

# SELECTED CHRONOLOGY OF POLITICAL PROTESTS AND EVENTS IN LAWRENCE, KANSAS

1974-2000

By Clark H. Coan

**Feb. 18, 1974 Vietnam Veterans Against the War Peace Vigil in Leavenworth.**

Members of the local chapter of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War caravan from Lawrence to Leavenworth where a peace vigil is held against continued US involvement in Vietnam plus partly in support of those soldiers in the US Disciplinary Barracks who refused to fight and those in the federal penitentiary who violated draft laws. The War College at Ft. Leavenworth trains US and international officers in counterinsurgency methods which result in human rights abuses. Noted peace activist Phil Berrigan speaks at a public forum at United Ministries in Higher Education at 1200 Oread Ave.

**Feb., 1974 Obiji Farm Forms.** An informal intentional community is created north of Lawrence. It originally consists of tipis, tents and a little cabin. At its peak it has 13 members (including children). It is part of the "Back to the Land Movement" which during the late 1960s and early 1970s consisted of nearly one million people throughout the United States who left urbanized areas for rural settings, intent on establishing themselves as "back-to-the-landers." Many of the "back-to-the-landers" were college-educated young people who were part of the Counterculture. At Obiji, the land is held communally, but the several dwellings are owned individually. One of their biggest achievements is learning how to build their own dwellings. At one point they also have two large vegetable gardens and goats which produce enough food for members for two summers. Drinking water is obtained from a spring-fed pond. Some dwellings use firewood for heating. The community becomes one of the longest-lasting intentional communities in the Midwest.

**May 7, 1974 Impeachment Hearings Begin Against President Nixon.** Many Lawrence residents, especially those opposed to Nixon's policies, listen to the live impeachment hearings broadcasts held by the House Judiciary Committee in the Watergate affair. The Watergate incident was essentially an attempt by Nixon to subvert the U.S. Constitution by approving the plan by the Committee to Reelect the President (CREEP) to send agents to unlawfully enter the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee in 1972 for the purpose of securing political intelligence to use against the George McGovern, the Democratic Party candidate. Plus, Nixon subsequently participated in the cover-up of the illegal operation.

Kansas Senator Bob Dole was called "Nixon's Hatchet Man" because he vigorously defended Nixon during the Vietnam War and Watergate scandal. When senators from

both parties questioned Nixon's "Vietnamization" program in the late 1960s, Dole "would chase departing senators off the floor and into the cloakroom or hallway, where he would yell at them for opposing Nixon." Dole grew so contentious in the Senate, he developed a reputation as "Nixon's Doberman pinscher".

**June, 1974 Haskell Loop Opposition Forms.** The four-lane road would link a proposed eastern US 59 bypass with downtown Lawrence, but would cut through the heart of East Lawrence resulting in the destruction of several houses and essentially the neighborhood itself. Ray Dryz starts questioning the project and soon Richard Kershenbaum starts campaigning against the project and recruits Mark Kaplan who joins in the opposition and starts organizing. By April, 1976, there is an elected a president of the organization. The group and the East Lawrence Improvement Assn. are able to kill the project.

**August 9, 1974 President Richard M. Nixon Resigns.** Many Lawrence residents celebrate the resignation of President Nixon who wants to avoid the impeachment process and admitting his role in the Watergate affair. He is replaced by Vice President Gerald R. Ford, who, on September 8, 1974, pardons Nixon for his role. Many perceive the pardon as a quid pro quo deal (in exchange for being appointed Vice President just eight months before Nixon's resignation, Ford promises to pardon Nixon if it becomes necessary) and thus, it costs President Ford the election in 1976. Nixon is the first president ever to resign from office.

**Nov. 5, 1974 Reactionary Loses Election for Governor.** Flamboyant conservative Democrat Vern Miller loses the election for governor partly due to Lawrence voters. During the counting of the votes on election night, moderate Republican Robert Bennett is behind until late into the night when the returns from Douglas County come in and put Bennett over the top. Many Lawrence voters are against Miller because as attorney general he sent undercover agents to Lawrence to try to entrap students, hippies and radicals to get them on drug charges. He previously announced he would "jump into Lawrence with both feet" in order to wipe out the hippie communes. One time he jumps out of the trunk of a car in a drug raid in a media photo op which opponents call grandstanding (getting publicity for a run for governor). He raids Lawrence three times and rounds up dozens of people who are mostly charged with selling marijuana.

**1975 Clinton Parkway Opposed.** Opposition appears against the proposed Clinton Parkway which would give Lawrencians ready access to Clinton Lake (the dam is finished in 1975 when the lake begins filling). Opponents warn that it would result in an extension of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street with all of its fast food restaurants, etc. City planners agree to limit commercial development to intersections and highway engineers agree to put in bike paths in an attempt to mollify opponents.

**Jan. 2, 1975 Community Mercantile Natural Food Cooperative Opens.** The consumer cooperative is created to provide healthful, natural food to Lawrence residents. It first focuses on bulk items such a brown rice and is first located at 728 Mass. St. In June it moves to 615 Mass where Nan Renbarger founds her Venbena Bakery in the backroom.

In 1977 it moves to 700 Maine St. where it remains until 1993 when it relocates to 901 Miss. It moves to 901 Iowa in 2001. In addition to members working two hours per month at the store, there was initially a paid manager. Later there was a worker collective consisting of Molly Van Hee, Sue Bryant and Chuck Magerl. Vebena Bakery became Amazing Grains Bakery which was a women's work collective. The Community Credit Union (a financial consumer cooperative) is formed and is located within the Merc. It later becomes a branch of Mainstreet Credit Union.

**April 17, 1975 The Capture of Phnom Penh by Khmer Rouge.** The hardline Communist Khmer Rouge capture the capital of Cambodia, Phnom Penh, and launch a genocidal campaign in which they kill over an estimated 2 million people in executions and enforced hardships. The Khmer Rouge Killing Fields refer to a broad state-sponsored campaign of crimes against humanity and genocide (the Cambodian genocide or Cambodian Holocaust) by the Khmer Rouge led by Pol Pot and the sites in which their victims are buried. Some of those responsible are tried for crimes against humanity. Some say the invasion of Cambodia in April, 1970, by US troops destabilized the "neutral" government King Sihanouk which allowed for the rise of the Khmer Rouge. College campuses (including KU) erupted in May, 1970, in protest of the invasion ordered by President Nixon.

**April 30, 1975 The Fall of Saigon.** Communist North Vietnamese troops capture Saigon ending the 20-year war in South Vietnam. Perhaps as many as 2 million Vietnamese are killed in the war (with most being civilians) and 58,000 US troops. This is the first war the US loses. Lawrence residents held many protests against the war in the 1960s and early 1970s. It is thought that the nationwide protests were responsible for keeping Nixon from ratcheting up the war (though he did bomb Hanoi in North Vietnam and invade Cambodia) and for his Vietnamization Program of gradual withdrawal of us troops over four years.

**May, 1975 Benefit held for Anti-war Activist Scott Camil.** A benefit concert for Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) activist Scott Camil's legal defense fund is held at the United Ministries in Higher Education. After receiving a Purple Heart in Vietnam as a marine sergeant, Scott Camil became active in VVAW, and a chapter leader of that organization. Supposedly, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover considered Camil to be one of the nation's most dangerous activists. Reportedly, as Camil and the organization became more powerful and effective, the FBI ordered his "neutralization". He was shot in the back by a Drug Enforcement Agency agent during a drug bust when he resisted arrest (allegedly he sold 2.5 ounces of cocaine to an agent). The foreman of the federal jury which acquitted him of resisting arrest and selling drugs, later said that he thought that the shooting was an attempt on Camil's life.

**April, 1976 Free University Heyday.** The Kansas Free University began operating in April, 1968, and continues until 1980. Its heyday is in the mid and late 1970s. Courses include "Esperanto", "Creative Capitalism", "Edible Kansas Plants", "Introduction to Bicycle Repair", "Introduction to Zen Meditation", "Organic Cooking and Gardening", and "Hatha Yoga". Many classes are held at the United Ministries in Higher Education

building. According to Merriam-Webster's dictionary, a free university is an "unaccredited autonomous free institution established within a university by students to present and discuss subjects not usually dealt with in the academic curriculum."

**April 29, 1976. Gov't Surveillance of Activists Confirmed.** The US Senate Select Committee on Intelligence chaired by Senator Frank Church releases its report on domestic spying. It concludes that the Central Intelligence Agency (Operation CHAOS), Federal Bureau of Investigation (COINTELPRO) National Security Agency (Project MINARET) and military intelligence agencies spied on law-abiding organizations and citizens in the 1960s and early 1970s. It is highly probable that peace, justice and civil rights organizations based in Lawrence were infiltrated by government informants and that perhaps hundreds of Lawrence activists were spied upon contrary to the First and Fourth Amendments. Organizations most likely to have been infiltrated include Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the Black Student Union (BSU). Agents would employ a variety of "dirty tricks" including coercing advertisers (often record companies) in Underground newspapers to stop advertising; using agents provocateur to get activists to commit crimes; entrapping leaders in crimes such as selling marijuana; and creating interpersonal dissensions within groups. Of course, they also monitored phone conversations and opened mail.

**Jan. 21, 1977 Draft Resisters Receive Full Pardon.** Perhaps hundreds of current and former Lawrence residents who went Underground or to Canada to escape the draft or were prosecuted by the US Justice Department for draft law violations during the Viet Nam War, celebrate their complete and full pardon by President Jimmy Carter. Ironically, Carter resumes draft registration three years later in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

**Jan., 1977 Sister Kettle Cafe Opens.** Sister Kettle Cafe opens at 1347 Mass. St. in the former Bob's Our Place Cafe building. It is run by a work collective composed primarily of radical feminists (including men). It files as a nonprofit in August, 1976, and serves affordable, high-quality, healthful vegetarian food to mostly people with alternative lifestyles. The restaurant closes in 1979. Some of those involved include KE Edminton, Sue Bryant, Val Kelly, Anne Burgess, Chris Mechem, Candida Howard, Retta Hendricks, and Jaime Grow. It is Lawrence's first vegetarian restaurant.

**1977 Martin L. Roberts: Activist Extraordinaire.** Whenever a pro-neighborhood or pro-downtown activist wants to submit a controversial letter-to-the-editor to the *Lawrence Journal-World* and remain anonymous, s/he signs it Martin L. Roberts. Roger Martin creates this technique. At this time, the editorial page editor does not call to verify the author of letters.

**1978 Cornfield Mall Opposed.** A Cleveland developer proposes to build a shopping mall in a cornfield on South Iowa St. Opposition surfaces immediately because many think it would harm downtown by siphoning away business. Downtown businessmen Jack Arensberg, Win Campbell and Bob Schumm and the Downtown Lawrence

Association campaign against the project. Candidates opposed to the mall win a majority of seats on the City Commission in April 1979, thereby killing the project.

**Feb. 1978 Latin America Solidarity Organizes.** Latin America Solidarity (LAS) is founded by five to eight people at KU, but is open to the general public as well. The principals are university librarians Shelly Miller and Rhonda Neugebaer. The first event, held in March, 1978, features a film on Chile followed up by Kansas City Chileans who had escaped the Pinoche regime. LAS holds a weekly rice and beans dinner and features speakers on Latin American issues. The organization opposes the illegal Contra War against the Sandinista government of Nicaragua, the genocide against native peoples in Guatemala and the civil war in El Salvador. The International Court of Justice rules in 1986 that the US had violated international law by supporting the Contras in their war against the Nicaraguan government and by mining Nicaragua's harbors. President Reagan ordered the CIA to mine the harbors and the agency provided broad training and equipment to the Contras in violation of a ban on such action by Congress. LAS obtains an FBI file which shows that it had been investigated by the agency contrary to First Amendment rights and in violation of a 1970s FBI guideline that blocked its agents from spying on groups and individuals unless they were investigating a crime (this is rescinded after the 9/11 terrorist attacks and passage of the Patriot Act).

