

Librarian's Shelf by Kelli Keyes

Jeff Barnes Presenting Historical Monuments

The rich and diverse history and heritage of Nebraska, as told through its often-secluded historical monuments and markers, is the subject of a presentation at the Columbus Public Library on Saturday, May 8, at 2 p.m.

“Marking Nebraska: Our (Mostly) Hidden Historical Monuments” by historian Jeff Barnes, is a comprehensive guide to Nebraska’s earliest historical markers. Drawing from personal site visits and photographs from across our beautiful state, Barnes shares the most interesting, colorful, and even controversial ways in which Nebraskans have told their stories through boulders, tablets, plaques, and statues.

This presentation is in conjunction with Barnes’ newest book entitled “Cut in Stone, Cast in Bronze: Nebraska’s Historical Markers and Monuments”. This beautiful, full-colored text, sponsored by the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation, provides readers with a comprehensive guide to the nearly 300 monuments, statues, plaques, and markers found throughout the state.

In addition to the photographs of the markers and the history behind them, Barnes also offers the locations and GPS coordinates of each site. “Many of the sites are located in remote areas far from towns and cities,” said Barnes. “I think with the ‘social distancing’ that we’re encouraged to adopt, seeing these monuments in their natural settings, which haven’t changed greatly, is a great Nebraska weekend adventure.”

Barnes, a former newspaper reporter and editor and fifth-generation Nebraskan, writes and lives in Omaha. He is also a past Nebraska State Historical Society trustee, a former Nebraska Hall of Fame Commission chairman, and former Durham Museum marketing director. In his spare time, Barnes has also authored other engaging texts like “Forts of the Northern Plains”, “The Great Plains Guide to Custer”, “The Great Plains Guide to Buffalo Bill”, “Extra Innings: The Story of Modisett Ball Park”, and “150 @ 150: Nebraska’s Landmark Buildings at the State’s Sesquicentennial”.

Please don’t forget about the library’s upcoming author fair on Saturday, April 24, at the Friedhof Building (old Schweser’s building) at 2 p.m.! Eleven talented authors have graciously agreed to come and read samples of their works. Each author will have a booth where you can meet them and purchase signed copies of their books. A tasty treat table will be set up with delicious goodies whipped up by “Feed Your Sweet Tooth”. Beautiful gift baskets will be raffled off during the event as well, so please come and support your library and local authors.

Remember also that the library is hosting free movie matinees on the second Friday of each month from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. in room 127. During this time, a family-friendly movie will be shown and free popcorn and juice will be provided. The Columbus Public Library is currently located in the old police station (2419 14th Street) while our new building is being constructed. If you would like to know the title of the movie being featured, please call 402-564-7116. All library programs are free to the public, so please come and make yourself at home!

For more information about Jeff Barnes or to schedule a personal interview, contact him at 402-571-1349 or email him at husker80@cox.net.