

## Authors:

**Natalie Peeterse** is the co-author of the graphic novel *Thunderous*, which won a High Plains Book Award in 2023. Her poetry chapbook *Black Birds : Blue Horse, An Elegy* won the Gold Line Press Poetry Prize in 2011. A second poetry chapbook, *Dreadful : Luminosity, Letters*, was published by Educe Press in the spring of 2017. She was included in *I Go to the Ruined Place: Contemporary Poems in Defense of Global Human Rights* (Lost Horse Press), and several other anthologies. She has an MFA from the University of Montana and has been a fellow with the Arizona Commission on the Arts, a participant at the Squaw Valley Community of Writers, an artist in residence at the Caldera Institute, a participant in the 2018 US Poets in Mexico in Merida, Yucatan and most recently a Visiting Scholar at the University of Washington's Whiteley Center at the Friday Harbor Laboratories. She is a recipient of the 2013 Artist Innovation Award by the Montana Arts Council. She lives in Helena, Montana.

**Almedia Ryan** was born and raised in Southeast Texas, spending most of her early years barefoot and exploring the outdoors. Her love of nature took her to the beautiful state of Montana, where she now lives with her husband, two children, and a spoiled rotten husky named Boulder. She used her education of art and dance to teach art to special needs students and as a performance arts choreographer for public schools. After one too many dance injuries, she left teaching and hung up her dancing shoes so she could dive back into another passion—writing.

**M.L. Smoker** is Nakoda, Dakota and Lakota, a citizen of the Fort Peck Tribe. She served as Montana poet laureate from 2019-2021. She received an MFA from the University of Montana. In 2019 she was recognized as an alumna of the year and an honorary doctorate in 2023 from the University. Her first collection of poems, *Another Attempt at Rescue*, was published by Hanging Loose Press in 2005, with a new collection debuting in 2025. She also co authored a children's graphic novel entitled *Thunderous* (2022). She received a regional Emmy award for her work as a writer/consultant on the PBS documentary *Indian Relay*. She served as the Director of Indian Education for the state of Montana for ten years, was appointed to the National Advisory Council on Indian Education by President Barack Obama and currently works at the non-profit, Education Northwest, providing guidance and support for Indigenous education efforts around the country.

**M.H. Van Keuren** once quit a perfectly good job to write science fiction in Montana. He is the author of 5 books, including *Rhubarb, Gnatz!*, and *Trash: A Love Story*. His trilogy, the Vanilla Cycle, includes *Legitimacy*, *Belief*, and the soon to be published *Impetus*. He lives with his wife in Billings.

**Lloyd Watson** is the pen name used by Dr. Scott Stephens, a Pediatrician, Hospitalist, and Palliative Care Physician. Feeling a need to make his life more complicated, he decided his lifelong hobby of writing Sci-fi and fantasy should become a profession. His first published novel, *Champion of the Goddess*, was released in 2024. He resides in Billings with his talented wife, artful daughter, and a Great Pyrenees that dominates too much of his time and furniture.

## Presenters & Groups:

**The 501st Legion and the Mandalorian Mercs:** "...The 501st Legion is an international costuming organization dedicated to celebrating STAR WARS™ through the creation and use of quality costumes that portray the villainous, morally ambiguous, or non-partisan characters from the STAR WARS™ universe. The Legion promotes interest in STAR WARS and facilitates the use of these costumes for STAR WARS-related events as well as contributes to the local community through costumed charity and volunteer work..." -Article I of the 501st Legion charter "...The 501st Legion is an international costuming organization dedicated to celebrating STAR WARS™ through the creation and use of quality costumes that portray the villainous, morally ambiguous, or non-partisan characters from the STAR WARS™ universe. The Legion promotes interest in STAR WARS and facilitates the use of these costumes for STAR WARS-related events as well as contributes to the local community through costumed charity and volunteer work..." -Article I of the 501st Legion charter

**The Mandalorian Mercs:** The Mandalorian Mercs Costume Club is an international STAR WARS™ costuming organization dedicated to celebrating the STAR WARS™ universe through the creation, display, and wearing of quality character costumes that represent the Mandalorian characters and culture from the STAR WARS™ sagas.

The MMCC unites individuals with a common love for STAR WARS™ and the Mandalorian culture/characters while encouraging self-improvement, personal growth, family involvement, and fellowship with peers.

The MMCC promotes interest in STAR WARS™ and facilitates the use of these costumes for STAR WARS™-related events as well as contributing to the local community through costumed charity and volunteer work. -from the Mandalorian Mercs charter

**Bradley Steffan Taylor:** 3D Printing Advice for Nerds.

**Briah Ard** is a high school student at Laurel High School with a passion for art and reading. She is the founder of her schools sci-fi club and enjoys watching and reading sci-fi and fantasy stories. She is currently studying graphic design and is excited to implement her skills for this program.

**Jennifer Ard** is a professional illustrator that lives in Laurel, MT. She grew up watching Star Trek with her dad and loves playing OG Mario. She loves all things geeky, is excited to make art, and can't wait to see the creative things the kids are going to make.

