

# Walk Through



# Nebraska History



Issue No. 3

The following are quotes from Nebraska teachers who have taken the opportunity to implement the *Walk Through Nebraska History* program in the classroom:

**“Walk Through Nebraska History is a great resource for PE Teachers when planning an interdisciplinary unit.”**

Becky Martin  
Park Middle School

**“Walk Through Nebraska History is a brilliantly appropriate and useful resource for incorporating interdisciplinary curriculum in the middle level classes. It is easily implemented and “kid-proofed” so that more kids are having relevant, fun learning.”**

Mary Claire May  
Horizon Middle School

**“The thing that has been most exciting to me is the integration of all subject areas! This document lends itself beautifully to teaming. I believe that students’ learning greatly increases when they have opportunities to explore one topic in several different classes.”**

Sue Munn  
Hamlow Elementary School

**“These manuals have been particularly useful in viewing Nebraska studies from an integrated-across the disciplines-approach.”**

Susan J. Weber  
Milford Elementary School

# *Walk Through Nebraska History, Issue No. 3 1998*

An integrated curriculum program with tools for introducing materials within the classroom.

## **Developed by:**

John LeFeber, Director of Social Sciences  
Curriculum/Instruction Section  
Nebraska Department of Education

Barbara Scudder-Soucie, Physical Activity Coordinator  
Health Promotion & Education Division  
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

## **Supported by:**

Nebraska Department of Education  
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Health Promotion & Education Division  
Nebraska's Governor's Council on Health Promotion & Physical Fitness  
Nebraska State Council for the Social Studies

## **Resources provided by:**

Department of Economic Development, Travel & Tourism Division  
Nebraska Game and Parks Commission  
Nebraska State Historical Society

## **Art work designed by:**

Sandy Peters  
Public Information & Publications Section  
Nebraska Department of Education



**Walk Through Nebraska History**  
**Issue No. 3**

**Table of Contents**

	<u>Page</u>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	ii
<b>Letter to Teacher</b> .....	iii
<b>Writing Team</b> .....	iv
<b>Reviewers</b> .....	iv
<b>Travel Log</b> .....	v
<b>Service Learning</b> .....	vi
<b>Historical Markers</b>	
First Oil Well (Marker 79).....	1
Homestead Movement (Marker 7).....	5
Half-Breed Tract (Marker 58).....	9
1776 Bicentennial Prairie Marker 1976 (Marker 196) .....	13
Nebraska City (Marker 60).....	17
The Ox-Bow Trail (Marker 219) .....	22
The Ionia “Volcano” (Marker 68).....	25
Sandhill Cranes (Marker 389).....	29
Cather Childhood Home (Marker 264).....	33
The Loup City Riot, 1934 (Marker 293).....	37
Historic Missouri Valley (Marker 167) .....	41
Ainsworth Army Air Field (Marker 380) .....	45
The Nebraska State Grange (Marker 59).....	49
The Republican River Flood of 1935 (Marker 39).....	52
Wild Horse Spring (Marker 29).....	56
The Sandhills (Marker 63).....	59
Fort Niobrara (Marker 87) .....	63
Mari Sandoz (Marker 85).....	67
Burlington Locomotive 719 (Marker 268) .....	71
Bordeaux Trading Post (Marker 42).....	75
<b>General Resources</b> .....	79

## INTRODUCTION

### ***Background:***

The *Walk Through Nebraska History* program was written over a one-day period to serve as an “idea-starter” for teachers. This is the third issue to be printed. Please call/email Barbara Scudder-Soucie (402/471-2101), email: doh512k @ vmhost.cdp.state.ne.us or contact John LeFeber via website (<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/SS/nehist.html>) for further explanation and/or additional copies.

### ***Goal:***

The *Walk Through Nebraska History* program provides the possibility for integration of all curriculum areas from the fourth through eighth grade levels. A section on Service Learning is also included (See page vi for description of Service Learning).

### ***Rationale:***

Creativity is a necessity when working in the classroom and this program provides exactly that. With the *Walk Through Nebraska History* program, the opportunity exists for expanded use of materials in multiple curricular areas.

### ***Summary:***

The *Walk Through Nebraska History* program provides information on 20 Nebraska historical markers. Integrated curricular ideas are included to be used as “tools” for learning both in the classroom and at home. The program was written by Nebraska teachers with the understanding that this is a starting point and expanded ideas are encouraged! The following is an example of how to use this program:

Start by having students exercise as a class from one historical marker to the next. Miles are earned by actually walking a mile or equating a mile with a certain amount of time spent engaging in activities such as jumping rope or playing softball (for example, 5 minutes could equal one mile). Physical activities with families may be included as well. As students are accruing mileage from one marker to the next, math instructors may create story problems to accompany the program (i.e., if Johnnie bikes and Susie walks between historical markers, who will get there first?). At the same time, language arts instructors may have students keep a log of their “travels” from one historical maker to the next, perhaps from the perspective of the pioneer. The science instructor may decide to teach about the different weather patterns experienced across the state as the students are “traveling” from one end to the other. The art instructor may have students paint, design, or mold different historical markers as they “come upon them.”

As you can see, students are not actually physically traveling to the different historical markers, but they are learning about them in different classrooms simultaneously as if they were actually making the trek like the pioneers did. It is up to the school to decide if an historical site is close enough for them to take a field trip and visit. Families may also decide to tour Nebraska with an educational incentive such as the *Walk Through Nebraska History* program in mind.

*Walk Through Nebraska History, Issue No. 3*

TO: Teachers

FROM: John LeFeber  
Director of Social Science Education  
Nebraska Department of Education

Barbara Scudder-Soucie  
Health Promotion & Education Division  
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

DATE: 1998

RE: *Walk Through Nebraska History, Issue No. 3*

We are pleased to provide you with a copy of the *Walk Through Nebraska History, Issue No. 3*. This program was developed by teachers from across the state of Nebraska. It is designed to integrate the different curricula areas.

The *Walk Through Nebraska History* program includes “idea-starters” for introducing materials within the classroom. This program was developed to help fill a void in the area of available materials. Some of the materials are designed to encourage family participation as well.

We are excited about this program and hope that you will be too. To improve the program, it is our plan to have Issue No. 4 available for 1999. Please assist us in improving this program for the anticipated Issue No. 4 by simply completing the brief evaluation included as the first page of this program booklet. Thank you in advance for your interest in and support of the *Walk Through Nebraska History* program!

***Writing Team***

Julie Goertzen  
Henderson High School

Sandy Jefferies  
Cardinal Elementary School/South Sioux City

Becky Martin  
Park Middle School/Lincoln

Mary Clair May  
Horizon Middle School/Kearney

Celeste Merchant  
Cardinal Elementary School/South Sioux City

Lonnie Moore  
South Valley Elementary School at Oxford

Laura Parson  
Conestoga Elementary School/Nehawka

Bob Rung  
McPhee Elementary School/Lincoln

Susan Weber  
Milford Elementary School

LaVonne Uffelman  
Nebraska Department of Education

***Reviewers***

Marybell Avery  
Lincoln Public Schools

Barbara Fraser  
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

Sally Husen  
Nebraska Governor's Council on Health Promotion  
& Physical Fitness

Richard Spencer  
Nebraska State Historical Society

LaVonne Uffelman  
Nebraska Department of Education

Sue Munn  
Hamlow Elementary School/Waverly

**WALK THROUGH NEBRASKA HISTORY, Issue No. 3**

**Travel Log**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

I started at \_\_\_\_\_ Historical Marker I finished at \_\_\_\_\_ Historical Marker

	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	
Date								
Activity								<b>TOTAL MILES</b>
Time/Distance								
How Do you Feel About This Activity?								
Adult Signature								

\_\_\_\_\_ Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Miles

## What is Service Learning?

Service Learning is a method under which students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet actual community needs. These service experiences are coordinated in collaboration with the school and community, and are integrated into the student's academic curriculum. The process provides structured time for students to think, talk, or write about what they did and saw during the actual service activity. This provides students with opportunities to use newly acquired skills and knowledge in real-life situations in their own communities. Service Learning enhances what is taught in school by extending student learning beyond the classroom and into the community and helps to foster the development of a sense of caring for others.

*Walk Through Nebraska History* provides students opportunities to combine many different academic skills in providing a service to the community. Defining the community to be served is one of the many activities students engage in before starting a project. The community could be a town, city, village, school, school district, county or state. The element that is central to Service Learning is a project. The project provides students the opportunity to utilize higher order thinking skills and to apply learned cognitive and psychomotor skills.

Community Service and Service Learning are concepts which differ in their intent, but contain some common activity and results. A community service project may not result in a learning activity for the student. Service Learning on the other hand is directly linked to learning.

Service Learning has three components. They are: Preparation, Activity, and Reflection. The preparation phase of the activity is the most important, in order to involve students in the learning activity. *Walk Through Nebraska History* suggests many opportunities to involve students in the learning process. The activity in many cases will be determined by the students as a result of being introduced to the topic. The reflection phase should be planned so that as students are involved in the activity, they are directed to be thinking about the benefits of the activity to the community and to direct their thoughts to what they are learning about the topic. This can be conducted through writing a journal or making reports, both written or verbal. Also, results of their activity should be shared with adults in the community, through articles written to newspapers or reports to clubs or boards. Where possible, the projects should involve adults in the community such as senior citizens.

### FIRST OIL WELL

The first publicized report of oil in Nebraska was an 1883 newspaper account of a "vein of petroleum" discovered in Richardson County. Over the next 57 years, the search for oil consumed thousands of dollars, and hundreds of wells were drilled throughout Nebraska. Traces of oil were reported at various locations across the state, but Nebraska did not have a producing well until 1940.

In 1939 and 1940, the Pawnee Royalty Company had two encouraging but unsuccessful drillings near Falls City. A third well, known as Bucholz No. 1, was begun near here on April 22, 1940. On May 29, 1940, the well began producing and averaged 169-1/2 barrels daily for the first 60 days.

Bucholz Well No. 1 thus easily qualified for a \$15,000 bonus offered by the Nebraska Legislature for the first oil well in the state to produce at least 50 barrels daily for 60 consecutive days. Interestingly, Bucholz No. 1 was located about five miles east of the "vein of petroleum" reported in 1883.

Although today Nebraska's oil production is largely centered in the southwestern panhandle, the pioneer efforts in this area have resulted in a major contribution to the economy of the state.

Nebraska Petroleum Council  
Historical Land Mark Council  
Nebraska 4, west of Falls City  
Richardson County  
Marker 79

(Distance between Marker 42 and Marker 79 is 561.7 miles.)

### Health and Physical Education

- Walk the distance of the height of an oil rig.
- What health products and medicines are dependent upon oil?
- What are the health risks associated with petroleum products and their production? For animals?
- What are the occupational risks involved in working on an oil rig?

### Math

- How many gallons of gasoline can be produced from a barrel of oil?
- What would this first well be worth with today's price of oil?
- Graph the production output of the major oil areas of the world.

### Reading and Writing

- Research and write about the history of oil in Nebraska.
- Interview a manager of a local gasoline station or Co-op to find out where their supply of oil/gasoline comes from.
- Write about one day in the life of an oil rig worker.
- Write a report about a major oil spill and its effect on the environment.
- Journal on fighting an out of control fire in or near an oil refinery.

### **Science**

- Compare and contrast the geographical make-up of the oil sites in Nebraska.
- What were the natural resources present which formed oil?
- Compare and contrast Nebraska and Texas oil supplies and geographical differences.
- Diagram or make a flow chart of the oil refinery process.
- What are the ecological implications of oil spills?
- Develop a list of all the positive benefits from oil and its production.

### **Social Studies**

- Locate the major oil fields of the world on a map.
- compare the oil production of Nebraska with the United States and Iraq.
- Research who qualified for the \$15,000 bonus offered by the Nebraska Legislature in 1940. Find out if bonuses or incentives are still being offered today.
- Write a letter and find out what is left of the oil vein reported in 1883.
- Find out what percent of Nebraska's current economy is based on the petroleum industry.

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Create a model of an oil rig.
- Make a diorama of an oil refinery.
- View Fires of Kuwait video (available at Hastings IMAX Museum).
- Compare oil and acrylic paints.
- Create a painting using half oil and half acrylic paints.
- Write an art museum to find out what percent of the museum printings are done with oils, acrylics, or other paints.

### **Service Learning**

- Develop a plan for recycling oil in your community and establish that plan.
- Find a place where one can recycle plastics.
- Find out what your school does with the used oil products from the school vehicles.

### **General Activities**

- Discover other oil field sites in Nebraska.
- Discover businesses in Nebraska that service the oil business.
- Discover other natural resources that are mined (uranium, gravel) in Nebraska.
- Discover environmental impact of oil production in Nebraska.

## **Resources**

- Nebraska Our Towns...East Southeast, 1992, pg. 181 (picture of first well to come to Nebraska in November 2, 1939), Taylor Publishing Co., Dallas, Texas
- Fires of Kuwait, a video, Hastings Museum
- Mining in Nebraska, published by Conservation and Survey Division, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources in Nebraska. It is a source for discovering what other natural resources are mined in Nebraska.

Oil fields in Richardson County  
Courtesy of Nebraska State Historical Society

**Marker 42 to Marker 79** Distance 561.7 miles

From: Chadron, NE  
To: Falls City, NE  
Beginning at Chadron, NE  
Go West on U.S. I 20 for 0.9 miles  
Go South on U.S. 385 for 93.0 miles  
Go Southeast on HWY 26 for 87.2 miles  
Go East on U.S. 80 for 271.0 miles  
Go East on HWY 2 for 3.2 miles  
Go East on HWY 34 for 41.5 miles  
Go South on U.S. 75 for 49.4 miles  
Go East on HWY 73 for 15.5 miles  
To Falls City, NE

## HOMESTEAD MOVEMENT

Abraham Lincoln was called the Great Emancipator because his proclamation of 1862 gave freedom to the slaves. In that same year, he signed another extremely important document that gave land to free men. No single act had more effect on the Middle West and Great Plains than the Homestead Act of May 20, 1862. It brought tens of thousands of land-hungry settlers to the region that was to become the nation's breadbasket.

Millions of acres from the public domain became available. Under this law, heads of families had only to pay a small filing fee and live upon and cultivate their 160 acres for five years. For some, the rigors of frontier life were too great, but many others replaced the prairie grasses with grain and built homes, often of sod, on land of their own.

