

Native Sons and Daughters of Kansas

Friday, January 29, 2016 | 6:30 p.m.

Ramada Topeka Downtown Hotel and
Convention Center | Topeka, Kansas



Best of Show and Freedom Award Winner, Ahna Valdez: "Reaching for Freedom"

In Jerry Farley's case, that education continued through the postgraduate level. He holds a B.B.A., M.B.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Oklahoma. What's more, he is a C.P.A. and has been president and chair of the board of several state and national professional organizations. He has authored or co-authored numerous articles and books in his field in not for profit finance and accounting.

When he wasn't helping to re-invent Washburn University, Farley has found time to serve on local and state boards for United Way, American Red Cross, American Cancer Society, Boy Scouts, Kansas Society of CPA's, state and local Chambers of Commerce and economic development corporations, including Go Topeka.

He and his wife Susan even relocated temporarily last year so their home could be decorated for the Designers' Show House which is the major annual fundraising project of Child Care Aware of Eastern Kansas.

He is also a former co-chair of Heartland Visioning and is past chair of the Topeka Chamber of Commerce. He serves on board of directors for the Guggenheim Funds, Westar Energy and Core First Bank.

He was inducted into the Topeka Business – an unusual place to find an education administrator. He has also been inducted into the Oklahoma Higher Education Hall of Fame and is a Rotary Paul Harris Fellow.

If you come to see Farley around lunch time, you'd better plan to bring your running shoes. Farley is a dedicated runner who tries to get in at least six miles a day – much of it with his dog. He does say that he doesn't run so hard that he can't talk because he spends a lot of that time talking to the dog.

Washburn, Topeka and our entire state of Kansas have all benefitted from the leadership and vision of Jerry Farley and we're proud to have him as this year's Distinguished Kansan of the Year.



From the late 1910s through the 1920s, President Parley Womer oversaw an increased endowment and an end to Washburn's high school-level preparatory academy. In the early 1920s enrollment neared 1,000 and Washburn loosened some of its rules, allowing, for example, smoking on campus. With the addition of Whiting Field House, Moore Bowl and the Mulvane Art Museum, Washburn took on a physical form that would remain familiar for decades.

In the 1930s, however, the financial foundation of the college weakened. With America's descent into the Great Depression, contributions stagnated and so did tuition income. Washburn struggled to pay its bills. By Washburn's 75th anniversary in 1940, the trustees decided that the college – facing operating deficits every year for the foreseeable future – could not continue as a private institution.

They turned to the people of Topeka, asking them to approve a new property tax and make Washburn a public college. On April 1, 1941, the voters did so overwhelmingly.

The newly renamed Washburn Municipal University was transferred from the Board of Trustees to a new Washburn Board of Regents, comprising the mayor and eight other members appointed by the City Council and School Board. The transformation, as it happened, took place on the eve of America's entry into the Second World War. The conflict brought drastic changes to Washburn. Many young men enlisted, but several Navy training programs brought new students from other parts of the country to campus. After the war, enrollment at Washburn surged past 2,000.

Through the 1950s and into the early 1960s, Washburn under President Bryan Stoffer opened new buildings – Memorial Union, Morgan Hall and Science Hall – and began receiving financial aid from the state of Kansas. In 1965, Washburn expanded its reach by opening KTWU, an educational television station. That same year, the university marked the passage of 100 years since the founders' dreams were realized.

In 1966, however, the university faced yet another challenge to its existence. This time, nature took a turn testing the Washburn resolve.

On June 8, only three days after the 1966 commencement, a tornado touched down southwest of Topeka. As sirens sounded, the storm spun northeast toward the city. Passing Burnett's mound, the twister mowed through the outskirts of town and then smashed into the heart of the Washburn campus. The fury lasted only a few minutes, but the results were shocking. Decades-old college structures stood in ruin, their roofs collapsed and walls tottering. In the space of an evening, the campus was transformed from a leafy park to something resembling a moonscape. If there was any good fortune, it lay in the fact that the university was between semesters. Relatively few people were on campus and they found shelter. Across the area, the tornado left 17 dead, but none of the fatalities occurred at Washburn.

President John Henderson and the rest of the administration, along with faculty, students, alumni and the community around them, left little doubt that Washburn once more would survive in the face of disaster. Early on, the manager of Washburn's physical plant, Lloyd Durow, summed up the spirit of resolve: "There'll always be a Washburn."



Essay Winners

ESSAY WINNERS

The Kansas Factual Story Contest encourages the preservation in writing of factual, unpublished anecdotes and happenings in the lives of Kansans. The winners receive a \$500 cash award provided by Mary Lynn Oliver of Wichita.

