

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE IDAHO HUMANITIES COUNCIL | SUMMER 2023

IDAHO 50 YEARS HUMANITIES

MUSEUM ON MAIN STREET TOUR BEGINS | HOST A CONVERSATION THAT MATTERS
DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES 2023 | HUMANITIES GRANTS

COVER:

**Author Angeline
Boulley and NEH
Chair Shelly C. Lowe
in Eastern Idaho**

Pictured: Drum group Ghost
Canyon performs a song in
honor of murdered and missing
indigenous women

**“Safe Spaces and Time
Travel: My Library
Literary Journey”**

Feature article by Michael Strickland

pg.4-7

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MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the IHC is to deepen understanding of human experience by connecting people with ideas.

Opinions expressed in Idaho Humanities do not necessarily reflect views of the Idaho Humanities Council or the National Endowment for the Humanities.

from the Chair SHELLEY McEUEEN-HOWARD



The vibrant music already filled the Potlatch WI&M Railway Depot freight room when we entered. A large crowd listened intently to the young country musician named Blaine Ross croon about the cowpoke life, a fitting accompaniment to the rustic freight room, music echoing off the weathered wood walls and open beams. Neat rows of folded chairs flanked a center aisle, and making way to my seat, I noted—with anticipation—a plentiful array of cookies and fresh coffee in the back.

I had traveled from Twin Falls to Potlatch, which sits 18 miles north of Moscow along the Palouse River. Sharing the journey with David Pettyjohn, the IHC Executive Director, and Jessica Evett, IHC Development and Communications Officer—and graciously joined by two other board members, Stephan Flores and Dulce Kersting-Lark—we were there to celebrate the achievements of the Potlatch Historical Society. We had also come to help present the Sister Alfreda Elsensohn Award

According to Sister Alfreda Elsensohn, founder of the Historical Museum at St. Gertrude in Cottonwood and the award's namesake, "A museum is a bridge which links the present with the past." The Potlatch Historical Society has found a remarkable way of accomplishing this bridgework, through making the past dynamic and integral to their present community, once a company town for Potlatch Forest, Incorporated. Today, the impressive and stately Railway Depot houses an array of small businesses, a museum, and The Blackbird at the Depot gift shop, filled with WI&M, Potlatch, and Idaho themed memorabilia. The depot's second floor sees dedicated rooms for storing and displaying the Potlatch Historical Society archives, a digital collection with over 2,600 photographs depicting life in Potlatch from 1861 to 2022, with a large selection of printed photographs in books for curious patrons.

My short time in Potlatch was memorable, made so by the enthusiasm exhibited by the award event attendees. Joy was palpable, and the energy animated. I was so pleased to have made the trip and been provided the opportunity to meet with this deservedly proud community.

Part of the Idaho Humanities Council's work is keeping the history, culture, and stories of Idaho alive while helping shepherd them into the present. The Potlatch Historical Society is a stellar example of an organization doing the work of bridging the past with the present, and the IHC is proud to have played a part in acknowledging their success.

from the Director DAVID PETTYJOHN

You may have noticed a new logo on the cover of this newsletter. No, we haven't rebranded. Instead, we modified our logo to recognize our 50th anniversary. It's a simple change that reflects a half century of championing the humanities in the Gem State.

A logo revision isn't the only recognition, however. In the rest of 2023 IHC will look back on our past 50 years by highlighting our successes, recording our history in the words of our founders, and hosting a celebration (more on that in the newsletter). Although this is an important part of any anniversary, most of our focus will be on our next 50 years. IHC board and staff has been conducting listening sessions across the state and virtually to learn more about the issues facing Idahoans in 2023 and how our programming can best address them. Idaho 2023 is very different from Idaho 1973 and we want to hear directly from you about how our next 50 years should be.

We have a survey link in this edition, and we hope you'll take a few minutes of your day to share your thoughts.

POTLATCH HISTORICAL SOCIETY RECEIVES STATE'S HIGHEST HONOR FOR MUSEUMS, HISTORICAL SOCIETIES, AND INTERPRETIVE ORGANIZATIONS

Potlatch Historical Society, Potlatch Idaho, receives the Sister Alfreda Elsensohn Award for its outstanding work.



Given annually by the Idaho Humanities Council and Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS), the Sister Alfreda recognition includes a \$10,000 award to be used by the awarded museum, historical society, or interpretive organization to continue its educational efforts.

The award is named for Sister Alfreda Elsensohn, who founded the Historical Museum at St. Gertrude in the 1930s. Sister Alfreda, one of Idaho's outstanding historians, sought to collect, preserve, and interpret artifacts from Idaho County and the surrounding area to better educate the public. "A museum is a bridge which links the present with the past," she said. It is her vision of Idaho museums as exciting, interactive, and educational institutions that the award seeks to recognize by honoring one outstanding Idaho museum each year.

"The Idaho State Historical Society engages communities by building upon shared experiences to inspire further action in preserving and sharing Idaho's history," noted ISHS Executive Director Janet Gallimore. "To help meet that goal, the Idaho State Historical Society and Idaho Humanities Council recognizes organizations throughout the state that are thoughtfully and conscientiously working on sharing their history. The Potlatch Historical Society is well deserving of this award.

"The Idaho Humanities Council encourages public awareness and understanding of history and other humanities disciplines," noted David Pettyjohn, Executive Director of the Idaho Humanities Council. "We are honored to acknowledge the Potlatch Historical Society with the Sister Alfreda award."



IHC and Idaho State Historical Society staff and board present Karen Roehm with the Sister Alfreda Elsensohn Award

The Potlatch Historical Society is dedicated to preserving the history of northern Idaho's most well-known company town. The organization curates a museum in Potlatch City Hall as well as a research room in the WI&M Depot, Room 203.

The Sister Alfreda Elsensohn Award presentation was held, April 29th, 2023, at the WI&M Railway Depot, 185 Sixth Street, Potlatch.

