Lyndon Johnson had barely assumed the American Presidency when southern Senators, familiar with the Texan’s vaulting ambition, counseled patience and warned him not to try to accomplish too much, too soon. Above all, they sought to warn him away from the temptation to exploit his presidential honeymoon—undoubtedly lengthened by the national sorrow that stemmed from the assassination of President John F. Kennedy—to push the big ideas, big policies and big programs that had animated his politics as Senate Majority Leader. Particularly concerned about his enthusiasm for what would become the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964, sure to roil the political waters and, perhaps, convulse his aborning role as Chief Executive, they urged him to avoid the political risks associated with the measure. Undeterred, Johnson replied, “What’s the Presidency for?”

Johnson’s question essentially the November final exam question for President Barack Obama and Mitt Romney—has been a subject of absorbing interest ever since the Framers of the Constitution invented the American Presidency. In light of the dramatic transformation of the office into the nation’s dominant political institution, what scholars have variously characterized as the Imperial or Plenary Presidency, to depict the rise of Presidential Government, it is a question that energizes discussions and debates about the future of the country and it takes center stage every four years as candidates for the White House campaign for the support of voters. Presidential aspirants excite hopes, inspire dreams and promise miracles. Above all, they paint a picture of what America would look like under their stewardship—their version of “Morning in America”—and all that they would accomplish, at home and abroad.

Candidates for the presidency talk about the exercise of executive power and its many uses—revival of the economy, creation of jobs, implementation of accessible and affordable health care, promotion of national security and foreign policy objectives, projection of American military strength, advancement of democratic ideals, and restoration of America’s reputation. “The President,” wrote the Cornell University political scientist Theodore Lowi, “is the Wizard of Oz.”

Candidates boast of the potential of power, but rarely do they talk about its limits, even though the Constitution confines the scope of presidential power. Rarer still, is discussion of meaningful ways of ensuring presidential accountability to the Constitution and to the American electorate. Those issues, critical backbones in a republic, which demands leadership and accountability, plumb the depths of our national experience and consciousness, and deserve attention from those who would govern in the Oval Office.

In truth, however, presidential candidates have little incentive to discuss the limits of power. The reason for their reluctance is not hard to identify: discussion of limitations betrays the potential for presidential power, government accountability and the challenges of an informed—or uninformed—electorate.

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(See ACCOUNTABILITY, Page 4)
Idaho Humanities Council seeks academic and public board members from SE and SW Idaho

The Idaho Humanities Council seeks applications to fill SE Idaho academic and SW Idaho public positions on its volunteer board of directors. An academic member is defined as either a scholar in the humanities or an administrator of an educational or cultural institution. A public member is anyone who has a strong belief that the humanities enhance our quality of life, and who has been an informed citizen, and contribute to lifelong learning. The deadline for applications is September 15, 2012.

SE Idaho is defined as the region south of Riggins to the western border of Twin Falls County. SW Idaho is defined as the region between the Wyoming border and the western border of Twin Falls County.

The Idaho Humanities Council is a non-profit organization that has served as the state-based affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities for nearly 40 years. The Council maintains a balance on the board of public and academic members, strives for fair regional representation and gender balance, and encourages ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity. IHC is dedicated to advancing greater public awareness, appreciation, and understanding of the humanities in Idaho and meets its mission by awarding grant funds to organizations throughout the state for public programs in history, literature, languages, archaeology, law, and other humanities disciplines.

The IHC also conducts special initiatives of its own, such as annual Distinguished Humanities Lectures in Boise, Coeur d’Alene, and Idaho Falls, weeklong summer institutes in the humanities for Idaho teachers, a Humanities Speakers Bureau, special lectures, the state-wide touring of Smithsonian traveling exhibits, and other programs and activities. IHC receives funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities and donations from foundations, corporations and individuals. Board members serve three-year terms, with the possibility of renewal for a second three-year term. The board meets three times each year in February, June, and November to plan for and conduct other business. The board will review applications and elect new members at the Council’s October meeting.

For more information, prospective applicants are invited to contact IHC Executive Director Rick Ardinger at (208) 345-5346, or rick@idahohumanities.org, or write to the Idaho Humanities Council, 217 W. State Street, Boise, Idaho 83702.

Initially, the Council and applications are on the IHC’s website at www.idahohumanities.org under the link “About Us.”

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Rick Bragg spoke to 200 in Idaho Falls

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Rick Bragg gave the 5th Annual Idaho Distinguished Humanities Lecture in April in Idaho Falls. Bragg spoke about the art of telling stories to an audience of 200 at the University Center Bannion Student Union.

Bragg is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist most noted for his best-selling memoirs about his family and the working class people of the foothills of the Appalachians; All Over but the Shoutin‘, A Man and The Prince of Frogtown. Bragg attended a Benefactor’s Reception at the lovely home of Tim and Amy Hopkins prior to the dinner and lecture. About 40 people had the opportunity to personally visit with Bragg.

The IHC thanks event sponsors Teton Toyota, The Post Register, and Idaho Public Television. Also, IHC thanks the BU bookstore for selling Bragg’s books onsite.

From the Director

How do you spell sesquicentennial?

By Rick Ardinger

March 4, 2013, marks the 150th anniversary of Idaho becoming a Territory of the United States. In the middle of the Civil War—largely because of the discovery of gold throughout the area—President Abraham Lincoln officially declared the region a territory. As with all anniversaries, the occasion offers Idaho an opportunity to reflect on its history, where we’ve been, and where we are going, in ways that are more than simple celebrations.

In addition to the parades and dances and celebrations of the past, there are opportunities for education, new scholarship and publications, and reimagining the future of the Gem State.

Some communities, such as Idaho City, already have gotten a head start on the Territorial Sesquicentennial celebrations.

In 2013, the IHC will sponsor a series of two-day, scholar-led workshops for K-12 teachers around the state on Territorial History (watch IHC’s website for more details).

It’s not too early to think about how your community will make the most of the commemoration.

Idaho Humanities Council

The Idaho Humanities Council is available to help communities commemorate the sesquicentennial meaningfully. Grant deadlines on September 15 and January 15 offer an opportunity for museums, libraries, teachers, scholars, and many community organizations to seek financial support for projects and programs to commemorate the sesquicentennial appropriately.

The IHC’s Speakers Bureau offers a number of scholars to lecture on Idaho history, politics, music, and art. The application process is simple and quick, and the variety of speakers and topics are listed on IHC’s website at www.idahohumanities.org.

The Idaho “Let’s Talk About It” program, a partnership of the IHC, Idaho Commission for Libraries, and US Bank (see related story on page 8), in libraries around the state offers a new theme, “Idaho at 150,” which explores the story of Idaho through fiction and nonfiction.

