Center for the Book
at the
New Hampshire
State Library

Book Notes

Fall 2007 Vol. 3 , Issue 2

The Big Read
New Hampshire Reads *Fahrenheit 451*

By Mary A. Russell, Director
NH Center for the Book

The Big Read is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts, in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and in cooperation with Arts Midwest. It is designed to revitalize the role of literary reading in American popular culture. *Reading at Risk: A Survey of Literary Reading in America*, a 2004 NEA report, identified a critical decline in reading for pleasure among American adults. The Big Read aims to address this issue directly by providing citizens with the opportunity to read and discuss a single book within their communities. According to Dana Gioia, Chairman of the NEA, "the purpose of The Big Read, like the purpose of literature itself, is pleasure. Not necessarily an easy pleasure, but a deliciously rich and complex one. A great book combines enlightenment with enchantment. It awakens our imagination and enlarges our humanity. It can even offer harrowing insights that somehow console and comfort us. The prospect of an America where only a few people share a love of reading is just too lonely to bear. Even if statistics didn't show that readers are more active in their own communities and more engaged in their own lives, the act of reading would still be an indispensable part of what makes us fully human."

Nearly two hundred organizations nationwide – including two in New Hampshire — will participate in the Big Read for 2007. Communities participating in 2007 were able to choose one of twelve classic American novels for their program. The Center for the Book at the New Hampshire State Library chose to focus our statewide Big Read program on *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury. This classic novel describes one man's journey toward knowledge in a futuristic society where people stopped reading books long ago and now the firemen burn any remaining books to protect people who might be troubled by the ideas those books contain. Really, the book burning is best for everyone, as Firechief Beatty explains, "If you don't want a man unhappy politically, don't give him two sides to a question to worry him; give him one. Better yet, give him none. Let him forget there is such a thing as war. If the government is inefficient, topheavy, and tax-mad, better it be all those than that people worry over it." (p. 61) What book could be a better choice for a program designed to turn the tide on the decline of reading?

New Hampshire Commissioner of Cultural Resources Van McLeod is an enthusiastic supporter of this project. "Being a small state, we have the ability to have a true conversation about any topic, whether it is politics, as part of our first-in-the-nation primary, or talking about a book as part of The Big Read. Our tradition of community and the wealth of culture make it obvious that we should be part of this national conversation about the importance of books." Kristen Vermilyea Harbaugh, Communications and Event Coordinator for the New Hampshire Department of Cultural Resources, is serving as the Promotion Coordinator for this project.

The New Hampshire Humanities Council (NHHC) has been a partner in planning this statewide project from the beginning. "The Big Read model of broad community involvement in reading and discussion fits the Humanities Council's mission perfectly," explains Executive Director

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New Hampshire Books

By Donna Gilbreth

As I sit here in my non-air conditioned office on a hot July day, I'm dreaming about cool fall days when I can again fire up my oven and do some real cooking! My gas grill is great for surviving these hot summer days, but I'm really more of a baking-type person. I'm at my happiest when cold weather keeps me inside and I have an excuse to bake some cookies.

So, I'm pretty excited when a new cookbook arrives at the State Library and I can scour it for recipes (as a true librarian, I keep my recipes organized in a small antique oak library card catalog). We don't buy any old cookbooks here, just those with a New Hampshire connection. Luckily, there are many New Hampshire related cookbooks coming along to keep me happy and feed my recipe collecting habit!

In this column I have highlighted some of the more recent cookbooks that have been added to the State Library collection. They are great reading, and hopefully will lead to some great eating. It will be cooler weather by the time you read this column, so go ahead and borrow the books from us and try out some new cooking pleasures!

Brody, Helen. *New Hampshire: From Farm to Kitchen*. New York, NY: Hipppocrene Books, 2004

Helen Brody has been a food feature writer in New England for over 25 years. This unique book profiles 30 New Hampshire farms and their products and provides 118 recipes that use some of our state's agricultural products. Brody selected farms that are still working farms, often in the same family for generations. She also made sure she highlighted a variety of crops and farms from all geographic areas of the state. One of my favorite stops after work is included, the Apple Hill Farm in Concord. Each chapter is on a different food, such as Cheese, Maple and Honey, Vegetables, etc. The chapter on Cheese includes an essay on the status of cheese-making in New Hampshire and a profile of Boggy Meadow Farm in Walpole, where a former Wall Street banker took over the family farm and diversified into creating award-winning Swiss cheeses. And of course, the chapter ends with many delicious recipes, like Leek and Goat Cheese Tart, using a variety of cheeses.

