



MAY 1
DIANE WILSON
with ROSETTA PETERS
and other
Očeti Šakowij writers

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Find out more at
ArtReachStCroix.org/BigRead
or call (651) 439-1465

Look for *The Seed Keeper* book club kits and FREE
Read & Release copies. Or, receive 15% off a
copy at Valley Bookseller or Chapter2Books.

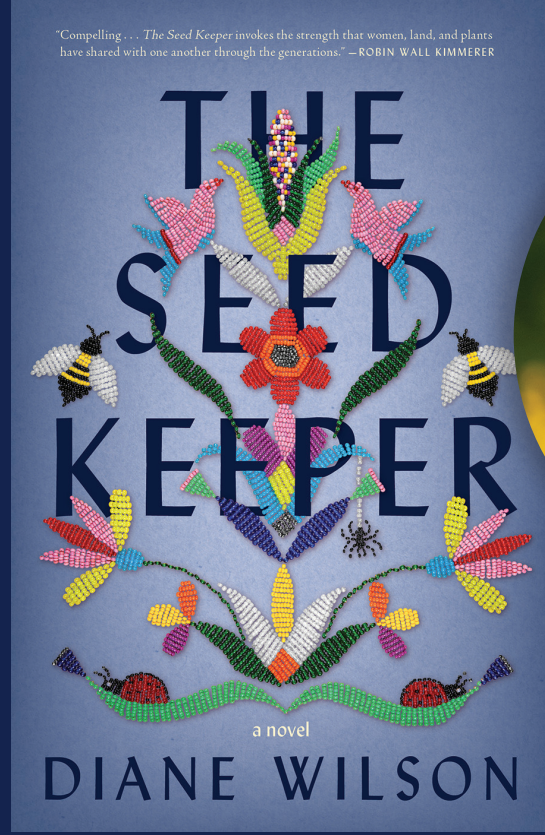
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National Endowment for the Arts grants impact individuals and
communities, visit www.arts.gov. NEA Big Read in the St. Croix Valley is
also supported by the **Human Family Unity Foundation**.*

*NEA Big Read in the St. Croix Valley is presented by ArtReach St. Croix
in conjunction with core program partners including Valley Bookseller,
Franconia Sculpture Park, Stillwater Public Library and other libraries
located between St. Croix Falls, WI and Hastings, MN.*

Cover photo by Nedahness Greene

NEA BIG READ

In the St. Croix Valley



*"Compelling . . . *The Seed Keeper* invokes the strength that women, land, and plants
have shared with one another through the generations." —ROBIN WALL KIMMERER*

*The river was the pulse of our people,
flowing through generations.*

APRIL 2026



In partnership with Franconia Sculpture Park, NEA Big Read in the St. Croix Valley will center Diane Wilson's novel *The Seed Keeper*—a river story. The author's connection to, and expressions of, a river are profound. The natural spaces of the St. Croix Valley are compelling influences on local creatives including on the author herself.



WRITE-IN WITH DIANE WILSON & ARROW BROKEN Diane will welcome readers and writers to this year's NEA Big Read grounded by the value of RECIPROCITY. Diane will turn things over to Arrow Broken Poetry Collective for the first of the month's writing workshops. Bring a notebook and favorite pen.

APRIL 1 / 5-7pm / Franconia Sculpture Park Commons

VALLEY POTTERY: 2,000 YEARS The St. Croix valley is famous for its vibrant community of ceramic artists, but did you know that pottery traditions in the Valley go back over 2,000 years? On exhibit will be pre-contact pottery shards from the Science Museum of MN. Archaeologist Ed Fleming has been studying these ancient traditions and how pottery styles demonstrate trade and movement along the rivers of the Midwest. Potters working here today created pieces inspired by the forms, decorations and stories they learned about during a recent visit to the Science Museum in St. Paul.

DEEP MAPPING Explore the places and stories of the St. Croix River basin with maps by St. Croix 360 founder, writer Greg Seitz. This exhibition and the work for his book (UMN Press, 2028) looks past the usual tropes of lumberjacks and settlers to the diverse peoples, ecosystems and communities that have created the watershed as we know it today. A Dakota language map by Marlena Myles showing Minneapolis (Village of Many Lakes) & St. Paul (Village along the White Cliffs) will also be featured.

