

Desert Sun.

Rancho Mirage Writers Festival provides feasts for the brain, soul

Sandie Newton Special to The Desert Sun

Published 8:52 a.m. PT Sept. 30, 2022



Sandie Newton chats with Jamie Kabler, founder, chair and president of the Rancho Mirage Writers Festival, and Deborah C. Dejah, director of programming. POC

It's been called "Coachella for the Brain."

When **Jamie Kabler** started the **Rancho Mirage Writers Festival (RMWF)** back in 2014, he had no idea it would become one of the most popular and celebrated annual events in our valley. Over the years he has welcomed close to 100 award-winning writers to the desert to discuss their award-winning books.

Novels. Biographies. Autobiographies. Mysteries. Thrillers. Self-help. So many books written by so many esteemed authors. Kabler knew our community was hungry for more literary opportunities, so he created the Rancho Mirage writers series in addition to his annual festival. The writers series is now in full swing at our beautiful Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory.

"Our mission is to bring our readers a rich and diverse program with topics ranging from politics, history, humor, and health to genre and literary fiction," Kabler says. "Our writers are all experts in their fields, distinguished historians, respected journalists and gifted storytellers. Many are recipients of the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award and the Man Booker Prize as well as New York Times best-sellers."

If you are a passionate reader and love books, Kabler's events are feasts for the brain and soul.

"We gather over 1,000 readers from around the globe to Rancho Mirage each January for our writers festival, and now with our writers series we love adding more events for book lovers to experience these stimulating conversations with world renowned authors," Kabler says.

The literary love feasts are underwritten by generous angels who appreciate the power and impact of the written word. The series events are all free, and the first 200 in attendance receive the authors books at no cost. For those out of the area or those not able to attend in person, both the writers series and the writers festival events are posted on YouTube allowing a worldwide audience to share this rich and unique local experience.

"Technologies have allowed us to share our events with a wider audience, and it's also a great way to go back and watch the conversations and book discussions over and over again," Kabler says. "Live streaming and sharing the content on the Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory YouTube channel has really enhanced our mission and purpose."



Congressman Adam Schiff and former Senator Barbara Boxer discuss his new book at the Rancho Mirage Writers Festival. POC

In addition to the festival and series events RMWF has a "student scholar" program which sponsors students in the Coachella Valley, along with their teachers, to attend the festival. They also sponsor exceptional college students from southern California universities, including USC, California State University San Bernardino and University of Irvine, to participate.

The festival also supports its partner, the Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory. A portion of the proceeds go to supporting its programs and improvements, and the foundation donated \$60,000 toward the cost of the glass façade that encloses the children's room, which becomes the Disney Room during the festival.

It's for these important and stimulating valley events that we award our **Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation Power of Community \$1,000 grant** to the Rancho Mirage Writers Festival to support and help keep the exceptional festival and series going strong in our valley.

"Join us," Kabler says. "We have books and authors covering diverse topics that will interest everyone in an intimate and engaging setting. Our free writers series is a great way to spend an afternoon boosting your brain."

Bravo to Kabler, his staff, volunteers and angels as they continue to bring world class literary events to our valley. The ninth Rancho Mirage Writers Festival does require advance ticketing and will be held Feb. 1-3, 2023, but you can experience the writers series events now at no cost. (Seats are limited.)