

## For Discussion

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS for *Finding My Voice*

In *Finding My Voice*, Diane talks of the difficulties separating her two childhood “worlds” — the hostile world of home and the friendly world of school, teachers and friends. To what extent can you identify with the events of Diane’s early years?

Diane attributes her mother’s emotional remoteness to anger and depression. How did you react to Diane’s descriptions of her mother?

How did Diane’s family history shape her view of herself and the world? How did it influence her decision to marry at such an early age?

Diane’s second marriage was to a man seemingly very different from her first husband. What changes in Diane’s life and in American society of the late 1950s factored into her choice?

Once out of the house and actively involved in volunteer work, Diane appears to “come into her own.” How did Diane’s personal growth affect her relationship with her husband and children?

Through volunteering, Diane became more confident in her abilities and self-worth. Have you ever attempted something new and challenging, but felt unsure that you would succeed?

Was Diane’s start at the radio station “pure luck,” or did she make her own luck?

Diane began to exhibit symptoms of her vocal disorder when her radio program, *The Diane Rehm Show*, went “national.” Is there any significance in the timing of her symptoms to the nationwide syndication of her popular broadcast?

Do you believe that Diane finally forgave her mother in the end? Do you believe she was able to identify with her mother’s own courage?

Diane struggled with issues from her childhood throughout her life. Do you believe a person can overcome early emotional traumas and find happiness?

Were you familiar with Diane Rehm before reading her book, *Finding My Voice*? If so, did you learn something about Diane that changed your first impressions of her?

Compare *Finding My Voice* to other published memoirs that you have read. Is this book similar to any of those? Why did you enjoy this book more (or less) than others you’ve read?

What would you consider Diane’s most admirable qualities? What are her least admirable? Would you like to have the opportunity to meet Diane, work with her, or have Diane as a close friend?

How essential is it that a published memoir be truthful?

## Participating Libraries

Everyone’s Reading *Finding My Voice* is sponsored by the following Metro Net libraries:

**Baldwin Public Library**  
248-647-1700  
[www.baldwinlib.org](http://www.baldwinlib.org)

**Bloomfield Township Public Library**  
248-642-5800  
[www.btpl.org](http://www.btpl.org)

**Canton Public Library**  
734-397-0999  
[www.cantonpl.org](http://www.cantonpl.org)

**Farmington Community Library**  
248-553-0300  
[www.farmlib.org](http://www.farmlib.org)

**Rochester Hills Public Library**  
248-650-7130  
[www.rhpl.org](http://www.rhpl.org)

**Southfield Public Library**  
248-796-4200  
[www.southfieldlibrary.org](http://www.southfieldlibrary.org)

**West Bloomfield Township Public Library**  
248-682-2120  
[www.westbloomfieldlibrary.org](http://www.westbloomfieldlibrary.org)

In addition, the following public libraries are participating in Everyone’s Reading:

**Auburn Hills Public Library**  
248-370-9466  
[www.auburn-hills.lib.mi.us](http://www.auburn-hills.lib.mi.us)

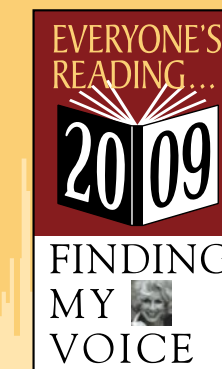
**Dearborn Public Library**  
313-943-2330  
[www.dearbornlibrary.org](http://www.dearbornlibrary.org)

**Oak Park Public Library**  
248-691-7480  
[www.ci.oak-park.mi.us/library/](http://www.ci.oak-park.mi.us/library/)

**Royal Oak Public Library**  
248-246-3700  
[www.ropl.org](http://www.ropl.org)

**Troy Public Library**  
248-524-3538  
[www.libcoop.net/troy/](http://www.libcoop.net/troy/)

**William P. Faust Public Library of Westland**  
734-326-6123  
[www.westland.lib.mi.us](http://www.westland.lib.mi.us)



Sponsored in part by the Michigan Center for the Book

[www.everyonesreading.info](http://www.everyonesreading.info)

## EVERYONE’S READING...

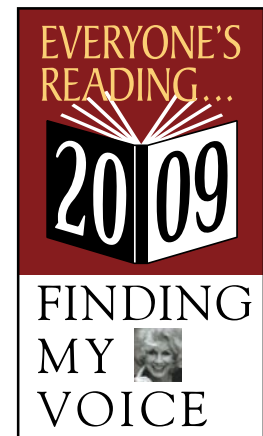
# Diane Rehm’s FINDING MY VOICE

February 1 — April 18, 2009

READER’S GUIDE

## What is Everyone's Reading?

EVERYONE'S READING is a community wide reading program sponsored by public libraries in Oakland and Wayne counties. Similar to other One Book, One Community programs across the country, Everyone's Reading promotes community dialogue through the shared experience of reading and discussing the same book. Additional programming, related to issues and topics in the selected book, is offered throughout the community to enhance the reading experience.



