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Announcing Columbia City's 2009 Seattle Book Fest

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SEATTLE – Remember the old Northwest Book Festival on the waterfront and how much fun it was? It's about to happen again! Seattle's Columbia City neighborhood is reviving it as Seattle Book Fest on October 24-25 from 10AM to 6PM at the Columbia City Event Center, the site of the former Columbia School, located at 3528 S. Ferdinand St. and approximately one block from the new Columbia City light rail station.

Seattle has long been well known as a book and author-friendly city, but unlike its Northwest neighbors Spokane and Portland, it has not had a major citywide book festival since 2003 when the extremely popular Northwest Book Festival lost its funding and folded. Writers, readers, bookstores, and small presses have missed the annual literary bash ever since—and there has been lots of talk over the years about reviving it. Now the talk has become a reality!

The fair will feature over 60 local authors; among them best-selling publishing phenom Garth Stein, mystery writer Mike Lawson, literary maven Nancy Pearl, women's fiction celeb Jennie Shortridge, and national award-winning poets Sam Hamill and Judith Roche. In addition, the fair will showcase over fifty exhibitors ranging from local bookstores such as Third Place Books and Fremont Place Books, nonprofits like Friends of the Library, and small but influential publishers like Copper Canyon Press, Black Heron Press, and Fantagraphics. There is also a long list of panels, workshops, and special events including a Scrabble tourney, spelling bee, bookbinding demo, and a workshop on "how to write a novel in a month."

The event is produced by Columbia City Cinema, and co-sponsored by the Columbia City Business Association and the Rainier Chamber of Commerce. Since it lacked corporate sponsorship, the event became a grassroots effort with funding and volunteer support coming from the community, the Seattle School District, the Seattle Public Library, and enthusiastic exhibitors. Like the earlier Northwest Book Festivals admission is free with a suggested donation of \$5. Over 20,000 people attended the earlier festival each year it was held.

Again, this new book fair—Seattle Book Fest— takes place on Oct. 24-25 from 10AM to 6PM on both days, and is located at the former Columbia School at 3528 South Ferdinand Street, in the heart of the Columbia City Historic District between Rainier Avenue and the Columbia City light rail station on MLK Way. The festival website is located at www.seattlebookfest.com.

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