

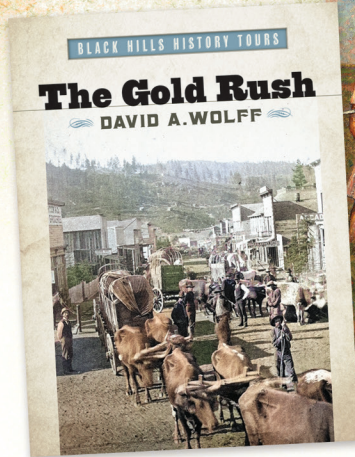
# 2024 SOUTH DAKOTA FESTIVAL of BOOKS

September 20-22, 2024

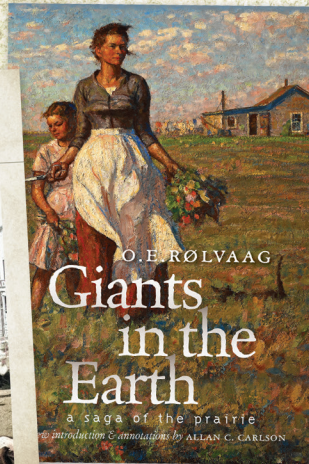




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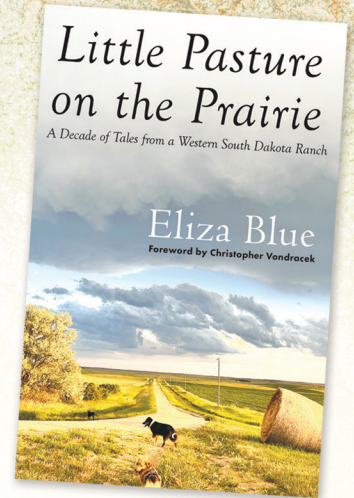
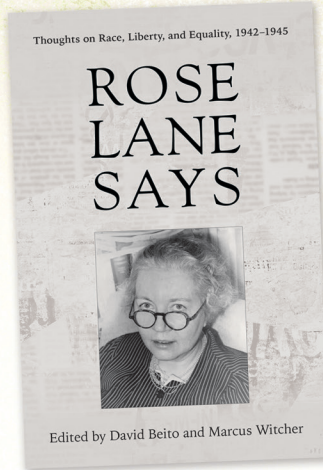


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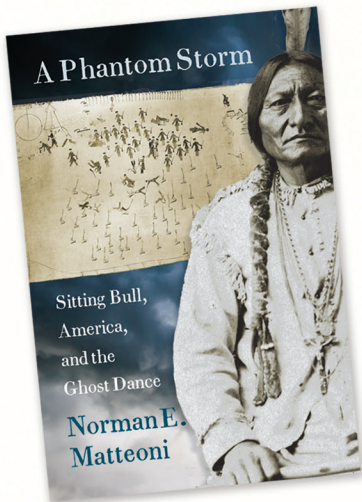
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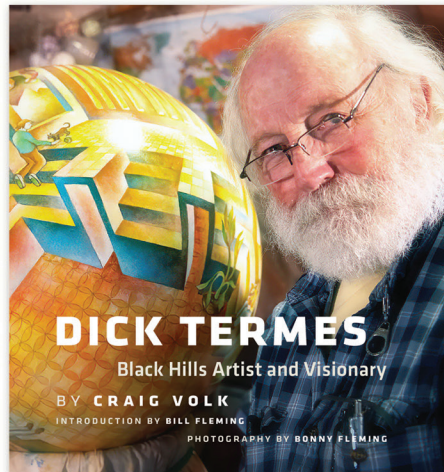


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Brookings muralist Chuck Bennis created the cover for this year's Festival of Books guide. Bennis creates art using several different formats including digital illustrations, murals and caricatures.

Check [SDBookFestival.com](http://SDBookFestival.com) and visit the SDHC booth in Exhibitors' Hall at the Festival for your chance to win this piece!

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View the schedule, changes to the author roster and other news at [SDBookFestival.com](http://SDBookFestival.com) or on the [SD Humanities Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#) pages. Use [#sdbookfest](#) when commenting or to view others' comments.

The South Dakota Festival of Books  
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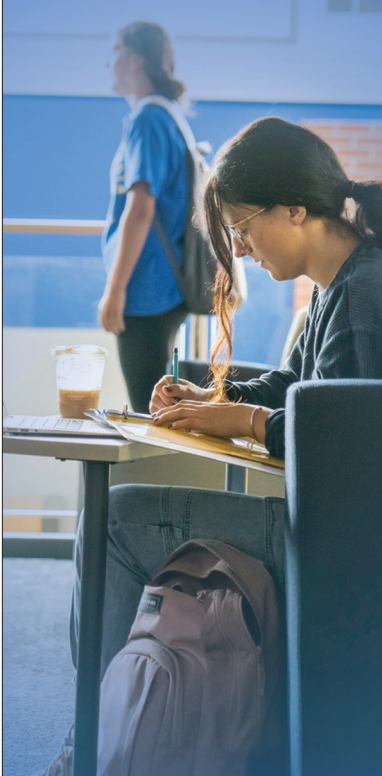
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# Welcome to Brookings

On behalf of the City Council and myself, I welcome you to the City of Brookings for the South Dakota Humanities Council's 22nd annual South Dakota Festival of Books – our state's premier literary event.

We appreciate the opportunity to showcase our community to literary enthusiasts from across the country who come here biennially to learn and commune.

Brookings combines small-town charm with college-town energy and world-class cultural and recreational amenities. We are the proud home of South Dakota State University and its Division I Jackrabbits.

When you have breaks in your schedule, I encourage you to walk through one of our beautiful parks, visit one of our museums (South Dakota Art Museum, South Dakota Agricultural Heritage Museum), or catch a glimpse of Mama T. Rex at the Children's Museum of South Dakota. I hope you'll have time to also stroll our colorful downtown, shop at our many boutique and retail businesses, and dine at our first-rate restaurants.

We trust you'll quickly learn what our nearly 24,000 residents already know: Brookings is a special place to play, study, work, and live. We're a vibrant, welcoming and inclusive community where we invite everyone to Bring Your Dreams! Just imagine – Brookings could be the backdrop for your next novel!



Sincerely,

Oepke "Ope" Niemeyer  
Mayor of Brookings

## Advertising Directory

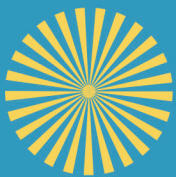
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# Story Medicine



Jennifer Widman and Christina Oey

On behalf of the South Dakota Humanities Council, we welcome you to the 22nd annual South Dakota Festival of Books! At heart, the Festival is about the power of stories, as this year’s presenters demonstrate.

Like many of us, Rebecca Clarren grew up hearing the stories of her ancestors’ struggles and successes as they settled the Dakota prairie. Then she learned about the Lakota whose land her Jewish ancestors had taken, and she realized she had to tell a new, more complex story.

Paul Horsted tells stories with his camera, showing how our landscapes have changed over decades. Jeanine Basinger coaxes Hollywood stars to share stories that might not be part of their public personas.

Some authors, like South Dakota Poet Laureate Bruce Roseland, are visited by characters who demand that their stories be told. Some travel the world to immerse themselves in their stories – climbing mountains, paddling rivers and surviving to tell the tale, as Brian Castner and Peter Heller have done.

Ann Bausum describes how the First Folio saved the magnificent stories of Shakespeare, while Kelsey Finn shows children with medical conditions how to reframe their stories and reclaim their power. Billy Mills’ story of overcoming racism, poverty, and poor health to win Olympic gold will surely inspire listeners of all ages.

In the novel *A Council of Dolls*, one of Mona Susan Power’s narrators expresses her storytelling motivations this way: “I have my own words to craft and offer up to the present moment. Words can undo us or restore us to wholeness. I pray that mine will be medicine.”

We look forward to sharing “story medicine” with all of you!

Christina Oey, *SDHC Executive Director*

Jennifer Widman, *SD Center for the Book Director*

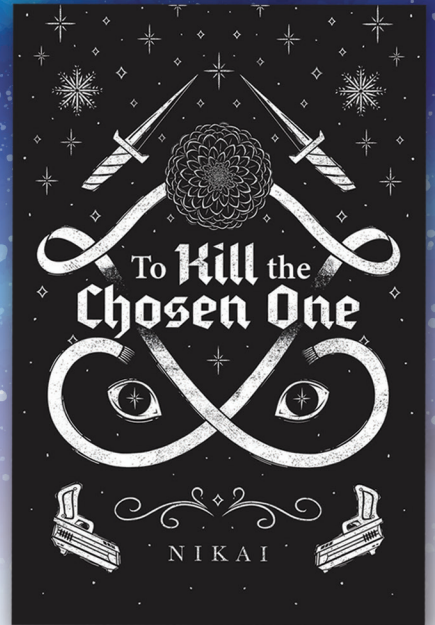
## FESTIVAL GUIDELINES

Please abide by the following guidelines to make this event enjoyable for all: no soliciting or distributing flyers, literature, etc., of any kind at any festival venue without prior consent. No videotaping or tape recording without prior consent. Turn cell phones and pagers off during presentations. The Festival of Books, its sponsors and venues are not responsible for lost or stolen items.



# Words of a Feather Press

ANNOUNCES A NEW YOUNG ADULT FANTASY SERIES



**TO KILL THE CHOSEN ONE**  
**"INCREDIBLY GRIPPING!"**

Nikai is a fantasy author and talent agent based in Los Angeles, California. With a degree in Visual Media Arts and a minor in Psychology from Emerson College, Nikai has honed his skills in crafting engaging and thrilling stories that transport readers to new worlds with memorable characters. His YA fantasy series, *Spirits of Sarana*, followed by its sequel, *Castles of Sarana* takes readers on a thrilling adventure dealing with themes of grief, anger and communication. Upon its debut, *Spirits of Sarana* was shared and recommended by several influencers and actors, earning high praise and reviews online. The Sarana series will span over five books, with the third arriving near the end of the year.