The IHC will partner with the Idaho State Historical Society in producing a modest traveling exhibit on Idaho’s Territorial History, that will explore the 27 years between territorial designation and statehood in 1890. The ISHS will tour the exhibit to museums, libraries, and schools, and other community venues for the next several years.

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Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Rick Bragg spoke to 200 in Idaho Falls

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incarceration of all people of Japanese descent without any real due process. Relocation centers, often at fairgrounds or race tracks, provided a temporary venue for internees during the summer of 1942 before they were shipped to more permanent camps in the interior of the country. The War Relocation Authority administered ten main prisons located in remote, desolate regions where most of the population despised everything and interviews that the Minidoka camp experience and its legacy. Contributors include people who were detained and can help shed light on the human side of Executive Order 9066 and the reality of U.S. Constitutional history.

The following is an excerpt from an interview I conducted with Dr. Roger Shimomura, a retired University of Kansas professor of art who spent time in Minidoka as a child. Dr. Shimomura has had over 125 solo exhibitions of his painting, and is the recipient of numerous grants, including four National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships. In 2002, an exhibition of his work entitled “An American Family” toured nationally to 12 major museums over four years. In this interview he reflects on how the internment experience impacted his family and himself to this day.

RT: Tell me how your incarceration influenced your painting.

When I look back upon my life, there were several incidents that probably had an effect upon my relationship to the incarceration experience. The first happened when I was attending high school and was going to write an essay on “camp.” It was my intention to interview my father to gain insight on this experience that we all shared. To my surprise he became very upset and said very emphatically, “we don’t talk about this in this house so don’t bring it up again.” Over the years I learned that my father’s family and himself had over 125 solo exhibitions of his painting, and is the recipient of numerous grants, including four National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships. In 2002, an exhibition of his work entitled “An American Family” toured nationally to 12 major museums over four years. In this interview he reflects on how the internment experience impacted his family and himself to this day.

RT: What are your earliest memories of Minidoka as a child? You were very young so most of your earliest memories must come from the years after the camp closed. Where did your family go and what did they do?

My first memory of life was my third birthday while incarcerated in Puyallup, Washington State Fair Grounds, the so called “assembly center” where we lived in temporary housing. I remember walking around inside and outside of our barrack telling everyone I saw that it was my third birthday. My mother somehow obtained a cake and put three candles on it. That memory was so vivid that 57 years later I did a series of lithographs called “Memories of Childhood” and events of that day officially became my first memory of life.

After our first year in Camp Minidoka, my father who was a registered pharmacist was released to look for employment outside of camp as long as it was outside of the so called “security zone” (West Coast). Prior to camp he worked at a prestigious downtown Seattle pharmacy for seven years. When the war broke out he said the boss wouldn’t allow him to work the front counter and was asked instead to fill prescriptions in the back room so as to be unseen by the customers. In addition he was suddenly given duties to mop the floors and wash the windows, chores not normally assigned to registered pharmacists.

After traveling around the country looking for employment he was fortunate enough to find a German American family in Chicago that owned a drug store and had a modest room for my dad to live in while he searched for living facilities for the rest of us still in camp. While he was away, my sister Carolyn Hisako was born in Minidoka and shortly after returning to Seattle, our family decided to join him in Chicago. It took almost a year for him to find a place that would rent to a Japanese family. So after two years in camp my mother, sister and I left Minidoka to join my father in a tiny apartment in the Southside of Chicago. I enrolled in kindergarten for the only year we lived there. During that time my sister Carolyn became ill from Influenza Meningitis and passed away at the young age of two. After three years away from Seattle my grandmother and grandfather left camp and came to Chicago where we all boarded a train and returned to Seattle. Shortly after returning there, my sister Karen was born. I enrolled in the first grade at Coleman School and subsequently attended Washington Jr. High, then Garfield High School, graduating in 1957. A few years after our release from Camp Minidoka and shortly after returning to Seattle, our family decided to go on a vacation to Canon Beach, Oregon. My dad had made our reservations well in advance, but upon arrival was told that the resort had a policy of not renting to Japanese people. I remember watching my mom and dad discussing what to do while standing in front of the hood of our 1946 Chevrolet. After my father went inside, he returned later saying that the owner had changed his mind as long as the family was willing to use the cabin furthest down the access road.

When we found the cabin, we were disheartened to find it a terrible mess, having not been used for years. We all drove to the nearest general store and purchased cleaning materials. After an entire day of scrubbing, the cabin was spic and span, and even though camp was miles outside of the cabin so we could see out the windows.

Following two days of vacationing, we all tied up after ourselves and returned to Seattle.

Another incident that had an effect on me was when I went to graduate school at Syracuse University, upstate New York. I was in a graduate seminar where we all discussed various topics including our personal backgrounds. When I mentioned that I spent three years away from home (Seattle) of which two were spent in a concentration camp in Idaho, most of the other students didn’t believe me. Fortunately for me there was a married couple from Portland, Oregon, that came to my defense. Were it not for them I had no immediate proof that I was telling the truth. It left an indelible mark upon me.

In the early 1970’s when the subject of reparations began to surface around the West Coast, writer Frank Chin called me and asked for help screen printing tee shirts for the first “Day of Remembrance” event that was to take place in Puyallup, Washington, February, 1975. I flew to Seattle to add my assistance to this project. During that same time I was eligible for my first substantial leave of absence and was looking for a research project for my application. Up to that point, despite the fact that my paintings were about being a person of Asian ancestry living in the Midwest, that work lacked any specific political and socio-cultural focus. The topic of redress offered a clear challenge and opportunity for me to propose a series of six large paintings called the “Minidoka Series.” This initial foray into narrative painting addressed the incarceration of 120,000 Japanese Americans during WWII. There was a certain level of artistic risk involved as issues of racial identity hadn’t been fully explored as content in mainstream art. After receiving approval of my sabbatical application, I was forced to proceed anyway.

Around this time Frank Chin was asked to write a (See TRAGEDY, Page 4)
major article for the Seattle Weekly about the history of Japanese Americans in Seattle.

He urged our family to write about and asked if my father would agree to be interviewed. I presumed he wouldn’t, but said I would ask him now that reparation issues were being publicly discussed and Issei and Nisei were testifying nationally. Shocking to me my father agreed to do this. When Frank came over he asked if he could tape record the interview and my father said “No.” Frank then asked my father to take notes. My father then proceeded to tell stories about camp I had never heard before and I listened with fascination. Frank feverishly took notes. Then my father told the story about when our family was to be inoculated for diseases prior to incarceration. The guard roughly removed me from my father’s arms to bring me into a room to get my shots. My father tightened his grip on me and pulled me back. Two guards then restrained my father and separated him from the rest of the people in line. He said he made them remove his pants and stand in front of hundreds of people as they took me away to get inoculated. He said it was the most embarrassing moment of his life. As Frank was furiously writing all this down, my father pointed at Frank’s notepad and said, “Don’t write about that. It’s too embarrassing.”

