



# The NCB News

Volume 9

Summer 1999

No. 2

A Publication of the Nebraska Center for the Book

## Chadron State College Site of 8th Nebraska Literature Festival

**O**n September 17 and 18, Oglala Lakota College and Chadron State College (CSC) will co-host the 1999 Nebraska Literature Festival on the campus of Chadron State College. The theme, Crossing Borders: Geographical, Ethnic, and Literary Frontiers in Plains Literature, acknowledges and celebrates the interstate cooperation behind the 1999 Festival. Artists from several states, working in various formats and representing diverse cultures, will come together to read, act, discuss, and perform during the festivities.



1999 Nebraska Literature Festival  
September 17-18, Friday and Saturday  
at Chadron State College

### Friday

The Festival will begin Friday morning with a series of writing workshops led by prominent regional poets, novelists, story writers, non-fiction writers, and playwrights. William Kloefkorn, Nebraska State Poet; Dan O'Brien, award-winning author of *Spirit of the Hills* and a new novel set at Fort Robinson; Peggy Adair; and Twyla Hansen will be featured, along with other experienced author-teachers. High school and college writers, as well as the general public, are encouraged to register early since enrollment in the workshops is limited. Concurrent poetry reading and storytelling sessions will be offered for those not participating in the workshops.

Friday afternoon will feature a variety of events, including poetry and prose readings, Mexican and Irish dancers, American Indian storytellers, a readers' theater group, and a drum corps. A Cowboy Poetry Gathering, featuring Glen Ohrlin, Echo Roy, and Deb Carpenter, will start the activities for Friday evening in the CSC Ballroom. Country Oak, the premiere country and western band in the region, will conclude the evening with music and dancing at the historic Olde Main Street Inn in downtown Chadron.

### Saturday

On Saturday, a series of readings by poets, prose authors, and playwrights will give the audience a chance to hear authors read from their work and talk about their writing processes. Also scheduled for Saturday morning and afternoon are panels to discuss the works of various Plains writers, including Nebraska authors Willa Cather, Mari Sandoz, John Neihardt, Loren Eiseley, Bess Streeter Aldrich, and Wright Morris. In addition, participants will discuss music lyrics, environmental literature, Mari Sandoz archival material, history of the Nebraska Panhandle, the works of contemporary Plains playwrights, and the process of getting a collaborative publishing venture successfully into print. In the afternoon, a CSC readers' theater group will perform a play by Nebraska dramatist Doug Marr. Saturday evening will conclude with an open mike reading and jam session at the Olde Main Street Inn.

### Sunday

On Sunday, those who want to enjoy the many natural and cultural attractions of the area on their own may venture off to tour Sandoz Country (maps will be available), or to visit nearby Ft. Robinson, the Museum of the Fur Trade, Toadstool Park, or Agate Fossil Beds. Guided tours of Mari Sandoz Country led by Sybil Berndt, Ft. Robinson and Lovers' Leap led by Wilmer Mesteth and/or Tom Buecker, and American Indian and Crazy Horse sites near Hay Springs led by David and Mabell Kaddacek, are also planned. Complete schedule on page 4.

### Sponsorship

The Festival is sponsored and funded by the Nebraska Center for the Book, the Nebraska Humanities Council, Chadron State College, Oglala Lakota College, and the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society, with additional funding from the Heartland Art Fund and the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism. The

*continued on page 4...*

# Crossing Borders

by Gerry Cox,  
Editor, NCB News

**A**n exciting look at the geographical, ethnic, and literary frontiers in the area surrounding Chadron and the Oglala Lakota College is possible in September. Take time to read this issue of the NCB News about the innovative Nebraska Literature Festival in Chadron. The activities listed on pages 4 and 5 demonstrate that many people are scheduled to

talk about writing and writers, and that many who write will discuss their work before and after publication, and lead writing workshops.

It will take a real effort to attend the Chadron Literature Festival if you are from the eastern part of the state. Those of you who make that effort will not be disappointed in either the content of the festival or the surrounding attractions. It will be well worth your time. ▲

## Homestead Days Celebrated in Beatrice

**G**ene Greissman and Jack Gladstone headlined the Homestead Days entertainment this summer at Homestead National Monument of America. Greissman, an internationally famed author and professional speaker, portrayed Abraham Lincoln. Gladstone, a Blackfeet Tribal member, performed in conjunction with Greissman. Beth Cross, a storyteller that believes "stories need a community to be shared in and communities are the stories they tell," gave a storytelling concert. Esther Barber presented an informative and amusing presentation on the vanishing American outhouse, ranging from two-story

outhouses to those built through the Works Progress Administration of the 1930's.

Senator David Landis closed the Homestead Days program with his *Norris: A Nebraska Colossus* presentation highlighting Senator Norris' 40 years in Congress. From rural electrification, to Nebraska's unique Unicameral, to the creation of Homestead National Monument of America, his rise from the farm to Congress is a testament to the power of one honest man. Senator Landis portrayed Norris in speech and in appearance.

Traditional arts and crafts demonstrations that have been part of Homestead Days since the event started in 1979 were also presented. Homestead National Monument of America is located four miles west of Beatrice on Nebraska State Highway 4. ▲

The **NCB News**

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### Nebraska Center for the Book Board and Committees

#### NE Literature Festival

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Nebraska Library Commission Director Rod Wagner is an ex officio member of all committees.

#### 1999 Nebraska Center for the Book Board Meetings

**November 7, Red Cloud, Annual meeting**, featuring Terry Evans, author of *Prairie: Images of Ground and Sky*, time to be announced.

#### Advertising

*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 402-471-2045, 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mjryan@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>.