Connect by visiting: [Potlatch Historical Society](#) | [Potlatch ID](#) | [Facebook](#)

“Safe Spaces and Time Travel: My Library Literary Journey”

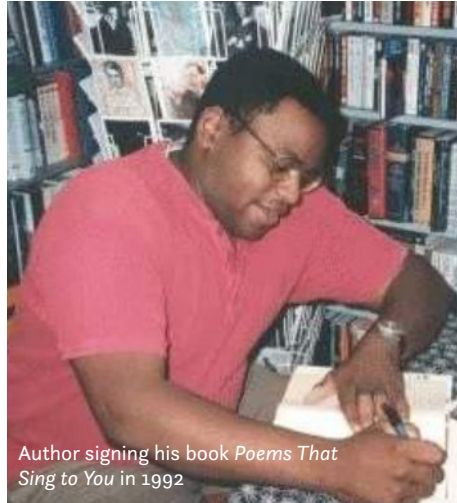
By Michael Strickland

EDITOR’S NOTE: *Michael Strickland teaches at Boise State University and studies at Idaho State University. He is the author of several books for children and adults.*

I have never felt afraid in any library. “If I have to spend time in purgatory before going to one place or the other, I guess I’ll be alright as long as there’s a lending library,” wrote Stephen King. “When all else fails, give up and go to the library. A library is a place where you can live a thousand lives. So why are you waiting when you could be living?”

I grew up in an inner-city area where crime, congestion, and other distractions ran alongside everything. Fear was in the fabric of the situation. Walking through housing projects and maneuvering around gangs of street punks became part of my survival kit. But there was an oasis. In my hometown, I could go to the stacks, wandering through centuries of thinkers. Sometimes I would spend an hour just looking at shelved books, taking in the titles, imagining the writers marching words across the page one after the other until they found their truth.

I often enter a library not knowing where I’m headed or how I’m going to get there, wherever there turns out to be. Libraries have always been like this for me, a journey of discovery. It was and is exciting — which is exactly how any worthwhile journey should be.



The library of my youth had stacks. I could rush in and grab our favorite books from one of the tall shelves. I would then scramble to the history section, which was on an elevated platform with stairs leading up to it, on the far side of the building. Usually, no one went up there, and it was like a little quiet hiding place. I would feel that I was above everyone, that no one could tell me anything, and that I was someplace else, looking down at everyone else from above. I was untouchable.

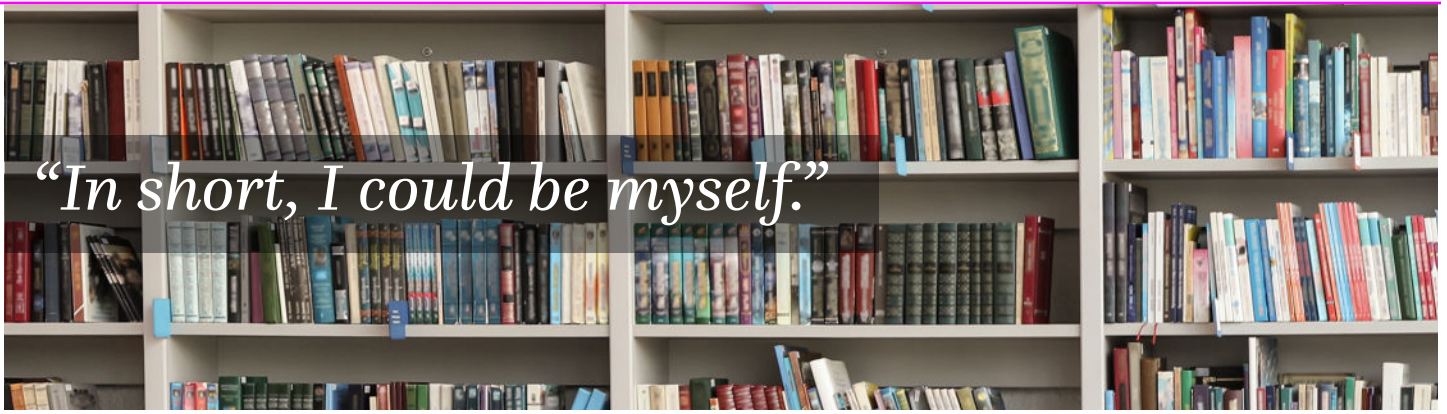
The library is a place where I didn’t have to do anything or say anything. I could let my thoughts wander without interruption and sit there quietly and think.

In short, I could be myself.

Today, I still use the library as a getaway. While Idaho may not be known for ethnic diversity, I can dig into my African American roots in a

quiet room and connect with souls past and present. “Access to knowledge is the superb, the supreme act of truly great civilizations,” wrote Toni Morrison.” Of all the institutions that purport to do this, free libraries stand virtually alone in accomplishing this.” In a country filled with racial, ethnic, political, and socioeconomic divides, the public library still welcomes everyone. They are open spaces without judgment about anybody’s characteristics. They require nothing of their visitors, regardless of their background, income, or appearance. You can stay all day, use the resources, and leave without having to spend a penny. They offer books, e-books and magazines, job-hunting assistance, computer stations, free Wi-Fi, and much more. And the library will never share or sell your personal data. Public libraries provide information and education to everyone, regardless of their circumstances. They are a centerpiece of democratic societies.

From the serenity of a library reading corner, I recently revisited Morrison’s novel, *Beloved*. I had her classic years ago, but I quickly discovered that I’d forgotten how powerful and unsettling it is. I had also forgotten how thoroughly Morrison mastered the art of time in her fiction, how effortlessly she weaves together past and present to move her stories forward. This mastery is on full display in *Beloved*. As a reader, I was transported to a grim past that parallels many of our present day evils, and makes me ponder our future. As a writer, I found myself



stopping again and again to marvel at her complex layering of time, and to make notes on how she accomplished it.

