

# Spring Newsletter

## Message from the Director



*“There ought to be a home for children to come to, -and their children-, a central place, to which they could always bring their joys and sorrows, -an old familiar place for them to return to on Sundays and Christmases. A home should always stand like a mother with open arms. It ought to be here waiting for the children to come to it, -like homing pigeons.” Bess Streeter Aldrich*

No doubt, this paragraph from *A Lantern in Her Hand* was more poignant because Capt. & Bess Streeter Aldrich had recently built their dream home in Elmwood, where they had lived for the past 13 years. Their fifth home in Elmwood, “the Elms” was perfectly suited for a family of six. The beautiful 3,400 square foot prairie mansion home was built for \$7,000 in 1922; and yes, we are celebrating its 100th birthday this year!

As our community’s latest centenarian, the Bess Streeter Aldrich House will be hosting three amazing exhibits, providing commemorative items for guests, and offering several special events. This newsletter will provide you more details about these activities, pique your curiosity, and hopefully build your desire to visit in 2022.

One of our most exciting developments is the creation of “Letters from the Elms,” a 100-page booklet with copies of letters Mrs. Aldrich wrote during her years at the Elms. It includes letters to her readers, publishers, and friends, and a collection to friend Marie Clements. The booklet is available for sale or as a gift to foundation members who join at the Lantern level.



Yet, there is another reason to visit this summer. The Aldrich House was selected by the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation as one of 28 historical sites across the state to participate in WanderNebraska, a new program designed for lovers of travel and history. Individuals who are interested in participating may request a check-off pamphlet on their website at <https://www.nshsf.org/about-us/wandernebraska/>. Isn’t it time to visit again? Kurk Shrader, Director

## A Summer Social

Until Covid, you were accustomed to an annual Spring Banquet. Last year we modified the event to a Summer Social, and the Aldrich Board thought it was successful. Therefore, we will continue with a Summer Social this year, a free event scheduled for Sunday, June 13. Our Short Story Contest winners will be recognized, and Lucy Adkins and Marge Saiser, Humanities Nebraska, will provide an interesting program entitled “Diaries and Letters of Early Nebraska Settlers.” Here is a description of the program.

“Women pioneers and homesteaders played an important part in the development and heritage of Nebraska. In this program, Marge Saiser and Lucy Adkins will honor them, featuring excerpts from diaries and letters of plains women of the past. In addition they will share poems they have written about the history and experiences of their own plains’ families.”



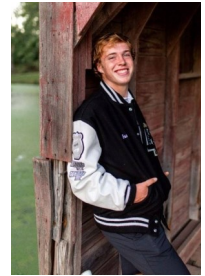
### Schedule of Events

12:30-1:30	Learning Center Tours, 221 S. 4th
1:00-2:00	“Letters from the Elms” Exhibit Aldrich House, 204 East F Street
1:30-2:00	Musical Prelude, Church
2:00	Program, Elmwood Christian Church 311 North Fifth Street
	Short Story Award Presentations Marge Saiser & Lucy Adkins
3:00-4:00	Refreshments, Tours Continued

## American Recovery Program Grant Meet Anne & Gus Pope



The Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation was pleased to receive a grant from Humanities Nebraska through the American Recovery Program. These funds will be used to enlist the part-time assistance of Anne and Gus Pope. They will be helping the Foundation with marketing strategies, exhibits and, of course, promoting our 100th birthday celebrations. Please welcome them when the opportunity arises.



**With major funding support from Humanities Nebraska, the National Endowment of the Humanities, and private donations.**

## New Logo and Website ([bessstreeteraldrich.org](http://bessstreeteraldrich.org))

The Aldrich Foundation has a new look. We have a new logo (see right) that was developed by Suzanne Oliver of Weeping Water. In addition, we have a new website that looks much more modern and will give the Foundation the opportunity to expand its services and marketing capabilities. We thank Tom Day of Elmwood for creating the website and being patient with those of us learning to edit it. Likewise, we thank Cass County Tourism for funding this project.



