

# mississippi's literary lawn party

The Mississippi Book Festival—also known as Mississippi's Literary Lawn Party—will take place for its second year in downtown Jackson on Saturday, August 20, at the State Capitol complex.

Last year's festival attracted 3,700 attendees—creating an incredible impact on the city and validating the demand for a dedicated event to celebrate the rich history, passion, and culture of Mississippi's literary achievements.

"The vision and enthusiasm of our team is to host a premier festival that attracts book lovers, writers, and publishers from Mississippi, the region, and beyond," explains Holly Lange, executive director of the Mississippi Book Festival.

A major draw for the festival are the panel discussions, which take place throughout the day at the Capitol as well as across the street at Galloway United Methodist Church, and the Woolfolk Building.

These panels showcase distinguished authors and experts discussing literary works and topics such as historical fictions, mysteries and thrillers, true crimes, poetry, short stories, and memoirs. Other discussions will center around subjects like chefs and cooking, lifestyles, photography, sports, history, comics and cartoons, and illustrations.

A few of this year's keynote authors and presenters will include Richard Ford, Congressman Gregg Harper, Julia Reed, and Jesmyn Ward.

Acclaimed author Kate DiCamillo is also on the agenda. "Master storyteller Kate DiCamillo, Newbery Medal-winning author of *Because of Winn Dixie*, *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*, and *The Tale of Desperaux*, has a new chapter book that will take you back to the heat of a 1975 Florida summer in *Raymie Nightingale*," says Lange. "The story of three young girls who set out to win the Little Miss Central Florida Tire 1975 contest will win over your hearts as well."

Outdoors, the grounds of the Capitol and nearby streets will be transformed into a bustling marketplace filled with authors, booksellers, and vendors.

"There is definitely something for everyone at the festival," says Lange, adding that attendees can enjoy live music by the Blues Boys, a taste of local fare at the Food Truck Vil-



Best-selling author and native Mississippian John Grisham spoke at the 2015 event.

lage, guided tours of the State Capitol building, and much more. In addition, there will be activities for children, including a designated play and entertainment area, a grand birthday party celebrating a legendary children's character, and the Mississippi Children's Museum again hosting interactive activities.

"Our goal is to promote literature and literacy in Mississippi," adds Sarah Ulmer, an organizer for the event. "Our state has such a rich culture and so many incredibly creative people living in it. The Mississippi Book Festival wants to take the time to celebrate their work and encourage more people to dive into reading."

Admission to the Mississippi Book Festival is free and open to the public. The venue opens at 9 a.m., and programs begin at 10 a.m. and conclude at 5:30 p.m. —S.M.B.

---

Visit [msbookfestival.com](http://msbookfestival.com) for more information.