

Freedom's Frontier

NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA



*Freedom's Frontier
Boys & Girls Club Youth Camp at
Mount Mitchell Heritage Prairie,
Wamego, Kansas*

2017 Annual Report



Letter from the Board Chair

Friends of Freedom Frontier:

As my term as chair of the Board of Trustees ends, I am heartened to look back on four years of strong accomplishments and to look forward to exciting new projects, programs and even stronger growth.

In 2017, as we continued to strive to **Create Lifelong Learners and Everyday Explorers**, Freedom's Frontier offered youth camp experiences to children participating in Boys and Girls Clubs. This year, the youth camp program expanded into Tecumseh, Kansas, for the first time.

Camps have exposed hundreds of students to historic sites and stories who have never had that kind of experience. Coupled with our *Bus on Us!* program, which provides funds to take classes to visit historic sites and museums, we are insuring that our young people know and understand the importance of regional history.

Through our ongoing interpretive grants program, we are **Investing in the Future of Our Past**. We provide critical support to our partners, enabling them to improve the quality and scope of their exhibits, attract new supporters and grants, and ensure their long-term sustainability. And our training, professional exchanges, and professional development scholarships are **Knitting Together a Professional Community** of partners across the heritage area.

“We have much to be proud of and much to look forward to. Thanks to each of you for your ongoing support of Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area!”

Jody Ladd Craig

A 2017 highlight was the installation of the first of 50 highway signs alerting travelers they are entering Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area. Years of planning and negotiating with two state departments of transportation, along with time and patience of both staff and trustees, made this possible.

Highway signage was one of the first goals identified by our partners as an extremely effective means of **Telling a Story of National Significance**.

Congratulations to all who have played a role in this important work!

As you read through this annual report, you will find examples of other ways that these four themes embody the work of Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area.



Jody Ladd Craig
Chair, Board of Trustees



Jim Ogle
Executive Director



Julie McPike
Managing Director



*Youth Camp visits
American Jazz Museum
Kansas City, Missouri*

Creating Lifelong Learners and Everyday Explorers

In the past five years, we have helped more than 1,220 underserved students from the region explore the history of our area. Many of the students that participate in our summer camps have never visited our museums or historic sites before. We also sponsor transportation grants for field trips to historic sites and help create and underwrite history-based educational programs for learners of all ages.

Investing in the Future of Our Past

Our Interpretive Grants offer seed money for projects that tell the history of our area. Our \$5,000 grant to Poplar Heights Living History Farm in Butler, Missouri, for a fiber arts exhibit resulted in \$12,549 match. There was so much volunteer time for this project that Poplar Heights stopped keeping track! Our grants spark renewed participation among community members, the first step toward sustainability for local historic sites.

Knitting Together a Professional Community

Freedom's Frontier works hard to build a professional community to benefit all of our partners. We connect institutions and organizations to work together on joint promotions, field trips, artifact loans for special exhibits, special tours, and research projects.

Telling a Story of National Significance

While the history of any of our museums or historic sites is interesting, when we tie those stories together, we become a national destination. This year, we cleared a major hurdle in our quest to reach this goal. The first of 50 entry signs have gone up along the most trafficked entrances to the heritage area. People traveling along our highways will know they are entering Freedom's Frontier!

Creating Lifelong Learners and Everyday Explorers



Upper: Youth campers learn how rivers shaped the frontier while visiting Arabia Steamboat Museum in Kansas City, Missouri.

Lower: Youth Camp explores Mount Mitchell Heritage Prairie, Wamego, Kansas.

Our Freedom's Frontier "Naturally Historic" Youth Camp provides 4th and 5th grade students from local Boys and Girls Clubs an opportunity to explore history from Civil War to Civil Rights, experiencing cultural, natural, and historical resources in the heritage area's 41 counties.

In 2017, we worked with Boys and Girls Clubs in Kansas City and Independence, Missouri; and Lawrence, Tecumseh, Olathe and Topeka, Kansas. Through our partnerships campers experienced archives, museums, nature preserves, historic sites as well as local waterways. Friends of the Kaw took students in kayaks and canoes on local waters; stressing safety, environmental stewardship and teamwork.

