

ALONSOVILLE VOICE

IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

The Children's Issue



Our cover art is by Oscar Rinn (age 3), [untitled], 2022, tempera paint sticks on paper

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DANCING TO HER OWN BEAT**

KIDS ART

**A 74-YEAR-OLD CHILD
RUNNING WILD**

This edition brought to you by:

David Bolton
Writer, Editor & Bon Vivant
writeventures@gmail.com

Sara Pak
Newsletter Designer & Dog Photo Judge
ksarapak@gmail.com

FEATURED STORY

LYLA RANDOLPH: DANCING TO HER OWN BEAT

David Bolton

Now a sophomore at the University of Arizona, Lyla was home for the summer after a tough freshman year. Sometimes after writing in her journal, she'd meander down Wingate, past houses where she would trick or treat with her Upper Wingate chums, kids from six homes on the 500 block. She walked past the circle where she first carved a pumpkin as a five-year-old and the cherry tree that she climbed whenever she had the chance. On the way to the playground, she paused at the bridge over Stony Run and recalled exploring the tunnel below with her younger brother Finn; their mom, Elizabeth, led the way, sloshing through water, holding that flashlight. There were lots of crickets, so many crickets.

Her education began at Roland Park Elementary and then Calvert. In the spring of the 6th grade, she lost Elizabeth to cancer. At 12, she didn't know how to handle the grief. Lyla turned to the stage for a creative outlet, playing Princess Fiona in the musical *Shrek* and Sandra Dee in *Grease*. She also excelled in the classroom. At the same time, she wasn't exactly comfortable with the culture at Calvert School. "At Calvert, everyone was the same," she said in a recent interview. "I was the weirdo. I didn't grow up going to country clubs."

After school, she participated in "Twigs," a Baltimore School for the Arts program for gaining skills. Every year they performed *Hansel and Gretel*. Lyla auditioned for BSA and was accepted. Some of her Alonsoville friends also made the grade. The school would be a "big shift" from Calvert. "Lots of cool outfits and style... and performance opportunities." Through dance, she forged close friendships, immersing herself in hip hop, jazz and contemporary ballet.

In the classroom, she got straight A's and would graduate with a 4.0. More importantly, in her junior year she started seeing a therapist. Lyla was ready to confront her grief over losing her mother. "Those first few years I pushed the feelings away by pouring myself into school and dancing. It was hard for me to ask for help when I was younger, so even if I wanted, or needed, support, I didn't really know how to reach out and ask for it."

Covid proved to be a challenge during the college application process. She did video auditions for 12 programs, including Towson, Montclair State, Point Park University, NYU, Fordham, Marymount Manhattan, Juilliard, Boston Conservatory, USC and the University of Arizona. She was accepted in all the programs, save two. She chose to attend Arizona on a full academic scholarship. The dance department was known for its versatile approach. "BSA had a heavy emphasis on ballet and modern. I wanted more options."

A Cultural Challenge

Making her way on the Tucson campus, 2000 miles from Alonsoville, proved more difficult than she anticipated. "The LA style" had a big influence, with a focus on superficial appearance and social media. Greek life, not her thing, was "a big deal." Among 35,000 students, she felt "pretty insignificant." People weren't interested in meeting this freshman, whether in the dorm or class.

At BSA, she had been part of a group effort with 25 students in her grade in the dance department. Lyla cherished the diversity and camaraderie; she performed with dancers, musicians, singers, and actors from all parts of Baltimore. In Arizona, there were 180 dancers in the department. "It was very 'cliquey.' Upperclassmen didn't welcome us; now they were competing for parts." Coming from BSA and Alonsoville where people had known her for at least six years made it a hard transition. "Everyone divided into little groups, and the classes were really big, with 44 students in her dance class." An introvert by nature, she didn't want to "break into something" where she was not welcome.

During winter break, Lyla considered transferring. A long-distance relationship had caused its own problems. Nevertheless, after conferring with her mom, Louisa, she decided to return to the university. She joined a hiking club and became involved with Students for Sustainability, serving on the food and health committee with the goal of eliminating food waste and food insecurity. She was part of a program that worked with markets to distribute discarded fruits and vegetables to those in need. She also joined the meditation club. "I like to meditate. I met lots of cool people in the club. It was a very welcoming environment." Lyla is proud of her effort to make university life work.

continued...