Beloved explores the devastating effects of slavery, both on those who are enslaved and those who escape. The novel tells two stories: one that takes place in 1873 in Cincinnati, Ohio, and one that unfolds through flashbacks to the previous eighteen years. The first story begins when Paul D, a former slave, arrives at Sethe's house. They had both escaped from Sweet Home,

a Kentucky plantation, eighteen years earlier, but they had not seen each other since. Paul D had endured a difficult journey to freedom, including a stint in a Georgia chain gang. Sethe had also faced challenges, including giving birth to her daughter Denver on the run from Sweet Home.

The flashbacks reveal more about Sethe's past. She was a house slave at Sweet Home, and she was repeatedly raped by her owner, Mr. Bodwin. She eventually escaped with her four children, but she was forced to kill her

infant daughter, Beloved, to prevent her from being captured and returned to slavery. The novel explores the ways in which slavery has scarred Sethe and Paul D. They are both haunted by their memories of Sweet Home, and they struggle to find peace in freedom. Sethe is particularly traumatized by the loss of Beloved, and she begins to see a ghost who she believes is her daughter.

Beloved is a powerful and moving novel that explores the lasting effects of slavery. It is a story of love, loss, and



Author reading a book with his daughter and New York Times bestselling author Amanda Turner in Boise

“The humanities unite us all. We are teachers, coaches, parents, brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, neighbors, friends.”



redemption. It is a reminder of the importance of fighting for freedom. From the comfort of a library chair, I engaged this preeminent novel of our time and experienced its timeless clarity and power. We are a nation with a past of both abominable and ennobling circumstances.

We live in an age of daily mass shootings, culture wars and violent wars, domestic struggle and tension abroad. If Morrison came back to life today, she'd feel the power of the words French writer Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr wrote in 1849, “plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose” – the more things change, the more they stay the same. In these uncertain times, surrounding myself with thousands of books at the library helps me remember that other authors have made it through the journey successfully and often. Every book ever written is a literary proof of a crossing: the bridges from tragedy to triumph and everything in between.

When in doubt, I retrace the paths of the pioneers, the masters, the literary heroes sung and unsung.

In contrast to the ultimate injustice, the slavery that is described in *Beloved*, libraries are the primary bastions of social justice. And they are sorely needed. Even the most socially conscious among us struggle to fight injustice. Speaking up or acting against discrimination can be personally and professionally risky, but remaining silent is no better than committing the injustice itself. Books, libraries and information allow us to examine our own biases and actions. They give voice to the voiceless, allowing us to listen with open hearts when others are hurt by actions or words. Nonetheless, racism and oppression is not the only theme that Morrison puts forth in the novel. Another theme is self love. *Beloved* teaches us to love ourselves even if others don't. You can not only live a happier life, but also inspire the people

in the community to love themselves as well. While the novel contains fanciful plot points, such as a ghost haunting a house, the novel also allows the reader to be reflective on how we view ourselves. We can look at the past as something that forms who we are in the future. It also reminds us to seize the day. “Today is always here,” said Sethe. “Tomorrow, never.”

The humanities unite us all. We are teachers, coaches, parents, brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, neighbors, friends. We come into each day carrying a mind and heart full of ideas, narratives, poems, and books we have read. We are the words we read. The message and the messenger are one — a single, complete entity. The library is my special place. When I need a release from the pressures of life, the first thing that comes to mind is always the library and those stacks, or a reading room. There, I can quietly be myself, and travel through time to engage centuries worth of human beings and



Clockwise from left:

Author Michael Strickland reading “The Aliens Are Coming” to schoolchildren

Author shown with his daughter and a friend donating a book to a school in Africa.

Below: The spirit of Christmas at a library

their experience. I’m struck by how the people who fear books are the ones who have difficulty understanding metaphors and people who don’t fit within their own experience. In such scenarios the author is reduced to a state of what existentialist John-Paul Sartre called “nothingness.” As with Ralph Ellison’s hero, the writer might say, “I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me.” But fiction is hardly an escape from reality. It’s a way of understanding it. This quote from *Beloved* shines a light amidst the darkness of the many recent incidents of book bannings across the United States:

“I got a tree on my back and a haint in my house, and nothing in between but the daughter I am holding in my arms,” said Sethe at the suggestion that she leave her home because of the ghost. “No more running—from nothing, I will never run from another thing on this earth. I took one journey and I paid for the ticket.” The sense of self-discovery and empowerment gained from her journey presents a view of life as a literary masterpiece. Sethe’s past experiences gave her a newfound confidence to face any challenge. *Beloved* inspires me. My life is my essay, my novel, my epic poem. Those I encounter discover my parents, my teachers, my personal literary past. It is revealed in my choice of words and texts, my manner of reading them, my attitude towards them, my eyes as I read them. I am the literature. Together, we are the story.



Idaho Humanities Council Awards \$51,141 in Major Grants and Action Grants

The Idaho Humanities Council (IHC) awarded \$44,000 in grants to organizations and individuals for the Spring 2023 Major Grant Round, and \$11,141 in Action Grants. Twenty-three awards include fifteen major grants for public humanities programs (Winter Major Grant Cycle) and ten Action Grants. The grants were supported in part by funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Idaho Humanities Council's Endowment for Humanities Education.

Major Grants (\$44,000):

Malad Valley Welsh Foundation, Malad, received \$1,500 to bring in a variety of speakers and presenters for the 17th Annual Malad Valley Welsh Festival.

Trailing of the Sheep Cultural Heritage Center, Hailey, received \$2,000 to bring a 2022 NEA National Heritage Fellow, TahNibaa Naataanii, to present at the Sheep Tales Gathering program of the 27th Annual Trailing of the Sheep Festival.

Boise Art Museum, Boise, received \$3,000 to bring in a new exhibit, *Katazome Today: Migrations of a Japanese Art*.

Coeur d'Alene Public Library Foundation, Coeur d'Alene, received \$1,500 to purchase adult fiction, non-fiction, and audiobooks in Spanish to better serve the Spanish-speaking community in Coeur d'Alene.



