

Kansas

GOVERNMENT JOURNAL

VOLUME 96-NUMBER 2

FEBRUARY 2010



Inside:
2010 Essay Contest Winners
Green Transportation

2010 Leadership Summit & Mayor's Conference

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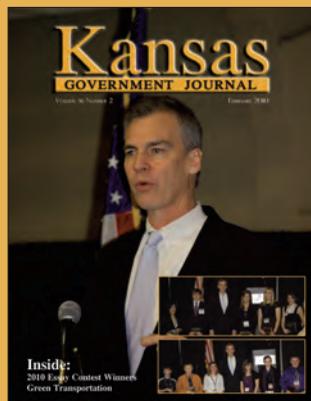
LEAGUE OF KANSAS MUNICIPALITIES



1910 • A CENTURY OF SERVICE • 2010

Celebrating 100 Years

KANSAS GOVERNMENT JOURNAL • FEBRUARY 2010



About the Cover:

Governor Mark Parkinson presents the 2010 essay contest winners at City Hall Day. See the "If I Were Mayor..." essay winners, beginning on page 38 and "The World Around You: How to Improve My City" essay winners on page 44. Photos by Amanda Schuster.

Kansas

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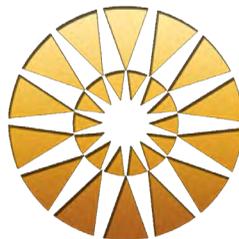
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LEAGUE OF KANSAS MUNICIPALITIES



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IN HONOR OF THE LEAGUE CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF SERVICE, WE HAVE CREATED SEVERAL PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS TO EXPRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MANY SERVICES THAT CITIES PROVIDE. VIEW THE LATEST, BY GOING TO WWW.LKM.ORG AND CLICKING ON THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY LOGO.



Obituaries

Lloyd Cecil Bloomer, 94, died on December 11, 2009 at the Osborne County Memorial Hospital. He was born on July 15, 1915, in Osborne.

In 1933, he graduated from Osborne High School and attended Washburn University. At Washburn, Lloyd played basketball and graduated with a law degree in 1941.

Bloomer served in World War II as captain in the U.S. Army's 80th Infantry. He was assigned to General Patton's Third Army in 1944 and landed at Utah Beach as an executive officer of a battery of field artillery. For his service, he received a Bronze Star Medal and Silver Medal. When he returned home to Osborne, he was elected as County Attorney, a position he held for 12 years.

Bloomer's public service included other positions in Osborne County. He was also the City Attorney for the Cities of Osborne, Downs, and Natoma.

Gerald L. Houghland, 77, died on February 8, 2010, after suffering a stroke in October. He was born on March 19, 1932, in Olathe.

Following his graduation from high school he attended Pittsburg State for one year and then served in the U.S. Army counter-intelligence corps during the Korean War. After his service, he received both his undergraduate and law degree from Washburn University.

Houghland began his law career as an assistant criminal prosecutor in the Johnson County District Attorney's Office from 1960-1967. Beginning in 1969, he served two terms as a state representative in the Kansas Legislature. He was also a school district attorney for northeast portion of Johnson County from 1960-1969. In 1970, he began working for the Housing Authority. Houghland became a District Court Judge in 1977. He retired in 1995, but continued to hear cases until 2001.



Calendar of Events

April

9, 10 - MLA: Civility and Public Service, (Canton & De Soto)

LKM will be offering two MLA classes on *Civility and Public Service*. This course is designed for both elected and appointed city officials. It will help you understand your role in the community and develop better working relationships between elected and appointed city officials. We will also provide policies and procedures that have yielded more effective and efficient meetings across the state. In addition, you will gain realistic strategies to communicate your message with citizens and the media. The course will be held in two locations, Canton on April 9, and De Soto on April 10.

30 - KMIT Board Meeting, Hillsboro

May

7-8 - Leadership Summit & Kansas Mayors Conference, Lawrence

LKM and the Kansas Mayors Association invites you to attend the 2010 Leadership Summit and Kansas Mayors Conference. This two-day event will provide elected and appointed city leaders an opportunity to gather and discuss the challenges facing our cities and will focus on how leadership at the local level can better address contemporary issues in local government. The 2010 Leadership Summit and Kansas Mayors Conference will include a selection of workshops and general sessions designed to provide insight into local government issues. The event will be held at the Spring Hill Suites, located at One Riverfront Plaza in Lawrence. Please visit www.lkm.org for more information and to register.

June

4,5, 18 - MLA: Ethics, (Ulysses, Goddard, Lenexa)

LKM will be offering three MLA core classes on *Ethics*. This course will offer participants an increased understanding of ethics within local governments. The course will be held in three locations, Ulysses on June 4, Goddard on June 5, and Lenexa on June 18.

25 - LKM Governing Body Meeting, Overland Park

25 - KMIT Board Meeting, Hays

July

9, 10, 19 - MLA: Neighborhood Building (Phillipsburg, Chanute, Great Bend)

LKM will be offering three MLA elective classes on *Neighborhood Building*. This course will offer participants an increased understanding of building and renovating attractions within your city. The course will be held in three locations, Phillipsburg on July 9, Chanute on July 10, and Great Bend on July 19.

August

6,7,13 - MLA: KOMA/KORA (Iola, Concordia, Greensburg)

LKM will be offering three MLA core classes, *KOMA/KORA*. The course will be held in three locations, Iola on August 6, Concordia on August 7, and Greensburg on August 13.

27 - KMIT Board Meeting, De Soto

September

10 - Governing Body Meeting, Manhattan

10, 11, 17 - MLA: Sexual Harassment (Scott City, Minneapolis, Westwood)

LKM will be offering three MLA elective classes on *Sexual Harassment*. The course will be held in three locations, Scott City on September 10, Minneapolis on September 11, and Westwood on September 17.

October

9-12 - LKM Annual Conference, Overland Park

Preparations are underway for LKM's 2010 Conference, when the League's 100th Anniversary will be celebrated. This conference will be held at the Overland Park Convention Center and Sheraton Hotel, October 9-12. Please visit www.lkm.org for more information.

27, 28 - LKM Regional Suppers (Goodland, Dodge City)

Goodland is the first stop for LKM's annual Regional Suppers on October 27. Dodge City will follow as the second stop on October 28.

November

3, 4 - LKM Regional Supper (Wichita, Concordia)

LKM will make its third stop in Wichita on November 3 for the annual Regional Suppers. Concordia will follow on November 4.

5,6 - MLA: Community & Media Relations (Manhattan, Fort Scott)

LKM will be offering two MLA elective classes on *Community and Media Relations*. This course will be held in two locations, Manhattan on November 5 and Fort Scott on November 6.

17,18 - LKM Regional Supper (Leavenworth, Parsons)

Leavenworth is the fifth stop for LKM's annual Regional Suppers on November 17. Parsons will follow as the sixth stop on November 18.



“If I were Mayor...” 2010 Essay Winners

The “If I Were Mayor” essay contest asked seventh-graders from around the state to describe what they would do if they were elected mayor of their city. Six winners were selected as regional winners and one winner was declared the overall state winner. This year over 800 students participated in the essay contest. Winners were presented with a plaque and \$250 savings bond.

On February 3, 2010, Governor Mark Parkinson presented all winners their awards as part of the League’s annual City Hall Day. City Hall Day provides an opportunity for city officials from around the state to gather and discuss legislative issues.

Colten Uhl, Sylvan Grove Overall & North Central Winner Sylvan Unified K-12

If I were mayor, I would make my town a clean and safe place for people to live in. The people would actually want to live here and have their children grow up in my town. I would make my town more energy efficient, safe, and clean.

There would be recycling bins at each store so we can reduce waste in our town and prevent harmful chemicals that destroy our ozone. I would ask for volunteers to plant trees so it would help our environment. It would look beautiful and resourceful at the same time.

The buildings would be energy efficient with energy panels and fluorescent light bulbs. There would be a teen center for kids to have a safe place to hang out without worrying about drugs and alcohol. Public speakers would talk about drug and alcohol awareness at schools to make sure kids will not go down the wrong path.

A safe building would be built in case some people do not have basements to go when tornadoes or other natural disasters strike. If someone’s house was destroyed in a storm, they could stay in the safe building until their home is repaired. To make sure families are safe, I would promote law enforcement to keep the crime rates down and have a safe community.

To keep cars clean and make the streets look nicer, we would pave over the dirt roads. To keep from having accidents on the sidewalks, I would take them apart and repair them so pedestrians can have a relaxing walk without worrying about tripping and falling.

If I were mayor, the town would be a better place to live and work. We could reduce waste and have a clean, safe town. The town would attract families and businesses which would help the economy. If I were mayor, the people would have a perfect place to live and work for the rest of their lives.





**Krista Kay Vogts, Olpe
Northeast Winner
Olpe Junior High School**

If I were mayor, I would have to make many decisions that would best suit the town of Olpe. It would be hard, but that would be part of my duty as being mayor. Not only would I have to make decisions, but I would have to solve and explain the problems to others.

