

“Speak Your Mind”

2019 WOODY GUTHRIE FESTIVAL Poetry Readings & Anthology

Call for Submissions – Poetry Readings & Anthology

Woody Guthrie, balladeer, poet and Oklahoma folk hero, was a champion of the disenfranchised, minorities and the working class. He was part of a primitive tradition, carried through the ages by common people to express their joy and anger and frustrations through music. Their drudgery and occasional triumphs. Their intense independence.

But he was more than a songster, more than a poet and more than the “entertainer” he often portrayed. He was a radical socialist activist on behalf of working people, the poor, and the disenfranchised. He protested the inequality he saw and registered his resistance to the injustice and mistreatment of his fellow humans through his songs and poetry.

We who call ourselves “Woody Guthrie Poets” will for the 15th year compose, read and recite poetry at the Woody Guthrie Folk Festival in Okemah, OK, and other venues in Oklahoma.

Anthology Sponsored by Village Books Press



Poetry Readings:

In conjunction with the Woody Guthrie Folk Festival in Okemah, Oklahoma, July 10-14, 2019, the Woody Guthrie Poetry Group (“Woody Poets”) who have read poetry as part of the celebration since 2005, will perform on Fri. evening, 12 July in Oklahoma City, on Sat., 13 July in Okemah, and on Sun. 14 July, at the Woody Guthrie Center in Tulsa.

Woody was, of course, an ardent supporter of the freedoms under the 1st Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which states: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

Woody once said,
*“There's several ways of **saying what's on your mind**. And in states and counties where it ain't too healthy to talk too loud, **speaking your mind**, or even vote like you want to, folks have found other ways of getting the word around. One of the mainest ways is by singing.”*

There is also the fact of the current U. S. administration’s tendency to try to stifle such constitutional freedoms in this country and around the world. Even the murder of a journalist by a head of state, i.e., Saudi Arabia, was committed with only minimal objection by the U.S.

In view of all this, we have chosen as our 2019 theme:

“Speak Your Mind”

Anthology:

Village Books Press will publish an anthology of the poetry submitted for the readings that reflects resistance to being denied the freedom of speech and expression, right to redress of wrongs, and other freedoms and rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the USA.

Poets are invited to submit up to three poems that reflect, either directly or indirectly, on any-thing stated above. Poems will be judged by a panel of poets selected by Jessica Isaacs. No poems read at previous Festivals or published in previous anthologies will be accepted for the readings or the anthology.

How to Submit:

Send poems in an attachment to WoodyGuthriePoets2019@yahoo.com in MS Word, along with a short (50 words or less) bio, and your snail-mail address. Send email to same address if you have questions.

Please state clearly in your cover letter for your poetry submission **whether or not you wish to be considered as a reader as well as having your poem included in the anthology.** Please look at your calendar before asking to read at any of the readings, to make sure you can actually be present at any of the venues on July 12, 13 and 14.

Unfortunately, due to the increasing number of submissions as well as limited time constraints for the readings, not everyone who submits will be accepted, and we cannot accommodate special scheduling requests. Thank you for understanding.

DEADLINE: APRIL 15, 2019