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About the Cover: The City of Lucas’ newest addition—The World’s Largest Travel Souvenir Plate. See related article beginning on page 262. Photo provided by the City of Lucas.
Vernon Berens, 74, died July 22, 2010. He was first elected to the Ellis County Commission in 1996 and was currently serving his fourth term. He also served on the Victoria City Council from 1973 to 1981 and as mayor from 1983 to 1989.

Virginia E. Herzog, 90, died July 14, 2010. In 1974, Herzog ran for Registrar of Deeds in Ellis County. She was the first woman to be elected to an Ellis County office and held the position for 11 years.

Audean F. Kramer, 84, died July 15, 2010. He formerly served as Union Township Clerk.

Robert D. Kraus, 74, died July 12, 2010. He formerly served on the Eskridge City Council.

Richard A. Medley, 72, died July 13, 2010. He was the former Geary County Assistant Attorney and then later the Montgomery County Attorney.

Alva Lee Powell, 97, died July 12, 2010. In 1966, he was elected to the Kansas House of Representatives in the 15th District (Miami County).
In September 2009, Wichita firefighters responded to a call which they expected to be a small apartment fire. Instead, they found an unconscious man and removed him from the apartment. Lieutenant Michael Sawyer said, “It’s a pretty good feeling.” Captain Larry Cole, who also responded to the fire, added that “the firefighters reacted quickly to the changing situation, and through teamwork saved the man’s life it’s very rewarding.” He also observed that “so many times...we roll up on a code blue (person not breathing) and the majority of the time we lose them. Even if you do everything perfect, the chances of getting them back are still slim.”

The 12 firefighters who responded to the fire received a Firehouse Magazine Heroism Award. The yearly award is given to firefighters throughout the nation for bravery.

The Lansing Historical Museum is now part of Blue Star Museums, a partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, Blue Star Families, and more than 600 museums across America. Nationally, the program offers free admission to all active duty military personnel and their families from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Because the Lansing Historical Museum already offers free admission to all attendees, military personnel will receive a free gift while supplies last when they visit the museum.

More than 600 museums in all 50 states and the District of Columbia are taking part in the initiative. The free admission program is available to active duty military and their immediate family members (military ID holder and five immediate family members), which includes active duty reserve and active duty national guard.

The City of Merriam is offering savings on prescription drugs to residents who are without health insurance, a traditional benefits plan, or have prescriptions that are not covered by insurance. The prescription discount card is made available to residents by the City of Merriam in collaboration with the National League of Cities (NLC) and is made possible through Merriam’s membership in NLC. It is free to all Merriam residents, regardless of age, income, or existing health insurance. For more information, go to [http://www.nlc.org/enterprise programs/rx_card.aspx](http://www.nlc.org/enterprise programs/rx_card.aspx).

Moody’s Investors Service announced that it has increased the credit rating on the City of Prairie Village’s general obligation bonds to Aaa, its highest rating category. Prairie Village becomes only one of four Aaa rated cities in Kansas. Moody’s recently rated Prairie Village’s general obligation bonds Aa1, its second highest category, due to the City’s prudent management, financial flexibility, and its easily affordable debt burden. The rating change from Aa1 to Aaa, came as the result of a Moody’s recalibration of municipal bond ratings across the United States to allow direct comparisons of credit quality across corporate, sovereign, and municipal debt markets.

Edwardsville and Basehor were recently selected to participate in the “Smart Lights for Smart Cities” program. The program tests the efficiency of lighting technologies and is part of a $4 million grant that was awarded by the U.S. Department of Energy. It will replace 4,000 of the inefficient mercury and high-pressure sodium street lights found throughout most of the Kansas City metro area with newer technology.

Michael Webb, Edwardsville City Administrator said, “I am glad Edwardsville was chosen for the program, but am still unsure about specific details, such as how many lights the City would receive, once the City is allocated its portion of the grant.” He added that the City “will look at where the street lights should be replaced, most likely putting the focus on the downtown area and the Kansas Highway 32 corridor.”

Basehor City Administrator Mark Loughry said that Basehor expressed its interest in the grant last year, and like Edwardsville, the City isn’t positive which lights will be replaced. “I know it’s for high-efficiency lights, and we will most likely begin to replace lights around town, with the oldest lights first and continue as funds are available,” said Loughry.

The Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library announced that it is a recipient of The Big Read, a matching grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Communications Editor, Lisa Coble-Krings said the library “was only one of 75 communities selected by the endowment for The Big Read.”

The program is designed to restore reading to the center of American culture. In October, library members will read The Maltese Falcon by Dashiell Hammett. Marie Pyko, Public Service Manager for The Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library said the $12,775 grant will help “bring the Maltese Falcon to life through community discussions, art events, programming, and outreach made possible by the grant money. We’ll be hosting expert lecturers, a jazz singer, and a mystery-themed dinner theater written and performed by library staff and members of the Topeka Civic Theatre. Our programming lineup is sure to inform and thrill.”
Located on K-18 Highway in the City of Lucas, you will find one of the largest things in one of the littlest cities—The World’s Largest Souvenir Travel Plate. With a population of around 400, this little city is also known as the Grassroots Art Capital of Kansas and was voted as one of the “8 Wonders of Kansas Art” by the Kansas Sampler Foundation.

The World’s Largest Souvenir Travel Plate was created in 2006 and 2007 as part of a National Endowment for the Arts “Challenge America” grant. Utilizing a retired satellite dish as a canvas, local artist Erika Nelson created the plate as a welcome icon for the City. Nelson painted images of the many things to see and do in the little City of Lucas.

Starting in the center, an Ed Root-style “LUCAS” is surrounded by a field of blue, with wheat shafts and a sunflower at the top framing an apple with “1887,” the year of Lucas’ founding. Below the City name is a ribbon emblazoned with “Grassroots Art Capital of Kansas,” a title that was bestowed upon Lucas in 1997 by Governor Bill Graves. The center medallion is surrounded by sausage links from Brant’s Meat Market, located in downtown Lucas.

The surrounding designs capture some of the main attractions in Lucas. Starting at the top, Adam and Eve welcome you to the Garden of Eden, one of the nation’s oldest examples of Outsider or Grassroots Art, built at the turn of the 20th Century by Samuel Dinsmoor. Dinsmoor’s mausoleum is pictured in the background between the two figures.

Next, are portraits of two anonymous ancestor figures, male and female. The man and woman figures represent ALL founding fathers and mothers as is reflected in the ribbons underneath their images, “Remember our Immigrant Ancestors” and “Honor Their Pioneering Spirit.”

Clockwise from the female figure, clouds reveal a flying pig. Small aircraft from the Lucas airport and smaller Slope Flyer radio-controlled craft emerge from the skyscape. There is also a buffalo hidden in the clouds.

Next, a cloud of smoke billows up from a burning wheat field, a common site in the area after harvest time. The wheat harvest section features a combine and crops in various stages of development.

The Post Rock Scenic Byway scene separates the crop section from a water section representing Wilson Lake. Fish portraits illustrate the species common in the lake: crappie, channel catfish, bass, and walleye. The water laps up onto an Ed Root sculpture. As his farmstead rests beneath the lake when the valley was flooded in 1965, the ribbon reads “Ed Root Neath Wilson Lake.”

by Amanda Schuster

Kansas Government Journal • September 2010
The sculptures are featured at the Grassroots Art Center and represent an important section of the Outsider Art timeline found in Lucas sites. Continuing clockwise are the Miller’s Park rock mountain replicas and miniature buildings, leading into the Florence Deeble section, a local who replicated her favorite sites (like Mount Rushmore) on concrete and rock in her backyard.

In the historic downtown section, you will find Brant’s Meat Market, the Lucas Theater, historic limestone jail, the green-topped Lucas watertower, and the World’s Largest Souvenir Travel Plate. There is also a painted shed featuring a snowdome housing the Lucas watertower, sculpture from the Garden of Eden, a flying pig, and the World’s Largest Souvenir Travel Plate. The watertower and grain elevator bring you up to the male ancestor figure and that completes the circle.

The decorative rim features line drawings of elements specific to the region. On the lower half, petroglyphs from the Saline River Valley, honor the first people to hunt and settle in the area. These transition to regional legends along the top, including the Lucas Community Band, the Luray Snake, Kansa the Buffalo, the first WWII Jeep bought by a farmer, old and new high school mascots, some art cars, pheasants, a spaceship or two, a whisky-smuggling hearse, and a frame-by-frame illustration of the Fred Dininney mystery.

