

The NCB News

Volume 20

Fall 2010

No. 2

A Publication of the Nebraska Center for the Book

Celebration of Nebraska Books Planned for November 6

A new event hosted by the Nebraska Center for the Book will highlight this year's One Book One Nebraska selection, honor winners of the 2010 Jane Geske and Nebraska Book Awards, and announce the 2011 One Book One Nebraska book choice. The **Celebration of Nebraska Books** will be held in Lincoln at the Nebraska State Historical Society's Nebraska History Museum, 131 Centennial Mall North, from 2:30 to 6:30 p.m. on November 6, 2010.

The celebration is open to the public and will include a program by Dr. Joseph J. Wydeven on *The Home Place* by Wright Morris, the **2010 One Book One Nebraska** selection. One Book One Nebraska is a statewide reading program encouraging all Nebraskans to read and talk about the same book. Throughout 2010, Nebraskans have been reading, discussing and learning about Wright Morris, *The Home Place*, and the interaction between photo and text. 2010 One Book One Nebraska is hosted by the **Lone Tree Literary Society** and is sponsored by the **Nebraska Center for the Book, Nebraska Humanities Council, Nebraska Library Association, Nebraska Library Commission, and the University of Nebraska Press**. Public nominations for the **2011 One Book One Nebraska** were submitted in June and July. Finalists will be revealed in October and the 2011 selection will be announced at the Nov. 6 celebration.

The celebration will feature presentation of the Nebraska Book Awards and Jane Geske Award. The **2010 Nebraska Book Awards** honor authors and publishers of books with a Nebraska connection published in 2009. Featured winning authors will read from their work and sign copies of their books. The **2010 Jane Geske Award** will be presented to an organization, business, library, school, associa-

tion, or group that has made an exceptional contribution to literacy, books, reading, libraries, or literature in Nebraska. The Jane Geske Award commemorates Geske's passion for books, and was established in recognition of her contributions to the well-being of the libraries of Nebraska. Jane

Geske was a founding member of the Nebraska Center for the Book, former director of the Nebraska Library Commission, and a long-time leader in many Nebraska library and literary activities.

The **Nebraska Center for the Book Annual Meeting** will be held at 2:30 p.m. An **Awards Reception and Book Signing** honoring the winning authors will conclude the festivities.

For more information contact Mary Jo Ryan, maryjo.ryan@nebraska.gov, 402-471-3434 or 800-307-2665; or see <http://centerforthebook.nebraska.gov> or the Facebook pages (www.facebook.com) of the Nebraska Humanities Council, Nebraska Center for the Book, Nebraska Library Commission, and One Book One Nebraska.

THE NEBRASKA CENTER FOR THE BOOK

Presents...

A Celebration of Nebraska Books
Nebraska State Historical Society's
Nebraska History Museum, Lincoln, NE

November 6, 2010

The Home Place Wright Morris

celebrate
Book Award Winners
Jane Geske Award
One Book One Nebraska,
with Dr. Joseph J. Wydeven
Reception and Book Signings

centerforthebook.nebraska.gov



Celebrate Banned Books Week with Reader's Theater

Guest Editorial
by
Karen Drevo,
Norfolk Public
Library

Karen Drevo, Nebraska Library Association Intellectual Freedom Committee Chair, suggests we celebrate our freedom to read during Banned Books Week (September 25-October 2, 2010) by reading some banned books. The following Reader's Theatre script can be used as a prelude to reading from banned and challenged classics. Read to your friends and family, to your classrooms and book groups; read together; read alone; read on.

Narrator I: Every year in late September we celebrate Banned Books Week, an event that celebrates the freedom to read and the importance of the First Amendment.

Narrator II: The First Amendment freedoms that we so often take for granted—the right to read, explore ideas, and express ourselves freely—are at risk . . .

Narrator III: . . . and that's why we have Banned Books Week—to celebrate your freedom to access information and express ideas, even if the information and ideas might be considered unorthodox or unpopular.

Narrator I: None of us has the right to control or limit another person's ability to read or access information.

Narrator II: Yet when individuals or groups demand that libraries and schools remove specific books from the shelves, they are doing just that.

Narrator III: The rights and protections of the First Amendment include children as well as adults. While parents have the right—and the responsibility—to guide their own children's reading, that right does not extend

to other people's children.

Narrator I: Each adult has the right to choose their own reading materials, along with the responsibility to acknowledge and respect the right of others to do the same.

Narrator II: When we speak up to protect the right to read, we not only defend our individual right to free expression, we demonstrate tolerance and respect for opposing points of view.

Narrator III: And when we take action to preserve our precious freedoms, we become participants in the ongoing evolution of our democratic society.

Narrator I: Act now to protect your right to read.

Narrator II: Stay informed. Be aware of what's happening—that's the best way to fight censorship.

Narrator III: When you encounter censorship, be prepared to speak up or let others know.

Narrator I: You can fight censorship by attending and participating in public hearings, writing letters to public officials, sending a letter or an op-ed article to local news organizations, and forming a coalition to oppose censorship in your community.

Narrator II: You can also fight censorship by seeking assistance from national groups, such as the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom (www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/index.cfm), the First Amendment Center (www.firstamendmentcenter.org), the Freedom to Read Foundation (www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/affiliates/relatedgroups/freedomtoreadfoundation/index.cfm), the National Coalition against Censorship (www.ncac.org),

(continued on page 3)

Ed. Note: Nebraska Writer, Monty McCord was named a finalist for the Spur Award in Western Writing by the Western Writers of America. The author was incorrectly identified in the Spring 2010 NCB News.

