

2017 WFA ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS PROGRAM
Innovations & Management Excellence
FORM FOR DIVISIONS 13 – 27



FAIR NAME: Marin County Fair (New Community Outreach Program)

CLASS: 2

DIVISION: 19

a) What was the goal?

➤ Rebecca Foust, Marin County’s Poet Laureate, believes in Poetry as Sanctuary. Foust asked ForWords to join her at this year’s Marin County Fair at the POETree and the new Poetry Table. ForWords works with local schools to engage and teach English Language Learners through arts, poetry and technology.

➤ The Department of Cultural Services in partnership with the Marin County Free Library share the value of STEAM-based learning. STEAM is a way to take the benefits of STEM and complete the package by integrating these principles in and through the arts. STEAM takes STEM to the next level: it allows students to connect their learning in these critical areas together with arts practices, elements, design principles, and standards to provide the whole pallet of learning at their disposal. STEAM removes limitations and replaces them with wonder, critique, inquiry, and innovation.

This is a shared goal for the Marin County Fair in providing STEAM-based activities for both young and old.

b) How did you achieve the goal?

➤ POETree

Fairgoers were able to write a poem, share a memory, be a part of a collective whole and join the Marin County Free Library and the Marin County Poet Laureate at the Fair’s POETree. Fair goers were invited to write their thoughts on paper “leaves” and tie them to the tree. Throughout the Fair, the tree bloomed with community creativity, imagination and inspiration.

➤ THE POETRY DOCTOR IS IN

The POETRY DOCTOR IS IN (was in) at the Poetry Table every day June 30-July 4 from 4-6 pm for free poetry critiques. Fairgoers brought one-page poems and received a free poetry critique from the Marin Poet Laureate. Comments included what is and what is not working in the poem, suggestions for revision, and ideas for publication.

➤ NOON POETRY ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCES

The Poet Laureate hosted poetry readings and community poetry activities each day of the Fair from Noon to 2 pm. Activities included a community open mike on July 4 and the creation and reading of a “Community Poem” on the theme of Sanctuary.

➤ POETRY OUTLOUD

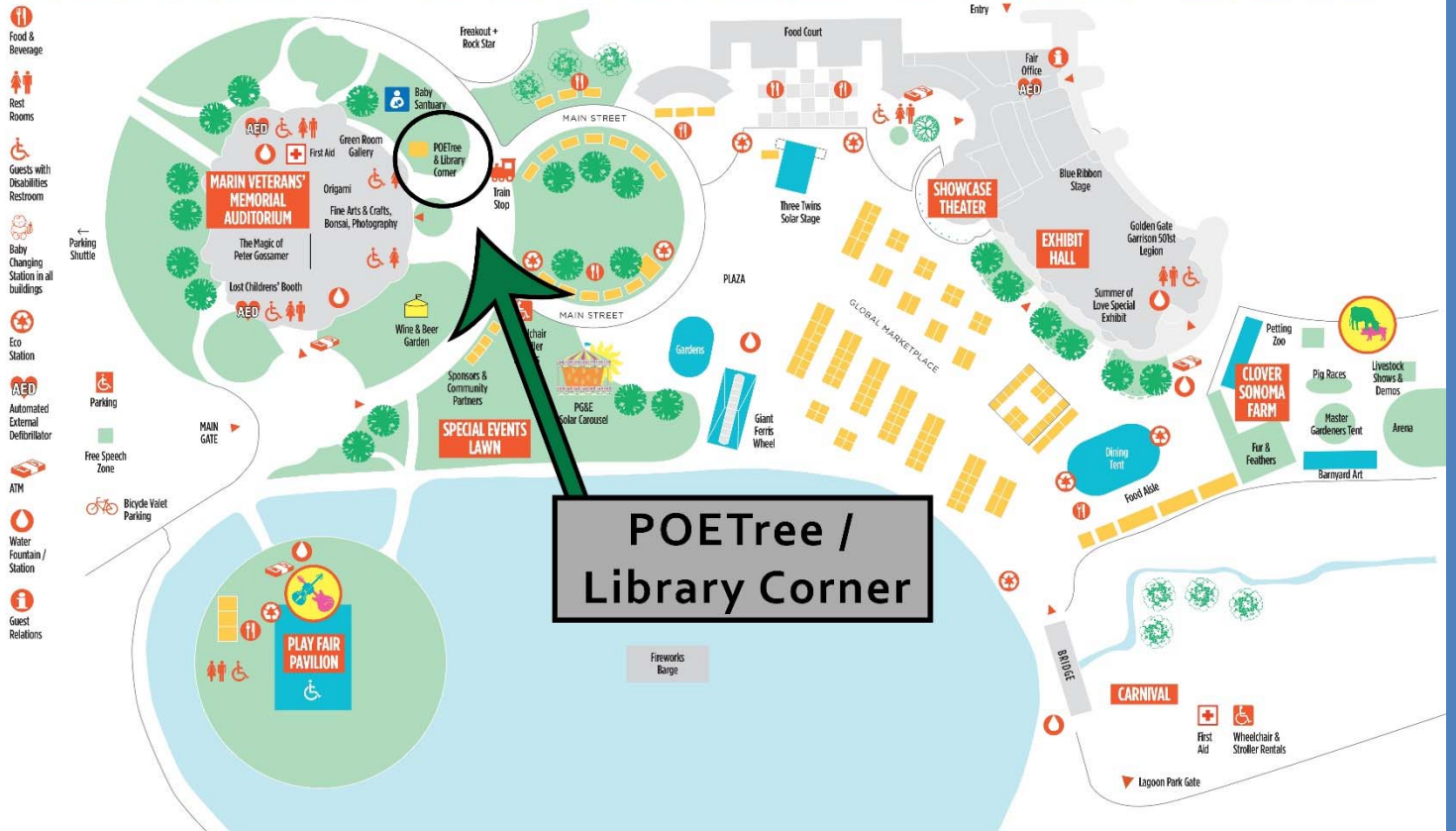
Every day at noon the Poet Laureate hosted poetry out loud:

