



2016  
VIRGINIA  
PRESS  
ASSOCIATION  
Local Writing  
Program

# Fairfax CONNECTION

## Children's Connection 2016

My Giving Tree,  
by Nuri Lim,  
Greenbriar East  
Elementary.

DECEMBER 29, 2016 - JANUARY 4, 2017

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## CHILDREN'S CONNECTION



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### HAPPY New Year

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1  
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

The new year is the time to set new goals,  
to change and be a better you.  
The new year is the time to cheer,  
"It's a new year!"

Happiness, excitement and laughter in the air.  
We all love this time we share.  
Friends, family and siblings, too  
We all say I like you, too.

Happy new year to every boy and girl,  
Moms and dads, and teachers, too.  
Because we all like each other  
And we all like you.

—BIANCA OFILIA PARKER, AGE 9,  
MOSBY WOODS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

### Love

Love is sweet and feels nice. Never let it go.  
On the day I was born that was the day that I re-  
ceived the best gift ever - LOVE.  
Voice. Without a voice, how would you express  
your love?  
Everyone deserves to be loved and appreciated.

—GABRIELLA ROSE McCLUER, 9,  
MOSBY WOODS ELEMENTARY

### What Makes a Good Friend?

A good friend makes you laugh. A good friend is  
there for you when you're sad or mad. Your friend is  
someone you can play or have fun with. Your friend  
helps you do homework, personal things, and gar-  
dening. Your friend is someone you care about and  
someone to tell your secrets to. It helps to get some  
stuff off your chest by telling your friend.

—ALEXANDER ORELLANA HERNANDEZ,  
AGE 10, MOSBY WOODS ELEMENTARY

### Dreams

Dreams are a weird kind of thing. They seem so  
real, but when you open your eyes they are not there.  
Dreams can be nightmares. They can be from the  
past or the present, but you just don't know it. I re-  
member when I was young my mom gave me a crys-  
tal necklace. I always imagined that the necklace had  
special powers. I imagined that the necklace's power  
is that you can wish anything in the galaxy and it  
would come true and the wishing powers would  
never run out. Some people say that a dream is just  
a fairy tale that never came true, but when you be-  
lieve with all your heart - it will come true. How do  
I know this? Well it's because I can wish anything in  
the world and it will come true.

—KARIN SALWANS, GRADE 5,  
MOSBY WOODS ELEMENTARY



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**My Life in Pictures, by Rachel Jeong, Greenbriar East Elementary.**



**Playing, by Hannah Dai, age 9, Grade 3, Navy Elementary School of Fairfax County, Miss Amanda Henderson's class.**

## Welcome

Dear Readers:

This week, the Fairfax 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 2017 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 school pages.

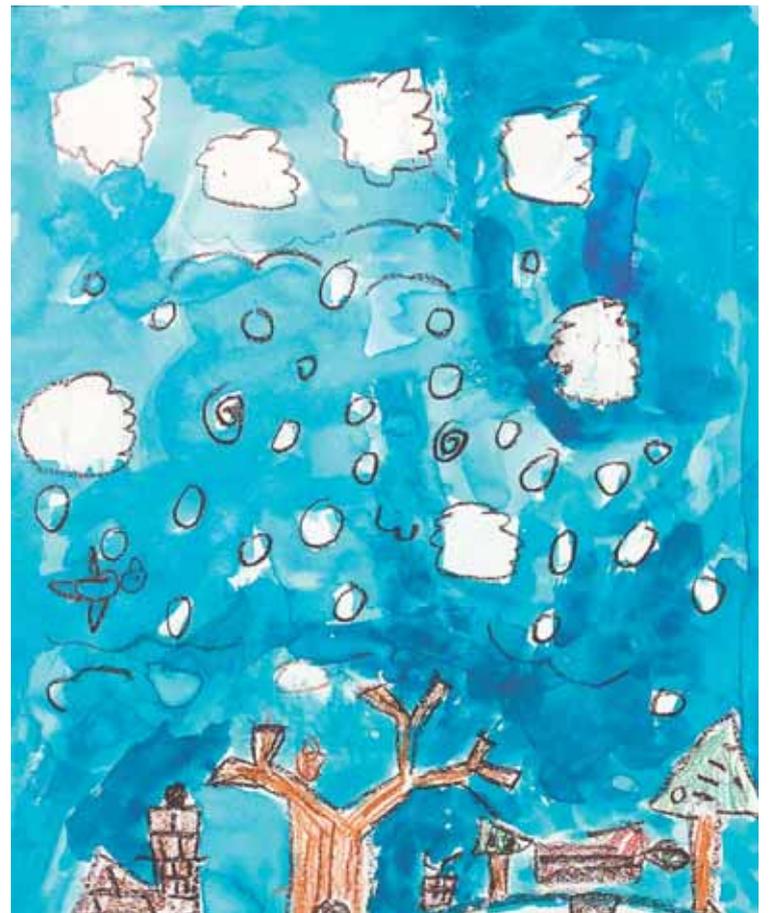
Our preferred method for material is e-mail, which should be sent to south@connectionnewspapers.com, but you can reach us by mail at 1606 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 or call 703-778-9414 with any questions.

