

The Story Catcher

Mari Sandoz Heritage Society
Celebrating 50-Years 1971-2021



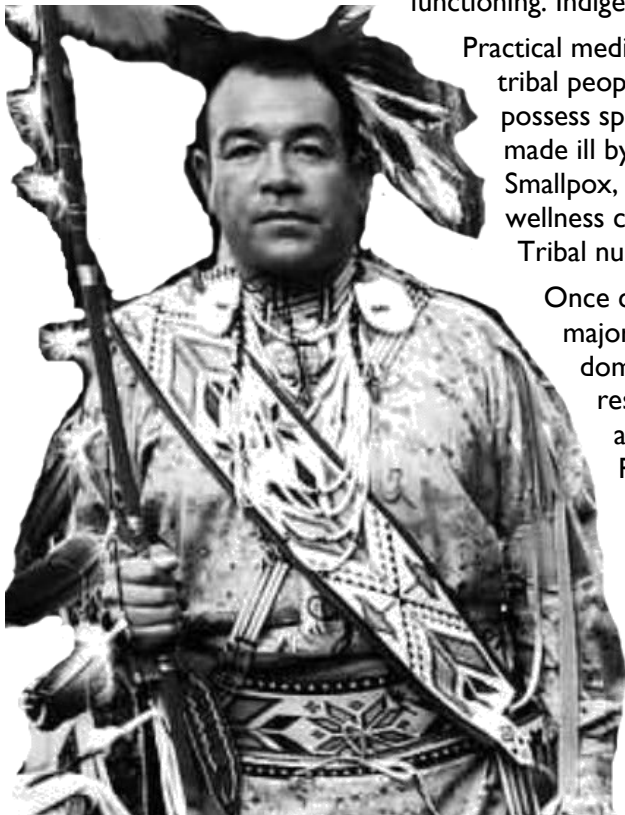
2022 Pilster Great Plains Lecture & Sandoz Symposium

“Health and Wellness on the Great Plains: Historic and Contemporary Views Featuring the Writings of Mari Sandoz 1896-1966”

The Mari Sandoz Heritage Society 2022 Pilster Lecture and Sandoz Symposium, “Health and Wellness on the Great Plains: Historic and Contemporary Views Featuring the Writings of Mari Sandoz 1896-1966”, will again be a FREE live and on-line event September 22-23 at the Center for Great Plains Studies on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus.

The Pilster Lecture by Creighton University Professor Taylor Keen, a member of the Omaha Tribe, will be Thursday September 22 at 3:30 pm (Central Time). The lecture is entitled, “Sacred Seeds: Post Colonization, Indigenous Environmentalism and Living Red”. There will be a question-and-answer session with both the live and virtual audience. Keen’s lecture will be followed by a book signing for Alan Wilkerson’s new book at Francie and Finch Bookstore in downtown Lincoln at 5:15 pm.

Physical and mental health have been and remain a core concern of every human regardless of individual age, occupation, lifestyle, or place of residence. Health and general wellness have governed realities, possibilities, and day to day functioning. Indigenous societies living on the Great Plains were no exception.



Practical medicine involved the use of the plants available to the women of these tribal people, while spiritual remedies were offered by men and women known to possess special powers. The people turned to both when injured, wounded or made ill by the pathogens they knew. After Europeans set foot on the continent. Smallpox, measles, viruses, and the impact of firearms created health and wellness crises for the Lakota, Cheyenne and other Tribal people whose Tribal numbers were negatively impacted.

Once confined to reservations, health and group wellness continued to be major concerns for Indigenous people who were then largely ignored by the dominant American society and culture. For people living on these reservations, the federal Indian Health Service has often been and remains a problematic solution. In fact, today, both the Winnebago and the Ponca Tribes in Nebraska provide their own health care services.

Mari Sandoz was born to a Swiss immigrant who had some medical training before emigrating and settling in the Nebraska Sandhills. She wrote that her father, Jules Sandoz, provided medical care to neighbors including his friends among the Lakota. It is not surprising that health and wellness is one of the many themes she explored in her writings.

The 2022 Sandoz Symposium begins at 9:00 am Friday, September 23 at the Center for Great Plains Studies. Current MSHS Sandoz Scholar, Dr. Cathryn Halverson of Minot, ND, State University will

2022 Pilster and Symposium continued...

open the program with a presentation on “Mari Sandoz and the Little Bighorn”.

A 10:00 am session moderated by Sandoz Board member Renee Laegreid, Ph.D., of the University of Wyoming, focuses on the history of Indigenous and Euro-American health as experienced and written about by Sandoz. Session presentations will be made by Dr. Kimberli Lee, Ph.D. of Northeastern Oklahoma University, Broc Anderson M. A. of the Trails and Rails Museum in Kearney, NE, and Courtney Kouba of Chadron State College.

