

Meeting of Kansas Center for the Book

by Roy Bird, Director, Kansas Center for the Book

The Board of Affiliates of the Kansas Center for the Book (KCFB), a program of the State Library of Kansas, held its first meeting on Tuesday, December 13, 2005, in Marvin Auditorium at the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library. The KCFB Board of Affiliates consists of representatives of each of the Affiliates who have joined the Center to promote Kansas books, Kansas authors and literary efforts in the state. As of December 13, a total of 37 libraries, library systems, organizations, booksellers and publishers have joined the Kansas Center for the Book.

About 30 representatives and State Library staff gathered at 10:00 am. After introductions, State Librarian Christie Pearson Brandau presented her vision of what the Center for the Book is and what it does. This vision included a statewide book festival. She then turned the meeting over to the appointed chair person, Cynthia Berner Harris of Wichita Public Library. The State Library's Special Projects Director, Vikki Jo Stewart, discussed One Book, One State projects, and the KCFB Director, Roy Bird, provided a brief update of activities of the Center since its move to the State Library last summer. Assisted by North Central Kansas Library System representative Carol Barta, the Affiliates brainstormed about what will be needed to make a successful book festival.

During a working lunch, the Affiliates' representatives divided into two groups based on interest. One group discussed an adult one book, one state project while the other discussed a notable books project to be completed in time for the book festival. The entire group then came back together to compare their discussions. In addition, an ad hoc committee of volunteers agreed to prepare by-laws and a mission statement. This committee and the two working groups that are planning the adult one book project and the notable books project will report back to the Board of Affiliates at its next meeting, which will be Friday, February 17, 2006, at 10:00 am at Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library.

In other KCFB news, the deadline for the Letters About Literature reading and writing initiative, which began in August, came on December 1, 2005. This initiative invites students grades 4-12 in elementary, middle school, and high school levels to write to an author, contemporary or in the past, about how the author's books have impacted their lives. While at this writing not all of the individual entries had been opened, an initial tally showed a 351% increase in entries from Kansas over last year's initiative. The state winners will be honored at the Kansas authors dinner at the annual Triconference and awarded a minimum of a \$250 cash award and a \$50 Target giftcard.

If you would like more information about Letters About Literature or if your library or organization is interested in becoming an Affiliate of the Kansas Center for the Book, contact Roy Bird, KCFB Director, royb@kslib.info or call at 800/432-3919.