



*The NCB Quarterly*

*a publication of The Nebraska Center for the Book*

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No. 2





## Board of Directors

The Nebraska Center for the Book is the 23rd state affiliate of the Library of Congress's National Center for the Book. The Center is a non-profit corporation whose purpose is to stimulate public interest in books, reading, and the written word. The Center acts as a catalyst, bringing together individuals and organizations to build the Nebraska community of the book. The Center serves as a partner and supporter of programs, events, and unique projects which celebrate the written word. The current board members are:

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Rod Wagner	Lincoln
Katherine Walter	Lincoln
Dee Yost	Hastings

\*F.M. Tuttle,  
Executive Treasurer      Lincoln

## Nebraska Center for the Book Board of Directors Meetings 1997

Thursday, August 7, 1997, Beatrice Public Library

Sunday, November 2, 1997, Heritage Room, Bennett Martin Library, Lincoln.

**Note: November 2 is your Annual Meeting** of the NCB Membership. Election of board members will take place and there will be a public program and presentation of the annual Jane Geske Award. Following the program, the NCB Board will meet.

**1997 Board of Directors meetings** will begin by 10 A.M. on each of these dates (except Nov. 2nd as noted above). Board meetings will be followed, after lunch, by meetings of the NCB working committees. For 1997 these include: a Membership Committee, a Public Relations/Publications Committee, a Nebraska Literature Festival Committee, and a Catalyst/Networking Committee. Committee membership is not restricted to board members. Please get involved in the work of your NCB!

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## RECONSTRUCTION

ALL it takes is a five-year-old in pale blue overalls drawing in a coloring book for a door to open into the light, for the house to be built again and the ocher hillside covered with flowers.

— the final poem from *Twenty-three Poems from the French of Max Jacob*, selected and translated by William Kulik, The Cummington Press, Omaha, Nebraska, 1994.

HARRY  
DUNCAN

MASTER  
PRINTER  
PUBLISHER  
TEACHER  
POET

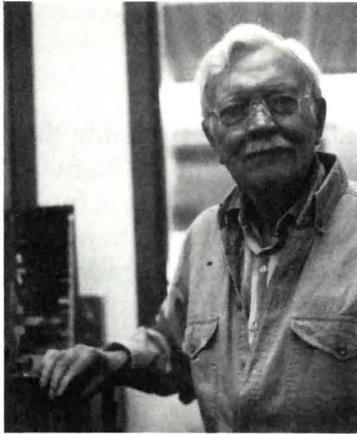


photo by Tim Fitzgerald

This issue of the NCB Quarterly is dedicated to Harry Duncan, born April 19, 1916, in Keokuk, Iowa, died April 18, 1997, in Omaha, Nebraska.

Harry Duncan was Professor Emeritus in the College of Fine Arts, University of Nebraska at Omaha and editor, typographer and printer as director of The Cummington Press. Mr. Duncan published such noted writers as Robert Lowell, William Carlos Williams, Wallace Stevens, R.P. Blackmur, Marianne Moore, Tennessee Williams, and Yvor Winters. He taught typography at the University of Iowa from 1956 to 1972 and at UNO from 1972 until his retirement in 1985. He also founded UNO's fine press, Abattoir Editions, and was, himself, a published poet and translator.

Mr. Duncan was presented the Jane Geske Award by the Nebraska Center for the Book in 1994. In May of 1981, he received the University of Nebraska's Award for Outstanding Research and Creative Activity. In 1979, he and his wife, Nancy Duncan, were honored together with a Governor's Arts Award from the Nebraska Arts Council. He was granted an Honorary Doctorate in 1976 from his *alma mater*, Grinnell College. One-man showings of his books have been held at the Sheldon Art Gallery, the California Book Club of San Francisco, the Grolier Club in New York City, and the UNO Art Gallery.

"From the first at The Cummington Press we were aware of great typographical traditions. That is to say, we had them on the brain. For none of us was trained in even the most elementary disciplines of the craft itself. And we couldn't find, at the beginning of the 1940s, anywhere at all in this country to learn how to print type in the traditional way, on damp paper with a handpress—it was rumored that no one here had done so for at least a generation, a lapse of time long enough to superannuate the art."

— Harry Duncan, from "The Technology of Hand Printing," one of the essays published by W. Thomas Taylor in the collection, *Doors of Perception*, Austin, Texas, 1987.

