



Mission Statement

The Mission of the SEK Museum Alliance is to work together to support the museums of Southeast Kansas through promoting their events and activities, sharing resources, and providing learning opportunities to advance our unique histories.

SEK Museum Alliance Board President

Leanne Githens, Wilson County Historical Museum, Fredonia

Secretary

Carol Staton, Cherryvale Historical Museum, Cherryvale

Treasurer

Jolene Born, Osage Mission-Neosho Co. Museum, St. Paul

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Gina McBride, Historical Society & Museum, Caney

E. Region VP

Gila LaRue – Chanute Historical Museum, Chanute

W. Region VP

Ray Rothgeb - Independence Historical Museum & Art Center, Independence

Member

Suzanne Shaffer, Woodson County Historical Museum

Contact us at:

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SEK Museum Alliance Newsletter

Spring, 2025 Vol. 5, Issue 1

Keeping you informed about all things "Museum" in Southeast Kansas

What's New?!

Mark Your Calendars! – Monday – April 14, 2025

Meeting details for 2nd Quarter SEK Museum Alliance Meeting:

Date/Time – April 14, 2025 - 8:30 AM registration, meeting begins promptly at 9 AM – NOON

Location – Iola Public Library Meeting Room, 218 E. Madison Ave, Iola, KS - Hosted by: Allen County Historical Society

*Educational Program: Sharon Moreland – Director of SEK Regional Library District and Iola Public Library

Sharon Moreland, will explore the research capabilities of the SEK Regional Library System.

PLEASE RSVP on the website, <https://www.sekmuseums.org/>

Library of Congress and Kansas State Department of Education Announce New Professional Learning Program

The Library of Congress and the Kansas State Department of Education are working together to bring the Library's foundational professional learning program "Teaching with Primary Sources" to K-12 educators and school librarians throughout the state. The initiative is dedicated to working with rural communities to explore the use of primary sources from the national library's vast – and free- digitalized collections as teaching and research tools, providing hands-on support and instruction.

The Library of Congress education specialists will visit Girard Public Library in Girard, KS on April 8, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. They will host on-site workshops for educators to discover a variety of the Congressional Library's online collections with demonstrations on accessing those collections. Learning sessions will include such topics as genealogy and local history, the Veterans History Project, and the Kansas Talking Book Project.

More information can be found at: <https://newsroom.loc.gov/news/library-of-congress-and-kansas-state-department-of-education-announce-new-professional-learning-prog/s/b9e2ebae-74e6-474e-a242-52cb4ce49431>

Facebook Live – Tech Moment at 2nd Qtr. Meeting

Come prepared to try out your skills with Facebook Live ! Bring an idea or an object you want to talk about and let us show you how to do a short Facebook Live presentation.

SEK Museum Alliance – Scholarships & Grants

At our First Quarter SEK Museum Alliance meeting, the board announced some **GREAT NEWS**. In order to assist our SEK Museum members with enhancing their museums and provide training to Museum staffs, the Alliance will be providing Grants and Scholarships to SEK Museum Alliance members.

\$250 Scholarship to Attend KMA Annual Conference - This \$250 grant will be awarded to a SEK Museum member who will be attending the KMA Annual Conference for the first time. The KMA conference provides educational sessions and networking opportunities for KMA members.

\$750 – Grants to Museums – SEK Museum Alliance Member Museums can apply for a grant to be used in their museum. Details and application deadlines are being worked out and will be announced soon.



Annual “Be Present” Award - 3 - \$100 awards = \$300 – To be eligible for these awards SEK Alliance Museums Members must attend 3 of the 4 quarterly meetings, to be placed in a drawing. The funds should be used in your museum on a project that will enhance your museum.

Stay Connected and Up-To-Date!



<https://www.sekmuseums.org/>

Have you bookmarked our website? It communicates what our organization is all about. This is the place to look for the latest information about future meetings, ongoing projects, minutes from previous meetings, and much more.

Join us on Facebook at “SEK Museum Alliance” to share history, tips for museum operations, resources to share, etc.

SEK Museum Alliance - Continue to Promote SEK Museums with our Video

To assist you in advertising your museum and other SEK Museums the board is providing a thumb drive containing the 2024 Video. The thumb drive will allow you to show the promotional video at Chamber meetings, organizational and club meetings. It can also be set up to play on a loop in your local museum.



SEK Museum Alliance – Quarterly Passport Report – 2024 Visitor Statistics

FACTS: Thirty-nine (39) museums participated in the SEK Museum’s passport program. This represents about 65% of the museums in the region. Participating museums were asked to report the number of passports stamped, number of children and adults associated with those passports, and the total number of visitors by quarter. Data reported for 1st and 2nd Qtr. was unreliable, with sporadic reporting by museums.

