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**Authors announced for 2024 Southwest Florida Reading Festival**

*Lee County Library System to mark 25th Anniversary*

Fort Myers, FL, Dec. 14, 2023 – The Lee County Library System has announced the lineup of authors for the 25th annual Southwest Florida Reading Festival, which happens the first weekend in March 2024.

Authors scheduled to attend the reading festival include suspense authors Jeffery Deaver, Lisa Unger and Ben Coes, along with historical fiction writers Sarah Penner and Charles Todd. Award-winning writer, artist and animated series creator Dan Yaccarino tops the list of youth authors, which also includes Sunshine State Young Readers Award winners Karina Yan Glaser, Karen Kilpatrick, Laura Martin and Joe McGee. Featured teen authors include Florida Teens Read award-winning writer Lamar Giles and fantasy novelist Adalyn Grace.

From romance to thrillers, sci-fi to humor, and graphic novels to nonfiction, an array of genres are represented. The mix of authors will meet fans and showcase their books from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, March 2, 2024. The free event will be held on the downtown outdoor campus of the Fort Myers Regional Library, 2450 First St.

The Southwest Florida Reading Festival features author presentations and book signings for all ages, writing awards, digital resource demonstrations, crafts and more. In fulfilling the festival's mission to promote reading, literacy and library services, every child and teen in attendance will receive a free book at the event.

"I am thrilled the Library System's signature event has reached this amazing milestone of 25 years promoting reading, literacy and library services in Lee County," said Mindi Simon, director of the Lee County Library System. "Having attended every event, I am so impressed by the range of authors we've brought to the community and the dedication of library staff and volunteers who create this world-class event each year."

Attendees can garner additional access to this year's festival authors by attending "An Evening with the Authors" on Friday, March 1, 2024. This signature fundraising event gives attendees time to mingle with the authors while enjoying dinner in an idyllic setting. The event is held at the historic Burroughs Home and Gardens on the Caloosahatchee River. Tickets are \$80 per person and available for purchase online at [ReadFest.org](http://ReadFest.org) through the end of January.

"This really is an unforgettable experience getting to meet the authors before the festival in a relaxed and elegant setting. True fans wanting to get more one-on-one time with their favorite authors won't want to miss it," festival coordinator Melissa Baker said.

Another way to be involved with this year's festival is to sponsor authors' meals, hotels, flights and other event costs. Opportunities range from \$25 to \$1,000, and contributions can be made securely online through the festival website. This new program is called "Adopt An Author."

Proceeds from "An Evening with the Authors" and "Adopt An Author" benefit the Southwest Florida Reading Festival, which is free and community-supported through donations, sponsorships and grants.

Visit [ReadFest.org](http://ReadFest.org) for a full list of participating authors and their biographies, along with additional event and donation information. More information also is available by calling 239-533-4832.

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**The complete author list and short biographies are below.**

**Author Bios**

**ADULT AUTHORS**

**Mary Kay Andrews** is The New York Times bestselling author of 30 novels including “The Homewreckers,” “The Newcomer,” and “Hello, Summer.” A native of St. Petersburg, Florida, she worked as a newspaper reporter for 14 years before leaving journalism to write fiction.

**Cara Black** is The New York Times and USA Today bestselling author of 21 books in the “Private Investigator Aimée Leduc” series and two World War II-set novels featuring American markswoman Kate Rees. Cara has received multiple award nominations and a Washington Post Book World Book of the Year citation.

**Jane K. Cleland** writes both fiction and nonfiction, including the award-winning and long-running Josie Prescott Antiques Mysteries and non-fiction bestsellers, “Mastering Suspense, Structure & Plot” and “Mastering Plot Twists.” She is also a contributing editor for Writer’s Digest Magazine.

**Ben Coes** is The New York Times bestselling author of international espionage thrillers, including “Power Down,” “Bloody Sunday,” and his latest release, “The Island.”

**Jeffery Deaver** is an international #1 bestselling author of more than 40 novels. His books are sold in 150 countries and translated into 25 languages. His novel “The Bone Collector” was a feature release from Universal Pictures and in 2024, CBS will be airing a new series, “Tracker,” based on his “Colter Shaw” series.

**Lee Matthew Goldberg** is the author of 13 novels including “The Ancestor” and “The Mentor” along with the “Runaway Train” series and “The Great Gimmelmans,” which was released in November.

**Heather Graham** is The New York Times and USA Today bestselling author of more than 250 novels and novellas including suspense, historical romance, vampire fiction, time travel and Christmas family fare. Published in more than 20 languages, Graham has won numerous awards, including the prestigious Thriller Master.

**Irene Hannon** is the bestselling, award-winning author of more than 65 romantic suspense and contemporary romance novels. She is a three-time winner of the RITA award from Romance Writers of America and is a member of that organization’s elite Hall of Fame.

