

**Young Poets of Delaware County
Contest Winners, 2019
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**Lucas Sopher
Grade 1
Coopertown Elementary
Haverford Township School District
First Place**

Angry

By: Lucas Sopher

I'm angry
'cause I don't like to write poems.
I'm angry
'cause I'm getting tired of Ms. Show'ems.
She's telling me to write some poems,
And I don't know'ems
How to write poems.

**Corinne Luba
Grade 1
Coopertown Elementary
Haverford Township School District
Second Place**

Rainbow Flowers
By: Corinne Luba

Rainbow flowers outside my window.
Rain and Shine helped them grow.
Orange and pink, blue and purple.
The happiness of a new spring day.

**Charleigh Hughes
Grade 1
Parkside Elementary
Penn-Delco School District
Third Place**

Feelings

Sometimes I feel sad at school but I do not know why.

It is not school.

Sometimes I feel sad at home but I do not know why.

I do not know why I cry. It is not school or home.

It is fun at school and at my home. Sometimes I cry,

But I do not know why.

**Diya Iyer
Grade 2
Indian Lane Elementary
Rose Tree Media School District
First Place**

**My Favorite Kite
By: Diya Iyer**

My favorite kite is blue and white.
It's so bright and performs a fancy flight
My kite is also light and it fears no height.
I love to fly it during a windy twilight.
It's no surprise that when my kite gets out of sight
The wind and I get into a feisty fight
When the wind uses all its might to steal my kite.
I hold on tight to my light and sprite kite
Oh my favorite kite, It's my Pride!
How I love to fly it all day and night!!!!

**Gianna Roselli
Grade 2
Culbertson Elementary
Marple Newtown School District
Second Place**

Seasons

Winter

Snow falls to the ground all pretty and white turning to a silent night

Spring

Flowers sprout in rainbow colors you might even go to play with others

Summer

Hot and sunny sometimes funny in summer

Fall

Leaves swirl round and round right before they touch the ground

**Claire DeHaven
Grade 2
Chatham Park Elementary
Haverford Township School District
Third Place**

Tsunami

Big waves of water
Come crashing d

o
w
n

Out of the water
right now right now.
Destroys my house
my neighbor's too.
Goes back into the water
back into the blue.

**Tess Berger
Grade 3
Swarthmore-Rutledge School
Wallingford-Swarthmore School District
First Place**

**Snow Day
By Tess Berger**

As I look out the window I know where to go,
I've seen a whole world that is covered in snow.
I jump out of bed, and downstairs I race,
Open the door find a magical place.
The grass is all gone, the flowers have vanished,
It seems just as though all the green has been banished.
I grab my friends I say "let's go!"
We race up the street out into the snow.
We make dozens of snowballs and have a grand fight,
Our parents make sure we don't get frostbite.
We trudge up a hill, sleds by our side,
Eager to catch one last thrilling ride.
The day is now done,
But it has been fun,
We go our own ways,
I head off into the white enchanted maze.

Lingxi, Kong
Grade 3
Coopertown Elementary School
Haverford School District
Second Place

Spring
Written by Lingxi Kong

The flower Garden feels like home.

Take a deep breath; fill your chest with
the beautiful scent of flowers.

Close your eyes; tilt your head up to feel the
sun pouring onto your happy face.

Open your eyes; keep striding on the wooden
path.

Pause in your tracks; kneel to get a better look at
the red, orange, yellow, and purple flowers.

You select the prettiest orange flower and tuck it
in your ponytail. As you examine the flower in your
hair in a pond reflection, you hear how the joyful
birds sing of their delight and cheerfulness of being
at this pretty place.

You feel an immeasurable amount of happiness as you
walk in between rows of cherry red roses and the bright
sun patting on your head.

The Flower Garden feels like home.

**Molly Foreman
Grade 3
Homeschool
Chester-Upland School District
Third Place**

Trees

It's cool outside.

The leaves fall from the trees:

Red, orange, yellow, green, and brown,
making piles for us to jump in. I love the trees!

Their bark is rough to the touch. Their leaves are
smooth and come in lots of different shapes.

