

Oklahoma
HUMANITIES

MAY 2008



AN INTERVIEW WITH PHOTOGRAPHER MIKE KLEMME
NEW POETRY FROM N. SCOTT MOMADAY
WILL ROGERS FOR PRESIDENT
OHC ANNUAL REPORT

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Oklahoma HUMANITIES

MAY 2008

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Oklahoma HUMANITIES is published biannually by the Oklahoma Humanities Council (OHC), 428 W. California Ave., Ste. 270, Oklahoma City, OK 73102. OHC is an independent, nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote meaningful public engagement with the humanities—disciplines such as history, literature, philosophy, and archaeology. As the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), OHC provides funding and resources that support humanities education and a vibrant cultural life for all Oklahomans.

The opinions expressed in *Oklahoma* HUMANITIES are those of the authors. Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in the magazine do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Oklahoma Humanities Council, its Board of Trustees, or staff.

Reader letters are welcome and may be directed to the Editor at: carla@okhumanitiescouncil.org or by mailing to the above address. Include “Letter to the Editor” in the subject line of your message. Letters are published subject to editorial discretion and may be edited for clarity or space.

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Harmon, Oklahoma
Photo by Mike Klemme
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Photo by Mike Klemme

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From the Executive Director
ANN THOMPSON

This inaugural edition of *Oklahoma HUMANITIES* is important in several ways. One is that it reflects the aspirations of the OHC to reach a wide audience with rich content, based in the humanities, that has the ability to inform, motivate, and inspire.

Another reason for our excitement in launching this magazine is our expectation that it will become *the* source for humanities-based activities throughout the state of Oklahoma. We will be featuring not just OHC-sponsored events, but those that reflect our mission to promote opportunities for the citizens of Oklahoma to think, converse, and reflect.

Finally, although the format of this magazine is new, it embodies 37 years of this organization's efforts to enrich the lives of Oklahomans. It is not a departure from former publications, but an affirmation of our work to date, that by learning how others have dealt with life's adversities, rejoiced in its delights, or laughed at its absurdities, our lives are enriched.

To Our Friends in Oklahoma,

On the occasion of the inaugural issue of *Oklahoma HUMANITIES* magazine, I send my heartiest congratulations to the staff of the Oklahoma Humanities Council and all its supporters.

It has been said that a good education is a travel guide to life, infusing all we see, hear, and experience with more meaning. The reward of humanities study is imagination, perspective, and critical intelligence. These qualities may appear ethereal, but they have profound practical implications. Like a good map, they inform our journey, explain the signposts, offer alternative destinations, and lead us to something new along the way.

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) was founded in the belief that cultivating the humanities has real, tangible benefits for civic life. Our founding legislation declares that "democracy demands wisdom." The survival of ideas and ideals is not preordained: the principles of our democracy must be learned and passed down to each generation. The NEH exists to foster the knowledge that is essential to our national identity.

The Endowment works to cultivate the best of the humanities for all Americans. We disburse millions of dollars to support scholars, filmmakers, curators, libraries, and others across a wide range of programs—but we can hardly fulfill our mission from one building in Washington, D.C. By law and by desire, a large share of our budget is dedicated to partnerships with 56 state and territorial humanities councils. In Oklahoma, of course, our partner is the Oklahoma Humanities Council.

To effectively extend programs to every level of society, we must rely on our state partners to capitalize on local strengths and respond to local needs. For more than 35 years, the Oklahoma Humanities Council has been doing just that, working to ensure that programs are accessible to as many Oklahomans as possible. Every day the Council enriches and enhances the lives of Oklahomans—in communities large and small, many of which, were it not for OHC resources, would have no access to local cultural programming.

I am proud of the partnership between the NEH and the Oklahoma Humanities Council. I congratulate you on the launch of *Oklahoma HUMANITIES*, and on your new, imaginative programs that promise to reach even more Oklahomans. I look forward to our continuing work together.

With best wishes,
Bruce Cole
Chairman, National Endowment for the Humanities



Photo by David Hills



Brad Henry
Office of the Governor
State of Oklahoma

Dear Friends,

Congratulations to the Oklahoma Humanities Council on the publication of the first issue of its new magazine, *Oklahoma HUMANITIES*. For 37 years, the Oklahoma Humanities Council has been reaching out to communities across the state to promote the humanities, and this magazine provides a powerful new tool for outreach.

The humanities are a vital part of our culture. Through shared history, literature, and ideas, we forge communities, foster understanding, and bolster civic life. More than that—we explore what it means to be human.

I commend the Oklahoma Humanities Council for its work promoting the humanities in our schools and through adult programs across our state. Reading programs, traveling museum exhibits, lectures and other cultural events not only enrich individual lives, they build communities.

Finally, thank you to the readers of this magazine and others who make the work of the Oklahoma Humanities Council possible. Your support benefits thousands of Oklahomans every year.

I look forward to reading this and future issues of *Oklahoma HUMANITIES*. Best wishes to the Oklahoma Humanities Council. Keep up the great work!

Sincerely,
Brad Henry
Governor



From the OHC Board of Trustees
MARTIN WING, CHAIR

As Chair of the OHC Board of Trustees, I can attest to the positive difference this organization makes in the lives of Oklahomans. From resources for teachers and students, to conversations that expand our worldview, the Oklahoma Humanities Council serves our state as no other nonprofit can.

OHC is unique in that it is the state affiliate for the National Endowment for the Humanities. NEH provided 67% of our funding in 2007 [see *annual report in this issue*]. Additional funding is provided by the State of Oklahoma and by individuals, foundations, and corporations. By uniting in a common cause, our supporters enrich individual lives and strengthen communities through their generous gifts.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to thank our donors and sponsors for making this publication possible. I hope you enjoy *Oklahoma HUMANITIES*, and that you find it a useful tool and catalyst for reflection and conversation.

SEND US YOUR FEEDBACK

Send your letters and opinions to the Editor at: carla@okhumanitiescouncil.org. Include “Letter to the Editor” in the subject line of your message. We look forward to hearing from you.

2008 OKLAHOMA HUMANITIES AWARD

N. Scott Momaday, Pulitzer Prize-winning author and Oklahoma Centennial State Poet Laureate, was recently honored as recipient of the 2008 Oklahoma Humanities Award. The annual award, sponsored by the Oklahoma Humanities Council, recognizes individuals who have contributed significantly to the understanding of the humanities in Oklahoma.



Upon receiving the award, Momaday stated that he was honored to receive it in a place he calls home. "I am mindful of my very distinguished predecessor and dear friend, Wilma Mankiller, who received this award last year," said Momaday. "I am deeply honored to follow in her footsteps." Mankiller, former Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, was the inaugural recipient of the award in 2007.

"I want to thank the Oklahoma Humanities Council for all their work that has made this award possible," said Momaday, "and I especially want to thank the staff of the Oklahoma Humanities Council with whom I have worked as Oklahoma Centennial Poet Laureate this year."

OHC Executive Director Ann Thompson noted that the public forum immediately following the award dinner gave audience members a chance to interact with Momaday personally. "The evening was truly the humanities at their finest—people engaging with each other, asking questions, hearing about the oral tradition of Native cultures and witnessing that tradition for themselves in Dr. Momaday's stories."

Sponsors for the event included: BancFirst, Chesapeake Energy, the Chickasaw Nation, Joulilian Vineyards, the *Oklahoma Gazette*, the Oklahoma Historical Society, and *The Oklahoman*.



OHC Board Chair Martin Wing (left) and OHC Executive Director Ann Thompson (right) present the 2008 Oklahoma Humanities Award to N. Scott Momaday.

LINCOLN ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS

OHC recognized 15 students as winners of the 2008 Lincoln Essay Contest in February at the State Capitol. Representative Shane Jett of Tecumseh was the featured speaker. Winners were chosen from almost 800 entries, representing 60 public, parochial, and home schools statewide. OHC administers the contest in partnership with BancFirst.

"Studying Abraham Lincoln gives us insight on how a great leader grappled with the problems of his time and rallied others to take action," said OHC Executive Director Ann Thompson. "As the 2009 bicentennial of Lincoln's birth approaches, it is especially appropriate for students to study his legacy."

Kindergarten through third grade students participate with drawings; fourth through twelfth grade students submit essays. First, second, and third place winners in each grade category receive cash awards of \$100, \$150, and \$200 respectively. First place winners' teachers receive a \$250 classroom grant. Winners included:

Kindergarten through 1st grade:

- 1st Place - Addison Taron
- 2nd Place - Joseph Hilburn
- 3rd Place - Cole Allen

2nd through 3rd Grades:

- 1st Place - Ryan Barclay
- 2nd Place - Noah Patton
- 3rd Place - Frank Rawson

4th through 6th Grades:

- 1st Place - Rachele Wagner
- 2nd Place - Abigail Kent
- 3rd Place - Noelle Juengel

7th through 9th Grades:

- 1st Place - Caitlin Braden
- 2nd Place - Jordyn Roe
- 3rd Place - Clayton Cromer

10th through 12th Grades:

- 1st Place - Afton Leewright
- 2nd Place - Cody Cowell
- 3rd Place - Dustin Belvin



Dr. Jennifer Kidney with student Cole Allen

JUST LOOK AT US NOW!



It is with great pleasure that we announce the launch of our new website: www.okhumanitiescouncil.org. Our goal for the new site is to give visitors a friendlier, more visual connection to our identity and mission, and to make it easier for users to access OHC programs and services.

As we add capabilities, the website will be your resource for secure online donations; event notices and reservations; a state-wide calendar of humanities events; and downloadable audio and video programs. Please take a few minutes to “surf us up” and let us know what you think.

TEACHER INSTITUTES

Knowledgeable, enthusiastic teachers are a wise investment in Oklahoma's youth. OHC will soon launch summer institutes that will increase the confidence, professionalism, and subject knowledge of K-12 educators. Institutes will provide content-rich, professional development centered on specific humanities themes.

Participants will have the opportunity to network with peers and engage with distinguished university professors and other humanities professionals in an intensive exploration of curriculum-relevant topics. When teachers implement their innovative learning experiences and newfound perspectives in the classroom, students will benefit for years to come.