Regarding the future, she would like to live in New York and “dance professionally on Broadway.” She might also “explore other paths,” possibly as a therapist or a teacher. She enjoys being a mentor or tutor. “I am patient. I help people understand things.” Dance has given her many skills, including attention to detail and the ability to absorb large amounts of information in a short period of time.

Growing up in “the bubble that is Roland Park,” Lyla is well aware of “her privileged life.” So easy to feel safe in this neighborhood, not realizing that two miles west people were enduring “racism and police brutality. People are dying in the streets.” She hopes Baltimore “can get it together.” The politicians need to work for those “who don’t have it as well. We can make a change.”

Who knows what the future holds for Lyla Randolph? Whatever path she chooses, she will be true to herself and make the world a better place, one friend at a time.

FROM THE KESWICK ARCHIVES

Once Upon a Time...

Dr. Hugh H. Young, one of Johns Hopkins world famous surgeons and on General Pershing’s staff in World War I, had an estate north of Cold Spring Lane. In the middle of the thirties, Doctor Young had a record-breaking party. A wooden platform, 100 feet long and 60 feet wide, was built in the dell for dancing. Paul Whiteman and his big band supplied the music. Guests included General Pershing and numerous males with red, white, and blue ribbons across their chests. The ladies were dressed as if for the queen of England. We Keswick boys spied on the guests through the numerous trees until detectives politely asked us to leave.

~ Tom Bracken, *Keswick History Notebook*



Henri Gordon (age 3), budding chalk artist and/or future member of blue man group.

