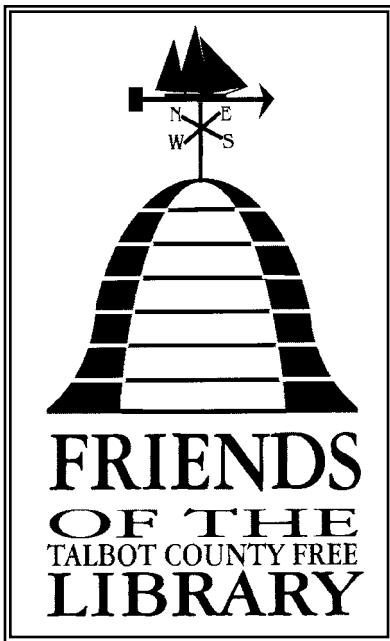


20th Annual
Poetry Contest
2010

Sponsored by



With
THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF TALBOT COUNTY

This annual Poetry contest
is dedicated to...
Gilbert Valliant Byron
July 23, 1903 - June 25, 1991
"The Voice of the Chesapeake"

Through his simple but moving
style of writing, Gilbert Byron,
a native of Maryland's Eastern
Shore, celebrated and chronicled
the Chesapeake Bay region and
its people for more than fifty years.
He was among the earliest to
recognize the impact of
development upon the Bay's
ecology.

Eventually, his essays, short
stories, novels and poems
became as much a part of
the region's culture and heritage
as his subject matter. His writing,
lifestyle and birth date earned
him the reputation as the
"Chesapeake Thoreau."

His affinity with nature and
the environment is reflected
in his favorite short poem:

Evening Marshes

Marsh grass is golden
Under a late sun,
and wild ducks' wings
Whistle with the wind.
We are one.
Wild duck and setting sun,
Marsh grass around the pond,
Earth smells and shadows,
Coming cold and early night.
Evening star and this
Great emptiness
Within me.

The FRIENDS are pleased to present
during National Poetry Month the awards
and honorable mention winners in the...

20th Annual Poetry Contest April 17, 2010

Over 200 entries were received from
students and adult citizens of Talbot County.

The Friends sincerely thank all who
submitted poems and hope they will continue
their interest in poetry.

Special Thanks to...

Poetry Contest Judges

Barbara Brown
Retired Elementary School Teacher
Member poetry group that meets
Friday in Oxford

Ginny Firth
Retired Clinical Social Worker, LCSWC
CASA Court-Appointed Special Advocate

Barbara Friedman
CASA Court-Appointed Special Advocate
Amateur watercolor painter

Winner

When We Moved Away

The creek stood still,
And the mountain cried,
When we moved away.

It rained and it rained,
But the ground was dry,
When we moved away.

Salty drops,
Slid from my eye,
And my mother stood,
Bewildered and scared,
When we moved away.

We wanted to stay,
But the rent was too much,
So we are going to live by the bay.

The trip was hot,
Like summer,
So when the sun sank down,
Moonlight slid across Eve's face,
And in the end, it wasn't bad,
Just different.

Ana Yacopino
Tilghman Elementary

Winner

Pouncing Predator

A pouncing predator
waits silently
and patiently watches its prey.

Moving closer, and closer
he stops in a still position -
still as a stone wall.

When it is the right time,
he pounces and sprints.
All that can be seen
are flashes of spots.

In minutes, after the prey
is down, all that can be seen
are bones baking in the high
Savannah grass.

No animal can catch
this pouncing predator.
Nothing can save its prey.

Olivia Renshaw
Chapel District Elementary School

Winner

Reading, Books, and Chocolate

On a cold winter night,
You'll usually find me...
 curled up by the fire
 with my nose in a book, reading,
 with a bar of chocolate.

Oh! What enjoyment!

On a rainy spring day,
You'll usually find me...
 on the window-sill bed
 on my stomach
 with a book in front of me, reading,
 with a bar of chocolate.

Oh! What enjoyment!

