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Idaho Humanities Council awards 24 grants at fall meeting

The Idaho Humanities Council, the non-profit, state-based affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, awarded **\$72,522** in grants to organizations and individuals at its recent board meeting in Boise. Twenty-four awards include five Research Fellowships, four Teacher Incentive Grants, and fifteen public humanities projects. Three projects are funded through the National Endowment for the Humanities *We the People* program, and six focusing on Idaho history and Native American culture are funded with support from the Idaho Governor's Lewis and Clark Trail Committee. The following projects were funded:

Major and Mini Grants:

Soterion, Inc., Spirit Lake Y.E.S. (Spirit Lake) received **\$1,500** to involve high school students in an oral history project with residents of Spirit Lake as part of the town's centennial commemoration. Project sponsors will work with the local historical society to identify residents to interview and work with a local history teacher to involve students in the interviews. **Crystal Owens** is the project director.

City of Spirit Lake received **\$2,000** to develop a photographic display of historical photographs of the area to travel to local sites throughout the community's year-long centennial commemoration. At the end of the year, the display would have a home in one of the historical buildings in Spirit Lake. **Marc Kroetch** is the project director.

Ada Community Library (Boise) was awarded **\$1,750** to host a series of lectures on how music influenced the work of great writers. The talks will explore how Ernest Hemingway enjoyed and was influenced by jazz, poet Federico Garcia Lorca by flamenco and gypsy ballads, Gertrude Stein by the music of American composer Virgil Thompson, Black American writer Langston Hughes by the blues, Oscar Hijuelos by Cuban music, and contemporary writer Anne Carson by tango music. Boise poet and scholar Norman Weinstein will present the lectures in April 2008. **Mary DeWalt** is the project director.

Rocky Mountain Writers Festival (Pocatello) received **\$1,974** to support a humanities lecture at the spring 2008 Rocky Mountain Writers Festival in Pocatello. Utah poet and essayist Paisley Rekdal will speak on poetry and photography. Rekdal is a poet and Associate Professor of English at the University of Utah and the author of several books of poetry. **Bethany Schultz and Greg Nicholl** are the project directors.

Malad Valley Welsh Foundation (Malad City) received **\$2,000** to support the fourth annual Welsh Festival on June 27-28, 2008. The two-day festival features music, food, and a variety of workshops on the history, language, myths, and culture of Wales and all things Welsh. Presenters include Ron Dennis, a professor of Welsh at BYU, Lucie Thomas Washburn, a Colorado librarian, who will lecture on Welsh myths, legends, and history, John Good, a professional musician and native of Wales who resides in Phoenix, Arizona, and Debra Richardson Baldwin of Preston, Idaho, a USU History instructor, who talks about Welsh language and culture. **Mike Williams** is the project director.

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The Idaho Mythweaver (Sandpoint) was awarded **\$1,125** to duplicate onto archival CDs and distribute to Idaho research libraries a series of 11 public radio programs about Native American stories and storytellers that were produced years ago for public radio station KPBX in Spokane and originally recorded on cassette tapes. The radio programs feature the voices of a number of tribal elders and storytellers from all of Idaho's tribes, some of whom have died since the original broadcasts. Copies will be distributed to Idaho colleges and university libraries, the Idaho State Historical Society, and to the archives of seven tribes in Idaho and Eastern Washington. **Jane Fritz** is the project director.

Lewis-Clark State College (Lewiston) received **\$2,000** to support the 21st annual Native American Awareness Week, March 10-14, 2008. The annual week of lectures, demonstrations, films, and other activities are meant to educate people of all ages in the Lewiston-area community about Native American cultures. **Bob Sobotta** is the project director.

Idaho State University (Pocatello) was awarded **\$1,500** to host a multidisciplinary conference on "The Art of Gender in Everyday Life," March 6-7, 2008. The conference will feature a festival of short films from around the world that deal with women's studies and gender issues. Tania Modlesky, a distinguished professor of feminist theory, gender studies, and film and popular culture and a University of Southern California English Professor, will present a lecture titled "No More Tears: On the Persistence of Melodrama in Representing Women's Lives." Modlesky is the author of several books, and her research has explored how women are portrayed in popular culture, soap operas, and contemporary literature. **Rebecca Morrow** is the project director.

