a window that shows the snowman they had built." Karma Cook, age 10, Grade 5, Hollin Meadows Elementary School**



**Cynthia Contreras, age 10**



**Martin Enyinnaya, age 10**



# Hadeed

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# WORDS & PICTURES

## 'The Light Bulb'

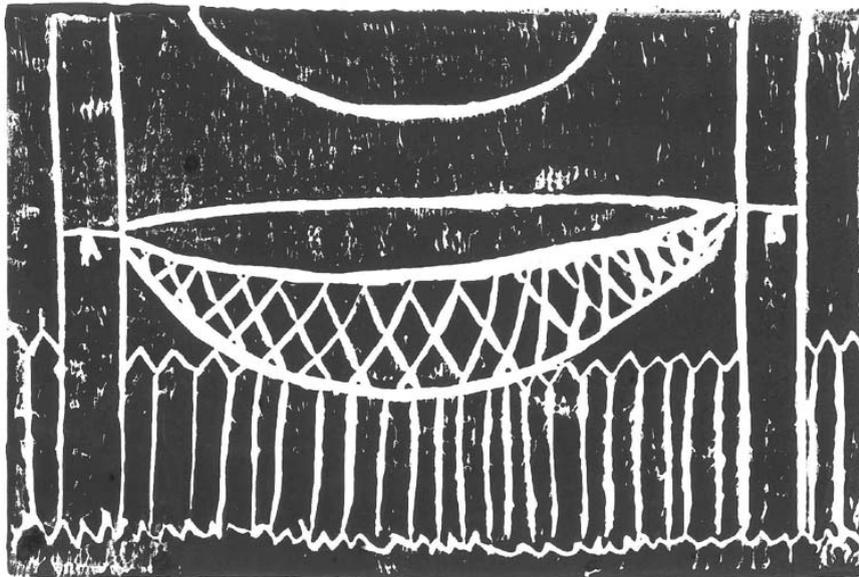
By Llew D.  
Browne Academy, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

The way we got light bulbs was by the leftover lightning from Zeus' thunderbolt. In a town called Kopals, one person named Jesse found the entrance to Olympus, the home of the gods. The gods were infuriated by Jesse finding a way there so Zeus turned him into an eagle. Jesse became one of Zeus's sacred animals. He became his servant. One night while the gods were sleeping Jesse stole some lightning for the people on the ground because they could not see at night. Since Jesse was an eagle, it was easy for him to steal the lightning and fly from Olympus down to the people. The people used the lightning to create light bulbs. They used the light bulbs for their lamps and chandeliers. That helped them see at night. When the gods woke up they found out what had happened. They gave him a punishment of being struck by lightning every day and it wounded Jesse very badly. But at night his wounds would heal. Soon Zeus forgave him and he removed his punishment and turned him back into a human.

But Jesse's adventure was far from over. He kept stealing lightning for the people because their light bulbs ran out of power. So every time their power ran out, he stole even more lightning. When Zeus heard this news he was so angry, he caused Olympus to have an earthquake! "This is the last chance I will give him to stop," said Zeus. "If he doesn't stop, I will turn him into something that when Jesse comes to steal the lightning, we can notice him." So the next night when Jesse came to steal even more lightning, Zeus said some magical words "Abrakazam, turn Jesse into a rattlesnake!"

When Jesse was transforming into a rattlesnake he was in so much pain that he cried out in agony. Aphrodite heard him and felt sorry for Jesse. She decided to help him by persuading Zeus to let the people on the ground have some lightning so they could see at night. The only reason she felt sorry for him and decided to help him was because Jesse was a nice person and Aphrodite, the goddess of love, liked him. Her plan was a success and Zeus let the people on the ground have some leftover lightning so they could see at night.

So, when a light bulb has burned out and you shake it you hear a rattling noise that sounds like Jesse's tail and it reminds Zeus that you need more electricity. That is how we have light bulbs.



Dayan T., Grade 6, Browne Academy



Kye S., Grade 5, Browne Academy



Kate S., Grade 6, Browne Academy



Alex V., Grade 5, Browne Academy

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## Monster

FROM PAGE 8

the ground. Zeus casted another spell, or at least tried to because what actually occurred was a howl of the wind. Slowly, a mass of clouds covered the sky. The wind was twisting and turning like it was anticipating a hurricane. Then, unexpectedly, the clouds got engaged in the movement of the wind. The wind sucked the clouds down ... down ... even more down ... until they hit the ground. As the wind got faster, a monster was born.

