



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: March 5, 2010

Contact: Kristi Hayek, (402) 474-2131, ext. 108

Youth to play a role in the upcoming Chautauqua

Local youth of all ages in the Columbus and North Platte areas will have a unique opportunity for learning and community involvement as part of the 2010 Kansas-Nebraska Chautauqua, “Bright Dreams, Hard Times: America in the 1930s.”

A collaboration between the Nebraska Humanities Council (NHC) and the Kansas Humanities Council (KHC), the Chautauqua will visit Columbus June 16-20 and North Platte June 23-27, with additional stops in Colby and Belleville, Kan.

Scholars will portray 1930s-era historical characters each evening, including Franklin Roosevelt, Aimee Semple McPherson, Zora Neale Hurston, Huey Long, and Will Rogers. During the day, each community will host a variety of events, including adult and youth workshops, “The Dust Bowl” traveling exhibit, and local history programs.

“The centerpiece of Chautauqua is the scholar portrayals each evening under the tent, but the variety of activities that are going on in each community throughout the week are fantastic ways to get people of all ages engaged in the history of the 1930s, and the youth programs in particular allow young people to become engaged with their community as well,” said Kristi Hayek, NHC program officer and Kansas-Nebraska Chautauqua coordinator.

This spring, high school students will have the opportunity to participate in “Iconic Images: Then and Now.” This photo workshop is a precursor to Chautauqua and helps youth gain an appreciation for iconic images from the 1930s. The students then photograph images of their communities that they consider iconic today and share those photos with the community.

Middle school children (grades 4-8) will have the opportunity to become young historians through the Youth Chautauqua Camp, led by Drs. Ann Birney and Joyce Thierer of Ride Into History. From Monday through Friday of Chautauqua week, they will explore and learn how to portray local historical characters from the 1930s and present their portrayals on the Friday evening of Chautauqua before the main tent show begins. Pre-registering for this workshop is required.

There are two workshops for younger children during Chautauqua week. “Dear Eleanor, Dear Michelle,” for elementary students (ages 8 and older), highlights the correspondence that Eleanor Roosevelt had with children nationwide and allows children at this year’s Chautauqua to write to First Lady Michelle Obama. Preschool and lower elementary children will learn about folk tales and create a mural during the “How Butterflies Were Made” workshop to be displayed at the tent during Chautauqua.

The “Bright Dreams, Hard Times” Chautauqua is funded, in part, by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities as part of the NEH’s special “We The People” initiative. For more information, go to the Kansas-Nebraska Chautauqua website, www.knchautauqua.org, or visit the Chautauqua website for each of the Nebraska host communities, www.chautauquacolumbus.com or www.chautauquanorthplatte.com.

###