This year Youth Camp Assistants **Scott Davis** and **Katie McWhirter** facilitated the camps. As students explored Freedom's Frontier, the camp assistants led discussions about heritage area themes.





Bus On Us! field trips at Ritchie House, and the State Capitol in Topeka, Kansas

Bus on Us! is Freedom's Frontier's program that provides students of all ages throughout the heritage area opportunities to take a history field trip. By contributing up to 75% of transportation costs, we make it possible for schools to bring students to sites within the heritage area to experience quality programming.

Many of these schools would not be able to take these trips without the funding they receive from *Bus on Us!* This program also allows for greater connection between schools and our partner sites.



Lexi Ray
Youth and Education
Coordinator

In 2017:

- 15 partner sites visited
- 23 schools awarded grants
- 223 adults served
- 1,974 students served
- \$6,832.83 awarded



Grants Support Freedom's Frontier and Partner Projects

Freedom's Frontier awards Interpretive Grants quarterly throughout the year, awarding up to \$5,000 for projects that interpret stories that connect to the heritage area's rich history. Grant applications are peer-reviewed by a committee comprised of staff and volunteers from partner sites. Projects align with at least one of our major themes: the shaping of the frontier, the Missouri-Kansas Border War, and the enduring struggle for freedom. More than 90 grants have been awarded since 2012. Thirteen were funded in 2017.

Abstracts for all of the Interpretive Grants can be found by searching for Interpretive Grants Awarded at www.freedomsfrontier.org.



Kelly Burns
Quindaro Project Coordinator

Investing in the Future of Our Past



Upper: Race Project KC students meet author Tanner Colby at Johnson County Library.

Lower: Kansas City, Kansas Public Library hosts a session of the Quindaro Oral History Project.



Coordinated by Johnson County Library, **Race Project KC**, is a racial justice high school curriculum focused on U.S. history. Freedom's Frontier Interpretive Grants helped to establish the program at Shawnee Mission East, Paseo, and Wyandotte high schools and expand it to include Raytown High School. Reading selections include *Some of My Best Friends are Black – The Strange Story of Integration in America* by Tanner Colby, and other fiction and non-fiction accounts of the American Civil Rights movement.

The library coordinates monthly events and hosts an annual multi-school Segregation Bus Tour. Students investigate the history of racial politics in Kansas City, Johnson County, and in their public schools. The program empowers students and teachers with the tools to understand Kansas City and its peoples' past, critique the present, and build for a better future through dialogue, critical literacy, and art integration.

