

HUMANITIES KANSAS

A Movement of Ideas

MOVEMENT OF IDEAS SPEAKERS BUREAU CATALOG

The Humanities Kansas Speakers Bureau catalog features presentations and workshops designed to share stories that inspire, spark conversations that inform, and generate insights that strengthen civic engagement.

At Humanities Kansas, we believe that stories carry our culture and ideas change the world. Since 1972, we have worked together with our partners and supporters to inspire all Kansans to draw on our diverse histories, literature, and culture to enrich their lives and to serve the communities and state we call home.

Visit humanitieskansas.org.





**HUMANITIES
KANSAS**

**Stories carry our
culture and ideas
change the world.**

SPEAKERS BUREAU

The presentations in this edition are available through April 30, 2021, or as funding allows.

Kansas nonprofit organizations are invited to apply for Speakers Bureau programs.

BOOKING A PROGRAM

How to bring a Humanities Kansas speaker to your community

- Review the catalog and select a speaker and topic.
- Contact the speaker and confirm time, date, and location.
- Apply online at humanitieskansas.org for HK program funds to bring the speaker to your community.
- Publicize your event. Download a press release, speaker bio, photo, and HK logo poster.
- Tell us how it went. After the event, download and fill out a Speakers Bureau evaluation and cost-share form and email them to leslie@humanitieskansas.org.

CONTACT

Leslie Daugharthy
785/357-0359 or leslie@humanitieskansas.org

The opinions expressed by the speakers do not necessarily reflect those of Humanities Kansas.

POET LAUREATE OF KANSAS™



KEVIN RABAS
2017-2019 Poet Laureate of Kansas

FINDING THE EXTRAORDINARY IN THE ORDINARY

Poetry can illuminate the path through our daily lives, revealing beauty in the mundane tasks and objects that we often overlook. As poet Naomi Shihab Nye observed, “Poetry helps us see something worth seeing everywhere, whether inside or outside of us.” Emotions triggered by everyday items – the memory of a lost mother, or the anxiety that comes with hope – often go unseen but are given voice through poems that span continents and generations. As Kansans, most of us can appreciate memories connected to limestone postrock, birdhouses, soap dishes, soup bowls, and sunset. With words and music, this presentation will uplift our daily experiences by exploring what poet Pablo Neruda called the “ode to ordinary things.” *Presented by Kevin Rabas.*

Kevin is a poet, jazz musician, and professor of poetry and playwriting at Emporia State University.

Kevin Rabas
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AVAILABLE FOR BOOKING THROUGH MAY 2019

To schedule a Poet Laureate of Kansas event in your community, please follow the Speakers Bureau instructions on pg. 2.

Support for the Poet Laureate of Kansas position depends exclusively on individual, corporate, and foundation gifts, including the Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Trust and Friends of the Humanities.





IRRIGATION IN KANSAS

Irrigation has made Kansas an agricultural powerhouse, but it has also opened the floodgates for unintended consequences such as lawsuits, soil salinity, water scarcity, and continually larger, more ambitious irrigation plans. From ditches in Garden City, to center-pivot units across the state, to new plans to divert Missouri River water to Goodland, this presentation will encourage Kansans to consider how the past can inform present-day discussions of water usage in the state. *Presented by Jay Antle.*

FROM FORT LARAMIE TO STANDING ROCK: THE DAKOTA ACCESS PIPELINE CONTROVERSY

For most Americans, the debate over the Dakota Access Pipeline comes down to images of protesters facing off against militarized police, or perhaps Facebook memes supporting one side or the other. This talk will take a step back from more recent contested events to trace the historical origins of divergent ideas about land use, Federal Indian Law, energy development, tribal self-determination, and national politics that set the stage for these events. This talk will use a number of maps and legal documents to provide context for the audience that will encourage thoughtful discussion of these issues. *Presented by Jay Antle.*

Jay teaches history and serves as executive director of the Center for Sustainability at Johnson County Community College.

Jay Antle
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THE DOCKUM DRUGSTORE SIT-IN

In July 1958, Black students gathered at downtown Wichita’s Dockum Drugstore to stage a peaceful protest against the unequal practice of segregation. Tired of being denied access to the city’s movie theaters and restaurants, students took action and turned their attention to the lunch counter at the popular drugstore. What happened during the three-week sit-in? What caused it to end? And why was its importance recognized by so few at the time? This presentation discusses the details of the sit-in, explores how these protests helped transform the struggle for racial equality in America, and considers contemporary non-violent protests. *Presented by Prisca Barnes.*

Prisca is the founder of Storytime Village, a nonprofit that promotes reading among low-income children.

Prisca Barnes
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CARE FOR THE CREATION

Natural resources are not only vitally important to the economy of Kansas, they have contributed mightily to the quality of life for generations of Kansans. As these resources face unprecedented challenges, people of faith are leading efforts to advocate for what they call “creation care.” These faith communities are looking for common ground to respond to what they agree is a threat to the world that they believe God entrusted to them as stewards. This program will tell a diverse range of stories, geographically and religiously, about creation care in Kansas. *Presented by Aaron Barnhart.*

Aaron is an author whose work focuses on history, civil society, rural America, and foodways.