The NCB News

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Nebraska Center for the Book Board and Committees

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2010 Nebraska Center for the Book Board Meetings

November 6 . . . Annual Meeting

2:30 p.m.

Nebraska State Historical Society's, Nebraska History Museum
Lincoln

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 402-471-3434, 800-307-2665, e-mail: maryjo.ryan@nebraska.gov, www.centerforthebook.nebraska.gov

The NCB News is published three times each 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: Mary Jo Ryan
Design and Production: Reynold Peterson
Staff: Kathryn Brockmeier, David Eckmann
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This publication is made possible by Library Services and Technology Act funding through the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), administered by the Nebraska Library Commission.



and the American Civil Liberties Union (www.aclu.org).

Narrator III: And support your local schools and libraries, and participate in Banned Books Week!

Narrator I: *Catcher in the Rye...Harry Potter...Captain Underpants...Of Mice and Men...To Kill a Mockingbird...Junie B. Jones...* Attempts have been made to remove these books from schools and libraries.

Narrator II: Whatever your favorite book, chances are good that someone has tried to ban it. Every year there are hundreds of attempts to remove books from schools and libraries.

Narrator III: Thanks to the efforts of librarians, teachers, booksellers, and members of the community, the majority of challenged books remain unrestricted in library collections.

Narrator I: Imagine how many more books might be challenged—and possibly banned or restricted—if librarians, teachers, and booksellers across the

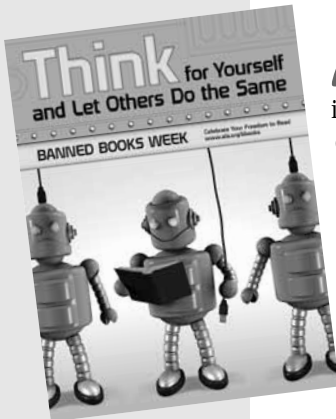
country did not use Banned Books Week each year to teach the importance of our First Amendment rights and the power of literature, and to draw attention to the danger that exists when restraints are imposed on the availability of information in a free society.

Narrator II: It's hard to imagine a library not having *Charlotte's Web, My Antonia, The Great Gatsby, Winnie-the-Pooh, The Grapes of Wrath, Gone With the Wind, The Lord of the Rings,* and hundreds of other challenged books on their shelves.

Narrator III: Celebrate YOUR freedom to read and your right to chose your books during Banned Books Week, September 25th – October 2nd.

Narrator I: Some of our favorite passages from books that have been banned and challenged... [select your favorite banned books from the list at <http://www.ala.org/ala/newspresscenter/mediapresscenter/presskits/bbw2010/index.cfm>].

Banned Books Week: Celebrating the Freedom to Read September 25–October 2, 2010



Banned Books Week is an annual event celebrating the freedom to read and the importance of the First Amendment. Held during the last week of September, Banned Books Week highlights the benefits of free and open access to information while drawing attention to the harms of censorship by spotlighting actual or attempted banning of books across the United States. Intellectual freedom—the freedom to access information and express ideas, even if the information and ideas might be considered unorthodox or unpopular—provides the foundation for Banned Books Week.

Banned Books Week is sponsored by the American Booksellers Association, American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression, the American Library Association, American Society of Journalists and Authors, Association of American Publishers, and the National Association of College Stores. It is endorsed by the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress.

For more information on getting involved with Banned Books Week: Celebrating the Freedom to Read, see Calendar of Events and Ideas and Resources at www.ala.org/bbooks or contact the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom at 800-545-2433, ext. 4220, or e-mail: bbw@ala.org.

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.

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

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



Nebraska Center for the Book Announces 2010 Jane Geske Award

The Jane Geske Award will be presented to *Plainsongs* and Hastings College at the Nebraska Center for the Book's Celebration of Nebraska Books on November 6 in Lincoln. Originating in 1980 at Peru State College and moving to Hastings College in 1983, *Plainsongs* has been a rare survivor among small poetry magazines. It has published three issues per year for almost thirty years, bringing poetry to this state and encouraging poets from within and outside the state to submit their works.

Plainsongs is indexed by the *Index of American Periodical Verse* and *The American Humanities Index*. The work of Dwight Marsh, former editor and professor at Hastings College, and the support of



HastingsCollege™

Hastings College, particularly the English Department, has allowed this outstanding periodical to grow into a venue for poets at all levels of expertise. *Plainsongs* and Hastings College deserve recognition for their ongoing support of poetry and its publication in Nebraska.

The Jane Geske Award, established by the Nebraska Center for the Book, is presented annually to an organization, business, library, school, association, or other group that has made an exceptional contribution to literacy, books, reading, libraries, or Nebraska literature. The award commemorates Geske's passion for books, and was established in recognition of her contributions to the well-being of the libraries of Nebraska.

Wright Morris Centennial Conference Set for October 9

The Wright Morris Centennial Conference, hosted by The Lone Tree Literary Society of Central City, will celebrate the centennial year anniversary of Wright Morris' birth. The conference is scheduled for October 9, 2010, at the Central City High/Middle School, 2815 South 17th Avenue. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m., with events planned from 9:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m. The Lone Tree Literary Society was formed in 1978 to "preserve the boyhood impressions of author/photographer Wright Morris." Morris was born in Central City in 1910 and died in California in 1998. He is buried in a family plot in the Chapman Cemetery. His photo-text novel, *The Home Place*, is the 2010 One Book, One Nebraska selection.