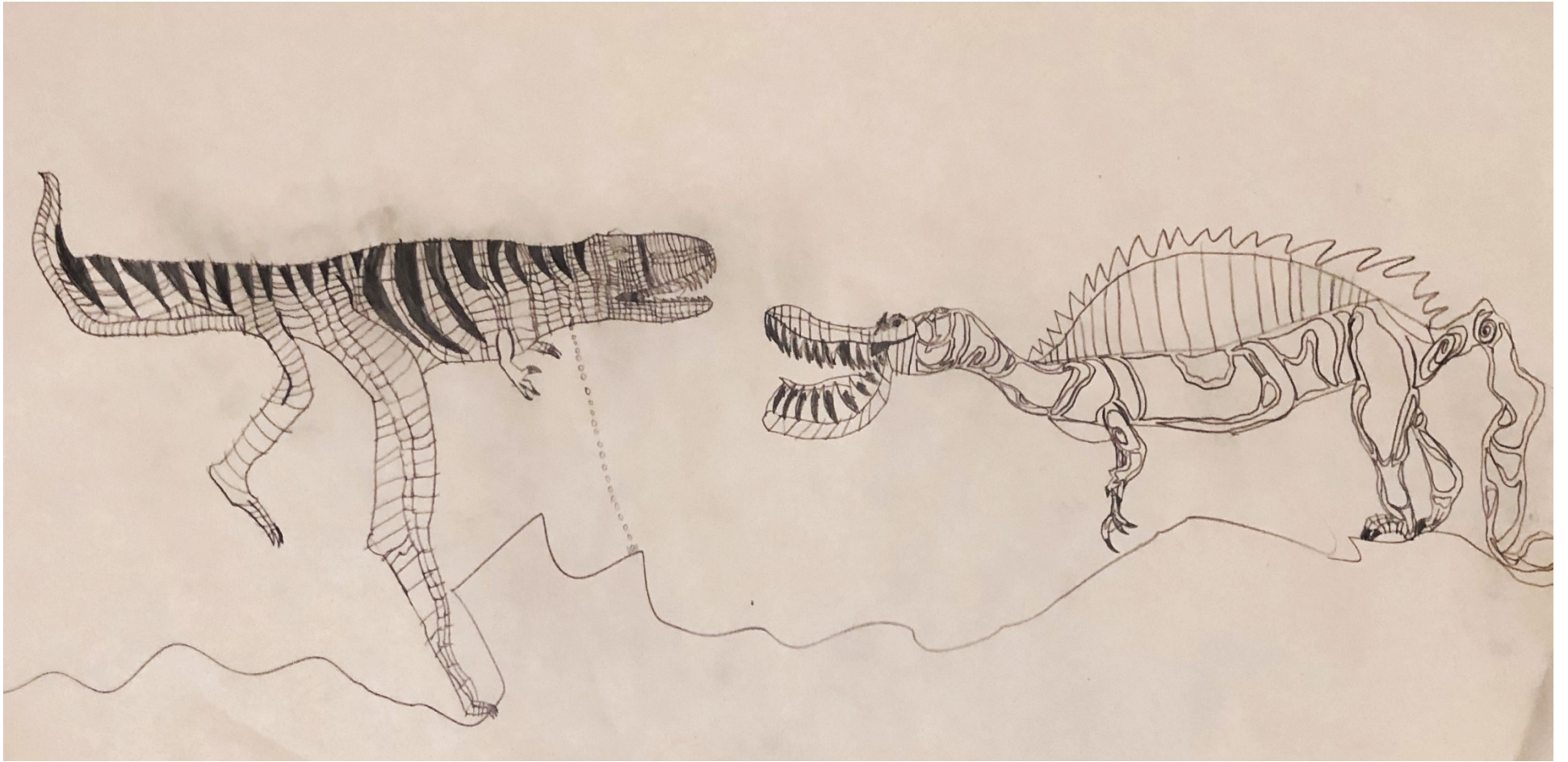


WHAT’S NOT TO LIKE?