I would start off by making our town look welcoming to others. By that I mean, promote clean streets, mowed lawns, nice lighting, and uncracked sidewalks and streets. I know all of these things would take money, but we could come up with it over time.

I also think a recreation center would be very nice for the town of Olpe. It would be somewhere that people could go to do physical activities, and parents could trust it as a safe place to leave their children.

As mayor, I would promote the idea of the city working in partnership with the school to install a new rubber track that would look better and safer than the existing one.

Lastly, I think our town could use a grocery store. It would be very useful. Not only could you get supplies, but you wouldn't be wasting gas and polluting the air because you wouldn't be driving to another city.

Being mayor would take a lot of responsibility, but I'm up for the challenge! I would make the decisions that would best suit the town of Olpe.



**Keegan Morgan, Colby
Northwest Winner
Colby Middle School**

If I were mayor, I would give money to the school, library, and hospital to buy better equipment and books to make it easier to learn and save lives. I would also make a homeless shelter for people to come and get a free meal, hot shower, clean clothes, and a place to sleep. I would make sure all kids get to and from school safely by having officers direct traffic and have a law that makes people slow down in school and residential areas. I would get more officers by increasing the pay and the benefits. I would put in a plant that makes gas from crops that have been grown by our local farmers. I'd also give money to athletic funds. I would cut back on the price people would pay on everyday essentials like groceries, gas, and medical expenses.

I would let self-employed people have a reduction in the bills they pay so they can make a better life for themselves and their family. To me a happy town is a town people would want to live in. I would put in new solar powered lights to reduce the amount of wire needed, and on the main streets so people can see better and reduce the amount of casualties. I would increase the amount of officers on patrol to keep reckless drivers off the road.

Jake Goldenstein, Augusta
Southeast Winner
Augusta Middle School



If I were mayor, I would upgrade the baseball fields, make a teen center, and start a recycling plant. These projects may be challenging, but they are attainable. By accomplishing these goals, Augusta could be a cleaner and nicer place.

My first priority is to start a recycling plant. Our community needs a nearby place for our recyclables. A way we could do this is by using tax dollars and grant money. We could put it where the IGA used to be. This leads me to my next project.

Additionally, our community could use a teen center. We need a safe place for teens to hang out.

Tax dollars could go towards this highly attainable project. A good place to put it would be the old POK. All we need to do is fix it up a bit.

Finally, the town needs higher quality baseball fields. The talent around here deserves nice fields. As a community, we could all donate a little time and effort for better quality fields. Donations and taxes could be a big influence on the project. This goal is very manageable.

I believe it is the responsibility of the mayor to start projects that would benefit people of all ages. By upgrading the diamonds, making a teen center and starting a recycling plant, it is my wish that our community becomes a better place.

Therefore, I will work hard to get to be mayor, and then attempt to accomplish these goals.



Anna Keller, Hesston
South Central Winner
Hesston Middle School

If I were mayor, I would turn my town into a healthy environment for children and teenagers. I think that is a very important issue, because there are lots of places where kids make bad lifestyle choices. They might be in trouble with the law, or take drugs. This could be because of peer pressure, or just because it's available to them. I would improve, and stop that issue by starting healthy programs from sports to creative activities. I think this would help keep kids away from all negative influences.

I would also start a resource center, a place where less fortunate people in the town could go for simple things that they need in their everyday lives that they could not afford. I think this is also an important issue, because there are lots of people in our town that we do not realize need help with this kind of thing. I would start this by asking everyone in the town to take part in the program.

My final change would be to start a community after school daycare. I picked this issue because there are lots of kids that have to walk home after school and stay by themselves at home because their parents are at work. I would start this program by asking parents to volunteer, and pass out fliers at the schools.

If I were mayor, I would make my town a healthier and safer environment.



**Anna Wiebe, Rolla
Southwest Winner
Rolla Junior High School**

If I were mayor of Rolla, I would do all sorts of great things such as build a Dollar General, upgrade the park, and have a gathering every month for all the Rolla people.

I would build a Dollar General for the Rolla community. They would not always have to go to Hugoton, Elkhart, or even Guymon to get one little thing to make supper. In the Dollar General, I would put clothes, food and other supplies people would use. It would be wonderful to have a little store in town!

Second, I would upgrade the park. I would put in more equipment for kids to play on.

Places for people to sit would be built for parties or cook outs. Dead trees and flowers need to be replaced so it would be a beautiful park.

Once a month, there would be a day when the community could all come together and do fun activities. The women would bake foods or maybe sew quilts. The men would play sports such as golf or horseshoes. The kids and teenagers would play sports like soccer, volleyball, basketball, or football. If they had some other ideas, I would listen to them.

So, if I could be the mayor of Rolla, I would build a Dollar General, upgrade the park, and have a community day.



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Kansas Scores in Public Health Report

Kansas met 6 out of 10 criteria for public health emergency preparedness in a report released by Trust for America's Health (TFAH) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The full report, titled "Ready or Not? Protecting the Public's Health from Diseases, Disasters, and Bioterrorism," can be found on the Web at <http://healthyamericans.org>.

"The Kansas response to the 2009 H1N1 pandemic flu virus demonstrates that we have taken significant steps to protect the health of the public, especially from new and emerging threats," stated Roderick L. Bremby, Secretary of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. "We appreciate the information

provided in the TFAH report and will integrate it into our overall and ongoing assessment of state public health preparedness."

Some of the indicators that Kansas met included: submitting data on available hospital beds for at least 50% of healthcare facilities in the state during the response to pandemic H1N1, having adequate laboratory staffing to support working 5, 12-hour days for 6 to 8 weeks in response to an infectious disease outbreak such as 2009 H1N1, and meeting readiness criteria for the Medical Reserve Corps, a volunteer organization that provides additional health professional support during emergencies.

Kansas Becomes a "ONE" State

Governor Mark Parkinson signed a proclamation declaring Kansas as a "ONE State." His signature indicates the State's support in the movement against extreme poverty and preventable disease. The Governor presented the signed proclamation in the Governor's Office at the State Capitol to Kansas State University students who are active supporters of ONE, a global anti-poverty advocacy organization.

Kansas joins 15 states and more than 130 cities across the nation in working with ONE to mobilize public support behind initiatives to fight poverty, combat diseases like AIDS and malaria, put children in school, and increase opportunity for those living in extreme poverty around the world. ONE works closely with policy

experts, African leaders, and anti-poverty activists to advocate for programs that are saving lives and helping the world's poor make a better life for themselves and their children.

"The declaration of Kansas as a ONE State proves once again, that citizens across the nation are committed to combating poverty and preventable disease, both here in the United States and around the world," said Mike Henry, Senior Director of U.S. Field Operations at ONE. "He added that Kansans have a long history of doing the right thing and helping their fellow citizens. Today, they have come together to make their voices heard, raise awareness, and take a stand for the most vulnerable members of society."

Kansas Recovers Near-Record Total

Insurance Commissioner Sandy Praeger's office helped thousands of Kansas consumers settle disputes with their insurance companies in 2009, recovering more than \$15 million in insurance claims for policyholders. These funds are above and beyond what companies had offered consumers to settle the claims.

This is the second time in three years the department has topped the \$15 million figure. The \$15,033,290.41 recovered in 2009 is just short of the record \$15.1 million recovery in 2007. Nearly \$87 million has been recovered by the Kansas Insurance Department (KID) for Kansas consumers since 2003.

"The hard work of our consumer assistance representatives makes this possible," Commissioner Praeger said. She added that "Kansans can be confident that KID is working to resolve disputes between companies and consumers in a fair and timely manner."

Recoveries are funds returned to policyholders through settlement of claims disputes with insurance companies. They are based on inquiries and formal complaints that are filed with the department. The number of complaints decreased slightly from 2007, while the number of inquiries increased by more than 50.

Kansas Improves Highway Safety

Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety listed Kansas as among the top 30 states that are improving highway safety through new highway safety laws.

The organization, in its 2010 Report Card on Highway Safety, gave Kansas an 8 ½. It evaluated states based on 15 standard highway safety laws, which it believes all states should adopt. The laws focus on distracted driving, teen driving, requiring seat belts, drunk driving, child booster seats, and motorcycle helmets. Jacqueline Gillan, vice president of the Advocates reported that

"Millions of Americans are at risk everyday because states don't have these laws."

Kansas' score placed it near the highest rated group, which includes ten states and the District of Columbia. Conversely, nine states ranked in the lowest group and had a rating of seven or lower.

Kansas improved its ranking in 2009 because of enactment of the Graduated Drivers License system that took effect for Kansas teenagers.



Mainstreet News

Topeka Gains in Rankings

Milken Institute/Greenstreet Real Estate Partners named Topeka as the country's "Biggest Gainer" in the best performing city-small cities category for 2009. Topeka improved 69 slots to number 37 from spot 106. The Institute reviewed 124 small cities.

