

# Speaking of Kansas

## Washburn Center for Kansas Studies



## Spring 2008 Kansas Studies

Spring 2008

### Fall Semester 2008 Offerings:

- **GL 103 Geology of Kansas** • 5:30 - 8:00 pm M •  
Lecture/Lab • Will Gilliland
- **PO 107 State and Local Government**  
*PO 107A*, 10:00 - 10:50 am MWF • Lecture • Loran Smith  
*PO 107B*, 8:00 - 9:15 am TR • Lecture • Loran Smith
- **PO 307 Internship, State and Local Government** •  
By ARR • Loran Smith

## Ichabod's Prairie Patch: a native plant garden

**A** touch of the Kansas prairie is coming to the Washburn University campus. **Meredith Fry**, biology major, and **Jillian Hager**, art major, are planning and designing called Ichabod's Prairie Patch. The project is part of the EcoVention portion of the spring semester art class that also includes EcoArt, a new art class offered at Washburn. The native plant garden is also being considered as a project for a Washburn Transformational Experience. The Center for Kansas Studies recently approved \$100 funding to help with expenses in purchasing Kansas native plants from a local nursery, limestone for a border from a nearby quarry, and other materials.

**What brings the Kansas prairie into the center of Topeka?**  
The origins of the project, to be

completed on the south side of the Art building, was rooted in the classroom where students were asked to consider projects that combine ecology and art. Ichabod's Prairie Patch has grown into a large garden plot that will resemble a prairie in several years. The garden will have a curved line perimeter made with native limestone block. Kansas native plants such as Button Gayfeather (*Liatris aspera*), Pale Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea pallida*), Rattlesnake Master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*), and Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) will be a part of the patch.

**The timeline for the project** calls for the first turning of soil in late April and planting to begin in May. The garden will be an ongoing project for the students until it is self-sustainable. It is hoped that the prairie  
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Tom Schmiedeler, Director  
785 - 670 - 1559  
tom.schmiedeler@washburn.edu

Deborah Altus, Human Services  
Tom Averill, English  
Robert Beatty, Political Science  
Patti Bender, Health  
Roy Bird, English  
Robin Bowen, VP Academic Affairs  
Marcia Cebulka, Playwright  
Jennie Chinn, KSHS  
Marion Cott, Kansas Humanities  
Charles Cranston, Mass Media  
Virgil Dean, KSHS  
Paul Fecteau, English  
Jessie Fillerup, Music  
Amy Fleury, English  
William Gilliland, Geology  
Rachel Goossen, History  
Chris Hamilton, Political Science  
Robert Hull, Finance  
Reinhild Janzen, Art  
Jim Kelly, KTWU  
Dave Kendall, KTWU  
Robert Lawson, English  
Gabrielle Lunte, Modern Languages  
Bruce Mactavish, History  
Ed Marchant, CIS  
Judith McConnell-Farmer, Education  
Mary McCoy, Biology  
Marguerite Perret, Art  
Mark Peterson, Political Science  
J. Karen Ray, English  
William Roach, Business  
Betsy Knabe Roe, Art  
Tom Schmiedeler, Geography  
Bradley Siebert, English  
Loran Smith, Political Science  
Margaret Stewart, English  
Sara Tucker, History  
William Wagner, History  
Mary Wanless, Art  
Tom Wolf, Biology  
Margaret Wood, Soc./Anthropology  
Carol Yoho, Art

