



# The **NCB** News

Volume 15

Summer 2005

No. 2

A Publication of the Nebraska Center for the Book

## Nebraska Book Festival to feature Ted Kooser, October 7-8

Ted Kooser, U.S. Poet Laureate and 2005 Pulitzer Prize winner, will headline the fourteenth annual Nebraska Book Festival October 7-8. This year's festival is hosted by Nebraska Wesleyan University in Lincoln. The event celebrates Nebraska's rich literary heritage and promotes the state's growing population of talented, contemporary writers. Co-sponsors for the festival include the Nebraska Center for the Book and the Nebraska Library Commission. The

Nebraska Humanities Council has also provided major funding for the festival since its inception as the Nebraska Literature Festival in 1991.

The theme for the 2005 Nebraska Book Festival is *Local Wonders*, from the title of Ted Kooser's evocative book about living in Nebraska's Bohemian Alps.



Everyone who attends the festival on Saturday will receive a free copy of *Local Wonders*, donated by the University of Nebraska Press.

The festival begins October 7 in the late afternoon with café and coffeehouse readings; a reception; and a screening of *King of the Corner*, Peter Riegert's film based on Gerald Shapiro's collection of stories, *Bad Jews and Other Stories*. Shapiro, professor of fiction writing and Jewish-American literature at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, will introduce the film, answer questions, and autograph copies of his book.

On Oct. 8, Ted Kooser will read and discuss his award-winning poetry after an introduction by Nebraska State Senator Chris Beutler. At noon, attendees are invited to a luncheon to hear Nebraska State

*continued on page 3...*

## American Life in Poetry Appears in the Nation's Newspapers

The Poetry Foundation, in partnership with the Library of Congress and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, supports the American Life in Poetry project, an initiative of Ted Kooser, the Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress. American Life in Poetry is a free weekly column for newspapers and online publications featuring a poem by a contemporary American poet and a brief introduction to the poem by Ted Kooser. "Newspapers are close to my heart and my family," said Kooser, whose wife and son both work in journalism. "As Poet Laureate I want to show the people who read newspapers that poetry can be for them, can give them a chuckle or an insight."

**American Life in Poetry: Column 003,  
by Ted Kooser, U.S. Poet Laureate**

A poem need not go on at great length to accomplish the work of conveying something meaningful to its readers. In the following poem by the late Marnie

Walsh, just a few words, written as if they'd been recorded in exactly the manner in which they'd been spoken, tell us not only about the missing woman in the red high heels, but a little something about the speaker as well.

### **Bessie Dreaming Bear**

*Rosebud, So. Dak., 1960*

*we all went to town one day  
went to a store  
bought you new shoes  
red high heels*

*ain't seen you since.*

Reprinted from *A Taste of the Knife*, Ahsahta Press, Boise, ID, 1976, by permission of Tom Trusky, literary executor of the Walsh estate. This weekly column is supported by The Poetry Foundation, The Library of Congress, and the Department of English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. This column does not accept unsolicited poetry. ▲



# Small Presses and Self-Publishing in Nebraska

**Guest Editorial**  
by  
**David Bristow,**  
*Nebraska Life*

On a cluttered shelf at the office of *Nebraska Life* magazine is a stack of books awaiting review – so many that we don't have space to review them all. Many come from the University of Nebraska Press, a few are from New York City publishers, and a growing number are from small, Nebraska-based presses.

Some small presses are literary, such as the Lincoln-based Zoo Press, which has gained enough attention that the University of Nebraska Press is now distributing its books. Zoo Press publishes poets from across the country, people who are writing for some of the nation's finest literary magazines.

Other literary presses are defiantly regional. Logan House Press of Winside, NE, began a decade ago, according to its Web site, as the "brainchild of Imagining Editor Jim Reese who, from over-familiarity with the scarcity of publishers of regional poetry and prose by living writers, contracted a chronic case of the red ass... The Logan House prescription requires regular doses of fresh poetry and fiction, a healthy if demanding Great Plains climate, and a regimen of creative exercise. Ingestion of dead literature is forbidden." So there. Logan House's most recent book is a new edition of William Kloefkorn's first book of poetry, *Alvin Turner as Farmer*, which hasn't lost any of its magic since its original publication in 1972.

