



# NEWS FROM CATHERLAND

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Visit us online at [www.WillaCather.org](http://www.WillaCather.org) to browse our bookstore or sign up for our e-Newsletter.

## Laura Bush Speaks at the Dedication of the National Willa Cather Center

On June 3rd, nearly 300 guests gathered in our Red Cloud Opera House as distinguished guest Laura Bush delivered moving remarks for the dedication of the National Willa Cather Center. A former teacher and librarian, Mrs. Bush lauded Cather's writing and spoke to its continued relevance. "Thanks to the talent of Willa Cather we have a better understanding of one of the most remarkable and compelling periods in American history," Bush said. "Through her words, we come to appreciate who we are as a people and what we can achieve as individuals and as a community. Willa Cather gave a lasting voice to the western spirit that defines us as a nation, and that's what makes her work so timeless."

Rev. Charles Peek, who served as Master of Ceremonies, opened the memorable event by stating, "How wonderful it is that we are able to gather today to celebrate this monumental achievement. The National Willa Cather Center is a high-water mark in generations of efforts by Mildred Bennett's kitchen cabinet and its descendants to fulfill the original mission to make known the significance of one of not just Nebraska's, not just America's, but one of the world's great writers, Willa Cather."

The National Willa Cather Center was created through restoration and adaptive reuse of the historic Moon Block building

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Laura Bush addressing guests at the dedication of the NWCC.



Prior to delivering her dedicatory address, Mrs. Bush, a prairie enthusiast, visited the Willa Cather Memorial Prairie, where extensive restoration and conservation work has taken place in recent years. L-R: Tracy Tucker, Education Director; Laura Bush; Lynette Krieger, Board President; and Ashley Olson, Executive Director.



## Laura Bush Speaks at the Dedication of the National Willa Cather Center

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in Red Cloud, Nebraska. The project was made possible with the completion of a \$7 million capital campaign, graciously led by Honorary National Chair, Ken Burns; Honorary Chair, Joanne Berkshire; and Co-Chairs, Ruth H. Keene and John A (Jay) Yost. In addition to federal appropriations and federal and state historic tax credits, nearly 500 individuals and foundations from across the country contributed to the campaign.

Executive Director Ashley Olson noted, “With the completion of this project, our rich and growing collection is now housed in an archive that will ensure preservation for years to come. Scholars and students will have hands-on access to these materials while conducting research quietly and comfortably in our new study center. And finally, our visitors from across the country and around the world will discover Cather and encounter some of her most treasured personal possessions through our new museum exhibit.”

Willa Cather Foundation Board President, Lynette Krieger, expressed thanks to the generous donors who

made the project a reality and spoke to the impact of the new museum. “Together we’ve created a place that transcends bricks and mortar. We’ve created a place that greatly enhances Cather’s presence in our modern world—a place that eloquently brings Cather’s story to life in the imaginations of scholars, students, and readers young and old.”

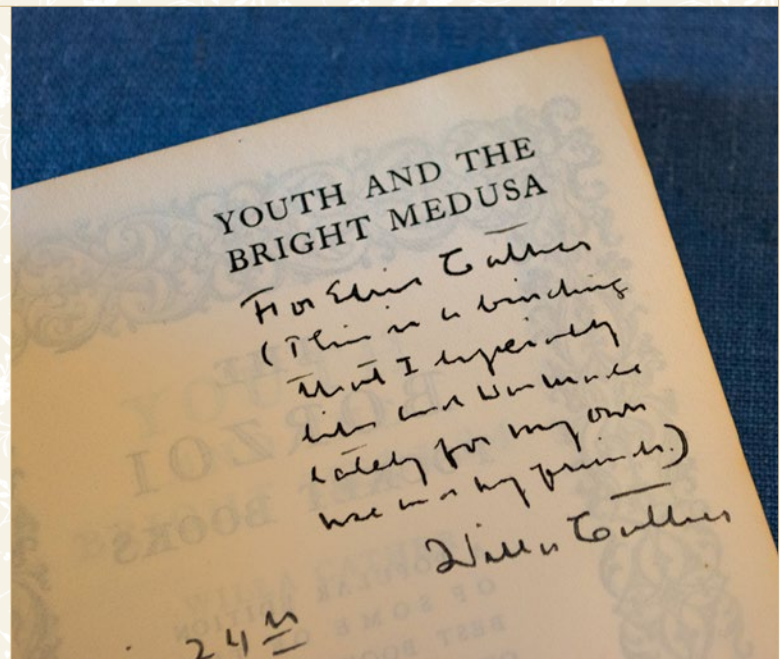
Public tours led by members of the Willa Cather Foundation Board of Governors and staff immediately followed the dedication and ribbon cutting. Tour highlights included the study room, archive, green room, classroom/theatre, bookstore, and exhibit hall.

