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Kansas State University
LIBRARIES

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Marlin Fitzwater spent a decade in the White House, the only press secretary appointed by two presidents. Now, the K-State alumnus has donated his personal papers to the Richard L.D. and Marjorie J. Morse Department of Special Collections.

His roots twine across north central Kansas, along an 80-mile swath of I-70 and prairie, from his birthplace in Salina, through Dickinson county and Abilene, and into Manhattan, where he launched his journalism career.

On that same stretch, if you stop in at the coffee shops and cafes, you’ll find a circle of locals, hashing the latest news. There is often a central figure—a farmer, business owner, retiree—who is quick with a joke, able to handle a story with a light touch.

Folks like these are Fitzwater’s kin. Not the cable news talking head or the rulers of the Twitterverse, but the straight-talking, witty storyteller.

Add in a deep respect for journalism, innate political savvy and a fierce work ethic, and you have the elements that propelled Fitzwater, class of 1965, to a front-row seat at some of the most important moments in American history during the latter part of the 20th century.

Fitzwater earned his stripes with the Environmental Protection Agency during that organization’s first decade. He led its press office through the Love Canal toxic waste crisis in the late ‘70s, and then served briefly in the Department of the Treasury before coming to the White House in 1983.
Fitzwater recently took time to tell us about a few of the thousands of photos in the collection and to reflect on his years with Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush, two men who shaped his life and with whom he traveled to all 50 states and 65 foreign countries.

Of countless great experiences during his years in the White House, one event still stands out: The historic Washington summit between Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev in 1987. Fitzwater arranged to have joint press briefings with his Soviet counterpart in front of a press corps of more than 7,000.

“The briefings started three days before the actual summit,” Fitzwater said. “And I just remember being on the podium and saying, ‘You know this is one of those moments they always told me about where if you say the wrong thing you could affect the course of history.’”

With characteristic dry humor, he added, “Anyway, at least now with 20 years of hindsight, it seems like it went okay.”

Ultimately, Fitzwater gave more than 850 press briefings and developed communication strategies for two presidents with vastly different styles. President Reagan, ever the actor, liked to work from a script. “President Bush was a little more surprising,” Fitzwater said, laughing. “Every once in a while [he] would want to talk to the press himself. He would just say let’s go down to the briefing room; I have some things I need to get off my chest.”

A scan of the collection further reflects the intensity of the job: Fitzwater’s notes from the Iran Contra scandal, the Exxon Valdez oil spill, the Gulf War. News clippings from the Malta Summit, held just weeks after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and from a visit to Bogota, Colombia, during the height of the War on Drugs.

There were lighter moments, too, as evidenced by photos at Camp David, of meetings with dignitaries and celebrities ranging from Pope John Paul II to Michael Jackson, of friendships with Bush and Colin Powell.

Fitzwater and President Bush confer during a joint press conference with Gorbachev on July 31, 1991, the day the two leaders signed the bilateral Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I).
“I always tried to stand in the corner and pretend I could save the day. I don’t know what I would do—maybe just give a note to the president, ‘Here’s a better answer.’”

Fitzwater stood behind a podium of his own design to field questions from eminent White House correspondents such as Sam Donaldson and Helen Thomas at the daily press briefing.

“Being press secretary means that you have to learn so much so fast. So this is kind of a classic ‘grab a few minutes to catch up on the information of the day.’”

Fitzwater during a cabinet meeting with a Polaroid camera loaned to him by the Washingtonian Magazine. His photos were published in a “behind-the-scenes” spread.

“The historic moment in 1987 when George Bush took me over to the Oval Office to President Reagan and told him, ‘I’m turning him over to you, sir.’”

“Colin [Powell] and I are helping prepare for the 1988 Moscow Summit, where the president said, ‘I no longer believe the Soviet Union is an evil empire.’”
Dean of Libraries Lori Goetsch says that the collection has immense potential to inspire generations of K-State students.

“We are profoundly grateful for Mr. Fitzwater’s donation,” said Goetsch. “It won’t just be preserved; students and researchers will use it to immerse themselves in the geopolitical landscape of the ’80s and ’90s.”

Those students will come to know an astute spokesman who navigated political allegiances, earned the respect of the press corps and never lost his sense of awe at being part of the president’s team.