Esposito, Mary Ann. *Ciao Italia Pronto!: 30-minute Recipes from an Italian Kitchen.* New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2005

Most of you have probably seen Esposito's NH Public Television cooking show or read one of her several cookbooks. She has been cooking great Italian food on television for over 15 years now. This book really appealed to me since I not only love Italian food, but also enjoy simple and fast meals for workdays. Esposito, a Durham resident, starts out with a list of essential ingredients for your pantry. Then she proceeds to over 80 recipes and several suggested menus. How can you go wrong with Zuppa di Pollo Fine Settimana (chicken soup using a store-bought rotisserie chicken)?

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The Frost Place, a North-Country Home for Poetry

By Jim Schley
Executive Director

The Frost Place is a museum and poetry center based at Robert Frost's homestead in Franconia, New Hampshire — a historic and literary landmark of international significance, as Frost's work is more popular and influential than ever, despite the passage of time.

Frost and his family lived in Franconia full-time from 1915 to 1920, then spent summers through 1938, and in 1976, when the property came up for sale, the Town of Franconia voted at town meeting to purchase the house and grounds and establish not only a museum to memorialize the poet but also a center to foster the ongoing writing and teaching of poetry. Since 1977, each summer a contemporary poet has been awarded a residency to live and work at The Frost Place, and since 1979 there has been an annual Festival and Conference of Poetry, one of America's most revered gatherings of writers. In recent years, Frost Place offerings have expanded to include an annual Young Poets Conference, the Conference on Poetry and Teaching, and a Seminar for advanced writers, as well as ongoing community- and school-based educational programs.

In addition to literary conferences and programs, the Frost Place welcomes visitors every summer to tour the simple but beautiful and informative museum rooms, where Frost's study with his chair and manuscripts, letters, and inscribed first editions of his books are on display.

Instead of approaching Robert Frost and his work in scholarly or academic ways, The Frost Place's commitment to honoring Frost is expressed through creative and lively efforts to heighten our visitors' and conference participants' appreciation for poetry in its vast diversity, from the classics Frost loved to the work of adventurous contemporaries. The museum is open to the public (for a voluntary donation) from Memorial Day to Columbus Day, and draws thousands of tourists from throughout the U.S. and beyond. The free Frost Day event each July is especially intended to be an open-house for the local and regional community.

Robert Frost was one of the most prolific poets in American history, and the extended period of time he spent

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New Hampshire Antiquarian Book Association

By Gary Crooker
NHABA Member
and Fair Director

If you love books, odds are you probably love old books. If you love old books do we have an organization for you! Members of the New Hampshire Antiquarian Book Association (NHABA) have been active participants in the New Hampshire literary community for 36 years. With sixty dealer/members blanketing the state we look forward to expanding our role in conjunction with organizations such as the New Hampshire Center for the Book.

The NHABA came into existencee in 1971 when thirteen dealers in used and rare books banded together for their own mutual benefit as well as to inform the book-buying public about the nature of the used book business. A statewide brochure was brought out and is still printed yearly. Brochures are distributed at all member shops and major state rest areas. If you are looking for a dealer that specializes in your area of interest -- or just in your area -- these handy guides will help your search.

Just a couple of years later what has become the organization's most high-profile event came into being with the advent of the NHABA's Annual Book Fair in 1973. The show was held at Concord's historic New Hampshire Highway Hotel until 1986 when the hotel was torn down. The event then jumped the river to the Everett Arena where it has been going strong ever since. Dealers from all the New England states, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Georgia and Canada gather annually to display their wares. Taking place for the 33rd consecutive year on Sunday, September 23, the NHABA Fair is now the longest continuously running statewide event of its kind in the country.

While buying and selling of books on the internet has been a valuable tool for member booksellers for well over a decade now, the NHABA Fair gives the book-loving public a chance to see why the organization came into being.

Either attending the fair or visiting one of our open-shop members offers the following benefits:

1. Direct interaction with book

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IMPAC Dublin Literary Award

By Charles Shipman
Chair, NH Dublin Committee

The New Hampshire State Library is proud to be a nominating library for the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award, an annual literary prize initiated in 1996 by the city council of Dublin, Ireland. Selected libraries from around the world participate by nominating novels of literary merit that are either written in English or translated into English within a given year.

Although books must appear in English, the award is truly international, with libraries from over 80 nations participating in the nominating process, and winners have included translations from French, Turkish, Spanish and German.

The New Hampshire State Library nominating committee is made up of 15 librarians. Most are members of the State Library staff, but there are public and academic librarians represented on the committee as well.

Dublin Award nominees are expected to be of "high literary merit," but what does that mean, exactly? Our committee came up with a list of criteria to consider. We look for books that are emotionally and intellectually engaging, with well-developed characters and plot. We also want books that offer a fresh perspective or innovative themes that leave a lasting impact on the reader. And of course, the writing must be of the highest quality.

