Humanities Nebraska’s Chris Sommerich, Jaclyn Wilson, and Nick Baxter visit the new Chief Standing Bear statue representing Nebraska in Statuary Hall at the U.S. Capitol.
HUMANITIES NEBRASKA ADAPTING, RESPONDING TO SERVING THE STATE IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

The content of this newsletter was going to be significantly different before all of our lives were upended in March by the coronavirus pandemic.

Humanities Nebraska’s spring is typically bustling with activity to report on across the spectrum of program areas, but the rapidly changing situation we have all been experiencing has meant a radical shift in what we as an organization are doing. We would like to start this newsletter by sharing a summary of how HN has responded so far and where we see things going in the coming weeks and months.

As it became apparent that regular life would be disrupted throughout the country, HN developed a phased plan to guide our responses to each stage of development. When local schools closed to help slow the infection rate, that triggered our switch to staff working the majority of the time remotely from home.

Thanks to a variety of technological tools and staff ingenuity, we have all been able to stay in communication and be effective in taking care of our areas of responsibility. The progression of COVID-19 has also meant a progression of postponements, cancellations, and other impacts on Humanities Nebraska grant-funded and council-conducted programs. Our broad philosophy throughout this has been to work in consultation with our local program partners to determine the best course of action, as they are the ones on the ground helping implement these programs.

This has meant working through our responses and otherwise communicating closely with school teachers, librarians, museums, speakers, community centers, foundations, donors, elected officials, and many others. It has been a powerful reminder of the broad and deep network of community partners we work with throughout the state of Nebraska.

The humanities programs and events that have been cancelled or postponed have increased as stricter restrictions on public gatherings have come into play. More than twenty high school teachers from all across the state were unable to bring their students to Lincoln to deliberate on global issues in our Capitol Forum Day program at the end of March. The teachers worked diligently to find some virtual way to give closure to this year’s program, but could not.

A record number of 26 Prime Time Family Reading Time programs had been in the works this spring, serving hundreds of families throughout the state. These programs take place over six weekly sessions, so some were ended early, others had just started but are now postponed, and others had not yet started. Our staff is working with all of our Prime Time teams to adapt and plan for a resumption of the program later this year. Prime Time is so important to many children and parents who come together to read and discuss books.

We had dozens of Speakers Bureau and grant-funded programs cancelled or postponed. Again, we are working with those speakers and host sites to adapt to the situation.

Military veterans and writing instructors participating in Nebraska Warrior Writers workshops have suspended in-person sessions. However, this month, they launched online Zoom writing sessions and presentations by professional authors. They hope for a large in-person workshop to take place sometime this summer when it’s safe to gather in person.

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This can be a time of COVID-19 relief funding included in the CARES Act, recently passed by Congress, to provide economic support for the humanities partners in need throughout our state. I hope that you are following us on social media (if you use Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter). If we have your email address we can keep you up to date on the status of both virtual and in-person program opportunities. If not, please send your email address to info@humanitiesnebraska.org so we can add you to our list. The Humanities Nebraska staff and board are thinking of all of you. We hope that you are finding outlets for social interaction and intellectual stimulation, and that you and your loved ones are staying healthy. We are also very grateful to all of you who are supporting HN financially, particularly in these uncertain times and with so many needs out there.

I hope that before we know it, we are seeing each other again at humanities programs!
WELCOME, NEW BOARD MEMBERS!

Humanities Nebraska recently welcomed six new board members and one returning member during the spring board meeting. Three have joined the board of the Nebraska Humanities Council, and four were added to the Nebraska Foundation for the Humanities.

NEW TO THE COUNCIL

Edgar Hicks has over 50 years of grain marketing experience, including 35 in communities such as Clark, Central City, and St. Edward. Now a director at CFO Systems LLC, he’s served on various USDA panels and on Governor Dave Heineman’s Nebraska Rural Development Commission and the executive committee of the Nebraska State Grange. He is co-chair of this year’s African-American History Challenge.

Sarah Rowe is an enrolled member of the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska and is of Lakota descent. A visual artist who has exhibited her work internationally, she uses a variety of media combined with traditional Native American imagery to transcend cultural boundaries and create cross-cultural dialogue. Sarah is the resident artist for the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska’s Domestic Violence and MMIW Group.

