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N E W S R E L E A S E

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Haruf to open Nebraska Book Fest Oct. 17

Kent Haruf, award-winning author of four novels set in the High Plains of Colorado, will deliver the keynote address Oct. 17 to open the 2008 Nebraska Book Festival in downtown Lincoln.

The 5:30 p.m. address, to be held in the Warner Chamber of the Nebraska State Capitol, is free and open to the public. Seating is limited.

Haruf's novel "Plainsong," the 2002 One Book One Lincoln selection, has been featured in at least 10 One Book reading programs throughout the United States. It won the Mountains and Plains Booksellers Award and was a finalist for the National Book Award, the Los Angeles Times Book Prize, and The New Yorker Book Award. His novel "The Tie That Binds" received a Whiting Foundation Award and a special citation from the PEN/Hemingway Foundation.

His other works include novels "Eventide" and "Where You Once Belonged," and "West of Last Chance," a collaboration with photographer Peter Brown.

Haruf studied and taught literature at Nebraska Wesleyan University in Lincoln. He's a graduate of the Iowa Writers Workshop, where he studied with John Irving, Vance Bourjaily, and Dan Wakefield. For two years he taught English in Turkey as a member of the Peace Corps. He retired from teaching at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale and now lives with his wife, Cathy, outside Sedalia, Colo.

A 6:30 p.m. reception at the Lincoln Woman's Club will follow Haruf's keynote address.

The Nebraska Book Festival will continue Oct. 18 with programs for children and adults at the Lincoln Children's Museum, the Nebraska State Historical Society's Museum of Nebraska History, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Culture Center, and other locations near Centennial Mall. Programs include readings, discussions, poetry slams, writing workshops, music, film, food, exhibits and book sales.

For additional information visit www.nebraskabookfestival.org.

The Nebraska Book Festival is presented by the Nebraska Center for the Book, Nebraska Humanities Council, Nebraska Library Commission, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and Secretary of State John Gale. The Nebraska Humanities Council has provided major funding for the festival since its inception as the Nebraska Literature Festival in 1991. The event celebrates Nebraska's literary heritage and promotes the state's growing population of contemporary writers. Other funders include the Nebraska Cultural Endowment, Nebraska Arts Council, and the "We the People" initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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