He has also written a New Adult dark fantasy novel, *To Kill the Chosen One*, which follows the villain of the story seeking retribution in an electrifying revenge tale filled with twists and turns—you'll never guess how it ends!

All three books are available now on Amazon!

When he's not writing or working, Nikai enjoys traveling, watching baseball, reading and learning new skills like dancing and more.

For more information, follow at @Nikaij on Instagram and stay up to date by visiting his website at [wordsofafeatherpress.com](http://wordsofafeatherpress.com). You can also reach him at [nikai@wordsofafeatherpress.com](mailto:nikai@wordsofafeatherpress.com)



# Campus Map Event Locations

US Highway 14 Bypass





## SDSU CAMPUS

1. AMERICAN INDIAN STUDENT CENTER (920 Campanile Ave.)
2. HILTON M. BRIGGS LIBRARY (1300 N Campus Dr.)
3. LINCOLN HALL (910 Medary Ave.)
4. MCCRORY GARDENS VISITOR CENTER (631 22nd Ave.)
5. OSCAR LARSON PERFORMING ARTS CENTER (1601 University Blvd.)
6. SD AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE MUSEUM (977 11th St.)
7. SD ART MUSEUM (1036 Medary Ave.)

## SDSU PARKING

Parking at the Oscar Larson Performing Arts Center is free.

Attendees with Visitor's Permits can also park in any stall designated as "Visitor" (see navy dots on SDSU map) or in any Campus Commuter lot. To acquire a Visitor's Permit, visit the Parking Services office, located in the University Student Union Card Services office (Room 140), or the University Police Department, located east of Dana J. Dykhouse Stadium off Jackrabbit Avenue.

Visitors can also use the Pay Lot (east side of University Student Union), which is free for the first 30 minutes.

# Brookings Map Event Locations

From corner of 6th St. and 7th Ave., go east three blocks to Medary Ave., then go north 2.7 miles.



A. BROOKINGS ARTS COUNCIL  
(524 4TH ST.)

C. CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF SOUTH DAKOTA (521 4TH ST.)

B. BROOKINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY  
(515 3RD ST.)

D. GOOD ROOTS FARM AND GARDENS (3712 MEDARY AVE.)

E. THE NOOK (314 MAIN AVE.)



## FREE DOWNTOWN PARKING

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BROOKINGS ACTIVITY CENTER/BROOKINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY LOT  
(SE of 5th Ave. & 4th St.)

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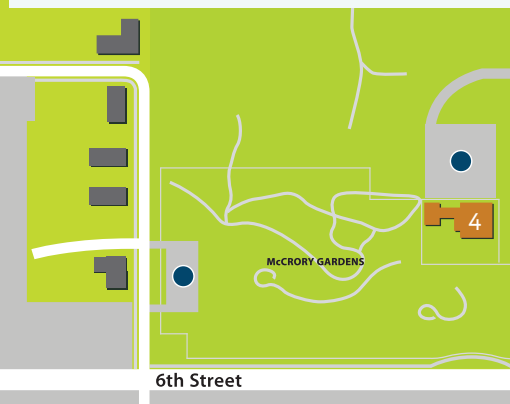
PARK & REC LOT (between 3rd St. & Front St.)

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SDPB SIOUX FALLS STUDIO  
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# Children's/Y.A.



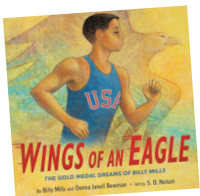
## MAKING MAGIC

Billy Mills recognizes skill and passion. His father told him that when the two are combined, magic happens. It propelled him to win the 10,000-meter race at the 1964 Olympic Games in Tokyo, and he saw it again in Donna Janell Bowman.

Bowman had earlier expressed interest in writing a book about Mills. His wife Pat stayed in touch with the writer, who later visited the Mills home. "I saw this incredible depth of wanting to understand, wanting to help America choreograph its future, starting with the young children," Mills says. "After about four or five hours of visiting, I thought she was on the right track. If a children's book was to be written about me, Donna Bowman was the perfect choice. Her compassion, research and knowledge were the perfect combination."

*Wings of an Eagle: The Gold Medal Dreams of Billy Mills* follows Mills from his childhood on the Pine Ridge Reservation to the Haskell Institute, the University of Kansas and the Olympics, where he became the only American ever to win the 10,000 meters. The storytelling is complemented by illustrations from S.D. Nelson, a member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe.

Mills says he was inspired by the global unity present at the Olympic Games and hopes to instill that message in children. "This is my attempt to get young people to understand their classmates, to listen, to learn, to dialogue," he says "Our culture says that this generation will choreograph America's future. I wanted to help them form an understanding of each other."



Silvia Baptiste

## Conversation and Inclusion

Rhode Island can be cold during the winter, especially for someone used to the year-round tropical climate of Bogotá, Colombia. Juana Medina was a student at the Rhode Island School of Design, struggling with both the weather and a short story assignment. Then she remembered a day when her mother picked her up from school. She was 5 or 6 years old and "was quite furious because I had to learn this thing called 'the English,'" Medina recalls.

Her mother explained that the family was planning a trip to Disney World, and she would have to learn English in order to talk to Mickey Mouse. So Medina learned as much English as she could, only to discover that Mickey Mouse didn't actually speak. "My classmates enjoyed that story and thought it was funny," she says. "Thankfully I had the encouragement from my professor to figure out where this story could live."

Soon, an agent was helping her transform the story into a children's book called *Juana & Lucas*. That story, combined with Medina's second title in the series, *Juana & Lucas: Big Problemas*, have been bundled as *Juana & Lucas: Dos Grandes Cambios*, the 2024 Young Readers One Book. About 15,000 third graders will receive copies, and Medina plans to speak with students in Sioux Falls and Brookings. Her presentations will be

streamed and recorded so students can watch in their classrooms or at home.

Medina's books place Juana in unique but relatable situations, such as struggling to learn a new language or navigating the confusing feelings when a parent remarries. Sometimes, students notice the smallest details. Once during a school visit, she was taken aback when a second grader said, "I'm sorry for your loss."

"It floored me because he was referring to a single line where I share about my father dying when I was little and how I felt my mom was very brave," Medina says. "It was clear to me that he must have gone through a very significant loss, and it doesn't matter if it was a pet hamster, or a goldfish or parent. I'll never know. But he had incredible empathy. It has happened over and over as more books come out. No matter the subject, it allows for connection and more conversation."

Inclusion is another hallmark of Medina's books. As a child, the stories she read often featured characters who were male and white. That sparked a passion for diversity. "For the longest time, I felt like my story was not worthy of being in books, that those were reserved for children in faraway lands," she says. "But with time I realized that there's plenty of room for all of us to find stories in books that reflect our realities and show that we all belong in this world."



## A Novel Surprise

So much of *A Council of Dolls* was a surprise for author Mona Susan Power. She was working on another novel when a friend called about a short story that Power had written years earlier called *Naming Ceremony*. It was about a little girl named Lillian growing up in Chicago in the 1960s with Indigenous parents who carried the multigenerational trauma of the Indian boarding school experience. “You know, this could be a whole novel,” she told Power.

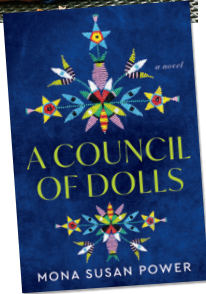
“Naming Ceremony” is now the first part of *A Council of Dolls*, a novel that explores those long lingering effects through three generations of a Native family.

The work is fiction, though Lillian (nicknamed Sissy) is inspired by Power’s own childhood in 1960s Chicago. “My mother didn’t sugar coat things,” says Power, an enrolled member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. “She was telling me about her experiences at those Indian boarding schools as soon as I was able to understand. Whatever issues I might have been having, it was nothing compared to that kind of system and how wrong it was.”

There’s dysfunction in each generation, and its source becomes clearer as the first three sections of the novel travel further back in time and readers meet the characters as children. Power originally intended to set the novel entirely in the 1960s, but worried readers might unfairly judge the characters. To provide fuller context meant wading deeper into history. “I didn’t want to villainize any of them,” she says. “I didn’t want to pull punches, but I really wanted to villainize colonization as opposed to any of these individual



Ted Hall



characters.”

Each child navigates these strange and foreign worlds with a doll — another surprise. “Ethel just arrived,” Power says of Lillian’s doll, which appeared one day during the writing process. “She was just there.”

The dolls help process the complex emotions of turbulent childhoods, much like Power’s own doll, which serves as the basis for Ethel.

“I used to create back stories for my dolls, and they were very real to me,” Power says. “My mother used to tell me that everything was potentially alive. She didn’t see things as inanimate objects, so it wasn’t a leap for me to look at some of my toys as these little beings who were invested in me and my life.”

*A Council of Dolls* won the Minnesota Book award and was longlisted for both the Carol Shields Prize and the National Book Award. In some ways, it feels like a novel Power was always meant to write. “It means the most to me of anything I’ve written,” she says. “It was more personal than any of my other published books. There were times I didn’t realize that I was crying as I was typing. It was only when I kept wiping at my face that I realized I was crying. I felt so much this push from ancestors. I was raised to believe that they are there, still invested in their descendants and relatives. I was raised to ask them for support when I needed it. I really felt as if so many of our dead were surrounding me. It was emotional and very cathartic.”

