

# Speaking of Kansas

## Washburn Center for Kansas Studies



Fall 2010

### Kansas Studies Courses Spring Semester 2011

- GL 103A, Historical Geology** (with Kansas emphasis) MW 1-2:15, Tanbra Eifert
- GL 103B, Historical Geology** (with Kansas emphasis) MW 2:30-3:15, Tanbra Eifert
- GL 103C, Historical Geology** (with Kansas emphasis) MW 5:30-6:45, Will Gilliland
- HI 322A, Kansas History** TR 11-12:15, Bruce MacTavish
- PO 106B, U.S. Government** MWF 12-12:50, Bob Beatty
- PO 107A, American State & Local Government** TR 11-12:15, Mark Peterson
- PO 307A, Intern-State and Local Government** PO 107 & Jr/Sr or consent of instructor, Mark Peterson
- PO 309A, Kansas Legislative Experience** TR 3-4:15, Bob Beatty

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Sharon Ashworth, Biology  
Tom Averill, English  
Bob Beatty, Political Science  
Patti Bender, Health  
Roy Bird, KS State Library  
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Jeannie Chinn, KSHS  
Marion Cott, KHC  
Charles Cranston, Mass Media  
Virgil Dean, KSHS  
Paul Fecteau, English  
William Gilliland, Geology  
Rachel Goossen, History  
Chris Hamilton, Political Science  
Robert Hull, Finance  
Reinhild Janzen, Art  
Jim Kelly, KTWU  
David Kendall, KTWU  
Robert Lawson, English  
Gabrielle Lunte, Modern Languages  
Bruce Mactavish, History  
Judith McConnell-Farmer, Education  
Eric McHenry, English  
Jay Memmott, Social Work  
Marguerite Perret, Art  
Mark Peterson, Political Science  
J. Karen Ray, English  
Leslie Reynard, Communication  
William Roach, Business  
Betsy Kanabe Roe, Art  
Tom Schmiedeler, Geography  
Robin Shrimplin, History  
Bradley Siebert, English  
Sarah Smarsh, English  
Margaret Stewart, English  
William Wagnon, History  
Marydorsey Wanless, Art  
David Winchester, Mabee Library  
Margaret Wood, Soc./Anthropology  
Carol Yoho, Art

## Kansas Day Presentation, 2011

**T**he Center for Kansas Studies will sponsor its annual Kansas Day presentation on Friday, January 28, 2011, at 3:30 p.m. in room 208, Henderson Hall on the Washburn campus, Topeka.

Our speaker will be **John W. Carlin**, former Kansas governor (1979-1987) and current Visiting Professor, Executive-in-Residence, in the Political Science Department at Kansas State University.

Carlin's talk is entitled "**Kansas at 150: What Looking at the Past Can Tell Us about Moving Forward.**" His service as an Archivist of the United States for the National Archives and Records Administration from 1995 to 2005, and as chair of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission during the same time period, provide him with the historical perspective needed for evaluating Kansas at its sesqui-centennial. Visit Carlin's website: [www.k-state.edu/polsci/faculty/carlin-john.html](http://www.k-state.edu/polsci/faculty/carlin-john.html)

This presentation is free and refreshments will be served.



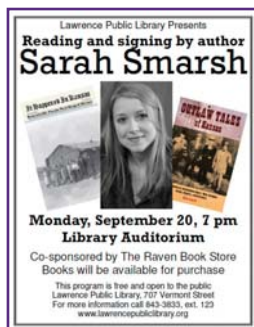
**John Carlin,**  
Kansas Day  
Speaker, 2011



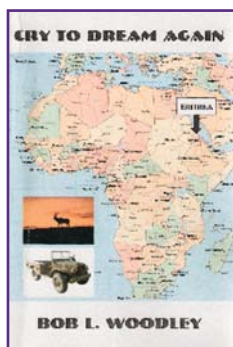
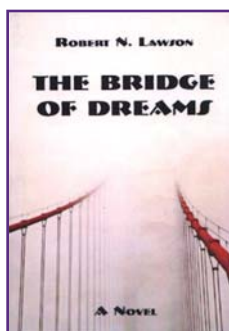
# Fellows News

**Sarah Smarsh**, assistant professor, Department of English, read from her new book, ***It Happened in Kansas***, and also addressed her other new book, ***Outlaw Tales of Kansas***, at 7 p.m., Monday, September 20, 2010, at the Lawrence Public Library. The Raven Bookstore sold copies of both books.

***It Happened in Kansas*** has been selected by the Kansas Humanities Council for an upcoming, statewide book-discussion series on Kansas history as we prepare to celebrate the 150th anniversary of our statehood. The series is part of the successful program TALK, or Talking About Literature in Kansas. Sarah chatted about the book with J. Schaffer on Kansas Public Radio prior to the library event.



