

# Speaking of Kansas

## Washburn Center for Kansas Studies



## Kansas Studies Newsletter

Spring 2009

### Summer Semester 2009 Offerings:

- **EN 190/390 Kansas in the Movies**
  - 1:40-4:35 pm TWTh, 6/2 to 6/30 • Lecture • Thomas Averill
- **PE 198KA Outdoor Activities (with Kansas emphasis)**
  - 7:30-10:25 am TWTh, 6/2 to 6/30 • Lecture/Activity/Lab • Patti Bender

### Fall Semester 2009 Offerings:

- **GL 103C Historical Geology (with Kansas emphasis)**
  - 5:30-6:45 pm MW • 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

## Summer PE activities focuses on natural Kansas

**Patti Bender, Physical Education**, is teaching a summer session: **PE198KA**, a special Kansas Studies course section of Lifetime Wellness. Patti

would welcome any CKS Fellow to hike, bike or canoe along with the class, and sends photos of a past section of this course as incentive.



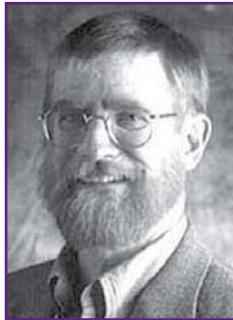
Tom Schmiedeler, Director  
785-670-1559  
tom.schmiedeler@washburn.edu

Deborah Altus, Human Services  
Sharon Ashworth, Biology  
Tom Averill, English  
Bob Beatty, Political Science  
Patti Bender, Health  
Roy Bird, KS State Library  
Marcia Cebulka, Playwright  
Jeannie Chinn, KSHS  
Marilyn Cott, KHC  
Charles Cranston, Mass Media  
Virgil Dean, KSHS  
Paul Fecteau, English  
David Feinmark, Mabee Library  
Jessie Fillerup, Music  
William Gilliland, Geology  
Rachel Goossen, History  
Chris Hamilton, Political Science  
Robert Hull, Finance  
Reinhild Janzen, Art  
Jim Kelly, KTWU  
David Kendall, KTWU  
Robert Lawson, English  
Gabrielle Lunte, Modern Languages  
Bruce Mactavish, History  
Judith McConnell-Farmer, Education  
Marguerite Perret, Art  
Mark Peterson, Political Science  
J. Karen Ray, English  
Leslie Reynard, Communication  
William Roach, Business  
Betsy Kanabe Roe, Art  
Tom Schmiedeler, Geography  
Bradley Siebert, English  
Sarah Smarsh, English  
Loran Smith, Political Science  
Margaret Stewart, English  
Sara Tucker, History  
William Wagnon, History  
Marydorsey Wanless, Art  
Margaret Wood, Soc./Anthropology  
Carol Yoho, Art

Center for Kansas Studies  
www.washburn.edu/cks

## Summer movies

**Tom Fox Averill, English**, is teaching a summer session: **EN 190/390, Kansas in the Movies**, the study of Kansas literature, Kansas film and Kansas culture in the 20th Century—the century of the movies—Kansas in the Movies helps us understand the unique role of Kansas in American popular culture. From *The Wizard of Oz* to Westerns to small town smugness, from con men to freedom riders, Kansas in the Movies reels in the adventure that is Kansas.



**Summer 2009—Discover Kansas!**

*Have you watched The Wizard of Oz with Dark Side of the Moon as the soundtrack?*



And your little dog, too!