Whether you’re a long-time Cather fan or have recently discovered her writing, you’re encouraged to visit the new National Willa Cather Center to delve into her life and work. Admission is free and the Center is open year-round. Please visit [www.WillaCather.org](http://www.WillaCather.org) or call (402) 746-2653 to begin planning your trip.

## Many New Additions Join the Cather Foundation Collection

As news of the National Willa Cather Center’s completion began to spread in early 2017, Archivist Tracy Tucker was excited to be moving the collections to their new home in the state-of-the-art archive. As it turns out, she wasn’t the only one excited about the new facility. Since the completion of the NWCC, we’ve been thrilled to receive dozens of exciting donations to our collections, including:

- A new Willa Cather letter sent to her brother Douglass. Written on July 30, 1927, during a long visit home to Red Cloud, Cather details some purchases for her parents’ home and a visit with her nieces. In addition to the letter, several photographs of Douglass and Huntington Beach and clippings about Willa Cather’s estate were included in this generous gift from Dr. Mark Facknitz.



One of the inscribed books Cather sent to family members. Elizabeth A. Shannon Collection.





Detail of the Dresden Plate pattern quilt, hand-stitched by Anna Pavelka.

family, along with many gift items given by Willa Cather to her nieces—jewelry, table linens, photos—as well as Cather’s own elaborately embroidered sea green silk blouse and a sequined lace fan. A large collection of Cather family books also came along with the secretary, including several books inscribed from Cather to her family members. An extensive clipping file is still being catalogued, but contains several Cather publications from periodicals, reviews of her work, and much more.

- Dresden Plate pattern quilt, hand-stitched by Anna Pavelka, life-long friend of Willa Cather and prototype for *Antonia*. This beautiful scallop-edged quilt uses dozens of vintage fabrics and likely dates to the 1930s. It remained in the Pavelka family until joining our collection. We are grateful to the Leo Paul Pavelka family for their generosity.
- The Elizabeth A. Shannon Family Collection includes a tall Eastlake slant-front secretary that now welcomes guests to the National Willa Cather Center’s study room. Still bearing its original shipping label (“C. F. Cather, Red Cloud, Ne.”), the desk belonged to Willa Cather and has been passed down through the Cather



Detail of Cather’s elaborately embroidered sea green silk blouse. Elizabeth A. Shannon Collection.

- A new Cather photo was donated by Red Cloud’s own Jeri Shute. The photo shows both Cather and her mother with a group of Webster County residents, including Wallace and Clarisa Maynard and Father Fitzgerald, “hunting stones” near the Drain farm just north and west of Red Cloud.



Standing L-R: Mrs. Charles Cather, Mrs. W.A. Maynard, Father Fitzgerald, W.A. Maynard, Willa Cather, Norma Richardson, Mrs. Alf. McCall, and Grace McCall. Sitting L-R: Father Fitzgerald’s niece, Isabel Maynard, Father Fitzgerald’s nephew, Marguerite Richardson, and Robert McCall.



## Many New Additions Join the Cather Foundation Collection

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- An anonymous gift of forty-eight new Cather letters sent to her Webster County farm manager, Willard Crowell. Covering the years 1938–1946, the letters detail Cather’s acquisition of farm properties and general farm management decisions; however, they also give hints of Cather’s other business—writing—, her travels, and her fond feeling for family and friends such as the Crowells.

If you are interested in donating material related to Cather’s life and writings, or if you would like to contribute to our permanent art collection, we would love to talk with you. Please contact Archivist, Tracy Tucker, at [ttucker@willacather.org](mailto:ttucker@willacather.org) or Executive Director, Ashley Olson, at [aolson@willacather.org](mailto:aolson@willacather.org) or (402) 746-2653 to discuss a tax-deductible donation.