"Clear, direct harnessing of type for the effortless communication of the word is an ageless quality of brilliant bookmaking. In the twentieth century, few individuals have held this skill, and Harry Duncan is among them. Although he has chosen to edit, design, and print his books in relative isolation, the integrity of his achievement as a maker of books is clear. ... [He makes] books for imagining: this is the embodiment of his belief that the true end of typography is to provide a window to the word."

— Kay Amert, director of the Typographic Laboratory and K.K. Merker, director of Windhover Press, both of the University of Iowa, from an article published in *Fine Print*, San Francisco, January, 1978.



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## Words from the President



The Board of the Nebraska Center for the Book has been moving along on the momentum of the Trustee Leadership Development training that we undertook last November. It was interesting to

see the image of the NCB generated by board members. As a whole, we drew a picture of the NCB not as a place or location, but rather as a "community of the book." We saw our identity in the activities of the book-loving public: individual readers, writers, libraries, bookstores, publishers.

Another bit of self-knowledge clarified for us during the workshop was that, as an active board without a staff, we have conducted both NCB board business and staff work at the same time (setting goals while attending to the details of carrying them out.) That double role is not unique to the NCB, but like many boards, we need to take care to understand the difference and to set goals cognizant of our mission (rather than based on our time and energy to carry out plans).

My hope is to assist the NCB to work steadily and with focus this year, with the organization's mission always in mind: *to stimulate public interest in books, reading, and the written word.*

In working toward fulfilling this mission, we have structured our board committees a little differently than in the past and have identified specific goals for each. Our big-

gest change is probably the group we've called the Catalyst/Networking Committee. This committee is fundamental to our mission. Its goal is to identify groups and individuals in Nebraska who are active in our book community so that the NCB can effectively serve as an information clearing house and can stimulate cooperative book-related activities.

Our Membership Committee is rebuilding the NCB membership base on a strategic basis and developing a promotional statement for us.

The NCB board continues to support the Nebraska Literature Festival by devoting one committee solely to that end. This committee is seeking stable financial support and producing an organizational manual for the production of future Festivals.

Our Publications/Public Relations Committee continues the NCB Quarterly with an emphasis on reaching special audiences, providing publicity for the annual meeting of NCB members (in November), and highlighting special awards.

The Executive Committee is focusing on fundraising.

It seems important to me that you, the NCB members, know how the board works and what our goals are. I welcome each of you to give me a call (402-554-2773) if you would like to discuss the NCB mission and goals, and especially if you can be involved in carrying out these goals by working with the board committees.

Denise Brady



## Book Review

Author: Sandra Dallas

*St. Martin's Griffin*, 1996, paperback \$10.95

Reviewed by Linda Hillegass, *Lee Booksellers*

When the women of the Persian Pickle Club get together to quilt a nine-patch or make a celebrity quilt, their lives seem to revolve around small things like Mrs. Judd's bossiness or the shatter-hard scones that Opalina always serves. But under the quiet everyday routine of their lives lie the hardships of the Great Depression, hidden tragedy, a shocking secret and friendship of depth and intensity.

Queenie Bean is a young wife and already a veteran of several years in Persian Pickle.

## The Persian Pickle Club

Her mama was a Pickle, so she just naturally is, too. When glamorous Rita Ritter comes to town Persian Pickle welcomes her in, but Rita isn't cut out for life in small town Kansas. She hates farm work, doesn't know a hen from a rooster, and can't quilt worth a darn either. Still, Queenie is drawn to her and when Rita begins to rock the boat, Queenie just about goes under with her.

Sandra Dallas is a fine writer, and *The Persian Pickle Club* is a marvelous read. She draws characters who are quirky without becoming cartoons, her plot looks its most predictable just before it takes a turn, and she makes *The Persian Pickle Club* seem so real you wish you could be a Pickle yourself.

## Red Cloud to Host Gilded Age Chautauqua July 4-8, 1997

In addition to Mark Twain, Jack London, W.E.B. DuBois, Zitkala-Sa, Kate Chopin and Stephen Crane, this year's Chautauqua will feature a young Willa Cather, portrayed by Jennifer Yatskis of Jamestown, North Dakota. Cather reviewed *The Awakening*, and she also wrote a piece about Stephen Crane at his death. Cather met Stephen Crane on his visit to Nebraska in 1898.

