



# The **NCB** Quarterly

Volume 8

Summer 1998

No. 2

A Publication of the Nebraska Center for the Book

## A FESTIVAL—FINALLY!

### Wayne State College to Host 7th Nebraska Literature Festival

#### Nebraska Literature Festival Welcomes Plains Writers

William Kloeffkorn  
David Lee  
Paul Zarzyski  
Twyla Hansen  
Barbara Schmitz  
Ted Kooser  
David Allan Evans  
Herb Scott  
Roy Scheele  
Bill Holm  
Art Homer  
Bryan Jones  
Dan Choan  
Elizabeth Cook-Lynn  
Neil Harrison  
Greg Kosmicki  
Matt Mason  
CarolAnn Russell  
Ron Block  
Charles Fort  
Joan Hoffman  
Jane Candia Coleman  
Dennis Hastings  
Anna Monardo  
Nancy McCleery  
Jonathan Holden  
Steven Schneider  
Lyn DeNaeyer  
Larry Holland  
Kathleene West  
Mark Sanders  
Robert McEwen  
Bob Ross  
Thomas McNeal  
Lisa Sandlin  
Jim Barnes  
Don Welch  
Brent Spencer  
Deb Carpenter  
Rod Rice

After taking a year off, the Nebraska Literature Festival is back. Wayne State College, with more than 20 years of organizing the Plains Writers series under its belt, is the perfect fit to host the 7th Nebraska Literature Festival.

Scheduled for September 17 - 19, this year's Festival is planned around the theme: *The World in the Plains: Plains Literature as World Literature*.

The Festival will explore how Plains writing represents the themes and nuances of world literature. "Our goal is to emphasize that Plains writing is at once universal and quintessentially American," says Gretchen Ronnow, one of the campus organizers of the event.

Festival attendees will benefit from Wayne State College's many years of fostering contacts between writers of the Great Plains and general public readers. A special attraction of this year's Festival will be the appearance of many alumni of the Plains Writers Series. Appearing will be an impressive array of authors. (See box at left.)

#### Student Days at the Festival

The Festival is longer than in previous years to allow time for special programming aimed at high school and college students. Although Thursday and Friday events are geared toward students, the general public is welcome. A videotape of highlights from the student days will be shown on Saturday when programs focus on the general public.

Teachers wishing to bring students to the Thursday or Friday events should contact Gretchen

Ronnow at Wayne State College, Humanities Division, 1111 Main Street, Wayne, NE 68787, 402-375-7394. There is no charge to attend the Festival, but teachers are asked to pre-register for Thursday and Friday events to provide an estimated count.

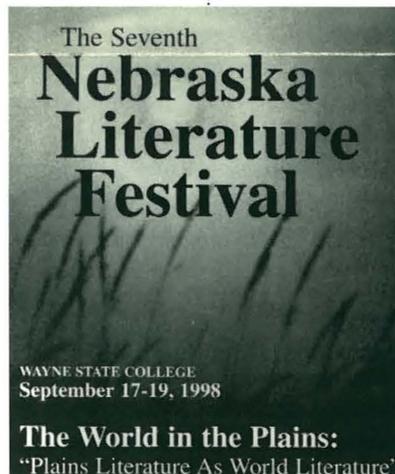
#### Saturday (General Public)

Saturday events will include several author readings, as well as a panel of editors of small presses. Also featured will be programming arranged by Nebraska author groups: the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial, the John G. Neihardt Center, the Friends of Loren Eiseley, the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society, and the Lone Tree Literary Society (Wright Morris).

Panelists include Dr. Marilyn Arnold of Brigham Young University, Charles Trimble and Nancy Crump of the John G. Neihardt Center, Dr. Dimitri Breschinsky of Purdue University, Dr. Helen Stauffer of the University of Nebraska-Kearney, Dr. Barbara Rippey of St. Mary's College, and Dr. Joseph Wydeven of Bellevue University.