They rustle in the wind like a little dance.

It makes me want to dance, too.

I love the feel of their bark

and the

feel of

the leaves.

I love

the way

the

branches

sway.

I love

trees!

I do!

SWOOSH

SWOOSH

SWOOSH

SWOOSH

SWOOSH

SWOOSH

SWOOSH

SWOOSH

**Sienna Shaw
Grade 4
Coopertown Elementary
Haverford Township School District
First Place**

**The Balloon
By: Sienna Shaw**

There once was a girl and her name was Sienna, her uncle gave her a balloon.

It meant so much to her that she took it everywhere, to the beach, to her school, and to the park.

It wasn't the actual balloon that meant so much to Sienna, it was that her uncle gave it to her.

A week later her uncle passed away, so she squeezed the balloon so tight.

Sienna realized that her heart had so many memories and so much love for him.

Then, when everyone was sleeping, she snuck outside with her balloon, and let it go.

From this day on, she knew her choice was the right one.

She never let go of any of her memories or any of her love for her uncle.

**Josephine Truitt
Grade 4
Notre Dame de Lourdes School
Ridley Township School District
Second Place**

“Bully”

To all the kids who are out there,
there is something happening everywhere.
It takes place at home and at school,
with all all the kids who think they rule.

They tease and mock and make people feel blue,
If you feel like this someone is bullying you.
There’s verbal bulling, bullying with words,
That the victim could have heard.

There’s cyber bullying you will regret,
It happens on the internet.
If you are the victim, always stay strong,
And just remember, bullying is wrong.

**Ryan Stone
Grade 4
Parkside Elementary School
Penn-Delco School District
Third Place**

My Family

My mom is like lava
If you tick her off she gets
Hotter and yells, "Go to your Room!"

My brothers are like a hurricane
They run and scream
"I gotta win in Fortnite"

My dad is like a clown
He makes terrible dad jokes
That makes us all laugh

But when you put us together
We are family.

Anrui Xu
Grade 5
Ithan Elementary
Radnor School District
First Place

A Musical Snowball Fight

Yesterday in Musicville,
It snowed and unleashed a giant chill.
Everyone forgot their sense of wrong and right,
And started an accidental fight.

Everyone built colossal basses and fortes,
Then they crossed over the line and the tempers grew short.
Someone was poked with a sharp icicle,
Another was squashed flat with a bicycle.

Igloos were knocked down like houses of cards,
One very rude one called his friend a retard.
The scales and the notes were at each other's throats,
The ground was littered with stepped-on coats.

Just as harmony seemed it would never come again,
And just as chaos seemed to be dominant, THEN,
As hopeless as it may have seemed,
Tiny, petite Grace note screamed,

“STOP!”

Everyone paused and looked at her, stunned,
Then they realized what they had done.
A single, solo voice stopped a violent fight,
Peace and happiness can return thanks to just one person's might.

Maggie Wesnoski
Grade 5
Scenic Hills Elementary
Springfield School District
Second Place

SELF-CONSCIOUS

You try to suck all of it in,
Not realizing what's inside.
Trying to hide all of your skin.
Trying to hide all of your lies.

Wondering if it will change,
If you actually try.
Can you possibly be as great,
Or will you just cry?

You hide all of your talents,
Thinking they are just stupid,
Being someone you're not,
Trying to get used to it.

You think of yourself as the worst,
So you try not to think.
You try not to curse,
Because of certain things.

If I stop thinking of myself as these things,
If I stop obsessing,
If I can finally just be me;
No more being depressing.

Would it all get better?
Would reality change?
Would I stop sending myself awful letters?
Would I be safe

From all my negativity
Trapping me?
I'm trying to get free,
But I'm scared to leave.

Stop judging yourself!
But I can't break free.
It's all in oneself,

My own chains hold me.

Call me cheesy,
And call me pathetic!
But I know my feelings
And I just don't get it!

Why do I try?
Why does it always win?
Trying to get me to die,
Something within.

Is it me, doing it to myself?
Tugging me down,
Pulling my heart out, putting it on a shelf?
No more knocking myself to the ground.