Some literary publishers produce hand-printed limited editions that combine art and poetry. The book itself becomes a work of art. Lincoln's Blue Heron Press, for example, prints as few as twenty copies of a given title; each may sell for hundreds of dollars. (For whatever reason, I haven't received any of these in the mailbox for review!) A directory of Nebraska literary publishers is available at [mockingbird.creighton.edu/NCW/pubs.htm](http://mockingbird.creighton.edu/NCW/pubs.htm).

Other small presses focus on regional history. North Platte's Old Hundred and One Press publishes books such as D. Jean Smith's *Medicine Creek Journals: Ena and the Plainsmen*. The book is a biography of Ena Raymonde, an independent-minded woman who lived in western Nebraska in the 1870s and kept a diary of her adventures. An Internet search revealed even more Nebraska publishers, so many that I gave up trying to get an accurate count. Many of these "publishers" are actually self-publishing authors. Other writers turn to Web-based publisher iUniverse. For a fee, the company produces the book, lists it on Amazon and other online book vendors, and offers print-on-demand services that help authors avoid a garage full of unsold books. So-called "vanity" publishing isn't new, but technology is making it more accessible, and is blurring the line between what is published and what is not.

Of course, many of the books are poorly conceived and poorly written. Some are truly awful. But even those that aren't the work of gifted writers may still find a grateful audience. Last year, four siblings from south central Nebraska published *Nebraska Farm Life WWI to WWII* through iUniverse. Though none are professional writers or historians, they felt that the long-gone rural lifestyle of their childhood was worth remembering. Their descendants (and perhaps historians) will thank them for their act of preservation. The idea of preservation, it seems to me, is a large part of what drives small presses and self-publishing. It's the notion that valuable thoughts and good words would be lost if decisions were left to major publishers. Especially in a region far from national centers of power, that attitude – backed by a profusion of small presses – is a healthy thing. ▲

## The **NCB**News

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#### 2005 Nebraska Center for the Book Board Meetings

November 6 . . . . Lincoln, Annual Meeting

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The *NCB News* can accept up to four 1/8 page ads for each issue. The advertising rate is \$125 for 1/8 page. *NCB News* is issued May 1, August 15, and November 1. The

advertising and copy deadline is six weeks prior to issue date. For details, contact Mary Jo Ryan, Nebraska Center for the Book, The Atrium, 1200 N Street, Suite 120, Lincoln, NE 68508-2023; phone 402-471-3434, 800-307-2665, e-mail: [cmjryan@nlc.state.ne.us](mailto:cmjryan@nlc.state.ne.us), [www.unl.edu/NCB](http://www.unl.edu/NCB).

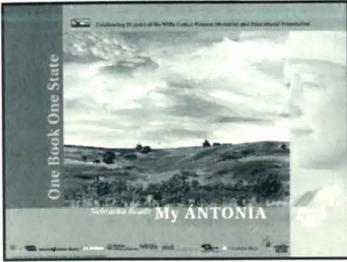
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# One Book/One State Succeeds



by **Susan N. Maher**, University of Nebraska at Omaha

When members of the "One Book/One State" steering committee met in Kearney during the 2004 Nebraska Book Festival, we had no idea whether our vision for a statewide reading of Willa Cather's *My Antonia* would gain interest or not. Very few states in the nation had attempted a statewide reading, putting Nebraska in the avant-garde of this kind of wide-reaching effort. Using the successful "One Book/One City" model that librarians have implemented around the state, we began building momentum for the culminating celebration in Red Cloud, marking the 50th anniversary of the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial and Educational Foundation (WCPM). Governor Mike Johanns, got the project rolling with a Proclamation in December 2004, urging the state's citizens to read and discuss *My Antonia*.

The group that organized "One Book/One State" was an unprecedented collaboration of organizations and institutions: WCPM, Nebraska Center for the Book, Nebraska Library Commission, Nebraska Humanities Council, Nebraska Library Association, *Lincoln Journal Star*, Omaha Public Library, Lincoln City Libraries, University of Nebraska Press, University of Nebraska Lincoln and Omaha campuses, Hastings College, Nebraska Educational Media Association, Nebraska English Language Arts Council, Beatrice Public Library, Southeast Library System, Panhandle Library System, Nebraska Small Business Development Center, Cather Circle, Nebraska Book Company,

and University of Nebraska Alumni Association. Using e-mail, telephone, and strategic meetings, members of the planning group organized press releases and public relations, a student writing contest, events in the state's public libraries, public lectures, discussion kits for reading groups, and book donations and discussion kits for small libraries around the state. Many more activities helped mark "One Book/One State" during the months of March and April 2005 across Nebraska.

