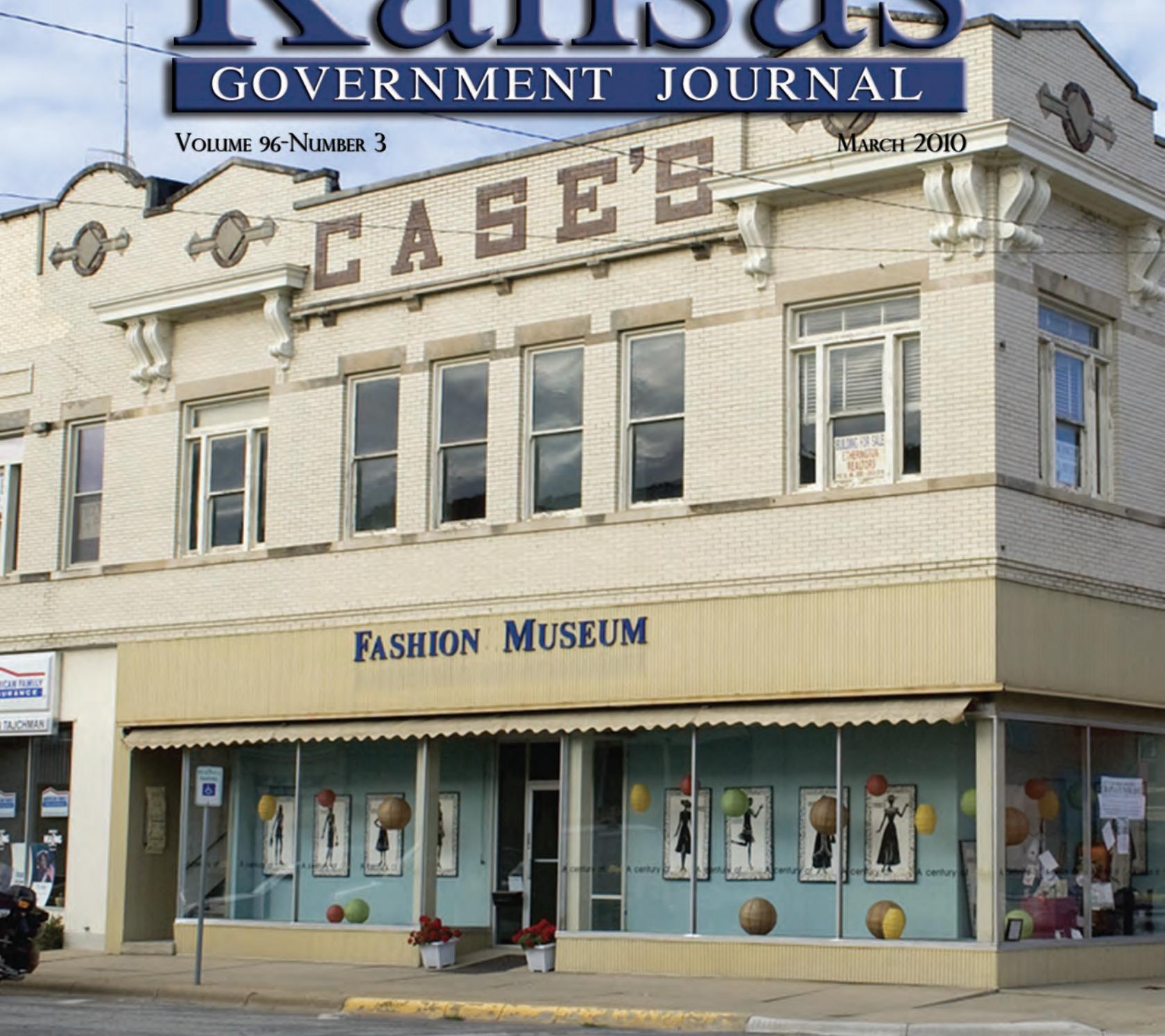


# Kansas

GOVERNMENT JOURNAL

VOLUME 96-NUMBER 3

MARCH 2010



## Inside:

Graycare: The Retirement Boom and Senior Housing

Abilene Downtown Historic District

Kansas Memory: Preserving Our Past with Technology of Today

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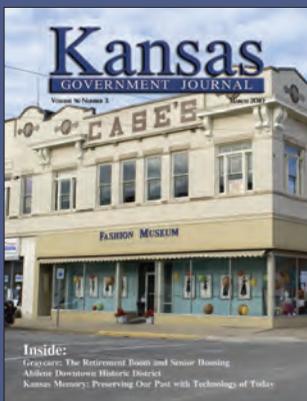


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*About the Cover:*  
The Case building at 212 N. Broadway in Abilene lies within the Town's Historic District Boundary and is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places. See related article beginning on page 79.

# Kansas

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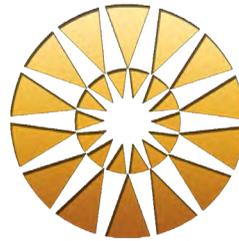
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## Obituaries

**Delores Anna Louise Mueller**, 91, passed away Saturday, March 20, 2010. She was the long-time assistant of John Stutz, the longest serving Executive Director of the League of Kansas Municipalities.

**Charles R. Hern**, 73, of Barnes, passed away Monday, March 15, 2010. After retiring from the Marine Corp in 1974, Hern continued his public service. He was a Washington County Commissioner and a Director on the Barnes Community Development Corporation.

**William A. Bell**, 89, of Topeka, died Tuesday, March 9, 2010. After serving in World War II, he returned home and was elected to two terms as Crawford County Treasurer. In 1959, he became the First Deputy State Treasurer.

**Rick Harman**, 81, passed away on February 23, 2010. In 1968, Harman was selected as the Republican candidate for Kansas Governor. He also served on the U.S. Olympic Committee in 1974, Kansas City Rotary No. 13, the Kansas Board of Regents, and as a host for the 1985 International Convention in Kansas City.

**Richard Thomas** passed away on March 7, 2010, at his home. Thomas was born in Pratt County, on July 23, 1930. He was awarded a Masters in Public Administration at the University of Kansas, which began a 37-year career as a public servant.

He was a City Manager in six different states (Nebraska, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, Montana, and California). In addition, he was an active member of each state's City Management Association as well as the International City and County Management Association.



# 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](http://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 already under way 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. LKM will hold a Governing Body Meeting on October 10 and KMIT will hold an Annual Meeting on October 11 at the conference.

### **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.

# Graycare: The Retirement Boom and Senior Housing

by Jonathan Fisk

Views of age and the aging process reflect many opinions and sentiments. To some, age implies a disposition, whether it is wise or stodgy. To others, it represents physical decline. And although age truisms can provide levity and perspective, the aging of America's population presents a tremendous challenge for the promulgators of public policy. It is a responsibility they cannot perform without understanding two fundamental questions. First, at what capacity will older Americans be able to live independently? Secondly, can the current healthcare infrastructure accommodate the rising demand and shifting expectations? This scope of this challenge is exacerbated by the design of the healthcare system, which is still geared towards treating acute illnesses rather than providing long-term care.<sup>1</sup>

The population of both the United States and Kansas is aging. This change is creating a shifting dynamic between demographics and economic development. Growth requires a certain demographic balance.<sup>2</sup> However, in many areas of America, especially in rural communities, this is not the case.<sup>3</sup> Jason Henderson and Maria Akers, at the Kansas City Federal Reserve, suggest that an imbalance will limit economic growth, especially in job recruitment and retention. For example, in counties with larger concentrations of retirement-age citizens, the income growth for non-farm jobs was weaker between 2000 and 2007 than in "younger" counties.<sup>4</sup> As such, it is critical that city leaders understand the demographic profiles of their communities.<sup>5</sup>

Americans have been "graying" since the 1950s. In 1950, slightly more than 8% of Americans were retirees (age 65 and older); 50 years later, over 12% were eligible to retire. Forty years from now, the Census Bureau estimates that retirees will comprise nearly 21% of the population.<sup>6</sup> In actual numbers, 12 and 35 million seniors were living in the United States in 1950 and 2000, respectively. By 2050, the Census estimates that over 87 million Americans will be age 65 or older.<sup>7</sup> In Kansas, the Census



predicts a similar trend in aging.<sup>8</sup> As shown in Tables I and II below, by 2030, the state will have likely gained approximately 250,000 new residents, which represents an increase of 9%. At the same time, Kansas will gain 236,000 retirees, an increase of 67%.<sup>9</sup>

Within a few years, 77 million baby boomers will become eligible for retirement benefits.<sup>10</sup> In 10 years, nearly 1 out of 5 Americans will be older than 65.<sup>11</sup> The impact associated with the impending retirement boom, however, is already apparent in many rural communities. In 2008, for example, town counties had retirement age populations of 17.6%.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, in rural counties that depend on farming, retirement age residents comprised nearly 19% of the population.<sup>13</sup>

Table I. Kansas Population Projections for Years 2000-2030

Change in Total Population (Actual Number)	251,666
Change in Total Population (Percent)	9.4%
Change in Age 65 and older (Actual Number)	236,862
Change in Age 65 and older (Percent)	66.5%

Source: <http://www.census.gov/population/projections/PressTab4.xls>

Table II. Kansas Projected Percent of Population Age 65 and Older: 2000, 2010, and 2030

2000 Percent	13.3
2000 Rank	17
2010 Percent	13.4
2010 Rank	28
2030 Percent	20.2
2030 Rank	28

Source: <http://www.census.gov/population/projections/PressTab3.xls>

Table III. Types of Senior Housing

Model	Typical Resident	Examples	Level of Care Required	Activity Level of Resident
Active Adult Communities	Baby Boomers <sup>22</sup>	Condos, Co-Ops, Single Family-both rental and ownership	Low: Many-Clubhouses, general outside maintenance, etc.	High
Independent Living Facilities	Baby Boomers, Silent Generation <sup>23</sup>	Apartments, multi-unit facilities	Medium: Housekeeping Provided, transportation, meals	Medium
Assisted Living Facilities	Silent Generation, GI Generation <sup>24</sup>	Apartments with personalized support systems in place	Medium-High: Medical support needed, but not requiring intensive nursing home care	Medium-Low
Skilled Nursing Facilities	GI Generation	Nursing Homes	High: Hospital Level Care	Low

Source: Lynn, David, and Tim Wang. "The U.S. senior housing opportunity: investment strategies." *Real Estate Issues* 33.2 (2008): 33+. Expanded Academic ASAP. Web. 4 Feb. 2010.