“You need to break these chains!
You need to gain confidence?
You need to be yourself; don't change!
You need to stop being self-conscious.”

**Liam Foreman
Grade 5
Homeschool
Chester-Upland School District
Third Place**

Ford Raptor

Finding its path

Off-road down the trail

Racing to the highway

Dirt on its sides

Running through the mud

At high speeds it turns

People all stare

The engine slows down

Over rough ground it trods

Raptor!

Makenna Linsky
Grade 6
E.T. Richardson Middle School
Springfield School District
First Place

Storm

It all starts with a whisper
Loose lips setting free a breeze
Swirling into a nosy ear
It passes through the mind
Catching, collecting, and changing
Rolling off the tip of the tongue
More eyes widen
More ears strain
The bitter breeze twists and tangles
Growing stronger,
More destructive with each heartbeat
Tap once
Tap twice
Send
And it's released
Darting through the world
Striking hearts,
Gasps slipping out

The wind is now a raging storm
Thunder in everyone's shouts
Tossing and turning their thoughts
Howling, blasting rumors
The whisperer can try
She can reach out to reel it in
But the sky only darkens
That little flutter of a breath
Transformed into a tempest of a lie

Don't let the gale consume you
Don't let the flurry escape
Don't eagerly fan the breeze
Live in the warmth of a clear, sunny sky

Ibrahim Tunnell
Grade 6
Beverly Hills Middle School
Upper Darby School District
Second Place

RAGE

Rage is like fire; it burns
Rage is like a bee; it stings
Rage is infinite; it never ends
Rage is violence; it kills

Rage is the sound of gunshots; they can scare someone
Rage is like failing a test; didn't get any questions right, not one
Rage is like losing a game; it's a poor sport
Rage is like being trash at basketball; your friends don't want you on the court

Rage is being stuck in a riot; death awaits you
Rage is like the color of blood, it sheds from you
Rage is like a street fight; no one will try to help you
Rage is like a serial killer; it'll try to kill you

What I'm trying to say
We live in a hellish world
We are being depressed
While our happiness is curled

Rappers selling their souls
And overdosing on drugs
And we always beefing
And turning into thugs

I know it's bad
I can't even watch a video
Without seeing "R.I.P. X"
But he died a year ago

I know we can do better
I can see it close-up
Cause what we're doing right now
Man, that is messed up.

**Keyarra Barley
Grade 6
Darby Township School
South-East Delco School District
Third Place**

Daddy Why

Daddy, why wasn't I enough, enough to keep you home
Daddy, why are you not here, to see how much I've grown
Daddy, why wasn't my heart, protected like your own
Even when I'm with my friends, Daddy, why do I feel so alone
Daddy, why did you commit that crime, why daddy why
You said you would always keep me safe, daddy why did you lie
Daddy, please come back to me, I'm almost out of tears
Daddy, why since you left, am I surrounded by my fears
That you will never leave that place, and that is why I cry
Because I love you so so much, but daddy, daddy why

**William Cellucci
Grade 7
Paxon Hollow Middle School
Marple Newtown School District
First Place**

Mr. Sky Immortal

I stare at Sky in the winter he lays
The clouds' hue like the hair of an angel it greys
The hawk and the buzzard wings slice and they slit
The globe of the heavens from frostbite to frostbit
The pie moon is seen by a keen one's eye
It typhoons and careens polar The Sun's passing by
The seeds of the poplar against Sky they mature
The gale shall bluster and seeds shall unfurl
The tree of the seeds keeps a story, you see
Of a once roaming peoples here, ancient but free
They talked to Sky and knew his life
Knew he sorrows, knew his strifes
Smoke from the village fire arose to Sky
And once long ago, Sky did reply,
"I sit here and sigh
I don't understand why you mortals try
You try and you try, you live then you die
Why do you tend to your wheat and your rye
When will you learn your pride is a lie
Take me for one, and exemplify
I do not try, I do not die
There is no pain nor ever a cry
I spend eternity by and by
By and by
By and by"
And so the people heard the words of Sky
And then they ignored the rest of Sky's replies
The immortal a fool and the human wise
For Sky didn't know risk or heart
Only knew rhythm, steady and smart
And so the people, they tried and they tried
But the people, their souls fled
And now they live above the lie
But we are still living under Sky
Living by and by
By and by
By and by

