

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: Mark Wilson, Alabama Center for the Book, mwilson@auburn.edu, 334-844-4946

ALABAMA BOOK FESTIVAL FEATURES CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT WRITERS, ACTIVITIES

“There is no substitute for books in the life of a child,” wrote Mary Ellen Chase more than half a century ago. It could not be more true today. Reading, in the words of another writer, is basic equipment for life and a love of words is nurtured in many different ways.

The Alabama Book Festival, to be held on Saturday, April 19, in Montgomery, will celebrate all those ways—including books, theater and storytelling—in special programming for young readers.

This year's line up includes

Deborah Wiles, whose first novel, *Love Ruby Lavender*, won wide acclaim, including selection as an ALA Notable Children's Book. Her picture book *One Wide Sky* was a Children's Book of the Month Club selection, and novel *Each Little Bird That Sings* was a National Book Award finalist. She'll read from and talk about her latest book, *The Aurora County All-Stars*.

Children's book illustrator Elizabeth Dulemba will be on hand to talk about her just released *Paco and the Giant Chile Plant*, a bilingual children's book. Her first picture book, *The Prince's Diary*, was named No.1 2006 Valentine's Day Pick by Book Sense.

Storytellers Wanda Johnson, recipient of the Storytelling World award, and Joseph Trimble, whose books include *Marty and the Million Man March*, will join Janet Chambers, author of *Ready, Set, Read*, and magician Russell Davis in the festival's children's area.

Amadeus the Traveling Dog, a four-year-old Great Pyrenees who books for children include *Friendship Rules*, will be on hand, and a special performance by the award-winning Children's Educational Theater will take place in the children's area. Clifford the Big Red Dog will be available throughout the day to greet children and sign autographs.

The Alabama Book Festival is a free event for all ages. It will take place from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the grounds of Montgomery's historic Old Alabama Town. Sponsored by the Alabama Center for the Book, Old Alabama Town, the Alabama State Council on the Arts, Alagasco, AT&T, Auburn University's College of Liberal Arts and many others, the festival is a signature literary event for the entire state.

For a full list of festival authors/presenters and more information, go to www.alabamabookcenter.org.

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