2024 Tucson Festival of Books to draw national headliners

University Communications
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Comedian Sarah Cooper [1], “Goosebumps” creator R.L. Stine [2] and actor and “Saturday Night Live” alum Kevin Nealon [3] are among the more than 400 authors taking part in this year’s Tucson Festival of Books, happening this weekend at the University of Arizona.

They will join more than a dozen University employees appearing as presenting authors at the popular annual event.

Organizers hope to top last year’s attendance estimate of 125,000 and say this year’s lineup of events and authors is as robust as the festival has seen since before the pandemic. The festival has been held every year since 2009, with the exception of 2020, when it was canceled due to COVID-19.

“As TFOB15 approaches, there is so very much to look forward to,” said Welz Kauffman, Tucson Festival of Books executive director. “Great authors and books, terrific moderators, so much for kids and families to do, plus a variety of things to eat and drink, wonderful music, and a powerful volunteer contingent ready to answer questions and welcome a diverse crowd, many of whom will be experiencing for the first time the beauty and architectural magnificence of the University of Arizona campus.”

Other authors presenting at the festival include:

- Ed Begley Jr. [4], actor known for movies including “Best In Show” and “Pineapple Express” and television shows including “Better Call Saul”
- Timothy Egan [5], Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter and author of New York Times’ bestsellers, including “The Immortal Irishman” and “The Big Burn”
- Ayana Gray [6], New York Times' bestselling author of the “Beasts of Prey” trilogy
- J.A. Jance [7], former Bisbee resident and bestselling author of more than 60 mystery novels
- Beverly Jenkins [8], author of more than 50 novels and the recipient of the 2017 Romance Writers of America Nora Roberts Lifetime Achievement Award
- Patty Lin [9], former television writer and producer whose credits include “Friends,” “Desperate Housewives” and “Breaking Bad”
- Viet Thanh Nguyen [10], Pulitzer Prize winner, Guggenheim and MacArthur fellow, and author of “The Sympathizer,” soon to be an HBO original series
- Bob Odenkirk [11], actor known for “Breaking Bad” and “Better Call Saul” and author of “Zilot & Other Important Rhymes,” which was illustrated by his daughter, Erin
- Dan Patrick [12], sports broadcaster and television and radio host
- Joe Posnanski [13], sportswriter and New York Times' bestselling author of books including “Why We Love Baseball” and “Paterno”
- Tia Williams [14], beauty writer and editor and author of “The Perfect Find,” now a Netflix movie starring Gabrielle Union

The University is well represented at this year’s event, with a roster of employees, including Dante Lauretta [15], Regents Professor of planetary sciences and OSIRIS-REx mission principal investigator; Esther Sternberg [16], professor and research director in the Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine; and Gabriel Dozal [17], lecturer in the Department of English, who will be discussing his poetry collection “The Border Simulator.”

“I am looking forward to engaging with an audience that might be more familiar with the border worlds that I explore in ‘The Border Simulator’ because this book is written for them — ‘the fronterizos,’” Dozal said, referring to people who live along the border. “Of course, I have made a book of poems that I hope hits with a wide audience and I’m addressing something that we are all negotiating: technology in our daily lives.”

Mystery author T. Jefferson Parker [18] will receive this year’s Festival Founders Award, which honors someone for a “literary achievement that has captivated our imagination and whose body of work will be an inspiration to readers, writers and book lovers,” according to the festival website.

The popular Science City [19] returns this year, with four science-themed "neighborhoods" featuring more than 60 organizations – including dozens from the University – offering hands-on activities, science demonstrations and performances for families with children.

While Science City is a favorite destination for kids, event organizers are hoping to encourage families to explore more of the festival through a new scavenger hunt [20], during which kids will use clues and a map to find six locations and identify historical festival "critter" mascots. The materials will be available in English and Spanish through a QR code or paper handouts that will be available online and in the insert published in the Arizona Daily Star. Once participants complete the hunt, they can spin a wheel to win a small prize.
This year's critter mascot is a coatimundi, a member of the raccoon family.

Attendees can get help planning for and navigating the festival by using the Tucson Festival of Books mobile app, which has event times and locations, author profiles, a parking map, a list of food vendors and more. The app is available in the [Apple Store](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/tucson-festival-of-books/id355559216) and on [Google Play](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.azstarnet.tfob&pli=1).

Other University authors participating in this year's festival include:

- **Carina Bennett**, Project Manager and Software Engineer, Lunar and Planetary Laboratory
- **Elizabeth Bernays**, Regents Professor Emerita, Department of Entomology
- **Jennifer Carlson**, Graduate Faculty Associate, Department of Sociology
- **Stacey Cochran**, Associate Professor of Practice, Department of English
- **Mari Herreras**, Content Developer, Arizona Telemedicine Program
- **Chris Impey**, University Distinguished Professor, Department of Astronomy
- **Gregory McNamee**, Research Associate, Southwest Studies Center
- **Manuel Muñoz**, Professor, Department of English
- **Lydia Otero**, Associate Professor Emerita, Department of Mexican American Studies
- **Margo Steines**, Lecturer, Department of English
- **Shelby Tisdale**, Visiting Scholar, School of Anthropology
- **Cat Wolner**, Chief Editor, OSIRIS-REx, Lunar and Planetary Laboratory

Additional resources:

- [Disability access information](https://tucsonfestivalofbooks.org/?id=13)
- [Exhibitor list](https://tucsonfestivalofbooks.org/?id=35)
- [Food vendors](https://tucsonfestivalofbooks.org/?id=1707)
- [Parking map](https://tucsonfestivalofbooks.org/?id=64)
- [Schedule of entertainment and family activities](https://tucsonfestivalofbooks.org/?id=64)

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Links:
[1] https://tucsonfestivalofbooks.org/?action=display_author&amp;id=66612
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