

# Mari Sandoz

High Plains Heritage Center

2007-2008

Annual Report



# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to share with you the wonderful things that the Center was able to accomplish in the 2007-2008 fiscal year. Every year our programs, events, and exhibits continue to grow and serve the campus and region by providing opportunities that may not have been otherwise available. These opportunities would not be possible without the support of Chadron State College and the many donors to the Chadron State Foundation and the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society.

As we look back on 2007-2008, we can see how truly far we have come in the five years since we first opened our doors. I hope that you share my enthusiasm as we look forward to the next five years and what new challenges and opportunities lay ahead for the Center.

Sincerely,

Sarah Polak, Director

Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center



**Sandoz Center Director, Sarah Polak (left), poses for a photo with Anne-Imelda Radice, Ph.D., Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, at the Connecting to Collections Summit in Washington D.C.**



**Dr. Michael Cartwright, Director of Nebraska Center for the Book, reads passages from Mari Sandoz's "Crazy Horse: The Strange Man of the Oglalas" at the Nebraska State Fair 2007.**

## EXHIBITIONS

### Zachary Even

**August 20, 2007 to October 20, 2007**

The wildlife artwork of Zachary Even, a 2003 graduate of Chadron State College with a Bachelor of Arts degree and emphasis in Graphic Design, is known to most Nebraskans as the artist featured on the 2007 Habitat Stamp. The Nebraska Habitat Stamp program began in 1977 as a way for the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission to raise revenues to purchase land for wildlife habitats and manage wildlife habitats on both public and private lands.

### Between Fences

**October 29, 2007 to December 9, 2007**

#### **Smithsonian Institution**

Once again, the Sandoz Center was selected to host a Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition. "Between Fences" looked at the definition of human relationships by and through fences and diverse fence types. The Center's program focused on the battles between farmers and ranchers, fought with barbed wire fence, which were flash points in the nationwide debate over enclosure and access to land and resources. "Between Fences" reached audiences who live surrounded by these familiar objects, whose history and meaning they hardly suspect. They were able to discover how tightly the fence is entwined with politics, industry, and daily life. The subject of the exhibition – boundaries, place, and space – was central to the visitors' physical experience, as they walked between fences and through gateways.

### Willa Cather and Material Culture

**December 15, 2007 to January 19 2008**

#### **Willa Cather Foundation**

For many years, the Literary Societies in Nebraska have been trying to find ways to work together not only to promote their author, but to help promote the vast literary heritage of Nebraska. One way that the Sandoz Center and

the Willa Cather Foundation are working together is by hosting an exhibit featuring "the other author." The Sandoz Center hosted "Willa Cather and Material Culture" while The Red Cloud Opera House at the Cather Center hosted "Old Jules Country", a photographic exhibit developed by Kira Gale, in October and November 2007.

### Keith Jacobshagen and Robin Smith

**February 1, 2008 to April 1, 2008**

#### **The Nebraska Statewide Arboretum and the artists**

In celebration of the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum's 30th Anniversary, the Arboretum was given the opportunity to create a display of works by Keith Jacobshagen. Jacobshagen is a nationally-known regional landscape painter from Lincoln, NE. This exhibition featured images from his notebooks which are combinations of small sketches and journal entries about the landscape and his artistic process.

The Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center was proud to be able to add to this exhibit by featuring the work of Robin Smith. Smith, a long time friend of Jacobshagen and fellow large format landscape painter, is a member of the Chadron State College staff and has earned critical acclaim for his moving works. Smith's work was also featured as the poster artwork for the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society Conference and Nebraska Statewide Arboretum joint conference on March 27-29, 2008.



*Panhandle Storm. 2007. 60" x 30". Created by Robin Smith*

**Native Perspectives on the Trail: A Contemporary American Indian Art Portfolio**

**April 7, 2008 to May 9, 2008**

**Missoula Art Museum, Missoula, MT**

This portfolio was organized by the Missoula Art Museum (MAM) and extended an invitation to Native American artists to participate in a limited edition print project and traveling exhibition. This project provides an important inclusive avenue for contemporary American Indian artists to develop and express a long ignored perspective. There were three intentions for this project: First, the Missoula Art Museum's location on the Lewis and Clark route; second, the mission of MAM to educate through contemporary art; and finally, MAM's commitment to providing contemporary American Indian artists in the region opportunities to voice a story largely untold or ignored.