Aaron Barnhart
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CHILDREN OF THE PROMISED LAND

Nicodemus, a small, unincorporated town in Graham County, is the only remaining western town established by African Americans during the Reconstruction Period following the Civil War. Today the town is a National Historic Site. This pictorial history explores the unique experience of mothers and their children in Nicodemus, some of whom were the first members of their families born free. This discussion will explore the dynamics of child-rearing during and after slavery, stories of children conceived in slavery but born free, and how baby names were changed or used to reflect attitudes about free-born children. *Presented by Angela Bates.*

Angela is the executive director and past president of the Nicodemus Historical Society.

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A CONGRESS FOR WOMEN: WOMEN'S CLUBS AND THE CHAUTAUQUA MOVEMENT

Chautauqua was a rural movement focused on moral education and self-improvement through programs on reform, religion, and culture. The movement was useful for advancing the cause of “womanhood,” through the creation of organizations like the Woman’s Council in Ottawa, Kansas, in 1892. This Council, defined as a “congress” for the growing women’s club movement, provided a space for women to discuss important issues of the day. This presentation will examine how these clubs engaged women in political activism, particularly suffrage and temperance, and how this early movement laid the groundwork for contemporary issues of feminism and gender equality. *Presented by Sarah Bell.*



Sarah is a doctoral candidate in history at the University of Kansas and membership coordinator at the Watkins Museum of History in Lawrence.

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WILLIAM STAFFORD: POETRY, POLITICS, & PLACE

Named United States Poet Laureate in 1970, William Stafford is perhaps the most celebrated poet from Kansas. Yet few understand his work as a pacifist and teacher. After graduating from Liberal High School, Stafford was drafted into the United States Armed Forces in 1941. He registered as a conscientious objector and performed alternative service that included forestry and wildlife conservation. Later, Stafford taught English at universities in Oregon, Iowa, and Indiana, but he never forgot Kansas. This presentation examines Stafford’s relationship to Kansas and explores ways to read poetry through the lens of his powerful yet plainspoken poems. *Presented by Aaron Brown.*

Aaron teaches writing and is chair of the department of Language & Literature at Sterling College.

Aaron Brown
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WATER IN KANSAS: PAST & PRESENT

Early evidence of Native peoples in Kansas shows that they lived near springs, seeps, and rivers. Later, European settlers moved along water sources, and eventually cities were established in areas with plentiful water supplies. Even today, demographic changes in Kansas are the result of water: scarcity connected to water-level declines in the Ogallala Aquifer is impacting depopulation in western Kansas, whereas some eastern Kansas counties, which are relatively water-rich, are gaining population. Recently the state government developed a 50-year water planning vision, identifying two major issues: reservoir sedimentation and the rapid drawdown of the Ogallala portion of the High Plains Aquifer in western Kansas. This presentation highlights how water issues today will define much about Kansans in the future, just as they always have. Powerpoint. *Presented by Rex Buchanan.*

Rex is the former director of the Kansas Geological Survey and the author of books about Kansas geology and water.

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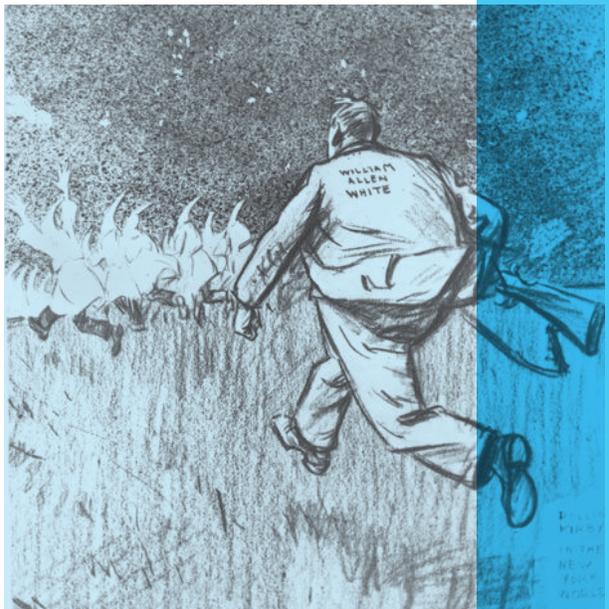


WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE AND THE KKK IN KANSAS: “A REAL AMERICAN GOES HUNTING”

Many remembered the tumultuous 1924 Kansas Gubernatorial campaign as the time William Allen White chased the Ku Klux Klan out of Kansas. As the editor of the *Emporia Gazette*, White was acutely aware of the growing presence of the KKK in Kansas following World War I. Seeing no candidates free of Klan influence, White declared, “I want to be governor to free Kansas from the disgrace of the Ku Klux Klan.” This presentation follows the raucous two-month campaign that had White traveling over 2,700 miles to deliver 104 speeches, all directed at expelling the KKK. Though he did not win, White’s efforts led to a Kansas Supreme Court ruling that outlawed the Klan in Kansas. Powerpoint. *Presented by Beverley Olson Buller.*

Beverley is an author, educator, and chair of the William Allen White Children’s Book Awards selection committee in Emporia.

