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Mid-Continent Public Library Hosts ‘Romance GenreCon’

Two-Day Romance Festival Features Bestselling Authors, Draws Readers and Writers

Kansas City, MO – Passion-loving page-turners will have the opportunity to attend the ultimate romance retreat on August 3 and 4 as Mid-Continent Public Library hosts the first-ever Romance GenreCon at its Woodneath Library Center [8900 NE Flintlock Road, Kansas City, MO 64157]. Free and open to the public, the two-day convention will feature some of the biggest names in the romance genre including the following authors who will share the sultry secrets behind their success:

- Cherry Adair, New York Times bestselling author of contemporary, romantic suspense
- Victoria Alexander, New York Times bestselling author of historical (Victorian) romance
- Janna MacGregor, Kansas City resident, attorney, and acclaimed author of historical (Regency) romance
- Cathy Maxwell, native of Olathe, Kansas, and New York Times and USA Today bestselling author of historical romance
- Pat Simmons, award-winning author of contemporary, multicultural Christian romance novels
- Kerrelyn Sparks, New York Times bestselling author of paranormal romance novels
- Sherry Thomas, award-winning and USA Today bestselling author of historical and contemporary romances, young adult fiction, and mysteries

“When people think of Kansas City, they think BBQ, fountains, and sports,” said Amy Fisher, MCPL Information and Reader Services Manager and organizer of Romance GenreCon. “But inside many Midwesterners is a passion for romance. In fact, Kansas City is one of the top locations in the country for romance book sales. Circulation of romance books at MCPL alone reached nearly 730,000 checkouts in the Library’s 2016-17 fiscal year.”

Throughout Romance GenreCon, attendees will have the opportunity to attend workshops and presentations in three different tracks: Reader/Fan, Beginning Writing, and Advanced Writing. Individuals can select programs individually or attend all workshops within a designated track. Within the writing tracks, two of MCPL’s special divisions, The Story Center and Square One Small Business Services, will offer attendees their expertise on the creative and business components of the romance industry.
In addition to workshops and presentations, Romance GenreCon will transform Woodneath Library Center into an English garden with a “costume-optional” welcome tea to kick off the event on Friday evening where attendees will get to “meet and greet” the authors. During GenreCon, attendees can also engage in a silent auction with donated baskets from the authors and the Library, which will benefit MCPL’s Story Center.

On Saturday morning, there will be a “Romance State of the Union,” which will examine romance today and explore how the genre has evolved over time and how it may continue to change with various trends as well as political movements like #MeToo.

“Not only does the genre’s fan base keep growing (as of 2017, a full 34% of fiction sold in the U.S. was romance),” said Beth Atwater, Collection Development Librarian at Johnson County Library and moderator of the Romance State of the Union Panel, “but the scope of romantic plots are expanding. While there’s no mistaking the appeal of ball gowns and bustles, the face of romance is changing. In the last year alone, authors like Alyssa Cole and Alisha Rai have introduced us to characters ranging from black Civil War-Era Pinkerton spies to the contemporary heirs of a business empire built by Internment Camp survivors.”

In addition to activities emphasizing meaningful fan-and-author interactions, the conference will also give fans a chance to experience the genre with activities such as creating their own book covers, playing historic games, and exploring “what they wore” back in the day. Additionally, on day two of Romance GenreCon, from 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., there will be a Romance Book Fair for attendees to purchase books and have them signed by the authors. The fair will include GenreCon’s featured authors, plus 30 other local and regional romance authors including BL Barry, Sierra Simone, Elle Boon, Jenna Jacob, and others.

Stay updated on all the latest news regarding Romance GenreCon and sign up for individual workshops at mymcpl.org/romance.

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Mid-Continent Public Library is the largest library system in the Kansas City metropolitan area, operating 31 branches and three Library-To-Go locations and serving more than 800,000 people in Jackson, Clay, and Platte Counties. The Library strives to enrich our citizens and communities through expanding access to innovation, information, ideas, and inspiration. MCPL is a 2014 National Medal for Museum and Library Service winner. Connect with the Library on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.