The Homestead National Movement of America, a part of our National Park System, is located on the Daniel Freeman homestead seven miles west of this site. It commemorates this act and the policies of government that played a major role in the settlement of the West.

Historical Land Mark Council  
North of Beatrice at airport on U.S. 77  
Gage County  
Marker 7  
(Distance between Marker 79 and Marker 7 is 72.1 miles.)

### Health and Physical Education

- Learn about frostbite-what it is, what are its symptoms, how can you prevent and treat it?
- Plan a menu for a typical settler family and compare it to a typical menu from today.
- Have a plow relay (a cultivator may be used instead of a plow). See which team can plow the straightest, fastest, etc.
- Have students record the amount of time it takes to walk from X to Y. This would represent the distance from the claims office to Daniel Freeman's homestead. Calculate the time to walk this distance based on the students' times.

### Math

- Compare and contrast costs of filing fees in 1862 to filing fees of 1998.
- What percentage of the average income was the \$10 filing fee?
- What percentage of a section of land is one hundred and sixty acres?
- Use graph paper as a visual aid to understand how large an area 160 acres covers.
- Compare the horse vs. the tractor by discovering how many horses were in an average team. Then compare the size of the machinery in 1862 with the sizes of machinery today. An implement dealer could be an excellent source for this discovery activity.

### **Reading and Writing**

- Create an ad for free land.
- Debate the issue of “Why Free Land?” Focus on why 160 acres, why the improvements were required (e.g. buildings), and compare the improvements to land in 1862 to those in the 1990’s.
- Write a letter to your family telling about what is now happening in your life.
- Explore readings from Nebraska Voices, Telling the Stories of Our State, Pioneering on the Prairie by Henry Lambrecht, Pound on Rain by Clay Capek.
- Have students write a letter to Homestead National Monument requesting information about the monument. (Include information the Freeman School.)
- Read Clara Colby’s description of Beatrice in 1872, nine years after the first homestead (pp 7-10, 125 Nebraska Voices).

### **Science**

- Compare the annual rainfall at Homestead Monument to other locations in Nebraska.
- What differences does the rainfall have on the type of plants found native to the region, particularly trees and grasses?
- Discuss natural disasters.
- Using a current Nebraska highway map, discover what topographical regions the Homestead Monument is in.
- Conduct an experiment with native prairie seeds to observe the growth of root systems.

### **Social Studies**

- Visit a natural prairie area and observe the flora and fauna.
- Investigate and list the steps necessary to stake a claim.
- Do a “Stake your Claim” activity from the Homestead Activity Guide.
- Compare the 160 acre homestead farm today in terms of productivity, size, income, to that of the 1800’s.
- Interview a Cooperative Extension Agent about farm families in the county whose farms date back to the original Homestead Act.

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Collect and display native flowers and grasses by creating a booklet of these.
- Make models of various pioneer homes and include a list of their advantages and disadvantages.
- Write and perform a play based on one of the readings listed in Resources section.
- Develop a floor plan for the Freeman home. Include household furniture.
- Compare the square footage per person of the Freeman home to your home.

### **Service Learning**

- Volunteer to clean local parks and points of interest.
- Adopt a corner and plant trees or natural grasses. Maintain for the school year.

### **General Activities**

- Find out how many students attended the Freeman School in 1870. What people from homesteads in the surrounding areas attended the school?
- Discover if there are any sections of native prairie/grasses in your community or county.
- Find out if there are original homestead buildings still standing in your area.

### **Resources**

- Homesteading: The Free Land Idea: An Activity Guide for Teachers Grades 4 through 6, produced by Homestead National Monument of America, National Park Service, U.S. Department of Interior, 1996, \$10 plus shipping & handling
- Twyla Hansen, Wesleyan University-Lincoln, Nebraska, Grounds Keeper
- County Extension Office
- Homestead National Monument, RFD, Beatrice, NE
- Nebraska Voices Telling the Stories of Our State, Nebraska Humanities Council, Nebraska Q125, 1993

Homestead Movement  
Courtesy of Nebraska State Historical Society

**Marker 79 to Marker 7** Distance: 72.1 miles

From: Falls City, NE  
To: Beatrice, NE  
Beginning at Falls City, NE  
Go Northwest on US 73, U.S. 159 for 19.6 miles  
Go West on HWY 4 for 16.8 miles  
Go West on HWY 50 1.4 miles  
Go West on HWY 4 for 34.3 miles

### HALF-BREED TRACT

It was an accepted custom for many early fur traders to marry into Indian tribes. As the Indians ceded their lands, the rights of the half-breed descendants were not always identified. This situation was recognized by the government in 1830, by the Prairie Du Chien Treaty which set aside a tract of land for the half-breeds of the Oto, Iowa, Omaha, and Santee Sioux tribes.

This tract was located between the Great and Little Nemaha Rivers. In 1838, the land was surveyed by John C. McCoy, who placed the western boundary eight miles west of the river instead of ten miles as specified. This caused problems, as later white settlers were to settle on Indian lands west of McCoy's line. Congress ordered the land resurveyed, and in 1858 the McCoy line was made official. On September 10, 1860, Louis Neal received the first patent.

The owners were never required to live on their property and many eventually sold their lands to whites. One of the original survey lines is now partly identified by the Half-Breed Road which runs in a southeast direction from here. The descendants of some pioneer fur traders still live in the area.

Auburn Community Betterment Council  
Historical Land Mark Council  
U.S. 136, east of Auburn  
Nemaha County  
Marker 58  
(Distance between Marker 7 and Marker 58 is 51.9 miles.)

### Health and Physical Education

- List at least five ways of handling disputes.
- Make a list of diseases brought to the Nebraska Territory and describe how they affected the Native American population.
- Determine the physical fitness characteristics needed to be a fur trader. Include survival skills.
- Discuss challenges which couples from different racial or ethnic backgrounds face today.
- Compare/contrast dress of a fur trapper traveling in the wilderness with a winter sports long distance runner.

### Math

- Research the type of goods used for bartering in trade between the Native Americans and the fur traders. Make a graph or chart to show the barter system.
- Compute the square miles of the Half Breed Tract. Convert it to metrics.
- How many marriages in Nebraska are considered mixed marriages (Bureau of Vital Statistics)?
- How many beaver pelts did it take to make a top hat, a coat, etc.?

### **Reading and Writing**

- Write to the Auburn Chamber of Commerce to find out more information or specific stories about the Half-Breed Road.
- Research Logan Fontenelle, an Omaha Chief, who was half French and half Omaha.
- Compare trapping then and now in terms of methods and equipment.
- Journal your experience as a person of a mixed race.
- Compare and contrast the philosophy of education between the Fur Trading French (Jesuit) and the Native American groups.

### **Science**

- Invite a professional surveyor to visit the classroom to demonstrate and have students practice with equipment. Compare and contrast equipment of the 1800s with current surveying equipment.
- Compare and contrast tanning of hides then and now.
- Invite a local Muzzleloader to demonstrate tanning of hides, and to show a variety of hides.
- Invite a representative from the Tandy Leather Company to speak.

### **Social Studies**

- Identify and mark McCoy's line on a Nebraska map.
- List, research, and discuss some other mixed ancestry groups in Nebraska, the United States, or the world (e.g. Mestizo).
- Discuss what prejudices exist for mixed marriages and mixed ancestries.
- What are the opportunities available for people of Native American ancestry?
- Write the Bureau of Indian Affairs to inquire about statistics about fur trader/Indian marriages.

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Compare French art of the mid-1800s with Native American art.
- View a video of a Powwow or visit a Powwow.
- Invite a Native American speaker.
- Invite a group of Native American dancers.
- Research the art produced by the traveling artists of the day (Catlin, Bodmer, etc.).

### **Service Learning**

- Get current calendar information concerning local ethnic events and then create a local calendar. Participate in an event (ex. help with planning, contacting participants, and with publicity of event).

### **General Activities**

- What were the pelts gathered by the fur traders used for (beaver pelt top hats, clothing) and how did this affect the economy in the eastern United States and Europe?
- Get to know or visit the local ethnic community groups and centers in your area.

### **Resources**

- The Mongrel by Anthony J. Barak, South Platte Press, David City, NE. A story of Logan Fontenelle of the Omaha Indians.
- The House at Seven Oaks (out of print but available from inter-library loan), a novel which deals with the Sarpy Trading Post.
- Nebraska Our Towns...East Southeast, by Jane Graff, Route #3 · Box 137A, Seward, NE 68343, 1992, Taylor Publishing Co., Dallas, Texas, pp. 131, 179, 182, 189, 194
- Tandy Leather Company
- Lease-a-Lodge at Milford, NE (tee-pees), contact Don Strinz Tipi, Inc., Route #1, Milford, NE 68405
- Muzzle Loaders and Mountain Men
- Native American Centers in Nebraska
- Great Plains Art Collection at Love Library, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
- Sharing the Past with the Future, Educator Resource Catalog, Nebraska State Historical Society
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Museum of The Fur Trade, Chadron, NE

Powwow  
Courtesy of NEBRASKALAND Magazine  
Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

**Marker 7 to Marker 58** Distance: 51.9 miles

From: Beatrice, NE  
To: Auburn, NE  
Beginning at Beatrice, NE  
Go East on U.S. 136, HWY 4 for 51.9 miles  
To Auburn, NE

### 1776 BICENTENNIAL PRAIRIE MARKER 1976

You are overlooking original prairie never broken by a plow. Nebraska looked much like this 200 years ago before the white men came: Grasses on which buffalo, elk, deer, and antelope fed; ground cover for homes for quail, grouse, and prairie chickens; pure spring-fed streams where thirsty animals and birds could drink and where fish spawned; areas where wild strawberries, grapes, plum, and chokecherry bushes bore fruit; walnut, cottonwood, and willow trees provided shade; where colorful flowers bloomed—wild indigo, purple coneflower, goldenrod, daisy fleabane, ground plum, dogtooth, and crowfoot violets. A trail once used by the Pawnee Indians is now U.S. Highway 77. The area was shared with the Oto tribe. To the east in 1856, John Prey, A. J. and Richard Wallingford, and others became some of Lancaster County's first settlers. A few miles to the north, the Fort Kearny Cut-off carried wagon trains westward during the 1850's and 1860's. Sod like you see was cut and used by settlers to build homes. This marker rests on railroad land purchased by William Mitchell in the early 1880's and has been preserved by his descendants including his grandson, Charlton Mitchell.

Elinor L. Brown  
Nebraska State Historical Society  
Rest Area south of Crete Corner, Hwy 77  
Lancaster County  
Marker 196

(Distance between Marker 58 and Marker 196 is 77.1 miles.)

\*Note: This rest stop was closed at time of printing this document.

### Health and Physical Education

- What vital vitamins and minerals would the homesteader get from plants and animals native to the area?
- Investigate natural homeopathic, alternative medicines, and home remedies.
- Compare and contrast the nutritional value of elk, buffalo, deer, and antelope meat to more traditional meats such as beef and pork.
- Take a hike through a native grass or prairie area.

### Math

- Graph the sizes and numbers of several prairie areas in Nebraska.
- Discover the length of Highway 77 in Lancaster County. Then calculate how long it would take to walk that distance at a rate of one mile per 20 minutes.
- Discover the following number combinations whose sum is 200: (1) five consecutive numbers, (2) five consecutive even numbers, and (3) five consecutive multiples of 10.
- Determine the prime factors for 200.
- While on a walk, count the different types of plants/vegetation found in a square yard area.

### **Reading and Writing**

- Write an essay about how things have changed in two hundred years.
- Write a Nebraska Birthday commemorative in the style of Paul Johnsgard as found in Nebraska Voices (pg 160).
- Write an original poem about the Nebraska prairie.
- Write a descriptive paragraph about the original prairie.
- Read Willa Cather's description of seeing the prairie for the very first time. Journal your thoughts and feelings of being alone on the prairie for an afternoon.
- Find and read three poems by Nebraska authors about the prairie.
- Create an ABC of Prairie booklet or poster.

### **Science**

- Which of the animals named on the marker are no longer living in the wild in this area?
- Investigate why these animals have disappeared.
- Determine the impact on the environment and on human activity if each of these species were to be reintroduced.
- Design a species that would exist in your local environment.
- Compare/contrast native prairie areas of Nebraska (e.g. 9 Mile Prairie, Lincoln; Kasl Tall Grass Prairie, Wilber; Willa Cather Prairie, Red Cloud).
- Create a booklet or poster identifying prairie plants or animals.

### **Social Studies**

- Compare life of Oto and Pawnee Native Americans.
- Explore the Native American heritage of students in your class.
- Find out how pioneers utilized prairie areas (e.g. sod for houses, grass/hay for animals).

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Create a pictorial glossary of the flora and fauna of the area.
- Share Native American music while class proceeds with assignments.
- Use Oto and Pawnee art designs to create drawings.
- Explore Native American hairstyles.
- Compare and contrast cultivated land and its vegetation with prairie land and its vegetation.
- Create a design for a card or button to commemorate bicentennial and/or prairie.

### **Service Learning**

- Campaign for accessible hiker/biker trails.
- Help with trail improvement. Volunteer to help maintain, expand, and renovate local hiker/biker trails.

### **General Activities**

- Create miniature soddie structures.

### **Resources**

- The Pawnee Indians by George E. Hyde, University of Oklahoma Press. A resource for teachers. Undoubtedly one of the best works on the Pawnee.
- The First Voices, *Nebraskaland Magazine*, January-February 1984. A good work to understand the life and lifestyles of the nations of Native Americans that made their homes in Nebraska.
- “Pioneering on the Prairie” by Henry W. Lambrecht, pp 109-111 of Nebraska Voices Telling the Stories of Our State, a Q125 publication of the Nebraska Humanities Council, 1993
- Contact county agents or soil conservation districts: Kasl Prairie, Wilber, NE (Saline County); Willa Cather Memorial Prairie, Red Cloud, NE (Webster County); 9 Mile Prairie, Lincoln, NE (Lancaster County).
- Nebraska authors/poets.