Artist Mary Linnea Vaughan allowed us to use her stunning painting, "Prairie Song," for publicity purposes. Graphic Designer Ellen Lincoln created a memorable poster that was distributed statewide, thanks to the generous support of Cornhusker Press in Hastings. It became the design for statewide billboards supported by Lamar Corporation.

Communities across the state of Nebraska embraced this event, scheduling all kinds of events to commemorate Willa Cather and the invaluable work of the WCPM. By the time "One Book/One State" wrapped up in Red Cloud during the weekend of April 29-30, thousands of Nebraskans had read or reread Cather's great novel and had spent time discussing it. The people of Nebraska made "One Book/One State" an enormous success, more than fulfilling the vision of a small band of professionals who had only an idea and big hopes last October in Kearney. ▲

## What is the Nebraska Center for the Book?

The Nebraska Center for the Book brings together the state's readers, writers, booksellers, librarians, publishers, printers, educators, and scholars to build the community of the book. We are the people who know and love books, and who value the richness they bring to our lives. Our Nebraska Center supports programs to celebrate and stimulate public interest in books, reading, and the written word. We have been an affiliate of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress since 1990. ▲

## Book Festival/Kooser *continued from page 1...*

Poet Bill Kloefkorn and to honor the winners of the Mildred Bennett Award and the Nebraska Center for the Book Awards.

Saturday's panels will include the stages of book publishing, how to publish in creative journals, ways for book groups to probe a book, and a discussion among historical Nebraska author organizations. Saturday also offers a full schedule of readings by

Nebraska authors. All Friday and Saturday events, except for the luncheon, are free and open to the public.

See page 4 for a schedule of events. For updates on the 2005 Nebraska Book Festival, see the Nebraska Center for the Book Web site, <[www.unl.edu/NCB](http://www.unl.edu/NCB)>, or contact Jim Schaffer, Festival Director, e-mail: <[jrs@nebrwesleyan.edu](mailto:jrs@nebrwesleyan.edu)>, 402-465-2352. ▲

## Join the Nebraska Center for the Book

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Name/address of a friend who might be interested in NCB membership:**

\_\_\_\_\_ \$15 Individual Membership    \_\_\_\_\_ \$25 Organizational Membership    \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 Octavo Membership  
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# 2005 Nebraska Book Festival Schedule

Local Wonders

October 7-8

Lincoln

## Friday, October 7

### 4:00-5:30 P.M.

- ▲ Readings at the No Name (Sur Tango Café, 12th & P Streets)

### 6:00-7:00 P.M.

- ▲ Reception sponsored by University of Nebraska Press (Downtown University of Nebraska—Lincoln Student Union)

### 7:15 P.M.

- ▲ Film: *King of the Corner* (Downtown UN—L Student Union)  
Talk by Gerald Shapiro

### 9:00 P.M.

- ▲ Invited readings at Crescent Moon Coffeehouse, hosted by Rex Walton (816 “P” Street)

## Saturday, October 8

### 8:30 A.M.

- ▲ Registration (Nebraska Wesleyan University, Old Main)

### 9:00-10:15 A.M.

- ▲ Panels (Old Main)
  - “Wonder who will publish this wonder?” Publishing in Small Journals, with Karen Shoemaker, Kelly Madigan Erlandson, Lee Ann Roripaugh
  - “Life of the Book,” sponsored by University of Nebraska Press

- ▲ Readings by Wesleyan writers – Ted Genoways, Ben Gottschall, Rick Cypert, and others (Callen Conference Center)

### 10:30-11:45 A.M.

- ▲ Keynote address by Ted Kooser – introduced by Sen. Chris Beutler (McDonald Theatre)

### Noon-1:30 P.M.

- ▲ **Luncheon**  
Speaker: Bill Kloefkorn  
Emcee: Scott Stanfield  
Mildred Bennett Award  
Nebraska Center for the Book Awards (Wesleyan Student Cafeteria)

