



NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL

THE FIRST NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL was held on September 8, 2001, on the east lawn of the U.S. Capitol and in the Thomas Jefferson and James Madison Buildings of the Library of Congress. Hosted by First Lady Laura Bush and sponsored by the Library of Congress, the festival drew a crowd of approximately 30,000 people to the nation's capital to meet their favorite authors, have their books signed, listen to music, enjoy storytellers and storybook characters, and learn about organizations that promote reading. All told, sixty nationally known authors and illustrators participated in the event.

On July 31, Mrs. Bush, Librarian of Congress James H. Billington, and National Basketball Association (NBA) player Ray Allen (representing NBA's Read to Achieve national reading campaign) unveiled the festival logo and Web site at a press conference in the Great Hall of the Jefferson Building. On Friday, September 7, the CBS *Early Show* featured a split live broadcast from New York and the Library of Congress including interviews with Mrs. Bush, Dr. Billington, and mystery writer Sue Grafton. Special segments included Library experts discussing the collections and a portion of the Back-to-School Program, which featured the first lady reading from Richard Peck's *A Year Down Yonder* (2001 Newbery Award winner). During the broadcast, Dr. Billington demonstrated the Library's award-winning Web site for children and families known as America's Library, and NBA star Grant Hill and Women's

National Basketball Association (WNBA) star Lisa Leslie read from *The Journal of Joshua Loper: A Black Cowboy* by Walter Dean Myers.

A special program held in the Coolidge Auditorium on the evening of September 7 included readings by David McCullough, John Hope Franklin, Gail Godwin, J. California Cooper, Larry L. King, and author/newscaster Tom Brokaw. The evening was attended by President Bush and Mrs. Bush, congressional representatives, Cabinet secretaries, leaders in the business community, distinguished guests of the White House and Library of Congress, and participating authors. The following morning, a White House breakfast, hosted by the president and Mrs. Bush, honored the authors, who then boarded buses for the Library and the official opening ceremony on Neptune Plaza.

The festival offered something for everyone. Thousands took tours of the Library's magnificent Main Reading Room in the Jefferson Building. The Library's four area studies reading rooms were open and held displays of international award-winning books. Many festival participants had their names written in Arabic, Chinese, and other scripts by the Library's area specialists.

Pavilions on the Capitol's east lawn were set up according to genre (Mystery and Suspense, History and Current Events, Fiction and the Imagination, and Books for Children and Young Adults). Each of these pavilions provided interpreters for people with hearing impairments. Thirteen current and former professional basketball players, including Michael Curry of the Detroit Pistons, Greg Anthony of the Chicago Bulls, and Nikki McCray of the Washington Mystics, represented the Read to Achieve campaign of the NBA and WNBA by reading and talking about books in the Books for Children and Young Adults pavilion. More than 2,500 children had their pictures taken with Clifford the Big Red Dog, Arthur, Elmo, and the Cat in the Hat as two dozen storybook favorites wandered the grounds throughout the day.

Another pavilion featured storytellers, who delighted thousands with their Caribbean, Appalachian, East Indian, and Gullah (South Carolina sea islands) tales and music. They demonstrated the close connection between the ancient and universal tradition of storytelling and the making of books. The Great Ideas for Promoting Reading pavilion featured more than sixty nonprofit organizations that promote reading, literacy, and libraries.

In the Madison Building, long lines waited to hear historians David McCullough, John Hope Franklin, David Levering Lewis, and Doris Kearns Goodwin discuss their most recent books. Also located in the Madison Building, the Digital Library Learning Center drew crowds for demonstrations of the America's Library Web site and the new Web-Braille site. Panel discussions in the



Coolidge Auditorium on mysteries, poetry, and children's books were also enormously popular. Book signings by participating authors had to be moved outdoors to deal with the long lines of loyal fans. Many authors patiently signed books for their fans long past the designated time.

A conservation clinic provided advice on caring for family photographs and documents to many who took advantage of the expertise of the Library's preservation staff. Representatives from the Copyright Office and the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped provided information and handouts on their services to a steady stream of customers.