**A Celebration of Souls: Day of the Dead in Southern Mexico**

**May 28, 2008 to August 24, 2008**

**Field Museum, Chicago, Il.**

This colorful bilingual exhibition examines the complex and rich histories of honoring the dead in ancient Mesoamerica, the labor of love involved in today's diverse rituals, and the spiritual importance of this holiday in rural Mexico.

Featuring exquisite color photographs, this exhibition focused on the lives of villagers as they prepare centuries-old recipes, scatter marigolds to guide the dead home, and celebrate this annual event. Students and faculty from Chadron State College have studied in Southern Mexico for many years. By bringing this exhibition to the Sandoz Center, Chadron State College students were able to share their experiences and knowledge of this beautiful region with the High Plains.



Photo of candy skulls from A Celebration of Souls: Day of the Dead in Southern Mexico Exhibition

**Coffee Gallery**

One permanent exhibition has been completed for the Coffee Gallery. The exhibit features a bronze statue of a cattle drive and introduces visitors to the Coffee Gallery. This exhibit is located on the landing at the top of the stairs leading into the Coffee Gallery. Other exhibits in the Coffee Gallery feature brand books, the history of Henry Oelrichs and the Anglo-American Cattle Company, rare and first edition books related to the history of cattle ranching, and videos. There are two videos in the Gallery space. One video is a copy of a 35mm film of a family haying in the 1930s; the other video is an overview of the gallery space.

**Excerpt from "Coffee Gallery makes space for new exhibits"**

**Originally story written by Tabatha Murphy**

The addition to the Gallery will include two interactive exhibits. The C.F. Coffee Gallery was established by descendants of Colonel C.F. Coffee in dedication to the ranching heritage of the High Plains.

## **Heritage Gardens**

### **Excerpt from “Horticulture Update: Claude Barr Plants blooming at Sandoz Center”**

**Originally story written by Lucinda  
Mays**

Anyone growing flowering plants on the High Plains of Nebraska knows it takes tough plants to hold up to dry conditions, alkaline soils, and high winds. At the Sandoz Center, we are enjoying lots of beautiful blooms because we’re growing plants recommended by the late plantsman, Claude Barr. Barr was a leader in the field, growing flowering plants for seed under the toughest of western South Dakota conditions. His work brings an incredible amount of knowledge about how to have beautiful plants in harsh conditions.

Barr was inducted into the South Dakota Hall of Fame in 1987. For his work, Barr was awarded the American Rock Garden Society Award of Merit.



**Flowers of the High Plains bloom in the  
Heritage Center Gardens**

# COLLECTIONS

## Additions

Items added to the Center's collections focused primarily on the book collections with over 450 books added. These collections were added from the Senator Arthur Carmody Collection, Claire Mattern Collection, Cartwright-Drueke Collection and long-term loan from the Nebraska Cattlemen Association.

## Excerpts from "The Future of Collections is in Digitization"

### **Original story written by Ann Greenia**

Ann Greenia, archivist for the Center, attended a conference in June on the digitization of small museum and library collections. The conference, entitled: "Connecting to Collections," was sponsored by the Institute of Museum and Library Services and hosted by the newly remodeled Denver Art Museum, the Denver Public Library and the Denver Historical Museum.

Cornell University defines digital images as "electronic snapshots taken of a scene or scanned from documents, such as photographs, manuscripts, printed texts, and artwork." Digitization has now become the standard approach to "copying" paper or photographic collections. The ongoing debate is whether the resultant digital object can ever be a true substitute for the original item, providing the viewer or listener with the same experience. Greenia feels this is a valid concern because digitization captures what the archive community describes as the "essence" of an item-its essential information content.

The main reasons to digitize are to enhance access and improve preservation. Digital projects allow users to search collections rapidly and comprehensively from anywhere at any time. Digitization can also help preserve precious materials. Making high quality digital images available electronically can reduce wear and tear on fragile items. "After attending the

conference in Denver, it is my assertion that the center is on target with preservation," said Greenia.

