

## From the President's Corner

by Mary Kay Smith

### City Funding

On May 4, Peggy Stanton was advised by Dennis Howard of the City of Lenexa that the last quarter revenue of the Tourism and Convention Fund was down. As a result, the amount of funds available for LHS for the balance of 2000 is uncertain. The LHS Board voted to draw on our CD funds, if it becomes necessary in order to insure the salaries of our staff.

### Volunteer Recognition

Volunteers have brought the Legler Barn Museum to where it is today. Now volunteers are necessary if LHS is to continue to be an effective and viable community asset. This month, we want to salute Patty Lierly. She has handled about every job in the Society—president, chair of committees, docent and program presenter, exhibit set-ups, and ex-officio. She coordinated the 2000 Soup Luncheon. Often, Bill Lierly worked tirelessly beside her. It is high time we recognize Patty and express our awareness and appreciation for her years of working for LHS.

### Volunteers Needed

Two major LHS fundraising activities are coming up—parking at the Lenexa BBQ on June 24, and the Spinach Festival with our Spinach Salad, Spinach Cafe, and Wimpy Burgers on September 9. We need volunteers to help! Please call Mary Kay Smith, 888-0144.

### City/LHS Task Force

The recommendations of the task force appointed to consider the City of Lenexa assuming responsibility for the operation of the Legler Barn Museum have been mailed to all LHS members. Everyone is urged to read the document carefully before attending the May 25 membership meeting. The issue will be discussed and voted on during the business session. Some changes in the by-laws recommended by the LHS Board will also be considered.

### Herb Garden

In April, the LHS Board voted to purchase the materials necessary to replace the fence around the Herb Garden. The work is being accomplished by a committee headed by Walt McKenzie. LHS member Marie Hormann and the Lenexa Field and Garden Club are in the process of renewing the garden. It will be the site of a tour and

Victorian Tea on June 17. If you would like to help at this fun and elegant event, call Katie Evans at 268-4606. We will need several people to serve, bake cookies, loan linens, tea cups, saucers and small plates, and to wash cups during the event. Hours for this event haven't been set yet, but should be 3 to 4 hours that day.

Anyone interested in helping with the Herb Garden should contact Marie Hormann at 888-9822 or Mary Jo Jones at 541-1465.

## May General Membership Meeting

Thursday, May 25  
7:00 p.m.

Lenexa United Methodist Church  
Wesley Room  
9138 Caenen Lake Road  
(enter the church from the west parking lot)

This month, our speaker will be a representative of the Johnson County Genealogical Society. The subject will be how to use the Johnson County Cemetery index to find the gravesites you are seeking. This will be a very interesting and informative program.

Refreshments will be served following the program. As always, friends, neighbors, and the public are welcome to attend this free meeting.

## Lenexa History Slide Presentation Update

by Katie Evans

One year ago, I began giving slide presentations about Lenexa history to area groups. I gave seven presentations in 1999, and so far this year, have given four. The groups have varied in size from about 130 people to seven.

At each meeting, I give away Legler Barn Museum brochures, and encourage those present to visit the museum complex. I also sell books from our Gift Shop, such as "Lenexa: The First 125 Years," "Na-Nex-Se," and "Historic Places of Lenexa."

Thanks to Loren Stanton and "The Star" for getting the word out for us. Call me at 268-4606 to schedule a presentation for your group. I am available day or evening.

## LBM News

A new temporary exhibit to open on May 21 at the Legler Barn Museum, called "Vanishing Towns/Vanishing Values," will run until June 25.

In the American mind, small towns represent the bedrock of virtues such as neighborliness, honesty, and self-reliance. As rural communities decline, are these values also disappearing? The exhibit features dramatic black and white photographs of small-town Kansas, accompanied by provocative commentary by American writers on the advantages and drawbacks of rural life.

Be sure to plan a visit to the Barn to explore this exciting exhibit.