Throughout the day, musicians entertained the crowds with a broad range of America's musical traditions and influences including mariachi, jazz, bluegrass, Dixieland, klezmer, and Scottish and Irish music. Food from vendors with stands on the Madison Plaza offered cuisine from around the world. The Library's Sales Shop sold \$76,000 worth of books and festival-related merchandise such as T-shirts, mugs, magnets, and tote bags.

While waiting for author and illustrator Steven Kellogg to sign books at the National Book Festival, Irwin Slonin reads to daughters Gina, Carly, and Samantha. (Photo by Christina Tyler Wenks)

The National Book Festival would not have been possible without the generous support, totaling more than \$1.4 million, of the festival's charter sponsors, AT&T, the James Madison Council, and WorkPlaceUSA; the festival's patron, the *Washington Post*; numerous contributors, including AOL Time Warner, AOL Time Warner Book Group, Borders Books and Music, Chevy Chase Bank, the Coca-Cola Company, Half Price Books Records Magazines, LeapFrog, the NBA, Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), Scholastic, United Parcel Service (UPS), and US Airways; and the festival's friends, LIVE! @ your library and the National Endowment for the Arts. Several hundred Library staff members participated in planning the festival and volunteered their services on the day of the event.

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

The following is a list of National Book Festival participants who have been nominated for, or received, national awards or were special guests of the Library of Congress and the White House:

Authors and Illustrators

Stephen E. Ambrose, historian and best-selling author

George Ancona, photographer, filmmaker, and author of books for young people

Marie Arana, author and editor of the *Washington Post Book World*

Natalie Babbitt, author and illustrator of children's books

Nevada Barr, author of mystery novels

Mary Brigid Barrett, author and illustrator of children's books

A. Scott Berg, author of biographies

Michael Beschloss, historian of the presidency and author of books about the presidents

Marc Brown, popular children's author and illustrator

Liz Carpenter, author and lecturer

Lucille Clifton, author, poet, and former poet laureate of Maryland

Harlan Coben, author of suspense thrillers

Michael Collier, poet and the new poet laureate of Maryland

Billy Collins, poet and the Library of Congress's eleventh poet laureate consultant in poetry

Robin Cook, author of popular medical thrillers

J. California Cooper, author of plays, short stories, and novels

Robert Crais, author and television scriptwriter

Christopher Paul Curtis, author of children's books

John Feinstein, author of sports books and radio and television commentator

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- John Hope Franklin, historian, author, and distinguished visiting scholar at the Library of Congress
- John Whittington Franklin, author
- Russell Freedman, author of biographies and histories for children and young adults
- Kinky Friedman, author of mysteries, songwriter, and country music performer
- Gail Godwin, author
- Doris Kearns Goodwin, author, historian, journalist, and commentator
- Sue Grafton, author of mystery novels
- Jan Greenberg, author of books for young people
- Stephen Harrigan, author and journalist
- William Least Heat Moon, travel author and poet
- Jan Karon, author of the popular Mitford series
- Steven Kellogg, illustrator and author of books for children and young people
- Dolores Kendrick, poet and poet laureate of the District of Columbia
- Larry L. King, author of books, plays, television documentaries, short stories, and magazine essays
- David Lee, poet and Utah's first poet laureate
- David Levering Lewis, author and biographer
- Eden Ross Lipson, children's book editor of the *New York Times Book Review*
- David Macaulay, author and illustrator of books for young people
- Patricia MacLachlan, author of children's books
- Thomas Mallon, author, essayist, and reviewer
- Margaret Maron, author of mystery novels
- David McCullough, biographer, historian, lecturer, and narrator of historical series on television
- Alice McDermott, author of short stories and novels
- Patricia and Fredrick McKissack, authors of children's books
- Barbara Mertz (best known as Elizabeth Peters), author of historical works and mystery-suspense novels
- E. Ethelbert Miller, poet and author
- Walter Mosley, author of mystery novels and short stories
- Walter Dean Myers, author of books for young people
- Linda Pastan, poet and former poet laureate of Maryland
- Katherine Paterson, author of books for young people
- Richard Peck, author of books for young people
- Nathaniel Philbrick, author of nonfiction
- Daniel Schorr, author, journalist, and television commentator
(Mr. Schorr was hospitalized just before the festival and was represented by his wife, Lisbeth B. Schorr)