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# Movies, Bookstores, and Libraries

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

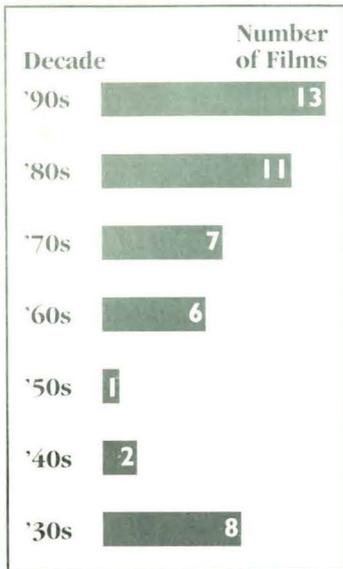
**I** asked five of my smart PhD-holding friends about films with library or bookstore plots and came up with about 10 titles, four of which appeared since 1998, suggesting either poor memory or an emerging genre.

A computer savvy movie buff introduced me to IMDb.com (Internet Movie Database) which lists more than 200,000 films and television programs indexed by title, director, performer, plot, and keyword. Searching books, bookstore, librarian and library yielded more than 150 films, including comedy, romance, drama, mystery, sex, violence, bad language, horror, crime, and murder. Eliminating duplicates and foreign language films left 48 titles. "B" indicates that the movie is based on a book and "V" indicates that according to reel.com and Amazon.com, it is available in video.

The mega-bookstore cum cafe of the '80s and '90s is reflected in film productivity. The fifties Cold War and anti-intellectualism produced one film and it was about censorship and bigotry.

Web searches are not definitive. *The Name of the Rose*, *Paper Chase*, and *Reuben Reuben*, did not show up on the Web. Some book titles, like Umberto Eco's *Name of the Rose* and *Fast Company* by Marco Page (pseudonym of Harry Kurnitz), are preserved in the film title. *Life is Beautiful*, scripted for the screen, enjoyed bookstore success. *You've Got Mail* is the progeny of *Shop Around the Corner* (1941). Two films have Nebraska connections: Joan Micklin Silver, director of *Crossing Delancey*, hails from Omaha and the Marks & Co. sign from *84 Charing Cross Road*, rescued by Dan Kelly, hangs in the College of St. Mary Library.

You can add to this list by e-mail to <OBPOmni@aol.com>.



- Notting Hill (1999)
- Love Letter (1999)
- Shooting Past (1999)
- Unconditional Love (1999)
- Life is Beautiful<sup>B</sup> (1998)
- You've Got Mail<sup>B</sup> (1998)
- George & Leo (1997)
- Buffy the Vampire Slayer (1997)
- Party Girl<sup>B</sup> (1995)
- Gabriel Knight: Sins of the Fathers<sup>B</sup> (1994)
- The Pagemaster<sup>B</sup> (1994)
- Salmonberries<sup>B</sup> (1991)
- Transylvania Twist (1990)
- I, Madman<sup>B</sup> (1989)
- The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover<sup>B</sup> (1989)
- Crossing Delancey<sup>B</sup> (1988)
- Burglar<sup>B</sup> (1987)
- The Name of the Rose<sup>B</sup> (1986)
- The Breakfast Club<sup>B</sup> (1986)
- 84 Charing Cross Road<sup>B</sup> (1986)
- The Body in the Library<sup>B</sup> (1985)
- Bugs Bunny's Third Movie: 1001 Rabbit Tales (1982)
- Reuben Reuben (1982)
- The House Possessed (1981)
- The Attic<sup>B</sup> (1979)
- The Hollywood Strangler Meets the Skid Row Slasher<sup>B</sup> (1979)
- Hunter<sup>B</sup> (1977)
- Foul Play<sup>B</sup> (1978)
- Le Sex Shop<sup>B</sup> (1974)
- Paper Chase<sup>B</sup> (1973)
- Seven Minutes<sup>B</sup> (1971)
- Goodbye Columbus<sup>B</sup> (1969)
- Fahrenheit 451<sup>B</sup> (1966)
- You're a Big Boy Now<sup>B</sup> (1966)
- Rome Adventure<sup>B</sup> (1962)
- The Music Man<sup>B</sup> (1962)
- Return to Peyton Place<sup>B</sup> (1961)
- Storm Center (1956)
- Africa Screams<sup>B</sup> (1949)
- From This Day Forward<sup>B</sup> (1946)
- Sniffles and the Bookworm (1939)
- Three Loves Has Nancy (1938)
- Girl in the Crowd (1935)
- Fast and Furious<sup>B</sup> (1939)
- Fast Company<sup>B</sup> (1938)
- C.O.D. (1932)
- The Babbling Book (1931)
- Local Boy Makes Good (1931)

## 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.

## Join the Nebraska Center for the Book

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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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
- \$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.

continued from page 1...

following local businesses and organizations have also contributed their support: the Best Western Motel, the Westerner Motel, the Roundup Motel,

Microtel Inn and Suites, the Grand Westerner Motel, Olde Main Street Inn, Chadron State Park, and Ft. Robinson State Park. Special contributions to the Nebraska Center for the Book from the Best Western West Hills Inn in Chadron, Community First National Bank in Chadron, Media Productions and Marketing, Inc. in Lincoln, Pollak & Hicks Law, P.C. in Omaha and Houchen Bindery Ltd. in Utica helped make the Festival possible.

The Festival planning committee includes Deb Carpenter and Holly

Boomer from Oglala Lakota College; Andrew Elkins, Kathy Agar, and Mary Ann Rudy from Chadron State College; Susan Vastine from Chadron High School; and Mary Ellen Elkins of Chadron.