Beverley Olson Buller
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FOUR HORSEMEN AND A SAGE

Fighting the rising tide of nativist sentiment in the early 20th century, a few Kansas leaders took a stand. In 1938, a rabbi, two priests, and a minister drove across Kansas to challenge a senatorial candidate who supported anti-Semitic and Nazi beliefs. The group was dubbed “The Four Horsemen of Tolerance,” and they traveled from town to town explaining, “that this kind of hate had no place in America.” A decade earlier, William Allen White, nicknamed the Sage of Emporia for his role as editor of the *Emporia Gazette*, held a similar concern with the growth of the Ku Klux Klan and launched a bid to become Governor to end its influence. This presentation explores the stories of Kansans who worked to stop forces of intolerance in our state. *Presented by John Burchill.*

John is an author and criminal justice historian who teaches at Kansas Wesleyan University.

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THE HARVEY GIRLS

The Harvey House chain of restaurants got its start in Topeka, Kansas, when Fred Harvey opened a café geared toward those traveling on the Atchison, Topeka, & Santa Fe Railway. Preferring the term “Harvey Girls” to waitresses, he recruited single women to work at the Harvey Houses that gradually sprang up all the way to California and Texas. Between the 1880s and the 1950s more than 100,000 women, many of them Kansans, proudly wore the black and white uniform of the internationally known Harvey Company. The presentation will explore the adventures of these pioneering young women. *Presented by Michaeline Chance-Reay.*

Mickey is an author and historian who teaches at Kansas State University.

Michaeline Chance-Reay
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THE VAQUEROS

When Spanish settlers arrived in New Spain – later Mexico and the American Southwest – they brought with them the tradition of the *Vaquero*, a horse-mounted livestock herder that originated on the Iberian Peninsula of Europe. As American settlers moved west, they adopted the methods of the *Vaqueros* for managing large herds of cattle. In the 1870s, demand for beef grew and the cattle industry boomed. Massive cattle drives to railheads in towns like Garden City, Dodge City, and Abilene required the unique skills of Hispanic, Black, American Indian, and white cowboys of the *Vaquero* tradition. This presentation highlights the culture of the *Vaquero*, including the development of the *corrido*, a form of ballad popular among cowboys. *Presented by Gene Chávez.*

Gene consults on diversity issues as president of Chávez and Associates.

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LIBERATION IN SOUTH AFRICA AND KANSAS

In 1958, two protests – held on two separate continents – changed the world. One happened right here in Kansas when Black students in Wichita, motivated by the desire for equality, led a peaceful sit-in at the local Dockum Drugstore. Meanwhile, seemingly a world away in Pondoland, Black South Africans began their own revolution protesting against their status as second-class citizens, a revolution met with violence and death. This presentation examines both liberation movements and discusses how these two historic events changed their nations' political trajectories. *Presented by Elene Cloete.*

Elene is the outreach and communications coordinator for the Kansas African Studies Center at the University of Kansas.

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OUT OF THE DARKNESS: RECORDS OF THE VIETNAM WAR

Much of the Vietnam War story is yet to be told. Only now, as records are located, declassified, and cataloged, does a more complete story emerge. The United States had a presence in Vietnam as early as the 1950s and remained there until the dramatic evacuation of the American Embassy in 1975. The conflict's effects shaped a generation. This presentation features historic material from the archive of Kansas Senator Robert Dole, who served in Congress from 1961 to 1996. His collection documents the evolution of national policy, including his interaction with women instrumental in POW / MIA recovery efforts, and provides a window into American life during the tumultuous Vietnam War era. *Presented by Audrey Coleman.*

Audrey is the senior archivist at the Dole Institute of Politics.

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IN THEIR OWN WORDS: THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS

For many, Egypt inspires thoughts of pyramids, tombs, and temples, grandiose displays of elite power. Egyptian civilization may seem too distant to relate to modern circumstances, but universal themes of love, strife, worry, and death found in Egyptian writings show a world not dissimilar from our own. How can I go on when my world has been turned upside down? Should I leave ungrateful children out of my will? What profession should I choose? These questions are as relevant today as they were thousands of years ago. This presentation explores these familiar struggles as documented in Egyptian literature, including love songs, legal documents, and the first recorded labor strike. Powerpoint. *Presented by Stacy Davidson.*

Stacy is an Egyptologist and teaches at Johnson County Community College.

Stacy Davidson
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SHARING PATTERNS, SHARING LIVES: KANSAS QUILTS

In the early 20th century, Emporia was home to a group of innovative quilters that included Rose Kretsinger, Charlotte Whitehill, and Hannah Haynes Headlee. Today their quilts are housed in art museums and internationally revered. Learn about Kansas quilts from this time period and the unique collaborations that sparked “the Emporia, Kansas phenomenon” and some of the finest quilts of the 20th century. *Presented by Deborah Divine.*

Deborah is a researcher, instructor, planner, and quilting historian.

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THE KANSAS CITY MONARCHS IN YOUR HOMETOWN

Formed in 1920, the Kansas City Monarchs revolutionized baseball: not only were they charter members of the Negro National League and the first professional team to use outdoor lighting, the Monarchs also sent more players to the major leagues than any other Negro League franchise. This presentation explores the exciting early barnstorming days of the Monarchs, highlights great players such as Wilbur “Bullet” Rogan, Satchel Paige, and Jackie Robinson who wore the uniform, and connects the spirit of the Monarchs to the many Kansas communities in which they played. Where possible, specific games and players from your community will be discussed. *Presented by Phil S. Dixon.*

Phil is a baseball historian and author.

