



Bring a Guest...

Provided by Jeanette Pilak

Guests of conference delegates can enjoy Iowa City, the UNESCO City of Literature during Thursday's Guest Tour. Pre-registration is required.

For 80 years, Iowa City has been teaching the world to write. The Iowa Writer's Workshop at the University of Iowa pioneered the teaching of creative writing at the university level. Dozens of creative programs within the university and the city followed.

The newest chapter in this tradition is Iowa City's designation as a United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) City of Literature — one of three in the world. The Guest Tour, Thursday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., at this year's Annual Conference & Exhibit will include several of the sites in Iowa City that have been key in its designation as a City of Literature.

Shamburg House: Since 1967, more than a thousand writers from more than 120 countries have attended the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa. The project is designed for established and emerging creative writers — poets, fiction writers, dramatists and non-fiction writers.

Dey House: Each year the Iowa Writers Workshop faculty selects a class of fiction writers and poets from a large and impressive pool of applicants. The manuscript is by far the most important part of any application. Because of the impressive list of alumni who attended the Iowa Writers Workshop, the town has been nicknamed "Pulitzer Town." See the building and grounds where Raymond Carver, Kurt Vonnegut, Jane Smiley, John Irving and hundreds of others learned, taught and wrote.

Homes of Famous Writers: Tour the locations where the 1980 Pulitzer Prize winner for poetry, Donald Justice, lived. Jane Smiley, whose best-selling *A Thousand Acres*, received the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1992, ate regularly at The Mill Restaurant where her boyfriend worked as a waiter. See where Don Cheever and Raymond Carver lived. Kurt Vonnegut's house (circa 1885) comes with stories of the infamous May Day parties and the beer party in the winter of 1966 the Vonneguts threw in honor of Saul Bellow, not yet a Nobel laureate.



Guest tour participants will eat lunch at one of the many unique and locally-owned restaurants in **downtown Iowa City**. After lunch, take a stroll along the Literary Walk, and you'll discover the outstanding array of material represented: there are passages from children's books, quotes from memoirs and dialogue from plays and short stories. In some instances, you'll notice Iowa's direct influence on the writers' work. The walk celebrates works by 49 writers. The designation by UNESCO as a City of Literature took into consideration the number of publishers, book stores and libraries as well as writers and writing programs. Tour participants can visit some of these along Iowa City's pedestrian mall, which also includes other unique shopping boutiques with clothing, jewelry, gifts, and more, as well as sidewalk cafes, bakeries and ice cream shops.

Participants must pre-register. The registration fee of \$45 includes admission to the site on the tour, transportation and lunch.

Jeanette Pilak, Executive Director for the Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature, provided the information and text regarding the tour sites and the City of Literature.