




Southwest Florida Reading Festival



March 7, 2026 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Fort Myers Regional Library Campus (3+ acres)
2450 First St, Fort Myers, FL 33901

- Free community event presented by the public library system
- Expected attendance: 6,000 to 8,000
- Average total books sales: \$20,000
- Average number of authors at festival: 25
- Annual marketing plan includes: print, radio and TV advertising, print and TV author interviews, social media, email marketing, media releases, website, flyers, posters, bookmarks
- Books-A-Million: Full service, on-site bookseller providing a selection of each authors' books for sale
- Award winner: Top 20 Event by the Southeast Tourism Society, 2017, 2016, 2015; Golden Image Award/Florida Public Relations Assn.; Best Promotional Campaign/Florida Festivals & Events Assn.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Authors are contracted for

1. Friday -Attendance at *An Evening with the Authors* reception (no speaking required)
2. Saturday - One or more presentations
3. Saturday - Two autographing sessions
4. Saturday - All day presence at the festival (10 a.m.-4 p.m.) to include scheduled presentation(s) and signing(s)

Typical presentation format at Saturday festival

1. 45-60 minutes for presentation, including time for Q&A
2. Some will be panels of like genre
3. Some may have a moderator or will be set up in an interview style, if desired
4. One book signing follows the presentation; the second signing is scheduled during the day; authors are escorted to the signing area

Presentation & signing facilities

1. The festival encompasses the 3+ acres of the Fort Myers Regional Library campus at 2450 First Street in downtown Fort Myers, FL
2. Adult authors will speak in tented venues on the campus seating 250-400 people
3. Children's authors speak in tented venues on the campus seating varying audience sizes
4. There is one onsite bookstore at the festival

Author Accommodations provided by the Reading Festival

1. Reimbursement for round trip airfare to Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW) up to \$750
2. Two nights at the boutique style The Banyan Hotel; additional nights at the group rate can be arranged but are at the author's expense
3. Ground transportation to and from: RSW, The Banyan Hotel, the Evening with the Authors dinner and the festival
4. Dinner and cocktails Friday and lunch at the festival Saturday
5. This is a destination location, making it easy for attendees to bring their families and "stay and play" with them before or after the festival. Visit www.fortmyers-sanibel.com/neighborhoods

FESTIVAL CONTACTS

Lee County Library System

2201 Second Street, Suite 400
Fort Myers, FL 33901

ReadFest.org

Facebook.com/SWFLreadingfestival

instagram.com/swflreadingfestival/

AUTHOR SELECTION COMMITTEE

Adult Authors

Jessica Girlando

239-533-4413

jgirlando@leegov.com

Teen Authors

Isa Lopez-Torres

239-533-4441

ilopeztorres@leegov.com

Children's Authors

Sarah Smith

239-533-4320

Ssmith5@leegov.com

Festival Coordinator

Melissa Baker

239-533-4832

mbaker@leegov.com

PAST AUTHOR PARTICIPANTS:

Tony Abbott 2008
Betzi Abram 2003
Diana Abu-Jaber 2012
Chantel Acevedo 2016
Renée Ahdieh 2025
Michele Albion 2011, 2013
Alexandra Alessandri 2023
Steve Alten 2008
Marty Ambrose 2000
Derek Anderson 2004
Mary Kay Andrews 2008, 2013, 2024
Sergio Andricain 2014
Tom Angleberger 2015
Jennifer Arena 2016
Tedd Arnold 2013
Emily Arsenault 2021
Ace Atkins 2001
Jamie Ayres 2014
Larry Baker 2011
David Baldacci 2007
Jennifer Barnes 2011, 2015
Annie Barrows 2013
Kalyann Bayron 2023
Janet Beard 2018
Ted Bell 2011
Kamilla Benko 2020
Dorothea Benton Frank 2013
Alex Berenson 2013
Elizabeth Berg 2002
Marianne Berkes 2006, 2008
Eileen Bernard 2003
Julie Berry 2021
Steve Berry 2006
Phil Bildner 2005, 2011
Reshonda Tate Billingsley 2007
Cara Black 2024
Clinton L. Black 2001
Lisa Black 2007, 2009, 2012