Mitchkins/Money

*Do you know why Kansas is setting to more kinds of Westerns than any other state?*



Hole in the Devil



Hollow Town

*Is Kansas a Northern or a Southern state in cultural and racial attitudes?*



The Learning Tree



Gordon Parks

*Did Truman Capote change Kansas, or did Kansas change Truman Capote?*



In Cold Blood



After Kansas

**Kansas in the Movies—EN 190/390—taught by Tom Averill**  
First Five Weeks, T/W/Th 1:40-4:35 p.m., 6/2 to 6/30, 2009

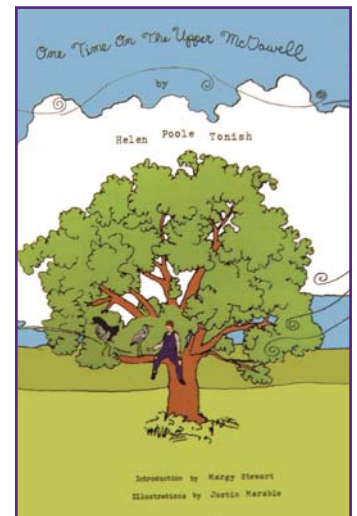
## Once Time on the Upper McDowell

**The Center for Kansas Studies** and the **Woodley Press** are working with Fellow **Margy Stewart, English**, on a new memoir, **One Time on the Upper McDowell**, by Helen Poole Tonish. Professor Stewart wrote an introduction to the work.



**Helen Poole Tonish** was born on McDowell Creek in rural Geary County, Kansas, in 1919, the oldest child of John and Minna Germann Poole and granddaughter of William Davis Poole, an Irish settler who came to Kansas aboard the steamboat Hartford in 1855. The family history since 1855 parallels the growth of cattle ranching in the northern Flint Hills, while the memoir itself conveys the joys of country life as well as the challenges of living on the land in a drought year during the Depression. Especially poignant is the story of the author's younger brother Bill and his orphaned pet, a great blue heron. The book as a whole gives us a glimpse of the varying influences exerted by a growing agro-industrial complex and the wondrous tall grass prairie—the wild and ancient ecosystem that was the foundation of the cattle industry.

Helen grew up in the house her father built in 1914 and rode her horse to the Briggs School, several miles away. As a child she raised Hereford calves for 4-H and learned to play the piano from her mother's sister, Louisa Germann Poole. Music became a lifelong interest. She was able to attend high school by staying with a relative in town and later earned a degree from Kansas State Agricultural College, now Kansas State University. Her first teaching job was in Culver, Kansas. Following the gender-segregation common in public schools at that time, she taught mathematics only to boys and home-economics only to girls. While teaching in Junction City, she met her future husband, a lieutenant stationed at Ft. Riley. After World War II, Edward Tonish became a school principal, while Helen continued teaching. The couple raised two daughters, Marsha and Barbara. Widowed in 1995, Helen Poole Tonish lives today in Broomfield, Colorado. She continues to play the piano.



Books will be available soon at the Washburn University Bookstore and can be purchased online. Google “Woodley Press.”





## The House Rules

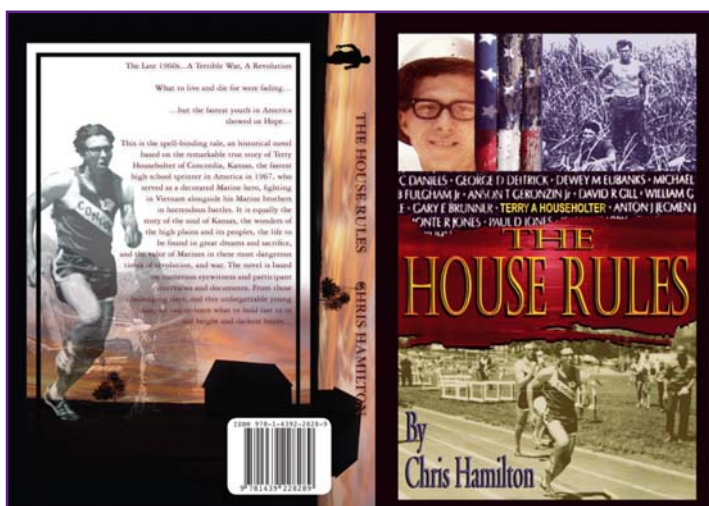
**Chris Hamilton, Political Science**, has published his new historical novel, **The House Rules**, with BookSurge.com.