Speakers

- Stephen Arkin: "Wright Morris' California Years"
- Susanne Bloomfield: "Making Do: Wright Morris' Cora and her Sisterhood"
- David Madden: "Observations of *The Home Place*"
- Joseph J. Wydeven: "Wright Morris, Nebraska Novelist and Photographer: Images of His Boyhood in *Will's Boy* and *The Home Place*"

Tours

- Wright Morris Boyhood Home and the Merrick County Historical Museum in Central City
- Cahow Barber Shop and Chapman Cemetery in Chapman

For conference registration information please visit the Lone Tree Literary Society's website at www.wrightmorris.org, e-mail: crjnbj@cablene.com or call Marilyn Heins at 308-946-3719.

Free Discussion Packets for The Big Read

The Nebraska Library Commission has a limited number of **The Big Read** discussion packets to help bring Nebraska communities together to read, discuss, and celebrate some of the greatest stories in United States and world literature.

Big Read book discussion packets are available to schools and libraries to keep as part of their collections. Student guides can be distributed to participants for them to keep. Just complete an order form (see blog posting at www.nlc.state.ne.us/blogs/NLC/2010/08/free_big_read_discussion_packets_for_nebraska_librarians.html) and arrangements can be

made to pick up the packets at the Nebraska Library Commission in Lincoln.

An example of what the packets offer can be found at www.neabigread.org/books/myantonia. To learn more about the Big Read discussion packets, join Mary Jo Ryan on *NCompass Live* on October 6, at 10:00 a.m. CT, for a discussion of how these materials can be used and a sampling of the materials. For more information, register for upcoming *NCompass Live* events, or to listen to recordings of past events, go to: www.nlc.state.ne.us/ncompass/ncompasslive.asp



Book Groups are Alive and Well in Nebraska

by Lisa Kelly,
Nebraska Library
Commission

Several years ago, the Nebraska Library Commission began collecting multiple copies of books for librarians to check out as book club kits (see www.nlc.state.ne.us/ref/bookclubkits.html). Since this project started, I've observed several libraries begin and enhance book group programming in their communities. Here are some interesting statistics from *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, 49.2 (Winter 2009) that I shared with my own book group:

Profile of the Typical Book Group Member

- Female (94 percent of groups characterized their groups as mostly female)
- Baby Boomer (70 percent of respondents were between the ages of 40 and 65)
- Library user (over 50 percent visited a library more than once a week)
- Friendly (60 percent said their groups were made up of personal friends)
- Big reader (54 percent read three or more books per month)
- Loyal (45 percent had been in their book group five or more years)
- Committed (83 percent of respondents said that their members almost always finish the book)
- Hungry (60 percent of groups always serve food at their meetings)

Nebraska book groups have shared some interesting information with me. Book club members generally join so that they'll read books outside of their area(s) of interest. Librarians generally put together lists and assist in selecting the books for their groups. It's also the librarian that gathers the background information on the author and the book and makes sure members have copies of the selection by using our book club kits, our Interlibrary Loan service (www.nlc.state.ne.us/ref/ill), or other means of resource sharing. Most groups meet on a monthly basis at a regular time and have experienced changes in membership, but have remained steady—many for more than ten years. Groups are very likely to serve food or drinks. Some use the programming provided by the Nebraska Humanities Council when their group reads the One Book One Nebraska selection. My favorite remark came from a librarian who said their club was so popular, everyone was talking about the book they were reading instead of gossiping in the local coffee shop.

Think about starting a book group in your area and see what happens in your community. We're eager to help you. Contact the Information Desk at the Nebraska Library Commission to check out book club kits, by phone: 402-471-4016 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: nlc.ask@nebraska.gov, or chat: www.nlc.state.ne.us/ref/contactus.asp.

American Life in Poetry: Column 269

by Ted Kooser,
U.S. Poet
Laureate,
2004-2006



It is enough for me as a reader that a poem take from life a single moment and hold it up for me to look at. There need not be anything sensational or unusual or peculiar about that moment, but somehow, by directing my attention to it, our attention to it, the poet bathes it in the light of the remarkable. Here is a poem like this by Carolyn Miller, who lives in San Francisco.

The World as It is

No ladders, no descending angels, no voice out of the whirlwind, no rending of the veil, or chariot in the sky—only water rising and falling in breathing springs and seeping up through limestone, aquifers filling and flowing over, russet stands of prairie grass and dark pupils of black-eyed Susans. Only the fixed and wandering stars: Orion rising sideways, Jupiter traversing the southwest like a great firefly,

*Venus trembling and faceted in the west—
and the moon,
appearing suddenly over your shoulder, brimming and ovoid, ripe with light, lifting slowly, deliberately, wobbling slightly, while far below, the faithful sea rises up and follows.*

American Life in Poetry is made possible by The Poetry Foundation, publisher of *Poetry* magazine. It is also supported by the Department of English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Poem copyright ©2009 by Carolyn Miller, from her most recent book of poems, *Light, Moving*, Sixteen Rivers Press, 2009. Reprinted by permission of Carolyn Miller and the publisher. Introduction copyright ©2010 by The Poetry Foundation. The introduction's author, Ted Kooser, served as United States Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress from 2004-2006. We do not accept unsolicited manuscripts.



What Are You Reading?

Nebraska Center for the Book board members share their thoughts about the books they are reading:

I've just finished *Flannery: A Life of Flannery O'Connor* (Back Bay Books, 2010) by Brad Gooch. I've always loved O'Connor's stories, and I've always been a little bothered that most of the scholarship about her writing focuses on her Roman Catholicism. I never thought that my appreciation of her work depended on any religious play there at all. (I see more of that, maybe, in her novels which, for me, lack the power of her stories.) Though Gooch spends a lot of time on her Catholicism, and though O'Connor was clearly devout, I came away from the biography with the sense that the stories, though informed by her Catholicism, certainly don't depend on it.

