

# AURELIO'S PIZZA OF NAPLES

## Now Open New Location!

6270 Naples Blvd Naples, FL  
 Across from Costco • Next to Crumbl Cookies

**239-403-8882**

**Take Out and Delivery**

Call us, or Order online at

[www.aureliospizza.com/location/naples](http://www.aureliospizza.com/location/naples)



THE FAMILY PIZZERIA  
 SINCE 1959

ND-41296917



**Purchase a Large 1-Topping Pizza & get a Small Dinner Salad for FREE!**

Must mention ad when ordering  
 available Mon-Fri thru 3/7/25

# NEAPOLITAN

+ LIFESTYLE & CLASSIFIED

## Conan O'Brien reveals why he's hosting Oscars

**Bryan Alexander**  
 USA TODAY

Conan O'Brien has revealed the real reason that he's hosting the Oscars. The two-time Emmy Awards host has never been allowed to even attend the prestigious film awards.



O'Brien

"I've never even been invited, to be honest," O'Brien said of the Oscars during a news conference for the awards show's creative team on Wednesday. "I only agreed to host so that I could get invited."

The former late-night host and "Conan O'Brien Needs a Friend" podcast host has ensured not only attendance but that he'll be master of ceremonies at the 97th Academy Awards today, March 2 (ABC 7 p.m. ET/4 PT). O'Brien, 61, is in the spirit, helping to roll out the famed Oscar red carpet (before lying down on the rolled-up carpet).

### The 2025 Oscars will delve into politics and honor Los Angeles after the wildfires

O'Brien says he will address the challenging political climate during the awards, but the show will not get bogged down in divisive jokes, given its focus on great movies and entertainment.

"As the host, I cannot ignore the moment we're in," O'Brien said. "But we're threading the needle, and we have to remember what we're celebrating and infuse the show with positivity. It's a difficult line to walk, but I'm determined to figure it out."

The show will have "uplifting" moments dedicated to Los Angeles after January's devastating fires, according to executive producer Raj Kapoor.

"There will be special moments throughout the show," he said. "That's a very important theme."

O'Brien said he even had LA tailor High Society make his tuxedo for the night, which he has lobbied unsuccessfully to keep.

"We wanted to do something that was from the community. It's the nicest thing I have ever put on in my life," said O'Brien. "It has my name on the inside, but I'm still told I won't be able to keep it. I'm 6-foot-4. Is John Tesh going to get it?"

### Conan O'Brien has consulted past Oscar hosts, and one stuck him with a dinner bill

O'Brien said he has consulted past Oscar hosts, including nine-time host Billy Crystal.

"He's the all-time great and mastered hosting the Oscars, in my opinion," O'Brien said.

