

November 7, 2020

Dear Sir or Madam:

Our school read an amazing book called *A Good Kind of Trouble*, by Lisa Moore Ramee, which focuses on the life of one girl who is affected by the Black Lives Movement. Our class was so inspired by her story and our discussions about how these issues affect our own lives that we want to take action to contribute to our own “good kind of trouble.”

We saw that the Commission for Historical Statues was seeking submissions for a replacement for the Robert E. Lee statue at U.S. Capitol. This issue affects us greatly as our school, Orchard House School, is right next to a statue of Robert E. Lee on Monument Avenue. We are excited to each submit our own name for the statue, an explanation for our choice, and an artistic rendering.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our submissions. We look forward to finding out what the new statue will be!

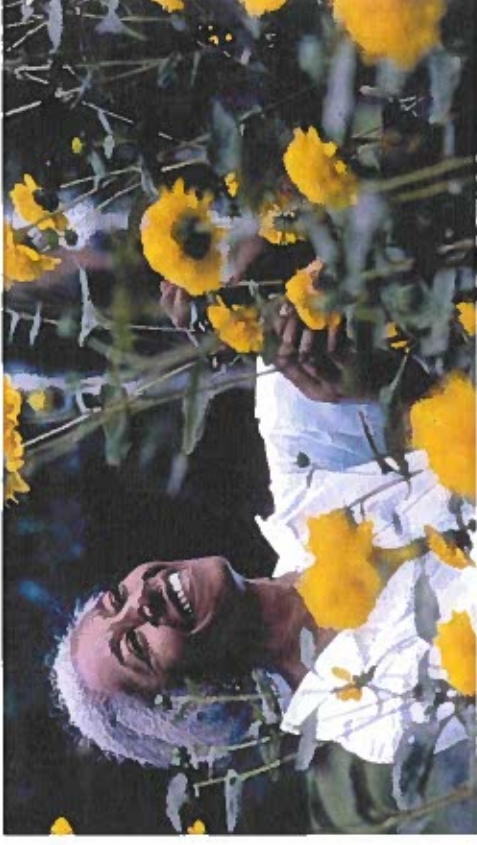
Sincerely,

Seventh Grade  
Orchard House School  
Richmond, Virginia

## Edna Lewis

I think that Edna Lewis should be honored in our Capital because she brought a new light to southern cooking, and how we can overcome life and the challenges it throws at us. Edna started out life as the granddaughter of an emancipated enslaved person, with eight siblings. Edna's father died when she was twelve years old, and at sixteen she left Freetown. She moved north, and worked in New York as a seamstress. A little while later she and her husband opened their restaurant, and it was a smashing success. It was visited and loved by Eleanor Roosevelt, William Faulker, and many more. Her menu brought old flavors, and new styles to southern cooking. Her ingenuity and culinary skill should be appreciated and highlighted in our Capital. Thank you for your consideration!

Lydia Whorley, Orchard House School



## **Maggie Lena Walker**

I think that Maggie Walker should be chosen because she was the first African-American woman to be president of a chartered bank. I especially think it should be a woman of color because in a time like this during the Black Lives Matter movement it's crucial to have a person of color let alone a woman. Here are some reasons why she should be picked: At the age of fourteen she worked for The Order of Saint Luke, which is a mutual aid organization that helped African-Americans with financial support in need. She also founded the St. Luke Herald newspaper, the St. Luke Emporium, and the St. Luke Penny Savings Bank. She then went on to become chairman of the board of the Consolidated Bank and Trust Company. Maggie Walker died in the Consolidated Bank and Trust Company.