Greenia's position was funded through gifts by donors to the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society. Unfortunately, continuing funding could not be secured. Ms. Greenia has accepted a position with the Reta E. King Library on the campus of Chadron State College. She is hopeful that additional funding may be secured in the future that would allow her to continue working with the Center's archival collections.

## CSC Online Catalog Update

The books housed at the Center are slowly making their way into the Chadron State College online catalog. The Reta E. King Library at Chadron State College has been very generous in covering the cost of time and resources to enter the books into the catalog; however, through this method the books housed at the Center take a back seat to the books purchased by and for the Library. Mr. Milton Wolf, Library Director, said that it costs approximately \$25 per book to list it on the online catalog. The number of books that would need to be entered is unknown at this time as collections are still being processed, but estimating even one thousand books that would be \$25,000.

## Moni Hourt

Mrs. Ramona (Moni) Hourt has begun the second year of a two-year gift funded position as Director of Educational Outreach for the C. F. Coffee Gallery. Mrs. Hourt is currently working on a variety of projects including educational outreach trunks which can be borrowed by classroom educators, programs for the Sandoz Center 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and the *Between Fences* exhibit. Mrs. Hourt worked with Nebraska Public Television on a documentary about the cattle ranching industry in Nebraska titled "Beef State."

## CENTER UPDATES

### Director's Achievements

#### **Connecting to Collections Summit**

The director of the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center at Chadron State College, Sarah Polak, was invited to participate in "Connecting to Collections: The National Conservation Summit" June 27-28, 2007 in Washington, D.C. Only four representatives, two from museums and two from libraries/archives, from each state and the District of Columbia were selected to attend the invitation-only conference sponsored by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services. The conference underscored the risks that endanger America's books, works of art, documents, and other treasures and promote solutions for saving them. Participants in the meeting represented small and medium-sized museums, libraries, and historic organizations with a proven dedication and commitment to conservation. These leaders were joined at the meeting by national leaders in conservation, government officials, and leaders in private sector support for conservation.

#### **SHRAB Reappointment**

Along with this exclusive invitation, Sarah has also been reappointed to the Nebraska State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB). SHRAB is a state board appointed by the governor under the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) program of the National Archives and Records Administration. The Nebraska State Historical Society Director and the State Archivist are permanent board members, while other members are appointed by the Governor for three-year renewable terms.

#### **Saving Nebraska's Treasures Board**

Saving Nebraska's Treasures was a series of workshops and television programming on NETV, funded by The Institute for Museums Library Service. They were designed to create awareness of the importance of preservation of

our cultural heritage. It was also designed to educate families, museum workers and librarians on how to slow deterioration of artifacts, photos, and documents. Sarah was appointed to the advisory board for this programming series.

#### **HELP Advisory Board**

The Center Director was recently appointed to the Hands-on Experiential Learn Project (HELP) Advisory Panel. This voluntary group is made of state museum service providers and was created to assist and promote HELP in their respective states. The panels assist HELP staff with museum application and selection processes. Other tasks include providing feedback on hiring a Field Expert, assisting staff in keeping the project on course, recommending resources for speakers on workshop topics, and promotion of the project by disseminating news releases provided by the HELP staff.

#### **Bridges To Buttes Scenic Byway**

This 200 mile stretch of highway begins in Valentine and ends at the Nebraska-Wyoming State Border, following Highway 20. The Sandoz Center is named among the tourist stops along this road. Since 1992, the National Scenic Byways Program has funded 2,451 projects for state and nationally designated byway routes in 50 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. The U.S. Secretary of Transportation recognizes certain roads as All-American Roads or National Scenic Byways based on one or more archeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic qualities.

### 2008 Mari Sandoz Heritage Society Conference

#### **"The High Plains of Mari Sandoz"**

Roger Swain led off the 2008 Mari Sandoz Heritage Society Conference with a presentation entitled "Planting Villages: How Gardens Make Good Neighbors." Swain is a biologist, gardener, writer and is known as "the man with the red suspenders." He is recognized by millions as host of "The Victory Garden," television's longest-running gardening show.

### **Conference Presentations Included:**

**Cultural Geography in Sandoz's Cheyenne Autumn** presented by Richard Voorhees, Instructor of Sociology and Anthropology, Inver Hills Community College, Inver Grove Heights, MN.