Everyone is welcome and registration is free. For more program details (as they are available) or to register for a Friday morning writing workshop, contact Andrew Elkins, Dept. of Language and Literature, 1000 Main St., Chadron State College, Chadron NE, 69337, 308-432-6307 or 308-432-2047, e-mail: <aelkins@csc.edu>.

### Book Fair

A Book Fair will run throughout the Festival in the CSC Student Center. Publishers, distributors, and organizations will sell books by Festival participants, as well as books on local and regional history, politics, and culture.

Participants will include: Chadron Book Shoppe, Sandhills Press (Mark Sanders), Nebraska Newspaper Project, University of Nebraska Press, Nebraska Humanities Council, Academic Freedom Coalition of Nebraska, Nebraska English Language Arts Council, Nebraska Literary Heritage Association, Wordsmith Books and Arts (Francis Moul), John G. Neihardt Center, Mari Sandoz Heritage Society, Friends of Loren Eiseley, Four Winds Indian Books, *Prairie Schooner*, Backwater Press (Greg Kosmicki), Logan House Press (Jim Reese), and a special table of festival participants' books. The Chadron State College Eagle Pride Book Store in the Student Center will also be open.

Vendors and booksellers that wish to participate should contact Andrew Elkins, Dept of Language and Literature, 1000 Main St., Chadron State College, Chadron NE, 69337, 308-432-6307 or 308-432-2047, e-mail: <aelkins@csc.edu>.

## Festival Schedule

*All events in the Chadron State College Student Center, unless otherwise noted.*

### Friday, September 17

- 9:00–10:30 a.m. Writing Workshops:**  
Bill Kloefkorn  
Dave Martin  
Greg Kosmicki  
Kent Meyers  
Barbara Schmitz  
Doug Marr  
Ron Block
- 9:00–10:30 a.m. Readings:**  
Jim Reese  
Karen Shoemaker
- 10:00–11:00 a.m. Readings:**  
Kelly Madigan Erlandson  
Charles Fort
- 10:30 a.m.–noon Writing Workshops:**  
Dan O'Brien  
Bill Clemente  
Jim Hanson  
Brent Spencer  
Peggy Adair  
Twylla Hansen  
Mary K. Stillwell
- 11:00 a.m.–noon Storytellers:**  
Anne Bodman  
Mary Heise  
Lucille Saunders
- Noon–1:00 p.m. Mexican Dance Group**
- Noon–1:00 p.m. Irish Dancing:**  
Kelly Madigan Erlandson, et al.
- Noon–1:00 p.m. Mari Sandoz panel:**  
Dan Holtz, et al.
- 1:00–2:00 p.m. Willa Cather:**  
Betty Jean Steinsouer
- 1:00–2:00 p.m. Readers' Theater:**  
Director Bob Curry, Oglala Lakota College
- 1:00–2:00 p.m. Readings:**  
Mary K. Stillwell  
Marjorie Saiser
- 2:00–3:00 p.m. Native American Storytellers/flute:**  
Calvin Jumping Bull  
Wilmer Mesteth
- 2:00–3:00 p.m. Student Poetry Contest, with cash prizes**

## 1999 Nebraska Literature Festival

Crossing Borders:  
Geographical, Ethnic,  
and Literary Frontiers  
in Plains Literature

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



3:00–4:00 p.m.

**Readings:**

Peggy Adair  
Barbara Schmitz

3:00–4:00 p.m.

**Native American Drum Corps and Dancers**

7:00–8:30 p.m.

**Cowboy Poetry:**

Deb Carpenter  
Echo Roy  
Otto Rosfeld  
Glenn Ohrlin  
*Preceded by the presentation of the Mildred Bennett Award to an individual who has made a significant contribution to fostering the literary tradition in Nebraska*

9:00 p.m.–midnight

**Country Oak, Country-western and Oldies Band,**  
Olde Main Street Inn, 1st and Main

Noon–1:00 p.m.

**History Panel:**

Grace Gouevia  
Jim Hanson,  
Mabell Kadlecek  
Tom Buecker (tentative)

1:00–2:00 p.m.

**Loren Eiseley/Wright Morris/John Neihardt Panel:**

Nancy Crump  
Joseph Wydeven  
Christine Pappas

1:00–2:00 p.m.

**Plains Playwrights:**

Margaret Griffith  
Doug Marr  
Mary Vallette  
Kevin Lawler  
Max Sparber

2:00–3:00 p.m.

**Willa Cather Panel:**

Susan Maher  
Matt Hokom  
Steve Shively

2:00–3:00 p.m.

**Mari Sandoz/Archives:**

Kay Walter  
Kimberli Lee

2:00–3:00 p.m.

**Readers' Theater:**

Doug Marr, playwright

3:00–4:00 p.m.

**Case Study: Publishing, *Leaning into the Wind:***

Mindy Keskenin  
Gaydell Collier  
Nancy Curtis

3:00–4:00 p.m.

**Environmental Literature Panel:**

Drucilla Wall  
Denise Banker  
Barbara Tracy

Evening

**Open Mike Reading, Jam Session**

Olde Main Street Inn,  
1st and Main

**Saturday, September 18**

9:00–10:00 a.m.

**Readings:**

Bill Kloefkorn  
R. E. McEwen

9:00–10:00 a.m.

**Readings:**

Shirley Fresquez  
Patricia Catches

9:00–10:00 a.m.

**Music Lyrics:**

Will Peters  
Tony Brave

10:00–11:00 a.m.

**Readings:**

Dan O'Brien  
Kent Meyers

10:00–11:00 a.m.

**Readings:**

Brent Spencer  
Ron Block

10:00–11:00 a.m.

