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Kansas Report to MPLA

July 21, 2007

Submitted by Susan Moyer, KLA Representative to MPLA

The Kansas Library Association (KLA) held its first meeting of the new fiscal year on Friday, July 13. This was the first meeting held under the leadership of new KLA President Carla Kaiser, Basehor Public Library and with the addition of Denise Smith, Stanton County Library, as Second Vice-President. Actions at the meeting included approval of the purchase of Affiniscape, an association community and website content management software.

The joint Kansas Library Network Board/State Library Advisory Commission held its final meeting on June 29. It will be succeeded by the new State Library of Kansas Board, established during the last legislative session. The members of the new board will be announced by the Governor's office in the coming months.

The Kansas Center for the Book has announced the 2007 Kansas Notable Books List. It holds a combination of fiction & nonfiction, and adult & juvenile titles. These include: Afoot: A Tale of the Great Dakota Turkey Drive by George Brandsberg, Angle of Yaw by Ben Lerner, Ballots and Bullets: The Bloody County Seat Wars of Kansas History by Robert K. DeArment, Flint Hills Cowboys: Tales of the Tallgrass Prairie by James Hoy, I'd Tell You That I Love You, But Then I'd Have To Kill You by Ally Carter, John Brown to Bob Dole: Movers and Shakers in Kansas edited by Virgil Dean, John Steuart Curry: The Road Home by Alice Bertels, Kansas Murals: A Traveler's Guide by Lora Jost and Dave Loewenstein, Light on Main Street: Storytelling by a Country Newspaper Editor by Rudy Taylor, The Loose Change of Wonder by Steven Hind, My Little Yellow Taxi by Stephen Johnson, Next Year Country: Dust to Dust in Western Kansas, 1890-1940 by Craig Miner, Not Afraid of Dogs by Susanne Pitzer, Ogallala Blue: Water and Life on the Great Plains by William Ashworth, Revolutionary Heart: The Life of Clarina Nichols and the Pioneering Crusade for Women's Rights by Diane Eickhoff, Shanghai Shadows by Lois Ruby, The Virgin of Small Plains by Nancy Pickard, Words of a Prairie Alchemist by Denise Low.

In Cold Blood by Truman Capote has been selected as the title for the second annual Kansas Reads statewide reading program to be launched on Kansas Day, January 29, 2008. Considered the first "nonfiction novel," it is based on the 1959 murders of four members of the Clutter family on their southwest Kansas farm and the subsequent trial and executions of the two men responsible. Also sponsored by the Kansas Center for the Book, Kansas Reads was launched in January, 2007 with The Learning Tree by Gordon Parks.

Safety is the theme for the next Kansas Reads to Preschoolers project to be held during National Children's Book Week in November. Covering an age range of infants to 8 year olds, the featured titles in this year's program are Do Kangaroos Wear Seatbelts by Jane Kurtz, Look Both Ways: A Cautionary Tale by Diane Z. Shore, and It's Time to Call 911: What to do in an Emergency.

The Kansas Trustee Certification Program was launched on July 1. This voluntary program identifies five core skills public library trustees must possess to do their job effectively and will offer a variety of means for participants to acquire one hour of training in each of them. Included in the five core elements are: to employ and supervise a qualified library director and periodically evaluate the director's competence; to practice board participation in a manner that enables the board to function effectively through good board organization, good documentation and new trustee orientation; to be knowledgeable about the library's annual budget and skilled in advocating for the library's needs with local government, community leadership and state government; to be capable of assessing and adopting policies that will result in the effective operation of the library, in accordance with state and local laws and with full respect for the Library Bill of Rights; and to facilitate an ongoing process of strategic planning for the library to determine their community's future needs for library facilities, collections and information access. These are outlined in a new publication entitled Reaching for Excellence: The Kansas Trustee Certification Program.

The trustee document and program are good companions to Reaching for Excellence: The Certification Program for Kansas Library Administrators which was also introduced this summer. It offers four levels of initial and ongoing

certification to public library administrators based upon their formal education and in-service training. Participants will re-certify every three years by completing at least 45 hours of qualified continuing education.

The 2007 Summer Institute for School Library Media Specialists was held in Emporia in June. Digital literacy, school library media programs and learning in an information-rich world was the focus of the two-day conference. Presenters included David Warlick, staff consultant with the North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction, picture book author Susan Stevens Crummel, and Sharon Draper, a young adult author, educator, poet and National Teacher of the Year. The Institute is an annual event sponsored by the Kansas State Department of Education, the School of Library and Information Management, the State Library of Kansas and the Kansas Association of School Librarians. The purpose of the Institute is to provide current information on best practices related to school libraries, education resources and information literacy instruction.

Dr. Gwen Alexander has been named the new dean of Emporia State University's School of Library and Information Management (SLIM). She comes to ESU from Wichita State University, where she served as Associate Dean of University Libraries. Dr. Alexander carries a Ph.D. and Master of Arts in Information Resources and Library Science from the University of Arizona as well as a Bachelor of Arts in business administration from Regis University, Denver. She has also earned a leadership certificate at Wichita State University's Center for Management Development and a certificate in the ACRL/Harvard Leadership Institute in the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Dr. Alexander currently continues her management studies at the WSU Barton School of Business MBA program.

Donna Lauffer has been named as the County Librarian for the Johnson County Library. Lauffer has served as the Interim County Librarian since January following the retirement of Mona Carmack. She has been with the Johnson County Library since 1979, and most recently served as the Associate Director for Branch Services and Outreach from 2002-2007. She holds a Masters in Library Science from UCLA, a Masters in Public Administration from KU, and a Bachelor of Arts degree from University of California, Long Beach.

Cynthia Berner Harris, director of the Wichita Public Library, was named the recipient of Wichita's 2007 Excellence in Public Service award. Chosen from a slate of more than one thousand eligible employees, Berner Harris was selected as the City representative for her strong work ethic, high performance, commitment to community, and leadership qualities. In addition, she was also recognized for improving the Library's functioning both internally and externally since her appointment as director of libraries in 2000. Among the achievements noted were: the opening of two new branch library facilities, the adoption of a new master plan for library facilities, four straight years of increased circulation, internal improvements in library organization, communication and training, and leadership in statewide library issues.