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**FOX CITIES BOOK FESTIVAL TO HOST SPEAKER AND LAWRENCE FOOTBALL COACH MARK  
SPECKMAN AT FUNDRAISER**

APPLETON, Wisconsin (March 11, 2016) – To raise funds and boost awareness for its ninth annual festival, the Fox Cities Book Festival will hold a fundraiser on Tuesday, March 29, 2016, at 6:30 p.m. at Riverview Gardens in Appleton featuring inspirational speaker and Lawrence University football coach, Mark Speckman.

Speckman brings over 35 years of coaching experience to his new role as Offensive Coordinator for the Lawrence University football team, a position he took in May 2015. His career as an inspirational speaker, however, stems from the fact that Speckman was born without hands. At speaking events around the country, he shares his life stories with a message that no challenge is insurmountable. Speckman is also the author of *Figure It Out: How I Learned to Live in a Digital World Without Digits*, published in 2012 and currently in its second edition.

According to Ruth Bloedow, Co-Chair of the Fox Cities Book Festival, Speckman's powerful story makes him a perfect fit for the fundraiser. "As Mark shares his experience living without hands, he is heartwarming, humorous and always deeply inspiring," Bloedow said. "The Book Fest has always been about bringing people together to celebrate storytelling, and Mark proves that a truly compelling story can have a big impact no matter the context."

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BOOK FEST FUNDRAISER SPECKMAN, cont.

For Speckman, participating in the fundraiser is a chance to engage a community that he's found welcoming from day one. "As a new resident of Appleton, I'm continually amazed at how much people do in the Fox Cities in support of one another," Speckman said. "I know the Book Fest does a lot to create a strong community, and I'm proud to support it in any way I can."

Tickets for the fundraiser cost \$25 and are available for purchase online at [www.foxcitiesbookfestival.org](http://www.foxcitiesbookfestival.org), at the event itself, or by mailing a check to Fox Cities Book Festival, P.O. Box 1014, Appleton, WI 54912-1014. The fundraiser will take place at Riverview Gardens, located at 1101 S. Oneida St. in Appleton, with doors opening at 6:30 p.m. Participants are invited to enjoy a cash bar and live music before Speckman's talk at 7:00 p.m. Time for questions and answers will follow the talk, and Speckman's book will be available for purchase.

The Fox Cities Book Festival will host over 60 authors from around the country at this year's festival, taking place at locations throughout the Fox Cities from April 18 to 24. Details can be found at [www.foxcitiesbookfestival.org](http://www.foxcitiesbookfestival.org). To learn more about Mark Speckman, visit [www.speckmanspeaks.com](http://www.speckmanspeaks.com).

*Founded in 2007, the Fox Cities Book Festival seeks to connect writers with their readers and readers with those who write the books they read. Held in a variety of venues throughout the Fox Cities communities and coinciding with National Library Week and National Poetry Month, the Festival brings noted national, state and local authors to share their works through readings, panels, workshops, school programs and conversations, raising their appreciation for one another and the pure joy of reading. For more information, visit [www.foxcitiesbookfestival.org](http://www.foxcitiesbookfestival.org).*

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