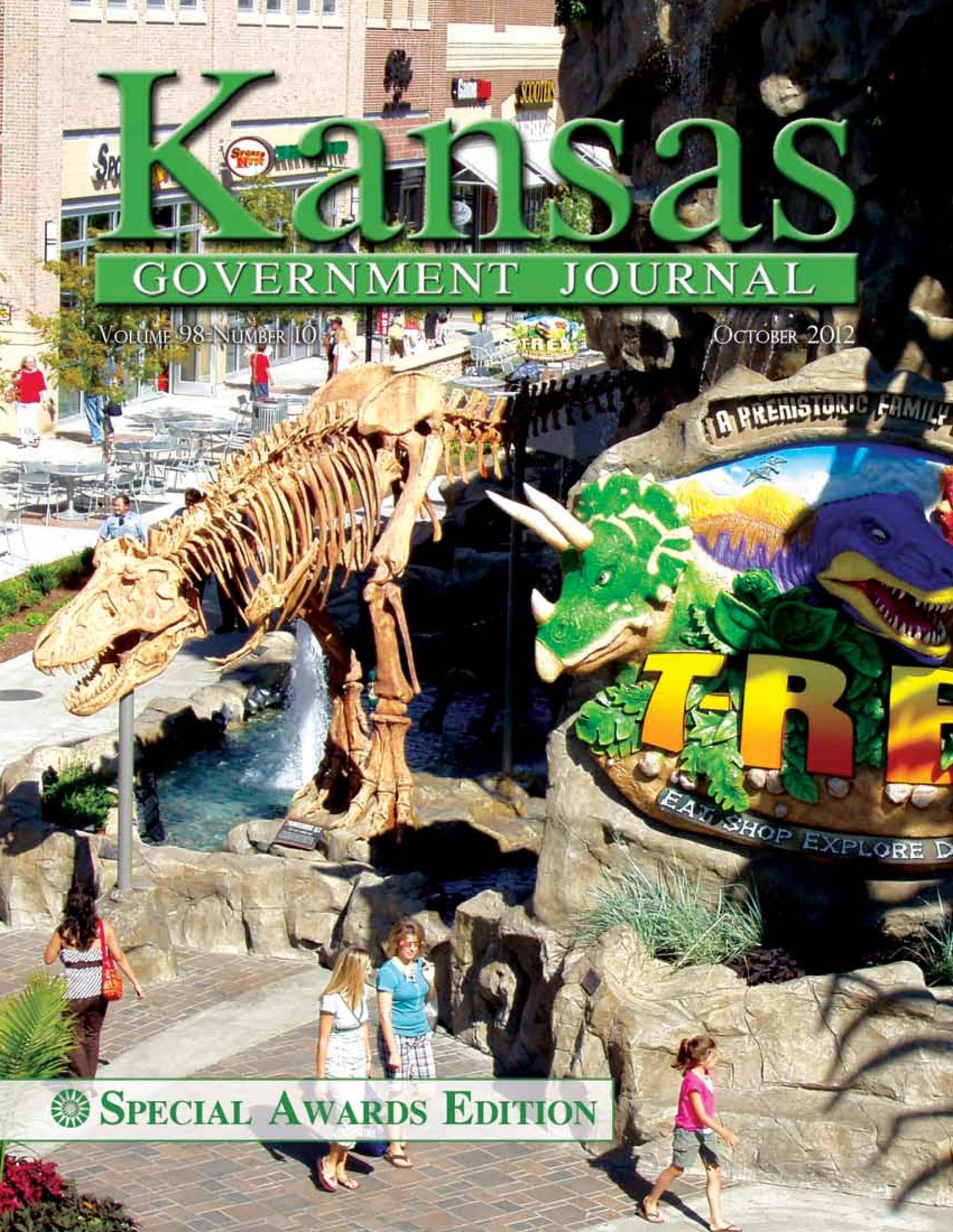


# Kansas

GOVERNMENT JOURNAL

VOLUME 98-NUMBER 10

OCTOBER 2012



SPECIAL AWARDS EDITION



## Dion Avello

Mayor - City of Derby



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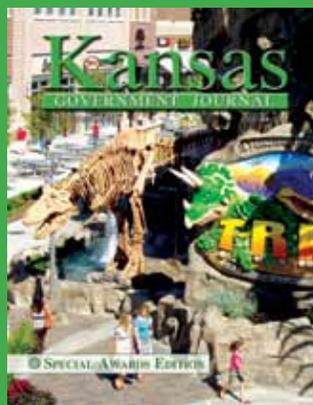
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About the Cover:  
 T-Rex Café located in Legends Outlets in Kansas City is just one of many restaurants and entertainment spots in the area. See related article, beginning on page 317.  
*Photo provided by Kansas Wyandotte County/KCK.*



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*The mission of the League shall be to unify, strengthen, and advocate for the interests of Kansas municipalities to advance the general welfare and promote the quality of life of the people who live within our cities.*

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## November

- 1 - Regional Supper, Mount Hope
- 7 - Regional Supper, Neodesha
- 8 - Regional Supper, Minneapolis
- 9 - MLA: Sexual Harassment, Webinar
- 10 - MLA: Sexual Harassment, Webinar
- 22 - Thanksgiving

## December

- 14 - LKM Governing Body Meeting, Topeka
- 21 - KMIT Board of Trustee Meeting, El Dorado
- 24 - Christmas Eve
- 25 - Christmas Day

## January

- 1 - New Year's Day
- 14 - Legislature Reconvenes
- 21 - Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday

## Obituaries

**Kenneth Allen Francis, 66**, died September 14, 2012, at Olathe Medical Center. Francis was currently serving as the Chief of Police for the City of Gardner. In 2002, Chief Francis was the recipient of the Clarence M. Kelley Award, which is presented to a criminal justice executive, honoring their proactive approach and dedication to improving the criminal justice system. He is the past president of several organizations including: the Johnson County Police Chiefs, the FBI National Academy Associates, the Missouri Police Chiefs Association, and the Metropolitan Police Chiefs' and Sheriffs' Association. He served on various committees with the International Association of Chiefs of Police, and was Chairman of the advisory board to Criminal Justice Studies at Johnson County Community College.

**Lauretta Sawyer King "Kit" Irby, 95**, died August 27, 2012, in Wichita. King served as Mayor of Cheney from 1977-1979. She was a nurse and was active in her church.

**Paul Martin Klotz, 69**, died September 7, 2012, in Topeka. Klotz worked for the League of Kansas Municipalities in legislative affairs, and was the Executive Director of the Association of Community Mental Health Centers of Kansas for more than 20 years. Prior to that, Klotz taught government classes at Lyons High School. While there, he ran for State Representative on the Democratic ticket in 1968. He then worked for Governor Robert Docking developing work-training programs across Kansas.

**LaMonte "Monty" Lauridsen, age 76**, died September 8, 2012, at Bridge Haven Memory Care Cottage in Lawrence. Lauridsen served Baldwin City, participating on several ad hoc city council committees. In the 1980s, he served as a municipal court judge for Baldwin City and in 1985 he was the first recipient of the Chamber of Commerce Service Partnership Award, recognizing him as a Baker University faculty member who gave leadership and service to the Baldwin City community.



## Wamego to Host Next Kansas Sampler Festival

The Kansas Sampler Foundation announced that Wamego will be the host for the 2014-2015 Kansas Sampler Festival. The event is designed to provide the public a sample of what there is to see, do, hear, taste, buy, and learn in Kansas.

Foundation Director Marci Penner said, “We are so excited to bring the festival to Wamego’s picturesque city park. Though Wamego will be the smallest city to ever host this event, we know that other cities in Pottawatomie County will be there to assist.”

Wamego went through an 8-month process including a preliminary application, final application, site visit, and interview before being designated as the ninth community to host the festival. The only event of its kind in the Midwest, the Festival will take place the first weekend of May in the Wamego City Park, and the ballfields just to the east of the park.

The Festival started as an open house for Mil and Marci Penner’s first Kansas guidebook in 1990. Several places in the guidebook

were invited to set up booths at the Penner Farm near Inman. The public response was so positive that the event was given a name, the Kansas Sampler Festival, and became an annual Kansas gathering. Eight thousand people attended in 1997, the final year the Kansas showcase was held on the farm.

Since then, it has moved around the state every two years with stops in Pratt, Ottawa, Independence, Newton, Garden City, Concordia, and Leavenworth.

Liberal will be in charge of the festival for a second year in 2013 when the festival takes place on May 4 and 5 in Light Park.

Each year, approximately 150 communities are represented under large festival tents to help the public plan Kansas day trips and to showcase Kansas entertainers, historic performers, products, food, art, and books. Attendance has ranged from 5,000-8,000. For more information, visit [www.kansassamplerfestival.com](http://www.kansassamplerfestival.com).

## Sporting Kansas City Receives Four Awards

The Stadium Business Awards were announced at the Museo dell’Automobile di Torino in Italy last Spring. Sporting Kansas City earned honors in four of the six categories the company was nominated for, including Venue of the Year, Executive of the Year, the Community Award, and the Product Innovation Award.

LIVESTRONG Sporting Park was selected as Venue of the Year for the world’s best stadium, arena, or sports venue—from the small club to the mega-capacity national sports facilities. The Community Award was given for being a stadium, arena, and major sports complex that has found new ways to support, enhance, and improve its local community.

The sporting park’s state-of-the-art facility, opened in June 2011 and has already hosted the U.S. Men’s and Women’s National Teams, along with the English Premier League’s Newcastle United FC, and Mexico’s Club Deportivo Guadalajara. The stadium also hosted the group stage of the 2011 Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football (CONCACAF) Gold Cup and served as the site for the semifinals and championship matches of the CONCACAF Men’s Olympic Qualifying Tournament in April of 2012.