Mostly, though, I was interested in O'Connor's relationship with her mother. I knew enough of her life to know that she was diagnosed in early adulthood with lupus and that she lived with, and was dependent on, her mother until her early death. Since O'Connor gave us so many great, narrow-minded, garrulous, racist (often) and unsympathetic "mothers" in her stories, I was curious to see how that jived with Regina O'Connor. It seems that yes, indeed, O'Connor often enough based them to some large degree on her mother. It's not clear that her mother—or anyone in Milledgeville, Georgia—much read her work.

J.V. Brummels

Flash House (Grand Central Publishing, 2004) by Aimee Liu. The setting of this novel is post World War II India and China. An American journalist disappears, supposedly killed in a plane crash, while pursuing a political story in Kashmir. His wife, an American, runs a safe house for young girls escaping the red-light district in Delhi. The wife, young son, a local girl, and a friend of the husband start on a difficult journey through India and mountains of Kashmir to locate the husband. His wife knows he is not dead. The story reflects internal conflicts and fighting within India and China. United States Cold War policy is core to this story.

Town in a Blueberry Jam (Berkley, 2010) by B. B. Haywood. This mystery, first in a new series, is set in a very small town near the coast of Maine. Candy Holliday relocates to Maine to recover from a divorce and loss of a demanding professional position. She and her father, recently retired from academia, run the Blueberry Acres farm. This is a typical amateur sleuth "cozy" and a very quick, light read. Of course, blueberry recipes are included.

Carol Connor

In my short-lived youth I developed a short-lived passion for tuna pizza and real French fries served at

a local café. I couldn't get enough of the salty, high-fat combination! Today, I can't imagine that these foods were my favorite meal. As I grew older, so did my taste buds and my common sense. Friends and family would probably now describe me—accurately—as a picky eater. I care about my health and the food that I put in my body. Consequently, reading Michael Pollan's *Food Rules: An Eater's Manual* (Penguin, 2009), was a delightful experience. He explores very simple rules for healthy eating (perhaps you've seen him on Oprah), and he reinforces why it matters when we make food choices. It's a good, quick read—and it will keep you away from the French fries!

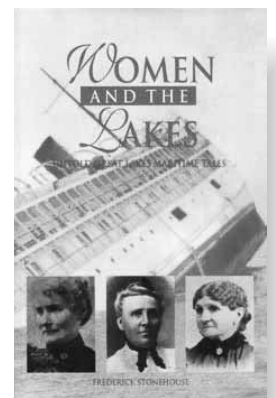
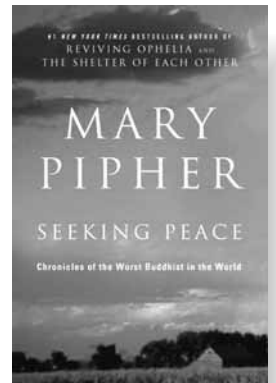
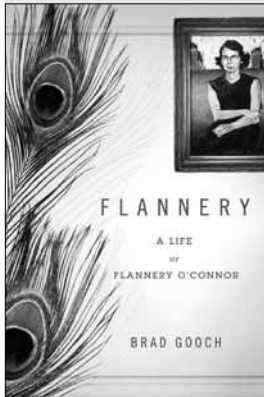
Like most people, I have read about what stress does to the body. Perhaps what these articles have not covered is the way in which extreme stress permeates one's entire life. Mary Pipher's *Seeking Peace: Chronicles of the Worst Buddhist in the World* (Riverhead Trade, 2010) is an honest look at ways in which stress manipulates our lives. Pipher does not embellish her childhood, but explores how it formed her coping skills. Her absolute honesty makes for an intense reading experience that gives the reader a chance to look honestly at his/her life. It's not all serious; she shares moments of joy and celebration. It's a book that you will remember that you've read.

Becky Faber

My husband and I have just returned from doing our volunteer lighthouse gig at Little Sable Point Lighthouse at Silver Bay, Michigan. Little Sable is Michigan's tallest lighthouse and we climbed 130 steps several times, plus going over a sand dune to get there. The light keepers in the early days were isolated, and they risked their lives to keep mariners from hitting sandbars, rocks, etc. While I am interested in the Fresnel lens and lighthouse structure, I'm even more interested in the human stories, especially the women who served as light keepers, often when their spouse died of illness or drowned.

Women and the Lakes: Untold Great Lakes Maritime Tales (Avery Color Studios, 2001) by Frederick Stonehouse tells their story. It is one of dedication. One

(continued on page 7)



such woman was Elizabeth Williams. After losing two husbands in the lighthouse service, she was appointed head keeper. She says, "I was weak from sorrow, but realized that though the life that was dearest to me had gone, yet there were others out on the dark and treacherous waters who needed to catch the rays of the shining light from my light-house tower." I am inspired by these stories, and enjoyed reading about these Great Lakes women.

Molly Fisher

I just finished *The Girl who Fell from the Sky* (Algonquin Books, 2010) by Heidi Durrow, which was a winner of the Bellwether Prize for Fiction for "serious literary fiction that addresses issues of social justice and the impact of culture and politics on human relationships." After being the only survivor in a tragic family accident, Rachel, the child of a white mother and black father, tries to make sense of her life and her lost family. Each chapter is told by a different person regarding the accident or other aspects of life. The book is somewhat disjointed and at times I was confused by what was happening, but the significance of the book is Rachel's life and her adjustment to being black in the United States after being raised abroad and never thinking about her race.