**Stop, Look and Listen: Our Home is on the Plains** presented by Dr. Gus van der Hoeven.

**Mari's Prairie: Sand Hills at the Sandoz Center** presented by the creator of the Heritage Gardens, Lucinda Mays, garden educator and public horticulturist at Chadron State College.

**Sandoz's Environment: Old Jules and the Vine** was a round table discussion of the environment featuring Jason Heppler, UNL graduate student; Matt Evertson, professor at Chadron State College; and John Wunder, professor at UNL.

**From Jewels of the Plains to the GreatPlants® for the Great Plains: The Legacy of Claude Barr** was presented by Jim Locklear, director of Nebraska Statewide Arboretum and Ron Weedon, Ph.D., professor of Biology, Chadron State College.

Other highlights from the conference included a workshop with the Center's archivist Ann Greenia, a workshop with Richard Voorhees featuring research methods of Mari Sandoz, a tour of the Herbarium and the archives of Claude Barr with Ron Weedon, and a tour of Mari Sandoz's gravesite.

### **Digital Archive Committee**

This group of CSC staff, faculty, and community members has begun talks on collaboratively working to preserve CSC, local, and regional history in a digital medium. The Sandoz Center and its staff have been a key component to this group bringing expertise to discussions and planning.

### **Museum Studies Program**

The Applied History Program has changed to the new Museum Studies Program at Chadron State College. This change takes the degree from a comprehensive major to a subject major. Also, students now have the option of a minor in Museum Studies.

Students of the program were delighted to attend a trip to Denver. While there, the students were given an in depth tour of the Denver Art Museum by Dan Kohl, Director of Design. The students were also treated to a behind the scenes look at the creation of the "GOLD" Exhibit at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Here, Salle Tulchin, Senior Exhibit Graphic Designer, showed the students how the traveling exhibit was organized and tailored to their facility.



**Exhibit Design students pose for a photo during their tour of the Denver Art Museum with Dan Kohl, Director of Design (far right) at the museum**

### **Western District History Day Competition**

March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008, marked the second year that the Center has hosted and operated Western District History Day. All of the competition, excluding the original theatrical performance, is held at the Center. The Center also offers a cash

prize award to the best entry, in any category, related to the High Plains.

CSC faculty from departments all over campus was invited to be involved in judging the competition. They were willing and excited to step up and be a part of this unique learning experience. This program has helped the Center to show faculty in various departments, such as Computer Science and Mathematics what the Center does and to help them become connected with the Center. The faculty involvement also helps the students know that they are being held to a higher standard and that their work is important. The faculty judges have also helped with parent and teacher relations. By having faculty judge, the parents and teachers can see that CSC and the Center are serious about the competition and the intellectual rigueur of the entries. The judging is open to the public and all are encouraged to stop in and see the work of these great young historians during the next competition on February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

### Ranch Day

Ranch Day kicked off on October 8, 2007, at the Warbonnet Ranch northwest of Harrison, NE. Education students from Chadron State College trekked to the ranch in order to gain a greater knowledge of this long established industry first hand. Every student also received materials to help them teach about the ranching industry. "The true story of ranching is not covered in history books. This opportunity gives future teachers resources to teach about this topic which is vital to Western Nebraska and our nation." Said Moni Hourt, Director of Outreach for the C.F. Coffee Gallery.

Speakers during the day included Melvin Nation, John Sibbett, and Joe Nunn who provided insight into the subject and its great affect on the Great Plains. Ranch Day 2007 was sponsored by the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center, The C. F. Coffee Gallery at Chadron State College, and by Virginia Coffee.

