



2013 FCFT President's Award



for Outstanding Advocacy for the Employees of FCPS

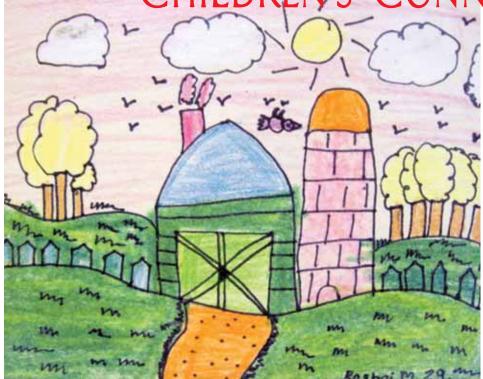
Megan McLaughlin (Braddock District)
Elizabeth Schultz (Springfield District)
Pat Hynes (Hunter Mill District)
Patty Reed (Providence District)
Sandy Evans (Mason District)
Dan Storck (Mount Vernon District)
Tammy Derenak Kaufax (Lee District)
Ryan McElveen (At-Large)
Janie Strauss (Dranesville District)
Pat Herrity (Supervisor: Springfield District)
Kaye Kory (Delegate: 38th District)

Other Award Winners:

Phyllis Pajardo (FCPS) Louise Epstein (FEC) Michael Hairston (FEA) Erica Hendry (media)

The Fairfax County Federation of Teachers would like to thank all of the 2013 award winners listed above for their consistent advocacy, proactive communications, and support of our workforce over the past year. We publicly acknowledge their efforts to make a difference in the lives of FCPS employees. Thank you for caring about us; it matters and is appreciated.





By Roshni Manikarnika, 2nd grade, Floris Elementary School.



By Cole Gillions, 14, Rachel Carson Middle School.

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.

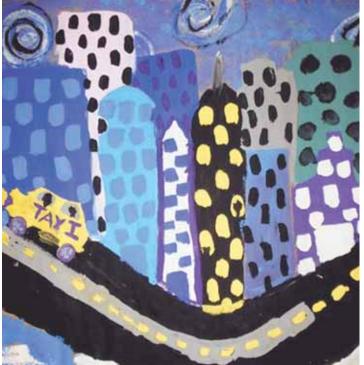
We appreciate the extra effort made by school staff to gather the materials during their busy time leading up to the holidays. We'd also like to encourage both schools and parents to mark their 2014 calendars for early December, the deadline for submissions for next year's Children's Connection.

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 email, 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 Mia Olek, 6th grade, Dranesville Elementary School.



By Ashley Powell, 3rd grade, Floris Elementary School.



By Chinmai Muskari, 13, Rachel Carson Middle School.

"I Have a Dream"

Students in Mrs. Shahidi's 3rd grade class at Dranesville Elementary share their dreams.

I have a dream. I want to become a teacher. I want to teach children in kindergarten. I want to teach in Washington, D.C. Learning is very important for children. I want to help the kids in learning. I have a dream.

— ALISON REALEGENO

I have a dream. I want to become an artist. I will bring my guerilla art all over the world. Guerilla art is street art. It is when an artist leaves their artwork in public for everyone can see. I will sell my art to make money. I will use that money to go all over the world. I will go on art shows and talk about my art. I will go on "America's Got Talent" and draw my best picture yet. I will have millions of fans who love art. I will make a lot of art movies so other children that love art will be really good at art. And that is my dream.

— Teagan Williams

I have a dream. I want to go to India and see my family. But first I have to go to college. I want to get a job as a doctor and a dentist. Then I can go to India. I really want to go to the Taj Mahal and ride an elephant.

— Keshav Nair

I have a dream. I want to be a dancer. I hope to make people happy. I want to make people believe in themselves. I wish to go to college and take dance class. I hope to live in New York City and perform in the New York City Ballet. With the money

The Oak Hill / Herndon Children's Connection

is published by

Local Media Connection, LLC.

A digital version of this publication and 14 sister publications available at www.connectionnewpapers.com/ documents

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By Cora Sadlack, 3rd grade, Dranesville Elementary School.

I make, I will donate some to St. Judes. Then I'll go to Hollywood and walk the red carpet. I have a dream.