**Robert N. Lawson**, professor emeritus of the Department of English, discussed his novel, ***The Bridge of Dreams***, on Tuesday, November 23, 2010, in the Mabee Library iRead Lounge, Washburn University. Twenty-four of the sonnets from ***The Collected Sonnets of Robert N. Lawson*** open the chapters in the novel. Both titles were published by The Bob Woodley Memorial Press, Washburn University. Dr. Lawson also discussed his editing of the novel, ***Cry to Dream Again***, by **Bob L. Woodley**, for whom the Woodley Press is named. Dr. Lawson and Dr. Woodley shared an office at Washburn University for thirteen years. Following the presentation, copies of the books were available for sale and autographing. A companion website to ***The Bridge of Dreams*** is accessible on-line: <http://www.washburn.edu/reference/bridge24/>



**Thomas Fox Averill**, professor, Department of English, writes: Kansas has been a key state from the beginning of the movies. Early Westerns found

their setting here: from pre-Civil War battles, to homesteader/rancher conflicts, to famed outlaws of Abilene and Dodge City, to Western expansion and Indian removal.

The iconic Kansas film is also America's most-viewed movie: ***The Wizard of Oz***, whether watched on the big screen, annually on television, or paired with Pink Floyd's ***Dark Side of the Moon***.

Kansas became a movie location in the mid-1950s, most importantly with Willliam Inge's ***Picnic***. Soon after, Gordon Parks (***The Learning Tree***), Richard Brooks (***In Cold Blood***) and Peter Bogdanovich (***Paper Moon***) gave us three more ways of looking at Kansas.

Our film heritage, from Western (***Dark Command***), to Small Town (***Gypsy Moths***), to Con Man (***Leap of Faith***), to Science Fiction (***A Boy and His Dog***), to Horror (***Carnival of Souls***), is rich.

This site hopes to enrich the history, heritage and future of Kansas in the Movies.

Visit: <http://www.washburn.edu/reference/cks/mapping/movies/>

Site categories include:

- Map of Movies Filmed in Kansas
- Listing of Movies Filmed in Kansas
- Listing of Movies Set in Kansas
- Map of Movies Set in Kansas
- List of Kansans in the Movies
- Directors of Kansas Movies
- List of all movies related to Kansas
- Kansas Literature in the Movies



## Other News

**The 15th Annual Kansas Silent Film Festival** will be held in White Concert Hall, Washburn University, February 25-27, 2011. This free public event is sponsored by Kansas Silent Film Festival, Inc., a local non-profit arts agency. The theme is "The First Academy Awards, 1927-28." These first awards, presented by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, were from the only year when all nominees were silent.

For event details visit <http://www.kssilentfilmfest.org>

For details about the First Academy Awards ceremony visit [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1st\\_Academy\\_Awards](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1st_Academy_Awards)

# On the Road with Green River Ordinance

**T**he 1960s was one of the most tumultuous decades in American history. The demand for political and social change was in large part led by the nation's youth, many of whom, as part of the baby-boom generation, became teenagers and young adults during the decade. In rejecting the social norms of previous generations, they forged new directions in politics, lifestyles, and the arts. Music, in particular rock-and-roll music, became one of the most popular avenues of youthful expression. Rock was born in the 1950s from a variety of influences and more or less matured in the 1960s into a number of genres, among them folk, rhythm and blues, soul, psychedelic and heavy metal. But unlike the swing music of the previous generation, "rock was accompanied by an ideological strain" and, along with the associated "life-style and social creed," it became contemptible to many older Americans because they interpreted it as unpatriotic and immoral.<sup>i</sup> And so it was claimed by a youthful generation as its own with its popularity and accessibility greatly enhanced by amplified sound and an evolving technology that produced and recorded it in both visual and audio formats.

By the dawn of the decade it reached nearly everywhere and by the time the British Invasion

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by **Tom Schmiedeler**  
Professor of Geography,  
Dept. of Political Science

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had come ashore at mid decade, a number of rock and roll bands had sprouted from the prairie towns and cities of Kansas. Among them was a group of four youths from Emporia who called themselves The Invaders. Stories of Kansas bands

like The Invaders can now be accessed at a variety of websites, but there is limited information from these sources concerning the day-to-day life of a Kansas rock band while touring. The road experiences of these bands—the logistics of travel, who they encountered and where they performed—are important because they are a means of measuring the pulse of change in the state at a critical time, not only because it involved a potential clash of generational values, but also because Kansas was experiencing large-scale economic transformation during the decade. In this essay, I explore this subject through the reminiscence of Bob Yoos, one of the guitarists and vocalists of The Invaders, who became the better known and more widely travelled Green River Ordinance.<sup>ii</sup> I got to know Bob while we both pursued master's degrees in geography at the University of Kansas. My approach is focused geographically on the spaces and places utilized and encountered while the band toured Kansas during a five year period from 1966 to 1971.

*Continued on p. 4...*



**Figure 1. The six-piece Green River Ordinance band at a park along the Arkansas River in Wichita in 1970.**

From left to right, **Steve Graves, Jimi Pritchett, Greg Taft** (back), **Dana Bennett** (front), **Glen Andrews** and **Bob Yoos**. Photo, Green River Ordinance Archives.