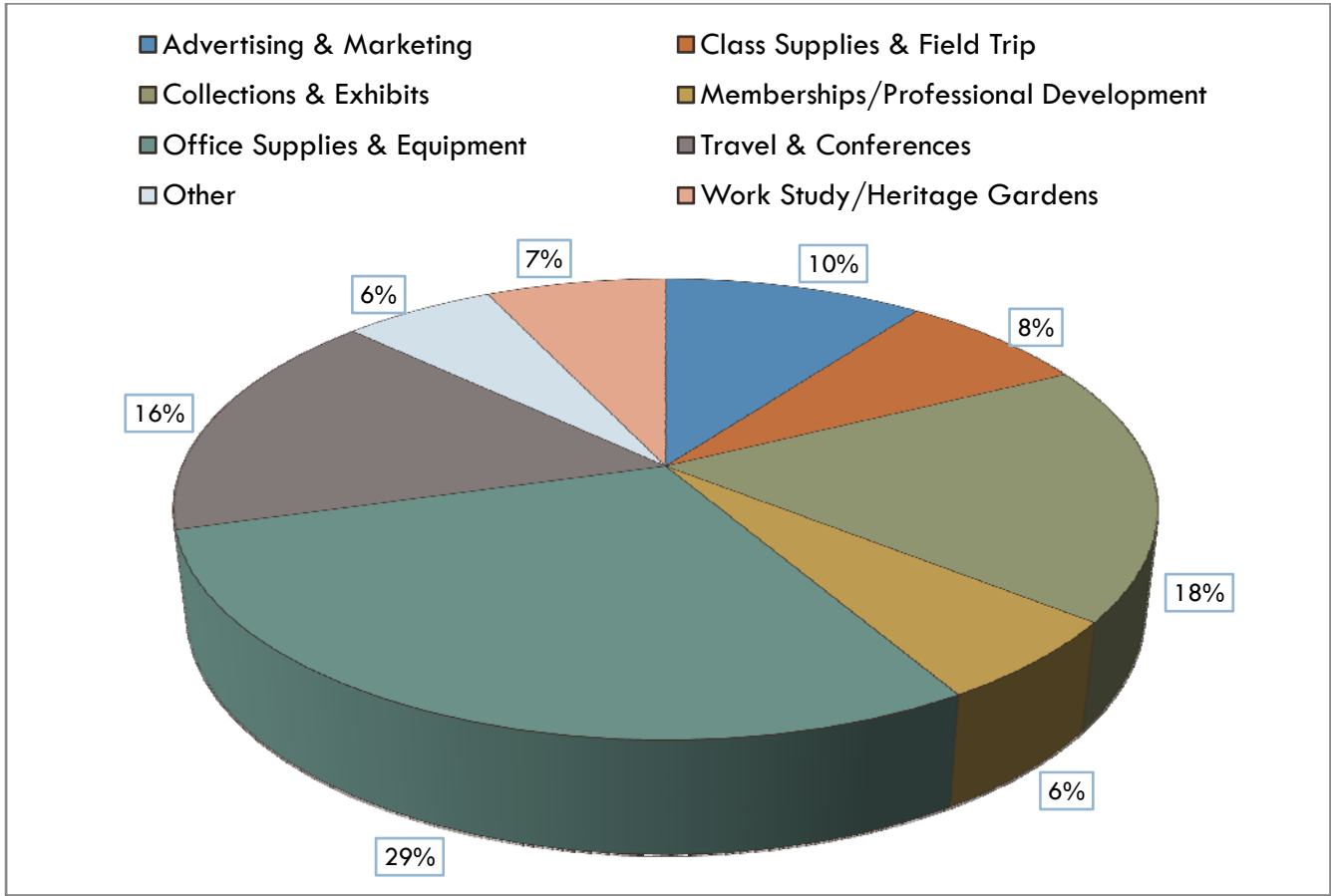
The first cattle were driven into the Warbonnet Valley in 1879 and became the location of the Warbonnet Livestock Company in northwestern Nebraska.