Kenworthy Performing Arts Centre, Moscow, received \$2,000 to support a silent film festival in Moscow.

City of Rexburg, Rexburg, received \$2,000 to produce a 15–20-minute documentary

on the history of the Rexburg Tabernacle.

University of Idaho, Moscow, received \$8,000 to support the Western Literature Association's three-day conference in October. The conference will take place at the Shoshone-Bannock Hotel & Casino in Fort Hall.

Idaho State University, Pocatello received \$1,500 to support their *Humanities Café* program, where faculty and the public can exchange ideas.

Basque Museum & Cultural Center, Boise, received \$2,500 to bring a traveling exhibit from the Basque Country to display at the BMCC for one year.

The Community Library, Ketchum, received \$1,000 to host a three-day seminar event, titled *To Taste Life Twice*, which seeks to deepen the community's understanding of the human experience through reading and writing.

Friends of Minidoka, Twin Falls, received \$8,000 to support *Nisei Trials - 80 Years*. This project will engage and educate the public about the Japanese Americans who resisted conscription into the United States Armed Forces while their families were unconstitutionally incarcerated at Minidoka War Relocation Center in Jerome, Idaho during WWII.

Boise State University, Boise, received \$3,500 to host Idaho teachers for a two-day conference. The conference will provide Idaho teachers with the opportunity to learn new content and perspectives to add to their curricula.

Idaho State Historical Society, Boise, received \$3,500 to support a variety of keynote and plenary speaker events as part of the 2023 American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) conference, which will be in Boise.



Prairie River Library District, Lapwai, received \$2,000 to support *Everybody Reads*. This year's selected book is *What Comes After* by author JoAnne Tompkins. Tompkins will travel to the North Idaho area for a four-day residency to discuss her book with readers throughout the region.

Idaho Mythweaver, Sandpoint, received \$2,000 to produce a podcast series exploring a variety of Nez Perce culture, history, art, and storytelling through community partnerships.

Action Grants (\$11,141):

Idaho Trails Association, Boise, received \$1,000 to offer history talks during the evening on two ITA volunteer trail projects on the Payette National Forest over the summer of 2023.

White Spring Ranch Museum/Archive Library, Genesee, received \$1,000 to create laser-printed wooden interpretive signs for the White Springs Ranch site in Genesee, Idaho.

McCall Arts & Humanities Council, McCall, received \$999 to host a series of discussions at the Central Idaho Historical Museum's Carpenter Shop.

Idaho State University, Pocatello, received \$1,000 to support a presentation on Ukrainian music as a part of the Frank Church Symposium.

Northwest Nazarene University, Nampa, received \$550 to present a public guest lecture on the work of Hildegard of Bingen and the relevance of her work.

North Idaho College, Coeur d'Alene, received \$1,000 to show the documentary, *Rumble*, and host American singer/performer CeCe Curtis-Cook.

Hailey Public Library, Hailey, received \$975 for a 3-part series with local scholar Ted Dyer that looks under the surface of three thematically linked Nick Adams short stories.

The Alturas Institute, Idaho Falls, received \$1,000 to feature both nationally and locally prominent women of high achievement in conversation.

Featured Action Grant:



NNU - Women's History Month Lecture with Dr. Lauren Whitnah on Hildegard of Bingen

This project celebrated women's history month by bringing in a scholar of the medieval world to present a public guest lecture on the work of Hildegard of Bingen and the relevance of her work to the broader question of how best to understand women's history as integral to the study of the past.

Hildegard of Bingen (d. 1179) was one of the most influential people in twelfth-century Europe. A prolific author, Hildegard is known primarily today for her visionary compositions in prose, poetry, and music. However, in her own time, she operated at the epicenter of political and religious controversy, interacting with the most powerful political and religious leaders of the twelfth century. The public lecture uses Hildegard's letters to situate her in the context of political and religious upheaval, exploring the extent to which Hildegard's experience was typical of women in the High Middle Ages.



IHC OFFERS SPECIAL GEM STATE GRANT OPPORTUNITY IN 2023

Investing \$50,000 in Idaho communities in honor of the IHC's 50th anniversary

As just one of the ways IHC is honoring our 50th anniversary, IHC is offering a special funding opportunity for the humanities in Idaho called the Gem State Grant. This one-time grant opportunity is designed to support Idaho communities as they look to the future. This opportunity will help organizations explore their community's history, its future, and its shared experiences. IHC encourages organizations to achieve these goals by focusing on cultural understanding and community engagement. Two organizations will receive \$10,000 and 6 organizations will receive \$5,000, and organizations will not be required to provide match or cost share.

IHC announced our Gem State Grant opportunity this summer, and received over 60 letters of intent by the August 1st deadline. Applications for the final round will be received by September 1st, with awards selected by IHC board members in early November.

The Gem State Grant is being offered in addition to IHC's regular Fall and Winter major grant cycles, and organizations who do not receive a Gem State grant may be able to submit their proposal as a Major Grant instead. Projects will take place between November 2023 and October, 2024.

**Questions? Contact Grants Manager Doug Exton at doug@idahohumanities.org
or by calling 208-345-5346.**

As always, our team is available to provide input on your application to ensure it meets with guidelines.

UPCOMING GRANT DEADLINES

MAJOR GRANTS

Idaho nonprofits or government agencies are encouraged to apply for funding for humanities work through IHC's Major Grants program. IHC's Major Grants are focused on supporting programs or projects that draw on history, culture, literature, and the humanities to ignite conversations with the public. The Major Grant is for requests over \$1,000, with no current limit for request size (average award is \$5,000). The IHC requires a draft to be submitted one month prior to the final application, and currently has two cycles per year.

Fall:

Draft due on **August 15th**

Final due on **September 15th**

Decision typically in the first week of November

Spring:

Draft due on **December 15th**

Final due on **January 15th**

Decision typically in the first week of March

Goals of the Major Grants include:

- Exploring the human experience
- Supporting Idaho's vibrant cultural organizations across the state
- Creating conversations between Idahoans

Examples of projects include:

- Exhibits
- Local history projects
- Discussions
- Planning for humanities focused programs
- Discussion programs

Currently, the IHC's target audience is the out-of-school adult public.