On a hot summer day
You'll usually find me...
 beside the pool
 under an umbrella
 with a book in my hand, reading,
 with a bar of chocolate.

Oh! What enjoyment!

On a cool, breezy fall day
You'll usually find me...
 on the swingset
 with a book in my hand, reading,
 with a chocolate bar in my coat pocket.

Oh! What enjoyment!

Grace Hill
The Country School

Honorable Mention

Crying Snowman

When the sun is shining bright,
That's when a snowman starts to cry.

All I know is that it's such a shame;
We only have the sun to blame.

When I see the snowman's tear
the snowman is melting, I fear.

Blake Saulsbury
Chapel District Elementary School

Honorable Mention

Untitled:

In the bright morning sky
the rooster lets out his cry
he wakes up the dog
who is big and strong
he came out to quiet the rooster
he barked and charged.
The rooster stopped his cry
and for once he wished he could fly.

Zander Kramer
The Country School

Winner

The Ocean

Life the ocean.
Dulcet sailing,
Or a blustery sea.
When times are trying,
Rig the sails to fit your needs.
Do not look back,
For if wit is left,
It is going to have to stay.
You must keep those thoughts,
Of regret away until they are at bay.
I barely grip the rail,
Letting the wind rouse my hair.
I relish the idea,
Of falling in,
Though most people think that it
Would be a sin.
Unexpected things
Surge from the deep.
But I am ready and expecting.
A star fish for good fortune.
But even if it is a puffer fish,
I promise that I will not weep.
But how can it be?
That the tide must beckon,
And take these friends out to sea?
That you can not help but miss them,
But fate has chosen to dismiss them.
For life is the fair-weathered sea.

Bryanna Ulrick
The Country School

Winner

The Human Failure

I take my shoes off and run to the edge of
the water
I don't need them
My feet are tough,
I can walk painlessly across sharp rocks and
grounds with pine cones and holly leaves
I squash the muddy sand through my toes
My sand
I stand next to the Bay and let the my feet
touch the polluted water
My water
I see a plastic bag and a soda bottle in the
polluted water
My water
How dare these people pollute my water
How dare these people kill my Bay
I wade deeper
My feet feel something, I pick it up
an old piece of trash
That was my trash
From my lunch
I sit down I don't care if I get wet
and I think
with my feet in the muddy sand next to the
trash in the polluted water
My feet
My sand
My trash
My water
This is what our Earth is becoming
This is the human failure
My failure
Our failure

Lucy Bond
The Country School

Winner

The Basketball Player

Here he comes, going down the lane
he's dribbling, he's shooting,
and rebounding
There's not much time on the clock
he's dribbling down the court,
and his team is down by two,
five seconds left
he's behind the three point line
he shoots and he scores at the buzzer.
Then poof
I wake up,
I wish I would have slept a little longer.

Matthew Elliott
The Country School

Honorable Mention

"Good bye honey I have to go to work
I won't be late unless I carpool with Burt
I will try to be home at 8
and I hope we have a juicy steak."

that was the last words he said to his wife
on that nice September morning that cut like
a knife

she did not know that tomorrow
she would be a widow

she did not know that two planes would be
hijacked

and then SMACK just like that
into the twin towers

she did not have that psychic power

right as he was about to take lunch

he heard a big crunch

he knew it was a terrorist attack

but no one could see that

he tried to get the word out

but debris was in his mouth

as a firefighter came near

a scrap of metal fell like a spear.

Quentin Faulkner
The Country School

Honorable Mention

Spring Softball Fever

Spring has finally come,
And softball has just begun.
Gentle breezes blow across our determined
 faces as we descend down,
To the diamond that we will play upon.

As the sun shines brightly through the blue
 sky it causes intimidating heat,
But we do not retreat,
For we have come to defeat.

The dirt of the field twirls like tornadoes
 dancing around.

We run the bases round and round.
As the ball meets the grass after every hit,
Then the score board lights up quite a bit.