RT: Were there other family influences that affected the family’s future or what would you even do? My paternal grandmother with whom I was very close while growing up, led a very interesting life. At the time she was alive I had no inkling as to what an interesting life my grandmother would ultimately live. My grandmother, (Tokuma) was trained as a nurse and was on a Red Cross ship at the famous Battle of Port Arthur in the Japan-Russo War. Following that duty she became the personal nurse of the Empress. She later married a large silk merchant in Tokyo where she met the brother to my grandfather (Yoshitami) who was already in the U.S. While my grandfather had intended to live in San Francisco, a day prior to his landing the great earthquake of 1906 forced his boat to land in Seattle, the next nearest port. My grandfather’s brother proposed a photo-marriage with my grandmother and after entertaining the offer he left Japan and emigrated to Seattle. In 1912 just prior to boarding along with 60 other photo brides, she began a diary which I later purchased 56 years of her life in America. For the last 14 years of her life I used to give her a new diary every Xmas never imagining what a treasure that I would inherit. Because of her medical training in Japan she became a midwife (sanba) in Seattle and would deliver over 1,000 babies during her career. In 1939 she came out of retirement to deliver me. After she passed away in 1969 I brought the diaries back to Japan and found out they had been written in Japanese that I had some difficulty in finding someone qualified to translate them for me. In somewhat of a rush I selected a graduate Art Education major from Japan who had lived the past 18 years in America.

I selected the wartime 1941, 1942 and 1943 diaries to be translated first. As the translations came in, I read them and found them to be sufficiently interesting to do a series of paintings to depict the incarceration as seen through the eyes and words of my grandmother. That group of works done from 1980-83 eventually totaled 25 paintings and travelled to nine venues across the country. In the exhibitions each painting was accompanied with the translated entry from the diary that inspired that work. In 1997 I revisited this theme and finished 30 paintings called “An American Diary,” once again visiting many of the same diary entries covered before only this time the images were consistent to the styles and appearances of the 1940s. This exhibition won the College Art Association’s “Outstanding Distinguished Body of Work for 2001” award. This work led toward a recent series, “Minidoka on My Mind,” a series of paintings and lithographs now numbering over 100 pieces all related to the incarceration of Japanese Americans. This show continues to tour around the country today.

RT: What is the most important and/or successful painting you have produced?

That’s a difficult question to answer because of all the variables associated with the words “successful” and “important.” Having said that, the large (8’ x 12’) triptych painting entitled “Nikkei Story” (2006), permanently installed in the Japanese Community and Cultural Center of Washington (Seattle), takes on many of the larger issues of Japanese America. Frequently using events from my own family history the three panels (Issei, Nisei and Sansei), make visual references to historical events, stereotypes, the WWII incarceration, ethnic traditions, education and even offers a somewhat unflattering critique of the Sansei generation of which I am a part. I hope that the painting will bring richness to the history of the building, to the organization, its occupants, and visitors and will encourage dialogue and occasional controversy. Whether successful or not will be only proven over time.

RT: What are you working on today?

I have three ongoing series of work that I continue to work on. The first is called “Minidoka on my Mind” an exhibition of prints and paintings that combine the incarceration experience. Selections from this group continue to travel to museums and galleries across the country. The second series is called “Yellow Terror” an exhibition that combines the visual collection of stereotypes, mainly from the WWI era, combined with the paintings that have been inspired by this collection. This 2,000 plus collection was donated to the Wing Luke Asian Museum in Seattle and was exhibited there along with the paintings that were inspired by the collection. This exhibition ran at the museum for nine months and is being considered for exhibition at other venues.

The third series of work is called “An American Knockoff,” a series of paintings that address issues of ethnic identity related to Japanese Americans. In this series of self portraits, I am seen as the stereotypical martial artist physically interacting with WWII stereotypes, Japanese nationals, Disney stereotypes, and struggling with other people/cultural icons/quotients that negatively interact with my identity as an American of Japanese ancestry. This series is currently touring the country.

Rusell M. Tremayne is an associate professor of history at the College of Southern Idaho in Twin Falls. He is a member of the Friends of Minidoka Board of Directors, and he has been involved in planning and conducting the annual Civil Liberties Symposium since its inception. He received CSI’s “Outstanding Academic Faculty Award” in 2006. He holds M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in history from Boise State University and the University of Washington respectively.
President should be a very strong man who uses with-out reserve every power that the position yields; but because of this fact I believe that he should be sharply watched by the people [and held to a strict account-ability].

Presidential accountability, like the more general proposition of governmental accountability, was criti-cized to those who conceived and shaped the young republic. The founders' deep-seated belief in holding officials accountable for their judgment, programs, and policies was born of a passionate belief that the people have the right and the responsibility to hold the elected officials accountable and that the Constitution, as Jefferson’s famous assertion in accountability of the governed to both the local and national level, is the answer lay in resort to the law? As Madison explained it, in terms that were set of views grounded in realism, culled from reading and experience: beliefs about political actors that led to the creation of institutions and consensus. Behind this system of thought stood a conception of self-governance and accountability were inex-trinsically linked. The health and vitality of the republic, moreover, hinged on their synergy.

We would do well to recall that, for the founders, the creation of the republic represented an experiment, and that there was no guarantee that it would succeed. In fact, in the early years, there was considerable doubt that the American experiment in republicanism would succeed, where other republics had failed. The key, as expressed in the writings of Washington and Hamilton and Madison, lay in the accountability of the government to the governed. As Hamilton wrote in Federalist No. 1, in 1787, the great question inherent in the pos-posed Constitution was whether it is possible to create a system in which the people can govern themselves through reasoned deliberation, discussion and debate, or whether they must forever suffer the imposition of government upon them. For the founders, it was neces-sary to avoid the mistakes of the ancient Athenians and the Romans; instead, the history of the ancient republics was there to warn, and it produced widespread anxiety in the early years and throughout the 19th Century, particularly because the American republic was the first of its kind in the world. Indeed, Lincoln characterized it as “the last, best hope for mankind.” The failure of the American Dream, rhapsodized in the words of Jonathan Winthrop, as a “Shining City on the Hill” and for civil good citizenship was the success for the success of republicanism throughout the world. The historical importance of Hamilton’s question in the first Federalist essay was not lost on those engaged in the debate about the roles and responsibilities of the citizenry.