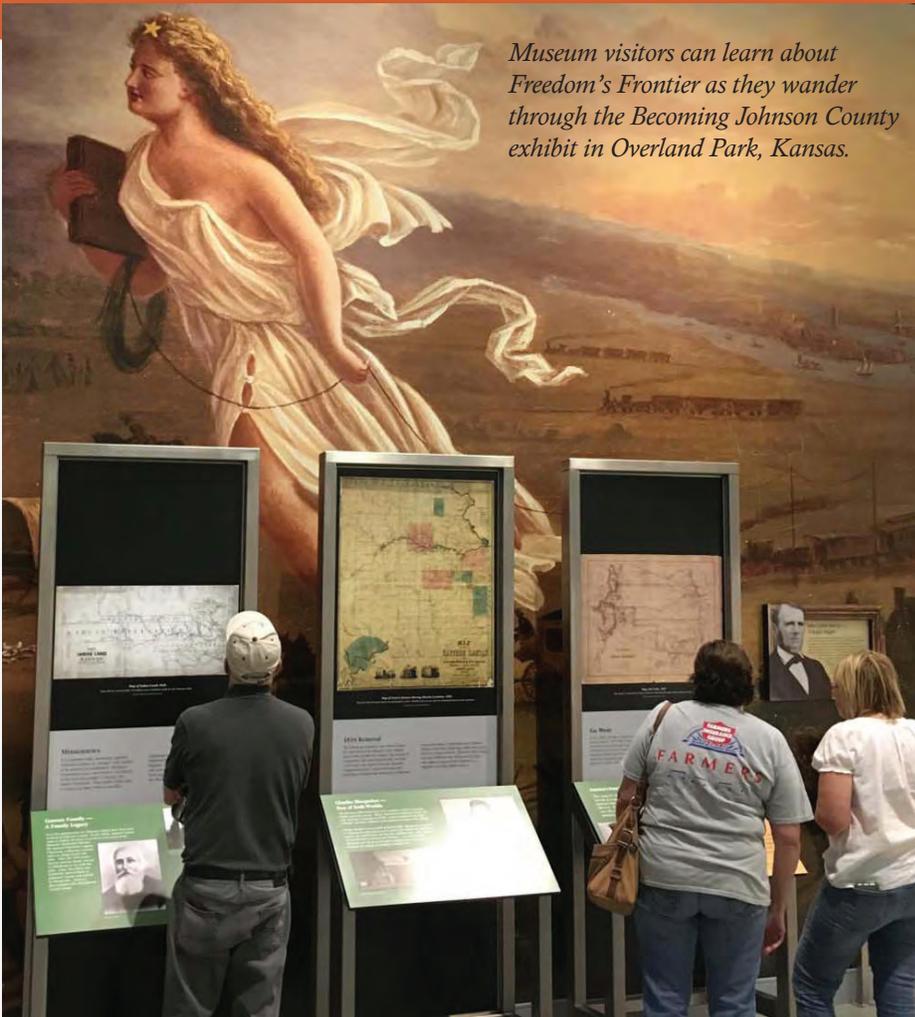
Freedom's Frontier received a grant from the Kansas Humanities Council to help preserve stories from the Quindaro Township neighborhood of Kansas City, Kansas. Working with Kansas City, Kansas Public Library, Quindaro Project Coordinator **Kelly Burns** helped organize **Quindaro Oral History Project** sessions with library patrons who had memories to share. The library will preserve the session transcripts. In three 2017 sessions of this ongoing project, 28 interviews were conducted.

Henry Fortunato's project, **A Hike Through History**, leveraged a Freedom's Frontier Interpretive Grant to raise money from foundations and other history organizations to place interpretive trail signage on the Burroughs Creek Trail in Lawrence, and Indian Creek Trail in Overland Park, Kansas.



Liz Hobson
Special Projects Coordinator

Museum visitors can learn about Freedom's Frontier as they wander through the Becoming Johnson County exhibit in Overland Park, Kansas.



Our Interpretive Grants support exhibits throughout our 41-county region, creating quality interpretation about the nationally significant history of Freedom's Frontier. When **Johnson County Museum** moved into a larger space in Overland Park, Kansas, museum staff applied for a grant to create an exhibit to showcase Freedom's Frontier themes.

Freedom's Frontier Interpretive Grants often lead organizations in new, unexpected directions. The success of **Threads**, a fiber arts exhibit and program at **Poplar Heights Living History Farm**, near Butler, Missouri, is a great example. Poplar Heights staff have been selling textiles created on the loom in the exhibit at regional craft sales. This provides funding for the farm's youth programs. Encouraged by the results of their Interpretive Grant, Poplar Heights applied for, and was recently awarded a Wal-Mart grant that will assist in creating a blacksmith shop at the farm.



House museum experts provided our partners with training in a workshop at the Alexander Majors Barn in Kansas City, Missouri.

Freedom's Frontier worked with the American Association for State and Local History to bring a low-cost training program to the heritage area.

The **Historic House Museum Workshop** helped support 50 historic house museum volunteers and professionals in the area by bringing experts in the field to provide training, insight and the latest research in the field. These museums can tell significant stories in unique ways, while preserving the area's historic landscape.

Our Partner sites are a vital part of Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area. Six sites a year host meetings, on the second Thursdays of odd-numbered months. Meetings include guest speakers, training, workshops, strategic planning, and networking over lunch.

Freedom's Frontier has a Professional Development Scholarship program for staff and volunteers from partner sites. One of the scholarship requirements is that recipients must share what they learn with other partners.

