



Programming Ideas

Your observance of Kansas Reads The Virgin of Small Plains can be as simple as putting up one of the posters with a copy of the book or hosting one—or more—of the presenters listed below. Fees for the speakers not associated with the Kansas Humanities Council will vary and be sure to give them plenty of lead time when planning your activities.

The following are ideas that you can tailor to your own community's needs—please tweak as needed. Don't be afraid to come up with something entirely different! And remember to tell the rest of the state what you are doing by contributing to the Kansas Reads BLOG (see website page).

Author Visits to Libraries/Communities

- Nancy Pickard, author of *The Virgin of Small Plains*, is available for library visits. Please contact your regional library system to make arrangements for a visit to your community.

Discussions

- Ask a local resident to lead a book discussion over *The Virgin of Small Plains*
- Contact the Kansas Humanities Council (KHC) for a list of trained discussion leaders: <http://www.kansashumanities.org/programs/talk/TALK.html> (this probably isn't the correct link but I didn't know what else to put here)

Ghost stories tie-in

- Have an evening where local "ghost" stories or lore are shared. Consider preserving the event with audio or video taping and transcription for library's local history collection. You may also want to share the results with the Kansas Folklore Society at <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/orgs/kfs/>.
- Hold a ghost story writing contest and have winners read their entries at a special program.
- Host a panel discussion on paranormal phenomena. Check local colleges and the Internet for presenters or simply get local people together to share experiences and opinions.

Cemetery tie-ins

- Host the KHC program "Talking Tombstones: History in the Cemetery" by Albert Hamscher, Dept. of History, KSU, 208 Eisenhower Hall, Manhattan, KS 66502, (785) 532-0436, aham@ksu.edu. For more info, see the KHC catalog: www.kansashumanities.org/pdf/KHC_HA_SB_catalog-7.pdf
- KHC program "Cemeteries Galore: Continuity & Change in Kansas Graveyards" by Randall Thies, 5033 SE 4th Terr, Tecumseh, KS 66542, (785) 379-9488, rthies@cox.net. For more info, see the KHC catalog: www.kansashumanities.org/pdf/KHC_HA_SB_catalog-7.pdf
- Contact your local cemetery sexton or history buff to prepare a talk (and tour, weather permitting) of the local cemetery. Discussion could include cemetery history, tombstone symbolism, grave witching, local legends and true stories.
- Sponsor an art contest with entries depicting the tombstone/monument to the virgin in the story.

Tornado tie-in

- Sponsor the KHC program "Twisters: Living in Tornado Alley by Jay Antle, Dept. of History, Johnson County Community College, 12345 College Blvd, Overland Park, KS 66210, (913) 469-8500, Ext. 4245, jantle@jccc.edu .
For more info see the KHC catalog: www.kansashumanities.org/pdf/KHC_HA_SB_catalog-7.pdf
- Contact local weather forecasters or storm chasers to talk about their experiences.

Flint Hills tie-in

- Jim Hoy, author of *Flint Hills Cowboys*, can also be booked through the KHC Speakers Bureau (see www.kansashumanities.org/pdf/KHC_HA_SB_catalog-7.pdf) for his programs on *Boots & Stetsons: the Kansas Cowboy* and *Home on the Range: Kansas Folklore*. He can be contacted at 938 Road 130, Emporia, KS 66801, (620) 343-3192, jhoy@emporia.edu
- For a program on growing up in the Flint Hills, contact Ken Ohm, author of "Ducks Across the Moon" & "Spatzies & Brass BBs: Life in a One-Room Country School", at 3006 SW Staffordshire Rd, Topeka, KS 66614 Ken.Ohm@Washburn.edu
- Ken Warren, Managing Director of The Land Institute, can speak on the history and issues of land use and new methods of agriculture for the future based on the Kansas prairie model). He can be contacted at The Land Institute, 2440 E. Water Well Road, Salina, KS 67401, 785-823-5376, email: warren@landinstitute.org.
- Display photos of the Flint Hills taken by local photographers

Mysteries, Mystery Writers

- Sisters in Crime Beth Wasson 785-842-1325 sistersincrime@juno.com (will hopefully be able to add more to this; am still waiting to hear back from her)
- Hold a program on the history of the mystery or other topics on the genre. One possible resource is Kaite Stover, Head of Central Library Readers & Circulation Services, Kansas City Public Library, 14 West 10th St, Kansas City, MO 64105 kaitestover@yahoo.com

Displays

- Book displays featuring the works of Nancy Pickard, the read-alikes listed elsewhere on the website, Kansas pictorial works, or Kansas ghost stories.
- Sponsor art show or contest with local artists. Themes could include Kansas plains, local cemetery, tornados, or something inspired by the novel itself. Think about partnering with local art council, cemetery boards, or art classes. If you need help funding such an endeavor, apply for Grassroots Grant from the Kansas Arts Commission at <http://arts.state.ks.us>
- Exhibit photography and/or sponsor contest with local amateur photographer(s) or professional Kansas photographer(s): Themes could be Kansas plains, local cemetery, or tornado images. Think about joining forces with local art councils, cemetery boards, photography club or store, local newspaper, or 4-H Club.