## On the Road with Green River Ordinance —cont.

### Beginnings

The Invaders were originally a four-piece band that plunged into the pool of budding Kansas rockers in the spring of 1966 with Bob on guitar and vocals; Tom Baysinger on bass and vocals; Glen Andrews on guitar and vocals; and Dwight Andrews, Glen's brother, on drums. They attended two Emporia high schools: Bob and Tom went to Emporia High and the Andrews brothers went to Roosevelt High, a private school associated with Emporia State University until it closed in 1970. Through time, band members left and were replaced by others, all of whom were Kansans and, with one exception, came to Emporia to attend Emporia State. Sometime in the late fall of 1968 or early winter of 1969 the four-piece band had evolved into a six-piece band that included Bob and Glen Andrews from the original group, Jimi Pritchett (drums and vocals) from Overland Park, Steve "Ruby" Graves (keyboards, trumpet and vocals) from Eureka, Greg Taft (lead guitar) from Salina, and Dana Bennett (bass and vocals) from Ottawa. These six were the band when it disbanded in the spring of 1971 (Figure 1).<sup>iii</sup>

Finding replacement members was not usually too difficult as a kinship of musicians had already evolved by the mid 1960s in college towns. Musicians often knew and heard each other play prior to performing together so when an opening became available, it was usually filled by someone whose abilities were known to the group. An exception to this practice for Green River Ordinance occurred when band members placed notices on bulletin boards for a keyboard player as they transitioned to the six-piece band. As Bob recalled Steve "just came there [to Emporia] and he thought that that might be fun. Came and knocked on my door and introduced himself and we invited him to sit in with us."

Prior to band formation, members had little formal training other than learning an instrument in a high school band or perhaps music lessons as youngsters. Their first "stage" experiences came from playing for high school friends at parties and

at family gatherings. The Invaders thus began, like so many others, as a raw but talented group of individuals who needed to hone their personal skills while learning to play together. It was not an easy task particularly as it required commitment and discipline at a time when rebelliousness was as thick in the air as pot smoke. And the message to improve could be acridly delivered. As Bob recalled,

We were rotten when we started. When you get out and start playing for people, you learn pretty quick what works and what doesn't. You think you might sound good when you're just listening to each other in a garage and then you get out and you have to play into a bigger space—whoa! Playing in the basement for a bunch of teens, well there's a whole different level of forgiveness there. Either we need better equipment or these people aren't liking it—you can tell by their body language that this isn't that good.

Even the most successful groups have had similar experiences when they walk on to a bigger stage. As Paul Williams, a member of the Temptations told his fellow band members after watching Gladys Knight and the Pips perform their synchronized gyrations on a shared bill in Cleveland in 1964, "Fellas, we've got to go back to Detroit and do some more rehearsing."<sup>iv</sup> And so, like the Temptations, The Invaders rehearsed and gradually became more proficient so that they soon went from playing small local gatherings to playing high school dances on Friday and Saturday nights in nearby towns like Olpe, Madison, Hamilton and Cottonwood Falls. They then began slipping through the doors of clubs, and dance halls including Renfro's, a sizeable, local hotspot for the Emporia State crowd.

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## On the Road with Green River Ordinance —cont.

By this time, they had learned about “promotionals” by which bands would promote themselves, contract to rent a variety of town buildings—community centers, V.F.W. and American Legion halls, and National Guard armories—and then hire someone local to put up posters advertising the engagement. As Bob recalled, “Surprisingly it worked pretty well,” in no small part because the band musically had become more polished, which enabled them to expand their reach into larger towns and venues beyond Kansas, but it was also a function of advertising on KOMA, a powerhouse of a radio station that transmitted from Oklahoma City. As a clear-channel station, KOMA operated at night with 50,000 watts of broadcast power with minimal interference and thus could be heard booming from car and transistor radios throughout the Heartland. Numerous Kansas bands advertised there because it was so effective in reaching their audience—the kids of the smaller towns and cities who had limited choices of rock radio stations (WLS in Chicago and KAAY in Little Rock were two others) at night—as opposed to those in large cities, like Kansas City, who generally listened to local stations that advertised their own rotation of bands.

The band used Western Union to contact station management with updated itineraries and to send them money that, according to Bob’s recollection, was around \$200-\$250 for a week’s worth of ads that played in prime time for about a minute each night. That was a considerable operating expense at the time, but the advertising enabled the group to charge a little more because the band was becoming popular and playing in larger venues to which return engagements became the norm. As Bob recalled, “that blossomed to where, rather than just playing pretty much in Kansas, we ended up playing in eight states and did a lot of that till the last of the band.”

In the early days, the band would get \$50-\$60 for an evening but as they started playing at higher-paying venues, they commanded in their heyday a

pay scale of \$300-\$600, “which was a pretty good rate for the time.” Sometimes they played for much less when the opportunity arose to fill in a “dead day,” for example, on a Sunday afternoon at the Meadow Lake Resort in Derby that had a teen swim beach and concession area.<sup>v</sup> On the high end of the pay scale were the gigs they least enjoyed playing:



**Figure 2. Playing “formal” at the Roosevelt High School Prom, Broadview Hotel Ballroom, Emporia, May, 1968.**

Members of the four-piece band from right to left: **Bob Yoos, Glen Andrews, Tom Baysinger.**

Photo, Green River Ordinance Archives.

high school proms that were such staid and formal affairs (“We don’t do ‘Love is Blue’”), that they “felt like work” (Figure 2). On the other hand, the festive New Year’s Eve gig was another high paying job. The larger clubs that could attract the patrons to fill them, also paid reasonably well. Among them was the Red Dog Inn in Lawrence, Renfro’s in Emporia, and the Lamplighter in Salina. The Lamplighter, built in the early 1960s on the western perimeter of Salina, usually hired the same band to perform on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday nights. When Green River Ordinance played there, they averaged around \$200 per night, which was not as much as in some other venues, but a short stay in any place reduced the costs and stress of daily travel, plus the band enjoyed playing there.