Buffalo  
Courtesy of Nebraska Department of Economic Development

**Marker 58 to Marker 196** Distance: 77.1 miles

From: Auburn, NE  
To: Crete, NE  
Beginning at Auburn, NE  
Go West on U.S. 136 for 18.5 miles  
Go North on HWY 50 for 3.0 miles  
Go West on HWY 41 for 28.8 miles  
Go North on US 77 for 13.1 miles  
Go West on HWY 33 or Roca Rd for 13.7 miles  
To Crete, NE

## NEBRASKA CITY

Permanent settlement in this area dates from 1846, with the establishment of old Fort Kearny on Table Creek. Nebraska City, founded in 1854, became an important depot for military and commercial freighting. Pioneer businessmen, such as S. F. Nuckolls, sought to attract freighting interests. In 1858, Alexander Majors, of Russell, Majors, and Waddell, decided to use Nebraska City as the point of departure for shipping military supplies west.

Steamboats brought rapidly growing volumes of goods and numbers of people heading west. In 1865, it was reported that up to 40 million pounds of freight were shipped west from Nebraska City.

In 1860, a direct road to the new Fort Kearny on the Platte was completed, shortening that journey by forty miles. Known as the Nebraska City-Fort Kearny Cut-off and also as the Great Central Route, the trail was originally marked by a furrow ploughed in the sod. Another name for this trail, the Steam Wagon Road, resulted from an 1862 experiment. That summer, a locomotive-like "Steam Wagon" attempted to haul cargo to Denver, but soon broke down and was abandoned.

With the building of the Union Pacific Railroad, overland freighting from Nebraska City soon gave way to railroad shipment.

Otoe County Historical Society  
Historical Land Mark Council  
Near Arbor Lodge, Nebraska City  
Otoe County  
Marker 60

(Distance between Marker 196 and Marker 60 is 69.3 miles.)

### **Health and Physical Education**

- Walk the tree trail at Morton Orchard across the street from Arbor Lodge.
- Determine the nutritional value of an apple.
- List uses for apples in foods (vinegar, jelly, etc.).
- Take a walk in your community and identify the trees along the way.
- Develop a walk with markers of all the Nebraska City trolley stops (map available from Chamber of Commerce). At each station, stop and include a physical fitness activity.

### **Math**

- How many miles are there from Nebraska City to Fort Kearny on the shortest highway route today?
- How much tonnage weight will a barge carry on the Missouri River?
- Determine the square footage of Arbor Lodge and compare it to the house where you live.
- Determine how many trees Joy and J. Sterling Morton planted at Arbor Lodge.
- Graph the trees and foliage found in Arbor Lodge.

### **Reading and Writing**

- Develop descriptive paragraphs of trolley stops/points of interest to be used with the above health and physical education activity.
- Write a biography or report about Julius Sterling Morton and/or his descendants. (There is a Morton Salt connection.)
- Investigate the spelling rules for “ie” and “ei” such as in frontier and freighter.
- Write a commentary for the trolley ride in Nebraska City.
- Journal a “play day” in the life of the Morton children living at Arbor Lodge.

### **Science**

- Research the make-up of a steamboat. How was it built in the 1800’s? Why did its size vary?
- What problems did the steamboats face as they traversed the Missouri River?
- Write the Lied Conference Center in Nebraska City to find out how the building is heated and cooled and about their philosophy on recycling.
- Explore the trees at Arbor Lodge Historical Parks in terms of type of tree, shape of tree, leaf arrangement, uses of trees, leaf edges, and bark and leaf rubbings.
- Find out how many animal specimens are housed at the River Country Nature Center (a natural history museum).

### **Social Studies**

- Research how many Nebraskans besides J. Sterling Morton have served as United States Secretary of Agriculture.
- Compare the economy and businesses of 1850 with the economy of today in Nebraska City.
- Make a list of how many “firsts” there are in Nebraska’s history found in Nebraska City (e.g. first newspaper, first Fort Kearny).
- Determine the reason for Nebraska City being an important steamboat port.
- Discover the organization of Russell, Majors, and Wadell’s freight Trains (The Expressmen).
- What freight comes into your community?
- What freight is sent out of your city?
- Tour the Old Freighters’ Museum at Nebraska City (Russell, Majors, and Waddell)
- List J. Sterling Morton’s business, political and philanthropic accomplishments including Morton Salt Company.
- Determine the names and how many buildings appear on the National Register of Historic Places.

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Compare photographs of early Nebraska City and Arbor Lodge with photographs of today.
- Choose an architectural style found in an historical building at Nebraska City and make a model of it. (Chamber of Commerce could send photos or postcards.)
- List the yearly festivals and activities in association with Nebraska City.
- Trace and picture the development of Arbor Lodge.
- Make a diorama/picture of an early Missouri River scene.

### **Service Learning**

- Plan an Arbor Day Celebration for your community.
- Plant a tree.

### **General Activities**

- Write the Nebraska City Chamber of Commerce for a yearly calendar of events, maps, etc.
- Make apple butter. Have an apple party at school serving food made from apples.
- Use any apple activities from other units.
- Attend the Apple Jack Festival in Nebraska City.
- Compare the age of your town and its buildings with those of Nebraska City.

## Resources

- From the Missouri to the Great Salt Lake: An Account of Overland Freighting, William E. Lass, Nebraska State Historical Society Publication, Volume XXVI, 1972.
- Frontier Steamboat Town, Glenn Noble, Midgard Press, Lincoln, NE. A history of the early days of Nebraska City.
- America Special Days video series (Arbor Day and accompanying teacher manual), Great Plains National, Lincoln, NE 402-472-2007.
- Nebraskaland Magazine on Architecture.
- Arbor Lodge State Historical Park, Nebraska City.
- Lied Foundation and Lied Conference Center, Nebraska City.
- Arbor Day Foundation and Arbor Farms, Nebraska City.
- Seventy Years on the Frontier by Alexander Majors (part autobiography, part stories of the West, an outstanding resource for understanding the frontier from 1830 to 1900).
- The Bullwacker Adventures of a Frontier Freighter, written by a man who worked as a bullwhacker, William Hooker. A good resource for the teacher. It can give valuable insight into the life and problems of the bullwhacker.
- The Expressmen, Old West Series by Time Life. This book will give lots of detail and illustrations about the workings of the freight trains.
- Nebraska Our Town...East Southeast, by Jane Graff ( Route #3 Box 137A, Seward, NE 68343, 1992, Taylor Publishing Co. Dallas, Texas.
- Nebraska Trailblazer, Notable Nebraskans, #5 and #17 Settler's Homes, and #20 Town Builders, Nebraska State Historical Society.
- Roadside History of Nebraska, Candy Moulton, Mountain Press Publishing Company, Missoula, Montana, 1997.
- Nebraska City Chamber of Commerce.
- River Country Nature Center (private), a natural history museum of taxidermy animals, birds, reptiles, etc.
- J. Sterling Morton, Founder of Arbor Day by James C. Olson.

Nebraska City  
Courtesy of Nebraska State Historical Society

**Marker 196 to Marker 60** Distance: 69.3 miles

From: Crete, NE  
To: Nebraska City, NE  
Beginning at Crete, NE  
Go East on HWY 33, HWY 103 for 13.9 miles  
Go North on US 77 for 8.6 miles  
Go East on Unnamed Street for 3.4 miles  
Go East on HWY 2 for 43.4 miles  
To Auburn, NE

### THE OX-BOW TRAIL

This marker sits astride the Ox-Bow Trail, also known as the Old Fort Kearny or Nebraska City Road. Beginning in the 1840's, this route carried thousands of emigrants and millions of pounds of freight destined for the settlements, mining camps, or military posts of the West. Many travelers were Mormons bound for the Great Salt Lake Valley. The trail, looping north to the Platte from such Missouri River towns as Plattsmouth and Nebraska City, resembled an Ox-Bow, after which it was named. Just west of here was an important ford across Salt Creek, where limestone ledges form a natural low-water bridge. Travel over the trail declined in the mid-1860's with the development of more direct routes from the Missouri to the Central Platte Valley.

The water supply for the City of Lincoln comes from wells in the Platte Valley near here. In 1932, this pumping station was built and a 36-inch water main laid to Lincoln. A treatment plant and an additional 48-inch main were added in the 1950's.

Saunders County Historical Society  
Ashland Chamber of Commerce  
Nebraska State Historical Society  
Ashland City Water Treatment Plant  
Saunders County  
Marker 219

(Distance between Marker 60 and Marker 219 is 53.2 miles.)

### Health and Physical Education

- Identify the benefits of water to the body while exercising, or during an illness, etc.
- List symptoms of dehydration and how to avoid these.
- Play water games.

### Math

- Calculate the distance from the water wells in Ashland to the Capitol in Lincoln.
- Figure the age of the roads and the pumping station.
- Explore the various well depths and graph them.
- Calculate the volume of water carried through a 36 inch water main 10 feet long in three minutes.
- How many pounds of weight does the average oxen pull (see The Expressmen) when yoked to a freight wagon?
- Calculate the amount of water in gallons and/or weight held in your town's water tower.

### Reading and Writing

- Consult the Roadside Guide to Nebraska, pages 226 to 229, for a verbal description of the Ox-Bow area and a UFO incident. Discuss the fantasy, fact, and fiction of the explorers to this area then and now.
- Pretend you are a traveler on the Ox-Bow trail and communicate with your family about sights, sounds, and people encountered on your trip.

### **Science**

- Analyze the components of water, good and bad.
- Construct a bridge that would support a designated amount of weight. Have competition for strongest bridge. Representative of freight?
- Compare/contrast the water supply and well system of Lincoln with that of your town.
- Invite a local city/village employee to come and describe the water treatment and storage facilities in your community.
- Create a display/report on limestone-formation, location, uses, etc.

### **Social Studies**

- Make a map of the Ox-Bow trail. Place current day towns and road marks on it.
- Discover the reasons why people traveled this trail to Utah, California, Oregon, and Colorado.
- Where are migrations occurring in the world today for the same reasons?
- Create a river model in the classroom that contains an ox-bow.

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Create Nebraska's version of riverdance.
- Using the ox-bow, shape create an art work piece using this design several times throughout the work.
- Create a visual show (panorama, slides, computer generated, paintings, etc.) showing the clothing and accessories worn by the travelers.

### **Service Learning**

- Volunteer to help improve or maintain a locate recreation spot.
- Volunteer to take a differently-abled individual to a local park or recreation area.

### **General Activities**

- Located at this site was Linoma Beach, a favorite spot of recreation in the Omaha and Lincoln area. Research the activities-years it was open, why it closed, and history in general.
- Write about your favorite recreation area.
- Research various "ox-bows" in Nebraska. Include information from Walter Van Tilburg Clark's The Ox-Bow Incident.

### **Resources**

- Complete Roadside Guide to Nebraska by Alan Boye.
- The Expressmen from Time Life's Old West series. Good information and illustrations to understand freighting, pony express, and stage coach business.
- Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Box 30370, Lincoln, NE 68503, 402/464-0641.
- Natural Resource District.

Ox teams hauling wood to Fort Niobrara  
Courtesy of Nebraska State Historical Society

**Marker 60 to Marker 219** Distance: 53.2 miles

From: Nebraska City, NE  
To: Ashland, NE  
Beginning at Nebraska City, NE  
Go North on U.S. 75 for 11.7 miles  
Go West HWY 34 for 25.0 miles  
Go North on HWY 63 for 16.5 miles  
To Ashland, NE

## THE IONIA "VOLCANO"

On August 24, 1804, the Lewis and Clark Expedition, traveling up the Missouri River, passed a bluff about 180 to 190 feet high. Clark wrote that it appeared to have been on fire and was still very hot. He also detected signs of coal and what looked like cobalt. Later, fur traders frequently noticed dense smoke and fire in this region. In 1839, J. N. Nicollet attempted to prove that these phenomena were not of volcanic origin. Nicollet theorized that the decomposition of beds of iron pyrites in contact with water resulted in a heat capable of igniting other combustible materials.

Unaware of this explanation, early settlers continued to fear the "Ionia volcano," which took its name from the once flourishing town of Ionia, located northeast of present-day Newcastle. An earthquake in 1877 aroused new fears of an impending volcanic eruption. In 1878, the Missouri River undermined the bluffs and a large section of the "volcano" fell into the river. The same flood nearly destroyed the town of Ionia. "Volcano" stories died out soon after the Ionia post office was discontinued in 1907.

Newcastle Community Betterment Committee  
Historical Land Mark Council  
Nebraska 12 in Newcastle  
Dixon County  
Marker 68  
(Distance between Marker 219 and Marker 68 is 155.2 miles.)

### Health and Physical Education

- Research and play games which originated in Ionia, Greece and which could have been played in Ionia along the Missouri River.
- Determine the health hazards of iron pyrites coming in contact with water.
- Find out composition of volcanic ash and decide if it is safe for handling.

### Math

- What was the population of Ionia at its height? What was it when the post office discontinued service in 1907?
- What would be the closest town to the Ionia "Volcano" site?
- Compare the height of the bluff with a football field.
- How many miles had Lewis and Clark traveled on their historic expedition when they noticed the bluff?

### Reading and Writing

- Research the origin of the town's name, "Newcastle."
- Research the past names of your town and neighboring towns.
- Find out how names of towns originate.
- Research and write a report about Newcastle and how it is connected to Ionia.
- Explain the myth of Ionia.
- Create a myth to explain a natural disaster of Nebraska.
- Read Lewis' and/or Clark's journals or diary entries for this part of the trip.

### **Science**

- Research the fault line which runs through Missouri and Nebraska. Map it.
- Have a teacher demonstration (outdoors) of iron pyrites in contact with water to produce heat.  
CAUTION: Research whether the fumes are harmful.
- Make a list of Nebraska's real natural disasters.
- Compare and contrast Nebraska with other states' natural disasters.
- What natural resources were present to create this phenomenon?
- Invite a guest speaker (soil conservationist, county extension specialist, or geologist) to compare and contrast the geology of the area then and now. Why isn't that phenomenon present now?

### **Social Studies**

- Use satellite photographs of Nebraska to compare the topography of northeast Nebraska with the rest of the state.
- What is the origin of the name Ionia? Does it relate to Ionia, Michigan or Ionia, Greece?
- Are there towns in your county that no longer exist or are unincorporated? Discover the reasons for their demise.
- Compare and contrast the Missouri River before and after the Bureau of Reclamation damming projects.

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Illustrate "A View of Nebraska" as seen by Lewis and Clark in 1804.
- Draw how you envision the smoking area to look.
- Collect geological samples or rocks of the area and create a display.

### **Service Learning**

- Devise a plan to save a "dying" town.

