

Schedule of Events:

Rocktown Author Room - Meet the Authors

Noon-4PM

Meeting Rooms - 1st Floor

Drop in anytime to meet local authors, buy books, and have them signed. No advance registration required.

Panel Session I: "Character Creation" *

1:00PM - 2:00PM

Community Youth Center - 2nd Floor

What is character development? How do authors create fully rounded, complex, and lifelike characters in fiction which engage readers? How do you create a character that readers feel invested in?

Learn from panelists Allison K. Garcia, Gayle C. Krause, Linda H. Miller, and Dwight Tusing.

***Advance registration requested.**

Panel Session II: "New Author Boot Camp" *

2:30PM-3:30PM

Community Youth Center - 2nd Floor

Learn how to take your writing from concepts to published work with panelists Linda Berry, Lori Mier, M.S. Marangione, and Sofia Samatar.

***Advance registration requested.**

Thank you for attending!

We value your feedback. If you registered for our panel sessions, you will receive an emailed survey to help us improve future festivals.

If you only attended the Author Room and have feedback to share, please email your thoughts to: info@mrlib.org.

About MRL

Founded in 1928, Massanutten Regional Library is a seven branch system that serves over 160,000 residents in Harrisonburg, Page County, and Rockingham County.

As a 501(c)(3), nonprofit organization we are funded in partnership with these localities and through the generosity of our patrons. Thank you!

We welcome you to visit us at any of our branches in: Bridgewater, Broadway, Elkton, Grottoes, Harrisonburg, Luray, and Shenandoah. All are welcome at MRL!

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www.mrlib.org



CELEBRATING LOCAL AUTHORS

Saturday, April 29, 2023

Noon - 4PM

Central Library - Harrisonburg



MEET THE AUTHORS



Linda Berry's lifelong love of literature and the visual arts culminated in a twenty-five-year career as an award-winning copywriter and art director. Now a full-time author, Linda writes mystery thrillers – most notably the Sidney Becker mystery series. Linda currently lives in Virginia with her husband and miniature poodle.



Sydney Tooman Betts resides with her husband near the extensive cavern system that inspired the setting for several chapters in her series *The People of the Book*. Betts has experienced a variety of cross-cultural adventures in North and Central America as well as in Europe and the Middle East. Her teaching experiences span from preschool to guest lecturing at the graduate level. Before penning her first novel, *A River too Deep*, Betts ghost-wrote stories for an adult literacy program.



Saloma Miller Furlong was born and raised in an Amish community in northeastern Ohio. With an eighth-grade education, she acquired her GED, enrolled in community college courses, and became an *Ada Comstock Scholar* at Smith College. She studied at the University of Hamburg in Germany for a semester. At age fifty, she graduated with a major in German studies and a minor in philosophy. Furlong is the author of three books and her story has been featured in two PBS American Experience films, *The Amish* and *The Amish: Shunned*. She is the mother of two grown sons and lives in Broadway with her husband David.



Allison K. Garcia is a Licensed Professional Counselor, but she has wanted to be a writer ever since she could hold a pencil. She is a member of Shenandoah Valley Writers, Virginia Writers Club, the Author Transformation Alliance, and is a Municipal Liaison for Shenandoah Valley NaNoWriMos. Allison's works about marginalized Christians have won several awards and her stories have been featured in six anthologies. She has five published novels: *Vivir el Dream*, *Finding Amor*, *Finding Seguridad*, *Finding Paz*, and *The Dry Depths of My Soul*.



Clifford Garstang is the author of two novels, *Oliver's Travels* and *The Shaman of Turtle Valley*, and three story collections, *In an Uncharted Country*, *What the Zhang Boys Know* (winner of the Library of Virginia Literary Award for Fiction), and *House of the Ancients and Other Stories*. He is also the editor of the award-winning anthology series, *Everywhere Stories: Short Fiction from a Small Planet*. He is a recipient of the Emerging Author Award from the Indianapolis Public Library Foundation and has received fellowships from the Sewanee Writers' Conference, The Bethesda Writer's Center, the Tinker Mountain Writers' Workshop, and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts.



