

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the Academy of American Poets established the month of April as National Poetry Month in 1996 to highlight the extraordinary legacy and ongoing achievements of American poets; to introduce Americans to the pleasures and benefits of reading poetry; to bring poets and poetry to the public in immediate and innovative ways; and to make poetry an important part of our children's education; and

WHEREAS, in May 2006 the Alexandria City Council established an Alexandria Poet Laureate program to confirm the value the community places on literary arts and to enhance understanding of the importance of poetry to the quality of life; and

WHEREAS, following an open call for nominations in which 19 local poets were nominated an independent panel of judges drawn from Alexandria citizens selected Mary McElveen as the outstanding candidate for the post; and

WHEREAS, on February 15, 2007, the Alexandria City Council officially appointed Ms. McElveen as the Alexandria Poet Laureate; and

WHEREAS, on April 10, 2007, the Alexandria City Council formally introduced and proclaimed Ms. McElveen as the City's Poet Laureate and Mayor William D. Euille declared April "Poetry Month" in the City of Alexandria; and

WHEREAS, at that meeting Ms. McElveen read her original poem for the occasion entitled "City of Songs," that so stirred the audience that Mayor Euille asked that it be transcribed and placed on a wall in the lobby of City Hall; and

WHEREAS, in the ensuing year, Ms. McElveen has appeared at numerous schools, libraries, arts programs and other city-sponsored activities including the Freedmen's Cemetery rededication, the dedication of the new T.C. Williams High School and the 2007 Alex Awards, reciting an original poem on each of those three occasions; and

WHEREAS, Ms. McElveen, celebrating her first year anniversary as poet laureate, had invited all Alexandrians to read or write a poem during the month of April;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM D. EUILLE, Mayor of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, and on behalf of the Alexandria City Council, do hereby thank Mary McElveen for her service during the past year as we look forward to her continuing efforts in the months to come.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Alexandria to be affixed this 10th day of June 2008.

WILLIAM D. EUILLE **MAYOR**
On behalf of the City Council
of Alexandria, Virginia

ATTEST:

Jacqueline M. Henderson, CMC City Clerk