

# Meet the Author Festival

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## *Meet the Authors*

### FICTION

#### **BETSY BERNFELD**

Betsy Bernfeld is a writer, librarian and lawyer in Jackson Hole. She is former director of the Teton County Library and founder of the Teton County Access to Justice Center. Betsy is recipient of the 2020 Wyoming Arts Council's Poetry Fellowship and is author of two volumes of poetry. Betsy's first novel, *The Journal of Henry David Tarantula*, was released this past winter by Winter Goose Publishing. It was selected for the Reimagined Indie Author Experience at the 2024 Tucson Festival of Books.

#### **MARJORIE DALEY**

Marjorie Daley has always been fascinated with writing. Her first fiction book, *Fire Ground*, was almost thirty years in the making and draws heavily on her husband's and father's experiences as firefighters. Marjorie lives on the high plains of Wyoming with her husband Bob, horse Miss Penny, and dogs Diesel and Tira. Her two children and stepson are grown and are making their own history.

#### **STEFANI JAYE FARRIS**

Stefani Farris is the author of the short story collection *Nothing is Precious*, the inaugural publication in the John Keeble Series of Rural American Writing. She's the recipient of two literary fellowships from the Wyoming Arts Council, as well as the Arts Council's Neltje Blanchan Award for nature writing and its Doubleday Award for writing by women. She has been a resident at the Ucross Foundation and the Island Institute in Sitka, Alaska. Her work appears in journals around the country. Stefani is a graduate of the University of Wyoming and lives with her family in Lander.

### **DALLAS JONES**

Dallas Jones was born and raised in Casper and is a graduate of the University of Wyoming and the Georgia Institute of Technology. Though currently residing in Colorado, he still loves everything about Wyoming except the wind and spring blizzards.

### **ROSE MARY LONG**

Rose Mary Long grew up in the Midwest in a church-going family, and began writing stories in her teens. She has been part of a jail ministry program for years and draws on those experiences for inspiration as well as a lot of imagination for her Women at the Well series.

### **JOHN D. NESBITT**

John D. Nesbitt is the author of more than forty books, including traditional westerns, crossover western mysteries, contemporary western fiction, retro/noir fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. He has won the Western Writers of America Spur Award four times. He has won the Western Fictioneers Peacemaker Award twice. He has been a finalist for the Spur Award twice, the Peacemaker eight times, and the Will Rogers Medallion Award eight times. He has also received two creative writing fellowships with the Wyoming Arts Council.

### **JANA SCHOTT**

Jana Schott wrote *The Night Before Christmas, Soldier Style* when her son was in Afghanistan. She lives in Laramie and enjoys crafting and spending time with her kids and grandkids.



# SCIENCE FICTION/FANTASY

## **V.L. ANDROMEDA**

V.L. Andromeda possesses a unique perspective that shines through in her writing. With a keen interest in mental health and queer themes, plus a passion for fantasy literature, she weaves intricate tales that explore the interplay between love, self-acceptance, and destiny. With a promise to charm audiences with her voice, Andromeda hopes to leave her mark on the "romantasy" genre. She resides in Wyoming with her husband and a lively brood of animal-children.

## **CAITEE COOPER**

Caitee Cooper grew up in Laramie, where she enjoyed all things outdoorsy, musical, and bookish. She went to college at the University of Wyoming, where she earned a B.S. in Psychology, and met her husband, Dallin. They went on to start several businesses and have many adventures. Caitee is the author of two novels, and currently lives in Cheyenne with her husband, their two boys, and two half-feral barn cats.

## **JOHN PARK**

John Park's love of books began in his early childhood. Born in Korea, John grew up traveling all over the world before settling in the United States. John has published three books since 2022 and enjoys being a part of the writing community, sharing his books, and supporting other aspiring writers.

## **HELEN M. PUGSLEY**

Helen M. Pugsley comes from a small town of 20 people in Eastern Wyoming but currently resides in Laramie. She has been writing since she was a teenager and has published three novels. When she's not writing, she wanders around aimlessly in search of fruit.