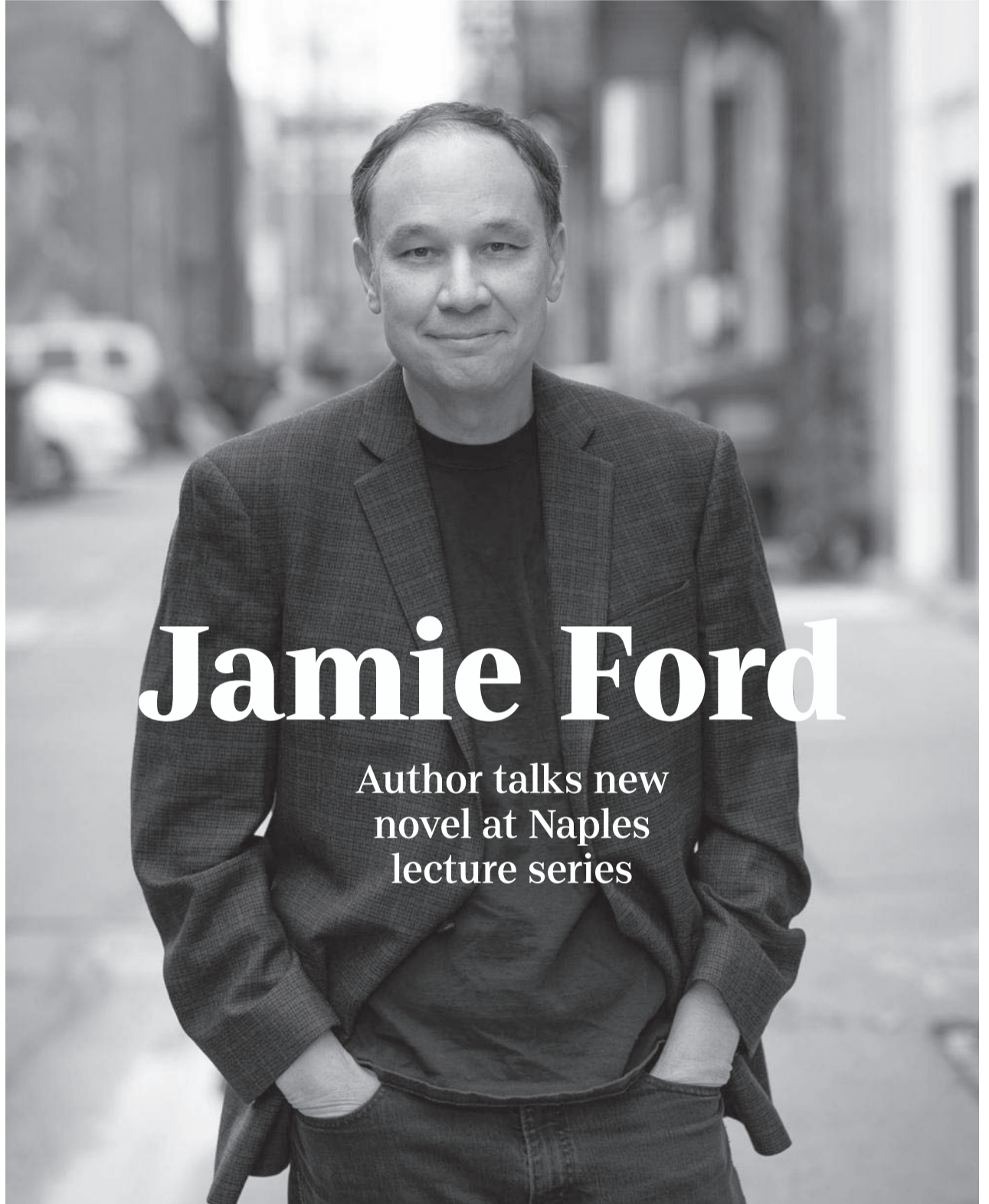
He claims his talk with Jimmy Kimmel went poorly after the four-time Oscars host insisted on going to an expensive restaurant, ordered pricey seafood appetizers "and stuck me with the bill."

However, Molly McNearney, Kimmel's wife, who wrote for the Oscars when Jimmy hosted, pitched great ideas.

"Molly is the genius there," said O'Brien. "There was a lot of chewing from Jimmy, crab claws were flying. He took some of it home. He brought a bucket with him."

### Taylor Swift's tour choreographer Mandy Moore promises more dance energy

Mandy Moore, the choreographer for Taylor Swift's Eras Tour, oversaw the unforgettable "I'm Just Ken" routine at the 2024 Oscars with Ryan Gosling. While Moore won't be bringing "Kenergy" back, the choreographer promised "really great performances and a lot of joy" in Sunday's routines.



# Jamie Ford

Author talks new novel at Naples lecture series

Jamie Ford, author of such best-sellers as "The Many Daughters of Afong Moy" and "Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet," will speak in the Nick Linn Series for the Friends of the Library of Collier County in Naples on March 10. ERIC HEIDLE/PROVIDED BY FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY OF COLLIER COUNTY

### Vicky Bowles

Special to the Daily News

Remember that boy in school who cried at sad movies? He grew up to be Jamie Ford, the acclaimed novelist whose love stories and historical fiction have sold more than 2 million copies and been translated into 35 languages.

Now, that author of the epic tale "The Many Daughters of Afong Moy" will be in Naples on Monday, March 10, in the 22nd Annual Nick Linn Series for the Friends of the Library of Collier County. (The series is sold out but see the info box to learn about the Friends and next year's series.)

The nonprofit Friends of the Library is set this year to donate \$238,000 to support the 10 branches of the Collier County Public Library system, funding such items as the Children's Summer Reading Program, the genealogy research databases, the Mail-a-Book program and the acquisition of e-books.