The largest place at which Bob recalled playing was at the Sterling Municipal

*Continued on p. 6...*

## On the Road with Green River Ordinance —cont.

Auditorium in Sterling, Colorado, which at the time was a developing regional center for Northeastern Colorado with a population of about 11,000 in the late 1960s. Built by the American Legion to honor World War I veterans, this multi-purpose building was located in the old downtown core where streets and blocks were oriented to the Union Pacific Railroad upon which the proprietor, Minos King, platted the town in 1881. It held 804 people in permanent balcony seating and could hold as many as four hundred seats on the basketball floor. Bob remembered the band's first engagement there, a promotional, as a great success: "That was a big place and we had a big crowd there...It was one of our best nights and we went back there several times after that. It was always good. It varied, but it was always good."

Bob's recollection of the smallest venue at which the band played was vague, but "it was in a little club in the basement of an old hotel in Concordia"



**Figure 3. The Barons House (Hotel), Concordia, c. 1940.**  
Photo courtesy of Cloud County Historical Museum, Concordia, Kansas

where the band stayed that night as guests of management as part of their contract. The hotel was The Barons House, a colossal structure for such a relatively small town, that stood on the northeast corner of Fifth and Washington (Figure 3). The club, the Oasis Bar, was so cozy that, according to Bob,

"There wasn't room for more than maybe twenty or thirty people and only four or five showed up. I never understood that one." Perhaps the sparse crowd was reflective of just a slow night for caravans at the Oasis or perhaps it signified something more chronic—what economic relics aging county-seat hotels had become by the 1960s.<sup>vi</sup> In any event, the band never played there again and the Barons was razed in December of 1979 only to be apparently revived, in one anecdotal account, in the chorus of the Garth Brooks song "Friends in Low Places":

'Cause I've got friends in low places  
Where the whiskey drowns  
And the beer chases my blues away  
And I'll be okay  
I'm not big on social graces  
Think I'll slip on down to the Oasis  
Oh, I've got friends in low places<sup>viii</sup>

Apparently, some of Brooks' friends in low places included Jim Garver, guitarist from his band who was from Concordia and, according to one web site, shared stories about the bar that supposedly became the inspiration for the song. Other web sites, however, offer different interpretations of the song's origins.<sup>ix</sup>

Just as the band began to "invade" new territory, somewhere along a road to a Kansas job they lost their name. With a variety of catchy names of Kansas bands—the Devastating Dinks, the Blue Things, the Fabulous Flippers, the Jermis, and Spider and the Crabs—that were emerging on the Kansas rock scene, The Invaders sounded a bit stale. And so when they passed one of the many signs—"Green River Ordinance



**Figure 4. Rusting "Green River Ordinance Enforced" sign, south end of Main St., Tipton.**  
Photo courtesy of Zoe Schmieder.



## On the Road with Green River Ordinance —cont.

Enforced”—that anchored the ends of the principal thoroughfares of many small Kansas towns, one of them exclaimed, “Hey, how about Green River Ordinance?” (Figure 4). At the time, the name was unique and geographically appealing so they adopted it immediately. And it was seemingly appropriate, too. The Green River Ordinance, which originated in Green River, Wyoming, in 1931, prohibited door-to-door salesmen from entering homes without an invitation. It was in response to a prolific number of Depression-era folk who began to infiltrate small towns trying to sell just about anything. Green River began as a railroad town on the Union Pacific and many of its workers worked in the rail yards at nights and thus were awakened during the day by “nuisance” peddlers.<sup>x</sup> And so here came the Green River Ordinance peddling their musical wares, but at night and to a more enthusiastic and appreciative audience than sleeping railroad workers.

### On the Road

The band’s original transportation was a 1950s Chevrolet bus, but it was too small and became unreliable. They replaced it with a 48-passenger, 1963, school bus with a Blue Bird body and a Chevy chassis (Figure 5). They painted it green with “The Green River Ordinance, Emporia, Kansas” in two lines of highlighted, semi-gold, lettering on each side. They removed the seats and installed



**Figure 5. On the road in the old Chevy bus in June, 1967.** Members of the four-piece band: drummer **Dwight Andrews** driving, bassist **Tom Baysinger** sleeping and guitarist **Glen Andrews** picking. Photo, Green River Ordinance Archives.

bunks behind the driver’s seat, with a closet behind them. Along the right side behind the entry way was space for a propane heater followed by a sofa sleeper. Across the rear of the bus was equipment storage space topped by a double mattress.

