



NOW SHOWING WHEN SUMMERTIME WAS DRIVE IN TIME

*A special report on
Lenexa's bygone movie
theater from the
Lenexa Historical
Society*

During their 1950s peak, over 4,000 drive-in theaters operated in the United States. Around 300 still exist, including a small handful in the Kansas City metro area.

Today, choices for visual entertainment are extensive. Television is available by cable, subscription or using an old-school antenna. Movies are viewed in theaters, online, and through streaming services. TV and movies are accessed via large screen, small screen, tablet and even your phone.

But those modern conveniences seem nearly lifeless compared to the unique, incomparable drive-in movie experience, when summertime was drive-in time!

You'd pay at the front booth and find a spot to park your vehicle. Then, with on-window speakers in place, the gigantic screen would blossom with previews, maybe

a news clip, double and triple features, and often a cartoon or two. And (bonus) there was always a nearby concession stand loaded with popcorn, candy, refreshments and ice cream.

Lenexa's "New 50 Drive-In" (later the "Fox 50") made its debut in 1953. Northeast of what is now I-35 and 87th Street (NE corner of 87th Street and Lenexa Drive), the 29-acre site had space for 900 cars. One newspaper column stated that the drive-in "offered a kiddie playground, sizable concession stand, and restrooms patterned on the latest Hollywood type. A special milk dispenser was even installed for 'bottle babies.'"

Over time, the drive-in fell victim to declining revenues, and closed at the end of the 1977 season. During its 24-year existence, the site also operated as Sunday services for the Overland Park Christian Church, and a Swap-N-Shop. Eventually, the highly valuable site was razed for development of retail, restaurant and office buildings.



NEW
50

AMPHITHEATRE
DRIVE-IN

3 Miles West
Overland Park
w/ New 50

Telephone
Lenexa 511

ADULTS 75c

Children Free
With Adults

Free Playground

GALA OPENING
TONIGHT AT 6:30

*Your New Thrill is
Awaiting You!*

On The Screen
Tonight & Saturday
John Wayne
in
"Trouble Along the Way"

Donna Reed • Ghas. Coburn
at 8:15 and 12 Midnight

ALSO
"Kansas Raiders"
with Audie Murphy

Technicolor • 10:40 Only
Bugs Bunny • World News

FREE
GIANT FIREWORKS

Tonite & Saturday 10 p. m.

FREE POPSICLES
For the Kiddies by
DeCoursey Ice Cream Co.

Roses to the First
300 Ladies by
Stats Flower Shop