Gayle C. Krause was named the 2022 winner of the Kid's Choice KIDLIT Writing Contest. She is a PAL SCBWI member and a past member of The Historical Novel Society and The Poets' Garage. Gayle presents writing seminars to children's authors and illustrators and her picture book *Rock Star Santa* has been presented in Australia and Montserrat. Her title, *Daddy, Can You See the Moon?* shares royalties with the nonprofit Our Military Child, and her YA novel, *RATGIRL: Song of the Viper*, was nominated for the International Reading Award and the Horn Book/Boston Globe Award. Her newest picture book, *Zadie & The Witch's Tea* will be available for pre-order on September 1, 2023.



Matt Little is a graduate of James Madison University and resides in the Shenandoah Valley with his wife, Carrie, and their two children, Nathan and Cecelia. *Goodnight JMU* is his first book and was written during the pandemic after many family readings of Margaret Wise Brown's famous *Goodnight Moon*. *Goodnight JMU* is a fun trip down memory lane for alumni and an introduction to all things JMU for future Duke Dogs.



Margaret Locke, 2018 RITA® Finalist and *USA Today* bestselling author of the *Magic of Love* and *Put Up Your Dukes* series, writes binge-worthy romance that keeps you up past your bedtime. She delights in making readers laugh, cry, and think. Because love matters. When not writing, Margaret adores spending time with her fabulous husband, two fantastic kids, and three funny felines.



M.S. "Maggie" Marangione teaches American Literature and writing at Blue Ridge Community College. Her novel, *Across the Blue Ridge Mountains* is under consideration for the Pen Faulkner Award. Additionally, her poetry and essays have been published in numerous journals including *Appalachian Journal* and *Sixty and Me*.



Lori Mier is the author of *Merin and Her Very Bright Star* in which Mier drew from her own story of loss and healing. Mier loves chai tea, working daily as a social change agent, and sunrise hikes with her son. She is also the co-author of a personal transformation book. She has a degree in Social Work and has worked with youth and families in foster care and adoption. She currently works independently as an Ecotherapist Guide and Coach, author and nature photographer, combining all of these to offer a unique and healing experience. Lori lives in the Shenandoah Valley with her husband and son.



Linda H. Miller is an educator with 36 years of teaching experience and is the author of fifteen children's books. Since retirement, along with traveling, she enjoys volunteering at Valley Brethren Mennonite Heritage Center and leading school groups to Washington, DC. Using the Heritage Center as the setting, a number of her books reflect life in the late nineteenth century. The country of Morocco is the setting for *Hattzga! Hattzga!*, a book about Jamal, the camel, searching for the best place to call home.



Kim Newton teaches English and Theatre at East Rockingham High School and is the author of *Goodbye Sister: A sibling's book for infant loss*. Kim wrote the work to be the kind of book she needed as a child when her own infant sister was born still. *Goodbye Sister* promotes healthy grief recovery for children and families, including affirmation of negative and positive feelings, grieving as a family, recognition of the loss of hopes and expectations associated with the arrival of a new baby, and a conclusion that reinforces the healing nature of love and memory.



Sofia Samatar is the author of five books, including the World Fantasy Award-winning novel *A Stranger in Olondria*. Her new memoir, *The White Mosque*, tells the story of her trip to Uzbekistan to research a group of Mennonites who followed a charismatic preacher to Central Asia in the nineteenth century. Sofia lives in Virginia and teaches African literature, Arabic literature, and speculative fiction at James Madison University, where she is the Roop Distinguished Professor of English.



Esther Yoder Stenson grew up Amish Mennonite in Stuarts Draft, Virginia and has lived and taught in El Salvador, China, and Egypt. She received an M.A. in Applied Linguistics from Georgetown University, as well as an M.A. in English/Creative Writing from James Madison University, where she also taught from 1995 to 2014. Besides publishing her recent memoir *Doors Through the Great Wall*, Esther has published a book of poetry titled *Miracle Temple*, and a chapbook titled *Showing Up*. Most recently, she has been teaching in Eastern Mennonite University's Intensive English Program.



Dwight Tusing is a resident of the Shenandoah valley, Virginia where he resides with his wife, Dawn and their dog Georgie. He discovered a love for comic books at an early age and enjoys reading Stephen King books. His stories originate in the Shenandoah Valley and are inspired by his love of history and mythology. He is a self-taught painter that uses oil as his medium and in his free time enjoys working out and listening to music. Dwight has is the author of *Primal Ties: In The Company of Wolves*.