### 2:00-3:15 P.M.

- ▲ Panels (Old Main)
  - Literary Societies, organized and hosted by Scott Stanfield
  - “Many ways to probe a book and some books worth probing,” Community Book Groups, organized and hosted by Mel Krutz

- ▲ Readings by *Prairie Schooner* writers – Twyla Hansen, Marge Saiser, Steve Langan, Matt Mason, J.V. Brummels, Kelly Grey Carlisle (Callen Conference Center)

### 3:30-4:45 P.M.

- ▲ Readings by Nebraska Book Award winners, hosted by Rod Wagner (Callen Conference Center)

### 7:00 P.M.

- ▲ Invited readings, hosted by Marge Saiser, Matt Mason, Twyla Hansen (Smith-Curtis Administration Building) ▲

## Fund Raiser Celebrates Omaha Public Library

Poet Laureate Ted Kooser was the featured speaker at the Omaha Public Library Foundation’s fundraising event, “Shelf Life 2005: An Evening of Art and Literature.” The benefit, held at the Hot Shops Art Center in Omaha, included a cocktail buffet, auctions, and readings by authors.

The evening’s celebrated writers included Ted Kooser, Alex Kava, Richard Dooling, Julie Kaewert, Willa Cather, and William Shakespeare. Artists Les

Bruning, David Belitz, Valerie Light Anderson, James Freeman, Wilson/Davis Studios, and Dar Vande Voort were commissioned to create works of art reflecting each author’s writing and the pieces were auctioned that evening. Betty Jean Steinshouer performed her interpretation of Willa Cather.

More than three hundred people attended the event, raising \$45,000 to help fund programs and collections for the Omaha Public Library. ▲

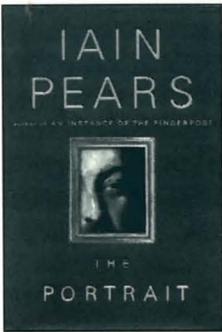


# Review: *The Portrait*

by **Iain Pears**,  
Riverhead Books,  
Penguin Group,  
2005

ISBN: 1573222984

Reviewed by  
**Barbara  
Rixstine**,  
University of  
Nebraska-Lincoln



The role of the critic in the arts is accepted but perhaps, not universally appreciated by artists themselves. Poets, painters, theater directors, and others gnash their teeth at what they see as lack of understanding, lack of vision and, most importantly, lack of ability to actually do the work.

William Nasmyth is a long-time art critic who comes to his former friend Henry Morris McAlpine's painting studio in Brittany for a portrait—but, what a portrait. For more than two hundred pages McAlpine alternately soothes, seethes, harasses, and entreats his portrait-sitter for both his friendship and his arrogance. McAlpine believes Nasmyth's criticism has harmed not only him, but two friends who were personally shattered by his mercurial dismissal of their work.

By 1912, when our story takes place, McAlpine has retreated to a life supplied with not much more than the basics. For his own reasons, revealed very late in the book, he has decided to do this one last work and cannot resist telling his sitter why. "...I was

in awe of you, even though I was already in my fumbling way a better painter than you could ever dream of becoming, but you had vast knowledge and a boundless self-confidence, and I wanted that from you, wanted to see how you did it. ... I didn't realize then it was not something that could be mimicked. That ability of yours never to doubt, never to hesitate about the correctness of your opinions, was part of your character, not mine."

It's a roller-coaster ride of fine and intense writing, typical of Pears at his best, rich with psychological complexity, atmosphere and the vocabulary of the wronged artist. Pears may be best known as the author of a series of art mystery books, including *The Raphael Affair* and *The Bernini Bust*, but he has also written the masterful and complex *An Instance at the Fingerpost* and *The Dream of Scipio*. I've never gone wrong with a Pears book and recommend them often to readers interested in the arts and in good writing. ▲

## NE State Historical Society Book Sale Set for October

by **Cindy S.  
Drake**,  
Nebraska State  
Historical Society

The Nebraska State Historical Society Library/Archives will hold a book sale **October 6–8** in the Beef Pit building at the Nebraska State Fairgrounds, from 10:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. daily. The Library has weeded more than 7,000 titles from the collection. The last library book sale was held in 1996.

