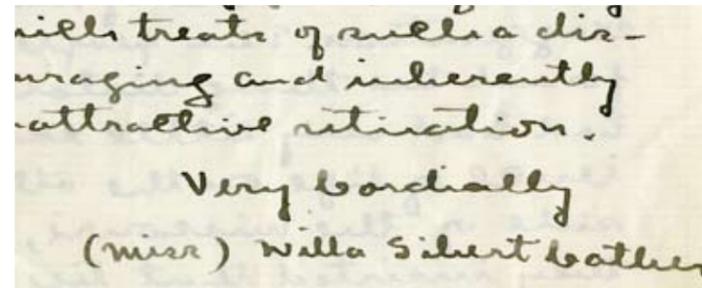


## CATHER LETTERS ADDED TO COLLECTION

The Willa Cather Foundation has recently received several new Cather letters as we continue to expand our growing collection of Cather artifacts. One letter, written by “(Miss) Willa Sibert Cather,” is addressed to “Mrs. Cleary,” a woman we know as Kate M. Cleary, a fellow Nebraska writer. Mrs. Cleary, we surmise from the letter, had written to praise Cather’s story “The Sculptor’s Funeral,” which had appeared in a 1905 issue of *McClure’s* magazine. “Anyone who has lived in one of those little western towns,” Cather writes, “must, I think, have a very keen and definite feeling about it, but it is almost hopeless to try to communicate it to anyone who has not had that experience.”

Though Cather scholars have known of the existence of this letter for some time, until now the letter has been held in a private collection. Thanks to the generosity of Gene and Connie Koepke, we are honored to give it a permanent home and make it available to Cather readers and scholars.

Additionally, we have acquired two letters written by Cather to Henry Goddard Leach, who was an American author, educator, poet and perhaps most relevant to Cather, the editor of *The Forum* from 1923-1940. Cather’s book *Death Comes for the Archbishop* was serialized in *The Forum* prior to its publication in 1927. These letters too had been held privately and can now be made available to scholars and visitors to Red Cloud.



## PRAIRIE JOINS ECOTOURISM COALITION

We are happy to announce our membership in the Great Plains Ecotourism Coalition, launching November 7. The coalition, a project of the Center for Great Plains Studies at the University of Nebraska, is committed to promoting environmental conservation and nature-based tourism throughout the Great Plains region.

A specially commissioned series of posters featuring scenes from around the state and the Great Plains have been released to mark the launch of the coalition.

The promotional posters are modeled after the Works Progress Administration’s National Park posters of the 1930s and will be available soon at the Cather Foundation bookstore.

The Willa Cather Memorial Prairie is a 612-acre mixed grass prairie located five miles south of Red Cloud. This unplowed ground and its unbroken horizon must look much as it did in the 1880s when Willa Cather gazed across the Webster County vista.

## CELEBRATE CATHER’S BIRTHDAY WITH US

“A soup like this is not the work of one man. It is the result of a constantly refined tradition. There are nearly a thousand years of history in this soup.” ~ Death Comes for the Archbishop

This year, celebrate Willa Cather’s birthday with us at the Red Cloud Opera House, as the Willa Cather Foundation hosts a December Night Soup Showdown! The Showdown will be held from 5:30-7:30 p.m., Sunday, December 7.

Each year, we celebrate Willa Cather’s birthday with friends of the Cather Foundation—we have hosted birthday teas, open houses, cocktail parties, and many other events—but this year, there are two ways for you to be involved.

First, you can become one of our Red Cloud celebrity chefs! Now is the chance for you or your group to show off your can’t-be-beat game day chili, Grandma’s surefire chicken noodle soup, or your own creative concoction. To enter the Showdown,

To book a guided tour of the Cather Prairie, contact Tracy Tucker by phone at (402) 746-2653.

Other partners in the coalition include Switzer Ranch and Nature Reserve, the Nebraska State Museum, Grand Island Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Nebraska Star Party, the Nature Conservancy Nebraska Program, and the Big Blue Ranch. Additional partners will be named at a later date. Information on the coalition can be found at [visittheprairie.com](http://visittheprairie.com).



simply sign up and provide a large roaster of your favorite soup; tables and serve ware will be provided by the Foundation.

Second, come and warm up at the Opera House after the Webster County Museum’s Festival of Trees or going on the Auld Public Library’s Tour of Homes. There is a free will donation to sample Showdown soups, with proceeds benefiting the Willa Cather Foundation’s arts and educational programs.

A “Best of the Showdown” will be determined through monetary votes by the attendees. The chef or group of cooks with the most donations at the end of the night will be crowned the inaugural December Night Soup Showdown winner and will receive a 2015 Opera House season ticket package, as well as a traveling trophy signifying their soup is the best in Red Cloud!

For more information or to sign up as a chef, please contact Program and Development Coordinator Kara Faber by phone (402) 746-2653 or via email [kfaber@willacather.org](mailto:kfaber@willacather.org).

## ROAD SCHOLARS RETURN TO RED CLOUD

In September, we again welcomed lifelong learners from across the country to Red Cloud through our Road Scholar program, “Red Cloud: Willa Cather’s Window to the World.” Our scholars spent five days in Red Cloud, enjoying lively book discussions with instructor Steve Shively of Utah State University, taking the Cather tours, and exploring downtown Red Cloud. They also saw a fabulous show in the Red Cloud Opera House, performed by the Wes Hird Trio featuring vocalist Vickie Nielsen and took a guided tour of the Cather Prairie.

