

Two high school students recognized in essay contest

The St. Francis Community High School English students of Lisa Gibson were encouraged to write essays for the 2007 Native Sons and Daughters of Kansas Boyd Student Essay contest. The essays were limited to 250 words and Mrs. Gibson said the essays were sent off to be judged on Nov. 21.

On Jan. 28, Brooks Hobrock and Mikaela Grace were notified that they had been recognized for their essay.

"Assistant executive director, John Pinegar, wrote the students that there were many fine entries and theirs were particularly noticed by the judges.

"I was very proud of the students," Mrs. Gibson said. "Being among those recognized was quite an honor."

Following are the essays.

Kansas! Say It Above a Whisper

By Mikaela Grace

I look out over the rugged landscape in front of me. I feel peaceful and contented, taking a break with my horse, from a long trail ride and enjoying the views of cliffs, steep drop-offs, and deep faults in the dry earth. Sounds like Kansas, right? Not exactly, yet I am in the north-west corner of Kansas in an area called the Arikaree Breaks. Not far from here is my home, a small rural community. Growing up in this area has certainly shaped my valves and viewpoints, and I appreciate how my environment has changed me for the better.



Grace

Kansas's landscape is often written off as flat and emotionless, and such generalization irritates me. The Breaks (and many other areas of Kansas) provide breath-

taking views of the untouched wilderness; why, then, is Kansas seen as a dull, drab prairie? I have come to see Kansas's landscape as a metaphor for the people of Kansas—both seen as flat and boring, but just under the surface there is diversity and interest. People view the citizens of Kansas as all dirt farmers and uneducated hillbillies. Even if one has no such prejudices, there is always the slight impression that Kansans are, well, boring, and as with all states, sometimes that is true. But to write off all Kansans as dull or mediocre is to overlook some of our nation's most intelligent, caring, and hardworking citizens.

In conclusion, Kansas is a lot more exciting than people give it credit for. On the whole, its citizens are well-informed and charismatic, and while most of its panorama lacks grandeur compared with the neighboring Rockies, it is beautiful just the same. Kansas is unique and appealing, and I am proud to be called a Kansan.

Kansas! Say It Above a Whisper

By Brooks Hobrock

Some people say Kansas is boring, but I beg to differ. The vast array of nicknames is one way to prove it. Kansas's wild nicknames stem from a variety of things from its history to its location in the country.



Hobrock

The Sunflower State is a nickname that reminds us of the natural beauty of the Kansas landscape and the wild sunflowers that grow on it. Other nicknames have to do with agriculture. The Wheat Sate is a widely known nickname referring to our state being one of the leaders in agricultural production, especially wheat. The Grass-

hopper State is a lesser known name coming from a plague of grasshoppers back in 1874 that ate up the states' crops and the landscape.

As you probably know Kansas is right in the middle of the country. This is where the nicknames Midway, U.S.A. and The Central State come from.

Our state is also known for its tornadoes which was made famous by the movie The Wizard of Oz. And even though statistics show that Oklahoma sees more tornadoes, Kansas is still known as the Cyclone State.

These next nicknames are all products of slavery and the Civil War. The Garden of the West or The Garden State was a name used by newspapers to try and get people to move to Kansas. They needed people to counteract the pro slavery squatters that were taking up the territory. Which brings me to another nickname, The Squatter State. This referred to pro slavery people from Missouri who were claiming land in Kansas to keep it from getting populated with people from free states.

The Jawhawk State also traces its roots back to before the Civil War. Antislavery "jayhawkers" from Kansas and pro-slavery "bushwhackers" from Missouri were crossing each others' borders and raiding homes. The jayhawk was later created into a mythical bird.

The last two nicknames, Bleeding Kansas and The Battleground of Freedom, refer to the bloodshed between anti and pro slavery people in Kansas and Missouri leading up to the Civil War. Kansas was crucial because it would enter the Union either as a slave or free state. Which ever way it went, it was going to change the balance between the two.

Now after all that, can you honestly say that Kansas is boring?



