Kansas Reads…*The Virgin of Small Plains*

by Roy Bird, Director, Kansas Center for the Book

Nancy Pickard

Kansas Reads…*The Virgin of Small Plains*, the 2009 Kansas Center for the Book (KCFB) one-book/one-state adult reading and discussion project, will be launched on Kansas Day, January 29, and runs through March 15, 2009. This is the third annual book discussion project of Kansas Center for the Book.

The **Kansas Reads…*The Virgin of Small Plains*** project began with the recommendation of the title by the committee which worked on the *In Cold Blood* project in 2008, along with three other titles. *The Virgin of Small Plains*, a 2007 Kansas Notable Book by famous Kansas author Nancy Pickard, was selected by Christie Brandau, State Librarian. Work began in May, 2008, for the 2009 book discussion project.

Carol Barta of NCKLS agreed to chair this year's Kansas Reads committee. Also on the committee are: the author herself, Nancy Pickard; Maria Butler, Lawrence Public Library; Marolyn Caldwell, Great Manhattan Mystery Conclave; Stormy Lee Kennedy, Claflin Books and Copies; Royce Kitts, Tonganoxie Public Library; Cheryl Larson, Pittsburg High School Library; Carol Ann Robb, Pittsburg Public Library; George Seamon, NWKLS; Joan Weaver, Kinsley Library; and Julie Mulvihill and Dan Carey Whalen, Kansas Humanities Council.

Partners have shared in presenting this bestselling book in many formats. Audio-Reader Network has recorded it and it is available as a Talking Book for those unable to read print. Thorndike Press has reprinted it in large print for the many readers who use that format.

The Kansas Humanities Council trained new book discussion leaders using *The Virgin of Small Plains* and awarded a grant to have four of those scholars conduct discussions at eight libraries around the state. Four of these programs will be broadcast via Enhanced Library Meeting Rooms (ELMeRs) to reach even broader audiences.

In addition to public libraries, others are participating in **Kansas Reads…*The Virgin of Small Plains***. High schools can find an educator tool kit on the website at www.kcfb.info. Some school librarians are organizing faculty book discussions in their buildings. Some of the bookseller affiliates of KCFB are offering discounts for copies of the book and assisting in arranging the book discussions in their communities and at distances.

Plan to join libraries, humanists, booksellers, educators, and Kansans around the state for **Kansas Reads…*The Virgin of Small Plains***. Read the novel, then join the discussion nearest you between January 29 and March 15, 2009!