



DCR Program Overview

About DALINC and DCR 2026 (www.dalinc.org)

The Dubuque Area Library Information Consortium (DALINC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that supports collaboration among libraries in the Dubuque area. Its mission is to encourage, coordinate, and develop programs and services that meet the educational, informational, and recreational needs of local communities.

Dubuque County Reads (DCR) is a standing committee within DALINC, dedicated to promoting literacy and community dialogue through a shared reading experience. Of DALINC's 14 institutional members, 9 actively participate in the DCR committee. Carnegie-Stout, Cascade, James Kennedy, Clarke University, Divine Word College, Loras College, University of Dubuque, Wartburg Seminary, and the Dubuque County Library District are participating in the 2026 program. Each library distributes books (both free and for checkout) and hosts public book discussions.

2026 Theme and Book Titles

This year's titles explore themes of ecological sustainability, Indigenous identity, food systems, and cultural heritage.

- Adult Read: *The Seed Keeper* by Diane Wilson
- Youth Companion Title: *Berry Song* by Michaela Goade

Program Goals

- Promote literacy across all age groups
- Foster community engagement through shared reading experiences
- Encourage respectful dialogue on diverse perspectives and lived experiences

Key Events (February–April 2026)

1. Book Discussions at 9+ participating libraries across Dubuque County
2. Author Keynote: Diane Wilson (not confirmed)
3. Youth Programming: Storytimes and family-friendly activities inspired by *Berry Song*
4. Potential Collaborative Events:
 - a. Dubuque Museum of Art (art-based programming tied to book themes)
 - b. Local Indigenous groups (speaker panel or workshop)

Community Impact

In 2025, DCR drew over 400 attendees and distributed nearly 328 books (200 giveaways). The 2026 program aims to expand access by offering more free copies in multiple formats, collaborating with new community organizations, and increasing visibility through a redesigned DALINC website.

Funding & Support

DCR 2026 is supported by grants and in-kind contributions. We are gathering funds to cover book distribution, author honorarium, indigenous speakers, programming costs, and website development to increase our reach and support our promotion efforts.

Book Summaries

***The Seed Keeper* by Diane Wilson**

The Seed Keeper follows Rosalie Iron Wing, a Dakhóta woman who reconnects with her heritage after years of separation. Raised by her father to respect nature and seeds, Rosalie is later placed in foster care and loses touch with her culture. As an adult, she returns to her childhood home, uncovering ancestral stories and reclaiming her identity. Through multiple generations of Dakhóta women, the novel explores themes of ecological sustainability, Indigenous resilience, and the sacredness of seeds. Diane Wilson's lyrical storytelling invites readers to reflect on land, memory, and the power of cultural preservation.

***Berry Song* by Michaela Goade**

Berry Song is a lyrical picture book by Caldecott Medalist Michaela Goade that celebrates Indigenous knowledge, intergenerational connection, and gratitude for the natural world. Set on an island in Alaska, a young girl and her Tlingit grandmother gather berries while singing to the land, honoring its gifts and wisdom. Through vibrant illustrations and poetic text, the story teaches respect for nature, seasonal cycles, and cultural traditions. As the girl learns to listen to the land and her ancestors, she prepares to pass this knowledge to her younger sister, continuing the song of gratitude and stewardship.



Contact Information

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Visit our website to learn more: www.dalinc.org