**Music with Literary Themes:**

Dan Holtz  
Norm Martin

11:00 a.m.–noon

**Readings:**

J. V. Brummels  
Don Welch

11:00 a.m.–noon

**Readings:**

Twyla Hansen  
Charles Fort  
Greg Kosmicki

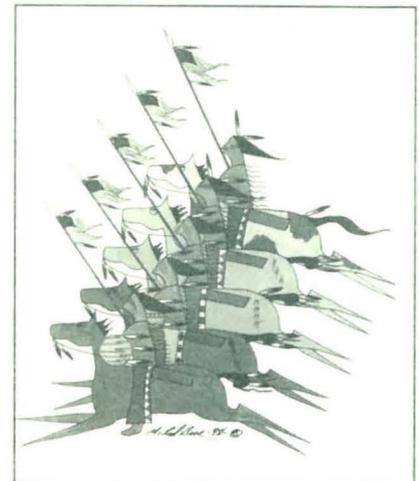
Noon–1:00 p.m.

**Bess Streeter Aldrich panel:**

Lori Kentner  
Carol Petersen



*Chadron State College Student Center*



# Lincoln Gains Two New Libraries

by **John F. Dale**,  
Lincoln City  
Libraries, Assistant  
Library Director,  
Project Manager

**T**wo new branch libraries, one named after one of Nebraska's foremost authors, Loren Corey Eiseley, the other after one of Lincoln's most dedicated volunteers, Bess Dodson Walt; what could be more exciting? Lincoln voters approved a 15.2 million dollar bond issue for the new branches in November 1998. The Lincoln City Libraries board, in its April 1999 meeting, selected the architectural firm of Clark Enersen Partners for the design.

Eiseley branch will be constructed near 14th and Superior Streets in the northwest quadrant of Lincoln. It will be located within Lincoln Parks and Recreation's new Keech park. The library and the neighborhood park will share a twelve-acre site. The Keech family, whose farm was located on this site, recalls that Eiseley and his good friend UN-L Professor Wilbur Gaffney used to walk in the area and stop by at Grandmother Keech's farm house for

drinks of water. The children's room will be named for Mary Ellen Rice, a long time staff member for Lincoln City Libraries and a member of the Keech family.

Walt branch library will also be constructed on park land, the Colonel Densmore park, in the southwest quadrant of the city near 14th and Thunderbird Lane. Bess Dodson Walt was a long time member of the Lincoln City Libraries board and foundation and a volunteer in other arts and humanities endeavors within Lincoln. A new YMCA building will be located on property adjoining the park. The three facilities will share a 70-acre site.

Both libraries will be designed at 30,000 square feet with an additional 2,000 square feet for one of the buildings to house Lincoln City Libraries' bookmobile. Construction for the branches is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2000. The buildings are scheduled to open in February 2002. ▲

## Arts and Literary Journal Highlights Regional Events

by **Bob Boyce**,  
Lincoln City  
Libraries

**G**rassroots Nebraska is, its subtitle tells us, a "free monthly regional journal." Its purpose was originally to promote Nebraska art and literature, but its enterprising, self-educated editor/publisher, Kim Smith, has made it more than that. The banner across the top of the front page now reads BOOKS-ART-HISTORY-EVENTS-PEOPLE & PLACES-SPECIAL INTEREST.

Each interesting issue has several feature articles, a couple of reviews of Nebraska books, an events calendar, and a profile of an artist, as well as occasional humor from Bob Rhubart, a Paul Fell cartoon, news notes, fiction, and poetry. Had you been reading *Grassroots Nebraska* since it began in October 1997, you might have seen articles on musicians, artists (B.C. Lavelle and David Alles), art galleries, authors (Duane Hutchinson and Roger Welsch), bookstores, publishing (Bison Books, the Fine Lines magazine), and a review of an Opera Omaha performance of Verdi. Smith also included articles on history (the

Stuhr Museum and Locomotive 710, now in the Haymarket in Lincoln) and business (Billy's Restaurant and the Zoo Bar, both in Lincoln).

Although *Grassroots Nebraska* is billed as a regional journal and copies are distributed in more than 500 locations across Nebraska, much of the material has been drawn from Lincoln. Smith aims to expand to 80 pages in the next two years (currently 24-26 pages per issue, up from 12 in the first issue) and to a circulation of 100,000 copies. He hopes to achieve distribution in every Nebraska community.

This journal is a symbol of what perseverance can do, with ads from car dealers, bookstores, antique stores, realtors, a band, a bar, food stores, restaurants, gift shops, and more. Smith said, "Part of my mission with *Grassroots* is to demonstrate that people can do what they want to for a living, if they're willing to work for it" (December 1998 issue). This free gift to Nebraskans is a dream come true for Smith, owner of LifeWorks Publishing. It's well worth your time. ▲



# Books, Taxes, and April 15

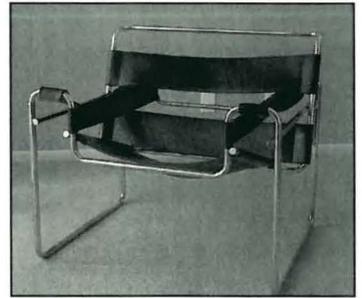
by **Oliver B. Pollak**,  
Department of  
History, University  
of Nebraska at  
Omaha

**S**itting on the floor transforming financial records into an income tax return is not the usual place for enjoyment, satisfaction, or creativity. Should book purchases be ordinary and necessary expenses, expensed under section 179 Internal Revenue Code, or depreciated under the Modified Accelerated Cost Recovery System? Credit cards replaced cash and checks. The paper trail leads to Jackson Street Bookseller, Antiquarian, Village Bookstore (recently transformed into the Bookworm), Barnes & Noble, Borders, and the Bluestem. Alas, no more Jane and Norman Geske Estuary receipts.