## Opportunities

It is true that the graying of America will present challenges to policymakers. Yet, it will also create growth opportunities for pro-active communities and developers. The workforce of the aerospace industry exemplifies the challenges, but also the opportunities of the retirement boom. In 2008, a quarter of aerospace workers were eligible to retire. The average age for both production workers and engineers is over 53. Clearly, in the near-future, the industry will lose institutional knowledge and experience, and a city may lose jobs. However, with aggressive recruiting and pro-active community planning, a host-city of this industry could successfully recruit new aerospace professionals and even new firms.<sup>14</sup>

The loss of older workers in one industry may be beneficial to another. Many current and future retirees are still productive and motivated to work. In fact, many employers and small business owners find that seniors are generally more experienced, are more reliable, and require less training than their younger counterparts. Moreover, they willingly accept a variety of schedules and responsibilities.<sup>15</sup>

In Wichita and Sedgwick County, for example, a public-private partnership provides several benefits for seniors looking to re-enter the workforce. The Senior Employment Program assists clients in resume preparation, job searching, and computer training.<sup>16</sup> The program also utilizes a job club which allows seniors to meet weekly to discuss job prospects and to exchange information. Finally, the program sponsors an annual job fair. In 2009, the program found paid employment for 70% of enrollees.<sup>17</sup> It should be noted that this program is funded through a combination of state, county, non-profit, and private resources.<sup>18</sup>

Another potential growth area for many communities is the development of senior housing. Again, this growth is related to demographics. Population projections demonstrate that between 2010 and 2020, the fastest growing segment of the population will be individuals from ages 65-74.<sup>19</sup> As they age, many of these retirees will seek housing, neighborhoods, recreation, and communities that can accommodate their slower pace.<sup>20</sup> The senior housing market typically consists of four different classifications as shown in Table III below.<sup>21</sup>



In some cases, these housing units may be developed as retirement communities. This housing option offers residents a variety of care and lifestyle choices.<sup>25</sup> In other words, within the same development, there may be active adult condos or homes, assisted living facilities, or even a skilled nursing facility. It should be noted that each housing option can involve a myriad of regulatory and bureaucratic hurdles and risks.<sup>26</sup> Other home healthcare arrangements can include the use of home health nurses and/or attendants.<sup>27</sup>

In other instances, retirees will attempt to stay in their homes or move to other homes in their neighborhood. According to a recent AARP survey, certain home features are important to many older Americans. Approximately 90% of respondents said that having a bedroom and/or a full bathroom on the main floor was necessary.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, nearly 8 out of 10 reported that covered parking or a garage is an important amenity in any residence they purchase. Finally, respondents also stated they believe that non-slip floors, grab bars in the bathroom, a bathing stool, and a personal alert system are also important.<sup>29</sup>

Several recent projects in Kansas demonstrate the development opportunities associated with senior housing. In Osawatomie, city officials, Governor Mark Parkinson, representatives of the U. S. Department of Treasury, and the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation celebrated the opening of a new 24 unit senior housing project. According to U.S. Treasury Deputy Secretary Neal Wolin, “this initiative will help spur construction and development, create much needed jobs, and increase the availability of affordable housing for families.”<sup>30</sup> In Wamego, another senior development has also generated construction and other related jobs. The Wamego development is valued at over \$5 million and will include 32 one and two-bedroom apartments.<sup>31</sup>

In Merriam, the City is providing additional services and activities intended for its senior-aged residents. The Parks and

Recreation Department offers a variety of services and programming including: transportation assistance, exercise classes and games, investment strategies, group meals and home delivery, and even video games. For example, at the Community Center, participating seniors meet twice a week to play video games on a Wii system. Each participant pays 25¢ per day to use the equipment.<sup>32</sup>

In Nemaha County, policymakers have also utilized the retirement boom. The County, which has been designated by the U.S. Dairy Administration as a retirement destination, is the only county in Kansas to receive the designation.<sup>33</sup> The County offers a number of retiree-friendly characteristics. It features a robust health and elder care system, which includes several modes of senior housing, advanced hospital and rehabilitation facilities, and also senior activities/outreach services.<sup>34</sup>

Casey Stengel once said, “The trick is growing up without growing old.”<sup>35</sup> Although, he does not share the trick, it is likely a combination of the right services and facilities. Importantly, it is the realization that aging, itself, is not the problem. Problems occur when there is a failure to adjust and adapt to new realities. In Kansas, recall that the population of retirees will likely grow by over 200,000 by 2030. And, according to the 2007 Census, many of them will enjoy higher incomes as shown in Table IV below.

They will retire somewhere and spend their money somewhere. The Kansas communities that master this trick will benefit.

Table IV. Incomes for Americans Age 55 and Older

Income	Number (in 1000s)	Percentage of Population
\$50,000 to \$74,999	6,617	15.0
\$75,000 to \$99,999	3,899	8.9
\$100,000 and over	7,249	16.5
TOTAL		40.4%

Source: [http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/age/2008\\_older\\_table20.xls](http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/age/2008_older_table20.xls)

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

<sup>1</sup>Maddox, George L. "Aging and well-being. (Future View)." *The Futurist* Mar.-Apr. 1991: 59. Expanded Academic ASAP. Web. 18 Feb. 2010.

<sup>2</sup>Maddox, George L. "Aging and well-being. (Future View)."

<sup>3</sup>Henderson, Jason, and Maria Akers. "Coming home to rural America: demographic shifts in the Tenth District." *Economic Review* [Kansas City] 94.3 (2009): 99+. Expanded Academic ASAP. Web. 4 Feb. 2010.

<sup>4</sup>Henderson, Jason, and Maria Akers. "Coming home to rural America: demographic shifts in the Tenth District."

<sup>5</sup>Henderson, Jason, and Maria Akers. "Coming home to rural America: demographic shifts in the Tenth District."

<sup>6</sup>US. Library of Congress. Domestic Social Policy Division. *Health Care Spending and the Aging of the Population*. 13 Mar. 2007. 16 Feb. 2010 <[http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RS22619\\_20070313.pdf](http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RS22619_20070313.pdf)>.

<sup>7</sup>US. Library of Congress.<[http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RS22619\\_20070313.pdf](http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RS22619_20070313.pdf)>.

<sup>8</sup>US. Library of Congress.<[http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RS22619\\_20070313.pdf](http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RS22619_20070313.pdf)>.

<sup>9</sup>Hall, Michele. *Aging population a concern for state's future*. 22 Feb. 2010. <http://www.k-state.edu/media/webzine/aging/population.html>.

<sup>10</sup>Challenger, John A. "Working in the future: how today's trends are shaping tomorrow's jobs; Globalization, aging, and trends in technology and society will create opportunities for eco-relations managers, retirement consultants, and outsourcing coordinators." *The Futurist* Nov.-Dec. 2005: 47+. Expanded Academic ASAP. Web. 4 Feb. 2010.

<sup>11</sup>Nguyen, Bao Q. "Tomorrow's workforce: the needs for immigrant workers and strategies to retain them." *Public Personnel Management* 37.2 (2008): 175+. Expanded Academic ASAP. Web. 4 Feb. 2010.

<sup>12</sup>Rural counties lacking a town of at least 10,000 people

<sup>13</sup>Henderson, Jason, and Maria Akers. "Coming home to rural America: demographic shifts in the Tenth District."

<sup>14</sup>Nguyen, Bao Q at "Tomorrow's workforce: the needs for immigrant workers and strategies to retain them."

<sup>15</sup>Peterson, Robin T. "Small retailer employment of older workers: an assessment." *Journal of Business Strategies* 24.2 (2007): 123+. General OneFile. Web. 18 Feb. 2010.

<sup>16</sup>Senior Services of Wichita. Senior Employment 1 Mar. 2010 <[http://www.seniorservicesofwichita.org/senior\\_employment\\_wichita.html](http://www.seniorservicesofwichita.org/senior_employment_wichita.html)>.

<sup>17</sup>510 of its 720 clients

<sup>18</sup>[http://www.seniorservicesofwichita.org/senior\\_employment\\_wichita.html](http://www.seniorservicesofwichita.org/senior_employment_wichita.html)

<sup>19</sup>Brownell, Ginanne, and Carla Power. "The Golden Age; The number of old people in the world is soaring. Soon they will change everything from politics to tax structures to the width of doorways." *Newsweek International* 6 Dec. 2004: 42. Expanded Academic ASAP. Web. 18 Feb. 2010.

<sup>20</sup>Lynn, David, and Tim Wang. "The U.S. senior housing opportunity: investment strategies." *Real Estate Issues* 33.2 (2008): 33+. Expanded Academic ASAP. Web. 4 Feb. 2010.

<sup>21</sup>Dependent on health and preference

<sup>22</sup>Baby Boomers (age 44-62)

<sup>23</sup>Silent Generation (age 63-83)

<sup>24</sup>GI Generation (age 80-plus)

<sup>25</sup>Lynn, David, and Tim Wang. at "The U.S. senior housing opportunity: investment strategies."

<sup>26</sup>Lynn, David, and Tim Wang. At "The U.S. senior housing opportunity: investment strategies."

<sup>27</sup>Billig, Miriam. "Supportive communities, an optimum arrangement for the older population?" *Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare* 31.3 (2004): 131+. General OneFile. Web. 18 Feb. 2010.

<sup>28</sup>Mathew Greenwald & Associates. American Association of Retired Persons. "These Four Walls...Americans 45+ Talk About Home and Community." 2003. 19 Feb. 2009. <[http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/il/four\\_walls.pdf](http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/il/four_walls.pdf)>.

<sup>29</sup>Mathew Greenwald & Associates. "These Four Walls...Americans 45+ Talk About Home and Community."

<sup>30</sup>Kansas. Kansas Housing Resources Corporation. Recovery Act Dollars Provide Much Needed Affordable Housing Kansas Seniors. 30 July 2009. 22 Feb. 2010 <<http://www.kshousingcorp.org>>.

<sup>31</sup>Kansas Housing Resources Corporation. <<http://www.kshousingcorp.org/display/files/News%20Releases/wamegogb111008.doc>>.

<sup>32</sup>Kansas Houses Resources Corporation. <http://www.merriam.org/park/Senior/wij.htm>

<sup>33</sup>Kansas State University. Kansas Population Center. Eds. László J. Kulcsár and Benjamin C. Bolender "Aging as an opportunity: Retirement migration patterns and community development in Nemaha County, KS." 22 Feb. 2010 <<http://www.ksu.edu/sasw/kpc/Research/CoA%20Nemaha%20report%20final.pdf>>.

<sup>34</sup><http://www.ksu.edu/sasw/kpc/Research/CoA%20Nemaha%20report%20final.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup>[http://thinkexist.com/quotation/the\\_trick\\_is\\_growing\\_up\\_without\\_growing\\_old/154399.html](http://thinkexist.com/quotation/the_trick_is_growing_up_without_growing_old/154399.html)

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# Mainstreet News

## Communities Receive Grants

The Kansas Department of Commerce announced that several Kansas communities are receiving federal grants totaling about \$7 million. The competitive grants are primarily for water and sewer projects. The communities are: Belleville, Burlingame,

Elgin, Hill City, Little River, Marion, Matfield Green, Muscotah, Oakley, Olpe, Park, Parker, Scranton, Smolan, and Woodston. Three counties are also receiving the grants. Those counties are: Osage, Lyon, and Bourbon.