**Mar., 1978 Radioactive-Free Kansas (RFK) forms.** A group of Lawrence residents and others form Radioactive-Free Kansas, an organization dedicated to opposing the construction of the Wolf Creek Nuclear Station near Burlington, Kansas. Founders include Jeanne Green and Bill Beems. Later Anne Moore and graduate student Clark H. Coan become organizers. RFK is primarily an educational organization, but also holds protests near the site of the plant into the 1980s. It is part of the Sunflower Alliance an umbrella of anti-nuclear groups which includes Kansas City People's Energy Project (KCPEP) and the Kansas Natural Guard.

**April, 1978 Radioactive Waste Repository Proposed.** The Rickano Corporation files for a license to put so-called low-level nuclear waste in a salt mine in Lyons, Kansas. The site was studied by the federal government for a repository for high-level waste but was abandoned in the early 1970s after the Kansas Geological Survey found that there was too much potential for groundwater intrusion into the mine, mostly because of old oil wells drilled into it. Low-level waste includes highly-radioactive parts from reactors. Due to extensive opposition (including from Radioactive-Free Kansas) the license is never granted. Journalist Max McDowell is instrumental in making the public aware of the proposal and the potential problems.

**April 16, 1978 Lawrence Coalition for Peace and Justice Begins Lecture Series.** The LCPJ begins its International Peace and Justice Lecture series by notable peace and justice advocates. These include Kenneth Boulding (1978); Richard Barnet (1979); Frances Moore Lappe (1980); Roger Fisher (1981), and Richard Rhodes (1986). Founders include Oread Friends Meeting members Anne Moore and KU psychology professor Howard Baumgartel. The Coalition forms in the winter of 1976-77. At a planning meeting held in October, 1977, attended by representatives from nine local churches

and organizations, the name is chosen. LCPC publishes a newsletter called *Peace Monitor* which is mailed to hundreds of Lawrence residents for over 30 years. The Tom and Anne Moore Peace and Justice Award is given to a peace or justice advocate annually. After the Moores leave town, Allan and Louise Hanson become the de facto leaders of Lawrence's most effective peace organization.

**June 25, 1978 Sunflower Alliance Protest Rally.** A rally is held in protest against construction of the Wolf Creek Nuclear Plant near Burlington. Both the Lawrence-based Radioactive-Free Kansas and the Kansas Natural Guard participate. A study commissioned by Nuclear Regulatory Commission released in 1982 illustrates the potential damage from a catastrophe at a reactor. Within the first year of a worst-case accident, the death toll could exceed 100,000, injuries could amount to 610,000 and damage could top \$300 billion (\$750 billion in 2016 dollars) near certain reactors. Further, another NRC-commissioned study estimated in 1985 that the chance of a meltdown at a nuclear reactor somewhere in America in the next 20 years it could be almost 50 percent.

**Aug. 12, 1978 O-Keet-Sha Trail Hike-In Held.** An estimated 150 supporters of the O-Keet-Sha Trail turn out for a "Hike-In" on a Sunday afternoon in Tonganoxie. The group meets at the Tonganoxie City Hall and from there hike their way to Lawrence. The Hike-In is scheduled to show support for turning the abandoned Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way into a nature trail for hikers and bicycles. Kansas rails-to-trails pioneers envision a route between Lawrence, Tonganoxie and Leavenworth. It was to be known as the "O-Keet-Sha Trail", and would be the first rails-to-trails conversion in Kansas. Sadly, it is not meant to be, but it laid the groundwork for today's growing rail-trail network. "O-Keet-Sha" is the Kansas Indian word for "stranger" (for Stranger Creek, the most substantial waterway along the route). An educational campaign is begun and a bill is introduced in the legislature to allow the trail to be built (normally abandoned railroad land reverts to the adjacent landowners under Kansas law). The Leavenworth County Commission asks a Kansas Legislature committee to kill the bill for the proposed trail. The Kansas Farm Bureau is able to kill the bill despite extensive lobbying by trail supporters. Those involved in the trail effort include Kansas Trails Council Secretary George Latham (owner of Gran Sport in Lawrence), KTC director Richard Douthit and Harriet J Hughes, Secretary/Treasurer of the O-Keet-Sha Trail Conservation Committee. Despite continued opposition by the Kansas Farm Bureau, by 2016 there are more than 200 miles of developed rail-trails in the Sunflower State and two short rail-trails in Lawrence.

**Jan. 12, 1979 Nonviolent Action at Wolf Creek.** Approximately 36 people are arrested for blocking a rail line transporting the reactor vessel for the plant. The primary sponsoring organization is Lawrence-based Kansas Natural Guard. On March 28, 1979, there is a partial meltdown at the Three Mile Island nuclear plant in Pennsylvania. This galvanizes the anti-nuclear movement in the state and nation. The mass Seabrook Nuclear Station protests in New Hampshire also inspire Kansas activists. On May 6, an estimated 65,000-125,000 people demonstrate in New York City and call for a non-nuclear world.

**Jan. 16, 1979 Conflict between KU Iranian Students Grows.** Conflict between three factions of KU Iranian students breaks out before and after the fall of the Shah of Iran on January 16, 1979. One faction supports Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi who was installed by the CIA in 1953. Another faction supports conservative Muslim cleric Ayatollah Khomeini and the smallest faction is the leftist People Mujahideen. Many protests are held and there are physical clashes between factions. Leading up to the revolution, the Shah's secret police, SAVAK, places informers on the KU campus to spy on anti-Shah students. Reportedly, the CIA also has informants on campus to spy on the Iranian students. During the Iranian hostage crisis in which 52 Americans are held hostage (Nov. 4, 1979 to Jan. 20, 1981), KU social welfare professor Norm Forer (who had served as a US Dept. of Justice mediator) travels to Iran in Dec. 1979 as a mediator with KU instructor Clarence Dillingham to gather information and open a dialogue between the American people and the Iranian students seeking democracy in Iran. When they return, Chancellor Archie Dyches and some state legislators denounce them for meddling in foreign affairs which they thought was seditious or traitorous. Forer is initially suspended without pay, but since he has tenure and there is no question about his teaching ability, so it would be hard to fire him. Thus, KU makes him move to a smaller office and cuts his salary. Dillingham doesn't have tenure and his teaching contract is not renewed. Reportedly, after returning from Iran he is entrapped by the KBI for selling cocaine several times to an agent in late 1980 and he ends up in prison.

**March 16, 1979 "China Syndrome" Moviegoers Leafleted.** When the anti-nuclear power Hollywood film, "China Syndrome" starring Jane Fonda, Michael Douglas and Jack Lemmon, is shown in Lawrence, moviegoers are leafleted with anti-nuclear power brochures by members of Radioactive-Free Kansas and the Kansas Natural Guard. In the film a news reporter and her cameraman are witnesses to an emergency core shutdown at a nuclear plant in California. In December, 1983, activists hand out leaflets at showings of the film "Silkwood" starring Meryl Streep in which Karen Silkwood, a worker at a plutonium processing plant in Oklahoma is purposefully contaminated and possibly murdered to prevent her from exposing blatant worker safety violations at the plant.

**June, 1979 Downtown Mall Opposed.** A proposed mall which would destroy the north end of downtown Lawrence is opposed by a group called Citizens for a Better Downtown which is led by Barbara Waggoner, Ed Boles, and Myles Schachtner. The April, 1981, City Commission election results in a majority opposed to the project, thereby killing the project.

**June 9, 1979 Protest Rally at Wolf Creek.** Partly in response to the accident at Three Mile Island, over 1,500 people attend a protest rally sponsored by the Sunflower Alliance near the construction site of the Wolf Creek Nuclear Plant. Both the Lawrence-based Radioactive-Free Kansas and the Kansas Natural Guard help organize the rally. Smaller rallies continue into the 1980s. Anti-nuclear activists in Oklahoma are able to block construction of the Black Fox Nuclear Plant, but they start before actual construction. Kansas activists wait until it was too late, so the plant goes online in 1985.

**Aug., 1979     Appropriate Technology (AT) Resource Center opens.** The AT Center opens in a storefront at 1101 1/2 Mass. St. This happens after a several-month-long organizational effort by the Appropriate Technology Collective which was formed from an initial class in the Free University. The organization promotes self-reliance in energy, food and health. It features the Neighborhood Solar Project, Project Save Energy Around Lawrence (SEAL), the Organic Gardening Project and many events. It maintains a resource library and reading room which operates until about 1985. This 501(c)(3) organization later became KAW Council. Some of those involved include Dan Bentley, Kat Greene, Michael Almon and Ken Lassman.

**Oct. 21, 1979     Balloons Released near Wolf Creek.** The Radioactive-Free Kansas and the Kansas National Guard release 425 balloons next to the plant. A major radioactive release could result in radioactivity blowing to Lawrence since prevailing winds are southwesterly and the city lies about 50 miles downwind from the plant. In 2008 the Nuclear Regulatory Commission extends the plant's license from 40 to 60 years. The risk of an accident continues to grow as the aging plant's reactor vessel becomes embrittled and the cooling pipes become corroded. Many expensive parts have to be replaced to keep the plant safe. Meanwhile, since no permanent repository for spent fuel currently exists in the United States, the reactor owners have kept the highly-radioactive spent fuel rods at the reactor site where they pose a dangerous hazard to Kansans and Lawrencians if there is a malfunction, a natural disaster, or a terrorist attack cause the cooling pools to lose water thereby triggering the high-level waste to explode spewing radioactivity into the atmosphere. Each 1,000 MW reactor produces 33 tons of hot, extremely radioactive waste each year. Also, each reactor also releases millions of curries of radioactive isotopes such as Krypton, Xenon and Argon in to the air and water each year.

**April, 1980     Anti-Draft Registration Rally.** After President Carter re-imposes draft registration for young men in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, there is significant resistance. A protest rally is held in the park adjacent to Watkins Museum and public lectures by prominent activists are also held in Lawrence. Thousands of 18-year-old men refuse or fail to register (including some in Lawrence). On Saturday, March 22, in Washington, D.C., nearly 20,000 march against the draft sponsored by M.A.D.— Movement Against the Draft. In response to those refusing to register, Congress passes a law denying federal benefits (such as federal student aid) to nonregistrants. Even though the Soviets withdraw from Afghanistan in 1989, President George H.W. Bush continues the program. Women never are included even though female recruits begin to serve in combat beginning in 2013.

**May 18, 1980     Anti-apartheid Protest at KU Commencement.** KU student Ron Kuby and about 30 other people bring signs and banners to KU commencement in Memorial Stadium calling on the KU Endowment Assn. to divest from companies doing business in South Africa which has apartheid, a rigid policy of segregating and economically and politically oppressing the nonwhite population. Kuby's arm is broken when a KU police officer grabs the banner Kuby is holding. Kuby later becomes a noted civil liberties attorney for the Center for Constitutional Rights.



