

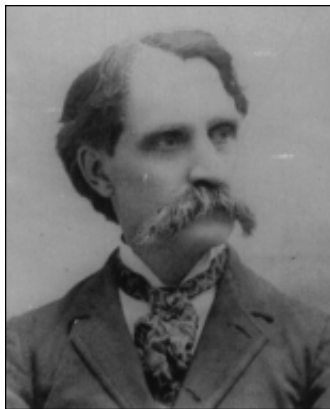
*We are not dead. Lawrence today . . .
has a brighter future before her than any
other town in the state. We don't want any
tears wept over our grave.
We are lively yet.*

The Lawrence Chamber of Commerce 1878–2000

by Marsha Henry Goff

That optimistic observation by the *Lawrence Weekly Tribune* on August 8, 1878, was shared by the men of Lawrence who formed the first Chamber of Commerce on December 12, 1878. Frequently derided as being a town “not worth a dam”—a reference to the long, unsuccessful struggle to dam the Kaw—Lawrence had suffered mightily through the Economic Panic of 1873 and the Depression which followed.

But by 1878, in spite of a crushing \$300,000 railroad bond debt, there was a feeling of optimism throughout the community. Some historians have linked the 1877 arrival of J.D. Bowersock to Lawrence's budding prosperity. Clearly, Bowersock made a



J.D. Bowersock

major impact on Lawrence. His completion of the dam across the Kaw provided water power for industry and his capital allowed him to establish or invest in a

great many Lawrence businesses, among them, the Lawrence Paper Company and the Lawrence National Bank.

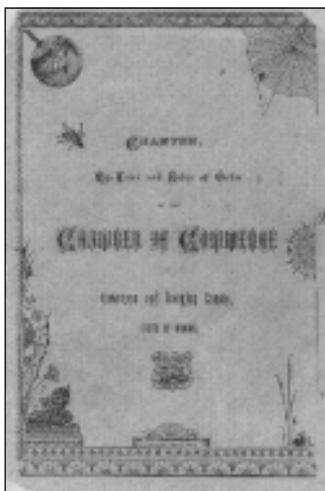
Bowersock was also instrumental in the formation of the first Chamber, which he served as vice-president. Lawrence Mayor I.N. Van Hoesen was elected president, early evidence of close Chamber-city government ties; George Leis, a druggist, and J.J. Canniff, a patent rights agent, were elected treasurer and secretary, respectively. Members of



the Board of Directors, in addition to the officers, were George Innes, George A. Hunt, George W. Hume, John Walruff, A.B. Warren, S. Steinberg, H.J. Rushmer and J.S. Crew.

According to the Articles of Incorporation, the Chamber was organized “for the purpose of fostering, promoting and improving the trade, commerce, manufacturing, industrial, railroad, and general interests of the city and county” with power to “hold and improve real estate, and to transact any and all business therewith.”

These busy founders of the Chamber had no time to waste when it came to Chamber business meetings, as shown by Rule VI of the *Rules of Order*: “No member shall speak more than twice to any question, nor more than ten minutes, if objection be made, without leave of the meeting.”



The Early Years

The first Chamber operated out of a building on the northwest corner of 8th and Vermont. A photo of that building—captioned “Chamber of Commerce, City Council and Lawrence Fire Department”—appears in the Chamber’s first brochure printed in 1879.



One of the Chamber’s first efforts involved seeking help from the Kansas Legislature in an attempt to scale down the railroad bond debt. A law was passed by the Legislature and signed by the governor in February of 1879, which authorized the issuance of new 30-year, six percent bonds to replace the older ones. The exchange was to be carried out at a sacrifice of at least 50 percent of the value of the bonds. Voters approved the compromise solution at an election held in June. By January 1880, the county debt of \$372,600 at seven percent interest was scaled down

to a more manageable \$186,300 debt at six percent.

Another early project was the organization of the Western National Fair Association in November 1879, after Kansas Pacific Railroad officials offered Lawrence businessmen the free use of Bismark Grove (located just north of the current FMC plant) for an annual fair. Bismark

Grove, with its Tabernacle seating 5,000, and gaslighted, beautifully landscaped grounds, had already hosted several well-attended gatherings.

One of these, the two-week National Temperance Camp Meeting of 1879, attracted up to 100,000 people to Lawrence to hear speakers prominent in the 19th Century Temperance Movement. Also speaking on the evils of alcohol were three reservation Indian chiefs—Bogus Charley of the Modocs, Jim Charley of the Peorias, and Captain King of the Ottawas. Still, according to the *Lawrence Journal*, liquor was readily



available on the grounds to those who knew where to buy it.

The Charter of the Western National Fair Association included the names of almost the entire Chamber Board of Directors and the fair was actively promoted by the Chamber. The fair association invested \$50,000 to improve and expand the facilities at Bismark Grove. Several permanent structures were built, including a huge two story Exhibition Hall. When completed, the fair site also included buildings to house livestock, a lake for pleasure boating, and a racetrack. The fair opened in September of 1880 and, by the third day of operation, attendance peaked at almost 45,000. The fair operated annually through 1888.

In January of 1884, in an editorial captioned “Work for the Chamber of Commerce,” the *Lawrence Morning News* criticized

the Chamber for not holding its monthly meeting as scheduled. Citing a recent rise in railroad freight rates, and the pressing need for good roads and sidewalks, the *News* editorial ended by saying, “There is work enough for the Chamber of Commerce to do.”

Not surprisingly, three days later the Chamber met to consider the recent change in railroad rates. While the “matter was left largely in the hands of the committee on railroads,” the Chamber expressed confidence that the Union Pacific was favorably disposed toward Lawrence and would do what it could to favor Lawrence trade and manufacturing. Chamber officials also stressed the railroad’s investment of \$100,000 in building a depot in North Lawrence.

The Chamber of Commerce appears in the 1888 Lawrence City Directory, names George Innes as president, and

states that meetings are held weekly above George Leis’ drug store at 747 Massachusetts. But by December of 1891, a new organization, The Commercial Club, was formed in Lawrence. Comprised of many of the men who formed the original Chamber, including J.D. Bowersock who served the Commercial Club as its first president, and adopting the same goal of “advancement of business interests in the city,” the name change—if that is all it was—is curious and the reasons for it remain a mystery.

The *Lawrence Daily Journal*, in reporting the Commercial Club’s formation, indicates that the Chamber had been inactive for several years.

It has been evident for a long time that there was room for such an organization and the businessmen now see it and there is no one on the street that does not heartily approve of the idea and nearly all have signified their intention of becoming members.

The Commercial Club operated out of offices in the Merchants Bank Building, 746 Massachusetts, for a number of years. However, there appears to have been a continuing struggle between retail merchants interested in increasing the

Lawrence trade area, and other businessmen who were interested in the benefits derived by attracting new industries to the city.

The *Lawrence Daily Journal* took note of this

three years earlier. Lawrence's merchants agreed to provide funds to furnish the rooms, pay for upkeep and to hire a matron to see to the needs of the women who frequented the Rest Room.



struggle in a June 9, 1909 article by commenting that Lawrence stores were up-to-date and the city should reach out to farmers to "come here to trade." The article concluded with the warning that "Lawrence must not get so enthusiastic with building that it forgets to look after its trade."

That same summer, The Lawrence Merchants Association was formally organized and established offices in the People's State Bank, 9th and Massachusetts. That the Merchants Association existed in some form prior to its formal organization in 1909, is evident by the fact that the Merchants Association is credited with establishing the Women's Rest Room

The Women's Rest Room was equipped with all the comforts of home: cots on which to rest, a kitchen, tables for study, and chairs for reading or sewing. Originally designed for out-of-town shoppers and visitors, the Rest Room soon became a gathering place for Lawrence women and girls. Each day, at least 50 high school girls and working women ate their lunches at the Rest Room, content in the knowledge that, while they walked back to school or work, the matron would wash their dishes.

Equipped with a telephone, the Women's Rest Room also became a message center, where mothers called and left word for their daughters to phone home during their

lunch hours. Before long, the Women's Rest Room was functioning as an employment clearing house for domestic help.

Rest Room matrons, as shown by the length of their service, apparently enjoyed their work. Mary E. Poff was employed as matron of the Women's Rest Room from 1906 to 1920. Mrs. M.E. Lawrence was matron for a number of years, and Mrs. Mack—who was matron when George Hedrick assumed the Chamber managership in 1930—was in all probability the last Rest Room matron.

The success of the Women's Rest Room is best judged by its longevity. The Chamber of Commerce eventually took over responsibility for the Women's Rest Room



which continued operation for many more years.

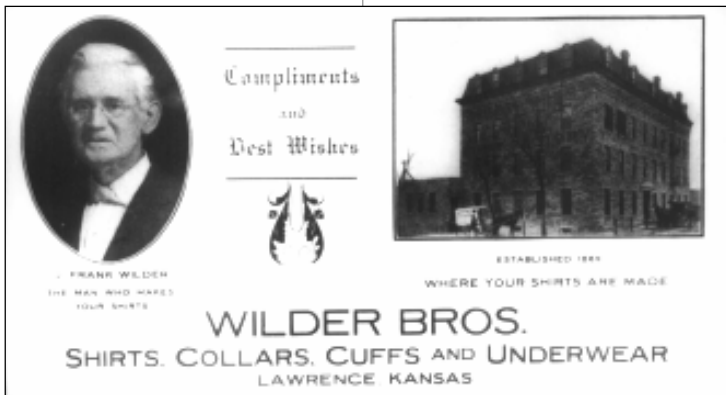
From 1909 until 1915, the Lawrence City Directory has separate listings for the Commercial Club and the Merchants Association. In 1915, a delineation of purpose is specified for each organization: Commercial Club (for public welfare); Merchants Association (for

special trade purposes). Harry B. Sparks is listed as Merchants Association secretary in 1915 and later served the Chamber in the

Bowersock. About this time, Professor Preyer of the KU Fine Arts Department, made a trip to the Reuter Organ Factory

of negotiations, the company was incorporated in Kansas on September 5, 1919 and arrangements were begun for the sale of stock in Lawrence and the acquisition of a factory building.” In March of 1920, the Reuter Organ Company began manufacturing pipe organs in the building which formerly housed the Wilder Brothers Shirt Company.

The 1923 city directory fails to list the Chamber president, but names C.L. Scott, believed to be the Chamber’s first paid manager, as secretary. The Chamber’s address is given as 16 West 8th. In 1925, the directory lists the Chamber’s address as 20 West 8th (or the northeast corner of 8th and Vermont in a building commonly referred to as the YMCA Building). Except for a three year period, the



same capacity. Sparks was warmly-remembered by Dolph Simons, Sr. who, as a boy, frequently accompanied his father to weekly luncheon meetings which were held by both organizations.

By 1917, the city directory contains no listing for either the Commercial Club or the Merchants Association. Beginning in 1916, the organization is referred to in *Journal-World* articles as the Chamber of Commerce. Otto B. Guffler was elected Chamber president in 1916. President in 1917 was H.B. Ober, and the Chamber’s address was listed as Peoples State Bank (the former location of the Merchants Association).

The 1919 city directory lists a familiar name as Chamber president: J.D.

in Illinois on a mission to acquire an organ for the Lawrence Masonic Temple. Upon learning that the owners of the organ factory were dissatisfied with their location, Preyer informed several influential Lawrence businessmen and Chamber officials, who invited the company to move to Lawrence.



According to Reuter’s *Forty Year History* publication, “After a series

Chamber remained in this location for the next four decades.

Scott apparently labored diligently to build the Chamber's membership and assure its success. Certainly the job was not an easy one, and Scott seemed perhaps too willing to accept blame when goals were not met. A 1924 Chamber brochure, presumably assembled by Scott, admits that "mistakes have been made, opportunities overlooked."

But Scott and the Chamber certainly had not overlooked the opportunity to take the lead in the 1921 widely-publicized effort to reach Lawrence's goal of \$200,000 to fund construction of a \$1 million Memorial Stadium and Student Union project on the KU Campus. Operating out of Chamber offices, the "Put it Across" and "Get it Done" divisions conducted a spirited subscription campaign. Chancellor E.H.



Lindley proved to be an especially effective speaker before local groups, and



every service-oriented club in Lawrence participated in the drive.

During Scott's tenure, there were almost continual membership drives as the Chamber sought to broaden its base and become financially secure. The most publicized campaign, dubbed "Forward Lawrence," occurred in January of 1930, near the end of Scott's term, when the Chamber established—and met—a goal of securing 550 regular \$25 memberships and 100 special memberships at a bargain rate of \$10.

But "Forward Lawrence" attempted to do much more than increase membership. Its aim was to instill a sense of pride of city in Lawrence residents, and also to energize them with a vision of the city's future greatness.

According to the Official Statement of the "Forward Lawrence"

Movement, the Chamber aspired to become...

"The Community Dynamo": The modern active type of chamber of commerce is often referred to as the community dynamo, where constructive ideas are planned and carried out.

The few Chamber brochures and reports of the Scott era which remain today are both polished and sincere. A 1922 brochure promotes Lawrence as the "Athens" of Kansas, and proudly lists the city's attributes. However, the Chamber—which has traditionally recognized the importance of an airport to the area's economic development—had to wait another seven years to list the Municipal Airport as an attribute.

Near the end of Scott's tenure, the Chamber moved from the YMCA building to offices in the City Hall across the street. This move occurred after fire destroyed the Fraternal Aid Hall which housed the Standard Life Insurance Company, and Standard moved to the YMCA building while their offices were rebuilt.

The Great Depression Through World War II

City merchants had long been interested in making Lawrence the retail trade center for area farmers, so when George Hedrick—with his farm and K-State background—interviewed for the position of manager, Chamber President Walt Varnum declared him the man for the job! Also to his credit, Hedrick had been associated with Southeast Kansas, Inc., a nine county organization known for its interest in flood control and dairy development.

Hedrick immediately embarked on a detailed survey of the Lawrence agricultural trade area which included all of Douglas and parts of Jefferson and Leavenworth counties. He then initiated the annual Rural Acquaintance Entertainment where rural residents could meet and get to know merchants on a social basis. Hedrick cites Emil Heck, Harold

Chamney, Wilson Counts, and Gideon Neis as some of the outstanding members of the Chamber's 1930 Committee on Agriculture.

The Chamber also encouraged area farmers to raise crops, particularly peas, which they could sell to the local canning factory. This not only provided the farmers with a ready market for crops, but also created jobs by enabling the canning factory to boost production.

city commission, served as chairman for the Chamber Work Program which printed script redeemable for food, fuel, and clothing. Local men, many of whom previously had been comfortable financially, received script worth \$2 per day for their labor on clean-up, street and other civic improvement projects. KU students were paid at the rate of 25 cents an hour for part-time work.