In celebration of KC150, Kansas City's sesquicentennial, the Legler Barn Museum will have a portion of the Premier Bank Picture Collection on exhibit at Crown Center. The exhibit, designed around the tradition of "Things People Collect," will highlight Kansas City's 150 years of rich history and culture. From throughout the metro area, communities will exhibit their collections at Crown Center. You can visit the exhibit during Crown Center Shops' regular hours: 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Wednesday and Saturday; 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Thursday and Friday; and from noon to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. The exhibit runs from May 13-June 18.

## Passport to Adventure Is In Full Swing

The Seventh Annual Passport to Adventure Hunt began May 13, and offers a full month of family fun. Visit the Legler Barn Museum and pick up an official passport with adventure hunt questions. Answer the Barn question and have your passport stamped. Then enter your name in the drawing for a beautiful basket of goodies to be given away May 23. Visitors to the Barn will receive surprise door prizes, while they last.

Visit at least six sites by June 18 and turn in your

### Need to Call an Officer/Board Member?

Pres. Mary Kay Smith	888-0144
Pres.-elect Jim Spaith	631-2502
Vice Pres. Angelo Miño	438-3364
Sec./Ex-officio Katie Evans	268-4606
Treas. Norman Keech	648-0438
Frank Andrews	894-1376
Walt McKenzie	888-0666
Bob Lillie	888-1476
Legler Barn Museum	492-0038

question sheet (found inside the passport) to any participating site representative to be eligible for a grand prize drawing to be held after Father's Day. Prizes are listed in the passport book and include: Coleman camping package, weekend spa package, and landscaping package.

Collect a stamp on every site in the passport book by June 1, and be eligible for the Super Grand prize to be awarded at the end of the challenge.

Passport to Adventure Hunt is sponsored by the Interpretive Site Coalition, a not-for-profit organization which provides professional development for the staff and volunteers of area nature, history, and science sites. Participating sites are:

Burr Oak Woods Nature Center, Cave Spring Interpretive Center, Children's Museum of KC, Ernie Miller Nature Center, Grinter Place State Historic Site, Jerry Litton Visitor Center, Kansas City Museum, Lakeside Nature Center, Legler Barn Museum, 1827 Log Courthouse, Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary, National Frontier Trails Center, Old Shawnee Town, Powell Gardens, Wonderscope Children's Museum, and the Wyandotte County Museum.

## ArtsLinks.org and Participate2000 Guide You to Area Arts

The Arts Council of Metropolitan Kansas City announces [www.ArtsLinks.org](http://www.ArtsLinks.org), an easy-to-use, searchable long-range calendar of cultural events in the Kansas City area. The site features news from the arts and cultural communities, a database of local organizations, links to other web sites, and a variety of resources and opportunities. It also lists the events of Participate2000, a program that organizes arts events into fun and educational monthly themes. Check out [www.ArtsLinks.org](http://www.ArtsLinks.org) for monthly themes and events, and then get out and get active in the arts!

Participate2000 is a program of KC 150: A Celebration of the Heart, in honor of Kansas City's sesquicentennial. Funding for Participate2000 comes from the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation's Community Arts Initiative, which is supported by a grant from the Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds. For more information, please contact Mark J. Spencer at 816-221-1777.

## Read All About It!

# Lenexa Bank Robbed, Captain Sanders Murdered!

Beneath Lenexa's serene exterior, mayhem has occasionally broken out. These pictures and stories came from newspaper and magazine accounts found in the Legler Barn Museum's Heritage Room from two books, titled "City of Lenexa, 1930s," and "Police and Crime." Also, "Banks" has interesting pictures of area banks and employees from the early 1900s to the present.

The Heritage Room has many fascinating volumes of stories and pictures, including books titled "Farm Scenes," "Boy Scouts," "Schools," "Trains," and "Churches." Each makes an interesting way to pass a hot summer afternoon in the cool of the LBM basement.



