

First Annual Qu Yuan Poetry Contest  
at Xiang Jiang Pavilion, Phalen-Keller Regional Park  
Sponsored by the Minnesota China Friendship Garden Society and the Dragon Festival

**WHAT:** The winning poem will be read at 11:00am, on Saturday, July 13, 2019, the first day of the Dragon Festival at Lake Phalen to mark the Grand Opening of the St. Paul-Changsha China Friendship Garden of Whispering Willows and Flowing Waters, and to celebrate the ideals of the poet Qu Yuan. The reading will take place at the Main Stage at Phalen-Keller Regional Park, just north of the Picnic Pavilion. The audience will include officials of both sister-cities, families and children. This is the only China garden in the U.S. built in Changsha style and containing elements of Hmong culture.

**THEME:** Poetry is an important art form around the world and especially in Chinese and Hmong culture. The story of Qu Yuan -- China's "Peoples Poet"-- provides the basis for the Dragon Festival celebration. He lived from 340-278 B.C. in the Chu State of China whose majority population was Hmong, ancestors of present day Hmong. Betrayed by his government, his country lost to an enemy, he walked into a river and was pursued in vain by townsfolk in boats banging drums. In writing your poem, please consider the following. More information about the Xiang Jiang Pavilion and the Dragon Festival can be found below.

- The themes that Qu Yuan's story evoke are loyalty to country, beauty of nature, and transcendence – what the famous poet Li Bai calls “the celestial space” in Qu Yuan's poetry -- and the many principles he is known for: patriotism, self-sacrifice, love of country and rural life, kindness. You are encouraged to research this.
- Through his imagination, the poet travels freely between heaven and earth; his poetry represents an entire celestial sphere where he longs to reside. This space is superior to the mundane order of the secular world and signifies another kind of existence.
- We encourage you to visit the Xiang Jiang Pavilion at St. Paul-Changsha China Friendship Garden, much like a pavilion where Qu Yuan and Li Bai would have found inspiration for their poetry. See map for location.

**CONTEST DETAILS:**

1. CONTEST OPENS: MAY 1, 2019 | CONTEST ENDS: JUNE 10, 2019 at midnight.
2. No Entry Fee.
3. Poetry contest is open to anyone. Any age. All cultures welcomed.
4. LENGTH AND FORMAT: No more than one page, typed. No author identification on the page.
5. LANGUAGE: English.
6. Poems should be original (published or unpublished) and can be in free verse or rhymed, in a traditional form or contemporary—the tone, style, and length of the poem is open.
7. Each poem should have a title.
8. The author's name must NOT appear on the poem page, only on the cover form (see below).
9. Limit of one poem per person.
10. The winning poet is requested to read their poem on July 13 at 11 A.M. at Phalen-Keller Regional Park. If unavailable, the Contest Curator will select another suitable reader to read the winning poem.

**PRIZE:** The poet of the winning poem will have the honor to read the poem on July 13, 2019, and will receive \$100, and publication on the MCFGS website and the East Side Arts Council's *Poets Post* at their Phalen Poetry Park and Dragon Garden. Two poets shall be named as runners-up, acknowledged and awarded gift certificates at the ceremony.

**JUDGES:** We are very honored to have three accomplished poets ~ Margaret Hasse, Wang Ping, Kao Kalia Yang

**JUDGING IS BLIND:** Authors' names will not be known to the judges.

If you have any questions, please email Contest Curator Romi Slowiak at [romislowiak@gmail.com](mailto:romislowiak@gmail.com) using POETRY CONTEST in the subject line of your email. Thank you for your interest!

QU YUAN POETRY CONTEST COVER FORM

SUBMISSION by email: Submit your poem to Contest Curator: [romislowiak@gmail.com](mailto:romislowiak@gmail.com) with the subject line "Submission to Poetry Contest." Send the poem as an attachment to the email, not in the body of the email.

SUBMISSION by U.S. mail: Mail three (3) paper copies of your poem along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope, to Contest Curator: Romi Slowiak, 1492 East Shore Drive, St. Paul, MN 55106.