Richard Blanco 2015
Herman Bly 2002
Prudy Taylor Board 2005, 2011
James O. Born 2008, 2016
Ben Bova 2001, 2005
Kristy Boyce 2025
Valerie Boyd 2005
Kim Boykin 2015
Rick Bragg 2004
Connie Bransilver 2001
Allison Brennan 2016
Denise Brennan-Nelson 2014
Scott Brick 2007, 2011
Douglas Brinkley 2004
Kristen Britain 2004
Drew Brockington 2019
Suzanne Brockmann 2007
Holly Brown 2017
Jeffrey Brown 2018
Monica Brown 2020
Sandra Brown 2005
Tracy Brown 2009
Wanda Brunstetter 2014
Nick Bruel 2011
Elise Bryant 2024
Michael Buckley 2012, 2024
Sheramy Bundrick 2010
T. Davis Bunn 2003
Alafair Burke 2014, 2022
Jan Burke 2000, 2004
Nancy Bush 2008
T.J. Butler 2002, 2004
Meg Cabot 2006, 2016
W. Bruce Cameron 2014
Frank Cammuso 2015
Colin Campbell 2017
Elisa Carbone 2004
Melody Carlson 2014

Jack Carr 2020
Gail Carson Levine 2013
Ally Carter 2013
Mary Casanova 2006
Dixie Cash 2007
Wiley Cash 2014
Joy Castro 2013
J.C. Cervantes 2021
Marsha Wilson Chall 2005
Joelle Charbonneau 2016
Jennifer Chiaverini 2021
Lincoln Child 2020
Cinda Chima 2015
Lindsay Cibos 2008
Scott Ciencin 2000 - 2003
Chris Claremont 2010
Carol Higgins Clark 2006
Julie Clark 2021
Mary Jane Clark 2011
Tracy Clark 2025
Jane K. Cleland 2024
Chanel Cleeton 2021
Lesa Cline-Ransome 2021
Ben Coes 2021
Nancy Cohen 2001, 2004
Evelyn Coleman 2001, 2001
Reed Farrel Coleman 2025
Jenny Colgan 2025
Nicole Collier 2025
Maria Antonietta Collins 2007
Sheila Herbet Collins 2003
Patrick Comer 2000
Tara Conklin 2019
Michael Connelly 2002
Tom Cooper 2022
Lori Copeland 2007
Tom Corcoran 2000
Enrique Cordoba 2005

Catherine Coulter 2013
Eli Cranor 2025
Jasmine Cresswell 2001
Millie Criswell 2001
Deborah Crombie 2012
Adrianna Cuevas 2022, 2024
Christopher Paul Curtis 2012
Lauren Dane 2016
Susanna Daniel 2011
Cynthia Darlow 2008
S.V. Date 2002, 2005
Katie Davis 2009
Kimberly Carol Williams Davis 2002
Melissa de la Cruz 2008
Jeffery Deaver 2005, 2024
Nora DeLoach 2000
Nelson DeMille 2011
Wes DeMott 2001
Anika Denise 2021
Sonali Dev 2020
Alda P. Dobbs 2023
Paul Doiron 2016
Trish Doller 2016, 2021
David Dorsey 2015
Tim Dorsey 2009, 2010, 2013
Sharon M. Draper 2010
Stella Pope Duarte 2006
Martha Tod Dudman 2008
Martin Dugard 2013
Lois Duncan 2002
Mark "Tiger" Edmonds 2003
Jason Edwards 2010
Brian Egerton 2002, 2003
Eric Elfman 2016
Kendra Elliot 2023
J.T. Ellison 2018
Roger Eschbacher 2004, 2007
Laura Esquivel 2007