Last year, we nominated three books for the Dublin Prize: *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy, *Zoli* by Colum McCann, and *Half of a Yellow Sun* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. These books are actually nominated for the *2008* Dublin Award, because a panel of writers and literary academics must narrow all the nominees down to a "long list," then a "short list," then a final winner. In the meantime, we'll be scouring the publishing world for the next round of Dublin nominees. To find out more about the IMPAC Dublin Literary Award, or to suggest a book for consideration, please visit http://www.nh.gov/nhsl/bookcenter/programs/impac.html

Award Notes

New Hampshire is home to several book awards and details about each of them, including links to their web sites, are included at www.nh.gov/nhsl/bookcenter/literacyc/awards.html

The Flume: NH Teen Readers' Choice Award

Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* captured the 2007 Flume Award. Sponsored by the New Hampshire Library Association, the Flume Award is given to a book that receives the most votes by NH students in grades 9-12. A critically acclaimed vampire romance story, *Twilight* beat out 12 other titles for the award.

The 2008 Flume list, which will be voted on next April, is now available on the Flume website.

Great Stone Face Award

The Great Stone Face Committee has announced the winner of the 2007 Great Stone Face Book Award for children in grades 4-6. It is *The Ghost's Grave* by Peg Kehret.

Runners up were: *Magyk* by Angie Sage, *Thunder From the Sea* by Joan Hiatt Harlow, and *The Dark Hills Divide* by Patrick Carman. The new nominee list for 2008 is on the CHILIS website.

Hale Award

Richards Free Library announces that on October 27th at 4:00 p.m. at the Newport Opera House, renowned children's author and illustrator Tomie dePaola will add the 2007 Sarah Josepha Hale Award to his 1976 Caldecott Honor Award for *Strega Nona* and Newbery Honor Award in 2000 for *26 Fairmount Avenue*.

Isinglass Teen Read Award

The Isinglass Teen Read Award for 7th and 8th graders announced that Stephenie Meyer won the 2007 award with her book *Twilight*, a teen vampire story with a romantic twist. The new list for 2008 has been announced and can be found on the website.

Students in grades 7 & 8 may suggest a book for the 2008-2009 cycle by sending an e-mail to blibrary@metrocast.net with the author and title of the book they are recommending. ALL titles on the Ininglass list are from teen suggestions.

New Hampshire students are invited to enter Letters About Literature 2008, a writing competiton that encourages you to read, be inspired, and write back. For details and entry coupons visit www.nh.gov/nhsl/bookcenter/programs/letters.html

NH Literary Awards Update

Nominations for the New Hampshire Writers' Project's 2007 New Hampshire Literary Awards are now in the hands of the judges. Outstanding works of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, children's literature, and journalism, as well as the lifetime achievement winner will be announced this fall.

The awards ceremony, which includes a reception and presentations by award winners, is scheduled for November 17, 2007, at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester. An afternoon of writing workshops with previous award winners will precede the reception.

As part of the awards program, NHWP is excited to present for the first time the Donald M. Murray Outstanding Journalism Award, in honor of Donald M. Murray, who died last December at the age of 82. A Pulitzer-Prize winner, Murray inspired countless reporters and writers with his passion for writing and the writing life. He was a longtime member of New Hampshire Writers' Project (NHWP) and received the New Hampshire Literary Award for Lifetime Achievement in 2001.

"He was always such a great supporter of the Writers' Project," said George Geers, president of the NHWP board of trustees. "He had students across the country who are editors, writers, publishers, and they all turn to him."

The New Hampshire Literary Awards, offered biennially since 1992, celebrate the remarkable literary talent in the Granite State. A cash prize of $500 is given to recipients of the Jane Kenyon Award for Outstanding Book of Poetry and the Donald M. Murray Outstanding Journalism Award.

Seven NH Towns Will Come Together to Read and Celebrate Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*

By Amy Lapointe, Director
Amherst Town Library

Northeast Cultural Coop, located in Amherst, NH, in partnership with the Amherst Town Library, the Friends of the Amherst Town Library and libraries in Bedford, Brookline, Milford, Mont Vernon, New Boston, and Wilton are pleased to announce that they have received a National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) grant to support "The Big Read" in those seven communities. The Big Read is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services and Arts Midwest.

The group will use the program to promote literacy and cultural awareness in the region. In addition to being a fantastic read, *The Joy Luck Club* provides a springboard to discuss the importance of China's role in the international arena, the many issues surrounding the immigration experience, and the fascinating tenets of Chinese culture. When the book came out in 1989, it garnered both critical acclaim and commercial success. It was described by reviewers as elegant, poetic, imaginative and moving. Tan's first novel continues to be a favorite amongst bookgroups. While the story is particularly resonant to women, themes of relationships between generations are applicable to all members of the family. One of the chapters of the book has even been adapted into a book for children titled *The Moon Lady*.