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VEGETOPIA: THE KANSAS COLONY WAY AHEAD OF ITS TIME

In 1856 a band of pilgrims set out for Kansas Territory to establish “heaven on earth.” Even more controversial than their abolitionist stance was their new way of eating — a meatless vegetable diet promoted by their eccentric young leader, Henry Clubb. But Clubb’s vision of a thriving colony never came to be. Border war troubles, illness, death, and the colony’s remote location thwarted its success. Clubb eventually recovered from his first failure to become the father of American vegetarianism. This program about the uniquely American tradition of utopian thinking will spur lively discussion on the practicality of chasing dreams. *Presented by Diane Eickhoff.*

THE LONG ROAD TO WOMEN’S SUFFRAGE IN KANSAS

Kansas was historically a leader in women’s rights, being just the eighth state to grant female suffrage. Yet the campaign for voting rights in Kansas required more than half a century of determined effort, as women suffered discouraging setbacks in three different statewide initiatives. How did they ultimately persuade an all-male electorate to grant them their rights? What did their long ordeal teach them about perseverance and politics? This presentation will explore the courageous individuals who took on the powerful interests opposed to electoral reform and discover other firsts that Kansas women achieved on the road to full suffrage. *Presented by Diane Eickhoff.*

Diane is a historian and the author of Clarina Nichols: Frontier Crusader for Women’s Rights.

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AFRICAN REFUGEE STORIES—AND SILENCE—IN KANSAS

The Bantu people of Somalia are an ethnic minority who were forced to leave their lands during the Somali Civil War. In 1999, the U.S. State Department made it a priority to resettle these refugees in America. Today, many Somali Bantu call Kansas City home. Just as it is across the African continent, stories are an important part of Bantu oral histories and identity. But what happens to vulnerable and marginalized communities when stories are interrupted, silenced, or forgotten? Through the power of stories and their erasure, this presentation explores the struggles of Somali Bantu in Kansas City to “live again” and to redefine themselves collectively in the aftermath of violence, exclusion, and resettlement. *Presented by Marwa Ghazali.*

Marwa teaches anthropology at University of Kansas and has research interests in African Studies and Peace and Conflict Studies.

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HEAD ‘EM UP & MOVE ‘EM OUT

The early days of ranching and trail driving required stamina and determination. The drover of yesteryear had little choice but to face the elements placed before him if he was to get his wild cattle to market. A thousand miles on the trail brought him into contact with all that nature could throw at him: lightning, flooded rivers, hail, tornadoes, and stampeding cattle were constant challenges. Today’s massive beef industry owes its beginnings to the men and women who were bold enough to “head ‘em up and move ‘em out.” Explore this exciting story of cowboys, cattle, and the steak on your plate. *Presented by Jim Gray.*

Jim is an author, speaker, promoter of cowboy heritage in Kansas, and executive director of the National Drovers Hall of Fame.

Jim Gray
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TASTING THE PAST: EXPLORING KANSAS FOOD MEMORIES

Food is a powerful expression of cultural memory. For years, ethnic groups in Kansas have used food to maintain connections to the past. When the Greek Orthodox congregation of Overland Park observes communion a parishioner bakes *prosfero*, a special bread marked with religious symbols. Communities near Lindsborg remember their homeland with food celebrations that feature dishes common to Sweden, such as pickled herring, codfish, and lingonberries. This presentation will explore food traditions from a number of ethnic populations in Kansas, including German, Czech, Italian, Jewish, and others. *Presented by Louise Hanson.*

Louise is a librarian in Lawrence and researcher with over 500 Kansas cookbooks in her collection.

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FEEL YOUR OATS (WITH HELP FROM A GOAT)

When J.R. Brinkley arrived in Milford, Kansas, in 1917, with a suspect medical diploma in hand and just \$23 in his pocket, few would have imagined the notoriety he would attain over the next 25 years in medicine, politics, and broadcasting. It all began with the xenotransplantation of goat testicles – a dubious cure for flagging male virility that quickly engaged the popular imagination – and brought him fame, fortune, and the wrath of the medical establishment. Eventually Doc Brinkley lost his Kansas medical license in 1930 but that didn't stop him from running for Governor. In this presentation, we look at Brinkley's life to see what cautionary lessons we might learn that could prove helpful in today's world. Powerpoint. *Presented by Jerry Harper.*

Jerry is a semi-retired lawyer with an ongoing interest in Kansas' more colorful characters.

Jerry Harper
jharper900@gmail.com





THE KANSAS WHIRLWIND: PETER MEHRINGER AND SPORTS OF THE DEPRESSION ERA

The Great Depression of the 1930s impacted all aspects of society, including sports. In Kansas, school athletics were increasingly limited and student athletes had to be resourceful. Wrestler Pete Mehringer did just that. Born in Jetmore, Mehringer was the son of German immigrants. With no wrestling program in his community, Mehringer took correspondence courses and practiced on his siblings. He was so good that the school hired him to be the high school wrestling coach while he was still a wrestler for the school! This presentation explores the incredible story of Mehringer and his rise to Olympic fame. *Presented by Laura Hartley.*

Laura is a public historian and event coordinator for Newman University.