**Aug., 1980 Kansas Energy Fair at Burlington.** An energy fair is held in Burlington and is co-sponsored by Lawrence-based Radioactive-Free Kansas. Booths promote renewable energy, energy efficiency, and sustainable living. By 1890 Lawrence had one major source of renewable energy: Bowersock Mills located below the dam on the Kaw River was producing electricity from hydropower. By 1916 it was producing enough electricity to power downtown. A north powerhouse with additional turbines was added in 2012 with total electricity output sufficient to power 5,400 households when operating at normal capacity. Other forms of renewable energy such as solar panels for heating and electricity don't become popular in Lawrence until after 2010. Kansas' first large-scale wind farm was erected near the town of Montezuma in 2001 and by 2017, 28% of electricity in the state is generated by wind. In 2016, about 85 percent of electricity for households in Lawrence is generated by the carbon dioxide-producing coal-fired plant north of the city.

**Nov. 17, 1980 Women's Pentagon Action.** About 2,000 women encircle the Pentagon and over 140 women are arrested for blocking the doors to two entrances. It is organized by Women and Life on Earth. The event is also held the following November. It is likely that some Lawrence women attend the event.

**Dec. 9, 1980 John Lennon Candlelight Peace Vigil Held.** A candlelight vigil is held in South Park in memory of John Lennon who was assassinated on Dec. 8, 1980, in New York City. Lennon was the political Beatle and was banned from entering the US by the Nixon Administration because he advocated for world peace and opposed US involvement in the Vietnam War. His song, "Give Peace a Chance" released in 1969, hit a chord in the hearts of millions of young people worldwide and gave them hope for the world. It became an anthem of the American anti-war movement during the early 1970s.

**Nov. 14, 1981 Nonviolent Direct Action at Wolf Creek.** Members of the Kansas Natural Guard plant wheat and cottonwood trees next to Wolf Creek. Eleven commit civil disobedience by trespassing and are arrested. This is one of the last nonviolent direct actions at the plant. Security guards hired by Kansas Gas & Electric surveil and photograph activists even when not near the plant but in the town of Burlington and they possibly monitor phone conversations of activists. At some point KG&E seeks an injunction in Douglas County District Court against the Kansas Natural Guard to keep members from committing civil disobedience in the future. KG&E seeks a membership list of the organization but the judge denies this request due to a US Supreme Court decision. The injunction against future civil disobedience involving trespassing is granted, however.

The plant goes on line four years later. The meltdown at the Chernobyl nuclear station in Ukraine in 1985 results in a vast area of 1,000 square miles (the size of Rhode Island) that is made uninhabitable due to radioactive contamination. Over 50,000 people are forced to evacuate permanently. In 2017, a new protective shield to contain the radiation and decontaminate the site is installed over the crippled reactor which has 200 tons of deteriorating nuclear fuel. There are 68 confirmed deaths by 2008 with an

unknown number dying prematurely from cancer in the future. Despite claims to the contrary, nuclear power does result in the release of gases that cause global warming. Studies have concluded that nuclear plants actually are responsible for Greenhouse gas emissions amounting to about one-third of a natural gas plant.

**Jan. 12, 1982 Transport of Radioactive Materials Banned.** The Lawrence City Commission bans the transport of certain radioactive materials associated with nuclear power plants (such as spent fuel rods and uranium-235) through the city. It doesn't apply to nuclear weapons. The ordinance is essentially symbolic but increases public awareness about the hazards of transporting radioactive materials. Radioactive-Free Kansas and other groups push for adoption of this ordinance. Not long after the City Commission declares Lawrence to be a **Nuclear-Free Zone** which bans nuclear power plants and nuclear weapons.

**March 28, 1982 Three Mile Island Day Rally.** A rally is held at Wolf Creek in remembrance of the partial meltdown of the Three Mile Island (TMI) reactor three years earlier. Participants are surveilled, videotaped and otherwise harassed by security guards hired by Kansas Gas & Electric. In the county where TMI is located, infant mortality (deaths of kids under one) soared 53.7% in the first month after the accident; the rate rose 27% in the first year after the accident. As originally published, the federal government's own Monthly Vital Statistics Report shows a statistically significant rise in infant and over-all mortality rates shortly after the accident. Penn State Professor Winston Richards reported, "Infant mortality for Dauphin County, while average in 1978, becomes significantly above average in 1980." In 1984 the first Voluntary Community Health Study was undertaken by a group of local residents trained by Marjorie Aamodt. That study found a 600 percent cancer death rate increase for three locations on the west shore of TMI directly in the plumes' pathway. The data were independently verified by experts from the TMI Public Health Fund. In February, 1981, a \$20 million fund is set up to pay over 15,000 claims for affected area residents and business within the 25-mile radius of Three Mile Island. By 1985, TMI's owners and builders paid more than \$14 million for out-of-court settlements of personal injury lawsuits.

**April 4-10, 1982 Ground Zero Week.** The Lawrence Coalition for Peace and Justice sponsors a Ground Zero Week which features workshops, and other events concerning the dangers posed by continued possession of nuclear weapons. During the week hundreds of signatures are gathered on a petition calling for a Nuclear Freeze. The petitions are presented to US senators and others. At a Ground Zero Peace Rally in South Park on April 10, participants tie peace messages on helium-filled balloons which are released into the air. Ground Zero Week is sponsored nationally by Ground Zero which is an advocacy and education organization devoted to raising awareness of the nuclear threat. Ground Zero Week consists of nationwide events to demonstrate that US cities have no defenses in the event of a nuclear war. Some have suggested that these events helped build the momentum for the huge UN March and Rally for Disarmament in New York City that took place two months later on June 12, 1982.

**May 1, 1982 Kansas Area Watershed Council Forms.** A group of bioregionalists found the Kansas Area Watershed (KAW) Council to promote bioregionalism. The story is that some members of the AT Center — a not-for-profit focused on self-reliance in energy, food, health and housing — attend the second Ozark Area Community Congress (OACC) in the fall of 1981, and come home inspired to begin bioregional congresses of and on the prairie. The first KAW Council is held May Day weekend in 1982 at Camp Hammond (located between Lawrence and Topeka). “Bioregionalism calls for human society to be more closely related to nature, and to be more conscious of its locale, or region, of life-place. It is a proposal to ground human cultures within natural systems, to get to know one's place intimately in order to fit human communities to the Earth, not distort the Earth to our demands.” KAW Council aims to cultivate community around issues relating to sustainability. It is one of the oldest such groups in America and is a primary organizer in the continental bioregional movement. It publishes the journal *Konza* for two decades and later there is an on-line Konza Journal ([konzajournal.com](http://konzajournal.com)). The group also continues to hold occasional spring camps and occasional monthly walkabouts. The official website of KAW Council is [kawcouncil.wordpress.com](http://kawcouncil.wordpress.com). Some of those involved initially include Ken Lassman, Joy deMaranville, Dan Bentley, and Mark Larson.

**June 12, 1982 UN Rally and March for Disarmament.** Hundreds of Kansans including many Lawrence residents participate in the UN Rally and March for Disarmament held in New York City while the UN holds a special session on nuclear disarmament. An estimated 750,000 to 1 million people march and attend the rally calling for the end to the nuclear arms race. The famous event—at the time the largest political demonstration in American history—is widely heralded as the high point of the antinuclear movement of the 1970s and 1980s. Two days later, 1,600 demonstrators are involved in acts of civil disobedience. The march and rally are organized by the June 12 Coordinating Committee which is created by the Mobilization for Survival (MOBE). The revolutionary anarchist MOBE was founded in 1977 and was an umbrella coalition, acting as the anti-nuclear (both power and weapons) coordinating activities around the country. Although President Reagan later says it is time for peace protesters to take their signs and go home, he agrees to begin the START talks with the Soviet Union which ultimately lead to the 1991 treaty reducing nuclear warheads to 6,000 on both sides. Speakers include Randall Forsberg, originator of the nuclear weapons freeze proposal, and Rev. William Sloane Coffin, senior pastor at the Riverside Church.

**June 30, 1982 Equal Rights Amendment Fails to Pass.** The deadline for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment expires. The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), which was designed to grant equal rights to women, was passed by Congress on March 22, 1972, and sent to state legislatures for ratification by three-fourths of the states. But the ERA falls three states short of ratification. Kansas was the seventh state to ratify the ERA (in 1972), partly due to lobbying by feminists from Lawrence. Despite the failure to amend the constitution, the adoption of laws and court decisions gradually extend equal rights to women over time though as late as 2016 women are often not paid the same as men doing the same or comparable job.

**Aug. 16, 1982 Filming begins for “The Day After” near Lawrence.** The film “The Day After” is filmed in and around Lawrence and Kansas City. Over 2,500 KU students and townspeople serve as extras in the filming. According to Athletes United for Peace co-founder Bob Swan, “Hundreds of townspeople and students act as extras and get fictionalized glimpses of what a nuclear war would do their community. Sets depicting the aftermath of a nuclear war are so realistic, many extras and actors are moved to tears. The filming creates an awakening determination among a number of Lawrence residents that this ‘future’ for their city is not to be allowed. Thus, it is no coincidence that Lawrence, with its special awareness and concern, becomes the center of citizen diplomacy and peace initiatives.” Among the most memorable scenes involving KU students was one in Allen Field House, which had been transformed into a makeshift hospital following the nuclear explosion. There, 1,200 students were “caked in mud and grease, dressed in rags, and bathed in blood” in order to resemble fallout victims. Another Lawrence scene took place under the Kansas River Bridge, where survivors had built a pitiful, dilapidated tent city and dug a giant burial pit. Some dub it “Reaganville” (similar to shantytown Hooverilles in the Great Depression). Reportedly, the Reagan Administration attempts to pressure ABC not to show the controversial film and perhaps that is why ABC tones it down for the television showing. The director of the ABC movie is Nicholas Meyer and the most famous movie star is Jason Robards.

**Nov. 2, 1982 Nuclear Freeze Wins in Referendum.** After a colorful and vibrant eight-month campaign by hundreds of Lawrence residents, the Nuclear Freeze is approved by a remarkable 74 percent of participating Lawrence voters in a City-sponsored polling held concurrently with state elections. About 53 % of those who vote in the general election take part in the official polling which is officially sponsored by the City of Lawrence and administered by the Lawrence League of Women Voters. People from all walks of life, from businessmen to carpenters, participate in this campaign to end the nuclear arms race. Under the guidance of the Lawrence Coalition for Peace and Justice, virtually every household is canvassed and purple yard signs supporting the Freeze sprout throughout the city. Organizers of these events include Quaker Anne Moore, Mennonite pastor John Linscheid, and former regional planner Clark H. Coan. Voters representing one-third of the national electorate vote overwhelmingly for the Nuclear Freeze and this has a major impact on public awareness of the threat of nuclear war and puts additional pressure on the Reagan Administration to pursue a reduction in the world’s nuclear arsenals.

**April 23, 1983 Soviet Athletes at the Kansas Relays.** In early 1983, Athletes United for Peace (AUP) invites a world-class Soviet track and field team to the Kansas Relays. According to co-founder Bob Swan, “A letter-campaign by hundreds of Lawrence school children overcomes two initial ‘Nyets’ by the Soviets resulting in a ‘Friendship Relays’ carried by American and Soviet prime television to some 250 million viewers. This ‘fairy tale’ week of events, included a ‘Country Welcome’ barn dance, American Indian Pow-Wow, ‘Relay for Peace’, and a farewell banquet.” Primary organizers of these events include businessman Bob Swan and Dr. Mark Scott. The whole city welcomes the Soviets with open arms. Media coverage includes ABC News, *New York Times*, *USA Today*, *Washington Post*, *Sovetski Sport*, and Soviet national television.