## SPILLS AND THRILLS

Don Carr and his wife Elesha were traveling through Italy when they noticed smoke rising from the famous volcano Mount Vesuvius.

“Hey, is that active?” Carr asked their driver.

“No,” the driver responded. “That’s the Camorra Mafia.”

“Then he told this story about how for 20 years they’ve been dumping toxic chemicals onto Mount Vesuvius and setting it on fire,” Carr recalls. That was the genesis for Carr’s first novel *The Midnight Rambler*, an environmental thriller set on Italy’s Amalfi Coast.

Carr has enjoyed writing since he was a staffer on the Sioux Falls Lincoln High School newspaper. After a stint in politics, he became a freelance journalist for several environmental groups. An 18-month investigation into a biofuel fraud case led to interviews with special agents within the Environmental Protection Agency. “I’d worked in the environmental movement for a long time, but I really had no knowledge that the EPA had these federal agents with guns and badges who could kick down doors and arrest criminal polluters,” he says.

It informed Carr’s creation of protagonist Sophie Grant, the special agent who pursues a toxic waste dumping cartel and becomes a target of legendary Camorra assassin *Il Mezzanotte Ramingo*, or “The Midnight Rambler.”

Sometimes authors appreciate the liberties of fiction. For Carr, who spent years working for organizations with overt messages, the opposite was true. “I was more careful,” he says. “The book couldn’t be the message. It had to be entertainment first.”



## STORIES ENDURE

Debra Marquart considered herself a musician, not a writer. Then, her band lost \$60,000 worth of equipment in a fire, and she began soul searching. “I recalibrated my sense of what was valuable,” Marquart says. “I started writing out of a sense of solace. If I don’t have the things, I have words for the things. I can start writing things down, recording my feelings and memories. Slowly, the writing began to take on more momentum and power. That’s when I began to realize that the truly durable things in the world are stories. Experiences come and go, things and people are ephemeral. But stories go on.”

Marquart carried that philosophy into her career as a teacher at Iowa State University and the author of several essays, memoirs, short stories and poetry collections, including *Gratitude with Dogs under Stars*, her 2023 release featuring new and collected poems. It was also a hallmark of her four years as Iowa’s poet laureate. Her initiative called “Sounding Our Place” brought her to communities around Iowa to discover what people relished about living there. “The environment and the ecology of the bioregion where we’re from has an important part in shaping the stories we tell and what our communities are like,” she says.

It also helped define her place in the Midwest. Though she has lived in Iowa since 1991, she remains rooted in North Dakota, where she grew up on a farm. “I still think of myself as a North Dakotan and a North Dakota writer,” she says. “My goal was to become more of an Iowan.”



## The Imagination of Poetry and Law

Wallace Stevens, the Pulitzer Prize winner for poetry in 1955, was a graduate of the New York Law School. Edgar Lee Masters, author of the *Spoon River Anthology* (1915), was once a law partner with Clarence Darrow. William Cullen Bryant was admitted to the Massachusetts bar in 1815, and on his daily walk to work was inspired to write “To a Waterfowl” after watching a single bird flying on the horizon.

Maybe it’s not unusual that poetry and the law can intersect, but it is unique to find three poets on the same law faculty. Frank Pommersheim, Tom Simmons and Ann Tweedy — professors in the University of South Dakota’s Knutson School of Law — are prolific poets and will share their work at a reading during the Festival of Books.

Pommersheim, a specialist in tribal law, is the longest tenured of the three. He arrived at USD in 1984 after 10 years of working on the Rosebud Sioux Indian Reservation. His poetry has evolved from family reflections to his assumption of a Buddha persona and the publication of seasonal triptychs illustrated by his daughter, Kate. “You have these experiences as a father with your children and they are amazingly intense, and I was struck by that,” he says. “I wanted to find a way to help me explore and remember. Along the way I started to read a lot of Chinese and Japanese poetry, particularly haikus, and I was taken with that vehicle of short, brief, intense expressions of things.”

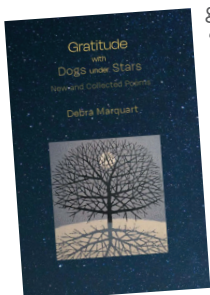
When Pommersheim retired in 2019,

Tweedy filled his position and brought her personal narrative poetry, in which she explores family relationships, the natural world, current events and health. She has written three chapbooks, and her first full-length book, *The Body’s Alphabet*, earned a Bisexual Book Award.

Simmons, who was first introduced to poetry as a fourth grader in Rapid City, enjoys writing nonfiction poetry. “I like finding something personal to write about or something outside myself, from history or someone’s biography, and work with that,” he says.

Poetry fills different roles for each professor. Pommersheim has long used it in classes and inspired Tweedy to follow suit. “I started to think about how a lot of Indian law is from a non-Native perspective,” she says. “I decided to incorporate some Native poetry and some short stories by Zitkala-Ša. The students really enjoy that. It’s a way to incorporate Native voices into federal Indian law, which is rare to hear.”

Simmons prefers to write poetry separately from his classroom duties. Still, all three can see the connections between poetry and the law. “People don’t really think about the law this way, but it requires a lot of imagination,” Simmons says. “You need to think through different possible alternatives and how they will impact things. They both use language. The language is the thing that’s doing something. The text is actually animated in some way, moving the reader or nudging society. They both structure phenomenon and reshape culture.”





## Coming Home for Closure

April of 2021 was not an ideal time to publish a book. The COVID-19 pandemic stopped appearances, tours and most promotional events before they even began. But Trent Preszler is making up for that in 2024 as he returns to South Dakota to speak with audiences about his memoir *Little and Often*, the 2024 One Book South Dakota.

The conversations will be different, three years removed from the book's release. Still, Preszler is thrilled that people continue to find his story. "I always felt like I got robbed of the experience of having a book tour, especially because it was my first book," he says. "I did quite a bit of stuff on Zoom and on podcasts, but it's just not the same. At this point the story lives with other people out in the world. But I'm amazed at how many letters and emails I still get from people, especially since the One Book announcement. I've been making a lot of connections with South Dakota folks."

*Little and Often* is the story of Preszler's journey to repair a long-strained relationship with his father. Preszler grew up on a ranch near Faith, where he struggled with self-identity, self-worth and even his own sexuality. He felt out of place in the rough and tumble cowboy culture of West River and became increasingly estranged from his father, a former rodeo champion and Vietnam War veteran. After Preszler left home, the two rarely spoke until his father's cancer diagnosis began to remove the chill between them.

When his father died, Preszler's only inheritance was a toolbox. He brought it home to New York and was inspired to build a canoe, not only to create something tangible and useful with his

father's hammer and tape measure, but also to heal, a process that continued through writing and still manifests itself in surprising ways.

"It's not like you write the book and close your laptop and say, 'Well, that's over,'" Preszler says. "I thought at one point, maybe naively, that because the writing process was so therapeutic that it was the end of the therapeutic journey. I thought that when I finished the canoe and again when I finished the book. But it's an ongoing thing. The feelings evolve and change. They don't go away completely, they're just different. They mellow, somehow."

Preszler teaches courses in sustainable agriculture and forestry and coordinates the Dyson Leadership Program at Cornell University, where he received a Ph.D. in horticulture in 2012. He previously spent 20 years as a winery chief executive, most recently at Bedell Cellars on the North Fork of Long Island. His visits to South Dakota have mostly been to see family, but he knows his One Book tour and appearance at the Festival of Books will carry more weight.

"If I think about it too much, I get a little nervous because the book is so deeply personal, not just to me, but it's deeply connected to South Dakota — the place, the people and the culture — and not always in positive ways," he says. "But I'm looking forward to it. I'm sure there will be interesting and difficult questions and I'll roll with it. I think there will be some measure of closure there. It will be another step in the process to see how I've changed."



## THE PAIN OF PARTING

The bond between mothers and daughters can be intense. Kao Kalia Yang felt it as she wrote *Where Rivers Part*, which tells the story of her mother Tswb (pronounced *chew*), who was born in Laos and spent years on the run from anti-Hmong violence. Readers feel the anguish when Tswb leaves her mother for a life with the man who would become her husband and the desperation she felt living in a Thai refugee camp before relocating to the United States.

*Where Rivers Part* is Yang's third family memoir. *The Latehomecomer* and *The Song Poet* are about her grandmother and father, respectively. "But I had a feeling that I wouldn't be able to do my mother's story justice until I knew what love was, love that would make you leave one unit to start another," Yang says. "I waited and waited, the pandemic came, and suddenly there was a ticking clock. I wanted to do it while she was still around to be part of the process."

After Tswb granted her daughter permission, Yang began collecting the stories that drive the memoir. But Yang struggled to find the right narrative voice, ultimately choosing to tell the story in first person. "Some part of me always knew that I would have to enter fully into her story," Yang says. "It was hard because I knew that my mother was 16 years old when she left her mother to join my father, and that she never saw her mother again. This is the nightmare that she wakes up from, even after all these decades. I learned as a mother that I would wait for my child wherever she needed me to be. I've always understood that my mom needed to know that her mother's spirit would always wait for her in that jungle where they parted."



## BOOKS YOU WANT, WHEN YOU WANT THEM

A lot has changed since Mark Leslie Lefebvre self-published his first book in 2004, both in the way it's done and how it's received. "I registered a company called Stark Publishing because I didn't want anyone to know it was self-published," he says. "I worked in the book industry and even I had a negative view about what self-published books were."

But the industry was changing, and Lefebvre became part of a movement that has become a mainstay. He'll talk with aspiring writers at the Festival about the challenges and opportunities of self-publishing.

