Darrel Draper portrays 26th president during humanities talk.

In a fiery speech directed at an audience that filled the community room, Theodore Roosevelt told much of his life story.

“I am Theodore, not Teddy,” the 26th president of the United States announced in a booming voice, noting that his first wife was the only one allowed to use the nickname.

Roosevelt, portrayed by Nebraska Humanities Council speaker Darrel Draper of Omaha, visited Gothenburg Public Library on March 1. There he asked the public to vote for him in the 1912 presidential election.

“If you vote for me, you vote for women’s suffrage,” he said.

The strong-willed president then told of how he had asthma as a child and spent time as an semi-invalid propped in bed.

Confined to his home in New York City, Roosevelt read books instead of playing outside which “opened up a whole new world.”

His father told him that three things were needed to survive—decisive judgement through intellect, action through a healthy, strong body and courage and persevervance.

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