It's the bottom of the 6th
And time to throw the last pitch.
I frown as I stand upon the mound.
With 3 balls and 2 strikes,
It is time to fight.
Whoosh the ball passes my hip
And lands directly in the mitt.
I proudly grin at my big win.

Chase Browning
St. Michaels Elementary School

Winner

Freedom Ride

Some called it a railroad.
I called it my ever-moving home.
At least it gave me a place to stay
So I wasn't wandering alone.

My journey started in a musty cellar in
Georgia.

It wasn't exactly my pick of the lot
But it gave me food and shelter
And the nice owner, I never forgot.
The stench in the cellar was sickening
And the water I drank was warm,
The cold floor had my body aching
And both of my shoes were torn.

Next I was off to a new town -
I have forgotten the name.
This time I stayed in a stable,
Another stop of the train.
I woke up every morning at five
Because the rooster crowed me awake.
The hay was rough to sleep on.
I wanted my ride to end for goodness
sake.

After my breath taking adventure
In that country southern town
I moved to the attic of a bookkeeper
Who really turned my life around.

He taught me to read some words here
and there.

His attic was filled with many books.
But mice had chewed on pages,
So it was hard to take a look.

My next stop was a real wild scare.
This time I was almost caught.
I was hidden in a cave in Maryland.
The darkness frightened me a lot.
The Confederates just about found me
When I went to get a drink.
I hid too quickly for them to see
And almost too quickly for me to think.

I was able to get right past them,
My heart filled with joy and surprise
You see, my train wasn't a railroad at all,
Just a pathway to freedom in disguise.

Rebecca Schisler
Sts. Peter and Paul High School

Winner

The Name Of The Game

I sit alone in a stand and watch and listen
not a thing stirs save the wind
so I wait for my prey
I hear leaves rustle
a twig snap
I turn slowly to look and see the deer
I watch as it pauses and sniffs the air and
 looks at the stand
It stares for a long moment
It knows something is amiss
but sees no movement so it carries on its way
I hesitantly raise my gun
never when the deer walks only when it
 pauses to feed
I must now hope for good fortune
that the deer pauses in a clearing
Luck has dealt me a bad hand
the deer chooses to only stop
where the branches are thickest
I watch as the deer continues through the
 woods
just another reminder that it's called hunting
 not shooting

Nick Dawson
Homeschooler

Winner

I Am A Child Of The Chesapeake Bay

I am a child of the Chesapeake Bay
From the rivers to the creeks, where I used to
play
The fresh fields, the wetlands, the wide-open
space
The Eastern Shore, my home, my very own
place

I fell in the hands of greedy men
Who bought up my land, made maps, and
then
In came the developers; in came the
deception
They built condos and mansions; I sank deep
in depression

I am a child of the Chesapeake Bay
From the rivers to the creeks, where I used to
play
The strip malls, the outlets, the tears on my
face
All brought by the men who cannot be traced
The heartless developer will have done all he
can
Just to make another buck, just to be the
bigger man
And so I grieve, where my heart can be found
On this Chesapeake Bay, on this Eastern
Shore ground

**Mollie Horney
Easton High School**

Honorable Mention

The Heron

He stepped light
Light as a feather
His straw legs bending
A perfect pace for the ambler

He looked up once
Once as a marsh hawk took flight
It's great wings extending
Until they took him out of sight

He was alone
Alone in the creek
While the marsh hawk was ascending
Towards the sky of the Chesapeake

He was looking
Looking for a meal
His search was near ending
Not a fish here to steal

He was thinking
Thinking to stop hunger's anguish
He was remembering
Yet another place to fish

And so he took flight
Flight from his creek
His home and his dwelling,
The Chesapeake

**Mollie Horney
Easton High School**

Honorable Mention

"Carousel"

She rode the carousel,
Embracing its electric whirl
Until all the faces about her
Merged in a seamless blur;
Though, she sensed the smiling eyes
Of a crowded carnival.

Her thoughts hung heavy
Like a dulling wine
While the horse
Reeled her from center
To the edge of nothingness
And back again.

