

Commentary... A feast of books

By Mac Hay
Columnist

A soon as you finish this article, go to the website of the Edinburgh International Book Festival, edbookfest.co.uk, and peruse what is available this year in Edinburgh, Scotland from August 10-26.

This year's festival, the largest in the world with over 1,000 authors, launched its theme, the lineup of authors, speakers, thinkers for 2019. This year being no exception, speakers from all over the world will be available for your pleasure, to hear, to chat and to mingle with 220,000 people like you who appreciate and are stimulated by great subjects and presenters.

It's not too late to book your travel, as this correspondent has done.

As the festival's website says: "Join us for creative, joyful, interactive experiences with the world's finest writers and thinkers. Whether you meet a hero you've always loved or find a new favorite, the Book Festival brings you everything that's exciting, inspiring and refreshing in stories, ideas and words today."

"Stories are devices that help humans make sense of a complex world," Book Festival Director Nick Barley said. "Whether we're listening to scientists and politicians, myth-makers or poets, to understand the world around us 'We Need New Storie' — our theme this year."

A huge bonus about heading to Edinburgh in August is experiencing the warmth and genuine friendliness of both locals and fellow visitors, making we tourists feel like locals immediately. The Scots are curious and interested in Americans, our lifestyle and politics. It's always a pleasure to chat with the people you meet on trains, busses, pubs and events.

August is festival month in Edinburgh. The Fringe

Festival with 56,000 events — music, song, theater along with the arts and international festivals, the bagpip-ing at the Edinburgh Military Tattoo — can fill your days with fun, stimulating entertainment not found anywhere else.

Walking the city with the bonus of an excellent local bus system easily gets you around this compact city of 500,000. The "Hop-on-Hop Off" city tour bus will give you an outstanding overview of Edinburgh. The famous Royal Mile includes the Castle, Scotland's Parliament, the Whisky Experience, Holyrood Castle, scary Mary King's Close, St. Giles Cathedral, numerous museums, pubs and restaurants. The Royal Botanic Garden, Rosslyn Chapel of Dan Brown's "The Da Vinci Code" fame and the Royal Yacht Britannia are also popular attractions.

Local touring companies offer day trips to the Stirling Highland Games, Stirling Castle, St. Andrews for golf, Culloden, site of Bonnie Prince Charles defeat by the British in 1746.

Delta has direct flights from Portland, to London Heathrow; from there either get a connecting flight to Edinburgh (EDI) or take the train to Edinburgh — a pleasant four-hour way to combat jet lag, viewing the countryside.

I encourage you to put this city, the festivals and events on your bucket list.

And get ready for this fall's Sisters-scaled version of a book festival, inspired in part by the legendary Edinburgh event. The Sisters Festival of Books is a three-day celebration of the literary culture of Central Oregon and the Pacific Northwest, featuring local, regional, and national authors and occurring across multiple venues.

The festival will take place Friday, October 18 through Sunday, October 20 in Sisters. Proceeds from the festival will be used to establish a scholarship for Sisters High School students through the Sisters Graduate Resource Organization. For all festival info including venues, author line-up, event details, and FAQs, visit SistersFoB.com.

School supplies drive underway in Sisters

Sisters' Back to School-School Supply Drive is underway at Sisters' Les Schwab Tire Center.

Community members can drop off new school supplies during regular business hours and help students in need begin the school year well equipped for a successful year. Les Schwab Tire Center is located at 600 W. Hood Ave., open Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The following new school supply items are needed (no used school or office supplies):

- One-inch three-ring binders, notebook dividers, college-ruled and wide-ruled notebook paper and college-ruled spiral notebooks.
- 4x6 index cards, college-ruled and wide-ruled composition notebooks.
- Wooden rulers with inches and centimeters (no plastic rulers).

- Fiskars pointed scissors.
- Crayola watercolor paints (cheaper, low-quality paints are not useable).
- Yellow highlighters, pens, pencils, basic calculators, dry-erase markers, white erasers.
- 12-count box Crayola colored pencils.
- Backpacks are needed for all ages.

School supplies distribution for those in need will begin the week before school on August 26 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Sisters Family Access Network (FAN) office located inside the Sisters School District administration building at 525 E. Cascade Ave.

Sisters FAN distributes school supplies to over 100 financially struggling students/families each year. Thank you for your donations for our local students.

Call FAN at 541-549-0155 for more information.

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