- ✓ June 30th and July 1st ForWords students read their very own vibrant poetry.
- ✓ July 2nd Fair Guests had fun helping create a community poem with Rebecca and ForWords students.
- ✓ The program on July 4th incorporated a Community Open mic, and fair-goers were invited to share a one-page poem.

c) What were the results?

➤ There was a steady stream of visitors to the table all five (5) days of the Fair and close to 300 leaves were collected for the POETree. All the readings had critical mass and were very worthwhile. As the Poet Laureate herself commented after the Fair, “I wanted to tell you that I personally loved doing this, had a great time, and felt super supported by the Fair and the Library--thanks! Best, Becky”

MARIN COUNTY FAIR 2017



POETREE





Rebecca Foust

MARIN COUNTY POET LAUREATE



Tell us your background and/or history in Marin County?

I moved from Pennsylvania to California in 1979 to attend Stanford Law School and to Mill Valley in 1987. All three of my children were born here, and our family has lived in Marin since 1987 except for a seven-year sojourn in Rye, New York from 1992-99. My kids went to the Ross School, Branson, Marin Academy and to Tam and Redwood High Schools, and I volunteered as a parent advocate for students with learning challenges during that time, work that earned me a CA Golden Bell Award and a Ross Community service award. In 2007, the year I turned 50, I retired from that work to pursue writing full time, earning an MFA from Warren Wilson college in 2010 and publishing my first full-length collection, *All That Gorgeous Pitiless Song*, that year along with a collaboration of art and poetry with Marin artist Lorna Stevens, *God, Seed: Poetry & Art about the Natural World*. I've been on the Marin Poetry Center Board of directors since 2008 and was events planner there for two years. I organize lots of events in the bay area, including the

Paradise Drive

Dusk mud flats mottled silver, mauve, five shades of taupe. Air barrel-aged in live oak and madrone. Phoenix Lake's green jewel. Mule deer and the tufted bobcat. Roses blooming straight through late Fall. Hawthorne leaves in drift, a child's cheek flushed in sleep. Purple against orange maple and sage. Peonies under palms, cactus next to the fat pout of pink hybrid tea. Trout Lilies and wild Iris. Mt. Tam mantled each dawn in fog, then naked and lit from within. Winter sunsets, the sky a wound, the sky vivid and gashed; each day bound to the last with dark thread.

