



2022 Walt Howat Memorial Poetry Contest Winners

Winning Haiku Ages 7 to 8

First Place

The Sun Is Shining by Nina Strzodka

The sun is shining
Horseback riding makes me hot
Nicky fills my heart

*Nina Strzodka
Medford, NJ
Age 7, grade 2*

Second Place

In the Pine Barrens by Delia Gaile

In the Pine Barrens
Where the Jersey Devil lives
Playing in the lakes

*Delia Gaile
Medford, NJ
Age 8, grade 2*

Third Place

I Like LBI by Felicity Ackley

I like LBI

The salty ocean is clear
But it burns my eyes

Felicity Ackley
Marlton, NJ
Age 8, grade 3

Honorable Mention

At Devil's Stadium by Brayden Abrams

At Devil's Stadium
My favorite hockey team
Pucks slam against the boards

Brayden Abrams
Medford, NJ
Age 8, grade 3

Winning Haiku Ages 9 to 10

First Place

My Sea Isle Breeze Life by Chloe Barker

My Sea Isle Breeze life
Cold waves washing up seashells
Sounds of boat motors

Chloe Barker
Hainesport, NJ
Age 10, grade 6

Second Place

The Little Bird by Michael Nelson

The Eastern Goldfinch
Soaring over vast mountain peaks

In the swift moonlight.

*Michael Nelson
Cherry Hill, NJ
Age 10, grade 5-2*

Third Place

At Cedar Run Camp by Aaron Carapetyan

At Cedar Run Camp
Nature is all around me
Birds and leaves rustle

*Aaron Carapetyan
Cherry Hill, NJ
Age 10, grade 5*

Honorable Mention

Six Flags Is So Fun by Max Ronca

Six Flags is so fun
Riding Nitro with my dad
He is my best friend

*Max Ronca
Medford, NJ
Age 10, grade 5*

Winning Haiku, Ages 11 to 13

First Place

The American Goldfinch by Aubrey Stein

The American Goldfinch
Black and white wings soar
Like an angel in the sky

Golden feathers shine

*Aubrey Stein
Westville, NJ
Age 12, grade 7*

Second Place

Beemerville Volcano by Violet Young

Beemerville Volcano
Long gone are those days
Of damage and destruction
The lone giant rests

*Violet Young
Haddon Township, NJ
Age 12, grade 7*

Third Place

7th Street Surfing by Emelia Vespe

7th Street Surfing
Catch the wave and feel
Sandy wax under my feet
Cold, salty water

*Emelia Vespe
Haddonfield, NJ
Age 13, grade 8*

Honorable Mention

A Dance in the Rain by Isla Jove Kunst

A Dance in the Rain
The flower blossoms
A violent stands alone happy

Dancing in the rain

*Isla Jove Kunst
Collingswood, NJ
Age 12, grade 7*

Honorable Mention

LBI Breeze by Morgan Donegan

Long Beach Island Breeze
Ocean waves wash up on sand
Freezing bubbly tide

*Morgan Donegan
Medford, NJ
Age 11, grade 6*

Winning Poems, Age 8

Johnson's Farm by Gianna Locilento

Leaves are falling on the ground,
Apples are growing all around
Pumpkin picking is super fun,
Apple cider is number one
The peaches there are super sweet
I'll take them home and then I'll eat!

*Gianna Locilento
Collingswood, NJ
Age 8
Mark Newbie School*

Second Place

Johnson's Farm (a triolet) by Felicity Ackley

The water park is very fun,
Johnson's Farm is cool.
Fun in the sun.
The water park is very fun.
Playing until the day is done.
This place rules!
The water park is very fun,
Johnson's Farm is cool.

*Felicity Ackley
Marlton, NJ
Age 8, grade 3*

Third Place

Funny Farm by Lila Goldstein

Funny Farm is a Funny Farm,
a family Friendly Funny Farm.
Funny bunnies live at Funny Farm.
Bunnies like when it's sunny at
Funny Farm.
Funny Farm is the best farm
In the world!