The four-piece band played more or less continuously during the summer and mostly on weekends during the rest of 1967, but as Bob related, the six-piece band played year round to the point that “we’d have stretches were we might go 22-23 nights without a night off...we pretty much kept on going... you’d get home for a few days and then you’d head out again.” This strenuous schedule ultimately took its toll on the band members and the bus, but the bus died first. As the miles rapidly accumulated and the band kept moving, routine maintenance inevitably fell behind schedule. The resultant breakdowns—several engines had to be replaced—were frustrating but remarkably the band missed “maybe but one job” because others would come to their rescue with the loan of a vehicle to pull a trailer until the bus got back on the road. Another challenge to road travel was the heat of summer. As one might expect, the only “air conditioning” on a 1963 school bus, was the ventilation provided by open windows. But as Bob recalled, “We tolerated it pretty well because we were young and most of us grew up that way anyway, but there were times when it was pretty stifling.”

When the bus wore out, the group bought two identical VW vans and split themselves and their equipment between them (Figure 6, p. 8). Of course, by doing so, they gained more reliable transportation, but lost the advantages of the bus space. Obviously among them was the greater freedom of movement in a vehicle that had effectively functioned as a scaled-down motor home. And, as it toiled on down the road, the bus had provided the opportunity for members to learn informally the basic chording of new songs or rehearse the intricacies of more complex ones already part of their repertoire. This advantage was of some importance because although there

*Continued on p. 8...*

## On the Road with Green River Ordinance —cont.

was no substitute for it, full-stage rehearsals at their road venues were not always possible given the time constraints imposed by long-distance travel. When possible the band tried to squeeze in proper rehearsals



**Figure 6. Six-piece band with roadie on and around one of their two VW vans, location unknown, 1969.**

Photo, Green River Ordinance Archives.

in the afternoons before evening performances. Rehearsing at home was undoubtedly more relaxed, but it took away from the time members needed away from their music and from each other.

Green River Ordinance usually had a revolving play list of about fifty songs. The band would play 30-40 of them at an engagement that usually lasted three hours. A typical performance pattern was to play forty-five minutes followed by a break of ten to fifteen minutes. The band tried to play songs that they enjoyed playing, were familiar to the audience and, of course, danceable. They sometimes ventured into the realm of more obscure music, however. For example, they enjoyed playing a Spooky Tooth song, “Evil Woman” but “people weren’t familiar with it generally; it was an exception if somebody knew where that came from. But people would like it. We just tried to keep it good music, we tried not get too far off that it wasn’t acceptable because then you start shrinking your audience.”

Perhaps the greatest advantage of the bus was that it provided alternative accommodation to

motels, particularly after the installation of propane tanks and a heating unit that kept it “warm enough” during the winter months. Decisions on where to spend the night evolved into a pattern of alternate nights between the bus and a motel. Bus-sleeping nights were often travel nights with the band usually leaving immediately after loading equipment and then driving all night. A standard rule, implemented after a driver woke up off the road, was to always have someone awake with the driver. After awhile the driver would pull the bus over and awaken the next pair for their turn. “We were pretty good about it,” as Bob recalled. “Everybody knew when it was their turn. It wasn’t regimented....” And if it was a long haul—and it could be as much as five hundred miles—to the next cluster of engagements, the band may well spend consecutive nights on the bus utilizing truck stop shower facilities along the way.

On the days when they were to spend the night at a motel, the band tried to get a room as early as possible at a “mom and pop” to take showers and sleep if necessary or, during the hot months, use the swimming pool. Although the quality of these rooms varied as they do now in the very few that remain, the band never splurged on anything substantially better because it simply was not important to them and then, again, they never had “a lot to compare it with anyway.” They were more interested in acquiring one of the large inexpensive “family rooms” with

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three beds and a roll away that were fairly common in motels then. Although the band did get kicked out of a motel in Sublette, it was an exception because as Bob described their situation, “We stayed in a lot



## On the Road with Green River Ordinance —cont.

of places more than one time, and so if we got the trust of the motel owner, we didn't want to blow it. And in some places, we got to know the people."

When the band finished a gig, they were usually too wired to return to the motel so the local twenty-four-hour diners were popular late-night spots for them. Although fast-food places were becoming common in the late 1960s, Bob remembers that they frequented the diners and truck stops more often. On the low rungs of the cuisine

ladder were bologna sandwiches as luncheon fare at stops along the road. If the band splurged at all on food, it was "usually a truck-stop steak...if that can be called a splurge."

Because the band played frequently in Kansas, they had plenty of opportunities to see various attractions in different parts of the state and they willingly took advantage of them. As a result, they learned its physical and historical geography more than most Kansans, especially those their age. Bob recalled their fascination with the butte and mesa country of the Red Hills and the various geologic formations of the High Plains. At one impromptu stop, they rolled out of the bus for a chat with a geologist from Ft. Hays State who was picking away at a fossil find in one of the Niobrara chalk formations somewhere south of Hays. They walked down to the bottom of The World's Largest Hand-Dug Well at Greensburg, and strolled the grounds of old Ft. Hays. And if the situation allowed it, they would find a state lake and "park the bus there to sleep, buy hot dogs and make a good time of it."



**Figure 7. Near Green River, Wyoming on August 2, 1967.** Pictured here are **Dwight Andrews** (rear) and roadie **Mike Coleman**. Photo, Green River Ordinance Archives.