**Katherine Howe** is the author of The New York Times bestsellers “The Physick Book of Deliverance Dane” and “Vanderbilt: The Rise and Fall of an American Dynasty” with Anderson Cooper. Her newest novel, titled “A True Account: Hannah Masury’s Sojourn Amongst the Pyrates, Written by Herself” was released in November.

**Sarah Penner** is The New York Times and internationally bestselling author of “The Lost Apothecary” and “The London Séance Society.” Her books have been translated into more than 40 languages worldwide. Her debut, “The Lost Apothecary,” has been optioned by Fox Entertainment for a drama series.

**Nick Petrie** is the author of eight novels in the “Peter Ash” series, most recently “The Price You Pay.” His debut, “The Drifter,” won both the ITW Thriller award and the Barry Award for Best First Novel and was a finalist for the Edgar and the Hammett Awards.

**Joe Posnanski** is The New York Times bestselling author of six books, including “The Baseball 100,” “Paterno,” “The Secret of Golf” and his latest, “Why We Love Baseball.” He has been named National Sportswriter of the Year by five different organizations.

**Matthew Quirk** is The New York Times bestselling author of “Inside Threat,” “The 500” and “The Night Agent,” now a hit television series on Netflix. He previously wrote for The Atlantic in Washington, D.C., reporting on crime, terrorism prosecutions and international gangs.

**Viola Shipman** is the pen name of Wade Rouse, an award-winning memoirist and bestselling author of 12 books, which have been selected as Indie Next and Michigan Notable Books.

**Charles Todd** is The New York Times bestselling author of the “Inspector Ian Rutledge” series and the “Bess Crawford” series. An award-winning author, Todd has published 40 titles including two stand-alone novels, an anthology and 20 short-stories.

**Lisa Unger** is The New York Times and internationally bestselling author of 20 novels, including “Secluded Cabin Sleeps Six” and “The New Couple in 5B,” a March 2024 release. With books published in 33 languages and millions of copies sold worldwide, she is regarded as a master of suspense.

## KIDS AUTHORS

**Michael Buckley** is The New York Times bestselling author of the “Finniverse,” “Sisters Grimm” and “N.E.R.D.S.” series and the co-creator, writer and executive producer of Cartoon Network’s “Robotomy.”

**Adrianna Cuevas** is the author of the Pura Belpré honor book “The Total Eclipse of Nestor Lopez,” “Cuba in My Pocket” and “Mari and the Curse of El Cocodrilo.”

**Karina Yan Glaser** is The New York Times bestselling writer and illustrator of “The Vanderbeekers” series, a New York Times Notable Children's Book and the winner of the NYC Book Award and the standalone novel “A Duet for Home,” which made the Sunshine State Young Readers Award list.

**Karen Kilpatrick’s** writing ranges from picture books to early graphic novels. She has penned several award-winning and bestselling series, including “P.I. Butterfly,” “When Pencil Met,” and the 2023 Sunshine State Young Readers Award winner “When Glitter Met Glue.”

**Laura Martin** works include the 2023 Sunshine State Young Readers Award winners “Glitch” and “The Monster Missions” as well as the “Edge of Extinction” series.

**Joe McGee** is the author of the chapter book series’ “Junior Monster Scouts,” “Night Frights” and “Creature Campers” as well as the “Peanut Butter & Brains” picture book series. His title, “The Haunted Mustache,” is a 2023 Sunshine State Young Readers award winner.

**Jamie Michalak** is the author of the “Dakota Crumb” picture books, the “Frank and Bean” books, the “Joe and Sparky” series and many other acclaimed titles for young readers.

**Dan Yaccarino** is the author and illustrator of more than 50 books for children, including “City Under the City,” “Unlovable” and “I am a Story.” Yaccarino is also the creator and producer of the animated series “Doug Unplugs” and “Oswald” as well as the character designer behind the series “The Backyardigans.”

## TEEN AUTHORS

**Elise Bryant** is the acclaimed author of “Happily Ever Afters,” “One True Loves” and “Reggie and Delilah’s Year of Falling.”

**Lamar Giles** writes for both teens and adults. A founding member of We Need Diverse Books, Giles is the author of acclaimed novels “Fake ID,” “Endangered,” and “The Last Mirror on the Left” as well as numerous pieces of short fiction.

**Adalyn Grace** is The New York Times, USA Today, International and Indie bestselling author of the “Belladonna” series and the “All the Stars and Teeth” duology.

**Lynn Painter** is The New York Times bestselling author of “Better Than the Movies.” She writes romantic comedies for both teens and adults.

**Natalia Sylvester** is the Pura Belpré and Schneider Family-honor winning author of the young adult novel “Breathe and Count Back from Ten” and adult novels “Everyone Knows You Go Home” and “Chasing the Sun.” Her first picture book, “A Maleta Full of Treasures,” will be released in April 2024.