Doug Kinsinger, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce/Go Topeka called the improvement, "encouraging." He added that "we felt that our job growth and income growth compared to the rest of the nation was

pretty strong, but it's nice to have that validated by a source such as the Milken Institute."

The Milken Institute, based in California, is a publicly supported, independent, and non-partisan think tank. Its annual listings consider multiple factors that include: job growth, job retention, compensation growth, quality of jobs created, and cumulative economic conditions.

Kansas Counties Receive Grant

Twelve southeast Kansas counties law enforcement agencies are set to receive a grant worth approximately \$305,000; it is enough for them to acquire high-tech finger print identification equipment.

Labette County Sheriff William Blundell summarized the new capabilities as, "The benefit of it is if we happen to get a good usable fingerprint of the crime scene we can scan it through our local database and see if we have any common matches on the fingerprint in our local system."

He added that "the biggest importance to it, is it gives us another tool to try and locate people responsible for committing these crimes...whether it be a burglary, a theft, a residence or a car or whatever, something that we can utilize as a tool to hold people responsible and keep them in the court system."

According to Sheriff Blundell the grant "allows us, in our 12 county region—we're all linked together, so if I happen to pull a print here in Oswego it will be comparing against the known offenders in the other eleven counties in the region."

Olathe Recognized as Performance Management Expert

The Center for the Implementation of Public Policies Promoting Equity and Growth (CIPPEC), an independent Argentinean agency created to enhance government performance and accountability, researched performance measurement best practices across the United States. Their search identified the City of Olathe. As a result, the agency requested that the City participate in a national forum to help Argentinean governments' effort to improve their performance.

Alan Shorthouse, Assistant Director of Strategic Financial Management and in charge of the City's performance measurement

program, will join a representative from Miami Dade County (the only other government singled out) in Buenos Aires as keynote presenters in a "Sub-National dialogue between Argentina and the United States: Performance Management and Accountability to the Citizen." The United States Embassy in Argentina is funding the trip through CIPPEC.

Shorthouse will conduct a 1.5 hour presentation on Olathe's program to national and local leaders, including governors of all the Argentinean provinces.

Sedgwick County Unveils New Plan

About 75% of older Americans (older than 45) take at least 4 medications per day. In fact, in 2010, the average older adult is expected to spend \$2,810 annually on prescription drugs, an increase of 133% from 2002.

Sedgwick County Department on Aging and Central Plains Area Agency on Aging (SCDOA and CPAAA) are launching an effort to assist older adults and their caregivers in making smart, economical health care decisions. The "Home for the Holidays" medicine management campaign was designed to reach families

over the holiday season at a time when they can meet to discuss health issues, evaluate their current situation, and implement a management plan that will help older adults make better health care decisions.

"Family gatherings during the holidays are a great time to inquire about the well-being of older loved ones, friends, and neighbors, including medication management and costs," stated Annette Graham, Executive Director of SCDOA and CPAAA.

City of Wichita Wins Award

The City of Wichita and its federal and state partners invested \$105 million in an important project to elevate the City's central rail corridor, providing 8 miles of new track, a new centralized traffic control system, and bridges at 1st, 2nd, Central, Murdock and 13th Street, as well as a new Chisholm Creek Bridge. The grade separation eliminated the need for motorists to stop for train traffic thereby reducing accidents, vehicle emissions, lost time, and reducing driver frustration.

The environmental impact was significant. The project decreased vehicle emissions by thousands of tons annually and will reduce vehicle idle time by two million hours. Additionally, the bridges were fitted with LED lighting, replacing the incandescent lighting in the original plans, reducing electrical usage by over 80%.



The World Around You: How to Improve Your City

2010 Essay Contest

The League of Kansas Municipalities invited all Kansas high school students to participate in an essay contest, “The World Around You: How to Improve Your City” to identify what changes they would like to initiate in their community.

On February 3, 2010, Governor Mark Parkinson presented the awards as part of the League’s annual City Hall Day. Nearly 200 students participated in the essay contest. Five winners were selected as regional winners and one winner was declared the overall state winner.

Regional winners were awarded with a plaque and a \$1,500 savings bond. The overall state winner was awarded with a plaque and a \$2,000 savings bond.

Promoting good city government is important to the League of Kansas Municipalities, and this essay contest provided students the opportunity to reflect on the role of local government.

Photo from L to R: Karla Davis, Olathe; Kaleb Moeller, Beloit; Governor Mark Parkinson; Victoria Gano, WaKeeney; Maggie Meiwes, Moran; and Morgan Wills, Liberal stand with the Governor upon receiving their award. Photos by Amanda Schuster.

UNITY GOING GREEN
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How to Improve Your City

Essay Winners





Morgan Wills, Liberal Overall & Southwest Winner Liberal High School

It has been brought to my attention that our community is very behind in regards to recycling. Recycling is extremely important to our community. Have you ever considered what happens to your old cell phone or computer once you've decided it's time for an upgrade? More common than not, our waste becomes someone else's problem. Malaysia, China, Vietnam, Hong Kong, these are only a few of the countries that have become major dumping grounds for e-waste. E-waste is just an abbreviation for old electronics that have reached their full lifespan. However, this is not the only issue we're facing. Everyday our community throws away plastic, paper, glass, magazines, newspaper, cardboard, and aluminum, all of which could be reused or recycled.

Plastic bottles, glass bottles, and plastic bags are estimated to last more than 500 years in a landfill. The average person creates 4.4 lbs. of waste every day—that's 1,600 lbs. a year. If we could just eliminate paper waste, we could reduce 30% of that. The main reason people fail to take action is simply fear. Instead of fearing what may happen, I prefer to take positive, courageous action. Starting up a recycling system for the community may seem like an ambitious project to say the least. However, I know that with determination and persistence, it is possible. Liberal already

has a recycling center in place. What I want to improve on is awareness within the community, convenience, participation, and the disposal of e-waste products. When I spoke to friends and family about recycling and their feelings towards it, most weren't even aware we had a recycling center. This is where the problem lies. Advertisement is essential in getting people involved. Most citizens don't realize how simple, but significant recycling can be. With the support of the community, the next step would be getting local businesses and schools to spearhead the movement. With business and schools successfully recycling, the community will be inspired to follow suit and join in the green movement.

The disposal of e-waste is equally important in becoming a green community. Electronics that we take for granted every day are being hastily and irresponsibly disposed of; it's hazardous to have e-waste in local, as well as, foreign landfills. Toxic chemicals from these products seep into the earth or are released into the atmosphere, negatively affecting the environment. If they are not put into landfills or shipped to foreign countries like Guano, China, Malaysia, and Vietnam, they are incinerated. The consequences of this are very harmful. Incineration of e-waste releases lead, cadmium, and mercury into the atmosphere. This can accumulate in our water, which is then passed to fish, and eventually back to you and me. If this is not the fate of your e-waste, then it is sent to under-developed countries where it is scavenged by young children and adults trying to salvage minuscule amounts of gold, copper, and iron. There is a state-of-the-art facility for e-waste in India. In 10 years, it could be a billion dollar industry, but it won't be easy.

In the meantime, the solution to this serious problem is simple. We must create a convenient way for local community members to dispose of unwanted electronics properly. They need to become aware of the harm they are doing to our environment and become responsible for the products' entire lifespan. Other solutions include buying from companies that produce cleaner products, thinking twice before you purchase new electronics, and returning the product to the manufacturers when you are ready to dispose of it.

The benefits of this will be everlasting. We may not receive instant gratification physically; however, we will receive instant gratification in knowing that we are doing something to better the environment and our community as well as secure a bright and safe future for the generations to come. Going green should be a way of life. There are many things an individual or family can do outside of recycling to be as eco-friendly as possible. It can be as simple as flipping a switch when you leave the room. What must be remembered is every single contribution matters. Recycling is a section of our community that should, and can be improved upon. Everyone is capable of making a difference; however, it is up to the individual to decide whether the difference delivers a positive or negative impact.

Change, as recently promoted in American politics, is a desirable feature in the progress towards greater good. With fresh ideas and unlikely partnerships, one can attain solutions to the toughest problems. Transformation is the first step in overcoming the obstacles that are inevitable in the governments and lives of the world's people. In order to make a greater global impact, the best place for this kind of change is in communities like mine and yours.

It is a mistake to pretend that a country, city, or community is not in constant danger of crisis. Due to the vulnerability that plagues our government, a strong federal system is absolutely crucial for the integrity of this country. Equally important is having a say in local government. That is why I have the pleasure of not only calling America my home, but also Olathe, Kansas. In this community, facing and combating problems is made easier with teamwork and inclusion.

In a sense, I wouldn't change anything about my city, but then again there is always room for improvement. Especially when being such a decisive factor in the everyday lives of thousands of people, as is the case for this country's towns and cities. As a youth, I can speak of my city's need for change, only from what I have experienced through my own civic engagement. The City of Olathe has shown great dedication and support to its youth, with its youth development programs. It must be mentioned that I would not have been elected one of three nationally-appointed youth members of the National League of City's Council on Youth, Education, and Families, without my City's support.