From the perspective of natural scenery, though, the highlights of their travels were to several engagements in towns along the front range of the Colorado and Wyoming Rockies including Jackson near Grand Teton National Park, their furthest venture from home, were they

played a couple of nights (Figure 7). Although some bands played the Dakotas, Green River Ordinance never did; beyond the trips to Wyoming, they flowed out from the center of Emporia like the grooves of an old 45 record. The exception was the larger cities—Kansas City, Omaha, Tulsa and Oklahoma City—where they seldom if ever played.

The band knew members of other bands and their paths did cross occasionally, but they rarely heard them play while touring. There were several, very good, Kansas bands touring the Midwest in the late '60s; Bob was most impressed with the Blue Things, Eric and the Norsemen and the "Germs [who] were really a fun band...and, of course, the Red Dogs and Flippers. They had their own sound and they were good." Musically, one of the more memorable times for Green River Ordinance occurred when they were asked to be the opening act for the Outsiders, a Chicago-based band (Sonny Geraci, lead singer) that had four records on Billboard's Top 100, all in 1966, including "Time Won't Let Me," which peaked at number five in April.<sup>xi</sup>

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## On the Road with Green River Ordinance —cont.

Green River Ordinance opened for them in Wichita, Manhattan and Lawrence on consecutive nights. As Bob recollected, “We felt pretty honored to be asked to be their opening act, so that was exciting...And they were pretty normal guys. And really they were just struggling to make a buck too. They hadn’t made that much money and they were out touring.”

Traveling in rural areas, the band had the inevitable conflicts with provincials including a couple of unfortunate, after-event confrontations in south-east Colorado. As Bob noted,

You’d run into that sometimes. But on the other hand, most of our memories of people—and we played a lot through western Kansas—were really how nice the local people would treat us...they might kid you about your hair, but we very seldom had out and out animosities. There were always some people who would do a drive by and see you standing on the corner and yell something out, but the people we interacted with were amazingly great.

Bob recalled a western Kansas local who lent the group an old pickup so they could travel a bit further down the road while the bus underwent repair and, at another time, “some guy spending the good part of an afternoon working on the engine.” And it was “amazing how many times we heard from some 30-35 year-olds working somewhere out in western Kansas saying ‘I wish I could go do what you guys are doing’ or ‘I wish I’d done what you are doing, gotten out of here for a bit.’” Whether recognizing the spirit of adventure in themselves that could not easily be satisfied by their humdrum existence on the isolated High Plains or perhaps lamenting lost opportunities for another path in life, the perspective from locals was often highly romanticized. The band knew full well that life on the road was not all “Peaches ‘N’ Cream” (Ikettes, 1965) and the challenges of five, grueling years in the business ultimately led to the end of the road.

### End of the Road

The end of the road was not like a sudden blow out, but more like a slow leak that over the last several months gradually brought the band to a halt in the spring of 1971. Part of it was triggered by the arrival of disco on the national music scene. The surge in popularity of this dreadful music allowed club owners to drastically reduce a major part of their nightly operating costs with a one-time capital outlay on a light show and sound system. In the venues that adopted disco, live bands became superfluous to the point that as Bob recollected “financially we were seeing a lot harder times. All of a sudden it was a lot harder getting bookings.” An additional economic issue was that 1970 was a recession year so the band ran into the first wave of somewhat higher fuel prices and “people not quite as willing to spend money.” Although band members made what could be described as “good money” at times, supporting themselves both on the road and at home was challenging in the best of times. Yet another factor worked hand in glove with the changing economic conditions. It was what Bob called the paradox of touring: the great cloak of exhilarating adventure that concealed the daily grind of the road. Breakdowns, nasty weather, separations, fitful nights, and the weariness of near constant travel eventually “caught up and it was pretty easy to say ‘Well, you know, it’s run its course.’”

Although the end of the road for Green River Ordinance was not the end musically for band members, as they all went on to do something different at least for awhile, it was the end to their “informal fraternity” whose membership had required specific traits.<sup>xiii</sup> From what I have learned from Bob’s reminiscence, among them would have to be a tolerance for others, a spirit of cooperation, an acceptance of individual responsibility and a willingness to sacrifice for the greater good. As Bob explained, the experience was “like being in a family

## On the Road with Green River Ordinance —cont.

(Figure 8). There were times when you did not get along. We would work through them and move on.” As for their legacy, keyboard player Steve Graves expressed it best when he wrote:

The memories will obviously last a lifetime, could never be bought with money, but had to be lived at the time. I am really proud of what we accomplished; it was more important than any college degree. We learned the music of the day, and pushed it a little, espoused politics and social consciousness on stage and in life, learned about group dynamics and what a variety of personalities we would run into in the future.<sup>xiii</sup>

As testimonial to this legacy, the six-piece Green River Ordinance band was inducted into the Kansas Music Hall of Fame on March 6, 2010,

at Lawrence’s Liberty Hall, the former Red Dog Inn at which the band had performed numerous times.



**Figure 8.** Bob Yoos and renovated “Green River Ordinance Enforced” sign on state highway 232 approaching Wilson, Kansas from the north, August, 2010.

Photo courtesy of Joanne Bergman.

<sup>i</sup> William Manchester, *The Glory and the Dream*, New York: Bantam Books, 1973, p. 1,171.

