

# The Arlington Connection

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PHOTO BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION

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The firefighters arrive for a Home Safety Check. Having the truck there made other neighbors think about their own fire safety measures.

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55+ Programs are in person at 55+ Centers, unless otherwise noted. A 55+ Pass is required to participate (starting at a \$20 annual fee). To join or register, go to registration.arlingtonva.us or call 703-228-4747.

55+ Centers will be closed Mondays, Dec. 26 and Jan. 2

Opera appreciation group to hear musical selections from "Daughter of the Regiment" by Gaetano Donizetti, Wednesday, Dec. 21, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Professional commentary by George Cecchetti. Registration # 912300-04.

Aurora Hills 55+ Center to feature an acoustic hour with music from the 50s and beyond, performed by Carl Gold, Ed Girovasi and Phil Rosen, Wednesday, Dec. 21, 1 p.m. Registration # 912301-02.

Read and discuss current articles in popular magazines, Wednesday, Dec. 21, 11 a.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Facilitated by librarian Vicky McCaffrey. Registration # 912402-17.

Cooking with sage demonstration, Wednesday, Dec. 21, 10:30 a.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Presented by Virginia Cooperative Extension Maser Food volunteers. Registration # 912501-02.

Winter Solstice, learn all about it from park naturalists from Gulf Branch Nature Center, Wednesday, Dec. 21, 10 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Program indoors. Registration # 912400-24.

YouTube Painting class, join fellow artists in a group setting and follow online instructions to complete a beautiful masterpiece, Wednesday, Dec. 28, 1:30 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Materials provided. Registration # 912303-07.

Open art studio to accommodate artists who work at their own pace, Wednesday, Dec. 28, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center; Thursday, Dec. 29, 1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Drop-in. Bring your own materials.

Local history discussion, Wednesday, Dec. 28, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 9123402-07.

Line dance practice for experienced and advanced dancers, Wednesday, Dec. 28, 10 a.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Morning meet-up at Langston-Brown 55+ Center, casual conversation, BYOC (bring your own coffee), Wednesday, Dec. 28, 9:30 a.m. Drop-in.

55+ walking group will walk along the Falls Church W&OD trail, Wednesday, Dec. 28, 9:30 a.m. Registration # 912106-04.

The Rocking Chairs, a grown-up garage band, open rehearsal, rock and roll hits from the 50s through the 70s, Wednesday, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., Madison Community Center. Drop-in.

Scrabble, friendly competition, coaching available for new players, Wednesday, Dec. 28, 1 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center and Friday, Dec. 30, 10 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Drop-in.

SEE FLOURISHING, PAGE 10

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from all of us as

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## Merry Christmas

**“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”**

**T**he pages of the Arlington Connection and sister papers have been full of holiday spirit, beginning before Thanksgiving. Amazing group and individual efforts to help the needy, holiday parades, Santa arriving by boat, Santa arriving by horse-drawn carriage, Santa arriving by tractor-pulled hayride, Santa arriving at the Malls, tree lightings, Menorah lightings, stories of giving, secular celebrations, religious celebrations. Shopping locally. Giving locally.

Christmas is about the birth of Jesus Christ. Whether you believe the Christmas story literally or in spirit, you know it is the story of joy, hope and love, with the promise of redemption.

It is also about embracing the teachings of Jesus: to love thy neighbor as thyself; to help the needy; to feed the hungry and clothe the poor; to care for those who are sick; to invite and welcome strangers; to treat others as you would have them treat you.

**Matthew 7:12:**

“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.”

**Matthew 25:35-40:**

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you

clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”

“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

**SO HERE IS** the verse relating the birth of Jesus from the Bible, Luke 2: 4-19:

“And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called

Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David.) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they

were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

“And there were in the same country, shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

“And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

**EDITORIAL**

**Whether you embrace the Christmas story literally or in spirit, it is the story of joy, hope and love, with the promise of redemption.**

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.”

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

### Editor’s Note About the Rest of 2022

This is our last edition of 2022. Our next edition will publish Jan.11, 2023, with deadlines for content and advertising of Jan. 5, 2023 (late ads accepted).

In the meantime you can email the editors at editors@connectionnewspapers.com.

You can reach sales/marketing/advertising at sales@connectionnewspapers.com.

Digital replica editions of the most recent week’s papers are available at [www.ConnectionNewspapers.com/PDFs](http://www.ConnectionNewspapers.com/PDFs)

Did you miss the Children’s Gazettes? Take a look. They are special.

<http://connectionarchives.com/PDF/2022/121422/Alexandria.pdf>

<http://connectionarchives.com/PDF/2022/121422/Mt%20Vernon.pdf>

— MARY KIMM

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## How To Do Contracting Business in a Complicated Town

BY SHIRLEY RUHE  
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

**D**an Roche says, “You can read a lot of thick documents but that doesn’t necessarily mean you know how the government works.” After decades of experience with government contracting, Roche has just written “The Total Beginners Handbook for Doing Business With the Government,” a soup to nuts basic guide on what good government contractors do.

“I believe this book is what’s been missing from the industry (and the city) for decades—namely a plain language, easy to understand, mildly entertaining guide to the business that drives much of the local culture and economy,” Roche says.

This is a guide to doing business with the government but the government benefits when vendors know how things work, Roche says. “And if it encourages more people to jump into the competitive space, it helps all of us.” Roche explains, “Your proposal can be Shakespeare but if the vendor has to dig to know you understand what is required, this means they have to work harder. You

need to make it easier to read. Organize it in various buckets—the less they have to work the better. Trying to explain a narrative can be a minefield.”

Doing business with the government can be a complicated process. There can be requirements for a small or minority owned business. “I’ve seen bids fail because the business misses the requirement in submitting their proposal.” In addition, he explains with multi-year contracts and whenever there is more money involved, there are often more complex procurement requests which means more questions. He has seen amazing ideas that could have made us all safer but they ran afoul of requirements.

