



## Southwest Florida Reading Festival



**March 6, 2027 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: \$25,000
- 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](http://www.fortmyers-sanibel.com/neighborhoods)

## **FESTIVAL CONTACTS**

**Lee County Library System**  
2201 Second Street, Suite 400  
Fort Myers, FL 33901  
[ReadFest.org](http://ReadFest.org)  
[Facebook.com/SWFLreadingfestival](https://Facebook.com/SWFLreadingfestival)  
[instagram.com/swflreadingfestival/](https://instagram.com/swflreadingfestival/)

## **AUTHOR SELECTION COMMITTEE**

### **Adult Authors**

Jessica Girlando  
239-533-4413  
[jgirlando@leegov.com](mailto:jgirlando@leegov.com)

Isa Lopez-Torres  
239-533-4441  
[ilopeztorres@leegov.com](mailto:ilopeztorres@leegov.com)

### **Teen Authors**

Brianna Marichal  
239-533-4706  
[bmarichal@leegov.com](mailto:bmarichal@leegov.com)

### **Children's Authors**

Sarah Smith  
239-533-4320  
[Ssmith5@leegov.com](mailto:Ssmith5@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  
Kalynn 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  
Bruce Borgos, 2026  
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  
**Kalie Cassidy 2026**  
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  
Lesia 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  
Fiona Davis 2026  
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 Egeston 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

**Rachel Gillig 2026**

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

Marc Gregson 2026

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

**Dan Gutman 2026**

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

Kristin Harmel 2026

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**

Kay Healy 2026  
Jean Heller 2000  
Hilary Hemingway 2001  
Patti Callahan Henry 2018, 2026  
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, 2026**

Karla Juarez 2003, 2005  
Richard Kadrey 2015  
Stuart Kaminsky 2000  
Victoria Kann 2011  
James Kaserman 2001  
James Kaserman 2002  
Sarah Jane Kaserman 2002

Xan Kaur 2026

Alex Kava 2012

Laurie Keller 2015

Katherine Kellgren 2011  
Dr. Carol Kennedy 2001, 2002

Barbara Kesel 2003

Helen Ketteman 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

**Wally Lamb 2026**

Jon Land 2015

Lorna Landvik 2006  
Kelly Lange 2002  
Alison Larkin 2008  
Ward Larsen 2026  
**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  
Sylvia Liu 2026  
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**  
Annabel Monaghan 2026  
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 O'Hara 2020  
Kitty Oliver 2003  
Lauren Oliver 2012  
James O'Neal 2010  
Joseph Pacheco 2005  
**Lynn Painter 2024, 2026**  
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  
Sarah Pekkanen 2026  
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, 2026  
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**  
**Spencer Quinn 2026**  
**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**  
David Rosenfelt 2026  
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  
**Stephen Shaskan 2026**  
Trisha Speed Shaskan 2026  
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  
**Brad Thor 2026**  
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  
**Lisa Wingate 2026**  
**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, 2026**  
Mario Alberto Zambrano 2014  
Zane 2012  
Susan Zurenda 2020

## **FEEDBACK FROM PAST AUTHOR PARTICIPANTS**

*“Thank you for a well-organized, top notch event, and I'd love to come to Fort Myers again in the future.” – Lisa Wingate, 2026*

*“Thanks for a wonderful festival. You have the best readers in Florida, and you all worked SO HARD to make the weekend a huge hit. I was so impressed by every detail.” – Sarah Pekkanen, 2026*

*“Thank you for the opportunity to speak at the Festival this year - I had a blast and everyone was terrific, from the volunteers to the attendees to the other authors - I was in heaven!” – Fiona Davis, 2026*

*"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*

## **2026 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.
- 100% of authors surveyed rated the management of their presentation as excellent.
- 100% of authors surveyed rated the book signing as excellent.

### **Recap of the March 2026 Reading Festival:**

- Hosted 26 nationally acclaimed authors: 16 adult authors, 6 children's authors and 4 teen authors
- Overall attendance is estimated at 8,000
- Over \$30,000 in book sales
- Approximately 3,000 adults attended author presentations and book signings
- Over 3,000 attendees engaged with Lee County Library System services
- 700 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
- 180 people volunteered the day of the festival

### **Received rave reviews from attendees with survey results indicating:**

- 95 percent are likely to attend again (84% very likely, 11% somewhat likely)
- 93 percent rate the overall event as "Excellent" (70%) or "Good" (23%)