Durrow's handling of prejudice, not being certain where one belongs, resonated with me as I recalled the first time I was told I couldn't play ball because I was a girl. All these years later, I can still remember where I was standing. A great read and an excellent choice for a book group.

Sherry Houston

Summer always gives me the opportunity to read books other than the ones I teach in the classroom. I admit to having a predilection for a good spy novel as well as an absorbing detective story. I began my summer reading with an author I've enjoyed over the years, John le Carré, and his book *The Honourable Schoolboy* (Scribner, 2002). Wonderful, familiar charac-

ters and a tightly woven plot kept me engrossed. Next, at the suggestion of a friend and avid reader, Cathy Mohnike, I began reading a series of books by Carol O'Connell—her Mallory novels. These are well-written detective stories with a psychological twist. She gets the reader involved in the "twisted" minds of both the criminals and the cops.

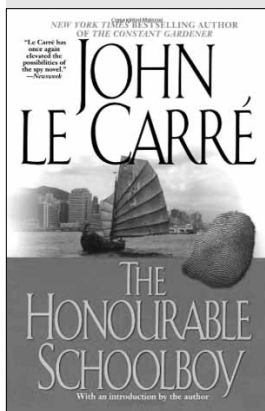
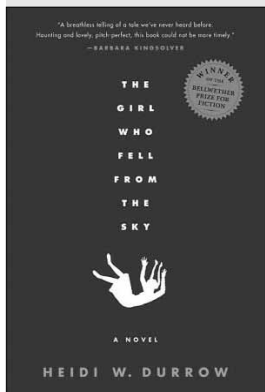
I'm finishing my summer reading with *The Help* (Putnam, 2009) by Kathryn Stockett, and am enjoying it immensely. I recommend this book to anyone—especially to those who, like me, remember the civil rights movement as the background to our youth. A memorable first novel for Ms. Stockett.

Lois Meyer

A book I found fascinating is *Brownville, Nebraska Territory: A Photographic Essay* (Barnhart Press, 1973), by Dorothy Broady, but it's hard to get hold of. You may have to do an Inter-Library Loan from your local library. The book is certainly worth the wait. I learned a great deal from *I Could Tell You Stories: Sojourns in the Land of Memory* (W. W. Norton & Company, 2000) by Patricia Hampl, which deals with telling the truth vs. lying in memoir. This book gives plenty to think about.

Another I really liked is *The Meadow* (Holt Paperbacks, 1993) by James Galvin, full of marvelous complex characters who tell the history of a meadow on the Colorado/Wyoming border. I'm halfway through Greg Kosmicki's new chapbook, *New Route in the Dream* (Pudding House Press). I'm reading it aloud to my husband and definitely recommend it for its insights and for pure skill with language.

Marge Saiser



Nebraska Book Festival Planned for May 21, 2011

Plans are underway for the 2011 Nebraska Book Festival, set for May 21 in Lincoln. The Festival is again dedicated to Nebraska writers and books, celebrating the reading and writing life of Nebraska. An awards luncheon will honor the winner of the Center for the Book's Mildred Bennett Award. A selection of Nebraska writers will read from their 2010 work and Writers' Workshops will be offered

free of charge. Nebraska Center for the Book board and Nebraska Library Commission staff are working on fund-raising, seeking sponsors, and finalizing programming for this day of Nebraska literary activities. Please send suggestions for Nebraska authors (with books © 2010) that might be invited to read to Mary Jo Ryan, maryjo.ryan@nebraska.gov. **Save the date:** May 21, 2011.



A “Bibliogastro” Tour, Part I

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



Oliver and Karen Pollak at Britain's only Burmese restaurant.

My paper, “English Language Burmese Cookbooks, 1903-2009,” presented at the 9th International Conference on Burmese Studies in Marseille in July, occasioned a bibliogastro tour. On our 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. Chicago-bound-for-London flight, passengers read paperbacks, hardbacks, newspapers, magazines, and a Kindle here and there (Amazon claims to have sold more e-books than print books during June), and perhaps listened to audio books on their headphones, as well as watched videos and slept. I read Ma Thanegi's *A Native Tourist*, recently acquired through Abebooks.com.

We threaded London with our trusty, spiral bound, 1998 edition of *London A to Z[ed]*. The publishing and bookstore industry appeared in disarray and outsourced. At Borders, in March 2002, I purchased three wonderful books, *The Bookshops of London* by Matt Jackson, *Book Lovers' London* by Lesley Reader, and *Eat My Words, Reading Women's Lives through the Cookbooks they Wrote* by Janet Theophano. (The 2009 4th edition of *Booklovers* was printed and bound in India.)

The four Borders stores in London closed in December 2009. The little bookstore a block from our hotel closed. Wesley Owen Books and Music, formerly Scripture Union Bookstore across the street from famed Wigmore Hall (the venue of over 400 performances a year), closed. My curmudgeonly uncle, a mid-20th century London antiquarian bookseller, criticized the superficial knowledge foreign bookstore clerks had of their stock and their pronunciations of Bournemouth. EU membership has not changed this.

To save our souls, neither venerable Foyles nor Waterstones had a copy of the 2010 *Zagat London* restaurant guide, which in hindsight should have been ordered prior to departure. Abebooks had eleven copies. We settled for less colorful, but workmanlike, Harden's *2010 London Restaurants* (printed in Italy) and *Cheap Eats in London* (printed and bound in Finland).