Because the taxpayer provides you the money through Congressional appropri-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Dan Roche, author of The Total Beginners Handbook for Doing Business With the Government.**



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

**New nuts-and-bolts guide on how to do business with the government.**

tions, compliance is very important. “If I have a great idea I want to explore, great—but they have to know I can speak to the obligations of the deal, what Congress voted on.”

Roche advises a four-step process when you are a small business bidding on a government contract. First you restate the need to show you understand what it is. Then you show how you will comply with the contractual obligations. Next you show how your team would distinguish yourself and how you would excel. Finally, show how you’ve done similar work in the past which shows you are a low risk partner.

Roche explains the Federal Acquisition Requirements (FAR) have been written to be sure the agency evaluations are objective and keep the good old boys from making the decisions. “It’s less and less about who you know. If I have a favorite vendor, they can get knocked out when doing the evaluations. It’s not up to you. It’s an old cliché about backroom decisions.”

Roche got the idea for his guide during COVID. He says in Washington if you go

SEE HOW TO DO, PAGE 9

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION



Matt Srebrow at Eagle Cleaners cleaned this dress by hand.



Matt Srebrow at Eagle Cleaners points out the hem which was a particular challenge since it brushed the floor.



Soyini Richards with her dress for the generations

The Arlington Connection

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

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An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.

Published by Local Media Connection LLC

1606 King Street  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Free digital edition delivered to your email box. Go to connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe

NEWS DEPARTMENT:  
arlington@connectionnewspapers.com

Mary Kimm  
Editor and Publisher  
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com

Shirley Ruhe  
Contributing Photographer and Writer  
slrbca@aol.com

Eden Brown  
Contributing Writer  
arlington@connectionnewspapers.com

ADVERTISING:  
For advertising information  
sales@connectionnewspapers.com  
703-778-9431

Debbie Funk  
Display Advertising/National Sales  
703-778-9444  
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin  
Marketing Assistant  
703-778-9431  
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Classified & Employment Advertising  
703-778-9431

Editor & Publisher  
Mary Kimm  
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com  
@MaryKimm

Publisher  
Jerry Vernon  
703-549-0004  
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Art/Design:  
Laurence Foong  
Production Manager:  
Geovani Flores

CIRCULATION  
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com



# The Dress With a Story

The dress to wear to the first annual Teacher's Festival which Dr. Soyini Richards founded to honor teachers.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE  
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

There was something about the dress inside the door at Eagle Cleaners. I just knew it had a story. I must have noticed the dress because the sequins sparkled in the sunlight from the window or maybe because it was impossibly long and beautifully embedded with purple and pink sequins.

Matt Srebrow, the manager at Eagle cleaners said, "Oh yes, I know that dress. It took me two hours to clean it. I had to clean it by hand — steam, brush and stain removal. It bleeds like crazy; if water touches it, it bleeds. And it is so heavy. It is one of a kind."

Dr. Soyini Richards, the proud owner of the dress, says she bought it at Signature in Georgetown for the first annual Teacher's Festival which she founded this year to honor teachers. "We held the event at National Harbor. It was a big deal with 400 people. Teachers don't get

enough credit which is why I founded this group. We gave a teacher \$1,000 and had prizes.

"I'm all about education. I've been a professor for 23 years. I'm a school psychologist, and I've been grading papers since I was 8 years old and helping my mother who gave me her papers to grade with a key."

She said, "The dress was the first dress I tried on [to wear to the event] and I bought it. The craftsmanship and delicacy was unusual. I said 'This is the one that I want; I feel so amazing in it.'" Richards says the dress was perfect because it used the same color theme of the Teacher's Festival, the yellow and red that were reminiscent of the colors in a box of crayons.

The event was very elegant with a fashion show and, "I wanted to look the part." Although she wasn't willing to share the price tag, she

**"Teachers don't get enough credit which is why I founded this group."**

— Dr. Soyini Richards

said, "it is an investment. It's the most expensive dress I've ever bought."

Richards confides, "I believe in divine appointment. I was appointed to wear the dress. I went to several stores and none clicked. This fit perfectly. I was proud of the moment."

Richards admits that the dress is very heavy, so heavy that she couldn't get the zipper to work because the material wouldn't stay together. "I had to go from the hotel across the street to the event to have a designer and a model help me zip it up. I was so determined to wear this dress." And it is so long that she had to wear 3-inch heels and the dress still brushed over the ground.

Although Richards doesn't know if she will ever wear the dress again, she wants to keep it for the memory. "I have been told she should pack it down for the generations."

## BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at [ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar](http://ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar). Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before the event.

### DONATIONS NEEDED

Pet Food Bank. AWLA has established a Pet Food Bank to serve qualifying residents of Arlington County and the City of Falls Church. In consideration of the effect financial obstacles

have on a pet owner's ability to afford pet care, the AWLA Pet Food Bank program's goal is to keep family pets out of shelters. If you are an Arlington County or City of Falls Church resident and are in need of assistance in feeding your

pet, follow this link and fill out a pre-registration form. Visit [goo.gl/forms/s2FuFdaYWdZm4tPw2](http://goo.gl/forms/s2FuFdaYWdZm4tPw2). Donations Needed. Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church, 2700 South 19th St., is seeking to replenish its food pantry. Particularly needed

are rice (large bags appreciated, the pantry will rebag), dry beans, canned vegetables, soup, small jars of peanut butter, small jars of jelly, pasta and pasta sauce. Donations are SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 10

# FIRE SAFETY



The firefighters arrive for a Home Safety Check. Having the truck there made other neighbors think about their own fire safety measures.