In 1998 we visited New York, Washington, San Francisco (twice), San Diego, Madison, New Orleans, Sante Fe, and Kansas City, as confirmed by frequent flyer miles and receipts from the Dahesh Museum, Strand Book Store, Hacker Art Books, Workmen's Circle Bookstore, New York; Archives of American Art in Washington; San Francisco's "genueflectable" City Lights Books; Wessex Books, Menlo Park; and Heather Grace Books in San Diego. At Hopkins and Crocker in Madison, I bought five *Little Leather Library* "volumes," a precursor to the Book of the Month Club, according to Janice Radway's *A Feeling for Books*. Crescent City Books in New Orleans, yielded *The Smell of Books: Cultural-Historical Study of Olfactory Perception in Literature* by Hans J. Rindisbacher.

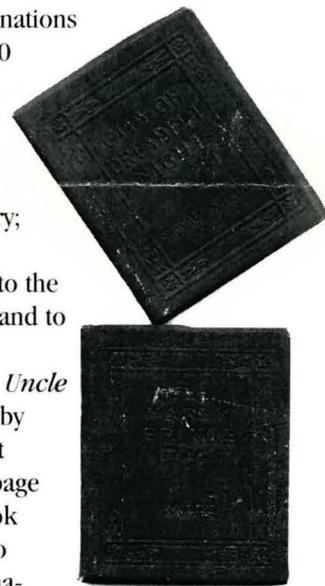
Although Sante Fe has many bookstores and a literary reputation stretching from La Fonda's on the plaza, to Cather's *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, and on to Taos, I bought nothing, being enthralled by my traveling copy of Marcel Proust's *Swann's Way*, a mind and body altering work. I just finished *The Year of Reading Proust* by Phyllis Rose. Spiveys Books in Kansas City's Westport district has an eclectic collection of 30,000 books and art. I did not buy anything (to be rectified in the

near future) and ended up at Oggi's impulsively purchasing a Marcel Breuer B3 Wassily Chair, 1925 clone, not the most comfortable reading chair.



My wife chuckled at Web purchases from The Bookstore in Horse Cave, KY and Pomfret Street Bookstore in Carlisle, PA, not begrudging the dispersal of our earnings throughout America. Web "browsing" brought books from the Bookhouse, Arlington, VA; The Avid Reader, Chapel Hill, NC; Jane Addams Bookshop, Champaign, IL; Mockingbird Books, Montclair, CA; Odyssey Books, Santa Clara, CA; The Great Northwest Bookstore, Portland, OR; Fireside Book Company, Columbus, OH; Riverrun Books, Greensboro, PA; and Willow Creek Books, Englewood, CO.

Gratifying charitable donations under IRS Code section 170 included Gerald Ackerman's *American Orientalists* to the Joslyn Museum's Milton R. and Pauline S. Abrahams Library; Florice Kovan's art book, *Rediscovering Ben Hecht* to the Jewish Federation Library; and to UN-L's Love Library, Wright Morris' *The Writing of My Uncle Dudley* published in 1982 by The Friends of the Bancroft Library and a manuscript page from his *Plains Song*. I look forward to tax time 2000 to recap acquisitions and donations, reconciling taxes with reading. My law partner warns that credit card information exposes my reading habits to commercial and government scrutiny. Read on. ▲



## Love Those Nebraska Authors

Supplies are limited on these Nebraska author materials available from the Nebraska Center for the Book. NCB publishes two resource guides on Nebraska authors. Coffee mugs with your favorite Nebraska authors and a book bag are also available.

- \_\_\_ *Resource Guide to Nebraska Authors I* (the "big six"—Aldrich, Cather, Eiseley, Morris, Neihardt, and Sandoz) . . . . . \$3.50
- \_\_\_ *Resource Guide to Nebraska Authors II* (six more Nebraska authors, including Weldon Kees and Malcolm X) . . . . . \$3.50

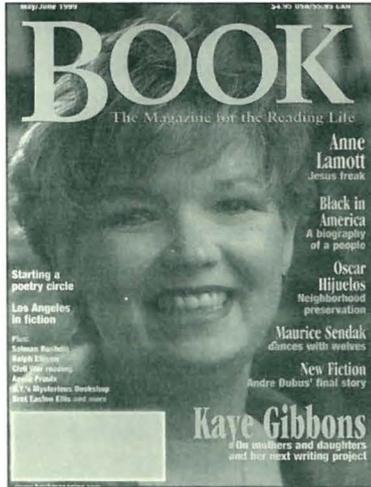
- \_\_\_ Coffee mug: Aldrich . . . . . \$6.50
- \_\_\_ Coffee mug: Eiseley . . . . . \$6.50
- \_\_\_ Coffee mug: Neihardt . . . . . \$6.50
- \_\_\_ Coffee mug: Cather . . . . . \$9.00
- \_\_\_ Coffee mug: Sandoz . . . . . \$9.00
- \_\_\_ Red canvas book bag with slogan: "Go Big Read!" . . . . . \$7.50

All prices include postage and handling. Make your check payable to: The Nebraska Center for the Book. Send to: Jerry Kromberg, 2622 Nottingham Court, Lincoln, NE 68512. ▲

# Review: Book: The Magazine for the Reading Life

**Reviewed by**  
**Dee Yost,**  
President,  
Nebraska Center  
for the Book and  
Republican Valley  
Library System  
Administrator