David Essel 2003
Janet Evanovich 2005
Mary Anna Evans 2004
Linda Fairstein 2011
Richard Ferrone 2008
Joy Fielding 2004, 2013
Joe Finder 2023
Candace Fleming 2017
Adrian Fogelin 2003
Connie May Fowler 2006
Marcia Freeman 2002
Dennis Fried 2001
Jeaniene Frost 2013
Diana Gabaldon 2003
Ed Gaffney 2007
Carolina Garcia-Aguilera 2000, 2004, 2006
Edmund Gatley 2004
Alison Gaylin 2025
Judy Gelman 2008
Lisa Genova 2025
Tess Gerritsen 2009
Jessica Day George 2019
Karina Yan Glaser 2020, 2024
John Patrick Green 2023
Johnny Heller 2019
Diana Hollingsworth Gessler 2002
Lamar Giles 2024
Sha' Givens 2004
Anna Godbersen 2012
Christopher Golden 2003
Lee Matthew Goldberg 2024
Lucia M. Gonzalez 2010
Paulette Goodman 2003
Kathleen Goonan 2000
Chris Grabenstein 2017
Sue Grafton 2002
Heather Graham 2001, 2011, 2024
Rubye Graham-Emerson 2003
Alan Gratz 2018

Shelley Shepard Gray 2017
Mark Greaney 2017, 2020
Jane Green 2012, 2013
John Patrick Green 2021
H.Terrell Griffin 2013
James Grippando 2004, 2010, 2017
Andrew Gross 2014
Craig Grossi 2018
Michael Grunwald 2007
George Guidall 2012
Robin Jones Gunn 2007
Donna Guthrie 2003
Margaret Peterson Haddix 2010
Patricia Haley 2003
Michael Hall 2018
James W. Hall 2000, 2004
Sue Halpern 2018
Kate Hannigan 2025
Irene Hannon 2024
Joan Hiatt Harlow 2006
Charise Meracle Harper 2015
Karen Harper 2000, 2001, 2007
Kim Harrison 2013
Kristy Woodson Harvey 2016
Gerald Hausman 2000, 2002
Pete Hautman 2005
Ali Hazelwood 2025
Jean Heller 2000
Hilary Hemingway 2001
Patti Callahan Henry 2018
Beverly Taylor Herald 2001
Maude Heurtelou 2003
Carl Hiaasen 2000
Robert Hicks 2007
Kristan Higgins 2023
Joe Hill 2008
Nathan Hill 2017
M.E. Hilliard 2022
Rachel Hauck 2021
Jared Hodges 2008

Alice Hoffman 2011
William Hoffman 2002
Nancy Holder 2012
Sara Holland 2020
Kimberly Willis Holt 2005
Lee Bennett Hopkins 2010
Ellen Hopkins 2013
Nancy Horan 2015
Darrell House 2006, 2009
Katherine Howe 2024
Ard Hoyt 2004
Ad Hudler 2003, 2006, 2009
Angela Elwell Hunt 2000
Travis Hunter 2002
Gregg Hurwitz 2017, 2021, 2023
Isabel Ibañez 2022
Molly Idle 2025
Amy Ignatow 2015
Michael Imepellizzeri 2001, 2002, 2003
Brenda Jackson 2004, 2008
Lisa Jackson 2010
R.J. Jacobs 2025
Eloisa James 2014, 2021
Lorelei James 2016
J.A. Jance 2011, 2022
Iris Johansen 2012
Roy Johansen 2012
Franklyn Johnson 2001
Maureen Johnson 2019
Nancy Johnson 2021
Stephen Mack Jones 2025
Alka Joshi 2023
Karla Juarez 2003, 2005
Richard Kadrey 2015
Stuart Kaminsky 2000
Victoria Kann 2011
James Kaserman 2001
James Kaserman 2002
Sarah Jane Kaserman 2002

Alex Kava 2012
Laurie Keller 2015
Katherine Kellgren 2011
Dr. Carol Kennedy 2001, 2002
Barbara Kesel 2003
Helen Kettelman 2004
Karen Kilpatrick 2024
Julie Klassen 2021
Sue Monk Kidd 2014
S.J. Kincaid 2017
Cassandra King 2005, 2017
Jonathon King 2003
Peter King 2001
Shelly King 2015
Jeff Kinney 2009
Christine Kling 2005
Jeff Klinkenberg 2007
Debra Knight 2002
Michelle Knudsen 2017
Michael Koryta 2020
Julie Kramer 2014
Jayne Ann Krentz 2021
Uma Krishnaswami 2004
Jarrett Krosoczka 2008
William Kent Krueger 2020
Vicki Levy Krupp 2008
Mary Kubica 2017
Jean Kwok 2025
Taya Kyle 2017
Jon Land 2015
Lorna Landvik 2006
Kelly Lange 2002
Alison Larkin 2008
Erik Larson 2012, 2020
Ryan LaSala 2021
Dennis Lehane 2000, 2009
Melinda Leigh 2023
Christine Lemmon 2001, 2002
Betsy Lewin 2014
Ted Lewin 2014

