

## From the President's Corner

by Mary Kay Smith

### Volunteer Recognition

I am constantly amazed at the accomplishments by the volunteers of the Lenexa Historical Society. The Spinach Festival is a tremendous undertaking. The following people co-chaired the various LHS components of the festival: Crafts and Antiques—Walt McKenzie and Greg Peterson; Spinach Cafe—Rita DeBrabander and Eleanor Boley; World's Biggest Spinach Salad—Ernestine Johnson and Doug Bartley; Wimpy Burgers—Pat Lierly and Katie Evans. These co-chairs reported that they had tremendous help from many members. Our thanks to all.

Each month, it is my pleasure to salute an outstanding volunteer. There are so many that the selection is difficult, but this time I have chosen Rita DeBrabander. A former Board member, she has been a driving force behind the annual Soup Luncheon, the Spinach Cafe, the Historic Sites Committee, School Tours, and a participant in almost every LHS activity. Husband Bert provided the spinach truck at the Spinach Festival, and created "The Cowboy," the folk art sculpture in the Herb Garden. Their efforts throughout many years are truly appreciated.

As I reflect on the work of our volunteers, I am reminded of our staff members who reinforce and support us. Peggy Stanton, Jim Peterson, and Beryl Hennigh make a wonderful team. Their talents complement each other and they work hours over and beyond the call of duty. They provide outstanding management service for the Legler Barn Museum.

In conclusion, I want to recognize the Barn Quilters. These ladies work every Wednesday upstairs at the Legler Barn to produce a beautiful quilt for the annual quilt raffle. Over the years, the proceeds are increasing the Building Fund.

### Gift Shop

The Gift Shop has new pewter thimbles and spoons with the Legler Barn Museum. Come in to see them and the pottery, books, magnets, etc. Remember, members get a 10% discount and purchases help support the activities of LHS.

### From Bill Nicks

Bill Nicks, Parks and Recreation Director, has this to say about the possibility of the city taking management of LBM: "I am looking forward to the transition...and working with Peggy, Beryl, and Jim after the first of the year. I have met with Marky Kay Smith and Jim Spaih and feel very confident that the transition will

## September General Membership Meeting

Thursday, Sept. 28

Program: 7:00

Lenexa United Methodist Church  
9138 Caenen Lake Rd.

This month, the program will be given by Katie Armitage. She will be talking to us regarding the Civil War.

Refreshments will be served following the program. As always, friends and neighbors are welcome.

If you have any questions about the program, please call Program Chair Jim Spaih at 631-9541.

Future meeting date: The November 30 meeting will be on the fifth Thursday instead of the fourth, due to Thanksgiving.

## LBM News

by Peggy Stanton, Museum Director

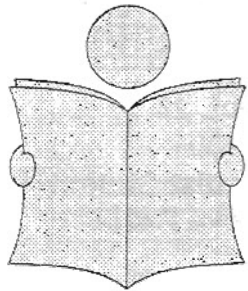
Recently, Joe and Bernice Ryckert generously donated the butcher block from Ryckert's Grocery Store to the Lenexa Historical Society. The Chamber of Commerce was not interested in keeping it in the Lackman-Thompson House, so, at the request of a board member, Seaton Van Lines moved the butcher block to the museum. It now graces the Old Town Lenexa exhibit.

While they were here, Seaton's men moved the piano that has been in the basement to the same exhibit. On this instrument, Genevieve Haskin Williams accompanied silent movies, which were held in the theater on the second floor of the Farmer's State Bank building in Old Town Lenexa.

These two artifacts are securely tied to Lenexans and Lenexa history, which makes them choice items for our collection. A collection rapidly outgrowing our storage space.

Please stop by the museum soon and enjoy these two new additions to the Old Town Lenexa exhibit on the main floor of the Barn.

be a smooth one. I think with the city taking over the routine of operating the Barn, that will free up the Society to concentrate on collecting, cataloguing, and preserving Lenexa history."



## “Barn Talk” Needs New Editor

by Katie Evans,  
Current Editor

The November/December issue of “Barn Talk” will be the last issue that I will produce. I have been producing “Barn Talk” for three years, and am no longer willing to devote the time it needs. If anyone is interested in taking over production, please call me at 268-4606.

I will be happy to continue to write historical articles for each issue, and help assemble the issues for bulk mailing. I will also be happy to train, if necessary, somebody else in the production of our newsletter. Please consider volunteering for this fun activity, even if someone doesn't call you to ask you about it. We may not know you are interested! Thank you.

