

■ Politicians, but not politics as usual, are the core of two new books from the University



of Minnesota Press. *Crossing the Barriers: The Autobiography of Allan H. Spear* (Minneapolis, 2010, 455 p., cloth, \$34.95) is the engaging, thoughtful, and beautifully written story of the late Minnesota state senator's personal, intellectual, and political development. Spear was a distinguished teacher of history at the University of Minnesota as well as a Democratic-Farmer-Labor senator from 1972 until his retirement in 2000. During those years he consistently championed human and civil rights, advocating successfully for the establishment of the university's African American studies department and working for the passage of the Minnesota Human Rights Act. Spear died before completing his book; an afterword by his colleague John Milton completes the story, ending with Spear's political legacy.

Minnesota's 2008 U.S. Senate race is the focus of Jay Weiner's close scrutiny of what turned out to be America's longest and most expensive election recount. In *This Is Not Florida: How Al Franken Won the Minnesota Senate Recount* (2010, 249 p., cloth, \$24.95), interviews supplement Weiner's day-to-day coverage of the battle, allowing him to analyze motivations and reach conclusions about successful strategies and mistakes made.

■ Fifty years after the famed explorations of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, Maj. Isaac Stevens led a survey from Minnesota to Washington State, looking for the best northern transcontinental railroad route. Accompanying the party to provide visual documentation of the trip were artists John Mix Stanley and Gustavus Sohon.

Eye of the Explorer: Views of the Northern Pacific Railroad Survey 1853-54 (Missoula, MT: Mountain Press Publishing, 2010, 210 p., cloth, \$50.00) reproduces all 82 of the artists' color lithographs and six of the paintings made from them, along with commentary by geographer-cartographer authors Paul D.

McDermott, Ronald E. Grim, and Philip Mobley. Contemporary photographs capture the present-day appearance of some of the nineteenth-century places. The book follows the survey; each segment of the trip is illustrated with a simple map, a summary of the experiences along the way and/or quotes from the travelers themselves, and observations by the authors. More than a picture book, *Eye of the Explorer* also recounts and interprets the historical and scientific importance of the survey's discoveries.

■ Across the international border, Minnesota's neighbor to the north shares many facets of regional development and history. Michael S. Beaulieu and Chris Southcott's *North of Superior: An Illustrated History of Northwestern Ontario* (Toronto: James Lorimer, 2010, 126 p., paper, \$34.95) tells the story of the region that "occupies an iconic place in Canada's past." Beginning with the original people up to 1671 and continuing through exploration and the fur trade to the coming of the railroad, industrialization, and the modern era, the book charts how the northern region came to serve the needs of the industrialized and more populous south. Billed as a popular history, the book is amply illustrated. It contains a selected bibliography but no footnotes. For ordering information, see www.formac.ca.

■ *Minnesota 101: Everything You Wanted to Know about Minnesota and Were Going to Ask Anyway* is a small-format, 272-page paperback collection of things that may or may not be peculiar to the state (beer batter? bison?). Mining published sources and the internet, co-authors Kristal Leebriick, Ruth Weleccki, Kate Dohman, Amanda Fretheim Gates, Tim Lehnert, and John Macintyre have assembled a collection of snippets that might amuse or inform residents and visitors. The information is arranged in chapters such as "people" "economy" and "town and city," but this is not a book to read cover to cover; there's no narrative, and readers are best advised to dip into it. Part of the Book of Everything series from

Macintyre Purcell Publishing of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, the collection sells for \$14.95; see www.101bookseries.com.

■ With spring, thoughts turn to baseball. Joining the list of recently published books on Minnesota's own nine is veteran sportswriter Doug Grow's *We're Gonna Win Twins! 50 Years of Minnesota's Hometown Team* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010, 328 p., cloth, \$25.95). This is a comprehensive chronicle that moves through the half-century, replaying the ups and downs with candor. More than a play-by-play, Grow's book briefly ties each season to world events and conveys the changing economics of the game, along with stars, controversies, and other landmark events.