Madisonian monitors

The model for success, so the founders believed, lay in accountability of the governed to both the Constitution and to the electorate. We have seen in the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson’s famous assertion of the right of the people to govern themselves, which expresses both the rights the colonists’ civil liberties. There was a general belief that executive power was to be held by conniving agents who brandished executive power for their own interests. The foundation upon which governmental authority rests, and the assumption that public opinion, precisely because public sentiment is their responsibility to assert demands for effective lead-ership and governmental accountability. The impact of a free press to the maintenance and vitality of the republic can hardly be overstated. Self-government, Jefferson explained, requires an informed electorate. That goal is scarcely achievable without the institution of a free and independent press, able to gather and report information necessary for the people to criticise governmental actions, programs and policies. Hence, the demand for governmental accountability is, so to speak, in our DNA, a genetic memory from a distant time of tyrannical kings, corrupt ministers and conniving agents who branded executive power as an exercise in arrogance, rests on the assumption that the right of the people to govern themselves on the consent of the governed. “In a republic of truth,” as Madison said, “the least opportunity of corruption of opinion is the ultimate authority.” That requires respect for facts and evidence and rejection of distortion, demagoguery and snake oil. Nothing of substance is ever achieved with fraudulent tactics. Fooling people into adopting one’s political position is a hollow victory; indeed, such fraudulent tactics contradict the premise of winning “content” from one’s fellow citizens, who are deceived are hardly “convinced” to something. 4. Avoid the Politics of Destruction. Politics is not war, and words are not bullets. It is wise to remember, after all, that in a democracy, which is fluid and reflect-ing of changing views and values, and grounded in compromise, that today’s opponent may be tomorrow’s ally. It has been justly observed that we can, and should, be tough on issues, but tender toward people. Thus, it is important to avoid coercion, threats and intimidation. Imposing our will on others is fruitless; it is far better to gain something than nothing. Compromise is par-ticularistic and squanders appeal and potential. The wages of rigidity may be measured in President Woodrow Wilson’s refusal to negotiate with members of the U.S. Senate on his proposal for America’s entry into the League of Nations. As observers noted, he “strangled his own baby.”

The founders’ goal of achieving governmental accountability, which drafted American citizens in their own great cause, remains our nation’s greatest experi-ment. Accountability is an experiment that demands engagement and considerable work. The founding genera-tion understood the responsibility that they were placing on us. It is our responsibility to demand of our leaders that we, as Americans’ desire for self-governance would lessen the weight of that burden. We are entitled to ask, in the early years of our third century of constitutional experi-ment, if our fellow citizens remain committed to

Theodore Roosevelt sought to use every power the presidency yielded.

ACCOUNTABILITY (Continued from Page 4)
The Idaho Humanities Council awards $75,000 in grants

The IHC awarded $75,575 in grants to organizations and individuals at its February board meeting in Boise. Thirty-nine awards include 28 grants for public humanities programs, seven grants to K-12 teachers, and four planning grants. The grants were supported in part by funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities and IHC’s Endowment for Humanities Education. The following projects were funded:

Public Program Grants:

The Lewiston City Library, Lewiston, received $2,500 to support the annual community “Everybody Reads” one book program. Area community participants will read Border Songs by James Lynch. Lynch will visit the region for a five-day residency in both Washington and Idaho towns. He will make presentations to students and the general public in Lewiston, Moscow, and Nez Perce. Jennifer Ashby is the project director.

The Idaho Museum of Natural History, Pocatello, received $3,500 to develop an interdisciplinary display at the museum on the significance of camas root in Native American culture. Dawn Kimbrel is the project director.

The Community Library, Ketchum, was awarded $2,500 to help support its annual Ernest Hemingway Symposium in October. Focusing on the theme of “Hemingway and Politics,” the symposium will highlight how Ernest Hemingway’s life and writing were influenced by world politics and how he may have used his writing to influence change. Several Hemingway scholars will make presentations. The project director is Sandra Hofferber.

The Sawtooth Interpretive Center in Stanley received a grant to develop an exhibit about its ice house. The Sawtooth Interpretive Center in Stanley received a grant to develop an exhibit about its ice house. The project director was Mary Reed.

The Log Cabin Literary Center, Boise, was awarded $3,000 to help support its 2012-2013 Montana Literary “Conversations” series. Scheduled speakers include Abraham Verghese, physician and author of the best-seller Cutting for Stone; Anthony Doerr, award-winning Boise writer and author of Memory Wall; Firoozeh Dumas, Iranian author of the memoir Funny in Farsi, about growing up Iranian in America; and Andrew Ross Sorkin, N. Y. Times reporter and author of the best-seller Too Big to Fail. The project director is Larry Tiersky.

The Clayton Area Historical Association, Clayton, received $1,100 to reprint a brochure about central Idaho mining history, available to visitors of the museum. The historic mining supply store built in 1880, the last remaining mining company store in the state, was converted into the local museum several years ago. The project director is Jolene Ogden.

The Mountain Home Historical Society, Mountain Home, was awarded $1,000 to transcribe oral histories with Elmore County residents. The oral histories provide insight into the life and activity of historic Elmore County. The transcriptions will be reproduced into soft cover books to be available for the public. Jamie McDaniel is the project director.

The Globe Lounge Group, Boise, was awarded $3,500 to facilitate a “Global Village” three-day festival September 14-16, 2012 to showcase cultural diversity in the Treasure Valley. Booths will be made available for cultural groups to showcase their heritage, art, clothing, and music. It is hoped that the festival will enhance community understanding of the diverse cultures in the Boise community and lead to future cultural activities. The project director is Daysi Ayodle.


The Boise City Dept. of Arts & History, received $3,000 for the 2012-2013 season of the Fettuccine Forum, promoting civil, public dialogue on a variety of topics. The programs are held in the Rose Room in downtown Boise on First Thursdays in October through May. Upcoming topics include The Left, the Right: Occupy Wall Street and the Tea Party, Greg Hahn; 70th Anniversary of the Japanese-American Internment; Memory and History; Lynn Lubamersky; and The Beat Goes On-Music: A Boise Legacy; Boise Then and Now, Rich Bommarito, and Boise Neighborhoods, Tully Gerlach. Mark Baltes is the project director.

The Historical Museum at St. Gertrude, Cottonwood, was awarded $2,000 to create a multimedia exhibition examining the lives of four women whose contributions influenced Idaho and the Pacific Northwest. Featured women include Sacajawea, Polly Bemis, Sister Alfreda Elsensohn, and Amy Trice. The multimedia exhibition will be accompanied by a series of public lectures. Sue Tacke is the project director.

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The Boundary County Historical Museum, Bonners Ferry, was awarded $2,000 for local interpretive exhibits to accompany the Smithsonian exhibit “The Way We Worked,” on display from May 12-June 23, 2012. One exhibit will tell the story of the 100-year-old fire department, and the other will highlight the history of blacksmithing in the county. Dottie Gray is the project director.

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is the project director.

The Idaho Mythsweaver, Sandpoint, received $1,900 to develop public presentations about the history of the Kalispel Indian Tribe in northern Idaho. Independent scholar Jane Fritz will utilize oral myths and legends, family histories, and published and unpublished writings about the Kalispel people, in particular the extensive ethnographic field notes of the late WSU anthropologist Allan H. Smith. Presentations will be made in Hope, Idaho, Spokane, Washington, and on the Kalispel Reservation. The project director is Jane Fritz.