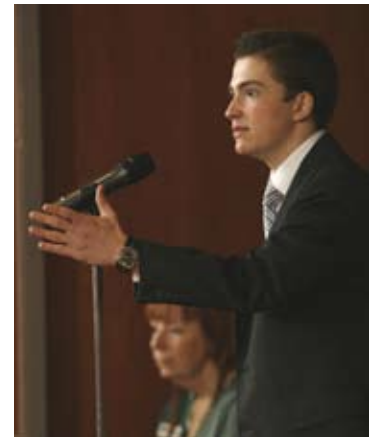
OHC's first Teacher Institute will focus on Oklahoma's Native American cultures to expand student awareness of our state's American Indian heritage. Watch for information on this pilot project on the OHC website: www.okhumanitiescouncil.org or contact David Pettyjohn, Director of Programs.

POETRY OUT LOUD FINALS

Hannah Roark, a senior at Stillwater High School, won the state finals of the *Poetry Out Loud: National Recitation Contest* held on March 1st in Oklahoma City. OHC facilitated the competition in partnership with the Oklahoma Arts Council, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and the Poetry Foundation.

As the state finalist, Roark will receive an all-expenses-paid trip with a chaperone to compete in the National Finals in Washington, D.C. The *Poetry Out Loud* National Champion will receive a \$20,000 college scholarship.

Five regional finalists competed in the state finals, including: Nathan Holliday of Putnam City West High School; Elizabeth McLeod of Milburn High School; Katie Priddle of Fletcher High School; 2nd place winner Katy Plummer of Skiatook High School; and winner Hannah Roark of Stillwater High School. Each student recited two poems selected from the *Poetry Out Loud* anthology, a collection of over 400 poems by classic and contemporary authors.



Nathan Holliday

As the state winner, Roark will receive \$200, and her school will receive \$500 for the purchase of poetry books. Second place winner Katy Plummer will receive \$100; her school will receive \$200 for poetry books.

For information on how your school can participate, contact Dr. Jennifer Kidney: jennifer@okhumanitiescouncil.org.



Winner Hannah Roark (center) with judges (left to right) Dorothy Alexander, Carl Sennbenn, Kim McCoy-Heffren, and Beverly Davis.

Oklahoma CONVERSATION

IN THE HUMANITIES

Author Sara Paretsky makes her first-ever Oklahoma appearance as the featured speaker for OHC's new *Oklahoma Conversation in the Humanities*. The conversation is free and open to the public, and will be held on October 11th, 2 p.m., in the Connors Cove Theatre at Hardesty Regional Library in Tulsa. The event will be moderated by Stacy Takacs, OSU Assistant Professor of American Studies and OHC Board Member. Immediately following the conversation will be a book signing with Paretsky.

Later that evening, Paretsky will appear at a private reception and dinner to be held at the Gilcrease Museum. Watch the OHC website, www.okhumanitiescouncil.org, for reservation information.

OHC Executive Director Ann Thompson said the conversation format of the event is designed to erase the barriers of a formal lecture by engaging

the audience directly with the speaker. "By encouraging dialogue between the public and writers, scholars, and other dignitaries," said Thompson, "we hope the annual conversation will show the immediacy and relevance of the humanities. Our moderator will open the discussion with Ms. Paretsky; then audience members will have an opportunity to pose their own questions."

Thompson went on to say that the *Oklahoma Conversation in the Humanities* will be an annual event in Tulsa. "Ours is a statewide organization," said Thompson, "and we're excited about this new opportunity to interact with audiences in the Tulsa area. The conversation is a signature event that we will promote across the region."

Sara Paretsky has a Ph.D. in American History from the University of Chicago. As the creator of the award-winning V.I. Warshawski detective series, she invigorated the crime/mystery genre



in 1982 by introducing a tough-minded, intelligent female investigator—a marked departure from the genre's traditional depiction of women as helpless "victims or vamps." Paretsky's work has garnered numerous awards, including the Diamond Dagger for Lifetime Achievement from the British Crime Writers Association and the Gold Dagger for best novel for her book *Blacklist*. Paretsky's newest novel is *Bleeding Kansas*. ■

REVISIT THE '60s WITH OKLAHOMA CHAUTAUQUA

Tulsa • June 3-7

Enid • June 10-14

Lawton • June 17-21

Oklahoma Chautauqua is historical tourism at its finest. It's your chance to time travel to another era and meet history's most illustrious characters. Historical enactments include a monologue "in character" and an opportunity to pose questions to both the visiting luminary

and the scholar/presenter. Daytime workshops and lectures give further glimpses of the social, cultural, and political nuances of the era. The program is free and open to the public.

This year's theme, *A Time for Every Purpose*:

America in the 1960s, will examine the turbulent decade that gave rise to issues such as civil rights, environmental awareness, and the women's movement. Featured characters include:

- Rachel Carson (1907-1964), environmentalist and author of *Silent Spring*
- Julia Child (1912-2004), American chef, author, and TV personality
- Betty Friedan (1912-2006), author of *The Feminine Mystique*
- Barry Goldwater (1909-1998), U.S. Senator from Arizona
- George Wallace (1919-1998), Governor of Alabama
- Malcolm X (1925-1965), revered spokesman for universal human rights



From left to right: Dr. Doug Misbler as George Wallace; Karen Vuranch as Julia Child; Dr. Gary M. Gray as Barry Goldwater; Judy Gail as Rachel Carson; and Dr. Sally Ann Drucker as Betty Friedan. Not pictured is Charles Everett Pace as Malcolm X.

For information on events in each city, contact the Arts & Humanities Council of Tulsa at: www.ahct.org. Oklahoma Chautauqua is a partnership of OHC and the Arts and Humanities Council of Tulsa. ■

MILLER BROS. & ARLINGTON 101 RANCH

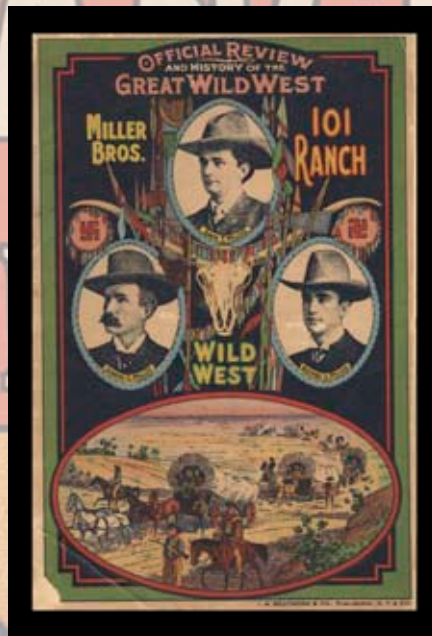
Exhibit at the Gilcrease Museum

The Gilcrease Museum lassoes the Wild West with a new exhibit entitled *101 Ranch: The Real Wild West*, beginning July 12th. The collection, valued at over \$2 million, was recently acquired from Ruth and Jerry Murphey. It contains over 3700 artifacts and memorabilia from the famed 101 Ranch. The exhibit will feature historical firearms, costumes, rare photographs, posters, and more.

The 101 Ranch, located near present-day Ponca City, was founded in the late 1800s by Colonel George Washington Miller. At its peak, the ranch encompassed roughly 110,000 acres and was the most prominent, profitable farming and ranching enterprise in the country. Part of the 101 Ranch success resulted from the innovative ranching techniques the Millers employed, including: developing one of the best breeding stocks in the West, using scientific methods to create better crops, and constructing their own power plant, telephone system, and refinery.

In 1905, Miller's three sons—Joe, George, and Zack—created a Wild West show using some of the ranch's working cowboys. "Miller Brother's Real Wild West" featured Tom Mix, Hoot Gibson, Bill Pickett, and Yakima Cannutt. The show later added female acts, including Ruth Roach, Lucy Mulhall, billed as "America's First Cowgirl," and sharpshooter Lillian Smith, known the world over as "Princess Wenona." It was one of the most exciting and successful Wild West shows of its time.

Special guest speakers, workshops, and films are scheduled in conjunction with the exhibit, which runs through January 25, 2009. For information, visit www.gilcrease.org or call (918) 596-2700.



Programs like this one featuring Miller brothers [clockwise from top] Zack, George, and Joe Miller, circa 1915, could be purchased at the "Wild West" show.



Magazine cover features the Miller brothers and other performers, circa 1910.



Postcard featuring George, Joe, and Zack Miller, owners of the 101 Ranch.



Ticket stub dated 1925



CELEBRATING OKLAHOMA! ONE FRAME AT A TIME

An Interview with Photographer Mike Klemme
By Carla Walker, Editor

Celebrating Oklahoma! The Oklahoma Centennial Photographic Survey is the masterwork of Mike Klemme, an Enid native who has spent the last 25 years photographing golf courses around the world. Klemme logged almost two years and 80,000 driving miles for the Oklahoma project, crisscrossing the state to document who we are: young and old; cities and backroads; mesas and river banks; cattle and race horses; quilts and dreamcatchers; sunrises and sunsets—Oklahoma in all its glory. Following is a conversation with Klemme about his experience with the project, his motivation to take it on, and how he

“sells” Oklahoma’s story through photography.

Carla Walker: Let’s start with a philosophical question about photography as artistic expression, “the arts,” versus photography as a tool to document history or tell a story, “the humanities.” What is your approach as a professional photographer?

Mike Klemme: Definitely, the camera can be used as a humanities tool, something to tell the story. Photography can also be a sales tool—in a purely advertising sense, or in the sense that you have

a particular point of view and you use the light, angle, and subject matter to sell that idea. An example of that would be a book I did in 1990 called *A View from the Rough*. Commentator Paul Harvey was on the radio talking about how bad golf courses were for the environment. I thought he was wrong, so I published a book about golf and the environment by photographing all the deer, and ducks, and bunny rabbits, and alligators, and other wildlife that inhabit golf courses. I was selling an idea through photography. The book changed public opinion and golf became an environmentally-friendly sport. It gave me a



Photos by Mike Klemme

glimpse of how you can change public opinion through photography. I brought those lessons to bear on the *Celebrating Oklahoma!* project.