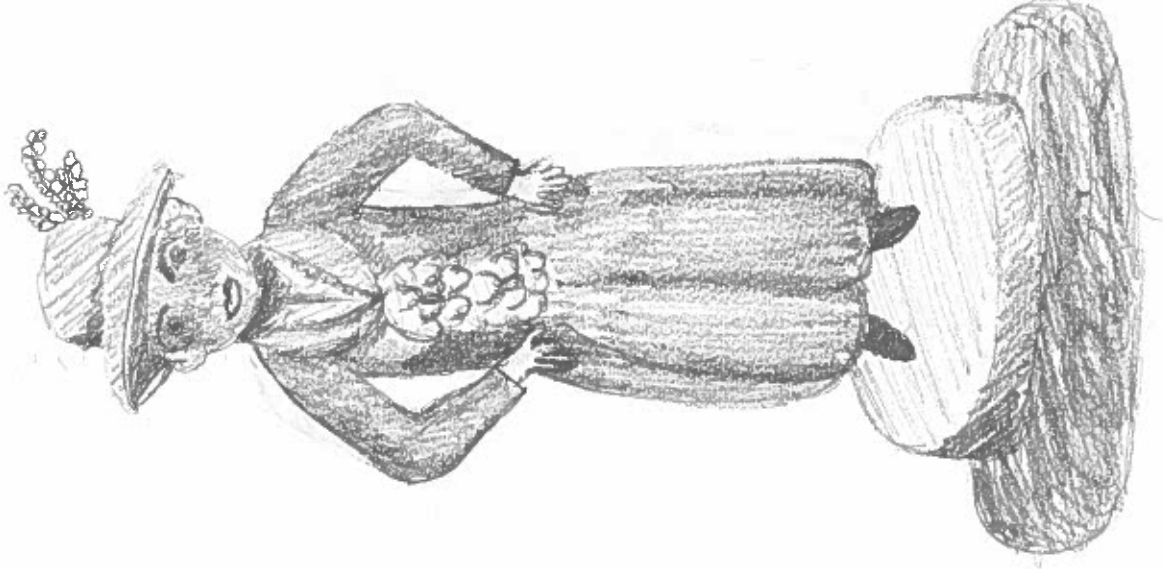
Evelyn Chapman 10/19/2020



### Anna Whitehead Bodeker

Anna Whitehead Bodeker was born in New Jersey. She moved to Virginia when she was ten years old and lived there the rest of her life. Anna married Augustus Bodeker, a German immigrant. By the late 1860s, she had begun to follow the activities of the National Woman Suffrage Association. When they came to visit Richmond, she invited them to discuss women's suffrage matters in her home, and the visitors left impressed. Soon Bodeker and other supporters founded the Virginia State Woman Suffrage Association, with Anna as president. I think that she was an important figure in the women's suffrage movement in Richmond, and I know that it would grab the attention of people who are not always recognized. It would mean a lot in terms of women's recognition in Virginia, and would force people to address the matter.

Lillian Davies, Orchard House School



## Neil Armstrong

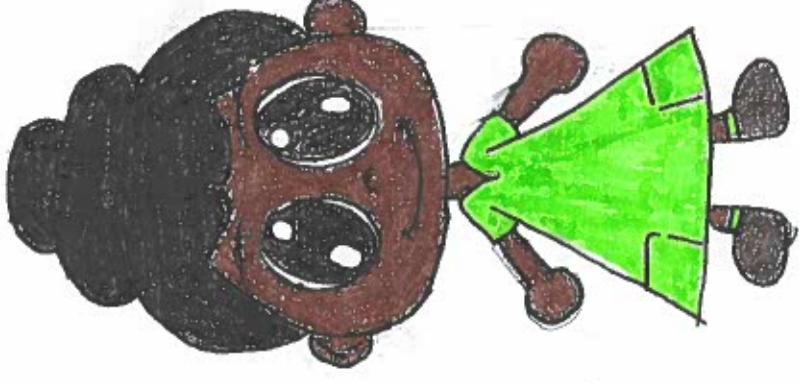
He was the first person to walk on the moon. I think that he is a good choice because he was the first person to travel to the moon, he taught people important things, and served in the navy. He didn't do something for just Virginia, did something for America. He helped people because he was brave enough to explore and see if it is too dangerous to go to the moon. He was also a university teacher. Teachers are always good people, they teach us good things like the history of the world and a lot more. If we didn't have teachers there would not be medical people, people to fight in the wars, and many more.

