

And the Winners Are...

Three poems

Henry Jacob, Maggie Guarino-Trier,
and Joanne Paone-Gill

We are pleased to print here the winning poems from the 2013 New Haven Free Public Library Poetry Contest. Henry Jacob, Maggie Guarino-Trier, and Joanne Paone-Gill won in the teen, youth, and adult categories, respectively.

—The Editors

First Crocus in New Haven

Gray sheets of late winter sky
Reflect from fallen snow,
And rest on patches of shaggy grass.

On the Green and in the yards,
After the raw bleach of earth,
Hope begins to show.

A soft, purple cup holds a strand
Of the sun: it smells of honey,
Conducts the darkness into light.

—Henry Jacob

Shine, Child, Shine!

Speak, child, speak!

Let the birds fly

out of your lips

and up into the sky.

Shine, child, shine!

The world is a song.

Extol its virtues

all life long.

Sing, child, sing!

Make up the words.

Compose a tune,

harmonize with the birds.

Laugh, child, laugh!

Don't tat the lace.

There are fairies to visit,

there are pigeons to chase.

Run, child, run!

Climb in the trees.

Talk to the squirrels,

capture the breeze.

Sleep, child, sleep,

Now the day's done.

But your promising life

has just only begun.

—Maggie Guarino-Trier

Resilience

Blindness visited us when
Dad turned 52. She didn't call in advance
to let us know she was coming. She just
showed up one day looking for Dad
...and stayed.

Life changed.
His business sold—
never a complaint was heard
no tears, no anger
Just acceptance.

My father sat in the kitchen
elbows on the table
sightless eyes closed, thinking.
Thinking.

Then I saw the light in his eyes.

Yes. The sun rose and
swept away the darkness.
He raised himself
went to the basement and slowly
carefully ... refinished it.

Life changed—
a shed, a deck, a fence
laughter, playfulness.
The light in his eyes remained.

He saw through his blindness.

—Joanne Paone-Gill