In the course of flying four million miles, I've sat in planes with people who are very educated but have no idea what Oklahoma is about or who we are as a people. The idea for *Celebrating Oklahoma!* was about more than just a pretty picture, it was about telling a story; but at the same time, I was selling our state—not just to people in New Jersey and California to tell them what a great place we live in, but to enhance people's feel-

ings here within the state, to show them things they probably didn't know, to surprise and shock them.

CW: Tell us how you got into photography and how it evolved to send you all over the world.

MK: In 1976, I had just returned to Enid after graduating from Oklahoma State University. My best friend's father owned a newspaper and hired me as an ad sales person. At the time, my friends were going to Salt Plains on the weekends to take pictures of the wildlife refuge. One day, one of my





friends handed me a camera and it was just over, I looked through the camera and I was hooked.

I also figured out that if I took photographs of my clients' products, they ran larger ads. It all just came together, the acquiring of a camera, the use of a camera, and the philosophy of selling with a camera. Then my best friend, Tom Taylor, became a golf pro at Oak Tree Golf Club and invited me to take pictures of the golf course. The Landmark Land Company developers saw the photographs and used them in brochures, calendars, posters and to decorate the clubhouse. Landmark was

developing golf courses in Palm Springs, Carmel, and Palm Beach, and they were the best in the world, so I started doing their work. There were no photographers doing the golf course thing—no one in the world—and I did everything I could to fill that niche. It was just one of those things, being in the right place at the right time, with a lot of hard work. I photographed Oak Tree in 1980 and since then I've photographed 1700 golf courses in 45 countries.

CW: You talked about getting the idea for *Celebrating Oklahoma!* from talking to people

on airplanes, but how did it go from that idea to a full-blown project?

MK: My dad has drilled history into me since I was a little kid. [*Bob Klemme has been marking the path of the Chisbalm Trail across Oklahoma since 1990 and was recently inducted into the Oklahoma Historians Hall of Fame.*] We talked about the centennial for years and how important it was going to be for the state. I started thinking: *If I'm going to do a project about Oklahoma, this is the perfect time.* That's when it started to gel, when I started thinking about documenting Oklahoma and linking it with the centennial.

I went before a legislative committee in 1998 or 1999 and asked for the designation as the official photographer of the centennial. I felt it would help me gain access to private property or get me into events if I had that official designation. They were just beginning to think about forming the Centennial Commission and couldn't give me a definitive answer. Then Blake Wade, director of the Centennial Commission, called in 2005 and said, "We were going through our files and ran across your proposal. It's brilliant. We'd really like for you to do this." I dropped everything and started driving the state. *Here we go, here's the next big ride.*

CW: How did you plan the project?

MK: When I was a little kid, every Saturday and Sunday we would go some place: Woolaroc, Roman Nose State Park, Chickasaw National Recreation Area. I knew about all those places, that was my backbone. I watched a lot of *Discover Oklahoma* and made notes. Then it was just a matter of driving from Enid to point XYZ. I also called a lot of bankers in small communities and asked them, "What's going on in your community? What are you proud of?" Small towns are really important to me.

CW: Why is that?

MK: I have such admiration for people who live in small towns only because their family lives there, only because that's where they grew up. People that make their living off the land get overlooked and their role is so important. I lived on the edge of town in Enid growing up, so I felt this dichotomy between a fairly good-sized town and the country. In 10 minutes I can be in a place where a guy is sowing wheat or roping a cow. It's really

cool to live in a place where you can see those sights. It's just part of me.

CW: What was your thought process for what should be included in the book?

MK: When I first started, I was taking pictures of things I knew weren't going to be around very much longer, like signs, and buildings, and old barns. Then I started thinking about all of the bright, new, expansive things that are going on—Oklahoma City's Bricktown and the BOK Center in Tulsa—and the pride we have in those things. I felt that it was my job to look at things at their best angle, at the best time of day, at the best time of year, and make it as appealing as possible. I didn't look at the fact that we have more teen pregnancies and more dropouts. I tried to look at everything as positively as possible. That's probably the salesperson in me.

CW: Going into the project, what was your dream? What message did you want to send?

MK: Three things: I wanted people outside our state to realize what a great place this is. Second, I want people in Oklahoma to feel good about where we live and who we are. Third—and this is the most important thing I wanted to accomplish—I wanted parents to have something to show their kids what a great place Oklahoma is and convince them to

stay here. Those are pretty tall goals, but somebody had to try to accomplish it.

CW: Tell us about the specifics of the day-to-day work.

MK: When I got in the car, I had a pretty good list of things I needed to do that day. That's not to say



they got done, because as I'd go from one place to the next, I might find six or seven things that needed to be photographed. Every time I found a story, there were 10 stories wrapped around it, but it was so fun. I could have easily done this for the rest of my life.

CW: Did you have conversations with the people

you photographed or do you have the ethic that you don't want to influence the subject?

MK: My ethic is that you need to interact. There were people that were "grab shots," but the majority I did talk to, I learned something about them and that became part of the experience.

CW: What did you take away from those conversations?

MK: The people here are so great because they still have the pioneer spirit; they still have that ability to take a risk, like the wildcatters or the people that came here in a covered wagon hoping they could start a new life but not really knowing all the facts. That spirit is gone back East, it's gone out West, but you can still find it here and I love that.

CW: How were your perceptions of Oklahoma changed by your experiences?

MK: I knew that the landscape was varied, but I didn't know there are 11 ecological zones in Oklahoma, which is more than any other state except Texas and Alaska. I knew that we have a number of different ethnic groups in Oklahoma, but I didn't realize there are so many. There are more languages spoken in Oklahoma than any state in the nation. We're this mixing

bowl of cultures and landscapes.

CW: How did you narrow down what images would be included in the book?

MK: That was the hardest part, because there were so many great photographs—about 20,000. I went through and pulled out my favorites first.

Designer Rick Long and his company, Source Publications in Tulsa, helped put the book together. We took the best pictures, split them into six categories—Land, Arts, Business and Technology, Leisure, Community, and People—and then tried to include as much geographic diversity within those categories as possible.

CW: What has photography taught you about the human experience?

MK: So many things. When I was in junior high school, my dad taught me how to do isometric drawings, where you look at an object and draw a top view, a bottom view, four side views, and a perspective. Dad had a woodshop and he'd cut out really odd-shaped blocks for me. I'd sit down with a T-square and a triangle and draw a block from all those different perspectives. It taught me to look at everything from every angle. Photography does that too.

I've often thought that someday I want to teach photography. I'm going to mark off a ten-foot square out in a field and tell my students to go and find beauty in that square—because you can. It might be in the middle of the day or at the end of the day; it might be in spring or fall or winter, but at a certain time, something really beautiful is going to happen in that square. If you sit there and contemplate it, you're going to find it. That is my number one lesson from photography: that there's something really beautiful in everything.

CW: What do you want to say about the project that no one has asked you about?

MK: I don't think anybody has asked, "Why would you spend all of this time and effort to do this?" I think it's because, number one, I wanted to exercise my craft; but secondly, I really have such strong feelings about where we live. You can't show everything in a 30-second ad on television. I took it upon myself to be the guy that showed our state and I hope that people feel I did it in the right way. I wish I could have had 500 pages in the book, not just 288, but I'm sure I'll do it again. I'm just sure of it. ■

Mike Klemme is currently doing art installations of Oklahoma images for corporations, hospitals, and other organizations. You can see more of his photos and purchase copies of *Celebrating Oklahoma!* at: www.celebratingoklahoma.com.



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ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2007



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The Oklahoma Humanities Council (OHC) is a private, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. As the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, we strive to stimulate discussion, inform new perspectives, and actively engage people in lifelong learning by targeting two critical areas of need in our state: K-12 humanities education and community building. Our mission is to promote meaningful public engagement with the humanities; we do this by providing funding and resources that support humanities education and a vibrant cultural life for all Oklahomans.

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With banking roots planted over 100 years ago, BancFirst has a rich history that parallels that of Oklahoma—a history filled with vitality, innovation, and mutual co-operation. From this longstanding tradition emerges an attitude of stewardship that extends beyond deposits and loans. BancFirst is a true Oklahoma corporate citizen that understands both the economic and intellectual needs of local communities.

“BancFirst has an unwavering commitment to the growth of the total community,” says BancFirst Chairman David Rainbolt. “Communities thrive when there is ready access to financial capital and when intellectual capital is cultivated. States with vibrant futures are populated with well-rounded citizens who have an appreciation and involvement in the humanities.”

Once a confederation of small community banks, BancFirst is now Oklahoma’s largest state-chartered bank with assets totaling \$3.5 billion. The BancFirst banking network serves 47 Oklahoma communities with more than 100 service locations. BancFirst has based that success on high-quality customer care; innovative, flexible services; and strong capital resources.

“BancFirst is proud of our involvement with the Oklahoma Humanities Council and the imperative role it plays in helping shape a brighter future for Oklahoma,” Rainbolt added. “Through our partnership on the Lincoln Essay Contest and other resources for rural schools, BancFirst and OHC help Oklahoma youth learn to be engaged citizens through the exploration of history, literature, and the study of government.”