## Wichita Wins Regional Clean Air Award

Located in the center of a revitalizing area of downtown Wichita, the INTRUST Bank Arena is a modern, first-class sports and entertainment venue with a 15,000 seat arena (for basketball), and 20 executive and 2 party suites designed to provide maximum “fan experience” for all guests. When the arena was under construction, Sedgwick County determined that it was important to reduce waste and to create an energy efficient building while conserving water. The decision was consistent with Sedgwick County’s policy and commitment to environmental sustainability.

The contract with the arena contractors required them to recycle as much material as possible during the construction. Sedgwick County Environmental Resources worked with the contractor and local recyclers to locate recycling bins on site. Sedgwick County also worked with the City of Wichita and the Kansas Department

of Health and Environment to address environmental concerns at this site. These collaborative efforts lead to a fairly quick and efficient cleanup in a timely manner.

Sedgwick County incorporated energy efficient and conservation designs in the arena. One-inch insulated glass with special glazing was installed. Sun-shading devices were installed to increase solar gain. All of the mechanical systems are high-efficiency. The roof and walls have extra insulation. Outside air is used to cool the building during transition stages. All the lighting fixtures are low energy bulbs including fluorescent, and LED. Rooms are set up with sensors so that lights turn off automatically when no one is present. Water conservation is also addressed with low water usage fixtures throughout the facility.

## New Golf Course Green Conserves Water

Golf courses require a lot of chemicals and water to maintain. However, one golf course in Andover is doing its part to reduce its environmental impact. After sustaining severe damage to hole five, Cedar Pines, a municipal nine-hole golf course, decided to install a new and eco-friendly green for the 2010 golf season.

The golf course has contracted with VersaSport of Kansas to install an artificial surface on the green. According to the golf course manager, Bob Bauer, the new surface is a great investment.

He said that, “we [the golf course] won’t use any water on it—no chemicals either...it won’t have to be aerated twice a year like a normal green and there will be minimal labor cost to keep it in perfect condition.”

Additional benefits include reduced equipment costs and a more even putting surface. Specifically, Bauer noted “golf courses that use these greens would be able to purchase about \$30,000 less in equipment since no specialty mowers would be needed.”

## Hutchinson Makes Recycling Easier

Residential recycling in Hutchinson is going single-stream. In other words, residents can place all of their recyclables together in a special recycling cart.

The cart is free for residents, but must be requested. Once the recycling cart is delivered, residents can begin the program. The City can collect: aluminum and steel, (tin)beverage and food cans;

plastic beverage, food and soap containers (recycling symbols #1 thru #7); glass containers (all colors of food & beverage jars and bottles); newspapers (including inserts), magazines, junk mail, office paper, books, phone books, catalogs, cardboard, and pasteboard.

## Olathe Adds E-Government Service

A new feature has been recently added to the online account to help Olathe residents remember which day to roll their recycling cart to the curb. Because the City picks up recyclables every other

week, residents would often get confused on their pick up week. However, now they can register online and sign up for an email reminder the day before their recycling is to be picked up.

## Police Department Creates You Tube Channel

Wichita City police officials are reaching the public through a new forum. Recently, the department announced that it will create a YouTube channel and use it for recruitment, programming, and requesting public assistance during criminal investigations. For example, the Department is seeking the public’s help by placing a video from an early December burglary.

“We’re not the first in the country to set up a channel,” Lt. Troy Livingston said. “But... in Kansas, in many ways, we’re leading the pack.”



## BlueCHIP® Awards Promote a Healthy Kansas

by Doug Vance

Lake Shawnee provides seven miles of concrete trails for biking, walking, and jogging. Photo provided by Kansas Recreation & Parks Association.

The members of the Kansas Recreation & Parks Association (KRPA)—who are dedicated to the promotion of healthy lifestyles in Kansas communities, and the state’s largest health insurer, have announced a new business partnership aimed at creating a healthier state by improving the quality of life for Kansans. Citing a common desire to make Kansas a healthy, happy place to live and work, KRPA and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas (BCBSKS) have forged a new partnership, resulting in the creation of a community awards program. BlueCHIP® is a community health improvement program created to recognize and reward Kansas communities who encourage and support healthy lifestyles through programs, initiatives, policies, and/or community-wide events.

“We are thrilled to be working alongside KRPA to recognize and reward Kansas communities through BlueCHIP,” said Andrew C. Corbin, BCBSKS president/CEO. “At Blue Cross, we take great pride in supporting initiatives and creating programs aimed at improving the health of our members, as well as all Kansans. Making healthy lifestyle choices requires personal responsibility, but when individuals come together as a community to work on a common goal, we know that success can be widespread.”

The creation of the BlueCHIP awards program was announced in Topeka during the annual KRPA conference, attended by more than 350 members, including park and recreation professionals, and private citizens from across the state.

“The opportunity to partner with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas in the development of this award is significant to all our members,” said Doug Vance, KRPA Executive Director. “We are excited to join forces and create a meaningful award that will

recognize important efforts throughout various sized communities to enhance healthy lifestyles and provide an incentive for communities to address their efforts in quality of life programs.”

“Park and recreation agencies play a leading role in providing programs and facilities which influence healthy lifestyles and our members are looking forward to using the BlueCHIP awards program as a way to increase that effort,” he said.

Through the partnership, BCBSKS will annually fund \$7,500 in cash awards with three winning BlueCHIP communities each receiving \$2,500. A selection committee will pick one winner each from the following three categories: small (up to 20,000 residents), medium (20,000-49,999), and large (50,000 and greater).

The BlueCHIP selection committee will be comprised of representatives from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Kansas Coordinated School Health, the League of Kansas Municipalities, KRPA, and BCBSKS.

“On their applications, communities should keep ‘CHIP’ in mind and tell the selection committee how their programs or initiatives support ‘C,’ clean air; ‘H,’ healthy food choices; ‘I,’ initiatives to curb obesity; and, ‘P,’ physical activity,” Vance said.

Applications for the 2010 awards program are available on the KRPA website, [www.krpa.org](http://www.krpa.org). The deadline to submit applications is Nov. 1, 2010. The three inaugural winners of BlueCHIP awards will be notified in early January 2011 and publicly announced later that month during the 2011 KRPA conference in Wichita.

☀️ *Doug Vance is the Executive Director for Kansas Recreation & Parks Association. He can be reached at (785) 691-7708 or [doug@KRPA.org](mailto:doug@KRPA.org).*

*View of south side of the courthouse square, looking west circa 1908. Photo provided by the Kansas Historical Society.*



# Belleville: A Most Beautiful Town

by Sarah Arbuthnut

“No town in the state more beautiful” boasted an 1899 local newspaper article of Belleville, gateway to the homestead country of the central Great Plains, where visitors today can still enjoy brick streets, friendly faces, and Rockwellian hometown charm.

Situated in Republic County, part of the northern tier of Kansas counties along the Nebraska border, another writer observed in 1890 that “the streets are wide and straight and well shaded. . . The business blocks are substantially built, of brick and native stone, the frame structures of pioneer days having disappeared . . . With its abundant supply of water, with its superior railroad facilities, and situated as it is in the center of a rich agricultural and stock-growing region, Belleville offers the best advantage to persons seeking desirable business locations and places for residence of any city in Kansas.” This sense of civic pride is a sentiment that continues to this day.

Belleville became an official town on September 25, 1869, with the organization of the Belleville Townsite Company. Located in Republic County (named for the Republican River, which runs through the county), Belleville was named the county seat in 1870. That same year, the Belleville Townsite Company contracted the digging of a well to supply water for the new town and the building of a “town house” to serve a variety of community needs. This log town house had a door at one end, a window at the other, and stood on the open prairie at what is today the northeast corner of 19th and M Streets. Belleville’s first post office, first store, first church, and first school all found homes simultaneously in the town house.

By 1872 the Town had grown enough to warrant the building of its first courthouse in the center of the public square. This modest, two-story wood-frame building was erected on the north side of the square and was quickly surrounded by a number of new businesses. The Belleville Townsite Company dissolved in 1874 and four years later Belleville was incorporated as a city of the third class. A decade later, in 1888, Belleville had become a city of the second class with more than 2,000 residents.

The entire state of Kansas boomed economically in the 1880s and Belleville was no exception. County agriculture flourished and was celebrated every fall with fairs or festivals, a tradition continued to this day. The first railroad connection arrived in Belleville on November 29, 1884, in the form of a Union Pacific Railroad passenger train. Though the Union Pacific was the first, the Rock Island Railroad would prove to be the most influential in the town’s history, as Belleville became an important division point for two Rock Island branches running stock and grain to markets in Kansas City, Omaha, and Chicago.

In response to repeated fires, more substantial brick and stone replaced wood frames in the construction of downtown businesses. Approximately 23 of the buildings in the historic preservation survey area were constructed prior to 1900, though all have storefronts altered in the 20th Century. Additionally, another 12 buildings were constructed in the period 1900 to 1919, with 33 more built between 1920 and 1945.

The commercial architecture of the Belleville downtown survey area is representative of Kansas architecture during the periods of construction. Buildings constructed in the late 19th Century represent the late Victorian Italianate and Romanesque styles. Most of the buildings constructed in the early 20th Century are examples of the Commercial style, but there are a few examples of the Colonial Revival and Classical Revival styles, as well. Additionally, downtown Belleville boasts two striking exceptions to traditional Kansas architecture: the Blair Theater, with an elaborate Spanish Revival façade, is situated on the south side of the square. And the Republic County Courthouse, a rare example of Art Deco style applied to a Kansas courthouse, sits in the center of the square and central business district.

1902 M Street opened as the People's National Bank in 1910. Photo provided by the Kansas Historical Society.



The Blair Theater, “one of the finest in northern Kansas and southern Nebraska,” was built by Sam H. and Katie Blair in 1928. The Blairs bought an existing moving picture theater on the south side of the square in 1920 and operated it until the lease expired in 1928. They then purchased and gutted three commercial buildings on the south side of the square and constructed a “modern” movie theater, ornamented in an elaborate Spanish style and wired for “talkies.” The new Blair Theater opened December 24, 1928, with the first talking picture premiering four months later.

After the passage of many years and several owners, the Blair Theater closed its doors in the mid-1990s. In 2000, however, the Blair Center for the Arts, a non-profit organization dedicated to revitalizing and renovating the theater, began its work and to date has spent more than \$275,000 refurbishing this landmark theater. The Blair Theater reopened in late 2008, boasting one of the state’s few 3-D screens and presenting first-run films, as well as hosting a variety of cultural and educational events.

The original Republic County Courthouse burned and was rebuilt in 1885. That structure succumbed to fire in 1938. The Public Works Administration (PWA), a New Deal economic recovery program of the Great Depression, quickly approved a grant for construction of a replacement building. Mann & Company, an architectural firm in Hutchinson, designed the structure. The new Republic County Courthouse was dedicated in late 1939. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2002 for its association with the PWA in Kansas and for its rare use of Art Deco style applied to a county courthouse.

