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Berks County Public Libraries and Berks Nature reveal bilingual StoryWalk® at The Nature Place

For immediate release—On Tuesday, August 1, 2023, an eager audience of approximately 30 people lined the walkway at Berks Nature, The Nature Place to witness the unveiling of Berks County’s latest StoryWalk. The grand reveal event recognized the partnership between Berks County Public Libraries and Berks Nature and celebrated the addition of another bilingual StoryWalk within the county.

Prior to the reveal Stephanie Williams, interim administrator for Berks County Public Libraries, welcomed guests at The Rookery rooftop deck as she and Berks Nature President Kimberly Murphy offered remarks. Among those present included Deputy Secretary of Education Susan Banks and Heather Sharpe, Director of the Bureau of Library Development, Office of Commonwealth Libraries.

Williams noted that while StoryWalks have been used around the nation since their creation in 2007 by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, VT, these storybook displays only recently debuted in Berks County beginning in 2020. Today, eight permanent and seasonal library StoryWalks reside within the county with recent additions added to the Muhlenberg Rail Trail and now Berks Nature.

As the remarks concluded, guests were asked to walk down the path to the first sign post where six excited children from the Berks Nature Preschool waited to assist with the unveiling of the StoryWalk. On the count of three, the children pulled the covering from the sign post, revealing the cover page of the story.

Following the official unveiling, event officials invited guests to walk the trail and read *The Last Tree* by María Quintana Silva (author) and Silvia Álvarez (illustrator) with translation by Jon Brokenbrow.

“We’re excited to finally reveal the product of this successful partnership,” Williams said. “Our hope is that individuals and families who visit the beautiful grounds of The Nature Place will enjoy the stories

presented at the Story Walk. As the seasons change, visitors can come back and read new stories, as the Storywalk will be updated quarterly.”

Berks Nature staff offered personal tours along the StoryWalk path as children gleefully darted from post to post, reading the story pages while burning off some excess energy. Just as other StoryWalks in Berks County and across the country aim to accomplish, the StoryWalk at Berks Nature blends physical activity with the joy of reading and love of the outdoors.

The StoryWalk will remain open to visitors from dawn to dusk to enjoy at their leisure in the park. Visitors are encouraged to plan their visit when The Nature Place is open, Tuesday–Saturday 10am–3pm, to enjoy the offerings of the free public nature center.

Additional information about library StoryWalks in Berks County is available at www.berkslibraries.org/storywalks.

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If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Stephanie Williams at stephanie.williams@berks.lib.pa.us. The StoryWalk® Project was created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, VT and developed in collaboration with the Kellogg-Hubbard Library. Storywalk® is a registered service mark owned by Ms. Ferguson.

About the Berks County Library System: The Berks County Public Library (BCPL) System is a department of the County of Berks, serving 428,849 county residents across 866 square miles and 72 municipalities since 1986. Through the support of the Berks County commissioners, BCPL staff aids in strengthening the Berks County community by providing centralized support for the 19 full-service member libraries and four branches. For more information, please visit www.berkslibraries.org.