



**President's Message Archive
2018**

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November, 2018

President's Message

Please allow me a moment of reflection. The turning of the wheel of time – when the intentions for the year-ending slip away, and the possibilities for the future loom. That is what I feel as we work together to strengthen our 24 towns on Highway 24, encouraging them and weaving a Solomon Valley story to share.

There is more we could have done last year, there is more we will do in the coming year. The Alliance Board of Directors began the Strategic Doing Process for planning at an event on October 10, addressing our responsibilities for the future of the organization as we strive to meet the needs of our 24 towns on 24.

A progress report on the process will be presented at the Annual Membership Meeting, January 26, 2019. I hope you will be there to help us embrace a vision of experiences and actions that will attract visitors to our remarkable valley.

The Carnegie Research Library in Osborne is the museum featured in this issue of the Anthology. In addition to enumerating the extensive collection of resources, a current project by Family Search is described.

I hope to see you at the annual meeting on January 26. Best wishes for the holidays and the New Year.

–Joan Nothern

September, 2018

President's Message

I encourage you to visit your neighbors along US 24! You'll be introduced to some very nice people who obviously love their community and are eager to share their warmth with you. It is not artificial, or commercial, but down-home real. I experienced this at the Twine-a-thon, August 17 in Cawker City. Being together to add to the great ball, to sing and dance, to witness the dedication of a new sign

with a picture history of the Ball-of-Twine, it was special in ways that defy words. It was an event of the heart.

You don't sing happy birthday to a 99 year-old very often, or see a 4-year-old dance her heart out while winning yours. This was community in action, welcoming all. The handsome new sign captures the unique history of the sisal ball. Do stop to see it—and be embraced by the town surrounding it.

The museum featured in this issue of the Anthology is a new facility, dedicated to some of the oldest stories in the valley, the new Waconda Visitor and Education Center.

Humanities Kansas is bringing Leo Oliva, a founding member of SV24HA and Solomon Valley Anthology newsletter editor, to our annual meeting to speak on Women Writers on the Santa Fe Trail, sharing the stories of five women who traveled the historic trail and wrote about their experiences. The writings include a diary, letters, articles for newspapers and magazines, and memoirs. There is keen interest in these women writers, perhaps heightened because we have been nourishing voices in the Solomon Valley for 14 years. We have come to appreciate women's participation in Call for Voices, with many of their writings printed in the newsletter. Please see contest details on our website. The due date for the current Call for Voices is November 1.

The alliance Board of Directors is planning to engage in the Strategic Doings Process with the first event in October. We hope to discover actions and opportunities that help the SV24HA address the needs of our 24 communities on Highway 24. This is a board decision as they seek the path for the alliance's future. Members interested in attending, please contact me. This special board meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, October 10, at the Stockton Public Library, located one-half block north of the only stoplight in town.

—Joan Nothern

June, 2018

Dear Friends Along This Way,

Friends are here to support each other, and that is precisely the purpose of the Solomon Valley Highway 24 Heritage Alliance. Our 24 communities on Highway 24 are busy each and every day meeting the needs of their residents and neighbors, and then working to tend the special events that define their community. It is a privilege to lend our support, for theirs is the heritage we have committed to promote.

The community kiosks were one of our first major undertakings. We wanted to recognize both our united Solomon Valley history and the defining characteristics of

each town. The two-sided kiosks were the perfect format—allowing us to do both! The Kansas Sampler Foundation had worked to refine how a person might digest the information about a place. They isolated 8 rural cultural elements that captured the past and present. These 8 cultural elements guided the story building for our kiosks.

But why a kiosk at each place? The stories were created by the people living there, for visitors stopping there. They are local voices for listening ears.

The kiosks have just undergone renewal. We hope listening explorers will stop for many years to come.

The museums in the valley are dynamic civic gifts. They engage visitors of all ages, encouraging appreciation for and understanding of the past. We will feature a museum column in the Anthology, updating on special exhibits and activities. Sue McFarland introduces the Rooks County Museum in this issue.

Please consider bookmarking our website on your computer (www.hwy24.org). It is a growing library of local histories, of new writing, of resources, of places to go and things to see! Do try it—you'll like it!

Finally, we are announcing the 14th annual Call for Voices. Youth and Adults may add prose and poetry to our valley heritage. Our writing contest enriches grassroots culture. You will find entry information in this issue and on our website.

Thank you for being a friend in the Solomon Valley. I hope our paths cross as we travel to enjoy the unique experiences provided by the "24 on 24."

—Joan Nothern

March, 2018

Dear Friends Along This Way,

We have many things to share with you as we complete our Water/Ways journey and begin again to explore the Solomon Valley together. There were eight special events presented during the course of our wander Water/Ways exhibit, from August 2017 to January 2018. We reported on all of them in the Solomon Valley Anthology, with the final program coverage in this issue. Another special note – the complete exhibit is now on our website! [Click Here To View](#)

It is an honor to acknowledge the Kansas Humanities Council for providing the principal funding for our Water/Ways partner site role. The KHC is a nonprofit cultural organization that connects communities with history, traditions, and ideas to strengthen civic life. This project is part of "Water/Ways," a statewide initiative exploring the ways water shapes our lives.

We say this, write this, read this over and over as we introduce and advertise KHC programs. But as we look back on this past two years, preparing for and presenting our exhibit Living Off the Water: the Challenge to Tame and Sustain Life in the Solomon Valley, the attribution to the KHC does describe our experience! We have benefited as communities connected to each other as well as with history and traditions.

During the year, you will find the [Call for Voices 2017](#) poetry and prose published in the Anthology. Many participants turned to water in their writing. We are pleased that the conversation will continue in this way.

Finally, our website has a fresh look. It is meant to be a useful tool. We hope it encourages you to get on the road to explore our 24 on 24! Take a look!

—Joan Nothern