



**President's Message Archive
2014**

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March 2014

Dear Friends Along This Way,

At our annual membership meeting, held in Osborne in January, we recognized the winners of the 9th Call for Voices.

David DeArmond, artist, took to the road again, joining us to tell about Sketching the 1916 Midland Trail Across Kansas, a project and book inspired by our Midland Trail recognition. Sketches will be available at the Sampler Festival, illustrating the adventures possible when pursuing a quest to travel the Midland Trail. The SV24 Alliance will provide a Midland Trail exhibit at the Sampler Festival, May 3-4, in Wamego, luring others to know and take U.S. 24—the Midland Trail.

John Edgar Tidwell and Carmaletta Williams provided a dynamic program on Kansas-rooted authors Langston Hughes, Gordon Parks, and Frank Marshall Davis. This continues our ongoing exploration of literature and its relation to place.

JoAnn Cool Alban, a SV24 Alliance member, winters in Savannah, Georgia. She has written about the Nicodemus-based Flyin' West being presented there. Ruben Schuckman of Hays sent a reflection on his family's Christmas journey. These two pieces are welcome Explorer Notes, assuring us heritage shared is a precious gift.

Two new directors were elected to our board for the coming year. We welcome Barbara Wilson from Osborne and Douglas McBlair from Glen Elder. Leaving the board is Don Rowlinson, Studley, after many years working with us. We thank him for sharing his passion for history.

In the coming year, I hope you enjoy the venture of the Midland Trail. It is part of our Highway 24 history, part of our heritage.

Let's meet in Wamego in May!

–Joan Nothern

June, 2014

Dear Friends Along This Way,

Our role as a Heritage Alliance is to direct attention to the history of the valley—helping to place it in a larger context. It is in this spirit we are looking at the decade 1916-1926 and the Midland Trail, an early transcontinental auto route that included the Solomon Valley.

As promised in the Spring 2014 Solomon Valley Anthology, the Alliance provided an exhibit at the Kansas Sampler Festival in Wamego in May. Dave DeArmond's watercolor sketches of towns along the route, showing how they look today, were exhibited with photographs of places 100 years ago. It was a real invitation to look again at this journey across Kansas—and we hope it sparked interest to know more.

Mark Stuempel, a traffic engineer, was there on the spot, working through locating the original logged route on maps and resources on his computer. The City of Wamego allowed us to mark the actual route of the Midland Trail through Wamego, placing orange and black bands around light poles along three streets: 6th, Lincoln, and 4th.

Linda Clover, Jan McClellan, Lynda Huffer, and I represented the Alliance, visiting about the Midland Trail. We appreciate your encouragement.

The Tenth Call for Voices is raised with this issue of the SVA. A significant literary contribution from youth and adults has been added to the heritage of the Solomon Valley through this project. Please help us spread the word. In fact, consider participating yourself! Information is available on our website www.hwy24.org and there is a flyer in this issue. Entries are accepted through November 1, 2014. The categories are poetry and prose: autobiography, essay, and fiction.

There is a beautiful two-lane highway that connects the towns in the Solomon Valley. It is a joy to travel. There are 24 towns to visit. Enjoy a stop soon.

–Joan Nothern

September, 2014

Dear Friends Along This Way,

Fall still stirs that rhythm of renewal that comes with the beginning of the school year. It is reinforced by planting winter wheat—preparing for a harvest next summer.

Preparation and planning are also an important part of the SV24 Alliance's work together. The officers and board of directors meet faithfully, making choices that guide the work of the Alliance. Besides being active in their own communities, they see the value of working together to sustain and promote the heritage of the Solomon Valley; they invest their time and effort in the Alliance.

In August, the directors and officers met at Cressler Creek Log Cabin in Hoxie. The rustic setting provided a comfortable atmosphere to reflect on the many activities the Alliance undertakes.

In October, they will meet in Alton. The challenge they will consider is strengthening the structure of the organization so that the initiatives we have launched are maintained. By being open and flexible, we have attempted many things. Now it is time to care for the Alliance.

Members, your input and support are welcome! We invited you to attend the Alton meeting.

–Joan Nothern

December, 2014

DEAR Friends Along This Way,

The sturdy blue-roofed kiosks found in our 24 communities are a testament to the SV24HA's effort to tell each local story right in that place. Choosing sites that were accessible and safe to stop at was done with deliberation a dozen years ago. There have been changes in two kiosk sites during the past year, in Penokee and Bogue. The local hosts were helpful in making these changes possible, a consideration that is really appreciated. The team of Alan LeSage, Roger Hrabe, and Leo Oliva wrestled with the structures and reset them in their new places. I take the time to share this because it is a good example of the ongoing work of the SV24HA as contributing partner for the future of the Solomon Valley.

Our website, www.hwy24.org, is another! Please go there soon and select the site map where you will find a directory to the amazing wealth of material waiting for you. Years of seeking out histories and stories, the heritage that is our mission to preserve, are there. The Solomon Valley Anthology, our quarterly newsletter, is reconfigured and presented online, promoting the rich heritage of the Solomon Valley.

At our last board meeting, I challenged each director to try to encourage two new members to join

the SV24HA. I now challenge every member to recruit a new member. We must continue to engage others in this journey of discovery and sharing, engage them in the activities already in place and to come.

We are fortunate that Ron Parks will present the program at our annual membership meeting, January 24, 2015. Ron is a member of this organization, and the author of *The Darkest Period: The Kanza Indians and their Last Homeland, 1846-1873*. He will help us understand those events and conditions that coincided with the settlement period of the Solomon Valley.

Each of you is essential in this subtle SV24HA partnership. I encourage you to consider giving a gift membership as you renew your own membership, spreading the value of our efforts.

I look forward to being with you at the annual membership meeting, January 24, in Osborne.

–Joan Nothern