This monster, named Tornado, was a twisting, fast, cruel, destructive, violet killer that would fly across the ground and would destroy everything in his path. Tearing and crushing, and killing grass on the meadow, he neared the forest. When he reached there, nothing changed. Tornado tore trees from their roots and sent them zooming through the sky like flying toothpicks.

On and on Tornado went, crushing and ripping. Finally, Zeus got so fed up that he chained Tornado. He was so destructive and mean that he decided to oppose Zeus, *the king of the gods* and using his

destructive powers, break free. Zeus then captured Tornado in an invincible cage and there Tornado remained. The second this was complete, Zeus ran to Hermes and said, "This 'magic' thing you gave me isn't magic at all! IT IS EVIL! IT CREATED A MONSTER! Assuming you are messenger of the gods, someone gave this to you.

Tell me who it is right now!" Hermes was frightened. He had never seen Zeus this angry before. "Who gave this to you" Zeus demanded threateningly. "Ummmm ...," Hermes said. "TELL ME NOW! OR ELSE ...," Zeus bellowed loudly. "Poseidon, Hades, and Apollo," Hermes said quietly.

He didn't want to get anyone in trouble. "Okay.

Thank you for telling me the in-

formation I seek. I'll get Demeter to fix my meadow and forest while I go to punish ... who is it ... right, Poseidon, Hades, and Apollo."

In the future, Zeus would sometimes get into rages as he has done in the past. When he does, he will lift the invincible cage that holds Tornado a tiny crack to see if Tornado won't destroy him or other gods and goddesses. When all checks are complete, he would

release Tornado to the earth to start crushing whoever got into his path. When Zeus recovered, he would capture Tornado. Sometimes Tornado would have children so there will be *many* monsters of the same kind on the ground. Zeus still has Tornado through the same process. Release, capture; release, capture. Some good advice would be: if you see Tornado, **RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!**



Sam S., Grade 6, Browne Academy

## There's Something In the Tree House

By Maxwell Albrecht  
Grade 5, Hollin Meadows Elementary School

There's something in the tree house,  
It's really big and hairy and it's giving me a scare!

There's something in the tree house,  
It has eyes as large as doorknobs and claws as long as pencils!  
Its mouth is big enough to fit a whole bicycle!

I'm going up the ladder, armed with a baseball bat.  
Hoping when I reach the top, the creature will not attack!  
I'm opening the hatch slowly,  
Now I see the mysterious creature and ... IT'S ONLY YOU Fluffy!  
(Fluffy is the author's hamster)

## Fear

By Tate M.  
Browne Academy, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

I will tell you a story,  
About truths and lies,  
About honor and glory,  
About fear's disguise.  
It will create fake notions,  
Make us excessively fret,  
The shadows in motion,  
The monsters make us sweat.  
Though it now seem like a curse,  
Make us stop at every single test,  
It must be overcome before it gets worse  
Or else you shall be forever depressed.  
Fear is in your mind,  
All mental, it's true.  
Imagination and myths combined,  
Can you stop what's stopping you?

## Friendship Is...

By Will G.  
Browne Academy, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

A cave in the night  
When shelter is needed,  
The logs in a fire  
When all is frozen,  
The water in a hose  
When fire is burning,  
The meal on a plate  
When hunger consumes you,  
The harness on a rock wall  
When you repel down,  
The helmet in a bike ride  
When your head is at stake,  
The extra gasoline  
When you're almost to the store,  
The exit to a maze,  
And the light at the end of the tunnel;  
Friendship is the missing piece  
To life's puzzle.

## Manners

By Tate M.  
Browne Academy, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Getting what you want is not an easy task,  
To receive, first you must ask.  
Asking can be difficult, with a pride too large,  
If you phrase the question nicely, though, you will be in charge.  
"Please," is the key to all success;  
"Thank you," will take care of all the rest.  
So use your manners, day in and day out;  
You will get your desire, with no need to shout.  
Remember these tips; they will be useful one day!  
So review, what words should we always say?

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# CHILDREN'S GAZETTE

## 'Celeste's Christmas'

By **Liliana Gamiz**

Age 6, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, homeschooler

Under the sea, Celeste, who was a mermaid, was making Christmas decorations and ornaments. Her friend Bert was a penguin. He was helping her so they could get it done quickly before their dinner started. Celeste's mama and Bert's mama were making dinner and dessert.

Celeste asked Bert if he had any suggestions of who to invite to dinner besides him.

Bert said: "Gingy just moved in across the street. Do you want to meet him?"

"Yes!" said Celeste.