EDITOR KEMAL KURSPAHC



**"Still Life — Fruits in Basket," by Isabella Snow, Grade 5, Fairview Elementary.**

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



**Ethan Zhang, age 7, Grade 1, Eagle View Elementary.**



**By Kai Wheeler, Grade 6, Orange Hunt Elementary.**

# CHILDREN'S CONNECTION

EAGLE VIEW ELEMENTARY IN  
FAIRFAX ART GALLERY

Artwork submitted by Art Instructor  
Jessica Chinn.

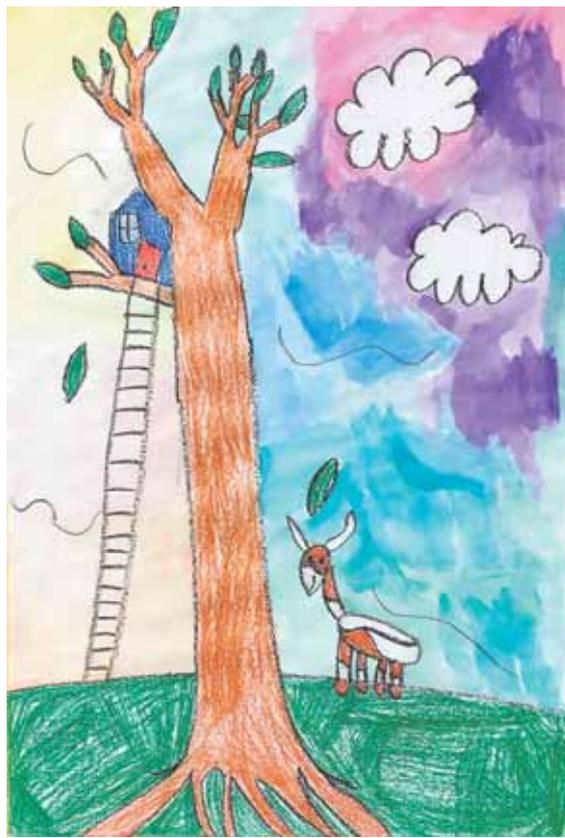
By Brian Song, age 11,  
Grade 6.



Bennett Hibsham, age 7, Grade 2.



Belgutei Natan-Erdene, age 6, Grade 1.



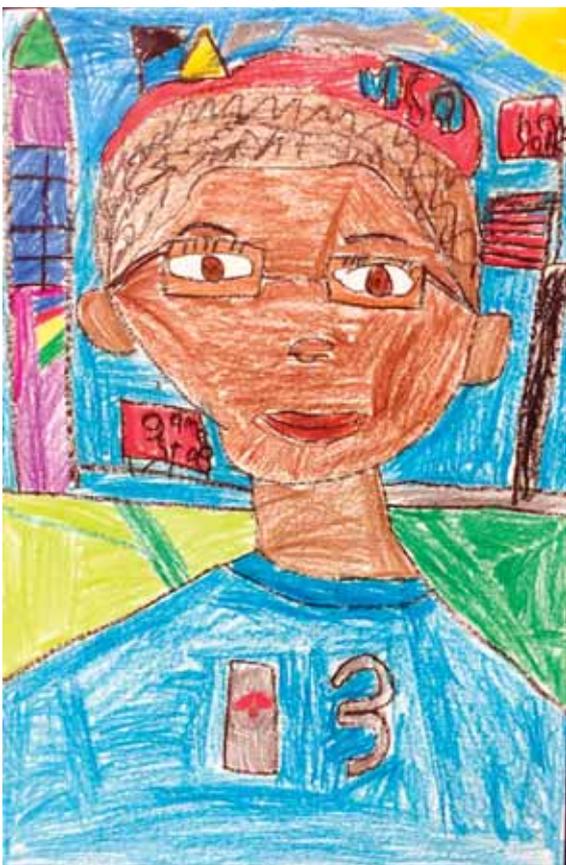
Lucy Nguyen, age 6, Grade 1.



Chelsy Park, age 7, Grade 2.



By Isabella Heymann, age 9, Grade 4,



By Carter Pilson, age 8, Grade 3.



By Jonathan Shin, age 8.



By Jennifer Bermudez, age 9, Grade 4.

# LAUREL RIDGE ELEMENTARY



**Kairos Woods, grade 2 —  
Lamb**

## My Dream Job

My dream job is to be a veterinarian. I like to work with animals. Animals are sooo cute. When I am a vet I will go to Africa, Asia, Australia and maybe South America. When I travel I will help and learn about other animals. I can't wait to be a vet!