## Reno County Receives Federal Grant

A Reno County program focused on drug offenders has received a federal grant worth nearly \$107,000 in its first year.

County Administrator Gary Meagher said the 18-month old drug court also can apply for 2 more years of funding totaling more than \$222,000. The money comes from the U.S. Office of Justice Programs.

Judge Joe McCarville said the money will help the program reach capacity. He said the goal is to maintain 30 people in drug court at a time.

The program now serves 12 offenders, up from 7 when it started. Drug courts focus on reducing the rate of imprisonment and its costs. Offenders receive treatment, help in finding jobs, frequent drug testing, and intensive supervision.

## CID Plan In the Works for Liberal

The City of Liberal took the first step in bringing new businesses to the community with the approval of a Community Improvement District (CID) on the north edge of Liberal near the U.S. Highway 83 bypass.

The CID project calls for an International House of Pancakes (IHOP) restaurant and additional retail and commercial space to fill the piece of land north of Tucker Road. Part of the proposal also calls for the City of Liberal to levy a CID sales tax within the improvement district in the amount of 2%. Two phases of the project will provide 21,000 sq. ft. of space for new businesses.

Commissioners said that the resolution is one of many long-term projects that have been in the works to bring new businesses to Liberal.

“There are a lot of things in the works right now. It takes a lot of time and years to get things moving, but I think in Liberal, we are starting to make a move, and we’re going to do some great things,” said Liberal Mayor Tim Lang.

# MAYOR OF THE YEAR

**M**ayor Joe Reardon is continuing a family tradition in public service. His father Jack was a three-term Mayor of Kansas City, Kansas in the 1970s and 1980s. His uncle, Bill, served as a Representative in the Kansas Legislature for 30 years. Reardon served as a District Commissioner before being elected to his first term as Mayor in 2005.

As Mayor/CEO of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Mayor Reardon has overseen an economic development boom benefitting the entire city. The Village West and Legends shopping area draws more than 10-million visitors annually and generates more than \$600-million a year in retail sales. The Hollywood Casino has created 1,000 new, full-time permanent jobs in Wyandotte County. Construction of the Cerner Continuous Campus in Village West will bring 4,000 new jobs to Wyandotte County and generate millions in new property tax dollars. The emergence of those high-paying jobs is already sparking a new wave of apartment construction.

The historic growth under Mayor Reardon's leadership is not just in Village West, but throughout the entire city, ranging from entertainment venues, manufacturing plants, health care facilities, new grocery stores, and new retail stores across the city. Wyandotte County is on the cutting edge of a new frontier. Not only will the Cerner project bring thousands of highly trained workers in the medical technology field, the Google Fiber Project will create entrepreneurial opportunities which are already drawing national attention. The recent designation of the University of Kansas Medical Center as a National Cancer Institute facility will bring world-class scientists and researchers to the city, along with millions of medical research dollars.

Mayor Reardon makes sure providing basic services and quality life are top priorities. The number of violent crimes in KCK has dropped 65% since its high in 1991. And the Unified Government property tax rate is 16% lower than it was in 1997 when the City and County governments consolidated.

Mayor Reardon praises citizens for the dramatic successes in Wyandotte County.

"What rests at the heart of our efforts is our community's willingness to overcome any obstacle or adversity put before us, rolling up our sleeves, standing side-by-side, and believing that together we can make Wyandotte County a better place to live,

work, learn, play, and raise our children," Reardon says. "The State of the Unified Government is strong and the community is poised to continue our progress and ready to rise to our new challenges."



The Kansas Mayors Association named Reardon the 2012 Kansas Mayor of the Year. The Kansas Mayors Association is an organization that promotes the proficiency of mayors in Kansas through study, research, and mutual counsel. The Association annually recognizes a Kansas Mayor who has gone above the call of duty to provide exceptional community leadership. The Kansas Mayors Association is an affiliate of the League of Kansas Municipalities, a nonpartisan organization of over 590 cities in Kansas established by municipal officials in 1910.



## State Receives Federal Grant

The Kansas Board of Pharmacy received a \$400,000 federal grant to bolster its efforts to monitor prescription drugs, reported Barry Grissom, U.S. Attorney for Kansas.

“Prescription drug abuse is the fastest-growing drug problem in America,” Grissom said in the release. “Two-and-a-half times more Americans currently abuse prescription drugs than the number of them using cocaine, heroin, hallucinogens, and inhalants combined.”

The grant, which will apply to fiscal year 2012, will assist the operation of K-TRACS, the State’s prescription drug-monitoring program.

The K-TRACS system is designed to help doctors monitor their own prescribing practices, as well as their patients’ histories of

using controlled substances, by collecting reports from pharmacies regarding those they dispense.

The system can be used to identify patients who need treatment for drug problems and to monitor long-term trends in public health. It is also designed to prevent health care prescribers, dispensers, and consumers from engaging in illegal drug diversion schemes.

The federal grant money primarily will be used to develop ways to share information between states. It also will go toward educating potential and current data requesters in the importance and the use of the data.

The money also may be used to help create criteria to identify health care professionals and patients whose K-TRACS data suggest they may be engaged in unsafe, inappropriate, or illegal activity.

## Kansas Aviation Program Receives Recognition

A Kansas program developed to provide legal and tactical advice to law enforcement officers called to airports has received national recognition.

The “Ops for Cops” program, organized by the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) Aviation Division, was awarded the National Association of State Aviation’s Education Program Award. “Ops for Cops” was presented jointly by KDOT, the Drug Enforcement Administration, Transportation Security Administration, local law enforcement, and airport management groups. It was presented in the past year in El Dorado, Johnson

County, Pratt, and Hutchinson, and is scheduled for several other communities in the coming months.

“We knew the program was adding real value to the law enforcement community when the Kansas Peace Officers Association sought out the program for their annual conference,” said Aviation Director Ed Young.

The Award, which was established in 1993 to recognize state aviation agencies for the education and motivation of the public through outreach efforts, was presented September 11 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

## K-State Awarded Safety Grant

Kansas State University is receiving a \$120,000 federal grant to develop a training program on grain dust safety and explosion hazards at mills and elevators.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) announced that Kansas State is among 72 recipients nationwide of \$10.7 million in safety training grants.

The dust generated at grain handling operations creates risks of fires and explosions. Kansas has had several grain dust explosions

in recent years, including major ones at Haysville and Atchison that resulted in fatalities.

OSHA says Kansas State’s program will be targeted to workers and supervisors in small grain elevator businesses, including flour mills and feed mills. Training and materials will be developed in English and Spanish.

## NetWork Kansas Expands Gardening Program

NetWork Kansas invites Kansas communities to apply for a new economic gardening program that would allow them to offer high-growth businesses in their area targeted toward economic gardening engagements as part of the Kansas Economic Gardening Network.

The NetWork Kansas Economic Gardening Community application process will accept submissions from community partnerships to provide matching funds for economic gardening engagements with 3-7 businesses in an applying community. Additionally, NetWork Kansas has partnered with Mid-American Manufacturing Technology Center (MAMTC) to offer Innovation Engineering engagements to qualified businesses through the economic gardening program. The deadline for initial community applications is October 12, 2012.

The Kansas Economic Gardening Network was launched to connect second-stage companies that have the intent and capacity to grow their business with significant sophisticated technical assistance. Selected businesses interact with an experienced national economic

gardening team who deliver economic gardening services tailored to meet the needs of each business. Examples of economic gardening services include GIS, market research, search engine optimization (SEO) tools, social media monitoring, and sales lead generation.

Jeremy Hill of Wichita State University has completed certification to provide market research expertise to Kansas companies and is the first Kansan certified to provide expertise as part of the national team.

The value of services available for each business is estimated at \$3,500 for economic gardening services and an additional \$7,000 for any business that is also participating in the MAMTC Innovation Engineering program. Communities with 7 participating businesses could receive a total of nearly \$30,000 worth of matching funds from NetWork Kansas as part of this program.

To learn more or to download an application, visit: <http://networkkansas.com/entrepreneurs/kansas-economic-gardening-network>.

# ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR

**S**usan Wettstein, Administrative Assistant of Garnett, Kansas has been selected as the winner of the 2012 Nancy Crain Municipal Administrative Professional of the Year award. Susan was presented the award at the AAKC Administrative Assistants of Kansas Cities (AAKC) spring conference in Newton earlier this year.

Susan has been an active member of AAKC since January, 1998. She has served AAKC well in her capacity on the Public Relations and Nominating Committees as well as co-hosting and hosting two conferences.

Susan has been with the City of Garnett for 27 years, serving 18 years as an Administrative Assistant to the City Manager. She is also the public information officer, which makes her responsible for preparing news releases on a variety of subjects. Besides helping track utility usages and costs, she prepares reports and agendas for all city advisory boards and helps the Economic Development Director with his duties.

Over the years, Susan has helped write grants for the airport, economic development, and the fire department. She is self-taught on how to create web pages and links and has completely revamped the city's websites on her own. This has saved the city money, which is very important in these tough economic times.

Susan is the Editor of *Town Talk*, the City's quarterly newsletter, and *The Prairie Spirit Express*, a quarterly newsletter for the Prairie Spirit Trail State Park. She also manages the City's Facebook page, volunteers as secretary of the Garnett Tourism Advisory Board, and spearheaded the creation of Garnett's Cornstock/Anderson County Corn Festival eight years ago, which brings several thousand people to Garnett each September.

Susan has been the President of the Lake Garnett Cruisers for 18 years; a member of the Prairie Spirit Rail Trail group for 15 years, and worked tirelessly to make sure that the biking/walking trail became a reality for Garnett, Iola, and Ottawa. She also served on the first board for Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Anderson County by writing grants to begin the program. Recently, Susan was recognized by the Garnett Area Chamber of Commerce as the volunteer of the year.