<sup>ii</sup> Interview conducted on August 12, 2010.

<sup>iii</sup> An exception to this statement is that Jimi Pritchett was drafted into the army and replaced by Mike Banks for a short time just before the group disbanded.

<sup>iv</sup> *The Motown Story*, Motown Record Corporation, 1970.

<sup>v</sup> The band played at this resort in June and August, 1969. They were guaranteed \$100 for each performance.

<sup>vi</sup> Information from Lana Tramp, Overland Trail Museum, Sterling, Colorado. Information on town proprietor from original town plat, Register of Deeds Office, Sterling, Colorado.

<sup>vii</sup> The band played at the Oasis on Friday and Saturday nights, August 26 and 27, 1966. Along with their free board, they received \$50 for the two nights.

<sup>viii</sup> From the album *No Fences*, Garth Brooks, 1990.

<sup>ix</sup> Some accounts dispute the validity of this story, noting that DeWayne Blackwell and Earl Lee wrote the first two verses of the song with a third verse, sung at concert performances, added later by Brooks. See <http://www.songfacts.com/detail.php?id=2167>

<sup>x</sup> See Marna Grubb, “1931 Green River Ordinance: Railroad Workers Demand Protection of Their Daytime Sleep,” Green River Historic Preservation Commission, n.d., <http://www.cityofgreenriver.org/index.aspx?NID=241>

<sup>xi</sup> Joel Whitburn, *Joel Whitburn’s Top Pop Artists and Singles, 1955-1978*, Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin: Record Research Inc., 1979, p. 312.

<sup>xii</sup> Email, Steve Graves to Bob Yoos, August, 12, 2010.

<sup>xiii</sup> *Ibid.*



# CKS Meeting Summaries, Fall 2010

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November 11, 2010

**F**ellows met for a breakfast meeting on Thursday morning, November 11, 2010, at 7:15. Attending the meeting were Tom Averill, Will Gilliland, David Winchester, Bob Lawson, Carol Yoho, Bradley Siebert and Tom Schmiedeler. After the round-the-table discussion of activities and projects, Director Tom Schmiedeler reported that funds remain from this year's budget. He encouraged Fellows to submit proposals for funding at the January meeting. He also announced that John Carlin, the Center's Kansas Day speaker, has titled his presentation: "Kansas at 150: What Looking at the Past Can Tell Us about Moving Forward." The presentation is scheduled for Friday, January 28, beginning at 3:30. Building and room is forthcoming. Tom also encouraged Fellows to send their Newsletter contributions to Carol Yoho by next week.

On behalf of Kim Morse and Dona Walker, Tom also brought to the table a request to co-sponsor a performance by Penny Musco, who performs a one-woman show about a little-known migration of African Americans, which she wrote and performed as Artist-in-Residence of the National Park Service. Fellows approved the request for partial funding in the amount of \$200.

Tom Averill discussed the visit by John Reimringer, author of the highly acclaimed novel, *Vestments*. John gave a fiction reading at 7 p.m. on Thursday, November 11 in the Kansas Room of the Memorial Union. John grew up in Topeka, attended Washburn and was a student in Tom's very first creative writing class. John also gave a reading at the First Congregational Church on November

12. Tom also mentioned that he has been working with student Rachael Metzger on updating the Map of Kansas Literature and on a new map of Kansas Movies that will soon be loaded on the Center web site. Tom announced a forthcoming reading by Gary Jackson, author of *Missing You, Metropolis*, at Mabee Library on April 4 and that Dave Kendall of KTUW has been working on loading episodes of "Sunflower Journeys" on YouTube.

Bob Lawson announced that he is scheduled for two library discussions of two novels he has published this past year: at Mabee Library, Tuesday, November 23 from 1-2:30 p.m. and at the Topeka Public Library (Sunday Afternoon with a Kansas Author) December 5 from 2-3 p.m.

Carol Yoho announced the 15th annual Kansas Silent Film Festival will be held in White Concert Hall, Washburn, February 25-27, 2011. The theme this year is "The First Academy Awards, 1927-28." Special guest at the 2011 festival will be Annette D'Agostino Lloyd, expert on the film career of comedian Harold Lloyd.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 a.m.

— *Minutes submitted by*  
**Tom Schmiedeler, Director**

September 9, 2010

**F**ellows of the Center for Kansas Studies formally opened the new academic year with a luncheon meeting on Thursday, September 9, beginning at 12:30. In attendance were Jay Memmott, Tom Averill, Sarah Smarsh, Judy McConnell-Farmer, Reinhild Jan-

zen, Bob Beatty, Will Gilliland, Tandra Eifert, David Winchester, Bill Roach, Patti Bender, Rachael Metzger, Carol Yoho, Virgil Dean, Marcia Cebulka, Tom Prasch, Robert Lawson and Tom Schmiedeler. Because some participants had to leave early for classes, the meeting began with a discussion of agenda items rather than the usual round-the-table conversations about summer activities and research projects. Tom Prasch began the discussions with a request for funding in the amount of \$1,000 to assist in launching a Kansas sesquicentennial reading series for the Kansas Humanities Council's TALK (Talk About Literature in Kansas) program. The proposed program, which will be conducted in libraries and other KHC sites across the state, both promotes Kansas history and literature and highlights Washburn contributions to Kansas studies. Tom's request, which will be used to partially cover the cost of purchasing forty copies each of four book titles, was approved.

