

Exciting Plans are Being Made for Kansas Book Festival

by Roy Bird, Director, Kansas Center for the Book

The book festival has another new name—it is now officially the Kansas Book Festival: Celebrating Books, Art and Kansas Heritage! We are planning the Kansas Book Festival with programming on four stages for both Friday and Saturday, September 29-30. It will include hourly programs for grades K-3, 4-8, retired persons, and general audiences. The Governor's Council on Cultural Affairs, which includes the State Library and KCFB (Kansas Center for the Book), met April 5 in Wichita. Council members viewed the Lawrence-Dumont Stadium where the event will be held, then adjourned to the Wichita Public Library where library director Cynthia Berner-Harris was host. Lunch was provided to the Wichita Convention & Visitors Bureau so that additional plans could be made. Deposits for the stadium, part of Century II (for rainout), and stages and tents for pavilions will be made soon. Marketing and fundraising is beginning right away.

Authors and programmers for the stages and for the State Library and KCFB pavilion are currently being invited. Programs the Center for the Book is responsible for will include author Kirby Ross, children's librarian, who will read *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, children's author Brad Sneed demonstrating book illustration, author and cowboy poet Jim Hoy, Western author Don Coldsmith, Kansas guidebook author Marci Penner, PBS children's characters such as Clifford the Big Red Dog, novelist Thomas Fox Averill, and Ann Parr who authored a children's biography of Gordon Parks.

Friday evening during the Kansas Book Festival will be a special time. The **Black, White and READ All Over Ball** will be held at the Exploration Place about two blocks from the stadium. Tickets to the formal ball will be \$40 each, and the venue will hold about 400. The premier event that evening will be formal recognition of the Kansas Notable Books List and the authors of the books selected. Donna Tucker and her jazz ensemble will perform, Kansas wines will be provided by Wyldewood Cellars and two excellent caterers and bar services for the open bar are being considered.

The **Kansas Notable Book List** is being prepared. The committee consists of six representatives of the Board of Affiliates and one from *The Wichita Eagle*. They are considering an initial bibliography of almost 60 books by Kansans or about Kansas that were published in 2005. The committee has met twice and will recommend up to 20 titles plus five alternates to the State Librarian for a final decision.

The Kansas Center for the Book had a successful three-day stay at the annual library Tri-Conference the first week in April. The KCFB staff and Fellows of KCFB shared duties at one table of the State Library booth all three days. KCFB prepared its "Basket O' Books" featuring

10 books by Fellows of KCFB, Starbucks coffee, mug and chocolate for the KLA basket fundraiser. The Kansas Authors Dinner was hosted by KCFB for the first time, and sponsored by Baker & Taylor Company. The event featured 19 working Kansas authors, two of the three Letters About Literature state winners, and the introduction of the KCFB quilt being prepared by Rosanne Siemens. A new Affiliate and several new Fellows joined the effort to promote Kansas authors, Kansas books, libraries, booksellers, publishers and literary events.