**April, 1983 First Meeting for Peace/Sunflower Summit Initiative.** At the opening ceremony of the 1983 Kansas Relays attended by the world-class Soviet track and field team, Lawrence Mayor David Longhurst invites President Ronald Reagan and General Secretary Yuri Andropov to come to his city for a "Meeting for Peace" in the "Heart of America." This invitation for a "Sunflower Summit" is later extended to General Secretaries Cherenko and Gorbachev. The Meeting for Peace initiative receives widespread support, including letters of endorsement from Governors John Carlin and Mike Hayden, and Senators Bob Dole and Nancy Kassebaum. Media coverage includes the *San Diego Union*, *Christian Science Monitor*, and *CBS Morning News*.

**April 30, 1983 Feminist Sonia Johnson Speaks at KU.** Prominent feminist and author Sonia Johnson speaks in the Kansas Union Ballroom. The title of her talk is "The Crisis of Conscience: Women and the Quest for Justice." She was excommunicated from the Mormon Church for speaking on behalf of the Equal Rights Amendment. Over her lifetime, she is author of seven books. The former English professor was a candidate for US president in 1984 for both the Citizens Party and Peace and Freedom Party. The Seneca Women's Peace Encampment located adjacent to the Seneca Army Depot (repository of nuclear warheads) in New York is established on July 4, 1983, and lasts until 1990. Protests, including nonviolent civil disobedience, are regularly held at the depot using the encampment as a base.

**June 1, 1983 Nuclear Awareness Network is Established.** The Nuclear Awareness Network (NAN) is incorporated on June 1, 1983. Principals are Stevi Stephens (who is elected to the Kansas House of Representatives in 1990) and environmental attorney Bob Eye. The office is located at 1347 1/2 Mass. St. The organization files petitions with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Kansas Corporation Commission and Kansas Supreme Court concerning nuclear safety and rate issues. Wolf Creek cost \$3 billion (\$6.75 billion in 2016 dollars) to build and it will cost more than \$1 billion to decommission it. Ratepayers, including electricity consumers in Lawrence, will have to absorb all of these costs. Plus, since 1983, electricity consumers have paid into a federal Nuclear Waste Fund one-tenth of a cent for every kilowatt-hour of electricity produced at nuclear power plants.

High-level radioactive waste must be isolated from the environment for at least 250,000 years. The United States, as yet, has no disposal facilities for high-level nuclear waste. The Yucca Mountain Nuclear Waste Repository project in Nevada was canceled due to political pressure and after scientists discovered that water was infiltrating the facility far faster than they thought possible. Instead, waste is stored on an ad-hoc basis. Commercial nuclear plants and governmental reactors store their own waste, typically in pools of water in concrete basins or in dry storage in steel or concrete chambers. There are 121 such storage facilities across the country. These solutions are temporary, and existing storage space is rapidly being exhausted. Meanwhile, the radwaste continues to accumulate at the rate of about 2,000 - 2,300 metric tons each year.

**Aug., 27, 1983 “Jobs, Peace & Freedom” March.** A march is held in downtown Lawrence in conjunction with a national march in Washington on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the famous “March on Washington” for Civil Rights where Martin Luther King, Jr. gave his “I Have a Dream” speech. It is organized by the Lawrence Chapter of a New Coalition of Conscience. About 300,000 attend the multi-racial march in Washington.

This is a continuation of city’s historic concern for justice for ordinary people—farmers, laborers and teachers. In the 1890s the People’s (Populist) Party was fairly strong in Douglas County. A Populist was elected to the city council. The populist *Jeffersonian* newspaper was published in Lawrence and “Little” Annie Diggs, perhaps the best known woman orator for the national People’s Party after 1893, lived in Lawrence. Diggs, a People’s Party journalist, wrote a Farmers’ Alliance column for the *Lawrence Journal* and later edited the *Advocate*, the official state Populist newspaper. The Populists believed in getting the influence of Wall Street out of government. Famous Kansas Populist orator Mary Elizabeth “Yellin” Lease said, “Wall Street owns the country. It is no longer a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, but a government of Wall Street, by Wall Street, and for Wall Street.” Reporters claimed she also said, “Raise less corn and more hell.” The Populists called for direct election of US senators, the initiative and referendum, women’s suffrage, an eight-hour workday, supervision of the banks, establishment of national forests, a graduated income tax, and regulation of the railroads.

**Oct. 12, 1983 Premiere of “The Day After” Held at KU.** Over 2,000 people, many of whom are KU students, fill the Kansas Union’s Woodruff Auditorium to see one of four special showings of the original film that are held on campus. A “sanitized” version of the film is shown on television the following month. The film’s director, Nicholas Meyer, attends the Lawrence premiere and the national media covers the premiere. Reporters from *Time*, *Newsweek*, *USA Today*, and *ABC News* and many others are anxious to hear local reaction to the film.

**Oct. 25, 1983 NATO Supreme Allied Commander Protested.** One of the largest demonstrations for peace at KU since the Vietnam War era is held in front of the Kansas Union. Nearly 300 people peacefully chant and hand out information to those attending the speech by General Bernard Rogers, Supreme Allied Commander of NATO, for his role in for preparing for the deployment and use of nuclear-tipped Pershing II and Tomahawk Cruise missiles in Europe. A mock replica of a cruise missile is displayed at the protest. About 25 protesters attend the Rogers’ talk and silently but symbolically protest his actions and statements by putting on skeleton masks and pointing at him. He is visibly disturbed by the action. Since the response to General Rogers is silent, it does not interfere with his freedom of speech, nor does it block the view of others since most of the masked people stand in the aisles. A primary organizer is Dr. Anita Chan, a research associate at KU’s Center for East Asian Studies.

**Oct., 1983 TownCenter Mall Proposed and Opposed.** A TownCenter Mall in the northern end of Mass. St. is proposed, but is immediately opposed by a group led by Pat Khede and Phil Minken. The April, 1987, election results in a majority opposed to the

project, thereby killing the project. The efforts by Lawrencians to protect their downtown from redevelopment, downtown malls and cornfield malls, permitted the downtown to grow organically into one of the most beautiful and vibrant historic downtowns in America. The National Trust for Historic Preservation ranked Lawrence among its "Dozen Most Distinctive Destinations," touting it as one of the best-preserved and unique communities in America. Parade magazine named downtown "the most popular tourist destination in Kansas." The American Planning Association named Massachusetts Street as one of the ten best streets in the nation for 2010.

**Nov. 13, 1983 Protest March Against the CIA-sponsored Contra War.** A march by hundreds of Lawrencians in downtown Lawrence is held in protest against the illegal Contra War. Latin America Solidarity sponsors the event. Signs with Nicaraguan victims' names and their dates of death are planted in South Park around the Band Stand. LAS was part of a national anti-interventionist campaign involving more than 1,000 peace and justice organizations. Also, the invasion of Grenada by the US began just three weeks prior to the protest march. Lawrence Police Dept. members videotape the marchers. A complaint is filed against the LPD because such activity can have a chilling effect on free speech and the right to peacefully assemble. Later the LPD adopts a weak policy on videotaping political events which the Lawrence City Commission approves.

**Nov. 20, 1983 Let Lawrence Live.** "The Day After", a made-for-television film depicting the aftermath of a nuclear war and filmed in and around Lawrence, is seen by over 100 million Americans plus millions of Europeans and Soviets. In response to the destruction of Lawrence on the silver screen, the Lawrence Coalition for Peace and Justice, a sister KU group and members of Athletes United for Peace, create a series of events under the title, "Let Lawrence Live." These events include a town meeting on nuclear war, "Day After Photo Exhibit", a candlelight vigil on Campanile Hill with nearly 1,000, held immediately after the showing, and a forum on the consequences of nuclear war which features noted biologist Paul Erlich (a KU graduate) and psychologist Robert Jay Lifton and is carried on ABC's *Nightline*. "Let Lawrence Live" is mentioned in the *LA Times*, *Washington Post*, *Time* and *People*. Some parents decide that the film would be too disturbing for their children to watch. Reportedly, President Ronald Reagan watches the film at the behest of his daughter. A primary organizer of the events is KU anthropology professor Allan Hanson.

As Athletes United for Peace co-founder Bob Swan so aptly summarized, "There is a striking historical coincidence that the city of Lawrence which suffered one of the largest civilian massacres in U.S. history (Quantrill's Raid in 1863), was chosen to be the setting of a nuclear massacre portrayed so powerfully in 'The Day After.' The filming created an awakening determination among a number of Lawrence people that this 'future' for their city was not be allowed, must never happen. Thus, it is no coincidence that Lawrence, with its special awareness and concern, has been a center of citizen diplomacy and peace initiatives beginning in 1982."

**March, 1984 Taxes for Peace Workshop Held.** A workshop is held on resisting war taxes. Information is provided on how to withhold war taxes. About one-half of the

personal income tax dollar goes toward the military and the telephone excise tax is dedicated totally for military expenditures. Some Lawrencians withhold a portion of their income taxes or excise taxes. Many send the amounts withheld to the Conscience and Military Tax Campaign Escrow Account to prove they are not personally benefiting from withholding the taxes.

**March, 1984 The Gentle Anarchist is Published.** The League of Non-Violent Resistance begins publishing *The Gentle Anarchist*. The goal of the anarchist street newspaper is either the “disbanding of all governments or the recognition of all governments of the right of anarchists to form communities free from State control.” Articles describe ways people can resist the government nonviolently (such as war tax resistance). It is published periodically until 1987. It is started by Ed Stamm and then Mark Parker and Dennis “Boog” Highberger join. Later Chuck Munson joins the group.

**March 24, 1984 Local Jesse Jackson Campaign A Success.** Thanks to advanced organizing by progressive activists, presidential candidate Jesse Jackson secures a delegate in the Douglas County Democratic Caucus to send to the state convention in Topeka. Jackson, an associate of Martin Luther King, Jr., is the second Black candidate to seek the nomination of a major political party. Jackson declares he wants to create a “Rainbow Coalition” of various minority groups, including African Americans, Latinos, family farmers, the poor and working class, gays and lesbians, and white progressives. He proposes the creation of a Works Progress Administration-style program to rebuild America’s infrastructure and secure full employment; reversing Reaganomics-inspired tax cuts for the richest ten percent to finance social welfare programs; instituting an immediate nuclear freeze and beginning disarmament negotiations with the Soviet Union; creating a single-payer system of universal health care; and, providing free community college for all. His main opposition is former Vice President Walter Mondale who loses to President Reagan in a landslide in the November general election. It takes another 24 years before a Black man is nominated and elected president (Barrack Obama in 2008). Jackson campaigns again in 1988 and more than doubles his results nationally.

**April, 1984 Costume Party Wins KU Student Senate.** An unusual political party wins the presidency and vice presidency of the KU Student Senate in a colorful campaign. Carla Vogel (President) and Dennis “Boog” Highberger (Vice President) use anarchism and street theatre to win the election. They appeal to disenchanting students, including international students. Boog, a self-proclaimed anarchist, calls for a university revolution and says he wants to be the last student body vice-president. Ironically, Boog goes on and becomes an attorney, works for the State of Kansas, and becomes a city commissioner and a state representative.