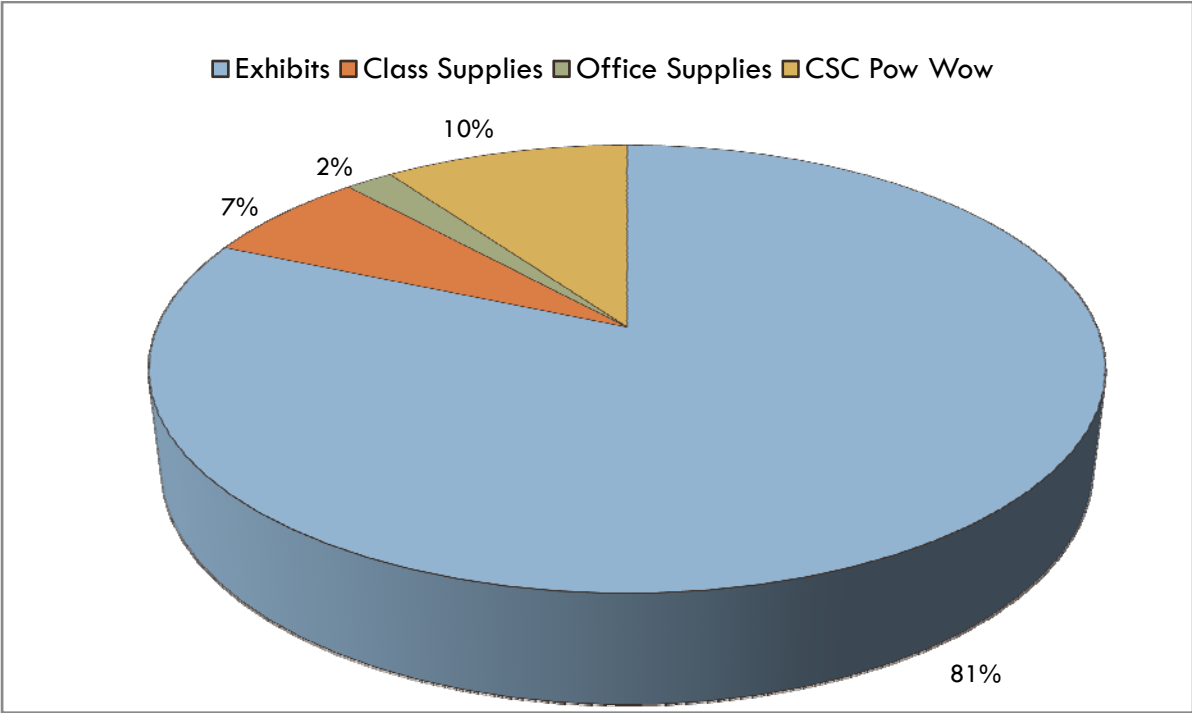
Dr. O'Rourke and Dr. Petersen look on as students listen to one of the presenters at Ranch Day

# Financials

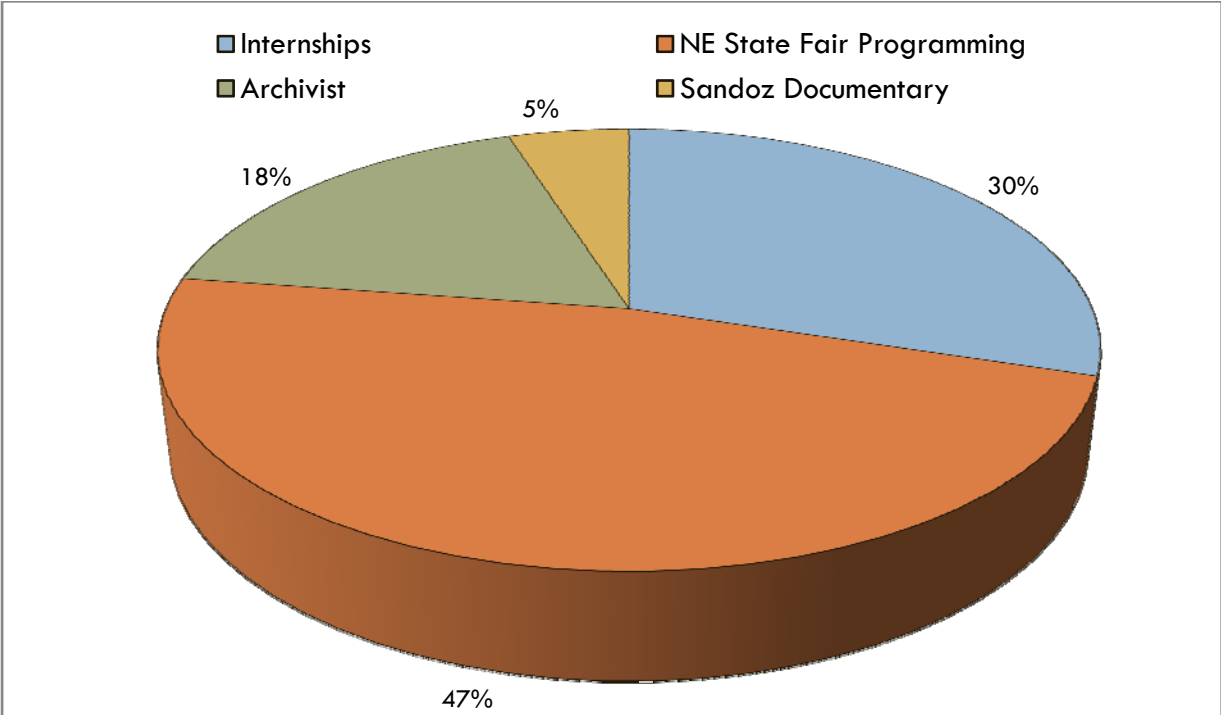
## Funding provided by Chadron State College



