

JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

September 2025

JCHS continues this season to recognize authors of published books that lives, have lived, or has close ties to Jefferson County. The season began on the 6th of June with the recognition of Blake Watson for his book of “Kansas and Kansans in World War I.” There were 40 people that attended this interesting and informational program and with a very warm welcome to our area for Blake Watson whose home is now New Orleans, LA.

Our next program is scheduled for Sunday, September 7, at 1:00 pm and will be held in the Oskaloosa Public Library meeting room. Authors to be recognized are: (1) James Thomas Crawford Sr., who is deceased, but his wife, Jan Crawford, and family will attend to accept his Recognition Certificate. James wrote a poem “Tribute to ’55 Series Game 7” which was about the 1955 World Series and a bet that he had with his sister on who would win the game between the New York Yankees or the Brooklyn Dodgers. The Dodgers won and so James won the bet against his sister. James’s bet was 50 cents and his sister’s bet was her silence about Mickey Mantle (which she boasted about quite often and he was tired of hearing about Mantle). So obviously there was silence in the house about her hero. Fifteen years later ESPN Classic Sports aired a documentary on the ’55 Series and featured James’s poem.

(2) The next author to be recognized is Julie Rice, Pen Name Jules Parker, who lives near McLouth, KS, for her published books, “By Gones Be Damned” and “Whippoorwill Hill.” Julie is the receptionist for the LMH McLouth Medical Clinic.

(3) Linda Colvin Funk of Nortonville, KS will be following and receive recognition for her book – 2007 “Roads of Yesterday”. This book, which took 40 years to produce, reflects on her childhood memories of growing up in Topeka, KS. and later moving to Nortonville, KS in 1968 following her marriage to her husband, Al. Linda has had articles published in several newspapers, magazine, and books. She attended Benedictine College, Highland Community College, and Washburn University.

(4) Jim Weishaar, another Nortonville, KS. resident, will be recognized for his book “MillRose” that was published in 2020. His book is a recipe book which contains a Century of Family, Farm, and Food, and organized by season. It is a culmination of more than 40 years of learning, experiencing, experimenting and doing. There are several master or base recipes, as well as tips, anecdotes, and other hopefully useful information of “old recipes and old memories.” Jim feels that food means more to both those who make it and those who eat it.

(5) The last author to be recognized on September 7th is June Hilbert for her book, “From HIGH HEELS to GUMBOOTS, One Cow Pie at a Time” and was published in 2013. Her book is a true story about herself, who was a “city girl” that forsake her stylish, high heeled shoes and put on the clumpy gumboots to be a ranchers wife. Readers will enjoy reading the hilarious accounting, whether they are from the city or country, and relate to the bittersweet experiences of life on the farm. June’s husband, Bill, made his fulltime living working for the Kansas Department of Agriculture and a farmer at heart. Often times he had to work away from home that would leave the farm chores to be completed by his lovely wife with little experience.

After graduation from high school, June attended Kansas State Teachers College at Emporia, KS with consideration of a degree in Home Economics. Later, she transferred to Kansas State University in her junior year to enter the dietetics program. Bill and June live south of Meriden, KS.

The Jefferson County Author Recognition Program was initiated by the Jefferson County Historical Society and is now co-sponsored by the Oskaloosa City Library and the Friends of Oskaloosa Library "FOOLS" organizations. The program will be from 1:00 – 3:00pm followed by refreshments. This should be a very enjoyable afternoon for all. The authors may have their books available for sale and happy to sign their books for all.

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