Since the State Historical Society Library is a research library dedicated to the history of Nebraska, materials pertaining to the history of the state, the Midwest, and the West, are collected to help patrons interpret the history of Nebraska. Duplicate and gently-used materials, including a collection of University of Nebraska Press titles published between 1972 and the mid-1990s, will be made available for sale. Many are out-of-print. Several are autographed by famous Americans, world leaders, or celebrities of the twentieth century.

Magazines, microfilm, maps, pamphlets, videos, etc. will be included in this sale. The following broad subject categories will be used: Nebraska State & Local History, American West, Native Americans, Miscellaneous United States History & State Material, American Presidents & Politicians, Genealogy, General

Military History, Civil/Spanish American Wars, World War I & II, Topics Pertaining to Countries From Around the World (some titles in original languages), Agriculture, Archeology/Anthropology, American/European Literature, Entertainment (Hollywood, Movie Stars), Medical, Arts, Novels (hardcover & paperback, many from 1940s-1960s), Sports/Olympics, Nature/Animals, and Cookbooks/Crafts/Decorating.

In most cases titles will be individually priced from \$.25 to \$15. Some items will be priced higher and some will be free. A bag sale will be offered during the last three hours of the sale (Saturday, October 8, 3:00 to 6:00 P.M.). A general listing of titles will be available by **September 6**, <[www.nebraskahistory.org](http://www.nebraskahistory.org)>, click on What's New. Volunteers are needed before and during the sale. For more information or to volunteer, contact Cindy S. Drake, <[nshs05@nebraskahistory.org](mailto:nshs05@nebraskahistory.org)>, 402-471-4786.

NOTE: Lincoln City Libraries will hold their annual library book sale (over 50,000 items) during the same weekend on the second level of the Grandstand in the State Fair Park. Hours are October 6: noon to 8:00 P.M., and October 7-8: 10:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. See <[www.lincolnlibraries.org/](http://www.lincolnlibraries.org/)> for details. ▲



# Review: *Not Just Any Land: A Personal and Literary Journey into the American Grasslands*

by **John Price**,  
University of Nebraska Press,  
2004, ISBN: 0-8032-3707-3

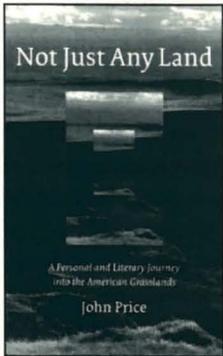
Reviewed by  
**David Bristow**

"Like many born in the Midwest, I had given little thought to committing to the place where I grew up," writes University of Nebraska at Omaha professor John Price, adding that he "had, in fact, always wanted to leave. Sometimes it felt as if I were already gone, a ghost in my own house. What was the source of that inner exile?"

*Not Just Any Land* is a curious and enjoyable blend of diverse elements. It is partly a book of nature, a quest to create "a new connection to my home landscape. . . a grasslands bioregion I'd lived in all my life but never seen, never known." It is partly a literary survey, with extended interviews with influential Great Plains writers Linda Hasselstrom, William Least Heat-Moon, Dan O'Brien, and Mary Swander. And though it is the work of an English professor

(and was begun, in fact, as the work of a graduate student), it is more memoir than scholarly treatise — a series of physical journeys to remote corners of the prairie states, and a more personal journey of self-discovery and a growing sense of place.

For Price, the regional writers he admires are the ones who have "become an example of not only the struggle to find self-recognition in this endangered, threadbare place but also the struggle to articulate for others what it is that the land demands of us in our daily lives: the nature of responsibility." Reconnecting with the nature of the prairies is a large part of what allows him, at last, to feel at home. ▲



## Mark Dunn Plays with Words

by **Barbara Rixstine**

If you've not yet found time for the deft and dark-edged humor of Mark Dunn, add him to the list of must-reads for this year. Dunn has offered us three novels so far—*Ella Minnow Pea: a Novel in Letters* (2002), *Welcome to Higby* (2003), and last year's *Ibid: A Life, a Novel in Footnotes*.