## Walter and Turner Scholarships Awarded

An annual tradition, the Willa Cather Foundation is pleased to announce the 2017 recipients of the Norma Ross Walter and Antonette Willa Skupa Turner scholarships. Patrick O’Neil of Lourdes Central Catholic High School received the Antonette Willa Skupa Turner Scholarship. Recipients of the Norma Ross Walter Scholarship included Marissa Galardi of Lourdes Central Catholic High School; Leigha Little of Millard North High School; and Addison Schneider of Waverly High School.

The scholarship award recognition took place as part of the 62nd annual Willa Cather Spring Conference. Each of the four recipients, having graduated from a Nebraska high school in May, delivered an original essay on Cather’s work, written as part of the extensive application process of the scholarships.

Since 1987, the Willa Cather Foundation has awarded over fifty scholarships totaling more than \$162,000 through the Norma Ross Walter Scholarship and Antonette Willa Skupa Turner scholarship programs.

The Norma Ross Walter Scholarship fund was established through a generous bequest from Norma Ross Walter, a lifelong fan of Cather’s work, a frequent visitor to Red Cloud, and a firm believer in education for young women. The Antonette Willa Skupa Turner Scholarship fund was established in 2012 by Antonette



Scholarship recipients are joined by WCF representatives following delivery of their Cather essays at the 2017 Spring Conference. L-R: Ashley Olson, Executive Director; Virgil Albertini, Board of Governors; Marissa Galardi; Leigha Little; Addison Schneider; Patrick O’Neil, and Antonette Turner.

Willa Skupa Turner, granddaughter of Anna Sadilek Pavelka. Turner has spent decades giving educational presentations about Pavelka to students, book clubs, and local libraries.

For more information about the scholarship programs, please contact Tracy Tucker, Education Director, at (402) 746-2653 or [ttucker@willacather.org](mailto:ttucker@willacather.org). Application forms for 2018 are available at [www.WillaCather.org](http://www.WillaCather.org) and annual deadlines are January 31 and February 28, respectively.



## 62nd Annual Spring Conference Examines the Railroad and Popular Imagination

The Willa Cather Foundation welcomed more than 200 guests to our 62nd annual Spring Conference in the newly opened National Willa Cather Center earlier this summer as speakers and conference-goers explored the role of the railroad in our Western cultural landscape. Conference directors Tom Gallagher and Glenda Pierce welcomed Brent Glass, Director Emeritus of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, as the conference keynote speaker. Other speakers included author Ann Satterthwaite, railroad historian James Reisdorff, drama historian Elissa Sartwell, Cather scholar Mark Facknitz, and commemorative stamp expert Bob Ferguson. The conference opened with lunch and a program at Lester Junction on the grounds of the Starke Round Barn with Liz Rasser.

Conference-goers enjoyed two gallery exhibits in the Red Cloud Opera House. *Catherland*, Shane Booth's exhibit of photographs taken with his antique studio camera, proved very popular with our summer guests, with nearly the entire exhibit sold before the close of the show. In the gallery, *Western Wonderlands* examined the myriad influences of the railroad on our Nebraska culture, from country music's train songs to porter culture and the rise of the civil rights movement.

Guests attended a railroad-inspired musical performance at the historic Burlington Depot with Dave Seay. Conference attendees also enjoyed *The Red Cloud Cannonball*, a vaudeville-style variety bill featuring classic railroad tunes and comedy (and a bit of Cather). The production was a lively tribute to the Opera House's early days, when traveling troupes arrived by train to entertain the local crowds. Omaha performer Jill Anderson co-directed and performed with an ensemble of Nebraska musicians for this one-of-a-kind performance.



The "Catherville Players" presented *The Red Cloud Cannonball*, a railroad-themed vaudeville, during the 62nd annual Spring Conference. L-R: D. Kevin Williams, Jill Anderson, Joe Mendick (in back), Bethany Eckloff, and Jesse Wohlman.

## Nationwide *Ántonia* Scholarship Opportunity

The Willa Cather Foundation is pleased to announce that a permanent endowment for a new scholarship program has been established as a result of the generosity of Antonette Willa Skupa Turner. The *Ántonia* Scholarship, as it will be called, was created to honor Turner's grandmother, Annie Sadilek Pavelka, prototype for *Ántonia* Shimerda in Cather's novel *My Ántonia* and Mary Rosicky in Cather's short story "Neighbour Rosicky."