Susan is busy doing whatever she can to promote the city and county, encouraging people to get involved and be proud of what Garnett has to offer. She played an important role in the selection



of a new logo and slogan for the community, "Small, Serene, Simply Garnett."

To be eligible for this award, nominees must be a member of AAKC for five years and employed in an administrative, secretarial, clerical, or related position for at least 10 years with the same municipality. A four-member panel of judges rates the nominees based on service and contribution to the AAKC organization, contributions to their profession, contributions to their community or municipal government, and professional development, education, and training. It's quite obvious that Susan meets all the criteria!

Congratulations to Susan Wettstein for her public service, dedication the City of Garnett, and her contributions to AAKC.



## Municipal Liability and Risk Management

A topic that causes confusion for many city officials and leads to many misconceptions is the basis and extent for municipal liability. In addition, the way to manage liability risks, including what and how much insurance cities need to purchase, is an area of uncertainty.

Many years ago, there was a doctrine that “The King Can Do No Wrong,” which essentially allowed governmental entities to escape liability for just about everything. Then, a model law was developed and eventually adopted in Kansas in 1979, called the Kansas Tort Claims Act (KTCA), K.S.A. 75-6101 *et seq.* The law now is that liability is the rule and exemptions from liability are the exception. A tort is basically a wrongful act that causes injury leading to liability. For example, common torts in cities are individual citizens being injured as the result of some action, or omission of a governmental entity, where the governmental entity owes a duty to the citizen. It might be tripping on a curb, hitting a pothole, being in an accident with a municipal vehicle, and other occurrences too numerous to mention.

While liability is the rule, there are numerous exceptions to city liability, which are found in K.S.A. 75-6104. For example, cities have immunity from liability for performing tasks that are discretionary, as opposed to ministerial. There are numerous cases interpreting when the discretionary function exception applies. These range from the conditional release of inmates who later kill people, to failure to put up no-diving signs on a low-water bridge where someone is later injured. Other common exceptions include failing to inspect or doing inadequate inspections of property to determine if there is a violation of a city regulation; the provision of police or fire protection; snow and ice due to weather on a public way; and any claim for injuries resulting from the use of any public property intended or permitted to be used as a park, playground or open area for recreational purposes, unless the governmental entity is grossly or wantonly negligent. The latter exemption is why cities, with almost absolute immunity from liability unless they are grossly negligent, may operate skate parks, spray parks and the like, without worrying about the liability.

If an incident does occur in the city for which liability is a possibility under the KTCA, there are still some protections to limit a city’s liability. The limit of liability for each occurrence is \$500,000 or the limit of any insurance policy the city has in place. Thus, if the city has \$1,000,000 worth of insurance coverage, that would be the limit rather than the \$500,000. Therefore, it makes little sense for a city to pay for additional insurance coverage, when liability is limited, at least for tort liability.

There are two things cities need to consider when faced with potential liability under the KTCA. First, for cities to be sued under that Act, the injured party must first make a claim with the city under K.S.A. 12-105b. The purpose for such claim is notice to the city of a potential lawsuit. The notice must contain the pertinent

information about the claim, such as the name and address of the complainant, the factual basis of the claim, any employee of the city who was involved, the extent of the injury, and the monetary damages being claimed. The governmental entity has 120 days to act on the claim. If the claim has not been granted or denied before the time has run, the claim is deemed denied and the complainant may file a lawsuit. The second important point is to always put the city attorney and the city’s insurance company on notice that an incident has occurred that may result in a claim or potential lawsuit for the city. One of the most difficult situations for cities is when an insurance company settles a claim or lawsuit that the city believes has no merit. But, an insurance company has other things to consider, such as balancing the cost to settle a case versus the cost to litigate.

Cities have other kinds of liability exposure that do not fall under the KTCA. Some of those include police excessive force cases; age, gender, and religious discrimination cases; civil rights and constitutional violation cases; contract cases; sexual harassment; Fair Labor Standards Act violations (brought by the U. S. Department of Labor or the individual); zoning; and workers compensation to name a few. Some of the above-mentioned types of cases are brought in federal court, which often are more expensive to defend. In addition, those types of cases do not have a limit of liability, but the instances in Kansas of cities losing and having massive verdicts against them is very small. It is those types of cases, however, where cities need to decide to what extent they are willing to insure against the risk. Thus, there may be a legitimate decision to be made whether to carry liability insurance in excess of the \$500,000 referenced above.

There is no way to avoid potential liability or being sued, because cities perform so many important public services. Cities can, however, minimize their risk of liability. Cities need to do regular and detailed property and equipment inspections. A giant pothole of which the city is aware and allows to stay in the road, or an uneven sidewalk that people have been injured on are just the type of defects that could create liability issues. Safety training for employees is critical to keeping both employees and the public injury free. Cities should have rules and regulations about the use of their facilities, including community buildings and recreational facilities. Cities should be doing regular sexual harassment training of their employees and supervisors to aid in having a defense to a sexual harassment claim. Police officers need to be trained on various aspects of law enforcement, including biased-based policing. The key is for cities to be aware of their risk potential and plan accordingly for regular inspections and training.

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



# PHOTOS WANTED

The League of Kansas Municipalities is seeking new photos to add to the photo database. Photos will be used for our ANNUAL LEAGUE CALENDAR, on the website, or in other publications. Send your best city photos to [photos@lkm.org](mailto:photos@lkm.org). Please make sure all photos are sized at least 300 ppi for best quality printing. Questions? Contact Amanda Schuster at [aschuster@lkm.org](mailto:aschuster@lkm.org) or (785) 354-9565.

## CLERK OF THE YEAR

**M**arian Cook, MMC, City Clerk of Overland Park, Kansas, truly exemplifies the qualities, both personal and professional, that City Clerk Mildred Vance supported and encouraged. Marian has dedicated her 38-year professional career to providing the highest level of service to her community. While furthering her own education and professional development, she has reached out to support fellow city clerks through her active participation and leadership in the City Clerks Municipal Finance Association (CCMFOA) and

**OVERLAND PARK**  
K A N S A S

### ABOVE AND BEYOND. BY DESIGN.

the International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC). Marian has volunteered countless hours to CCMFOA from being a member, to hosting an IIMC Region 7 conference, to serving CCMFOA as a board member, officer (Treasurer, Secretary, Vice President), and CCMFOA President in 2010.

Marian has actively participated in CCMFOA sessions by sharing her experiences and information from both the CCMFOA and IIMC, and taking time to speak individually to clerks needing information and assistance. She does this while maintaining the highest level of professionalism and offering sincere encouragement to those she is helping. Marian began her career of public service in administrative support positions and then stepped into the office of City Clerk in 1999. She is an active member in her church and has received numerous certificates of recognition for her commitment and dedication to her citizens and for the success of her community.

As Overland Park's City Clerk, Marian has been a leader in improving many municipal services, including the implementation of a city-wide documents imaging system, made



modifications to the City's animal licensing program to increase cost recovery, has revised the massage license regulations, and performed a wide variety of system transitions in the Clerk's office. Marian holds an Associates degree in Secretarial Science from Central Missouri State University and a Bachelor of Science degree in Organizational Management and Leadership from Friends University. She earned the Certified Municipal Clerk designation in 1993 and the Master Municipal Clerk designation in 2008.

*Czech Heritage mural pays tribute to the Czech immigrant heritage in the City of Lucas.*



# K

BY TRUDY RICE

# KANSAS PRIDE



## CULTURAL CAPITAL

### CITY OF LUCAS - CZECH HERITAGE MURAL

The Post Rock Scenic Byway Committee was exploring ways to educate area residents and visitors about the history of the native limestone when the idea of a mural was “hatched.” The Byway Committee and the Lucas PRIDE Committee began to raise funds to paint a mural that would pay tribute to the Czech immigrant heritage of the Lucas area. Ultimately, funding included a grant from the Kansas Arts Commission, the Russell County Convention and Visitors Bureau, a Fort Hays State University Political Science Professor, and several businesses and individuals.

Students from the Lucas/Luray High School art classes helped with scraping the wall along with several other community volunteers. Local artist, Erika Nelson, designed the mural concept on paper to illustrate the project to the school students, the historical society, Kansas Arts Commission, Russell County Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Lucas Area Chamber of Commerce. The design illustrates the native land and the arrival of the Czech immigrant families with their tools to quarry the native limestone rock along the hillsides. As the mural progressed, it included buildings made of the natural limestone, and then historic attractions like the Garden of Eden. The painting also incorporates two major disasters that occurred while the mural was in progress.

On September 3, 2011, the Czech Heritage Downtown Mural was dedicated by Lucas PRIDE Project Coordinator, Lynn Schneider, and artist, Erika Nelson. The mural is a great beautification project as well as a Cultural Capital tribute to the Czech immigrants of the area.

**T**he Kansas PRIDE program is a community improvement initiative sponsored by the Kansas Department of Commerce, K-State Research and Extension, and Kansas PRIDE Inc. During the past 42 years, over 400 Kansas communities have participated in this program with about 70 communities enrolled in any one year.

To enroll, a group of interested volunteers collaborate with city government to organize a local community PRIDE committee. Then, with technical support from the state organization, they assess their current situation, set goals for the future, implement appropriate community improvement projects, evaluate their impact, and celebrate!

The PRIDE program recently adopted a framework (see graphic on right) referred to as the Community Capitals for their community planning and recognition model. Research around this model suggests that communities who evaluate and invest in ALL seven of the Community Capitals have a greater chance of future sustainability. This past year, the following Kansas communities were recognized for their Excellence in PRIDE related to one of the seven Community Capitals.