Kevin Lewis 2005
Terri Libenson 2021, 2023
Grace Lin 2017
Jeff Lindsay 2001, 2007, 2009, 2015
Elinor Lipman 2025
Laura Lippman 2015
David Liss 2009
Eric Litwin 2011
Martín Llorens 2014
Gary Loderhose 2002
Mary Logue 2005
Ethan Long 2014
Lois Lowry 2009
Lisa Lutz 2008
Hilde Lysiak 2019
Jay MacDonald 2006
Doug MacGregor 2000, 2001, 2002
TJ MacGregor 2001
Annette Chavez Macias 2023
Debbie Macomber 2006, 2016, 2025
Robert Macomber 2004, 2009, 2010
Michelle Madow 2014
Susan Mallery 2015
Phillip Margolin 2004, 2014
Margaret Maron 2014
Laura Martin 2024
Michele Martinez 2008
Connie Mason 2000
Janeen Mason 2009
Susan Rowan Masters 2003
Peter Matthiessen 2002
S.R. Maxeiner, Jr. M.D. 2003
Stacy McAnulty 2022
Timothy McCann 2002
Erin McCarthy 2007
Sharyn McCrumb 2006
Joe McGee 2024
Nina McGuire 2000
Jenn McKinley 2020
LuAnn McLane 2014

Bob McLeod 2007
Karen McManus 2025
Jillian Medoff 2018
C.C. Medina 2001
Meg Medina 2023
Maile Meloy 2015
Brad Meltzer 2006
Kate Messner 2020, 2025
Jamie Michalak 2024
Shelley Fraser Mickle 2003
Linda Lael Miller 2007
Sue Miller 2006
Kyle Mills 2021
Wendy Howell Mills 2004
Lisa Miscione 2005
Jacquelyn Mitchard 2016
Alexandra Monir 2020
Mary Alice Monroe 2001, 2004, 2015
Angela Montoya 2025
Johanna Moran 2010
Nina Moreno 2023
Gustavo Bolivar Moreno 2008
David Morrell 2003
Bob Morris 2005, 2008
William Morrow 2003
Stan Mulford 2002
Thomas Mullen 2019
Stuart Murphy 2002
Victoria Christopher Murray 2003
Lauren Myracle 2010
Laura Taylor Namey 2022
Donna Jo Napoli 2004
Julie & Mike Neal 2003
Carla Neggers 2008, 2010, 2018
Kadir Nelson 2013
Carla Norton 2015
Zachariah OHora 2020
Kitty Oliver 2003
Lauren Oliver 2012
James O'Neal 2010

Joseph Pacheco 2005
Lynn Painter 2024
Daniel Palmer 2016
Michael Palmer 2005, 2012
Barbara Parker 2000
Doris L. Parker 2001
P.J. Parrish 2003, 2004
Karyn Parsons 2025
Stephan Pastis 2014
Lisa Patton 2019
Baptiste Paul 2022
Miranda Paul 2022
Chris Pavone 2020
Jackson Pearce 2019
Ridley Pearson 2011
Robert Newton Peck 2002
Ana Sofia Pelaez 2016
George Pelecanos 2006
Sara Pennypacker 2012
Mike Perkins 2003
Kayla Perrin 2001
Martha Lou Perritti 2003
Esther Sandner Petersen 2003
Sarah Penner 2024
Nick Petrie 2024
Dani Pettrey 2015
Nathaniel Philbrick 2022
Susan Elizabeth Phillips 2011
Nancy Pickard 2001, 2003
Craig Pittman 2017, 2022
Greg Pizzoli 2021
Joe Posnanski 2024
Peggy Post 2003
Ashley Poston 2019
Kevin Powell 2004
Martha Powers 2001
Jack Prelutsky 2004
Margi Preus 2013
Mary Jo Putney 2004
Julia Quinn 2014