Jennifer and Briah will present **Personalized Paper Action Figure Funko!** During this program kids will get to design their own paper action figure Funko character(s) to take home. They will have the option to choose between a few different characters, design their own suit and accessories. They can mix and match or create their own.

**The Council of Westmarch-A Montana Smial of The Tolkien Society:** The Council of Westmarch (TCofW) is a Montana-based, not-for-profit group dedicated to the appreciation and study of the works of J.R.R. Tolkien, and is an official Smial of the UK Tolkien Society. TCofW meets regularly (typically monthly) to discuss and celebrate Professor Tolkien's writings in a spirit of fellowship, and strives to promote interest in his works. We also have celebratory events, public engagements, and participate in larger community events when applicable.

**The Free Little Library Project** is a self funded project focusing on access to literature, mutual aid and art. We believe books should be accessible to all, so we give our Free Little Libraries to their host for free and completely stocked with books. Each Free Little Library is its own art piece and no two libraries are the same! If you'd like to host a Free Little Library follow us on Facebook or Instagram and send us a message!

**Haan Puppets:** Samantha Pfeifer started making puppets while attending college at Rocky Mountain College. She immediately fell in love with the craft. She started making puppets under her business name Haan Puppets. Since then, she has made countless puppets, taught many kids about puppets, and has been a puppet master for a handful of shows both in Billings and beyond. Her next project is working with local non-profit businesses to put on puppet shows for kids. Follow her Instagram @HaanPuppets to get updates on her latest work.

**Riley Olsen:** Riley, a Historical Wargamer, has been an avid gamer since he was little, and has been a player and proponent of historical wargames in the last five years. He has played and hosted games across the country, and hopes to expand the hobby. Riley believes that beyond being a great time to spend with friends, gaming historical battles allows us insight into the decisions and lives of soldiers and commanders across history.

**Pikachu!** Ace is a local software developer nerd and father of two little ones who love Pokemon, along with his wife Kirsten love to do family themed costumes. Be on the lookout for a sleeping Snorlax, a confused Psyduck, a fiery Charmander, and a very large Pikachu.

**Wise Wonders** is excited to see you at Library Con. Join our 14-18 year old Robotics team to make your very own catapult with Dr. Nefario and the Minions.

Our mission at Wise Wonders Science and Discovery Museum is to engage curious, creative, and scientific minds in a playful learning environment for all children and families. Central to this mission is supporting STEM education through fun and interactive exhibits that support learning through play. Come see us Tuesday through Saturday 10am-5pm @ 30242nd Ave North.

**Billings Best Balloons:** Hello! My name is Violet Mentzer. My husband and I have been making balloon art in the Billings Community for close to a decade. I specialize in large scale decor and entertainment, and am always up for trying something new!

## **Vendors' Room:**

**AntiSewcial:** Unique, unconventional, and imaginative handcrafted bags and accessories for the discerning individual.

**Dandelion Fluff Leather:** At Dandelion Fluff Leather, I love to create a variety of handmade leather items. I make a variety of items from gaming and cosplay products to leather purses and custom pieces. Come see me for masks, arm bracers and more for all your hero or villain needs.

**Faeries For Nature** loves to celebrate nature! I make and sell a wide variety of fairytale woodland jewelry type gifts, including anime, games, cosplay items and more! Hand crafted items made by myself, to regular merchandise. I like to offer unique, one of a kind, inspirational items that will leave you dreaming. I often take custom orders. Find me at [www.faeriesfornature.com](http://www.faeriesfornature.com)

**Evermore Hobbies** sells a variety of items such as figures, posters, plushies, jewelry, even stickers. We love what we sell and love to talk about that figure or poster you might buy from us. From anime to movies and more. We are Geeks and know it!

**Rainy Day Geekery:** Hi, I'm Kristi, the maker behind Rainy Day Geekery, and I have been making geektastic, fandom-related goodies since 2012. I am passionate about creating vinyl decals for people to personalize their spaces. I also create cute custom handbags, whimsical book sleeves, and sew other items made from quirky, unique fabric you won't find in any big box store.

**The Splash Page:** Billings Longest Running and Best Comic and Gaming Store. For 30 years we've specialized in all things comics, table top games, Pokemon and Magic the Gathering.

**This House of Books** is an independent bookstore cooperative based in downtown Billings. We carry all genres, as well as book-adjacent gifts like journals, puzzles, pens, and bookmarks, but we specialize in local and regional authors, including many who live right here in Billings!

**The Yarny Cat Girl:** Hi. I am Cierrah Rehard, owner of The Yarny Cat Girl. I make handmade items out of yarn such as hat, scarves, gloves, etc.

## **The Friends of Billings Public Library**

## **Food:**

- **The Corn Dog Company**
- **The Stomping Grounds**

*Thank you to the Friends of Billings Public Library & to Art's Paper &  
Paint for their support of our 2024 Library Con!*