1. CONTACT INFORMATION

Poet's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

2. POEM

Title of Poem: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I have included a copy of my poem (3 papers copies if by U.S. mail).

3. VERIFICATION: My signature below confirms that I have closely reviewed and accepted the rules and conditions of the contest as published in the contest document above and available online at the St. Paul-Changsha China Friendship Garden website at <http://mnchinagarden.org/st-paul-changsha/> I hereby verify that my submitted poem is a new work (whether published or unpublished); that I am the author of the poem; that decisions of judges are final; that if I am unable to read my poem on July 13, I will inform the contest curator as soon as possible so another reader may be arranged to read my poem.

4. PERMISSION TO USE: By submitting this poem, I grant explicit permission for the Minnesota China Friendship Garden Society to use this poem and publish this poem with my name on their website, Facebook page, eNewsletter, and other marketing materials and be posted at the Phalen Poetry Park.

5. HOLD HARMLESS: My signature below signifies that I hold harmless the Minnesota China Friendship Garden Society and its Board members and Advisors, the poetry contest judges, and the Dragon Festival and waive any liability in connection with this contest.

Poet's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR POETRY CONTEST AT XIANG JIANG PAVILION

### Xiang Jiang Pavilion

The Xiang Jiang Pavilion 湘江亭, located in the St. Paul-Changsha China Friendship Garden of Whispering Willows and Flowing Waters at Phalen-Keller Regional Park, is a gift to the City of St. Paul from the City of Changsha and Changsha Yanghu Wetlands Park in 2018 - the 30-year anniversary of the St. Paul-Changsha sister-city relationship. The Xiang Jiang Pavilion is named after the Xiang River 湘江 that runs through the heart of the City of Changsha, much like the Mississippi River through St. Paul. The Xiang Jiang Pavilion is a replica of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century Aiwan Pavilion 爱晚亭 in Changsha, one of four famous pavilions in China. The Xiang Jiang Pavilion illustrates the Changsha architecture with sweeping eaves and landscaping style with open garden grounds, unlike the Beijing style with straight eaves, or the Suzhou Southern style with extreme sweeping eaves and enclosed grounds.

These couplets are beautifully carved in the right and left front granite columns on the Xiang Jiang Pavilion in St. Paul and Aiwan Pavilion in Changsha. The couplet is read right column first, then left column as in traditional Chinese writing.



*Along the mountain path, a red sunset unfolds,  
Blossoms of 500 peach trees burst forth,  
Jade green clouds descend over the mountain cliffs,  
A pair of red-crowned cranes await their bamboo home.*

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### Dragon Festival

















The Dragon Festival in St. Paul is celebrating 19 years of honoring the Pan-Asian heritage and spirit on July 13 and 14, 2019. It is held on the banks of Lake Phalen at Phalen Regional Park, in St. Paul, Minnesota. The mission is to bring together the Greater Twin Cities community in celebration of the diverse Asian Pacific cultures through an annual dragon festival. Typically, there are 14 teams with 18 paddlers, 1 drummer, and 1 fly catcher racing colorfully decorated Dragon Boats throughout the two day weekend. Thousands of people attend to cheer them on. The event is intended “to be more about fun and community building” than as a “highly competitive event.” Dragon boat racing has a rich history of ancient ceremonial and ritualistic traditions, which originated in southern central China more than 2500 years ago. The legend starts with the story of Qu Yuan, who was a minister in one of the Warring State governments, Chu.

City of Saint Paul  
Parks and Recreation  
Phalen Regional Park

 Xiang Jiang Pavilion



Key

- |   |                     |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|---|---------------------|
|  | Picnic Area         |  | Amphitheater        |
|  | Picnic Shelter      |  | Playground          |
|  | Building Structures |  | Portable Toilet     |
|  | Golf Course         |  | Softball Field      |
|  | Parking Lot         |  | Baseball Field      |
|  | Boat Launch         |  | Fishing Area        |
|  | Sand Volleyball     |  | Ice Rink            |
|  | Food                |  | Trails - Off Street |