*Avery Meredith*



**Maggie Walker, submitted by Caroline McGettrick**

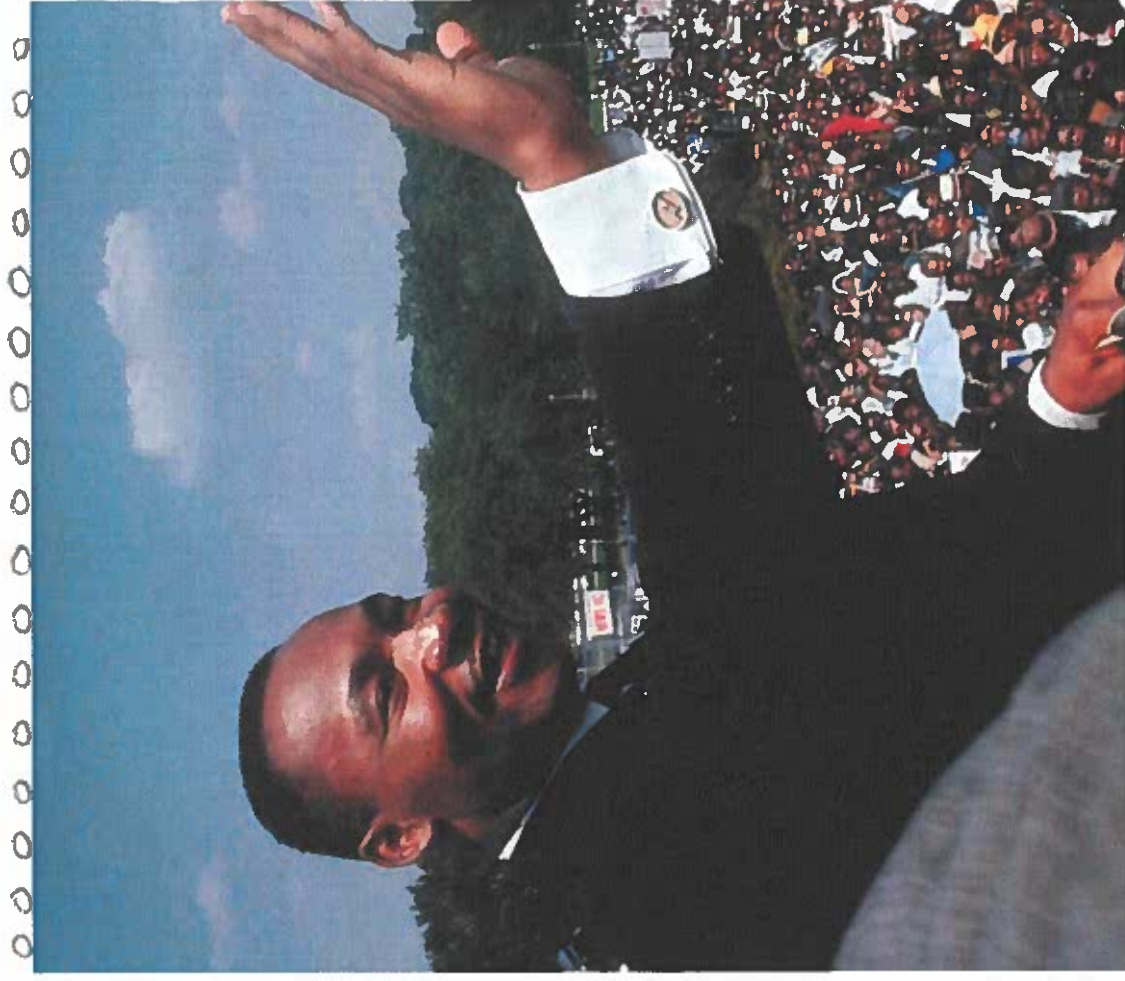
I chose Maggie Walker because she was an African-American teacher and I think teachers are really important to the community. Maggie Walker is a school named after Maggie Walker and I think that if she had a school named after her that's saying something. If she is a statue I think (I hope) everyone would like that better than Robert E. Lee, not just because she was a teacher but because of the impact she had on Virginia. Because of Maggie Walker we can have a great school to teach lots of kids. If the statue gets changed to Maggie Walker then "kids" can grow up to say they went to a school named after one of the best African-American women in Virginia. This year Maggie was one of eight women featured in "The Only One In The Room" display at the Smithsonian National Museum, that's pretty significant. Being a girl I am kind of biased because girls haven't really been represented. But even if I was a boy I think she would be better than Robert E. Lee.



Martin Luther King Jr.  
January 15 1929- April 4th 1968

Martin Luther King Jr. made a huge impact on our country. This world isn't anywhere near perfect but he made it a step closer. Martin was a social activist and Baptist minister who played a key role in the American civil rights movement from the mid-1950s until his assassination in 1968. He fought for equality and human rights for African Americans. He held peaceful protests and gave speeches. One of his most famous speeches is I Have a Dream in this speech he fought for African American rights and freedom.

