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## Random Acts of Poetry Focuses on Youth

Poets across Canada will visit juvenile detention centres, alternative schools, and youth centres Oct. 4 to 9, 2010, during the seventh annual Random Acts of Poetry event, sponsored by The Canada Council for the Arts.

For the first time, the event is focused on bringing poetry to young people. “We want to draw attention to youth literacy, which is a crucial issue for Canada’s future,” says Claire Rettie, executive director of the READ Society, a non-profit literacy organization serving children, youth and adults in Victoria, British Columbia.



Wendy Morton reads to a youth

READ supports the national event in conjunction with Sooke poet Wendy Morton, the event founder. During the week, 30 poets across Canada, from Victoria, B.C. to Pasadena, Newfoundland, will commit Random Acts of Poetry. Poets will read to youth and hand out copies of their poetry books.

“We will choose poems that speak to young people and hope to encourage them to find poems in their own lives,” says Morton, who will read at LÁU, WELNEW Tribal School in Saanich, B.C. She believes that poetry is a way into language for those who have barriers to it.

Since 1976, READ has provided tuition assistance for children and youth from low-income households in Victoria so they can improve their reading, writing, mathematics and study skills.

Across Canada poets will commit Random Acts in: Sooke, Victoria, Vancouver, Nanaimo, Gibsons, Calgary, Edmonton, Moose Jaw, Winnipeg, Verdun, Quebec City, Laval, Elmvale, Kincardine, Stratford, Thamesford, Toronto, Ottawa, Port Perry, Fredericton, Wolfville, Pasadena, and Montague.

### **For more information please contact:**

Wendy Morton, 250-642-3542 [wendymorton@shaw.ca](mailto:wendymorton@shaw.ca)

Claire Rettie, READ Society, 250-388-7225 [crettie@readsociety.bc.ca](mailto:crettie@readsociety.bc.ca) [www.readsociety.bc.ca](http://www.readsociety.bc.ca)