Olathe provides the Olathe Teen Council, Olathe Youth Congress, and the Olathe Youth Court for young adults to address their concerns. Even when resources are scarce as we have encountered in this current economy, youth truly want to make a difference in their community, and a city that values this is precious. Just as important as it is for young people to address their concerns on a national level, it is no different locally. Active young members of the community will help the neighborhood as well as themselves. Civic engagement is for everyone in the community; youth are not excluded. It is crucial for a young person to be committed to his or her local government, seek to make a difference in the community, and voice opinions in municipal government decisions.

This is where I wish my city would step in even more: making sure that its youth are well on their way to becoming productive citizens with a bright future ahead of them. The future leaders of not only our nation but our cities are to be given a great deal of attention to. Youth definitely have a duty to their city, but the city must not fall back on showing its concern for the youth. Adult-youth partnerships are not only important for the healthy growing of a community, but also helpful for teens on an emotional level.



Karla Davis, Olathe
Northeast Winner
Beth Ezra Academy

In order to achieve more outreach for the youth of my community, the following needs to take place: promotion for youth involvement in the city's already well established programs, educating teens on local government, and a potent mentorship program (just as children look up to their teen siblings, teenagers also need role models). To achieve this, youth and elected officials in Olathe must find this a cause for which they are passionate about. With the fire initiated, then steps will be taken to bring young people a well-built awareness into the soul of the wonderful city in which they live in.

At the end of the day, this country is made of towns and cities of all forms and sizes. Each American city is unique and its inhabitants essential. I am proud to be a part of the federal government, as well as the State of Kansas' government, and ultimately my very own municipality. With the help of all three, youth can achieve a deeper understanding into the tough work put into managing their nation and city—the protectors of their freedom. Only with an open mind and a common goal of unity, can we reach a greater feeling of patriotism and acceptance for each other, and our communities.



Victoria Gano, WaKeeney
Northwest Winner
Trego Community High School

WaKeeney, located halfway between Kansas City and Denver, is a small town that provides a home for approximately one thousand seven hundred people. In Wakeneey, we have around one hundred different businesses that range from agriculture clear to attorney's and antique shops. So, when you hear of a small town that has so many businesses, you would think that there would be a lot of job opportunities; but this is certainly not the case. Instead, we have a lot of businesses that do not provide a lot of positions for people, or businesses that do not make the public aware of open positions.

are many people in WaKeeney that are unemployed and use the excuse, "I don't know of any open jobs," much too often. I also believe that if there were people from out of town planning to move to WaKeeney, they would be able to see if they would be able to be successful in our town. Because, a lot of people move to a town because their spouses' job made them transfer, and when they get there the other one doesn't have a job because they weren't able to check ahead of time. So, I think that we should get a website up and running as soon as possible, for the sake of the unemployed.

To solve this problem, I think that a website should be set up that would be useful for people to go and visit, that would tell them what open job positions there are and what the specifications are for each one.

First, I would have either myself or someone else set up a website. This website would be open to the public and would have all of the local businesses listed in alphabetical order. Each business would have a list of open positions at their job and each position would have a link to open up an online list of specifications along with an application for people to fill out. Once an application was submitted it would automatically be sent to a designated e-mail address for people to look over and review.

Next, I would have to contact each business in town and inform them of the new and upcoming website. Once contacting the businesses, I would proceed to ask each one of them for a list of open positions, the positions specifications/requirements, and an application for the position. All of the information would then be transferred and listed on the website for the public to view.

Finally, once the website had been up and running for several months, I would put together a survey for the public to partake in. The survey would consist of questions such as: "Has our website been helpful in your job search?" "Were you able to open the requirements and application pages easily?" And finally, "Were you able to receive a job through the businesses listed on our website?" Once receiving the surveys, I would review each of them and improve the website if needed.

Overall, I think that this website would benefit the people of WaKeeney tremendously. I believe that there



Maggie Meiwes, Moran
Southwest Winner
Marmaton Valley Jr./Sr. High School

To some people a little town means nothing, but to me a little town symbolizes my home. My school, park, and community mean the world to me. The men and women in our community need to participate and take care of the town in which we live. My goal is to transform the little town of Moran into a remarkable place to live and raise a family. I have big plans for my hometown.

Picture a beautiful summer day; the birds are chirping, the children are giggling, and the wind is gently blowing through the trees. The day is perfect for a stroll in the park. When I arrive at the park, I notice how terrible our park appears. The paint is chipping off the playground equipment. The grass is dying from lack of moisture and proper shade and there appears to be not one flower to represent the beauty of summer. I would like to change our community park. Children and adults should enjoy the park and not have to worry about chipped paint or broken benches and no shade. My plan to upgrade the park would be to replace the old equipment or repaint the equipment; plant shade trees, flowers, and bushes for decoration; install a restroom and light poles for the evening hours; fix the shelter house and replace the picnic tables inside; replace the bleachers at the softball and baseball fields; and to repair the basketball court.

Some residents of Moran have been with us many years. As they age, things resembling cleaning their yards and planting their garden become more challenging with time. I would like to see our school organizations help our elders with more difficult tasks. Whether the organizations pick up broken limbs or mow their lawn in the spring; any little gesture will mean the world to our elders. Along with these ideas I plan to build a walking/biking trail throughout Moran. Many residents enjoy the fresh air, but they do not have a place to enjoy the outdoors safely.

My school represents a major part in my town. The entire town enjoys supporting our students at the ball games. The football bleachers are falling apart and need to be repaired. The American, Kansas, and school flags in front of the school have been whipped to shreds by the wind. The flags symbolize the pride in our country, state, and town; therefore the flags deserve to be restored. I would also like to see our shop class build a few picnic tables for the concrete by the concession stand. The picnic tables would receive excellent use at the football games and school cook outs.

My community means the world to me. Moran characterizes a town where I can escape from the traffic and people of the city and relax in peace. The residents of Moran are kind people who would be willing to lend a hand in need. I am sure the people of Moran would love to assist me in pursuing my plan. If we work together anything can be accomplished!



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Historic Environs Case Important to Cities

An important case affecting Kansas cities was decided by the Kansas Court of Appeals on January 22, 2010, *Friends of the Bethany Place, Inc. v. City of Topeka*, Case No. 100,997. The City prevailed on the issues, but the Friends of Bethany Place have filed a petition for review in the Kansas Supreme Court, so this decision may not be the last word on the issue. It is, however, an interesting decision affecting cities and the standards when acting in a quasi-judicial capacity.

The facts of this case revolve around a unanimous decision by the Topeka City Council, acting in a quasi-judicial capacity, to override a decision of the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Grace Episcopal Cathedral had applied to the SHPO for a permit to install a 40 stall parking lot, including 10 handicapped spaces, on the grounds adjacent to Bethany Place. Bethany Place houses the offices for the Episcopal Diocese and is on the Kansas Historical Registry. The SHPO determined that “the parking lot would encroach upon, damage, or destroy the historic environs of Bethany Place because the project would require the removal of mature trees and because the project would ‘drastically change the relationship between the two historic buildings on the site with the public street of Polk.’”

After holding a public hearing in which interested individuals were allowed to present testimony, and, at which the City Council received the recommendation from the planning commission that the determination of the SHPO be upheld, the City Council voted unanimously to overturn the denial of the permit. The Council also received numerous documents in a council packet, including an action sheet showing the findings the Council would have to make to overturn the decision of the SHPO. The Council was told that to overturn the recommendation of the SHPO, it would have to find, based upon all relevant factors, that there was no feasible and prudent alternative to the proposed parking lot and that all possible planning to minimize harm to the historic property and its environs had been included.

Some of the individuals testifying before the Council suggested alternatives such as increased angle parking on various side streets, utilizing some of the alley for parking and other like suggestions. Most of the suggestions were not accompanied by cost or safety information and officials from the church testified as to the reasons those alternatives would not be workable or achieve the church’s goals. The motion to overturn the SHPO specifically recited the statutorily required findings. There were some questions from councilmembers about whether the City could even deny the permit, based upon the First Amendment free exercise of Religion and the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000 (RLUIPA), 42 U.S.C. § 2000cc (2006). The City Attorney suggested that the Council consider the relevant factors and statutory findings and they would probably get sued regardless.

In the ensuing litigation, the district court found that the Council’s actions were arbitrary, capricious, and unreasonable. The Court expressed concern that quasi-judicial matters before the City Council were handled as a part of the regular council agenda, rather than a separate proceeding. It also expressed concern that the record was incomplete, making judicial review difficult, but that there were multiple alternatives for the Council to consider. The District Court seemed to believe that the City Council did not adequately consider whether the alternatives presented were feasible. Thus, the Court found there was not substantial competent evidence to support the statutory findings of the Council.