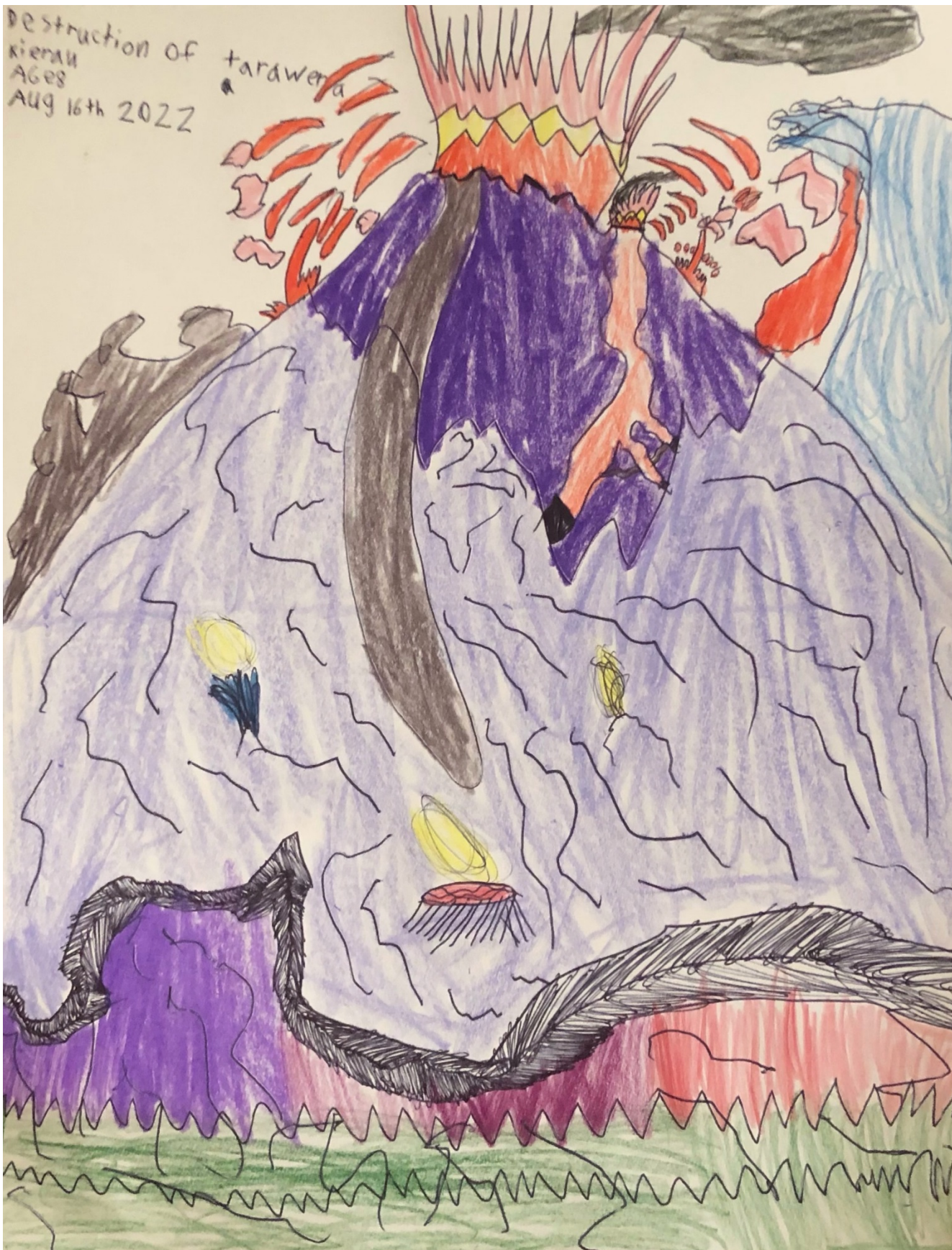
Jim Burger’s “Words and Pictures of a Charmed Life”