#### Book Fair

Of special interest will be a Book Fair, organized by Wayne State College, that will run throughout the Festival. Among the books offered for sale will be in-print works of the writers reading at the Festival. Authors will be available to sign books. Vendors and booksellers that wish to participate should contact Ed Battistella, Wayne State College, Humanities Division, 1111 Main Street, Wayne, NE, 68787, 402-375-7394, e-mail: <EBattistella@wscgate.wsc.edu>.



continued on next page...

# PUT ON YOUR THINKING CAP

by Linda Hillegass

**P**ut your brain to work and help us rename this publication. We want something snappier, more friendly, and more expressive of our focus on books. Although several people did respond to our plea for suggestions in the last issue, we're extending the contest deadline to try to build the list. Mail your ideas (as many as you like) to Mary Jo Ryan, Nebraska Center for the Book, The Atrium, 1200 N Street, Suite 120, Lincoln, NE 68508-

2023, e-mail: <mjryan@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>.

Deadline: September 30, 1998.

If we choose your suggestion for our new name, you'll win a \$25 gift certificate from Lee Booksellers. They're located in Lincoln, but they mail free anywhere in the Solar System.

Even if we don't pick your suggestion, you still have a chance to win. Go back to the last issue (Spring 1998) or to the Library Commission home page, <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>, search on Quarterly, and fill out the questionnaire on page 7 completely. We'll enter your name in a drawing for a \$10 gift certificate at Lee Booksellers. ▲

## Literature Festivals continued...

### Sponsorship

"It's a great pleasure to be able to host Nebraska's premier literature festival," said Ed Battistella, Head of the college's Division of Humanities. "This provides an opportunity to highlight what we are doing to promote literature on campus and to promote Nebraska and Plains literature."

In addition to Wayne State College (WSC) and the Nebraska Center for the Book (NCB)—with Katherine Walter, NCB Festival Committee chairperson—sponsors of this year's Festival include the Nebraska Humanities Council, The Gardner Foundation, the Nebraska Department of Education, Random House, and the WSC Campus Bookstore. The campus steering committee for the event includes Ed

Battistella, Jim Brummels, Gretchen Ronnow, Lisa Sandlin, Bill Slaymaker, Jo Taylor, Laurel Longe, Lana Hansen, Melissa Ryan, and Marian Vogel. ▲

more on the festival on page 4...

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I am working on a project about *Wisdom*, a magazine published from 1956 to 1961. I would appreciate hearing from any of your readers who remember this magazine. I can be reached in Omaha at 402-333-5166 or by e-mail at <opollak@cwis.unomaha.edu>.

Very cordially yours,

Oliver B. Pollak  
Department of History, University of Nebraska at Omaha

## The **NCB** Quarterly

Summer 1998 Vol. 8 No. 2

### Nebraska Center for the Book Board

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### Nebraska Center for the Book 1998 Committees

Membership on committees is not restricted to board members. Please contact us if you would like to become involved: Lauren Riedesel, Nebraska Center for the Book, The Atrium, 1200 N Street, Suite 120, Lincoln NE, 68508-2023.

#### Nebraska Literature Festival Committee

Katherine Walter, *Chair*  
Dee Yost  
John Butler  
Jerry Kromberg  
Denise Brady

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Oliver Pollak  
Richard Allen  
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Nebraska Library Commission staff

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Lora Black  
Lauren Riedesel

### Fundraising/Development Committee

Denise Brady, *Chair*  
Connie Osborne  
Molly Fisher  
Rod Wagner, Nebraska Library Commission Director, is an *ex-officio* member of all committees to coordinate staff support from the Library Commission during the transition year, 1998.

