

STATE HOSTS FIRST FILM FAM TRIP!

The Kansas Film Commission staff are still flying high from the results of their first ever familiarization (fam) trip of Kansas for film production executives last October 12-15.

"Our goal was to raise the visibility of Kansas as a film location site within the film industry," said Vicky Henley, manager of the film commission. "We made new contacts and friends with key film industry personnel and we were able to dispel the visual stereotype some have with Kansas."

Film executives from Los Angeles included: from Metro Goldwyn Mayer (MGM), Senior VP of Production, Mel Swope and Director of Production, Robert Curran; from the Walt Disney Company Locations Department, Laura Rohrer; producer Debbie Hemela from MDM Entertainment and freelance

location manager Laura Matteson whose recent production credit includes *BATMAN III*. All were escorted around the state by Henley, Mary McCaffrey, and Doreen Seely.

After his return to Los Angeles Mel Swope from MGM wrote: "Thank you for the fastest, busiest fam trip of my career...you are on your way to building one of the top film commissions in the USA."

The trip started in Topeka with a small reception at the Governor's Mansion. Highlights of the trip included the Flint Hills Skyline Drive, Manhattan, Russell, the Smoky Hills, Hays, Dodge City, Hutchinson, Wichita, Fort Scott, Lawrence and Overland Park.

Community representatives' comments on the fam trip included:

"We have seen time and again that first-hand



Fam participants at KCSC Spaceworks in Hutchinson

experience and meeting the people of Kansas can show us off better than any other form of promotion." — Judy Billings, Lawrence CVB

"The fam trip was extremely worthwhile...this kind of personal, first-hand exposure is an asset." — Ken Breidenbach, Overland Park CVB

"This seems a very efficient method, both in cost and time, for showcasing the wide variety of film locations available in our state." — Gene Countryman, Wichita CVB

"For us it was another step in learning what interests and attracts the producers." — Mary Lynn Stevenson, Fort Scott Chamber of Commerce

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