

St. Croix Valley Local News

community news & voices

Community

Valley Reads announces the 2010 book selections

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The 2010 St. Croix Valley Reads season is beginning with the announcement of three books celebrating this year's theme "Welcome Home."

All residents of the St. Croix River Valley are encouraged to read these books and discuss them with their friends, families, co-workers and book clubs.

You will get an opportunity to meet the authors and participate in community gatherings to talk about these books," said officials at ArtReach Alliance, Valley Reads organizers. "The books reach across cultural divides and will resonate with anyone who has ever moved into a new community and tried to belong. "

For very young children and their parents and teachers is children's picture book, "Grandfather's Journey," by Allen Say. This is the story of the author's grandfather whose life's journey includes immigrations to America and back again to Japan. In the end, the grandfather realizes that the "welcome home" he has sought has indeed been found in both of his countries. This Caldecott winner's fascinating and beautiful illustrations will be enjoyed by children of all ages, especially ages 4-8.

For young adults is "Weeping Under This Same Moon," a novel by Jana Laiz. It is based on the true story of a teenager and her siblings who arrive in America as refugees from Vietnam and end up connecting with a disaffected American teenager who has decided to try some volunteer work. The Vietnamese family, of Chinese heritage, have become unwelcome in Vietnam in the aftermath of war in the 1970s. The American high school student has seen herself as an unwelcome outcast in her suburban New York setting. When the American and the refugees connect they find in each other a "welcome home" and the promise of a new start.

For adults is "The Latehomecomer," a memoir by award-winning St. Paul author Kao Kalia Yang. This is a wonderfully lyrical and moving account of a Hmong family's immigration experience that ranges from the jungles of Laos through refugee camp life in Thailand to a new way of living in Minnesota. This story of several generations of a family finding their "welcome home" can finally be told in compelling detail in their own words through the authentic voice of an English speaking daughter.

Valley Reads is a community wide multi generational reading program. Between March 1 and 14, 2010 there will be opportunities to meet authors Kao Kalia Yang and Jana Laiz. There will also be scheduled discussions of the book and if your group would like a facilitator for your own group, contact Jessica Pack of ArtReach Alliance.

The books are available at local libraries, school libraries and Valley Bookseller in Stillwater and Back to Books in Hudson, Wis.

This program is supported by individuals and organizations throughout the Valley. It has reached over 20,000 individuals with book discussions, activities related to reading and writing including theater performances and visits with authors. The program continues to grow and expand.

Support the celebration of literature in our community by becoming a sponsor for 2010. Sponsorship information is available at www.valleyreads.org or call ArtReach at 651-439-1465. Donations of any amount are welcome, from individuals, fraternal organizations or businesses.

For more information visit www.valleyreads.org or call ArtReach at 651-439-1465.

Valley Reads is a program of ArtReach Alliance and is possible through community partnerships with: Back to Books, Bayport Public Library, Boutwells Landing, Hudson Area Joint Library, Hudson School District, The Phipps Center for the Arts, Stillwater Area Public Schools, Stillwater Public Library, and The Valley Bookseller, and the community members that serve on the steering committee.

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