## Learning Center Update!



You may remember that the Aldrich Foundation Board joined with the local Legion Post to purchase this building located at 221 South 4th Street. The building has three offices and a large 40' x 40' room in the back that we intend to upgrade into a future museum and community learning center. We were successful in renting the offices and started fundraising efforts to pay for the building. Last fall, the Elmwood Cultural Arts and Learning Center board expand-

ed its mission by starting the Elmwood Community Foundation, an affiliated fund of Midland Community Foundation. Its intent is to help facilitate the transition of this building into the museum and assist other local nonprofit organizations and their missions. We received a generous \$10,000 donation from Keith Swarts and Jayme Nekuda and over \$12,000 in matching funds from other benefactors. Because the donations were made during a match period, Midland Community Foundation contributed another 17 percent. In the end, the fundraising efforts raised over \$31,000! Based on these results, the board approved the installation of a new HVAC system for the Learning Center this spring. You will be able to see proposed renovation plans and explore the building up close during our June 12 event from 12:30 to 1:30. Thank you for your support!

## Exhibits...Exhibits...Exhibits

The Aldrich Foundation is has been decorating the Aldrich House with a different theme every quarter. Check out the following exhibits at [bessstreeteraldrich.org](http://bessstreeteraldrich.org).

- Classic Children's Literature Exhibit, Feb. to May 1
- Letters from the Elms Exhibit, May 4 to July 31
- Stitch-in-Time Quilt Show, August 3 to November 13
- Journey Into Christmas, November 26 to December 18




## Book Club Discussion Questions/Review

With assistance from the Syracuse Library Foundation, the Aldrich Foundation is having book club materials developed. The most recent additions came from Gretchen Garrison, who developed materials for *Journey Into Christmas*, *The Drum Goes Dead*, and *The Lieutenant's Lady*. If your club is contemplating reading an Aldrich book, you will want to check out "Book Club Materials" on [bessstreeteraldrich.org](http://bessstreeteraldrich.org). Here, we have discussion questions and facilitator links. By this time next year, we hope to have all the books covered. The Syracuse Library Foundation Grant has also enabled us to purchase multiple copies of Mrs. Aldrich's books and make them available to book clubs to use for free. Contact the director to check out the Aldrich book of your choice.

## Seeking Additional Guides/Character Tours

As you are aware, the Aldrich House now offers character tours. Donna Durette of Eagle and Billie Lefholtz of Lincoln are pleased to share their talent on the first Sunday of every month or by appointment. We continue to seek additional individuals who might be interested in assisting the Aldrich Foundation with tours and presentations to groups. Recently, we welcomed new guides Cindy Hall, Jolene McLaughlin, Dale Betz, Becca Bloch, Colleen Winter, and Randi Van Dyne. If you would like to participate in the next guide training, let the director know.

## Kids' Writing Camp

<b>Where:</b> Bess Streeter Aldrich House/Gardens 204 East F Street, Elmwood, NE	
<b>When:</b> June 13-16 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.	
<b>Cost:</b> \$40/Student (Materials/Snacks Provided) Do you like to write? What better place to get inspired than at the home of famous Nebraska Author Bess Streeter Aldrich. Come see what it's all about!	
<b>Who:</b> Children, Grades 3 to 6	
<b>RSVP:</b> Call 402-867-4233 or email <a href="mailto:kurkshrader@gmail.com">kurkshrader@gmail.com</a> For Reservations; Limited Space	

This summer the Kids' Writing Camp will be held at the Aldrich House from June 13 to 16 (12:30 to 3:30). Children, grades 3 to 6, are invited to participate (\$40). We thank Cindy Backemeyer for agreeing to teach this class again this year.



## Short Story Contest; Still Time to Be a Winner!

Put your taxes aside and work on that short story entry! Normally by now, the Bess Streeter Aldrich Short Story Contest entries have been submitted and judged! Because the Foundation moved the awards ceremony to a Summer Social instead of a Spring Banquet, the entry date for the short stories was also moved. They are not due until April 15, giving you plenty of time to submit them. Remember, it is suggested that writers (3rd grade and up) submit them at the submission link on our website (under the "Event" link). Alternative submission options are available if you contact the director. Here are the general instructions:

To generate a fictional short story that is written in the wholesome spirit displayed by Bess Streeter Aldrich in her works while incorporating a theme that focuses on Nebraska's family life, economy, history, cultural diversity, and/or geography (past, present, and/or future). Writers are encouraged to focus on historical and/or realistic topics remembering that Mrs. Aldrich had a passion for Nebraska, small-town dynamics, and family antics. No essays, please.

## Free Educational Resources!

The Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation is excited to provide a number of FREE resources to help the next generation enhance their reading and writing skills and learn about Nebraska Hall of Fame Author Bess Streeter Aldrich and her exceptional literary contributions.

