



K a n s a s I n s u r a n c e D e p a r t m e n t

Sandy Praeger COMMISSIONER OF INSURANCE

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KANSAS DAY ROOTS RECOGNIZED AT CAPITOL *Commissioner Praeger Celebrates Her Hometown's History*

Every year, Kansas Insurance Commissioner Sandy Praeger celebrates Kansas Day with a little extra pride. That's because January 29 has double special meaning. The observance of Kansas Day actually originated in her hometown of Paola. It's also the birthday of her daughter, Gretchen.

"Growing up and attending public school in Paola is where I first learned my appreciation for our wonderful state, because we always studied Kansas' history and were reminded that Kansas Day originated in our own hometown," said Praeger. "Then, as an adult, when I became a mother on that date, Kansas Day became even more special. It's a day I am proud to celebrate every year."

The first Kansas Day observance is believed to have been held on January 29, 1877 at North School in the Paola, Kansas. History teacher LeGrande Alexander Copley is credited for initiating the first Kansas Day celebration by asking students to compile a list of questions about local history and by decorating his classroom with historical symbols associated with Kansas. He later promoted the event through the Kansas Teachers Association.

At Commissioner Praeger's request, today Governor Kathleen Sebelius signed a proclamation recognizing Paola, Kansas as the birthplace of Kansas Day. State Senator Robert Tyson, State Representative Jene Vickrey and Miami County Commissioner Bill Butler joined Commissioner Praeger at the governor's proclamation signing ceremony.

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