

NAPA COUNTY POET LAUREATE PROGRAM

2012-2014 Nomination Form • DEADLINE (POSTMARK): June 1, 2012

Nominee Information

NAME BECKEE NEWCOMER, WILSON

MAILING ADDRESS [REDACTED]

PHONE (DAY) [REDACTED] (EVE) SAME

EMAIL [REDACTED]

WEBSITE

SIGNATURE Beckee Newcomer Wilson DATE 5/27/12

Please attach the following:

- 1) One page detailing how the nominee would contribute/ participate as Napa County Poet Laureate based on the position description and the mission and goals of the program;
- 2) Nominee's writing resume listing any awards, publications, teaching positions and similar achievements.

Nominator Information

NAME GEORGE STRATTON — REPRESENTING "SOLSTICE WRITERS"

ORGANIZATION Solstice writers Club

MAILING ADDRESS [REDACTED]

PHONE (DAY) [REDACTED] (EVE) SAME

EMAIL [REDACTED]

WEBSITE

SIGNATURE George Stratton DATE 5/27/12

Please attach a one-page statement in support of the nominee based on the mission and goals of the program. Please refer to the Nomination Guidelines for Submission Instructions.

Submission Instructions

Please mail completed nomination packets by June 1, 2012 to:

Napa County Poet Laureate Nominations
Arts Council Napa Valley
1041 Jefferson Street, Suite 4
Napa, CA 94559

May 21, 2012

To the Napa County Poet Laureate Selection Committee:

It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that I am writing to endorse Beclee Wilson as Poet Laureate for Napa County! I have been a participant with the Solstice Creative Writing Group since we began at Rianda House in June of 2011. Prior to that, I was a student in George Stratton's writing classes at Napa Valley College Upper Campus for about ten years. I am also active with a Benicia poetry group and have organized and led several poetry events in the city of Fairfield. I hope my perspective will be helpful to you as you evaluate this candidate for the Napa County Poet Laureate position.

My first contact with Beclee was with the Napa College Community Education Courses, in 2003, when she was a student as well. She was always present with great passion for not only reading her own poetry, but for listening to others read their compositions as well. Her interest showed her concern for the group as a whole, demonstrated through both honesty and compassion. She has continued with that same zeal as our group now meets at Rianda House to share and critique poetry and short stories.

As a past teacher myself, I am most impressed with Beclee's volunteering to teach poetry every spring to the fifth graders in St. Helena. She works with them in the classroom and then guides them with creative ways of displaying their work in town. She even gets some of them to read their poems in public!

Beclee and I were both accepted into the Napa Valley Writers Conference 2009. It was there that I appreciated her understanding of various poetry styles and her willingness to learn about new ones. I am also a proud owner of two of her books, "Tassajara Wind" and "Winter Fruit."

During the time I have known Beclee, she has distinguished herself as a conscientious and energetic leader in all she takes on.

I urge you to carefully consider Beclee Wilson as the next Poet Laureate for Napa County, 2012-2014!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Suzanne Bruce". The signature is fluid and elegant, with the first name "Suzanne" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Bruce".

Suzanne Bruce

Solstice Creative Writing Group

Poet, Fairfield, CA

To: Napa Arts Council

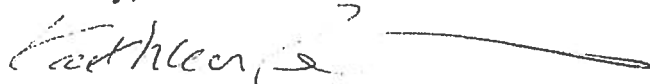
May 23, 2012

I am writing in support of the nomination of Beclee Wilson for Napa County Poet Laureate. Beclee has the qualities and attitudes needed by a poet laureate. She is unfailingly supportive of other poets including our young poets in the schools.

I first met Beclee in Jane Hirschfield's workshop at the Napa Valley Writer's Conference five years ago. She encouraged me to join George Stratton's writing class at Napa Valley College. I could not because I was still working at the time. But whenever I saw Beclee after that she reminded me about the class. This is the kind of open hearted enthusiasm and generosity we need from a Poet Laureate.

Beclee organized a reading at Rianda House during National Poetry Month for members of our Solstice Writers Group as well as fifth grade students with whom she has been working. Beclee is truly a good will ambassador for poetry in our valley.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Kathleen', followed by a long horizontal flourish line.

Kathleen Patterson

May 24, 2011

Olivia Everett, Interim Executive Director
Arts Council of Napa Valley
1041 Jefferson Street, Suite 4
Napa, CA 94559

Dear Ms. Everett,

I support St. Helena poet Beclee Newcomer Wilson's nomination for Napa County Poet Laureate, 2012-2014.