OLIVE ANN BEECH "KANSAS FACTUAL STORY" ESSAY CONTEST 2016 WINNERS

FIRST PLACE

"We Love Kansas—and Know
Precisely Why!"
– by Anne Weir Emerson
Fort Scott, KS

SECOND PLACE

"To the Stars Through Difficulty,
A Journey to Kansas"
– by Logan Hecke
Spring Hill, KS

THIRD PLACE

"Generations from Pioneer Settlers"
– by Erica Shults
St. Marys, KS

HONORABLE MENTION

"My Grandfather the Hero"
– by Ari Barmor
Wichita, KS

HONORABLE MENTION

"Summer of '93"
– by Paula Kelly-Frey
Manhattan, KS

The late Mamie Boyd of Mankato and Phillipsburg was an early day newspaperwoman who coined the phrase, "Kansas! Say it Above a Whisper". In 1976, Mrs. Boyd's family chose to honor her by initiating an annual essay contest for Kansas students, grade 8 through 12.

MAMIE BOYD "KANSAS! SAY IT ABOVE A WHISPER" ESSAY CONTEST 2016 WINNERS

FIRST PLACE

"Kansas"
– by Andrew Foreman
Topeka, KS

SECOND PLACE

"Wave the Wheat"
– by Bridget Howard
Leavenworth, KS

THIRD PLACE

"Kansas Says it Above a Whisper"
– by Noah Andrew Tattershall
Easton, KS

HONORABLE MENTION

"Kansas Landscapes"
– by Helen Krehbiel
Bern, KS

HONORABLE MENTION

"Say it Above a Whisper"
– by Paige Robinson
Easton, KS

Beech “Kansas Factual Story” We Love Kansas—and Know Precisely Why!

– by Anne Weir Emerson, Fort Scott, Kansas

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Forty-one years ago, my husband, three preschool sons and I traded a New York lifestyle for a small farm in Kansas. We did so without hesitation. My husband was vice president of a Wall Street investment firm; I had been the assistant creative director at Faberge'. The move seemed so right for us and more important, for our boys. As much as we loved the city and all our family and friends there, we sensed something (good old-fashioned values) was missing in our lives. Preparing me for a radically different lifestyle, my husband reminded me on our drive westward his projected annual income would be less than his annual lunch tabs in the city. That “Aha!” moment for me quickly translated to: “Huge Challenge Ahead!”

Rolling into our tiny, old farmhouse north of Fort Scott, I discovered a washer, dryer, dishwasher and central heating were conveniences of our past. The closest newsstand, grocery store, doctor and school were 17 miles away! What we gained was far more important: daily quality time together, creatures great and small, caring neighbors, magnificent sunrises/ sunsets and--BIG sky such as we'd never really seen in New York. We instantly understood Fort Scott native Gordon Parks' claim that Kansas has the world's most beautiful clouds and sky!

And then there were our new farm friends--who taught us how to nurse sick calves, deliver piglets and butcher chickens. Friends who--during that first really bitter cold winter when my husband fell sick--arrived at 4 a.m. to do all our chores before heading back home to start their own! Friends -- who invited us to go trick or treating to the housebound, elderly neighbors or join their already crowded Thanksgiving table.

While our family was flourishing in this new horizon-to-horizon world, I had to accept the obvious reality: I could not dig a decent post hole! My barbed wire fences were scalloped! In winter, I broke every needle when giving shots to our cattle!

Fort Scott beckoned. The town of 8,975 made me feel even more Kansan--especially a patriotic one! Its picturesque 1842 Indian frontier military fort was soon to be declared a national historic site! One of America's first national cemeteries, Fort Scott National Cemetery (older even than Arlington), honored Indian Scouts and heroes from all wars. Strolling among the white grave markers, I gained far greater pride in our military, its history and our country--fully appreciating their sacrifices for each one of us.

We found in Kansas exactly what we hoped: traditional values, compassion, responsibility to enhance the future for those who follow. Our sons thrived with their daily farm chores, nurtured by an exceptional school system and community of faith. We felt so “Kansan!”

Every year my husband would ask neighbors, “Are we Kansans yet?” Without hesitation, the reply was always the same: “No.” Decades later, before waiting for a response, Tim added, “I'm never going to be a Kansan, am I?” We finally got it--but that never stopped us from trying!

In the following years, we all became heavily involved in town and rural activities. Even in a stressed economy, Fort Scott found money for new schools, its community college, parks and charities. Today, thousands of tourists enjoy our picturesque downtown, frontier fort, rich history, national cemetery, Gordon Parks Museum and our brand new Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes!