**July, 1984 White Train Actions.** Conceived by the Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action, the White Train Campaign involves a national network of protesters who gather along railroad tracks to demonstrate against and attract attention to trains carrying arms shipments from the Pantex Corp. plant in Amarillo, Tex., where nearly all of the nation's nuclear warheads are assembled. The founder of the Ground Zero Center,



Catholic theologian Jim Douglass gives a talk in Lawrence. White Train vigils are held in Lawrence and Topeka. More than 150 people, many of whom are members of the Lawrence Coalition for Peace and Justice (LCPJ), protest a White Train in Topeka on Feb. 19, 1985. About 22 are arrested after committing civil disobedience. In 1988-89, LCPJ endorses a series of vigils in witness to the passage of trains carrying highly explosive Class A fuel and motors for Trident missiles through Lawrence. This campaign is sponsored by Nukewatch. Some members of the Lawrence Coalition for Peace and Justice commit civil disobedience at the Nevada Nuclear Test Site and the Strategic Air Command (SAC) in Omaha in the 1980s. Plowshares actions are held at various nuclear missile silos including near Warrensburg, Missouri. Noted peace activist Phil Berrigan undertakes several Plowshares actions and spends years in the Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary.

**Oct., 1984     Disorientation Guide Published.** The “Disorientation Guide” is published to supplement the official KU orientation guide (and also it is like the old People’s Yellow Pages), but with a little more political content, and information about KU that the administration probably wouldn’t provide. It is published by a shifting group of people once a year and funded by the KU Student Senate. One of the occasional features is a “Brief and Incomplete History of Radical Action at KU”. Issues are put out in 1984-87 and 1989-90. Dennis “Boog” Highberger is a regular member of the shifting group.

**1984     Impeach Reagan Rally Held.** An “Impeach Reagan” rally is held at KU and features a boom box parade with radios tuned to Gil Scott Heron's "Re-Ron" on student radio KJHK, and a urine test booth set up on KU’s Wescoe Beach. Many are opposed to Reagan for his massive budget cuts, tax cuts for the rich, War on Drugs (“Just Say No”), the Contra War against Nicaragua, and the nuclear arms buildup. Reagan undertakes many reactionary actions such as to de-fund the enforcement division of the Environmental Protection Agency. Kansas Senator Bob Dole as chairman of the Senate Finance Committee helped shepherd Reagan’s massive budget and tax cuts through Congress.

**April, 1985     KU South Africa Divestment Campaign.** Starting in April, there is series of actions including an eight-day sit-in in Strong Hall, demonstrations and a three-week camp-in on the KU Endowment Association building grounds on West Campus which culminates in a sit-in by students and Lawrence residents and results in the arrests of 50 nonviolent civil resisters. The protesters call on KUEA to end investments in companies doing business in South Africa which has the racially discriminatory system of apartheid. After KUEA announces they had previously adopted a selective divestment policy, the protesters declare victory even though they had demanded full divestment. The actions are part of a broad-based international divestment campaign. South African Embassy (in Washington, DC) protests and civil disobedience take place every day for an entire year in 1984-5, inspiring similar protests in 26 other US cities. In all, between three and six thousand people are arrested including 23 members of Congress. This leads to Congress passing the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986 (over President Reagan’s veto) which imposes economic sanctions against South Africa. The blow to the South African economy and continued resistance by the Black majority in that country, leads to the

dismantling of apartheid through a series of negotiations that culminate in the elections of 1994, the first in South Africa with universal suffrage, in which Nelson Mandela is elected president. The KU Committee on South Africa is the local organizing body and those involved include Dr. Anita Chan; Ron Kubie, a KU student; Ed Dutton, professor of social welfare; Ben Zimmerman, professor of social welfare; Laird Okie, a British history Ph.D. candidate; and Keenan Gentry, a KU student.

**April, 1985 Meeting at the Elbe.** Athletes United for Peace organizes the “Meeting at the Elbe,” held in April-May, 1985, in which a delegation of 50 Americans (including Lawrence residents) returns to the Elbe River to commemorate the US-USSR wartime alliance. In April, 1945, WWII American and Soviet soldiers met in peace at the Elbe River in Germany and celebrated the end of the war in Europe and victory over the Nazis. This remarkable reunion of American and Soviet veterans in Torgau, German Democratic Republic, a meeting first proposed in August, 1983, by Lawrence residents Bob Swan and Dr. Mark Scott, is seen by an estimated one billion citizens in 60 nations. *Time, The Guardian, LA Times, New York Times, and the Washington Post* all cover this historic event.

**April, 1986 Hermes Peace and Justice Library Opens.** The Hermes Peace and Justice Library is an outgrowth of the Community Peace House, a short-lived Catholic Worker-style experiment. Catholic social service volunteer Michael Hermes, several area churches, community activists and members of the Lawrence Coalition for Peace and Justice initiate the project in the fall of 1985. By the end of April, 1986, the peace house is open and it has a small but growing peace and justice library. When Hermes leaves Lawrence in late spring of that year, the library is named in his honor. When the peace house closes by the end of the year, the library moves to Plymouth Congregational Church. The library grows over time and eventually finds a permanent home in the Moore Reading Room in KU’s Smith Hall which houses the Religious Studies Department. Initial founders of the library are librarian Cheryl Musch, former librarian Susan Clark, and Clark H. Coan. Marvin Voth, and librarians Joyce Steiner and Barb Michener later become involved in the library.

**April 13, 1986 Anti-Contra Rally at KU.** About 200 people attend a rally in front of Strong Hall in opposition to US aid to the Contras fighting the Sandanistas in Nicaragua. The hour-long event is sponsored by Latin America Solidarity (LAS). Most peace groups joined the anti-Contra war campaign as the Contra war heated up in 1983 and 1984, but some were involved in the Central America movement from the start. There are widespread protests nationwide 1986-87 (like the KU rally) after Congress passes nonlethal aid to the Contras in 1985.

**April, 1986 Walk for Peace.** A Walk for Peace is held in downtown Lawrence as part of the Soviet Veterans Journey for Peace. Soviet World War II veterans, most from the historic Elbe River link-up with Americans in 1945, make an exciting “Journey for Peace” to eight American cities to rekindle the “Spirit of the Elbe”. On April 25, 1945, forward patrols of the First Army’s 69<sup>th</sup> Division encountered the vanguard of Marshal Koniev’s First Ukrainian Army on the Elbe River near the town of Torgau in what is now East

Germany. The patrols celebrated the ending of the war in Europe and the victory over Facism. Participants include American Elbe veteran Buck Kotzebue and Soviet veteran Major Gen. Aleksandr Olshanski who remarked, *"We hope very much that the Spirit of the Elbe in international relations...would contribute to the cessation of nuclear testing, the destruction of all nuclear weapons, both on Earth and in space."* This historic journey, organized by The Elbe Alliance, is covered by CNN, Associated Press and *Newsweek*.

**April 29, 1986 Anti-Nuclear Die-in at KU.** About 50 KU students and Lawrence residents attend a "No Business as Usual" protest in front of Flint-Stauffer Hall. At 1:30 p.m. about 30 people fall to the ground after a countdown to the impact of a Soviet nuclear warhead hitting campus. The Lawrence Chapter of NBAU Action Network sponsors the event. A flier posted on campus states: "The threat of nuclear war now casts its shadow over the lives of all the people of the world. As students, we are preparing to take our place in the world that might not be there when we get out of school! So, on Monday, April 29, we are calling on our fellow students to look at the ways our institutions, our lifestyles, and many other things we take for granted that contribute to the escalating threat of nuclear destruction...Obviously, 'Business as Usual' on campus means preparing for nuclear war and our own destruction. That is why we are calling for NO BUSINESS AS USUAL on Monday April 29. Join us in demanding 1) an end to all military research (on campus), 2) total nuclear divestment by the Kansas University Endowment Association, and, 3) a complete phase-out of the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) program." Similar events are held around the country and are sponsored by No Business As Usual Action Network which calls for direct action at key installations involved in researching and testing Strategic Defense Initiative (Star Wars). The group hopes to temporarily shut down the facilities using mass civil disobedience.

**July 15, 1986 Test Ban Treaty Resolution Passes City Commission.** Lawrence Coalition for Peace and Justice proposes to the Lawrence City Commission a resolution calling upon the US to join the Soviet Union in a moratorium on nuclear weapons tests and asks the two countries to conclude a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. A petition with 442 signatures is submitted to the Commission. The resolution passes. Substantive negotiations for the Comprehensive Test Ban begin in 1994 and a final treaty is adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1996, but does not enter into force because eight countries including the US have not ratified it (however, the US did sign it in 1996). Even though it has not officially entered into force, it is generally being adhered to by all nations except for North Korea. Organizers include Ph.D. candidate Erik Kilgren, peace activist Clark H. Coan, and KU professors Cliff Ketzell and Allan Hanson.

**Sept., 1986 Meeting for Peace Postcard Campaign.** At the beginning of the 1986-87 school year, students of the KU Coalition for Peace and Justice launch a campaign to support the idea of a "Sunflower Summit" in Lawrence by securing the signatures of thousands of KU students on postcards addressed to Presidents Reagan and Gorbachev inviting them to meet in Lawrence, the "Heart of America," to achieve arms control and better relations. The Meeting for Peace Committee, chaired by businessman Bob Swan, and the Lawrence Coalition for Peace and Justice pick up on the idea and gather signed

postcards from townspeople. Finally, a delegation of 11 KU students and townspeople personally deliver 12,000 postcards to the Soviet Embassy and the White House. The *New York Times* and *Newsweek* cover the postcard campaign for a "Meeting for Peace."

Bob Swan later remarks, "While the past of Lawrence includes its actual destruction in 1863 and 1856 and its fictionalized holocaust in 1983, the people of this friendly and tranquil community have great hope in the future, great hope for US-Russia relations, and great hope that Langston Hughes' 'tomorrow, bright before us like a flame' is a beacon of peace and freedom and brotherhood of all of the peoples of the world." The quotation from Hughes, who lived in Lawrence as a child, is the official motto of the City of Lawrence.

**Oct. 6, 1986    Kansans Fast for Life in Central America.** About 15 KU students and Lawrence residents fast in front of the federal building in Topeka to protest aid to the Contras fighting to overthrow the Sandanista government in Nicaragua. The protesters are also worried that the US is preparing to invade that country. Congressman Jim Slattery has an office in the building. The fast is part of Central America Pledge of Resistance which created a coordinated movement that was successful in preventing an all-out U.S. war in Nicaragua and El Salvador. The Central America Pledge of Resistance began in 1984 in response to the threat of U.S. invasion into Nicaragua. The national structure grew as people signed the pledge resisting the U.S. government's policies toward Central America. Calls for actions were sent out from the national center to the local groups whose members committed civil disobedience and protested U.S. policies in Central America.

**Oct. 8, 1986    Protest Against Showing of "Hail Mary" Film.** About 150 fundamentalist Catholics kneel and pray in front of the Kansas Union in protest of the showing of the Jean-Luc Godard's 1985 film "Hail Mary" in Woodruff Auditorium. The film is a modern retelling of the story of the virgin birth of Jesus and shows Mary giving birth in the nude. About 100 of the protesters are from St. Marys, Kansas, perhaps the most conservative town in the state and home to fundamentalist, ultraconservative, Catholic Saint Mary's Academy and College (not sanctioned by the Vatican).

**Oct. 12, 1986    Total Nuclear Disarmament Treaty Nearly Concluded in Reykjavik.** President Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev nearly conclude an agreement to completely phase out nuclear weapons. The talks collapse at the last minute ostensibly because Reagan wants to continue the Strategic Defense Initiative (Star Wars) research and development, but Gorbachev wants to restrict it. Some contend that the proposed Soviet provision would have had little effect on research that was still in its very early stages. Many Lawrence residents are disappointed that the Superpowers came so close to concluding a treaty eliminating nuclear weapons from the face of the Earth. Still, the progress that had been achieved eventually results in the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. Meanwhile, Reagan approves deployment of the M-X missile, some of which are deployed later that year. The missiles originally were to be on mobile launchers so that the Soviets could not target them. This would have given the US more of a first strike advantage.

