

Northfield Poet Laureate Report April 2019

Events

April 4. Justin Watkins (author of *A Mark of Permanence*). Co-sponsored by Cannon River Watershed Partnership. Attendance: 12

April 17. Jimmy Santiago Baca. Kracum Performance Hall. Co-sponsored by Carleton College. Attendance: 75.

April 23. Michael Bazzett (reading from his translation of the *Popul Vuh*). Attendance: 12.

April 28. Great Lakes Poets Laureate Reading at Zenith Bookstore in Duluth. Readings by Joyce Sutphen (Minnesota Poet Laureate), Kimberly Blaeser (former Wisconsin Poet Laureate), Sheila Packa (Duluth), Deborah Cooper (Duluth), Ellie Schoenfeld (Duluth), Jim Armstrong (Winona), Ken McCullough (Winona), Howard Paap (Bayfield, WI), and Rob Hardy (Northfield). Attendance: 35.

Upcoming Events

May 1. May Day at Prairie Creek Community School. Unveiling of the school poem the Poet Laureate wrote with the children in January 2018. The poem has been engraved on a large piece of locally-sourced hardwood for display in the school.

May 2. Daniel Dietrich. Northfield Public Library. 7pm.

May 9. Leslie Schultz. With concertina player Jake Minar Bastyr. Hot Spot Music. 7pm.

May 16. Anders Carlson-Wee. Content. 7pm.

May 20. Great Lakes Poets Laureate Reading. Content. 7pm.

May 30. Great Lakes Poets Laureate Reading. Winona Public Library. 7pm.

June 4. Steven Schild. Content. 7pm.

Poem in Your Pocket Day

During the week of April 15, I was a poet-in-residence in the sixth grade at Northfield Middle School. I taught eleven sections of sixth grade writing. On Tuesday, April 16, I taught Monika Burkhead's five classes, on Wednesday, April 17, I taught Caitlin Robertson's one class, and on Friday, April 19, I taught Sarah Bloom's five classes. The lesson was on kennings and riddle poems. There were 350 children in the 11 classes. Although National Poem in Your Pocket Day was observed on Thursday, April 18, we moved Northfield's observance to Thursday, April 25. Fourteen businesses participated this year. Thank you especially to CakeWalk, Content Bookstore, Goodbye Blue Monday, The Hideaway, Northfield Yarn, Quality Bakery, and Tandem Bagels. These businesses offered discounts or free items to 6th graders who came in and recited a poem. The businesses reported that from 10 to 40 children took advantage of these special offers on Poem in Your Pocket Day.

Sidewalk Poetry Judging

For the third year, the Northfield Poet Laureate served as a judge for the Sidewalk Poetry competition, along with Diane LeBlanc (St. Olaf), Becky Boling (Carleton), Angelica Linder (Northfield Public Library), and Joel Olson (Northfield Public Schools). The process was once again expertly coordinated by Bonnie Jean Flom.

Artists on Main Street

The Northfield Poet Laureate was awarded a \$750 Artists on Main Street grant to commission the creation of an artist-designed poetry post for installation along the Riverwalk. A poetry post consists of a frame for the display of poetry (a poetry box) mounted on a post. Here's an example of a poetry box and a decorated post before installation:



Image credit: <http://www.poetryboxes.com/news/own-the-boards-article-part-2/12222014>