The 11:00 am session, “Indigenous Health Care of Today’s Great Plains,” will be a question, answer and discussion session moderated by Melodie Edwards, a media producer at Wyoming Public Radio at the University of Wyoming who has researched and has a podcast on this subject. The panelists will be Anpo Charging Thunder, M.D. from the staff of the Gordon, NE, Memorial Health Services and retired UN-L professor and author Joe Starita of Lincoln. Starita is author of *A Warrior of the People: How Susan La Flesche Overcame Racial and Gender Inequality to Become America’s First Indian Doctor*.

At 12:15 pm, the Symposium will move to the Lied Commons for a luncheon with a presentation on the renovation and reuse of the hospital constructed by LaFlesche, an Omaha Tribal physician for decades. Dan Worth, AIA FAIA, a preservation architect in Lincoln, who has been a key professional in this physical renovation project which includes a hospital and day clinic, will present the story of this remarkable woman and her hospital. Luncheon cost is \$30 per person.

A 2:00 pm open house at the UN-L Archives will introduce participants to the Sandoz Collection preserved and made accessible there. At the same time Jamison Wyatt, graduate student in English at UN-L and a member of the MSHS Board, will offer a guided walking tour of places in Lincoln where Mari Sandoz lived and worked while she was writing *Old Jules*, her best-selling signature book.

Registration for the lecture and symposium is now open and information is available on our website at www.marisandoz.org

BOOK REVIEW:

Lost and Found in Nebraska

By Alan Wilkinson. Injury-Times Publications, 2022. 290 pp. \$14.95 paperback.

Review by Jamison Wyatt

On an evening in early November 1928, Mari Sandoz boarded a passenger train at Lincoln Station, westwardly bound. By daylight, the train entered the first low Sandhills of Nebraska, the region Sandoz left nearly a decade before to escape the tyrannical reign of her father, the man who considered her desire to be a writer akin to maggotry. Within a few hours, she would be next to this man as he lay dying at an Alliance hospital. Sandoz recounted this final meeting in the concluding pages of *Old Jules*, and she wrote with a level of emotional detachment that is as shocking as her protagonist is cruel. In her foreword to the biography, she even stated that her tormentor rescinded his previous vitriol, granting her permission to tell his story. Though Sandoz always sought to tell the truth, some readers have speculated that the scene is one of pure fiction that she created to absolve emotional vulnerability. In his latest novel, *Lost and Found in Nebraska*, Alan Wilkinson’s protagonist confronts trauma with no such fantasy. In opening scenes reminiscent of Alexander Payne’s 2013 film *Nebraska*, Steve Kaminski returns to the Sandhills of his childhood forty-five years after assaulting his father. And though his father has since died, the prodigal son must confront familial ghosts found in letters, photographs, and the land itself. Steve’s quest becomes a 21st century rendering of the emotional turmoil Sandoz surely suffered while writing *Old Jules* in the early 1930s. Further, chance encounters lead Steve to Sandoz: a stay in the Mari Sandoz Suite at the Olde Main in Chadron, where he has the obligatory “wash-the-dust-off-from-the-road” drink with proprietor Jeanne Goetzinger; a developing friendship with Lyn Collier, an academic who makes a pilgrimage to Sandoz country in an attempt to finish a project twenty years in the making; and a discovery that he himself may have an historical family connection with Sandoz. Perhaps Wilkinson’s greatest work to date, *Lost and Found in Nebraska* demonstrates masterful storytelling, poetic description, and keen historical observation. In 1993, Caroline Sandoz Pifer permitted Wilkinson to read the unpublished—and presumably lost—manuscript of Sandoz’ first novel *Ungirt Runner*, a novel that betrays Sandoz’ later emotional detachment. Wilkinson taps into the raw energy of *Ungirt Runner* to reveal an enriched biographical understanding of Sandoz before she achieved the polish and poise of successful writerdom. Sandozians of all levels will surely discover something new in *Lost and Found in Nebraska*.

Thank you, Humanities Nebraska!

The 2022 Pilster Lecture & Sandoz Symposium program is funded in part by **Humanities Nebraska and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment**. We are grateful for their financial support. We would also like to thank our co-host, the Center for Great Plains Studies, and UNL Communications for livestreaming services.



National Park Service Preservation Planning Grant Awarded to Chief Dull Knife College to create Healing Trail

The story of the Northern Cheyenne Breakout from Fort Robinson in January 1879 is well known to Sandoz Society members thanks to the efforts of longtime member the late T.R. Hughes and Northern Cheyenne tribe member, historian and author Gerry Robinson.

An estimated 130 men, women and children of the Northern Cheyenne broke out of a makeshift prison at the northwest Nebraska fort to escape the harsh conditions where the US Army, entrusted with their care, was intentionally withholding food and firewood to force the tribe to accept its relocation to Oklahoma. The event led to the creation of the Tongue River Indian Reservation on Northern Cheyenne ancestral land in Montana.

In August 2021, a program of the National Park Service awarded Chief Dull Knife College a Preservation Planning Grant to create a four-mile healing trail on land around Fort Robinson to tell the story of the Northern Cheyenne who were “resolved to live free or die in the effort.” The Fort Robinson Memorial Foundation and Northern Cheyenne Breakout Committee (acting through Chief Dull Knife College) want to turn tragedy into a modern-day opportunity for providing knowledge, understanding, and cross-cultural healing.

