



RAPPORT

HUMANITIES NEBRASKA

HELPING PEOPLE EXPLORE WHAT CONNECTS US AND MAKES US HUMAN

Photo via Wikimedia Commons



**NEW SPEAKERS
BUREAU
PROGRAMS
NOW
AVAILABLE
FOR BOOKING**

PG 2

Photo: Inmates orchestra of Janowska Nazi concentration camp



**GOVERNOR'S
LECTURE
RECAP &
PHOTOS**

PG 5



**SPARK!
PLACES of
INNOVATION**

**APPLY TO
HOST NEW
SMITHSONIAN
EXHIBIT**

PG 12

UPCOMING EVENTS

- DUE
JAN 2
MINI GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE
(Details on our website)
- DUE
JAN 15
MEDIA GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE
(Details on our website)
- JAN
17
HN WINTER BOARD MEETING
Lincoln
- START
FEB
NEBRASKA WARRIOR WRITERS WORKSHOPS
Lincoln, Omaha, Online
(Dates to be announced)
- DUE
MAR 3
MINI AND MAJOR GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE
(Details on our website)
- MAR
4-6
HUMANITIES ON THE HILL
Washington D.C.
- MAR
24
CAPITOL FORUM DAY
State Capitol, Lincoln
(Details to be announced)

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NEW TOPICS AND SCHOLARS ADDED TO HN SPEAKERS BUREAU

Twelve new programs ready to be booked for libraries, schools, senior centers, and other not-for-profit organizations.

Humanities Nebraska (HN) has once again expanded the offering in the HN Speakers Bureau with new topics and several new speakers.

Long-time Speakers Bureau member **Marci Broyhill** has added a new program called **Dreams & Goals: Pioneers Striving for Success**. Based on a mixture of historical research and her personal experiences growing up in rural Nebraska, Marci highlights the efforts of people in agriculture as they solve problems, strive for success, and bring refinement to their domestic routines. This entertaining program ends with an opportunity for audience members to reflect on their personal dreams and goals.

Speaker and historian **Bill Hayes** added **Military Life on the Lewis & Clark Expedition** to his offerings. He focuses on the military nature of Lewis and Clark's expedition. Reading

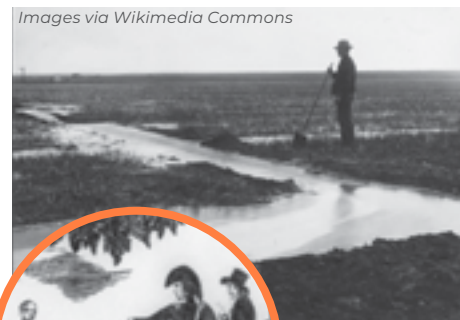
from journals of corps members, Bill shares a few episodes that highlight how this military unit interacted with various nations on the Great Plains.

Speaker, professor, and filmmaker **Barney McCoy** has added a screening and discussion program titled **Running Towards the Fire – A War Correspondent's Story**.

Barney's 57-minute film showcases war correspondents during the Allied forces' 1944 D-Day invasion of Europe and the subsequent defeat of Nazi Germany and the Axis powers. The documentary draws from the memoirs of Omaha-born war correspondent Robert Reuben, who parachuted into Normandy, France, hours before the D-Day invasion and was the first journalist on the ground.

Also focused on World War II history, speaker **Theodore Wheeler's** new program is about his latest novel, "The War Begins in Paris." **From the Plains to Paris: Literary Community, Female Journalists, and the Exploits of Midwesterners Abroad** discusses the key historical figures he used to create his novel, what drew him to write about that era, and the connection between his literary community activism in Nebraska and that era's journalists.

While researching World War II journalists, Ted was inspired by the story of Jane Anderson, an Atlanta debutante who became a female war correspondent. Though one might think she is famed for her trailblazing role, she



Images via Wikimedia Commons

Above: Irrigation ditch on the Dutch Flats, Scotts Bluff County, 1909.

Middle: Etching of Lewis & Clark conferring with Native Americans. Bottom: Notorious "Radio Spy" Jane Anderson

is actually one of the "Radio Traitors," a group of American journalists who broadcast propaganda into the United States on behalf of the Nazi regime.

Speaker **Kent Warneke** offers a new program with his brother and co-author, **Kevin Warneke**.

