



Springfield CONNECTION

Franconia♦Kingstowne♦Newington

By Maazullah Foshanji, 12,
Grade 7,
Key Middle School,
Art Teacher Katie Kendall.

Children's & Teens'
Connection 2017

DECEMBER 28, 2017-JANUARY 3, 2018

ONLINE AT WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

KEY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Artwork submitted by art teacher Katie Kendall.

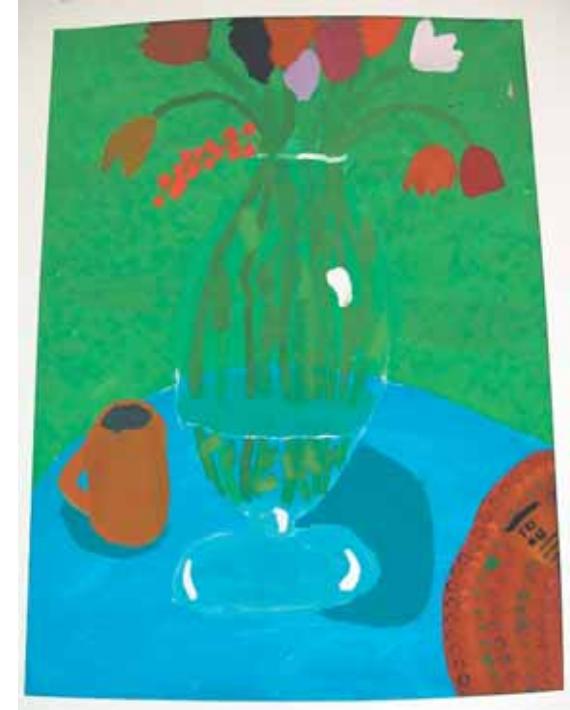


"Panda," by Olman Canales Menjivar, 12, Grade 7



"Lion," by Faarid Alwadud, 12, Grade 7

"Dog," by Connor Landacre, 12, Grade 7



"Still Life with Transparent Object," by Isabella Smith, 12, Grade 7

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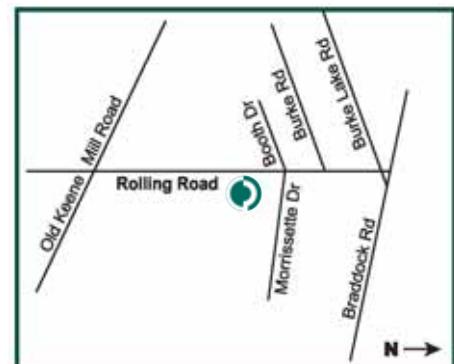


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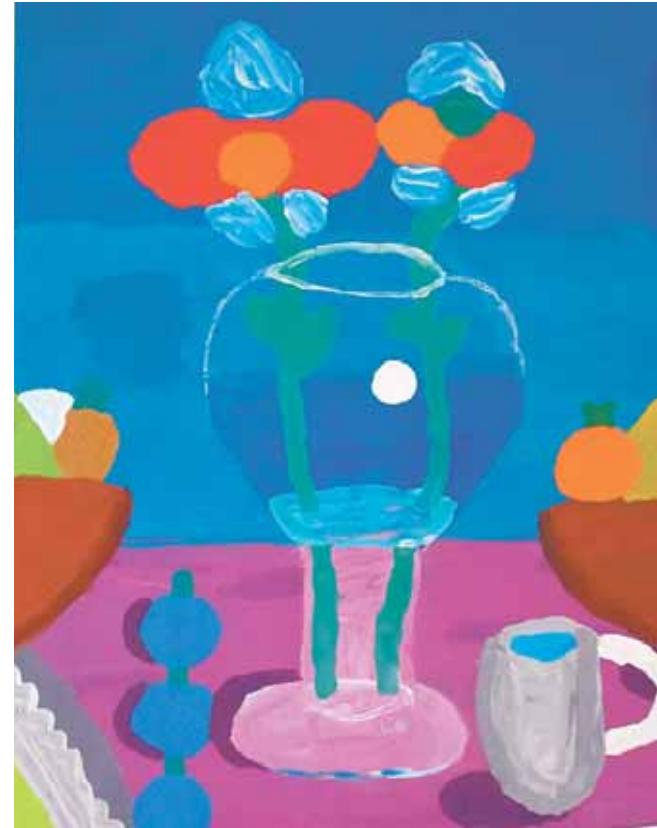
CHILDREN'S CONNECTION



By Adalai Elkins, Grade 2, Orange Hunt Elementary



By Ava Harder, age 7, Hunt Valley Elementary, Teacher: Ann Spring, Second Grade



"Still Life with Transparent Object," by Phebe Sar, 12, Grade 7, Key Middle School, Art Teacher Katie Kendall.



By Daisy Yirrah, age 5, Franconia Elementary

Welcome

Dear Readers:

This week, the Springfield 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 2018 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 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 KURSPAHIĆ

Name Alberto Tolentino

North Springfield Elementary School - Springfield, VA
Teacher: Ms. Cox
Grade 2

If I could give my parents any gift that doesn't cost money it would be love.
Because then she feels happy and joyful and when I give her love she gives me her love

By Alberto Tolentino, North Springfield Elementary School, Grade 2, Teacher Ms. Cox

CHILDREN'S CONNECTION

Orange Hunt Elementary

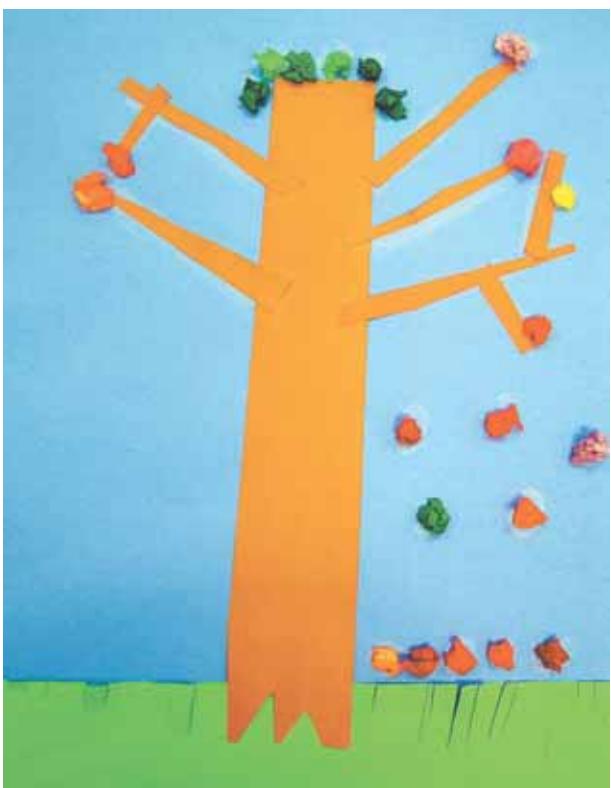
Artwork submitted by teachers Maureen Kieffer and Mary Stahl