She heard not the failing gears,
Grinding below the carousel song.
She saw not the mortified look
Of the crowd, now thronged

To watch the inevitable conclude,
And O! how they sighed:
"The carousel lost control
And a young girl has died."

Alex Stinton
St. Michaels Middle High School

Winner

The Afghan Boy

I watched him come
Right down the road
To the village square
With his heavy load
He saw me leaning
Against the wall
My weapon drawn
He seemed so small
To pull a cart
Of heavy wood
And weighing more
Than it really should
He shyly smiled
And waved at me
A little frightened
As I could see
I passed him on
For market day
The mountain boy
From far away

As dusk came on
I heard the sound
The awful noise
My heart did pound
The smoke was black
And flames shot high
I ran so fast
Through passersby
And then I dropped
Down to my knee
A blackened cart
Not much to see
I turned away
To cry alone
My Afghan boy
Would not go home

Alice Craig

Winner

Etude Dude

Freckle-faced and fearless,
 Still suited-up in jersey and cleats,
 He hustles into rehearsal,
 Sliding into place just as
 he did

When he stole third base
 in the bottom of the 8th
 Then became the winning run -
 It was a squeaker

Oblivious to the trail of sandlot footprints
 He leaves across the theater carpet,
 And his grunge-rimmed nails as his
 unwashed hands
 Grasp fingerboard and bow
 (the bottom is called the frog
 and one wonders if there's the same live
 amphibian in his pocket),
 Then raises the violin to his scraped chin
 In a flourish-you can almost see
 the dust rise off him -
 he begins: a ribbon of horsehair drawn
 against lines of metal strings
 And the long march of weekly drills and
 practicing battles
 Melts away into the magic of a boy's music

Tomorrow he'll walk out on the big stage,
 Fresh-faced and glowing -
 freckles practically scrubbed off
 Squirmy in a suit coat and bow tie
 (the one with embroidered violins)
 That he will peel off the first chance he gets
 (Running around in tee shirt and bare feet
 in his dress pants)
 To play with his chums, allegro embodied
 ("On guard!" he swashbuckles. "My bow
 has morphed into a sword!")

To snips and snails and puppy dog tails, one
 must add something dynamic to this boy,
 This Minor League Mozart who makes music
 that pours like water from a pitcher to
 The glass of confirmation
 That there must be a God
 Winking at tunes that soar as high as a fly
 ball-"Kiss it goodbye!"
 Tagging the corners with minuet, etude,
 sonata ... jig

And crossing home plate, arms raised high
By a boy who will pack up his case
And dash back out to the world
that awaits him with a crescendo of grand
slam possibilities

Ann Dorbin

Winner

Soul Food

I slipped into the woods at the edge of dusk
empty, hungry, longing
but I did not know this.
My aimless footsteps led me to feast
on something I do not have words for,
but know to be real all the same.

My soul soaked up
the susurrations of wings above me
and call of owl in the distance.
I drank in the texture of leaves,
the webs of branches in fading light.

I stepped almost daintily upon the leaf-
carpeted earth
around pools of water
brushing past trunks of still slumbering giants
trailing fingers along branches and moss-
covered logs.

Somehow, I was filled along the way
with breath and life
...and this nameless thing.

So I crept home clothed in night
Filled, comforted, satisfied.

Samantha Pitts

Honorable Mention

Three Little Boys

The Claiborne ferry is no more
The dock deserted still
But on a day not long ago
I had a special thrill

Three little boys of ten or so
With bikes too big by far
Would ride and jump right off the dock
And grab the handle bar

As water splashed, they quickly swam
And dragged the bikes ashore
Up, up the ramp they clambered on
To jump the dock once more

Such laughs and yells, I smiled and waved
A picture there to see
Of rusted bikes and ferry docks
And little boys so free

Alice Craig

Honorable Mention

Back Home (in Eastern Maryland)

I've seen "Those Oklahoma Hills"
Woody Guthrie called his home.
But they remind me of an ocean
with its waves as still as stone.