**Nov. 4, 1986 Agnes the Frog wins 27% of Vote in County Election.** A fictitious frog, Agnes T. Frog, representing the elusive northern crawfish frog listed on the state threatened species register and once observed in the Baker Wetlands south of Lawrence, wins 27.5% of the vote in a colorful write-in campaign which is reported internationally. Stevie Stephens, wearing a frog costume, appears at public events, and an airplane pulls a "Vote for Agnes T. Frog" banner over Memorial Stadium during a football game. The write-in campaign is in opposition to County Commissioner Nancy Heibert who runs unopposed and is the South Lawrence Trafficway's chief cheerleader. The trafficway would destroy part of the Baker Wetlands National Natural Landmark which contains 50 acres of virgin wetland prairie. Primary organizers included former attorney and political strategist Richard Larimore and biologist John Simmons. Eventually, the road is built through the wetlands and opens in November, 2016.

**June 27, 1987 Douglas County Bank Massacre.** Locally-owned Douglas County Bank proposes to raze eight Victorian houses in Old West Lawrence in order to make way for a parking lot and bank drive-through. The Old West Lawrence Association tries to negotiate with the bank to save some of the houses, but the bank breaks off abruptly negotiations and orders the razing of the houses in an "early morning raid". This is reportedly the biggest destruction of structures in Lawrence since the 1863 Quantrill's Raid. Out of this destruction comes the Lawrence Preservation Alliance, a Historic Preservation Ordinance, a Lawrence Historic Resources Commission and a 30-day waiting period after issuance of demolition permits.

**Sept. 7-13, 1987 River City Reunion Celebration Held.** A reunion celebration of Lawrence's special contribution to the arts in the Midwest is held in a week of poetry and fiction readings, noontime book-signings, a five-day film series, and six evenings of music. The festival focuses on national and locally known Beat and Counterculture figures such as Beat poet Allen Ginsberg, Beat writer William Burroughs (a Lawrence resident), Beat writer Michael McClure (originally from Marysville, KS), Beat writer Diane DiPrima, experimental poet Anne Waldman, poet John Giorno, countercultural poet and singer Ed Sanders, and former Harvard psychologist and promoter of LSD Timothy Leary.

**Oct. 1, 1987 Lawrence Neighborhood Association Forms.** By the late 1970s, Lawrencians were beginning to question the value of virtually uncontrolled growth. Residents in older neighborhoods organized to protect their neighborhoods from incompatible development and to ensure that new suburbs didn't divert resources away from older neighborhoods. Others began to question the value of permitting development on sensitive lands such as prime farmland and floodplains. So, in 1987 an association of Lawrence neighborhood groups is created to strengthen the power of neighborhood groups by uniting them. The organization is issue-oriented and nonpartisan politically. According to an article in the *Lawrence Journal-World*, "The Lawrence Association of Neighborhoods serves as an umbrella group for more than 20 individual neighborhood associations across the community, helping those associations advocate neighborhood goals at City Hall and other venues."

**1988 People with Disabilities March for Self-determination.** According to Mike Mikesic, Executive Director of Independence, Inc., the agency “organizes and leads a protest march of people with disabilities and friends that goes from Mass. Street to the Kansas Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS) in east Lawrence to protest the lack of reliable personal care attendant services that people with disabilities covered by Kansas Medicaid were determined eligible by SRS eligible to receive. This is one of many statewide advocacy efforts in the 1980s and decades that follow that led to more adequate funding for Home and Community Based Services, including the rights to self-direct one’s attendant care services.” It is part of the nationwide independent living movement. According to Wikipedia the disability rights movement is “a global movement to secure equal opportunities and equal rights for all people with disabilities. It is made up of organizations of disability activists around the world working together with similar goals and demands, such as: accessibility and safety in transportation, architecture, and the physical environment; equal opportunities in independent living, employment equity, education, and housing; and freedom from discrimination, abuse, neglect, and other violations. Disability activists are working to break social, physical and institutional barriers that prevent them from living their life to the full.”

**April 25, 1988 Soviet Elbe Veterans Visit America.** A delegation of three Soviet Elbe veterans visits several American cities including Lawrence which holds an Elbe Day Commemoration and Elbe Banquet. Participant Lt. Gen. Vladimir Orlov remarks, “*We have visited several cities in America, but Lawrence in our opinion is the warmest city. I would like to say part of our heart will be remaining in Lawrence forever.*” The delegation also lays a wreath on the grave of Dwight D. Eisenhower in Abilene, who was the Supreme Allied Commander when the Elbe link-up occurred in 1945.

**March, 1989 Protest at Riverfront Plaza Along River.** A small protest is held at the site of the proposed Riverfront Plaza, a factory outlet mall on the south banks of the Kansas River east of City Hall. The protesters are concerned that bald eagle roost trees will be removed for the project. Some trees are saved and others are cut to make way for the mall. State and federal agencies impose certain restrictions on the operation of the mall to help mitigate the impact upon the eagle population (i.e., the promenade is closed during prime eagle visitation season). Bald eagles, which are protected by a special federal law because it is the national symbol, perch in trees below the Kansas River Dam in the winter because the open waters are a prime fishing site. At the time the bird was on the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants (it was de-listed in 2007).

**April 5-7, 1989 Environmental Awareness Fair.** KU Environs holds an environmental awareness fair in front of Strong Hall. There are informational tables on commercial whaling, the environmental harm caused by plastic and Styrofoam containers, and the dangers of Ozone-depleting chemicals. There is a petition protesting the production and use of Chlorofluorocarbons at two plants in Wichita. Other participating organizations include Greenpeace and Audubon.

**April 9, 1989**     **March for Gay and Lesbian Awareness Week.** About 50 people march down Mass. St. to inaugurate Gay and Lesbian Awareness Week. The event is sponsored by Gay and Lesbian Services, the third oldest such university organization in the country. Discrimination against gays and lesbians in employment, housing, marriage, public programs and public accommodations continues to be considerable. Overt hostility to gays and lesbians is illustrated by Topeka pastor Rev. Fred Phelps and his Westboro Baptist Church congregation who regularly protest at public events around the country and hold signs like "God Hates Fags". They hold more than one picket in Lawrence over the years.

**April 9, 1989**     **Marches for Women's Equality, Women's Lives.** About 17 KU students ride in one of 17 buses (holding 75 each) from Kansas City to the March for Women's Equality, Women's Lives in Washington, DC which has 500,000 participants. Supporting rallies are held in Topeka (200 participants) and Kansas City, Missouri (400 participants). Lawrence feminists and supporters attend all three events. The marches call for equal rights for women, reproductive rights and the right to choose. It is interesting to note that Kansas legalized abortion in 1969, well before the Roe v. Wade decision by the US Supreme Court legalizing abortion nationwide. Also, Kansas was the eighth state to grant women full suffrage (in 1912).

**April 22, 1989.**     **Large Protest Against Ozone-Depleting Chemicals.** On Earth Day 1989, more than 1,100 people, including about 100 KU students and many Lawrence residents, march and protest outside of the Vulcan Chemical Plant and Racon Plant in Wichita. About 22 are arrested for committing nonviolent civil disobedience. Racon is one of the country's top five largest producers of Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) which are a major cause of the shrinking of the Ozone layer. The Ozone layer prevents ultraviolet light from reaching Earth's surface which can cause sunburn and skin cancer. There are simultaneous rallies against CFCs at major producers located in Kansas, Texas, California, New York, Germany, Denmark, Hungary, Sweden and Italy. This event is the first-ever environmental protest to be held around the world at the same time. A group calling itself Kansas Save the Earth Campaign carpools in a caravan from Lawrence to Wichita. A few years later Vulcan begins phasing out CFCs. The Montreal Protocol treaty required the phasing out of the production of chemicals responsible for ozone depletion. It was agreed to on Aug. 27, 1987, and entered into force on Aug. 26, 1989 (the US ratified it). The treaty was a remarkable success because by 2012 it phased out 98 percent of ozone-depleting substances resulting in the smallest hole in the ozone layer over Antarctica in ten years.

**Nov. 9, 1989**     **Fall of the Berlin Wall.** The Berlin Wall which symbolizes the Communist Iron Curtain comes crashing down as East German citizens demand freedom and democracy. The fall of the Berlin Wall also symbolizes the ending of the Cold War. Two years later Soviet citizens overthrow the Communist dictatorship of the USSR and the Soviet Union's constituent republics declare independence. The events indicate the end of communism as a viable political and economic system. Many Lawrence residents, especially those who were involved in US-Soviet citizen diplomacy initiatives and peace projects, celebrate the end of communism and the Cold War.

**Dec. 20, 1989 US Invasion of Panama.** The US invades Panama ostensibly to oust notorious dictator and drug lord Manuel Noriega. Perhaps the real reason is the George H.W. Bush Administration wants to be sure that when the Panama Canal Zone is transferred to Panama in 1999, the country is stable and democratic. Noriega surrenders on Jan. 3, 1990. Some Lawrence residents are concerned that this war is also a way to get US citizens used to wars again. The Vietnam Syndrome, which had been in effect since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, is the public's aversion to American overseas military involvements, following the Vietnam War which had eventually become unpopular with the American people. The Vietnam Syndrome seems to disappear after the 9-11 terrorist attacks in 2001.

**Feb. 24, 1990 Gulf War Peace Vigils Held.** US ground troops push Iraqi soldiers out of Kuwait beginning Feb. 24 in Operation Desert Storm. The Lawrence Coalition for Peace and Justice organizes 19 Sunday vigils for peace in the Middle East, drawing 700 participants on one Sunday in South Park. It sponsors a public forum with Representative Jim Slattery on the Persian Gulf Crisis as well as a public forum on the roots of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. It mounts a vigil at the Lawrence Holidome in connection with a visit of Senator Robert Dole to Lawrence and meets with him to discuss the Gulf Crisis. The US ambassador to Iraq either wittingly or unwittingly gave the green light to Saddam Hussein and didn't make it clear to him what would happen if he used force against Kuwait. So, he went ahead and invaded Kuwait in order to control its oil fields.

**April 21, 1990 Earth Day Parade and Fair.** Hundreds turn out for the Earth Day Parade downtown and the Earth Day Fair in South Park because it is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Earth Day held on April 22, 1970, in which millions of Americans participated and which paved the way for the Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, Environmental Protection Agency and other landmark legislation. According to *Wikipedia*, "Mobilizing 200 million people in 141 countries and lifting the status of environmental issues onto the world stage, Earth Day activities in 1990 gave a huge boost to recycling efforts worldwide and helped pave the way for the 1992 United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro." Earth Day parades and fairs continue annually in Lawrence. EPA data show that Douglas County is in the top 10 percent of counties in terms of polluted air (esp. toxic emissions).

**July 26, 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Signed into Law.** The groundbreaking Americans with Disabilities Act is the nation's first comprehensive civil rights law addressing the needs of people with disabilities, prohibiting discrimination in employment, public services, transportation, public accommodations, and telecommunications. It has had a broad impact upon American society. The promise of the ADA is that all Americans should have equal access and equal opportunity, including Americans with disabilities. Since its enactment, the ADA has opened many doors and sought to level the playing field for employment of Americans with disabilities. In Lawrence it has allowed people with disabilities to access facilities and programs, gain employment and use public transportation. Organizations such as



Independence, Inc. have advocated for the disabled and taught self-advocacy to people with disabilities. However, barriers continue to exist for those with disabilities.