One of the best periodical bargains for readers hit the newsstands with the October/November 1998 issue of *Book: The Magazine for the Reading Life*. While it has taken a few criticisms early in its life for



divulging the end of a mystery in a review, misusing an apostrophe and not meeting the expectations of one reader, this reader thinks the magazine will find its niche. The magazine's mission is to provide news, features and information that nurture and

enhance the reading experience. It was designed for people who are passionate about books. Recent articles and interviews discuss the writing of Tom Wolfe, Anna Quindlen, Rita Dove, Jim Harrison, Anne Lamott, Oscar Hijuelos, Maurice Sendak, Kaye Gibbons, and Vachss Populi, just to name a few. If those don't match your literary interests, the magazine includes articles on starting a poetry circle, the Mysterious Bookshop in New York, adult and children's book reviews, a calendar of literary events and newsy tidbits about books being made into movies and award winners. Librarians attending this summer's American Library Association Conference were reading the article on "Touring New Orleans by the Book." Pick up an issue at the bookstore or newsstand. Call 800-221-3148 for a subscription or visit the publisher's website at [www.bookmagazine.com](http://www.bookmagazine.com). At \$20 for a year's subscription (6 issues), this is a treat for any literature lover. ▲

# Review: For the Love of Books, 115 Celebrated Writers on the Books they Love Most

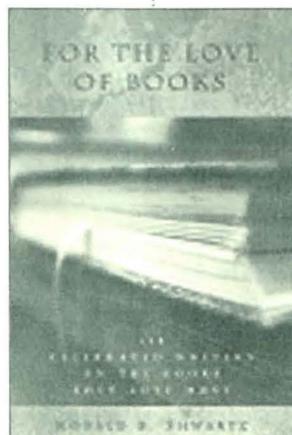
**by Ronald B. Schwartz,**  
(New York:  
Grosset/Putnam,  
1999) \$24.95 ISBN  
0-399-14466-8

Have you ever wanted to ask your favorite author what they read as a child and about their favorite books? Schwartz, a Boston trial lawyer, asked prominent writers for three to six influential titles. This resulted in more than 3,600 letters, faxes, and e-mail. Among the 115 authors responding (about a quarter of whom were women) were Dave Barry, Robert Coles, 93 year old Clifton Fadiman and his daughter Anne, Doris Lessing, Joyce Carol Oates, Neil Simon, and Kurt Vonnegut.

The ten most mentioned works in the index of over 360 authors, and 525 titles are *The Bible*, cited 9 times; Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* and Marcel Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*, 8 times each; Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, 7 times; and Tolstoy's

*Anna Karenina*, J.D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*, William Shakespeare's *Collected Works*, and Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, 6 times each. Joseph Conrad and Vladimir Nabokov had the most titles listed, with seven titles each. Five Willa Cather and two Tillie Olsen titles were listed.

Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award winner Justin Kaplan, author of *Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain*, and current editor of *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*, read Jules Verne, Arthur Conan Doyle, and rereads Proust "practically every year." His wife, Anne Bernays, however, looks to John Galsworthy, Charlotte Bronte, Charles Dickens, Edith Wharton, and Virginia Woolf. Schwartz has succeeded in engaging the "endless rearrangements of twenty-six letters" to readers who write. ▲



# Review: Plains Song Review, Exploring Nebraska's Sense of Place, Vol. I

*Edited by  
Christine  
Pappas*

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

**"Hear! Hear!" for Plains Song Review Debut**

The University of Nebraska College of Arts and Sciences has published the first volume of *Plains Song Review*, edited by Christine Pappas. Pappas is a political science graduate student, a familiar of the Heritage Room of Nebraska Authors at the Bennett Martin Library and a lawyer. The journal made its debut at the Loft last month in Lincoln. It was a one of a kind event. There was electricity in the air as approximately 20 of the almost 50 authors read from their work.

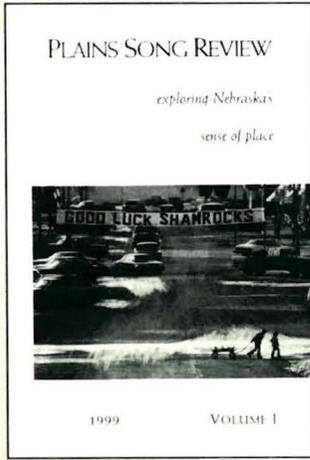
The title of the journal derives from Wright Morris's last novel *Plains Song*, published in 1980. The journal is designed for students to present their ideas about what it means to be a Midwesterner, a Nebraskan, a citizen of the Plains. The emotions ranged from humor, to pain, to exhibitionism, to introspection as these young people experimented with language and identity. Several of the readings referred to the students working on their parent's or grandparent's farm during summer vacation, an experience Wright Morris shared

and wrote about in several of his works. Some writers relished being Nebraskans, but Joanna Findlay, a visiting student from Aberdeen, Scotland, scathingly describes her bleak existence exiled in Lincoln (compounded by the campus being dry) in *Falling off the Edge of the World*.

*Plains Song (of J. Alfred Chimneyrock)* by Dale S. Biggs is the shortest piece, four lines, but oh so funny. The prize for the best contribution went to Andria Skaff, a geology senior for *Delia's Place*, an amusing and thoughtful connection between Delia, a ten million year old horse skeleton discovered at Ashfall Fossil Beds State Park, the process of excavating the find, and the visitors to the park.

Gertrude Stein may have said there is no there there. Nebraska's students clearly resound that there is a here here to which I must add, a resounding "hear! hear!" Readers, for the small price of \$5, can acquire this book of nearly fifty poems and short stories from Lee Booksellers or the University and share this reviewer's enthusiasm.

