

# Fair Poet Assembly - May 23, 2024 - 9:00 am

Student Hosts: Charlie Holbrooks, Mike Hess

## Fair Poet Order of READING

**Aurora Johnston** is an 8th grade student at Fairport. Aurora is a member of the Fairport auxiliary, the volleyball team and also part of the theater department. Aurora was moved to write this poem when the new year started and she was going through a rough time with most of the people in her life leaving her. However, she as her title suggests, Aurora “built her way up” and found someone who was there to help her through it all and be an amazing friend.

### “Building my way up”

I feel like I'm stuck in a hole of doubt.

I have no materials that will build my way out.

Almost everyone in my life is leaving me .

Which makes the hole deeper, quickly

As the hole gets deeper ,I hear a voice.

It's the one person who won't leave me, but will take me out of my void

As I hear them continue speak.

I started to feel less weak.

Before I knew, I look down, and there was no more hole.

They built me up to reach my goal.

I hope to never go back there.

I felt scared, lonely, and not aware.

I will never go back down the hole of doubt.

I have finally found a better route.

**Lucy McCauley** is a 7th grade student at Fairport. They like to sing, and recently appeared as Jack in *Into the Woods*. Reading and basketball are additional hobbies, and they are a proud Ravenclaw and Ares Cabinmate (Go Harry Potter and Percy Jackson). Lucy was a Regional competitor for Power of the Pen this year. They feel like middle school is really hard, and wanted to encapsulate the pressure of building into their poem; they are proud to be here on stage today.

## **Beam**

Imagine a wooden beam in a construction site

Now imagine an adult construction worker, standing on the beam

Sure, the beam feels some pressure, but let's assume the beam can handle that

Now, Imagine another construction worker standing on the beam

More pressure on the beam, right?

But the beam hasn't broken,

So it must be okay!

What about a third construction worker?

The beam can already handle two, what's a third one?

And it keeps going.

Four,

Five,

Six,

Until, SNAP!

But, how is that possible?

The beam should have held more, right?

Wrong.

Why? Because there are people out there with the same stupidity as the construction workers who keep piling onto the poor wooden beam causing it to SNAP!

As it were a twig instead of something that could be stood upon in the first place,  
and now the beam sits there broken.

No one even bothers.

It's as the beam never supported them in the first place.

Suddenly, a man comes by.

He looks at the beam, and picks up the broken pieces.

He throws them in the trash

Now, it sits.

Crying.

Taken advantage of, being broken, and thrown away.

As if it was nothing.

Now, it is just a broken beam, in the trash, at a construction site.

While the world around it grows.

Everyone, and Everything, is still underconstruction.

But not the beam.

**Elijah Mondville** is a 7th grade student at Fairport. He likes playing video games and listening to music, especially the Beatles and Queen. He was inspired by this year's theme to write a poem that is a metaphor for human development.

## **“The Cycle of Construction”**

A building is slowly constructed.

Starting off small, the building grows.

The workers tell each other information, and report it to the manager.

New things are added, and some old things removed.

It seems to be different all the time.

Some things may stay longer than others, but nearly all of them eventually change.

The building starts getting old.

The foundation could collapse, or it could have to get demolished.

But in one way or another, the building comes crashing down.

But, very soon...

A building is slowly constructed.

**Natalia Perez-Soto** is a 6th grade student at Fairport. She enjoys participating in many of the fine arts by painting, drawing, and writing poetry in her spare time. She also recently performed in *Into the Woods*, Harding's spring musical. Natalia was inspired to write her poem by watching the construction of the new building outside her classroom windows. She was struck by the parallels between the progress and delays of construction and the progression of learning the students were experiencing alongside the site.

## **“Everything Grows with you Along Side with your Mind“**

At the little school of Harding,  
There are many kids trying to be their best at learning.  
The parking lot is starting to get demolished.  
Kids are worrying about their grade percentage.  
The winter breeze flows by.  
Many kids try and get through the days but can't even if they try.  
Puddles that are being made by the snow that is continuing to melt.  
The school is starting to be built.  
The days are starting to get warmer.  
Kids are getting even more livelier.  
All the schools teams are all hard at work.  
The past feelings of old friendships still lerk.  
Every kid is trying their best,  
but even kids need rest.  
Kids are starting to get better grades.  
The building is getting built more and more by the days.  
More test come up that are getting harder.  
The construction of the building is getting farther.  
Along side with the building,  
the kids minds are growing.

