

# Rhode Island Center for the Book



At Rhode Island Council for the Humanities

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**Contact:** Kate Lentz  
Director, RI Center for the Book  
401-273-2250  
kate@ribook.org

## **Rhode Island Center for the Book Announces** **2016 Reading Across Rhode Island Title: *The Wright Brothers* by David McCullough**

**PROVIDENCE, RI** –*Reading Across Rhode Island*, Rhode Island’s One Book, One State community read program kicks off its 14<sup>th</sup> year by inviting everyone to join in the reading of *The Wright Brothers* by Pulitzer Prize-winning author David McCullough with this year’s honorary co-chairs, **Governor Gina Raimondo** and **First Gentleman Andy Moffit**. *Reading Across Rhode Island* is a project of the **Rhode Island Center for the Book at the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities**, made possible through a vibrant collaboration of librarians, teachers, book group leaders and readers from across the state.

“*The Wright Brothers* describes the process of innovation and invention that created an entire industry and made the world more accessible for all people. This book is a great catalyst for tapping and inspiring potential innovation in our state,” stated **Governor Gina Raimondo**, “We are pleased to join the Rhode Island Center for the Book and readers across the state in this shared experience of reading and discussing together.”

The 2016 program runs from January through May with readers in Rhode Island classrooms, libraries, bookstores and book groups invited to join discussions and participate in local community events such as lectures, exhibits and dramatic interpretations centered on this year’s selection. **Programming begins with a kick-off event on January 30<sup>th</sup> from 2:00-4:00 pm at the Tiverton Public Library in Tiverton, RI.**

“We are honored to welcome such a distinguished author and historian to Rhode Island,” said **First Gentleman Andy Moffit** of author David McCullough, “and we look forward to engaging the statewide community in a conversation around such a uniquely American story of the tenacious pursuit of ambition.”

### **About This Year’s Book**

Two-time Pulitzer winner, New York Times-bestselling author, and master historian David McCullough brings to vivid life two of the most iconic figures in American history in *The Wright Brothers*. Regarded by many in their time as mere “bicycle mechanics,” Wilbur and Orville Wright were in reality self-taught geniuses of truly exceptional capacity of mind,

pioneering scientific explorers, and extraordinary exemplars of the American character. McCullough tells a great American story that has never before been told as it should, deeply exploring the character as well as the technical achievements of the men who taught the world how to fly.

**David McCullough** has twice received the Pulitzer Prize, for *Truman* and *John Adams*, and twice received the National Book Award, for *The Path Between the Seas* and *Mornings on Horseback*. His other widely acclaimed books are *1776*, *Brave Companions*, *The Great Bridge*, *The Johnstown Flood*, and *The Greater Journey*. He is the recipient of numerous awards and honors, including the National Book Foundation Distinguished Contribution to American Letters Award, the Francis Parkman Prize (which he won twice), the *Los Angeles Times* Book Award, the National Humanities Medal, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award. He has been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, as well as the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and has received more than forty honorary degrees.

“I feel immensely pleased and honored that my book, *The Wright Brothers*, has been chosen for Reading Across Rhode Island,” remarked **David McCullough** in a video introduction on the RI Center for the Book website, “I feel strongly that the book has much to say about values and the importance of reading and of libraries to a good education.”

“David McCullough’s historical work provides an exciting opportunity to connect with new classrooms and nonfiction readers throughout the state,” stated **Kate Lentz, Director of the Rhode Island Center for the Book**, “McCullough’s telling of the Wright Brothers’ story engages readers with history and connects to important themes in our lives today.”

**Come On and Read With Us: Reading Across Rhode Island Kicks Off on January 30<sup>th</sup> from 2:00-4:00 pm at the Tiverton Public Library, Tiverton, RI**

Readers are invited to attend this year’s Reading Across RI kick-off for an engaging introduction to the book’s themes. Steven Lubar, professor of American studies at Brown University, will present "Connecting with the Wright Brothers," exploring Orville and Wilbur’s connections to important people and places in their lives and also suggesting ways that we might connect with them now. Professor Lubar’s research focuses on the history of museums and the history of technology. Before coming to Brown, he was curator of the history of technology at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. Living Literature, a collective of Rhode Island based artists and educators who teach literature through a unique and imaginative process, will also perform a dramatic fifteen-minute interpretation of McCullough’s book.

The kick-off will give book group leaders an introduction to resources and materials provided through Reading Across RI to catalyze interesting discussions.

**Other Planned Events:** Join us for An Afternoon With David McCullough on May 21<sup>st</sup> at The Robert J. Shapiro Arts Center, Toll Gate High School. Registration for this event will be available on the Rhode Island Center for the Book website in March. Look for other upcoming book-related events throughout the year at [ribook.org](http://ribook.org)

Sets of books are available for loan to classroom teachers, library discussion groups and senior centers by contacting [kate@ribook.org](mailto:kate@ribook.org). Further reading lists, book discussion guides, the author’s website, audio interviews and other supplementary material may be found on the Rhode Island Center for the Book website at [ribook.org](http://ribook.org).

**Rhode Island Center for the Book at the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities** is a statewide organization devoted to promoting personal and community enrichment by celebrating the art and heritage of reading, writing, making, and sharing books. Founded in 2003, the RI Center for the Book is the state affiliate of the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress and is hosted by the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities. The Humanities Council's mission is to seed, support, and strengthen public history, cultural heritage, civic education, and community engagement by and for all Rhode Islanders. <http://www.ribook.org>

**PHOTOS ATTACHED:**

*The Wright Brothers* Book Cover; Author David McCullough

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