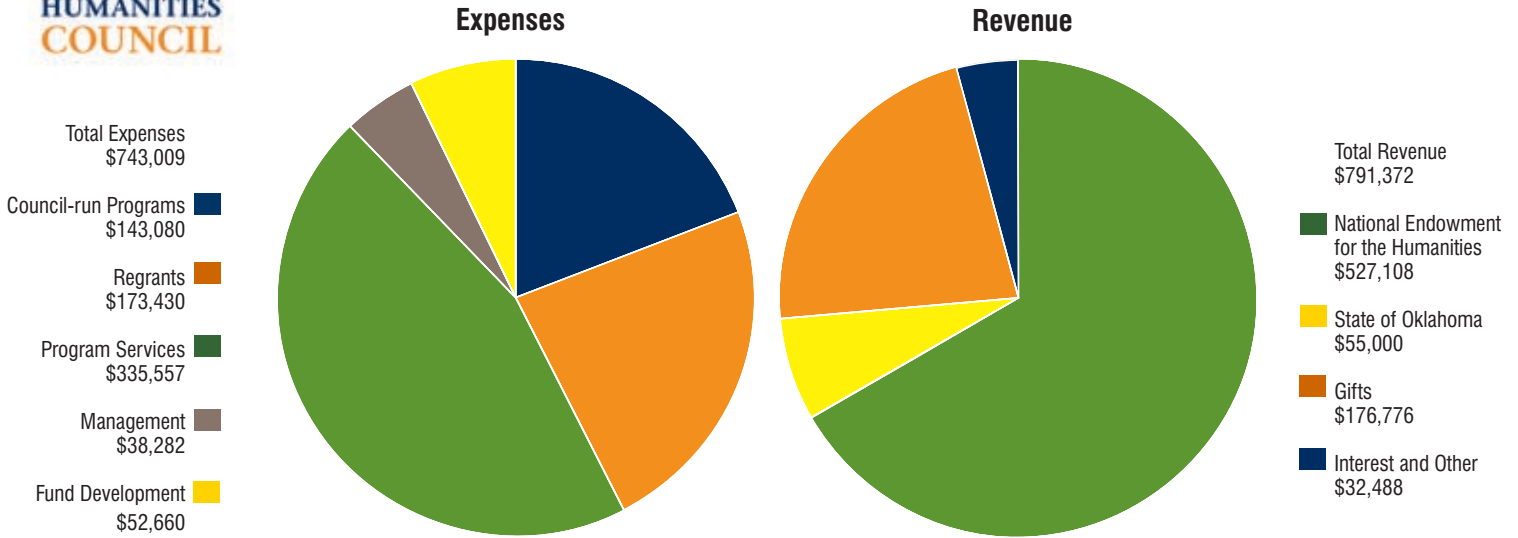
More than a marketing slogan, *Loyal to Oklahoma & You* affirms BancFirst’s continued focus on the people, communities, and promise of Oklahoma.



DAVID RAINBOLT
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SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDING OCTOBER 31, 2007



Note: Figures are from audited financial statements for the period of November 1, 2006 through October 31, 2007.

In fiscal year 2007, the Oklahoma Humanities Council funded 754 programs in 44 counties across the state. OHC programming served 261,069 Oklahomans who participated in cultural events, lectures, reading and discussion groups, exhibits, teacher training, classroom competitions, and much more. If your county isn't listed, contact us about bringing OHC programming to your community.

Alfalfa	Comanche	Grady	Kay	McClain	Ottawa	Rogers	Woods
Blaine	Creek	Harper	Kingfisher	Murray	Payne	Sequoyah	Woodward
Canadian	Custer	Haskell	Kiowa	Muskogee	Pittsburg	Texas	
Carter	Delaware	Jackson	LeFlore	Noble	Pontotoc	Tillman	
Cherokee	Garfield	Jefferson	Lincoln	Oklahoma	Pottawatomie	Tulsa	
Cleveland	Garvin	Johnston	Love	Okmulgee	Roger Mills	Washington	

What our audiences have to say:

Grants

It brought people together that would not normally find each other. This presentation was a very uplifting and informative experience.

— *Conversations with Joy Harjo, Oklahoma City University*

Let's Talk About It, Oklahoma

This type of program expands individuals and helps us to become more complex and able to understand the complex world in which we must try to function.

I can now look at someone else's view with more tolerance.

Oklahoma Chautauqua

The speakers were well prepared, knowledgeable, stimulating, and friendly. We learned a lot about our state, region, and ourselves.

— *Centennial Chautauqua, Ponca City*

Oklahoma Centennial Lecture in the Humanities

It was an important reminder of traditional values. I was especially glad that my daughter and grandson were exposed to Chief Wilma Mankiller tonight.

Oklahoma Connections

I learned that books bring people together.

I discovered that books are about a lot more than reading!

I found out that I like history!

Poetry Out Loud

In learning to recite the poems I selected, I was surprised to find that I could relate to each one. This experience made poetry familiar, and I now realize that it is available to everyone.

— *Hannah Roark, Stillwater High School, Oklahoma's 2008 winner of Poetry Out Loud*

I think it is particularly important for Oklahoma students to have the opportunity to participate in Poetry Out Loud. It makes them feel connected to a larger world and to cultural traditions that they sometimes feel have no relevance or meaning for them.

