

Northfield Poet Laureate Report

Summary: September 2016-May 2023

Activities as Poet Laureate

- Wrote and read more than 25 poems for public occasions in Northfield. These include poems for City Council meetings, dedications of parks and public art, the Joseph Lee Heywood graveside ceremony (2016), Living Treasure Award ceremonies (2017-2020), State of the City Addresses (2018-2020), and Boards and Commission Recognitions events (2017-2018). One poem was included in the pre-recorded portion of the 2020 Northfield High School commencement, which was held online due to Covid-19 (link: <https://npb.ci.northfield.mn.us/CablecastPublicSite/show/183?channel=1>).
- Organized and hosted more than 50 poetry readings at the Northfield Public Library, Content Bookstore, Imminent Brewing, Hot Spot Music, and the Northfield Depot, including three readings featuring poetry and music (since 2015). At least half of these readings have featured local poets (Northfield and Faribault area).
- Organized and hosted a Northfield Poetry Festival (2017-2019). The festivals in 2017 and 2019 served as the capstone event for SEMAC grants in those years.
- Organized and hosted the Northfield Poetry Tour, which featured more than 30 local poets, including several reading in public for the first time (2023).
- Organized and hosted 4 juried Writers Night readings (2017-2019), including one as part of the inaugural First Friday Art Night sponsored by the Northfield Downtown Development Corporation (NDDC) and one on Resilience and Sustainability co-sponsored by the City of Northfield Climate Action Plan Advisory Board. PDFs of the readings from Writers Nights (including 5 sponsored by the Northfield Arts Guild, 2004-2006) can be found here: <https://mynpl.org/c.php?g=629947&p=7122865>
- Wrote two successful SEMAC grant applications (2017, 2019) which brought \$20,000 to the Northfield Public Library for poetry programming over two years. Funds from these grants also paid for the lectern and camera used at library events, as well as for the installation of the poem in the library atrium.
- Led poetry workshops at FiftyNorth, Northfield Arts Guild, and Northfield Public Schools.
- Led a summer poetry day camp at the Northfield Arts Guild (2017) and a National Poetry Month poetry club at the Greenvale Park Community School (April 2017).
- Collaborated with art specialist Bridget Novak on a monthly poetry group at Laura Baker Services Association, and presented on the collaboration at the 2019 LBSA Gala, which featured a short video and a chapbook of poems by LBSA clients (2019-2020).
- Organized workshops by visiting poets at Northfield High School, The Key, and FiftyNorth.
- Participated in a program on the role of art in end of life conversations, sponsored by End in Mind and hosted by Cathy Wurzer (2018).
- Collaborated with Jennifer Lompart (Northfield High School) and TruArtSpeaks (Minneapolis) on youth poetry slams in Northfield (2018, 2019).
- Collaborated with Prairie Creek Community School to create a school poem, which was engraved on wood for display in the school and set to music by St. Olaf College music students as “The Prairie Creek Song” (https://youtu.be/6RyK2_tYPWA).
- Created a poem for permanent display in the atrium of the Northfield Public Library (2017).

- Facilitated the creation of a collaborative community poem for the Rivewalk Steps (2019).
- Wrote and performed a narration to accompany the Cannon Valley Regional Orchestra/Northfield Arts Guild dance studio performance of *The Nutcracker* in Northfield and Cannon Falls (2018).
- Had two poems included in the anthology *Undocumented: Great Lakes Poets Laureate on Social Justice* (Michigan State University Press 2019), including a poem written for the Northfield Human Rights Commission's annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day observance.
- Read poetry at a variety show at the Contented Cow as part of Winter Walk 2018.
- Wrote and read a poem for the Northfield Arts Guild's 2017 Art and Ale fundraiser.
- Served as a judge for the state Poetry Out Loud finals (2020-2023).
- Served as a judge for the Sidewalk Poetry Contest (2017-2020), hosted kick-off and capstone celebrations, and helped with placement of poems on new sidewalks.
- Coordinated Poem in Your Pocket Day activities, including teaching a poetry lesson in all of the sixth grade English language arts classes at Northfield Middle School (2017-2019).
- Gave a talk and read poems for a Carleton College staff luncheon (2017).
- Participated in a Prairie Creek Community School staff retreat (2017).
- Led a Sunday morning poetry discussion at Bethel Lutheran Church (2018)
- Created and maintained the Northfield Poet Laureate Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/NorthfieldPoetLaureate>) and website (<https://mynpl.org/PoetLaureate>).
- Organized and hosted the monthly Poetry Open Mic Evening (POME) at the Northfield Public Library (beginning in November 2022).
- Wrote and presented a Proclamation, adopted by the Northfield City Council, proclaiming April 20, 2023 "Penchant Day," in honor of Penchant (Northfield Women Poets).
- Served as a juror for the Red Wing Arts 19th Annual Poet-Artist Collaboration (2020). Poems featured on the cover of the 2021 and 2023 chapbooks.
- Compiled and distributed an occasional Northfield Poetry Newsletter with notice of events and publications by local poets.
- Helped organize two successful writing groups for local poets
- Wrote blurbs for the back cover of poetry books by Leslie Schultz, D.E. Green, Steve McCown, and Susan Jaret McKinstry
- Made numerous guest appearances on KYMN's ArtZany! Radio for the Imagination and wrote a guest column about the Poet Laureate position for the *Northfield News*
- Served as an ex-officio non-voting member of the Arts and Culture Commission (2016-2020)
- Served on the public art review committee for the roundabout tunnel project (2019)

Photo album of Northfield Poet Laureate events (Google):
<https://photos.app.goo.gl/vVdm695NIIhSTXyn1>

Grants and Awards as Poet Laureate

- 2020 Minnesota Author Project: Communities Create contest. Finalist. For *Legacies: Poetic Living Wills*. Editor, with contributions from 16 other local poets. Link: <https://library.biblioboard.com/content/151421a3-3293-4131-a022-250c1b7cb3b1>
- 2019 Artists on Main Street Grant (2019). Northfield Downtown Development Corporation. \$750.
- 2019 Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council (SEMAC) Grant, to support the Northfield Poet Laureate program. Grant writer on behalf of Northfield Public Library. \$10,000.
- 2017 Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council (SEMAC) Grant, to support the Northfield Poet Laureate program. Grant writer on behalf of Northfield Public Library. \$10,000.