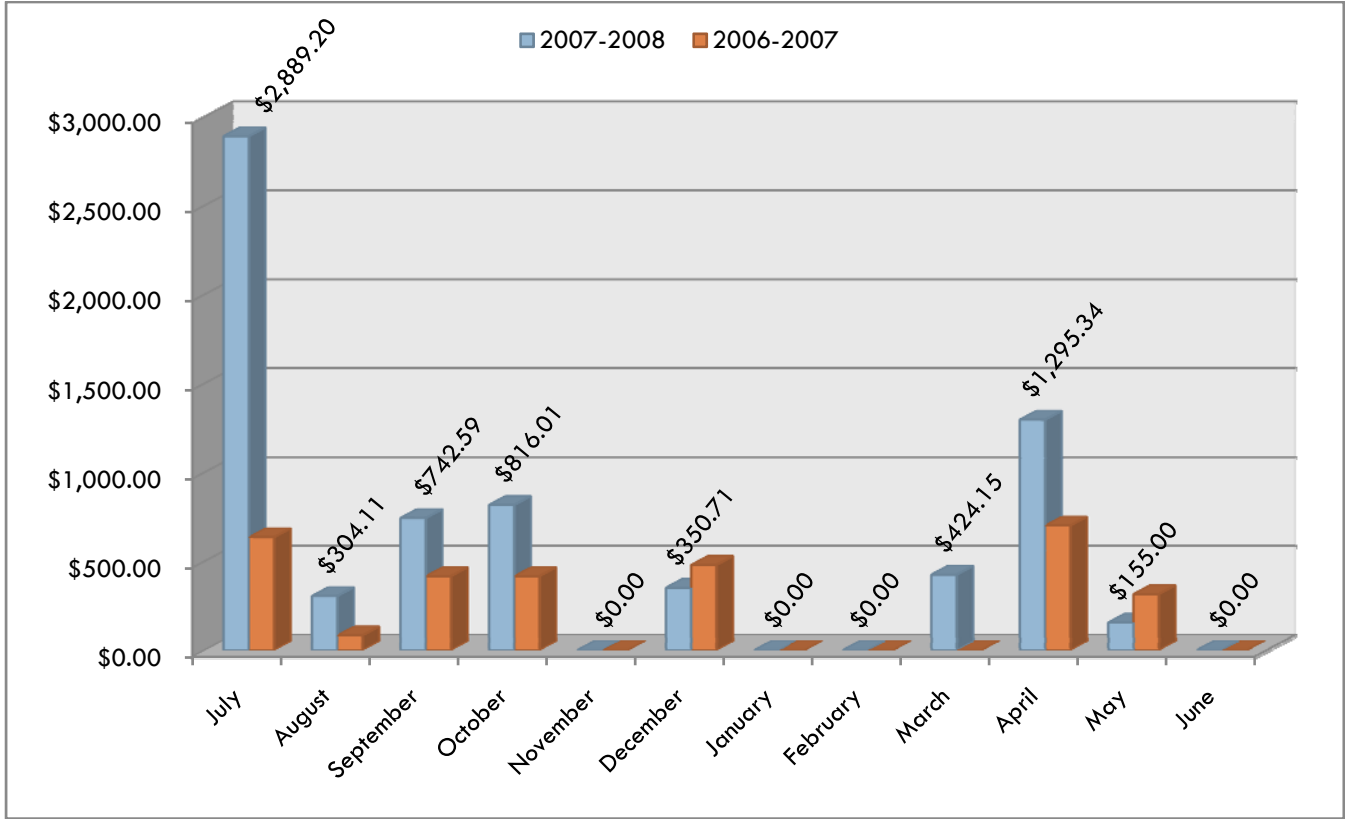
### Endowments held by Chadron State Foundation