- KAITLIN SNOW

My dream is to become an anesthesiologist. My dad is one, and I want to be one too. I want to help people in the hospital. I will be an anesthesiologist in Washington, D.C. They put people to sleep before they have surgery. It takes five years for you to become an anesthesiologist. You have to go to medical school. It might be challenging, but I will try my best. I have a dream.

— Nadia Hanfi

I have a dream. My dream is to become a volcanologist. I want people to be safe from lava. I have a family that lives in El Salvador. It is dangerous because there are volcanoes. I will save the world. I will learn about volcanoes. I will visit a lot of volcanoes and study. I would invent something to stop volcanoes from erupting. I will go to college and study math lots of science. I have a dream.

— Luis Escalante

My dream is to become a famous dance teacher. My mom teaches me how to dance. I want to make my mom proud by becoming a good dance teacher, and I want to teach kids to dance. I want to see me on the television, and I want people to have good dreams.

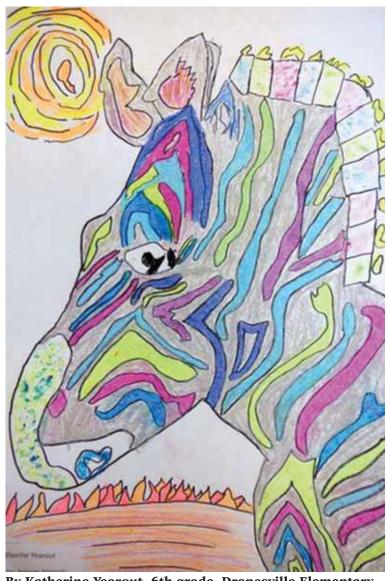
— Marcie

I have a dream. I will sell my art to make money. I will go to art school. I can't wait to have an art show. I will display my beautiful drawings. When I draw, I have fun. I have a dream.

— Cora Sadlack



By Sadie Sadlack, kindergarten, Dranesville Elementary School.



By Katherine Yearout, 6th grade, Dranesville Elementary School.

BUZZ ALDRIN REFLECTIONS

The Best **Present Ever**

The best present I ever got was in 2011 when I got a metal detector! It was soo cool! I couldn't use it because it was in the middle of the winter on Christmas, but as soon as it was spring I started using it, I searched the backyard because my sister found a chain there once. But I didn't find anything so I went on the lawn & searched... beeeeeep I found a nail & a penny. I found a screw but recently I found something big I couldn't dig it up.

> Joshua Gregory, 4th grade, BUZZ ALDRIN ELEMENTARY

The Wind's Seed

The trees swav as their leaves fall to the ground. The squirrels find food, for winter is near. The grass rustles because of the wind. But what does the wind do? It carries a special touch of hope. The scent of the wind mingles with the trees as it flows in the sky. The wind twists through bushes and turns around houses until it finds what it needs. A seed. A seed full of kindness, and a seed that will not droop or fall when it sprouts.

Once the wind finds this seed, it leaves the hope it carries to linger around the seed. The seed then turns the hope into nutrients for it. The hope and the seed then grow together, creating belief. The grown seed now believes in something it needs to change or correct. This belief grows stronger in the grown seed until the grown seed knows what to do with it. The grown seed now creates a dream of what it will do to make a difference of its belief. The grown seed now grows even larger until it becomes a small tree. Now this small tree will do a few things of its dream as it keeps growing into a medium tree.

As it becomes a medium tree, it will start doing bigger things to support its dream. When the medium tree completes its final stage to become a grown-up tree, it will do more than ever before to achieve its dream, since it has more authority. This grown-up tree will keep working until its dream has been accomplished. The grown-up tree will get his dream accomplished eventually.