The Kansas Court of Appeals first analyzed whether the Friends of Bethany Place had standing to challenge the Topeka City Council’s decision. The Court found that the organization had standing to seek judicial review. The Court noted that the burden was on those challenging the City Council’s decision and that there was a presumption that the council had acted reasonably. The Court went on to hold that “[a] governing body was not required to make detailed findings of fact in order to properly act on a permit application before it. Nevertheless, the better practice in deciding these quasi-judicial matters is to provide specific and detailed findings, and governmental bodies are encouraged to do so. This is because findings of fact assist in providing a reviewing court with a meaningful record for judicial review.” (Slip Opinion at 3, Syl. ¶ 5) Thus, the lesson from this opinion is that cities should make sure that a record of a public hearing and the reasons for the governing body’s decision, particularly in a quasi-judicial matter, is clear in the minutes. Fortunately, the District Court’s concern about how the hearing was handled in the course of a regular meeting agenda, did not seem to concern the Court of Appeals panel.

Another issue argued by the Friends of Bethany Place was that the City Council should have considered the Golden factors, referring to the suggested factors typically considered in a zoning case, which were enumerated in *Golden v. City of Overland Park*, 224 Kan. 591, 584 P.2d 130 (1978). The Court noted that the factors are merely advisory and other factors may be more pertinent. Overall, the Court found that the alternatives presented by the opponents to the church’s permit did not rise to the level of “relevant factors.” Thus, it found that the District Court had improperly substituted its judgment for that of the City Council. Finally, the Court found, given its disposition on the other issues, that it was not necessary to address the First Amendment or RLUIPA claims. There was a lengthy dissent by Judge Green who would have affirmed the District Court’s opinion that the City of Topeka acted arbitrarily, capriciously, and unreasonably.

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In Southeast Kansas

As noted last time, my first road trip of the year was an invitation destination to Baxter Springs. But, there were also a number of specific stopping points, including several pre-arranged ones in my head as I left the home base in Derby for my two-day tour headed south along K-15, then east on US-166 out of Ark City.

First of all, I wanted to stop by Caney, as it had been several years since my last visit there. Caney is located just a tiny bit north of where US-75 enters Oklahoma, and south of US-166 a mile or so. On still-snow-covered city side-streets, I drove right to where I remembered city hall to be...in what was long ago the two-story telephone company. But, finding an empty building led me to (remarkably) conclude that city hall had moved. The “new,” and very attractive, Caney City Hall (now three years old) is on the “main” street (West Fourth), in the heart of downtown. City Clerk Carole Cooker provided me with a thorough building walk through, and explained that city hall remains somewhat of a work-in-progress, as it has been built in a series of complete stages, all with cash. (By the way, Cooker is a 40-year employee of the City; the last 33 as Clerk...WOW!). On our tour we bumped into City Administrator Don Whitman and Police Chief Rick Pell, who were meeting in the latter’s office—an interesting sidebar: Whitman’s 18-year-old college freshman daughter had recently been appointed by the mayor to the city council...though she had not yet attended a meeting at the time of my visit. I also met Assistant City Clerk, Debbie Morrison, Dispatcher/EMT Rachel Byrd, and Connie Perkins, who also works in the office. Really nice folks in Caney.

My next stop was in Treece, where I did not necessarily expect to find anybody at city hall, as I knew that the City is cutting back all it can these days, as it starts the process of closing up forever. Nobody was home there, and nobody was home at Mayor Bill Blunk’s house either (turns out he works in Joplin). But, while in the area, I was able to talk on the phone with both City Clerk Pam Pruitt and Mayor Blunk...both of whom returned my messages in short order. I had been asked by LKM Executive Director, Don Moler, to personally extend the services of the League in completing the necessary unincorporated steps required to dissolve the legal entity of the City. Property owners in Treece are being “bought out” by the EPA, because of the contamination of the residue of the old zinc/lead mines. Mayor Blunk told me he expects the buyout process to take about 18 months, at which time Treece will also no longer be a municipality.

After my noon lunch with Mayor York in Baxter (thanks, Huey), I drove the few miles to the east to Galena, where, believe it or not, I had never been on League business before (I am chagrined to admit). Galena’s history is also as a mining town, and it is the first Kansas city (headed west, that is) along Old 66; in fact the old Mother Road has long-since been the four-lane that connects Galena to nearby Joplin to the east. Missouri starts right on the other side of the city limit sign. And, just inside that line, on the Galena side, is the brand-spanking-new Orthopedic Specialist of the four States (ortho4states.com)...quite a speciality hospital, and quite a coup for Galena (and Kansas)...and it is expected to give the local economy a figurative shot in the arm. Galena City Clerk, Debbie Kitch told me all about it when I spent a half-hour or so at City Hall. I don’t think

I had ever met Kitch in person, though I know we have talked on the phone before—by the way, she has been serving as City Clerk for 12 years.

Back to the west, I over-nighted in a very nice, brand-new motel in Coffeyville, and then shared breakfast (at Lannings) with Coffeyville City Manager, Jeff Morris, the next morning. It was catch-up time with Morris...I wanted to know how the post-flood progress was going, and it is going very well. The new motel (on-166, downtown) brings the City back to within one of the number of “pre-flood” (July 2007) motels. Morris and I had a lunch scheduled back in early November, before I forgot what day it was (another story for another time, but let’s agree that getting older sometimes appears to come into play).

In mid-morning, I met up with new Cherryvale City Administrator Greg McDanel, over a cup of coffee (actually latte, I think) at Ane Mae’s Natural Foods and Coffee House in Independence—McDanel had business at the courthouse that day. This was my first chance to meet McDanel in person, though we met up electronically back when he first came on board, and have “talked” on several occasions since. McDanel and his family, (including an 18-month-old first child), moved to Cherryvale in the fall, after starting his city career in Independence, MO, and earning his MPA at UMKC.

Leaving Indy, I traveled up US-169 to Chanute, for a scheduled lunch (at Benchwarmers) with City Manager John (“J.D.” works, too) Lester. Him and his family, (four kids ranging in age from pre-school to college freshman) came to Chanute a year or so ago. Lester is an Indiana native, and has spent much of his career in the public utility business. Before coming to Kansas, Lester worked for the state utility association in Missouri, and also served as a city manager in Missouri. He and I had met a time or two, but had never before had much of a chance to chat.

My book recommendation this month was a Christmas present from my son a couple of months ago: *Arkansas Valley Interurban: The Electric Way* by Robert Collins (South Platte Press, 1999; ISBN 0-942035-50-X). More “booklet” than “book,” this little 60-page historical gem documents the existence of narrow-gauge electric rail service between Wichita, Newton, and Hutchinson (with stops in Sedgwick and Halstead), from 1910 to 1940. This history is especially interesting to son Brek and me, as he grew up in Halstead, and was very familiar with three local remnants of the old “AVI”—the still-visible path of the old rails under Second Street, from one end of town to the other (east/west); the AVI depot, at Second and Spruce; and, especially, the AVI Bridge, over the Little Arkansas River, which was spared during the building of the Halstead Flood Control Levee Project (completed in 1994). Brek turned 17 the year we finished the flood control project, and has fond memories, as do I, of shooting BB guns into the river from the long-since-abandoned bridge. Lots of great pictures, too...the two Halstead structures are on pages 57 and 58 of the book. Thanks, kid.

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Green Transportation

by Jonathan Fisk

Politicians and other civic leaders are enjoined in symbiotic relationships with their constituents and regional partners. They are influenced by salient internal and external events, which in turn, influence the outcome of those events. Effective leaders also consider how specific policies impact their region’s economics, wealth, and educational achievement.

In today’s world, policy-making as it concerns transportation and its impact on the environment can be particularly complex. As such, one set of policy initiatives does not fit all communities or circumstances. A suburb near a coastline, for example, may be better suited to advance “green” programs and development rather than traditional economic development when compared to a poorer urban or rural community with a high unemployment rate.¹ When considered individually, environmental and transportation policy questions are both formidable. When combined, their nexus is a labyrinth of complex and technical policy alternatives, each deserving of rigorous debate by the appropriate lawmaking body.

This article is intended to be informational; it reports and showcases “green” transportation options that are available in and to Kansas communities.

