

Bill Tammeus Newspaper Collection (AC153)

Introduction:

The Bill Tammeus Newspaper Collection features editions of the *KC Star* and *KC Times* from early 1980's and 1990's collected by Bill Tammeus, former columnist for the *Star*.

Descriptive Summary:

Creator: Bill Tammeus

Title: Bill Tammeus Newspaper Collection

Date Range: 1974- 2005

Bulk Dates: 1981 & 1990- 1991

Size: 3 linear feet (2 Boxes)

Collection Number: AC153

Donor Information:

Bill Tammeus, January 2026.

Citation Note:

Bill Tammeus Newspaper Collection (AC153), Black Archives of Mid-America, Kansas City, Missouri

Related Collections:

Kansas City Star Collection AC81

1934 KC Star Collection AC127

Administrative Information:

Reproduction Restrictions: None

Access Restrictions: None

Original Language Statement:

The Black Archives of Mid-America follows the widespread practice of using the language provided by speakers and writers of historical documents. Using the speaker's or writer's

language can be very informative and provide pivotal contextual information about cultural and societal customs of previous time periods. As a result, researchers may encounter descriptive language, which often includes verbiage that contains obvious bias, or outdated and stereotypical terminology, and/ or content. Contemporary readers and researchers might find this language harmful or offensive.

Biographical Sketch:

Bill Tammeus is a former columnist for *The Kansas City Star*, where he was employed for over 35 years. Tammeus received his Bachelor's in Journalism from University of Missouri in 1967. He has also written for the *Presbyterian Outlook*, a national magazine, a blog on *The Kansas City Star's* website titled "Faith Matters," and the *National Catholic Reporter*. In 1977, he became the writer of the Starbeams column at the *Star* after the death of his colleague, Bill Vaughan, who had been the columnist before his death. He has also written several faith based books: "A Gift of Meaning" (2002), "They Were Just People: Stories of Rescue in Poland During the Holocaust" (2009), "Jesus, Pope Francis and a Protestant Walk into a Bar: Lessons for the Christian Church" (2015).

Historical Sketch:

The Kansas City Evening Star, founded in September 1880 by William Rockhill Nelson and Samuel E. Morss. They also owned the *Sentinel* in Fort Wayne Indiana, which had been begun by Nelson's father Issac De Groff Nelson. Morss retired a year and a half after they launched the Evening Star, after which Nelson put the full power of his newspaper behind those civic and political ideals that he personally espoused such as opposition to speakeasies and bars, in support of the Parks and Boulevard system and the City Beautiful Movement.

In 1882, the *Evening Star* merged with the *Kansas City Evening Mail* and became the *Kansas City Star*. In 1890, they launched the *Weekly Kansas City Star*, followed by the *Sunday Kansas City Star* in 1894. Nelson bought the *Kansas City Times* in 1901.

After Nelson's death in 1915, control of the *Star* went to his wife Ida, who passed in 1921, then to his daughter Laura Kirkwood, who passed in 1926. Per Nelson's Will, should Ida or Laura

both perish, his entire estate, including the newspaper, was to be sold within two years and the proceeds were to be used to build a public art museum (The Nelson- Atkins Museum of Art). In 1928, the staff of the *Star* banded together to purchase the newspaper.

In 1977, the *Star* and the *Times* ceased being locally owned publications when they were purchased by New York-based Capital Cities Communications. In 1985, Capital Cities purchased ABC, which merged with Disney in 1996, and a year later the *Star* was sold to Knight Ridder publishing. In 2006, Knight Ridder was bought by the McClatchy Company, but the company filed for bankruptcy in 2020, after which, the *Star* was purchased by Chatham Asset Management.

Scope and Content Note:

This collection contains a reproduction of the very first edition of the *Kansas City Evening Star*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Saturday September 18, 1880, as well as editions celebrating the 100th and 125th Anniversaries of the *KC Star*, and an edition celebrating the 150th Anniversary of Kansas City, MO. There is also an edition of the *LA Times* included.

This collection is primarily arranged in chronological order.

Collection Inventory:

- f. 1 *The Kansas City Star & The Kansas City Times*- Souvenir Editions
- f. 2 *The Kansas City Star*, Main Edition, Friday August 9, 1974
- f. 3 *The Kansas City Star*, Main Edition- 100th Anniversary, Sunday September 14, 1880
- f. 4 *The Kansas City Star*, Centennial Section, Sunday September 14, 1880
- f. 5 *The Kansas City Star*, Metropolitan Edition, Wednesday November 5, 1980
- f. 6 *The Kansas City Times*, Metropolitan Edition, Tuesday March 31, 1981
- f. 7 *The Kansas City Star*, Main Edition, Monday July 20- Tuesday July 21, 1981
- f. 8 *The Kansas City Times*, Metropolitan Edition, Saturday July 18- Friday July 24, 1981
- f. 9 *The Kansas City Times*, Johnson County Edition, Wednesday October 18, 1989
- f. 10 *The Kansas City Times*, Johnson County Edition, Wednesday February 28, 1990
- f. 11 *The Kansas City Star*, Sports Section, Thursday March 1, 1990
- f. 12 *The Kansas City Star*, Johnson County Edition, Thursday May 1, 1990

- f. 13 *The Kansas City Star*, Johnson County Edition, Monday August 19- Wednesday August 21, 1991
- f. 14 *The Kansas City Star*, Johnson County Edition, Thursday August 22- Saturday August 24, 1991
- f. 15 *The Kansas City Star*, Metropolitan Edition, Sunday August 25, 1991
- f. 16 *The Kansas City Star*, Johnson County Edition, Thursday December 26, 1991
- f. 17 *The Kansas City Star*- A Chronicle of the Great Flood of '93, September 1993
- f. 18 *The Kansas City Star*, Lasting Legacies- KC@150, Sunday May 21, 2000
- f. 19 *The Kansas City Star*- 125th Anniversary, Sunday September 18, 2005
- f. 20 *The Los Angeles Times*, World Report, Tuesday August 27, 1991

Processed by Laura Darnell, Archivist, February 2026.

Sources:

“Bill Tammeus.” 2014. Mizzou School of Journalism. August 7, 2014.

<https://journalism.missouri.edu/alum/bill-tammeus/>.

“Bill Tammeus.” 2016. Flatland - Kansas City PBS’ Nonprofit Journalism Source. January 8, 2016. <https://flatlandkc.org/reporters/bill-tammeus/>.

Hughes, Gary. 2022. “A History of the Kansas City Star.” Historic Newspapers. February 11, 2022. https://www.historic-newspapers.com/blogs/article/kansas-city-star-history?srsltid=AfmBOoqnXwODmwq-ljqlzBMyK49JqFZkpz5xcARshQe8_M7twdDgoa8F.