The grown-up tree still keeps his kindness because he comes to inspire others and lead them to a path of beliefs and dreams. The

SEE REFLECTIONS, PAGE 7



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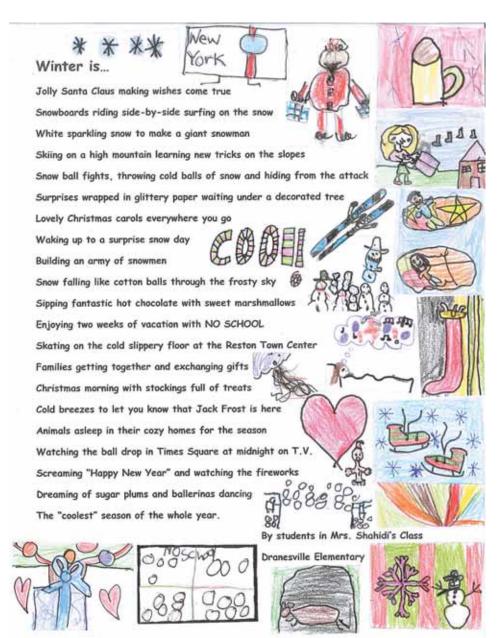
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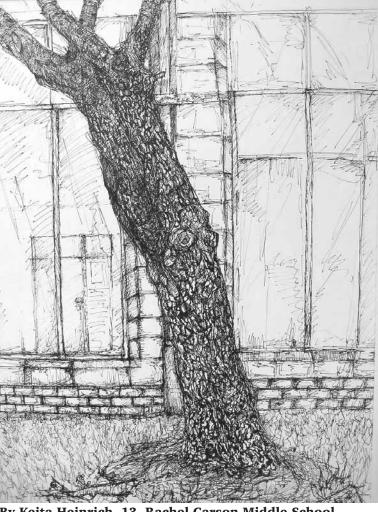
A poem by Dranesville students.



By Priscilla Luu, 14, Rachel Carson Middle School.



By Emily Huo, 12, Rachel Carson Middle School.



By Keita Heinrich, 13, Rachel Carson Middle School.

BUZZ ALDRIN REFLECTIONS

From Page 5

grown-up tree's inspiration is like a bridge for others to cross to start their beliefs and dreams. But eventually, the grown-up tree gets old and can do no more. The old grown-up tree becomes a legend. That is when the wind twists through bushes and turns through houses to find another seed that has kindness, just like the old one. So then, a cycle begins full of hope, beliefs, dreams, and inspiration. Any kind seed can be the wind's choice. Even you.

LIZY GREGORY,
 6TH GRADE,
 BUZZ ALDRIN ELEMENTARY

What Makes a Good Friend

A good friend is a person that you can easily find.

A person, like you or me, may

just come to mind.

You can rely on them to be there

as long as it takes.

And in the end, it doesn't mat-

ter if you make mistakes.
You can always trust them and know them to be true.

Even when others might lose

faith and give up on you.

A good friend is someone who stands by you through it all.

And it doesn't matter how high you climb or how far you fall.

They don't judge the way you look or the things that you like to do.

They just accept you for being you.

—Ben Zalles, 5th grade, Buzz Aldrin Elementary

The Best Part of Me

The best part of me is my eyes. My eyes help me see and make me happy.

My eyes help me see the trees and colors and everything around

They help me read and learn.

My eyes go across my face to see all the cool things we do.

They are thin and blue.

They are full of shapes.

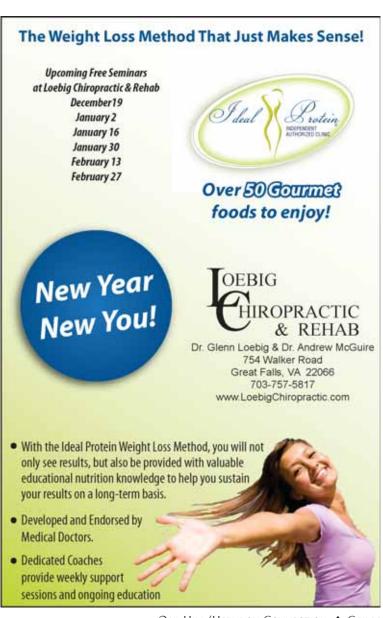
My eyes are awesome, they help me see.

My eyes are my best friend to

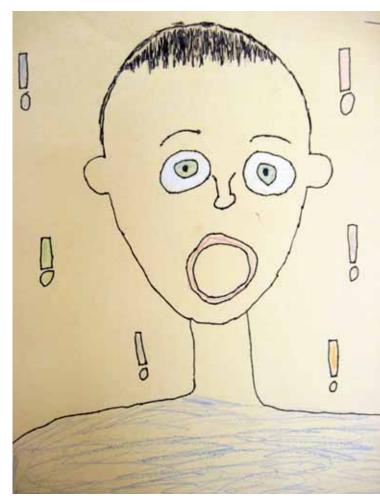
Rowan Simons,
 3rd grade,
 Buzz Aldrin Elementary











By Aidan Mohr, 3rd grade, Floris Elementary School.

