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## THE UPLANDS ALL-COMMUNITY READ PROJECT BRINGS GUESTS FROM AFGHAN-PAKISTAN BORDER

Rehman Khan, a UW PhD candidate, and his wife, Dr. Aaliya Bibi, a physician, both from the Pakistani-Afghan border, were in Dodgeville Sunday for an insightful discussion about current Afghan-US relations. They spoke with Greater Iowa County residents who are reading Stones into Schools as part of the first-ever All-Community Read project.

Everyone is invited to get to know Khan and Bibi when they return to Dodgeville for a discussion of “Afghan Women -- Facts and Myths” on Sun., Feb. 13 at 2 p.m. at Stonefield Village Apartments and “A Celebration of the Afghan Nowruz Festival” complete with music and traditional foods on Sun., March 13 at Stonefield. Both events are free.

In addition, Sanad Shah will be moderating two feature films as part of the Community Read to be shown free -- the heart-warming *Kite Runner*, on Fri., Jan 28 at 7 p.m. at the Mineral Point Opera House and *Afghan Star* on Fri., Feb. 15 at 7 p.m. at the Opera House.

“Such people-to-people exchanges are our best hope for building understanding and eventually peace between our countries,” said Jane Kavaloski, one of the coordinators of the Community Read. In addition to the films and lectures, informal book discussions of Stones into Schools are being held in all of the participating libraries and in local coffee shops and churches. Check with your local library for a complete listing.

Seven area libraries, the Dodgeville Kiwanis Club, Grassroots Citizens of Wisconsin and Folklore Village are sponsoring the Community Read. Hundreds of residents of all ages are reading author Greg Mortenson’s Stones into Schools, a sequel to his best-selling Three Cups of Tea. Area schools are also participating.

Local merchants are getting into the act. They have the books for sale at 43/90 North Earth Bookstore in Spring Green, Set in Stone Bookstore in Mineral Point and the Hometown Pharmacy in Dodgeville.

In his book, Mortenson recounts his inspiring story of building over 170 schools, mostly for girls, in remote areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Hundreds of thousands of American donors, both large and small, have provided the funds while labor, staff and materials have been supplied by villagers from the region in a true American-Afghan partnership. None of the schools has been destroyed by the Taliban.

Making this film and lecture series possible has been a grant from the Center for South Asia at UW-Madison. The Center has also provided the resources for two “Afghan Discovery boxes” – complete with artifacts, music, multi-generational reading and more. The boxes are available now for checkout at the Dodgeville and Mineral Point libraries. The books are available at libraries in Hollandale, Cobb, Blanchardville, Barneveld, Spring Green, Mineral Point and Dodgeville. For more information about the CSA’s outreach program, call (608) 262-9224 or email: [rweiss@southasia.wisc.edu](mailto:rweiss@southasia.wisc.edu).

Additional funding for the Community Read has come from the Wisconsin Humanities Council, with funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the State of Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Humanities Council supports and creates programs that use history, culture and discussion to strengthen community life in Wisconsin. Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

For more information about the All Community Read, check with your local library or go online to [dodgevillelibrary.com](http://dodgevillelibrary.com) or [grassrootswi.org](http://grassrootswi.org).

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