Lefebvre had his first story published in 1992. That same year he began working as a part-time bookseller, joining his passions for writing and publishing in a time dominated by 12 publishers. "Right now we're at the 'big five' because of all the amalgamation," he says. "Unfortunately for writers, there are fewer opportunities."

In 2011, after years in the print-on-demand world, he became Director of Self-Publishing and Author Relations for global eBook retailer Kobo, where he helped create Kobo Writing Life, a DIY portal for authors and small publishers. By the end of 2016, Kobo Writing Life was responsible for one in every four ebooks sold.

It's impossible to predict the future for self-publishing, but Lefebvre envisions an increasingly collaborative industry. "It's not about cutting people out but finding out

how we can best leverage everyone's skills to give readers what they want, how they want it, when they want it."



## The Art of Storytelling



As the youngest of eight children in a boisterous Irish family, it was often hard for Lian Dolan to get a word in edgewise. "I used to rehearse my material for dinner in the bathroom," Dolan says, with a laugh. "What am I going to say that my older brothers and sisters will actually listen to, because when you're the youngest of eight, you are not interesting in any way, shape or form."

In hindsight, those were some of her earliest lessons in storytelling, a craft she has grown to master in a variety of mediums, including magazines, novels, radio and podcasting. She'll share some of her storytelling advice with festivalgoers at a session called "It's All Storytelling."

One of the first lessons she learned was the importance of being a good listener. Picking up on structure, watching for reactions and identifying what resonated with an audience helped her put together her own stories. "For maybe 10 years I said nothing at the dinner table," she says. "I'd listen to my father, who was funny, and my siblings, who seemed smart and sophisticated, tell the stories and shape them. Then you sort of leap off the cliff and start doing it yourself. You figure out that things need a punchline, or they need to be about something more than your life. The key ingredient was listening to the smart and funny people around me."

She further honed those skills at Pomona College, where she continued

writing and hosted a radio show. Then she went to work as a production assistant in the film and video department at Nike. Dolan has written magazine columns for *O*, *The Oprah Magazine*, *Pasadena Magazine* and *Working Mother Magazine*. She is the author of five novels, including 2024's *USA Today* Best-seller *The Marriage Sabbatical*. Her podcast *Satellite Sisters*, an award-winning talk show that she created with her four sisters, began on radio in 2009 and is now a top-rated podcast for women.

It's a varied resume, but no matter for whom she's writing or speaking, the nuts and bolts of storytelling remain the same. "Every story starts with the basics — a beginning, middle and an end — and somewhere in there is a lesson, punchline or something much more dramatic," she says. "Start small and personal and then open up to a wider lesson or take a big cultural trend and bring it down to personal level."

The best stories have staying power. She still recalls a humorous story involving a root canal, followed by a trip to a department store, which she told on her podcast. "I told that story 10-plus years ago, and once a week, people will email me about it. I'm just astonished, because if I didn't tell that story that trip would have just been forgotten. But I'm reminded of it every week. It's not a story that's going to change the world, but it's brought a lot of joy to people over the years. There's nothing better than that."



## T.R.: Accessible and Relatable

One of the saddest bits of presidential trivia involves Theodore Roosevelt, who tragically lost both his mother and his wife on Valentine's Day in 1884.

His deep despair sent him from the hustle and bustle of New York City to the isolation of North Dakota's badlands, where he lived two rugged years as a rancher.

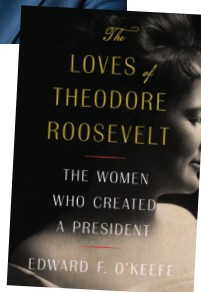
Roosevelt later said that he never would have become president were it not for his experiences in the badlands. That notion made an impression on Edward O'Keefe, who grew up in Grand Forks and spent most childhood summers attending the annual Medora Musical and hiking in Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

As an adult, he wanted to write a book about Roosevelt's time in his home state, but the research soon took a different course. "I found these extraordinary letters in every single place I looked," O'Keefe says. "I saw the influence of these incredible women in his life. I thought it was a story that deserved to be told. The most masculine president in American memory is actually the product of unsung and extraordinary women."

*The Loves of Theodore Roosevelt: The Women Who Created a President* uncovers the influence of Martha Bull-och Roosevelt, Anna Roosevelt Cowles, Corinne Roosevelt Robinson, Edith Kermit Carow Roosevelt and Alice Hathaway Lee Roosevelt — his mother, two sisters and two wives. Each of them provided counsel and consolation when Roosevelt needed them most.

O'Keefe writes that Anna, known as Bamie, was to her brother what Robert F. Kennedy was to John F. Kennedy. "Roosevelt's daughter said that had

Bamie been a man, she — not Theodore Roosevelt — would be president of the United States," O'Keefe says. "Roosevelt called Bamie his feminine Atlas on whose shoulders the world rested."



When Roosevelt left New York for the Badlands, he left his daughter with Bamie. Upon becoming president after the assassination of William McKinley, his first cabinet meetings were held in Bamie's home, known in Washington, D.C., as the

Little White House. "She is this extraordinary figure that intentionally wrote herself out of history. She didn't want anybody to know that it was anyone but TR making these decisions alone."

Similarly, his sister Corinne was a confidante during Roosevelt's term as governor of New York. She would quietly knit or crochet while her brother held meetings with politicians or party bosses. Then, they would strategize. "Haven't we had fun being governor of New York?" he once asked her.

O'Keefe, who serves as CEO of the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library Foundation, believes this new look at the 26th president only enhances the image of the self-made man that Americans have come to know. "I realized that Theodore Roosevelt is a bit like all of us. He needed people in his life, just like we all do, to help him make the right decisions, put him on the right path and pick him up when he's down. I was excited by the notion that I was writing about a more universally accessible and relatable Theodore Roosevelt."

## PRESERVING STORIES

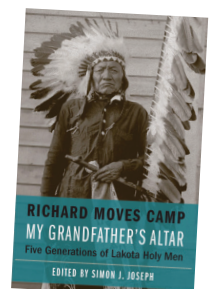
Reading *My Grandfather's Altar* is like sitting across the table from Richard Moves Camp as he tells stories. That's the way it was meant to be.

Simon Joseph, the book's editor, first met Moves Camp while he was studying the historical origins of the Lakota Yuwipi ceremony. Moves Camp explained the ceremony from his family's perspective; his great-grandfather was Wóptuŋ'a, also known as Chips, the holy man remembered for providing Crazy Horse with war medicines of power and protection. Subsequent generations have preserved traditional Lakota religion, a task made even more difficult during the official prohibition period of 1883 to 1934, when the United States Indian Religious Crimes Code outlawed Indian ceremonies.

Over the next two years, Joseph listened as Moves Camp told stories, which are presented in *My Grandfather's Altar* as closely as possible to the "stylistic conventions and formulaic expressions of Lakota oral narration."

Readers learn history that might surprise them. Crazy Horse never wanted fame, Moves Camp explains, just to fulfill his dream of being a great warrior. And the Ghost Dance, a precursor of the Wounded Knee Massacre, was simply a way to reconnect with deceased relatives.

But Moves Camp's main objective is to preserve his family's story of unbridled commitment to traditional Lakota life.



# Schedule Sneak Peek

Watch [SDBookFestival.com](http://SDBookFestival.com) for a complete event schedule in August!

At that time, you can obtain a copy by calling (605) 688-6113 or emailing [festival@sdhumanities.org](mailto:festival@sdhumanities.org). We will also post updates on our Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn pages.

## FESTIVAL PREFACE EVENT

SUNDAY, AUG. 18

6:30 pm at South Dakota Art Museum — Build anticipation for the Festival with *New York Times* bestselling author Marc Cameron as he discusses his new book, *Bad River*. Known for penning the “Tom Clancy’s Jack Ryan” series, as well as taut thrillers set in the wilds of the Alaskan bush, former U.S. Marshal Cameron’s latest book culminates with vivid sequences set in the Badlands. Talk followed by Q&A and book signing.



## THURSDAY, SEPT. 19

SDPB “In the Moment” Live Broadcast with Lori Walsh, featuring Donna Janell Bowman, Billy Mills, S.D. Nelson and Tracy Hauff at SDPB Sioux Falls Studio  
Author Reception at Good Roots Farm and Gardens (TICKETS REQUIRED)



## FRIDAY, SEPT. 20

9 a.m. – 9 p.m. Full day of Festival events and workshops to be announced: Author Talks, Craft Sessions, Panel Discussions, Poetry Readings, Book Signings and more!

Writing Workshops (TICKETS REQUIRED)

1 – 5 p.m. Exhibitors’ Hall open

SDPB “In the Moment” Live Broadcast with Lori Walsh, featuring Jeanine Basinger, Lian Dolan and Mona Susan Power

“Remembering Elizabeth Cook-Lynn” with the Oceti Sakowin Writers Society

“Celebrating Perseverance through Storyworks: Indigenous College Students’ Self-Documentaries” with SDSU Students

“World War II Botany: How Plants Won the War” with Judith Sumner, in conjunction with the South Dakota Agricultural Heritage Museum’s exhibit *On the Farm Front: Agriculture During World War II*

“Rivers, Mountains, and The Alchemy of Storytelling: A Writer’s Journey” with Peter Heller

“Little and Often: Traveling Around the State and Into the Past” with Trent Preszler

Open Mic sponsored by the South Dakota State Poetry Society



# YOUNG READERS FESTIVAL 2024

Learn more at [SDHumanities.org/Young-Readers](http://SDHumanities.org/Young-Readers)

THURSDAY, SEPT. 19

Washington Pavilion in Sioux Falls

FRIDAY, SEPT. 20

Children’s Museum of South Dakota in Brookings

FEATURED PRESENTERS INCLUDE:

- Ann Bausum
- Donna Janell Bowman
- Jeanne Bowman
- Laura Dean
- Kelsey Finn
- Tracy Hauff
- Juana Medina
- Billy Mills
- Lisa Mueller Howard
- Joan Mueller Peters
- S.D. Nelson
- Kevin Smith

## Young Readers One Book 2024

In 2024, SDHC will provide 15,000 copies of *Juana & Lucas: Dos Grandes Changes*, written and illustrated by Juana Medina, to South Dakota third graders!