The Army asked the Northern Cheyenne to voluntarily depart for the so-called Indian Territory that had been set aside for them in Oklahoma or else. Or else we’ll cut off your food, or else we’ll withhold water, or else there will be no more fuel for your fire. The commander of Fort Robinson had made good on every single or else. It had been more than five days since his prisoners had eaten. Wood was no longer being delivered for their heating stove, and they were slowly freezing in their makeshift prison.

The captives knew they were doomed regardless of their choice: a slow death in the icy barracks, or a brave and honorable death outside in their homeland. As night fell, they reassembled their few rifles from components they’d scattered and hidden. They took aim at the fort’s guards and prepared to fight for their lives. The Northern Cheyenne’s journey home had begun.

Gerry Robinson -- no relation to the namesake of the fort his ancestors escaped from – told Native Sun News Today that the Northern Cheyenne had made a good faith effort to live on the Oklahoma land to which they’d been relocated. “‘Give it a year,’ they were told, and if they didn’t like it, they could come back” to their ancestral home, recounted Robinson. “That was a lie.”

Within six months of arriving in Indian Territory, tribal elders informed the government agent in charge of their relocation that they would stay true to their commitment but would return north as soon as their agreed-upon year was up. While the Northern Cheyenne honored their word, the U.S. government did not; reneging on its agreement, the government denied the request to return peacefully.

Under cover of night, 353 Northern Cheyenne slipped away in September 1878 and started a perilous trek back home. Pursued relentlessly by the U.S. Army, they made their way steadily north and westward. For a month and a half, the group had evaded capture, but their numbers had been reduced in several pitched battles, and the young, injured and elderly had trouble keeping up with the demanding pace.

Shortly after fording the South Platte River east of Ogallala, Nebraska, the refugees

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The Story Catcher

The “Story Catcher” is the title of a book by Mari Sandoz and it is the title of Helen Winter Stauffer’s biography of Mari, *Mari Sandoz: The Story Catcher of the Plains*. The Story Catcher is published four times a year by the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society, a 501©(3) non-profit organization. The vision of the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society is to perpetuate and foster an understanding of the literary and historical works of Mari Sandoz and to honor the land and the people about which she wrote; Native Americans, ranchers, farmers, and the people who settled the High Plains country. The Society hosts an annual conference, the Pilster Great Plains Lecture Series, and a writer’s workshop. Additionally, the Society provides collections on loan to the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center at Chadron State College in Chadron, Nebraska.

Address Changes

Address changes should be mailed to:
P.O. Box 6808, Lincoln, NE 68506

Contributions to the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society are tax-deductible. To join the Society contact visit our website at www.marisandoz.org



Mari Sandoz

The feats, the passions, and the distinctive speech of the West come alive in the writings of Mari Sandoz (1896-1966). As the author of 23 books, including *Old Jules*, *Cheyenne Autumn*, and *Crazy Horse, the Strange Man of the Oglalas*, Sandoz was a tireless researcher, a true storyteller and artist passionately dedicated to the land. With her vivid stories of the last days of the American frontier, Mari Sandoz has achieved a secure place as one of the finest authors in American literature and one of Nebraska’s most important writers. As a historian and as a novelist, Sandoz was inducted into the Nebraska Hall of Fame in 1976 and posthumously received the coveted Wrangler Award from the Hall of Great Westerners.

Preservation Grant continued...

decided to split up. A swifter, healthier force continued onward under the leadership of Chief Little Wolf to winter in the Nebraska Sand Hills and eventually the Yellowstone region of Montana Territory; those less able to keep the pace followed Chief Morning Star.

“Morning Star was in his 60s by then,” said Robinson. “He’d lost five of his family and he was tired,” Robinson explained. “He was what’s called an old-man chief, and the responsibility of an old-man chief is to take care of the women and children.” The group decided to seek refuge under the Lakota chief named Red Cloud on the agency. Morning Star didn’t know the Red Cloud Agency had been moved by the U.S. government 60 miles northward, and Morning Star’s group was instead heading straight toward Fort Robinson, an Army stronghold.

Gerry Robinson’s brother Major Robinson and his Native-owned Redstone Project Development company were tapped to lead the design and construction of the Northern Cheyenne Healing Trail slated for completion in 2025.

So why a healing trail when an anger or resentment trail might seem more fitting? It’s true, agreed Major Robinson, that the U.S. government “looked at our ancestors as animals that needed to be removed from the face of the Earth; I think we have every right to feel that, but it keeps us stuck in that moment and controls us,” he said. “We’re all healing from something, and I hope that people who come and experience this reflect on these amazing people and the children who were never allowed to have their own story. Can we do better and treat each other better—and in the process heal a part of ourselves?”

Excerpts from Native Star News

Trio of Articles Highlight Visit from Swiss Journalist

Falconnier Visits Western Nebraska, Sandoz Country

by Shannon Smith

The Mari Sandoz Heritage Society recently hosted Swiss journalist, author, and festival director, Isabelle Falconnier, as she spent several weeks in Western Nebraska and Lincoln.