Beth Whited is the Executive Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer at Union Pacific, where she is former president and a founding member of LEAD, Union Pacific’s women’s initiative. She has also served on the boards of Lauritzen Gardens, Heartland Workforce Solutions, and the Omaha Symphony, and she previously served two terms with the Nebraska Foundation for the Humanities.

NEW TO THE FOUNDATION

Linda Graf is a registered radiologic technologist at McCook Community Hospital. She has served on the board of the Southwest Nebraska American Red Cross, as a parish councilwoman for her church, and as mentor for the Teammates program. She is a Prairie Plains Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) volunteer and serves on the Graf Charitable and McCook Community foundations.

Mike Homa is president of the Nebraska division of R&R Realty Group. He serves on the Hope Center board of directors, the University of Nebraska Business College Dean’s Advisory Board, and previously served in a variety of capacities with other community organizations. Previously, Mike was president at Mutual of Omaha Bank, and he held various leadership roles with American National Bank.

Laura Troshynski of North Platte works in the Trusts department at First National Bank of Omaha. She is the past president of the North Platte Public Schools Foundation and served as both the Annual Giving Chair and Foundation Gala Chair for the Great Plains Healthcare Foundation. She currently serves on the University of Nebraska College of Law Dean’s Advisory Board.

Jen Rae Wang of Omaha heads government and regulatory affairs for Cox Communications. She has worked for the White House, a Nebraska governor, and two members of Congress. She is a part-time adjunct professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Journalism and Mass Communications, and adjunct professor in the Master of Business Administration program at Doane University.

The Council also elected Amy Sandeen of Hastings as chair and Connie Duncan of Lincoln as vice chair. Mike Linder of Omaha was elected treasurer, and Barbara Hewins-Maroney of Omaha was elected as a large member of the Executive Committee. The Foundation elected Nicholas W. Baxter of Omaha as president, Tami Hellman of Kearney as vice president, and Kent Warneke of Norfolk as treasurer.

PERSPECTIVES FROM D.C.: HUMANITIES ON THE HILL

This spring concludes my first year of serving on the Nebraska Humanities Council. Growing up, I would receive the NEH newsletters, watch a Chautauqua, or see a local event that was funded by a grant from Humanities Nebraska. Being a fifth-generation rancher in the Sandhills, I had a love for history, especially that of our great state, and when I was asked to join the Council I did so with great admiration for NEH.

Earlier this year, Nick Baxter, president of the Foundation, executive director Chris Sommerich, and I had the opportunity to attend the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) annual “Humanities on the Hill” in Washington D.C. It was a whirlwind trip that gave us the opportunity to interact with other state Humanities Councils and visit with our Federal Delegation about the importance of Humanities in today’s society.

The NEH was founded in 1965. Every state has a Humanities Council, and out of the NEH budget, around $50 million is sent to the state councils to be used for administration costs, programming, grants, etc.

Humanities Nebraska receives a portion of that, which they use along with funds that have been raised by fundraising efforts, and other income, to continue the excellent programs that NEH has encouraged and supported.

I have had the opportunity to lobby in D.C. on a number of occasions for different organizations, and I was pleasantly surprised by the positive image that Humanities Nebraska has with our federal delegation. All of them have been supporters of NEH in the past. We thanked them for that support and asked for continual support in the future.

I always enjoy interacting with our delegation, and especially attending the Nebraska breakfast where I saw numerous familiar faces, but the highlight of the trip for me was interacting with members and staff of other state humanities councils.

I think what amazed me the most is hearing about all of the diversity in programming and opportunities provided for our country. One of my favorite factoids came from the executive director of Alaska Humanities where there are 227 federally-recognized tribes. In Anchorage alone, there are over 100 languages spoken in the Anchorage School District. As someone who always is looking at ways to bridge the east/west divide within our state, I can’t imagine having to use bush pilots, ferries, and trains to get to multiple locations.

It was really reassuring to see Humanities Nebraska being perceived as a national leader in not only organizational setup, but programming, and that was evident in the many accolades that I heard throughout the entire event. At the end of the whirlwind trip, I was filled with knowledge and excited to take all that I had learned back to Nebraska and share it with others. Humanities bridge all of us, and in this time of uncertainty it’s even more important to understand who we are, where we have come from, and where we will go.