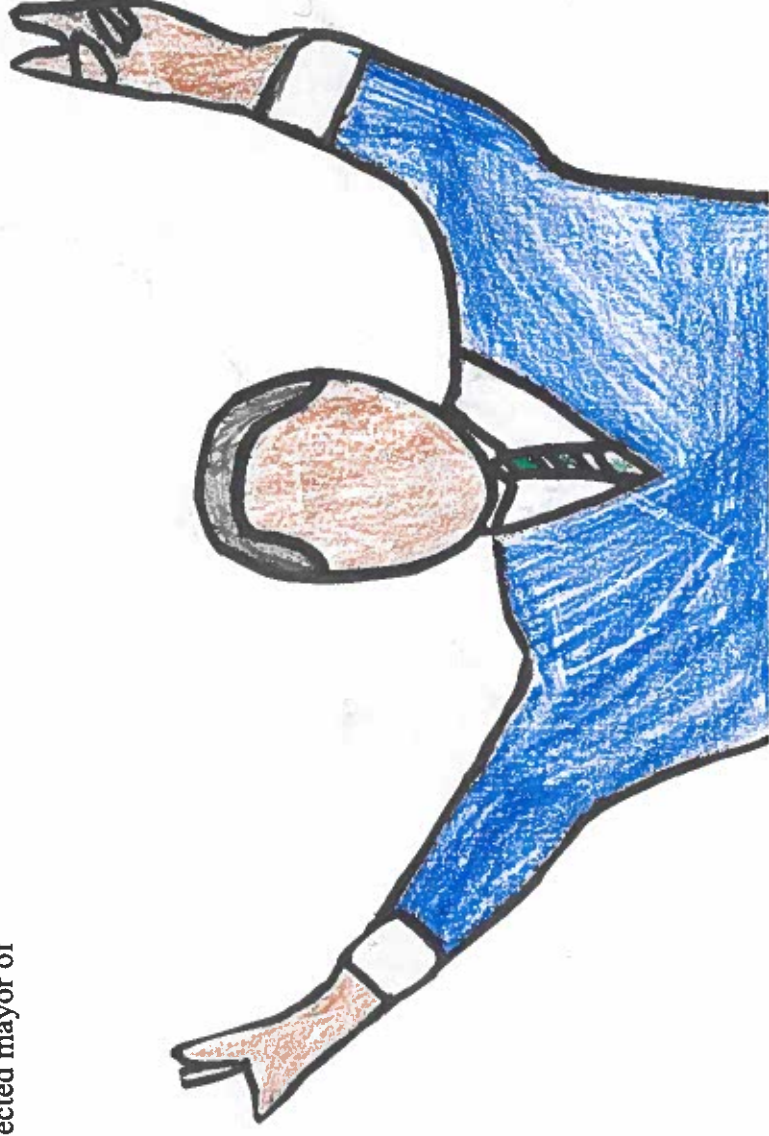
Layla Wintsch



## **L. Douglas Wilder**

I think L. Douglas Wilder should be the new statue. He was the first African American to be elected governor of the United States. He began his education segregated at George Mason Elementary and attended all-black Armstrong High School in Richmond. Wilder graduated from Howard University Law School in 1959 and soon afterwards established Wilder, Gregory and Associates. In 1969 Wilder entered politics, winning a seat in the Virginia State Senate during a special election. In 2004, L. Douglas Wilder returned to politics and was elected Mayor of Richmond with 79% of the vote. He became the first directly elected mayor of Richmond in sixty years.