Extensive development of the Interstate highway system after 1956 weakened the economic position of railroads and accelerated a population movement of Kansans from farms to cities. In the post World War II period, a major change in the Belleville commercial district has been the relocation of services, automobile services, and implement dealers to commercial corridors approximately seven blocks west along Interstate 81 and 10 blocks south along U.S. 36.

Nevertheless, downtown Belleville retains a good number of specialty stores, banks, and offices. Downtown Belleville is still an active business district anchored by public services including the city hall, post office, library, and Republic County Courthouse. Situated at the intersection of two major highways and within easy driving distance of dozens of communities in both Kansas and Nebraska, Belleville is in a prime position to attract visitors and new residents to this most beautiful of towns.

☀️ *Sarah Arbuthnot is a freelance writer for the Kansas Historical Society. This article was reprinted with permission from the Kansas Preservation, Autumn 2009 issue.*

## Belleville Downtown Survey by Caitlin Meives

In addition to documenting exceptional architecture such as the Blair Theater and the Republic County Courthouse, the Belleville Downtown Survey documented 91 other buildings along M Street, 17th Street, and in the blocks immediately surrounding the courthouse square. While historic resource surveys often lead to the nomination of a historic district to the National Register of Historic Places, a nomination does not necessarily have to follow a survey. In this case, based on the findings from the survey, the Kansas State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) determined that downtown Belleville may have the potential for a National Register historic district but that the district could be strengthened by making some relatively simple changes to historic building façades.

Belleville’s example highlights the many other advantages to conducting surveys. The historical research performed by preservation consultant Dale E. Nimz provided the community with a context for the development of its commercial core and the evolution of its building stock. Belleville’s Main Street program and the larger community can use this information for marketing and promotional purposes, perhaps increasing heritage tourism efforts as well as local pride. Examples of such uses could include interpretive signage or walking tours. In addition, this information can serve as the basis for a National Register nomination if the city and property owners wish to pursue a historic district in the future.

The City of Belleville can also use the survey information, historic context, and preservation recommendations provided by Nimz and the SHPO to incorporate preservation activities into its planning efforts or even as a basis for a citywide preservation plan.

Perhaps most importantly, the survey information and images gathered on each property are now available and readily accessible to the public on the SHPO’s online survey database, the Kansas Historic Resources Inventory (KHRI) at [kshs.org/khri](http://kshs.org/khri). Visitors to the site can access the 93 Belleville survey records, which include historical and architectural information, color digital images, and site plans. Property owners who make changes to their buildings can update the survey records to reflect those changes if they register with KHRI. They can also upload new digital photos or add new information to the survey form.

As a result of the historic resources survey, the City of Belleville, its residents, and the Belleville Main Street program now have an inventory of the core downtown buildings, a historic context statement, and a public education tool. Armed with knowledge of its past and preservation recommendations, the Belleville community can now look toward the future while still promoting and preserving its past.

☀️ *Caitlin Meives is the Survey Coordinator for the Kansas Historical Society. She can be reached at [cmeives@kshs.org](mailto:cmeives@kshs.org) or (785)272-8681 Ext. 257.*

Blair Theater, 1312 19th Street. Photo provided by the Kansas Historical Society.





## Statewide Smoking Ban and the Implications for Cities

Cities have been asking numerous questions about the new statewide smoking ban that passed the Legislature in a somewhat surprising procedural move and was signed by the Governor on March 12, 2010. HB 2221, originally a child care bill, ended up as the vehicle for the statewide smoking ban, having been amended by the Senate. The bill had been sitting in a conference committee since the end of the 2009 legislative session, but no conference committee meetings had been scheduled. Since last year, the proponents for a statewide smoking ban had been actively working toward getting a bill and the Governor had come out in strong support of a smoking ban. After a one day hearing in the House Health and Human Services Committee on a much weaker bill, support began building for HB 2221. Instead of conferencing the bill, the House made a motion to concur in the Senate amendments and HB 2221 was passed on a vote of 68-54.

Because this bill was originally passed by the Senate during the 2009 Legislative Session, it contains meaningless effective dates for various requirements in the bill. For example, the smoking infractions in the bill purport to become effective on January 2, 2010. The bill itself, however, does not become effective until publication in the statute book, which is July 1, 2010. Thus, the provisions of the bill cannot become effective until that date and the January 2, 2010 language is of no effect.

The following is a summary of the bill, which contains no preemption language. This means that cities may have smoking ban ordinances that are parallel to or more restrictive than the state law. Because the law is uniform, cities may not exempt themselves from the Act and must enforce it in the same manner as any other state statute. Section 1 of the bill just adds the smoking ban provisions to the list of crimes in K.S.A. 21-3105. Section 2 contains the definitions that provide the parameters for the smoking ban. Section 3 sets forth the places where smoking is prohibited. These prohibitions include, public places, and public meetings; taxicabs and limousines; common areas of buildings including lobbies, restrooms, and hallways; common areas of motels and hotels and at least 80% of sleeping rooms; and any place of employment. Place of employment is defined as any "enclosed area under the control of a public or private employer." Those places would include private offices, stairwells, employee cafeterias, hallways, meeting rooms, and work rooms among others.

In subsection (b) of Section 3, it states that employers must adopt and maintain a written smoking policy prohibiting smoking, which applies to all areas of the place of employment. Then, all current employees must be informed within one week of the adoption of the policy and new employees should be informed when hired. In addition, if requested, the employer must give the employee a copy of the policy. While this seems to be redundant, since the bill already prohibits smoking in places of employment, the manner in which the bill was passed probably explains this anomaly. Cities, therefore, should adopt a written smoking policies for their facilities. The clear language would absolutely prohibit smoking at all city enclosed facilities, including public workshops,

community buildings, city halls, law enforcement offices, the fire department, and any other facility that has employees present. Cities must enforce these provisions.

Besides the smoking prohibitions, there are exceptions to the ban. For example, a portion of an adult care home or a long-term care unit of a medical care facility may be designated as a smoking area. Those areas must be fully enclosed and ventilated to be covered. In addition, the long-term care unit smoking area is restricted to residents and their guests. Outdoor areas beyond building access points are not required to be non-smoking. Access point means "the area within a ten foot radius outside of any doorway, open window or building air intake." Cities with smoking bans will need to check any allowed outdoor smoking area for compliance. Other exceptions are tobacco shops, gaming floors in casinos, private homes except when used as a day care facility (Section 7 of the bill contains the day care requirements), hotel and motel rooms totaling not more than 20% of the business, and private clubs in designated areas where minors are prohibited. Private club in this bill means an outdoor recreational facility not open to the general public and to which individuals pay substantial dues, perhaps a country club golf course. Another interesting exception is that class A and B clubs licensed prior to January 1, 2009 may notify the secretary of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment within 90 days of the effective date of the Act that they wish to continue to allow smoking. The date has been the subject of debate and potential change in a conference committee on an alcohol bill, so cities should watch for the LKM legislative update for information about whether the date changes.

Proprietors of businesses and those in charge of public facilities must post the premises with the international no smoking symbol, even though the bill prohibits smoking except in a few areas. There are individual penalties for those who smoke in violation of the law. But, there is also a penalty provision for those who own, manage, operate, or otherwise control the use of any public place or other place where smoking is prohibited who have knowledge that smoking is occurring and acquiesce to the smoking under the totality of the circumstances. Thus, cities need to be vigilant in making sure buildings in which smoking has historically been allowed are now smoke free. It is not a stretch to assume that there will be some grumbling and opposition to the new law, but cities need to be firm in their enforcement.

So, the ultimate effect of the law is that cities must at the least enforce the prohibitions in HB 2221. Cities may have ordinances that parallel or are more restrictive than the state law and may enforce those provisions in municipal court. The penalties in the bill are criminal penalties, so cities' penalties must be criminal, as opposed to an administrative process to address violations. Cities should discuss with their city attorneys the best way to become compliant with the new statewide smoking ban.

 Sandy Jacquot is Director of Law/General Counsel for the League of Kansas Municipalities. She can be reached at [jjacquot@lkm.org](mailto:jjacquot@lkm.org) or (785) 354-9565.



*Aerial view of Abilene, 1930-1940s. Photo provided by the Kansas Historical Society.*

# Abilene Downtown Historic District

by James D. Holland, Sally Schwenk, and Kerry Davis

What do you think of when you hear the name “Abilene, Kansas?” The answer for most non-Kansans would probably be the Chisholm Trail and the rough and tumble Texas cattle drivers that spawned legendary saloons (The Pearl), hotels (Drovers’ Cottage), and frontier law enforcement (“Wild Bill” Hickok). Kansans are more likely to think of the boyhood home of President Dwight D. Eisenhower—the small Kansas community that shaped an international military hero and the 34th President of the United States. People near Abilene may invoke visions of a downtown with destination dining, high quality specialty shops, and retained historical architecture.

There is no right answer or single overriding theme to Abilene’s history; all contribute to the diversity of travelers visiting this Dickinson County community. Today, Abilene’s historic downtown reflects its distinct historical eras and development patterns. An inventory and National Register nomination of the Abilene Downtown Historic District recently documented this history. The project was partially funded by a 2008 Historic Preservation Fund Grant administered through the Kansas Historical Society.

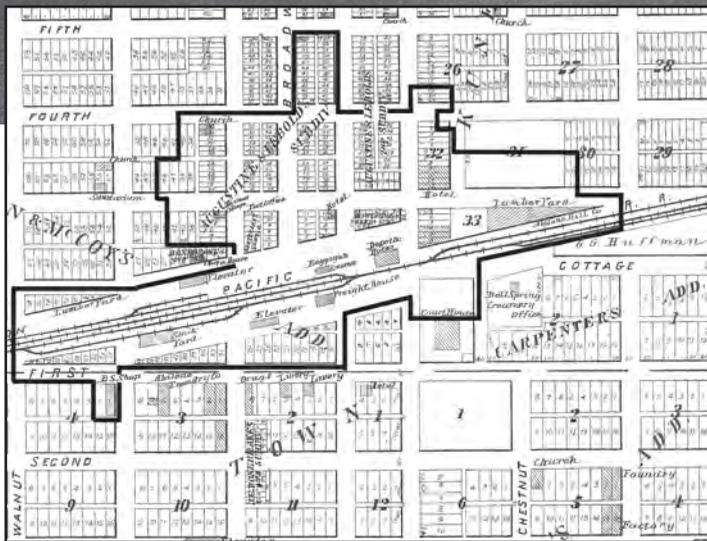
Abilene has not always touted or respected its rich history. Efforts in the 1950s and 1960s to present the appearance of an up-to-date city with historical traditions occurred as a result of the national interest in President Eisenhower’s hometown. The City organized to make the most of its enviable position by telling the Eisenhower story through new attractions and modernization.

These activities, in turn, stimulated a group to capitalize on the Texas cattle drive years through recreation at Old Abilene Town.