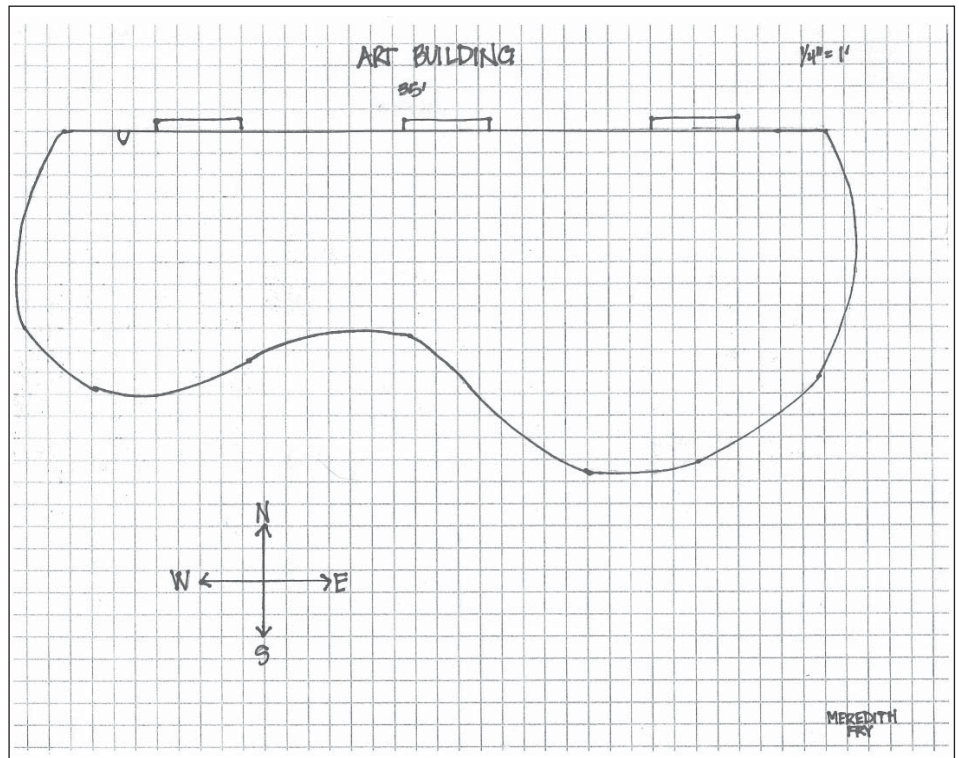
Center for Kansas Studies  
[www.washburn.edu/cks](http://www.washburn.edu/cks)

## Ichabod's Prairie Patch cont.

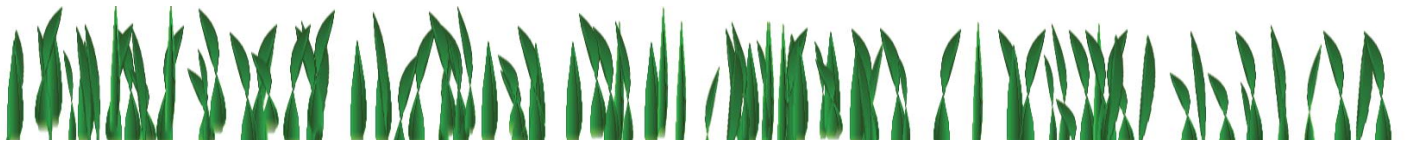
patch will inspire others to explore the Kansas prairie, to utilize plants as living art, and to increase awareness of how native plants can be grown in your own backyard.

The EcoArt and EcoVention courses, co-taught by **Marguerite Perret** and **Betsy Knabe Roe**, provide students with a new way to view the environment. EcoArt is an interdisciplinary course that explores the intersection of contemporary art practices and the environment as reflected in the broader culture, mass communications, the science of ecology, and through social and community interventions. EcoVention is the independent study portion that includes the creation of a significant environmental themed art project.\*

—article is by **Meredith Fry**,  
Washburn University biology major.



\***This project** is an extension of the prairie garden begun in 2006 by **Betsy Knabe Roe** and also funded in part by the Center for Kansas Studies.



## More Garden Plots, by Thomas Fox Averill

**Center Fellow Thomas Fox Averill**, Writer-in-residence at Washburn, shares two more Garden Plots here, pages 3 and 4. Averill took a month-long Sweet Summer Sabbatical and visited gardens in the UK, France, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. His goal was to find garden stories to write, and although the UK is a long ways from Kansas, several of the stories inspired by his travel will be set in the Sunflower State. Four other of Averill's stories were published in *Speaking of Kansas*, Fall 2007 issue. Photographs used with stories were taken by Averill.



Read *Garden Plots* pp. 3 & 4 ➔

## More Garden Plots, *cont.*

### #5: The Woman Who Wore Flowers

**A** woman wears a flower each day. She grew up in the country and knows the name of every bloom. People note her comings and goings. “There she is,” they say, and they know it is Monday, because she wears blue: an iris, perhaps, or an aster. Sunday is a white lily. Each day a different color, a different flower, for what do they know of names? They do not know that she is also a drier of flowers. Each day she presses a wilting flower into a book, the daily blossom marring the texts of the volumes of county histories her father published, the portraits of the founders of the county streaked by yarrow lace, creating a jaundiced face. Her Bible stores the miracles of rose, dahlia, lily. Even her diary, her son discovers upon her death, is not the language and story of the past, but a journal of days spent carrying beauty. And what is the past, he thinks, but something that grew each day as we



tucked it in? He looks at the withered flowers—stamen, pistil, petal. He breathes in dust, but smells honeysuckle, jasmine, his mother.

