Salmon Shark *(Lamna ditropis)*

by Amy Pinney

Your North Pacific salmon slayer
principal apex predator
lurking in the spawning grounds
gray and white, fierce and long
a double-keeled tail
voracious teeth
pelagic
hunter
wild

Contest Sponsors:
Capital Transit • Juneau Arts & Humanities Council
Juneau Public Library • Printing Trade Company
Lucky Look by Richard Stokes

Between me and the rising sun
airborne diamonds glisten
as a red squirrel scampers
across a spruce bough
spring-loaded with fat drops
from last night's shower.
August 8th by Wayne Owen

Clouds pass like fishes
searching for beaches in these
skies full of water
Late October Anchorage  
by Jenny McBride  

Eight a.m. skateboard glides  
Through the dark  
Dressed all in black  
On bravado of imagination  
With silent grace  
That morphs into  
The comfort of a foot stool  
At the bus stop.
Shinrin-yoku: Art of Forest Bathing

by Margo Waring

In Japan, the doctor prescribes walks in the forest to calm the mind, lower heart rates and reduce stress. Today, my forest walk bathes me in steady hard rain, drips down my collar, soaks my pant legs, gives me chills, hurries me along and cheers my spirit.
Mentoring by Beatrice Franklin

Listen to me
urges the surf
pounding beyond
my dark window.
Let the exhale of
my spent storm
shore up your
persistence.
Christmas Girl
by Jamie Buehner

From her seat facing me in the Fred Meyer cart, my three-year-old has pointed out fleece-lined pants with polar bears. Are you sure you'll wear these? Yes. She nods emphatically, and I set them in the cart. At home, I suggest the polar bear pants and she says No! It's hard for her to show you she loves you, her dad says. I'm not your Christmas girl, she tells me. Then, looking out the window, Actually, I am.
Sweet Mornings
by Pat White

Snow, like a dusting of powdered sugar fell last night
Revealing my secret trails in the woods.
The snow like the sugar in my coffee, sweetens my Morning walk.

Contest Sponsors:
Capital Transit • Juneau Arts & Humanities Council
Juneau Public Library • Printing Trade Company
My daughter returns from the beach smelling like wild mint. “I saw a moving rock!” she says. Suddenly a rock becomes a porcupine and begins hobbling along the water’s edge.

Things aren’t always as they seem.
On My Beard, Briefly by Alex Klimkewicz

Each hair carries Midwestern roots
Valiantly unshorn since my Juneau arrival,
No longer shame-shaven stubble meekly stooping.
Now, bold whiskers sprouting bountifully, beautifully.

I trace a slope of silver across my cheek
Like powdery snow caps on rugged peaks.
Look: can you see mountain goats traipsing up the ridge?
They nestle into warm brush and bristles,
Lost in the thicket of my proud Alaskan beard.
Snow Day by Diane DeSloover

Schools closed, yellow buses empty. Children on plastic sleds scream down powdered slopes. Teachers trade lesson plans for skis rescued from cluttered garages. Only snow-burdened evergreens feel the weight of this day. Brave limbs, fixed in still life brace to hold up the frigid months ahead.

Poem selected from the adult category, 2020

Contest Sponsors:
Capital Transit • Juneau Arts & Humanities Council
Juneau Public Library • Printing Trade Company
Before the First Hard Frost

by Dan Branch

Slip this tiny tomato
between your pale lips,
pierce its skin
with a gentle bite,
enjoy the last sweet juice
of summer trickle
onto your tongue.

Contest Sponsors:
Capital Transit • Juneau Arts & Humanities Council
Juneau Public Library • Printing Trade Company
Dear Taku, Lemon, Mendenhall  
by Lin Davis

Despite your floods and outbursts, despite your brown waste, our love for you does not melt. You moraine, you shoal your sands, halt calving. Ecstatic we ride your rebound. Be as melty as you need to be, Proud Ones. Run your courses, coast down your carved gorges. Forty-mile fjords wait under you, below sea level, steeped, sharpened. Sweet Lemon, hung out to dry, no fjords from you.

