

Seventh Annual National Book Festival Was Held in Washington on September 29th

by Megan Schulz, State Library of Kansas

The seventh annual National Book Festival, which is organized and sponsored by the Library of Congress and hosted by First Lady Laura Bush, was held on September 29, 2007. This event is on the National Mall, Washington, D.C., and is estimated to have attracted more than 120,000 attendees this year. Representing Kansas in the Pavilion of the States was Roy Bird, Director of the Kansas Center for the Book and Megan Schulz, State Library of Kansas, as well as two Junior League of Washington volunteers.

The Pavilion of the States has representatives from every state and U.S. territory which take the opportunity to promote events and projects focused around literature in their local areas. Kansas events such as the Kansas Book Festival and programs including the Notable Books, Kansas Reads, and Kansas Reads to Preschoolers were shared. Chosen from among the 2007 Notable Books list, the featured book representing Kansas was *Flint Hills Cowboy: Tales of the Tallgrass Prairie* by Jim Hoy. Items distributed were focused around the Tallgrass Prairie region of Kansas.

This year, as in years past, visitors to the festival were entertained by 70 authors, illustrators and poets. Podcasts of authors' presentations can be located at www.loc.gov/podcasts/bookfest.



*National Book
Festival Poster*

Along with the Pavilion of the States, other pavilions included Children; Teens & Children; Fiction & Fantasy; Mysteries & Thrillers; History & Biography; Home & Family; and Poetry. Also in attendance were NBA and WNBA stars, favorite storybook characters and veterans who were featured in Ken Burns' new PBS documentary *The War*.

Located on the National Book Festival website, and of particular interest, is a newly launched National Book Festival Young Readers' Online Toolkit accessed at www.loc.gov/bookfest/toolkit/. Available in this toolkit is information on hosting your own local reading celebration, suggested reading lists, a flash card maker, and information on writing, art and poetry contests, among them Letters About Literature.



*Two Junior League of Washington Volunteers;
Megan Schulz, State Library of Kansas; and Roy
Bird, Kansas Center for the Book*



Librarian of Congress James H. Billington summed up the festival: “The goal of the National Book Festival,” he said, “is not only to encourage Americans to read often and widely, but also to make reading a lifelong practice.” This goal is also shared by the Kansas Center for the Book. Next year, the National Book Festival and the Kansas Book Festival will be more opportunities to share how Kansas pursues these goals.