Thank you TO THOSE WHO MAKE IT POSSIBLE!

\$10,000





## SATURDAY, SEPT. 21

9 a.m. – 9 p.m. Full day of Festival events and workshops to be announced: **Author Talks, Craft Sessions, Panel Discussions, Poetry Readings, Book Signings** and more!

9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Exhibitors' Hall open  
**Veterans' Writing Workshop** with SDHC Scholars Molly Barari and Amber Jensen  
**Awards Ceremonies:** Distinguished Achievement in the Humanities and South Dakota Poet of Merit

**"Celebrating the 2025 Centennial of O.E. Rølvaag's *Giants in the Earth*"** with author Allan C. Carlson, Kamryn Miller of the Center for Western Studies, and Jennifer Teisinger and Delta David Gier of the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra

**"Songs from *The Grass Widow*"** with Eliza Blue and Jon Bakken

**"Footprints: The Pursuit of Excellence"**  
with Olympic gold medalist Billy Mills



Office of the President | Wokini

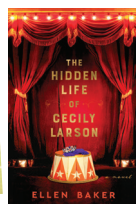
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**"From Iraq to the Arctic and the Klondike"**  
with Brian Castner

**Veterans' Open Mic**

**"Women, Wine & Words"** with Ellen Baker, Lian Dolan, and Maggie Hill (TICKETS REQUIRED)

**Literary Pub Quiz** with Ted Wheeler



## SUNDAY, SEPT. 22

**Book Lovers' Brunch** at McCrory Gardens  
(TICKETS REQUIRED)

**"Finding My Voice, Sharing Family Stories"**  
with Kao Kalia Yang

**Party on the Porch:** FREE admission to McCrory Gardens! Bring a lawn chair or blanket to enjoy live music, with food and beverages available for purchase.

## CAN'T JOIN US IN PERSON?

While we're all looking forward to gathering in Brookings, we know some of you might not be able to join us there. If you'd still like to experience a bit of Festival fun, you can watch livestreams of selected Festival weekend events via Zoom or the South Dakota Humanities Council's Facebook page. Watch [SDBookFestival.com](http://SDBookFestival.com) for details!

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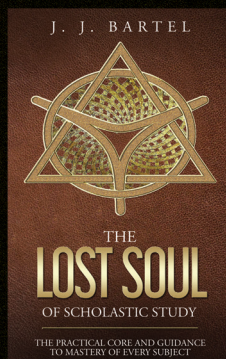
*Vacant Eyes*, \$16.95;

*It's Only Hair*, \$18.95;

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# Presenters

**ELLEN BAKER** is the author of three novels, including *The Hidden Life of Cecily Larson*, the HarperCollins Lead Read for Winter 2024. After growing up in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois and South Dakota (and graduating from Brookings High School), Baker fell in love with Maine on a 2010 visit and stayed. A former independent bookseller and museum curator, she offers online courses and coaching for writers.

**JON BAKKEN** is a classical cellist, jazz bassist, songwriter, composer and elementary strings teacher from Brookings. He is also the creator of *Tiger Meat*, a zine and website about South Dakota albums,



which is being collected in hardcover editions in summer 2024. Bakken recently released his debut folk-rock album, *Return to the City of Afterwall*, and an EP of songs from an upcoming musical theater collaboration with Eliza Blue, *The Grass Widow*.

**JEANINE D. BASINGER** is Corwin-Fuller Professor Emerita of Film Studies at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut, where she founded the Film Studies Department and the Cinema Archives. Her books include *Silent Stars*, winner of the William K. Everson Film History Award and *American Cinema: One Hundred Years of Filmmaking*, the companion to a 10-part PBS series. Basinger lives in Brookings, where she earned degrees from South Dakota State University. Her latest book is *Hollywood: The Oral History*, co-written with Sam Wasson.



Jay Fishback

**ANN BAUSUM** writes about history for readers of all ages from her home in southern Wisconsin. Her latest work, *The Bard and The Book*, celebrates the story of how the plays of William Shakespeare were saved from oblivion thanks to a 400-year-old book. Her body of work was recognized nationally in 2017 by the Children's Book Guild of Washington, D.C.

**DAVID T. BEITO** is an emeritus professor of history at the University of Alabama and a Senior Research Fellow at the Independent Institute. His academic research in American history has covered civil rights, tax revolts, civil liberties, the non-governmental provision of infrastructure and mutual aid. Beito's most recent books are *The New Deal's War On the Bill of Rights* and *Rose Lane Says*.

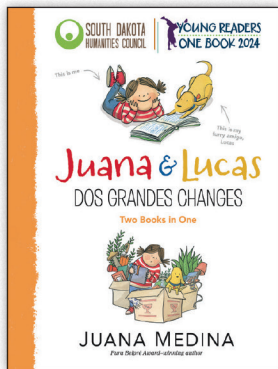
**ESTHER G. BELIN** is the author of two poetry books and co-editor of *The Diné Reader*. She teaches in the Native American and Indigenous Studies Department at Fort Lewis College and the low-residency MFA in Creative Writing program at the Institute of American Indian Arts. Raised in Los Angeles, she learned from the resilient Indian community to strengthen her Diné worldview. She is Tłógi born for Tó'dích'ii'nii and lives just east of the Dibé Ntsaa mountains on the Colorado side of the four corners.



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PHOTO BY SILVIA BARTISTE

**JUANA MEDINA**  
Winner of a Pura Belpré  
Author Award



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**DEDRA MCDONALD BIRZER** is the director and editor-in-chief of the South Dakota Historical Society Press. She is writing an intellectual biography of Rose Wilder Lane, a brief version of which appears as a chapter in *The Essential Women of Liberty*. Birzer's book reviews have appeared in numerous publications and she is a frequent guest on National Review's "The Great Books" podcast.



**ELIZA BLUE** is a writer, folk musician and rancher living on the short grass prairie of western Dakota. Her weekly column appears in 19 print publications and she has written two books: *Accidental Rancher* and *Little Pasture on the Prairie*. She hosts a PBS show celebrating rural art and culture, *Wish You Were Here with Eliza Blue*, and is the artistic director of the Kithship Collective, an organization devoted to innovative, ecosystem-specific storytelling.

**DONNA JANELL BOWMAN** writes inspiring picture books including *Step Right Up: How Doc and Jim Key Taught the World About Kindness* (winner of the 2019 South Dakota Prairie Pasque Book Award) and *Wings of an Eagle: The Gold Medal Dreams of Billy Mills*, co-authored with Lakota Olympian Billy Mills and illustrated by Lakota artist S.D. Nelson. Armed with an MFA in Writing, Bowman works and lives in central Texas.

**JEANNE BOWMAN** has illustrated books including *The Selfish Giant* by Oscar Wilde and *Bob Marshall: Defender of the Wilderness* by Linda Elovitz Marshall. She received the 2022 Will Rogers Medallion Award for Illustrator of the Year for her work on *Charlie Russell and the Gnomes of Bullhead Lodge* by Emily Crawford Wilson. Bowman lives in Sidney, Montana.



**SHERI BRENDEN** is a former research librarian who worked for two of Minnesota's largest law firms and, as a reporter, for the *St. Cloud Daily Times*. She also wrote stories about agricultural cooperatives, farming and rural America for a major farm supply company. Her book, *Break Point*, tells the story of how two Minnesota teenagers took on the unequal system of high school athletics in 1972, setting a nationwide legal precedent.

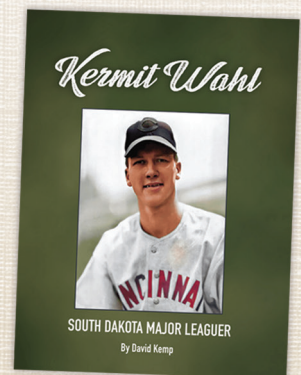
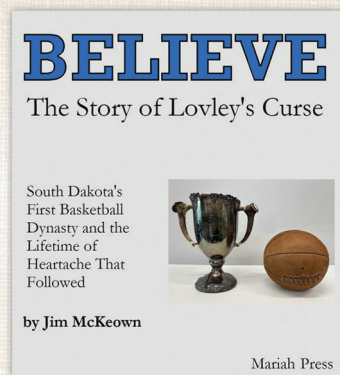
**TAYLOR BRORBY** is the author of *Boys and Oil: Growing Up Gay in a Fractured Land*, *Crude: Poems* and *Coming Alive: Action and Civil Disobedience* and the co-editor of *Fracture: Essays, Poems, and Stories on Fracking in America*. His work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Huffington Post* and numerous anthologies. A contributing editor at *North American Review* and a member of the editorial boards of *Hub City Press* and *Terrain.org*, Brorby teaches nonfiction writing at the University of Alabama.



**GARRETT BUCKS** is the founder of The Barnraisers Project, which has trained nearly 1,000 participants to organize majority-white communities for racial and social justice. He is also the author of the popular newsletter *The White Pages*. Originally from Montana, Bucks lives in Milwaukee with his wife and two children. *The Right Kind of White* is his first book.

