



NEIGHBORING LAURELS

Compiled by Chris Lewis

Montana

- > Poet Laureate program established in 2005 by Gov. Brian Schweitzer.
- > The position is panel-appointed for a term of two years.
- > There is no monetary award.
- > Though there are no set requirements in terms of readings, the Laureate is featured in a newsletter that is published six times per year.
- > *Current Laureate:*
Greg Pape, who will serve until mid-2009
- > *Montana's first Poet Laureate*
Sandra Alcosser, who held the position from 2005-2007

Nevada

- > Poet Laureate program was established in 1957 by Gov. Grant Sawyer.
- > The position is a lifetime-appointment...in theory.
- > Theory, half-explained: the first Laureate, Mildred Breedlove, was appointed in 1957 and served until 1967 when she resigned her position after feuding with state officials. (Attempts to have the nature of this friction explained have not been successful.) Later that year, Norman Kaye was appointed to the "lifetime" position, but in 2007, Gov. Jim Gibbons decided to name Kaye Poet Laureate Emeritus. This, according to the governor, permitted him to name a new Poet Laureate (presumably to a lifetime position)—which he has yet to do. Kaye has disputed the governor's interpretation. As it stands today, Gibbons-ites maintain the position of Poet Laureate in Nevada is vacant; Kaye-ites maintain this is not the case.

Oregon

- > Poet Laureate position was established in 1923 by Gov. Walter Pierce, though the title was not officially approved by the legislature until 1989.
- > The first Laureate was appointed to a lifetime-term; the length was then shortened to four years. The current Laureate is on a two-year appointment, and may be re-appointed for an additional two years.
- > The current Laureate receives a \$10,000 annual stipend, and is eligible for an additional \$10,000 for expenses.
- > *Current Laureate:*
Lawson Fusao Inada (2006-present)
- > *Past Laureates:*
Edwin Markham (1923-1931)
Ben Hur Lampman (1951-1954)
Ethel Romig Fuller (1957-1965)
William Stafford (1975-1990)

Utah

- > Poet Laureate position was established in 1997 by Gov. Mike Leavitt.
- > The position is for five-years; host institutions and organizations provide honoraria which the Arts Council matches. The council also provides travel and project funds.
- > The Laureate travels throughout the state and promotes literature, particularly poetry. The Laureate speaks/reads at colleges, universities, schools, etc.
- > *Current Poet Laureate:*
Katherine Coles (2006-present)
- > *Past Laureates:*
David Lee (1997-2002)
Kenneth W. Brewer (2003-2006)

Washington

- > Poet Laureate position established in 2007 by Gov. Christine Gregoire.
- > The appointment is for two-years.
- > The position pays \$10,000 per year.
- > *First and Current Poet Laureate:*
Samuel Greene (2007-present)

Wyoming

- > Poet Laureate position was established in 1981 by Gov. Ed Herschler.
- > Laureate tenure coincides with that of the governor's stay in office.
- > Until 2008, no money was awarded, but now there is a \$5,000 annual project budget. Though the budget is not a salary, it may be used by the Laureate to fund trips, readings, etc.
- > *Current Poet Laureate:*
David Romtvedt (2004-present)
- > *Past Laureates:*
Peggy Simson Curry (1981-1987)
Charles L. Levendosky (1988-1995)
Robert Roripaugh (1995-2003)

