

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** June 8, 2016

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## **The State Library of Kansas Announces the 2016 Kansas Notable Books** *15 books celebrating Kansas cultural heritage*

**Topeka, KS** — The State Library of Kansas is pleased to announce the 11<sup>th</sup> annual selection of Kansas Notable Books. The fifteen books feature quality titles with wide public appeal, either written by Kansans or about a Kansas-related topic. The Kansas Notable Book List highlights our lively contemporary writing community and encourages readers to enjoy some of the best writing of the authors among us.

“The Kansas Notable Books Committee considered the eligible books published in 2015. I was delighted to receive the recommended list and make the final decision,” said State Librarian Jo Budler. “Our list is intended to showcase Kansas’ unique talent and history while encouraging residents to visit their library and check out the celebrated titles.”

An awards ceremony will be held at the Kansas Book Festival, on September 10, 2016 at the State Capitol, to recognize the talented Notable Book authors.

Kansas Notable Books is a project of the Kansas Center for the Book, a program of the State Library. Throughout the award year, the State Library promotes and encourages promotion of all the titles on that year's list at literary events, and among librarians and booksellers.

For more information about Kansas Notable Books, call 785-296-3296, visit [www.kslib.info/notablebooks](http://www.kslib.info/notablebooks) or email [infodesk@ks.gov](mailto:infodesk@ks.gov).

### **2016 Kansas Notable Books**

*Alphabet School* by Stephen T. Johnson (Lawrence)

Published by Simon & Schuster

Explore the ins and outs of letters A to Z in a school setting with this innovative picture book. The letter G is what’s left of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, the letter F is a Kansas flag pole, and two library bookends become the letter M. Children will enjoy finding letters on every page. Preschool – Grade 2.

*A Bitter Magic* by Roderick Townley (Leawood)

Published by Alfred A. Knopf

Cisley’s mother vanished – on stage, during a magic act in front of a packed theater. An astonishing illusion, but also perhaps the last as Maria Thummel never reappears. It’s up to Cisley to hunt for clues to her mother’s disappearance, puzzling over broken mirrors, ever-shifting labyrinths, a closet full of whispering dresses, and the scent of a pure black rose. Cisley must discover her own powers to learn what’s real and what is simply an illusion. Grades 4 – 8.

*Bottled: A Mom's Guide to Early Recovery* by Dana Bowman (Lindsborg)

Published by Central Recovery Press

An unflinching and hilarious memoir about recovery as a mother of young children, Bowman explains the perils moms face with drinking and chronicles the author's path to recovery, from hitting bottom to the months of early sobriety – to her now (in)frequent moments of peace. *Bottled* offers practical suggestions on how to be a sober, present-in-the-moment mom, one day at a time, while providing much needed levity. Each chapter ends with a top ten, such as Top Ten Annoying Recovery Slogans That Actually Work.

*The Boy Who Became Buffalo Bill: Growing Up Billy Cody in Bleeding Kansas* by Andrea Warren (Prairie Village)

Published by Two Lions

The greatest showman of his era, Buffalo Bill was the legendary star of the famous Wild West show. But long before stardom, Buffalo Bill – born Billy Cody – had to grow up fast as his family was caught up in the violence of Bleeding Kansas. At age eleven, Billy worked on wagon trains and rode for the Pony Express. By age seventeen, he became a soldier, a scout, and a spy. Learn how Billy's youth made him into an American legend. Grades 4 – 8.

*Diary of a Waitress: The Not-So-Glamorous Life of a Harvey Girl* by Carolyn Meyer (Albuquerque NM)

Published by Calkins Creek

When gutsy Kitty Evans answers an ad to work for Fred Harvey's restaurants located along western railroad lines, she never expected to have the adventure of a lifetime. Kitty's journal captures interactions with everyone from railroaders to hobos, along with the funny and often painful experiences she and her fellow waitresses endure. Primary source photographs illustrate the Harvey buildings and local people. Grades 5 - 9.

*For the Sake of Art: The Story of a Kansas Renaissance* by Cynthia Mines (Wichita)

McPherson County's art heritage tells the story of the friendship between Lindsborg artist Birger Sandzen and McPherson seed merchant-turned-art dealer Carl Smalley and the annual art exhibitions they helped organize. School children sold tickets to exhibits from 1911 to 1937 and purchased an impressive art collection. This revised edition includes 125 illustrations and recently discovered correspondence between Smalley and Sandzen.

*Harvey Houses of Kansas: Historic Hospitality from Topeka to Syracuse* by Rosa Walston Latimer (Post TX)

Published by The History Press

Starting in Kansas, Fred Harvey's iconic Harvey House was the first to set the standard for fine dining and hospitality across the rugged Southwest. In 1876, the first of Harvey's depot restaurants opened in Topeka, followed just a few years later by the first combination hotel and restaurant in Florence. Fred Harvey and the Harvey Girls introduced good food and manners to the land of the Wild West.

