

Proclamation

POETRY MONTH

WHEREAS,

When great trees fall
rocks on distant hills shudder,
lions hunker down
in tall grasses,
and even elephants
lumber after safety.

When great trees fall
in forests,
small things recoil into silence,
their sense

eroded beyond fear.

When great souls die,
the air around us becomes
light, rare, sterile.

We breathe, briefly.

Our eyes, briefly,
see with

a hurtful clarity.

Our memory, suddenly sharpened,
examines,

gnaws on kind words

unsaid,

promised walks

never taken.

Great souls die and
our reality, bound to
them, takes leave of us.

Our souls,
dependent upon their
nurture,

now shrink, wizened.

Our minds, formed
and informed by their
radiance, fall away.

We are not so much maddened
as reduced to the unutterable ignorance
of dark, cold caves.

And when great souls die,

after a period

peace blooms,

slowly and always

irregularly. Spaces fill

with a kind of

soothing electric vibration.

Our senses, restored, never

to be the same,

whisper to us.

They existed. They existed.

We can be. Be and be

better. For they existed.

“When Great Trees Fall” by Maya
Angelou was written in 1987 after the
death of her friend and fellow
writer/activist James Baldwin.

WHEREAS, the Academy of American Poets designated the month of April as National Poetry Month in 1996 to celebrate the legacy and ongoing achievements of poets in the United States, introduce the pleasures and benefits of reading poetry, bring poets and poetry to the public in immediate and innovative ways, and make poetry an important part of children’s education; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Carrboro established the position of poet laureate in 2002 to enhance the presence of poetry in the social and civic life of Carrboro; and

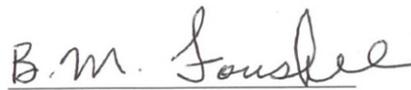
WHEREAS, several free, local poetry events are scheduled for this April, including:

- a ‘Writing Together’ workshop on April 1 with Carrboro Poet Laureate Liza Wolff-Francis; and
- the monthly Recreation, Parks & Cultural Resources’ Poets’ Open Mic Night via Zoom on April 2; and
- the Lanza’s Café bi-monthly Poetry Open Mic Night on April 12 and April 26; and
- a Poetry, Popcorn, & Pie event at the Century Center on April 15, featuring local poets, including Poet Laureate Liza Wolff-Francis and an open mic; and
- an Earth Day seedling giveaway at the Carrboro Farmers’ Market on April 20, where young people can contribute a line to this year’s community poem; and
- a workshop with former Poet Laureate Gary Phillips on April 25; and
- a youth poetry writing workshop as part of Carrboro in Motion at Collins Crossing Apartment on April 27; and

WHEREAS, the Town’s signature poetry event, the annual West End Poetry Festival, will be held in October to bring together poets of diverse styles, backgrounds, and stages of development to share poems and their love of poetry;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Barbara M. Foushee, mayor of the Town of Carrboro, North Carolina, do hereby proclaim April 2024 to be Poetry Month in Carrboro. I encourage all residents to celebrate poetry and poets by reading, listening to, and sharing poems and by attending Poetry Month events, which are listed on the Town’s website at carrboronc.gov.

This the 9th day of April, 2024.


Barbara M. Foushee