**Don't forget that our November Membership Meeting will be November 30, due to Thanksgiving.**

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

## Sculpture Dedicated

“Children of the Trails,” a bronze sculpture by Kwan Wu was dedicated in the courtyard of the Johnson County Courthouse complex in Olathe on September 7. Commissioned for the millennium by the Johnson County Board of County Commissioners and the Arts for Cultural Enhancement Committee, the project was made possible by the Johnson County Government, Old Settlers Association of Johnson County/Olathe, and the Johnson County Heritage Trust Funds.

The sculpture depicts a pioneer boy, girl, and dog crossing a rocky creek during the Westward Expansion. Their faces are lifted upward as they advance through a stainless steel arch which symbolizes a rainbow in anticipation of the future.

Nancy Klunder, Lenexa resident and LHS member, and Mike Alley, also of Lenexa, were among the 11 members of the ACEC which included: Karen Lyman, chairman; Ray Wolf, vice chair; Mike Alley, secretary; B. Scott Tschudy, Emily Fowler, Joanne Francisco Breyfogle, Bruce R. Craig, board liaison; Gayle Sims, Bill Breyfogle, and Jerry Snider.

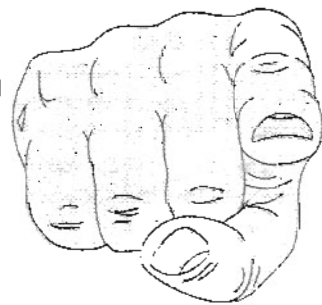
LHS members and friends are invited to visit this historic and commemorative site.

## WANTED: HISTORIC PRESENTERS

Historic presenters are needed to portray various historic people from the Lenexa area. We need both men and women to talk to school children and civic groups. This is a great opportunity to learn about Lenexa history and be involved in telling others about Lenexa.

We plan to have a class this fall for anyone interested in being a presenter. Call the Bam to learn more and sign up!

—Jim Peterson, Asst. Dir., 913-492-0038.



## Read All About It!

Some Lenexa trivia, taken from our library in the Heritage Room ("City of Lenexa, 1950s"):

### "Operator, Give Me Tuxedo 8-1234"

Did you know that the old telephone exchange for Lenexa was "Tuxedo"? If you have an 888 prefix, you have lived in Lenexa a long time!

### Population Figures for Lenexa

1907	360
1910	383
1920	472
1930	452
1940	502
1950	803
1960	2,487
1970	5,242
1980	18,637
1990	34,110
1999	40,202

### Lenexa Country Club

This ad appeared in the 1957 Lenexa Telephone Directory:

Silver Spur Country Club  
Right in Your Own Back Yard  
Memberships Available  
Ask for Information

Tuxedo 8-5271

Lenexa, KS

Can anyone tell us anything about this country club? Were you a member? Where was it? Did it have a golf course or tennis courts? A restaurant? When did it close? Who owned it? Inquiring minds want to know!

### Lenexa City Budget

1957: \$114,000

1958: \$129,549; \$60,000 came from the Water Department and the rest from taxation.

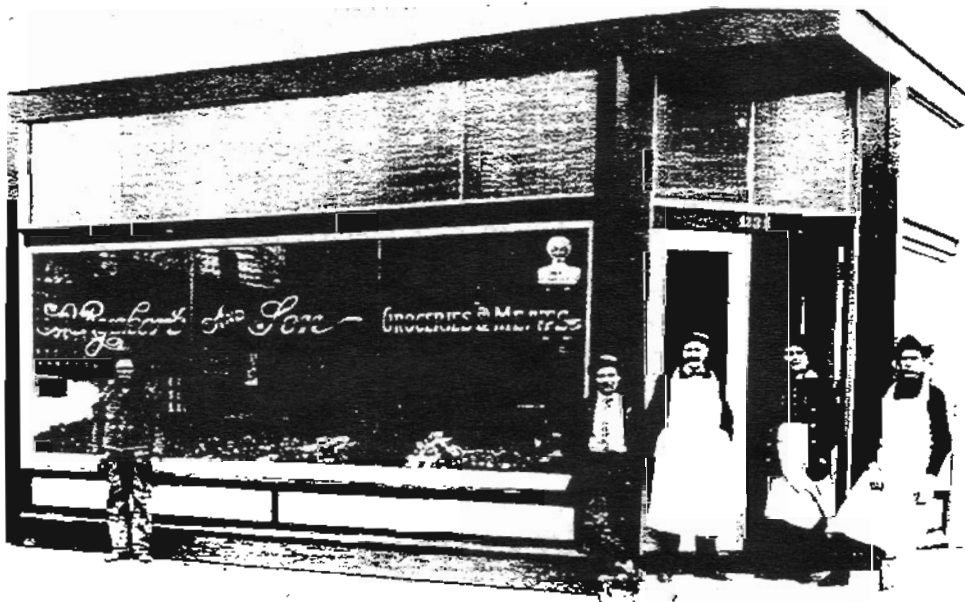
In his report, Mayor Wesley Fry worried about growth vs. lack of money: "I am pleased to see the city growing as it is, but it certainly isn't helping the tax problem. It takes 18 months after a house is assessed before the city derives any revenue and to one completed right after the first of March, it can be as long as two years. Our only hope for relief is to induce industry to this area. Something that increases the tangible valuation without requiring too much additional services from the city."