Start with Dunn's first book, *Ella Minnow Pea*. (Sound it out.) Young Ella lives in Nollop, an America-like country named after its native son Nevin Nollop, who created, "The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog." For complicated reasons, Nollop's council decides to forbid the use of certain letters, more each day. Only by creating another sentence of thirty-two

letters or less, using the entire alphabet, can inhabitants throw off the arrogant mantle of illiteracy

thrown over them. Young Ella takes up that task, and the book details her progress, as well as the town's, in a

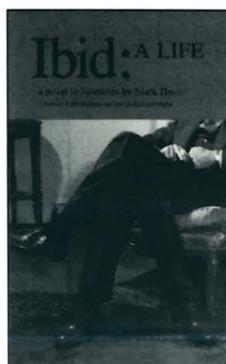
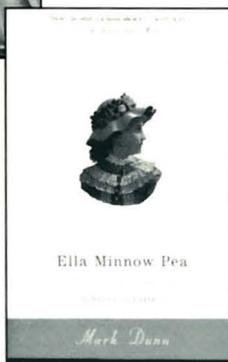
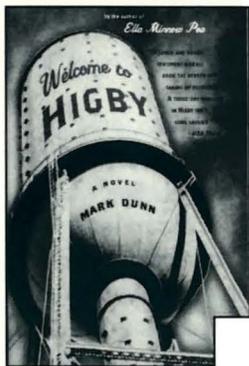
series of letters. It's a compelling journey, well-told with sound-alikes and creative spellings, sure to interest the word lover.

*Welcome to Higby* is more of a mainstream novel, detailing the adventures of a variety of strong characters living in the small town of Higby in northern Mississippi. Higbyites have a number of strange quirks, all of which work with their friends' and relatives' strange quirks in a very humane and witty send-up of the Southern small town.

By the time this reviewer got to *Ibid: A Life* I was prepared for anything, and wasn't disappointed. In *Ibid*, Dunn creates another strange book premise: himself as the biographer of three-legged Jonathan Blashette, former circus employee, owner of the Dandy-de-Odor-o men's deodorant company, and humanitarian. In this creative set-up, the only copy of the biography has been accidentally destroyed, leaving only its footnotes, out of which *Ibid* is formed.

Although crude at times, Dunn's humor is as sharp as always and is filled with pop culture references and historical notes, much like the Woody Allen movies *Zelig* and *Radio Days*, which Dunn credits at the end.

I still prefer *Ella Minnow Pea*, but *Ibid* has its moments too. ▲



## Gift Books, a Memoir by Inscription

by **Oliver B. Pollak**,  
University of  
Nebraska at Omaha

Books have been given as gifts even before Gutenberg. Publishers scramble to get their holiday list (Christmas and Hanukah) into the stores by October. I received Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* in 1950, published in London pursuant to Book Production War Economy Standard, inscribed by Leslie Gutfreund with a black fountain pen "WITH LOTS OF LOVE FROM LESLIE CHRISTMAS 1950." They moved to Johannesburg. I never read the book.

Books are given to mark special events like rites of passage. Upon graduating high school in March 1937 my mother, Ruth Pollak, received *Propbeten und Gottesmänner (Prophets and Godly Men)* by Marcus Ehrenpreis, and published by Berlin's Der Heine-Bund Eine jüdische Buchgemeinde, from the Hannover Gemeinde Synagogue, signed by Rabbi Unruh. My mother left Nazi Germany in 1939.

The English translation of Werner Keller's *The Bible as History* (15th impression 1974, useful for establishing when the gift was received) was inscribed by my inlaws Reva and Joe Goldstein, "To Oliver, Whose everyday life will someday be recorded as History. Much love Reva & Joe." Barbara in den Bosch, a graduate student whose master's thesis I directed, presented me with David Landes' *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World* (1983), a significant reading in my calendar conscious life.

Garrison Keillor's *Lake Wobegon Days* (1985) came to me in 1985 with the inscription, "To our dad on his 84 divided by 2 birthday Love Noah and Aaron." I have received numerous books from my wife, curiously uninscribed but accompanied by a birthday, Valentine's Day, or anniversary card that gets separated from the book. When I give a mystery, women's literature, or art book to my wife I can expect the accusation that I am giving her a book that I want to read.

My publisher Jim McKee presented me with Houghton Mifflin's 1899 trade list, *A Catalogue of Authors*. Neil Shaver, at Yellow Barn Press, lavishes

me with fascinating and mouthwatering antiquarian catalogues. My law partner David Hicks and I frequently exchange books at birthdays and the holiday season. The best eye and ear opener, a real epiphany, was *Leonard Cohen: A Life in Art*, by Ira B. Nadel.