The Malad Valley Welsh Foundation, Malad City, received $1,000 to help support presentations at the annual Welsh festival, June 28-30, 2012. The festival celebrates Malad Valley’s Welsh roots through educational presentations on the history, culture, and language of Wales. Workshops explore Welsh language, Welsh history, ancient Welsh tribal history, and the history of the Welsh choirs, specifically in the Intermountain West. Gloria Thomas is the project director.

The Western Folklife Center (Statewide) was awarded $3,500 to produce a public radio feature, a concert event in Boise, and an expansive website, all focusing on the history of folk fiddling music and the National Old Time Fiddlers’ Contest in Weiser, Idaho. The program will examine the historical roots of fiddling, the music and social traditions, and will provide for a digitized archive to preserve this musical genre and make it more accessible to the public. The project director is Taki Telondis.

The University of Idaho, Moscow, was awarded $1,999 for the annual Philosophy Forum held as part of the Inland Northwest Philosophy Conference. Titled “Pragmatism, Law, and Language,” and held in Moscow March 23-24, the forum examined the language of law from a pragmatist perspective. Using case studies and civil discussion, participants discussed how language shapes the law, for example, in the meaning of the U.S. Constitution. Graham Hubbs was the project director.

The Bingham County Historical Society, Blackfoot, received $2,000 for the preservation of photos in its collection. Preserving the photo collection will enable the society to make the photos more accessible to the public. Janet Alvarez is the project director.

The Portneuf District Library, Chubbuck, was awarded $2,000 to help support a conference focused on mobile and cloud computing, ebooks in libraries, and librarians. Held May 4, 2012, the conference included presentations and hands-on workshops for the southeastern Idaho region of libraries, including academic, public, school, and special libraries. The project director was Jezeynne Dene.

The Weippe Community Club, Weippe, received $1,500 to help support presenters at the annual Canas Festival exploring Lewis and Clark history and Nez Perce Culture. This year the festival will focus on “Birds along the Trail,” particularly birds first noted in Lewis and Clark Journals that are still in Idaho. Presentations on the history of bird migration, environmental impacts on bird habitats, Native American myths, and human interaction with birds combined with several complementary activities were part of the festival held May 25-26. Marge Kuchynka is the project director.

TEACHER INCENTIVE GRANTS:
The IHC awards grants of up to $1,000 twice a year to K-12 teachers and educational organizations to enhance teaching of the humanities in the classroom. The following grants were supported by IHC’s Endowment for Humanities Education.

Margaret Marti, Writers @ Harriman, Boise, received $1,000 to help support a residency during a 12-week period. The program is designed to help teachers expand their methods for teaching writing. It provides professional growth for teachers and increases student writing skills in preparation for their advancement into secondary school. Students interact with professional writers during weekly visits.

PLANNING GRANTS:
Susan Miller, City of Caldwell, received $1,000 to support a planning meeting with four experts in restoration and museum interpretation. The city is planning to restore and preserve the Van Slyke Museum, an outdoor agricultural museum housing log cabins, railroad cars, and historic agricultural equipment.

Harleen Baird, Mud Lake Historical Society, was awarded $1,000 to support the opening of a museum in a restored building in downtown Mud Lake. They will begin preliminary gathering of photographs and will consult with a nearby museum director to begin the organization of materials and development of exhibits for the new site.

The next deadline for grants proposals is September 15, 2012. IHC strongly recommends that prospective applicants contact staff to discuss their project ideas before writing their proposals. Applicants also are strongly encouraged to submit a rough draft of their proposal for staff critique several weeks prior to the deadline. Grant guidelines and online application instructions, as well as information about IHC grants and activities, are available on IHC’s website at www.idahohumanities.org

Remember to send back that envelope...
The Idaho Humanities Council honored Boise educator and administrator Russ Heller and retired North Idaho College English Professor Virginia Tinsley Johnson this past spring for Outstanding Achievement in the Humanities. The two were honored in separate ceremonies in Boise on February 9 and in Coeur d’Alene on April 26 respectively.

Heller was honored not only for his exemplary career as a secondary history teacher and administrator for the Boise Independent School District for nearly four decades, but for his work mentoring history educators around the state, including sponsoring an outstanding annual history educators conference.

Heller began his teaching career at Boise High School in 1973, after a stint in the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam War, and following completion of his degree magna cum laude at Boise State University. Twenty-seven years later, he became supervisor of programs in history and social studies. At the same time, he co-founded and became executive director of the Idaho Council for History Education, for which he has planned annual history conferences every October, often involving nationally prominent, Pulitzer Prize-winning historians as lecturers each year. The conferences now attract teachers from all over Idaho and the Pacific Northwest.

“Russ Heller’s passion for history has been inspirational to students and teachers of all disciplines and grade levels,” said Idaho Humanities Council Chair Katherine Aiken, Dean of the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences at the University of Idaho. “He has devoted his life to helping other teachers become better equipped and prepared to teach history in a way that makes it come alive for students.”

On the evening of the award ceremonies, several colleagues and former students spoke about Heller’s work in the humanities, and the appropriateness of the recognition, and helped “roast” him. Then Heller himself said a few words about his life’s work in the humanities.

In Coeur d’Alene on April 26, about 150 attended the award ceremony for Virginia Johnson, who was honored for 40-plus years of service as a mentor English teacher to students and colleagues, her work as an NIC administrator, and her years of service in the public humanities to promote a love of art and literature off campus.

Over her career she taught thousands of students, and won several local and national awards for excellence in teaching, including the William H. Mears Award for teaching from the Association of Community College Trustees.

Fascinated with the life of 19th century British writer and women’s rights advocate Mary Wollstonecraft, Johnson took a sabbatical and went to Europe one year to trace Wollstonecraft’s steps, returned to Coeur d’Alene, and developed a Chautauqua-style performance of Wollstonecraft for NIC’s popular Popcorn Forum. She presented this performance many times.

At her award ceremony a number of Johnson’s colleagues properly toasted her before Johnson herself talked of her life in the humanities.

In nominating Virginia for the award, her NIC colleague Fran Bahr commented that Johnson “never ceases to serve, support, encourage, cajole, recommend, advertise, and assist those in the humanities.”

The IHC has presented its award for “Outstanding Achievement in the Humanities” annually since 1986. Previous recipients of the award have included independent historian Keith Petersen, Twin Falls anthropologist James Woods, Boise State University History Professor Robert Sims, College of Idaho Professor Louise Atteberry, State Historian Merle Wells, Idaho State University of Idaho Political Science Professor David Adler, Coeur d’Alene human rights activist Tony Stewart, Moscow writer Mary Chairman Blew, Idaho poet William Studebaker, historian Arthur Hart, Nez Perce elder Horace Axtell, former Lewis-Clark State College English Professor Keith Browning, Idaho State University History Professor Ron Hatzenbuehler, Basque Museum and Cultural Center Director Patty Miller, and others.