Nelson painted the World’s Largest Travel Souvenir Plate on-site between September and November 2006. Other contributors include Wilson Telephone who donated their decommissioned 14 ft. satellite dish, J. Jean Mettlen who allowed the plate to be installed on his property, and the City of Lucas who donated concrete and a crew for major lifting and installation work.

Nelson is a visionary artist, educator, and one of America’s foremost experts and speakers on the World’s Largest Things. She is a national researcher and speaker on grassroots art environments, roadside attractions and architecture, and the world’s largest things. Nelson is also the founder and curator of a unique and innovative traveling roadside attraction and museum called The World’s Largest Collection of the World’s Smallest Versions of the World’s Largest Things.

For more information on Lucas and its Grassroots Art community visit www.getruralkansas.org/Lucas/114index.shtml or www.grassrootsart.net. Information for this article was reprinted with permission from The World’s Largest Things, Inc. website, www.worldslargestthings.com. Artist Erika Nelson may be contacted at info@worldslargestthings.com.

Amanda Schuster is the Communications Specialist for the League of Kansas Municipalities. She can be reached at (785) 354-9565 or aschuster@lkm.org.

Abilene
World’s Largest Spur

Cawker City
World’s Largest Ball of Twine

Garden City
World’s Largest Cow Hairball

Goodland
World’s Largest VanGogh Painting and Easel

Greensburg
World’s Largest Pallasite Meteorite &

Hutchinson
World’s Largest Hand-Dug Well

McPherson
World’s Largest Grain Elevator

Lawrence
World’s Largest Chimney Sweep

Oakley
World’s Largest Concrete TeePee

Topeka
World’s Largest Prairie Dog

West Mineral
World’s Largest Wren & Russian Egg

source: www.worldslargestthings.com
Kansas officials are expecting to receive nearly $27 million intended to help turn around its lowest-achieving schools. “When a school continues to perform in the bottom 5% of the state and isn’t showing signs of growth or has graduation rates below 60%, something dramatic needs to be done,” said Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. Turning around our worst-performing schools is difficult for everyone, but it is critical that we show the courage to do the right thing by kids.”

Governor Mark Parkinson hosted the new Consul General of China to Chicago, Yang Guoqiang, in the Capitol to renew business ties between China and Kansas. The meeting covered topics related to international trade and investment between China and Kansas. The two leaders also exchanged gifts on behalf of their respective governments.

China was Kansas’ fifth largest export market in 2009, purchasing $353 million in Kansas goods. Top categories included animal hides, aircraft, and industrial machinery. Overall, Kansas businesses totaled $8.89 billion in global exports in 2009.

According to a report from the Associated General Contractors (AGC) of America, Kansas led all states in construction job growth from May 2009 to May 2010. Kansas had a net gain of about 3,600 construction jobs, a 6.2% gain, over the period. Only four other states had construction employment growth. According to the AGC, 61,900 workers were employed in construction jobs in Kansas in May.

The data also revealed a year-to-year job decline in building and heavy construction, such as highways, water, and sewer systems. The 12-month net gain in Kansas was entirely due to growth in specialty trades such as electricians and plumbers rather than general contracting. Since February, however, all three construction sectors; building construction, heavy construction, and specialty trades have grown in Kansas.

For the fourth time in five years, Area Development magazine has named Kansas a winner of the Silver Shovel Award for excellence in job creation and capital investment. The award is part of the magazine’s 2010 Golden & Silver Shovel Awards, which recognizes states that drive significant job creation through innovative policies, infrastructure improvements, processes, and promotions that attract new employers and investments in expanded facilities.

Silver Shovels are awarded to 10 states in 3 population categories: over 10 million, 5-10 million, and under 5 million. Kansas was recognized in the latter group, along with Louisiana, South Carolina, and Alabama. A single Gold Shovel Award was presented to the nation’s highest performing state—New York.

“The award is just another example of how Kansas is one of the best states in the nation for business,” said Governor Mark Parkinson. “Even during a recession, we were able to pass job-creating policies, including a new 10-year transportation plan that invests in our infrastructure and our economy. We’re excited to build on this success as we continue on the road to recovery.”

In 2009, the Kansas Department of Commerce was involved in 58 successful recruitment projects in which Kansas was competing with at least 1 other state. Those projects totaled 11,888 new jobs and $685.2 million in capital investment. The Department was also involved in 141 expansion/retention projects with existing Kansas businesses, totaling 21,600 new or retained jobs and $1.37 billion in capital investment.

The Kansas Small Business Environmental Assistance Program (SBEAP) was awarded the 2010 National Small Business Environmental Assistance Award. The award was presented at a ceremony in Virginia. SBEAP assists small businesses with free and confidential environmental compliance through on-site visits, a toll-free hotline, and workshops/webinars. “The Small Business Environmental Assistance Program provides services to businesses to assist them in complying with environmental regulations,” said Roderick Bremby, Kansas Department of Health & Environment Secretary.

He added that “[t]his award recognizes exemplary performance in one or more areas where individuals and programs have contributed their time, created resources and work products, promoted policy advancements, developed program innovations, and established new partnerships to build a strong network of small business environmental assistance.”
Serving as the regional voice on water issues and as a vehicle for cities and counties to work collaboratively on common water concerns and challenges, the Regional Economic Area Partnership’s (REAP) Water Resources Committee (WRC) has paved the way for regional cooperation and collaboration. Shortly after its inception in 2007, several members of the WRC expressed concerns about the growing number of conflicts with Rural Water Districts (RWDs) over water service territorial issues. In some cases, cities found themselves unable to provide municipal level water services, including fire protection, to areas within their growth boundaries. At the same time, RWDs felt threatened for fear of losing territory and future revenues.

To begin to understand the issue, it is important to first identify the difference in organizational missions. Cities are general jurisdictions of government having powers granted by Kansas statutes as well as constitutional home rule authority. Cities have statutory authority to purchase, construct, or extend the infrastructure and works necessary to supply the city and its inhabitants with public utilities, including water. Municipal water supplies were originally developed to provide fire protection and safe drinking water in an urban setting. Today, there are 518 municipal water suppliers in Kansas ranging from the very small, more rural communities to the state’s largest cities.

RWDs were originally formed for the purpose of providing adequate water supplies to rural areas where there were none. They were constructed using funds provided by loans and grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. There are approximately 300 rural water districts in Kansas. Many continue to serve widely dispersed populations with drinking water and provide no other services; while others have evolved to the point that they provide high-level service through large capacity systems, including fire protection.

Water service territory annexations are not a new occurrence. However, with the expansion of city boundaries, particularly in the more urban areas of the state, the number of annexations are growing as boundaries meet. Procedures for the annexation of rural water district territory have been provided for in Kansas statute (K.S.A. 12-527); however, the previous procedures were woefully insufficient to meet the guidance needs of cities and RWDs in annexation cases. In other cases, the parties have attempted to negotiate agreements but found their efforts complicated by a lack of guidelines or formula to serve as the framework for the negotiations and eventual agreement.

Often-times a lack of communication on both sides results in an inability to negotiate a reasonable value for a transfer of infrastructure, customers, and territory; leading to expensive litigation, delays, and high costs to the current and future utility customers. In the hopes of crafting a solution, REAP decided to utilize its position as a forum for local governments to address the issues at hand and build consensus among stakeholders to avoid future litigation.

To begin the discussion and necessary research on the complex issue of service territory transfers, REAP established a Municipal Utilities Growth Issues Committee (MUGIC) in 2008. The MUGIC was charged with developing a common approach to resolving conflicts over territory between RWDs and municipalities, as well as drafting a set of guidelines and model service agreements that would be acceptable to all parties. The guidelines were to be developed with the customer’s best interest being the number one goal. REAP
staff and committee members researched local, state, and national strategies to address the question of valuation as well as various state organizations and stakeholders to better understand the issue.

Research efforts lead to a discussion forum, held in December of 2009, where representatives from REAP, Kansas Rural Water Association (KRWA), Kansas Municipal Utilities (KMU), and the League of Kansas Municipalities (LKM) discussed a collaborative approach in moving forward. Through considerable cooperation and discussion, all parties agreed the guideline’s success and implementation could only be achieved when all parties were at the table and involved in their development. This would ultimately help entities facing conflict to resolve their service area disputes without litigation. Over the next few months, members from each organization worked together to craft appropriate language.

After the Guidelines for the Transfer of Water Service Territory Between Cities and Rural Water Districts guidance document was finalized, all participating organizations made it accessible for their respective membership. The document was not only aimed at providing assistance to cities and rural water districts to help them deal with water service to annexed land, but also requests for water service outside of city boundaries, or between other rural water districts.