### #6: State Flowers



and Hawaii, where he'd never been, behind

**O**nespring, a truck driver who'd driven every state in the union tilled his acre of back yard in the shape of the United States. He dug up patches for Alaska and California Poppies. the garage, cursing their non-contiguity. He mounded up some mountains, bordered the 48 states in green plastic and laid out his rock collection, one per state. Then he planted state flowers. Since he lived in Kansas, he started with Sunflowers. Then others he could achieve quickly: Goldenrod in Nebraska and Kentucky, Violet in New Jersey, Rhode Island, Wisconsin (Wood Violet) and Illinois (Purple). Texas Bluebonnet, lots of it. Vermont Red Clover. Some more Goldenrod in Alabama, to mix with Camellia—they upgraded in 1959.

*Cont. p. 4* ➡

## More Garden Plots, *cont.*

He put the Roses in North Dakota and Iowa (Wild Prairie), Georgia (Cherokee) and New York. Then Nevada Sage Brush, New Mexico Yucca, New Hampshire Purple Lilac—they would flower next season, perhaps. Discouragement seeped into his garden when he contemplated the wait to see Maine White Pine Cone and Tassel—what were they thinking? Or Louisiana and Mississippi Magnolias, if they survived Kansas. And what about the North Carolina and Virginia Dogwoods? Could he make an Arizona Saguaro Cactus bloom? Years later, his Oklahoma Mistletoe (para-

site on a locust tree) put on waxy white berries. He was tired of the cultivation of variety. He tilled the U. S. of A. and planted cockscomb, poppies and red impatiens to create Red States, asters and chicory for the Blue States. Simple, he thought. Not much to remember. Not much to think about. And only a few states to replant every four years, come election time. Although he missed the variety, he sure didn't miss the work. He took to sitting on the back deck with a 20 oz. bottle of Coke, surveying his domain, proud of his country.



# Fellows Meetings: *Minutes*

April 3, 2008

**F**ellows of the Center for Kansas Studies met for a breakfast meeting at the Lincoln Room of the Washburn Union on Thursday, April 3. Fellows present at the meeting were **Tom Averill, Rachel Goossen, Marguerite Perret, Will Gilliland, Carol Yoho, Mark Peterson, Bradley Siebert, David Feinmark, Bob Lawson, Meredith Fry** and **Tom Schmiedeler**.

After a round-the-table beginning of introductions and activities updates, **Director Tom Schmiedeler** reported on the Center budget and the forthcoming meeting with Robin Bowen, Vice President for Academic Affairs, regarding Center funding. He also reported that **Bill Wagnon** continues to develop a program through the Kansas Humanities Council for a July commemoration of the Underground Railroad in Kansas. Bill, in absentia, requested that a \$1,000 be allocated by the Center for the project. Fellows approved the funding request.

**Tom Averill** reported that **Fellow Margy Stewart**, currently on sabbatical, is continuing her research on the manuscript "Once on the Upper McDowell" a Flint Hills frontier memoir. She has interviewed the author and arranged graphic work for her book publication. Tom also discussed the William Stafford Memorial Poetry Rendezvous scheduled for April 10-12 in Hutchinson (April 10), Newton (April

11) and the Flying W Ranch at Clements, Kansas (April 12). Session highlights include a workshop and "Poetry and Music" in Hutchinson, and "Poetry and Pizza" in Newton. Sessions at the Flying W include a presentations by Kim Stafford (William Stafford's son) and Denise Low (State Poet Laureate), a panel discussion "William Stafford: His Art & Influence" moderated by fellow Tom Averill, and an evening supper followed by campfire music and poetry. Fellows of the Center had previously pledged \$500 in support of this event. Tom also requested \$500 for support of a visit by twenty juniors from Waring High School in Beverly, Massachusetts, who will be on a tour of America to discover lives different from their own. Tom, along with Fellow **Amy Fleury**, wish to take them to the Flying W Ranch on June 11 for Flint Hills exposure and to do some Kansas writing with them. Tom mentioned that a similar excursion took place five years ago and that it had a lasting impact on the students. Fellows approved the funding request.