L-R, Firefighter/Paramedic Jody Marker, Lieutenant Nicolas Calderon, Firefighter Jason Sandridge, Probationary Firefighter Kevin Della Pucca pose with Juno the poodle after their inspection.

PHOTOS BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION

## Home Fire Safety Check

### Cooking

The cooking area, including on top of the stove and in the oven, is free from all items that can burn. Pots on the stove are not left unattended while cooking, remember “Keep an Eye on What You Fry.” The oven is never used to heat the home. Cooking vents are cleaned per manufacturer’s directions. Charcoal and gas grills are only used outdoors and at least 15 feet from the home, deck or garage.

### Smoking

House rules include not smoking in bed or while lying down. Ashtrays are large, deep and kept away from any items that can burn.

### Heating

Baseboard heaters do not touch any furniture, curtains or other items stored on the floor. Chimneys and heating systems are inspected, cleaned and repaired annually prior to the heating season. The area around the furnace is clear of all items that can burn. All portable heaters are placed at least three feet from furniture, walls or bedding. Portable heaters are plugged directly into wall outlets and turned off when you leave the room. Every fireplace is equipped with a sturdy metal screen.

### Electrical & Appliances

Extension cords are not used as permanent wiring. Extension cords used are not tacked to walls, run under rugs, or through doorways. Safety covers are present on all outlets if small children are present. Appliances are plugged directly into wall outlets. Clothes dryer lint filter and venting system are clean.

### Housekeeping

Matches and lighters are kept out of reach of children in a secure place. Paint, varnish and other flammable are stored in sturdy metal containers and in a cool place. Ashes from fireplaces and barbecues are only disposed of in metal containers. Candles are placed in sturdy holders away from children, pets or things that can burn. Candles are extinguished before leaving the room or going to bed.

### Smoke Alarms & Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Smoke alarms are installed on every level of the home and in every bedroom. Smoke alarms are tested monthly and vacuumed regularly. Carbon monoxide alarms are located on every level of the home. Alarm batteries are changed twice a year, unless equipped with a 10-year lithium battery. All alarms are less than 10 years old.

### Escape Plan

You have a plan of escape showing two ways out of every room and an outside family meeting place. You regularly practice your escape plan by having fire drills with everyone in your home. Your house numbers are clearly visible from the street. Fire extinguishers are rated at least 2A:10B:C and only considered for use by adults on small fires after calling 9-1-1.

## Glad I Flunked My Home Safety Check?

### Arlington County Fire Department does free safety check.

BY EDEN BROWN  
THE CONNECTION

The neighbors were on full alert when the fire engine pulled up outside my home at 11 am on Sunday morning. It was the on-duty crew at Station Eight coming to do a free safety check on my home. At the Arlington County Fair someone said the Arlington County Fire Department (ACFD) will check your smoke detectors and install new ones if you need them, as a public service. I didn’t believe it would be so easy, but it was, and I’m glad I called: my house flunked the safety check.

The four firefighter/paramedics went through the house, commenting as they went: smoke detector that goes off every time my son-in-law takes a shower? Try putting it on a wall instead of the ceiling. Never put it in the corner of the ceiling. The one that never goes off, even when the steak is broiling and it should be wailing? It was out of date by about a decade. In fact, most of my smoke alarms had outlived their lifespan and because of age or dust, might not have worked if I had had a fire in my house. Several had been removed by my kids because they were annoying (that steady chirping that tells you the battery is low.) Those detectors wouldn’t have saved anyone’s life.

“We started the safety check program a while back when there were people who died in a fire because their smoke detectors weren’t working,” said Paramedic/Firefight-



The team goes through each room, looking for smoke detectors or the absence thereof.

er Jody Marker, who has been in the ACFD for 27 years. “It was tragic because working smoke detectors would have saved those lives.” Lt. Nicolas Calderone said it’s a good idea to get the newer ones anyway, because they come with a lithium battery that lasts ten years, so no more annoying beeps.

Where should they go in the house? “Definitely there should be one on every floor,” Probationary Firefighter Kevin Della Pucca said. “I personally put one in every bedroom in my house.” That’s the view of a man who fights fires and has kids. And it’s also the view of the official flier put out by the ACFD.

### Most Common Cause of Fires in Arlington:

Overloaded plugs with multiple devices plugged into one outlet or extension cord  
Space heaters  
Kitchen fires  
This time of year: Christmas trees

The team also recommended fire extinguishers, small ones, for the kitchen, the car, and the garage. “A guy was working on his car and it sparked a fire on him,” said Firefighter Sandridge. “His wife was able to save his life by spraying him with a fire extinguisher.”

CO2 detectors also now come in plug-in versions which alleviate the burden of changing batteries. Della Pucca recommended two per household, one located near the furnace is good, and one elsewhere in the house where the air gets dispersed. “CO2 won’t kill you fast the way smoke will, but it’s dangerous because you can’t smell it.”

What are the most common causes of fires in Arlington? “Overloaded plugs with multiple devices plugged into one outlet or extension cord, space heaters, and kitchen fires,” said Calderone. “And of course, this time of year, Christmas trees.”

The team was friendly and non-judgmental about the expired smoke detectors. They suggested getting the highest quality device you can buy, and because of their inspection, seven new smoke detectors and three small fire extinguishers are now in place for the holidays.

Thanks, ACFD, for keeping us safe, and Happy Holidays!



This intricate 2019 yard display with its elegant Christmas greeting and hundreds of lights, a draw for drive-bys on Lorton Rd for many years, is bucking the trend of 'bigger every year' with a simple display in 2022



Burke's Marshall Pond Road community display has been growing for several years, making Fairfax County's noted list of "Tacky Christmas Lights"



This Marshall Pond Road homeowner may soon be out of yard space or reach the extension cord limit

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

# If It's Stays Still Long Enough, Decorate It!

Neighbors get into the holiday spirit.