*Kansas Trail Guide: The Best Hiking, Biking, and Riding in the Sunflower State* by Jonathan Conard (Sterling) and Kristin Conard (Santa Clara CA)

Published by University Press of Kansas

Whether you're an avid hiker or desultory explorer, a bicyclist or horseback rider, this book makes a most congenial guide. An invaluable companion for exploring new trails or learning about accustomed routes, this comprehensive guide will tell you all you need to know about the trails that crisscross Kansas—history and geography, wildlife and scenery, park locations and cultural possibilities, and, even a bit of geology and botany.

*Kansas Wildflowers and Weeds* by Michael John Haddock (Manhattan), Craig C. Freeman (Lawrence), and Janet E. Bare (Littleton CO)

Published by University Press of Kansas

A reference and a guidebook for a new generation of plant enthusiasts, this volume includes up-to-date nomenclature, keys, and descriptions, as well as habitat, distribution, and ecological information. Designed for

the professional botanist and passionate amateur alike, it expands upon Bare's earlier book's 831 entries with descriptions of 1,163 species—representing about 56 percent of the native and naturalized species currently known in Kansas—as well as 742 color photographs.

*The Madman and the Assassin: The Strange Life of Boston Corbett, the Man Who Killed John Wilkes Booth* by Scott Martelle (Irvine CA)

Published by Chicago Review Press

Union cavalryman Boston Corbett became a national celebrity after killing John Wilkes Booth, but as details of his odd personality became known, he also became the object of derision. Over time, he was largely forgotten to history, a minor character in the final act of Booth's tumultuous life. And yet Corbett led a fascinating life of his own, a tragic saga that weaved through the monumental events of nineteenth-century America. Ultimately Corbett ended up in Kansas where his shaky mental health led to his undoing.

*Notorious Kansas Bank Heists: Gunslingers to Gangsters* by Rod Beemer (Minneapolis)

Published by The History Press

Bank robbers wreaked havoc in the Sunflower State. Belle Starr's nephew claimed to have robbed twenty-one banks. The Dalton gang failed in their attempt to rob two banks simultaneously, but another gang did this in Waterville in 1911. Some 4,000 vigilantes were organized and armed by the Kansas Bankers' Association. Woven throughout the narrative are excerpts taken from newspaper articles and witness accounts of the times.

*Sun and Moon* by Lindsey Yankey (Lawrence)

Published by Simply Read Books

Sun and Moon have always held their own places in the sky, but after a lifetime of darkness Moon wants to trade. Before agreeing to grant his wish, however, Sun asks Moon to take a careful look at his night. Follow Moon as he travels through the dark discovering children dreaming, foxes hunting, fireflies glowing, and scenes unique to the nighttime. Will Moon still wish to change places in the sky? Luminous, intricate illustrations light up this picture book. K – Grade 2.

*To Leave a Shadow* by Michael D. Graves (Emporia)

Published by Meadowlark Books

Pete Stone hadn't always been a private eye. He'd lost his dairy business when the depression hit, his children grew up, and his wife left him for a chinchilla farmer. When Mrs. Lucille Hamilton walked through his door searching for her missing husband, Pete was the only one who believed her husband's death hadn't been a suicide. Told in the style of hard-boiled crime fiction and set in 1930's Wichita, Graves's depiction of the city during the jazz age makes this a compelling mystery.

*Twenty-Five Years among the Indians and Buffalo: A Frontier Memoir* by William D. Street, edited by Warren R. Street (Ellensburg WA)

Published by University Press of Kansas

Nearing 60, William D. Street (1851–1911) sat down to write his memoir of early years on the plains of western Kansas. His tales of life as a teamster, cavalryman, town developer, trapper, buffalo hunter, military scout, and cowboy put us squarely in the middle of such storied events as Sheridan's 1868–1869 winter campaign and the Cheyenne Exodus of 1878. They take us trapping beaver and driving cattle on the Great Western Cattle Trail. Handed down through the family, these memoirs were edited by Street's great-grandson.

*While the Kettle's On* by Melissa Fite Johnson (Pittsburg)

Published by Little Balkans Press

These poems are an invitation into the poet's home and family, sharing the good times, losses, and smallest moments of daily life. Whether writing about washing dishes with lavender suds or tracing the raised letters *B-a-l-l* on a Mason jar, each poem draws the reader into her world. She reminds us of the simple joys of an evening

walk “sometimes padded and zipped up; others, short sleeved, my skirt hoping for a breeze ...” and through a kitchen’s open window the “... soundtrack of indiscernible songs from car radios below.”

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