— ANNETTE McGRATH,  
GRADE 2

## SCHOOL NOTES

Send notes to the Connection at [south@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:south@connectionnewspapers.com) or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

**Vocal musicians from 12 Fairfax County public schools** have been named to the Virginia Honors Choir for 2016. This select choir is open only to the top 125 singers from around the Commonwealth of Virginia, and is the highest honor a choir student can attain during his or her high school career. Thirty-one Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) students were selected for the choir, and five students were named as alternates. The choir will perform at the Virginia Music Educators Association (VMEA) convention to be held at the Omni Homestead Resort in Hot Springs, Nov. 17-19. FCPS students named to the 2016 Virginia Honors Choir include the following students from our area schools: **Woodson High School:** Megan Humes, Caroline Grass, Jacob Lamb, Lucas Valdes, and Marc Manaloto and **Hayfield Secondary School:** Jessica Pressley.

### The Fairfax Children's Connection

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**This holiday season could be  
the best time for your family to discuss  
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For care tips during the holidays and when they're over,  
please call **The Kensington Team**, who is always ready to help

The holiday season is a great time to share the joys of togetherness and tradition. But for families whose aging relatives are showing signs of decline, the holidays can also be stressful and even, sad.

If you notice that a senior family member seems more overwhelmed than overjoyed during the holidays, then use this opportunity to pay close attention to signs of concern, such as depression or confusion. While family is all together, talk among yourselves to consider the benefits of assisted living at The Kensington, such as:

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Information Center: 1212 W Broad St, Falls Church, VA | 703.992.9868 | [www.TheKensingtonFallsChurch.com](http://www.TheKensingtonFallsChurch.com)



# Announcing Group Interviews for The Kensington Falls Church

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| Cooks                               | Laundry Attendants    |



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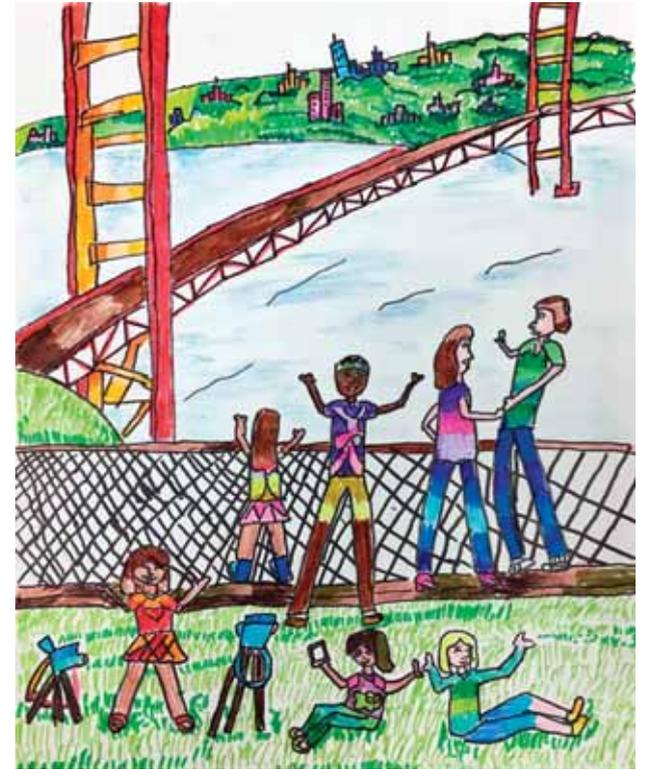


For immediate consideration or more details,  
email [FallsChurchCareers@KensingtonSL.com](mailto:FallsChurchCareers@KensingtonSL.com)  
or call 703-992-9868.

## CHILDREN'S CONNECTION

GREENBRIAR WEST  
ELEMENTARY

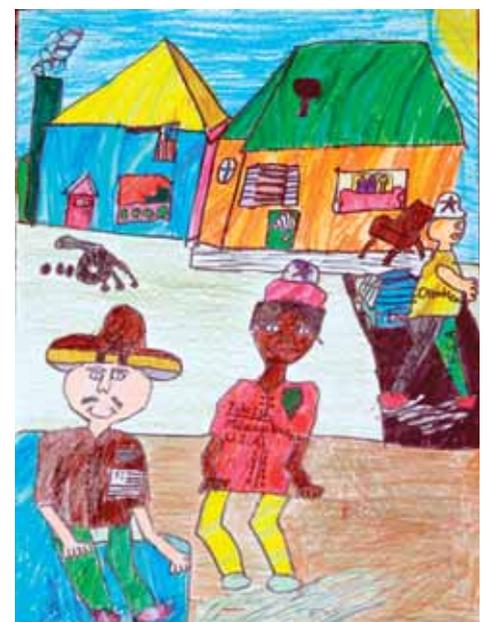
By Sathwika Prasad,  
Grade 3, Greenbriar  
West Elementary, Art  
Teacher: Jeniffer Regan



By Pragna Tangirala, Grade 1, Greenbriar West Elementary,  
Art teacher: Ms. Sui.