Kate Quinn 2022
Matthew Quirk 2024
Maria Rado 2005
Alisha Rai 2021
James Ransome 2021
Chris Raschka 2003
Randy Rawls 2015
Frank Remkiewicz 2001, 2002
Patricia Rice 2001
Larry Richardson 2001
Vanessa Riley 2023
Deb Rogers 2023
Sherri Duskey Rinker 2016
Kimberla Lawson Roby 2017
Shauna Robinson 2022
Eric Rohmann 2017
Rebecca Ross 2023
Lori Roy 2019
Paul Ruben 2008
Hank Phillippi Ryan 2014
Ginny Myers Sain 2025
Anthony Samad 2004
Kim Vogel Sawyer 2021
Judy Schachner 2012
Jennifer L. Schiff 2023
Frederick Schofield 2001
Aileen Schumacher 2000
Lisa Scottoline 2010
Brenda Seabrooke 2001, 2002
Cat Sebastian 2021
Ruta Sepetys 2023
Jeff Shaara 2009
Jill Shalvis 2014
B.A. Shapiro 2019
Dani Shapiro 2021
Deborah Sharp 2013
Jessica Shattuck 2018
Bob Shea 2013
Courtney Sheinmel 2014
Sara Shepard 2011, 2017

Viola Shipman 2025
Neal Shusterman 2016
 Linda Shute 2001
 Obert Skye 2012
 Holly Goldberg Sloan 2015
 Irene Smalls 2007, 2008
 Patrick Smith 2000
 Cynthia Smith, Leitch 2011
 Tom Smoot 2009
 Charles Sobczak 2001, 2002, 2003
 Christina Soontornvat 2021
 Julie Soto 2025
 Bill Sparks 2003
 Erica Spindler 2012
 Patricia Sprinkle 2001
Les Standiford 2000, 2007, 2013
 Wendy Corsi Staub 2008
 David Ezra Stein 2012
Heidi E.Y. Stemple
 Melissa Stewart
R.L. Stine 2010
 Sarah Strohmeier 2004
 Dana Sullivan 2015

Tui T. Sutherland 2017
 Peter Swanson 2019
 Natalia Sylvester 2024
 Anthony J. Tata 2019
 Brad Taylor 2022
 Marlene Taylor 2002
 Candis Terry 2015
 Carlene A. Thissen 2005
 Jodi Thomas 2016
 Trisha R. Thomas 2005
 Salome Thomas-EL 2003
 Tracy Price Thompson 2002
 Caroline Todd 2012
Charles Todd 2024
 Annabelle Tometich 2025
 Duncan Tonatiuh 2015
 Kathy Hogan Trocheck 2001
Scott Turow 2018
 Thrity Umrigar 2012
 Lisa Unger 2020, 2024
 Vivian Vande Velde 2006
 Annie Vanderbilt 2009
 Sara Varon 2020

Ana Veciana-Suarez 2004
 Elaine Viets 2000, 2004
 Debbie Viguie 2012
 Brady Vogt 2002
 M. Diane Vogt 2001, 2005
 Susan Vreeland 2008
 Tina Wainscott 2000, 2001, 2002
 Blair S. Walker 2003
 Jennifer Ward 2018
 D. Watkins 2017
 Melanie Watt 2013
 Wendy Wax 2019
 Joe Weber 2004
 Elissa Brent Weissman 2016
 Jenna Evans Welch 2022
Rosemary Wells 2011
Karen White 2019
Lauren Willig 2019
 Valerie Wilson Wesley 2006
 Charles G. West 2000
 Chassie West 2001
 Diana Lee Whatley 2004
 Kate White 2016