### **General Activities**

- Research your community disaster plan.
- What is the purpose of the Red Cross and what does it do in your community?
- Organize a fund raiser to benefit the Red Cross.
- Determine what other post offices have closed in Nebraska since 1907 and why.

## Resources

- USGS-United State Geological Survey maps
- Earthquakes in Nebraska, R.R. Burchett, printed by Conservation and Survey Division, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Illustrations about earthquakes in general. Charts and maps on earthquakes in Nebraska.
- The Incredible Journey of Lewis and Clark by Rhoda Blumberg. An outstanding source for student and teacher alike on the training and journey of these two explorers.
- Volcanoes, geoguide by national Geographic Society. Lesson plans to understand volcanoes.
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Nebraska Our Towns...North Northeast by Jane Graff, pp. 114-117
- Perkey's Nebraska Place Names by Elton A. Perkey, 1995, Nebraska State Historical Society
- CD ROM Virtual Nebraska on CASDE (Consortium for the Application of Space Data to Education) for Macintosh or IBM (Edu content support, 402/472-0310, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, rperk@tan.unl.edu)
- The Journals of Lewis and Clark with an introduction by John Bakeless, 1964, pp 38-51 (paperback), from the Platte to the Vermilion

Ionia Volcano  
Courtesy of U.N.L. Conservation and Survey Division

**Marker 219 to Marker 68** Distance: 155.2 miles

From: Ashland, NE  
To: Newcastle, NE  
Beginning at Ashland, NE  
Go Southeast on HWY 63 for 1.0 miles  
Go Northeast on HWY 6 for 8.2 miles  
Go South on HWY 31 for 1.0 miles  
Go Northeast on U.S. 80 for 12.6 miles  
Go North on I 680 for 99.5 miles  
Go West on I 129 for 14.2 miles  
Go Northwest on HWY 12 for 18.7 miles  
To Newcastle, NE

## SANDHILL CRANES

The Big Bend of the Platte River in central Nebraska is one of the most important staging areas for the spring migration of the world's largest population of sandhill cranes. Throughout history, the Platte has also been a corridor of migration for native peoples and Euroamericans. For both cranes and humans, the river has provided water, food, and shelter in a sometimes harsh environment.

No one knows when sandhill cranes appeared on the Nebraska landscape. Their remains have been found in nine-million-year-old deposits in western Nebraska and in prehistoric and historic Native American sites throughout the central plains. The journals of explorers and fur traders such as Edwin James (1820), John Townsend (1834), Rufus Sage (1841), and John J. Audubon (1843) mention sandhill cranes they observed while traveling up the Missouri River or along the Platte. Settlement of the Great Plains brought many changes to the Platte. Irrigation reduced its volume, and its shorelines and islands became overgrown when prairie fires and floods were controlled. Only the Big Bend region still provides prime habitat to sustain the annual migration of sandhill cranes.

Hall County Historical Society  
Nebraska State Historical Society  
Platte River Trust  
Nebraska Department of Roads  
U.S. 34/U.S. 281 and Platte River Road, between Grand Island and Doniphan  
Hall County  
Marker 389  
(Distance between Marker 68 and Marker 389 is 192.6 miles.)

### **Health and Physical Education**

- Develop a crane dance or walk after viewing the movements of the crane.
- Research and report on human diseases that are associated with fowl.
- Investigate the nutritional values of grains eaten by the cranes.

### **Math**

- Discover the following: numbers of sandhill cranes that traveled through Nebraska for the 1970's, 1980's, 1990's, and project for 2000. Graph for those years.
- Discover the amount of grain consumed per crane per day.
- Calculate the amount of grain that is eaten per day while cranes are in Nebraska .
- Make a model of the actual wing span of a sandhills crane.
- Calculate the distance of the cranes migratory route.
- Find the ratio in miles of the portion of the Platte River that the cranes use each spring. Show on map.

### **Reading and Writing**

- Write a letter to the Crane Meadows Nature Center in Grand Island.
- Report on the Sandhill Cranes.
- While listening to habitat music, write a poem, letter, or essay to promote crane habitat preservation.
- Write a story from the crane's perspective.
- Assume the persona of an explorer or fur trader as they traveled the Platte and first observed the cranes. Describe them for those who have not seen them.
- Read "Eeny, Meeny, Miney, and...Moe" about sandhill cranes.
- Write a farmer along the Platte River to get their perspective on cranes feeding in their fields and tourists traveling in the area to see the cranes each spring.

### **Science**

- Compare/contrast the sandhill crane with the whooping crane.
- Create a flip chart showing the life cycle of a sandhill crane.
- Have students develop a hypothesis as to why sandhill cranes spend more spring time in Nebraska than fall.
- Create a real (or model of the) crane's habitat.
- Make models of the footprints of the sandhill cranes and other migratory birds.
- Determine the ecological and environmental reasons for clearing the sandbar islands in the Platte River for crane use.

### **Social Studies**

- Map the migratory route of the sandhill crane.
- Debate habitat use-urban expansion versus habitat maintenance.
- Research and report on John Audubon. What impact on environmental awareness has he had on the United States today?
- What impact does the crane have on tourism in Nebraska today?
- List the advantages and disadvantages of the sandhill crane on agriculture.
- Compare and contrast the migration of cranes and humans.

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Listen to tapes of sandhill crane "music."
- Create and display origami cranes.
- Develop a crane dance.
- Create a paper or clay sculpture involving cranes.
- Paint or draw landscapes using cranes.
- Draw a picture of the Platte River sandbar islands before and after they have been cleared for the cranes.

### **Service Learning**

- Help create visuals in the observatory areas for proper crane viewing etiquette.
- Volunteer at your local chamber of commerce to promote crane awareness.

### **General Activities**

- Take a field trip to Crane Meadows.
- Improve or develop an indigenous bird habitat.
- Design a new crane T-shirt.
- Write the Grand Island Chamber of Commerce for areas the public is encouraged to view the cranes.
- Collect newspaper articles on cranes from February through April.

### **Resources**

- The Cry of the Sandhill Crane, by Steven Groonis, North Word Press, Inc., Box 1360, Minocqua, WI, ISBN 1-55971-142-6. Filled with great colored photos. Everything you wanted to know about this bird but didn't know what to ask.
- The Platte River: An Atlas of the Big Bend Region, Allen Jenkins, Ed., University of Nebraska at Kearney , 1993
- "Eeny, Meeny, Miney, and...Moe" from Cranes in My Corral by Dayton O. Hyde. The story is available in the book or in Heath Publishing fifth grade reading series called Rare as Hen's Teeth.
- Crane Meadows Nature Center
- Crane Meadows Trust
- Grand Island Chamber of Commerce
- Fort Kearny State Historical Park Nature Center/Gift Shop/Museum
- Stewards of the Platte (newsletter), Box 2201, Grand Island, NE 68802
- *Nebraskaland Magazine* (spring issue)
- Platte River Whooping Crane Trust, 2550 Diers Avenue, Grand Island, NE 68803, 308/384-4633
- *Audubon* magazine, May, 1989
- Those of the Grey Wind by Paul Johngard
- Sandy by Dayton O. Hyde (cranes as pets)
- "Migration Music," North Wind Press, audiotape of bird sounds including cranes, 800/336-5666
- Crane Train (out of Kearney) Annual Gathering
- Wings Over the Platte (three day annual gathering of tours, seminars, wildlife art, banquet), 800/658-3178
- Lillian Annette Rowe Sanctuary, 308/468-5282
- Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, P. O. Box 30370, Lincoln NE 68503, 402/464-0641 (brochure: "Sandhill Cranes: Wings Over the Platte")
- Kearney Chamber of Commerce, 308/237-3101
- Audubon Society
- VHS videotape, "A Place for Whooping Cranes," produced by Dave Erickson (order through ICF Bookstore)

Sandhill Cranes  
Courtesy of Nebraska Department of Economic Development

**Marker 68 to Marker 389** Distance: 192.6 miles

From: Newcastle, NE  
To: Doniphan, NE  
Beginning at Newcastle, NE  
Go West on HWY 12 for 12.3 miles  
Go South on HWY 57 for 16.1 miles  
Go West on U.S. 20 for 20.5 miles  
Go Southwest on HWY 81 for 134.4 miles  
Go South on HWY 281 for 9.3 miles  
To Doniphan, NE

### CATHER CHILDHOOD HOME

Built circa, 1876, this is the house in which Willa Cather lived from 1884 to 1890. She describes it in "Old Mrs. Harris," in "The Best Years," and in this quotation from Song of the Lark: "They turned into another street and saw before them lighted windows; a low story-and-a-half house, with wing built on at the right and a kitchen addition at the back, everything a little on the slant-roofs, windows, and doors." Restored and donated by the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial and Educational Foundation.

Administered by the Nebraska State Historical Society  
Willa Cather Historical Center property, Red Cloud  
Webster County  
Marker 264  
(Distance between Marker 389 and Marker 264 is 53.5 miles.)

### Health and Physical Education

- Research recreational activities in which the Cather children and family participated.
- Identify common hygiene practices during late 1880's (sanitation and plumbing).
- Research comments made about Nebraska football when Cather was a student at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln.
- Identify a fire exit on a floor plan of the childhood home. Determine where family members would meet on the lawn.

### Math

- Estimate the square footage of the Cather childhood home with your home. What is the ratio of people per square foot?
- Compare the monetary award value of the Pulitzer Prize in 1923 with today.
- Compare the number of books Cather wrote with the number of short stories and essays.
- Calculate the size of the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial Prairie.
- Compare the population of Red Cloud during the 1880's and today.

### Reading and Writing

- Research the Pulitzer Prize which Cather won in 1923. Find a copy of the book for which she won the award. List other Pulitzer Prize winning authors.
- Research and describe, through several paragraphs, Willa's bedroom in the attic as well as the attic playroom and bedroom for her siblings.
- Read aloud to students "Old Mrs. Harris," a short story which describes Willa's grandmother.
- Compare Cather to other Nebraska authors.
- Describe your classroom or bedroom in the same literary style as Cather describes her room.
- Cather has 12 entries in Bartlett's Familiar Quotations. Find some of them and share with the class.

### **Science**

- Research or draw the original prairie grasses that Willa Cather would have seen on the prairie.
- Describe “The Divide” area and Republican River Valley.
- List the watershed areas included in “The Divide” area. Find out how many miles “The Divide” encompasses. (Contact a Webster County Agent, Soil Conservation, or Natural Resource District.)
- Compare the heating, cooking, laundry, sanitation, etc. systems of the Cather childhood home to your own.
- Describe controlled prairie fires and how they enhance and revitalize ecology.

### **Social Studies**

- Find how many people lived in Cather’s childhood home and where she fit in the family. What was her relationship to all of these people?
- Research the immigrant groups that settled in Red Cloud. Where did the Cather family come from? Compare these groups to your town and family.
- List the Catherland sites.
- What are some events that occurred between 1884-1890 in Red Cloud, Nebraska, and the United States?

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Locate a picture of the childhood home. Sketch and discuss the architectural elements of the home.
- View Hallmark Hall of Fame depictions of O’Pioneers and My Antonia (portions filmed in Nebraska).
- Take an organized tour of Catherland (country and town tours are available).
- Find and listen to music mentioned in Cather works or from this time period.

### **Service Learning**

- Plant plots of native prairie grasses as described and named in Cather’s novels.

### **General Activities**

- Research how the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial Foundation gets its financial support.
- Research what buildings in Cather’s novels are owned by the Foundation and which ones need restoration.
- Make a list of the different buildings owned and maintained by the Foundation.
- Write Kent Pavelka (c/o KFAB Radio Station in Omaha, NE) and find out his relationship to Cather’s My Antonia.

## Resources

- "Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial Newsletter and Review," 326 North Webster Street, Red Cloud, NE 68970, 402-746-2653
- Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial and Educational Foundation, 326 North Webster, Red Cloud, NE 56970, Pat Phillips, Director, Web Site: [www.willacather.org](http://www.willacather.org), fax 402-746-2652
- Nebraska State Historical Society
- Cobblestone Magazine (children's history magazine), December 1980, special Cather issue
- Note Cards by Linda Stych: Five Different Scenes from the Childhood Home, contact Pioneer Memorial in Red Cloud
- Willa Cather, A Pictorial Memoir, photographs by Lucia Woods and others, text by Bernice Slote, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln
- "Nebraska Trailblazer-Notable Nebraskans," #17, Nebraska State Historical Society
- Stuhr Museum, Grand Island, NE
- Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial Prairie, south of Red Cloud, Nebraska
- "Nebraska Trailblazer-Early Settlers," #17, Nebraska State Historical Society
- Bartlett's Familiar Quotations
- "My Grandmother, Antonia," by Antonette Turner (pp 116-119) of Nebraska Voices Telling the Stories of Our State, a publication of the Nebraska Humanities Council, 1993

Girlhood home of Willa Cather in Red Cloud, Nebraska  
Courtesy of Nebraska State Historical Society

**Marker 389 to Marker 264** Distance: 53.5 miles

From: Doniphan, NE  
To: Red Cloud, NE  
Beginning at Doniphan, NE  
Go South on 34 and 281 for 5.0 miles  
Go South on U.S. 34 for 9.7 miles  
Go South on U.S. 281 for 18.8 miles  
Go South on St. Link 91D for 1.0 miles  
Go South U.S. 281 for 0.9 miles  
Go Southwest on St. Link 91D for 0.2 miles  
Go South on U.S. 281 for 17.9 miles  
To Red Cloud, NE

### THE LOUP CITY RIOT, 1934

During the Depression, low farm prices, accompanied by dust storms and drought, created unrest among farmers and workers in Sherman County and across Nebraska. The Farm Holiday movement, which encouraged farmers to withhold agricultural products from the market, was active. Representatives of left-wing political groups arrived to promote their own programs for economic recovery. In Loup City, the People's Standard, edited by A. E. Brunson, endorsed local farmer and worker complaints.

Violence erupted in Loup City on June 14, 1934, after rumors spread that women poultry workers at the Fairmont Creamery plant might strike for higher wages. Ella Reeve "Mother" Bloor of the American Communist Party, and a group of associates then in Nebraska, organized a demonstration of support on the courthouse lawn. A march from there to the creamery and back culminated in a clash with local residents. The resulting jail sentences and fines levied upon Mother Bloor and others in her group marked the end of the attempt by the far left to organize farmers and workers in Nebraska.

Sherman County Historical Society  
Nebraska State Historical Society  
Marker 393

(Distance between Marker 264 and Marker 393 is 116.9 miles.)

### Health and Physical Education

- Explore conflict resolution, peer mediation, and anger control as methods of solving problems.
- Have a mental health worker discuss stress management and blood pressure issues.
- Investigate health and safety hazards associated with field and factory work (e.g., repetitive motion, etc.).
- Identify appropriate physical exercises to strengthen muscles for job related activities by creating a poster highlighting some of these.

### Math

- Compare wages of 1934, to modern day wages and benefits.
- Access the internet for daily stock or commodities quotes.
- Set-up a game giving the students a set amount of hypothetical money to invest for a period of time. Create a visual of the gains and losses for that time frame.
- Graph the prices of farm commodities from 1934, in ten year increments.
- Graph the population growth/decline from 1873, to the present.

### Reading and Writing

- Write a persuasive speech on reasons for appropriate physical conditioning.
- Listen to an old radio show (e.g. Gang Busters) and create a radio drama.
- Discover the names of local newspapers and investigate their origins.
- Develop a classroom edition of a newspaper that deals with issues important to the class.
- Write a report from the information you gain about the Depression from the senior citizens in your community.

### **Science**

- Investigate what conditions contributed to the great dust bowl.
- Create an experiment showing how drought affects plant growth (explore using various soils, light, temperatures, and moisture).

### **Social Studies**

- Loup City was populated by Polish immigrants. Investigate the ethnicity of your family or community.
- Study derivations of family name, first names, city names, etc. (including the name Loup).
- Investigate the origin and definition of communism.
- Discuss why communism would be attractive to farmers and workers in Nebraska in 1934.
- Determine what countries were communistic in 1934, and those that are communistic today. Create a map demonstrating the findings.
- Speculate as a group why communism has failed or has been replaced in several countries.
- Compare and contrast communism with cooperatives today.
- Investigate the origin of the terms “right wing” and “left wing” as reference to political philosophy.
- Research the effects the dust storms and drought had on local farming conditions and production and income in your community. (Interview senior citizens in their homes or care homes.)

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Access your local library for references or sources on depression photography. Create a visual exhibit of this photography.
- Have someone demonstrate the polka, learn basic steps, and listen to music.
- Create wolf masks out of paper mache (loup is a French word for wolf).

### **Service Learning**

- Start a peer mediation group for the community.
- Write a letter to the editor expressing concern about a local issue.
- Student groups form partnerships with community businesses and provide moral boosters to them in the form of cookies, balloons, and attention.

### **General Activities**

- Explore newspapers of the period. Was there other unrest? What was the price of foods?
- Access a 1934, June issue of a newspaper and report the findings.

## **Resources**

- The Russian Revolution, Robert Goldston, Bobbs-Merrill, 1966. A short history of how communism grew and took root in Russia. It can give a good understanding of why people would want to turn to communism.
- Senior citizens of the community
- The Great Dust Bowl
- Local museums
- Newspapers from the 1930's

Loup City  
Courtesy of Nebraska State Historical Society

**Marker 264 to Marker 393** Distance: 116.9 miles

From: Red Cloud, NE  
To: Loup City, NE  
Beginning at Red Cloud, NE  
Go West on U.S. 136 for 22.0 miles  
Go North on HWY 10 for 28.1 miles  
Go West on HWY 6 and 34 for 7.1 miles  
Go North on HWY 44 for 59.7 miles  
To Loup City, NE

## HISTORIC MISSOURI VALLEY

During their exploration of the Missouri and Columbia Rivers, Lewis and Clark held councils with the Ponca, Omaha, and Sioux Indians inhabiting this region. The council with the Sioux occurred August 28-31, 1804, at Calumet Bluff, now the southern abutment of Gavins Point Dam. By 1857, the Ponca and Omaha tribes had signed peace treaties and had been removed to reservations, but peaceful relations with the Sioux were still some years distant. In 1862-1863, General Alfred Sully, provisioned by steamboat, campaigned against the Sioux in Dakota Territory. Many local inhabitants took part in the expedition as members of the Second Regiment, Nebraska Volunteer Cavalry, leaving the Northern Nebraska settlements unprotected. On July 23, 1863, Indians, alleged to be Sioux, invaded the area, killing the children of Henson Wiseman who lived near present-day Wynot, Nebraska.

Steamboats, which first ascended the Missouri in 1819, carried military personnel, provisions, miners to the Montana gold fields, and settlers to their new homes. Today the churning steamboat has given way to pleasure boats as the Missouri yields her power to flood-control reservoirs.

Nebraska Department of Roads  
Nebraska State Historical Society  
U.S. 81, about three miles south of Yankton  
Cedar County  
Marker 167

(Distance between Marker 393 and Mark 167 is 198.8 miles.)

### **Health and Physical Education**

- Describe the feelings a mother might have experienced following the killing of her children.
- Why was travel during these times such a safety issue?
- What safety issues do children who are left alone face today? (The children had been left at home when the incident occurred).

### **Math**

- Figure the cost of a steamboat trip up the Missouri?
- How big was the Historic Missouri Valley in acres?
- How much weight could the steamboat carry?
- Calculate the length of the Missouri River in miles. Plot the dams on a map. Calculate the miles between each dam.

### **Reading and Writing**

- Read aloud the narrative account of the Wiseman massacre as told in Teaching About Nebraska by Betty Karle.
- Write an account of the Wiseman massacre from the Native American perspective.
- Describe your journey up the Missouri River on a steamboat during the 1860's. Take the perspective of the steamboat.

### **Science**

- Debate the benefits of flood-control reservoirs.
- Describe the differences in the Missouri River before and after the flood control projects of the Bureau of Reclamation.
- How has the channel of the Missouri River changed from then to now?
- Make a list of the dangers in Missouri River travel.

### **Social Studies**

- Compare and contrast transportation of goods and people on the Missouri River then and now.
- Compare and contrast the Ponca, Omaha, and Sioux Indians inhabiting this region.
- What took the place of the steamboat as a mode of transportation on the river?
- Why was the steamboat not more widely used? What were the pros and cons of steamboat use and travel on the Missouri River?

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Draw pictures of travel on the Missouri River before and after the flood control projects.
- Find pictures of military dress in 1804 and now.
- Find photographs or artists' depictions of steamboats and the Missouri River.

### **Service Learning**

- Have students pick a topic mentioned in the marker description. Develop a multi-media presentation which could be presented to various civic groups.
- Write thank you notes to various volunteer groups in your community.

### **General Activities**

- Research current day use of the Missouri River for transportation.
- Make a list of volunteer groups in your area who deal with weather watching, civil defense, fire fighters, and EMT personnel, etc.
- Take a field trip to DeSoto Bend Wildlife (in Iowa east of Blair, NE) to see the contents of the Steamboat Bertrand.
- Determine the difference between the steamboat of yesterday and the pleasure boat of today.

## **Resources**

- Robert Manley filmstrip mentions the story of the Wiseman family being killed
- U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Reclamation
- Nebraska Our Towns...North Northeast, by Jane Graff, pg. 87 Taylor Publishing, Dallas, Texas, 1988
- Teaching About Nebraska, Notebook by Betty Karle, 14912 Lafayette Plaza, Omaha, NE 68154
- Yankton, South Dakota Chamber of Commerce
- Belle of Brownville pleasure boat, Brownville, NE
- "Nebraska Trailblazer-Native Americans," Nebraska State Historical Society

Steamboats  
Courtesy of Nebraska State Historical Society

**Marker 393 to Marker 167** Distance: 198.8 miles

From: Loup City, NE  
To: Wynot, NE  
Beginning at Loup City, NE  
Go East on HWY 58 for 60.0 miles  
Go North on HWY 30 for 126.6 miles  
Go East on HWY 12 for 12.2 miles  
To Wynot, NE

### AINSWORTH ARMY AIR FIELD

Ainsworth Army Air Field, completed on November 30, 1942, was a satellite of Rapid City Army Air Field and under the command of the Second Air Force. The field was one of eleven Army Air Force training bases built in Nebraska during World War II.

The 2,496-acre field included three 7,300 x 150 foot concrete runways, a hanger, warehouse, repair and machine shops, link and bomb trainers, Nordan bombsight vaults, and barracks for over 600 officers and enlisted men. The base's primary mission was to provide proficiency training for P-39 and P-47 pilots of the 364<sup>th</sup> and 53<sup>rd</sup> fighter squadrons, and for B-17 crews of the 540<sup>th</sup> and 543<sup>rd</sup> bombardment squadrons before deployment to the European Theater of Operations. Aircraft camouflage experiments were also conducted on the site.

The air field closed in 1945 and the following year the city of Ainsworth received a U.S. Government Revokable license for commercial aircraft operations on the field. In 1948 the War Assets Administration declared the property surplus, and the city of Ainsworth received title to the air field for use as a municipal airport.

Ainsworth Airport Authority  
Nebraska State Historical Society  
U.S. 20, west of Ainsworth, Ainsworth Municipality  
Brown County  
Marker 380

(Distance between Marker 167 and Marker 380 is 167.9 miles.)

### **Health and Physical Education**

- Create an army/air force calisthenic course.
- Exercise by running or walking the distance of the perimeter of the 7,300 foot by 150 foot runway.
- Play with a parachute. Create a game.

### **Math**

- Graph the types of planes in the SAC Museum.
- Figure the total square footage of the three runways.
- Mark-off on a playground the wing span of various World War II planes.
- Determine how many people are in a squadron, company, and battalion. Draw a chart indicating the organization of the military with the numbers displayed.
- Calculate the distance between Ainsworth, NE and Rapid City, SD.

### **Reading and Writing**

- Write to the SAC Museum to determine which planes are on display.
- Create a word game using military terms such as password or bingo.
- Read and identify the difference between an enlisted person and an officer.

### **Science**

- Explore the principle of flight.
- Have a pilot come in and share his/her experiences.
- Investigate the camouflage characteristics of animals and how that relates to the military.
- What camouflage is used on aircraft today?
- Why was camouflage different in Vietnam and Desert Storm? Determine what other possible camouflage might be needed for military aircraft.

### **Social Studies**

- Design a map showing the layout of what you think the airfield looks like.
- Take a field trip to your local airfield and explore its history.
- Check into CASDE website and explore the Landsat photography of Nebraska.
- Determine the location of other Nebraska Airfields and map the findings.
- What effects would Ainsworth experience if the United States would open the base?
- Have kids create maps from aerial photographs.
- Look at and compare a road map to an aeronautical map.
- Interview a former pilot or veteran.

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Compare photographs of the airfield in World War II with the airport today.
- Design and create a logo for your airplane.
- Have a photographic or model display of airplanes of World War II.
- Study the art work of Bev Doolittle.
- Draw the ground plan design of the airfield.

### **Service Learning**

- Help put flags up at the local cemetery on Veterans or Memorial Day (also clean up after ceremonies).
- Write a letter to a service person or become a pen pal with someone in the service.

### **General Activities**

- Compare the Fairmont Army Air Field with the Ainsworth Army Air Field then and now.

**Resources**

- Visit your local airport.
- Ainsworth Chamber of Commerce
- Fairmont Chamber of Commerce
- SAC Museum near Mahoney State Park off I-80 between Lincoln and Omaha
- "Nebraska Trailblazer-Aviation in Nebraska," #18, Nebraska State Historical Society

Ainsworth Airfield Control Tower  
Courtesy of Nebraska State Historical Society

**Marker 167 to Marker 380** Distance: 167.9 miles

From: Wynot, NE  
To: Ainsworth, NE  
Beginning at Wynot, NE  
Go West on HWY 12 for 12.2 miles  
Go South on HWY 81 for 25.4 miles  
Go West on I 20 for 130.3 miles  
To Ainsworth, NE

## THE NEBRASKA STATE GRANGE

The National Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry was organized in Washington, D.C. in 1867. During the 1870's, it was the major voice of the American farmer and its social, educational, and fraternal activities brightened farm life. "Granger Laws," enacted by state governments, established the pattern for modern America's regulated free enterprise economy.

The Nebraska State Grange was organized in 1872, but errors in its co-operative ventures and the rise of the Farmers Alliance led to its decline. The Grange movement was reestablished with the organization of Custer Center Grange near here in February, 1911. The State Grange was reorganized in Broken Bow, November, 1911. Local Granges have spread over the state and are noted for contributions to community life and sound farm policy. Custer Center Grange continues as the oldest Grange organization in Nebraska.

James D. Ream—first Master of both the Custer Center and Nebraska State Granges—was one of Nebraska's leading agricultural pioneers. One of the first settlers in this valley in 1880, he developed his homestead into the beautiful Cedar Lawn Farm.

Nebraska State Grange, 1967  
Historical Land Mark Council  
U.S. 2, northwest of Broken Bow  
Custer County  
Marker 59

(Distance between Marker 380 and Marker 59 is 113.7 miles.)

### **Health and Physical Education**

- Create or plan several activities in which the Grange members might have participated during the 1870's. Identify mental health benefits of these activities for the members.
- What organizations are there in your community that lead to community pride and well being?
- List the social activities that adults take part in today and compare them with social activities of the early 1900's.

### **Math**

- At its height, how many Grange members were there? Graph Grange membership by decade from 1870 to present.
- Determine Nebraska Grange membership by size of group and area covered per group. Make a chart of the results.
- Some farm organizations ask for parity for farm commodities prices. A formula for parity is developed by comparing prices of farm products to farm equipment in a given year. Investigate prices for wheat and combines in 1950, and for today. Repeat the process for different farm products, equipment, and years.

### **Reading and Writing**

- Research and write or give a report on James D. Ream. Find out what made him one of Nebraska's leading agricultural pioneers.
- Interview a senior citizen about their Grange membership. Share what you learned.
- Write about an agricultural issue or concern of today (e.g. water rights, pesticides, e coli, crop prices).

### **Science**

- Compare agricultural practices and crops of Custer County and your county.
- Obtain seeds of different crops grown in Nebraska and plant them. Make observations through the growing process.
- Compare soils and vegetation of Custer County and your county. How do your findings relate to crops grown in each area?

### **Social Studies**

- Compare the purpose and organization of the Nebraska State Grange in 1872, and today.
- Invite a member of a local Grange organization to tell about its activities.
- Discover a Granger law and how it improved conditions for Nebraska farmers.
- The Granger movement led to the Populist Movement. What was Nebraska's role in the Populist movement? Particularly investigate Williams Jennings Bryan.
- Contact the Nebraska Grange Association and find out what its role in agriculture is today.
- Find out the agricultural organizations in your county today.

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Find songs that relate to agriculture or farming.
- Find pictures of Grange Halls. Compare and contrast.
- Design a modern day social facility for your community.
- Have a square dance demonstration.

### **Service Learning**

- Design a project for community beautification.
- Participate in community clean-up or Adopt a Highway.

### **General Activities**

- Have a demonstration of different ethnic group dances.
- Form a community awareness group to address a specific issue.
- Visit a Chamber of Commerce meeting.
- Discover where the nearest Grange Hall is to you. Determine the building uses for the Hall.

### **Resources**

- Nebraska State Grange Association
- USDA-United States Department of Agriculture
- FFA-Future Farmers of America

Farm Machinery stacking alfalfa  
Courtesy of Nebraska State Historical Society

**Marker 380 to Marker 59** Distance: 113.7 miles

From: Ainsworth, NE  
To: Broken Bow, NE  
Beginning at Ainsworth, NE  
Go Southeast on US 20 for 88.0 miles  
Go South on U.S. 183 for 12.4 miles  
Go West on HWY 70 for 13.3 miles  
To Broken Bow, NE

### THE REPUBLICAN RIVER FLOOD OF 1935

On May 30, 1935, torrential rains fell in eastern Colorado and southwestern Nebraska; by early morning of the 31<sup>st</sup>, the usually peaceful Republican River was running bluff-to-bluff along its upper reaches. When the waters subsided two days later, over 100 lives had been lost and many millions of dollars of damage had been done. A number of persons from this community were drowned.

After the prolonged drought of the early 30's, the wet spring of 1935 had brought welcome relief to the region. By the end of May, however, the soil was nearing the saturation point. The rains of May 30<sup>th</sup>, concentrated in the basin of the South Fork and extending into the valleys of the Arikaree, Frenchman, Red Willow, and Medicine, poured into the main stream-normally 300 to 400 feet wide, turning it into a raging torrent one to four miles wide.

The flood water came as a wall, variously estimated at from three to eight feet in height. The advance of the crest was more rapid in the upper valley, reported at ten miles an hour above Trenton, at five between there and Oxford, and slowing to 2 ½ miles an hour upon crossing over into Kansas.

To prevent the repetition of such a tragedy the federal government has built a series of six dams, five in Nebraska, across the Republican or its tributaries, serving not only as flood protection, but providing recreation and irrigation facilities as well.

Oxford Rotary Club  
Historical Land Mark Council  
U.S. 136, west of Oxford  
Furnas County  
Marker 39

(Distance between Marker 59 and Marker 39 is 96.2 miles.)

### **Health and Physical Education**

- Identify and discuss common health problems following a flood.
- Take a CPR class.
- Participate in a local Red Cross first aid or swimming class.
- Have a Games and Parks employee demonstrate boater safety.
- Map your own home including emergency exits and supplies. Share with your entire family. Design a fire exit map.

### **Math**

- Determine the length of the Republican River beginning at Limon, Colorado to Orleans, Nebraska.
- Determine the time elapsed from flood arrival at Benkelman, Nebraska to the arrival at Trenton, Nebraska and from Indianola to Oxford, Nebraska.
- Simulate the rate of flood water by having a group of students walking, jogging, and sprinting fifty yards simultaneously.

### **Reading and Writing**

- Invite resource persons (e.g. Army Corps of Engineers) to discuss the pros and cons of damming a river. Follow up activity and debate issues.
- Read Willa Cather's book the Enchanted Bluff to understand the many facets of the river.
- Read a story from Bluff to Bluff by Marlene Wilmont. Write a story about your own family's experience through a trial.
- Write the Alma Chamber of Commerce to ensure which town had to be moved during the building of Harlan County Reservoir.
- Write a persuasive essay/letter urging contributions of either time or money to American Red Cross or a service club.

### **Science**

- Compare and contrast the Republican River with the Loup River System and/or the Niobrara River. Include flooding, surrounding terrain, water sources (e.g. spring fed), types of fish, etc.
- Develop a model to demonstrate the effects of water erosion.
- Discover materials used to build dams. Find out the advantages and disadvantages of each.
- Compare the dams and manmade lakes on the Republican River with those on the Missouri River.
- Discover which rivers/watersheds feed into the Republican River.
- Investigate the changes in the quality of soils before and after the flood.

### **Social Studies**

- Determine the changes in the number of farm homesteads as the result of the flood.
- Map the system of dams and reservoirs on the Republican River drainage basin.
- Create a flour/salt relief map of the Republican River and its tributaries.

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Sketch river pictures comparing various Nebraska rivers.
- Create a pictorial history of various floods such as Johnstown, Rapid City, Big Thompson Canyon, etc.
- Use water colors to create a painting.
- Build a model of a dam. Simulate a flood as the dam breaks (outside).

### **Service Learning**

- Volunteer services to your community during a disaster.
- Help prepare a disaster plan for your school, church, community organization.

### **General Activities**

- Compile a list of students in your classroom who would help during a disaster.
- Find out how much farmland was reclaimed by the government for the building of the Harlan County Reservoir.
- Make a flow chart of the land reclamation process.
- Contact a Red Cross chapter for information or a presentation of the Red Cross' role/job during a flood disaster.

### **Resources**

- Enchanted Bluff by Willa Cather
- Bluff to Bluff by Marlene Wilmont. Stories of survivors of the 1935 floor.
- Bluff to Bluff, Too by Marlene Wilmont. More stories of survivors.
- CD Rom of Virtual Nebraska a part of CASDE (Consortium for the Application of Space Data to Education content support, University of Nebraska-Lincoln 402/472-0310, [rperk@tan.unl.edu](mailto:rperk@tan.unl.edu))
- Army Corps of Engineers
- "Nebraskaland Magazine's," *Nebraska Rivers*, 1983, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Alma Chamber of Commerce

Republican Valley Flood in 1935  
Courtesy of Nebraska State Historical Society

**Marker 59 to Marker 39** Distance: 96.2 miles

From: Broken Bow, NE  
To: Oxford, NE  
Beginning at Broken Bow, NE  
Go Southeast on HWY 2, HWY 70, HWY 92 for 40.9 miles  
Go South on Armada St. for 0.2 miles  
Go South on U.S. 183 for 11.7 miles  
Go South on U.S. 180 for 2.3 miles  
Go South on U.S. 183 for 4.2 miles  
Go South on U.S. 180 for 2.7 miles  
Go South on U.S. 183 for 11.0 miles  
Go South on East Ave. for 0.6 miles  
Go South on Burlington St. for 1.4 miles  
Go West on W. 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. for 0.5 miles  
Go Southwest on U.S. 6 for 17.2 miles  
Go South on HWY 46 for 3.5 miles  
To Oxford, NE

### WILD HORSE SPRING

Named for the beautiful, spirited wild horses so numerous in this area when white men first visited these lush plains, this Spring symbolizes the hope and faith its discovery brought to the early pioneers. Though the rich land beckoned them, men seeking homesteads had been reluctant to settle this land, so strange and forbidding because of its lack of known water sources.

In the early days, this Spring served to quench the thirst of the wild horses, buffalo, and other wild animals of the region. Later, its clear, cool waters refreshed the hot and thirsty cowboy, trail weary from the long trek between Stinking Water Creek and the Platte River.

It was never an abundant source of water but it was sufficient to supply the needs of the early settlers until they could dig wells for themselves. The precious, life-giving water from this Spring, so far from any stream, provided comfort and courage to the men and women who established their homes in this part of the frontier, and it is to them that this marker is dedicated.

Perkins County Historical Society  
Historical Land Mark Council  
Nebraska 61, north of Grant  
Perkins County  
Marker 29

(Distance between Marker 39 and Marker 29 is 144.4 miles.)

### Health and Physical Education

- Explain why water is necessary to sustain life.
- Take part in a relay race carrying a cup or bucket of water.
- What happens to the body when deprived of water?

### Math

- How big in area was Wild Horse Spring?
- How heavy is a five gallon bucket of water? Compare to five gallons of sand, marshmallows, etc.
- How many miles is Wild Horse Spring from Stinking Water Creek and the Platte River?

### Reading and Writing

- Write a documentary telling the origin of the wild horses.
- Describe riding a wild horse for the first time.
- Write a description of the trip to the spring from the house from the perspective of the bucket.
- Describe how water can give “comfort and courage” to the pioneers.
- Read a story about wild horses.

### **Science**

- What was the source of Wild Horse Spring?
- What kind of indigenous animals may have drunk from Wild Horse Spring?
- How have uses for water changed from then to now?
- Why was this water so precious?
- List ways for conserving water.
- What are the various ways of making water safe to drink?

### **Social Studies**

- Describe steps in well digging then and now.
- Find the ways pioneers discovered underground water for well digging.
- Find five different springs in Nebraska.
- Find out if there are springs in your local area.
- Discover how the introduction of the horse changed the life of the Native American on the plains.

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Sing the song, "Cool, Clear Water."
- Draw pictures of uses for water.
- Have a visiting artist give a lesson on drawing horses and other animals.

### **Service Learning**

- Research the Adopt a Wild Horse Foundation.

### **General Activities**

- Discuss advantages and disadvantages of hard and soft water.
- Bring in a speaker on water softener systems.
- Have a guest speaker tell about the steps in breaking a wild horse.
- Go on a horse trail ride.
- Take steps to help clean a polluted stream.

### **Resources**

- Water Softener Companies
- Adopt a Wild Horse Foundation

Wild horses  
Courtesy of Nebraska Department of Economic Development

**Marker 39 to Marker 29** Distance: 144.4 miles

From: Oxford, NE  
To: Grant, NE  
Beginning at Oxford, NE  
Go West on HWY 136 for 10.2 miles  
Go West on HWY 34 for 134.2 miles  
To Grant, NE

## THE SANDHILLS

The Sandhills, Nebraska's most unique physiographic feature, covers about one-fourth of the state. The sandy soil acts like a giant sponge, soaking up rain and forming a vast underground reservoir. Hundreds of permanent lakes are found here. However, the same sandy soil makes the area unsuitable for cultivation. Grasses flourish, making the Sandhills ideal cattle country.

Although the Sandhills were long considered "an irreclaimable desert," cattlemen had begun to discover the Sandhills' potential as range land by the early 1870's. Huge ranches were established here.

Unsuccessful attempts at farming were made in the Sandhills region in the late 1870's and again around 1890. The Kinkaid Act of 1904 allowed homesteaders to claim a full section of land, rather than the quarter-section previously allowed. Nearly nine million acres were successfully claimed by "Kinkaiders" between 1910 and 1917. Some of the Kinkaiders attempted to farm, but most of these attempts failed. Many of the largest ranches broke up about the same time due to regulations against fencing federal range. Today the Sandhills contain many ranches, but none so large as those of the past.

Historical Land Mark Council  
Nebraska 2 & U.S. 83, east of Thedford  
Thomas County  
Marker 63  
(Distance between Marker 29 and Marker 63 is 136.3 miles.)

### Health and Physical Education

- Introduce rope tricks to the class.
- Learn line dances or square dances.
- Play horseshoes.

### Math

- Calculate the distance between towns on #83 Hwy between Valentine and North Platte.
- How many sections (640 acres per section) are there in nine million acres?
- Calculate the percentage of land in Nebraska covered by Sandhills.
- Make a pie chart of the above percentages.
- Determine what percent of Halsey National Forest is range land and how much is forested trees.

### Reading and Writing

- Develop a letter exchange with a student who lives on a ranch in Cherry County.
- Write a report on the Kinkaid Act of 1904 and compare it to the Homestead Act of 1862.
- Read or listen to cowboy poetry such as Sandhill native, Otto Rosefeld.
- Have students write their own cowboy poem.
- Interview by e-mail various cattlemen about being a "21<sup>st</sup> Century Cowboy."
- Pretend you are a tour guide. Develop a vacation plan for a five day trip through the Sandhills.
- Create a journal/schedule of a typical day in the life of a cowboy, past or present.

### **Science**

- Determine steps necessary to correct “blow-out” areas of the Sandhills.
- Read about Gordon Lord, Forest Ranger, and the National Forest in the Sandhills (pp 34-36 of Nebraska Voices).
- “Reclaim the Desert” by creating a vegetated desert by planting various seeds in containers of sand and treat with appropriate nourishment to encourage growth.
- Collect samples of various soils, sand, silt, and loess and map their locations in Nebraska.
- Set-up an experiment showing the effects of rain on various types of soil with and without vegetation.
- Compare feed lot beef cattle production with Sandhill range land industry.
- Create a diagram showing how a windmill works.

### **Social Studies**

- Outline the Sandhills area on a Nebraska map.
- Compare the average ranch size in the sandhills to the average farm size in Nebraska or Pennsylvania.
- Determine the factors that cause the differences.
- Compare and contrast the highway system and the county road system of Eastern Nebraska with the counties in the Sandhills.
- View a virtual Nebraska satellite photo(s) of the Sandhills.
- Make a 12 month time line for a typical Sandhill rancher. (Include calving, branding, etc.)

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Discuss why pioneer families lined-up outside the homes and soddies.
- Show photos from the Soloman Butcher collection.
- Find pictures or drawings of yucca (soapweed), prickly pear, and other plants of the area.
- Create sand paintings.
- Design a cattle brand.
- Listen to cowboy music (Michael Martin Murphy or Riders in the Sky).
- Take pictures, make sketches, or make a display of a windmill(s). Explain how they work and how they have changed in design and/or function over the years.
- Make a balsa model of a windmill.

### **Service Learning**

- Adopt a prairie program.
- Sign a pledge to protect your water supply after generating a list of ways to protect the local water supply.

### **General Activities**

- Research Nebraska's largest sand golf course south of Mullen.
- Compare the clothing worn by the 1898 cowboy versus the 1998 cowboy.
- Visit a working ranch (e.g. Bowring Ranch).
- Research different types of berries found in the Sandhills today (wild plum, elderberry, chokeberries, sand cherries, etc.).
- Research the yucca soapweed to gather support for the following quote by Titus Coop: "For the Native Americans, the yucca was like going to K-Mart or Wal-Mart." They used the sharp tips of leaves for a sewing needle. They boiled the seed pods and ate them and the reason its called soapweed-that's because they dug up the roots and used them as soap.
- Obtain a yucca and try making a sewing needle or soap. Find a recipe for the boiled seed pods.