Willa Cather attended Chautauqua in 1894 at Crete, Nebraska and reviewed the activities in nine articles for the *Lincoln Evening News*. In addition to appearing on stage with Stephen Crane, Yatskis will also pre-

sent Cather at a Sunday matinee. The evening schedule follows:

July 4, 1997	Mark Twain & Company and Willa Cather
July 5, 1997	Twain and Cather
July 6, 1997	Cather Matinee, DuBois evening
July 7, 1997	London and Chopin
July 8, 1997	Zitkala-Sa

Complete schedules are available from Stephany Thompson, local coordinator, 830 North California, Hastings, NE 68901, 402-463-2985.



## Nebraska Earns Honors and Awards — Locally and Nationally

### Nebraska Wins 1997 Boorstin Center for the Book Award

On May 5, 1997, Librarian of Congress Emeritus Daniel J. Boorstin presented the first two Boorstin Center for the Book Awards to the Florida and the Nebraska Centers for the Book. Each of the annual awards includes a cash prize of \$5,000. Florida's award was presented in recognition of the contribution that it has made to the Center for the Book's overall national program. The State Award, won by Nebraska, recognizes an excellent state program and, specifically, the Nebraska Literature Festival, inaugurated by the Nebraska Center for the Book in 1990.

Dr. Boorstin made the presentation during the Center for the Book's "idea exchange day," an annual gathering of state centers at the Library of Congress. Representatives of 29 state centers took part in the discussions and in special events at the Library on May 4-5.

President-Elect Laureen Reidesel was present as the surprise \$5,000 cash award was given to the Nebraska Center.

"I am enormously proud of the Center for the Book and its crucial role in promoting books, reading, and libraries throughout America," said Boorstin, who created the Center in 1977, early in his career (1975-1987) as Librarian of Congress. "My wife Ruth and I are delighted to provide financial support for the Center's national program, and we invite others to join us through their tax-deductible gifts to the Center."

For information about the Center for the Book and its activities, contact the Center for the Book, Library of Congress, 101 Independence Ave., S.E., Washington, DC 20450-4920, 202-707-5221 (telephone), 202-707-0269 (fax), or visit the Center's web site at: <http://lcweb.loc.gov/loc/cfbook/>

### Nebraska Literature Festival Receives Awards

The Nebraska Literature Festival is an ongoing, concentrated effort to promote Nebraska writers and our rich literary heritage. The festival is produced annually throughout Nebraska, with its most recent festival held in Lincoln last September. The first festival was held in Omaha in 1991. Each festival is coordinated by both aca-

demical scholars and the general public. Activities include programs, a book fair, exhibits, presentation of papers, public readings, discussions and workshops. The festival brings the general public into contact with working authors as well as with scholars interested in past and present Nebraska writers. One day is set aside before each



*Accepting the award on behalf of the Nebraska Literature Festival is Katherine Walter, Chair of the Festival Committee, with special thanks to Cynthia Schneider and Steve Shively, Lincoln Festival coordinator in 1996 and 1993 respectively.*

festival to allow high school students to participate in workshops and presentations developed just for them.

The Mayor's Arts Awards, sponsored by the Nebraska Literary Heritage Associa-

tion, are given to recognize excellence in writing and its promotion in Nebraska.

The Mayor's Arts Awards program is the first formal honor for the Nebraska Literature Festival and is shared by the efforts of so many who plan and produce each event.

## **More Awards...Recognize Carol Connor, *The Prairie Schooner* and editor Hilda Raz, and Clifton Hillegass**

The Nebraska Center for the Book announces the following awards for 1997.

**The Mildred Bennett Award** is presented annually by the Nebraska Center for the Book to recognize an individual who has made a significant contribution to the fostering of the literary tradition in Nebraska. Its purpose is to remind us all of the literary and intellectual traditions that enrich our lives and mold our world. The recipient is nominated each year by the local festival committee and approved by the NCB Board.

This year's winner is **Carol Connor**, director of the Lincoln City Libraries.

**The Jane Geske Award** is also presented annual by the Nebraska Center for the Book to an organization, business, library, school, association, or other group which has made an exceptional contribution to literacy, books, reading, libraries, or Nebraska literature. This year's recipient is the ***Prairie Schooner* and editor Hilda Raz.**

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## Third Annual Prairie Institute

The Third Annual Prairie Institute which will be held at the Red Cloud Elementary School from June 9-13. Three hours of graduate or undergraduate credit (one hour each in geography, history, and English) are offered by the University of Nebraska-Kearney. Teachers for the Institute are Dr. Charles Peek, Dr. Mark Eifler, and James Fitzgibbon. The registration fee is \$100 and includes use of facilities, morning rolls and coffee, special speakers and the traditional prairie dinner. The theme for this year's Institute is *Lost and Found: The Evolution of Prairie Pathways*. The announcement states that "the Institute will address how, when, and why various communities came to be here from the biological communities represented in the fossil record to the human residents of the prairie....always the pathways show us var-

ied circumstances of the convergence or clash of myth and material value systems. And as always, the Institute will treat its subject interdisciplinarily, demonstrating how literature and story, paleontology, and history can be integrated in our approach to fuller understandings."