*Review originally appeared in the Lincoln Journal Star, May 9, 1999* ▲



## Plum Creek Children's Literacy Festival

Nebraska author, Ivy Ruckman, will join fellow authors and illustrators Emily Arnold McCully and Chris Demarest to work with students and adults at the 1999 Plum Creek Children's Literacy Festival on Friday, October 15 at Concordia University in Seward.

Poet David Harrison will appear with McCully and Demarest, working with secondary students and adults on Saturday, October 16.

Children attend free of charge but must preregister for Friday, Children's Day. Saturday is for secondary school students who will attend writing workshops free of charge and adults who may attend sectionals of their choice. For more information, contact Janelle Uffelman, 402-643-7318. ▲

### Fort Robinson and the American West 1874-1899

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# Book Lovers Love Library Book Sales

by Dick Allen

*“There’s to be a library book sale next weekend and it says Sale of the Century,” said my wife Mary on a leisurely Sunday morning. I, unrepentant lover of all things book-like, betook myself thereto. And this is what I experienced.*



The dates were July 9, 10, and 11. The place was Hastings. The Annual Book Sale was sponsored by the Friends of the Hastings Public Library and held in the City

Auditorium. To find out more about the sale and the tradition of annual book sales in Hastings, I talked to the Hastings Public Library Director Linda Rea. Linda told me that annual library book sales go back 20 years in Hastings. “They became a regular tradition and have really taken off because of the involvement of our library Friends group. We hired Volunteer Coordinator Felicia Cogley in 1992 and she increased membership in the Friends of the Library group to its current level of 400.” I met Felicia transporting two library carts of collectible books to the auditorium. She said that 150 Friends took part in this year’s sale, in the initial sorting of donated books to the library (making sure that they weren’t needed for the library collection), dividing them into subject categories, and moving them all to the City Auditorium.

“How many books are being offered for sale this year?” I inquired. “About 100,000, most of them priced at 50 cents (hardbacks) or 25 cents (paperbacks).” Linda told me that last year’s library sale netted \$6,000. “That’s a lot of books sold at those prices!” she added. She showed me the sorting and storage area in the library’s basement and the special area for books kept from the donations as “back-ups” for the collection.

We walked over to the City Auditorium just before the beginning of the “Early Bird Sale” (\$5 admission) and saw the tables with books neatly arranged by subject category—an impressive sight, I might add! Noting the scale by the magazines, I was told, “We sell magazines by the pound.” Needless to say, I became an “Early Bird” book buyer, got in the long line forming before 5 p.m., picking up a large box on the way in. People were there with boxes, shopping carts, empty baby strollers, and wagons—all sorts of vehicles to be filled with books. I saw some Nebraska book dealers and a man that must deserve the prize for coming the longest distance (from Louisiana) with a specially designed book cart and boxes.

Linda noted that many of the customers come every day. “On Saturday we offer a book-mending and book-covering service for a low fee. On Sunday there is a \$1 per bag sale.” When asked what happens to the books that are not sold she said, “We offer them to charities and to whomever else that might want them. There may be a few that suffer a less favorable fate.”

Most Nebraska public libraries hold either special book sales or “ongoing” book sales. Check with your local library and the other public libraries in your area. The Internet Web site, <<http://www.book-sales-in-america.com/>> that advertised the Hastings sale (which may have persuaded the man from Louisiana

to attend) lists three upcoming sales in Nebraska and dozens in neighboring states. ▲



*Felicia Cogley and Linda Rea (left to right) prepare for the Hastings Public Library Book Sale.*

## THIS SPACE AVAILABLE

By way of dipping our toes in the water, the *NCB News* has begun taking ads in a small way. We can publish only three or four ads per issue. The cost is \$125 per 1/8 page. To place an ad in the November issue, contact Mary Jo Ryan, Nebraska Center for the Book, The Atrium, 1200 N Street, Suite 120, Lincoln, NE 68508-2023; 402-471-2045, 800-307-2665; e-mail: <[mjryan@neon.nlc.state.ne.us](mailto:mjryan@neon.nlc.state.ne.us)>. The deadline for the next issue is September 17.

## Bibliofile: Chadron's Fur Press Features Specialty Publications

by **Mary Jo Ryan**, Nebraska Library Commission Communications Coordinator



**T**he Fur Press, headquartered in Crawford, is a small specialty publishing company. Founded 25 years ago, the keystone of the firm is the *Sketchbook series*, books of drawings of Indian, Mountain Man, Buffalo Hunter, Voyageur, and Fur Trade objects. More than a quarter million copies of these have been marketed. This summer, Mary Jo Ryan met with Jim Hanson, proprietor of the press, to talk about how the press operates and chronicles the history of the Fur Trade period.

### Q: How did you get started publishing specialty books?

A. When I was 8 years old my father wrote a book that was published by the Nebraska Historical Society. I was so impressed that I began to write books. I wrote books on vowels, on cavemen, on dinosaurs. I still write one-of-a-kind books as special gifts for my wife, Ann. Anyway my first real book was published in 1974 by University of Nebraska Press. When I saw the royalty check, I realized that the money was in publishing.

Over the years, I had researched the material culture of the fur trade, leaning heavily on the collection of the Museum of the Fur Trade in my hometown, Chadron. I've always enjoyed drawing, so I spent a couple months and invested \$1500 in my first *Sketchbook*. I placed three or four ads in specialty magazines and within six months we were off and running.

### Q: Can you describe your stock?

A. The first books I did are still in print and still selling well. We've added books on everything from Daniel Boone to fur trade knives. All are in a 48 page, hand lettered format and retail for \$5. We have some more expensive books, and recently we've put out some all-color "coffee table" books.