Questions? Please email Doug Exton, Grants Manager (doug@idahohumanities.org)

HUMANITIES FOR ALL GRANTS

IHC's Humanities for All Grants are focused on making programs or collections more accessible to Idahoans. With an award size of up to \$1,000, Humanities for All Grants are due at the first of each month and have a 2-week waiting period for a decision.

Goals of the Humanities for All Grants include:

- Remove barriers to allow all Idahoans to have access to the robust cultural heritage of Idaho
- Increase public access to the shared human story
- Enhance archival preservation of Idaho history
- Common barriers include, but are not limited to, language, geography, finances, and vision/audio impairment.

Examples of projects include:

- Spanish translation costs
- Archival services
- ASL interpretation
- Digitization costs

RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

IHC's Research Fellowships are focused on supporting humanities research in and on Idaho. Topics do not need to focus on Idaho to be considered, unless you are a scholar living out of state. With a newly increased award size of \$7,000, the IHC awards up to 3 Research Fellowships. The application is due **September 15th**, with a decision the first week of November.

A scholar for the Research Fellowship is considered someone who holds a Master's degree in the humanities fields or a Tribal Elder.

Goals of the Research Fellowship include:

- Supporting Idaho's scholars with research
- Promoting the public humanities through publications and presentations
- Generate new research in the humanities

Examples of projects include:

- Travel
- Lodging
- Course releases
- Research costs

K-12 GRANTS

IHC's K-12 Grants are focused on supporting Idaho K-12 teachers in a variety of ways. With an award size of up to \$1,000, K-12 Grants are due August 1st, December 1st, and April 1st. K-12 Grants have a 2-week waiting period for a decision from the due date.

Goals of K-12 Grants include:

- Enhancing humanities education across Idaho
- Supporting Idaho's K-12 teachers
- Creating opportunities for both curriculum & professional development

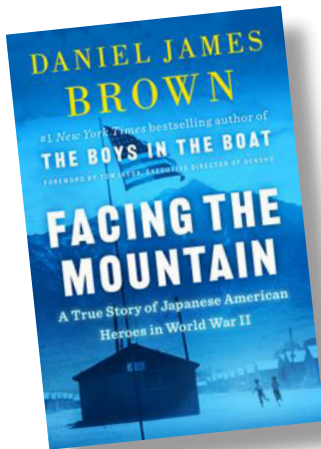
Examples of projects include:

- Field trips
- Teacher workshops
- Book purchases
- Conference attendance costs

Currently, K-12 grants cannot be used to support programs focused specifically on K-12 students.



**BEST-SELLING AUTHOR
DANIEL JAMES BROWN TO
SPEAK IN COEUR D'ALENE
SEPT. 8, 2023, 7PM | CDA RESORT**



The #1 New York Times bestselling author Daniel James Brown will deliver the 18th annual North Idaho Distinguished Humanities Lecture on September 8th at 6PM at the Coeur d'Alene Resort. Brown's *Facing The Mountain*, is a gripping World War II saga of patriotism, highlighting the contributions and sacrifices that Japanese immigrants and their American-born children made for the sake of the nation. *Facing the Mountain* is an unforgettable chronicle of war-time America and the battlefields of Europe. Based on Daniel James Brown's extensive interviews with the families of the protagonists as well as deep archival research, it portrays the kaleidoscopic journey of four Japanese American families and their sons, who volunteered for 442nd Regimental Combat Team and were deployed to France, Germany, and Italy, where they were asked to do the near-impossible.

It is his second New York Times Bestseller and one of NPR's "Books We Love" of 2021. *Facing The Mountain* is longlisted for the PEN/Jacqueline Bograd Weld Award for Biography and was the Winner of the Christopher Award.

Brown is also the author of *The Boys in the Boat*, the #1 New York Times-bestselling story about American Olympic triumph in Nazi Germany, now the inspiration for the PBS documentary "The Boys of '36" and being made into a movie directed by George Clooney and Grant Heslov.

Benefactor tickets include admission and an invitation to a special reception at 5:30pm with author Daniel James Brown before the lecture where hors d'oeuvres will be served along with a cash bar.



Standard tickets include dinner and the lecture. The program begins at 7PM. Following the event, there will be a book signing with the author. Copies of Daniel James Brown's books will be available for sale at the event.

*All event plans are subject to change due to COVID.





**PLAYWRIGHT SAMUEL D.
HUNTER TO SPEAK IN BOISE**
SEPT. 29, 2023, 7PM | BOISE STATE SPEC



2023 marks the 50th anniversary of the Idaho Humanities Council, and you are invited to a special IHC 50th birthday event with playwright Samuel D. Hunter. He will discuss his work with Boise State professor Dr. Mac Test on September 29th at 7 PM at the SPEC. The event will also feature local actors performing scenes from Hunter's work for the audience, with some time for Q and A.

Hunter is best known for plays *A Bright New Boise*, which won the 2011 Obie Award for playwriting, and *The Whale*, which won the 2013 Drama Desk Award and the 2013 Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Play. A film adaptation of *The Whale*, written by Hunter and directed by Darren Aronofsky, was released in December 2022. A native of Moscow, Idaho, Hunter is the author of 17 produced plays and the recipient of a 2014 McArthur Fellowship.



New for 2023, ticket prices will be offered on a sliding scale starting at \$5. Tickets with suggested ranges are now available for purchase. Benefactor tickets are available for a private reception prior to the lectures with Samuel D. Hunter for \$100.00, with cash bar and heavy hors d'oeuvres.



