



THE COLUMBIA COUNTY

STORIES

by the

RIVER

FESTIVAL

FEBRUARY 14 - MARCH 14, 2026

**Sponsored by the St. Helens Public Library
and the Columbia County Authors Alliance**

THURSDAY, JANUARY 29
(PRE-FESTIVAL EVENT)

Feb“word”ary Kick-Off Meeting

Hosted by the Columbia County Authors Alliance

During February, local writers band together to participate in a month-long writing challenge. Join in the fun at this kick-off meeting. Option to purchase food or drink. Led by local author Jana Mann.



**5:00 PM -
7:00 PM**



**Sunshine Pizza
2124 Columbia Blvd, St. Helens**

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14

Columbia County Authors Special Collection Launch Event

Hosted by the St. Helens Public Library

The St. Helens Public Library has created a special collection of books by authors who live or work in Columbia County, or who belong to the St. Helens Writers Guild or the Scappoose Public Library Writing Group. Celebrate the establishment of this important collection, meet the authors, and peruse the books.



**11:00 AM -
12:00 PM**



**St. Helens Public Library, Columbia
Center, 375 S. 18th Street, St. Helens**

St. Helens Writers Guild Meeting

Hosted by the Columbia County Authors Alliance

Share what you're working on, participate in creative writing exercises, and meet other local writers. Led by local author Jana Mann.



**12:00 PM -
2:00 PM**



**Auditorium, Columbia Center
375 S. 18th Street, St. Helens**

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17

Write-In

Hosted by the Columbia County Authors Alliance

Connect with other writers informally, talk about your work in progress, and get some words down on the page. Led by local author Ellen Jacobson.



**10:00 AM -
12:00 PM**



**Beyond the Forest Coffee Shop,
230 S 1st Street, St. Helens**

St. Helens Public Library Book Club

Hosted by the St. Helens Public Library

This month's book club pick is *Everyone in My Family Has Killed Someone* by Benjamin Stevenson. Ernest Cunningham, an author who writes books about how to write books, joins his family at an Australian ski resort to celebrate his brother's release from prison. What results is a "witty twist on classic whodunits..." (Maureen Corrigan, Washington Post). Led by Library Assistant Tari Johnson.



**6:00 PM -
7:00 PM**



**Auditorium, Columbia Center
375 S. 18th Street, St. Helens**

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19

Author Panel: Pathways to Publishing

Hosted by the Columbia County Authors Alliance

How can you get your words in front of other eyes? What does it mean to "be published" and how the heck do you do it? Hear from local authors who have uncovered a variety of ways, from traditional to self-published (and in between), to go from "writer" to "author." Q&A to follow. Led by local author Mike Exinger.



**5:30 PM -
7:00 PM**



**Auditorium, Columbia Center
375 S. 18th Street, St. Helens**

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20

Late Night Write-In

Hosted by the Columbia County Authors Alliance

Connect with other writers informally, talk about your work in progress, and get some words down on the page during this special Feb"word"ary write-in. Bring money to chip in for pizza (optional). Led by local author Jana Mann.



**6:00 PM -
11:00 PM**



**Auditorium, Columbia Center
375 S. 18th Street, St. Helens**

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22

Open Mic Night

Hosted by the Columbia County Authors Alliance

Enjoy readings by local authors, along with stand-up comedy and live music. Held monthly by Beyond the Forest.



**4:00 PM -
6:00 PM**



**Beyond the Forest Coffee Shop,
230 S 1st Street St. Helens**

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

Whodunit? An Interactive Mystery Event

Hosted by the Columbia County Authors Alliance

Examine a crime scene, search for clues, and try to figure out whodunit in this interactive event. Led by cozy mystery authors Ellen Jacobson and Tamelia Aday.



**5:30 PM -
7:00 PM**



**Auditorium, Columbia Center
375 S. 18th Street, St. Helens**

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28

Writers Workshop: Finding Story Ideas

Hosted by the Columbia County Authors Alliance

Can't find the car keys? Sorry... Can't find the scissors? Oops... Can't find a story idea? I can help with that! This workshop is all about finding stories - it's so much easier than hunting for keys or scissors! "Everybody walks past a thousand story ideas every day." (The Writing Cooperative). Led by local author Jana Mann.



**12:30 PM -
2:00 PM**



**Auditorium, Columbia Center
375 S. 18th Street, St. Helens**

TUESDAY, MARCH 3

Pen & Perspective: In Conversation with Local Authors

Hosted by the St. Helens Public Library

Readers will learn how local authors choose what to write about, their writing process, and hear short passages from the authors' books. There will be time for questions from the audience. Moderated by Library Director Suzanne Bishop.



