

Fellows are encouraged to choose institutions which offer courses that closely examine the origins and development of the U.S. Constitution, the evolution of political theory and constitutional law, or other such topics directly related to the Constitution. Culp has not decided where she plans to attend graduate school, but expressed excitement over the prospects of selecting a school and continuing her education.

NSU Historians Attend Civil War Symposium

Dr. Bill Corbett and Dr. Brad Agnew, Professors of History, attended the second annual symposium commemorating the Battle of Wilson's Creek at Springfield, Missouri, Friday and Saturday, April 6-7.

The program, "1861: Storm Over the Land" examined the personalities and events of the first year of the Civil War. In addition to the Battle of Wilson's Creek, fought a few miles south of Springfield on August 10, the meeting traced the First Battle of Bull Run in Virginia, which took place on July 21.

The Symposium began with a half-day guided tour of the Wilson's Creek battlefield, much of which is within the boundaries of a National Park Service Battlefield Monument. The tour ended in the General Sweeney Museum, which houses an extensive collection of documents and artifacts related to the battle and the Civil War in the region.

The Union defeats in Virginia and Missouri, the two major battles of the first year of the war, dispelled the belief that the conflict would be brief and glorious and marked the beginning of a four-year-long conflict that not only resulted in the end of slavery and preservation of the Union but also dramatically changed the American government and its relation to its citizens.

Dr. Corbett, who teaches a course in the Civil War era, commented, "The meeting was particularly valuable because it assembled a group of scholars who have focused their research and writing on the Missouri, Arkansas, Indian Territory region, an area that usually receives scant attention in most accounts of the Civil War."

History Day Brings Hundreds to Campus

Nearly 375 students from grades 6 to 12 representing 14 area public school participated in the annual History Day Contest on the campus of Northeastern, Tuesday, April 3, 2001.

Eighteen teachers accompanied the contestants, and many others worked with students developing entries at their schools. The contestants were divided into 184 entries in fourteen different categories of competition, including table-top projects, documentaries, performances, and papers.

In addition to the contestants and their teachers, 57 NSU faculty and staff members, upper-level history students, and administrators, as well as citizens from Tahlequah, Muskogee, and other communities throughout the area served as judges.

Several teachers and administrators from area schools visited the contest as observers. Most brought students from their schools to observe the projects, documentaries, and performances entered in the contest. "These teachers and students were here to learn about the contest in anticipation of involvement next year," Dr. Billy Joe Davis, contest director, said.

Davis said he was particularly proud of the university's involvement in the National History Day program. "That involvement dates to 1980 with our first contest held in April, 1981," Davis added. Throughout the period the NSU contest, District 8 of Oklahoma History Day, has consistently been one of the largest in the state.

Throughout the years, many of the procedures developed on the Northeastern campus in the District 8 Contest were adopted at the state competition, and later at the national level.

Jay Middle School won the sweepstakes trophy for most points earned by their students in the junior division (grades 6-8), and Jay High School won sweepstakes honors at the senior level (grades 9-12). Jay Middle School teachers, Leah McClain-Parker (second from right) and Steve Smith (right), accepted the award for their school, and Pat Durham (left) and Judy Waterbury (second from left) accepted the sweepstakes award for Jay High School.



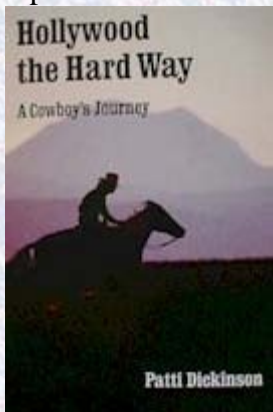
In surveying the 18 teachers participating in the contest and 10 who completed and returned their questionnaires, Dr. Davis learned that 637 students began the process of developing a History Day entry in this district, and 574 (90%) completed their entries. Several schools conduct local contests that winnow contestants before the district level. The local contests are the result of his suggestion a few years ago when the overwhelming numbers that attended the district contest taxed NSU's facilities and resources.

Additional information indicates that the students involved in developing History Day entries in District 8 are approximately 42% Caucasian, 32% Native American, 23% Black, 2.5% Hispanic, and 1% Asian American. .

Contest winners are listed on Dr. Davis' web site: <http://arapaho.nsuok.edu/~davisbj/>

Patti Dickinson Discusses Her Book With NSU History and Creative Writing Students

Patti Dickinson, author of *Hollywood The Hard Way: A Cowboy's Journey*, discussed her book and her experiences as a professional writer at 10 a.m., Friday March 30, during a public meeting sponsored by the Department of History in the AV Auditorium of the John Vaughan Library on the campus of Northeastern State University.



Dickinson, a Wilburton native of Cherokee ancestry, graduated from California State University Fresno in 1982 with a B.A. in history. She and her C.P.A. husband moved to Coeur d' Alene, Idaho, in 1993.

In Idaho, while traveling to a writers' conference, Dickinson heard a story concerning Jimmy Wakely, a Hollywood singing cowboy, and a 1946 bet he had made with Rolla Goodnight, an Oklahoma rancher and cousin of the legendary Charles Goodnight.

The wager was on the ability of Rolla's 20-year-old grandson, Jerry Van Meter, to ride from Guthrie, Oklahoma, to Hollywood in 50 days, taking along only what he could carry on his horse.

Legendary Western lawman Frank "Pistol Pete" Eaton, who served as the model for Oklahoma State University's mascot, provided Van Meter with an Osage Indian pony and a Colt revolver.

During his 50-day odyssey, Van Meter faced attempted robbery by Mexican bandits, a stampede of mustangs, a near fatal crossing of the Mojave Desert, and a host of other adventures. One critic claimed, "Dickinson's graceful and vivid writing keeps the reader right at Van Meter's side. It's very hard to remember that the adventure is fact and not fiction."

Richard W. Slatta, writing in *Library Journal*, asserted, "This compelling tale about cowboy grit and heroism rewards the reader page after page. *Hollywood the Hard Way* shows that fact can be stranger than fiction."

Intrigued by the wager, Dickinson spent several years researching and writing the story, which was rejected by all New York publishers who saw her manuscript. The author was finally able to convince the University of Nebraska Press to give the book a chance.

Published in 1999 to excellent reviews, the story has been compared to Larry McMurtry's