Some choose to write an article for our weekly emailed newsletter, the Monday Minute. Others make presentations at Partner Meetings. In 2017 we awarded five scholarships, totaling \$2,197.50.

Knitting Together a Professional Community

Partners met at the Olathe Community Center in Olathe, Kansas, to talk about marketing, tourism, and other topics.





“Relationships and expertise gained through Freedom’s Frontier have an impact on our partners. We collaborated with **Franklin County Historical Society** to develop an emigrant Indian tribe exhibit. Lawrence audiences expressed interest in this history, but the Watkins has hardly any collection materials to tell the stories of tribes that were the region’s first residents,” said **Steve Nowak**, Executive Director of the **Watkins Museum of History** in Lawrence, Kansas, and the Chair of the Freedom’s Frontier Advisory Committee.

“Partnering with Franklin County allowed us to present images from their collection that establish a connection with Haskell Indian Nations University, another Freedom’s Frontier partner. Haskell students provided programming that explored native cultures,” Steve said.

This success inspired the Watkins Museum and Franklin County Historical Society to try it again this year, with an exhibit exploring life on the home front during World War II, based on a collection of photos taken in and around Ottawa, Kansas.

For Franklin County, these programs continue the success of **Native Neighbors**, a program developed with a Freedom’s Frontier Interpretive Grant. Native Neighbors won an award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History. These collaborative efforts also help both Freedom’s Frontier and its partners to market historic sites to travelers.

“I have been a partner in Freedom’s Frontier for eight years. From the very beginning I’ve been impressed with the camaraderie and friendship among partners and the knowledge and experience the group represents.”

Steve Nowak



Sonia Smith
Communications and
Marketing Manager



They're here!



ENTERING
FREEDOM'S
FRONTIER
NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

New federal and state
highway boundary
signs are going up in
Missouri!



Keep an eye out for Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area highway signs in Missouri. The photos above show the first installations of Freedom's Frontier boundary signage along federal and state highways in Missouri. These three signs are in Johnson County (Highway 13 south of Warrensburg) and Ray County (Highway 13 north of Richmond and Highway 10 east of Richmond). Signs have also been installed in St. Clair, Barton, and Vernon counties.

The Freedom's Frontier comprehensive master plan for signage, developed in 2011, identified the 25 most traveled state and federal highway corridors within heritage area boundaries in Kansas and Missouri. Signage Coordinator **Doug Pickert** works closely with the Departments of Transportation in both Kansas and Missouri to get signs installed. Once all 50 signs are in place, it's estimated that more than 228,000 highway travelers will see Freedom's Frontier boundary signs every day.



Telling a Story of National Significance

Doug Pickert
Signage Coordinator

Guiding Travelers in Freedom's Frontier

Highway boundary signs are only one piece of the heritage area's signage plan. The plan also includes signs at locations throughout the heritage area to identify them as a Freedom's Frontier Partner Site. Thirty-eight partners display on-site Freedom's Frontier signage. Signage Coordinator **Doug Pickert** works with each site to customize signs to partner needs.

Two directional signage pilot projects are also underway. The pilot projects in Kansas and Missouri are helping Freedom's Frontier staff to learn about the complexities of a signage project that spans a federal heritage area, in two states, 41 counties, and multiple municipalities.

The first directional sign was installed at the **Battle of Island Mound State Historic Site** near Butler, Missouri, in Bates County. It lets battlefield visitors know other local sites tell Freedom's Frontier stories.



Partners Connecting to Freedom's Frontier Themes

National Heritage Areas like Freedom's Frontier are places that preserve the nation's significant stories; conserve cultural and natural landscapes; and interpret our heritage history in educational and economically beneficial ways.

As word spreads about Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area, we gain more Partners. Some have historic sites. Others – such as Fractured Atlas, an arts organization based in New York – collaborate with Freedom's Frontier because they can offer resources for museums and other sites. Our website, www.freedomfrontier.org, has a section with information about "Places to See," that showcases our Partners that have sites for visitors. A complete list of Partners is also listed online.