### 1998 Nebraska Center for the Book Board Meetings

**August 8**, Oakland, 2:00 P.M. (in conjunction with the Great Plains Chautauqua; site to be announced.)

**November 8** - Lincoln, annual meeting, time and site to be announced.

*The NCB Quarterly* is published three times a year by the Nebraska Center for the Book, The Atrium, 1200 N Street, Suite 120, Lincoln, NE 68508-2023. Subscription is free with membership. Editor: Linda Hillegass. Design and production: Valerie Dayton

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ISSN 1063-9365

# Wright Morris Inscribed

by **Oliver B. Pollak**

Department of History, University of Nebraska at Omaha

**B**ook collectors are interested in the edition, condition, and dust jacket. A signature adds value to a book and the most prestigious is the inscribed copy.

The recent passing of Wright Morris prompted a survey of BiblioFind on the Internet and revealed over 700 copies, including about 35 signed and 12 inscribed volumes. The following inscriptions offer unique views of the writing personality.

In *The Man Who Was There* (1945) Morris wrote "For Ralph & Louise who were also there and who know the Ward Line and the Osborn Look, Wright, 5-48." In this novel Agee Ward is an orphan whose mother Ethel Grace Ward died at his birth. Morris's own mother, Grace Osborn, died when he was six days old. Morris and his wife Mary moved to Haverford and Wayne, Pennsylvania when Mary got a teaching job in a private school. Ralph Sargent was an Elizabethan scholar teaching English at Haverford College, where Morris also taught.

To another colleague he wrote in *The Home Place* (1948) "To Dwight [Kirsch]—who knows that objects and places, coherently grouped, disposed for human use and addressed to it, must have a sense of their own, mystic meaning proper to themselves to give out—Wright." Kirsch was an Iowa artist and writer.

To Jeannette Hopkins, his editor at Harcourt Brace for *Love Among the Cannibals* (1957) and *The Field of Vision* (1965) he wrote in the latter, "For Jeannette Hopkins and a sea warmer than the one on the sombre side of the gallring. P.S. This turns out to be a wonderfully ambivalent statement." In another copy of *The Field of Vision* he wrote, "This book is for Daniel for the time being very much a part of the author's field of vision. Wright Morris. Chez les Needhams, July 18, 1961."

Jake Zeitlin had a barn-shaped bookstore on La Cienega Boulevard in Los Angeles that comprised a cultural salon during the 30s and 40s, including Aldous Huxley, John Steinbeck, and photographer Edward Weston. In *Ceremony in Lone Tree* (1960) Morris wrote, "For Jake, in the hope that we still 'have the boy, the young man, Jake Zeitlin stepping forth as a poet' all unseemly greetings. August 19, 1960."

In *Fire Sermon* (1971) he wrote to Carlos Baker, Hemingway's biographer, "For Dorothy and Carlos Baker, who have witnessed the Fire and now heard the Sermon, Wright Morris, Princeton, 10-13-71."

This story was facilitated by the Internet and conversations with booksellers in California, Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania. To do a similar search, go to <<http://www.bibliofind.com/>> and use the "signed/inscribed copies" command. ▲

## 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, 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 Library of Congress's National Center for the Book since 1990.

## Morrie Tuttle Honored

Nebraska Center for the Book's volunteer Executive Treasurer, Morrie Tuttle, was awarded "The Literary Heritage Award" at the Lincoln Arts Council 20th Annual Mayor's Arts Awards in April. His many

volunteer activities include contributions to literary, library, musical, art and museum organizations and causes. Congratulations Morrie! ▲

### Join the Nebraska Center for the Book

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/address of a friend who might be interested in NCB membership:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_ \$15 Individual Membership
- \_\_\_ \$25 Organizational Membership
- \_\_\_ \$50 Octavo Membership
- \_\_\_ \$100 Quarto Membership
- \_\_\_ \$250 Folio Membership

Please send this form and a check to:  
**Nebraska Center for the Book**  
**The Atrium, 1200 N Street, Suite 120**  
**Lincoln, NE 68508-2023.**

# A Taste of Wayne

**W**ayne State College (Wayne, NE) serves approximately 4,000 students from Nebraska, northwest Iowa, many other states, and several foreign countries. Fifty percent of Wayne's students major in the arts and sciences. Undergraduate humanities programs are available in English, mass communications, speech, modern languages, and theater.