Despite these efforts, by the early 1980s many of the grand historic homes and downtown commercial buildings were underused and in general disrepair, reflecting regional economics, apathy, and disinvestments. However, by the middle of the decade, a strong preservation ethic emerged. Brothers Terry and Jerry Tietjens brought dreams of preserving the Seelye Mansion as a tour home. Merle Vahsholtz began preservation work on the Lebold Mansion and Lynda Scheele became a strong advocate for preservation and founded the Abilene Heritage Homes Association. By the end of the 20th Century, Abilene’s preservation movement developed into an institutionalized function of the community. In 1997, the City Commission adopted a preservation ordinance and appointed a heritage commission to administer the ordinance and



Case building, 212 N. Broadway, Abilene; plat map of downtown Abilene. (Dark line denotes Historic District boundary). Photos provided by the Kansas Historical Society.



be an advocacy group for preservation. On June 30, 1997, Abilene became a Certified Local Government (CLG) as part of a national and state program providing training and funding opportunities. Currently there are 19 properties, 3 districts, and 1 National Historic Landmark listed in the National Register of Historic Places within the city of Abilene.

These efforts were not able to save all of Abilene’s significant resources. Two properties with associations to Eisenhower were demolished. In 1999 the Plaza Theater building in downtown Abilene collapsed due to neglect and in 1998 the Belle Springs Creamery, which was listed in the National Register of Historic Places, was demolished before it collapsed. These and other losses scarred downtown Abilene and are a reminder that the preservation of historic buildings is necessary to save tangible reminders of a community’s history and promote a unique sense of place — a vibrant, viable downtown.

An early goal of establishing an Abilene Downtown National Register Historic District remained elusive until the heritage commission proposed the project and the City Commission agreed to provide matching funds for the grant. While the City Commission expressed support for preservation, securing municipal funding hinged on two issues: property owner support and the economic benefits of establishing the district. Although proponents did not

contact every property owner in the study area individually to discuss the project, more than a majority of the study area owners endorsed a statement of support. Signatures collected from 75% of the property owners showed that 81% of the signers were in favor of the project. Several public workshops on the federal and state historic preservation tax credit programs presented by the State Historic Preservation Office’s staff served as a primer for both property owners and city officials. When historic tax credit incentives are combined with the local Neighborhood Revitalization Property Tax Rebate program, the feasibility and benefits of investing to save significant aging structures and make reuse of these buildings becomes apparent.

**Commercial Significance**

The origin of Abilene’s central business district can be traced back to the westward expansion associated with the evolution of the transcontinental railroad after the Civil War. The first permanent settler, Timothy Hersey, settled near a natural low-water crossing on the banks of Mud Creek about a mile from where it entered the Smoky Hill River. During the years when Kansas was a territory, frequent travel on the Smoky Hill and Military Road brought many travelers to the Hersey doorstep. The rugged pioneer soon saw the benefit of developing a town site and selling off lots to entrepreneurs keen on making their fortunes in the West.

One such fortune seeker was Joseph G. McCoy, who sought a location to join the Texas Longhorn cattle trails with eastern rail connections. He established his site in Abilene and in 1867, the first longhorn cattle arrived in Abilene to be sold to buyers from eastern markets. A community quickly formed on Hersey’s original town plat. Within a few short years, however, the cattle trade moved farther west and many of the town’s frame buildings were dismantled and moved by train to the next railhead. A “new” Abilene grew up near the original town, north of the railroad tracks.

Located in Grant Township in Dickinson County, Abilene’s role in the 1860s as the county seat and as the railhead for the Chisholm

*Perring Building, 118 N.W. 2nd Street, Abilene;  
Photos provided by the Kansas Historical Society.*



Trail grew in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries to that of a major agricultural market center in the state. The Abilene Downtown Historic District reflects the role of Abilene as an important commercial center during an era in which America became a major economic power as the result of the expanding railroad system and the enormous growth of its population. This period created national markets for the agricultural products of the region. Abilene's railroad freight depot and yards received what farmers harvested and stockmen raised in the surrounding area—livestock, grain, fruits—passed them on or processed them into products people needed locally, or for an additional fee, shipped them to competitive markets outside the region. At the same time, the city's business concerns received manufactured and processed goods from the East, stored them (for a fee), and reallocated them (for a fee) to markets in the region and farther west. Today, the District serves as a tangible reminder of the importance of organized public and private entrepreneurship that enabled Abilene to compete with a regional network of villages, towns, and cities, and to attract and dominate investment. The individuality and evolution of the retail stores, offices, banks, and hotels; the courthouse and city hall; the special use institutional, manufacturing, and processing facilities; warehouses and wholesale houses; and railroad freight and passenger-related buildings and structures gave Abilene's downtown and the community itself its unique collective image.

The 45-acre Abilene Downtown Historic District encompasses the city's largest intact grouping of the historic commercial, institutional, industrial, and railroad-related resources and comprises 123 resources constructed circa 1867 to circa 1960 that include 75 contributing buildings, 4 contributing structures, 9 National Register listed buildings, and 35 non-contributing buildings. Where once they shared the same distinctive characteristics with many buildings of their time; today many of these resources are important as lone survivors of their period of construction, functional, and/or architectural property type. Today as in the past, the District reflects the dense urban configuration typical of late 19th and early 20th Century commercial areas in rural

railroad market centers. Here as in other Midwestern market centers, the arrangement of the railroad grade dictated the location and arrangement of industrial buildings, commercial business houses, and residential neighborhoods, visually defining Abilene's built environment.

### **Architectural Significance**

The Abilene Downtown Historic District also derives its significance from being a contiguous and unified entity, composed of a wide variety of architectural and functional resources. These resources represent the spectrum of building technology, design, stylistic features, form, and function that define the history of Abilene's downtown commercial center.

Dating from the 1860s through the mid-20th Century, most of the buildings found in the Abilene Downtown Historic District are simple load-bearing brick or limestone commercial buildings of one to three stories. The traditional building materials are red or buff brick and limestone. Approximately one-third of these buildings exhibit popular architectural styles from the period of their construction including Italianate, Gothic Revival, Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals, Classical Revival, Art Deco, Mission Revival, and Modern Movement styles. Other contributing resources include simple vernacular designs with various, and sometimes subtle, stylistic references, which retain architectural features and physical forms that reflect the then—popular design trends.

The District also includes four significant structures—three-grain elevators and the historic railroad alignment. The industrial and railroad freight buildings and structures are at the edge of the downtown retail area adjacent to and within the railroad right-of-way. Their design and materials are function-specific. Their builders utilized both traditional and new construction techniques and materials in a variety of combinations to create efficient, fireproof, functional space. Identified by their plan, size, and materials—brick, stone, tile, corrugated metal, and/or concrete construction—the vast majority of these buildings do not reference any architectural styles. Their period of construction, however, played an important role in the choice of plan, materials, and methods of construction.

Abilene's central business district is a unique assemblage of buildings and structures built by early pioneering bankers, land agents, and entrepreneurs who staked their future on the rapidly growing "new" town north of the Union Pacific rail lines. Joining these efforts in the 20th Century were town leaders, business owners,

*300 N. Broadway, Abilene; Photos provided  
by the Kansas Historical Society.*



204 N. Cedar, Abilene; Photos provided by the Kansas Historical Society.



and professionals influenced by the City Beautiful Movement who added early 20th Century Revival-style civic buildings and businesses to the mixture of 19th Century Victorian era architecture. The most dramatic change to the downtown came in the 1950s with the construction of a sleek Modern Movement-style courthouse erected on the site of the historic county courthouse. Throughout both centuries, towering grain elevators and mills dominated and delineated the commercial center's boundaries. Despite two world wars and the Great Depression, Abilene's singular business district remained downtown, centered in the historical grid of streets anchored by the Union Pacific rail lines on the south and the city hall, library, and fire department complex on the north. To recognize nomination of Abilene's Downtown Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places is a crucial step in protecting one of the state's most storied railroad towns for future generations.

☀️ *Contributing to this article are James D. Holland, AICP, Community Development Director of the Abilene Heritage Commission; he can be reached at [citydevelop@abilenecityhall.com](mailto:citydevelop@abilenecityhall.com) and Sally Schwenk and Kerry Davis, preservation professionals at Sally Schwenk Associates, Inc. They can be reached at [sschwenk@ssapreservation.com](mailto:sschwenk@ssapreservation.com). This article was reprinted with permission from the Kansas Preservation, Summer 2009 issue.*



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## Insurance Commissioner Wins National Award

Kansas Insurance Commissioner Sandy Praeger is a 2010 recipient of the American Medical Association's (AMA) top government service award for an elected statewide official. This is the second time she has won an AMA service award. She received a Dr. Nathan Davis Award at a dinner in Washington, D.C., as part of the AMA's National Advocacy Conference.

Commissioner Praeger is one of nine honorees chosen this year to receive the Davis award for outstanding government service. The award, named for the founding father of the AMA, recognizes elected and career officials in federal, state, or municipal service whose outstanding contributions have promoted the art and science of medicine and the betterment of public health. "Insurance consumers in Kansas and all across America are fortunate to have

Sandy Praeger looking out for their interests," said Jane Cline, president of the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) and West Virginia insurance commissioner.

"Sandy's passion for championing parity in the health care system distinguishes her impressive career," said Roger Sevigny, NAIC Past President and New Hampshire Insurance Commissioner.

"She has worked diligently to ensure consumers have access to affordable and quality care," said Sevigny.

"She is an influential national voice on issues such as insurance market reform and the increasing health costs facing small businesses," said Rebecca J. Patchin, M.D., AMA board chairwoman.

## Bio-Science Authority Brings Researchers to Kansas

As part of its strategy to accelerate economic growth in the areas of bioscience strength, the Kansas Bioscience Authority (KBA) moved forward with more than \$4.4 million in new investments to advance the state's national leadership in animal health, human health, and bioenergy.

The investments include: \$2.49 million in support from the KBA over five years for Dr. David Volkin, who joined the University of Kansas as the school's second KBA eminent scholar. The University will also receive \$1.8 million over five years to support the work of KU's third KBA eminent scholar, Dr. Rakesh Srivastava.

A research team led by Kansas State University's Dr. Jishu Shi was also approved for \$500,000 from the KBA's Collaborative Biosecurity Research Initiative. Shi's research is helping to develop novel vaccines to combat a serious viral disease threatening swine and swine production globally. The researchers will focus on the host immune response that protects some pigs from multiple strains of the disease, with particular focus on a super virulent Asian strain of the virus.

## Kansas Insurance Department Receives Settlement Check

A \$417,000 settlement check received by the Kansas Insurance Department will be deposited into the state's general fund. The settlement is from Nationwide Life Insurance Co. and Nationwide Life and Annuity Insurance Co. for alleged unsuitable sales of variable annuities to clients of a Kansas-based financial advisory business, Waddell & Reed Inc.

Five states will receive a total of \$2.1 million from the Nationwide Life settlement: Kansas, California, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin. In agreeing to the settlement, Nationwide Life does not

admit to the state regulators' allegations that it violated any law or regulation. "The multi-state settlement is the latest example of state insurance regulators working to ensure market fairness and the suitability of annuity sales," said Sandy Praeger, Commissioner of Insurance. "Settlement money such as this is regularly returned to the state general fund."