**Fellows Marguerite Perret** and **Betsy Roe** are sponsoring a student project involving the nature garden, "Ichabod's Prairie Patch." Washburn student Meredith Fry outlined the project, an expansion of an earlier garden project by Betsy Roe, before the Fellows. It involves the planning, budgeting, development, and creation of a native plant

garden on the south side of the art building. Meredith requested \$100 from the Center to buy plants for the project. From the discussion that followed, Fellows agreed to grant the \$100 and suggested that an additional allocation could be made if funding from other sources proved to be insufficient to complete the project.

**Tom Schmiedeler** requested funding in the amount of \$300-\$400 from next year's budget for expenses related to lodging and travel primarily in western Kansas. Tom is researching frontier urban planning in Kansas. The focus is on how town companies benefited from the use of federal and state town site acts in their acquisition of land for most of the state's county seats. Fellows approved the request.

**David Feinmark** of Mabee Library encouraged fellows to contact him regarding books about Kansas that they would like the library to purchase. He also distributed a list of selected recent purchases for Kansas Studies and mentioned that he is currently working on a project to identify the hundreds of master's theses and doctoral dissertations on Kansas themes regardless of where they originate. The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:50 AM.

*Meeting minutes by*  
**Tom Schmiedeler**

January 24, 2008

**T**he luncheon meeting of the Center for Kansas Studies was held on Thursday, January 24. Present at the meeting were **Bob Lawson, Carol Yoho,**

**Tom Averill, Virgil Dean, Reinhold Janzen, Rachel Goosen, Amy Fleury, Marcia Cebulska, Marguerite Perret, Judy McConnell-Farmer,** and **Tom**

**Schmiedeler.**

**Director Tom Schmiedeler** discussed the current state of the Center budget and reminded Fellows of the

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## Fellows Meetings: *Minutes, cont.*

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upcoming Kansas Day presentation of Mike Hayden on Monday, January 28. He also called attention to the new Center for Kansas Studies banner that he had brought with him, which attractively displayed the Center home page logo in a 21 inch by 9 feet format. The banner was the collaborative creative work of **Carol Yoho** and **Bob Beatty**.

Among Fellows reporting news, **Marguerite Perret** announced that “Niche: Nature Morte in the Simulated Garden,” a mixed-media installation by her and Bruce Scherting in collaboration with **Betsy Roe**, will open to the public at Spooner Hall at K.U. on February 12. The opening reception is set for Thursday, February 7 from 3-5 PM. The installation presents “images of the tree of life as a symbolic construct and as an illustration of natural selection. The result is reminiscent of a strange fairy tale where the beautiful and peculiar occupy the same space.” **Reinhild Janzen** announced that the opening

reception for “Visual Encounters with Paraguay: Celebrating 40 Years of Kansas-Paraguay Partnership” will be on Friday, February 1 from 4:30 to 8:00 PM. Oscar Centurion, Cultural Counselor of the Embassy of Paraguay in Washington D.C. and visiting Paraguay sculpture artist, Gustavo Beckelman, will be special guests at the opening. There also will be an accompanying gallery talk at the Mulvane Art Museum on Thursday, January 31, from 12:15 to 1:00 PM at which Beckelman will discuss how the history, culture and politics of Paraguay is reflected in its art.

**Fellows Bill Wagnon, Marcia Cebulka** and **Bruce MacTavish** requested funding in the amount of \$3,000 for a collaborative project involving a full-scale play portrayal of the lives of fugitive slaves in Kansas and the roles played by both whites and blacks. The funds are an honorarium for playwright Cebulka to transform a document written by Lewis Bodwell, the Topeka Congregation minister who escorted a

family of “freedom seekers” from Topeka to Iowa in July 1858, into a docudrama composed of about a dozen scenes. A panel of outstanding scholars has been recruited to interact with the audience in a discussion about the elements introduced into the production by Cebulka. **Bruce MacTavish** has been actively involved in developing the program and will lead the panel discussion. Fellows approved \$2,500 for the project with the possibility of additional \$500 if it is available after the last spring meeting.

**Bob Beatty** and **Mark Peterson** requested funding in the amount of \$800 in support of the Kansas Congressional History Project. The resources will be used primarily for interviews with former Kansas Congressmen within the state. Fellows approved the funding request for the full amount. The meeting adjourned at approximately 1:45 PM.

*Meeting minutes by*  
**Tom Schmiedeler**

### December 6, 2007

**F**ellows of the Center for Kansas Studies met for their second fall semester meeting over breakfast at the Lincoln Room of the Union on December 6.