This six-week series of public and school events will run through early November, after kicking-off on the afternoon of Sunday, September 23, at Souhegan High School in Amherst with a special family event celebrating the traditional Chinese Moon Festival. The Moon Festival will include lion dancers, a theatrical presentation, Chinese food, and much more. Big Read programs will be held in various locations throughout the seven participating communities. All are welcome to attend. Not-to-be-missed events include a Chinese tea ceremony and tea plantation slide show, a Chinese film series at the Wilton Town Hall Theater, a bus trip and curator-led tour of the Yin Yu Tang house at the Peabody Essex Museum, and a hands-on brush painting workshop. Other programs will include book discussions, lectures, arts and crafts from China, photographic exhibits, art exhibits, mah jong lessons, Tai Chi on the town commons, storytelling, music, Chinese cooking, and more.

Watch for announcements on programs and check www.NortheastCulturalCoop.org or the websites of the seven libraries as well as the website of The Big Read at www.neabigread.org for details on this exciting initiative.

Ten Ways to Put Poetry in Your Life

By Patricia Fargnoli
New Hampshire Poet Laureate

Too often, people will tell me: "I never read poetry," or they'll tell some horror story about how in high school, they were "forced" to "analyze" difficult poems. The result of this is that books of poetry don't sell well (usually under 1000 copies), poetry sections in many bookstores are small, and publishers are often reluctant to publish poetry. Yet, when some crisis or major event in our lives occurs, it is often to poetry that we turn first. And poems take a central (and rightful) place at weddings, funerals, national crises (such as 9/11), governmental inaugurations. As I've traveled around the state, I've been excited to learn that, in addition to the many reading venues, poetry workshops and poetry discussion groups are forming everywhere. People who don't write poetry themselves are reading it…and discussing it...and doing so with great pleasure.

Last winter, I had the opportunity to read and discuss my work with seniors in a lifelong learning class at New England College. Not only was I delighted to have such an intelligent and enthusiastic audience, but I was also happy when a member of the class came up to me afterward to tell me of a small poetry discussion group she belonged to that had formed among her friends. I also have, for several years now, been fortunate to teach a poetry reading and discussion lifelong learning course in poetry to adults over 52 at Keene State College. And I'm thrilled when a student who has seldom read poetry gets excited by a contemporary poet.And recently, my book was slated for discussion at a book club in my home town and I've been invited to attend and answer questions.

However, much more needs to be done to bring an appreciation of poetry to everyone. And, whether or not you are a practicing poet, you can help. Here are ten suggestions:

1. Choose a book of poems by a contemporary poet; read it cover to cover.

2. Invite a local poet to discuss his or her work at your club or organization.

3. Start a poetry book discussion group with a few of your friends.

4. Read poetry to children.

5. Take a course in poetry appreciation or writing poetry.

6. Attend a poetry reading (they are never boring and can be exciting).

7. Support the work of poets by buying their books.

8. Be a "Poetry Ambassador" in your community by planning and carrying out one poetry event a year – be sure to include local poets in your plans (if you do this, tell me and I'll write about it here).

9. Read a poem every day. If you have a computer, make Poetry Daily, or a similar site, your home page and read the poem posted there every day (www.poems.com) to make this easy.

10. Explore the many websites devoted to poetry. On The Poetry Foundation site you can even hear famous poets read their poems (www.poetryfoundation.org).

Ellen Hinsey, in *Poetry Magazine*, February 2003, wrote, "No individual poem can stop a war - that's what diplomacy is supposed to do. But poetry is an independent ambassador for conscience: it answers to no one, it crosses borders without a passport, and it speaks the truth. That's why, despite talk about its marginalization, it is one of the most powerful of the arts." I would add, reading poetry is a joyful experience, it lifts us up, it connects us to all that it means to be a imperfect human living in an imperfect, but also beautiful, world.

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http://www.nh.gov/nhsl/bookcenter

Ladybug Picture Book Award

This fall the winner of the 5th annual Ladybug Picture Book Award will be chosen. Over the past five years I have been asked lots of questions about this NH Center for the Book project. Here are the answers to the most frequently asked questions.

How are books nominated?

A committee of children's librarians working in New Hampshire reads hundreds of picture books each year and meets each January to select 10 recent titles that they feel should be considered for that year's Ladybug Award. This committee is chaired by Ann Hoey, Youth Services Coordinator for the NH State Library.

To be considered for nomination, a picture book must meet the following criteria: be published within the last three years; be in print; have either the book's author or illustrator from the U.S.; possess strong child appeal; have artistic quality with text that supports the illustrations; not be a title previously nominated.

In previous years publishers have been invited to send their titles for consideration, but beginning with the 2007 award only New Hampshire librarians may suggest titles for nomination.

