



Naturally Connected

Built on Love

Insights and the Excitement of Albion's Big Read

By Cassidy Porter



After speaking with Albion's Big Read Director, Jess Roberts, and Assistant Director, Akaiia Ridley, I gained insights to the successful longevity of Albion's Big Read. Starting as a collaborative effort among community leaders, members, young adults, and Albion College students and educators, Albion's Big Read is rooted in connection and understanding. Prior to the 2015 kick off, Roberts shared that it took about a year and half of planning and community discussions. The vision of Albion's Big Read was to create an educational experience specifically for Albion's young people. Amidst the closing of Albion Public Schools, it was deemed necessary to continue to have some kind of educational space for Albion kids. Albion's Big Read has continued over the years due to the love and support that the organization has been able to foster.

Albion's Big Read brings the Albion community together throughout the month of October over a common reading. There are discussions about the common reading led by Albion 8th through 10th graders, known as the Big Read Leaders. But it doesn't all happen in October. It takes a full year to produce one October calendar of work. Preparations for the next year all start in November with the directors and committee members reading numerous books to determine the best fit. By January, outreach to Marshall Public School teachers occurs for nominations to become a Big Read Leader, followed by monthly meetings and parent meetings. Then in the summer, the Big Read Leaders get to work reading the book, learning how to lead discussions, and building a lasting bond.

The Big Read events are a time for the community to come together for a common experience but also show appreciation and love for our Albion youth. The program gives opportunity to read books not commonly exposed to in school, and opportunities to build leadership and communication skills outside of the Marshall Public Schools' classrooms.

This year the common reading is *Mighty Inside* by Sundee T. Frazier, set in 1955 as Melvin Robinson navigates his way through his first year of high school in a majority white school system. Books can be picked up for free at Book Hubs: City Hall, Albion District Library, Charles Snyder Building, Foundry Bakehouse & Deli, and Cutler Center in Stockwell Library. And join Albion's Big Read Saturday September 30th from 1PM - 4PM at Holland Park for their kick-off and check out the list on events on page 2.

Philanthropic Circles of Albion

Albion Area Philanthropic Women and Men Who Give

Philanthropy is a key component of the Albion community. It is the action that goes unnoticed and unrecognized, for countless reasons. But seeing how some of the Albion area giving circles recently had their quarterly meeting, it is important to recognize the generosity of these groups.



Albion Area Philanthropic Women have been giving back to the Albion community since 2007. Every quarter, March, June, September, and December, the women gather each with a check for \$100 to donate to a presenting local non-profit organization. The 100+ membership brings each quarter's donation to around \$10,000. Each presenter has three to four minutes to explain the needs that they have, followed by a short time for questions.

INNOVATE Albion received the latest round to support their robotics teams. Numerous organizations have been the beneficiaries of Philanthropic Women including Kids 'N' Stuff Children's Museum, Forks Senior Center, Blazers Track Club, and the Ismon House, just to name a few. Over the years, the Albion Area Philanthropic Women have given over \$639,000.

Beyond the generosity of giving, the quarterly meetings are a time for the women to gather and discuss their love for Albion. The women end the meeting by "passing the hat", where an additional organization of choice gets a few donations as the women give any bit of cash that they can.

In addition to Philanthropic Women, in 2019 a men's group started up known as Men Who Give. Similar to Philanthropic Women, Men Who Give meet quarterly to hear from different presentations from non-profit organizations to donation \$100 each. As a recently started group as well as the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, there are about 30 members leading to \$3,000 donation every quarter.

Both Men Who Give and Albion Area Philanthropic Women, determine the recipient by anonymously voting with a small slip of paper. The votes are then counted and announced right there at the meeting. The Sister City Committee received the Men Who Give donation, supporting next year's youth trip to France.

The next giving round for these organizations is in December, and I wonder who the recipients will be.

Stay Involved!

Fold me in half and hang me on the fridge!