Depression

By 1932, the Chamber was working diligently to counteract the effects of the Depression. When FDR initiated the federal WPA program in 1933, Lawrence's own program had been in effect for about a year. Tommy Constant, a member of the three-man

The Chamber served as coordinator for all the relief agencies; it was the Chamber that requested, stored, and distributed the flour and salt pork, provided by the Emergency Relief Association through the Red Cross, which were handed out to indigent citizens from the Courthouse steps. And it

was the Chamber that solicited over \$500,000 in grants from federal programs which—in addition to providing work for Lawrence residents—left the town with several



completed projects, among them, the construction of New York School, the rehabilitation of Dyche Museum, the extension of water lines, and street, curb and other improvements from which we still benefit.

In 1933, the Chamber moved from the City Hall at 8th and Vermont across the street to R.C. Jackman's newly renovated WREN Building. During rebuilding, Jackman allowed the Chamber to "write their own ticket" in the layout of their offices on the lower floor. When the move was announced, an irate letter-to-the-editor writer protested the closing of the Women's Rest Room, but his criticism was premature. The Women's Rest Room moved with the Chamber to their new location and operated for many more years.

Soon after the move, the Chamber established a priority to find a project for which they could utilize the Civilian Conservation

Corps. When Mart Flory, of Baldwin, came to Hedrick with the idea to build a county lake, the Chamber was sufficiently interested in the project to agree to raise \$10,000 by selling lots on the proposed lakefront. Cliff Ramsey, a local attorney and avid sportsman, provided legal work free of charge. Area landowners, including

Tom Veatch, of the Black & Veatch engineering firm which provided free preliminary engineering services, were persuaded to donate portions—some sizable—of their farms for the lake and land surrounding it.

By summer of 1934, CCC workers were brought in and work was begun. That Chamber project, a county landmark dedicated

The Chamber was active in a 1934 attempt to replace Lawrence's three-member commission-mayor form of city government, in effect since 1914, with a commission-city manager, convinced the change would help the city operate more efficiently and economically. The voters instead opted to switch to a council-mayor form of government which lasted until 1951.

The year 1935 saw a flood which caused great damage to the town. CCC workers brought in from their camp at Lone Star worked hard sandbagging the dikes in a futile effort to save low-lying areas of Lawrence.

Acting on behalf of the Chamber, Hedrick served as Chairman of the Flood Relief Committee which provided help for flood victims. One month later,



The WREN Building

in 1940 and enjoyed by several generations of area residents for almost 50 years—is, of course, Lone Star Lake.

the first steps were taken by the Chamber to form a super drainage district. Businessmen and farmers, alike, concluded that the

area would be better protected from flooding by consolidating several smaller drainage districts into a large comprehensive one.

In spite of the flood, the Chamber managed to attract over a dozen conventions to Lawrence—ranging from the Midwest Band Festival and The Kansas Editors' Convention to a reunion of the 353rd Infantry. The Merchants' Bureau was extremely active in promoting "Dollar Days," lighted Christmas decorations, and KU and Haskell flags which adorned downtown streets on game days.

In 1936, the Chamber was proud to announce in its Annual Report that it had "worked closely with tax levying bodies to bring about tax reductions without curtailing services." Holding the line on taxes continued to be an important issue, because the Chamber's 1937 Taxation Committee, chaired by George Docking, went on record opposing adoption of a retirement plan for school employees.

In its 1938 brochure, the Chamber was feeling good enough about the city's future to brag:

LAWRENCE

*1/2 way East,
1/2 way West
1/2 way North,
1/2 way South
The Center of the World*

Within a few months, two events did serve to at least make Lawrence the center of national attention. The first of these, The National Corn Husking Contest, jointly sponsored by the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce and Capper Farm Publications, took place in November 1939, in a field north of Lawrence at the site of the present airport terminal. The contest represented quite a coup for the Chamber, attracting a crowd estimated

by State Highway officials to total 120,000.

The second event in April 1940, brought a taste of Hollywood to Lawrence when the premiere of the movie *Dark Command* was held here. The Chamber sponsored the project, but, according to Hedrick, much of the responsibility for its success belonged to Chamber coordinator Fritz Meyn, and Stan Schwahn, local theater manager.

A huge parade was held to honor the celebrities who came to Lawrence. Today, their names are legend: John Wayne, Gene Autry, Walter Pidgeon, Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes. The parade culminated with the burning of a replica of the "Eldridge" in South Park. Two thousand persons attended the movie which premiered at two local theaters—Granada and Dickinson—at 75 cents a seat. After the premiere, the Chamber hosted the stars at a magnificent party at the Country Club, and John Wayne, a self-confessed alcoholic, earned the



crowd's admiration by refusing liquor.

In 1940, the Chamber disputed a census count of



Lawrence and Douglas County residents. As is the case today, the Chamber believed KU and Haskell students should be included in the count. Hedrick met with the census enumerator in Kansas City and his arguments apparently met with some success.

World War II

Europe was engulfed in war in 1940, and America was gearing up for a conflict it hoped to avoid. When local guardsmen were mobilized in 1940 and ordered to Camp Joseph T. Robinson, Arkansas, the Chamber

initiated an innovative program that helped the guardsmen and Lawrence merchants as well.

The Chamber distributed books containing \$5 worth of 25-cent coupons which guardsmen could use,



before departing for camp, as credit at local stores to purchase necessities for themselves and Christmas gifts for their loved ones. Each guardsman was limited to a maximum of \$15 credit and signed an IOU to pay back the amount by March 1. The officers at Camp Robinson agreed to withhold the money owed the merchants from the guardsmen's first paychecks.

The program was successful beyond the Chamber's wildest dreams.

The merchants received \$4,110 from the 300 guardsmen who used the coupons and every cent was paid in full.

The Chamber soon implemented another project to show the guardsmen that their townspeople had not forgotten them. Chamber President Glenn Charlton had an idea to send home-baked cakes to the men training at Camp Robinson. He named Lena Funk as chairwomen of the effort and—with the help of Ship Winter, who provided a truck, and Henry Brinkman, who equipped it with shelves—the Chamber transported 450 cakes, baked by Lawrence mothers, wives, daughters and sweethearts, to the guardsmen.

There was still a degree of Chamber business-as-usual. In 1941, Santa Fe refused the Chamber's request to connect its line to the Union Pacific line. However, the Chamber was more successful in its support of a \$15,000 bond issue to improve the municipal airport which Lawrence voters approved. According to Hedrick, the Chamber had a strong Aviation Committee in 1941, headed by Dr. Lyle Powell, a World War I fighter pilot.

The Army's February 1942 announcement that it planned to build a

munitions plant near Lawrence, was the culmination of a lot of hard work by the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce and other interested Kansans such as Rolla Clymer and Kenneth Spencer. The Chamber, knowing that Santa Fe's cooperation in providing rail service was crucial in attracting a war plant, worked primarily through Mr. Reinhold, Santa Fe's lobbyist in Washington, D.C.

Colonel Strecker, of the Army Corps of Engineers, and George Foulk of Hercules Powder Company,

that the crowd called for larger quarters. The meeting moved across the street to the Odd Fellows Hall where over 300 Lawrence citizens listened to the presentation.

Not surprisingly, one of the first questions concerned the possibility of explosion. Col. Strecker was brutally honest. Explosion, with loss of life, he said, was a very real possibility. The audience apparently appreciated his candor and the rest of the questions dealt with what the plant would require in the way of workers and help getting

Eventually, over 2,600 Lawrence residents would be working at Sunflower during the World War II operation, a total that has at times been described as one-half of the city's working population and one-sixth of its total population.

Naturally, housing for workers became a major problem. The Lawrence housing shortage was so critical that Hedrick recalls the quick rental of a remodeled chicken coop located on South Massachusetts Street. During this time, the Chamber maintained a rental listing and staffed two full-time housing employees.

Soon buses, operating around the clock, transported workers to the plant from the Douglas County Courthouse. Women, many of whom had never worked outside their homes, were suddenly presented with the opportunity to earn a good wage while helping their country's war effort. And workers from Missouri and Arkansas, eager to work at SOW, converged on Lawrence.

Clearly, Lawrence would never be the same! Even the *Journal-World*, always a champion of progress for the city, regretted in print the fact that one could walk several blocks downtown and pass many people



Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant

the operating contractor for Sunflower Ordnance Works, asked Hedrick to assemble a meeting of Lawrence businessmen and interested citizens so they could speak to them and answer their questions. The Chamber meeting room could hold approximately 125 people and Hedrick soon realized

started. Foulk encouraged farmers to apply and stated, "We want to hire all our help if possible from this community."

The Chamber helped Hercules set up temporary offices in the Community Building at 11th and Vermont while administrative quarters at Sunflower were built.

without encountering a familiar face. But residents soon adjusted to the changes, as did Lawrence businessmen, most of whom had to raise their employees' wages in order to compete with SOW's higher payscale.

In June of 1943, Lawrence was once again threatened by a rising Kaw. Several hundred "Blue Jackets"—machinist mate trainees at KU—worked around the clock to sandbag the levees. When the river broke through the dike, according to a *Journal-*

thousands of acres of badly-needed crops. In appreciation of the trainees' successful and heroic efforts, Chamber President Ship Winter headed a drive which raised over \$4,000, and the young men were transported in Joe Wilson's Rapid Transit buses to Haskell Stadium where they were treated to dinner and an evening of entertainment. The remaining money was used to buy shoes to replace those the trainees ruined while working on the dikes. The Union Pacific

agricultural deferments from service, they were hard hit by the shortage of manpower and had a desperate need for farm laborers. With the substantial financial help of Chamber Director W.J. Small, who earlier had been successfully recruited to build his dehydrating plant in North Lawrence, the Chamber was able to persuade the government to locate a prisoner of war camp in the city.

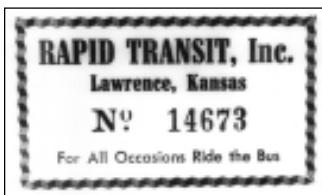
Although the camp to house captured German soldiers of Rommel's Afrika Corps officially opened on April 30, 1945, and the war with Germany ended about a week later, the camp's population peaked at 300 prisoners by late summer and continued to operate until the end of the year. Art Heck remembered that the prisoners who worked on his family's potato farm were hard-working and friendly. Other POWs helped to build KU's Danforth Chapel, and one, an architect, helped plan and supervise Stokely's building expansion.

The Chamber engaged in a number of civic and business activities during the post-war years, which included assisting in the campaign which solicited contributions to build the KU Campanile as a memorial to KU students who lost their lives in World War II. Another



World article, several trainees threw their bodies across the breach until sandbags could be brought to close it. The article concluded with the observation that "Old Man River had to admit the U.S. Navy is a pretty tough foe."

Controlling the floodwaters enabled the Union Pacific Railroad to continue wartime operation and also saved



Railroad donated \$1000 to the fund and grateful Grant Township and Lakeview farmers contributed \$1,105.45.

Area farmers had more to worry about than floodwaters, however, because in spite of

Chamber project was the construction of the wading pool at South Park. Additionally, the Chamber sponsored large Trade Shows which were held at the Community Building, and continued to provide entertainment for area agricultural fairs and other events such as Eudora's CPA Picnic.

Keith Lawton, as assistant to George Hedrick, helped find housing for students returning to the University of Kansas. And, in which proved to be Hallmark Cards' budding interest in a Lawrence location, Lawton—at the request of Dolph Simons, Sr., who arranged the visit—met a company representative at the Santa Fe Depot late one night and showed him an upstairs office space on Massachusetts Street. Hallmark rented the space and operated out of it for a short time.

As a result of Chamber and city leaders' determination that Lawrence continue to enjoy the benefits of a growing economy, the Civic Action Committee was formed. Headed by KU basketball coach Phog Allen, the committee developed a "Lawrence Victory Plan" which set forth a blue-print for the city's future development. Among the seventeen projects discussed at the committee's first meeting on January 9,

1945 were a new junior high school, street widening projects, opening of Sixth between Massachusetts and New Hampshire, creation of downtown parking lots, a new police and fire building, improvements in the water

quickly hired by Chamber President Joe Wilson and, upon taking office in June, immediately set to work.

The Chamber soon became actively involved in the effort to change the Lawrence form of city government from mayor-



department, and upgrading of the municipal airport.

In 1947, George Hedrick announced his plans to resign effective in 1948. Faced with hiring a new manager, Chamber leaders decided to seek an aggressive individual, one who would put into action their progressive ideas for Lawrence. E.R. "Bus" Zook, manager of the Chamber in Liberal, Kansas, came highly recommended. A US Marine combat veteran of the Pacific, Zook had a reputation for living up to his Marine motto: "Can do!"

Zook enjoyed the Relay Parade that took place on the April day in 1948 when he visited the city to interview for the position of manager. He met and was

council to commission-manager. Voters approved the change in April 1950, and the Chamber then began recruiting qualified individuals to run for the five commission seats. The Chamber openly endorsed five candidates—George Bradshaw, John Crown, Lew Henry, Simon Hurwitz, and Chris Kraft—all of whom were elected to the first five-man commission.

Post-war Growth

The Lawrence Industrial Development Company was formed in 1949. That group, consisting of members of the Chamber's Industrial Development committee, included Simon Hurwitz,

George Lawrence, M.N. Penny, Dolph Simons, Sr., Art Weaver, and Ship Winter, as well as Richard Barber, the attorney in charge of the group's legal affairs, and Zook, who had the authority to transact business in his own name.

As the economic development arm of the Chamber, LIDC proved to be a significant factor in recruitment of industries to Lawrence. Operating from a base of capital contributed by the group's members, LIDC was able to obtain options on land suitable for development and could then lease or sell that land to prospective industries at a non-speculative price.

LIDC's first effort involved purchase of a twenty-acre tract near 23rd and Haskell, a portion of which was acquired from owners of the rapidly growing Lawrence Color Press who found they owned more land than they required for construction of their new plant. Burnett Instruments was one of the first small businesses to locate on the LIDC site.

LIDC's next project helped bring to Lawrence its first major post-war industry. In June of 1950, Food Machinery and Chemical Corporation announced plans to build a \$3.5 million Westvaco (now FMC) plant in North Lawrence near the site of Bismark Grove. A major influence in FMC's

decision to locate here was Chancellor Deane Malott. As a member of FMC's Board of Directors, it was he who first suggested Lawrence as a suitable location.

The Chamber's involvement in the construction of Allen Fieldhouse began early in 1951 when Charles Stough, then Speaker of the Kansas House of Representatives, picked up his phone and told Zook that a new fieldhouse was not on KU's list of requests for funding. Soon after Stough's call, a small group of interested alumni—which included Henry Bubb of Topeka—met in Zook's office to discuss the matter. Immediately after leaving the Chamber meeting, Bubb

third in priority. Stough still did not have an easy task persuading the Legislature to fund the project, but once proponents showed that the fieldhouse also would be used by KU's ROTC units, money was allocated.

In spite of its emphasis on industrial development, the Chamber maintained a strong interest in agricultural activities. John Vogel, Chairman of the Chamber Agriculture Committee, invited several county agricultural leaders to meet and discuss the issue of establishing a fairground facility. All of those involved agreed that the Douglas County Fair had long since outgrown its Haskell Institute location.



visited with Chancellor Murphy. He returned to the Chamber offices later that day to say that he felt good about the situation.