**ALLAN C. CARLSON** holds a Ph.D. in Modern History from Ohio University and has taught at Hillsdale College, Gettysburg College and the Catholic University of America. For two decades he served as Editor of Marriage and Family Studies for *Transaction*. His books include *The New Agrarian Mind* and (as editor) *Land and Liberty: The Best of FREE AMERICA*. Carlson also wrote the introduction

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## Presenters

and annotations for the 2024 re-release of O.E. Rølvaag's classic novel *Giants in the Earth*.

**DON CARR** investigates and writes about America's worst polluters, from the gas fields of North Dakota to the "Dead Zone" in the Gulf of Mexico. His work has been featured in *Politico*, *Sierra Magazine* and *The Huffington Post*, and he has appeared on Fox News, *CBS Evening News* and NPR. Carr worked as a Senior Communications and Policy Advisor for the Environmental Working Group and a Senior Communications Manager at the Environmental Defense Fund. *The Midnight Rambler* is his first novel.



**BRIAN CASTNER** is a nonfiction writer, former Explosive Ordnance Disposal officer and veteran of the Iraq War. His most recent book is *Stampe*, a new history of the 1897 Klondike Gold Rush. Castner is also the bestselling author of *Disappointment River*, *All the Ways We Kill* and

*Die* and the war memoir *The Long Walk*. His journalism and essays have appeared in *The New York Times*, *WIRED*, *Esquire* and on NPR.

**DAVID CHARPENTIER**, author of *The Boy Who Promised Me Horses*, has worked in Indian education since 1990. At St. Labre Indian School on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation, he taught English and established a college mentoring program. He serves as founder and co-president of the nonprofit Bridge Foundation, providing cultural, leadership and educational programs for Native youth in southeastern Montana. Charpentier lives with his wife Mandy in Billings, Montana.

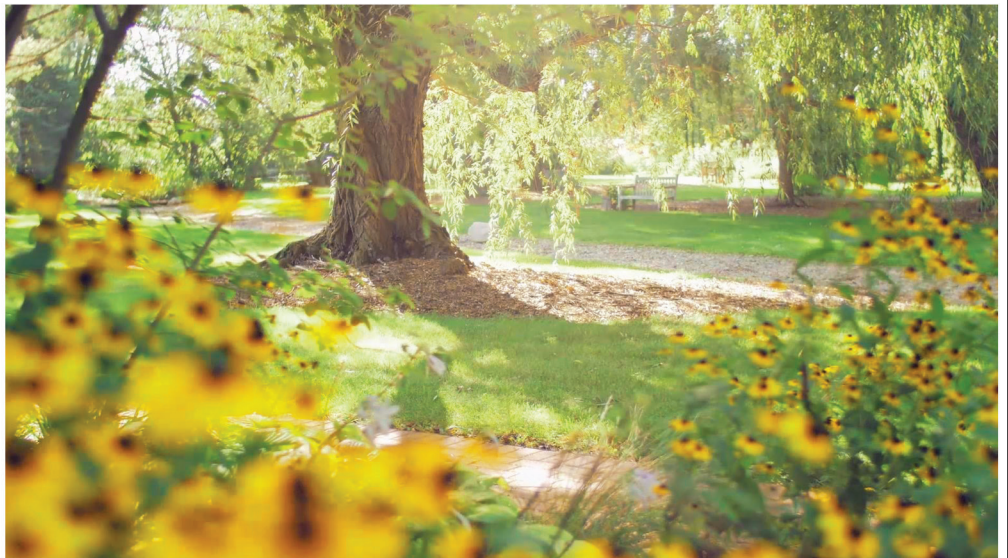
**REBECCA CLARREN** has written about the American West for more than 20 years and received the 2021 Whiting Nonfiction Grant for her work on *The Cost of Free Land*. Her journalism, for which she has won the Hillman Prize, an Alicia Patterson Foundation Fellowship and 10 grants from the Fund for Investigative Journalism, has appeared in *Mother Jones*,

*High Country News*, *The Nation* and *Indian Country Today*.

**PHYLLIS COLE-DAI** began pecking away on an old manual typewriter in childhood and never stopped. She has authored or edited more than a dozen books in multiple genres, seeking to "write across what divides us." With Ruby Wilson, she co-edited the popular *Poetry of Presence* anthologies of mindfulness poems. Her second novel, *The Singing Stick*, is out this fall. Originally from Ohio, she resides with her scientist-husband in Brookings, but they will relocate to Maryland in 2025.



**LAURA BETH DEAN** is the author of *Sweet Potato Moon* and *Georgia Jipp: Blizard Pilot*. Born into a dairy farming family in Cooperstown, New York, and growing up in five countries on four continents as the daughter of mis-



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sionaries, she relished her South Dakota relatives' blizzard and sheep ranching stories. Dean now lives with her husband and three children in southwest Virginia, where she appreciates quiet and blizzard-free adventures as a home health nurse.

**LIAN DOLAN** is a writer, podcaster and author of five best-selling novels, including 2024's *The Marriage Sabbatical*. She has written columns for *Pasadena Magazine*, *O Magazine* and *Working Mother Magazine*. The creator, producer and host of "Satellite Sisters," the award-winning podcast she created with her four real sisters, Dolan received the 2017 Podcast Pioneer Award by Women in Podcasting. She has two adult sons and a senior German shepherd and lives in Pasadena, California with her husband.

**KELSEY M. FINN** is a geneticist, bioethicist and professor with a Ph.D. in Human Genetics from Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and postdoctoral training in Bioethics at Mayo Clinic. Finn's research into communicating with children about



genetic conditions, along with her passion for embracing human diversity, led to a series of books, including *Having Cystic Fibrosis Is a Lot Like Being a Superhero*. She works and writes from Minnesota, where she lives with her husband and two children.

**TRACY HAUFF** is an enrolled member of the Oglala Lakota Oyate and the author of the children's book *Far from the Forest*. Her writing, focused on American Indian culture and history, has appeared in *Articles of a Treaty*, *The Gift*, *Navigating Narratives: The Corps of Discovery in Tetonwan Territory*, *Wicazo Ša Review* and *Studies in American Literature*. Hauff resides in the treaty land of He Sapa and enjoys hiking in the sacred Black Hills or Badlands.

**PETER HELLER** is the national best-selling author of 11 books, including

2023's *The Last Ranger* and 2024's *Burn*. An award-winning adventure writer and a longtime contributor to NPR, Heller is a contributing editor at *Outside* magazine, *Men's Journal* and *National Geographic Adventure*. He holds an MFA from the Iowa Writers' Workshop in poetry and fiction.

**SARA HENNING** is the author of the poetry collections *Burn*, a Crab Orchard Series in Poetry Editor's Selection; *Terra Incognita*, winner of the 2021 Hollis Summers Poetry Prize; and *View from True North*, winner of the 2019 High Plains Book Award. She teaches creative writing at Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia, where she coordinates the A.E. Stringer Visiting Writers Series.



**SARAH HERNANDEZ** (Sicangu Lakota) is a professor of Native American Literature and the director of the Institute for American Indian Research at the Uni-

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versity of New Mexico. Her research focuses on early and contemporary Native American literature. Hernandez is a member of the Oceti Sakowin Writers Society, a nonprofit for Dakota, Nakota and Lakota writers. Together they launched #NativeReads, a community-based reading campaign and podcast series to increase knowledge and appreciation of the Oceti Sakowin literary tradition.

**PATRICK HICKS** is the author of books including *Adoptable*, *The Commandant of Lubizec* and 2023's *Across the Lake*. His work has appeared on NPR, *PBS NewsHour* and *American Life in Poetry*. Hicks has won grants from the Bush Foundation



and the National Endowment for the Humanities, and he was a finalist for an Emmy. He is the Writer-in-Residence at Augustana University and a faculty member in the MFA program at the University of Nevada Reno at Lake Tahoe.

**MAGGIE HILL** has published essays and

nonfiction pieces in *The New York Times*, *The New York Daily News* and *Scholastic* professional magazines. Her short stories



have been published in *Lakeshore Literary*, *Cleaver Literary* and *Embark Literary*. Hill has received several artist fellowships and residencies, including Yaddo and Ragdale. *Sunday Money* is her first novel.

**PAUL HORSTED** has been photographing South Dakota for more than 40 years. His work has appeared in *LIFE*, *Reader's Digest*, *USA Today*, *National Geographic*, *Smithsonian* and *South Dakota Magazine*. In books like *Exploring with Custer: The 1874 Black Hills Expedition*, just released in a revised fourth edition, Horsted seeks out historic photo sites to create precisely matched modern images.

**E. JANET JOHNSON** has lived in New England, New York, the Midwest, the Dakotas and the Southeast. She spent 31 years teaching English, Russian, strategic

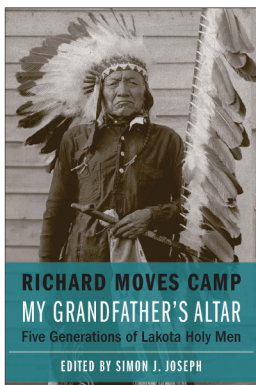
reading, English for Speakers of Other Languages and education courses at South Dakota State University, while observing more than 600 classes as a faculty mentor. In retirement, Johnson has returned to her love of poetry, publishing work in several anthologies and releasing her first book, *The Rebel Coat*.