# ROMANCE

## **NEVA BODIN**

Neva writes to entertain, and helps us to laugh, love, and understand life. She infuses readers with faith and hope through fiction and nonfiction. She is the author of *Devotions From the Goat Pen*, *Bitzy Bunny Gets a New Mama*, *Montana Free*, *Falling for the Doc*, and *There's a Circus in the Sky*. She writes short stories, newsletters, poetry, and freelance articles.

## **GAYLE M. IRWIN**

Gayle M. Irwin is an award-winning Wyoming author and freelance writer. She is a contributing writer to eight *Chicken Soup for the Soul* books and freelances articles to regional magazines and newspapers. Gayle authors the *Pet Rescue Romance – Yellowstone Country* series, a collection of sweet, contemporary romance books, plus stand-alone stories in the same genre. All weave pet rescue and adoption into the love story.

## **L. DAWN JACKSON**

L. Dawn Jackson began writing stories as soon as they put a pencil in her chubby baby hand. She was a 2021 and 2022 finalist in the San Francisco Writers Contest. She was also selected as a mentee in the inaugural 2021 Romance Authors Mentorship Program through Romance Writers of America. She lives at the top of the American Rocky Mountains with two miracle children, her amazing husband, a lupus diagnosis, and an ever-increasing knitting stash.



# MYSTERY

## **LOIS J. EVENSON**

Lois J. Evenson is a Wyoming native. She writes thrillers and loves to engage readers and raise goosebumps and laughter in equal measure. Although her stories take place in many settings, she particularly loves to spotlight Wyoming as often as she can. Her first book, *Raptor's Kiss*, was released in 2022. The second book in the series, *Raptor's Quest*, is available for pre-order and will be released on Sept. 24, 2024.

## **MANDIE HINES**

Mandie writes on themes of grief, hope, and healing in both poetry, *Origami Stars* and *Hot Air Moon*, and the thriller/horror genres, *The Lost Always Take Off Their Shoes*. She's a community organizer, promoting creative writing in Cheyenne and throughout the state, connecting literary artists, and creating opportunities for writers to share their work. She's currently working on a new poetry collection and a supernatural mystery series.

## **PAULLA SCHREINER**

Paulla Schreiner is the author of three Darcy Moreland mysteries, all set in Cheyenne.

# NONFICTION

## **CAROL CHAPMAN**

Carol Chapman, a Wyoming native, wrote her first book after careers in teaching, small business finance management, caregiving, and nonprofit volunteering. She sends out two email blogs per month which can be seen on her website, [carolchapmanwrites.com](http://carolchapmanwrites.com).

## **RAEHEL HENDERSON**

Raechel Henderson is the author of *Sew Witchy: Tools, Techniques and Projects for Sewing Magick* and *The Scent of Lemon & Rosemary*. She lives in Wyoming and writes about living a magickal life.

### **MARCIA HENSLEY**

A transplant from Oklahoma where she earned her B.A and M.A. degrees from the University of Tulsa, Marcia lived for 30 years in Western Wyoming before moving to Laramie in 2017.

She is the recipient of the Wyoming Art's Council's Neltj Blanchan award for writing inspired by nature. Her essays have been published in numerous anthologies, High Country News and Writers on the Range. Her first book *Staking Her Claim: Women Homesteading the West* won awards from the Mountains and Plains Independent Booksellers Association as well as *Women Writing the West*, *Wyoming Writers*, and the Wyoming State Historical Society.

### **DEBRA MOERKE**

Foster parent to over 140 children, Debra writes a true story of one little girl who fell between the cracks in the system. Debra is married and has six children of her own. Her story is one of grace and forgiveness for what we may believe to be the unthinkable.

### **ARIELLE ZIBRAK**

Arielle Zibrak is Professor of English and Gender and Women's Studies at the University of Wyoming. The author of *Avidly Reads: Guilty Pleasures*, *Writing Against Reform: Aesthetic Realism in the Progressive Era*, and numerous essays in scholarly and public-facing venues. She is also the editor of *Edith Wharton's The Age of Innocence: New Centenary Essays and Twelve Stories by American Women*. Current projects include a video streaming series for The Great Courses called "A Literary Tour of the United States" and a public history of consumer feminism and new-age philosophy in America titled *The Image of Desire*.