The college has been a part of the Nebraska Public Radio's Big Radio on Campus program, hosted a summer Rural Writing Institute, and cooperated in the publication of the *Nebraska Humanities* magazine issue on "The Plains, the Prairies and the Humanities."

The city of Wayne, in northeast Nebraska, is about 120 miles from Lincoln, 100 miles from Omaha, 130 miles from Sioux Falls, and 45 miles

from Sioux City, Iowa. Accommodations are available at several local motels and bed and breakfasts (see below) and in the nearby cities of West Point and Norfolk.

Wayne State has several campus attractions, including an arboretum and a planetarium. The arboretum is planted throughout the campus. A tour guide will be available or visitors can take a self-guided tour.

The John G. Neihardt Center is in nearby Bancroft. The Center includes Neihardt's home, a museum, exhibits, and a garden. Hours are 9 A.M. - 5 P.M. Monday through Saturday and 1:30 - 5 P.M. Sunday; the Center's phone number is 402-648-3388. ▲

**For Festival program updates and additional information, check the Festival web page at: <<http://www.wsc.edu/academic/humanities/nlf.htm>>.**

## Heading for Wayne

**T**here is no need to pre-register for the Nebraska Literature Festival, but do reserve accommodations. Other events in the area coincide with the Festival and rooms are limited. Mention the Nebraska Literature Festival when you reserve your room.

### In (or near) Wayne

- ◆ Wayne Super 8 (Highway 35), 402-375-4898 or 800-800-8000. \$40.48 per night for a single room.
- ◆ K-D Inn (Highway 35), 402-375-1770. \$36.95 per night for a single room.
- ◆ Sports Club Motel (Highway 35), 402-375-4222. \$36.95 per night for a single room.
- ◆ Grandma Butch's Bed & Breakfast (Highway 35), 402-375-2759. \$40 - 50 per night for a single room. The higher rate is for a private bath.
- ◆ Swanson's Bed & Breakfast (Highway 15, north of Wayne), 402-584-2277. \$45 - 50 per night for a single room. The higher rate is for a private bath.

- ◆ Camping facilities are available at two locations:
  - Wayne Municipal Airport on Highway 35, east of Wayne
  - Henry Victor Park on Highway 15, south of Wayne.

### In Norfolk

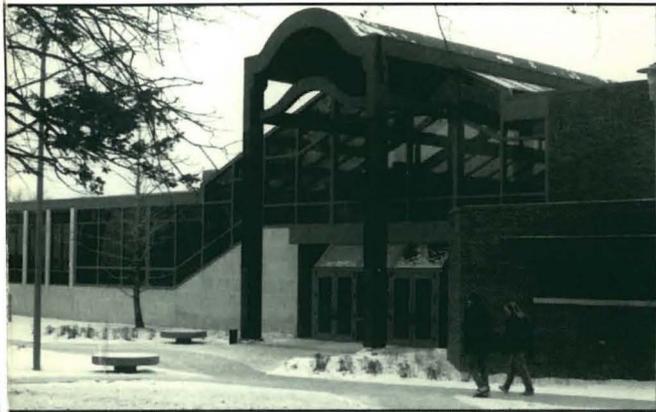
- ◆ Super 8, 1223 Omaha Avenue, 402-379-2220
- ◆ Days Inn, 1001 Omaha Avenue, 402-371-3035
- ◆ Ramada Inn, 1227 Omaha Avenue, 402-371-7000
- ◆ Norfolk Country Inn, 1201 South 13th Street, 402-371-3263

### In West Point

- ◆ Super 8, 1211 Lincoln Avenue, 402-372-3998

**Food is available in the campus food court in the Student Center or in downtown Wayne.** ▲

# Festival Schedule



WSC Student Center

## Thursday, September 17

All readings & panels in Gardner Hall Auditorium. Book Fair in Student Center Atrium.