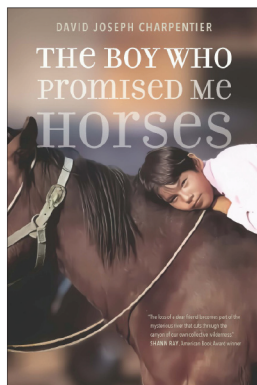
**NANCY TYSTAD KOUPAL** is director and editor-in-chief of the Pioneer Girl Project and founder of the South Dakota Historical Society Press. She received an MA in English from Morehead State University and did postgraduate work at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Koupal is the editor of L. Frank Baum's *Our Landlady*, *Pioneer Girl Perspectives: Exploring Laura Ingalls Wilder*, *Wilder's Pioneer Girl: The Revised Texts* and *Pioneer Girl: The Path into Fiction*.

**MARK LESLIE LEFEBVRE** (who also writes under Mark Leslie) is the author of more than 30 books, including humorous

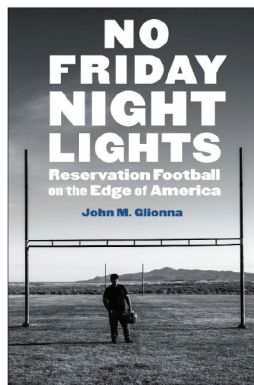
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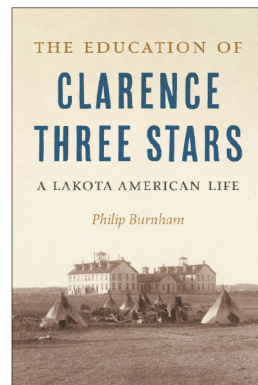
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pioneer in digital publishing, he has worked in the book industry since 1992, serving as President of the Canadian Booksellers Association, Director of Self-Publishing and Author Relations for Rakuten Kobo and Director of Business Development for Draft2Digital.

**DEBRA MARQUART** is distinguished professor of liberal arts in the MFA Program in Creative Writing and Environment at Iowa State University and the Stonecoast Low-Residency MFA Program at University of Southern Maine. She is a former Iowa Poet Laureate and Senior Editor of *Flyway: Journal of Writing & Environment*. Having authored eight books, including 2023's *Gratitude with Dogs Under Stars*, Marquart has received over 50 grants and awards, including a Poets Laureate Fellowship from the Academy of American Poets.

**JOSEPH M. MARSHALL III** is a teacher, historian, writer, storyteller and traditional craftsman. An enrolled member of the Sicangu Lakota tribe, his nonfiction



titles include *The Lakota Way* and *The Journey of Crazy Horse*. Marshall's latest work, the Smokey River Suspense Series, is contemporary fiction incorporating issues facing Lakota people. A 2023 inductee to the Western Writers Hall of Fame, he has also received the 2022 Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation Educator of the Year Award and the 2023 Western Writers of America Owen Wister Award.

**NORM MATTEONI** earned a B.A. from the University of Santa Clara and a J.D. from Notre Dame Law School. A lawyer, lecturer and author on the law of eminent domain, he has studied and presented on

the legal ramifications of the U.S. government's coerced taking of the Black Hills. Matteoni is the author of *A Phantom Storm: Sitting Bull, America and the Ghost Dance* and *Prairie Man: The Struggle between Sitting Bull and Indian Agent James McLaughlin*.

**JIM MCKEOWN**, author of *BELIEVE: The Story of Lovley's Curse*, earned a bachelor's from South Dakota State University and graduate degrees from Columbia University and the University of Iowa. He has taught college-level computer science for 35 years while also supporting



the school in his hometown of Elkton as chair of the booster club, school board member, public address announcer, referee, scorekeeper and sports-writer for *The Elkton Record*.

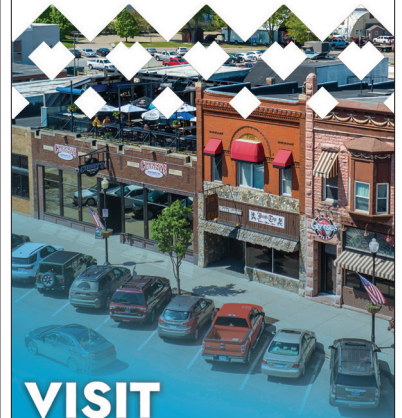
**JUANA MEDINA** was born and raised in Bogotá, Colombia. She is the author and illustrator of multiple children's books, including the chapter book series *Juana & Lucas*, winner of the Pura Belpré Award and two International Latino Book Awards. A graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design, Medina is an assistant professor at George Mason University's School of Art. She lives with her wife and twin sons in Northern Virginia.

**BILLY MILLS** (Oglala Lakota) is the only American ever to win the Olympic gold medal in the 10,000-meter run, a 1964 victory considered one of the greatest upsets in history. Mills grew up on the Pine Ridge Reservation, attended the University of Kansas, served in the U.S. Marine Corps, founded Running Strong for American Indian Youth and became an internationally known speaker and author. The new children's book, *Wings of an Eagle*, tells his inspiring life story.

**RICHARD MOVES CAMP** (Oglala Lakota) is a fifth-generation Lakota healer, historian and spiritual leader, a calling he

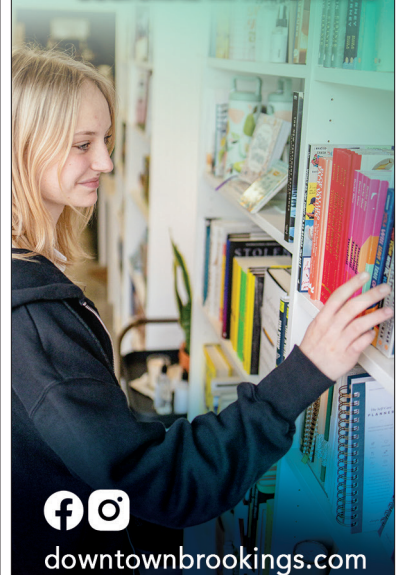


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## Presenters

explores in his book, *My Grandfather's Altar*. He holds a master's degree in mental health counseling with an emphasis in behavioral health from Sinte Gleska University (SGU). Moves Camp teaches at SGU, provides counseling and cultural consultation throughout Indian Country and lectures on Lakota history, culture and traditions.



book *West River*. Raised in Fort Pierre, he graduated from Black Hills State College, the University of Wyoming and the University of South Dakota. Now retired from Dakota State University, where he taught English, Nelson has published in national, regional and state publications. He edits the South Dakota State Poetry Society's *Pasque Petals*.



Department. Originally from Washington, D.C., he has taught high school literature in three states and adult creative writing at Minneapolis' Loft Literary Center. Norton writes about the confluence of individual and systemic issues in our society, particularly the gutter-end of the healthcare system, emergency response and end-of-life issues. *Trauma Sponges* is his first book.



**JOAN AND LISA MUELLER** grew up in Freeman, where their Mennonite heritage played a vital role in their daily lives. Their first novel, *Katy: The Little Rose from Ukraine*, is a historical children's fiction book based on their family's 1874 journey from Russia to Dakota Territory. Joan is a middle school reading teacher for the West Central School District in Hartford and Lisa is the Rock Steady Boxing Director in Sioux Falls, helping those living with Parkinsons.

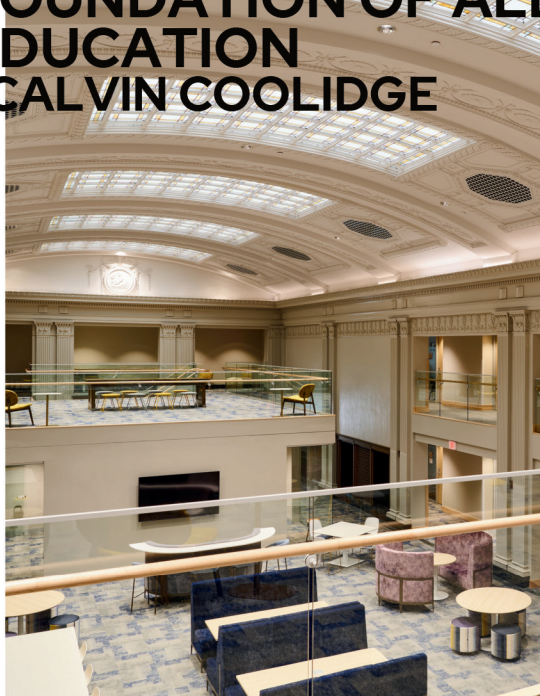
**S.D. NELSON** is an enrolled member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe who also has Norse heritage. He has written and illustrated numerous children's picture books, most recently *Grandma's Tipi* and the YA novel *Crazy Horse and Custer: Born Enemies*. Nelson's books have received the American Indian Library Association (ALA) Honor Book Award and the Western Writers of America Spur Award. He also illustrated Billy Mills' autobiographical children's book, *Wings of an Eagle*.

**EDWARD F. O'KEEFE** is CEO of the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library Foundation and author of *The Loves of Theodore Roosevelt*. He spent two decades in broadcast and digital media at ABC News, CNN and NowThis, receiving a Primetime Emmy Award, the Edward R. Murrow Award and a George Foster Peabody Award for ABC's coverage of 9/11. A former fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School, O'Keefe was born in North Dakota and lives in New York with his family.

**JOHN S. NELSON** is the author of the poetry collection *Bootjack* and the chap-

**JEREMY NORTON** is a 24-year veteran firefighter/EMT with the Minneapolis Fire

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# Presenters



**CHRISTOPHER PEXA** is Bdeewákantunwaŋ Dakota, enrolled at Spirit Lake Nation, and wašiču from Polish and Irish peoples. An associate professor of English at Harvard University, he focuses on Indigenous literatures, politics and language learning and revitalization. Pexa's first book, *Translated Nation: Rewriting the Dakhóta Oyáte* won the 2018-19 Modern Language Association Prize for Studies in Native American Literatures, Languages and Cultures and the 2019 Labriola Center American Indian National Book Award.