Thank you.

by Jaclyn Wilson, Council Board Member

THANK YOU TO OUR NEWLY RETIRED BOARD MEMBERS!

Humanities Nebraska is grateful to the board members who reached the end of their board service in January.

Jonathon Benjamin-Alvarado of Omaha served on both the Council and Foundation boards from 2014 to 2020, as did past Council Chair John Schleicher, formerly of Omaha and now of Reno, Nev. Chris Cornelius of Lincoln served on the Council board from 2018 to 2019.


We are grateful to them for their leadership and dedication to improving the cultural and educational life of our state.
HUMANITIES NEBRASKA DONORS: THANK YOU!

Many donors make multiple gifts throughout the year. Donors are listed at the level of their cumulative giving for the year in our annual report.

ORGANIZATIONS
Gifts of $50,000 or more
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Kathy M. Perdue Foundation
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Donors are listed at the level of their cumulative giving for the year in our annual report.

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Join these generous contributors and help to cultivate an understanding of our history and culture. Thank you for becoming part of our mission!
**IN MEMORY**

**STEPHEN KALISH, 1942-2019**

Stephen E. Kalish died December 18, 2019. He was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and earned his B.A., J.D. and LL.M degrees from Harvard University. After clerking for a United States Court of Appeals judge and practicing law in Los Angeles, he joined the faculty of the University of Nebraska College of Law in 1971. He was also a Fellow in Law and Humanities at Harvard, a Fellow in Law and Economics at the University of Miami, an academic visitor at the London School of Economics, and scholar in residence at King’s College, London. He served on the Nebraska Humanities Council Board 1999-2003.

**DARRELL LLOYD, 1935-2019**

Darrel W. Lloyd passed away November 29, 2019. After teaching high school English, he went on to have a 36-year career at Hastings College as professor of English, chairing the department for seven years and earning numerous accolades. His short stories, poems and essays were published in numerous periodicals and journals, and his plays have been performed at Hastings College. Darrel was on the Nebraska Humanities Council Board 1986-1995 and was chairman 1991-1992. He also served on the boards of the Nebraska Foundation for the Humanities (1991-1995) and the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial.

**HELEN STAUFFER, 1922-2019**

Helen Winter Stauffer died November 21, 2019. in Lincoln, Nebraska. She is the author of the most comprehensive biography of Nebraska author Mari Sandoz, Mari Sandoz: Story Catcher of the Plains (1982) and editor of her correspondences, Letters of Mari Sandoz (1992). As a member of the WAVES (Womens Navy, 1943-1945), Helen taught aerial gunnery. She was active in the Great Plains Chautauqua, Nebraska Humanities Council (1986-1993), Modern Language Association, National Education Association, Western Literature Association, Sandoz Heritage Society, and the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial.

**JACK MADDUX, 1932-2019**

Wilfred Jackson “Jack” Maddux died November 24, 2019. A third generation rancher, he was past president of the Nebraska Stock Growers Association and was instrumental in helping Nebraska’s groundwater management legislation. He was chairman of the University of Nebraska Foundation and was a member of the Nebraska Foundation for the Humanities board 1993-1999.

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**CHUCK TRIMBLE, 1935-2020**

Charles “Chuck” Trimble, a member of the Ogilva Sioux Tribe who dedicated his life to advancing the causes of self-determination, sovereignty and human rights for Native Americans, died on March 2, 2020 in Omaha. Chuck, who overcame early poverty, helped establish the American Indian Press Association. He mediated disputes between the tribes and the U.S. government and promoted economic development on tribal reservations through his national consulting firm. He also founded Red Willow Institute, a nonprofit that provided technical and management assistance to Native nonprofit organizations. He was elected executive director of the National Congress of American Indians, using his position to lobby for tribal rights. He served on both Humanities Nebraska boards 2000-2006.

**GRANT SPOTLIGHT: “ULDLADYLIKE2020” HONORS WOMEN INCLUDING GRAACE ABBOTT, SUSAN LA FLESCHE PICOTTE**

In commemorating the centennial of the passage of the 19th Amendment, a video series titled “ULDLADYLIKE2020” tells the stories of women who were well ahead of their times. These include two Nebraskans: Grace Abbott (who fought for the rights of immigrants, advanced child welfare, and promoted the regulation of child labor) and Susan La Flesche Picotte (the first Native American female doctor, who also advocated for Native rights).