Falconnier contacted the Society earlier this year inquiring about the collection of artifacts and documents owned by the Society and held at the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center on the Chadron State College campus. After several conversations with members of the Society and Courtney Kouba, the archivist employed by the Society to manage and further document the collection, Falconnier made arrangements to travel to Nebraska in late May.

She spent time in Chadron with Kouba and then came to Gordon where she and I spent two days exploring Sheridan County and the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. As I drove Isabelle south, deep into the heart of the Sandhills, I was moved to see our landscape through her eyes. She is from Lausanne, a beautiful city of about 140,000 people on Lake Geneva and the home of the International Olympic Committee headquarters. Her old city has medieval shop-lined streets and features a spectacular 12th-century Gothic cathedral with an ornate façade. The huge contrast between our worlds is probably not a lot more than what ‘Old’ Jules Sandoz found when he left Switzerland in 1881 and homesteaded here in the Sandhills.

I was able to find several important locations south of Gordon, Rushville, and Hay Springs thanks to some old, out-of-print, tour maps. The society is working on creating a new tour, with an online map as well as printable versions, to accommodate the many people from all around the world who want to learn more about the lands about which Mari wrote so eloquently.

My family hosted Isabelle at Twisted Turtle in Rushville, where she witnessed the concept of a Reuben Pizza—something that stayed with her this whole trip!



Falconnier Visits Lincoln

by Jamison Wyatt

On Wednesday, May 25th, Swiss journalist Isabelle Falconnier arrived at my house, and we sat at my dining room table discussing Sandoz and *Old Jules* while drinking coffee. We only needed some cigarettes, and our bohemian roundtable would have been complete, just as Mari often participated.

Ninety minutes later, we began driving around the city seeing the places associated with Sandoz's time in Lincoln. This motor tour allowed us to see sites outside of my conventional downtown walking tour, including 1825 South 24th Street, the house of Eleanor Hinman. Seeing the house seemed to affect Isabelle profoundly. She recently read a French translation of *Crazy Horse*, and at the Hinman house Isabelle could imagine the beginning of the *Crazy Horse* research trip Sandoz and Hinman first took together in July 1930.

Eventually, we made our way downtown and visited the site of the old history museum basement where Sandoz conducted her newspaper research for *Old Jules* in 1929 and 1930. A new irony struck me as I described the dark and damp basement to Isabelle. In 1908, Jules punished a young Mari when he found her short story "The Broken Promise" published in the Omaha Daily News. He locked her in the root cellar with snakes. Over twenty years later, Sandoz willingly spent hours in a similar environment to construct the historical background for her punisher's biography. Surely the irony was not lost on Sandoz.

Isabelle and I looked at other downtown sites associated with Sandoz, including the Nebraska State Capitol where Sandoz received the telegram from the Atlantic Monthly Press notifying her on June 13, 1935, that *Old Jules* won first place in its nonfiction contest. The capitol also deeply affected Isabelle.

By early afternoon, we stopped at the Cornhusker Hotel where I recommended Isabelle stay because of its

associations with Sandoz—Sandoz frequently typed *Old Jules* manuscripts in the Tasty Pastry, the old Cornhusker Hotel coffee shop—and then we walked to the University of Nebraska—Lincoln Libraries Archives and Special Collections where we examined some of the Sandoz Collection. I had never seen the notebooks Sandoz used while she conducted research for *Old Jules*, and I was amused by the fact that the notebook brand was labeled "Jewel."

Thursday, May 26, I drove Isabelle to Ron Hull's office at Nebraska Public Media, and there Isabelle and Ron had a nice conversation for about ninety minutes. I stared out Ron's window and through the misted fog gazed upon the outline of the state capitol thinking again about how Sandoz's life changed there in 1935.

Isabelle and I traveled back to downtown and stopped at the Nebraska History Museum where we arranged to see the dress Sandoz wore to the 1938 stage adaptation of *Old Jules* in Alliance. I am still always so shocked by how physically small Sandoz was, especially when we think of her as a larger-than-life writer who has so greatly inspired us all. Her dress was a lovely cream lace with dark brown rayon trim. The dress entranced Isabelle.

Afterward, we toured around downtown and the university some more, and then later in the evening we had a lovely dinner in the Haymarket at the Oven, another site tangentially related to Sandoz. (Mary Zarek, an early Lincoln friend of Sandoz, used to make chocolates at Russell Stover's candy factory in the building where we ate.) After dinner, I drove Isabelle past Lincoln Station, the Burlington Depot from which Sandoz left in 1928 to travel to Alliance and visit *Old Jules* before he died.



Top photo: Swiss journalist Isabelle Falconnier visits with Ron Hull at Nebraska Public Media

Middle photo: Falconnier at the Nebraska History Museum with the dress Sandoz wore to the 1938 stage adaptation of *Old Jules* in Alliance

Bottom photo: Article author Jamison Wyatt and Falconnier enjoying a meal at The Oven in Lincoln's Haymarket District

Photo credits Jamison Wyatt

A Swiss Journalist in the Footsteps of Mari Sandoz in Nebraska

by Isabelle Falconnier

Translated from French and edited by Shannon Smith

As a Swiss journalist and author, I first heard about Mari Sandoz just one year ago. But I felt an urge to travel across the Atlantic, just like her father did in the 1880s. Driving from Chadron to Gordon and Lincoln and visiting Mari's main places, thanks to Mari Sandoz Heritage Society members Shannon Smith and Jamison Wyatt, I definitively fell in love with her.

