SPEAKERS ANNOUNCED FOR 39TH ANNUAL SPRING CONFERENCE

KEYNOTE SPEAKER DR. LYNELLE NOISY HAWK

“Black Elk Still Speaks: Native American Issues Today, History & Progress” is the theme of the Neihardt Foundation’s 39th Annual Spring Conference, which will be held Saturday, April 25th, at the John G. Neihardt State Historic Site, with Keynote Speaker Dr. Lynelle Noisy Hawk. In “Black Elk Speaks,” John Neihardt wrote about the Lakota ways that were shared with him by Oglala Lakota visionary and healer Nicholas Black Elk. Many of the struggles and tragedies of those times continue today. The conference topic was selected to promote cultural understanding, just as Neihardt and Black Elk did through their collaboration.

Pulled from today’s headlines are the issues of exploited, missing and/or murdered Native women in both the United States and Canada, and

(Continued on page 4)
HISTORIC CAMERA DONATED TO MUSEUM

CAMERA USED DURING CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN NEIHARDT AND BLACK ELK

"I‘m not loaning it to you," former board member Mike Nolan said to the executive director of the Neihardt Foundation after placing the winning bid for an antique Kodak camera at the 2019 Laureate Feast. The camera had been donated for the live auction by two of Neihardt’s grandchildren, Coralie Hughes and Robin Neihardt, with the stipulation that the new owner loan the camera to the foundation for display in the museum at the Neihardt State Historic Site in Bancroft, Nebr.

"I‘m giving it to the museum," finished Nolan, after a brief pause.

With those words, the camera that Neihardt used to document his meetings with Nicholas Black Elk, which resulted in the book "Black Elk Speaks," was returned to Bancroft where it can be displayed for the public to view.

"It’s impossible to over-estimate the significance of this item to our collection," said Marianne Reynolds, executive director, "Neihardt and Black Elk were brilliant men who enjoyed each other’s intellect and developed a genuine friendship. Anyone who has read ‘Black Elk Speaks’ has imagined what it would have been like to sit in on those conversations." Now, visitors to the museum can literally look through the lens that captured the images from the Black Hills and Pine Ridge Reservation that are associated with those talks.

In February 2020, the 1930s era Kodak folding camera will be examined by conservationists at the Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center in Omaha, who will recommend preservation strategies. The camera will be unveiled at the Neihardt Center’s Spring Conference on April 25, 2020.

Pictured above, left to right: Robin Neihardt, Mike Nolan (holding camera), Coralie Hughes.

JGNF RECEIVES GRANT TO UPGRADE COMPUTERS

Fremont Area Community Foundation provides support

Readers may not be able to tell that there’s something different about this newsletter, but Neihardt Foundation staff sure can! This is the first newsletter developed using computers that the Foundation purchased with a capacity-building grant from the Fremont Area Community Foundation (FACF).

The new computers allow staff to work more efficiently and use up-to-date software that the Foundation’s old computers were too outdated to use. The Neihardt State Historic Site has many visitors from Fremont and the surrounding area, and will now be able to redouble its efforts to reach out to and engage that community.

The Fremont Area Community Foundation makes competitive grants for civic improvement, health and recreation, social services, arts and culture, and educational purposes in Fremont and the surrounding communities.

The board and staff of the Neihardt Foundation thanks FACF for its generous support.

HEISE EARNED PROMOTION

Keeley Heise, administrative assistant for the Neihardt Foundation, has been promoted to Executive Admin Assistant to more accurately reflect her role and responsibilities.

Heise joined the foundation in January 2018. She has a doctorate in Geography with specialization in Natural Hazards from Oklahoma State University.

Congratulations, Keeley! You are an invaluable member of the Neihardt team.
BOARD ELECTS NEW MEMBERS

At its board meeting in August 2019, the Neihardt Foundation Board of Directors welcomed five dynamic new members: Gary Bowen, Nancy Gillis, Lisa Nelson, Myron Pourier, and Yasuko Taoka. This edition features Gary, Nancy, and Myron. Lisa and Yasuko will be featured in the next edition.

Gary Bowen grew up on a ranch near Page, Nebraska. He attended Wayne State College in 1959 before earning a Bachelors degree in Architecture at UNL (1964) and a Master’s Degree in Architecture, UNL, 1974. Practicing architecture for 55 years, Bowen worked at firms in London, Washington, DC, and 12 other states. As a Principal and Project Designer, he was an architect with BVH Architecture in Omaha for 45 years, and is licensed in Iowa and Nebraska. His work has focused on historic preservation, religious, and civic projects.

After 19 years as the executive director of the Neihardt Foundation, Nancy Gillis says that “Being involved with the Foundation has been one of the great joys of my life and I look forward to many more years supporting its mission, vision, and purpose in any way I can.” Gillis has taught at Wayne State College, Northeast Community College, and both Nebraska Indian Community College and Little Priest College for nearly 30 years overall. Being of Choctaw and Cherokee heritage, she has resided on both the Winnebago and Omaha reservations since 1987. She serves on the Dr. Susan LaFlesche Picotte Hospital Board and the Walthill Village Planning Board, as an Elder at Winnebago Reformed Church, and an advocate for Atlas of Winnebago (a community service non-profit). She is also the proud mother of two, grandmother of four and, at this point, great-grandmother of six.