RECAP: EASTERN IDAHO DISTINGUISHED HUMANITIES LECTURE



This year, the IHC is reimagining what is possible for our future as we celebrate our 50th anniversary and honor our past. In April, we celebrated the voices of indigenous women in the humanities at our 14th annual Eastern Idaho Distinguished Lecture with guests Angeline Boulley and NEH Chair Shelly Lowe. Our spring event in Eastern Idaho included a switch to a panel format and several interactive opportunities centered around imagining better futures for young and old through genuine partnerships with the distinct communities around our state.

IHC brought Ms. Boulley to Fort Hall mere weeks before the debut of her highly anticipated new novel, and with the popularity of her debut novel *Firekeeper's Daughter* there was a great deal of excitement for Ms. Boulley's appearance in Eastern Idaho. Boulley writes beautifully about the world of a young Ojibwe woman and how she navigates challenges by staying close to her Elders and her cultural traditions while bravely protecting her community. The importance of representation and characters exhibiting strength in their culture and humanity were evident in the range of ages, backgrounds, and interests found in our audiences.

Boulley was joined on stage by NEH Chair Shelly C. Lowe, who timed her first visit to Idaho to match up with IHC's Eastern Idaho Lecture. Lowe is a citizen of the Navajo Nation and grew up on the Navajo Reservation in Ganado, Arizona. From 2015 to 2021 she served as a member of the National Council on the Humanities, the 26-member advisory body to NEH, an appointment she received from President Obama. She is the first indigenous woman to chair the NEH.

The festivities kicked off on Thursday, April 13th, when Chair Lowe and Angeline Boulley toured the Chief Taghee Elementary Academy in Fort Hall to learn more about their Shoshone language immersion program. All were struck by the joy and passion of the staff and students at the school. Later that afternoon, the College of Arts and Letters at Idaho State University hosted a meet and greet for high school students. About 125 high schoolers from across the region came to ISU to meet Angeline Boulley and Chair Lowe and to discuss telling stories, working hard to achieve your goals, and achieving success.



Top: Randy L' Teton, Angeline Boulley, and NEH Chair Shelly C. Lowe on stage during a moment taken to honor murdered and missing indigenous women



Author Angeline Boulley signs books for area high school students the day prior to her talk



From left: Chairman Nathan Small and Congressman Mike Simpson presented and met with community members before and after the event



Author Angeline Boulley signs a copy of *Firekeepers Daughter* following the event

On Friday, April 14th, over 300 attendees gathered at the Shoshone-Bannock Event Center. Guests were welcomed by Chairman Nathan Small of the Fort Hall Business Council and Representative Mike Simpson. Seymour Eaglespeaker, Kira Murillo, and Raliah Marshall, dancers from the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe, performed alongside the drum circle Ghost Canyon to begin the festivities.

Angeline Boulley and Chair Lowe sat down with Randy'L Teton, member of the Idaho Humanities Council Board and a Shoshone-Bannock community member, to discuss the themes from *Firekeeper's Daughter* that address the complex issues indigenous women face including balancing multiple identities, combating racism, educating the young, and being empowered through connection to their family heritage and culture. These women graciously shared their personal experiences, wisdom, and joy in working in the humanities. The evening concluded with a final drum song to honor the missing and murdered indigenous women in Idaho. The audience was invited to hold hands and to unite in their honor.

Ms. Boulley stayed to sign books for the audience, which were provided by Rediscovered Books in Boise. Pre-orders of Ms. Boulley's new book "Warrior Girl, Unearthed" were made available through a new local bookseller in Idaho Falls.

Collaboration and using local vendors for our events is important to IHC, and the shift from Idaho Falls to Fort Hall brought with it new opportunities to expand this commitment in Eastern Idaho. Refreshments and decorations were provided from members of the Shoshone-Bannock tribe at the tribe's beautiful event center, and tribal leaders graciously participated in many aspects of the event. None of this would have been possible without the generous contributions of IHC board member Randy'L Teton. Her guidance and leadership were invaluable.

IHC staff is grateful to the members of the Shoshone-Bannock tribe for being such generous partners in this event. We are also grateful to our event sponsors for making our Eastern Idaho Distinguished Lecture and the inclusion of several new elements possible.

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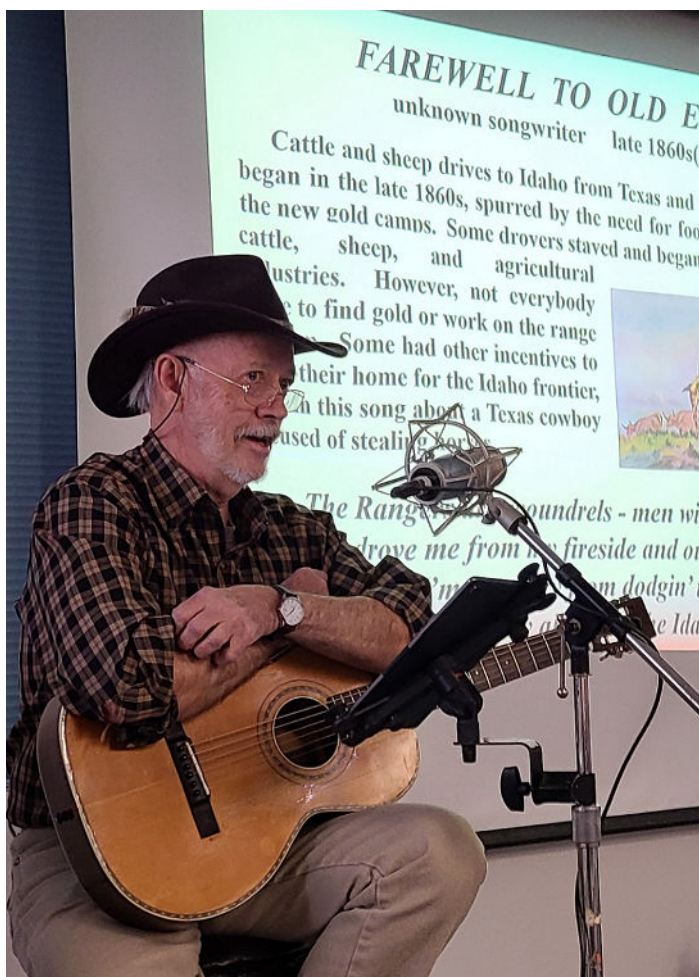


After a summer break, we're excited to announce several new episodes of IHC's podcast series *Context*.