The guidelines provide several factors that contribute to conflicts between cities and rural water districts over water service territory. They include: (1) Lack of awareness of the legal rights and responsibilities that each have for water service to their residents; (2) lack of understanding concerning service capabilities and limitations; (3) lack of communication regarding future plans; and (4) emphasis on the utility’s goals and desires at the expense of the present and future customers of the utility.

Cities and neighboring rural water districts should make a concerted effort to address these potential sources of conflict by implementing the following: educate staff and governing bodies; periodically perform system service capability studies; conduct joint meetings to discuss future growth plans; commit to serving the best interest of the customer; and, recognize that a lack of regard for other utility customers is not a good practice.

Most importantly, the guidelines layout a list of 13 factors that should be considered to arrive at reasonable compensation. Factors include: value of RWD property rendered useless; value of service facilities; demonstrated impairment of service; costs associated with maintaining current financial integrity; and, applicable legal expenses, among many others. These factors are encouraged to be considered in all cases whether a USDA loan is present or not.

The guidelines also included three sample agreements. Each of the three sample agreements were drafted for specific annexation situations including factors such as the presence of a USDA loan and/or facilities. Municipalities and RWDs can select from the three options and use the checklist as a guide during the annexation process, though it should be noted that they are only samples. No particular form should be considered as the only one suitable to a particular situation. Care should be taken to adapt an agreement form as necessary to fit the specific case.

Concluding the document is a one page checklist that stresses cooperation and communication among parties with strong support of drafting a written agreement, such as the examples provided in the guidelines. The checklist also encourages the use of mediation if agreement cannot be reached.

With all aspects of the guidelines, it is important that information be developed and shared with the other party to the transfer as quickly as possible. Both parties share responsibility for insuring this process proceeds timely and the determination of value and compensation is made as quickly as possible. Neither the city nor the water district should be working in a vacuum. The secret is communication, but it is imperative that this communication be honest and timely.

In conclusion, the guidelines were created to prevent and resolve conflict between municipalities and RWDs during the annexation process. In addition, it strongly supports discussion, collaboration, and mediation in the hopes that excessive expenditures and litigation can be avoided. It is the hope that with the recent passing of HB 2283, the guidelines will complement the bill’s formal requirements and provide comprehensive framework for water service territory transfers. Through collaboration and cooperation, and keeping the customer interest in mind, municipalities and RWDs alike can successfully use these tools during the process of transferring water service territories and avoid costly litigation.

For a complete version of the guidelines or more information about REAP visit http://www.reap-ks.org/water.html

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Danville is a very small place (official pop. 52), so I didn’t really expect to find a “city person” to talk to and no address I had matched up with anything I could find. So, I stopped in at the Danville Post Office (located in a converted former gas station on the south edge of the city on US-160). The postmistress was very helpful (as those folks usually are) and phoned the mayor for me. Mayor Olivier actually stopped whatever he was doing at the time, and came to meet me at the post office. Of course, I had to bite (i.e., be my normal smart-alec self), and ask the mayor if he was the Lawrence Olivier (the famous English actor spelled it Laurence), and should I call him “Sir” (admittedly, this reference may be lost on all of you under 50 years). My query prompted an accepting grin and a neat story about his name. Turns out that a few years ago, Larry (as he is called) was invited by AMC and NBC to New York City, to spend five (all-expenses-paid) days in “the City that never sleeps,” and appear on the Today Show, etc., along with a group of 24 other leading men (other guys with famous names). VERY cool. (Later on, I found a story on the Internet about Mayor Olivier’s great NYC adventure…you can look it up!) A Danville native, Larry recently retired as an inspector at Cessna’s Wallace Plant in Wichita; he commuted the 100 or so miles (roundtrip) every workday for 32 years. Larry has served as Danville Mayor for about six years and Mrs. Olivier (Maxine) is the City Clerk (she still works in Anthony). Larry also filled me in on a bit of Danville history…it was once the location of the biggest Harley Davidson dealer west of the Mississippi, and the owner’s house (and also an abandoned hotel) is framed with the wood from motorcycle shipping containers—Larry said he could show me proof (in the way of lettering on the wood) in the basement of the house. I would have let him, but I needed to move on down the road…next time. Mayor Olivier seems like a really good guy; talking with him was a lot of fun. Sometimes, this is a great job.

As my lunchtime destination point was always on down the westward path, I didn’t stop again until reaching Attica (pop. 570), located along US-160, a few miles west of the City of Harper, but still in Harper County. As many other cities in Kansas, Attica can attribute its birth primarily to the railroad, as the spot on which it was started is where two branches of the old AT&SF merged. At city hall in Attica (right on Bulldog Boulevard), I enjoyed a nice visit with City Clerk Darlene Fannett and Assistant City Clerk Jamie DeViney. We were joined by City Superintendent T.J. Rausch, who shared a bit of his interesting life story with me. Though still rather young (of course, EVERYBODY seems young to me anymore), T.J. left a hectic career in commercial aviation to come back home and raise his family, and work for the City. Some people do have their priorities in order.

I stopped at the City office in the next city on my path, Sharon (Barber County; pop. 185), just long enough to say “hi” to City Clerk Lisa Fischer and check out her signed (Sharon native) Martina McBride poster. I asked her if she knew if Martina’s eyes are really that beautiful shade of purple-ish blue…she didn’t…darn…

Arriving at city hall in Medicine Lodge (pop. 1,883) just a few minutes ahead of my planned time, I met up with City Administrator Austin Gilley and City Clerk Kandi Simmons. We headed to the local Pizza Hut for lunch and friendly conversation. Kandi has been with the City about four years and was elevated to Clerk when Jean Kimball moved up to City Administrator a couple of years ago (Jean took her planned retirement about a year later). Austin started with the City earlier this summer, though we already knew each other. Austin is an Oklahoma University grad (as is my daughter-in-law), and is originally from Oklahoma City. He and his wife and two daughters were not in town long when daughter number three arrived on July 14. CONGRATS, Austin. One of the issues in Medicine Lodge these days is water (sales volume and rates; not the usual quality or quantity) since one of the largest companies (and H2O users) in town, a company that makes sheet rock and other building products from gypsum coming out of local mines, is currently using much less water, due to the depressed (and depressing) housing market. The trickle-down effects of this recession drill down to many areas of our economy we mostly don’t think a lot about.

My literary recommendation this month is a book I recently borrowed from old friend, Phil (whom, I have often mentioned. We met a very long time ago on the eighth floor of the county jail). Extensively researched (including numerous first-person interviews) and indexed, Dangerously Funny: The Uncensored Story of The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour, by David Bianculli, is not an opinion book (in fact, it’s not even funny except in places where descriptions of scenes tickle my “old person” funny-bone memory), but rather a well-documented piece of historical writing. And, it is not only the history of the brilliant, landscape-changing TV show (which lasted three seasons, but just over two years in calendar time—late January 1967 through April 1969), but also a chronicling of the late 60s in our nation—as the show nearly perfectly reflected (and, in some ways, facilitated) the times in which we lived back then. In my lifetime, there is no other period that even comes remotely close to approximating the changes that occurred in our country, society, and culture as did the last third of the 60s, and the Smothers Brothers’ Sunday-nights production (including the behind-the-scenes events and issues) was an on-spot and close-up mirror of those times. I have not previously read any work that so accurately retells what was going on in our lives in the late 60s. Sue and I were fortunate enough to be able to see the Smothers Brothers perform nearly three years ago, at the Orpheum in Wichita—it brought back tons of memories…mostly good ones.

Don Osenbaugh is the Director of Finance and Field Services for the League of Kansas Municipalities. He can be reached at dosenbaugh@lkm.org
Students arrived back to Liberal High School (LHS) Wednesday morning with something added in the hallways, cafeteria, and classrooms—recycling bins.

LHS Key Club unveiled their newest service project after months of work by Key Club President Morgan Wills. Twenty recycling bins have been placed around the high school to collect plastic bottles that will later be taken to the City of Liberal Recycling Center.

Funds for the waist-tall green recycling bins were provided by local businesses and civic organizations. Wills and Key Club advisor Mariah Cline spent their summer visiting local businesses and civic clubs to ask for support. Each bin was a $79 donation for purchase and holds an advertisement slot for the group sponsoring the bin.

Eleven different businesses, organizations, and civic clubs came forward to be a part of the green service project.

“It is great to see all the support from the community,” said Wills.

The idea for the project stemmed from Wills’ “Green Movement” essay which was awarded first place in a statewide contest, “The World Around You..How to Improve Your City” sponsored by the League of Kansas Municipalities last February.

Wills’ message was the Liberal community could be improved by recycling and educating the community on the benefits of recycling. She became dedicated to applying her message to the community and to incorporating a way for local businesses to become involved. Wills said she feels hopeful the action at LHS will inspire others in the community to take part.