The scholarship will be open to students nationwide and will provide an award of \$1,000 to a high school graduate who is planning to enroll as an English or history major at an accredited college or university. "We are incredibly grateful to Antonette Turner for sharing our interest in

fostering the reading and study of Cather in high schools across the country," Ashley Olson, executive director of the Willa Cather Foundation said. "This scholarship fund is particularly meaningful because it will enable us to expand our reach to support students outside of our headquarters here in Nebraska."

Scholarship applicants will be asked to write an essay on Cather's novel *My Ántonia* or her short story "Neighbour Rosicky." Fittingly, the first scholarship will be awarded in 2018, as we celebrate the 100th publication anniversary of *My Ántonia*. Applications will be available online by December 1st, 2017, and are due by February 28th, 2018.



## 16th International Cather Seminar Held in Pittsburgh



The Washington (PA) Symphony Orchestra's production of "Willa Cather's Iron City Music" at the Carnegie Music Hall.

With thanks to Co-Directors Timothy Bintrim and James Jaap, the 16th Willa Cather International Seminar was held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in late June. More than a hundred Cather scholars and enthusiasts met at Duquesne University's beautiful campus for a week of new Cather research, tours of Cather's Pittsburgh sites, and performances. Pittsburgh public television personality and producer Rick Sebak kicked off the week with an introduction to Pittsburgh, in addition to following the Cather group as we toured historic and literary Pittsburgh sites—the August Wilson house in the Hill District, the George Gerwig house, Judge McClung's house in Squirrel Hill, the Carnegie Museums of Natural History and Art, and numerous downtown architectural gems.

The seminar featured more than sixty presentations on Cather's life, writing, and influences during her decade in Pittsburgh. Of particular note, esteemed Cather scholars John J. Murphy and Ann Romines were honored as invited plenary speakers. Addressing the full seminar, Murphy reflected on his decades of Cather research with his talk, "Why Willa

Cather? A Retrospective." Romines delivered a thoughtful analysis of Cather's development in "Becoming Miss Cather From Pittsburgh."

In addition, seminarians attended a number of musical performances, the first being a recreation of Frederic Archer's 1896 organ recital in Carnegie Hall. Our guests attended this performance in the Tiffany-windowed Cavalry Methodist Church in Allegheny City, to take advantage of their 1895 Farrand and Votey organ—a similar instrument to the one Cather would have heard. Kim and Brett Vanderlaan spearheaded a memorable evening featuring the Washington (PA) Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Music Hall, with classical selections from a number of concerts Cather attended while in Pittsburgh.

We were so pleased to welcome Gregory Spears, composer of *Paul's Case*, the opera, who prepared selections from the opera, along with a panel discussion featuring *Boston Globe* music reviewer Steve Smith, and Cather scholar Jane Dressler. The busy week also included Cather trivia, a trip to Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater and Kentuck Knob, a Stanley Cup parade, a Pittsburgh Pirates game, the Andy Warhol museum, and, as ever, so many opportunities for camaraderie among our Cather community.

### Save these Dates!

We hope you'll join us for our upcoming conferences and seminars!

- May 31-June 2, 2018 — "Dissolved into Something Complete and Great": Celebrating 100 Years of *My Ántonia*. 63rd annual Willa Cather Spring Conference in Red Cloud, Nebraska.
- June 29-July 1, 2018 — Willa Cather's Irish Connections. Cather Symposium in Limavady, Northern Ireland.
- May 31-June 1, 2019 — Cather at the Theater. 64th annual Willa Cather Spring Conference in Red Cloud, Nebraska.
- June 24-June 28, 2019 — The 17th International Cather Seminar at Shenandoah University in Winchester, Virginia.



## Dr. Mary Ruth Ryder Joins Cather Legacy Society

Reflecting on attending her first Spring Conference many years ago, it was the kindness shown to her as a young scholar that compelled Dr. Mary Ruth Ryder to become a member of the Willa Cather Foundation. “The scholars were kind to each other, non-competitive, supportive of young scholars, and receptive. Part of my response was also due to Red Cloud itself and the interaction with people who were proud, pleasant, and eager to share. There was a familial atmosphere.”

