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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

St. Petersburg Times Festival of Reading Announces New Date and Location

St. Petersburg, FL — The 13th Annual *St. Petersburg Times* Festival of Reading has been scheduled for Saturday, October 29 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg — a new location. The free Festival is an annual celebration of literacy, featuring nationally known author talks, book signings, panel discussions, workshops, and a variety of entertainment.

USF St. Petersburg was selected as the new Festival of Reading venue for several reasons. Firstly, the campus facilities will enable much larger audiences to hear the most popular authors. Secondly, the downtown St. Petersburg location puts the Festival in the heart of what has become a bustling urban center, adjacent to the cruise port and airport, and blocks from BayWalk and the Pier. And thirdly, the date coincides with several other downtown events and activities, which is expected to increase attendance at the Festival of Reading.

In addition to authors, there will be celebrity readers, a variety of entertainment and poetry reading, an extensive Book Market, food and drink concessions, many children's activities including arts and crafts, interactive games, costumed story-book characters and an appearance by SPOT the News hound — the *Times*' literacy mascot.

At this time organizers are seeking corporate partners for sponsorships; performers for the entertainment stages; booksellers, self-published authors, and vendors of literacy-related merchandise to be part of the Book Market; and volunteers to assist with the Festival in a variety of roles. Applications can be downloaded from the Times Festival of Reading Web site at <http://www.festivalofreading.com> or requested by leaving name, address and phone number on the Festival of Reading information line at (727) 892-2358.

The complete line-up of author talks, book signings, workshops and entertainers will be posted as confirmed on the Festival Web site and also published in a special section in the *St. Petersburg Times* on Thursday, October 27, 2005.

Sponsors of the Festival include the Renaissance Vinoy Resort & Golf Club, and USF St. Petersburg, with support from the City of St. Petersburg and The Poynter Institute.

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Photos and event logo on request from apenrose@sptimes.com.