“ONE OF THE GREATEST THINGS I LEARNED WAS THAT A PERSON—ANY PERSON—CAN ABSORB SO MUCH MORE INFORMATION THAN THEY THINK THEY CAN. I’M GLAD I HAD THAT EXPERIENCE, BECAUSE UNLESS WE’RE PUSHED IN LIFE, WE DON’T DO IT. WE MAKE ROOM FOR OURSELVES, OR WE GET INVOLVED IN OTHER THINGS, BUT IF YOU WANT TO WORK IN THE WHITE HOUSE, THE JOB IS YOURS 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK.”

— MARLIN FITZWATER

Consider a 1988 Fourth of July celebration at which Fitzwater sat with an Abilene classmate who became the national archivist.

“The fireworks are going off; the White House was 10 feet away—you could touch it. All I could think was, ‘Is America a great country or what?’ Here’s Marlin Fitzwater and Don Wilson on the south grounds just like we own the place. Who would have ever guessed?’

Today, Fitzwater and his wife, Melinda, split their time between Maryland and Florida. He still writes, and he’s completed several novels and an autobiography, “Call the Briefing!”

Fitzwater shared a close, often teasing, relationship with Bush, and still does.

An advance man recognized Kansas’ native son at a stop during Bush’s campaign for re-election.

Reagan staged photos that took advantage of Fitzwater’s habit of catching up on sleep during flights.

Reagan loved to celebrate birthdays, and this was one of Fitzwater’s held during a flight on Air Force One.

After Fitzwater’s early years on the farm led to skin cancer, a brimmed hat became part of his uniform.

Fitzwater and Bush during a more serious moment after a meeting about the Persian Gulf War in 1991.
Coming this fall, the public will be able to experience highlights from the Marlin Fitzwater Papers in an exhibit that highlights the spokesman’s path from rural Kansas to the White House.

Fitzwater will visit Manhattan for the opening on October 4, and plans for additional public programs are underway.

Details will be posted at lib.ksu.edu/events as they become available.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE
Want to support special collections like this one?
Contact Nicole Askew at 785-532-7530 or nicolea@found.ksu.edu.
www.found.ksu.edu/give/specialcollections

Fitzwater has visited with special collections faculty, including curators Volodymyr Chumachenko (top) and David Allen (bottom), to give them background on the 74 boxes of donated materials.
When unforeseen CHALLENGES occur and new OPPORTUNITIES arise, the flexibility to deal with both is invaluable. That’s why we’re so grateful for both the Dean’s Excellence Fund and the Friends of the K-State Libraries.

**The Dean’s Excellence Fund**

If you want to understand exactly how your gift to K-State Libraries impacts students, campus life, research and academic growth, perhaps there’s no better example than the Dean’s Excellence Fund.

It’s an account that can be used to help K-State Libraries cope in times of crisis and to act in moments of possibility.

No other fund has the same unrestricted potential.

For example, last summer, the Dean’s Excellence Fund was used to improve Hale Library’s InfoCommons and its wireless capacity. The InfoCommons is the epicenter of academic activity on campus: It’s where most of our 30,000+ weekly visitors spend part of their time studying, using the computers and printing.

After decades of heavy use, the furniture had to be replaced. At the same time, demand for wireless connectivity exploded. In fact, K-State students’ number one request was that we improve our wireless signal.

Donations to the Dean’s Excellence Fund allowed us to create a more comfortable, tech-friendly space.
The Friends of the K-State Libraries

Funds from the Friends of the K-State Libraries have also been influential in both preserving and modernizing Hale Library.

In fact, they have raised more than $1 million in the last 30 years.

Their efforts have funded massive, multi-year projects such as the professional restoration of the 1934 murals in old Farrell Library, as well as smaller, critical items such as a 3D printer and the well-loved modular white boards.

None of this would have been possible without support from K-State alumni and friends.

If you believe that a strong library system is essential to the future of Kansas State University, please consider a gift to the K-State Libraries.

www.found.ksu.edu/give/library GIVE
Open/Alternative Textbook Initiative

saves students millions of dollars

Natarajan says K-State algebra students appreciate the availability of a free, online textbook.
Consider the numbers:

If Dr. Rekha Natarajan, college algebra coordinator, is responsible for teaching more than 1,600 students per year, and the textbook she assigns costs $260, then collectively, they would spend $416,000.

Alternately, Dr. Natarajan could receive $5,000 and create an online textbook that she makes available for free.

Which scenario is best for K-State students and families?

Bonus question: What would happen to the price of a college education if this scenario were duplicated for students in intro to biology, human nutrition, technical writing and so on?

