

MEDIA RELEASE
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**HEADLINERS FOR 5TH ANNUAL
SUFFOLK MYSTERY AUTHORS FESTIVAL ANNOUNCED**

SUFFOLK, VA (January 25, 2018): The Suffolk Division of Tourism is pleased to announce that best-selling authors and good friends **Charlaine Harris** and **Toni L.P. Kelner** will be the Co-Headliners for the 5th Annual Suffolk Mystery Authors Festival, slated for Saturday, August 4, 2018, at the Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts. A partnership between the SCCA and Suffolk Tourism, this unique festival appeals to avid readers and aspiring writers alike, with events such as book signings, author meet & greets, workshops, and moderated panel discussions. In addition to the headliners, this popular annual event will feature an additional 38 best-selling authors of mystery, suspense, paranormal, horror, romance and women's fiction. Applications to be a Featured Author are now being accepted until April 2. In addition to kicking off the Opening Session, Harris and Kelner will be signing their latest titles during the afternoon signing sessions, along with all Featured Authors.

Charlaine Harris is a #1 *New York Times* bestselling author who has been writing for over thirty years. She launched a lighthearted series "starring" Georgia librarian Aurora Teagarden, with *Real Murders*, a Best Novel nominee for the 1990 Agatha Awards, and wrote eight Aurora titles. Harris also created The Sookie Stackhouse urban fantasy series about a telepathic waitress who works in a bar in the fictional Northern Louisiana town of Bon Temps. The first of these, *Dead Until Dark*, won the Anthony Award for Best Paperback Mystery in 2001. Each book follows Sookie as she tries to solve mysteries involving vampires, werewolves, and other

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supernatural creatures. The series, which ended in 2013, has been released in over thirty languages. Sookie Stackhouse proved to be so popular that Alan Ball, creator of *Six Feet Under*, announced he would undertake the production of a new show for HBO based upon the books. He wrote and directed the pilot episode for that series, *True Blood*, which premiered in September of 2008. It was an instant success and went on for seven wildly popular seasons. Harris currently writes a series set in the small town of Midnight, Texas. She is a member of the Mystery Writers of America (MWA), the American Crime Writers League, Sisters in Crime, and the International Crime Writers Association. She is a past member of the boards of Sisters in Crime and MWA, and she has served as president of the MWA. She is also a member of Science Fiction Writers of America, Horror Writers Association, and Romance Writers of America. Harris has been married for many years and is the mother of three children and the grandmother of two. She lives in central Texas, and when she is not writing her own books, she reads voraciously. Her house is full of rescue dogs.

Toni L.P. Kelner is the best-selling author of eleven mystery novels: eight Laura Fleming mysteries and three "Where are they now?" mysteries. She is also the author of numerous short stories. Kelner won the Agatha Award for Best Short Story for "Sleeping With The Plush," and a Romantic Times BOOKreviews Career Achievement Award for Mystery Series in 2002. She has also been nominated multiple times for the Anthony, the Macavity, and the Derringer awards. As Leigh Perry, she writes the popular Family Skeleton series for Berkley Prime Crime. Kelner is a member of the Horror Writers Association, American Crime Writers League, Sisters in Crime, International Thriller Writers, Mystery Writers of America, Science Fiction & Fantasy Writers of America, Short Mystery Fiction Society, and Femmes Fatales. Although born in Pensacola, Florida, and raised in Charlotte, North Carolina, Kelner has been living north of Boston, Massachusetts, for more than 25 years. She lives with her husband, two daughters, two guinea pigs and a "ludicrous" selection of books.

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Together, Harris and Kelner have co-edited a series of very popular urban fantasy anthologies. The most recent are *Games Creatures Play* and *Dead But Not Forgotten*. The anthologies feature stories with an element of the supernatural, and the submissions come from a rare mix of mystery and urban fantasy writers.

To learn more about the Suffolk Mystery Authors Festival, please contact the Suffolk Visitor Center at 757-514-4130, visit www.SuffolkMysteryAuthorsFestival.com or like us on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/SuffolkMysteryAuthorsFestival.

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