Green Roads and Transportation

The term green highway is not an oxymoron. According to the Green Highways Partnership,² green roads bring together functionality to sustainability by incorporating environmentally friendly design and construction techniques. First, they are designed to be an integral component of a region’s public and mass transit network. Importantly, they are not just a new road that adds to the existing “supply.”³ Design-wise, they will likely blend in with native plant species and protect sensitive ecosystems. Green roads are also built with materials that allow water to pass through them more freely, reducing the effects of storm water runoff. Finally, they are constructed with recycled materials, which may include using recycled materials from the replaced roadway.⁴

Permeable Surfaces

Traditional pavement, such as the asphalt and concrete used on many Kansas roads, is impervious. In other words, it does not allow water to pass through, turning it into runoff.⁵ This is especially problematic during rain events. During a storm, water collects on pavement and its flow carries off metals and toxins into nearby rivers, lakes, and streams. It can even damage the structural integrity of the concrete/pavement. In order to mitigate these effects, many cities and property owners are experimenting with permeable surfaces.⁶

Permeable surfaces include porous concrete and asphalt, interlocking concrete pavers, and concrete grid pavers. It should be noted that many definitions do not consider compacted gravel as porous.⁷ Each reduces storm water runoff by allowing water to pass through it unimpeded. In effect, they reduce the flow and volume of storm water runoff. Table 1 below lists five of the more common types of permeable surfaces and their common uses and limitations.⁸

Although decisions relative to permeable surfaces depend on the needs, resources, expected uses, and the local climate, it is possible to make a few general observations about their respective limitations and durability. The material types listed above, for example, should not be used in areas having a slope of greater than 15% because fill material may erode.⁹ Their use should also be avoided in areas that are prone to contamination from sources such as transfer stations, gas stations, and heavily industrialized areas because of possible groundwater pollution. In most other settings (urban, suburban, and rural), the use of permeable pavement does not increase the likelihood of contaminating groundwater.¹⁰

Finally, using salt to thaw ice and snow does not clog them. Once dissolved into snow or ice, de-icing agents work by lowering melting temperature.¹¹ Thus, as the snow melts, it can pass through the permeable road surface. The benefits are two-fold: ice and snow accumulate at a slower rate, and refreeze is limited.

Table 1. Permeable Surfaces

Type	Common Uses	Limitations
Concrete Block Pavers & Grid Pavers	Driveways, parking lots, shoulders, ditch liners, medians, boat ramps, emergency access roads, fire and bike lanes, sidewalks, pool decks and patios.	Block & Grid Pavers: Winter sanding should be kept to a minimum to avoid clogging the infiltrating surface. Grid Pavers: Plowing needs to be done cautiously to avoid surface damage.
Plastic Grid Pavers	Overflow parking lots, sidewalks, shoulder parking, or other low-traffic areas.	Caution when plowing to reduce the chance of damage. Winter sanding should be minimized to avoid clogging the infiltrating surface.
Pervious Asphalt & Concrete	With correct installation, surfaces can be used in same settings as traditional asphalt and concrete	Can become clogged, reducing pass through rates if installed and maintained improperly.

Source: <http://www.bae.ncsu.edu/info/permeable-pavement/BMP_PermeablePavementFinal.doc>



*Pervious concrete parking lot at I-Lan park in Leawood.
Photo provided by The Concrete Promotional Group*

In fact, research at the University of New Hampshire found that many porous pavements actually need less salt because the melted water drains so much better.¹²

In 2007, for example, the City of Leawood installed permeable pavement over a section of the parking lot at I-Lan Park. The lot is adjacent to a stream, which during rain events, will, with the new surface, absorb excess runoff. Partly because of this location, City leaders decided that a pervious concrete lot was the City's best option. Joe C. Johnson, Director of Public Works explained that "the water trapped in the pervious parking lot is held until it evaporates into the atmosphere and/or seeps into the soil beneath the parking lot." He went on to add that "this indicates that the water and the pollutants are not being discharging into the channel, and the soil will act as a filter to clean the water so when it does drain into the channel, naturally, it will be free of pollutants."¹³ Today, the creek is better protected from runoff that may include oils, greases, and other toxic substances found on the parking lot. He added that "the concrete has performed well and looks pretty much the same as the day it was placed."¹⁴

Public Transportation

One Washington D.C. legend is a story of how the first map of the Interstate Highway System was drawn. It consisted of three East-West hand-drawn lines and three North-South lines sketched on a map by President Roosevelt.¹⁵ The actual interstate system came into being in the mid-1950s when Congress passed the 1956 Highway Act.¹⁶ Since then, millions of Americans have sought the open road and the independence which it brings. Yet, as the costs to build and maintain the miles and miles of highways continue to increase, many Americans are rethinking public transportation.

Industry experts expect demand for and funding of public transit to continue to grow. As an industry, ridership has outpaced both highway miles traveled and population. Between 1995 and 2008, the U.S. population and highway vehicle miles increased by 14 and 21%, respectively. During the same period, use of public transportation swelled by approximately 38%.¹⁷ Moreover, during the past 15 years, 17 new light rail, heritage light rail, and streetcar systems have become operational.¹⁸ In that same period, 71 light rail, heritage light rail, and streetcar systems have improved their operations and routes. The nation's public transit stock has also added 10 new commuter rail lines, 1 new heavy rail system, and 7 new busing organizations. Again, since 1995, 18 heavy rail systems, 9 commuter rail system extensions, and 7 bus ways have undergone significant expansions.¹⁹

Growth did not occur in a vacuum. Evidence suggests that public transit creates a broad array of indirect benefits for both the private user and the community. Robust public transportation systems generate economic growth opportunities for nearby

cities and regions. The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) suggests for every \$10 million of capital investment, approximately \$30 million of increased business sales is created. A similar ratio is realized when operating investments are made. Public transit also produces jobs. The APTA estimates that each billion dollars of federal investment creates over 47,000 jobs. These new jobs are in various sectors of the economy including construction and manufacturing, finance and insurance, retail, and wholesale trade.

Using public transportation also reduces household transportation expenses and the carbon footprints of private passenger vehicles. According to the APTA study, 18 cents of every household dollar is spent on transportation. Of that amount, nearly all of it is spent on vehicle purchase, fuel, and upkeep. These costs can be even higher in suburban areas. Each \$10 million investment will likely save consumers nearly \$15 million through reduced fuel and maintenance costs.²⁰ Finally, these systems reduce U.S. automobile travel by over 100 billion vehicle miles annually, which equates to 3.4% of the total vehicle miles traveled in 2007.²¹ They estimate that the total energy saved at 4.2 billion gallons of gasoline, the equivalent of 37 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions.²²

Public transportation systems are available in a variety of communities. In Salt Lake City Utah,²³ the city's public transportation system has saved citizens approximately 1.3 million hours of travel time and over \$70 million dollars of time and fuel costs. In Colorado Springs,²⁴ travelers reduced their travel time by 189,000 hours and saved nearly \$3.5 million dollars in fuel. In both cases, savings could be spent on other goods and services.²⁵

In Kansas, public transportation is available in large and small communities. In Lawrence, for example, the City and the University of Kansas cooperate on a city-wide busing system. Harvey County, with a county-wide population of 33,643, also operates a public transit system.²⁶

In Harvey County, the program consists of six buses and a minivan. Each is wheelchair accessible. The program offers demand and fixed routes to locations near and within Harvey County.²⁷ In Burrton, as in each community within the County, residents can schedule trips to shopping centers, recreational activities, and medical trips (five days a week) or use the fixed route option to get to their destination. Buses also travel to Wichita, Hutchinson, and Newton, Kansas. Rides are available to all residents of Harvey County who call and reserve a seat.²⁸

Lawrence operates a more traditional public busing system. In 2008, the City reported the following statistics for both buses and its T-Lift para-transit.

Table 2. Lawrence 2008 Transit Statistics ²⁹	
Routes	8
Vehicles	12 Fixed Route, 14 Para-transit, and 5 park and ride
Average Daily Users	Buses: 1,260; Paratransit Lift: 161
Miles Traveled	825,542
Hours Operation	65,480

Source: The Broader Connection between Public Transportation, Energy Conservation and Greenhouse Gas Reduction 14 Jan. 2010. <http://www.apta.com/>

Moreover, the City also promotes Google Transit, which is an online tool that allows users to plan trips using public transportation. In fact, Lawrence is one of the first communities in

Kansas to use the service. It is available here: <http://www.google.com/intl/en/landing/transit/#mdy>.

A site such as this is especially useful for communities wanting to promote public transportation as a viable option. Consider the following scenario: Bill is an education major at the University of Kansas who is completing his student teaching at Free State High School. He does not have access to a vehicle and cannot find a friend to take him. Walking is not very desirable because it is below freezing and the distance is several miles. In this hypothetical situation, he has very few options. Using Google Transit however, he found a way to his destination in less than a minute. The trip will cost one dollar each way.

Debates about these issues are never easy. They are often dominated by discussions of competing values, beliefs, and perspectives. The right 'answer' may not even exist. Policy paralysis however is not an option. These challenges demand that city and other civic leaders collaborate to formulate innovative and sometimes brand-new solutions.

 *Jonathan Fisk is a Research Associate with the League of Kansas Municipalities. He can be reached at jfisk@lkm.org or (785) 354-9565.*

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“A Child Shall Lead Them”

On February 3, 2010, city officials from around the State gathered in Topeka for the League’s annual City Hall Day. Governor Mark Parkinson addressed the audience with updates from the legislative session and helped League President, Mayor Carl Gerlach, present awards to deserving students from around the state.

The League has offered an essay contest to seventh-grade students for a number of years. This year, in conjunction with the League’s 100th Anniversary, we added an additional essay contest for high school students. The high school essay asked students to consider the world around them and determine what they would like to improve in their community and how they could achieve that change.