How is the winner chosen?

In November, New Hampshire children from preschoolers to those in third grade vote for their favorite of the nominated titles. Many libraries, schools (including homeschools), and day-care centers are among the current voting sites. In previous years many sites held their voting during Children's Book Week. Beginning in 2008 CBW will move to May, but Ladybug voting will stay in November to coincide with elections.

What do the voting sites do?

* Let people in their community know that they are a voting site.

* Read the ten nominated titles to the eligible voters (or have older kids read the books to them).

* Have the children vote for their favorites (there is a free picture ballot on our website that you can use, or a show of hands works well in many places).

* Count all the votes and record them on the tally sheet and send it to the address indicated on the top of the sheet by the deadline (November 30, 2007, this year). Because the selection of the winning book depends upon the total number of votes cast, it is important that voting sites report all the votes cast, not just which book got the most votes at their site.

When is the winner announced?

The winning picture book is announced by the end of December. Each year we receive thousands of votes (17, 027 last year) so it takes a little while to count them all. The publisher of the winning book is notified and then the winner is announced on the New Hampshire Center for the Book Blog (http://nhbookcenter.blogspot.com) and on our website.

The author and illustrator of the winning book are contacted to let them know their book has won, and a crystal award for their book is commissioned from Pepi Herrmann Crystal. The actual award is sent, one to the author and one to the illustrator if they are not the same person, in early spring.

How is the Ladybug Award funded?

We were able to launch the award thanks to a generous donation from Toadstool Bookshops. Since then it has been funded through the sale of Ladybug stickers. There is an "I voted" sticker available for $5 per 100 and a small square ladybug sticker suitable for labeling nominated books available for $4 per 100. Order forms for the stickers are available on our website. All of the stickers feature our very own Ladybug, created by Luci Albertson of the Bedford Public Library.

2007 Nominees

- *Red Fox at McCloskey's Farm* by Brian Heinz and Chris Seban
- *Duck & Goose* by Tad Hills
- *Library Lion* by Michelle Knudsen & Kevin Hawkes
- *Not Afraid of Dogs* by Susanna Pitzer & Larry Day
- *I Saw an Ant on the Railroad Track* by Joshua Prince & Macky Pamintuan
- *Pip & Squeak* by Ian Schoenherr
- *The Secret Science Project that Almost Ate the School* by Judy Sierra & Stephen Gammell
- *The Trouble with Cauliflower* by Jane Sutton & Jim Harris
- *The Remarkable Friendship of Mr. Cat and Mr. Rat* by Rick Walton & Lisa McCue
- *Moose Tracks!* by Karma Wilson & Jack E. Davis

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New Hampshire Books

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General Federation of Women's Clubs-New Hampshire. *Once Upon a Time…Recipes and Remembrances of New Hampshire's Old Man of the Mountain.* Memphis, TN: Wimmer Cookbooks, 2006

This group has a long history of supporting and promoting the Old Man of the Mountain. In the late 1920's the New Hampshire Federation of Women's Clubs was instrumental in raising $100,000 towards the purchase of the forest land surrounding the Old Man. In the mid-1980's they again helped raise money to establish a museum of Old Man artifacts and memorabilia. This current cookbook project is to benefit the Old Man of the Mountain Legacy Fund to create a lasting memorial to the fallen Old Man. Members from around the state contributed hundreds of favorite recipes and remembrances of visiting the Old Man of the Mountain.

Landis, Denise. *Dinner for Eight: 40 Great Dinner Party Menus for Friends and Family.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 2005

Landis, an Exeter resident, is a longtime recipe tester for the *New York Times.* That sounds like a dream job to me! As a New Hampshire resident, and mother of three, she also brings a realistic approach to the menus in this book. Many recipes are easy to recreate in New York City, where you can find just about any food ingredient, but shopping in New Hampshire can be a bit more challenging. And for the entertaining-challenged, she provides not only an appetizer-to-dessert menu, but includes suggested wines and beverages. Recipes range from simple family favorites like Baked Stuffed Clams to contributions from famous chefs like Nigella Lawson. There are many helpful hints on preparation and how to create dishes in advance of a dinner party.

Marion, Dawn. *Legendary Cooks: Recipes from Five Generations of New Hampshire Cooks.* Warner, NH: NH Trillium Books, 2002

Here is a little family history, a lot of family recipes, and some lovely artwork tying it all together. Artist and illustrator Marion was born and raised in Center Ossipee, surrounded by several generations of family. She has gathered together treasured recipes and included many of her charming illustrations and old family photos. Everyday, homestyle recipes like New England Fish Chowder are interspersed with the author's more international choices like Mushroom and Cabbage Piroshki.