This is the story of Terry Householter, America's fastest high school sprinter in 1967, and a decorated Marine hero in Vietnam. It also is the story of Kansas people, a town and generation in those desperate times of war and social revolution, the wonders of the high plains, and the valor of Marines. Terry and his school-mates are forever altered by the creeping "Storm" of Vietnam, and the late 1960s societal conflicts. No choir-boy, Terry, without a father and raised by grandparents, very poor, becomes a charismatic but quiet ally to "average guys," inspiring people on all sides.



Terry leads his track team to towering achievements. He, amazingly, turns down national track scholarships and joins the Marines.

Terry and his Marine squad fight a horrendous, fateful battle only two weeks before his return home; Terry dies earning the Bronze Star for valor. The novel shows how people across forty years are still discovering ways Terry showed others to live well, be a true friend and remember things which need to be remembered in both our bright and darkest hours.



Chris plans to display the book at Kansas Sampler Festival on May 2, and at the Washburn Bookstore on May 7.

## Former Governor Mike Hayden

**Bob Beatty, Political Science**, will have his article, "Being close to the People?: A Conversation with Former Governor Mike Hayden," published in the spring 2009 issue of **Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains** (see <http://www.kshs.org/publicat/history/new.htm>). It is the fourth and, perhaps, final installment in the special series of articles, based on his gubernatorial interviews, which Bob has been editing for Kansas History for more than a year. This conversation



with Mike Hayden, former state legislator, governor, and now Secretary of Wildlife and Parks, explores issues such as property tax reappraisal, capital punishment, and highway construction. Hayden, a Rawlins County farm boy who served a tour of duty in Vietnam, 1969-1970, was first elected to the state legislature while attending graduate school at Fort Hays in 1972. He served as speaker of the house from 1983 to 1986, and defeated incumbent Lieutenant Governor Tom Docking to become the state's forty-first governor in January 1987. As with the previous interviews, the edited article and the interview transcripts, along with selections from the video and audio recordings, are available through the Kansas Historical Society's "Kansas Memory" web site.

—**Virgil W. Dean**, *Kansas History* editor



# Kansas Film Censorship

This book review first appeared in *Great Plains Quarterly*, Winter 2009, Volume 29, Number 1, pp. 73-74. Author is Thomas Fox Averill, English.

***Banned in Kansas: Motion Picture Censorship, 1915-1966.*** By Gerald R. Butters, Jr. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2007. xvi + 348 pp. Photographs, notes, appendix, bibliography, index. \$44.95.

**F**rom 1915 to 1966, Kansas maintained an active film censorship board, empowered by the legislature to review each film that might be shown in the state. The board could accept the film, remove scenes or titles (and, when pictures began to talk, objectionable language), or reject the film entirely—hence the title of Butters’ book, ***Banned in Kansas***.

In 1920, the Kansas Board of Review first published its official standards. These included the positive: a film should be wholesome, and should not ridicule any religious sect or race of people. But the “shall nots” quickly asserted themselves: no debasing of morals, no evil or suggestive dress, no depiction of infidelity in marriage, no nudity, no alcohol, no settings where people are drinking or gambling or “cigarette smoking.” In addition: no crime, violence, passionate love scenes, dance halls, white slavery or seduction and betrayal of innocence.

Gerald Butters has meticulously researched the history of Kansas film censorship. He enhances his archival research with film advertising, letters to the editor, editorials and newspaper coverage of the Board’s activities. He also recreates the regional and national climate. Kansas was not the only state, nor the first, to censor films. The film industry tried to self-censor, thus avoiding the problems created by censorship boards.