The University of Idaho (Moscow) received **\$3,502** to host a conference on "Jazz History and Culture," honoring the 100th anniversary of Lionel Hampton's birth, as part of the 41st annual Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival in Moscow, February 19-20, 2008. Planners are calling for academic papers to be delivered as part of the conference. Tulane University jazz archivist Bruce Raeburn will deliver a public keynote lecture, titled "A Century of Hamp," exploring the life and art of Hampton and his contribution to American culture. Raeburn is a writer and critic and head of the Hogan Jazz Archives at Tulane in New Orleans. Planners also will develop a photo exhibit in time for the conference. **Lynn Baird** is the project director.

The Basque Museum and BSU Basque Studies Program (Boise) were awarded **\$4,000** to bring author Mark Kurlansky to Boise on March 14 for a public lecture at the Basque Center in downtown Boise. Kurlansky is author of *The Basque History of the World* and several other national bestselling books. His talk will be open to the public. **Patty Miller and John Bieter** are the project directors.

Idaho Public Television (Boise) received **\$12,100** for the statewide broadcast of the 20th season of *American Experience*. This award-winning history series will feature new programs on *Buffalo Bill*, *George H.W. Bush*, *Grand Central* (about Grand Central railway terminal), *Kit Carson*, *The Lobotomist* (about the neurologist Walter J. Freeman and his operation for the mentally ill), *Minik, the Lost Eskimo* (about an 1897 early anthropological study of Eskimos), *Oswald's Ghost* (a fresh look at the Kennedy assassination), and *Walt Whitman*. Encore presentations from past years also will be broadcast. **Kelly Ryan** is the project director.

University of Idaho (Moscow) received **\$3,500** to support the sixth annual American Indian Film Festival in Moscow, recently renamed "Sapatq'ayn Cinema." Held in Moscow's historic Kenworthy Theater on March 28-31, 2008, the festival will feature 13 independent short documentary and feature films. A panel and audience discussion will be held at the conclusion of the films. Panelists include Heather Kae, an undergraduate Native American actress, Arthur Taylor, a doctoral candidate and member of the Nez Perce tribe and new faculty member of the U of I American Studies program, Nez Perce elder Horace Axtell, and others. **Janis Johnson** is the project director.

Idaho State University (Pocatello) was awarded **\$6,623** to bring writer Terry Tempest Williams to Pocatello for a public lecture and series of "conversations" in April of 2008. Planners hope to engage book clubs in reading Williams' work prior to her arrival. Williams will visit with ISU students, be interviewed by the local public radio station, and present a public lecture. Williams is a Utah native and a writer of natural history and memoir, the environment, and contemporary issues. She is perhaps best known for her memoir *Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place*, which chronicles the high incidence of cancer in a family that fell victim to nuclear bomb site testing in the 1950s. She's written several other books, including *The Open Space of Democracy*, *Desert Quartet*, and the soon-to-be-published *Mosaic: Finding Beauty in a Broken World*. **Kristin Fletcher** is the project director.

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Museum of Idaho (Idaho Falls) received **\$5,000** to host an exhibit titled *World of the Pharaohs: Egyptian Masterpieces from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*. The exhibit is 8,000 square feet and consists of over 200 artifacts. The Museum of Idaho will be the first venue ever to display the collection in its entirety. The exhibit will be at the museum from February through December 2008. The exhibit will explore the culture and history of ancient Egypt. The museum also plans public presentations to provide an opportunity for the general public to view traditions and foundations of a different culture and examine barriers that may separate cultures. **David Pennock** is the project director.

Idaho State University (Pocatello) received **\$3,000** for Dr. Jamie Romine to research the lives of early women settlers in South Bannock County and prepare a paper, a lecture, and write an “ethno drama” for stage to highlight their lives and experiences. Romine will conduct research by reading diaries, letters, and other documents at the South Bannock County Historical Center in Lava Hot Springs. She will develop a slide presentation, draft a script based on her research, and present it in Lava Hot Springs in early 2008. **Jamie A. Romine** is the project director.

Research Fellowships:

Brian Norman (Pocatello), Idaho State University Assistant Professor of Ethnic American Literatures, received **\$3,500** to research and compile a book about “neo-segregation narratives” in contemporary literature. Norman will explore why contemporary literature frequently continues to return to issues of segregation and racial division from the Jim Crow and Civil Rights eras to “address contemporary concerns about racial division and national identity.” His proposed book will dissect such works as *A Raisin in the Sun*, *The Chaneysville Incident*, *The Color Purple*, *Darktown Strutters*, *Getting Mother’s Body* and *As I Lay Dying*.