– Isabelle Falconnier

I was born on the shore of Lac Léman, between lake and mountains, in the heart of the Old World, Europe. But I have always been interested in the mythology of the Last Frontier and the impact it had both on European and American people. I studied English and American literature in Switzerland and in Scotland, became a journalist, wrote many papers about Nature Writing authors and a 2018 French-language book about Montana. In Jules and Mari Sandoz, who crossed and broke so many frontiers, I found two people who lived all the expectations as far as the Frontier myth is concerned.

I travelled from Lausanne, Switzerland, to Nebraska, during ten days in May 2022. My intentions were both to research facts and figures about Mari, and to visit the places and landscapes that were hers during her Nebraska years. I discovered many fascinating things during this trip. I discovered that somewhere on this planet, people do eat pizzas topped with sauerkraut and corned beef and seem to enjoy it. I was given the definite proof that even when freezing cold outside, Americans never ever think of drinking water without ice. I learned that the Nebraska weather is even more unstable than the Scottish one: sun, heat, rain and freezing wind all in one afternoon – not to speak about the tornado warnings. I could not help crying when I unexpectedly sighted a herd of free-range bison in Fort Niobrara Wildlife Park, peacefully eating grass, losing their winter coat with youngsters running amongst the eldest. And of course, I met Mari.

She was the one who made me travel so far. I first saw her name in a small French-language book published in 2021 in Geneva, Switzerland: *Miss Julia Fleisch, L'aube du féminisme* by Christian Fleisch, telling the story of a Georgian girl of a Swiss born baker who became a fierce feminist and a journalist during the late 1880's until her death in 1941. Then, a new French edition of Mari's *Crazy Horse* biography came out at the éditions du Rocher publishing house - I wrote an article about the book issued in the Sunday paper *Le Matin Dimanche*. The more I read and learned about Mari, the more she sounded both extraordinary and familiar. But completely unknown in

Switzerland! I decided to travel to Nebraska, her place of birth, writing, and burial, obviously the best place I could really get to know her. My aim was to understand the making-of of her best-seller book, *Old Jules* as well as the particular relationship between Mari and her father himself.

I found people like Shannon Smith, Jamison Wyatt and Courtney Kouba very helpful. I'll never thank them enough for their time, patience, and dedicated knowledge of Mari Sandoz. The first leg of my trip was Chadron, after a glimpse at Chimney Rock symbolic entrance to the State. At the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center, I met Courtney Kouba, archivist of the Center, who introduced me to the collection and the nice museum. She helped me find my way through the thousands of letters exchanged between Mary and her publishers, review directors, friends, family, readers, journalists, all relating to *Old Jules*. At the Olde Main Street Inn, I naturally slept in the unique Sandoz Suite and met the extraordinary Jeanne Goetzinger who told me the story of her mother and of her so special place. Jeanne had then just started to read *Lost and Found in Nebraska*, a novel set in Sandoz Country today, by her English friend and writer Allan Wilkinson. She was so excited to be in the novel, as well as her stylized hotel!

In Gordon, the precious Shannon D. Smith introduced me to the mysteries of the Sandhills: we drove multiple country roads through Old Jules Country all the way from Gordon to Mari's sister Caroline ruined small museum, the Sandoz family Orchard place, Mari's gravesite overlooking the homestead, the remote Swiss Beguin Cemetery, the River Place and the Mirage Flats area, where Old Jules first settled, the Sacred Heart Church he contributed to build, Walgren Lake and finally Rushville, where Mari got both a teacher license and a divorce. The freezing wind did not take away a hint of the melancholic charms of these places.

In Valentine, on my way to Lincoln, I met David Sandoz, one of Mari's many great-nephews. He showed me two precious things: a framed fine drawing of the Sandoz crest, proudly suspended near the entrance of the house, and a letter he got from Mari in May 1963, explaining to the young Dave how to get to her New York apartment. The letter is even accompanied by a map of Greenwich Village hand drawn by Mari! David made the visit to New York. Both the letter and the map are carefully framed on the wall of Dave's bedroom.

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Story Catcher Workshop Colorado Debut A Success

The popular Mari Sandoz Story Catcher writing workshop for new and emerging writers left the state for the mountains of Colorado this summer.

The July 19-22 event was held on the Western Colorado University campus in Gunnison, Colorado. That marks the first time in a decade the popular event wasn't held in or near the scenic campus of Chadron State College in the northwest corner of Nebraska's Panhandle.

Gunnison, in the heart of the Rocky Mountains, would have won Mari Sandoz' approval based simply on the inspiration of Crested Butte and the Grand Mesa National Forest. Noted national writers Lloyd Schwartz, Sean Prentiss, Kelly Ann Jacobson, Maya Jewell Zeller, and Kelly Krumrie provided workshops for the participants.