**6:00 PM -
7:30 PM**



**Auditorium, Columbia Center
375 S. 18th Street, St. Helens**

Other Cool Stuff to Check Out

Columbia County Writer Festivals - Raymond Carver Writing Festival in Clatskanie - May 9, 2026 & Scappoose Public Library Authors Festival (SPLAF) - October 2026

Writing Resources - Pick up a curated list of writing craft and publishing books at the St. Helens Public Library or download at sthelensoregon.gov/library

THURSDAY, MARCH 5

Writers Workshop: Kickstart Your Short Story (Registration Requested)

Hosted by the Columbia County Authors Alliance

This hands-on workshop will teach you story structure, help you develop your idea, and provide time to start writing. Perfect for fiction writers working in any short form—whether you're aiming for 1,000 words or 5,000. Leave with an opening scene and a roadmap to finish your story. Led by local author Sharon Hughson.



**5:30 PM -
7:00 PM**



**Auditorium, Columbia Center
375 S. 18th Street, St. Helens**

SATURDAY, MARCH 7

St. Helens Public Library Family Storytime

Hosted by the St. Helens Public Library

Join us for a very special storytime with local children's book authors reading from their books, plus movement and singing. This program is part of the monthly Family Storytime series held the first Saturday of every month. Led by St. Helens Public Library Youth Librarian Jana Wiersma.



**10:00 AM -
11:00 AM**



**Auditorium, Columbia Center
375 S. 18th Street, St. Helens**

Feb“word”ary Writing Challenge Celebration

Hosted by the Columbia County Authors Alliance

Celebrate the completion of Feb“word”ary writing challenge and listen to readings from participants. Led by local author Jana Mann.



**12:00 PM -
2:00 PM**



**Auditorium, Columbia Center
375 S. 18th Street, St. Helens**

TUESDAY, MARCH 10

St. Helens Public Library Adults & Crafts – Handmade Journals (Registration Required)

Hosted by the St. Helens Public Library

Every writer needs a place to record their ideas, and what better place than in a handmade journal. Who knows? Maybe it will inspire you to write a bestseller. Or maybe just use it for grocery lists and to-dos. We are pretty sure you'll have fun making one, however you decide to use it! Led by Library Technician Nicole Woodruff.



5:15 PM -
6:30 PM



Auditorium, Columbia Center
375 S. 18th Street, St. Helens

THURSDAY, MARCH 12

Write-In

Hosted by the Columbia County Authors Alliance

Connect with other writers informally, talk about your work in progress, and get some words down on the page. Led by local author Mike Exinger.



10:00 AM -
12:00 PM



Cathedral Coffee
33555 E Columbia Ave, Scappoose

Join Our Local Writing Groups

St. Helens Writers Guild - Second Saturday of every month from 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM at the St. Helens Public Library. Open to all ages.

Scappoose Public Library Writing Group - Third Sunday of every month from 2:00 PM - 4:00PM at the Scappoose Public Library. 18+ only.

SATURDAY, MARCH 14

Local Author Book Sale

Hosted by the Columbia County Authors Alliance

Meet local authors, buy some books, and get them signed!



10:00 AM -
12:00 PM



Hallway, Columbia Center
375 S. 18th Street, St. Helens

Anthology Release Celebration

Hosted by the Columbia County Authors Alliance

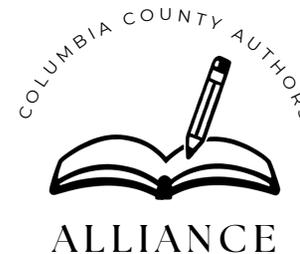
Join us in celebrating the release of the inaugural Lower Columbia County Writers Anthology, *Hidden World*.



12:30 PM -
2:00 PM



Auditorium, Columbia Center
375 S. 18th Street, St. Helens



Columbia County Authors Alliance

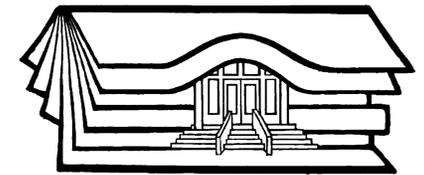
Supporting Columbia County writers and authors through networking and educational opportunities, community anthologies, and author events.

Website: columbiacountyauthors.com
FB: @columbiacountyauthors

St. Helens Public Library

Columbia Center
375 S. 18th Street, St. Helens, OR 97051
Ph: 503-397-4544

Website: sthelensoregon.gov/library
FB: @StHelensPublicLibrary



St. Helens Public Library



The Stories by the River Festival is funded in part by a generous donation from the Oregon Cultural Trust and the Columbia County Cultural Coalition.

