



The Leawood Rotarian

The Newsletter of the Leawood Rotary Club

Celebrating Over 31 Years!

leawoodrotary.org

June 18, 2026

Leawood

 Rotary Club

SUMMER CAMP

THURSDAY
JUNE 18, 2026
7:15 A.M.

 **The Lodge at Ironwoods**
 14701 Mission Road
 Leawood, KS 66224

 **CATERED BREAKFAST**
 Start your day the Rotary way!

 **FANTASTIC PRESENTATION**
 by Leawood Mayor **MARC ELKINS**

 **ALL SORTS OF CRAFTS & GAMES**
 fun • creativity • community




SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER
MAYOR MARC ELKINS

Invoker:

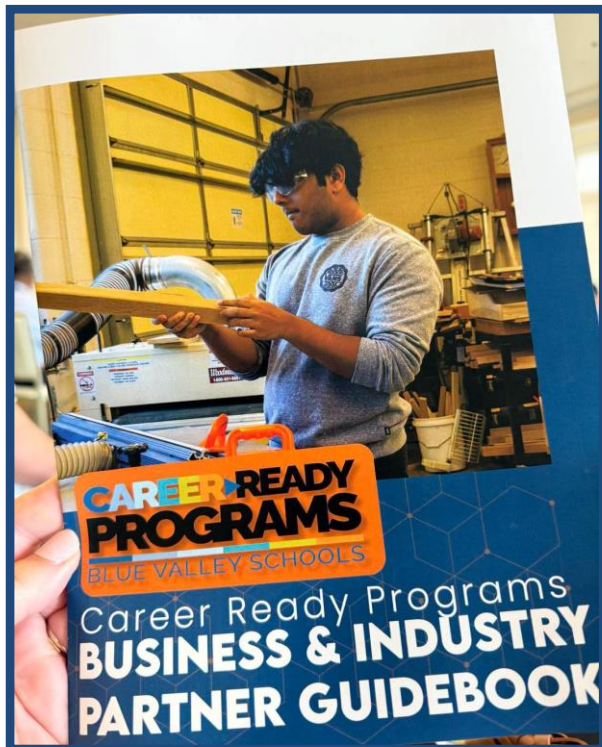
June 18 – Ken Selzer

June Greeters:

John Meier, Kirk Nelsen, Brad Moore, Andrew Pujado, Jim Rawlings, Rick Robinson (Captain 6/18)

Last Week

Last week, Mark Turrentine, Blue Valley Schools District Coordinator of Career & Technical Education, discussed real world learning and career-ready programs within the schools and numerous community partnerships. Members also discussed upcoming “Leawood for the Goal” activities.



Save the Date:

TOGETHER, WE SHINE HOPE.

Candlelight VIGIL

TO RECOGNIZE SURVIVORS OF
HUMAN TRAFFICKING



JULY 5TH
SUNDAY • 8:00 PM



LOOSE PARK
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI



LET'S LIGHT THE WAY TO FREEDOM AND HOPE.
ROTARIANS STANDING TOGETHER TO END HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

Rotary 
District 6040

Rotary 
District 5710



AWARENESS.
COMPASSION.
ACTION.
HOPE.



ALL ROTARIANS, FAMILY & FRIENDS ARE INVITED.
COME OUT. SHOW YOUR SUPPORT. MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Join the Rotary Alley Cats – July 15

The Leawood Rotary Alley Cats are participating in the Summer Bowl for Kids' Sake on Wednesday, July 15th from 6pm to 7:30pm.



It's a great opportunity have some fun while supporting a fantastic organization!! You can also donate to the cause by clicking the donation link below:

<https://bbbskc.donordrive.com/team/6938>

Details:

- Date/Time: Wednesday, July 15 from 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM
- Where: Park Lanes, 7701 Renner Road, Shawnee, KS

Please let Jonn Wullschleger know if you would like to join the team!

Rotary Flashback: 2015 Annual Dinner

February 21, 2015, at "The Venue"



See you at the 2026 Annual Dinner on Thursday, June 25th!

Leawood History: 50 Years Ago

Article from October 24, 1979, issue of the Johnson County Sun

Financial woes face Leawood

By Cathy Hamm

(First of two parts)

Leawood — It's almost an idyllic existence. The city of Leawood, one of Johnson County's most desirable residential communities, is noted for its expansive and luxurious housing, its cleanliness and its quietness. In this northeast Johnson County city of more than 13,000 residents, the accent is on the quality of life.

It is suburbia personified, the post World War II dream come true — almost.

While on the surface Leawood appears a peaceful Kansas community nestled among the trees, it is also true that the city is faced with an ominous financial cloud hanging over its otherwise sunny skies. Should current budget troubles cloud over and choose to pour, those storm clouds could wash away the "Leawood way of life."

How serious is Leawood's financial situation? The answer varies — not in the fact that a potential crisis exists but rather in its severity.

From Councilwoman Jean Wise, past chairman of the city's budget and finance committee: "The significant fact is that our expenditures will mushroom — and not because of extra population."

From Councilman John Carper, current chairman of the budget and finance committee: "I wouldn't necessarily call our financial situation a crisis. Leawood is a city in transition."

From Mayor Kent Crippin: "The

lines of revenues and expenditures may cross in the next two to three years."

As anyone who has ever tried to balance a checkbook knows, when the outgo exceeds the income, there's big trouble afoot.

It is ironic that Leawood, which is thought of as one of the wealthiest cities in Johnson County, is faced with a financial crisis, but to those connected with the city government, it is not surprising.