While writing "Saving Harlan Brandt," the true story of how modern-day Good Samaritans helped save the life of an injured cattleman, the brothers found a deeper appreciation for the culture of rural life in their home state. **The Stories Behind a Nebraska Good Samaritan Story** is a behind-the-scenes look at how their book came to be, highlighting what's best about rural life in Nebraska.

Among other new members of the HN Speakers Bureau is **Christine Erlander Beard**, a professor at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO).

In her program **The Role of Music During the Holocaust** (featured in cover photo), she discusses the Nazi regime's cultural "purification" objectives in relation to music and how it affected composers and musicians across Europe. Combining music with lecture, Christine provides a poignant look at the type of music performed in ghettos and camps, as well as the role music played during the Holocaust.

Gail Shaffer Blankenau joins the HN speakers with her program, **Journey to Freedom: The Escape of Celia and Eliza Grayson**. She shares the story of two enslaved Black women held by Stephen F. Nuckolls, an important figure in the history of the Nebraska Territory, where slavery was a pressing issue at the time. The Graysons' escape and Nuckolls' pursuit of them highlighted the existence of slavery in Nebraska and called into question the effectiveness

of popular sovereignty. Their struggle contributed to legislative efforts to ban slavery in Nebraska and influenced national discussions on slavery as tensions mounted leading up to the Civil War.

Jerry Bockoven, Nebraska Wesleyan University professor emeritus of Psychology offers his first Speakers Bureau presentation: **Stories and Rhymes for Difficult Times: Cultivating Our Emotional Heritage**.

Marrying art with psychology, the presentation examines how poetry and storytelling can manage anxiety, grief, and other common emotional challenges. With more than 90% of survey respondents agreeing that the United States is currently experiencing a mental health crisis, the need to identify ways to maintain our emotional well-being has seldom been greater. This presentation will describe poetry and storytelling as effective coping methods in language that make the concepts both understandable and engaging.

Another newcomer is **Gregory Carlson**, Creighton University associate professor, who joins the bureau with two new programs focused on fables.

Aesop in America looks at how a dozen traditional Aesopic fables were presented during four different eras of U.S. history: the colonial world, the turn of the 20th century, the time between both world wars, and recent days. Each brought fascinating, often witty interpretations and re-interpretations to these traditional fables.

Twelve Great Fables and Crazy Ways to Present Them mixes storytelling of good old fables with images of how craftsmen



Top: Aesop's Fables on American advertising. Middle: Books by HN Speakers Bureau members. Bottom: A whiskey decanter depicting the fable "Androcles and the Lion."

have applied fable images to various objects. Carlson shows some of the most surprising of the 10,000 objects in the Carlson Fable Collection at Creighton University, such as matchboxes, whiskey decanters, tapestries, menus, neckties, and more.

Carrie Meyer, an associate professor and associate dean from the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC), joins the bureau with two programs built on UNMC history.

Legacies of Healing: The Wigtons, the Swifts, and UNMC explores lasting positive impacts two families have had on Nebraska and several of its institutions, particularly UNMC.

Nebraska's Healing Heritage: A History of UNMC is the story of many Nebraskans and their desire to lead the world in providing quality health care education, and through that, improved patient experience. Carrie presents many of UNMC's groundbreaking accomplishments achieved during its 143-year-and-counting history.

Learn more about these programs and how to book a speaker at HumanitiesNebraska.org/catalog

Images via Wikimedia Commons



NEBRASKA SCHOOLS INVITED TO CAPITOL FORUM

We all want the next generation to be engaged citizens. Capitol Forum on America's Future helps students explore key global issues.

Using the Choices curriculum, made available to Nebraska teachers at no cost by Humanities Nebraska, students are empowered to stay informed and engaged in international and domestic issues. As they learn about international trade, terrorism, immigration, nuclear proliferation, and climate change, this program encourages them to hold thoughtful conversations and make educated voting decisions about complex issues.

Participating students cultivate deliberative techniques and skills in civil discourse while learning to think objectively. They also have a unique opportunity to discuss important issues with peers from throughout the state and with Nebraska's elected officials.

Teachers are provided professional development through a workshop with an expert in one of the five Capitol Forum themes, an outstanding professional learning community with other social studies teachers in the state, and a modest honorarium. Schools are reimbursed for substitute teacher pay and travel expenses.

Teachers should act now to apply for the 2025-26 school year. Contact Program Manager Kristi Hayek Carley at kristi@humanitiesnebraska.org or visit the HN website to learn more.