12:00 - 12:30 Registration & campus welcome

12:30 - 1:45 Readings about Beginnings:

- Twyla Hansen
- Barbara Schmitz
- Ted Kooser

2:00 - 3:15 Voices of the Midwest:

- David Allan Evans
- Herb Scott
- Roy Scheele

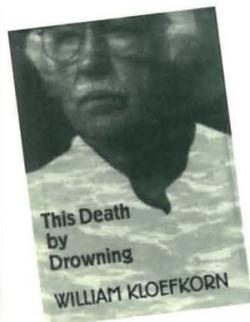
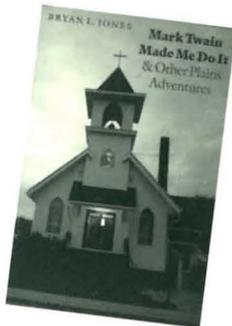
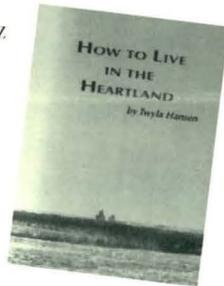
3:30 - 5:00 The Stampede to Creative Nonfiction. Writers talk about this new genre and read from their works:

- Bill Holm
- Art Homer
- Bryan Jones

5:00 - 7:30 Dinner on your own

7:30 - 8:30

- William Kloefkorn, Nebraska State Poet
- David Lee, Poet Laureate of Utah



## Friday, September 18

All readings & panels in Gardner Hall Auditorium. Book Fair in Student Center Atrium.

9:00 - 9:50 Short Story Writers. Writers read from their works and answer questions:

- Dan Choan
- Elizabeth Cook-Lynn
- Neil Harrison

10:00 - 10:50 Here from There, part one. Readings on place and placement:

- Greg Kosmicki
- Matt Mason

11:00 - 11:50 So This is Nebraska. Readings provide perspectives on what it's like to live in Nebraska:

- Joan Hoffman
- Ron Block
- Charles Fort

12:00 - 1:00 Lunch on your own

1:00 - 1:50 The Novel and History. A panel of novelists and historians discuss the writing process:

- Jane Candia Coleman
- Dennis Hastings
- Anna Monardo

2:00 - 3:15 Here from There, part two. More readings on place and placement:

- Nancy McCleery
- Steven Schneider
- CarolAnn Russell

3:15 - 7:30 Dinner on your own

7:30 - 9:00 A Cowboy Gathering. Three cowboy poets read their works:

- Lyn DeNaeyer
- Larry Holland
- Paul Zarzyski

## Saturday, September 19

All Saturday readings & panels in the Student Center. Book Fair continues in the Student Center Atrium from 9 to 5. Registration in the Student Center Atrium.

9:00 - 9:50 Candid Glimpses Into the Mind of a Writer. Willa Cather's letters and what they reveal:

- Speaker: Marilyn Arnold, Brigham Young University
- Moderator: Patricia Phillips (Organized by the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial)

**STUDENT DAYS:-**  
Thursday & Friday  
(General public welcome)

**GENERAL PUBLIC:**  
Saturday

All events are open to the public and free of charge. No pre-registration is required.



continued on page 6...