The Insurance Department, a fee-funded agency, contributed nearly \$120 million to the State general fund last year from premium fees and taxes paid by insurance companies.

## Stimulus Used for Energy Efficient Appliances

Kansas officials announced that the State plans to use \$2.6 million in stimulus dollars to assist low-income families purchase new and more energy-efficient appliances. The Kansas Housing Resources Corporation (KHRC) expects to issue 4,800 rebate vouchers. The KHRC stated that the rebates will range from \$200 to \$800.

Low income families can use the rebates toward purchases of driers, washing machines, freezers, refrigerators, dishwashers, and

window air conditioners. However, the program will not cover furnaces or central air systems.

Spokeswoman Catherine Couch says the agency will initially evaluate rebates for approximately 1,500 Kansans.

## Highway Patrol Utilizes Social Networking

In following a recent trend amongst law enforcement agencies, the Kansas Highway Patrol has begun using two social networking sites, Twitter and Blogspot. The effort is an attempt to reach more Kansans with public safety information.

The Patrol is beginning to post information relative to public safety and patrol activities. The Twitter page is available at [www.twitter.com/kshighwaypatrol](http://www.twitter.com/kshighwaypatrol).

[twitter.com/kshighwaypatrol](http://www.twitter.com/kshighwaypatrol). They plan to use Twitter for more periodic updates related to highway safety, road conditions, and road closures. The other site, [www.kshighwaypatrol.blogspot.com](http://www.kshighwaypatrol.blogspot.com), will be used for more detailed messages on a similar set of topics.



## Kansas Memory: Preserving Our Past with Technology of Today

by Lynne Hewes

When I was a little girl, one of my favorite winter quiet-time activities was looking through our family collection of old photographs: stark black and whites of my grandparents standing in front of a house I barely recognized as the one I would come to know several remodeling jobs later; a hand-tinted photo of my father as a little boy, wearing denim overalls and posing in an alfalfa field; faded Kodak color pictures of my sister and me in our Easter dresses, squinting into the sun.

I knew right where to find all those treasures of our family's history: piled in the bottom right drawer of a desk in the corner of our living room.

Later, as I grew older, and my grandparents passed away, our photo collection grew and expanded into more desk drawers. Once, I even discovered two never-before-seen old shoeboxes on a top shelf of our bedroom closet. Those boxes were filled with black and white pictures of women with tight-corseted dresses, men with white hair and handlebar mustaches, and unsmiling children wearing short pants and vests.

One of these days I will go through them and write names down for you, my mother said.

She never got around to it, and while I have some of those old photos, framed today, most are now long-gone—many pictures of relatives I never knew and whose names I will never learn.

Obviously, my mother was not a scrapbooker, but there were those who were, even in those days. I know that because I have run across fine old family albums in antique shops; those albums no longer the property of the people whose photos are inside, but are instead lost and gathering dust on the bottom shelf in Booth #97, waiting for someone, anyone, to drop in and purchase someone else's family history.

### Top Photos from L to R:

1. 1920 or Previous, City of Onaga looking down Main Street (now called Leonard Street).
2. 1911, City of Stockton looking down Main Street.
3. 1925, City of Roeland Park, The Roesland School.
4. 1905-1910, City of Cimmaron, people walking on Main Street. *Photo provided by [kansasmemory.org](http://kansasmemory.org), Kansas Historical Society.*
5. City of Dresden looking down Main Street.
6. 1908, City of Peabody
7. 1921, City of Arma, Sheridan Coal Co.

*All other photos provided by LKM.*

What are the chances of those pieces of history finding an appreciative home, much less finding their way to a place where others can learn from them, can stare into the eyes of their ancestors and find that connection we've lost as modern families who have moved farther and farther away from each other?

Now there is a suitable home for such historical relics, and that home does not involve taking photos away from their original owners.

The Kansas State Historical Society has created an Internet site called Kansas Memory so that people can share historical resources, including photographs, diaries, letters, and oral histories. The site, a division of the Kansas Historical Society, needs only to borrow these items long enough to scan them and turn that scan into digital images fit for the Internet.

Recently, the Gray County Historical Society funded a *Kansas Memory* scanning party by offering to pay room and board for staff members of the Historical Society to travel to western Kansas

for a couple of days to copy individuals' photo collections at the Cimarron City Library.

The operation took only a few minutes and resulted in a variety of additions to *Kansas Memory*, including the 10,000th photo to be placed in the collection (View Item #10,000 on the Kansas Memory home page, [www.kansasmemory.org](http://www.kansasmemory.org)). As a consequence of that operation, Gray County now has as many photos on file available for access as other, much more populated counties in the state.

Some photographs were even scanned through the glass of their frames. The operation doesn't take much time, and original copies are catalogued and returned to their owners. But in the process of sharing, family histories are preserved, and people all over the world are given access to historical information that might otherwise have been lost forever.

Doris Phelps, retired Cimarron City Librarian, was one of the first to show up for the scanning party.

"I took 31 photos," Phelps said. "There were photos of the Soule Canal in Ingalls, a picture of the house south of Cimarron where I grew up, and the old Phelps house in Cimarron with barns around it, sheets hanging on a clothesline, and the old telephone office on the corner northwest from the house. We even had an old V-mail letter from World War II."

Phelps stresses that the entire process was surprisingly easy.

"It didn't take long at all, really," she said. "And the people there were very organized and professional. I stayed and waited and answered questions about who was in each picture, while one person typed and another scanned the photos. It all felt very organized and safe for my documents."

Another Cimarron resident who gathered boxes of photos to have scanned was Sara McFarland.

"I took a lot of photos," McFarland said. "My uncle was Frank Hungate, a photographer here during the early part of the 20th Century. We had boxes of photos he had taken: family, school, churches, towns. We had photos not just of Cimarron, but also of Ensign, Montezuma, and Ingalls. There was even a box labeled 'Gray County, Unidentified.' I don't even know where those came from."

McFarland's mother had tried to organize those photos many years ago, putting them into separate, labeled folders.

"I know she was interested in preserving those photos and in getting people to make copies of their old photos for the Historical Society," McFarland said.

McFarland has high hopes for the future of those photos she took to the Kansas Memory scanning party.

"It's just a wonderful treasure trove of knowledge," she said.

"Most small towns and small counties don't have real history books. Now, if someone has time and wants to write such a book, there's information available and easy to access."

In addition to providing information for others, McFarland stresses that loaning old photos and other documents to be scanned and placed on the Internet might also prove beneficial to the people who own those documents.

"Just think," she said, if you've got your old photos in the basement and they were damaged or destroyed in a flood or another disaster, then you could get copies of your documents back because they would be preserved by Kansas Memory."

The existence of Kansas Memory has started me wondering: Does the state of Oklahoma, where I grew up, offer its version of Kansas Memory? It's too late now for me to preserve most of my family photos, and I deeply regret that.

However, it's not too late for Kansas residents to spend a bit of quiet time exploring the history of communities and families others have shared at [www.kansasmemory.org](http://www.kansasmemory.org). And just maybe, as they browse, those keepers of family memorabilia will decide to participate in this amazing project by sharing their own family documents.

See *History at Your Fingertips* on the next page for more information regarding [www.kansasmemory.org](http://www.kansasmemory.org).



Top photo: Taken between 1915-1920; Automobiles on Main Street in Cimarron. Left Photo: Taken between 1905-1910; A family is picnicking while on a camping trip in Gray County. Photos provided by [Kansasmemory.org](http://Kansasmemory.org), Kansas Historical Society.

# History at Your Fingertips

Special research on often obscure topics, topics not available to mainstream audiences, once necessitated long hours in dusty museums, scrolling through microfilm in dimly lit library backrooms, or wandering around in tall weeds surrounding untended forgotten cemeteries.

Now that we live in the age of the Internet, however, our quest for details can be answered with a click of a computer mouse in the comfort of our own homes. No more do we have to plan our research around a library's "open" hours, or wait in line for the next available microfiche reader, or travel all the way to Topeka to find information.

The Kansas Historical Society's website, Kansas Memory, preserves our own histories and help us learn about the histories of our neighbors. The site itself is attractive and user-friendly. The material it contains is impressive.

Kansas Memory even features a portion created especially for teachers, with materials linked to Kansas curriculum standards and benchmarks. Kansas history teachers are now able to help their students use primary sources to learn about almost everything Kansas, from the Indian Removal Act, to early settlements, to Exodusters after the Civil War, to photos and stories about life during the Dust Bowl, to the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. And more.

Kansas Memory continues to be a work in progress—in fact, it will ALWAYS be a work in progress, as new items will be added often.

For more information, visit [www.kansasmemory.org](http://www.kansasmemory.org), or contact Director of Acquisitions-Library & Archives, Curator of Photographs, Nancy Sherbert, at (785) 272-8681, ext. 303, or [nsherbert@kshs.org](mailto:nsherbert@kshs.org), or visit the Kansas Historical Society at 6525 SW 6th Ave., Topeka, KS 66615.

☀️ *Lynne Hewes is a Community Editor for The Legend Magazine and may be contacted at (620) 225-0020. This article was reprinted with permission from The Legend Magazine.*

*Photo top right: Taken May, 1919; View of the 35th Division Band and soldiers, celebrating the return of the 35th Division after World War I, parading through the Kansas State Capitol grounds. Photo bottom: Taken 1919; View of an unidentified band marching in another World War I "Welcome Home" parade. Photograph was taken in the first block of East Douglas in Wichita. Photos provided by [Kansasmemory.org](http://Kansasmemory.org), Kansas Historical Society.*



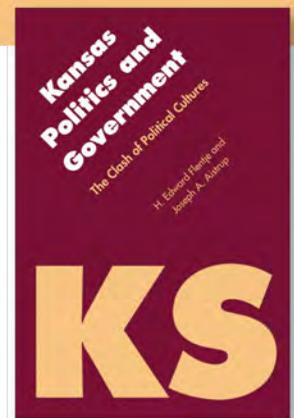
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## Over Spring Break

The first place I want to mention this time is Goessel (pop. 512); my visit there actually took place several weeks before Spring Break. Goessel is located a few miles due north of North Newton (which is directly-adjacent to and due north of... Newton), right off K-15, just into Marion County. I had some business to discuss with Goessel City Clerk, Anita Goertzen... Municipal Court Clerk, Paula Flaming also sat in on the chat. Afterwards, Anita showed me around the civic center, city hall, and library building, which is 20 years old and still looks like new. On the wall in the community room hung the original ordinance of incorporation from 1952, along with a picture from Goessel's very first governing body meeting—held in a car repair shop (as I recall)... cool. I was pleased to see that Goessel still has its own hometown food store, which, like most stores have done to survive these days, has added a deli (along with a space for the lunch crowd), and catering. Keith's Grocery also has its own special sausage, which, of course, just forced me to leave some of my money behind on my way out of town... good stuff, too.