“I appreciate everyone’s support,” said Wills. “It means a lot to me. I hope people see what we are doing here and take part, or maybe do a similar recycling program. I think we are setting an example for the whole community.”

Wills said the high school currently houses 20 recycling bins but could use more.

Any business or organization interested in supporting the green effort may contact the Key Club through the high school.

Recycling bins are supported by Clingan Tires of Liberal, Tan It By Girlfriends, Spencer Browne’s Coffee House, McDonald’s, Pizza Hut, Emporia State University, Scantlin’s Furniture, Carpet and Mini Storage, Dr. Dora Davis and Dr. Steve Cauble - Doctors of Optometry, Kiwanis of Liberal, Mortgages Unlimited Inc., and Big Brother Big Sisters of Seward, Haskell, and Stevens Counties.

Wills is the daughter of Jim and Melinda Wills of Liberal.

Laura Estes is the Lifestyles Editor for The Southwest Times. She can be contacted at lifestyles@swdtimes.com. This article was reprinted with permission from The Southwest Times, August 25, 2010 issue.
7th grade students from around the state are invited to enter the “If I Were Mayor, I Would…” Essay Contest and be one of six geographic regional winners. Winners will receive a $250 savings bond. One grand prize winner will be selected to represent the entire state. The winners, along with their parents and teachers, will be recognized at a special ceremony in Topeka on February 2, 2011.

• The contest is open to all Kansas students enrolled in the 7th grade during the 2010-2011 school year.

• Each entry must contain the student’s name, home address, telephone number, school, and teacher’s name.

• Essays may not exceed 250 words and must fit on one page.

• Essays must address the subject and begin with “If I were mayor, I would…”

• Only one essay may be submitted per student.

• Essays will be judged based on the following: creativity, clarity, sincerity of thought, and proper use of grammar.

• Essays must be received at the LKM office by Monday, December 6, 2010. Winners will be notified by the beginning of January 2011.

• Essays will not be returned and will become the property of LKM.

• LKM retains the right to publish essays along with the names and likenesses of each student.

A completed entry form must accompany each essay. You may download the form at www.lkm.org/youtheducation. All entries must be received by Monday, December 6, 2010. Mail to: LKM, Attn: Junior High Essay Contest, 300 SW 8th Avenue, Suite 100, Topeka, KS 66603.
O
ver the last several years, the City of El Dorado has taken a series of planned thoughtful steps to ensure the long-term health of staff. Unfortunately, the changes began because of the significant increases in health care costs burdening the City. Like many other government agencies, health care was doled out generously and was soon perceived as an entitlement. Annual expenses steadily increased by 15% to 25%, making it necessary for the City to do something different.

Our first step was to shift from a traditional premium-based medical health insurance policy to a self-funded plan, in which we directly reimburse our employees for covered health care expenses, while also purchasing catastrophic insurance for added protection against major events. This helped us in two important ways. First, it dramatically reduced our health care expenses. Second, and most importantly, it facilitated our employees becoming active participants in the selection of medical services and providers. The net result was better, faster, and more affordable care.

The second step we took was to change our prescription benefit plan. In my experience, the prescription component of our employee benefit plans was always the least discussed and often overlooked part of our plan design. With continuing increases in the use of prescriptions as part of the standard treatment regimen, and with prescription costs growing as a larger percentage of our overall health care costs, we could no longer afford to ignore this piece of our health care plan.

By design, our employees are partners in our health care system and help steer the direction of our health care plan by making recommendations to the City Commission. When our employees pick up a prescription, they share in the expense of the prescription by paying a copay and/or a percentage of the total prescription cost, and the balance is paid by the City. Because we do not have the expertise or resources, we contracted with a pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) to “manage” our pharmacy benefit the City provides to its employees. Many municipalities may also contract with a similar entity to administer the pharmacy benefit. The PBMs were supposed to hold down our costs by ensuring the least expensive medications were dispensed and increased savings as a result of employees using their mail order pharmacy.

After our costs continued to rise, we decided to contact some consultants to assist us in determining whether or not we were indeed saving money. What we discovered while examining our prescription costs was shocking. I had always been told that “mail order” prescriptions were less expensive than those filled by local retail pharmacies. We found that this was simply not true. While a mail order prescription may appear less expensive because our employee’s out of pocket expense is initially lower, it is overall more expensive to the plan (City) and hence the employee. What really happens with mail order is quite different than what we were told, and I think misunderstood by most of the general public. After we cost compared the mail order prices and the prices the PBM was charging the City for prescriptions against prices we could get at the local pharmacies, we decided a change was definitely needed.

In our case, the use of mail order resulted in higher expenses to the City’s benefit plan and is something all employers should be aware of in designing their benefit plans. We discovered that PBMs were using incentives, which would save the employee money when switching to mail order, however, the overall cost of the prescription to the plan (City) was significantly higher than the retail prices, without standard discounts, offered at local pharmacies.

In our investigation of the expenses associated with several highly used drugs, we learned some important lessons most purchasers of health care never see. The cost from PBMs were double, sometimes more than what the standard going rate is at a local pharmacy. Our employees liked using the local pharmacies more and the City was able to keep its tax dollars circulating in the community instead of sending it out of state.

So what’s the final word on this subject? Pay careful attention to the benefit plan design and ask for assistance when reviewing the information from PBMs. Understand the real price of the prescription to determine whether or not it is a good deal. The information from PBMs contains formulas and discounts making it difficult to know the actual cost of prescriptions when performing a comprehensive cost comparison. Eventually, our City received the information needed to appropriately analyze these costs and we realized we needed to make significant changes. Not only did these changes save money overall, it allowed employees access to our local pharmacies keeping their dollars within the city. I would encourage all communities to do the same.

Herbert E. Llewellyn, Jr. is the City Manager for the City of El Dorado. He can be reached at herb@eldoks.com or (316) 321-9100.
To Protect, Serve, and Blog

One of the important services provided by the League of Kansas Municipalities (LKM) is education. We focus a great deal of our efforts on supporting city officials as they work towards the goal of good governance. But another key element of our teaching pursuits is that of youth civics education.

Last year, LKM unveiled a new workbook for third-grade students (available online at http://www.lkm.org/youtheducation) to help teachers address the state civics requirements. As part of the workbook, LKM identified some of the key services that cities provide. The lesson includes information on a city’s governing body, fire protection, water service, and the police department. It is often the last topic on that list that rouses the most interest from young students. Police officers evoke images of crisp uniforms, shiny badges, car chases, and the childhood vision of good conquering evil. And, given the degree of sacrifice required by a job in law enforcement, it is appropriate that students learn the value of service that officers provide every day that they are on the job.

In Overland Park, there is an additional image added to the traditional list of police officers wearing uniforms, carrying badges, and chasing bad guys. It is the image of a writer. Earlier this summer, Overland Park Police Chief John Douglass began writing a blog on behalf of the police department entitled, Just the Facts (http://oppdchief.blogspot.com). So far, the result has been successful enough to ensure that writing stays on the list of important police officer duties.

Sharing the Facts

In recent years, social media has spread exponentially. Its use dominates realms from private business and personal use to every level of government. So, it is no surprise that police departments have joined the ranks in participating in social media.

In his first post, Chief Douglass noted that he is not the first police chief to incorporate blogging into city service. He pays tribute to Kansas City, Missouri Police Chief Jim Corwin, who was a source of inspiration for the Overland Park blog. Chief Douglass commented that Chief Corwin and his staff “have used his blog to get vital and important information out to the public.” He explained that they share the same motivation for writing a blog: “to provide timely news information, to recognize noteworthy accomplishments of the men and women of our police department, to inform the public, primarily the citizens of Overland Park concerning issues and events important to our City, and finally, to offer a transparent window into the workings of our police department.”

During a recent interview, Chief Douglass continued to credit Chief Corwin as a strong model of effective communication. “When Kansas City was pursuing the Waldo rapist, Chief Corwin used the blog to keep the public informed almost in real-time, so citizens weren’t waiting for the news broadcasts.” Chief Douglass saw the benefits of using the blog as a tool to better reach citizens, particularly when considering the public trend toward the use of social media. The City of Overland Park uses Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and Flickr. The police department determined that Chief Douglass’s blog would be a nice complement to the City’s social-media pursuits.