The IHC honors two for ‘Outstanding Achievement in the Humanities’

US Bancorp supports ‘Let’s Talk About It’ program for 2012-2013

Fifteen Idaho libraries will participate in the 2012-2013 “Let’s Talk About It” program, an annual grant to the Idaho Humanities Council from the US Bancorp Foundation.

“Let’s Talk About It” (LTAI) is the library reading and discussion program that brings people together with scholars in mostly rural communities to discuss ideas and books. The US Bancorp grant will help support five reading-discussion programs over the course of a season in each of the 15 libraries, for a total of 75 library book discussions.

The US Bancorp Foundation grant will help support scholar honoraria and travel to libraries to moderate discussions, new books, and promotion. The program is a partnership of U.S. Bank, the IHC, and the Idaho Commission for Libraries. The ICL has managed the program for more than 25 years. Project Director Dian Scott selects participating libraries, contracts with scholars, and ships multiple copies of two books to the libraries.

“U.S. Bank is happy to support this great program that brings people together all over Idaho to discuss books and ideas,” said US Bank Senior Vice President Rob Aravich, while presenting a check at the libraries.

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“This is a program that educates and builds community relationships, and it touches so many towns throughout Idaho. Each participating library will host five scholar-led discussions over the course of a season. Some of the themes include “Across Cultures and Continents,” “Living in the Modern West,” “Our Earth, Our Ethics,” “We Are What We Eat,” “American Empire,” “1920s and the Jazz Age,” “We Are What We Eat,” “American Empire,” “1920s and the Jazz Age,” “We Are What We Eat,” “American Empire,” “1920s and the Jazz Age,” “We Are What We Eat,” “American Empire,” “1920s and the Jazz Age.”

For more information about Let’s Talk About It, see the Idaho Commission for Libraries website at libraries.idaho.gov/landing/lets-talk-about-it or contact Project Director Dian Scott, Idaho Commission for Libraries at (208) 334-2150.

Idaho Humanities 8
Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Richard Russo will speak in Boise, Saturday, September 29

Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Richard Russo will be the speaker at the IHC’s 16th Annual Distinguished Humanities Lecture and Dinner on Saturday, September 29, 2012, 7 p.m., at the Boise Centre.

Tickets are available now for purchase online at www.idaho humanities.org under “Events”, or by calling the IHC at 345-5346. General tickets are $60. Benefactor tickets are $125, offering an invitation to a pre-dinner reception with Russo in a private home and preferred seating at the dinner and lecture. IHC always recommends reserving tickets early as the event usually sells out. The evening will begin with a no-host reception at 6:00 p.m. at the Boise Centre. Dinner will be served at 7 p.m., with Russo’s talk to follow. Russo’s books will be available onsite and he’ll be available for signing afterwards. A silent auction of signed first edition books will be in the lobby of the Boise Centre.

Russo is regarded by many critics as the best writer about small-town America since Sherwood Anderson and Sinclair Lewis. His novels are set in fading industrial towns throughout the northeastern United States, towns that almost become characters in their own right. From the group and the resentments to the people and the cafes, Russo chronicles blue-collar America in ways constantly surprising and utterly revealing. During his evening in Boise, Russo will talk about his life, his work, the liberal dose of humor that fuels his fiction, and the art of interrupting tragedy and comedy throughout his work to create the natural tensions of everyday working life.

His novel Empire Falls, a tragi-comic story that explores relationships in a once-thriving Maine textile mill town gone bust, won the 2002 Pulitzer Prize for literature, and was later made into an HBO miniseries. An earlier novel, Nobody’s Fool, premiered as a Hollywood film in 1994, starring Paul Newman, and allowed Russo to retire from university teaching to devote himself to his work. One of the recurring themes in several of his novels is the way that the decline of the American factory town, as it succumbs to the brutal realities of globalization, affects the lives of its citizens who would otherwise be resistant to it. “Really, what I am writing about in all of these is class and work,” he says.


Born in 1949 in Grovenville, New York, a town much like the ones he depicts in his books, Russo now lives in coastal Maine with his wife and their two daughters.

Award-winning writer Anthony Doerr to speak in Coeur d’Alene, Friday, October 12

Award-winning writer Anthony Doerr will be the speaker at the IHC’s 9th Annual Northern Idaho Distinguished Humanities Lecture and Dinner on Friday, October 12, 2012, 7 p.m., at the Coeur d’Alene Resort. Tickets to the event are available now.

Doerr’s books include the much-praised short story collection The Shell Collector, a novel About Grace, and a memoir Four Seasons in Rome: On Twins, Insomnia, and the Biggest Funeral in the History of the World. His latest collection of stories (and two novellas) is Memory Wall, which features stories set on two different continents, each primarily about the fragility of collective and personal memory. The book won the 2010 Story Prize, and the title story of the collection currently is being adapted as a feature film.

Doerr’s short fiction has won four O. Henry Prizes and has been anthologized in The Best American Short Stories, The Anchor Book of New American Short Stories, and The Scribner Anthology of Contemporary Fiction. He has won the Barnes & Noble Discover Prize, the Rome Prize, the New York Public Library’s Young Lions Fiction Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, an NEA Fellowship, the National Magazine Award for Fiction, two Pushcart Prizes, the Pacific Northwest Book Award, three Ohioana Book Awards, the 2010 Story Prize, and the 2011 London Sunday Times EFG Short Story Award, which is considered the largest prize in the world for a single short story.

His books have twice been listed as New York Times “Notable Books” and made a number of other year-end “Best Of” lists. In 2007, the British literary magazine Granta placed Doerr on its list of 21 Best Young American novelists. Born in Cleveland, Ohio, and educated at Bowdoin College in Maine, Doerr lives in Boise with his wife and two sons. He teaches now and then in the low-residency MFA program at Warren Wilson College in North Carolina, and his book reviews and travel essays appear in the New York Times. He also writes a regular column on science books for the Boston Globe.

Tickets are available now for purchase online at www.idaho humanities.org under “IHC Events,” or by calling the IHC toll free at 888-345-5346. General tickets are $45. Benefactor tickets are $100, offering an invitation to a pre-dinner reception with Doerr in a private home and preferred seating at the dinner and lecture. IHC always recommends reserving tickets early as the event often sells out.

Contributions made between November 1, 2011 and July 11, 2012

IHC Warmly Thanks Idaho Humanities Council Donors!

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IN MEMORY

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IHC thanks Idaho Heritage Trust for support

Contribution and consultation support from the Idaho Heritage Trust helped lift the foundation of Idaho’s Centennial House, home of IHC offices, built in 1969.