Maria Finch

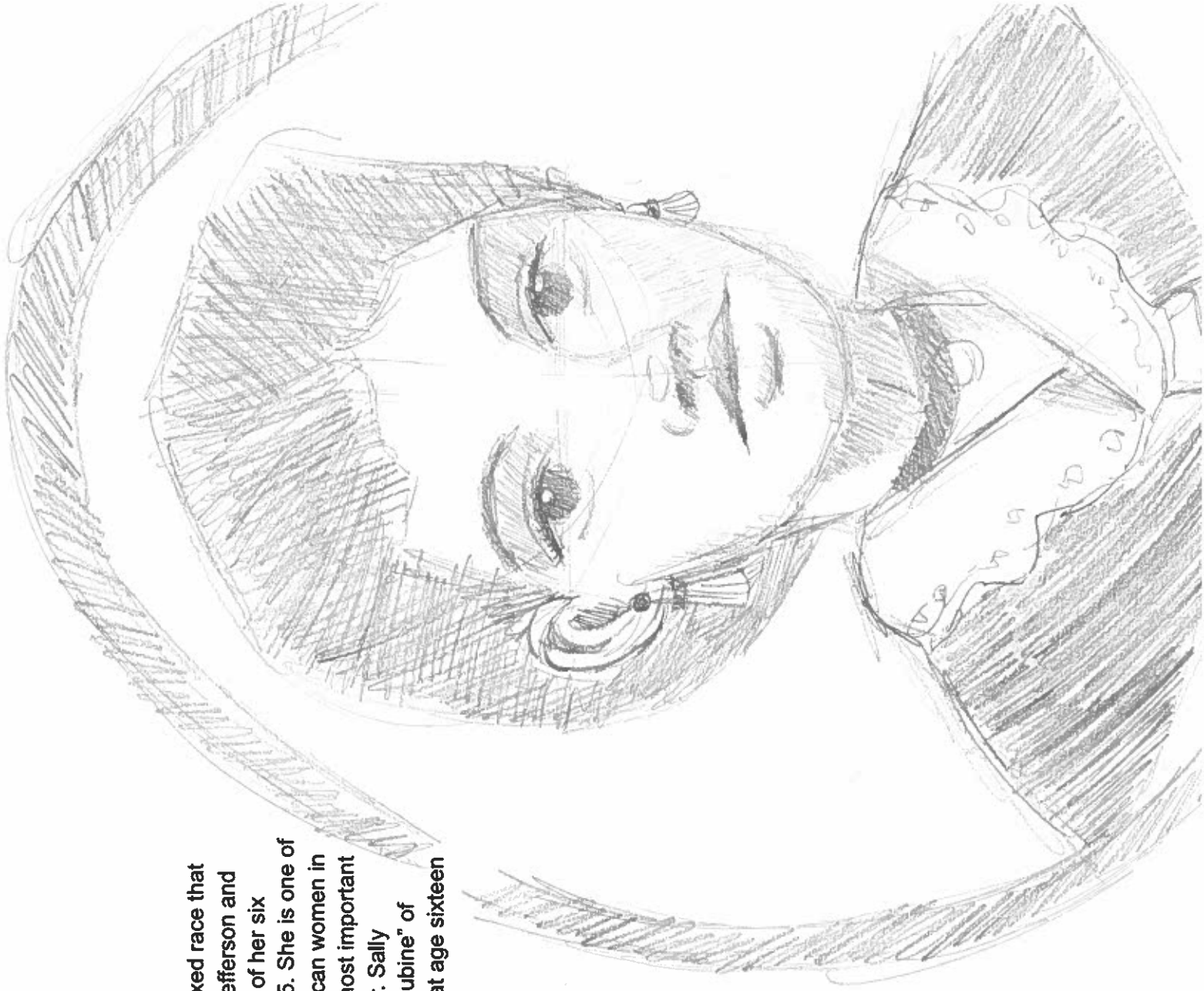




## Sally hemings

Sally Hemings was an enslaved woman of a mixed race that was thought to be the "concubine" of Thomas Jefferson and multiple sources suggest that he was the father of her six children. She was born in 1773 and died in 1835. She is one of the most famous and least known african american women in U.S history. Thomas Jefferson was one of the most important founding fathers, but also a lifelong slave owner. Sally hemings should not only be known as the "concubine" of Thomas Jeferson, but as a strong woman who at age sixteen negotiated for her and her children's freedom.

Javri Marlow



## Alexander Hamilton

I think the new statue should be Alexander Hamilton. I think it should be him because he was an important part in history and he was the secretary of treasury for George Washington for 5 years. He helped out the country by writing 85 essays for the federalist papers and he fought in the Revolutionary war. He actually came to America because he was such a good writer. Whoever is reading this should watch the musical! Lin Manuel Miranda made a whole musical about Alexander Hamilton and you can learn a lot from it! I think Alexander Hamilton was also against slavery, so I think lots of people would like that. Hamilton died in a duel with Aaron Burr. They had a duel because Hamilton voted for Jefferson to be president and Aaron Burr was mad about that.

Izzy (Elizabeth) Craft

This is Lin-Manuel  
Miranda:



This is Alexander  
Hamilton:

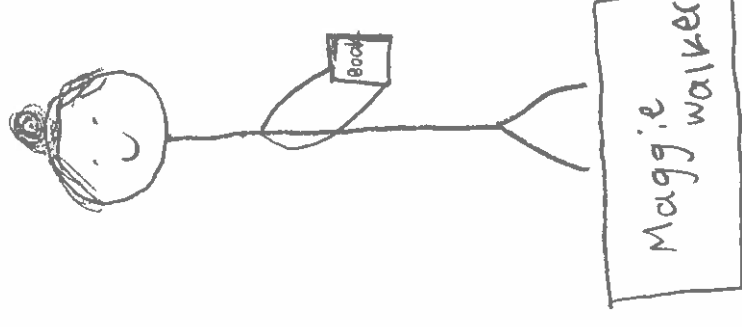


Maggie Walker (submitted by Imogene McBrayer)

I believe that Maggie Walker should be one of the statues because she was an african american business woman and teacher. During the civil war she had to face lots of things such as political and social barriers. She devoted her life to civil rights advancement and wanted everyone to have educational opportunities.

Something that she really wanted to do was help jim crow era african americans. She was a newspaper editor and bank president. They preserved her home as a tribute to her courage and determination.

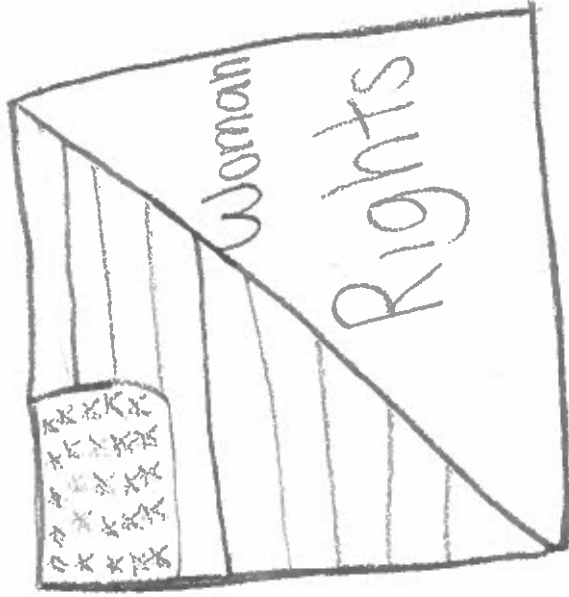
Once she said "I was not born with a silver spoon in my mouth but with a clothes basket almost upon my head, I have come up on the rough side of the mountain." This definitely represents the beauty and intelligence of Maggie Walker and picking her for the monument would represent the beauty of Virginia.