<https://burgerphotobook.com/buy-the-book/ols/products/whats-not-to-like>

Also available at The Ivy Bookshop, Bird In Hand, Atomic Books, The MICA School Store, and The Baltimore Museum Of Art Gift Shop.



Kieran Paulson (age 8), Prehistoric Clash



Kieran Paulson (age 8), Destruction of Tarawera, August 16, 2022

News & Notes

KIA Virtual Meeting

Monday, September 19, 7:00.

Officials from the Department of Transportation will give an update on Cold Spring traffic.

Election Day

Tuesday, November 8

Moving Day

Many thanks to Cindy Leahy & Jim Kucher, who, after 24 years, will be leaving Alonsoville.

For many years, Cindy was a tireless advocate for the neighborhood at City Hall. And, whenever there was a neighborhood event, Jim was there to help. His big laugh set the tone.

They will be missed.

Next Alonsoville Voice, the Halloween Issue

We welcome photos, art, and stories. What's your most memorable Halloween in Alonsoville?

Also, please let us know about any future event that might be of interest to the neighborhood. Could be music, a poetry reading, an art show, a Stony Run cleanup, the Crankies, anything that brings people together.

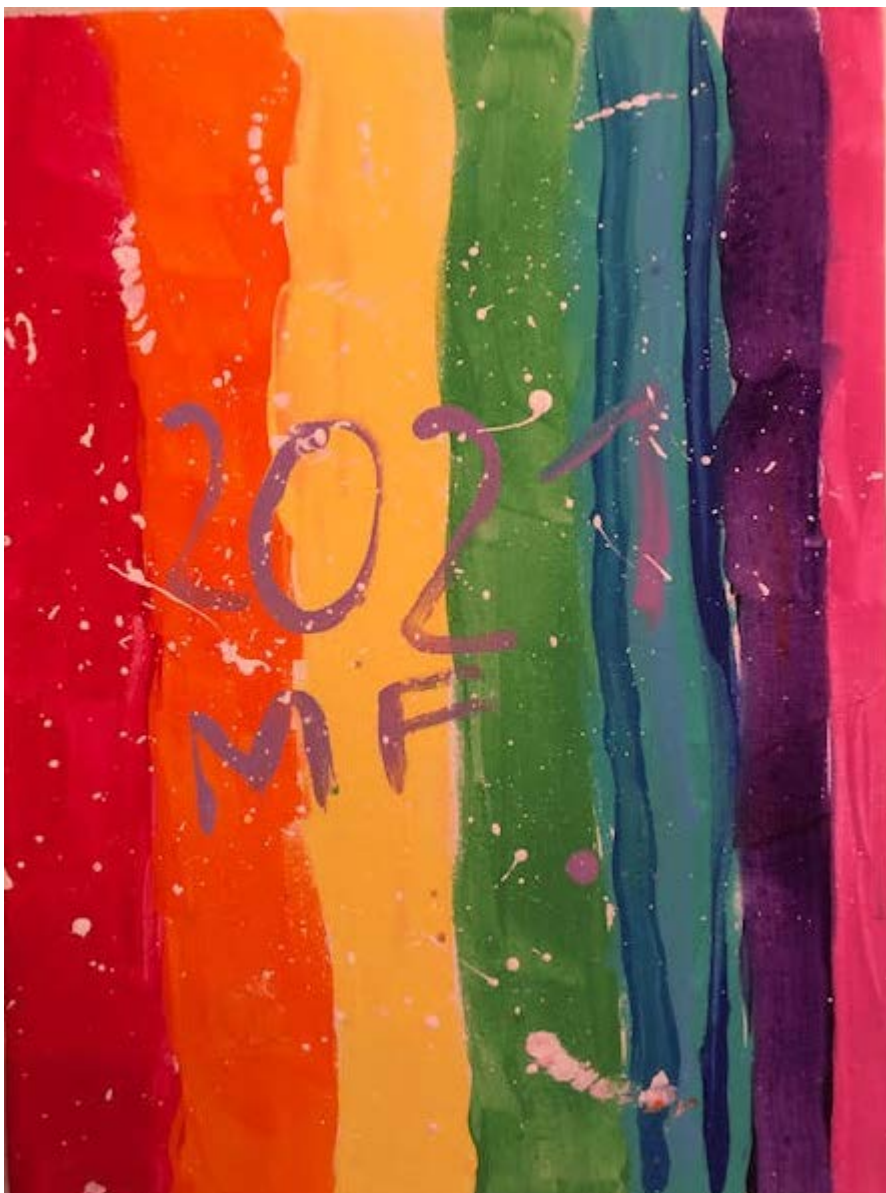


Marloe Filippi (age 9)