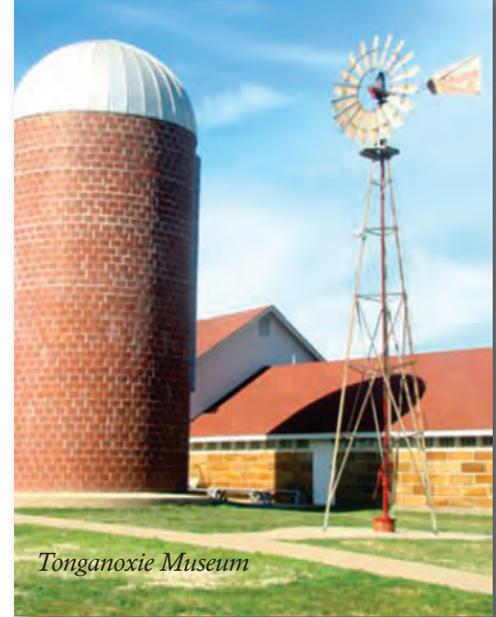
The following organizations signed Partnership Pledges in 2017:

Kansas

Edgerton Community Museum – Edgerton
Greenbush Education Resource Center – Girard
Lansing Historical Museum – Lansing
Museum of the Kansas National Guard – Topeka
Santa Fe Trail Association – Larned
Shawnee Mission East High School – Prairie Village
Tonganoxie Community Historical Society – Tonganoxie
Topeka Rotary Club – Topeka
Visit Topeka – Topeka
Watkins Foundation Historical Society – Lawrence

Missouri

Bridging the Gap – Kansas City
Concordia Area Museum and Historical Society – Concordia
Connecting For Good – Kansas City
Day Log Cabin at the Green – Parkville
Front Porch Alliance – Kansas City
Hicklin Hearthstone – Lexington
JuneteenthKC – Kansas City
LaBudde Special Collections
Miller Nichols Library, UMKC – Kansas City
McClure Archives and University Museum – Warrensburg
Mid-coast Radio Project, KKFI – Kansas City
Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art – Kansas City
Quindaro Press, LLC – Kansas City
Raytown Historical Society & Museum – Raytown
Rice-Tremonti Home – Raytown
Silver Heart Inn – Independence
Warrensburg Convention Visitors Bureau – Warrensburg
William Klein Park – Kansas City



Tonganoxie Museum



Day Log Cabin



*Topeka's Rotary Pocket Park
at Constitution Hall*



Adam Newhard
Partnership Coordinator

Judy Billings Most Valuable Partners

The **Billings Most Valuable Partner (MVP) Award** was established to recognize one of the founders of Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area, and its first Executive Director, **Judy Billings**. In 2017, this award was shared by two MVPs. Both awardees provide great insight to Freedom's Frontier staff, offering new ideas, and working with staff on a variety of programs. They are also both great advocates for their communities within the heritage area, dedicated to advancing tourism, and communicating key issues to their local, state and federal elected officials.

Retired teacher **Paul Bahnmaier**, President of the **Lecompton Historical Society**, is a booster for Lecompton, Kansas, and its history, a history that Paul's family has been a part of since coming to Lecompton in 1855.

Paul is a long-time member of the Freedom's Frontier Partner Advisory Committee, and has been involved in our Boys & Girls Club youth camps since the first year of the program. As a Lecompton Reenactor, Paul portrays Sheriff Samuel Jones to educate students about issues, including slavery and women's suffrage, that faced early Kansans. Paul often portrays Sherriff Jones for other Freedom's Frontier events, and at festivals throughout the heritage area.

If **Beth Carmichael**, Development Director for the **St. Joseph, Missouri, Convention Visitors Bureau**, were a baseball player, she would be a utility person – one of those rare players who excels at every position. She has filled so many roles with Freedom's Frontier over the years, it is hard to count them all.

Beth has served as a thorough and thoughtful member of the grant review committee and provided great feedback and input on the grant application and review process.

The relationship Beth forged between Freedom's Frontier and the St. Joseph CVB is a model we strive to emulate with other destination management organizations. She has opened doors for Freedom's Frontier to connect with the travel industry in Missouri and has worked to include Freedom's Frontier in St. Joseph's marketing opportunities. We are looking forward to Beth's help and advice in 2018 as we expand our tourism efforts.

