Culture
Every culture has traditions. My culture, for example, is Russian.

There is a tradition in Russia that on New Year, you stay up until 12:00 to greet the New Year. I started doing this since I was about 6 years old. The first time I stayed up till midnight I remember eating ice cream which technically was NOT part of the tradition. We did it just for fun. Another tradition which is also a tradition in America is to decorate the Christmas tree (which Russian people call it plain “elm tree” because not every person in Russia celebrates Christmas). In Russia, the tradition of decorating eggs is a tradition. We don’t go on egg hunts, but it’s still satisfying to put stickers on the eggs. There is also a game where two people charge their eggs that they are about to crash so they can eat them. Whoever’s egg cracks first loses. But that just means that the people who win get to peel the egg themselves without any help which is weird since it’s not a good thing. But it’s still fun. I am in America but my family hasn’t stopped any of them. Sure we added traditions like trick or treating on Halloween, but that just means that we get more fun things to do.

— Zlata Bobkina

Thanksgiving
Last year’s Thanksgiving was a very funny one in my house, especially considering that we were supposed to be in a different place altogether! Just a couple days before Thanksgiving last year, my family adopted a puppy. We were supposed to visit family in Delaware for Thanksgiving, but we ended up staying at home because 1) we just adopted our puppy (her name is Juno, by the way. She and my cat do not get along at all) and 2) because pretty much everyone in my family got sick. First my mom and I got sick, and then my brother, and my dad got sick on Thanksgiving day. However, I remember that the meal was very tasty and that it was a good Thanksgiving.

There was a fantastic pumpkin pie, and everything else was delicious, too. After dinner, Juno would jump off the couch to chase trash cans and that made everyone laugh! This year, we have plans to go to Delaware again! Fingers crossed no one gets sick!

— Nina Lingan

Swimming
It was a sunny afternoon during summer. I was going to a swim meet, when all of a sudden it began raining, and in summer you swim outside, but the swim meet still went on. The pool was freezing and worst of all it was a championship meet so it was a swim meet with only the best swimmers. This meet in particular only happens once every year. Therefore, the officials couldn’t cancel the meet. Anyway, when it was my turn to swim, I gained a new best time and even got 5th place while racing against 12 year olds when I’m only 11. Even though it was FREEZING and raining during the whole entire time I swam, I still did great, got new best times, and had fun.

— Lauren Levine

Global Warming
One Thanksgiving tradition that is very commonly known is eating a turkey. However, my family doesn’t have this tradition. We don’t have this tradition because eating turkeys for Thanksgiving can lead to one of our biggest problems in nature. Eating turkeys can increase our issue of global warming. Animals and humans both breathe in oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide. An average of 45 million turkeys are killed every year during Thanksgiving. Since so many people are in need of turkeys during Thanksgiving, people must breed turkeys in order to make more. Carbon dioxide has a major impact on global warming. The more carbon dioxide in the air, the bigger our global warming issue. If there is a large amount of turkeys then more carbon dioxide is in the air. This actually goes for many animals. My family doesn’t eat meat too often because if more people eat meat then more animals have to be bred which contributes to global warming. If people are less meat then our global warming issue would be lighter.

— Deepa Shanmugam, 11

Orangutans
The orangutans of Borneo’s rainforests are under threat.

See Hoover Middle School. Page 5

Welcome
Dear Readers:
This week, the Potomac Almanac 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. Because of the response, we will continue to publish more artwork and writings in January.

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 2019 calendars for early December, the deadline for submissions for next year’s Children’s Almanac. Please keep us in mind as your children prepare their creative works for display 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 Almanac 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 schools pages.

Our preferred method for material is e-mail, which should be sent to almanac@connectionnewspapers.com, but you can reach us by mail at 1606 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314 or call 703-778-9415 with any questions.

— Editor Steven Mauren

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Barack Obama

Hi there! My name is Barack Obama; I am going to tell you about my life. I was born in Honolulu, Hawaii in 1961 and went to school in Hawaii and played basketball in high-school. I had a pet ape when I lived in Indonesia. I graduated from high-school in 1983 after that I graduated from Harvard law school because I wanted to be a lawyer. I married a woman named Michelle Robinson. I have two children – Malia and Sasha. Before I became the President of the United States, I worked as a community organizer in Chicago, Illinois. I was also a state senator and a United States senator and a professor. In 2009, I became the 44th president of the United States of America. As a president, I really wanted to help people so I created Obama care. Obama care allows everyone to see a doctor when they are sick or if something bad happens like if you break your leg. I was the first African-American president. Now you know about my life.

— Mercy Miles, Grade 2, Silver Spring, teacher Michelle Robinson

Spider

The tiny spider Virtually invisible, Scurrying about Up ahead A fly buzzes, Straight into the trap Sticky, gooey trap Tangled up Center of web Out of the corner of its eye It rushes,
This eight legged beast Eyes narrowing.
Then, BUZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZzzzzzzzzzzZZzzz Bites, dagger Fangs, sink Into prey Fly no more; Can anyone See this Tragic Battle?