Randy Wayne White 2003
 Tyler Whitesides 2014
Susan Wiggs 2005, 2017
Lori Wilde 2017
 Doug Wilhelm 2007
 Alex Willan 2022
 Beatriz Williams 2017
 Sheila Williams 2004
 F. Paul Wilson 2007, 2010
 Darryl Wimberley 2001
Lauren Wolk 2023
 Douglas Wood 2006
Stuart Woods 2008
 Lori Woolridge 2003, 2004
 Dan Yaccarino 2004, 2005, 2024
Rick Yancey 2014
 Salina Yoon 2017
Adrienne Young 2022
 Mario Alberto Zambrano 2014
 Zane 2012
 Susan Zurenda 2020

FEEDBACK FROM PAST AUTHOR PARTICIPANTS

“Thank you so much for inviting me. I had a wonderful time. I must say, SWFL was the best organized and professionally run festival that I’ve ever attended. Everything was seamless and everyone, I mean, everyone was so nice. What a wonderful event.” – Tracy Clark, 2025

“It was brilliant! Thank you so much for having me!! It’s a jewel of an event.” – Jenny Colgan, 2025

“Thank you so much for including me in the SWFL Reading Festival! You did a phenomenal job!! The festival was a much-needed joyful experience for both authors and readers.” – Lisa Genova, 2025

“Thank you so much for such a fantastic event. Every one there did a truly stellar job. Everything was so well organized and fun, and the whole team was warm, welcoming, and efficient. I had such a lovely time and I appreciate you all so much. It’s such a joy to spend the day in the company of readers, librarians, booksellers, and author friends.” – Lisa Unger, 2024

"Thank you for inviting me to be part of the Southwest Florida Reading Festival and for making me feel so welcome. I was delighted and honored to be part of it. And what an amazing event it was! From an author perspective, it was flawless. Beautifully planned and executed, and I felt very well taken care of." – Irene Hannon, 2024

"Thank you for inviting me to your wonderful event. It was SO well organized, and it was obvious how much work and care went into every detail. Thank you for letting me be a part of it." – Laura Martin 2024

"What a wonderful festival. I enjoyed it so much. You and your team are fabulous and you spoiled all the authors rotten." – Ruta Sepetys, 2023

"Thank you for having me!! It was a great event. Relaxed and ran like a well oiled machine. I'd love to come back." - Kendra Elliot, 2023

"I can't say enough good things about this event! Lovely venue, efficient schedule and well organized. The wonderful librarians and staff in Lee County have been bringing readers, authors and books together for 24 years and it shows." – Melinda Leigh, 2023

"I had the best time! What a well run festival, and the weather was perfect." – Alafair Burke, 2022

"Thank you for a wonderful event! It was a fantastic experience all around and I feel so lucky to have been invited. I'll be talking about this far and wide to every author I know." – Shauna Robinson, 2022

"This all went so well- it was an absolute pleasure. Thanks again for a wonderful event!" – Kate Quinn, 2022

"That was a fun evening and I'd love to attend in person. Congratulations to all of you and thanks once again for inviting me!" – Ben Coes, 2021

"Thanks for inviting me to participate this year. It has been a pleasure to work with you and the others. You've all done an amazing job moving the festival online!" – Jayne Ann Krentz, 2021

"It was a wonderful weekend! Thank you so much for all the work you put in to make it such a success!" – Jack Carr, 2020

"The Festival has been a great experience, well-run, with so many enthusiastic volunteers, and an audience that clearly appreciates this gem of an offering in their community. Hope to God they invite me back some day." – William Kent Krueger, 2020

"I had SUCH a wonderful time at the festival. Thank you so much for having me!! I would absolutely love to attend again, maybe next year when my Black Canary novel is out!" – Alexandra Monir, 2020

"It was a terrific and well-run festival that was not only a great literary experience with lots of books sold, but also a ton of fun. I especially appreciate the good weather." – Karen White, 2019

"Thanks so much for having us and for making everything run so smoothly (even in the face of snowstorms and delayed flights!). This is hands down the best run festival I've ever attended. It was a joy to be there. . ." – Lauren Willig, 2019

"What a wonderful festival! I loved it. . . Thank you for all your work and inviting me!" – Jackson Pearce, 2019

"Thanks for inviting me. It was such a well run and well attended event. I had a great time. I'd love to do it again. The perfect weather didn't hurt either. – Michael Hall, 2018