By Samantha Larsen, Kindergarten



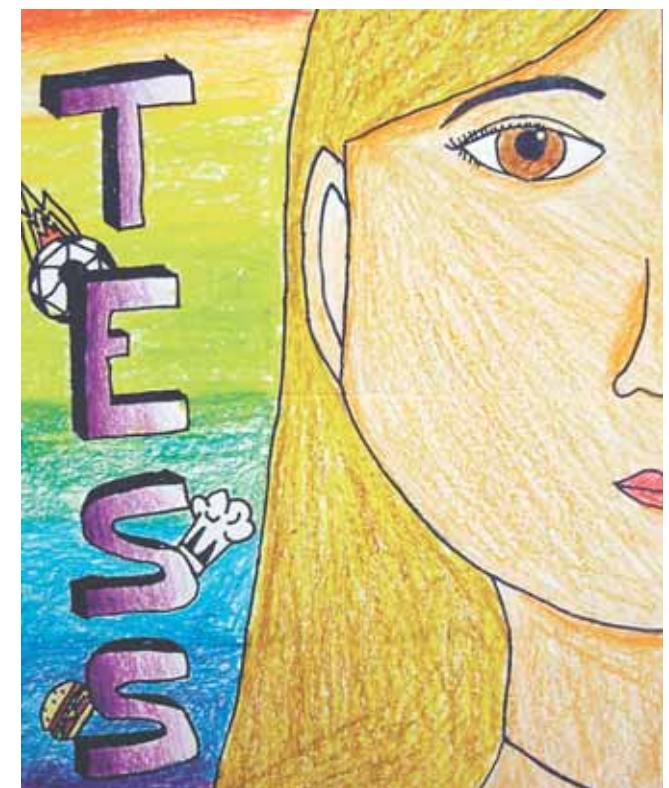
By Roxie Griffith, Grade 2



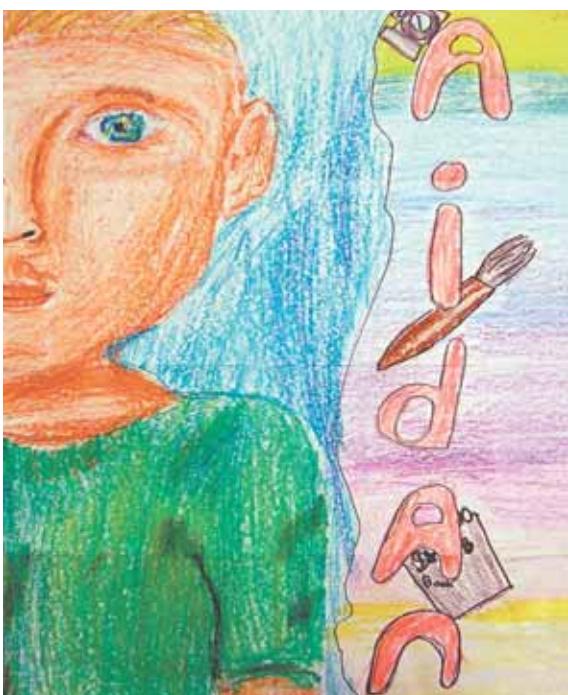
By Henry White, Kindergarten



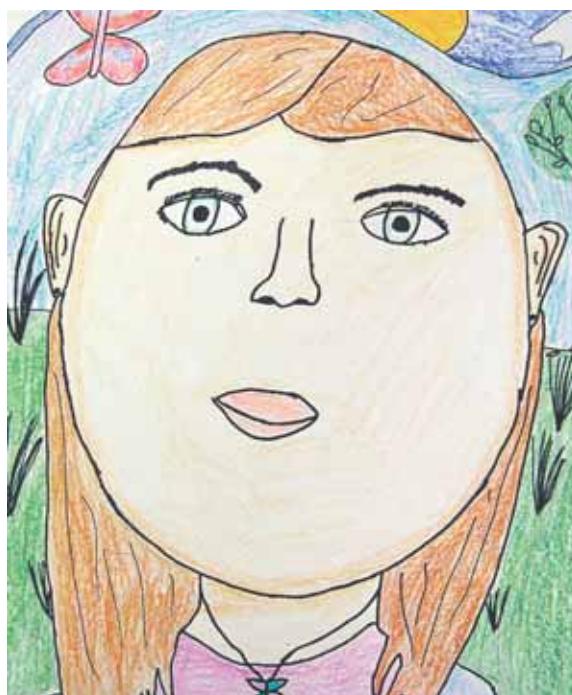
By Eleni Grace, Grade 2



By Tess De Groot, Grade 6



By Aidan Holroyd, Grade 6



By Bridget Roseberry, Grade 3



By Gavin Schmidt, Grade 4

CHILDREN

FRANCONIA ELEMENTARY
K. Kennedy-Labat's First Grade Class

Our Special Gifts!

I will cheer somebody up when they are sad because they are always sad when they have no one to play with.
—SYDNEY CUNNINGHAM,
AGE 6

I keep the popcorn smell out of my house for my Dad. My mom opens windows and doors. He does not like popcorn smells!
—HAILEY KUSS, AGE 6

I would give my mom a hug because I love my mom!
—JACKSON SCHUTTER,
AGE 6

You will always be the best! You are the best big brother, Oscar. You are the best ever! You do EVERYTHING.
—ELI PEREZ, AGE 6

I would make a bracelet for my best friend Jason! A friendship bracelet. The pipe cleaner is red. And I use beads too
—NOAH CAROC,
AGE 6 (KRISTEN STUMP'S
MULTIGE CLASS)

CHERRY RUN

Fourth Graders' Opinions in Mary Zavaleta's class.

