

Kansas Notable Books List for 2008 Has Been Announced

by Roy Bird, Director, Kansas Center for the Book

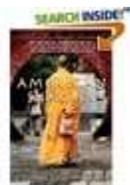
On June 22, three newspapers ran exclusive feature stories announcing the Kansas Center for the Book's (KCFB) 2008 Kansas Notable Books List. *The Kansas City Star*, *The Wichita Eagle* and *The Topeka Capital-Journal* ran exclusives following e-mail announcements to KCFB Affiliates and on Kanlib-L. This third annual roll of honor includes fiction, nonfiction, adult and children's books, each of which was published during 2007 and identified as outstanding for different reasons.

A committee of the KCFB identified the titles and submitted them to the State Librarian, Christie Brandau, for the final decision. The 2008 Kansas Notable Book advisory committee included representatives from academic, public and regional libraries, authors, booksellers, publishers, and the media. Press releases went out across the state to other daily and weekly newspapers on June 23. The news release is available on the State Library of Kansas website under News. More about the Notable Books project can be viewed on the Kansas Center for the Book website at www.kcfb.info.

The authors of the 15 Kansas Notable Books will be honored at a reception hosted by the State Library of Kansas late this summer and again at an evening gala at the River City Reading Festival in Lawrence on September 26.

Begun in 2005, with the first titles announced in 2006, the Kansas Notable Books List has quickly become a highly respected honor among the state's writers. The project was singled out along with others in the citation for the Kansas Center's 2008 Boorstin Center for the Book Award, the highest accolade a state center for the book can receive. Authors, booksellers, publishers and librarians have featured Notable Books in presentations, displays, and literary events around the state. Authors of Notable Books have appeared at many venues in the state as well.

The 2008 Kansas Notable Books List continues to raise awareness of the great activity in the state's literary community.



American Shaolin: Flying Kicks, Buddhist Monks, and the Legend of Iron Crotch: An Odyssey in the New China, by Matthew Polly. Leaving college behind, Topekan Matthew Polly journeys to a storied temple in China where he undergoes two years of awe-inspiring physical and mental conditioning in this

nonfiction true tale.

The Boy Who Was Raised by Librarians, illustrated by Brad Sneed. This children's book follows the school-age years and beyond of a student named Melvin to show that there is no question too large or too unusual that can't be answered by reference librarians, who sometimes inspire as well as inform.





Can I Keep My Jersey? 11 Teams, 5 Countries, and 4 Years in My Life as a Basketball Vagabond, by Paul Shirley. This lively nonfiction American-abroad insider pro-sports book traces the up-and-down career of Paul Shirley, a Kansas farm boy who becomes an Iowa State basketball starter, professional basketball

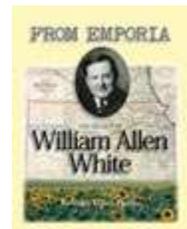
player and sports analyst.

The Curse of Catunkhamun, by Tim Raglin. In this children’s book, feline villains plot to turn all dogs into zombies. Only two canine detectives can solve the mystery of the Golden Bone of Catunkhamun (pronounced cat-un-common) and thwart the evil scheme.



The Farther Shore, by Matthew Eck. In this adrenaline-filled critically acclaimed novel, Matthew Eck puts readers inside the mind of a young man caught in the fog of the unexpected battle of Mogadishu, the most intense combat Americans had engaged in since Vietnam.

From Emporia: The Story of William Allen White, by Beverley O. Buller. This book by a Kansas school librarian and chair of the William Allen White Children’s Book Award selection committee shares the life of the man who helped shape Kansas history and literature for future generations. This book was written because there was no children’s biography of Emporian William Allen White.



Hellfire Canyon, by Max McCoy. This book, which has also won a Spur Award from the Western Writers Association, is based on the true story of Branson area serial killer Alf Bolin and follows a young man’s quest for vengeance which makes him desperate enough to go undercover and join Bolin’s gang during the

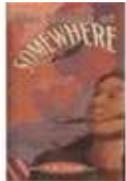
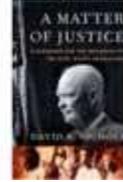
troubled Civil War years.

Hunger for the Wild: America’s Obsession with the Untamed West, by Michael L. Johnson. A University of Kansas English professor offers a monumental cultural and historical analysis of how ideas of wilderness have shaped the ways Americans have perceived the West for nearly 500 years, from Disneyfied frontier to Ralphlaurenized range, from UFO fanatics to post-regional cowgirls.



The Kitchen Sink: New and Selected Poems, 1972-2007, by Albert Goldbarth. Wichita State University Distinguished Professor Albert Goldbarth has in a 35-year career created an erudite, copious, hilarious, and heartbreaking style, epitomized by his newest work with selections of earlier poetry, ranging from brief, flickering lyric to long, narrative sequences.

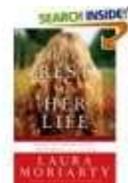
A Matter of Justice: Eisenhower and the Beginning of the Civil Rights Revolution, by David A. Nichols. The former academic dean at Southwestern College in Winfield and leading authority on Eisenhower, David A. Nichols draws on archival documents, including newly available material from the Eisenhower Presidential Library, to take readers inside the Oval Office as Ike worked behind the scenes to desegregate the District of Columbia and complete the desegregation of the armed forces.



The Middle of Somewhere, by J.B. Cheaney. See what happens when a 12-year-old girl hits the road on a jaunt across Kansas in an RV with her cantankerous, wind-prospecting grandfather and hyperactive little brother. She learns that there are some things that cannot be controlled and that sometimes a little chaos is just

what a girl needs.

The Rest of Her Life, by Laura Moriarty. Bestselling Lawrence author Laura Moriarty explores the complex moral dilemma of parents being sued for actions of a teenager, how all families involved cope with a terrible accident, and the tenuous mother/daughter relationship that remains.



Sea Monsters: Prehistoric Creatures of the Deep, by Michael J. Everhart. Paleontologist Mike Everhart returns to the Kansas Notable Books List with his second book, the official companion book to the National Geographic film “Sea Monsters.” The book explores the relatively unknown world of marine reptiles that lived at the same time dinosaurs roamed the land, the sea monsters depicted in the film, the paleontologists who discovered and studied their fossils, why they

disappeared, and the making of the film.

Storm Chaser: A Photographer's Journey, by Jim Reed. Wichitan Jim Reed shares his best photographic images and his experiences as he tracked severe weather across the country, while explaining why the weather that was once reported after the news is today often the news itself. This is a beautiful picture book about some of the most powerful and deadly phenomena in the US.



Writing in an Age of Silence, by Sara Paretsky. Best known for her bestselling mysteries, including the V.I. Warshawski novels, the native of Lawrence turns her attention in this nonfiction work to five different periods of her life: the traditions of her childhood in Kansas, the political climate of the 1960s, the awakening of her own feminism, the attack on civil liberties, and our obsession with terrorism

and biological