## COMMUNITY CAPITALS MODEL



## BUILT CAPITAL

### CITY OF LARNED: SPLASH PARK

The Larned PRIDE Committee has dedicated themselves to improving Built Capital through their park system. A 2010 Larned PRIDE community survey showed high support for a splash pad. The Doerr-Vernon Park was identified as the ideal location due to its proximity to the highway. Larned PRIDE collected over 400 signatures in favor of the City of Larned contributing \$25,000 toward the splash pad project, if a Small Communities Improvement Program (SCIP) grant was received. PRIDE members began soliciting contractors, clubs, churches, and schools to support the project by writing a letter of support and commitment for the number of volunteer hours they would provide. These hours would eventually include anything from manual labor to daycare or meals. They did receive the SCIP grant and the project was on its way to completion.

Demo Day, Extreme Makeover Weekends, and a Final Touch-up Day were planned to improve Doerr-Vernon Park. On Demo Day, PRIDE leaders split volunteers into 17 groups and coordinated a complete day of work for each group. During the Extreme Makeover Weekends, churches provided meals to construction volunteers in the park. In addition to the splash pad, a major addition to the park was a large fort structure that had been fabricated at the Vocational Training program at the Larned State Hospital through a philanthropy program. As the Fort was being constructed, other areas of the park, such as new play equipment, light posts, and refinishing the tennis courts were being completed. PRIDE worked with a number of contractors and city departments who graciously gave their time throughout the project. PRIDE members were in shock to realize over 6,000 hours were contributed to the project.

The finale of the comprehensive project was a “Flip the Switch” night held in early June of 2012, where the community was treated

to hot dogs and the splash pad was turned on for the first time. It was obvious that the community had pride in its accomplishment.

The on-going success of the project is shown by the number of cars around the park on any summer day. Driving around the park to count how many out-of-county license plates can prove to be amazing!

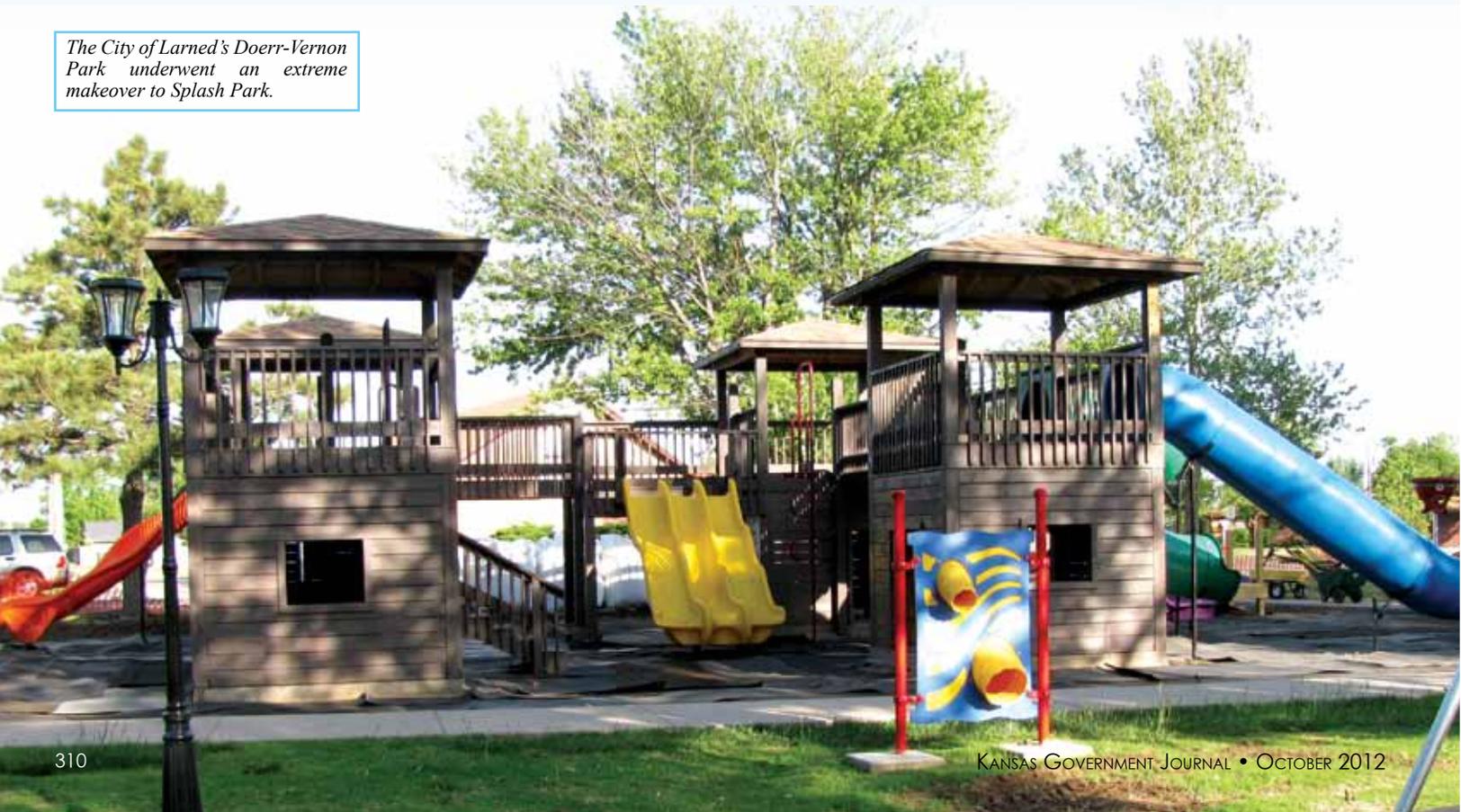
### CITY OF ALTON: SKATEBOARD PARK

In the fall of 2010, several youth in the community were saying, “We need somewhere to use our skateboards.” To respond to the need, four elementary school students and their fathers approached the Alton City Council with a proposal to create a skateboard park in the Lyman T. Earl City Park. The City Council gave them permission with the stipulation that they raise the necessary funds and “police” themselves. Two of the councilmembers are also Alton PRIDE members, so it seemed only natural that Alton PRIDE would get involved.

With the help of Nadine Sigle, K-State Research and Extension Post Rock District Extension agent, and Dr. Elaine Johannes, K-State Research and Extension Youth Development Specialist, Alton secured a Get It-Do It project grant. The Get It-Do It program encourages youth-adult partnerships to improve community opportunities for all to lead an active lifestyle. Alton PRIDE worked with the youth to conduct a park assessment and develop a work plan that included a budget and timeline. In true cooperative spirit, the group constructed six ramps, decks, and an equipment storage shed, all modeling Built Capital, while the City Council agreed to cover liability insurance.

For the grand opening, a skateboard company from Hays, *White Chocolate*, came to Alton to give a REAL skateboard demonstration as well as take orders for the safety equipment necessary for the youth participants. This demonstration was attended by residents of all ages. Alton’s investment in youth demonstrates their commitment to each other and the future sustainability of Alton, a city of less than 100!

*The City of Larned’s Doerr-Vernon Park underwent an extreme makeover to Splash Park.*



## FINANCIAL CAPITAL

### CITY OF HIGHLAND - SNOWFLAKE CITY OF KANSAS

In January of 2011, Highland PRIDE voted to raise \$7,000 to purchase lighted snowflakes for the downtown streetlights and become the self-proclaimed "Snowflake City of Kansas." The City Council agreed to pay for the decorations, with Highland PRIDE agreeing to reimburse the City. To gain support, the project was introduced through the local newspaper including the need to raise financial capital to pay for it.

The first PRIDE fundraiser was a fried chicken dinner. A total of 40 volunteers helped by frying 300 lbs. of chicken, donating homemade desserts and hot rolls, running the dishwasher, serving drinks and food, clearing tables, and clean-up. Volunteers included PRIDE members, Doniphan West High School students, Highland Community College students, and Highland citizens. A crowd of 300 attended the free-will offering dinner. After expenses were paid, \$2,157.61 was dedicated to repayment. On July 4, 2011, Highland PRIDE sponsored a homemade ice-cream and homemade desserts social at the stadium. A free-will offering generated a profit of \$446.82. At this point, the community had already raised over one third of the money necessary. This is an example of community Financial Capital.

Throughout the year, several businesses and many citizens saved aluminum cans, which generated \$624 to be added to the decoration funds. Former Highland residents mailed donations to PRIDE for a total of \$526.25. The local library sponsored a book sale in September of 2011, and Highland PRIDE decided to hold a bake sale in the same location. Homemade pastries, breads, noodles, candy, etc., were donated, which generated a profit of \$723.40 that was added to our goal.

December 17, 2011, was the official dedication of the new snowflake decorations. Trudy Rice, K-State PRIDE Extension Associate, presented a Partners In PRIDE grant of \$1,000 to PRIDE President Marian Thompson. By years end, efforts in fundraising totaled \$5,478.08. With such efforts it is no doubt that Highland will continue to raise support toward becoming the "Snowflake City of Kansas!"

## HUMAN CAPITAL

### CITY OF WASHINGTON: CHRISTMAS COMPASSION PROJECT

December of 2011 was the culmination of all the work that went into the City of Washington Christmas Compassion Project. A total of 323 Angel Tree gifts were distributed, 155 PRIDE food boxes were delivered, and 550 Christmas dinners were prepared. This project represented \$20,000 in donations, over 2,000 volunteer hours, and hundreds of personal vehicle delivery miles.