**Chloe Pruey** is a 7th grade student at Fairport. She likes to hang out with friends, and enjoys a good nap. Chloe was inspired to write an acrostic poem by her teacher, Mr. Campbell, after he showed her some structured poems in class. She wrote her poem to speak to teens that may be struggling with emotions and mental health, and wants to remind them that they can build themselves up after a struggle.

## **“Build up.”**

**B** Building confidence, and self love.

**U** Uncomfortable with your words is okay, it takes practice to build up courage.

**I** Isolation can be bad but socializing can be helpful.

**L** Loving your self and who you are.

**D** Desire to help build up your self.

**U** Unhappy is okay, it takes time to be happy.

**P** Positive that you are good enough for most.

## High School Fair Poet Finalists

**Ashlie Kastl** is in 11th grade at Harding High School. She's a varsity volleyball player and enjoys reading and painting in her freetime. When the Fair Poet theme, "Under Construction" was announced this year, Ashlie was inspired to use her experience of helping her dad renovate their family home and other houses. Those concrete images in her poem may be grounded in her memory. Her poem, "One Day" is a nod to the future.

### "One day"

We'll find our property  
Meet the architects  
Watch the footers get put in  
Watch as the framing goes up  
Wait in the vehicle  
for the trusses to arrive on the trailer

We'll stand on the grass  
Admire the view  
Of our future  
Come into focus

Stand in the sunlight  
Remember the moments  
When we daydreamed  
About our forever house  
With smiles brighten

Our hearts glowed  
We daydreamed

The timber frame  
A stone fireplace  
Backyard full of woods  
The planted flower seeds in the dirt

Our wish list may not be our reality  
Of what we'll have one day  
But in my heart  
I know  
You're the one  
I picture standing next to me

**Genesis Martinez** is a 9th grade student at Fairport. Genesis enjoys reading and is a member of the Fairport Auxiliary. Genesis enjoys writing creatively. The inspiration behind writing this poem is her family and how even though there are struggles, the family stays together and builds on hopes and dreams for the future.

## **“Family Under Construction”**

In the heart of a home where laughter once dwelled,  
Lies a blueprint of a family, now a fragmented shell.  
Walls that echoed with the warmth of embrace,  
Stand silent, bearing the coldness of space.

The foundation trembles, cracks begin to show,  
As the structure of unity faces the wrecking ball's blow.  
Rooms once filled with shared dreams and plans,  
Now hold dust of memories.  
The scaffold of trust, once sturdy and tall,  
Each nail and beam, once made with care,  
Now pried apart in the thinning air.

Children, the heart beams, in this shifting plot,  
Learn to build bridges where the adults could not.  
Blueprints of their own, they draw and they scheme,  
They construct a future from the rubble of dreams.  
So let the hammers fall, let the saw sing their song,  
For even in division, this family is strong.  
In the blueprint of life, with its changing design,  
Lies art of rebuilding, one day at a time.



**Destiny Ornelas** is a senior at Harding High School. Last year, she graduated from Auburn Career Center's dental assistant program and will be working in a dental office again after graduation. While at school, Destiny likes to help her classmates understand difficult concepts. She never wants to leave anyone behind. When writing her poem, "Architectural Framework," Destiny drew inspiration from her teachers and friends. Just like the construction site in her poem, Destiny continually grows, matures, and transforms.

## **"Architectural Framework"**

In the chaos of rebuilding,  
I discover growth within me  
Layer upon layer  
Shedding old skin  
Embracing new beginnings.

Each imperfection is the  
Evidence of my power  
Each nail driven in -  
A symbol of resilience.

Under construction, I mature -  
Blossoming into something greater  
An ongoing transformation  
But always moving forward  
Toward a more luminous future.

**Summerlyn Slavkovsky** is a senior at Harding High School and a member of the National Honor Society. She will be attending John Carroll University in the fall to major in English Literature with a minor in law and society. Summer completed her senior project at the law firm, Constant Legal Group and eventually wants to pursue a law degree.

### **“Nothing Good Can Last”**

She sits against a lone tree,  
The rustling of leaves envelops her.  
She knows that she should leave,  
But what’s only a few moments longer?