Ziplining in Nature, by Reshmi  
Balakrishnan, age 11, Grade 6,  
Greenbriar West ES



By Pratheek Tangirala, Grade 5,  
Greenbriar West Elementary

# CHILDREN'S CONNECTION

## My Dream Job

My dream job is to be a veterinarian. I like to work with animals. Animals are sooo cute. When I am a vet I will go to Africa, Asia, Australia and maybe South America. When I travel I will help and learn about other animals. I can't wait to be a vet!

—ANNETTE McGRATH,  
GRADE 2, LAUREL RIDGE  
ELEMENTARY

## Only a Dream

I woke up in a patch of sharp, misty grass. I gazed up at the sky and it shone a blinding light. "Where am I?" I thought as I got up. My feet felt crisp grass poking between my toes. There was in front of me a field of exquisite blossom cherry trees, showering their petals onto my head. I started running, my feet brushing up against the soil. I giggled and threw the tiny petals into the air, falling back down. Then there was a humongous gust of wind. I could hear an alarming sound, as loud as a roaring bear. "BEEP! BEEP!" I woke into the real world and sighed. Only a dream.

—ESHAL I. KHOWAJA, II,  
OF FAIRFAX,  
GRADE 6,  
COLIN POWELL ELEMENTARY.  
TEACHER: TARA CARLSON

## KINGS GLEN ELEMENTARY POETRY CORNER

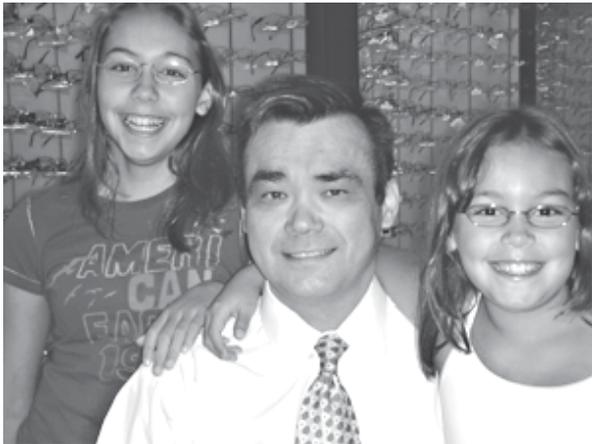
Writings by the students in  
Mrs. Kelly's Class.

## Getting a Dog

I woke up at 7 a.m. to go to school. I had breakfast, math, reading, lunch, recess, writing, music, and PE. At the end of the day, I went home on Bus 1. My mom and grandpa went to Maryland that day to go to an animal shelter to look at dogs. But, I did not know that, so when I got home, I saw a puppy! I asked, "Is it mine?" and my mom said, "yes." My mom was recording me because my dad is stationed in Qatar. That night, we had to go buy a doggie bed, brush, food and choose a name. We named him Milo and I can still not believe he is mine.

—ANNABELLA VASQUEZ, 9,  
BURKE

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# CHILDREN'S CONNECTION

## MOSBY WOODS ELEMENTARY ART GALLERY

Artwork by students in Art Teacher: Lois Petersen & Victoria Howes classes

**Nina Heard, Grade 2, Teacher, Ms. Shannon.**



**Nina Heard, Grade 2, Teacher, Ms. Shannon.**

## MANTUA ELEMENTARY

Artwork by students in Ms. Nathalie Shirley's class.

**Juliana Genoble, Grade 5.**



**Kaylee Bryson, Grade 2.**



**Alexandra Constantinescu, Grade 4.**

Artwork by students in Mr. Davide Lorenzi's class.



**Annabel Ingson, Grade 5.**



**Annabel Ingson, Grade 5.**

**Ngoc Mai Pham, Grade 3.**



## Jealousy

JIHUN YIO, GRADE 10  
FAIRFAX HIGH SCHOOL

Something inside me says it's not right  
Anger and fear run through my mind  
I've found myself in quite a plight  
A feeling foreign to none  
A want for something I can't possess  
A pain no greater to anyone  
Something that I'm too afraid to express  
Keeping it inside me  
Spurs me to don a mask  
One that looks happy and carefree  
And when someone does ask

I'll tell him  
I'm fine  
As if I were to be reading  
Off a script line by line  
It makes everything feel heavy  
Pulling me down to my knees  
Never able to feel at ease  
I cannot change  
The way I feel  
Not knowing how to deal  
With the problem on my hands  
So I carry on  
Letting it grow  
Like the light of the sun from the break of dawn  
I wish I could just let it go  
If only it were that easy