In addition to the classroom instruction, lab work and tour, each evening will offer special talks: "The Overland Trails: Neihardt" (Joe Green and Stan Smith); "Coming and Going," Helen Stauffer discussing the differences in finders and followers; "Plants and Perceptions," Ron Weeden, an ethnobotanist, talking about the use of plants; and a Chautauqua book discussion on Kate Chopin and Willa Cather led by Betty Kort. The Cather text for this Institute will be *A Lost Lady*.

*The next Nebraska Literature Festival will be held in 1998.*

*Watch this newsletter for further details on the time and place!*

### More Awards...

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The Center first announced the Jane Geske Award in 1992, established in recognition of Jane Geske for her contributions to the well-being of the libraries of Nebraska.

The Nebraska Center for the Book will present a **Lifetime Achievement Award** to

the founder of Cliffs Notes, Inc., **Clifton K. Hillegass**, for his many contributions to Nebraska publishing and for his generous literary support of Nebraska Library collections. This new award, given on occasion to those special, deserving individuals will be presented at the Center's annual meeting in November.



# 10th Annual Storytelling Festival of Nebraska in Omaha

## Storytelling Festival of Nebraska

1803 S. 58th Street, Omaha, NE 68106-2225

Coordinator: Nancy K. Duncan:  
402-551-4532

**T**he Storytelling Festival of Nebraska kicks off its tenth anniversary this summer with its annual event in Omaha on June 20-22 on the campus of College of Saint Mary. Newly incorporated as a statewide organization, the Festival provides events across the state as part of the resurgence of interest in the common thread of human existence: stories.

Internationally known guest tellers from across the nation, joined by thirty-five regional tellers from Nebraska, Kansas and Iowa, model excellence in telling events for ages 5-95. Regional tellers represent all walks of life, such as: NE State Senator David Landis (President of the new Board of Directors); Jim Marx of Pacific Counseling Services; Perry Ross, an elementary school principal from Iowa City, IA; Fr. Damien Zuerlein, pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe parish, Omaha; The Five Bright Chicks, a five-woman Omaha storytelling troupe; eleven-year-old Sarah Peters of Bellevue, NE; and Priscilla Howe, professional teller from Lawrence, KS.

Guest tellers Patricia and Fred McKissack, Margaret Read MacDonald, David Massengil, Olga Loya, Geri Keams, and Syd Lieberman are introduced at the Kickoff Luncheon on Friday, June 20th at noon.

Two ninety-minute workshop sessions fill Friday afternoon. Regional tellers are featured at Friday evening telling sites, one for children and two for adults from 7-9:15 PM, immediately followed by the ever-popular Ghosting, 9:30 - 11 PM, at which guest tellers spin stories of the supernatural (age 7 and up only).

Saturday's offerings include two additional workshop sessions beginning at 9:30 AM, a large Swapping at which anyone may tell a story in one of five different telling sites, and more tellings for adults and for children on Saturday afternoon. Saturday evening at 7:30 PM is the Festival's main telling event at which each of the six guest tellers takes one of three stages for an hour.

On Sunday guest tellers spread out through the community, appearing at local churches and worship centers. Sunday afternoon will feature two hours of Tellings of Stories for the Spirit on the College of Saint Mary campus and will conclude with a tenth anniversary celebration.

Registration for the full weekend is \$90. Information, reservations, group rates, access to the Festival Speaker's Bureau and brochures are available by calling 402-551-4532. Tickets for all individual telling events are available at The Story Monkey Bookstore, 517 S. 13th Street, Omaha, 402-344-4645. Prices at the door for individual tellings are \$6/adults, \$5/seniors and stu-

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## 10th Annual Storytelling Festival of Nebraska in Omaha

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dents, and \$4/children. (Pre-schoolers and toddlers are not admitted.) Pre-paid tickets are discounted \$1 per ticket.

The Festival is sharing three of its guest tellers with the International Children's Literature Conference held the same weekend at the Peter Kiewit Conference Center, with the Children's Department of the W. Dale Clark Public Library and with Arts

Are Basic - University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Partial funding for the Storytelling Festival of Nebraska has been provided by the Nebraska Arts Council, the Alan & Marcia Baer Charitable Trust, the Nebraska Humanities Council, and by United Arts Omaha. The Festival is approved for educational and recertification credit through a variety of agencies. One hour of graduate or undergraduate credit is available through College of Saint Mary.