Gingy came to the holiday dinner inside Celeste's house. After their dinner, they opened presents. Gingy opened a little gingerbread doll. Bert opened a nice bowtie and Celeste opened the beautiful Christmas shell with red and green on it.

After Gingy left to go to bed, Celeste and Bert played checkers. After they played checkers, they went and read books in their beds and told stories. Then they went to sleep.

After they went to sleep, their mothers were talking and after their mothers went to bed, Santa Claus came at midnight. When Bert and Celeste woke up in the morning, Santa Claus had brought a gift for each of them.

Celeste had a beautiful necklace made out of tiny Christmas shells – the same ones that she found in her present. Bert found a nice tuxedo with stars of red and it was all green. And for Gingy there was a cookie that was nice and it looked just like Gingy and it was sweet and yummy.

It was Christmas time. They sang Christmas carols after they opened their presents.

The End



"Celeste's Christmas" by Liliana Gamiz, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, homeschooler



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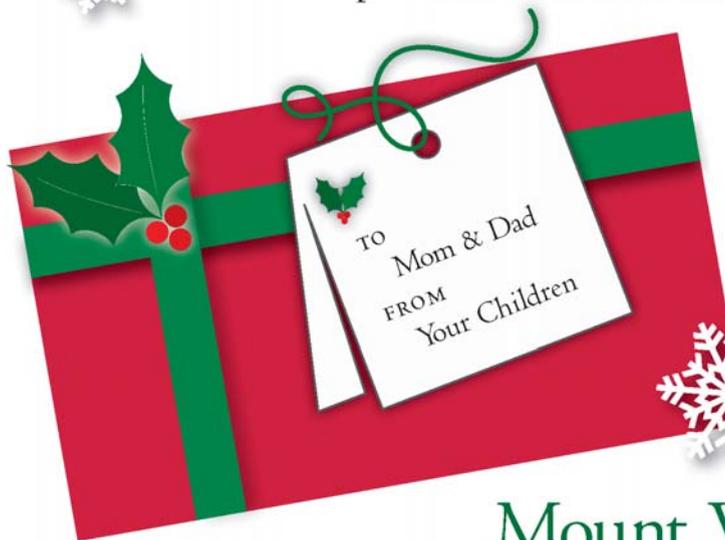
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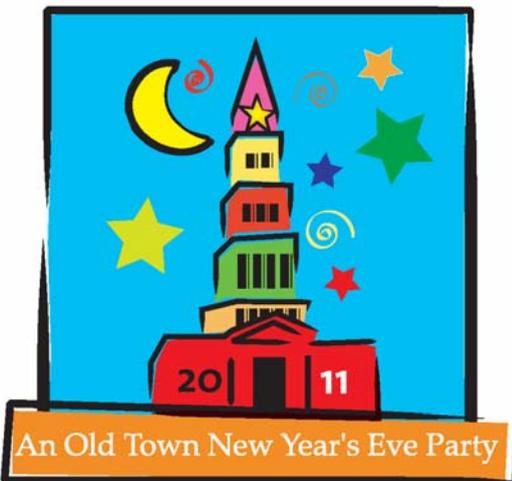
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## GALLERY