According to Bob Mikesic, “throughout the 1990s in Lawrence there are various individual and small group protests expressing objection to discriminatory or unfair practices or treatment of individuals with disabilities. They approach Independence, Inc. staff and the Access Task Force takes action to address the issues through education and advocacy for the needed change using applicable nondiscrimination laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988, Kansas Act Against Discrimination, Chapter X of the City Code of Lawrence Kansas and any other law that applies.”

**Oct., 1990 Meeting for Peace.** According to Meeting for Peace founder Bob Swan, “American and Soviet citizens, in order to celebrate common historical and cultural ties and to co-create a common future, gather in Lawrence in the ‘Heart of America’ for an historic Meeting for Peace. More than 325 ordinary Soviet citizens from all 15 republics and more than one thousand Americans from Kansas and other states attend this historic event. The Soviet delegation is the largest ever to visit the United States. The event is comprised of Soviet home stays with American host families, colorful and symbolic special events, and a conference with eight task forces on subjects of mutual concern such as market economies, science, the environment, health and global security. The home stays with American families result in the bonding of more than 500 American host family members and their Soviet guests. Highlights of the week include an Eisenhower 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Anniversary Celebration, and a Soviet-American Arts Festival.” This and previous citizen diplomacy or people-to-people efforts in the 1980s help defuse the tensions of the Cold War. Media coverage includes the *New York Times* and many Kansas newspapers and television stations. The Meeting for Peace Foundation which is founded by Bob Swan in 1989, sponsors the events. Karen Brashears becomes executive director of the organization. A primary funder is Paul Fisher, the founder of the Fisher Space Pen.

**Nov. 18, 1990 Elkins Prairie Destruction Protest.** The largest remnant of tallgrass prairie in Northeast Kansas is lost forever when Jack Graham, a Wichita land speculator, has the 80-acre Elkins Prairie plowed under. About a dozen environmentalist gather at the prairie and protest the plowing. This unique virgin prairie was home to over 150 species of plants including two federally-threatened species. It was located on the Northeast corner of Sixth Street & the South Lawrence Trafficway. The prairie was a community natural landmark for over 40 years where schoolchildren, biologists, and nature lovers would explore this natural area. A 2005 survey by Kansas Biological Survey found that only 0.5 percent of the county’s vast pre-settlement natural grasslands had survived. Douglas County loses about 40,000 acres of land to sprawl and other development every decade.

The Save the Elkins Prairie group attempts to preserve the prairie. Persons active in the organization included biologist Kelly Kindscher, environmentalist Ken Lassman, artist Stan Herd, and environmentalist Clark H. Coan. The Final Environmental Impact

Statement for the South Lawrence Trafficway supposedly contained safeguards that would protect the prairie. However, they were insufficient and the land speculator demanded that potential buyers (Douglas County, The Nature Conservancy and KU Endowment Assn.) pay far more than fair market value. The loss of the prairie is reported in *The New York Times*. Partly in response to the loss of habitat, Kelly Kindscher starts an initiative to establish the Kansas Land Trust. By 2017, the trust has conserved nearly 38,000 acres of natural lands and farmland in Kansas primarily through conservation easements, including over 800 acres in Douglas County. Also, as a result of the destruction KU architecture professor Dennis Domer creates the Douglas County Preservation Alliance.

**Nov. 6, 1990 Save the Baker Wetlands Campaign.** The bonds for the South Lawrence Trafficway are approved in a countywide referendum by 55.8% to 44.2%. Vastly outspent, the Save the Baker Wetlands organization manages to heighten awareness of the importance of the wetlands through a door-to-door canvass, yard signs and advertising. With objective ballot wording and an extra push by the organization, it is likely that the SLT bonds could have been defeated at the polls. Over the next decade federal lawsuits by environmentalists and Haskell University students (Wetlands Preservation Committee) with Bob Eye as the lead attorney keep the trafficway from being built, but a decision in final lawsuit allows the project to move forward. Due to the intense and persistent opposition by environmentalists and Haskell Uni. students and faculty, KDOT undertakes mitigation measures which include establishment of re-created wetlands, a Baker Wetlands Discovery Center and a bike path along the trafficway. However mitigation didn't include building a wildlife bridge which would allow wildlife to travel from the Haskell Wetlands to the Baker Wetlands. The eight lanes of traffic (four lanes for the new 31<sup>st</sup> St. and four lanes for the SLT) prevent wildlife from traveling between the two wetlands. The trafficway opens in November, 2016. Primary organizers of the campaign are entomologist Hank Guarisco and environmental activist Clark H. Coan with former attorney Richard Larimore providing advice on political strategy. Less than half of the nation's original wetlands remain. Activities resulting in wetlands loss and degradation include: agriculture; commercial and residential development; road construction; impoundment; resource extraction; industrial siting, processes, and waste; dredge disposal; silviculture; and mosquito control. Originally the Wakarusa River Bottoms contained 17,800 acres of wetlands. Today there are fewer than 700 acres, mostly in the Haskell-Baker Wetlands (excluding re-created wetlands).

**March, 1991 Haskell Rail Trail Opens.** The Rails-to-Trails Coalition of Kansas (RTCK) and the Lawrence Bike Club convince the Lawrence Parks and Recreation Department and Lawrence City Commission in 1988 to pursue the railbanking/conservation under the National Trails Act of the out-of-service Santa Fe Railroad rail spur which stretches from 23<sup>rd</sup> St. to 29<sup>th</sup> on the eastern boundary of Haskell Indian Nations University and convert it into a recreational trail. The trail is built primarily using funds obtained from the proceeds from selling the rails and ties. The trail opens in 1991 and is the first operational rail-trail in Kansas. The trail is extended north in to 11<sup>th</sup> St. in 2010 (that section is called the Burroughs Creek Trail) and will become a section of a planned 22-mile trail loop around the city. The co-chairs of the Coalition are Clark H. Coan of Lawrence and Larry Ross of Wichita.

**April 21, 1991 Native American Shot and Killed by LPD Officer.** Gregg Sevier, a 22-year-old Creek/Choctaw Native American is killed by Lawrence police on April 21, 1991. Sevier's parents call 911 to have a professional come help Sevier because he is depressed and not responding to them. Instead of sending a trained professional police arrive and in a matter four minutes Gregg is dead. The 911 dispatcher was advised that Gregory Sevier had a knife and that the Seviars wanted someone to check on him. Officer Ted Bordman is the first officer to arrive at the Sevier home. Without consulting the Sevier family, Officer Bordman makes contact with Gregory Sevier by shouting orders and acting in a confrontational manner. Officers Phillips and Wheeler subsequently arrive at the Sevier home. Although Gregory Sevier poses no significant threat of death or serious injury, Officers Bordman and Phillips fire their service revolvers at Sevier who is struck with six bullets and is killed. The family files a federal lawsuit in 1992 and after many appeals, the lawsuit is settled with the City for an undisclosed amount. There is extensive agitation in Lawrence for holding the officers accountable and for ensuring that officers receive crisis intervention training. A petition drive is launched and more than one protest is held in South Park concerning this tragedy.

**June-August, 1991 Summer of Mercy in Wichita.** Thousands of anti-abortion protesters flock to Wichita and about 2,600 are arrested for committing civil disobedience in front of three abortion clinics. Many pro-life supporters from Lawrence attend the events. These events galvanize pro-life, conservative Republicans who take over the Kansas Republican Party in the primary of the following year. Dr. George Tiller, the owner of one clinic which provides late-term abortions, is killed by an anti-abortion fanatic in 2009.

**Aug., 1991 Friends of the Kaw forms.** The organization forms partly in response to proposed dredging operations between Lecompton and Lawrence. It incorporates and receives 501(c)(3) status in 1997. The organization's mission is to protect and preserve the Kaw for present and future generations. This involves protecting it from water pollution and other threats such as dredging and development. In 2000 it hires a Kansas Riverkeeper whose primary duty is to be the eyes, ears and voice for the Kaw which entails monitoring regulations affecting surface water and responding to pollution reports. FOK also hosts float trips down the river in an effort to enhance public awareness of this natural resource. In 2012 the US Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar designates the Kansas River as a National Water Trail. Some of those involved over the years are Lance Burr, Mike Calwell, Eileen Larson, and Laura Calwell. Water pollution in the river continues to be a problem due to periodic releases of raw sewage in Topeka; feedlot runoff; and agricultural chemical runoff. A fish consumption advisory remains in the effect for the river in Lawrence.

**Dec. 24, 1992 Bush Pardons Iran-Contra Figures.** As one of his last acts in office, George H.W. Bush pardons Elliott Abrams, Robert McFarland, Caspar Weinberger and three others for their role in the Iran-Contra affair. After Congress banned federal funding for assisting the CIA-sponsored Contras who were waging an illegal war against the leftist Sandinista government in Nicaragua, President Reagan tacitly authorized

former CIA director and Vice President Bush to run the Iran-Contra operation out of the Office of the Vice President. Funds received from the sale of arms to Iran are used to fund the Contras in violation of the Congressional ban. Since the operation was run out of Bush's office, it is a clear conflict of interest for him to pardon those involved. The pardoning of Weinberger eliminates the chance of prosecutors to explore the role in the affair of senior Reagan officials, including Bush's own actions as Vice President. Many Lawrence residents who want the truth to be revealed are upset with the pardon.

**Aug. 6, 1993 Annual Hiroshima Day Vigil.** The Lawrence Coalition for Peace and Justice holds annual peace vigils at 9<sup>th</sup> & Mass. Streets in remembrance of the victims of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 which killed up to 230,000 Japanese, mostly civilians. Some say that that the US knew (the Japanese code had been broken in 1940) that the Japanese emperor was ready to surrender unconditionally, but President Truman wanted to ward off the Soviet Union from its imminent invasion of Japan. Others say that Truman could have demonstrated the power of the nuclear bomb by bombing a virtually unpopulated island near a Japanese city and this would have convinced the emperor to surrender unconditionally. The official line is that the two bombings were necessary in order to prevent the loss of thousands of American GIs who would have been killed in an invasion.

**Aug. 17, 1993 Simply Equal Campaign launched.** Simply Equal, a grassroots coalition, forms and launches an extensive campaign and petition drive. It is led by the Freedom Coalition which was co-founded by Diane Silver in the fall of 1993. Lynne Green and KU social welfare professor Ben Zimmerman are co-chairs of Simply Equal. The petition calls on the City Commission to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodations on the basis of sexual orientation.

It should be noted that the city of Lawrence has had an historical concern for freedom. It was called the Abolitionist Capital of the West because of its extensive anti-slavery activities in the 1850s and 1860s (this was why Confederate guerrilla leader William C. Quantrill targeted it for his deadly attack). Thus, it is no coincidence that Lawrence, with its special awareness and concern for freedom, has been at forefront in Kansas of granting equal rights to all citizens including gays and lesbians. (That said, the community did impose de facto Jim Crow Segregation and racially discriminatory policies and practices around 1910 which lasted until the late 1960s).

**March, 1994 Community Garden Established.** A community garden is created behind the Community Mercantile located at 901 Miss. St. Individuals garden on individual plots. Dave Loewenstein is involved in creating the garden and it is still operating in 2016. The benefits of community gardens include (1) allowing people without land to produce food; (2) enabling low-income residents to provide some of their food needs and eat more healthful food; (3) increasing a sense of community ownership and stewardship; (4) fostering the development of community identity and spirit; and, (5) bringing people together from a wide variety of backgrounds (age, race, culture, social class).

