

Topeka's Summer Reading Program Features the City of Topeka

by Diana Friend, Manager of Public Information, Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library

As the kids head out the door looking for summer fun and adventures, the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library's summer reading program will encourage summertime reading, special entertainment programs and the opportunity to travel to seven community tourist attractions. Beginning May 31 and continuing through August 1, 2006, children and young adults 18 years of age and under, will have a great adventure reading this summer and have the opportunity to participate in 89 special programs.

This year the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library has created a program "**Readings from Topeka—Put Yourself in the Picture**" to learn and visit the quality attractions in our community. Traveling around Topeka, our participants will be able to learn more about Topeka, the history and the entertainment the city offers. And, just like when you are on vacation, promotional materials feature "postcards" of Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site, Old Prairie Town, Topeka Zoological Park, Great Overland Station, Kansas Museum of History, Museum of the Kansas National Guard, and Heartland Park Speedway. Each site will present a program at the library and then go to the site by riding the Topeka Trolley to and from the site.

Youth Services Manager Jeff Dawson is working closely with the Shawnee County schools to support the goal of maintaining students' reading levels through the summer months. The library's summer reading program keeps reading fun and offers prize incentives for children who complete the program. The summer reading program is targeted to appeal to preschool, elementary and young adult youth.

"This is an excellent summer reading theme and working with local partners is fantastic," said Dawson. "I am optimistic it could lead to future program partnerships with the local school districts, and will ultimately involve many more children than the library could hope to reach alone."

A summer reading schedule was distributed earlier this month at all Shawnee County elementary schools. Schedules are also available at the library, on the web site: <http://www.tscpl.org/events/summer2006.htm>, and on the bookmobiles. Many programs require registration, which began on Wednesday, May 31.