Switching to JotForm, a more efficient recording tool, to collect data in the 3rd quarter, was more reliable, but the number of museums reporting was still sporadic. Thirty-three (85%) of the passport participants reported 540 passports stamped with 231 children and 624 adults in the 3rd quarter. In the 4th quarter, 27 (69%) of the passport participants reported 187 passports stamped with 133 children and 256 adults. A combined 3rd and 4th quarter count resulted in 31,036 visitors. The percentage of passports stamped to the total number of visitors in the 3rd and 4th quarters was 4% and 1.8% respectively.

IMPLICATIONS: Obviously, these numbers do not include all SEK museum passport participants, nor are the remaining 30 museums in the region included. Using, the reporting museums as a sample group, to obtain an average visitor count, and the total of the 3rd and 4th quarter visitors, one could reasonably deduce that there was a total of over 62,000 visitors to the 39 participating museums in 2024. Further, over 95,000 visitors graced the doors of SEK Museums in the same period. Think of the economic impact on the region!

Calculations based on averages drawn from JotForm quarterly reports.

2025 Dues - Remember Dues Benefit All Museums!



Southeast Kansas Museum Alliance (SEK MA) offers Individual, Institutional, and Business/Industry memberships. Paid membership supports the viability and sustainability of the SEK MA. Members represent a

range of museums and organizations, professionals, and museum operators in a 15-county region of Southeast Kansas. The SEK MA is dedicated to nurturing collaboration among museums, supporting museums by promoting their events and activities, sharing resources, and providing learning opportunities that advance the unique histories of the region.



Annual Membership Fees:



Institutional:

- Annual budget less than \$10,000: \$25.00
- Annual budget greater than \$10,000: \$50.00
- Business/Industry: \$100.00

Individual:

\$20.00

Notices



Future Meeting Dates:

Due to Feedback the Board has received at past meetings, it was decided by the board, to do another survey on meeting dates. Once the survey has been completed, we will schedule future meetings based on the preferences for the day of the week. Stay tuned for the survey.

Successes and Challenges!

From the feedback the board receives, one of the most beneficial elements of our general meetings is the Successes and Challenges sharing time.

As expected, there are recurring themes on the Challenges side – need more visitors, volunteers, funding, space, upkeep of aging buildings, security systems, cataloging/accession, operating costs etc., etc. While solutions are sometimes difficult to find, at a minimum, knowing that you are not the only museum struggling with a particular issue is a help.

The Success column is always encouraging and exciting! Despite the challenges, small and not-so-small museums are making things happen. Just a few include:

- **Parsons** – Sponsored Nelly Don movie, expanded the Nelly Don Dress Collection, Open in off season this year.
- **Caney** – Received an \$8,000 donation from private donor/Caney school Alumni for operating expenses.
 - o Accomplished the Smart Goal of organizing 250 old Caney Chronicle newspapers from 1870's-1900
 - o 100 kids through museum for Kansas Day
- **Cherryvale** – Successful Breakfast at the Museum program in November
 - o Completed Vietnam Oral History Interviews and the companion Vietnam Grant Exhibit
 - o 200 kids hosted at the museum on Kansas Day
- **Oswego** – Received a Kansas Heritage Trust grant to restore log cabin – Hosted 5th grade students for KS Day
- **Anderson County** – Hosted an Artifact Identification Day – Thirty people brought items and many others attended
- **Osage Mission** – Completed construction of the church building and working on the lay out of church
- **Girard History Museum** – Revamping Display Areas in the Marvin Green Building and adding new heating system.
- **Woodson County** – Planning Yates Center's 150th celebration – Received cleaning supplies at the January Meeting
- **Galesburg** – Galesburg Middle School students have decorated a museum window each month, through their Art projects. – Received a mercantile catalog showing household items, furniture – using for research
- **Gordan Parks Museum** – Successfully hosted the KMA conference in November
- **Allen County** – Have a traveling exhibit on Native American Sovereignty from Watkins Museum
- **Independence History Museum & Art Center** – Hosting Folk Dancing, Art Classes, and Meadowlark Lounge
- **Wilson County Historical Society** – HVAC system completed – 2025 plans/goals outlined based on SMART goals
- **Coffeyville Aviation Museum** – WASP/Tuskegee Airmen Exhibit was successful
- **Galena** – New Board Members and are excited to get to work
- And the list goes on!

This sharing time at the general meetings provides resources to help you meet your challenges, or gives you an idea you hadn't thought about. Just another reason to join us at the meetings!