BY SUSAN LAUME  
THE CONNECTION

Early Germans are credited with starting the Christmas tree decorating tradition in the 16th century, and Britain's Queen Victoria spread those and new decorating traditions to English speakers after adopting and expanding on many of her German husband Prince Albert's Christmas customs. However, there can be no doubt. Americans brought new light to holiday decorating — literally.

After Thomas Edison's invention of the first successful electric light bulb, he and his partner Edward H. Johnson looked for commercial uses for the new device. Johnson created the first string of electric lights in 1882 and displayed them on a Christmas tree. Until that time candles were used to illuminate holiday trees, resulting in many fires. A third partner, Albert Sadacca, then in his teens, and his brothers, had the idea of making safer Christmas light strings available to all. Their efforts would corner the string light market until the 1960s. General Electric offered a preassembled kit of lights in 1903. Until then Christmas lights were only for the wealthy, who could afford to have an electrician perform the complicated wiring. President Calvin Coolidge lit the first electric-lighted national Christmas tree in 1923.

From then on as lights got safer, Americans were hooked on decorating, which spread well beyond lighted trees. Surveyed Americans reveal 84 percent decorate at the holidays, with an estimated \$6 billion spent annually on holiday decorations. Driving during the day, wire reindeer and blow-up creatures of many varieties can be spotted on



Richard Cotton, of Springfield Glen, is among those adding elements every year, although he says his wife Gina tells him to "Quit adding things."

lawns across the area. But of course, night still holds the most magic. Displays present the traditional and the bizarre, either a simple few lights, or a whole magical world. Drivers may come across lighted surprises or know of spots that draw them to return year after year.

**SOME PLACES**, whole streets join in the light celebrations, such as Marshall Pond Drive in Burke.

As one of the homeowners on Marshall Pond Drive, Holly Walsh (yes, that's her real name) says, "We get together as a community, helping each other decorate for the Christ-



Some, like Larry and Jan Gould, go for an elegant look with many white lights to decorate their yard and home along Lee Chapel Road

mas holiday, and other holidays throughout the year." The display has been going on since her now college/high school children were small and is growing every year. When one of the six military families of the seven decorating families in the cul-de-sac added an American flag light, they were soon in each yard.

How do they manage the lights high on the houses? Walsh says one neighbor used climbing and rappelling equipment. Others went together to rent a cherry picker in past years to reach the high points. Tucked away in a side street in Burke, do they get noticed? Walsh says in the pandemic year about a 1,000 people were wall to wall along the street. She expects a busy season again this year, especially during Christmas week. So much so that the



Many use traditional symbols of Christmas, such as Santa and his reindeer

community has a directional sign at the head of the court to direct drivers, viewers, and deliveries. Their street was included in Fairfax County's list, Tacky Christmas Lights in Northern Virginia and Fairfax,

From decorating trees, to bedecking our homes, tables, churches, and shopping malls; and outdoor displays on houses, in yards; and dressing ourselves and our pets, even our vehicles, decorating may help us lengthen the pleasant memories of the season ... and give us all something extra to smile about. Ask six year old Ellery Tatum her favorite decoration, after a thoughtful hesitation she replies, "Everything."



Along Hoopes Rd, a display includes both traditional religious symbolism and the quirky futuristic spiritualism of Jeti Master Yoda



Decorating ideas often spread from house to house, as Holly Walsh indicates happened with lighted American flags in her neighborhood



One may not expect to see octopus and flamingos in a winter holiday display, but Ellery, and Tatum Sloane, 7 and 2 years old, and their friend Will Russell, 5, felt drawn to the characters for a picture



There may be some "one upmanship" at play as display get bigger and the objects get larger and larger, like this two-story house-height snowman found on Schoolhouse Woods Road, Burke

# DECORATE IT!

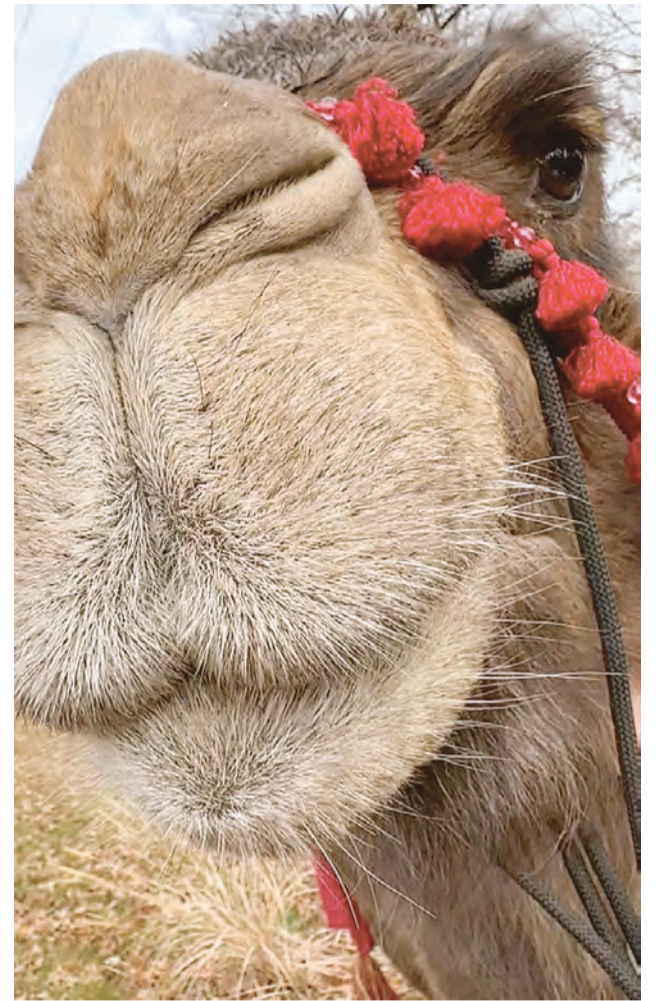
PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION



Pets, often included in holiday finery, whether they like it or not, include this reluctant elf, Tia, in Springfield



George, a finery accepting 'rein-dog' in Alexandria dresses to assist the Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Department



Of course, one must bedeck one's camel, Delilah, of Bar C Ranch



Employees Jette Hansen and Tiffany Garshak dress up in holiday brights to spread cheer while working at Trader Joe's in Springfield



Sara Evans, of Springfield, wears her seasonal red coat and snowflake earrings, as she drives her Rudolph the Reindeer car, but still can't fly over traffic congestion



Dozens of friends concoct kitschy outfits to attend an annual Christmas Tree Skirt party hosted by Mary Mulligan, of Ridge Road Estates; pictured Mandy Warble, Mary Mulligan, Melissa Burns, Brigette McGovern, Michele Dunphy



A coffee run inevitably turns up people showing off their holiday spirit, like Colleen Schaefer, 12 of Irving Middle School, and her aunt, Tricia Hill of Burke



Mistletoe to capture the romance of holiday kisses is highlighted with heart symbols



This home on Sydenstricker Road goes tall and bright with its lighted wish of love and peace for all the world

# Leading with Deeds to Equity

Ann Burke's grassroots efforts and support of community make her an agent of change.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

**H**igher, higher," commanded a 10-year-old boy as Ann Burke pushed him in a tree swing in the backyard of his new home in Vienna. He's the oldest son and third child of a single mother and until earlier this month, he lived in a low-income apartment in a neighborhood marred by gun violence, a lack of access to quality education and the safety of afterschool programs. Now the family will have a new home for the holidays.

With leaves crunching under foot, Burke walked through her own backyard in Alexandria blinking back tears as she recounted the family's rise from a life of poverty and instability to one of safety and possibility. She gave the family money for a down payment and cosigned a loan so that the family could purchase a home in Vienna, Virginia. This display of generosity underscores Burke's commitment to slavery reparations which she says are critical to healing this country's racial divide.

"Am I responsible for slavery and the impact that it continues to have on the African American community? No, I'm not" she said. "No but we all have a joint responsibility to help right the wrongs that have led to the country's racial inequality."

Burke has spent more than a decade on the frontlines of the effort to fight systemic injustice and provide economic development opportunities for African Americans. Her approach is two-pronged. Burke, who is white, supports organizations that work to dismantle the pattern of more than 400 years of inequality in the United States. She also works to help other white Americans understand the impact that past discriminatory practices have on the current quality of life people of color.

"I think that there are a lot of white people who just don't get it," she said. "The knee jerk reaction of some is to say, 'We've had a black president and there are many blacks in positions of power. Why do we need reparations?'"

Part of her work is hosting open dialogue sessions in her home that are designed specifically for people who are white, a dynamic that she feels is vital to having the honest conversations necessary to create effective change. Having begun her work years before the racial protests after the murder of



Ann Burke, pictured at her family's summer home, is committed to finding solutions to end racial injustice.

**"We all have a joint responsibility to help right the wrongs that have led to the country's racial inequality."**

— Ann Burke

George Floyd by a police officer, she says her ideas were seen as controversial. "I think that people saw me as the Marcus Garvey of the 21st Century."

Since that time, the ideas that Burke touted have become mainstream. Last year the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia voted to create a fund for reparations and is crafting a plan to put it into action.

"The most important work I've been involved in is really changing how white people think about race," said Rev. Elizabeth Rees, an Episcopal priest and the Upper School Chaplain of St. Stephen's & St. Ag-

nes' School in Alexandria. "It's happening in small groups all over the county. We just elected a new bishop [Rt. Reverend E. Mark Stevenson] for whom that is a priority as well. The church is really sinking into this kind of work right now."

Grassroots organizations can become agents of change, says Burke. "Working together as individuals and as a part of a group we can tap into our collective wisdom to find solutions."

One such group is ACT for Alexandria, a community foundation that serves the city in part by mobilizing the residents around issues like racial equity and economic opportunity. One of the group's current initiatives is working as a collaborating partner on ARISE, a guaranteed income pilot program by the City of Alexandria.

"It will help low-income families receive \$500 per month for two years," said Kyle Reardon, Marketing & Communications Manager, ACT for Alexandria. "These are critical resources that will help families move up the economic ladder. One hundred seventy households will be randomly select-

**"The most important work I've been involved in is really changing how white people think about race."**

— Rev. Elizabeth Rees,  
Upper School Chaplain,  
St. Stephen's & St. Agnes' School

ed to participate and will begin receiving payments in February 2023."

Burke will begin a new project in the new year in which she plans to teach others how to use meditation as a means of increasing awareness of one's thoughts and the role that they play in our personal biases. "Recognition and acknowledgement are the first steps in the process," she said. "As long as we keep moving forward, we can make change one person at a time."

## How To Do Contracting Business in a Complicated Town

FROM PAGE 3

to a party, everyone has a meaningful purposeful job. It became harder to be that contractor during COVID. He had all the kids in the same house and his wife to run things so Roche thought he would use the time to write a book.

"I thought, 'wouldn't this have been good 20 years ago?'" He had to learn over time as a contractor working with AT&T, Department of Commerce, Amtrak, DoD and others. But there was no dummy guide.

Roche says his guide has re-

ceived a lot of positive reaction so far.

"Normally more senior people have been reading it and then buying it for the team. I wanted something you could read in two nights."

Roche thinks this town is full of

great people who still don't succeed. How do you know if a company is special? You have to find out and identify why your company should exist.

He says altruism is what you do if you live in this town. If you live in Minnesota, the mission goes

away. Altruism drives all that you do; it's not just about the dollars. The city is full of amazing impactful causes. What you do has purpose and drive.