■ For the 2011-12 academic year, the State Historical Society of Iowa (SHSI) will award up to ten stipends of \$1,000 each to support original research and interpretive writing related to the history of Iowa or Iowa and the Midwest. Preference will be given to applicants proposing to pursue previously neglected topics or new approaches to or interpretations of previously treated topics. SHSI invites applicants from a variety of backgrounds, including academic and public historians, graduate students, and independent scholars. Applications will be judged on the basis of their potential for producing work appropriate for publication in *The Annals of Iowa*. Grant recipients will be expected to produce an annotated manuscript targeted for this scholarly journal.

Applications must be postmarked by April 15, 2011. Download application guidelines from www.iowahistory.org/publications/the-annals-of-iowa/research-grants-for-authors.html or contact Research Grants, State Historical Society of Iowa, 402 Iowa Ave., Iowa City, IA 52240-1806.

■ In 2010 *Money* magazine named Eden Prairie the best place to live in America, the same year prolific city historian Marie Wittenberg published *Eden Prairie: A Brief History* (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2010, 159 p., paper, \$19.99). The

book's nine topical chapters (for example, Native Americans; Stores and Post Offices; Churches, Megachurches, and Cemeteries) present short, descriptive essays on their subjects. A brief resource list at the volume's end will interest people who may wish to read further.

■ During the first half of the nineteenth century, steamboats were the essential means of commerce in the inland West. Drawing on period sources, authors Lawrence H. Larsen and Barbara J. Cottrell recount the adventure story of what was, at the time, the longest steamboat trip in North American history. Their 2010 book, *Steamboats West: The 1859 American Fur Company Missouri River Expedition* (Norman, OK: Arthur H. Clark, 256 p., cloth, \$34.95) skillfully interweaves the authors' narrative with extensive quotes from the journals of Dr. Elias Marsh and Charles Henry Weber as well as the official accounts of Charles P. Chouteau and Capt. William Franklin Reynolds. Navigating from St. Louis through rocky rapids to Fort Benton in present-day Montana, the steamers

not only extended trade deep into the Northwest but also marked a significant advance in transportation.

■ Neighboring La Crosse, Wisconsin, is the subject of Eric J. Morser's *Hinterland Dreams: The Political Economy of a Midwestern City* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011, 266 p., cloth, \$55.00). In tracing the municipality's rise from its beginnings as a trading post well-situated on the Mississippi River to its status as a thriving small city, Morser examines the complementary roles of landscape and resources, businesspeople and boosters, and—crucially—government institutions and policies. Federal, state, and local government, the historian concludes, created a lasting legal foundation that transformed La Crosse and its economy. The author also links the growth of the nation to the development of small cities, which provided raw materials that enabled larger cities, such as Chicago, to flourish. *Hinterland Dreams* presents a broad understanding of the Midwest's urban past, one that could apply to Minnesota's small cities as well.

■ Great Lakes maritime history is the overarching theme of David C. Anderson's *Boats, Ships, and a Raft: Memories and Reflections*. This clothbound book is a miscellany, with chapters ranging from "First Boats and Family Matters" to "On the Evolution of Form in Great Lakes Bulk Freighters." Stories, family history, design critiques, a philosophical argument about aspects of modernity, plus a backward look and reevaluation of some material after 50 years are included in the book's 103 pages along with many photographs and some drawings. The volume is available from the publisher: Hanfors Press, PO Box 301, Decorah IA, 52101 for \$18.00 plus \$3.00 postage and handling (checks or money orders only).

■ In *Prairie Lightning: The Rise and Fall of William Drew Washburn* (Lakeville, MN: Pogo Press, 2010, 187 p., paper, \$18.95), Kerck Kelsey emphasizes the business career and social life of his ancestor William Drew Washburn. Kelsey sympathetically portrays Washburn as a hard-driving capitalist whose flour milling, waterpower, and railroad ventures helped transform Minneapolis from a small town to a thriving metropolis in the period from about 1860 to 1900. Through his vivid descriptions of life at Fair Oaks, Washburn's palatial Minneapolis residence, Kelsey excellently portrays an aspect of Minneapolis society in the Gilded Age. This study is an extension of Kelsey's writing about the Washburn family. His previous books include *Israel Washburn Jr.: Maine's Little-Known Giant of the Civil War* (Rockport, ME: Picton Press, 2004) and *Remarkable Americans: The Washburn Family* (Gardiner, ME: Tisbury House Publishers, 2008).

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