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FRESH PRODUCE: KANSAS'S ORCHARDISTS, MARKET GROWERS, AND TRUCK FARMERS

This historical presentation highlights Kansas's commercial specialty crops, agriculture experimentation, horticultural "royalty" marketing, and the evolving local foods movement. Learn about Kansas's nationally-known heritage apple; the crabapple king's downfall; the successful grow-secrets of freed slaves, entrepreneurs, and early suburbanites; the state's connection to exotic fruit introduction; the 1960s counterculture influence on today's market mainstays; future outlooks; and county-specific produce projection. *Presented by Cindy Higgins.*

Cindy is a journalist and historian of Kansas industry.

Cindy Higgins
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Grimm for Grownups

In the 19th century, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm - known as the Brothers Grimm - traveled Europe collecting folktales, most of which were never intended for children. Why did the Grimm brothers document odd stories, such as The Six Swans, Maid Maleen, and Nixie in the Millpond? This talk explores the story of the Brothers Grimm and their folktales, and discusses why collecting these stories can be important for understanding a community's values and fears. *Presented by Priscilla Howe.*

Priscilla is a freelance storyteller and a 2015 Fulbright Senior Scholar.

Priscilla Howe
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KANSAS LEGENDS AND FOLKTALES

Grasshoppers so big that cowboys can ride them to herd cattle. Summers so hot that corn pops in the field. Rancher Henry Mudge wrecking pianos, shooting sheep, and fooling European dignitaries. Kansas is a place of big skies and tall tales, but these exaggerated narratives help us understand the character of our state and its people. This talk will explore some of the many Kansas legends and folktales and help audiences decipher between a myth (folk religion), legend (folk history), and tale (folk literature). When possible, local legends and folk tales—and what they say about that particular community—will be discussed. *Presented by Jim Hoy.*

Jim is a folklorist who works with the Center for Great Plains Studies at Emporia State University.

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THE AMAZON ARMY

When coal was discovered in southeast Kansas in the late 1860s, thousands came from all over the world to work the mines. The mix of nationalities created an ethnic geography unique to Kansas that came to be known as the Little Balkans. Miners faced hazardous working conditions, poor pay, and discrimination. In 1921, thousands of women marched on the coal mines in support of striking miners. *The New York Times* dubbed them the “Amazon Army.” This spirited act linked men and women together in one of the most dynamic pages in the history of American labor. *Presented by Linda O’Nelio Knoll.*

Linda is an educator, author, and historian who researches the local history of southeast Kansas.

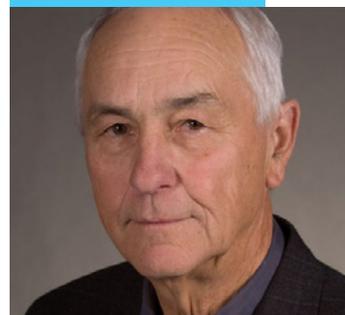
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IF THESE WALLS COULD TALK: KANSAS MURALS

Explore the artist, meaning, and stories behind the state’s rich collection of public murals. From the iconic John Steuart Curry murals in the Kansas Statehouse to the post office murals of the New Deal and the many murals done by townspeople across the state, these works tell us much about the people involved. Led by muralist Dave Loewenstein, this presentation explores history through a new lens and examines the organizational and technical efforts that go into capturing a community’s story in public art. *Presented by Dave Loewenstein*

Dave is an artist and co-author of Kansas Murals: A Traveler’s Guide.

Dave Loewenstein
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RETHINKING THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Jesus of Nazareth was a first-century Jewish preacher who lived in an era of intense struggle between the Jewish people and the Roman Empire. This presentation examines the historical context surrounding Jesus' longest teaching, *The Sermon on the Mount*. Often oversimplified as either moral platitudes or requirements for admission to heaven, contemporary research into the era indicates the sermon may have been more an effort to promote a countercultural program of nonviolent resistance against Roman oppression. *Presented by Kirk MacGregor.*

Kirk teaches religious studies and philosophy at McPherson College.

Kirk R. MacGregor
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SHIFTING WATERS: INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT & COOPERATION

The Rio Grande, like many waterways that serve as international borders, has been endowed with both symbolic and practical importance. Around the globe these living, shifting boundaries have sparked both conflict and cooperation among rivals. From the Jordan, Indus, and Mekong river basins, to the San Juan River in Central America, water is a key area of diplomacy. The presentation explores the role of water in the modern history of international relations and how they hold the key toward future conflict or cooperation. *Presented by Aaron Margolis.*

Aaron teaches history at Kansas City Kansas Community College.

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VETERANS' VOICES: ORAL HISTORY WORKSHOP

Every veteran has a story. Yet many of these stories go untold because we don't know what to ask or veterans seem reluctant to talk about their service. Oral history is an empowering way to let veterans speak about their experiences, whether they happened 50 years ago in Vietnam or more recently in Afghanistan. This workshop provides family, friends, and community members the skills to interview those who served our country. This presentation will include recommendations for setting up and starting an interview, what types of questions to ask, and tips for documenting the discussion. *Presented by Kaye McIntyre.*

Kaye is the producer and host of "KPR Presents," Kansas Public Radio's weekly public affairs program.

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LAND ETHICS AND WATER RESOURCES

In 1949 Aldo Leopold sparked the modern conservation movement with his treatise on “land ethics,” declaring that ethical individual cooperation should also consider soil, water, plants, and animals. But what role does culture play in determining the land ethics of place? This presentation explores different land ethics and how they impact our water resources through land management choices. Learn about agricultural practices in Kansas and how they compare with the indigenous land ethics of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, the Altai Republic of Siberian Russia, and Kikuyu people of central Kenya. *Presented by Heidi Mehl.*

Heidi is the manager for the Healthy Streams Initiative at the Nature Conservancy.