The answer lies in K-State’s Open/Alternative Textbook Initiative.

Since 2013, this initiative has granted awards of $2,000-$5,000 to 45 faculty members who developed open or alternative textbooks for their courses. Instructors can adapt a pre-existing free, online resource (an open text) or elect to write their own materials, use library resources or implement some combination (an alternative text).

The initiative was created when the student governing association allocated seed money from an existing fund created by university administrators. K-State Libraries provided additional financial backing, as well as administrative support.

“THE SAVINGS PASSED ON TO STUDENTS IS MORE THAN TEN TIMES THE AMOUNT OF OUR INITIAL INVESTMENT.”
— PROVOST APRIL MASON

Upon witnessing the financial impact of the program, the offices of the provost and president committed funds for two additional years.

“The savings passed on to students is more than ten times the amount of our initial investment,” said April Mason, provost and senior vice president. We look forward to the development of many more affordable—and even free—resources in our classrooms.”

This is just one of thousands of open access programs at universities around the globe in response to the high cost of traditional publishing. They all share a desire to make research freely available.

“Libraries have always worked to get users access to the information and research they need,” said Lori Goetsch, dean of libraries. “If cost is a barrier to students participating in a college education, it’s a natural fit for a university’s library system to facilitate access.”

In 2015, the Open/Alternative Textbook Initiative received national attention thanks to “Open Textbooks: The Billion Dollar Solution,” a report released by the Student Public Interest Research Groups. They concluded that if every undergrad in the United States were assigned just one open-source textbook each year, students would save a billion dollars annually.

So what happens when a professor receives a stipend, creates an open textbook and reduces the students’ financial load?

At K-State, it’s a winning formula for everyone involved.

Visit lib.k-state.edu/open-textbook to learn more.

What is an open textbook?

Open textbooks and materials are created with the intent that they will be freely used, adapted and distributed. They can be accessed online, downloaded for no cost or printed at low cost.

SPRING 2013 - SPRING 2016
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

30+ courses have been or are in the process of being converted to open/alternative textbooks

More than 13,000 K-STATE students benefit each year

More than $1,670,000 saved!

FACT: Every year these textbooks are used in these courses, students will collectively save more than one million dollars.

As the program grows, so will the savings.
We’ve all heard of businesses that prey on vulnerable consumers: The payday loans with a 40% APR. The robocalls that lure recipients to provide personal information. Dangerous products—cars, food or even toys—that are sold to an uninformed public.

A field of advocacy known as the “consumer movement” emerged during the mid-twentieth century to expose unfair and unsafe business practices like these and to educate citizens.

Richard Morse, a leader in the consumer movement, was a professor and chair of the family economics department at K-State from 1955 through 1987. He spent much of his career advocating for truth-in-savings policies and was appointed to the U.S. Consumer Advisory Council under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson.

Morse donated his personal papers to K-State Libraries and collaborated with the staff to establish the Consumer Movement Archives (CMA).

“Richard Morse’s gift laid the foundation for what’s become one of our premier research collections,” Dean Lori Goetsch said. “Many leading consumer advocates and watchdog organizations followed suit with their own donations.”

“THE CONSUMER MOVEMENT IS ABOUT PREVENTING INDUSTRY FROM TAKING ADVANTAGE OF OUR NATION’S CITIZENS AND FAMILIES. WE’RE PROUD TO PRESERVE THAT HISTORY.”

— JANE SCHILLIE, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS CURATOR

Several hundred boxes hold both personal papers of advocates like Morse and organizational records from institutions such as the National Consumer Law Center and the Consumer Federation of America.
Since 2014, the Consumer Movement Archives Research Award has provided funds for a new generation of scholars to travel to Manhattan.

The 2015 CMA award winner, Mallory SoRelle, came to K-State from Cornell University to conduct research for her dissertation. SoRelle, who will be an assistant professor of American politics at Lafeyette College this fall, worked at the National Consumer Law Center right before the financial crisis in 2006.

“People were projecting horrible things for the economy,” SoRelle said. “But no one was listening. A lot of measures said consumers were angry, and even though they were mobilizing for other causes, they weren’t responding the same way to the financial crisis.”

She wanted to know why it was so hard to mobilize consumers around financial issues and how that was related to consumer advocacy groups’ inability to spur reform.

During her visit to Manhattan, she worked intensively with archival records from Americans for Fairness in Lending, an organization that tried to raise awareness about predatory lending and get people to demand change.