## Why Read *Finding My Voice*?

This year's Everyone's Reading selection is *Finding My Voice* by Diane Rehm.

Previous Everyone's Reading Selections:

**2008**

*The Beekeeper's Apprentice*  
by Laurie R. King

**2007**

*Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights, and Murder in the Jazz Age* by Kevin Boyle

**2006**

*Shadow Divers: The True Adventure of Two Americans Who Risked Everything to Solve one of the Last Mysteries of World War II* by Robert Kurson

**2005**

Author Elizabeth McCracken, featuring *Here's Your Hat, What's Your Hurry*; *The Giant's House*; and *Niagara Falls All Over Again*

**2004**

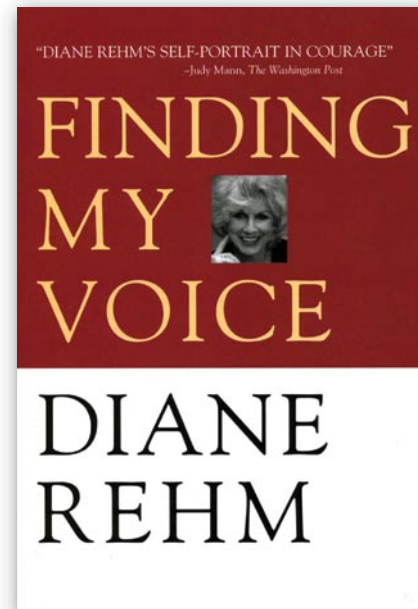
*Saul and Patsy* by Charles Baxter

**2003**

*A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest J. Gaines

**2002**

*Pay It Forward* by Catherine Ryan Hyde



*Finding My Voice* is a memoir, which is a genre that continues to increase in popularity. After travel books, memoirs and autobiographies are the bestselling nonfiction category. From Frank McCourt's best seller and Pulitzer winner, *Angela's Ashes*, to Dave Eggers' *Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*, the memoir has gone beyond traditional autobiography and become a literary art form in itself.

Diane Rehm is known best for her award-winning radio program on which she has interviewed many of the great public figures of the past 25 years. Ms. Rehm's skill as an interviewer is legendary, while at the same time, her life stands as a classic American success story. In *Finding My Voice*, Rehm focuses on her personal story, particularly her experiences with spasmodic dysphonia, rather than on her place in journalistic history. Rehm uses the memoir format to examine truths about her life and help readers reflect on their own human experience.

"This is the age of memoir. Never have personal narratives gushed so profusely from the American soil." — William Zinsser in his introduction to *Inventing the Truth: The Art and Craft of Memoir*.

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Check out *Finding My Voice* from a participating library (see a list on the back page).

Discuss the book and participate in the various programs.

Use this guide to lead your own book discussion group or attend one of the special Everyone's Reading events listed in the program brochure and at [www.everyonesreading.info](http://www.everyonesreading.info).

Explore other memoirs for adults and teens listed at [www.everyonesreading.info](http://www.everyonesreading.info).

## The Author



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Diane Rehm, a Washington, D.C.-based National Public Radio (NPR) talk show host, takes readers through her life and career in *Finding My Voice*. Rehm's difficult childhood served as the motivation and basis for this personal memoir. In 1973, with no prior experience, she began her radio career as a volunteer producer at WAMU. In 1979 she became the host of her own program, and in 1995 it was syndicated by NPR. Her many awards include being named "Washingtonian of the Year" and one of Washington's "100 Most Powerful Women." Her second book, *Toward Commitment*, was co-written with her husband John Rehm and is a deeply personal book about marriage. Rehm has hosted a variety of personalities and dignitaries on her program, including President Bill Clinton, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Annie Leibovitz, Ted Koppel, and Toni Morrison. Topics on *The Diane Rehm Show* range from national and international events, to great literature and ways to improve one's health and life.

## MEET THE AUTHOR

You are invited to hear Diane Rehm speak about her life and her experience writing *Finding My Voice*. Signed copies of the book will be available to purchase before and after her talks.

Due to popular demand, a ticket will be required for both author appearances. Tickets are free and available at participating libraries beginning Monday, March 23. Contact your local participating library for more information and ticket availability.

**Tuesday, April 14 at 7 PM**  
Royal Park Hotel  
600 East University Dr.  
Rochester



**Wednesday, April 15 at 7 PM**  
Maple Art Theatre  
4135 West Maple Road at Telegraph  
Bloomfield Township