*We know that we are reading even while suspending disbelief; we know why we read even when we don't know how, holding in our mind at the same time, as it were, the illusionary text and the act of reading. We read to find the end, for the story's sake. We read not to reach it, for the sake of the reading itself. We read searchingly, like trackers, oblivious to our surroundings. We read distractingly, skipping pages. We read contemptuously, admiringly, negligently, angrily, passionately, enviously, knowing what brought the pleasure along. "What in the world is this emotion?" asks Rebecca West after reading King Lear. "What is the bearing of supremely great works of art on my life which makes me feel so glad?" We don't know: we read ignorantly. We read in slow, long motions, as if drifting in space, weightless. We read full of prejudice, malignantly. We read generously, making excuses for the text, filling gaps, mending faults. And sometimes, when the stars are kind, we read with an intake of breath, with a shudder, as if someone or something had "walked over our grave," as if a memory had suddenly been rescued from a place deep within us --- the recognition of something we never knew was there, or of something we vaguely felt as a flicker or a shadow, whose ghostly form rises and passes back to us before we can see what it is, leaving us older and wiser."*

From: *A History of Reading*, by Alberto Manguel, Viking, New York, NY, 1995, page 303



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## The Mari Sandoz Heritage Society Annual Program Meeting and Young Writers' Workshop

The Mari Sandoz Heritage Society plans a week-long, intensive, creative writing workshop for 25 promising high school writers, to be held on the campus of Chadron State College and in the surrounding region from June 8-14, 1997. The workshop's goal is to give young writers the opportunity to gather with people of similar age and interests, to share their creative work, and to receive feedback from their peers and professional faculty.

The registration fee is \$175 per student, which includes 7 nights' lodging in college dorms, 7 days' meals, 24-hour-a-day supervision, a week of professional writing instruction, an anthology of students' writing, a Sandoz book (donated by the Society), and a chance to participate in the Sandoz Society's annual program. Contact Andrew Elkins at Chadron State College, Chadron, NE 69337; phone: 308-432-6307 or e-mail at [aelkins@scs1.csc.edu](mailto:aelkins@scs1.csc.edu)

The annual program meeting of the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society will be held June 13-15 also on the Chadron State College campus. The three-day program will feature speakers from several disciplines — history, literature, sociology — to discuss Sandoz's writings and Great Plains history and culture. The program will begin Friday, June 13, with dinner and theater. Saturday, June 14, will feature lectures and slide presentations and conclude on Sun-

day, June 15, with a guided tour of the Agate Fossil Beds National Monument.

Featured speakers and presenters include: Jane Barker, author of sixteen books for adults, young adults, and children; Jane Wilson, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Georgia, who will discuss from a historical perspective, Sandoz' portrayal of women; Richard Voorhees (Inver Hills Community College, Minnesota) will draw on his sociological and anthropological training to discuss the years Sandoz spent in New York; and David Kadlecsek, an independent scholar who recently published *To Kill an Eagle: Indian Views on the Last Days of Crazy Horse*. The lecture on Saturday evening will be delivered by James Olson, distinguished Western historian, Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, friend of Sandoz, and author of the standard history of Nebraska.

To register, write to the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society in care of the School of Liberal Arts at Chadron State College or call Andrew Elkins at 308-432-6307; e-mail [aelkins@csc1.csc.edu](mailto:aelkins@csc1.csc.edu) or contact Don Green 308-432-6276; e-mail [dgreen@csc1.csc.edu](mailto:dgreen@csc1.csc.edu).

Both of these programs are made possible in part through the support of Chadron State College and the Nebraska Humanities Council.



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## Projects for the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress

- "Building a Nation of Readers" is the Center's national reading promotion theme for 1997-2000. Previous national reading promotion campaigns have included: "Readers Are Leaders," "Books Make a Difference," "Be a Lifetime Reader," "Books Change Lives," and "Year of the Reader."
- The Center is the sponsor and producer of "The Sound of Writing: America's Short Story Magazine of the Air," a national Public Radio (NPR) series of 30-minute programs that feature readings of two original short stories. It also is a partner in "The Book Guys," an NPR call-in program which features information about books and book-related events around the country.

*The Nebraska Center for the Book*  
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*c/o Bennett Martin Public Library  
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