- Dr. Ida Meftahi, from Boise State University, joins us in a fascinating conversation about her pioneering work in documenting the history of Iranian Dance and her personal journey as a dancer, scholar, and educator.
- Dr. Ann Campbell, a professor of English Literature from Boise State University, joins us to talk about why Jane Austen is the author of our go-to comfort reading and viewing, despite publishing only 6 novels over 200 years ago.
- Dr. Nick Underwood, a professor of historical modern Jewish and European history from the College of Idaho joins us to talk about the essentials of Jewish history, antisemitism, Idaho's Jewish history, and the value to all Idahoans of our religious diversity.
- Arlie Sommer makes media art about and for Idahoans, exploring this place the people who make Idaho unique. She joins us to talk about her latest project, a short documentary about an "Idaho Babe."
- Dr. Gautum Basu Thakur is the director of the critical theory minor at Boise State University and chair of a new department and major- Humanities and Cultural Studies. He joins us to talk about this new program and the value of applying critical theory to literature.

Join IHC staff as we talk with scholars, experts, and keepers of knowledge across Idaho's communities to share what they are thinking, writing, and talking about. *Context* will be your guide as you explore the humanities.

Visit <https://anchor.fm/idahohumanities> for links to all the episodes and subscribe.



Interested in booking a speaker for your community? Inquiring Idaho is open for host site applications!

Detailed information on current topics, qualifications for speakers, compensation, and host site information can be found at www.idahohumanities.org.

Please contact Debra Schlechte at 208-345-5346 or at debra@idahohumanities.org if you have any questions about the program.

Survey says...

Do you have five minutes to help shape the future of humanities programming in the state of Idaho?

As part of our 50th Anniversary, IHC has been conducting a series of in-person and virtual “listening tours” to learn more about issues facing our communities. Now, we want to hear from you!

IHC is conducting an online survey throughout the month of September. Responses are completely confidential and will provide valuable input on how the Council can best respond to the most critical issues facing Idahoans.

Survey responses will be collected through Sept. 30th. Link is available at www.idahohumanities.org or by scanning the QR code.



Think **DAILY.**
Give **MONTHLY.**

IGEM

Remember to send back that envelope...

When you opened this issue of Idaho Humanities you saw the donation envelope—please don’t throw it away. Show your support for the work of the Idaho Humanities Council today by sending it back with your tax-deductible gift enclosed.

The IHC is dependent on donations from our readers, program attendees, civic leaders, community activists, and others who believe that lifelong learning in the humanities helps build an intellectually inquisitive Idaho citizenry. The IHC will put your gift to good use funding innovative programming, sparking thought-provoking conversations, seeking out eye-opening cultural experiences, and generating new ideas to bring people together around the state.

Return your envelope or make your donation securely online at www.idahohumanities.org, and help IHC further the humanities in your community today!

If you’re a longtime supporter, have you considered a recurring gift that sparks new ideas and conversation in the Gem State? We’ve added a new online giving feature that makes it easier to set up a recurring gift with your checking account or credit card through our **GEM program**. Whether it’s monthly, quarterly, or yearly, recurring gifts provide a bedrock for humanities programming throughout Idaho, from the Panhandle to the Snake River Plain. We’ll also be rolling out a special thank you gift for our sustaining supporters in our upcoming 50th Anniversary newsletter edition (late November).

Your ongoing support of our mission means so much, and please contact Development and Communications Officer Jessica Evett at jessica@idahohumanities.org if you have any questions about a recurring gift or a year-end gift to IHC.



The Idaho Humanities Council is pleased to announce that Cindy Wilson, Boise, and Dr. Kathy Aiken, Moscow, have received the 2022 Outstanding Achievement in the Humanities Award. IHC's highest honor is awarded annually to recognize a high achievement that fosters greater understanding or appreciation of the humanities. Each recipient was honored in a ceremony in their respective hometowns over the summer.



CINDY WILSON

Cindy Wilson's remarkable 33-year teaching career is a testament to her unwavering dedication to education and civic engagement, inspiring generations of students in urban and rural Idaho school districts to strive for excellence and become active participants in their communities. A trailblazer in her field, she pioneered Orofino High School's involvement in the "We the People" national program, empowering students to engage in simulated legislative hearings. Under her expert guidance, her students secured five state-level victories in the competition. Her innovative approach to education included organizing community round table discussions, political debates, and implementing the Citizenship in the 21st Century class in the West Ada School District after collaborating with the Idaho Human Rights Education Center.

Committed to civic work, Mrs. Wilson has contributed her expertise to the Governor's Task Force for Improving Education (K-12), the Idaho Board of Correction under Governor Butch Otter, the Idaho Law Foundation, Law Related Education Committee, the Idaho YMCA Youth Government State Committee, Idaho Mormon Women for Ethical Government, and the board of Idaho Children are Primary. Other accolades include the Orofino Rotary Club Teacher of the Year, Milken National Educator for Idaho, NEA Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence, Idaho Human Rights Educator of the Year, Meridian Teacher of the Year, and the Concordia Law School Leaders in Action Award.



**OUTSTANDING
ACHIEVEMENT
IN THE HUMANITIES**



DR. KATHERINE AIKEN

Dr. Katherine G. Aiken is professor of history emerita at the University of Idaho where she also served as College of Letters, Arts & Social Sciences Dean and Interim Provost and Executive Vice President. She is being honored for her contributions to the field as well as her commitment to mentoring others throughout her career. She was a member of the State Department of Education Professional Standards Committee for six years; she is committed to K-12 curriculum development and has led numerous professional development workshops. Aiken was chair of the Idaho Humanities Council, served on the Council for seven years, and has been lead scholar for the Council's Teacher Institute. She served as a Latah County Historical Society board member and on the University of Idaho Library Advisory Board. She is currently a member of the Idaho Public Television Board and the Idaho Historic Sites Commission.

