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What if All of Rehoboth Read the Same Book? Rehoboth Beach to Participate in “One City, One Book” Program

Rehoboth Beach DE: November 7, 2018—Across the country, communities of all sizes are using a “One City, One Book” program to bring people together to read and discuss a single book. The concept—to engage residents in a city-wide reading project—is now being developed for Rehoboth Beach. The local program, “Rehoboth Reads,” will involve a wide range of events over a period of several months in early 2019, all centered around one book. The title of the book has not yet been revealed.

Rehoboth Reads is designed to be an annual project that involves the local community in thoughtful, meaningful conversations, inspires an interest in reading among infrequent readers, encourages frequent readers to expand their reading choices, and fosters collaboration between various art forms to create a multi-faceted experience.

“I’m excited to announce the One City, One Book program,” said Rehoboth Beach Mayor Paul Kuhns. “Books help all of us to see the world from different perspectives and develop connections. To have people from across the city come together and read the same story is incredibly powerful and will help to further strengthen our literary community. One City, One Book is a wonderful program for our city, and I want to thank all the community partners who worked to make it possible.”

A Rehoboth Beach Reads committee is organizing the program, which will be under the auspices of the Rehoboth Beach Public Library, a 501(c)3 organization. Their mission statement is: “To use literature and the arts to promote a sense of community through shared purpose and experience, while encouraging engagement and education.” Committee members include Susan Kehoe, Managing Partner, Browseabout Books (Committee Chair); Tyler Antoine, Program Librarian, Rehoboth Beach Public Library; Alex Colevas, Buyer, Browseabout Books; Maribeth Fischer, founder and executive director, Rehoboth Beach Writers Guild; Georgette Regnault; Book Club Coordinator in partnership with Rehoboth Library; and Nancy Sakaduski, owner, Cat & Mouse Press.

Although the committee has not yet announced the book chosen for the first year's program, they said that in addition to seeking a book with a compelling message, they wanted to choose a book with a local connection, either through its author or its subject. The book they selected will be unveiled at a public event to be held at the Rehoboth Library on December 6. Details will be announced soon.

The One City, One Book program originated at the Washington Center for the Book (Seattle), with the goal of having people come together through the reading and discussion of a common book. The idea began in 1998 when the Washington Center for the Book hosted author Russell Banks for four days of programs and discussion about his novel, *The Sweet Hereafter*. Since then, communities across the US and in other countries have created similar programs to promote civic unity through literature.

The books chosen can be fiction or nonfiction, classic or contemporary, and sometimes deal with challenging or even controversial themes to promote lively discussion. The book usually contains compelling issues, characters, and themes to encourage discussion.

Rehoboth Reads is still in the development stages and is actively seeking volunteers, sponsors, in-kind donors, and participating partners (event venues, cultural groups, civic organizations, etc.). For more information, please send an email to: rehobothreads@gmail.com.

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