Heidi Mehl
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KANSAS WEATHER IN LIFE, LITERATURE, AND PHOTOGRAPHY

When it comes to weather, Kansans have a lot to say, and for good reason. Not only is weather on the High Plains some of the most dramatic in the world, but it also shapes how those living in the region see themselves. This presentation opens with storm chaser Stephen Locke’s vibrant images of weather, paired with poetry by Kansas writers inspired by the drama that unfolds in the sky. Audience members are encouraged to share their weather-related stories and images as part of short writing exercise intended to spark discussion about the natural forces that influence our lives and shape our world. *Presented by Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg.*

Caryn is an author and was the 2009-2013 Poet Laureate of Kansas™.

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photo credit: John Noltner

TRANSFORMING THE COMMONPLACE: SEED PORTRAITS, HAIR WREATHS, AND BUTTER SCULPTURES

What would the Iowa State Fair be without butter sculptures, the Minnesota State Fair without seed portraits, or Victorian houses without hair wreaths? These beloved wonders are due, in large part, to the work of visionary artists like Lillian Colton, a seed portraitist, who started her craft in the late 1960s; Caroline S. Brooks, who pioneered the art of sculpting in butter in the late 19th century; and Leila Cohoon, a well-respected hair-wreath expert. This presentation examines the uncommon transformations of commonplace materials, and features the stories of these three women and the institutions that preserve these odd traditions. *Presented by Erika Nelson.*

WOMEN WONDERWORKERS: THE SELF-MADE WORLDS OF VISIONARY FEMALE ARTISTS

Explore four visionary art environments created by female sculptors. Mary Nohl embellished her Lake Michigan property with a series of interconnected concrete curvilinear forms, some reaching the second floor windows of her family home. Truck driver and preacher Inez Marshal sculpted large blocks of limestone and established the International Sculpture Hall in rural Portis, Kansas. Grandma Prisbery's bottle village is located in an earthquake-prone area in Simi Valley, California. Laura Pope Forrester paid tribute to local and national heroes with her sculpted concrete vignettes surrounding her mercantile in rural Georgia. The presentation examines their inspirations and motivations, the work itself, and the afterlife of overlooked sites after their makers have passed. *Presented by Erika Nelson.*

Erika is the creator and curator of the World's Largest Collection of the World's Smallest Versions of the World's Largest Things Traveling Roadside Attraction and Museum.

Erika Nelson
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RAILROADED: THE INDUSTRY THAT SHAPED KANSAS

In the 19th century, the influence of the railroad industry was vast. Some claim that Kansas was created specifically to accommodate westward expansion of railroads. Railroads brought immigrant settlers, created jobs, and fed beef markets in the East. They enabled regular mail service and the adoption of standard time. Most Kansas towns were founded because of the railroad, and few survived without it. This progress came at a cost to the Plains Indians who were forcibly displaced by this westward expansion. This presentation examines the complicated legacy of railroads. *Presented by Leo Oliva.*

Leo is a historian with a research focus on 19th-century Kansas.

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VETERANS MEMOIR WRITING WORKSHOP

Writing is a powerful tool that can help veterans come to terms with their memories. It can also communicate to family and friends those stories that are difficult to verbalize. This workshop is designed to give veterans the tools and confidence to develop and write their own stories. Participants can use notes, drafts, poetry, free-writing exercises, and other methods to generate moving and honest writing. No prior writing experience is necessary. *Presented by Al Ortolani.*

Al is a former English instructor, published poet, and facilitator of Vietnam veterans writing workshops as part of HK's Kansas Stories of the Vietnam War initiative.

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THE KANSAS INDUSTRIAL FARM FOR WOMEN

In 1917, the Kansas Industrial Farm for Women was established in Lansing, Kansas, to house women found in violation of new quarantine laws intended to prevent the spread of venereal diseases. As male troops enlisted for World War I, large numbers were found to have syphilis and gonorrhea. It was a public health crisis. To counter this, five-mile "morality zones" were established around Kansas military installations to keep soldiers away from "lewd" women. The women who were arrested, incarcerated, and kept until the prison officials felt otherwise, were taught to grow crops, raise chickens, sew, and cook. This presentation explores life on this unusual farm and the women who lived there. *Presented by Laura Phillippi.*

Laura is a historian based in Leavenworth.

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BRONCO BUSTIN' SHOWMEN AND THEIR SPECTACULAR WILD WEST SHOWS

Wild West shows at the turn of the 20th century delighted audiences in the United States and abroad. A surprising number of skilled cowboys and breathtaking shows originated in the Great Plains region. This presentation highlights famous western entertainers including Will Rogers, Pawnee Bill, Tom Mix, and Lucille Mulhall and shows such as Pawnee Bill's Historical Wild Indian Museum and Encampment, the 101 Ranch Real Wild West, and the Mulhall Congress of Rough Riders and Ropers. A reoccurring thread through all of these shows was Buffalo Bill Cody, the father of western entertainment. *Presented by Jane Rhoads.*

Jane is an author and 2009 Notable Kansas Book award winner.

