

Sidewalk Poetry Contest Winners Announced

The Arts and Culture Commission of Northfield, in partnership with the Friends of the Library, is pleased to announce the winners of the city's first annual Sidewalk Poetry Contest. Nine poems have been selected for imprinting in city sidewalks from the 121 poems submitted for judging. Winning poets, in alphabetical order, are: Brendon Etter, Olivia M. Fantini, Patrick Ganey, Lily Hanlon, Rob Hardy, Brenda Hellen, Joan Reitz, and Anne Running Sovik. Five contest judges chosen from across the community were asked to select eight to ten poems. The judging process was blind, in that poems were not identified by author's names at the time of judging. The names of the contestants were maintained by the Friends of the Library until the judging was completed. The winning poems are on display at the Northfield Library. Plans are underway for a community celebration at which the winning poems will be read. The Arts and Culture Commission would like to thank Northfield residents for their enthusiastic response to the contest.

The selected poems:

When the songs of our grandmothers
fill our mouths
we are obliged to sing.

Brenda Hellen

This is for flames, for petals, for the
weight of night and morning's distance,
for futility and grace.
This is for love
hovering over dark water,
a lone crane that never lands.

Brenda Hellen

laughing baby in the supermarket
shaking a box of animal crackers
too much life for one shopping cart.
your toothless smile
has thrown me a life raft
in this terrible ocean
of havoc and hope.

Olivia M. Fantini

The whistled tune
travels along the sidewalk
stepping up up up
down up
jaunty as the man
who follows

Anne Running Sovik

still winter thaw

tall pines bend, grey sky drops rain,
even at midday
a train whistle sounds lonely

Patrick Ganey

On this spot
someone once thought of something,
someone remembered,
someone stopped to talk
to someone she had not seen all winter.
Something happened here:
rain fell,
wind tugged at someone's umbrella,
someone persevered.

Rob Hardy

...at the beginning, continue
through to this verse's end
and having reached that do
move along, or else again,
begin...

Brendon Etter

spider web gleaming

fragile in the bright sunshine

but oh – the spider

Joan Reitz

Do not be afraid
to let your mind
wander

Lily Hanlon