**Shrinidhi Shriganesh
Grade 7
Garnet Valley Middle School
Garnet Valley School District
Second Place**

An ode to my Mother

My dear mother,
for all those nights
you sat by my side,
to hold me tight

From my first step
to today's road
we choose to walk on,
and is bestowed

I remember
how I was ill
you were by my side,
for my good will

When you told me
time did not matter
you'd stay by me,
ready whenever

Give the world
full honesty
forever understand,
that policy

"The real, true you.
is the best you,
so just be you"

**Alexa von Berg
Grade 7
E.T. Richardson School
Springfield School District
Third Place**

Night Sky

I rested my young head on my purple plush pillow
The glary moon lit up my misty rose colored room
I tossed and turned trying to get the brightness out of my squinting blue eyes
The night was still young
I decided to get out of my tiny white bed and take my teal blanket off
I slowly and silently crept down the old, creaky stairs
CREAK
I stepped in one wrong place
It was still as quiet as a church mouse
I tiptoed to my big maroon colored front door on my small cottage home
I put my hand on the door knob and very easily turned it
I pulled the door open, trying not to make any noise
I snuck outside and onto the fresh summer grass
Very quickly I pulled out my teal blanket and flattened it out on the lawn
I laid down and gazed up at the beautiful stars
I counted each one and noticed they were special in their own way
These stars gave me connection
The number of stars is equal to the chances you will have in one lifetime
The night was not young anymore and I crept back up into my old rickety room
I laid down and got warm and snuggled in my bed
Only this time, I had a new appreciation for the night sky
For, I fell asleep right away without the moon bothering me

**Evelynn Deus
Grade 8
Drexel Hill Middle School
Upper Darby School District
First Place**

Hanahaki

I bite the petals and the stems
Of Cherry blossoms, of Lily pads
I sink to my knees and drown in leaves
Of primrose, of Yarrow
The vines come cascading out
High tides of love and doubt
Like carnations, like Anemone
They wrap my neck and tighten my lungs
Draining me of the crisp air
Like Poppys, like Poinsettias
My sink is stained
My nostrils maimed by the sickening perfume
Rose thorns tickle my throat and threaten to spring my lungs in two
But it's worth it, if I can still love you

**David Gelman
Grade 8
Springton Lake Middle School
Rose Tree Media School District
Second Place**

What Playing Piano Means To Me

In a room by the window is an instrument
A large black instrument

It sits there dead and alive at the same time
Transporting its emotions through me as I play

It can be happy filling the room with sounds of laughter
Or sad its sweet melody touching the hearts of everything around it

At times it can be an itchy sore that I carry around with me
Always telling me that it is there and I need to practice

As much as I want to I can't control it
I would try until I lie on the floor pleading with it then I break down and walk away

But for one reason or another something always brings me back to the seat
I would sit there staring at it pondering what instinct of mine always drags me back

But then it would dawn on me
I love it. In pain or happiness it will always be a part of me

Something I can't abandon
Something I will hold in my heart Forever

Alaina Cummings
Grade 8
Northley Middle School
Penn-Delco School District
Third Place

Sonder

Late night driving
through,
small towns,
big towns,
cities even,
or small rural farms.

The people, their lives are here,
their whole childhoods,
their experiences,
their lives just as vivid as your own.

They know every back road,
every diner,
every spot to walk.
They know the buried secrets.
School scandals.
The people to avoid.
This is their town,

Their lives are here,
vivid lives,
written on sidewalks,
illuminated by the neon lights
of the diners,
and store,
and motels,
with their no vacancy signs.

