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'PATHWAYS' PARTNERSHIP PLACES POEMS IN PARKS

The next poet laureate may one day list Summit Metro Parks (SMP) and the Akron-Summit County Public Library (ASCPL) as inspiration.

Beginning June 1, the countywide park and library systems will roll out "Pathways to Poetry," a limited three-month display of nature-inspired poems written by local students.

Three parks will each have five poems posted along trails through August. Locations include F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm (1828 Smith Rd., Akron), Cascade Valley Metro Park / Overlook Trail (354 Sackett Ave., Akron) and Goodyear Heights Metro Park / Pioneer Area (550 Frazier Ave., Akron).

The subject matter varies from changing seasons to wildlife, and the ages of the authors range from second grade to eighth grade.

"Nature as inspiration is universal across all ages," said Barb White, ASCPL's neighborhood services manager. "The poems submitted by young writers were equally inspiring – in their creativity, in their emotional resonance, and in the reverence for the natural world."

White, who coordinated the submissions process with ASCPL's youth services coordinator Carrie Burrier, said about 100 poems were received from public school students, teen library patrons and individuals who sent poems from home.

SMP spokesperson Nathan Eppink described how impressed park employees are with the submissions: "Reading them for the first time, it made us even more excited about the 'Pathways' project. The poems are not season-specific or park-specific. They're just great," he added.

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“Pathways to Poetry” loosely coincides with the library’s “Mind, Body & Sole” summer reading program, June 6 through July 30. The free program includes reading and movement milestones that may be reached for the chance to earn prizes. Details are at akronlibrary.org.

For more information about the park district, visit summitmetroparks.org or call 330-865-8065.

ABOUT SUMMIT METRO PARKS

Summit Metro Parks manages 14,100 acres, including 16 parks, several conservation areas and more than 125 miles of trails, with 22.4 miles of the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail. Annual attendance averages 5 million visits.

ABOUT THE AKRON-SUMMIT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Comprised of Main Library, 17 branch libraries and mobile services, the Akron-Summit County Public Library provides resources for learning and leisure, information services, meeting spaces, and programs for all ages that support, improve, and enrich individual, family, and community life.

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