The series airs through August 26 on American Masters Wednesdays, which is available on most PBS stations. Presenting history in a bold new way, the 8-10 minute stories of 26 women who broke barriers in male-dominated fields at the turn of the 20th century are brought back to life through archival imagery, captivating original artwork and animation, along with interviews with historians, descendants and accomplished women of today.

The series also includes a resource-rich interactive website featuring the mini documentaries, in case anybody would like to see them again. That can be accessed at www.Unladylike2020.com. In addition, program creators developed a U.S. history curriculum for grades 6-12 on

**HN AWARDS 20 GRANTS TOTALING $30,554**

- Albion Area Arts Council, Albion, $1,999 to help fund “Todd Green: A World of Music”.
- Asian Community and Cultural Center, Lincoln, $2,000 to help fund Larry Culp 2020.
- Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, Omaha, $1,000 for “Refocusing History: A Lecture Series.”
- The City of Lincoln Commission on Human Rights, $550 to help fund a Youth Empowerment Through Social Justice art performance featuring Omaha and Lincoln students.
- Crane River Theater Company, Kearney, $2,000 to help fund its annual “Page to Stage” library outreach program during the summer of 2020.
- Fort Atkinson Commission, Fort Calhoun, $1,200 for humanities content at the Fort Atkinson Bicentennial events later this year.
- Foundation for Lincoln City Libraries, $3,520 to help fund a keynote address by Elaine Weiss, author of “The Women’s Hour…The Great Fight to Win the Vote” during the August 7 Women’s Suffrage Celebration.
- Friends of Lincoln, $1,500 to help fund “The Future We See: Town Hall,” which was held on February 26, 2020.
- Friends of the International Quilt Study Center and Museum, Lincoln, $1,847 to help fund “The Embellished World: A History Through the Lens of Hand Embroidery.”
- Metropoitian Community College, Omaha, $2,000 for a February 12 talk by author Ronald Stephens based on his book, “The New Moon at the End of the World.”
- Nebraska Shakespeare Festival, Inc., Omaha, $1,250 for the Nebraska Shakespeare scholars forums.
- Opera Omaha, $1,750 to help fund its Poetry & Music Project 2020, inviting students in grades K-12 to submit poems for consideration to be set to music by composers Matt Browne and Frances Pollock.
- Oregon Trail Community Foundation, Scottsbluff Visitor Center, $1,450 to bring presenters to its Grand Re-Opening and Centennial Celebration.
- Sidney Gold Rush Days Inc, Sidney, $2,070 for humanities content at the seventeenth annual festival.
- Studebaker Museum Foundation, Grinnel Island, $1,822 to help fund a temporary exhibit titled, “New in Town,” which will be on display through September 6.
- University of Nebraska at Kearney Board of Regents, Sidney, $2,000 to help fund a temporary exhibit titled, “New in Town,” which will be on display through September 6.
- University of Nebraska-Lincoln Board of Regents, $2,000 to help fund a temporary exhibit titled, “New in Town,” which will be on display through September 6.
- University of Nebraska at Kearney Board of Regents, $2,000 to help fund an exhibit titled, “Canning to the Pacific: Latinx Experience in Central Nebraska.”

**Friends of the University of Nebraska at Kearney Board of Regents, $2,000 to help fund a temporary exhibit titled, “New in Town,” which will be on display through September 6.**

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SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS INVITED TO APPLY FOR CAPITOL FORUM 2020-2021

All high school social studies teachers are invited to apply to become part of Capitol Forum on America’s Future for the 2020-2021 school year.

Each year, up to 25 teachers from across the state are selected to receive free curriculum from the Choices Program at Brown University, training, and other support so they can enhance their students’ knowledge on global issues such as international trade, nuclear proliferation, terrorism, immigration, and climate change. Students develop skills that will enable them to become more informed voters and engaged citizens in the future.

HN provides Capitol Forum statewide in collaboration with the Office of Nebraska Secretary of State Robert Evnen with funding from the Cooper Foundation. Though 2019-2020 teachers were unable to meet in person for Capitol Forum Day as scheduled in March due to the pandemic, next year’s students will be welcomed to Lincoln to interact with delegates from other schools for a day of deliberation. Students emerge with a deeper understanding of how different policies can affect different populations.