Lives happen here,
Lives just like your own,
And you'

Nishat Tasnin
Grade 9
Upper Darby High School
Upper Darby School District
First Place

Suffering

The lowest point creeps in at sudden speed
Set up the borders to keep it at bay
Alert with flags as red as a nosebleed
Cast a magical spell and walk away

Overwhelmed in panic by the bully
Boil the blood and ooze out the dark debris
Soak in the illness and embrace wholly
Solidify the fear in counts of threes

Hide away the treasures and brace the heat
Confused and hurt make a deadly duet
It will all go away in a heartbeat
Still the memories reek of fear and sweat

With deep scars and a lost limb you survive
What a time to die while being alive

**Cooper Jones
Grade 9
Interboro High School
Interboro School District
Second Place**

The Theater

The actors are not prepared for the play.
They don't remember their lines from the script.
Though they all have to know in one whole day.
If they can't perform their turns will be skipped.

Draw the curtains and hang the lights tonight.
The time has come to prove themselves on stage.
They've had their time now they will have to cite.
Repeated word by word and page by page.

Enveloped by fear in front of them.
No emotion is shown in their chairs, here.
Stare at the curtains, the end a red hem.
The unknown problem, the people can't hear.

Ev-ery-thing is done, the end has come.
Ev-ery-thing was perfect, except some.

**Emilie Puopolo
Grade 9
Radnor High School
Radnor Township School District
Third Place**

Changing-

It feels weird,
Like I should've changed overnight,
Like one night of half-awake half-asleep
Should've made me grow,
Like stretching out my spine.
Being a "real teen."
Thirteen isn't real,
Thirteen when you're barely out of junior high,
Thirteen where you can see movies
That you snuck into before.
Fourteen isn't real,
Nor is it special
Cuz you don't have the excitement of
Movies
And feeling grown up,
You just float around waiting,
Waiting for the next step,
In Limbo.
So now fifteen the grand,
Sneaking out with friends and boys
And finally having the guts to disobey.
But I don't see those guts,
I can't see myself spitting in her eye
And running away with him.
I don't know how to leave her,
Fifteen may be real, but it's not completely free.

Sophia Chen
Grade 10
Ridley High School
Ridley School District
First Place

Imber

It's raining my love
Can you hear me over the pitter patter of teardrops that slide down your cheeks?
They're calling you to repent-
Repent.
Oh, but I think I saw you at the window
With eyes made of clouds
You brought your shoulder to the glass and

Disappeared.

I think I can fee
Think I can feel
I can feel
Can I feel
Can I feel you there?

Are you down there?
Are you still there?
Curled in nightmares and daydreams, within the shadows of reality
I know you're there.
Why else does the color of your soul burn my sleep?

You're still here.

There's a shotgun in a glass jar
If I were a ticking time bomb, I'd still be me
Not you, when you're so unlike you
The jar is empty.
The wires are cut.

My love, just like,
Like how snow melts away without a hint of regret
And, and, and,
With no concern for your feelings

My love cares not for your tastes.

But it's as you like it
And all I can do
Is sit
Sit in my headspace
While raindrops fall in frozen time
And I'll pray that I'll never be your ideals

They'll never become me.

It's getting cold, my dear
But you can't feel it, can you?
No, you never could.

**Moira Carroll
Grade 10
Haverford High School
Haverford Township School District
Second Place**

Memory

My memories aren't always happy, but they're mine.

And they'll be with me until the end of time.

And when I've grown old, and I've learned and I've taught.

When I've died perhaps I'll remember, what my years have long forgot.

**Katy Foreman
Grade 10
Homeschool
Chester-Upland School District
Third Place**

A Ray of Sun in the Storm

A cliff,
Tall against the angry sky,
Like the crooked teeth
Of some forgotten monster,
A monster that rages against
It's roots.
The sea.
The sea rages, call
For its worshipers who stand
Above at the cliff top,
Terrified of what is coming,
For the sea is calling for blood.
I am brought forward
By people who
Terrified
Answer the call of their
God.
Trembling, I stand
At the brink,
And I know this is
The end.
The sea leaps up at me,
As if to pull me
From the cliff top and into
Its dark embrace.
Wind tears at my back,
The accomplice of the sea,
Trying to fling me into
The depths.
I stand at the brink,
And fear
Washes over me like the sea,
Crashing and driving
Hope away.
And yet,
As I stand looking towards my death
A single ray of sunlight
Breaks through the angry