**FRANK POMMERSHEIM** is the author of *Braid of Feathers: American Indian Law and Contemporary Tribal Life* and *Broken Landscape: Indians, Indian Tribes, and the Constitution*. He is also a poet whose most recent chapbook is *Idleness of a Recluse Poet*. An Emeritus Professor of Law at the University of South Dakota School of Law, Pommersheim won several teaching awards during his academic career, and in 2022 he received the Federal Bar Association

Lawrence Baca Lifetime Achievement Award in Federal Indian Law.

**AMANDA POTTER** is the manager of content strategy at Sanford Health, where she oversees content creation and execution for over 70 social media accounts. She is also a writer and poet who has just finished her first full-length manuscript, a memoir. Potter lives with her son in Sioux Falls.



**MONA SUSAN POWER** is the author of numerous short stories and four books of fiction: *The Grass Dancer*, *Roofwalker*, *Sacred Wilderness* and *A Council of Dolls* (longlisted for the National Book Award and the Carol Shields Prize and winner of the Minnesota Book Award). An enrolled member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe (Yanktonai Dakota), Power was born and raised in Chicago and now lives in Minnesota.

**TRENT PRESZLER** grew up on a West

River cattle ranch, an experience he explores in the 2024 One Book South Dakota, *Little and Often*. He served as CEO of Bedell Cellars and founded Preszler Woodshop, making bespoke wooden canoes, before becoming Professor of Practice in Management and Organizations at Cornell University's Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management. Preszler's research and teaching focus on sustainable business practices within the agriculture and forestry sectors.

**JIM REESE** is Associate Professor of English and Director of the Great Plains Writers' Tour at Mount Marty University in Yankton. His latest books are *Dancing Room Only: New and Selected Poems* and the essay collection *Bone Chalk*. His next project, *Coming to a Neighborhood Near You: The Business and Repercussions of Crime and Punishment* (Fall 2025), draws on his extensive work with both the Federal Bureau of Prisons and the South Dakota Department of Corrections.



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**MARCIE R. RENDON**, citizen of the White Earth Nation, is one of *O: The Oprah Magazine's* 31 Native American Authors to Read Right Now and a McKnight Distinguished Artist Award winner. A playwright, poet, novelist and community arts activist, Rendon is the creative mind behind Raving Native Theater and the award-winning author of the Cash Blackbear murder mystery series. Her latest books are *Anishinaabe Songs for a New Millennium* and *Where They Last Saw Her*.



Jaida Grey Eagle

**BRUCE ROSELAND**, South Dakota Poet Laureate, is a fourth-generation cattleman who grew up on – and still works – a ranch in north central South Dakota. His poetry reveals sacred relationships between the land and its stewards. Roseland holds a master's degree in sociology from the University of North Dakota and has years of service as a member and past president of the South Dakota State Poetry Society. His newest book is *Earl's Own Dakota Odyssey*.

**ROBERT J. SAWYER** is a bestselling science-fiction author and one of only eight writers ever to win all three of the world's top awards for best sci-fi novel of the year: the Hugo, the Nebula and the John W. Campbell Memorial Award. The ABC TV series *FlashForward* was based on his novel, and his latest book is *The Downloaded*.

**TOM SIMMONS** is a lawyer and professor at the University of South Dakota Knudson School of Law, where he teaches Estate Planning and a pair of Tribal Wills Clinic courses. He has received the Cutler Award for Excellence in Legal Education and the John Wesley Jackson Memorial Award for Outstanding Professor of Law. Simmons has written three collections of poetry, most recently *Soviets on Venus*.

**KEVIN SMITH**, a professor in the College of Education at Dakota State University in Madison, teaches future educators how to teach mathematics and use technology in the classroom.



He also serves as the Program Coordinator for the Master of Science in Educational Technology degree. Smith recently wrote and illustrated his first children's book, *Yucky!*, which tells the story of a young girl who doesn't like math until the right teacher comes along.

**JUDITH SUMNER** is a botanist who specializes in flowering plants and ethnobotany. She studied at the Royal Botanic Gardens (Kew) and did extensive field work in the Pacific region. Sumner has taught at the college level and at botanical gardens, including the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University. Her most recent book is *Plants in the Civil War: A Botanical History*.



**DICK TERMES** is a Spearfish artist who uses a self-devised geometric system known as six-point perspective to paint complete scenes on large spheres. His Termespheres hang in galleries and museums around the world and were displayed

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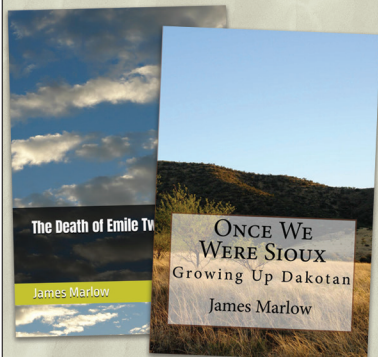
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at the University of Rome alongside the work of one of Termes' major inspirations, M.C. Escher. Termes' many honors include the 1999 Governor's Award for Distinction in Creative Achievement.

**ANN TWEEDY** is a poet whose first full-length book, *The Body's Alphabet*, earned a Bisexual Book Award and was a finalist for a Lambda Literary Award. She also has published three chapbooks: *Beleaguered Oases*, *White Out* and *A Registry of Survival*. Her poems have been nominated for three Pushcart Prizes and four Best of the Net Awards. Tweedy teaches at the University of South Dakota Knudson School of Law, focusing on service to Native tribes.

**EDO VAN BELKOM** has written 35 books and more than 300 short stories in the genres of horror, science fiction,



fantasy, mystery and erotica. Most recently, his YA series *Wolf Pack* inspired the Paramount Plus TV series of the same name. Van Belkom's collection *Death*

*Drives a Semi* was recently reprinted in a 25th anniversary edition. He has won the Bram Stoker, Aurora and Silver Birch Awards.

**CRAIG VOLK** received his MFA in playwriting/screenwriting from the Yale School of Drama and won the 2007 PEN-USA award for best drama for *Mayakovsky Takes the Stage*. He spent 12 years working in Hollywood, including as a staffer on the Emmy-winning series *Northern Exposure*. Volk's books include the historical bio-drama *A Dust Bowl Book of Days, 1932* and an intellectual biography of artist Dick Termes.

**C.M. WENDELBOE** of Cheyenne, Wyoming, writes murder mysteries with Western flair, as well as traditional Westerns. When he was discharged from the Marines as the Vietnam war was winding down, he entered law enforcement. During his 38-year career, he served in various roles for several agencies, yet he always felt proudest of "working the street." He was a patrol supervisor in Gillette, Wyoming, when he retired to pursue fiction writing.

**THEODORE WHEELER** is the bestselling author of three novels, most recently the *USA Today* bestseller *The War Begins in Paris*. He has won fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, Nebraska Arts Council and Akademie Schloss Solitude in Stuttgart, Germany. For 14 years, Wheeler worked as a journalist covering law and politics. He teaches creative writing at Creighton University.



Anne Gustafson

**LYDIA WHIRLWIND SOLDIER**, born on the Rosebud Reservation, is a founding member of the Oceti Sakowin Tribal Writers Society. A graduate of Sinte Gleska University and Pennsylvania State University, she is best known for her poetry, but is also a nonfiction writer, teacher, business owner and Native craftswoman. She received the 2015 South Dakota Living Indian Treasure Award in recognition of her preservation of traditional art forms.

**KAO KALIA YANG** was born in a refugee camp in Thailand and came to America at age six. She writes books for adults, including *The Latecomer* and *Where Rivers Part*, and for children, most recently *The Rock in My Throat*.



Yang is also a filmmaker, teacher and co-founder of Words Wanted, which helps immigrants with writing, translating and business services. She raises twin sons with her husband in Minneapolis.

**DANA YOST** was a daily newspaper editor and writer in the Upper Midwest for 19 years. He has received the Minnesota News Council's Minnesota Journalism Accountability Award, as well as two daily paper columnist of the year awards and two editorial writer of the year awards from the Minnesota Newspaper Association. Since 2008, Yost has published eight books. His latest chapbook, *Free-Fall*, includes many poems dealing with mental illness.





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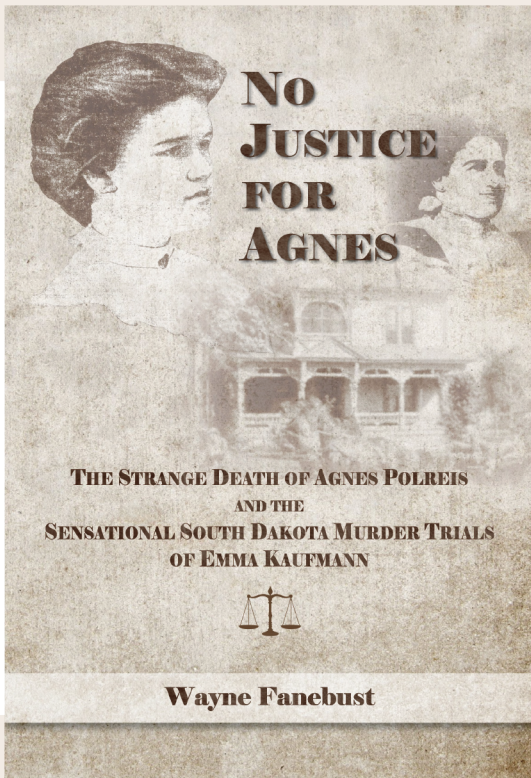
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