



# Students design coins for War of 1812 commemoration

## They show off their ideas at Fort McHenry

By Mary Gail Hare, The Baltimore Sun

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Connor Tudja, 10, jumped at the chance to design a coin to commemorate the War of 1812. He researched the 1814 battle at [Fort McHenry](#) before taking pen and watercolors to poster board. He used a gold background for his coin, which features an image of Francis Scott Key, author of the national anthem, inside a 15-star American flag on its front. On the back, he outlined the fort.

He and several other young artists who have submitted their ideas to the Maryland War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission showed off their designs at Fort McHenry on Monday.



Barbara Haddock Taylor, Baltimore Sun

"I have been here to the fort before, and I like history," said Connor, a student at St. Ursula's School in [Parkville](#).

The commission will consider his and other youthful ideas before making a recommendation to the U.S. Mint, which will issue a \$5 gold piece and a \$1 silver piece early in 2012. The issuance, marking the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812, will help kick off the celebration of the nation's second war for independence. If Virginia's [Jamestown](#) coin, which generated about \$6 million in revenue a few years ago, is any indication, proceeds should cover a hefty percentage of the costs of the festivities, officials said.

"Clearly, we will be honoring the War of 1812 and showing what Baltimore was about 200 years ago," said Rep. C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger, who helped push the coin issue through Congress. "This will be a celebration and an education. And it won't cost taxpayers a thing."

The commemoration will begin with a weeklong maritime festival at the Baltimore harbor in June 2012. The events will likely draw millions of visitors and spur as many as 2,100 full-time jobs and \$100 million in revenues, said Bill Pencek, director of the state's bicentennial commission.

"These events will elevate Maryland globally as a premier place to live, work and visit, and drive economic development," he said.

The coin will be the catalyst, "the bedrock of our commemoration success," Pencek said, while lauding the dozen student submissions on display. The drawings featured images of the flag that flew over the fort in September 1814 and phrases from the national anthem, which Francis Scott Key wrote in the aftermath of the British bombardment.

"I used the flag, the stars and the moon to show the battle went on for several hours," said Josh Engleman, 10, a student at Warren Elementary in Cockeysville.

Alyssa Engleman, Josh's 13-year-old sister, outlined the footprint of the fort, calculating with her ruler to ensure accuracy.

"The fort has a really interesting shape, almost like a star," she said. "I learned a lot of facts that I didn't know about this war and why we fought it, when I was doing this project."

Jack Linnehan, 10, a Jacksonville Elementary student, chose the bald eagle.

"I looked at a lot of other coins and they had eagles," he said.

Griffin Oursler, 11, wrote "God bless America" over his drawing of an American flag, an eternal flame and the [Red Cross](#), which was founded about 70 years after the war.

"I just thought it would be good to include the Red Cross because it helps a lot of people," said Griffin, a student at Warren Elementary. "This contest gives me a chance to make a coin and maybe say years from now, maybe to my grandchildren, that I made the 1812 coin."

*The commission is accepting students' designs through Oct. 8 at its offices in the World Trade Center, 14th floor, 401 E. Pratt St., Baltimore 21202. Attn: Kate Marks.*

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