Charing Cross Road still appeared to be thriving. Though of course, Marks & Co. of 84 Charing Cross Road (immortalized by Helen Hanff) had long since become a memory elevated to the stage and silver screen. Nearby was a Jamie Oliver restaurant, open only one and a half weeks. We had a wonderful repast. Who said the English cannot create imaginative cuisine? (Just about everyone.) A look at Oliver's

eclectic cookbooks will make you salivate and change your mind.

We saw “Enron” by Lucy Prebble at the Noel Coward Theatre. From our Omaha perspective it was a play, musical and tragedy.

We trudged to Blenheim Crescent and Notting Hill to visit the trinity. At Books for Cooks we resuscitated with a cappuccino and passion fruit cheesecake, and purchased *Picklehead*, and a reprint of *A Plain Cookery Book for the Working Classes* by Charles Elmé Francatelli published in 1861, the same year the classic *Mrs. Beeton's Book of Household Management* appeared. At the Travel Bookstore (inspiration for the 1999 film, “Notting Hill”) I acquired a signed copy of Dervla Murphy's *Wheels within Wheels*. But, alas, the third store, Garden Books, had decamped.

The British Library is as fabulous as ever. It contained Burmese cookbooks I did not know about. A core book of my study, *The Home Cookery Book for Burma* (Rangoon, 1903) is deliciously “not in BL.” For a decade I have been ruminating about the Melodists' Club, a mid-nineteenth century London singing group. The 1898 1st edition of *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, by Sir George Grove, gave the Melodists' Club a 247-word separate entry. The separate entry in the 5th edition of Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians* was reduced to 162 words. The 20-volume 1980 New “Grove” dropped the separate entry and reduced reference to one sentence.

The British Library catalog indicated their collection contains the Club's *1840 Constitution*, but it was destroyed when Nazi bombs hit the old British Museum. I ordered 7899.cc4(1) expecting the same response, “missing in action,” but instead got its shelfmate, (4), a 1893 French language book published in Switzerland on Richard Wagner's “Valkyrie” and “Nibelung.” We revived ourselves with designer cappuccino in the BL rooftop café run by Peyton and Byrne. We browsed the BL Bookstore, savoured the books on books section, but limited ourselves to purchasing postcards.

Every so often, a restaurant has a book display to peruse while waiting for your order or books by celebrity chefs for sale. The Mandalay, Britain's only Burmese restaurant—America has about thirty—had a shelf of books (NFS) next to the cash register, including Israeli Moshe Yegar's *The Muslims of Burma: The Study of a Minority Group* (the restaurant owner is a Muslim), and Ma Thanegi's *A Native Tourist*. . .to be continued...

Ed. Note: Pollak's next installment of “A ‘Bibliogastro’ Tour” will be published in the Winter 2011 NCB News.

Review:

At Willa Cather's Tables: The Cather Foundation Cookbook

Edited by
Ann Romines,
Willa Cather
Foundation, 2010
ISBN
978-0-615-40185-0

Review by
Nancy Sherwood,
Auld Public Library
Guide Rock, NE

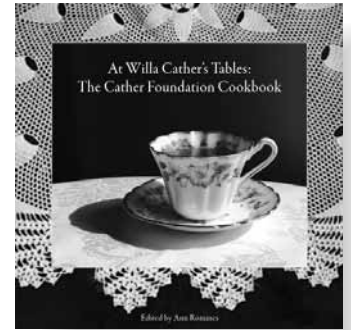
Any fan of Willa Cather, or cookbook collector, will enjoy this 302-page book that not only contains Cather family recipes, but also recipes of the staff and friends of the Cather Foundation.

Previous Cather conference attendees will recognize some of the recipes that were served at the banquets or P.E.O. salad luncheons. It is truly a delight to read how Cather's interest in food was woven into her writings.

Edited by Cather scholar Ann Romines, books

may be purchased at the Willa Cather Foundation's Cather Bookstore in Red Cloud, by calling 866-731-7304, or online at

www.willacather.org (click on the "featured item" on the home page or navigate to the book via "Books About Cather" at the online bookstore).



Review:

From the Garden Club: Rural Women Writing Community

by
Charlotte Hogg,
University of
Nebraska Press,
2006
ISBN
978-0-8032-7365-8

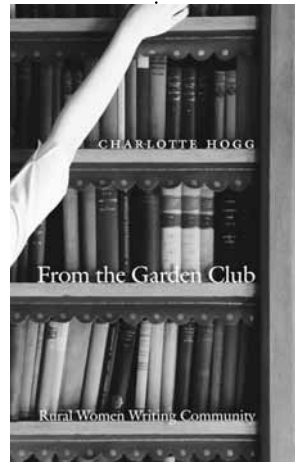
Review by
Becky Faber,
University of
Nebraska-Lincoln

Those of us with rural backgrounds will recognize the approach that Charlotte Hogg takes in *From the Garden Club: Rural Women Writing Community*. Her ties to Paxton, Nebraska, particularly through her paternal grandmother, provide the groundwork for her research in exploring the roles of women as they relate to literacy in these types of communities. As a graduate student trained to consider literacy in a more traditional and scholarly manner, Hogg realized that Paxton "was rife with literacy in nontraditional ways that were beginning to be described in studies of women's contributions to literacy."

Her research explores several aspects: local histories written by women in the community, engagement in the local library, and involvement in a variety of local clubs and

organizations. Hogg recognizes that "the women in Paxton grounded themselves in space and time through their writing against everything moving around them and past them" and that they "had an authority in lived history: they wrote their world within and against the national landscape and had knowledge that younger generations simply could not have." Hogg makes extensive use of local documents and personal interviews, recognizing "how women were changed through their literate lives [and] also how they have the power to change others through their literate acts." The text is easy to follow and respectful of the small town traditions that have shaped the

contributions of those in rural communities where the historical and sociological backgrounds have been so carefully kept.