Film history is as complicated as the attempts to direct and censor movies, either by the industry itself or by Kansas. Movies were, and still are, big business. By 1910, a quarter of the American population saw a movie at least once a week. By 1920, film production was the fifth largest industry in the U.S. Then, as now, huge divides in politics, religion, artistic sensibility, region and taste made uniform judgment and standards nearly impossible, whether for Kansas or the nation. After the Prohibition, after two World Wars, as foreign films flooded the American market, as levels of education and financial security increased, as individual rights were strengthened in education, the workplace and in other mediums—particularly publishing—censorship of films was narrowed to a single standard by the U.S. Supreme Court. A film would be judged as a whole, and only censored if “obscene,” meaning that “to the average person, applying contemporary community standards, the dominant theme of the material taken as a whole appeals to prurient interest.”

By the mid-1960s, Kansas censors (historically they were women, and political appointees) viewed between 300-400 films a year and rejected or censored fewer than ten. In 1966, Shawnee County District Court Judge Marion Beatty ruled the state statute that had created censorship to be invalid. By then, Kansans inside and outside the movie industry had tried for years to dismantle the Board of Review. In 1968, the Motion Picture Association of America adopted their rating system based on the age of the viewer. Kansans who had called all along for the protection of their children could act as their own censors.

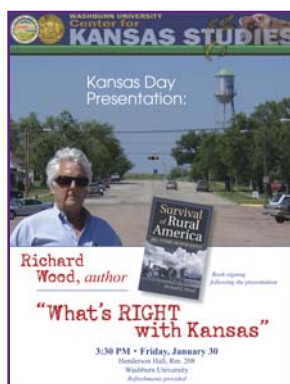
This long and complicated history is not only well-researched, but thoroughly documented in what will be a valuable reference book. In

## Kansas Film Censorship, *cont.*

his conclusion, Butters notes that his book is a contribution toward further scholarship. He also writes of a visit to the firehouse in Kansas City where the Board had its office. There, he imagines “the ‘tsk-tsk’ from a disgruntled female censor.” Such imagining belittles the social complexities of censorship, and demonstrates Butters’ problem with tone throughout the book: most often he comprehends with real insight, but sometimes he playfully dismisses the ardent and now-quaint fight against the prolonged kiss, or the phrase, “By God!” The story of censorship can seem repetitious—the excision of yet another curse word, bare breast, or bottle of alcohol.

Butters’ writing, too, suffers from repetition, especially in the transitions between chapters. The book might have sought more balance, between fact and analysis, between the first twelve years of Kansas film censorship, over half the book, and the final 38 years.

Those quibbles aside, Butters has given back to the region an almost lost history. And though he is looking at film censorship, his subject suggests provocative social history. Banned in Kansas is significant to our understanding of the culture wars still being fought, whether in politics, public schools, or on the big screen. 🌀



## Kansas Day Celebration:

Jan. 30, 2009

Guest was: **Richard Wood**  
author of  
*Survival of Rural America*





# Fellows Meetings: *Minutes*

April 16, 2009

**F**ellows of the Center for Kansas Studies met for a breakfast meeting on Thursday, April 9, with Fellows **Tom Averill, Rachel Goossen, Will Gilliland, Marcia Cebulska, Carol Yoho, Mark Peterson, Margy Stewart, Bill Roach, Bob Lawson, David Feinmark** and **Tom Schmiedeler** present. After a round-the-table discussion of current activities and events, Director **Tom Schmiedeler** reported that the Center budget allowance had been exhausted for the current fiscal year and that a small part of the allocations made this year will be carried over into the new budget beginning July 1. **Margy Stewart** announced that the memoir of Helen Poole Tonish, *Once Upon a Time on the Upper McDowell* has been published by the Center for Kansas Studies and Woodley Press. Margy wrote the introduction to the work about growing up on a Flint Hills ranch in the early 1930s.