Thanks for financial support and advice from the Idaho Heritage Trust, the foundation of Centennial House, home of the Idaho Humanities Council offices, at 217 W. State Street in Boise, is strengthened and stabilized. Centennial House is part of an historic district in Boise.

Built in 1899, Centennial House was home to a pair of sisters who were both public school teachers for many years. An addition was added to the back of the original Victorian clapboard structure shortly after it was completed. However, a second story addition was added to the back of the original Victorian clapboard structure shortly after it was completed. However, a second story addition was added to the back of the original Victorian clapboard structure shortly after it was completed. However, a second story addition was added to the back of the original Victorian clapboard structure shortly after it was completed. However, a second story addition was added to the back of the original Victorian clapboard structure shortly after it was completed. However, a second story addition was added to the back of the original Victorian clapboard structure shortly after it was completed. However, a second story addition was added to the back of the original Victorian clapboard structure shortly after it was completed. However, a second story addition was added to the back of the original Victorian clapboard structure shortly after it was completed. However, a second story addition was added to the back of the original Victorian clapboard structure shortly after it was completed. However, a second story addition was added to the back of the original Victorian clapboard structure shortly after it was completed. However, a second story addition was added to the back of the original Victorian clapboard structure shortly after it was completed. However, a second story addition was added to the back of the original Victorian clapboard structure shortly after it was completed. However, a second story addition was added to the back of the original Victorian clapboard structure shortly after it was completed. However, a second story addition was added to the back of the original Victorian clapboard structure shortly after it was completed. However, a second story addition was added to the back of the original Victorian clapboard structure shortly after it was completed. However, a second story addition was added to the back of the original Victorian clapboard structure shortly after it was completed. However, a second story

Several blocks east of the State Capitol, Centennial House was donated to the Idaho Humanities Council from 1987 to 1991, after which it became the staff office and permanent headquarters of the IHC.

Many thanks to the Idaho Heritage Trust for its support of the Idaho Humanities Council, and for the IHT’s ongoing work preserving many other historic structures throughout Idaho.

Idaho Humanities 10
Sign up now to participate in American Civil War reading program

In commemoration of the sesquicentennial of the American Civil War (1861-1865), the Idaho Humanities Council, in partnership with the Andrus Center for Public Policy at Boise State University, is offering a five-meeting, scholar-led reading/discussion program in Boise exploring the theme “Making Sense of the American Civil War.” In October of 2012, the program is free and anyone interested in participating may apply by submitting all their contact information and a brief paragraph stating why they wish to participate to Debra Schlechte at debra@idahohumanities.org. Seating is limited and participants must commit to attend all five meetings. IHC will make three books available on loan to participants for the series. The deadline to apply is September 7.

The five two-hour book discussions are scheduled for Tuesday and Thursday evenings, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., on the following dates: October 23, 25, 30, November 1, and 8, at Boise State University’s Ron and Linda Yanke Family Research Park, 220 E. Parkcenter Boulevard, so plenty of easy parking will be available.

“Making Sense of the Civil War,” is a program developed by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Library Association to give a glimpse of the vast sweep and profound breadth of Americans’ war among and against themselves. The series is organized as a series of “conversations” that are meant to be considered together. Each conversation is itself arranged as an unfolding story, moving forward in time. Some of the readings were written by eye-witnesses, some written for perhaps only one other person to read, while others were well researched after the passage of time and imagined for vast audiences. A hundred and fifty years after the defining war in our nation’s history, Americans are still discovering its meanings.

The discussion series is based on the readings of three books. March, by Geraldine Brooks, is a Pulitzer Prize-winning historical novel which tells its story through the voices of characters from another novel, Little Women, by Louisa May Alcott. America’s War, edited by historian Edward L. Ayers, is mostly a collection of writings by people who had to decide for themselves before and during the war where justice, honor, duty, and loyalty lay, including selections written by Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, Mark Twain, Henry David Thoreau, and many others. Crossroads of Freedom: Antietam, by historian James McPherson, explores the battle in the fall of 1862 that changed the course of the Civil War.

Scholars who will lecture and facilitate discussions so far include Andrus Center President Marc Johnson, constitutional scholar and new Andrus Center Director David Adler, and BSU History Professor Lisa Brady.

Once participants are selected, IHC will make the books available early so readers are prepared well in advance of the meetings.

CDA Public Library program begins Nov. 8

Coeur d’Alene Public Library (702 E. Front Street) will offer a five-meeting, scholar-led, reading discussion program on “Making Sense of the American Civil War” over five Thursdays, beginning in November. The series will take place in the library conference room at 7 p.m. on November 8, 15, 29, December 13, and 20, beginning at 7 p.m. each night. Members of the public interested in participating should contact Coeur d’Alene Public Library Communications Coordinator David Townsend at dtownsend@cdlalibrary.org or call (208) 769-2355, ext. 426.

Participants must commit for the whole series and sign up early, allowing time to read the books. The library will lend copies of the three texts to all participants in advance of the series.

Boise 150 Publishing Opportunity

Boise 150 Publishing Opportunity

Boise 150 Publishing Opportunity

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Andrus Center to convene October 25 public conference on ‘Why the Civil War Still Matters’

Some of the nation’s most respected Civil War historians will be at Boise State University on Thursday, October 25, 2012, for a one-day conference entitled Why the Civil War Still Matters.

The conference, which is open to the public, is sponsored by Andrus Center for Public Policy in partnership with the Idaho Humanities Council and the Idaho Council on History Education. Registration for the conference will be open later this summer at the Andrus Center website: www.andruscenter.org.

The conference will feature presentations by:

Dr. David Adler, the newly named Director of the Andrus Center, and a national recognized scholar of the Constitution and the American presidency.

Dr. Gary Gallagher is the John L. Nau III Professor in the History of the American Civil War at the University of Virginia and author and editor of numerous works on the war. Dr. Gallagher has twice been recipient of the Lane Prize for the best book on the Civil War as well as the William Woods Hassler Award for contributions to Civil War studies. His most recent book is The Union War.

Dr. Lisa M. Brady is an Associate Professor of History at Boise State University and the author of War Upon the Land: Military Strategy and the Transformation of Southern Landscapes During the American Civil War.

Jeffry Wert is a well-known military historian of the Civil War who has written both battle histories and biography. His book, Gettysburg – Day Three was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.

The 150th anniversary of the Civil War was considered the defining event in our history. It took the lives of 620,000 American soldiers and 120,000 Civil War veterans in the Union, following the first battle of Bull Run.

News & Opportunities

For more information about the series, see IHC’s website at www.idahohumanities.org, or contact the Idaho Humanities Council at (208) 345-5346.

