

Kansas awarded additional funds to digitize historic newspapers

Kansas has been awarded more funding by the National Endowment for the Humanities to continue participation in the National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP), according to Teresa Jenkins, public information officer for the Kansas Historical Society in Topeka.

Jenkins said the historical society will use the funds to digitize an additional 100,000 pages of Kansas newspapers, dating between 1836 and 1922. Kansas was brought into the program in 2009 and has digitized 100,086 newspaper pages, which can be found on the *Chronicling America* website — chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/.

"The list of newspapers for the new grant hasn't been determined yet, however we are starting to look at potential titles. The criteria for selection is complex but it includes, among other things, research value, geographic representation and clarity of the microfilmed images. There is an advisory board that will meet this fall to make title recommendations," said Margaret Knecht,

who heads the historical society's library section. "Having stated that, however, I expect this cycle will include mostly different titles and, if possible, those titles will be from different counties."

During the first cycle, Knecht said, the state was divided into six large regions, with at least one title selected from each region. Jewell County was located in the north central region, however newspapers from Saline and Dickinson counties were selected to represent their district. For this cycle, the state map has been redrawn into seven regions to match the regional library systems.

"The digitization of 100,000 pages of newspaper microfilm seems like a lot, but it is hardly a half-drop in the bucket when you consider all of the newspapers in Kansas," Knecht said. In the first cycle we digitized approximately 150 rolls of film to get 100,000 images. The historical society owns approximately 15,500 rolls of Kansas newspapers from 1854 through 1922.

As I said — hardly a half-drop."

Launched in 2005, the NDNP is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Library of Congress to provide enhanced access to U.S. newspapers. The *Chronicling America* website currently has nearly four million pages published between 1836 and 1922, from 25 states including the District of Columbia.

To track the progress of the digitization of Kansas newspapers, visit kshs.org/16126.

"The Library of Congress does not have the capability to host unlimited content on *Chronicling America*," Knecht said. "We are hoping to be able to create a Kansas digital newspapers website and we are pursuing private funding to establish it. While prices are decreasing, it is still an expensive process."

The Kansas Historical Society is a state agency that operates the Kansas Museum of History, State Archives and Library, Kansas Capitol Tour center and 16 state historic sites.

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