RETURNING POET LOTTERY PROCEDURES:

August 8, 2026

Dear Alumni Poets,

We hope this finds you well in your Writing lives in these challenging times. We wanted to reach out to fill you in on some updates to our application procedures for returning poets.

Our program is healthier than ever, and having returning poets be a part of it is essential. Our great good luck through the years in supporting poets and poetry has led to a much-needed change in our returning poet lottery policy for returning poets. As you know, this Poetry program depends on its small size and the additions of new voices every year. In the past, poets were asked sit out one session before entering the lottery. And, if their name wasn't selected in the lottery, admittance was guaranteed the following year. This policy worked out well for years and years, but is no longer sustainable.

We need a policy to preserve the size, spirit, and integrity of the program. If you would like to attend the workshops again please see the information, below.

1. If you would like to attend again, please enter the returning poet lottery. Please do not try to avoid this process by sending in a new application, as we won't be able to consider your application.
2. Please wait out two sessions before entering the lottery; we'd love to have you back sooner, but we are experiencing a greater volume of returning poets. (We have reduced this from three sessions this year. We will see how it goes.)
3. There is no need to submit a writing sample.
4. If we have more folks than can be accommodated, we try to admit those who were not admitted the previous years, or those who have not returned in over a decade.

We are happy that so many want to return, and that our community has such great energy. The important thing about the community is that it is a community. We know that the friendships that are begun in the program, and the workshops and reading groups formed out of these friendships, are a very important part of the ethos of the Community of Writers, so we hope we can make an every-third-year system work, and that you bear with us while we try it out.

If you would like to enter the lottery for this coming summer, please complete the online Application Form, indicate you are a returnee, and send in your nonrefundable lottery fee of $20 by the deadline. (We are no longer requiring folks to pay a tuition deposit in advance.)

• Online lottery payments are subject to a 3.25% service charge.

• To avoid this fee, mail in a check for $20. Please send to the Nevada City address, below. Make check out to Community of Writers and put "Poet Lottery" on the memo line of the check.

Thanks so much for your understanding and patience as we try out these new procedures. We certainly hope to see you back in the valley!

Sincerely,

Brenda Hillman
Poetry Program Director

Brett Hall Jones
Executive Director