Favorite animal?

A human- because I'm a human and we can find a way to live peacefully (or not.)
—EVAN JONES

Cheetahs- it must feel good to run that fast! I wish I could. Do you?
—VICTORIA SHEA

Elephant- When I was younger, I thought an elephant could give me a shower. When I was 2 or 3, I wanted to be an elephant when I grew up. Even now, I still like elephants because they are very cool.
—FIONA MULCAHY

A Galapagos tortoise- I want to ride it! They were almost instinct.
—KESHAV PARIKH

A dog- It's a very interesting story about how dogs came to be real. They
SEE CHERRY RUN, PAGE 13

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Discover Burgundy creativity!

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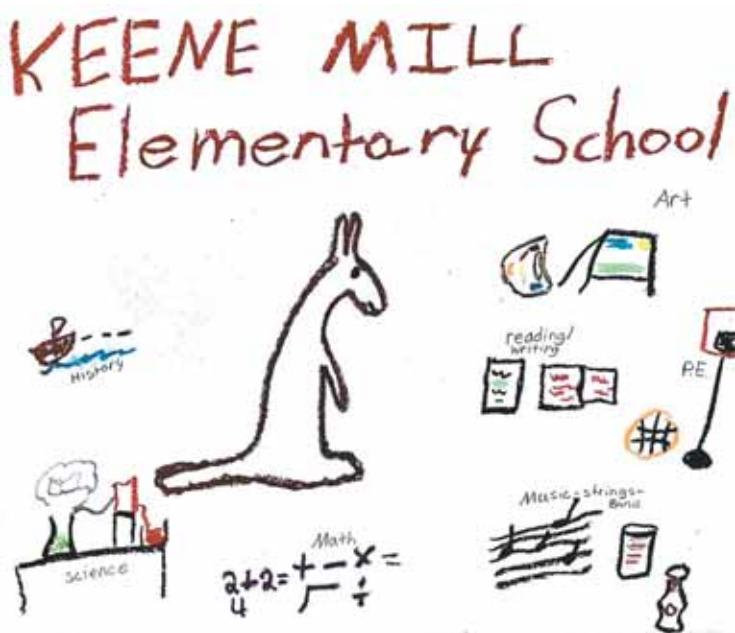
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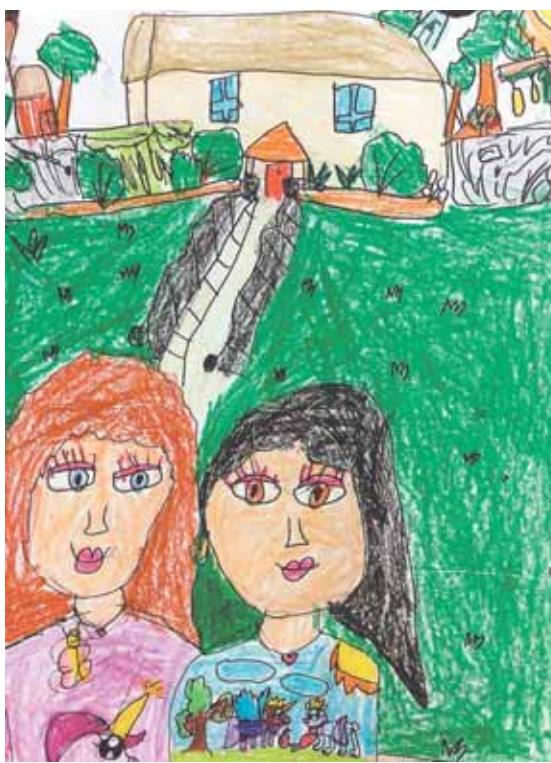


KEENE MILL ELEMENTARY

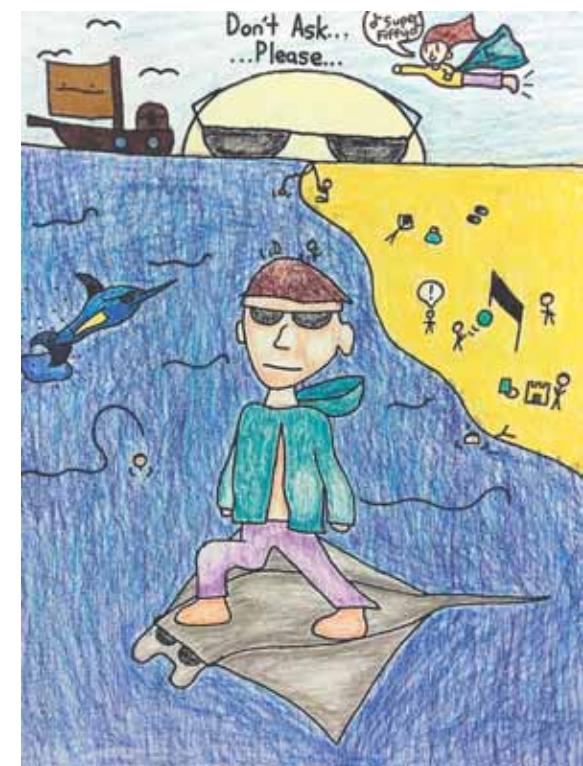
Artwork submitted by teacher Deborah Ehlers



By Kyra Okhlopkov, 9, Grade 4 (Mrs. Allen).



