



## NEBRASKA HUMANITIES COUNCIL

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# **N E W S   R E L E A S E**

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## **Columbus and North Platte will host 2010 Chautauqua**

The Nebraska Humanities Council will present the 2010 Kansas-Nebraska Chautauqua at West Pawnee Park in Columbus June 16-20 and at Cody Park in North Platte June 23-27.

It also will visit Colby, Kan., June 2-6 and Belleville, Kan., June 9-13.

For the third consecutive year, the theme is "Bright Dreams, Hard Times: America in the Thirties," with scholars portraying historical characters who helped shape America's response to the Great Depression, a time of economic collapse, the environmental disaster of the Dust Bowl, and signs of worldwide political unrest.

**Patrick E. McGinnis** will portray Franklin D. Roosevelt, the president of the United States from 1932-1945 and the leader of the New Deal plan to help Americans. McGinnis holds a Ph.D. from Tulane University and is emeritus professor of history at the University of Central Oklahoma.

**Fred Krebs** will portray Huey Long, the Louisiana senator who used force and totalitarian tactics to attempt to bring aid to his constituents. Krebs is professor of history at Johnson County Community College in Overland Park, Kan., and a Chautauquan with 15 different characterizations.

**Tonia Compton** will portray Aimee Semple McPherson, who provided relief to impoverished families in Los Angeles and was a pioneer evangelist and pastor. Compton is an assistant professor of history at Columbia College in Missouri and a history doctoral candidate at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a master's degree from Texas A&M.

**Wanda Schell** will portray Zora Neale Hurston, who worked for federal WPA projects collecting folklore and authored works of fiction and non-fiction during the Thirties. Schell is an accomplished actress and writer, as well as a published playwright, singer, storyteller and director.

**Doug Watson** will portray Will Rogers, American humorist, radio and film star, and essayist who commented on American culture and politics. As moderator for each performance, Will Rogers will bring audiences into the Thirties using his authentic American voice. Watson holds a Ph.D. from Texas Tech University and teaches English at Oklahoma Baptist University.

The Chautauqua runs Wednesday through Sunday, with a different scholar portraying his or her character each evening. Workshops for adults and children are held during the day.

Adult audiences have an opportunity to examine four themes that were important during the Depression era and have particular relevance today: the changing relationship between Americans and their national government; the flowering of artistic and intellectual activity; the role of religion in public life; and the democratization of American culture through radio and sound movies.

Middle school students will research and portray local historical figures during the Youth Chautauqua Day Camp, high school students will photograph images in their communities and compare them with photos of the past, young children will create a colorful mural based on a folktale by Hurston, and elementary school children will learn about children who wrote to Eleanor Roosevelt during the Depression and then write a letter to the current first lady.