Long before that experience, however, Ryder was assigned the reading of *My Ántonia* in eighth grade. Something in the text spoke to her. Being part of a farming heritage, she felt tied to the rhythm of the land, as Cather’s characters were. As a high school sophomore, she chose *The Song of the Lark* for a class project, foreshadowing her future career as an educator by inspiring four of her classmates to read the novel.

Ryder earned her Master’s degree in eighteenth century British Literature and taught high school English and Latin (as Cather did). It wasn’t until pursuing her PhD that she delved into Cather professionally. Transitioning her studies from British masters to Willa Cather isn’t as bifurcated a choice as it might seem, and Ryder speaks convincingly about the classical foundation found in Cather’s work.

Mary Ryder became a member of the WCF after having a paper accepted and well-received at the Inaugural Willa Cather Seminar in 1981, titled “Willa Cather and Nebraska,” held in Red Cloud and Hastings and directed by noted Cather scholar John J. Murphy. To this day it’s the fellowship that brings Ryder to events like the Spring Conference. “It’s an impetus for research and scholarship, especially for budding scholars,” Ryder states. “Even for non-scholars, make the trip to Red Cloud. There Cather’s writing becomes more real, and you feel the dynamic force in the land. Through the WCF’s work, you come to better understand Cather and her writing.”

Ryder decided to include the WCF in her estate plans because she wanted her legacy to include an



Dr. Mary Ruth Ryder, pictured at the 2017 Willa Cather Spring Conference.

organization that supported her as a young scholar, and through its scholarship programs, continues to support high school students who have dreams of going to college. “I know the WCF is never going to fold,” remarked Ryder recently. Her aspirations of continued Cather studies and the perpetuation of Cather’s life and work align with the WCF’s mission. “Through the study and elevation of Cather’s texts, we become more conscious of fragile ecological systems and more sensitive and responsive to the lessons embedded in her novels,” stated Ryder.

When asked what her dreams are for the Cather community, Ryder thoughtfully responded, “That Cather will come to be recognized universally as a leading writer of the first half of the twentieth century. Her stories are the American story. Embedded in her work is a portrait of who we are and what we became as a nation.”

If you would like to learn more about perpetuating your support of the Willa Cather Foundation, please contact Ashley Olson, Executive Director, at [aolson@willacather.org](mailto:aolson@willacather.org) or (402) 746-2653.



## Hitchlers Honored with Miriam Mountford Volunteer Award

Tom and Linda Hitchler of Red Cloud were recently recognized by the Willa Cather Foundation with the 2017 Miriam Mountford Volunteer Award. The Hitchlers have been volunteering since the opening of the Red Cloud Opera House in 2003. Now retired from owning and operating a local restaurant, they can often be found greeting guests or serving refreshments and freshly made popcorn at Opera House performances.

“We would like to express our sincere thanks to Tom and Linda for their generous and long-term commitment to the Willa Cather Foundation,” said Executive Director, Ashley Olson. “Without the selfless support of community members like the Hitchlers, it wouldn’t be possible to sustain the arts and educational programs that are central to our mission.”

Each year the WCF recognizes a volunteer who has been especially dedicated to helping the Foundation meet its mission by awarding the Miriam Mountford Volunteer Award at the Spring Conference. Mountford was the Foundation’s first volunteer, alongside its founding board members, and the first president after founder Mildred Bennett. She also assisted in devising the first guided tours of the Cather historic sites and editing the *Willa Cather Newsletter & Review*. The Miriam Mountford Volunteer Award was established in her memory to recognize individuals for outstanding volunteer service.



Executive Director Ashley Olson pictured with award recipients Tom and Linda Hitchler.

The WCF has a variety of volunteer opportunities available year-round, which include assisting with programs at the Red Cloud Opera House, landscaping at historic sites, and greeting and providing information to visitors and guests. If you are interested in volunteering, please call (402) 746-2653 or email LauraLea Johnson at [ljohnson@willacather.org](mailto:ljohnson@willacather.org). Volunteers are entitled to a discount in our bookstore, as well as tickets to Opera House performances.

## Artist Residency Culminates with Memorable Exhibit by Photographer Shane Booth



Shane Booth pictured with his 1867 studio camera.