Clouds and lands
On the stormy sea,
Turning it bright turquoise.
Hope rises within me,
Like the wind, but
This time it drives back fear.
I laugh aloud and,
Even as those behind me
Prepare to end my life, I know
They will not harm me.
I shake the hand of fate and know
What the outcome will be.
Again, I laugh, and I leap.
The sea rises up, smelling
Victory at last,
But it has not conquered me.
It pulls me into its briny depths
Death takes my hand to
Break me, but he shall not break me,
For I
See.
The ray of sunlight shines through the
Depths and plays about my
Feet.
I close my eyes
And I smile, for I know that
Somewhere,
Sometime,
My rescuer has come
And, against all odds,
Has indeed saved me.
He has lifted me from the waves,
Cradled me in his arms,
And welcomed me
Home.

**Ally Ostrander
Grade 11
Academy Park High School
Southeast Delco School District
First Place**

“Untitled”

My grandma always lectures me
“Stop watching scary movies. They will fill your head with violence and bad thoughts.”
I didn’t know how to tell her that the movies don’t bother me
Because that’s not what fear really is.

Fear is the student walking to school, never knowing who might show up
A kid with a gun in his bag, hate in his mind
Doesn’t like his life
Might as well end others
Every day the fear of the boy and the gun
Fills the atmosphere with fear and distrust
But still we march on, go to our classes
Ignore the fear in the pits of our stomachs
And hope nothing happens.

Fear is the girl walking home at night
She has mace in her hand, a knife in her pocket
It’s dark, she’s afraid of the man lurking behind her
Like a tiger to prey, he’s been stalking her slowly
Craving her innocence, virtue, virginity
She’s only a child, she can’t win the fight.
The night gets darker and the man grows closer
And finally he pounces, completely defiling her.

Fear is the black teenager walking to the store
He’s the perfect student and child, never done anything wrong
All A’s, does sports a star MVP
Then he hears the sirens blaring behind him
The flashing red and blue lights in his eyes
The colors of the flag that denied him

He raises his trembling hands in the air
But the white cop’s gun is already out
And he fears for his life as the officer yells
“What’s that in your pocket?”
And before he can answer that it is his phone
The smell of gunpowder fills the air.

The difference between me and my grandmother
Is that for her generation, fear is a second hand symptom
In the back of her mind, never in focus
But for us, fear is always around
Every day, hour and minute we live
It surrounds every thought and action
Yes, for us fear is present every day
But I'll tell you a secret: It is not here to stay.

**Deidra Senessie
Grade 11
Academy Park High School
Southeast Delco School District
Second Place**

PAPER PLANE

So I finally learned how to make a paper plane
And the edges were not the smoothest, they were not the cleanest,
And the chicken grease on my hand had gotten a hold of it
But an airplane is an airplane
And it flew very well
Yet to see it fly around in my room made me think

Paper Plane, if you could see...
What would attract you the most?
The way I see my hair curl up in the butterfly mirror I own,
or the fact that my room consists of that as well as
One door, a queen mattress
and 4 of my siblings occupy it
What would you like to look at first?
The brown eyes that brighten up my face or the fact that clear teardrops from them
resemble the leak that we've had in our kitchen for days

What would you think of my mother's dresses?
Hand me downs...
The ones from my cousin's mother
Who lost her brother
Due to manslaughter
Of a man with a different color
But mama says I shouldn't speak on things that don't concern me
Yet it happens and I go through it
Why is it that the hardest trials and tribulations isn't a child's place when
We go through it
And we don't deserve it...
Paper plane,
You fly so effortlessly as I cry my eyes out every night.
Not having a hand to hold when I think of how death lurks calmly through the alley ways
outside my window.
But no one knows
Because if they ask I say I don't know
Truly because mother says
What happens at home stays at home.

