

## **2007 Kansas Book Festival - Bigger and Better!**

by Roy Bird, Director, Kansas Center for the Book

The second annual Kansas Book Festival at Koch Arena on the campus of Wichita State University (WSU) on Friday, October 5, and Saturday, October 6, was better attended than the first Festival in 2006 with high quality programs and events for all!



*Kimberli Talcott of the State Library of Kansas staff provides information to visitors at the Kansas Center for the Book booth at the 2007 Kansas Book Festival.*

Festival producers and partners estimate that attendance was above the first state book festival in 2006, which had over 7,500 persons attend. The free festival was a celebration of books, arts and Kansas heritage. It featured readings, panel discussions and book signings by more than 70 authors—most with new books—covering all genres, fiction and nonfiction, for children and adults.

Authors from across Kansas and across the country presented readings, talks and panel discussions and signed their books in Koch Arena, the basketball arena at WSU. Kansas booksellers, literary organizations and the Governor's Cultural Affairs Council partners hosted booths. Six booksellers, all Commercial Affiliates of the Kansas Center for the Book, hosted



book signings by festival authors.



*The Kansas Talking Books Service booth at the 2007 Kansas Book Festival was attended on Friday by Director Toni Harrell.*

While that was going on in the arena, children outside enjoyed the Book Land Children's Area. It featured a story tent, a "twens read" tent, a read-a-latte lounge, an activities tent hosted by the Kansas Historical Society, and special presentations and costumed characters. Entertainment was hosted by the Kansas Arts Commission, and the Kansas Humanities Council who encouraged recording of reminiscences for their "Kansans Tell Their Stories" project.



*State Library of Kansas staff person Megan Schulz enjoyed meeting noted Kansas author Don Coldsmith at an autographing table after his panel*



*State Library of Kansas staff person Kimberli Talcott  
HAD to meet book character Curious George.*

Friday night, October 5, was a special night. A gala called the “Night of Notables” featuring the authors of the 2007 Kansas Notable Books titles drew nearly 200 persons. Vicki Tiaht, wife of U.S. Congressman Todd Tiaht, and Stacy Parkinson, wife of Lt. Governor Mark Parkinson, were honorary chairs of the gala. Sixteen authors of Notable Books, who had received their



*l. to r. Roy Bird, Dave Loewenstein and Christie  
Brandau. Dave is the co-author of "Kansas Murals:  
A Traveler's Guide" -- one of the 2007 Kansas  
Notable Books*

medals at the opening ceremony of the Festival earlier that day, proudly wore them as they autographed books at the Wichita Art Museum. The catered dinner was excellent, and entertainment included presentations by authors Michael Korda, about his new biography of Dwight D. Eisenhower; Steve Doocey, originally of Abilene; and State Poet Laureate Denise Low. The evening was hosted by emcee Larry Hatteberg. Complimentary wine was provided by Wyldewood Cellars.

This year the Festival had a professional producer, Cyndi Hughes, a native Kansan now living in Austin, TX. A video interview with Michael Korda was posted on the KC Star website by Aaron Barnhart, spouse of Notable Book author Diane Eickhoff, at <http://videos.kansascity.com/p/media?id=1523098>. Festival author Cynthia Leitich Smith liked it so much she wrote about it in two separate blogs: <http://cynthialeitichsmith.blogspot.com/2007/10/2007-kansas-book-festival.html> and <http://spookycyn.blogspot.com>.

In an interview with Radio Disney, children's author Michael Buckley said he hadn't expected the Kansas Book Festival to be so big in its second year and hoped he would be invited back next year.

So, if you were unable to attend the 2007 event, make plans now to be at the 2008 Kansas Book Festival October 10-11 in Wichita! It promises to be even bigger and better!