Review:

"Hey, Lady" Review Site a Breath of Fresh Air

Review by
Barbara Rixstine,
University of
Nebraska-Lincoln



If you've not yet found it, "Hey, Lady, Whatcha Reading?" is a breath of fresh air from the overenthusiastic bookseller sites and often modestly-written fan book reviews so often found when looking for information on something to read. Accessing <http://heylady.net> brings up a very '50s pinup girl. Who is she? Says "Trish," the "hey lady" of the title: "I'm the pinup girl. Both the one in my header and the one that's my avatar. In my imagination, of course."

"Trish" says she reviews "literary fiction, historical fiction, young adult, fantasy, science fiction, mysteries, and thrillers (so long as they're not supernatural)." She does not review "chick lit, romance, memoirs, non-fiction, or erotica." Obviously, "Trish," is in northern California, because her site offers a variety of options including a northern California author list, a northern California book bloggers list, and local bookstores, among others. It's easy to explore and one of the most visually interesting book sites around.

Going Home a Difficult Read for Prime Time Storyteller

by Erika Hamilton,
Nebraska Humanities Council

Prime Time Family Reading Time storyteller Maria Saenz admits that Eve Bunting's children's story, *Going Home*, is a difficult read. "It is difficult because it's so true," she says. "It's a personal story." The story is told from a child's perspective about a family trip to his parents'

hometown in Mexico. His parents are excited about going home for Christmas, but Carlos and his sisters are unsure. They consider the United States their home. The parents yearn to return to Mexico permanently, but they live and work in the United States for the opportunities available to their children.

Like the parents in the story, Maria is from Mexico. She moved to Nebraska in 1989 to follow her own opportunities. She studied psychology and earned a master's degree in counseling from Chadron State College. She taught Spanish at Western Nebraska Community College, English as a Second Language in a middle school, and is now a therapist at St. Joseph's Children's Home in Torrington, Wyoming (thirty miles west of her Scottsbluff home).

After reading and discussing *Going Home* during Prime Time, Maria asked for a show of hands from people who want to eventually return to their home

country. Several parents raised their hands. How many want to stay in the U.S.? Almost every child raised a hand. "That is sad," Maria said after the program, "because it means an eventual separation of family." Family is important to Maria. That's why she became involved with the Nebraska Humanities Council's Prime Time program. In 2005, her oldest daughter became Nebraska's first Prime Time student intern in a public library, a position made possible through a Nebraska Library Council grant to the Nebraska Humanities Council. Maria attended sessions with her, participating in the audience with her youngest daughter. Within four years, Maria went from being in the audience, to being a volunteer, to becoming a bilingual Prime Time storyteller.

She stays involved because "Prime Time is a way to work against media that's separating families—such as television," she said. "I want to spread interest for reading and the importance of communication within families. I love when the parents relate stories to their everyday lives. They have such interesting experiences to share." Maria knows first-hand the importance of literacy and family involvement in improving educational expectations and strengthening community. "Families should take opportunities," she said. "No excuses."

As for the question she asks families, her own answer is this: she longs to return to Mexico someday, but her daughters will stay in the States. That is why it's so difficult for her to read and discuss *Going Home*, but also why it's so important.



Fine Lines Fiction Writing Contest Entries Due December 31

After a successful 2009 contest, the 55-word writing contest is back. Writers of all ages are invited to submit. The subject matter should be appropriate for everyone, ages 9-99. Submit only fiction entries. Poetry and essays will not be considered. A winning story uses a minimum amount of words (up to fifty-five) and tells a powerful message with the absence of fluff.

All entries must be sent no later than December 31, 2010. They will not be returned. Include name, age, postal address, and e-mail address. Winning and honorable mention submissions will be printed in the *Fine Lines* spring issue. Additional information, including prizes and fees, is located at www.finelines.org/2010/07/55-word-writing-contest-2010 or e-mail: fine-lines@cox.net.

Plum Creek Festival Set for October

The 15th annual Plum Creek Children's Literacy Festival at Concordia University in Seward will be held October 7-9, with the Adult Conference Day on Saturday, October 9. Featured authors are Patricia

Polacco, Dan Gutman, Ashley Bryan, Sarah Weeks, Alyssa Satin Capucilli, Pat Schories, and Ralph Masiello. For more information or to register, see www.cune.edu/plumcreek.

The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress in partnership with Target presents
LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE 
Letters About Literature is a national reading and writing promotion program.


Letters about Literature Contest Now Open

Young readers in grades 4 – 12 are invited to write a personal letter to an author for Letters About Literature (LAL), a national reading and writing promotion program. The letter can be to any author (living or dead) from any genre—fiction or nonfiction, contemporary or classic—explaining how that author’s work changed the student’s view of the world. The reading and writing promotion is sponsored by the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, in partnership with Target. In Nebraska, Letters About Literature is sponsored by the Nebraska Center for the Book and the Nebraska Library Commission, with support from Houchen Bindery Ltd.

LAL awards prizes on both the state and national levels. The Nebraska Center for the Book has its own panel of judges who select the top letter writers in the state. Nebraska winners are honored in a proclamation-signing ceremony at the state capitol during National Library Week. State Winners will receive \$50 Target Gift Cards and additional prizes, and then advance to the National Level Judging.