## Ryckert Family Donates Butcher Block

The Ryckert family, who operated Ryckert's Grocery store in Old Town from 1929 to 1993, has donated the store's enormous butcher block to LHS. It has been removed from storage at Lackman-Thompson House to the museum. It is on display on the first floor.

The grocery was started by Florian Ryckert, and was owned by his grandson, Joe, and great-grandson, Paul, when it closed.

Left: An early shot of Ryckert's.



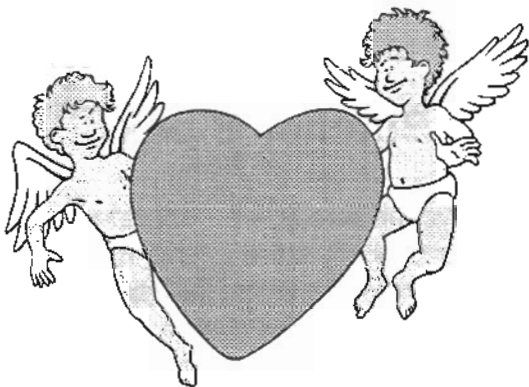
## Be My Valentine

by Sharon Hammtree, LBM Volunteer

Hey, all of you romantic people—we need your help in making our Valentine's exhibit a huge success in February of 2001. Anything that you would like to contribute to this exhibit would be helpful. You can donate your items or just loan them to us until the exhibit is over and they will be returned to you. Donate items like antique cards, romantic poems, articles from the newspaper, books, etc.

Also, we are going to have a Valentine's Day contest. First place wins a romantic dinner for two at one of our wonderful local restaurants; second place is a bouquet of flowers; third place is a box of delicious chocolates. To enter, all you have to do is tell us about your most romantic Valentine's Day in a letter.

Bring the items that you submit to the exhibit to the Legler Barn or I can pick them up. Send letters for the contest to the Barn and put "ATTN: CUPID" on the outside of the envelope. Thanks!



Lenexa Historical Society  
14907 W. 87th St. Pkwy.  
Lenexa, KS 66215-4135

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## You're Invited to *The Gandy Dancers' Ball*

A new and exciting fundraiser is being planned right now for 2001. The Gandy Dancers' Ball will be held in the first half of 2001. An exact date will depend on the availability of the ballroom at the Holiday Inn, Lenexa.

Jim Peterson, Assistant Director at LBM, and Katie Evans, Board Member, met in August with Carol Brown, Special Events Director at the Holiday Inn, Lenexa. The discussion yielded many interesting and exciting ideas for a black-tie party open to the public.

The focus of the evening will be on Lenexa's history, specifically the part the railroad played in the growth of Lenexa. Some of the evening's suggested activities are: a time line of music and dancing relevant to Lenexa's significant years; period reenactments; and a brief slide presentation on Lenexa's history. The theme of the ball will be making history fun and intriguing.

It was suggested to place small displays around the room about Lenexa's early citizens and events. We hope to involve some area railroad enthusiasts who would lend some of their items and stories for displays.

There will also be informational displays explaining how LHS will use the money raised: architectural and land preservation, restoration of the Caboose, and historical research, to name a few. Another use is to start a long-term endowment fund to financially stabilize LHS.

The Gandy Dancers' Ball will be black-tie because, currently, there is no formal public event held in Lenexa. The ballroom was chosen to achieve an elegant atmosphere.

So far, Jim and Katie are the only volunteers for this exciting new project. It is certainly the most ambitious new project planned in quite some time.

To fill all of the 250 seats in the ballroom (and that's our goal!) will require some enthusiastic volunteers. Carol is working on corporate donations, and sponsorship of much of the cost of this event. She has also taken responsibility for many other tasks related to getting this off the ground. Of course, we need to assist her!

If you would like to be in on planning and executing the first ever Gandy Dancers' Ball, call Jim at 648-2043, or Katie at 268-4606. We need your ideas and help. This is our opportunity to change the public's perception of LHS, and to interest them in our organization and our city's history.

Many thanks to our benefactors: Amos Family Funeral Homes, Cookbook Publishers Inc., Hermes Landscaping, and Zarda Bar-B-Q and Catering.