

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# ARTS COUNCIL ANNOUNCES NEW STATE WRITER LAUREATE

The Alaska State Council on the Arts has chosen Homer writer Nancy Lord as the new Alaska State Writer Laureate. She will serve a two-year term beginning October 1, 2008. She succeeds current State Writer Laureate, John Straley from Sitka.

As State Writer Laureate, Lord will represent the Council and the State of Alaska in communities, schools and libraries conducting workshops and readings.

Ben Brown, Chairman of the Alaska State Council on the Arts, noted, "I've known Nancy for over a decade, since we served together on the Board of the Alaska Humanities Forum. I was delighted when she was recommended for the position of State Writer Laureate, and I wasn't the least bit surprised that the Council unanimously chose her for this important job. Nancy has wonderful insight in the Alaskan experience, and both the emotional and intellectual intelligence to serve all Alaskans well in this new capacity."

Lord is the author of three short fiction collections: *The Compass Inside Ourselves* (Fireweed Press, 1984), *Survival* (Coffee House Press, 1991), and *The Man Who Swam with Beavers* (Coffee House Press, 2001). She is better known for her three literary nonfiction books: *Fishcamp: Life on an Alaskan Shore* (Island Press, 1997), *Green Alaska: Dreams from the Far Coast* (Counterpoint Press, 1999), and *Beluga Days: Tracking a White Whale's Truths* (Counterpoint Press, 2004.) For many years she also wrote and recorded commentaries for NPR's *Living on Earth*.

Her stories and essays have appeared in many journals and magazines, including *Ploughshares*, *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *Sierra*, *North American Review*, *More*, and *Fourth Genre*. Her work is also well anthologized. A story, "Candace Counts Coup" appeared in the *2003 Pushcart Prize XXVII*, an essay, "In the Giant's Hand," appeared in *Travelers' Tales Alaska*, and a lyric essay, "I Met a Man Who Has Seen the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, and This is What He Told Me," is forthcoming in *Best American Spiritual Writing 2008*.

She has received a Boochever fellowship from the Alaska State Council on the Arts, a Rasmuson fellowship, a scholarship to the Bread Loaf Writing Conference, and numerous fellowships for writing residencies at such places as the MacDowell Colony, Ucross Foundation, and Hawthornden International Retreat for Writers.

Lord is a graduate of Hampshire College and earned an M.F.A. in Writing from Vermont College. Lord moved to Homer, Alaska in 1973. She has taught fiction and nonfiction writing workshops and classes in nature and memoir writing for many years at the Kachemak Bay Campus of Kenai Peninsula College/University of Alaska. She is on the faculty of the low-residency graduate writing program at the University of Alaska Anchorage. She has been a visiting writer in Alaska schools from Unalaska to Pelican and at colleges and institutes from Maine to Texas. She is a regular faculty participant at the Kachemak Bay Writers' Conference in Homer.

Lord's new essay collection/memoir, *Rock, Water, Wild: An Alaskan Life*, is forthcoming from University of Nebraska Press in 2009. John Haines, former Poet Laureate of Alaska, has said of this work, "With this new book it is refreshing to have Nancy Lord's range of thought and example. Her writing is a gift to the intelligence of those of us who wish to understand our human occupation of the Earth—what we have done and are doing, and what we may learn for the betterment of our future."

For more information about Nancy Lord or to contact her, visit her website:  
<http://www.nancylord.alaskawriters.com>

For more information on the Alaska State Writer Laureate program, contact the Alaska State Council on the Arts at 269.6610, or 1.888.278.7424.