**Biking, by Elizabeth Dai, age 6, Grade 1, Navy Elementary School of Fairfax County, Miss Michaela Venator's class.**



**Playing, by Hannah Dai, age 9, Grade 3, Navy Elementary School of Fairfax County, Miss Amanda Henderson's class.**



## Darkness...

Darkness is a thing that can bottle up emotions and cause one thing..... fear  
Darkness can cure one thing, fear  
Darkness is like a potion that wipes out your memories  
Darkness is as fast as an energetic deer  
Darkness waits for one thing to capture your feelings  
But darkness is a bad thing that happens to you  
Darkness can take over all your good in you  
Darkness is a tiny thing that gets bigger and starts to brew

One thing that can defeat darkness is the good inside you  
Good always defeats evil and the good inside of you can destroy darkness  
You must embrace the feeling when you are good  
If you defeat darkness, then it will be starker  
Darkness is bad but you can be the hero  
Darkness is a unique thing that won't come back any more times, zero

—AGE: 11 NAME: SACHITH MANKALA, OF FAIRFAX, AGE 11, GRADE 6, COLIN POWELL ELEMENTARY

FAIRFAX CONNECTION ♦ MONTH 1-31, 2008 ♦ 9



**Ethan Doan, age 10.**



**Sophia Huh, age 11.**



**Catherine Williamson, age 9.**



**Amy Lee, age 9.**



**Nolan Nguyen, age 10.**

# CHILDREN'S CONNECTION

GREENBRIAR EAST ELEMENTARY

Artwork submitted by teacher Christie Miller-Spadaccini.

**Audrey Cu,  
Grade 1.**



**Candice  
Cheung,  
Grade 2.**



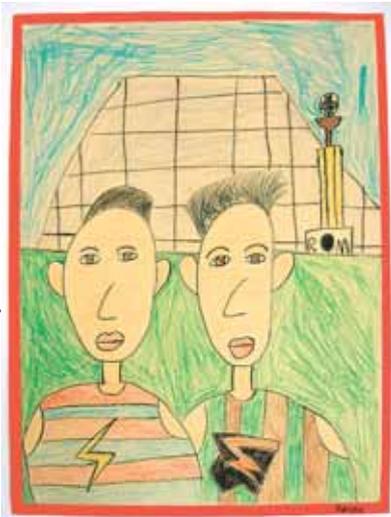
**Caroline  
Grindal,  
Kindergarten.**



**Zhi Wen Xie,  
Grade 6.**



**Rayan  
Mosleh,  
Grade 2.**



**Jiah Khan,  
Grade 2.**



**Kaylee Garcia, Grade 3.**



**Map About Sua Moon**

## Why We Should Have a Class Pet

I want a class pet because then we can have a friend. During indoor recess, we can play with it and give it company. We can take care of it and feed it food. If we have a class pet everyone would want to go to school. It will make learning fun.

—NABIHA USMAN, GRADE 3, GREENBRIAR EAST

## If I Were the President

If I were the President I would make every school have a hot tub outside for recess. The next thing I would do is make flying cars because when there is traffic on the road you can push this button on the side of the seat, and when you push that button it will make wings come out of your car so you can cut out all of the traffic. The next thing I would do is build my own hotel and the name would be Katie's Famous Hotel, and the first person who came would get one night free with free food and a swimming pool all to yourself. The best part is there is a huge water park all to yourself with ice cream for free and the pool can be filled with ice cream flavors with some toppings. Then if I were president I would make books walk by themselves using a machine and there will be a seat for you to sit if you are walking around. And those are the goals I want to do when I am President!

—KATIE HOANG, GRADE 3, GREENBRIAR EAST

## Imagine a Day

Imagine if you eat an apple and you close your eyes and imagine where you want to go. So you grab a big, short apple and eat a small bite and then it shows a door right next to you. So you have to say where you want to go, then you have to jump inside the door as fast as you can. Then you might jump into a pool if you want to go somewhere hot. If you want to go somewhere cold you might jump into a big pile of snow. So if you want to go back into the real world just wish where you want to go then the door will be there. But this time when you go back into the real world you have to go backwards!

—KATIE HOANG, GRADE 3, GREENBRIAR EAST

## The Three Chapter Story

BY HANNAH LYNCH, GRADE 3, GREENBRIAR EAST

### Chapter 1, a dog or a cat?

A cat or a dog? It's all on the behavior.

It plays like a dog, but looks like a cat.

Maybe I'm wrong, maybe I'm right.

A cat? What breed? A dog? Okay.

Some things are not right.

I ask a friend, she says cat.

I ask mom, she says dog.

A dog or a cat? It's a simple question!

No one can answer that question anymore.

Not even the genesis.

Chapter 2, It's a cat

"Yes, I'm speaking to you.