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WATER: WHY IS IT SO DIFFICULT TO CONSERVE?

Water is the most precious natural resource, sustaining all life on Earth. Despite its value, freshwater consumption is not sustainable in many areas around the world, including Kansas. Why is it so difficult to conserve this vital resource? This presentation will look at the role of culture—our values, norms, and beliefs—and consider their impact on “the water problem” and how they can help solve this issue. *Presented by Matthew Sanderson.*

Matthew is an associate professor of sociology at Kansas State University.

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SICKLE AND HAMMER: THE UNITED STATES AND EARLY SOVIET RUSSIA

The relationship between the United States and Russia has always been complicated. This presentation examines the people and policies that made it so. From the involvement of American armed forces in the Russian Civil War in 1918 to American efforts to counter famine in fledgling Soviet Russia in the 1920s, there were often competing motives. Even President Franklin Roosevelt’s formal recognition of Soviet Russia may have been born from a need for allies in the coming war. This presentation also explores the human element, such as noteworthy American writer Theodore Dreiser’s 1927 trip to Soviet Russia, and poet and Kansas native Langston Hughes’ 1932 collaboration on a film project in Moscow that explored race relations. *Presented by Norman Saul.*

Norm is a historian who specializes in Russian history, international relations, and Mennonites and Volga Germans from Russia in Kansas.

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THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE

The booming, experimental period in American history known as the Harlem Renaissance exposed the world to the arts, culture, and intellect of African Americans. But it was also a time of struggle when white society failed to respond to issues of civil rights and social equality. Could art produced by African Americans primarily for African Americans succeed where politics, religion, and the courts failed? It was a tall order, but not for residents of Harlem, New York, where young Black men and women with college degrees worked and lived. This generation was determined to chart a new course far beyond their parents and grandparents, many of whom had been enslaved. Using jazz, blues, spirituals, and poetry, this presentation spans the 1920s and explores the contributions of Kansas artists who answered the call to this unmistakable moment. *Presented by Lem Sheppard.*

Lem is a musician and historian based in Pittsburg.

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THE IRRIGATION CRUSADE

From the 1880s to the earliest days of the 20th century, the “Irrigation Crusade” was promoted as a way for grassland farmers and community boosters to continue thriving during droughts. Charles “Buffalo” Jones—colorful Kansas frontiersman—led the crusade in western Kansas by organizing four irrigation companies to divert water 100 miles from the Arkansas River to land in and around Garden City. This presentation gives context to Jones in the larger Irrigation Crusade of the West. *Presented by Jim Sherow.*

KANSAS V. COLORADO

In 1902, Kansas accused the state of Colorado of taking more than their fair share of water from the Arkansas River and diminishing land values because of the reduced water flow. The argument eventually escalated to the U.S. Supreme Court, where *Kansas v. Colorado* (1907) became the first suit of original jurisdiction brought before the court that involved a dispute over interstate river rights, and was the largest, most in-depth suit ever argued before the justices at the time. This presentation tells the dramatic story and legacy of *Kansas v. Colorado*, a legal fight that continues to this day. *Presented by Jim Sherow.*

Jim teaches Kansas and environmental history at Kansas State University and has authored books and articles about people living in the grasslands.

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WHAT'S FOR LUNCH? SCHOOL LUNCHES IN THE UNITED STATES

From sack lunches to school lunches, what we eat has never been far from anyone's mind. This presentation traces the changes from the typical school sack lunch 100 years ago, to the passage of the National School Lunch Act in 1946, and the monitoring of school lunches ever since. As early as 1910, school lunches were believed to be essential for the physical and mental health of children. Teachers knew even back then that students functioned better with full stomachs. Who could argue with that? Not so fast! School lunches have become the subject of serious debate. Participants will learn about school lunch history, the intent of feeding children at school, and the considerations that task involves. *Presented by LuAnn Soliah.*



LuAnn is a former clinical professor of nutritional sciences at Oklahoma State University and studies eating patterns of U.S. citizens.

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A NEW APPROACH TO DEMOCRACY

How does a nation talk about important topics? The polarization and incivility found far too often in today's political landscape, whether here or abroad, makes discussion on current events tricky. At best, these important but difficult dialogues become an uncomfortable experience for participants, and, at worst, a minefield. This presentation shares examples from across the world where people are experiencing a shift towards a more participatory and citizen-centered style of democracy while focusing less on finding the right answer and more on mutual recognition, where citizens listen to others on their own terms. *Presented by Marie Paxton Staniforth.*

Marie teaches political science at the University of Kansas and Johnson County Community College.

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MOMENT BY MOMENT: FAMILY HISTORY WRITING WORKSHOP

Family history tells us who we are and where we come from. But genealogical records sometimes lack the personal details that communicate just how interesting families can be. In this workshop, participants are encouraged to take their research and turn it into story form. Capture family lore that has been passed down for generations, describe that uncle that showed up at Thanksgiving, or recount grandma's cooking. Travel to the places your family lived and write about what they saw. The workshop includes writing exercises to create characters and identify compelling topics. Adding stories to genealogy can make family history move vivid and more likely to be read by future generations. *Presented by Kim Stanley.*

Kim teaches writing and literature courses at McPherson College.