— *Sally Walkiewicz, Stillwater High School, Teacher of winner Hannah Roark*

New Poetry from N. Scott Momaday

OKLAHOMA CENTENNIAL STATE POET LAUREATE

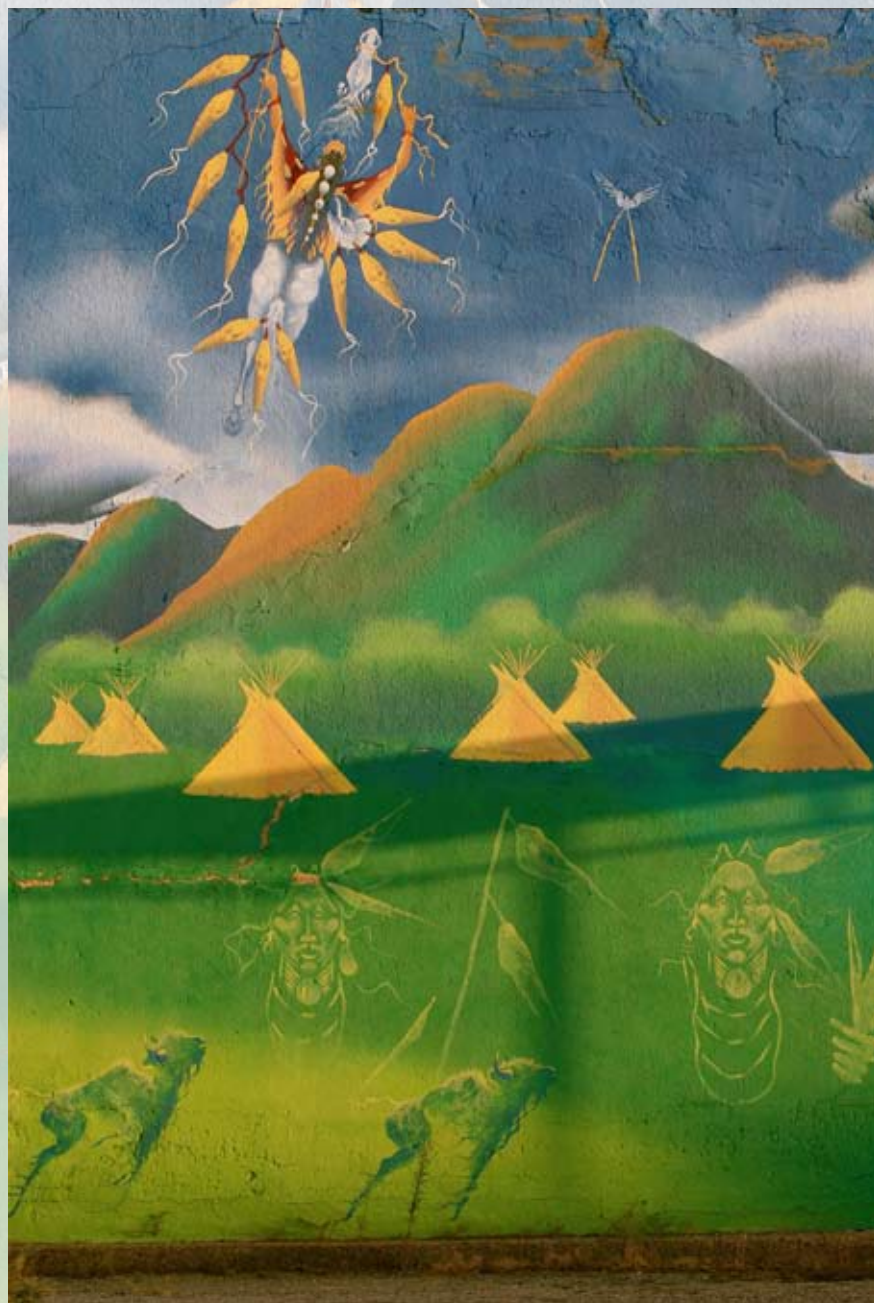


Photo by Mike Klemme

The Sun Horses

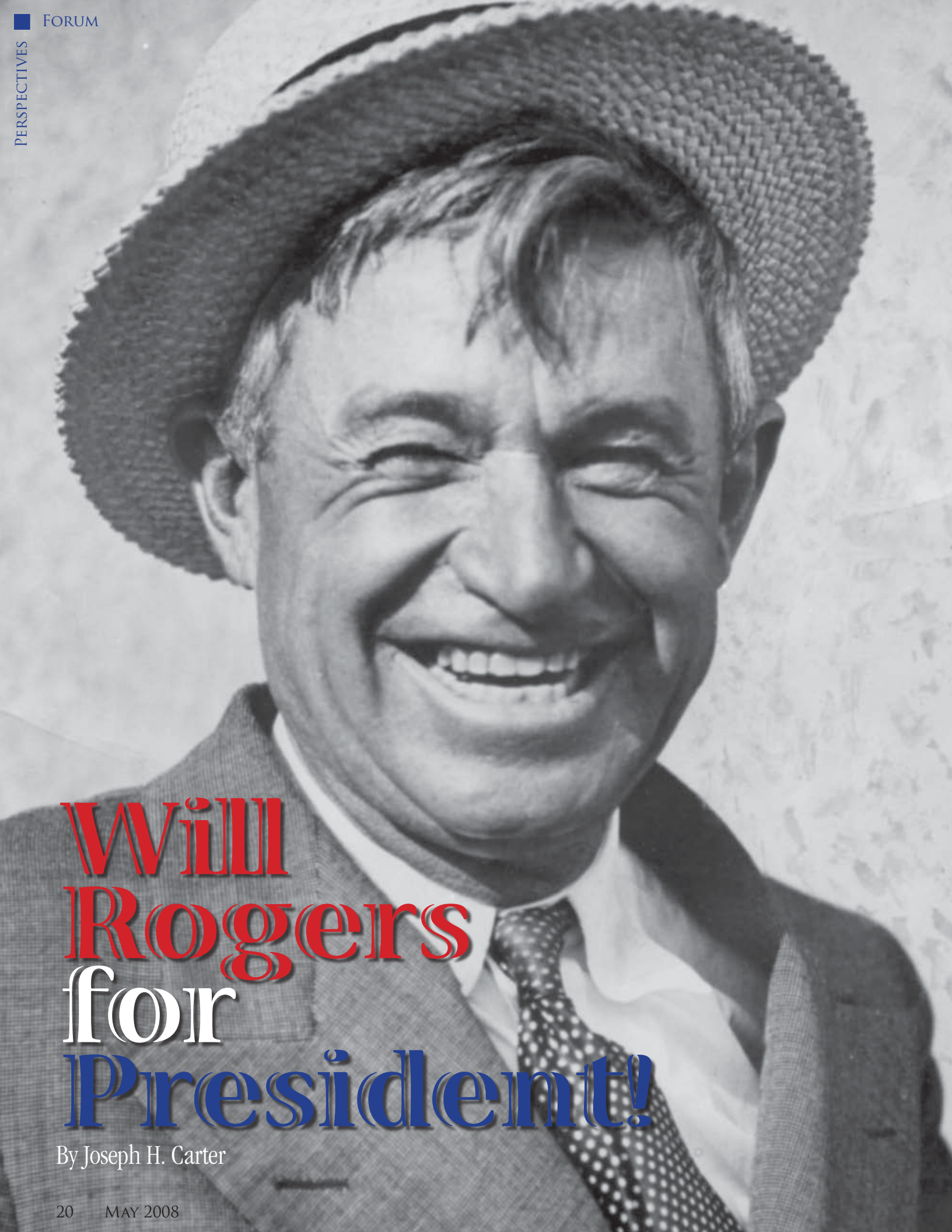
The horses came
And we did not understand at first
That a destiny came with them.
They ranged along the ridge,
dancing their shadows on the sun.
Some came to us when we sang,
But others kept away on the horizon.
And we knew in our deepest reverence
that we were who we ought to be
as long as there were horses
appearing on the skyline.
Then one day,
after we had got in their way,
the soldiers fired a thousand shots,
and the sun blanched,
and the horses were no longer there.

—N. Scott Momaday, 2008

Mutation

Here is mutation.
I listen and do not hear
The withering words.
Language sifted in the leaves
Becomes the long breath
Of the elder, creeping bear
Whose breath is woven
Among branches, and dissolves
Without procession,
Into the far rush of rain.

—N. Scott Momaday, 2008



Will Rogers for President!

By Joseph H. Carter



No mortal, and certainly no Oklahoman, personifies the meaning of humanitarian more than Will Rogers. He was champion of the underdog, a philanthropist, and the voice of peaceful solutions. Actor Spencer Tracy, a close friend of Rogers, said he was “one of the best-known, and one of the least-known men in the world.” The observation still holds true.

Hundreds of books on Rogers’ life and the re-release of his movies—he starred in 71 films—have kept alive the near-mythic admiration Oklahomans have for this icon of the common people. Schools, businesses, and a turnpike bear his name. Still, for all that we know and admire about this “Oklahoma Native Son,” many are surprised to hear about his run for the presidency of the United States.

Quips and Tricks

William Penn Adair Rogers, 1879-1935, was born in a log cabin on the tall grass prairie of the Cooweescoowee District of the Cherokee Nation. The range would later become Rogers County, Oklahoma, named in honor of Will’s legendary father, Clement Vann Rogers, a judge and senator of the Cherokee Nation who helped write the state’s 1907 constitution.

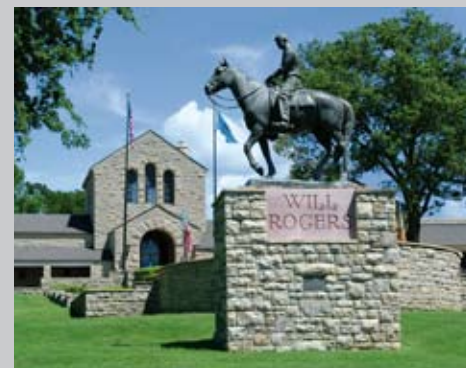
Will Rogers was riding horseback shortly after he learned to walk. Working on his dad’s ranch, he acquired the skills of the laboring cowboy, including roping and managing livestock. But the tool that once snagged cattle would soon lasso a career in entertainment. At Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show in Chicago, teenager Willie Rogers witnessed a trick roper spinning his name in the air with a lariat: O-R-O-P-E-Z-A. Inspired, the youngster practiced and mastered rope tricks that arguably have never been bested.

Rogers was restless and by age 20 was traveling the world in search of adventure. In 1902, he joined a Wild West show in South Africa, billed as “the Cherokee Kid.” Following bookings in New Zealand and Australia, in 1905 Rogers signed on with a show in New York’s Madison Square Garden. One evening a wild steer leaped the rails and raged through the grandstand and terrified patrons. Rogers lassoed the steer and nobody was hurt. Newspaper accounts touted his heroism and cinched his career.

Even his mistakes often turned golden. “Oops, got all of my legs through but one,” was greeted with roaring laughter when he muffed the difficult “Texas skip.” The laughter encouraged more quips. “Swinging a rope isn’t bad,” he observed, “as long as your neck’s not in it.”

Vaudeville dubbed Rogers “Poet Lariat.” His title as “Oklahoma’s favorite son” came after he began punctuating rope tricks with more jokes and his own cowboy wisdom. “To make jokes and tricks come out even,” he said, “I’ve got to either practice roping or learn more jokes.” He read several daily newspapers and the Congressional Record to find material for his commentary. He once opined that congressmen were “funnier 365 days a year than anything I ever heard of.”

It was Rogers’ down-home humor that also won him a spot in Broadway’s *Ziegfeld Follies*. Saun-



WILL ROGERS MEMORIAL MUSEUM

A visit to the Will Rogers Memorial Museum is a “best bet” if you want to learn more about the life and legacy of “Oklahoma’s Native Son.” The 20-acre museum grounds overlook the beautiful Tiawah Valley. Rogers purchased the land in 1911 as the site for his retirement home. His wife, Betty, donated the land to the state, along with much of the museum’s collections. Also located on the grounds is the Rogers family tomb, situated in a sunken garden. The museum’s eleven galleries include:

- A library of more than 2,000 volumes
- Archives of Rogers family documents, movies, audio tapes, and 18,000 photographs
- Theaters for viewing a documentary and films starring Will Rogers
- A children’s museum with interactive exhibits and activities
- A saddle collection
- Original art and statuary by artists such as Charles Russell, Jo Davidson, and Wayne Cooper
- The statue, *Never Met a Man I Didn’t Like*, in the museum rotunda. An identical cast stands in Statuary Hall of the U.S. Capitol.

Also worth a visit is the site where Rogers was born, the Dog Iron Ranch near Oologah. The 400-acre grounds include the historic two-story home, an 1879 era-correct barn, and farm animals. Put these sites on your “must see” list.

Will Rogers Memorial Museum
1700 W. Will Rogers Blvd.
Claremore • (918) 341-0719
8 a.m.-5 p.m., 365 Days/Year

Will Rogers Birthplace Ranch
9501 E. 380 Rd.
Oologah • (918) 275-4201
8 a.m.-5 p.m., 365 Days/Year

Images courtesy the Will Rogers Memorial Museum



tering onto New York's most celebrated stage in chaps and a Stetson, he swung his rope, chewed gum, and talked while the girls were "changing from nothing into nothing." His fresh, topical, bipartisan jokes on politics and celebrities were the talk of the town.

From Joker to Journalist

Rogers' true test of stage presence came at a Baltimore benefit. His act was peppered with lines that poked fun at President Woodrow Wilson's policies following World War I. Unannounced, Wilson motored from Washington to attend the performance. George M. Cohen urged the cowboy to keep his act intact and figuratively shoved his pal into the spotlight.

"I'm kinder nervous," Rogers said, glancing toward the president. Wilson led the crowd's laughter and the performer stayed the course. Some of the gags were supportive of Wilson; others, were humorous, though tough revelations. Wilson and the audience roared and the president went backstage to meet and embrace Rogers. "You can always joke about a big man that is really big," Rogers concluded. "But don't ever kid about the little fellow that thinks he is something 'cause he will get sore. That's why he's little."

Sensing the commercial value of his cowboy charm, the McNaught Syndicate commissioned Rogers to write a weekly newspaper column. *The New York Times* became his flagship in 1922 and hundreds of newspapers followed. He wrote more than 600 meandering Sunday columns, often opening with, "Well, all I know is what I read in the newspapers."

When he traveled, Rogers found a telegraph office to dispatch his columns. While visiting his sisters in Chelsea, he took copy to the local telegrapher who was leisurely singing and strumming a guitar. "You should be on radio," Rogers told Gene Autry. Years later, Autry said those were the words that inspired his entry into show business.

The "Bunkless" Ticket

Rogers' run for the U. S. presidency appeared as a series of articles published in *LIFE* magazine, the nation's foremost humor publication of the period. *LIFE* offered Rogers \$2,500 per edition to be the candidate of the "Bunkless" ticket and to outline his political notions in monthly serials—nothing serious, simply debunk the folly



During a 1932 campaign appearance, Rogers warmly introduced Franklin D. Roosevelt, noting, "He is a particular friend of mine and for many years standing. . . ." Roosevelt's head rolled back in laughter when the comedian added, "If this introduction lacks enthusiasm or floweriness, you must remember you're only a candidate. Come back as president and I will do right by you. I'm wasting no oratory on a prospect."



In a letter now exhibited in the Will Rogers Memorial Museum in Claremore, Roosevelt expressed fear that Rogers really would run for the presidency. Rogers had no such interest. "Don't get panicky," he advised Roosevelt. "All you

that surrounded the election of America's chief executive. Some folks, however, took the candidacy seriously.

Rogers garnered valid electoral votes at the 1928 Democratic National Convention. He was solemnly endorsed by Henry Ford as the most capable prospect to lead America. Rogers said that he would much prefer Ford in the driver's seat. "If elected, I absolutely and positively agree to resign," Rogers pledged.

