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SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

For immediate release
March 11, 2004

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ILLINOIS AUTHORS BOOK FAIR TO BE HELD MARCH 27TH AT STATE LIBRARY IN SPRINGFIELD

SPRINGFIELD — Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White is inviting citizens from throughout Illinois to join him at the eighth Illinois Authors Book Fair Saturday, March 27th from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Illinois State Library in Springfield.

"The state of Illinois is blessed with a wealth of literary talent, and it is a pleasure to showcase our gifted authors each year at the Illinois Authors Book Fair," White said. "This free event is the only one of its kind that exclusively showcases Illinois authors or works about the state of Illinois. More than 30 talented authors representing a variety of genres will take part this year. The Book Fair has grown in popularity each year because there is something for everyone at this unique event. Though the focus is on our talented authors, there is also a variety of programming for adults and children. I hope parents, grandparents, children, families and booklovers from throughout the state will join me for five hours of free fun as we shine a spotlight on the incredible talents of our Illinois authors."

This year's featured authors include several nationally known authors:

--**Erik Larson**, whose recent book *The Devil in the White City* is currently one of the top ten non-fiction paperback books on the *New York Times* bestseller list and was a finalist for the 2003 National Book Awards. Larson is also the author of the acclaimed nonfiction bestseller *Isaac's Storm*, the story of a devastating hurricane that hit Galveston, Texas in 1900.

--**Elizabeth Berg**, a popular author of books about women's lives in transition, including *Open House*, which was selected by television personality Oprah Winfrey for her popular Book Club.

--**Catherine Gourley**, award-winning author and editor of books for both young adults and adults, who wrote three books that are part of the *American Girl* nonfiction series that is popular among young girls.

--**Robert E. Hartley**, a well-known former Illinois newspaper reporter whose most recent book is *Lewis & Clark in the Illinois Country: The Little-Told Story*. The book is the centerpiece of a statewide campaign to commemorate the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark expedition in libraries and museums.

Additionally, **Tom Joyce** of Home and Garden Television's "The Appraisal Fair" will return to appraise rare and old books from 10am-noon and 1pm-3pm. Joyce was a popular attraction at the 202 Book Fair.

All of the participating authors will autograph their books and personally meet with book lovers. The authors will present numerous workshops and panel discussions on subjects including mystery writing, fiction writing, writing children's books, self-help books, history, and biographies.

A special children's area will include storytellers, crafts, the Ansar Shrine clowns, games, face painting and puppet making. Patrons can browse or purchase books at an onsite bookstore, and there will be a raffle and silent auction.

On Friday evening March 26th, a fundraising dinner honoring participating Book Fair authors will be held in the atrium of the Library. Proceeds are used to expand the Library's collection of first edition works by Illinois authors and to support the work of the Illinois Center for the Book, which promotes reading and celebrates Illinois' rich literary heritage. Tickets for the dinner are \$100, half of which is tax deductible. Contact Carolyn Bodewes at cbodewes@ilsos.net or 217-782-0974 for information on both the Friday night dinner and Saturday's events.

The Illinois State Library, Gwendolyn Brooks Building is located at 300 South 2nd Street in downtown Springfield. Sponsors of the Illinois Authors Book Fair are the Illinois Humanities Council, LaSalle Bank, the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Illinois Arts Council.

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