"The Total Beginners Handbook for Doing Business With the Government" is available on Amazon.



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### Legals

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

AT&T proposes to modify an existing facility (new tip heights 96.5', 99.9', 111' & 114.4') on the building at 1512 S Arlington Ridge Rd, Arlington, VA (20221406). Interested parties may contact Scott Horn (856-809-1202) (1012 Industrial Dr., West Berlin, NJ 08091) with comments regarding potential effects on historic properties.

### CALENDAR

			1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31		

**Let us know about an upcoming event**

connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar

## "FLOURISHING AFTER 55"

FROM PAGE 2

Trivia Night, test your knowledge and have fun with friends, Thursday, Dec. 29, 6 p.m., Lubber Run Community Center. Registration # 912600-13.

Gyrokinesis class, a movement method that addresses the total body and coordinates movement, breathing and mental focus, begins Thursday, Dec. 29, 8 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Cost \$49.50, 9 sessions. Registration # 912100-02.

Woodcarving enthusiasts meet Thursdays, 1 - 3 p.m., Madison Community Center. Members can provide instruction. Drop-in.

Early New Year's Eve celebration, Dancing Through the Decades theme, dress according to a favorite decade, music from every era, Friday, Dec. 30, 2 - 4 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Cost \$10. Call to register, 703-228-4771.

Fast Forwards walking group meets in front of Aurora Hills 55+ Center for a two to five mile loop, including some hills, Friday, Dec. 30, 9 a.m. Drop-in.

Cribbage, a classic card game, easy to learn, instruction available, Friday, Dec. 30, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Drop-in.

### BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 4

collected during Mass each Sunday. Visit [www.ourladyqueenofpeace.org](http://www.ourladyqueenofpeace.org) for more.

#### ONGOING

Online Salary Negotiation Workshop. AAUW (American Association of University Women) Work Smart is free online for anyone looking to learn how to negotiate a salary increase or promotion. Why is negotiation so important? AAUW's research on the gender pay gap shows that, one year out of college, women are already paid significantly less than men. Visit [salary.aauw.org](http://salary.aauw.org).

Create a Wildlife Sanctuary. The Audubon at Home Wildlife Sanctuary certification program assists homeowners in restoring their home's

natural habitat by providing information on sustainable gardening practices. These practices include using native plants, removing invasive species, reducing use of pesticides and fertilizers, and creating space for native flora and fauna. Visit [audubonva.org/audubon-at-home-1/](http://audubonva.org/audubon-at-home-1/) for more.

Naloxone (Narcan) can save the life of someone who is overdosing, if given in time. Anyone who assists a person in need is protected from liability by the Good Samaritan Law. Naloxone (Narcan) is available without a prescription for a fee at all pharmacies. Obtain it for free by attending a REVIVE! training. Contact Emily Siqueland at 703-228-0913 or [esiqueland@arlingtonva.us](mailto:esiqueland@arlingtonva.us) or visit [health.arlingtonva.us/](http://health.arlingtonva.us/)

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

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# ENTERTAINMENT

**JAN. 2-27, 2023**

Bright New Days. At Gallery Underground, 2100 Crystal Drive, Crystal City Shops, Arlington. First Friday Opening Reception: Friday, January 6, 2023, 5-7 p.m. The Focus Gallery of Gallery Underground will present Bright New Days, an all-member show celebrating all the possibilities of the coming new year. This exhibit will showcase the talent and diversity of art styles of the membership.

**FRIDAY/JAN. 13**

Seeds: Selecting and Starting. 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. Online. Jumpstart your vegetable garden! Get the scoop on seed selection – hybrid vs. heirloom, which seeds to start indoors and what's required to get them growing. Extension Master Gardener Beth Buffington will explain how to make your own starter pots, create simple lighting systems, and practice winter sowing by starting seeds outdoors in milk-jug greenhouses. Germination is complex, but seed starting is reassuringly simple! Free. RSVP at <https://mgnv.org/events/> to receive a link to participate.

**MONDAY/JAN. 16**

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration. 10 a.m.

Workshop. 11 a.m. Program featuring Civil Rights leader Dr. Otis Moss Jr., Olivet Institutional Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio. At 1601 13th Road South Arlington. Presented by the Arlington Coalition of Black Clergy.

**FRIDAY/JAN. 20**

Caring for Your Native Plants Garden. 10:00 – 11:30 am, Online. In response to requests from viewers of our sustainable landscaping programs, Extension Master Gardener Elaine Mills will discuss gardening techniques with a focus on gardens with native plants. Following the cycle of the seasons, she will cover such tasks as dealing with winter storm damage and salt; doing a soil test and interpreting results; winter and summer pruning of native trees and shrubs; planting, dividing, and cutting back native perennials, grasses, and sedges; dealing with summer flooding and drought; and making use of fall leaves. She will also share information on making wise selections of plants and choosing lawn alternatives as well as year-long practices to encourage and support local wildlife. Free. RSVP at <https://mgnv.org/events/> to receive link to participate.

## HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT 2022



“Snow Maiden” will be presented at Synetic Theater in Arlington through Dec. 23, 2022.

**THROUGH DEC 23**

“Snow Maiden.” At Synetic Theater, 1800 S. Bell St, Arlington. In a frozen forest, a lonely boy builds a girl from snow. When she mysteriously comes to life, mischief, laughter, and enchantment abound. But what will happen when the ice begins to melt? Told through dazzling movement, dance, and acrobatics, Snow Maiden is a magical tale of hope, friendship and the transformative power of dreams. Based on the beloved folktale Snegurochka, Snow Maiden is a holiday treat for friends and fans of all ages.

**THROUGH DEC. 31**

Home for the Holidays Art Show. At Arts Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon. Works by local artists on display the entire month of December. Visit [www.artsherndon.org](http://www.artsherndon.org). Call 703-956-6590.