This year’s overall winner, Morgan Wills, is from Liberal and represented the southwest region of the state. Her essay, entitled “The Green Movement,” addressed a number of environmental issues with a particular focus on e-waste.

“E-waste” describes materials generated from discarded electronic devices, including computers, televisions, and mobile phones. The waste from electronic devices tends to be toxic and often requires special attention during the disposal process. In her essay, Ms. Wills noted:

Toxic chemicals from these products seep into the earth or are released into the atmosphere, negatively affecting the environment...The consequences of this are very harmful. Incineration of e-waste releases lead, cadmium, and mercury into the atmosphere. This can accumulate in our water, which is then passed to fish, and eventually back to you and me.

Ms. Wills concluded that by recycling e-waste in a responsible manner, it is possible to not only treat the environment with more care, but also develop an important after-market industry. The Bureau of Waste Management within the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) states that “[e]-waste contains many valuable, recoverable materials such as aluminum, copper, gold, silver, plastics, and ferrous metals. In order to conserve natural resources and the energy needed to produce new electronic equipment from virgin resources, electronic equipment can be refurbished, reused, and recycled instead of being landfilled.”

Waste Not, Want Not - The problem of e-waste is one that Kansas is already taking steps to address. Outside of Lyons, Kansas, Rice County operates the County landfill. For over a year, the County has also operated an e-waste recycling collection hub—one of eight in the state. The County originally learned about e-waste through a grant offering by KDHE. In 2007, the County applied for a grant as part of a public/private partnership to create an e-waste collection center. Just before launching, the private partner pulled out, but the County and KDHE determined the project was of such importance that it should still go forward. The project has turned into a very successful collaboration with counties, cities, and non-profit organizations.

When Rice County originally applied for the KDHE grant, it proposed working with seven counties. Since then Rice County has expanded its scope by joining with additional partners. The project now includes collaboration with a large portion of central and south-central Kansas using the umbrella of several counties, one city, and “Sunflower Resource, Conservation and Development.” A 17-county region is served by 11 trailers devoted to collecting and recycling e-waste. The other counties that are served by this program include Barton, Pawnee, Stafford, Pratt, Reno, Harvey, McPherson, Saline, Ellsworth, Comanche, Clark, Barber, Kiowa, Harper, Sumner, and Kingman.

Rice County offered 8 collection events in 2009 and collected 167 tons of e-waste. That is enough to fill 14 semi trailers with 7 ft. high pallets of computers, televisions, and cell phones. Rice County collects the materials, secures the waste on pallets with shrink-wrap, and then transports the e-waste to Asset LifeCycle in Topeka, the company that actually recycles the e-waste.

As the numbers suggest, the project has been an overwhelming success with a steady stream of collection. On any given day, there are 5 to 15 vehicles bringing waste to the collection facility. Under the KDHE grant, all e-waste recycling is free to individuals, government agencies, and educational institutions.

Though the program has been an incredible service to Rice County and the surrounding communities, the project is not yet sustainable. Currently, the County is highly reliant on KDHE’s grant, which expires in October. Despite the financial issues, Rice County hopes to continue its service.

As Ms. Wills and KDHE noted, there is financial potential in collecting components of e-waste. Unfortunately, the market is not yet strong enough to offset the collection expense. But, Rice County sees the value in e-waste collection. Jill Nichols, Rice County Coordinator and Economic Development Director, notes that while “you never make money in recycling, it is still saving taxpayer dollars because it cuts on solid waste transportation and disposal.” This benefit complements the environmental benefits to create a worthwhile government project.

Wisdom of Youth - In Ms. Wills’s conclusion, she notes that recycling e-waste may not provide instant gratification, but “we will receive instant gratification in knowing that we are doing something to better the environment and our community as well as secure a bright and safe future of the generations to come.” As technology becomes increasingly pervasive, it may not be too long until the materials gleaned from e-waste also provide a strong return. It is with these thoughts in mind that Rice County hopes to not only make a positive impact on Kansans today, but for many generations to come.

 *Nathan Eberline is the Intergovernmental Relations Associate for the League of Kansas Municipalities. He can be reached at neberline@lkm.org or (785) 354-9565.*



Classified Advertising

Chief of Police

The City of Fredonia, Kansas (pop.2,400) is accepting applications for Chief of Police. This position is appointed by the City Commission and supervised by the City Administrator. The Police Department is composed of five sworn officers and one secretary and has a budget of \$455,000. The Chief is responsible for planning, organizing, and directing the work of the Police Department. Bachelors Degree in Criminal Justice or a closely related field is required, plus at least seven years progressively responsible experience with three years as a Lieutenant or higher, and Kansas State Law Enforcement Certification. Salary range is \$36,300 to \$50,100 DOQ. Send cover letter, resume, salary history, and a list of 10 references to City Administrator, 100 North 15th Street, Fredonia, KS 66736, or fredoniacity@fredoniaks.org. Substance abuse screening and post offer physical required. First review begins on March 1, 2010.

City Administrator

The City of Medicine Lodge (pop. 1,917) located in South Central Kansas is seeking applicants for the position of City Administrator. This historic community, at the eastern edge of the Red Hills (Gypsum Hills), is the county seat and business hub for area farmers and ranchers. City services provided include police, fire, streets, and parks departments, and water, sewer, and solid waste utilities. The City has just completed installation of a pressurized raw water transmission line utilizing CDBG and EPA grants. The Waste Water Treatment Plant, completed in 2005, is state-of-the-art. In 2006, a new municipal swimming pool with water slide was opened to the public. The City is currently working on phase I of the Airport Enhancement program being funded 95% by the FAA.

The successful candidate will be responsible for management of a \$4 million budget; oversight of all city departments and personnel, and official representation of the City in contractual matters and various local clubs, boards, and committees. Must have experience and education equivalent to a bachelor's degree in public administration

and demonstrate knowledge of finance and budgeting, project development, grant writing and administration, zoning issues, personnel management, and public works activities. Computer skills as well as written and verbal communication skills are essential. Starting salary is commensurate with qualifications. Offers excellent benefit package.

Please submit resume, salary history, and references to City Administrator Search; City Clerk; 114 West First Ave.; Medicine Lodge, KS 67104. Open until filled.

City Administrator

The City of Quinter, KS is accepting resumes for the position of City Administrator. The position is appointed by the Mayor and City Council.

Quinter is a rural, family oriented community. We are home to a diverse and creative business community; excellent schools (academic and non-academic); hospital and a physicians group (5-board certified M.D.'s).

We are seeking a cooperative leader with excellent communication skills to join our outstanding, hardworking city staff and our community. Knowledge and experience in municipal government, budgeting, finance, community development, and planning is desired. An appropriate Bachelor or Masters degree preferred. An equivalent combination of experience and education will be considered. City residency will be required.

Send a confidential resume, with cover letter, and three work related references to: City of Quinter, c/o Mayor Tummons, P.O. Box 555, Quinter, KS 67752.

City Attorney/Public Officer

The City of Fairway, Kansas is seeking legal services for the positions of City Attorney and Public Officer. The positions are appointed by the Mayor with consent of the City Council. The City Attorney and Public Officer serve at the will of the Governing Body, and the positions are appointed in May of each year. Deadline for submission is March 8, 2010 at 1:00 p.m. Contact City Administrator/City Clerk

Kate Gunja at 913-262-0350 for more information or view the full RFPs online at www.fairwaykansas.org.

City Manager/Administrator

The City of St. Paul, NE (2,100 pop.) is creating the position of City Manager/Administrator to assist our Mayor/City Council form of government in the operation of our ever expanding and thriving city.

This person will be responsible for the management of all services of the city including electrical utilities, water, sewer, streets, parks and recreation, police, fire, and EMT. Responsibilities would also include the fiscal needs of the city – budget preparation and oversight, grant writing and management, personal issues, labor negotiations, long range planning, financial management, and all other areas related to the operation of a City of the Second Class.

Currently there are 18 full time employees that would require leadership and guidance to achieve the goals set by the Mayor and City Council.

Experience in a City/County government position is desired as well as a college degree in a discipline such as public administration, business administration, or a related field or an equivalent combination of education, training, and experience. Salary is commensurate with background and experience. All resumes and correspondence should be directed to Dan Nielsen, Mayor, 704 6th St., St. Paul, Ne., 68873. Phone 308-754-4222. E-mail spvet@qwestoffice.net. The web site for the City of St. Paul is stpaulnebraska.com. Application deadline is March 15, 2010.

City Manager

The City of Blanchard, OK (6,600 pop.) is receiving resumes for the position of City Manager. Compensation is competitive and will be based on experience and qualifications. This is a high profile position in the organization and community. The person selected for this position will exemplify the highest moral and ethical values. A minimum of three years of City Manager, Assistant City Manager experience is required; a degree in public administration, business administration or other related

discipline is desired. A position profile has been completed and can be reviewed at www.chellconsulting.com. To apply please send a cover letter, detailed résumé and five work related references to Chell Consulting, LLC, P.O. Box 721447, Norman, OK 73072-1447 or e-mail to info@chellconsulting.com. The position will be open until filled. The City of Blanchard is an EOE.