I'll give you hints while I speak,"

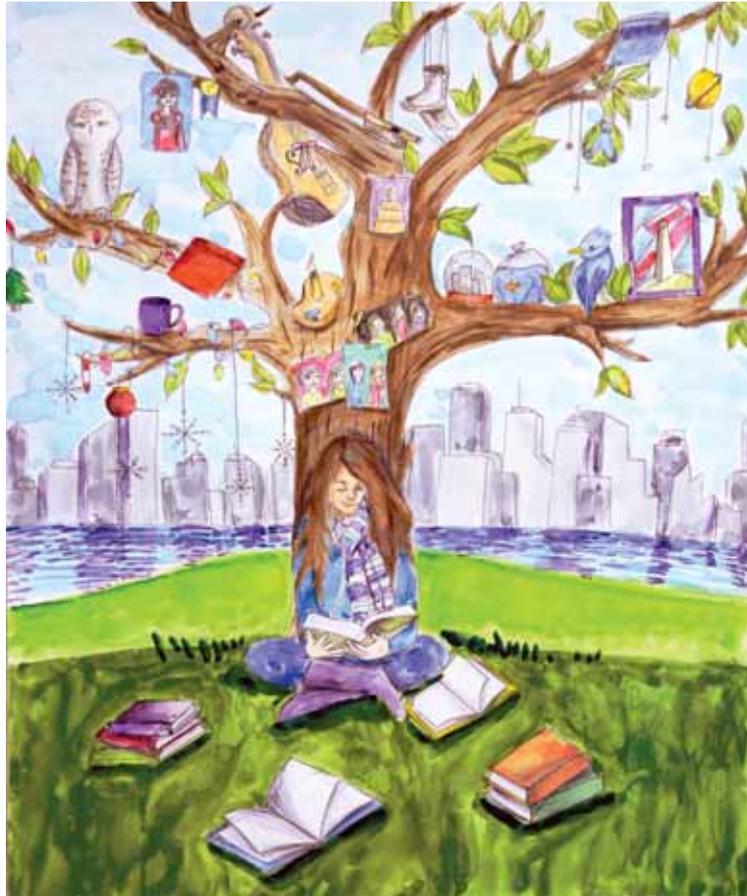
SEE WRITING, PAGE 11

# WRITING

FROM PAGE 10

“Who said that?”  
 “I said that, don’t be confused,”  
 “Okay, I won’t but who are you?  
 Are you a cat or a dog?”  
 “One or the other,  
 trust me,”  
 “I will, but who are you?”  
 “I’ll give you hints”,  
 like I said,  
 “Okay, what are they?”  
 “I like to play, but not for long.  
 I eat a lot but I don’t weigh a  
 lot.  
 Who am I?”  
 “A cat?”  
 “Yes!”

Chapter 3, Here we go again.  
 “I’m Max the the cat,  
 I’m wise like a dog,  
 but as sleek as a cat.  
 I’m 15 pounds,  
 you’re 60 pounds.  
 Memorize that now,”  
 “Thank you,  
 let’s play.”  
 “Not yet, not yet.  
 Just 1 more quashton.  
 It will fly by very fast...  
 who are you?”  
 “Here we go again.”  
 To Be Continued...



My Giving Tree, by Nuri Lim, Greenbriar East Elementary.



## Saint Leo the Great Catholic School

*Saint Leo the Great Catholic School community leads by the example of Jesus, with respect and compassion for all, to foster faith and academic growth.*

### Open Houses

Sun, January 29, 2017 12:00pm  
 Wed, February 15, 2017 10:00am

### Faith

*Our community provides a safe, nurturing atmosphere infused with faith, virtues and catholic principles.*

### Academics

*Our curriculum provides the foundation necessary for your child's spiritual and intellectual development.*

### Technology

*Technology is integrated into every aspect of our learning process.*



- Founded in 1957, we have been instilling values and virtues in our students for over half a century, educating Pre-School 3-Grade 8.
- St. Leo has implemented a K-8 Lab Learner program to enhance science instruction. We have also purchased Google Chromebooks to increase technology education in the classroom.
- Active Board technology is present in every classroom for hands on learning, which improves your child's cognitive abilities and critical thinking skills.
- Honors High School Algebra offered to qualified 8th graders and Adv. Math courses gr.5-8 (including Geometry) for those who qualify.
- Three mobile labs and 15,000 volume media center assists with providing a multi-faceted learning approach to our science and social studies curriculum.
- Spanish is offered in Kindergarten through 8th Grade.
- St. Leo the Great offers a myriad of extracurricular activities, such as Robotic, Girls on the Run, Odyssey of the Mind, Art/Math Clubs
- Our NVCYO Sports Program includes Basketball, Track & Field, Tennis, and Cheerleading.
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## CHILDREN'S CONNECTION

"Baby bears of Shenandoah" by Alexander Yu



### A Fantastic Day

BY ALEXANDER YU

Today was a fantastic day. In the morning we went to Shenandoah national park. As we drove on the winding road, my mom exclaimed, "What is that?" My dad quickly pushed the brakes and opened the window. To our surprise we found two little baby bears next to the road. One of them was standing by a tree. The bear stood up to observe what we were doing. It had

shiny coat of black fur and little round eyes. I felt the bears are so cute and plump like my baby brother. Meanwhile my dad took tons of pictures. Then the bears scampered away. My dad made funny noises. Each time he made one the bears turned back to look. Everybody stared out the window in awe.