Though never a serious candidate himself, some of Rogers' finer moments were jovially lampooning presidents, from Teddy Roosevelt to Franklin Roosevelt. "If the president does nothing else but keep our army and navy at home," he said, "we can forgive him for not giving us rain, lower taxes and an inflated stock market."

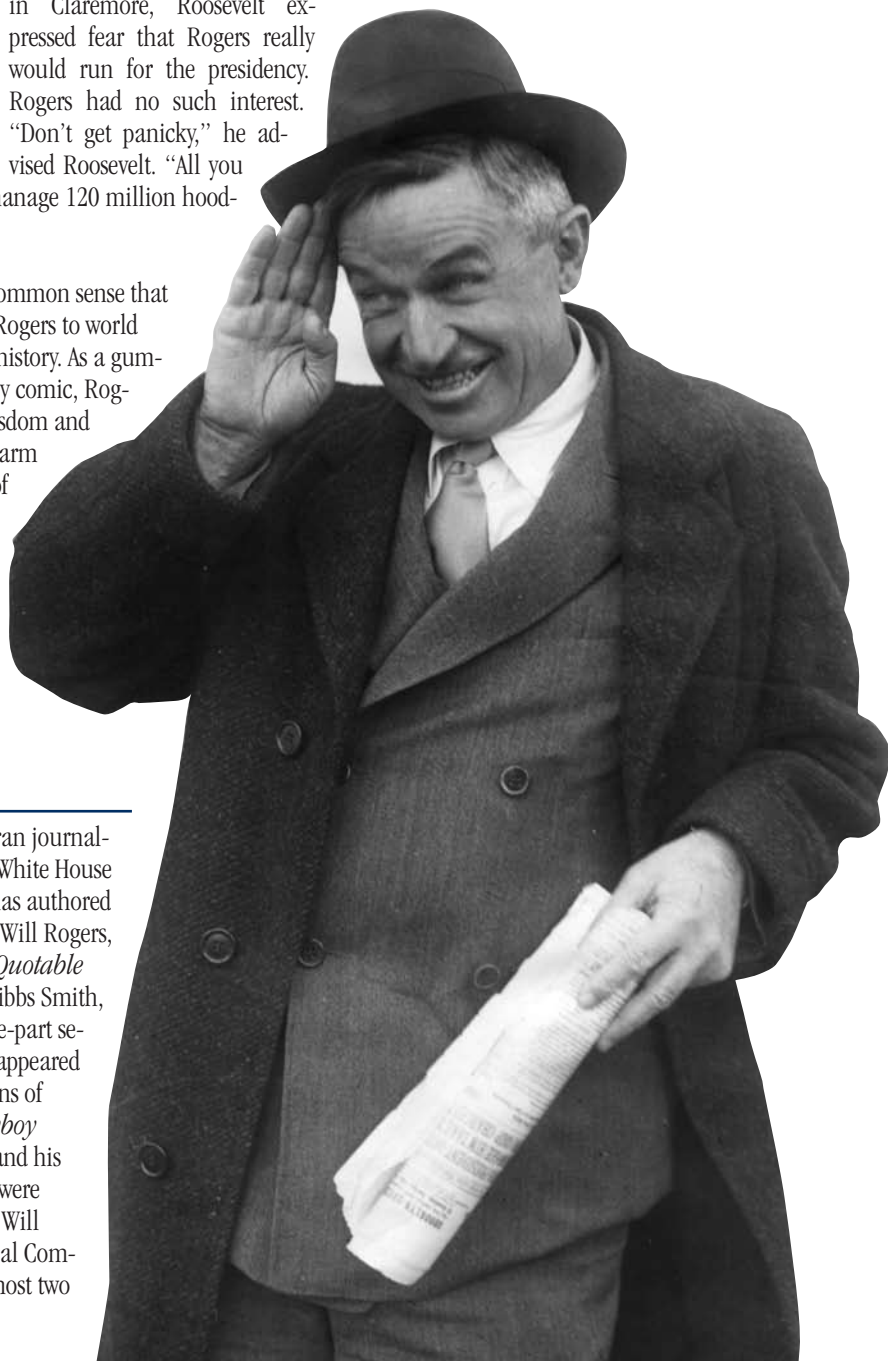
Rogers generally sided with the underdog, but as a pundit he spared no politician's foibles. At the time the Democratic Party was floundering, he commiserated: "I'm not a member of any organized party, I'm a Democrat." There is no evidence that Rogers ever formally registered with either party. He remained neutral, but involved.

Relaxed and amiable among kings, senators, and common folks, Rogers honestly proclaimed, "I never met a man I didn't like." Author Alex Ayers (Penguin, 1993) wrote: "Will Rogers never met a man he didn't like. He also never encountered a bag of hot air he didn't deflate, a stuffed shirt he didn't lampoon, or a social ill he didn't treat with the marvelous medicine of laughter."

have to do is manage 120 million hoodlums."

Such was the common sense that propelled Will Rogers to world fame and into history. As a gum-chewing cowboy comic, Rogers' glowing wisdom and down-home charm won the favor of the world. His image and words remain timeless; his wisdom, properly applied, is just as relevant. ■

Joe Carter, veteran journalist and former White House speech writer, has authored three books on Will Rogers, including *The Quotable Will Rogers* (Gibbs Smith, 2005). His three-part series on Rogers appeared in recent editions of *American Cowboy* magazine. He and his wife, Michelle, were directors of the Will Rogers Memorial Commission for almost two decades.





Bear's Heart (1851-1882). The Honoring, ca. 1875-78. Ledger drawing, pencil, colored pencil, and iron gall ink. Arthur & Shifra Silberman Native American Art Collection, National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, Oklahoma City.

THE HUMANITIES: A Conversation of Story and Place

By Dr. Lewis Parkhill

What are the humanities, and more particularly, what do the humanities mean for us some 230 years into our North American experiment in democracy? It's a question I've enjoyed exploring for over 30 years in conversations with students and colleagues, in and out of college humanities classes, and with readers in many Oklahoma communities. It's a question well worth asking and a challenging one to answer.

The humanities are nothing more (or less) than our best efforts to tell the human story and our place in it by observing and trying to understand the intersections of people with the planet over time, and to tell the story in greatest possible plenitude. Studies such as history, literature, philosophy, art history, archeology, comparative religion, and ethics engage us in awareness of our shared humanity and cultural differences, inviting wide public conversation in the ongoing dialogues and stories of humanity.

Public dialogue is an essential part of the humanities because the "human story" is really "human stories"—differing stories of origins, competing claims of place, conflicting systems of value, all serving to provide human community and to nourish people in their places over time.

We are born, wordless, into a storied world and learn the names for things, ideas, and their connections as we grow, discovering the possibilities of our place in the stories of our time. By fostering awareness of this shared human experience, the humanities encourage an open-minded engagement with the stories of the past and present, both those within our community and those from other communities.

When Old and New Collide

A stanza from Robert Frost's poem "Does No One At All Ever Feel This Way in the Least?" dramatizes the powerful hold of story for us and insight into the value of giving attention to other stories:

...we took the Indian name for maize
And changed it to the English name for wheat.
It seemed to comfort us to call it corn.
And so with homesickness in many ways
We sought however crudely to defeat
Our chance of being people newly born.

Identifying with New England immigrants, the speaker in the poem invites readers to imagine a moment of choice between two worlds and their stories and to consider the motives and meanings

We are born, wordless, into a storied world and learn the names for things, ideas, and their connections as we grow, discovering the possibilities of our place in the stories of our time.

the choice represents. An ocean away from England, the homesick immigrants gain some "comfort" by changing "the Indian name for maize" to the "English name," corn. But, by choosing the comforts of the familiar, the old world past over the new world Indian culture, they "defeat" their "chance of being people newly born."

People live in story: the narratives of who we are, how things came to be, and how those influences have shaped our time and place. The names of "corn" and "maize" for the same food grain represent two different communities applying their

own story maps to the same territory, imagining different homes in the same land.

From Perception to Perspective

Since its formation in 1971, the Oklahoma Humanities Council has fostered public conversations to enrich our understanding of our place in the world. Because of Oklahoma's unique history as "Indian Territory," Oklahoma humanities programs must necessarily include the competing stories of western expansion. I recall vividly an OHC-funded exhibit on Ft. Marion ledger art at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. Each admission ticket held a different name of the 72 Kiowa, Cheyenne, Comanche, Arapaho, and Caddo Indians captured in the Red River War and imprisoned in Ft. Marion near St. Augustine, Florida from 1875 to 1878.

Provided with colored pencils and blank military ledgers, Indian prisoners adapted traditional pictographic art to their captive circumstances and created more than 800 lasting images of personal experience and tribal culture. Moving through the exhibit, museum visitors were immersed in the national story of western expansion and its human drama as told through that particular Native American experience and the individual story of the person whose name was on their ticket. The exhibit gave presence and voice to those who lived here first, people who saw the "old world" of their homelands threatened by the alien invasion of a "new world."

Recovering the stories embedded in the Ft. Marion ledger art was enlightening in itself, but that perspective also opened a new "conversation" with art from the European tradition. I can never look

at Albert Bierstadt's 1867 painting *Emigrants Crossing the Plains* [pictured below] without Ft. Marion ledger art entering my thoughts.

Bierstadt's landscape epitomizes the non-native vision of the American West. A vast sky of clouds and rocky crags fills the background, bathed in sublime, golden sunset. Below, the "Emigrants" move by covered wagon, horseback, and foot with their herds of cattle and sheep, along the trail, through trees, and into open prairie toward the golden promise of the West. Their route curves around a small cluster of Indian tipis—a relatively small, but centrally located part of the over 5- by 8-foot painting. The perspective I gained from the Ft. Marion exhibit magnifies this part of the painting for me, adding native stories which contrast powerfully with the golden affirmations of "manifest destiny."

The impact of the cultural encirclement I see pictured in Bierstadt's painting can be measured concretely in the loss of native languages, fragile oral histories, and tribal community. Viewed in the context of the human story—the humanities—it is a loss not only of native culture but also world culture. [Bierstadt's painting and

165 pieces of Ft. Marion ledger art, like the example pictured at left, can be viewed in the permanent collection of the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City.]