By Anna Nguyen, 8, Grade 2



By Brandon Davis, 11, Grade 6



By Lily Brody, 11, Grade 5



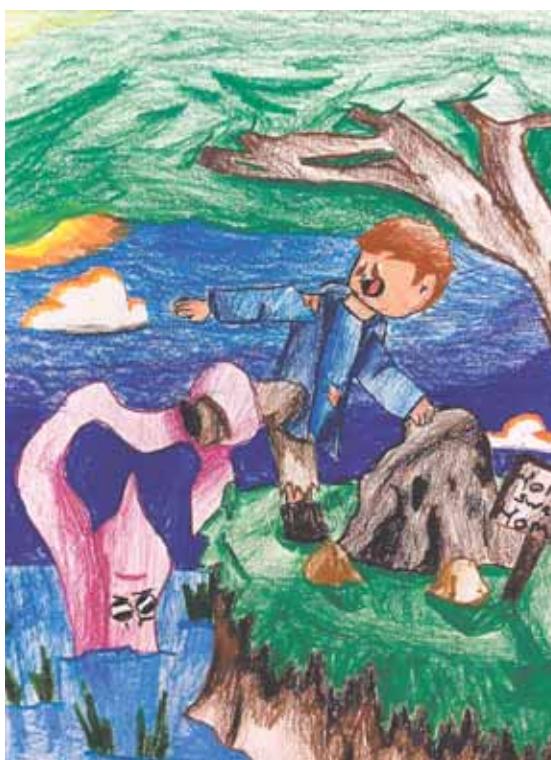
By Elena Small, 11, Grade 6



By Ella Park, 11, Grade 6



By Lily Simpson, 11, Grade 6



By Paris Johnson, 11, Grade 6

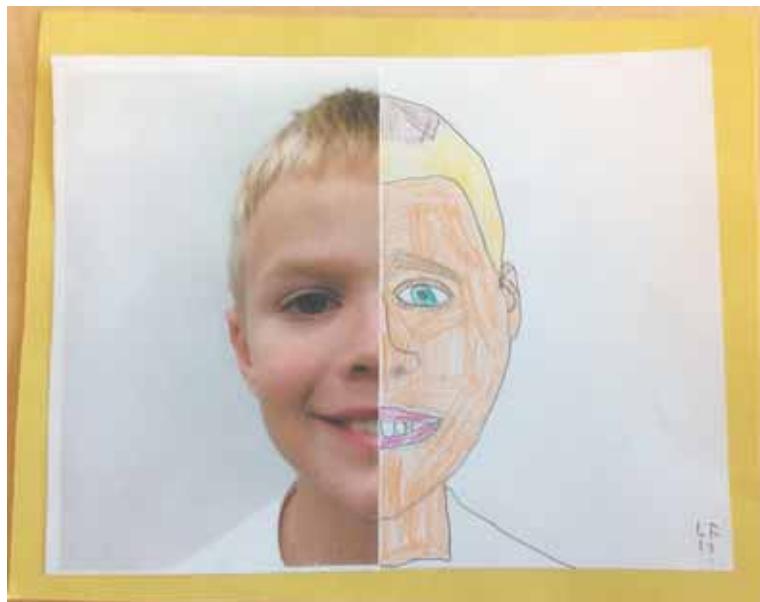


By Priella Markles, Age 8, 3rd Grade

KEENE MILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mindy Stewart, Second Grade Team Leader at Keene Mill Elementary School in Springfield, submitted these three pieces of her students' artwork with a following note:

"The submissions are from a recent math project. We were working on our geometry unit and the focus was symmetry. The kids in my class love art, thus the integration of math and art. The results were amazing. Their personalities really came through their symmetrical renditions of their faces."



Lochlan Ferguson, 7 years old, 2nd grade, Springfield, Keene Mill Elementary, Mrs. Stewart, Springfield.



Anna Nguyen, 8 years old, 2nd grade, Springfield, Keene Mill Elementary, Mrs. Stewart, Springfield.



Alina Amaya, 7 years old, 2nd grade, Springfield, Keene Mill Elementary, Mrs. Stewart, Springfield.

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HUNT VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Teacher: Ann Spring, Second Grade



My Dog

My dog is a Schnoodle, a mix between a Poodle and a Schnauzer. Her name is Kylie. Her fur is blackish grey. Kylie is very fast. She beat my brother in a race and he's on the cross country team. He can run a mile in less than 6 minutes so she is very fast if she can beat him. When Kylie's running she looks like a rabbit. Once when it was snowing, we put little socks on her back legs. When we took her outside she did a handstand on the sidewalk because she did not like the socks.

—ADAM CARR, AGE 7



My Holiday Tradition

Ever since I was five I started a tradition. The tradition was I would go to my stairs, go down it a little, then peek around the wall and see if Santa Claus came. Once I saw Santa's foot. Then I go back to my room.

—GIGI SHANNON, AGE 7

My Pets

I loved my dogs because they were furry, silly, cute, and most of all kind. When I was a baby they snuggled up with me. My old dogs were King and Prince. They were both brown. When I was about one and a half they both died. But they're in my heart.

—ANNELIESE GAETA, AGE 8



My Pet

My dog is white with black dots. It is special because it is always near me when I am sad.

—RYAN WHITEHOUSE, AGE 8



My Dream Cat

This is my dream cat. Her name is Violetta. She likes playing with yarn. She is a baby cat or kitten. She is soft. I like her soft violet fur. Her bed is pink though she is very small and cute and cuddly.

—SHAILA GREEN, AGE 8



My Two Cats

My pets are special because the first one laid on my sister's face at night and one time the second one put his face on my shoulder. But one time the first cat attacked the cat sitter but the other one was trying to save her. But he couldn't save the cat sitter. I love them because they're cute and cuddly. I love their whiskers and their purr. I love everything about my cats! I love the second one because he purrs really easily.

—SOLIYANA DIBABA, AGE 7

My Holiday Tradition

On Christmas, my family has jobs for Christmas night. I make the dough cookies that are turned into ornaments that go on our tree. When our elf comes we find our elf named Bella and then once we find her we give her a gift.

—CHLOE NIPHADKABIN, AGE 7



SPRINGFIELD ESTATES

Poetry written by fifth graders at Jill Hardek's class at Springfield Estates Elementary.

Grandparents

My caring loving grandparents working on the Christmas tree these cold afternoons in the living room to hear me giggle.

— MARIANA

Mom

My sweet loving mom Walks to the laundry room on a beautiful afternoon on the carpet to wash her clothes.

— NOAH

Rudolph

A reindeer Unique and special Playing and flying Happily Red nose

— PAULINA

My Mom

My adored mom opens the oven Christmas Eve in the kitchen Santa's cookies are done.