Kerry Hunter (Caldwell), College of Idaho Political Science Professor, received **\$3,500** to research and write about political culture in New Zealand, focusing primarily on the preservation of individual rights and freedoms as they compare to similar rights in the United States. During five months as a visiting professor at Victoria University of Wellington in 2008, he will interview members of parliament, students, faculty and the general public. He plans to write articles and develop presentations to use in conferences and in his classroom at ACI.

Jason Herbeck (Boise), Assistant Professor of French at Boise State University, was awarded **\$3,500** to continue research examining the work of French writer Albert Camus. Herbeck plans to examine Camus’ literature as a “workshop of philosophical inquiry.” He notes that both Camus’ literary works and philosophical essays appear on high school and college syllabi, but are seldom considered as correspondent parts of a whole.

Steven Olsen-Smith (Boise), Associate Professor of English at Boise State University (Boise), received **\$3,500** to continue research and compilation of a web-based catalog of books owned, borrowed, written in, and consulted by 19th century American author Herman Melville. These books contain annotations and markings by Melville that Olsen-Smith believes help interpret Melville’s work and illustrate the role of books in his own compositions. Olsen-Smith inherited the project from Melville scholar Merton Sealts, who began the catalog in 1948. The online catalog is housed in one location on BSU’s website and involves many contributors from across the country.

Debbie Lee (Moscow), Associate Professor of English at Washington State University, received **\$3,500** to finish research and write a history of the Selway-Bitterroot and Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness areas. The area comprises the largest tract of wild land in the contiguous 48 states, and Lee hopes to write an accessible history, comprised of a series of five individual histories of inhabitants and explorers in the region during different eras.

Teacher Incentive Grants:

Susan Hodgkin, an English teacher in Moscow Senior High School (**Moscow**), received **\$998** to print an anthology of student responses to a Holocaust survivor visiting their classroom. Hodgkin implemented the Adopt-a-Survivor program in Moscow. She invites Holocaust survivors to her classroom to present their stories. Her students will respond with poetry, letters, journal entries, or essays. Hodgkin will select about 130 of the best responses to publish. Enough copies of the book will be made to present to each student, to the school, to the survivor guest, and to others instrumental in the Holocaust survivor programs. **Susan Hodgkin** is the project director.

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Beverly Schumacher, Maple Grove Elementary School (**Boise**), was awarded **\$1,000** to help fund a one-day workshop on reading and music. Peggy Skeffington Gretsch will present a one-day in-service workshop for area music and reading teachers. Gretsch demonstrates the connections between reading and music and shows teachers how to use music to help students better understand literature and other cultures as well as enhance their reading skills. **Beverly Schumacher** is the project director.

Chris McAvoy, a teacher at the Community School (**Hailey**), was awarded **\$1,000** to support activities in a course examining local history of the Wood River Valley. The students will focus on the history of the Ketchum and Hailey Train Depots, write personal essays, design a web-based mining information project, develop a local scavenger hunt, and provide information for interpretive signs for the depots.

Merrienne Montgomery, a teacher at Willow Creek Elementary (**Nampa**), received **\$450** to help bring Idaho State Historical Society resources into Willow Creek Elementary School, and to help fund a one-day field trip to significant historical sites in Boise. Several history trunks, videos, slide shows, and a mural display on the Corps of Discovery will be in the school for two weeks and will be made available to all fourth grade students and teachers. Parents also will be invited to visit the school and review the resources during that time. The field trip will include visits to the Bown House, Old Fort Boise, and the Idaho State Historical Museum.

The Next Deadline for Grants:

The next deadline for Idaho Humanities Council grant proposals is **January 15, 2008**; however, IHC strongly recommends that prospective applicants contact staff to discuss their project ideas before writing their proposals. Applicants also are encouraged to submit a rough draft of their proposals for staff critique in mid-December 2007. Grant guidelines and application forms, as well as information about IHC grants and activities, are available on IHC's website at www.idahohumanities.org, or by calling 208-345-5346, (Outside Boise calling area, call toll free at 888-345-5346).

For an electronic version of this press release contact Wilma@idahohumanities.org.