



Photos by Ashlee Bratton of Ashography - See more photos at www.coloradoauthorshalloffame.org

Oh... what a night! 13 impactful Colorado Connected Authors were inducted into the Author's Hall of Fame

The Colorado Authors' Hall of Fame inducted 13 outstanding Colorado connected authors to the Colorado Author Hall of Fame to a sold-out crowd on Saturday, September 6th at the DoubleTree Hilton Denver Tech Center at the DoubleTree Hilton Denver Tech Center.

The Colorado Authors' Hall of Fame is the first in the nation to recognize and celebrate the breadth of work that authors exclusively brought forth. Collectively, they have sold over 60 million copies worldwide.

The Hall inducts new authors biennially every two years. The public is invited to nominate their favorite authors with ties to Colorado. Nominations will open again in late fall, 2026.

This years' Living Inductees, honored at the Induction Gala include bestselling and prolific authors:

- **Jim Butcher**
- **Jim Davidson**
- **Mary Ellen Gilliland**
- **Francine Mathews**
- **Linda Seger**
- **Oscar Sladek**
- **Tommy Spaulding**
- **Daniel Tyler**
- **Stephen White**
- **Rebecca Yarros**

The three Legacy Inductees included **Kent Haruf**, **Christy Eve Bennett**, and **Perry Eberhart** and were represented by family members.

The Author's Hall of Fame aims to recognize and cele-



brate outstanding authors with ties to Colorado. The new Inductees will join 50 authors who have already been inducted since 2019. One of the attendees said, "This is the finest collection of human beings that I have ever been surrounded by."

Before introducing Emcee Dom Testa, Judith Briles welcomed Susan Sweeney Lanam to accept the Community Achievement Award on behalf of Bob and Gerri Sweeney for being the Best Weekly in Colorado in Supporting Authors.

Inductee Oscar "Osi" Sladek shared part of his story as a young boy hidden by many from the Nazis. He brought the crowd to their feet with tears in their eyes as he broke into song. Adventure author Jim Davidson shared a story of how his father pushed him to hand pump a water well as a kid. Exhausted, he was encouraged to keep doing it... it will become easier. And then, the whoosh of the water could be heard. Davidson remained all that publishing a book is similar—it takes work.

Fantasy author Jim Butcher spoke out to all those who aspired to write, dropping nug-

gets of encouragement. When the program first started, the Hall's vice president Mara Purl introduced the winners of the Aspiring Authors Scholarships. Each hung on to Butcher's words as he spoke.

Legendary script writer and author Linda Seger reminded all, "You never walk alone." Producer and director Ron Howard uses her work as a guidebook in his films. Mary Ellen Gilliland glided the rapt audience to her discovery of Summit and her development of guidebooks to the region.

Michelle Kelly accepted for her brother Tommy Spaulding who was in Europe and shared a story of how she arrived in America with other adoptees, she to be adopted by the Spaulding family. When she was finally identified, Tommy as a new big brother burst forward, yelling out, "We got the best one," to the delight of her listeners.

Suspense and crime author Francine Mathews surprised all with a story of how her young son described her to a "show and tell" at his school. "My mom has curly blond hair, weighs 300 pounds, and likes to type." Francine also accepted for Boulder crime



fantasy author Rebecca Yarros shared her experience when she delivered the first pitch at Fenway Park three nights earlier where Fourth Wing Night was celebrated. Over 11,000 replica flight jackets

writer Stephen White who was unable to attend and revealed how the two had planned a story idea about a murder in the White House and were surprised to see the concept float onto TV this past year.

The three daughters of Kent Haruf shared how grateful they were for his belief in them and for the way he tended to his inner flame so that he can live on through the legacy of his heartfelt words. They revealed, "Our dad loved the magic of words. He loved the power of a good story. Dad was particularly delighted in overhearing one old farmer saying to another, "I may be a bachelor, but I got air conditioning."

Accepting for her grandmother Christy Eve Bennett newspaper columnist and girls fiction author was Cheri Johansen; and for Bennett's son Colorado ghost writer Perry Eberhart was his son Dan Eberhart. Both shared stories of that set the stage for the evening.

Wrapping up the evening,

flew into the hands of fans. On November 13, it's Fourth Wing Night at the Colorado Avalanches game.

About Colorado Authors Hall of Fame

Authors' Hall of Fame® strives to educate the people of Colorado and the country about the stories of the authors who shaped their works using their personal presence and the environment of our State with courage, leadership, intelligence, compassion, and creativity. Inductees are authors who've made a major impact on others with their words. The Authors' Hall of Fame® recognition endeavors to ensure their legacies never die. It was founded by Judith Briles.

The public is invited to visit the website. Nominations for the 2027 Induction will open in August of 2026. The public is invited to nominate outstanding authors. Read the criteria for nominations on the Hall's website, www.ColoradoAuthorsHallofFame.org.



Lexi Oberly, Susan Sweeney Lanam and Judith Briles



Michele Kelly



Linda Seger



Jim Butcher



Cheri Johansen