Contest Sponsors:  
Capital Transit • Juneau Arts & Humanities Council  
Juneau Public Library • Printing Trade Company
Heading South by Leiann Burton

I get an uncomfortable feeling
That I will miss something important
Like the Sockeye run in June
Or the spray from Nugget Waterfall
Where Black bears run across the trail
Fog horns’ bellow in Auke Bay
And the damn wind
All the little things
That make North home
Juneau Town
by Andrea Iverson

Towering mountains, an abundance of fish rots on the ground
Glaciers recede, their time forgotten
Ravens and crows everywhere we go

Trails galore beckon our footsteps, Bears and goats share our town
The crew ships come like mighty Vikings
Filling the streets with constant talking

Nestled beneath Mt Juneau
Our tiny village knows no bounds
Pumpkin Spice Haiku  
by Nattinee Nipataruedi

Orange Equinox
Packing summer in a box
I need warmer socks
Cod Opening by Helena Fagan

Wheelhouse air filled with breath
of crew and dreams of sleek sablefish
pulled up and over the hauling station
one after
the other
after the other
until the hold pushes toward the sea bottom;
swimming or dead they seek the depths.
The Valley Without You
by Christelle Mariano

When asked what you remember, say:
The tote your father hauled from the trunk.
Hacking a jagged ridge of sunset through your first fillet.
Staccato instructions against the chopping board.

When asked what you miss, say:
August.
Hickory haunting the empty smoker.
Mud tugging his rain boots to stay.

Poem selected from the adult category, 2020

Contest Sponsors:
Capital Transit • Juneau Arts & Humanities Council
Juneau Public Library • Printing Trade Company
Mysteries of a Tiny Plant by Anne Fuller

Have you seen boats deep in the forest?
    Look among the cushy beds of moss -
Find the flower pods that look like a circle of canoes
Through summer we can watch shiny green filagreed leaves.
    It’s a small plant, called FERNLEAF!
Now familiar leaves and obvious seed cases,
    But when are there flowers?
Look early, just after the snow melts,
    See long white tendrils stretching.
A wonderful tiny plant under big trees.

Contest Sponsors:
Capital Transit • Juneau Arts & Humanities Council
Juneau Public Library • Printing Trade Company
Poem selected from the adult category, 2020
Share This World - A Skype at the Glacier
by Sam Jordan

My breath pulsing out,
A beaver smacks her tail in warning.
I nod to the flick of salmon fin,
And dodge the crackle of raven wing on cold air.
Open the line! Let the real pour in.
Across the distance,
We'll talk of fur, stone and carving water.
Wide eyes blink and wait...
"Good morning!" I begin.

Contest Sponsors:
Capital Transit • Juneau Arts & Humanities Council
Juneau Public Library • Printing Trade Company
Water by Ellie Jo Wall (5th Grade)

Here I am. Then I'm gone. I sway, ripple, gush, fall. My sound is almost like music, gentle, mysterious. I break through even the toughest rocks. I carve canyons. I fall from the sky, as you run toward me, your arms outstretched, waiting. Waiting for water.
The Top by Eva Hildebrand (6th Grade)

I sit at the top.
The tall Sitka Spruce
reaches for cotton clouds
against a vast expanse of sky.
A beetle lands on a needle
with its streaky textured back.
Then opens its red wing case,
raises tiny black wings
and in a flutter, takes off.
I am alone again.
Lovely by Rylee Kay Tagaban (9th Grade)

Splatter of black ink
Calls me from the mountain peak
My lovely Raven
What I Don't Show by Melissa Maxwell (8th Grade)