EXHIBITION OPENING **APRIL 2** / 6-8pm / ArtReach St. Croix

ON VIEW THRU MAY 9 / Wed & Fri, 10am-4pm; Thurs, 10am-7pm; Sat, 12-4pm

BEHIND-THE-SCENES AT SMM Learn about the 7,000-year-old copper working tradition in the Great Lakes region with Science Museum of MN (SMM) Archaeologist, Ed Fleming. Then, Pejuta Haka Red Eagle, Asst. Curator of Native American Collections will describe collaborative work with indigenous artists and the Native collections at SMM.

APRIL 7 / 6pm / Bayport Public Library

BOOK DISCUSSIONS

Everyone is welcome to join a book discussion about *The Seed Keeper*, the 2022 Minnesota Book Award winner for Fiction which follows several generations of a Dakota family as they struggle to preserve their way of life and sacrifice to protect what matters most.

APRIL 8 / 6:30pm / St. Croix Falls Library

APRIL 9 / 6pm / Bayport Public Library
(for Young Adults)

APRIL 15 / 1pm / Somerset Public Library

APRIL 22 / 6pm / Wilberg Memorial Public Library of Osceola



A LOVE LETTER TO THE ST. CROIX

Mitákuye Oyás'ıŋ—We Are All Related. Diane Wilson will read her essay created especially for this year's Big Read. Diane and Rosetta Peters work remotely with Očeti Šakowiŋ writers from South Dakota and Minnesota. The Wówapi Kága Oyáte writers are coming to the Valley to share their work alongside Diane and Rosie for this celebratory event.

MAY 1 / 6pm / The Phipps Center for the Arts, Hudson

WRITING WORDS IN SERVICE TO THE RIVER Dedicate time to crafting words during these interactive writing workshops guided by poets from Arrow Broken. Come to one or more.

APRIL 11 / 10am-12pm / Wash. Co. Heritage Center

APRIL 11 / 3-5pm / Marine Community Library

+ **APRIL 18** / 3-5pm / Belwin's Peter J. King Family Foundation Wetlands Center

APRIL 30 / 7-10pm / JRod's Garage, Marine on St. Croix

During their monthly poetry event, Arrow Broken will host Dougie Padilla after which all workshop participants will be invited to share during an Open Mic.

RIVER BELLWETHERS Capable of filtering ten to forty gallons of water daily, freshwater mussels are vital to healthy rivers. Losses—from damming, pollution and warming waters—are legendary. Tamara Dean will present fascinating stories of determined citizen scientists who battled government officials, changed policy and set new standards to protect native mussels.

+ **APRIL 11** / 2:30pm / Stillwater Public Library

POWER OF THE PRESS Use a portable printing press and create a Big Read-inspired print to take home during this drop-in style event. Presented by the MN Center for Book Arts.

APRIL 14 / 6pm / Bayport Public Library

THE RIGHTS OF NATURE Does a river have legal rights? This documentary weaves a compelling link between three main case studies (Ecuador, New Zealand, USA) and the broader history and story of the Rights of Nature movement.

APRIL 17 / 7pm / St. Croix Falls Library

SEEDS AND STORIES Writers are invited to join Diane Wilson to explore personal memories and experiences that illuminate our relationship with the St. Croix Valley, this treasured landscape. Then, in **SEEDS OF RECIPROCITY** Diane and The Acreage's Horticulturalist will lead seed necklace making to represent the principle of reciprocity: we care for our seeds, and they care for us, a relationship that carries profound responsibility and reverence.

+ **APRIL 18** / 2-4:30pm / The Acreage, Osceola

SEED ART FOR ADULTS Learn about the Minnesota tradition of making art with seeds and create your own unique mosaic. Presented by Caponi Art Park.

APRIL 21 / 5:30-7pm / Pleasant Hill Library, Hastings

+ **APRIL 22** / 9:30-11 am / For All Abilities / Pleasant Hill Library, Hastings

CROP ART: SEEDS, GLUE AND A TOOTHPICK A Minnesota State Fair tradition since 1965, experienced and amateur artists spend long winters making intricate Crop Art by gluing seeds to boards. This locally-made Seed Art will be on tour—each week at a new location.

MARCH 17-MAY 4 /

Visit ArtReachStCroix.org/BigRead for library locations and schedules.

+ Registration required at
ArtReachStCroix.org/Register

ASL interpreter

+ Online or livestream option

All events are **FREE**.
Donations Requested.

More workshops and resources at ArtReachStCroix.org/BigRead