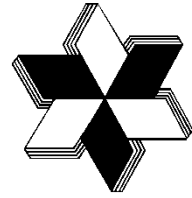




CITY NEWS



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WICHITA PUBLIC LIBRARY
The Discovery Center
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE BIG READ RETURNS TO WICHITA IN FALL

AREA TO READ AND CELEBRATE "THE THINGS THEY CARRIED"

For the fourth straight year, the Wichita Public Library will host The Big Read. The Big Read is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) designed to restore reading to the center of American culture. The NEA presents The Big Read in cooperation with Arts Midwest. The Big Read - Wichita will focus on Tim O'Brien's "The Things They Carried" and occur Oct. 1-Nov. 15, 2011.

Mayor Carl Brewer announced the grant at a news conference this morning. "Wichita's Big Read efforts have attracted more than 25,000 attendees and been recognized nationally for its outstanding partnerships and marketing," said Mayor Brewer. "Receiving this grant for a fourth year in a row, and being the only community in Kansas selected, speaks to the quality of The Big Read – Wichita and its dedication to keep making The Big Read even bigger."

Mayor Brewer joins Congressman Mike Pompeo and Col. Ricky Rupp, base commander of McConnell Air Force Base, as honorary chairs of The Big Read – Wichita. He was joined at the news conference by representatives of the Wichita Art Museum, who unveiled this year's poster, featuring *Signs* by Robert Rauschenberg. Special Events Committee Honorary Co-Chair Vicki Tiaht announced several major events, including The Big Read – Wichita Kickoff at the Wichita Art Museum from 2-4 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 1, and a visit from author Tim O'Brien at Wichita State University's Hughes Metropolitan Complex from 7-8 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 3. Both events are free to attend.

The Wichita Public Library is one of 76 non-for-profit agencies to receive grants to promote and carry out community-based reading programs featuring activities such as book discussions, lectures, movie screenings, and performing arts events. Participating communities also receive high-quality, free-of-charge educational materials to supplement each title, including Reader's, Teacher's, and Audio Guides.

For more information about The Big Read – Wichita, please visit www.bigreadwichita.org.

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The National Endowment for the Arts was established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government. To date, the NEA has awarded more than \$4 billion to support artistic excellence, creativity, and innovation for the benefit of individuals and communities. The NEA extends its work through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector. To join the discussion on how art works, visit the NEA at arts.gov.

Arts Midwest promotes creativity, nurtures cultural leadership, and engages people in meaningful arts experiences, bringing vitality to Midwest communities and enriching people's lives. Based in Minneapolis, Arts Midwest connects the arts to audiences throughout the nine-state region of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. One of six non-profit regional arts organizations in the United States, Arts Midwest's history spans more than 25 years. For more information, please visit artsmidwest.org.

Wichita Public Library provides collections and services that inform, entertain and enrich the quality of life in Wichita. For more information, please visit www.wichita.lib.ks.us.

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