Styrna, Joan. *Good Food Simply Prepared: A Collection of Recipes from 3 Generations of the Styrna Family.* Portsmouth, NH: Peter E. Randall Publisher, 2005

Styrna is a trained chef and teacher, living in Brentwood. The story begins with her grandparents, immigrants from Belarussia and Poland who came to Nashua in the early 1900's to work in the mills. The author shares many of their ethnic recipes like Chlodnik and Babka. In the next section she highlights many of the post-World War II meals popular with her parents and many others in that era. Remember Swiss Steak, anyone? Finally, the author's own contributions range from the simple favorites of her youth to more exotic creations from her days as a professional chef. San Francisco Cheesecake sounds like a keeper to me! The book is illustrated by another New Hampshire resident, Sheila Lemieux of Danville.

Common Reading Programs go to College
One Book, One Campus

By Carrie Thomas
Library Director,
Colby-Sawyer College

As schools, bookstores and public libraries in New Hampshire gear up for the statewide "Big Read," various colleges and universities across the country are mailing books to incoming freshmen with instructions to read them before arriving on campus in the fall. The academic Common Reading program is a relatively young phenomenon. A study done at Gustavus Adolphus College (www.gustavus.edu/eacademics/library/Pubs/Lindell2007.html) last fall found that 61% of the programs they surveyed were less than four years old, but a handful such as the ones at Skidmore College and UNC-Chapel Hill have been around for a decade or so.

The reasons for this growing phenomenon are varied, but most campuses incorporate the common reading experience into their orientation program and use the opportunity to welcome students to the college experience. Some oft-cited benefits are: "to develop a sense of community" or "to ease the intellectual and emotional transition newcomers make when they arrive on campus" or "to engage students early with a proactive discussion of challenging reading." (Mantey, J. "Incoming Freshmen Get Summer Reading Assignments," *U.S. News & World Report*, posted 6/7/07 at www.usnews.com/usnes/edu/articles/070607/7summer_print.htm)

With that in mind, the programs often choose books that provide students with an opportunity to understand diverse perspectives and that contain issues students confront in daily news and popular culture such as the Middle East, poverty, or social and environmental issues. Some of the more popular recent choices have been *The Kite Runner* by Hosseini, *The Things They Carried* by O'Brien, *Fast Food Nation* by Schlosser and *Mountains Beyond Mountains* by Kidder. While most campuses want to foster student-faculty interaction and try to find a book that will stir discussion, the University of North Carolina got more discussion than they had bargained for in 2003 when they picked another popular common read title, *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America* by Ehrenreich. A conservative student group with funding from a local foundation and support from some state legislators published newspaper ads and staged campus protests of the book's stances against capitalism and religion. (O'Connor, E. "Misreading What Reading is for," *Chronicle of Higher Education* 50.2, 9/5/03).

As with the community reading programs, it is hoped that reading the same book will bring students from varied backgrounds closer together and create common ground for discussion. Some colleges only use the book for small group discussions during orientation while others require written essays, sponsor contests, hold cultural events such as films or exhibits tied to themes in the book and host author visits. Some programs try to integrate the reading into the fall semester courses, which reinforces the ideas and may make the reading seem more relevant to the students, but requires a lot more faculty cooperation.(Ferguson, M. "Creating Common Ground," *Peer Review*, Summer 2006)

Here in New Hampshire, some local colleges that are assigning a book this summer are: Keene State College with *Devil's Highway* by Luis Alberto Urea, Rivier College with *March* by Geraldine Brooks and Colby-Sawyer College with *Outside Lies Magic* by John Stilgoe.

Which book would you save from the flames?

In his classic novel *Fahrenheit 451*, author Ray Bradbury created a futuristic society that burned books. The main character, Guy Montag, finds a group of men who have formed a loosely organized rebellion to save books. Their plan is to "keep the knowledge we think we will need." The rebels save books that represented "bits and pieces of history and literature and international law. Each man had a book he wanted to remember, and did." If you lived in a society that burned books, what is an important book that you would want to save from the fire? We invite your responses as part of **The Big Read: New Hampshire Reads Fahrenheit 451**, a project of the Center for the Book at the New Hampshire State Library in partnership with the New Hampshire Humanities Council. Tell us which book you would remember, which book you would save from the flames, and why. Send your response (in 100 words or less) to the NH Center for the Book, 20 Park St., Concord NH 03301, or submit online at http://bigreadnh.blogspot.com. Please include your name, phone number, and city or town with your submission. Your contact information is for verification purposes and won't be shared with other organizations. All responses will be posted on the project web page, and some will be published in various newsletters and publications.