In 2013 during the War on Terror, Fort Scott raised \$12,000 to buy and place 7,000 American flags (Symbols of Sacrifice) on the fort's parade ground in memory of heroes lost and the families who mourn them. At Christmas, Wreaths Across America honors the fallen at our national cemetery.

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Generations from Pioneer Settlers

– by Erica Shults, St. Marys, Kansas

THIRD

In the year of 1869, several families traveled from Iowa to Kansas. One of these families happened to be my great-great-great grandparents and their children. John G. Schwartz and his wife Catherine journeyed through the prairie in a covered wagon. One of their children, Sophia Schwartz-Imming, who is my great-great grandmother, was only six months old at the time.

After all the hardships of traveling in a wagon, they finally settled near Hanover, Kansas. The little town had just been established that year and the Pony Express ran right through it. The Schwartz family was one of the first white families to settle in this part of Kansas. Sophia and her family were true pioneers. They built a dirt dugout in the side of a hill near the banks of Cottonwood Creek. They also had to go through droughts and the grasshopper plague of 1874. Soon they took up a homestead and lived there.

As their family grew, they moved into Hanover and some of their children started their own life. Sophia married Frank B. Imming. Each of them played a big role in the establishment of the community. For example, Frank was the mayor of Hanover from 1907-1909 and worked in the general merchandise business. He owned a general store. Sophia was one of the first members of the Hanover Women’s Study Club.

The club helped organize projects and raise money for things the town needed.

Sophia and Frank had 11 children. Their daughter, Loretta Imming-Vlach, was my great grandmother. She lived in Hanover her whole life. Loretta’s husband Anthony took over his father’s meat market in town. It was one of the main places to buy meat. For years, my grandmother Mary worked there when she was young.

Before Loretta passed away, my family and I would go visit her often. During one trip to Hanover, we walked along Cottonwood Creek in search of a dirt dugout that they might have lived in. After a while, we ended up finding one. There were many stones that formed an arch for the doorway and it was barely tall enough to stand in. The inside was very small.

Being able to see this was very exciting. It made me realize the hardships that pioneers had to face. I thought it was really interesting to learn about pioneers coming to Kansas on covered wagons and to actually get to see where they lived, especially because they were members of my family. They were true pioneers because they traveled to Kansas while facing hardships, built dirt dugouts, and helped establish a community. Their future generations also went on to help the town of Hanover.



The Summer of '93

– by Paula Kelly-Frey, Manhattan, Kansas

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The summer of 1993 had an auspicious beginning. I was newly engaged to a wonderful man, we had purchased a quaint little deli that we held high hopes for, and we had both graduated from Kansas State University. We were spending time working on growing our business, planning a wedding, and hanging out with our friends in any off time.

We hadn't been bothered by "too much snow" that winter. Really, for the snow loving people we are I don't even remember there being enough of the white stuff that year. But in March that year there was a 3 day period that was nicknamed "Storm of the Century" with over 300 hundred deaths attributed to it across the United States and though the majority of snow fell in the northern states, Kansas saw its fair share. Though Kansas didn't receive the 40+ inches that some of the northern states did, the trouble began with the spring thaw.

With the thawing of millions of pounds of snow came water slowly trickling down mountains and streets and streams to meet in the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. April and May saw Kansas bodies of water swell and by the beginning of June there were areas that were totally saturated. Any rainfall during this time made the swollen rivers begin to reach dangerous levels. And yet still the rain came pouring down.

It was during the end of June, or maybe the start of July, that homes around Manhattan were threatened by the rising waters. My fiancé and I lived in a tiny studio apartment in the middle of town. Nothing to be worried about at our place. But many of our customers and friends at the time lived in the affected neighborhoods. We knew we wanted to help but didn't have an inkling what to do.

The answers came to us through different people. The first call came when they asked for people to come help sandbag in the Dix Addition on the east side of town. What we affectionately call Tuttle Puddle was not only in danger of overflowing its banks, it was already slipping and sloshing outside its boundaries. We began lending a hand with the sandbagging efforts each evening after work.

Travelling to a central location and being bussed over to the sandbagging area du jour, we were taught how to fill the bags, seal the bags, and place them correctly to build the wall securely. There were evenings we stood in a bucket brigade (which we quickly altered to "bag brigade") and talked and joked as we sent full bags from truck beds to the ever expanding sandbag walls.

Ours clothes muddied and our hands and arms rubbed raw from the rough bags, we saved many homes from becoming a waterlogged mess. I remember one home we couldn't help. The basement was already full of water and the homeowners were trying to dry it out in hopes that the damage wouldn't spread. The family kindly let all the volunteers track into their home and use their basement bathroom when the need arose.