Home—A Storied Place

One of the widest engagements of Oklahomans with the humanities comes through OHC's *Let's Talk About It, Oklahoma* (LTAIO) program. Public libraries in every part of the state have hosted one or more of the 39 thematically-focused reading and discussion programs, which explore the stories of mythology, American history, ethnic identity, political philosophy, women's lives, children's literature, and even murder mysteries. A humanities scholar opens each session with author and historical background and discusses how the book fits into the overall theme.

Then, the magic of LTAIO happens in reader-led discussion. As a long-time scholar participant, I continue to marvel at how readers not only illuminate the books, but how they communicate their own stories to each other. In the theme of "What America Reads," one reader responded to James Jones' novel *From Here to Eternity* set on

the verge of World War II. She shared memories of being a teenager in Pensacola, Florida, near the navy flight training center in the 1940s.

"What was that like?" someone asked. "It was wonderful," she responded and everyone laughed. But just as suddenly tears filled her eyes and she added, "All those beautiful boys. I often wonder how many never came home."

"Home" is a storied place, enriched by the knowledge and perspective of what we share with other people—people who called the grain "maize" and those who called it "corn," people who experienced the loss of land, and people forever changed by the loss of war.

In his book *The Names: A Memoir*, Oklahoma Poet Laureate N. Scott Momaday says, "The events of one's life take place, *take place*...; they have meaning in relation to the things around them." The humanities engage us in the dual meaning of Momaday's repetition. Our lives *take place* day by day. It takes a humanities-enriched sense of place—an informed awareness of how we intersect with the larger human story—to live in our greatest humanity. ■



Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902). *Emigrants Crossing the Plains*, 1867. Painting, oil on canvas. Permanent art collection, Atberton Gallery, National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, Oklahoma City.

TRUTH LIES AND DUCT TAPE

From *Writing in an Age of Silence*
By Sara Paretsky

Everyone knows the routine: we take off our shoes and walk in our stockings, or even bare feet, across a filthy floor. We must place not only our overcoats, but also our suit jackets in a tub that has held other people's shoes.

Dirty flying feels symptomatic of our life nowadays. It's as though the debris of the World Trade Center has coated our minds and hands as well as the floors of the airports we walk through. Every aspect of life in contemporary America is affected by the public reaction to the events of September 11.

During this time, Americans have been angry and confused. Our sense of self as a country has always been an optimism bordering on arrogance, dating to before we were a country. When John Winthrop was leading his group of Puritans from England to Massachusetts Bay in 1630, he lectured them that:

[W]e must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us; so that if we shall deal falsely with our god in this work we have undertaken and so cause him to withdraw his present help from us, we shall be made a story and a byword through the world.

This sense of being set apart from other people,

of being better, more holy, more surely right, has persisted through the four centuries of European life in America. This sense has meant different things to different people. To some, it has meant a freedom to experiment, to try new things, not to be bound by shibboleths.

To others, our commitment to justice and the rule of law, even in the shameful days of segregation and lynch mobs, did, indeed, make us a city upon a hill, a beacon for all oppressed people everywhere.

I myself grew up in the belief that America was a haven. The Statue of Liberty, "the Mother of Exiles," welcomed my twelve-year-old grandmother when she had to flee a pogrom and sailed, alone, into New York Harbor in 1911.

I also grew up when the Federal Government sent marshals to protect black children as they had to walk to school past angry, rock-throwing mobs of white adults. I grew up when the Supreme Court struck down laws that permitted discrimination in schools, the workplace, in the bedroom, indeed, in the courts themselves.

I cannot find words to express the depth of my loss, or my outrage, to see my country abrogate treaties abroad, and violate the very heart and bones of our Constitution here at home. Some

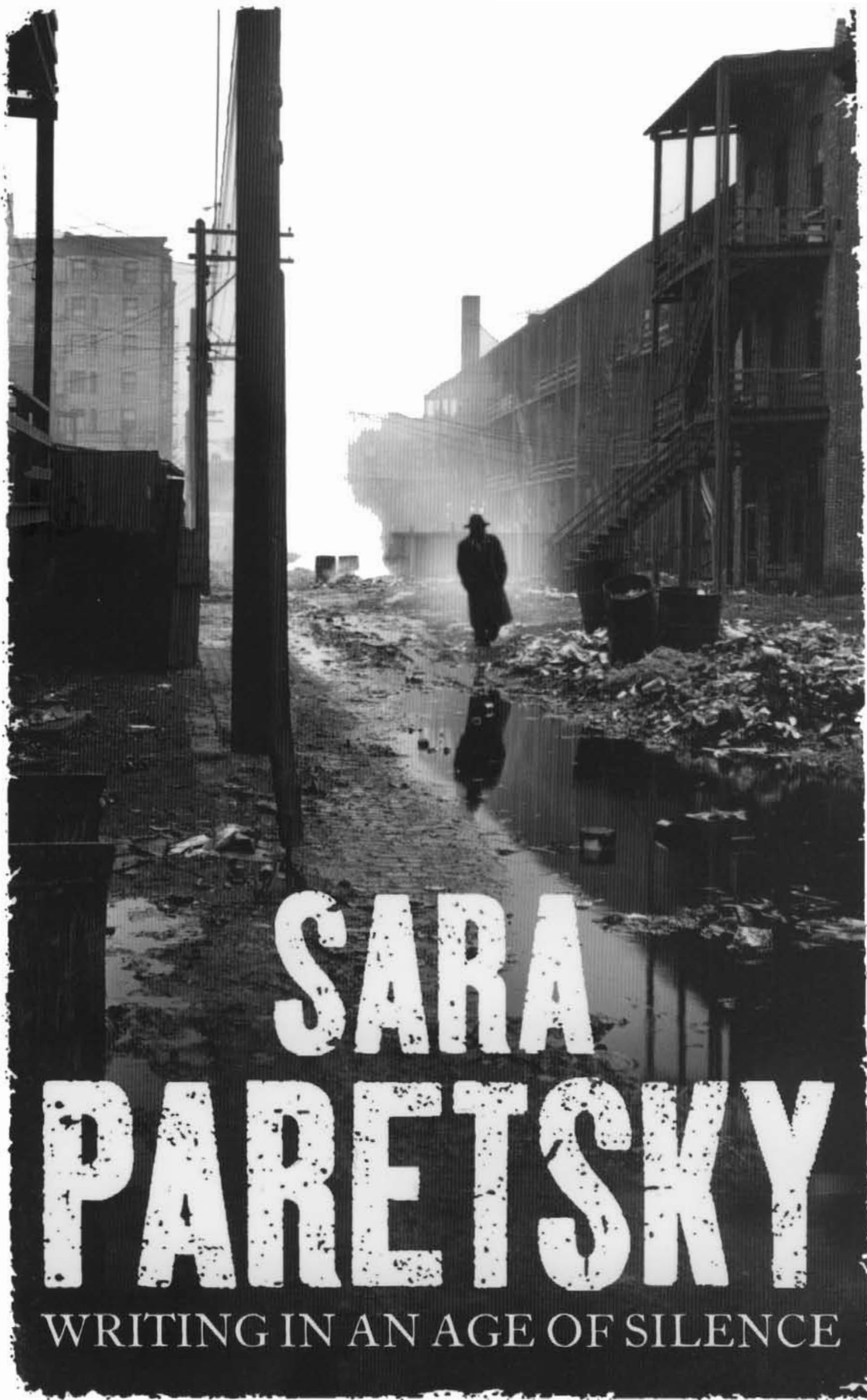
of us feel corrupt and tainted, others weak and angry, and the mood of the country is ugly. As a writer, in a time like this, it is hard to know what to say and how to say it.

Silence does not mean consent. Silence means death. When we have something to say and we are afraid to speak, or forbidden to speak, we feel as though we've been walled into a closet.

Libraries and Civil Liberties

Just as libraries have been heavy losers in contemporary budget wars, they have also been on the front lines of today's assaults against America's most cherished liberties. This assault began with, but isn't limited to, the USA Patriot Act, passed in the feverish fearful weeks immediately after 9/11. Every state in the union has laws, either written or established by legal precedent, to protect the privacy of library patrons: what we read, what we check out, what we look at on-line, is our business.

The Patriot Act overturns those confidentiality laws. The Patriot Act allows the government to compel libraries to produce circulation records, Internet use records, or information stored in any medium. If served with a subpoena, libraries and librarians may not disclose the existence of the subpoena, nor the fact that records were produced as a result of it. Patrons cannot be told that their



SARA PARETSKY

WRITING IN AN AGE OF SILENCE

records were given to the FBI, nor that they are the subject of an FBI investigation. In addition, the government does not have to demonstrate “probable cause” to get a subpoena issued. Instead, the law enforcement agent only needs to claim that records may be related to an ongoing investigation involving terrorism or intelligence activities.

According to a survey conducted by the Library Research Center at the University of Illinois in 2002, our government has seized circulation and Internet-use records from at least eleven percent and perhaps as many as thirty percent of the nation’s libraries since passage of the Patriot Act (Survey reported on the American Library Association website. The figures have not been updated since 2002, so they are probably considerably higher.)

I wrote the Library Research Center recently to see if they were updating their survey to include 2003-2005 data, and learned that the FBI denounced the study’s author in the pages of the *Wall Street Journal* as a supporter of terrorism; she has been threatened with unspecified reprisals if she continues the study.

That news made me sick.

Truth, Lies and Duct Tape

What is the appropriate response of a writer in times like these? At the most basic level, it’s my job to continue to write stories that—I hope—people will want to read. More fundamentally, I think it’s my job to try to fumble my way as close as I can to the truth, not to accept a slippery slipshod misuse of language or ideas, not to let the fear of arrest or public outrage lead me into self-censorship.

This particular essay began as a talk I gave to a number of libraries and state library associations about the Patriot Act and the library. I was scheduled to speak at the Toledo, Ohio public library the night before we shocked and awed Iraq. The library asked me not to deliver this talk, because it was so controversial that people were turning in their tickets rather than listen to me; the library asked me to emulate other writers in giving humorous anecdotes about my writing life (the time I was arrested for having mismatched social se-

curity and driver’s license names, and other light-hearted memoirs of the post-terrorism age.)