REFRESHMENTS — Those touring the St. Francis Emergency Service Building open house on Saturday enjoyed the treats.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Natural resource sponsors conference in Wichita

On Feb. 21 through the 23, six professional societies that promote the wise use and management of Kansas' natural resources are sponsoring the first Kansas Natural Resources Conference at the Airport Hilton in Wichita. The theme of the conference is "Where do trees belong in Kansas? The Role of Trees in Kansas Landscape."

Joan Gienger, District Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service, St. Francis, is among those planning to attend.

"There's still time to register," said Dan Meyerhoff, steering committee chairperson. "Registration information is available on the Internet at the Web site <http://www.k-state.edu/fisheries/KNRC/RegistrationKNRC.pdf>. Those interested in the conference theme should find that the conference speakers, concurrent sessions, and trade show will provide a variety of information.

The Plenary session speakers will address the conference

theme with Dr. Elliott West speaking on the historical extent and composition of riparian forests, particularly in central and western Kansas, h said Mr. Meyerhoff. Dr. West is a distinguished professor of history at the University of Arkansas.

Other plenary session speakers are Dr. Jim Sherow, professor of environmental history at Kansas State University and Larry Rutter, retired from the Kansas State Historical Society. Speaker biographies are on the Web site.

There will be over 50 papers presented during the concurrent sessions throughout the conference, h said Mr. Meyerhoff. gWe are excited about the number of papers and posters to be presented at this conference, and the wide range of topics should appeal to a broad spectrum of people interested in environmental and natural resources topics.

Presentations are divided among 11 subjects according to Craig Paukert, Kansas Coopera-

tive Fish and Wildlife Research Unit at K-State University, who is handling presentation scheduling. A few titles include: Cedar Tree Removal and Its Effect on Hydrology and Sensitive Fish and Wildlife Species; Landscaping Agriculture with Conservation Buffers for Multipurpose Benefits; The Kansas Forest Stewardship Program Spatial Analysis Project: Methods and Outcomes; Management of Canada Thistle and Musk Thistle with Milestone® (Aminopyralid) Herbicide; Tree Invasion of Our Prairies: A Product of Our Affinities, Fears, and Ignorance. Check out the rest on the Web site.

Conference brochure, registration form, concurrent session topics, tradeshow exhibiting information, committee chairs, and hotel information is available on the Internet at the Web site www.k-state.edu/fisheries/KNRC. Or, contact Dan Meyerhoff, at 785-625-2588 or email at dan.meyerhoff@ks.usda.gov.

Lines From the Library

By Pat Leibbrandt

The following new books have arrived at the library: A Whole New Light by Sandra Brown; Hand Of Evil by J.A. Jance; "T" Is For Trespass by Sue Grafton; Hokus Pokus by Fern Michael; The Appeal by John Grisham; Light Of The Moon by Luanne Rice; The Secret Between Us by Barbara Delinsky; Duma Key by Stephen King; Beverly Hills Dead by Stuart Woods; Shadow Music by Julie Garwood; Plum

Lucky by Janet Evanovich; These Tangled Threads by Tracie Peterson; Prelude by B.J. Hoff; Secrets On The Wind by Stephanie Whitson; Coming Home by Rosamunde Pilcher; Quilts And Afghans; The Priscilla Hauser Book Of Tole And Decorative Painting by Priscilla Hauser; Scrap Saver's Country Stitchery by Sandra Foose; Scrap Saver's 101 Great Little Gifts by Sandra Foose; Christmas Crafts; Better Homes And Garden Christmas Joys To

Craft And Stitch; Better Homes And Gardens Christmas Crafts To Make Ahead; Better Homes And Gardens Country Bazaar Crafts.

The library has the following new books in the children's department: Amanda Pig And The Really Hot Day by Jean VanLeeuwen; Tiny Goes Camping by Cari Meister; Young Cam Jansen And The Substitute Mystery by David A. Adler; Young Cam Jansen And The Spotted Cat Mystery by David A. Adler.



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