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RESEARCHING YOUR HOME AND THE PEOPLE WHO LIVED THERE

Researching a property—whether an old home, a new business, or a section of pastureland—can do more than tell us the history of a space; it can also help us build a human connection to the people who came before us and the history they experienced. This presentation helps participants consider creative ways to study documents and assemble a meaningful narrative with information found through research. It leads participants through the process of how to examine land data and historic maps and navigate through county registers of deeds, historical societies, and other defenders of local history. *Presented by Diana Staresinic-Deane.*

Diana is the executive director of the Franklin County Historical Society and the Old Depot Museum in Ottawa.

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THE MURDER OF EMMETT TILL

On August 25, 1955, Emmett Till whistled at a white woman outside a Mississippi grocery store. Three days later, the 14-year old African American boy from Chicago was kidnapped, tortured, murdered, and thrown into a river. For the next fifty years, there was not a single memorial to Till's murder in the Mississippi Delta. Since 2005, however, over \$5 million has been invested in the production of an entire Emmett Till commemorative infrastructure. The Delta now boasts nine roadside markers, two restored buildings, a museum, an interpretive center, a community building, and a nature trail that tells the story of Till's 1955 murder. This presentation introduces the audience to the various Till memorials and uses them to explore the competing narratives of exactly what happened on the night of the murder. *Presented by Dave Tell.*

Dave is a professor of communication studies at KU and co-creator of the Emmett Till Memory Project. His work on Emmett Till has been recognized with a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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RED STATE: SOCIALISM AND THE FREE PRESS IN KANSAS

Although Socialism's contributions to the labor movement, women's suffrage, and food safety are well documented, its impact on journalism is less known. At the turn of the 20th century, a cottage industry of small newspapers blossomed in Kansas. Read by a growing working class, these newspapers often gave voice to economic issues. As the United States prepared for World War I, these newspapers ramped up editorials rallying against the "grotesque bloodletting" of war. As a result, the Espionage Act of 1917 and the Sedition Act of 1918 were passed, allowing authorities to imprison those with opinions counter to the war effort. This presentation will discuss the rise and fall of the Socialist press in Kansas, as well as its causes, leaders, and detractors, and explore the role of the free press. *Presented by Matthew Thompson.*

Matthew teaches history at Johnson County Community College and serves as assistant registrar at the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art.

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WHEN FREEDOM CHANGED AMERICA

One hundred years separate the Emancipation Proclamation (1863) and the March on Washington (1963). Both movements were defined by the pursuit of freedom: one from the institution of slavery, the other from economic and political inequality. But what did freedom mean to Americans who participated in these important historical events? Today, as seekers of the American Dream, we can learn a great deal from the devotion and commitment of those looking to reclaim America and the principles for which it stands. *Presented by John Edgar Tidwell.*

Edgar teaches African American and American literature at the University of Kansas.

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FREE DID NOT MEAN WELCOME

Millions of African Americans walked away from the South after Emancipation looking for freedom. For some it meant a journey to Kansas, a “free state.” Discover how many realized that for Black people in Kansas “Free” did not necessarily mean “Welcome.” *Presented by Carmaletta Williams.*

Carmaletta is a former professor of English and African American Studies at Johnson County Community College.

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RURALPRENEURS: TUMBLEWEEDS AND TALENTS IN KANSAS COMMUNITIES

How can businesses succeed in small town Kansas? The answers can be found in what we have termed “ruralpreneurs” – innovative entrepreneurs who have built successful enterprises in small town Kansas, and strengthened their communities as a result. This presentation highlights real-world examples of Kansas entrepreneurs who have built businesses and created jobs and opportunities in a rural setting. These include innovative businesses in Marysville, Garden City, Downs, Neodesha, and more. The presentation also honors the emerging role of diversity, technology, and telecommunications that have brought about so many changes in society. It also reflects the importance of a spirit of service and community. This fascinating, inspiring, fun, and informative presentation highlights rural Kansans and builds pride in our state. *Presented by Ron Wilson.*

Ron produces a weekly radio program and news column about rural Kansas.

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FREE SPEECH IN TIMES OF CRISIS

“Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press...” With these simple words in the First Amendment, U.S. citizens are granted an inalienable right to express their opinions, a right that does not dissipate at times when society is under stress and disagreements get heated. Even when we do not agree with someone’s language, we believe in the speaker’s right to utter it. History shows us, however, that sometimes people in positions of authority actively work to close off public discussion. This presentation looks at the reasons free speech is protected and explores how the use of social media and terms like “fake news” can hinder public discourse. Powerpoint. *Presented by Stephen Wolgast.*

Stephen is a former New York Times editor who now teaches journalism and digital media at Kansas State University.

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FREE SPEECH IN KANSAS: COMMUNITY WRITING WORKSHOP



Visit humanitieskansas.org



The Pulitzer Prizes

As part of a special Pulitzer initiative, Kansas nonprofits can invite trained instructors to facilitate writing workshops in their communities. Just as William Allen White defended free speech “by voice, by posted card, by letter, or by press,” participants are welcome to express themselves through essays, poems, letters to the editor, memoirs, fiction, and in any way they choose. Writing workshops are available as program funding allows.

Please choose one presenter for this workshop from the list below:



Anthony Funari is a writing & literature teacher at Johnson County Community College.

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Daniel Hoyt is an English professor at Kansas State University.

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Paula Ripple is a former English composition instructor at Dodge City Community College.

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