

December 3, 2013



Dear Friends,

Just last month, as we gathered for our first ever awards luncheon, Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area partners, friends and trustees got a glimpse of the impact that FFNHA can have on historic sites and communities. The Interpretive Grant Showcase highlighted not only how successful the new grant program has been in its first full year, but also how busy our partners were.

At that same gathering, we recognized two women so influential in the establishment of the heritage area – Deanell Tacha and Judy Billings – and the recipients of the awards named for them. Our first recipient of the *Tacha Freedom Award*, Quentin Umphenour, is just a high school freshman, but he presented an informative program, and set the bar for future award winners. The *Billings MVP Award* recipients, Carol Bohl and Eileen Roberts, both also played important roles in establishing the heritage area, and have exhibited continuing commitment to excellence since then.

As I near the end of my tenure as FFNHA Board Chair, I have seen many changes, from increases in programming and grants, to the beginnings of the long-anticipated signage study, and the establishment of an endowment with the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation (www.gkccf.org/). Our FFNHA staff stays busy!

In 2013, working with the board, friends and partners, FFNHA was able to:

- In partnership with Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site and numerous partner sites, reprise the week-long Civil War to Civil Rights summer daycamps for at-risk children in Boys and Girls Clubs. The educational camps were funded through a National Park Foundation America's Best Ideas Grant.
- Sign an agreement with TranSystems to conduct a study for the signage comprehensive master plan. The study will result in signage implementation in 1-2 test locations, and a multi-year plan for implementation throughout the heritage area.
- Collaborate with partners to help promote the 150th anniversary of Civil War events throughout the heritage area. A Twitter event coordinated with Commemorate Lawrence 1863 partners let followers experience Quantrill's Raid as if it was happening in real time, and won recognition from the Travel Industry Association of Kansas and the Kansas Museums Association for innovative marketing and use of technology. On the other side of the Missouri-Kansas border, visitors traveled from the Burnt District Monument along Quantrill's path to Lawrence, and learned about the historic raid from multiple perspectives. In another recent bus tour, the University of Kansas's Osher Institute allowed tourists to learn about Order No. 11 and the lives it changed in Missouri's Burnt District.

These and other heritage area successes happen because FFNHA staff, partners, friends and board members are dedicated to conserving, interpreting and preserving the heritage area's significant stories for future generations.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES John Dillingham, Chair, Kansas City, MO · Deanell Reece Tacha, Vice Chair, Lawrence, KS · Bill Tempel, Secretary, Lexington, MO · Charles Jones, Treasurer, Lawrence, KS · Dr. Mary Davidson Cohen, Executive Committee Member-At-Large, Leawood, KS · Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Robert Arter, Ft. Leavenworth, KS · Connie Banwart, Fort Scott, KS · Judge Duane Benton, Kansas City, MO · George Breidenthal, Kansas City, KS · Charles Clark, Prairie Village, KS · Jody Craig, Leawood, KS · David Dunfield, Lawrence, KS · Jan English, Kansas City, KS · Bob Ford, St. Joseph, MO · Michael L. Gibson, Paola, KS · Kent Glasscock, Manhattan, KS · Crosby Kemper, III, Kansas City, MO · Jim Maag, Topeka, KS · Elle McCoy, Chanute, KS · Emanuel Northern, Kansas City, KS · Terry Ramsey, Nevada, MO · Kala Stroup, Lawrence, KS · Bill Temple, Lexington, MO · Joan Wagnon, Topeka, KS · Kevin Wood, Harrisonville, MO

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The 2014 Workplan includes these goals:

- Work with partners to help elevate sustainability of partner organizations as well as FFNHA. Create a 3-to-5-year sustainability plan that includes: identifying investment opportunities for foundations, corporations, and tourism related organizations; increasing friends giving; and pursuit of grant funding.
- Create new partnership possibilities for commerce and tourism, and designate FFNHA tourism centers, along with a training program for employees and volunteers who staff them.
- Begin to develop thematic-based itineraries for experiencing the heritage area, and resources for tour bus operators or heritage area partners to conduct bus tours.
- Develop educational offerings for children and adults, working with partners on curriculums.
- Create a recreation-based interpretive plan that identifies existing and emerging recreational trails, opportunities for interpretation and interpretive methods.
- Continue to work on creating and implementing the signage comprehensive master plan.

With the support of our friends, trustees, partners, and others who provided in-kind and cash donations, FFNHA was able to meet the requirement to show a one-to-one match of local dollars in 2013, as we received federal money through our national status. The generosity of our donors also allowed for the establishment of our new endowment. But, to accomplish our 2014 goals and continue to work toward big goals in the future, FFNHA also needs sustainable operations funding. Please consider making a year-end contribution to the important work of Freedom's Frontier.

As we grow the heritage area, we need continuing support from partners and friends. I'm sure that you will hear this reiterated by Jody Craig as she steps into the role of FFNHA Board Chair in January. Please contact FFNHA Executive Director Fred Conboy (phone number and office address listed at the bottom of the first page) if you have ideas for funding sources, or point prospective donors to the Web page, www.freedomfrontier.org, where they may click the donor button to lend support.

Wishing you Happy Holidays and a fantastic year in 2014!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Dillingham". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

John Dillingham
Chairman
Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area