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(Neb.)-CSC Writing Workshop Highlights Preserving Family History

By: Chris Fankhauser Posted at: 05/21/2013 10:01 AM



(Chadron)-Learning how to preserve written family history and regional farm or ranch stories will highlight the Story Catcher Writing Workshop and Festival at the Chadron State College Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center May 28 through May 31.

Dr. Matt Evertson, department chair and professor of English and Humanities, said he, as workshop director, is thrilled to have an outstanding group of critically-acclaimed authors join the workshop once again this year.

Scholarships are still available to attend the workshop and all deadlines have been extended, according to Evertson. The registration form and detailed schedule of events can be found at: storycatcherworkshop.com.

The workshop will begin with a keynote address by Jonis Agee entitled "To Wake the Sleepers" at 6 p.m. on May 28. Agee is a Nebraska native who also spent time growing up in Missouri. Many of her stories and novels are set in these two states. She has authored 12 books and is the Adele Hall Professor of English at UNL. In her newest novel, "The River Wife," five generations of women experience love and heartbreak, passion and deceit against the backdrop of the 19th Century South.

In addition to her keynote address, Agee will also lead workshops about sense of place and story openings with impact.

Pamela Carter Joern is an experienced workshop faculty member who will lead an advanced/intermediate fiction writing workshop. She also has some regional ties, having spent time in Nebraska during her youth, and she has set some scenes in her novels in or near the Sandhills. She has written six plays that have been produced in the Twin Cities area and teaches at the Loft Library Center in Minneapolis.

Ghanian-born Jamaican poet, Kwame Dawes will direct a hands-on poetry workshop entitled "Chameleons of Suffering." In this workshop, which is not a multi-day format, Dawes will lead poets through a series of exercises

and discussion. He is the award-winning author of 16 books of poetry and numerous books of fiction, non-fiction, criticism and drama. Dawes is the Glenna Luschei Editor of "Prairie Schooner" and a Chancellor's Professor of English at the University of Nebraska.

Marianne Kunkel, managing editor of the "Prairie Schooner" literary journal hosted at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, is leading a stand-alone session on "Publishing in Journals." Based on their experience and current positions, Kunkel and Dawes will provide workshop attendees pragmatic insight into "how to" have work published.

CSC faculty members, in addition to Evertson, who will be leading workshops include Dr. Robert McEwen and Dr. Rich Kenney. Poe Ballantine, a Chadron resident and autho, will appear via film since he will be at the Book Expo of America in New York promoting his latest non-fiction book.

Local legend and perennial favorite Linda Hasselstrom will be returning to lead intermediate to advanced level memoir and non-fiction workshops about family history and writing revisions.

On May 31, the Sandoz Center will be open to the public for the festival including an open mic starting at 1 p.m., vendor displays and booksellers all afternoon. Workshop faculty will sign their books at 4:30 p.m.

—*CSC Information Services*