



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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WHAT TO EXPECT AS WE OPEN THE PAGES ON THE 2023 LOUISIANA BOOK FESTIVAL

BATON ROUGE, La. – The 19th [Louisiana Book Festival](#) is set for **Saturday, October 28, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.** in downtown Baton Rouge's Capitol Park with events and programming in the State Capitol, State Library of Louisiana, Capitol Park Museum, and in tents on neighboring streets. Nearly 200 authors and presenters, ranging from award winners to self-published and debut authors, will discuss their books during more than 100 panels and programs locations throughout the day, followed by book signings.

“The Louisiana Book Festival is a highlight on the fall calendar every year,” said Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser. “It brings tens of thousands of people to downtown Baton Rouge – and for good reason. Festival organizers at the Louisiana Center for the Book and the State Library of Louisiana spend countless hours putting together a day that has something for everyone, from the youngest booklovers to the oldest.”

“The Louisiana Book Festival has been around for more than two decades now. We’ve grown a lot since the first festival, but we’ve remained dedicated to our mission: celebrating readers, writers, and their books, with a special emphasis on our state’s rich literary heritage and unique history,” said Robert Wilson, assistant director of the Louisiana Book Festival. “This year is no different. We have an amazing lineup of authors, including some festival favorites and some new names, all with fascinating stories to tell.”

A highlight of the day is the presentation of the [Louisiana Writer Award](#) (LWA), given this year to Maurice Carlos Ruffin at the opening ceremony. Past LWA recipients David Armand, Darrell Bourque, Richard Campanella, Johnette Downing, Fatima Shaik, and Tom Piazza will also participate in the festival.

Other highlights this year include:

- The return of the National Student Poets for the second year.
- A sports biographies panel on Louisiana Sports Hall of Famers Skip Bertman, Dale Brown, and Pat Browne, Jr., as well as a program on the legendary racehorse Lexington and its Louisiana connection.
- Panels featuring the emerging and expanding genres of Afrofuturism, Grit Lit, Flash Fiction, and Autofiction.
- Hayley Arceneaux, a Baton Rouge native and cancer survivor who became the youngest American to orbit the earth and wrote “*Wild Ride*,” one version for young readers and one for grown-ups.
- Special guests Guy Lamolinara, head of the Library of Congress Center for the Book, of which the Louisiana Center for the Book is an affiliate, and Tracy Carr, director of the Mississippi Center for the Book, and Karen O’Connell, director of the Arkansas Center for the Book. Carr and O’Connell will each moderate author panels.
- Many authors with debut novels, including six featured in *Deep South Magazine*’s Spring/Summer Reading List, “*King of the Armadillos*” by Wendy Chin-Tanner, “*Graceland*” by Nancy Crochiere, “*One Summer in Savannah*” by Terah Shelton Harris, and “*Cicadas Sing of Summer Graves*” by

Quinn Connor, as well as two from the Fall/Winter list, “*Glory Be*” by Danielle Arceneaux and “*Letting in Air and Light*” by Teresa Tumminello Brader.

- Bernice Alexander Bennett and Louisiana contributors to “*Black Homesteaders of the South*.”
- The “dean of southern studies” Charles Reagan Wilson, author of “*The Southern Way of Life: Meanings of Culture & Civilization in the American South*,” who will discuss the book with James G. Thomas, Jr., Center for the Study of Southern Culture.
- Cooking demonstrations, including Toya Boudy, who wrote “*Cooking for the Culture: Recipes and Stories from the Streets of New Orleans to the Table*,” and Jason Smith, who wrote “*Lord Honey: Traditional Southern Recipes with a Country Bling Twist*.”
- The launch of “*Louisiana Lens: Photographs from The Historic New Orleans Collection*” by John Lawrence, as well as featuring two books by Steve Bergsman being made available at the Cavalier House Books bookselling tent before their official publication date.
- Kathryn Olivarius, author of “*Necropolis: Disease, Power, and Capitalism in the Cotton Kingdom*,” a Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities Book of the Year.
- Cheryl White, a professor of history at LSU-Shreveport, with her book “*Shreveport Martyr Father Louis Gergaud: In His Own Words*,” which honors one of five Catholic priests who died 150 years ago during a yellow-fever outbreak in 1873. He and four other priests are now being considered for sainthood.

To learn more about these and additional authors attending the 19th Annual Louisiana Book Festival, too numerous to mention here, visit the [Featured Authors, Panelists, and Other Participants webpage](#) to link to a page on each and their featured work.

All featured titles will be available for purchase at the book tent run by the independent Cavalier House Books of Denham Springs, where featured authors are scheduled for book signings. Festival T-shirts, mugs, pins, and collectible posters will also be on sale at the festival.

The 2023 Louisiana Book Festival will also include the Young Readers Pavilion and Teen HQ with activities and award-winning authors. There will also be food vendors and a wide variety of book-related activities and exhibitors.

For more information about the 2023 Louisiana Book Festival, visit LouisianaBookFestival.org.

The Louisiana Center for the Book, the state affiliate of the Library of Congress Center for the Book, was established in the State Library of Louisiana in 1994. Its mission is to stimulate public interest in reading, books, literacy, and libraries and to celebrate Louisiana’s rich literary heritage.



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