Shane Booth’s wildly popular exhibit *Catherland* closed at the end of July. We were pleased to hear so many wonderful comments from guests about his latest work. We also wanted to hear from Booth himself about the residency and how it was to experience Cather’s Red Cloud. “Being an artist in residence at the Willa Cather Foundation was an amazing experience!” Booth said. “Being able to stay in the historic Miner House and immerse myself in the culture and history—up close and personal—and to create a body of work was a great



opportunity. I hope the work captures Willa's hometown with the same passion she felt for it."

Booth's residency occurred in the summer of 2016, and after returning to North Carolina, he planned for the exhibit which was to hang in 2017. "After returning home to edit and choose work for the exhibit, I was haunted by this magical town and couldn't get it off my mind," Booth said. Booth says that he enjoyed his time meeting Willa Cather Spring Conference-goers. In addition to sharing a love of Cather, he says, "They really understood where my work was coming from and saw the spirit of



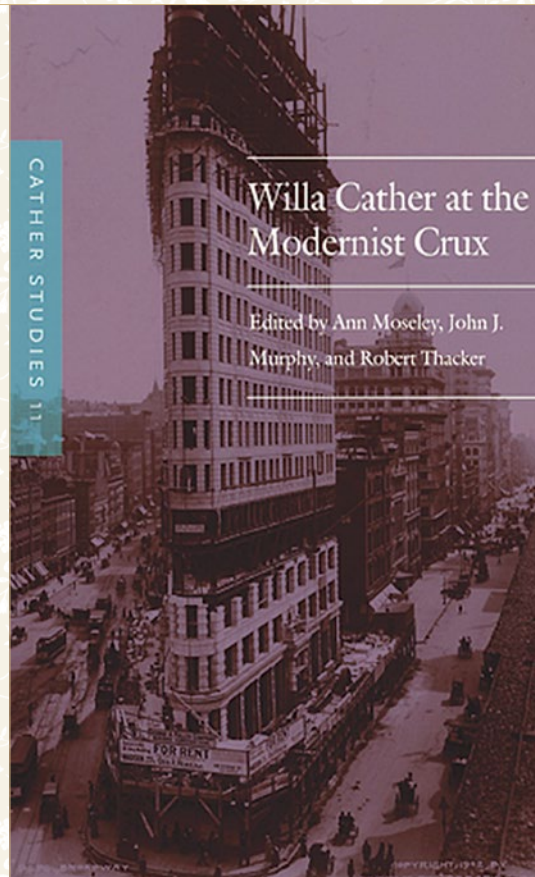
"Old Barn in Catherland" by Shane Booth.

running the Foundation are absolutely amazing—people I now call friends."

## New Release! *Cather Studies, Volume 11: Willa Cather at the Modernist Crux*

*Willa Cather at the Modernist Crux* examines Willa Cather's position in time, in aesthetics, and in the world. Born a Victorian in 1873, Cather made herself a modernist through the poems, stories, and novels she wrote and published into the twentieth century. Beginning with a prologue locating Cather's position, this volume of *Cather Studies* offers three sets of related essays.

The first section takes up Cather's beginnings with her late 19th century cultural influences. The second section explores a range of discernible direct connections with contemporary artists (Howard Pyle, Frederic Remington, and Ernest Blumenschein) and others who figured in the making of her texts. The third section focuses on *The*



*Song of the Lark*, a novel that confirms Cather's shift westward and elaborates her emergent modernism. An epilogue by the editors of *The Selected Letters of Willa Cather* addresses how the recent availability of these letters has transformed Cather studies. Altogether, these essays detail Cather's shaping of the world of the early twentieth century and later into a singular modernism born of both inherited and newer cultural traditions.

This volume, edited by Cather scholars Ann Moseley, John J. Murphy, and Robert Thacker, may be purchased by calling (402) 746-2653 or online at [www.WillaCather.org](http://www.WillaCather.org). Orders

placed prior to September 30th will be eligible for 20% off the retail price of \$40.00.