### SHORT STORY CONTEST

Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8, Grades 9-12

Objective: To generate a fictional short story that is written in the wholesome spirit displayed by Bess Streeter Aldrich in her works while incorporating a theme that focuses on Nebraska's family life, economy, history, cultural diversity, and/or geography. 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place prizes are awarded to Adult, Grade 3-5, Grade 6-8, and Grade 9-12 categories. Submissions are due 4/15/22. Guidelines and submission link are located at [bessstreeteraldrich.org](http://bessstreeteraldrich.org).

### TRAVELING TRUNKS

Grades 3-8

The Bess Streeter Aldrich Traveling Trunks provide resources and activities to enhance instruction in literature, writing, and the Homestead Movement, and include period games to play. Trunks may be checked out for up to two months.

### A LANTERN IN HER HAND UNIT OF STUDY

Grades 9-10

A Lantern in Her Hand Unit of Study will help students recognize Bess Streeter Aldrich as a Nebraska Hall of Fame author, learn about the Homestead Movement and the Nebraska pioneer experience, and develop reading comprehension and thinking skills through high-quality literature. Teachers can access instructional materials, assessments, answer keys, and enrichment activities online for FREE simply by requesting a password from the executive director.

### FIELD TRIPS

Enjoy an educational field trip to the Aldrich House, take a character tour, participate in an "I Spy" activity or tree identification activity in the gardens. Field trips are free in 2022 for Lantern Novel Study participants; otherwise, \$3/student.



*Free Educational Resources*

### Postcards for Educators.

This spring a postcard was mailed to every middle school and high school in Nebraska. Please check out the education resources that the Aldrich Foundation offers to public, private, and home schools. Share this information with your friends and family. Thank you to the Syracuse Library Foundation for funding the Lantern Unit and this publicity.

## Upcoming Events!

**Spring Came on Forever Plant Exchange.** On Saturday, April 30, we will once again be hosting The Spring Came on Forever Plant Exchange. For those who want to thin their flower beds (inside or outside), we suggest you arrive at 9 a.m. with at least ten plants. For bringing plants, you may take home five. At 9:30 a.m. we open for any other garden enthusiast who may want to take home plants for a suggested \$2 donation. Additionally, the Aldrich House will be open for tours \$5, (our last weekend for our Classic Children's Literature Exhibit). Coffee and other treats will be available for you to enjoy as you walk around the Aldrich Gardens. What a fun morning!

Spring Came on Forever  
Plant Exchange

Saturday, April 30

9—10	Bring Ten Plants, Take Home Five, No Charge
9:30—12	Open to Those Who Don't Bring Plants Suggested Donation \$2/plant Refreshments Available (Coffee & Baked Goods)
9 to 12	Tours Available, Classic Children's Literature Exhibit, \$5 adults; \$3 children

### DRESSING A VICTORIAN LADY PROGRAM & TEA

Leigh Jean Koinzan, Plattsmouth

Bess Streeter Aldrich House, 204 East F, Elmwood

Friday, April 22

Aldrich House Open, 1 to 2 p.m., Free

Program & Tea, \$15

Program, 2 p.m., Elmwood Christian Church

Tea to Follow; Served by the CWF Women

Reservations Due April 16; Contact Kurk Shrader

Email [kurkshrader@gmail.com](mailto:kurkshrader@gmail.com) or Call 867-4233



**How to Dress a Victorian Lady & Tea.** On Friday, April 22, the Aldrich Foundation will host a special program and tea. Leigh Jean Koinzan, Plattsmouth, will present "How to Dress a Victorian Lady" at 2 p.m. at Elmwood Christian Church. Following her program, the Christian Women's Fellowship Group will serve tea in the fellowship Hall. Participants may also view the Classic Children's Literature Exhibit at the Aldrich House, 1 to 2 p.m. Cost: \$15. RSVP by April 16.

**Journey Into Christmas.** The tradition continues; every room in the Aldrich House will be decorated for Christmas around Mrs. Aldrich's short story "Another Brought Gifts." This story has it all: children, Santa, hometown traditions, and hope! Come see how our decorators incorporate this theme in their decorations. The dates for tours include November 26-27, December 3-4, 10-11, 17-18, or by appointment.

**Educational Workshops.** With the impending addition of HVAC at the Learning Center, the Aldrich Foundation may be able to start offering classes again this summer. Watch our website and/or our Facebook page about upcoming classes. If you would like to teach a class or have suggestions for topics, let the director know.

