

Liz Wallace  
Communications Manager

lwallace@ci.norfolk.ne.us

## Summer Speaker Series celebrates 150 years of Nebraska Statehood with the Neihardts



There's no better way to celebrate 150 years of Nebraska Statehood than through reenactment. On Wednesday, June 14, the Norfolk Public Library kicked off the Summer Speaker Series with special guests John and Mona Neihardt.

Brad Kellogg (John) and Raija Weiershauser (Mona), authors and independent scholars, brought the story of the famous Nebraska duo to life in front of a crowd of 35 captivated listeners. During this program, John and Mona reminisced about their lives together, thus telling their story to the audience. An interesting concept of their story has to do with their long distance courtship. While Mona was living in Paris, her mother sent her a book of John's poems. After this, Mona began to write to him and they began a courtship through letter writing.

"This story was very well received," said Norfolk Public Library Director, Jessica Chamberlain. "We received numerous comments such as, "Very interesting. Makes me want to read more of his books!" and "This program was fascinating, informative, and endearing! What a beautiful presentation! Thank you very much!"

The story of John and Mona was the first of four in the series. The series will continue through Wednesday, July 26.

"This series is something I really enjoy putting together," said Chamberlain.

Be sure to mark your calendars! The next program of the series is Nebraska's Outlaw Trail, Highway 12, which will be held on Wednesday, June 28, at 6:30 p.m. On Wednesday, July 12, listeners will learn about the Hidden History of African Americans in Nebraska. Finally, Maria Rodaway: Prairie Pioneer will finish the series on Wednesday, July 26<sup>th</sup>, with special guest star Karen Drevo, a Norfolk Public Library Youth Services Supervisor. All presentations will be held at the Norfolk Public Library.