



NEBRASKA HUMANITIES COUNCIL

215 Centennial Mall South, Suite 330
Lincoln, NE 68508
Phone: (402) 474-2131 Fax: (402) 474-4852
E-mail: nhc@nebraskahumanities.org
Website: www.nebraskahumanities.org

N E W S R E L E A S E

For release: May 8, 2008

Contact: Beth McQueen, (402) 474-2131, ext. 108

Depression-era Chautauqua will prompt memories

LINCOLN—Gov. Dave Heineman has declared June 25-July 6 as “Chautauqua Days,” in recognition of “Bright Dreams, Hard Times: America in the Thirties,” which will be hosted by Falls City from June 25-29 and by Hastings from July 2-6.

A collaboration of the Nebraska Humanities Council and the Kansas Humanities Council, the Chautauqua also will visit Lawrence and Beloit in Kansas. The 2008 Kansas-Nebraska Chautauqua is especially significant for the relatively recent nature of its theme.

“The 1930s is the most recent Chautauqua period we have ever explored,” said Jane Renner Hood, executive director of the Nebraska Humanities Council. “Because of that, we have an opportunity to draw from the experience of local people in each community who might have experienced the Depression.”

Audiences will have the opportunity to consider the strength of Nebraskans during the 1930s and celebrate their resilience and creativity through adversity.

“Both Hastings and Falls City have utilized local resources to locate farm equipment, radios, photographs or stories that are significant to their communities in the ’30s,” said Beth McQueen, NHC program officer and Chautauqua coordinator. “This shows how relevant the 1930s era is to Nebraska and to people today.”

Scholars will portray five historical characters who helped shape America’s response to the Great Depression. The characters are humorist Will Rogers, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Louisiana governor and U.S. Sen. Huey Long, evangelist Aimee Semple McPherson and Harlem Renaissance writer Zora Neale Hurston.

The “Bright Dreams, Hard Times” Chautauqua is funded, in part, by a major three-year grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities as part of the NEH’s special “We The People” initiative.

For additional information on this summer’s Chautauqua, go to the Nebraska Humanities Council’s website, www.nebraskahumanities.org or contact Beth McQueen at (402) 474-2131 ext. 108 or beth@nebraskahumanities.org.

###