Aiken's American history scholarly areas of interest include social and cultural history, labor history, women's history, mining, and the environment. She is the author of four books and many articles dealing with those topics--often with an Idaho focus. She enjoys making presentations on history topics around the state of Idaho and the Pacific Northwest. Aiken has also won numerous teaching awards which include the ASUI Outstanding Faculty Award, the University of Idaho Award for Teaching Excellence and has received the Alumni Award for Excellence five times. In addition, she was a leader in establishing the current University of Idaho General Education Core Curriculum that includes a Core Discovery program.

The Council has presented its award for "Outstanding Achievement in the Humanities" annually since 1986. For a full list of recipients over the years, please visit www.idahohumanities.org.



Museum on Main Street Returns to Idaho

After years of waiting, the Smithsonian has successfully returned to Idaho! *Spark! Places of Innovation* officially opened in Priest River in May. The kickoff event featured live music, food trucks, and guided tours. Over 20% of the town showed up to welcome the Smithsonian back to the state. The exhibit was the first to open in the United States during its inaugural tour, and Idaho is the only state West of the Mississippi to host the exhibit in 2023.

Prior to the opening, Carol Harsh, Director of the Museum on Main Street program, led an installation workshop for representatives from all six sites. Over two days, the group learned how to install the exhibit, explored the exhibit's themes, and discussed potential funding and programming opportunities.

After a successful six-week visit, *Spark!* then traveled to Kellogg. The community welcomed the exhibit with a vendor fair and guided tours. The exhibit will travel to Soda Springs, Twin Falls, and Nampa before concluding its visit in Marsing in 2024.

Check the IHC website for more information and come see the Smithsonian when it's near you!



EXHIBIT DATES:

Soda Springs 08/26/23 - 10/07/23

Twin Falls 10/14/23 - 11/25/23

Nampa 12/02/23 - 01/13/24

Marsing 01/20/24 - 03/02/24

HUMAN TIES

CONVERSATIONS THAT MATTER

Now in its second year, the IHC program Human Ties: Conversations That Matter has been getting established across the state during our 50th Anniversary year. To date in 2023, we have partnered with community groups to host conversations in Rigby, Salmon, Lewiston, Priest River, Pocatello, and Coeur D' Alene. Topics have ranged from leadership to how we define free speech.

Human Ties brings communities together to have respectful and civil conversations about challenging topics that are meaningful to Idahoans. The conversations will be centered around a humanities-based text and moderated by a trained facilitator.

Educators and community members are encouraged to apply to host a conversation or attend a conversation near you. Upcoming conversations in Sandpoint and Priest River will be held in October.



INTERESTED?

If you are interested in serving as a facilitator, IHC will also be hosting its second two-day training in Boise during January or February. Facilitators receive ongoing support from IHC staff as well as compensation for their work.



INFO:

For more information about the program including a complete list of topics and facilitators, visit our website at www.idahohumanities.org

QUESTIONS:

For questions, contact Program Officer Johanna Bringhurst at johanna@idahohumanities.org.

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IHC just moved to a new database system to keep track of our generous donors and supporters. To update your communication preferences or information associated with our mailings and/or donor recognition, please contact jessica@idahohumanities.org.

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This gift was made by the family of Robert & Klara Hansberger to commemorate their interest in and support of the Idaho Humanities Council

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what are you reading?

In each issue of *Idaho Humanities*, a couple of readers tell us what they've been reading and what they recommend.



Reader: Monique Michel (she, her, hers)

Occupation and Place: Director and owner, the Ballet Folklorico Mexico Lindo dance company, and dance studio owner of Alma Folklorica, both located in Boise.

Book: *Crying in the Bathroom: A Memoir* (2022) by Erika Sanchez.

From the book, "From the New York Times bestselling author of *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter*, an utterly original memoir-in-essays that is as deeply moving as it is disarmingly funny." If you've read or heard of Sanchez's first book, you'll appreciate this one as well. Her style of writing invites you in and makes you take notice.

As a first-generation Mexican American, I found this book so comforting. As the daughter of immigrants, I've long struggled with my identity: Am I from here? Or there? Or can I be both, and be proud of them both at the same time, without fully pledging allegiance to either of them? Would my choices and actions

growing up be seen as less than? Or as compensation in spite of? Did I/ do I suffer from Imposter Syndrome?

These are some of the questions I live with day in and day out. Reading this book felt like talking with a friend from the barrio, the neighborhood, who really "saw me". Or as we say, "they got me". I enjoyed reading the stories and essays on Sanchez's travels and tribulations growing up, and how she handled them while struggling to find her own authentic voice as an adult. The book is both hilarious and painful. It is honest and raw and evoked emotions that made me cheer out loud, fold the pages, highlight passages, and write down quotes that inspired me.

The book is like talking to an old friend who is barely/finally discovering themselves, and they want to tell you all about it. You'll want to keep the tissue handy because it'll definitely give you pause to think about your own experiences. Maybe you'll recognize yourself in these stories. Maybe you'll learn something new. Either way, you won't soon forget how sometimes a good cry can be so cleansing for the soul; as it the source for joy and pain alike. Transitions are challenging, but oh, how they can also be so healing.



WHAT ARE YOU READING?

What Are You Reading has been a feature of our print newsletter for many years. For IHC's 50th Anniversary, we want to know what our supporters and community surrounding the humanities are reading in 2023. You can send your own What Are You Reading to jessica@idahohumanities.org or to 1020 West Main Street, Boise, ID 83705 by Oct. 31st to get included in our year-end community-sourced book review. We'll include a few for our next print edition of the newsletter as well as a special page on our website. We'll also include your review in a special time capsule in our basement to be unsealed in 2083 for IHC's Centennial! Include your name, occupation and place, and a headshot in addition to your book review.