After Chief Douglass’s introduction, his first full post served to encourage morale in the office by commending the efforts of a new member of the force, Officer Phillip Windholz. Officer Windholz provided emergency CPR to a non-breathing victim, while the medical personnel prepared the victim for transportation. Chief Douglass added that the Field Training Officer Wes Griffith, “advised that Officer Windholz acted, ‘without hesitation in trying to save the woman’s life,’ and credits Officer Windholz’s fast action with the woman being able to breathe on her own again.” In addition to sharing positive stories about the department, Chief Douglass also uses his blog to practice good management by recognizing the members of his team.

As modeled by Chief Corwin, Just the Facts also operates as a practical tool. Since Chief Douglass launched his blog in June, he has used the site to disseminate information on a number of comment-worthy crimes. He has alerted the community of suspects who are on the lam (and apprised the community after officers capture the suspects), warned drivers about traffic concerns, and used the blog as a platform to announce Overland Park Police Department (OPPD) initiatives like the annual “Click It or Ticket” Grant Enforcement Campaign. Each entry provides an opportunity to share the important endeavors of an essential city service.

The Process of Publication

Overland Park Executive Officer, Jim Weaver, notes that while the blog is Chief Douglass’s personal creation, other staff members contribute to the process. Chief Douglass receives stories and ideas from the administrative staff, sergeants, crime statisticians, and the department’s press releases. To ensure effective time management, he approves and posts some stories contributed by others in the department.

Part of the process also included the consideration of whether to allow comments on the blog. After some deliberation, Chief Douglass decided not to allow comments. The administration had observed other municipal-blog comments taking on a very negative tone, and they wanted to avoid the comments turning into a sideshow. Instead, they allow feedback on the OPPD Facebook page and via e-mail on the blog, which has served as an interactive tool for communication between the department and the Overland Park citizenry.

As a whole, the blog is a team effort that has yielded very positive results. Chief Douglass noted that the publication is a “small part of what the police department does, but an effective piece of service.” It has also been a creative opportunity that has provided enjoyment for the author. Chief Douglass noted that while his “MPA required a great deal of technical writing, he does not approach the blog as an English major or a professional writer. The great part about a blog is that it takes on a more casual tone so anyone can participate.” And given the positive response from the community, the next version of the LKM’s youth-education workbook may just include a picture of a police officer with a shiny badge, uniform, and his hands on a shiny laptop.

Nathan Eberline is the Intergovernmental Relations Associate for the League of Kansas Municipalities. He can be reached at neberline@lkm.org or (785) 354-9565.
In 1919, the Army, concerned about its ability to respond to a crisis, ordered a convoy of its trucks to travel across the United States. The objective was to collect information about the nation’s inchoate highway system. The 2,000 mile journey took 62 days to complete. The trip confirmed the need for a more comprehensive and efficient network of roads. Funding for the project, however, was not appropriated until 1956 when President Eisenhower signed the 1956 Federal-Aid Highway Act. The new law included both a funding source and design guidelines for the new interstate highway system. The multi-billion dollar project was finally completed in the early 1990s, a period of over 4 decades. Today, it traverses across 47,000 miles of countryside and reaches all corners of the country.

The nation’s electric grid shares a similar history. In the early 20th Century, the U.S. grid consisted of 4,000 individual and independent electric utilities, many with their own power distribution network. Producers supplied power via low-voltage connections to local customers. As the Century marched forward, demand increased. In response, local utilities sought ways to make their operations more efficient. Soon, they began to interconnect their lines, supplying power to larger geographic areas. The cooperation allowed producers to operate more efficiently, leading to more consolidation. Eventually, what began as 4,000 independent operators transformed into three large inter-connected systems (as shown right).

The electrical grid transports power in a similar manner as a highway system moves automobiles. Power is generated and then it is distributed to its final destination. Much like the highway system that predates interstate highways, the grid’s current infrastructure is inefficient and outdated. President Obama described it as an anachronistic system that is wasteful. In fact, it is responsible for nearly a third of America’s greenhouse gas emissions. Moreover, it has become increasingly susceptible to outages and blackouts. Utilities are also having difficulties placing new conventional above-ground transmission lines. The not-in-my-backyard response of many suburban and urban communities is paradoxical since many of these same communities need transmission infrastructure upgrades.

The Smart Grid

The smart grid integrates 3,200 electric distribution utilities (both public and private), over 10,000 generating units and thousands of miles of transmission lines to deliver power to customers spread over thousands of square miles. In fact, at its core, the smart grid operates the same as the existing grid: power is produced, transported, and consumed. Yet, it is unfair to characterize it, as just another grid repair or improvement. The smart grid modernizes the relationship between power producers and consumers. According to the Department of Energy, the smart grid is an automated electric power system that operates through a complex network of sensors, devices, and computers. The system generates and analyzes billions of data points from which it is able to monitor and control the production of electricity so that it can maintain system stability.
ability to sense, monitor, and when necessary, control the electrical system, given a set of parameters or conditions, is what makes the system “smart.” The end result is a more user-friendly, environmentally sensitive, and more secure system to transport electricity.

Implementing a smarter electric grid will require the participation of a myriad of stakeholders ranging from regulatory agencies (Department of Energy, Southwestern Power Pool, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, North American Reliability Corporation, and Kansas Electric Transmission Authority, etc.), to private enterprise and industry. It will also require the coordination of complicated financing schemes, political will and negotiation, and the deployment of technology. (See Smart Grid Matrix below)

Although specific amounts cost to benefits vary, it seems clear that in the long run the smart grid’s benefits will outweigh its cost. Preliminary Department of Energy (DOE) estimates determined that at least $165 billion will be needed for distribution and transmission line upgrades. In its report, the DOE also calculated that by amortizing these new costs over 20 years, the smart grid could be funded with an $8 billion annual increase in funding. Because utilities and governments, on average, spend $18 billion annually on the grid related projects, yearly spending would likely need to be increased to over $26 billion.

Expected benefits for consumers, the environment, and the system’s reliability will likely accrue to between $638 and $802 billion dollars over the 20-year-period. As such, the smart grid likely produces a benefit to cost ratio of approximately 4:1 to 5:1.

The availability of smart grid technology will help consumers improve their understanding of how electric utilities set rates. According to the DOE, customers would be able to track their electricity usage as they do their bank account. Through the use of smarter meters, they will be able to log-in and be provided with real-time data on their consumption patterns. They will be able to see how much electricity they are using, when they are using it (likely by hour), and how much it costs during that time. Then, a customer could adjust his or her behavior accordingly, which often leads to lowering his or her individual consumption when prices and overall demand are highest. It will also make net metering easier. Again, through enhanced data tracking, consumers will be able to monitor the amount of electrical generation they produce through wind, solar, or other forms of on-site generation and how it affects their bill.

The increase in consumer participation in the energy markets may also lead to a decrease in overall industry costs. The DOE suggests that energy price signals at the individual level impact the overall supply and demand nature of energy prices—essentially, creating a more efficient marketplace and correcting the price of electricity. For example, according to a DOE report, the organized wholesale electricity markets of PJM and the New York Independent System Operator (NYISO) have saved customers between $430 million and $1.3 billion a year by improving operating efficiencies and stabilizing electricity price fluctuations.

The present grid’s instability and vulnerabilities cost ratepayers billions each year. In fact, researchers suggest that up to 10% of electricity is lost or stolen in some American cities. Because the smart grid is more secure, it avoids disruptions, outages, and blackouts, which will increase productivity by billions of dollars. For example, in August 2003, a blackout occurred that impacted nearly the entire Mid-Atlantic and Northeast. According to estimates, over 28 million people lost power for up to 4 days and the U.S. economy lost over $10 billion. In an average year, U.S. firms lose approximately $150 billion in productivity because of outages, disruptions, and blackouts.