### New novel goes from mid-19th century to 2045

Ford's writing prompts reviewers to use words like tender, powerful, heartfelt. His debut novel, "Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet," was named the #1 Book Club pick in 2010 by the American Booksellers Association.

"I've always been super sentimental," he told Publishers Weekly in a 2022 interview. "I was emo before emo was a term. I've tried writing stories that aren't love stories, but they just want to be there, so I shamelessly lean into it."

His latest novel, "The Many Daughters of Afong Moy" stretches from the mid-19th century to the future, the year 2045. Afong Moy was a real person, believed to be the first female Chinese immigrant in the U.S. She was brought to New York City as a teenager by American merchants who likely bought her from her family and was exhibited around the country as a curiosity because of her tiny, bound feet and traditional Chinese clothing.

Ford's book fictionalizes seven generations of women who descend from Moy, each seeking love and a secure place in their changing worlds. His themes include inherited trauma and ancestral pain, as well as the concept of epigenetics — which posits that we not only inherit physical characteristics like hair color and eye color, but also behavioral and psychological traits that impact how we react to pain and to other people.

A California native who was raised in Seattle and now lives in Montana, Ford has a special romantic attachment to libraries. Read on to find out why.

See FORD, Page 5D

Celebrate Save Your Vision Month

# FREE Cataract Screenings



239-396 3048

[SneadEye.com](http://SneadEye.com)

**SNEAD EYE GROUP**

Expertly Equipped · Perfectly Precise · Clearly Caring

# Ford

Continued from Page 1D

## His 'superpowers as an adult'

**Naples Daily News:** “The Many Daughters of Afong Moy” is so focused on mothers and daughters. How do you tune in your novelist imagination for that, as your online biography doesn't mention whether you have children?

**Jamie Ford:** Oh, I do have kids! My gray hairs won't let me forget! We're empty nesters now, but we raised a blended family of six children, including four daughters.

What it really comes down to — for me anyway — is a balance between imagination, curiosity and emotional intelligence. Growing up I was always a kid who couldn't turn my feelings off, I just felt everything so deeply, the good and bad. At the time I never saw this as an asset. I mean, girls aren't usually lining up to go to prom with the boy who cries at sad movies. But as an adult, especially as a storyteller, those things that I thought were my weaknesses as a boy are my superpowers as an adult.

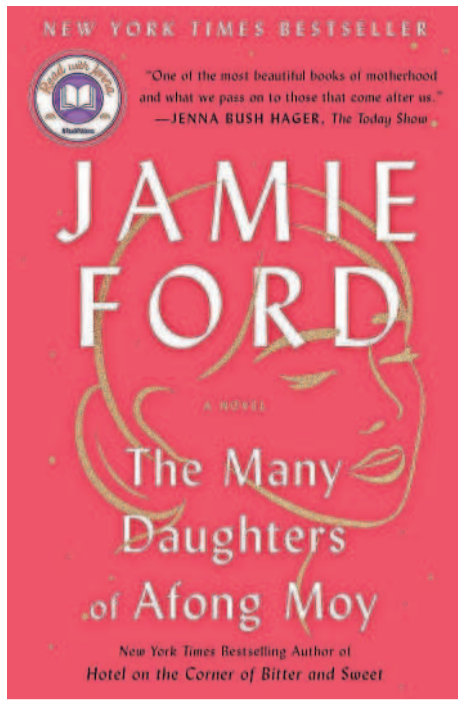
It also didn't hurt that I was primarily raised by my mom and my sister. And both of my grandmothers were larger-than-life matriarchs.

**NDN:** This novel explores being an immigrant or being multiracial and having a foot in two different worlds. Could you talk about how that's part of your own life, since your father's side has Chinese heritage and your mother's side descends from the Mayflower? (So really, they were immigrants, too!)

**JF:** This is something I struggled with most of my life growing up. I didn't feel Chinese enough, because I couldn't speak Cantonese like my dad, and I didn't feel white enough because people would often ask, “What are you?”

At the time, they always guessed that I was Indigenous, or more interestingly, Russian. I look back now and Russia was the great global enemy, so being equated with “Russia” was being recognized as not just different, but there was fear baked into that difference.