### Q: How do you market your books?

A. We prefer to sell through wholesalers rather than do retail sales ourselves. People hear of us by word of mouth. We've sold to Slim Pickens, Roy Rogers, and Mary Tyler Moore.

### Q: What are your customers like?

A. Most are living history enthusiasts. Some are modelers or doll makers, quite a few are involved with movies and television. Museum curators buy them, and so do a lot of elementary school teachers. We produced *The Mountain Men Coloring Book* that is very popular with school kids. Our *Sketchbooks* appeal to the same public that buys the *Foxfire* books.

### Q: How do you develop a new title and do you have any in the works?

A. Our customers pretty well dictate what we produce. If I have about 20 inquiries in a year, I will seriously consider doing a book on that topic. Right now, I'm collecting material for a possible *Sketchbook* on horn, which was the plastic of the past. It could be molded, pressed, bent, etched, stained, sawed, and even turned in a lathe. Horn was used for everything, from combs, cups, buttons, and knife handles to boxes, lanterns, jewelry, and even children's books.

### Q: What are your favorite and least favorite things about the publishing business?

A. The second most satisfying thing is to see your name in print on the cover of a book. The most satisfying thing is to open the last box of a title and realize you need to order a second printing. My least favorite moment is when someone wishes to impress us with superior knowledge. My feeling is, if they know so much, why don't they publish their own book?

### Q: You mention the Museum of the Fur Trade. How does the Press relate to the Museum?

A. My father was the Museum director for several years and I edit their publications. In June, a 50th Anniversary history of the Museum was published. It is all color and only \$7.95. Now I'm working on a six volume series on trade goods made for Indians. The first volume should be available in about 5 years. The Fur Press and the Museum of the Fur Trade are separate entities, but we work together.

### Q: Any interesting anecdotes?

A. We sold 10,000 books in a single day to Tandy Leather Co. It filled up an entire UPS van and I understand it set a UPS record at the time for rural pick-ups.

### Q: What books do you read?

A. I love anything by John Le Carre, and Georges Simenon is fun. Most of my reading is nonfiction and I prefer first-hand accounts by frontier people. I just finished David Donald's superb biography of Lincoln and right now I'm reading *Martyred Village*, the story of Oradour which was wiped out by the Nazis in France just after D-Day as a reprisal against partisans.

### Q: What's the origin of the name, Fur Press?

A. It's a play on words. The old fur traders used a fur press to squeeze their pelts into compact bales. Since most of our books relate to that era, we called it the Fur Press.

### Q: What's the Fur Press address?

A. Becky Serres, The Fur Press, 303 Paddock, Crawford, Ne. 69339.

Find out more about Chadron area writers and readers by viewing the Nebraska Literary Heritage Association video *Writers on the Plains*, available through the Nebraska Library Commission. The video describes the collection of works by Nebraska authors housed in the Heritage Room of Nebraska Authors. This video is also available from the Nebraska English Language Arts Council (which has a Chadron affiliate), the Mari Sandoz Society, and the Nebraska Humanities Council.



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<b>Paul A. Olson Seminar</b> , Gary Moulton on the Botanical Collection Contact: Great Plains Studies, 402-472-3082	September 15	Lincoln
<b>John H. Ames Reading Series</b> , <i>Heritage Rom of Nebraska Authors</i> , Hobe Hays, Contact: 402-441-8516	September 16	Lincoln
<b>Nebraska Literature Festival 1999</b> , <i>Crossing Borders: Geographical, Ethnic, and Literary Frontiers in Plains Literature</i> . Contact: Andrew Elkins, 308-432-6307	September 17 & 18	Chadron
<b>The Fullness of Life: The Voice of Hugo Wolf</b> , Discussion, performance at UN-L, Song settings by German Composer Hugo Wolf. Contact: Bill Shomos, 402-472-2494	September 17-19	Lincoln
<b>Governor's Lecture in the Humanities</b> , Pulitzer-prize winning columnist, David Broder, Joslyn Art Museum. Contact: Nebraska Humanities Council, 402-474-2131	September 23	Omaha
<b>Omaha Public Library Brown Bag</b> , Dana Stabenow, Mystery Writer Contact: Jennifer Kirchmann, 402-444-4842	September 28	Omaha
<b>Lincoln City Libraries Annual Book Sale</b> , Nebraska State Fairgrounds. Contact: Barbara Hansen, 402-441-8512	September 30 - October 3	Lincoln
<b>Old West Days</b> , <i>The Nebraska Cowboy Poetry Gathering</i> . Contact: Bob Stetter, 402-376-2331.	September 30 - October 3	Valentine
<b>The Lessons of the Century</b> , Discussion of minorities relating to the play, <i>Cafe Zeitgeist</i> , at Wayne State College. Contact: Jeff Johnston, 402-375-7090	October 1-11	Wayne
<b>Aldrich Remembrance Day</b> , Bess Streeter Aldrich House & Museum, Contact: Lorri Kentner, 402-994-3855	October 4	Elmwood
<b>Plum Creek Children's Literacy Festival</b> Contact: Janelle Uffelman, 402-643-7318	October 15 & 16	Seward
<b>Author Visit, Ben Mikaelson</b> , Contact: Kate Marek, 402-426-3678	October 19	Blair
<b>Nebraska English Language Arts Council Conference</b> , Contact: Rosalie Shimerda 402-488-0014	October 25	Lincoln
<b>Nebraska Writers Guild, with Brent Spencer</b> Contact: Jean Lukesh, 308-384-9750	October 30	Hastings
<b>Nebraska Center for the Book Annual Meeting</b> Contact: Dee Yost, 402-463-4244	November 7	Red Cloud