## Now Available! Educator Resources for Cather's "Paul's Case"

The Willa Cather Foundation is deeply committed to helping educators at both the secondary and post-secondary levels teach Willa Cather's works in their classrooms. A variety of teaching resources can be found at [www.WillaCather.org](http://www.WillaCather.org) by clicking first on the "Learn" tab near the top of the main page, then on the "Resources" link in the drop-down box on the next page. Available resources now include extremely valuable materials that can be used to create an excellent, engaging unit on Cather's short story "Paul's Case," a story that resonates strongly among today's young students and provokes lively class discussions. The new teaching package on "Paul's Case" includes:

- Curricular indicators which the unit meets, both for Common Core and for Nebraska State Language Arts requirements.
- Two excellent PowerPoint presentations. The first introduces the relevant details of Cather's biography

through the 1905 publication of "Paul's Case." The second focuses on interpretation of the story, particularly by using images of Cather at different points in her life and images of different places and artworks referred to in the story. It also includes a number of discussion questions.

- A concise timeline of Cather's life and works, including important details about the genesis of "Paul's Case."
- Creative and engaging suggestions for classroom discussion and activities, including creating a Facebook page for Paul, writing a poem based on the artworks Paul sees, and creating a Twitter account for Paul's time in New York City.

We wish to acknowledge Board of Governors members Charles Johanningsmeier and Julie Olin-Ammentorp for their leadership in developing the teaching package for "Paul's Case."

## Willa Cather Merit Badge Recipients Reunite



Troop leader and six members of Girl Scout Troop #116. Bottom row: Sheila (Bartley) Keeler, Alene Rucker, Cheryl (Reiher) Keyser. Top row: Virginia (Ailes) Hoelscher, Kiley (Barta) Harris, Barbara (Lewis) Kudrna, and Chris (McManis) Wilson.

We were delighted to recently host a reunion for Red Cloud Girl Scout Troop #161 at the National Willa Cather Center. Under the guidance of Alene Tanner (now Rucker), members of this troop earned the Willa Cather Merit Badge, which was approved by the National Headquarters of Girl Scouts in 1963. To earn a Willa Cather Merit Badge, Girl Scouts were required to: (1) Read one book written by Willa Cather and report to members of their troop; (2) Attend two sessions given by qualified speaker; (3) Make a scrapbook with pictures and clippings relative to Willa Cather; (4) Attend a tour of the buildings and settings in Red Cloud, which are mentioned in Willa Cather writings; (5) Take part in a tour given by a qualified guide which visits



rural areas, creeks, and communities mentioned in Willa Cather writings; (6) Give ten hours service to the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial; (7) Write a 200 word essay on Willa Cather; (8) Make three approved posters for upcoming events and display them; (9) Attend one Willa Cather film and write a review; and (10) Embroider their own Willa Cather badge.

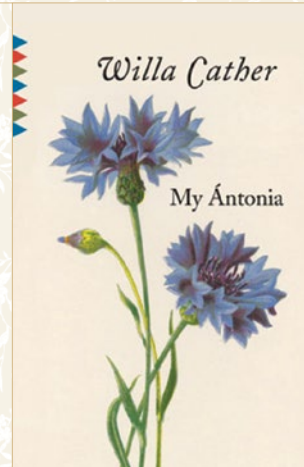
Members of Troop #116 reminisced while enjoying a lovely lunch and sharing photographs and newspaper clippings. An unexpected and delightful highlight took place when troop leader, Alene Rucker, distributed each of the Cather essays members had written to fulfill their badge requirements. A guided tour of the National Willa Cather Center capped off the afternoon.

## Big Plans for the Publication Centenary of *My Ántonia* in 2018

The Willa Cather Foundation is gearing up for a year-long celebration of the publication centenary of one of Cather's most widely read novels, *My Ántonia*. "For many people, reading *My Ántonia* in high school is their first introduction to not only Willa Cather's work, but to literature itself," education director Tracy Tucker says. "We'd love to see people read the book again during the centenary year and explore the many ways it speaks to our lives today." To encourage readership and dialogue surrounding the book, the Cather Foundation, the *Cather Archive*, and community partners will coordinate a number of events throughout 2018 to explore the novel.

"The purpose of these events is not only to promote the study of Cather's life and works within the larger community, but also to highlight the continued relevance of *My Ántonia* as a story that confronts contemporary issues, including immigration, religious difference, gender, class, and environmental preservation," said Andy Jewell, WCF board member and director of the *Cather Archive*. Panel discussions, lectures, musical events, art installations and exhibits, and readings are currently planned for Virginia, Colorado, Wisconsin, and Oregon, in addition to Omaha, Lincoln, Scottsbluff, and of course Red Cloud. Details will be posted to the Willa Cather Foundation website, [www.WillaCather.org](http://www.WillaCather.org), and elsewhere as dates approach.