Myron Pourier is the President and CEO of Black Elk Charitable Foundation in Porcupine, South Dakota. At least once a week he hikes the 7,242-foot-high granite mountain that, since August 2016, has borne his great-great-grandfather’s name - Black Elk Peak (or Heháka Sápa). Pourier was central to the historic name change to what was previously known as Harney Peak. Asked by South Dakota Public Broadcasting if he ever mentions to trail trekkers that he’s a direct descendant of Nicholas Black Elk, he says, “You know, normally I never do. Only at the point when they start talking, ‘This was called Harney Peak, and it was changed to Black Elk Peak.’ I listen to the conversation and then I introduce myself. And they’re like, ‘Oh. Wow.’” He also volunteers as an addiction counselor with inmates.
the danger of the U.S. Government abrogating long-standing treaties. The Red Power movement formed from the 1950s to the early 1970s, along with other minority activist groups, in opposition to the long record of mistreatment and mismanagement.

Economic development on reservations has always been difficult, primarily from both the locations in areas without much potential as well as severe restrictions on how tribes may utilize their own funds, much of those held in trust by the government. This painful history has led to high unemployment, poverty, and mental and physical health problems, including historic trauma, drug and alcohol abuse, rampant diabetes, youth suicide, and domestic violence; found in both reservation and urban Native populations.

During the conference Native scholars will give presentations on issues that still plague Native people today, along with discussions of progress.

The Keynote Speaker, Dr. Lynell Noisy Hawk (Oglala/Hunkpapa Lakota), will give a presentation on health and welfare, particularly women’s health and the impact of historical trauma in behavioral health and health care disparities. Dr. Noisy Hawk has been with Twelve Clans Unity Hospital in Winnebago since prior to its official opening on July 1, 2018. Serving as the hospital’s Clinical Director and as a healthcare provider, she is honored to be part of the hospital’s journey to excellence as a member of the executive team.

Other presenters include:

- Marissa Cummings (Umonha): traditional women’s roles and their place in the dynamics of nation rebuilding through language, agricultural practices, ceremonies, and culture revitalization;

- Garan Coons (Dineh/Lakota): past, present, and future economic development in Indian Country;

- Dr. Kent Blansett (Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw): the “Red Power” movement of the 1960’s, the takeover of Alcatraz as a protest stand and its results.

The moderator will be Taylor Keen (Cherokee/Umonha).

Registration information will be available at neihardtcenter.org and on our Facebook page in mid-February.

Photo of Dr. Lynell Noisy Hawk from Billings (Montana) Gazette

55TH ANNUAL NEIHARDT DAY
SAVE THE DATE

It might be cold and snowy outside, but we’re already planning for this summer's Neihardt Day, which will be held on the grounds of the Neihardt State Historic Site on Sunday, August 2. By Nebraska Legislative Proclamation, Neihardt Day is always held the first Sunday in August to celebrate Nebraska's Poet Laureate in Perpetuity.
YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS
HELP KEEP NEIHARDT’S WORK AND LEGACY ALIVE AND THRIVING

To promote the work and legacy of John G. Neihardt, the Foundation depends on the generosity of members and visitors. There are many ways to lend your support—if you don’t see something here that interests you, give us a call and we will work with you!

**Memberships:** Annual ($25 single, $30 family) or lifetime ($500 pledged at $100 per year)

**General donations:** This type of donation allows us to put your contribution where it is most needed.

**Charitable bequest:** This option allows you to give assets such as stock, bonds, and cash to the Neihardt Foundation through the provision of a will or estate plan.

Please contact us if you would like to discuss a donation; donate through neihardtcenter.org; or, mail a donation to Neihardt Foundation, PO Box 344, Bancroft, NE 68004. The Neihardt Foundation is a non-profit organization.

Thank you for your support!

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2019 LAUREATE FEAST WAS ONE FOR THE RECORD BOOKS
ANNUAL EVENT SUPPORTS NEIHARDT FOUNDATION

It was almost as if Mother Nature herself wanted to stay for the whole party. On Sunday, November 10, over 90 people gathered at the Neihardt Foundation’s annual Laureate Feast in Omaha. It seemed that no-one was deterred by a weather forecast that called for heavy snow ... and the snow itself began to fall as the very last cars pulled out of the parking lot.

The Laureate Feast is an annual event held by the Neihardt Foundation in support of its mission to educate, preserve, and inspire through the works of Nebraska’s Poet Laureate in Perpetuity, John G. Neihardt. Funds raised are used for operating expenses, programs, and education. The Neihardt State Historic site is proud to be affiliated with History Nebraska, which provides a portion of its funding; events such as Laureate’s Feast supplement that funding.

This year’s Word Sender Honoree was Matt Mason, Nebraska State Poet. An active advocate for poetry across the state, and particularly with young people, Mason engaged the audience by reading from his own works and discussing the place of poetry in our lives. It was easy to imagine Neihardt listening in with an approving ear. The lively event also included silent and live auctions, with Auctioneer Myrv Christopherson skillfully and humorously leading the live auction.

Pictured left to right: Coralie Hughes, Robin Neihardt, Matt Mason. 2019 Laureate Feast.
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WINTER HOURS
Through April
Tuesday—Saturday:
10 a.m.—4 p.m.
Mondays by Appointment

Word Sender is the official newsletter of the John G. Neihardt Foundation

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