### Smart Grid Matrix

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<th><strong>Funding Sources</strong></th>
<th><strong>Technology</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Ratepayers, Tax-payers, Location, Equity</td>
<td>Cost, Renewables, Environmental Impact</td>
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<th><strong>Government</strong></th>
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<td>Federal, State, Local Politics and Policies</td>
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<th><strong>Utilities</strong></th>
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<td>Private, Public, Municipal, Co-ops, Independent Producers</td>
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<th><strong>Consumers</strong></th>
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<td>Residential, Commercial, Industrial Costs and needs</td>
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Consider the effects of poor power reliability at a commercial facility such as a bank or any firm dependent on data records. In a single power event, data can be lost or corrupted that may cost millions of dollars to recover or replace. The effects of an insecure grid for a manufacturing or research facility may be even greater. Because many of these firms utilize power-sensitive industrial processes or research methodologies, they are vulnerable to power fluctuations. In fact, the DOE suggests that some firms are so sensitive that a momentary voltage dip causes the same negative impact as a several minute long outage. Moreover, as organizations continue to add automation and technological sophistication, the need for stable power will likely grow. As a result, the DOE predicts that by 2011, nearly 1 out of 5 organizations will require digital-quality power that the smart grid can provide.\(^\text{21}\)

The smart grid will also generate widespread environmental benefits. The Energy Information Administration (EIA) suggests that improvements to the electric power sector present the best opportunity to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.\(^\text{22}\)

Consider a neighborhood equipped with smart meters. Residents can calculate their energy usage and then take steps to reduce their carbon footprint. Smart appliances synced to a smart meter can be programmed to run at times when demand is lower. Finally, as mentioned before, the smart grid will likely increase the popularity of net metering. As these tools come online, they will likely decrease the demand for non-renewable electrical generation. During the transition to a modern grid, new green jobs will also be created.\(^\text{23}\)

A smart grid will also hasten the development and deployment of renewable energy sources and generators. Because renewable energies are often intermittent, they can quickly disrupt grid stability. As such, they require technology that can constantly balance power supply and demand. Under the current grid scheme, when demand outpaces supply, the grid may shut down.\(^\text{24}\) As a result, many providers still use conventional power sources even if they possess a large inventory of renewable resources. In fact, because conventional power facilities have long start-up times, they often remain “on” even in optimal wind or solar conditions. Although, it is beyond the scope of this article, research is ongoing in power storage technology that would compensate for wind and solar power’s volatility.\(^\text{25}\)

In 2003, the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) analyzed the potential environmental benefits of a national smart grid. The group identified that, on average, consumers would reduce their electrical demand by 4%. They also concluded that an “interstate” grid and subsequent improvements in energy efficiency would likely reduce greenhouse gas emissions by between 13% and 25%, the equivalent of 100-200 million metric tons of carbon dioxide. Again, using the interstate system as a metaphor, the smart grid has the same environmental benefit of removing 1-2 million cars from the road each year.\(^\text{26}\)

Perhaps the most noticeable change will be evident in the grid’s overall security and reliability. Because a power disruption in the current grid, i.e. a blackout, often has a domino effect, the grid, as a whole, is at risk. However, a smart grid helps to mitigate that risk by detecting and isolating outages before they become systemic. In other words, while the new grid cannot prevent outages, it can contain them better. When outages do occur, the modern grid will be better equipped to identify the specific grid locations that need repair. As a result, utilities and power providers’ outage response and restoration times will likely be quicker.\(^\text{27}\) This is especially valuable in rural communities, where outages tend to run longer because of increased travel times.\(^\text{28}\)

### Lawrence Smart Meters

In late March 2010, the DOE announced that Westar Energy and the City of Lawrence would be a test market for the next generation of grid technology. The federal grant, worth $19 million, would replace the City’s 43,000 electric meters with “smart” meters.\(^\text{29}\) Another $27 million dollars, according to Westar, is earmarked for computer and software upgrades. The project, called SmartStar Lawrence, is expected to generate savings of between 5 and 15% per monthly billing cycle for Lawrence residents and businesses. For larger consumers, the savings could be even greater.\(^\text{30}\)

The utility expects savings to result from greater customer awareness and access to information. Again, the use of smart meters will permit Lawrence residents “bank-like” access to their account. For example, a resident could compute the difference between using energy efficient light bulbs and traditional incandescent bulbs. They may also calculate differences in costs associated with running appliances at peak times versus non-peak times. The utility also believes that smart meters will improve its response times during outages. Westar explained that because the new technology facilitates two way communications between provider and customer, officials will be able identify outages quicker. The project is expected to be completed and operational in three years.\(^\text{31}\)

\(^{Jonathan Fisk was the Research Associate for the League of Kansas Municipalities. He is now in a PhD program at Colorado State University.}\)
The Smart Grid – Benefits and Challenges


Ferrey, Steven. “Restructuring a green grid: legal challenges to accommodate new renewable energy infrastructure.”

Ferrey, Steven. “Restructuring a green grid: legal challenges to accommodate new renewable energy infrastructure.”

Temporary Cereal Malt Beverage Permits

Cities are allowed to regulate alcoholic liquor to the extent they are not in conflict with state statute. Thus, cities have various kinds of licensure for private clubs, clubs and drinking establishments, caterers, and temporary permits for short-term events. The authority for these types of licenses derives from state statute.

Cereal malt beverage (CMB) regulation is entirely local, however, Cities require permits to serve CMB for consumption on the premises, general retailers, for off-premise consumption, and limited retailers. The only involvement by the State is that the permit applications used by cities must be on a form approved by the Attorney General and the Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control of the Kansas Department of Revenue (ABC) issues a stamp for the local permit upon payment of a fee by the applicant.

For many years, cities have issued temporary CMB licenses under their home rule authority, and until this year, it had never been a problem. For example, special events of short duration typically warrant a license just for those events. Apparently, the ABC became aware of the temporary licenses and indicated to wholesale CMB distributors that they could not deliver CMB to holders of temporary licenses. The change had nothing to do with a problem regarding a temporary licensee, but merely a sudden awareness that cities were issuing these licenses, and a very technical reading of the statutes involved.

The ABC requested an Attorney General Opinion asking whether a beer wholesaler can sell CMB to holders of temporary licenses that do not meet the requirements of statute. K.S.A. 41-2703 states that “[r]etailers’ licenses shall be issued either on an annual basis or for the calendar year.” It further states that the city must notify the distributors of any license nonrenewal on or before April 1, if the license has been issued on an annual basis. K.S. A. 41-307 states that a beer distributor has the authority to deliver CMB to licensees licensed under K.S.A. 41-2702. Thus, the question specifically asked by the ABC was whether licenses issued on a temporary, rather than an annual or calendar basis, allowed distributors to furnish CMB to temporary permit holders.

The Attorney General, in Opinion 2010-12, opined that a beer distributor may not sell CMB to a person holding a license that is not issued on an annual or calendar year basis. This decision was based upon a plain, very technical, reading of the statute. The opinion goes on to state that cities may use their home rule authority to issue special events shorter term CMB licenses, because this supplements state law and would not be in conflict with state law. The opinion also states that cities may impose reasonable requirements in regulating CMB at events of short duration including licensure.

However, the opinion also states that beer distributors cannot deliver CMB to holders of these licenses. That begs the question of what purpose would be served in exercise a city’s home rule authority.

Because this opinion leaves in question the ultimate use of temporary CMB licenses, we offer the following suggestions for cities. One option for cities would be to issue the license for a calendar year, but require the licensee to return the license after the event. Another option would be license for the calendar year, but for specific events within that calendar year.

It is unclear whether the ABC would consider this sufficiently compliant with the statute, but it would meet the technical requirement of the statutes. Ultimately, a legislatively solution may be the best option, but it seems unnecessary if cities can simply resolve the issue by issuing a calendar year or annual license, even though the event for which the license is issued is of short duration.

Another issue regarding CMB requirements is that K.S.A. 41-2702 states, “Each applicant for a retailer’s license or renewal of such a license shall submit to the director a copy of the completed application for such license or license renewal, together with a fee of $25. Upon receipt of such application, the director shall authorize a state stamp to be affixed to the license.” However, despite the plain language of the statute, the ABC requires cities, not applicants, to collect and send the $25 to the ABC. Of course, cities would always have the option of informing the applicant of the requirement to send the money directly to the ABC.

Finally, the ABC has issued a letter to cereal malt beverage distributors, city and county clerks, and other interested parties discussing the Attorney General opinion. It states that effective October 1, 2010, “distributors may not sell or deliver any CMB to a CMB licensee unless the CMB license is issued on an annual basis or for the calendar year.” It further states that any previous communication on the issue is null and void. Cities should examine their policies and licensing ordinances to make sure that they are in compliance with the letter of the law.

Sandy Jacquot is Director of Law/General Counsel for the League of Kansas Municipalities. She can be reached at sjacquot@lkm.org or (785) 354-9565.
To attract new home development in Maize, City staff met with local area developers on September 9, 2009 to propose the following utility incentive package for new homebuyers in Maize:

1. New homes valued at $249,999 and below will receive a $2,000 water/sewer credit.
2. New homes valued between $250,000 and $499,999 will receive a $4,000 water/sewer credit.
3. New homes valued at $500,000 and above will receive a $6,000 water/sewer credit.

All of the developers were supportive of the proposal. Five developers committed to a 100% match of the City’s incentives and a sixth developer committed to a 50% match. In addition, some of the home builders in the developments also agreed to match the City’s and developer’s incentives. Thus, the local incentives for a new home buyer in Maize can range from $3,000 to $18,000 depending on the value of the home.