**SATURDAY/DEC. 31**

New Year's Eve Golf Tournament. 10 a.m. Shotgun start. Annual four-person scramble. Entry fee includes green fee, cart fee, range balls and prizes. Entry deadline December 26. At Herndon Centennial Golf Course, 909 Ferndale Avenue, Herndon. Cost is \$80 per player. Call 703-471-5769 or visit [herndongolf.com](http://herndongolf.com).

## BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 10

opioid-awareness/ for available training sessions. The Chris Atwood Foundation also offers training to the public. Visit [www.chrisatwood-foundation.org/naloxone](http://www.chrisatwood-foundation.org/naloxone) for details. Monthly Memory Café. 1-3 p.m. at 7910 Andrus Road, Suite 6, Alexandria. The Memory Café, a social gathering for individuals living with memory loss and their families, virtually. Registration is free and highly recommended to reserve spots, which are open on a first come first served basis. To reserve a spot, please call 571-210-5551 or email [bdesai@seniorhelpers.com](mailto:bdesai@seniorhelpers.com). Visit [www.dementiacare-connections.com/memory-cafe](http://www.dementiacare-connections.com/memory-cafe) or [www.seniorhelpers.com/alexandria-va](http://www.seniorhelpers.com/alexandria-va) for more. Arlington County, in partnership with the Human Rights Commission's Equality Task Force, has launched a web page with resources for the LGBTQ community. The new webpage compiles LGBTQ resources on a variety of topics, including homelessness and housing, domestic violence and sexual assault, and health. There are also topics specifically for teens and youth — such as scholarship opportunities and school clubs — as well as ones targeted at seniors and older adults, such as SAGE. Visit [topics.arlingtonva.us/lgbtq-resources](http://topics.arlingtonva.us/lgbtq-resources).

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Thank you to the hundreds of supporters who helped to keep all your Connection Newspapers alive throughout Alexandria, Fairfax County, Arlington County and Potomac, Md. along with affiliated websites and digital media. Now we need help again in 2022.

Each local newspaper's mission aspires to provide greater community service, and we do know that our communities are better off if we continue to publish. Last year's financial support from readers and supporters like you bridged the shortfall before Federal PPP funding arrived, and both made our survival possible. We now await a decision for a grant from Rebuild Virginia in early February that we hope will help us in 2022 and beyond. But we need help to survive the first quarter, always a brutal time for cash flow in weekly newspapers. Thank you.

Please, help save these historical papers. All gifts will be used to fund our printed newspapers and websites and to meet obligations to our loyal and patient employees, writers, contractors and suppliers.

The ongoing pandemic continues to crush many newspapers across the country, and our newspapers continue to be at risk. The Northern Virginia area's best read and most trusted source for community news includes the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and all Connection Newspapers in the metropolitan region.

The pandemic has hit small businesses hard, which in turn has reduced advertising revenue that keeps these local newspapers alive to provide hyper-local news to residents. It feels like no small miracle to be looking forward into 2022.

The pandemic has been a bear, financially and otherwise. Revenue plummeted at the beginning in 2020. Some beloved advertisers have stayed the course supporting us throughout, and many more have done what they can. In the fall of 2021 we saw the return of some advertising for events and Grand Openings, but now omicron clouds the horizon in so many ways. Revenue still remains short of expenses despite our greatly curtailed costs.

Connection Newspapers has been offering these local newspapers to residents for over 200 years. Countless residents have grown up with these papers covering significant moments in the lives of family and children, news, community events, school activities, and even pictures of your dogs and cats. Internet news and large national newspapers cannot provide the local connection or historical connection that local papers like Connection Newspapers and the Alexandria Gazette Packet provide. If your child, dog, mother, father, neighborhood, school has been featured, you understand the value of local community newspapers.

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## Between Zero and Fat



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

For those of you who know me beyond the margins of this column, this title is rhetorical. It refers to the chance that what I'm about to describe involves your truly succeeding on any level. For most of you regular readers, you only know what I tell you/admit to. Which is a lot. And I am happy and proud to be as simple and as transparent as I am. Other than picking out dessert, I'm not really your go-to person. I'm more likely your go-away person. I'm helpful, occasionally, but only to a limited degree.

Though I'm good in an emergency and usually level-headed: "Cheerful in all weathers," to quote Augustus McCray (Robert Duvall) reading the hand-carved epitaph for Deets' (Danny Glover) as written by Woodrow F. Call, in a particular sad scene from the mini-series "Lonesome Dove," I am nonetheless challenged and unhelpful in many ways (technical, mechanical, structural) other than as manual labor. What's the point? Read on.

My wife Dina and I have had cats and dogs pretty much during the entirety of our 45-year connection. Twice the brood has consisted of a puppy and kitten raised up together in the same household. But the most recent iteration, since my cancer diagnosis nearly 14 years ago, has exclusively involved cats, upwards of five in-home, all at once, with no dog. In that time, we had never bought anything resembling a 54-inch high, multi-level cat-condo/climbing-type furniture thing. Until "Black Friday," that is.

After spending time perusing the website for "Cat Trees & Condos," we decided on a carpeted piece of furniture/apparatus thing exclusively for the cats to climb, hide, bat, sleep, et cetera. Sort of a jungle jim for cats, you might say.

At any rate, we were so focused on the amenities (features and benefits) of the "thing," and anticipating the fun our four cats - once acclimated, would have, that we never even considered how the "thing" would be delivered; as in, in pieces or as seen on site) which led her to conclude that it probably required assembly. Disappointed, but undaunted, I said, "No problem, we'll deal with it."

