



Media Release

For immediate release

Libraries name 2022 Writers in Residence

EDMONTON, AB, November 29, 2021 – The Metro Edmonton Federation of Libraries is delighted to announce that Norma Dunning and Rayanne Haines have been selected to serve as the 2022 Writers in Residence at the Edmonton, Fort Saskatchewan, Strathcona County and St. Albert public libraries. Dunning and Haines will offer a wide range of supports and programs to writers of all ages and experience levels, through their time with the libraries.

The Metro Edmonton Federation is a consortium of four libraries: Edmonton Public Library (EPL), Fort Saskatchewan Public Library, St. Albert Public Library and Strathcona County Library. Each is a partner in this venture and will play host to a Writer in Residence over the coming 12 months.

As the regional Writer in Residence, Rayanne Haines will split her time between Strathcona County, Fort Saskatchewan and St. Albert, with multiple-month stints in each community. The first stop in her residency will be Strathcona County Library, starting in early January.

“We’re delighted to welcome Rayanne Haines as the regional Writer in Residence. She’s a talented writer in a number of genres, and is deeply committed to nurturing growth and success in local writers,” says Peter Bailey, CEO of St. Albert Public Library. “We had great success with Writer in Residence programs online in 2021 and in 2022 we hope to move back to supporting aspiring writers in person as well.”

Haines is an award-winning and bestselling hybrid author of three poetry collections - *The Stories in My Skin* (2013), *Stained with the Colours of Sunday Morning* (2017), *Tell The Birds Your Body Is Not A Gun* (2021) and four Urban Fantasy/Romance novels. Her creative non-fiction essay, *This is Normal* was a 2020 finalist for the Jon Whyte Memorial Essay Alberta Literary Award. She is an Edmonton Artist Trust Fund Award recipient and teaches in the Faculty of Fine Arts and Communications at MacEwan University.

“I unequivocally believe in the transformational power that libraries and the programs they offer provide for people,” says Haines. “I’m grateful and excited to take on this role and to have the chance to offer writing support (in ways that best work for the individual) to writers in the Greater Edmonton area.”

Norma Dunning will spend her year as EPL’s Writer in Residence, sharing her time between various EPL branches across the city. “We often think of libraries as a space for reading,” she says. “My hope and goal is to turn the library into a space for writing, for all ages.”

Dunning is the 2021 recipient of the Governor General's award for English-language fiction, one of Canada's oldest and most prestigious prizes for literature, for her short story collection *Tainna: The Unseen Ones*). This is Dunning’s second collection of short stories. Her first short story collection, *Annie Muktuk and Other Stories* (2017), received the Danuta Gleed Literary Award and the Bronze Foreword INDIES award. Her short story “Elipsee” also won the Howard O’Hagan award in 2018. As well, Dunning is a professor at the University of Alberta and the grandmother to five children.

While in residence, each writer will devote roughly half their time to mentoring other writers and the other half to working on personal projects.

Local writers at all levels can take advantage of workshops with both Writers in Residence, and will also have the opportunity to work with them one-on-one. All of these services will be offered at no charge. More information will be posted on the websites of Edmonton Public Library (epl.ca) and Strathcona County Library (sclibrary.ca) early in 2022.

The Metro Federation Writer in Residence program is wrapping up a successful ninth year; 2021 writers Nisha Patel and Vern Thiessen have engaged with numerous aspiring and experienced writers in the metro Edmonton area through free one-on-one writing support, creative opportunities and dozens of writing programs. Patel and Thiessen will pass the torch to the 2022 writers in the New Year.

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About the Metro Edmonton Federation of Libraries

The Metro Edmonton Federation of Libraries consists of Edmonton Public Library, Fort Saskatchewan Public Library, St. Albert Public Library and Strathcona County Library. Libraries in the Federation collaborate on programs, projects and events, and share methods to help customers learn to use eReaders and download eBooks.

About Edmonton Public Library

Edmonton Public Library (EPL) is proud to be 2014 Library of the Year! We’ve come a long way since 1913 when books were all you could find on our shelves ... and we’re just getting started! Today, EPL carries everything you care about. We are Edmonton’s largest lender of all manner of information and entertainment. Our professionally trained staff take you beyond Google with the

knowledge, discernment and desire to help you navigate a universe of information. The second most visited place in Edmonton, every year EPL hosts over 15.4 million in-branch and online visits across our 21 branches and website. We deliver our incredible content to you everywhere – in the library, at home or on your handheld device. Unmatched access and unrivalled value – that is today's EPL. EPL is a registered charity and relies on donations to enhance services. Spread the words. www.epl.ca/give

About Fort Saskatchewan Public Library: Fort Saskatchewan Public Library is open, bright, and full of activity! Serving a population of over 24,000 (and growing!) FSPL is a place for children, youth, adults, and seniors to engage in a variety of interactive programs and activities. From finding your perfect next read to our innovative Makerspace, FSPL is a space for everyone. Not only do we provide resources and programs for learning and development, we are also a place to meet friends, relax, and to enjoy being a part of the community. www.fspl.ca

About St. Albert Public Library: St. Albert Public Library is your place to be, to meet, and to grow. This vital community hub is one of the busiest mid-sized libraries in Canada, the most visited place in downtown St. Albert, and is consistently rated as one of the key strengths of the city. SAPL is home to STARFest – St. Albert Readers Festival – a world-class annual literary festival that consistently showcases an exciting range of authors who are driving national conversations. In 2020, SAPL was a leader in the rapid pandemic pivot to online programming and creative outdoor programs and activities with our Outreach Literacy Van – we take pride in evolving alongside the community we serve. SAPL is committed to reducing barriers to access, and creating opportunities for citizens to engage with ideas, resources, and each other. With locations in downtown St. Albert and Jensen Lakes Crossing, we are here for you, and here for all. www.sapl.ca

About Strathcona County Library: Strathcona County Library is located in the heart of Sherwood Park but serves the entire Strathcona County, an area of 1,265 square kilometres, through the services of a Bookmobile and a partnership with Fort Saskatchewan Public Library. In November 2010, we opened the doors to our newest home in the Strathcona County Community Centre. Spread out over 64,000 square feet on two floors, our main branch houses a 200,000+ collection that includes books, eBooks, audiobooks, DVDs, CDs, newspapers, magazines and databases. We also host several hundred programs each year, ranging from early literacy development with infants to travel insurance for seniors. Strathcona County Library – your place for literacy, learning and leisure. www.sclibrary.ca

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