My great uncle Eric Bonner, an antiquarian bookseller in London, presented me with *Speed, The Book of Racing and Records* (1950) inscribed with a blue fountain pen, "Wishing you a merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 1950/1 Uncle Eric." I still refer to it. His last gift to me was when I was teaching in Rhodesia in 1970, a catalogue of the 1953 Cecil Rhodes Centenary Exhibition in Bulawayo. *The Black Arrow* by Robert Louis Stevenson and *Sung under the Silver Umbrella, Poems for Young People* (1945) came from an unremembered source in the 1950s. The former remains unread, the latter still gets some attention. This 50% success/failure rate between the donor and the donee has left me with an ambiguous attitude about giving books. It is a careful decision. Recommending a book is different than giving a book.

Donors know my interests or what they think they should guide me to. My childhood experience fostered caution about giving books. People have idiosyncratic interests. Giving a book suggests you are committing the donee to more work than the donor – the recipient is supposed to take the time to read the book. A recent pleasure is to give books I have written, including *Jewish Life in Omaha and Lincoln: A Photographic History; Nebraska Court-houses: Contention, Compromise and Community; A Year at the Sorbonne: A Proustian Life*; and soon, I'll give copies of *A State of Readers, Nebraska's Carnegie Libraries*.

The ultimate (but not pressing) book-gift question is, who gets your library, accumulated over many decades, when you move to a much smaller retirement community or close up shop? ▲

## Mayhem and Murder Unite at Annual Event

by **Barbara Rixstine**

This spring's "Mayhem in the Midlands" mystery conference in Omaha raised the bar again on participation, with more than two hundred attendees. Participants from twenty-eight states attended the conference, sponsored by the Omaha and Lincoln public libraries.

This year's guest of honor was Peter Robinson, author of the mysteries *Close to Home: A Novel of Suspense* and *Innocent Graves*. Donna Andrews, author of *We'll Always Have Parrots* and other mysteries, was Toastmaster of Honor. The Friday night auction raised more than \$3500.

Maggie Tarelli-Falcon of Omaha Public Library, chaired the conference. She said, "People enjoy the intimate atmosphere with readers getting a chance to visit with and have books signed by their favorite authors, and authors enjoying meeting their fans. Special events such as the mystery dinner and opening night cocktail party add to the fun."

Next year's conference will be held May 25-28, 2006 and will feature Laura Lippman (*To the Power of Three* and *Every Secret Thing*) as Guest of Honor and Denise Hamilton (*Savage Garden: A Novel* and *Sugar Skull: An Eve Diamond Novel*) as Toastmaster of Honor. ▲



# The NCB News



## THE NEBRASKA CENTER FOR THE BOOK

*an affiliate of the Library of Congress*

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**Nebraska Book Festival  
Director Sought**  
See Announcement <[www.nlc.state.ne.us](http://www.nlc.state.ne.us)>



# Calendar of Events:

**Behind the Lines with Andrew Carroll**, author of *War Letters: Extraordinary Correspondence from American Wars and Behind the Lines*

• Lee Booksellers Edgewood, Contact: Linda Hillegass,  
402-420-1919, <[info@leebooksellers.com](mailto:info@leebooksellers.com)>, <[www.leebooksellers.com](http://www.leebooksellers.com)> ..... August 12 ..... Lincoln

• W. Dale Clark Library, Omaha Public Library  
Contact Linda Trout, 402-444-4838, <[ltrout@omaha.lib.ne.us](mailto:ltrout@omaha.lib.ne.us)>, <[omahapubliclibrary.org](http://omahapubliclibrary.org)> ..... August 13 ..... Omaha

**Library Card Sign-Up Month: The Smartest Card@your library®**, <[www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org)> ..... September ..... Nationwide

**3rd Annual North Platte Literary Festival**

Contact: A to Z Bookstore, 308-534-0140, or <[annmilton@inebraska.com](mailto:annmilton@inebraska.com)>, 308-534-2231 ..... September 16-17 ..... North Platte