“Without Capitol Forum, I would not have been exposed to such diverse views,” said one Norfolk Senior High student who participated last year.

When possible, student delegations are able to have lunch with their state senators. Capitol Forum Day culminates with a question-and-answer session with Nebraska’s U.S. senators and representatives. This gives students a better understanding of government policy making.

Upon returning home, the student delegates share their experiences with their classes and participate in more deliberation and voting. Nebraska teachers who wish to be part of next year’s Capitol Forum should submit an application by July 1. Benefits include curriculum from Choices, professional development, travel costs (including lodging if applicable), and substitute teacher pay in remembrance to the schools, alleviating any financial concerns. The application can be found on the HN website.

For more information, teachers may contact Kristi Hayek Carley at kristi@HumanitiesNebraska.org or download a brochure on the Capitol Forum page at www.HumanitiesNebraska.org.

HUMANITIES AT HOME: GIVING FOR THE FUTURE

The onset of COVID-19 has changed everyone’s lives. At Humanities Nebraska, the staff remains committed to bringing people together to talk, listen, and learn from one another, even while doing so in person is impossible right now. As you might have already noticed, we are working on new ways for Nebraskans to connect with each other.

Some examples are our frequent Humanities at Home eblasts and virtual programs by various members of our Speakers Bureau.

Your gift will help us build smarter, more compassionate communities. By making a tax-deductible contribution, you can help ensure that the humanities continue to shape Nebraska’s future. Our ability to offer virtual programming to communities statewide is fueled by generous donors who truly understand the importance of the humanities in maintaining a healthy democracy and strengthening communities.

Making a gift online on our secure website at HumanitiesNebraska.org is quick and easy. Gifts of $50 or more are recognized in HN’s annual report. Because of you and your one-time or recurring monthly gift, we can keep our mission strong, transform Nebraska, and stay in touch with you during this time of hardship and physical distance. Thank you!
2020 GOVERNOR’S LECTURE: DORIS KEARNS GOODWIN ON “LEADERSHIP IN TURBULENT TIMES”


The Governor’s Lecture in the Humanities will be presented free to the public by Humanities Nebraska and the E.N. Thompson Forum on World Issues with support from the Duncan Family Trust.

Humanities Nebraska is pleased to announce that Doris Kearns Goodwin will be the speaker for the 25th Annual Governor’s Lecture in the Humanities. Her topic will be “Leadership in Turbulent Times,” which is also the title of her latest best-selling book.

Goodwin’s career as a presidential historian and author was inspired when as a 24-year-old graduate student at Harvard she was selected to join the White House Fellows, one of America’s most prestigious programs for leadership and public service. Goodwin worked with President Johnson in the White House and later assisted him in the writing of his memoirs.

She then wrote *Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream*, which became a national bestseller and achieved critical acclaim. Her next book, *No Ordinary Time: Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt: The Home Front in World War II*, was honored with a Pulitzer Prize. She also authored multiple other books, such as *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, Lincoln Prize winner *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*, and *Leadership in Turbulent Times*, each garnering international critical acclaim and various prestigious awards.

Goodwin is seen frequently on major television stations, cable networks and shows including “Meet the Press” and “The Late Show with Stephen Colbert.” She has served as a consultant for various documentaries, including “Baseball” by Ken Burns and several about American presidents. She was awarded the Charles Frankel Prize, given by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Sarah Josepha Hale Medal, the New England Book Award, as well as the Carl Sandburg Literary Award.

Co-chaired by HN board members Connie Duncan and Chris Zygielbaum, the benefit dinner prior to the free public lecture raises important funds for HN’s statewide programs. Invitations will be mailed this summer.

**Tuesday, September 22, 2020**

5:00 p.m. Benefit Reception, Dinner, and Presentation of the Sower Award in the Humanities, Embassy Suites, Lincoln

7:30 p.m. Free Public Lecture, Lied Center for Performing Arts, Lincoln

9-11:00 p.m. Humanities After Hours

For more information regarding sponsorships, please contact Heather Thomas via email at heather@humanitiesnebraska.org. For status updates, please visit humanitiesnebraska.org and select “Governor’s Lecture” under Programs.