For details, please select [Capitol Forum at humanitiesnebraska.org/programs/](https://humanitiesnebraska.org/programs/)

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BEST-SELLING AUTHOR AMY TAN SHARES HER THOUGHTS ON WRITING AT 29TH ANNUAL GOVERNOR'S LECTURE

On Tuesday, September 24, the 29th annual Governor's Lecture in the Humanities kicked off the 2024-25 season of the E.N. Thompson Forum on World Issues at Lincoln's Lied Center for Performing Arts. "A Conversation with Amy Tan" featured the best-selling author in conversation with Kwakiutl Dreher, a writer, filmmaker, and associate professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The event was chaired by HN board member Andy Pollock and former HN board chair Connie Duncan.

More than a thousand people attended the lecture in person, and hundreds more tuned into the livestream broadcast provided by Nebraska Public Media.

At an earlier benefit dinner at Embassy Suites, philanthropist Anne M. Hubbard received the 2024 Sower Award in the Humanities. More than \$176,500 was raised to support HN programming.

The engaging conversation between Amy Tan and Kwakiutl Dreher covered the entire range of Tan's long career as a best-selling author. She shared thoughts about her writing process, the complications of retelling her parents' immigrant experience, and details about turning a book into a feature film.

Afterwards, a long line of fans curved down the Lied Center corridor as they waited to have Amy Tan sign copies of her books, including her most recent work, "The Backyard Bird Chronicles."

HN is grateful to co-sponsors E.N. Thompson Forum, Anne M. Hubbard, Rembolt Ludtke, Union Pacific, and the many other benefactors and sponsors listed on the previous page.



Photos by Ron Coleman

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Join these generous contributors and help people explore what connects us and makes us human.

Gifts received between August 1, 2024, and October 31, 2024.

Many donors make multiple gifts throughout the year. Cumulative giving for the year is listed in our annual report.

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To learn more, please contact Erin L. Moran at erin@HumanitiesNebraska.org

SAVE THE DATE! 4.10.25
Patron's Circle donors are invited to an upcoming celebratory event in gratitude for their support on Thursday, April 10, 2025, in Omaha. Save the date notices with details will be mailed to Patron's Circle donors in early 2025. For questions, please contact Erin L. Moran, Director of Development: erin@humanitiesnebraska.org.



STATE POET ACHIEVES 93-COUNTY GOAL

In October, Nebraska State Poet Matt Mason fulfilled his commitment to appear in all 93 Nebraska counties.

"It feels fantastic," he said. "I think it's so important to bring poetry and the arts everywhere we possibly can."

He added, "I owe a lot to my family, who supported and helped me."

Matt relied on networking to achieve his goal.

"Some of these counties are pretty small, with small school systems and libraries run by volunteers. I would put updates on Facebook, and somebody would see a county where they had a contact and help make the connection. That was just wonderful."

As he traveled the state, putting more than 50,000 miles on his old blue Toyota, he adjusted his program according to what the community wanted. Sometimes he gave a reading; sometimes he taught a writing workshop. As long as he could make poetry accessible and entertaining for whatever group he was speaking to, Matt was all in—including when he spoke in a bowling alley.

"For 100 years, we've seen poetry as something that is 'smarter

than us,'" he said. "That's why I want to go into schools—not to explain what it is or how it's done, but show them that poetry is interesting and fun."

Matt was always gratified to speak to people who were wary of poetry but were soon enjoying themselves.

"Going into some of these schools, I find students who don't feel comfortable about poetry, but once they start writing about it, they end up doing beautiful work," he said.

He spoke about a time he was working with senior citizens in a town of less than 1,000 residents. After lunch, about half the group drifted to the other side of the room, apparently determined not to participate.

"They heard me talk about poetry and read some poems, and one person said, 'Hey, that one didn't rhyme!' It was fun to see their preconceptions of poetry broken down and to have them join the group...I went back like six times."

Matt was equally delighted when he would meet a local poet.

"We have so many talented poets in this state who don't get much of a spotlight," he



Memorable moments from Matt Mason's journey across the state.

Photos courtesy of Matt Mason

lamented. "Anything I can do that raises appreciation for poetry, I really hope it catches on."

When his tenure as Nebraska State Poet comes to a close at the end of this year, Matt will take some time to go over the many poems he wrote during his travels. He hopes to publish a volume of these works in a year and a half or so. He also plans to continue to speak, promote a love for poetry in Nebraska, and support the next State Poet, who will be selected soon.

