

Waukesha Reads events run through October

Keynote appearance is tonight, cabaret is Friday

By Summer Fisher
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WAUKESHA — The annual Waukesha Reads program continues this week with a full lineup of events celebrating literature, culture, and community. Featured tonight is a keynote appearance by author Diane Wilson. Later this month, there will be a cabaret performance, film screening, writers' workshop, and scholar discussion.

The keynote event, "Seeds and Stories: A Night with Diane Wilson," takes place at 6:30 p.m. today at the Waukesha Civic Theatre.

Wilson is the author of "The Seed Keeper," this year's Waukesha Reads selection.

"Weaving together the voices of four indelible women, 'The Seed Keeper' is a beautifully told story of reawakening, of remembering our original relationship to the seeds and, through them, to our ancestors," reads a description of the book.

Wilson has published five award-winning books. She also carries the 2022 Minnesota Book Award for Fiction.

Her background includes being a former executive director for Dream of Wild Health, an Indigenous nonprofit farm, and the Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance, a national coalition of tribes and organizations that work to create sovereign food systems for Native people. She is currently

enrolled on the Sicangu Oyate (Rosebud) reservation in South Dakota and is also a Mdewakanton descendant.

She resides near the St. Croix River in Minnesota, where she takes care of an Indigenous seed garden, native perennials for pollinators and a Tamarack bog.

Wilson, a Dakota writer, educator, and environmental advocate, will share insights into the cultural and historical importance of Indigenous oral storytelling and her work with Native organizations in restoring seeds at tonight's event.

She'll also explain why, as she puts it, our stories are seeds for the future. A Q&A and book signing will follow Wilson's presentation, and refreshments and copies of her books will be available for purchase.

Tickets for the keynote are free and can be picked up at the Civic Theatre box office, online at waukeshacivictheatre.org, or at the door.

The celebration of reading continues Friday with "Sips, Songs and Cinema: Cabaret & Green and Gold" at the Waukesha Public Library, beginning at 6 p.m.

The after-hours event will feature Wisconsin beer, wine and snacks while experiencing the Waukesha Reads Cabaret, inspired by "The Seed Keeper," performed by Candace Decker and Phil Smith.

After the performance, attendees can enjoy a screening of the inde-

pendent 2025 film "Green and Gold," introduced virtually by filmmakers Davin and Anders Lindwall.

Filmed in Door County, the 105-minute unrated movie tells the story of a struggling dairy farmer who bets everything on the Green Bay Packers to save his farm and stars Craig T. Nelson.

The library doors will close promptly at 6 p.m. and no one will be admitted after that time. All attendees must be 21 or older and show a valid ID upon entry. Register on WaukeshaReads.org

Programming continues into next week with The Choice of Voice: A Writers' Workshop led by author Kathie Giorgio, founder of the All-Writers' Workplace & Workshop.

The session will run from 10:30 a.m. to noon on Monday at the Waukesha Public Library and invites fiction and nonfiction writers to explore the role of voice in their craft.

Later that evening, at 6:30 p.m., a book discussion of "The Seed Keeper" will take place at the Retzer Nature Center, S14-W28167 Madison St., hosted in collaboration with the Retzer Nature Center Book Club.

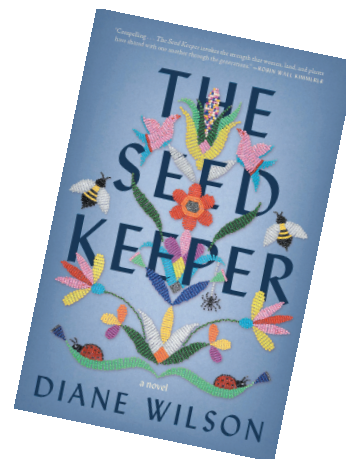
The month concludes with a Scholar Panel at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 30 at the Waukesha Public Library, where local scholars Marin Denning, John Kasperek, and Ellyn Lem will examine "The Seed Keeper" through the lenses of American Indian Studies, history, and English literature.

Waukesha Reads is financially supported by We Energies Foundation, Waukesha Rotary Club and the Waukesha Public Library.



Sarah Whiting photo

Diane Wilson, author of "The Seed Keeper," is the featured author at this year's Waukesha Reads event.



Waukesha Reads is an event hosted by the Waukesha Public Library. This year's featured book is "The Seed Keeper" by Diane Wilson.

Image courtesy Waukesha Public Library