What I Want to Be When I Grow Up...

Writings from Ms. Mayers' second grade class at Floris Elementary

I want to be a doctor when I grow up because I want to listen to people's hearts. I think that would be exciting! I have a doctor's kit. I always dreamed of being a doctor. I want people to feel better so they can go where they want to go. It will be fun helping people. Shinjini Ray,

2ND GRADE, FLORIS ELEMENTARY

I want to be a doctor when I grow up. I want to help people. Helping others makes me happy. Doctors sometimes save lives. So people like doctors and are thankful to them. I don't like seeing my brother sick. When the doctor makes him feel better, I am happy. I read a lot of books so that I can be a smart doctor.

> — Anika Gulati, 2ND GRADE, FLORIS ELEMENTARY

I want to be a doctor when I grow up because I can cure sickness. I can help other people feel better, not get the flu or a virus. I might get my own kit. I also want to learn about many doctors' knowledge. I can also learn about shots and diseases. I can help prevent sickness. I can also help people have a happy life!

- KATIE WANG.

A Gift That Doesn't Cost Money

If I could give my parents any gift that doesn't cost money it would be a homemade book. That shows them how much I love them and the great things they did for me and what I will do for them because they did great things for me since I was born. Neil Malhotra,

2nd grade, Floris Elementary



By Natalie Kattas, 3rd grade, Floris Elementary School.

My Favorite Toy...

My favorite toy is my American Girl doll. Her name is Josephine. Her nickname is Josie. She is my favorite toy because I get to dress up like her. I also like to do things with her. My two favorite things to do with her are cartwheels and dancing. I get to sleep with her every night. It feels like I have a sleepover every day! That is why my American Girl Doll Josephine is my favorite toy.

- RIYA GHATE,

2nd grade, Floris Elementary

My favorite toy is a stuffed animal because you can play with them and they are cute. They are so soft and so cuddly. They are fun to play with because you can bring them on big trips. You can talk to them if you are alone. Stuffed animals can be one of your

> - Brayden McCluskey, 2nd grade, Floris Elementary

The Christmas Toy

Once upon a time it was Christmas Eve, December 24, 2014. When Pranav and Brayden opened the door they saw a Christmas tree. They couldn't wait to unwrap the presents, but their dad said, 2ND GRADE, FLORIS ELEMENTARY "Sleep." Just then Brayden and Pranav's cousins came over and slept with them. Then they had dreams that they got to sneak to see what Santa looked like. While they were sleeping they heard Santa's footsteps coming. So Pranav, Brayden, Shiv, and Isaac snuck to where Santa was going. But it was only a dream! Then the next day I got out of bed, brushed my teeth, and raced down and

> - Pranav Malladi, 2nd grade, Floris Elementary



By Rhea Tiwari, 5th grade, **Armstrong Elementary School.**





By Kaitlyn Woodbrey, 5th grade, **Armstrong Elementary School.**



By Yaswant Kapa, 3rd grade, Floris Elementary School.

By Molly O'Brien, 5th grade, **Armstrong Elementary School.**

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By Katherine Hamilton, 4th grade, Buzz Aldrin Elementary School.

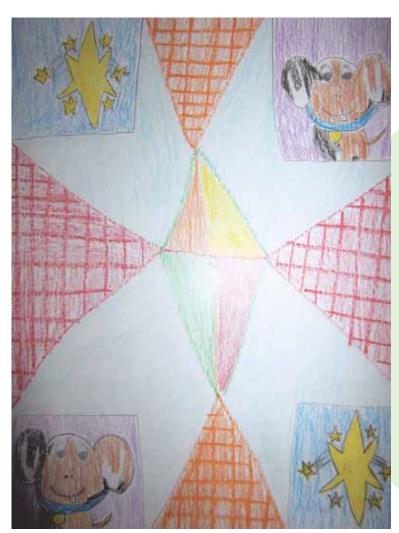
BUZZ ALDRIN ART GALLERY

By James "Jimmy" T. St. John IV, 2nd grade, Buzz Aldrin Elementary School.