Matt's advice to his successor? "Get out as much as you can. Reach as many people as you can and show them your version of poetry. Enjoy it."

IN MEMORY



JOHN GOTTSCHALK | 1943-2024 John Gottschalk, philanthropist and retired publisher and chief executive officer of the *Omaha World-Herald*, died November 3. Born in Rushville, he studied journalism and political science at the University of Nebraska and worked at a small town newspaper, saving every penny so he could buy the *Sidney Telegraph* at the age of 25. In time, he rose to the head of the state's largest newspaper and was honored in the Nebraska Newspaper Association Hall of Fame. He served on a variety of boards, including Omaha Performing Arts, the Joslyn Museum, Henry Doorly Zoo, and Nebraska Game and Parks. Through their family foundation, he and his wife, Carmen, supported education, veterans, conservation, and other causes. In 2011, he was awarded the Sower Award in the Humanities.

GRANT SPOTLIGHT: BUFFALO SOLDIERS AT FT. ROB

In July, more than a thousand visitors to Fort Robinson saw a unique historic reenactment: African American troops of the 10th Cavalry Regiment – “Buffalo Soldiers” – thundering across the ground in military drills. This HN-grant-funded visit by the Colorado-based group called Buffalo Soldiers of the American West was part of a joint effort between the Nebraska State Historical Society (NSHS) and the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the fort.

Composed entirely of African American troops, the 9th and 10th Cavalry were stationed at the fort between 1885-1907. While facing discrimination,

these soldiers played significant roles in military operations as well as westward expansion.

The Buffalo Soldier reenactors helped teach visitors about a lesser-known part of Nebraska and U.S. history in a memorable way. They set up a historically-appropriate camp and interacted with visitors on an informal basis. They also presented several high-action demonstrations of military drills on horseback. Visitors consisted both of summer tourists and northwest Nebraska residents, one of whom was so impressed by the mounted drills that they called neighbors to make sure they would come to the fort in time to witness the next presentation. The



Photo courtesy of Nebraskaland Magazine/
Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

event drew in visitors from South Dakota and Wyoming as well.

NSHS staff stated, “The project was a huge success and further proves the need for living history programs in western Nebraska and at Fort Robinson. The tremendous attendance demonstrates an interest in these events.”

RECENTLY AWARDED GRANTS

African Culture Connection, Omaha, \$15,000 for African Culture & History Experience for Youth and Community • **Angels Theatre Company**, Lincoln, \$1,825 for the Salon Reading Series 2024-25 • **Asian Community and Cultural Center**, Lincoln, \$6,662 for Untold Migrant Stories • **Battle Creek Heritage Park Committee/ Parks of Pride**, Madison, \$4,120 for a history walk project • **Bluebarn Theatre**, Omaha, \$2,000 for "Bluebarn's Dracula: The Journal of Jonathan Harker" and the Dacre Stoker residency • **Center for Independent Documentary**, Eustis, \$12,000 for "She Wrestles" • **Completely KIDS**, Omaha, \$3,168 for the Museum Explorers Club • **Friends of Lied**, Lincoln, \$2,000 for a lecture and conversation, "A House Divided" • **Geneva Public Library**, \$1,211 for the presentation "Orphan Trains of Nebraska" • **Great Plains Black History Museum**, Omaha, \$2,000 for an exhibit and event commemorating the 61st Anniversary March On Washington • **John G. Neihardt Foundation**, Bancroft, \$2,000 for interpretive signage for the Hugh Glass Monument • **Joslyn Castle Trust**, Omaha, \$3,143 for "Willa Cather and One of Ours" art and literary festival • **Lincoln City Libraries**, \$1,200 for "One Book One Lincoln Visit" • **Lincoln Orchestra Association**, \$4,000 for 2024-25 pre-concert chats and podcast • **Meadowlark Hearth Living Environment Foundation**, Scottsbluff, \$2,000 for workshops teaching ancestral skills for living off the land • **Metropolitan Community College**, Omaha, \$2,000 for "ORDER - A Study of Narrative Shaping & Photo-editing with Louie Palu" • **Nebraska Poetry Society**, Omaha, \$1,200 for its 2025 reading series • **Nebraska Public Media Foundation**, Lincoln, \$10,000 for "Nebraska Stories: Japanese Hall" • **Nebraska Writers Collective**, Omaha, \$10,000 for its 2024-25 visiting writers series • **Omaha Discovery Trust**, \$4,000 for Robin Wall Kimmerer's talk • **Omaha Performing Arts**, \$2,000 for "Voices Amplified: Voices with Disabilities" • **Opera Omaha**, \$2,000 for the Poetry & Music Project 2024-25 • **Pawnee County Promotional Network**, Pawnee City, \$1,700 for updates to the Harold Lloyd museum exhibit • **Prairie Arts Center**, North Platte, \$2,800 for "Fire on the Prairie" • **Richardson County Historical Society**, Falls City, \$1,069 for a presentation on Victorian clothing's impact on society • **Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center**, Denton, \$1,000 for a panel discussion, writing exercises, and community conversation • **Table Rock Historical Society**, \$2,000 for window displays • **Truth First Film Alliance, Inc.**, Moline, IL, \$2,000 to update and remaster the documentary "Lost Nation: The loway-1" • **University of Nebraska at Kearney Board of Regents**, \$3,790 for "A Mosaic of Mothers" by The SALT Quintet and \$2,000 for a traveling exhibit, "Coming to the Plains II: The Somali Experience in Central Nebraska" • **University of Nebraska at Omaha Board of Regents**, \$10,000 for "Pride and Joy: Nebraska LGBTQIA2S+ history; \$2,000 for "The Moor: The Untold Story of The First Black Head of State of Renaissance Europe;" and \$1,720 for ArteLatinX 2024.

