



News Release

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First Annual Ann Arbor Book Festival Set for April 22 through 25 *Inaugural Festival to Highlight Books, Authors and Literacy*

Ann Arbor, MI, February 3, 2004—The Ann Arbor Book Festival kicks off Thursday, April 22 and runs through Sunday, April 25, 2004. This literary celebration will be a grand event for readers, writers and words. Book lovers of all ages will find many diverse activities to explore. The festival will be held on North University Avenue – where the University of Michigan’s central campus meets downtown Ann Arbor.

2004 marks the inaugural year for this festival, which will be held in the heart of University of Michigan land – home to many writers, poets, artists, students, teachers, publishing companies and printers – book lovers, all. Ann Arbor Book Festival will celebrate and showcase poetry, booksellers and publishers, literacy, book groups, songwriting, comics, and book arts.

A few unique features this festival will offer include a Body, Mind and Spirit Pavilion; a press tour to see how a book is made; the Comics are Sequential Art Comic Pavilion, including a comic writing stage and many comic artists; a poetry pavilion, offering workshops for young budding poets and the best in local poetry slams; and a stage highlighting the importance of the Brown vs. Board of Education ruling, in this, the 50th anniversary of the historic case.

Other offerings will include: author readings and book signings by local and national authors; workshops for writing, bookmaking, and papermaking; panel discussions with authors, editors and publishers; the Book Arts Pavilion, featuring the top book cover designs of 2003, one of a kind books, special collections, and illustrations; and children's activities such as storytellers, authors, puppets, costumed characters and hands-on activities. The event will also offer a language and literacy symposium, which will help parents and educators learn how to reach children with the individual support they need to flourish. A Literacy Guide will be available to provide the community with information on how to get involved in becoming literacy advocates and volunteer literacy mentors/tutors.

Featured authors include Gore Vidal, Charles Baxter, and Mark Crilley, among many others (some surprises to come), and festival goers can meet them at a gala benefit dinner to be held in their honor. The festival opens on Thursday evening with a movie and panel discussion about the process of taking a book to the big screen, and ends Sunday with an antiquarian book fair where more than 40 book dealers from Michigan and throughout the Midwest will be selling fine used, rare and out-of-print books, maps and prints. The festival will undoubtedly provide engaging activities for all types and ages of book lovers in between.

General event information about the Festival, including how to purchase tickets to the Gala Author dinner slated for Saturday evening of the festival, and how to get involved, is available at www.aabookfestival.org. Visitors to the site can also learn about a writing contest, and how to submit to the “Books Change Lives” discussion.

The Ann Arbor Book Festival was created in 2003 to promote reading, heighten awareness of literacy challenges, and showcase the rich culture of the written word in Michigan and beyond. It is presented in association with Shaman Drum Bookshop, Borders, The Ann Arbor News, Malloy Incorporated, Michigan Radio, Michigan TV, and the Michigan Humanities Council.

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