I think that you should put Susan B. Anthony as the new statue. Susan B. Anthony was a woman rights activist who traveled to Virginia to meet with congress and the president. She also met with lots of women rights groups to speak out for what she believed in. Susan B. Anthony wrote daily diaries to tell her story and to make sure that people don't forget what she fought for. I think Susan B. Anthony had a great impact on the world around her and made sure that people know her name. She never gave up on changing the world and so since we are taking down the statue it is time for some change.

By Elise Nee

Orchard House  
School



## Maggie Walker

Maggie Walker was a businesswoman and teacher. She was a very important person. She was the first African-American woman to charter a bank and serve as its president in the United States. She should be on the statue because too few people know about her and she was a very important person. She had a vision to make improvements in the way of life for African-Americans.



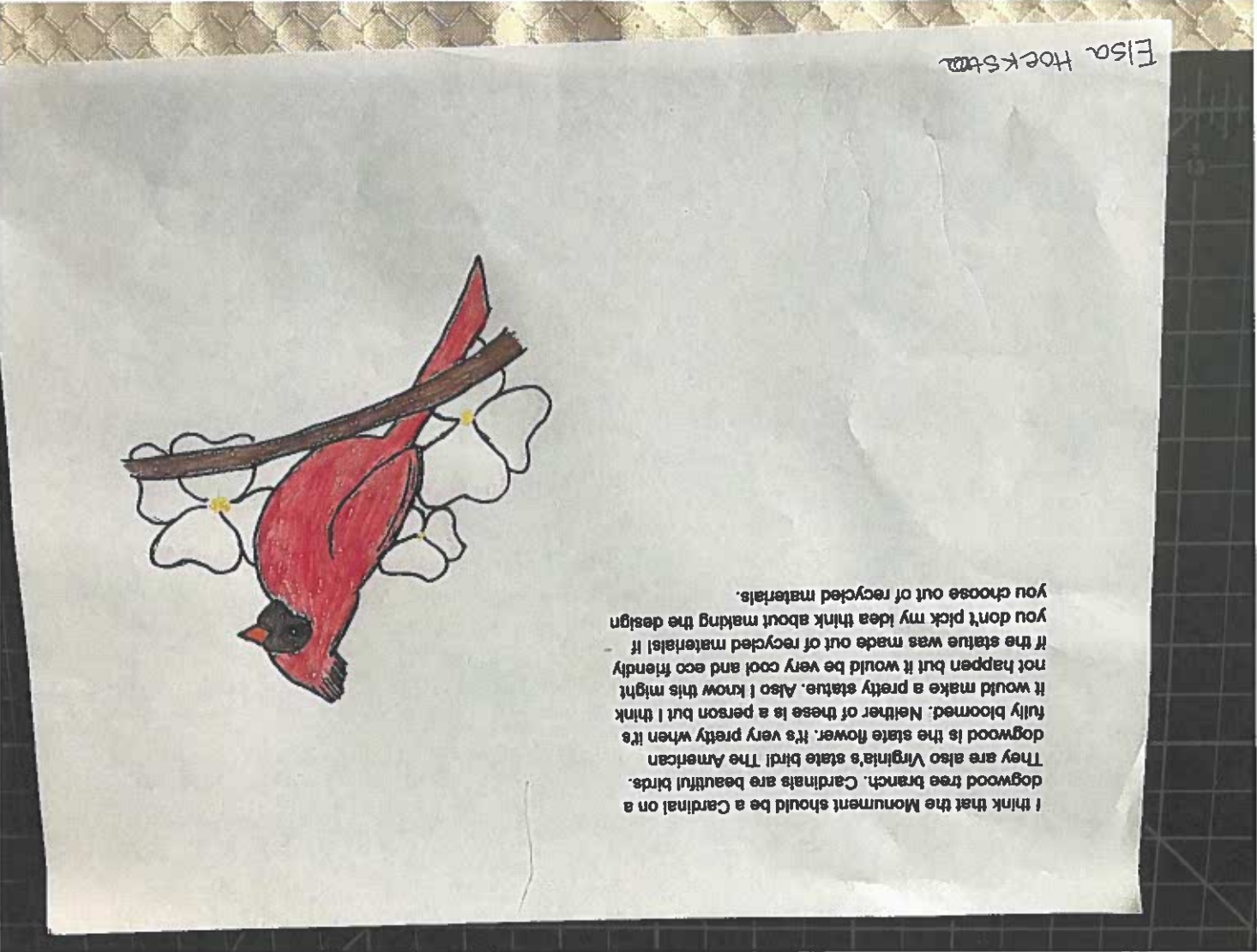
Claire Gatewood

Carmen Barclay-Foley

## Gordon Ramsey

I think Gordon Ramsey should be the new figure in the statue because he is an extremely good cook and helped out lots of restaurants in VA. He also inspired and helped VA to open 5 restaurants and in 2019 appeared on Food Network's Bite Club. He is a well known celebrity. With being a famous cook, lots of people's idols have been on Master chef, master chef Jr., Hell's Kitchen, and over 10 other well known shows. Lots of people look up to him and want to be just like him and I think it would help bring a lot of people to VA if they heard there was a statue of Gordon Ramsey and people would think there would be gourmet food here, (there is) we might get a bigger population. In conclusion, having a statue of the most famous cook, would be a great idea.





