

NEWS RELEASE
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**12TH ANNUAL SUFFOLK VIRGINIA AUTHORS FESTIVAL
ANNOUNCES 2026 HEADLINER**

SUFFOLK, VA (February 18, 2026) Suffolk Tourism is pleased to announce that Joe Kenda—star of Investigation Discovery’s *Homicide Hunter* and one of America’s most recognizable true-crime voices—will headline the 12th Annual Suffolk Virginia Authors Festival (SVAF). A national bestselling author of both nonfiction and fiction, Kenda is known for gripping true-case accounts, as well as suspenseful novels. His featured festival appearance will include an in-depth interview, followed by book sales, signings, and meet-and-greet opportunities with attendees. The Suffolk Virginia Authors Festival is free and open to the public from 1 p.m. until 5 p.m. on Saturday, March 14, 2026, at the Suffolk Conference Center at the Hilton Garden Inn Suffolk Riverfront. This unique festival appeals to avid readers and aspiring writers alike, with events such as book signings, author meet and greets, author readings and moderated panel discussions. This popular event will feature 75+ best-selling authors of genres including Cozy and Traditional Mysteries, Romance, Suspense and Thriller, Sci-Fi and Fantasy, Paranormal and Supernatural, Horror, Steampunk, Detective, Action, Women’s Fiction, LGBTQIA, Short Stories and Anthologies, Historical Fiction, True Crime, Young Adult, Holiday, Children’s Literature, Poetry and Non-Fiction. For event details and to learn about the participating authors, visit SuffolkVaAuthorsFestival.com.

Joe Kenda is a retired homicide detective, television personality, and bestselling author best known as the star of Investigation Discovery’s *Homicide Hunter: Lt. Joe Kenda*. Over the course of two plus decades with the Colorado Springs Police Department, he investigated hundreds of homicide cases and ultimately retired as Commander of the Major Crimes Unit. Widely

respected for his sharp instincts, straightforward style, and remarkable clearance rate, Kenda became one of the nation's most recognizable true-crime voices.

Homicide Hunter ran for nine seasons and aired in 69 countries and territories worldwide, becoming one of Investigation Discovery's most successful and highest-rated programs. Since retiring from law enforcement, Kenda has continued to share his experiences through television, public appearances, and his writing. His books include *Killer Triggers*; *I Will Find You: Solving Killer Cases*; and *First Do No Harm*; as well as the suspense novel *All Is Not Forgiven*. Kerri Furey, esteemed broadcast journalist and public relations professional, will interview Kenda during the Festival's opening session.

12TH ANNUAL SUFFOLK VIRGINIA AUTHORS FESTIVAL

Venue: Suffolk Conference Center at the Hilton Garden Inn Suffolk Riverfront

100 E. Constance Rd. Suffolk, Virginia 23434

Event Schedule:

- 11:30 a.m.** **VIP Reception** (*Tickets Required – Sold Out*)
- 1:00 p.m.** **Suffolk Virginia Authors Festival Opens to the Public (Free)**
Throughout event Meet Authors, Book Signings, Book Purchases
 Coffee Lounge (Relax, read and socialize)
 Festival Merchandise Available for Purchase
- 1:15 p.m.** **Headliner Interview: Ret. Lt. Joe Kenda**
Interviewer: Kerri Furey
- 2:00 p.m.** **Moderated Panel Discussion:**
Page-Turning History: Mystery, Crime & Intrigue
Murder, secrets, and scandals aren't new. Discover how historical fiction writers create suspense in eras without DNA tests, cell phones, or modern forensics.

- 2:35 p.m.** **Author Readings:**
Pamela Brothers Denyes (*Poetry*)
Barry R. Beck, Jr. (*Children’s Literature*)
- 2:50 p.m.** **Moderated Panel Discussion:**
Creatures, Curses, & Crime Scenes
Solving crimes in worlds where anything—and anyone—is possible.
- 3:25 p.m.** **Author Readings:**
Lisa Dodson (*Romance & Suspense*)
Micki Bare (*Middle Grade Fantasy*)
- 3:40 p.m.** **Moderated Panel Discussion:**
Love, Fear, Magic & Murder
Blurring genre lines to create bold, boundary-breaking fiction.
- 4:15 p.m.** **Author Readings:**
Pamela K. Kinney (*Horror*)
Tasha Haight (*Children’s Literature*)
- 4:30 p.m.** **Moderated Panel Discussion:**
Dream to Draft to Deal
Navigating the Writing Journey.
- 5:00 p.m.** **Festival Concludes**
Save the Date for 13th Annual SVAF: March 13, 2027

The Suffolk Virginia Authors Festival is produced by Suffolk Tourism. Learn more about the event at www.suffolkvaauthorsfestival.com. Follow the event on Facebook: [SuffolkVaAuthorsFestival](https://www.facebook.com/SuffolkVaAuthorsFestival). Additional Suffolk information may be found at VisitSuffolkVa.com. Contact Suffolk Tourism at 757.514.4130 or VisitSuffolk@suffolkva.us for assistance.

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