Wind: Marilyn Bruno, 3 years old, Thomas Aquinas Montessori School



Thomas Bruno, 9 years old, Grade 4, Waynewood Elementary,

### HANDCRAFTED



Aliyah Stone, 4th grade, Woodley Hills Elementary, coil pot



Kelly Martinez-Romero, 4th grade, Woodley Hills Elementary, coil pot



Bernice Bendsen, 4th grade, Woodley Hills Elementary, coil pot



Imani Campbell, 4th grade, Woodley Hills Elementary, coil pot



Ben Fenuku, 4th grade, Woodley Hills Elementary, coil pot



Kelvin Cruz Cortez, 4th grade, Woodley Hills Elementary, coil pot



Owen Chong, 4th grade, Woodley Hills Elementary, coil pot



Jack Noce, 4th grade, Woodley Hills Elementary, coil pot



Monica Hernandez Arevalo, 4th grade, Woodley Hills Elementary, coil pot



Alaina Lyberger, Kindergarten, Woodley Hills Elementary, pinch pot



Shanyce Lawrence, Kindergarten, Woodley Hills Elementary, pinch pot



Andrew Downham, Kindergarten, Woodley Hills Elementary, pinch pot



Karla Morales Melgar, Kindergarten, Woodley Hills Elementary, pinch pot



Jefferson Climaco-Montano, Kindergarten, Woodley Hills Elementary, pinch pot



Mark Romo-Rocha, Kindergarten, Woodley Hills Elementary, pinch pot

# GALLERY



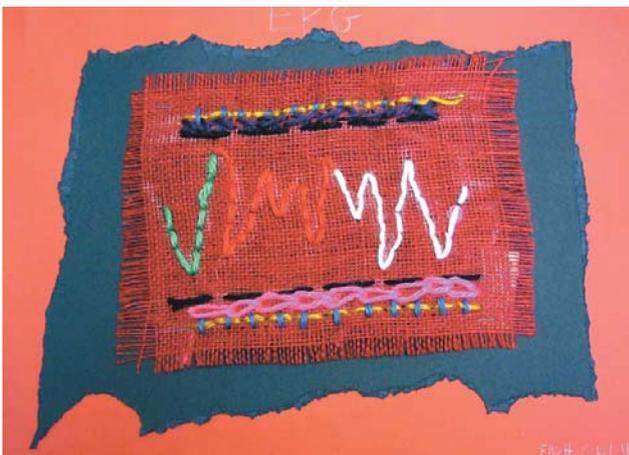
Abbey Beatty, Grade 1, Waynewood Elementary



Caroline Christensen, Kindergarten, Waynewood Elementary



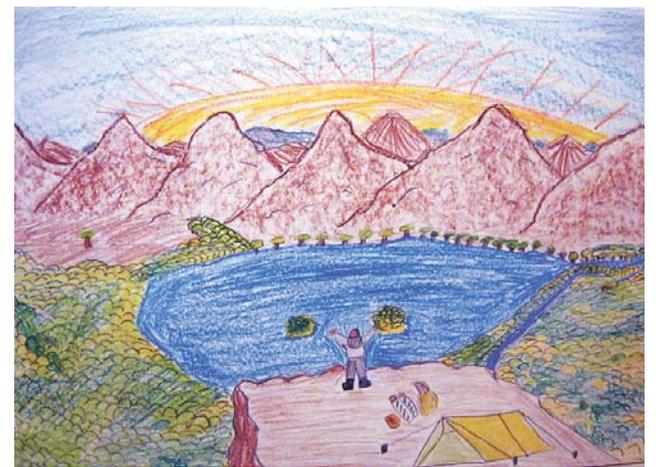
Charlotte Heimbach, Grade 1, Waynewood Elementary



Elliott Ortel, Grade 5, Waynewood Elementary



Finn O'Donnell, Grade 1, Waynewood Elementary



Jack Dillaplain, Grade 6, Waynewood Elementary

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Grades 6-12

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11:30AM - 1:30PM

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**21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements**

**NOTICE**  
 Edward E. Gahres, MD is closing his medical practice at 5021 Seminary Rd, Ste 109, Alexandria, VA, on December 31, 2011. Patients interested in requesting copies of their medical records should call (703) 931-7515 between 10 am and 4 pm, Mon., Tues. and Thurs.

**21 Announcements 21 Announcements**

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**12 Commercial Lease 102 Instruction 102 Instruction 21 Announcements 21 Announcements**

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**21 Announcements**

**ABC LICENSE**  
 Angel F. Rodriguez Jr, Sole Proprietor, DBA Angel's Vineyard Wine Shop, 103 N. West St, 2nd Floor, Alexandria, VA 22308. The above establishment is applying to the Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control for an Internet Wine Retailer's License where in consideration of payment, internet or telephone orders are taken and shipped directly to the consumers and which establishment is not a retail store open to the public. Angel F. Rodriguez Jr, owner.  
 NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to the Board no later than 30 days from the date of the first two required newspaper publications. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

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**21 Announcements 21 Announcements 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  
 8570 Executive Park Avenue  
 Fairfax, VA 22031  
 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.

**21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements**

**JUNE 30<sup>th</sup> - 2PM**  
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 Tickets: (800) 233-3123  
 JohnEdward.net or TeleCharge.com  
 Reading not guaranteed.

**21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements**

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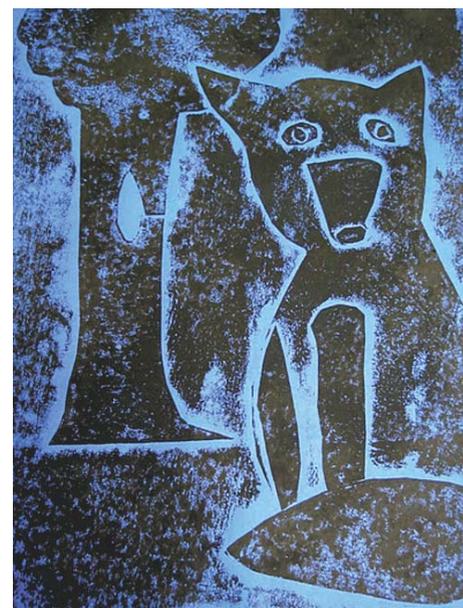
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Grant Hartzell, Grade 1,  
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## GUTTER