Paper plane
It's so ironic that
My little sister is getting bullied
By people who are in the same boat as her
We all are misfortunate but
She's boney and everyone wants a curvy girl
But what is wrong with her?
When her smile shines so bright that the room,
Loses its circulation and chokes
Under the pressure she gives it

Paper plane
My 2 brothers do not like my boyfriend
Because he wants me to give it up
Due to a video he saw on Instagram
My baby brother
He's only one and
His first word was gun.
Probably because he saw one
Tucked into the drawer under my folded clothes
Owned by my brother
Because instead of saying there's
No place like home he says
Don't walk out of our room alone
Don't look too close at the shadows
On the walls because
Someone may be there and you know
Our locks don't turn

As you fly around...
Flaunting the wings that I made you carry my emotions in
I hope that for what's best
You remain a regular, oblivious
Paper plane

**Princess Warley
Grade 11
Academy Park High School
Southeast Delco School District
Third Place**

My Affliction

My intention was to be perfect
That's why I basked in the glory of being called articulate
As if my diction was what defined the truth I spoke
So I tore any accent I had out of my throat
Ripped myself out of my vocal chords
until I turned into an alien language
That
Was foreign to me but could be deciphered by anyone
And sometimes when I choke on my remains
I take a day off and say it's because I've lost my voice
When in reality it is not lost, but abandoned

My fixation was to be perfect
When I was seven my sensei told me that only perfect practice would make perfect
Which I find to be a paradox because how can imperfect beings practice perfectly while
being flawed?
So all my attempts to perfect my craft were in vain
I became a shredding machine destroying all of my faulty work until it wasn't enough so
I ripped apart my relationships
Until they were unrecognizable
And I realized that destruction was the only thing I did perfectly
So I did until my surroundings were nothing but ruins

My affliction was to be perfect
But how can I be perfect when I am a contradiction?
when my exterior is graffitied in scars?
when I am asymmetrical in all of my ways?
when I express myself so quickly I have no time to spellcheck?
How can I be perfect when I was created to be
Remarkable?
People often do not realize perfection is an illusion
And that remarkable is NEVER uniform

**Deddeh Salee
Grade 12
Academy Park High School
Southeast Delco School District
First Place**

THUNDER

It seems to me that no one ever thinks twice about thunder and lightening
We all know that the two just go
But did you know that thunder is Lightening's biggest fan
When lightning flashes, she flashes with grace and leaves an impression
Then thunder follows to applaud her performance
A performance that she gave no thought on, a natural talent, a gift.
And sometimes a curse
Cursed to be so magnificent
So beautiful and eloquent
That lightening believes it would be easier had she been ordinary thunder
An ordinary clap
An ordinary boom
Of the common crowd
She sometimes imagined the consequences of "stealing the thunder"
To be like everyone else
An insignificant rumble of thunder
But it didn't appease her because she know she was so much more
She would continue to exhibit excellence
Because she is the emission of light, the electric discharge, the whole show
So when lightning flashes, she flashes with grace and leaves an impression
Then thunder follows to applaud her performance
And lightening takes the applause in all its glory
Because who knows that nobody has ever been struck by thunder

**RJ Lehal
Grade 12
Marple Newtown High School
Marple Newtown School District**

**There Once Was A Man From Illinois
By: RJ Lehal**

There once was a man from Illinois.
This man was tall and wise.
He grew up in a log cabin with a curious mind.
This man from Illinois has so much to do.

This man would read till he was satisfied.
He read all types of books.
With his skills he became a lawyer.
This man from Illinois had so much to do.

This man would find politics to be his calling.
He debated a little giant and lost that race.
His words convinced many he should be chief of state.
This man from Illinois had so much to do.

This man would run for president.
Many liked his views and voted him in.
But as this man entered some left.
This man from Illinois had so much to do.

This man went straight to work.
He had one goal and he sought to see it through.
He hoped for a peaceful end but as bulls ran he knew.
There is no peace in sight.
This man from Illinois had so much to do.

This man slaved over what to do.
How shall this man reunite the nation?
He thought to remove the cause.
So he signed their Emancipation.
This man from Illinois had so much to do.

