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Thomas, House headline SOKY Book Fest

By JACKSON FRENCH jfrench@bgdailynews.com Apr 18, 2019



The SOKY Book Fest will bring dozens of published authors to Bowling Green, including Angie Thomas, author of The New York Times best-selling “The Hate U Give,” and Kentucky author Silas House, for an annual celebration of literature.

Book fest coordinator Sara Volpi said the event connects local people to a host of authors.

“It is a way to get readers and authors together in the same room so they meet each other and support each other’s work,” she said.

The SOKY Book Fest, in its 21st year, is a free event that takes place at Knicely Conference Center.

April 26 – the event’s first day – will have Teen & Children’s Day from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and the Kentucky Writers Conference from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., according to the schedule at sokybookfest.org.

On April 27, the book fest will be from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and include panels, speakers, roundtables and additional workshops.

The event gives authors a way to promote their work and local readers and writers a chance to converse with authors to learn about their work and the writing process.

“It offers a lot of access to learning about being an author and learning about new books and having fun while doing it,” Volpi said.

Roughly 150 authors in fiction, nonfiction, children’s literature, poetry and memoir will be present, Volpi said, noting that she was excited to have Thomas and House attending.

“The Hate U Give,” which follows the story of a black teenager who gets involved in activism after seeing the police shoot her friend, is “incredibly relevant” in today’s political climate, she said.

Volpi said House was “an obvious choice” because of the Berea author’s large following in Kentucky.

The book fest lineup includes dozens of others, including local fiction writer and Western Kentucky University professor David Bell, prolific young adult author Sharon Draper, children’s author Artie Bennett and Susan Dyer, president of the Friends of the Holt Home in Breckinridge County and author of a book about restoring the house, which once belonged to Joseph Holt, Abraham Lincoln’s judge advocate general.

For writers seeking a more direct learning experience about certain aspects of the writing process, like how to hook the reader immediately or inserting humor into memoirs, the Kentucky Writers Conference offers workshops with writers.

A full list of workshops at the Kentucky Writers Conference is available on sokybookfest.org.

Volpi said seating at the workshops is limited so registering on the event’s website is recommended.

Volpi said the book fest allows locals to meet authors without having to travel to an event in a larger city and is designed to provide a massive range of authors working within as wide a variety of genres and styles as possible.

“It’s like taking every literary event that could be held and putting it all in one event,” she said.

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