As we got back on the road I told my mom, "Today is the best day of fall!"

—Alexander Yu, age 8, of Centreville, is a third grader at Greenbriar West Elementary in Fairfax.

"Mom Queen at Family Room," by Herwen Andrew Xu, age 11, Grade 6, Navy Elementary School, Fairfax.



### That Man

"Yay, we are going to the homeless shelter!" My sister said screaming into my ears.

Ugh, I don't wanna go. I shoved my headphones into my ear. When we arrive my sister goes bashing out the car, "Whoop, we're here!"

I roll my eyes, gosh. For most of the day I stand outside giving out snacks and drinks to strangers. I really want to go back home and snuggle in bed. I was about to go for a break but this old man stops me in my tracks. "Uh, hello, how can I help you? Snacks are over in that area." I said pointing to a table in the distance.

He laughed. "Why do you seem down? Turn that frown upside down," he said smiling.

I was so surprised! He didn't have any teeth! I chatted with this interesting man for awhile. He told me the world needs more positive people. I smiled and before I could've said thanks to him he left. How could a man like that be homeless? I wonder what happened to him. Till this day I love going to the homeless shelter, but I've never seen that man since then. I always think of him.

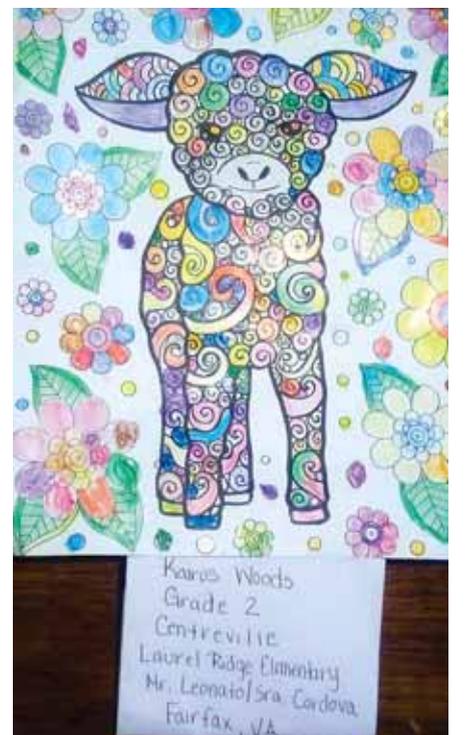
—KIMANH TRAN, OF FAIRFAX, AGE 11, COLIN POWELL ELEMENTARY



By Anika Sharma, age 11, of Fairfax, Grade 6, Colin Powell Elementary.



By Jessica Chen, age 11, of Centreville, Grade 5, at Greenbriar West Elementary in Fairfax, Teacher: Mrs. Sui.



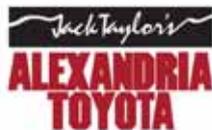
By Kairos Woods, Grade 2, Laurel Ridge Elementary School.

1

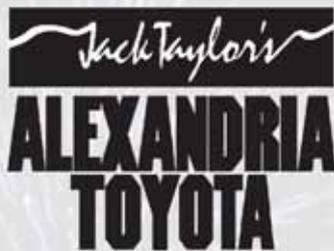
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 -Werner Heisenberg



Michael painting.



Maria painting.

## Creating Artwork at Forestdale Elementary

Students at Forestdale Elementary school created artwork using using shaving cream and water color paint.



Michael's artwork.