**FESTIVAL  
SCHEDULE**  
*continued...*

- 9:00 - 10:50 Niobrara Room A Panel of Small Press Editors. Editors and booksellers discuss the future of publishing about the Plains:
- Mark Sanders, Sandhills Press
  - Kathleene West, Puerto del Sol
  - Bonnie P. O'Connell, Abattoir Editions
  - Denise Brady, Bradybooks
  - Alison Wilson, Nosila Press
  - David McCleery, A Slow Tempo Press
  - Jim Reese, Logan House
- 9:00 - 10:50 Nebraska Room Readings:
- Deb Carpenter
  - Lisa Sandlin
  - Brent Spencer
  - Jim Barnes
- 9:00 - 10:50 Niobrara Room B Video Highlights of Thursday/Friday Events
- 10:00 - 10:50 Elkhorn Room Indian Views on Neihardt. A panel discussion:
- Charles Trimble, Neihardt Center Director
  - Nancy Crump, Neihardt Center Assistant Director
- (Organized by the John G. Neihardt Center)
- 11:00 - 11:50 Niobrara Room A Expatriates and Out-staters. Readings and panel discussion about where the center of Nebraska literature is found:
- Kathleene West
  - Mark Sanders
  - Robert McEwen
  - Bob Ross
  - Moderator: Gretchen Ronnow
- 11:00 - 11:50 Elkhorn Room From the Great Plains to the Steppes of Russia, Loren Eiseley Transplanted:
- Speaker: Dimitri Breschinsky, Purdue University
- (Organized by the Friends of Loren Eiseley)
- 11:00 - 11:50 Niobrara Room B Information Sessions. Literature-related groups will be available at tables to talk with interested persons, including:
- Finelines
  - Nebraska English Language Arts Council (NELAC)
  - Nebraska Network 21 (NN-21)
  - Omaha Literacy Council
  - Nebraska Writing Project
  - Rural Voices Project
  - School at the Center
- 12:00 - 1:00 Lunch on your own

1:00 - 1:50 Nebraska Room *Goodnight, Nebraska:* Reading and discussion by author Thomas McNeal

2:00 - 2:50 Niobrara Room A Favorite Female Characters in the Writings of Mari Sandoz. A Panel Discussion:

- Helen Stauffer, University of Nebraska Kearney
- Barbara Rippey, St. Mary's College, Omaha
- Holly Boomer, Oglala Lakota College, SD
- Daniel McGlynn, Mari Sandoz Heritage Society

(Organized by the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society )

2:00 - 2:50 Elkhorn Room Remembering Wright Morris, Nebraska and Beyond:

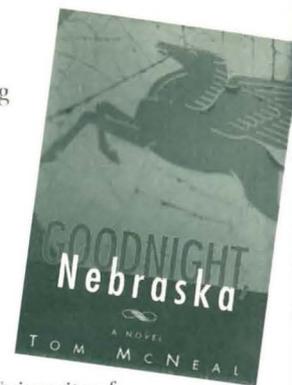
- Joseph Wydeven, Bellevue University
- Rod Rice, U.S. Air Force Academy

(Organized by the Lone Tree Literary Society)

3:00 - 3:45 Nebraska Room The Wild Beneath Things: the Blood and Bones of Nature. Closing Readings:

- Neil Harrison
- Don Welch

3:45 - 5:00 Additional time to browse the Book Fair



*Above: Wayne State College  
Humanities Building*

## Review:

by Janice A. Radway

University of  
North Carolina Press,  
1997, hardcover  
(ISBN 0-8078-2357-0)  
\$29.95

by Lynne Sharon  
Schwartz

Beacon Press  
1996, hardcover  
(ISBN 0-8070-7082-3)  
\$18.00  
1997, paperback  
(ISBN 0-8070-7083-1)  
\$10.00

# A Feeling for Books: the Book-of-the-Month Club, Literary Taste, and Middle-Class Desire

and

## Ruined by Reading: A Life in Books

Where do our ideas come from? How does the intellect develop? Neurologists, psychiatrists, psychologists, and educators present varying theories. John Stuart Mill's *Autobiography* (1873) and Henry Adam's *Education of Henry Adams* (1906) are classics on elitist intellectual development. One hundred years later, two women reveal their middle-class intellectual development as professional readers with authority, charm, and whimsy.

