

## NEWS RELEASE

Distributed June 25, 2015

### **Nanaimo's Poet Laureate Receives FBCW Honorary Ambassador Award**

#### **Summary**

Nanaimo's Inaugural Poet Laureate, Ms. Naomi Beth Wakan, has received a special award from the Federation of British Columbia Writers (FBCW).

Naomi received the Honorary Ambassador Award in recognition of the dedicated and spirited way she has made live poetry a rich and everyday component of civic life in Nanaimo. She brings poetry to all kinds of venues, from art gallery shows, festival openings to city Council meetings and local literary cafes.

The Honorary Ambassador Award is a new award, created by the FBCW to raise the the profile of writers and the importance of writing that benefits everyone.

As Nanaimo's inaugural Poet Laureate, Naomi has worked to encourage writers of all ages. Last year, she judged a national youth poetry competition. This year, she is going to run a similar competition with a Nanaimo theme for Grades 10-12. She is also contributing to an anthology of Nanaimo poetry and planning a memoir workshop for seniors.

*Strategic Link:* Cultural Vitality: Ensuring that Nanaimo will have a strong and vibrant culture which evolves with a coordinated and collaborative effort leading to greater popularity as a place to visit, live, work and play.

#### **Key Points**

- Naomi Beth Wakan was chosen as the first recipient of the FBCW Honorary Ambassador Award.
- Naomi Beth Wakan is currently in the second of her three year term as Nanaimo's Poet Laureate.

#### **Quotes**

"Naomi continues to surpass our expectations as Nanaimo's Poet Laureate, and it's wonderful to see her inspiring work recognized at the provincial level."

Bill McKay  
Mayor  
City of Nanaimo

**Contact:**

Chris Barfoot  
Culture and Heritage Coordinator  
City of Nanaimo  
chris.barfoot@nanaimo.ca  
250-755-7522

Main Office  
Culture & Heritage Department  
City of Nanaimo  
cultureandheritage@nanaimo.ca  
250-755-4483



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