Jon Scieszka, author of children's books

Grace Simpson, poet and poet laureate of Virginia

Gary Soto, author of books for adults and young people, poet, essayist, and film producer

Gail Tsukiyama, author of novels, poetry, and short stories

Scott Turow, author of popular novels related to law

Donald Westlake (also known as Richard Stark and Tucker Coe), author of mystery novels

George F. Will, author, columnist, and television commentator

Storytellers

Alan Chen and the New Arcadia Puppet Troupe performed a traditional folktale, "Grandaunt Tiger," with hand puppets from Taiwan.

Carmen Deedy, a Cuban-American storyteller and author of six children's books, told family stories from her home state of Georgia.

Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer entertained the audience with family music and stories, from oral literacy to book literacy.

Derek Burrows, a Bahamian-born performer and storyteller, told stories based on island traditions and immigrant life in America.

Joseph Bruchac shared his extensive knowledge of Native American culture through stories, flute music, and the traditional folk stories of the Abenaki Tribe of New York State.

Keith Little and Samuel Smith of the Navajo Code Talkers Association brought oral history to life in an interview on the work of the code talkers during World War II.

Nilimma Devi used the art of Kuchipudi dance to tell ancient East Indian tales with a contemporary meaning or a universal truth.

The Pan Masters Steel Orchestra performed a medley of Caribbean steel band music.

Ron and Natalie Daise celebrated the rich history of the Gullah culture of the South Carolina sea islands through the stories and music of the people who live there.

Sheila Kay Adams and Jim Taylor performed Appalachian traditional folk stories and ballads from the mountains of North Carolina.

NBA and WNBA Current and Former Basketball Players Participating in the Children and Young Adults Pavilion for NBA and WNBA's Read to Achieve National Reading Campaign

Greg Anthony of the Chicago Bulls

Nate "Tiny" Archibald of the Fayetteville Patriots

Elton Brand of the Los Angeles Clippers

Michael Curry of the Detroit Pistons

Pat Garrity of the Orlando Magic
Nikki McCray of the Washington Mystics
Delisha Milton of the Los Angeles Sparks
Dikembe Mutombo of the Philadelphia 76ers
Theo Ratliff of the Atlanta Hawks
Nykesha Sales of the Orlando Miracle
Jackie Stiles of the Portland Fire
Sam Vincent of the Mobile Revelers
Jahidi White of the Washington Wizards

Organizations Represented in the Great Ideas for Promoting Reading Pavilion

American Foundation for the Blind
American Library Association
American Poetry and Literacy Project
Association of American Publishers
Association of American University Presses
Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy
Between the Lions
Book Adventure Foundation
Book It!
Cartoonists Across America and the World
Center for the Book in the Library of Congress
Children's Book Council
Corporation for Public Broadcasting
Council for Professional Recognition
District Lines Poetry Project
District of Columbia Center for the Book
Everybody Wins! D.C.
Favorite Poem
Firstbook
Friends of Libraries U.S.A.
Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.
Institute of Museum and Library Services
International Reading Association
KIDSNET
Laubach Literacy
Lindy Boggs Center for Community Literacy
Literacy Volunteers of America
LIVE! @ your library

National Basketball Association's Read to Achieve campaign
National Book Foundation
National Center for ESL Literacy Education
National Center for Family Literacy
National Center for Learning Disabilities
National Center on Adult Literacy
National Coalition for Literacy
National Council for Literacy and Social Justice
National Council of Teachers of English
National Education Association
National Endowment for the Arts
National Endowment for the Humanities
National Federation of Press Women
National Geographic
National Institute for Literacy
PBS Literacy Link
PBS Ready to Learn
Poets House
Promoting Maryland Metro Area Libraries
Promoting Virginia Metro Area Libraries
Reach Out and Read, National Center
Reading Is Fundamental
Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic
SIL International
Smithsonian Institution
Texas Book Festival
UNESCO
U.S. Department of Education
VALUE (Voices for Adult Literacy United for Education)
Washington Literacy Council
WETA, Reading Rockets
Women's National Book Association
World Bank