Then, over the mid-March school break, Grandma and Grandpa (Sue and I), and Granddaughter Maddison took off on what has become somewhat of a family tradition over the last few years... a work/play multi-day Kansas road trip. This time we headed east by northeast, making our first stop in Severy.

Severy is a small city (pop. 328), located at the intersection of K-99 and US-400 (old K-96), 65 miles or so east of Wichita and about 60 miles south of Emporia. Maddi and I chatted with City Clerk, Paula Babb for a few minutes, about nothing much in particular. I first met Paula when she was just a little bit into the job, about five years ago, and it is easy to see how much she has learned, and how much better she has made the city operation.

Leaving Severy, we worked our way north, up K-99, toward Emporia. At Hamilton (pop. 303), we met City Clerk Brenda Stewart, who has been on the job there about a year. Brenda showed us what she is doing to get city hall in better shape and order, and also showed Maddi the old jail (really just a tiny, damp, concrete room with a light-weight jail-bar door), which Brenda will soon be converting into more storage space. Brenda recommended that we stop at the old sundry shop on the corner, which is operated by her cousin—we did... the six-stool fountain still has the wonderful Steffen's Ice Cream facades that some of us remember from the old drug stores in and around Wichita (home of Steffen's).

On to Madison (with one 'd'), (pop. 750) a place I have been meaning to take Maddi for a long time. The first thing you notice here are the wonderful brick streets and how well most of the downtown buildings are kept up. While Sue and Maddi checked out the antique stores, I visited with longtime (I wish I could remember, or had written down, HOW long—15 years?) City Clerk, Carol Porter, whom, I learned, is originally from Mulvane, just down the road from where we live in Derby. I asked about the apparently-recently-enlarged manufacturing facility just down the block... turns out that ABZ is a high successful, home-grown, multi-national (they now have a plant in China) business that makes butterfly valves. The

museum in the cool-looking restored railroad depot did not happen to be open when we were there... darn.

At Olpe, (pop. 508) (girlhood home of Peg Weiland, by the way), we chatted with City Clerk, Joyce Wilson, who had attended a break-out session I attended at the Clerks' Conference (CCMFOA) in Wichita just a few days earlier. Like many small cities (and several of the ones we visited on our trip, in fact), this is a one-person shop. So, when Joyce gets called out in her other role as firefighter/first responder, the CLOSED sign goes up in the door as she is sprinting toward the fire station across the street. Joyce also told us a little bit about her family, including about her daughter, who is a United States Marine.

Lunch break in Emporia included a wonderful hour in a really neat consignment antique place, located in a great old railroad office building right next to the tracks... tons of a wide variety of "ancient" (at least to Maddi) artifacts... what fun it was showing and explaining all the old stuff to Maddi (as well as telling lies about things about which I had no clue). I love history... especially the everyday, people kind.

### More Spring Break stories next time...

My recommendation this month is what we used to call a record album. Actually, I have this grouping of songs on a two-volume LP (that's a great big vinyl disk—for you youngsters), which I bought shortly after hearing one of the songs on the radio—while I was working as a "graveyard shift" juvenile detention officer (i.e., jailer), on the Eighth Floor of the old Sedgwick County Courthouse/Jail, probably sometime in mid-1974 (the LP was released in March of '74). The song that I bought *The Complete Phoenix Concerts* double album to get was *July, You're a Woman*, by John Stewart. [I now also have the CD, and have burned it onto my computer hard drive—and I still like the songs just as much as I did over 35 years ago.] This concept album is mostly what I would call Americana folk, and it features several songs about Kansas, including *Wheatfield Lady*, *Kansas Rain*, and *Kansas*, and several other tunes include references to Kansas, other small-towns, and rural-state settings in the lyrics. John Stewart was not an original member of the Kingston Trio (famous folk group established in the late-50s), but was a Trio member from 1961-1967, before embarking on a long and very productive solo career, mostly doing variations on folk and Americana music. Stewart wrote all his own music, and many other songs, including *Daydream Believer* (a big hit for the Monkees and later Anne Murray), and a number of additional tunes you would recognize if you heard them. John Stewart passed on in early 2008 (at age 68), and was still writing, recording, and performing at the time of his rather sudden death. Try this CD/LP/album/record if you want to hear some really great songs that have some story telling, people-history, and meaning behind them.

☀ Don Osenbaugh is the Director of Finance and Field Services for the League of Kansas Municipalities. He can be reached at [dosenbaugh@lkm.org](mailto:dosenbaugh@lkm.org) or (316) 259-3847.



## “Flexing” Municipal Muscles

My commute to and from work is a significant part of my day. After waking in Shawnee, Kansas, I make my way up Highway 7 before merging onto I-70 and heading straight west to Topeka. The trip takes about an hour, which means I spend nearly two hours each day on the road, five days a week. This may not be ideal, but relatively speaking, it is a small sacrifice. It allows my wife and I to have careers that we both sincerely enjoy—quite the rarity for two lawyers.

Despite my tolerance for the road, it frustrates me when the half-awake commuter drives under the speed limit in the passing lane or when the I-70 corridor slows to a strolling pace during a light misting of rain. Ironically, it was during one of those particularly frustrating commutes that I tuned into “Morning Edition” on National Public Radio and heard a story entitled, “The End of 9-To-5: When Work Time is Anytime” (<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=124705801&ps=cprs>).

I listened with pleasure as Jennifer Ludden described the workplace in the Hennepin County Human Services and Public Health Department (HSPHD) in Minneapolis, Minnesota. For the past year, Hennepin’s HSPHD has been experimenting with a new flexible workplace system that incorporates the concept of the Results-Only Work Environment (ROWE).

ROWE is a concept developed by Jody Thompson and Cali Ressler, former HR managers with Best Buy who now operate the consulting firm, CultureRx (<http://gorowe.com/>). Five years ago, the duo developed a management approach that evaluates employees on performance, not presence. CultureRX describes ROWE by explaining away misconceptions regarding the system: “ROWE is not flextime. ROWE is not telecommuting. ROWE is not job sharing. ROWE is not about allowing your people to work from home a couple of days per week. In a results-only company or department, employees can do whatever they want whenever they want, as long as the work gets done.”

Deb Truesdell, Hennepin County’s ROWE Manager, further flushed out how the system came into existence, and more importantly, how the system works for a government entity. About a year ago, Hennepin County was working on methods to improve telecommuting for the County’s staff of 9,000. The County hoped to improve telecommuting, so citizens could access staff in multiple locations throughout the County instead of having everyone centralized in a small number of County offices.

During the evaluation process, the County leaders discovered a Minnesota Department of Transportation grant for entities that reduced interstate emissions. The County concluded that by successfully establishing a system that effectively promoted telework, they could also meet the grant’s demands by cutting the time workers spent on the roads during the traditional commute.

After receiving approval by County officials, HSPHD brought Thompson and Ressler to implement the ROWE system. The duo led six trainings that included teaching the principles of ROWE and developing the leadership to handle the responsibility of a results-oriented workplace. The employees also learned about

“sludge,” the traditional way people think about jobs and time, which often includes eliminating the assumption that attendance equals production. More importantly, they taught the corollary that individuals can be productive for their employer in locations other than the traditional workplace. ROWE emphasizes that you can work anytime and anywhere, as long as you complete your job and complete it well.

In Hennepin County, employees must still work 40 hours per week, but the focus shifts from hours-logged and hours-at-work to work-completion. Each division of Hennepin’s Human Services spent time developing goals and expectations along with a plan to accomplish those goals, including time expectations for responding to calls and e-mails, along with how many people need to be in the office at any given time.

After nearly a year of working under the ROWE system, Truesdell offered her thoughts on the change, “ROWE requires trust and an expectation that people will be adults and manage their time and responsibilities. Once you establish the results expectations, everything is based on whether or not employees do their work.”

And employees “doing their work” is exactly what Hennepin County is experiencing. The County is already seeing increased productivity, savings in travel reimbursement, and reduction in fuel costs. The change has also provided Hennepin County a way to compete with corporate America. Recently, a Hennepin County official received a corporate job offer that was a significant jump in prestige and salary. After the potential employer rebuffed the possibility for a ROWE workplace, the employee returned to his job with the County—the flexibility was simply too important to dismiss.

Hennepin County may have the government monopoly on ROWE at the moment, but it is not the only entity exploring increased flexibility in the workplace. For the past 18 months, the City of Wichita has granted each department director the freedom to incorporate flexible hours for employees.

According to Senior Human Resources Specialist, Lisa White, the City was motivated to improve employee retention while creating a more employee-friendly workplace. The program also helps with budget issues and flexibility by cross-training employees to handle different issues when employees are working off site. So far, Wichita is finding success with the program.

Cities and counties are frequently looking for ways to stay competitive while providing top-notch customer support for their citizens. Hennepin County and the City of Wichita are demonstrating that flexibility in the workplace can not only improve employee satisfaction, but also create an environment that encourages excellence in productivity. There may not be dollars to compete with big business, but with ingenuity and flexibility, local governments can still find a way to thrive.

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



# Classified Advertising

## Assistant City Superintendent

The City of Leoti is hiring for the position of Assistant Superintendent. This position will be under the supervision of the City Superintendent. This employee assists the City Superintendent in supervising, planning, and organizing the activities of the Public Works Department including water, sewer, and street maintenance. This candidate should possess a strong mechanical aptitude and excellent communication, supervisory, organizational, and public relations skills.

A knowledge of equipment, road construction and repair techniques, water and wastewater treatment, and safety procedures, and a working knowledge of mathematics is required. This employee will operate loaders, tractors, trucks, backhoes, street sweepers, graders, mowers, and other department equipment. The ability to understand and anticipate problems, to enforce departmental policies and procedures and to interpret written instructions, maps, blueprints, reports, and manuals is required.

A high school diploma or GED is required. A valid Kansas CDL and small systems Kansas Water and Wastewater License will be required.

Successful candidate must agree to reside within the City of Leoti. Compensation will be commensurate with experience and ability. The City of Leoti is an Equal Opportunity Employer which offers generous salary and benefits packages. All offers of employment are conditional upon the successful completion of a post-offer physical exam, drug/alcohol testing and thorough background check, which includes a driving record.