The Big Read: NH Reads *Fahrenheit 451*

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Deborah Watrous. "When the NEA announced *Fahrenheit 451* as one of this year's selections, we were thrilled. That was a title we were already planning to include in our year-long, statewide book discussion program on speculative fiction. And what a great book for library-based discussions. It's startling that Bradbury wrote this book in 1953, when television wasn't yet a ubiquitous presence in our lives and the internet wasn't even imagined. His warnings about mass-media thought control and the peril of losing access to knowledge resonate powerfully today."

More than sixty libraries, schools, and bookstores from throughout the Granite State will participate in The Big Read: New Hampshire Reads *Fahrenheit 451* by holding book discussions, showing films, putting together exhibits, and hosting NHHC Humanities-to-Go programs on topics relating to the role of government in our lives. Thanks to the Big Read grant, participating libraries and schools will receive free copies of *Fahrenheit 451* to distribute to their reading groups. When the project is over, we hope to pass on many of the copies to local schools that read this book as part of their curriculum. There will also be some copies "wandering" around the state. These copies of the book will be packaged with information about the Big Read and an invitation to come to the website and let us know where you found the book.

Among the programs planned for our Big Read are two that were put together by the New Hampshire Humanities Council. "One Mother, Two Fathers: The History of Science Fiction" is a discussion by author Jeanne Cavelos of the influences that gave birth to science fiction and how the genre has grown from its founders to what it is today and is being held at, and supported by, the Christa McAuliffe Planetarium in Concord on Friday, October 5. "Media and the Soul of the Citizen," a panel discussion co-sponsored by the Portsmouth Public Library, will be held on October 30 at 7pm.

Other supporters of our project include New Hampshire Public Radio's The Exchange, which will do a program focused on our book during the second week of October, and the SNOB (Somewhat North of Boston) Film Festival, which will be held in Concord November 9-11 and will include a competition asking film makers to create a short film based on any of the themes presented in *Fahrenheit 451*. According to Kristen Vermilyea Harbaugh, "Partnering with the NH Center for the Book and the Big Read is a great way for SNOB to continue to expand and to challenge its audience with new concepts of and relationships between film, literature and art." In addition to being our Promotions Coordinator, Kristen is the co-chair of the 2007 SNOB Film Festival.

Toward the end of *Fahrenheit 451*, the main character finds a group of men who have formed a loosely organized rebellion to save books. The rebels save books that represented "bits and pieces of history and literature and international law. Each man had a book he wanted to remember, and did." Inspired by this idea, we began asking earlier this year "What Book Would You Save from the Flames?' We have received numerous responses, some predictable, some inspired, all interesting – and all posted on our website at http://bigreadnh.blogspot.com.

There will be lots of programs and discussions — some live and some virtual — going on here in the Granite State in October. I hope you will read (or re-read!) *Fahrenheit 451* and then get out and discuss it with your friends, neighbors, co-workers, family — anyone you happen to run into. Visit our website to find out when and where people will be gathering to talk about this book, and if you should happen to find a copy of the novel "wandering" through your community be sure to visit our website and let us know about it.

The Big Read: NH Reads *Fahrenheit 451* Participants

Aaron Cutler Memorial Library - Abbott Library - Barnes & Noble, Manchester, Newington, Salem - Barrington Public Library - Baker Free Library - Bayswater Book Company - Borders Books, West Lebanon - Canaan Town Library - Chesley Memorial Library - Chester Public Library - Colby Memorial Library - Dunbar Free Library - Dunbarton Public Library - Derry Public Library - Durham Public Library - East Kingston Library - Exeter Public Library - Frost Free Library - Gilford Public Library - Gibson's Bookstore - Hampton Falls Free Library - Hills Memorial Library - Howe Library - Innisfree Bookshops - Keene Public Library - Kelley Library - Leach Library - Lincoln Public Library - Madbury Library - Main Street Bookends - Manchester City Library - Minot-Sleeper Library - Morgan Hill Bookstore - Nesmith Library - Orford Social Library - Pease Public Library - Peterborough Town Library - Philip Read Memorial Library - Pillsbury Free Library - Plaistow Public Library - Portsmouth Public Library - Richards Free Library - Rye Public Library - Samuel H. Wentworth Library - Sandown Public Library - Silsby Free Public Library - Somersworth Public Library - Talking Books Plus - Tilton School - Toadstool Bookshops, Keene, Milford, Peterborough - Tracy Memorial Library - Village Book Store - Water Street Bookstore - Weare Public Library - Weeks Public Library - Wiggin Memorial Library - Wolfeboro Public Library

33rd Annual
New Hampshire
Antiquarian Book Fair

Sunday, September 23, 2007
9:30 am - 4:00 pm

Everett Arena, Concord, NH
Exit 14 off Route 93
Admission $3

Book signings by Nicholas Basbanes,
Mike Pride, Mark Travers,
Peter Wallner, and Peter Randall

Bring this coupon for FREE Admission courtesy of the NH Center for the Book

NH Antiquarian Book Association

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aficiandos who have made a life's work of knowing their trade. No matter where your reading or collecting interests lie, some member of the NHABA community will be of help. Specialties range from scholarly and technical books, to cookbooks, children's literature and everything else that has ever been written down.