About to show what I create, trying to accept whatever fate. Racing heart, when am I supposed to start? All dressed-up, really hope I don't mess-up. Gut twisting, eyes misting. I'm excited, I find, but also scared out of my mind. As I step out on my stage, my mind is a blank page. Hours of practice get me through, my body knows what to do. Fake it for a while, until I feel a real smile. Am I done? That was actually, really fun.
The Glacier Top by Drew Cadigan McAdoo (5th Grade)

In the chopper, flying high, looking down from the beautiful sky onto the glacier; there, I land, drinking fresh water from our land, exploring this new, wondrous place; here comes the chopper; there, I go, leaving this glacier top; no one knows how fun this was.
The Woods
by Kaiya Schwartzengraber (4th Grade)

The woods are a wonderful place.
My family and I go there to play.
We have campfires, using wood from the beach.
We love going to the woods. But, we stopped going there when my baby brother was born. Now, I am not blaming it on my baby brother; he was just too young to go.
This summer, we will go and have fun there again, because he is going to be one year old.
Portland Island
by Madeleine Bass (4th Grade)

That wonderful place, where the waves crash against the shore, the fire crackling beside me, and that smell; that salty, fresh smell. Knowing this is Juneau; this is Alaska. And, it feels like home.
A Moment of Comfort
by Nixie Schooler (4th Grade)

A moment of comfort
is a warm hug from your mom;
or, a soft, warm blanket
wrapped around you;
or, the soft, sweet smell
of freshly baked muffins;
or, a moment of laughter
with your friends.
A Fish Named Puppy by Callie Stickel (5th Grade)

There's a fish named Puppy who lives on my street
He cannot walk, he has no feet
I think he'll live, though he doesn't eat
That fish named Puppy who lives on my street,
That fish named Puppy, he is so sweet.
Tasmania by Atagan Hood (5th Grade)

The sun falls behind the mountains in the distance
The smell of eucalyptus flows through the air
Birds sing
Wind rustles the branches
You feel free
A thunderstorm on the horizon
Lightning tinted pink
You smell the dirt after the rain
You are happy.
The Ice Rink by Brie Powers (5th Grade)

I feel my sharp blade step onto the ice
Smelling the fresh popcorn as I skate around
My friends join me and my hands start to get cold
I feel exhilarated to be skating.
Skating Rink by June Troxel (5th Grade)

Walking in, hearing sharp blades on the ice
Smelling the fresh popcorn being made
Your friends greet you when you walk in the warm and cozy locker room
Looking out at the empty shiny ice
Peace fills the rink.

Poem selected from the youth category, 2020

Contest Sponsors:
Capital Transit • Juneau Arts & Humanities Council
Juneau Public Library • Printing Trade Company
Mount Jumbo by Elias Kourtis (5th Grade)

As you finish your ascent to the top of the mountain
And you lie down on a rock to relax
You look down at the forest, city, ocean
Your dog lies down and a friendly crow flies over
It's as if the mist around you is the embodiment of love
As if all the happy feelings in the world are centered around this place
You remember the first time you were here
How time goes by.
Downhill Skiing by Torben Higgins (5th Grade)

The sound
of the skis
It is the best ever
My dad is behind me
We are going fast
The swishing sound
when the skis slide on the snow
Once we are done
we eat a chili burger.
Grand Canyon by Cassandra Thompson (5th Grade)

Rocks on top of rocks
Tumbling down the eerie drop
Wind blowing against the bumpy stones
Dusty breezes filled with smell
Sand hitting my face
Crushing snow against my boots
Watching airplanes soaring
Through the sky
This might be a place
You would like to go.

Contest Sponsors:
Capital Transit • Juneau Arts & Humanities Council
Juneau Public Library • Printing Trade Company
Risk by Katherine Fritsch (11th Grade)

Everyone takes risks
Driving in snow, asking him out, bluffing at Blackjack
But you…you take more risks
Making friends, going to church,
walking down the street
Shadows of possibilities always lurk, you constantly think,
Will they always be my friend?
Will I be called a bad person for my feelings?
People take risks every day, but you take them constantly
Always on guard, you can never mess up.