Please contact the City of Leoti at 620-375-2341 for application or download at [www.leotikansas.org](http://www.leotikansas.org). Return application to: City of Leoti, PO Box 7E, Leoti, KS 67861

## City Clerk/Administrator

Anthony, KS (pop. 2,300), County Seat for Harper County 60 miles Southwest of Wichita, five member elected city commission, electric, water, wastewater utilities, police, fire, street, and parks and recreation departments. \$6.8 million budget, 33 full time employees. Knowledge

and experience in finance and budgeting. Working leadership relationship with City Superintendent, Chief of Police, and other department heads. Combination of education and experience equivalent to an appropriate Bachelor's Degree and proven experience in local government management. Salary negotiable. Full position requirements available on the city's website. Applications available by fax or phone. Send application, cover letter, detailed resume and three work related references to the City of Anthony, P.O. Box 504, Anthony, KS 67003. Application deadline is April 30, 2010. EOE

## City Superintendent

The City of Conway Springs is seeking an experienced working supervisor who will be responsible for all aspects of public works, including the maintenance and operations of the water and wastewater distribution systems, and for facility and road maintenance. Class I water or wastewater certification is preferred. Applicant must have a valid driver's license and High School diploma or equivalent. Salary is based on qualifications and experience. Applications are available at City Hall 208 W. Spring Ave. Conway Springs KS 67031, [cscity@haviandtelco.com](mailto:cscity@haviandtelco.com) or 620-456-2345.

## City Superintendent

Successful candidate will demonstrate ability to plan, coordinate and schedule personnel, materials, and equipment necessary to maintain the City of Leoti streets, alleys, parking lots, water system, sewer system, and parks in good working order and sound condition. The candidate will enforce departmental safety policies and procedures—must possess excellent communication, organizational, supervisory, technical, and public relation skills.

A knowledge of equipment, road construction and repair techniques, water and wastewater treatment, and safety procedures, and a working knowledge of mathematics is required. This employee must be able to operate loaders, tractors, trucks, backhoes, street sweepers, graders, mowers, and other department equipment. The ability to understand and anticipate

problems to enforce departmental policies and procedures and to interpret written instructions, maps, blueprints, reports, and manuals is required.

A high school diploma or GED is required. Must be able to attain a valid Kansas Commercial Drivers License (CDL) and small systems Kansas Water and Wastewater License.

Successful candidate must agree to reside within the City of Leoti. Compensation will be commensurate with experience and ability. The City of Leoti is an Equal Opportunity Employer which offers generous salary and benefits packages. All offers of employment are conditional upon the successful completion of a post-offer physical exam, drug screen and thorough background check-including driving record.

Please contact the City of Leoti at 620-375-2341 for application packet or download at [www.leotikansas.org](http://www.leotikansas.org). Return application and resume to: City of Leoti, PO Box 7E, Leoti, KS 67861

## Consolidated Emergency Communications Center Director

The Communications Center Director for Cowley County is a new position that will be responsible for merging two existing PSAPs into one consolidated countywide emergency communications center. The Communications Center will be a department of Cowley County and the Director will report to the County Administrator. Salary Range: \$48,339 to \$63,523, plus benefits.

Minimum Requirements Desired: Bachelor's degree in business, public administration, emergency communications, administration of justice, or related field. Minimum of five years experience in emergency communications, including responsible supervisory duties, or an equivalent combination of education, training and experience.

For complete information on the position and to download a County application form, please visit the [www.cowleycounty.org/website](http://www.cowleycounty.org/website).

Mail resume, a minimum of five work related references, salary history, and completed Cowley County application

form to: Cowley County Emergency Communications Center (911) Director Search, 311 E. 9th Avenue, Winfield, KS 67156-2843. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled; however, the first review of applicants will take place May 7, 2010. Cowley County is an EOE. Minority and Female candidates are encouraged to apply.

#### **Construction Inspector-Water Plant**

Experienced Construction Inspector for construction of a major water treatment plant improvement. Temporary position expected to last 18-24 months. Anticipated start date around mid-April. Full-time position with a salary range of \$47,442 to \$77,000 depending on qualifications. For more information and to apply: [HRePartners.com](http://HRePartners.com)

#### **County Administrator**

Ellis County seeks Administrator to serve award-winning community with small town way of life alongside thriving economy and excellent state university. Annual budget \$16.6 million; 176 employees. Chief administrative officer with responsibilities for finance, purchasing, human resources, and policy research and recommendations. Three years experience in managing public sector department; Bachelors Degree in public administration or related field; and public finance experience required. Five years experience in local government management as Administrator/Assistant Administrator; 2) Masters Degree in public administration or related field; 3) previous work experience in county government; 4) experience with rural populations; and 5) ICMA membership preferred. Letter of application with resume, salary history, four work-related references (in one integrated e-file please) in confidence to search advisor: [mflentje@austinpeters.com](mailto:mflentje@austinpeters.com) or mail: 543 N. Birkdale Court, Wichita, KS, 67230; or fax: 913-851-7529. Preference to applications received before April 15. Finalists subject to disclosure. Recruitment profile: [www.elliscounty.net](http://www.elliscounty.net).

#### **County Administrator**

Finney County, is seeking an experienced professional to serve as County Administrator. Finney County is a progressive regional agricultural, commercial, and medical services center in Southwest Kansas. The county's population is over 40,000 and there are two incorporated communities, Garden City, the county seat with a population of 30,000, and Holcomb with a population of 2,000.

The County Administrator reports to the five-member Board of County Commissioners and is responsible for the day-to-day professional management of 15 departments and 325 employees. The 2010 annual budget for Finney County is over \$35 million. The County Administrator assists the County Commission in the development of budget, policy and procedures, and personnel administration, and coordinates strategic planning and financial management activities. The Administrator works with five elected department heads and has direct supervisory responsibility of ten department heads and their departmental operations.

Qualifications for this position include a minimum of five years in public administration with extensive knowledge of county operations, including budget development, capital improvement planning, strategic planning, and statutory requirements impacting local government administration in the state of Kansas. Qualified candidates will have a Master's degree in public administration or related field with 5 years of experience, or a Bachelor's degree in a relevant field with 7-10 years of county government experience. Starting salary and benefits are negotiable based upon experience and qualifications.

Comprehensive resumes are to be submitted to the Application Review Committee, c/o County Clerk Elsa Ulrich, P. O. Box M, Garden City, Kansas 67846. Email address for electronic submissions is [eulrich@finneycounty.org](mailto:eulrich@finneycounty.org). Resumes will be accepted through the close of business May 21, 2010.

#### **Firefighter/EMT**

City of Owasso, (pop. 60,000) one of Oklahoma's fastest growing communities, is seeking resumes for Firefighters/EMT. The hired professional will work under the direction of the Station Captain, and will be responsible for first aid, fire suppression and rescue work involving personal injury, illness, and traumatic situations. Requirements: Must be Nationally Certified as an EMT-Intermediate or EMT-Paramedic licensed (EMT-Basic licensure will be considered for hire upon providing an official letter from their school indicating they are currently enrolled and in good standing in a Nationally Certified EMT-Paramedic program). See [www.cityofowasso.com](http://www.cityofowasso.com) for more information. Send resume to [employment@cityofowasso.com](mailto:employment@cityofowasso.com) or Human Resources, P.O. Box 180, Owasso, OK 74055. Deadline for application: April 27, 2010. EOE.

#### **Journeyman Lineman**

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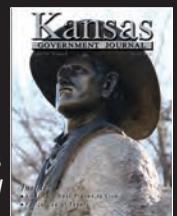
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# Moler's Musings

by Don Moler

## Hidden Fees



I had a run-in with a bank bureaucracy today, which I think has a number of interesting things to tell us about customer service, veracity, and dealing with the public. It seemed like a pretty straight-forward deal. I had written a check over two months ago which had not been cashed. The check was for a grand total of \$46, and I decided to put a stop pay on the check. That seemed simple enough, especially given that I do most of

my banking these days via the Internet. So, I went online to my bank website and logged into my account and right there on the screen was a button to stop payment on a check. I clicked on the button, and the screen allowing me to authorize the stop payment appeared before me. Interestingly, I thought, there was no mention of the fee, except a somewhat curious notation that the fee could be found in the little booklet which is periodically sent out in my monthly statement. I found this odd, in an electronic world where I was able to do almost all of my banking on the Internet, that the fee schedule was mysteriously missing from anywhere on the website. So, I just assumed it was like it had been five or six years ago when I last did a stop pay on check. At that time, as I recall, my bank allowed me three stop payments on checks per year without charge, and then a modest charge of about \$5 per check.

So, not thinking it was any big deal, I authorized the stop payment on the check. Once this had been accomplished, I went back to my account to see what the charge had been for stopping payment on this \$46 check. Much to my chagrin, the stop payment charge was \$30. I immediately decided that a \$30 charge to stop payment on a \$46 check didn't make much sense, so I called the bank's customer service hotline to stop the stop payment and to get the \$30 put back into my account. I spoke to a young woman who informed me that she didn't have the authority to do anything like that, and she was going to find her supervisor to assist me.

When the supervisor came on the line I explained that I had no idea that the charge was \$30 and wished to forget the stop payment on the check. She responded that the charges were all laid out in the small booklet that is sent out with the statements, and that she couldn't help me with the charge as it could only be done at a branch of the bank. I commented, in parting, that I felt it was unfortunate that the bank could seemingly put the method for putting a stop payment on a check on the website, but that it was unable to somehow put the service charges which were part of the account agreement on the website so that they could be easily accessed by the customer. So, the end of the story is simply that I went into the bank, dealt with a very pleasant bank officer, and in about 3 minutes had the stop check stopped and the \$30 had been reinstated to my account.

This little episode reminded me once again of some of the things that we as city officials need to be constantly vigilant when dealing with our customers and citizens. First of all, I found it unbelievable that the bank would provide a process, allowing their customers to do something online, but with a hidden \$30 charge waiting for the customers at the other end of the process. Secondly, I felt that the demeanor of both the telephone assistant and the supervisor on the "customer service line" was somewhat less than stellar. I got the distinct impression from both of them that they could care less about my concerns, comments, or my suggestions for improving their service and website. Their tone, with which I am sure everyone reading this is familiar, was that typical bureaucratic tone that conveys no interest whatsoever in your problem.

The third thing I found disconcerting was that an untruth (formerly doing business as a lie) was told to me by the phone supervisor. She told me that I had to go into a branch of the bank to take care of this problem because I had to sign a piece of paper to remove the stop pay on the check. Well, that turned out to be utter nonsense. In essence, all I had to do was appear at the branch and ask for it to be undone. It was undone quickly and courteously. As it turned out, the bank officer saved the situation and renewed my general faith in the business practices of this bank.

One of the greatest difficulties in dealing with the public remains indifference to the problems of the customer. It strikes me that customer service representatives should make it their business to be very interested in the concerns raised by the people they are attempting to serve. While it should be obvious, but apparently isn't, a customer service representative should be interested in customer service. This is something that the entity needs to instill in their employees. Secondly, when dealing with the public, or in private for that matter, you should always attempt to be as absolutely honest as possible, even if it is something the customer or citizen doesn't want to hear. Finally, if you have charges for a particular service, they should be readily available to the public. They should not be hidden, and it should not require a search of desk drawers to locate the fee schedule for a service which is available on the net.

Anybody doing business online should have the rules and the fees easy to find when they are dealing with your government on the Internet. We, in public service, must always strive to be the best service providers we can possibly be as the members of the public have no choice but to deal with the governmental entities which we represent. Caring about working with citizens to solve their problems, and helping them to understand the rules and fees is an integral part of providing great customer service.



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