**Downtown Omaha Lit Fest**, Festival in the Omaha Old Market to benefit Omaha Public Library

Contact: Timothy Schaffert, <[timothy@omahalitfest.com](mailto:timothy@omahalitfest.com)>, <[www.omahalitfest.com](http://www.omahalitfest.com)> ..... September 16-17 ..... Omaha

**Plum Creek Children's Literacy Festival**

Contact: Janell Uffelman, 800-535-5494, 402-643-7318, <[juffelman@cune.edu](mailto:juffelman@cune.edu)>, <[www.cune.edu/show.asp?durki=944](http://www.cune.edu/show.asp?durki=944)> ..... Sept. 22-24 ..... Seward

**2005 National Book Festival**, Contact: <[www.loc.gov/bookfest](http://www.loc.gov/bookfest)> ..... Sept. 24 ..... Washington, DC

**Banned Books Week**

Contact : <[www.ala.org/ala/oif/bannedbooksweek/bannedbooksweek.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/bannedbooksweek/bannedbooksweek.htm)> ..... Sept. 24–Oct. 1 ..... Nationwide

**Paul A. Olson Seminar: Tolstoy and John Wayne: Peace in the Plains**, Speaker: Paul A. Olson,

Kate Foster Professor of English, UN–L, Contact: Center for Great Plains Studies, Kim Weide, 402-472-3964, <[kweide@unlnotes.unl.edu](mailto:kweide@unlnotes.unl.edu)>, <[www.unl.edu/plains/seminars/Olson/olsonseminars.html](http://www.unl.edu/plains/seminars/Olson/olsonseminars.html)> ..... Sept. 13 ..... Lincoln

**Symposium: Changing Natural Landscapes: Ecological and Human Dimensions**

Sponsored by Natural Areas Association and Center for Great Plains Studies

Contact: Center for Great Plains Studies, 402-472-3082, <[cgps@unl.edu](mailto:cgps@unl.edu)>, <[www.unl.edu/plains/seminars/futuresymp.html](http://www.unl.edu/plains/seminars/futuresymp.html)> ..... Sept. 21-24 ..... Lincoln

**NLA/NEMA Conference: Libraries: Heart and Soul of Communities**

Contact: <[www.papillion.ne.us/~nla-nema2005](http://www.papillion.ne.us/~nla-nema2005)> ..... Sept. 28-30 ..... Omaha

**Book Sales: Nebraska State Historical Society and Lincoln City Libraries**

Contact: Cindy S. Drake, 402-471-4786, <[nshs05@nebraskahistory.org](mailto:nshs05@nebraskahistory.org)>, <[www.nebraskahistory.org](http://www.nebraskahistory.org)>, or Barbara Hansen, 402-441-8512, <[b.hansen@mail.lcl.lib.ne.us](mailto:b.hansen@mail.lcl.lib.ne.us)>, <[www.lcl.lib.ne.us](http://www.lcl.lib.ne.us)> ..... October 6- 8 ..... Lincoln

**Nebraska Book Festival, Local Wonders, featuring Ted Kooser**

Contact: Jim Schaffer, 402-465-2352, <[jrs@nebrwesleyan.edu](mailto:jrs@nebrwesleyan.edu)>, <[www.unl.edu/NCB/2005.html](http://www.unl.edu/NCB/2005.html)> ..... October 7-8 ..... Lincoln

**Nebraska Cowboy Poetry Gathering: Old West Days**

Contact: 800-658-4024, <[www.nebraskacowboypoetrygathering.com](http://www.nebraskacowboypoetrygathering.com)> ..... October 13–16 ..... Valentine

**Teen Read Week: Get Real! @ your library®**

Contact: <[www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/teenreading/teenreading.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/teenreading/teenreading.htm)> ..... October 16– 22 ..... Nationwide

**Jim Trelease: The Read-Aloud Handbook**, Contact: Seward Memorial Library, 402-643-3318,

<[info@sewardlibrary.org](mailto:info@sewardlibrary.org)>, <[www.sewardlibrary.org/trelease.htm](http://www.sewardlibrary.org/trelease.htm)> ..... October 19 ..... Seward

**Antonia's Czech Tulip Quilt**, Antonette Willa Skupa Turner Contact: Dan Nieman,

South Sioux City Public Library, 402-494-7545, <[dnieman@southsiouxcity.org](mailto:dnieman@southsiouxcity.org)> ..... October 27 ..... South Sioux