*Lila Goldstein
Cherry Hill
Age 8, grade 3
Shera Goldstein*

Honorable Mention

JCC Camp (a triolet) by Ava Carapetyan

Fun fun everywhere,
JCC is great!
Look at the sun.
Fun fun everywhere.
There's only one.

I just can't wait.
Fun fun everywhere,
JCC is great!

*Ava Carapetyan
Cherry Hill, NJ
Age 8, grade 3*

Honorable Mention

Ventnor City by Blaise Corso

The grass is green and the sky is blue
On the beach the sand is gold
The waves are clear
Once in awhile you will see a dolphin or two.
There are so many things to do
In Ventnor City
Like golf at Congo Falls
Or an inflatable water park
Then lunch with a friend.

*Blaise Corso
Collingswood, NJ
Age 8
Mark Newbie School*

Winning Poems, Age 9-10

First Place

Clementon Park by Farrah Crosby

Clementon Park, Clementon Park
the one roller coaster
that moves like a spark
you can't move your body
it turns like a pretzel
and every drop
you don't know
if it will ever stop,
but Clementon Park Clementon Park

has the one and only roller coaster
that moves like a spark.

Farrah Crosby
Collingswood, NJ
Age 9

Second Place

The Volcano in NJ by Emma McGrath

When someone says volcano,
What do you think of?
A mountain so high
that it is touching the sky,
when a sudden burst of lava
shoots out the top like a pinata.

As volcanoes are known to be
in the sunny tropical islands...
there is an extinct volcano lying down for sleep

In New Jersey,
Imagine on a windy day,
the trees are shaking,
the wind is howling,
suddenly everything is still.
BOOM BOOM BOOM!
The lava shoots out the top.
Just then you'll know that
you experienced a volcano.

The lava cascades down the volcano
like a river in the valleys.
Down the hills and through the meadows
it goes
Now the volcano is lying down for sleep
in New Jersey.

Emma McGrath
Cherry Hill, NJ
Age 10, grade 5

Third Place

Fairy Trail by Gabriella Crowther

So many little fairy neighborhoods,
cute little houses out in the woods.

Some made of wood, some made of stone,
all of the houses with a different color tone.

Some have moss, some have spots,
they are all different, but they're all fairy lots.

Some are big, some are small
Some are hidden, while others stand tall.

Out at South Mountain, Millburn, New Jersey,
lives a little forest where fairies live and play.

Such a long hike, two hours long,
such a beautiful sight, a lot of waterfalls.

Fun with my family, a fun fairy hike,
it's a beautiful fairy trail, from morning to night.

*Gabriella Crowther
Mount Ephraim, NJ
Age 9, grade 4*

Honorable Mention

Volcano by Vivienne Placentra

Boom, Bang, Bash!
Cling, Clang, Clash!
But it doesn't do
That anymore.
Kablam, Kabash, Kaboom!
Explosions and Commotion!

I said, it doesn't
Do that anymore!
Pew, Pew, Pow! -
Listen! The Volcano
Isn't active anymore!
Sorry I was just
Making sounds for a
Hawaiian Volcano,
Exhales You could have
Told me that sooner!!!

Vivienne Placentra
Collingswood, NJ
Age 10, grade 5

Honorable Mention

New Jersey's Diner by Emily Nguyen

The diner's thick, wood, brown
doors as heavy as a brick.
The bell chiming as you enter
inside. The sweet smell of coffee
and donuts swaying through the air
like palm trees.

Listening to the diner's music
beating like drums while
being gracefully seated by the
waiter as the wind peacefully
whistles through the open
window.