Conservative budgeting — underestimating revenues and overestimating expenditures — in past years has resulted in sufficient carryover to cushion the city from severe financial shock. "We have tried to be conservative," Mrs. Wise acknowledged. "We've estimated expenditures on the high side, but then it's hard to forecast 1½ years in advance.

"We've been wrong both ways in estimating revenues and expenditures. But you do the best you can and hope the mistakes balance," she said.

So far, the mistakes have balanced. But as inflation bares its teeth and the city sees its way south, new pressures are placed on the city's budget, pressures which are rapidly deflating that carryover cushion.

Crippling, double-digit inflation has had perhaps the greatest effects on the budget in terms of personnel. The cost of paying the city staff has gone up tremendously in the past few years, placing a strain on the already burdened city.

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Leawood History: 50 Years Ago

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Financial woes face Leawood

In 1975, the city paid slightly more than \$600,000 for its personnel's salaries. The 1980 budget shows a proposed expenditure of \$1.4 million, an increase of \$800,000 in just five years.

Add to that the rising cost of employee benefits — insurance, workmen's compensation, social security — and the impact is even greater.

Part of that increase, of course, has been the addition of extra personnel to handle the multitude of details associated with the city's continued southward expansion. "Ten or 20 years ago, we may have had one or two developers," Mayor Crippin pointed out. "Today we have maybe 15. It's easier by far to take care of one than it is to take care of 15. That kind of thing pushes the city for greater involved and monetary compensation."

The planned southerly expansion not only calls for additional staff time, but it ultimately creates a greater demand for services. Police and fire protection and street maintenance are musts for any city, and Leawood is no exception. At the same time, however, the city must be able to provide adequate services not only for its citizens' welfare but for its desirability.

But now there is a greater area to cover; there are more streets to be patrolled, more fire alarms to answer, more streets to be plowed, better sewer facilities to be installed. And there is constantly the pressure for more.

The Leawood Police Department will add its first officer since 1977 next year. "We all feel the strain of the budget," Police Chief Al Sellers said. "With our budget, we get what we need, but those 'nicer-to-have things' are being sliced out.

"At the present time, we have adequate staff, but with southern development, we will need another full district. It would cost a bundle."

The fire department has already seen southerly expansion. In March 1978, a second fire station opened at 127th and Mission Road, and nine staff members were added. With the addition of the station, the response time, according to Fire Chief Jourdan Toman, has been cut in half.

The cost of personnel, however, has risen, too. In 1980, salaries for the fire department alone are expected to reach \$415,990, an increase of nearly a quarter of a million dollars since 1975.

Trying to hold the line on costs has hurt the city in terms of personnel. Raises this year for city employees were only 6 percent although inflation is running nearly double that. What impacts the individual employees impacts the city, and Chief Toman notes that he loses one or two employees about every four to five months. "We lose personnel to other fire departments in the county," he said. "We are one of the lowest paid in the county. We are lucky we don't lose more."

Providing street maintenance has also proved a challenge in these tight times. "You don't necessarily add

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services the minute you need them," Mrs. Wise explained. "Every time you add more streets, you don't buy a snowplow, and you can't buy just one-fifteenth of a snowplow."

Never was the situation so clearly emphasized as last winter, one of the coldest and snow-filled on record. "During the big snowstorm of last year, we had to go to other people for a truck," Mayor Crippin recalled. "One of our trucks got stuck at 86th and Lee Boulevard, and it sat there for four days."

Much of the equipment is old-fashioned, Mayor Crippin added. "Roto-Rooter has better equipment for sewers than we have," he said.

"We haven't responded to the needs in the past of the public works department," Mrs. Wise said. "The equipment had been allowed to run down to nothingness, but now we are planning ahead in terms of men and equipment."

The days of the woefully under-equipped public works department may be coming to an end. The budget now calls for the purchase of new equipment which should help alleviate the strain on the department and the residents but which will add additional strain to the budget.

It is not impossible for a city to absorb these costs in its budget in ordinary times, but then Leawood does not find itself in an ordinary situation.

Primarily residential in nature, it has little commercial development to support it. The city must rely on — and is at the mercy of — its revenues.

The intangibles tax, which is widely thought of as an unfair tax, is being slowly eliminated and will be gone by 1982. That tax alone brought in \$220,000 in 1979, but in 1980, that

amount will only reach \$140,000.

Like most cities, however, Leawood does gain considerable revenue from property taxes. "The city does rely heavily on the ad valorem taxes," Councilman Carper noted. "That's, because we are primarily residential in nature."

Property taxes, however, are largely unresponsive to inflation, partly because they are based on figures established in 1969. "The problem that a city like Leawood faces," Councilman Wise explained, "is that new housing does not support itself."

While the city is paying today's prices for services, it is receiving taxes based on property values 10 years ago. For a city in Leawood's situation, this can make a critical difference.

In 1975, the ad valorem tax revenues amounted to approximately \$433,000; three years later, that amount had climbed to only about \$637,000.

Other sources of revenue need to be found, city officials say. In the future, Leawood will be making a greater pitch to obtain local, state and federal monies, according to Mayor Crippin.

In the meantime, the lines of revenues and expenditure may cross, and the city may go in the red. Because of the cash basis law, there is no "instant-credit-up-to-four-years-to-pay" for the city.

The city is faced with perplexing financial problems, and, as the crisis nears the breaking point, solutions must be found to preserve the city. The question remains: how much are the residents willing to give to regain a hold on their city?