In 1925, the *Oxford English Dictionary* identified a new word, "middle-brow." The following year, entrepreneur Harry Scherman started the Book-of-the-Month Club. Literary judges screened books and advised readers. Radway, a scholar of reading, published *Reading the Romance* in 1984. She calls her current investigation an ethnographic account. It is also intensely personal as she recalls being bedridden for a year at the age of 12. Her teacher, Mr. Shymansky, brought boxes of Book-of-the-Month Club books to her house. Over 20 years later, she looked at those volumes, which included *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Marjorie Morningstar*, and asked questions about club selection procedure, the nature of American culture and reading habits, and how these books had affected her.

The middle-class was concerned with family, leisure and profession. Their busy lives accepted the club's cultural guidance to maximize a sense of improvement and association with culture, and to satisfy the urge to collect. Some librarians, authors,

publishers and bookstores opposed the club for distorting culture. The monthly book club news was not so much a critical review as a descriptive guide for potential selection.

Radway's research occurred when club mores were challenged by Time-Warner, its new owner. One sign of change was the elimination of judges in 1994.

Schwartz, a novelist, has written *Disturbances in the Field* and *The Fatigue Artist*. Although her title suggests that reading is dangerous, her point is that no young girl, Victorian or otherwise, was ever ruined by reading. She recalls learning to read the Little Leather Library on the shelf, a precursor of the Book-of-the-Month Club, at age three and a half. She later read the most popular of the club's offerings, William Shirer's *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* (1960).

Generations of Americans have read *A Message to Garcia* by Elbert Hubbard, part of the high school canon. She demonstrates the hollowness of its tenets of loyalty and duty. Schwartz recalls the impact that Betty Martin's moving story of a leper colony, *Miracle at Carville*, had on her.

Literature comprises a major facet of our common culture. Without ever meeting Radway or Schwartz, you may feel a kinship for having traversed the same books. They both speak highly of Willa Cather. Their two books, borrowed from the library, invaded my consciousness. Applying their models and ruminations you may reflect on early readings and library usage, including waiting for the mail and devouring Reader's Digest condensed books.

Both authors mine Marcel Proust's *Swann's Way*, and Italo Calvino's *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler*, and I am determined to read both soon. Thus, another explanation of the professional reader's intellectual development: One thing leads to another.

Reviewed by Oliver B. Pollak, Department of  
History, University of Nebraska at Omaha ▲

# Calendar of Events....



**“Meet Eleanor Roosevelt” Chautauqua-style.**  
Sponsored by Nebraska Humanities Council (NHC).  
Contact: Marj Manglitz 402-464-3607.

September 2	Seward
September 3	Crete
September 4	Lincoln
September 9 & 10	Wayne
September 11	Columbus
September 13	York
September 16 & 17	McCook

**Nebraska Literature Festival 1998** “The World in the Plains: Plains Literature as World Literature.”  
Contact: 402-375-7394.

September 17, 18 & 19	Wayne
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**“As Long as the Grass Will Grow”** Native American tradition-bearers, storytellers, and western poets.  
Sponsored by NHC. Contact: Mike Morava 308-665-2900.

September 25 & 26	Fort Robinson State Park, near Crawford
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**Lincoln City Libraries Annual Book Sale at the Nebraska State Fairgrounds.**  
Contact: Barbara Hansen 402-441-8512.

October 2 - 4	Lincoln
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**Nebraska Center for the Book Annual Meeting.**  
Contact Laureen Riedesel 402-223-3584.

November 8	Lincoln
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**Symposium on Edward Curtis and his The North American Indian**, published 1907 - 1930 in 20 volumes and 20 portfolios. University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Great Plains Room of Love Library.  
Contact: Eva Sartori 402-472-6987.

November 13-14	Lincoln
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**THE NEBRASKA  
CENTER FOR  
THE BOOK**

*an affiliate of the Library of Congress*

c/o Nebraska Library Commission  
The Atrium  
1200 N Street, Suite 120  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-2023  
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**Nebraska Literature Festival**  
September 17, 18 & 19 • Wayne State College

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