The woods behind her childhood home,  
Brought comfort and despair.  
Now a single tree stands alone,  
Not a branch left to spare.

She up and left the city,  
Left her job, left her friends,  
But who will she be,  
When will the party end?

Just like the city,  
Her childhood home is under construction.  
The new owners work swiftly,  
Only adding to her family’s dysfunction.

What was once a happy family,  
Turned bitter and cold,  
Just like the wood, just like the city.  
Everything grows old.

So as she sits against a lone tree,  
Reminiscing about her past,  
She reminds herself freely,  
Nothing good can last.

**Miika Toutant** is an 11th grader, a member of Fairport Harding's Drumline, and Harding's Drama Club. When it comes to poetry Miika has more of a love/hate relationship with it. They don't normally enjoy reading it, but when the poetry flows during the writing process, they love it. They use poetry as a form of expression. In their poem, "The Ladder of Life," they use an extended metaphor comparing climbing a ladder to showing how someone moves through life. Inevitably, there will be challenges, broken trust, and times when an individual feels like they are falling backwards. The speaker of the poem recognizes that these setbacks are a part of life, that trust can be rebuilt, and that people keep moving up the ladder of life with perseverance and grit.

### **"The Ladder of Life"**

When you open a book to the first page.  
You begin a story, a new story that is unpredictable.  
You don't know what you'll find on the upcoming page.  
You'd think it was as if you were climbing a ladder.

The thing is, with my ladder.  
I find a step I believe to be sturdy.  
I trust it, so I climb.  
The step breaks, snapping beneath me.

Snapping, sending me down several rungs.  
Now I have to spend time rebuilding.  
Reconstructing trust, rebuilding the step.  
This time the step holds, I continued to climb.

I climb this ladder, this ladder of life.  
Getting sent back down every once in a while.  
But that's how life works, that's how the ladder is set up.  
So I construct my life the way it is meant to be.

At times I have to extend my ladder.  
The ladder's steps are too short.  
The ladder's anti-slip needs replaced.  
I almost slip, I almost fall.

The ladder becomes more difficult to climb.  
I don't know about your ladder.  
But mine?  
It isn't the easiest to climb.

The ladder helps me reach the direction made for me.  
The ladder helps me find my reason, whether it is down or up.  
It helps me learn who to trust.  
It helps me climb.

Life is like climbing a ladder.

I don't know what I'll find on the upcoming page.

I'll continue my story, being as unpredictable as when I started.

I've started my story, now it's time to build.

## **FAIR POET WINNERS**

Congratulations to the Fair Poet Finalists for grades 6-8 and for grades 9-12. Every school year since 2016, the students here at Fairport Harding have participated in the Fair Poet contest, created by one of Fairport Harding's Alumni Mr. Hank Werronen from the Class of 1961. Students this year wrote on the theme "Under Construction" to go along with the new school building that is "Under Construction" in Fairport Harbor. Every student who was on stage today should be proud of their creative writing skills! The Fairport Harding English department and the literary community panels who helped with the judging process to narrow the poems to the top ten finalists would like to say thank you to all who have participated and were willing to share their written work. The judging this spring was extremely difficult. Well done by all finalists on stage today!

### **Middle School:**

1st- Aurora Johnston (\$100)

2nd- Lucy McCauley (\$50)

3rd- Chloe Pruey (\$25)

4th- Natalia Perez Soto

5th- Elijah Mondville

### **High School:**

1st- Genesis Martinez (\$175)

2nd- Miika Toutant (\$100)

3rd- Destiny Ornelas (\$50)

4th- Ashlie Kastl

5th- Summerlyn Slavkovsky

### **Honorable Mentions:**

Ashlyn Bralley (\$50.00)

Brooklynn Reglus (\$50.00)

Natalie Phillips (\$50.00)

Hunter Clasing (\$50.00)

Also, recognized today during the Fair Poet Assembly were the 2023-2024 Regional Qualifiers for the Power of the Pen Writing Club - Lucy McCauley and Kelsey McKinney. Both advanced out of District for the first time and competed at Shaker Heights this past spring.

Congratulations to Fairport's two Regional Qualifiers for the Just Write Competition - Marissa Malone and Hannah McCauley. Lastly, Hannah McCauley received a certificate and pin for advancing to the Just Write State Tournament held last week at the University of Findlay for the third time in her high school career. Well done Hannah!

Congratulations to all!