**Marcia Cebulska** announced that on April 29 at 12 noon she and **Tom Prasch** will present slides and discuss their research trip to Mexico for "The Bones of the Butterflies," a play Marcia is writing. A light lunch will be served at the event. **Tom Averill** mentioned that several of his "garden stories" have been accepted for publication and that he will teach the course "Kansas in the Movies" this summer. He also announced that for this fall's faculty colloquium, organized by Tom

Prasch, he is preparing an essay "Fossil Evidence."

**Rachel Goossen** mentioned that statewide History Day on April 25 will be held on the Washburn campus, and that she will be teaching a new class, "History of American Childhood." **David Feinmark** reported the forthcoming donation of **Tom Averill's** collection of Kansas-related books to Mabee library. His collection will augment the library's current collection of theses and dissertations on Kansas themes and complement the papers of Congresswoman Nancy Boyda recently acquired by the library. A political science intern, funded by a grant from the Center, has been working on the cataloguing of those papers.

**Mark Peterson** noted that an ad hoc committee has developed a conference to be held at Washburn, September 22 and 23, 2009, commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the implementation of the Philadelphia Plan of affirmative action, which was led by Arthur Fletcher, (BA '50) who was then Assistant Secretary of Labor in the Nixon Administration. Professor Gerald Torres, co-author of *The Miner's Canary*, will deliver the keynote address on the night of the 22nd at an event jointly sponsored by WU and the Brown Foundation. It will be open to the general public. The program on the 23rd will include several panels of paper presentations and a roundtable discussion

on the past, present, and future of Affirmative Action. Invited participants include Professors Dean Kotlowksi, author of *Nixon's Civil Rights*, and Mary Frances Berry, author of *And Justice for All: The United States Commission on Civil Rights and the Continuing Struggle for Freedom in America*. Professor Berry succeeded Fletcher as Chairman of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

Among agenda items, **Marcia Cebulska** requested funding in the amount of \$200 for the compensation of the work of Martin Wisneski of Technical Support at the Law School, who has expended much time and effort disseminating Marcia's "Brown vs. Board" script to schools, churches, NAACP chapters and other organizations. Marcia noted that copies are free for in-classroom and non-professional performances and that she donates royalties for these performances. In the past two years the program has reached more than 2,300 venues. **Carol Yoho** also requested funding in the amount of \$150 for adult speaker support or for youth contest writing awards for the 2009 meeting of the Kansas Authors Club to be held in Topeka. Fellows approved both requests for funding from the 2009-2010 fiscal year budget.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50.

*Meeting minutes by*  
**Tom Schmiedeler**

January 29, 2009

**F**ellows of the Center for Kansas Studies met on Thursday, January 29 for a luncheon meeting in the Lincoln Room of the Washburn Union.

Present at the meeting were **Sarah Smarsh, Marydorsey Wanless, Will Gilliland, Rachel Goossen, Judy McConnell-Farmer, David Feinmark, Carol Yoho, Marcia**

**Cebulska** and **Tom Schmiedeler**. Director **Tom Schmiedeler** mentioned that approximately \$1,500 remained in the center budget and

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## Fellows Meetings: *Minutes, cont.*

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that he had received unanimous support from about fifteen fellows to continue on as director of the Center for an additional three-year term. He also announced that the Kansas Day presentation, “Survival of Rural America: What’s Right with Kansas” by Richard Wood was the following day beginning at 3:30 in Henderson Hall, room 208. Tom also mentioned that **Tom Averill**, in absentia, continues to work on publication of the Flint Hills memoir for which **Margy Stewart** has written an introduction. **Carol Yoho** will create a web presence for the book via the Map of Kansas Literature and the Center’s web site. Tom continues his commentaries as the old Kansan, William Jennings Bryan Oleander.

**Sarah Smarsh** requested funding in the amount of \$200 for a day-long campus visit by nonfic-

tion writer Joe Miller of Kansas City who wrote the acclaimed book, *Cross X*, about an award-winning debate team from a largely black and crumbing east Kansas City high school. Miller’s visit will be coordinated with the creative writing program’s first nonfiction workshop this spring. Sarah anticipates class room visits and an evening reading by Miller. Fellows voted to fund the visit at the requested amount.