This man suffered sleepless nights.
How shall this one man reunite the nation?
He turned to others in the fight.
One had just beaten an unstoppable foe.
Another had followed the Anaconda Plan.
This man from Illinois had so much to do.

This man had just been given hope.
Two men who knew the fight.
Two men who shall help him save the nation.
He gave one his respect another was granted a rank.
This man from Illinois had so much to do.

This man had put his faith in another.
In return that man did what no other could.
He had bested the Old Man and sent him home.
The nation cheered and illuminations were shown.
This man from Illinois had so much to do.

This man had suffered with no sign of relief.
The trouble was gone and so came time to breathe.
The play shall be a good place to be.
While another had other plans.
This man from Illinois had so much to do.

This man went to his play with delight.
He had a sigh of relief and a laugh.
This man was unaware of the gunman standing behind him.
He laughed one last time then fell silent for good.
This man from Illinois had so much to do.

This man was carried to his deathbed.
He stayed with us until he could no longer.
This man had given all he could and now he had was gone.
This man as so many before had been taken so soon.
The nation called for the man who still had so much to do.
But this Man from Illinois had ran out of time.

This man had done so much.

For that he was admired.
Many came out to see one last time.
The man from Illinois who had done so much.

Many mourned, many cried, many lost their minds.
Nonetheless the man was brought home.
Placed in the ground – in his beloved town of Springfield, Illinois.
This man from Illinois had done so much but yet more was still left.

This man from Illinois had given his all and for that we are grateful.
A memorial would be placed in his honor in the heart of our nation.
This man had paved the way for another who would say “I have a dream”.
This man from Illinois may be gone but in our hearts he’s still here.
Telling stories as he did of a Man from Illinois who saved the Nation.

**Alex Sun
Grade 12
Interboro High School
Interboro School District
Third Place**

Lost Love: Shakespearean Sonnet

Should I recall the day I found my love?
A sea of hearts beneath the shining sun,
I crave, I see, a goal to rise above,
My heart ignites the warmth, it's just begun,
I sense, I feel, I hear, the evil cries,
There is a blur, my vision goes blind,
The words enclose me like a wall of lies,
The swirl of love is gone for me to find,
I simply could not let it go to waste,
My heart is not a whole new place to stay,
That is why my soul shall be replaced,
And now my thoughts are in a strange array,
Come quick, come now, I need a helping hand,
Relive my past and see where it all began.

Bios of the Judges

Camelia Nocella – Retired as Senior Career Teacher for the School District of Philadelphia, and she has studied poetry at Temple University, the University of Pennsylvania and University of the Arts. She has been a featured reader at various venues throughout the areas of Philadelphia and Delaware County. Camelia has given poetry presentations for Poets and Prophets, Cadence Crafters, the Delaware Valley Woman’s Conference at Delaware County Community College and the Philadelphia Writer’s Conference where she served as a board member as well as participated in the Painted Bride’s Word-Up, the South Street Arts Festival, the Media Arts and Philadelphia Fringe Festivals. In addition, she was the associate editor of **The Mad Poets Review**, was an award winning poet at the Philadelphia Writer’s Conference and a member of the Wild Women of Poetry. Currently, she is a board member of the Mad Poets Organization, Poetry Coordinator for the poetry series Rhyme, Rhythm, and Reason at Kia’s Cakes and Café’ in Lansdowne, Pennsylvania, and Children’s Librarian for the Prospect Park Library. “It has been a long time since”, is a published collection of her poems.

Amy Barone’s latest poetry collection, *We Became Summer*, from New York Quarterly Books, was released in early 2018. She wrote chapbooks *Kamikaze Dance* (Finishing Line Press) and *Views from the Driveway* (Foothills Publishing). Her poetry has appeared in *Café’ Review*, *Paterson Literary Review*, *Philadelphia Poets*, *Sensitive Skin*, and *Standpoint* (UK), among other publications. She spend five years as Italian correspondent in Milan for *Women’s Wear Daily and Advertising Age*. She belongs to *PEN America Center* and the *brevitas* online poetry community that celebrates the short poem. A native of Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, Barone lives in New York City.