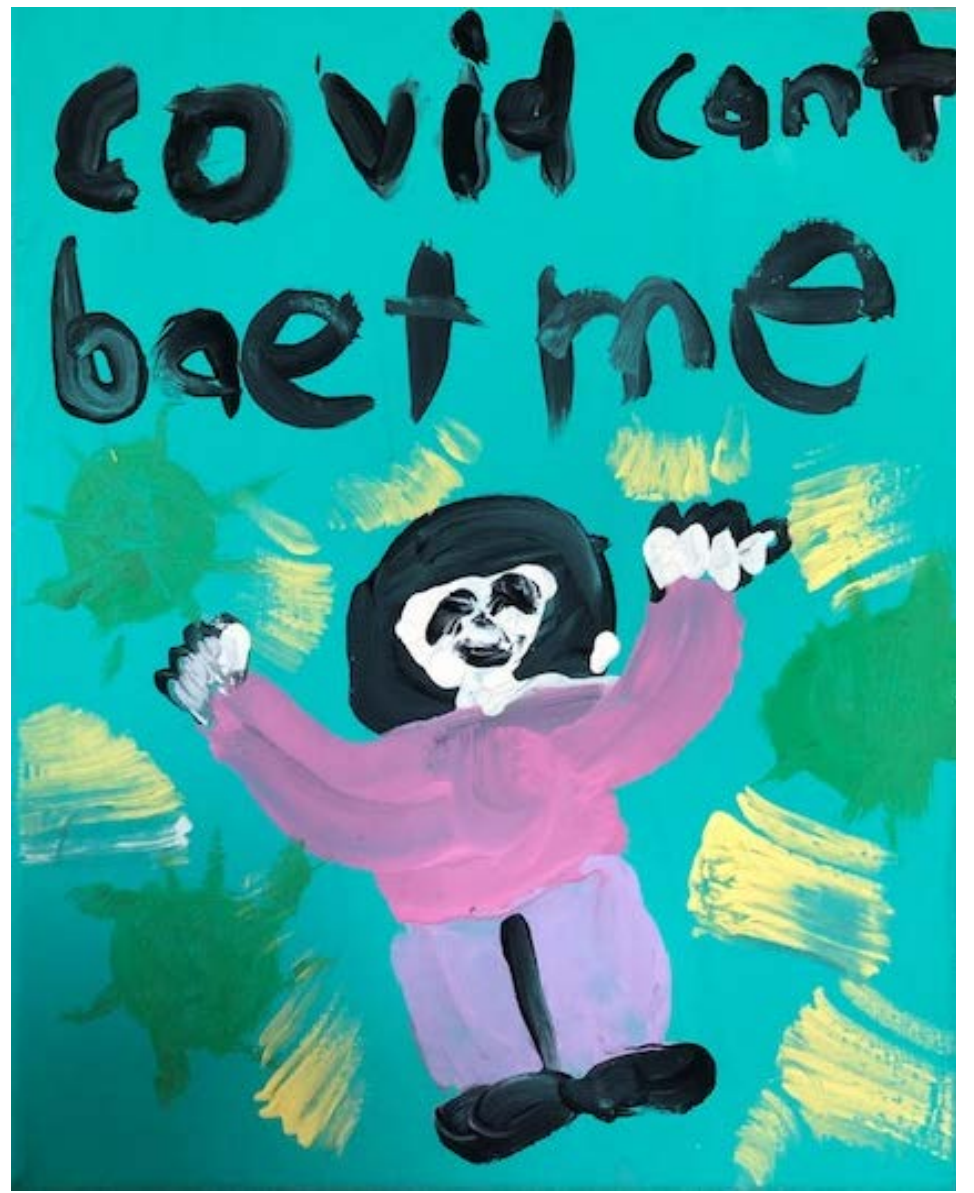
Quote of the Day

“Children; they have bad manners, contempt for authority; they show disrespect for elders and love chatter in place of exercise. They no longer rise when elders enter the room, they contradict their parents and tyrannize their teachers. Children are now tyrants.”

~ Socrates, 470-399 BC, *founder of Western philosophy*



Marloe Filippi (age 9)



Marloe Filippi (age 9)

A 74-year-old Child Running Wild

A clear crisp day
sunlight sharp as a blade
robin-egg sky, a joy to be alive
Chasing the grandson 'round the playground
through the tunnel
 up red metal steps
 down a twisting sliding board,
“You lose,” the 5-year-old declares.
I screech like Scrooge:
 “Come back, you!
 My turn down the slide!”
Of course he darts away, quick as a bird.
up and down, sideways and about, spiced with laughter, “You lose.”
who’s best standing on the see saw? “You lose.”
on the swing my feet fly toward the sky.
up comes the boy, high as a kite
perfect synchronicity. “You lose!”



Marloe Filippi (age 9)



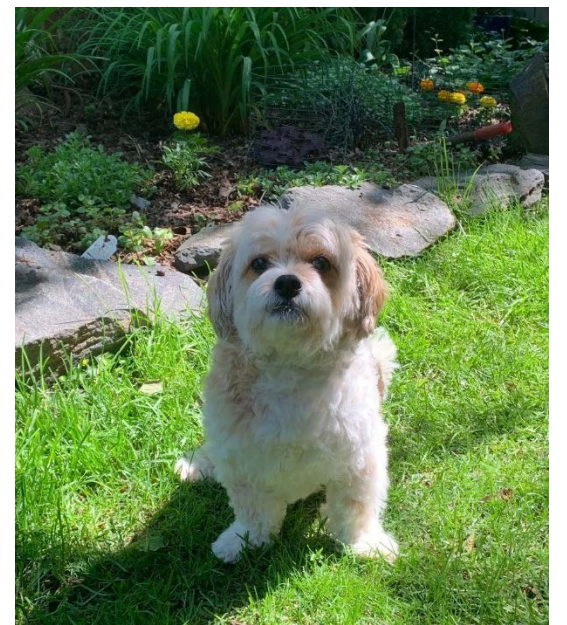
FEATURED DOG IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Christopher

The Prince of Alonsoville

Christopher is our beloved senior pup who rules the household with an iron paw (when his cat sister, Lucy, lets him). He loves his Alonsoville human friends, and you know you're special if he greets you with his distinctive woo-woo-woo howl of joy.

~ Mia Scharper, his human



FROM OUR EDITOR...

One More Word

Zen master Alan Watts practiced the art of “seeing the world as if for the first time,” in other words, seeing the world through the eyes of a child, no easy task as the years and decades pile up. Yet it’s possible to retain a sense of wonder.

Consider that owlet in Larry Grubb’s birdhouse, high on the sycamore. Neighbors congregated in the alley, hoping to catch a glimpse the baby’s head. She or he grew quickly. Soon we could see her face, those intense black eyes scanning joggers, dog walkers, and runners. One morning the owlet flew the coop, ending up in the middle of the alley. Flapping her wings, she wobbled up the steps, taking refuge among the ferns. People kept their distance. Mama owl eventually found her baby and led her down the stairs. For days neighbors would pause in the alley and search the trees for the owlet. One morning we were rewarded with the sight of her, pruning herself on a branch; higher up were the parents, keeping watch. What a lovely vision.