And I've roamed Alaskan mountains,
And New York City streets,
And felt the blue Gulf waters
wash the sand beneath my feet.

But sometimes when I leave my home,
my refuge by the Bay,
A voice in me says turn around
and never look away.

Back home in eastern Maryland,
I learned to drive a car.
I learned to swim and learned to dance
and sail home by a star.

Sometimes I think of moving on,
Then, stop and ask, "What for?"
There's everything I need here —
Home on the Eastern Shore.

Now I could go on talking
'bout the rivers and the Bay,
How the geese pitch in secluded coves
On nor'west windy days.

Or talk about the thunder
when a storm comes boilin' in,
Or moonlight sails on autumn nights
when a cool breeze nips your chin.

Back home in eastern Maryland,
I stood at water's edge,
I picked cattails and skipped flat shells
and watched the clammers dredge.

Sometimes I'd wade for oysters
or watch an osprey soar.
A child's life was much simpler then —
Home on the Eastern Shore.

But it takes more than a travelogue
to make a home complete.
What makes the Shore a special place,
are the people that you meet.

Back home in eastern Maryland
Lived a man who I once knew,
Who grew up hard and grew up strong.
But grew up straight and true.

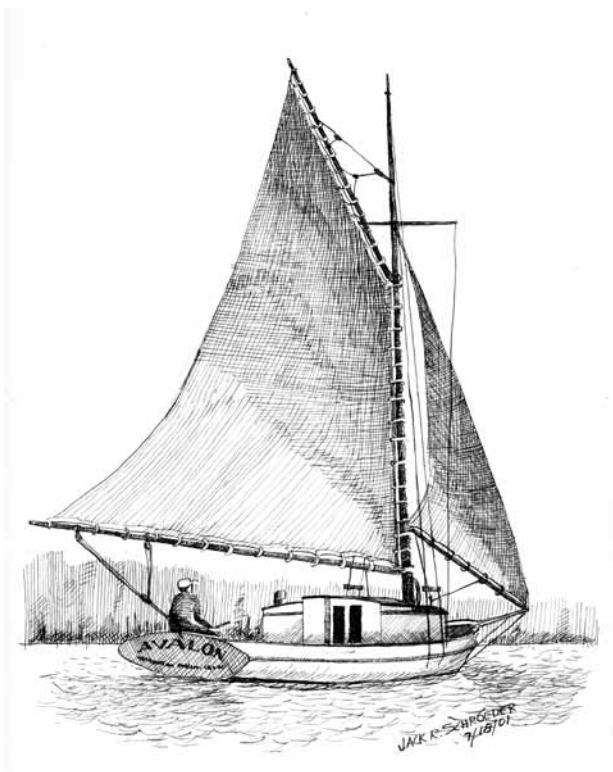
He helped me on life's journey
and he told me all his tales,
And even when his life ran out,
his spirit never failed.

Back home in eastern Maryland,
I learned to spin a yarn.
'bout a dog named Blue or a log canoe,
or a fish, long as your arm.

I learned to laugh at life's set backs,
and I learned what friends are for.
There's everything I've needed here —
Home on the Eastern Shore.

My heart will always be here —
Home on the Eastern Shore.

William (Buddy) Loscomb



I'm going to wander away, away
Where there are islands
All green with delight.
I'm going to sail on down the Bay
Without a thought for the night.

Gilbert Byron, 1920



FRIENDS OF THE TALBOT COUNTY FREE LIBRARY

Established in 1974 to assist in improving facilities and services and has been responsible for upgrading and helping the Library become a community cultural center.

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF TALBOT COUNTY

was founded in 1954 to collect, preserve and interpret the history and culture of Talbot County.

Its mission is to promote public interest, knowledge, understanding and appreciation of our rich heritage as it relates to the history of the Chesapeake region and the Nation.

The society is a private, nonprofit educational organization.

All contributions are tax deductible.