Two hundred eighty-three area businesses were sent letters specifically asking for help with the Christmas Compassion Projects. PRIDE sent news releases to the county's weekly papers, and the project began to gain momentum. The Washington PRIDE Committee and the Washington Ministerial Association accomplished a successful Washington County Christmas Compassion Project. This speaks to the Human Capital of a community and their ability to increase the quality of life for all.

## NATURAL CAPITAL

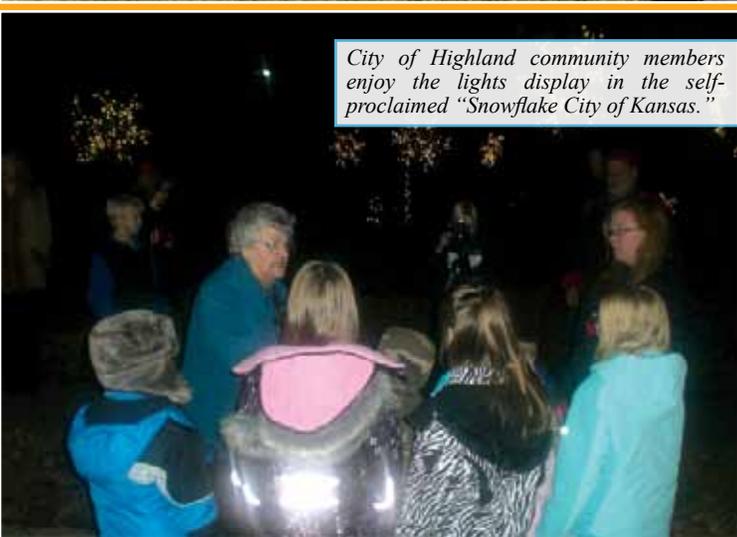
### CITY OF POTWIN: COMMUNITY GARDEN

Potwin PRIDE received honorable mention for a Natural Capital project started in 2000 that continues to grow every year. The Plant a Row for the Hungry Garden is now named after Ken Whittington who helped start the project that would use the community's natural resources as well as exist as a project where youth and adults could participate together. Last

City of Alton youths utilizing the new skateboard park in Lyman T. Earl City Park.



City of Highland community members enjoy the lights display in the self-proclaimed "Snowflake City of Kansas."



Volunteers assemble food boxes for the Christmas Compassion project in the City of Washington.



The Plant a Row for the Hungry Garden in the City of Potwin.



*City of Alden flower garden in full bloom.*



year, the community harvested 929 lbs. of tomatoes from 129 plants for which volunteers laid the irrigation and helped put black plastic, tomato cages, and straw down as mulch. In addition to this, volunteers of all ages dug 314 lbs. of sweet potatoes and harvested 697 lbs. of turnips. The vegetables went to the Salvation Army in Wichita, an El Dorado church for the homeless, and to the Food 4 Kids pickup at the community food bank. In addition, there were potatoes and sweet potatoes to put in the Thanksgiving boxes that are distributed to those in need. This is a community garden that “keeps on giving!”

#### **CITY OF ALDEN: FLOWER GARDEN**

Alden PRIDE received honorable mention for its effort to create a flower garden in an ignored empty space by the post office as a project to increase the Natural Capital of the community. After planning and fundraising, the real work began. The lot was tilled and leveled, and volunteers framed the pathways. Walkways were cemented, and ornamentals were planted. The project was completed with a total of 30 volunteer hours put into it. Additional resources were contributed to the project through a community-wide ice cream social, donation of cash from Alden PRIDE, and the donation of flowers and benches from Alma Fair and the Council on Aging.

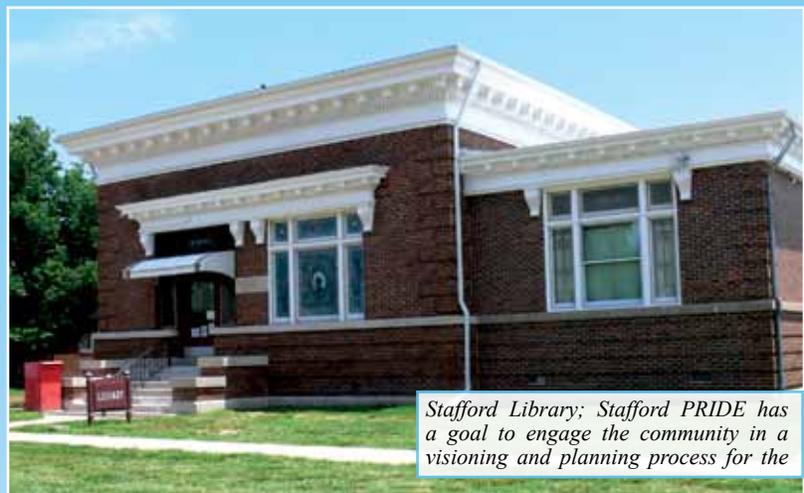
A resident of Alden shared the following: “It is a beautiful sight to look at in the blooming season; it has made the main road in town look so much better. It feels like there is so much life in the community. It has been such a blessing to have all the wonderful help in the community.”

### **POLITICAL CAPITAL**

#### **CITY OF STAFFORD: COMMUNITY VISIONING**

The City of Stafford organized and initiated a comprehensive approach to engage the community in a visioning and planning process. Stafford PRIDE is a large group of dedicated, caring volunteers that work in the community of Stafford as a catalyst for improvement that makes a difference in the lives of the residents of Stafford.

The community vision initiative was planned to gain community participation to define a vision for the future and identify goals that will move the community in the direction of success. Glenn



*Stafford Library: Stafford PRIDE has a goal to engage the community in a visioning and planning process for the*

Newdigger, K-State Research and Extension Stafford County Agent, facilitated the community planning meeting. The participants took time to create a timeline from the past, brainstorm strengths and weaknesses of Stafford, describe the community as they see it today, and draw a picture of Stafford as they see it in 2020. This work will be used to inform decisions on appropriate improvement projects that are undertaken by the City of Stafford elected officials and volunteers. A technique that was used to involve the broad community of this initiative was to publish the meeting notes and outcomes in the local newspaper.

By promoting community cooperation, Stafford PRIDE encourages all community organizations and people of all ages to do something positive to influence the future success of their community, a great example of Political Capital!

### **SOCIAL CAPITAL**

#### **CITY OF SPEARVILLE: NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM**

Spearville PRIDE was recognized for their outstanding work in developing a Neighborhood Watch program in conjunction with the local law enforcement, county communications department, schools, and EMS. Sometimes cities do not appreciate what they



Community-wide meeting for the City of Spearville's Neighborhood Watch program.

have until they no longer have it! This is what Spearville realized as their original neighborhood watch program was neglected. Spearville PRIDE decided it was time to resurrect the Neighborhood Watch program that was started several years ago. After starting a community conversation with key leaders, it was determined that a community-wide meeting should be held to inform residents of safety measures they could be responsible for, such as reporting suspicious behavior, marking "safe houses" in the neighborhood that youth could go to if they felt threatened, and ensuring personal safety at home and away. This was a volunteer led-initiative that involved over 30 people and over 500 hours of time. The elementary school youth were involved in designing the "Helping Hands" posters that will mark the safe houses.

The community reports that their diversified city is now more of a "united community" as a result of addressing a safety need and informing the residents of the community services available to insure the safety of all.

*Trudy M. Rice is an Associate Specialist for K-State Research and Extension Community Development. She can be reached at [trice@ksu.edu](mailto:trice@ksu.edu). All photos for this article were provided by PRIDE.*

## PARTNERS IN PRIDE (PIP) PROGRAM

In 2011, Kansas PRIDE Inc., initiated a new mini grant program called Partners in PRIDE (PIP). This program has made 8 awards to date totaling \$13,000 that is matched, at a minimum, dollar for dollar at the local level. These competitive awards are intended to recognize Kansas PRIDE Communities of Excellence that are engaged in a comprehensive community planning process, increase the local volunteers' ability to apply for grants, and provide an opportunity for them to invest in one of the seven community capitals.

The following cities have received these funds:

- Basehor** - Community Garden to enhance the Natural Capital.
- Highland** - Snowflake Project to enhance the Cultural Capital.
- Wilson** - Czech Heritage Project to enhance the Cultural Capital.
- Spearville** - Comprehensive Recreational Plan to enhance the Political Capital.
- Larned** - Crop Maze to enhance the Financial Capital.
- Grinnell** - Indoor Fitness Center to enhance the Human Capital.
- Glasco** - Storefront restoration to enhance the Built Capital.
- Stafford** - Outdoor Fitness Center to enhance the Social Capital.

Funds to support this program are raised by Kansas PRIDE, Inc. through donations from corporate sponsors, organizations, and individuals that care about the future success of Kansas communities. Special thanks to the Kansas Mayors Association, the first organization to designate their contribution to this fund!



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## Gaining the Trust of Your Citizens

Kansans enjoy autumn for many reasons. For farmers, the last harvest of the year is a time to get paid for months of hard work. For others, it's a brief respite from our often-brutal summers and winters. But for me, autumn's always been about football. My dad got me hooked at a young age, but once I started playing the sport I had no chance of ever kicking that addiction. I know it's cliché for a grown man to think back to the "old playing days," but one part of those Friday night battles has stayed with me—how much teamwork was required for success. You'll never gain one yard on a football field unless you work together with your teammates, and that requires a commitment to an important value—trust.