An example was back in high school when I volunteered to work a Haunted House. I was the Devil, complete with rubber mask, red cape, pitchfork — the whole deal. And while on break, I took my mask off and a girl said, “Wow, you really do look like the Devil.” What can I say? Even the Prince of Darkness needs to take a break and have a cookie and some orange juice.



PROVIDED BY JAMIE FORD

## Ford didn't set out to be historical fiction writer

**NDN:** Is a TV adaptation of “The Many Daughters of Afong Moy” still in the works, with Jenna Bush Hager as executive producer?

**JF:** It's still in the works! I've been down this path before, so I don't tend to get too excited this early in the game, because lots of books get optioned and scant few get produced. But I have read several versions of the pilot, which I love, and a very famous and extremely talented Asian American actress has been attached. So, hope is alive!

I have so much respect and admiration for Jenna and her team, including her producing partner. They're great, big-hearted people, doing great things and it's an honor work with them.

**NDN:** You're a big fan of the late, great sci-fi author Harlan Ellison, and with “Afong” you dipped into more of a speculative fiction realm. Do you plan in the future to write a full-on sci-fi or fantasy novel?

**JF:** Honestly, I didn't set out to be a writer of historical fiction, but because of the success of my first novel, “Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet,” I created that expectation, with readers, my publisher, and to some degree, myself. But I've always felt that speculative fiction is my mother tongue, it's where my imagination goes, so I do plan on weaving both historical and speculative ele-

ments into future books. It just gives me a bigger box of crayons to work with.

Also, with artificial intelligence encroaching on the publishing ecosystem, a way to rise above that is to write things that are radically original — things that no one has ever thought of before — and if they haven't been thought of and written down, they haven't been pirated into an AI, yet.

**NDN:** Because the Friends of the Library supports our public libraries, could you share any memories or anecdotes of the role libraries have played in your life?

**JF:** I love this question. Because I met my wife at that hotbed of swinging singles activity known as ... the public library. It wasn't singles night at the library. It wasn't speed-dating night. It was just the Great Falls Public Library in all its bookish splendor. This was before I'd sold a book, signed with an agent, before all of that, so it's kind of magical that I now write full time, and the public library has played such a pivotal role in my journey. Also, a year later, I proposed in a bookstore.

Ford's website is <https://jamieford.com/>

## 22nd Annual Nick Linn Series

**What:** Author lectures and luncheons that raise funds for the Collier County Public Library system. The series is sold out for this year.

**Where:** The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort, 2600 Tiburon Drive, North Naples

**2025 author lineup:** **Kate Quinn**, Monday, Jan. 13; **William Kent Krueger**, Monday, Feb. 17; **Jamie Ford**, Monday, March 10; and **Lisa Gardner**, Monday, March 24.

**Join the Friends:** Friends memberships begin at \$40/year and also provide access and discounts to other programs. To become a Friends member and get information about next year's series, go to <https://collier-friends.org/events/nick-linn-series/> or contact Marlene Haywood, Operations and Events Manager, at [mhaywood@collier-friends.org](mailto:mhaywood@collier-friends.org) or 239-262-8135.

## FAITH LUTHERAN CONCERT SERIES

# 2025 Upcoming Events



**Youth Haven**

**Tuesday, March 4**  
**Meal 5:30 p.m. | Concert 6:30 p.m.**  
**Fat Tuesday Meal & Nuclear Jazz Sextet**

*featuring SWFL local ensemble, The Nuclear Jazz Sextet. Prepare to be blown away by the incredible talent of these musicians. There will also be a traditional Fat Tuesday (Mardi Gras) meal of pancakes and gumbo served at 5:30 p.m.*

**In partnership to raise funds for Youth Haven, a SWFL organization providing safe haven for at-risk children & teens**

All Faith Lutheran Concert Series performances and events are free and open to the public

Faith Lutheran Church Naples | 4150 Goodlette Road N | [flcnaples.com](http://flcnaples.com)

# Resort-Style Living.

## LIFELONG PEACE OF MIND.

**THE TERRACES AT BONITA SPRINGS** offers luxury retirement living, where unmatched hospitality and personalized services set a new standard in Southwest Florida.

With our Life Care contract, enjoy carefree independence today, knowing you've secured access to a full continuum of on-site care—all at predictable monthly fees for life.

LIVE CONFIDENTLY, COMFORTABLY, AND WITHOUT WORRY.

CALL 239-494-5610