# YOUNG ADULT

## **MELODIE EDWARDS**

Melodie grew up in Walden, Colorado. She graduated with an MFA from the University of Michigan and received two Hopwood Awards for fiction and nonfiction. She was the first person to receive the Pattie Layser Greater Yellowstone Writing Fellowship through the Wyoming Arts Council and was the recipient of the Doubleday Wyoming Arts Council Award for Women. She's the author of two books. She also loves to putz in the garden and backpack and ski in the mountains with her twin daughters, her husband and her dog.

## **JENNIFER LAWRENCE**

Jennifer Lawrence was born in Boulder, Colorado. She moved to Wyoming as a young adult and has called it home since. She attended college at the University of Wyoming. Jennifer currently writes children's and middle-grade fiction. She also has a strong interest in women's history, particularly in the West. Her book *Soup Suds Row: The Bold Lives of Army Laundresses 1802-1876* was a multiple award-winning book, including The Willa Award from Women Writing the West.



# CHILDREN'S

## **KATHY BJORNESTAD**

Kathy Bjornestad is a retired K-12 school librarian and language arts teacher. She is a Wyoming Fellowship for Creative Fiction recipient and has received an honorable mention for the Neltje Blanchan Award. Kathy has placed in multiple writing contests and published several essays. She is part of South Dakota's 2024 Speakers' Bureau and has published four children's books. She's currently hard at work on an adult science fiction trilogy.

## **LESLIE COLBURN**

Leslie Colburn is a mom, an educator, and the author of four children's books. Colburn writes parenting articles and material encouraging those in the waves of grief. She believes children's books can change the world and uses them to inspire and empower young people. Her newest book, *Twinkle, the Littlest Star*, a book about finding hope and purpose, releases November 12, 2024.

## **EUGENE M. GAGLIANO**

Former elementary school teacher, Eugene M. Gagliano, is the Wyoming Poet Laureate Emeritus (after 7 years of service). Gene has read his poetry to the Wyoming Senate and House of Representatives and read at the Governor's Arts Awards as well. He has published 3 adult poetry books and 7 children's poetry books. Gene's new children's poetry book (*My Fruity Friends*) will be released in September. As a children's author, he has published 8 middle grade fiction books (two 2019 Evvy Award winners) and 3 alphabet books. This year, his middle grade fiction book, *Ice Cave Mystery* is being considered for a Wyoming State Historical Award.

## **GUYLA GREENLY**

Dr. Guyla Greenly is a transformational leadership coach and professional development speaker. She is the owner of Dandelion Leadership Coaching where she helps leaders and emerging professionals transform their workplace wishes into reality. In honor of her military child upbringing and shared experiences with her military grandchild, Guyla published *Hazel House Finds a New Family* in 2023.



### **HALLIE GUIDRY**

Hallie Guidry is a writer, editor, lawyer, and artist. In addition to being the CEO of Amaranth Publications, she has over ten years of experience in professional editing. Within the realm of books, Hallie has been instrumental in the writing, editing, and polishing of hundreds of published works, including inspiring non-fiction, bestselling contemporary romances, and heartwarming memoirs of pain and loss. *Ezra's Family in the Spooky House* is her first children's book. It has been awarded the Five Star Readers' Favorite Award.

### **TARA PAPPAS**

Tara Pappas is a mixed-media artist, author, and illustrator in Laramie. Growing up in Southern Colorado, Tara spent much of her time in the mountains—hiking, camping, backpacking, and rock climbing. Although she has been drawing and painting from a very young age, it wasn't until moving to Wyoming in 2012 that she began creating and exhibiting her artwork more seriously. As her artistic style has continued to develop and evolve, her love of the outdoors has naturally inspired and influenced her work.