Special guests to the Road Scholar program this year were Andrew Jewell, co-editor of *The Selected Letters of Willa Cather*, and Antonette Turner, the granddaughter of Annie Pavelka, the prototype for Antonia. Another special guest was “Carl, the Trolley,” who took our participants around Webster County to visit the historic Cather country sites.



Our Road Scholars also enjoyed getting a sneak peek of our collection of Cather objects. Education Director Tracy Tucker and Executive Director Ashley Olson led the group as they examined rare books, letters, jewelry, photographs, and clothing that once belonged to Willa Cather.

This year’s participants came to Red Cloud from Oregon, New Jersey, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Arizona, Iowa, Colorado, Texas, West Virginia, and Illinois; they all appreciated Red Cloud’s small-town hospitality and historic atmosphere. During their free time, they enjoyed visiting the Starke Round Barn, the Webster County Museum, the Republican River, and the downtown merchants.

We would like to thank our community partners who helped make this program a success: Chapter Y P.E.O., Republican Valley Arts Council, Webster County Public Transportation, Red Brick Cafe, The Palace, Subway, KO Bar in Bladen, Green Acres Motel and the Red Cloud Opera House volunteers.



## AUTUMN VISITORS TO WILLA CATHER SITES



Spring is often our busiest tourist season in Red Cloud, but autumn is a great time to visit! We recently hosted groups from the Catholic Diocese of Lincoln, Sylvan Lucas High School, Verdigris High School, Golden Plains High School, and Red Cloud High School. Dr. Melissa Homestead of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln also brought her undergraduate Cather scholars to tour the Cather historic sites and the Willa Cather Memorial Prairie.

The Willa Cather Foundation can accommodate groups of almost any size, and tours can be customized for your group. To book a tour for your group, contact Education Director Tracy Tucker via email at [ttucker@willacather.org](mailto:ttucker@willacather.org) or by phone at (402) 746-2653.

## CATHER BOOK CLUB RESUMES MEETINGS

The Willa Cather Book Club launched its new season in October with the One Book One Nebraska selection for 2014, *Once Upon a Town: The Miracle of the North Platte Canteen*, by Bob Greene. Several members shared their own reminiscences of the North Platte Canteen, and book club leader Tracy Tucker shared her family’s collection of World War II ration books and stamps, draft cards, and Office of Price Administration correspondence.

This year, the Cather Book Club has two meeting times: the

third Wednesday of each month at 4:00 p.m. at Cherry Corner Estates, and again the next evening at 7:00 p.m., in the gallery of the Red Cloud Opera House. The Willa Cather Foundation Facebook page also posts interviews, discussions, and photos related to that month’s books. For the full schedule, please visit our website at <http://www.willacather.org/education/book-club> or contact Tracy Tucker at [ttucker@willacather.org](mailto:ttucker@willacather.org) or by phone at (402) 746-2653 for more details.

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**COMING UP:**  
 AT THE RED CLOUD OPERA HOUSE



Joseph Hall's Elvis Rock 'N Remember Tribute  
 Saturday, December 6, 7:00 PM  
 Advance Tickets \$20 / Day of Show \$25

Yesterday, Today: The Interactive Beatles Experience  
 Saturday, January 24, 7:00 PM  
 Advance Tickets \$20 / Day of Show \$25

The Patrick Lentz Band  
 Saturday, February 14, 7:00 PM  
 Advance Tickets \$20 / Day of Show \$25



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



## INITIAL CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON NWCC, FUNDRAISING CONTINUES TOWARD GOAL

On October 9, 2014, phase one of construction began on the historic Moon Block building in downtown Red Cloud, Nebraska, which will become the National Willa Cather Center. "Beginning construction is a milestone in recognizing Willa Cather's enduring legacy. We are grateful to more than 350 individuals and foundations nationwide who have made this possible," said Honorary National Chair, Ken Burns.

This phase of construction will prevent further deterioration to the historic building and prepare it for reconfiguration and finishing



work. Executive Director Ashley Olson stated, "After many years of careful planning, it's rewarding to see preliminary work proceed while we continue the campaign to raise the balance of funds necessary to begin the final phase of construction next spring."

When complete in 2016, the National Willa Cather Center's archive and public museum will safely house and provide access to countless original documents and objects related to the life and work of nationally-renowned author, Willa Cather. Also included are classroom and multimedia space, enlarged backstage facilities for the Red Cloud Opera House, exhibition space, an expanded bookstore, loft apartments for visitors, and street-level retail spaces.

We continue our capital campaign to raise the remaining \$764,000 needed to bring the project to completion. The entire project is estimated to cost \$6.7 million. To date, \$5.9 million has been raised in private gifts and grants, including support from the Peter Kiewit Foundation, Robert B.



Daugherty Foundation, and a community development block grant from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

Please consider making a contribution to the Willa Cather Foundation to help complete the campaign. Gifts may be made over a 5 year period; naming and recognition opportunities are available at various giving levels. For more information, please contact Ashley Olson, Executive Director at 866-731-7304 or aolson@willacather.org.

## HOLIDAY SHOPPING

It's that time of year! The 6th annual Shopping Extravaganza will be held Tuesday, November 25, from 5:00 - 8:30. The Willa Cather Foundation Bookstore will be open with special deals, prizes, and hot cider! See our holiday flyer for the very best gift ideas for everyone on your list!

For our valued friends nationwide that are unable to join us, remember to visit our website to take advantage of our holiday sales. All bookstore profits support the invaluable work of the Cather Foundation.