*Left: Farmers State Bank was robbed in 1908. Dynamite was used to blow the vault, to the detriment of the front windows. Miriam Haskin Warner, daughter of E.H. Haskin, is sitting in front of the building. Above: Theodore Benninghoven was the bank employee forced to lie on the floor during the 1930 heist.*

*This is an article from the "Lenexa News" describing the 1930 robbery of Farmers State Bank:*

### THE LENEXA BANK ROBBED

Two Bandits Escape With Approximately \$2,000 in Loot Last Saturday

#### ESCAPE IN FORD MOTOR CAR

Two bandits held up and robbed the Farmers State Bank, shortly after noon Saturday, December 29th, escaping with approximately \$2,000.

E.H. Haskin, cashier, had just left the bank for his dinner hour at home, leaving Theodore Benninghoven, bookkeeper, alone in the bank when the bandits entered. He was forced to lie on the floor in the corridor

of the bank while the money was taken into their possession. The bandits left toward Kansas City in a Ford motor car.

After scooping up the money, Benninghoven was forced into the vault and an attempt was made to lock the door, but the 20-year-old bookkeeper was able to free himself and immediately called Mr. Haskin, who summoned officers.

The money was covered by insurance and at 4 o'clock the same day, Mr. Haskin had everything straightened out as if there had been no hold-up.

The bandits were young men, wearing dark clothing, one with yellow goggles.

**Lenexa Abuzz About Murder!  
More Mayhem on Page 4**

**Read All About It!** continued from page 3

## Mysterious Lenexa Resident Murdered!

*The following is an excerpt from an article that appeared in a magazine, "Daring Detective," about a murder occurring in the 1930s. To get the full story, read about it in "Police and Crime" in our Heritage Room.*

"Twilight spread eerily over the small town of Lenexa, Kansas as the dark figures of two men moved between the leafless trees surrounding a small white house.

"The men stood in the shadows of the trees and stared at the still house. No lights shone through its windows. The men were neighbors of the retired ship captain and about the closest friends the old man had in town. Nevertheless they knew little about him or where he came from.

"The captain, T. A. Sanders, had been a constant source of speculation to the town's citizenry ever since he had first appeared in Lenexa eight years ago. Gruff and blunt in his speech, he had volunteered no information concerning his past and had taken up residence in the little white house which he had bought for cash. Just why he had decided to settle in Lenexa no one knew. It was assumed that because of its proximity to Kansas City and because it was a quiet community, the aged eccentric found the town to his liking.

"Lenexa remembered Capt. Sanders had brought a strange looking trunk with him which he said contained navigation instruments.

### The Victim

He had no friends or relatives in the vicinity... Sanders adopted a habit of taking a walk twice daily, greeting everyone he met affably. He would spend hours spinning yarns about ship life...yet...no one was ever invited into his home.

"Suddenly, the two men stiffened. The side window was raised wide open so that the icy night air flooded the

house...One of the men peered into the Stygian blackness of the house. Taking a torchlight from his pocket he switched it on...The round splash of light played across the floor of the living room, then abruptly stopped. Highlighted into stark relief by the bright rays of the torch was the crumpled body of Capt. Sanders. His head lay in a pool of blood whose coagulated surface was now blue-black."



*Sheriff E. G. Carroll, left, figured out by scant clues that William E. Skelton bludgeoned Sanders. Find out what led Carroll to the murder weapon, the motive, and why Skelton tortured Sanders before killing him. What was really in the trunk? What really happened to Sanders' wife 10 years before he came to Lenexa? Was that what made him angry when asked about his past? It's all in our library!*



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## Many Thanks to Our Benefactors

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Thanks to all four companies for their generosity!  
We appreciate Lenexa Holiday Inn and Sebring Decorating Supply for their continued support.  
Premier Bank is now a corporate member of LHS.  
Please patronize all our corporate friends!