

# City of Sonoma

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**DATE:** July 13, 2023  
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## City of Sonoma Announces Bench Dedication Ceremony Honoring 24th U.S. Poet Laureate Ada Limón

SONOMA, CA --- The City of Sonoma is pleased to announce a special bench dedication ceremony in honor of acclaimed poet Ada Limón, the 24th Poet Laureate of the United States. The ceremony will occur on Friday, August 18, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. outside Readers' Books, a cherished local bookstore located at 130 East Napa Street in Sonoma, where Ada Limón once worked during her time at Sonoma Valley High School.

The engraved bench bearing a chosen quote from Ada Limón's distinguished body of work will serve as a permanent reminder of Ada's poetic message as well as the pride we share with her family and friends in her native town of Sonoma. Mayor Sandra Lowe, who conceived of the commemorative bench, remarked, "I am immensely honored to create a permanent tribute to Ada Limón as the 24th Poet Laureate of the United States. Ada's journey through our public schools and as a graduate of Sonoma Valley High to becoming a nationally and internationally recognized poet is a testament to every child, every person to nurture their creative spirit and pursue their passions. We are honored to celebrate Ada's extraordinary accomplishments and to dedicate this bench as a lasting tribute to her and to the importance of arts and literature in the City of Sonoma."

The site of the new bench is in front of Readers' Books, an independent and local bookstore located just off the historic Sonoma Plaza where the Poet Laureate worked from 1991 to 1993. "Ada knocked on our door before we even opened to ask for a job," recalls Readers' Books owner Andy Weinberger. "She was just fifteen, and at one point she was simultaneously both our youngest and our oldest employee. She was one of the best things that ever happened to us."

The bench dedication ceremony will feature a program of speakers including elected officials and representatives and will culminate in a ribbon-cutting to officially unveil the bench to the public. Following the dedication ceremony, Ada Limón will be available for a special book signing event from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at Readers' Books. Attendees will have the opportunity to meet the esteemed poet and have their copies of her books signed by the author herself.

"This is such an enormous honor for me and a personal one, too. One of the things I love about the bench's location is that it celebrates the whole community. When I was growing up, I didn't just have excellent teachers at the public schools (shout out to teachers!), but I was also surrounded by a beautiful community of readers, writers, and artists that were willing to share their passion. I am convinced that I learned as much about poetry from working at Readers' Books than I did in college. I was lucky, I am

lucky, and I hope this quote, this bench, celebrates what it feels like to be in a community that celebrates the arts. What a gift Sonoma has given me.”

The City of Sonoma welcomes all members of the community and supporters of the arts to attend this memorable event celebrating the achievements of a remarkable poet who hails from Sonoma Valley.

Event Details:

Date: August 18, 2023

Time: 9:00 a.m. Bench Dedication Ceremony, 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Book Signing

Location: Readers' Books, 130 East Napa Street, Sonoma CA 95476

For questions about the bench dedication ceremony honoring Ada Limón contact Sarah Tracy, Public Information Officer at the City of Sonoma at (707) 338-3759 or [stracy@sonomacity.org](mailto:stracy@sonomacity.org).

For poet laureate-related publicity and interview requests, contact Brett Zongker, Chief of Media Relations at The Library of Congress, via email: [bzongker@loc.gov](mailto:bzongker@loc.gov).

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**About Ada Limón:** Ada Limón is the author of six books of poetry, including *The Carrying*, which won the National Book Critics Circle Award for Poetry. Her book *Bright Dead Things* was nominated for the National Book Award, the National Book Critics Circle Award, and the Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award. Her work has been supported by a Guggenheim Fellowship. She grew up in Sonoma, California and now lives in Lexington, Kentucky where she writes, teaches remotely, and hosts the critically-acclaimed poetry podcast, *The Slowdown*. Her new book of poetry, *The Hurting Kind*, is out now from Milkweed Editions.

In June of 2022, Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden appointed Ada Limón to be the 24th Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry, also known as the U.S. Poet Laureate. The position has existed as part of the Library of Congress for over 80 years and was named by an act of Congress. To find out more about the laureateship, you can visit the library's website, [www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov).

**About Readers' Books:** Andy and Lilla Weinberger founded Readers' Books in November of 1991 after recognizing the need for a literary bookstore in Sonoma. Since then, Readers' has become a Sonoma institution, living up to the motto: "A gathering place for booklovers of all ages". Over the years, Readers' has been proud to bring great authors to Sonoma to share their books as well as welcoming local authors to share their writing with the community. Readers' Books is located at 130 East Napa St., half a block east of Sonoma's historic Plaza as well as online at [www.readersbooks.com](http://www.readersbooks.com). Readers' Books can be reached by phone at (707) 939-1779 or by emailing [info@readersbooks.com](mailto:info@readersbooks.com).