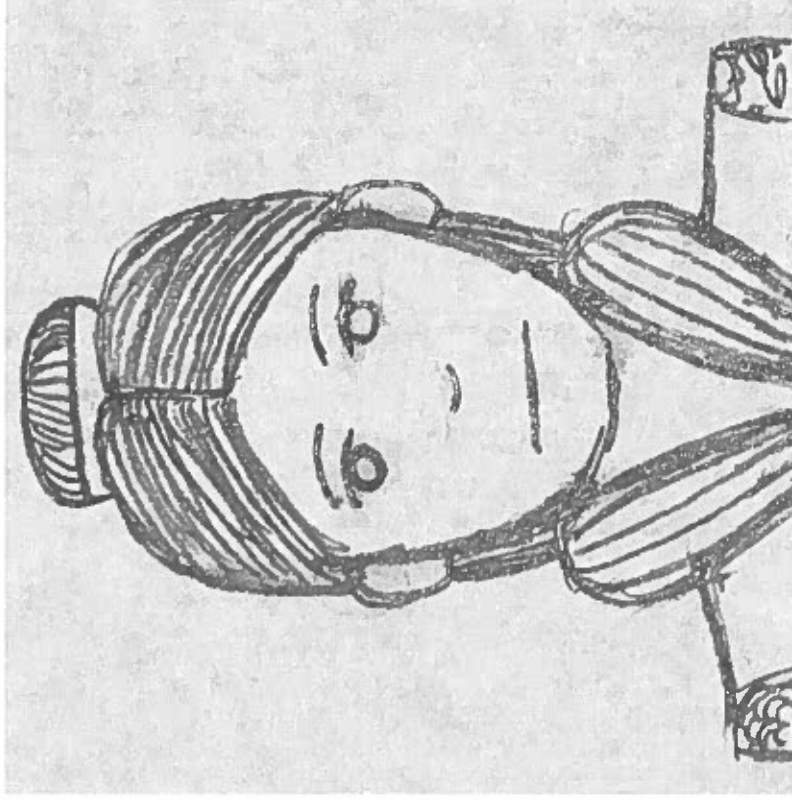
Elsa Hocksta

I think that the Monument should be a Cardinal on a dogwood tree branch. Cardinals are beautiful birds. They are also Virginia's state bird! The American dogwood is the state flower. It's very pretty when it's fully bloomed. Neither of these is a person but I think it would make a pretty statue. Also I know this might not happen but it would be very cool and eco friendly if the statue was made out of recycled materials! If you don't pick my idea think about making the design you choose out of recycled materials.

Virginia Minor  
(1824 - 1894)

Virginia Minor was born in Virginia. Even though Minor was from Virginia, they supported the Union during the Civil War. After the war Minor became involved with the women's suffrage movement. She helped form the Woman Suffrage Association of Missouri. Which was the first organization in the state formed entirely to support women's voting rights. And served as their president for 5 years. After that she joined the National Woman Suffrage Association. She's a powerful advocate for women's voting rights.

Undsay Gogia





Elizabeth Van Lew

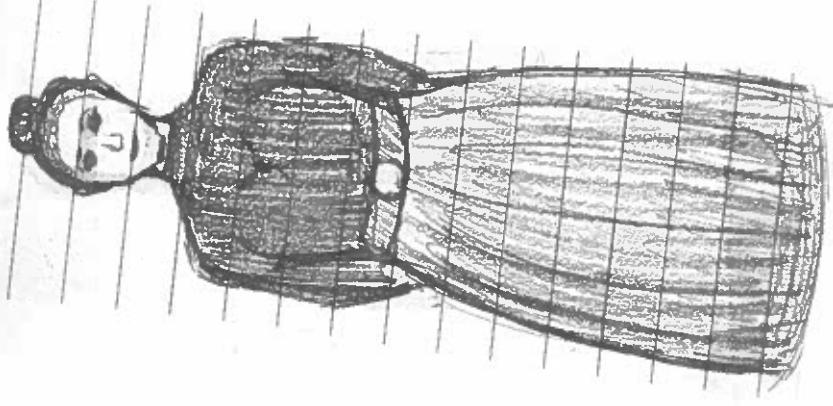
Elizabeth Van Lew was born on October 12, 1818, in Richmond, VA. She died on September 25, 1900, in Richmond, VA. Her father, John Van Lew, was a slave owner. But, when he died, Elizabeth Van Lew, freed all of his slaves. She also sent some to school. But later, when the Civil War started, Elizabeth recruited many slaves to be spies for the Union. They relayed information that they had heard to Elizabeth, who then communicated it to the Union. I think that should be commemorated in the capitol building downtown because she was an important part of the Civil War and a great, and strong woman. And, she freed and helped many slaves in the 1800's.



