

Random poetry popular

Poetry Week



Jan DeGrass Photo

Victoria Anderson (l) and Montana Jamieson (centre), students at the Gibsons Alternate program, enjoyed Susan Telfer's original poetry during Random Acts of Poetry Week.

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Jan DeGrass/Arts and Entertainment Writer

Poet and teacher Susan Telfer presented an unusual sight last week as she strolled the halls of Chatelech Secondary School and the Sunshine Coast Alternative School carrying her sign marked Random Acts of Poetry and a basket of copies of her book, *House Beneath*, pausing to read to any student who asked.

The interest was high, Telfer said.

She put out on display 10 books a day for five days, with the idea that students were free to keep a copy. The one-on-one readings and book distribution were part of Random Acts of Poetry, a program to bring poetry to youth, sponsored by the Canada Council for the Arts and the Read Society in Victoria.

Poets across Canada visited a variety of alternative schools and youth centres Oct. 4 to 9, during this seventh annual event.

"We want to draw attention to youth literacy, which is a crucial issue for Canada's future," said Claire Rettie, executive director of the READ Society, a non-profit literacy organization serving children, youth and adults.

At Gibsons Alternate school program last week, Telfer found willing listeners in students Victoria Anderson, who likes poetry and has written some herself, and Montana Jamieson, who enjoyed hearing the poetry and likes to explore other art projects.

Telfer's book, *House Beneath*, was published by Hagios Press in 2009 and is available at local bookstores. Telfer's poems have been published in literary journals across Canada. In 2008, she was the recipient of the Sunshine Coast Arts Council's Gillian Lowndes Award.



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