



PRESS RELEASE
North Olympic Library System
2210 South Peabody Street
Port Angeles, WA 98362

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: January 24, 2025
Contact: Clair Dunlap, Youth Services Librarian
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Re: Nellie Bridge named the next Clallam County Poet Laureate
Attached: *NellieBridge_CreditMorningStarPhotography.jpg*

The North Olympic Library System (NOLS) is excited to announce **Nellie Bridge** as the next Clallam County Poet Laureate. Bridge will serve from April 2025 through March 2027, succeeding the county's first poet laureate Jaiden Dokken.

Community members are invited to the inauguration ceremony during **Poetry Fest on Friday, April 4, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Port Angeles Main Library**, 2210 S. Peabody St. During the event, Dokken will perform their final poetry reading as poet laureate, and Bridge will kick off her two-year term with a reading of her own. Attendees can explore beginner-friendly poetry activities and browse a variety of poetry books in celebration of National Poetry Month. The inauguration will also be livestreamed on Zoom.

A second Poetry Fest celebration will take place on **Friday, April 25, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Forks Branch Library**, 171 S. Forks Ave., where Bridge will read from her work.

Bridge recently returned to Sequim, where she was raised, after spending six years working with teens in international schools, including four years in Sofia, Bulgaria, and two in Lima, Peru. She currently works with fourth through sixth graders at Five Acre School in Dungeness. "As

an ongoing part of my teaching, I encourage young students to write expressively and enjoy language, which keeps me delighting in poems and words,” said Bridge.

She attended The Evergreen State College for her BA and NYU’s MFA program for poetry as a New York Times Fellow. She also apprenticed with letterpress printers including The Yolla Bolly Press, Copper Canyon Press and the Wells College Book Arts Center.

“I write plainspoken lyric poems often grounded in direct observation,” explained Bridge. Her writing explores themes of identity, place, experience, and the desire to connect as both newcomer and returning stranger. Her poems have appeared in journals such as Press Pause Press, Volume, Vagabond, New Delta Review, EcoTheo Review, Pleiades, and Rattapallax; manuscripts have been finalists or semi-finalists at Alice James, Sarabande, Pleiades, Black Spring, Trio House, Airlie, and Persea. She has published two small-run chapbooks. Her manuscript “Holes in the Ship of Theseus” is currently shortlisted for the Best of the Bottom Drawer Prize.

A primary goal of the Clallam County Poet Laureate program is to use poetry to bring a variety of voices and perspectives to culturally diverse audiences throughout the county, and to bring communities together through poetry. In this role, Bridge aims to offer a range of events to engage people of all ages, abilities, and experiences, including those in long-term care, youth in the justice system and incarcerated individuals.

“I envision, roughly, a first year of generative events and a second year of dissemination of the poetry that was created locally,” said Bridge. She plans to collaborate with other organizations to display poems in unexpected places in the county, and explore the possibility of creating an anthology of new and old poems from the community. She is also eager to collaborate on poetry translations, a practice she began during her travels.

A committee of community arts leaders, practitioners, and enthusiasts from across the county selected Bridge from a pool of talented poets who submitted applications last fall. The 2025-27 term comes with a \$10,000 stipend funded by the North Olympic Library Foundation (NOLF)

and Clallam County in recognition of the appointed poet's time and energy in participating in or hosting events, and to support the poet's craft and practice.

Poetry Fest events are funded in part by the Port Angeles Friends of the Library and the Friends of Forks Library.

For more information about this program, visit [NOLS.org/poet](https://nols.org/poet), email Discover@nols.org, or call 360-417-8500.



Nellie Bridge will begin her two-year term as Clallam County Poet Laureate in April 2025. Photo by Morning Star Photography.

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