Within a few days, Stough call to apprise Zook that he had received a new list from the Chancellor. Building a fieldhouse was ranked

Utilizing a recent law passed by the Kansas Legislature which allowed a county, upon voter approval, to levy a tax on property to raise money for fairground facilities and 4-H and FFA fairs, the group presented to the County Commissioners a resolution asking for a vote on the

matter. In April of 1951, Lawrence voters approved a bond issue to establish the 4-H Fairgrounds at 19th and Harper. The first fair at the new fairgrounds was held in 1952, and in 1961, Vogel's Committee initiated the first 4-H/FFA Livestock Auction.

In 1951, after much lobbying by the Chamber, a parking lot was constructed in the 800 block on New Hampshire. It was the only parking lot built entirely by revenue from parking meters. Later parking lots were jointly funded by the city and the businesses who derived benefit from them.

Things were definitely looking up in Lawrence, but tragedy loomed just around the corner. Westvaco had been in operation only a month when the devastating flood of 1951 occurred, inundating all of North Lawrence and portions of East Lawrence. Volunteers, including city and county residents, students, Chamber members and city officials, worked shoulder to shoulder with sailors from Olathe Naval Air Station in a desperate attempt to strengthen the dikes with sandbags. The battle was lost when the river rose so high that it lapped over and then broke through the levees.

When the water at last receded, North Lawrence and parts of East Lawrence were disaster areas.

Chamber leaders realized that government assistance would be a long time coming, so they called on Tommy Constant for help. Constant's own



Flood of 1951

construction company headquarters was located in North Lawrence and much of his equipment was ruined, but he set to work, calling on the Army Corps of Engineers for what assistance they could offer, borrowing tools and machinery wherever he could find them, and using his employees and volunteers to clear streets and clean several feet of mud and water out of flood-damaged houses so that people could return to their homes as quickly as possible.

The Chamber and city formed a non-profit corporation, Lawrence Disaster, Inc., which operated out of Chamber offices. Chaired by Ship Winter and managed by John Crown, Lawrence Disaster, Inc. applied for government money to

cover clean-up costs and also requested additional funding to help prevent another flood. Zook and several civic leaders, including Mayor Chris

Kraft, testified before Congress. In addition to gaining funds for clean-up and victim-relief, their persuasive testimony resulted in the genesis of Clinton Lake and other flood-control reservoirs.

The flood, however, did not long deter the Chamber's effort to recruit other industries to Lawrence. When CFCA showed interest in Lawrence, Zook, acting on behalf of LIDC, hunted for a site which met the company's specifications, namely adjacent rail service and protection from explosion. Once acreage north of Highway 10 was selected, Richard Barber faced, and surmounted, the difficult task of having multiple easements removed from the site.

Lawrence's first major motel, The Holiday Inn

(now Days Inn) at 23rd and Iowa, was constructed in 1952. The effort to gain a motel for Lawrence began when Zook read in his Sunday paper about the grand opening of a Holiday Inn at Independence, Missouri. He and his wife drove to Independence that day and visited with the Memphis-based President of the company, who put Zook in touch with Bob Brock and Ed Linquist, then engaged in building a Holiday Inn in Topeka, but who expressed interest in Lawrence as a future location.

When lack of financing proved to be a potential stumbling block, Zook approached Standard Life Insurance Company (whose office was located directly across the street from the Chamber office) about loaning the fledgling company the money to buy land and construct the motel. Standard Life agreed to make a loan covering most of the cost, and the rest of the money—\$35,000—was raised by selling shares to a group of Lawrence investors, all of whom were Chamber members. LIDC obtained the land, but the sellers insisted upon a covenant—readily agreed to by the purchasers—that no liquor would be sold on the premises as long as the sellers lived.

Also in 1953, the State Highway Department

approved the plan to build a Highway 59 bypass on the western edge of the city, which resulted in Iowa Street much as we know it today. While it



may now be difficult to imagine Lawrence without this busy trafficway, at the time it was proposed, it engendered a lot of criticism from people who believed it was unnecessary.

Lawrence's three legislators, city officials, KU Chancellor Franklin Murphy, and the Chamber joined forces to effect a route change for the Kansas Turnpike. Originally planned to connect Kansas City and Topeka by way of Tonganoxie, after much lobbying by Lawrence interests, KTA finally agreed to route the highway through Lawrence. KTA planned only one interchange for the city, and Chancellor Murphy—recognizing even then that the west would eventually serve as

the campus front door—was persuasive in his argument to locate the designated interchange on Iowa Street. The Chamber then worked to develop

the second interchange in North Lawrence, in order to provide local traffic with another means by which to cross the river.

Late in 1952, Lawrence city and Chamber leaders had begun to think about the city's approaching 100th birthday in 1954. City officials, realizing that it was inappropriate for taxpayers' money to be spent on such a celebration, encouraged the Chamber in its plan to spearhead the Centennial activities. A non-profit corporation, fittingly called "Lawrence Centennial Corporation," was formed and work began on plans to raise money for a huge celebration and, more importantly, to leave the city with a lasting monument to its century of existence.

Chamber leaders discussed a number of projects, but finally settled on the idea of acquiring land for a new city park and donating it to the city. A site on the west side of town was chosen and Chamber officials were excited that the preferred tract of land was near the onetime homesite of Jess Willard, former world heavyweight boxing champion. LIDC purchased the land and later assigned the contract to Lawrence Centennial Corporation which took title to the land. On November 10, 1954, for the sum of one dollar, Lawrence Centennial Corporation presented the land to the city and, with the remaining funds in its treasury, provided the new park with its first playground and picnic equipment. Today, only fond memories and faded souvenirs of the 1954 Centennial celebration remain, but Centennial Park endures as a permanent reminder of Lawrence's 100th birthday.

From its inception, Community Chest, which raised money for local charities, had been provided with office space and management staff by the Chamber. In 1956, when United Fund took over and broadened the fund-raising role of Community Chest, the Chamber continued to provide those services. Russ Mosser, who later would serve the Chamber

as president, served as the last president of Community Chest and the first president of United Fund.

One of the most important industries brought to Lawrence by the Chamber's use of LIDC—and by local financing provided by all three banks then doing business in Lawrence—was the Callery Chemical Plant which operated during 1958 and 1959. Callery served as the catalyst for the first county sewer line, Riverside Sewer District 1.

Although Callery existed for only a short time (its purpose ceased when the government canceled plans to build a military long-range bomber for which Callery was to manufacture fuel), the work which went into its location—especially obtaining Callery's and Santa Fe Railway's agreement to pay for the extension of water and sewer lines—opened up the adjacent Santa Fe Industrial Park, designated in 1956, for future development.

In 1957, Rapid Transit, the private company providing bus transportation

in the city, announced plans to cease business due to steadily declining revenues. The Chamber raised \$7,000 and waged a hard-fought campaign to preserve bus transportation for city residents and to save taxpayers the expense of a city-owned bus service. The Chamber's efforts were rewarded when the Lawrence Bus Company, still in business, began operation in September 1957.

Recruitment of Hallmark, which had conducted a small operation in downtown Lawrence for a short period during the late 1940s, was initiated by Franklin Murphy, then on the Hallmark Board of Directors, who suggested Lawrence as a plant site.

Joyce Hall, accompanied by his young grandchildren, arrived at Zook's home one Sunday afternoon and, while Zook's wife babysat, the two men drove around Lawrence looking at prospective locations. Hall liked the site northwest of town where the current plant now sits.



Hallmark Cards

LIDC entered into transactions with owners of three separate parcels of land to purchase the amount of acreage required by Hall.

In what may have been a fortunate premonition, Zook became concerned during the mid-1960s about the possibility of fire in the WREN Building. In 1965, the Chamber offices moved to 901 Kentucky Street. In December of that same year, the WREN Building was destroyed by fire.

The Difficult Decades

The Sixties and Seventies were difficult and challenging decades for America in general—and for Lawrence in particular. Changes began in the early 1960s with the emergence of what has since been termed a “participatory democracy.” It became a time of maximum participation—suddenly everyone wanted a part in decisions which affected their lives, their country, their city, their Chamber.

The Lawrence Businessmen’s Association was formed in 1962 by a group of Chamber members and other businessmen who wanted the Chamber to be more aggressive in recruiting new job-making industries. According to Walt Morton, one of the group’s organizers, it was never LBA’s intention to harm or

even engage in serious competition with the Chamber—only to stimulate it. But LBA did attempt to encourage new businesses to locate in Lawrence and worked hard, although unsuccessfully, to recruit one small industry which expressed an interest in Lawrence. During the years of its existence, LBA planned several civic projects and erected signs promoting Lawrence along the highways entering the city.

working hard to raise a few dollars here and there.

Lawrence continued to grow during Winter’s term as Chamber manager, and he credits assistants Martin Owens and Wilmer Barr with being of great assistance to him. A few of the businesses which located in Lawrence during Winter’s tenure were Cyntech (Alza Chemical), Gibson’s Discount Store, and Packer Plastics.

In 1967, Lawrence Paper Company became



The Chamber’s downtown clean-up program

Zook resigned his Chamber position in 1966, and the search committee selected Keith Winter, from a host of candidates, to lead the Chamber. Membership then totaled only 350 and Winter constantly worried about the Chamber’s precarious financial state. At home, he studied the Chamber’s books late into the night, and he tried to make every Chamber function—even the simplest luncheon meeting—a money maker,

the first resident of Santa Fe Industrial Park with the construction of a 40,000 square foot building. By 1971 the company had completed its move into an additional three-story building on the site. Today Lawrence Paper Company remains at its Santa Fe location and employs 315 workers at its 400,000 square foot plant.

Lawrence’s gain in successfully wooing Packer Plastics was Richmond, Missouri’s loss.

Jim Schwartzburg was at home one Friday evening in 1969, wondering why—poised to sign that afternoon—he had put off, until Monday, signing an agreement with the Richmond city fathers to locate his business there. Then Schwartzburg’s phone rang and Keith Winter asked him why he had not chosen Lawrence as a place to locate his company. Schwartzburg, who had earlier visited the city at the urging of his friend, Downer Dykes, KU Professor of Design, explained that Lawrence had given no serious indication that it was interested in his business.

of the First National Bank, Schwartzburg made his presentation short and sweet.

Rhodes surprised Schwartzburg by saying, “I think we can do that.” Winter and Rhodes enlisted the help of the Chamber Board and city officials, and together they worked out a proposal to bring Packer Plastics to Lawrence. Today, with a current payroll of 630 workers, Packer Plastics is one of the largest private employers in the city.

Another coup for the Chamber and city was the announcement that Kresge would build a \$10 million warehouse in Lawrence.

peaceful civil-rights and anti-war demonstrations soon degenerated into mass rioting and violence. It is painful to remember that troubled time in Lawrence history, but it is also important to learn how city officials and civic leaders responded in an effort to calm the situation.

Winter and Chamber members initiated a series of meetings involving persons from every segment of the community. In one attempt to bring together—in a relaxed setting—representatives of the many factions of Lawrence society, Dolph Simons, Jr. hosted an event where a widely diverse group of local residents were given the opportunity to meet Apollo 16 Astronaut Charlie Duke.

Before Winter resigned his position as manager, he nearly tripled Chamber membership, a figure brought about in part by the voluntary dissolution of the Lawrence Businessman’s Association, most of whose members rejoined the Chamber. Winter left the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce on a sound financial footing. Because he had spent so much time worrying about Chamber finances, it is in that latter accomplishment that Winter takes a great deal of satisfaction.

In 1970, the Chamber moved into new quarters in



Winter convinced Schwartzburg to re-visit Lawrence the next day to talk with some local bankers. By 5:30 Saturday afternoon, Schwartzburg was tired of presenting his proposal to banker after banker, so when Winter brought in Warren Rhodes

Turbulent Times

Unfortunately, in spite of such successes, Winter’s four-year term was somewhat over-shadowed by the events taking place in Lawrence streets and on the University of Kansas campus. What began as

the Gill Building at 901 Tennessee. In April of that same year, the Chamber hired a new manager, William Gaut.



Kansas Union

Gaut must have wondered about his timing, because during his first few months in Lawrence, arsonists burned the Student Union at KU, two young men—one black, one white—were shot and killed, a Lawrence police officer was critically wounded, and a curfew was imposed which—in addition to keeping citizens off the streets—imposed a dark to dawn blockade enforced by Highway Patrolmen positioned at the city limits to restrict entrance into Lawrence. In cooperation with law enforcement agencies, the Chamber operated a work-pass program which distributed passes to shift-workers allowing them to drive to and from work during curfew hours.

Continuing Winter's efforts, and initiating many

of his own, Gaut scrambled to defuse crisis after crisis. On April 22, 1970, the Rumor Center began 24-hour-a-day

operation out of the Chamber offices. The Rumor Center, established in an effort to control the far-fetched stories that swept through the community, had a direct line to the police dispatcher which allowed volunteer operators to dispel fears by authoritatively answering questions.

Lawrence's radio station, KLWN, greatly assisted the effort to calm the community by keeping citizens informed. When the turmoil at Lawrence High School caused administrators to lock the doors—not to keep students in, but to keep agitators out—Arden Booth sent News Director Celia Patti to the school. Patti spent several days at Lawrence High, phoning in reports apprising parents and others about actions

taken by the Board of Education and school administrators to restore a normal educational atmosphere.

The Chamber secured a grant from the Kansas Police Enforcement Act which enabled community representatives—city, KU, and law enforcement officials, businessmen, blacks, hippies, student activists, grassroots people and flower people—to participate in the Menninger Police/Community Relations Program which was designed to facilitate understanding between the various segments of the community. Frequent “rap sessions” were also held at the Chamber offices.

Gaut was pleased when, in spite of the troubles plaguing the city, Fleetwood Manufacturing decided to locate in



Lawrence. Their representatives explained that, being from California, they were not unduly concerned about the local problems because they realized they were temporary.

In 1971, Emily Taylor, KU Dean of Women and

member of the Lawrence Chamber, led twelve other female faculty members to attend the Chamber's annual event hosting KU



Ambassadors sport new jackets

faculty. At one time welcomed, women for the previous few years had been discouraged from participating. When Dean Taylor and her entourage appeared at the door, Olin Petefish signaled to the band, and the women triumphantly entered the National Guard Armory to the lively strains of "When the Saints Go Marching In."

A Chamber project of which Gaut remains particularly proud was Lawrence's finalist status in the 1971 All American Cities Contest. The Centron-prepared film presentation—which Gaut says, "brought tears to one's eyes"—pictorially demonstrated to contest judges how Lawrence citizens, working together, had repaired the rifts that nearly tore apart the city.