— JACOB

Henry

My fluffy fat parakeet slides down quickly on this warm morning on the metal bars to eat the food.

— AYESHA

Bears

Big, brown Eating, hunting, sleeping Lonely, Dangerous, strong, Mammal

— MIGUEL

Sister

My silly sister gets out fast on snowy days on icy spots to slip, fall and laugh.

— JOANNA

Brother

My playful funny brother plays with his plush on some cold days on the warm bed to have fun.

— JONATHAN

Dog

Small, cute Jumping, panting, whining Sad, happy, hungry, mad Mutt

— JORDYN

Christmas Tree

The Christmas tree Spikey and coned Still and bright Colorful Pine tree

— RYAN

My Sister

My nice sweet sister using the phone this morning at home to make her laugh.

— DIANA

A Drink

Hot and smooth Calm and relaxing Lovely Hot cocoa

— ELLIE

Mom

My warm nice mom hugs me fast in the morning in our home so we're not late.

— CHANDLER

My Brother

My loving caring brother sips warm milk on cold days in bed to get warm.

— GERALD

Christmas

A holiday Fun and cozy Building and sharing Together Wintertime

— JAVIER

Avalanche

The avalanche Strong and fast Rumbles and shakes Demolishing Landslide

— CRISTIAN

Snow

The snow White and fluffy Glides and flies Smoothly Snowflake

— ETHAN

Snowflake

The snowflake Cold and melting Falling and disappearing Cloudy Winter

— GREGORY

Snowboard

My brother Cool and awesome Jumping and boarding Fast Ben

— JACINDA

Sister

My lovely caring sister is talking loudly in her room to hear her echo.

— GENESIS

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ORANGE HUNT ELEMENTARY

Piece of Paradise

BY SAMINA TUKHI
ORANGE HUNT ELEMENTARY

What! One normal day me and my sisters were at school. Suddenly I saw my mom and dad's face pop out of the creaky door of my class. "Samina, come. We have a surprise for you and your sisters ." I mysteriously watched them as I stepped forward to hear the news. "We're going to Punta Cana (a place in Dominican Republic)." "Yay! A place I've never been to."

I could never ask for something more spectacular. This wasn't good news, it was the best news plus one million bests. We picked up my little sisters and headed for the airplane that would help us arrive to Punta Cana. Soon we would arrive to this paradise. We got little Mango colored bags full of toys for us to play with during the ride.

From the Maple Tree country to a place I might end up calling a "Piece from Paradise". When we were buckled up in our seats ,the plane flew into the sky like a free bird.

My belly jiggled like my friend's mom's homemade jello, dancing as I punched it with my plastic fork. The traveling bird flew through the ocean of foggy clouds. The sky was as blue as Robin Eggs. The clouds floated around in different shapes of fire breathing dragons, other beasts from myths and tales, pups begging for a dog biscuit, thrones of white "cotton candy", and giants meditating. It felt like somebody behind me had dumped a bucket of excitement into my mind. When will we get there? What will Punta Cana look like?

We finally got there. When we were far away from the airplane, I saw Palm Trees and a lot of people. Soon we arrived to the place we were going to stay. We were going to live in a little house that was sitting beside it's twin. We unpacked and slept with something little to eat. For some reason it felt cool to live in a little house. In the days that came by we discovered a big pool that went from the shallowest you could think of and ended at a very deep ending. One morning we saw a White Crab in front of our door .We were terrified, but a staff member came and took the White Crab away.

This next event is what made the friendship between our family and another family. We were at the



Self-portrait, by Josette Satterfield, 12, of Fairfax, Grade 7, Rocky Run Middle School, Teacher: Ms. Schuetz

11/30/17
Josie Satterfield

pool and I wasn't looking where I was going. I accidentally walked behind the woman beside my mom instead of going behind my mom. "Samina what are you doing?!" mom said. "Oooooops! Sorry." I replied laughing. We all giggled and started engaging in conversation after that.

Nights arrived and we would go to restaurants. One night I accidentally ate a rabbit thinking it was a chicken. Although it was a rabbit, it tasted a lot like a chicken.

Soon my sisters and I were in a daycare; the most amazing daycare ever. In daycare we got creamy ice cream on cones. They took three pieces of yarn and braided them into our hair, and once they had a contest with different stations. I actually won! We even had a concert contest where we would pass a hat. Whenever the music ended, the person with the hat would lose. My youngest sister won and got a bag of treats and little toys. The best part is that I took pictures with three different trained creatures; a baby monkey, two pirate parrots, and a heavy Pale Green Iguana.

When we left this "Piece of Paradise", I was sad, but also happy that this was another memory stored into my brain. I was like jewelry left in the Mesopotamian deep dry and wet dirt. This was a memory never to be forgotten. I took a deep breath as our plane flew through the same sky. Goodbye; "Piece of Paradise".

POETRY

A Flight in the Night

Soaring with my might
In my midnight flight
The moonlit sky
Filling up my eye
Barely moving my wing
So happy I could sing
Oh what a sight
That is to be seen at night!

—JIMIN YIO OF FAIRFAX, 12,
GRADE 7,
ROCKY RUN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Hope

Earth is a fallen world
So many disasters
But there is one thing we can clutch onto to preserve it forever
Hope
We must share it with others
It's too good to keep to ourselves
We must believe that everything will be alright
We need to hold on tightly
To hope

—GRACE OH, GRADE 6,
MOSBY WOODS ELEMENTARY

SPRINGFIELD ESTATES ELEMENTARY

Victoria Nutley's
fifth grade class

The Cold Season

The gray
Icy or misty
Snowing and freezing
Peacefully
Winter

—ERIC LI

Happy because it is so
Cold

—AYMAN KARAR

Snowing

White
Cold, icy, snowy
Hailing, freezing, falling
Hot cocoa, coat, dark skies
Cozy
Holiday

—CARYN JACKSON-HAY

Santa

Jolly eating man
Giving out presents
When its Christmas
Around the world
So kids get what they want

—JEFFREY CRUZ

Winter

The blanket
Snowing and flurrying
Below zero & freezing
Be jolly and build a snowman
Frozen
Snow