City Superintendent

The City of Burlingame is accepting applications for City Superintendent. This position is for a working supervisor who will be responsible to manage, plan, direct, and oversee all aspects of public works including the maintenance and operations of the natural gas, electrical, water, and wastewater distribution systems, and for facility and road maintenance. This position requires strong management, communication, and public relations skills. The ideal candidate will have experience in city utility operations, along with natural gas, water, and wastewater certification and a valid CDL. Any equivalent combination of education and experience will be considered. Salary DOQ. Send an application to the City Clerk at 101 E. Santa Fe Avenue, Burlingame, Kansas 66413. Applications are available by calling 785-654-2414. Open until filled.

Communications (911) Director

Barton County, Kansas, accepting applications for Communications (911) Director until position filled. Directs County-wide emergency communications (911) system, 13-person staff manning 911 system on 24-hour basis. Prefer two years college education or equivalent experience and five years supervisory experience with Communications\911 Center. Thorough knowledge of law enforcement, fire and other emergency services as well as computer systems, budgeting, and personnel supervision needed. Salary \$35,000-\$45,000. Residency, valid Kansas driver's license, passing drug screen and physical capacity testing required. Application and job description - Barton County Administrator's Office, 1400 Main, Room 107, Great Bend, Kansas, 67530. Applications available at <http://www.bartoncounty.org/admin/employment.htm>. (620) 793-1800 or toll free 1-877-419-7171. EOE.

Director of Rural Operations

The Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners is seeking applications

for a Director of Rural Operations. The D.R.O. duties include but are not limited to supervision of the Road and Bridge, Solid Waste, and Noxious Weed Departments, and will also act as the County Road Superintendent. The D.R.O. will be expected to plan, organize, implement and supervise activities related to county roads, solid waste, noxious weed, and animal control.

Preferred Qualifications: Direct relevant education and minimum of 5 years experience in related field. Knowledge of road construction and maintenance, solid waste operations, and noxious weed/prairie dog control and eradication. Ability to read and interpret blueprints. Ability to effectively communicate orally and in writing. Should be able to perform and/or manage multiple tasks, projects, able to effectively delegate. Should be efficient, a self-starter, and possess good work habits and leadership skills.

Necessary Special Qualifications: The D.R.O. must be able to obtain a valid Kansas CDL License. The D.R.O. is required to be on-call. D.R.O. must be able to obtain all necessary permits and licenses for chemical application, wildlife control, landfill operations, and fulfill all statutory and regulatory compliance for County operations under D.R.O.'s supervision.

Residency: Hamilton County requires all County employees to be residents of Hamilton County, KS.

Applications may be picked up at the County Clerk's office at the Hamilton County Courthouse, 219 N. Main Street, Syracuse, KS 67878 or by telephoning the Clerk's office at 620-384-5629. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

Hamilton County is an equal opportunity employer, provides excellent benefits and salary.

Human Resources Director

St. Charles, MO (65,000 pop.) is a progressive City with a rich history nestled along the Missouri River. With over 400 full-time employees, St. Charles is looking for the skills and experience necessary to step into a Director's role in Human Resources Management. Requirements include a Bachelor's Degree in HR, Public Administration or a degree relating to the fields of HR. A Master's Degree is strongly desired. Candidates will have at least seven years experience in HR Management and three years of labor relations experience. Municipal government experience and SPHR desired. The City offers a competitive salary and generous benefits to include a fully

paid defined benefit pension plan, deferred compensation plan with match, medical insurance, dental, prescription insurance, life insurance, vacation/sick, leave paid parking and more.

Interested applicants should forward a resume or application with salary history to:

The City of St. Charles, Human Resources Department, 200 North Second Street, St. Charles, MO 63301. Fax 636-940-4606. e-mail HR@stcharlescitemo.gov. Additional information and applications can be found on the careers tab of our website www.stcharlescitemo.gov. No phone calls please.

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Street Superintendent

The City of Salina, KS seeks a dynamic individual to serve as the Street Superintendent. Duties include planning, organizing and directing 35 employees in performing street maintenance & traffic control programs along with submitting budget recommendations, maintaining records, compiling reports, and coordinating after-hours response. Education: high school diploma or G.E.D. Experience: five (5) years of progressively responsible street maintenance, construction, or related field with three (3) years in supervisor role. Requirements: residency of 40 minute response time. Position pay range: \$44,179-68,474 per year, starting range \$44,179-49,480. For more information or for Veterans Preference guidelines go to www.salina-ks.gov and click on Employment link, or contact the Human Resources Dept. at 785-309-5710. We Value a Commitment to Ethics, Customer Service, and Excellence. EOE.

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Moler's Musings

by Don Moler

An Old Friend



The Moler family said goodbye to an old friend last week. The friend was a 1997 Infiniti J30 four-door sedan. It was a good looking machine in what was described by the manufacturer as “aspen white pearl glow metallic with saddle leather interior.” Basically, it had white metallic paint and tan leather on a real good looking body. I purchased the car over 5 ½ years ago for my then 15½ year old son Seth. It was Seth’s

first car, and he loved it. He drove it throughout his high school years and beyond. Amazingly enough, it ran like a top, and I have nothing but good things to say about it.

In the five and half years since we got this machine, Seth had changed from a big boy just getting started in high school to a handsome young man with a family. The car ran many, many miles in varying conditions and never left him on the side of the road once. Amazingly, he was never involved in an accident of his own making. I am knocking on wood as I say this as I never like to declare victory and spike the ball.

The one time the car was damaged in an accident involved a rather large deer that wandered out onto a dark road one evening a couple of years ago. The car was slightly damaged, to the tune of about \$1,500, and the deer received superficial injuries.

So Seth drove this car until it had 150,000 miles on it. Then, all of a sudden, it started having some real issues. The first sign of trouble was when one of his rather new tires decided to walk off the rim while he was driving it. Damage was minimal and Seth safely navigated the machine to the side of the road. Within a couple of hours, he had mounted his spare, taken it to a tire store, and had the tire replaced. A couple of weeks after that, the right rear caliper literally blew apart upon hard braking, and that led to a replacement of most of the brake parts on the four wheels of the car. This created an expense which approximated the entire value of the car.

At this point, I determined that the machine was starting to show its age mechanically, and that I was no longer comfortable having my fine young son, and his family, riding around in it anymore. So, as doting parents, Judy and I determined that we would spring for another vehicle for our son’s family so that we could have some level of certainty that they would be in a machine that would hopefully get them where they needed to go in reasonable safety.

To this end last week, we purchased for Seth a 2004 Infiniti FX35 SUV. It is a great machine which has about 93,000 miles on it. If the last Infiniti was any indication, it should last Seth and his family for a number of years. We picked it up at a used car lot, and I could see in Seth’s face that he had become ambivalent about the

changing of the guard as to his primary car. Despite the fact that the old 1997 Infiniti J30 had become tired and worn after many years of good service, it was like an old friend to him. It was his first car, and one that served him very well. While he was excited about new adventures in his new Infiniti, there is never completely a substitute for your first car or for a vehicle of any kind which you have grown to love and in which many good experiences have transpired over the years. Many wonderful memories were associated with that old white car, and now we were saying goodbye.

But that’s the way it goes. Change becomes the norm and you can only hold on to some things for a certain period of time. Automobiles are one of those things unless they are some sort of special collector item. The reality is that machinery of all kinds wears out, and after a period of time, it is time to turn loose of it and to get something newer, safer, and more serviceable. That is exactly what we did with the old white Infiniti.

I think transition in personal life, professional life, and in government are all challenging. They first require the ability and the knowledge to know when to change, and not to wait until you are forced to change. The changes are also challenging because there is inevitable expense involved. It was not lost on me, as the check-writer in this case, that we paid almost exactly twice as much for the second vehicle as we did for the first vehicle five and half years ago. Whatever the case, times change, costs increase, and transition remains difficult. Now typically, if you have made a good choice as to how best to transition, you will find that the transition will pay off in the long run and that you will look back from some point in the future and recognize that you made a good choice to transition to something new.

The situation we do not want to find ourselves in as governmental leaders is one where transition is forced upon us by events outside of our control or over which we have no ability to impact. It is much better to be in charge of the transition, to plan it in advance, and to see it through to its fruition, than it is to wait until there are no options, and are forced to take whatever transition is offered given a limited set of monetary and political options over which one has no control. The point is simply that planning foresight, and the willingness to make a transition when necessary, are important governance factors that cannot be overstated. While it is often comforting to stay with what we know, we must always be willing to embrace new things when the time is right. As we cleaned out the old car for the last time, Seth looked at me with a sad face upon the realization that the old car was leaving us forever. I told him, as I have told him many times before: “C’est la vie.”



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