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Title: Chelsea District Library Brings Award-Winning Children’s Authors to Town

March is National Reading Month and at Chelsea District Library (CDL) that means another Authors in Chelsea event! This two-day event beginning Tuesday, March 14 will feature nationally recognized children’s authors, and include assemblies and workshops for more than 1,000 first through sixth grade Chelsea students. But this event is not just for students, as we welcome our entire community to meet all three authors in a public event, An Evening with the Authors (see below for details). Whether you are an aspiring author, or just a lover of youth literature, this event is for you!

This year’s authors include David LaRochelle, Naomi Shihab Nye, and Pablo Cartaya. LaRochelle will visit first and second grade classrooms in North Creek Elementary. LaRochelle is the recipient of the Theodor Seuss Geisel Award and author of numerous picture books and books for beginning readers, including *See the Cat: Three Stories About a Dog, Moo!, and Isle of You*. Youth Library Associate Sarah Bernhardt eagerly awaits LaRochelle’s visit, exclaiming, “I can’t wait for students at North Creek to meet award-winning author/illustrator David LaRochelle! It will be such a powerful experience for them to meet an author who writes, illustrates, and publishes books for children just like them. I hope that they will also be inspired to continue writing and publishing their own stories, as students are authors and illustrators, too!”

Poetry Foundation’s former Young People’s Poet Laureate Naomi Shihab Nye will be visiting third through fifth graders at South Meadows Elementary. Nye is also a National Book Award Finalist and Newbery Honor recipient as well as the author of *The Turtle of Michigan, The Turtle of Oman, Cast Away*, and many others.

“I was introduced to the work of Naomi Shihab Nye as a tween, through her Newbery Honor-winning novel *Habibi*. It was one of the first books I’d read that took place in the Middle East, a location I knew almost nothing about, and it opened my eyes to the vast array of dynamic cultures of the world. I’m excited and honored to explore Ms. Nye’s novels and poetry with Chelsea students and give them the opportunity to travel the world through her stories—and then meet the person who wrote them!” said Youth and Teen Librarian Jessica Zubik.

Beach Middle School sixth grade students will have the opportunity to work with Pura Belpré Honor award-winning author Pablo Cartaya. Cartaya authored *The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora*, *Each Tiny Spark*, and *The Last Beekeeper* among others. Youth and Teen Librarian Stacey Comfort is “so excited to bring Pablo Cartaya to the 6th grade students at Beach Middle School” after “reading his letter in his story collection *Hope Wins* for CDL’s Pizza & Paperbacks book club.” She looks “forward to the discussions we’ll be able to have about the short stories and letters in that book”, noting that much of Cartaya’s work is relevant to student’s experiences today, including life experiences during and after the recent pandemic.

With the help of a grant from Chelsea Education Foundation and support from the Friends of Chelsea District Library, CDL provided over 300 copies of the visiting authors’ books to Chelsea School District classrooms. These books allow students and teachers to prepare for each author’s visit. Providing every student the opportunity to read the works in advance creates more meaningful interactions between the authors and students.

In addition to their time in the classrooms, this year’s distinguished guests will be featured at An Evening with the Authors, which is open to the public and free of charge. The event will take place on Tuesday, March 14, at 6:30pm in the Washington Street Education Center Board Room located at 500 Washington Street, Chelsea, MI. Don’t miss this exclusive opportunity to hear each author share their journey into the world of writing, participate in Q&A sessions, and get your books personally signed by the authors. Books will be available for purchase courtesy of local Chelsea bookstore, Serendipity Books. The first 20 families to arrive will also receive a free book!

For further information about the Authors in Chelsea program, please visit chelseadistrictlibrary.org/authors-in-chelsea/.

About Us: Chelsea District Library (CDL) is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to engage, inspire, and equip through evolving services and resources. CDL currently serves 16,126 residents in the Chelsea library district—City of Chelsea, Lyndon and Sylvan Townships, and the portions of Lima and Dexter Townships within the Chelsea School District. For more information visit chelseadistrictlibrary.org.

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