

State Library Has New Communications Director

by Janie Rutherford, Communications Specialist

After a three-year hiatus from state government, I'm happy to be back in the Statehouse, on the third floor in the State Library of Kansas serving as the Communications Specialist for the Talking Books Program.

Most recently, I handled marketing for the United Way of Greater Topeka, managing the media relations, public relations, and special event planning for the organization that services Topeka and its surrounding counties. The best thing about that job was the compassionate, caring people that I was privileged to work with at the more than 30 local agencies United Way funds. Topekans really do care about each other.

Before United Way, I worked at several half-time positions, writing special projects for the Kansas State Department of Education, handling client development work for a law firm, and doing a little lobbying. I've freelanced for a variety of start-up companies, non-profit associations, federally-funded programs, and a local public relations and marketing firm. As you can surmise, I like to keep busy.

From 2001 to 2005 I served as communications director for the Senate President's Office and Senate President Dave Kerr of Hutchinson. Working with the Senate Republicans was a great time, working in the most beautiful (and getting more beautiful) building in the State of Kansas. Joining the State Library staff and coming back to the State Capitol is like coming home.

Speaking of home, I have two sons who attend Kansas State University, which is also my alma mater. My older son Rob is finishing his second year and is majoring in economics. He is threatening me with attending Law School. My younger son James is finishing his first year at KSU. He is majoring in mechanical engineering and performance music. He has played the double bass since fourth grade and currently is principal bassist in the KSU Symphony.



Rob, my husband, and I have been married for 23 years and live in the Shawnee Heights area. Rob is a native Topekan, having grown up in the Highland Park area. He worked in the printing industry for many years, most recently at Cardinal Brands (used to be known as Adams Business Forms) as their Materials/Import Manager. Cardinal sold at the end of 2007, so my husband is currently looking for employment. He has great printing, purchasing and management skills.

We also have a slightly schizophrenic cat that I call "baby girl." Since she is the only other female in my household, she and I stick together.

My hobbies include collecting antique cookbooks—current collection numbers about 300; and I love to read. I usually have an audio book going in the car, a book by my bed, and one next to my chair in the living room. Have I mentioned that I love working in a library!

I'm very happy to be on the staff here at the library, and if I can be of any help to anyone, please just ask.