First published (under the title "Perfect") in *Ambush Review*

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long running annual Poetry World Series at the Mill Valley Library, and have taught workshops locally at Book Passages, Marin Poetry Center, Pleasanton Poetry Festival, SF Writer's Conference, Ross School, Branson, and Marin Academy.

Do you have a favorite memory of the Marin County Fair?

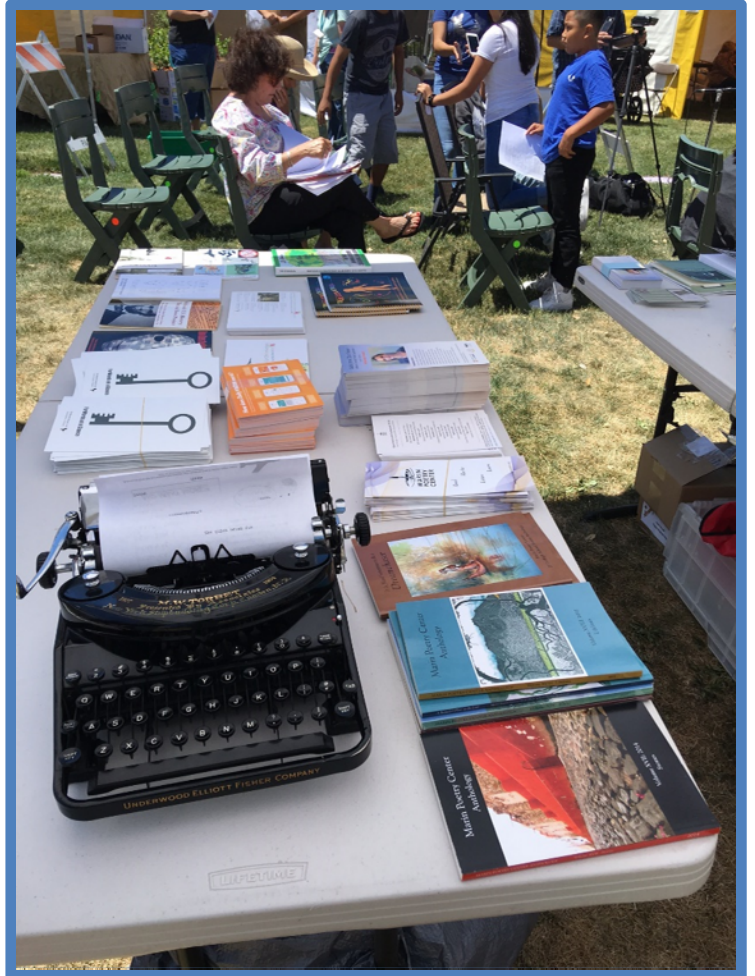
I love the Marin County fair, and my best memory of it is eating A LOT of pie there in 1992, the year I was pregnant with my third child. I love the cultural exhibits and events—music, art, etc. and also the traditional county fair stuff like great food, fun, and rides.

What is your vision for poetry for our community?

My vision for poetry in our community is best summed up in this description of my poet laureate project: My 2017-19 Poet Laureate project, "Poetry as Sanctuary," ties in with California's status as a Sanctuary State, and of it Foust says "poetry is a sacred space—church, a hospital, a hospice bed—offering a safe place for our most private, urgent, and otherwise ineffable expressions. Reading and writing it opens an escape from technology, stress, life-overload, grief, and other emotional pain. Perhaps the most important service poetry can provide now is respite from or way to respond to current political events. Poetry can build community, and I'd like to use it to raise the awareness and empathy for what is at stake under the new Administration for our undocumented immigrant population here in Marin." Foust hopes to plan community read-arounds on political themes and readings featuring immigrant poets in the County libraries.

POETree

Write a poem, share a memory, be a part of a collective whole and join the Marin County Free Library and the Marin County Poet Laureate Rebecca Foust at the Fair's POETree. Fair goers are invited to write their thoughts on paper "leaves" and tie them to the tree. Throughout the Fair, the tree will bloom with community creativity, imagination and inspiration.



PDF Entry Information

Exhibitor Name: Elisa Seppa

WEN: 838108

Division: Section 2 - Innovation & Management

Class: 19 New Community Outreach Program

Title: Marin County Fair

Description:

Notes:

