



**TEXAS
BOOK
FESTIVAL**

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NOTE: Media are invited to attend the author presentations at Evangelina Garza Elementary, 8731 North Doffing Road in Mission, Texas, on March 20, with authors Mara Price, 8:15-9 a.m. and 1-1:45 p.m., (Grandma's Chocolate); and Diane Gonzales Bertrand, 9:30-10:15 a.m., (Upside Down and Backwards) presenting. Please RSVP to Brenda Thompson by March 12, and bring media credentials and a driver's license to be admitted to the school.

March 4, 2013

**Reading Rock Stars brings authors to elementary schools
in the Rio Grande Valley March 19 and 20**

Nearly 4,000 children to receive new, autographed books of their own

AUSTIN—Texas Book Festival's Reading Rock Stars, a dynamic program that brings books to life for children in economically disadvantaged public schools across the state, will host seven exciting authors at six elementary schools in the Rio Grande Valley March 19 and 20. Authors will present their books in entertaining fashion, give each student an autographed copy, and present a set of books to each school's library. Participating schools follow a curriculum guide in preparation for the authors' visits.

Since 2001, Reading Rock Stars has donated more than 23,000 books to children at Title 1 schools in the Rio Grande Valley. For many children, it is the first book they have ever owned.

"Reading Rock Stars is one of the ways Texas Book Festival touches communities around the state," says Heidi Marquez Smith, executive director. "Many of the children we reach through this program have never been in contact with an author before, or owned a brand-new book. Reading Rock Stars helps bring books alive for kids and instills a lifelong love of

reading, which in turn helps cultivate learning and creativity.”

According to Kendall Miller, who manages the Reading Rock Stars program for the Texas Book Festival, nearly 100 advanced teacher copies and curriculum guides, donated by publishers, will also be donated to participating schools. Following the author presentations, the teacher copies will also be given to the school libraries.

Reading Rock Stars in the Rio Grande Valley is presented in cooperation with the University of Texas Pan-Am and the university’s FESTIBA: Festival of International Books and Arts.

The following are the schools and authors for Reading Rock Stars in the Rio Grande Valley March 19:

Eligio Kika De La Garza Elementary

Liz Scanlon, *All the World* (prek-K)
Gwen Zepeda, *Level Up* (grades 1-3)
René Saldaña, Jr., *Lemon Tree Caper* (grades 4-5)

WJ Clinton Elementary

Mara Price, *Grandma’s Chocolate* (prek-2)
Winifred Conkling, *Sylvia & Aki* (grades 3-5)

Ruben Hinojosa Elementary is in their 3rd year and will have the following authors:

Diane Gonzales Bertrand, *The Empanadas that Abuela Made* (1st grade)
Don Tate, *It Jes’ Happened* (grades 2-3)
Diane Gonzales Bertrand, (grades 4-5)

Authors and schools for March 20:

Evangelina Garza Elementary

Mara Price, *Grandma’s Chocolate* (prek-2nd), 9:30- 10:15 a.m. and 1- 1:45 p.m.
Diane Gonzales Bertrand, *Upside Down and Backwards* (grades 3-5), 8:15- 9 a.m.
**media invited to attend these presentations*

Diaz-Villarreal Elementary

Gwen Zepeda, *Level Up* (prek-2nd)
Winifred Conkling, *Sylvia & Aki* (grades 3-5)

Perez Elementary School

Liz Scanlon, *Think Big* (prek-k)
Don Tate, *It Jes’ Happened* (grades 1-3)
Rene Saldana, *Lemon Tree Caper* (grades 4-5)

Reading Rock Stars continues to expand through support from H-E-B, Brigid Cockrum and family, and other generous donors. For more information on Reading Rock Stars, contact the Texas Book Festival office at (512) 477-4055 or email Kendall Miller at Kendall@texasbookfestival.org.

About Texas Book Festival

Texas Book Festival is a nonprofit organization that celebrates authors and their contributions to the culture of literacy, ideas, and imagination. Founded in 1995 by Laura Bush and a group of volunteers, the annual Festival is held on the grounds of the Texas Capitol every fall; in 2013 the Festival will be held the weekend of Oct. 26 and 27. The Festival features readings and discussions from more than 250 renowned Texas and national authors, entertaining and informing more than 40,000 adults and children alike. Thanks to 1,000 volunteers, the Festival remains free and open to the public. TBF supports Texas public libraries and literacy through its Library Grants and Reading Rock Stars programs, and also hosts year-round events across the state. Texas Book Festival members receive invitations to exclusive author events, priority seating, the latest literary news, and more. Visit www.texasbookfestival.org for more information.

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