



**President's Message Archive
2015**

To Read More about
Solomon Valley History
visit our website at
www.hwy24.org

March, 2015

Dear Friends Along This Way,

Our effort to identify and recognize veterans' memorials along the World War II Veterans Memorial Highway has been included in the Kansas Humanities Council's special initiative, "The Things They Carried Home." This truly enlarges our vision, as consultants Cynthia Harris and Von Rothenberger will address artifact preservation and historical research for our grant-supported project. SV24 board member Doug McBlair is acting as the Veteran contact for the grant activities. Please see the KHC press release reprinted in this issue of the Anthology for further details.

The board met in Nicodemus in February, with members meeting in interest groups to begin charting actions to meet current needs and goals. The condition and future of the 24 kiosks, and strengthening Call for Voices were the first subjects of the board's work for renewal. Working together we can sustain the SV-24-HA!

The Annual Membership Meeting, January 24 in Osborne, was enjoyed by all. Ron Parks's work on the Kanza stirred new appreciation for their struggles to survive. Call for Voices winners Dawn Wolf, Keith Schlaegel, and Janice McIntosh read their entries, bringing life to their words.

The meeting set the stage for the year ahead. Join us!

–Joan Nothern

June, 2015

Dear Friends Along This Way,

It is summer! Kansas at its best as county fairs and communities celebrate accomplishments and welcome visitors. The list is impressive:

- July 18-Glen Elder: Fun Day in the Park
- July 22-25-Hoxie: Sheridan County Fair
- July 27-29-Hill City: Jayhawkers Roundup Rodeo & Fair
- July 31-August 2-Nicodemus: 137th Emancipation Celebration & Homecoming
- August 10-15-Stockton: Rooks County Free Fair
- August 14-Cawker City: Twine-a-thon
- August 14-15-Cawker City: Picnic, Games & Cook-off
- August 22-23-Alton: Summer Jubilee

This list represents what the Solomon Valley Highway 24 Heritage Alliance is all about: communities working together, preserving, enjoying, sharing all that is special about them. Could we say this is "Heritage in Action"? Plan to travel Highway 24 this summer to participate in some of these events!

Two years ago we promised to raise awareness of the Midland Trail, preparing for the 100-year anniversary of the publication of the Midland Trail Tour Guide in 1916. We kept this promise in part by hosting the Midland Trail Rendezvous booth at the Kansas Sampler Festival in Wamego in May 2014 and 2015, where we had maps and photos, tools and stories to shed light on the Midland Trail decade. We even marked the route through Wamego so people became aware of walking along the historic auto route.

We have been given a remarkable boost in this effort. The newspaper, The St. Marys Star, introduced a new magazine, Highway 24: Life Along Route 24, in May, 2014. It was so well received, the 2015 edition followed in May 2015, with the cover story "Celebrating the Midland Trail: Follow the history of 'Main Street of America' as it becomes Highway 24."

Dave DeArmond's artwork is on the cover and accompanies the article. The magazine article is about the Solomon Valley Highway 24 Heritage Alliance, from our beginnings to our accomplishments, the kiosks, website, and newsletters, all dedicated to preserving and promoting the heritage of the Solomon Valley. The Highway 24 magazine anticipates producing high quality annual editions—encouraging travel on US 24. We have found an ally for our quest to nurture travel along 24. I truly hope Highway 24 magazine flourishes.

I hope to see you this summer in Glen Elder or Hoxie, Hill City or Nicodemus, Stockton, Cawker City or Alton.

—Joan Nothern

September, 2015

Dear Friends Along This Way,

Perhaps the most important thing that has happened during the 15 years the Solomon Valley-Highway 24-Heritage Alliance has existed is the gift of working with people who care deeply about their communities. We have established friendships, shared visions, and worked on projects together. We encourage new efforts and witness changes together.

Faye Minium was a cofounder of the SV-24-HA. She was a friend in the deepest sense of that word— caring for each of us as we gathered at Prairie Junction. Faye died July 13, 2015. Her extraordinary example of leadership has inspired this organization to establish an *Ambassador Award* on behalf of the SV-24-HA.

The first Ambassador Award is the *Faye Minium Spirit Award*. We hope to raise up and acknowledge individuals who commit their hearts and efforts to the well being of their communities, contributing to forward-looking, compassionate places that are home. In so doing, they reflect the spirit of Faye.

With a renewed sense of friendship—

—Joan Nothern

December, 2015

Dear Friends Along This Way,

When other communities hear about our work together, they are inspired to reach out to their neighboring towns in an effort to "do more together than is possible to do alone." It is remarkable that our accomplishments of the last sixteen years are recognized. It is your work in your communities that is being recognized!

At the annual membership meeting in January, we will celebrate the power of individual effort as we present the first Faye Minium Spirit Award. Community nominated candidates reveal the giving spirit and dedication that nourish rural Solomon Valley towns. We will be honored to acknowledge one that day. For more information about Faye, please see a reprint of her obituary on page 4.

The SV24 Board of Directors meets five times a year. Doing the math, 5 meetings times 16 years, means we have had 80 meetings at locations in our six counties, moving from Glasco to Hoxie. We know each other so much better now than when we began.

Our mission remains the same: Solomon Valley Highway 24 communities will collaborate to interpret, preserve, and promote our heritage. At the last board meeting for 2015, a decision was made to reduce the miles traveled to meet, and to gather in Osborne County, starting in Osborne. So our approach will be different. This is an experiment to enable members and board members to continue to devote time and energy to the mission of the SV24 Heritage Alliance.

The 11th Annual Call for Voices drew a good response, with the author/readers reviewing the entries now. The participants tell us they are glad “someone is listening.” They are answering the question posed a dozen years ago, “Where are the writers of today?” that led to the Voices project.

The Kansas Humanities Council’s “The Things They Carried Home” initiative inspired Von Rothenberger’s journey along the World War II Veterans Memorial Highway, seeking actual veterans’ memorials. Von will preview his discoveries at the annual meeting in January. I hope that we will be there to see them together.

–Joan Nothern