—THOMAS INTHIRATH

Santa's Reindeer

A reindeer
Furry and brown
Flying and Running
Merrily
Deer

—JERECK MONTOYA-SERRANO

Elves

An elf
Small and energetic
Wrapping or delivering
Small
Elves

—JOEL LAINEZ-GOMEZ

Christmas

The lights
Lovely and sweet
Playing and resting
Happily
Family

—JOY CARPENTER

The Season of Winter

The winter
Icy and fragile
Blowing or melting
Tranquilly
Holiday

—SANDRA LOPEZ

Me

Hamza
Sitting by the fireplace
Drinking hot chocolate
On a snowy day
At his house in the cozy sunroom
Because it's cold

—HAMZA NOUMAN

Winter

Cold and snowy
Playing, cooking, baking
In the light of the dark night sky
Break

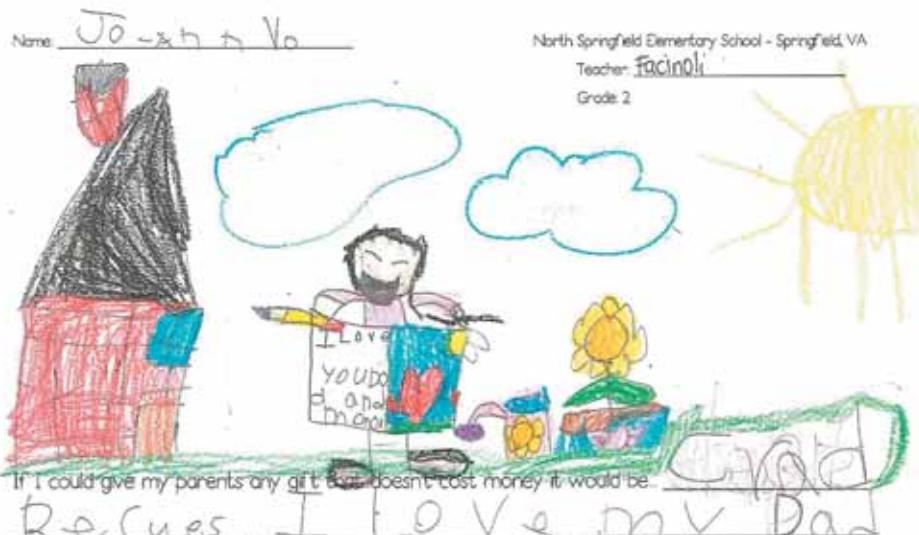
—TOMMY DUNN

Snow

Snow
White, small
Gliding, falling, covering

—JOY CARPENTER

NORTH SPRINGFIELD ELEMENTARY



By Jo-Ann Vo, Grade 2, Teacher: Kathleen Facinoli



If I could give my parents any gift that doesn't cost money it would be Love.
 because That is What I do best!

By Will Beasley, Grade 2, Teacher: Ms Cox



If I could give my parents any gift that doesn't cost money it would be flowers.
 I want the flowers to be blue
 and white and pink.

By Chase Waldrige, Grade 2, Teacher: Kathleen Facinoli

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HUNT VALLEY ELEMENTARY

Ann Spring's Second Grade Class

My Holiday Tradition



My family tradition is that every year we get out the Christmas decorations there is a box that holds my elf, Elfie. Then she starts hiding. This year first she hid on a shelf, then on a lamp, next in the Christmas tree, and last on the curtains. This family tradition is special to me because my family has a lot of fun.

—ELIZABETH CAVEN, AGE 8



Every morning in December I wake up and go downstairs and look around. But why? Because every night of the holiday season, Santa sends an elf named Vern to our house to see if we are good or bad. So every morning me and my sister look all over the house, racing to see who will find him first. Once he was on the ceiling and once he was in my family crest. On Christmas night he flies away and we will not see him until next year.

—MORGAN HOLZGREFE, AGE 8



I love Secret Santa! Secret Santa is when a family will put their names on paper then put it in a hat or cup. The family will pick names and whoever you get you will give them a present unless it is you. This year I got a V.R. —GABRIEL GATTEW, AGE 7



At my house on Christmas Eve my mom and my dad hide a pickle ornament. The first person to find it gets a prize, for example chocolate, a book, or new pj's. The reason this tradition is so special to me is because I started it when I was two years old. I was born in Germany and it is a German tradition. It is very honoring that they picked a tradition from the country I was born in.

—SYDNEY AUSTIN, AGE 7

Franconia Elementary

Renee Octaviano's Fifth Grade Class

What I want to be when I grow up

BY JULIA JONES

When I was younger I changed my mind every day. Firefighter, magician, astronaut. But I've always been a dancer. I've been dancing at my studio since I was 2 years old. It's my eighth year there and I finally got a chance to audition for the competition team. It was super cool that I got in and I've been working really hard. One of the jobs that I wanted when I was younger was to be a dance teacher. But now my imagination has grown. I think bigger. When I grow up I want to own my own dance studio!

My Future Job

BY AUSTIN MARKHAM

I want to be a YouTuber as a part-time job. So, the first reason why I want to be a YouTuber is that you can make videos for people all around the world and you can entertain them if they were bored. And, you can make money for getting a lot of views and subscribers!

I also want to be a video game designer as my job. Because you can become a well known person and it is fun making new games for me and other people to play! You can also make LOTS of money for designing games.

What I want to be when I grow up

BY NATHANIEL PENBERG

I want to be an environmentalist because the environment getting destroyed and it actually is our fault, but I want to be part of the solution not the problem. I want to fix what is happening like plastic bags and plastic straws. Animals are getting hurt because of plastic and I want to stop it. Also if I could save an animal's life that would make me feel great. My family also likes to help the environment and I also want to save the environment.

Acting

BY LUCA ROEDERER

When I grow up I want to be an actor. I want to become an actor because you can afford many things. You can get big houses and the job is fun. You could meet other celebrities and stars.

You could become famous or popular and you can get paid a lot. You get to work with cool props and cool equipment. And you get to do cool and funny accents you also could get great makeup and costumes. I'm taking acting classes and the process is very interesting. I hope you enjoyed reading this article.