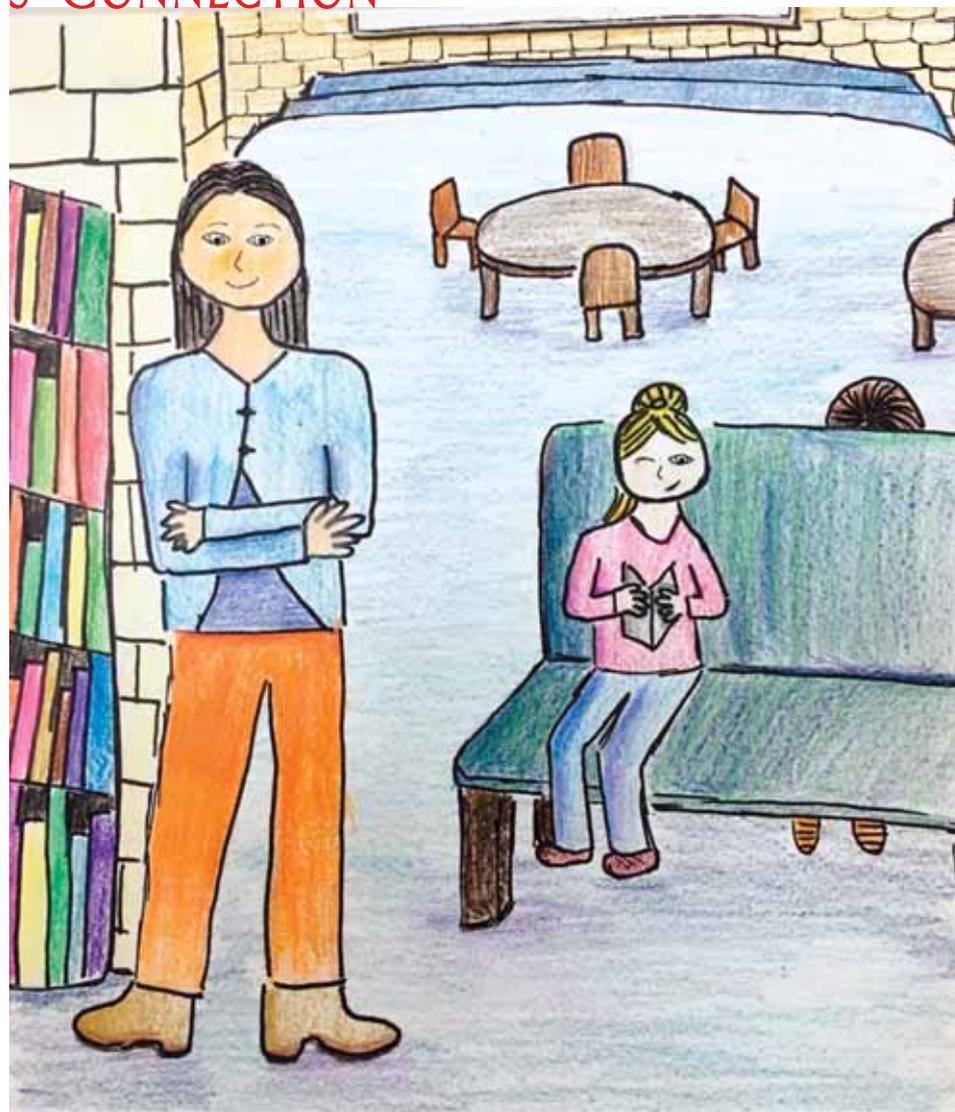
Maria's art.

## CHILDREN'S CONNECTION

### The Library

Ashley's note: I chose the library because it's so calm and relaxing. The greatest thing I like about it is that there are so many books! Since I love to read, going to the library is one of my favorite places to go. The library is a place where your imagination grows.

—ASHLEY HWANG, AGE 10, GRADE 5,  
WILLOW SPRINGS ELEMENTARY,  
FAIRFAX. PRIVATE ART TEACHER: MS.  
YANSHUN SUI.



### Color in life

Color, the vivacious elegance,  
Shimmer, glitter a twinkling beam,  
Saturated, it's a delightful glow,  
Rainbows are magnificent dashes,  
Hue pops like soda,  
It's as bright as the sun and the stars  
combined,

Color is a charming grace it pleases  
everything from your clothes to nature!  
Never fading it is like light,  
Luminous it is so bright,  
Dullness will never pass your eyes,  
There a no words to describe colors  
sight,

Color is the essential of life without it  
joy wouldn't come easily.

—MELINA NEJADIAN, 11, OF FAIRFAX,  
GRADE 4, COLIN POWELL ELEMEN-  
TARY



**"A Dancing Course,"** by Evelyn Li, Navy Elementary, Fairfax, Grade 5,  
Teachers: Susan Bridge and Yanshun Sui.

## Dad

BY CHRIS KERNAN, SENIOR  
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**A**s a young boy I always had a sense of childlike wonder. I questioned everything, from "why the microwave beeped," to "why birds fly," but the one person I asked the most questions towards was my Dad.

As he would leave for work every morning, I would stand on top of the stairs and ask, "Where are you going?" or, "When are you coming back?"

To which he'd always reply softly, and with confidence, "I'm going to work buddy, see you before dinner." His confidence gave me confidence that he would always come back. I mean, why would he not? He was my dad after all.

Years passed and I grew up. Through the tough breakups and bad grades he would always be by my side, like a loyal fan, cheering me on until the finish line. Whenever I had a question, as silly or serious as it may have been, he had the answers. Soon I lost that sense of childlike wonder, but he never stopped being there for me. However now, as I sit next to him on his death bed years later, I feel that sense of childlike wonder coming back, this time with a bitter taste to it.

I ask him with a tear gently cascading down my cheek, "Where are you going now, Dad?"

He looks at me with sorrow in his eyes, I can see the tears forming. "I don't know," he says plainly, but I can tell he's holding back.

For once in my life, he didn't have all the answers, nor did I feel the confidence I once felt as a child. As I watch him pass, I start to realize that my loyal fan is leaving the stands.

Still to this day, as I walk up the stairs, I turn my back to the door and imagine my father walking out into the morning sunlight. Though I know he won't step through the door again, I can still hear him cheering me on from above.