



For Immediate Release:

For further information contact:
Liz Willyoung, Event Producer (727) 786-2223 or
Anthea Penrose, Public Relations Manager (727) 893-8461

September 27, 2005

***St. Petersburg Times* Festival of Reading Announces Author Line-up & Event Activities**

St. Petersburg, FL — The 13th Annual *St. Petersburg Times* Festival of Reading, scheduled for **Sat., Oct. 29 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.**, at its new location - the University of South Florida St. Petersburg (140 7th Avenue S.) - will feature over 60 celebrated authors including best-sellers **Carl Hiaasen, Doris Kearns Goodwin, Candace Bushnell, R.L. Stine, Sue Ellen Cooper, Greg Smith and Jim & Kate Lehrer.**

The free festival, which annually attracts thousands of book lovers, will be staged in several University buildings, including the Campus Activities Center, Davis Hall, the Florida Center for Teachers, the nearby Fish & Wildlife Research Institute and Poynter Institute.

In addition to the author talks there will be celebrity readings, a variety of entertainment and poetry readings, an extensive Book Market, food and drink concessions, a Publix Storyland area offering many children's activities including arts and crafts, interactive games, costumed story-book characters, a Halloween costume contest and an appearance by SPOT the News hound — the *Times'* literacy mascot.

The first 500 persons who donate a new children's book at the "Publix Books-for-Kids Tent" will receive a voucher for two tickets to the Tampa Bay vs. Carolina hockey game on Dec. 26 at the St. Pete Times Forum courtesy of the *St. Petersburg Times*. The donated books will be given to the YWCA Family Village and Community Pride Child Care Inc.

-more-

Visitors to this year's Festival should be prepared to see a sea of red hats at the session featuring Red Hat Society founder **Sue Ellen Cooper** who will be presenting *The Red Hat Society: Fun and Friendship After Fifty*. Other headliners are **Candace Bushnell**, whose novel,

Sex and the City, launched a television phenomenon (she'll talk about her next novel, *Lipstick Jungle*); **Carl Hiaasen**, who will present his second children's book, *Flush*; and **Doris Kearns Goodwin** (*Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*).

R.L. Stine will tout his new series, *Mostly Ghostly*, while Florida author **Greg Jenkins** will talk about his book, *Florida's Ghostly Legends and Haunted Folklore*. Jenkins' talk will be followed by a panel called Eyes on Florida: Looking at the State Through Different Lenses. The panel, made possible through a grant from the Florida Humanities Council - the State Program of the National Endowment for the Humanities - features a historian (USF's **Ray Arsenault**), a journalist (*Times* writer **Jeff Klinkenberg**) and a novelist (St. Petersburg author **Lee Irby**), discussing how their professions change the way they look at the state. USF historian **Gary Mormino**, author of *Land of Sunshine, State of Dreams*, will moderate.

Other novelists attending include American Book Award-winner **Ana Castillo** (*Water Women/Opaque Men*), PEN/Hemingway Award-winner **Bobbie Ann Mason** (*An Atomic Romance*), novelist and book critic **Kit Reed** (*Dogs of Truth*) and best-selling author **Richard Paul Evans** (*The Sunflower*) and Radio America personality **Greg Smith** (*On a Roll: Reflections from America's Wheelchair Dude With the Winning Attitude*).

A panel at the Poynter Institute on The American Empire: The Power of Politics and the Politics of Power will feature **Robert Merry** (*Sands of Empire*), **David Rothkopf** (*Running the World: The Inside Story of the National Security Council and the Architects of American Power*) and **Craig Crawford** (*Attack the Messenger: How Politicians Turned You Against the Media*).

Rona Jaffe, whose 1958 novel *The Best of Everything* was an early precursor of *Sex and the City*, **Candace Bushnell**, (*Sex and the City* and *Lipstick Jungle*) and Quacker Industries CEO **Jeanne Bice** (*Pull Yourself Up By Your Bra Straps*) will

discuss: Women Today: Are We Better Off Than Our Mothers? Another panel, Writing Couples: How Two Authors Survive Under the Same Roof will feature PBS journalist and mystery writer **Jim Lehrer** (*The Franklin Affair*) and novelist **Kate Lehrer** (*Confessions of a Bigamist*); Southern author **Lenore Hart** (*Ordinary Springs*) and **David Poyer**, the most popular living author of American sea fiction (*That Anvil of Our Souls: A Novel of the Monitor and the Merrimack*); and nonfiction writers **Mim Eichler Rivas** (*Beautiful Jim Key: The Lost History of a Horse and a Man Who Changed the World*) and former Miami Dolphin and FSU offensive lineman **Victor Rivas Rivers** (*A Private Family Matter*). Rivas Rivers became an actor after his football career and is currently the spokesman for the National Network to End Domestic Violence.

Other speakers will include *New York Times* business writer **Joseph Treaster** (*Paul Volcker: The Making of a Financial Legend*); **Quang X. Pham** (*A Sense of Duty: My Father, My American Journey*), and Florida thriller writer, **James O. Born** (*Shock Wave*.) Renaissance Vinoy Resort chef **John Pivar** will present his cookbooks, *Taste the Vinoy* and *Fire It Up*, while *Times* food editor **Janet Keeler** will talk on How to Pick a Cookbook. Sisters **Jennifer and Kitty O'Neil** will explain *Decorating with Funky Shui*, while former local resident, **Jessica Hundley** will present her biography of the late musician **Gram Parsons**, *Grievous Angel*.

In addition to Hiaasen and Stine, several other children's book authors are in the festival line-up, including three-time Newbery Honor author **Zilpha Keatley Snyder** (*The Unseen*) and Sunshine State Reader authors **Betty Birney** (*The World According to Humphrey*), **Adrian Fogelin** (*Crossing Jordan*), **Lee Kochenderfer** (*The Victory Garden*) and **Vivian Vande Velde** (*Heir Apparent*).

There will be an opportunity on festival day to meet *Times* columnists **Robyn Blumner**, **Eric Deggans**, **Terry Tomalin** and **Howard Troxler**, who will each give talks about their work.

The complete schedule of authors, book signings, workshops and entertainers will be on the Festival Web site www.FestivalofReading.com and published in a special Festival 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.

#

Photos and event logo on request.