



DATE: January 23, 2023

AGENDA ITEM #6

TO: Historical Commission

FROM: Jia Liu, Associate Planner

SUBJECT: Margaret Thompson Essay Contest

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive an update on the Margaret Thompson Essay Contest

BACKGROUND

Margaret Thompson Historical Essay Contest

The Margaret Thompson Essay contest is for children from grades three through six. Essays are written covering a specific theme. Each year hundreds of essays are judged by community members and prizes will be awarded in the spring.

Winners at each grade level receive \$50 for first place, \$30 for second place and \$20 for third place. In addition to individual prizes, the school with the most winners will be awarded a trophy.

2023 Essay Contest Theme – “A Path to Conservation Inspired by Wallace Stegner”

Wallace Stegner was at the forefront of the modern conservation movement. He was a visionary who understood how important wilderness is to human beings. Mr. Stegner brought awareness locally, nationally, and globally to the importance of the environment and conservation. In 1962, he co-founded Green Foothills, a local environmental organization, which led to the development of MidPeninsula Regional Open Space and their work in preserving wilderness areas and natural open spaces for all to enjoy.

In writing their essays, students are to have a conversation in your classroom or with family members about what the student and the student’s family are doing to save our natural resources and protect our environment and wildlife. Think of the writer as an environmentalist or conservationist. What are some things the student are doing? Are there places in the natural world that the student and the student’s family like to go and feel the “hope in nature?” Conclude the discussion by thinking about how the student can save and protect the environment in the future.

Students can visit the Museum to view the exhibit anytime by March 5, 2023 to learn about the impact Wallace Stegner had on the conservation movement. For more information on this exhibit, please visit this website: losaltoshistory.org/StegnerExhibit.

Here is a video with more information on Wallace Stegner and the essay contest:
<https://youtu.be/UMfJxCmAuSw>

The essay contest documents, including the Cover Sheet (Attachment A), Writing Prompt (Attachment B), General Instructions for Teachers, Principals, and Parents (Attachment C) and Rubric for the Essay Contest (Attachment D) are provided with the agenda report. The documents are also available at <https://www.losaltosca.gov/historicalcommission/page/margaret-thompson-historical-essay-contest>.

DISCUSSION

The goal of the item is for the Commission to receive the updates on the status of the Margaret Essay contest.

Enclosed:

Attachment A – 2023 Cover Sheet

Attachment B – 2023 Writing Prompt

Attachment C – 2023 General Instructions for Teachers, Principals, and Parents

Attachment D – 2023 Rubric for Essay Contest