I don’t like hostility. I don’t relish confrontation. I thought about acquiescing. I thought about all the times I had caved in to the demands of an angry person, and how filled with self-loathing I’ve been afterwards. I gave this talk, but my knees were shaking so badly I had to grip the podium throughout.

Silence does not mean consent. Silence means death. When we have something to say and we are afraid to speak, or forbidden to speak, we feel as though we’ve been walled into a closet.

I was fortunate that night: the five hundred people in the audience who’d come out in a rainstorm to hear me gave me an ovation.

If the crowd had booed me from the stage in Toledo that March night, I don’t know whether I would have found the courage to keep making these remarks. I am as weak and as easily manipulated by angry rejection as anyone else, and certainly more than my heroes, the great Russian poets of the 20th Century, who risked torture, imprisonment, and death rather than cave into the demands of an authoritarian government.

The only way to keep ourselves free is to speak, not to let ourselves be silenced, either by pernicious laws, or by mob screaming.

Whenever I sit down to write, I feel like a toy ballerina on a magnet, being twirled in circles so fast that I can’t figure out what to look at. The toxicity I encounter at airports pervades the landscape these days. I feel that I’m walking under a toxic cloud, not of germs or radiation that plastic and Dettol [*a British equivalent of Clorox*] might keep out, but of lies. When the government tells me there’s a code orange alert, to wrap myself in duct tape and plastic, but go shopping—as long as I don’t buy anything French—because it’s my patriotic duty to buy and run up my debt but I mustn’t have bankruptcy protection, I become

just about speechless from the disconnect between truth, lies—and well, duct tape.

I want to walk away, no, run away from all these horrors. I want to play with words and dazzle readers with my brilliant turns of phrase, but the times weigh me down.

I can’t stand idly by while my beloved country reduces its citizens to speaking in whispers out of fear of what their invisible, invasive government may do.

Because my own great comfort comes from other writers’ words, my hope is that my stories may also bring readers some solace in the night, provide some lamplight on a darkened path. Twenty-six hundred years ago, the poet Sappho—who saw the goddess descend from the heavens in a chariot pulled by sparrows—wrote:

Although they are
Only breath, words
Which I command
Are immortal.

When I enter a library, when I enter the world of books, I feel the ghosts of the past on my shoulders, urging me to courage. I hear Patrick Henry cry to the Burgesses, “Is Life so dear, or Peace so sweet, to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery?” I hear Sojourner Truth tell me that the hand that rocks the cradle can also rock the boat, and the great abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison say, “I am in earnest, I will not be silenced.”

It is my only hope, that against those forces which seek to silence us, to rob us of our voices and our precious freedoms, that my words, Sappho’s words, indeed, our Constitution’s words, that all these words, which are only breath, will not only endure, but triumph. ■

Sara Paretsky is the author of the bestselling V I Warshawski novels. She will be the featured speaker for OHC’s *Oklahoma Conversation in the Humanities* in Tulsa on October 11th. See page 8 for details. The preceding essay was excerpted and reprinted by permission of the author.

CALENDAR

Events

Oklahoma Chautauqua

- June 3-7, Tulsa
- June 10-14, Enid
- June 17-21, Lawton

Information: 918/584-3333



This year's theme, *A Time for Every Purpose: America in the 1960s*, examines the turbulent decade that gave rise to issues such as civil rights, environmental awareness, and the women's movement. See pages 8 for more details.

Santa Fe Trail Symposium

Draper Farm Headquarters, Guymon
June 21, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Information: 580/338-5838



"The Study of Native American Culture" is the theme for this year's Symposium hosted by the Guymon Area Arts and Humanities Commission, a local affiliate of the Oklahoma Humanities

Council. Events and entertainment will include: the Oklahoma Fancy Dancers, Cherokee flute player/maker, basketmaker, potter, reenactments, free chuckwagon feed, and more.

Oklahoma Conversation in the Humanities

With Sara Paretsky
Award-winning Mystery Novelist
Presented by the Oklahoma Humanities Council
Connors Cove Theatre
Hardesty Regional Library, Tulsa
October 11, 2 p.m.
Information: 405/235-0280

Author Sara Paretsky makes her first-ever Oklahoma appearance as the featured speaker for OHC's new *Oklahoma Conversation in the Humanities*. The conversation is free and open to the public and audience members will have an opportunity to pose questions to Ms. Paretsky, who will also appear at a private reception and dinner later that evening. See pages 8 for more details.

Exhibitions

Art365

Portions run simultaneously at:

- Liggett Studio, Tulsa
May 19 – June 14
- Alexandre Hogue Gallery, University of Tulsa
May 29-June 27

Information: 405/232-6991



Art 365 is the culmination of a statewide call for proposals by the Oklahoma Visual Arts Coalition. Six artists were selected to work with guest curator Diane Barber of Houston, Texas, for one year to create work for the exhibition which opened in

March 2008 at Untitled [ArtSpace] in Oklahoma City. Barber identified a common thread among the artists' works—defining and exploring American identity—expressed literally or introspectively using media such as painting, printmaking, mixed media, sculpture, and modified technologies. Artists include: Sarah Atlee, Norman; Betsy Barnum, Edmond; Joseph Daun, Oklahoma City; Ashley Griffith, Oklahoma City; Darshan Philips and Aaron Whisner [as Live4This], Tulsa; and Liz Roth, Stillwater.

Oklahoma and the Chisholm Trail: Photographs by Shane Brown

Malinda Berry Fischer Gallery
OSU Foundation, Stillwater
Through July
Information: 800/622-4678



Photography by Shane Brown captures a present-day cattle drive on the Chisholm Trail. Brown chronicled the Chisholm Trail for the centennial issue of *Oklahoma Today* magazine and photographed the cattle drive on horseback.

University of Oklahoma American Indian Artists Exhibition

Jacobson House Native Art Center, Norman
Through June 29
Information: 405/366-1667

The annual University of Oklahoma American Indian Artists Exhibition features works in a wide variety of artistic media. Artists include award-winning alumni and current students, as well as past and present faculty and staff of the university.

 Funded by the Oklahoma Humanities Council

Setting the Table: 
Designs in Mid-Century Dinnerware
 Price Tower Arts Center, Bartlesville
 Through August 3
 Information: 918/336-4949




Between the 1940s and 1960s, dining as an experience in the home, outdoors, and in front of the TV came to life and shaped the culture of dining we enjoy today. *Setting the Table* informs visitors of the design, materials, form, and function of dinnerware, as well as the social history of the era that altered how domestic interiors were displayed. Classic place settings by Russel Wright, Eva Zeisel, Edith Heath, and other artists are on display, including dinnerware, glassware, utensils, and serving pieces. Additional objects include vintage linens and furnishings, advertisements, invitations, and etiquette guides.

101 Ranch: The Real Wild West
 Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa
 July 12, 2008-January 25, 2009
 Information: 888/655-2278




The Gilcrease Museum will present a new exhibit, *101 Ranch: The Real Wild West*, containing over 3700 artifacts and memorabilia from the famed 101 Ranch. Featured pieces include historical firearms, costumes, rare photographs, posters, and more. See pages 9 for more information.


Craft in America: 
Expanding Traditions
 National Cowboy &
 Western Heritage Museum, OKC
 October 11-January 18
 Information: 405/478-2250



Craft in America explores the many cultures and movements that influenced American crafts over the past 100 years. More than 175 pieces of handcrafted furniture, ceramics, textiles, basketry, glass, wood, jewelry, and metal make up the nationally touring exhibit. Several western themed objects will be incorporated during the Oklahoma stop, including works from the collections of the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, the Philbrook Museum, the Fred Jones Jr. Museum, and pieces from individual Oklahoma artists. The three-part PBS series, "Crafting in America," will air three times per day in the gallery theater area.

Let's Talk About It, Oklahoma! Reading & Discussion Programs

Private Investigations: 
Hard-boiled and Soft-hearted Heroes
 Antlers Public Library, Antlers
 Information: 405/298-5649
 • May 20, 6 p.m.
A Case of Lone Star by Kinky Friedman
 Presenter: Lewis Parkhill

The Cowboy 
 Johnston County Library, Tishomingo
 Information: 580/371-3006
 • May 15, 6:30 p.m.
Monte Walsh by Jack Schaefer
 Presenter: William Hagen
 • June 5, 6:30 p.m.
Lonesome Dove by Larry McMurtry
 Presenter: Trisha Yarbrough

Calendar Image Credits

In order of appearance:

An evening under the tent at Oklahoma Chautauqua in Tulsa.

The Oklahoma Fancy Dancers will be featured at the Santa Fe Trail Symposium in Guymon.

Sarah Atlee. *Magnolia Black*. Acrylic, collage, and Prismacolor on canvas. From the *Art 365* exhibition on view in Tulsa.

Images of the Chisholm Trail by photographer Shane Brown are featured at the Malinda Berry Fischer Gallery in Stillwater.

From *Setting the Table*, an exhibit opening at Price Tower Arts Center in Bartlesville.

Postcard featuring George, Joe, and Zack Miller, owners of the 101 Ranch.

David Gurney. *Tree of Life*, 2006. From the *Craft in America* exhibit opening at the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. Photo by Doug Hill.



Many thanks to our friends at DPS Printing Services, Inc. for their support of this publication.



End Notes From the Editor

Carla Walker

The end of a magazine is probably the last place [pun intended] you'd expect to find a note from the editor; but that's what this publication is all about: shaking things up, surprising you, and, ultimately, offering new perspectives that expand your world.

Where else will you find all this?

- A conversation with a world class photographer on his quest to "sell" the story of Oklahoma
- A gifted novelist speaking out on the loss of civil liberties and her struggle against silence
- A first look at never-before published poetry from our State Poet Laureate

- News on cultural events—on the road and around the corner—to engage and enlighten your family

If you missed these gems the first time through, go back and find them. Better yet, gather a group of friends and use the articles to start your own spirited conversations. The true value of the humanities is in sharing them with other people, debating differing viewpoints, having those "aha" moments that take you outside yourself or give you a piece of the puzzle you didn't know you were missing.

Go back, find a new perspective, and pass it on!



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