The Maize City Council approved the incentive package at their September 21, 2009 meeting. The original incentive package was offered for newly constructed homes for sale by builders and under contract between October 10, 2009 and December 1, 2009. The package was marketed through the City’s website, the Fall Parade of Homes, and the developers. The Council directed staff to evaluate the package after December 1, 2009 to see if it was justified to offer the incentives in 2010.

City staff’s goal was to have 10 contracts signed with an average value of $275,000 during the original time period. A total of three homes and six lots were sold between October 10, 2009 and December 1, 2009. Out of the 9 sold, 2 lots, and 2 homes qualified for the $2,000 credit and the remainder qualified for the $4,000 credit.

Based on the success of the fall incentive package, the Council approved keeping the incentives in place for all of 2010 with a review at the July 2010 meeting.

Through June 30, 2010, 12 homes have qualified for the water credit. Two have qualified for the $6,000 water credit, 2 have qualified for the $4,000 credit and 8 will receive the $2,000 credit.

The results have shown that this program is a success. Even in the down economy, there were 51 new housing starts in Maize in 2009 and there have been 23 new starts through June 30, 2010.

Jocelyn Reid is the City Clerk for the City of Maize. She can be reached at jreid@cityofmaize.org or (316) 722-7361.
Extreme Park Makeover
Rossville Playground Dreams Come True

After nine months and nearly $130,000 a dream that began with four Rossville community moms became a reality on Sunday, June 13, 2010. The children of Rossville broke through a paper chain and streamed onto the amazing new Leathers-Designed playground that had been just a drawing on paper less than a year earlier.

The Rossville Community Foundation was a trusted partner in acquiring funds to build the playground. Contributions were also received from donors who sponsored park components, benches, t-shirts, fence pickets, decorative tiles, and pulled pork dinners. Efforts to obtain the necessary funds to build the playground were helped in a big way from individual donors, businesses, and by Rossville PRIDE volunteers who secured a $75,000 Small Community Improvement Grant through the Kansas Department of Commerce. By build day, the Park Improvement Committee had enough money needed to make the playground happen.

Core committee members Misti Lundin, Sarene McCrory, Natasha Streit, and Angie Essman, were the heart and soul of the effort to improve the park. Before, during, and after the five-day build, the four moms spent long days and many evenings making sure the site was ready. Along the way, their steering committee members coordinated fabulous meals for all the build volunteers, child care for the children of the builders, and artwork that makes the new playground a one-of-a-kind destination in northeast Kansas.

The park was completed with the help of hundreds of volunteers who came together to build it in just five days. From June 9, 2010 to June 13, 2010, volunteers worked from sun up to sun down and often in the pouring rain to make sure it was completed on time.

The new playground features two towers, the dawg house and tree house. The dawg house features a bulldog painting, a giant letter “R” with a window in the middle, and a studded dog collar with a 2010 tag. The tree house is adorned with hand-cut, painted 3-D leaves and a squirrel. Other additions to the new playground include the climbing wall, with a beanstalk mural; four standard swings, complemented by a new tire swing; monkey bars; balance beams; and ladders that share space with a triple slide and an enclosed spiral slide.

Separated from the main playground by a picket fence is the Tot Lot, geared toward preschool visitors. The Tot Lot features toddler swings and an adaptive swing for children who need more support. The custom combine play structure has realistic tire treads, a control panel, and a tunnel through the header. The village features store fronts of Doug’s Pharmacy and The Flower Shop, which sits next to a red barn and silo with a menagerie of hand-painted farm animals inside. A gum ball slide, painted to look like a real gum ball machine was also added to the Tot Lot area.

Information provided by the City of Rossville. All photos provided by the Rossville Park Improvement Committee.
The City Clerk and Municipal Finance Officers Association of Kansas (CCMFOA) is currently seeking nominations for the 2011 Mildred Vance City Clerk/Finance Officer of the Year award. This prestigious award is presented each year to a nominated city clerk or finance officer who has made significant contributions to the state association, the profession, and to their city.

To be eligible for the award, nominees must: (1) be a current Kansas city clerk or finance officer who has held the position for at least three years; (2) be a member of CCMFOA for at least three years; and (3) have attained the status of Certified Municipal Clerk (CMC) or have received the GFOA Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting. Nominations may be submitted by fellow city clerks, mayors, councilmembers, city managers/administrators, or fellow employees.

This award was named in honor of Mildred Vance, former auditor and City Clerk/Municipal Finance Officer of Parsons, Kansas, who served her community from 1948 to 1988. Mildred was instrumental in developing and promoting professional education programs for city clerks and finance officers at the state and national levels, and was one of the first 100 clerks to receive a CMC award in 1972. Mildred was later accepted into the Academy for Advanced Education and served as a director to the International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC). She strongly believed that city clerks and finance officers should contribute to their communities, and she unselfishly gave her time and talents in church, community, and civic activities.

The recipient of the award will be announced at the annual CCMFOA Spring Conference in Wichita in March 2011. The award will be presented at the annual League of Kansas Municipalities Conference in October 2011.

If you know or work with a city clerk or finance officer who is deserving of recognition and meets the above criteria, please contact Cheri R. Peine, City Clerk, Oswego, KS for a nomination form. Fax: (620) 795-4873; Phone: (620) 795-4433; Email: cpeine@oswegoks.com. Applications are due January 1, 2011.
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NLC President Ronald O. Loveridge, Mayor, Riverside, California
The City of Amarillo, with a (pop.194,000) is seeking a new City Manager. Amarillo is situated at the intersection of Interstate 40 and Interstate 27, approximately 120 miles north of Lubbock and 360 miles northwest of Dallas-Fort Worth.

The City of Amarillo and the associated region have a high quality of life with a very healthy governance and political environment. The City is a home-rule municipality and operates under a Council/Manager form of government vesting the responsibility for daily operations in the City Manager. The Manager reports to the City Commission and serves at their pleasure. The City Manager oversees eight divisions, a workforce of 1,900 employees, and an annual operating budget of $236 million.

This position requires a minimum five years experience as a senior executive, with previous experience managing major initiatives that can reshape the future of a community. The successful candidate will be fiscally conservative with well-rounded experience in all areas of city operations. In addition, the ideal candidate will have economic development expertise and experience with downtown revitalization and redevelopment projects.

Candidates should possess a Bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university, with a major in public administration, political science, or related field. A Master’s degree in public or business administration is preferred.

To view complete position profile, visit: www.governmentresource.com/pages/CurrentSearches

For more information or to apply, please email resume and cover letter to:
Ron Holifield
Strategic Government Resources
Ron@GovernmentResource.com
214-676-1691
www.sgjobs.com

Director of Emergency Communications

The City of Hutchinson is seeking candidates for its Director of Emergency Communications position. The Hutchinson Reno County Emergency Communications Center (HRCECC) provides emergency communication services to all public safety entities in Reno County (pop.65,000) with 17.5 budgeted staff.

Essential Functions Include: Planning, and directing the operations for HRCECC including various telephone, radio, teletype, (CRT) and other communications systems serving Law Enforcement, Fire Service, SHERIFF’S Department and Emergency Medical response agencies serving Reno County. Analyzes and evaluates law enforcement, fire service and emergency medical service response protocols and makes recommendations to public safety officials for the effective delivery of emergency communications services. Overseeing the selection, supervision, and development of departmental staff. Developing/providing effective training programs for new and current dispatchers to maintain and improve HRCECC operations. Developing the HRCECC’s annual budget as well as monitoring and approving all HRCECC expenditures, purchase agreements, and service contracts.

Candidates should possess an Associate of Arts degree or equivalent with major course work in public administration, criminal justice, or a related field with a minimum of five years of public safety dispatching experience along with three plus years experience in a managerial/supervisory capacity. Two additional years of qualifying experience may be substituted for the Associate of Arts degree. Candidates must also possess National Crime Information Center and Emergency Medical Dispatcher certifications.

Pay range is $54,705 to $77,523 depending upon qualifications. Interested persons may apply at www.hrepporters.com or send resume to: toms@hutchgov.com

Director of Finance-Bel Aire, KS

Essential functions of this position include: budget, internal auditing, investments, debt management, revenue/expenditure tracking, preparation & analyzing of financial statements as well as cash management. Project fiscal management and record is also required. Department head position with supervision and administration of finance department.

This position provides financial forecasting and monitoring of all City funds and operating budgets as well as developing short and long-term fiscal strategies in conformance with generally accepted governmental finance, accounting and auditing principles and practices.

