



Kansas Insurance Department

Sandy Praeger

COMMISSIONER OF INSURANCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRAEGER HOSTS KANSAS DAY ACTIVITIES *Open House Will Feature Children's Comments on Kansas*

Kansas Insurance Commissioner Sandy Praeger is hosting an open house to celebrate Kansas' 143rd birthday on **Friday, January 30** at the Kansas Insurance Department, 420 SW Ninth Street in Topeka. The public is invited to attend the celebration from **1:00 to 3:00 p.m.**

On display during the festivities, will be comments from third and fourth graders answering the question, "Why am I proud to be a Kansan?" Third and Fourth graders from Avondale West Elementary School in Topeka submitted many of the responses. Some of them include:

"I am proud to be a Kansan because of our history and what the people did for us now." --Rakim

"Kansas has more wheat than any other state. Kansas is a great place to live." --Aaron

"We have a lot of land. I like it because we have always had good sports teams. KU has been good for the last 18 years in basketball. I also like that we are in the middle of the U.S.A. I'm glad to be a Jayhawker." --Evan

The grade school students will visit the Department for a children's Kansas Day celebration and tour at **10:00 a.m.** on **Friday, January 30**.

"Kansas Day is a special time to recognize and honor our distinct history and unique character in the American landscape," said Praeger, who has a special fondness for Kansas Day. The observance of Kansas Day originated in Commissioner Praeger's hometown of Paola. It's also the birthday of her daughter, Gretchen.

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.

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