— Ida Liben (inspired by Valerie Worth), Grade 6, Rockville, teacher Michelle Robinson

Theodore Roosevelt

Hi! My name is Theodore Roosevelt (or Teddy Roosevelt). I’m going to tell you about my life. I was born in 1858. I died in 1919. I lived in New York. Alice Roosevelt was my wife, she died and left me a widow. Alice and I had one child. My first lady is Edith Roosevelt, we had 5 children. My hobbies included boxing, swimming, climbing mountains, Judo, and hunting. I was a cowboy and the head of the rough riders. I won the Nobel Peace Prize. I was president for eight years. The teddy bear was named after me. Now you know about my life. BYE!

— Nathan Cummings, Grade 2, Gaithersburg, teacher Michelle Robinson
Excerpt from The Candlestick People

We rehearse, from bottom to top. It is good, but we have many huge mistakes. We decide to have a meeting every Saturday to practice our play. I am glad it is on that specific day because I have every other day of the week. I am just glad to be able to work around my schedule. When I notice something sticking out of my desk. It is a very special that we get to have it every year. We never have an apple pie! Apple Pie is one of my favorite desserts and I love watching him do this. However, we do have one tradition that I feel that Christmas is complete without. The turkey made out of tofu and cranberries! It isn’t the most delicious thing I have eaten to put it nicely. We also celebrate New Year’s Eve with a yearly tradition. A Turkey is three strikes in a row.
McLean School (Upper School)

By Ava L., Grade 12

By Ezra G., Grade 9

By Ethan Z., Grade 10

By Anastasia E., Grade 10

By Walker T., Grade 9

By Isa L-C., Grade 12

By Mia H., Grade 11 McLean School

McLean School (Lower School)

By Nicholas

By Boyd H., Grade 1

By Enzo R., Grade 2

By Max L.L., Grade 1

By Daniella M., Grade 4

By Leyu G., Grade 2
McLean School (Middle School)
Norwood School

By Abby, Grade 7

Silkscreen by Cassidy, Grade 7

By Louis, Grade 1

By Catherine, Grade 4

By Karina, Grade 4

By NiuNiu, Grade 4

By Joseph, Grade 6

By Evelyn, Grade 5

Endangered Species – North Chinese Leopard by Gavin, Grade 4

By Harper, Grade 7

Maryland Lighthouse by Cole, Grade 2

By Inshera, Grade 8

Endangered Species – Andean Bear by Jake, Grade 4
My Last Chance

As I was on my way to my second move up meet, I was so nervous that I thought that I was going to puke. My heart beating 100 miles per hour. I felt dizzy, nauseous and I felt like I was having a panic attack.

I was really nervous for this move up meet because this is my last chance to make it to the level that I want to be. A move up meet is where you have to score at least a 36.00 to be able to move up to the next level. The previous move up meet I was really nervous, so when I competed bars, I fell. Then I had a panic attack, but my coaches did not know how to handle a panic attack. So I was extra nervous for this move up meet.

When I was walking toward the building my heart was beating a million miles an hour. I stepped inside the building and I felt nauseous. I took a deep breath and headed to warm ups. I was so nervous.

My first event was floor. I was not too nervous for floor because floor is one of my best events. I competed floor, I stuck all my tumbling passes and did all my dance with straight legs and pointed toes. Next I competed bars and I stuck my dismount and I did not fall on my squat on like I did at the previous move up meet. After that I competed beam. Even though beam is one of my best events I was still really nervous. I started my beam routine strong but then when I did my full turn I fell. A full turn is a skill where you turn on your squat on like I did at the previous move up meet.

And after that I competed vault. I was extra nervous for this move up meet. It was finally time for vault. This was my last chance that I could make it to the level that I want to be. I saluted to the judges and took a deep breath. Then I started to run as fast as I could down the vault runway. I felt like I was running in slow motion down the long blue runway. I jumped onto the spring board as hard as I could. I landed right on the mat and headed to the judges.

I was terrified that I would not make it to the level that I would like to be. When my coaches told me my score I felt like I was going to explode! I made it to level 7!

Happy

Not happy like I just got a baby kitten, happy
Not like I am about to see my best friend that I haven’t seen in a billion years, happy
Not like I am about to go on the best roller coaster ever, happy
But that I am in school, happy
That I am with my friends, happy
That I am in a happy place, with happy people, kind of happy
— Cole, Grade 5

Angry

I am angry.
Not about to explode angry.
Not on the ground temper tantrum.
Or screaming my head off angry.
But mildly angry.
Angry that it is Monday.
Angry that the weekend is over.
Angry that I have a test first thing in the morning.
— Emma, Grade 5

Cookies

Gooey, yummy
Eating, baking, chewing
Chocolate chip, oatmeal, caramel, blondies
Enjoying, biting, savoring
Chocolates, sweet
Brownies
— Emma, Grade 5

Jump!