### Endowments held by Mari Sandoz Heritage Society



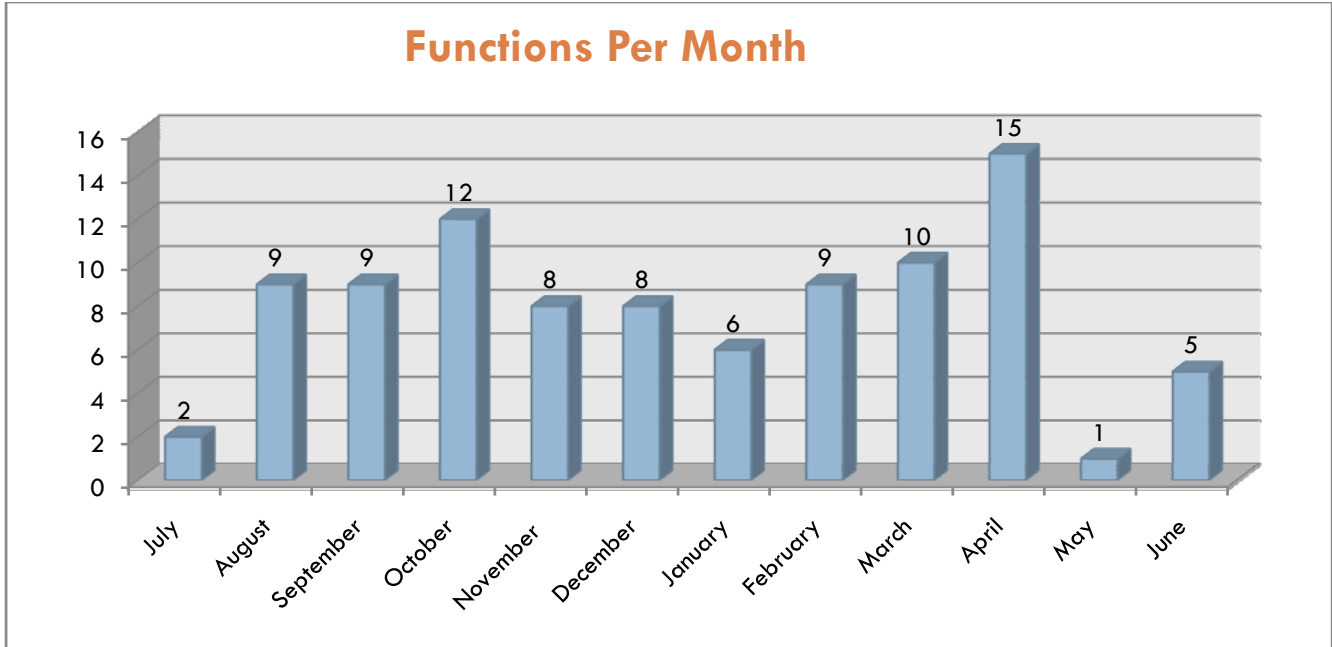
# Gift Shop Revenues



	2006-2007	2007-2008
July 2007	\$634.86	\$2,889.20
Aug 2007	\$83.18	\$304.11
Sept 2007	\$416.26	\$742.59
Oct 2007	\$416.30	\$816.01
Nov 2007	\$0.00	\$0.00
Dec 2007	\$478.63	\$350.71
Jan 2008	\$0.00	\$0.00
Feb 2008	\$0.00	\$0.00
Mar 2008	\$0.00	\$424.15
Apr 2008	\$700.35	\$1,295.34
May 2008	\$314.79	\$155.00
June 2008	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>total</b>	<b>\$3,044.37</b>	<b>\$6,977.11</b>

## Chicoine Atrium Use

Total Number of Functions for the Year: 94



Total Number Attendees for the Year: 3622

