



## MEDIA RELEASE

### Jennifer Frankum appointed Poet Laureate

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**Owen Sound, Ontario – Thursday, February 12, 2026 –** At its February 05<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Board of the Owen Sound & North Grey Union Public Library approved the appointment of Jennifer Frankum as the 2026-2027 Owen Sound Poet Laureate.

Jennifer Frankum fashions poems out of everyday moments of wonder. She began writing daily after a breakdown at twenty-four in 1987. With counselling, family support, medication and grit she went on to teach high school English, Creative Writing, Careers, Civics, Family Studies, Parenting, ESL and Special Education for twenty-nine years in Port Elgin. Jennifer has three poetry collections in print and a picture book for toddlers, all with the *Brucedale Press*. She lives in Bruce County with her husband. Her two adult daughters have flown to nearby cities.

During her term as Owen Sound Poet Laureate (2026-2027) Jennifer is looking forward to leading poetry workshops for teenagers, adults and seniors, and giving and arranging poetry readings throughout Grey and Bruce Counties. She will continue to write poems to celebrate and commemorate the overlooked bits of beauty, as well as advocate for poetry which she believes is the taproot of the soul and its healing, and a force for good.

Outgoing Poet Laureate Rebecca Diem commented on her term by saying "This was a life-transforming opportunity, and I'm so grateful to the library, the donors, and everyone in the community who made poetry with me during my term as Owen Sound Poet Laureate. My mandate was to celebrate collaboration and I will continue that work in my creative and professional capacities. I am deeply honoured to take my place among the past laureates to cheer on Jennifer Frankum as she shares her gift for words and community with us. My daughter is already a fan of her work, and so am I. My heartfelt congratulations to Jen!"

Jennifer stated "I am honoured and energized to begin fulfilling the duties of Owen Sound Poet Laureate. Congratulations to Rebecca Diem for her outstanding work. Her Community Revue was a joyful celebration of the literary arts and music, and an afternoon of wonder for toddler, teen and senior, and everyone in between. Bravo Rebecca!"

Jennifer added "I am motivated to encourage and support writers, and to have more workshop participants say to me, as a teen writer said recently at the conclusion of a meeting, 'I wish I could stay here all day!' That is the heartfelt response I am looking for."

The Poet Laureate program is hosted by the Owen Sound & North Grey Union Public Library with funding from several members of the community. The Poet Laureate's honorarium and other expenses for the current term are covered by donations from Phillip Faulkner, Pat Lorenzo and David Madill, CFP of BMO Nesbitt Burns. Never supported by tax-based funding, the existence of the Poet Laureate program depends entirely on donations from community members who see the benefit of having a local advocate for the literary arts. Anyone interested in becoming a sponsor of the Owen Sound Poet Laureate program is invited to contact Tim Nicholls Harrison, CEO, Owen Sound & North Grey Union Public Library at 519-376-6623 ext. 5201.

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**For more information, please contact:**

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