“Umm is this safe?” I asked. I looked around nervously at the treetops which were dripping with water due to the storm. I tried unclasping my carabiner again but it wouldn’t budge. I was worried about not finding my mom and staff not coming. I heard loud thunder rumbling in the side of my ear. I was at Adventure Park, Sandy Spring, MD. “Should I call staff?” I asked.

“Maybe you should yell STAFF and tell them that you are stuck in this tree and can’t get your harness off!” My friend screamed.

Why am I thinking that I will die in this ropes course? I actually don’t really know? Stop daydreaming Francesca! I am going to be fine! Umm is it going to rain?

“Umm, Francesca it is starting to rain. I think we should call staff, now!” my friend said.

After 10 long minutes in the rain, one staff member came to rescue us. One slight problem was that he had no idea how to rescue us. After our long discussion about how to unclasp my carabiner I heard him say, “Umm, I think I need to get some more staff!” I see him and more staff coming. They asked me one question.

“Where is your mom?” I think for a second.

Nervously I said “I don’t know, I think by the entrance?”

I start to see staff running to the entrance and that made me nervous. I had never seen staff running to get kids guardians before. I see my mom coming. I am so excited to see my mom. I hear “Francesca, are you ok?” I knew something was wrong! What happened!” My mom asked quickly.

“My carabiner is stuck on the tree and staff did not hear me!” I hear staff talking to my mom. I start to get nervous! What are they saying? This might take a while, or we can’t get her down!

I see a staff member climbing the emergency ladder to get to me. He quickly did the course and said “We have to hook this up to you and get you down!”

“Oh, good!” I said. He gently attached me to the harness and he said “Jump!”

— Francesca, Grade 5
clothes. But my uncle had better clothes than most people. He was a tall, very thin boy and he was really poor. This older kid made fun of him, so my uncle hit the bully and they started fighting.

At the end, he ended up with a broken thumb. The boy with rags said thank-you and they became best friends. One day at the Bazaar, my uncle and my grandma saw his friend and his dad working there and realized he was very poor. My grandma just started crying and her dad and his dad. The next day, my uncle realized all the kids at the school did not have their usual rags. They were all wearing nice suits! My uncle didn't know why but soon re-

alized it was my grandma who paid for all those suits. My grandma died before I was born, but I know he loved her very much. That is why my grandma is my hero. I love him a lot. — Daria Tavakoli, 11

**Culture**

My parents both originate from China, and al-
most all my relatives are from China, my mom, dad, and I have really changed our ways.

We are becoming more of an American fam-
hly, but we still keep some major traditions. Such as during Chinese New Year we would go to cel-

inations hosted by other Chinese-Americans, or we would go out with some of our friends to eat a big feast at a Chinese restaurant. Also during the Moon Festival another Chinese holiday would we eat mooncakes a Chinese delicacy only made dur-
ging the festival. Though we celebrate Chinese and celebrate Chinese holidays we also celebrate American holidays, such as Thanksgiving, Christ-

mas, Labor Day, and more. During Thanksgiving we have a big Thanksgiving dinner with all our friends. Also during Christmas we usually go on vacation or stay at home by the Christmas tree. Even though we are Chinese, my parents have moved here with me to start a new life and we have embraced American culture. We are keeping traditional traditions and celebrating new tradi-
tions in America. — Zachary Li, 11

**Heroes**

My hero is my mom because she is amazing and fun. I love her. If I were to write about an issue she helps me. Everything she does for me is amazing. She always thinks of me before anything. Every morning, breakfast, boys and girls all depends on her for spending every moment with her, and we always have a blast.

She shows me to be me and to be funny, and unique in my own way. Another reason I look up to her is because she had breast cancer and during that time it was extremely hard for her and she fought through it for us which shows me to be even more brave than I already am. She would get 5’s in her arms and she got really sick from it and I was so 

little that it’s hard for me to remember but I do 

see her very strong. This shows me that whatever happens to think of how my mom did it and reflect of it. This is why my mom is my hero. Also she’s funny. One example of that is our jokes and when I talk 

in my class. — Emi Bernstein

**Persistence**

I remember one time when I was doing home-

ework. I realized that it was really time consuming. I wanted to quit right then and there, but then it hit me. The fly hit me. There was a fly buzzing around our room. It was annoying and it was bother-
ing me. I chased it around the house until I couldn’t see it anymore. It was gone. And I thought it was 

cause I did not like that fly. Then I remembered about my homework. Ugh. I went downstairs and saw it. Homework. I decided that I would go to get a good grade, I had to do my homework. So I did. 

The next day I turned it in and got 2/2 points. Yay for me! THE END — Jonathan Davis

**Connelly School of the Holy Child**

Riley Clark

Sister of three best friends who grew up fight-

ing over the remote and taking turns sitting in the 

front seat on the way to school, a fluffy, furry, and 

blonde friend who enjoys longs walks and a belly 

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— Daria Tavakoli, 11

— Zachary Li, 11

— Emi Bernstein

— Jonathan Davis

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