One of her favorite experiences has been teaching poetry to St. Helena's fifth graders and helping them share their poems with the community. This is a program that she could bring to fifth graders throughout Napa County as Poet Laureate.

Beclee is the author of three collections of poetry, *Women in Bits and Pieces*, *Tassajara Wind*, and most recently *Winter Fruit*. She has attended the Napa Valley Writers' Conference for several years and studied with Jane Hirshfield, Brenda Hillman, Elizabeth Alexander, and Arthur Sze.

Beclee has a gift for being able to observe life with a poet's heart and through an artist's eyes. That combination creates poems that are crystal clear and filled with surprise, poems that are honest and generous.

I believe Beclee would be a wonderful and active Napa County Poet Laureate and recommend her highly.

Sincerely,


Bonnie Long



Napa County Poet Laureate Nominations
Arts Council Napa Valley
10421 Jefferson St., Suite 4
Napa, CA 94559

Gentlemen:

It is with great pleasure and confidence that I submit the name of Beclee Newcomer Wilson for nomination as Poet Laureate of Napa County. She has been an active poet and supporter of poetic activities for many years. Her organizational ability is exceptional as demonstrated at last month's reading by members of our Solstice Writers Group at the Rianda House Senior Center in St. Helena. The hour-and-a-half program consisted of an introductory message from Beclee, readings by eleven poets, a congratulatory award, poetry of her 5th grade students, and a mixing of poets and attendees with refreshments to end the program.

To further demonstrate her leadership ability, I can report on her activities with all 5th grade pupils in St. Helena Elementary School. She has not only taught them poetry writing in month-long special classes, but organized their readings to the public at local commercial outlets such as coffee shops.

She is the author of three poetry collections: *Tassajara Wind*, *Women in Bits and Pieces*, and *Winter Fruit*. I include five poems selected from these publications for your consideration.

As Beclee's instructor in creative writing for several years, one of the most admiral qualities that I have observed is her willingness--and ability--to work with other poets in editing and completing their own efforts.

I know that Beclee would be an excellent and appropriate Poet Laureate for our county, and could represent us very well in the wider world.

Sincerely,



GEORGE STRATTON
Solstice Writers
St. Helena, CA

Napa Valley Poet Laureate Nominee 2012-2014

Beclee Newcomer Wilson

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
email: [REDACTED] tel: [REDACTED]

Poetry book publications

Winter Fruit (Xlibris, 2011), *Tassajara Wind* (Wheelwright Press, San Francisco, 1984), *Woman in Bits and Pieces* (New World Press, San Francisco, 1980).
Winter Fruit chosen by Xlibris to feature at the Miami Book Fair International, November 2011

Education

B.S. in speech and elementary speech education and creative dramatics,
Northwestern University
M.A. in Public Address, University of Michigan
Ph.D. in Speech Communications, University of Minnesota
MSW in gerontology and social welfare policy, University of California-Berkeley

Teaching Experience (special courses-seminars on communication and poetry)

University of Michigan, University of Illinois, University of Missouri-Kansas City.
New Haven College. Bay Area : Mills College, San Francisco Theological
Seminary, University of California-Berkeley

Community Poetry Activity

Teaching: St. Helena Elementary School, Special Poetry Unit on Writing
and Performance (5th grades, 2011 and 2012), Ashlawn Elementary School,
Arlington, Virginia (May, 2012)

Napa Valley Writers' Conference: Studied with: Jane Hirshfield, Brenda Hillman,
Elizabeth Alexander, Arthur Sze (2007-2010)

Solstice Writing Group: organized and hosted special community poetry reading,
Rianda House, St. Helena (May, 2012)

White Barn Theatre: one woman show--poetry and song (St. Helena, March 2012)

Member: Napa Valley College Poetry and Short Story Class (George Stratton, past
eight years) and Solstice Writing Group (current)

Lois Swanson
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]

29 May 2012

Dear Arts Council Napa Valley:

The Napa Valley community would be privileged to have Beclee Wilson as our Napa Valley Poet Laureate. Her poems are lyrical and inspirational. They bring into mind experiences and sights that make the reader feel as if she is there. Her book of poetry is one you want to sit with often. I have heard her read her poetry in person and enjoyed each poem.

Also, Beclee's contribution to our community includes working to inspire and develop young poets in the fifth grade, and participating in a poetry group at the Rianda House, the St. Helena Senior Center. She recently organized a program for both groups to read their poems for an audience at the Rianda House, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all of us, even the non-poets.