What makes a good friend

BY MARLEY VALVERDE

What makes a good friend is they need to be kind like my friend Janiyah. She is so much fun. She makes a lot of people laugh and she makes up really cool dance moves. She always helps people who are sad. Next is my friend Anamaria she is super funny. Sometimes she messes up but she tries to help. She always makes you laugh when you're sad. Last but not least Alison and Isbel. They are the most fun BFF's I ever had. They will always be there when I need them.

What do you want to be when you're older?

BY ALEX WEST

What I think I want to be when I'm older is a person who customizes cars. Why I want to be that is I am a very creative person so I think I could create an amazing car design. I love seeing people happy so bringing a smile to their faces would be a great site for me. I have always liked cars since I was 5 years old. I would get lots of money for making the cars better so I could make a good living.

CHERRY RUN

FROM PAGE 5

have super puppy cuteness that can make a heart melt. They are friendly- well, most of them. You can teach them tricks.

—SAMUEL GRIFFITH

Favorite game?

Roblox is a game I love to play. You can play tons of different games on it. You can create an avatar. You can have friends. You can enjoy relaxation time.

—SAMUEL GRIFFITH

My favorite game is Rocket League. It's a game where you have cars and you can play hockey, soccer or basketball. You hit the ball or puck with the car and try to make a goal. I play it with my neighbor all the time.

—NICOLAS MORENO

I think Minecraft is a very convenient game because you can play it on almost any device, from your X-box to your iphone! Minecraft is good to build things and has two main game modes: Creative and Survival. In Creative, you are free to do and build whatever you want, but in Survival you have limited resources.

—FIONA MULCAHY

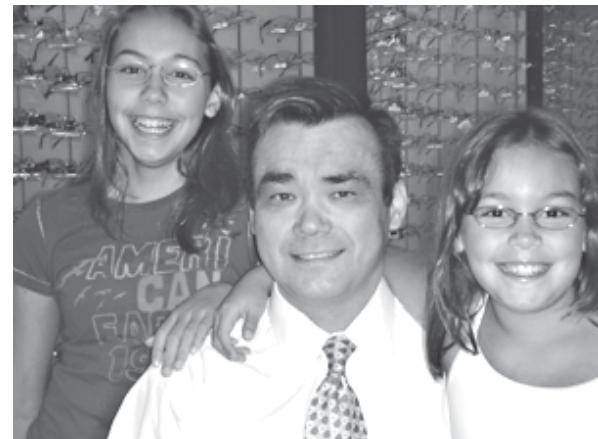
Something you remember doing for the first time?

I remember going to a farm. The farm had roasting marshmallows, a mountain you could look up to see its beautiful land, and apple trees that had not-ready apples, rotten apples and good apples on the ground.

—BRIELLE CROWELL

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POETRY CORNER

Heart of Ice, Cave I Dwelled

My eyes drifted to the snow
Feelings faster than the storm
I saw my joy fade
The sun's light fading
Foggy mist
I couldn't see
My steps led me to snow
Like being buried
Beneath it all
My heart stung
The wolves hungry for my soul
I started forward
I didn't look back
Mind swirling
Tears a blizzard
White scattered my path
Icicles dripped like how I faded
I Wish you could know
I'm sorry
But I knew I must keep going
The fog then lifted
Bringing the sun to my heart
It reached out its hand
I opened my eyes
The frozen dew sparkled
The snow endless mountains of white
I cried for it
I didn't know why
As the wind shifted my coat
My heart as well
I found myself on a cliff
I slipped on pure ice
And started to fall
The ice was so pure
It's cold, the sparkling crystals swept me off my feet
It wasn't just my feet
I hung paralyzed
Lost
Afraid
Alone
My joy ran away
It leaped so fast a blur
Swallowed by shadow
My heart of ice
But it came back to me
Back to me as wonder
With wonder came joy
As I hung with shadows growling
The jagged peaks begged for gloom
I only held on tighter
I then knew I must not fall...
Delicate snowflakes stroked my skin
I knew those who need me

I hung
My eyes glistening with glaze
If you were to throw an arrow at my heart
It wouldn't pierce my heart of ice
I'm so sorry
I let go
My heart was glowing
Brighter than that below
Fell to the cliffs...
Fell to the peak of my life...
The shadow...
The snow that scarred me...
Landed on a cloud
I lived
I yelled
I yelled because of it that haunted me
For the snow that had me survive
No, I'm going back
I started to run
The frozen pond singing
Tears dripping
Heart knowing not
But to keep going
Not today...
Not today...
I will run till I die
Death's scythe will not touch me...
It's not my time...
I grasped onto my life
I knew
And I ran home
That it wasn't I
But my wonder
Than the light
It came through the clouds
Not a sleep
But the entire sky
I hugged my life
Only I will touch
You will not haunt me
I had run away
I had fallen
But had gotten up again
The birds of past screeched
The present birds cried
The future eagle looked with its eyes
So that it pierced so much
My heart of ice melted
I do not know why
The ice wrapped around me
And then I flew

BY HANNAH BANG, 12, 6TH GRADE
GRADE 6, FAIRHILL ELEMENTARY

Can you guess my favorite season?

It's a season where people may get fevers or shivers from the cold
It's a season where divine, decorative, and delightful snowflakes unfold
It's a season with laughter and soft and warm dinks where we hit them together and they go CLINK!
This season gives you a reason to go to the ice skating rink
Did you guess it, it should be clear, so grab your coats because my favorite season winter is here

—RUGIATU AISHA WURIE, 11, FAIRFAX, GRADE 6, COLIN POWELL ELEMENTARY



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HOLIDAY SOBER-RIDE

Free Sober Rides. The annual Holiday SoberRider program will operate 8 p.m.-4 a.m. each night from Friday, Dec. 15, 2017-Monday, Jan. 1, 2018. area residents age 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may download Lyft to their phones, then enter the code in the app's "Promo" section to receive their no cost (up to \$15) safe transportation home. WRAP's weekly Holiday SoberRide promo codes will be posted at 2 p.m. on Dec. 15, Dec. 23 and Dec. 31 on www.SoberRide.com.