“I argue in my research that most consumers don’t realize that government played an active role in constructing and regulating the system of credit in the U.S., so there’s disconnect when it comes time for them to demand change in how that system works,” SoRelle said. “Unless you make it clear that financial policies change through government action, people don’t understand how they should act to influence policy.”

“The material from the CMA has become an indispensable part of my dissertation.”

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“IT’S NOT EASY TO GET TO MANHATTAN, BUT IT’S ESPECIALLY NOT EASY TO GET THERE FROM ITHACA, NEW YORK. HAVING SUPPORT FROM THE CONSUMER MOVEMENT ARCHIVES RESEARCH AWARD MADE IT POSSIBLE.”

— MALLORY SORELLE
Keli Rylance, formerly head of the Southeastern Architectural Archive at Tulane University, has joined K-State Libraries as head of the Richard L.D. and Marjorie J. Morse Department of Special Collections.

She oversees the development of the department’s physical and digital collections as well as its services and programs for the university and broader community. Rylance also works with donors to acquire unique materials and financially support the department’s preservation and outreach efforts.

Rylance earned a doctorate in art history from Pennsylvania State University and a master’s in library and information studies from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

“I am looking forward to working with the K-State family to promote its rich resources and develop new collaborations and funding opportunities,” Rylance said. “A primary focus will be digitization endeavors aimed at broadening access to the department’s diverse holdings.”

Nicole Askew is the new director of development for K-State Libraries at the Kansas State University Foundation.

Askew has 15 years of development experience. Most recently, she worked for the University of Illinois at the Chicago School of Business. She received her bachelor’s in social work at Florida A&M University and her master’s in social work from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

“I am extremely excited about working with K-State Libraries with their fundraising/philanthropic endeavors,” Askew said. “Support from our alumni, friends, and corporate and foundation partners are greatly appreciated as we continue to expand and enhance K-State Libraries. Your gift will have a significant impact on students.”
Deciding which car to buy, which website to trust or which sources to use in an academic paper?

You’ll need “information literacy,” a broad set of skills that helps us make decisions.

This spring, the Association of College and Research Libraries Instruction Section awarded librarians Sara Kearns and Joelle Pitts the 2016 Innovation Award for their work in bringing information literacy education online through the New Literacies Alliance (NLA).

Traditionally, librarians have visited the classroom to teach information literacy, but the NLA upends that model. Pitts and Kearns, in partnership with a team of librarians from K-State, the KU Medical Center, Indiana University, Marquette University and others, created free online information literacy lessons and built-in tests that professors can assign to their classes.

Since the first NLA modules were launched last year, they have been adopted in classes at universities across the country, including Indiana University, Marquette University and Oklahoma State University.

The group has ambitious plans to add partner institutions and create several more online lessons.

K-STATE LIBRARIANS Receive 2016 Association of College and Research Libraries Innovation Award

ABOVE & BEYOND
Three outstanding K-State Libraries employees received awards at the 2016 ceremony on April 11.

BRICE G. HOBROCK
DISTINGUISHED FACULTY AWARD

Jason Coleman, academic services librarian, received the Brice G. Hobrock Distinguished Faculty Award, which recognizes outstanding librarianship.

Coleman, who is entering his 18th year with the Libraries, provides research support for the social sciences. He is also very active in the Reference & User Services Association, a division of the American Library Association.

DEAN’S AWARD

Darchelle Martin, public relations officer, received the Dean’s Award, which recognizes a non-tenure track unclassified professional.

Martin, who has been with K-State Libraries since 2011, leads the marketing and communications team. She plans and oversees special events, publications production and other promotional efforts. She is also the staff liaison to the Friends of the K-State Libraries.

SUPPORT STAFF OF THE YEAR AWARD

Dennis Ryan, annex collection coordinator, was chosen as the Support Staff of the Year.

Ryan started working at K-State Libraries in 2012. He was instrumental during the move of library materials from a facility in Lawrence to the new K-State Libraries Annex in Manhattan, and he continues to provide vital behind-the-scenes support.

K-STATE’S NLA TEAM

ASHLEY STARK   JOELLE PITTs   SARA KEARNS   MELIA FRITCH   ALICE ANDERSON
THE FRIENDS OF
THE K-STATE LIBRARIES
Gala, 2016

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!
We raised more than $48,000! Proceeds will pave the way for facilities improvements to Hale Library.

Access photos at lib.k-state.edu/gala.