Fellows present at the meeting included **Carol Yoho, Mary Dorsey Wanless, Tom Averill, Bob Beatty, Rachel Goossen, Will Gilliland, Virgil Dean, Tom Schmiedeler, Patti Bender, Bob Lawson, Margy Stewart** and **Marcia Cebulka**. After the round table discussions of Fellow activities, **Director Tom Schmiedeler** announced funding was available

in the Center budget for projects. He reported that the program review was nearing completion due to the outstanding work of ad hoc committee members **Tom Averill, Rachel Goossen, Bob Beatty** and **Bill Roach**. He also announced that the Kansas Day speaker will be Secretary of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks and former governor, Mike Hayden. Secretary Hayden will give his presentation entitled “The Changing Face of Kansas” on Monday, January 28 at 3:30, location to be determined.

**Margy Stewart** announced a book project that is to be published by the Center. As Margy describes: “Before she passed away, one of my neighbors gave me a memoir written by her sister-in-law about growing up on a Flint Hills ranch in eastern Geary County in the 1920s. I read the memoir many times and found it to be captivating. Entitled “One Time on the Upper McDowell” and written by Helen Poole Tonish, it catches many of the tensions between homesteading and ranching, and between

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## Fellows Meetings: *Minutes, cont.*

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the demands of society and the attractions of the wild. The Center for Kansas Studies has agreed to publish this narrative, which can then be used in Washburn classes, as well as sold through historical societies throughout the Flint Hills. I intend to write a historical and critical introduction to accompany the book.

In other Fellow news, **Virgil Dean**, editor of *Kansas History* at the Kansas State Historical Society urged Fellows to explore the Historical Society's newest online resource, "Kansas Memory." The site utilizes a number of categories such as Built Environment, Agriculture, Community Life and Education, as well as featured items. **Tom Averill** reported that he is writing a forty-page contribution to the *Encyclopedia of Kansas Literature* for the Society of Midwestern Literature. Students in his *Kansas Characters* class will be giving their presentations on December 12 at 2:00 P.M. in the basement of Garvey Hall.

**Rachel Goossen** announced that history students will con-

tinue interviews of veterans and civilians of World War II as part of the Remembering World War II project. She also announced that a search is under way to hire a new faculty member to replace **Bill Wagnon** in the History Department and she encouraged Fellows to participate in History Day on Saturday, February 23. **Bob Beatty** mentioned that he is continuing to conduct interviews for his TV ads project.

In conjunction with a proposal by Bill Wagnon, **Marcia Cebulski** will be writing a multi-scene play about the decision of a slave family to flee Topeka on the Underground Railroad. The play is expected to be about an hour in length and will be followed by a panel of scholars led by **Fellow Bruce MacTavish**. The decision to have the Center provide additional funding for an honorarium for Marcia to write an expanded version of this play will be made at the January meeting. Marcia announced that she is also working on a sequel to "Through Martha's Eyes," which will air on PBS.

**Patti Bender** continues to teach her summer Lifetime Wellness course on outdoor activities with a Kansas emphasis. This summer it will be listed as 198k. She anticipates adding a companion trail book for the students to use and intends to teach a course *Kansas Outdoors* in the spring of 2009. **Marguerite Perret** reported that she will be teaching *Eco Art* in the spring semester and that author and art critique, Linda Weintraub will be at Washburn on March 26 and will be available for classes in the afternoon from 1-3. She will also present a public lecture at the Mulvane that evening. **Carol Yoho** recently completed an online version of the "Active Duty Memoirs" of her father Cleve T. Martin, who was a machinist's mate first class during World War II. Readers can access his story through Carol's web site home page <http://members.cox.net/cyoho/>

*Meeting minutes by*  
**Tom Schmiedeler**



Fish live at **Leland Harvey Garden**, south of Yager Stadium, a generous gift to Washburn honoring the memory of Leland Harvey by brother Robert M. Harvey and sister Sarah B. Harvey. Obsidian, black volcanic glass, similar in composition to granite, lines the pool and was mined in Colorado.



# Online Resources

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<http://deniselow.blogspot.com/>

Ad Astra Poetry Blog of Denise Low, Poet Laureate of Kansas 2007-09

[http://www.flickr.com/photos/civilwar\\_veterans\\_tombstones/sets/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/civilwar_veterans_tombstones/sets/)

Civil War Grave Markers in Kansas

<http://skyways.lib.ks.us/orgs/schs/preservation/photoarchive.html>

Preservation Photo Archive, Shawnee Co. Properties

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WASHBURN UNIVERSITY  
1700 SW COLLEGE AV  
TOPEKA, KANSAS 66621  
Department: Geography