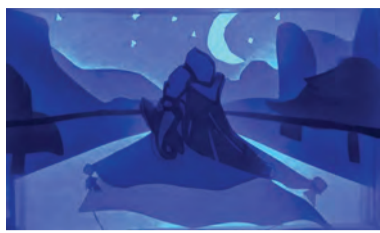
A few days later, the "thing" arrived in a box, in pieces, assembly required. The size of the box (small-ish) confirmed my worst fears. And when I opened it and started sorting the pieces, the nuts, bolts, screws, I began to have a bad feeling (a feeling I've had many times before) that assembling this apparatus was going to be way beyond me. And as a result, it was destined to sit in our living room disassembled and emblematic of my skillset - or lack thereof. Fighting my instincts and not automatically giving in to the assembling challenges, I located the directions to see if there was any path forward where I could possibly succeed where I knew it was likely impossible.

The how-to booklet was eight pages long, not too bad, with each section of instructions written in five languages, however. That didn't bode well - for me. In addition to these varied words, there were several schematics with identifying numbers and arrows with dotted lines and easy to follow directions - for a normal person, I imagine (It looked like Egyptian hieroglyphics to me and appeared totally beyond my abilities).

Nevertheless, I sat back on the couch and began reading the manual, attempting to find any familiar elements that might enable me to shock the world. It took me five minutes to realize that I wasn't shocking anybody. Instead, I was left to stew in my own juices. "Incompetent Ken" had struck (or rather not struck) again. There would be no success story here. "Mighty Casey" as it were, had swung and missed.

I then looked up at Dina. She was sitting across the room anxiously awaiting my assessment. "Well?" She asked. "Well," I said, "there's no way I can do this." A few days passed with the opened box resting against the wall waiting for divine intervention. By mid-week, lightning had struck. A neighbor, with whom Dina is very friendly, took pity on us and offered to assemble the "thing." It took him all about one hour, and during that hour, he was talking to us the whole time, barely concentrating on the task at hand. Yet, he succeeded. And all I could do was sit there, mesmerized, as to how simple it all seemed to somebody else.

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



Devika Srikanth, 14, 8th grade,  
Teacher Polly Beam



Grace Laha, 13, 8th grade,  
Teacher Polly Beam



Irene Ecarma, 7, 2nd grade,  
Teacher Tietjen Alvarez



Lucas Pellerito, 7, 2nd grade,  
Teacher Tietjen Alvarez



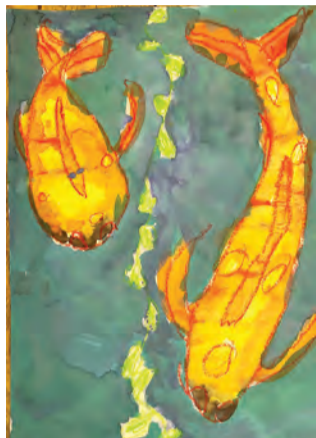
Peyton Nash, 7, 2nd grade,  
Teacher Tietjen Alvarez



Lauren Apriceno, 8, 3rd grade,  
Teacher Tietjen Alvarez



Henry Wachter, 8, 3rd grade,  
Teacher Tietjen Alvarez



Luna El Sheikh Ali, 8, 3rd  
grade, Teacher Tietjen Alvarez



Dudley Greene, 8, 3rd grade,  
Teacher Tietjen Alvarez



Max Kraemer, 5, kindergar-  
ten, Teacher Tietjen Alvarez



Kailey Lubisco, 6, kindergar-  
ten, Teacher Tietjen Alvarez



Ryland Babcock, 9,  
4th grade, Teacher  
Tietjen Alvarez



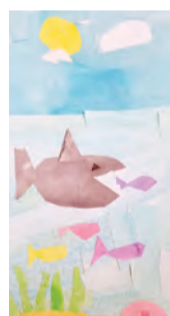
Nicholas Apriceno,  
10, 4th grade, Teach-  
er Tietjen Alvarez



McKenzie Magee, 10,  
4th grade, Teacher  
Tietjen Alvarez



Connor King, 10, 4th  
grade, Teacher Tietjen  
Alvarez



Tristan Taylor,  
10, 5th grade,



Sasha Grey,  
10, 5th grade



Samantha Metcalf,  
10, 5th grade



Chase  
Montaque,  
10, 5th grade



Usra Abdulrahman, 13, 7th  
grade, Teacher Polly Beam



Sam Biggins, 12, 7th  
grade, Teacher Polly Beam



Prince Owusu, 8, 3rd grade,  
Teacher Tietjen Alvarez



Leo Morado, 8, 3rd grade,  
Teacher Tietjen Alvarez



Solana Szymanski, 8, 3rd  
grade, Teacher Tietjen Alvarez



Olivia Song, 8, 3rd grade,  
Teacher Tietjen Alvarez



Lexi Benenson, 6, kindergarten,  
Teacher Tietjen Alvarez



Bryson Barnett, 5, kindergarten,  
Teacher Tietjen Alvarez



Chance Maxwell, 13, 8th grade,  
Teacher Polly Beam



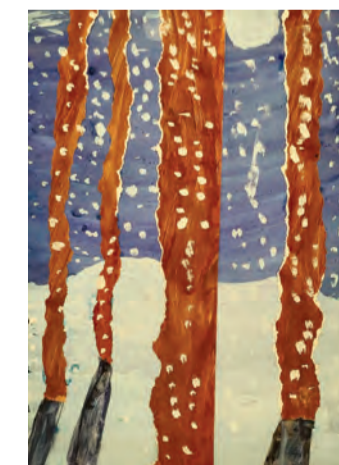
Khalid Ousman, 13, 8th grade,  
Teacher Polly Beam



Nate Benites, 13, 8th grade,  
Teacher Polly Beam



Sammie Weinstein, 14, 8th grade,  
Teacher Polly Beam



Ryan Kaskela, 7, 1st grade,  
Teacher Tietjen Alvarez