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For Immediate Release

Rapid City Library Remembers 1972 Flood

Rapid City, S.D. – June 5, 2009 –The Rapid City Public Library, as a part of its Oral Histories Project, commemorates the tremendous local impact of the **1972 Flood** through a FloodWiki and Flood website.

The Oral Histories Project’s goal is to record the memories and events of the night of the 1972 Flood, through the eyes and minds of those that experienced it first-hand, with recorded interviews and statements. These recollections not only help to preserve the facts of the event, but also the memory of how it affected the people living in the Black Hills. The website also includes the Dewall Collection, a large collection of digitally preserved transcripts and audio news broadcasts as well as letters of the events of the night of June 9, 1972.

“The most important thing about the Floodwiki,” says Library Outreach Coordinator, John Pappas “is that individuals can easily record their memories online and enable younger generations to access it in a manner familiar to them [wikis]. Library staff is also able to walk anyone through the process if it is new to them.”

The FloodWiki allows individuals to interact directly by providing a palette for them to include their own stories and pictures. No matter where they live now, citizens that recall the events are invited to write their memories down in the Wiki in order to ensure future generations the opportunity to learn what the flood was like. The flood page also features more than 100 pictures comparing the aftermath of the flood to the landscape 20 years later; comments from former mayor Don Barnett; and other reports from KOTA broadcasting. Anyone with memories to share is encouraged to add them to the site.

In listening to the flood interviews, several similarities and differences become apparent. All of those interviewed share a connection – their experiences surviving the nation’s second-worst inland

flood in history. Many of the survivors mention the strange-colored dark sky during the afternoon hours, the rising water, people trapped in trees, and the heavy fog covering the city on the morning after the flood.

Visit us online at www.rapidcitylibrary.org to view any of the online resource sites for information, entertainment, and to find about the life-altering experiences of the 1972 flood.

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The Rapid City Public Library has served the Rapid City area since 1879, and now has two locations, the downtown library at 610 Quincy Street and the north library within General Beadle Elementary School at 10 Van Buren St. Both offer print and electronic resources for adults, young adults and children as well as computers and Internet access and a variety of programs and events. In March 2008, USA Today named the Rapid City Public Library's downtown library as one of the nation's 10 greatest places to "Find a Nook and Read a Book."

Find video footage of RCPL events at: <http://www.youtube.com/user/rapidcitylibrary>

Find photos of RCPL events at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/rcpl/>

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