"Thank you so much for inviting me and for helping me meet so many new-to-me readers and loyal fans. A great event!" – J.T. Ellison, 2018

"The festival was a magnificent event--well organized, helpful volunteers and thousands of enthusiastic readers, all in a beautiful Florida setting. What more could a book lover (and author) want? Thank you for inviting me." - James Grippando, 2017

"The SW Florida Reading Festival was the best one I have been to - I believe we sold out all copies of the book at the retail tent. Met so many nice people!! Hope I will be invited back when my next book comes out - would love to do it again!" - Colin Campbell, 2017

"By FAR, the most well-organized festival I've done with the most considerate attention to the authors. (I've done Chicago, Brooklyn, LA Times, etc.)" - Sherri Duskey Rinker, 2016

"It was a wonderful festival--one of the best I've attended! Fabulous lineup of authors, great attendance, and extremely well organized. Thank you for inviting me and for providing such a fantastic experience!" - Elissa Brent Weissman, 2016

"The moderator was excellent and very well prepared. Because there were fewer options for panels at the time slot of my talk the room was nearly full. It's always fun to speak to a packed house of engaged, enthusiastic readers. The book sales were brisk too, meaning the festival attracts real book lovers and book buyers. That's always a plus!" - Daniel Palmer, 2016

"I'm Grateful for this superb festival. Honestly, right down to the weather, everything was just perfect... I've told all my author friends, how wonderful the festival was."- Kim Boykin, 2015

"My wife and I thoroughly enjoyed the Festival and appreciate the invitation to participate. I was so impressed with your volunteer force."- Randy Rawls, 2015

"I really had a lot of fun, and sold a decent bunch of books. (Had a long line waiting for me at my first signing.) And since I don't do many of these (maybe one or two a year) the blending of the group of authors always helped, and ours had a blast."- Andrew Gross, 2014

"Seriously, what a fabulous event. I loved all of it. No complaints. The new venue for the talks is excellent. I had a nice crowd with good questions and met lots of Florida fans. I also had a wonderful time with the other authors. Thanks for inviting me."- Phillip Margolin, 2014

"I really enjoyed the festival -- and I thought it was beautifully managed. The readers were so friendly and nice. Thank you for inviting me! And I'd love to attend in the future!"- Jill Shalvis, 2014

"Thanks much! You and everyone else did a wonderful job putting the festival together and I very much enjoyed participating. Speaking before such a large and enthusiastic crowd was great fun. I hope to come back at some point."- Alex Berenson, 2013

"It was a great festival. So well organized. Everyone I met was super nice and helpful. Great turnout too! I was the first one on in the morning and there were lots of people in the tent. Thanks for inviting me, I really enjoyed it."- Bob Shea, 2013

2025 FESTIVAL RESULTS

Southwest Florida Reading Festival Mission:

- To promote reading and literacy
- To bring awareness of the library's year-round programs and resources to the community
- To strengthen the Lee County Library System's relationships within the community

Distinguishing event characteristics:

- This event is consistently very well managed. Authors, year after year give this event excellent reviews in post event survey results (available by request). Authors frequently ask to come back!
- 100% of authors surveyed rated the overall festival as excellent.
- 100% of authors surveyed said they are likely to attend the festival again.
- 100% of authors surveyed rated communications with the festival staff as excellent or good.
- 100% of authors surveyed rated the management of their presentation as excellent.
- 100% of authors surveyed rated the book signing as excellent or good.

Recap of the March 2025 Reading Festival:

- Hosted 25 nationally acclaimed authors: 15 adult authors, 5 children's authors and 5 teen authors
- Overall attendance is estimated at 7,000
- Over \$25,000 in book sales
- Approximately 3,300 adults attended author presentations and book signings
- Over 250 demonstrations of Lee Library System resources occurred
- 450 students entered the annual Aspiring Authors writing contest
- Over 4,000 children and teens enjoyed authors & programs
- Over 2,000 children and teens took home one free book
- Over 140 people volunteered the day of the festival

Received rave reviews from attendees with survey results indicating:

- 99 percent are likely to attend again (89% very likely, 10% somewhat likely)
- 98 percent rate the overall event as "Excellent" (80%) or "Good" (18%)