

READING, PA – The Oct. 3 Story Lane Book Fair and Market at the Reading Public Library is bringing together the best not only in local literature, but also nationally renowned authors as well.

The book fair's organizers, Barrio Alegria and the Reading Public Library, announced Monday the celebration of literature will feature award winning authors from across the region and nation, including poet, author, and performer Javier Ávila.

Ávila has published nine books of poetry and fiction and has performed his one-man show, "The Trouble with My Name," in over 100 cities across the country.

Ávila has received the William Aguilar Cultural Award from the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education; 2016 Hispanic Leader of the Year Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce; the Poetry Award from Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña; and the Olga Nolla Poetry Award, among other accolades.

Ávila is slated to give his keynote remarks at 4 p.m. inside the library, after poetry workshops and a panel discussion on publishing for aspiring authors.

Anthony Orozco, director of operations for Barrio Alegria, said having Ávila and the other others to the book fair is a testament to the power of telling stories from diverse communities.

"Bringing this sort of talent, especially during Hispanic Heritage Month in a city with such a proud Puerto Rican history, is really monumental," Orozco said. "This is more than a keynote speaker presentation, this is acknowledging where we are in our journey as a community and our abilities as literary creators."

Ávila joins local award winning authors at the book fair, such as Lizette Epps, winner of the 2024 BookFest Book Awards' Non-fiction Category in Society & Social Sciences on Race, Class, Culture, & Religion; and Laurel Radzieski, who won the 2026 Halcyon Award for Poetry.

Entry to the book fair is free and open to the public and will feature children activities in the early afternoon and a market with food trucks, performances, and local vendors selling their works and other items for bookworms of all interests.

Story Lane starts at 1 p.m. inside the library, with the outdoor market beginning at 4 pm. While the library closes at 6 pm, the outdoor night market continues until 9 pm. Organizers remind attendees that on-street parking is free after 6 p.m. and the 4th & Cherry Streets Reading Parking Authority garage is conveniently located right across the street from the bustle of the market.

Daniel Egusquiza, community engagement supervisor for the Reading Public Library, has been integral in crafting the book fair based on community input.

According to Egusquiza, among the many reasons to read books is a special gem of the human spirit – recognizing the beauty of our lives and their potential.

“When local authors write about streets, families, losses and small miracles they have experienced, they do more than tell a story; they give us a chance to encounter ourselves in language,” Egusquiza said. “Perhaps that is our obligation. Not merely to make room for books to be sold, but for our people to see our lives written down, passed on and understood.”