2. You get to hold the book which interests you right in your own little hands. As I said the internet is a wonderful tool but for those immersed in book culture there is no substitute for the actual feel and smell and experience of the book.

3. Once you create a solid customer/dealer relationship you will have another set of eyes and ears watching out for the books you seek. As well versed as they are most dealers will admit that they are often educated by their customers about different genres. Once they know what you are looking for they are looking for it also.

4. Finally, you can connect with experts who really want to talk with you. Nowhere, outside of the library, will you find such informed booklovers as eager to discuss books, book collecting, reading and just about any other aspect of book culture.

The NHABA is made up of folks who spend their lives accumulating, collecting, handling and dispersing old volumes. If you have the same interest yourself or just wonder what makes these people tick, then pick up a brochure or visit the fair. As far as what does make lovers of old books tick, maybe in our most idealistic moments we identify with the words Ray Bradbury put into the mouth of Montag in *Farenheit 451*, "Somewhere the saving and putting away had to begin and someone had to do the saving and keeping, one way or another, in books, in records, in people's heads..." Visit www.nhaba.org to learn more.

Frost Place

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in New Hampshire was extraordinarily auspicious for him as a writer and a person. New Hampshire was not a "refuge" from the world but a landscape and dynamic (albeit traditional) culture, where he was able to concentrate and explore his perceptions of life and refine his technical discoveries at a crucial period in his artistic development, and where he partook whole-heartedly of his genuine passions for botany, animal husbandry, orchard and garden work, and (most important) parenting and neighboring. While other states and regions also "claim" Frost, the longevity of his tenure in New Hampshire — and the reciprocal devotion shown by the citizens of Franconia when they purchased his former home to save it from almost certain demolition — gives the Granite State "pride of place" in Frost's complicated biography.

Moreover, since its founding as a modern-day literary venue, The Frost Place has been a compelling and generative setting for countless contemporary poets, including many from New Hampshire. Present New Hampshire Poet Laureate Patricia Fargnoli has called The Frost Place "my spiritual home," and those who would agree are legion, including former New Hampshire Poet Laureate and recent United States Poet Laureate Donald Hall, who has said, "There is no other poetic institution in the United States that feels more consecrated to the poem itself."

The Frost Place
A Museum and Poetry Center
P.O. Box 74, Ridge Road
Franconia, NH 03580
http://www.frostplace.org

Center for the Book
at the New Hampshire State Library
20 Park Street Concord, NH 03301

The mission of the Center for the Book at the NH State Library is to celebrate and promote reading, books, literacy, and the literary heritage of New Hampshire and to highlight the role that reading and libraries play in enriching the lives of the people of the Granite State.

Charles Simic Named U. S. Poet Laureate

By Andrea Thorpe
Director,
Richards Free Library

The Library of Congress has named Charles Simic Poet Laureate of the United States. This is the 5th time a New Hampshire poet has been named to the post, which has also been held by Robert Frost, Richard Eberhart, Maxine Kumin, and Donald Hall. Simic is Professor Emeritus of creative writing and literature at the University of New Hampshire, where he has taught for 34 years.

His awards include MacArthur, National Endowment for the Arts and Guggenheim fellowships, the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry, the Sarah Josepha Hale Award, numerous other prizes for poetry and the PEN International Award for translation twice. Simic is the author of 18 books of poetry, a memoir, essays and several translations. Simic will publish a new book of poetry, *That Little Something*, in February 2008.

The Georgia Review has called him "one of the wisest poets of his generation, and one of the best." *The Chicago Review* described Simic's work as "some of the most strikingly original poetry of our time."

On making the appointment, Librarian of Congress James Billington said, "The range of Charles Simic's imagination is evident in his stunning and unusual imagery. He handles language with the skill of a master craftsman, yet his poems are easily accessible, often meditative and surprising. He has given us a rich body of highly organized poetry with shades of darkness and flashes of ironic humor."

A native of Yugoslavia, Simic came to this country as a teenager. "I am especially touched and honored to be selected because I am an immigrant boy who didn't speak English until I was 15," he said. Simic's mastery of English has made his work as appealing to the literary community as it is to the general public.

Mr. Simic lives in Strafford, NH, with his wife Helen. He will take up his duties in the fall, opening the Library of Congress's annual literary series on Oct. 17 with a reading of his work. He also will be a featured speaker at the Library of Congress National Book Festival on Saturday, September 29, 2007, on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.