We made more work for them to clean up but they were so thankful that our community had come to try to help them and their neighbors that they didn't think twice about it.

The second way for us to help came through people that either didn't have the time or the physical ability to help in the sandbagging process. Several people a day would call our small restaurant and request to buy 5 or 10 or even 20 sandwiches that they could deliver to the volunteers. When these calls came in we would add an extra sandwich or two to their order for free. I remember thinking that this is what having a small business was all about. It was rewarding to have people call us so that we could help them to help others.

Though the work was hard in those few weeks and we worried that we couldn't keep the rising waters from destroying homes, I remember it as a time when we really felt a part of our community. We weren't just college students any longer. We were active participants in the trials and successes of our town. That was over 20 years ago and we've continued to ride out many storms in Manhattan. The Little Apple. Home of the Wildcats. Land of Purple. Our town. Our Home.

“KANSAS *As Talented As You Think*” 2016 HIGH SCHOOL ARTS COMPETITION

The Kansas high school art competition, “Kansans . . . As Talented As You Think!” has announced the winning entries in eight categories and its Best of Show. The winning entry for Best of Show this year was drawn by Ahna Valdez, a senior at Olathe East High School.

Ahna’s work, “Sanguine Uncertainty” received the top honor, but Ahna was also the winner of the “Freedom” category with her work, “Reaching for Freedom.” “I have always known that I would pursue a career in art because when I am completely absorbed in making a piece of artwork I am truly happy,” stated Ahna. “I wish to go to art school so that I can become a concept artist in the entertainment industry. I am applying to Ringling School of Art and Design, and Maryland Institute College of Art.”

Adriana Lane’s entry “Aged Piano” was chosen as winner of the black and white photograph category. Adrian is a senior at Topeka West High School. Adrian remarked, “When I started to take classes with Mr. Berryman I can honestly say I have been a happier person. I have never been an open person; I formerly kept to myself and never spoke my mind, but photography has given me the chance to express myself in a way I have never been able to before.” She plans to major in art at Washburn this fall.

The color photograph category was won by Lawrence Free State High School student Laura Phillips with her work “Afternoon Stroll.” Having grown up on a small farm and learned to love the outdoors, she became a member of Venture Crew, a coed division of the Boy Scouts of America. “Through it, I have backpacked through the Rocky Mountains, been dog sledding in Minnesota, and canoed down the Missouri River,” stated Laura. “My travels and experiences fostered my love for photography.”



Dusty Morris, a junior at Lawrence High School, was winner of the pastel category with his work “Harvest Still Life.” “I spend a lot of time after school in the art room or in the woodshop because they are my favorite ways to spend my time,” said Dusty.

The painting category winner is Aric Zillinger, a senior at Washburn Rural High School in Topeka with his work “The Blind Vulture.” Aric, who hopes to pursue a degree in graphic design, illustration or animation from a university in Kansas stated, “What I really appreciate about the arts is that there is not one right answer -- a person’s creativity can be expressed regardless of the media. My current favorite media are pencil and ink drawing, any kind of digital art, and painting.”

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Meet the Judges

MEET THE JUDGES

Ron Michael is the director of the Birger Sandzen Memorial Gallery in Lindsborg, having served as curator there for 17 years. He is also an artist whose works have been exhibited widely. He earned an MFA in ceramics from the University of Kansas MLS from Emporia State and two undergraduate degrees from Fort Hays State.

Marrin Robinson is the student art advisor at K-State. She is known for her paintings of the Flint Hills and the Konza Prairie. Her undergraduate degree is from Dartmouth and her MFA in painting is from Washington University in St. Louis.

Lori Wright is an associate professor and chair of the Art and Design Department at Kansas Wesleyan in Salina. A native Kansan and lifelong Kansas resident, she received an MFA from K-State and a BA from Emporia State.

Nicole Emanuel is founder and executive director of InterUrvan ArtHouse which provides and promotes art and entrepreneurial services in Overland Park. She received a degree in painting from the Kansas City Art Institute.