Best regards,

Lois Swanson

Lois Swanson,
Chair of the Program Committee
Rianda House
St. Helena

UNTYING

Comes that time when you know
all the contradictions.
You are firmly rooted and grounded.
The empty space is inside crammed
with silence.

This time you don't ask permission.
Do your own growing.
Living through another is
having hand-me-down clothes,
renting, with no knot of your own.

Comes that time when you reach in,
untie,
look deep,
reflect the clear sky.

From Women in Bits and Pieces

DEGREES OF LEARNING

Rolling my red lettuce leaves
in a blue and white tea towel,
laying them aside in the cool
of the "ice box", I think about
Carolyn, who taught me.
We were fat, with bellies holding
daughters who now hold their own.
Did Faith Baldwin, writing secrets
in *Family Circle*, teach her?
So much academe neglected,
like perfect biscuit making,
technique for turkey basting.
Not that we aren't wiser having
diplomas with full names
traced in raised gold
hanging on family room walls.
We have our "incidental learning" degrees,
legacy of the never to be forgotten
gathered from the everyday.
Collection of bird and plant names
learned on picnics. Camping
nights sleeping on a mountain pass
under Milky Way, Orion, after Venus
inscribed herself on the twilight sky.

From Winter Fruit

POST MORTEM

Bear with me
while I pause
on the outskirts of emotion.

Hold my breath
like a cupped leaf on water
float or sink,

a deer frozen
on the road
statue of indecision.

You know what I mean
move on, go back
knowing each tremor

makes the rift
deeper, no clearer
only more pain.

Stand by me,
I'm walking with tears
to the center of sorrow.

From Winter Fruit

BEFORE THE WIND

makes the dried grass
restless
mountains call out
tell its direction

Like yielding trees
I bow
having no strong roots
to hold me
I follow.

Tassajara Road
Time stretched over miles
mountains take so long!

Wrapping itself
around the mountains
the road guards the gate

Clinging to steep cliffs
a blue-grey thread
I descend
unwinding

Very soon
no matter how well I climb
children will pass me
...

From Tassajara Wind

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Nominee Information

NAME Beclee Wilson

MAILING ADDRESS _____

PHONE (DAY) _____

(EVE) _____

EMAIL [REDACTED]

WEBSITE _____

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

Please attach the following:

- 1) One page detailing how the nominee would contribute/ participate as Napa County Poet Laureate based on the position description and the mission and goals of the program;
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Nominator Information

NAME Terilyn Buchanan, Judi Campbell, Janelle Davis, Cindy Hemmick

NAME Several Teachers at St. Helena Elementary School

ORGANIZATION St. Helena Elementary School

MAILING ADDRESS [REDACTED]

PHONE (DAY) [REDACTED]

(EVE) _____

EMAIL [REDACTED]

WEBSITE sthelema.

SIGNATURE [Signature]

DATE 06-01-12

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Submission Instructions

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1041 Jefferson Street, Suite 4
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June 1, 2012

Napa County Poet Laureate Nominations Arts Council Napa Valley 1041
Jefferson Street, Suite 4
Napa, CA 94559

To Whom It May Concern:

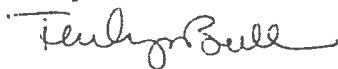
We recommend Beclee Wilson for the Napa County Poet Laureate Program. She has worked with the fifth grade teachers here at St. Helena Elementary School for two years now and will be expanding her program to include fourth graders next year.

We have enjoyed her enthusiasm and dedication for poetry which has inspired many poets among our students. In addition, she coordinated a community outreach by having a Poetry Fest at the local coffee shop, Napa Valley Coffee Roasting Company. Many students have found their "voice" as a result.

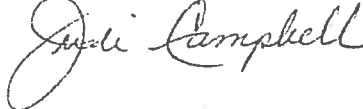
There is such a benefit for young learners to work with professionals and become inspired to do something in their future. It has been an amazing process to work with such a talented poet.

Sincerely yours,

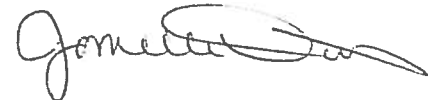
Terilynn Buchanan



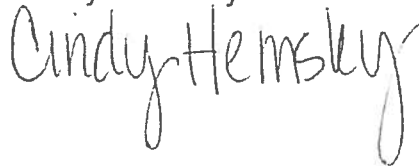
Judi Campbell



Janelle Davis



Cindy Hemsley



Fifth Grade Teachers of
St. Helena Elementary School