Beth Carmichael
St. Joseph, Missouri



Paul Bahnmaier
Lecompton, Kansas

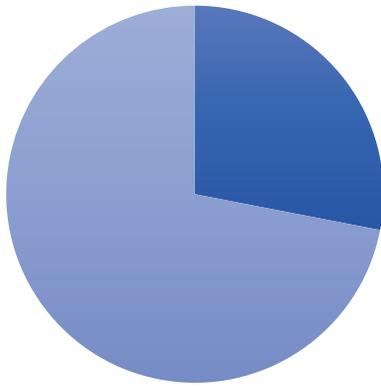
“Our 2017 Most Valuable Partners have been dedicated supporters of Freedom's Frontier since the beginning. Their representation of this history has been extremely important to the development of the heritage area.”

Judy Billings

Billings MVP Award Winners

- 2013: Carol Bohl – Harrisonville, Missouri
Eileen Robertson – Humboldt, Kansas
- 2014: Deborah Barker – Ottawa, Kansas
- 2015: Kerry Altenbernd – Lawrence, Kansas
- 2016: Peggy Buhr – Butler, Missouri
Michael Stubbs – Wamego, Kansas

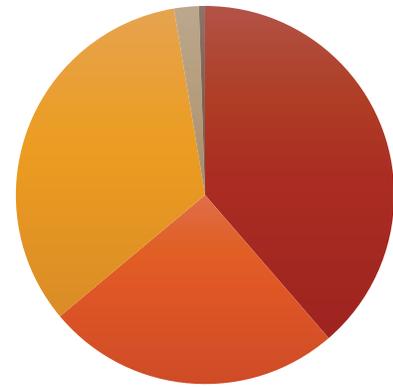
Expenditures



■ Administrative ■ Program

Administrative	\$436,631.71
Program	\$1,120,438.13

Funding Sources



■ Local Government ■ Federal ■ Grants ■ Friends ■ Other

Local Government	\$509,477.50
Federal	\$332,637.31
Grants	\$440,857.54
Friends	\$27,745.10
Other	<u>\$6,873.29</u>
	\$1,317,590.74

Leveraging Local Dollars to Create Capacity

Freedom's Frontier works with local governments and private organizations to provide baseline support for many of our partner organizations. We also work on behalf of our partners to coordinate larger projects that support the activities of many organizations, but which no one partner has the capacity to manage the project. In 2018, we:

- Received a \$20,000 grant in partnership with the **Unified Government of Kansas City, Kansas, and Wyandotte County** to work towards National Landmark Designation for the Quindaro ruins.
- Entered into an agreement with **Northeast Kansas Tourism Group** to serve as their financial administrator while they go through a period of revitalization and reorganization.
- Assisted the **Johnson County Kansas Heritage Foundation** as this group of history and heritage organizations in Johnson County, Kansas, dedicated to work toward their collective sustainability, wrote their bylaws and filed their nonprofit paperwork in the State of Kansas.



The Northeast Kansas Tourism Group met at the Carnegie Building in Lawrence, Kansas.

Our Generous Donors

Mary Kay Aldous Trust
Constance Banwart
Deborah Barker
Aaron Barnhart & Diane Eickhoff
Kay Barnes
Duane & Sandra Benton
Judy Billings
William L. Bruning
Peggy Buhr
Kay Caskey
City of Lawrence, Kansas
Charles & Virginia Clark
Jody & Bill Craig
Kelvin Crow
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Sonia Smith
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Deanell Tacha
Bill & Davoren Tempel
The Breidenthal Foundation
Nancy & Scott Thellman
William Wagnon
Doug Wallace
William Webster
Kevin Wood
Alexis Woodall
Walt Wulf



Donations to Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area show a local commitment to projects, and a local match for receiving our federal funding. Donations can be made through the Freedom's Frontier webpage, or social media, or by contacting Executive Director **Jim Ogle**, or a member of the Board of Trustees.

Board of Trustees

Members of the Board of Trustees meet six times a year to provide governance to the organization, represent it to the public, and develop sustainable fundraising strategies.