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For more information about the series, see IHC’s website at www.idahohumanities.org, or contact the Idaho Humanities Council at (208) 345-5346.

News & Opportunities

The Boise City Department of Arts & History seeks original written contributions from anyone, of any age, from anywhere, of any genre that explore one or more of the three Boise 150 themes: Enterprise, Environment, and Community. Accepted submissions will be included in a BOISE 150 book of compilations (title to be determined) that will be distributed in summer of 2013. The deadline is September 15.

For application information, visit www.boise150history.org.

2012 National Preservation Conference in Spokane

The National Preservation Conference will be held October 31-November 1 in Spokane, WA. It’s a unique conference, celebrating the 2012 sesquicentennial of the Nation’s landmark Preservation Law. Check out the schedule at www.nationalpreservationconference.org.

News & Opportunities

News & Opportunities

News & Opportunities

(See NEWS, Page 12)
convening of approximately 2,000 professionals and enthusiasts, and provides Idaho residents with a unique opportunity to network, to learn and to receive high-level training in historic preservation, community revitalization and related fields. Preservation Idaho members, historic preservation commissioners and local historical society museum directors will find exceptional opportunities for training and networking. For more information visit www.preservationidaho.org.

Race reviews for Kim Barnes’ latest novel

Moscow novelist Kim Barnes is receiving rave reviews of her third novel In the Kingdom of Men, a story set in Saudi Arabia in the 1990’s. Barnes teaches writing in the University of Idaho’s MFA program, and is the author of two memoirs and two other published novels. She’s on tour now promoting this new book. Born and raised near Lewiston, Barnes was a Pulitzer Prize finalist in 1997 for her memoir In the Wilderness: Coming of Age in Unknown Country.

ISU Professor publishes book on Carnegie Library history

ISU English Professor Susan Swetnam has published a memoir, to be released this month, that takes readers on a tour now promoting this new book. Born and raised near Lewiston, Barnes was a Pulitzer Prize finalist in 1997 for her memoir In the Wilderness: Coming of Age in Unknown Country.

Swetnam addresses not only the how of the process but also the why. Although virtually all citizens and communities in the West who sought Carnegie libraries expected tangible benefits for themselves that were only tangentially related to books, what they specifically wanted varied in correlation with the diverse nature of western communities. By looking at the detailed records of the Carnegie library campaigns, the author is able to provide an alternative lens through which to perceive and map the social-cultural makeup and town building of western communities at the turn of the century. The 264-page book is available for $32.95, or as an e-book for $26.00, from Utah State University Press at www.usupress.org.

1898-1920 examines a cross-section of Carnegie library applications to determine how local support was mustered for cultural institutions in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century West. This comparative study considers the entire region between the Rockies and the Cascades/Sierras, including all of Idaho, Utah, Nevada, and Arizona; western Montana, Wyoming, and Colorado; eastern Oregon and Washington; and small parts of California and New Mexico.

WHAT ARE YOU READING?

In each issue of Idaho Humanities, several readers tell us what they’ve been reading and what they recommend.

Reader: Jim Woods

Occupation: Professor of Anthropology, College of Southern Idaho, Twin Falls

Book: The Evolution of God by Robert Wright

Of all the themes covered in my introductory anthropology courses, religion elicits the most interest from students. Thus, I found this book to be ideal for offering me some fresh inspiration on this topic. Wright presents a very readable overview of the evolution of religious belief beginning with a concept of an essential life force among foragers, to the spirits of tribal peoples, to the complex pantheons of gods and goddesses of chiefdoms, to the more recent adoption of a monothestic god by many western state-level societies. This book serves as a fascinating overview of the historical change in the concept of “God” among world religions including Christianity and Islam. The mid-section of the book explores historical nuances and parallels in the New Testament and Koran which I found to be very appropriate given the present relationship between Arabic cultures and the West. Wright proposes that most modern religions developed from a complex history of changes that were the result of geopolitical events and as such, they continue to be very dynamic in nature, not at all static as they are so often perceived. And, since cultures continue to evolve, he proposes there may even be a specific direction of this religious change, toward a mutual acceptance of differences based on very ancient and inherited altruistic behavior.

Reader: Marilyn Eagleton

Occupation: Library Assistant at Eagle Public Library, Eagle

Book: One View over the Cuckoo’s Nest by Ken Kesey

Set in a mental institution in the 1960’s, this story revolves around a power struggle that exists between patient Randle McMurphy, who is feigning insanity to escape a prison sentence, and Nurse Ratched. He manages through humor, personality, individuality, and zest for life to reawaken the spirits of these men despite efforts to the contrary by the head nurse. I somehow managed to get through high school English without reading this novel. I’m so glad I picked it up as an adult. It makes me ask what insanity really is, and do we as a society conveniently place labels on those whose uniqueness may not fit into our ordered world, and demand, no matter the price, conformity.

Reader: Brandon Schrand

Occupation: Assistant Professor of English, University of Idaho, Moscow

Book: Blood, Bones, and Butter: The Inadvertent Education of a Reluctant Chef by Gabrielle Hamilton

It was after I finished reading Anthony Bourdain’s Kitchen Confidential when a friend suggested that I read Gabrielle Hamilton’s. If I found Bourdain’s food memoir to be a kind of rock-star tour de force (and indeed, I did), I found Hamilton’s Blood, Bones, and Butter memoir, to be honest, a cut above. One need not be a foodie to enjoy Hamilton’s lyrical prose and coming of age narrative. One just needs to enjoy picturesque writing and a compelling story, and I found both in these pages. The memoir opens up in rural Pennsylvania where Hamilton’s bohemian parents hosted lavish parties that boasted whole lambs roasted on spits and funky, yet masterful, themed decorations. From the opening, we follow a young and rebellious Hamilton from kitchen to kitchen, on into college where she studied to be a writer, across Europe, and finally to an abandoned kitchen space riddled with rats and roaches that she transforms into her now famous East Village restaurant, Prune. Blood, Bones, and Butter, is as delicious as it is delightful, and will inspire even the most reluctant cook.

ACCOUNTABILITY

(Continued from Page 5)

...and in the name of governmental accountability, require those who would wield power in our name, to fully articulate, explain and defend their positions on the various issues and challenges that confront our state and nation. That requirement marks the threshold of responsibility for those who would govern, and for those who would demand complete accountability of the government to the governed. In the annals of American political history, no statesman or jurist more ably stated the role and responsibility of the citizenry than Justice Louis Brandeis who, in 1927, in Whitney v. California, justly observed: “Those who won our independence believed that the final end of the state was to make men free to develop their faculties, and that in its governance, deliberative forces should prevail over the arbitrary...”

David Adler is the Cecil D. Andrus Professor of Public Affairs at Boise State University, and Director of the Andrus Center for Public Policy. He’s written several books on the American presidency and is a member of IHC’s Speakers Bureau.