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City of Wylie
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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Poet Laureate to Headline Smith Library's Poetry Festival
Workshops, Open Mic Events Planned

Wylie, TX, May 8, 2014 – The Smith Public Library is hosting a poetry festival May 29 and 31, highlighted by a poetry workshop presented by 2010 Texas Poet Laureate Karla K. Morton.

The event, ROAR@SPL Poetry Festival, will kick off with a Poetry & Open Mic Night at 96° West Winery, 103 N. Ballard Ave., at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 29, for age 18 and up. Aspiring poets are invited to bring some of their work to read aloud. Michael Baldwin, author of “A Slam Poetry Manual: How to Produce a Poetry Slam and Succeed as a Slam Poet,” will read some of his work. A native of Fort Worth, Baldwin’s book “Scapes” won the Edwin Eakin Poetry Book Award in 2011, and his book “Counting Backward From Infinity” won the Morris Chapbook Award in 2012.

Youngsters who are in fourth through 12th grade are invited to the poetry workshop from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, May 31, with Will Richie and Alejandro Perez of DaVerse Lounge. An open mic will follow; lunch is provided.

Headlining the festival is Morton, who will present a poetry workshop from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. The workshop is for ages 18 and up and will include a presentation by Morton about her poetry and writing process, as well as poetry exercises for participants from the poetry book, “Wingbeats.” She has written nine books of poetry including “Redefining Beauty,” a

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journey through cancer diagnosis, chemotherapy, radiation and recovery. She has also published “Karla K. Morton: New and Selected Poems,” by TCU Press. Morton resides in Denton, She was born in Fort Worth and holds a journalism degree from Texas A&M University. In her role as the 2010 Texas State Poet Laureate, she created a “Little Town, Texas Tour” to serve as an ambassador of poetry.

Books written by Morton and Baldwin and other nationally known poets will be on display. All participants will receive a book bag and an age-appropriate poetry workbook.

The ROAR@SPL Poetry Festival is designed to showcase the personal connections poetry can create between poet and reader and explore how poetry can give everyone a voice loud enough to be heard. Library Director Rachel Orozco said all participants are encouraged to bring two original poems for inclusion in a chapbook. (Original chapbooks were published as inexpensive leaflets and sold in towns and villages as a form of entertainment, information and history – although the historical information was somewhat unreliable. In present day, chapbooks are small books of about 40 pages, usually of poetry.)

For more information, visit www.wylietexas.gov/library or call 972-516-6250.

Schedule:

7 p.m. May 29 – Poetry & Open Mic Night, 96° West Winery, 103 N. Ballard Ave.
10 a.m. May 31 – Tween and Teen Workshop
Noon May 31 – Open Mic with lunch provided
1:30 p.m. May 31 – Poetry Workshop with Karla K. Morton

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About Wylie -- Incorporated in 1887, the City of Wylie is located just 24 miles from downtown Dallas in Collin, Dallas and Rockwall Counties. Possessing an outstanding school district, a low crime rate, an ISO #1 rating and an expanding business climate, Wylie (population 44,158) is one of the fastest growing communities in the State of Texas with a 192% increase since 2000.