Qualified candidate should possess a Bachelor’s Degree in accounting, finance, public administration or business administration from an accredited college or university; 3 - 5 years of senior level experience in the areas of public-sector accounting, administration, auditing, budget development, municipal financing (including bonds, lease/purchases and public-private

The City of Bel Aire is a fast growing young City bordering Wichita with numerous recreational and cultural amenities. To learn more about Bel Aire, visit www.belaires.gov. Interested persons may apply on-line at www.hrepartners.com (City of Bel Aire) and attach resume with references.

Economic Development Coordinator

The City of Ogallala, NE (pop. 5,107) is looking for a dynamic leader to serve as its economic development coordinator. The City is poised for economic growth as it looks to focus its energy on its economy. While the position will seek to recruit businesses to the community, it will also need to be filled by an individual who can help create programs that provide entrepreneurial opportunities and that grow and retain current employers of the community. The position will require someone with good communication and collaborative skills. Complete job description and an application may be viewed at www.ogallala-ne.gov. Application and Resume may be submitted to: Harold Stewart, City Manager, at 411 East 2nd Street, Ogallala, NE, 69153; or harold.stewart@ogallala-ne.gov. The position will remain open until filled. Salary $57,203-$81,471, DOQ.

Police Officer

The City of Frankfort is accepting applications for a part-time police officer to work 20-25 hours/week. Must be 21 years of age, have no criminal history or lengthy traffic record, a valid drivers license, and high school diploma or equivalent. Wages depend on qualifications and experience. Benefits include KPER’s retirement, vacation and sick leave, and partial paid health insurance. To obtain an application, contact City of Frankfort, City Hall, 109 North Kansas Frankfort, KS 66427 or call 785-292-4240. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. The City of Frankfort is an E.O.E.

Police Officer

The McLouth Police Department is accepting applications for a full-time police officer. Applicants must be 21 years of age, possess a valid driver’s license and a high school diploma or equivalent, have no criminal history or lengthy traffic record, be in good physical condition, KLETC certified and preferably, patrol and investigation experienced. Wages are dependent on experience and qualifications. City benefits include BC&BS health insurance, paid vacation and sick leave and KPERS retirement plan. To obtain an application form visit cityofmclouth.org or the McLouth City Hall at 110 North Union Street, McLouth, Kansas 66054. Completed applications with resumes will be accepted until the position is filled. The City of McLouth is an E.O.E.

Public Works Assistant

Quinter (pop. 800) is a thriving, friendly, family-oriented community, located along I-70 between Hays and Colby, with strong community involvement, high quality schools, a hospital, 65 businesses, four churches, youth and adult recreation programs, pool, park, library, grocery, law enforcement, and nearby farms—a great place to work, live, and raise kids.

The Public Work Assistant Superintendent assists with maintenance of city water, sewer, pool, street and park facilities, vehicles, and equipment. Duties include assuring with daily inspections and written reports for water wells and sewer lift stations, routine and emergency repairs, snow removal, mowing, reading water meters, mosquito spraying, and tree trimming. Operates backhoe, street sweeper, front-end loader, dump truck, sewer machine, tractor, packer, and mowing equipment. Participates in developing department budget, inventory, and operational guidelines. This full-time, non-exempt employee reports to the Public Works Superintendent and generally receives assistance from summer hires. Quinter residency required. Immediate opening. Position open until filled. Salary range is $38,126 to $53,373 annually. Overtime may be needed.


For additional information, contact HR at 785-229-3634 or humanresources@ottawaks.gov. EOE
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A Job Well Done

It was home beautiful over the weekend at the Moler household, and a job I had been putting off until the temperatures moderated somewhat came front and center as the focus of my weekend. We have a house that is largely constructed of stone, but it has several large expanses which are wooden and require painting. It requires a variety of jobs which are not particularly pleasant, including working on a high ladder—with out a net I might add.

My parents had a number of rules they lived by their entire lives and one of them, while never verbally articulated, went something like: “Never pay someone do a job you can do yourself.” Certain house painting falls into this category. My parents painted their house all of my life. The last time they painted it, they were in their mid 80’s, and while the job took longer than it had in the past, they paced themselves and did a very workmanlike job. To show how this creed was part of their family DNA, one only has to look at a family photograph of my mom and dad, circa 1944, about 40 ft. off the ground on homemade scaffolding, painting the old barn on the family homestead outside of Jamestown, Kansas.

They also believed that when you undertook a project, you should always endeavor to do the very best you possibly can.

First of all, you must plan for what you need to do, and determine what tools and supplies are going to be necessary for you to accomplish this task. For my house painting job, I had to both determine the kind and type of paint, the right painting equipment to remove the old paint and apply the new paint, and then obtain the appropriate supplies from the hardware store. So, the first step was to plan the job. The second step was to obtain the appropriate supplies necessary to allow me to do the job in a manner which would allow for a positive outcome, a good looking house, and a happy spouse at the end of the day. The third step was the actual process of painting the house. The fourth and final step was to clean up everything.

Now, as I have told son Seth, and his BFF Joe for many years, don’t do a job unless you are willing to do it properly. So when painting, that always means to me that you must prepare the surface you are going to paint before actually painting. It always amazes me how many people seem to think that painting just involves, well, painting. Nothing could be further from the truth. The reality is that the real work in any job involving painting is the preparation. Doing this often involves scrapping and removing the flaking or dead paint. So, I began scraping the house.

Once I was satisfied that I had done as much damage as I possibly could do with the scrapper, it was time to start painting. Applying the paint is a very satisfying undertaking as there is a beginning, middle, and end to the process. Also, when you are done, you can see that you have actually achieved something. Most life endeavors are not quite so clear cut. But, painting a house has a certain positive reinforcement that allows you to see the improvement from start to finish.

Finally, once you have painted the house, there is yet another time consuming step which must be followed. This is the clean up portion of the project. You must be willing to adequately clean all of your tools, otherwise they will be ruined and must be thrown away. Also, there is great potential for a large mess with the paint, the roller tray, the roller, the brushes, or any other thing which is left sitting about.

I always try to emphasize the point that you should never undertake a job unless you are willing to complete the job before you move on to something else. Very few things drive me as crazy as people who start a job, and then for reasons known only to them can’t seem to finish it or do it in such a lackadaisical way that they might as well have never started in the first place.

This is a classic problem and one of the reasons you have to adequately set aside the amount of time it takes for a job to be completed. In the painting example, you must complete all of the steps in their totality.

Completing all of the steps, in the proper order, and giving them the amount of time they require, insures that at the end of the day, you will have produced a quality product you will be proud of and which others will appreciate. Cutting corners or trying to do too much in too little time does not work to anyone’s benefit. Projects always take the time they take. Cutting corners, or doing it the fast and easy way, limits our ability to be successful and will marginalize the finished product.

We live in a time where everything seems to be on fast-forward and projects are expected to be completed at breakneck speed. Despite this, we must always be willing to take the time necessary to do the projects that we undertake, and to be ready, willing, and able to do them in a manner that allows us to have a positive outcome at the end of the day. While I will never be a great house painter, at least I can rest assured that I took the time to do the steps that are required for a workmanlike result. Not only did the job get done, but I can take satisfaction in knowing that I did it as well as I could given my skill level. You can never have a quality output unless you are willing to have a quality input.
2010 LKM Regional Suppers

Please join us for the 2010 Regional Suppers!

These informative sessions will feature a discussion of the LKM 2011 Legislative Priorities. We hope you will take this important opportunity to network with local officials to discuss the upcoming Legislative session.

**Oct. 27, Goodland**
Sugar Hills Country Club
6450 Rd 16
Registration - 6:00 p.m. CST
Dinner - 6:30 p.m. CST
Registration - 5:00 p.m. MST
Dinner - 5:30 p.m. MST

**Oct. 28, Dodge City**
Cowtown Steakhouse
503 E. Trail
Registration - 5:30 p.m.
Dinner - 6:00 p.m.

**Nov. 3, Wichita**
Wichita Art Museum
1400 W. Museum Blvd.
Beren Conference Room
Registration - 5:30 p.m.
Dinner - 6:00 p.m.

**Nov. 4, Concordia**
City Hall
701 Washington
Registration - 5:30 p.m.
Dinner - 6:00 p.m.

**Nov. 17, Leavenworth**
Riverfront Community Center (RFCC)
123 S. Esplanade
Registration - 5:30 p.m.
Dinner - 6:00 p.m.

**Nov. 18, Parsons**
City Hall Basement
112 S. 17th Street
Registration - 5:30 p.m.
Dinner - 6:00 p.m.

Registration is available online at [www.lkm.org/regionalsuppers](http://www.lkm.org/regionalsuppers).

For More Information
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League of Kansas Municipalities
adebusk@lkm.org
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Contact the League of Kansas Municipalities for more information.

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