Executive Committee

Jody Ladd Craig (Chair), Leawood, Kansas
Duane Benton (Vice-Chair), Kansas City, Missouri
Deborah Barker (Secretary) Ottawa, Kansas
Kent Glasscock (Treasurer), Manhattan, Kansas
John Dillingham (At-Large), Kansas City, Missouri
Deanell Reece Tacha (At-Large), Lawrence, Kansas
Kevin Wood (At-Large), Independence, Missouri

Trustees

Kay Barnes, Kansas City, Missouri
Peggy Buhr, Butler, Missouri
Kay Caskey, Butler, Missouri
Kelvin Crow, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
Jan English, Prairie Village, Kansas
Bob Ford, St. Joseph, Missouri
Henry Fortunato, Overland Park, Kansas
Grant Glenn, Topeka, Kansas
Stanley Harris, St. Joseph, Missouri
Mary Hunkeler, Mission Woods, Kansas
Jeremiah Morgan, Kansas City, Missouri
Gary Nevius, Overland Park, Kansas
Craig Patterson, Kansas City, Missouri
Larry Pfautsch, Harrisonville, Missouri
Jim Rankin, Topeka, Kansas
Brigadier General Don Scott, Kansas City, Missouri
Luther Smith, Kansas City, Kansas
Kala Stroup, Lawrence, Kansas
Bill Tempel, Lexington, Missouri
Nancy Thellman, Lawrence, Kansas
Bill Wagnon, Topeka, Kansas
Alexis Woodall, Olathe, Kansas
Walter Wulf, Humboldt, Kansas

Honorary Co-chairs

Governor **Sam Brownback**, Kansas
Governor **Eric Greitens**, Missouri

Ex-Officio Members

Jennie Chinn, Executive Director
Kansas State Historical Society

Gary Kremer, Director
State Historical Society of Missouri **Board Officers**



Johnny Szlauderbach
Grants Research Coordinator

Advisory Committee

Advisory Committee members represent partner sites across the heritage area. The committee meets at least six times a year to discuss Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area projects, and provide insight to staff. Two members of the committee – one from Kansas, one from Missouri – also sit on the Board of Trustees as liaisons from the partnership.

Steve Nowak – Advisory Committee Chair
Executive Director, Watkins Museum of History

Erica Layton – Advisory Committee Vice Chair
Curator, Atkins-Johnson Farm and Museum

Peggy Buhr – Missouri Liaison
Museum Director, Bates County Museum

Alexis Woodall – Kansas Liaison
Interpretive Specialist, Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and Farm

Cheryl Collins
Director, Riley County Historical Museum

Paul Bahnmaier
President, Lecompton Historical Society

Kristi Lee
Director, Leavenworth Convention and Visitors Bureau

Alinda Miller
President, Lone Jack Historical Society

Alana Smith
President, Westport Historical Society



Honoring our Trustees

In 2017, Freedom's Frontier recognized three of our original trustees, two of whom served as our first and second board chairs, as they left the board.



Although serving as a federal judge in the 10th Circuit at the time, **Deanell Tacha** agreed to become the first chair of the board of the fledgling Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area back in 2006.

Deanell brought the trustees together to form a strong contingent of supporters for the organization's initial efforts, and has since been a tireless promoter. She conveyed the importance of preserving our history for future generations and laid the groundwork for our focus on youth education projects.



John Dillingham was brave enough to step forward and follow Deanell as Board Chair. He simply did what he has done for so many other organizations and nonprofits – threw himself fully into the job.

John is a master at making connections. Many of our trustees serve on the board as a result of those connections.

Many partners have been the beneficiaries of John's creative thinking about ways to relate our stories to each other.



Dr. Kala Stroup has been a national leader in higher education. She has served as President of several universities, Commissioner of Higher Education in Missouri and President of the Kentucky System of higher education.

Kala has also served on several national boards including the National Executive Board of the Boy Scouts of America. She was selected for Kansas University's Emily Taylor Center for Women & Gender Equity Hall of Fame. She served two terms on Freedom's Frontier's board.

Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area Offices are located in the Carnegie Building, Lawrence, Kansas.



Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area is dedicated to building awareness of the struggles for freedom in western Missouri and eastern Kansas. Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area inspires respect for multiple perspectives and empowers residents to preserve and share these stories.

We achieve our goals through interpretation, preservation, conservation and education for all residents and visitors. National Heritage Areas are places where historic, cultural, and natural resources combine to form cohesive, nationally important landscapes.

Unlike national parks, National Heritage Areas are large lived-in landscapes. Consequently, National Heritage Area entities collaborate with communities to determine how to make heritage relevant to local interests and needs.

Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area is an internationally recognized region in western Missouri and eastern Kansas where a young nation's diverse definitions of freedom collided. Through sharing authentic and honestly interpreted stories, residents respect multiple views of freedom. Compelling learning experiences, interpretation and preservation offer visitors and residents of all ages an understanding of the region's importance. Historically aware citizens collaborate to build diverse economies for current and future generations.

There are 12 western Missouri counties, and 29 eastern Kansas counties in Freedom's Frontier, a national heritage area covering 31,021 square miles, with an estimated population of 2,883,526.



Missouri

- Barton
- Bates
- Buchanan
- Cass
- Clay
- Jackson
- Johnson
- Lafayette
- Platte
- Ray
- St. Clair
- Vernon

Kansas

- Allen
- Anderson
- Atchison
- Bourbon
- Chautauqua
- Cherokee
- Clay
- Coffey
- Crawford
- Douglas
- Franklin
- Geary
- Jackson
- Jefferson
- Johnson
- Labette
- Leavenworth
- Linn
- Miami
- Montgomery
- Neosho
- Osage
- Pottawatomie
- Riley
- Shawnee
- Wabaunsee
- Wilson
- Woodson
- Wyandotte

Request a map brochure (shown above), or more information about Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area via email to information@freedomfrontier.org.



What is a Heritage Area?

In 1984, the first National Heritage Area, Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Area, was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan. In his dedication speech, Reagan referred to National Heritage Areas (NHAs) “a new kind of national park” that married heritage conservation, recreation, and economic development. NHAs are designated by Congress as places where natural, cultural, and historic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape.

Through their resources, NHAs tell nationally important stories that celebrate our nation’s diverse heritage. NHAs are lived-in landscapes. Consequently, NHA entities collaborate with communities to determine how to make heritage relevant to local interests and needs.

- **Creating Lifelong Learners and Everyday Explorers** – NHAs connect communities to natural, historic, and cultural sites through educational activities, which promote awareness and foster interest in and stewardship of heritage resources. NHAs connect heritage history with educators and students of all ages – offering programs for preschool through continuing education for adults.
- **Investing in the Future of Our Past** – NHAs leverage an average of \$5.50 for every \$1.00 of federal investment to create jobs, generate revenue for local governments, and sustain local communities through revitalization and heritage tourism. Through new or improved amenities, unique settings, and educational and volunteer opportunities, NHAs improve local quality of life. NHA partnerships foster pride of place and an enduring stewardship ethic.
- **Knitting Together a Professional Community** – Since NHAs are a grassroots, community-driven approach to heritage conservation, they encourage community members from many disciplines to work together toward common goals. NHAs engage professionals in economic development, public history, heritage tourism, conservation, and preservation. In addition, NHAs foster volunteerism, as community members work with the NHAs to create new educational and recreational opportunities.
- **Telling a Story of National Significance** – By engaging community members in heritage conservation activities, NHAs strengthen sense of place and community pride.

The NHA program is administered by National Park Service (NPS) coordinators in Washington DC and six regional offices - Anchorage, San Francisco, Denver, Omaha, Philadelphia and Atlanta - as well as park unit staff. NHAs are not national park units. Rather, NPS partners with, provides technical assistance, and distributes matching federal funds from Congress to NHA entities. NPS does not assume ownership of land inside heritage areas or impose land use controls.

Through annual Congressional appropriations, NPS passes funds to NHA entities. Although most entities are authorized to receive up to \$1 million annually over a set period of time, actual annual appropriations range from \$150,000 – \$750,000.



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