Prentiss, one of the country's leading nature writers, led the Advanced Workshop, As he has done in past years, collected writing examples in advance from the participants meeting with them individually during the workshop to review their projects. He also led a craft session and a lunch roundtable at which participants discussed the "next chapter" in their writing, from college degree options to residencies, retreats, and workshops, to options and processes to get published. Prentiss wrote *Finding Abbey: The Search for Edward Abbey and His Hidden Desert Grave*. It won the 2015 National Outdoor Book Award for History/Biography, the Utah Book Award for Nonfiction, the New Mexico-Arizona Book Award for biography and was a finalist for the Vermont and Colorado Book Awards. He is the series co-editor for *Bloomsbury Writers Guide and Anthology* textbook series and serves as the poet laureate of *Backcountry Magazine*.

Schwartz discussed *Comedy in Poetry: Do Jokes Always Have to be Funny?* He says from the drunken porter scene in *Macbeth* to contemporary poets like Robert Pinsky and Mark Halliday, poetry has room for humor, and often that humor intensifies the pathos. Schwartz is a prolific and much-admired voice in modern poetry, with many literary achievements, as outlined in his profile at the Poetry Foundation: Born in Brooklyn, poet and Elizabeth Bishop scholar. He earned a BA at Queens College CCNY and a PhD at Harvard University. In his poems, Schwartz often uses a conversational frame to explore intimate and familial relationships. He is a Professor of English, Emeritus, at the University of Massachusetts in Boston, where he served as director of the creative writing program.

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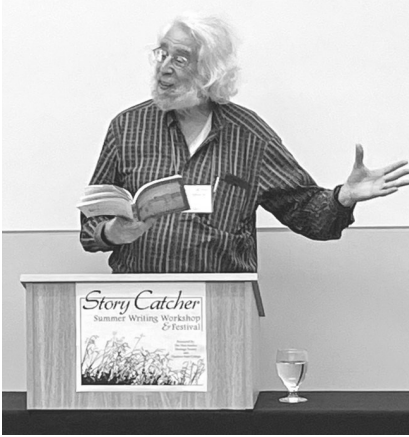
In Lincoln, under pouring rain, I found in Jamison Wyatt, author of a very useful and complete *Stalking the Ghost of Mari Sandoz*, a perfect guide to her haunts in the capitol city. He walked me around the city where Mari lived from 1919 to 1940, showing me the places she lived in as well as other significant sites – University, Historical Society, Capitol, etc. What a perfect storyteller Jamison is! I could imagine Mari chatting with her cousin in front of their first boarding house, or working in the old – and now gone – basement offices of the Historical Society.

We even met the famous television producer Ron Hull, who had the great idea to ask Mari to give a series of talks about writing on tv in the 1960s, bringing her all of a sudden to a much broader audience! I was eager to see the dress Mari wore at the first staging of a play about Old Jules in Alliance in 1938 – the picture showing her with her mother and the actor playing *Old Jules* is a symbolic and important one. I was indeed able to see the dress, carefully taken out of her box by the Historical Society staff, and this moment was a very moving one for me.

In Alliance, I visited the vast cemetery to see Jules Sandoz gravestone – his wife and youngest daughter are not far from him. I also strolled the streets imagining the old hospital where Jules died and Mari decided she could at last write this *Old Jules* that would change her life. After a last glimpse on Chimney Rock, it was time for me to drive back to Denver Airport.

I for sure enjoyed discovering Nebraska very much – her places, landscapes, and people. The woman I met there, named Mari Sandoz, profoundly impressed me. Her childhood in the Sandhills, eldest of this hard working and strict Swiss migrant couple, is nowadays hardly imaginable. The strength it took her to get her independence from this background, and then nevertheless use it as sociological, historical, and literary material for her books, leaves me amazed. Everything that surrounds *Old Jules*, its creation, its destiny, what it reveals – and does not tell – about Mari and her father's relationship, is as much inspiring as thrilling. The fact that the daughter of the first Sandoz to ever travel from Switzerland to establish in Nebraska, and make his part of Nebraska's history, herself became a major Western American writer, makes me somehow proud.

Now I'm back home in Lausanne, Switzerland. Mari's waiting for me not to forget her: I'm working on an article for a Swiss historical magazine called *Passé Simple*, and then, hopefully, I'll turn my Nebraska journey into a book, a non-fiction narrative that will introduce Mari Sandoz to my fellow Swiss readers.



Kelly Ann Jacobson taught “Literary Magic: Strengthening Your Speculative Fiction with Literary Elements”. She focused on applying literary fiction techniques to participant’s speculative works. A brief description of the genres was followed by the reading of techniques applied to science fiction, fantasy, and other speculative genres. Jacobson is the author or editor of many published books, including *An Inventory of Abandoned Things*, which won the 2020 Fiction Chapbook Contest by Split/Lip Press, who subsequently published the collection in 2021. Dr. Jacobson received her PhD in fiction from Florida State University and teaches speculative fiction and short story writing for Southern New Hampshire University’s online MFA in creative writing.