**Sept., 1994 Lawrence-El Papaturre Sister City Relationship Established.** The Lawrence-El Papaturre Friendship Committee (LEPFC) is operating by September, 1994 and establishes its sister relationship with El Papaturre through U.S.- El Salvador Sister Cities. LEPFC, functions mostly as moral support to El Papaturre, a community of 80 families, with financial assistance given toward projects selected by them as they adjust to post-civil war establishment of their little village after returning to their country from Honduras where they had fled for safety during the El Salvador Civil War. The group helps purchase a used truck to fix up and send to the community collecting medical supplies, etc., to send down on the truck which is delivered by Pastors for Peace. According to Barbara Schaible, "initially the concentration of the Lawrence group is on raising funds to help with the infra-structure of the fledgling community, especially in support of their effort to establish schooling up to 6th grade for their children, and in the area of needed medical supplies." Some of those involved initially are Liz Maggard, Barbara Schaible, Emily Bono, Rosina Aguirre Kalusha, Ellie Pedersen, and Mark Larson. El Papaturre is not an official sister city under the auspices of the City of Lawrence's sister city program.

**Jan. 25, 1995 Accidental Nuclear War Averted.** Both the US and Russia have their strategic nuclear forces on hair-trigger, launch-on-warning alert. A team of Norwegian and American scientists launch a rocket from the northwestern coast of Norway loaded with scientific equipment to study the aurora borealis. Either they fail to notify the Russians of the launch or the Russians fail to transmit the notice to their strategic command.

During its flight, the rocket resembles a U.S. Navy submarine-launched Trident missile. As a result, fearing a high-altitude nuclear attack that could blind Russian radar through ElectroMagnetic Pulsing (EMP) thereby allowing the US to launch a pre-emptive first strike, Russian nuclear forces are put on high alert, and the nuclear weapons command suitcase (containing the launch codes) is brought to Russian president Boris Yeltsin, who then has to decide whether to launch a retaliatory nuclear strike against the United States. Reportedly, it is the only time that the so-called nuclear briefcases are broken out and opened up. Fortunately, President Yeltsin is sober when the event occurs. The event confirms previous concerns of Lawrencians about the possibility of an accidental nuclear war.

**May 8, 1995 Simply Equal Amendment Adopted by City Commission.** The City Commission adds "sexual orientation" to the Human Relations Ordinance which protects different classes of individuals from discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodations. Lawrence is the only city in Kansas to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation. In 2015, the US Supreme Court rules that gays and lesbians have a constitutional right to marry. It is estimated that eight percent of Lawrence residents are gay or lesbian which is double that of the national figure of 3.8 percent.

**Nov., 1995 Haskell Students Protest Trafficway.** More than 40 students from Haskell Indian Nations University and KU line 31<sup>st</sup> Street with signs and flags drawing media attention from Kansas City and Topeka. The protest is organized by Haskell's Wetlands

Preservation Committee which is formed in October, 1993. Protests began in April 1994. Haskell students are concerned that the trafficway would destroy the Baker Wetlands which was once owned by HINU and it would disturb possible unmarked graves of students in the wetlands. The 573-acre Baker Wetlands were “stolen” in a modern-day land grab from Haskell Institute in 1958 and eventually transferred to Baker University in 1968. A federal law required that no more than 20 acres (later changed to 40 acres) could be transferred to any one single entity. That is why a transfer to KU was aborted at the last minute. The Bureau of Indian Affairs apparently did not consult with the Haskell administration, faculty, students or the constituent tribes about the transfer in 1958 and when given a chance to reclaim the wetlands in 1966, the BIA said it wasn’t interested. The Baker Wetlands was designated by the National Park Service as a National Natural Landmark in 1969.

**Sept., 1996 Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve Established.** The Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve is established near Strong City. The preserve conserves 11,000 acres of the rapidly-disappearing virgin tallgrass prairie. It is Kansas’ first “national park”. A previous attempt by Rep. Larry Winn, Jr. and Save the Tallgrass Prairie to create a 300,000-acre tallgrass prairie national park east of Matfield Green was unsuccessful due to intense opposition. Due to the size of this proposed park, it would have been a viable prairie ecosystem (which the preserve is not). Only one-tenth of one percent of the original tallgrass prairie remains in the world, and most of that is in the Flint Hills. Even the prairie in the Flint Hills is disappearing due to subdivisions, highways, lakes, lack of burning, and energy development. Due to opposition by ranchers (Kansas Livestock Assn. and Kansas Farm Bureau), the enabling legislation for the preserve (1) creates a multi-use preserve instead of a protected park; (2) bans federal ownership beyond 180 acres; and, (3) continues cattle grazing and oil production. Kansas Audubon, the Kansas Chapter of the Nature Conservancy, and Grasslands Heritage Foundation are among the organizations pushing for the preserve. Key players are Sen. Nancy Kassebaum and Ron Klataske of Kansas Audubon.

**Oct., 1996 Coalition for Homeless Concerns forms.** A grassroots group composed of homeless and formerly homeless people, activists and professionals is created to advocate for the homeless which has been a growing problem in Lawrence. In the 1970s there were only two visibly homeless individuals but by 1990 there are dozens. The group both educates the public and advocates for solutions. Perhaps as an outgrowth of the coalition’s activities, the Lawrence Community Shelter is established. A street paper called “*Change of Heart*” begins publication in January, 1997, and is published under the auspices of the Coalition (for many years Craig Sweets is the editor). Those involved initially include Hilda Enoch, Saunny Scott, Phil Mansfield, Ed Dutton, Marilyn Roy, and Keith Staples.

**March, 1997 KAW-FM Community Radio Goes on Air.** The unlicensed, low-power KAW-FM (88.9 FM) goes on the air and broadcasts out of the station in the basement of Liberty Hall. This grassroots community radio station features alternative music shows and public affairs programs such as “Peace Train” (peace issues) and “Wild Earth” (environmental issues). The FCC issues a “cease and desist” order but the station

continues to operate until June, 1998. The station closes down after the FCC assigns the frequency to an out-of-state translator station which results in reception interference.

**April, 1997 Food Not Bombs.** A small group of mostly high school students serves vegetarian food in South Park once a week to anyone who is hungry, not just the homeless and poor. The national Food Not Bombs movement spawned into hundreds of autonomous chapters that collect surplus food that would otherwise go to waste from grocery stores, bakeries, markets, gardens, and generous people, and then prepares it into community meals which are then served for free to anyone who is hungry. The central beliefs behind FNB is that: (1) If governments and corporations around the world spent as much time and energy on feeding people as they do on war, no one would go hungry. (2) There is enough food in the world to feed everyone, but so much of it goes to waste needlessly, as a direct result of capitalism and militarism. (3) Vegetarian food is both healthful and nonviolent. Food Not Bombs calls attention to poverty and homelessness in society by sharing food in public places and facilitating gatherings of poor, homeless and other disenfranchised people. There are four tenets to the Food Not Bombs philosophy: food recycling, consensus decision-making, nonviolence, and vegetarianism. FNB, Lawrence evolves over the years and at times becomes inactive until a new group re-starts it. Melissa Tacke and Jesse Heckman are involved in the founding and operation of the organization founded in 1997.

**Dec. 11, 1997 Kyoto Agreement on Climate Change.** The Kyoto Protocol agreement on greenhouse gases is adopted, but doesn't go into effect until Feb. 16, 2005. A total of 192 countries are required to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. As of 2016, the USA is the only signatory that has not ratified the Protocol. The US was supposed to reduce greenhouse gases seven percent below 1990 levels, but by 2012 they were projected to be 26 percent above 1990 levels. Lawrence residents are concerned about the lack of progress by the US and they are concerned about Climate Change impacts such as higher land and ocean temperatures; extreme weather events; altered ecosystems and habitats causing an acceleration of the extinction of species; coastal flooding caused by rising sea levels; and reduced agricultural productivity.

**June, 1999 Public Transportation Campaign Initiated.** The Public Transportation Committee is formed to promote establishment of a citywide bus system. The extensive campaign involves a float in a parade, petition drive and more. The City Commission approves establishment of the public transit department and advisory committee on Jan., 11, 2000. Initially funded with federal transit grants, the City sets aside 3 mills of property taxes to provide the required local match. The system starts operating in December, 2000. In 2008 voters approve a ¼ cent sales tax to expand operations. That same year it consolidates with KU on Wheels. By 2015 the combined systems provide 3 million rides annually. The system primarily benefits those who do not or cannot afford to drive; seniors who can no longer drive; and those with disabilities. Some of those involved include Mary Michener, Pat Slick, Vashti Winterburg, Hilda Enoch, and Clark H. Coan.

**Nov. 21, 1999 School of the Americas Protest.** About 20 KU students and Lawrence residents caravan in two vans to Ft. Benning, Georgia to protest the US Army School of the Americas. The school trains international officers in counterinsurgency techniques. Many graduates have gone on to commit grievous human rights abuses, particularly in Central and South America. About 12,000 attend the protest and over 4,400 “cross the line” and commit civil disobedience and are arrested. The protests have been going on for ten years and continue to be held annually. Due to the opposition the name of the school is changed to the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation in 2001, but it continues to train international officers in counterinsurgency techniques.

**Dec. 1, 1999 Solidarity! Collective Forms.** The Solidarity! Collective, which has also been known by other names, including the Mother Earth and Black Cat collectives, since its inception, is an anarchist group which forms during the Battle for Seattle anti-globalization protests against the World Trade Organization. Throughout its history it organizes demonstrations, maintains a Food Not Bombs (feeding the homeless) chapter, hosts a women’s health peer education group, and is involved in other activist projects. The Solidarity! Library (which once was in a storefront in 1100 block of Mass. St.) remains active, free, and open to the public, retaining its circulating book collection of more than 4,000 books on topics such as anarchism, environmentalism, feminism, and vegan cooking at the Ecumenical Campus Ministries.

**Sept. 2000 Local Currency Debuts.** A local currency called REAL Dollars debuts in Lawrence. REAL stands for Realizing Economic Alternatives in Lawrence. It is accepted in several dozen stores. The purpose of a local currency is to keep the money flowing in the community. American dollars allow money to be sucked out of the community. A local currency is supposed to enable people who are marginal economically to have more purchasing power. The Ithaca HOUR is a local currency used in Ithaca, New York and is the oldest and largest local currency system in the United States that is still operating. One Ithaca HOUR is valued at US \$10 and is generally recommended to be used as payment for one hour's work, although the rate is negotiable. It inspires Lawrence’s local currency initiative which is started by Dennis “Boog” Highberger, John Cougher and Kris Olsen. Mike Pagano designs the bills. Cougher leaves town within a year leaving it in the hands of city commissioner Dennis “Boog” Highberger who doesn’t have enough time to devote to it. By the end of 2003, the initiative had fizzled.

**Sept. 2000 Living Wage Campaign Launched.** The Kaw Valley Living Wage Alliance forms to promote the adoption of a Living Wage for companies receiving certain tax benefits from the City of Lawrence. Those companies that want to receive such tax benefits have to agree to pay their employees a living wage. A lengthy campaign is held by KVLWA which includes Labor Day picnics and a petition drive. After the organization secures a grant, graduate student Mark Horowitz is hired to lead the campaign. The City Commission adopts the ordinance in October, 2003. The Living Wage level is set at 130 percent of the federal poverty level for a family of three. However, median wages remain low in Lawrence compared to university cities such as Ames and Iowa City, Iowa. The ordinance has limited effect as it doesn’t apply to City employees, City contractors or to organizations receiving City funds.



**Author's Note:** Since the author has a progressive point of view and participated in several of the protests and events listed, it cannot be assumed that his summaries are completely objective. Further, the author was generally unaware of political protests and events sponsored by conservatives, and thus, only two are mentioned.

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