President George Bush, then America's Ambassador to the United Nations, spoke at the Annual Meeting of the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce on April 14,

1973. He was also the guest of honor at a luncheon in the Student Union which was hosted by Dolph Simons, Jr.

During Gaut's tenure, the Chamber was successful in recruiting Gustin-Bacon (later Aeroquip), which constructed a \$2.5 million plant in the Santa Fe Industrial Park in 1972. Presently, Kinedyne manufactures cargo restraints—a product line it purchased from Aeroquip—at its plant in East Hills Business Park.

Also in 1972, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America located here, primarily as a result of Bob Billings' considerable assistance. The new city library was built, and construction began on Clinton Reservoir.

The sawtooth-curbed and tree-lined Massachusetts Street we know today, which was paid for by a HUD grant and downtown property owners, was strongly supported by the Chamber. According to Gaut, the Chamber had earlier submitted a downtown renovation proposal to the city which called for the costs to be shared by the city, downtown property owners, and the issuance of bonds.

In 1972, a group of downtown retail merchants decided that—instead of continuing to

rely on the Chamber's Retail Committee—their interests would best be served and protected by the formation of a separate organization. The resulting organization, Downtown Lawrence Association (now DLI), consisted of downtown merchants whose memberships in DLA were voluntary. Pete Whitenight served as DLA's president for the first two years of its existence, and the organization was extremely successful both in soliciting members and in raising money for promotional events, Christmas lights, and other downtown activities.

The Chamber also played a role in a number of civic improvements, which included lending support to the 1973 Watkins Community Museum Fund Drive, chaired by Dolph Simons, Sr., which raised \$296,887 to renovate the building and endow the museum with an operating fund.

Making up for Lost Time

Gaut departed Lawrence for a position with the Denver Chamber in April of 1974. Glenn West was hired as manager of the Lawrence Chamber in 1975, and in March of that year, the Chamber moved into new quarters at Vermont Street Station in the 800 block of Vermont.

It is difficult when reviewing relatively recent history to sort out those things which will be of lasting significance, but it is clear that West led the Chamber during a time of great progress for Lawrence. In 1976, Gloria Morton, Chamber Vice-President of Operations, broke the gender barrier when she became the first female vice-president. Prior to that, however, Dorothy Rooney broke ground with her 1972 election as the first female member of the Chamber's Board of Directors.

President George Bush, then Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, returned to Lawrence in April of 1976 to

incentive would aid in downtown redevelopment and encourage Maupintour to locate their new headquarters at 6th and Massachusetts near the new city hall.

West admits that the 1977 "Cornfield Mall" proposal was then, and continued to be, an extremely difficult issue for the Chamber. On the one hand, the Chamber wanted to keep Lawrence dollars in Lawrence and appreciated the outside trade dollars which such a mall would attract. On the other hand, they felt a responsibility to downtown business district merchants who could be economically devastated by a mall located on the periphery of town.

Action 80, formed in 1979 and headed by Warren Rhodes, was the Chamber's attempt to work out a solution which would

built between Massachusetts and Rhode Island from 7th to 9th Streets.

Action 80's proposal met with strong opposition at a meeting at West Junior High School and the City Commission later failed to act on the proposal. In a comprehensive report of its activities, Action 80 expressed the gloomy, but accurate, opinion that as of December 1980, the situation was "unresolved and moving in the direction of confrontation rather than negotiation."

A more successful result had been achieved by the Chamber when it conducted a 1976 drive to raise \$35,000 to buy land from the KU Endowment Association on which to build a new airport terminal. The goal was exceeded by \$15,000. According to City Manager Buford Watson, purchase of the land was necessary because, according to FAA grant stipulations, the city must own the airport in order to receive federal funds.

The Chamber has always recognized the importance of the airport to the economic development of the city. In 1979, the Aviation Committee worked to secure a \$1.5 million FAA grant for airport improvements. They monitored completion of Phases I and II, which



Watkins Community Museum

deliver a Vickers Lecture at KU.

Also in 1976, the Chamber provided testimony on the Tax Increment Financing bill which was passed by the Kansas Legislature that year. The Chamber had hoped that such an

provide Lawrence with a mall, but locate it near the downtown area where its effects on merchants would be more positive. After a great deal of study, Action 80 recommended to the Lawrence City Commission that an enclosed development be

consisted of land acquisition, lengthening and widening of the primary runway, and installation of a new runway lighting system.

Quaker Oats began operation of their new \$10 million facility in 1978. West's successful recruitment of Quaker Oats had an unusual twist. He was sitting at his desk one

Wednesday morning when a man walked into his office and said that, although he could not name the company, he represented a major Fortune 500 company which might be interested in locating in Lawrence. Quaker Oats' need for anonymity resulted from the fact that the plant they intended to build would produce a revolutionary new product in the pet food market, Tender Chunks.

When two other company representatives joined the first, one of them—Sonny Younger—saw West and said to his colleagues, "We're in trouble. He knows who I am and who I work for!" Indeed, West did. He and Younger were long-time friends who had grown up together in St. Joseph, Missouri.

In 1979, the Chamber was successful in

persuading the state to raise the limit on the usury law. At a Chamber-sponsored panel discussion, Dick Holzmeister, of Capitol



Santa Fe Industrial Park

Federal, explained to the audience that there was no mortgage money available to Kansas home buyers because "when the wholesale cost of money is 11.76 to 12.875 percent, the retail cost can't be limited to 11 percent."

Chamber President John McGrew and West later testified before the Kansas Legislature about their concern that, because of prevailing high interest rates, Kansas capital would be forced to go out of state unless the usury limit was raised.

The Chamber's 1979 Annual Banquet featured an evening of entertainment at the new Spencer Art Museum. A few weeks later, Spencer's Assistant Director for Development and Educational Programs, Ann Wiklund—who would later serve the Chamber as Director of Membership

and Communications—approached West for advice on her idea to ask Lawrence's four banks to jointly fund the Museum's proposed self-guided tour. West suggested that any one of the banks would likely underwrite the entire project. Wiklund met with R.A. Edwards, then President of Douglas County Bank, who readily agreed to pay the printing costs necessary to implement a self-guided tour of the Museum.

When the Kansas Legislature passed a law which allowed cities to levy a two percent guest tax on hotel and motel rooms in order to promote travel and tourism, the Chamber was quick to encourage the city to levy such a tax to fund the Convention and Visitors Bureau, established in 1980, which the Chamber manages for the city. West believes both Chamber and city owe a great deal to John Myers, who served as the first director of the Convention and Visitors Bureau.

West also recalls how thrilled he, himself, was to participate in the dedication of Clinton Lake, which was the culmination of a quarter-century of work begun after the 1951 flood. Over the years, Chamber and city officials had made countless trips to Washington, D.C., where they lobbied Congress and made sure that

bureaucrats knew of the area's continuing interest in flood control. But West remembers more than the pageantry and fireworks of the ceremony; he has an indelible memory of the fright he felt when the jet flyover arranged for the Clinton Lake dedication seemed—for one scary moment—to be on a collision course with a passenger jet.

West left the Chamber in March 1981 for a Chamber position in Macon, Georgia. He was succeeded by Gary Toeppen, a Nebraska native, who was given high marks for his economic development expertise. It was under Toeppen's leadership that the Chamber achieved one of West's stated goals: In 1986, the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce was accredited for the first time in its long history by the United States Chamber of Commerce.

But Toeppen's first goal upon assuming the Chamber managership was to establish two much-needed industrial parks, one for traditional industry and the second for research and high-tech firms. For almost 11 years, the Chamber had considered KU Endowment Land on West Campus as a possible site for a research park. However, after Chamber President Martin Dickinson and Toeppen met with the

Executive Committee of the Endowment Association, they determined that the land in question was best left to be developed for university purposes.

In spite of a Chamber-commissioned study by Tony Redwood, Director of the Institute for Public Policy and Business Research, which painted anything but a rosy picture of private research park development, the Chamber decided to solicit site development proposals from owner-developers. Bob Billings' proposal to develop his land west of

Street was extended west from Kasold and paved. Wakarusa Drive was widened and paved as well. Home to an ever growing number of firms, Oread West includes an eclectic mix of corporate offices (the \$4 million dollar headquarters of Golf Course Superintendents Association), finance consultants and banking institutions (Campbell-Becker, Inc. and UMB and Commerce Banks), health-related businesses (Neu's Physical Therapy Center, Help Innovations), government agencies (U.S. Geological Survey, United



Oread West Research Park

town as a corporate and research park won Chamber, city, and county approval.

But much still needed to be done before Oread West could become reality. Crucial to the development was the support of the city commission on infrastructure improvements. The land was rezoned, city water and sewer lines were extended, and, probably most significant, 15th

States Department of Agriculture) and research and development firms (Oread Laboratories, Microtech Computers) and environmental and engineering firms (PSI, formerly Hall-Kimbrell, and Landplan Engineering).

In what he says was "one of the smartest decisions I ever made," Toeppen hired Ann Wiklund as Director of Membership and Communications in June of 1982. Wiklund

stayed on the job for 11 years, during which time she served as president of the National Association of Chamber Membership Directors. Wiklund remembers her early, pre-computer days at the Chamber when the membership list consisted of mailing labels created on her Selectric typewriter. Although she left her position in 1993 to manage Congresswoman Jan Meyer's Lawrence office, she says she feels fortunate not only to have worked at the Chamber, but to have worked with Toebben. "He didn't micro-manage and trusted me to do my job. That's accepted management style now, but Gary was practicing it long before it became prevalent."

The Convention and Visitors Bureau, under the leadership of John Myers, was extremely active in promoting Lawrence on a year-round basis. However, Myers and his assistant Judy Billings, the current director, soon realized that the summers did not offer much in the way of activities which would bring visitors to Lawrence—or, for that matter, keep Lawrence residents in the city.

The 4th of July holiday, with the Jaycee's fireworks display, seemed a good time to schedule a major event. Because of the success of Salina's Smoky Hill River Festival, the idea of an Independence Days

Festival on the banks of the Kaw appealed to Myers, Billings, and a number of other community leaders who helped with the project.

The first festival, held in 1983, attracted about 8,000 people. Each year the event proved more popular and Judy Wright was hired in 1985 to coordinate the festival. A few months later, Independence Days Inc. was formed with Wright as executive director. Several well-known artists—among them Louis Copt, Roger Shimomura and Grandma Layton—created posters for the annual festivals.

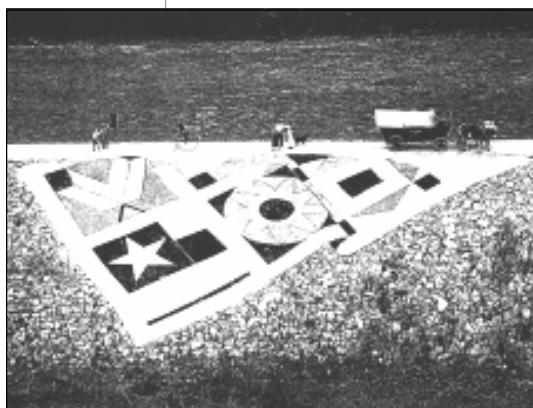
Stan Herd's huge *Quilt*, formed of brightly colored stones on the north levee of the river across from the Festival, attracted national attention when a story about it broadcast by WIBW-TV in Topeka was picked up by CBS and featured on *CBS This Morning*. The resulting publicity helped win

Independence Days Inc. first place in "innovative marketing of a festival" by the International Festival Association.

The 1990 Independence Days Festival was

Lawrence's last because of a financial deficit which was incurred. Although 25,000 persons attended the festival, the event needed about 10,000 more visitors to be financially successful. Attendance was affected by extremely hot weather and the fact that the 4th of July fell on a Wednesday when previously the festival was able to take advantage of weekends. However, Wright is proud of the fact that—before the corporation dissolved—the group raised sufficient funds to pay all its debts.

Myers and Billings teamed up on another project which resulted in a made-for-TV movie being filmed on location in and surrounding Lawrence. The movie's producers had visited a number of sites in Missouri, but Myers and Billings showcased Lawrence so well that they virtually stole the movie away from Missouri. A number of Lawrence and area residents participated



Stan Herd's "Quilt"

in the movie as actors and extras, and today *The Day After*, a movie about the aftermath of nuclear war— is reported to be the most watched made-for-television movie ever!

In 1983, *The Day After* had its world premiere in Lawrence, as did *The Dark Command* in 1939. But the later movie, because of its topic, attracted a host of news organizations, both American (*Good Morning America*, *Today Show*, *CBS Sunday Morning*, *60 Minutes*, *Voice of America*, *Time* and *Newsweek* Magazines) and foreign (Japanese, Canadian, Australian and West German television). Additionally, Ted Koppel's *Nightline* featured a panel discussion of the movie by Lawrence residents.

Since *The Day After*, a number of other movies,

The latter movie, filmed here in 1989 and broadcast in 1990, was Michael Landon's last major TV movie production. When Billings saw him later in LA, he agreed to narrate the Chamber's *The Magic of Lawrence* film, a task he performed at his home in California in January 1991. By the following July he had succumbed to cancer.

There will undoubtedly be other films; The Lawrence Film Commission was established April 1, 1989, and Billings has compiled The Lawrence Film Directory, which provides producers with all the information they need in order to film a movie in Lawrence.

Don Volker and Nelson Krueger were the primary movers involved in

establishing the Leadership Lawrence program in 1982. Modeled after the State Chamber's program, Leadership Lawrence has come to be recognized as

an excellent tool to develop future community leaders. Each year, the program has many times more applicants for the class than can be accepted.

The Chamber's Small Business Fair, held annually from 1984 to 1992, originated from a "Business After Hours," promotion at Dale Willey's auto dealership in 1983, when 15 to 20 businesses responded to the Chamber's invitation to set up display tables there. The 1990 Small Business Fair featured 102 exhibitors and attracted 4,500 visitors. In 1994, the Chamber initiated a trade show/mixer format which has proven to be highly popular.

In 1983 Ann Wiklund, Chamber Director of Membership and Communications, mentioned to Clencie Hills that she would be the perfect person to coordinate plans for celebrating Haskell Indian Junior College's Centennial in 1984. Soon, Hills was asked to do just that. "By the time I was hired in August, Hills remembers, "a very ambitious schedule of events was already in place."

The Chamber took an active roll in making Haskell's Centennial celebration a memorable one for the oldest Indian school in America. According to Hills, "The Chamber saw this whole Centennial event as a way to nationally showcase the only institution of its kind. Chamber members were the underpinnings of the whole event."



The Day After

both big screen and TV have been shot in Lawrence, among them, *Nice Girls*, *Don't Explode*, *Murder Ordained*, *Kansas*, and *Where Pigeons Go to Die*.



Michael Landon



Haskell kicked off the school's Centennial year with a riot of color as students wore their tribal dress to the American Indian Day convocation on September 28, 1984. Many students later remarked that the colorful convocation was their favorite Centennial event. And there were a great many events to choose from, among them: banquets, a series of seminars, powwows—including a poignant Veterans' Day program featuring Native American veterans in an Indian Veterans Honor Powwow—and an American Indian Athletic Hall of Fame Centennial Enshrinement Ceremony on March 30, 1985 with Wes Santee as master of ceremonies.

The Chamber helped sell 400 tickets to a September banquet where Sportscaster Chris Shenkel

spoke and Haskell's Theatre Group, The Thunderbirds, performed. And when Haskell alumni returned for Homecoming in October, they were treated to open houses, reunions, a parade through Downtown Lawrence, football game, golf tournament, arts and crafts displays, benefit art auction, fashion show and "Centennial Run."

Exhibits on Indian culture, arts and crafts were featured at several locations, including the Lawrence Library, Watkins Museum, Lawrence Arts Center, and KU's Adams Alumni Center and Art and Design Gallery.

The Haskell Indian Foundation grew out of a Chamber task force—geared to supporting Haskell during its Centennial year and beyond—which was chaired by Sandy Praeger. "It became clear," says Praeger, "that Haskell needed and wanted help in securing grants, scholarships and private philanthropy to replace federal funding that had eroded." In an effort to publicize the foundation's efforts, Praeger and Haskell President Gerald Gipp appeared on *Good Morning America* from studios in Kansas City. Foundation members, comprising a large group of Chamber members, including Praeger, Dolph

Simons, Jr., Fred Six and John Tacha hosted a Congressional Reception to demonstrate local support for Haskell.

Today Haskell's campus boasts a large attractive sign—Haskell Indian Nations University—in the school's colors of purple and gold.

In March of 1984, Toebben was contacted by a representative of the Fantus Site Selection Company of Chicago, who said Fantus was seeking 5,000 to 10,000 square feet of office space for a major company. Toebben assembled a sales package on Lawrence and showed about ten sites to company representatives. Lawrence made the first cut from 50 cities under consideration to 10 and the Chamber hosted the unknown company's four representatives on two site selection visits. During one of the visits, a call was placed to the Chamber from the company's home office in an effort to contact one of their representatives. The caller left the phone number and the company's name: Sallie Mae.

One of the Chamber's employees exclaimed, "I know that company! I have a student loan with them." After inadvertently discovering the identity of the mystery company and checking it out, the Chamber pursued Sallie Mae with vigor. "We were

confident they'd be good for Lawrence," Toebben says, "and we knew we wanted them!"



Lawrence made the cut to three sites, which included Columbia, Missouri and Nashville, Tennessee; then to two (Nashville), and finally Sallie Mae settled into Duane Schwada's Venture Business Park. Since then, of course, Sallie Mae has expanded to its large facility on the Bluffs at 6th and Iowa Streets and is now one of the largest private employers in Lawrence.

In 1984, the Chamber, recognizing that public-private economic development partnerships were becoming common throughout the U.S., initiated the Economic Marketing Development Program. At that time, many cities and counties were forming their own economic development departments, but that

appeared to Toebben to be a duplication of effort locally since the Chamber already performed that function.

The Chamber proposed a Four-way Cooperative Marketing Program, with the Chamber, the city, and county contributing money, and the University of Kansas contributing in kind. (KU's in-kind participation resulted in the outstanding "Smart Move" publication.)

The Lawrence-Douglas County Advisory Council on Economic Development was established in 1989 to serve as an advisory board to review on an ongoing basis the marketing program and budget of the Economic Development Marketing Program, financed by the City of Lawrence, Douglas County and the Chamber.

In 1997, the city and county commissions established The City and County Economic Development Board which is charged with making recommendations to the city and county as the Board determines are in the best interests of implementation of the Horizon 2020 Economic Development Strategic Plan. Shirley Martin-Smith, chair of the CCEDB, says that the members "are truly committed to the purposes for which the Board was established." She notes that the Board is

"interested in county-wide input and has held meetings in each community to get feedback on needs" and she believes that the Board allows for "stronger and more consistent communication between city and county governments."

In 1985, the Lawrence Chamber and other business and university leaders across the state realized that the Kansas economy was not rebounding from the recession of 1980-82. With the support of Senator Wint Winter, the Kansas Legislature commissioned a report on the state's economy by Tony Redwood and Chuck Krider. At a time when the state's three major industries—agriculture, aviation, and oil and gas—were all in distress, there was bi-partisan support for creating a fourth industry: technology. Focusing on technology made sense because of the state's excellent research universities, well-educated workforce with a willingness to work hard, and the potential of spinoff businesses created by talented people from major companies. The Redwood-Krider Report led the Kansas Legislature to pass major economic development initiatives in 1986. These initiatives are credited with turning around the state's economy.

According to Charles Becker, vice-president of Campbell-Becker who served as vice-chair of the Chamber's Economic Development Task Force, KTEC—created by the legislature to attract technology companies—is the “jewel in the crown” of state agencies focusing on economic development in the technology field.

KTEC (Kansas Technology Enterprise Corporation) was authorized funds by the legislature in 1987-88 to provide seed capital, and chose Campbell-Becker to manage the funds. Campbell-Becker created a limited partnership, Ad Astra (and later Ad Astra II), mixing KTEC's funds with a private-fund. The first investments made by Ad Astra were in 1989.

Several years later, the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce and KU became partners with KTEC in founding a new business incubator, Kansas Innovation Corporation. KIC, under the leadership of Jake Maczuga, provides financing and management help for start-up companies.

Kansas International was started in 1988 as an outgrowth of two Lawrence groups, one from KU and the other a local business group, which were meeting in Lawrence. Since both groups had the same goal in mind—teaching local companies how to sell their

products and services abroad—they decided to consolidate their efforts. According to former executive director Nancy Hiebert, KI helped sensitize the Lawrence business community (through a series of monthly seminars) to the opportunity of doing business abroad. KI provides its over 100 members with databases, translators, foreign language printers, and individuals willing to make foreign contacts for local businesses.

A Chamber priority for over a decade was the construction of a new terminal for the Lawrence Airport. Toeppen ruefully admits driving his car onto the airport runway in an attempt to convince business prospects that they were receiving red carpet treatment—when his actual motive was to keep them from seeing the dilapidated condition of the old terminal.

Ernie Angino's election to the city commission in 1983 is viewed by many as a turning point in the effort to construct a new terminal. He was appalled at the state of the airport and expressed his firm conviction that “Lawrence should come into the 20th Century.”

Angino believed that money to preserve the Union Pacific Depot might better be spent on a new airport terminal. He floated a trial balloon—which turned out to be made of lead—that stone from the depot could be used in constructing the terminal and a commemorative plaque affixed stating that the stone was from the depot and emphasizing the changing modes of travel, from rail to air, during the past 100 years.

All of the commissioners agreed that paying for construction of a new terminal should not rest on the backs of local taxpayers, so they sought



Lawrence Municipal Airport

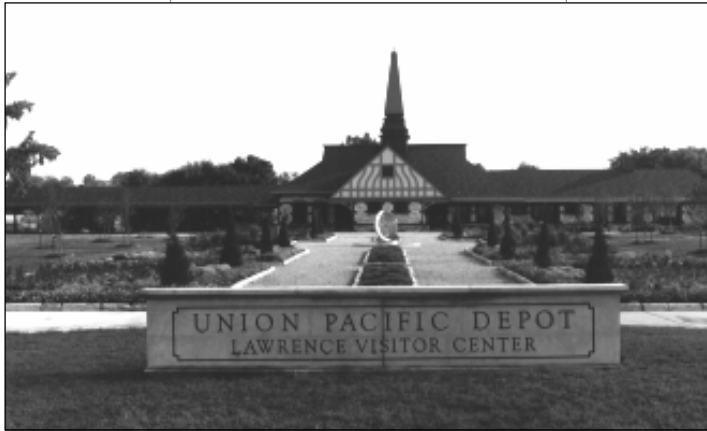
alternate sources of financing. The new terminal, dedicated in 1987, was funded by a combination of rental fees, revenue sharing funds, and interest from revenue sharing accounts.

Since then, the airport has seen a number of improvements. The Chamber helped the city secure a 90-10 grant for installation of the \$1.58 million instrument landing

system which was installed in March 1993. The city's share of the cost was \$158,000. At the same time, new lighting was installed, along with an automated surface observation system which broadcasts weather information to pilots. According to former Lawrence Mayor Bob Walters, who has also served on the Lawrence Aviation Advisory Board, "Whenever we needed something for the airport, the Chamber was always there supporting us."

By 1990, Bob Moody, formerly a Lawrence City Commissioner as well as mayor, was beginning to see the fruits of his long labor to see the Union Pacific Depot restored.

Moody had been active in the effort since 1984 when the railroad decided to abandon and demolish its depot. In December 1984, pilot Delbert Richardson flew Moody, City Commissioner Mike



Amyx, and City Manager Mike Wildgen to Omaha to discuss options with Union Pacific. The railroad agreed to delay demolition for 30 days while Moody and company scrambled to find a way to save the depot which the railroad insisted must be moved from its position near the tracks.

In 1985, Union Pacific accepted a KU group's proposal to move the depot "stone by stone" and offered a \$10,000 donation. But, although Save the Depot Task Force members worked hard at finding a solution, moving the depot proved to be an impossible task. On February 7, 1990, the railroad donated the depot to the city and agreed that

it be renovated for nonprofit use without relocation. The Depot Management Board was formed with Moody as chair, and by autumn the firm of John Lee and Associates was hired as project architect.

B.A. Green Construction Co. was selected as the contractor for Phase III of the renovation in early 1993 and by spring, the city received two federal ISTEA grants through the

Kansas Department of Transportation—one to complete the restoration of the depot and acquire and demolish adjacent buildings, and the other to provide landscaping.

On March 16, 1996, the depot was rededicated as a community building and visitors' center operated by the Chamber's CVB. As for Moody, he reflects that, "In this day and age, quite honestly, this is the one project that I think has had solid support of the community. The preservation was a matter of perseverance, perspiration and a bunch of personable people. It was truly a community project."

The Visitors' Center operates with a paid staff of one and one-half and a

volunteer staff of 45-plus. In addition to providing information about things to do, accommodations and places to dine, visitors may view a film *Lawrence: Free State Fortress*, unveiled in August 1997. The film—which has won first place in the Open Division of the Kan Film Festival as well as in the College Division: Documentary—was the creation of Dr. Steve Bruner and his wife Kathy in cooperation with KU's Film Department.

Looking to the Future

As a result of the Chamber's contract with Douglas County to provide economic development expertise, the Chamber was able to assist Leo Lauber in the development of his Intech Business Park located east of Eudora on K-10 Highway. Bill Martin, the Chamber's Economic Development Director, coordinated a public-private effort to land the promotional graphics division of UARCO (now Communicolor) that involved the Chamber, the owners of Intech Business Park, the City of Eudora, Douglas County, and the State of Kansas.

The printing company, which opened in 1990, was the largest manufacturing plant to locate in Douglas County since Quaker Oats

in 1978. Since then, Intech has attracted other important businesses. M-PACT—the result of Lauber's own Orthopedic Casting Laboratory, whose offices were located at Intech, merging with Martin World Wide—constructed a 70,000 square-foot plant in Intech Business Park. Sacs Warehouse is located there as is Filters Plus.

According to Lauber—who admits that Intech's marketing efforts have been passive because companies approach them due to the park's convenient location and high visibility on K-10's Smart Corridor—"Bill Martin was the real secret of our success. We haven't gone all out and tried to publicize the park. When we got a nibble we'd turn it over to Bill immediately and he went to work on it. He worked two years to get us UARCO."



Lauber modestly credits serendipity for part of Intech Business Park's success. But when Jim Martin, President and CEO of M-PACT, discusses the future of Intech, he sees Leo Lauber's vision for the business park as being right on target.

Baldwin City also benefited from the cooperative approach in attracting business and industry to the area. Working with the Baldwin City Development Corporation, the City of Baldwin City, and Douglas County, Martin coordinated the successful effort to locate SOARK, a manufacturer of athletic apparel, in the Baldwin City Industrial Park. SOARK began operation with 15 employees in August of 1989, closed briefly, and reopened. Baldwin City Industrial Park also currently includes Cutler Engineering, Custom Mobile Equipment which manufactures gigantic fork lifts, and a John Deere retail implement dealership.

Since 1974, the Chamber had been looking for a site for a new industrial park similar to the Santa Fe Industrial Park north of I-70. In 1984, Joel Jacobs was appointed by Chamber President Pete Whitenight to head a task force to identify a location for a new industrial park.

Learning from past failures, the Chamber involved—from the beginning—representatives of both city and county commissions, whose approvals were necessary. City Commissioner Ernest Angino and County Commissioner Beverly Bradley served on the initial task force.

Two locations were proposed, one north, the other east, of Lawrence. The plan for the 300-acre East Hills Business Park was selected and received unanimous approval by both city and county commissions on every phase of development. In December 1989, the Garage Door Group of Kansas City, Missouri (now Amarr Garage Doors), was the first major plant to locate in the East Hills Business Park. Since then, Kinedyne, Pittman-Moore, Mallinckrodt Veterinary (both Pittman-Moore and Mallinckrodt are now consolidated into Progress Vanguard), API Foils (formerly Astor Universal), National Computer Systems, Sauer-Danfoss (formerly Sauer-Sundstrand) and ProSoCo have located facilities there.

Sauer-Danfoss, a producer of hydrostatic transmissions, selected East Hills for the site of its new \$30 million manufacturing plant even though a second location in Iowa was a lower cost

alternative. “We looked at several sites in the Midwest,” says Keith Folkmann, plant manager, “and decided we could best duplicate our operation at Ames, Iowa



by locating in a similar university city.”

Bill Martin was realistic about the difficulty of competing with communities that are primed to offer much more to entice new businesses than Lawrence and Douglas County are prepared to do. He felt Lawrence could be most successful by attracting first-class privately-owned companies that—because they do not have to meet the bottom-line expectations of stockholders—can consider the educational and cultural opportunities and the overall quality of life which the Lawrence area offers.

The benefits Lawrence has derived from the Santa Fe Industrial Park for the last 44 years are being duplicated, if not surpassed,

by the development of the East Hills Business Park—now expanded to 387 acres—which is occurring at a much faster rate than originally anticipated. The seven companies located there have invested \$96 million into the community. Already, the park has generated over 1,500 jobs and an estimated collective annual payroll in the millions of dollars.

Since its formation, the Chamber has been a leader in working with local and state officials to provide good streets and highways. The latest idea for a southern bypass originated in a 1985 Chamber Transportation Committee discussion about the severity of traffic on 23rd Street. The Chamber commissioned an Entertel Survey of public opinion on traffic problems in the city and found that the general public was also very concerned about traffic on 23rd Street and Iowa Street. As a result, the Chamber worked hard to ensure that proponents of the bypass appeared at every public hearing so that the governing bodies would be exposed to the views of average citizens.

Sandy Praeger and Nancy Hiebert, then Lawrence Mayor and Douglas County Commission Chair, respectively, had frequently discussed ways to get the federal

government involved in helping fund the bypass project. So in 1987, when both attended the National Chamber Meeting in Washington, D.C., they took advantage of the opportunity to seek assistance from Senator Bob Dole and Congressman Jim Slattery.

Praeger believes the bipartisan support (she is Republican, Hiebert is Democrat) for the project impressed the officials, as did the obvious cooperation which existed between the local city and county governments. Praeger and Hiebert also met with Kansas Department of Transportation and Kansas Turnpike Authority officials, and ultimately received KTA's pledge to build and finance the new interchange which now connects the turnpike to the South Lawrence Trafficway. Congress authorized \$7.3 million toward construction of the bypass. Douglas County and the City of Lawrence each pledged \$4 million for the bypass and, in a public vote in 1990, 56 percent of Douglas County voters approved the plan to build the South Lawrence Trafficway.

Although the bypass was stalled by lawsuits and opposition to the road, the western section—a nine-mile two-lane stretch of road from US Highway 59 to the Lecompton/

Lawrence turnpike interchange northwest of the city—was opened to traffic in 1997.

In the summer of 1999, Governor Graves became personally involved in the effort to complete the eastern section of the SLT. Chamber representatives, along with local officials, worked hard to put together a package of financial and other inducements in an effort to gain Haskell's necessary support for a 31st Street location.

Such a mitigation package was necessary because the Federal Highway Administration



would not approve 31st Street route unless Haskell Indian Nations University agreed to the 31st Street alternative with a mitigation package acceptable to its Board of Trustees. Kansas Department of Transportation, on the other hand, would not approve any route other than 31st Street because it was the most direct route with the lowest cost of the alternatives considered.

Construction of the eastern leg, which would have connected US Highway 59 (and the western section of the bypass) to Kansas Highway 10 east of Lawrence, reached—quite literally—a dead-end when, in an October 1999 meeting, HINU Board of Trustees rejected a mitigation offer from KDOT, thus assuring that the federally required Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement would be completed with a No Build result.

In 1985, as a first step to possible resort



development at Clinton Lake, the Convention and Visitors Bureau approached the owner of Clinton Lake Marina, Mark Rotunde, regarding moving the marina from the west to the north side of the lake. Rotunde liked the idea and worked with State Senator Wint Winter and Judy Billings to obtain funds from the legislature to provide the

infrastructure to accommodate the marina at the new location.

A resort at Clinton Lake was included in the Visit 2020 Plan for Lawrence adopted by the City Commission in 1992 and ultimately included in the Economic Development component of Horizon 2020. The resort was also cited as a potential development project in the Nichols Gilstrap “State of the Lawrence Tourism Industry” report to the city commission in May 1999.

Toeppen and Billings appeared to express interest on behalf of Lawrence each time the legislature discussed resort development in the state. The legislature enacted legislation in 1998 that offered support to a privately owned resort in a state park. A \$21.8 million, 150 room hotel with a conference center has been proposed by C.B. Richard Ellis from Kansas City.

The Riverfront Plaza, a Chelsea project which brought outlet shopping to the south banks of the Kaw, was a sweet victory for Chamber officials and others who had met defeat on four previous attempts to bring additional retail development to the downtown area. The Chelsea project was the one which finally gained the public support

necessary to ensure governmental approval.



Riverfront Plaza

When David Longhurst first introduced Chelsea representative Jeff Randall to Toeppen, and Randall asked why Chelsea should be interested in coming to Lawrence, Toeppen replied that “a dozen developers would love the opportunity to build in Lawrence, but they are not sitting at this table tonight.”

Fittingly, even before the Mall’s Grand Opening in 1990, the first major function held in the Riverfront Plaza Factory Outlet Mall was the Chamber of Commerce’s Annual Meeting. At that annual meeting, Jean Milstead, the first female leader of the Chamber in its 111 year history, completed her term as Chairman of the Board. Her successor, John Lungstrum had the honor

of participating in Riverfront Plaza’s ribbon-cutting ceremony. That honor was particularly fitting for him because, as a Chamber officer, he worked very closely with Chelsea and the City of Lawrence to achieve the

public-private partnership necessary to make the project a reality.

By November 1993, Lawrence had two outlet malls from which to choose. Tanger Factory Outlet Center opened for business one year after they announced plans to build a \$5 million, 100,000 square-foot mall in North Lawrence adjacent to the turnpike interchange. In late 1997, Tanger scrapped plans to increase the size of the center by 58,000 square-feet and the facility is currently on the market.

The Riverfront Mall has recently been purchased by a group of investors consisting of Dolph Simons III, Dan Simons, Doug Compton, Bill Newsome and Bill Sutcliffe. The lower level is currently devoted to office

space, with Sprint as the major tenant. In February 2000, Marriott Hotels announced its intention to house a 108 room hotel in the Riverfront.

Maintaining their long-time presence near 8th and Vermont, the Chamber moved to its present offices at 734 Vermont—a half block north of their previous location—on March 5, 1991.

Abatements have always been a hotly debated topic in Lawrence. Determining the worth of businesses, both new and expanding, is a complicated procedure. In 1991, the Chamber worked with the City Commission to formalize a policy in which most eligible companies would get a 50 percent tax abatement over a 10 year period if a cost-benefit analysis done by the University of Kansas indicated a positive return. The City Commission accepted the idea of the analysis, but chose to keep—and use—flexibility in setting the ratio of cost to benefit.

In 1992, the Chamber succeeded in obtaining public support for the Small Business Development Center and the Center for Research, Inc., established by KU during the 1980s to provide free consulting services to entrepreneurs and prospective entrepreneurs in six

northeast Kansas counties. Under the Chamber's plan, the city and county each added an additional \$10,000 to their economic development allocations for the KUSBDC.

In order to help businessmen who were overburdened by skyrocketing premiums for workers compensation, Toeppen worked with the Kansas State Chamber to ensure passage of a law that would ease that burden and make certain that compensation was paid only to those who were injured on the job. According to Terry Leatherman, vice-president of legislative affairs and the state chamber's chief lobbyist, a major grassroots lobbying was required and "the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce was a leader in this effort."

The legislature failed to override Governor Joan Finney's veto of their first workers compensation bill, but a compromise was worked out acceptable to business and labor which resulted in 1993 reform of the program.

The Chamber's 70th Annual Meeting, held in April 1993, featured another new building on the Lawrence scene, KU's Lied Center at 15th and Iowa. A highlight of the Ric Averill produced show featured a basketball opera—"Pavarotchie Meetsa Gregoria Ostertago"—starring Alonzo Egotissimo, alias Jack Wright, professor of Theater and Film, and KU basketball star Greg Ostertag. Ostertag's role was easy. He threw a basketball to Wright, who broke out in song: "When the moon hits your eye like a big pizza pie, it's a slam dunk!"

The Flood of 1993, along with a sinkhole at Second and Elm Streets, brought attention to the flooding problems along North Second Street. Once the sinkhole was repaired—traffic was routed around it for over three months—the city installed two pumps to drain the area, each capable of sending 40,000 gallons per minute to the river, at a total cost



\$1,102,783 (\$675,000 of which was covered by an Economic Development Association grant). The pumps—including those which drain the underpass—were equipped with back-up power and proved their effectiveness during the heavy rains of 1996 when they operated for 80 hours straight.

The North Second Street of today is a far cry from the one that Toeppen used to avoid by using the Hallmark Cards entrance from the Turnpike so prospective businessmen in his car wouldn't see the most blighted entrance to the city. The Chamber's North Second Street Task Force and its chair, Rusty Thomas, pushed hard for street improvements. Thomas' involvement was so intense that when the asphalt overlay was completed in 1984, using KLINK funds which paid 50 percent of the cost, Toeppen joked that the street should be renamed "The Rusty Thomas Memorial Highway."

North Second was later widened and reconstructed from Lincoln

Street to the Y where Second merges with Third. The project, completed on



North 2nd Street

September 30, 1996, took almost a year and the city's Director of Public Works, George Williams, understood the frustrations of businessmen who were greatly inconvenienced and, in some cases, financially damaged by the construction. Still, when one looks at the street today, with its neat business buildings and beautiful landscaping, the problems suffered in the creation of this lovely gateway to the city seem well worth the result.

In September 1993, Gene Ramp, chair of the Lawrence Education Round Table announced the formation of the Lawrence School-Business Partnership, a brainchild of the Chamber. The Partnership was designed to apprise local businesses of how they could best help schools. The school

district agreed to pay the salary of the Partnership's half-time director, while the Chamber agreed to provide office space, secretarial and support services.

By early October, Linda Robinson—who boasted an impressive background in teaching and counseling—was hired as director.

Twenty partnerships were formed the first year of the program with the number doubling the second year. There are currently more than 100 working partnerships—ranging from large companies like Hallmark and Capitol Federal which teamed up for the last three years to provide sophisticated daily planners for LHS students, to Duds 'n' Suds, a small company that washes and dries blankets for the Early Childhood Education Program classrooms at East Heights and Pinckney Elementary Schools. According to Robinson, "We try to make a niche for any business, regardless of how large or small."

Robinson resigned her position at the end of the '98-'99 school year. Nancy Quellhorst, a Lawrence High School employee, assumed the duties of director in September 1999.

A major initiative of the Business/Education Partnership was the Early Childhood Education

Program for at risk students, four years of age. The first classroom for 20 students opened at East Heights Elementary School in 1996. In 1997, Bill Dann made a \$50,000 contribution to the Early Childhood Education Program in the name of Jesse Milan to add a second classroom. Another \$50,000 contribution from Mr. Dann in 1998 honored Gertrude Ruttan and allowed a third classroom to be added. Mr. Dann made another contribution in 1999 in the name of Judge Jean Shepherd.

The Chamber has always supported new businesses in Lawrence provided the community could support it. Thus, in 1993, the Chamber went on record favoring the redevelopment of Nieder Acres, the area between 31st and 33rd Streets on Iowa and the construction of a Target Superstore on the site. More recently, the Chamber offered strong support to infill development proposals in Downtown Lawrence: the east side of the 800 block of New Hampshire, currently the home of Border's Book Store, and the east side of the 1000 block of New Hampshire for the attractive Berkeley Plaza development which includes office, residential and retail use.

During her term as Chair of the Chamber's

Board of Directors in 1996, Marilyn Bittenbender is most proud of her work to effect a change in how costs for the city's stormwater management fee were figured. While the Chamber recognized the need for the plan to control stormwater runoff and realized it had to be funded, the costs as initially calculated were clearly too steep. So Bittenbender and Toebben, working with city officials and others, eventually secured a reduction in fees by more than 60 percent.

From 1990 until the present day, the average increase of visitors to Lawrence each year has been seven percent. In addition to the tourist dollars such an annual increase brings into our community, CVB Director Judy Billings cites the amenities—new hotels, restaurants, the showcasing of our history—which tourism

creates for residents as well as visitors.

Billings and her staff have worked hard to secure conventions and create events to attract

tourists. One of CVB's most creative marketing strategies began in 1991 with the highly successful Festival of Poinsettias, an annual holiday celebration which runs from Thanksgiving weekend through December. Kicking off with the Eldridge Hotel's Old Fashioned Christmas Parade featuring horse-drawn vehicles, the celebration showcases the area's theater and concert presentations, craft sales and exhibits with a striking crimson backdrop of thousands of poinsettias.

The Festival is a partnership between the CVB and more than 150 retail and professional businesses throughout the community that display poinsettia plants. The beauty of it all is that most of the activities showcased were already in place. The Festival has won several awards, among them, selection as one of the "Top 100 Events" by the American Bus Association.

In 1988, Lawrence hosted the National AAU Junior Olympic Games in which 5,000 athletes competed in 18 different sports. The event was held in Lawrence in 1989 and immediately after those games, Lawrence was invited by the State Department of Health and Environment to bid on hosting the first of the Sunflower State Games.



Lawrence was selected over several other cities, according to Billings, “because we had the expertise in successfully running the Junior Olympic Games.”

The first Sunflower State Games, held in Lawrence in July 1990, attracted 1,500 athletes. The number of participants has grown each year. In 1998, the Sunflower Games expanded to two weekends instead of one, and over 7,500 competitors were welcomed to Lawrence by the bright banners which adorned the city. Because the games take place between spring and fall semesters at KU, the infusion of tourist dollars is particularly welcome. Billings estimates that the community gains about \$750,000 per weekend from the Sunflower State Games.

When state officials told Billings that the brown signs on the highways that inform visitors of places of interest in Lawrence would cost \$20,000 each, she worked with the State Tourism Office to have the signs funded in a highway bill passed by the legislature. Because of that bill, the signs, installed in 1994, cost only \$200. Funding for the blue logo signs, which use logos to denote lodging and restaurant choices, were included in the same bill.

In 1995, CVB introduced a Visitor’s

The Kansas Jayhawks Before They Were A Basketball Team.



Guide with a magazine format. For each of its three years of publication in the new format, the Guide has been designated “The Best Visitor’s Guide in the State” by the Travel Industry Association of Kansas.

Rob Phillips, Eldridge Hotel manager, and historian Katie Armitage approached Billings in 1996 about their idea for a Civil Way Days promotion. In January 1999, the CVB coordinated activities which focus on the area’s Civil War history and incorporated those events into a brochure listing a calendar of events. CVB is actively marketing Civil War Days and has developed a stunningly creative series of ads which focus on the area’s colorful history.

Never one to miss an opportunity, Billings was eager to capitalize on

interest generated by *Ride with the Devil*, a movie released in late 1999 which features Quantrill’s Raid on Lawrence. She believes *Ride with the Devil* “may have the biggest impact of any movie yet” in bringing tourist dollars into our community.

Lawrence residents had a front row seat for the Advanced World Aerobatics Championships in which 55 pilots from 14 countries competed in the skies over the municipal airport from July 4-11, 1997. Countries represented in the competition were Argentina, Austria, Canada, Czech Republic, Great Britain, Japan, Mexico, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, South Africa, Switzerland, Ukraine, and the United States. The winner of the event—Janusz Kasperek, a pilot

with LOT, the Polish national airline—flew to victory in an airplane borrowed from an American competitor.

Lawrence acquired the prestigious event because the US team used the Lawrence Municipal Airport to practice for the 1993 AWAC competition which was held that year in Hungary. Nelson Krueger, a friend of John Morrissey—who was a KU graduate and member of the team—took Judy Billings to the airport to meet Morrissey and his wife. “Why are they doing this in Hungary?” Krueger asked, “Why aren’t we doing it in Lawrence?” On behalf of the CVB, Billings made a bid, the French governing organization (CIVA) awarded the competition to the US, and the US organization (IAC) awarded it to Lawrence.

An article about the AWAC competition which appeared in *Sport Aerobatics Magazine* lamented that not enough International Aerobic Club members showed up to assist on the judges line and man the boundaries, and credited Billings—terming her “the busiest person at AWAC”—for recruiting local volunteers, many of them pilots, to fill the positions.

In the fall of 1997, the CVB initiated “Big Blue Weekends” in which

townsfolk and visitors alike are encouraged to wear blue and take part in all the special events that occur in Lawrence on weekends during football season. Brochures package the events and market them to prospective visitors. In 1998, visitors were welcomed to Lawrence by festive Big Blue banners adorning the street lights.

The CVB’s website (www.visitlawrence.com), specifically targeted to visitors’ interests, debuted on January 30, 1998. The site lists hotels and restaurants and is linked to any local organization which has a webpage.

The Chamber’s Visit 2020 task force, chaired by Brian Kubota, was hard at work long before the Horizon 2020 planning process had received much publicity and, according to Planner Sheila Stogsdill, several strategic recommendations of that task force were included in the final Horizon 2020 document.

In an effort to “make the public more aware of local economic development efforts,” the Chamber began inserting its monthly newsletter—“The Chamber Report”—into the *Journal-World*. Distribution to *Journal-World* readers began in July 1994.

As Lawrence and Douglas County grew in

population, so did their needs for improved public safety and health facilities, recreational opportunities, and a second high school. Officials of governing bodies and the Chamber recognized that paying for those needs could overwhelm taxpayers who already felt they were overburdened. But then Toeppen, according to Douglas County Administrator Craig Weinaug, came up with a 4 for 1 concept in which voters would be asked to approve a one-cent county sales tax which would provide revenue for a new jail, expanded health care facilities, new and upgraded parks and recreational facilities while allowing city and county governments to reduce



their mil levies, thus furnishing needed property tax relief. Indirectly linked to the county sales tax—the city and county promised to lower their mil levies sufficiently to allow the school district to increase its own without an increase in property taxes—was the school bond election to provide Lawrence with a second high school. Toeppen credits Dan Watkins, chair of the Chamber Board of Directors in 1994, and City Commissioner John Nalbandian for their input in developing the idea.

According to Fred DeVictor, Director of Parks and Recreation, “the Chamber provided major assistance in the effort to pass a one-cent county sales tax.” Revenues from the proposed tax are shared by Douglas County and the cities of Lawrence, Eudora, Lecompton and Baldwin City. Lawrence receives roughly 60 percent of the revenue, Douglas County about 36 percent, and Eudora, Lecompton and Baldwin each receive about one percent.

The “4 for 1 Committee: A Common Sense Plan for Douglas County,” was headed by Shirley Martin-Smith, Rex Johnson and Terry Riordan. That committee, assembled by the Chamber, planned campaign strategies which included door-to-door literature drops, created a

speakers’ bureau, and gathered statistical data—particularly effective was a comparison of sales taxes in neighboring counties—for advertisements and brochures.

DeVictor chaired a working committee of those agencies that would benefit from the sales tax,



Prairie Park Nature Center

e.g., those serving health, public safety, senior adults, children and recreational needs of the community. He mentions the Lawrence Aquahawks, who have benefited from the new improved aquatic center, as working tirelessly to ensure passage of the issue. The remodeled pool is only one benefit realized by the sales tax. An indoor pool is under construction near Free State High School, a new jail recently opened on K-10 Highway and a new health facility near the hospital is home to Douglas County Visiting Nurse’s Association, Burt Nash Mental Health Center and the Douglas County Health Department.

Thanks to the sales tax, the City of Lawrence has

been able to buy and “warehouse” land for parks: 30 acres near both Brookcreek in East Lawrence and Free State High School, and 40 acres off 15th Street west of Wakarusa Drive. Improvements have been made to East Lawrence Recreation Center and YSI

(Youth Sports Incorporated) and upgrades have been made to ADA requirements. The sales tax also allowed creation of a new skateboard park at Centennial Park,

a nature center at 27th and Harper, and an adult softball complex.

Best of all, according to Mike Wildgen, “We [the city] promised that we would put 5 mils of the sales tax into the budget each year. We’ve kept that promise.”

Craig Weinaug is proud that the county also lived up to its promise to cut the mil levy. Today, even with an ambitious capital improvement program, the county mil levy is 4 mils lower than it was before the county sales tax passed. “Not all of that is due to the sales tax,” admits Weinaug, “part of it is due to the increase in valuation.” However, he notes that—because the county estimated sales tax

revenues so conservatively, cost overruns on the jail and the health facility have not been a stumbling block to completion.

Weinaug sees the Chamber “as a good sounding board for us. They give us realistic feedback on proposed projects and, since we can’t spend public money to sell our proposals to voters, the Chamber performs that function.”

The Chamber did not take a position on the first bond issue in 1990 to build a second high school for Lawrence because its annual survey of its members did not indicate support for the idea. Lack of public information and objection to the proposed site and moving ninth graders to LHS and the new high school were believed to be factors in the bond issue being defeated by a 69 percent margin.

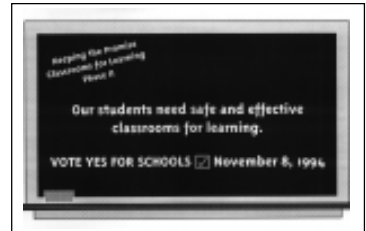
The Chamber lent considerable support to the successful 1992 school bond issue which resulted in the construction of Southwest Junior High and Prairie Park and Sunflower elementary schools, expanded Wakarusa and renovated Central Junior High and Lawrence High School. The Chamber endorsed the bond issue and took an active role in forming the Citizens Committee for Classrooms for Learning.

The Chamber continued to monitor support for a second high school in its annual surveys. By 1994, with 54 percent of members who responded to the survey endorsing the issue and only 20 percent opposing it, Toebben geared up for the campaign to win support for the \$36.9 million bond issue—\$25.8 million of which would go toward a second three-year high school. Former State Representative Jessie Branson and businessman Bob Johnson were selected to chair the committee “Classrooms for Learning, Phase II.”

Realizing they would have strong organized opposition, the committee “hit the ground running.” According to Branson, the effort actively involved more than 1000 volunteers and many businesses who gave money and used their marquees to support the bond issue. “So many people,” she says, “worked so hard.” Bob Johnson, her co-chair, agrees and gives the Chamber a great deal of credit: “Had the Chamber not been willing to commit themselves wholeheartedly to the project it would have been almost impossible to be successful.”

Wanda Williams, who served as co-treasurer of the campaign with Don Binns, said she and her husband Roy, KU Men’s

Basketball Coach, simply wanted to “increase the opportunity for student



participation. It is our backgrounds as teachers that make it easy for us to get involved in any effort to improve education.”

The hard work paid off and voters approved the bond issue on November 8, 1994 in the same election in which the county sales tax was approved. Toebben saw the successful effort to provide Lawrence with a second high school as “a strong statement that this community is building for the future.” Furthermore, he states emphatically that—of all the contributions he has made to the community during his tenure as Chamber president—passage of that bond issue “is the high point of my time here.”

Professional Women of the Chamber began in 1996 in order to provide support, education, recognition and networking opportunities for Chamber businesswomen. Miles Schnaer, owner of Crown Automotive, had earlier approached the Chamber with a proposal for his

Crown Automotive dealership to sponsor The Athena Award, a national award sponsored by Oldsmobile, given to women who have supported other women in business. Betty Markley, Director and Membership Services and Small Business, took Schnaer's proposal to the Sound Advice for Small Business Task Force, suggesting that the nearly 500 women members of the Chamber might wish to have a separate organization within the Chamber. A subcommittee was formed to implement the idea. Key to the formation of PWOC were Jan McNish, who chaired the task force, and Debbie Liddel who chaired the subcommittee.

In June 1997, the Chamber initiated its annual job fair, The Employment Marketplace, where job-seekers could meet potential employers and learn about career

opportunities in Douglas County. The first event attracted over 600 people. The fair is an outgrowth of the Chamber's Labor Availability Committee.

In 1997, the Chamber's Senior Council tackled the difficult task of placing bronze plaques on historic buildings in Downtown Lawrence. Jessie Branson, who coordinated the effort, oversaw committees of volunteers working on design, historic research, boundaries, and block and building selections. The first plaque, cast by Degginger Foundry in Topeka, was installed at Liberty Hall in June 1998. Twelve historic buildings currently boast plaques and another 17 buildings are expected to have plaques installed by May 2000.

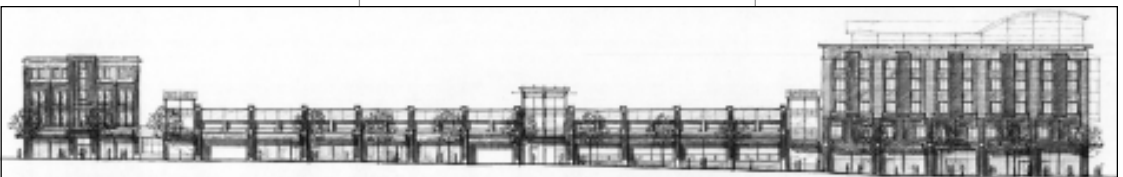
For decades, the Chamber has intermittently employed task forces to look at the parking problem that exists downtown. The most recent of these

recommendations in 1998 was to build a 375-space parking garage between the library and fire station. That recommendation took a back seat to a creative plan to build a \$20 million retail and residential development in the 900 block of New Hampshire. Jeff Shmalberg, vice-president of Scotch Industries, says that his family business needed an additional 20 parking spaces and, in an effort to secure them, that initial endeavor grew into an idea to provide downtown with more retail and residential space. Originally expected to cost \$5 million, the project has grown considerably in scope and currently includes a proposed additional \$6 million dollar Lawrence Arts Center.

"When the Chamber got wind of what we were doing," says Shmalberg, "they asked me to bring the model of our proposed



Downtown 2000—900 Block of New Hampshire looking East



Downtown 2000—900 Block of New Hampshire looking West

development to a meeting. It was the Chamber that came up with the idea of using tax increment financing for the rooftop parking lot.”

TIF is a creative form of financing which, now that the district has been created by the city commission, will use new revenues generated through sales and property taxes on the development to finance the debt on the parking garage.

The Chamber was also a strong advocate of a second comprehensive state highway bill and hopes to see funding in the bill for widening US Highway 59 between Lawrence and Ottawa, widening 6th Street (US Highway 40) from Wakarusa Drive to the SLT, and connecting 15th Street to the SLT.

In 1998, the Chamber learned that booking KU Men’s Basketball Coach Roy Williams as a speaker guarantees a quick ticket sellout. In addition to speaking at the Chamber’s 120th annual meeting, Williams also received the coveted Buford M. Watson, Jr. Public Service Award for his significant contributions to the Lawrence area. “A community is just like Allen Fieldhouse,” Williams asserted. “It’s only as good as the people in it.”

Governor Bill Graves provided another annual

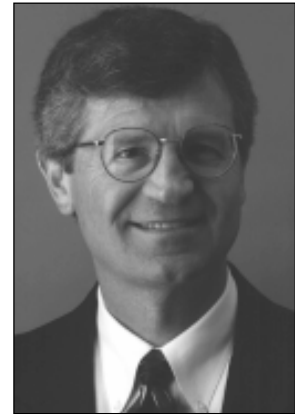
meeting sellout in 1999. The governor praised the community and credited the Chamber for its work. “You really are blessed,” he said. “I think a large part of that is because of the work of this Chamber. . . . A lot of communities would give anything to have the quality of life you enjoy in Lawrence and in Douglas County.”

The March 1999 departure of Bill Martin, who had served the as the Chamber’s Director of Economic Development for the past 13 years, was greeted with shock by many. Toebben reacted with stoic acceptance: “You can only expect someone as good as Bill to stay with you for so long. Thirteen years is probably as much as we were entitled to.”

Martin downplayed his significant contributions to the impressive growth of area jobs during his tenure, telling the Board that “the staff here is exceptional. You won’t see any change in program due to my departure.” After conducting a nationwide search and interviewing five finalists for his job, Martin’s view was deemed correct. In late August, Toebben named Debi Moore, Martin’s trusted assistant and acting economic development director in his absence, as his replacement. Moore is the most senior member of

the Chamber staff and has been with the organization for 23 years.

Moore’s experience and hard work recently paid off in a big way. As this history was going to press, American Eagle Outfitters, Inc. announced plans for a new 402,000 square-foot distribution center in East Hills



Gary Toebben

Business Park. The \$43 million project is expected to provide 300 jobs and will be the largest investment by any private company in Douglas County history. The 23 year-old company, a specialty retailer of casual apparel for men and women, ages 16 to 34, hopes to have the center operational by May 2001.

On August 10, 1999, the Chamber was hit with another blow when Gary Toebben announced his intention to leave his position as Chamber president to become president of the Northern Kentucky Chamber of

Commerce. Judy Billings, director of Lawrence Convention and Visitor's Bureau, agreed to serve as acting president until his successor was selected.

City Manager Mike Wildgen maintains that Toeppen's tenure as Chamber president was significant because he "took a broad view of community issues. His perspective in looking at how community members of all economic levels benefit from support of good government, public improvements, excellent education and community consensus building was important and will be hard to replace."

As similar accolades began pouring in for the departing Toeppen, the Chamber Board quickly set in motion the effort necessary to secure his replacement. Mike Scott, Chamber chair-elect, took very seriously his job as chair of the search committee and hoped to have a new president named by late December 1999. Scott's committee indicated it was looking "for someone who is aggressive, who will take chances, who will not take Lawrence for granted and who will realize there are still a lot of ways to improve." According to Scott, the search committee hoped to "hire an up-and-coming young professional like Toeppen

was when he came here—or a veteran willing to make a lateral move."



Bill Sepic

"We got both!" said a jubilant Scott when Bill Sepic, formerly president of the Rochester, Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, was announced as the Lawrence Chamber's new president in early January 2000. "We're pleased with the caliber of the person we hired. He's a 36-year-old 'up-and-comer' in the profession and his job at Rochester was very similar to the one in Lawrence. He will build consensus and direct staff in the ways it needs to go. In the end, we think he'll be a very highly successful Chamber president."

Sepic began his duties with the Lawrence Chamber on February 21, 2000.

While the Chamber of Commerce takes great pride in the colorful and important history of Lawrence—and in its own contributions to that

history—it is the future of the community that the Chamber must consider. As economist and business consultant Peter Drucker reminds us,

Long-range planning does not deal with future decisions, but with the future of present decisions.

The men who formed the first Lawrence Chamber of Commerce in 1878 would be quick to recognize the truth of Drucker's statement. And so do the Chamber leaders of today—both men and women—who are ready, and able, to lead Lawrence into the next millennium.

Chief Executive Officers

C.L. Scott	@ 1920-1930
George Hedrick	1930-1948
E.R. Zook	1948-1966
Keith Winter	1966-1970
William Gaut	1970-1974
Glenn West	1975-1981
Gary Toebben	1981-1999
Bill Sepic	2000-

Chamber Leaders

2000	Mike Scott	Southwestern Bell
1999	John J. Immel	Attorney
1998	Al Hack, Jr.	CEK Insurance
1997	Dale Willey	Dale Willey Automotive
1996	Marilyn Bittenbender	Stephens Real Estate
1995	John Elmore	Mercantile Bank
1994	Dan Watkins	Attorney
1993	Gary Sollars	Charlton-Manely Insurance
1992	David Brans	Gould Brans Associates
1991	Hank Booth	KLWN/The LAZER
1990	John Lungstrum	Attorney
1989	Jean Milstead	Douglas County Bank
1988	Bob Georgeson	First National Bank
1987	Don Johnston	Maupintour
1986	Bob Johnson	Charlton-Manley
1985	Bob Stephens	Stephens Real Estate
1984	Pete Whitenight	Whitenight's Mens Shop
1983	Joel Jacobs	FMC
1982	Martin Dickenson	KU Law School
1981	Sherry Schaub	Quaker Oats
1980	Lynn Anderson	First National Bank
1979	John McGrew	McGrew Real Estate
1978	Jerry Nossaman	Dentist
1977	Ned Cushing	University State Bank
1976	Tom Greene	Calvin, Eddy & Kappleman
1975	Alan Hack	Lawrence National Bank
1974	Charles Haverty	H.O. Peet
1973	John Brand, Jr.	Attorney
1972	Odd Williams	Douglas County Bank
1971	John Crown	Lawrence Paper Company
1970	Morris Kay	State Representative
1969	Robert Payne	Hallmark
1968	Frank Raley	Lawrence Construction
1967	Dolph Simons, Jr.	Lawrence Journal-World
1966	James V. Owens	Owens Floral
1965	Arthur Heck	Agri-Business
1964	Russell Mosser	Centron
1963	Robert Oyler	Attorney
1962	Jim Clark	Jim Clark Motors
1961	Warren Rhodes	First National Bank
1960	Justin Hill	Lawrence Paper Company
1959	Olin Petefish	Attorney
1958	E.P. Addy	Santa Fe Railway
1957	Art Wolf	Centron
1956	Lisle Eby	Lawrence Savings
1955	M.N. Penny	M.N. Penny Construction
1054	William Bodin	Bill Bodin, Inc.
1053	Larry Flannery	Weaver's Dept. Store
1952	H.W. Stowits	Rexall Drug Store
1951	Ernest Pontius	Lawrence Journal-World
1950	John Andrews	Kansas Public Service
1949	Richard Barber	Attorney
1948	Cecil T. Hough	Kansas Power & Light
1947	Joe J. Wilson	Rapid Transit Bus Co.
1946	Mike Getto, Sr.	Hotel Eldridge
1945	Chris Kraft	Kraft & Starr Co.
1944	Roger Allen, Sr.	Fritz Co.
1943	M.S. Winter	Winter Chevrolet

1942	C.G. Hease	Lawrence Paper Company
1941	Rpger Wo.;oa,s	{pst,aster
1940	Glenn Charlton	Charlton Insurance
1939	Charles Radcliffe	Ober's
1938	John Brand, Sr.	Attorney
1937	Dolph Simons, Sr.	Lawrence Journal-World
1936	Al Green	Green Bros. Hardware
1935	Charles Russell	Reuter Organ Company
1934	George Lowman	Round Corner Drug
1933	I.J. Meade	Lawrence National Bank
1932	J. Wayne McCoy	Southwestern Bell
1931	Arthur B. Weaver	Weaver's Dept. Store
1930	Walter Varnum	Round Corner Drug
1929	C.B. Holmes	J.R. Holmest Investment
1928	C.B. Hosford	Hosford Invest. & Mortgage
1927	Paul Dinsmoor	Lawrence Paper Company
1926	Paul Dinsmoor	Lawrence Paper Company
1925	C.B. Hosford	Hosford Invest. & Mortgage
1924	George Kirchoff	Poehler Merchantile
1923	Van Bruner	Lawrence Steam Laundry
1922	Van Bruner	Lawrence Steam Laundry
1921	H.B. Ober	Ober's Clothiers
1920	H.B. Ober	Ober's Clothiers
1919	J.D. Bowersock	Lawrence Paper Company
1918	W.C. Simons	Lawrence Journal-World
1917	Otto B. Guffler	Poehler Merchantile Co.
1916	Otto B. Guffler	Poehler Merchantile Co.
1915	Charles Starkweather*	Starkweather Shoe Co.
1914	Olin Bell*	Bell Bros. Music Co.
	A.P. Hults**	Dentist
1913	Olin Bell*	Bell Bros. Music Co.
	A.P. Hults**	Dentist
1912	Olin Bell*	Bell Bros. Music Co.
1911	Olin Bell*	Bell Bros. Music Co.
1910	M. Robinson**	Robinson & Winey Clothing
1909	M. Robinson**	Robinson & Winey Clothing
1908	M. Robinson**	Robinson & Winey Clothing
1907	Albert Henley**	American Cement Plaster Co.
1906	Myer Newmark**	Newmark Drygoods
1905	Myer Newmark**	Newmark Drygoods
1904	Myer Newmark**	Newmark Drygoods
1903	W.F. March**	Merchants National Bank
1902	W.F. March**	Merchants National Bank
1901	J.R. Sanborn**	Newsdealer, Sporting Goods
1900	J.R. Sanborn**	Newsdealer, Sporting Goods
1899	Alexander Monroe**	Merchants State Bank
1898		
1897		
1896		
1895		
1894	Alexander Monroe**	Merchants State Bank
1893	Alexander Monroe**	Merchants State Bank
1892		
1891	J.D. Bowersock**	Bowersock Milling
		Lawrence National Bank
1890		
1889		
1888	George Innes	Innes Dry Goods
1887		
1886	J.D. Bowersock	Mayor, City of Lawrence
1885		
1884	Alexander Monroe	Merchants State Bank
1883	J.D. Bowersock	Mayor, City of Lawrence
1882		
1881		
1880		
1879		
1878	I.N. VanHoesen	Mayor, City of Lawrence

*Merchants Association (Formed 1909)

**Commercial Club (Formed 1891)

Index

- Action 80 22
- Advanced World Aerobatics
Championships 38,39
- Allen, Coach Phog 13
- Amyx, Mike 30
- Angino, Ernie 29,32
- Armitage, Katie 38
- Athens of Kansas 6
- Autry, Gene 9
- Averill, Ric 35
- AWAC 39
- Baldwin City Industrial
Park 31
- Barber, Richard 14,15
- Barr, William 18
- Becker, Charles 29
- Big Blue Weekends 39
- Billings, Bob 21,24
- Billings, Judy 25,26,
33,34,37-39,44
- Binns, Don 41
- Bittenbender, Marilyn 37
- Booth, Arden 20
- Bowersock, J.D. 1,3,5
- Bradley, Beverly 32
- Bradshaw, Goerge 13
- Branson, Jessie 41,42
- Brinkman, Henry 10
- Brock, Bob 16
- Bruner, Kathy 31
- Bruner, Steve 31
- Bubb, Henry 14
- Bush, President George .. 21,22
- Canniff, J.J. 1
- Chamney, Harold 7
- Charley, Bogus 2
- Charley, Jim 2
- Charlton, Glenn 10
- Civil Unrest 19,20
- Civil Way Days 38
- Civilian Conservation
Corps 8
- Clinton Lake 23
- Clymer, Rolla 11
- Compton, Doug 34
- Constant, Tommy 7,15
- Copt, Louis 25
- Cornfield Mall 22
- Counts, Wilson 7
- Crew, J.S. 2
- Crown, John 13,15
- Dam on the Kaw 1
- Dann, Bill 37
- Dark Command 9
- DeVictor, Fred 40
- Dickinson, Martin 24
- Docking, George 9
- Dole, Senator Bob 33
- Downtown Lawrence
Association 21
- Drucker, Peter 44
- Duke, Charlie 19
- Dykes, Downer 19
- Early Childhood Education
Program 36
- East Hills Business
Park 21,32
- Edwards, R.A. 23
- Emergency Relief
Association 7
- Finney, Governor Joan 35
- Flood of 1935 8
- Flood of 1993 35
- Flood Relief Committee 8
- Floodwaters of 1943 12
- Flory, Mart 8
- Folkman, Keith 32
- Foulk, George 11
- Funk, Lena 10
- Gaut, William 20,21
- Gipp, Gerald 27
- Graves, Governor Bill 33,43
- Guffler, Otto B. 5
- Hall, Joyce 17
- Hayes, Gabby 9
- Heck, Art 12
- Heck, Emil 7
- Hedrick, George 4,7-13
- Henry, Lew 13
- Herd, Stan 25
- Hiebert, Nancy 29,32,33
- Hills, Clencie 26
- Holzmeister, Dick 23
- Hume, George W. 2
- Hunt, George A..... 2
- Hurwitz, Simon 13
- Independence Days 25
- Innes, George 2,3
- Intech Business Park 31
- Jackman, R.C. 8
- Jacobs, Joel 31
- Johnson, Bob 41
- Johnson, Rex 40
- Kansas Innovation
Corporation 29
- Kansas Technology Enter-
prise Corporation 29
- Kansas Turnpike
(KTA) 16,33
- Kasperek, Janusz 38
- King, Captain 2
- Koppel, Ted 26
- Kraft, Chris 13,15
- Krider, Chuck 28
- Krueger, Nelson 26,39
- Kubota, Brian 39
- Landon, Michael 26
- Lauber, Leo 31
- Lawrence Businessmen's
Association 18
- Lawrence Centennial
Corporation 16,17
- Lawrence, George 14
- Lawrence Industrial
Development
Company 13
- Lawrence, Mrs. M.E. 4
- Lawrence School-Business
Partnership 36
- Lawrence Victory Plan 13
- Lawrence: Free State
Fortress Film 31
- Lawton, Keith 13
- Layton, Grandma 25
- Leadership Lawrence 26
- Leatherman, Terry 35
- Lee, John 30
- Leis, George 1,3
- Liddel, Debbie 42
- Lindley, Chancellor E.H. 6
- Linguist, Ed 16
- Lone Star Lake 8
- Longhurst, David 34
- Lungstrum, John 34
- Mack, Mrs. 4
- Maczuga, Jake 29
- Malott, Deane 14
- Markley, Betty 42
- Martin, Bill 31,32,43
- Martin, Jim 31
- Martin-Smith, Shirley ... 28,40

McGrew, John 23	Riordan, Terry 40	Thomas, Rusty 36
McNish, Jan 42	Riverfront Plaza 34	Toeppen, Gary 24-44
Meyer, Congresswoman Jan 25	Robinson, Linda 36	Union Pacific Depot Restorationd 30
Meyn, Fritz 9	Rogers, Rogers 9	Van Hoesen, I.N. 1
Milan, Jesse 37	Rommel's Afrika Corps 12	Varnum, Walter 7
Milstead, Jean 34	Rooney, Dorothy 22	Veatch, Tom 8
Moody, Bob 30	Rotunde, Mark 33	Vogel, John 14
Moore, Debi 43	Rushmer, H.J. 2	Volker, Don 26
Morrissey, John 39	Ruttan, Gertrude 37	Walruff, John 2
Morton, Gloria 22	Santa Fe Industrial Park 17,18	Walters, Bob 30
Morton, Walt 18	Santee, Wes 27	Warren, A.B. 2
Mosser, Russ 17	Schnaer, Miles 41,42	Watkins, Dan 40
Murphy, Chancellor Franklin 14,16,17	Schwada, Duane 28	Watson, City Manager Buford Jr. 22,43
Myers, John 23,25	Schwahn, Stan 9	Wayne, John 9
Nalbandian, John 40	Schwartzburg, Jim 19	Weaver, Art 14
National Corn Husking Contest 9	Scott, C.L. 5,6	Weinaug, Dg. Co. Admin. Craig 39,40
National Temperance Meeting 2	Scott, Mike 44	West, Glenn 21-24
Neis, Gideon 7	Sepic, Bill 44	Where Pigeons Go to Die Movie 26
Newsome, Bill 34	Shenkel, Chris 27	Whitenight, Pete 21,31
North Second Street 35,36	Shepherd, Jean 37	Wiklund, Ann 23,24,26
Ober, H.B. 5	Shimomura, Roger 25	Wildgen, City Manager Mike 30,40,44
Oread West Research Park 24	Shmalberg, Jeff 42	Willard, Jess 17
Ostertag, Greg 35	Simons, Dan 34	Willey, Dale 26
Owens, Martin 18	Simons, Dolph III 34	Williams, Coach Roy 43
Patti, Celia 20	Simons, Dolph Jr. 19,21,27	Williams, George 36
Penny, M.N. 14	Simons, Dolph Sr. 5,13,21	Williams, Wanda 41
Petefish, Olin 21	Six, Fred 27	Wilson, Joe 12,13
Phillips, Rob 38	Slattery, Congressman Jim .. 33	Winter, Keith 19,20
Pidgeon, Walter 9	Small, W.J. 12	Winter, Keith 18
Poff, Mary E. 4	South Lawrence Trafficway 33	Winter, Ship 10,12,14,15
Powell, Dr. Lyle 10	Sparks, Harry B. 5	Winter, Wint 28,33
Praeger, Sandy 27,32,33	Spencer, Kenneth 11	Women's Rest Room 4
Preyer, Professor 5	Steinberg, S. 2	World War II 10
Professional Women of the Chamber 41	Stogsdill, Sheila 39	Wright, Jack 35
Quellhorst, Nancy 36	Stough, Charles 14	Wright, Judy 25
Ramp, Gene 36	Strecker, Colonel 11	Younger, Sonny 23
Ramsey, Cliff 8	Sunflower Ordnance Works 11	Zook, E.R. (Bus) 13-18
Randall, Jeff 34	Sunflower State Games 37,38	
Redwood, Tony..... 24,28	Sutcliffe, Bill 34	
Reinhold, Mr. 11	Tacha, John 27	
Reuter Organ Factory 5	Taylor, Emily 20,21	
Rhodes, Warren 19,22	The Day After Movie 26	
Richardson, Delbert 30	The Great Depression 7	
Ride with the Devil Movie 38	The Lawrence-Douglas County Advisory Council on Economic Development 28	

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Marsha Henry Goff is a freelance writer, newspaper columnist and community volunteer. She has lived most of her life in Lawrence and often lectures to school and civic groups about Lawrence and Kansas history.

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Watkins Community Museum

Photo Reference

(page, upper, middle, lower)

Broeker, Alta 4, 5u

Billings, Bob 24

Chamber of Commerce 25, 26, 30, 32,
33ml, 35, 37, 38, 39, 41, 43, 44

Chamber of Commerce Archives
at Watkins Community Museum 6u, 11,
13, 16, 17, 18, 20l, 21, 23, 26

Glenn, Livingood, Penzler Architects 42ul

Herd, Stan (courtesy of) 25

Kansas State Historical Society 5l, 19

Kansas University Archives 14, 20u

Lawrence Journal-World 36

Lawrence Parks and Recreation 40

Lawrence Riverfront Plaza 34l

MHGInk Communications 27ul, 31

Postma, Sally 2u

Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant
(courtesy of) 11

Watkins Community Museum 1ul, 2l, 3,
7ul, 8ul, 9ml, 10uml, 12ul, 15, 22, 34u

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