**David Feinmark** from Mabee Library presented an update on the progress of the records transfer of former Congresswoman Nancy Boyda’s papers to Washburn. The Center is providing funding for archival filing and organization of the papers. David also mentioned that Mabee is initiating a server as an institutional repository for any writing or publishing related to Washburn. Playwright **Marcia**

**Cebulska** reported on her trip to see monarch butterflies in the mountains of Central Mexico over the holidays. She participated in one commercial tour and “lucked out” with a free private tour with a biologist and conservationist. In conjunction with this experience, Marcia has written a draft of a play whose central character studies monarch butterflies that migrate from Mexico to Kansas. At the first fall meeting on September 11, 2008, Fellows approved \$500 for the trip to the El Rosario Butterfly Reserve and an additional \$500 pending availability for writing the play. With funds available, Marcia will receive the second allocation.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:00.

*Meeting minutes by*  
**Tom Schmiedeler**

### November 20, 2008

**F**ellows of the Center for Kansas Studies met for a breakfast meeting on Thursday, November 20. Present were **Tom Averill, Margy Stewart, Rachel Goossen, Patti Bender, Bob Beatty, Bob Lawson, Marguerite Perret, Bill Roach, David Feinmark, Carol Yoho, Alan Bearman** and **Tom Schmiedeler**. Director, **Tom Schmiedeler**, spoke briefly regarding the Center budget and announced that Richard Wood will be the Kansas Day speaker. His presentation will be on his recent book, *Survival of Rural America: Small Victories and Bitter Harvests*, on Friday, January 30, at 3:30 P.M., tentatively scheduled for room 208, Henderson. Tom also reported that the Porubsky

Grocery film project received a tremendous boost from a Kansas Humanities Council grant of over \$8,000. Matt Porubsky thanked the Center for its contributions to the KHC grant proposal and for our “help in general, and faith in the project.” Tom also requested funding in the amount of \$100 for transportation costs associated with two day trips to county seats on his town form project for Kansas. His request was approved by Fellows.

In other news, **David Feinmark** provided a list to Fellows of new Mabee Library acquisitions in support of the Center for Kansas Studies. The list is noted for several earlier Ph.D dissertations. **Tom Averill** announced

that he will be completing work on two novels during his academic sabbatical in the spring of 2009. **Patti Bender** announced that the summer lifetime wellness course for Kansas Studies will be offered twice this summer, once during each of the five-week sessions. It now has the designation “K” so that it can be found easier. She also announced the possibility of a new course, perhaps titled “Kansas Outdoors,” as a one-credit elective with possible collaborative opportunities.

**Bob Beatty** reported that he and Fellow **Virgil Dean** have initiated a book project on the Kansas Governors from 1961-2011. It will be based on the ongoing inter

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## Fellows Meetings: *Minutes, cont.*

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views that Beatty and Dean have been conducting with Kansas' six living governors. Center for Kansas Studies Fellows voted to support the project with a small grant to purchase books and research papers on Kansas governors and related subjects. Bob, along with Alan Bearman, Interim Dean of Mabee Library, also announced that they have received a proposal from an elected official

to house the papers of the official at Mabee Library. Alan mentioned that the papers could greatly enhance the stature of Mabee and Washburn as a place to study politics and also stimulate research projects for transformational students. To digitize the papers and make them available across the state, however, would require the paid assistance of several student workers. He proposed that if the

Center were to grant \$1,000 for the project, Mabee Library would match that grant with funds from the Library Endowment. Fellows voted to allocate the money pending acquisition of the papers by Mabee.

*Meeting minutes by*  
**Tom Schmiedeler**



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Speaking of Kansas  
Spring 2009  
Center for Kansas Studies

Department: Geography

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