33
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TOTAL

ONE BOOK ONE NEBRASKA

2025 TITLE ANNOUNCED

Nebraska Center for the Book has announced that "**The Long March Home: A World War II Novel of the Pacific**" by Marcus Brotherton and Nebraskan Tosca Lee is the 2025 One Book One Nebraska selection. People across the state are encouraged to read it and then talk about it with their friends and neighbors.

"The Long March Home" is a historical fiction novel inspired by true stories of friendship, sacrifice, and hope on the Bataan Death March. It is told from the perspective of Jimmy Propfield, who joined the army for two reasons: to get out of Mobile, Alabama, with his best friends Hank and Billy and to forget his high school sweetheart, Claire.

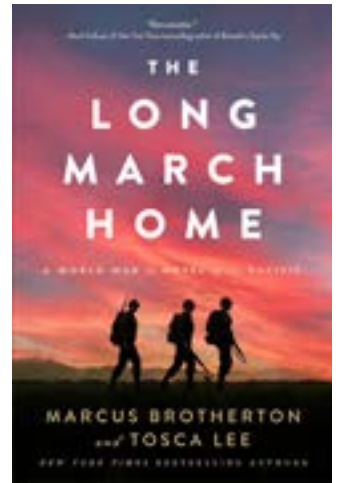
With the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the three teenage friends are plunged into war, eventually captured and forced onto the Bataan Death March. With no hope of rescue, they vow to make it back home together. But the ordeal is only the beginning of their nearly four-year fight to survive.

Marcus Brotherton is a *New York Times* bestselling author and co-author. **Tosca Lee** is the award-winning and *New York Times* bestselling author of twelve books.

Libraries across Nebraska will join other literary and cultural organizations in planning book discussions, activities, and events that will encourage

Nebraskans to read and discuss this book. Support materials to assist with local reading/discussion activities will be available after January 1, 2025, at onebook.nebraska.gov. Updates and activity listings will be posted on the One Book One Nebraska Facebook page.

One Book One Nebraska is sponsored by Nebraska Center for the Book, Humanities Nebraska, and Nebraska Library Commission.



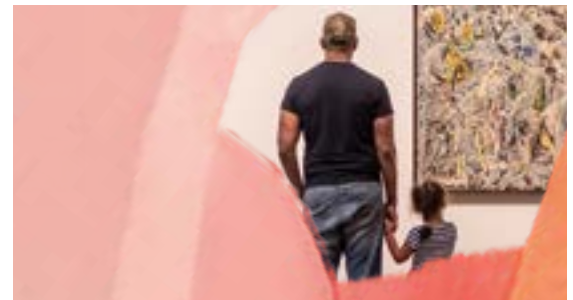
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Join fellow visionaries by becoming a Legacy Donor when you include Humanities Nebraska or the Nebraska Cultural Endowment in your will or another planned gift. Legacy Donors help ensure every Nebraskan has access to the arts and humanities for generations to come. To join these donors, please contact Erin L. Moran at 402.474.2131.