BLOOD DONATIONS NEEDED

The American Red Cross urges eligible donors to give more life by giving blood this December. In December, donations decline but the needs of patients remain steady. During the holiday season, set aside an hour to give the most important gift – give blood and give more life. All those who come to give blood or platelets Dec. 21, 2017, through Jan. 7, 2018, will receive a long-sleeved Red Cross T-shirt, while supplies last. Make an appointment to give blood by downloading the free Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting redcrossblood.org or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

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Dec. 26: 1-5 p.m., South Run RECenter, 7550 Reservation Drive
♦ Fairfax - Fairfax Blood Donation Center, 2720 Prosperity Avenue, Suite 200 (unless otherwise noted)
 Dec. 26: 10:45 a.m.-5:45 p.m.
 Dec. 27: 12:45-8 p.m.
 Dec. 28: 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Pennino Building 10th Floor Conf Rm, 12011 Government Center Parkway
 Dec. 28: 12:45-5:45 p.m.
 Dec. 29: 7:45 a.m.-3 p.m.
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TUESDAY/JAN. 9

American Legion Post 177 Luncheon. 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at American Legion Post 177, 3939 Oak St., Fairfax. Presentation on "Advanced preparation and arrangement for funeral/memorial" by Peter Hause, Fairfax Memorial Funeral Home. \$11. Call 703-280-2356 for more.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke sponsors a monthly meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, noon-1:30 p.m., for caregivers to learn and to share with others experiencing similar challenges. Before attending, contact the facilitator, Eileen Thompson at 703-451-8626 or eileen.thompson1@gmail.com.

Haven of Northern Virginia provides support, compassion, information and resources to the bereaved and seriously ill. To become a Haven volunteer, please call 703-941-7000 to request an orientation. Volunteers must complete a 30-hour training and commit to one year of service answering Haven phones (2.5 hours weekly). Next training is scheduled for fall 2017.

ONGOING

Volunteers needed at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Museum offers a variety of exciting volunteer opportunities in Museum events, programs and administration. Contact volunteers@fairfax-station.org or 703-945-7483 to explore services that will fit your schedule and interests. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, or call 703-425-9225 for more.

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"Cansir"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Though I want to treat the disease – and my having been diagnosed with the disease, with respect, I don't want to treat it with the utmost reverence. I mean, it's not the Pope.

It's an affliction, not an affection. Certainly not one worth embracing anyway. But definitely one which needs engaging.

Treating and living with lung cancer shouldn't be a vertical-type, up or down, either-or set of options. There should be more integration with non-Western, holistic and alternative approaches rather than, as has been my experience: you're on your own; and your oncologist, generally speaking – or potentially legally-liable from speaking, knows/say less about it than you the patient.

I've tried to straddle this line going on nearly nine years now. Adhering to the conventional wisdom/treatment didn't seem like enough. Perhaps hearing the extremely grim prognosis that I received on Feb. 27, 2009: "13 months to two years," affected my thinking. Perhaps hearing the equally grim likelihood – statistically referencing, of living beyond five years (low single digit percentage); heck, even living beyond two years, might have given me pause as to what course of treatment: chemotherapy, I was starting and why. But what did I know? I had just been blindsided and then bewildered as to why and how I was going to live the rest of my life.

Yet here I sit, nine-years old, so to speak. Some days I believe my amazing good fortune has to do with the treatment and care I've received from my oncologist and staff at the Infusion Center. Other days, I think it has to do with some of the alternatives I've assimilated into my life. Though I can't honestly include exercise in that life, I have modified my diet somewhat and most definitely can mention vitamins, supplements, alkaline water and apple cider vinegar, among a few others; along with a positive attitude with mostly good humor, as important elements. It hasn't been easy, but it has been me. Meaning, I am proud of how I've managed a bad situation and so far, not made it worse.

Though I am somewhat unique, statistically measuring, in how long I've survived (however, I'm not exactly 108-year old Paul Edgecomb/Tom Hanks from the movie "The Green Mile"), I don't know that the varied steps I've taken and the humor and attitude with which I've put one foot in front of the other are likewise unique.

Of the many patients/survivors I've met along this way, many, if not all, have exhibited similar good humor and more of a can-do attitude quite frankly, than I. I've always been happy to make their acquaintance and eager to hear their stories, as they have been interested in hearing mine. Although cancer is not exactly catchy, I've found that, in speaking/sharing with fellow cancer survivors, what goes around comes around. And what 'that' is that is going around is, to invoke The Beach Boys: "Good Vibrations," and that is catchy and healthy too!

When I was first diagnosed – and caught up in my own circumstances, I was not interested – too much, in interacting with other lung cancer patients/survivors. I was more concerned with my own fragile emotional state and was afraid that exposing myself to more bad news: other "terminal" lung cancer patients' stories would weaken my resolve.

I don't recall how many months or years it was before I realized how wrong I had been. Weaken? My involvement with fellow lung cancer patient/survivors has only strengthened my resolve. Has that openness and appreciation for my fellow lung cancer patient extended my life? I'd like to think it has.

But if it hasn't, I guess the jokes on cancer. And that's a laugh with which we can all live.

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

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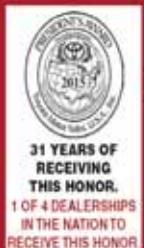


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NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR COUPON. TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF PURCHASE. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA PARTS CENTER ONLY GOOD THRU 1/31/18.

VARIABLE DISCOUNT

\$15.00 OFF when you spend \$100.00 - \$199.99
\$30.00 OFF when you spend \$200.00 - \$299.99
\$45.00 OFF when you spend \$300.00 - \$399.99
\$50.00 OFF when you spend \$400.00 or more

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Jack Taylor's
ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA

FREE

BATTERY CHECK-UP

Check cold cranking amps and visual inspection of battery condition. Includes battery condition print out.

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TRUESTART BATTERY

\$99⁹⁵

INCLUDES BATTERY INSTALLATION
Includes: 84 month warranty, 24 month **FREE** replacement, 24 month **FREE** roadside assistance.

Does not apply to hybrid batteries.

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Check your windshield. Does your sticker say **11/17, 12/17,** or **1/18?** If so, your VA Safety Inspection is now due

VIRGINIA STATE INSPECTION

FREE

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CALL FOR AN APPOINTMENT AT **703-684-0710 OR SCHEDULE ONLINE AT **ALEXANDRIATOYOTA.COM****