Tom Averill introduced Washburn student Rachael Metzger who will be working with Carol Yoho to learn techniques needed to place various books online. Fellows approved Tom's request in the amount of \$100 to be paid to Carol for her efforts in training Rachael. Tom also requested funding (\$200) for several "Speaking of Kansas" honorariums for the academic year including one for John Reimringer, who grew up in Topeka and is returning for a reading from his novel. He will also be visiting classes. He also requested \$200 toward a collaborative effort (Law School, History Department) to bring a staged reading of Marcia Cebulka's

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play, *Visions of Right*, to campus. The play treats issues raised by a Phelps-like minister, and is thoughtful, complicated and of great interest to our community. Fellows approved these funding requests also.

In regard to a potential Kansas Day activity, Tom mentioned that he had received an email from Haydn Reiss, producer of two films on Kansas poet William Stafford entitled *William Stafford and Robert Bly: A Literary Friendship* (1964) and *Every War has Two Losers: A Poet's Meditation on Peace* (2009). Tom suggested that a screening of one or both films might be appropriate for the Center's Kansas Day event. Director Tom Schmiedeler said that he will be announcing this possibility and others in a forthcoming message to Fellows.

Sarah Smarsh announced that her recently penned books on Kansas history published by Globe Pequot Press, *It Happened in Kansas* and *Outlaw Tales of Kansas* are now available in paperback or readers can access the Kindle Edition. In conjunction with the publication of these

books, Sarah will be presenting a reading on Monday, September 20, at the Lawrence Public Library at which The Raven bookstore will have her books available for sale. Sarah will also be the editor of a book which will serve as a catalog for the collaborative art exhibit "The Waiting Room," which opens in St. Paul this fall. The Waiting Room is a project involving a national collaboration of individuals, but one that relies largely on Kansas artists, writers, scholars and health professionals. The project at large is spearheaded by Washburn University art professors Marguerite Perret and Stephanie Lanter. Sarah's contribution, *A Waiting Room of One's Own*, will be published in 2011. She invites everyone to join the conversation at the Facebook group page, "The Waiting Room."

Marcia Cebulka, the Center's active playwright, is also part of the Waiting Room team. Her part focuses on *Tick Tock*, the play she wrote to accompany the installation when it travels around the country. Fellows approved Marcia's request for funding (\$400)

to pay for costs associated with choreography and photography illustrating the play in Sarah's book. Marcia also announced that a reading of *Visions of Right*, written in response to the anti-gay ministry of Reverend Fred Phelps, will be held on September 20, at 7:30 P.M. at The Point Annex, 915 W. 44th Street in Kansas City, Missouri. A group of Kansas City actors will give the reading in a casual atmosphere. All are welcomed!

In other action, Fellows approved a request in the amount of \$500 by Reinhild Janzen to support publication of the art faculty exhibition brochure. The exhibit will open at the Mulvane on October 15. Carol Yoho reported that her husband, Max Yoho, has published a new book of humorous fiction, *With the Wisdom of Owls*. Max will have his first book signing Friday, September 17, at Hastings in Fairlawn Plaza, Topeka, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

— Minutes submitted by  
**Tom Schmiedeler, Director**



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A J.E. Dunn Construction **tower crane** is involved in the Kansas Statehouse preservation and restoration project.

The Comansa 21 LC 400 tower crane is being used during the exterior masonry restoration project.

The crane is the tallest free-standing tower crane in North America and stands 340 feet above ground to permit the horizontal boom to pass above the Ad Astra statue on top of the dome.

Read more at [cjonline.com](http://cjonline.com)

"Tall crane to loom over Capitol," August 18, 2010.

Photo, looking south across 8th St. at Van Buren St., was taken by Fellow Carol Yoho.

## Kansas 150 Commemoration

Beginning Kansas Day, January 29, 2011

The **Kansas 150 website** commemorates the 150th anniversary of statehood. The kick-off will be Kansas Day, January 29, 2011. This website gives Kansans an opportunity to share their talents with others, find valuable cultural resources to bring to their community, and promote hometown events, projects, and programs. The site is also connected via Twitter, Facebook, Flickr & YouTube



**ks150.kansas.gov** Plan now for **January 29, 2011**

- **Calendar:** Events listed come directly from Kansas 150 events entered on the TravelKS.com calendar. Site includes a link to TravelKs.com
- **Advisory Committee:** List with links to agencies that are members of the Kansas 150 Advisory Committee
- **Take Part:** Submission form to become a participating member of the celebration, listing and description of your program/service
- **Resource List:** Resource database created from information entered in the "Take Part" submission form
- **Marketing:** Items marketed through the Kansas State Historical Society Museum Store, including an order form to print and mail
- **Event Planning:** Kansas Day 2011 tool kit, including tips in planning, budgeting, publicity, safety, schedule of events planned for Kansas Day at the Kansas Historical Society in Topeka, a history of the first Kansas Day, and 150+ ideas for a Kansas Celebration



Center for Kansas Studies  
*Speaking of Kansas*  
Fall 2010

Department: Geography

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