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Help us invest in the future of the arts and humanities across Nebraska. Learn more about the Nebraska Cultural Endowment at NebraskaCulture.org



A NOTE FROM ERIN L. MORAN DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

It's been a busy and fruitful start at HN! As I think back on my first three months as Director of Development at Humanities Nebraska, I reflect on what I have had the opportunity to take part in:

- The excitement of the 29th Annual **Governor's Lecture in the Humanities**, featuring best-selling author Amy Tan and the presentation of the 2024 Sower Award in the Humanities to Anne M. Hubbard.
- Having the opportunity to meet **many HN supporters** and planning for future trips to all corners of our state.
- Attending two **Prime Time Family Reading** programs. Although each program was presented differently, there was a shared theme of gathering at the table for a meal and connecting over a story. Families were encouraged to expand their conversation and ponder responses to questions. Some of the responses were born out of memories and imaginations blossoming right in front of our eyes—as an observer, it was a delight to see the creativity flow!

It is clear to me within these first months that we are indeed helping Nebraskans explore what connects us and makes us human. I look forward to what is to come!



That's me on the right at Prime Time!

Don't forget the ways you can connect with us:

- **Attend one of our events.** Our Speakers Bureau is a great way to learn more about a variety of topics. Make sure to check out the available presentations and speakers on our website. And if you do not receive our weekly e-blast, sign up to see upcoming events that are happening across the state.
- **Review grant opportunities** on our website. Organizations can apply for mini, major, or media grants throughout the year.
- **Make a gift to HN**—there are many ways to give back to Humanities Nebraska!

Please reach out if you have any questions or if there is anything we can help with. My email is erin@humanitiesnebraska.org.

Thank you so much for your support and Happy Holidays!

To become an HN donor or to see more ways to give, please visit:
HumanitiesNebraska.org/ways-to-give/donate

MAKE AN IMPACT



GIVE NEBRASKA is a coalition of 76 diverse nonprofits working to build a vibrant, creative, and healthy community. HN greatly appreciates donors who designated gifts to us through their Give Nebraska workplace giving campaigns. To learn more, please visit givenebraska.org.



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TO UPDATE ADDRESS OR CANCEL SUBSCRIPTIONS,
402.474.2131 or INFO@HUMANITIESNEBRASKA.ORG

APPLY NOW TO HOST SMITHSONIAN EXHIBIT "SPARK! PLACES OF INNOVATION" 2026-27

Museums, libraries, and other community centers may apply now to host the next Museum on Main Street (MoMS) exhibition, "SPARK! Places of Innovation" during its Nebraska tour from June 2026 through March 2027.

The exhibition, specially designed for small museums by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES), uses art, photography, artifacts, and interactives to explore the unique combination of places, people, and circumstances that sparks innovation and invention in rural communities. Inspired by an exhibition by the National Museum of American History, the exhibition features stories gathered from diverse communities across the nation. Photographs, engaging interactives, objects, videos, and augmented reality bring a multilayered experience to reveal the leaders, challenges, successes, and future of innovation.

Museums that have hosted a MoMS exhibit in the past have increased professional practices among staff and volunteers, increased knowledge of educational practices, learned new exhibition techniques, added new objects to permanent collections, researched local history in new ways, forged new alliances with community groups, strengthened relations with government officials, and enlarged community membership bases.

SPARK! offers small towns a springboard for diverse local programming in the humanities, sciences, and arts. Visitors will be inspired to learn



Nebraska innovations have included Cliffs Notes study guides, Swanson TV Dinners, Vice Grips locking pliers, and Kool-Aid (formerly Kool-Ade) soft drink mix. Cover, Bottom Right: The chair ski lift was invented in Omaha.



how innovation has shaped their own communities and how they may be innovators themselves. Community members will come together in conversation about their history, present, and future.

Sites will be selected to host the exhibition for about six weeks each between June 2026 and March 2027, with support and materials from Humanities Nebraska and the Museum on Main Street program of SITES. The selected hosts will be asked to help promote the national exhibition, develop a companion local exhibit, and offer educational programming related to the theme. An application and more information about hosting SPARK! is available at humanitiesnebraska.org or by contacting Mary Yager at (402) 474-2131 or mary@humanitiesnebraska.org. Applications are due February 15, 2025.



To apply to host "SPARK! Place of Innovation", please visit
www.HumanitiesNebraska.org/programs/museum-on-main-street/