The WCF also invites requests from educators, schools, libraries and community groups as they plan for the novel's



Order your copy of *My Ántonia* online at [www.WillaCather.org](http://www.WillaCather.org) or call 402-746-2653. All purchases support our mission to promote Cather's legacy through education, preservation, and the arts.

centenary. The Cather Foundation offers many classroom and book group resources free of charge, including copies of primary documents (photos and letters), biographical information and chronologies, slideshows, discussion questions, activities, assessments, and teaching strategies. Teachers who lack classroom sets of *My Ántonia* are especially encouraged to contact us. "We think every student should be reading Cather," Tucker said, "but especially *My Ántonia*, and especially in 2018." In order to see this happen, the Cather Foundation will provide, free of charge, classroom sets to school districts who may need them. The WCF also regularly provides guest lectures, Skype Q&A sessions,

digital and other resources to schools and book clubs who are interested in diving deeper into the text. Requests for any teaching or programming support should be directed to Tracy Tucker via email at [ttucker@willacather.org](mailto:ttucker@willacather.org), or by phone at (402) 746-2653.

**About the novel:** *Willa Cather's My Ántonia (1918) is one of the most significant American novels of the twentieth century. Set during the great migration west to settle the plains of the North American continent, the narrative follows Ántonia Shimerda, a pioneer who comes to Nebraska as a child and grows with the country, inspiring a childhood friend, Jim Burden, to write her life story. The novel is important both for its literary aesthetic and as a portrayal of important aspects of American social ideals and history, particularly the centrality of migration to American culture.*



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Betty Kort, Hastings, NE

Mellanee Kvasnicka, LaVista, NE

Lucia Woods Lindley, New York, NY

Susan Maher, Duluth, MN

Gary L. Meyer, Red Cloud, NE

Nancy S. Picchi, New York, NY

Rhonda Seacrest, Lincoln, NE

James P. Southwick, Heber City, UT

John N. Swift, Whittier, CA

Gary W. Thompson, Lincoln, NE

Joseph R. Urgo, Asheville, NC

### Staff

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Sara Brownwood, *Program & Marketing Coordinator*

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Jarrod McCartney, *Heritage Tourism Dev. Director*

Karin Prellwitz, *Maintenance Assistant*

Tracy Tucker, *Education Director & Archivist*

Cheryl Wilson, *Buildings & Sites Curator*

Sylvia Andersen, *Tour Guide*

Kay Blackstone, *Tour Guide*

Kevin Daehling, *Prairie Curator*

Angela Duca, *Tour Guide*

Janice Hartman, *Tour Guide*

Priscilla Hollingshead, *Tour Guide*

Barb Kudrna, *Tour Guide*

Janet Maruhn, *Tour Guide*

Don Richards, *Tour Guide*



The Willa Cather Foundation  
413 North Webster Street  
Red Cloud, NE 68970

COMING UP!  
AT THE RED CLOUD OPERA HOUSE



**OH/PIONEERS:** a new play by A.P. Andrews  
September 8th & 9th, at 7:00 p.m. & 10th at 5:00 p.m.  
\$25 in advance / \$30 day of show

**TREO:** original blues, country, and rock  
Saturday, October 21, at 7:00 p.m.  
\$20 in advance / \$25 day of show

**Mary Carrick:** cabaret  
Friday, November 21, at 7:30 p.m.  
\$20 in advance / \$25 day of show

**Lloyd McCarter & the Honky-Tonk Revival**  
Saturday, December 9, at 7:00 p.m.  
\$20 in advance / \$25 day of show

Visit us online at [www.WillaCather.org](http://www.WillaCather.org) for information on upcoming events.



The State of Nebraska owns six Cather-related properties and a number of inventoried artifacts and documents. The properties are collectively referred to as the Willa Cather State Historic Site and are jointly preserved and maintained by the Nebraska State Historical Society and the Willa Cather Foundation. The Cather Foundation acquired the sites in its earlier years and continues to manage them and care for them alongside its own historic properties.



Arts programming presented with the support of the Nebraska Arts Council and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment.