South Dakota, the land of infinite variety, is one of America’s few remaining economic bright spots. The population is growing and unemployment is below 3% because the state possesses one of the most economically free economies on the continent. Where the bison once roamed, entrepreneurs now ply their respective trades free from excessive taxation and government regulation.

But South Dakotans have not always had it so good, and to this day government stifles the economic activities of the state’s Native Americans. Follow Augustana College business historian Robert E. Wright, holder of the Nef Family Chair in Political Economy, in Little Business on the Prairie: Entrepreneurship, Prosperity, and Challenge in South Dakota as he traces the epic story of South Dakota’s discovery some 12,000 years ago to its founding booms in the 1870s and 1880s through the economic crises of the 1930s and 1980s to the challenges facing the state in the near future. With 340 pages and more than twenty illustrations, the book is available for $16.95 at CWS, Zandbroz, Barnes & Noble, and on amazon.com.
Estate Planning

The Board of Directors of the Center for Western Studies encourages members of the Augustana College Heritage Society for CWS and others interested in directing a portion of their estate to support CWS to review and/or update their wills and insurance policies, being mindful to specify “The Center for Western Studies” to clarify the beneficiary of their funds.

Office Coordinator Erin Castle’s musical group, the Union Grove Pickers, celebrated the release of their third album, Scattered & Sown, at Sioux Falls’ historic Orpheum Theatre on March 28. Of its 16 tracks, Earn Your Scars, written by Castle (above, in green), paints a familiar landscape of the Plains and its people, awaiting the promise of spring’s bloom and working through the summer’s heat. While themes of home, love lost and won, and the trials and triumphs of everyday life are woven throughout, the band’s sound is purely Americana, as it employs blues, folk, country swing, and straight-up rock and roll in a way that only UGP does. The CD is $12, and can be purchased at Last Stop CD Shop, String Theory Luthiery, and Total Drag Records in Sioux Falls, or on iTunes.

In addition to the release of the album, Castle received a Gold Addy Award for her vocal performance in an advertisement with Media One for the Heartland House in Sioux Falls. She does, however, find time to work hard for the CWS when she’s not making music! Having now been through her first Dakota Conference, she’s getting comfortable in her role and preparing for the next adventure, the opening of the new museum exhibits.

Marketing Budget Expands

A donor-directed gift toward the cost of the Center’s support of South Dakota Public Broadcasting, one of the options under Focused Giving, permits the Center to increase its budget allocation for other promotional activity. For a second year, CWS is mentioned as an underwriter every day on South Dakota Public Radio, with a broadcast range reaching 30,000 listeners and extending into North Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Wyoming, and Montana.

For 2015, CWS has committed to placing a ½-page ad in every issue of South Dakota Magazine, with a national readership of over 60,000. The Center also promotes its programs to hundreds of thousands through Southeast South Dakota Tourism, Chamber News, Sioux Falls Visitors Guide, and Results Radio stations. In early March, CWS joined with American Radio Corporation (Chicago) to sponsor public service announcements about school safety in the Sioux Center, Iowa, market on KSOU AM 1090 “The Top Classics of the 60s and 70s,” a musical era appreciated by many in the CWS demographic.

Journal of the West Publishes Director’s and Council Member’s Articles

“The New Radicals: Manifestos from the Western Plains” is the title of an article by Executive Director Dr. Harry Thompson published in the special issue of the Journal of the West devoted to radicalism in the American West, 53:1 (Winter 2014): 60-68. Thompson writes about four works of nonfiction, all published in the last eight years, as examples of continuing concern with issues facing the region: Ghost Dances, by Josh Garrett-Davis, A Separate Country, by Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, Bird Cloud, by Annie Proulx, and The Horizontal World, by Debra Marquart. “Like the grasses of the Plains,” writes Thompson, “the roots of radicalism in the West extend deep into the earth.” Both Marquart and Garrett-Davis explore their personal journeys of escape from and return to the land of their birth, North Dakota and South Dakota, respectively. Cook-Lynn, born on the Crow Creek Reservation, issues a call for a historiography that arises from indigenous perspectives and a re cognition of separate nation status. Proulx writes about her experience in building a radical vision of metal and stone in Wyoming.

National Advisory Council member Dr. Jeffrey Johnson, Associate Professor of History and Director of American Studies at Providence College (Rhode Island), is the issue’s guest editor and offers his take on the definition of radicalism in the West: “The region’s brand of radicalism . . . comes in a unique flavor. Distinctive extractive industries, geography, demographics, and resources created a socioeconomic climate well suited to persistent protest and recurring rebuke.” Johnson’s own article, “Closed Shops and Open Anarchism: Labor, Radical San Francisco, and the Great War” (pp. 32-41), part of a forthcoming book-length study, discusses the Preparedness Day Bombing of 1916, “one of the most important reminders of the turbulent relationship between capital and labor in the early twentieth century.”

The Center for Western Studies once again hosted the registration for the Augustana College Distinguished Scholars event in February and March.
Dakota Conference Attracts 250 to Discuss Regional Identity

Among the more than seventy presentations at this year’s Dakota Conference on Where the West Begins? were papers by twenty-four undergraduate students from Minot State University, Valley City State University, Presentation College, and Augustana. Of these, fifteen were from the two North Dakota institutions.

Los Angeles-based author Josh Garrett-Davis, whose Ghost Dances provides an insightful account of growing up in Hot Springs and Pierre, South Dakota, in the 1980s and 1990s, spoke at the Friday luncheon on the imaginative richness of the West. Several papers discussed the conference theme of geography, identity, and promise of the Northern Plains/West, including a session assembled by National Advisory Council Member Dr. Jon Lauck on the Midwest and the Great Plains.

Executive Director of the Pine Ridge Area Chamber of Commerce Ivan Sorbel addressed the economic challenges and promises of reservation life at the Friday dinner. Saturday’s closing luncheon featured Dr. Robert Wright, author of the new CWS publication Little Business on the Prairie, on the topic of “The Other Two Dakotas.”

David Trask, of Fort Collins, Colorado, asked whether Native American people have a place in the emerging midwestern historical narrative. Thomas Simmons, USD Law School, examined the topographical emphases in the Hugh Glass narratives. William E. Lass, Minnesota State University Mankato, explained how the boundary between Minnesota and South Dakota was established. He and sixteen other authors participated in the Northern Plains Autograph Party Saturday afternoon.

Dr. Gordon Iseminger, University of North Dakota, received the Distinguished Contribution Award, presented by the Board of Directors in recognition of his work as a teacher, author, and frequent presenter at the Dakota Conference. Seven who presented at the 2014 conference received cash awards totaling $950 (recipients and paper titles available on website).

Where Is the Midwest?

As our name indicates, the Center for Western Studies is located in the West, specifically the Northern Plains. An allied region to the east is the Midwest. In conjunction with the Dakota Conference on regional identity, an exhibit in the Elmen Gallery explored the origins and definitions of terms used to identify central regions of the U.S. The difficulties inherent in defining these regions were demonstrated with maps. Visitors were asked to consider what geographical and demographic characteristics serve to identify each region, if these characteristics are changing, and whether these distinctions and labels make sense today. For the term “Midwest,” they were able to go a step further with MyMidwest, an interactive mapping survey developed by Sasaki Associates of Massachusetts, which was available on a kiosk accompanying the exhibit. The survey allows individuals to share how they define the region and to compare their definitions with people from different areas of the country and even outside the United States. Though the exhibit is down, the survey is still available at http://mycampus.sasaki.com/branches/mymidwest/.

On The Record: An Exhibition of Contemporary Ledger Art

CWS Participates in National Heritage Health Study

Last fall, the Center for Western Studies was one of 14,000 collecting institutions in the United States selected to participate in Heritage Health Information (HHI) 2014, a study sponsored by the Institute of Museum and Library Services and conducted by Heritage Preservation. HHI 2014 is a national survey on the condition of collections held by archives, libraries, historical societies, museums, scientific research collections, and archaeological repositories.

The most comprehensive survey of its kind, it assesses collections in all media, in all formats, in all types of institutions, and in all 50 states. The survey results will be used by administrators, policymakers, government agencies, and private funding sources as they make decisions that affect the preservation of collections in the nation’s 55,000 cultural institutions.

Collections Assistant Liz Thrond coordinated the Center’s participation in the survey, which provided a great opportunity for a self-assessment of CWS collections.

HHI 2014 is a follow-up to Heritage Health Index, a watershed study conducted in 2004. The report from this initial study, A Public Trust at Risk: The Heritage Health Index Report on the State of America’s Collections, found that more than 820 million of the 4.8 billion objects held in the nation’s cultural institutions were at risk and another 1.8 billion were in unknown condition.

At the reception on March 25, artist Jerry Fogg discusses how he uses his mixed-media technique in the traditional ledger art process.

South Dakota Hall of Fame artist Donald F. Montileaux announces that he has won the Spur Award for his children’s book Tasunka: A Lakota Horse Legend. Other artists in the show, which runs March 9–June 27, are Gerald Yellowhawk, Jim Yellowhawk, and Wade Patton.

In a recent article about artist Jim Savage in the Argus Leader, “Wife Preserves Legacy of Husband’s Western Art,” Shirley Savage Jones notes: “There is less hankering for original pieces of western art. The Center for Western Studies seemed like a great place to perpetuate the history of western art and leave a legacy for Jim’s work. I was happy to find a home for this beautiful art and keep Jim Savage and his work in the public eye.” Savage’s work will be showcased in the Northern Plains Folk Art Continuum, a centerpiece of the new museum exhibits opening this fall. Executive Director Harry Thompson remarks, “The folk art exhibit pays tribute to Jim Savage’s artistry in wood as passed down from his grandfather, a stone carver, and his father, a woodworker, as part of his English heritage of carving.”

In the latest issue of South Dakota Bird Notes (March 2015), the President of the South Dakota Ornithologists’ Union, Ricky Jones, acknowledges the special relationship that exists between SDOU and CWS. Addressing SDOU members in the “President’s Page,” he encourages them to donate any records they have “to this great asset to South Dakota and SDOU.” Referring to Herbert Krause, who played important roles in founding both SDOU and CWS, he notes, “The ongoing usage at CWS is an homage to one of SDOU’s founders and his vision for the great potential for the future of ornithology in South Dakota.” Mr. Jones encourages members to visit, use the SDOU collection, and support CWS with membership gifts.

I’m Lauren Evans, a senior history and anthropology major from Freeport, Illinois. I joined the CWS staff in June 2014. After I graduate in May, I hope to work in a museum setting, preferably collections.

While I’ve been at the Center, my main projects have been concerning the CWS artifact collection. My biggest project has been cataloging the artifacts on display in the Fantle and Froiland Galleries and moving them into permanent storage as part of the current exhibit renovations. I cataloged the Shirley Savage Jones collection, which included most of the items on display in Jim Savage’s workshop. In addition, I’ve also been cataloging and storing the existing backlog of items here at the Center, including many Plains Indian ethnographic pieces. All in all, I’ve cataloged nearly 1,000 artifacts at the Center—a pretty substantial amount!

I have helped with different events while I have been working at the Center, including the Boe Forum and Dakota Conference. Through my internship, I have gained invaluable collections experience and I’ve had a lot of fun getting to know the Center staff and my fellow interns. I can’t wait to see where I end up next!

Editor’s note: Before spending a year in England in the anthropology exchange program between Augustana and the University of Exeter, Lauren had expressed to Dr. Harry Thompson her interest in interning at CWS, having taken his course “The Search for Authenticity,” in which she researched and transcribed original documents in the archives. We are very happy that Lauren came back!
Sicangu Lakota writer Lydia Whirlwind Soldier, author of the popular poetry collection *Memory Songs* published by CWS in 1999, is the 2015 recipient of the prestigious Living Indian Treasure Award presented by the Governor of South Dakota. Reporter for the *Capital Journal* Lance Nixon observed, “Today, as a poet in two languages, Lydia Whirlwind Soldier realizes that having deep roots in the Lakota language has paid off in more ways than just giving her a deeper appreciation for her own culture. It has also helped her shape better poems in English.”

National Advisory Council members author Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve (in 1997) and artist and author Arthur Amiotte (in 2013) are previous recipients of the award. Dr. Amiotte was recently in Sioux Falls to speak in conjunction with an exhibit of his life’s work at the Washington Pavilion Visual Arts Center, *Transformation and Continuity in Lakota Culture: The Collages of Arthur Amiotte, 1988-2014*, curated by the museum of the South Dakota State Historical Society.

Amiotte is the author of the section “An Appraisal of Sioux Arts” in the CWS state centennial publication *An Illustrated History of the Arts in South Dakota* (1989). The exhibit text acknowledges that Amiotte is known for “his signature use of mixed media collage to create a visual cultural biography of the Lakota that highlights the steps they took toward assimilating to European-American culture. . . . These seemingly incongruous images layered together offer a sense of the cultural confusion the Lakota experienced during the process of assimilation and pays tribute to a collective Lakota culture.” His essay on the ethos of Plains Indians is featured in the catalog accompanying the Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibit *The Plains Indians: Artists of Earth and Sky*.

### Artists of the Plains Art Show & Sale: Celebrating 35 Years

This year’s award winners are, from left to right, Carol Lundeen (second place 2/D), Arnold Bortnem (first place 3/D), Rebecca Sunde (second place student award), Andra Guzzo (first place student award), Donald F. Montileaux (first place 2/D), and Megan Sweets (second place 3/D). Harry Thompson, Executive Director of the Center for Western Studies, and Tony Haga, Center for Western Studies Board Chair, offered congratulations. Education Assistant Kristi Thomas (not pictured) managed the show and sale.

Watercolor artist Sharon Gray takes time to discuss her work with CWS Board Member Arlen Viste at the 35th Annual Artists of the Plains Art Show and Sale.

Augustana College art student Rebecca Sunde, one of several students participating, prices her work at the 35th Annual Artists of the Plains Art Show and Sale.

The CWS had a special visit from Don Hildebrand on his 92nd birthday in April! Don is one of the soldiers seen in an exhibit depicting the 147th Field Artillery leaving Mitchell, SD, for training during World War II. The image belongs to the Glenn Soladay Collection. Glenn and Don were cousins by marriage. Both served with the 147th in the Pacific theater. The exhibit has since been replaced with a new display about the evolution of passports, but materials from the Soladay collection will be on exhibit during the 2016 Dakota Conference, April 22-23, when CWS observes the 75th anniversary of America’s entrance into World War II.

Original or Copy?

This April marked the 150th anniversary of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. The events of that fateful day were reported in seven editions of the *New York Herald*, copies of which have become highly sought-after collectibles. But these editions are also some of the most widely reproduced newspapers in world history. An exhibit at CWS this spring helped people learn to identify reproductions with examples from the CWS collections. Think your family heirloom is an original? Check your copy for the following tell-tale signs of a reprint: yellowing, brittle paper that cracks at fold lines; identification as the 8:10 a.m. “Mourning Edition” which never existed; multi-column advertisements on the inside pages, which might even testify to the paper’s true print date; and the president’s portrait on the front page.

Lydia Whirlwind Soldier

Arthur Amiotte

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Events Calendar

May
29 CWS hosts reception for Association of South Dakota Museums

June
26 On the Record: An Exhibition of Contemporary Ledger Art closes

July
6 Treasures from the Center for Western Studies Fine Art Collection exhibit opens