

## PROCLAMATION

**WHEREAS**, the Academy of American poets established the month of April as National Poetry Month in 1996 to seek to highlight the extraordinary legacy and ongoing achievements of American poets, to introduce Americans to the pleasures and benefits of reading poetry, to bring poets and poetry to the public in immediate and innovative ways, and to make poetry an important part of our children's education; and

**WHEREAS**, poetry, as an essential part of the arts and humanities, affects every aspect of life in America today, including education, the economy, and community pride and development; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1979, the Alexandria City Council voted Jean Elliott, a 78-year old Alexandria resident, as the City's first and only Poet Laureate of record, and with her passing in 1999, the City had not had a Poet Laureate; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2006, City Council reestablished an Alexandria Poet Laureate program as a readily identifiable low to no-cost means of Alexandria to confirm publicly the value of the literary art, and enhance the quality of life in Alexandria; and

**WHEREAS**, Mary McElveen was appointed by Council in 2007 and served until 2010 as the City's second Poet Laureate because she has a passion for the music of words and believed that poetry should be "set loose" in the everyday world for the pleasure of the public; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2011, Amy Young was appointed by City Council to be the successor to Ms. McElveen as Poet Laureate for the City of Alexandria; and

**WHEREAS**, during Amy Young's tenure, she wrote original poems for the Annual USA/Alexandria Birthday Celebrations; for Adoption Day; for the Year of the Dragon and Year of the Snake poems for two Jiangsu Chinese Delegation visits; for the Alpha Delta Kappa Convention in Alexandria; for tributes to the 2011 Snow Storm; and for the 2012 Newtown, Connecticut school tragedy; and

**WHEREAS**, Amy Young reached into the community and worked closely with the Alexandria City Public Schools; served as judge for the Washington Area Airport Authority Poetry Slam; led a series of "Come Write With Me" workshops; worked with the Tenants and Workers United to create the Arlandria Young Poets Club – week long bi-lingual poetry writing workshop at Tenants and Workers United; held readings at the Arts Picnic, Project Discovery Tea, Poem in Your Pocket Day, Alexandria Earth Day, Del Ray Farmers Market, Youth Arts Festival, Alexandria Festival of the Arts; coordinated a "Celebration of Small Poems" with guest readers Mary McElveen and Town Crier Jonathan Fiore-Walker; and was a guest reader at a Tribute to Jean Elliott at Old Presbyterian Meeting House; and

**WHEREAS**, poetry projects introduced by Amy Young include Dog Days of August to inspire dog owners to write poems about their dogs with exhibits of the dog poems in dog parks throughout the City; a Poetry Flash mob at First Thursday with Arlandria Young Poets Club; and the Map Alexandria with Poems and Photography (MAPP) project; and

**WHEREAS**, Amy Young's term as Poet Laureate for the City of Alexandria expired April 16, 2013 and a new Poet Laureate has been appointed.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM D. EUILLE**, Mayor of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, and on behalf of the Alexandria City Council, do hereby acknowledge with sincere appreciation the contributions of Amy Young and thank her on behalf of the citizens of Alexandria for promoting poetry and the literary arts in our City, and encouraging the greater participation of children, especially in the educational programs and activities in the literary arts that Amy created to make poetry part of the fabric of life in the City of Alexandria.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Alexandria to be affixed this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of April, 2013.

**WILLIAM D. EUILLE** MAYOR  
On behalf of the City Council  
of Alexandria, Virginia

ATTEST:

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Jacqueline M. Henderson, MMC City Clerk