Unfortunately, beyond the gridiron, America is experiencing a trust-deficit. Public trust in institutions has been decreasing since the 1960s, and it's now at record lows. Only 44% of Americans trust organized religion, 29% trust the criminal justice system, 25% trust the media, and 21% trust banks and big businesses. The federal government is possibly the least trusted, at only 13%. And although institutions closely connected to people like small businesses and local governments are still trusted (65% and 61% respectively), they too are garnering record-low levels.<sup>1</sup>

This diminished trust should matter to local governments. Studies have shown that as trust in government diminishes, so does the rate of compliance with the law. Additionally, trust is necessary for a community to work together to fix problems, and without it there can be paralyzing inaction. Trust is also a fundamental component of a healthy democracy, as it encourages citizen engagement in politics and enhances support for democratic ideals.<sup>2</sup>

Why is contemporary trust so low? That debate is best left to the thousands of academic papers on the topic, but there are a few key factors worth mentioning, many of which are beyond the control of city officials. There is a strong relationship between economic growth and institutional trust, and sometimes trust just depends on the individual (citizens who are younger, have lower life satisfaction, and have more education, all tend to have lower levels of trust). Residents of bigger cities are also less trusting of local governments than those of smaller cities.<sup>3</sup>

But luckily, there are trust factors that local officials can influence. For example, residents that participate in community improvement activities tend to manifest higher degrees of trust in their municipalities.<sup>4</sup> One organization in our state that's been instrumental in coordinating these trust-building activities is Kansas PRIDE. The Kansas PRIDE Program is a partnership of Kansas State University, the Kansas Department of Commerce, and Kansas PRIDE, Inc., that assists local governments and volunteers in making their communities better places to live and work. PRIDE has facilitated the restoration of a mini-park in Smith Center, maintained historic structures in Greeley, started the farmers' market in Elk City, and initiated hundreds of other projects in cities across Kansas.

Fighting the perception of corruption is another way to build trust. Even if corruption is non-existent, citizens are skeptical of entities managing large amounts of public funds, so municipalities

should be as open as possible. Although transparency on its own is ineffective, educating the public about the local governments' structure and decision-making processes is a proven way to build trust. Overland Park, which was one of three Kansas municipalities to receive a 2012 Sunny Award from the Sunshine Review, a non-profit organization dedicated to state and local government transparency, has taken some great steps to build trust with public information. The City's website, [www.opkansas.org](http://www.opkansas.org), gives the function and contact information of all governing body members, City departments, and City boards. The City also posts their own governing body manual online, which describes how specific decisions are made. These small steps demystify local government and increase citizens' trust in their city officials.<sup>5</sup>

As many city leaders would probably guess, the most powerful explanation of public trust is the degree of satisfaction with municipal services. Recognizing the importance of high-quality city services, the City of Wichita has set up "Neighborhood City Halls." These halls are in several convenient neighborhood locations, and allow residents to meet with city council members, talk to representatives of the city police, inspection, and health departments, enroll in parks and recreation programs, and get assistance with issues like trash, loose dogs, and dangerous structures.<sup>6</sup> The City of Gardner has also taken action to improve municipal services. Each year, the City conducts a citizen survey to see which services its residents are satisfied with and which it needs to improve. This survey provides a comprehensive overview of the quality of municipal services, and is an important tool in its resource-allocation decisions. By providing tools that respond to citizens' service demands, Gardner and Wichita have increased their residents' trust in their local governments.

Any municipality trying to gain the trust of its residents needs to remember that trust can only be built up over time, and that any initiative requires the involvement of both parties. Whether that means creating volunteer opportunities, educating residents about how local governments work, staffing centers to respond to service requests, or simply asking residents how they feel about their community, trust can only be established by creating tools for residents to interact with the local government. Once that happens, the city and its residents can work together as a team to build great a community.

 *Michael Koss is the Membership Services Manager for the League of Kansas Municipalities. He can be reached at [mkoss@lkm.org](mailto:mkoss@lkm.org) or (785) 354-9565.*

<sup>1</sup><http://www.gallup.com/poll/1597/confidence-institutions.aspx>

<sup>2</sup>Sofie Marien and Marc Hooghe, *Does political trust matter?*, European Journal of Political Research, Volume 50, Issue 2 (March 2011).

<sup>3</sup><http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/insights/10835en.pdf>

<sup>4</sup><http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/insights/10835en.pdf>

<sup>5</sup><http://igitur-archive.library.uu.nl/USBO/2010-0127-200123/Grimmelikhuijsen.pdf>

<sup>6</sup><http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/insights/10835en.pdf>



# League of Kansas Municipalities 2012 Regional Suppers

The League of Kansas Municipalities invites all Kansas city officials to join us for the 2012 Regional Suppers. We hope you will take this opportunity to discuss the upcoming Legislative session that will highlight LKM's 2013 Legislative priorities.

**October 23 • Liberal**

Ruffino's Italian Restaurant  
2 Rock Island Road  
\$18 per person  
RSVP by October 16

**October 30 • Kansas City**

Hollywood Casino  
777 Hollywood Casino Blvd.  
\$22 per person  
RSVP by October 23

**November 7 • Neodesha**

Neodesha Public Library  
502 Indiana  
\$10 per person  
RSVP by October 31

**October 24 • WaKeeney**

Western Coop Electric  
613 S. 13th Street  
\$13 per person  
RSVP by October 17

**November 1 • Mount Hope**

Mount Hope Community Center  
105 S. Ohio  
\$12 per person  
RSVP by October 25

**November 8 • Minneapolis**

Prairie Fire Grill  
213 N. Concord  
\$12 per person  
RSVP by November 1

**Registration for all locations will begin at 5:30 p.m. with dinner beginning at 6:00 p.m.**

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

Written cancellations need to be made 72 hours prior to the meeting date or participant will be responsible for payment.



## ...To The Fair and To My Roots

The (Kansas State) Fair never gets old. It will always be a part of me. And, as you may know, I have written of it here often over the past nearly 12 years. I grew up (the first 10-plus years of my life, anyhow) in Hutchinson, which in fact gave my Fair addiction a great start. I have attended the Fair probably 30 or 40 times in my life, maybe more. Accordingly, on the first Saturday evening of the 2012 Fair, Sue and I, granddaughter Maddi, daughter Morgen, and her friend Denver headed west, to take in a bit of the 100th Anniversary of The Fair. 100 Years...wow!

To me, the fair is still about my (our) Kansas roots. I do know that the League of Kansas Municipalities is about cities and, yet, the overwhelming number of cities in Kansas are still (as they have been since the start) small-to-very-small and/or are very much rural in nature. And, though I have never lived in the “country” for even a single day in my entire 65 years, I have lived a great deal of my life closely surrounded by the country (wheat, corn, bean, milo, and “silage” fields; uncultivated draws harboring birds and other wild critters; farm ponds and windmills; pastures and feedlots filled with cattle; those ubiquitous hedgerows, etc.), as well as by a culture deeply attuned to the farming life (I grew up with “farmers” and so did my kids), and the summer and fall harvests have been a big part of my life, for all of my life. Even now, in Derby, very few days in a row go by without a drive in the country that I look over the vegetation, the farm animals, and the wildlife—feeling and sharing with family, the warmth, safety, and security, the “roots” of the rural countryside.

I would miss the country a great deal if I ever left it behind for any length of time. And, the Fair just reinforces the same feeling of those roots. We mostly just milled around a few hours at the Fair, as is our norm. We listened to some music at the free venues, took in some exhibits, checked out a few great-looking farm animals (including Macey Dinkel’s four lambs), and, of course ate harmful amounts of “fair food” (Pronto Pups are NOT corn dogs, by the way...they are dipped in a batter of rice flour)—which this time around featured my first (and last) bite of a fried Snickers bar (Denver’s)...yuk! By the way, Morgen and Denver highly recommend the tacos from Our Lady of Guadalupe’s (located within the indoor “food court,” which is surely a sign of the times). We don’t really do most of the rides or the Midway stuff, but we never miss the Sky Lift...I could spend the whole post-sunset evening doing nothing but that.

Speaking of nostalgia, and also back onto a subject about which I have previously written...my book recommendation this month is a biography—and I do love a well-written biography—about my favorite writer, Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., titled in full, *And So It Goes... Kurt Vonnegut: A Life*. “And so it goes” is a phrase (Vonnegut uses to refer to the inevitability of death) uttered by the main character, Billy Pilgrim, in the book that put Vonnegut on the map as an

accomplished novelist (and which is ranked #18 of all 20th Century English language novels by Modern Library), *Slaughterhouse-Five*, or *The Children’s Crusade: A Duty-Dance with Death*, which was published in 1969. I read the book in early 1971 (I have the notation in my original log book, which dates back a year or so earlier. My log is a “Golden T” brand steno pad [remember those?], which I bought for 39¢ at a TG&Y store [remember THOSE?] in the Seneca Square “mall,” in Wichita. It was during my second stint working in a wonderful “full-service” hardware store... but, that is a long story for another time. The same log is still in service, by the way, after over 40 years.) The *Slaughter-Five* in the title of the book was a real place, a meat animal slaughter house, under which was a deep, underground meat locker. It was in that locker that Billy Pilgrim (and Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.) survived the fire-bombing of Dresden, Germany ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bombing\\_of\\_Dresden\\_in\\_World\\_War\\_II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bombing_of_Dresden_in_World_War_II)) while laboring as a part of Nazi prisoner-of-war detail (his unit was captured at The Battle of The Bulge; many others perished while being confined and marched, and starved, after their surrender) as World War II was ending, in 1945. Dresden, a beautifully ornate and historical city, whose population had swelled by the end of the war to about 1.2 million with the addition of 600,000 German-citizen refugees, had been largely untouched throughout most of the war, until right at the end, when a massive fire bombing by the RAF (British Air Force) burned most of the Centre City (where Vonnegut was) to the ground, and killed approximately 25,000 civilians in the process. Among the survivors were Kurt and some of his fellow soldiers, meaning that the attack probably saved their lives.