—Grant Glenn & Don Lambert, Co-Chairmen

Black & White Photography

WINNER

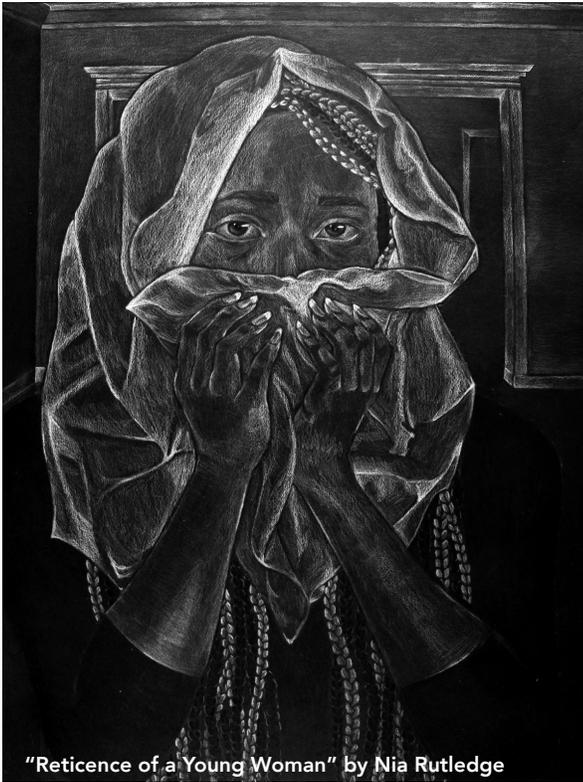


"Aged Piano" by Adriana Lane



Adriana Lane

Drawing
WINNER



"Reticence of a Young Woman" by Nia Rutledge



Nia Rutledge

Painting
WINNER



Aric Zillinger



"The Blind Vulture" by Aric Zillinger

Freedom WINNER



Ahna Valdez



"Reaching for Freedom" by Ahna Valdez

Past Kansans of the Year

- | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| 2014 - Dayton Moore | 1993 - John Brooks Slaughter, Topeka | 1972 - Robert L. Brock, Topeka |
| 2013 - No Award Given | 1992 - Stephen A. Hawley, Salina | 1971 - Ray E. Dillon, Sr., Hutchinson |
| 2012 - Marilyn Maye, Overland Park | 1991 - Marynell Reece, Scandia | 1970 - Duane L. Wallace, Wichita |
| 2012 - Dick Davidson, Bonita Springs, FL | 1990 - Jordan Haines, Wichita | 1969 - Charles B. Rogers, Ellsworth |
| 2011 - Harold Stones, Topeka | 1989 - Bob Billings, Lawrence | 1968 - Hugh F. Edwards, Hamilton |
| 2010 - Deanell Reece Tacha, Lawrence | 1988 - Marianna K. Beach, Hays | 1967 - Debbie Barnes, Moran |
| 2009 - Robert M. Gates, Wichita | 1987 - Fred C. Bramlage, Junction City | 1966 - Jim Ryun, Wichita |
| 2008 - Delano E. Lewis, Kansas City | 1986 - George E. Nettles, Jr., Pittsburg | 1965 - Debbie Bryant, Overland Park |
| 2007 - Jim Richardson, Lindsberg | 1985 - Gordon Parks, Fort Scott | 1965 - Jim Ryun, Wichita |
| 2006 - Max Falkenstein, Lawrence | 1984 - Bernard W. Rodgers, Fairview | 1964 - Laurin W. Jones, Dodge City |
| 2005 - Martina McBride, Saron | 1983 - Mrs. Olive White Garvey, Wichita | 1963 - Mrs. O.L. Koger, Topeka |
| 2004 - Lynette Woodard, Wichita | 1982 - Carl Nordstrom, Topeka | 1962 - Rees H. Hughes, Pittsburg |
| 2003 - Bob Dole, Russell | 1981 - Joe H. Engle, Chapman | 1961 - Harry Darby, Kansas City |
| 2002 - Jack St. Clair Kilby, Dallas, TX | 1980 - Keith G. Sebelius, Norton | 1960 - Maurice E. Fager, Topeka |
| 2001 - Ross Beach, Hays | 1979 - Daphyne Smith Cauble, Wichita | 1959 - R.A. Clymer, El Dorado |
| 2000 - Dean Smith, Chapel Hill | 1978 - G.W. Tomanek, Hays | 1958 - Mrs. Frank Boyd, Mankato |
| 1999 - Shirley Knight, Goessel | 1977 - Emerson D. Yoder, Denton | 1957 - Mrs. Olive Ann Beech, Wichita |
| 1998 - Pat Roberts, Dodge City | 1976 - J. Rex Duwe, Lucas | 1956 - Karl A. Menninger, Topeka |
| 1996 - Robert Sudlow, Lawrence | 1975 - Nyle Miller, Topeka | 1955 - Arthur D. Weber, Manhattan |
| 1995 - Stan Herd, Lawrence | 1974 - Edward W. McNally, Pittsburg | |
| 1994 - Samuel Ramey, Colby | 1973 - Lyle E. Yost, Hesston | |