Maya Jewell Zeller is, the author of the interdisciplinary collaboration (with visual artist Carrie DeBacker) *Alchemy For Cells and Other Beasts* (Entre Rios Books, 2017). She is Associate Professor of English for Central Washington University and Poetry Editor for Scablands Books.



Kelly Krumrie is a writer and teacher based in Colorado. Her creative and critical writing appears in *DIAGRAM*, *Entropy*, *La Vague*, *Black Warrior Review*, *Full Stop*, *The Explicator*, and elsewhere. She holds a PhD in English and Literary Arts: Creative Writing from the University of Denver where she served as prose editor for *Denver Quarterly*. She also writes a column for *Tarpaulin Sky Magazine* called “Figuring” that puzzles over and gives shape to art and environments that integrate or concern mathematics and science. Dr. Krumrie is currently the Visiting Writer in English at Western Colorado University.

Longtime Story Catcher coordinator Matt Evertson, a professor at Chadron State College and a member of the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society Board had assistance this year from fellow board member Steve Coughlin who teaches at Western Colorado University and received training in Story Catcher organization and management during his time at Chadron State.



Photos from top to bottom right: Lloyd Schwartz giving a reading on the last night of the workshop; Lunch field trip to the West Tomichi River Park; Student writers working through a series of interactive exercises focused on speculative fiction; Sean Prentiss leading a craft session on “Time Perception and Creative Writing”; Kelly Ann Jacobson giving a spirited reading from her book *Tunk and Wendy*; Maya Jewell Zeller energizes the crowd with new work, poetry and prose from her many publications on the third night of the workshop.

Photo credits Story Catcher Workshop

Call For Proposals

Mari Sandoz Research Award

The Mari Sandoz Heritage Society encourages research on Mari Sandoz and her work by offering an annual research award of \$1,000 for proposals that emphasize new insights on Sandoz or new approaches to her life and work. Topics to consider include: feminism; American Indian topics; environmental issues; activism. The award recipient will present the research at the Mari Sandoz Symposium held annually during the fall.

The Mari Sandoz Heritage Society agrees to award this scholarship in two installments: the 1st installment of \$500 to be awarded upon announcement; the 2nd installment of \$500 to be awarded following presentation of research at the Mari Sandoz Symposium (dates & location TBD). The Mari Sandoz Heritage Society will also waive the symposium registration fee and reimburse for travel expenses for up to but not exceeding \$700 to attend the symposium. Travel arrangements are the responsibility of the scholar. Failure to deliver the presentation of research will result in forfeiture of the 2nd installment of the scholarship and all travel reimbursement.

Applications are accepted from August 1 of the current year to July 31 of the following year. The deadline for applications is by midnight on July 31. Applicants will be contacted by September 1 regarding the status of their applications. Award winners will be announced publicly at the fall symposium.

More information and the online application can be found here: <https://www.marisandoz.org/events-activities/mari-sandoz-research-award/>

Applications will be evaluated on:

- The articulation of the research question
- The context of the broader theoretical/historiographical issues significant to the topic
- The significance of the overall project to the field of Sandoz research
- The decision of the Sandoz Research Award committee is final. Applicants will receive email notification of their proposal status following final review of the proposals.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR RESEARCH IS AVAILABLE THROUGH THE VOORHEES ENDOWMENT

The Voorhees Endowment at Chadron State College provides stipends in the form of Voorhees Grants for researchers using the archival resources of the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center. Applicants are required to define their proposed project(s) and describe how endowment funds will be used. Funding may be used for travel to the Center; lodging during research trip to the Center and preparation of research project findings into various media formats. Priority will be given to individual researchers or research teams from schools in the Chadron State College service area, including reservation schools. Mari Sandoz Research Award Applicants are encouraged to apply for these funds. Please use the online endowment application form found here: <http://www.marisandoz.org/funding-endowments/endowment-request-form.html>

Mari Sandoz
HERITAGE SOCIETY

www.marisandoz.org

Questions?

Contact Mari Sandoz Research Award
Committee Chair, Dr. Jillian Wenburg
jl@jillianwenburg.com

2022 History Day Recognizes Youth With Sandoz Prize

25 students from Nebraska's Panhandle participated in the Western District History Day at Chadron State College on February 25. Categories included documentary film, free-standing or table-top exhibits, theatrical performances, research papers, and websites. The top three entries in each category advanced to the Nebraska State Contest in Lincoln. The Mari Sandoz Heritage Society Great Plains Award was given to Miranda Betson and Teague Edelman of Crawford for "The Many Faces of Mount Rushmore." Overall results from the junior and senior divisions:

SENIOR DIVISION (High School)