### **Resources**

- The Atlas of the Sand Hills, published by Conservation and Survey Division, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. An outstanding and thorough work on this area of Nebraska. Mainly a resource for teachers, but can also be interesting and useful for students.
- CD Rom of Virtual Nebraska, a part of CASDE (Consortium for the Application of Space Data to Education content support, Rick Perk, University of Nebraska-Lincoln 402/472-0310, rperk@tan.unl.edu)
- Cowboy poets: Baxter Black, Michael Martin Murphy, Otto Rosefeld
- Thedford Art Gallery, Thedford, NE 69166
- Nebraska Voices Telling the Stories of Our State, NE Q125 publication of the Nebraska Humanities Council, 1993, pp 34-36
- Halsey National Forest, Bessey Nursery, Halsey, NE
- Soil Conservation District Office/Natural Resource District
- Nebraska Department of Tourism
- A Treasury of Nebraska Pioneer Folklore, compiled by Roger L. Welsch, 1984, Bison Book (much poetry and song)
- Sandhill Horizons, by Earl H. Monahan with Robert M. Howard, 1987 (A story of the Monahan ranch and other history of the area.)
- Rader's Place, Alliance, NE
- No Moving Parts, by Susan Strayer Deal (poetry), Ahsahta Press, 1980, ISBN 0-916272-ISX
- Solomon D. Butcher Photographing the American Dream, by John E. Carter, University of Nebraska Press, 1985 (Butcher was a pioneer and he photographed pioneers particularly in the Sandhills.)
- "Nebraska Trailblazer-Ranching," #8, Nebraska State Historical Society
- "Cowkids Never Mind Their Mother's" by Judith Sounberger, pp 103-105 from Nebraska Voices Telling the Stories of Our State, Q125 Publication of the Nebraska Humanities Council, 1993
- Bartlett Richards, Nebraska Sandhills Cattleman by Bartlett, Richards, Jr. with Ruth Van Ackeren, 1980, Nebraska State Historical Society

Sandhills  
Courtesy of NEBRASKALAND Magazine  
Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

**Marker 29 to Marker 63** Distance: 136.3miles

From: Grant, NE  
To: Thedford, NE  
Beginning at Grant, NE  
Go North on HWY 61 for 18.9 miles  
Go East on I 80 for 50.3 miles  
Go North on U.S. 83 for 66.3 miles  
Go West on HWY 2 for 0.8 miles  
To Thedford, NE

## FORT NIOBRARA

When a Sioux Indian reservation was established north of here in Dakota Territory in 1878, early settlers in the region grew fearful of attack. They requested military protection, and in 1880 Fort Niobrara was built a few miles east of present-day Valentine. There was no later Indian trouble in the immediate area, and the Ghost Dance religion in the early 1890's brought the last major Indian scare. Among the officers once stationed at Fort Niobrara were John J. Pershing, later commander of U.S. forces in World War I, and Frederick W. Benteen, a survivor of General Custer's ill-fated staff.

Fort Niobrara was an active post until 1906. In 1912, part of the original military reservation was set aside as a national game preserve. It has since become Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge, with ranges maintaining sizable herds of buffalo, elk, and Texas longhorn cattle.

Cherry County, a center of cattle production, was organized in 1883 and named for Lieutenant Samuel A. Cherry, a Fort Niobrara officer killed in the line of duty. Valentine, founded in 1882, was named for early-day congressman E. K. Valentine.

Cherry County Historical Society  
Historical Land Mark Council  
Hwy 20, southeast of Valentine  
Cherry County  
Marker 87

Distance between Marker 63 and Marker 87 is 106.9 miles.)

### **Health and Physical Education**

- Invite a Native American who would demonstrate a dance from his/her tribe.
- Organize and outfit a canoe trip either real or imaginary.
- Compare beef and buffalo in terms of nutrition. Include fat content.

### **Math**

- Determine the square acres/miles of the Fort Niobrara Wildlife Reserve.
- Research the height of Fort Falls.
- Create a time line of the history of Fort Niobrara.
- Determine the difference in land area of Cherry County compared to your county.
- Figure the percentage of land area occupied by Cherry County to all land area of Nebraska.
- Compare beef/buffalo and deer/elk in terms of size and weight.

### **Reading and Writing**

- Write Fort Niobrara Visitor's Center and ask about types and numbers of animals on public display.
- Read Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee, and write a poem expressing your feelings on the plight of the Sioux.

### **Science**

- Find the dietary needs of and food sources for the animals on display at Fort Niobrara.
- Discover what disease affect the three herds at Fort Niobrara. Determine what can be done to prevent the spread of those diseases.
- What geological features are responsible for the waterfalls of Nebraska?
- Compare and contrast the physical features of buffalo with domestic cattle.
- Determine what characteristics made the longhorn popular in the past and what characteristics have caused the breed to be ignored by beef producers today.
- Research and write a report on buffalo, elk, or Texas longhorn cattle.

### **Social Studies**

- Investigate the beliefs behind the Ghost Dance.
- Investigate John Pershing and his involvement with Fort Niobrara.
- What is an National Wildlife Refuge? Report on it.
- Map the territorial range of the Dakota Sioux from 1850, to the present day.

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Create a diorama of the Wildlife Refuge.
- Explore the art work and music of the Lakota Sioux through Native American resource persons.
- Draw a pencil drawing of one of three large animals on the refuge.
- Find photographs of deer, elk, buffalo, and longhorn cattle.

### **Service Learning**

- Research history of the military's defense of settlers in Nebraska from 1860 to the period of Fort Niobrara.
- Visit military forts in your area. Attend Civil War reenactments.
- Volunteer to participate in historical activities at parks and museums in your community.

### **General Activities**

- Discover needs at a wildlife refuge near you and take steps to meet those needs.
- Discuss what animals need refuge in your area. Determine what steps would have to be taken to establish such a site.
- Debate the pros and cons of making the Niobrara a protected river.
- Plan a trip to the Valentine area. Develop an itinerary which includes sites in Valentine, Fort Niobrara Wildlife Refuge, Smith Falls, and Snake River Falls.
- Research other areas John J. Pershing served during his military career.
- Write to Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Museum to find out details of the annual longhorn cattle auction.
- Visit a wildlife refuge near you and chart the wildlife on the preserve.

## **Resources**

- "Fort Niobrara 1880-1906" by Thomas Buecker, *Nebraska History* magazine, fall 1984. A short history of the fort. Not much else has been published.
- Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee, by Dee Brown. The best selling classic on the plight of Native Americans that climaxed at the Wounded Knee Creek.
- Winter of 1980, printed by the Nebraska State Historical Society. A compilation of newspaper accounts leading to, describing, and telling the aftermath of the incident at Wounded Knee.
- Valentine Chamber of Commerce
- Fort Niobrara Visitor's Center and Museum, RFD, Valentine, NE
- Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge, RFD, Valentine, NE
- *Nebraskaland Magazine*

Fort Niobrara in 1889  
Seated: second from left, Turning Bear;  
Center, Blunt Arrow;  
Second from right, Follows The Woman;  
On horseback; left, Goes to War.  
The others are unknown.  
Courtesy of Nebraska State Historical Society

**Marker 63 to Marker 87** Distance: 106.9 miles

From: Thedford, NE  
To: Valentine, NE  
Beginning at Thedford, NE  
Go West on HWY 2 for 25.4 miles  
Go East on Spur 16B for 2.6 miles  
Go Northeast on HWY 16B for 11.3 miles  
Go East on S-16B Rd. for 6.0 miles  
Go North on U.S. 83 for 17.1 miles  
To Valentine, NE

## MARI SANDOZ

1896-1966

This is the country of Mari Sandoz-historian, novelist, teacher-who brought its history and its people to life in her many books, articles, and stories. She was born in Sheridan County, Nebraska. Although she lived much of her life in the east, she is buried here in her own west.

Mari Sandoz was first famed for Old Jules (1935), the story of her father and other settlers who came to the upper Niobrara region in the late nineteenth century. Her greatest achievement is the series of six related books on life as it developed with Indian and white men in the trans-Missouri country: The Beaver Men, Crazy Horse, Cheyenne Autumn, The Buffalo Hunters, The Cattlemen, and Old Jules. In these, and a dozen other volumes, she presented the drama of man on the Great Plains more completely, accurately, and vividly than anyone before her had done.

Mari Sandoz was internationally known as a chronicler of the west and as an expert on Indian history. Her own aim was to understand all of life by understanding this one part of it how man shaped the Plains country, and how it shaped him.

Nebraska Centennial Commission  
Historical Land Mark Council  
Hwy 27, 20 miles south of Gordon  
Sheridan County  
Marker 85

(Distance between Marker 87 and Marker 85 is 92.3 miles.)

### **Health and Physical Education**

- Research “growing up” in an isolated area like the Panhandle.
- How did living in the Sandhills affect health?
- Why did so many people go insane on the prairie?
- Make a list of Panhandle early settlers’ recreation. See the short story by Sandoz, The Christmas of the Phonograph Records.
- Compare and contrast the diets of Sandoz’s childhood and diets of today.
- Determine what to do in case of a poisonous snake bite.

### **Math**

- Compute the square miles of Sandhills in Nebraska or of a particular county.
- What ratio of Mari Sandoz’s 22 books dealt with Indian history?
- How many miles did Old Jules traverse from his native country, Switzerland, to Sheridan County, Nebraska?
- What is the area of a Nebraska pioneer homestead?

### **Reading and Writing**

- Find a list of the 22 literary works written by Mari Sandoz.
- Read aloud to your class, The Christmas of The Phonograph Records. Have the students write about a real or created Christmas disaster.
- Write a letter to Mari’s sister, Caroline Pifer, and get her own stories about their childhood.



### **Science**

- Using Sandoz books, find at least five plants or vegetation mentioned.
- Collect tales about rainmaking techniques in the dry Sandhills (e.g. prayer, church steeples, divining stick, seeding clouds). See Chapter 8 of Old Jules.
- What did Jules have to do to make the orchards thrive and grow in the dry Panhandle area?
- Compare rainfall amounts in the Panhandle, central, and eastern Nebraska. Graph results.

### **Social Studies**

- Locate Rushville and Gordon, Nebraska on a Nebraska map.
- Find where Mari Sandoz is buried.
- Compare the landscape and topography of western Nebraska with other parts of the state.
- List the Native American groups of the area and describe how Sandoz portrayed them in her works.

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Find photographs of Sandoz country (include Mirage Flats).
- Write a report or show pictures on/of a Nebraska artist of the early 1900's.
- Draw a picture of Old Jules as described by Sandoz.
- Draw a picture of the Sandoz cabin as described in The Christmas of The Phonograph Record.
- Read "Portraying the Landscape of Mari Sandoz," pp 129-131 from Nebraska Voices and report your findings.

### **Service Learning**

- Research pioneer families in community through cemetery records, family histories, community histories, State Historical Society, on-line research. Write a research report and give to a local library and historical societies.

### **General Activities**

- Develop a personality character sketch of Old Jules.
- Compare the University of Nebraska during the times Cather and Sandoz attended and now in terms of student population (size and gender), degrees offered, buildings, etc.
- Research the life of Sandoz, and present it on a time line.

## **Resources**

- "Mari Sandoz Heritage" Newsletter, Chadron State College, Chadron, NE 69337
- The Christmas of the Phonograph Records, by Mari Sandoz
- Caroline Pifer, sister of Mari and overseer of Sandoz estate, Gordon, NE
- Gordon Chamber of Commerce
- Mari Sandoz Heritage Society, Chadron State College, Chadron, NE 69337, (308) 432-4451
- Great Plains Quarterly, Winter 1996, Vol. 16, No. 1, Mari Sandoz, Nebraska Sandhills Author: A Centennial Recognition
- "Portraying the Landscape of Mari Sandoz" by Kira Gale, pp 129-131, from Nebraska Voices Telling The Stories of Our State, Nebraska Q125, publication of the Nebraska Humanities Council, 215 Centennial Mall South, Suite 225, Lincoln, NE 68508
- Perspectives: Women in Nebraska History, by Nebraska State Council of Social Studies and Department of Education, 1984, June issue
- Mari Sandoz, Story of Catcher of the Plains, by Helen Stauffer (a Sandoz biography)
- Old Jules Country, photographic exhibit by Kira Gale (may be borrowed from the Nebraska Humanities Council)

Mari Sandoz sitting in her apartment  
Courtesy of Nebraska State Historical Society

**Marker 87 to Marker 85** Distance: 92.3 miles

From: Valentine, NE  
To: Gordon, NE  
Beginning at Valentine, NE  
Go Southwest on HWY 12 for 0.7 miles  
Go West on I 20 for 90.9 miles  
Go North on HWY 27 for 0.7 miles  
To Gordon, NE

## BURLINGTON LOCOMOTIVE 719

By the mid-1880's the Sandhills had become an important cattle-raising region. The extension of the Burlington and Missouri Railroad westward through the Sandhills in 1877-1888 made ranching more profitable by making more accessible eastern markets. By 1888, the Burlington had reached burgeoning Alliance, planned as a railroad junction and named by B & M engineer J. N. Paul. Material for building the Belmont Tunnel (about 30 miles northwestward), supplies for the Newcastle, Wyoming coal mines, and equipment for grading camps on the line between Alliance to Newcastle were freighted overland from Alliance while it served as the Burlington's western terminus.

Locomotive Number 719, built at the Havelock, Nebraska, shops around 1903, was used for most of its half century of service on the Burlington's Alliance Division. Late in its career 719 was used on the Sterling, Colorado, to Cheyenne, Wyoming, branch line. Representative of the steam-power era of railroading, it was one of the K-4 locomotives, mainline passenger types, built at Havelock. The 86-ton engine, donated by C B & Q to the city of Alliance in 1962 and refurbished by Burlington Northern volunteers, is now located on land donated to Alliance by John D. Nielsen.

Alliance Area Chamber of Commerce  
Nebraska State Historical Society  
Diamond Hill Park, RR #2 on Hwy 2, Alliance  
Box Butte County  
Marker 268

(Distance between Marker 85 and Marker 268 is 72.8 miles.)

### **Health and Physical Education**

- What were some of the safety issues involved in operating a locomotive?
- How has crossbar usage changed from mid-1880's to present day?
- Have a guest speaker or visit a train yard and see how safety in train travel has changed.
- Contrast the locomotive with the human body (e.g. coal-food, wheel-foot, piston-heart).