*And So It Goes...* was authored by Charles J. Shields, and published last year. Shields also wrote the biography of Harper Lee, *Mockingbird*, which I mentioned several years ago in this space, and is a very skilled researcher and writer. The best biographers tell the real life story of a real person, flaws and all (not just the “wonderful human being” parts), and this one does, too. Sometimes it’s hard to read the real story about one of your heroes—the Mickey Mantle book was REALLY hard to read. But, then all of us are flawed, are we not? After I read *Slaughter-Five* (41 years ago!) I caught myself up on all the Vonnegut books written to that point (five, I think), and read *Breakfast of Champions* when it came out in 1974 (I finished it on July 8 of that year), and then every book Vonnegut wrote after that, until his death in 2007. Privately, like many of us, Kurt Vonnegut was a study in contrasts and contradictions. For me, he is simply the guy who wrote the books that helped shape and frame my view of the world.

 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)

## KCK NAMED AMONG NATION'S BEST CITIES FOR YOUTH



*T-Rex Café located in Legends Outlets in Kansas City has become a popular restaurant for youth to enjoy in the area. Photo provided by Wyandotte County/KCK.*

**K**ansas City, Kansas (KCK) has been named one of America's Promise Alliance's 100 Best Communities for Young People presented by ING. The announcement came at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, September 12th, via live webcast from Washington, D.C. by America's Promise Alliance Chair Alma Powell and ING Foundation President Rhonda Mims. A watch party was held at 10:45 a.m. at the Central Office of the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools.

This national award was given to KCK to recognize its outstanding and innovative work in addressing the high school dropout crisis and for its programs and services that make it an outstanding place for youth to live, learn, and grow.

Last spring, Dr. Cynthia Lane, Superintendent of the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools (KCKPS), invited community leaders to come together to draft an application for the award.

"As a school district, we are dedicated to not only the education of young people, but also to their overall growth and well-being, and we have so many partnering organizations throughout this community that help to make that possible," Lane said. "Many dedicated people and programs contributed to this recognition, and this award further reinforces our belief that a focus on youth pays dividends for the entire community."

A first-time winner of 100 Best, KCK was recognized for its dedication to improving educational outcomes for area youth. KCKPS had a major role in those efforts, working to raise math proficiency from 3% to 68%, and reading from 11% to 67% on state assessments. To address low achievement, the District instituted a reform program called First Things First, which helps

foster youth development by strengthening relationships between adults and children, and between schools and families. In addition to the reform effort, the District also implemented Early Release Wednesdays, a model that dismisses students from school early to provide teachers with extra time to work together to strengthen their teaching skills and develop comprehensive lesson plans. Such an effort required significant support from community partners, in order to find safe places for young people to go on Wednesday afternoons.

KCKPS also helps young people understand the importance of community and service through the Link Crew program. The program helps rising freshmen transition from middle school to high school with the connection of a mentor. Seniors and juniors are trained as mentors to help freshmen understand what it takes to be successful in high school.

"Based on population figures released recently from the U.S. Census Bureau, Wyandotte County has the largest population of young residents in the Metro. This honor couldn't have come at a better time and truly exemplifies what a community can accomplish when it works together," said Mayor Joe Reardon. "From community-based programs like Healthy Communities that promote physical activity and healthy eating through school food policies to the growing Internship Program that provides students an opportunity





Top: Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools (KCKPS) officials along with Mayor Reardon gathered for a watch party during the announcement of the award.

Left: Mayor Reardon speaking at KCKPS in recognition of KCK being named among the 100 Best Communities for Young People. All Photos provided by Wyandotte County/KCK.



KCK will receive a \$2,500 grant, signage identifying the community as one of the nation's 100 Best Communities for Young People, and access to America's Promise Alliance's community development resources.

The 100 Best competition is part of the Grad Nation campaign, a large and growing movement of dedicated individuals, organizations, and communities working together to end the dropout crisis. The goal of Grad Nation is to raise the national high school graduation rate to 90% by 2020, with no school graduating fewer than 80% of its students on time.

In its sixth year, the competition experienced its greatest interest to date with nominations from more than 320 communities representing all 50 states, Washington, D.C., the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. Winners were chosen by a distinguished panel of judges that included 2012 National Teacher of the Year Rebecca Mieliwocki, 2012 National Superintendent of the Year Heath Morrison, National Urban League President Marc Morial, and GLSEN Executive Director Eliza Byard.

A list of all 2012 winners can be found at [AmericasPromise.org/100Best](http://AmericasPromise.org/100Best). The webcast can be viewed at [AmericasPromise.org/100Bestwebcast](http://AmericasPromise.org/100Bestwebcast).

to obtain valuable work skills, we will continue to build upon the great partnerships that focus on improving the quality of life for the benefit of all residents."

All communities entering the 100 Best competition completed a rigorous application where they provided details on how their existing programs and initiatives help deliver the Five Promises-resources identified by America's Promise as being critical to the development of healthy, successful children: caring adults; safe places; a healthy start; effective education; and opportunities to help others. Applicants also were asked to describe how different sectors of their community work together to help children and families overcome challenges. Most importantly, communities were judged on the strength and innovation of their efforts and programs to help young people graduate from high school prepared for college and the 21st Century workforce.

"As young people across the country go back to school, it is especially timely to recognize communities like Kansas City, Kansas that have come together to make supporting young people a top priority and that are committed to helping young Americans reach their full potential," said John Gomperts, America's Promise Alliance President and CEO. "The 100 Best winners are doing outstanding work delivering the Five Promises that create the conditions for all young people to have the best chance for success. We hope the example set by these communities provides inspiration for others to take action."

#### About America's Promise Alliance

America's Promise Alliance is the nation's largest partnership dedicated to improving the lives of children and youth. It brings together more than 400 national organizations representing nonprofit groups, businesses, communities, educators, and policymakers. Building on the legacy of our Founding Chairman General Colin Powell, America's Promise believes the success of young people is grounded in the Five Promises-Caring Adults, Safe Places, A Healthy Start, Effective Education, and Opportunities to Help Others. For more information, visit [AmericasPromise.org](http://AmericasPromise.org).

 This article was reprinted with permission from the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/KCK, September 18, 2012 electronic newsletter.

# SPOTLIGHT YOUR CITY WITH NLC

National League of Cities (NLC) is offering a new opportunity to spotlight NLC member cities on their website and in their weekly e-newsletter, *The Weekly* that is distributed to over 16,000 people in the membership. The NLC Member Glance is a spotlight feature housed in the Member Center on the website. Cities will be featured for 2 weeks, offering great visibility and allowing them to showcase a successful project, program, event, or simply general information about the community that they want to share with the rest of the NLC membership.

It's very easy to take advantage of this opportunity. Complete and submit the online form at <http://www.nlc.org/member-center/member-glance-form>. Cities will then be notified when their city will be featured.

To see an example, please refer to the Member Center for the current Member Glance city: <http://www.nlc.org/member-center>. (See box at lower right of Member Center.)

If you have any questions about the Member Glance, contact NLC Member Relations Representative Alison Scher at (202) 626-3138 or [scher@nlc.org](mailto:scher@nlc.org).



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# Classified Advertising

## Accounting Officer

The City of Osawatomie is accepting applications for an Accounting Officer. Great benefit package. Job descriptions and applications are available at City Hall, 439 Main Street Osawatomie, KS, 66064 or on our website at [www.osawatomiex.org](http://www.osawatomiex.org). The City of Osawatomie is an EOE. Applications will be accepted until position is filled.

## City Attorney

The City of Derby (pop. 22,523) seeks a public service-minded attorney, licensed in Kansas. Serves as general counsel to management and elected/appointed officials. Drafts and reviews contracts, advises management on employment issues, drafts ordinances, reviews policies, provides legal counsel to police and other departments, and oversees contract attorneys for trials and other matters.

Reports to City Manager and participates as key member of senior management team. Supervises part-time City Prosecutor.

*Bloomberg Business Week* recognized Derby, the 18th largest city in Kansas, as the Most Affordable Suburb in the state (2010). Derby is proud of its quality schools, parks and recreation, and new library. Quality homes, low taxes, and quick commutes to all the amenities of the Wichita metro area make Derby the place to be. *Family Circle Magazine* named Derby one of the Top 10 Places to Raise a Family (2007).

Prefer municipal law experience. Minimum salary \$71,890, actual salary DOQ. View job description and apply online at [www.derbyweb.com](http://www.derbyweb.com). Application, cover letter and resume required. Preference to applications received by October 18. For more information call MacKensie at (316)7880-1519 X.276. EOE.

## City Manager

The City of Rio Rancho (pop. 87,521) is located in Central New Mexico, in the Land of Enchantment. The City boasts magnificent views of the Sandia Mountain range, affordable housing, excellent schools, and temperate climate. The City is a progressive community established in 1981

and is in close proximity to skiing, hiking and numerous outdoor and cultural activities.

A Bachelor's Degree in Business, Economics, Public Administration or related field is required, and 10 years of progressively responsible municipality experience, 5 of which must have been in a supervisory capacity. A Master's Degree in Public Administration or related field is strongly preferred. Experience leading a community of similar size is highly desirable.

Interested applicants should submit a letter of application, detailed resume with salary history, and four work-related references by email to: [applyCM@ci.rio-rancho.nm.us](mailto:applyCM@ci.rio-rancho.nm.us). Open until filled. First review of applications begins October 15, 2012. Applicant information is subject to the New Mexico Inspection of Public Records Act. To view the job description and recruitment brochure, please visit the employment section at: [www.ci.rio-rancho.nm.us](http://www.ci.rio-rancho.nm.us). EOE.

## City Superintendent

City of Attica, Kansas (pop. 626) is accepting applications for the position of City Superintendent. The ideal candidate would have experience in all public works including water, waste water, streets, natural gas and high voltage electrical distribution. Persons must possess a valid Kansas driver's license and high school diploma or GED is required. Salary DOQ, benefits include health insurance, paid vacation and holidays, and KPERS retirement system. Send application to City of Attica, PO Box 421, Attica, KS 67009. Applications will be taken until position filled. Any questions please contact City Clerk's Office at (620) 254-7216.

## Director of Development Services

The City of Midland, Texas, is seeking a new Director of Development Services. Midland has an estimated population of 114,500 and is located in West Texas, at the midpoint between Dallas/Fort Worth and El Paso along I-20. The City has 925 employees and a total budget of over \$206 million for the 2012-2013 fiscal year. The

City of Midland has an active development market, with a high demand for services.

Bachelor's degree in a related field required; Master's degree preferred. Expertise in code enforcement, inspections, affordable housing programs and general planning principles is highly desirable. Minimum of 5 years of senior management experience at a departmental level or higher is required.

To view a complete position profile and online application instructions, visit: [www.governmentresource.com/pages/CurrentSearches](http://www.governmentresource.com/pages/CurrentSearches).

For more information on this position, please contact:

Ron Holifield, CEO  
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## Director of Finance

The City of Midland, Texas, is seeking a new Director of Finance. Midland has an estimated population of 114,500 and is located in West Texas, at the midpoint between Dallas/Fort Worth and El Paso along I-20. The City has 925 employees and a total budget of over \$206 million for the 2012-2013 fiscal year. Midland is prominent in the oil and gas industry and is experiencing exceptional growth, which promises to continue.

Bachelor's degree in a related field required; Master's degree preferred. CGFO and CPA preferred. Minimum of 5 years as a Finance Director or Assistant Finance Director in a municipality of similar size required. Familiarity with applicable tax, financial and debt related Texas statutes is highly desirable.

To view a complete position profile and online application instructions, visit: [www.governmentresource.com/pages/CurrentSearches](http://www.governmentresource.com/pages/CurrentSearches).

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# Classified Advertising

## Executive Director

The Montgomery County Action Council (MCAC), a public/private county-wide economic development agency, is seeking a new director to expand its successful initiatives. Montgomery County is a vibrant manufacturing center in Southeast Kansas. Cessna, Standard Motor Products, John Deere, and [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) are a few of the many successful companies located here.

MCAC collaborates frequently with several local, regional, and state partners and the new director must demonstrate the ability to foster positive relations. A comprehensive and innovative approach to economic development is required as is proven experience in effective project management. Montgomery County has been very aggressive in economic development and welcomes a leader with creative ideas to encourage the growth of local businesses and the recruitment of new industries.

Preferred skills: business development and recruitment, finance, economics/economic development principles, business counseling, grants, marketing, board and community relations, management, CEcD.

Please mail resume with cover letter immediately to MCAC Executive Committee, P.O. Box 588, Independence, Kansas 67301. Salary commensurate with experience; generous benefit package.

## Fire Chief

The City of Rowlett, Texas, is seeking a new Fire Chief. Rowlett has a population of over 56,000 and is located along the shores of Lake Ray Hubbard in the Dallas/Fort Worth metro area. Rowlett was ranked 24th of the Best Places to Live in America by CNN *Money* Magazine in 2010.

The Rowlett Fire Rescue Department has an annual budget of over \$7.8 million and 77 employees.

Bachelor's degree in Fire Science, Public Administration or a related field is required. Master's degree, Chief Fire Officer Designation, and/or Chief Medical Officer Designation desired. Preference will be given to candidates who have completed the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer (EFOC) Program. More than eight years of experience in an administrative and supervisory capacity required.

View complete position profile and online application instructions at: [www.governmentresource.com/pages/CurrentSearches](http://www.governmentresource.com/pages/CurrentSearches).

For more information on this position, please contact:

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## Public Works Director

The City of Grand Island, a community of more than 48,500 residents, is seeking a dynamic, highly organized, strategic planner and articulate communicator with exceptional management and leadership skills to lead the Public Works Department. The Public Works Department is comprised of five divisions with a total operating budget of \$29.4 million for enterprise funds and \$7.7 million for general and internal service fund. Seventy-five employees make up the Public Works Department staff. The Director may serve as the City Engineer providing technical and administrative support to the Mayor, City Council and City Administrator. Ten years of increasingly responsible managerial experience. Public Works experience is preferred. A Bachelor's degree in civil engineering, construction management, business or a closely related field is required. A Professional Engineer registration in the State of Nebraska is preferred. The salary range is \$75,820 - \$106,696 annually commensurate with experience and qualifications. An excellent fringe benefit package is included. For more information on this outstanding opportunity, contact Amy Hall at (308) 385-5444, ext. 190 or at [ahall@grand-island.com](mailto:ahall@grand-island.com). The on-line application process is available at [www.grand-island.com](http://www.grand-island.com). The filing deadline is October 9, 2012. EEO/AE/M/F/D/V/G

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## Rock On



The story I am going to relay to you today is about a somewhat different yard matter that I haven't mentioned in any of my prior columns. It is a story that begins a number of years ago and continues through today.

For over 15 years, I have driven by what appears to be a rental house that is not too far from where I live. And every day that I have driven by this house I have noticed, and

admired, a beautiful large dark red stone which sits in the backyard of this house, under some trees, and surrounded by weeds. Now, this isn't just any kind of stone. It is what is known as a red quartzite boulder, or in Kansas, a glacial erratic. When I say the story starts a number of years ago, I am thinking more along the lines of a billion or two years ago. These are very old and unusual rocks, particularly in this part of the world. In this case, a glacial erratic is a rock that differs essentially from the rock it is found with and the area in which it resides. This means that the rock did not originate in the area in which it was found. In the case of glacial erratic, these are stones which were carried to Kansas, and other places, as a result of the movement of glacial ice, often over distances of hundreds of miles. They come in various shapes, sizes, and colors, but they have one thing in common—they originated in one part of the world, and were transported to another part of the world via the very gradual movement of glacial ice.

As the glaciers moved from north to south, pieces of rock and stone were broken off as the ice flow very gradually proceeded along its southern path. These pieces of rock would be pushed along, or often carried within the ice flow until the ice flow stopped. At this point, when the atmosphere would gradually warm, the ice would melt and the glacier would recede back in a northerly direction. Then the rocks that were carried by the ice flow would settle to the ground below the ice as it melted, thus creating what is known as a glacial erratic. Interestingly, the glacial ice in Kansas terminated in the very northeastern part of the state. It appears that it terminated just south of the Kansas river. The western edge of the ice flow ended roughly on a line from Wamego northwest past Blue Rapids. That was as far as the glaciers apparently moved, and thus most of the glacial erratics one would find naturally occurring are seen in this part of the state. So, it was with great interest that I had driven by this rock for many years and watched it vegetate, so to speak, in the backyard of this rental house.

After talking about the rock, literally for years, Judy suggested that perhaps I should attempt to buy this rock and have it moved to our yard. (Probably just so she wouldn't have to listen to me talk about it anymore.) Quartzite is a very hard rock which originally was sandstone. It is converted into quartzite via millions of years of compression within various tectonic plates which move and serve to compress the original sandstone and reshape it over the years. It is incredibly hard and heavy material which cannot be easily damaged with a hammer. For example, there is

a well-known red quartzite boulder which can be found at the entrance to the Kansas Historical Society and museum out on west 6th street here in Topeka. This particular boulder, which is also highlighted on the Kansas Historical Society website, is estimated to weigh 20,800 lbs. (10.4 tons) and the good people at the Kansas Historical Society estimate it to have been carried to Kansas about 700,000 years ago. They estimate the source of the rock is perhaps, Iowa, Minnesota, or South Dakota where it was formed during the Precambrian times, more than 2 billion years ago.

The stone in question, which I have admired faithfully for over 15 years, is a smaller version of the boulder which is found out at the Kansas Historical Society. A contractor, who I discussed this matter with, for the purposes of moving the boulder should I be able to purchase it, estimated that the boulder in question was somewhat less than 10,000 lbs. (5 tons), but he couldn't be sure exactly how much less. His principle concern had to do with how large the piece of equipment he would need to actually lift this particular stone and move it to our house.

As stories like this often go, there was lots of smoke, but not much fire. When I contacted the owner of this stone, despite the fact that it was neglected and clearly unloved, at least by the people and on the property on which it sits, the actual owner of the property apparently has no intention of selling the rock to me or anybody else. This is interesting on several levels as a stone which is as old as this particular stone, would not actually be owned by anybody for very long. It would merely pass through the ownership of those of us who were lucky enough to see it. So I have had to content myself by simply admiring the stone as it sits on the back of this lot when I drive by on a more or less daily basis. I think what the rock has taught me is that well laid plans don't always work out and that you have to redefine what you thought you needed, and how you thought you needed it.

We are doing this in government all the time. At any one time a city administration may have literally hundreds of goals for making their community the best it can possibly be for the citizens who live and work there. We have many ideas and plans on how best to accomplish these goals, and clearly they cannot all be successful. Oftentimes, what we believe is a good plan doesn't work out for one reason or another. At that point it is necessary to set our sights in a slightly different direction, try a new approach, and move in that new direction, which will hopefully present solutions which are as positive as those anticipated by the original plan or goal. It is a constant renegotiation of goals, needs, and services that we in government undertake in an effort to provide services and benefits to our citizens and communities. If you run into a stone wall, you have to back up and try a new approach. It is part of governing and governance and is something we must all do on a regular basis. As to the stone in question, I have written it off as something I will never possess, and which will never sit on my front yard. My wife, among others, has suggested that I go on a search for a different rock of this type. Time will tell.

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