## Maggie Lee Walker

She was the first Black woman in the nation to organize and run a bank. And she did it in the segregated South in the former capital of the Confederacy, Richmond, Virginia. Maggie Lena Walker graduated from school in 1883, having been trained as a teacher. She married a brick contractor in 1886 and left her teaching job, at which point she became more active within the Independent Order of St. Luke, an organization dedicated to the social and financial advancement of African Americans. In 1899, Maggie became the grand secretary of the organization - a position that she would hold for the rest of her life. During her tenure, she founded the organization's newspaper and opened a highly successful bank and a department store. By the time she died, on December 15, 1934, Maggie had turned the nearly bankrupt organization into a profitable and effective one. I personally think that she was a really cool woman. She didn't really care what other people thought about her dreams and what she wanted for herself. I see her as an amazing role model for myself and the rest of the US.

Maggie Stanley



### **Bruce Garnett**

**Bruce Garnett was a advocate for gay rights. I feel this would be a good statue because I feel that Virginia is starting to open its eyes to the idea of lgbtqia+ people and I believe it would mean a lot to quite a few people as well as open some people's eyes in the direction of accepting these things if this statue is chosen. He also just seems like a really genuine person who I personally look up to, his attitude would also be a good role model for some of the more one minded people. Garnett spoke at many places and he formed Gay rights Association in richmond. I feel Bruce Garnett would be a great role model for future children and possibly adults as well.**

**-Essa Freeman**



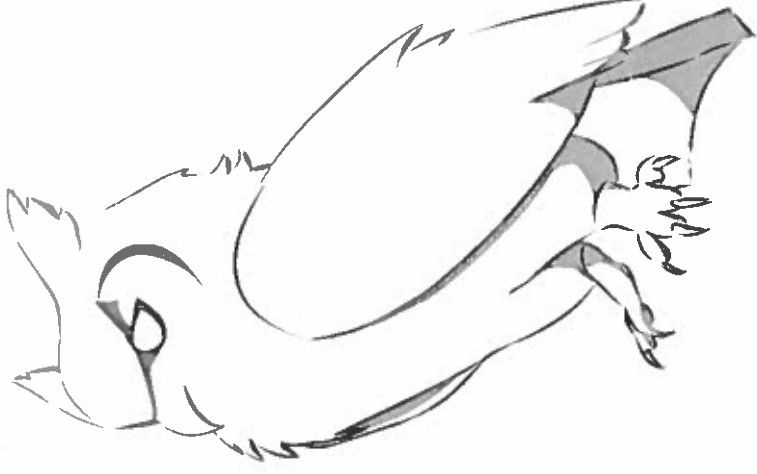
## Great Horned Owl

Hello. Now I know you may be thinking I'm crazy for saying this, but hear me out. Though the bird is not **officially** related to Virginia history, you have to admit the beauty and the grace of this bird. It is a bird that resides in Virginia. They also won't take anyone else's crap and are quite feisty when threatened.

Now, you might be wondering, why a bird? Well, in my opinion, they're better than humans, and I would've chosen some type of pet, but people have allergies and stuff and...*that just wouldn't have worked*. It doesn't have to be a big statue either, just big enough to be seen so people can ask, "WHY **THE HECK WOULD YOU PUT A BIRD AS OUR NEW STATUE**". Which I (and many others) would find hilarious. I personally just don't want another old white guy on top of a pedestal. It's getting old(heh). And whatever we put up a statue of, there will be riots no matter what. So why not make it *ridiculous* to riot about? Now I know it would be hard to make this a statue, so why not a mural at least? It's still able to be seen, and not in the middle of the road. However, if you make it a mural, it might just seem cool instead of funny... so make it a statue please.

Though I know this is probably not what you were expecting, this is what you get. So, will you join me on the train of comedy?

- Lucy Rocket Bishop



UWU

## Huey P. Newton

Huey P. Newton is from Monroe, LA.

You may have heard of him from the Black Panther Party. I believe that Huey P. Newton should be the new monument. Because he had done amazing things in history for the black community that's super important to me. Him and Bobby Seale founded the Black Panther Party to fight against Police Brutality in America. Which is a very important cause back then! The Black Panther Party was started in Oakland, California. Some things that Newton did with the Black Panther Party was that they were the Free Breakfast for Children Programs which is still a program to this day. The Black Panther Party ended in 1982. The new modern day version is Black Lives Matter. They have been on the news alot. I hope that you have Bobby Seale as your new monument. He has done alot for us Americans.

-Asani Ka-Re

10-26-2020

