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South Florida's 'Literary Mecca' returns

Twenty-nine years of Miami Book Fair International have offered up a range of unforgettable moments. The world's most esteemed authors have made the Fair, as Tom Wolfe put it years ago, the "Literary Mecca of the western world." But one image stands out for me beyond all the others: A young child, oblivious to the crowds milling past him, huddled over his book and traveling in some wondrous new world.

That young child is one of more than 25,000 children who are touched by our event each year, a new generation growing up with the love of reading and writing. And, the Book Fair will never disappoint them, offering a first-hand, wide-eyed chat with Mr. Lemony Snicket himself, stages for storytelling, puppet shows and plays that engage and inspire them.

Back in 1983, there were many who doubted that the Miami community would support a Book Fair. A vacation playground, certainly, but hardly a literary hotspot. Well, we have proven the naysayers wrong, and this week Miami is vibrating with books and authors, and we are the absolute center of the literary world.

Miami Dade College is proud to host the Book Fair each year. Like the college, which is so much a part of the community, the Book Fair belongs to you. The best is yet to come as the Street Fair rolls out the colored tents this weekend, offering thousands of books, hundreds of booksellers and publishers and more than 450 authors. See you at the fair.

Madeline Pumariega, president, Miami Dade College,

Wolfson Campus, Miami

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