

R Mueller, James E., (1944-2002) Papers, 1988-2012
1324 4.0 cubic feet (140 folders) 3 video tapes, 7 audio cassettes, 213 lantern slides

This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri. If you would like more information, please contact us at research@shsmo.org.

INTRODUCTION

The collection consists of the correspondence and printed materials assembled by James E. Mueller over the course of his years of research and volunteerism as an environmentalist in Joplin, Missouri. Included in the papers are materials concerning air quality issues, a campaign targeting emission levels of a local company, and a proposed landfill at a site in farm country north of Joplin. There are also papers pertaining to other environmental issues that interested Mueller, including hazardous waste disposal and lead poisoning.

DONOR INFORMATION

The papers were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by Suzanne Wilson and Kaisa E. Young on 12 July 2014 (Accession No. 1608).

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

James Evans Mueller (Jim) was a professional photographer and self-educated environmentalist from Joplin, Missouri. Mueller was born May 9, 1944, in Carthage, Missouri, and attended Joplin schools. In 1967 he graduated magna cum laude with a B. A. degree in English Literature from Missouri Valley College, Marshall. With a long interest in photography, he was a still and video photographer for KUHI-TV for three years and in 1972 established his business as a freelance photographer, concentrating on commercial, industrial, and aerial photography.

In 1977, he was accepted as a student in the Ansel Adams Workshop in Yosemite National Park. From 1979 to 1983 he was an assistant instructor at that workshop, first in the darkroom processing students' daily film, then as instructor of a student group, at workshops held in Yosemite and Pebble Beach, California. In the 1970s and early 1980s, he taught photography classes in continuing education at Missouri Southern State College, Joplin.

Mueller married Suzanne Jane Wilson, a freelance journalist, in 1983; he had one daughter, Kaisa Elizabeth Mueller, from a previous marriage. He was very involved in the Joplin community. He served as president of the board of the Spiva Art Center and was cofounder with Wilson of the national photography competition PhotoSpiva in 1977.

Mueller was especially active in environmental issues in the 1980s and 1990s, when fellow activists described him as the "environmental conscience of the area" and praised him for his ability to interpret technical data and translate it into language anyone could understand. He assisted citizens' groups that were focused on issues pertinent to the Joplin region, including landfill siting, air quality, hazardous waste incineration, and superfund sites for lead remediation. Mueller died September 25, 2002, at age 58.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The papers have been arranged into the following four series: **Environmental Issues**, **Environmental Work**, **Audio-Visual**, and **Miscellaneous**.

The **Environmental Issues** series consists of scientific information, newspaper articles, and other materials collected by Mueller having to do with environmental issues that interested him. The series has been arranged chronologically.

The **Environmental Work** series consists of publications, photographic evidence and presentations chronically Mueller's career as an environmental activist in Joplin. Of particular note is the campaign for clean air quality, the explosion in the feed handling building of the ICI Explosives Environmental hazardous waste incinerator in Joplin, the proposed siting of a landfill in farm country eight miles north of Joplin, and the disposal of hazardous waste. The series has been arranged chronologically.

The **Audio-Visual** series contains slides, photographs, cassette tapes and VHS videos featuring town hall meetings, presentations given by Mueller, and photographs of environmental sites. The series has been arranged chronologically when possible.

The **Miscellaneous** series consists of various materials having to do with Mueller's career as an environmentalist. Of note is the campaign against pollution from the Atlas Powder Company in Joplin, Missouri. The series has been arranged chronologically.

FOLDER LIST

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- f. 2 Chemical Sensitivity, 1989
- f. 3 Joplin Quality of Life, 1989
- f. 4 Wildcat Park/Silver Creek Sewer Photos, 1989
- f. 5 Wildcat Park/Silver Creek Sewer, 1989
- f. 6 OSHA Hazardous Waste, 1989
- f. 7 Joplin Environmental Policy Statement, 1989
- f. 8 Joplin Sewage, NPDES Permits, 1989-1992
- f. 9 Clean Air Act and Missouri Progress Report, 1990
- f. 10 Environment and Religion, 1990
- f. 11 Right to Know Act, 1990
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- f. 13 Peace Letter, 1990
- f. 14 Speech for President's Circle, 1990
- f. 15 Profiles on Environmental Health, 1990 and 1993
- f. 16 Risk Assessment, Dioxin, 1990
- f. 17 Spiva Prairie, 1990
- f. 18 Schuyler Zoning, 1990
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- f. 20 Eagle Picher Industries, 1992-1996
- f. 21 Joplin Sewer Project, 1992

- f. 22 Environmental Permits and How to Obtain Them
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- f. 66 Acid Rain, 1989
- f. 67 Recycling, 1989

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- f. 83 Kansas Army Ammunition Plant Emission Levels, 1995
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- f. 95 Corporate Greed Editorials
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