Public Poetry Installations 2016-2023 (not including Northfield Sidewalk Poetry)

- Northfield Public Library atrium poem (2017). Written by Rob Hardy. Installed with funds from a 2017 SEMAC grant. Link to image: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/FGasBTsEfhdWLbvT6>
- Prairie Creek School poem (2018-2019). Written by Rob Hardy with the children of Prairie Creek Community School. Displayed inside the school entrance. Link to image: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/dhV5CmXfffgPV1Qm7>
- Riverwalk Steps poem (2019-2020). Created collaboratively by 16 local poets and painted onto the steps by Natalie Draper and Teresa Jensen. Link to image: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/6gu1RrpvoKxf56mC8>

Community Partners

Northfield Public Library, Content Bookstore, City of Northfield, Northfield Public Schools, FiftyNorth, Northfield Arts Guild, Cannon Valley Regional Orchestra, Prairie Creek Community School, Arcadia Charter School, Laura Baker Services Association, Northfield Shares, Hotspot Music, Imminent Brewing, Northfield Depot, Northfield Union of Youth, Carleton College, St. Olaf College, Northfield Downtown Development Corporation, Northfield Historical Society, TruArtSpeaks (Minneapolis), Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council, KYMN (Paula Granquist), *Northfield News*, WINGS, End in Mind (Cathy Wurzer)

Poetry Readings in Northfield Hosted by the Northfield Poet Laureate (2015-2023)

2022-2023. April 2022: Rob Hardy and Greta Hardy-Mittell (Content Bookstore), May 2022: Margaret Hasse (Content Bookstore), June 2022: Northfield Public Library Poets: Becky Boling, Heather Candels, D.E. Green, Steve McCown, Julie Ryan (Northfield Public Library), September: Klecko (Content Bookstore), February 2023: Sun Yung Shin (Content Bookstore), April: Penchant/Northfield Women Poets (Content Bookstore). May 2023: Chris Martin (Content), Northfield Poetry Tour (Northfield Depot, Northfield Public Library).

2021. November 2021: Michael Kleber-Diggs, Michael Bazzett, Lee Colin Thomas (Content Bookstore)

2019-2020. September 2019: 3rd Northfield Poetry Festival (Content and Northfield Public Library), with musical guest Mestifonía. October: D.E. Green (Content). November: Steve Schild (Northfield Public Library). January 2020: Joanne Esser (Content). February: Rebecca Fremo (Northfield Public Library). March: Larry Gavin (Northfield Public Library), October: Steve McCown (Northfield Public Library *virtual*)

2018-2019. September 2018: Kai Carlson-Wee (Content). September: Northfield Poetry Festival (featuring Minnesota Poet Laureate Joyce Sutphen). October: Bao Phi (Content); Nicole Borg (Northfield Public Library). November: Michael Kleber-Diggs (Northfield Public Library). December: Mary Moore Easter and Lisa Dordal (Content). January 2019: Faribault Poets Larry Gavin, Audrey Helbling, John Reinhard, Peter Allen, and Kristen Twitchell (Northfield Public Library). February: Christopher Bakken (Content). March: Emily Oliver (Northfield Public Library); Danny Caine (Content). April: Justin Watkins (Northfield Public Library); Great Lakes Poets Laureate on Social Justice: Sheila Packa, Ken McCullough, Jim Armstrong, Emilio DeGrazia, and Rob Hardy (Content). May: Daniel Dietrich (Northfield Public Library); Anders Carlson-Wee (Content). May: Concertina: Leslie Schultz, with musical guest Jake Bastyr, concertina (Hot Spot Music).

2017-2018. October 2017: Leila Chatti (Northfield Public Library). November: Anders Carlson-Wee (Content Bookstore). March 2018: Jim Lenfestey (Content). April: Andrea Een (poetry and hardanger fiddle at Northfield Public Library). April: Rachel Moritz (Content); Jennifer Kwon Dobbs (Content). May: Danez Smith (Northfield Public Library); Leslie Schultz (Northfield Public Library); Mary Moore Easter (Content).

2016-2017. October 2016: Freya Manfred (Content). November: Greg Hewett (Content). December: Ken McCullough (Content). January 2017: Richard Broderick (Content). February: Kathleen Roberts (Content). March: Youth Poetry Night: Anna Kochever, Bella Callery, Alondra Pérez, Hannah Pahs (Content). April: Riki Kölbl Nelson and Karen Herseth Wee (Content).

2015-2016. October 2015: Brenda Hellen and Rob Hardy (Content). November: Diane LeBlanc (Content). December: D.E. Green (Content). January 2016: Susan Jaret McKinstry (Content). February: Greg Hewett and students (Content). March: Youth Poetry Night: Alondra Pérez, Chris Lazaro, Bella Callery, Anna Kochever (Content). April: Kaethe Schwehn (Content). May: Leslie Schultz (Content). June: Lost Poems of Neruda: a bilingual reading by Cecilia Cornejo and Fritz Bogott (Content).

Submitted by Rob Hardy, former Northfield Poet Laureate (September 2016-May 2023)