### **Math**

- Calculate how many coal cars are in the average train and how many coal trains go through Alliance each day.
- What was the weight of a locomotive?
- How long would it take to ride the train from the Missouri River in eastern Nebraska to Alliance in 1888?
- Compare angles and levers on the locomotive with angles and levers of the human body.

### **Reading and Writing**

- Write and find out how many people work in the train yard in Alliance.
- Journal a day on the train in 1903.
- Read parts of Across America on an Emigrant Train, which describes travel minute by minute (sleeping, eating, etc.).
- Compare and contrast a locomotive of yesterday and today.
- Interview a train engineer. Share findings.

### **Science**

- Compare fuel and speeds of trains then and now.
- Compare products transported then and now.
- Compare passenger trains then and now.
- Research the train car make-up then and now.

### **Social Studies**

- Compare a railroad yard (Havelock, North Platte, Alliance, etc.) of yesterday and today.
- What was the purpose of the caboose and why has it become obsolete?
- Draw a map of Nebraska and plot the route of the Burlington and Missouri Railroad.
- What ever happened to Havelock, Nebraska?
- Make a diorama of a boom town or ghost town.
- Research towns or businesses in your county that died when the railroad left.
- Research the immigrant houses the railroad built for the settlers whom they brought to Nebraska (e.g. Henderson, Nebraska)
- Research the A,B,C named towns along the railroad routes.

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Sing the songs, “I’ve Been Working on the Railroad” and “Casey Jones.”
- Find pictures of railroad depots. Note similarities and differences. Note which ones are still being used. Where are the ones that have been saved, and what’s being done with them?
- Visit a depot and sketch it.

### **Service Learning**

- Interview persons in the community. Make a booklet of train stories. Share the book with the community.

### **General Activities**

- Research the transcontinental railroad and the Burlington Northern’s place in the scheme of it.
- Share train stories with a local newspaper or with a local historical society.
- Discover which railroad yard in Nebraska is the largest railroad yard in the world.
- What are the spots in Nebraska where one can board Amtrak?

**Resources**

- Lincoln Journal Star, Jim McKee
- "Nebraska Trailblazer, Railroads" #10
- "Nebraskaland-The Saga of the Railroad," August, 1981
- Bailey Railroad Yard, North Platte, Nebraska
- Across America on an Emigrant Train, by Jim Murphy
- Alliance Railroad Yard, Alliance, NE

Burlington Depot in Lincoln  
Courtesy of Nebraska State Historical Society

**Marker 85 to Marker 268** Distance: 72.8 miles

From: Gordon, NE  
To: Alliance, NE  
Beginning at Gordon, NE  
Go South on HWY 27 for 0.4 miles  
Go Southwest on U.S. 20 for 55.4 miles  
Go South on U.S. 385 for 16.7 miles  
Go North on Big Horn Ave. for 0.3 miles  
To Alliance, NE

### BORDEAUX TRADING POST

From about 1846 until 1872, an Indian "trading house" occupied a site near here. Built by James Bordeaux, the trading station was once attacked and set afire by hostile Crow warriors. Fortunately, some friendly Sioux Indians came to the rescue and drove off the attacking Crow.

James Bordeaux was from a French settlement near St. Louis and while yet a young boy, he went west with fur traders. Bordeaux was active in the fur trade in the vicinity of Fort Laramie from the 1830's until the 1870's. In the 1840's, he served as host to the explorer John C. Fremont and the historian Francis Parkman. He left his name to Bordeaux Bend near Fort Laramie, scene of the Grattan Massacre. His name also survives in the name of Bordeaux Creek, near this marker.

The Indians brought buffalo robes, furs, and ponies to this post to trade for guns, powder, beads, blankets, and whiskey. Some of the weapons may have been used against the troops at Fort Phil Kearny and Custer's troops at the Little Big Horn. The story of James Bordeaux's life is the story of the Upper Missouri country from the 1830's-1870's.

Citizens of Chadron  
Historical Land Mark Council  
U.S. 20, east of Chadron  
Dawes County  
Marker 42

(Distance between Marker 268 and Marker 42 is 59.0 miles.)

### Health and Physical Education

- Explore safety issues regarding the use of firearms, ammo, powder, and whiskey.
- Write safety rules for the traders and Native Americans to use in their day.
- Research the diet of fur traders and/or Native Americans.
- Research the effects of alcohol.

### Math

- Calculate the number of miles traveled from Bordeaux Trading Post to Fort Laramie and from the Post to the Little Big Horn.
- Have classes create math story problems to coincide with the fur trading era.
- Set prices for the trading goods and determine how many robes, furs, and ponies needed to buy supplies.
- Determine the value of various hides, pelts, and furs today. Graph results.
- Research how many pelts the average fur trader collected each year.
- Calculate the distance between the Trading Post and Fort Robinson and the time it took for travel by horse or foot.

### **Reading and Writing**

- Read Francis Parkman's book.
- Research and report on famous fur traders.
- Read stories on mountain men or Mr. Tucket, by Gary Paulson
- Compare the range of guns sold to the Native Americans to bows.
- Write to the Museum of the Fur Trade in Chadron, NE for information about museum displays and its collections.
- Write dialogue between the Native Americans wanting to trade furs, robe, and hides with the fur trader.

### **Science**

- Compare weather characteristics of this area to Bordeaux's homeland of France.
- Acquire hides and learn the process of tanning (student hunters).
- Discover the chemical ingredients in gun powder and whiskey.
- Inquire about current trapping practices in your area and types of animals trapped.
- Find out why coniferous trees flourish in this area.
- Research the native animals of Nebraska that were hunted/trapped for their hides/pelts from 1840-1870.

### **Social Studies**

- Draw a map of the plains and locate several trading posts (e.g. Bordeaux, Sarpy's, Fort Laramie, Bent's Fort). Determine routes to get goods to St. Louis.
- Locate a picture of the Bordeaux trading post and create a model.
- Find out which Native American groups traded at this post.
- Read and discuss "A Renewable Resource" (see Resources).
- Map the hunting grounds and/or camping areas for Native American groups in the Pine Ridge area.
- Research John C. Fremont and write a report and map his explorations.

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Do a characterization of James Bordeaux and include costume.
- Make a design using colored beads.
- Examine photos of Native Americans for items they traded for furs (e.g. beads, blankets, guns).
- Compare photos or drawings of United States military and French trapper guns and weapons.
- Find photos of the Pine Ridge area from then and now. Compare and contrast in terms of trees and vegetation.

### **Service Learning**

- Have a trade and swap day.

### **General Activities**

- Attend a rendezvous in your local area.
- Try a pemmican recipe.
- Find out what the local market is for furs today and where they are sent.

### **Resources**

- “A Renewable Resource,” *Nebraskaland Magazine* Trail Tales, Vol 3, No 4, Winter 1997, pp 6-7, by Kady Hogeland (A 14 year old Panhandle girl relates experiences of trapping coyotes. She gives her perspective on how wearing fur is being “green”).
- Mr. Tucket by Gary Paulson. Written for young readers, it gives good insight into beaver trapping and life on the Plains in the 1850s.
- Mountain Men by Rick Steber, Bonanza Publishing. A small book with several short accounts of mountain man adventures.
- The Museum of the Fur Trade Quarterly
- Museum of the Fur Trade, 6321 Highway 20, Chadron, NE 69337
- Turkey Creek Furs and Recycling, 841 West 11th, Crete, NE 68333, 402/826-2516
- *Nebraskaland Magazine*
- “Early Fur Trade in Northwestern Nebraska,” by Charles E. Hanson, Jr. *Nebraska History* (Fall 1976).

Reconstructed Bordeaux Trading Post  
Courtesy of Nebraska State Historical Society

**Marker 268 to Marker 42** Distance: 59.0 miles

From: Alliance, NE  
To: Chadron, NE  
Beginning at Alliance, NE  
Go South on Cheyenne Ave for 0.3 miles  
Go North on U.S. 385 for 48.1 miles  
Go North on U.S. 385 for 9.6 miles  
Go East on U.S. 20 for 1.0 miles  
To Chadron, NE

## GENERAL RESOURCES

If you see a void in resources provided, please contact the Division of Health Promotion and Education (471-2101) with ideas for additions.

Battle of the Bridges by Rex German and Russ Czaplewski.

Centennial. James Michener. ISBN 0-449-21419-2.

Colonial America Cooperative Learning Activities. Mary Strohl and Susan Schneck. Scholastic. 1991. ISBN 0-590-49133-4.

The Great Platte River Road. Merrill J. Mattes. University of Nebraska Press. 1992. ISBN 0-8032-8153-6.

If You Traveled West in a Covered Wagon. Ellen Levine. Illustrated by Elroy Freem. Scholastic. ISBN 0-590-45158-8.

I Walked to Zion. Susan Madsen.

Indians of the Plains. Robert H. Lowie. University of Nebraska Press. 1982. ISBN 0-8032-7907-8.

Make It Work! North American Indians. Andrew Haslam & Alexandra Parsons. Two-Can Book. Thomson Learning, Publisher. 1995. ISBN 1 56847-137-8.

Mormons Time Line.

My Folks Came in a Covered Wagon, Roote and Huff, ed. 1991. Capper Press, Topeka, KS. ISBN 0-941678-13-x.

Native Americans Cooperative Learning Activities. Mary Strohl and Susan Schneck. Scholastic. 1991. ISBN 0-590-49151-2.

Nebraska: A Geography (Westview Geographies of the United States). Bradley H. Baltensperger (out of print—source through inter-library loan). Westview Press. 1985. ISBN 0-86531-218-4.

Nebraska Historical Tour Guide. D. Ray Wilson. Crossroads Communications. 1988. ISBN 0-916445-21-6.

Nebraska Our Towns...6 Volumes A Second Century Publication. Jane Graff, Project Coordinator of Seward, NE 68434. Taylor Publishing Co. Dallas, TX. 1991.

Nebraska Place Names. Gives the origin of the town name and ethnic culture. Lilian L. Fitzpatrick. 1960. University of Nebraska Press.

North American Indian Sign Language. Karen Liptak. Scholastic, Inc. 1990. ISBN 0-590-50829-6.

Nya Nuki. Ken Thomasa.

The Orphan Train Adventures. Joan Lowery Nixon. Bantam Books. (A Family Apart, is one book of the series).

The Orphan Train Quartet. Joan Lowery Nixon. (A Place to Belong, A Family Apart, Caught in the Act, In The Face of Danger are books of the series.)

The Overland Migrations. Produced by the Division of Publications, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior; Washington, DC. Handbook 105.

The Pawnee Indians. George E. Hyde. University of Oklahoma Press. 1974. ISBN 0-8061-2094-0.

The Pioneers. Marie and Douglas Gorsline; Random House; 1978; ISBN 0-394-83904-8.

The Platte River: An Atlas of the Big Bend Region. Published by the University of Nebraska at Kearney, Kearney, NE. 1993.

Red Dog. Bill Wallace. Archway paperback.

These Were the Sioux. Mari Sandoz. University of Nebraska Press. 1961. ISBN 0-8032-9151-5.

We Pointed Them North. Teddy Blue Abbott.

Wild Towns of Nebraska. Wayne C. Lee. Caxton Publishers. Caldwell, ID. 1988. ISBN 0-87004-325-0.

Health Tour Director's Guide; Wellness Council of America; ISBN 0-9628334-6-0; 1996; Wellness Council; Community Health Plaza, Suite 311; 7101 Newport Avenue, Omaha, NE 68152, E-Mail: [welcoa@neonramp.com](mailto:welcoa@neonramp.com)

The Nebraska History CD Project

Videos: Blossoms on the Prairie Through Great Plains TV

### **Great Plains Trails Network**

5000 North 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Lincoln, NE 68521

### **Health Observances Calendar**

American School Health Association  
P.O. Box 708  
Kent, OH 44240  
216/678-1601

OR

National Health Information Center  
11426/28 Rockville Pike  
Rockville, MD 20852  
301/770-5800/5801 (fax: 301/984-4256)

**Indian Center**

1100 Military Road  
Lincoln, NE 68508  
402/438-5231

**Local Natural Resources Commission**

[www.nrc.state.ne.us/](http://www.nrc.state.ne.us/)

**Local Natural Resource Districts**

**Dr. Robert Manley**

See Nebraska Humanities Council

**MECC**

6160 Summit Drive, North  
Minneapolis, MN 55430-4003  
(Oregon Trail II Program, computer simulation game)

**Nebraska Brand Committee**

HDQS: P.O. Box I  
Alliance, NE 69301-0775  
308/762-2496

**Nebraska Department of Agriculture**

301 Centennial Mall South  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4947  
402/471-2341  
[www.agr.state.ne.us/](http://www.agr.state.ne.us/)

**Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services**

Division of Health Promotion and Education  
301 Centennial Mall South  
Lincoln, NE 68509-5044  
402/471-2101  
*Nebraska Tour brochure and other physical activity materials available*  
[www.hhs.state.ne.us](http://www.hhs.state.ne.us)

**Nebraska Humanities Council**

215 Centennial Mall South  
Lincoln, NE 68508  
402/474-2131

**Nebraska State Historical Society**

1500 R Street  
Box 82554  
Lincoln, NE 68501  
800/833-6747  
Nebraska Trailblazer Newspaper  
[www.nebraskahistory.org/](http://www.nebraskahistory.org/)

Four disks referred to as NebData may be purchased from the Nebraska State Historical Society. The data may also be found on the Social Science Resources HomePage (<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/SS/ss.html>). Use the Excite search tool.

**Nebraska Tourism Office**

700 South 16<sup>th</sup> Street  
Lincoln, NE 68508  
402/471-3796 (800/228-4307)  
[www.visitnebraska.org](http://www.visitnebraska.org)

**Stewards of the Platte**

308/382-5221

**Stuhr Museum**

Dale Clark, Director of Educational Programs  
Grand Island, NE

**United States Department of Interior**

**University of Nebraska-Cooperative Extension**

University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
211 Agricultural Hall  
Lincoln, NE 68583-0703  
402/472-2966  
[www.ianr.unl/ianr/coopext/coopext.htm](http://www.ianr.unl/ianr/coopext/coopext.htm)

**Nebraska Game & Parks Commission**

P.O. Box 30370  
Lincoln, NE 68503-0370  
[www.ngpc.state.ne.us](http://www.ngpc.state.ne.us)