A panel of national judges for the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress will select six National Winners and twelve National Honorable Mention Winners. The National Winners will receive

a \$500 Target Gift Card, plus each will secure a \$10,000 LAL Reading Promotion Grant in their name for his or her community or school library so that others can experience personal relationships with authors and the stories they tell. The National Honorable Mention Winners will each receive a \$100 Target GiftCard, plus each will secure a \$1,000 LAL Reading Promotion Grant in their name for his or her community or school library. The community or school library selected for the National Winners and National Honorable Mention Winners is at the Sponsor’s sole discretion.


Students compete in three grade levels: Level 1 for grades 4 – 6; Level 2 for grades 7 – 8; and Level 3 for grades 9 – 12. Teachers, librarians, and parents can download free teaching materials on reader response and reflective writing at www.lettersaboutliterature.org. Submissions must be postmarked by December 10, 2010. State winners will be notified in March 2011 and national winners by mid-April. Nebraska-specific information (including letters from Nebraska winners of past contests) is available at centerforthebook.nebraska.gov/programs/LAL.html. For more information contact Mary Jo Ryan, maryjo.ryan@nebraska.gov, 402-471-3434 or 800-307-2665. 

New Center for the Book Website Now Available

The Nebraska Center for the Book and the Nebraska Library Commission announce the launch of a new website at <http://centerforthebook.nebraska.gov>. Visitors will find a wealth of knowledge about programs and upcoming events and all things literary that are important to Nebraska’s readers, writers, booksellers, librarians, publishers, printers, educators and scholars.

Of special note is the Calendar of Events, the most comprehensive listing of literary events throughout Nebraska. If your library, school, or

organization has an upcoming literary event, we want to hear about it. Please feel free to submit your literary events, including contact information, date, time, and location, along with a link to your website listing, if possible. We will try to post them in a timely manner.

Please take a moment to visit the website and then tell us what you think. Your feedback would be much appreciated! Please send Website comments and calendar events to Kathryn Brockmeier, kathryn.brockmeier@nebraska.gov. 



The NCB News



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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Celebration of Nebraska Books
November 6, Lincoln

centerforthebook.nebraska.gov/programs/celebration.html

CURRENT RESIDENT OR:

- Library of Congress National Book Festival** September 25 . Washington, DC
Contact: www.loc.gov/bookfest
- Visiting Writers Series**, with Wang Ping. September 28. Norfolk
Contact: Neil Harrison, Northeast Community College, neil@northeast.edu, 402- 844-7348
- E.N. Thompson Forum on World Issues**, with E. Benjamin Skinner. September 30. Lincoln
Contact: enthompson@unl.edu, 402-472-0074, <http://enthompson.unl.edu>
- Nicholas Sparks, honoring 20th Anniversary of Lincoln Lighthouse** October 2 Lincoln
Contact: www.liedcenter.org/events/detail.php?eid=87, 402-472-4747, 800-432-3231
- Missouri Valley Reading Series**, with Dinah Lenney October 6 Omaha.
Contact: www.unomaha.edu/creativewriting/mvrs.php
- Plum Creek Children's Literacy Festival** October 7-9 Seward
Contact: Vikki Gremel, Concordia University, www.cune.edu/about/2040, 402-643-7483,
PlumCreek@cune.edu
- Wright Morris Centennial Conference** October 9, 2010. . Central City
Contact: Marilyn Heins, Lone Tree Literary Society, www.wrightmorris.org, 308-946-3719,
e-mail: crjnbj@cablene.com
- NE Library Association/NE Educational Media Association Conference** October 13-15 . . Grand Island
Contact: Michael Straatmann, 402-216-0727, NLAexecutivedirector@gmail.com,
<http://nebraskalibraries.org/conference/2010/>
- Governor's Lecture in the Humanities**, with Christine Todd Whitman. October 14. Lincoln
Contact: www.nebraskahumanities.org/governor/currentlecture.html, or [www.liedcenter.org/](http://www.liedcenter.org/events/detail.php?eid=90)
[events/detail.php?eid=90](http://www.liedcenter.org/events/detail.php?eid=90), 402-472-4747, 800-432-3231
- Teen Read Week** October 17-23. Nationwide
Contact: www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/yalsa/teenreading/trw/trw2010/home.cfm
- Missouri Valley Reading Series**, with Lydia Peelle. October 20. Omaha
Contact: University of Nebraska at Omaha, www.unomaha.edu/creativewriting/mvrs.php
- Fall 2010 Reynolds Series**, with Jon Davis October 21 Kearney
Contact: Dr. Allison A. Hedge Coke, University of Nebraska Kearney, hedgecokea@unk.edu
- Talk and Book Signing**, with Katherine Leiner October 27 Lincoln, NE
Contact: A Novel Idea Bookstore, ANovelIdeaBookstore.com, anovelaidebookstore@yahoo.com,
402-475-8663
- Visiting Writers Series**, with Daryl Farmer and Jim Reese October 27. Norfolk
Contact: Neil Harrison, Northeast Community College, neil@northeast.edu, 402-844-7348
- Pilster Great Plains Lecture**, with Michael Forsberg and Dan O'Brien. October 28 Chadron
Contact Mari Sandoz Heritage Society, www.marisandoz.org/pdf/Pilster_Lecture_Series.pdf,
marisandoz_society@windstream.ne



Calendar of Events:

View the complete
Nebraska Literary
Calendar at
[centerforthebook.
nebraska.gov/get_](http://centerforthebook.nebraska.gov/get_involved/calendar.html)
[involved/calendar.html](http://centerforthebook.nebraska.gov/get_involved/calendar.html)