By Lizy Gregory, 6th grade, Buzz Aldrin Elementary.



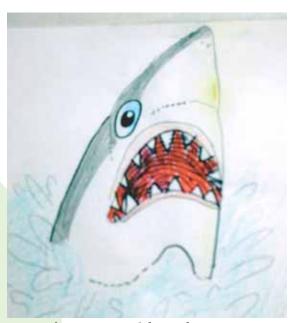
My Favorite Things by Jamie Hueper, 3rd grade, Armstrong Elementary School.



By Ada Langston, 4th grade, Armstrong Elementary School.

Armstrong Art Gallery

By Esri Lowe, 4th grade, Armstrong Elementary School.



By Maximus Nasta, 6th grade, Armstrong Elementary.





By Keira G., 2nd grade, Our Lady of Good **Counsel Catholic School.**



Roy Lichtenstein Inspired Portrait by Fatima J., 8th grade, Our Lady of Good **Counsel Catholic School**





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Fun in the Sun by Sophie Jones, 5, Reston, Sunrise Valley Elementary School.



By Alex Davis, 6th grade, Sunrise Valley Elementary School.



By Esme Hansing, 6th grade, Sunrise Valley Elementary School.



By Kaliyana Haering, 5th grade, Sunrise Valley Elementary School.



By Charlotte Zatterstrom, 5th grade, Sunrise Valley Elementary School.



By Christopher Zhong, 4th grade, Sunrise Valley Elementary School.

SUNRISE VALLEY ART GALLERY



By Jay Chadwick, kindergarten, Sunrise Valley Elementary School.



By John Walter G. Egan, 6th grade, Armstrong Elementary.



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The Daze of My Life



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Every three weeks I have chemotherapy. Every three months I have a CT Scan. And every three months - after that scan, I have an appointment with my oncologist to discuss the results. And before any of the above, the Wednesday before my Friday infusion, I go for my pre-chemo lab work to determine if my levels are up to protocol standards in order to allow me to even get treatment two days hence on Friday. Accordingly, I live my life in threeweek/three-month cycles. And after each infusion/appointment, the cycle begins all over again. Unlike a credit card expiration date that renews for three years, my expiration date, such as it is presumed to be, renews for only three months – or shorter if my scan results and lab work are discouraging. And I can live with that; I have been living with that. But short-timing like this can play mind games, as I alluded to in last week's column. Though I usually know whether I'm coming or going, I don't always know whether I'm standing pat or betting on a future.

And since I'm not a betting man - or much of a gambler, I usually stand pat and act as if life will go on as it sort of has: with fits (not literally) and starts, with some good results – and some not so good results. On balance though, my results have been above and beyond the expectation of my oncologist. And in a peculiar way, that's what I sort of live for: to surprise my doctor. There's no better feeling I have than to see my oncologist smiling back at me, almost inexplicably, as to why I've been able to live for as long as I have. Though I've always maintained a positive outlook and kept my sense of humor, I can't really speak to whether these two traits would have convinced my oncologist that my initial "13 month to two-year" prognosis was merely a starting point, not the end game that he had predicted. Moreover, given the severity of my original diagnosis: stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer; metastasized, inoperable, terminal; and supported by all the lessthan-encouraging, life-expectancy-challenged statistics from your favorite cancer society, I am in fact living proof that what has gone around is not always what goes around. Patients are different. Lifestyles are different. Drug/medication interactions are different. Commitment levels to alternative methodologies are different. In general, there are many variables. As bad as the diagnosis/prognosis was, I never gave up hope, never gave in to my disease – emotionally.

Now whether there's a rhyme or reason to my exceedingly good fortune - or whether I'm just incredibly lucky, I can't say for sure. Certainly I don't have any definitive keys to the kingdom, so to speak, that have enabled me to live free and not die. I just try to take each day as it comes, and not expect too much and not overreact to what symptoms/feelings I may be experiencing. As my father used to say, every day that he would wake up is a good day. And since I've been waking many three-week/three-month intervals, I'm happy to say: keep those intervals coming; it may very well be what's been keeping me alive.

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

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