- Group Exhibit** Kamden Victory and Tylea Underwood of Crawford, "Grace Abbott"
Ariisa Staman, Erika Flores, and Nichelle Patty of Bayard, "The Women Belong in the House and in the Senate"
- Group Performance** Matthew Applegate and Dugan Pafford of Bayard, "An End to Nucyaler [sic] Proliferation by Jerry Rabushka"
- Individual Documentary** Tyler Kaus of Chadron, "Meyer v. Nebraska: Debate Over Bilingual Education"
Alexa Tollman of Crawford, "The Battle to Save Fort Robinson's History"
- Individual Paper** Maralee Rischling of Chadron, "The Debate to Forego Diplomacy: The 1936 Nazi Olympics"
Hannah Rudloff of Sioux County "Nixon Goes to China: Consequences for the 20th Century & the 21st Century"
- Individual Website** Thomas Kaus of Chadron "Diplomacy that Aided Polish Independence"

JUNIOR DIVISION (Middle School)

- Group Exhibit** Miranda Betson and Teague Edelman of Crawford, "The Many Faces of Mount Rushmore"
Ada Norman and Amelia Betson of Crawford, "Sacagawea"
- Group Website** Matthew Sorenson and Samuel Kahl of Chadron, "Debate and Diplomacy During the Cuban Missile Crisis"
Eliu Paopao and Wesley Margetts of Chadron, "Grigori Yefimovich Rasputin and his Effects on the Romanovs"
- Individual Documentary** Josephine Werner of Chadron, "The Use of Animation as Propaganda in World War II"
Mason Frye of Chadron, "Joe Louis' Influence for Civil Rights Movement"
- Individual Exhibit** Jaelyn Brown of Chadron, "Jefferson vs. Hamilton Debate on the National Bank"
- Individual Website** Hannah Sprock of Chadron, "Hindenburg Disaster"
Samson Sprague of Chadron, "Understanding the Space Race"

Sandoz Center Exhibit Features the Photography of Fred W. Farrar

(reprinted with permission from Chadron State College)

"Fred W. Farrar's Pioneer Photography" is the current exhibit at the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center at Chadron State College now through December 15, 2022. Gallery hours are Monday through Thursday 10:00 a.m.-noon and 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. and Friday 10:00 a.m.-noon.

Pioneer photographer Fred W. Farrar chronicled the Black Hills from the turn of the 20th century through the 1930s. An exhibit that opened in July at the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center consists of 30 of 39 pieces displayed in the 1980s in a collection organized by the late Dr. Allen Shepherd, a former CSC History Professor, and the late Mary Farrar, daughter of Farrar. Farrar leaves a legacy of images of life in the Black Hills around the turn of the century. He took photos of people, parties, babies, weddings, and scenery. His photos include parades, fairs, the circus, and the largest Rapid City event of the year from 1898 to 1910, Stockmen's Days. According to Shepherd and Mary Farrar, current generations owe a considerable debt to roving photographers like Farrar. With a mobile dark room, camera, and glass plate negatives, they ventured into the wilderness, photographed a cross-section of his era, and often received little remuneration.

Farrar, along with others, provided an invaluable service by capturing images of space and time which no conventional historian could. Part professional and part amateur, part artist and part historian, part user of glass plates and the new film negatives. His portraits range from local historical figures to unidentified residents. Some of the most powerful images are

(continued on page 11)

Farrar Photos continued...

unknown subjects and many capture the essence of the era and the human experience, both joyful and tragic, according to Shepherd and Mary Farrar.

Farrar was born in 1885 in Iowa and came to Rapid City with his family when he was two. In addition to photography, he enjoyed the outdoors, hunting, horses, music, and gunsmithing. He attended Rapid City High School and the South Dakota School of Mines. He died in 1975 at the age of 90 in Chadron and was buried in Mountain View Cemetery in Rapid City. He had five sons, and one daughter, Mary, who preserved the collection for many years, who died in 2015. Farrar's granddaughter, Dede Farrar, inherited the collection of more than 2,500 negatives, photographs, and ephemera and donated it to the Minnilusa Historical Association and Pioneer Collection at The Journey Museum in Rapid City in 2017.

THE MARI SANDOZ HERITAGE SOCIETY PRESENTS

A BOOK TALK

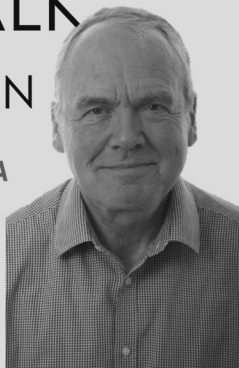
WITH **ALAN WILKINSON**
AUTHOR OF THE NEW NOVEL
LOST AND FOUND IN NEBRASKA

SEPTEMBER 22, 2022
5:15 P.M.

FRANCIE & FINCH BOOKSHOP
130 South 13th Street, Lincoln, NE

In the 1920s, Mari Sandoz wrote *Ungirt Runner*, an autobiographical novel that was key to her development as a writer; however, the whereabouts of the unpublished manuscript are currently unknown. Fortunately, English writer Alan Wilkinson read the manuscript in 1993 and took extensive notes which he has incorporated into his latest novel.

In *Lost and Found in Nebraska*, a prodigal son returns to the Sandhills after a forty-year exile, and an academic searches for the missing manuscript. Together they uncover some unsettling truths about themselves and the author of *Old Jules*.



For more information
info@marisandoz.org

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