## Are You an Aldrich Foundation Member?

If you are unsure if your membership is up to date, check the “Membership” link (then “current members button”) under BSA Foundation at [bessstreeteraldrich.org](http://bessstreeteraldrich.org). It was last updated on March 3. Your membership dues enable us to plan programs, maintain the Aldrich Home, stay connected in our community, and coordinate learning activities for Aldrich enthusiasts. Personally, you may be entitled to discounts on books, free admission to the Aldrich House, and even free books (especially during this 100th birthday year when the commemorative book “Letters from the Elms” is available for free at the Lantern Level.) Contact Kurk Shrader if you have questions.

### *Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation*



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[bessstreeteraldrich.org](http://bessstreeteraldrich.org)  
402-994-3855

#### Contact Information:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Levels (Mark One):** Your membership in the Aldrich Foundation demonstrates your commitment to encourage the reading of exceptional great plains literature and to illustrate a sense of community pride by specifically promoting Elmwood and the works of Bess Streeter Aldrich. All members receive two newsletters and recognition in one of them.

\_\_\_\_\_ Student Level, \$10; Any student, up to 18 years of age, can join. They also receive recognition in the newsletter and \$5 off any book purchase.

\_\_\_\_\_ Spring Came on Forever Level, \$25; receive newsletters and \$5 off any book purchase;

\_\_\_\_\_ The Rim of the Prairie Level, \$50; receive newsletters and two tickets for house tours;

#### **IN HONOR OF THE ALDRICH HOUSE'S 100<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY IN 2022, THOSE WHO CONTRIBUTE \$100 (Lantern Level) OR MORE RECEIVE SPECIAL RECOGNITION**

\_\_\_\_\_ Lantern in Her Hand Level, \$100; receive newsletters, four complimentary tickets for house tours; Commemorative Publication “Letters from the Elms,” Ten Quilt Drawing Tickets, Two Recognition Event Tickets, and \$5 Off Any Educational Class

\_\_\_\_\_ Journey into Christmas Level, \$250; receives newsletters, All Lantern-Level Benefits, and two season passes, and a free book choice of book (circle one): Lantern in Her Hand, White Bird Flying, Rim of the Prairie, Spring Came on Forever, Mother Mason, Journey into Christmas; or The Cutters

#### Other:

\_\_\_\_\_ Cash Donation: Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer. Please contact me about volunteer opportunities at the Bess Streeter Aldrich House and/or Museum (provide guided tours, decorate house, assist with house and garden maintenance, help with fundraiser, and/or become a board member.)

Make checks payable to: Aldrich Foundation. To process a credit card, contact the director.

## 2022 Exhibits and Events

<b>Feb. to April</b>	Classic Children's Literature Exhibit
<b>April 22</b>	"How to Dress a Victorian Women" Program & Tea
<b>April 30</b>	Plant Exchange
<b>May to August</b>	Letters from the Elms Exhibit
<b>June 12</b>	Summer Social "Letters & Diaries from Early Nebraska Women's Settlers" Lucy Adkins & Marge Saiser, Humanities Nebraska
<b>June 13-16</b>	Summer Writing Camp
<b>August to Nov.</b>	Stitch-in-Time Quilt Show
<b>December</b>	Journey into Christmas Nov. 26-27; Dec. 3-4, 10-11, 17-18; or by appointment.

### Other Upcoming Events for 2022

Follow us on Facebook or watch our website for details about these and new events!

## Misc./Memorials/Notes of Appreciation!

Don't forget to stop at the Aldrich House to purchase your quilt raffle tickets, get your free commemorative bookmark, and pick up the Aldrich book on sale with our 100th birthday discount.

We are very appreciative of friends and family members who have chosen to honor their loved ones by giving memorials to the Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation. Most recently, we received memorials in honor of Dwight Clements, Joann Hill, Shirley Wenzel, Doug French, and Ginger Hoyt.

Thank you to the anonymous benefactors who provided writing camp scholarships for kids with financial need. Check with the director about availability of the scholarships.

Finally, we thank Foundation members who renewed their membership and joined in our birthday celebration. Together, we are making a difference and helping the next generation learn about Mrs. Aldrich and her outstanding writing!



Stay Up-to-Date with the Latest Events at the Aldrich House by Liking Us on Facebook: **Bess Streeter Aldrich House and Museum**

This newsletter is funded in part by Cass County Tourism., [www.visitcasscounty.com](http://www.visitcasscounty.com).

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PRESORT  
STANDARD U.S.  
POSTAGE PAID  
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