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TROY TIMES



Groups such as the Bulgarian Cultural Center will have informational booths and perform traditional musical or dance styles for the Troy library's upcoming International Fair.

Photo provided by Daniela Natcheva

Troy library to host International Fair celebrating diversity

By: [Brendan Losinski](#) | Troy Times | Published April 20, 2022

TROY — The Troy Public Library is inviting the community to join them for an International Fair, highlighting several of the various ethnicities and cultures represented in the Troy community.

Holly Osentoski, the library's teen services librarian, said the program was particularly aimed to engage young people and encourage them to learn about other cultures.

"We have done something similar before. The community engagement librarian who used to have my position did this several times before COVID. Our last one was in 2018," she said. "For us, it's a way to get teens more involved in the community. They also get a chance to show their clubs to the general public. It lets people learn about countries they might not know much about. It lets us show off some local clubs and organizations as well."

The International Fair will take place 1-3:30 p.m. Saturday, April 30, at the Troy Community Center, 3179 Livernois Road, in Room 305.

The program is open to all ages. There is no cost to attend, but registration is required. Those interested may sign up by going to www.troypl.org/calendar. This event is sponsored by the Friends of the Troy Public Library. More information is available by calling (248) 524-3538.

"(The fair) is a program that the library's Teen Advisory Board has put together," explained Osentoski. "They reached out to several different groups, especially those who operate through the schools. We will have about 250 attendees registered so far, and when they come in, they will be given a little passport, and each of our 17 booths will have a little stamp they can get stamped in their passport. Once they get 12 stamps, they will get a goodie bag of treats at the end. There also will be performances going on during the program."

Several local cultural organizations will be present, and some will host music and dance performances displaying their heritage. This includes the Shannon Irish Dance Academy, the PACCM Hula Dancers, and HORA LOCA Flag Dancers, and representatives from Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh, the Troy High Fiddlers and the Troy Athens Filipino Dance Group.

"We'll have a table with lots of artifacts from Bulgaria," said Daniela Natcheva, the community outreach director for the Bulgarian Cultural Center. "We'll have Bulgaria rose oil, Bulgarian dolls dressed in traditional costumes. We will talk to people about Bulgaria and living there. We talk about the resorts on the Black Sea."

"Along with all of the exhibits from the various nationalities, you will see a booth from our group," added Rajender Sandadi, the president of Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh. "We will be showing off some information about yoga, temple architecture and some other topics."

Both groups are among those who will have members performing at the International Fair.

"We have about 60 children in the Bulgarian school (who are) learning the language at the Balkan Center in Troy and learning how to sing and dance in Bulgarian; we're trying to keep the traditions alive," said Natcheva.

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“There will be a brief performance of dance and drama performed by members of our organization,” said Sandadi. “It will be Indian classical dance. There will be Bharatanatyam style and Kuchipudi style and Kathak style, which are the key forms of Indian dance.”

Natcheva stressed how events like this are important for communities to maintain their heritage and for others to get a better understanding of the heritage and culture of their neighbors.

“We participate in events like this because it’s important to show our culture,” she said. “We participate in Troy Daze in the fall for the same reason. We’re proud Bulgarian Americans and we like to show our culture to the people of Troy. It’s important for people to understand one another.”

The library staff said they are happy to be able to host large public programs like the fair once more, and they said it shows how important diversity is in the Troy community.

“It will be an excellent opportunity for the community to learn about other customs and cultures they’re not normally exposed to,” said Osentoski. “Troy is very diverse, and you get to learn about different groups. It really lets you know your community.”