

Ellen Bass chosen as Santa Cruz County Poet Laureate

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REGISTER-PAJARONIAN STAFF REPORT

SANTA CRUZ — Arts Council Santa Cruz County announced Monday that Ellen Bass was chosen as Santa Cruz County Poet Laureate.

Bass is a long-time resident of Santa Cruz where she teaches poetry and creative writing. She is currently teaching in the Master of Fine Arts program at Pacific University.

Her poems have appeared in hundreds of journals and anthologies, including The New Yorker, The Atlantic, The American Poetry Review, and the New Republic. She has a new book of poetry just being published this month, "Like a Beggar," from Copper Canyon Press.

"I am delighted to accept

the invitation to be Santa Cruz County's Poet Laureate," Bass stated in a press release. "I hope in the next two years to inspire people to read great poetry, to write poetry, and to take poems into their hearts."

Bass will be featured at a poetry reading sponsored by Poetry Santa Cruz at Bookshop Santa Cruz at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday. A short reception sponsored by Arts Council Santa Cruz County will follow the reading.

As Poet Laureate, Bass is charged with increasing awareness of poetry for both youth and adults. To meet this goal, she plans to assemble a team of accomplished local poets to broaden the reach of the Poet Laureate.

Bass is Santa Cruz County's

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third Poet Laureate, following Gary Young and David Swanger. The Poet Laureate serves a two-year term and receives a small stipend to support his/her work. Arts Council Santa Cruz County, Poetry Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz County Office of Education and Santa Cruz Public Libraries all provide financial support to the program.

Arts Council Santa Cruz County assembled a selection committee that consisted of community members from a variety of organizations: Len Anderson, Poetry Santa Cruz; Cynthia Kilian, Santa Cruz County Arts Commission; Dennis Morton, Poetry Santa Cruz; Janis O'Driscoll, Santa Cruz Public Libraries; Jory Post, Santa Cruz Writes; and Michael



Photo by Irene Young

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Watkins, Santa Cruz County Office of Education.