Emily Nguyen
Cherry Hill, NJ
Age 10, grade 5

Winning Poems, Ages 11 to 13

First Place

The Uncommon Violet by Emilia Romano

Under this abstract sky of heather,
Beneath the swirling, paisley clouds,
Twist, curl, and reach to one another
A lingering grasp through the curtain of rain

Pounding to the ground
Beating one with the hearts of a state
Soaking through the spongy earth
Lovingly nourishing life in her palm

The sodden, trodden, fudge-colored dirt
Home to the Greatest treasure of all.
A seed
A tough, hopeful young thing
Nestled in this garden haven,
Look! There,
A crack in the shell
A splintering, splitting schism
Crrrrracking with subtle ferocity
A gymnast wobbling on the balance between life
And nothingness

Look! There,
Marvel at that fighting spirit
Equal to the fire
Burning in the hearts of all who call this state home

Look... there...
That sprout, glowing with youth, brimming with possibility
That green... gentle but strong
Quiet... but supporting

Look... there...
At that special certain vibrance
Look... there...
New Jersey...

The uncommon violet.

Emilia Romano
Mullica Hill, NJ
Age 13, grade 8

Second Place

Running, Racing by Declan Walsh

Horses, running, racing,
Riders, yelling, pushing,
Crowds; cheering, booing,
Stadium, packed with people,
Racetrack, dirt spraying,

All gone in the past,
the racetrack replaced
The gateway all alone
the sound of the horses hooves
Replaced by cars beeping
Like a mob of angry people
The large stadium
Replaced by giant box stores
Large enough to make an elephant seem like an ant

There will never again be
The horses, riders, crowds,
Stadium, racetrack

Now it is not the horses, running, racing,
but my memories.

Declan Walsh
Merchantville, NJ
Age 12, grade 7

Third Place

Midnight Beach by Natalie Gibison

The cool sand
Invading my shoes as I walk
Through the empty beach,
Chilled midnight breeze dancing through
My hair causes goosebumps to appear on my skin.
The only black night surrounds me,
My only flashlight is from the new moon.
I'm cautious of high tide as
The waves become louder with each step.
I feel the damp sand through my shoes
that waves spilled over moments ago.
I can't see anything, relying on my
Other senses to take control.
I close my eyes seeing the same pitch black,
And take a deep breath.
The scent of fresh sea salt surrounding me,
The waves just below me reaching as far as they could
Before being pulled back to the ocean,
The breeze flows through my hair again,
I could live this moment forever.

Natalie Gibison
Haddon Township
Age 13, grade 8

Honorable Mention

College Football by David Bowen

A sapphire day in the large open fields
The sun radiating
The emerald grass swaying in the wind
A lovely day to be in the Garden State
A man clothed with a leather cap for protection
Begins to play the game of football
The rugged ball thrown by the Quarterback

Soaring through the air
Like a javelin from the Olympic games
All to arrive in the hands of the receiver
Dashing to the end zone
an ostrich
Running towards its prey
The Prey caught an end zone
scored
And a crowd screaming with satisfaction

On a sapphire day in the Garden State
College football was created.

David Bowen
Cherry Hill
Age 11, grade 7

Honorable Mention:

New Jersey, You Are... by Lucy Bielicki

New Jersey you are the many seasons
Present and ever changing
I could never list all the reasons
How you are eternally rearranging

New Jersey you are the spring birds singing
You are their silence as well
You are the maple leaves swinging
And the ground where they will soon dwell

But New Jersey you are not perfect
You have many flaws
And are not always correct
You must build on what was

New Jersey, I love your every side
You live in long after I have died
Lucy Bielicki

Haddon Township, NJ
Age 12, grade 8

Honorable Mention

New Jersey's Honey Bee by Caroline Bell

When I think of a honeybee, I think of their stingers as swords.
When I look at a rose, all I see is it's thorns.
I'm sure, as you know, there's more than meets the eye.
I know they seem strong but even the toughest creatures cry.

Sometimes, we're judged on our exterior alone.
We're even judged on the state we call home.
We all put up this wall that's hard to knock down,
But if it isn't gone soon, we won't ever be found.

Whether you live in New Jersey, Massachusetts, Virginia or Maine,
China, India, or in Ukraine. You all have a home that's special to you,
And you shouldn't be judged, no matter what point of view.

This judgmental world and society we're in,
Makes us feel unsafe or lost in our own skin.
I hope you know, your life, up until death,
is always worth living, worth every last breath.

Caroline Bell
Pennsauken, NJ
Age 12, grade 7