October

- 1st:** 2PM The Play That Goes Wrong at Albion College's Herrick Auditorium
- 2nd:** 7PM Blues at the Bohm with Thornetta Davis
- 4th:** 12PM Riverside Gifts & Treasures Grand Opening Ribbon Cutting
7PM Albion's Big Read Film Series: Into the Spider-Verse at the Bohm Theatre
- 7th:** 11AM - 12:30PM Albion's Big Read Discussion at Ludington Center
- 10th:** 4:30PM - 6PM Albion After Hours at Yellow Bird Chocolate Shop
- 11th:** 7PM Albion's Big Read Film Series: Into the Spider-Verse at the Bohm Theatre
- 14th:** 11AM - 12:30PM Albion's Big Read Discussion at Ludington Center
5PM Albion Branch NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet at Upper Baldwin Albion College
- 15th:** 11AM - 12PM Sensory Friendly Hours at Kids 'N' Stuff
- 17th:** 6PM - 7:30PM Albion's Big Read Discussion at Ludington Center
- 18th:** 6:30PM Singer-Songwriter Open Mic Night at Stirling Books & Brew
7PM Albion's Big Read Film Series: My Beautiful Stutter at the Bohm Theatre
- 19th:** 6PM - 7:30PM A Lecture by Bettina Love: Punished for Dreaming at the Bohm Theatre
- 21st:** 9AM Member Mornings: Halloween Spooktacular at Kids 'N' Stuff
10AM - 12PM STEM Saturday with INNOVATE Albion at KCC Eastern Academic Center
12PM - 1PM Albion College Century Celebration at Albion College Football Game
- 22nd:** 1PM Hike Albion! starting at Victory Park Pavilion
- 24th:** 5PM Witches & Wizards Night downtown Albion hosted by Riverside Gifts & Treasures
- 26th:** 7PM Marilyn Crandell Schleg Memorial Lecture at Albion College Bobbitt Auditorium
- 24th:** 6PM - 7PM Pop-In Craft: Decoupage Pendulum Board Coasters at the Albion District Library
- 29th:** 8AM - 1PM Pancake Brunch at the American Legion Post 55
1PM - 3PM Sweets on Superior Street
- 31st:** 11:30PM The Rocky Horror Picture Show at the Bohm Theatre

November

- 2nd:** 7PM - 8PM Albion's Big Read Celebration at the Bohm Theatre
- 3rd-5th:** Piano Fest at Albion College
- 6th:** 7PM Blues at the Bohm With Who Cross Dat Road
- 12th:** 4PM - 5PM Albion College Symphony Orchestra Concert
- 12th-18th:** World Fest - Paulo Padilha - Music Events
- 14th:** Albion After Hours at Stirling Books & Brew
- 15th:** 6:30PM Singer-Songwriter Open Mic Night at Stirling Books & Brew
- 18th:** Member Mornings: Changing Leaves at Kids 'N' Stuff
10AM - 12PM STEM Saturday with INNOVATE Albion at KCC Main Campus, Battle Creek
- 19th:** 11AM - 12PM Sensory Friendly Hours at Kids 'N' Stuff
4PM - 5PM Albion College Briton Brigade Indoor Concert
- 25th:** Small Business Saturday
- 26th:** 8AM - 1PM Pancake Brunch at the American Legion Post 55
- 29th:** 7:30PM - 8:30PM Albion College Student Showcase Recital

December

- 1st:** Albion Aglow Downtown Albion
- 3rd:** 7PM - 9PM A Festival of Lessons and Carols at Goodrich Chapel
- 12th:** Albion After Hours at Word Journey Publishing
- 16th:** Member Mornings: Snowball Fight at Kids 'N' Stuff
10AM - 12PM STEM Saturday with INNOVATE Albion at Marshall Middle School
- 17th:** 11AM - 12PM Sensory Friendly Hours at Kids 'N' Stuff

Recurring Events

Mondays:

7PM - 9PM Live Music at Albion Malleable Brewing Co.

Wednesdays:

12PM - 1PM Brown Bag Documentary Series at Albion District Library

4:30PM - 6:30PM Oktoberfest Albion! at Superior Street Mercantile
October 4th through October 25th

Fridays:

7PM - 9PM Trivia Night with Patrick Lopez at Stirling Books & Brew

Saturdays:

7PM Karaoke Saturday! at Stirling Books & Brew

Starting October 13th through November 5th Thursday through Sunday Taylor Swift The Eras Tour at 7PM at the Bohm Theatre

Scan me to read more stories!



To submit feedback, information, or events for future documents contact ambassador@albionfoundation.org.

One free small popcorn with purchase of Taylor Swift Eras Tour ticket!





Valid only at Eras Tour Concert showings during October and November 2023.