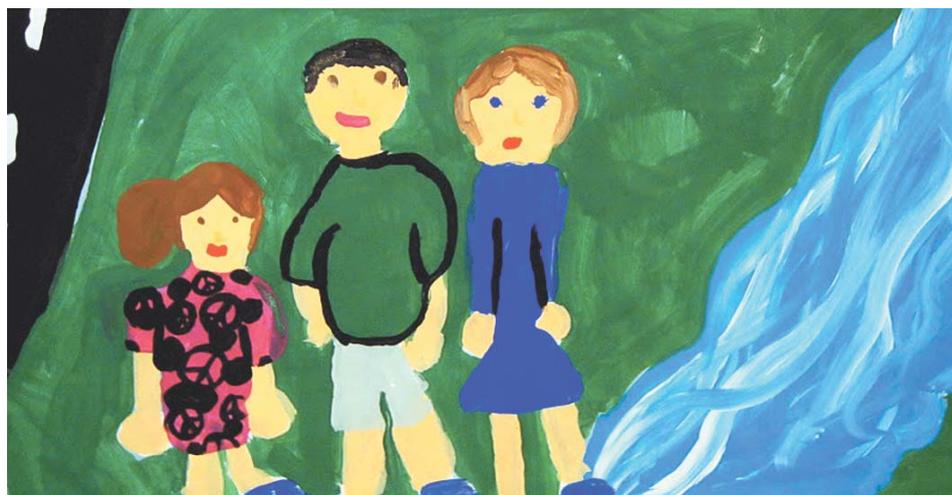
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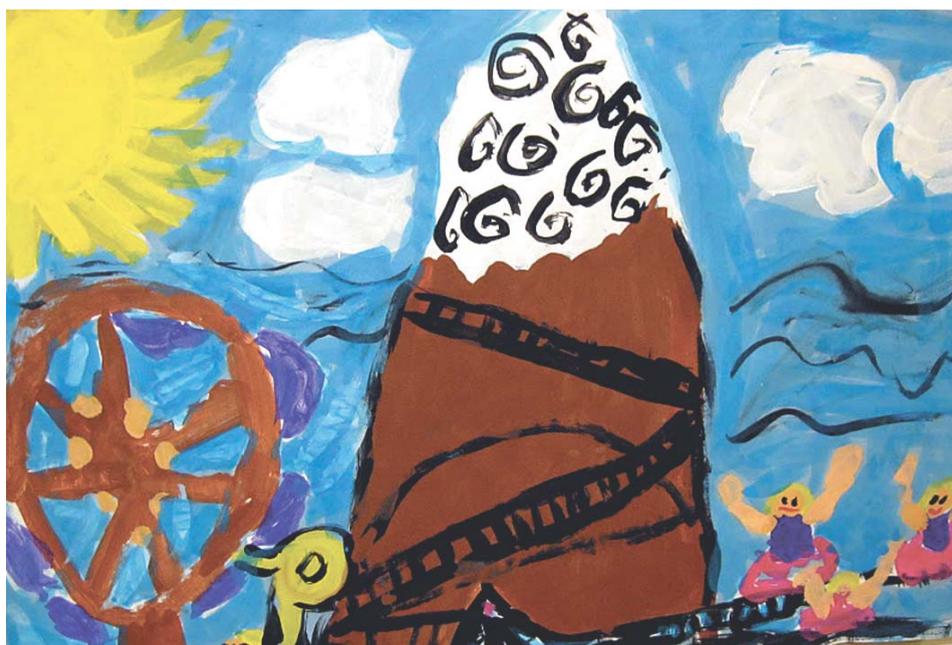
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## LAWN SERVICE

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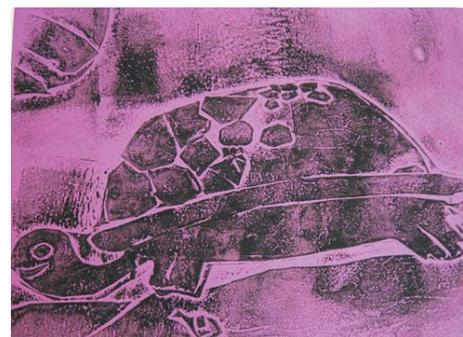
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## SNOW REMOVAL

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